

A REPORT UPON
LAND USE
AND ZONING

CITY OF COLUMBUS AND
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO

*COLUMBUS
URBAN AREA*

COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY
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A Report Upon
LAND USE AND ZONING
Columbus Urban Area

Prepared for the
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
and
FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

By
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January, 1956

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Gentlemen:

We are pleased to submit herewith our preliminary report on Land Use and Zoning. This is the eighth in the series of reports comprised in the preliminary planning program.

Due to the vast amount of detail involved in the field investigations, mapping and analysis of land uses and of land use relationships, the present study has been in progress along with certain other phases of the current planning program - for approximately eighteen months. It is not possible to reproduce all these detail maps in the present report. However, these and the proposed zoning district maps are on file in the offices of the Planning Commissions. The texts of the proposed zoning regulations have also been submitted separately although described herein.

Zoning, when realistically tailored to the community's needs and conscientiously administered, is one of the most effective instruments for bringing about a well ordered, serviceable urban pattern. It is, therefore, one of the most important planning measures. While the estimates and proposals contained herein for the different land uses have been based on an over-all land use plan, these are purposely liberal in order to provide a degree of flexibility in the plan. In addition, further study is to be given to the areas for industrial districts, and these may be further expanded prior to final adoption of the zoning or to conducting the public hearings thereon.

During the course of this study we have had the cooperation of many officials, organizations and individuals. We particularly wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Planning Commission staffs both in the laborious field checking and mapping and in reviewing the proposals.

Respectfully submitted,

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

By *Russell H. Riley*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
EXISTING LAND USES	3
Existing Land Use Pattern	4
Amount of Land Used	6
FUTURE LAND USE REQUIREMENTS	9
THE PRESENT ZONING REGULATIONS	11
The Present Columbus Zoning Ordinance	12
The Present County Zoning Resolution	14
THE PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS	16
Relation of Proposed Zoning to Land Use Require- ments	16
Proposed Districts and Regulations	18
ADMINISTRATION OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS	27

INDEX TO TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1	Existing Areas Occupied by Major Land Uses - Columbus Urban Area	6
2	Land Occupied in Relation to Popula- tion - Columbus Urban Area	7
3	Estimated Future Land Use Requirements - Columbus Urban Area	9
4	Comparison of Existing and Proposed Zones - City of Columbus	12
5	Comparison of Land Uses and Proposed Zoning - City of Columbus and Unin- corporated Portion of Urban Area	16

INDEX TO PLATES

<u>Plate No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1	Existing General Land Use	4
2	Existing Zoning - 1954	12
3	General Land Use Plan	14
4	Comparison of Areas Used and Zoned	16

INTRODUCTION

Basic to the development of a well-planned community is the arrangement and extent of the industries, stores, office buildings, residences and public or other property which comprise the community. Such service facilities as streets, parks, schools, sewers, water mains and public transportation cannot be planned or developed effectively - or economically - unless the uses of all buildings and land are guided and controlled in accordance with a definite, preconceived pattern. Thus, one of the first steps in the current general or master planning program was the formulation of an over-all land use plan to serve as the framework of the whole community design.

The carrying out of the land use plan is accomplished mainly through coordination of individual private and public building developments - that is, through zoning. Zoning is concerned with regulating the use of buildings and land, the height and bulk of buildings, the amount of yards and open space around structures, and the density of population. Consequently, it is one of the principal instruments by which the community can direct its own development.

To be realistic, the land use and zoning plans must be related to the character and requirements of the community. Such zoning cannot be effective when excessive areas are provided for some uses, such as industry or commerce, at the expense of other types of development such as dwellings. For example, over-zoning for stores or factories invites the scattering of these buildings while pre-empting areas or discouraging the orderly growth of desirable residential districts unprotected from such intrusion. On the other hand, the economic well-being of the community - on which its whole future depends - demands ample, well-located sites for new industrial growth and business expansion. Thus, a balance must be struck between the areas set aside for the different types and kinds of development so that each can function in accordance with its needs and without restraint or interference with the others.

Zoning promotes sound and stable property values throughout the community. Residential areas are protected from the intrusion of obnoxious or more intensive uses and greater provacy is assured. Realistic zoning for each type of use in accordance with its actual needs and likely development also tends to reduce land speculation and its resulting costs.

The protection of residential neighborhoods is a major purpose of zoning regulations. There is no reason why such neighborhoods should not be maintained as desirable places of abode for many generations rather than to become the rundown, depleted areas characteristic of some of the older parts of Columbus as well as of other large cities. This involves more than the mere prohibition of stores or factories from these districts, however. While modern residential planning recognizes the feasibility of incorporating apartments and other types of rental housing, when properly integrated, in an over-all neighborhood design, this must be carefully done to avoid adversely affecting the single-family house. Such multiple dwellings generate additional traffic, tend to destroy the privacy of the smaller home and overtax playgrounds, schools, transportation and other facilities. Apartments also tend to depreciate more rapidly than single-family homes and hence should be carefully controlled in areas where they will not be inimical to other residential development and where they can be adequately served by the thoroughfare and service systems.

EXISTING LAND USES

For purposes of determining the present detailed land use pattern, as well as present and probable future land requirements, a field inspection was made in 1954 of every parcel of land in the City of Columbus, the adjoining incorporated areas, and the urban and urbanizing environs beyond. This was supplemented by an earlier (1953) field survey of all the unincorporated territory of Franklin County as a whole. From this field information maps were prepared on a suitable scale to show by different colors, the use of all property according to major classifications within the City and County and the density in lot area per family of all residentially used land. Computations were made of the total area devoted to each land use within the City, the adjoining incorporated communities and the remainder of the Columbus urban area.

For purposes of the mapping and analysis, land uses in the City and County were divided into the following classifications.

1. One-family residences
2. Two-family residences
3. Multi-family residences (three or more dwelling units)
4. Boarding and rooming houses
5. Commerce, including retail stores and shops, offices, filling stations, etc.
6. Light industry, including unobnoxious manufacturing, public garages, wholesale and warehouse establishments, etc.
7. Heavy industry, including packing plants, foundries, automobile graveyards and other industries obnoxious because of the emission of smoke, odor, gas, dust, noise, etc.
8. Railroads
9. Public and semi-public property, including schools, churches, institutions, cemeteries, etc.
10. Parks and playgrounds

11. Vacant land used for no urban purpose, including undeveloped and agricultural property
12. Streets and alleys

Existing Land Use Pattern

The general pattern of existing land uses within the Columbus urban area was diagrammatically depicted and described at some length in an earlier report, so that all of this description need not be repeated here. The detailed land use maps mentioned above were used in further study of these existing conditions. It is not practicable to reproduce these detailed maps in the present report but a revision of the earlier general map is presented as Plate 1.






The large amount of ribbon commercial development located on many, if not most, of the main traffic arteries is a salient characteristic of the present land use pattern. While generally found in most other cities, this condition is especially pronounced in Columbus. The more compact concentrated shopping center is a more recent development here, as elsewhere, but the City has gone beyond most other comparable communities in the construction of six or seven major shopping marts. The land use survey indicated that a number of the existing stores, especially in the vicinity of the new centers, were vacant. As might be expected, due to the excess of present commercial zoning, scattered stores are located in many residential districts also.

Another striking feature of the existing land use pattern is the large number of railroads traversing the Columbus area, which together with the railroad yards and adjoining industries tend to bisect Columbus. These lines serve as barriers to traffic circulation, create hazardous crossings at grade, and in combination with industries interfere in some cases with residential development, forming pockets of generally poor housing, as described in the report on the latter. Industries have naturally tended to cluster along the railroads, mainly within the center of the community, although a desirable new industrial



EXISTING GENERAL LAND USE

LEGEND

-  ONE AND TWO FAMILY RESIDENCES
-  MAJOR MULTIPLE DWELLING AREAS
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRY AND RAILROADS
-  PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC

ING COMMISSION
 UNTY
 WINING COMMISSION

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 ST. LOUIS

11. Vacant land used for no urban purpose, including undeveloped and agricultural property
12. Streets and alleys

Existing Land Use Pattern

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Another striking feature of the existing land use pattern is the large number of railroads traversing the Columbus area, which together with the railroad yards and adjoining industries tend to bisect Columbus. These lines serve as barriers to traffic circulation, create hazardous crossings at grade, and in combination with industries interfere in some cases with residential development, forming pockets of generally poor housing, as described in the report on the latter. Industries have naturally tended to cluster along the railroads, mainly within the center of the community, although a desirable new industrial

district has been established around the Westinghouse and General Motors plants west of the City, and a number of industries are located in the section east of High Street to the south, as well as west of Port Columbus.

While not normal industrial uses, the extraction of sand or gravel and the quarrying of limestone have absorbed substantial areas in both directions along the Scioto River. These operations have created extensive areas of depleted land no longer suitable for building purposes and should be more carefully controlled to avoid further spoilation of desirable urban land.

Residential areas, in general, have followed a compact and reasonably logical pattern. Multiple dwellings are to be found primarily in the sections surrounding the central business district and boarding and rooming houses around Ohio State University. There has been some scattering of apartments, however, in the areas adjoining Grandview Heights, to the north of the University, in parts of East Columbus and Hilltop, and elsewhere. There are more two-family dwellings in the Columbus area than in the average city, many of these being of post-war construction. (Differentiation was not made between one and two-family homes in the earlier report in the absence of detailed information.) Two-family dwellings have scattered through most of the older portions of the City, only the extremities of East and West Columbus and a large part of North Columbus being entirely single-family in character. Two-family homes have intermingled freely with the multiple dwellings south of Ohio State University as well as south and east of the central business district. New construction of this type has occurred in parts of East Columbus and Whitehall as well as in other districts and a number of smaller developments have been located on scattered suburban sites. Unless more carefully directed, such construction will create problems of service and residential integration in the future.

Single-family homes have absorbed most of the North Columbus-Linden, East Columbus and Hilltop districts and predominate in all of the adjoining communities

TABLE 1
 AREAS OCCUPIED BY MAJOR LAND USES
 COLUMBUS URBAN AREA

	Area in Acres				Percent of Total Area			Percent of Developed Area		
	City of Columbus	Other Incorp. Areas	Unincorp. Areas	Total Urban Area	City	City & Other Incorp. Areas	Aver. in 5 Cities*	City	Tot. Urban Area	Aver. in 5 Cities*
One-Family Residences	7,567	3,611	4,109	15,287	26.5	28.3	21.9	32.5	34.1	28.3
Two-Family Residences	1,772	259	59	2,090	6.2	5.1	5.3	7.6	4.7	6.8
Multi-Family Residences	1,097	110	47	1,254	3.8	3.0	3.8	4.7	2.8	4.9
Rooming Houses	168			168	0.6	0.4			0.4	
Commerce	856	252	540	1,648	3.0	2.8	3.3	3.7	3.7	4.3
Light Industry	1,165	93	568	1,826	4.1	3.2	2.9	5.0	4.1	3.7
Heavy Industry	539	82	466	1,087	1.9	1.5	3.6	2.3	2.4	4.7
Railroads	1,314	85	1,081	2,480	4.6	3.5	3.4	5.7	5.5	4.4
Public & Semi-Public	2,734	1,011	4,191	7,936	9.6	9.4	7.4	11.6	17.7	9.6
Parks & Playgrounds	823	145	551	1,519	2.9	2.4	6.7	3.5	3.4	8.6
Streets	5,208	1,522	2,761	9,491	18.3	17.0	19.2	22.4	21.2	24.7
Total Developed Area	23,243	7,170	14,373	44,786	81.5	76.6	77.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
Vacant	4,939	3,912			17.3	22.4	20.4			
Water	345	58			1.2	1.0	2.1			
Land Excavation			1,427							
Total Area	28,527	11,140			100.0	100.0	100.0			

*Of more than 250,000 population each - Dayton, Memphis, Dallas, Newark, N. J., and St. Louis

and unincorporated areas except Whitehall. Beyond the main body of urbanization, such development has tended to scatter, particularly in the past two years, along most of the principal highways and many county roads as well as in several other areas.

Because of its position as the seat of government and of Ohio State University, Columbus has an exceptionally large area of public property - despite its deficiency in parks and recreation space. Fortunately, these properties are located in different sections of the community where they supply desirable openness without creating serious barriers to urban expansion.

Amount of Land Used

Statistical studies in many American cities have shown that the amount of land used for the various urban purposes is directly related to the population of the community. These areas in Columbus, the adjoining communities and the unincorporated remainder of the urban area are listed in Table 1 (based on computations from the land use field survey and the January, 1955 Columbus corporate boundary).

A little less than two-fifths of the total area of both Columbus and the adjoining communities is used for residential purposes. Slightly under three-fourths of all residential land in the City and about three-fourths of that in the other incorporated areas is devoted to single-family homes, and recent building construction in both the City and County is tending to increase this proportion. Excluding vacant lots and undeveloped territory, about 45 per cent of the City is used for dwelling purposes, which is slightly more, particularly with respect to one-family homes, than the average of the five cities, including Dayton, also shown on Table 1. The higher ratio of single-family dwellings and generally larger lots outside the City are indicated by the figures for the urban area as a whole.

The proportion of commercial development is somewhat low in Columbus, occupying less than four per cent of the developed area, but this is largely due to the higher acreages of dwellings and public property, as noted later.

TABLE 2
 LAND OCCUPIED IN RELATION TO POPULATION
 Columbus Urban Area - January, 1956

Use	Acres Used Per 100 Persons				Average 5 Cities*
	City of Columbus	Other Incorp. Areas	Unincorp. Areas	Total Urban Area	
One-Family Residences	1.81	6.03	6.78	2.84	1.43
Two-Family Residences	.42	.43	.10	0.39	0.34
Multi-Family Residences	.30	.18	.08	0.26	0.25
Commerce	.20	.42	.89	0.31	0.21
Light Industry	.28	.15	.94	0.34	0.19
Heavy Industry	.13	.14	.77	0.20	0.24
Railroads	.31	.14	1.79	0.46	0.22
Public & Semi-Public	.65	1.68	6.92	1.48	0.48
Parks and Playgrounds	.20	.24	0.91	.28	0.43
Streets	<u>1.25</u>	<u>2.54</u>	<u>4.56</u>	<u>1.76</u>	<u>1.25</u>
Total	5.55	11.95	23.74	8.32	5.04

Note: Based on estimated populations of 417,500 in City of Columbus, 59,900 in other incorporated communities and 60,600 in unincorporated areas.

* Of more than 250,000 population each - Dayton, Memphis, Dallas, Newark, N. J., and St. Louis

Even though industrial employment in Columbus is comparatively lower than in the other major Ohio cities, the amount of land used by industries and railroads combined is about the same proportionately as that in the average city, indicating that larger factory sites have been used and also that extensive areas are absorbed by the railroads.

Public and semi-public property aggregates an exceptionally large area - one-ninth of all developed land inside Columbus and one-sixth of the total community, in contrast with less than 10 per cent of the average city. Conversely, however, parks and other recreation areas are sparse, constituting less than half as much area here proportionately as in the average city. The relative narrowness of streets in many of the older sections of the City is reflected in part by the figures in Table 1, but these are influenced also by the larger areas of dwellings and public property noted above.

In 1954, relatively little of the City was still vacant. With the annexation of substantial areas later in that year, however, about 4,900 acres or one-sixth of the Columbus area was unused at the beginning of 1955. This was slightly lower than the average of the other cities, but would now be somewhat above the average if such figures included the undeveloped land (from a total area of 6,290 acres) added to Columbus during 1955.

The ratios of specific land uses to population are shown on Table 2. These areas are especially significant since they provide an index to the land requirements of the future. As would be expected, existing development is much more intensive inside the City and much more spacious in the unincorporated outlying districts. Thus, in relation to the population, twice as much land has been used in Upper Arlington, Bexley and the other communities and about four times as much land in the unincorporated suburbs as that now occupied inside Columbus.

In comparison with the average city, the residential ratios are slightly higher, the ratio of public property substantially higher and the proportion of parks relatively low. Despite other aspects of its economy, Columbus has approximately as much land per unit of population in commerce and industry and more in railroads than the average city. Comparisons between the latter and the urban area as a whole are not valid since the other cities do not include suburban development.

TABLE 3
ESTIMATED FUTURE LAND USE REQUIREMENTS
Columbus Urban Area

<u>Use</u>	<u>Existing Areas Used</u>		<u>Areas Needed For Estimated 1980 Population</u>	<u>Amount To Be Absorbed</u>
	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Acres Per 100 Persons</u>		
One-Family Residence	15,287	2.84	24,900	9,613
Two-Family Residence	2,090	0.39	3,500	1,410
Multi-Family Residence	1,422	0.26	2,600	1,178
Commerce	1,648	0.31	2,850	1,202
Light Industry	1,826	0.34	4,600	2,774
Heavy Industry	1,087	0.20	3,000	1,913
Railroads	2,480	0.46	2,500	20
Public & Semi-Public	7,936	1.48	10,900	2,964
Parks and Playgrounds	1,519	.28	8,100	6,581
Streets	9,491	1.76	16,600	7,109
Total	44,786	8.32	79,550	34,764

FUTURE LAND USE REQUIREMENTS

On the basis of its economy and future growth prospects, Columbus is expected to have a population by 1980 of some 830,000. There is a definite relationship between this population and the area of land which it will require. Thus, knowing the present ratios of land utilization for the different urban purposes and probable changes due to modern building trends and other factors, it is possible to estimate with reasonable accuracy the amount of land that will be needed in the future. These estimates are shown in Table 3.

In making the estimates it has been assumed that future development will be generally more spacious than that now characteristic of much of the Columbus area, particularly of the City proper. Furthermore, while the existing landuse ratios per 100 persons were taken into consideration and used as a guide, all of the requirements were based also on parallel estimates of what an additional 300,000 or so persons might be expected to need for residence, work and play, based on present-day land use trends and modern standards of design. Considered also was the City's current trend toward gradually increasing industrialization and a generous allowance was made for future growth of all types of manufacturing.

Thus, an aggregate future area of nearly 80,000 acres has been allocated for all land uses combined, including streets, public property, and parks and recreation areas. (The latter are based on the proposed park and recreation plan described in an earlier report.) This provides for an increase of almost 35,000 acres - more than 75 per cent - to accommodate an expected population growth of not quite 300,000 or 60 per cent. Based on the population ratios, this would mean a future urban community comprising some 9.5 acres per hundred persons, in contrast with 8.3 acres per hundred presently occupied in the urban area as a whole and 5.6 acres per hundred used inside the City.

The largest land increases are anticipated in single-family residences, streets and recreation areas. The two former normally constitute the largest areas of land absorption in the average city; a large increase in the latter is needed to improve facilities now somewhat below standard in Columbus. While no over-all expansion is expected in railroad property, an exceptionally large allowance has been made for industrial growth, being about 2.6 times as much as is now utilized. This is most liberal, even recognizing modern factory construction trends toward large sites, single-story buildings and employee parking lots. The allocation for commerce is also liberal to permit ample off-street parking and the design of shopping facilities with adequate set-backs and landscaping to harmonize with their residential environs. Because of the already exceptionally large areas devoted to public property, a smaller proportionate increase in this land is expected in the future and an increase of not quite 3,000 acres, or 40 per cent, has been anticipated.

THE PRESENT ZONING REGULATIONS

Zoning regulations were first enacted in the City of Columbus in 1923, in the unincorporated territory outside the city (including 16 of the 18 townships) in 1948. The City and County have derived many benefits from these regulations. Residential sections have been afforded some protection from the intrusion of objectionable uses, and better design and more open space around buildings have increased the light and air available for residential structures.

However, more than thirty years have elapsed since the original zoning ordinance was drafted. The County resolution is more recent but the urgency of conditions immediately following World War II forced its preparation and adoption without adequate time for study and analysis. Neither of the zoning district maps had the benefit of a comprehensive master plan, now underway, on which such regulations - to be effective for guiding community growth - must necessarily be based. Since its adoption in 1923, the Columbus Zoning Ordinance has been amended some 400 times, most of these changes to lower the restrictions on some small areas, frequently from a residential to a commercial zone. (Many of these changes also have been of the so-called "spot zoning" character, designed to change the classification of one or two lots, without consideration of adjoining properties.) Even so, the present zoning district map is basically about the same as that adopted over three decades ago. While a new zoning text was enacted by the City in 1954, many of the new regulations fail to meet modern standards of development and certain provisions need further revision, clarification and strengthening, as discussed hereinafter.

During the seven years of its existence the County zoning resolution has been amended approximately 200 times, and a number of the present regulations as well as the zoning district maps need substantial improvement.

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONES

City of Columbus
(January, 1956 Area)








	Area Used		Present Zones		Proposed Zones	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
One-Family Residence	7,567	33.1	7,511	32.7	8,434	36.7
Two-Family Residence	1,772	7.8	5,209	22.6	3,382	14.7
Multi-Family Residence	1,265	5.5	1,931	8.4	3,310	14.4
Total Residence	10,604	46.4	14,651	63.7	15,126	65.8
Commerce	856	3.7	1,969	8.6	1,621	7.1
Light Industry	1,165	5.1	2,806	12.2	2,485	10.8
Heavy Industry	539	2.3	1,141	5.0	1,335	5.8
Railroads	1,314	5.7	—	—	—	—
Total Industry	3,018	13.1	3,947	17.2	3,820	16.6
Total Area Zoned	—	—	20,567	89.5	20,567	89.5
Public & Semi-Public Parks and Playgrounds	2,734	11.8	—	—	—	—
Vacant	823	3.6	2,407*	10.5	2,407*	10.5
Total	4,939	21.4	—	—	—	—
Total City Area	22,974	100.0	22,974	100.0	22,974	100.0
Streets	5,208	—	—	—	—	—
Water	345	—	—	—	—	—
Total City Area	28,527	—	—	—	—	—

*Including large public or semi-public areas as well as parks, presently unzoned.



EXISTING ZONING - 1954

LEGEND

-  AGRICULTURAL
-  SINGLE FAMILY
-  2 TO 4 FAMILY
-  MULTIPLE DWELLING
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRY
-  PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC

COMMISSION
ING COMMISSION

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ST LOUIS

The general zoning pattern now in effect in the Columbus urban area is shown on Plate 2. Comparison of this map with Plate 1 showing the existing general land use pattern and with Plate 3 (presented later) showing the general land use plan indicates that existing zoning of the Columbus urban area is rather poorly related both to existing conditions and what might be desired. For example, the areas zoned for business and industry inside Columbus embrace a substantial portion of the whole city, including several sizeable areas which are now almost entirely residentially occupied. In addition to the large amount of strip commercial zoning along major thoroughfares and highways and other large areas allocated for business purposes - far more than can actually be used - small spot commercial districts are scattered through the City and some parts of the County.

The Present Columbus Zoning Ordinance

In order to analyze more fully the effectiveness of the present regulations, computations of the areal extent of the major classes of zoning districts were made. A comparison of the existing areas occupied by the different land uses inside the City with the areas allocated for these purposes is presented in Table 4.

Obviously, the present districts are entirely out of scale with existing conditions and the City's probable future needs. For example, the areas set aside for one-family residences are smaller than the areas already used even though the City now contains substantial areas which will and should be developed for additional single-family homes. On the other hand, the area allocated to two-family dwellings is three times that now occupied for this purpose. Based on present usage, the districts designated for retail business would support a city of almost one million. While the districts for multiple housing and for industry are not quite so badly out of scale with potential requirements, some of these districts need adjustment and realignment to serve these purposes most effectively.

Defects in the Present (1954) Zoning Ordinance

In addition to the serious defects in scale of the present zoning districts and their poor relationship to a comprehensive, over-all land use plan, there are a number of deficiencies in the regulations which apply to these districts, even though the latter were adopted within the past eighteen months as a complete revision of the original zoning text.

Among these are the provision of separate use, height and area districts. Modern zoning practice no longer follows this earlier procedure. Use, height and area regulations, being interrelated, should be combined within each district for application to its specific needs. The present Columbus ordinance does this in part also, so that the regulations are somewhat anomalous in setting up separate height and area districts, and then enumerating these requirements specifically in certain use districts.









Some of the regulations in the present ordinance do not meet modern standards of good design, particularly with respect to yard and density requirements. For example, there is no lot area per family requirement in the least restricted apartment district. This is a serious omission which could result in a very bad overcrowding of such property with its problems of service, traffic congestion and the serious overcrowding of facilities designed for the area as a whole. No minimum lot size or larger lot areas for single and two-family dwellings are specified in the other apartment districts, which would permit the crowding of some parcels, such as corner lots, with small individual dwellings. Yard requirements are based generally on percentages of the lot width or depth, and are relatively low, especially for apartment buildings.

The section of the ordinance dealing with the jurisdiction and powers of the Board of Zoning Adjustment is an extraordinary one, containing many provisions which constitute rezoning on the part of the Board - a legislative act which has almost invariably been declared illegal on the part of such Boards in



GENERAL LAND USE PLAN

LEGEND

-  MAJOR COMMERCIAL CENTERS
 -  RAILROADS AND INDUSTRY
 -  PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC
 -  RURAL (RURAL DENSITY LESS THAN 1 PERSON PER ACRE)
 -  SUBURBAN (RURAL DENSITY 1 TO 5 PERSONS PER ACRE)
 -  LOW DENSITY RESIDENCE (5 TO 20 PERSONS PER ACRE)
 -  MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENCE (20 TO 35 PERSONS PER ACRE)
 -  HIGH DENSITY RESIDENCE (35 OR MORE PERSONS PER ACRE)
- NOTES: RESIDENTIAL AREAS SHALL BE DEVELOPED UNDER SUCH AS LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES, MAPS, ETC.

PLANNING COMMISSION
 COUNTY
 PLANNING COMMISSION

SCALE: 1" = 1/2 MILE

numerous court cases in other states. Among these provisions are the permitting of commercial uses in residential districts, of manufacturing uses in commercial districts, and the extension of nonconforming uses to adjoining property.

There are many other individual provisions, including certain definitions, conflicts in wording, permitted uses in some districts, the implication of more than one central business district (not designated on the district map) which need revision, amendment or clarification both for the protection and conservation of property and for purposes of good zoning practice and more effective administration.

The Present County Zoning Resolution

The present County zoning regulations were adopted somewhat hurriedly shortly after World War II in order to provide a measure of control and protection over the rapid growth occurring outside the City. Considering the limited time for its preparation and the lack of detailed information on existing land uses and their future requirements, the County resolution was well done. However, as indicated on Plate 2, the district maps are out of scale with probable community needs, far too much area (along almost all existing streets and roads) having been allocated to residences, for example, and not enough for commerce and some other development. This earlier zoning could hardly be expected to accord with an over-all land use plan, as is evident from comparison with the map of Plate 3. Furthermore, many of the revisions of the district maps - including, like those inside the City, a number of small spot changes - have not been conducive to the most desirable land use arrangement.

While the present resolution is modern in requiring off-street parking and setting good standards of area and open space for residential development, it would permit unduly tall apartments (up to nine stories) in some areas and needs additional yard requirements in commercial and industrial districts. Furthermore,

dwellings are permitted everywhere, even in heavy industrial districts, which is contrary to present-day practice since residential construction in desirable non-residential areas pre-empts the latter and frequently results in unsatisfactory housing. The present resolution is also excessively long, containing detailed requirements concerning the regulation of trailer camps, signs and other matters which are not properly zoning, and should be handled in other codes - such as the building and health codes - or by separate resolutions. Like the City ordinance, it also needs some clarification, revision of certain definitions, reassignment of several permitted uses and the like, both for better protection of property and to facilitate administration.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF LAND USES AND PROPOSED ZONING

City of Columbus and
Unincorporated Portion of Urban Area

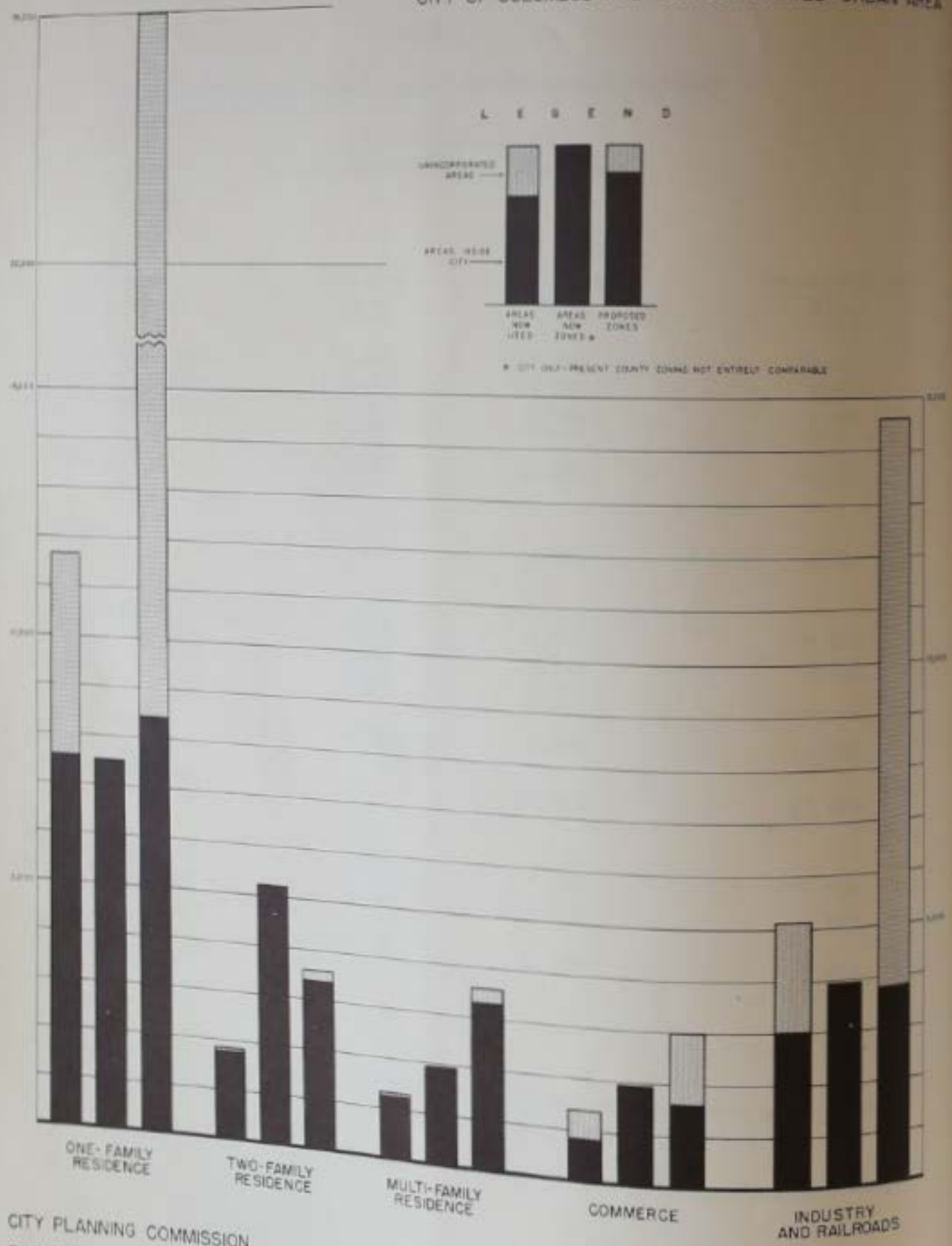
<u>Use</u>	<u>Area Used</u> <u>Acres</u>	<u>Est. 1980</u> <u>Requirements*</u> <u>Acres</u>	<u>Proposed Zones</u> <u>Acres</u>
One-Family Residence	11,676	19,400	30,041
Two-Family Residence	1,831	3,200	3,585
Multi-Family Residence	<u>1,312</u>	<u>2,480</u>	<u>3,599</u>
Total Residence	14,819	25,080	37,225
Commerce	1,396	2,580	2,999
Light Industry	1,733	4,500	9,265
Heavy Industry	1,005	2,910	5,315
Railroads	<u>2,395</u>	<u>2,415</u>	—
Total Industry	5,133	9,825	14,580
Total Area Zoned		37,485	54,804
Public & Semi-Public Parks and Playgrounds	6,925	9,750	9,750
	1,374	7,850	7,850
Total Area (Excluding Streets)	29,647	55,085	72,404

* Estimated future requirements for entire urban area, less areas now used or expected to be used in existing incorporated communities adjoining the city.

** Not counting 8130 acres of land proposed for 1R-20 (20,000 sq. feet per family) zoning.

COMPARISON OF AREAS USED AND ZONED

CITY OF COLUMBUS AND UNINCORPORATED URBAN AREA



CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
FRANKLIN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

PLATE 4

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNERS
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
JANUARY 1956

THE PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS

The proposed zoning regulations include revision of both the text and district boundaries in the City and County. In addition to setting a land use pattern attuned to the community's needs and providing the maximum protection to residential areas, a major objective has been complete coordination of the two zoning plans and district regulations to establish continuity of development throughout the Columbus urban area and to facilitate future zoning administration. Thus, future annexation, for example, could be carried out without disturbing the zoning pattern. While certain districts such as agricultural are not needed inside the City and the more intensive apartments and the central business district are not needed in the County, the two sets of regulations are generally the same with only such changes in wording and organization as are necessary to conform with the separate political entities and Ohio statutes.

Relation of Proposed Zoning to Land Use Requirements

It is not possible to reproduce the detailed zoning maps in the present report. (See Plate 3.) However, the general land use plan is repeated from an earlier report and this plan is generally representative of the proposed zoning. The texts of the proposed ordinance and resolution have been submitted separately.

A comparison of existing land uses and estimated 1980 requirements for the Columbus urban area (excluding the separately zoned incorporated communities) with the proposed zoning is presented in Table 5. This data is graphically shown on Plate 4. The proposed zones inside the City were shown in Table 4.

By far, the largest area designated in the plan is for single-family residences. This would permit an almost three-fold expansion of existing areas and approximately 50 per cent more than the estimated 1980 need. However, it should be pointed out that these

districts include school and park sites and other non-residential uses which will be needed in the future (although allowance for future streets has been subtracted), which would reduce the available acreage to some degree. Even so, the allowance for such homes is more than ample - and does not include over 8000 acres designated for 20,000 square foot lots or the estate districts - which indicates the necessity for careful control over actual utilization of these areas by controlling sewerage and other utility extensions to insure compact and continuous development of each section as needed. The areas set aside for two-family residences and for multiple housing are also substantial but more closely attuned to the probable need. While the allocation for multiple dwellings is nearly 50 percent greater than the estimated need by 1980, many two-family dwellings are located in parts of these and will probably continue to locate therein in the future.

The acreage allotted to retail business is less than 20 percent above the expected need. However, provision is made in the regulations for a special shopping center district to be designated under appropriate conditions in the future, which would add to the surplus and increase the choice of sites and flexibility.

An exceptionally large acreage is designated for manufacturing. This is almost three times the area now used for industry and railroads combined, and excluding the latter would permit expansion by more than 300 percent. This is also well over 50 percent above the most liberal allowance for industry in the 1980 land use estimates. These areas are balanced in different sectors, including acreages of 1000 to 2000 or more in each of three separate townships, and from 500 to 1000 acres in each of four other townships generally surrounding the city, as well as over 1400 acres in territory recently annexed to Columbus, and 3800 acres in the remainder of the city. A number of the proposed sites constitute from two to several hundred acres and there are numerous tracts of 100 to 200 acres. The major portion of the outlying sites are vacant, but sewers and water will have to be extended to some of the new locations. Thus, provision is made for a diversity of plants and plant sizes - the individual and aggregate areas should be ample actually for a community of more than 1,000,000.

The proposed zoning inside Columbus is much more realistic than the existing zones. The one-family residence districts have been enlarged to protect existing and future buildings. The two-family zones have been

decreased to about twice the present acreage used, and the multi-family districts have been enlarged substantially. The latter is consistent with the trend for central sections of the City to develop more intensively as the community grows in size. Commercial districts have been decreased by more than 300 acres and the industrial districts, mainly those for light manufacturing, have been reduced slightly. All of these changes are designed to relate the zoning more closely to the actual land use pattern and to the potentials of various sections in line with the over-all community plan.

Proposed Districts and Regulations

The present Columbus zoning ordinance has twenty-two use districts including four districts not specifically designated on the zoning maps. The Franklin County zoning resolution has sixteen districts. Under the proposed regulations, nineteen districts combining use, height and area specifications would be established in the City and seventeen in the County. A brief discussion of the proposed districts and the additional regulations is given in the following:

Agricultural Districts

The present farm-residential district has been retained in the County regulations. In addition to agriculture this would permit one-family dwellings (when located on lots of at least one acre), churches, public schools and recreation areas, and certain other special uses such as institutions, riding stables, etc. when located on large tracts and with distance restrictions from other residential property.

Suburban Residential Districts

Two new suburban residential districts are proposed in the County regulations, one requiring minimum lot areas of not less than three acres, the other one acre or more. Only a small part of the latter is included in the City. Permitted uses are generally similar to those in the farm-residential district, yet are somewhat more restricted, being intended primarily to encompass one-family residences and appurtenant development such as public schools, churches, recreation areas, etc.

One-Family Districts

Existing County regulations provide for four one-family residence districts, requiring 6,000, 8,000, 10,000 and 20,000 square feet per family respectively. The City has six such districts, two pairs of which have the same density regulations at 5,000 and 7,200 square feet per family and differ only in their width and minimum floor area requirements. The other city districts, which are recent amendments, require 10,000 and 20,000 square feet per family respectively.

Four single-family districts are proposed in both City and County regulations. The present 10,000 and 20,000 square foot zones are retained. Another district requiring lots of 60 foot width and 7,200 square feet for normal minimum single-family residence development is provided, and the present 5,000 square foot City zone is also included in the County which comprises areas where lots of this size or smaller already prevail. A minimum width of 50 feet is required in the latter district but smaller lots previously platted can be used despite these requirements.

Two-Family Districts

The present City "R-4" District permits three and four-family apartments and row houses as well as duplexes provided they have lot areas of not less than 2,500 square feet per family. The proposed regulations would establish a separate district for one and two-family homes, as now established in the County. While a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet (3,500 square feet per family) is required, special provision is made for the conversion of existing dwellings on lots providing 2,500 square feet per family in the older sections of the City.

Apartment Districts

The Columbus zoning ordinance presently contains four apartment districts (including one district primarily for rooming houses) with relatively low density requirements, one of these being unrestricted,

as noted earlier. The County regulations provide for two districts. Three apartment zones having different height and area restrictions are proposed in the City, only one in the County. The latter would require an area of 1,500 square feet per family and limit buildings to not more than two and one-half stories. The other two districts in the City require 1,000 and 500 square feet per family respectively, with further reductions in the latter to 400 and 250 square feet per unit for one bedroom and for efficiency apartments. The 1,500 square foot district in the City would permit only dwellings, apartments and row houses up to four units. The other two districts would allow also boarding and rooming houses, private clubs and institutions and professional offices. A height of ten stories is proposed in the least restricted apartment zone, a height of three stories in the intermediate zone unless the side and rear yards are increased in accordance with the excess height above 40 feet.

A special combined apartment and office district, as now established along East Broad Street, is retained in the proposed City ordinance. This includes hotels, apartment hotels, offices, studios and the like where signs and other commercial displays are limited and the residential appearance is substantially maintained. Height and area regulations are the same as in the least restricted apartment zone.

Commercial Districts

Existing commercial regulations have been modified somewhat, with an additional district in the County and realignment of such districts and their regulations in the City. Most of the existing commercial zones in Columbus are in the least restricted, general commercial category. Under the proposed regulations, three districts would be utilized in both the City and County, with an additional commercial zone for special application. These include: (1) a local commercial district permitting such uses as retail stores and offices, filling stations, barber and beauty shops, etc., primarily for local service; (2) a highway commercial district permitting drive-ins, automobile and farm implement sales rooms or lots, motels, tourist homes

and the like in addition to other retail sales; and (3) a general commercial district for such additional heavy commercial uses as garages, distributing stations, small bakeries, cleaning establishments, etc. Front yards would be required in all cases and side and rear yards on lots abutting a residence district.

A major change in the present commercial regulations is the prohibition of all dwellings in commercial districts except over stores or in predominantly residential blocks. This would tend to prevent the pre-empting of desirable commercial sites by residential construction, which has been done in the past, frequently to take advantage of the lower restrictions in lot area, under existing commercial regulations.

A special shopping center district is proposed in both the City and County regulations to provide for integrated design of such facilities comprising areas of five acres or more where so situated and so designed as to parking, arrangement and general appearance as to meet general specifications for the approval of the City or Regional Planning Commission. Such a district would be established only after thorough study and report by the Commission to the appropriate legislative body and would then be laid out and developed as a unit in accordance with the approved plan.

Central Business District

The central business district provided for in the present zoning ordinance implies the establishment of more than one such district which is contrary to the very nature and purposes of such a zone. The central business district is necessarily the area of high land values, business and office concentrations, and of hotels, amusements, and specialized shopping facilities which serve the whole urban community. Such a district is created in the proposed regulations. In addition to the usual commercial activities, hotels and apartments, wholesale establishments, printing, transportation terminals, and the like are permitted along with certain types of light loft manufactures or processing. Taller buildings are permitted than elsewhere in the City, the height

limitations being based on building bulk and setbacks beyond a height equal to twice the width of the fronting street. Off-street parking and loading spaces are required as in other districts, but may be modified or waived where found by the Planning Commission to be impracticable or unjust in a specific case.

Manufacturing Districts

The proposed manufacturing districts are similar to the present districts provided, however, that performance standards, as described below, based on the actual industrial operation would eventually be used in lieu of the present distinction of the emission of objectionable or unobjectionable quantities of odors, smoke, gas or noise. Residential uses would be prohibited entirely in the least restricted districts and in all except predominantly residential blocks in the lighter industrial zones. Front yards would be required in all cases and where the property abuts a residential district, side and rear yards would be required along the residence lot.

Performance Standards

The establishment of standards governing industrial operations in order to determine appropriate locations for different types of industry is a relatively new development in zoning. Experience is limited both in the formulation of the standards and in their enforcement. From a planning standpoint, consideration must always be given to the suitability of a particular section for general industrial purposes, including its relation to facilities for traffic, transportation and service and its place in the over-all land use pattern, but otherwise the distinction between "light" and "heavy" manufacturing is based on its effect on surrounding property. Any industry, therefore, could be accepted in any logical industrial area if it so controlled odor, dust, smoke, gas, noise and other concomitants as to protect adjoining property and property values.

A set of standards governing the amount of noise, smoke, dust, odor, glare, heat, sewage and several other features in terms of the measured quantity of such

industrial concomitants to be permitted in each type of zone has been included in the proposed regulations. However, trained personnel and adequate equipment for conducting the tests and measurements set up in the standards will be necessary for their enforcement, and until such personnel and equipment or outside technical assistance are available, the existing classification of industries based on knowledge of the general types of manufacturing operations and their effects will have to be used. Additional research into manufacturing processes and the appropriate standards is also desirable to test and affirm or to suggest any revision of the standards proposed in the present ordinance.

Excavation and Quarrying Districts

Excavation and quarrying are treated in the present regulations as industrial uses. It is proposed to establish a new district for these purposes which would permit the extraction of sand, gravel or stone and farming and agriculture activities, but no other uses. Distance restrictions and other operational standards are set up for the protection of surrounding property and the community as a whole. These include grading and planting to minimize erosion and prevent stagnant water areas.

Flood Plain Districts

Low lying land subject to periodic flooding should not be used for normal building purposes. A district restricted to non-urban types of uses somewhat similar to that in the present County resolution is proposed. This district would permit summer homes, cabins and camps for seasonal occupancy, and parks and non-commercial recreation facilities in addition to agriculture. It would be limited initially to certain areas along Alum Creek until more exact information on the other flood plains is available, at which times the district maps could be revised accordingly.

Airport Height Restrictions

In order to protect the public safety and prevent the creation of airport hazards, special height limitations are established in the vicinity of Port Columbus

and the Lockbourne Air Force Base, as now provided in a separate Columbus zoning ordinance. These would protect the approach zones to each of the major runways by restricting building heights in accordance with their distance from the ends of the runways.

Off-Street Parking and Loading

Areas for off-street parking and loading spaces are an integral part of modern urban development. The present zoning regulations require the provision of such facilities in relation to the different land uses and the proposed regulations retain or expand these requirements.

Special Uses

There are a number of special uses such as airports, cemeteries, large amusement parks, hospitals, some types of institutions, broadcasting towers, utility stations, and the like, which because of their size or other peculiarities, do not fit into the normal urban pattern. These uses are generally handled by the Board of Zoning Appeals as exceptions to the regulations, as now provided by the Columbus ordinance. However, in order to insure adequate consideration of the effect of such developments on the Comprehensive Plan, the proposed regulations require that each request be referred to the City or Regional Planning Commission for study and report before final action. Since existing Ohio statutes do not empower the County Board of Appeals to authorize special exceptions, final action in the County would be taken by the Board of County Commissioners.

Under the proposed zoning regulations, trailer camps in the City and County are not specifically permitted in any district. These would be treated similarly to other special uses for authorization only in agricultural and certain commercial districts after compliance with all sanitary requirements and additional standards set forth to insure good arrangement and to protect adjoining property.

Large-Scale Housing Developments

Unified housing projects comprising 20 acres or more would be authorized in any district provided they complied with the particular density regulations as well as other specified standards or conditions and were approved by the appropriate Planning and Zoning Commissions and the appropriate legislative body. Conditions for approval include the over-all design, relation to major streets, railroads and other natural boundaries, provision for schools and recreation areas, and the effect on the Comprehensive Plan and all adjacent property. Such projects would permit garden apartments and types of group housing in areas where they are otherwise not allowed, provided all the conditions - including, where desirable, buffer planting and screening - were met for the protection of other residential areas.

Nonconforming Uses

Nonconforming uses have long constituted a troublesome zoning problem. Provision has been made in many zoning ordinances for their eventual removal by amortization over a period of years, but there is a question of the legality of this procedure in Ohio. The present city ordinance allows the expansion of nonconforming uses when approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals. This is contrary to accepted zoning practice, tending to prolong the use and to perpetuate a monopoly. The proposed regulations provide only for continuation of the existing nonconforming use without structural alterations or enlargement and for compliance with the district regulations once the nonconforming use is discontinued for at least two years or abandoned. Nonconforming buildings damaged by more than 60 per cent of their value through fire, explosion or other act of God could not thereafter be reconstructed. The nonconforming use of land could not be re-established once it had been discontinued for one year or changed to a conforming use.

Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of Zoning Appeals is necessary to insure reasonable application of the regulations. It is not intended, however, for purposes of evading the law or to provide a special privilege or a convenience sought

by some property owner, and authorizations of this type have almost invariably been declared illegal and annulled by the courts. Powers of the Board fall generally into three classes: (1) appeals from a decision of the Building Inspector where it is alleged that there is an interpretation of the zoning regulations; (2) the consideration of special uses or "exceptions" specifically authorized by the regulations; and (3) variances in the strict application of the regulations in cases of clearly demonstrable hardship.

Under existing statutes, the second of these powers is not authorized in the County. Most cases, however, fall in the category of alleged hardship, and it is in this field that many boards have been unduly liberal, sometimes undoing by their actions public confidence and support in the whole zoning procedure. The granting of a use variance, for example, as a two-family dwelling in a single-family district, is illegal and justified under no conditions or circumstance. A variance should be allowed only where an individual property is so irregular in shape, or peculiar in topography or otherwise so special in its physical conditions that it differs from other property around it and cannot therefore, comply with all the district regulations without suffering an obvious injustice and the impairment of property rights and enjoyment. Under these conditions the Board is empowered to make such adjustments in the regulations - not involving abrogation of the law - as may be necessary to relieve the hardship.

The section of the present City ordinance dealing with the Board of Zoning Appeals is unsatisfactory and a completely new section is proposed. The provisions in the County resolution are now contained in several sections. These sections have been combined in the proposed resolution, and the powers and duties of the Board more clearly defined and clarified.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS

Zoning regulations are only as effective as their administration and enforcement. This is directly dependent not on the planning commissions but on those public officials and administrative boards who help to enforce the laws. The thorough understanding and support of the zoning regulations - and of the land use and other phases of the master plan which they are designed to facilitate and bring about - are most essential on the part of such public officials as well as of the citizenry as a whole.

While zoning legislation inside the City follows the common practice of referral to the Planning Commission for study and recommendation to the City Council, such legislation in the County under present Ohio statutes is very indirect and involved. The procedure for initial consideration and hearing of the zoning legislation by the Rural Zoning Commission, its subsequent consideration by the Regional Planning Commission, and additional hearings by the Zoning Commission in cases of disagreement between the two, before final disposition by the County Commissioners, is cumbersome and long. Furthermore, since to be effective zoning must be closely related to the whole planning process, the present procedure makes this difficult except under conditions of the closest cooperation and collaboration. There is evidence that this condition does not now exist. It would be desirable that the Regional Planning Commission or its staff and the Rural Zoning Commission meet jointly from time to time to discuss these mutual problems as well as to secure better understanding of the whole master plan. In whatever way such cooperation can be brought about, however, it is completely essential to the success of the plan.

Zoning is valuable not only because it is a major instrument for carrying out the plan but also for the protection of property and of property values. It should have stability and the public confidence. It cannot serve these purposes when amendments are easily or frequently made. Haphazard, easily gained changes for

purely selfish reasons not only undermine public confidence in the laws and in the whole planning process, but they generate more numerous and frivolous requests for further zoning changes. Once the present comprehensive zoning plan has been adopted, the City and County should be very careful in permitting amendments thereof. While the need for changes in the district boundaries or regulations may sometimes arise due to altered conditions which could not be prevented or foreseen, such amendment should be permitted only after a thorough investigation of all aspects of the change, keeping in mind that the plan is a comprehensive plan for the benefit of the entire community and that in any conflict of interest, the public welfare should be paramount.

Apart from changes in the maps or text, the effectiveness of the zoning law will be determined by the day to day enforcement of these regulations. The failure to ferret out all violations of the law, carelessness in enforcement, or the granting of unwarranted variances by an over-liberal Board of Zoning Appeals can be equally as damaging as a zoning change. (A variance in use, besides being generally illegal is actually a zoning change.) The administration of zoning regulations in the County now leaves much to be desired. The police, the sheriff and other law enforcement officers could check all new construction for building permits and with their help, the Building and Zoning Inspectors should insure that the new regulations are complied with strictly and in all respects.