



FISCAL YEAR ENDED • SEPTEMBER 30, 1956

ANNUAL

REPORT

**CITY PLAN COMMISSION
CITY OF PROVIDENCE**



City Plan Commission

EDWARD WINSOR, *Chairman*
JERRY LORENZO RALPH MATERA

WALTER H. REYNOLDS, *Mayor*
LUCIO E. CARLONE, *Secretary*

PAUL A. SAN SOUZI, *Vice Chairman*
RAYMOND J. NOTTAGE HARRY PINKERSON

FRANK H. MALLEY, *Director*
DIETER HAMMERSCHLAG, *Senior Planner*
ANTHONY A. VERRECCHIA, *Senior Planner*

*Suite 103, City Hall,
Providence 3, Rhode Island*

February 12, 1957

The Honorable Walter H. Reynolds, Mayor.
The Honorable City Council
of the City of Providence
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island

Gentlemen:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 11 of Chapter 309 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1938, and of Section 179½ of Chapter 2 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Providence, 1946, the City Plan Commission submits herewith its Annual Report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1956.

Respectfully yours,

EDWARD WINSOR
CHAIRMAN
CITY PLAN COMMISSION

EW:MK

IN CITY COUNCIL

MAR 7 - 1957

READ:

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

CLERK

I. ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS

- A. LEGAL BASIS - The City Plan Commission operates under two basic legal documents. The State Enabling Act and the Ordinance adopted by the Providence City Council in 1944. The first authorizes the cities and towns of the State of Rhode Island to establish planning agencies, and lists some of their powers and responsibilities. The second prescribes the organization and specific duties of the City Plan Commission.
- B. MEMBERSHIP - The City Plan Commission consists of the Mayor (ex officio), five qualified citizens appointed by the Mayor, and two councilmanic members elected by the City Council. The present members and officers are:

Mr. Edward Winsor, Chairman	to January, 1961
Mr. Paul A. San Souci, Vice Chairman	to January, 1962
Mr. Lucio E. Carlone, Secretary	to January, 1960
Mayor Walter H. Reynolds	to January, 1959
Councilman Jerry Lorenzo	to January, 1959
Councilman Ralph Matera	to January, 1959
Mr. Raymond J. Nottage	to January, 1959
Mr. Harry Pinkerson	to January, 1958

C. STAFF

1. The technical work for the Commission is carried on by a staff headed by Director Frank H. Malley who is appointed by the Commission. The staff of the Department has been as follows:

1. Mr. Millard Humstone	Planner IV
2. Mr. Anthony A. Verrecchia	Planner IV
3. Mr. Dieter Hammerschlag	Planner IV
4. Mr. Dudley S. Hinds	Planner III
5. Mr. Lewis J. Winter	Planner III
6. Mr. Anthony N. Meleo	Planner III
7. Mr. Lawrence Press	Planner III
8. Mr. Harold T. Stearns	Planner II
9. Mr. Christos G. Jemorakos	Planner II
10. Miss Lorraine Sanderson	Planner I
11. Mr. John Terenzi	Planner I
12. Mrs. Mary M. Hannan	Secretary
13. Mrs. Marion Kaufman	Librarian-Stenographer

1. Mr. Millard Humstone resigned January 22, 1956.
4. Mr. Dudley S. Hinds resigned November 27, 1955.
2. Mr. Anthony A. Verrecchia promoted from Planner III to Planner IV.
6. Mr. Anthony N. Meleo promoted from Planner II to Planner III.
9. Mr. Christos G. Jemorakos promoted from Planner I to Planner II.
3. Mr. Dieter Hammerschlag joined the staff on January 30, 1956.
5. Mr. Lewis J. Winter joined the staff on January 23, 1956.
7. Mr. Lawrence Press joined the staff on March 1, 1956.
11. Mr. John Terenzi joined the staff on March 12, 1956.

2. The Department operated under a budget of \$60,162. Expenditures for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1956, and for the previous year, 1954-1955, are tabulated in Appendix A.

D. OPERATIONS

1. The purpose of the Department is to give technical advice and assistance to the Council, the Mayor, and the various departments and boards of the city administration, and to the people of the community.
2. The major role of the Department is the preparation of the various elements of a Master Plan for the City of Providence. These are developed by the staff and adopted by the Commission.
3. All matters which come before the City Council dealing with physical improvements within the city are required to be referred to the Commission for study and advisory opinions. The Director advises on all cases coming before the Zoning Board of Review.

Since the Department's inception in 1944, it has dealt with 739 Council Referrals, and 838 Board of Review Referrals. In Appendix B, Part I is a tabulation of the City Council Referrals for 1955-1956, and Part II is a tabulation of the Board of Review Referrals for the past fiscal year.

4. The Department publishes each element of the Master Plan as it is completed. A list of the Master Plans and special reports which have been published since 1944 follows:

REPORTS PUBLISHED

FUTURE POPULATION OF PROVIDENCE, 1945	(Out of Print)
A PLAN FOR FIELDS POINT PORT AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT, 1946	(Out of Print)
MASTER PLAN FOR THOROFARES, 1946 Amended in 1950	(Out of Print)
MASTER PLAN FOR LAND USE AND POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, 1946	(Out of Print)
MASTER PLAN FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS, 1946	(Out of Print)
ZONING ORDINANCE, 1948, Approved 1951	(Out of Print)
MASTER PLAN FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL SITES, 1950	(Out of Print)
PARKING IN DOWNTOWN PROVIDENCE, 1950	(Out of Print)
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, 1950-1956	(Out of Print)
Supplement 1951-1957	(Out of Print)
Supplement 1952-1958	(Out of Print)
Supplement 1953-1959	(Out of Print)
Supplement 1954-1960	(Out of Print)
Supplement 1955-1961	
Supplement 1956-1962	

MASTER PLAN FOR PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYFIELDS, 1953
RAILROAD RELOCATION, 1953
THE EFFECT OF EXPRESSWAY CONSTRUCTION ON SURROUNDING (Out of Print)
PROPERTIES, 1953
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIMPROVED STREETS IN PROVIDENCE, (Limited No.)
RHODE ISLAND, 1954
INDUSTRIAL ZONING STUDY, 1954
LAND USE COMPARISON 1946-1953

II. MAJOR ACTIVITIES 1955-1956

A. INDUSTRIAL ZONING STUDY

A study of land zoned for industrial use and other areas which might be rezoned for industrial use was made as a result of a Resolution of the City Council. A Report was approved by the Commission and sent to the City Council.

B. LAND USE AND ZONING COMPARISON

This report was prepared in order to find what changes have taken place and to find how much progress has been made toward the objectives of the MASTER PLAN FOR LAND USE AND POPULATION DISTRIBUTION during the seven years since 1946 when it was published.

Part I is a description of the 1953 land use pattern broken down into Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Public and Institutional uses and Vacant areas. Part II is an analysis of the changes in the land use pattern between 1946 and 1953, first on a city-wide basis and then on a neighborhood basis. Part III is a description and analysis of dwelling units and residential densities including: first, the 1953 pattern of residential densities; second, the changes in the number of dwelling units between 1946 and 1953; and third, the changes in the amount of lot area per dwelling units between 1946 and 1953. The fourth part is a comparison of land use and zoning.

C. REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR WEST RIVER PROJECT NO. UR R.I. 1-6

On May 15, 1956, the Commission approved the Redevelopment Plan submitted by the Redevelopment Agency on May eleventh, and reported to the City Council recommending the execution of this plan as being necessary and in the public interest.

D. NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

A definitive start on neighborhood analysis was made at the beginning of this fiscal year. This work is directed toward the detailing of master plans at the neighborhood level and is in accord with the established policies and procedures of the Department. It is also an activity required by the Housing Act if the City is to continue to qualify for federal

funds for Urban Renewal. The development of Master Plans for the twenty various neighborhoods will be pursued as an important part of the Department's work program.

E. URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAM

The Urban Renewal Program stems from the requirements of the Housing Act of 1954 and there are seven specific parts in the "Workable Program" of Urban Renewal which are as follows:

1. Codes and Ordinances - This covers all necessary codes and ordinances a city shall have. The principal part of this section that we are concerned with is the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Community Plan - This pertains to the Master Plan.
3. Neighborhood Analysis.
4. Administrative Organization.
5. Financing - We are concerned with this in connection with the Capital Improvement Program.
6. Housing of Displaced Families.
7. Citizen Participation.

While the Workable Program applies to activities of a number of City Departments, there are several aspects that concern this Department. The Department is making every effort toward accomplishments to this end.

F. URBAN RENEWAL APPLICATION

A survey and planning application for federal funds for the Mashapaug Pond Area was begun near the end of the fiscal year.

G. ROBIN BROOK SEWER

A Resolution of the City Council requested the Director of Public Works, the Traffic Engineer and the Director of the City Plan Commission to study and report back on the advisability and necessity of constructing a highway over the present Robin Brook Sewer System land.

Consideration was given to the various factors involved, including topography, land use, development of existing streets, and particularly areas which would be made accessible by such a highway, and it was concluded that the construction of a highway in this location is unnecessary and inadvisable at this time.

H. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Department in collaboration with the Finance Director, submitted to the City Council a Capital Improvement Program for 1956 through 1962 of \$27,213,567 including \$1,636,602 for the Water Supply Board. The total Capital Budget for 1956-1957 is \$6,670,665, exclusive of the Water Supply Board. Of this total amount \$657,000 is to be financed from current revenue and \$6,013,665 from bond authorities,

I. DEMONSTRATION GRANTS

Central Business District and College Hill

The Downtown Businessmen's Coordinating Council, having financed and contracted for a customer attitude survey, requested the Department, through the Executive Office to undertake a Space Use Survey as an additional step toward evaluating and correcting the ills of the Central Business District. Investigation of this matter indicated the possibility of a Demonstration Grant. At the end of the fiscal year an application was under preparation which would provide "A Study of the Extent to which the Civic and Business Groups Interested in the Downtown Area can Participate Practically and Constructively with an Official Planning Agency and the City Government in Developing Plans, Policies and Programs for the Renewal of the Central Business District."

The year 1956 saw the formation of the Providence Preservation Society, consisting of people actively interested in the preservation of historic buildings. There are many such buildings especially in the College Hill Area which adjoins the Central Business District. In accordance with the Society's request the Department started the development of a Demonstration Grant proposal encompassing "A Study of the Methods and Techniques for Developing a Feasible Program of Preservation, Restoration and Renewal in a Historic Area."

It is expected that both the above proposals will be submitted to the Urban Renewal Administration early in the coming fiscal year.

J. DEXTER ASYLUM

The Commission reviewed a progress report of the proposals made by the staff for the subdivision of the Dexter Asylum site, the release of which has been pending in the Court for some years. The study was undertaken in order to determine the feasibility of rezoning the area. Two of the initial proposals are consistent with the present zoning regulation establishing the area as an R-1 Zone. The difference is that in one the wall remains standing, except for needed openings, while in the other, the wall is demolished. The number of units vary from 149 with the wall

remaining to 160 without the wall. Consideration was given to location and size of a school site. The inclusion of a school site results in the reduction of units to 132 with the wall and 136 without the wall. In these proposals the lots were approximately 8,500 square feet.

The third proposal deals with a multiple dwelling use of the area. The densities allowed were 4,500 square feet for garden apartments and 2,800 square feet for high-rise apartments. Multiple dwelling and garden apartment construction costs were assumed at \$16.00 and \$12.00 a square foot respectively. The rental needed to make such a project economically feasible averages about \$200.00 per unit per month.

At the end of the fiscal year the Commission decided that more investigation was desirable to determine any benefits that might result from a combination of single-family residences and fewer general residence dwelling units.

K. NATIONAL HOUSING INVENTORY

In spite of every effort on the part of the Commission and the Executive Office, Providence was excluded from the National Housing Inventory of 1956 because of inadequate funds appropriated by Congress to the United States Bureau of the Census.

L. MISCELLANEOUS

The Commission and staff were host to the American Institute of Planners annual Conference that was held for the second time in Providence on May 6-9, 1956.

APPENDIX A

Expenditures and Appropriations of the City Plan Department

	Expenditures	
	<u>1954-1955</u>	<u>1955-1956</u>
PERSONAL SERVICES (Salaries)	\$ 46,670.00	\$ 52,010.52*
SERVICES OTHER THAN PERSONAL (Printing, Transportation Miscellaneous, Fees, etc.)	3,736.09	3,575.36
MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES (Stationery, Office Supplies, etc.)	944.05	1,070.08**
EQUIPMENT	<u>160.04</u>	<u>838.92***</u>
Total Expenditure	\$ 51,510.18	\$ 57,494.88
Appropriation	<u>51,815.00</u>	<u>60,162.00</u>
Balance (returned to General Fund)	\$ 304.82	\$ 2,667.12

* \$1,285.00 of this expenditure was transferred to Item II and Item V.

** \$ 250.00 of this expenditure was a transfer of funds from Item 0.

*** \$1,035.00 was a transfer of funds from Item 0.

**APPENDIX B
PART I**

Summary of Action on Petitions

**Referred from City Council
1955-1956**

<u>Subject</u>	<u>City Plan Action</u>			<u>City Council Action</u>				
	<u>Total No. of Referrals</u>	<u>No Objection</u>	<u>Recom- mended Denial</u>	<u>In Accord with CPC Recommen- dations</u>	<u>Opposite to CPC Recommen- dation</u>	<u>Partially Approved</u>	<u>Died in Committee</u>	<u>No Action</u>
Zoning Amendments	37	13	24	19	6 (6)*	1		11
Abandonment of Streets	10	10		5	2 (2)*			3
Sale or Lease of City-owned Property	16	16	2	12	1 (1)*			5
Redemptions of Tax Title Property	35	28 (1**)	6	26			3	6
Miscellaneous	18	15	2	12				6
Total	118	82	34	74	9 (9)*	1	3	31

* The figures in parentheses indicate the number of petitions granted by the City Council following City Plan Commission recommendations for denial.

** Partially approved.

APPENDIX B
PART II

Summary of Action on Referrals from
the Zoning Board of Review
through September 30, 1956

<u>Plan Department Action</u>			<u>Subsequent Action By Board of Review</u>		
<u>Total No. of Referrals</u>	<u>No Objection</u>	<u>Recommended Denial</u>	<u>In Accord with CPC Recommendation</u>	<u>Opposite to CPC Recommen- dation</u>	<u>No Action</u>
178	72	106	92	75 (75)*	11

* The figure in parentheses indicates the number of changes granted by the Board of Review following City Plan Commission staff recommendations for denial.