



## THE GROWTH OF CITY SERVICES



CITY OFFICIALS, ALL MALE, IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1909.

### ANN ARBOR'S FIRST CITY HALL 1907-1963



THE 1908 EIGHT-MAN POLICE FORCE COPEd WITH ROWDY STUDENTS, CROWDS OF VISITORS AND A GROWING POPULATION. PATROLMAN WILLIAM BLACKBURN (LEFT REAR), FORMER FIFTH WARD CONSTABLE, WAS THE CITY'S FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICEMAN.

Completed in 1907, Ann Arbor's first City Hall provided first-floor office space for expanding public services and a council chamber above. The eight-man Police Department had a separate entrance on Fifth Avenue. The Fire Department was already located across Huron Street in the landmark 1882 Firemen's Hall.

After incorporation in 1833, the village council met sporadically in the courthouse office of Ann Arbor's founder, John Allen, the first village president.

Ordinances adopted at the first meeting dealt with matters of public safety, such as the discharge of firearms, and hogs and dogs running wild. In 1836 the village established a volunteer fire department. Putting out fires and providing cistern water to fight them cost over a third of the village's total 1848 income of \$2,152. The village hired workers to ring the Presbyterian church bell to mark the hours, erect and light street lamps around the courthouse, and repair the dirt streets.

The 1851 charter made the village a city governed by a mayor and aldermen with enlarged taxing powers. The first paid police force was organized in 1871, funded by license fees on saloons and billiard tables, which were considered "sources of disorder."

Until 1895 the city continued to lease space in the County Courthouse. Expanding services then made it necessary to rent offices on North Fourth Avenue in the new "City Building" and by 1907 to build a new City Hall.



ANN ARBOR FIREMEN SHOW OFF THEIR FIRST MOTORIZED TRUCKS IN 1915 (PHOTO BELOW). IN 1882, AFTER RENTING HORSES FOR SEVERAL YEARS, THE CITY PURCHASED ITS OWN HORSES TO HAUL FIRE EQUIPMENT THAT HAD BECOME TOO HEAVY FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PULL.

ALSO IN 1882 THIS BRICK FIREMEN'S HALL REPLACED AN 1860 WOODEN BUILDING (PHOTO LEFT). EACH BUILDING HAD A TOWER WITH A BELL TO SUMMON VOLUNTEERS AND AN UPSTAIRS HALL FOR MEETINGS OF CITY COUNCIL AND OTHER PUBLIC GROUPS.

