CINCINNATI

2000

PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

REPORT

to the
City Planning Commission
and
City Council

A review of the Comprehensive Development Plan for Downtown

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December, 1990

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The 2000 Plan Review Committee Report Summary

MISSION

In 1982, the 2000 Plan - "a design for a pleasing city" - set forth specific goals and strategies for office buildings, housing, retail, parking and transportation, entertainment, hotels and convention center development for the period ending in the year 2000.

In October 1989, City Council, on a motion by Peter Strauss, authorized the appointment by the Planning Commission of a 2000 Plan Review Committee to determine "whether the City of Cincinnati is on target with downtown development outlined in the Cincinnati 2000 Plan." A 36-person Committee was so appointed, consisting of original 2000 Plan Committee members and their replacements plus some new people. We divided up into seven Subcommittees addressing the 2000 Plan categories.

The Committee as a whole has reviewed and after discussion adopted a detailed report from each of its Subcommittees. These reports, together with this Summary, constitute our Committee report, submitted herewith.

We have had excellent cooperation and particpation from the Economic Development Department and the City Planning Department. Due largely to a grant from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation to help defray our costs, the assignment has been completed at no significant out-of-pocket expense to the City.

CONVICTIONS

The Committee believes:

To have a strong city we must have a strong downtown.

The 2000 Plan as drawn up in 1982 continues to be a viable design for the development of the City. Recommended revisions in the goals are minor.

To convert the Plan to reality, however, certain steps must be taken, and these are recommended in our report.

All aspects of Downtown development (housing, retail, entertainment, etc.) are interrelated and dependent on each other and must move forward along with office development.

To address the challenge that the 2000 Plan represents, the City Council and the City Manager must be unanimously convinced that a strong and vital Central Business District (CBD) is a key part of their responsibility, and that a successful execution of the 2000 Plan will be good for every single citizen of Cincinnati, no matter where in the city he or she may live. The City Administration and the entire Cincinnati community must strongly endorse this belief if success is to be achieved.

The entire Cincinnati community needs to recognize the CBD as a job- and tax revenue- generator that contributes either directly or indirectly to the economic health of every Cincinnati citizen. The scope and importance of the CBD needs to be defined in detail so that this core area has the fullest support of all of Cincinnati's citizens in their own enlightened self-interest.

To provide support for this thesis, note that the CBD generates roughly 84,000 direct jobs, with an estimated payroll of $2.9 billion per year and also generates either directly or indirectly more than 42% of all of the City's income tax revenue.

Cincinnati must have and be perceived to have an attractive, safe, clean Downtown, vibrant and alive at night as well as in the daytime, and on weekends as well as weekdays. Downtown must attract and welcome all segments of Cincinnati's diverse community.

REALIZATION

Over the last ten years the City has made remarkable progress on some elements of the 2000 Plan: Office Buildings, Hotels and Convention Center. However, the balance of the plan is substantially behind target, and well behind its potential achievement. Our goal over the next ten years must be to duplicate in all other aspects of downtown development the progress that has been made in the three areas noted.

DETERRENTS

We believe that the principal deterrents to greater progress toward fulfillment of the 2000 Plan have been:

Lack of specific assigned responsibility. In 1982, the 2000 Plan was completed and approved by City Council. The planning effort did not, however, include the establishment of hard objectives and did not include either an enabling organizational structure or the necessary financing.

Neither the City Manager nor the Director of the Department of Economic Development was clearly assigned the responsibility for delivering results in accordance with the plan and the timetable. Over the years since, the 2000 Plan evolved into an optional "if possible" mode.

Ineffective Organization Structure. Without the assignment of specific responsibility and authorized personnel, the City's administrative structure has not been able to organize effectively to assign specific highly competent managers to 2000 Plan categories, i.e. (1) Office Buildings, (2) Entertainment/Hotels/Convention Center, (3) Housing, (4) Riverfront West, (5) Retail, (6) Parking/Transportation, and (7) Environmental Quality/Urban Design.

For example, the City's Economic Development Department Staff has been reduced 27% since 1982 reflecting a substantial reduction in priority relative to the CBD. As a result, most of the categories in the 2000 Plan have lacked the dedicated champions and the expertise to achieve 2000 Plan results.

Unavailability of Enabling Funding. During the period since 1982, the City has invested capital funds quite modestly against development efforts for the CBD. We believe that under-investment in CBD development is a very important reason why broad scale progress against the 2000 Plan is lagging and particularly why the retail segment of the CBD has not benefited from a healthy infusion of new businesses which can succeed in the downtown climate of today's Cincinnati.

In examining the reasons for success in other cities which have healthy, vibrant downtowns, one of the recurring elements is funding of downtown development through the much more aggressive use of alternate funding mechanisms like Tax Increment Financing.

In making these comments, we are not being critical of the City Council, the City Manager, or the Economic Development or other Departments. We are simply pointing out that the complex, ambitious and challenging 2000 Plan cannot be realized effec-

tively without all the same organizational and funding elements that are needed to run a huge complex business enterprise — which the downtown City and the 2000 Plan certainly represent.

PROGRESS IN 2000 PLAN CATEGORIES:

1. *Office Buildings*

Importantly because the Director of the Economic Development Department gave priority and deep personal commitment to office building construction, and because City Council provided appropriate funding, the City's performance against 2000 Plan objectives has been excellent.

In fact, growth in office space has occurred at a higher rate than anticipated in the plan. Compared to the forecast of 7,000,000 square feet by the year 2000, 6,000,000 square feet will be completed by the end of 1990 and an additional 4,000,000 square feet will be completed by 1995. We now project that with continued effort, we should see a total of 11,000,000 square feet completed by the year 2000 rather than the 7,000,000 square feet originally forecast.

Development of office space received top priority and appropriate funding because of broad recognition that this use increases employment and generates tax revenue more than any other 2000 Plan category.

2. *Entertainment/Hotels/Convention Center:*

Entertainment - In the 2000 Plan, an "entertainment district" was to be designated in the area between Sixth and Seventh Streets and Vine and Main Streets. Since the plan was published, we have lost two legitimate theatres and three cinemas from the downtown area. Only the Taft theatre and one cinema remains. Despite effort, we have no positive results to show in improving the downtown entertainment climate in the last decade.

The Pluss project did not prove to be economically feasible and was aborted. The State sponsored Performing Arts Center has now been targeted for the 6th and Walnut Streets location and the chances of this entertainment project becoming reality are considered good.

With the benefit of hindsight, we believe that while the entertainment district concept is probably sound, we should not make it limiting. We should strongly encourage and recruit entertainment concepts not only for the Sixth, Seventh, Vine and Main Street area, but for all reasonable downtown locations.

Hotels - The 2000 Plan forecast 3,500 total hotel rooms by the year 2000. With the addition of the Westin and the Hyatt Regency and a renovated Cincinnatian, we now have 2,953 and an additional 635 rooms proposed via Fountain Square West (250), Marriott Courtyard (245), and Hampton Inn (140), for a total of 3,588 by 1995. We are ahead of the forecast schedule in part because of the stimulus of the expanded Convention Center.

We can reasonably expect to have 4,000 total hotel rooms Downtown when jusitifed in response to the growth of needs from additional office buildings and a strong convention business and with continued encouragement and support of the City.

Convention Center - The renovation and expansion of the Convention Center was a major objective of the 2000 Plan. This work was completed in 1987 at a cost of $62 million. To date the enlarged facility has attracted an estimated $275 million in delegate expenditures and is making its anticipated contribution to the City's economy.

It is time to launch a new study to determine the cost, feasibility and economic impact of a further major enlargement of the Convention Center relative to other Downtown investment opportunities that also have the potential to make Downtown more appealing and economically, more successful.

3. *Housing*

The 2000 Plan calls for a minimum goal of 6,000 additional housing units. With projects now underway, we anticipate that by 1995, 1407 units or 23% of the 6,000 recommended will have been created. An additional 1,528 units are planned for later phases of the Adams Landing and Garfield Place projects. Riverfront West should be able to generate about 1,000 housing units by the year 2000.

The City should adopt a goal of 4,000 Downtown housing units by

the year 2000 as one of its highest Downtown priorities. This goal of 4,000 reflects a reduction from the original goal of 6,000 in the 2000 Plan, and has been revised downward based on economic reality, but City Council is urged to encourage additional development particularly of middle and upper income housing.

The City should continue its existing policy of assuring that at least 1,300 low-income housing units exist Downtown. Recognizing that many existing low-income units may be acquired for new development, the City should provide appropriate assistance for the development of additional low-income housing Downtown.

4. *Riverfront West*

The 2000 Plan calls for the development of Riverfront West during the 1990 to 2000 decade. It is clear we are behind schedule because site clearance and preparation for development is a complex and time consuming enterprise which must be properly staffed, organized and funded. None of that work has yet effectively started.

Because of Riverfront West's size (75 acres including air rights over Fort Washington Way), its proximity to Downtown and its attractive river setting, this area has the potential to dramatically improve the business climate and the national image of Cincinnati.

For the first key step, the City should initiate work on the clearance of Riverfront West, moving current businesses to viable locations. Development of the acreage along the river should be encouraged since development of that frontage will open all of Riverfront West to constructive planning and development efforts.

5. *Retail*

The 2000 Plan calls for a net increase of about 400,000 square feet. of retail space. Since 1980 about 230,000 square feet of new retail space has been developed and 870,000 square feet of retail space has been lost, for a net loss of 640,000 square feet.

Another 266,000 square feet of retail space will be lost if Lazarus relocates to Fountain Square West. Since more that 18 suburban malls now surround downtown Cincinnati, the original retail objectives may have been unrealistic. However, it is very clear that

Cincinnati's downtown retail has suffered severe losses that were unanticipated and against which, no defense had been prepared.

These severe retail losses are threatening to change the essential character of Cincinnati's downtown from a successful, vibrant, healthy core area to a retail void that can harm the attractiveness and appeal of the entire Cincinnati community.

The City's Economic Development Department should be organized and funded in a fashion which will better enable them to maintain the current retail stores and recruit new retail stores that are unavailable in suburban locations, in addition to maintaining stores that do have suburban locations, to help bring life and vitality back Downtown. However, experience in cities with successful downtowns has shown that, in addition to retail stores, cleanliness, landscaping, design and appearance are also vital to economic success.

In addition, the City should encourage for the longer term, the possible formation of a Business Improvement District to provide functions and services which significantly enhance the appeal of Downtown to all its users. The City should also encourage State legislation authorizing creation of a Business Improvement District and agree to maintain or increase downtown services and expenditures, if such a District is formed.

6. *Parking/Transportation*

Parking - The 2000 Plan calls for a total of 11,000 additional parking spaces by the year 2000 given the current split of usage of 77% automobiles/23% transit. Through 1990 we have added about 5,790 additional parking spaces, so we are roughly on the 2000 Plan schedule.

However, because of the City's success in developing office buildings ahead of the original schedule, the occupants of these buildings have understandably garnered most of the available parking spaces. Independent studies have indicated up to 90% occupancy during business hours.

It is therefore no surprise that shoppers now report that a major limitation to shopping Downtown is inadequate parking. It seems urgent that current available parking spaces need to be better

identified via better signage, need to be better advertised to communicate their availability, and need to be re-priced to give preference, in City owned parking facilities, to short term shoppers.
In addition, a study should be initiated, promptly, to explore the feasibility, possible locations and methods of financing for a major increase in downtown parking availability.

Mass Transit - The 2000 Plan calls for an increase in the percentage of people coming downtown via mass transit from 21% to 35%. However, actual usage is essentially unchanged from 1982. This is unlikely to change at current, relatively low-cost gasoline prices, since consumers are demonstrating daily that current economics justify their continued usage of autos.

Cincinnati and Hamilton County should encourage State legislation which will permit local gasoline tax initiatives which would be used to fund improved mass transit facilities. This effort, combined with anticipated continuing increases in gasoline prices, may, over time change the consumer transportation economics to achieve the 35% target level of mass transit usage.

Light Rail Transit - Light Rail has the potential, long-term, to support office, retail and entertainment elements of the Year 2000 Plan. We recommend that the City consider the purchase of the NE corridor right-of-way, if it can be acquired at a reasonable cost. Light rail has a high initial capital investment, but a low operating cost. In view of increasing environmental concerns, and the anticipated continuing escalation in gasoline prices, light rail could become a very attractive mass transit option for Cincinnati. At a minimum, the City should maintain the option of using light rail in the future, by preserving the present right-of-way intact, if that proves legally feasible.

7. *Environmental Quality/Urban Design*

The 2000 Plan describes a "Design for a Pleasing City" which would include such amenities as pedestrian ways using modular brick and granite paving materials, open spaces and vistas to serve both as focal points and as buffers between areas of unrelated usage, and the use of grass, flowers and trees to modify and beautify the areas of pedestrian movement.

In addition, the 2000 Plan calls for preservation of the Downtown's historic character. It designated Oldtown, Lytle Park, the North Frame, and Main Street from Sixth Street to Central Parkway as Historic Districts, and recommended individual buildings along Fourth Street also be designated as Historic.
The 2000 Plan also recommends that the City's skyline maintain a pyramidal shape peaking at Fountain Square, with the mass of the buildings extending down toward Riverfront West, with the height of new buildings to be limited to protect the views to the river of the existing buildings.

The plans for a Pleasing City, expressed above in a very condensed form, we believe, continue to be sound and feasible. However, responsibility and accountability for executing these plans must be assigned and funded.

We recommend that the Park Board be assigned the responsibility for all downtown green spaces, street trees and flowers and be empowered to work with property owners toward better execution and maintenance of all landscaping efforts.

In addition, the Urban Design Review Board and the Historic Conservation Board should continue to be utilized to review and advise the City on relevant plans throughout Downtown.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The City Council should assign specific responsibility for the successful execution of the revised 2000 Plan, when approved, to the City Manager and his Administrative organization. The City Manager should provide the City Council with an annual, 2000 Plan Progress Report. Council will then be able to inspect and supervise the adequacy of the progress being made and initiate changes as appropriate in personnel, funding and priorities to achieve the approved plan in the agreed upon time frame.

2. The City Manager should appoint a highly talented Section Manager for each of the 7 categories represented in the 2000 Plan. These Section Managers would be positioned either within the Economic Development Department or within another Administrative Depart-

ment as appropriate for the specific category involved. These Section Managers would be responsible and accountable for achieving the agreed upon results for their category on the approved time schedule.

Each Section Manager would be responsible for developing a budget which would be needed to execute the objectives of the 2000 Plan for that category and which would be submitted to the City Manager, with the approval of the Department Head involved. It would be the City Manager's responsibility to recommend the appropriate priorities and the necessary funding to City Council for approval.

3. City Council should request the Cincinnati Business Committee (CBC), the Chamber of Commerce and the 2000 Plan Review Committee select a Board of Trustees for a proactive Cincinnati Downtown Progress Committee. This Board would consist of about 15 broadly based members who have a strong personal or business interest in the success of Downtown.

These Trustees would be responsible for establishing a long-term strategy and priorities for the development of all aspects of Downtown progress and the attainment of 2000 Plan goals. They would also work with the City Administration and with all of the established Downtown organizations to coordinate and help direct the key development areas: retailing, housing, entertainment, etc. This Board should be constructed to provide the leadership and advocacy necessary to achieve the superior Downtown results this City deserves.

Council should also work with the Cincinnati Downtown Progress Committee to develop sources for the relatively modest level of funding that will be required to enable this Committee to operate effectively. We expect that over time, this Committee could evolve logically into a Business Improvement District structure.

4. The City Manager should initiate a major internal effort to simplify and streamline those parts of the ap-

proval process that currently delay or inhibit developers and entrepreneurs from starting new projects and ventures on a timely basis. When delays are encountered, they not only hurt the venture initiators but also hurt the City by delaying or blocking the creation of new jobs and new tax paying businesses.

5. City Council should launch a major study of the funding mechanisms that are now in successful use by other cities which have vibrant, healthy central business districts. This study effort should particularly review much more aggressive use of tax increment financing in a fashion which does not penalize public school funding. We should position Cincinnati to benefit from the experience of other effective communities.

We need to improve our methods of Downtown financing so that attractive new developments can help provide more jobs and more tax revenue, which, in turn, will enable us better to support the educational and social responsibilities of the City.

We suggest that this Study be chaired by the head of the Council's Finance Committee, and augmented by volunteers from the City's financial community.

6. Although professional sports teams were not covered in the original 2000 Plan, the Review Committee recommends that the Reds and Bengals become an official part of the 2000 Plan and be recognized as a vital part of Cincinnati's economic and entertainment life.

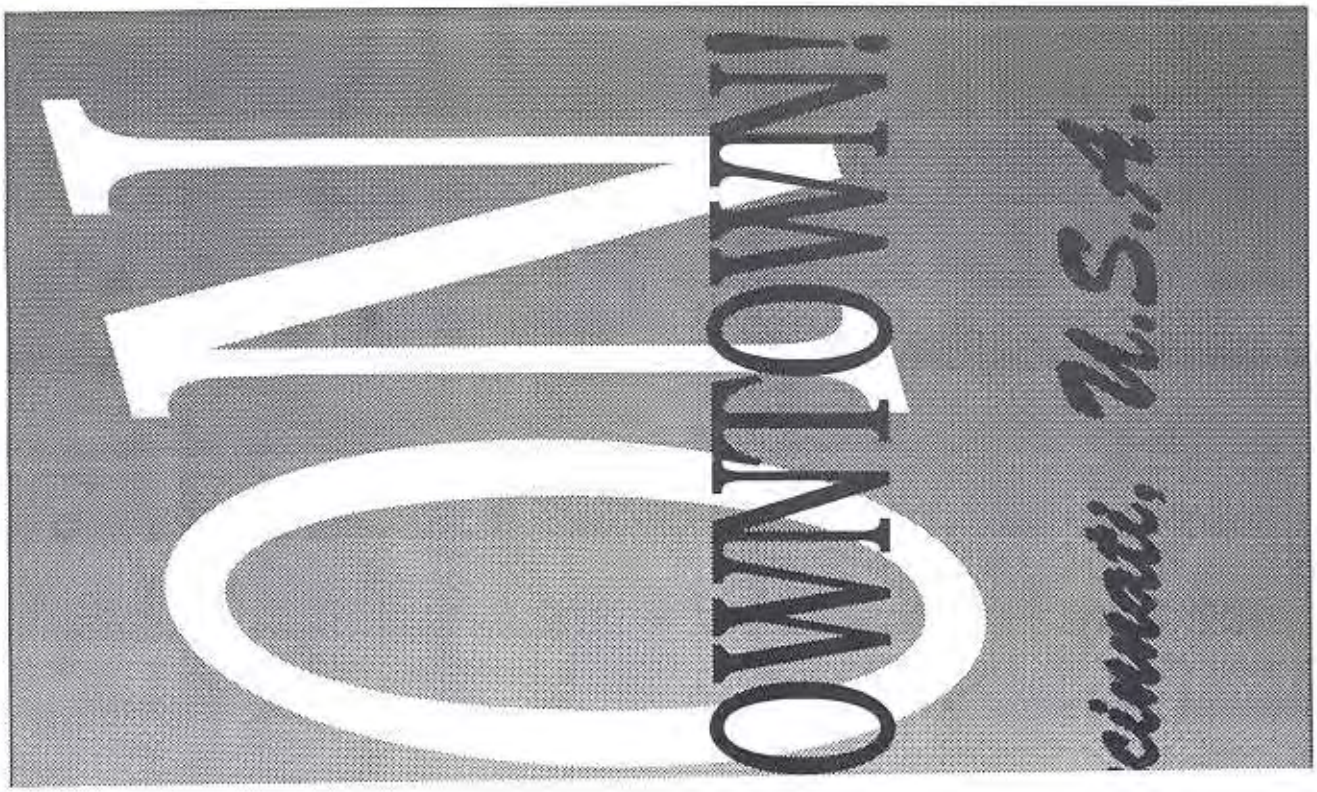
To this end, the City should maintain a close and constructive relationship with the Reds and the Bengals. When appropriate, Council should appoint a high level Sports Commission which will serve to help achieve a positive and constructive relationship between the City and the teams and between the teams themselves.

The Sports Commission should also work to see that the Stadium and related facilities are maintained, improved and if necessary, enlarged to be fully competitive with professional athletic facilities in other comparable markets.

> The recommended effort is designed to ensure that the Reds and the Bengals will continue to be a successful part of Cincinnati's future in the year 2000 and beyond.

The 2000 Plan Review Committee believes that with the full support of the City Council, with the assignment of responsibility for results to the City Manager, with the recommended organizational structure and with adequate funding, the 2000 Plan can be a reality and can change the vitality and attractiveness of Cincinnati to be on a par with the most progressive cities in the country.

The conclusions contained in the reports of the seven subcommittees follow. These embrace an appraisal of progress made to date in reaching the goals of the 2000 Plan, possible modification of certain of those goals, and recommendations of steps to be taken to reach the target and complete the mission.



2000 Plan Review

Activities Map

Cincinnati, Ohio

Subcommittee members:

George A. Schaefer, Jr
co-chairperson
Samuel M. Cassidy
co-chairperson

William H. Dickhoner
John P. Williams, Jr.

OFFICE BUILDINGS/ FOUNTAIN SQUARE WEST

OFFICE SPACE

2000 PLAN - GENERAL

It should be noted that the original 2000 Plan considers downtown office development to be the "driver" of the Plan, creating much of the market for the residential, retail and hotel segments, and generating, by far, the greatest demands on our parking, highway and other transportation systems.

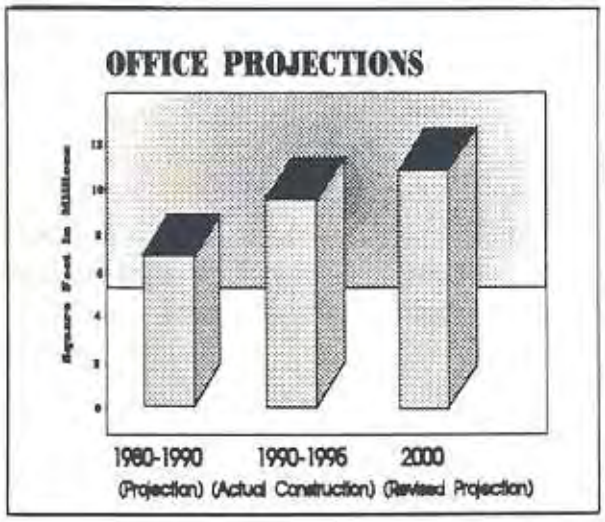
Development of office space is emphasized in the 2000 Plan because it increases the employment and tax bases more than any other use.

Current Status

The following is an excerpt from the report given by the Economic Development Department at the January 11, 1990 meeting of the Cincinnati 2000 Plan Review Committee:

Growth in office space has occurred at a much higher rate than anticipated in the Plan. Compared to the forecast of 7,000,000 square feet from 1980-2000, by 1990 nearly 4,600,000 square feet has been built, another 1,400,000 square feet will be completed in 1990, and 4,000,000 square feet will be completed by 1995. Conservatively assuming some slowing in the national and local economies and a subsequent decline in the rate of demand and development, at least 11,000,000 square feet of office space may be built between 1980 and 2000. This would represent a 57% increase above the Plan's projections.

The graph shows the Plan projections compared to the 1990 square footages.



Recommendation

The revised goal for new office space should be as high as the market will bear, and could be as high as 11,000,000 square feet.

OFFICE BUILDING SITES

2000 PLAN - CORE

The greatest concentration of office building sites is designated for the East Core, which is expected to accommodate 6 to 7 million square feet of new space. The 2000 Plan recognizes that the trend toward larger, more prominent structures will generate an employee population requiring many new personal service and convenience retailing establishments. To accommodate these requirements and to provide a degree of activity to enliven the street level, new office structures are encouraged to develop facilities in their lower levels for convenience retailing and amenities for noon-time "brown baggers."

A modest amount of new office development is also projected for Lytle Park, Oldtown, Garfield Place, Main Street and Riverfront East.

Current Status

Development of new office space has been concentrated in the East Core. Most new projects have provided facilities in their lower levels for convenience retailing and amenities for workers.

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan goals.

2000 PLAN - RIVERFRONT WEST

The Riverfront West (RFW) area will accommodate another .5 to 1.5 million square feet of office space. Development of the riverfront is planned for the 1990 to 2000 period.

Current Status

Some office development in RFW will be necessary to support the cost of infrastructure required to link this area to the Downtown core. (See RFW Subcommittee Report.)

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan projection as modified by the RFW Subcommittee Report.

RETAIL IN OFFICE BUILDINGS

2000 PLAN

At street level, many office buildings are given over to retail uses.

Retail stores will be encouraged in the lower floors of new office buildings.

Current Status

Retail has been incorporated in the lower floors of most new office buildings. However, retail is declining except for convenience retail.

Recommendations

1. Revise the 2000 Plan. Retail in office buildings is appropriate only in the West Core, in order to maintain a critical mass in the existing retail core.

2. With the exception of convenience retail, other retail in office buildings is appropriate only in or immediately adjacent to the primary retail district area, in order to maintain a critical mass in the existing retail core.

FOUNTAIN SQUARE WEST

2000 PLAN - MIXED USE

The block bounded by Fifth, Race, Sixth and Vine, excluding the Terrace Hilton and the 525 Vine Street Building (Fountain Square West) should be redeveloped starting in the 1980s with a mixed-used project which could include a minimum of 600,000 square feet of office space.

The Fountain Square West (FSW) site should be developed as a specialty retail and office complex with loading dock and underground parking facilities. It is preferred that residential units be a component of the project. The project may also include a hotel, entertainment facilities and other compatible uses.

Current Status

In December, 1989 City Council approved a Lease of Land

Agreement between the City of Cincinnati and the John W. Galbreath Company for the Fountain Square West site. On February 6, 1990 at City Council's Urban Development Committee, Dan Galbreath and the City Manager executed the Lease. The Lease provides Galbreath with one year to complete schematic designs and secure financing.

It appears that the development of this site will not meet deadlines. Galbreath is negotiating revisions in the development proposal.

Recommendations

1. The City should immediately proceed to demolish the buildings acquired for Fountain Square West development purposes. The area should be graded, if additional delays are experienced in this project.

2. When buildings are acquired by the City for development purposes, the ground level show windows of abandoned buildings should be covered, as soon as possible, or should contain plans and sketches of the proposed development to demonstrate to the public the reason for the abandonment of the buildings.

3. Vacated buildings should be lighted at street level.

ENTERTAINMENT, HOTELS & CONVENTION CENTER

Subcommittee members:

Jackson H. Randolph
chairperson

Neil J. Bortz
Samuel T. Britton
Michael Rozow
Robert H. Starnes

ENTERTAINMENT

The Cincinnati 2000 Plan encourages the promotion of entertainment as a supportive element for increasing convention and hotel business as well as general evening activity in the Downtown area.

2000 PLAN - ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

An entertainment district is to be designated in the area between Sixth and Seventh Streets and Vine and Main Streets.

Current Status

The City has cancelled its agreement with Pluss Holdings, S.A., of Geneva, Switzerland, for the development of a mixed-use project at Sixth and Walnut. The site lies within the proposed entertainment district. It is uncertain whether City Council will seek other developers for the project or look to other uses for the site.

A State-sponsored Performing Arts Center Site Selection Committee has picked the Sixth/Walnut entertainment site for the proposed new center. The center concept promises a facility offering performance venues ranging in size from small recital rooms and experimental "black box" theatrical spaces to a full-sized theatre with a seating capacity sufficient to attract major national road productions.

Recommendations

1. The concept of an entertainment district remains viable. While entrepreneurs interested in locating within the district's boundaries should be encouraged to locate there, we should not bypass opportunities in other parts of the Downtown area. Other new "districts" might also evolve.

2. Major developments, where economically feasible, should be encouraged as a means of attracting smaller uses. In this manner, the district concept can be realized.

3. Main Street running north from Sixth Street is rich in historic architecture with a scale that provides a pleasing contrast to larger buildings immediately south. The City should encourage small retail shops, cafes, restaurants, night clubs, etc. in this area to encourage more street and nighttime activity and offer incentives to attract entrepreneurs.

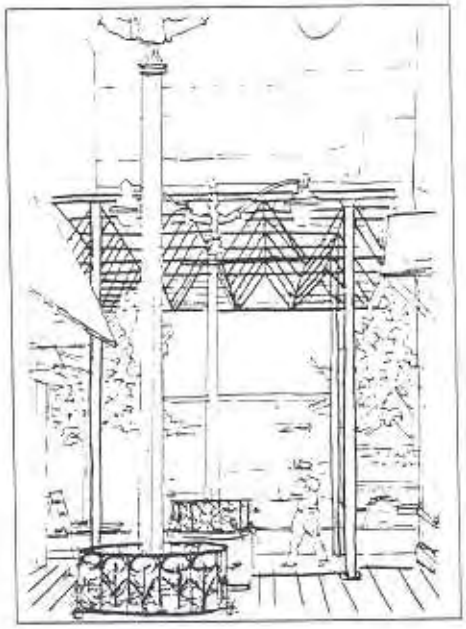
4. The Performing Arts Center's location should fall within the boundaries of the entertainment district as a means of reinforcing Fountain Square, existing eating and drinking establishments, and the retail core area.

2000 PLAN - ALLEY

While the concept of alley development is attractive, a concentrated effort to upgrade may be premature.

Alleys such as Gano, Lodge and Bowen would be upgraded to encourage greater pedestrian use.

Current Status



There has been limited activity regarding alleyways since the 2000 Plan was published. Gano Alley was given an entrance and lighting as part of the development of the Brendamour Building. Several restaurants have been attempted on the alley, with limited acceptance from both the public and entrepreneurs.

Recommendation

While the concept of alley development is attractive, a concentrated effort to upgrade alleys for pedestrian access may be premature. At this point, we must continue to focus on pedestrian activity on the street. The idea may be more compelling as an entertainment district develops in the Plan's preferred location.

2000 PLAN - THEATRES/CINEMAS

Legitimate theatres and cinemas should be encouraged downtown.

Current Status

When the 2000 Plan was first published, two legitimate theatres and three cinemas existed within the downtown area. One live performance facility and one movie theatre remains.

Until recently, the Taft was considered the only downtown performance venue of sufficient size to attract traveling theatrical productions, concerts, etc. The theatre, part of the Masonic Temple, needs upgrading, but the theatre's owners have expressed no interest in renovating the facility. Because the property is located in the heart of the CBD's office area, it is expected to become a future office development site.

Within the past year, however, the State of Ohio has announced plans to assist in the development of a performing arts complex in Cincinnati. This proposal has enormous implications for Downtown's future ability to attract visitors. The uniqueness of the facility also holds considerable promise for additional entertainment activities.

As of this writing, site selection has been finalized within the proposed entertainment district, in the area bounded by Main, Vine, and 6th and 7th Streets. The subcommittee was in general agreement that this site closest to the Downtown core afforded the City the maximum impact from the complex.

A minority position favored the Ninth Street site across from the public library, in hopes of stimulating development along the full length of a corridor running from Fountain Square to the Emery Theatre.

Recommendations

1. The 2000 Plan goal remains valid. The City should aggressively support the State's development of a performing arts center in the Downtown area.

2. The site for the performing arts center should reinforce existing restaurant, retail, hotel and convention sectors in the Downtown core.

3. To be an effective and consistent Downtown attraction, the performing arts center should offer extremely diverse programming and a full operation schedule,

providing both daytime and evening activities.

4. The center should also be a state-of-the-art technical facility, attracting the highest quality performances as well as encouraging experimental works.

2000 PLAN - DEVELOPMENTS ADJACENT TO THE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

Sidewalk cafes should be encouraged.

New developments within and adjacent to the proposed entertainment district should contain entertainment-related facilities at the ground floor.

Current Status

There has been much discussion regarding the need for sidewalk cafes and other outdoor, seasonal facilities for dining, coffee, etc. The City is assisting those entrepreneurs who have plans to expand outdoors. Other entertainment-related uses, such as cinemas, galleries, etc. are needed.

Recommendation

This goal remains valid. Sidewalk cafes and other outdoor seasonal facilities should be encouraged and impediments to such facilities should be removed.

HOTELS

2000 PLAN

The 2000 Plan anticipates the need for 1,800-2,300 new first-class hotel rooms by the year 2000 in order to reach a total of 3,500. The plan calls for 1,400-1,700 new hotel rooms in the West Core area near the Convention Center and 400-600 in Riverfront West.

New hotel development should be promoted north of L.S. Ayres Garage at the southwest corner of Fifth and Elm, in the block bounded by Central, Seventh, Plum and Sixth and in Riverfront West. New hotel development should also be considered in Fountain Square West as well as in other areas of the West Core.

Existing hotels, including the Netherland, the Cincinnatian and

the Terrace Hilton, should be encouraged to upgrade.

Current Status

In 1980, there were 1,870 rooms. Over the last ten years the Westin Hotel, the Hyatt Regency, and the Cincinnatian combined have added 1,083 first-class rooms. Other hotels in this class, the Netherland, the Terrace Hilton and the Clarion, have upgraded their rooms and facilities in response to the Convention Center expansion and newer competitive hotels, as was encouraged by the 2000 Plan. In addition, the Garfield House has been converted in large part, to an extended residence hotel.

Three new hotels are proposed which will fill voids in the Downtown hotel market: a 250-all-suite hotel in Fountain Square West, a 245-room Marriott Courtyard at Fifth and Plum Streets, and a 140-room Hampton Inn at West Fourth Street and Central Avenue. Excellent future hotel sites are located on either side of the Convention Center on Elm Street at Fifth and Sixth Streets. A hotel proposed between Riverfront Stadium and the Coliseum was deleted from the 2000 Plan in the mid-1980's after unsuccessful efforts to develop a Holiday Inn on the site.

Recommendations

1. The 2000 Plan forecast of 3,500 total rooms should be increased to 4,000. The hotels described above will provide a total of 3,928 rooms by 1995, achieving the 2000 Plan forecast five years early. Further expansion of the Convention Center would greatly increase demand for additional Downtown hotel rooms.

2. The goal of 400-600 hotel rooms in Riverfront West remains valid.

3. One or two new hotels may be desirable on the east side of Downtown in the late 1990's to serve the greater than originally anticipated growth of office space which is expected to continue over the next ten years. These facilities can be accommodated within the Broadway Commons project and the proposed Procter and Gamble expansion area north of Sixth Street. Both of these future development areas have good access to I-71 and I-471.

CONVENTION CENTER

2000 PLAN - EXPANSION

The renovation and expansion of the Convention Center was a major objective of the 2000 Plan.

The Convention Center was designed for future expansion onto the WCPO TV site..

Current Status

Completed in 1987 at a total cost of $62 million dollars, the new Convention Center has already attracted over $275 million dollars in estimated delegate expenditures, substantially increased the occupancy rates at downtown hotels, and provided an increased share of Downtown's retail sales.

Laventhol and Horwath, the foremost convention center market research firm in the country, recently analyzed Cincinnati's Convention Center occupancy rates and market position in relation to its competitive facilities. Conventions and trade shows are expected to continue to exhibit strong growth, and cities across the country are responding to this market with new or enlarged facilities.

At the time Cincinnati's expansion was planned, the enlarged 162,000 square foot exhibit hall could accommodate 80% to 85% of the largest conventions in the national market. With the increased competition, Cincinnati's national market share has dropped to an estimated 75% of the largest conventions and is expected to drop to 60% to 70% by the year 2000.

Due to move-in and move-out days, the average convention center achieves 45% occupancy; 70% is considered the highest achievable percentage. Cincinnati is currently at an excellent 60% occupancy, which, however, creates difficulties in scheduling simultaneous smaller conventions, consumer shows and other local events. As a result, Cincinnati is turning away business which is a lost opportunity to Downtown hotels, stores and restaurants.

It is clear that if Cincinnati is to maintain its position in the convention industry, the current center will require further expansion. The current facility was designed to be expanded to the west onto the WCPO TV site. This would provide a total of about 200,000 square feet of exhibit space and an additional 10% of the current market. A major expansion totalling 400,000 square feet

could compete for 90% of the current market and maximize simultaneous use of the facility.

Such an expansion could be accommodated across Central Avenue using air rights above I-75. The savings in land acquisition costs would more than offset the construction cost premium of building over freeways, which makes this alternative an increasingly attractive option. Seattle recently completed a new convention center above a downtown freeway and Kansas City just began expansion of its center above an adjacent freeway.

Recommendations

1. Given the long lead-time required to relocate affected property owners and to properly plan, finance, design and construct such a major facility, a study should be undertaken in the immediate future to determine a feasible plan to capitalize on Cincinnati's desirability as a leading convention city and to determine what size facility will be necessary for Cincinnati's Convention Center to remain competitive entering the 21st century.

2. The City should also continue to examine all possible options to ensure maximum efficiency in the operation of the Convention Center.

HOUSING

Subcommittee members:

J. Clay Stinnett
chairperson

Estelle Berman
Donald W. Lenz
Jack W. Partridge, Jr.

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

2000 PLAN - GENERAL

The 2000 Plan states that the development of downtown housing should be encouraged to the fullest extent possible with a minimum goal of 6,000 additional units.

Current Status

Of all the goals of the 2000 Plan, housing has been the most difficult to achieve. Between 1980 and 1987 new construction, conversions and demolitions resulted in a net loss of 62 housing units downtown as compared with a net gain of only 147 dwelling units citywide. During this same time period, the trend toward a smaller household size resulted in an overall decline in the City's population.

From 1979 to 1989 the City's Economic Development Department has assisted in the creation of approximately 687 units, as follows:

1980	One Lytle Place	220	Units	Market Rate
1981	Fourth & Plum	200	Units	Market Rate
1982	Two Garfield Place	162	Units	Market Rate
1984	Walnut Towers	105	Units	Low Income

During the early 1990s, the City plans to assist private developers to build approximately 720 new residential units:

1990	Central Pkwy Towers	220	Units	Low Income SRO
1992	Garfield Place Phase I	148	Units	Market Rate
1992	Adams Landing (Buildings 1 and 3)	197	Units	Market Rate
1992	Lombardy Building	55	Units	Market Rate
Future	Elderly/Handicapped	100	Units	Low Income

In summation, 1,407 downtown housing units (23%) of the 6,000 minimum recommended by the 2000 Plan will have been created by 1995. An additional 1,528 units are planned in later phases of the Adams Landing and Garfield Place projects.

Recommendation

The housing goal should be revised from 6,000 units to 4,000 middle and upper income units. In addition to the 687 units already completed, Adams Landing and Garfield Place together will add 1,950 units and the Riverfront West area can accommodate at least 1,000 additional units by the late 1990's. The balance of the units required to meet the revised goal can be achieved by aggressively encouraging smaller scaled developments such as the Lombardy Building (55 units) and the Waldo Apartments (28 units).

2000 PLAN - GARFIELD PLACE

New housing should be created through new in-town, multi-story development, focusing on Garfield Place. The proposed closing of Eighth Street between Elm and Vine and the extension of Piatt Park will encourage the area's pedestrian use and also enhance its neighborhood identity. The 2000 Plan projects 1,000-1,500 units for this area.

The Phelps apartment building is located on Fourth Street, facing Lytle Park.

Current Status

In 1982, 162 new units were completed at Two Garfield Place. Piatt Park was relandscaped in 1990. Phase I of Garfield Place Housing plans a total of 700-800 units, with 148 units to be completed by 1992. Rehabilitation of the Waldo Apartments adds another 28 units. In the area north of Piatt Park, several small buildings in the Ninth Street Historic District have been rehabilitated and Central Parkway Towers (YMCA) produced 220 units of SRO housing. Thus a total of over 1,210 units will have been completed by the year 2000.

Recommendation

The goal for the Garfield Place area remains valid except that Eighth Street should not be closed to traffic.

2000 PLAN - LYTLE PARK

The rehabilitation of existing structures and the building of small new ones in remaining spaces should be promoted. The 2000 Plan projects between 400-700 units for the Lytle Park area.

building code to facilitate rehabilitation of smaller buildings, including commercial loft buildings and small retail buildings with apartments on the upper floors.

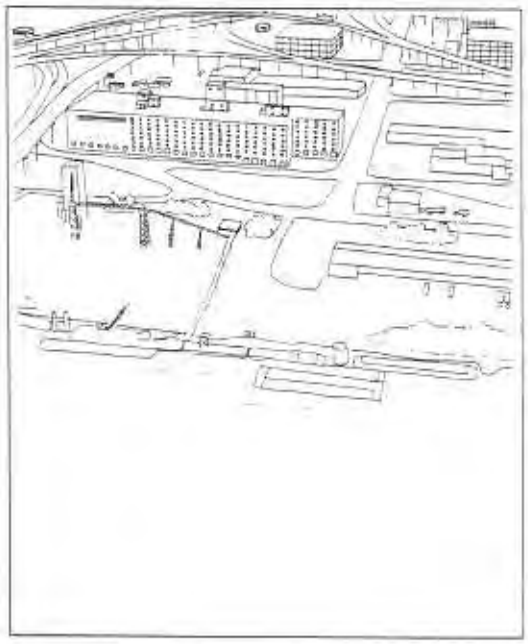
4. Local building officials should be encouraged to consider the economic effects of their decisions and to rule in favor of housing and renovation projects.

5. The City should amend the Zoning Code to include a definition for loft apartments and relax the requirements for off-street parking spaces for the renovation of existing buildings as housing.

2000 PLAN - RIVERFRONT WEST

Riverfront West will be a mixed-use development site.

New residential development is also projected in the long term as part of the mixed-use projects in Riverfront West. Riverfront West should contain as many residential units as possible. The development of office space should be no more than necessary to make development of residential, tourist, recreational and entertainment facilities economically possible. Housing projections for this area were 1,200-2,000.



Current Status

Because of the expense of dealing with flood protection for this site and a modest market for high-priced housing Downtown, beginning efforts to redevelop the Riverfront West area may be delayed until the late 1990s.

Recommendation

Continue to emphasize housing as the major component in Riverfront West. The goal of 1,200-2,000 remains valid. (See RFW Subcommittee report).

2000 PLAN - RIVERFRONT EAST

The riverfront between the Coliseum and the L & N Bridge has been dramatically transformed during the past two decades from a semi-abandoned industrial area to a recreational center with luxury housing facilities. The 2000 Plan calls for additional high-

Current Status

Rehabilitation in this area has produced offices but not housing.

Recommendation

Additional housing in this neighborhood is still desirable.

2000 PLAN - MAIN STREET

Main Street retains a special cohesiveness because of its historically interesting structures. It also affords a high potential as a center for commercial and professional office space in rehabilitated and new buildings. New housing will be encouraged in adjacent areas along Walnut and Sycamore Streets. In the area east of Sycamore Street and north of Sixth Street are sites appropriate for office and residential uses in both rehabilitated and newly constructed buildings. The 2000 Plan projected 800-1,200 units for this area. Court Street, a subarea of the Main Street district, is conveniently located between Vine and Main, to serve expanding shopping needs for residential areas to the west and for the county offices employees to the east.

Court Street is conveniently located to the Main Street area and can serve expanding shopping needs.

Current Status

Although rehabilitation of Walnut Towers (YWCA) produced 105 units of low-income elderly housing, success with rehab has been limited. Use of upper-story lofts and apartments has been hindered by zoning and building codes. Specifically, the zoning code requires parking spaces, and the building codes have egress requirements for mixed-use buildings which are difficult to meet.

Recommendations

1. The City should endorse all efforts to modify the state building code to facilitate rehabilitation of smaller buildings, including commercial loft buildings and small retail buildings with apartments on the upper floors.

2. Local building officials should be encouraged to consider the economic effects of their decisions and to rule in favor of housing and renovation projects.

3. The City should amend the Zoning Code to include a definition for loft apartments and relax the requirements for off-street parking spaces for the renovation of existing buildings as housing.

4. To encourage new housing, street improvements, including facade treatments, street furnishings and sidewalk pavers, should be concentrated in the Main Street Historic District between Sixth Street and Central Parkway.

5. Property owners should be encouraged to improve their building facades, using existing incentives.

2000 PLAN - OLDTOWN

Rehabilitation of the Lombardy Building can add up to 55 new Downtown housing units.

The upper floors of some commercial loft buildings have been converted to middle and upper-income apartments. The area is re-emerging as a viable housing and retail center complementing and enlarging the specialty shopping in the Downtown. Continued renovation of existing buildings as well as new development for retail and residential use are to be encouraged in Oldtown. The 2000 Plan projects 400-600 units for this area.

Current Status

Street improvements have been carried out in the Fourth Street Historic District between Elm and Walnut Street. Two hundred units were rehabilitated as market-rate housing in two buildings at Fourth & Plum Streets. The rehabilitation of the Lombardy Building is expected to add another 55 units by 1992. This area is now sought after for new hotel space in conjunction with Convention Center business.

Recommendations

1. The goal of 400-600 housing units by the year 2000 is still valid.

2. The City should continue to encourage private developers to rehabilitate historic buildings for apartments.

3. The City should endorse all efforts to modify the state

density housing in this area which offers a splendid view of the river, proximity to parks, the Stadium and Coliseum, and eastern access to downtown. The 2000 Plan projects 400-600 units for this area.

Current Status

In 1980, 220 units were completed at One Lytle Place, located on the riverfront near the Coliseum.

Recommendation

The housing goal is still feasible.

2000 PLAN - COLUMBIA PARKWAY

Located between Columbia Parkway and the river just below Mt. Adams, this area, with panoramic views of the Ohio Valley, provides an opportunity for a residential center. To encourage this, the City is planning to extend the Riverfront Parks to the east. Rehabilitation of the historic townhouses along Martin Street will be encouraged; convenience retailing may also be provided. The 2000 Plan was amended to call for 1,250 housing units.

Current Status

Historic houses along Martin Street were removed. This area has become the site of Adams Landing, a new multi-story development, extending from Sawyer Point to Kemper Lane. Initial phases will provide 197 market-rate units. At completion, this project will provide a total of 1,259 units, and include convenience retailing.

Recommendation

Continue development of Adams Landing. Continue rehabilitation of existing housing and park development in accordance with the proposed Eastern Riverfront Redevelment Strategy.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS

CBD Low-Income Housing Resolution

Passed by City Council on May 30, 1985, Resolution No. 70-1985 was enacted to minimize displacement of low-income residents of

Single-Room-Occupancy (SRO) hotels are no longer as prevelaent as they once were.

the Downtown by maintaining at least 1,300 affordable housing units in the CBD, including the area within one block north of Central Parkway. These housing units are included in the 2000 Plan goals. The Resolution calls for:

1. Development of 200 units of single-room-occupancy (SRO) housing.

2. Assistance in developing 100 units of elderly/handicapped housing.

3. Participation in Federal Rental Rehab program, if available.

4. Administration of a federally funded loan and/or grant program to facilitate repairs of existing low-cost housing.

Current Status

Since the Resolution was passed, 1) 200 units of SRO housing have been completed in the Central Parkway Towers; 2) 100 units of elderly housing are still to be developed; 3) the City participated in the federal rental rehab program; and 4) the City has initiated a federally funded loan program for repair of existing low-cost housing.

Recommendation

1. The intent of Resolution No. 70-1985 should continue to be respected.

2. The City should continue its existing policy of assuring that at least 1,300 low-income housing units exist Downtown. Recognizing that many existing low-income units may be acquired for new development, the City should provide assistance for the development of additional low-income housing Downtown.

OVER THE RHINE

Current Status

The Over-The-Rhine (OTR) neighborhood, a National Register Historic District immediately north of Downtown, is viewed by many as offering both commercial and residential development

opportunities that would complement the CBD. A 1985 Urban Renewal Plan identified the development and maintenance of 5,520 low-income housing units in OTR as the highest priority for allocation of public resources.

Recommendations

1. The physical and social conditions in OTR should be addressed with the goal of creating a mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhood adjacent to Downtown. Current efforts for a mixed-use strategy should be supported.

2. The City should reconsider the recommendations in the Over the Rhine Plan and the Housing Retention Ordinance. City policy should be revised to give equal support to the development of low and moderate income as well as market-rate housing. The City should promote small-scale housing development on a building by building basis.

The Housing Retention Ordinance that inhibits demolition of residential buildings, whether occupied or not, has resulted in a stock piling by certain interests, with the help of City funding, of vacant buildings. The City should incorporate a monitoring process where City funds are involved for bringing buildings on line for useable housing. Appropriate monitoring would allow the City to seek diverse housing stock ownership in OTR with commitments to rehab or develop the property on a timely basis. The City should also provide opportunities for existing businesses in the area to grow. Public policy should recognize that OTR is an historic district.

ADDITIONAL HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Use all available financial incentives and increase public funds to assist developers. Establish an annual appropriation to pay for the City to purchase future sites and to finance future garages and other public improvements necessary to help developers create a feasible project.

2. Assure through lobbying efforts at a State level that the recently passed legislation making housing a public

purpose in Ohio is responsive to Cincinnati's interests. On a local level, assure that a portion of any new funds raised as a result of the legislation are directed to housing in the Downtown.

3. Explore the creation of a public-purpose development resource organization to encourage interest in needed projects, initiate specific proposals, and approach potential developers. Such an organization could help smaller housing developers move projects forward and to raise equity investment funds by working with public and private resources including the City's Department of Economic Development, the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce, and the Cincinnati Business Committee.

4. Continue to develop open spaces to create an attractive atmosphere for residents. Sidewalk cafes, street vendors, flower stands and entertainment could promote outdoor activity. The latter will require the removal of restrictive code obstacles.

5. Use incentives for rehabilitation more aggressively. The historic districts with their mixed-use atmosphere and interesting building facades offer an environment conducive to small business development and housing.

6. Increase the City's Commercial/Industrial Revolving Loan Fund (C/IRLF) and other sources of funding to encourage more small businesses and services to locate Downtown.

RIVERFRONT WEST

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FUTURE DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

2000 PLAN - HOUSING

The 2000 Plan calls for 1,200-2,000 dwelling units to be developed in Riverfront West (RFW) by the year 2000.

Current Status

In the short term this goal looks challenging because the economic viability of Downtown housing has not yet been established. However, in the long term, this objective may be realized, given the superb river location and the proposed park-like setting.

Recommendation

Maintain goal of 1,200-2,000 housing units. If a privately financed housing development is proposed for RFW, it should not be unduly influenced by the rate of progress of other Downtown housing projects since the RFW site may prove to have its own unique appeal.

2000 PLAN - HOTEL ROOMS

The 2000 Plan calls for 400-600 hotel rooms to be developed in RFW by the year 2000.

Current Status

This goal looks possible within a 1995-2005 time frame, provided that it is economically justified by purposeful development pace in RFW and need for hotels in the balance of Downtown. This need could arise in response to office growth and further expansion of the Convention Center.

Recommendation

Maintain existing 2000 Plan goal.

Recommedation

As many as 10,000 parking spaces could be built under the surface of RFW development to serve local uses and relieve tight parking throughout the Downtown area. This concentration of parking could be linked to Downtown by moving sidewalks or bus loops. Increase parking goal to 4,000-10,000.

2000 PLAN - URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES/AESTHETICS

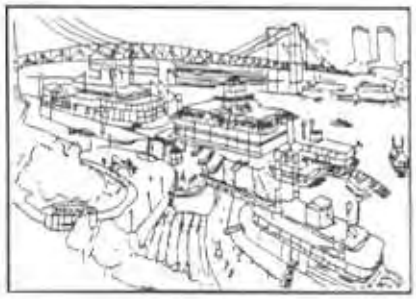
The 2000 Plan called for new development to "step down" in height from the expressway to the river to enhance tenant views, to locate new high-rises to allow sufficient open space around them, to avoid a high-rise edge along the river, to protect views of the river from Downtown, to construct new buildings over parking garages and to include convenience and entertainment retailing space.

Recommendation

The design guidelines specified in the original plan remain sound.

2000 PLAN - PARK / RIVER USAGE

The 2000 Plan calls for a new park on the river with activities to complement the mixed-use development and meet citywide recreational needs. Activities proposed include a new public landing for the Delta Queen, the Mississippi Queen and other riverboats; restaurants, a fresh food and fish market; an amphitheater; areas for programmed events, active recreational facilities such as tennis courts and a skating rink, and passive recreational areas and green space.



The Cincinnati Riverfront could be further enhanced by developing a floating entertainment facility.

Current Status

Initial recreational and entertainment facilities envisioned along the river in the 2000 Plan are under active consideration.

Recommendation

This goal is unchanged except that no duplication of facilities already established in Sawyer Point would be anticipated.

2000 PLAN - LINKAGE WITH DOWNTOWN

Current Status

The 2000 Plan calls for linking the Downtown core with RFW through an air-rights development over Fort Washington Way.

Recommendation

This remains a sound approach.

2000 PLAN - FLOOD PROTECTION

The 2000 Plan envisions the construction of new buildings on a platform of parking garages as a means of flood-proofing.

Current Status

A superior alternative, however, to build a landscaped earthen dike may be a more economically feasible option and should be more actively pursued.

Recommendation

Revise the 2000 Plan to include two alternatives—building on a platform or building an earthen dike.

2000 PLAN - RAILROAD OPERATIONS

The 2000 Plan did not address existing railroad operations in Riverfront West.

Railway lines in the RFW site could be converted to pedestrian trails.

Current Status

The existing rail line running through RFW is a barrier to functional development and a serious safety hazard, especially for children.

Recommendation

Railroad operations through the area should be terminated as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL RIVERFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS

Personnel

Appoint a Riverfront West Section Manager to work exclusively on the RFW development.

Funding

1. The City may have to invest as much as $50 million over the next decade to finance land acquisition, flood protection, transportation services, garages and park development.

2. Tax increment bond financing, generated from property taxes on private RFW development is probably the best available source for public improvements.

Quality and Sequence

1. The City should require world class development of the Riverfront West site. Work should be started with a broad range of interested parties and developers to arrange a sequence of development that makes good economic sense for all participants. The schedule should concentrate on development south of Mehring Way between the Suspension Bridge and Central Avenue. After the existing businesses are relocated and flood protection is in place, development of the area north of Mehring Way can logically begin.

2. For the first key step, work on the clearance of Riverfront West should start immediately to move current businesses to sound, viable locations, and to permit planning and the start of appropriate development on a timely basis. Development along the riverfront should be encouraged since development of this frontage will open all of Riverfront West to constructive development efforts.

RETAIL

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TOTAL DOWNTOWN RETAIL SPACE

2000 PLAN - FORECAST

The 2000 Plan forecasts a need for 695,000 to 815,000 square feet in new and replacement retail space by the year 2000. The 2000 Plan also estimated that retail space would shrink due to demolitions, demise of marginal stores, and consolidations for increased efficiency, by 275,000 to 450,000 square feet, over the same period. This produced a forecast for a net increase in retail space of 365,000 to 420,000 square feet.

Current Status

Significant changes have occurred in Downtown retailing since the early 1980s. The closures of the Elder Beerman and L. S. Ayres department stores substantially reduced Downtown's retail space, which is currently 2,360,000 square feet.

The Tower Place Mall will add interest and diversity to the downtown retail scene.

Since 1980 about 230,000 square feet of new retail space have been developed downtown and 870,00 square feet have been lost for a net loss of 640,000 square feet. Over 200,000 square feet of new retail space is under construction or renovation (Tower Place/Carew Tower) with 370,000 square feet of additional space (Fountain Square West and Sixth & Race Anchor) proposed by 1995.

Using the 2000 Plan's figures, another 846,000 square feet of space will be lost if Lazarus relocates to Fountain Square West for an additional net loss of 266,000 square feet. A substantial amount of Lazarus's selling space has already been converted to their division offices.

Recommendations

1. Tower Place, the proposed FSW retail component and the new Sixth and Race retail anchor will offset much of the recent loss of Downtown retail space with highly productive sales space.

2. The remaining existing retail base should be stabilized over the next ten years and reorganized into more contemporary and productive sales space.

2000 PLAN - DOWNTOWN'S MARKET SHARE

The 2000 Plan forecasts that Downtown's share of total metropolitan retail sales, which declined in the 1960's and the 1970's, would stabilize at 5.5% during the 1980's. This assumed a substantial reduction in the rate of suburb growth due to increasing energy and finance costs.

Current Status

A Downtown Retail Development Strategy was recently developed by the City's consultant team headed by ZHA, Inc, in conjunction with an Ad-Hoc Committee of Downtown retailers. The strategy was adopted by City Council last September and is now being further developed for implementation by a Steering Committee of Downtown retail and business interests. The strategy focuses on improvements required for Downtown to stabilize and enhance its market share over the next five years.

Suburban residential growth in Cincinnati has continued, accompanied by new and expanded regional mall development. As a result, Downtown's market share of retail sales continued to decline to about 2.7% through 1989, according to the ZHA Study. The current expansion of the Tri-County Mall and the recently announced expansions of the Northgate and Eastgate Malls represent a continuation of this trend.

ZHA estimated that if the recommended retail strategy is fully implemented, Downtown's market share could increase to 3.1% by 1993 and to 3.5% by the year 2000. However, the additional suburban retail developments announced since the ZHA study was completed will impede increasing Downtown's market share through the year 2000.

Recommendation

Tower Place, the proposed FSW retail component and the new Sixth and Race retail anchor will provide increased retail sales and stabilize Downtown's current market share through the year 2000.

2000 PLAN - DOWNTOWN AS A REGIONAL RETAIL CENTER

The objectives of the 2000 Plan are to provide a regional retail center that will outdraw its competition in suburban shopping centers, to provide the retail linkages that tie together hotel, convention and evening entertainment facilities, and to provide convenience shopping to serve an important and growing in-town residential and office worker population.

Current Status

Downtown's ability to outdraw its suburban competition has been made more difficult by continued suburban growth and new outlying shopping destinations.

Recommendations

1. Downtown retailing should focus on maintaining and recruiting unique shopping opportunities that are unavailable in outlying shopping centers, in addition to maintaining stores that do have suburban branches. The City should encourage efforts to focus on the moderate and upscale market Downtown.

2. Retail should continue to link together hotel, convention and entertainment facilities, which would support expanded shopping hours.

3. Both the 2000 Plan and the ZHA study suggest that more convenience shopping should be provided to serve the growing office worker population and the forthcoming expanded Downtown residential market.

2000 PLAN - STRENGTHENING THE RETAIL CORE

The 2000 Plan calls for strengthening the present retail core, with a multi-level specialty shopping complex connecting Race Street and Fountain Square, the relocation of Elder Beerman, the renovation of the multi-level Carew Tower Arcade related to adjacent retail development, and the extension of the Skywalk to tie the key retail elements together for pedestrians.

Development will concentrate new general merchandise and apparel shops between the department stores along Race Street, from Fourth and Seventh, and extending eastwardly along Fourth

and Fifth Streets.

Current Status

Elder-Beerman and L. S. Ayres have closed their Downtown department stores. The Tower Place project, including the renovation of the Carew Tower Arcade, and the proposed Fountain Square West project will reinforce the retail core area in a configuration appropriate for current conditions and in conformance with the intentions of the 2000 Plan. Lazarus is considering a move to the FSW project.

Recommendations

1. As recommended in the ZHA study, attracting a new anchor store to Sixth and Race Streets, which is unique to the market and complements Downtown's existing anchors, will increase the number of destination retailers and further strengthen the retail core.

2. As recommended in the ZHA study, shoppers goods retailing should be concentrated in a smaller area along Race Street between Fourth and Sixth Streets, as well as along Fourth and Fifth Streets between Race and Vine Streets, to provide a critical retail mass. The proposed relocation of Lazarus to Fountain Square West will facilitate this strategy. In the event that Lazarus remains at its current location, the retail core area should continue to extend to Seventh Street.

3. The Downtown retail core area would be weakened by the development of a large introverted shopping mall similar to Columbus's recently opened City Center. The 2000 Plan should prevent such a Downtown project.

4. The existing Skywalk connections that have been disrupted by building closures should be reconnected to link Downtown's office and retail areas. New extensions to the Skywalk should be built only where street level activity would not be adversely affected and a second level pedestrian connection is desirable to support adjacent uses.

5. The Skywalk must provide highly visible and easily

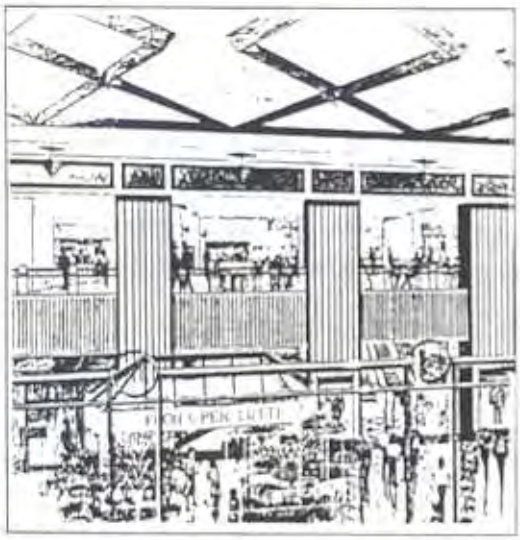
accessible interchanges between street and skywalk levels to be successful. The Skywalk should present a more attractive, cleaner, and better maintained image to the pedestrian than it does currently.

6. To encourage increased employee support of Downtown retailing, future office building developments on Third Street should be encouraged to provide pedestrian links to Fourth Street between Elm and Sycamore.

2000 PLAN - TAPPING THE UPSCALE MARKET

Downtown can retain its share of sales if it appeals to the high-income group which can most afford to expand its purchases. New retail space is required to provide a level of quality which is demanded by that segment of our population which is experiencing real gains in total and discretionary income and to provide a local outlet to that very considerable segment of the affluent Cincinnati population which is currently exporting its purchases.

Upscale specialty stores in the Arcade can compete with suburban-malls.



Current Status

The establishment of the Westin Mall (1981) and Saks Fifth Avenue (1984) are examples of efforts to tap the upscale market downtown. Tower Place (under construction) and FSW (proposed) are also intended for the upscale market.

Recommendation

The 2000 Plan's and the ZHA study's emphasis on orienting Downtown retailing towards the upscale market should also consider a more multi-segmented market approach which capitalizes on Downtown's various market components: Downtown workers, visitors, Downtown residents, and suburbanites.

2000 PLAN - RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT MIX

Downtown can create a mix of stores, entertainment and cultural facilities which cannot be duplicated and which has considerable drawing power.

Current Status

A new state-funded performing arts center has been proposed downtown. In addition, the City is helping to add to the mix of restaurants Downtown through its low-interest loan program.

Recommendations

1. The 2000 Plan objective is realistic.

2. The proposed performing arts center will be a major new destination and therefore should be located as close as possible to Fountain Square to support restaurants and facilitate pedestrian activity during evening and weekend hours.

2000 PLAN - RETAIL LINK TO RIVERFRONT WEST

In the longer term, a link also may be made across Ft. Washington Way in order to extend the Race Street retailing into the Riverfront West area.

Current Status

The reduced amount of projected net new retail space and the objective of concentrating the retail core area do not support an extension of the retail core down Race Street to Riverfront West.

Recommendations

1. The proposal for a major retail extension along Race Street across Fort Washington Way should be abandoned.

2. The concept that retail should be limited to eating, drinking and entertainment functions in Riverfront West is appropriate.

3. Care should be taken that Riverfront West not draw shoppers goods trade away from the downtown retail core area, but that it be physically linked to provide convenient access to the retail core area.

RELATED PLANNING ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The future success of Downtown retailing is highly dependent on the realization of other plan elements, such as housing, employment, entertainment, and parking. It is also dependent on administrative aspects of environment and management.

1. Housing - Increased housing, not only Downtown, but within a five-mile radius of Downtown, will benefit Downtown retailing.

2. Employment - Continued growth of jobs Downtown will contribute to the market for Downtown retail.

3. Entertainment - As mentioned previously, entertainment, such as could be provided by the proposed new performing arts center, could help to extend shopping hours and could expand the existing retail market.

4. Parking - ZHA's surveys of metropolitan shoppers indicate that the availability and cost of parking are the single greatest inhibitor to shopping Downtown.

Parking for the retail core area should have good access from the freeways , have improved signage, be more intelligible to the unfamiliar user, provide a clear path from parking to stores, and be priced with economical short-term rates for two or three hours, and then escalated in price to discourage all-day employee parking.

A convenient and economical means of transporting the growing office worker population along Northern Kentucky's riverfront into Downtown's retail core should be established to capitalize on this untapped and growing market.

The proposed new parking garages at Sixth and Race Streets (City/Galbreath) and Third and Race Streets (Duke/Allright) will help provide needed short-term parking for Downtown shoppers. The City should work with Duke/Allright to provide a convenient pedestrian link between their proposed parking garage and the retail district at Fourth and Race streets.

5. Environment - Downtown's retail core area should be distinctly defined as an attractive destination with a unified

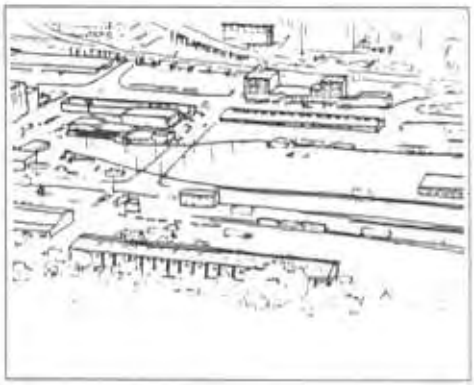
2000 PLAN - RETAIL

The 2000 Plan calls for 100,000 square feet of retail space to be developed in RFW by the year 2000.

Current Status

Development of the Riverfront West site can only take place after existing produce uses have been relocated.

Retail downtown is currently declining both in square footage and citywide market share. (See Retail Subcommittee report.) Nevertheless, retail provides essential support for housing, hotel and office users.



Recommendation

Maintain existing 2000 Plan goal with the provision that RFW retail space be largely devoted to local residential needs - grocery, convenience, and other services - and not compete with the established Downtown retail center.

2000 PLAN - OFFICE

The plan calls for .5 to 1.5 million square feet of office space in RFW.

Current Status

Given adequate demand, office building development in RFW continues to look feasible and achievable.

Recommendation

Maintain 2000 Plan goal.

2000 PLAN - PARKING

The 2000 Plan calls for 1,000 - 4,300 parking spaces to be built.

Current Status

If the stated goals for housing and office space in RFW are realized, the top goal of 4,300 parking spaces will be needed. In addition, more peripheral parking is needed for the Downtown core.

visual image including unique lighting, landscaping, signs and street furniture.

6. Maintenance and Security - Programs should promote a high level of maintenance and security for the retail core area, as well as place temporary tenants or storefront displays in vacant buildings. Clean streetscapes, attractive storefronts, and an improved street vendor program will encourage pedestrians to browse and shop.

PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Subcommittee members:

David P. Crafts
chairperson

Dean P. Fite
Judy Van Ginkel
Edgar J. Mack, Jr.
Donald J. Mooney, Jr.

2000 PLAN - THE BASIS

Cincinnati benefits from an exceptional exposure to the regional highway system through I-71, I-74 and I-75. It has an efficient grid of one-way streets to handle cars within the core area. Overall, a satisfactory balance exists between the supply of parking spaces and the demand.

About 179,000 person-trips are made Downtown per day, 79% of them by automobile, 21% by public transit. This latter figure rises to 25% during peak periods. Van-pooling and ride-sharing have not as yet become significant factors in the city. During those periods of top demand, the transportation system within the downtown core is close to its capacity. And yet the volume is expected to grow by 33%, to approximately 238,000 person-trips per day, in the next 20 years.

Fort Washington Way provides access to both I-75 and I-71.

Current Status

Cincinnati continues to benefit from an exceptional regional highway system. The opening of the I-471 bridge and connector to I-275 has provided additional important access to Northern Kentucky and the communities to the east of Cincinnati in Ohio. This benefit comes with a mixed blessing. The exceptional highway system has been one factor in the accelerated growth of downtown office developments. Coupled with available affordable parking (particularly for all-day parkers), mass-transit usage has retrogressed. This trend must be reversed because the highway system is almost at its maximum capacity.

In 1990, an estimated 203,000 person-trips will be made downtown per day, 77% by automobile, 23% by public transit. During those periods of peak demand, the transportation system within the downtown core continues to function close to capacity.

2000 PLAN - MASS-TRANSIT

The 2000 Plan calls for an increase in the percentage of people

coming downtown by transit from 21% to 35%. To do this, both an efficient regional system and a good downtown circulation system are needed.

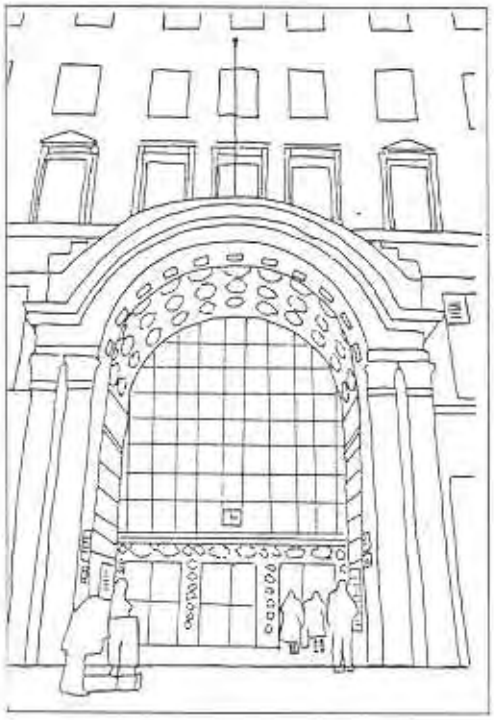
Queen City Metro - Current Status

With current funding and constraints, Queen City Metro (QCM) is limited to fine tuning the existing system. The Cincinnati 2000 Plan modal split of 35% transit appears unrealistic. Without intervention there will be a significant increase in CBD parking demands and potential future unacceptable transportation level of service as a result of traffic congestion.

Recommendation

The goal of 35% transit use should be maintained, but aggressive action will be required to meet it. The City and County should encourage State legislation permitting local gas tax initiatives supporting mass-transit funding. Assuming passage of State legislation, a County-wide gas tax to supplement current transit funding should be implemented.

This concept has been effectively used to fund mass-transit in California. It would require a cooperative City/County effort. Estimates are that a one-cent gas tax in Hamilton County would raise $4.3 million per year. With this funding, QCM could provide expanded service frequency and system coverage, including added express buses from satellite parking lots.



TANK currently has a terminal located inside Dixie Terminal on Fourth Street.

TANK (Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky) - Current Status

TANK's lease on its Cincinnati base in the Dixie Terminal Building expires in 1994. If this lease is not renewed, it will potentially exacerbate traffic congestion in downtown Cincinnati.

Recommendations

1. TANK should start negotiations with Dixie Terminal early enough to permit development of an alternate

terminal if the lease is not renewed.

2. It is in the long-term interest of TANK and the City to develop an alternate long-term location for the TANK terminal. A TANK terminal is required because existing street capacity cannot support additional TANK buses if routed through the CBD.

2000 PLAN - DOWNTOWNER

The 2000 Plan calls for bus circulation loops expanding Queen City Metro's *Downtowner* service and linking all downtown areas with the regional access routes and the outlying parking areas. One counter-clockwise loop would be along Ninth, Plum, Third and Broadway; an inner clockwise loop would be along Seventh, Sycamore, Fourth and Elm Streets.

Current Status

The Downtowner currently operates one loop every ten minutes during the mid-day hours of 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. The ten-cent fare is heavily subsidized. Ridership is well below capacity.

The City has supported SORTA's application to UMTA for a Downtown trolley system intended to supplant the Downtowner system with expanded hours and areas of service. UMTA has yet to act on SORTA's request.

Recommendations

1. Improve the Downtowner route structure and frequency. Trolley buses can be an attractive option for these routes, as well as providing shuttles for peripheral parking. Federal grants appear questionable in the short-term, but should be pursued aggressively if funds become available. If Federal grants are not an available, trolley bus acquisition may require an allocation from the City Transit Fund or private investment.

2. Expand QCM or TANK scope to include Downtowner-type service to Northern Kentucky. Provide Downtowner connection at TANK's Cincinnati terminal. State legislation may be required to permit extension of QCM service to Northern Kentucky.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION

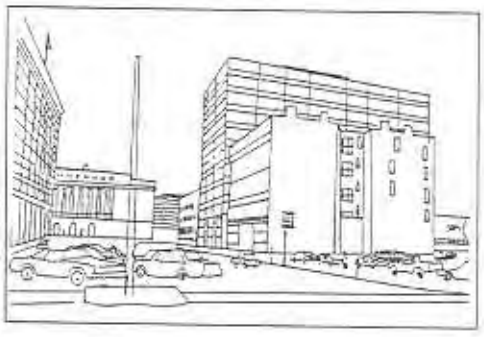
High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

A new option has been suggested by the Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). HOV lanes have been effective in many cities. Currently they are only feasible as additional interstate lanes rather than replacement of existing traffic lanes. OKI states HOV lanes may be feasible on I-71 and I-471. It takes up to 15 years to finalize such major capital transportation initiatives. The City and County should immediately begin work with OKI to consider HOV lanes as a means to increasing interstate capacity.

2000 PLAN - LIGHT-RAIL TRANSIT (LRT)

As a result of transit studies by OKI, a regional light-rail system has been recommended as the most effective solution, and this has been endorsed by all affected communities. The 2000 Plan concours with this recommendation.

A station for the proposed light-rail transit system could be strategically located on Court Street.



If such an LRT system is developed, it could use the existing Central Parkway subway tunnel and could be extended underground along Walnut Street. The subway portal could be between Third and Fourth Streets, and the system could continue across the Suspension Bridge. Stations could be near the Stadium, Sixth and Court Streets.

Current Status

This is a difficult issue. Light rail is reported to be successful in some cities (San Diego and Portland) but not in others (Buffalo). Federal funds for advanced land acquisition are available, but only if a definitive plan has been developed. Of the previously proposed options, some of the rail right-of-way land has been sold for private development. A study in 1986 recommended a focus on the northeast corridor using existing Conrail tracks.

Recommendations

1. The City should consider purchase of the NE corridor right-of-way if it can be acquired at a reasonable cost.

Federal funds are probably available only if a specific plan is developed. Use local funds if a County gas tax becomes a reality. Light rail has a high initial capital investment, but a low operating cost. At some point in the next two decades, it will probably be an attractive mass-transit option, particularly with environmental concerns increasing.

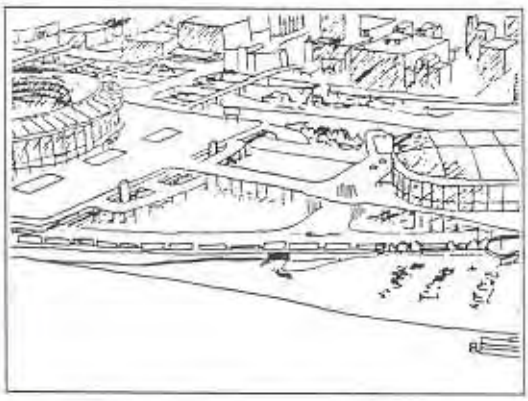
2. The light-rail option/property acquisition should be monitored by a transit authority. Unless this organization applies visionary thinking to this issue, nothing will happen and the potential of light-rail right-of-way acquisition will be lost.

2000 PLAN- PERIPHERAL PARKING

Provide outlying long-term parking facilities to reserve Downtown garage spaces for short-term shopper and business parking.

At present the Riverfront Stadium Garage serves as a peripheral parking facility; 3,000 spaces will be added on the riverfront as Riverfront West is developed. Union Terminal parking lot, now 700 spaces will be expanded to 1,400 spaces to meet the demand in the northwest corridor. Motorists approaching from the northeast will be accommodated at a new 1200-space facility at Elsinore. A 400-space facility will be located at Eggleston within walking distance of the Central Business District.

Peripheral parking is important for city workers so that Downtown parking is freed up for shoppers.



Each of these peripheral parking facilities will be served by individual shuttle buses, requiring 9 vehicles initially, 18 eventually. Service during peak periods would be at 5-minute intervals and cost 25 cents each way per person to cover operating expenses.

Current Status

With the exception of Riverfront West, it is questionable if peripheral parking will be available in the next decade. The 2000 Plan counts heavily on peripheral parking at Union Terminal, Elsinore and Eggleston to meet long-term needs. The availability of parking at the Union Terminal and Elsinore is questionable. The Eggleston area is being used for private surface parking.

Recommendations

1. Park-and-Ride is an attractive option and there is apparently an unmet demand for this service. Fulfilling the demand is severely limited by QCM's ability to provide service and to identify and secure appropriate suburban locations. If QCM funding can be increased, OKI is in a position to pursue park-and-ride options aggressively. Included should be a cooperative effort with ODOT to develop parking on State land close to major interstate arteries.

2. Discussions should take place with the Museum Center at Union Terminal to see if the peripheral parking concept can be tested. Only after careful testing, can this concept be considered a viable option.

3. Parking garages along the Eggleston corridor are still feasible. The City must take responsibility for developing these facilities.

4. It is imperative to link future Riverfront West parking with the CBD along the Race Street corridor. In order to enhance the short-term parking in support of retail, an imaginative connector, such as a moving sidewalk, should be considered. An option would be Downtowner trolley service.

2000 PLAN - PARKING IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE

Provide replacement Downtown parking spaces and a pricing policy to discourage long-term parking. Approximately 4,800 spaces will be required to offset existing spaces lost to new development. As part of the 4,800 replacement parking spaces, the Fountain Square West complex should include underground parking for a minimum of 600 automobiles. These facilities are intended primarily to serve short-term demand, less than three hours. Employee CBD parking should be discouraged by a pricing policy that increases rates substantially after two or three hours.

Current Status

Primarily in support of the 4,600,000 square feet of office space added since 1980, 5,790 net new parking spaces have been con-

structed in the past decade. The low availability of convenient, short-term parking is still considered a deterrent to a vital retail sector. There are several critical issues in this category.

Under the current code, developers are required to provide less than 50% of parking needs for normal office occupancy. The City is often expected to fill the void. This issue presents a dilemma.

Recommendations

1. The City should establish a process for monitoring CBD parking capacity and rates.

2. To support CBD retail, parking rates in City controlled garages should be restructured to encourage short term parking. It is recommended that the operation of such garages be reorganized and that rates of 75 cents per hour for the first four hours and $1.50 thereafter be adopted. This should be supplemented by an expansion of the Downtown Council's Park & Save Program such that merchants/professionals can authorize payment of up to a maximum of $1.50 per customer. For one and two hour parking meters, the current rate of 25 cents per half hour should be retained indefinitely.

3. Any private garage within a block of the retail zone and constructed under a Development Agreement, should be required to have a significant portion of parking with a rate structure identical to City garages. Meters could be considered for short-term parking. Other special recommendations are included in the Retail Subcommittee Report.

4. In addition to short-term parking adjacent to the retail core, Riverfront West and peripheral parking should be coordinated with Downtowner trolley service to stimulate downtown retail traffic.

5. Under the leadership of the Downtown Council, the current Park & Save Program, supported by Downtown retailers, should be expanded and publicized more broadly.

6. An improved strategy needs to be developed for handling special-event parking.

7. The City should consider changing the Zoning Code to require more developer-funded on-site parking. However, the highway/transit infrastructure may not support the traffic demands created by such an increase in office-related parking. With the office construction projected for the next decade, and no significant change in the interstate system and City gateways, traffic congestion can only increase, possibly to an unacceptable level.

2000 PLAN - BUS TRAFFIC

The 2000 Plan calls for providing bus-only lanes on Fifth and Sixth Streets and on Walnut and Main Streets to minimize conflicts between buses and other vehicles. To allow for greater bus-transit capacity on Downtown streets, buses will be through-routed wherever possible.

Current Status

No bus-only lanes currently exist in the CBD.

Recommendations

1. Bus-only lanes should not have a high priority. City Traffic Engineering reports that bus-only lanes would present significant traffic-management issues for the CBD.

2. Bus circulation loops will need to be expanded as office/residential developments occur on the periphery of the CBD. Improved QCM funding is a critical element. The City should support the UMTA grant for shuttle buses.

3. Parking regulations should be enforced, including those regarding no stopping, no standing, and trash pickups. Minimal traffic-flow blockage should be enforced during building construction.

2000 PLAN - ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The 2000 Plan lists street improvements and extensions to provide improved access to the proposed new developments. Throughout the entire planning period, improvements to widen certain road-

ways and to improve turning movements within the Downtown grid of one-way streets should continue to be made.

Additionally, in the 1990's in the Riverfront West area, Third Street should be upgraded for improved access from the westbound ingress from Fort Washington Way at Elm Street to southbound Plum Street. Race Street to Vine Street should be extended as a one-way couplet to Mehring Way to provide access from Downtown to the mixed-use development and the peripheral parking structure proposed to the west of the Stadium.

Current Status

Since 1980, street improvements within the Downtown core have resulted in relatively few additional lanes or increases in street capacity. Exceptions are on the perimeter of the core and along arterials leading into Downtown. Major peripheral improvements are Eggleston Avenue, Pete Rose Way east of the L & N Bridge, and Central Avenue between Fifth and Seventh Streets. Major arterial improvements include Reading Road between Elsinore and Liberty for better access to I-471 and completion of the I-471/Liberty interchange.

Lane capacity was reduced on Garfield Place, Plum Street at the Convention Center, Central Avenue between Fifth and Sixth Streets to accommodate former Plum Street traffic, and Race Street between Seventh and Fifth Streets for a sidewalk widening. The loss of various alleys for new development may have encouraged more on-street loading, although most of that occurs in off-peak traffic periods.

During the upcoming decade, some capacity improvements being considered include: Third Street west of Plum; access ramps for a new Cincinnati/Covington bridge; improved roadway connections to Race Street and possibly Vine Street from future Riverfront West development; new turn lanes at Fifth, Race and Vine Streets in conjunction with the Fountain Square West project; and a possible Reading Road widening from Liberty to Central Parkway in conjunction with the future Broadway Commons development.

A recent preliminary estimate of traffic conditions at gateway intersections around the periphery of Downtown concluded that unacceptable levels of congestion may occur at several key intersections during the morning and evening rush hours unless some

new strategies are implemented and are effective in alleviating some of the traffic congestion.

Traffic Engineering is implementing computerization of traffic signals in the CBD beginning this year. Completion is expected in 1993. This will maximize utilization of existing street capacities. The impact will be more on off-peak flow versus rush-hour flow as the latter is approaching maximum capacity.

Recommendations

1. Significant street widening in most other areas is unlikely because of the physical encroachments of existing development. If expanding street capacity is not feasible, alternatives must be tested which will reduce the growth in private auto traffic. They include instituting not only additional "transit incentives," but also the typically less popular "auto-disincentives." These alternatives are discussed fully in reports previously submitted to the City.

2. The original plans for upgrading ingress/egress to Riverfront West should continue to have a high priority. These plans must be integrated into proposed access ramps for the new Cincinnati/Covington Bridge.

3. Continue with computerization of traffic signals.

2000 PLAN - RIDE-SHARING

The 2000 Plan calls for an all-out effort to increase the average occupancy of autos entering the downtown, then at 1.2 persons per auto in rush hours and 1.3 during the day to a 1.4 person average through van-pooling and ride-sharing programs. If auto occupancy could be raised substantially, especially during rush hours, a LRT system might be deferred until after the year 2000.

Current Status

Readily available, reasonably priced parking, the introduction of flexible working hours at some businesses, and reduction in gas prices from their peak has deterred progress in this area.

Recommendations

1. The 2000 Plan goal should be maintained.

2. CBD public and private sectors should be requested to reduce parking subsidies and to encourage car pools/van pools/transit ridership.

3. Consideration should be given to reduced parking rates for car and van pools as is now provided in the Stadium Garage.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

City Administration

1. Responsibility for transportation, transit and parking administration is in diverse City organizations with little coordination, both internal and external with QCM, TANK and OKI. There should be a focal point for these functions within the City Administration, i.e. a Transportation Section Manager. City Council should adopt a formal Transportation Policy to ensure a balanced approach to funding transportation improvements and administration of these important aspects of City government.

2. An element of the City Transportaion Policy should be the re-establishment of benchmark data and the monitoring of results every two years. To deal effectively with transportaion issues in the metropolitan Cincinnati area, control needs to shift to a new regional Transit Authority. The Transportaion Section Manager in city government should be a member as well as a representative of what is now SORTA Board, OKI and other bodies involved in transportaion planning.

County-wide Coordination

If a County-wide gas tax is implemented, the SORTA Board should be reconstituted, with broader representation including OKI so as to truly represent the needs of all of Hamilton County. This organization should become a transportation management association with a charter to solve transit/transportation problems on a cooperative regional basis. Even if a gas tax is not implemented, the fragmentation of accountability/responsibility must be addressed both within the City

Administration, the SORTA Board, OKI, and other bodies involved in transportation planning.

Movements of Hazardous Waste

Movement of hazardous waste through the CBD is an escalating problem that requires attention.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY/URBAN DESIGN

Subcommittee members:

Fred Lazarus III
chairperson

Gavin D. Gray
David Gosling
Bobbie Sterne

2000 PLAN - PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

The 2000 Plan recognizes that the central office and retail core will be the primary focus of pedestrian movement—and an increase in the number of pedestrians downtown was projected. A well designed pedestrian system is required—and will also enhance the appearance of the downtown area.

The 2000 Plan builds upon the existing street-level and skywalk system, and extends it to link the core to other related districts. Streets designed to serve as corridors for the most important pedestrian movement and to connect major functional areas are:

Fourth Street from Oldtown to Lytle Park
Fifth Street from Elm to Broadway
Sixth Street from Race to Main
Seventh Street from Race to Main
Court Street from Vine to the Hamilton County Courthouse
Race Street from Garfield Place over Fort Washington Way to RFW
Main Street from Court to Fourth.

The proposed skywalk extensions are:

From Atrium One to a pedestrian bridge over Fort Washington Way
Elm, Race and Fifth Street connections to Hyatt-Sak's project
From the Terrace Hilton north to the Federated Office Building and west of Lazarus (Shillito/Rikes)
From the Westin Hotel south across Fourth Street and west across Vine Street to McAlpin's
From Fourth Street and McAlpin's south across Fort Washington Way
A combination of upper level platforms and skywalks linking RFW to the Riverfront stadium
From Riverfront Coliseum across Mehring Way to One Lytle Place,

From One Lytle Place to the Sawyer Point Park
Extension from the 580 Building east through
the Federal Building to the present Columbia Olds site
Extension from the present Columbia Olds site south
to the Central Trust Center, Phase II and Atrium II.

Current Status and Projections

Most of the planned extensions to the skywalk system have been implemented, at a cost of over $15 million.

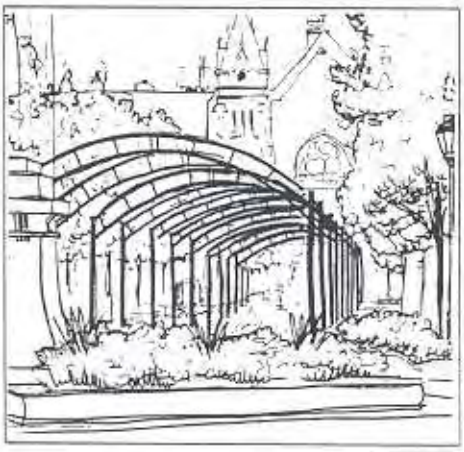
Recommendations

1. New extensions to the skywalks should be built only where street-level activity would not be adversely affected and a second level pedestrian connection is desirable to support adjacent uses.

2. The areas at the foot of escalators/stairs linking the skywalks to the street should be attractively designed to encourage people to come off the skywalks onto the street. (See Retail, p. 47).

3. Skywalks should be designed to be compatible with the buildings they connect and as transparent as possible to minimize blocking of view corridors.

4. Signage to the skywalk/street-level pedestrian movement system should be clearly understood by all users. Banners and fixed signs should be designed to uniquely convey a sense of location within the Downtown, be consistent throughout in design and create a pleasing experience for the pedestrian.



The Piatt Park Improvement added new plantings and water fountains to the linear park in the heart of the north frame.

2000 PLAN - OPEN SPACES

In planning the pedestrian movement system, special emphasis has been placed on integrating it not only with the various buildings to be served but also with open spaces and vistas, including Fountain Square, Lytle Park, Piatt Park, Yeatman's Cove Park and Sawyer Point Park. New open spaces may serve as focal points for residential communities, afford recreational opportunities or simply serve as buffers between areas of unrelated uses. Such additions are: Plum Street Park, Piatt Park Improvement, Garfield Place Pedestrian Ways, Court Street Market Plaza,

Broadway Square and Park, St. Xavier Park, Third Street Linear Park, Perry Street Crafts Market, the Eden Park Waterfront and Riverfront West Park.

Current Status

Improvements are proceeding on schedule, with half the park projects called for by the year 2000 already completed, including Fountain Square, Lytle Park, Piatt Park (without the planned street closing between Elm and Vine Streets), Yeatman's Cove, Sawyer Point, Court Street and Broadway Square.

Remaining projects are the Garfield Place Pedestrian Ways, which involve vest pocket parks, widened sidewalks and recreation amenities for future residents; Plum Street Park, which is planned to extend from the Convention Center to City Hall; St. Xavier Park; Third Street; Perry Street Market; Eden Park Waterfront and Riverfront West Park.

Recommendations

1. Maintain existing 2000 Plan goals for development of open spaces.

2. Preserve Fountain Square as the Downtown's primary gathering place, preserving clear vistas and paths to and from the Square. Additional street furniture, such as seating and trash receptacles, should be place unobtrusively, so that capacity is increased and vistas are preserved.

3. Decorative and seasonal lighting should be installed in Downtown public open spaces and in street trees to enliven Downtown after dark.

2000 PLAN - HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Downtown Cincinnati's cultural heritage and its historic character form a valuable legacy contributing to the richness of the City's personality. Conservation of these assets as a functional part of Downtown is an integral part of the 2000 Plan.

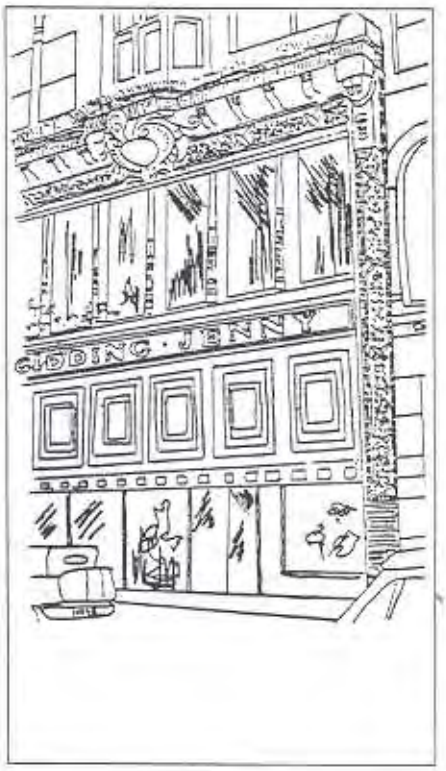
At the time the 2000 Plan was written, there were three National Register historic districts in the downtown: Lytle Park, West Fourth Street and West Ninth Street historic districts. There were

also a number of buildings individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The 2000 Plan proposes local designation of Oldtown (including West Fourth Street), Lytle Park and the North Frame (including West Ninth Street) areas as historic districts, with boundaries generally coinciding with those of the National Register districts.

The Fourth Street streetscape includes many elegant storefronts which can be development assets.

The 2000 Plan also recommends local designation of Main Street from Sixth Street to Central Parkway as a historic district and individual historic buildings along Fourth Street from Race to Main Streets.



Current Status

All the historic districts proposed for local designation have been designated, including Main Street. Designation in the North Frame area resulted in the West Ninth Street district, the Court Street district and individual designation of City Hall, St. Peter in Chains Cathedral, Plum Street Temple, and the Covenant-First Presbyterian Church.

Historic buildings create an inviting streetscape that is both interesting and pedestrian-friendly. There are development opportunities for a number of significant historic buildings on Fourth Street.

Recommendations

1. Maintain original 2000 Plan goals.

2. Initiate facade improvement program in Main Street historic district.

3. Assess the impact on the CBD of possible demolition of significant historic buildings particularly along Fourth Street.

4. Historic buildings and other architectural resources should be considered as Downtown assets and can be actively promoted as such.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS

2000 PLAN - DOWNTOWN CORE

Emphasis in the core area will be on pedestrian use. To impart a strong unifying image to this major office and retail area, paving treatments are proposed for the full width of the sidewalks, using modular brick and granite paving materials. A uniform Tripod Lighting System, using the three-pole base will be used to consolidate signs, lighting, traffic control equipment and other elements within a cohesive framework.

The core will be landscaped with such tree species as Little Leaf Linden, Ginkgo and Honey Locust. These trees do well in intensely developed urban settings, are a good height, and their generally light-density foliage minimizes screening of storefronts and signs. A variety of these three species is suggested for use in the Downtown. To provide a sense of order and continuity, however, one species should predominate along any given street.

Current Status

New modular brick paving has been installed in some places—mostly on new building sites—and not in others. Where the sidewalks have not been replaced, they appear ugly and dirty. The newly created Downtown Services Committee is established to manage problems in the Downtown, such as sidewalk maintenance.

Recommendation

1. Continue to implement 2000 Plan goals but with significantly increased emphasis on improved cleaning and upkeep of sidewalks.

2. Support the Downtown Services Committee.

3. Continue to install modular brick paving for priority pedestrian areas.

2000 PLAN - RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The 2000 Plan suggests modular brick paving treatment adjacent to the curb to help define residential districts; the remainder of the sidewalk will be concrete. The use of a single-pole lighting system is proposed for general illumination in all residential areas. This

will permit economies in City inventory and maintenance costs. In addition special lighting fixtures are proposed for selected residential streets to enhance their historic quality.

Trees for residential areas include the Pin Oak, Norway Maple and Tulip Poplar.

Current Status

New modular brick paving and lighting have been installed in some residential neighborhoods, including West Fourth Street and Court Street.

Recommendations

1. Maintain 2000 Plan goals.

2. Implement a street-tree planting program in all residential areas.

3. Improve maintenance of existing trees.

2000 PLAN - FRAME AREAS

The 2000 Plan proposes special lighting fixtures for selected residential streets to enhance their historic qualities. Existing boulevard lighting fixtures which are currently being replaced because of obsolescence could be reconditioned and can be aesthetically suitable for this purpose.

Trees proposed for frame areas, between the regional expressway network and the Downtown core, would be tall with generally dense foliage. Suggested species include Horse Chestnut, Willow Oak and Australian Pine.

General illumination in the frame areas will be provided by single-pole lighting. The sidewalks here will generally not receive any special paving treatment.

Current Status

All planned improvements have been carried out.

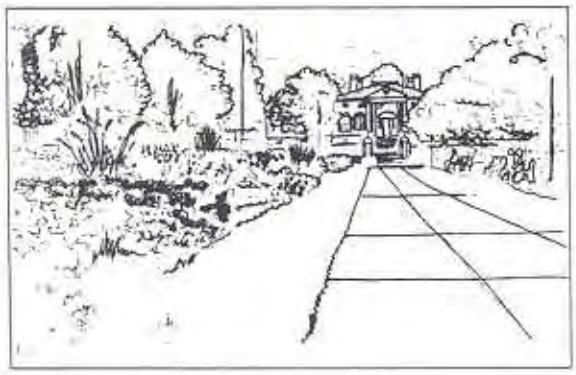
Recommendations

1. Retain 2000 Plan goal.

2. Include funds in the City budget to maintain existing improvements.

2000 PLAN - PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Pedestrian spaces give downtowners respite from the day to day activities.



Certain Downtown areas are proposed as pedestrian focal points. To enhance their role as unique environments, special lighting, paving and landscape treatments should be encouraged. Among the areas that should receive this special treatment are: Piatt Park, Court Street Market, Broadway Square, Plum Street Park, Sawyer Point Park, Eden Park Waterfront and Riverfront West Park.

Current Status

New lighting, paving and landscape treatments have been implemented in Piatt Park, Court Street, Broadway Square, and Sawyer Point Park. Improvements are still proposed for Plum Street, Eden Park Waterfront and Riverfront West.

Recommendations

1. Maintain 2000 Plan goal.

2. The Park Board should be designated as the agency responsible for all Downtown green spaces and should be empowered to work with property owners toward better maintenance of trees and planters for which property owners have prime responsibility. Cincinnati should ensure that the street tree assessment fees derived from Downtown real estate is spent on upgrading and maintaining Downtown street trees.

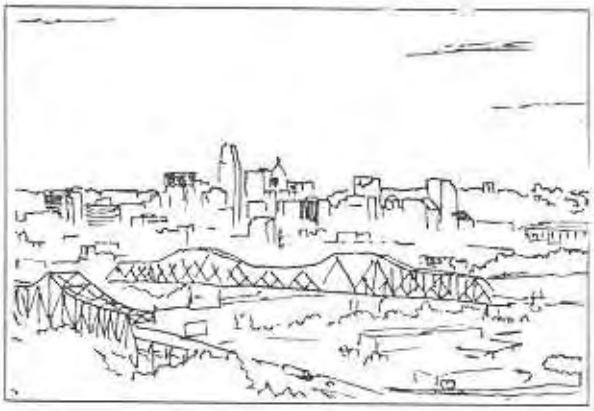
3. Establish open green spaces, with flowers and fountains, wherever feasible throughout the Downtown area to provide a haven of rest and recreation and to enhance the beauty of the City.

4. Special landscape treatment should be implemented to separate, at grade level, parking areas from pedestrian ways. The treatment can include earthen berms, plantings, low walls and decorative fencing.

2000 PLAN - BUILDING HEIGHTS AND DENSITY

Pyramidal massing of buildings, such as those around Fountain Square, are visual clues to activity centers.

The City's skyline should maintain a pyramidal shape peaking at Fountain Square, which will continue to be the central focus of the City. Its symbolic and functional role will be reinforced by placing the greatest amount of development on the adjacent blocks.



The remainder of the core beyond Fountain Square is the zone of the next greatest development activity and will contain the greatest building mass in the downtown area. This mass will extend down toward the new buildings in Riverfront West, to tie together the river and the Downtown core through an air-rights development over Fort Washington Way.

Areas along the fringe of the core will provide a transition from the less intensely developed areas of Garfield Place, Main Street, Old Town and Lytle Park.

The protection of views to the river will be a primary factor in determining building configurations. Development along Columbia Parkway should not block the view of the river from adjacent Mount Adams.

Current Status

The pyramidal massing of the skyline is still largely maintained, however, tall new buildings on Third Street and in the East Core are penetrating the envelope.

Recommendation

Reconfirm the original 2000 Plan goals.

2000 PLAN - DESIGN GUIDELINES

New buildings should reinforce the existing skyline, pyramiding in height at Fountain Square.

Current Status

In general, new buildings reinforce the existing skyline, however there have been some exceptions. The Urban Design Review Board is the appropriate monitoring body to ensure that new

projects fit into the context of the massing in the core area.

Recommendation

1. Maintain the original 2000 Plan goal.

2. Support the Urban Design Review Board in the ongoing effort to reinforce the City's skyline.

2000 PLAN - SURFACE MATERIALS

New buildings as viewed in the skyline should provide a "solid" surface appearance complementing the City's tradition of masonry buildings.

Current Status

Some new buildings have been partially clad in glass materials.

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan guideline.

2000 PLAN - STREET LEVEL RETAIL

It is desirable that new buildings provide retail space for shopper's or convenience goods along the sidewalk frontages wherever possible, and particularly to maintain retail continuity along Court Street, Garfield Place, Sixth, Fifth, Fourth, Race, Vine and Main Streets.

Current Status

Most, but not all new buildings have provided retail space along the sidewalk frontages. Several new buildings are oriented towards the interior and provide retail where it is not visible from the street. This has been permitted under the 1988 Downtown Development Zoning Code.

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan goal.

2000 PLAN - SKYWALK RETAIL

New buildings connected to the skywalk system should provide retail space fronting the pedestrian rights-of-way through the buildings.

Current Status and Projections

Because shoppers goods retail space is concentrated in the West Core, this plan concept is questionable elsewhere in the Downtown (e.g. East Core).

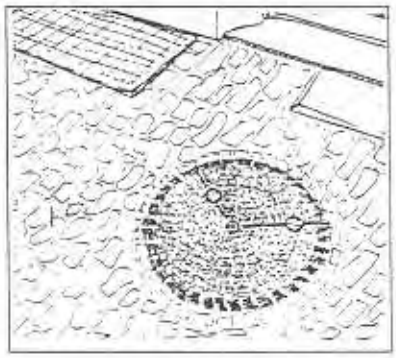
Recommendation

Except for the major retail concentration area in the West Core, the skywalks should be used primarily for transportation.

2000 PLAN - RETAIL SHOP ENTRANCES

New buildings should orient their entrances and retail shops to the public sidewalks; many display cases and shop windows should front on the sidewalks.

Specail paving can be used to delinate a shop entrance.



Current Status

Many, but not all, new buildings have oriented their entrances and retail shops to the public sidewalks. In some cases, retail provided on the interior of the building is not visible from the public sidewalks and therefor, entrances to this retail space are not easily accessible from the public ROW. This has been permitted by the 1988 Downtown Development Zoning Code.

Recommendation

1. Maintain original 2000 Plan guideline.

2. Emphasize street-level retail entrances with attractive window display cases, visible signage, special paving treatments and other inviting physical features.

2000 PLAN - SETBACKS

The lower floors of new buildings should be built uniformly to street rights-of-way in most cases.

Current Status

It is becoming increasingly common for new buildings to be set back from the street rights-of-way. This disrupts "street-wall" continuity and weakens the urban context.

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan guideline.

2000 PLAN - UPPER-STORY SETBACKS

The upper floors of tall buildings should be set back from street rights-of-way, particularly along north-south streets to allow sunlight to reach the street level.

Current Status

Most, but not all, upper floors of tall buildings are set back from the street.

Recommendation

Maintain original 2000 Plan guideline.

2000 PLAN - NATURAL LIGHT ON PUBLIC PLAZAS

New buildings built adjacent to public plazas, parks and open spaces should be designed to allow sunlight into these open spaces from mid-morning to mid-afternoon. For example, when the FSW site is developed with a major office-retail complex, particular care should be given to provide building setbacks on upper floors to maintain sunlight on Fountain Square.

Current Status

The proposed design for FSW by Helmut Jahn provides some setbacks and will not negatively affect the amount of sunlight that falls onto Fountain Square.

Recommendation

1. Maintain the original 2000 Plan guideline.

2. Support the Urban Design Review Board's endorsement of the proposed design by Helmut Jahn.

FOURTH STREET

2000 PLAN - ARCADE

Buildings should be remodeled or designed to provide a continuous, covered, pedestrian arcade along the north sidewalk from

Elm Street to Main Street.

Current Status

This proposal has not been carried out.

Recommendation

Abandon this proposal.

2000 PLAN - MIXED USE

New development should maintain the existing diversity of uses by providing mixed-use projects with retail and commercial space fronting the sidewalks as well as office and institutional space on upper floors.

Current Status

Most new projects incorporate mixed uses. FSW is an excellent example.

Recommendation

This guideline should remain unchanged.

2000 PLAN - DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Urban Design Review Board and the Historic Conservation Board to review and to control development along Fourth Street to maintain its historic character.

Current Status

To date, there has been little involvement of the Urban Design Review Board or the Historic Conservation Board in controlling development along Fourth Street, except in the review of two proposed hotels in the West Fourth Street Historic District. This will become more important as new projects are planned.

Recommendation

The original 2000 Plan recommendation should remain unchanged.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

STREET VENDORS

Current Status

The manner in which wares are displayed by street vendors in Downtown gives a very disorderly appearance to those areas where they are located.

Recommendations

The City should turn over to the Cincinnati Downtown Progress Committee the responsibility of licensing street vendors within the retail area. The Committee should determine location of the vendors, consistency in presentation of goods and overall appearence. Income derived from renting space could be used to partially fund the Committee's activities.

DOWNTOWN OPERATIONS

Recommendations

1. Special events in Downtown should continue to be promoted by the Downtown Council.

2. Office lobbies should be used for activities that are attractive to the public at large and not just to the people using the office building.

3. Shop windows should have attractive displays and remain lit until 11:00 p.m.

4. The facades of buildings could be greatly improved above the first floor by cleaning and judicious painting.

5. An effort should be made to coordinate signage and the backgrounds of these signs. Guidelines should be established to upgrade and unify building facades without requiring uniformity.

6. Drastically improve street cleaning and enforce ordinances requiring owners to maintain the sidewalks adjacent to their property. All building owners should be encouraged to install hose bibbs, at street level, to aid in sidewalk maintenance.

7. Support the proposed creation of the Cincinnati Downtown Progress Committee (see Summary p. 10).

8. Support efforts to promote more entertainment downtown, including development of alleyways and sidewalks for cafes.

9. The City should lobby UMTA to approve SORTA's grant application for a low fare downtown shuttle system to provide easy access to and from downtown and outlying parking areas, Union Terminal and Bicentennial Commons.

10. SORTA should consider establishing a fare free zone within downtown in lieu of the limited service provided by the Downtowner.

URBAN DESIGN MODEL

The University of Cincinnati has established three research centers: The Center for Urban Design, The Community Planning and Design Center and The Environmental Simulation Laboratory. The three centers work interactively and collaborate on a variety of projects. All are concerned with the development of design principles and computer-aided techniques. The center for Urban Design is especially concerned with central city urban issues and has extensive experience of retail design in North America and Europe. It is suggested that future development initiatives in downtown Cincinnati might utilize The University of Cincinnati' Center for Urban Design's services in assisting with a unified approach to Urban Design.