

0.1
962
74

IOWA STATE LIBRARY
DES MOINES, IOWA

TA
7
.1822
No.74
1925

IOWA STATE COLLEGE
OF AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIC ARTS
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

Vol. XXIV
24

June 24, 1925

No. 7

CITY-PLANNING PROCEDURE FOR IOWA MUNICIPALITIES

By ROLLAND S. WALLIS



DRAWN

Bulletin 74

ENGINEERING EXTENSION DEPARTMENT
IOWA STATE COLLEGE
AMES, IOWA

Published weekly by Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, Ames, Iowa. Entered as Second-class matter and accepted for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 429, P. L. & R., Act of August 24, 1912, authorized April 12, 1920.

CITY-PLANNING PROCEDURE FOR IOWA MUNICIPALITIES

BY ROLLAND S. WALLIS

Municipal Engineer, Engineering Extension Department
Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa

MAKE no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood, and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty.

Daniel H. Burnham.

Every growing city and town in Iowa should be planning ahead in a broad way for its future physical growth, to the end that this growth may bring with it as great a measure as possible of convenience and attractiveness. Such planning, if done in a systematic and business-like manner, is of the sort known as city planning. While it is not the purpose of this publication to dwell at length upon the advantages of city planning, every progressive citizen will realize that better results at a lower cost can always be obtained where a project is carried on according to a carefully-studied plan than would be the case were it advanced by the haphazard, piecemeal fashion that characterizes the physical expansion of most of our communities.

City Planning and Small Communities

City planning (or town planning—the terms are interchangeable) should concern every community, regardless of its population. Too often people living in small towns think that such planning is something applicable only to large and rapidly-growing cities. On the contrary, while city planning is especially important in such cases, no growing town is too small to profit by planning ahead. In fact, it is only by accepting the city-planning idea early that the small community can avoid making the typical mistakes that have caused so much embarrassment to our large cities.

Much so-called city-planning work in large cities is really replanning. Due to the fact that such changes have been too long delayed, these projects are costly and spectacular and give to the citizen of the small town the feeling that such work is not for his community. Conditions requiring replanning exist in most small towns, just as in large cities, but their correction naturally costs but a small fraction of what similar changes cost in the heart of a great city. The advantages of making such changes, however, are relatively just as important to the small town as to the large city.

New City-Plan Legislation

Every city and town in Iowa now has the power to create and to maintain an official city-plan commission. This legislative sanction on city planning was given by the 41st General Assembly (see Appendix for the text of the law), and undoubtedly an active interest

in city planning will result throughout the municipalities of the state, both large and small. While certain Iowa communities have done and are doing notable city planning, most cities and towns have held back from attempting comprehensive planning because of the former lack of definite legal authority.

Getting Started in City Planning

There are several ways in which a local movement for obtaining a comprehensive city plan for the community may be started. The city council may on its own initiative appoint a city-plan commission in accordance with the provisions of the new law. However, unless the council is made up of real community leaders, this action is more apt to come as the result of a popular demand on the part of citizens interested in civic advancement. This, after all, is a more logical procedure; the city council is elected to represent the citizen body—to carry out, rather than to anticipate their wishes. Ordinarily, then, it will be necessary to request the city council to take the desired action.

Assuming that a small group of citizens is interested in the local possibilities of city planning, these individuals will ordinarily do well to place the matter before the various local civic and commercial organizations, with the object in mind of interesting them to the point of actively backing the idea. Talks by authorities on city planning are apt to prove helpful, but the enthusiasm of an aggressive group of men thoroughly informed and convinced as to the advantages of city planning should be able to enlist the support of all the local organizations interested in civic progress. This campaign should culminate in the creation of a joint committee to place the matter before the city council with the definite object in view of securing the appointment of a city-plan commission. Definite arrangements should be made with the city council for a hearing, preferably at an adjourned meeting when ample time for a fair presentation is available. The actual presentation should be handled by persons well-informed and enthusiastic as to the advantages of city planning.

Creation of the City-Plan Commission

The local movement toward securing a comprehensive city plan will assume official form with the passage by the city council of an ordinance definitely establishing a city-plan commission, the members of which are then appointed by the mayor, subject to the approval of the council.

Personnel of the Commission. A worth-while city-plan commission must be made up of community leaders—successful and broad-minded men and women who are public-spirited enough to give willingly of their valuable time and energy for the good of the community. They must serve without compensation, and they should be

of the sort that can toil cheerfully in spite of criticism and disappointment. The group, moreover, should be truly representative of the various interests in the community.

The membership of the commission cannot include any person holding an "elective office in the municipal government"; it is to be made up entirely of local citizens "qualified by knowledge and experience to act in matters pertaining to the development of a city plan."

Number of Members. While the law provides a minimum number of members, no maximum number is stated; any convenient number of members, not less than seven, may be appointed. This flexibility is desirable, as the best number will depend upon conditions that vary widely in different municipalities.

The requirement that the membership should be representative of the community ordinarily demands a large number of members in large cities, while a smaller number will of course represent the average town. Large commissions, however, are unwieldy and should not be created, even at the cost of a less thorough representation of community interests. Everything considered, the small commission functions better than the large one.

Membership Terms. The term of membership is definitely established by law at five years, except that the members of the first commission are to be appointed for such terms (not to exceed five years) as will cause not more than one-third of the terms to expire in any one year. The purpose of this provision is to give continuity to the policies and plans of the commission by preventing wholesale changes in its membership. In recognition of this principle, the number of changes in any one year should be kept as small as possible. It is also desirable that the longer terms predominate in the first commission in order to encourage the greatest stability from the start.

The following schedule suggests suitable terms for the commission members first appointed:

Number	Appointment terms				
	5 years	4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year
7	2	2	1	1	1
8	2	2	2	1	1
9	2	2	2	2	1
10	2	2	2	2	2
11	3	2	2	2	2
12	3	3	2	2	2
13	3	3	3	2	2
14	3	3	3	3	2
15*	3	3	3	3	3

*There is no maximum limit on the number of members that may be appointed.

Working Funds

It has been aptly pointed out that city planning is made up of three factors: (1) financial, (2) technical, and (3) promotional. Technical ability will produce a plan, but it must be paid for. The best of planning cannot be sold to a community without promotional work—without publicity—and this costs money. While it can be argued justly that city planning will eventually result in the saving of money for the community—nevertheless, just as in all planning work, money must be spent to save money.

A city-plan commission should not be appointed if sufficient funds cannot be provided to enable it to carry on its work efficiently. Expert advice is usually needed, and a working organization must be maintained. Without funds only slow progress can be made, and meager results are discouraging to the commission and to the city council alike. In just this way city planning has received a serious set-back in many a community.

Most of the expense in the preparation of a comprehensive city plan occurs in the early years of the life of the city-plan commission, and it is just at this period that the average city council feels the most reticent about appropriating large sums for this work. Later, when the merits of the plan have been demonstrated and the people of the community are behind it, suitable appropriations are not difficult to secure.

The bigger the movement, the greater ordinarily is the starting inertia to be overcome. Whether a community is to advance according to the principles of city planning or is to develop in a haphazard fashion will often depend on the attitude of its leading citizens and of its local organizations. If they are willing to back their faith in the future of the community with cash, as has been done in many a case, it will always be possible to start out in city planning on a financial scale adequate to produce results. It is important that the first efforts succeed; it has been wisely observed that "nothing succeeds like success."

City planning, such as is recognized by Iowa's new law, must base its success on cooperation. If a planning commission does not have the respect and backing of the city council, it can accomplish but little. It would seem, therefore, an experiment of doubtful wisdom to secure the appointment of a commission from a city council not in sympathy with the city-planning idea. It is not unreasonable, however, for a council to hesitate to appropriate lavishly at first, and the financial assistance of individuals and organizations at the beginning of this new work seems a consistent and a desirable arrangement.

Headquarters of the Commission

The city-plan commission should be provided with quarters convenient and generally suitable for its work. In communities of the average size it may prove difficult to make ideal provision for the activities of the commission, but if the spirit of cooperation fundamental to its success exists throughout the municipal administration, reasonably suitable quarters will be provided.

The space requirements of the commission are not particularly complicated. A meeting place, suitable for public attendance, is desirable—the council chamber is apt to meet this need. Suitable space is needed for filing and for displaying the various maps, charts and records that will be prepared or otherwise accumulated; and more or less working space will be demanded, depending on the nature and extent of the working organization.

These requirements will vary widely with the size of the community. The working organization of the commission in a large city may be so extensive as to justify separate quarters. In smaller cities the commission's draftsman may well be allotted working space in or near the city engineer's office, where suitable filing space for maps and charts is apt to exist, and where the engineering records of the city are conveniently accessible. In the small town the space requirements of the commission are even simpler and usually will be easily met.

The Working Organization

The sort of working organization that should be established by a city-plan commission, while influenced by the existing administrative organization of the municipality, will depend chiefly upon the population of the community. The planning commission for a large city must do things on a large scale; a corps of draftsmen and fieldmen must be established, as well as a clerical force—probably with a full-time city-plan engineer in charge. Even when provided with large working organizations most city-plan commissions will, from time to time, employ city-planning consultants in connection with the solution of such local problems as are of especial importance.

The city-plan commission of a small town or village ordinarily will not be justified in creating a permanent working organization of any sort, though the employment of some local person as secretary to handle its clerical work may prove advisable. The problems in such a community, while important, are not as complex and as numerous as are the problems of a large city; their solution does not require the continuous efforts of an organization. For this reason the city-plan commission in the small town will generally find it more economical and satisfactory to have all its technical investigations and drawings

made by a consultant on city planning, just as a consulting engineer is ordinarily employed to make investigations and to prepare designs for municipal improvements.

The planning commission of a small city will do well to follow an intermediate course. It should employ a draftsman familiar with city-planning problems and methods, and then establish him in the office of the city engineer. Here he will have access to the records that he will need continually. He will, moreover, be able to keep the commission in touch with the improvement plans handled by the city engineer. This man, while working in close cooperation with the city engineer, should be strictly an employee of the commission and held responsible for the preparation of its drawings and local studies. For the general guidance of the work and the policies under which it proceeds, the commission should ordinarily rely on the services of a city-planning consultant.

Functions of the City-Plan Commission

Viewing its duties and activities in a broad way, the city-plan commission has four main functions: (1) to prepare a comprehensive city plan for the future growth of the community; (2) to secure the local adoption of the plan, both popular and official; (3) to keep the official plan up-to-date by suitable revisions; and (4) to see that future municipal improvements and expansion are carried out in accordance with the official plan. In the efficient exercise of these functions the commission will be called upon to investigate, to create, to criticize, to coordinate, and to exercise vigilance without end.

These functions divide themselves naturally into two periods—'before' and 'after' the official adoption of the city plan. The first period, during which the plan is created and 'sold' to the community, is of definite duration—usually only a few years. The second period, in which the plan is kept up-to-date and gradually made a reality by the execution of coordinated improvements and growth, is one that is never-ending. City planning, in fact, is something that cannot be finished; cities grow and times change, and thus it is that city plans must be modified continually. Little that is worth while is accomplished in city planning without continuity of effort. The city-plan commission must be regarded as a permanent feature of the municipal administration.

Preparing the Comprehensive Plan

There are three distinct steps in the procedure that the city-plan commission must follow in securing a satisfactory and comprehensive plan for the community: (1) the survey, (2) the survey analysis, and (3) the preparation of general plans and recommendations

The Survey*

In order to know what needs to be done in the community, the commission must first obtain a thorough and accurate knowledge of existing conditions. The first efforts of a newly-appointed commission should then be toward acquiring all the fundamental information available. This phase of its work is known as the 'survey'—sometimes it is designated the 'civic survey.'

An exhaustive survey of a large community would be a stupendous undertaking; such investigations would require much time and effort and would prove very expensive. Considerable good judgment will be required in determining just how far to carry the survey investigations; beyond a certain point the information may not be worth its cost in time, effort, and money. No general rule can be stated as to the proper scope of such a survey; information necessary in one community may be of little real importance in another. Local conditions must govern. A considerable useless expenditure of time and effort will ordinarily be prevented if the survey is outlined and directed by some one experienced in making city-planning investigations.

The commission should first acquire copies of all available maps showing conditions in and about the community as to topography, land ownership and development, the arrangement of streets, public lands, parks and playgrounds, schools and other public buildings, transportation lines, and the distribution systems of public utilities. Statistical data will be needed on such subjects as natural resources and climate, housing, business and industries, health and sanitation, education, public safety, public nuisances, as well as the various administrative, financial, and legal conditions that would affect the carrying out of a city plan.

It is not necessary or even desirable that the survey of local conditions should be carried on by the commission alone; insofar as may prove feasible, the survey should be made a real community project. The active cooperation of each local business and civic organization should be enlisted, some suitable specific task being assigned to each. In order that this may be accomplished, the members of the commission must be prepared and willing to appear before these various organizations in order to tell them about the survey and the part it is to play in the local city-planning project.

Analysis of Survey

The next step toward the preparation of the city plan will be the careful analysis or study of the data secured in the survey, together with an efficient presentation of this information in usable form. Much

*See "A Survey of an Iowa Town—A Preliminary Report on a City Plan for Mason City," Bulletin 76 of the Engineering Extension Department, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

of the data can be clearly presented by charts, diagrams, or other graphical means. A great variety of information can be effectively presented on outline maps showing the city and the surrounding region. Models are often well worth their cost where it is desirable to illustrate clearly certain combinations of local conditions that may be demanding study.

This sifting of data and its presentation in convenient, easily-understood forms has a two-fold purpose. One of these is the greater convenience with which all the members of the planning organization can study and discuss existing conditions. This group will ordinarily be made up of busy men and women who give of their time without compensation; a few minutes saved such a group justifies much more time spent by a draftsman or clerk. The second and most important function of the graphical or visual presentation of data is its inestimable value in presenting the results of this survey to the public, and in constituting the basis for public discussions and explanations of existing conditions and such city-planning projects as may come to be recommended by the planning organization. The survey data thus presented should be placed on exhibit so that the public may have ready and prompt access to this information.

Planning Studies

With the data analyzed and effectively presented, the planning organization is ready to get actively to work on the various planning studies that are to result in a city plan for the community. Of a necessity the various problems must be considered individually at first, but just as soon as each problem is thoroughly understood and the various alternatives are well in mind the planning organization's true function—that of coordinating all the projects under consideration into one harmonious and efficient plan—should be brought into play. This study will almost invariably lead to a vision of new possibilities far superior to the ideas shown on the individual plans that preceded the comprehensive study. The final result will be a comprehensive plan for the community.

According to Iowa's new law, each city-plan commission is authorized to make surveys, studies, maps, plans, or charts of the whole or any portion of the municipal area, as well as of any land outside its limits that in the opinion of the commission bears relation to a comprehensive plan for the city or town. This, in a word, authorizes the preparation and presentation of a comprehensive city plan—in fact, a regional plan for the community.

In its work of building up a comprehensive plan in which projects of various sorts are carefully coordinated, it should be the desire of the planning commission to obtain every possible viewpoint of these problems. All the municipal departments should be conferred with in

order to secure accurate knowledge of all proposed improvements, as well as the valuable suggestions that are apt to come out of the experience of these departments. Suggestions may well be invited from local organizations, as well as from the general public. Many of the pet ideas of the citizens of a community will be found to have real merit and should be utilized to such an extent as proves practicable; all the proposals worked into the plan must be carefully analyzed and modified so as to fit into the comprehensive scheme of community development.

It is most important that the commission obtain and maintain a broad perspective of its task. It is only too easy for such a planning group to fail to maintain a good balance—to fritter time and efforts away on relatively unimportant details connected with the broad aspects of the local city plan. It is essential, too, that the economic requirements of a practical plan should be kept constantly in mind; the city council "has the right to demand that every scheme presented to them justify itself as a business or social proposition."

Scope of the City Plan. No hard and fast outline of the features of a city plan can be set forth. While there are certain typical problems that deserve attention in nearly all communities, their relative importance and difficulty will vary widely. The location of the town, its topography, soil, and other natural features, the size and character of its population, commerce, and industries—all are factors affecting the scope and emphasis of any city plan.

Ordinarily a comprehensive city plan will consider and propose solutions for such problems as: the major-street system, including its extension and such necessary changes as opening new connections, widening, and straightening; the control of street traffic; the transportation system, including both steam and electric roads, grade crossings, bus and aerial lines; the local transit system—chiefly pertaining to street-car and bus lines; park and boulevard systems; schools and playgrounds; housing; waterways and waterfront improvement, both commercial and recreational; public utilities, public health and sanitation; the grouping of public and semi-public buildings; the public regulation of the development of private property, known as zoning*; civic art, including civic structures and art objects, as well as all conditions affecting the appearance of the city; and various sorts of public nuisances.

City-Planning Program. The duties of a planning organization extend beyond the preparation of a comprehensive plan. It is most important that a carefully-worked-out program of improvement be prepared for at least a few years into the future. This demands a

*The Engineering Extension Department has issued two publications on zoning: Bulletin 52, "Zoning for Iowa Cities and Towns" (contains the text of the Iowa zoning law); and Bulletin 65, "Zoning Procedure for Iowa Municipalities." These may be obtained on application.

careful analysis of municipal finances and resources, as well as a careful classification of proposed improvements on the basis of cost and urgency.

It is important to select the first project on such a program with considerable care. It should be one the immediate advantages of which are obvious. The average citizen is but little interested in projects not proposed for immediate execution; the municipal official, likewise, is not readily interested in projects that are not to materialize during the existing administration.

Time Required. The time required to prepare a comprehensive plan depends on too many factors to be closely estimated without an intimate knowledge of local conditions. In a general way it is affected by the population of the municipality, the area of the region studied, the nature of the local topography, the amount and form of the information available (such as maps and statistics), the working funds provided, and the local need for education. When not unduly handicapped in some such way, the survey and planning will ordinarily require from one to three years, depending chiefly on the size of the community. During this period annual reports to the city council are required; they should cover planning progress as well as the finances of the commission.

Adoption of the City Plan

When the comprehensive plan is ready, it must be 'sold' to the people of the community and to the administration. Ordinarily it is best to take it first to the people. It is fundamental that the people should be familiar with the recommendations and advantages—that they should want to see its proposals become realities. The support of the municipal administration is of course necessary if the plan is to be made the 'official plan' and to be perpetuated, but with popular approval behind the proposals of the plan its serious consideration and early adoption by the city council are practically assured.

This phase of the procedure toward securing the adoption of the plan is largely one of publicity, and nearly all of the means ordinarily employed to gain the attention of the public may be used to advantage. The newspapers constitute a very important medium of publicity—usually the one of greatest local importance. The newspapers will be glad to print city-planning articles of real news value. Pamphlets, posters, bulletins, public exhibitions, lantern-slide lectures, and motion pictures are some of the mediums available. The school children should not be overlooked—their interest may be secured in various ways and the subject thus brought into many homes not effectively reached otherwise.

Selling the city plan to the municipal administration may prove the hardest step, and it is of course one that is essential. It is here that many city-planning projects have stumbled in the past, and some seem to have fallen to rise no more. Some very good plans have been prepared and published—never to receive any official recognition. Most of these were produced by volunteer organizations, however, and the work of an official planning commission, now available to each community in Iowa, will seldom be ignored by an administration sufficiently in sympathy with the city-planning idea to create the commission to make these studies for the community.

The formal confirmation of a comprehensive plan, naturally enough, is apt to come slowly. Such a plan is apt to involve many recommendations that require supporting discussion to convince as cosmopolitan a body as the average city council. Everything considered, the plan of submitting separately the various coordinated plans has much to recommend it. While it might prove inexpedient to ask for final approval of complicated plans and recommendations, it is apt to be relatively easy to obtain the council's approval on, say, a comprehensive plan for a system of main thoroughfares.

Carrying Out the City Plan

A city plan that is never followed is wasted effort unless, perhaps, it may serve as an inspiration for other plans that may become realities. The carrying out of a city plan is not apt to prove a primrose path, but it constitutes the supreme achievement of a planning commission. Nothing short of results can begin to repay its members for their time and efforts in obtaining and establishing the plan.

In this phase of its work—the long, hard pull—the chief function of the commission will be to coordinate the projects of all departments by studying each in relation to the complete physical structure of the community.

The city-plan commission is merely an advisory body to the city council on all projects involving the location and arrangement of municipal improvements. While the council cannot proceed with any contemplated project without filing a request for the commission's recommendation on the improvement, the commission cannot prevent any action that the city council may finally decide to take. If the commission is to succeed in full measure, it must gain for its work the understanding, the respect, and the support of the municipal administration and of each department with which it works.

Enforcing the Plan. The problem of enforcing conformity to the system of streets shown on the official city plan on the part of the private owners of land affected is one not entirely or uniformly solved. A number of methods by which this may be accomplished legally have

been developed, but Iowa has as yet obtained no legislation bearing directly on this problem.

The mapping of the proposed street system can injure no one, and until property is actually taken by the city there need be no compensation. However, both the land owners and the municipality may disregard the plan. The land owner may erect buildings on ground within platted streets with the primary object of extracting substantial damages from the city when the land is finally taken for street use; and the city may change its plan and abandon the proposed street without reference to private losses that may be sustained due to such action. This has not proved to be a satisfactory way to obtain the advantages of city planning.

Probably the best plan for the municipality to pursue, as well as the fairest to the land owner, is the early acquirement by the municipality of all vacant land within the lines of the proposed streets. Where the development as a street seems remote, however, it has been suggested that the imposing of a suitable easement would be preferable to an actual taking of title to the land. This would leave the land available for general use, while the fact that such an easement existed would result in certain tax exemptions which would doubtless further tend to cause the average owner to accept the situation without serious protest.

Street Widening. Street widening, while often called for as an essential step in improving the local system of thoroughfare streets, is a difficult and expensive operation in closely built-up sections where the need for this improvement is usually the most imperative. Here building values usually materially exceed land values, and financial considerations usually demand that the widening be effected gradually as the various existing structures are reconstructed—the actual taking by the municipality being deferred in each case until the existing structure is torn down.

Subdivision Plats. An important feature of the new city-plan commission law is that the recommendation of the commission must be obtained before any proposed subdivision plat can be accepted by the city council. In return for this small sacrifice of its previous complete authority in this matter, the council is privileged to turn all such plats over to the commission for investigation—and these plats are problems that the council seldom has the information or the time required for an intelligent decision.

Certainly it is desirable that more attention be given to this matter of the expansion of a town's street system. Many, if not most, of the bad conditions typical of the street arrangement in any community are due to faulty coordination between adjoining subdivision plats. Usually they have been laid out at different times and by different individuals. The chief concern of each landowner, naturally enough, has been to get the greatest possible number of salable lots out of his

tract; but in so doing he is apt to have overlooked the desirability of maintaining good continuity of streets. Awkward and dangerous street jogs, narrowings and dead ends have thus been created—to the danger and delay of street traffic forever. The importance of creating a comprehensive plan showing the location of future major streets ahead of the actual platting of this unoccupied land is not hard to see.

The commission should adopt suitable rules for the guidance of land owners in the platting of their land, covering such items as street widths, street grades, street names, curb radii, data shown on the plats, and the way in which they are to be submitted. The experience of the commission will enable it to give helpful counsel to the land owner in the platting of his land to the best advantage of all concerned.

Acquiring Land. In every community there can be found many tracts of ground that, due either to their small size, low level, irregular topography or shape, or other characteristics, are of little actual value. It is advisable that the municipality should consistently buy up such tracts, both with a view to improving them—perhaps as parks or playgrounds—and of preventing their use for some unsightly or unsuitable development.

Paying for Municipal Improvements. Tax and debt limitations placed on municipalities by state legislation, taken along with the constantly-increasing costs of municipal enterprises and administration, are causing many communities to cast about for other means of paying for municipal improvements. There is a decided tendency to turn to local assessment of benefits for a large part of the costs, thus in a sense making the improvements pay for themselves. This is justifiable, because judicious expenditures on a carefully-prepared city plan usually result in marked increases in land values near to the public improvements—increases that in the aggregate are apt far to exceed the sum expended on these projects. While benefit assessments cannot legally be made to exceed the actual benefit derived from the improvement, it is indeed a rare improvement that does not confer a substantial local benefit. Only where the local benefit is not sufficient to pay for the improvement, is it time to draw upon the general funds of the municipality.

Needed Legislation. The commission must needs study carefully the legal powers of the community that affect the satisfactory execution and maintenance of public improvements. It will soon come to understand the legislative needs of the city, and it should work for the enactment of such state legislation and local ordinances as may be needed to facilitate and further the execution of its plans.

Municipal Art Commissions. Except where municipal art commissions have been established, the recommendations of the city-plan commission are required previous to the erection or the purchase of land for any statuary, memorials, or works of art to be placed in any

public place. This perhaps warrants a brief discussion of the relative functions of 'art' and of 'city-plan' commissions.

To some it seems difficult to separate clearly the work of these two types of organizations, and it is true that there may easily be an overlapping of functions. In principle, however, the distinction is not difficult to draw. City-plan commissions plan and criticize proposed improvements in a broad way, they consider the future growth of the community and judge proposed improvements on the basis of their convenience, efficiency and general utility. Art commissions deal with immediate and specific problems. Instead of ignoring details they must study and analyze them, and from the standpoint of appearance rather than utility. While the city-plan commission, for example, should decide on the location, the capacity, and the type of a bridge required to meet present and future traffic needs, the art commission should be the final jury as to the general appearance and the details of the proposed structure.

The work and methods of these commissions are radically different, and it follows that the personal characteristics of their memberships should be radically different. While in the small community there is perhaps scant justification for the creation of a separate art commission, it might be advisable for the city-plan commission to refer problems of the art-jury type to a committee made up of several of its members who are reasonably well versed and interested in art.

Revision of the City Plan. As has been pointed out, there can be no such thing as finishing the job of building a city, because the city is a thing of growth influenced by changing conditions of the times. It follows that no city plan can ever be finished. As time goes on it must be continually subject to various changes, modifications, and improvements justified or demanded by community growth and changing conditions.

The original plan prepared for the municipality will be a broad sort of a scheme—a sort of an ideal to serve as a general guide to efficient and attractive growth. In the natural expansion of the city, unexpected conditions may be encountered that justify modifications in the original plan. The nearer a project comes to realization, the more detailed its planning will become; and with this more close inspection various minor changes will be suggested that serve to perfect, rather than to mutilate the original plan. While it would be a futile expenditure of time for a planning commission to attempt such exhaustive studies while engaged in preparing a comprehensive plan for the whole community, it is entirely feasible to devote the needed attention to the details of each improvement as it materializes to become an existing part of the structure of the city.

Publicity. Suitable and effective means of keeping the plan before the people must be utilized. The public should be kept informed by well-planned publicity campaigns as to such progress as is made

from time to time in carrying out the plan. Those of the oncoming generation should have the main features of the plan presented at a suitable stage in their public-school training, so that each boy and girl will come into the rights of citizenship possessed of a definite knowledge of the comprehensive plan of improvement that is being followed by the community.

Attitude of Plan Commission. Throughout the years that bring the gradual execution of its city-planning program, the city-plan commission should maintain an attitude of cooperation and watchfulness. It should embrace every opportunity to cooperate with each municipal department in its planning for future improvements, and it should exercise constant vigilance against any tendency toward material departures from the accepted plan. It is proverbial that "everybody's business is nobody's business," and an alert and permanent commission is the only real safeguard to a long life for the city plan. The plan commission should keep in close touch at all times with local developments, always with a view to advancing the execution of the plan in some degree at every opportunity.

City-Planning Literature

Every city-plan commission will feel the need of a reference library on city planning and allied subjects. So much valuable material has been published that anything like a well-balanced bibliography would demand more space than is here available. As a guide to city-planning literature there is nothing more complete than the very helpful "Manual of Information on City Planning" prepared by Theodora Kimball (Harvard University Press, 1923).

Another volume that should be on the commission book-shelf is "The Law of City Planning and Zoning" (MacMillan Company, 1922) by Frank B. Williams. The bound proceedings of the National Conference on City Planning (1910 to date) are filled with authoritative discussions on city-planning topics. Attention should also be called to "City Planning," the new quarterly organ of the conference.

There are many other organizations that have printed valuable material on city planning and from which information can be obtained on various phases of civic improvement. The "manual" mentioned above contains a complete list of such organizations, as well as of the various periodicals that devote space to city-planning subjects. Much can be gained by securing and studying the city-planning reports of other communities.

APPENDIX

The City-Plan Commission Law

Chapter 117—41st General Assembly

CITIES AND TOWNS—PLAN COMMISSION

H. F. 383

AN ACT authorizing the creation of city plan commissions in cities and towns of all classes, providing the manner of appointment of members of such commissions, the terms for which they shall serve, defining the powers of such commissions, authorizing the appropriation of money for the expenses thereof, and providing for levying a tax therefor.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

SECTION 1. Plan commission authorized—appointment. The council of each city and town, including commission governed cities and special charter cities, may by ordinance provide for the establishment of a city plan commission for such municipality, consisting of not less than seven members, who shall be citizens of such municipality and who shall be qualified by knowledge or experience to act in matters pertaining to development of a city plan and who shall not hold any elective office in the municipal government and who shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to the approval of the council.

SEC. 2. Tenure—vacancy—compensation. The term of office of said members shall be five years, except that the members first named shall hold office for such terms, not exceeding five years, that the terms of not more than one-third of the membership will expire in any one year. If any vacancy shall exist on said commission caused by resignation, or otherwise, the mayor shall appoint a successor for the residue of said term. All members of the commission shall serve without compensation except their actual expenses, which shall be subject to the approval of the council.

SEC. 3. Organization—rules—report—assistants. Such city plan commission shall choose, annually, at its first regular meeting, one of its members to act as chairman of the commission, and another of its members as vice-chairman, who shall perform all the duties of the chairman during his absence or disability, and shall adopt such rules and regulations governing its organization and procedure as may be deemed necessary; and each year shall make a report to the mayor and council of its proceedings with a full statement of its receipts, disbursements, and the progress of its work for the preceding calendar year. Subject to the limitations contained in this act as to the expenditure of funds, it may appoint such assistants as it may deem necessary and prescribe and define their respective duties and fix and regulate the compensation to be paid to the several persons employed by it.

SEC. 4. Powers. Such city plan commission shall have full power and authority to make or cause to be made such surveys, studies, maps,

plans or charts of the whole or any portion of such municipality and of any land outside thereof which in the opinion of such commission bears relation to a comprehensive plan, and shall bring to the attention of the council and may publish its studies and recommendations.

SEC. 5. Functions. No statuary, memorial, or work of art in a public place, and no public building, bridge, viaduct, street fixture, public structure or appurtenance, shall be located or erected, or site therefor obtained, nor shall any permit be issued by any department of the municipal government for the erection or location thereof, until and unless the design and proposed location of any such improvement shall have been submitted to the city plan commission and its recommendations thereon obtained; provided, however, that such requirement for recommendations shall not act as a stay upon action for any such improvement where such commission after thirty days written notice requesting such recommendations shall have failed to file same; and said recommendations shall not be necessary as to statuary, memorials or works of art in municipalities where municipal art commissions have been established.

SEC. 6. Plats submitted for approval. Where such city plan commission exists all plans, plats, or re-plats of subdivisions or re-subdivisions of land embraced in said municipality or adjacent thereto, laid out in lots or plats with the streets, alleys or other portions of the same intended to be dedicated to the public in such municipality shall first be submitted to the city plan commission and its recommendation obtained before approval by the city council.

SEC. 7. Commission's recommendation. No plan for any street, park, parkway, boulevard, traffic-way, river-front, or other public improvement affecting the city plan shall be finally approved by the municipality, or the character or location thereof determined, unless such proposal shall first have been submitted to the city plan commission and the latter shall have had thirty days within which to file its recommendations thereon.

SEC. 8. Fund. The council of any such municipality, when it shall have passed an ordinance creating a city plan commission, may annually appropriate a sum of money from the general funds for the payment of the expense of such commission. The said commission shall have full, complete and exclusive authority to expend for and on behalf of such municipality all sums of money so appropriated. All gifts, donations or payment whatsoever which are received by such municipality for city plan purposes shall be placed in the city plan commission fund, to be used by the said commission in the same manner as hereinbefore stated. The said commission shall have no power to contract debts beyond the amount of its income for the current year.

Approved April 3, 1925.



THE COLLEGE

The Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts conducts work along five major lines:

AGRICULTURE

ENGINEERING

HOME ECONOMICS

INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE

VETERINARY MEDICINE

The Graduate College conducts advanced research and instruction in all these five lines.

Four, five and six-year collegiate courses are offered in different divisions of the College. Non-collegiate courses are offered in agriculture, home economics and trades and industries. Summer sessions include graduate, collegiate and non-collegiate work. Short courses are offered in the winter.

Extension courses are conducted at various points throughout the state.

Research work is conducted in the Agricultural and Engineering Experiment Stations and in the Veterinary Research Laboratory.

Special announcements of the different branches of the work are supplied, free of charge, on application. The general bulletin will be sent on request.

Address, The Registrar,

IOWA STATE COLLEGE,

Ames, Iowa.