PLANNING SAN FRANCISCO

A Monthly Bulletin of the San Francisco City Planning Commission

HIS CITY

He has fought to protect it, he has left his loved ones in its trust, he lives for the day he will return to it. We, in his home town, are responsible to him for its growth, its development, its welfare.

Carefully, now, we must prepare the plans for its future, his future. They must be practical plans, comprehensive challenging plans that solve today's probelms, set the pattern for tomorrow's improvements and form the basis for a constant, continuous growth—a Master Plan, ever changing, building, and expanding!

The City Planning Commission, through this monthly publication hopes to bring to you, the citizens of San Francisco, the story of the progress of the Master Plan—what it is, how it is formulated, how it is activated, how it grows!

Your comments, your suggestions, your ideas are welcomed, your support is sought. We know you join with us, with all San Franciscans, in sponsoring the program that will provide the best for the future of our city, for the future of *HIS CITY!*

Michael D. Lapham

A STATEMENT FROM MAYOR LAPHAM

The City Planning Commission is to be congratulated for undertaking this publication to further inform the citizens of San Francisco on the developments of the Master Plan. The substantial progress the Commission has made on the Master Plan in the past year augurs well for the future.

VOLUME Nº 1
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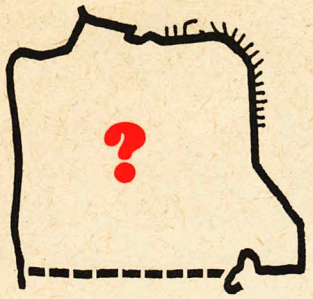
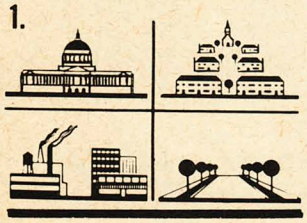
WHAT IS THE MASTER PLAN



The Master Plan is one of the essential tools for building a great city. It is more than a single map. A map shows things as they are: the Master Plan shows what should be done. It is a representation of ideas for civic improvement, the best that can be developed by citizens and officials working together. Since the city grows and changes, its plans must also change. The Master Plan, therefore, is a flexible instrument. It will be constantly refined to meet new prospects and needs.

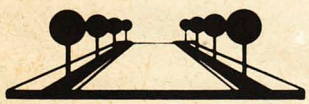
1.



THE USES OF LAND

The modern city is a vast problem of space. Formulas for the proper and efficient use of land are basic elements of the Master Plan. The aim is to determine the quantity of space needed for all prospective uses, and to plan the most advantageous arrangement of these areas.

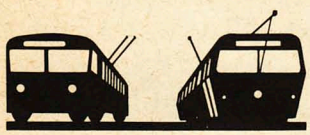
2.



FREEWAYS, HIGHWAYS AND STREETS

Traffic is the life-blood of the city. The freeways, highways and streets are the channels through which this vital flow moves. They must be adequate, and they should form a system like the blood vessels of the body. Our streets were never planned originally for this purpose.

3.



TRANSIT

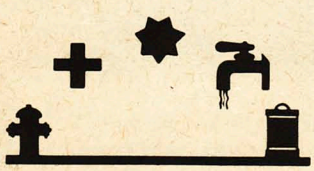
Transit is the service of carrying people from place to place. It needs improvement badly. The freeways, highways and streets provide the routes. Vast sums can be wasted, and important benefits lost by failure to correlate plans for public ways, and streetcar and bus routes.

4.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation deals with the delivery of materials into and the shipment of products out of the city by rail, ship, plane and truck. Every function of the community is affected by the location and character of facilities devoted to this service. They are an important part of the Master Plan.

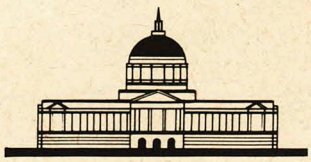
5.



UTILITIES

Electric power, telephone service, water supply, sewers and other services all have to be planned. They can be fitted into the structure of the community with greatest economy and efficiency if there is a Master Plan.

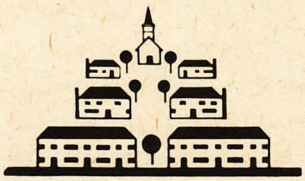
6.



PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Public buildings form an important part of the structure of the city, and the quality of service rendered by them depends in large part upon where they are and how they are fitted into the general city pattern. This is assured by the Master Plan.

7.



REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

Blighted districts and slums are costly. They provide miserable homes for children and drive people out into the newer, more spacious suburbs. Such old areas must be rebuilt along modern lines. The Master Plan will be the broad general guide for such work.

8.

SUBDIVISION DESIGNS

New methods of developing subdivisions and new ideals for home neighborhoods are constantly appearing. The benefits of such progressive effort can be brought to this city by a systematic check of all subdivision plans. Proper standards and principles must be set in the Master Plan.

9.

RECREATION, PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS

Parks and recreational facilities are regarded as essential in the modern city. When open spaces for such purposes are not provided by private land owners, the obligation falls on the city. The designation of areas for such uses becomes part of the process of city planning.

10.

THE CITY'S APPEARANCE

The appearance of the city generally reflects the cultural level of its people. Investments in architecture, gardens, and civic centers can easily be ruined by ugly surroundings. The community as a whole must have standards of beauty, cleanliness and decency. This is a mark of civic consciousness and true greatness.

Sunset—district of homes, protected by proper zoning.

PLANNING COMMISSION PROGRESS

The Commission in 1944, held 38 special meetings, in addition to the regular bi-weekly meetings, so numerous were the matters requiring the commission's attention.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

An innovation is the holding of evening neighborhood meetings. In this way the fullest expression of opinion is obtained from the greatest number of property owners and citizens within an area affected by a particular study of the Commission. Such meetings proved invaluable while the Sunset rezoning and Telegraph Hill building height limitation legislation were under consideration.

SUNSET REZONING

Over 69,000 San Franciscans, 10,000 home owners, were given the protection of First Residential zoning when a major portion of the Sunset District was rezoned. The Ordinance of 1921, passed when most of the district was sand dunes, classified the area as Second Residential, permitting multiple dwellings. However, 98% of actual construction through the years was single family homes. To preserve the nature of the district, rezoning to First Residential was proposed within the neighborhood. The overwhelming opinion of all who attended favored rezoning. The Commission submitted its report and on June 6, 1944 the Board of Supervisors approved the rezoning.

POSTWAR PUBLIC WORKS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Mayor requested the Commission to prepare a comprehensive Public Works Improvement Program to have the city ready for postwar construction. Departments were asked to submit a listing of their plans, programs for land acquisition and construction, and method of financing. To assist the departments in compiling the information, the Commission prepared a Postwar Public Works Improvement Handbook, a concise form for reporting, and the staff held conferences with all departments. Suggestions from citizens, improvement clubs and civic organizations were solicited and over 500 received and reviewed. The Commission added proposals resulting from its own studies, and, thanks to the close coöperation of the Chief Administrative Officer and department heads the preliminary report was delivered to the Mayor on time, on October 1, 1944. Revisions and refinements have been made and the full program, totaling over $131,000,000 is now available for review and recommendation by the Mayor's Citizens Committee. Projects submitted by the Commission itself were: Marginal Freeways, Terminal Sites (for downtown park-

(Continued on page 4)

THE JOB AHEAD —as I see it

L. DEMING TILTON
Director of Planning

IN APRIL we open our gates to visitors from many famous cities. Paris, the queen of all, will be represented. South American neighbors will walk up Market Street, comparing it with the broad, dignified boulevards of Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo. Citizens from Russia and England will tell us of the plans which they have made for new towns to take place of those destroyed. These friends from abroad will know a good deal about city planning. It is an important activity where many of them live.

Their coming moves us to reflect a bit about our own future. First, we should look into the mirror! Hard-working old San Francisco has become careless and slovenly. Pride in the appearance of the city has been weakened by the war. It needs a stimulant. Opera, music, and the impressive landscapes of the Park are deeply appreciated, but a spreading civic ugilness is accepted without protest. Defacers of the city—sign-painters and bill-posters, news-vendors, rubbish dumpers and others—operate with a free hand, often in violation of city ordinances.

The April conference may help us by opening our eyes. The move to polish up would be better, however, if it could be translated into a sustained, constructive program. Certainly the city we see about us is not a proper symbol for either the present or the future. San Francisco should be able to stand proudly alongside the noblest cities of the world. The task of making it that kind of a city is large, but not beyond our capacity.

The key to our future is the Master Plan. During the year the basic work on this document will be completed. It will show what needs to be done as time passes to create a new and better city on this superb site.

The people must understand the purposes and value of the Master Plan. Conferences on it must be held and means found to translate it into reality. Civic leaders must strive for its execution in the same spirit as statesmen will work to secure the peace of the world. This is the challenge to us growing out of the momentous days of April, 1945.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Numerous letters from civic organizations are received and welcomed by the Commission. Typical is the following from the Parkside District Improvement Club:

"Gentlemen:

The excessive and detrimental redivision of established lots into smaller panels, which has occurred with increasing frequency in the Parkside District, was considered at a recent meeting of the Parkside District Improvement Club. This problem has become even more serious in this single-family home district since the introduction of the so-called "Title Six" type of residential buildings.

The area of normal lots in the Parkside-Sunset is 3000 sq. ft. for lots on Avenues, and 2500 sq. ft. for lots on Streets, but the redivision of lots by speculative builders to increase the number of building sites has produced a large number of very small lots, many of them having an area of only 1,437 sq. ft. Such lots can be used only by overcrowding the lot and by increasing the population density of the district.

So far as we can ascertain, San Francisco is the only city that does not protect its residential property owners by regulating minimum lot sizes. Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, Martinez, San Mateo, Redwood City, Palo Alto, San Bruno and many other cities have established minimum lot size of 4000 sq. ft. The F.H.A. standards set a minimum lot size of 4000 sq. ft. for all communities except San Francisco. In the Parkside District there is *no* established minimum lot size. This is a deficiency that should be corrected at the earliest possible time.

To check the trend of excessive redivision of lots and to prevent the injury caused thereby, not only in the Parkside, but also in many other districts in San Francisco. The Parkside District Improvement Club recommends the enactment of adequate regulation of lot sizes.

We trust you will give this your most serious consideration for the betterment of the entire City."

E. LA PLACE, Pres.

Commission Progress

ing), a Central Produce Market, Tideland Reclamation, Completion of the Civic Center and Redevelopment Sites.

LAND USE SURVEY

Particularly important to the Master Plan of San Francisco, to any city so constricted in area, is the use of land. Utilizing the $100,000 WPA survey left incomplete in 1940 as a base, the staff secured the necessary additional information, made corrections, prepared basic data maps and analyzed the area, use and zoning of all San Francisco's blocks. With the comprehensive study as a textbook it is now possible to project the land use pattern toward which San Francisco should strive.

TELEGRAPH HILL HEIGHT LIMITATION

The Commission again moved its meeting to the district affected when requested by the Board of Supervisors to study bills proposing to protect the panoramic view from Telegraph Hill by placing height limitations on buildings. Passage of the bills with minor changes was recommended.

OTHER STUDIES

Studies completed or under consideration include: John McLaren Park boundaries; Circulation, with particular emphasis on the Market Street congestion; a second Bay crossing; Urban Redevelopment Legislation and the Rehabilitation of San Francisco's blighted areas; Completion of the Civic Center; Down town Parking Terminals; Calvary and Laurel Hill Cemetery Development and a Central Produce Market.

WHAT OTHER CITIES ARE DOING

CLEVELAND, OHIO

A vast area of the St. Clair-East 55th Street district of Cleveland was devastated by a gas explosion and fire last October. The Second annual report of their Planning Commission shows the intent to bring about at least one blessing from that chaos in presenting redevelopment plans that call for:

"a small playground, a residential section replatted into wider lots than formerly, a rearranged street pattern to discourage trucking and through traffic, and new zoning to more effectively separate business and industry from homes."

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ROOM 282 • CITY HALL

ZONING MATTERS

APRIL 19, 1945 • 3 P. M.

Northwest corner 37th and Taraval;
Northeast corner 36th and Taraval;
Second Residential to First.

Southeast corner Beaumont Avenue and Lone Mountain Terrace;
First Residential to Second.

Southwest corner Greenwich and Van Ness;
Second Residential to Commercial.

North side of Precita Avenue, between Coso and Shotwell;
Second Residential to Commercial.

Southeast corner of Mission and Oliver;
Commercial to Light Industrial.

SAN FRANCISCO CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

MICHEL D. WEILL, *President* — GEORGE W. JOHNS, *Vice-President*

GARDNER A. DAILEY — MALCOLM MacNAUGHTON — MRS. CHARLES B. PORTER

L. DEMING TILTON, *Director of Planning* — J. ROGER DEAS, *Secretary*

Room 252 City Hall, San Francisco, 2.

CHARTER, Sect. 116, Paragraph 3. *It shall be the duty of the commission to make, maintain and adopt, . . . a master plan of the physical development of the city and county, which plan . . . shall make recommendations for the development of all areas . . . including, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets, viaducts, subways, bridges, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds, parks, squares, aviation fields and other public ways, grants, and open spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property and the removal, relocating, widening, narrowing, vacating, abandonment or extension of any of the foregoing ways, grants, open spaces or buildings.*

Sec. 562, P. L. and R.
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