Chapter 5

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

In the Metropolitan Area and in each of the communities residential uses occupy far larger quantities of land than any other use. The location of residential sections and the density and character of building within them therefore have a profound effect on numerous plan relationships throughout the Area. The Master Plan indicates the probable distribution and desirable pattern of future residential development in the Area.

Estimates of the quantity of land likely to be needed for new housing between now and 1970 were arrived at. Preliminary determinations were made as to where this land can and should be provided to insure sound development within the present urban areas and for future expansion beyond them. Estimates were made of future housing needs in terms of kind of structure, such as the single-family and the various types of multiple dwellings. Such information is essential in the measurement of residential land requirements and serves as a valuable guide in revising the Zoning Ordinance and extending its application.

These data also have an important bearing on policies for the control of subdivisions; on the location, character and extension of thoroughfares and transit lines; on water, sewer and other utility extensions; on the location and character of schools, playgrounds, fire and police stations, medical centers, branch libraries, post offices and other public facilities and services, as well as of such uses as shopping centers, churches, etc.

Although the statistical basis of this phase of the Master Plan is the three-county area, the actual territory surveyed for the Residential Areas study includes only those portions of the counties now urban or likely to become so. In some phases the inadequacy of information about the Kentucky counties has limited the Plan to Hamilton County or the City of Cincinnati.

Future Housing Requirements

It was estimated that approximately 135,000 new dwelling units would be required between the date of the study (1946) and 1970. About 62,000 will be needed for the probable increase in households. The remaining 73,000 units will be required as replacements, largely for units in deteriorated areas needing redevelopment. Not all of the deficient units will require demolition as a considerable number can be brought up to standard.

For purposes of making estimates of land requirements for future residential use, the estimated housing units were assumed, on the basis of recent construction trends and present requirements for replacement, to be roughly divisible into 81,000 in one- and two-family units and 54,000 in multiple structures.

On the same basis it was assumed that about 11% of the total construction potential of the Area, or 15,900 units, may be anticipated in Northern Kentucky leaving 120,000 units for Hamilton County.

The Land Available

Detailed statistical data on vacant lots and acreage were at hand only for Cincinnati and the urbanized portions of Hamilton County. (See Fig. 23.)

It was estimated that early in 1946 there were 19,065 vacant lots available in the urban area of Hamilton County on existing streets, and 6,176 in subdivisions where streets and utilities have not been installed.

Of the vacant lots having improvements, 12,988 were within the City of Cincinnati and 6,077 outside its corporate limits. An earlier survey shows about three out of five to be "good" as far as topography is concerned, the remainder ranging from "poor" to "fair."

In the Area as a whole, future residential development does not therefore appear to present a land problem although there is need for new vacant lots with improvements. However, as many cities have been brought close to bankruptcy through premature subdivision, the absence of an oversupply of lots may be regarded as evidence of sound local practices in land development.

Within the city limits there are relatively few large tracts of vacant acreage left for subdivision. Accordingly it will be difficult to locate more than a very few large-scale projects on vacant land in the city proper. Large-scale satellite residential community developments are likely to seek outlying areas — the only places where
LAND AVAILABLE FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL USE
CINCINNATI METROPOLITAN AREA

LAND USE STATUS
- COMPLETELY UTILIZED
- MORE THAN 60% UTILIZED
- LESS THAN 60% UTILIZED
- VACANT
land can be accumulated in tracts large enough and low enough in price to make such ventures attractive investments.

Redevelopment of blighted areas might furnish some relief but few large areas are available from this source. Some 1,585 acres (1,135 acres within Cincinnati and 450 elsewhere in the county) might be obtained in this way. In spite of hilly topography there is in the county a large amount of good, fairly level acreage well suited to development.

Geographical Distribution

The final questions considered were: how much housing can reasonably be expected to go to each of the various communities? Where should it go to promote a desirable pattern of well-served and stable communities and neighborhoods?

To approach answers to these questions a geographical distribution of the total estimated new construction was attempted, allocating to each community the number of structures and dwelling units of various kinds which might reasonably be expected to be built in each. (These estimates appear as Table 17 in the Master Plan report on Residential Areas.)

Density Standards

In making this distribution consideration was given to the minimum land use density standards to be observed in connection with new building. In estimating net residential land requirements in the Area, it was found necessary to assume a formula of population density pending the adoption of density standards in connection with the revision of the Zoning Ordinance. Setting of automatic density standards is a function of that Ordinance.

The limitation on height of buildings and the requirements for yards, courts, etc., in the present Zoning Ordinance were not considered sufficient as these requirements do not prevent or control the crowding of a large number of families into a building which complies with such requirements.

The formula used for the estimates was based in part on a study of desirable standards and in part on a review of recent advanced practice of builders in the Area, and is as follows: New single family residences should have a lot of at least 6,000 square feet. Multiple family structures should have at least 6,000 feet of land for the first dwelling unit, and at least 1,500 square feet of land for each additional dwelling unit.

Expansion of this formula yielded the following minimum standards as to lot size per structure, land area per dwelling unit, and dwelling unit density per net acre, for structures of the size indicated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwelling Units per Structure</th>
<th>Minimum Lot Size (Sq. Ft.)</th>
<th>Land Area Per Dwelling Unit (Sq. Ft.)</th>
<th>Maximum No. of Dwelling Units per Net Acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>3,750</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>2,622</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16,500</td>
<td>2,062</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>79,500</td>
<td>1,590</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>154,500</td>
<td>1,545</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emerging Population Pattern

Estimating the 1970 population by communities involved translation of the housing pattern into a population pattern. (See Fig. 6.) The estimates are shown in Appendix Table 19 in the Master Plan report on Residential Areas.

It is thought that the bulk of future growth in population in the Metropolitan Area will occur outside the present limits of Cincinnati, Covington and Newport. The substantial construction anticipated within these cities may not be accompanied by corresponding growth in population. New construction inside the city limits may be offset to a great extent by necessary demolition and the rebuilt areas may therefore have a lower density of population. In addition, fewer persons may occupy the average dwelling unit in accordance with the trend toward smaller sized households. These indications may be modified by the introduction of new types of residential buildings, housing legislation, reversals of trends, and other factors. In the remainder of Hamilton County and in the outlying parts of the Kentucky area, most of the new building will be at a net gain.

It is anticipated that the direction of growth in the urban area of Hamilton County will swing from the eastern to the northern and western communities in accordance with land availability and accessibility, and the growing industrialization of the Upper Mill Creek Valley. Construction of the Mill Creek Expressway will accentuate this trend. Growth, however, will occur in all outlying communities.

The greatest growth in population will take place in the major peripheral communities. Northwest Hills and Westwood Hills are expected in the long run to experience the greatest growth and to become the largest communities in the Area, each having over 60,000 potential population. These general areas present particularly good opportunities to plan transportation, shopping centers, and other services in anticipation of such development.
Northeast Heights, due for faster initial growth, may level out at about 35,000, with Price Hill and Upper Valley achieving about this same size or less.

Mt. Washington's 1970 population appears unlikely to exceed 15,000, while the probable maximum for Indian Hill-Madeira may be set at 7,500.

For the most part, only moderate increases or decreases are anticipated in the built-up portions of the urban area lying generally between the Basin and the peripheral communities. Exceptions are Bond Hill-Rose-lawn which is expected to double in population, Hyde Park-Oakley which may grow by a fifth and Madisonville-Mariemont, the growth of which is expected to approximate 50% over the present population.

The reverse side of the picture is found in the "old neighborhoods" — the Basin and the older sections outside of it. The Basin itself, if properly redeveloped, would decrease to less than half its present population. Even if the trend of the last three decades were continued it would lose as much as 27% of its 1940 population. With the exception of Riverside-Sedamsville, the older communities outside the Basin are expected to decrease to a lesser extent.

Between these two extremes are the middle-aged sections, such as Avondale-St. Bernard, Clifton, Cumminsville, Norwood and Walnut Hills, where numerically at least little change is expected. Changes of course will be taking place but they will be in the composition and character of the population and in the types of residential construction.

**Neighborhood Conditions and Their Treatment**

Even the construction of the estimated 135,000 dwelling units, including the portion contemplated in redeveloped areas, will not give Cincinnati a satisfactory supply of housing unless the existing supply is kept in sound and usable condition.

An appraisal of general housing conditions in each of the 5,500 residential blocks in Cincinnati and the surrounding urban area of Hamilton County was made, based on the block summaries of the 1939-1940 Real Property Survey. On the basis of data on structural condition and sanitary facilities it was estimated that in 1940 about 63,000 dwelling units, or about 34% of the total, were deficient in one respect or another. These units needed major repair, or sanitary facilities, or both. Many additional units while reported to be in good condition were found in locations that were generally unsatisfactory.

Some 56,390 units (some of which were not themselves substandard) were located in deteriorated areas, i.e., areas in which there was a high degree of concentration of physically substandard units and in some cases undesirable environmental conditions such as congestion, noise, dirt, traffic hazards, and mixture with industrial and commercial buildings and junk yards. (See Fig. 24.)

**Classifications of Condition**

The classifications of condition shown on the map were based on the data taken from the 1939-1940 Real Property Survey, and are defined as follows:

- **Deteriorated (Class 1)** blocks include all blocks with a mean average rental value of $15 or less per month, and with 60% or more of the total dwelling units needing major repairs or lacking a private bath, and a median year of construction prior to 1905.

- **Deteriorated (Class 2)** blocks include all blocks having a mean average rental under $20 and not in Class 1; and those with $20 to $25 rentals, having a median year of construction prior to 1905 and with at least 60% of the units needing major repairs or lacking a private bath.

- **Declining** blocks include all $20 to $25 blocks not in Class 2; plus blocks of $25 to $30 mean average rental not classified as fair or good blocks.

- **Fair or good blocks** (not specifically designated on the map, Fig. 24) include $25 to $30 blocks with fewer than 40% of the units lacking private baths, fewer than 40% needing major repairs and a median year of construction no earlier than 1920. This classification also includes all blocks having a mean average rental of $30 or more.

**Deteriorated and Declining Areas**

Fig. 24 shows as Deteriorated Areas (Class 1) those which are in such deteriorated condition as to call for clearance at the earliest possible date. Deteriorated Areas (Class 2) are relatively less deteriorated and will need redevelopment before 1970. Declining Areas while not needing complete clearance and redevelopment still need drastic treatment.

Fig. 25 shows the areas for which redevelopment is recommended, as well as those for which rehabilitation is proposed. Localities to be redeveloped for residential use are differentiated from those allocated to future non-residential uses. Graphic distinction is not made between those portions of the redevelopment areas in need of immediate action and those where delay might be justified by the condition of the buildings themselves. The demarcation of these areas provides only a general guide for further more detailed analysis and study of each locality as a "redevelopment project."
The term "redevelopment" as used in this chapter means complete demolition of buildings and restoration of the cleared land to the market under whatever controls have been adopted by the public authorities concerned for the specified area. It is the type of treatment prospectively to be authorized by urban redevelopment legislation such as failed passage in the Legislature in 1947. A number of states have urban redevelopment laws and the subject is under consideration in many others.

Comparison of Figs. 24 and 25 will indicate that there has been some generalizing of outlines. In some cases Deteriorated (Class 2) and even some Declining Areas have been included in the tentative redevelopment areas. This is the result of planning analysis in which general environmental conditions and the effect of various developmental and land use proposals involved in the Master Plan were considered.

Rehabilitation Areas

There are many other neighborhoods in which old buildings predominate, in which commercial or industrial structures are mixed with residential and where there are various other signs of deterioration, but where the good still outweighs the bad and restoration to sound health is possible. These are classified as "rehabilitation areas" and are also shown in Fig. 25.

The treatment needed in these rehabilitation areas will vary but will include such measures as demolition of the worst structures, removal when possible of adverse non-residential activities, repair and modernization of residences, reduction of overcrowding and the introduction of new playgrounds, schools or other features needed to restore lagging interest in the localities as places to live. In some cases the complete demolition and redevelopment of small parts of neighborhoods may be needed.

A new municipal housing code based on rational standards of housing quality and strictly enforced would be a valuable instrument in promoting the rehabilitation of residential properties. In December, 1947, the Cincinnati Committee to Expedite Housing recommended to City Council that it initiate action on the preparation of such a code, separate from the building code, to provide minimum standards for existing dwellings with respect to conditions affecting health, such as inadequate sanitary facilities and overcrowding. It recommended also the adoption of comprehensive and objective methods for determining the quality of existing housing such as have been devised by the American Public Health Association, and the establishment of a program for the condemnation of substandard dwellings. These recommendations are steps in the right direction.

Physical rehabilitation involves removal of elements which have an adverse effect, plus the introduction of elements which restore livability and faith and pride in the neighborhood. In part the necessary measures will require public expenditures for improvements or the enforcement of public law, but to a great extent they are matters of guidance and encouragement to the private activities of residents and property owners there.

Lesser Treatments

There are several other types of treatment needed in some localities but which are not referred to in Fig. 25.

In some middle-aged neighborhoods a higher than average proportion of residential structures is beginning to show signs of deterioration. The approach here should be, through organized effort, to induce owners of property to renovate and modernize their buildings.

Some neighborhoods are in essentially good condition today but need the continued protection of adequate zoning, careful planning of further residential development and the location of new facilities such as expressways, railroads, etc. This problem concerns mainly the various planning commissions.

Where new neighborhoods are beginning to develop the objective can be accomplished in part by proper planning of public improvements and exercise of suitable control over proposed private developments. In part, it requires stronger planning and developmental controls than are available at present.

Legislation Required

For redevelopment new state legislation is required and only a part of the land which can be assembled can be used for residential development. Clearance activities also carry with them the problem of rehousing the displaced low-income families.

Aside from the annexation of new territory, if the city is to receive a substantial portion of the total new residential building in the Area it must be by way of efficient use of its available land, and redevelopment of its blighted areas.

Need for Organized Effort

A variety of activities will be needed in coming years to reach the objectives of the residential phases of the Master Plan. These activities, which lie in many fields, must be consciously related to each other as to nature, scope and timing. There is need for a more intensive and comprehensive attack upon the problems of expand-
RECOMMENDED PLAN FOR RESIDENTIAL AREAS NEEDING TREATMENT
HAMPTON COUNTY

SOURCE OF DATA:
1940 REAL PROPERTY SURVEY
NONE AVAILABLE FOR KENTUCKY

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CINCINNATI, OHIO

METROPOLITAN MASTER PLAN
ing, preserving, and rehabilitating the residential sections of the Area.

Some of the things which must be done and which will not be done unless they are properly organized with appreciable governmental assistance, may be summarized as follows:

1. Continuous research and planning in all phases of the housing problem.

2. Measures to assist builders to market their units on terms consistent with the purchasing power of the public generally.

3. Continuous study of local housing conditions.

4. Redevelopment of areas deteriorated beyond hope of restoration.

5. Rehabilitation of declining areas which cannot be cleared for years.

6. Housing for low-income families displaced by redevelopment and public improvement activities.

7. Review and revision of codes and ordinances and their supplementation by new enactments so as to assure rational housing standards without imposing arbitrary restrictions on builders and developers.

8. Correction of various legislative deficiencies, Federal, State, and local, to meet the needs of the many phases of residential land use.

**Permanent Organization Recommended**

Finally, to bring the program to a head and develop its various phases adequately, there is a continuing need for a permanent organization with adequate staff and with powers and activities which should include:

1. Carrying on continuous inquiry into housing market conditions and making its findings available periodically to the public.

2. Working with all persons, organizations and agencies in the field of housing in order that the sum total of housing activities be as nearly consistent as possible with the general program, both in volume and character.

3. Serving as the central point of contact between the local governments and the various State and Federal agencies in housing and related fields.

4. Assisting builders, realtors, lending institutions and public and private agencies of all kinds active in the field, advising them as to the kinds and amounts of action which appear to be required.

5. Seeking to discourage building activity which appears to be excessive in light of apparent requirements or prejudicial to the development of the general program, or conversely seeking to stimulate action when needs appear to exceed contemplated private and public construction.

In its function of co-operation and co-ordination, such an organization should have purely advisory powers at least until sufficient experience has been attained to demonstrate the feasibility of such an approach.

Finally, since the housing market of the urban area cannot be broken into separate economic and geographic compartments, it would appear desirable where agreeable to the local governments having jurisdiction, that the organization make its assistance and co-operation available throughout the entire Metropolitan Area.

The continuation of such a steering organization which would have a broad perspective on total housing developments, is probably one of the most essential steps in attempting to meet the complex problems of housing inherent in planning, developing and redeveloping desirable residential areas throughout Metropolitan Cincinnati.

**Cincinnati Committee to Expedite Housing**

Closely following the foregoing Master Plan recommendations City Council appointed a Special Committee of Council to form an emergency housing committee. As a result, the Cincinnati Committee to Expedite Housing came into being. Council appropriated sufficient funds to maintain a small staff with offices in City Hall.