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A Report Upon Public Buildings and City's Appearance

Harland Bartholomew & Associates

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WEST PALM BEACH

A Report Upon

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND CITY'S APPEARANCE

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

Prepared for

CITY COMMISSION

and the

CITY PLANNING BOARD

By

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES

CITY PLANNERS

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

A Report Upon

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND
CITY'S APPEARANCE

West Palm Beach, Florida

Prepared for

THE CITY COMMISSION
and the
CITY PLANNING BOARD

By
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES,
CITY PLANNERS
Saint Louis, Missouri

November 1952

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

CITY PLANNERS · CIVIL ENGINEERS · LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

317 NORTH ELEVENTH STREET

SAINT LOUIS 1, MISSOURI

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW
RUSSELL H. RILEY
HARRY W. ALEXANDER
ELDRIDGE LOVELACE

DONALD W. HUTTON
DONALD W. McGLASHON
DONALD WOLBRINK

November, 1952

City Commission
City Planning Board
West Palm Beach, Florida

Gentlemen:

In accordance with our agreement, we are pleased to submit herewith a preliminary report upon Public Buildings and the City's Appearance. This is another of the series of reports comprising your comprehensive city plan.

The accompanying report is concerned with the location of the several types of public buildings that will be needed to serve the future citizens. However, schools and parks were discussed in the preceding reports, and these structures are not included in this study. The public buildings will include those of an administrative and cultural nature, such as the courthouse, city hall and library, as well as service buildings such as fire and police stations, public garages and storage areas. With the aid of a long range plan, the new buildings can gradually be located over a long period with the assurance that they will give adequate service to the future population.

During the preparation of this report, we have received the most helpful assistance from local officials, corporations and individuals, all of which is gratefully acknowledged.

Respectfully submitted,

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

By

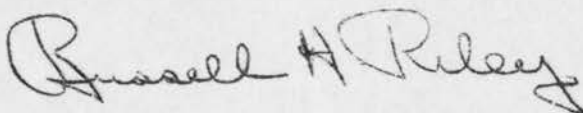


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INTRODUCTION

The conduct of public affairs requires the provision and maintenance of many public buildings. These include structures containing office space and meeting rooms for officials and employees, buildings for the storage and maintenance of equipment, facilities for providing public services, and other structures for cultural and recreational facilities such as libraries, museums, and auditoriums. The provision of the necessary public buildings is particularly difficult in areas that are experiencing a substantial amount of new growth. Likewise, there is a continuous demand for new services or the provision of more existing services which, in turn, requires additional public buildings. Finally, changing conditions frequently make it desirable to relocate existing buildings or the existing structures become obsolete and inadequate over a long period.

Some of the public buildings serve the entire community and should have a convenient central location. These include such structures as the city hall, courthouse and the library. Other public buildings should be located to give regional or neighborhood service and several such buildings will be required in the larger communities. These include such structures as schools, fire stations and branch libraries. Public schools and recreational facilities were discussed in a preceding report and these structures are not an integral part of this study.

All too frequently, little consideration of sound planning principles has been given in the selection of sites for new public buildings. Instead, a location is selected on the basis of immediate need and frequently because of ease or economy in acquisition. Because of the many public buildings that are necessary to serve the city, and especially because of the convenience and relationship that they should bear to existing and future development, it is essential that their location be an integral part of the comprehensive city plan. Many advantages and economies can be obtained if the public buildings are properly related to all the other proposed improvements and to the future trend of growth.

This report is concerned with an analysis of the existing public structures in West Palm Beach, probable future requirements, and with recommendations regarding the location of the future public buildings, including those that should be near the central business district, as well as those that should be located to serve different portions of the future urban development. The final portion of the report contains recommendations regarding policies and steps that should be followed both by the officials and the citizens so that the appearance of West Palm Beach can be gradually, yet substantially, improved.

PART I

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

MAJOR OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

Advantages of Grouping Public Buildings

Many communities have experienced substantial advantages in a sound grouping of certain public buildings. The following are some of the major advantages realized from this practice.

Convenience

Many citizens find it necessary to visit more than one public building in the transaction of business activities. Obviously, there is a pronounced convenience to the citizens if these various buildings and public offices are closely related. There are also various transactions and cooperative activities between the various public offices which can be facilitated if the buildings are close to each other.

Economy and Appearance

Public buildings need open space around them so that they can be seen and appreciated. If the structures are grouped around a common open space, less acreage is required and economy is realized in providing an adequate setting. Likewise, economies can be obtained in maintaining and servicing the several grouped structures, which is not possible if they are located on widely scattered sites.

Influence Upon Business District

The central business district is comparatively the most valuable section of the entire city. The preservation of this area and its high value is a major objective of all planning programs. The scattering of individual public buildings throughout the business district can adversely affect the value of certain blocks for retail and commercial purposes. On the other hand, a properly located public building group can exert a major influence upon securing the proper trend and direction of growth in the area and upon stabilizing property uses and values therein.

Desirable Location of a Public Building Group

The following principles should be approached as closely as existing conditions permit in selecting a location for a public building group near the central business district.

Relation to Business District

The public building group should be adjacent to, but not within, the central shopping center. Here is found the largest concentration of people during the business day and many persons who visit the business district to shop will also find it convenient to transact some public business. In selecting a location adjacent to the business district, serious consideration should be given to the probable future direction of growth of this valuable center

and the location should not interfere with the logical, even though gradual, expansion.

Accessibility

The building group should adjoin important major streets so that it will be readily accessible to the people who visit it and also so it can be viewed by the many citizens who may visit it only very infrequently. Accessibility to good transit lines is also an important consideration. This is another reason why location adjacent to the business district is important, for here are found the major concentrations of major streets and transit routes.

Size of Site

The site should be adequate to accommodate all or at least the large majority of the administrative type of public buildings that will be needed during the period covered by the plan. Likewise, there should be adequate area to provide for off-street parking as well as for lawns and planting. The latter is particularly important in a community where tourists have such a major influence upon the economy.

The location and type of surrounding structures is also an important factor. Obviously, industries do not provide a good environment for an attractive group of public buildings. On the other hand, good commercial development, including hotels, and public and semi-public

uses such as churches and schools enhance, rather than detract from, public buildings.

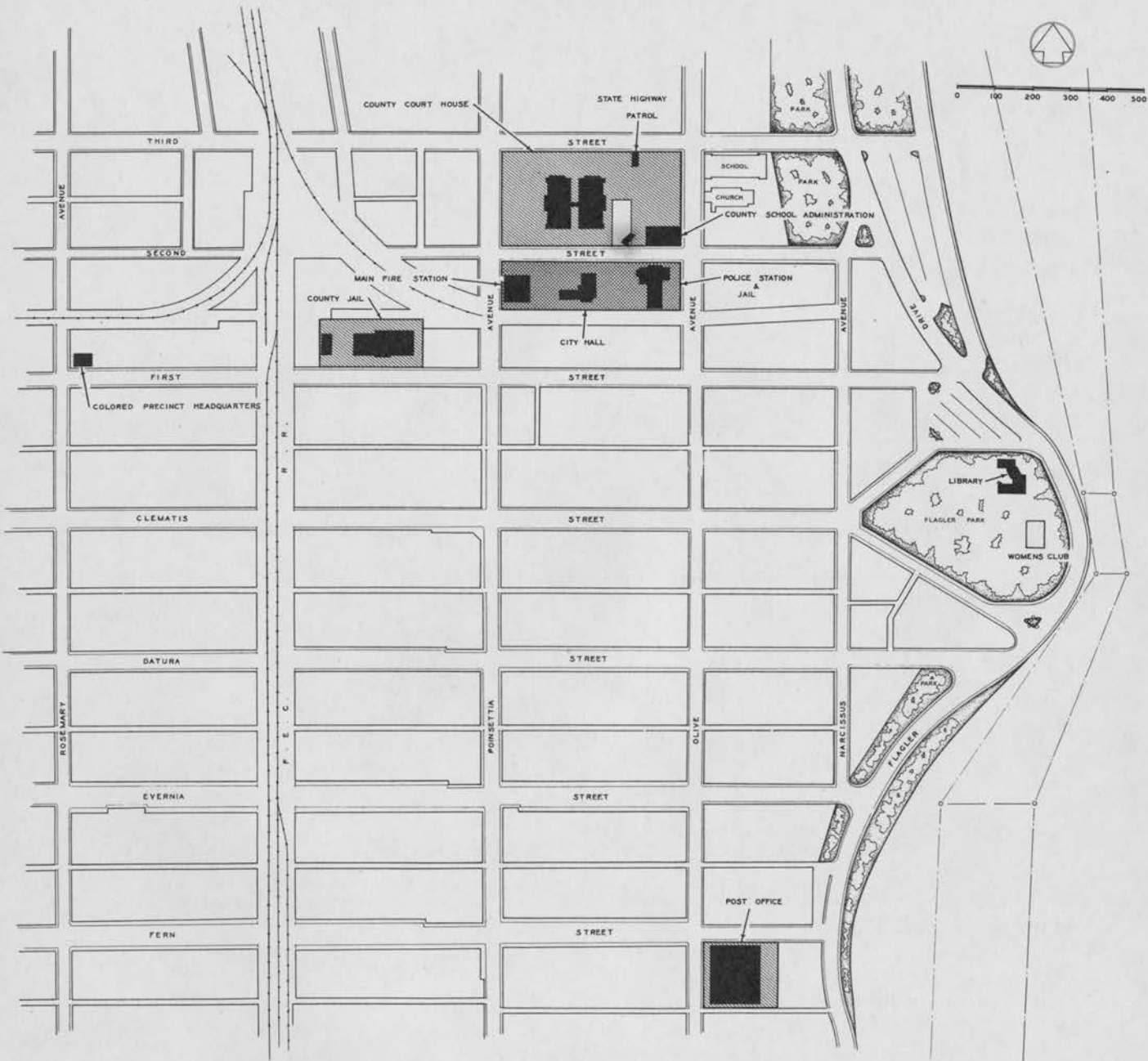
The item of cost is always an important factor in considering public improvements. However, the cost of site is usually only a small portion of the total cost of development and the matter of location is far more important than the original site cost.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA

PREPARED FOR
CITY COMMISSION
CITY PLANNING BOARD

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNERS
ST. LOUIS, MO.



EXISTING PUBLIC BUILDINGS

LEGEND

-  PUBLIC BUILDINGS
-  PUBLIC LAND AROUND BUILDINGS
-  PUBLIC PARKS
-  SEMI PUBLIC BUILDINGS

EXISTING PUBLIC BUILDINGS

This section is concerned with the location of public buildings throughout the city, their existing condition and adequacy, and probable future public building needs.

Existing Public Buildings Near Central Business District

Plate*1 shows the location of major public buildings within or near the central business district. It includes the administrative and cultural structures, as well as some that are more of the service type. The plate also shows the location of public park areas and the more important public and semi-public uses whenever they are near existing public buildings.

A number of the more important public structures are concentrated within the one and one-half blocks lying between Poinsettia and Olive south of Third Street. These include the county courthouse, the county school administration building, the city hall and the city police station and jail. The central fire station is also located in this area. In an adjacent block is located the new county jail and a small unit of the County Health Department.

Other buildings within or near the central business district are the library located in Flagler Park, and the colored police building located on First Street just east of Rosemary. The post office is located on South Olive at Fern and is a considerable distance from any of the other public structures.

The present concentration of public buildings south of Third Street is rather unusual for a city the size of West Palm Beach, for it is seldom that so many public buildings are found in such close proximity to each other. Further, this location is very well related to the central area, being at the edge of the shopping center and bounded by two of the city's most important major thoroughfares. Likewise, preceding phases of the master plan indicated little northward expansion of the business district and instead, the probable future trend of growth was toward the south. Consequently, the location is one which should have maximum benefits to the area, for it will tend to stabilize commercial values and not interfere with future growth. In addition, the surrounding development comprising commercial, residential and some public and semi-public uses provides a desirable environment for a grouping of public buildings. Thus, the location of the public building group conforms to many of the desirable principles that should be adhered to in locating future public structures.

The major disadvantage of the present grouping is the lack of lawns and planting, particularly around the city structures. The area south of Second Street now has rather a barren appearance, and while some area should be used for off-street parking, additional trees and shrubs are seriously needed. This is a particularly important consideration in southern cities and especially in a city where there are so many tourists and visitors.

Condition of Buildings and Future Needs

Following is a brief summary of the character and condition of the existing buildings, within and near the main business district, as well as comments regarding probable future needs.

County Courthouse

The county courthouse is a large structure that was erected about 1915. The building is in good structural condition and has been satisfactorily maintained. The major difficulty is that the size and arrangement of rooms does not provide for efficient use of space. The building has ample open space around it and is well related to the business district. The single small lot in the block which is privately owned should be acquired by the county.

Steps are already being taken to provide an additional story over the east half of the courthouse. This addition can be constructed without interfering with the present use of the building. Upon its completion, it could be occupied by courtrooms and allied activities so that the floors immediately below could be remodeled for more modern office space and storage area.

Because of the present condition and size of the building, there is no reason why it cannot gradually be remodeled for efficient use. With proper maintenance it can accommodate the administrative offices of the County for many years in the future.

County School Building

The county school building is an attractive structure that is also in good condition and appears to have adequate area for accommodating the school administrative staff for many years in the future. Its location immediately adjacent to the property line is somewhat unfortunate, but the building can be, and undoubtedly will continue to be, used for many years.

City Hall

The present city hall was erected in 1947 and consequently is of good construction and in excellent condition. The present building was erected as the first portion of a much larger structure and the present facilities are inadequate for current needs. In fact, only a portion of the administrative offices are accommodated in this building and some of the space is not efficiently arranged for present use. The plans for the complete structure provide for a total of 19,348 square feet of office space, in contrast to the 7,732 square feet now available. The completion of the balance of the proposed building will be needed within the near future.

City Police Station and Jail

The present police station and jail, as well as the meeting room for the City Commissioners, is located in a separate structure lying immediately east of the city hall. The building was originally erected as a servicemen's center in 1943. While it is in satisfactory structural condition, the design is not satisfactory for use by administrative offices. Consequently, the present facilities should eventually be replaced, and there is no apparent reason why the building should be continued for a long period.

The colored police headquarters are in an adequate building and well located for present use. The building should serve its present purpose for a long period, but a location farther to the west may be desirable whenever portions of the Westward Expansion Area are made available for non-white families.

Central Fire Station

The central fire station was erected in 1947 and is in excellent condition and of good construction. The building is well located for the present service, although a more detailed discussion of the existing fire protection will be contained in a later section of this report. A large amount of fire fighting apparatus is now accommodated in this building and one of the major needs is for repair space. It is currently intended that this be provided on the south side of the building where space is already available.

County Jail

This is a new building that is in excellent condition and of good construction. Not all the interior has been completed, as there is no immediate need for same. Consequently, the building is adequate for all conceivable future needs during the period covered by the city plan. Further, it is conveniently related to the courthouse.

A small structure containing one of the units of the County Health Department is located immediately west of the jail. This is also a new building in excellent condition, and it is probable that the structure will be enlarged to accommodate additional health facilities in the future.

Library

The present library was erected in 1924 as a memorial to the soldiers in World War I. One wing was added at a later date. The building is an attractive structure and is in good condition at the present time. The major need is for additional stack space which can probably be most effectively provided by the use of some of the courtyard area. However, the building is not adaptable for much additional expansion and although it can serve for many years with the additional stack space, it will eventually have to be replaced. Further, the Park and Recreation Report

indicated the necessity of eventually removing the library and Women's Building from Flagler Park and authorizing the entire area for more intensive recreational use and particularly for the winter visitors.

Post Office

The present post office was erected in 1937 and is in excellent condition. There is now some congestion in the mail handling, particularly in the parcel post facilities. If another structure could be made available to accommodate parcel post, the present post office would be adequate for a long period. Further, additional space for federal offices could be provided by the addition of an extra story to the present structure.

One of the major difficulties of the present location is the lack of adequate parking facilities along congested Olive Street. Efforts should be made to provide these in accordance with the recommendations made in the report upon major streets and parking. With these facilities and with the provision of new facilities for handling all parcel post, the present post office should be adequate for many years and a new structure should not be considered in this program.

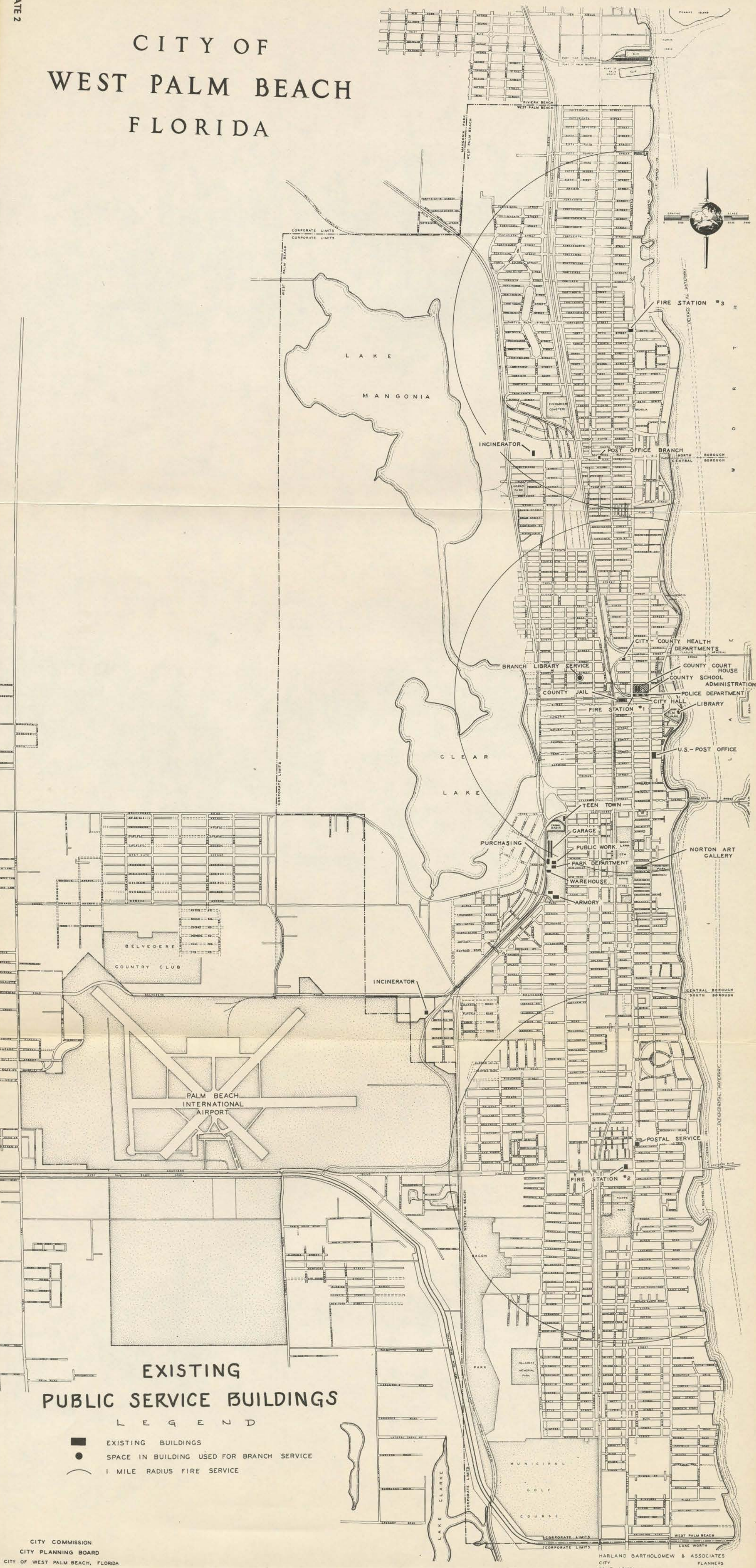
Auditorium

The city does not have a separate building serving as an auditorium and there has been much discussion locally regarding the erection of such a structure. Currently, the facilities at the high school, the Norton Gallery and the Armory, are utilized for plays, musicals and similar entertainment and for some of the larger meetings. Provision for an auditorium must be considered in any long range plan for the development of public buildings in the Palm Beach Area.

Summary of Future Needs

A resume of the above discussion of existing public buildings indicates that both the courthouse and the county jail either are, or can easily be made, adequate to serve local needs during the period covered by the plan. The county school building also appears to be adequate for a long time, although it may eventually be reconstructed. The present city hall is well located and in good condition, but it should be enlarged within the near future. Likewise, the present post office is well located, is in good condition, and by provision of convenient off-street parking and the relocation of the parcel post facilities, this structure can be enlarged so that it will serve during the period covered by the plan.

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA



EXISTING PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDINGS LEGEND

- EXISTING BUILDINGS
- SPACE IN BUILDING USED FOR BRANCH SERVICE
- 1 MILE RADIUS FIRE SERVICE

The present library will eventually have to be reconstructed, and at that time should be removed to a new location. Similarly, the city police station and jail should be relocated during the period covered by the plan. The public auditorium is another structure that must be considered in a long range plan for public buildings in the Palm Beach area. The existing buildings that will serve for some time, together with those that will be needed in the future, indicate that there is an excellent opportunity for the development of an impressive and efficient group of public structures near the central business district.

Existing Public Service Buildings

Plate 2 graphically shows the general location and extent of all of the public buildings within the city of West Palm Beach, including those in the central business district which were discussed in connection with Plate 1. Following is a brief summary of these additional structures.

City-County Health Departments

The majority of the City-County Health Departments are located just beyond the central business district on Fifth Street near the Florida East Coast passenger station. This is a comparatively old building and is now intensively used. The majority of the space is occupied by County Health Department offices and the city facilities are

becoming more and more crowded. It is expected that the city may eventually have to vacate this structure, and it is possible that its health services can be accommodated in the enlarged city hall. Further, since the building is older, it is probable that it should be abandoned and complete new facilities be provided elsewhere to accommodate the County Health Department.

Additional City Offices

Because of the limited facilities in the city hall, a number of city departments are forced to find space in other buildings. Several of these, including the departments of public works, inspection, purchasing, parks, electricity and the like, are located in several old buildings near the center of Howard Park. The large majority of these buildings are of frame construction and are not in good condition. Neither are they efficiently arranged for administrative purposes. Further, there is such an increasing need for recreational activities and uses in the park that practically all of these older structures should eventually be removed and the offices located in the enlarged city hall where they would be much more convenient to the public and where closer coordination and cooperation could be effected between the city departments.

City Garage, Storage and Warehouses

The city garage and major service areas are also located along the west side of Howard Park. The majority of these facilities are also old and are not designed to afford maximum efficiency and convenience. A number of these structures will have to be removed whenever Parker Avenue is extended northward along the west side of the park to connect with Tamarind at Okeechobee Road. Consequently, the study of public buildings should include recommendations regarding a new location for the city service and storage facilities.

Armory

The present armory is in good condition and it appears to be adequate for future needs. It, together with the nearby garage, is located in the southern portion of Howard Park. Fortunately, the location is at the extreme end, where there is a minimum of interference with recreational uses. Further, since the armory is sometimes used for public meetings and activities, it is possible that this use might be somewhat expanded and consequently the location appears to be satisfactory for the future.

Norton Art Gallery

The Norton Art Gallery is a very attractive structure and provides many advantages to the local community. The area is owned and maintained by the city, but the building is owned and administered by the Palm Beach Art League.

It is doubtful that any expansion will be needed for a long time, but area is available, enabling enlargement if it becomes necessary. Some additional off-street parking facilities should be provided east of Olive Street, but this must be done with considerable care so as not to seriously disturb the park and the views to Lake Worth.

Branch Facilities

The Post Office Department has two local branches-- one in the northern and one in the southern portion of the city. These are now logically located and additional branch post offices may be necessary in the future as additional urban growth occurs.

There is also one branch library located in the non-white residential district which gives good service and is comparatively well patronized. It is possible that additional branch libraries may be needed in the future, and serious consideration should be given to locating such facilities in some of the newer elementary schools.

Teen Town

This is a comparatively new structure that was erected by the local Junior Chamber of Commerce. It has recently been turned over to the city and is now being utilized in conjunction with the local recreational program. It is an excellent building that can serve many useful purposes.

The School and Recreation Report recommended the construction of a new elementary school in this general location, and the building might be used in conjunction with the school program, or it might conceivably be used for school purposes.

Fire Stations

The city now has three fire stations, the central one having been discussed in connection with Plate 1. One of the remaining two serves the southern, and the other the northern portion of the city. All of the buildings are comparatively new, in excellent condition, and are well located. A one-mile radius around the stations shows that the majority of the development is within a very reasonable distance of the station, since a two-mile radius of service is not unusual in residential areas. One of the major difficulties regarding the location of the fire stations is that none of them are west of the Florida East Coast Railroad, and as a result, it is possible that there will be serious delays occasioned by the train movement over this railroad. The Underwriters have already recommended the development of at least one additional station west of the tracks, to insure improved protection in the surrounding development.

Incinerators

Two incinerators are shown on the plate, although neither of these are now being utilized. Currently, garbage and trash are being disposed of by land fill methods in the area south of Belvedere Road and east of the Airport. A more thorough discussion of the garbage and refuse problem is contained in a later section of this report.

Summary and Needs

A number of the existing city departments are located in outlying structures which should eventually be removed. Most of these departments should be accommodated in the enlarged city hall. Likewise, most of the city service and storage facilities should be removed in the near future and relocated in another section of the city.

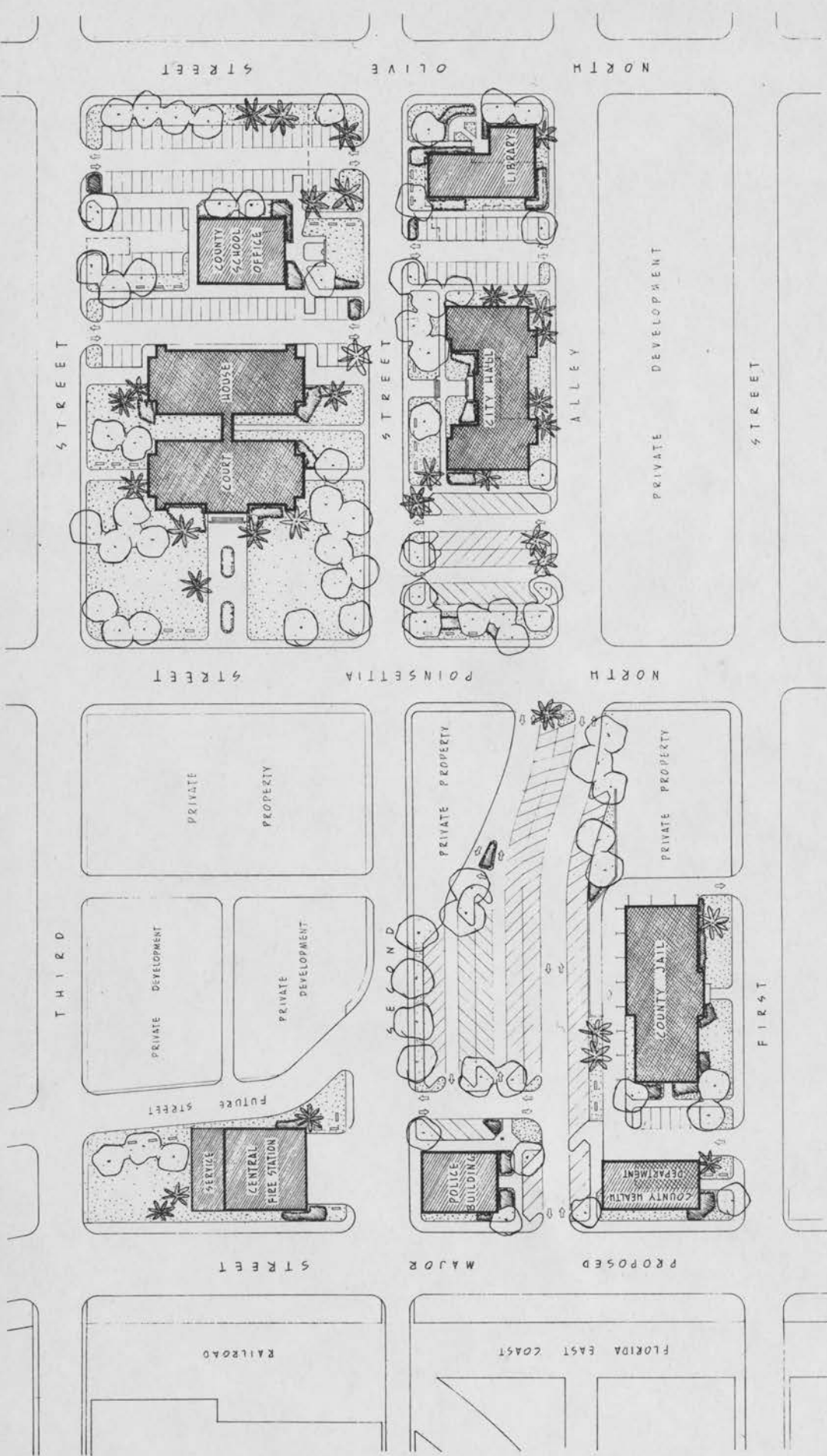
The present art gallery and the armory can be continued in their present location during the period covered by this plan. Additional branch post offices and libraries will probably be required in the future, although their locations can be determined as they are needed, rather than to now select specific locations. All of the present fire stations are in excellent condition and are well located to provide fire protection. However, additional fire stations will be needed, particularly as the Westward Expansion Area is developed, and early consideration should be given to the development of a fire station west of the Florida East Coast Railroad.

PROPOSED LOCATION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Proposed Public Buildings Near
Central Business District

Careful consideration was given to possible locations for grouping of public buildings within or near the central business district. There are a minimum of logical locations for these structures. While a location along Lake Worth would have certain aesthetic advantages, most of this frontage could more logically be used for open recreational area rather than public buildings. Certainly no location along the western portion of the business district is desirable, because of the railroad, and as previously indicated, the expansion of the business district will be primarily to the south and therefore it would be difficult to select a location for public structures that might not interfere with the future expansion.

As a result, the only sound location for grouping public buildings is in the vicinity of the structures now located south of Third Street. As indicated, this site satisfactorily meets most of the basic principles that should be considered in locating centralized public structures. Further, certain of the buildings now located here are entirely adequate, with nominal enlargements, for future needs and consequently a substantial amount of the center is already available.



PROPOSED GROUPING OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA

PREPARED FOR
CITY COMMISSION
AND THE
CITY PLANNING BOARD

BUILDINGS TO BE RETAINED

NEW BUILDINGS

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNERS
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

Plate 3 shows a suggested plan for the future development of public buildings in the area south of Third Street and west of Olive. It should be emphasized that this is a long range plan that can be gradually carried out during the next 25 or 30 years, and consequently even though some of the existing structures are expected to continue in their present use and location for a long period, they can eventually be relocated in accordance with the arrangements shown on the plan.

The plan proposes the completion of the city hall in accordance with the plans already available. The building would be located near the center of the one-half block between Olive and Poinsettia. It is also recommended that the present city police station and jail be removed eventually and that this portion of the block be utilized for the new library. Here it would be very convenient to the central business district, yet would be an integral portion of the public building group. The courthouse can be retained in its present location, and, by additions, will serve for many years. Even if the building were to be completely removed and reconstructed, the location in this block would be entirely sound and desirable. In order to provide more open space, and a better relation to other buildings, it is recommended that the school offices eventually be removed and located farther north of Second Street. This would provide ample opportunity for more landscaping and would also afford a better view of the courthouse.

The plan also proposes that the present central fire station be relocated to the west, immediately adjacent to the proposed major street along the east side of the railroad. Here it would have very excellent access to streets so that the equipment could move rapidly and conveniently to any section of the city. The building should be set back of the street so that equipment could be treated without any interference with movements along the thoroughfares. It is recommended that a new police station be located south of Second Street which should place these protective facilities in close relationship to each other and yet away from the administrative buildings.

The present county jail will be continued and should adequately serve the West Palm Beach area for many years. Since additional facilities will be needed for the health departments, these could logically be located west of the jail by enlarging the present small structure to accommodate all health facilities in one location.

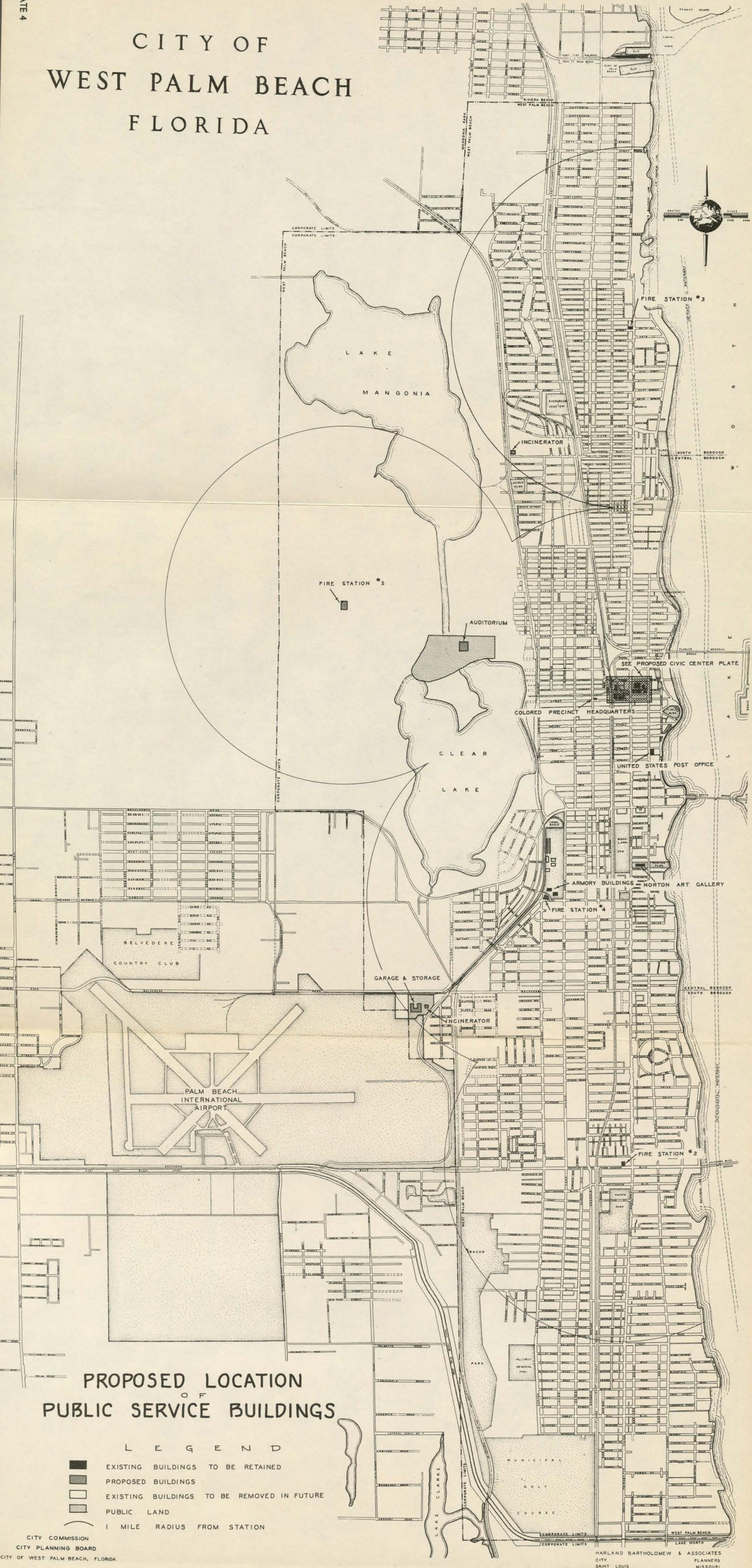
A substantial amount of off-street parking is proposed with some 60 spaces being available on the city hall block and approximately 100 on the courthouse block. These should be adequate for employees and persons visiting this center and at the same time would probably accommodate some of the shoppers' cars. It should be noted, however, that with parking becoming so increasingly important, the

central fire station will eventually have to be removed to provide the spaces needed in the city hall block. The plan also shows a large parking area just west of Poinsettia which was proposed in the off-street parking plan and which would also conveniently serve the area.

The parking areas are well screened with trees and shrubs and there would be some opportunity for benches and passive recreation in the surrounding lawns. Ample planting of trees, shrubs and lawns are proposed throughout the area so that the entire development would have an attractive setting and a pleasing appearance. This is an extremely important requirement in a resort community and can afford many advantages in the future. Lack of adequate planting around the present public structures is a major defect. It is possible that some of the lawn west of the courthouse may be needed for off-street parking, but this could also be designed and planted so as not to detract from the development.

One of the major advantages of a public grouping in this location is that the large majority of the property is already publicly owned and the development can be gradually carried out over a long period.

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA



Other Buildings

As previously indicated, the post office should remain in its present location, as it is well related to the existing and future business district. However, additional parking space should be provided and one of the most feasible locations is in the area immediately south of the present site. An additional story will probably be needed on this structure to serve future office needs, and separate facilities should be provided for handling of parcel post. The structure that accommodates the parcel post facilities should logically be located near the railroad in order to reduce trucking operations. Inasmuch as a previous report recommended the operation of all passenger trains over the Sea Board Railroad, the new parcel post building should logically adjoin this railroad rather than the Florida East Coast.

Proposed Location of Public Service Buildings

Plate 4 shows the suggested location of the other public buildings that will eventually be needed to serve the future population. The majority of these buildings are of the service type, such as fire stations, garages and the like. Following is a brief discussion of the several proposals.

Armory

While the Armory is located in Howard Park, it is at the extreme southern end and does not interfere with recreational activities. Further, it could continue to be used for certain public functions and fortunately is served by a substantial amount of parking space.

Norton Art Gallery

This structure has an excellent setting and should continue in its present location.

Auditorium

There has been much local discussion regarding the need for, and the possibilities of, developing a large auditorium which would accommodate conventions, local meetings and the various activities of the winter visitors. Such a structure is undoubtedly desirable, but it would require a substantial expenditure, both for construction and for maintenance and operation. With the city needing so many different types of improvements, the financing of an auditorium requires special consideration. However, the major concern of the city plan is the location of the auditorium rather than its financing.

An auditorium should normally be as close to the central business district as possible, because here are located the hotels as well as most of the transit routes and important major streets. There is no single location

in West Palm Beach that satisfactorily meets these requirements. The acquisition of one or more blocks near the business district would be extremely costly, and as recommended in the Recreation Report, the building should not be located in the proposed park along Flagler Drive.

The plan for the Westward Expansion Area proposed that the auditorium be developed along the north shore of Clear Lake. Here it would be located in a large park area containing more than 50 acres. This would afford an excellent setting and provide unlimited opportunities for off-street parking. Further, it is proposed that an outdoor swimming pool and other recreational facilities be provided adjacent to the auditorium so that an outstanding variety of activities would be available in this location. In addition, there could be an unusually pleasing landscaped treatment.

While the auditorium would be some distance from the present central business district, it would be in close proximity to the shopping center proposed in the Westward Expansion Area. Further, it would be immediately adjacent to a very important major street and would also be accessible to several of the transit routes that would be necessary to serve the new development. The location affords unusual opportunities and advantages that are not frequently found in other cities of similar size.

If, for any unexpected reason, the site does not become available, the only alternate location that would offer certain possibilities is the block bounded by Clematis, Sapodilla, Datura and Tamarind. This block is now largely vacant and the city already owns several lots. The entire block would be needed to accommodate the building and the off-street parking facilities, and even then there would be inadequate space for proper lawns and planting. Further, it could not accommodate the many related outdoor facilities that could be developed on the site north of Clear Lake.

Garage and Storage Facilities

There are several city buildings now located in Howard Park that should eventually be removed. Practically all of these are old structures and are not efficient for present operation. A number of these buildings will be affected by the extension of Parker Avenue northward along the west side of the park.

The administrative offices that are now located in the park should be moved to the city hall whenever it is enlarged. The other buildings, including the garage, storage and service structures should be relocated in the area now owned by the city along the south side of Belvedere at the northeast corner of the Airport. This area is now being used for sanitary fill. The location is very sound

for garage and storage facilities in that it would not adversely affect surrounding development, and is well related to the future population. It would be especially convenient and accessible to the urban growth that should occur in the Westward Expansion Area. The site is adequate for all needed expansion of these facilities and has the important advantage of having access to a railroad spur so that heavy materials could easily be delivered to the storage yard. Since the area is now almost completely filled, it could be made available within the near future for its proposed use.

Fire Stations

The eventual relocation of the central fire station to a site just east of the Florida East Coast Railroad was discussed in connection with Plate 3, but the building will probably remain in its present location for many years. The existing fire stations Number 2 and Number 3 are in good condition and are well located to serve both existing and probable future needs.

In order to conform to the recommendations of the Fire Underwriters, it is recommended that the next fire station constructed in the city be located in the triangular area at the southwest corner of Howard Park. This property is not now used for any purpose and is not well adapted for recreational activities. It is quite adequate to

accommodate a modern fire station and there would be ample lawn for landscaping. Further, the site would be available to the proposed Parker Avenue major street and thus would have convenient accessibility to the north and south.

This proposed location lies between the two railroads and thus gives the development within this general location assurance of protection without any interference from train operation. The location would be convenient to the southern portion of the Westward Expansion Area and likewise could be used in conjunction with Station Number 2 to serve the extreme southern portion of the city. It should be noted that whenever the recommendations contained in the Railroad Report are carried out, namely, the operation of through trains over the Sea Board Railroad, the potentialities of delays of the fire apparatus at the crossing of the Florida East Coast will not present any serious problem.

A fifth fire station will eventually be necessary to serve the urban development in the Westward Expansion Area. This should be located near the main business district so that it can readily serve the more intensively used portions, such as the commercial and multiple dwelling districts. The outlying portions of this new urban development would still be within a two-mile radius of this new station and

since the entire area would be adequately served by major streets, ample protection would be afforded by Station Number 5. While the plan shows a one-mile radius around all of the existing and proposed fire stations, a two-mile service radius is not unreasonable for single-family development, and thus the entire future urban development would be reasonably accessible to the proposed system of fire stations.

Garbage and Trash Disposal

The plate shows the location of the city's two incinerators, neither of which are now in use. Currently, garbage and trash are being disposed of by land fill methods in the area south of Belvedere which is to be used for the future garage and storage facilities, and some material is being placed in the low portions of Bacon Park. The area south of Belvedere is almost completely filled and dumping can continue here for only a matter of a few months. Likewise, the fill will soon be complete in Bacon Park. Consequently, the city will soon be confronted with a major problem in determining how it will dispose of its garbage and trash.

The disposal of garbage and trash by the land fill method, which normally involves the excavation of a trench, the placing of the garbage and trash therein, and then covering the fill with a layer of dirt, is becoming

increasingly popular throughout the country. One of the major advantages is the economy that accrues from this type of disposal. Unfortunately, however, soil conditions in the West Palm Beach area are not conducive to this type of operation. The water level is too close to the surface and experience has revealed that the placing of the fill in water, even though it may receive some cover, is not satisfactory.

The only lands that would be satisfactory for sanitary fill are the shell pits that are located a substantial distance west of the city or the acquisition of higher land far to the west where the refuse could be hauled. This has two major disadvantages. One is that an unusually long distance would be travelled to haul the garbage and trash, which would involve the acquisition of a substantial amount of new equipment and high hauling costs. These would largely offset any economies that could be achieved from land fill. The second disadvantage is that so much residential development is occurring west of Military Trail and will probably continue to extend further westward. Even though it is not a desirable or a sound type of growth, there would be continuous objections from the home owners about the nuisances created by the fill, particularly because of the difficulties that would be encountered by the high water level.

It appears that disposal of garbage and trash by incinerators is the most desirable procedure for the West Palm Beach area. The modern incinerator has many marked advantages over the type of incinerator the city now uses. They can be so constructed and operated that no odors or nuisances are emitted, and, except for psychological reasons, have little or no adverse influence upon surrounding development. Because of the elongated shape of the urban pattern, two incinerators will be desirable to serve the future city. It is recommended that these new structures be located at approximately the same site as the present incinerators. Here they are readily accessible to the surrounding areas which they would serve and particularly to the future growth that is anticipated in the Westward Expansion Area. Further, they would be located in industrial rather than residential districts and thus would not be immediately adjacent to good residential sections. The incinerators themselves should not be any more objectionable than the industrial uses which surround them.

One unusual major disposal problem that is encountered in Florida cities is the disposal of the palm fronds. These represent a substantial proportion of the trash and do not readily burn. The city now has a machine which shreds this material and the residue therefrom can readily be disposed of. While no data is available, it is believed

that this method is somewhat costly and may not be the most economical solution. Another possible method would be the storing of the material so that it could dry over a period of time and then it could undoubtedly be burned in a modern type of incinerator. Another possibility would be to dispose of this material by the land fill method in a swamp, which would probably not cause the same difficulties that would result from the filling of the swamp with garbage. It is probable that experimenting with all three methods will be necessary in order to arrive at a sound and satisfactory conclusion.

PART II

APPEARANCE OF THE CITY

GENERAL PROBLEM

Most American cities contain some or many unattractive sections that are not conducive to good urban living. Among the major reasons for this unfortunate condition is the fact that most cities grew so rapidly that expenditure and attention was devoted to the provision of essential facilities rather than to the appearance thereof. Many people are also unconcerned about the appearance of cities and are more concerned with securing new growth, irrespective of its type of character. A large number of persons are, however, becoming more concerned about the appearance of their cities because they realize its importance in providing good living conditions and that it is a factor in attracting future growth. Certainly this condition applies to Florida cities such as West Palm Beach, because the city's appearance has a major influence upon attracting tourists and visitors.

The preceding phases of the city plan have contained recommendations whereby the city can gradually become more efficient and convenient as a place in which to live and work. As these improvements are carried out, they should result in improved appearance. However, certain additional steps should be taken to develop an attractive community that can successfully compete with other urban areas.

The responsibility for improving the appearance of cities rests upon both public agencies and individual citizens. It is important that the public agencies assume leadership in these efforts, but since a large portion is developed and maintained by private enterprise, it is evident that all citizens must participate actively therein. Following are some of the more important steps that should be taken by both groups.

Public Buildings and Areas

Public Buildings

The preceding section of this report contains recommendations regarding the development of several public buildings in the city. Of particular importance is the grouping of public buildings proposed north of the central business district. The plan for this area indicates that extensive lawns and planting should be provided around the several structures which should be an important asset to the city.

Streets and Appurtenances

The local street system occupies a substantial portion of the total developed area within West Palm Beach. Many of the older and more intensively used streets have a good pavement, but there are also many residential districts where paving is entirely inadequate. The disposal

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA

ADVERTISING SIGNS



TOO MANY SIGNS DETRACT FROM THE APPEARANCE AND LOSE THEIR ECONOMIC VALUE.



ABSENCE OF HANGING SIGNS ADD GREATLY TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE MAIN BUSINESS STREET.

POLES AND WIRES



THESE POLES ARE UNSIGHTLY AND THERE IS A LACK OF GOOD STREET PLANTING.



THE POLES, SIGNS AND LACK OF STREET TREES DO NOT PROVIDE AN INVITING ENTRANCE TO WEST PALM BEACH.

RESIDENTIAL STREETS



ATTRACTIVE LAWNS AND PLANTING, AND WELL MAINTAINED STREETS AND WALKS PROVIDE GOOD RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES.



AN ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL STREET FREE OF POLES AND WITH ATTRACTIVE PLANTING.

VIEWS IN WEST PALM BEACH

of storm water presents difficult local problems and more curbs and gutters are desirable. The adoption and strict enforcement of the proposed subdivision regulations should be important factors in insuring a satisfactory and desirable standard of street improvements in future development. The lower pictures on Plate 5 show the attractive improvement of some of the local residential streets.

Street Signs and Markers

Street names should be available at each intersection on a durable and uniform type of street sign that can readily be seen from moving automobiles. In addition, traffic directional and control signs should be provided in adequate numbers. These should also be of a uniform type throughout the city.

Street Lights

Adequate street lights are particularly important in urban areas. They mean safety for the motorist and also for the pedestrian and home owner. The central and northern portions of West Palm Beach are now fairly well provided with a parkway, or whiteway, type of pole and the majority of this system has underground cable.

The major problem with the existing facilities is that much of the system is old, some of it in a very bad state of repair, and frequent breaks occur in the cables. For example, very few of the street lights along First Avenue in the central business district are now in operation.

The southern part of the city has the fewest lights and here many are of the overhead type and are primarily located along major thoroughfares. One reason for the absence of street lights in this section is that much of it has been recently developed and funds were not available to provide the necessary facilities.

The city has recently required subdividers to install street lights in some new subdivisions which is a sound and desirable policy that should be continued in the future. The city will, however, also be required to undertake extensive repairs in some of the older street lighting systems and to initiate an extensive program of new facilities in the developed portions of the southern part of the city.

Parks

Public parks are becoming more essential to provide recreational facilities and are of maximum importance in resort communities such as West Palm Beach. In addition to the facilities for games and sports, it is imperative that the areas be well landscaped with trees, shrubs and palms. Protection against the sun is especially desirable in southern cities. The provision of well landscaped parks along the shores of Lake Worth can add substantially to the city's appearance and desirability.

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH FLORIDA

PUBLIC PARKS



TREES ARE ESSENTIAL IN
LOCAL PARKS AND MORE
SHADE TREES SHOULD BE
PROVIDED.



ATTRACTIVE PLANTING
IN PUBLIC AREAS ALONG
LAKE WORTH CAN BE ONE
OF THE CITY'S MAJOR ASSETS.

SEMI-PUBLIC BUILDINGS



SPACIOUS AND WELL LANDSCAPED LAWNS AROUND
SEMI-PUBLIC BUILDINGS BENEFIT BOTH SURROUNDING
NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE ENTIRE CITY.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS



PRIVATE COMMERCIAL
BUILDINGS CAN BE ATTRACTIVE
AND ADD TO THE CITY'S APPEARANCE.

VIEWS IN WEST PALM BEACH

A view along Lake Worth, which is such a valuable asset to the city, is shown on Plate 6. More of this type of planting is needed. Additional planting is also desirable in many of the other city parks and the view of a small section of Howard Park indicates the many potentialities.

Street Trees

Street trees are one of the most important assets that a city can have. This is particularly true in West Palm Beach, where the appearance of the streets is so important to the tourists, and protection from the sun is needed. There are also excellent opportunities of having varied types of street tree planting, including many varieties of palms. Many of the streets in the city contain fine planting of trees and palms, while others are quite barren and unattractive. Several pictures of various streets shown on Plates 5 and 6 show this contrast.

The local street trees are under the control and supervision of the Park Department. This department has recently completed a plan for a ten-year street tree planting program, which is a very sound and progressive step. The plan shows the proposed location and type of trees to be planted along each street and the individual property owners must get permission from the Park Department to plant the street trees, and thus uniformity and orderliness will be assured. The trees will be maintained by the city after they have been planted by the individual owners. The important portion of

the program is that the owners cooperate and assure completion of the planting within the period programmed by the Park Department. In new subdivisions, it is only sound that the developer plant the street trees as the area is being improved.

Poles and Wires

Many of the streets in West Palm Beach now carry many poles and wires. Some of the pictures on Plates 5 and 6 clearly indicate the appearance that results therefrom. It is of course more costly to place the wires underground and eliminate the poles, yet it is extremely difficult to grow and maintain street trees unless the poles and wires are removed. The more modern policy is to provide easements in the rear of the lots and locate the poles and wires along these easements where they will not be seen from the street. The proposed subdivision regulations contain provisions that will require this procedure in the future.

Public Schools

Public school grounds are other important areas that should contribute to the appearance of the city and to the desirability of the surrounding residential areas. A number of new school grounds are proposed in the urban area during the next 25 years, all of which should be properly planned and landscaped. The city now contains many fine school

buildings, but unfortunately most of the school grounds have not been properly planned nor do they contain adequate tree or shrub planting. The expenditures required for such facilities are small in comparison with the expenditure required for the construction of the school buildings.

Private Structures and Facilities

Private buildings comprise the large majority of urban development. Consequently, their character has a major influence upon the appearance of the community.

Residential Areas

Residences occupy more privately developed land in West Palm Beach than any other single use. Fortunately, the large majority of the residences in West Palm Beach are fairly new and thus are rather attractive. As indicated in the Housing Report, however, there are a number of old and dilapidated structures, many of which should be removed and others should be substantially rehabilitated. Constant adherence to such a rehabilitation program will have a major influence upon the appearance of the community.

One factor that can be particularly important in providing and assuring attractive residential areas is the development and maintenance of lawns and planting. Fortunately, this is easier in Florida than in many areas because plant material grows so rapidly, and further, there is a very wide variety from which to choose. Civic organizations and garden clubs should sponsor programs to encourage individual property owners to improve and maintain attractive home grounds. Some of the pictures on Plates 5 and 6 indicate that there are many residential areas in West Palm Beach that are very attractive.

Commercial Areas

Commercial structures usually represent substantial investments and with proper design can be attractive at little or no additional cost. This is, however, a matter for individual action rather than the enforcement of standards and requirements. There are many attractive commercial structures in West Palm Beach, some of which are shown on Plates 5 and 6. However, there are far too many cheap commercial buildings, some of which have been converted for commercial use from residential or other purposes. The multitude of small signs that are usually plastered over these more inexpensive structures further add to their unattractiveness.

One of the most important opportunities for the development of attractive shopping centers is in the new outlying centers which can and should be developed as a unit, with a uniform type of architecture and structural treatment. In many cities, these centers are provided with adequate off-street parking space and with attractive planting of trees and shrubs so that they become valuable assets to the community and can maintain their values over a long period.

Industrial Areas

Industrial areas are all too frequently unattractive and objectionable in appearance. While there are many of the heavier type of industries where it is difficult to secure much beauty, there is no reason why the appearance of many light industries could not be improved. Fortunately, it is becoming more and more of a common practice to acquire larger sites and to have ample open space which can be planted and made much more attractive. Many industries are also developing attractive plants and well landscaped office buildings.

Semi-public Buildings

Hospitals and institutions are frequently found in residential areas. They should have ample open space around the buildings, which should be well planted with lawns, trees and shrubs. Plate 6 shows two good examples of semi-public buildings in West Palm Beach. The proposed zoning

ordinance will assist in securing ample open spaces around these buildings whenever they are located in residential areas. However, the planting and landscaping will depend upon the initiative of the boards that are responsible for the maintenance of the institutions.

Advertising Signs and Billboards

Several of the pictures on Plate 5 clearly reveal the unattractive appearance that results from a multiplicity of advertising signs and billboards. Not only do they seriously detract from the views along the streets, but frequently they are so numerous as to seriously interfere with any potential usefulness. It is imperative that advertising signs and billboards be confined to commercial and industrial areas and even here there should be some semblance of order and attractive presentation. The view along a portion of Clematis indicates the attractive appearance that is achieved when there are no heavy overhanging signs along the street.

The city now has a sign ordinance, but this is primarily concerned with the structural safety of such signs and some additional control would be desirable in regulating the setback of a sign, its size, and the number that can be provided in any one block or its relation to the area of the store which it serves. The removal of many unattractive signs and billboards within the West Palm Beach area would undoubtedly bring very favorable reaction on the part of the many winter visitors.

