

Scientific article

DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2026-1-162-177

For citation

Ierusalimskiy, Yu. Yu., Punevsky, Ya. V. (2026). Participation of Rostov local government bodies in the improvement of the city in 1870–1914, Herald of an Archivist, no. 1, pp. 162-177. DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2026-1-162-177

Ierusalimskiy, Yu. Yu., P. G. Demidov Yaroslavl State University, Yaroslavl, Russia

Punevsky, Ya. V., MIREA – Russian Technological University, Moscow, Russia

Participation of Rostov local government bodies in the improvement of the city in 1870–1914

Abstract

The article, based on documents from the collections of the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA), the State Archives of the Yaroslavl Region (GAYAO) and its Rostov branch (RSF GAYAO), which are being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time, examines the main activities of the municipal authorities of Rostov, Yaroslavl Province, from 1870 to 1914. The work uses statistical sources, periodicals, memoirs and diaries. The article examines the level of expenditures by the municipal government on street paving, the number of paved streets in absolute and relative terms, the circumstances of the introduction of electric lighting in Rostov and the participation of the Rostov City Duma and City Council in this process, and establishes the scale of the borrowing policy, which the municipal authorities of Rostov were forced to resort to in order to bring the road network in proper order. The authors studied the condition of the road network in Rostov from 1870 to 1914. Based on the analysis of archival sources, complaints from city residents about the condition of the pavements, which were submitted to the city council, are considered. The study established that the Ministry of Internal Affairs' authorization of a tax on goods imported into the city, effective November 1, 1912, played a significant role in accelerating the pace of street paving in Rostov. Archival documents were used to determine the cost to local city authorities of installing an electric power station, opened in 1905, the amount of subsequent city government expenditures on electric lighting, and the number of employees in this area under the control of city government bodies. The article establishes that, in introducing electric lighting, Rostov city government bodies drew inspiration from the experience of Yaroslavl and Rybinsk. Through an analysis of periodicals, the authors determined the city population's attitude toward the introduction of electric lighting. Particular attention is paid to the construction of a water supply system funded by A. L. Kekin and its purchase in 1902 under the control of city government. The authors describe the measures taken by Rostov city government to expand and modernize the water supply network,

including the creation of a system of water supply booths and towers, and the introduction of water filtration. A conclusion is drawn about the important role of city government bodies in practical urban improvement efforts, which were carried out under rather severe financial constraints. All this allowed Rostov to become one of the most well-maintained district towns in the Yaroslavl Governorate.

Keywords

City government, city of Rostov, improvement, pavements, water supply, electric lighting, budget, expenses.

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About authors

Ierusalimskiy Yuri Yuryevich, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, P. G. Demidov Yaroslavl State University, Faculty of History, Department of Russian Medieval and Modern History, Head of Department, Head of the Center for the Preservation and Strengthening of Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values, Yaroslavl, Russia, State University of Education, Faculty of History, Political Science and Law, Department of Russian History, Professor, Mytishchi, Russia, 8-485-230-54-52, osniyar@uniyar.ac.ru

Punevsky Yaroslav Victorovich, MIREA – Russian Technological University, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Assistant, Moscow, Russia, 8-901-047-65-62, moskva221090an@gmail.com

The article was received in the editorial office on 17.03.2025, recommended for publication on 20.12.2025.

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .

