



A STUDY OF THE CITY CENTER OF DALLAS, TEXAS

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P. H. V.

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INTRODUCTION

A study of the city center of Dallas, Texas, would be incomplete without an investigation of the problems confronting North American city centers in general. It is only by such an approach that one can make use of the experiences of the many others who have sought solutions to the complexities of downtown development. Coupled with a thorough examination of the specific conditions existing in the Dallas city center, this general study should make possible the establishment of a few basic principles which will govern proposals for the future.

The proposals of the thesis are not to be considered the dogma of a particular belief. Those which cannot be implemented for some years were carefully labelled "guides" to indicate the flexibility intended. It is felt that the most desirable element of the entire scheme is that the basic pattern for future development is established at minimum cost, thus making it possible to eliminate flaws before sizable construction is recommended.

Each progressive step can only be taken as conditions warrant it. The thesis proposals are based upon the presumption that during the next forty years there may very well be in Dallas an expansion of facilities equal to that which took place in the forty years past, a period during which the city center doubled in size and in height. This presumption may prove to be incorrect. If such is

the case, little will have been lost. If, on the other hand, we witness another period of mushroom growth, how much better it will be that planning policy made allowances for it!

CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEMS OF CITY CENTERS

The city center harbors largely business enterprises. They offer a multitude of goods and services all within convenient access one to the other. Some of the commercial interests locate centrally because they require the entire resident population as a market. Others operate downtown because it is a market in itself.

The brief paragraph preceding expresses the city center's right to exist. Comparative shopping, luxury goods, highly specialized professional services, service facilities for transient business people, recreational facilities and cultural activities all thrive in a central location. Implicit in the same paragraph, however, are factors responsible for the three major problems of downtown areas. A concentration of goods and services implies internal traffic and a relatively high density. Because downtown is centered within a resident population, commuter traffic and deterioration also become problems. Few major cities have been able to cope adequately with the complexities of deterioration, density, and traffic which occur at their centers.

The deterioration at the city center cannot be properly analyzed without giving due consideration to the city as a whole. One of the most well-known observations on the composition of the urban environment is Edward W. Burgess' "Theory of Five Concentric Zones of City Development". The first zone is the city center.

Surrounding it is a transitional zone followed by workingmen's homes, the residential zone and the commuter zone in concentric rings. As a city grows these zones move outward from the center absorbing areas on the outer circumference and relinquishing areas on the inner circumference. The Zone of Transition contains the slums. It is the oldest residential area of the city. Since it is adjacent, the existence of urban deterioration poses a distinct problem in relation to the city center.

Most city officials, social workers and citizens agree that slums are a threat to the health, morals and safety of a community. Others, such as Daniel Seligman of Fortune Magazine, indicate that slums are a necessary part of urban growth. "The slums are crowded because there are jobs to be had...."¹ It is in this transitional zone that rural and immigrant people try to adjust to the urban way of life. They are to a degree poor and ignorant. Generally, until they have had time to establish themselves with good, steady employment, they seek the least expensive living accommodations available.

Although the problems inherent in slums are outside the bounds of the city center, it can be established that they exist where they do as a result of its

¹ D. Seligman, "The Enduring Slums", The Exploding Metropolis, (Garden City, 1958), p. 112.

presence. The close proximity of the central business district gives the slum a potential which makes the land desirable and valuable. "Land values in the slum environment are high not because of the income derived from the slum property, but because of high income expected sometime in the future, when the central business district will extend into this area. Thus, the high land values in the slum environment have a speculative basis."² Furthermore, it is considered that city tax structure encourages this speculation. One of the causes of central slum development is said to be "high taxes and the unwillingness of both public officials and property owners to adjust inflated assessments and values to realities".³

Buildings in a state of deterioration exist also within the central business district itself. They are no particular threat to morals or health, but normally they fulfill functions alien to central activities. Many are vacant. "In America, where in some respects the mischiefs of contemporary urban civilization have been carried farthest, the greater part of our overgrown metropolises are, in strict economic terms,

2 S. Riemer, The Modern City, (New York, 1952), p. 102.

3 S. E. Saunders and A. J. Rabuck, New City Patterns. The Analysis of and a Technique for Urban Reintegration, (New York, 1946), p. 16.

bankrupt: their dwindling taxes cannot support the load of debt incurred through growth, disorganization, and blight; and their urgent repair awaits a systematic deflation of the still absurd structure of values that was created in the past, in anticipation of further growth."⁴

Closely related to the traffic of an area is that quantitative measure applied to populated land called density. The word itself implies that there is a closeness, a massing of individual elements. In an urban area these elements are normally people and their shelters. Therefore, both population and building densities occur.

The relationship between density and traffic is relatively simple. Traffic becomes more complex the more people and goods there are in a given area. The more space occupied by building, the less space is likely to be available for surface movements.

For proper evaluation of the factors evident in high density and low density urban cores, the cities of New York and Los Angeles provide an excellent representation of each extreme. What has happened in New York has happened to a lesser extent in practically every North American city. Streets and avenues were

⁴ L. Mumford, City Development, (New York, 1945), p. 161.

originally designed to accommodate a population density no greater than that which could be sheltered by buildings four stories tall. But in a large part of Manhattan this average building height has been multiplied by as much as ten. The result is five or ten early Mannhattans superimposed. The problem resulting from such a high concentration of buildings is that the four to nine later additions were provided with no independent means of access. "Our mild legal limits on the height of midtown buildings merely encourage tall structures in the very areas where traffic congestion is already close to paralysis, and we demolish crowded slums only to replace them with public-housing developments whose population densities, as high as four hundred and fifty people an acre, are twice the average residential density of the city. We have consistently acted as if there were no relation between the number of people we dump on the land and the amount of congestion on the streets and arterial traffic routes."⁵

Today over six million people pour into tunnels and the deep chasms which are the street of Manhattan, but only 17% dare take their automobiles.⁶ The remainder crowd into mass transit. Frequented by such a vast

5 L. Mumford, From the Ground Up, (New York, 1956), p. 220.

6 F. Bello, "The City and the Car", The Exploding Metropolis, (Garden City, 1958), p. 60.

population the city can provide practically every type of service known to man except a commodious route for each of these people to travel at his convenience.

While New York was exploiting the potentials of high-rise buildings and motorized travel, Los Angeles was still latent. A respect for earth tremors which have frequently occurred in Southern California placed limitations upon building heights. Popularity of the motor car was in evidence before any significant centralization had taken place. There has never been any great need for subways or commuter trains to the city center. Today 95% of all travel in the Los Angeles metropolitan area is by automobile.⁷ To accommodate these vehicles a phenomenal percentage of land is required for roadways. The city has a very undistinguished business and cultural center. For mere performance of casual errands, trips of many miles are often required. And the most interesting point of all is that, according to a test made by Fortune Magazine, during peak afternoon hours one can drive out of downtown New York on its most heavily travelled route as quickly as one can drive out of downtown Los Angeles on its most heavily travelled route.⁸

This evidence should place in a quandary those who

7 Ibid., p. 58.

8 Ibid., p. 60.

advocate decentralization as the answer to urban problems. Use of the automobile has made lower density residential development very desirable. Business development exclusive of high densities, which the automobile fosters, has yet to demonstrate any particular desirability.

Traffic is essential to the exchange of goods and services within the city center. The exchange of services normally involves the movement of people. Employees move to and from their places of employment. Clients move about various business establishments. The exchange of goods requires the movement of both goods and people. However, since delivery of goods is only a portion of the mercantile activity, and since merchandizing is only a portion of downtown activity, movement of goods in the city center should be considered a traffic function secondary to the movement of people.

This lack of priority constitutes a major traffic problem. In most large cities on-street vehicle loading and unloading in the downtown area must be limited. Even those concerns which maintain off-street docking facilities find it difficult to move their large vehicles during business hours. There is evidence that, as a result, the larger goods-handling activities, wholesaling in particular, are now moving away from the

city center.⁹ Retailing, which depends heavily upon the presence of people, is remaining. It is doubtful that the problems of moving goods within the city center can be solved by retailers independently.

The primary downtown traffic function is the movement of people. They travel to, from and about the city center on foot, on public conveyance, and in private vehicles. Changes in vehicular transportation have made the center what it is today. Further changes appear to threaten its very existence.

Before the advent of the motor vehicle, travel was slow. Animal drawn carts and wagons were used largely for transporting heavy goods. Where buggies were used to move people, it was essentially for comfort, not speed. Over short distances one could travel quickly by mounting and running an animal, but this speed was heavily offset by the time involved in saddling and unsaddling. As a result, people tended to live in areas where everyday necessities were within walking distance and staple commodities a convenient buggy-ride away. Since the size of a city center depends upon the number of people it is capable of serving conveniently, centers of this time were able to develop only insofar as people could be crowded around within a negotiable radius. For

9 Philadelphia City Planning Department, Philadelphia Central District Study, (Philadelphia, 1950), p. 58.

this reason large cities tended to be, according to today's standards, decentralized. Those living outside the attraction of the center sacrificed any of its advantages for the time saved in carrying on the majority of their family activities nearer home. Since people and goods travelled at the same speed, it was profitable for merchants to bring the goods to the people.

That there must have been some need or desire for centralization, however, is demonstrated by the fact that the first use of intracity motor vehicles was for the transport of people, not goods. Those means of transportation which had caused cities to develop prior to the twentieth century were not generally adaptable to carrying either goods or people about within the city. Yet, at these transportation intersections and terminals many activities took place which offered employment opportunities. If a worker could not find a place to live within walking distance of this center, he had to find a local means of transportation. The privately owned horse and buggy was not generally suitable, since the horse could not be left all day at the place of work. Collectively, however, workers could afford to hire a driver. So, for many years people rode horse drawn street cars, not because they were particularly faster than walking, but because they were more comfortable, offered protection from bad weather, and were not

hampered by muddy roads.

The adaptation of an electrically driven car to these rail lines provided the first economical, rapid, intra-urban transit. Through this development in mass transit and other technical improvements the city center was able to attain a phenomenal growth. For the first time within the city, people were travelling faster than goods. Clothing and furniture stores and other forms of merchandizing tended to move to the city center. Professional men found that in the central business district they were able to offer a better service by specializing. In many cities large downtown high schools, churches and theaters were built to serve the entire urban population. "As a result of these transfers of functions, the central business section of the city grew rapidly, whether or not the city itself was growing."¹⁰

This era of centralization began around 1900. By the late 1920's another phenomenon was taking place. Automobiles were seriously challenging the role of the street car as the principal means of urban transportation. Motor trucks, which were reasonably perfected during World War I, were making it possible once again to move goods as quickly as people. Another transfer of functions was inevitable. Another traffic problem was apparent, not one of insufficient means of transportation, but one

¹⁰ H. W. Gilmore, Transportation and the Growth of Cities, (Glencoe, 1953), p. 115.

of too many. The Great Depression and World War II did not alter the fate of the city center. They merely postponed it.

During the ten years following the Second World War the number of automobiles in the United States doubled. There became one car for every three people.¹¹ Transit riding declined. By 1956 the street car had all but disappeared. Clothing and furniture stores found it again more profitable to operate nearer the residential areas. The large downtown churches, high schools and theaters began losing their popularity.

The problem of moving people to, from and about the city center has become acute. Many centers have become too large to move about on foot. The streets, designed for use of a relatively few number of horses and buggies, cannot accommodate all the automobiles which manage to arrive downtown. Mass transit is unable to operate profitably. Parking facilities for private vehicles, quite uncommon prior to automobiles, are insufficient. In short, the downtown that was promoted by the street car can no longer serve adequately a people who, in most cities, prefer to travel by private means.

¹¹ Bello, op. cit., p. 54.

CHAPTER II
THE CITY OF DALLAS AND
THE MAJOR PROBLEMS OF ITS CENTER

It has been stated that the city center offers comparative shopping, luxury goods, highly specialized professional services, service facilities for transient business people, recreational facilities and cultural activities. An examination of the location of these functions will reveal that Dallas, Texas, with a population of approximately 750,000, departs from the normal in some respects. The lack of complete conformity gives Dallas a distinction and should cause its problems to be dealt with in a unique manner.

The strongest concentration of shopping facilities is in the very center of the city. In the four block area bounded by Main Street, Harwood, Elm, and Akard are five large department stores. On the opposite side of Main Street at Ervay, which splits this four block section, is Dallas' most well-known store. At Lamar Street, which is four blocks from Akard, between Main and Elm are the two remaining large department stores. Shops handling high quality goods line both sides of Main Street and the south side of Elm Street from Harwood to Akard. Lower quality shops and specialty shops are located along both sides of Elm Street from Akard to Lamar and for five blocks from Harwood to Good Street. The remaining notable retail sales areas are the automobile showrooms on the north side of downtown scattered along Pearl Street southeast of Ross Avenue,

along Ross Avenue from Pearl to Akard, somewhat along Harwood from Ross to Cedar Springs Boulevard and on Cedar Springs from Harwood to Maple Avenue. (See Plate 1.)

There has been no significant expansion or development in retail sales areas on Main and Elm Streets since 1941. Three department stores have made additions on their sites, but the majority of expansion has taken place in suburban shopping centers. Many of the downtown automobile showrooms were built between 1946 and 1950, especially on Ross Avenue and on Cedar Springs. There have been very few new showrooms in the downtown area since that time.

Office space is heavily concentrated at the heart of the city. 26.4% of the total downtown floor area is devoted to office space and financial institutions, a total of over eight million square feet.¹ The bulk of this office use is found between Wood Street and Pacific Avenue, Field Street and Harwood. The area north of Pacific and east of Akard is significant in that most of the recently built office space is scattered within this area. (See Plate 2.)

Officials of the City of Dallas and members of

¹ Dallas Department of City Planning, Dallas Central District, (Dallas, 1961), Table 2, p.22.

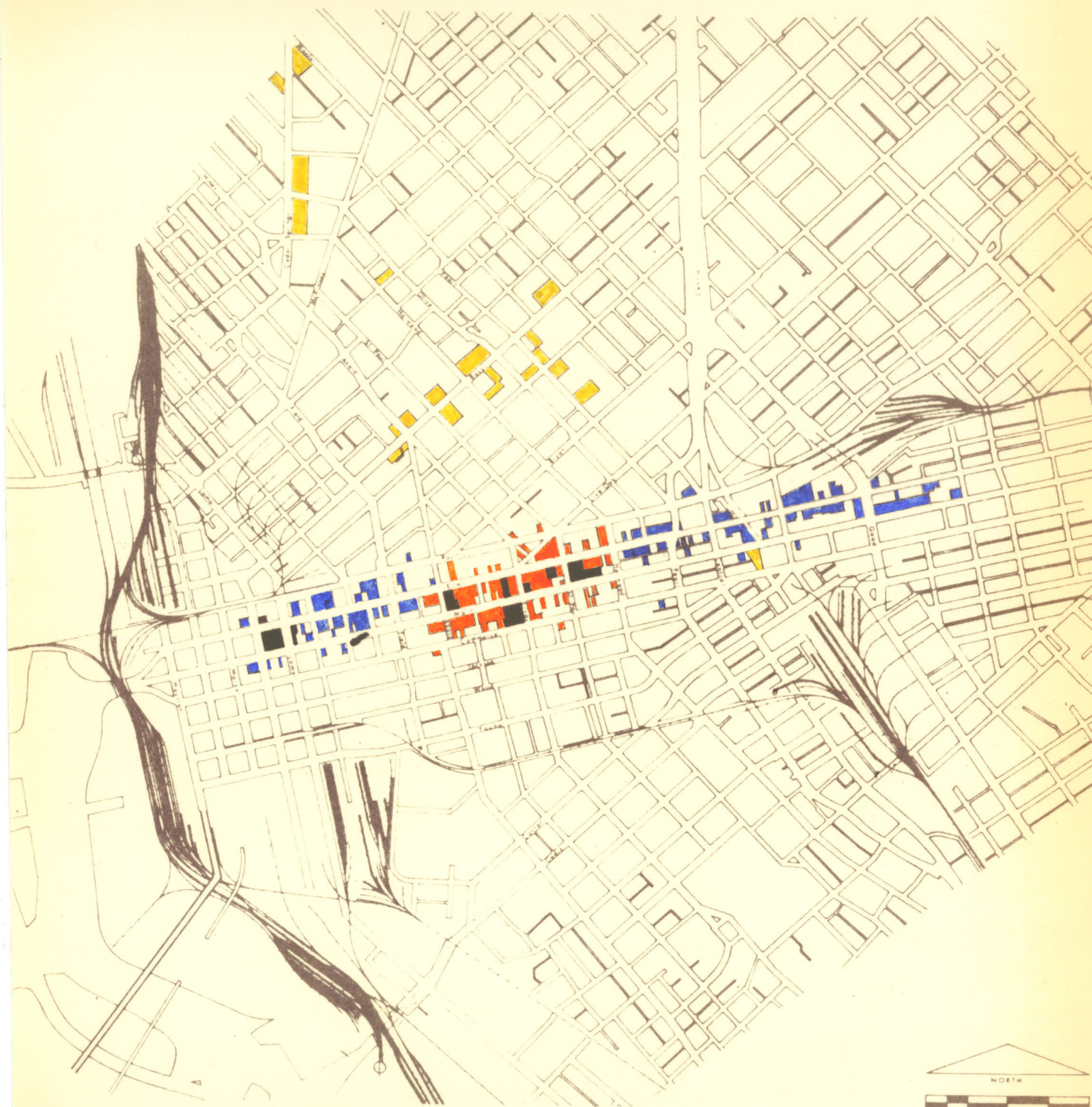


PLATE 1: RETAIL USES

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department
stores



lower quality &
specialty shops



quality
shops



automobile
sales

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city of dallas
1959



PLATE 2: AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT OFFICE USE

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citizens' groups have made a recent effort to promote Downtown Dallas as a convention center. The major result of this effort has been the construction of the Dallas Memorial Auditorium, a huge arena and theater complex located on South Akard Street five blocks from Commerce Street and two of Dallas' largest hotels. At approximately the time of this construction both the Statler-Hilton and Sheraton chains were either building or planning new large hotels in the downtown area. The Statler occupies a single block jointly with the Public Library on Commerce and Saint Paul. The new Sheraton is part of the Southland Center which occupies a block on Olive and Live Oak. The Dallas Chamber of Commerce reports that 156 major conventions were held in Dallas in 1959. The largest conventions brought as many as 10,000 to 20,000 people to Dallas at one time.² The city center can be described as having excellent transient facilities. (See Plate 3.)

Dallas departs from the normal in that it has more than one entertainment center and more than one cultural center. Downtown does not act as a cultural center. Large motion picture theaters are located on the north side of Elm Street across from the major shopping area. Three are in one block between Harwood and Saint Paul.

² Ibid., p. 89.



PLATE 3: TRANSIENT FACILITIES

l e g e n d
 ■ hotels
 ■ bus depots
 ■ train station
 ● convention hall

s o u r c e
 department of
 city planning
 city of dallas
 1959

One is near Ervay Street one block away. The four major hotels feature well-known entertainers in their "supper clubs". Near the corner of Akard and Commerce there is a concentration of restaurants and night clubs. (See Plate 4.) The only significant cultural activities within the city center take place at the Dallas Memorial Auditorium, where one can see productions of Broadway plays, and at the Public Library.

Another entertainment center is found within the State Fair Grounds in Southeast Dallas two miles from the center. On these grounds there are a 75,000 seat stadium, an ice arena, a roller rink, an amusement park, a rodeo arena, an amphitheater, the State Fair Musicals, a large swimming pool and an aquarium. The Fair Grounds also act as a cultural center; since it is at the State Fair Auditorium that performances both of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and of the Dallas Civic Opera are given, and since it is here that the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts and the Hall of State, a historical museum, are located.





A second cultural center is the campus of Southern Methodist University in North Dallas four miles from the center. Here one finds recitals by well-known artists, lectures, drama, a large library, and various evening courses. (See Plate 5.)

With this description one should be able to sense



PLATE 4: PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT

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	cinema		theater
	night clubs		sports arena

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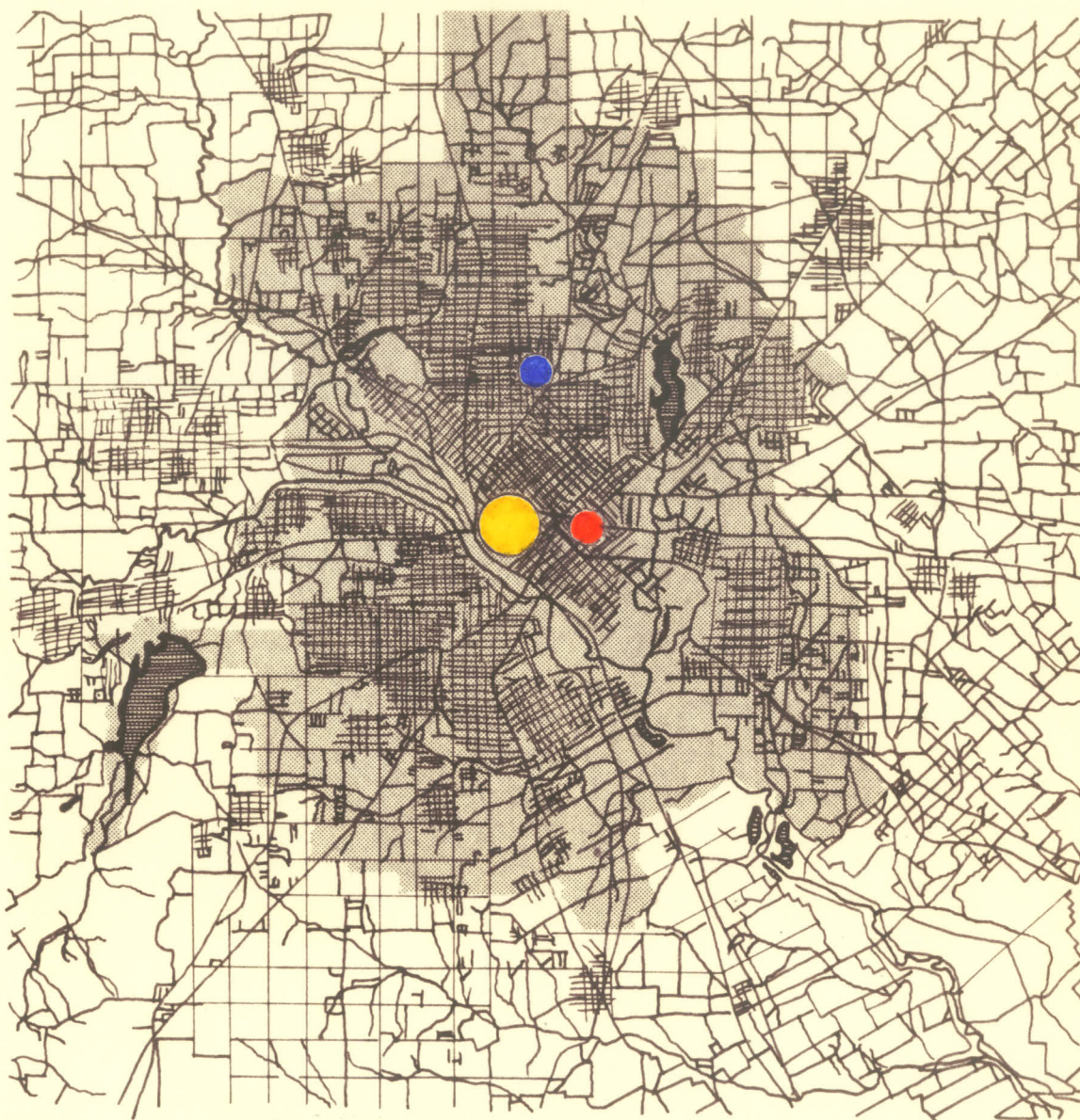


PLATE 5: COMMERCIAL, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CULTURAL CENTERS
DALLAS, TEXAS

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|---|---|----------------|---|---|
| l |  | city of dallas | | |
| e | | | | |
| g | | | | |
| e |  | city center |  | fair park |
| n | | commercial and | entertainment | entertainment |
| d | | center | center | center |
| | | | |  |
| | | | | southern |
| | | | | methodist |
| | | | | university |
| | | | | cultural center |

the role played by the Dallas central district in the life of the community. From the investigation of city centers in general it was determined that deterioration, density and traffic composed the major categories of difficulty within the average central business district. In this respect Dallas is no exception.

There is evidence of deterioration both within the heart of the city and upon the fringes of the central district. The greatest deterioration of commercial buildings is on both sides of the major office and shopping area; that is, west of Field Street and east of Harwood. Residential slums are apparent particularly in the southern and northern extremities of the central business district. The extent of deterioration in comparison to other, especially older, cities is not so serious. However, a large area of blighted dwellings defined approximately by a circle of two mile radius about the center of the city presents a serious potential. (See Plates 6, 7, 8 and 9.)

Dallas is characterized by a dense building development in the core of the city. It has been noted for years as having the tallest structures in the Southwest. Combined with narrow congested streets this aspect gives a big city atmosphere to an urban area populated by less than a million. Downtown Dallas has been the object of the great admiration of travellers



PLATE 6: SOUND, WELL MAINTAINED BUILDINGS

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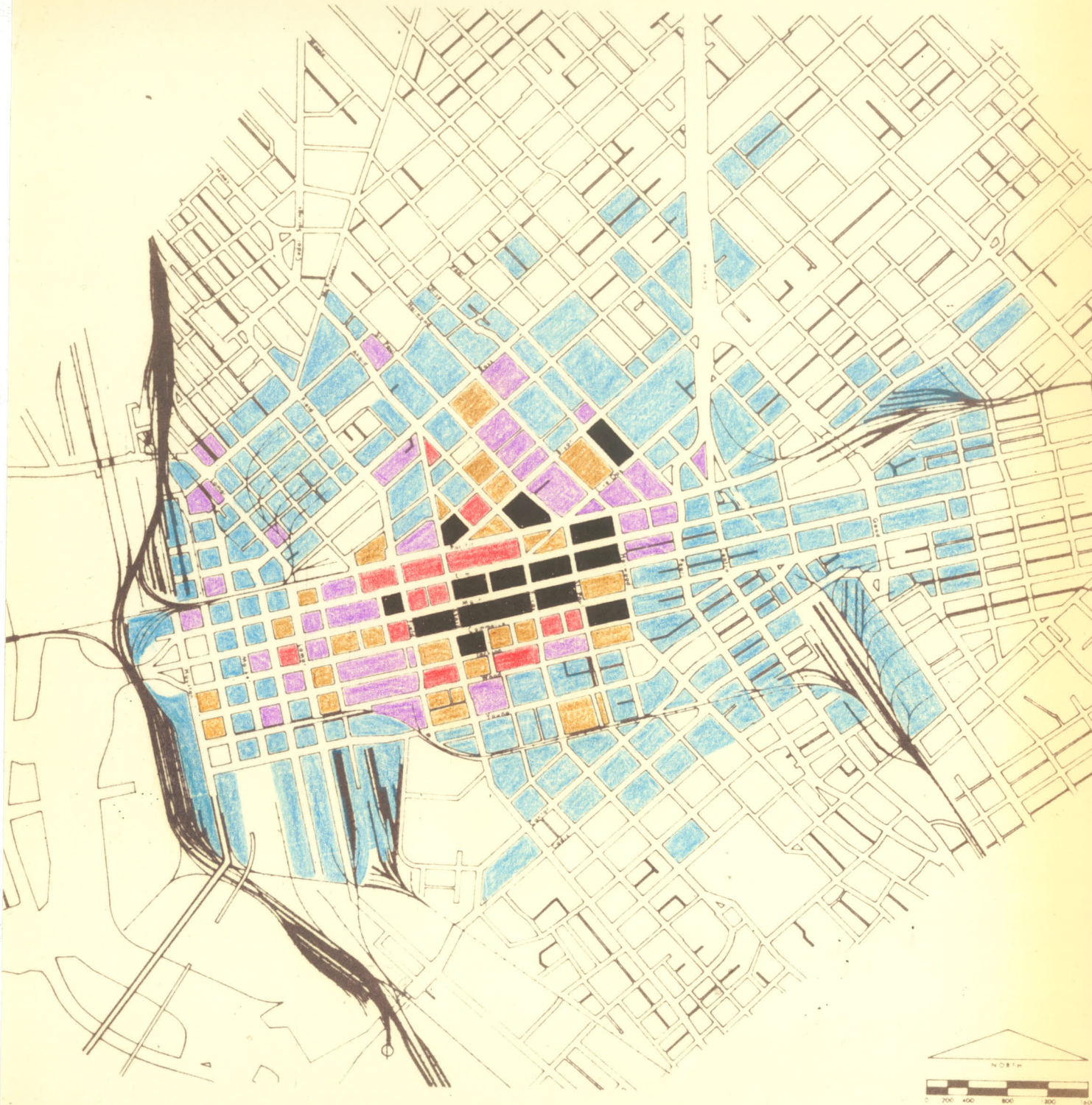


PLATE 7: ASSESSED VALUATION OF PROPERTY

1	over 40.00	5.00-9.99
e	20.00-39.99	1.00-4.99
g	10.00-19.99	under 1.00
e		
n		
d		
	in dollars per square foot	

s tax department
o city of dallas
r
c october
e 1958

PLATE 8: EXISTING DOWNTOWN ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Typical Uses Permitted</u>
A-1 Apartment	Single-family, two-family and multiple-family residences.
A-2 Apartment	Same as in A-1 plus hospitals, boarding houses, hotels and doctors' offices.
LR-3 Local Retail	Retail establishments, offices, commercial parking, garages and other services plus uses permitted in A-2
C-1 Commercial	Commercial uses such as lumber yards, wholesale, heavy services, light manufacturing and storage plus all uses permitted in LR-3.
C-2 Commercial	All uses permitted in C-1 plus some heavier activities such as breweries, motor freight terminals, bag cleaners, and paint shops.
M-1 Manufacturing	Heavier manufacturing than permitted in C-1 and C-2 such as the manufacture of flour, dyes, hardware, metal products and insecticides. Also includes welding, gasoline storage and cotton ginning.
M-2 Manufacturing	All uses permitted in M-1 except residences plus the heaviest types of industry such as slaughter plants, foundries, forge works, asphalt refining and acid manufacture.

s zoning ordinance
 o
 u city of dallas
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 c 1947
 e amended 1951



PLATE 9: EXISTING ZONING

s zoning ordinance
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 u city of dallas
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





and citizens alike, but its excellent qualities are in opposition to its surroundings. As yet this conflict of maintaining a loosely knit, low density city with a compact, high density center has not been resolved. (See Plate 10.)

The smallest percentage of open space surrounding any one block in the downtown area is approximately 39%. In the older area west of Lamar Street 50% of the land is devoted to open space. Practically all of this open land is used for circulation. The notable exceptions are two small plazas on Houston Street and City Park on South Ervay. (See Plate 11.)

The Dallas downtown street system suffers from the conflicting claims of two of its earliest settlers. The original almost east-west oriented grid extends into a larger grid-iron pattern of streets intersecting at approximately 30°. Pacific Avenue, Elm, Main, and Commerce Streets have eighty feet wide rights-of-way and fifty-two feet wide pavements. The early street pattern west of Lamar also maintains eighty feet wide rights-of-way for all streets. Practically all the remaining streets in the city center are narrower at some point or other. A typical width is fifty feet for the right-of-way and thirty-six feet for the pavement. Since 1875 there has been little change in the circulation system of the urban area which existed at that time. (See Plate



PLATE 10: BUILDING AREA - LAND AREA RATIO

l e g e n d		over 8 to 1		3 to 1- 4 to 1		1 to 1
		5 to 1- 7 to 1		2 to 1		under 1 to 2

s department of
o city planning
u city of dallas
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PLATE 11: PICTURESQUE OPEN SPACE

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■ public

■ semi-public
and private

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department of
city planning
city of dallas
1959

12.)

Much of the vehicular traffic within the downtown area is through traffic. In September, 1958, a survey conducted by the Dallas City Planning and Traffic Control Departments revealed that during a twelve hour period 78,518 automobiles, 58% of the total number, and 20,107 trucks, 70% of that total, passed through the central business district destined elsewhere.³ (See Plate 13.) This alien function places an extremely heavy burden upon the downtown streets. To accommodate this traffic, on-street parking and truck loading is generally prohibited between seven o'clock and nine o'clock in the morning or from four-thirty to six in the evening.

Since 1946 the maximum number of persons accumulated in the downtown area has increased from less than 75,000 to almost 110,000.⁴ The fourteen feet wide sidewalks on the east-west streets accommodate these people adequately most of the time. The north-south streets which are much farther apart have sidewalks about half this width. It is common to see people walking in the gutters of these streets.

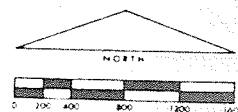
Transit riding to the central business district has declined sharply since 1946. 3582 buses and trolleys now

3 Ibid., p. 68.

4 Ibid., Plate 21, p. 65.



PLATE 12: STREET CHANGES SINCE 1875



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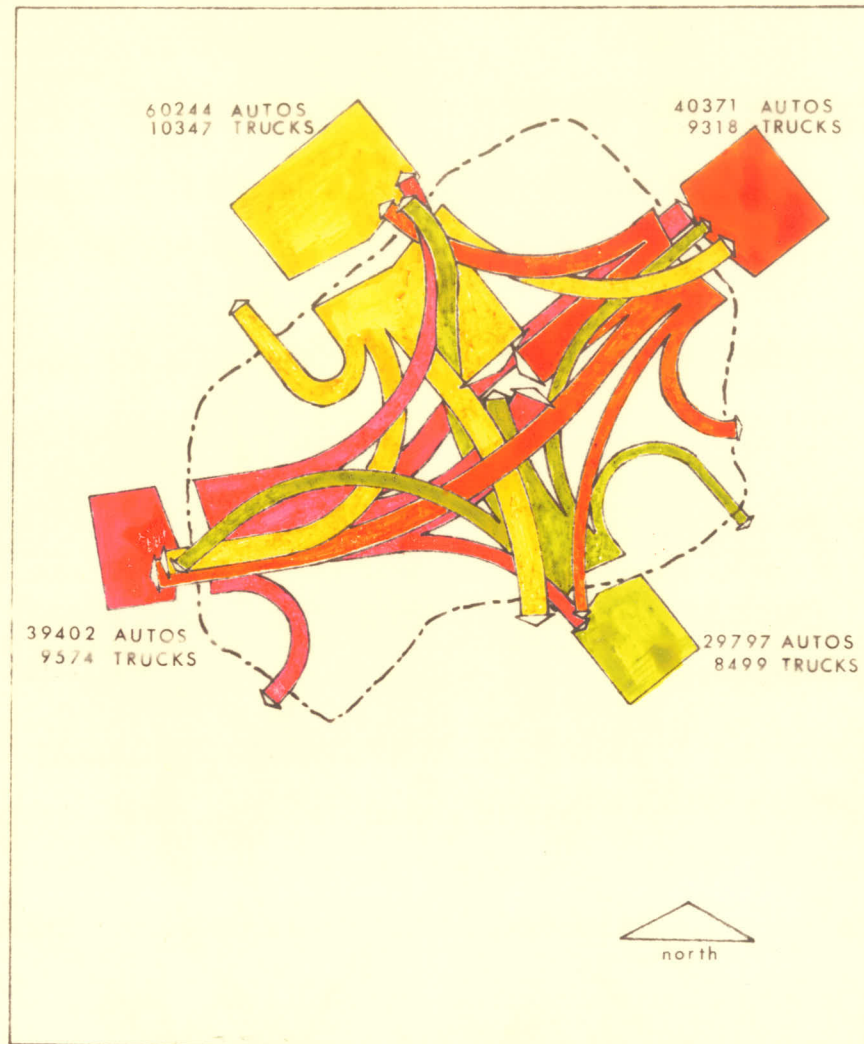


PLATE 13: TRAFFIC DESTINATIONS--24 HOUR PERIOD

s department of
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r city of dallas
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enter the downtown area in one daylight period as compared to 4050 in 1946. The number of passengers entering has decreased from 127,907 to 71,094, a decline of more than 40%. The number of persons entering the city center by automobile has increased 70% during the same period. 85,274 private cars brought 147,215 people downtown in one daylight period in 1946. 139,632 automobiles brought 207,504 people downtown in one daylight period in 1958. 70% of the total number of people entering the central area arrive by car. Only 19% travel by bus. Pedestrians and trucks account for the remainder.⁵

The maximum accumulation of automobiles downtown has increased from less than 13,000 in 1946 to over 38,000 in 1958.⁶ To accommodate the parking of these vehicles there are 26,418 off-street and 1965 on-street parking spaces in the area bounded by Young, Houston, Pacific, Austin, Ross and Harwood. Within the entire central business district there is a total of 58,183 parking spaces of which 9428 are on the streets.⁷ It is anticipated that much of the on-street parking will ultimately be prohibited to allow maximum space for vehicular movement. (See Plate 14.)

5 Ibid., p. 56 and 57.





6 Ibid., p. 63.

7 Ibid., p. 76, 77 and 78.



PLATE 14: OFF STREET PARKING

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	public garages		private garages
	public lots		private lots

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department of
traffic control
city of dallas
1959

CHAPTER III
PROPOSALS FOR THE DALLAS CITY CENTER

POLICY

The purpose of this thesis is to attempt solutions to the problems of deterioration, density and traffic in the central business district of Dallas, Texas. In so doing it is important that an assessment of the value of this type of area be established. The thesis supports the opinion that the centralization of shopping, office space, transient facilities, entertainment and cultural activity is desirable. The basis is on grounds short of proof. However, there are factors which lend support.

An examination of the two contrasting cities, New York and Los Angeles, will reveal that the quality and/or convenience of shopping, transient facilities, entertainment, and cultural activity is far superior in the centralized community. The strong movement toward centralization which took place in Dallas between 1900 and 1930 is evidence of a desire for such which can be attributed to the citizens themselves. Centralized activity became a workable reality through the development of mass transit, a development which would not have occurred without the desire for centralization. Since 1946, even with a sharp decline in the use of the transit system, there has been in Dallas a marked expansion of certain central activities. The desirability of the downtown area as such must, therefore, still exist.

Dallas has a distinguished downtown area worthy of preservation. Present trends in suburban living and travel plus the policies of municipal, state and federal government threaten to extinguish the center's source of life. No one interested party, speculator, or developer is likely to reverse this trend. Action by the people as a community, through their municipal government, can, however, bring about policies which would lend protection to the central business district. The following policies would exercise control over the major problems of the Dallas city center.

The problem of deterioration upon the periphery of the downtown area can be controlled by distinct separation of the retail and office area from the residences and warehouses which produce lower revenues. Ideally this separation should be accomplished by an intervening land use or combination of land uses which will encourage retail and office growth on the interior and discourage it on the exterior. The measure will not eliminate slums within the city. It should, however, deter the speculative holding of poorly improved lands, since the area to be developed as the central city will be more clearly defined. Furthermore, a well co-ordinated city center will encourage the ultimate development of deteriorated land within the center to new or improved uses instead of allowing shifts of the center from the

more expensive old retail and office areas to the less expensive old residential and warehouse areas.

Density is not yet a great problem in downtown Dallas. The traffic difficulties accompanying high density central development can be adequately solved, particularly when the conveniences afforded shoppers and workers in a compact center outweigh some of the inconveniences or expense necessary in travel to and from it. Measures should, nevertheless, be adopted to restrict the increase of the building to land ratio in those areas which have already the highest densities. It is assumed that downtown expansion will take place more vertically than laterally. Yet to exclude the possibility of sizable lateral expansion would be a serious mistake. The boundaries of the city center must either be movable or encompass enough area to accommodate lateral expansion..

The alleviation of traffic congestion in downtown Dallas is one of the most complex and difficult tasks facing the city government. This much is known from past experience. New facilities for automobile traffic to and from the city center encourage additional traffic to such a degree that their capacities are soon exhausted. It appears doubtful that there will ever be sufficient municipal funds to provide convenient and congestion-free motor car access to downtown for all the residents of the Dallas Metropolitan Area. Even if adequate motorways

were provided, so much land area would be required within the city center for rights-of-way and parking space that a great deal of the convenience of centralization would be lost. One of the major tasks, then, is to find a suitable alternative.

Centralization was made fully feasible by the use of rapid transit. This thesis contends that no large established concentration of business and social activities will continue to flourish without tolerable public transportation facilities. Once again a comparison of New York and Los Angeles demonstrates why centralization takes place. The growth of Los Angeles occurred at a time when automobiles had made private transportation just as rapid as local public transit. Because of the development of subways in New York, public transit has always been faster than transportation by private means.

Therefore, for the preservation of the Dallas central business district municipal expenditure for public transit is in order. Considerable funds are now allotted for street improvements, traffic control devices and enforcement of traffic regulations to make driving downtown more convenient to Dallas car owners. The city would fulfill better its democratic function through utilization of a portion of these funds to provide a good transit system for those who do not own cars or

who would own fewer cars if they had an alternate means of transportation.

The Dallas transit system, in order to compete with private transportation, must provide service faster than driving an automobile to town. Mere reduction of fares through subsidy from municipal funds is not likely to influence greatly the commuting public. Transit fares have always been and must continue to be cheaper than driving a car, even discounting investment, insurance, and highway expenses. The Dallas commuter, if his undeniable present preference for private transportation is an indication, is far more interested in comfort, convenience and speed than in cost. If his desire for speed were satisfied; the chances are that, like the New York subway patron, he would be willing to sacrifice some comforts and conveniences.

It is possible at little cost to provide rapid transit service utilizing the fleet of air-conditioned buses presently owned by the Dallas Transit Company. It seems obvious, however, that these buses cannot be expected to operate on the same streets as private transportation and travel faster than the automobiles. There are several long narrow streets leading into the downtown area which are able to move only relatively small amounts of vehicular traffic. If some of these were prohibited to all but bus traffic and if a signal light system were utilized at each intersection of the

necessary cross streets, buses could safely travel at speeds of as much as forty miles per hour. This device would provide adequate transit service to most of the city proper.

But, as New York City clearly indicates, good public transportation alone will not solve traffic problems. The Dallas system of motorways requires reshaping. With the help of United States Government funds freeways which by-pass the downtown area are being built as part of the Interstate Highway System. If the number of cars travelling in the environs of the central business district were to remain constant, the by-pass freeways would accommodate the sixty per cent of traffic travelling through the city center with destination elsewhere. The present downtown street system would be adequate for the remaining forty per cent destined there. However, the six new freeways, either now complete or under construction, which are converging on the city center will attract such a heavy load of traffic that it is hopeless to think that the present downtown street system will serve with any degree of sufficiency.

The only reasonable attitude to take consistent with a policy of preserving the compact, central character of downtown Dallas is one which recognizes that the collection and dispersal of vehicles in one locality has always been and will likely always be a

relatively slow process. An excellent example of this natural occurrence is the fact that, even by our fastest means of air transportation, a hearty percentage of one's time is spent on the airport runways or obtaining access to them. One of the most important considerations for automobiles in the Dallas city center is that those which must necessarily travel slow be separated from those which, because of further destinations, need not reduce speed and would only add to the collection of automobiles in the central business district if they did.

The six freeways converging on the center must interchange traffic in the downtown area. This in itself has a retarding effect upon speeds. It is hereby recommended that the influx of traffic to the central business district be drawn from the freeways at points in advance of the freeway interchange. Likewise, entrances to the super-highway system from the city center should be at the same points. This form of separation of traffic according to origin or destination offers several advantages. The purpose of the Interstate Highway System under construction at great cost to the Federal Government will not be thwarted by the congestion of mostly local traffic. Interaction of movement on the downtown street system will be reduced as the requirement for crossing through-traffic is minimized. Traffic will be facilitated by the more orderly traffic distribution.

The automobiles destined for the center must under most any circumstances utilize the downtown street system. In attempting to reshape the present confused pattern of streets emphasis should not be placed upon providing street area for vast numbers of cars, but upon providing the least number of conflicts to movement. Those areas of downtown which have negligible parking facilities have no requirements for private passenger automobiles at all. Those streets which are not suitable for moving traffic should be reserved solely for service and property access. In so doing many of the intersections, great impediments to traffic movement, can be removed.

The fundamental theory of good downtown street planning is simple. The physical character of a particular street should be such that it attracts automobiles with similar speed requirements. Streets with considerable access to parking facilities should not be thoroughfares. Movement on thoroughfares should not be impeded by traffic desiring to park.

The most logical place for downtown parking is on the periphery. Land values there are low enough to make parking revenue an adequate return on investment. Furthermore, the closer parking facilities are to the freeway exits to the city center, the fewer cars will reach points of directional interchange of traffic.



Since not every driver will enter the center near his final destination, parking can be encouraged on the periphery only if fast bus service is provided from the periphery to the main employment and shopping areas.

In summary the policy for the Dallas Central Business District will discourage deterioration by giving the city center a definite form and control density through the use of building regulations and periodic lateral expansion when necessary. It will minimize traffic problems by encouraging use of public transit and insuring that streets and highways are used for the purposes for which they are best suited.

In addition, some consideration should be given the nearby entertainment and cultural center on the State Fair Grounds. A policy directed toward providing a closer relationship between the city center and Fair Park would have a number of advantages. For example, duplication of services would be avoided, inasmuch as people congregate at Fair Park during hours different from the peak periods downtown; the good transient facilities in the city center would be more convenient to State Fair visitors, and an extension to the downtown area of an existing exhibitional monorail installation on the Fair Grounds might become feasible. It is not anticipated that the relationship between these two centers will become close in the near future,

but a planning policy encouraging the ultimate merger
of the two has more desirable aspects than otherwise.

PROCEDURE

Programming policy requires that each step of the ultimate goal be accomplished at its appropriate time. To make the policy for the Dallas Central Business District effective changes must be made to building regulations, the zoning ordinance, the street and highway system, the transit system, and public parking facilities. This action on the part of the city government will foster changes by private citizens and reassessment of tax values. It is anticipated that some alterations could take place immediately providing that the boundary of the central business district is determined.

As either completed or proposed freeways converging upon the city center will present formidable barriers, it is recommended that Highway 77 act as the western boundary of the city center and Highway 67-80 the southern boundary. Since the most practical way of connecting the two completed sections is either by submerged or by elevated roadway, it is suggested that Highway 75 will present less of a physical barrier and need not act as the entire boundary to the east. Instead, the Good-Latimer Expressway will be the boundary from Bryan Street and Highway 75 to Highway 67-80. The temporary northern boundary will be Continental Avenue, McKinney Avenue, Field Street and Ross Avenue. The northern and

eastern boundaries will be reinforced by large open areas of parking either city owned or encouraged by the availability of rapid transit to the downtown core. The municipally owned parking will be located in the right-of-way of a currently proposed freeway connector to be financed by the city and on government property adjacent to the train terminal. The aforesaid freeway may not be built for some time. Purchase of the property would, however, be far less expensive now than later. Ultimately the connector will act as northern boundary. The eastern boundary should, in contrast, be movable, thus encouraging lateral growth only in the direction of Fair Park.

Within these bounds it is suggested that the following program be established:

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Zoning change

New Building Regulations

Reservation of streets for transit use only

AT COMPLETION OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS IN DOWNTOWN AREA

Changes to Street System

Consolidation of Transportation Terminals

BY TURN OF THE CENTURY

Fusion of Fair Park and Downtown

PROPOSALS

ZONING CHANGES

The classification Local Retail 3 (LR-3) is renamed Retail 3 (R-3). Its permitted uses, height regulations, and area of lot requirements remain the same. The Dallas Central Business District is rezoned as shown in Plate 15.

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Within the area bounded by the East-West Freeway (Highways 67 and 80), Stemmons Freeway (Highway 77), Continental Avenue, McKinney Avenue, Field Street, Ross Avenue, Central Expressway (Highway 75), and Good-Latimer Expressway the following regulations apply:

No building may be built having a floor area to ground area ratio greater than 8, if the entire ground area is to be occupied by a building.

When the entire ground area is not to be occupied by a building, the floor area to ground area ratio of 8 applicable in the preceding regulation may be increased by a percentage equal to the percentage of the total ground area not occupied by a building. No building may be built having a floor area to ground area ratio greater than this adjusted figure.

For purposes of computing the percentage of total ground area not occupied by a building, one-half of an

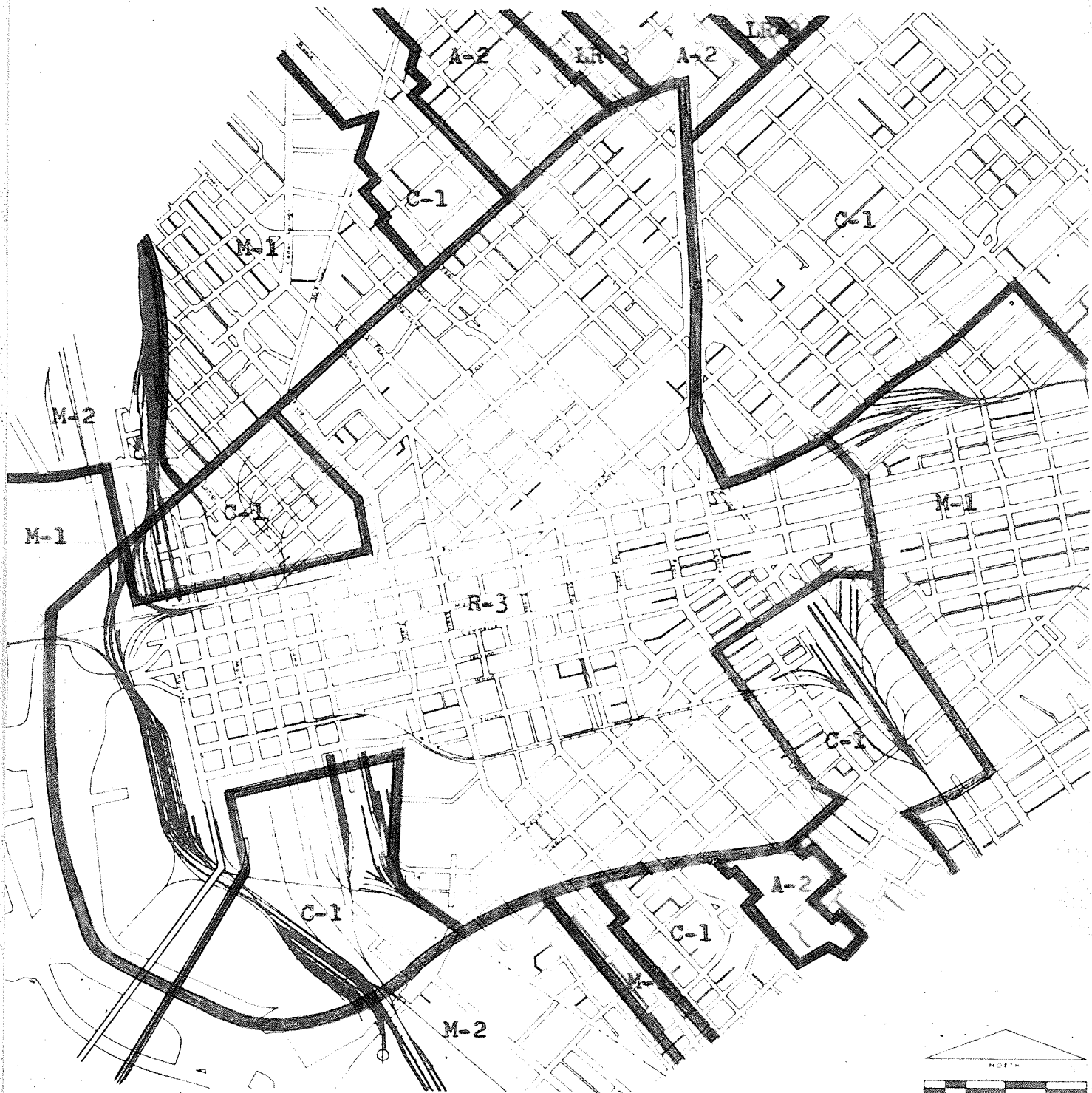


PLATE 15: REZONING

exterior, but covered, area may be considered as not occupied by a building.

No floor of a building may occupy more than half of that area between the street right-of-way and a line formed by the intersection of the top of the floor and a plane extending from the center line of the street right-of-way forming on the building side an angle of sixty degrees on the upper side of a horizontal.

RESERVATION OF STREETS FOR TRANSIT USE ONLY

Those streets indicated on Plate 16 are prohibited to all through traffic except transit vehicles.



PLATE 16: EXCLUSIVE TRANSIT ROUTES



PLATE 17: GUIDE TO STREET CHANGES AT COMPLETION OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM IN DOWNTOWN AREA

- | | | | |
|---|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| l | freeway | streets for private vehicles | traffic control signals |
| e | expressway | streets for transit vehicles | transportation terminal |
| g | tunnel | streets for | right-of-way |
| e | | | |
| n | | | |
| d | | | |

1 mile
minimum
access
interval

1 mile
minimum
access
interval

12' per 10' 12' per
lane lane

FREEWAY
no grade intersections

signal lights required at all
points of intersection

12' per 12' per
lane lane

600' minimum
access
interval 12' per 12' per
lane lane

EXPRESSWAY

private property access 12' per lane

STREET FOR PRIVATE VEHICLES

loading platforms for
non-crossing streets

9' 22' 9'

private property access 9' 22' 9'

STREET FOR TRANSIT VEHICLES

12'

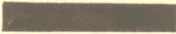
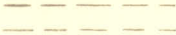



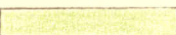





vehicular
access to
private
property
prohibited
during
hours of
peak
pedestrian
traffic

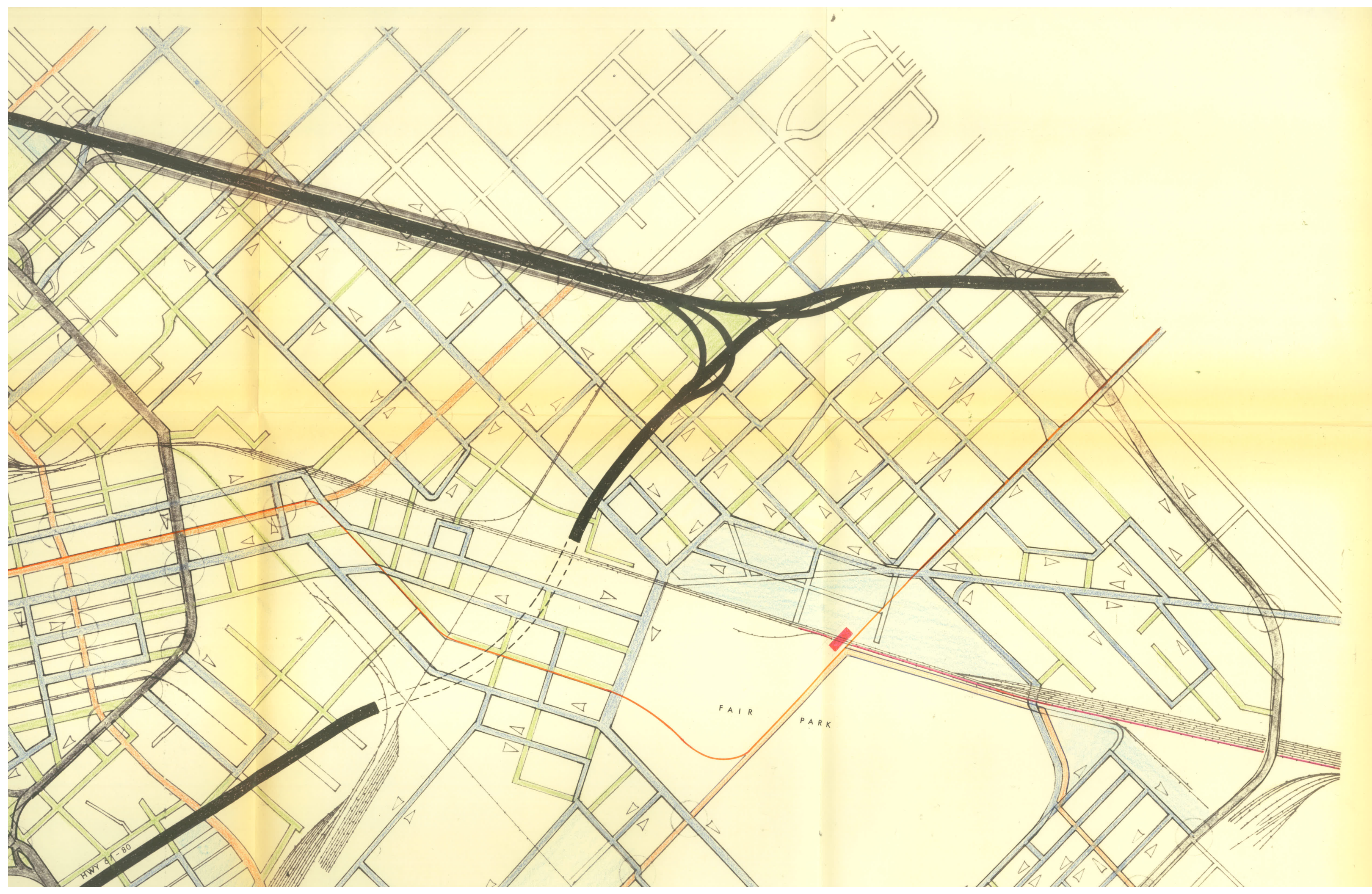
12'
lane

STREET FOR PEDESTRIANS

PLATE 19: GUIDE TO MERGER OF
DOWNTOWN AND FAIR PARK

l e g e n d

-  freeway
 -  tunnel
 -  expressway
 -  streets for private vehicles
 -  streets for transit vehicles
 -  streets for pedestrians
 -  traffic control signals
 -  monorail
 -  commuter trains
 -  transportation terminal
 -  major parking areas
-









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