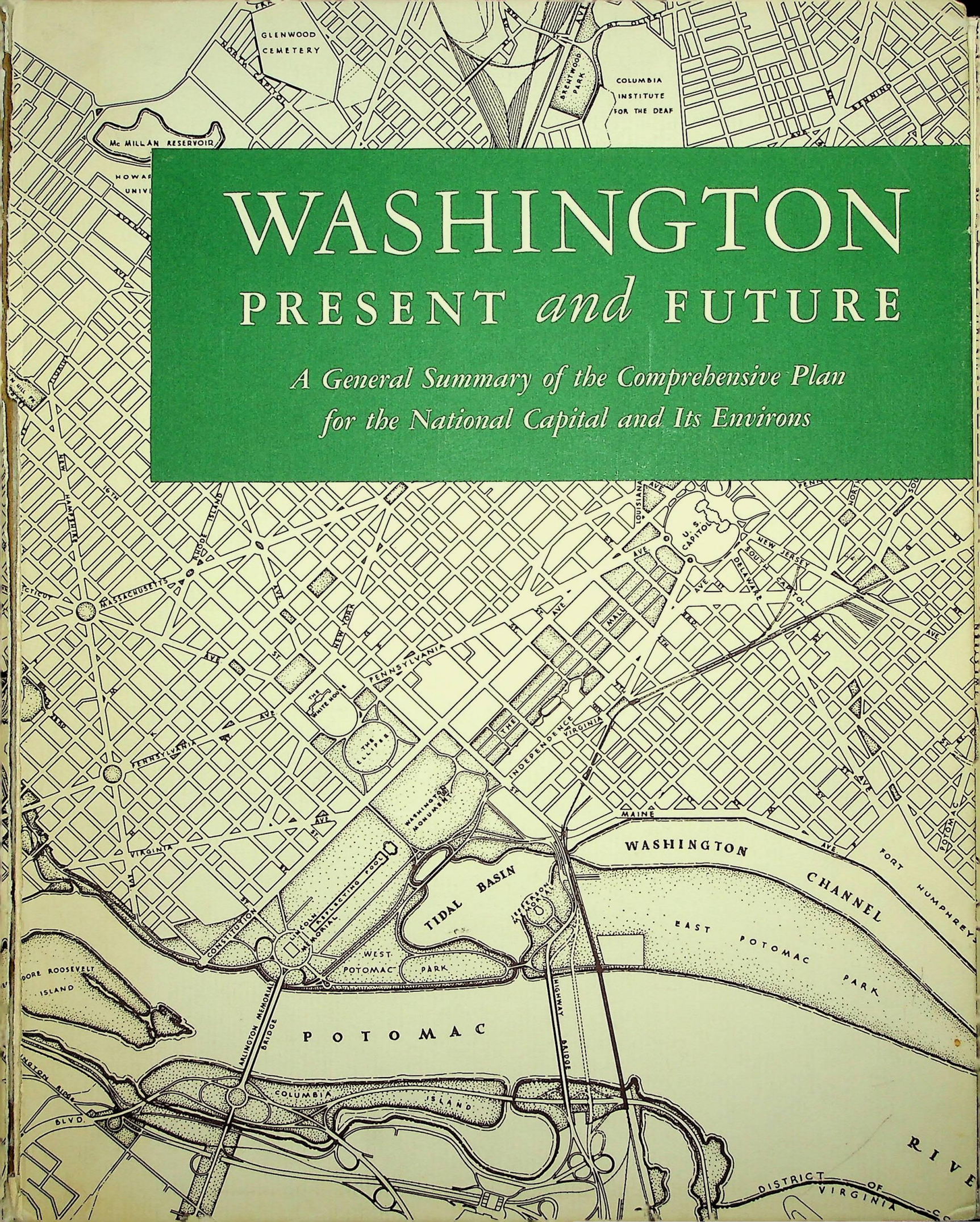

GLENWOOD CEMETERY
ARBUTUS PARK
COLUMBIA INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF
McMILLAN RESERVOIR
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON
PRESENT and FUTURE
A General Summary of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and Its Environs
U.S. CAPITOL
NEW JERSEY AVE
SOUTH CAPITOL
LOUISIANA AVE
MASSACHUSETTS AVE
RHODE ISLAND AVE
NEW YORK AVE
PENNSYLVANIA AVE
THE WHITE HOUSE
THE ELLIPSE
INDEPENDENCE AVE
VIRGINIA
WASHINGTON MONUMENT
MAINE AVE
WASHINGTON CHANNEL
FORT HUMPHREYS
POTOMAC
TIDAL BASIN
JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
LINCOLN MEMORIAL
REFLECTING POOL
CONSTITUTION
WEST POTOMAC PARK
EAST POTOMAC PARK
ISLAND
ARLINGTON MEMORIAL BRIDGE
HIGHWAY BRIDGE
COLUMBIA ISLAND
BLVD
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
VIRGINIA

THE L'ENFANT PLAN OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

PLAN
of the CITY, *intended for the*
Permanent SEAT of the
Government of the UNITED STATES,
Projected agreeable to the direction
of the PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES,
in pursuance of an ACT of CONGRESS, *passed the*
sixteenth day of July, MDCCXC,
establishing the Permanent Seat
on the bank of the Potowmac.

OBSERVATIONS explanatory of the PLAN.

I. The position for the different Grand Edifices and for the several Grand Squares or Areas of different shapes as they are laid down were first determined on the most advantageous ground, commanding the most extensive prospect, and the better to regulate of such improvements as the various intents of the several objects may require.

II. Lines or Avenues, of direct communication, have been devised, to connect the separate and most distant objects with the principal, and to preserve through the whole a reciprocity of sight at the same time Attention has been paid to the passing of their leading Avenues over the most favorable ground for prospect and convenience.

III. North and South lines intersected by others running due East and West, make the distribution of the City into Streets Squares & and their lots have been so contrived, as to meet at certain given points with their divergent Avenues, to assist form on the spaces first determined, the different Squares or Areas; which are all proportioned in magnitude to the number of Avenues leading to them.

Breadth of the Streets.

Every Grand front-work Avenue, and every principal Avenue, such as the communicates from the Presidents house to the Congress house, &c. are 160 feet in breadth, and that divided.

10 feet of pavement on each side		20′
30 feet of gravel walk, planted with trees on each side		60′
80 feet in the middle for Carriage way		80′
	160 Feet.	

The other Streets are of the following dimensions, viz. Feet.
They leading to public buildings or markets, 130′
Others, 110′ 90′

In order to execute the above plan, Mr. Ellicott drove a true Meridional line, by celestial observation which passes through the Area intended for the Congress house, this line he crossed by another due East and West, which passes through the same Area. These lines were accurately measured, and made the bases on which the whole plan was executed. He ran all the lines by a Transit Instrument, and determined the Acute Angles by actual measurement, and left nothing to the uncertainty of the Compass.

REFERENCES.

A. THE equestrian figure of GEORGE WASHINGTON, a Monument voted in 1783 by the late Continental Congress.

B. An historic Column the intended for a Mile or itinerary Column, from whose Station, (a mile from the Federal House) all distances of places through the Continent are to be calculated.

C. A Naval itinerary Column, proposed to be erected to celebrate the first rise of a Navy, and to stand a ready monument to ascertain its progress and Achievements.

D. The Church is intended for National purposes such as public prayer, thanksgivings, funeral Orations &c. and appointed to the great Use of no particular Sect or denomination, but equally open to all. It will be likewise a proper shelter for such Monuments as were voted by the late Continental Congress, for those Heroes who fell in the cause of liberty, and for such others as may hereafter be decreed by the voice of a grateful Nation.

E. Five grand fountains intended with a constant spout of water. N.B. There are within the limits of the City, above 25 good springs of excellent water abundantly supplied in the driest season of the year.

The Squares coloured yellow, being fifteen in number, are proposed to be divided among the several States in the Union, for each of them to improve, or subscribe a sum additional to the value of the land; that purpose, as the improvements round the Squares to be completed in a limited time.

The center of each Square will admit of Statues, Columns, Obelisks, or any other ornaments, such as the different States may chuse to erect, to perpetuate not only the memory of such individuals, whose Counsels, or military Atchievements, were conspicuous in giving Liberty and independence to this Country; but also those whose unfeigned hearts rendered them worthy of general imitation; to excite the youth of succeeding generations to tread in the paths of those Sages so Heroes, whom their Country has thought proper to celebrate.

The situation of these Squares is such, that they are the most advantageously and reciprocally seen from each other, and as equally distributed over the whole City allotted, and connected by spacious Avenues round the ground Federal Improvements, and as contiguous to them, and at the same time as equally distant from each other, as circumstances would admit. The settlements round these Squares must soon become connected.

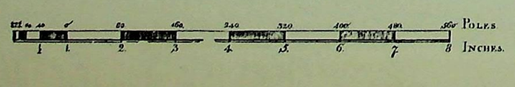
This mode of taking possession of and improving the whole district at first must leave to posterity a grand idea of patriotic interest which permeates it.

These figures coloured reds, are intended for the use of all religious denominations, on which they are to erect places of worships, and are proposed to be allotted to them in the manner as those coloured yellow to the different States in the Union, but no burying grounds will be admitted within the limits of the City, an appropriation being intended for that purpose without.

N.B. There a number of Squares or Areas unappropriated, and in situations proper for Colleges and Academies, and of which every Society when object as National may be accommodated.

Every Road within the City, will stand square on the Streets, and every lot even those on the Acutest Angles must will run fly are with their fronts, which on the most acute Angle will not measure less than 50 feet, and many will be above 140 feet.

SCALE OF POLES.



PART OF VIRGINIA, WITHIN THE FEDERAL DISTRICT.

POTOWMAC RIVER.

EASTERN BRANCH.

PART OF MARYLAND, WITHIN THE FEDERAL DISTRICT.

Pine Creek, whose water, if necessary, may supply the City, being diverted into Jenny White's branch.

Pine Creek.

Perpendicular height of the source of Tiber Creek, above the level of the tide in Eastern Creek ..... F. 236. I. 7. P. 4/8

Perpendicular height of Jenny White's spring branch of the Tiber Creek, above the level of the tide in said Creek.

Tiber Creek.

The water of this Creek is intended to be conveyed on the high ground, where the Congress house stands, and after watering the part of the City, its vicinity will fall from under the rise of that Edifice, and in a cascade of 20 feet in height, and 50 in length in the upper reservoir below, there to run in three falls through the Gardens into the Grand Canal.

The perpendicular height of the ground where the Congress house stands, is above the side of Tiber Creek, 78 feet.

Perpendicular height of the Mill at branch above the side in Tiber Creek ..... F. 115. I. 7. P. 8/8

New Road to Bladensburg.

Road to Frederick Town.

Road to Rock Creek Church and the lower falls of Potowmac.

GEORGE TOWN.

Road to Alexandria.

Road to Marlborough.

Canal through Tiber Creek.

Bridge.

Lat. Congress House, ... 38°. 53′. N.
Long. ..... 0°. 0′.

From the entrance of this River up to the second Bridge, the depth of water is from 5 to 4 fathoms. The deepest all along the shore where Wharfs are marked.

References.

F. Grand Cascade, formed of the Water from the sources of the Tiber.
G. Public walk being a square of 1200 feet, through which carriages may ascend to the upper Square of the Federal house.
H. Grand Avenue, 400 feet in breadth, and about a mile in length, bordered with gardens, ending in a slope from the houses on each side. This Avenue leads to the Monument A, and connects the Congress Garden with the
I. Presidents park, and the,
K. Well improved fields, being a part of the walk from the Presidents house, of about 1800 feet in breadth, and ½ of a Mile in length. Every lot slop coloured red, are Green plots, designates some of the situations which command the most agreeable prospects, and which are the best calculated for spacious houses and gardens, such as may accommodate foreign Ministers, &c.
L. Around this Square, and all along the
M. Avenue from the two bridges to the Federal house, the pavement on each side will pass under an Arched way, under whose cover Shops will be most conveniently and agreeably situated. This Street is 160 feet in breadth, and a mile long.

N.1.

INTERIOR BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D. C.
April 3, 1950.

THE PRESIDENT,
THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

It is my privilege and pleasure to transmit herewith a report of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission entitled "Washington—Present and Future." This, the first and key volume of a series of monographs, is a general summary of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and its environs.

Under the impetus of the District of Columbia Redevelopment Act of 1945 the Commission has reviewed and brought up to date its work on the plan of Washington over the past 25 years. During this period new basic policies have been evolving. Many earlier plans have been wholly or partly realized; still others are now impossible, or no longer valid, due to the speed of growth and the change in needs. This postwar version of the Commission's plan springs from broadened concepts of community living with thought given to the need for wider distribution of centers of Federal employment, making for better living and working conditions.

It is the Commission's hope that the comprehensive plan will be the guide not only for new growth throughout the National Capital metropolitan region, but also for the redevelopment of the blighted areas of the central city. Our democracy should not tolerate existing conditions. While it is impractical to secure official endorsement of scores of Government agencies concerned with different elements of the plan, their views have been sought.

Ensuing monographs will contain detailed recommendations and present the facts and figures which are the basis for the policies and proposals submitted in this summary report. The plan has been prepared with the assistance of Harland Bartholomew and Associates, consultants, and largely while Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant 3d (Retired) was a member and chairman of the Commission.

The work of the Commission is performed primarily under the act of April 30, 1926 (44 Stat. 374). The act of August 2, 1946 (60 Stat. 790) also requires the preparation of a comprehensive plan as a condition precedent to the redevelopment program. This report is being printed with a special appropriation approved August 24, 1949 (Public Law 266).

Respectfully,

William W. Wurster.

WILLIAM W. WURSTER, *Chairman.*

"THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT"
FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.

WASHINGTON
PRESENT *and* FUTURE

A General Summary of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital and Its Environs

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

MONOGRAPH NO. 1 • APRIL 1950

Foreword

THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON,
April 11, 1950.

DEAR MR. WURSTER:

I have long been interested in city planning, especially in the planning of Washington. It should be the best planned city in the world and a Capital befitting the dignity and ideals of a great nation in a family of nations.

As we celebrate the sesquicentennial of our Government's establishment in Washington, we must look forward and give consideration to this 1950 version of the comprehensive plan for the National Capital and its environs. Properly, this plan covers the metropolitan region surrounding the limited boundaries of the District of Columbia. Because jurisdiction is divided between the Congress and the neighboring States of Maryland and Virginia, it is essential to have a guiding plan for development of the area as a whole. Hence, to extend and perfect the plan requires cooperation of a high order.

Plans must be translated into reality through the years ahead. This will require ever closer working relations between planning and developmental agencies to secure desired results. We must avoid piecemeal decisions based largely on pressures of the moment.

In all that we do, however, we must not overlook the fine character inherent in the original plan by neglecting the older areas. Planning for their redevelopment as a part of the expanding community is as essential as planning for new growth.

Very sincerely yours,

Harry Truman

MR. WILLIAM W. WURSTER,
Chairman, National Capital Park and Planning Commission,
Interior Building, Washington, D. C.

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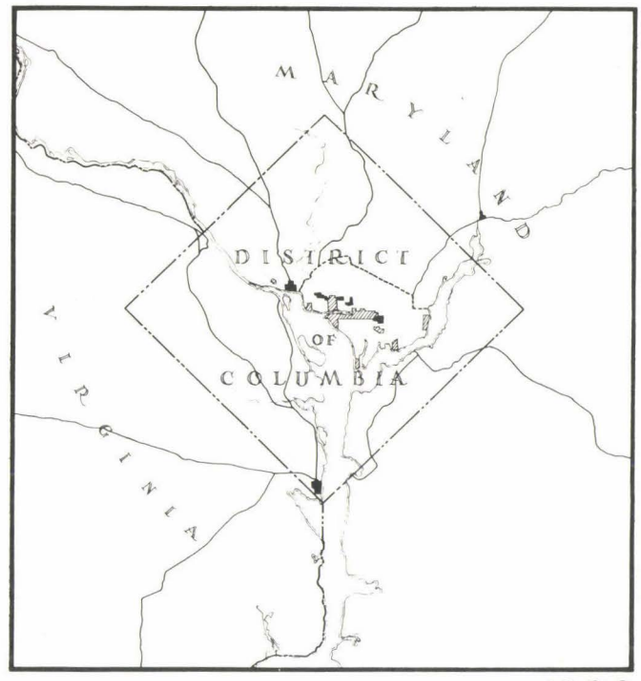
MAPS AND CHARTS



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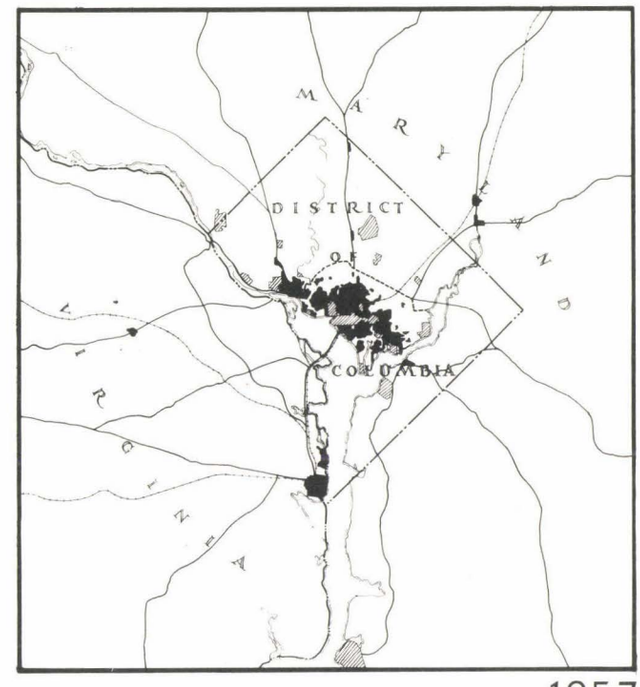

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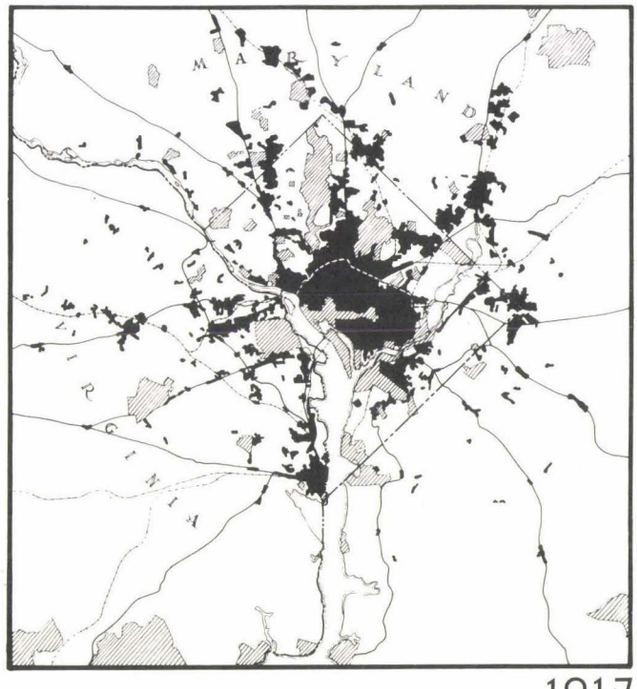
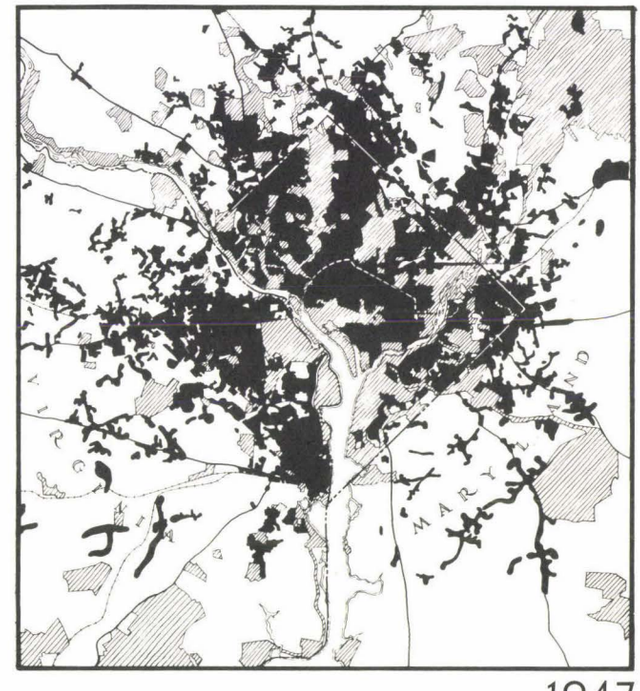


1917



1947

EVOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

■ URBAN DEVELOPMENT

▨ PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC PROPERTY

---- BOUNDARY OF ORIGINAL CITY

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

GRAPHIC SCALE IN MILES

MAP 1

Aims of the Plan

WASHINGTON, THE "SEAT OF GOVERNMENT," should offer a setting for effective conduct of our national and world affairs. For its own people it should be a good place to live. For all the people of the United States it should be an inspiring symbol of their country.

L'Enfant's vision gave the city a good beginning with a sound central framework. Following the Civil War, three decades of uncontrolled growth stalled later extension of his plan in many directions. With the coming of the automobile, more growth surged outward sprawling into new suburbs. Waves of building that followed the depression and World War II have brought Washington to a crucial stage in its growth. (See map 1, p. 4.)

A century after L'Enfant, efforts at city planning were reborn with the "McMillan Commission" and its plan of 1901. Twenty-five years later the National Capital Park and Planning Commission was established and since 1926 has been carrying forward the task of planning ways to improve the city.

The Commission here presents in general summary its newly restudied long-range, comprehensive plan for the District of Columbia and environs. This plan is a practical guide for step-by-step action to correct past mistakes and to build for future needs over the next 30 years.

THESE ARE THE AIMS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

1. To develop a National Capital that will be loved and honored for its eminence among cities—an inspiring symbol, to citizen and visitor, of the dignity and vigor of American democratic government.

2. To preserve the best of the past in city building and experience, joined with leadership in new, sound ways of development.

3. To set the framework for efficient, economical conduct of the work of the Federal Government.

4. To further the general welfare of the 2,000,000 people who will be living in the metropolitan community 30 years hence.

5. To create satisfying and healthful living conditions through the best possible arrangement of uses of land.

6. To encourage a stable, attractive, and profitable central business area.

7. To maintain and restore livability and attractiveness to central, in-town areas; clearing and rebuilding slum areas; and eliminating land overcrowding.

8. To achieve orderly development in outlying sections where the land is still vacant.

9. To move people and goods in and out of the metropolitan region, and from place to place within it, quickly, safely, and economically.

10. To serve the daily needs of the people for parks, active play areas, schools, and other community facilities for health, safety, and convenience.

11. To conserve natural resources for use and enjoyment on the one hand, by utilization well adapted to potentialities; and on the other, by preservation of elements in an unspoiled state.

THESE ARE BASIC FACTORS IN DEVELOPING AND CARRYING OUT THE PLAN:

1. Recognition of Washington's unity with the surrounding area.

2. Need for cooperative attack upon interdependent metropolitan problems by independent local and State governments, the District Government, and Congress.

3. Danger of further overconcentration of Federal employment centers, in terms of traffic congestion and security; need for sound physical growth; wider distribution of administrative establishments in the central area; and for locating other functions farther out.

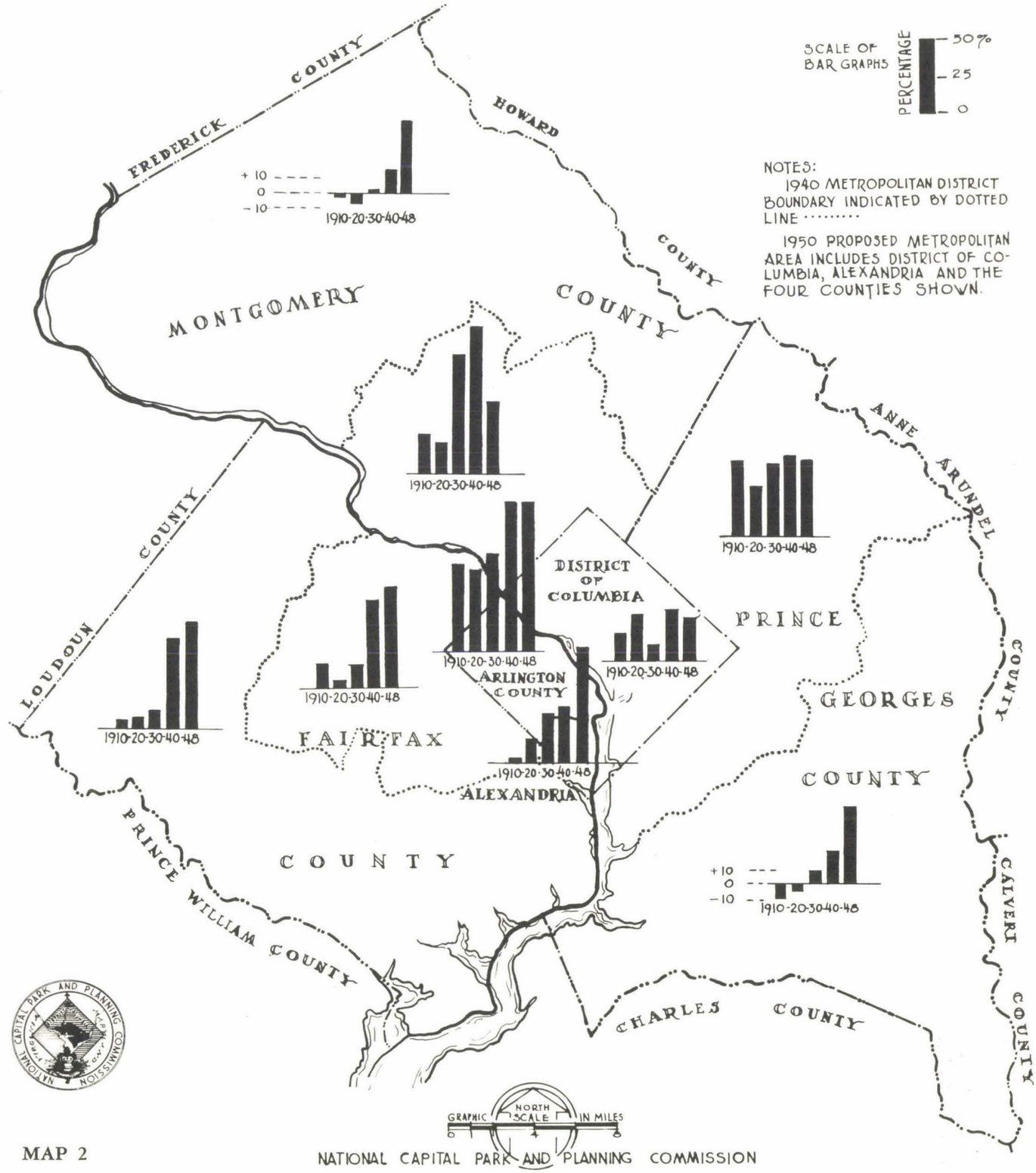
4. Danger of further spread of drab, unorganized urban sprawl, detrimental to social and economic values as well as to beauty and convenience; need for land planning aimed at orderly physical development.

5. Justice of fair sharing in the costs of development by the Federal Government, in view of its predominance in the economic base of the Capital area.

6. Elimination of arbitrary divisions in neighborhood communities based on racial, national or religious distinctions.

POPULATION GROWTH

BY PERCENTAGE OVER PRECEDING CENSUS IN THE 1940 METROPOLITAN DISTRICT AND THE PROPOSED 1950 METROPOLITAN AREA AS DEFINED BY THE U. S. CENSUS BUREAU



MAP 2

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The Comprehensive Plan

THE PLAN AS A GUIDE

THERE IS HERE PRESENTED for the National Capital a comprehensive plan—a consistent vision to coordinate and guide all that can be done to realize the aims just outlined, revising and bringing up to date earlier plans for the future. It covers not only the District of Columbia, but also the metropolitan area as a whole.

There have been many plans for Washington since L'Enfant's noble concept of 1791. Most of these later plans have dealt separately with unrelated elements, beginning with the highway plan of 1898, followed by the park plan of 1901, the zoning plan of 1920, a new park plan in 1924, and a transportation plan in 1944. Not until the present National Capital Park and Planning Commission was formed in 1926 was the basis laid for a comprehensive approach to planning. It was in 1930 that the new commission was able to develop and present, in outline, the basic elements of a comprehensive regional plan.

Though the sights of the Commission then were raised high, the events that followed expansion of Federal activities in 1933 soon showed that the task of planning the National Capital must be not only a continuing one but one requiring still higher sights. In the 15 years spanning the prewar, wartime, and postwar periods to the present, all the principal features of the 1930 plans have been either realized, partly realized, modified or made impossible of realization. Besides outgrowing the earlier plans, new needs have developed that call for planning on a scale and scope that could not have been foreseen in the early thirties. To these needs the Commission has directed its energies.

The comprehensive plan covers all basic elements that, added together, determine what kind of community this shall be: The use of land; government establishments; transportation; housing and slum clearance; population distribution and density; and community services. The plan includes recommendations on major tools that can be used to build toward reality: Zoning, subdivision control, urban redevelopment, and programs of public land purchase and construction.

Such a plan is not just a series of projects that can be listed. The heart of the concept is to tie many different kinds of special-purpose plans together, so that roads fit with residential areas, centers of employment with transit facilities, school service boundaries with traffic barriers; so that all parts fit into their places without conflict, to promote order, convenience, economy and livability. Its main features are shown on the fold maps inside the back cover and in the pages that follow.

The plan is not a blueprint, but a general design. Such a guide is an essential first step, to be followed immediately by a number of more specific plans. It must be reviewed periodically, to adjust its sights to new times and conditions. Although it must be firm enough to serve as a guide on which people can rely, it must not be a permanent strait-jacket.

General as they are, the things the plan proposes are practical. They are based on years of study of the needs of the community. Many agencies, many experts have contributed their thought.

The plan has been formally adopted by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, as directed in several acts of Congress. The plan does not have the force of law, however. It makes recommendations and proposals in many fields, over a large area. The responsibility for action still rests on governmental agencies that have authority over some part or activity which together make up the metropolitan community.

In the end, accepting and building this plan is up to the people of the area and to Congress. Theirs is the final authority, and also the immediate responsibility. The plan is not just a vision for the distant future. It is the basis for a program, a schedule of action, starting now. Action on the plan must be continuing, from this year forward, if its objectives are to be realized within the next 30-year period.

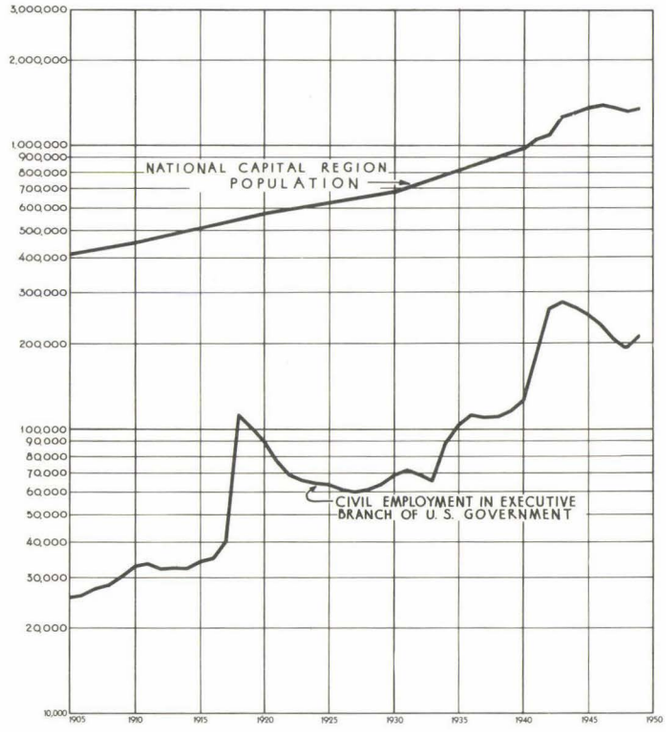
PEOPLE AND THEIR WORK

Trends and Forecasts

People set the scale of the comprehensive plan. The National Capital belongs to the whole country. But Washington is a city, and like any other it must meet the needs of the people who live and work here. Basic to the planning of Washington's future is an estimate of the number of people for whom to provide.

The planning problems of today are the direct result of rapid, unexpected population growth in the past. After World War I, new growth extended the National Capital into Maryland and Virginia. Since 1920, and especially since World War II, the metropolitan region outside the District has grown faster than the District itself. This trend will surely continue, because so little vacant land remains in the District, and because Federal activities must increasingly be located outward.

In mid-1948, metropolitan Washington had 1,400,000 people—860,000 inside the District and 540,000 outside.



POPULATION GROWTH AND GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

CHART 1

This was a growth of 435,000 since 1940—200,000 (a 30-percent increase) inside the District and 235,000 (a 77-percent increase) outside, for an average regional increase of 45 percent. In other words, by 1948 almost two-fifths of the population in the metropolitan area were living outside the District. (See map 2, p. 6.) Even with the rapid growth in nearby Maryland and Virginia, there has been no loss of population in the center. People have continued to fill up old and congested parts of Washington, in spite of bad conditions.

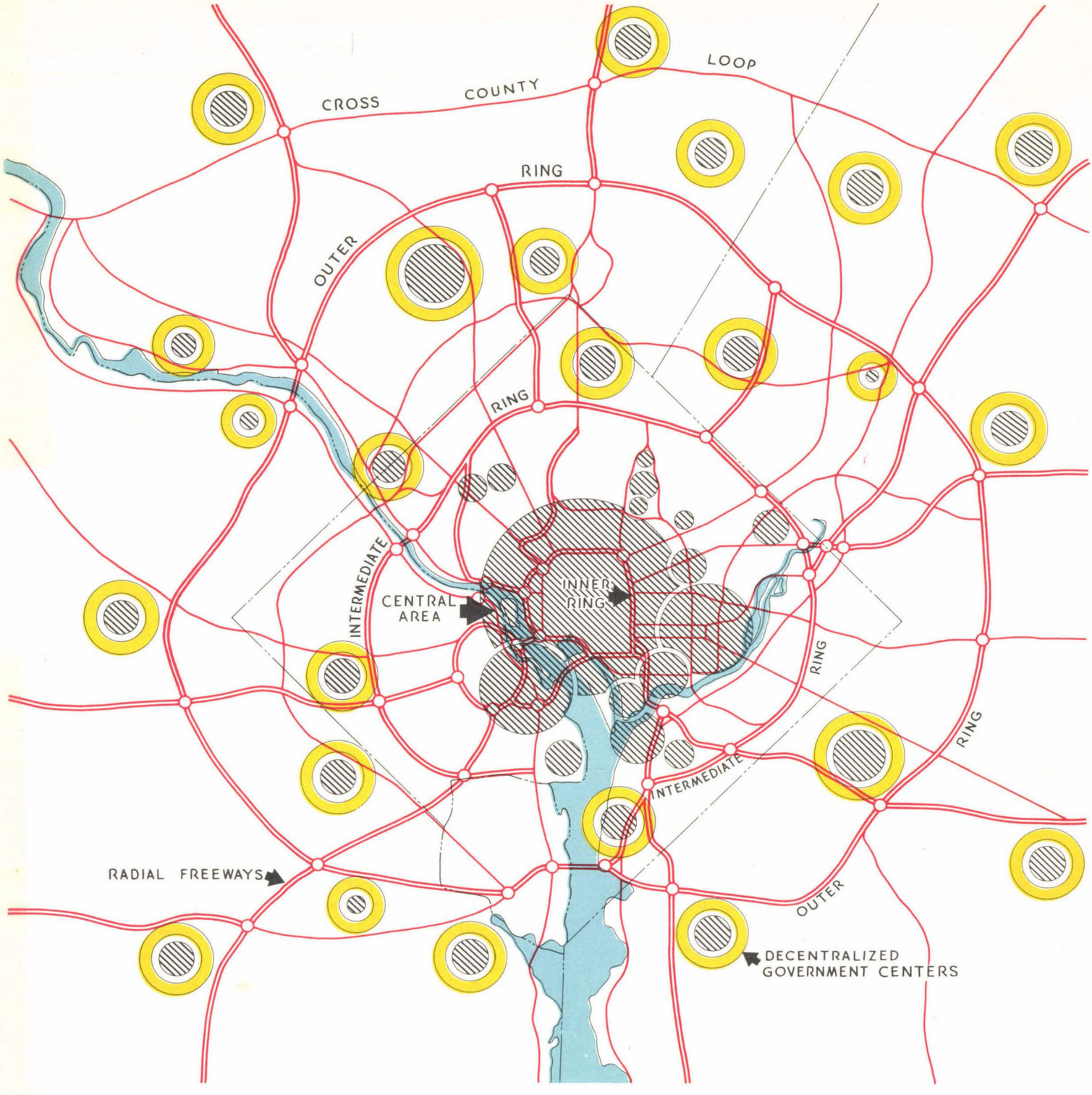
The city's growth in numbers has been due far more to people moving into the region, as employment opened up, than to natural increase. Past growth has always been directly affected by expansion of Federal activities. Far more than in an ordinary city, future growth will be affected by unpredictable events—international developments, national economic shifts, changes in Government policy.

Best judgment available to the Commission, based on expected employment trends, forecasts a 1980 population for the Washington metropolitan region of 2,000,000. The District of Columbia itself should level off at about 1,000,000, for this is as large a number as the District can provide for in the land area available, at density standards that will assure good living conditions. It is also as much growth as can be absorbed without drastically changing the character of many parts of the community, and requiring vast public expenditures to increase the capacity of schools, water and sewer lines, and other community services and utilities.

This expected growth for the region as a whole will require vast new city building. There must be homes for 600,000 more people—about one new dwelling for every two that exist today. In the suburbs, land area occupied by residences will probably be twice what it is now. New suburban business centers, schools, playgrounds, and other community services will be needed throughout the region.

Jobs and the Plan

In the Washington area, the Federal Government is by far the biggest employer, with a third of all employees. This corresponds to the proportion of employees in manufacturing industries in other cities. Taking the place of industry in other cities, Government



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

PATTERN OF DECENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The pattern should be based upon a balanced distribution through the National Capital Region. The centers should be placed so as to be accessible to a planned system of expressways, both radial and circumferential in function. Certain of these centers would form the nucleus for satellite communities.

MAP 3

employment makes up 90 percent of all basic jobs (leaving out service jobs like retail trade, transportation, laundry work, and other occupations that could not exist without the people in basic jobs as customers). Since the region is unique in its lack of large-scale manufacturing, its economy is almost wholly dependent on Government activity. Each added Federal employee means 5 to 7 additional people in the metropolitan region—his family, and the family of the service workers whose jobs he creates by being a new customer.

Average family-unit size tends to be no smaller than in other cities. A larger proportion of the total population is employed—47 percent in the District, as against an average of 37 percent in the 17 largest American cities. This has its effect on housing needs and on buying habits and requirements. It does not mean that all new housing should be built to fit the average family, since many are larger and many smaller.

The present pattern of job locations is highly concentrated. In 1947, 84 percent of *all* jobs were inside the District, 9 percent in Virginia, and 7 percent in Maryland. This means that, while practically all those living in the District work there too, most of those living in Maryland and Virginia must travel considerable distances to jobs in the District. (See map 4, p. 11.)

This lack of balance and excessive distances between home and work is a tremendous force for traffic congestion, overloading transit facilities, and requiring great expense for new bridges and superhighways. There should be a definite policy to locate as many as possible of the required new employment places away from the center, and actually to remove most of the existing temporary workplaces. Since the Federal Government itself is the major employer, it holds the key to the solution of this problem.

The Planning Commission's conclusions with respect to the location of Federal employees in the executive establishment of the Government are that—

(*a*) The number of employees west of the Capitol should not exceed present levels of about 140,000.

(*b*) Temporary structures should be removed and leased space in the business district reduced.

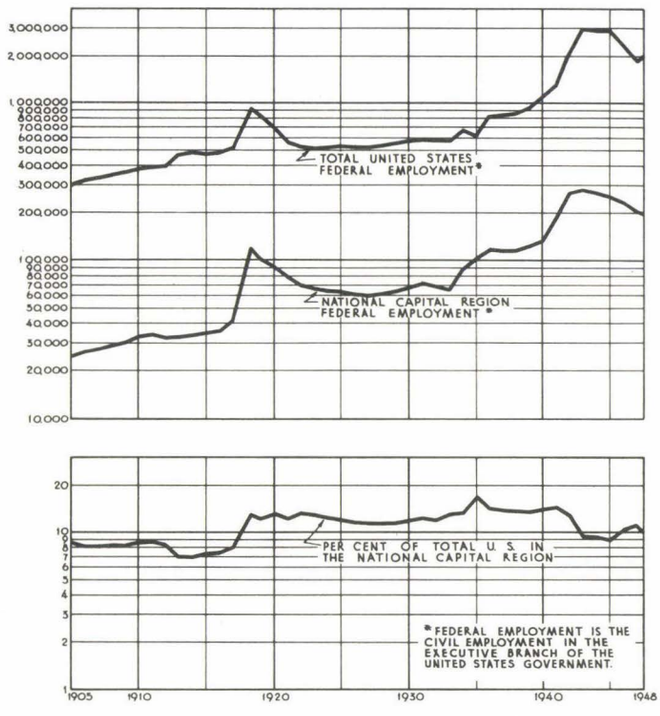
(*c*) Any replacement by permanent structures for functions justifying central locations should be on approved sites essential to complete plan commitments, such as selected sites along East Capitol Street.

(*d*) Whenever consistent with the efficient functioning of an agency or activity, it should be located or relocated outside in one of three general zones: Outlying parts of the District of Columbia, such as the vicinity of the planned intermediate ring road; the edge of present urban development, 10 to 15 miles from the White House; at distances of 50 miles, more or less, for industrial, experimental, or confidential activities.

(*e*) Each proper Federal authority, when a new activity, an expansion, or a move is expected, should decide its proper placement in collaboration with and with the approval of the Planning Commission.

(*f*) As a general policy, basic employment centers should be distributed throughout the metropolitan area in balance with existing and potential residential areas and transport facilities. The centers should be in line not only with standards of public economy, public efficiency, and private convenience, but also with present-day principles of national defense.

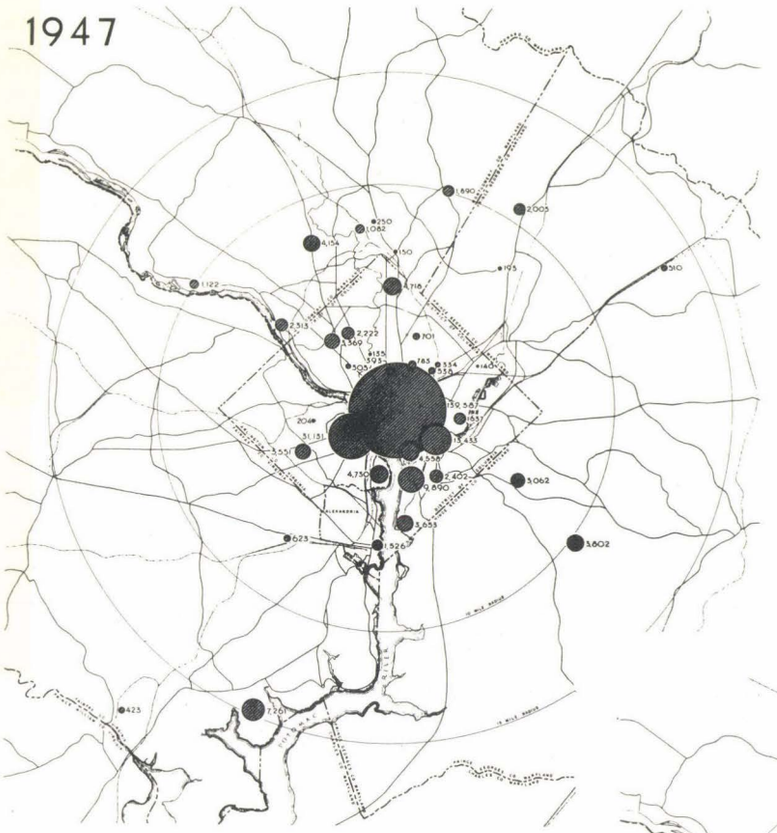
The comprehensive plan is based on the assumption that these policies on location of Federal employment will be followed. Map 3 on page 9 shows diagrammatically the type of balanced distribution that is recommended. The soundness of the rest of the plan depends on this new balance of work places.



FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT*
UNITED STATES—NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

CHART 2

1947



DECEMBER 31, 1947

● 5,000 EMPLOYEES

● 10,000 EMPLOYEES

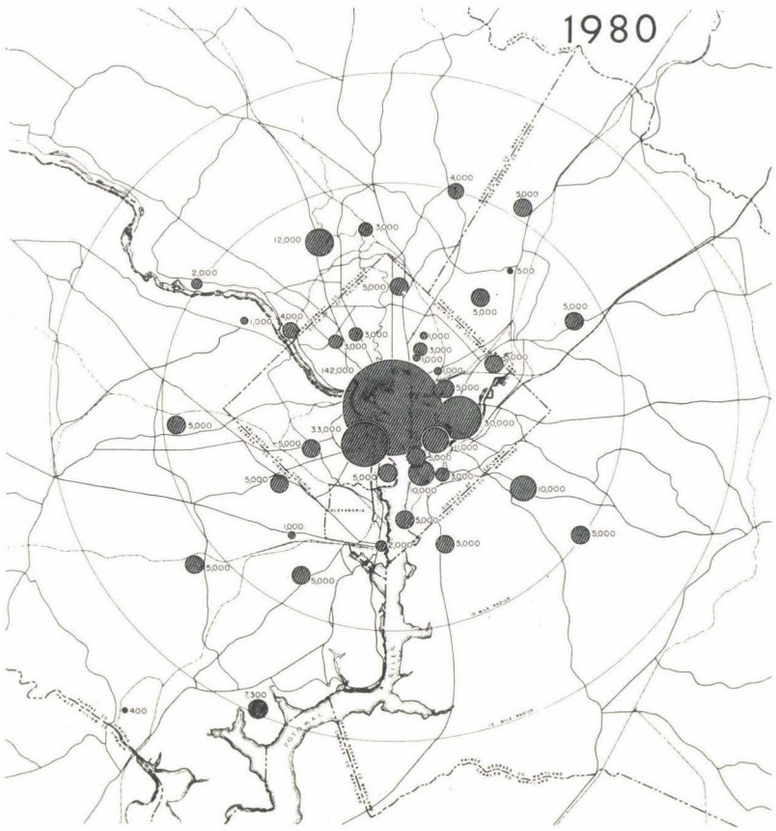
AREA OF CIRCLES INDICATES NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT, INCLUDING MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DISTRICT GOVERNMENT, COMPRISES 268,000 OF WHICH 8,400 IN SCATTERED LOCATIONS ARE NOT SHOWN

SCALE OF MILES

2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

1980



PROPOSED 1980 DISTRIBUTION

● 5,000 EMPLOYEES

● 10,000 EMPLOYEES

AREA OF CIRCLES INDICATES NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT, INCLUDING MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DISTRICT GOVERNMENT, COMPRISES 372,000 OF WHICH 3,800 IN SCATTERED LOCATIONS ARE NOT SHOWN

SCALE OF MILES

2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

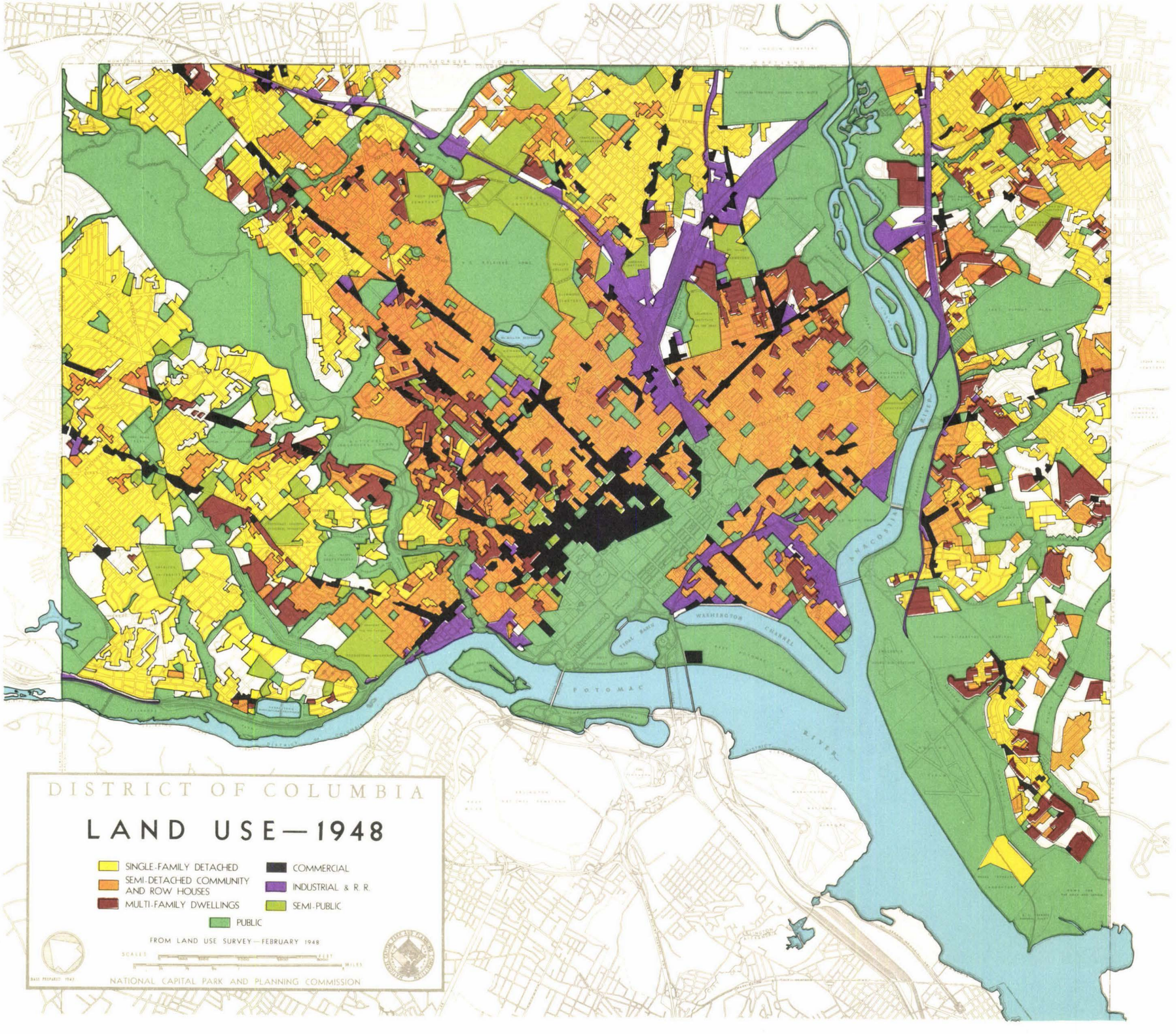
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LOCATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

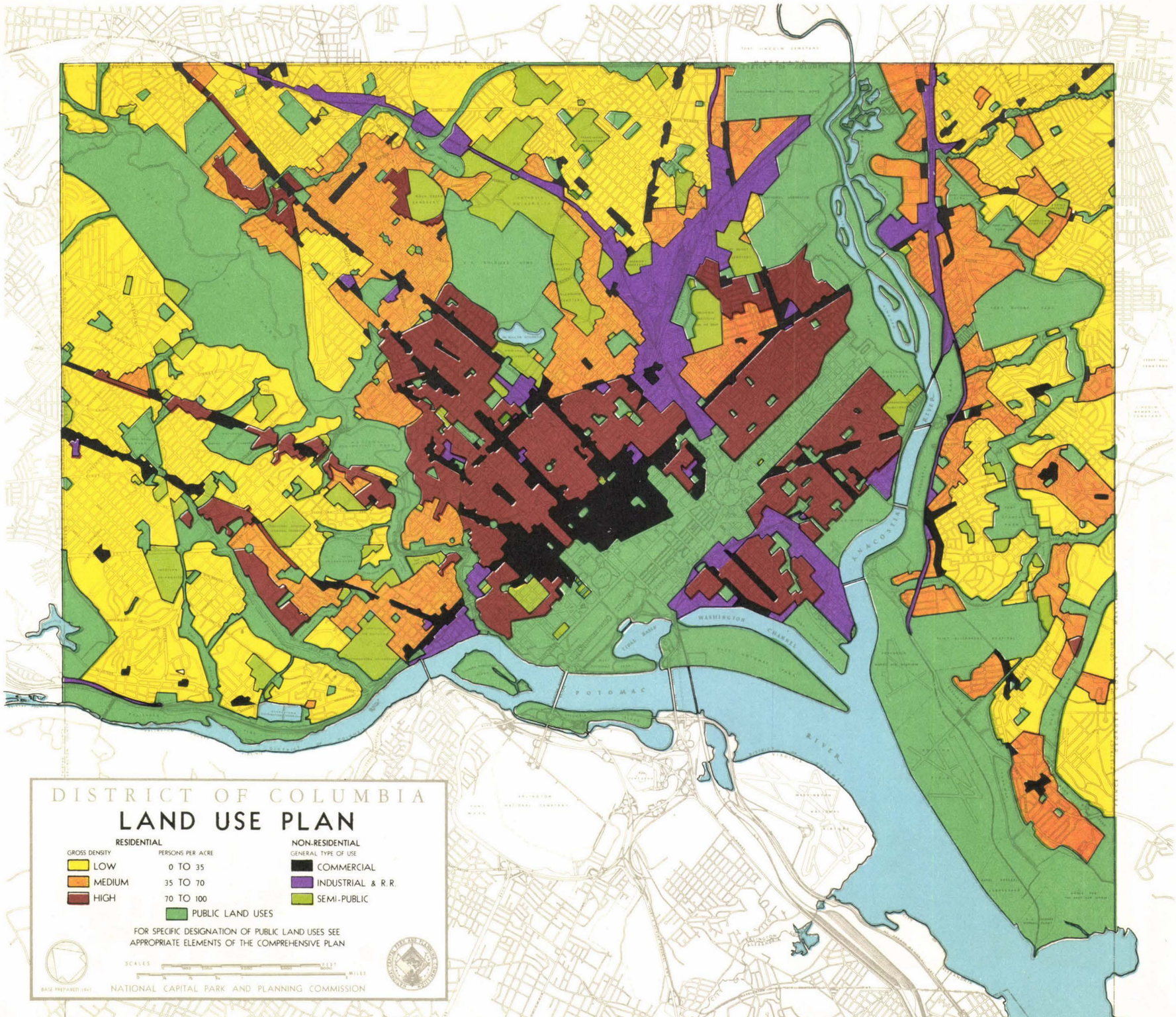
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 4

MAP 5


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LAND USE—1948
SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED
SEMI-DETACHED COMMUNITY AND ROW HOUSES
MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS
COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL & R. R.
SEMI-PUBLIC
PUBLIC
FROM LAND USE SURVEY—FEBRUARY 1948
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
POTOMAC
RIVER
WASHINGTON CHANNEL
ANACOSTIA

MAP 6


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LAND USE PLAN
RESIDENTIAL
GROSS DENSITY
PERSONS PER ACRE
LOW
0 TO 35
MEDIUM
35 TO 70
HIGH
70 TO 100
PUBLIC LAND USES
NON-RESIDENTIAL
GENERAL TYPE OF USE
COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL & R.R.
SEMI-PUBLIC
FOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION OF PUBLIC LAND USES SEE
APPROPRIATE ELEMENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
SCALES
FEET
MILES
BASE PREPARED 1941
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
POTOMAC
RIVER
WASHINGTON
CHANNEL
ANACOSTIA

LAND IN USE

Present Patterns

The existing arrangement of areas for living, working, shopping, and other urban activities shows what kind of city Washington is, and sets the stage for what can be done to improve it. The maps of General Uses of Land, 1948 (No. 7 on p. 16) and District of Columbia Land Use, 1948 (No. 5 on p. 12) show how parts of the metropolitan region are now arranged. These maps also show how much of the pattern is already fixed, and set limits to the changes that can be planned for with reasonable expectation of realization, either through development of new areas or through redevelopment of obsolete areas. The summary of existing uses of land in the District is given in table 1, page 14.

By reason of its function as the Nation's capital, Washington has open space in Federal and institutional uses not found in other cities. Generally, these holdings are assets to the community and valuable land reserves. Land in general community use, however, is comparable with other cities.

A place to earn a living is the first need for city people. In the District, only 5 percent of the total land area is used for business, industry, and railroads. Since Federal activities are Washington's basic industry, the location and arrangement of Federal holdings are the controlling element in the plan for the District. However, only 336 acres, less than 1 percent of the area of the District, is devoted to Federal office buildings and grounds where most of the people are employed daily.

Shopping and private business take up less land than in the average city. The central business district is not quite 2 percent of the *taxable* area of the District; it pays, however, 23 percent of the real estate taxes.

Places to live are the parts of the city that are of direct concern to the greatest number of people. There is a separate housing section of the plan presented on page 21. As a land use, residence takes up a quarter of the District's developed area. Less than average amount of land is used for detached one-family houses, and more for apartments, flats, and row dwellings.

Parks offset in certain respects the higher densities of residential squares. Parks and areas that are of park-like character provide wedges of open space in the city for recreation and for a touch with nature. Property in semipublic and institutional use (1,866 acres), and schools and other functional uses serving the community (1,697 acres) represent less than 10 percent of the total area. Parks represent the major part of public land in community use. Parks and areas used as parks amount to 8,155 acres. (See map 20, p. 40.)

The District of Columbia has been chosen as the site for hundreds of private institutions. The land they occupy is no larger than in other cities. (Studies of land use in 11 cities over 150,000 population show 9.87 percent as the average amount of developed land used for public and semipublic purposes, the lowest figure being 5.6 percent, the highest 15.8 percent.)

Another segment of the total District area is used for streets—25 percent of the total—surprisingly large when they are thought of as lines on a map. It is not, however, out of line with street area in other cities.

Washington's undeveloped vacant land is only about one-tenth of the District's area. This provides very little leeway. (Even fully developed parts of a city usually leave about 5 percent of the area vacant.) This small amount of empty private buildable land is the reason why most new growth in the future must be outside the District, in suburban territory where most of the land is still vacant. (See map 9, p. 19.)

It is not merely *how much* land is used that is important, but also *how well* it is used. Here Washington has its problems, like all other older cities. In many

Table 1.—Existing Land Use, District of Columbia

Use Jan. 1, 1948	Total land area		Total developed area (percent)
	Acres	Percent	
Residence, of all types	8,890	22.4	25.2
Commerce, industry, and railroads	2,028	5.1	5.8
Public property in Federal use	3,963	10.0	11.2
Public property in community use	8,740	22.0	24.7
Tax exempt private and semipublic property	1,866	5.0	5.3
Streets and alleys	9,816	24.5	27.8
Total developed area	35,303	89.0	100.0
Vacant land	4,360	11.0	.....
Total land area	39,663	100.0	.....
River area	4,297	.....	.....
Total area—District of Columbia	43,960	.....	.....

sections, different types of dwellings are mixed together in a hit-or-miss way. A balance among kinds of dwellings is good, but exploitation of land by a few irresponsible profiteers is not. Often big apartments have been built in single-family neighborhoods, robbing their neighbors of light and air, crowding local streets with cars, and interfering with good living in the houses. A great many apartments have been built for too many families on too small lots, creating excessive densities.

Stores and shops have been scattered among older residence areas in a likewise harmful way. They are often strung out along main streets, instead of being concentrated in definite centers where better merchandising is combined with automobile parking and other customer convenience, and neighborhood protection. Some land areas better suited to commerce or industry have been built up with houses.

The effect of such unplanned growth is a wasteful disorder, where no type of land use does its job really well. The results include overcrowding, poor living conditions, unprofitable business, reduced property values, and lower tax income.

Land Use Plans

For the future, the goal is gradually to sort out conflicting uses that do not fit together, and to establish sound land uses in the older areas; and in the new areas, to plan in advance for healthy new growth.

Regional proposals are shown on the fold map inside the back cover. More detail for the District of Columbia is given on map 6, page 13. These recommend in general terms the best arrangement for the different land uses that can be worked toward during the next 30 years. The plan is more general in the suburban territory where this Commission has cooperative responsibilities, advisory to local authorities. Inside the District, the plan is more specific.

The National Capital is its own reason for being; industrial development is not needed to support its economy, nor desirable in this setting. Since the Washington region is not especially well located in relation to raw materials or labor forces, the plan proposes no major industrial growth. Set aside for factories is only enough area for service industries.

Major business centers are planned in relation to major streets and transit, taking advantage of decentralized locations made possible by new arteries of transportation, to relieve overconcentration downtown. Each major commercial center, including downtown, will have enough land area to make room for buildings needed and for car parking in addition. Determination of local neighborhood centers requires more detailed, localized planning.

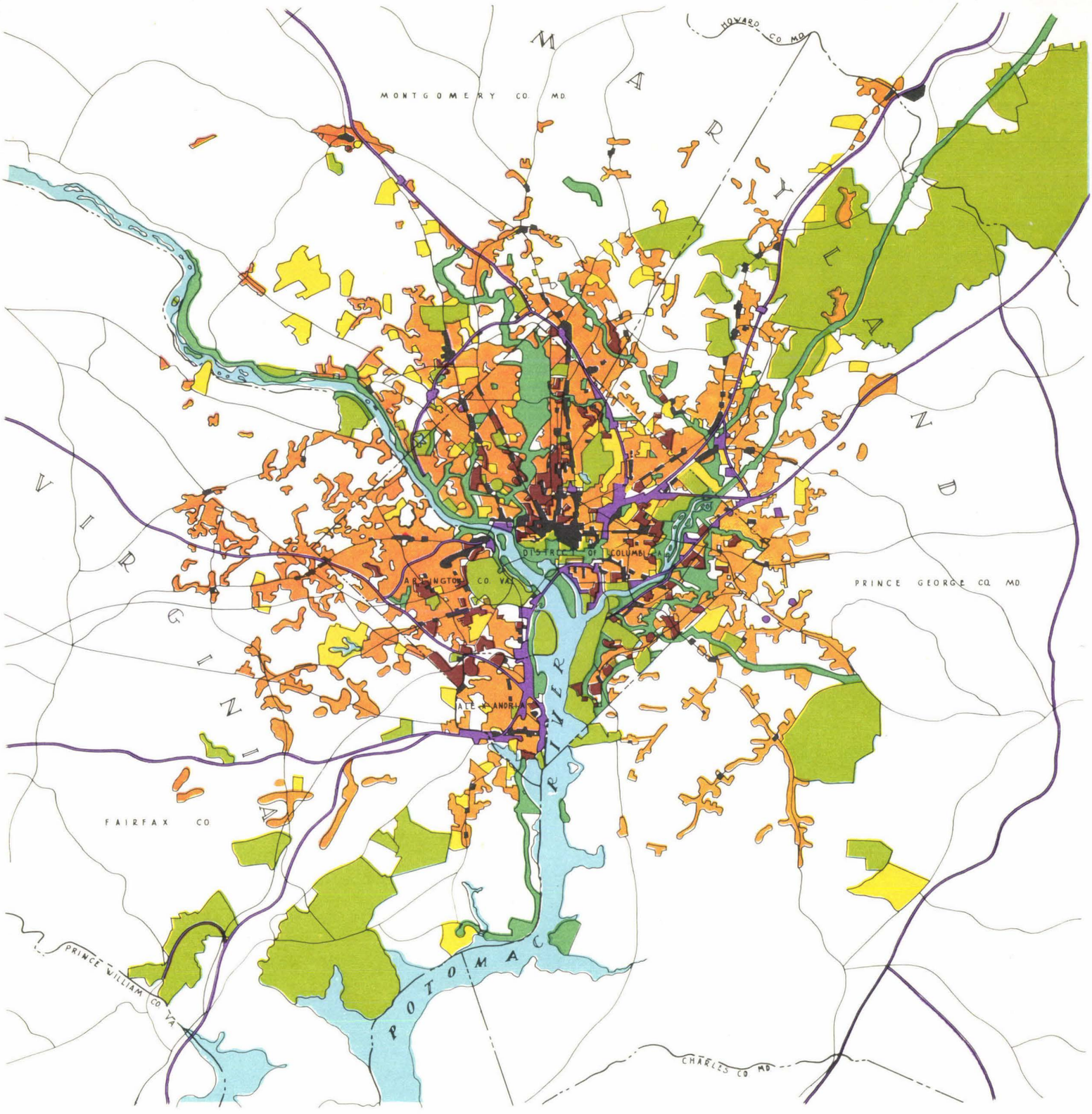
Historic sites, stream valleys, river shores, or wooded hillsides of natural beauty are kept as permanent open space. So, too, are lands too steep, too rocky, or too low for economical development. Planned for open types of use are lands in outer areas most suitable for farming or forestation, both in order to make use of valuable natural soil resources and to preserve rural open spaces between urbanized communities.

Residental areas are planned, in the older city and in new sections, only where it is realistic to expect the creation or preservation of neighborhood conditions that will make for good living. In addition to protection from nuisance types of factories and stores, residential areas need enough people to support schools, playgrounds, and community services, and enough space for uncrowded living, for sunlight and clean air. They need, too, protection from the noises, odors, and dangers of through traffic.

Good neighborhoods do not need to be all single-family houses, or all identically designed garden apartments, or all the same rental range, or all the same kind of people. A balance of housing types and a range of social and economic levels is necessary to a healthy community where people can live in an American way.

In rural areas not within reach of water and sewer lines, residence must be of low density, with lots big enough to have water supply (wells) and septic tanks on the same lot. Depending on the soil, they may take an acre or more per family. In suburban areas where public water supply and sewage disposal can be justified economically, medium densities make sense. In areas already built up and established with utilities and with transportation and services already in use, higher densities may have to be accepted. Unless a district is so old and worn out that it must be cleared and rebuilt, the houses and apartments now there set the pattern for years.

Within the District of Columbia, the plan follows these general principles, but is more detailed as to densities. In the outer parts of the District moderate densities are recommended—up to 35 persons per gross acre. ("Gross acre" includes not only house lots but also streets, local stores, schools, playgrounds, churches and the like.) Typical blocks in such an area would



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

GENERAL USES OF LAND—1948

- SINGLE FAMILY
- MULTI-FAMILY
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL & R. R.
- PARK AND RECREATION
- OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY
- SEMI-PUBLIC PROPERTY
- VACANT LAND

BASE PREPARED 1948

SCALES 1/30000 1" = 10000 20000 30000 FEET
0 2 4 6 8 10 MILES

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 7

have single-family detached houses on lots 50 by 100 feet or larger, with some low density apartments in each neighborhood. The plan would expect 260,000 of the District's 1,000,000 people to be living in this kind of area in 1980, on 54 percent of that portion of the District's area planned for general residential use.

Medium densities are proposed for 25 percent of the residential area, where 275,000 people are expected to be living with between 35 and 70 persons per gross acre. These would be areas of row houses and garden apartments, with some single and double houses.

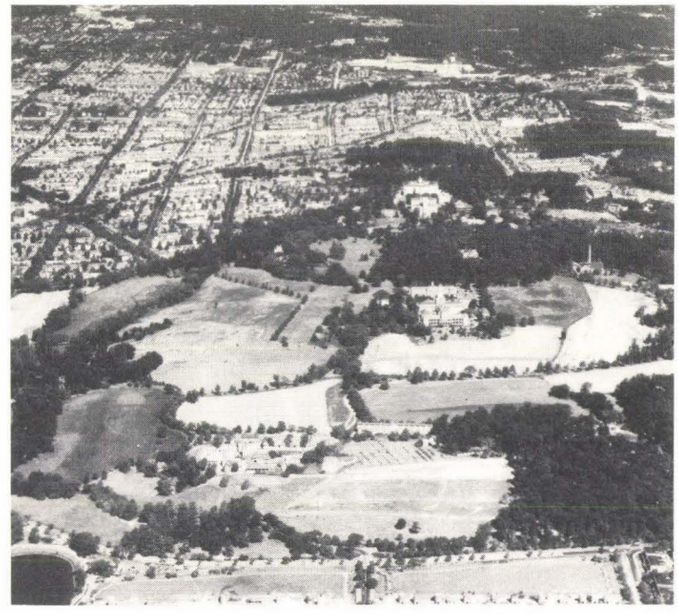
Higher densities are accepted for 21 percent of the residential area, housing 365,000 people, with 70 to 100 persons per gross acre. Here the typical dwelling would be in an apartment, with some of the small efficiency type, some of the garden type, and most in buildings not quite as open as the so-called garden apartments, but by no means as congested as what most people think of as typical city apartments. The maximum density in this high density area would not allow as crowded living conditions, or buildings as close together with so little grass and trees, as the average prewar Washington apartment.

The remaining 100,000 people would be housed at various densities in business or other nonresidential areas. This would include apartment hotels and other dwellings downtown, and houses and apartments within the fringe of local business centers.

The land use plan, especially in the suburban areas, is meant to encourage the building up of well-defined urban and suburban residential communities, well-rounded socially, and including places for employment and facilities for service and civic life. The past continuous outward spread of house building, unbroken by any large open spaces, should be checked and discouraged, so that no home area is too far away from the country and each separate community is small enough for people to know each other and take part in civic affairs. This will require more detailed land use planning than as yet undertaken.

The other main urban land use is for the various public purposes. Plans for schools, parks, and recreation areas are discussed separately, on pages 34 and 39. Washington has, in addition to the buildings of the Federal Government, a number of public institutions with great land areas. The institutions themselves may no longer have any real reason to remain inside the District.

A special board, created by Congress, is needed to determine policies and make recommendations in collaboration with the Planning Commission, as to whether each institution should stay, move out, or reduce its holdings, and whether new uses should be made of the land.



FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.

U. S. SOLDIERS' HOME

The Commission, however, recommends certain changes at once. The National Training School for Boys should be moved. The Dalecarlia Reservation should be reserved for uses related to District water supply and its protection. The United States Soldiers' Home grounds might well be confined to a smaller area, permitting other appropriate public uses that would retain open-space character. Among the uses proposed by the Commission are thoroughfare extensions and land for recreation and local park needs.

This generalized land use plan suggests a basic lay-out for future development that is possible, practical, and better than the city of today.

Zoning

It is useless to draw a plan that has no machinery for bringing it into reality. Some key parts of the land use plan can be put into effect by acts of the Federal Government. But the main land areas being planned for are in private ownership, and will be developed privately for private use. Here, the plan can be effected only by persuasion, or by regulation and control.

Zoning is the established American tool for the mutually protective control of private land use and population density. (Urban redevelopment, more fully discussed on a later page, is emerging as a new tool for rearranging land uses according to the plan in certain specialized areas.) The District of Columbia and planning jurisdictions of the suburban territory are covered by zoning regulations. In their present form, with exception of the Prince Georges County ordinance and prospective new ordinances in Montgomery and Arlington Counties, the zoning helps very little in guiding growth toward the newly conceived patterns pointed out by the comprehensive plan.

The text of the zoning regulations of the District of Columbia should be completely overhauled and modernized. The zoning map should be correspondingly changed and the present separate use, height, and area districts combined on a single map. This will take still more detailed planning, area by area, for each community in the city, within the framework of this general land use plan. Present zoning is far out of line, both with existing conditions and with objectives of the plan. For example, only half as much land is now zoned for detached houses as is used for this purpose, and only a quarter as much for row houses. On the other hand, four times as much land is zoned for apartments as is in apartment use. Many areas that are and ought to be of low density are blanketed into apartment zones that allow incompatible buildings. The placement and amount of business zones is out of line even further.

STREET TREES IN WASHINGTON. *Such scenes give beauty to otherwise drab residential streets.*

A more basic weakness in the present zoning is the lack of density regulations. With the allowable bulk of buildings limited only by present regulations of height and yard space, 3,670,000 people now could be legally housed in Washington. In addition to providing for nearly four times as many people as the city will have, this allows densities far more crowded than are healthy or practical. Unless corrected such zoning would make possible excessive traffic loads on the streets and crippling burdens on school, playground, and utility services. Unpredictable public costs would arise to increase the capacity of facilities built to serve present lower densities.

The Commission recommends revising Washington's zoning map and modernizing the regulations to:

(1) Control population density according to the limits proposed in the plan in order to determine the maximum number of families that can be provided for within a neighborhood.

(2) Require better standards for off-street parking in residential districts, and off-street loading in business and industrial districts.

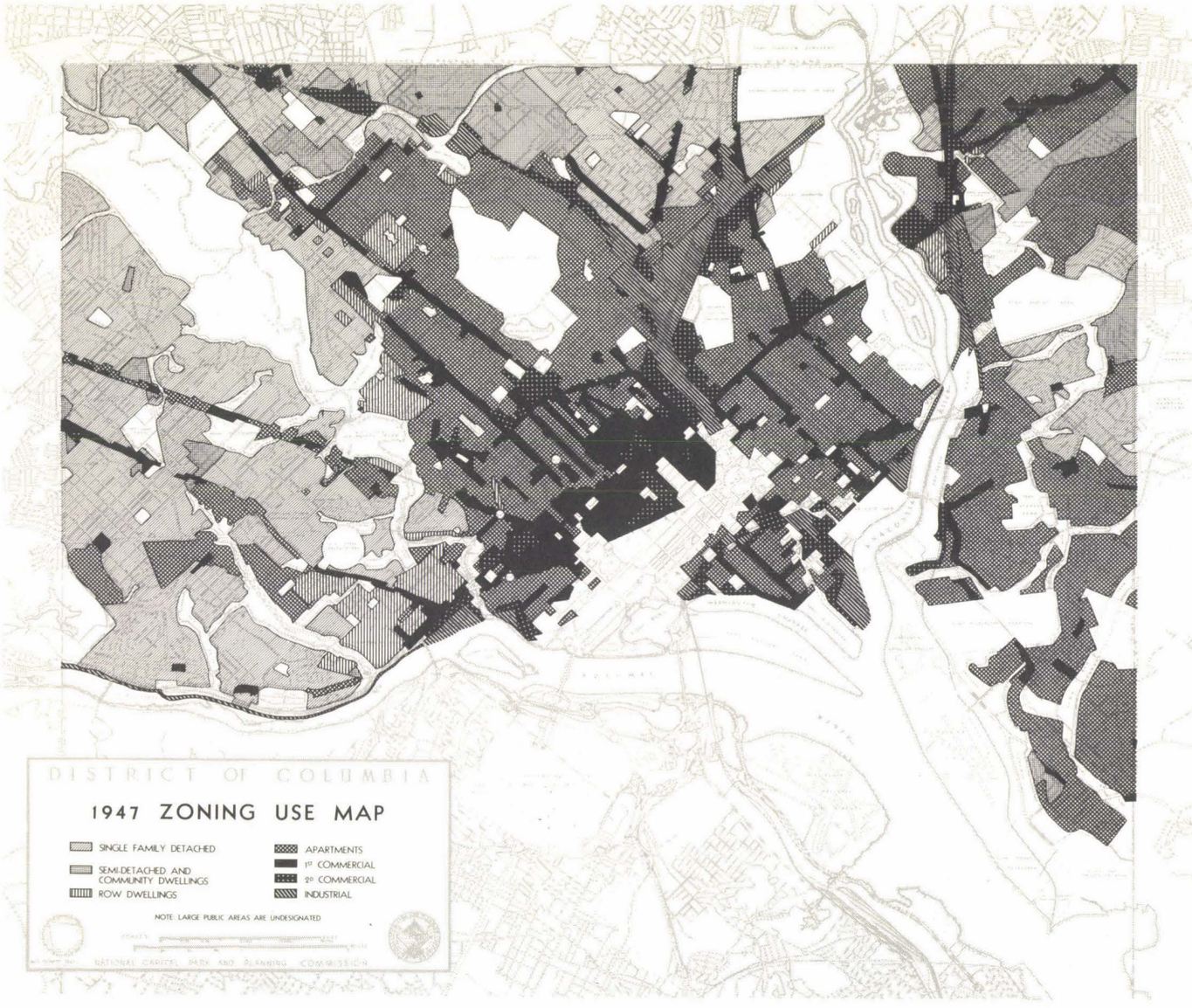
(3) Protect business and industrial areas from residence use.

(4) Substitute for strip commercial zoning, neighborhood business centers having adequate depth for modern needs.

(5) Provide special treatment for large-scale residential developments (over 10 acres).

(6) Reduce nonconforming uses within a time limit.

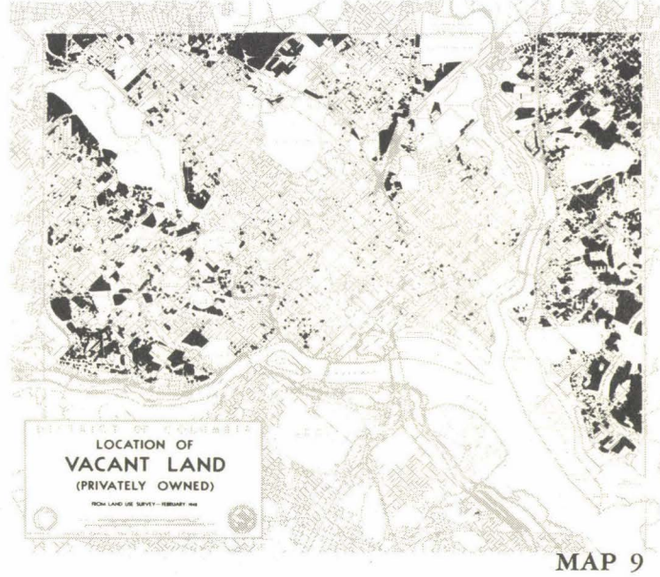
In addition to zoning revision in the District, the land-use plan strongly suggests the direction of zoning revision in the areas outside. This, of course, is the task of the planning commissions and the local governments in the various cities and counties, some of which are already alert to their responsibilities. In Maryland, Prince Georges County in 1949 adopted an up-to-date zoning ordinance based on the best current forecasts of its land use needs. It was prepared by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, which is now drafting similar zoning revisions for Montgomery County. In Virginia, Arlington County has understaken zoning modernization. Such regulations must meet local needs. Some correlation of standards and procedure, however, seems to be desirable. Coordination and cooperation are essential among the different planning bodies and with the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, if a regional zoning scheme is to result that will be effective in promoting over-all, sound development and land use.



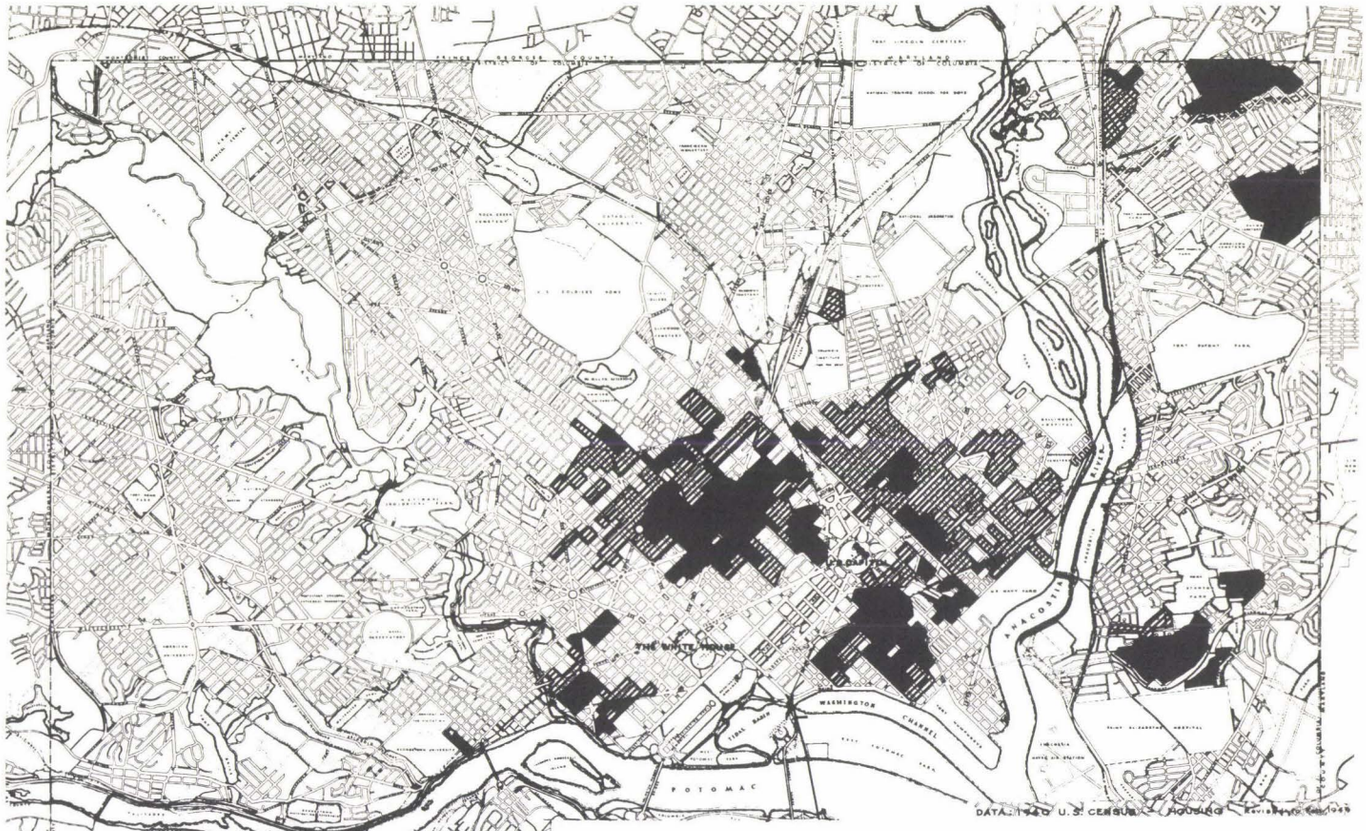
MAP 8

Table 2.—Present Zoning of Vacant Land, District of Columbia, Jan. 1, 1948

Permitted use	Acres	Percent
Single-family dwellings	1, 860	43
Two-family dwellings	535	12
Row houses	48	1
Multifamily dwellings	1, 501	34
Commerce	163	4
Light industry	168	4
Heavy industry and railroads	85	2
Total	4, 360	100



MAP 9



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PRINCIPAL PROBLEM AREAS

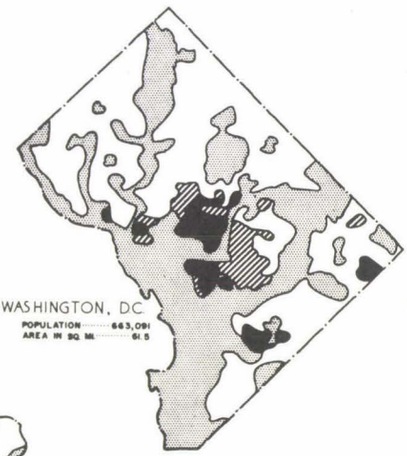
AREAS WITH OBSOLETE CHARACTERISTICS
IN 1940—OVER 50% OF DWELLINGS NEEDED MAJOR REPAIRS AND/OR LACKED PRIVATE BATH

AREAS WITH BLIGHTED CHARACTERISTICS
IN 1940—35% TO 50% OF DWELLINGS NEEDED MAJOR REPAIRS AND/OR LACKED PRIVATE BATH

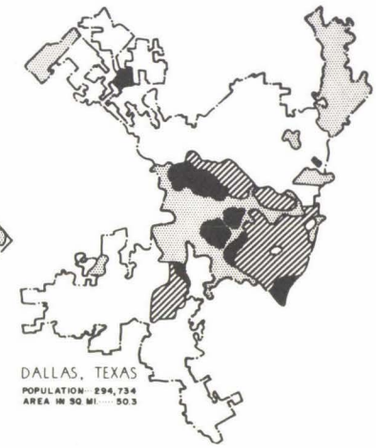
NOTE: OUTLYING AREAS UNDERGOING SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE SINCE 1940 AND ISOLATED AREAS OF LESS THAN FIVE ACRES OR LESS THAN TEN HOUSES HAVE BEEN OMITTED

SCALE: 0 1/2 1 MILES

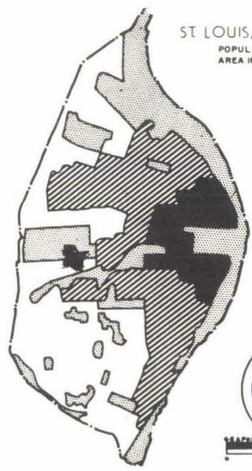
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



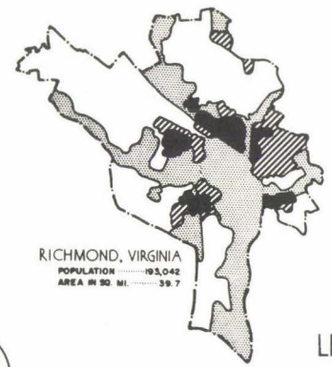
WASHINGTON, D.C.
POPULATION 663,091
AREA IN SQ. MI. 61.5



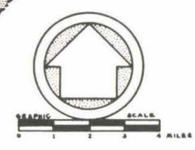
DALLAS, TEXAS
POPULATION 294,734
AREA IN SQ. MI. 50.3



ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
POPULATION 816,048
AREA IN SQ. MI. 65.0



RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
POPULATION 193,042
AREA IN SQ. MI. 39.7



NOTE: DATA FOR ALL CITIES, EXCEPT WASHINGTON, TAKEN FROM SIMILAR GENERALIZED SURVEYS, FIELD INVESTIGATIONS AND STUDIES PREPARED BY HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES, BASED ON UNITED STATES CENSUS DATA.

COMPARISON OF PRINCIPAL PROBLEM AREAS IN REPRESENTATIVE CITIES OF THE U. S.

LEGEND

- OBSOLETE · · · AREAS THAT SHOULD BE LARGELY REPLANNED AND REBUILT.
- BLIGHTED · · · AREAS WHERE SOME REPLANNING AND SELECTIVE REHABILITATION IS ESSENTIAL.
- SATISFACTORY · · AREAS THAT ARE NOW ADEQUATELY MAINTAINED AND USED.
- NON-RESIDENTIAL · AREAS PRIMARILY DEVOTED TO OTHER THAN RESIDENTIAL USE.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 10

HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT

How People Live

The comprehensive plan is concerned not only with where people live, but also with how they live. Health and welfare of Washington demand that all people have a chance for decent, safe, and healthful housing.

For some time, there has been a shortage of places to live. There are still not enough dwellings for most kinds of people and especially for those with low incomes. Much of the present housing is substandard, worn-out and falling down. Many dwellings are seriously overcrowded. Many structures have been poorly converted to makeshift tenements, from houses that are obsolete because they do not fit the needs of present-day families. In the District of Columbia, 17 percent of all dwelling units (32,219 units) were listed as being in need of major repairs or without bath.[1] This indicates the extent of the need for remodeling or replacement.

In 12 years, the public housing program in the District has built about 3,000 dwelling units for low-income families. Though Washington has less extensive slums than other cities, there is great need to step up the housing program.

Map 10, on page 20, Principal Problem Areas, marks out sections where problems of obsolete housing and land use are critical. These are areas for replanning. In rebuilding and rehabilitating problem areas, the most challenging opportunity is presented to rejuvenate the central area of Washington and to realize the aims of the comprehensive plan. Redevelopment is the new tool for obtaining a new land-use pattern. By this form of action, more than mere protection through zoning or guidance through subdivision control can be applied to achieve land use, circulation, and housing goals. Redevelopment areas are the places where the public, through government, must go into partnership with private enterprise, in order to make our Capital a city that meets the American standard of living.

Redevelopment Planning

The Commission fully recognizes that urban redevelopment is not merely a housing measure. Redevelopment is an important and effective method for changing the present land use pattern of the city—wiping out maladjustments, establishing by positive action new land uses organically related to a new, more functional arrangement of the city's parts.

AIRVUE ASSOCIATES

AN OBSOLETE NEIGHBORHOOD. *An example of land overcrowded with buildings in typical inhabited alley squares.*

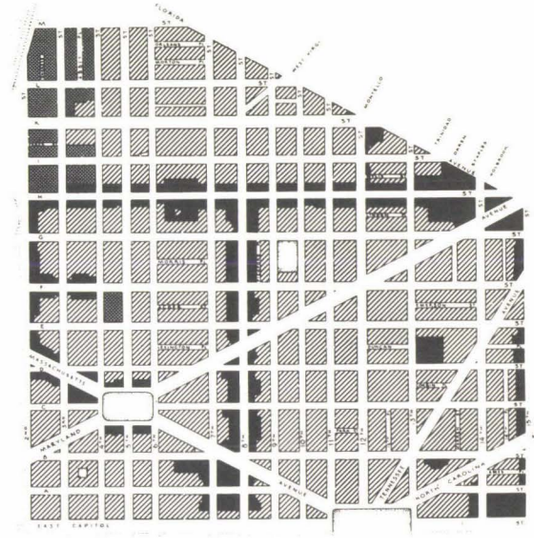
The Commission urges faster construction of public housing for low-income families, both on vacant land and on cleared slum sites. There must be places to live for families now living in slums while their dwellings are being torn down, and also permanent places, in neighborhoods convenient to their needs, for low-income families displaced from any areas planned for rebuilding with higher-rent housing or nonresidential use. Local public housing authorities must be prepared to meet, in each jurisdiction, their fair proportion of the total metropolitan need for low-rent public housing. In cases where local action is not taken, the National Capital Housing Authority should be permitted to build on vacant land, outside as well as inside the District.

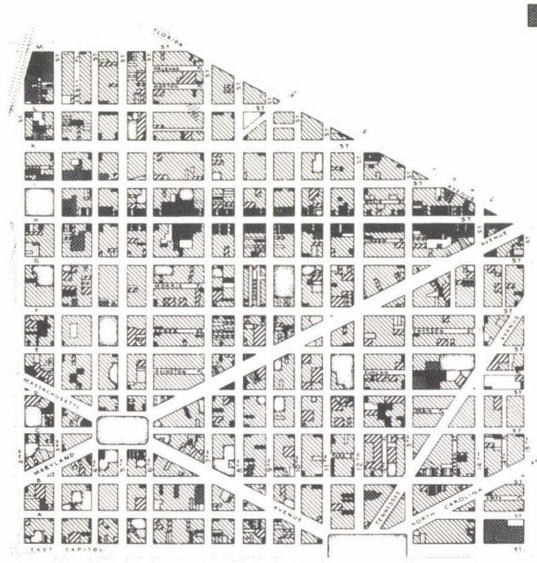
The District of Columbia Redevelopment Act of 1945 sets up the procedures for undertaking redevelopment projects. Project plans adopted by the Planning Commission must be approved by the District Commissioners and carried out through the Redevelopment Land Agency. Private enterprise is given preference in the rebuilding process, public housing being allowed only if

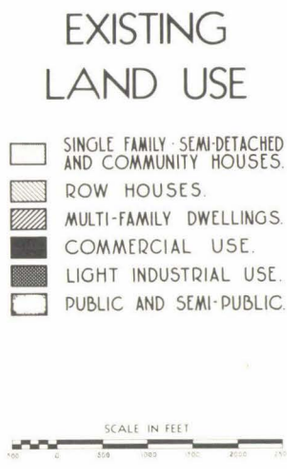
[1] Sixteenth Census United States 1940; Housing—First Series—Data for Small Areas, District of Columbia; table 3, p. 5.

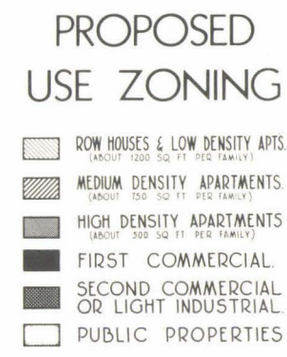
EXAMPLE OF PROPOSED ZONING REVISIONS

BASED ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

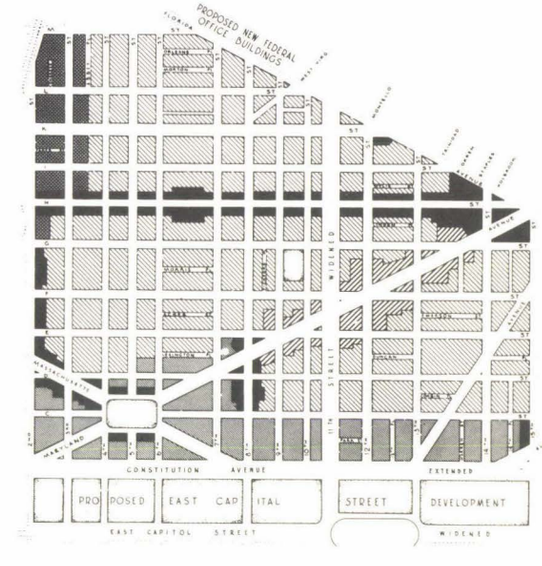








NOTE THE PROPOSED USE ZONING SHOWN WOULD HAVE TO BE ADJUSTED TO THE ZONING OF ADJACENT TERRITORY. MAP SHOWS PROPOSED STREET CHANGES & WIDENINGS.



NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Area shown is in northeast Washington, north of proposed East Capitol Street development. Present uses are mixed. Present zoning provides for excessive commercial frontage and no population density control. Proposed zoning would retain the commercial center along H Street but reduce frontage for business along Eighth and Fifteenth Streets. Three types of multifamily zones would be included. Reduction in commercial and industrial zones would provide more effective control over location of these uses in the neighborhood.

MAP 11

private enterprise cannot meet any low-rent specifications of the project plan.

In any case, public intervention is necessary to assemble the scattered ownerships in a large enough site for redevelopment and because the site cost may be too great for private capital to carry out the plan. The District Redevelopment Act and the Housing Act of 1949 each authorize use of public funds to write down a part of the cost of slum land to a level where private builders can afford to take over.

The Commission strongly recommends that the Redevelopment Land Agency be provided money to undertake a program of action. Redevelopment must, of course, fit into the comprehensive land use and density plan. Choice of areas for redevelopment should be influenced not only by the need to eliminate slums, but also by the urgency of other features of the comprehensive plan—new streets, open spaces, public works, or nonresidential land uses.

In deciding, for an individual redevelopment project, whether the new use should be rehousing for the occupants of the previous slum or higher income housing of a different type, or nonresidential uses, the best interests of one group of people should not be sacrificed disproportionately to those of another. In many locations where the land use plan calls for residential redevelopment, soundly planned reconstruction can provide as many good-standard new dwelling units as there were slum units before clearance. The important thing is to see that new development meets the needs of people so well that a costly cycle of blight, slum, and clearance will not be repeated in later years. Standards of open space, of light and air, of parking, of quiet, convenience and amenity, must be maintained to assure the permanent economic and social health that is the object of the program. Sample plans on pages 24 and 25 (maps 12 and 13) show two methods how this can be achieved in typical redevelopment areas.

Other Improvement Programs

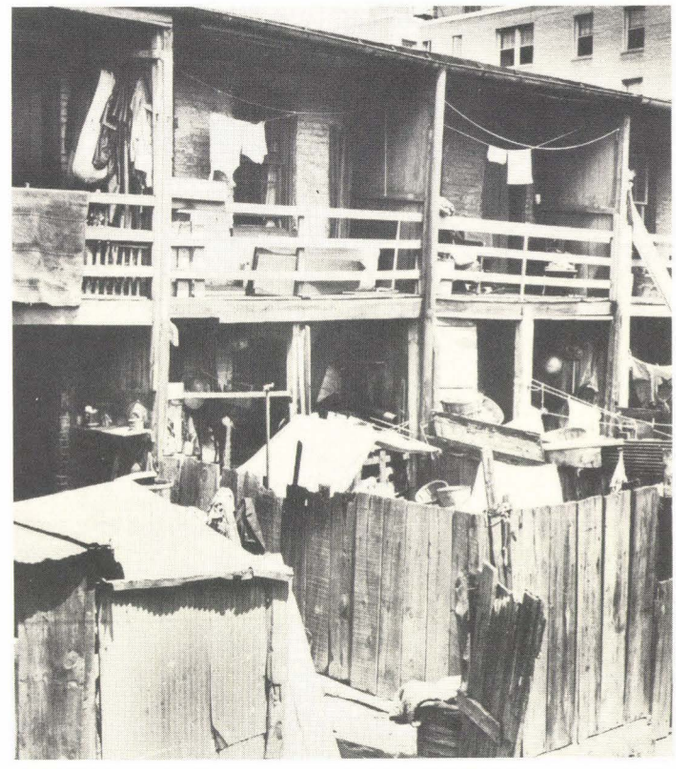
Private rehabilitation and modernization are already widespread in parts of Washington. The Georgetown area is the most striking example. The comprehensive plan includes recommendations for helping and stimulating this type of development where blight has not advanced too far. This involves rezoning, rigid code enforcement, new parks, playgrounds, and services. A new minimum housing standards ordnance is essential. Other types of control are needed to prevent overcrowding within the structure, and other misuses.

The final phase of a comprehensive housing program is the encouragement and guidance of new private building. The great majority of new growth, on vacant land, requires guidance of the over-all plan, subdivision regulations, and good zoning. Though this is largely a local suburban responsibility, certain Federal agencies can help. The Federal Housing Administration has a chance to push forward the plan and program in its actions on mortgage-insurance applications and other parts of its work in the metropolitan region. It could well encourage other types of development in fields other than its present limited practice. At the least it has a responsibility not to approve private projects that go counter to the principles and standards of the plan. Some regular procedure for checking with the Planning Commission should be adopted.

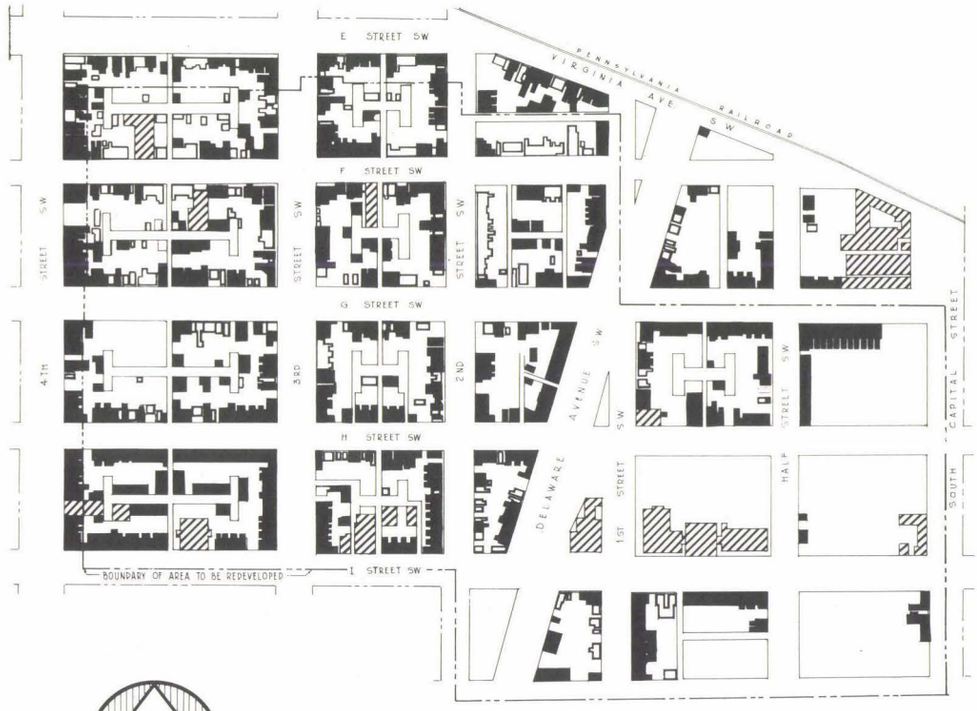
Achieving good housing in good neighborhoods for all the people of metropolitan Washington is not an overnight job. The program will take the 30-year period forecast by the plan. Yet it is important that all groups that have a share in the various parts of the picture put prompt and forceful effort into moving toward this goal.

A WASHINGTON SLUM

NCHA PHOTO

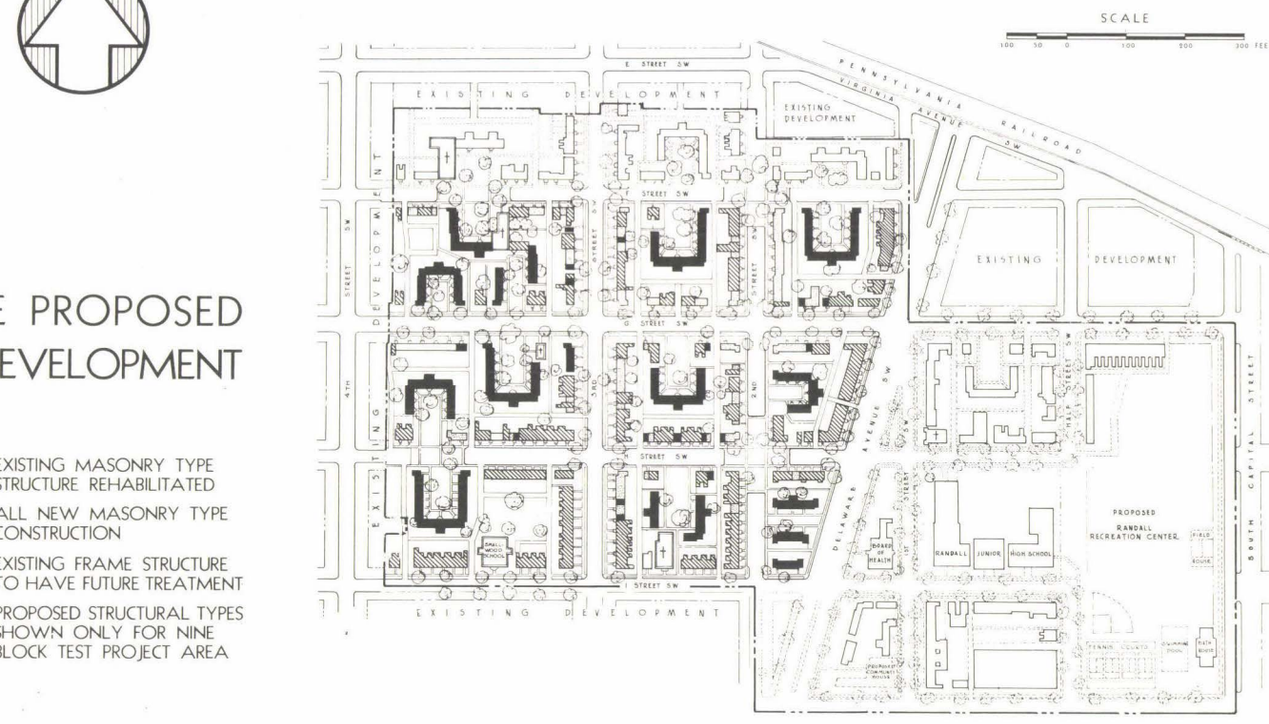


A REHABILITATION STUDY IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON



THE EXISTING CONDITIONS

- MASONRY TYPE STRUCTURES
- FRAME TYPE STRUCTURES
- COMMERCIAL AND PUBLIC STRUCTURE—ALL TYPES



THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT

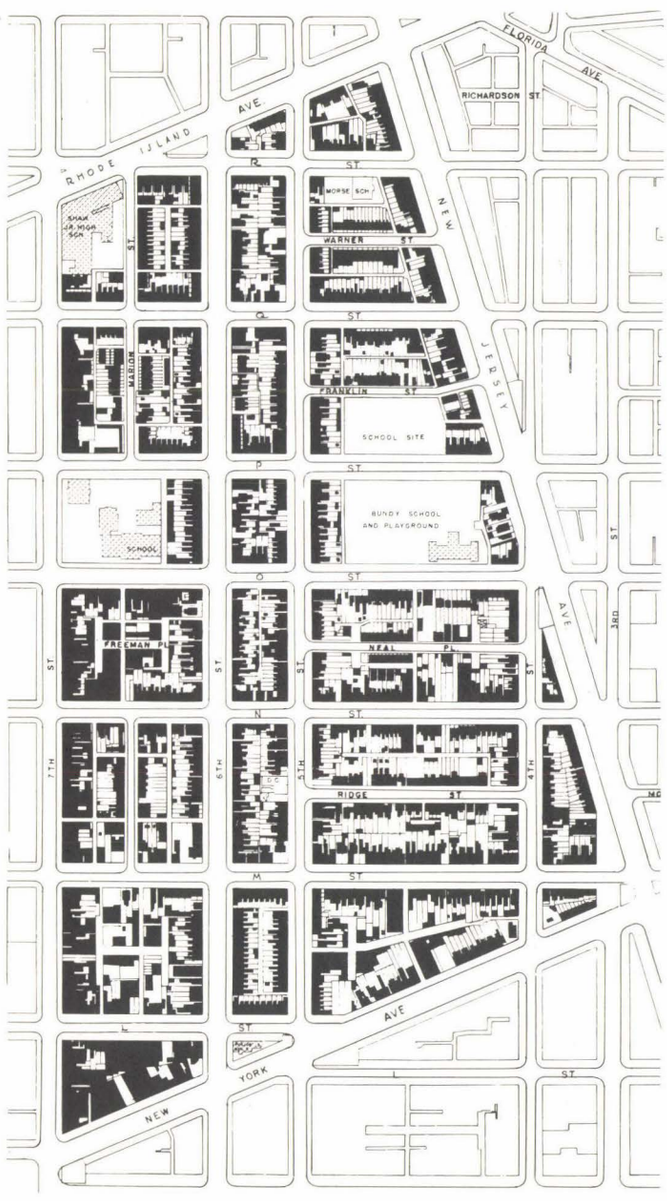
- EXISTING MASONRY TYPE STRUCTURE REHABILITATED
- ALL NEW MASONRY TYPE CONSTRUCTION
- EXISTING FRAME STRUCTURE TO HAVE FUTURE TREATMENT

NOTE: PROPOSED STRUCTURAL TYPES SHOWN ONLY FOR NINE BLOCK TEST PROJECT AREA

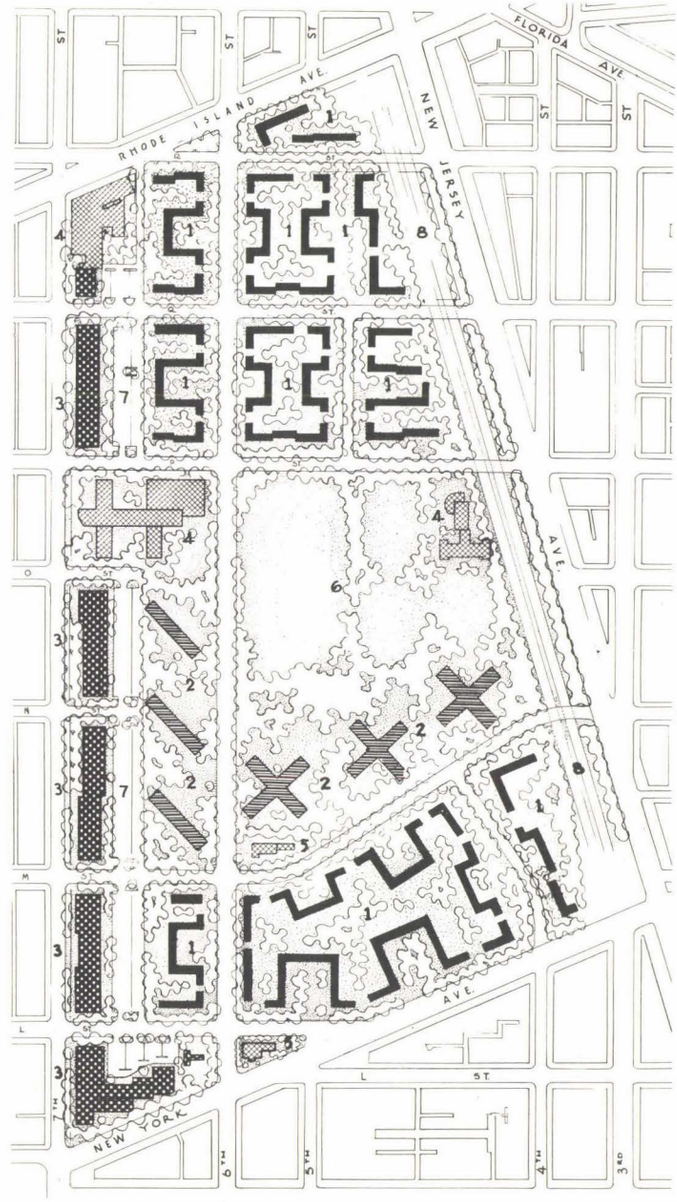
FROM A STUDY PREPARED BY THE HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION

MAP 12

A STUDY FOR THE
REDEVELOPMENT OF AN OBSOLETE NEIGHBORHOOD



EXISTING CONDITIONS



POSSIBLE CONDITIONS

LEGEND

1. ROW HOUSES
2. APARTMENT BUILDINGS
3. COMMERCIAL—WITH APARTMENTS OVER
4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS
5. OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS
6. PARK AND RECREATION AREAS
7. PARKING AREAS
8. PROPOSED INNER-LOOP EXPRESS HIGHWAY

SCALE IN FEET

200 0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 13

MOVING PEOPLE AND GOODS

Congestion

A major aim of the comprehensive plan is moving 2 million people, their supplies and other goods, wherever they need to go—quickly, safely, and economically. We must solve our present problem of transportation and foresee solutions to the problems of the future.

The traffic that now clogs the streets is at its worst when people are going from home to work and back. In all our cities, more and more people driving to work, from more and more spread-out residential areas, have made the traffic problem acute and very costly to solve. In Washington, workplaces are so concentrated in Federal offices that congestion is especially critical.

It is to the downtown business district and the Government centers nearby that most people want to go. Of every six people entering that area, one now walks, two come in a car or taxi, and three ride public transportation. But more and more people are trying to use private autos. From 3 miles out and beyond, people entering downtown use cars more than walking or public transit. In the District, there is one auto for every 6.3 persons. The trend is toward a higher ratio of cars to people. In the years ahead, there will be not only more people but probably more cars in relation to the number of people.

In addition, truck traffic is an increasingly important part of the lifeblood of American cities. Traffic jams that delay Washington's trucks are a real factor in raising prices and the cost of living. Congestion is not only inconvenient, it is wasteful and costly.

There are three attacks on the problem, which must all be used at once. Most basic: Cut down on the amount of travel needed, by getting home and work closer together. This is one of the major purposes of the comprehensive plan, to be attained by spreading Federal employment centers throughout the metropolitan region. Second, and cheapest, but possible only as the third step is undertaken: Make public transportation so quick and convenient that more people will use it to go to work and fewer will drive. Third, most costly, but also necessary in spite of what can be done through the first and second: Create a system of collector and distributor roads, both radial and circumferential in function, that will redistribute traffic through the region and diminish the volume demand within the central area. This will entail cutting through modern highways, widening certain old ones, building some new bridges, and providing new parking facilities.

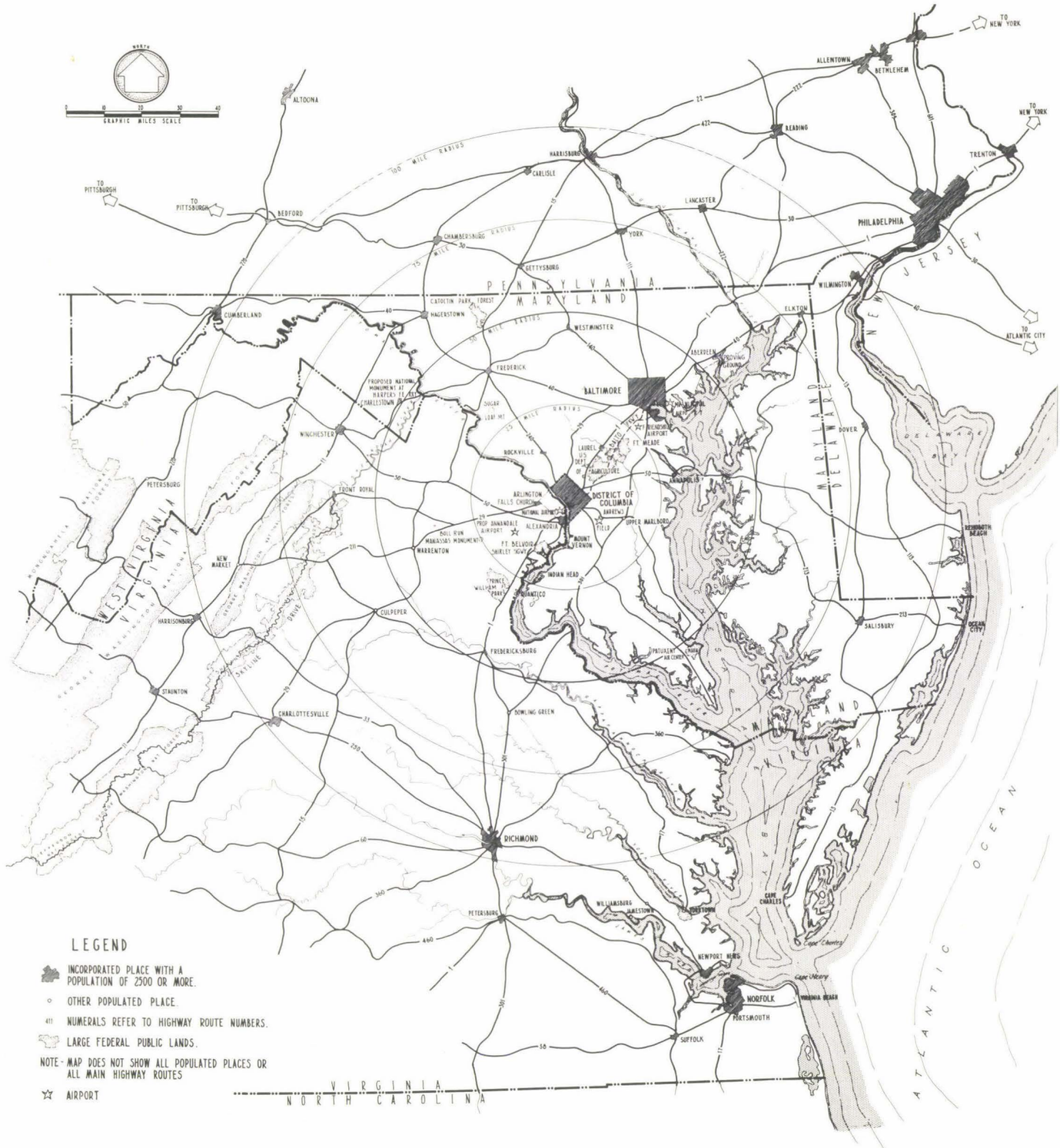
HENRY G. SHIRLEY MEMORIAL HIGHWAY, LOOKING NORTH. *A good example of the free-flowing, dual roadway type of controlled access highway needed to serve the National Capital region.*

Thoroughfares

The central area will always be the main focus of traffic. More efficient design and use of radial streets, going out from the center like the spokes of a wheel, are essential parts of the Regional and District Thoroughfare Plans, maps 15 and 16, pages 30 and 31. As outlying centers develop, for homes, business and employment, cross-connections will be more and more necessary—circumferentials, ring roads, distributors—to move traffic more directly and to bypass through traffic around congested areas. Today, a good circumferential route is badly needed. This need will be emphasized as Federal employment centers are decentralized.

These new and improved main highways must be modern—at least divided highways, and preferably freeways for all types of traffic, or parkways for passenger cars only and in certain cases express busses, with no cross traffic, no driveways or parking, no traffic lights, and only a few designed points of access. They must fit into a network of ring roads and distributors broadly visioned as a scheme for regional communication. They must be laid out in line with land use plans—serving residential areas, but not smashing through home neighborhoods. For maximum traffic capacity and safety, they must be built to high standards of curves, grades, and pavement width. Main routes in the metropolitan area, inside the District and outside, must be coordinated into a single network of arteries, for trucks as well as passenger cars and busses.

The thoroughfare plan is based on concepts of desirable future land use, and location of Government establishments and employment centers. Changes in these elements will in time produce proportionately large changes in present traffic patterns. Therefore, it is clearly not possible to use straight-line projections of present origin-and-destination patterns as a basis for planning future highway facilities. Many of the pro-



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 14

posals in the thoroughfare plan, particularly in the outer parts of the region, find little justification in present traffic volumes; but they are designed to meet future needs of parts of the region that are going to double in population. The chief, and limited, value of an origin-and-destination survey is to get a better understanding of the traffic habits of people in relation to present patterns of land use and highway facilities.

The plan is an integrated *network* of radial and circumferential routes designed to function in combination and to serve all major movements of traffic—now and in the future. It recognizes the greater need for circumferential routes that will arise in the future when employment is more widely distributed and when a larger city is spread over a far greater land area.

There would be three complete circumferential routes in the plan. The first of these would be located about 1 mile from the White House; its most important function would be to carry traffic around and through the central area, relieving this congested section of unnecessary volumes. The second would be between 3 and 5 miles from the White House, following the route of Fort Drive through much of its length. The third, an outer bypass route, would follow new alinement; it would be between 6 and 10 miles from the White House.

Radial routes would extend from the center to all parts of the urban area and beyond. Important among these would be: The Northwest Freeway and George Washington Memorial Parkway to the northwest, the Northern Freeway to the north, the Baltimore-Washington Parkway to the northeast, the Annapolis Freeway and Suitland Parkway to the east, Indian Head Highway and Mount Vernon Memorial Highway to the south, Shirley Memorial Highway to the southwest, and Lee Boulevard to the west. These routes would not just give direct access to the central area but, by means of the ring routes, provide for distribution to outer and inner residential areas and dispersed employment centers. In many instances the plan has been arranged to provide separate routes for passenger cars and trucks.

A few expressways cannot solve the problem, nor can a system limited to radial routes or circumferential routes. The individual will make many trips involving many combinations of types and kinds of routes. The integrated network is designed to meet his needs.

To keep the streets open for moving traffic and to assure cars a place to stop at the end of the trip, more offstreet parking must be created. New zoning regulations should see to it, in areas where such regulations

FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.

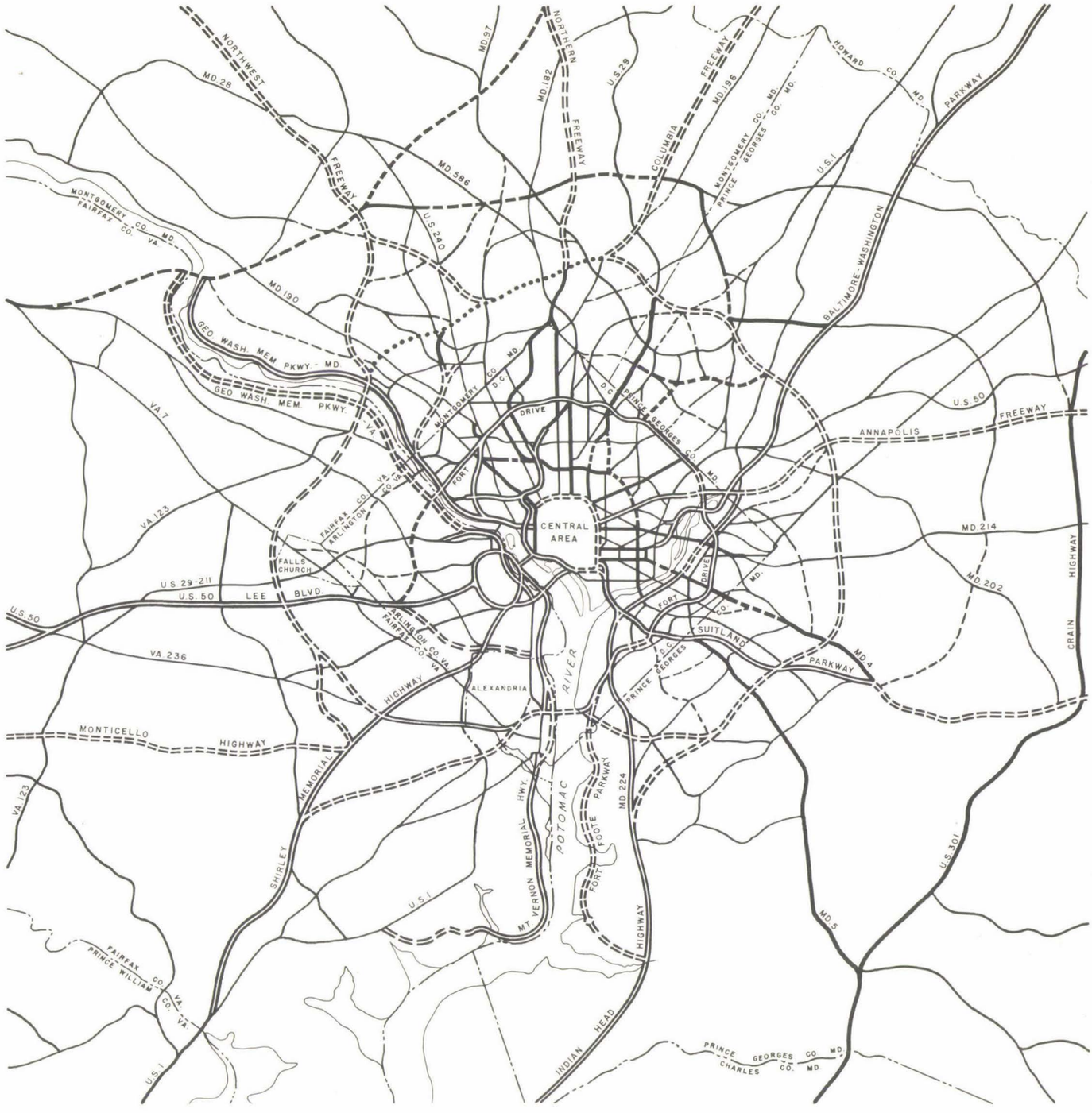
SUITLAND PARKWAY

are equitable, that all new buildings, whether apartments, stores, or offices, provide their own parking. The Federal Government should do as much as is practical to take the lead. Every new Federal building should have parking space for its own employees and official visitors, varying with the type of activity and location.

In built-up areas like downtown, zoning cannot help. Before streets can be cleared of parked cars and freed

THE PENTAGON NETWORK. *An example of a coordinated solution of public land use, thoroughfare, traffic, and parking problems.*

FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
PROPOSED REGIONAL THOROUGHFARE PLAN

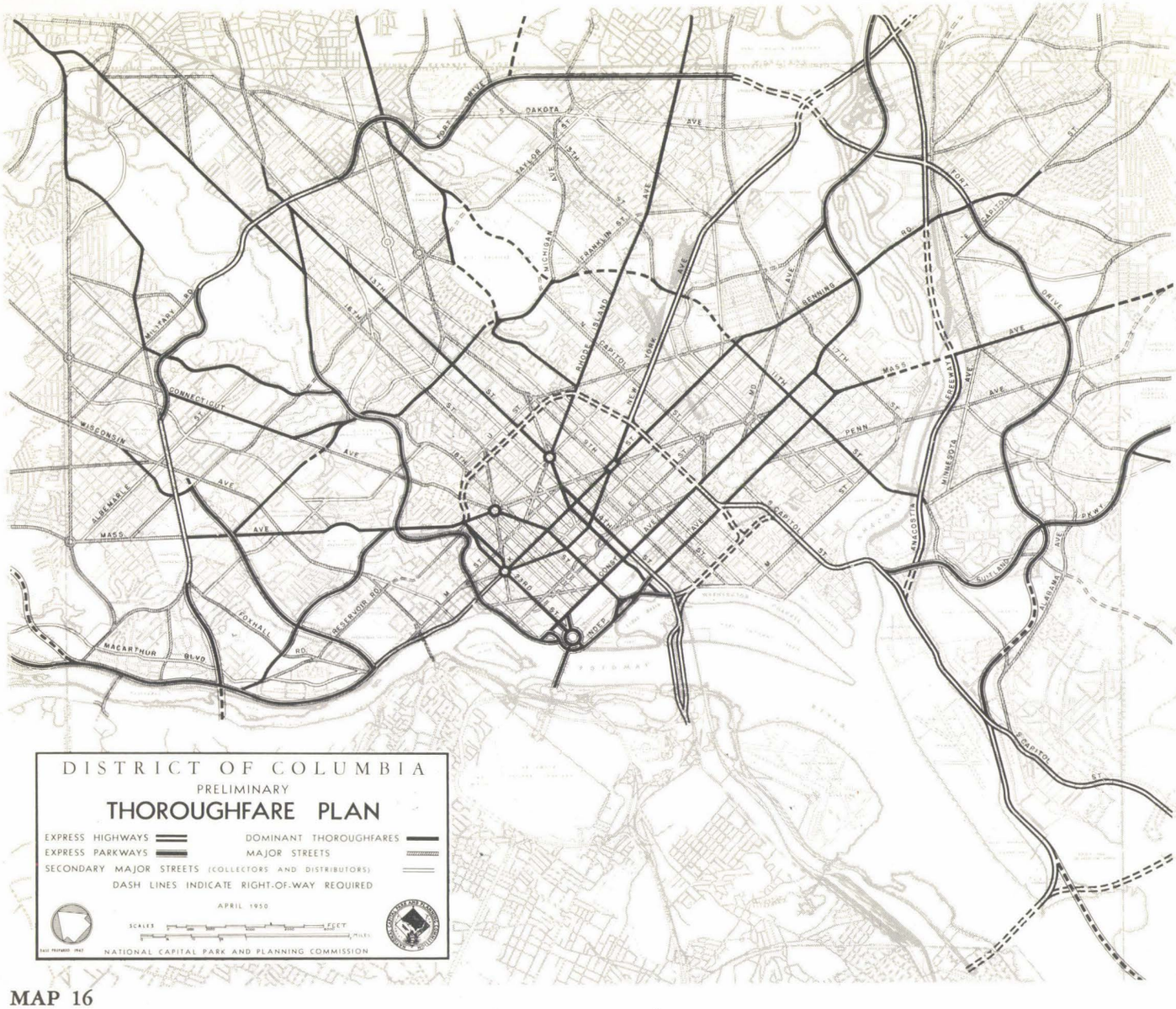
EXPRESS HIGHWAYS AND PARKWAYS
DOMINANT THOROUGHFARES
MAJOR HIGHWAYS
CROSS SECTION UNDETERMINED
NOTE DASH LINES INDICATE NEW RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BE ACQUIRED

SCALE OF MILES

APRIL 1950

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

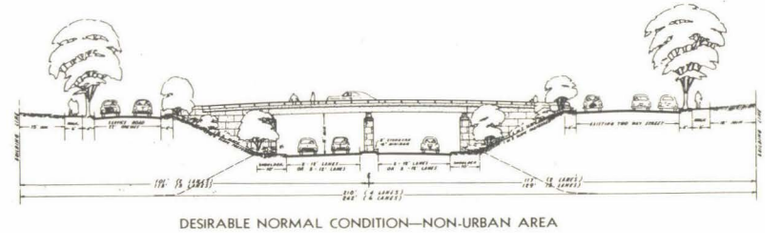
MAP 15



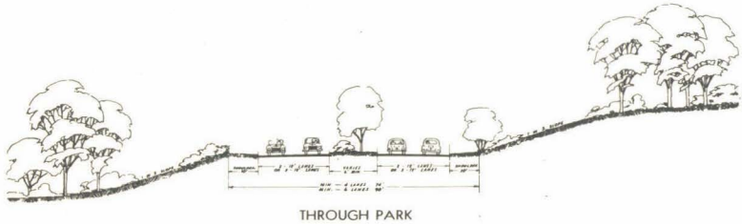
MAP 16

CROSS SECTIONS

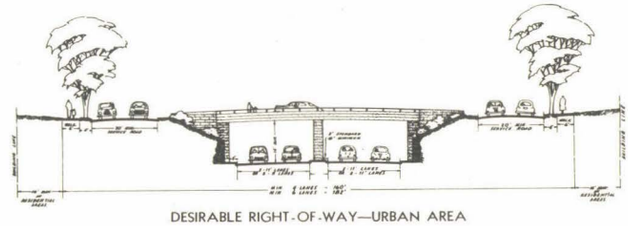
TYPICAL EXPRESSWAYS



DESIRABLE NORMAL CONDITION—NON-URBAN AREA



THROUGH PARK



DESIRABLE RIGHT-OF-WAY—URBAN AREA

CHART 3

for traffic use, new parking facilities must be created. Where it cannot be done by private enterprise, public powers and money must be used for this community problem, through the parking agency already established.

Public Transit

People who ride streetcars and busses suffer most from traffic congestion. If more people used public transit, there would be fewer private cars using the streets and therefore less congestion. Transit itself would become quicker and more comfortable, and the public would not be required to spend so heavily for new street and bridge improvements to handle such volumes of automobiles. The problem is to persuade people, by transit improvements, to reverse or at least check the trend away from transit riding toward use of private autos.

The quickest mass transportation is a subway or elevated. An extensive subway system in Washington does not now seem feasible, because sound operation demands much heavier mass riding to support subways than present and future population densities would produce. Furthermore, the land-use plan aims at no material further concentration downtown, so that transit need not provide for a much heavier flow than at present. In addition, in Washington the transit flow branches out from the center in many directions, whereas subways require concentrations along a few radial lines.

Bus traffic would benefit from a well-planned thoroughfare system. Freeways and parkways would make possible express bus service to suburban areas almost as fast as rail rapid transit. Within the central area, however, bus operation is sure to be slowed down by auto traffic. The Commission nevertheless recommends gradual replacement of streetcars with busses. It urges study of traffic rules, to speed up bus movements downtown—perhaps setting aside certain lanes for busses only, or even prohibiting private cars and delivery trucks entirely on certain streets in the rush hours. Since a bus carries about 30 times as many people as an auto, it is fair and reasonable to delay as many as 30 autos in order to speed up each bus. The goal is to move people, not vehicles.

Rail, Air, and Waterways

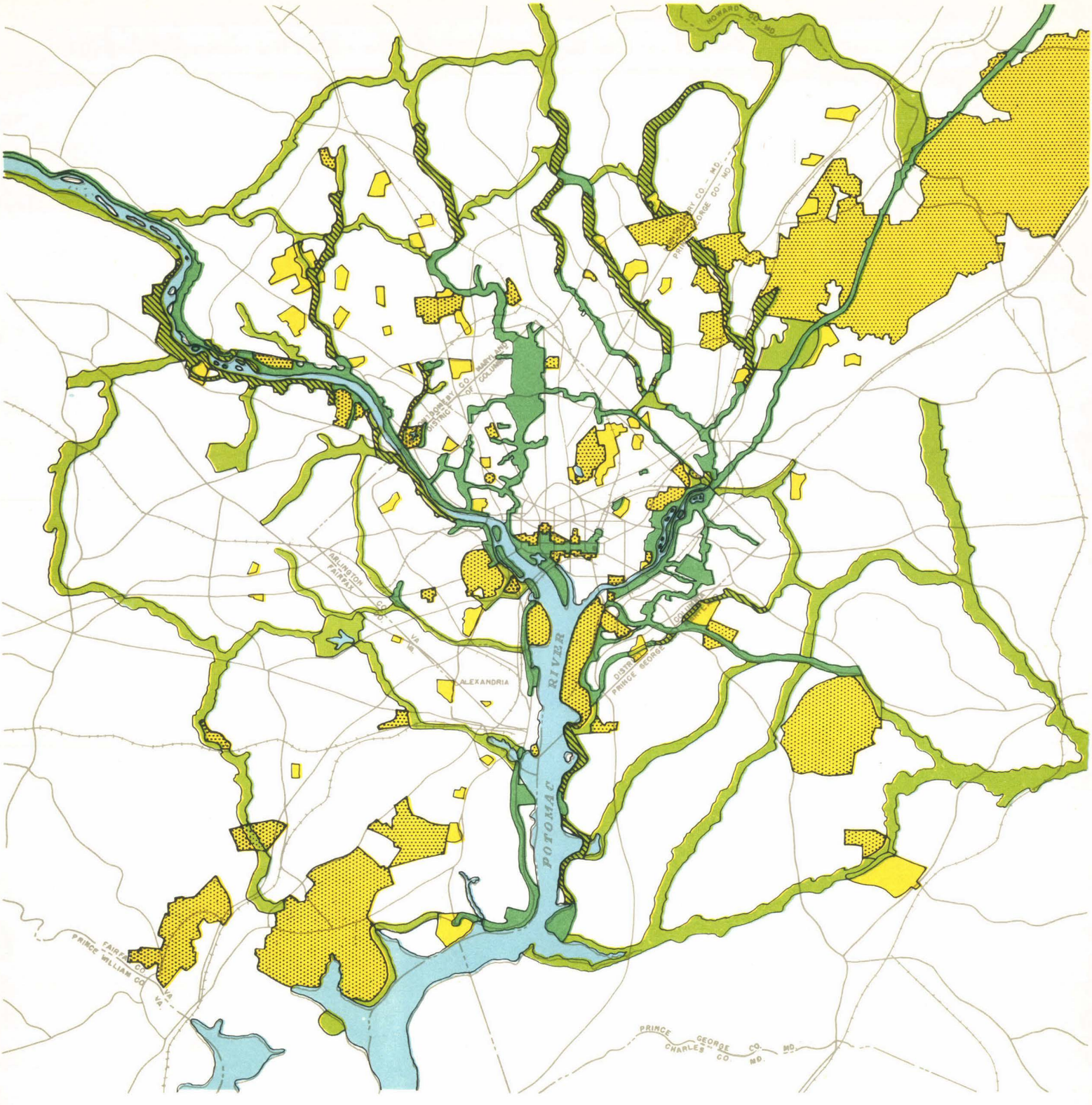
Railroad routes in the metropolitan region do their work adequately. Changes proposed are double tracking the Virginia Avenue tunnel and building an alternate rail bridge or tunnel across the Potomac for north-south train movement. Remaining grade crossings should be eliminated. As for terminals, some rearrangement is desirable at Union Station for better handling of both arriving and departing passengers by auto, taxi, bus, and streetcar. A study of freight, produce, and truck terminals would be desirable, as some change in arrangement may cut down on local trucking.

Air transport is increasingly important. The National Airport is the second busiest in the country, and an alternate major airport will soon be needed. Several possible locations have been studied by the Commission and the Civil Aeronautics Authority. The CAA forecasts that within 10 years there may be need in the region for as many as 17 new airports for personal and nonscheduled flying.

The Commission recommends setting up a regional airport authority as the only means to orderly development and operation. As soon as this authority, in cooperation with the Planning Commission, has worked out a coordinated plan, necessary sites should be purchased and then protected through zoning to preserve approach lanes. Also, because of air traffic volumes, abandonment of Bolling Field and Anacostia Naval Air Station for military flying should be considered.

Waterways are important to Washington for short-haul sand and gravel movement but not as a major freight or passenger port. The National Capital is almost unique among American cities in that most of the water front is in public ownership. While it is true that park and recreation uses predominate, nevertheless that part of the water front most needed and logically adapted for commercial or other nonrecreational uses has been or can be developed in complete harmony with park uses and the plan as a whole. Water-front recreational facilities should be improved, with attention to facilities for small craft and spectators' participation in such events as the President's Cup Regatta. The Potomac is Washington's greatest natural asset.

The Chief of Engineers is now making a comprehensive plan for the future development of the Washington water front. The Commission has recommended that the plan include a commercial deep water terminal at Alexandria and a considerable increase in wharf and mooring facilities for small boats. In connection with the flood control and navigation report on the Anacostia River, the Commission has approved the extension of the Anacostia River Channel to Bladensburg.



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

REGIONAL PARK PLAN

PARKS AND PARKWAYS—EXISTING PROPOSED
PARKS AND PARKWAYS AUTHORIZED BY CAPPER-CRAMTON ACT
OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY SEMI-PUBLIC PROPERTY

SCALES
10000 0 10000 20000 30000 FEET
1 0 2 4 6 8 10 MILES

BASE PREPARED 1948

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 17

OPEN SPACES

Recreation Needs

People need different kinds of open space, for different uses. Children of preschool age need small areas very near their homes—in the yard, or in the block. These must be provided by the family individually or neighbors cooperatively, or by the apartment-house builder. They are too costly for the public to develop and maintain. Elementary-school ages need playgrounds, within walking distance—one-fourth to one-half mile—equipped and supervised, preferably next to school buildings, 2 to 5 acres in size in central, built-up areas, but larger in outlying districts. High-school ages and above need playfields, within ½ to 1 mile of their homes, 5 to 25 acres in size, with ball fields, tennis courts, and the like. All age groups need neighborhood parks, preferably natural areas of trees and green for sitting, strolling, or informal play, within walking distance of their homes. All also need indoor recreation facilities, best provided at school buildings.

People of all ages need large, natural parks and reservations, where they can get away from sight and sound of the city. These large, natural open spaces also serve an important need to break up the stretch of urban areas with greenbelts. These help define and hold neighborhoods and communities. Parkways are another part of the system of recreational areas, linking various parks together, making them accessible and also serving an important function in the traffic circulation system. (See map 17, p. 33.) Of the various kinds of open spaces, Washington is best served by its large parks and the parkways linking them, although few of the parkways are developed as in other cities.

As a standard against which to measure needs, the metropolitan area should have 10 acres of open space for each 1,000 people; a minimum of 3½ to 4 acres out of the 10 should be within walking distance. Of this, at least 1 to 1½ acres per 1,000 people should be in space for active use, part for playgrounds, part for playfields. These minimum standards are considered practical to use in planning for the District of Columbia. They are lower than are appropriate in suburban parts of the region.

In determining adequacy of present land holdings, city-wide ratios of acres to population do not present the whole picture. Some neighborhoods already meet or exceed standards, while others are still well below even city-wide averages. There are too few of the close-by, active play spaces and neighborhood parks. It is important not only that Washington shall have enough total recreational land acreage in relation to future population, but that this acreage, for each type of recreation facility, be located to meet walking distance and other standard requirements of each neighborhood.

As now existing, there are 8,155 acres in the park, parkway and playground system. Of this 5,705 acres are city-wide parks, or 6.6 acres per 1,000 people. There are 455 acres in smaller park areas, and 1,231 acres of parkways. There are 764 acres in recreation units. This area, plus 482 acres included in other parks gives 1,246 acres for active play, or 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons. Since 1924, the Commission has acquired 2,576 acres in all park categories.

Suburban areas in Virginia have far too little land set aside to meet the open space needs of the 1980 metropolitan population, both for local service and in large areas for regional use. Maryland, however, under a progressive planning program, has made substantial progress in acquiring land for park and recreation use. Plans should be made now to meet future needs, where not already provided for, and the necessary areas acquired before private building makes it costly or impossible to provide adequate open spaces.

Park and Recreation Plans

Plans for Washington's parks and open space must meet needs not only of people of the region, but also of citizens who visit their Capital to see the headquarters of their Government and the monuments to its past. Maps 17 and 18, on pages 33 and 36, show plans for public open spaces for the region and the District.

For the District, the plan for supervised recreation, map 19, page 37, shows 26 recreation centers of 10 to 20 acres. Smaller playgrounds serve the children of each neighborhood. This system of play areas is designed for all the people of the District. In regard to the use of play areas by different racial groups, the District of Columbia Recreation Board has adopted the following statement of policy (July 20, 1949): "The Board will make every possible and realistic effort toward the removal of racial segregation in public recreation in such

sequence and at such rate of progression as may be consistent with public interest, public order, and effective administration." The Planning Commission feels that progress in the direction of this policy will make possible a better relationship between each play area and the territory within its natural service radius, in accordance with principles both of city planning and of democratic life.

As now planned, the District will have 8,530 acres in the park, parkway, and playground system. There will be 1,325 acres in recreation units, which is 16 percent of the total park and recreation area. This will provide 1.3 acres of *active* recreation for every 1,000 persons of the estimated 1980 population. To meet 1980 needs, 74 acres for supervised recreation will have to be acquired, developed, and operated. There will be a deficit in neighborhood parks of 168 acres. Plans of the Commission now do not provide for acquiring any additional large parks in the District of Columbia.

Money is needed to acquire and develop lands that are necessary for missing links in the park and playground systems. Sites should be acquired quickly wherever they are vacant, to save costs in acquiring and tearing down buildings. Clearance will be necessary in many places to create breathing space where there is none now.

For the region, the Commission urges early action by Fairfax County and Virginia, under the Capper-Cramton Act, to provide for acquisition of land for a key link in the George Washington Memorial Parkway before private house building makes it too late. A new large-scale regional park is needed to meet needs of the rapidly increasing population of Fairfax and Arlington Counties. In Maryland, the Commission recommends using part of the reservation at Greenbelt for a regional park for that part of Prince Georges County, extending Cabin John Creek Park to serve the western part of Montgomery County, and more land at Fort Washington to serve the southern part of Prince Georges County. Farther out, the Commission endorses such proposed extra-regional reservations as Sugar Loaf Mountain and Harpers Ferry Historical Monument.

All public park areas should be held and used only for open space, without allowing any other public uses to creep in.

TYPES OF RECREATION FACILITIES

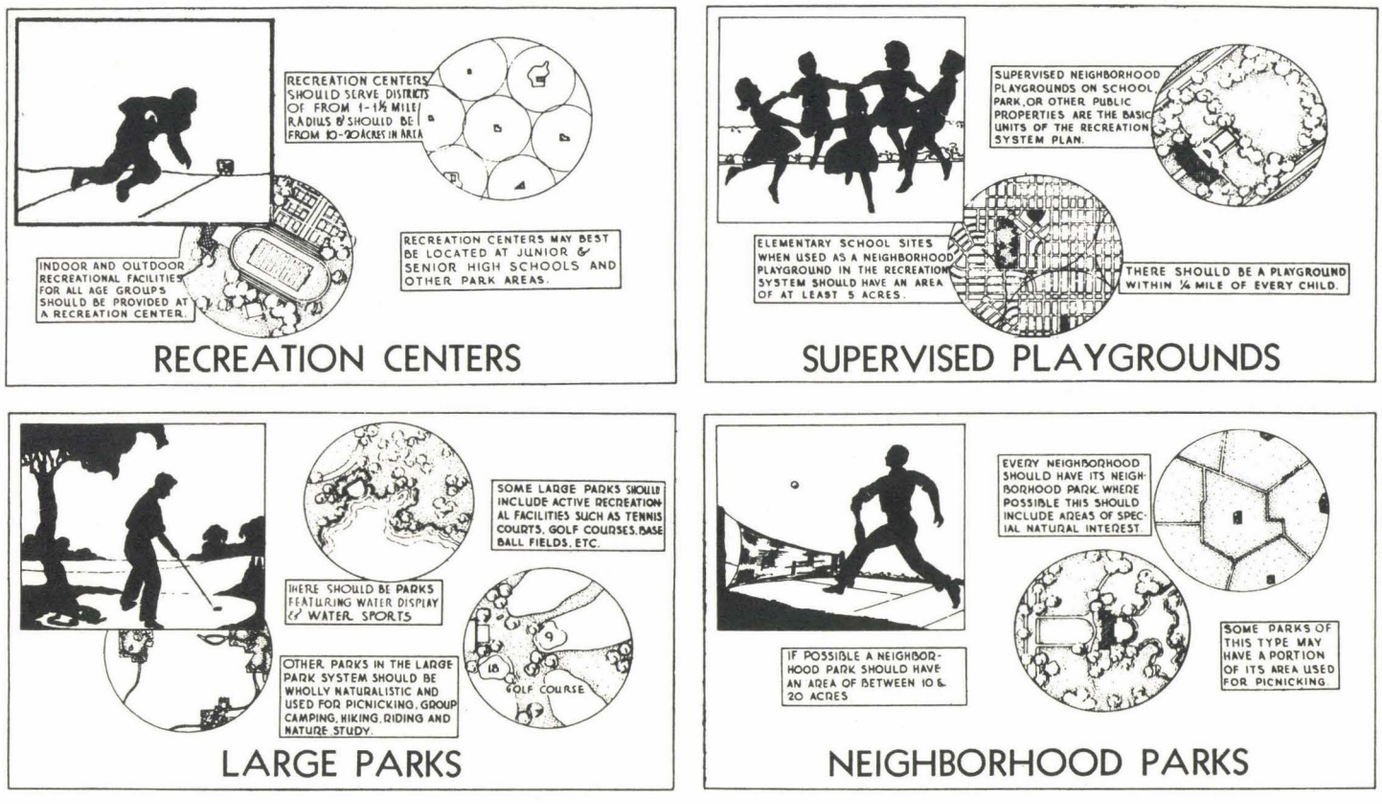
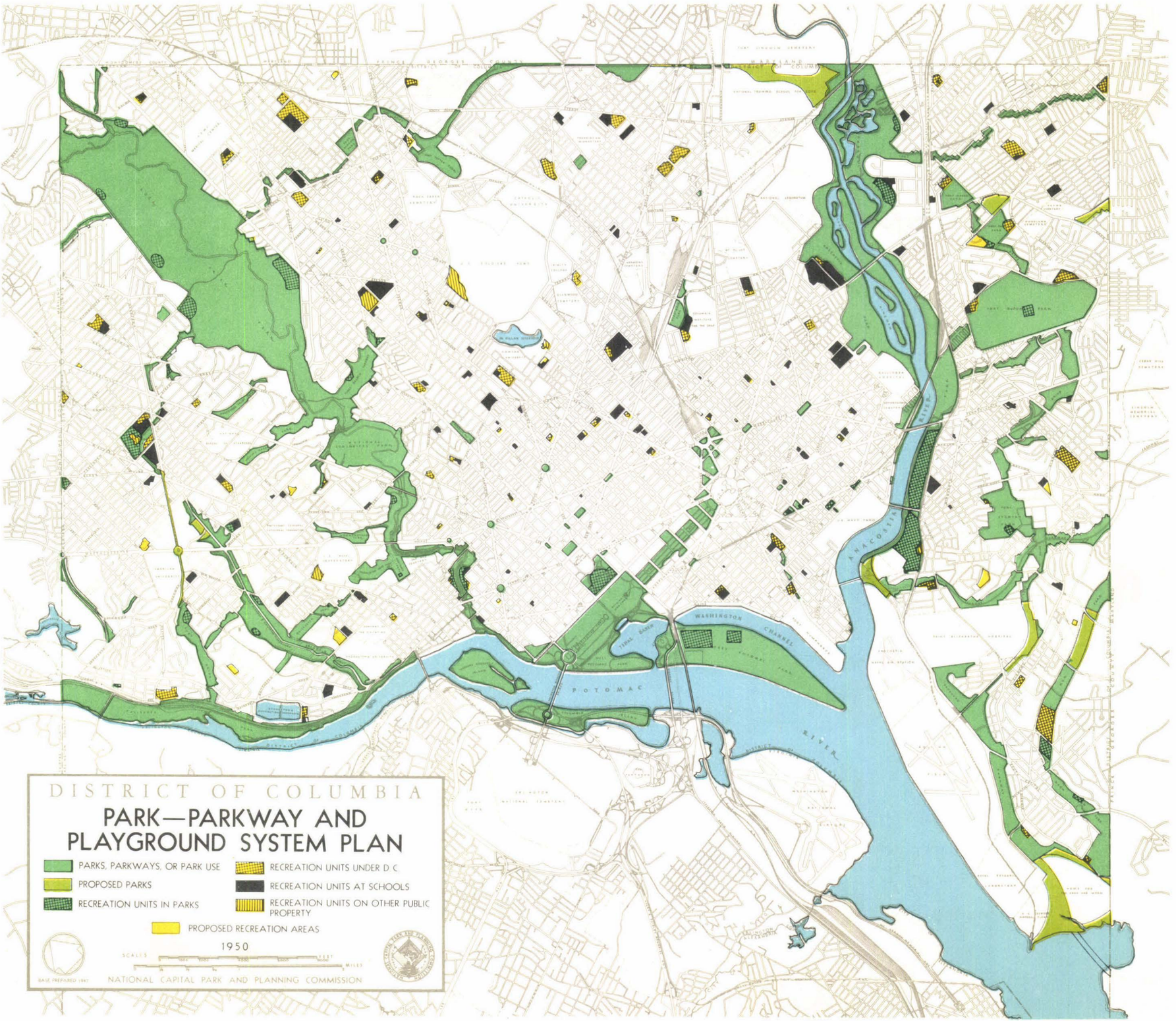


CHART 4

MAP 18



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PARK—PARKWAY AND PLAYGROUND SYSTEM PLAN

- PARKS, PARKWAYS, OR PARK USE
- PROPOSED PARKS
- RECREATION UNITS IN PARKS
- RECREATION UNITS UNDER D C
- RECREATION UNITS AT SCHOOLS
- RECREATION UNITS ON OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTY
- PROPOSED RECREATION AREAS

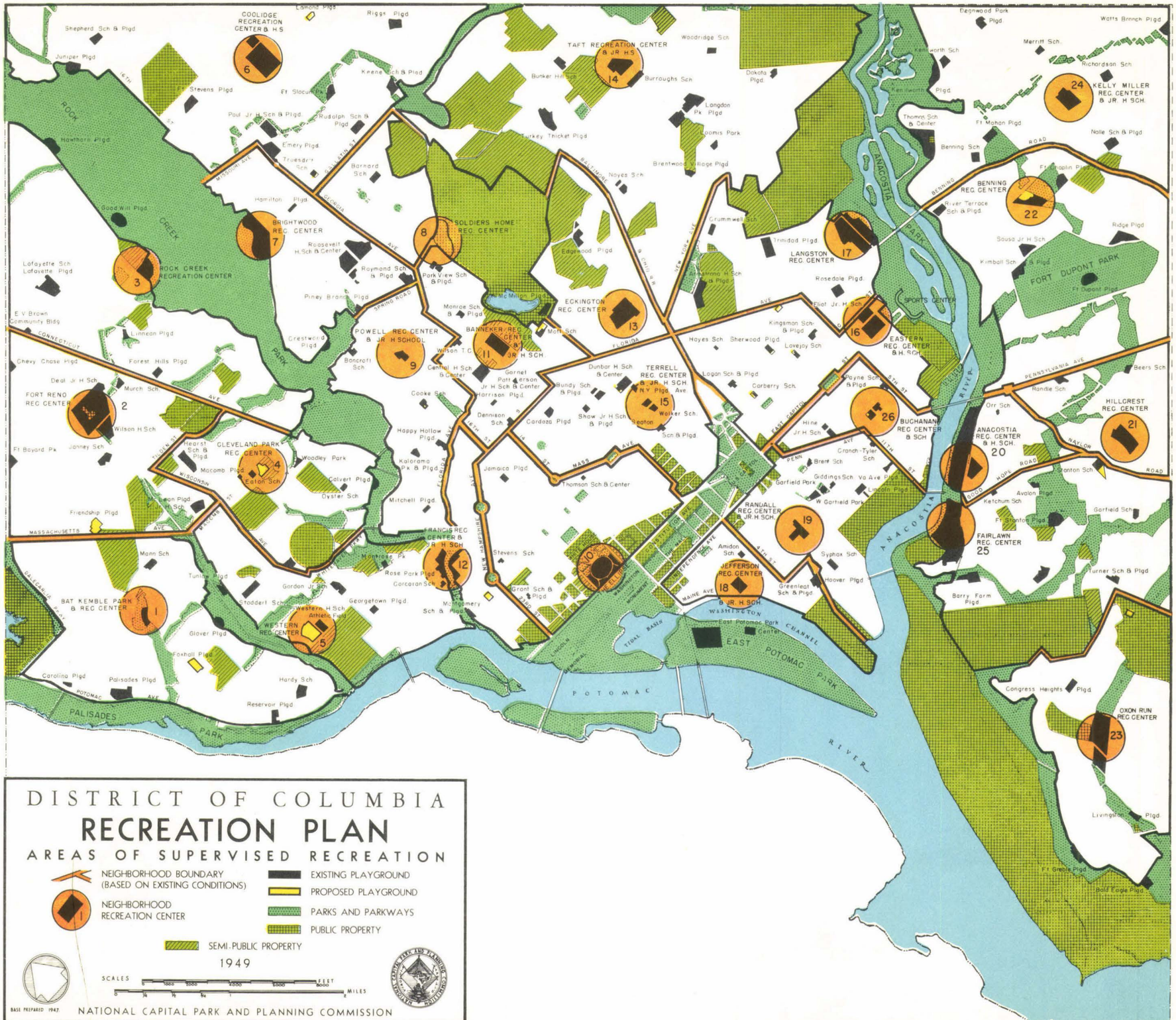
1950

SCALES

BASE PREPARED 1941

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 19



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

RECREATION PLAN

AREAS OF SUPERVISED RECREATION

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY (BASED ON EXISTING CONDITIONS)

NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION CENTER

EXISTING PLAYGROUND

PROPOSED PLAYGROUND

PARKS AND PARKWAYS

PUBLIC PROPERTY

SEMI-PUBLIC PROPERTY

1949

SCALES FEET MILES

BASE PREPARED 1947.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

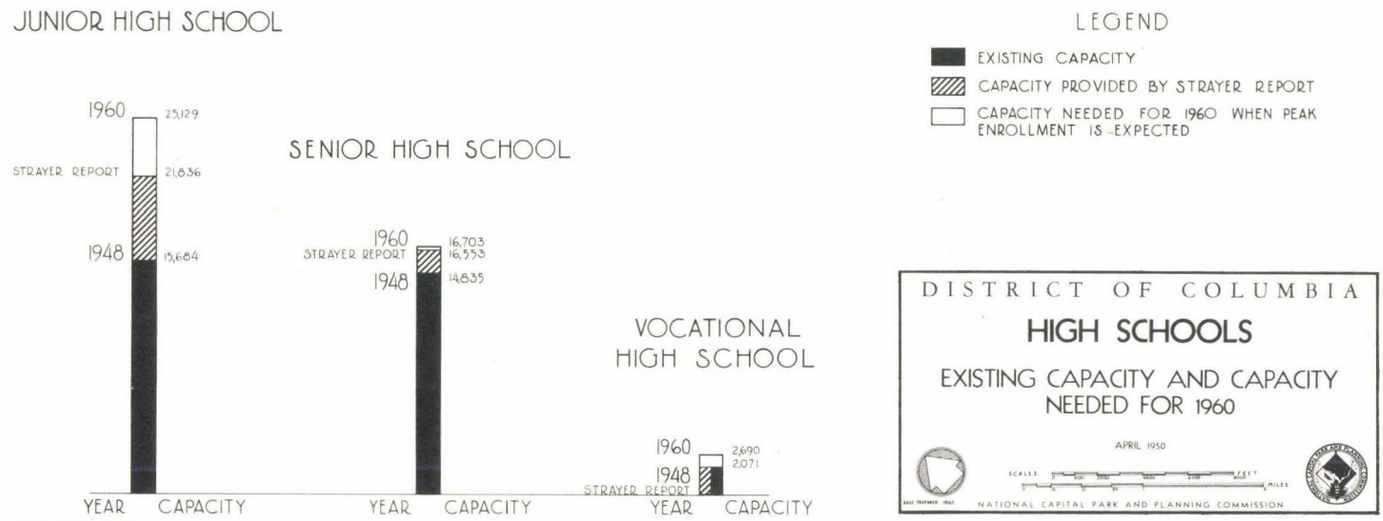


CHART 5

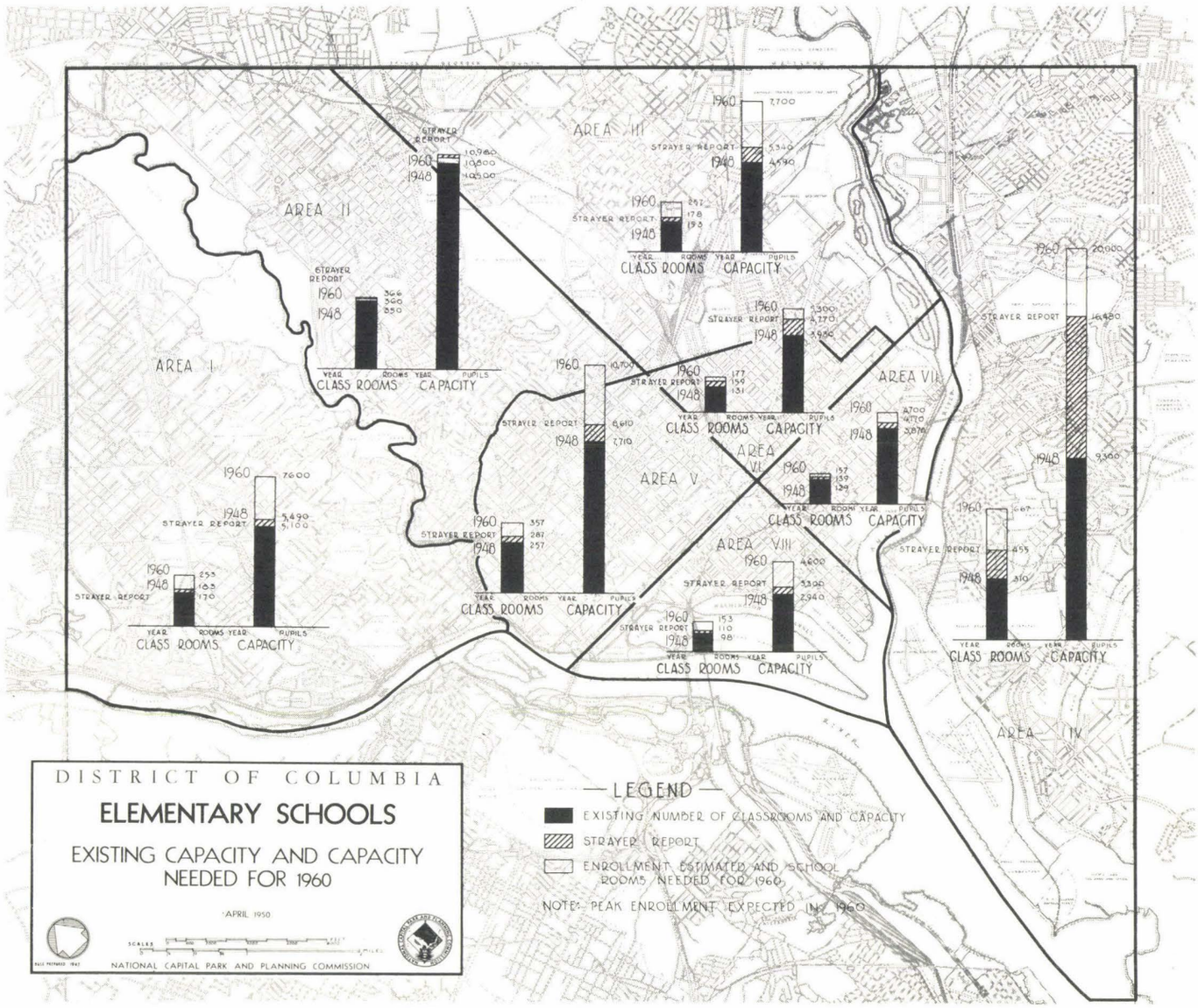


CHART 6

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Schools

Due to rapid growth and shifts of population during the war, many of Washington's schools are too crowded. There are now enough total classrooms, but there are more than enough in some areas and too few in others. Elementary school enrollment will rise to 1960 but after then predictions are not reliable, especially for sections of the city. As neighborhoods stabilize and settle down, it will be possible to plan more soundly for new schools and school relocations.

The charts for elementary schools and for high schools, Nos. 5 and 6, on page 38, show present capacity and capacity needed to meet expected 1960 numbers of school children. (The Strayer report, prepared for the Board of Education in 1948, indicates 1960 as the date when the ultimate in school facilities will be required.) About 25 new elementary schools must be built in the years ahead. It is very important that their planning tie in with the rest of the city's development and that adequate sites be acquired in advance of need, not only for economy in site purchase but also to influence residential construction in the direction recommended by the comprehensive plan.

In the face of so great an unmet need, both for good school buildings well located and for open space, public funds must be carefully spent to avoid the waste of duplication. As with recreation spaces, new schools should be located to serve their natural neighborhood areas, with an eye to the trend toward eventual elimination of racial segregation. This is also sound economy because school buildings last several generations, and patterns of racial distribution are constantly shifting.

Where schools exist, not wholly modern, but soundly built and capable of modernization, advantage should be taken of this fact, to avoid waste of public funds and to give the greatest possible improvement of the educational plant with available money. Considerations of racial use, past or future, by no means should be permitted to interfere with any such modernization which in other respects is sound.

Water Supply and Sewerage

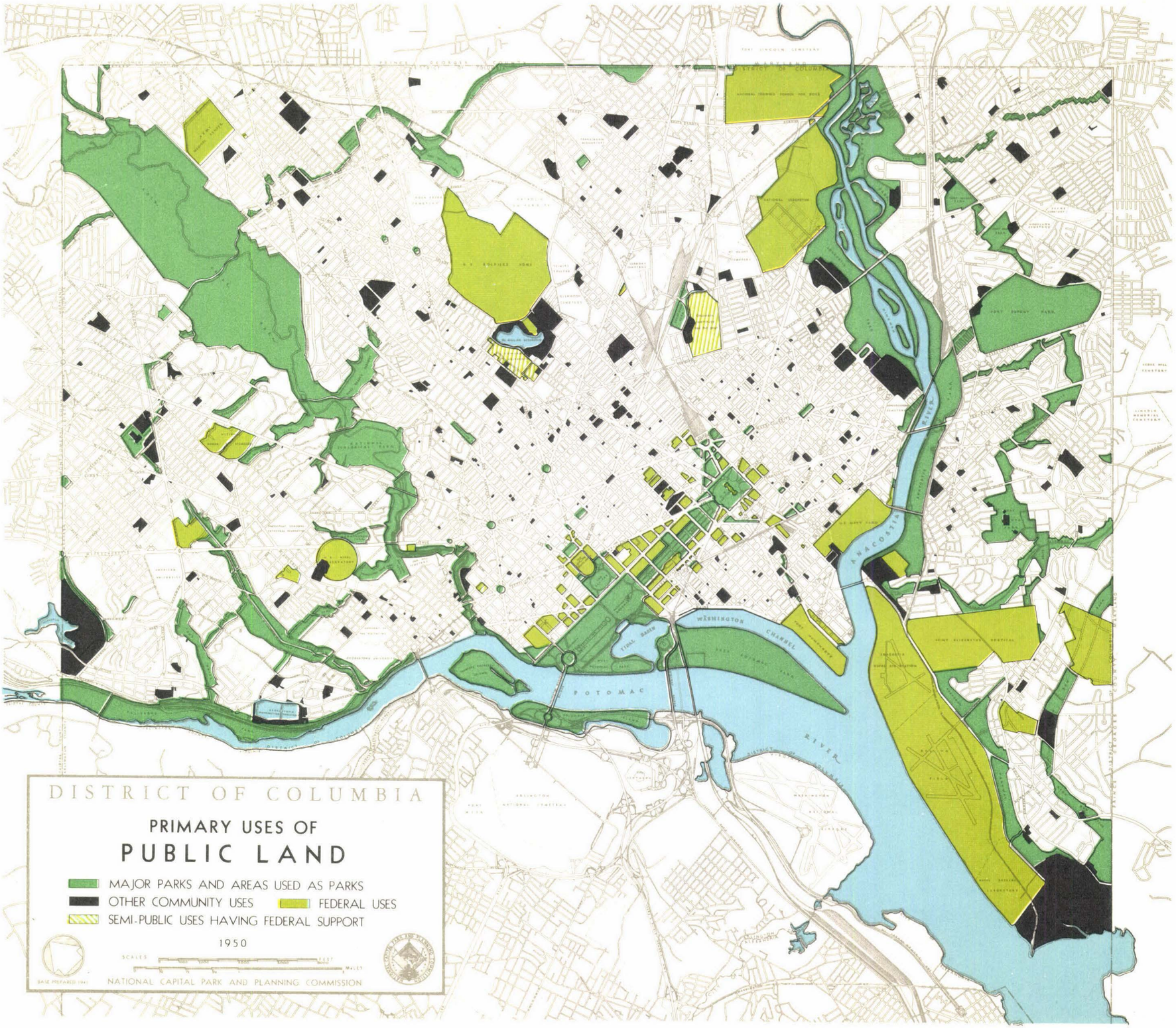
The Potomac River can furnish a wholly adequate water supply for any conceivable population that may develop in the region. At the present time it supplies the District of Columbia, Arlington County, and Falls Church in Virginia. The Maryland suburban area has its principal source of supply on the Patuxent River.

The planning question involved in serving the 1980 population is how and by whom shall the supply be distributed. While the Commission has taken no position on this issue, it would appear to be essential to coordinate the solution of this problem with the Commission's future land-use plan and with sites for decentralized Government establishments. Economy in distributing water will be helped if the land-use plan is followed, with compact urban areas separated by open country instead of a disorganized sprawl of scattered building, with every group of houses demanding public services.

In the field of sewage collection and disposal, the future problem may be more difficult because growth of the metropolitan area has now reached a point where development has begun to spill over into watersheds that cannot be drained through either the existing or heretofore proposed treatment plants. This means that within a short time plans must be made for a number of small treatment plants on tributary streams, both above and below Washington, if urban development is to take place at satellite locations beyond the fringe of the presently urbanized area without creating new pollution problems. The Potomac below Washington is badly polluted. Recent land fills have cut down the water area so that the river can oxidize even less sewage than it could earlier, before much of the new growth occurred. Of four treatment plants in the area, only the Pentagon plant is adequate, removing 90 percent of the pollution before the treated sewage flows into the river. The Potomac River can absorb to a reasonable extent a sewage load from no more than half a million people in the Washington area. With a population of 2 million expected by 1980, this means that enough new treatment plant capacity must be built to handle the equivalent of 75 percent of the total sewage load expected.

In connection with water supply and sewage pollution problems of the Potomac, the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin is taking a leading role in studying the problems and in obtaining action that will achieve the aim of conserving and restoring the Potomac as a great natural resource for the Washington area.

MAP 20


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PRIMARY USES OF
PUBLIC LAND
MAJOR PARKS AND AREAS USED AS PARKS
OTHER COMMUNITY USES
FEDERAL USES
SEMI-PUBLIC USES HAVING FEDERAL SUPPORT
1950
SCALES
BASE PREPARED 1941
NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
POTOMAC
RIVER
ANACOSTIA
WASHINGTON
CHANNEL
TIDAL BASIN

SETTING FOR DEMOCRACY

Civic Art

Washington is a beautiful city because of its Mall, its parks, and the river. Yet in spite of these, the bulk of the inner residential areas are quite ordinary and certainly not beautiful. One redeeming feature of these sections is that street trees hide the ugliness. Beauty that exists must be preserved and enhanced. In the course of the improvement program laid out by the comprehensive plan, new beauty should be created.

Control over appearance of private buildings cannot well go beyond that provided by the Shipstead Act, except as modernized zoning would require more setback from the street, more air and ground space around buildings, and better chance for private lawns, gardens, and trees. But even in the absence of official controls, influence should be brought to bear to protect the beauty of old buildings, not necessarily of historical value, like those around Lafayette Square.

Street trees, for which the city is famous, should be even better protected and maintained. Wherever a public improvement requires cutting down trees and other planting, the project should be designed and means provided so they will be put back, either as before or in a better way.

Public and Federal buildings should be kept to a high standard of architecture, setting, and site lay-out. This Commission believes the Nation's Capital should lead in architecture, and that harmony with older buildings can be secured without slavish, unimaginative copying of antiquated forms. The best of modern design should have a public place among the Roman columns and Renaissance cornices.

An early section presented recommendations on the location of new Federal offices, from the point of view of efficiency and as employment centers. Those buildings to be built in the central part of the District must also be guided by the main lines of over-all orderly design that have given Washington its grandeur.

The Mall will always be the main feature of the central composition in the plan of the National Capital. Plans for its completion should be brought up to date in light of current Federal policies and adhered to in connection with such new public and semipublic buildings and monumental features as require central locations. New Federal and other public and semipublic buildings requiring central locations could be placed along East Capital Street, as recommended by this Commission some years ago. The northwest building plan for west of Twenty-first Street and south of Virginia Avenue should be completed. Similarly the southwest area plan should be finished.

In a commanding location, a public auditorium for gatherings and civic events should be built, tying in with the Board of Trade's effort to make Washington an attractive convention center. This building will be a traffic generator of significant proportions. The site must be selected with this aspect in mind.

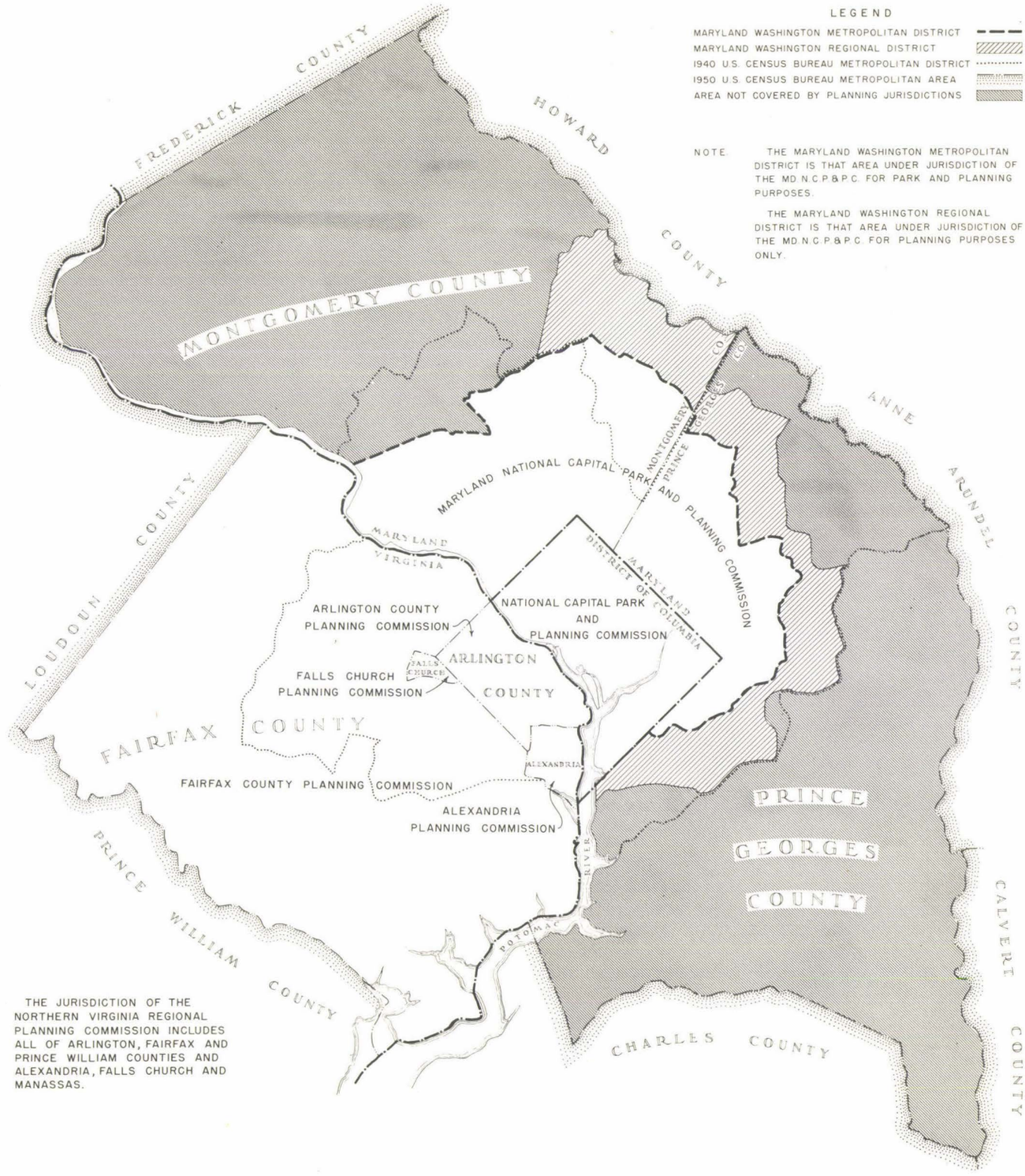
Public Monuments

As the National Capital, Washington has dual personality. The city must shelter inhabitants satisfactorily and accommodate their working places as well as furnish a suitable setting for the "Seat of Government." The manner in which these separate functions are performed is the city's measure of success as a metropolis. Each function requires detailed planning in collaboration with the responsible operating agencies. The important thing is that each and every phase in the area's urban development be worked out continuously and comprehensively within the framework set by the plan.

The basic lay-out of the Capital buildings is framed around a system of monuments of national significance. The Capitol and the White House are themselves monuments, as well as working parts of the Government. New "working" buildings will probably work better, if their efficiency is not subordinated to magnificence. But the monuments as such have a true and leading place, to inspire the citizen and visitor with the National Capital's function as the setting for the spirit as well as the operation of democracy.

The proposed treatment to improve and dignify the setting of the Washington Monument should be completed. The temporary buildings left over from World Wars I and II, which encroach on the Mall and the central setting of main Government buildings, should be removed as quickly as possible and landscaping restored.

In general, visitors to Washington should be able to gain from their pilgrimage a sense of their Nation's Capital as a living symbol of the vigorous progress, as well as the inspiring past, of the United States.



NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES

BASE PREPARED 1948

SCALE OF MILES

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 21

Putting The Plan To Work

THE JOB OF THE PEOPLE

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN calls for creation of a new pattern of ring roads connecting new decentralized Federal employment centers as the primary element in a revitalized plan for future Washington. It calls for other sweeping changes—clearance and rebuilding of large areas, developing many new communities in the countryside for urban living, building modern highways, extending the park system. These changes look big on the plan but, spread over a number of years, they will happen gradually. Equally important, the plan calls for keeping and saving all that is good in the metropolitan area today—not only the historic Government center, but the tens of thousands of good homes, the business centers, the downtown area.

The plan suggests ways for citizens to safeguard their own interests, through their own effort. It proposes the improvement of certain familiar and established protective measures, like zoning and building codes, and extension of traditional public services like schools and playgrounds. But if the plan is to be fulfilled through preservation of home neighborhoods and other private areas, it will be done only by the enterprise of owners and residents. Government can step in with direct help only in extreme cases of blight and slum, and of housing for marginal lowest-income families.

Citizens and citizen groups have a job ahead. Each individual has an intelligently selfish responsibility, to maintain and repair and modernize his own property. In every neighborhood, there is a further responsibility, equally selfish, but requiring vision and vigor. This is the starting and continuing of local civic groups, to stimulate individual property owners, to organize improvement, to develop the local concern and self-respect that are essential. Without this movement, blight and falling values are sure to come to every older area.

Such groups, and other city-wide organizations, have a still broader job to perform. It is up to them to see to it that each agency of government—local, District, county, State, and Federal—does its part. A vital fact of our American heritage is that government is not self-starting. Citizens must push not only for needed public works and services, but for the zoning changes, the code enforcement, so necessary to private property protection. Good government—efficient, farsighted—is essential to achieving the aims of city planning. And constant civic vigilance is the price of good government.

THE TIDAL BASIN. *Temporary buildings usurp planned use and development of West Potomac Park and adjacent monument grounds.*

FAIRCHILD AERIAL SURVEYS, INC.

THE ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

General Planning

In the work of planning for Washington's future, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission has a part that is both broad and limited. In publishing this comprehensive plan, the Commission is offering advice and suggestions to all the agencies of Government, both inside and outside the District of Columbia, that have anything to do with the physical development of the metropolitan region. But in getting the plan carried out, the Commission is largely limited to stimulating others, and to acting as watchdog.

The Commission, set up by act of Congress in 1926, is charged with "preparing, developing, and maintaining a comprehensive, consistent, and coordinated plan for the National Capital and environs." This is not a one-time job. As the metropolitan city grows and changes, the comprehensive planning must also progressively change—adapting the view of the distant future to the facts of the immediate past. The plan here published evolved out of a series of earlier plans, on which the Commission has been working since its start. As the years ahead go by, this plan, too, will be revised from time to time. Its broad goals will not change, but the steps proposed to move toward those aims will have to shift with new ideas, new ways of doing things, new developments in technology, and in public opinion. The plan is the Commission's guide to its daily official decisions on individual matters. To the extent that it is known and approved by the community at large, it will also be an effective guide for the whole metropolitan area.

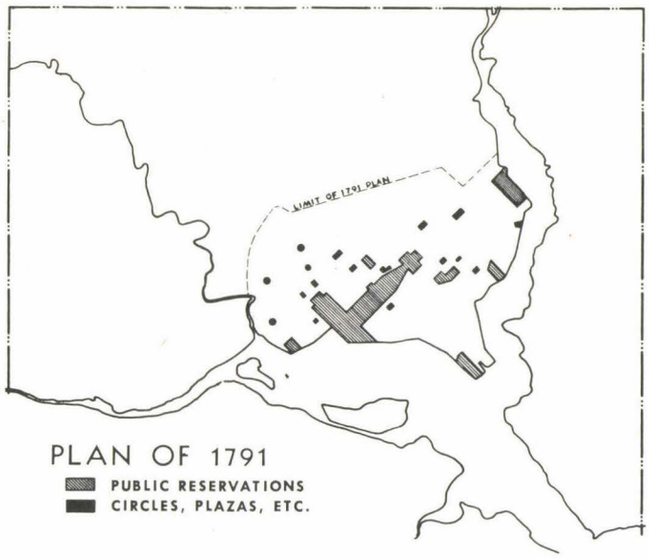
Organization

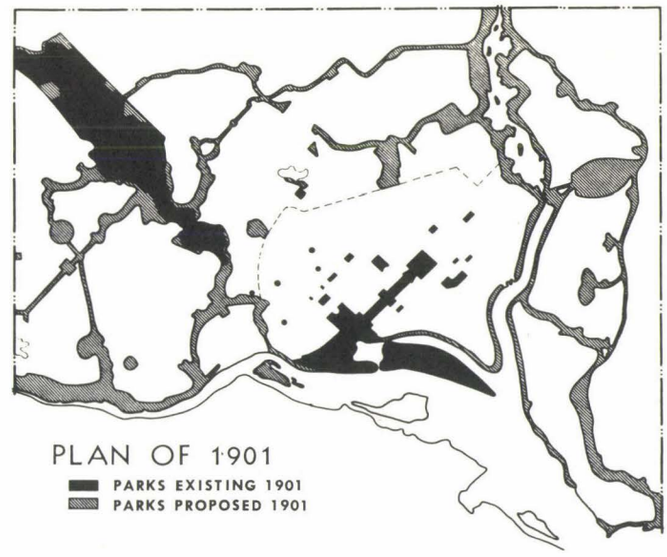
The Commission is an independent agency. Its function involves not merely drawing up a design, but also proposing and recommending steps toward carrying it into effect. A bill to reorganize the structure and powers of the Commission is now pending. This will assure the community that planning guidance is a part of every action that would affect the city's future development. The National Capital metropolitan area would then become the area included in the 1950 census definition as shown on map 21, page 42. Final authority to decide, however, rests with the responsible administrative or legislative body.

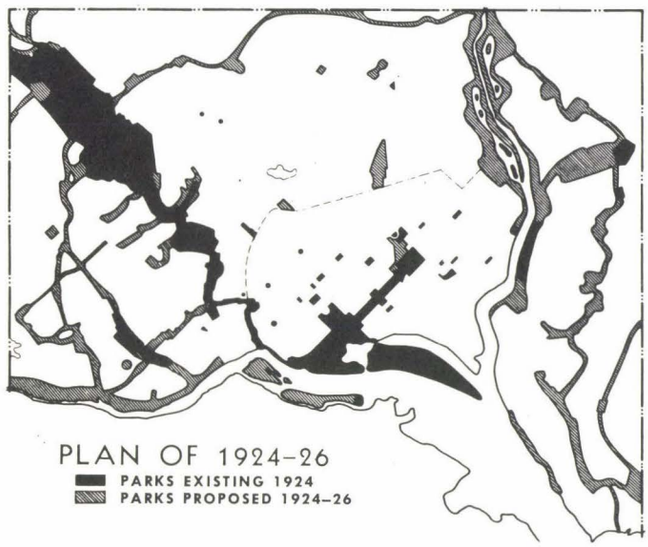
In addition to city planning, the Commission has some direct powers. As a park commission since 1924, it buys all lands in the District for parks, parkways, and playgrounds. In accordance with its own plans, it decides where and at what time to buy property, with funds allocated to it, and then transfers the sites to the administrative agencies. In Maryland and Virginia, under agreements with the States and local authorities under the Capper-Cramton Act of 1930, the Commission acquires land for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a major feature of the regional plan. By agreement with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, it advances and contributes funds for the extension of the National Capital park system into Maryland. This land acquisition power is a unique tool, giving the general planning agency a strong, direct hand in putting into effect a key element of its over-all planning recommendations.

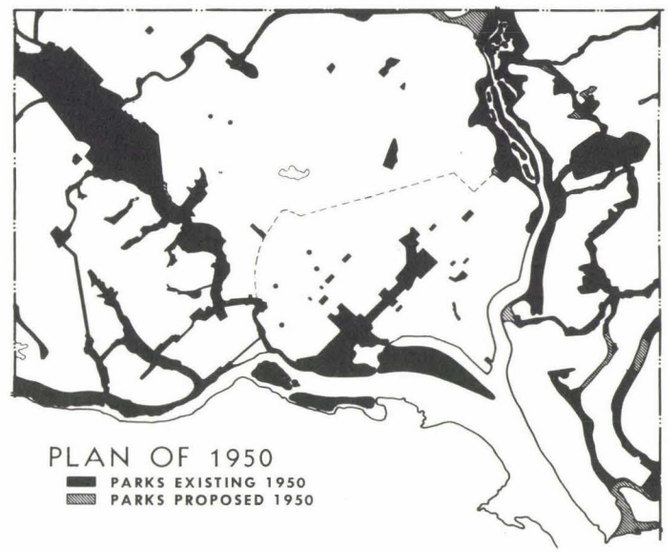
Under other special acts, the Commission has authority to set the boundaries of redevelopment project areas and approve redevelopment plans, to modify or change the official highway plan, and to approve the location, height, and bulk of Federal public buildings not subject to zoning control.

In short, this Commission operates much like the planning commission of any other American city. It cannot pass laws and ordinances, nor levy taxes. Except for parks, it cannot buy land for public use. It cannot clear slums, or build buildings, or enforce laws, or regulate traffic. Yet all of these things must be done if the comprehensive plan is to be carried out. Having prepared the plan, the Commission's job is to keep its goals before the public and the administrative agencies. The plan must be brought to bear, day in and day out, as one of the factors in immediate decisions. Only to the extent that the Planning Commission is a working part of local government, participating in daily decisions—and only to the extent that the comprehensive plan is a living thing, real to the people of the community and standing for what they need and want—will the growth and change that is sure to come in Washington move in the direction of the goals and aims of planning.









EVOLUTION OF THE PARK SYSTEM

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SHOWING MAJOR PARKS, PARKWAYS, AND OTHER PUBLIC AREAS USED AS PARKS

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

L'Enfant's plan provided 607 acres of public reservations. No additions were made until 1889–90 when the Zoological Park was authorized and 1,600 acres of Rock Creek Park were acquired. In 1901, East and West Potomac Parks were started to be reclaimed from marsh land. The plan of 1901 recommended acquisition of 5,792 acres of parks and sites for public buildings. Since 1924, the Park and Planning Commission has acquired 2,576 acres in accordance with its park plan of 1924–26 as periodically revised.

MAP 22

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

The comprehensive plan for the Washington metropolitan area is a single unit, recognizing that the urban community shares problems throughout the region. But the metropolitan area itself is many units, when it comes to carrying the plan into effect. In such matters as zoning, or regulation of new subdivisions, or local public services such as schools and playgrounds, authority for action is divided. Inside the District of Columbia, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission has an official relationship with the District Government. In the suburban areas beyond, there are several independent planning agencies, each with its own field of authority. The region is fortunate in that the suburban territory in Maryland has been united for planning purposes by farsighted official action under the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. In Virginia, where there are now five planning agencies, the advantages of coordinate planning have been recognized in the recent establishment of the Northern Virginia Regional Planning Commission. Power to regulate private development, or to control public development, is in the hands of these planning agencies and of separate county, city, and State governments.

In Maryland and Virginia the comprehensive plan is advisory only. But if it contains good advice—if it is a good plan—it will have the strength to be effective. All the parts of the metropolitan unit gain from benefits to the whole. If this field of mutual interest is realized, the machinery can be worked out for cooperative action toward the goals of the plan.

A first step toward the aim of unified action is creation of a formal association of all planning agencies in the region. Because the political independence of the two States and the District rule out a single official planning agency for the whole territory, such a regional planning council is recommended as the most effective method for jointly considering metropolitan problems, setting policies, and proposing solutions. Past informal committee sessions pave the way for this, with a background of cordial cooperation already established. Such a council has many reasons for being, quite apart from the proposal to give Maryland and Virginia direct representation on the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, wisely included in the pending bill for reorganization of that Commission.

In preparing the comprehensive plan, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission has tried to give due weight to the needs of the suburban areas. It has, nevertheless, made its recommendations for the territory beyond the District boundary in general sketch form only. It is of the greatest importance that this outline plan be acceptable to and accepted by the independent sections that it covers, and then designed in further detail as the base for action.

Advantages are obvious of more or less uniform regulations for development and correlated zoning throughout the region, and of dovetailed plans and programs for public-works construction, under an over-all guiding framework. Equally clear are advantages of continued local self-control and independence. Farsighted vision can gain from the first, without sacrificing the second.

New governmental forms may prove desirable, as city development spreads still farther. Economy and efficiency of such public services as water supply, sewage disposal and transportation may suggest a kind of coordination greater than can be accomplished through cooperative steps. Such developments, if they prove necessary, can best come through the experience of the joint planning body that is proposed. In any case, the best development of the region requires full participation from every part, which will be ever more and more interdependent.

Where there are common economic and social interests, and where the urban development of a metropolitan area is continuous and not sharply divided at political boundary lines, it is important that basic planning should be carried out for the whole area and not for each section by itself. To accomplish this for the National Capital, it might appear easy by expanding the boundaries of the District of Columbia. Such a proposal is not realistic. Nor is an interstate planning authority set up by legislative compact necessary. Effective planning can be carried out by close cooperation between the planning agencies existing in all political jurisdictions in the Washington region through formal association by means of a regional council as suggested above.

Just as the suburban areas could not live without the jobs of central Washington, so, too, the District of Columbia could not long survive without the areas in Maryland and Virginia that are now essential parts of the metropolitan region.

FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Federal Government has double-barreled responsibilities in putting the comprehensive plan into action. First, the District government, until some form of reorganization is put into effect, is still a Federal function. As such, it must accept all development tasks that in the average American city are responsibilities of local government. And second, the Federal establishment itself, as the major economic base of the community, can make or break the future of the city by its policy—or lack of policy—on geographical arrangement of its operations. Most important is a decision on the policy of locating future centers of Federal employment. This is the basic question on which rests the validity of the comprehensive plan, and the future of the metropolitan community.

As local government, the District Commissioners have responsibility to use the comprehensive plan, to gain from it, and to participate in its further evolution and more detailed study. Zoning revision is the outstanding need. Preparing, adopting, and enforcing a housing code is also recommended. Schools, streets, playgrounds, and other local public improvements are under parts of the District government.

Throughout the country financing of essential public works is a problem of local governments. In Washington, the Federal Government has a part in this far beyond its purely local services. Since it takes the place of taxpaying industries that support the average city, it should contribute a substantial sum, in lieu of real estate taxes on its own establishment. This sort of financial aid is essential to creating and maintaining a worthy National Capital.

NEXT STEPS

The comprehensive plan is geared to a program of action, starting now. A city changes faster than people realize. If goals now far-distant are ever to be reached, progress must begin immediately.

In addition to the general recommendations that appear throughout this statement of the comprehensive plan, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission urges that the appropriate executive authority or Congress act promptly on each of these 12 points:

(1) Quick and definite decision on decentralization of the Federal establishment, and minimum extent of essential new building in the central area.

(2) Prompt demolition of temporary Federal buildings, especially those in and near the Mall and nearby park areas, and restoration of the setting; reduction of leased space in congested areas.

(3) Completion of buildings planned to finish the formal setting for the "Seat of Government."

(4) Preparation of coordinated site development plans when decentralized government centers happen.

(5) Start of redevelopment projects to improve central, in-town residential areas, building additional public housing for low-income, displaced families, and eventual removal of the slum stigma from the Capital.

(6) Revision of the District zoning regulations, to include density control and other improvements.

(7) Provision of permanent parking areas at key locations, related to the thoroughfare plan.

(8) Completion of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway as the passenger-car approach to the National Capital from the northeast.

(9) Construction of a new Potomac River bridge at Alexandria with connections to provide a bypass to the north and east.

(10) Completion of land acquisitions for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and immediate road building.

(11) Progressive construction of the various parts of Fort Drive, as a high-speed ring road to distribute traffic on radial routes and to handle circumferential traffic.

(12) Action to preserve places of historic interest in danger of loss or damage.

The comprehensive plan of Washington and environs points the way to improvement of this key city. The community will move toward the goals of the plan, by the democratic action of its citizens, its local governments, and the Federal Government acting on behalf of all the people of the country.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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FORTHCOMING MONOGRAPHS

Forthcoming monographs of the comprehensive plan report are to have the following content:

People and Land
Open Spaces and Community Services
Housing and Redevelopment
Moving People and Goods
Regional Aspects of the Comprehensive Plan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people over a long period of years have participated in the making of the comprehensive plan. They include Federal, District, and local government officials, citizens and citizen organizations, and a number of professional associations. It is impracticable to express our appreciation to them all individually, or to weigh the value of their advice and ideas.

Better to channel this flow of assistance during the period of preparing plans and other materials for the various parts of this comprehensive plan report, the Commission secured the voluntary formation of a Citizens Advisory Board on the Comprehensive Plan of the National Capital. Its membership includes representatives from more than 70 organizations in all fields most likely to be interested in the plan. The comments and recommendations received have been most helpful and constructive. As later and more specific publications are prepared, the Commission hopes to consult this group and its working committees even more than it has to date.

Of particular assistance have been the planning agencies in the suburban areas who bear the brunt of the day-to-day problems thrust upon them by the rapid growth in their areas. The making of the plan has served to emphasize the need for even closer working relations with them in the future.

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"COUNTY

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

THOROUGHFARES

- EXPRESS HIGHWAYS
- EXPRESS PARKWAYS
- DOMINANT THOROUGHFARES
- MAJOR STREETS
- SECONDARY MAJOR STREETS

NOTE: DASH LINES INDICATE RIGHT-OF-WAY TO BE ACQUIRED

LAND USE

- RESIDENCE—LOW DENSITY
- RESIDENCE—MEDIUM DENSITY
- RESIDENCE—HIGH DENSITY
- PUBLIC-COMMUNITY USE
- PUBLIC-FEDERAL USE
- SEMI-PUBLIC
- COMMERCE
- INDUSTRY

SCHOOLS & RECREATION

- EXISTING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- PROPOSED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- EXISTING / PROPOSED — JR. HIGH SCHOOL, SR. HIGH SCHOOL, VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
- EXISTING RECREATION CENTER
- PROPOSED RECREATION CENTER

HOUSING

- GOOD CHARACTER
- BLIGHTED CHARACTER
- OBSOLETE CHARACTER

WATERWAYS

- ANCHORAGES

SCALES

0 1000 2000 4000 6000 8000 FEET

0 ¼ ½ ¾ 1 2 MILES

BASE PREPARED 1947

NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MAP 23

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