CHAPTER XVII

Comprehensive Plan and Program

The Need of a Comprehensive City Plan

The whole City Plan is divided into subjects or chapters for the purpose of this report. The matters treated in various chapters have not been studied separately. Each has been studied in connection with all of the others, as a part of the common Plan. All of the parts of this Plan are interrelated, so that studying any one part separately is liable to give an incomplete, or even false, impression.

It now becomes important to see how the various parts of the Plan interweave and where there is bound to be a certain amount of give and take for the common good.

Almost at the beginning of the study, a tentative City Plan was made on which each detailed recommendation was indicated, so that its rightful place in the general scheme could be determined. This tentative City Plan Map, with the completion of the studies, became a final City Plan Map, on which is indicated every recommendation of the whole report that can be indicated graphically. No change should be made in any part of the Plan without checking back to see how it affects the rest of the Comprehensive Plan.

Order of Urgency

The carrying out of the City Plan should not increase the normal expenditure of municipal funds. The yearly budget is more or less fixed and limited, whether the funds be derived from the tax levy or from bond issues. The usual policy in nearly every city is to struggle along from hand to mouth and year by year, patching here and there, and doing those things, and usually only those things on which the taxpayers insist most strongly. As a rule in all cities it is customary for the strongest demand to secure the earliest satisfaction. In fact, it is difficult to do otherwise, unless there are means at hand of showing the public just where each particular demand fits into a general plan and program for a fully rounded out development of the community.

It should be of the greatest advantage to city officials, to be able to show to a petitioner the exact relation of his demand to the other parts of a complete program for the city’s development, and just when, logically, his demand should be taken up. There is, therefore, the utmost need of such a scheduled program for public improvements extending over a long period of years.

In each chapter of this Report, and for each part of the City Plan, the relative urgency of the proposed improvements is indicated, and in most cases, approximate dates of undertaking the improvements are stated. On the School and Play-yard; Thoroughfare and Parkway; and Trolley and Bus Tables, the order of urgency is worked out in great detail.

The study of these tables and proposed dates of execution, shows at a glance that there is a certain limited number of items that calls for immediate attention, and it is that immediate list that is made the subject of the next chapter, entitled “Immediate Program to Meet Deficiencies.”

The execution of the rest of the proposals is grouped by five or ten-year periods, spread over a range of fifty years.

In general the proposals are so distributed that there can be no abnormal burden on the taxpayer in any given five or ten year period.

If Cincinnati should fail to grow as rapidly as the prognostication in Chapter I would seem to warrant, then the program of execution would be retarded correspondingly. On the other hand, if Cincinnati should have an unexpected boom, then the program could be readily acceler-
ated. Of course, the exact date allotted to any specific improvement is open to change. At best it is only the relative time of execution that can be planned for now.

In general, the conclusions embodied in this Report can be divided into two main classes as follows:

1. Those matters which affect the control of the character and intensity of use of private property, all of which can be controlled by ordinance or law.

2. Those matters which have to do with the acquisition or improvement of property for public use, all of which involve more or less expense to the city.

All of the matters which affect the use of private property can and should be taken care of immediately by the City Council, especially as they can all be handled virtually without expense to the city or the taxpayers. These matters include the following:

1. Building Zone Ordinance (already enacted).
2. Amendments to the Building Ordinance (already enacted).
3. Fire districts amended to conform with the Building Zone Ordinance.
4. The revision of traffic regulations.
5. Billboard and advertising device regulations.
6. Overhanging street sign regulations.

As far as the City Planning Commission is concerned, and in accordance with the powers and duties delegated to it by the
City Charter, it should take care immediately of the following matters:

1. The official adoption of the City Plan (already adopted).

2. The adoption of rules and regulations for controlling the layout of plats and subdivisions (adopted).

3. The expansion of its functions as a Municipal Art Jury.

With regard to the improvements for which the city must pay, the immediate expenditure is limited as is described in detail in the Citizens' Survey Report.

All of the public improvements and the other features of the Plan that must be carried out within the next five years are listed and described in the following chapter, "Immediate Program to Meet Deficiencies." These immediate needs are also listed in detail on the borders of the City Plan Map.

With regard to all of these proposals, everything possible should be done to live up to the program as here presented, so that the city will never find itself anywhere stifled or throttled by inadequate public services. If it is found to be impossible for Cincinnati to execute this program on schedule and thereby keep abreast of its growth, then it will be obvious that the Smith one Per Cent Law and the other financial restraints are doing far more harm than good, and should be modified as may be necessary to meet the changing conditions.

The Metropolitan Plan

In studying this Report it must surely be evident that the Comprehensive Plan cannot be cut off sharply at the purely arbitrary political boundaries of the city. The physical, the economic and the social problems of Cincinnati extend beyond these imaginary lines, just as though they did not exist. The problems of the whole tributary region are one, and in any study must be treated as one. Therefore, as permitted by the State law and as directed by the City Charter, this Comprehensive Plan includes the whole region directly tributary to Cincinnati. Therefore, the City Plan is really a metropolitan, or regional or county Plan, and to a certain extent, especially in matters of circulation, includes the adjacent area on the Kentucky side of the river as well.

Mobility of the City Plan

Obviously the City Plan cannot be made once and for all. Conditions are constantly changing. It is impossible to foresee today just how conditions are going to develop 25 and often even 10 years hence. Therefore, it should be understood that the City Plan as described in this report is not fixed and unchangeable, but rather is plastic and capable of change by the City Planning Commission and the City Council, whenever and wherever changing conditions demand. However, a Plan once made continues in spirit, if not in detail. It becomes the duty of the City Planning Commission, with the help of the City Departments and any other bodies and individuals interested, to preserve the continuity of intent through the decades.