

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



1964 ANNUAL REPORT

**CITY PLAN COMMISSION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

**REVIEW OF PLANNING & PROGRESS
OCTOBER 1, 1963
THRU
SEPTEMBER 30, 1964**

CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	2
Progress and Planning	3
I INTRODUCTION	5
II MASTER PLANNING	
1964 Master Plan Revision	8
School Plan Study	8
Recreation Plan Study	8
Circulation Planning	8
III PROJECT PLANNING & COORDINATION	
Westminster Mall	11
Weybosset Hill Project	12
Railroad Relocation Project	13
Performing Arts Center	14
East-Side Renewal	15
IV PLANNING TOOLS & ACTION PROGRAM	
Zoning Revision Study	17
Capital Improvement Program	17
Community Renewal Program	17
V STAFF & ACTION DATA	
Organization Chart	20
Commission and Staff	21
Expenditures and Appropriations	22
Commission Action on Referrals	23



City Plan Commission

EDWARD WINSOR, *Chairman*

WALTER H. REYNOLDS, *Mayor*

HARRY PINKERSON, *Secretary*

ALBERT BUSH-BROWN EDWARD J. COSTELLO

JERRY LORENZO

RALPH MATERA RAYMOND J. NOTTAGE

FRANK H. MALLEY, *Director*

DIETER HAMMERSCHLAG, *Deputy Director*

Suite 103, City Hall,

Providence, Rhode Island 02903

January 4, 1965

Hon. Joseph A. Doorley, Jr., Mayor
& Honorable City Council of the
City of Providence
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island

Gentlemen:

It is with pleasure that I transmit to you herewith the Annual Report of the City Plan Commission for the year ending September 30, 1964.

Several major accomplishments have occurred during this period: completion of the city-wide MASTER PLAN revision and the commencement of construction on the WESTMINSTER MALL. Though each of these projects was an important responsibility of the Commission, they illustrate the indispensable cooperation and leadership of other agencies and individuals who made them a reality.

To all departments, staffs and citizens who have helped both plans and progress we dedicate this report.

Sincerely,

Edward Winsor
Chairman,
City Plan Commission

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 21 1965

READ:

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

2

Vincent Vespia
CLERK

PLANNING & PROGRESS 1963-4

- December 1963 -- PERFORMING ARTS STUDY released by Plan Commission
- Jan-March 1964 -- Draft COMMUNITY RENEWAL PROGRAM reviewed
- March 1964 -- WESTMINSTER MALL construction started
- April 1964 -- Court case obstructs Mall Construction
- May 1964 -- MASTER PLAN FOR 1975 approved by Plan Commission
- May 1964 -- WEYBOSSET HILL PROJECT area condemned
- June 1964 -- ZONING REVISION STUDY commenced
- June 1964 -- Preliminary EAST SIDE RENEWAL PLANS presented to citizens by the Redevelopment Agency
- July 1964 -- East Side Demonstration Project for Rehabilitation began
- August 1964 -- Community Renewal Program SCHEDULE certified by Plan Commission
- August 1964 -- LIPPITT HILL Residential Project approved by FHA
- August 1964 -- \$600,000 credit for RAILROAD RELOCATION project approved by Congress
- August 1964 -- BRADFORD HOUSE Apartment for elderly started
- September 1964 -- MAJESTIC GARAGE dedicated
- September 1964 -- Successful negotiation to complete WESTMINSTER MALL
- September 1964 -- Completion of 1975 MASTER PLAN GUIDE publication

I INTRODUCTION
PLANNING FOR WHAT?

I. INTRODUCTION

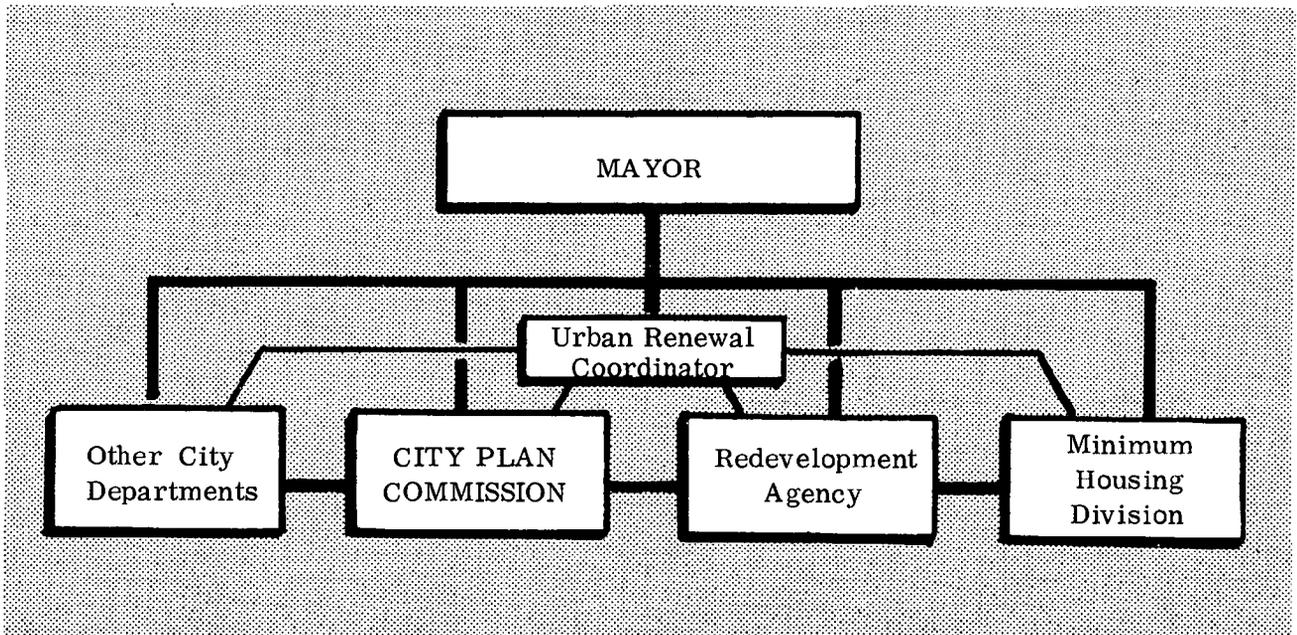
A bird's eye view of Providence would show a city that is the result of the plans of many and the haphazard growth of generations. Every building, every street, every sign is the outcome of someone's action which, if investigated, would usually uncover some kind of "plan" of what should be built. Since it was natural for most individuals and organized groups to have different values and goals, the overall appearance of their projects combined seems to show little forethought at all! Local governments also have reflected a variety of activities and interests. Good plans for one public agency sometimes limit the activities of another. Therefore the need for coordinated planning in our cities has been a major challenge of present urban life.



Needs of the entire city are the concern of Providence's City Plan Commission. While every department of the municipal government must try to serve all the citizens, the Commission and its staff of professional city planners must balance the needs of various public and private interests to produce a compatible LONG-RANGE plan which will assist all. This planning, characterized by its broad scope and time period, is called "comprehensive" or "master" planning.

The physical environment is the prime subject matter of the Plan Commission. However, a basic requirement of all plans and their preparation is that they must be related to people and to their needs and desires. Each planning study must therefore analyze social and economic influences and how they will be affected by future programs.

Independence of the Commission is established by municipal ordinances made possible by state legislation which designate both the structure and responsibility of the agency. The organization follows the pattern of most of the experienced planning agencies throughout the United States, where non-partisan boards of civic-minded citizens have been particularly valuable in creating and supporting clear goals and programs for city development. Coordination with the Mayor and other branches of city government is assured by membership on the Commission of the Mayor and two Councilmen elected from City Council serving with the five other citizen members who are appointed to five-year overlapping terms.



SIMPLIFIED PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE (also see pg. 20)

Cooperating Agencies and departments of the City include every aspect of municipal life. Each has contributed to the formation of the long-range goals and programs recommended by the Plan Commission, and each is essential to their success. In addition to city departments concerned with property and services, close assistance is provided by several agencies whose programs involve considerable private initiative such as the PROVIDENCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, the DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION and DIVISION OF MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS. In this area the role of the Urban Renewal Coordinator is most important, for it is through these collective efforts that the Master Plan is brought to reality.

II MASTER PLANNING

II. MASTER PLANNING

1964 Revision

MASTER PLAN, PROVIDENCE, R. I., "A Guide for Development to the year 1975" was approved by the Commission in May and the intricate process of producing the plan in printed form was completed in the fall. Representing almost three years of work by the Commission and staff, the publication brings together for the first time since 1946 a combined picture of long-range physical plans for Providence. On the same large sheet showing a multi-colored plan of recommended land-uses within the City, the various elements of the Plan are described. After a review of the special character and background of Providence, Community Goals and Policy are discussed, followed by summaries of Master Plan Programs in transportation, land use, schools, recreation, parks and the various means of achieving the plan such as urban renewal.

School Plan Study

A concentrated reappraisal of Providence schools, their location, resources and physical development is periodically necessary. This key element of the Master Plan last published in 1950 had received critical attention during the preparation of the major 1964 Master Plan revision and was given top priority for a detailed study follow-up. Careful field surveys and cooperative efforts with the School Department personnel were then undertaken. This detailed Master Plan for Public School facilities is scheduled for completion in 1965.

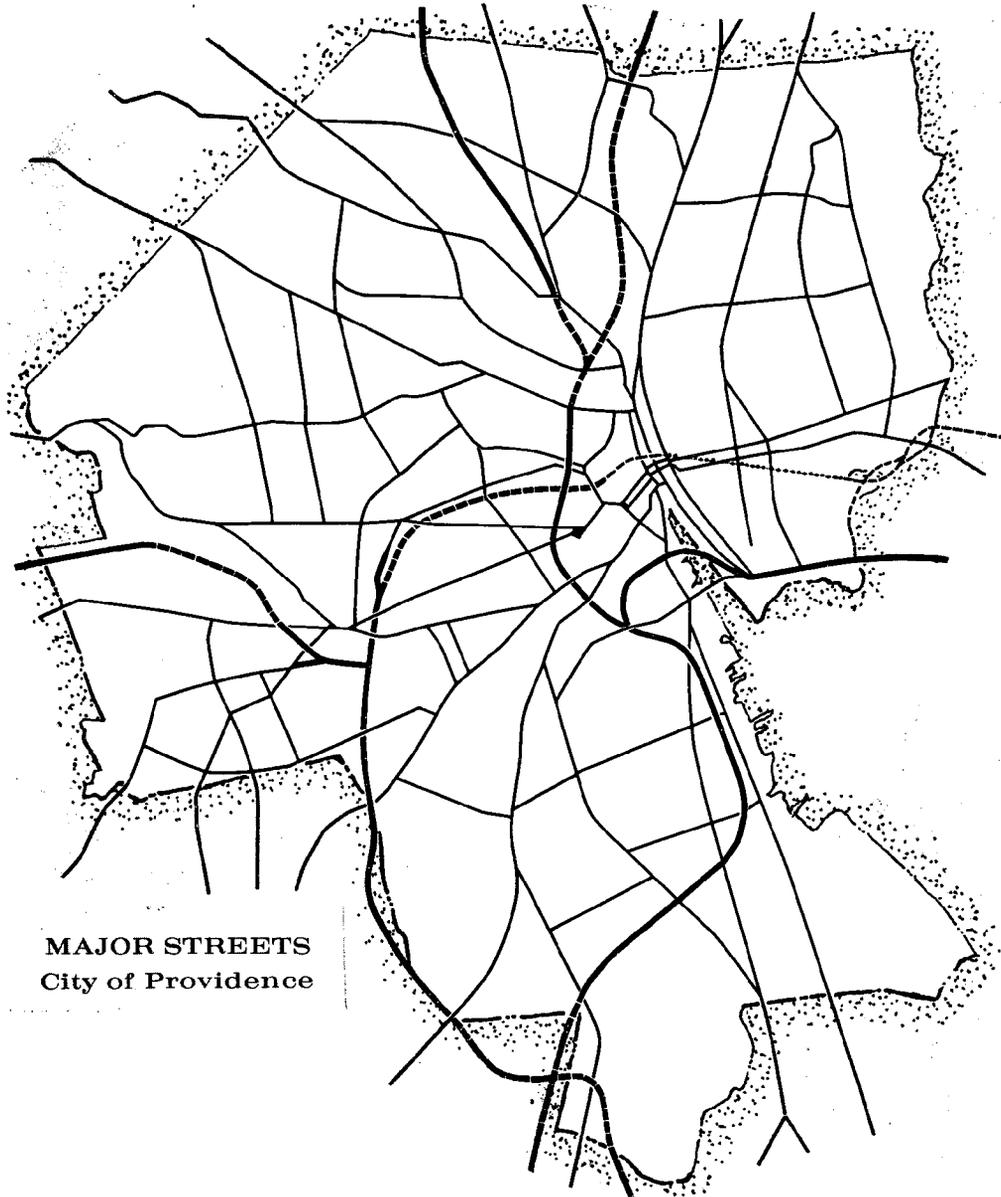
Recreation Plan Study

While most of the 1953 MASTER PLAN FOR PLAYGROUNDS AND PLAYFIELDS has been completed or exceeded, the need for attention in this area is critical. Incidents of juvenile delinquency have only high-lighted the necessity for a major improvement effort in the field of public facilities for leisure time use and open space. A planning study team, working with the Recreation Department, concentrated during the summer on an investigation of how existing playgrounds and other facilities were used. Organized methods were also initiated to uncover the actual needs and potentialities of every neighborhood. This Master Plan study is scheduled so that it may be published concurrently with the school facilities plan.

Circulation Planning

As a result of a series of computer analyses of projected highway traffic during 1962 and 1963 under the supervision of the staff and transportation consultant Alan Voorhees Associates, a broad review of the City's circulation system of streets and freeways was made. The completion of the consultant's work at

the beginning of 1964 permitted a timely re-evaluation of Master Plan proposals prior to their approval in May. Critical attention was also given to a recommended Master Plan conversion of the East Side railroad tunnel to highway use which is discussed under the Railroad Relocation section of this report.



Regional and state-wide transportation planning was actively supported through the participation of the Commission's Director as Vice Chairman of the Technical Core Committee for a new state transportation study. This major federally-assisted project got underway under a plan proposed by the Core Committee which was approved by a broadly representative policy group composed of local, state and national officials which included Mayor Walter H. Reynolds. The new project was titled Comprehensive State-Wide Transportation and Land Use Planning Program and scheduled to run for three years. The City Plan Commission and other local agencies have since assisted the project by drafting a new system of Land-Use classification for the region. Providence and the entire State through this million dollar program will thus be closely analyzed, and a more comprehensive system of highways developed.

III PROJECT PLANNING & COORDINATION

III. PROJECT PLANNING AND COORDINATION

Westminster Pedestrian Mall

Usually the Commission does not execute projects which it has proposed. However, in view of the unique character of a Pedestrian Mall and in order to retain continuity from planning through design and execution, the Mayor appointed the Commission's Deputy Director as Coordinating Architect for the project. The firm of Fenton Keyes Associates of Providence prepared the construction drawings and specifications and the Public Works Department supervised construction.



The city administration and the federal government were joined in an unique cooperative effort of public and private financial support when the Providence Chamber of Commerce raised \$50,000 to meet the sum needed to award a contract to the lowest bidder. Under the surface of the new landscaped pedestrian area will be a complete new system of utilities which account for a major portion of the costs.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held in March of 1964. However, a preliminary injunction obtained by a property owner against the construction of the Mall created serious difficulties. Considerable effort was necessary on the part of the Law Department, the Public Works Department, the City Plan Commission and many private individuals to adapt the project to this ruling without stopping it completely. A decision in Superior Court on July 6th permanently enjoined the City from building the project as planned. Under this decision it was possible to complete only the utilities involved and work proceeded on that part of the Mall through the summer. Negotiations to resolve the legal difficulties were aided substantially by the intercession of IMPACT R.I. Inc.

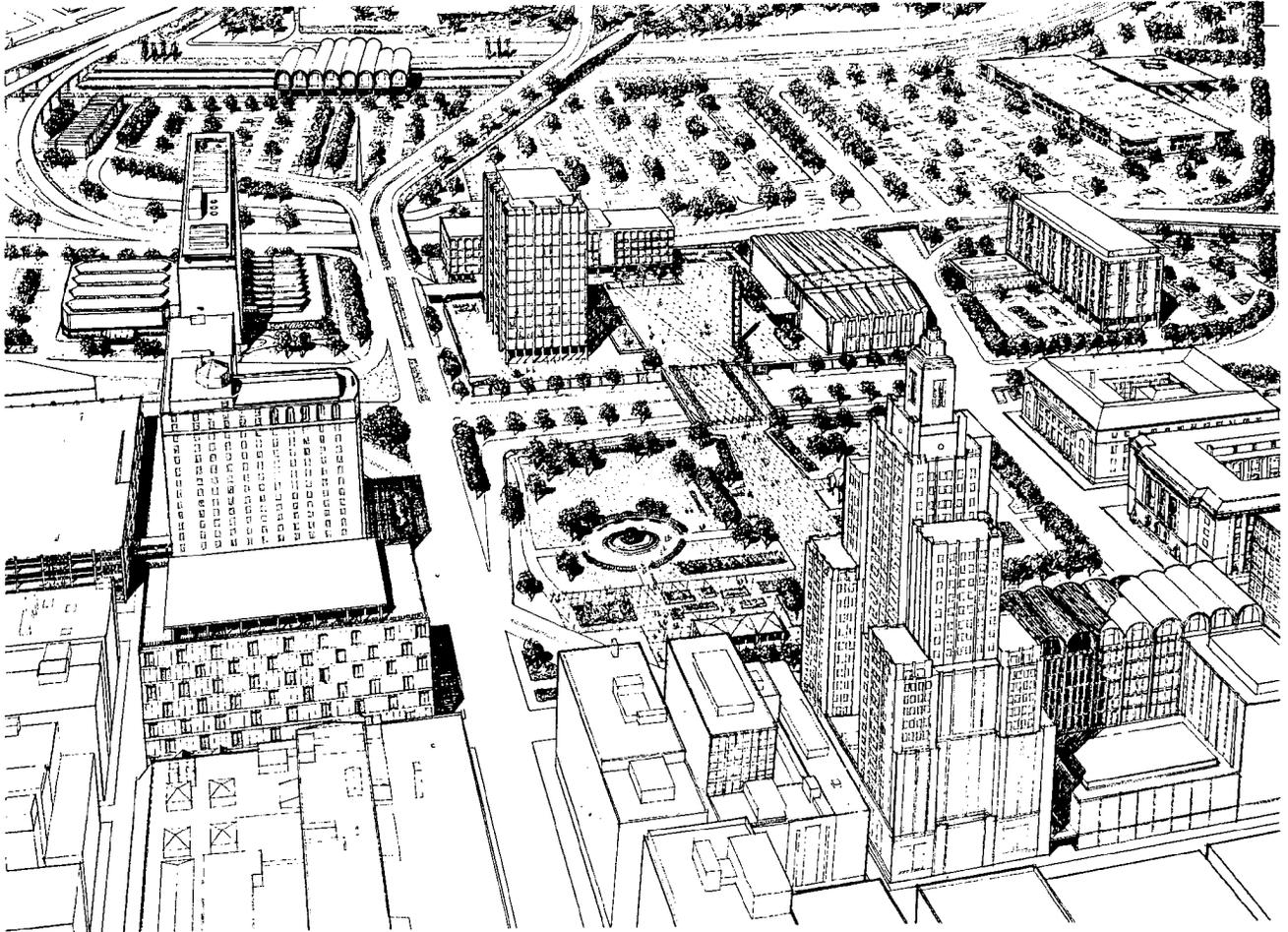
Releases from abutting property owners were obtained through the efforts of the Chairman of the Pedestrian Mall Committee of the Chamber of Commerce. This, and a cutback in the length of the project, satisfied the objecting property owner. Consequently, the injunction was lifted permitting the City to proceed.

The delay resulting from these events made it impossible to meet the originally contemplated opening date of Thanksgiving Day. However, through the cooperation of the contractor and an extraordinary effort by the Public Works Department, underground work was finished so that the Mall - though incomplete - could be fully used by pedestrian shoppers during the Christmas Shopping Season.

Weybosset Hill

The residential urban renewal project proposed in the Commission's DOWNTOWN PROVIDENCE 1970 was moved into the execution stage on schedule by the Providence Redevelopment Agency. Previous consultation by the Commission's Deputy Director during project planning stages was followed during this year by several sessions with the Providence Redevelopment Agency's staff personnel and project architects. Condemnation of existing property occurred in May after federal agencies gave the renewal project a "green light".

The MAJESTIC GARAGE, one of the top priority items shown in the Downtown Master Plan, and also within the Weybosset Hill area, was completed in September. Here the final appearance of this handsome structure was the result of joint efforts by the staffs of the City Plan Commission, Redevelopment Agency and garage designers.



Providence Downtown Master Plan envisions the area this way after Railroad Relocation.

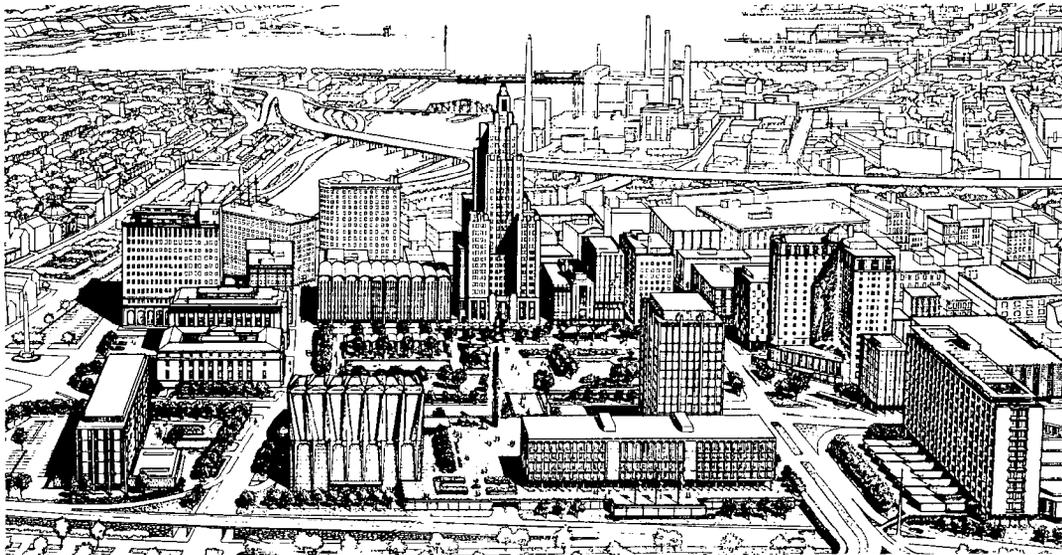
Railroad Relocation Project

Attention on the Civic Center area project, being developed under the auspices of the Providence Redevelopment Agency, was focused on the traffic circulation system. The Commission and City Traffic Engineer devoted considerable time on a re-evaluation of a major through-road in the project area which was part of the Downtown Master Plan. This road will provide access to downtown, from the new Red Bridge crossing the Seekonk River, through a tunnel under the East Side area of Providence. During this study, alternative plans from the Redevelopment Agency were examined and consultants to both the Commission and Agency were utilized.

In May, after careful review, the Commission officially reaffirmed its decision that the tunnel should be converted to automobile use. A related meeting had previously been held in April which reported the findings by the Commission and its transportation consultants to State and local administrators and members of IMPACT R.I. Inc. At that time the State Public Works Director assured those represented there that the State would cooperate with City plans to allow such a facility to be built.

In a joint meeting of city and federal officials in July, it was decided to proceed on the basis of the Downtown Master Plan framework. A RAILROAD RELOCATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE composed of representatives of the Plan Commission, the Redevelopment Agency and the Urban Renewal Coordinator will be an important aid in expediting the project.

Later during the year the Commission forwarded a detailed plan of traffic circulation and land use in the "railroad relocation" project area as requested by the Redevelopment Agency for its current project planning. With several years preparatory work complete and 11 million dollars already reserved by the federal government, this venture has become the keystone to the completion of a renewed downtown core.

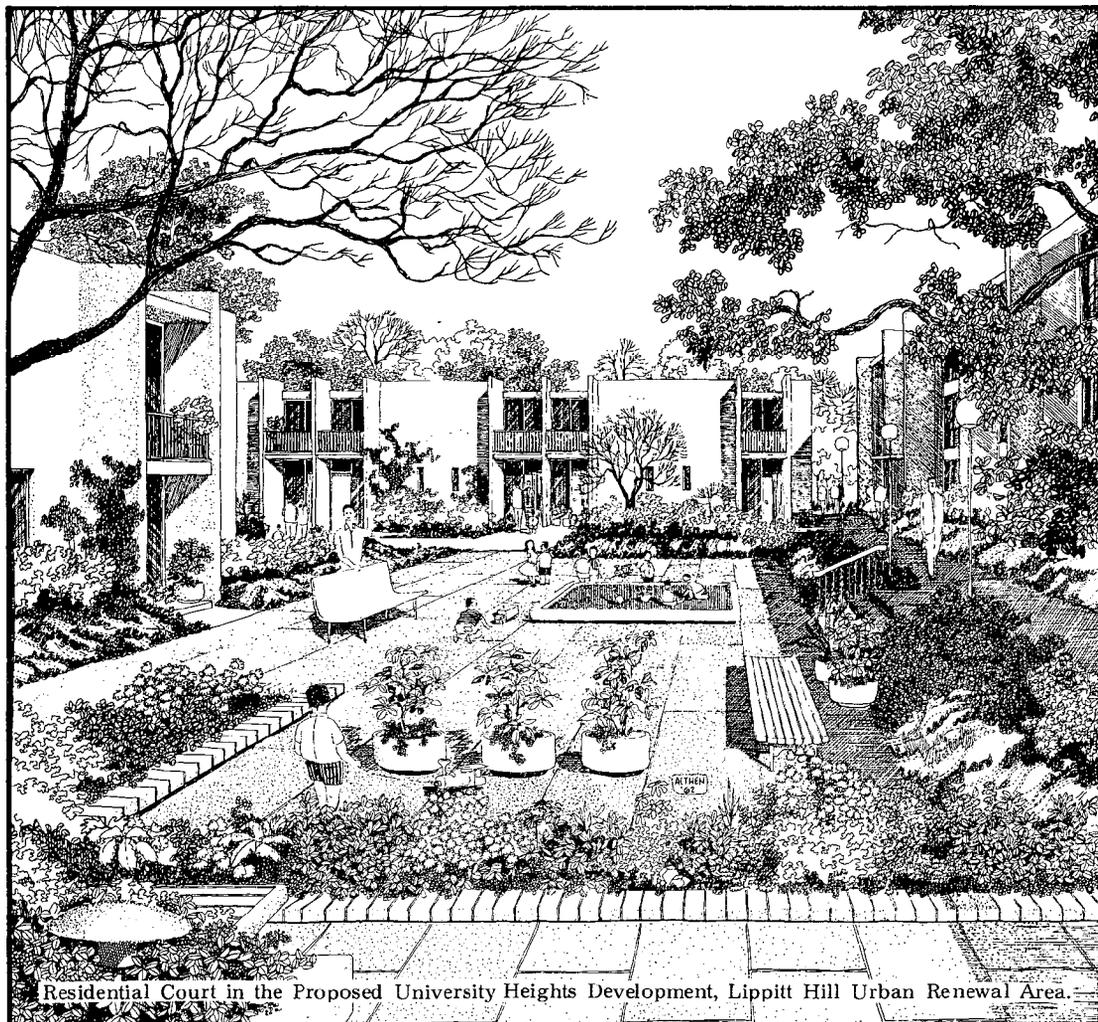


Performing Arts Center

A high-light of Providence's Downtown Master Plan is the development of a regional cultural center within a central civic plaza. Proposed for the site of the present railroad station this feature takes the form of a structure housing various facilities for the performing arts. In December 1963 the Plan Commission released a study, A CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS FOR RHODE ISLAND which had been prepared with the cooperation of the Rhode Island Fine Arts Council. Following strong citizen interest, the Mayor appointed a committee of prominent citizens to help expedite the development and financing of the Center. The Commission continued during the year to work with this committee which is expected to make an official report in December of 1964.

East Side Renewal

The Redevelopment Agency's major follow-up to the Commission's College Hill proposal moved closer to execution during the year. The two major programs in this area are the "Lippitt Hill" and the "East Side" renewal projects, and involve considerable rehabilitation of houses as well as new housing and industry, the construction of roads and educational facilities. The Commission staff, while not responsible for project planning, reviewed such elements as plans for the Lippitt Hill School, University Heights housing, Randall Square, and certified compliance with Master Plan recommendations, particularly as they relate to the historic College Hill area.



IV PLANNING TOOLS & ACTION PROGRAMS

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IV. PLANNING TOOLS & ACTION PROGRAMS

Zoning Revision Study

Zoning, as a legal method of controlling the development and uses of land, is still a major tool to implement City Planning. In June it came under close examination after the Federal government granted funds to help finance a comprehensive review study by the Plan Commission. This updating and development of improved machinery to carry out objectives of the Master Plan was commenced with the addition of a special staff to undertake the work. The larger share of the financing of this \$78,000 study will be carried by the U. S. Urban Renewal Administration. Target date for completion of these recommendations is the end of 1965.

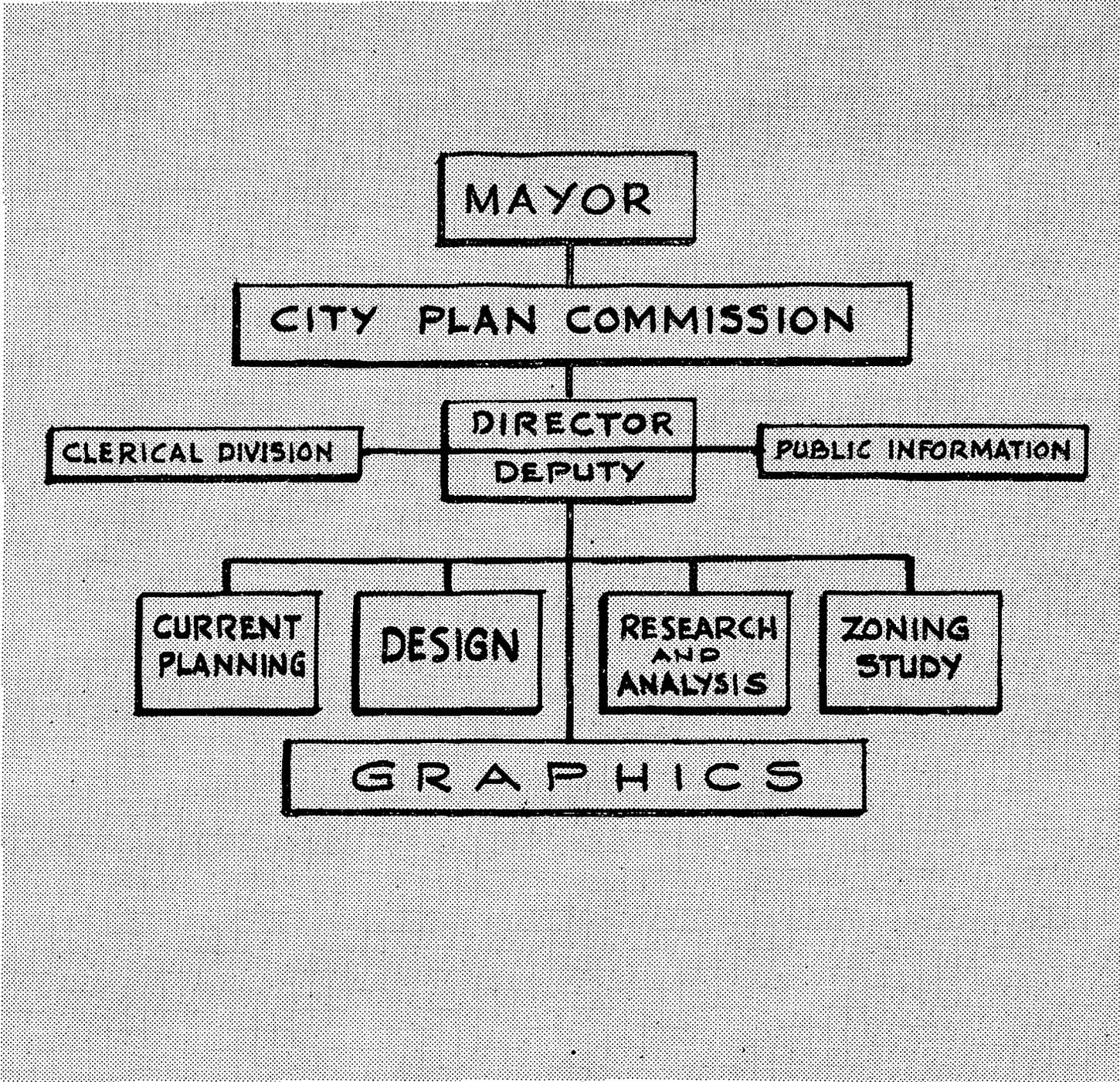
Capital Improvement Program

Financing physical improvements for the City is perhaps the most critical step in determining whether a project actually will become a fact. Consequently, each year a long-range budget review is made jointly by the Commission and the City's Finance Director. City departments and agencies submit their capital budgets to the Plan Commission for eventual incorporation into an overall six-year Capital Improvement Program. During the past year the City's Finance Director, the Commission and staff developed an expanded program of review, discussion and re-evaluation of each department's long-range financing, and after three Commission meetings the combined Capital Improvement Program was approved in August. This was followed by its transmittal to City Council. In preparation for even more effective use of this planning tool, a revision of the Capital Improvement Program process was scheduled, and Edwin Folk of Philadelphia, a consultant, was retained for a special two-day review and workshop appraisal of Capital Budgeting.

Community Renewal Program

A "train schedule" for urban renewal has sometimes been the term used to describe the Community Renewal Program (CRP). Actually the CRP is not so much a "time table" as it is a selection of future renewal action with recommended priorities. While the Master Plan contains the goals and the needs of the City and describes detailed plans that are necessary, the Community Renewal Program focuses on the City's ability, resources and practical working methods to realize these goals.

V STAFF & ACTION DATA



ORGANIZATION & FUNCTION

PROVIDENCE CITY PLAN COMMISSION

THE CITY PLAN COMMISSION
1963 - 1964

Edward Winsor, Chairman to Jan. 1966
James B. Leach, Vice Chairman to Jan. 1967*
Harry Pinkerson, Secretary to Jan. 1968
Albert Bush-Brown. to Jan. 1965
Edward J. Costello. to Jan. 1967
Jerry Lorenzo (Councilman) to Jan. 1965
Ralph Matera (Councilman) to Jan. 1965
Raymond J. Nottage to Jan. 1969

The Honorable Walter H. Reynolds
Mayor of Providence (ex officio)

THE COMMISSION STAFF

Frank H. Malley, Director
Dieter K. Hammerschlag, Deputy Director

Clerical Division

Mrs. Mary M. Hannan Miss Joyce A. Giardini

Principal Planners

William E. Barbour John W. Grifalconi Bryan A. Bailey

Senior Planners

Anthony N. Meleo Christos G. Jemorakos Jagdish C. Sachdev

Associate Planners

William F. Lombardo James T. Beattie Ove F. Van Jepmond*
Leonard J. Ferro Donald S. Conley Richard F. Crombie

Assistant Planners

G. John Terenzi Richard H. Piscione Christian G. Cannell*

Planning Aides

Bruno Mollo Robert J. Azzi*
Ramon S. Losada Timothy E. Quinn

ZONING STUDY STAFF

Durward W. Caudill, Project Head
Mrs. Ann E. Mitchell, Stenographer

Assistant Planners

Ernest E. Lagimoniere* Rajinder N. Chanda Sidney Clifford, Jr.

Planning Aides

David W. Shaw F. A. DiQuattro, Jr.

*Resigned during fiscal year

Expenditures and Appropriations
of the
City Plan Commission

	<u>Expenditures</u>	
	<u>1962-1963</u>	<u>1963-1964</u>
<u>ITEM 0</u> PERSONAL SERVICES (Salaries)	\$139,266.51	\$131,833.07*
<u>ITEM I</u> SERVICES OTHER THAN PERSONAL (Printing, Transportation, Miscellaneous, Fees, etc.)	20,944.85	17,622.12
<u>ITEM II</u> MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES (Stationery, Office Sup- plies, etc.)	1,084.22	1,016.69
<u>ITEM III</u> SPECIAL ITEMS (Insurance for models)	77.96	85.36
<u>ITEM V</u> EQUIPMENT (Office furniture, books, maps and charts)	<u>786.14</u>	<u>1,149.02</u>
Total Expenditures	\$162,159.68	\$151,706.26
Appropriations	<u>168,282.32</u>	<u>167,751.64</u>
Balance (returned to General Fund)	\$ 6,122.64	\$ 16,045.38

* \$15,000.00 of this total was transferred to the Pedestrian Mall Account

\$ 2,300.00 was transferred to Item I from Item 0
\$ 10.00 was transferred to Item III from Item 0
\$ 1,035.00 was transferred to Item V from Item 0

Summary of Action on Referrals from
the Committee to Assist in Implementing the Downtown Master Plan
through September 1963

<u>Total No. of Referrals</u>	<u>City Plan Action</u>			<u>Action of Building Department</u>		
	<u>No Objection</u>	<u>Recom- mended Denial</u>	<u>Held</u>	<u>No Objection</u>	<u>Recom- mended Denial</u>	<u>No Action</u>
61	60		1	55		6

Summary of Action on Referrals from
the Zoning Board of Review
through September 30, 1964

<u>Total No. of Referrals</u>	<u>City Plan Commission Action</u>		<u>Zoning Board of Review Action</u>		
	<u>No Objection</u>	<u>Recom- mended Denial</u>	<u>In Accord with CPC Recommen- dation</u>	<u>Opposite to CPC Recommen- dation</u>	<u>No Action</u>
149	74	75	94	51 (45)*	7**

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

** Three petitioners withdrew application.

Summary of Action on Petitions
Referred from City Council
1963-1964

City Plan Commission Action

<u>Subject</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- dations</u>	<u>Died in Committee</u>	<u>No Action</u>	<u>Vetoed by Mayor</u>
Zoning Amendments	15	5	10	7	3 (2)*		4	1
Abandonment of Streets	5	5		4	1			
Sale or Lease of City-owned Property	12	2	10	1	1		10	
Redemption of Tax Title Property	9	8	1	8		1		
Miscellaneous	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>
	44	23	21	22	5 (2)*	1	15	1

* The figure in parentheses indicates the number of petitions granted by the City Council following City Plan Commission recommendation for denial.

FILED

JAN 6 4 14 PM '65

DEPT. OF CITY CLERK
PROVIDENCE, R. I.