ANOTHER YEAR
OF ACHIEVEMENT

Second Annual Roos Report
To Supporters of Better Government:

On this second anniversary, it is again my privilege to report to you, our valued friends, on the continued progress made in St. Louis County government during this past year, and to express my gratitude for your sustained interest and active backing.

During our first year in office we established a solid foundation as the framework for building. This involved two fundamental objectives: the restoration of honesty and integrity in County government, and the control of the runaway costs of government, so that any increase in expenditures is limited to the increase in the County's tax base.

Having attained these first goals, our second year, 1964, was one of building! It was a year which saw the attainment of most of those objectives which are within the authority of the executive and legislative branches of the County government to accomplish. It was also a year which brought into focus other needs such as capital improvements, charter revision, and governmental reorganization. These needs which can only be met with the cooperation of forces outside of the immediate control of the County government -- the people, the State Legislature, our neighboring governments. We shall continue to work toward securing that cooperation.

I want to thank particularly the Republican County Councilmen for their unstinting cooperation and devoted work in making this a banner year of progress: Gerald A. Rimml, Brainerd W. LaTourette, Jr., Edward E. Murphy, Jr., and Maurice L. Stewart.

To the wonderful citizens on our County boards and commissions who have given countless hours of their own time in the cause of better government... to the staff members of this Administration... and to the loyal campaigners of 1963 who made everything possible, please know my genuine esteem for you. Thanks for everything!

Lawrence K. Roos
TAX ACCOUNTING FULLY AUTOMATED
Real and personal property tax accounting, as well as merchants and manufacturers taxes are now fully automated. This means greater accuracy by fewer employees with a considerable saving of cost in the collecting procedure. And now, for the first time, County tax bills are itemized so that each taxpayer will know exactly where his tax dollar is spent.

RABIES CONTROL STRENGTHENED
The computer system helps safeguard the lives of residents by making central registration of animals a reality. Through the cooperation of private veterinarians with the County Health Department, the inoculations of dogs and cats are now recorded in the quick-access computer. Registration statistics are then examined to spot the areas of the County which do not show the normal amount of vaccinations, and rabies control trucks are sent into those areas to find unvaccinated animals. Another health protecting merit of the system is that owners will now be notified when it is time to reinoculate pets against rabies.

Health authorities say that when 70% of animals are inoculated—a community has rabies under control. It is expected that St. Louis County will exceed the 70% requirement in 1965 as the automated registration system is fully implemented.

COUNTY OPERATIONS STREAMLINED
Several other responsibilities of the County Health Department have been automated, including child health conference reports, nursing reports and vital health statistics. The County payroll is also now produced by data processing, an innovation which increases accuracy and reduces clerical expense.

ELECTION PROCESS NEXT
The Administration’s next target of automation is in the conduct of election activities where a study is underway for conversion of voter registration records, the preparation of voter canvass lists and election notice mailings. This conversion would not only reduce error and speed research, but save the taxpayers the considerable expense of processing these records through a service bureau.

$25,000 NOW SAVED YEARLY IN INTEREST COST
Another example of savings for taxpayers was the elimination of $25,000 in unnecessary interest charges for County borrowings. Previously the County had scattered its deposits in so many different banks that when it was necessary to borrow against anticipated taxes, the loans bore interest costs of $25,000 annually. During the past year, the Roos Administration directed that Government deposits be concentrated on a business-like, nonpolitical basis in those banks from which the County borrows. This new policy now enables the County to borrow its short-term operational needs at no cost—thus abolishing a sizable amount of superfluous expense.

MORE REFORMS IN PURCHASING PROCEDURES
The Roos Administration continued to replace former piecemeal purchasing procedures with modern practices—which are estimated to have saved as much as $50,000 in 1964. Quality control, improved purchasing contracts and better price agreements have been instituted, based on the recommendations of a citizens committee of professional purchasing agents. One instance of resultant savings is seen in the maintenance cost of County typewriters. By eliminating service contracts and arranging for periodic checks and emergency calls, the County saves a minimum of $400 per year. This is another classic example of how interested citizens can make a constructive contribution for better government.

FULL INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR LESS MONEY
The chaotic, politics-riddled, partial-coverage insurance program inherited in 1963 was revamped in 1964 to assure complete coverage of all County vehicles and buildings at $3,203 less cost each year. Also, until this year, the County had paid annual premiums on 20 separate fidelity bonds covering fewer than one-fourth of its 2,423 employees. We now have one blanket bond covering all County employees at 50¢ per employee—a cost significantly less than the previous inadequate coverage which cost $1.31 per employee. This new insurance program was directed by a volunteer Insurance Advisory Committee activated by the Administration.
As a result of greater efficiency and cost control, the Roos Administration made a 6¢ reduction in the tax rate in 1964! Also, through modern business thrift, the total costs of government in the first two years of this Republican Administration, 1963 and 1964, have been increased by only 9.1%—well within the growth of the County’s tax base. This compares with a skyrocketing 26.8% spending increase in the prior two years, 1961 and 1962, of the former administration. In other words, the rate of increase has been more than cut in half.

It is important to note that this tax cut has been accomplished with no curtailment of essential services; in fact, some County services have actually been expanded.

This tax cut achievement, along with full-value County services, is dramatic testimony for the Roos better government philosophy: Choose honest, dedicated business men and women, look for the better way, and spend only within the limits of the County's income.

CONSTRUCTION CODES REVISED
A major accomplishment this past year—the beneficial effects of which will be felt for many years to come—was the modernization of the County's antiquated building, plumbing and electrical codes. Patterned after the most progressive national standards, the new codes make St. Louis County more attractive for expanded plant construction by industry and at the same time assure Countians of greater protection in the purchase of homes.

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED
The manufacturer seeking a new plant site sees the St. Louis metropolitan area (St. Louis City, and St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson, St. Clair and Madison Counties) as one labor market, one source of raw materials, one marketing center, one center for research and one industrial location. He is not concerned with the residential identities of those living within the complex, but rather sees us as a single economic entity. When he locates here, all of us in this metropolitan area reap the benefits; when he chooses a location elsewhere—we all lose.

Last Spring, the Supervisor proposed an area-wide approach to industrial development which has resulted in plans for the formal organization of the St. Louis Regional Industrial Development Corporation—an exciting new teamwork venture to stimulate business expansion in the metropolitan area. New industry moves, of course, more jobs and a redistribution of the taxes now borne by homeowners.

MASTER ZONING ORDINANCE
A priority responsibility to County residents was furthered by this Administration with the publication of a comprehensive master zoning ordinance covering much of the County's undeveloped land. This measure would replace the County's present outdated zoning regulations which date back nearly 18 years and have been changed only on a piece-by-piece basis, and then more than 700 times! Embodying sound concepts of planning consistent with the interests of the citizens, the new master zoning ordinance presents the means of guiding the orderly future development of the County while at the same time protecting the interests of residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial property owners.

The master zoning ordinance contains the important elements of creative thinking as well as the practical products of numerous public expressions and the judgement of the selfless citizens who toiled for years to develop a sound proposal. The early enactment of the ordinance will do much to assure the orderly growth of St. Louis County.

SIDEWALK SAFETY
Pedestrian safety was another matter of concern in which positive action was taken in 1964. Through County Council ordinance, citizens on their own initiative may now construct sidewalks in the districts they specify. The cost is prorated among the adjacent homeowners enjoying the immediate benefits of the new sidewalks. Future subdivisions are now required to include sidewalks as part of their total construction plan.
COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICTS REDRAWN

With an admirable display of bipartisan teamwork, the County Council reapportioned the Council districts into equal population units. The old districts had become grossly disproportionate as the County’s population ballooned. Now, as a result of the redistricting, every County citizen has equal representation in the County’s law-making body.

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL

Taking positive action to solve a serious health problem in the County, the Supervisor appointed an Air Pollution Commission to establish regulatory standards for clean air control. The County Government is also cooperating in the activities of the Interstate Air Pollution Study to establish area-wide protection against air pollution.

HUMAN RELATIONS

This Administration has been responsive to its residents’ spiritual and moral needs. In the field of human relations, concern for the civil rights of all citizens was demonstrated by the enactment of a Public Accommodations Code which prohibits discrimination in public places because of race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin. Simultaneously, a Commission on Human Relations was created to foster mutual self-respect and to further amicable relations among the various segments of the population which together comprise the County.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Leisure-time needs of Countians were recognized by the opening of the new Suson Park in the south county, the rehabilitation of a lakewind deluport water-sports area at Creve Coeur Park, and the expansion of Jefferson Barracks Park. The Summer Recreational program has been expanded and now serves more than 25,000 County children annually.

LAW ENFORCEMENT STRENGTHENED

The Roos Administration added 30 new officers to the County police force this past year in vivid illustration of the Administration’s constant war on crime. An unfortunate corollary to population growth is an upswing in crime, and this situation holds true in St. Louis County. The Administration continues a constant alert to the problem.

Following the establishment of a Central Police Records system and Municipal Police Officers Academy, plus a 10% police salary increase in 1963, this year’s expansion of the force to 182 officers serves as a stern warning to criminals of the County’s intention to expand its law enforcement apparatus as needed. Nevertheless, much remains to be done. The Police Department must continue to enlarge its capability in manpower and material. However, consideration must also be given to the County’s ability to meet the rapidly growing cost of the Police Department. And a clearer definition of County and municipal responsibilities in providing law enforcement services must also be made—to give the municipal taxpayer good protection without the burden of unjust double taxation.

LEGAL AID FOR INDIGENTS

The Administration also supported the establishment of the County Legal Aid Society this past year to assist indigent citizens in obtaining competent counsel in civil court cases. This service supplements the existing Public Defender office which handles indigent cases in the criminal courts. All Countians, rich or poor, are now assured of good legal representation.

ACCOUNTING SYSTEM SUCCESSFULLY MODERNIZED

An independent certified public accountant firm, experienced in management consulting, has taken a fresh look at the County’s archaic accounting system. A year-long study has resulted in a completely new accounting plan, which, when implemented in 1965, is expected to substantially increase the accuracy and efficiency of record-keeping within the government.

COUNTY-URBAN ROAD NETWORK

Recognizing County road improvement as a critical need, the Supervisor, with County Council approval, established a County Highway Commission to plan the construction, maintenance and repair of vital arterial roads with the entire County in mind. This commission has thus far designated 175 miles of heavily traveled roads as the County-Urban road network, and is now developing a program for County-Municipal cooperation to improve these high traffic roads. This is only a beginning to the solution of our frustrating public road problems—further curative action will be taken in 1965.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION FOR HIGHWAYS—AIRPORTS

Two activities of cooperation with area governments are those of regional highway planning in which the County is participating as part of the East-West Gateway Planning Commission, and airport needs.

COUNTY-MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP

In June of 1964, in an address at the University of Missouri, Supervisor Lawrence K. Roos formulated the concept of a County-Municipal partnership as the ideal basis of local government in St. Louis County. Such a partnership contemplates the eventual incorporation of all of the heavily populated areas of the County into municipalities large enough to be capable of providing municipal services efficiently, yet small enough to remain responsive to the needs of the citizens.

County Government, in turn, would be responsible for providing those services which can best be performed on an area-wide basis regardless of municipal boundaries. This definition of a precise policy to serve as a guide for intelligently relating the activities of County Government to municipal responsibilities is a notable accomplishment of the year just ended.

PERSONNEL PRACTICES

The Roos Administration has initiated legislation now pending before the County Council to standardize personnel practices within the Government. This action would establish the same work standards for County patronage employees as those now in effect for civil service employees.

AND THERE WERE DISAPPOINTMENTS

While 1964 was a vintage year for progress in St. Louis County, it also witnessed unfortunate disappointments such as the defeat of the bond issue. Also, the Democratic minority on the County Council blocked the people’s right to vote on proposed charter changes to extend the merit system, and to make appointive the office of Highway Engineer.
The Year Ahead

Bond Issue - The People

The need for good roads is a top priority must! Those who use the outdated roads in the County are aware of the virtual strangulation of traffic flow—a condition costly both in irritation to the motorist, and in economic consequences to our community.

The garbage and refuse disposal situation has passed the critical stage. The need for incinerators did not evaporate when the 1964 bond issue propositions failed to win a two-thirds majority. It got worse. A failure to make necessary capital improvements will limit economic opportunity for all of us and stunt the growth of St. Louis County.

Charter Reform - Courts, the People or Democrats on County Council

The County Charter must be improved to increase the efficiency of government. Examples: (1) the extension of the merit system, and (2) the making of certain County administrative positions appointive rather than elective.

The extension of the merit system is necessary to recruit and retain County employees whose duties require specialized skill and continuity of operation. Certain positions, now elective, are strictly administrative—not policy-making. The responsibility for the administration of the Government must be clearly defined to avoid “buck-passing” and pulling in opposite directions. Picture a business with the heads of various divisions working for a competitive advantage. A chief executive, to be responsible for the total performance, must be given authority for those functions which are administrative in scope.

Whether a vote on these two charter reforms is made possible by the decision of the courts where the matter is now pending, by citizen action, or by a simple dropping of the partisan posture by anyone of the three Democratic minority members of the County Council, the improvement of the County Charter ranks high among the goals of the Administration for the forthcoming year.

Broad Legislative Program - Missouri State Legislature

Supervisor Roos has proposed a legislative program vital to the prosperity of the County and the welfare of its citizens. A majority of the proposals has been indorsed by the entire bipartisan membership of the County Council.

Full Home Rule Authority

If the more than 800,000 citizens of St. Louis County are to come to grips with the challenges of today and tomorrow, we must be given the authority to solve our own problems in our own way.

Simple Majority for Bond Issues

Missouri is one of only a few states still requiring a two-thirds majority for the issuance of general obligation bonds. This requirement should be reduced to a simple majority to make more realistic the attaining of vitally needed capital improvements.

Non-Partisan Courts

Legislation to enable the citizens to vote on the extension of the non-partisan court plan in this area is needed. This would make it possible to take our courts out of politics.

Fair Share in General Assembly

Reapportionment of the Missouri Legislature is necessary to give Countians their rightful representation in State matters.

Statewide Conflict-of-Interest Law

Enactment of a strong state-wide conflict-of-interest law is necessary to assure at all levels of government the maintenance of the highest standards of moral integrity on the part of governmental officials and persons doing business with the government. In October of 1963, the Roos Administration passed a St. Louis County conflict-of-interest law with strict penalties for violation. It is time we had such a law on the State level.

Other Legislative Needs

Other major legislative proposals requiring the support of the State Legislature include proposals for the improved safety of vehicle operation; increased State financial support for the care of County mental patients; expanded State payments for foster-home care of County children; legislation authorizing Missouri to cooperate with Illinois in air pollution control; and the setting up at the State level of a study group to consider tax reform measures.

TEAMWORK GOVERNMENT - State Legislature and the People

One target objective of the Administration's legislative program deserves special mention: the legal tools to achieve full County-Municipal partnership. The existence of 148 separate taxing authorities, including 96 municipalities, 23 fire districts, the County Government, and a proliferation of other local jurisdictions, results in duplication and inequities of service which are both costly and unnecessary.

The Supervisor has called on the General Assembly to enact legislation placing in the County Government the responsibility for developing factual information to guide citizens in consideration of proposals for municipal annexations, consolidations and incorporations, while leaving the final decisions in the hands of the citizens of the area concerned.

Such legislation would encourage local reform and combine the best elements of area government with fundamental principles of local responsibility.

"We have good reason to be optimistic about our County's future, if we have the courage and the courage to face up to a multitude of challenges. We are entitled to hope that sooner rather than later these challenges will be met. Toward this end, I firmly assure the citizens of our great County that all the resources, all the energies, all the initiative of this Administration will be clearly focused on the fulfillment of this mission of progress."

—Lawrence K. Roos