RICE UNIVERSITY

A CONTINUOUS SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR
THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BLIGHTED AREAS IN THE CITY

by

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ABSTRACT

Title: A CONTINUOUS SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF BLIGHTED AREAS IN THE CITY

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By looking at blighted areas it becomes clear that the development of blight is part of the growth-change-decay cycle of the city. This is sometimes effected by the form of the city structure. The location and activities of blighted areas can be seen to have positive as well as the more evident negative values. An analysis of areas which have maintained continuous redevelopment reveals that diverse activities and foci have developed. Life as opposed to dullness is evident. Society, the political structure, economics and physical form are the major contributors to the development of blight in American cities. This thesis is concerned primarily, with the physical form of the city as this form is related to the development of blight, and as this form can be changed to encourage the redevelopment of blighted areas.

Objectives for inducing redevelopment can be formulated. There must be a desire for redevelopment by the people of the area. The public policy must encourage this desire and provide a framework for redevelopment.

Foci and activities existing in the area must be reinforced and expanded to provide the life necessary to stimulate redevelopment. A mechanical transportation structure and a pedestrian communication structure must be a fundamental part of this redevelopment.

This thesis suggests that a continuous system of community facilities can provide the focus of a physical framework which will stimulate redevelopment of blighted areas.
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INTRODUCTION:

The industrial revolution and its aesthetic is now an accepted part of our environment. We are of the machine age. The house is a machine for living as is the city. We have developed hierarchies of transportation, communication, and living. Our problem is that of interpretation of these new hierarchies into a city structure. Most of the alternatives have been explored, at least in theory. The particular concern of this thesis is the process of structuring this interpretation of the existing city into clear hierarchical systems that will reflect and strengthen this new age.

Our historical past is not to be erased and a new order imposed. We will have few opportunities to originate, but many to continue.

CITY DEVELOPMENT

Cities are the result of many factors: the cultural and social systems of its people; the communal goals as reflected through the political system; the physical environment, the climate, topography, and location; the economic structure and considerations; and continuous change in these factors.
Most American cities were initially the result of land promotion. Land speculation required only a limited development criteria. The individual nature of this development responded slowly to change. Technological change and growth have further emphasized the deficiencies in city form.

Today the center city is isolated. The suburbs are sprawling. A belt of blight between these two is undermining the efficiency of the city as an institution. The city has lost its order. It has lost its communal and communitive purpose. It must be re-thought, re-structured, and re-subdivided in order to reflect its possibilities.

**COMPOSITE ORDER**

The city has developed a machine order which includes mechanical transportation, services, utilities, etc. Mechanical transportation must be made more integrated and more defined. The human order must be connected with this machine order. The human order includes all the facilities that are used by people in common—community facilities: places and spaces, support facilities, work, recreation, education, spiritual, etc. People to people communication must be made a part of, and integrated with city form. Transportation, the mechanical order, and communication, the human order, must be made separate when they oppose each other. The resulting city form then becomes a composite of human and machine orders and the links between them.

**MAN AND HIS AGE**

Man is born, he grows, he matures, and he will die. He eats, he sleeps, he works, and he communicates. He is a social being. He has a private life. His alterna-
tives are greater than ever before in his history. His problems of interpretation are also greater.

Blight reflects physical and cultural obsolescence. Through interpretation of his culture, of his way of life, and of the equipment which serves him, man will be able to symbolize his age. It is hoped that the new physical symbols can encourage the elimination of physical obsolescence while a more equitable culture evolves.
I. URBAN FAILURE:

BLIGHT AND SLUM
One of the manifest results of urban problems is the occurrence of blight. Blight is defined as, "Any disease or injury of plants resulting in withering, cessation of growth, and death of parts, as leaves, without rotting . . . That which frustrates one's plans or withers one's hopes; that which impairs or destroys." However, urban blight is much more complex than the decay which is evident. It is the reflection of frustration with the urban culture and with the physical form of the city. No environment is an absolute success or failure, but it may approach these
ends based on the values of the judge, whether he is an individual or he is society. On a continuum from success to failure in an environment, blight is nearer the latter, but it is not failure. Some environments seem unable to benefit from attempts at redevelopment, as some nations seem not to benefit from foreign aid. I will call these environments slums. Statistics will reveal crowding (based on people/room rather than people/acre), the lack of a living wage, low educational levels, and poor health standards. These result in an inability of the people to develop or maintain the more abstract quality of the urban environment, the urban culture. The people are confined rather than expanded by their urban environment. By contrast, the blighted area has these same problems, but to a lesser degree. It is dying, but not dead. It has, or has the basis of, an urban culture. The blighted area has the basis of a reasonable hope that redevelopment will succeed.

THE VICIOUS CYCLE

The development of blight is part of the nature of the growth of American cities. There is a cycle in the nature of our cities of growth, change and decay, and obsolescence. This cycle works from within the district and from the city as a whole. Our cities have developed rapidly. Districts have been built over a short period of time reflecting limited considerations. "The central cities are products of the burgeoning system of private enterprise. Profit conditioned planning and housing standards; whatever city planning was, was geared to the speculation urge."

After a time the original builders of a district begin to move out to new areas. "Newness, and its superficial gloss of well being, is a very perishable commodity."

There is a dullness or lack of interest in the area which prompts these people to desire something else. This is the first sign of the beginning of blight. The new
inhabitants frequently do not have the means to maintain the area in its former
style, and sometimes they do not have the means to adjust the structures to their
own pattern of life. The other aspect of growth is the influence of city change on
the area. The old structure of the area changes. The former residential streets
become avenues of the farther out areas into the center city. Land uses change.
What once was a residential environment is characterized by imballence in uses.
The area cannot cope with its new functional uses and the population changes more
rapidly. With greater changes in the people, the social structure is weakened or
is destroyed. Many neighborhoods built before the automobile have not been able
to resolve its function with the system of life. By this time the area is mostly
rented by absentee landlords who offer very little maintenance. The area is fast
becoming a slum.

THE BLOCK AND BLIGHT
The city form also plays some importance in this process. The great majority of
American neighborhoods built before the 1950's were based on some kind of geo-
metric grid. Almost all were conceived in plan only. The logic in orientation and
economy of the grid reflect the technology of the pre-auto age and the speculative
nature of city development more than a concern for the quality of human life within
this framework. Blight cannot be blamed on the grid, but it can be seen to have
some contributing support to its development. "The gamut of choice between ex-
tremes is curtailed if the city has an inappropriate form. Every lack of differen-
tiation in its physical pattern means a negation of choice, and thus a negation of
true urbanity. An inhuman anonymity then results, that of particles in an amor-
phous mass, whereas a genuinely urban anonymity is comparable to the condition
of a mosaic, in which each cube contributes to the full splendor of the whole without losing any of its own lustre."

One of Jane Jacob's notions is the effect of the size of New York blocks on the diversity and therefore the success of the urban neighborhood. Blocks 900 feet long obstruct cross circulation and discourage activity which is located usually at the intersection of two streets. Lack of activity and dullness are synonymous in an urban environment. Like the corner apartments in a highrise building, the corner of the block is more valued than the middle. The plan of the city of Barcelona recognizes this by creating a widening of the street and sidewalks in this location.

Another example of the effect of block sizes on the development of a city can be seen in the adaption of the plans sent from Spain for the new towns in the Americas. Here, the blocks measure nearly 500 feet square. They obstructed city circulation. A system of alleys soon subdivided these large blocks. Today the result of these adaptations can be seen in the enclosed galleries and pedestrian ways particularly in the more diverse and dense central cities. The "galerias" in Santiago de Chile have much the same concept as the covered mall shopping center in the United States without the sea of parking. They are continuous, block after block and always changing direction. They form protection from summer sun and winter rains. They serve as entrances to hotels, apartment and office buildings, theaters and other diverse facilities. They are used day and night. The commerce developed along their side is diverse and specialized. Kiosks are added in larger spaces. Types range from button kiosks to very large department stores. All these facilities benefit from the complex integration of movement by the people and diversity of activities.
The super-block has been proposed as the answer to meeting the requirements of machine age technology, transportation and social communication. It usually fails because it produces dead spaces as well as obstacles to the city pattern. It has density but not diversity. Another important factor in the super-block concept is that its success depends greatly on its impact on the city's system of transportation and social communication. Most super-blocks are too small by themselves and are too poorly integrated into the city.

**SOCIETY AND BLIGHT**

There is much more than the physical form of the city or the endurance of materials that causes blight. John B. Mays notes that "The fundamental problems are really social and moral rather than economic. It is upon the answers given to such questions as how do Americans want to live in cities, how do they select their neighborhoods, and how firmly they are set on social segregation, that the future of the gray areas and their threatened inhabitants will be decided... It would be a good thing for American society if its institutionalized selfishness could become a little more enlightened and ethically other-regarding."

This is a rather strong indictment of American society and it overlooks the greater interest in this problem in the past few years. Newspapers, civic groups and politicians are considerably more interested in the urban environment. But our interest is just beginning and we must question ourselves.

Senator Thomas E. Kuchel in August, 1966, before the hearings of the Senate Sub-Committee on Executive Reorganization on the Federal Role in Urban Problems remarked, "We need to try to improve human nature at the same time we seek to improve human environment." Of course, human nature in one sense remains
fundamentally the same. But human nature used in reference to society and its inter-relationships must be enlightened and educated. This lack of concern by society as a whole hinders redevelopment. The lack of understanding of the social structure of blighted areas has caused failure of pasted attempts at eradication of blight.

"In most cases," notes the report of CIAM 9, "the grouping of dwellings does not reflect any reality of social organization: rather they are the result of political, technical and mechanical expediences." It must be added that economic factors determine a very important part also. "Although it is extremely difficult to define the higher levels of association, the street implies a physical contact community, the district an acquaintance community, and the city an intellectual contact community - a hierarchy of human associations." The social associations are at least as important in city organization as the placement of utilities.

BLIGHT NEGATIVE
The blighted areas are of limited value to their residents. Those who can afford to change location do so. Those who cannot must adjust. However this adjustment is not easy because it is an admission of inferior status. Blighted areas are characterized by a lack of security. The social organization is weak. Many of its people have difficulty in finding jobs. They are not areas where the small business meets with success. The banks ignore the area when loans for construction or mortgages are made. The schools are poor. There is little attraction for families. The people of the city try to forget the area. It is not an area to visit or be seen in. It is isolated from the majority of the community and left to its own fate.
BLIGHT POSITIVE

There are, however, some assets which may be found in blighted areas. In many cases they occupy valuable real estate. Blight is usually concentrated in a belt surrounding the center of the city. As of this time it is not considered to have advanced into the twenty-year-old suburbs farther out from the central city, although these areas are beginning to decline and when they start into snowball decline I think that their problems will make those of today seem relatively simple. The location of blight is usually close to the central city commerce, services, institutions, and cultural facilities. Many areas affected with blight contain one or more of the important facilities used by the city as a whole.

Blighted areas have a higher density of persons/room which must be lessened, but greater numbers of people are not in themselves a disadvantage. If a sense of privacy can be developed, the more dense population can support more and varied activities, therefore more life. The blighted areas can also be characterized by mixed functional uses, which, when accepted as a possible advantage, may contribute to the redevelopment of the blighted area. Mixed uses will allow use of the area during the day and night. And movement and action are in themselves a sign of life which breeds interest.

The blighted area is also characterized by mixed ages of the structures. Some of these buildings are of good quality and offer the kinds of space not available in newer structures. There is bound to come a day when newness is no longer associated with goodness. Hopefully this change will not be a complete reversal, but rather an approach that recognizes quality in buildings regardless of age.
Finally, because of economic limitations which are usual for blighted area inhabitants, it is probable that neighbors and neighborhood are more important than in areas where variety can be gained through automobile movement or through seasonal change of location. We cannot reject blight as death and find as the only solution complete obliteration of the existing community and complete rebuilding.
"Please look closely at real cities. While you are looking, you might as well also listen, linger, and think about what you see." Natural redevelopment and renewal offer a guide to approach the redevelopment of blighted areas.

CONTINUITY
The essential factor in continuously redeveloping areas seems to be a stable social structure. This must not infer a lack of change, but it does suggest that when change occurs it is over a long period of time. Violent economic, natural or politi-
cal changes can have an effect on an otherwise stable society. Generally, the areas which have continued to renew themselves have been of a rather conservative nature. Usually they have expressed an economy of means and in their kind and method of structure. Great and sudden growth or decline of a city can destroy an area which would otherwise have a stable social structure and redevelopment process. Examples of continuous redevelopment in the United States include Boston's Beacon Hill, Washington D. C.'s Georgetown, New Orleans' French Quarter and Garden District, and parts of San Francisco. New York City has not developed an area of continuous redevelopment. It has, however, experienced cycles of development, decline, and redevelopment. Extreme success as well as dullness can induce decline.

DIVERSITY

Jane Jacobs sees diversity as the chief element of the success of an urban environment. "To generate exuberant diversity in a city's streets and districts, four conditions are necessary.

1. The district, and indeed as many of its internal parts as possible, must serve more than one primary function; preferably more than two. They must insure the presence of people who go outdoors on different schedules and are in the place for different purposes, but who are able to use many facilities in common.

2. Most blocks must be short; that is, streets and opportunities to turn corners must be frequent.

3. The district must mingle buildings that vary in age and condition, including a good proportion of old ones so that they vary in the economic yield they must produce. This mingling must be fairly close-grained.
4. There must be a sufficiently dense concentration of people for whatever purposes they may be there. This includes dense concentration in the case of 8 people who are there because of residence."

This criteria is applicable to other types of urban environments than the type suggested by Mrs. Jacobs, but in different degrees. It is probable that natural redevelopment occurs when an area is valued. A few areas have avoided becoming dull while others have at some point in time been considered worthwhile to their inhabitants to the degree that they would rather renew than move if that is the choice.

**DENSITY**

One of the most perplexing problems in urban theory is that of density. Peter Smithson notes that, "Unfortunately, almost all known sorts of low-density development are inadequate, in their form, in their system of construction, and in their system of access, for our present way of life. And most serious of all, they are culturally obsolete. To overcome cultural obsolescences is not only a matter of finding the right living pattern for our present way of life and the equipment that serves it, but it is also a matter of finding the correct symbols to satisfy our present cultural aspirations."

There seems to be a maximum range of rural and a minimum range of urban densities that allow for natural redevelopment. There also seems to be a considerable gap between these two ranges. In a rural environment, perhaps one house/acre is the maximum density which allows independence, space, and natural privacy. In the city continuous redevelopment seems to be found in areas which there is a great distinction between community space, usually the street, and private space, the
structure of the house and its garden. This distinction occurs when continuous land coverage is in the area 30-40% with densities of 50 people/acre and higher. Small rural communities and the previously mentioned urban communities are examples of redevelopment on a continuous basis or at some point in their development cycle. It remains to be seen if the suburban development and the culture which they reflect will be able to sustain continuous redevelopment.

**BASIS FOR INDUCED REDEVELOPMENT**

There are several necessities in order that urban redevelopment might begin in those areas where it is not occurring naturally. The first and probably the most important is the commitment of society through its political system to the goals of redevelopment. The United States Supreme Court in 1954 stated, "The concept of public welfare is broad and inclusive...The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monitory. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy."

Charles Abrams noted in *The City is The Frontier* that "Physical patterns available to people, existence of alternatives, no longer rest exclusively with the decisions of private industry or individuals. Public policy for slum clearance, housing, race discrimination, zoning, road building, community facilities, transportation, suburban development, recreation, relief of poverty, and for spending and taxation is the main lever in manipulating the pattern of society and choices available to its members." Without social and political commitment there is little hope for the future of induced redevelopment of blighted areas.

A second need is the commitment of the residents and property owners of the area to want to be redeveloped. Opposition to change must be overcome. The common
good must be made an understandable concept. Attainable goals must be agreed upon by both the people concerned and the city.

The third need is a catalyst for redevelopment. This catalyst is more difficult to define, but it is part of the previously mentioned reasonable hope that redevelopment will succeed. There must be activities or facilities of intrinsic value to the blighted area to and possibly to the city which can be used as ordering structure to organize the redevelopment. In blighted areas where the physical organization interferes with the social contact or where there is no provision for this contact, a system reflecting the social nature of urban life might solve the problems of dullness and blight by resulting in increased vitality of the community life in the area. Another possible catalyst is the exploitation of existing facilities of value to city life in areas of little residential life. There seems to be, especially in newer cities, areas adjacent to and sometimes including the central business district where nobody lives. Surprisingly, parks, libraries, cultural and governmental facilities, schools, churches, commerce and offices and a wealth of other facilities are within walking distance... yet there seems to be little incentive to add residents to the underused and vacant land.

THE ANTI-CITY CITY

At the same time public policy is stimulating and underwriting the cost of new subdivisions miles from the central city. The public is building freeways that undermine and cut up established neighborhoods. Facilities near the central business area are underused while newer ones are having to be built farther out. There are a great number of facilities in blighted areas which receive a minimum of use because they can serve only a limited demand. People are limited to a single activity
or facility since there is no connection between activities or facilities. There are also no full-time residents to give the area interest and life. The area is semi-city, and many cities indirectly encourage this through codes, taxation, and location and quality of community facilities.

**BLIGHT BOUNDARY?**

Another basic notion is that blighted areas considered for renewal should have some limit or a boundary. This is a practical necessity rather than the result of the nature of the city. "The assumption that a community can be created by geographic barriers and the principal aid to social cohesion is looseness of grouping and ease of communication, rather than the rigid isolation of arbitrary sections of the total community with impossibly difficult communications." When redevelopment of blighted areas is considered, whether small or large in area, the integration of the city with the area is a prime determination for all other decisions.

**MOTION CONFLICTS**

Conflicts of motion are usual in blighted areas, especially between vehicular and pedestrian motion. Henry Ford stated, "I will build a motor car for the great multitude... so low in price that no man... will be unable to own one—and enjoy with his family the blessings of hours of pleasure in God's great open spaces." But as Serge Chermayeff and Christopher Alexander remarked in *Community and Privacy*, "The automobile which was developed as a tool to serve human purposes has emerged as a dominant pressure in its own right. The forms which result, such as the strips of roadway commerce that are the main streets of many modern cities, are in conflict with their original basic human purposes. The architectural space of a predominantly pedestrian civilization—shaded alleyways and quiet squares standing
in contrast to festive and busy streets, or to solemn and monumental avenues and plazas--has become secondary to the automobile, its accommodating tarmac and flanking commerce. The automobile needs accommodation. But so do people's other needs. At present the form of the city reflects only one, and excludes the other."

**NEED FOR MOTION LINKS**

The links define the motion of the city. Mechanical transportation, however, is only one of the links. Aldo van Eyck suggests, "The time has come to orchestrate all the motion that makes a city a city. It is somehow in the nature of cities in general and of traffic in particular to suppress certain kinds of motion which, if less insistent, are certainly no less fundamental to the ideal city."
A LINKED STRUCTURE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A solution to the problem of blighted areas in the city is a linked structure of community facilities. I define community facilities as all the facilities outside the privacy of the home. From the house out. Community facilities are the distinguishing characteristics of urban life from rural life. The street is the linking corridor and activities are the rooms of the community house. The cause of much of the blight in areas of the city is the absence of links and the failure to integrate community facilities into the structure of the city, that is, the structure of community life.
CITY COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The city community facilities hierarchy must be determined. Those facilities which serve the city as a whole would best be connected directly with the city transportation system at the edge of the area. Kevin Lynch states in *The Image of the City*, "An edge may be more than simply a dominant barrier, if some visual or motion penetration is allowed through it—if it is, as it were, structured to some depth with the regions on either side. It becomes a seam rather than a barrier, a line of exchange along which two areas are sewn together." The facilities which are city orientated could then become the link in the integration of the community facilities into the city. These might include industrial, commercial, cultural, and recreational facilities. Educational facilities might be used to connect several areas of the city and, therefore draw pupils from divergent backgrounds.

LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The local community facilities, those directly serving the area, could then serve as the dominant facilities within the area. Mass transit stops form a natural focus to the local facilities. Commerce, schools, churches, public facilities and open spaces arranged in a continuous organization then become the focus of the neighborhood. Pedestrian paths, sidewalks, and low-speed vehicular transportation link the area focus with the more distant residences. This motion is augmented by an occasional store, playlot, nursery, or other neighborhood facility.

MOTION HIERARCHY

The machine age motion has introduced a new hierarchy into urban design. "Movement in cities must include the function of parking and stopping. In general, national inter-city, inter-sector, and local (low speed car, pedestrian) traffic should each
have separate systems which offer no short cuts—all movement must proceed
through each state of the hierarchy—and the town building should respond to the hierarchy of movement."

A major aspect of a linked structure of community facilities for the redevelopment of blighted areas in the city is a solution of the vehicular-pedestrian circulation hierarchies and their integration with the community facilities hierarchy system, that is, with the communal life of the area. The region and city must first be examined to determine their effect on the defined blighted area and vice versa.

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE HIERARCHY
The physical structure of blighted areas then must be reduced to its existing functional, and, as far as can be determined, social patterns. The existing pattern of streets probably reflects some of these social patterns. They are important, but should not be considered rigid if they oppose functional and/or social hierarchies.

Buildings must be evaluated. Those useless and abandoned or whose condition is such that repair is impossible, must be removed and their site incorporated into the redevelopment scheme.

A local system organizing the community facilities and pedestrian movement into a continuous structure supported by a vehicular hierarchy must then evolve. It is important to avoid, if possible, destruction of existing residential buildings and community facilities for both social and economic reasons. When they exist, social and physical patterns and routines can be reinforced by the new hierarchies. The local system should then be integrated into the framework of the city.
COMPOSITE HIERARCHY

The transportation hierarchy then includes the regional and the city system of transportation linked with blighted areas transportation with a distinction between medium and low speed vehicular movement. Parking as it relates to housing and community facilities becomes the termination of the transportation hierarchy which is then linked to the pedestrian movement hierarchy. Pedestrian movement then structures the link in continuous community facilities structure. "Medieval cities had a high degree of integration between movement channels and buildings; the Ponte Vecchio was lined with houses and shops. In later centuries the converse became true—specific and clear separation was maintained between streets and squares and their adjacent buildings. If we are to provide a framework for the city which is more or less permanent and one which by its service and form can provide comprehensibility as well as predicate land uses of the city and intensities of action, it is conceivable that channels of movement and their termini and model change could become a part of architecture again."

BLIGHT REVERSED

The linked structure of community facilities now is the focus of the area's communal life. Transportation, which formally interfered with this life, has been reorganized to support it. A background has been set to encourage further redevelopment corresponding to the nature of community life. Dead buildings have been replaced with useful ones and a dead city structure has been replaced with one complimenting urban life. The population of the area should increase because it is now more interesting and desirable place in which to live. The structure allows functional diversity which in turn would likely encourage economic and social diversity. Under certain
circumstances little has been destroyed, yet the area could begin to offer advantages and a way of life not available in other locations of the city. The attractiveness of the types of facilities which are offered would increase the value of the area to its residents and to others in the city. In turn this should encourage further redevelopment, especially by the prime sector. The area would, hopefully, be on the road to continual self-redevelopment.
IV. DEMONSTRATION:

THE SITE: GALVESTON

To show the process of redevelopment as it might be applied to a specific site, I have chosen the city of Galveston. There seems to be a need for redevelopment of blighted areas in this city, but this demonstration can only show what might happen given a desire for redevelopment on the part of the people of the area concerned and of the city.

The city as it relates to the region (Figure I) indicates that it is chiefly a transportation termination. However, with construction of a bridge at the eastern end...
of the island, there might be some east-west traffic generated. The existing thoroughfare plan (Figure 2) of the city defines the three major east-west routes as: Seawall Boulevard along the Gulf of Mexico; an industrial route between the railroad yards and wharves along the channel and Galveston Bay; and Broadway through the center of the city. North-south connectors occur at regular intervals.

CITY AND CITY STRUCTURE

The city of Galveston was founded (Figure 3) in 1838. It was organized about two perpendicular axes, Broadway and Bath Avenue, with a park every ten blocks and with larger blocks toward the Gulf to serve as sites for small farms, estates and as a buffer between the city and the Gulf. The city grew and prospered. It was the financial and commercial center for a large inland area and the chief port of Texas in the nineteenth century. In 1900 a hurricane destroyed much of the city and killed nearly 6,000 people. The city never fully recovered. Presently Galveston is in the process of accepting its new role as a part of the Houston region and its population is expected to begin to increase from the existing 70,000 inhabitants.

The city has not grown much larger than the original plat of 1838. Continuous redevelopment is encouraged by the lack of land of sufficient elevation for expansion of the city. It is reasonable to assume that the areas where natural redevelopment has not occurred will be stimulated to redevelop by the expected increase in population. The existing land uses (Figure 4) gives some indication of the concentration of activities. The retail and commercial development is concentrated in the core, north of Broadway and south of the harbor between Nineteenth and Twenty Sixth Streets; along the Gulf; on Broadway west of the core; and along several of the north-south
1. PROBABLE REGIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM.  

2. MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN.
3. ORIGINAL CITY PLAT, 1838.

4. EXISTING LAND USE.
connector streets. Most city wide institutions are in or near the core. Industrial uses are near the railroad yards and harbor on the north side of the island.

REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The prime areas for redevelopment (Figure 5) as defined by the Comprehensive Plan Report are judged to be over 40% deteriorating/dilapidated. This area includes the Central Business District west of Nineteenth Street. It must be noted that there are many facilities in adequate buildings and some in new buildings within this area. Also, there are numerous buildings of deteriorated/dilapidated condition elsewhere in the city, especially in areas near the definite blighted areas. Existing parks, schools and public housing are the major buildings in good physical condition within the blighted areas.

A continuous system of community facilities for the redevelopment of these blighted areas could be structured with a spine (Figure 6) beginning at the western end of the areas to be redeveloped, connecting the major areas and facilities, defining the Central Business District, and continuing eastward to the hospital district and the east end recreation and commercial area. A sub-system connecting adjacent facilities would then be based on an analysis of the character of smaller areas in the city. The objectives for redevelopment of individual areas would be co-ordinated with the general objectives of the whole system. The area adjacent to the Central Business District along Broadway between Eighteenth and Twenty-Seventh Streets will serve as an example of this process in a local area.

OBJECTIVES

The general object of the redevelopment process is to supply those elements lacking
5. PRIME REDEVELOPMENT AREAS.

6. CITY SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES.
in blighted areas which, if available, would produce a stable and active community life, and therefore continuous self-redevelopment in the future. The general objectives in implementation of a system of community facilities to accomplish redevelopment are: one, establish mechanical transportation and pedestrian communication hierarchies; two, use existing facilities and activities as local foci integrated into the city structure in a continuous system; and three, introduce those elements considered lacking in the area whether they be activities and facilities or people in sufficient numbers to give the area life.

SITE AND ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS

The site of particular interest in this demonstration (Figure 7) is the major entrance for traffic into the Central Business District. It is at the intersection (Figure 8) of the axes which dominated the original city plat, Broadway and Bath Avenue (now Twenty-Fifth Street). A monument to the Texas revolution marks this intersection. The area was once the location of the most luxurious residences in Galveston. Through the years institutions and commercial activities have developed in the area. In recent years many of the former large residential structures have given way to progress in the form of parking and used car lots, service stations, drive-ins, etc. Many smaller residential structures still exist in areas with less traffic, but their value as residences has decreased with the change in the nature of the area.

The existing street pattern (Figure 9), and land subdivision (Figure 10) have little relation to the traffic circulation into the business district or to the activities existing in the area. There is little pedestrian space except in several nearby parks. The plat does not distinguish between pedestrian and vehicular movement (Figure 11). The necessity to turn in front of oncoming traffic to enter or leave the business dis-
7. CENTRAL BUSINESS AREA. 22

8. LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AREA.
strict makes this major traffic pattern difficult and sometimes dangerous.

The area contains (Figure 12) many activities which relate to the city as a whole, and some of a more local nature. Several of the old mansions, many of the smaller houses, and some semi-public buildings are of architectural note. Some of the newer structures are of substantial importance to the architectural character of the area. However, since there are few residents in the area, the social pattern of these people is less important than it would be in an area of more residential character. The block wide path of a tornado in 1962 has cleared many of the structures from the area and only a few have been replaced.

The existing activities are related (Figure 13) to each other within the district. Since many of the activities relate to the city as a whole, the pattern of traffic movement must be made efficient in the restructuring of the area.

**RESPONSE**

The chief element lacking in the area is the existence of the number of full-time residents which could use to advantage the facilities available and contribute to the life of the area. The increased life should in turn encourage further development of facilities.

The area is a major crossroads for the city. Vehicular transportation (Figure 14) is restructured to express and facilitate this circulation. Pedestrian movement (Figure 15) must be restructured and directed toward larger areas where contact with vehicular traffic either does not exist or is at compatible speed and volume. When pedestrian and vehicular motion cross (Figure 16), the intersection must allow for both of these kinds of motion.
12. ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA.

13. ACTIVITIES RELATED.
14. PROPOSED VEHICULAR MOVEMENT.

15. PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT.

16. PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR INTERSECTIONS.
Broadway becomes the linear focus (Figure 17) for the redevelopment which will allow for the introduction of various higher density residential structures. Minor connecting links enter the main focus from the west and south of the area. The intersection of Broadway and Twenty-Fifth Street is developed as a symbolic center of the city. A connector to the business district at the former location of Twenty-Second Street becomes the focus of commercial activity. The former Twentieth Street is a connector between the Galveston County Courthouse and an elementary school and two block size parks. This connector will provide space for expansion of the school and community services of the Courthouse. The housing for the elderly is nearby. Perhaps continuing education could be introduced into this educational-community services connector.

The system for redevelopment is now structured in general terms. The next step in the process is to react to change and stimulation which this initial redevelopment will produce.

Perhaps the area will be on its way to continuous self-redevelopment. Probably the area structure would be adjusted over a period of time to reflect the continuous changes. However, the general direction is established and with time a new mature environment will emerge.
17. Redevelopment Proposal.
V. URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PROCESS:

BASIC DESIRE, FRAMEWORK, AND FEASIBILITY

There are three groups which must be interested, regardless of motives, in redevelopment of a blighted area for it to succeed. The first and most important is the desire of the people who live and own property in the area for a better environment. The people of the city must allow and contribute to the desire for redevelopment. The people must be committed to the city. There must, finally, be a public policy on all levels of government which provides a basic framework for the redevelopment.
Blighted areas must have an intrinsic value to their inhabitants and to some extent to the city as a whole. The value of the area reinforces the desire to redevelop.

Any reasonable hope that redevelopment of blighted areas will succeed also requires a certain amount of economic feasibility. Redevelopment based solely on the profit motive may be possible. The desire to break even may, in some cases, be impractical, but the American city and society seem unlikely to sponsor a losing economic proposition.

GOALS
After a desire and framework for redevelopment have been established specific and limited goals must be formulated. These goals must reflect the position that the redeveloped blighted area will play in the region and the city and the type of environment desired within the specific area. The private and public sector of the economy must then join forces with foundations, and non-profit organizations to provide the capital necessary to improve the quality of life as well as physical structures. It is necessary for all groups to know and understand the goals and means to those goals. It is desirable for agreement among these groups on the goals and means.

PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND CHARITABLE PARTICIPATION
Federal participation in the mechanics and financing of urban redevelopment are specifically defined by the National Urban Renewal Program initiated in the National Housing Act of 1949 as amended. These amendments allow for a redevelopment orientation after the initial rebuilding orientation of the law produced unsatisfactory results.
In a redevelopment district, through existing urban renewal laws, the land is cleared of those structures which offer no possibility of redevelopment. The renewal agency then sells the land to a private developer who must have his projected redevelopment approved by the agency. He may include existing right-of-ways in addition to the cleared areas. The private sector is sometimes better able to determine which facilities will be successful in an area than public agencies. However, the system of community facilities as defined by the agency and the general goals must be reapproved by this agency, allowing for the best interests of both the community and the private sector. In any case local government and the local private sectors have a greater opportunity to correctly interpret the local needs.

Non-profit corporations may be able to accomplish much in the way of quality because the profit margin is frequently the difference between a satisfactory and a good solution. Foundations can be utilized in providing excellence in public community facilities and their programs and activities. The flexibility of non-government organizations and especially foundations is necessary under certain circumstances in the process.

**PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

The planned development district, a concept of zoning, might be used to accomplish redevelopment without the participation of government agencies higher than the city level. This concept recognizes that it may be desirable that certain areas of the city larger than a city block be developed in accordance with plans prepared and approved in advance. The city governments adopt a scheme as an amendment to the city zoning ordinance. Its chief value is that it allows for development of parcels which may include existing city right-of-ways and it allows for diversity and mix-
tures of uses not ordinarily allowed by zoning ordinances. This concept might be coordinated with land acquisition under an urban renewal scheme to redevelop blighted areas.

**REDEVELOPMENT AS A CITY ENDEAVOR**

The city might choose, although it is contrary to the American private enterprise system, to be its own client in a redevelopment scheme. Municipal bonds could be issued with electorate approval to finance the redevelopment of blighted areas. The city through its powers of taxation, code enforcement, and eminent domain could acquire property without participation with the federal renewal program. Or it could acquire the land through the federal program. The sale and rents of the new structures within the area could then be used to retire the bonds. It is not uncommon for municipal bonds to be used to finance industrial facilities. These facilities might be part of a redevelopment scheme to offer the residents of the area the opportunity of employment. These industrial facilities would be linked with and strengthen the community facilities structure.

**THE SPECIAL DISTRICT**

Another source of financing for redevelopment when the city will not lend its support to the process would be for the area to create a special district through an election for that purpose. This district is not desirable because there are already too many such independent and overlapping districts in cities. Perhaps the mere threat would be enough to stimulate action by the city. In any case, it is conceivable that the district could finance its own improvements through issuance of bonds. By assessments of the property owner or through sale of improved properties repay the bonds.
WHO'S VALUE

One of the dilemas of land values is that city improvements which are paid for by the community as a whole sometimes increase the value of an individual property. Suburban lands which fronts on new freeways, especially at intersections, increase immensely in value. Yet these landowners do not consider that they should contribute significantly to the building of these facilities.

The Erie Canal was paid for by assessments on the adjacent property owners. Today the Bay Area Rapid Transit System is estimated to have increased the value of the land near its stations $800,000,000, but it is being paid for through the issuance of bonds of just a little greater value. Redevelopment will increase the value of certain real estate and it should be taxed accordingly. On the other hand, blight is made profitable because of low taxes on obsolete and decayed structures while improvement is discouraged by increased taxes. It has been suggested that city property taxes should be based more on land value rather than building value to encourage continuous redevelopment.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

A possible stimulus for redevelopment is strict code enforcement. "Only local government can deflate the bootleg price of slum housing by code enforcement and/or taxation. Block by block research shows that in Philadelphia, vigorous code enforcement has so deflated central city housing prices there that a large percentage of the 14,400 row houses now vacant can be bought (or put) in decent move-in condition for $4,000 cash or less. (Compare this with an average cost of $20,500 for new public housing, and $12,300 now budgeted by the Housing Authority to buy units
and do them over completely, regardless of how much fixing up they really need.

If FHA or other special financing is made available, this $4,000 cost would make it possible for even relief clients, black or white, to buy or lease decent used housing."

As previously noted, the public policy for slum clearance, housing, race discrimination, zoning, road building, community facilities, transportation, suburban development, recreation, relief of poverty and for spending and taxation are the means that the political system can use to influence the city structure, and, within the city structure, the redevelopment of blighted areas. The same means can be used in both a positive and a negative manner. They must be used constructively to make redevelopment a continuous process.
SUMMARY:

Redevelopment is a continuous process. Blighted areas development when this continuous process does not keep up with the everchanging city. Blight is valuable neither to the residents and workers of an area, nor to the city as a whole. It becomes necessary for the city to stimulate redevelopment of its parts when these areas are not able to do so in a continuous way. Not to do so would contribute further to the decline of the area and to the spread of blight. One means to stimulate redevelopment in blighted areas of higher concentration of people and/or of diverse activities is to restructure the area linking community facilities and providing areas for new facilities and for expansion of existing facilities along these links. By doing so, the regeneration of community life and activities would have a stimulating effect on the desire of individuals in the private sector to redevelop their property.
EPILOGUE:

"When the city fails, it is not for technical or formal reasons, but from a lack of readiness of the part of its inhabitants to embrace an urban way of life as demanding as it is rewarding. For urbanity is not to be acquired gratuitously or by any amount of training on a formal level alone, which produces nothing but a hollow likeness. Urbanity is a reward for commitment, a reward of the same order as an artist's satisfaction with a work well done, not only in terms of craftsmanship and formal appearance, but in lasting truth and power."
NOTES:

1. WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY, SECOND EDITION (Springfield, Mass., 1959)


6. Alison Smithson, editor, "Team 10 Primer" ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN, XXXII, #12, (December, 1962) 574.

7. Jacobs, Illustrations.

8. Ibid, pp. 150-151.


19. Ibid. p. 44.

20. Ibid. p. 20.


22. Ibid. p. 173.

23. Ibid. p. 54.


25. Sekler, p. 78.