Lafayette Paving
Nearly 50 Miles; Cost $2,750,000

In a little more than two years Lafayette has seen the construction of almost 50 miles of city streets at a cost of almost $2,750,000.

Carried out under four major paving projects, the work has transformed a large part of the city's thoroughfares from dirt and gravel to asphalt and concrete.

Such progress in a comparatively short period of time takes added luster when compared with the fight for better streets in earlier years.

Until 1914 every street in Lafayette, then a town of some 7,000, was dirt—dirt which became a sea of mud during the frequent rainy spells.

A small band of leading citizens kept up the cry for better streets, but what appeared then on deaf ears for so many years.

Lafayette's Jefferson St., then as now the main street in town, was in such bad condition that Gov. Sanders, addressing a meeting on street improvements at that time, said: "Jefferson Street is a famous street. It is either covered by six inches of dust or six inches of mud."

A. A. McBride, publisher of the Lafayette Gazette, and Dr. N. P. Moss, local druggist and civic leader, were among those heading the movement for better streets.

Dr. Moss, reading of work done in Illinois on street paving, persuaded civic engineers engaged in roadway work there to come to Lafayette to advise on local improvements.

The engineers appeared before the city council, police jury, school board and succeeded in receiving pledges of $500 appropriations from each.

Volunteers were enlisted to transport gravel and other materials, and wagons borrowed from sugar cane planters.

The first strip of road in the city was a portion of a roadway from Johnston St. to the Protestant Cemetery on Pinhook Rd.

Farmers and others using the gravel road were so impressed that later voted a road tax.

The used of the automobile brought up the city bond issue for roads in 1914.

From these beginnings the town began building gravel roads that now covered much of downtown Lafayette.

Strata were changed from quarries to passable streets during the early years included portions of Johnston St., Oak Ave., Lee Ave., Jefferson St., Vermilion St., Buchanan St., Central St., Lafayette St., Congress St., St. John St. and the Scott road.

Later Jefferson St. and many other thoroughfares in the central business area were paved with brick.

A state-wide building program started in 1928 resulted in the paving of the main highways through the city.

Activity continued into the 1930's, when Lafayette received the aid of the federal WPA program.

Under WPA citizens petitioned to have streets paved. The usual 18-foot asphalt topping cost the property owner about $1 per front foot.

Also during this program many concrete culverts were constructed, even though the street was not paved.

First Project
Very little additional street paving was done until the first street paving project was launched in 1932.

Parts of 22 streets were surfaced with asphalt, concrete gutters and curbs were provided, and subsurface drains were installed in some cases.

Barber Brothers Construction Co., of Baton Rouge, with a bid of $591,000, won the contract for the first paving project.

Such additional costs as engineering and legal fees and contingencies boosted the actual cost of the project to $565,000.

Portions of Gen. Mouton, Refinucy, Lucile, Coolidge, and E. Convent streets were surfaced with asphalt.

Asphalt paving was applied to parts of Campbell, S. Pierce, W. Convent, Barry, S. Buchanan, Stewart, Reid, E. Convent, Tulane, Hoover, Auburn, Coolidge, Harding, Wilson, Taft, Roosevelt, Girard, Park, Poole, N. E. St., Mary St., H. St., N. Mall, Fowler and Theodore Sts.

The use of soil cement base for the streets stirred up a controversy among property owners, some of whom claimed it would not stand up.

Only three of the original 35 streets were protested out when the city held a protest meeting on June 30, 1932. They were Stevenson, Ed¬win and Lewis Sts.

2nd Project
A second street paving project covering almost 10 miles of roadways, about the same as the first, was initiated in 1932. It was again awarded to Barber Brothers in July, 1932.

Work started later that month under a construction contract of $656,000, which was boosted to $737,000 by other costs.

The 52 streets included in the program were divided into four small projects.

One was for 30-foot-wide concrete on Bienville St., another for 34-foot-wide asphalt on St. Chestnut St., and a third for 30-foot-wide asphalt on Eighth St.

Largest of the four projects was common street width in the city.

The city's third street paving project, announced in October of 1933, originally included work on 61 streets and covered some 15 miles of roadway.

It was divided into six smaller projects, one for 30-foot-wide concrete and others providing for asphalt streets ranging in width from 21 to 34 feet.

A protest meeting several months later resulted in protests that the total down to 51 streets and about nine miles of roadway.

In the latter part of 1933, while the third paving project was being initiated, the city offered a street-paving project as part of a $2 million tax bond proposal.

The $800,000 bond issue would have provided for resurfacing of 12 downtown Lafayette streets.

City fathers reasoned that a large percentage of the city's residents used these central city thoroughfares and thus should pay for their upkeep.

Voters rejected the proposal when they went to the polls on Dec. 15, 1933.

They passed another bond proposal which was expected to have a great effect on traffic, even though not a strict street project.

An undersurface on Jefferson St., at the Southern Pacific boundary and the overhauling of streets in that area received the approval of local property owners.

The project was presented as a $300,000 project, with the city paying $180,000 and the railroad the rest.

The city accepted a low bid of $500,000 from the Lake Charles contracting firm of F. Miller and Son, and construction started in the latter part of 1934.

The city also started a fourth project and set the wheels in motion for a fifth project during 1934.

The fourth project met with the greatest opposition of any presented to property owners so far, mainly because of opposition to resurfacing the streets and curbing the curbs on pavers.

A total of 78 street projects were included in the fourth street paving program, 25 of them calling for new construction, 32 scheduled for curb to curb paving and 21 slated for repair.

Some 500 property owners stormed a protest meeting on Oct. 5 and petitioned for the removal of 44 of the 78 street projects, including four for new construction, 29 for curb to curb paving and 11 for repair.

Streets were one of the major facets of a comprehensive planning survey being conducted by the city.

A preliminary sketch plan brought out as its major criticism was that Lafayette streets lacked continuity, not only in terms of length but also in terms of width.

The survey found that the most common street width in the city was 40 feet and that a majority fell in the group between 40 and 50 feet wide.

Establishment of a major street system would be difficult because of the lack of continuity and the curvilinearity of the street widths, city planners maintained.

College Ave. was the heaviest travelled street in the city, said the city planners, but traffic on all the major highways into the city had increased remarkably in recent years.

The Lafayette street system was found to be of the rectangular or gridiron pattern, but the most desirable type of street system was said to be a combination of the radial, rectangular or gridiron and a third type known as the curvilinear.

Three-fourths of the streets in the city were of the minor classification, those serving only the immediate residential area directly.

City planners recommended construction of a limited access bypass west of the city and widening of U.S. Highway 90 west and U.S. Highway 167 to state lines.

They also proposed that Lafayette, Pierce, Cypress, Johnston and W. Convent Sts. and Oak Ave. be widened to four lanes and that Oak and Convent Sts. be connected by a street.

They proposed for the future nine new grade separations at points where the Southern Pacific Lines tracks are crossed by four main streets.

The 18,000 automobiles and trucks normally registered in Lafayette, expected to increase by about 45 per cent in 1970, said the city planners.

Bobo Rockefeller, Cousin in Tiff
Over Ill Father

WASHINGTON, Pa. —Barbara (Bobo) Rockefeller, ex-wife of millionaire Winthrop Rockefeller, is quarreling with her cousin, a glass factory worker, over the care of Bobo's ill father Julius Pauluska.

Miss Pauline Pauluska wants to keep the 83-year-old former coal miner at her Washington, Pa., home. Bobo, residing in New York, told newsmen she would like to see her father placed in a rest home.

"I am interested only in making my father's last days comfortable," said Bobo. "This best interest must be the determining factor," Bobo said.

Bobo's father, now recuperating from pneumonia, lived with a brother, Anthony, for 25 years. Anthony, who was Miss Pauluska's father, died last year.

Bobo saw her father for the first time in 31 years in April, shortly after he had suffered a heart attack. He and Bobo's mother were separated when Bobo was 6.