

May 16, 1988

**WHITHER WORCESTER?:
PLANNING THE CITY'S FUTURE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report was to study the planning and development operations in the City Manager's Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) and the Bureau of Land Use Control (BLUC), and to compare them with the manner in which several other New England cities organize similar operations. The Research Bureau selected these operations (1) because of the need to define specific goals from the Master Plan and to develop a strategy to implement them; (2) to determine how other municipalities are involved in downtown development; and (3) to determine how other communities respond to development pressures and neighborhood opposition to housing and economic development.

Findings

Some of the Research Bureau's findings include the following:

1. All the cities surveyed have planning departments that integrate short- and long-range planning. Those functions are not separated into different departments as they are in Worcester between the OPCD and the BLUC.
2. Most planning departments have the capacity to update a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance on an ongoing basis even if it has to be done over several years.
3. Most planning departments have or are acquiring the capacity to develop plans for each neighborhood that include housing, commerce, industry, recreation and public institutions. These have been developed with neighborhood consent by working with representative neighborhood groups.
4. Most cities surveyed have a development organization separate from municipal government that focuses on downtown; e.g. Springfield Central, Hartford's Downtown Council, and the Lowell Plan. These development entities work closely with city government. Some receive funding from the city, though raising the bulk of their funds from private sources. They serve as promotional organizations, conduits for funds, and sources of proposals for development.

5. Most cities visited have gone through a reorganization process in the last half-dozen years due to the dramatic decline in federal support for community development agencies, and because of the need to deal with changing planning and development issues in the 80's. One goal of this reorganization in many cities has been for planning and development departments to focus the process of development in such a way so as to facilitate procedures for developers, providing all relevant information in one office, packaging the financing, and providing a project manager to coordinate the many aspects of development. In the cases of Springfield and Providence, the mayors are assisting potential developers. A second goal of reorganization has been to focus more on all aspects of neighborhood revitalization - housing, commercial/manufacturing, parking, open/public space, etc.

Conclusions

The conclusions that can be drawn by comparing the organization of planning and development activities in Worcester and other cities include the following:

- A. Worcester has the lowest staff per capita ratio for planning and development of any of the 8 cities surveyed.
- B. Worcester is spending less on planning and development per capita than every city visited except for Lowell.
- C. Worcester is spending less on planning and development per square mile than every city visited except for Fitchburg.
- D. Worcester spends the third lowest percentage of tax levy funds on planning and development activities.

Furthermore, a multitude of responsibilities that were not necessarily related to its original planning functions such as human service programs and law enforcement assistance programs, have been added to the OPCD over the years.

Recommendations

In light of these findings, the Research Bureau makes the following recommendations:

1. The City Manager should appoint an Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development accountable to the Manager and responsible for coordinating all planning and development functions.
2. The City Manager should reorganize the present planning and development functions into three new departments/divisions: planning and policy development, downtown development, and neighborhood development. The Assistant City Manager should have direct responsibility over these departments/divisions:

A. Planning and Policy Development: This department should combine short- and long-range planning in one operation. Such a department should be capable of writing and updating a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance, and preparing profiles of neighborhoods and plans for them in collaboration with representative neighborhood groups. The department should also be capable of developing policy for the City on important municipal, and even regional, issues such as affordable housing, transitional housing, and growth of public institutions such as colleges and hospitals. In order to perform these functions, the Planning and Policy Development staff should include several professional planners accompanied by appropriate staff support: one planner for downtown, two for neighborhood planning, and one for policy development. The Planning and Policy Development Department should be supported by tax levy funds.

B. Downtown Housing and Development: The Downtown Development Department should be responsible for implementing the plans for downtown in partnership with the new downtown division created by the Worcester Business Development Corporation. The responsibilities of each should be clearly defined with respect to housing, commercial development, parking, and "marketing" the City. The City Manager should facilitate development by providing "one-stop shopping" for the developer, and tracking each project both before and after the necessary approvals. In order to do this, the Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development should be able to coordinate staff from other departments, such as Public Works and Code Inspection that are also involved in working with developers.

C. Neighborhood Housing and Development: This department should be responsible for implementing neighborhood plans that have been developed by the Planning Department. To accomplish this would require administering CDBG funds, packaging of other financing for neighborhood developments, and encouraging and facilitating housing rehabilitation and development, as well as commercial and industrial development.

3. The Assistant City Manager should also serve as the Director of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority. The WRA Board should be actively looking to utilize its broad powers especially for neighborhood revitalization.

INTRODUCTION

This report was undertaken in response to a request from the City Council to study the functions and operations of the Office of Planning & Community Development (OPCD) and the Bureau of Land Use Control (BLUC), and to compare them with the manner in which other cities organize similar functions and operations. The City Manager concurred in that request. After reviewing the multitude of diverse functions performed by the OPCD and the BLUC, it was decided to narrow the scope of the study to the organization of planning and community and economic development operations in these agencies, and to compare them with such operations in eight other New England cities. The reasons for singling out those functions are threefold:

1. The City of Worcester recently contracted with an outside consultant to develop a Master Plan that has now been adopted in concept by the City Council. The OPCD has responsibility for updating and implementing this plan. One purpose of the survey was to determine how other cities organize planning activities, and how cities develop, update and implement comprehensive plans.
2. There is universal agreement in Worcester that development in the downtown area needs to be facilitated and enhanced. The Worcester Business Development Corporation recently created a downtown development division to assist in this undertaking. The City is expected to be a partner in this undertaking, providing funds and staff support by the OPCD. A second purpose of the present survey was to determine the role of other cities in facilitating downtown development, and the relationship between a quasi-public development organization, if there is one, and the municipality.
3. In the last couple of years, there has been increasing opposition to housing and other development in the neighborhoods of Worcester. This situation is by no means unique to Worcester. A third and very important purpose of this comparative survey was to determine how other cities deal with development pressures, while working with neighborhoods to insure that needed housing is constructed and other forms of community and economic development can occur.

By focusing on these functions, the Research Bureau does not in any way intend to diminish the importance of the other operations of the OPCD and BLUC. (A complete list of those can be found in Appendix A). Nor do we intend to imply that planning and development activities do not occur in other municipal agencies, e.g., Department of Traffic Engineering and School Department. Planning and development, however, are not listed among such agencies' primary functions, as they are in the case of the OPCD and BLUC.

It should also be stated at the outset that this study does not purport to be a "scientific" survey. The cities surveyed were chosen because they have all experienced a long period of decline

and are now in varying stages of resurgence. Hartford, Springfield and Providence are the New England cities with which Worcester is usually compared because of their similarity in size. The information found herein was gathered from personal interviews, follow-up telephone conversations, and reports and studies from the cities surveyed. In most cases, there were no organizational charts available, so the narrative is based on written and verbal descriptions of how things work. The narrative for each city surveyed was reviewed for accuracy and completeness by those interviewed.

As expected, no two cities organize their planning and development operations in exactly the same way. There is great similarity, however, in the kinds of issues raised and themes addressed when determining how to organize planning and development activities.

Summary of Findings Regarding Planning and Development in Cities Surveyed

The following is a list of issues that were raised and problems observed about planning and development that were common in most cities visited, regardless of their form of government:

1. Any organizational structure should reflect the goals that are to be accomplished. A city needs to determine its areas of focus for the next decade or more, and then set some measurable goals for dealing with the identified areas. This "city focus" should clearly distinguish between municipal service functions and economic development opportunities. When the latter are considered necessary and desirable, there should be a reasonably well-defined and agreed upon strategy between the public and private sectors for the planning and investment of resources to accomplish such goals. Hartford, for example, in its 1985 Plan of Development, identified affordable housing as one of its major needs over the next 15 years. It will pursue a regional approach to affordable housing. The city will try to have built an additional 4800 new units of housing and rehabilitate 2100 units by 1990. A sound development plan when adopted should be a consensus plan that contains enough details to assure a reasonable chance for success within a defined time frame.

2. Every city visited has a planning department: it is considered essential to municipal government. The work involved in administering the zoning ordinance and assisting the various boards and commissions is generally integrated with and is not separated from more long-range planning as is done in Worcester where these functions are divided between the OPCD and the BLUC.

3. All cities are concerned with structuring the Planning Department so that there is some focus on both short- and long-term planning. Since CDBG funds can only be used for areas that are eligible under Block Grant guidelines, those areas that are not eligible may be neglected unless tax levy funds are appropriated for planning activities.

4. All cities have discussed the issue of whether planning should be put in a separate department or merged with development. If the two are merged, there is a danger of planning simply reacting to immediate crises. If it is separate, there is a danger of it becoming too abstract. If separate, however, the planning office can provide planning assistance for other departments such as police, fire, DPW, schools, etc.

5. All cities visited concurred that planning departments should have the capacity to update a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance on an on-going basis even if it has to be done over several years. All cities visited (including Boston) are studying the zoning ordinance piece by piece. In many of the cities surveyed, Planning Boards and City Councils have been asked to digest a small piece of an ordinance at a time.

6. A common goal was for all planning departments to have the capacity to develop plans for each neighborhood that include housing, commerce, industry, and public institutions. Generally, these have been developed by working with representative neighborhood groups.

7. A recurrent question was whether planners should have a general planning background or be specialists in a particular field, e.g. transportation, environment. In cities the size of Worcester, there was a consensus in favor of employing generalists, while contracting out for specialized studies (e.g., traffic planning for downtown).

8. Most cities have consciously developed a set of goals to attempt to build on their strengths. It is important for a public-private consensus to evolve that defines the development focus from time to time. Otherwise, the planning effort lacks support, focus and momentum. For example, in Boston and Hartford, strong commercial growth has led to the development of a linkage program in order to benefit neighborhoods with poor and minority populations with new housing and jobs. Portland considers its waterfront a strength and has redeveloped it for tourism and the fishing industry.

9. Most cities visited have a development arm separate from the city and in most cases focusing on downtown; e.g. Springfield Central, Hartford's Downtown Council, and the Lowell Plan. In Boston, the Boston Redevelopment Authority has both planning and redevelopment powers under one organization. In most cases, these development entities work very closely with the city government and receive funding from the city, though raising the bulk of their funds from private sources. They serve as both promotional organizations and a conduit for funds. All are concerned with creating a vibrant downtown. One aspect of a downtown's vitality is to build housing near and within the City's core making it easily accessible to both daytime and nighttime activities downtown. To implement this goal, Providence, for example, has established a fund with \$4 million of city money and

\$16 million from local banks to be lent to housing developers at 75% of the prime lending rate.

10. Most cities visited have gone through a reorganization process in the last half-dozen years due to the dramatic decline in federal support for community development agencies, and because of the need to deal with changing planning and development issues in the 80's. One goal of this reorganization in many cities has been for planning and development departments to focus the process of development in such a way so as to facilitate procedures for developers, providing all relevant information in one office, packaging the financing, and providing a project manager to coordinate the many aspects of development. In the cases of Springfield and Providence, the mayors assist potential developers. A second goal of reorganization is to focus more on all aspects of neighborhood revitalization - housing, commercial/manufacturing, parking, open/public space, etc.

CONCLUSIONS

1. During its fifteen years of existence, the OPCD has performed a multitude of diverse and important functions for the City of Worcester including administering the yearly cycle of CDBG funds, serving as the City's main agency for federal and state grant writing, and administration, working closely with the Chamber of Commerce on economic development activities such as the Airport Industrial Park and the Biotech Park, overseeing and encouraging housing development and rehabilitation, administering the funds for numerous human service programs, and tracking the City's legislative needs and interests.

2. The primary responsibility of the Bureau of Land Use Control, and one which it has consistently fulfilled, has been to assist boards and commissions through the provision of technical and administrative services, and advice on land use and regulations. It has not been given the staff or responsibility to formulate long-range plans for the City.

3. The responsibilities that were added to the OPCD over the years were not necessarily related to its original planning functions. They have given the agency a focus towards action rather than one of long-term planning. The original decision when the OPCD was established to remunerate the Planning Director \$1.00 per year clearly indicated that the planning function was not a top priority for the City of Worcester.

4. The OPCD currently has three staff members whose primary responsibility is planning. This contrasts with Springfield which has 13 planners, Hartford with 6 planners and 5 architects, Portland with 7 and plans to hire 2 more, Providence with 7 planners and 2 architects, and Lawrence, which is slated to have 9 planners when hiring is completed.

5. The chart that follows indicates that planning and development activities have been less of a priority in Worcester than in the other cities surveyed:

- A. Worcester has the lowest staff per capita ratio for planning and development of any of the 8 cities surveyed.
- B. Worcester is spending less on planning and development per capita than every city visited except for Lowell.
- C. Worcester is spending less on planning and development per square mile than every city visited except for Fitchburg.
- D. Worcester spends the third lowest percentage of tax levy funds on planning and development activities.

6. Given the development pressures in the neighborhoods, the lack of development in downtown, and the stiff competition from other cities to attract new business, planning must be re-established as a priority of the City. It is critical to invest in planning the City's future.

A COMPARATIVE SURVEY OF EXPENDITURES ON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN FY88

| CITY/ DEPARTMENT | PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BUDGET* | PORTION TAX LEVY | TOTAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET | TAX LEVY FUNDS AS % OF TOTAL BUDGET | TOTAL 98 SPENT PER CAPITA | TOTAL 98 SPENT PER SQ. MILE | NUMBER OF STAFF | STAFF PER CAPITA |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| NORCESTER | | | | | | | | |
| OPCD | \$1,237,000 | 3400,000 | | | 17.62 | 122,079 | 38 | |
| BLUC | 238,000 | 238,000 | | | 1.44 | 6,263 | 9 | |
| NORCESTER TOTAL | 1,495,000 | 638,000 | \$203,000,000 | .31 | 9.06 | 39,242 | 47 | .00028 |
| BOSTON | | | | | | | | |
| BRA | 30,000,000 ¹ | -0- | | | 53.29 | 714,283 | 313 | |
| Public Facilities | 14,000,000 | 8,000,000 | | | 24.87 | 322,333 | 310 | |
| EDIC | 7,000,000 ¹ | -0- | | | 12.43 | 166,666 | 154 | |
| BOSTON TOTAL | 51,000,000 | 8,000,000 | 1.2 billion | .67 | 90.59 | 1,216,283 | 777 | .0014 |
| FITCHBURG | | | | | | | | |
| Office of the Planning Coordinator | 389,000 | 82,000 | | | 9.73 | 13,893 | 11 | |
| Industrial Development Council | 80,000 | 50,000 | | | 2.00 | 2,857 | 2 | |
| FITCHBURG TOTAL | 469,000 | 132,000 | 40,300,000 | .33 | 11.73 | 16,750 | 13 | .00033 |
| HARTFORD | | | | | | | | |
| Planning Department | 630,000 | 650,000 | | | 4.77 | 25,326 | 17 | |
| Hartford Redevelopment Authority | 450,000 | 450,000 | | | 3.30 | 24,457 | 13 | |
| Policy Development & Program Administration | 900,000 | 128,500 | | | 6.60 | 48,913 | 14 | |
| Housing & Community Development | 1,500,000 | 1,000,000 | | | 11.00 | 81,322 | 22 | |
| Downtown Council | 1,500,000 | -0- | | | 11.00 | 81,322 | 20 | |
| HARTFORD TOTAL | 5,000,000 | 2,228,500 | 297,817,920 | .75 | 36.68 | 271,739 | 96 | .0007 |
| LAURENCE | | | | | | | | |
| Department of Planning & Community Development | 1,023,000 | 300,000 | | | 15.23 | 159,230 | 23 | |
| LAURENCE TOTAL | 1,023,000 | 300,000 | 93,000,000 | .33 | 15.23 | 159,230 | 23 | .00027 |
| LOWELL | | | | | | | | |
| Division of Planning & Development | 700,000 | 140,000 | | | 7.37 | 49,296 | 32 | |
| Lowell Plan | 150,000 | -0- | | | 1.58 | 10,563 | 7 | |
| LOWELL TOTAL | 850,000 | 140,000 | 111,000,000 | .76 | 8.95 | 59,859 | 39 | .00041 |
| PORTLAND | | | | | | | | |
| Department of Planning & Urban Development | 850,000 | 340,000 | | | 13.80 | 39,351 | 42 | |
| PORTLAND TOTAL | 850,000 | 340,000 | 98,548,192 | .88 | 13.80 | 39,351 | 42 | .00068 |
| PROVIDENCE | | | | | | | | |
| Department of Planning & Development | 2,600,000 | 1,900,000 | | | 16.58 | 130,000 | 73 | |
| Providence Foundation | 300,000 | -0- | | | 1.91 | 15,000 | 9 | |
| PROVIDENCE TOTAL | 2,900,000 | 1,900,000 | 202,945,892 | .93 | 18.49 | 145,000 | 78 | .0005 |
| SPRINGFIELD | | | | | | | | |
| Planning Department | 538,000 | 538,000 | | | 3.33 | 16,254 | 17 | |
| Community Development | 400,000 | -0- | | | 2.62 | 12,083 | 13 | |
| Springfield Redevelopment Authority | 1,200,000 | -0- | | | 7.88 | 36,254 | 33 | |
| Springfield Central | 600,000 | -0- | | | 3.94 | 18,127 | 9 | |
| SPRINGFIELD TOTAL | 2,738,000 | 538,000 | 191,423,426 | .28 | 17.98 | 82,719 | 74 | .00048 |

* Budget figures are for staff and operating costs, not programmatic funds. No attempt has been made to isolate the planning and development budget from other operations that such an agency may perform, e.g. monitoring of neighborhood centers, because of the difficulty of obtaining such information from all cities.

¹self-financing agency

Prepared by: Worcester Municipal Research Bureau

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the Research Bureau makes the following recommendations:

1. The City Council and the City Manager need to define specific goals and objectives from the Master Plan that can be accomplished by the year 2000. These should include specific plans for downtown development and neighborhood revitalization.

2. The City Manager should appoint an Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development accountable to the Manager, responsible for coordinating all planning and development functions and for the strategies to implement the agreed-upon goals. The City Manager should reorganize the present planning and development functions into three new departments/divisions: planning and policy development, downtown development, neighborhood development. The Assistant City Manager should have direct responsibility over these departments/divisions:

A. **Planning and Policy Development:** This department should combine short- and long-range planning in one operation. In other words, the day-to-day administration of the zoning ordinance and land use regulations should be merged with development of the longer-range plans and directions in which the City hopes to move. Recommendations to the various boards and commissions should be based on an understanding of the comprehensive plan of development. Such a department should be capable of writing and updating a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance, and preparing profiles of neighborhoods and plans for them in collaboration with representative neighborhood groups. One technique for developing and implementing neighborhood plans that is used in Boston is to institute an Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) to experiment on a temporary basis (2 years) with zoning changes before altering the zoning ordinance permanently. The department should be capable of developing policy for the City on important municipal and even regional issues such as affordable housing, transitional housing, and growth of public institutions such as colleges and hospitals. In order to perform these functions, the Planning Department staff should include several professional planners accompanied by appropriate staff support: one planner for downtown, two for neighborhood planning, and one for policy development. The Planning Department should be supported by tax levy funds.

B. **Downtown Housing and Development:** The Downtown Development Department should be responsible for implementing the plans for downtown in partnership with the new downtown division created by the Worcester Business Development Corporation. The responsibilities

of each should be clearly defined with respect to housing, commercial development, parking, and "marketing" the City. The City Manager should facilitate development by providing "one-stop shopping" for the developer, and tracking each project both before and after the necessary approvals. In order to do this, the Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development should be able to coordinate staff from other departments, such as Public Works and Code Inspection that are also involved in working with developers. Other proposals to facilitate downtown development that should be considered include creating a loan pool to provide more attractive interest rates for housing and commercial development, and floating bonds to continue redevelopment efforts. The City Manager should determine whether there is any benefit to long-term leasing of city-owned property as compared with out-right sale, and determine when each is appropriate.

C. Neighborhood Housing and Development: This department should be responsible for implementing neighborhood plans that have been developed by the Planning Department. To accomplish this would require administering CDBG funds, packaging of other financing for neighborhood developments, and encouraging and facilitating housing rehabilitation and development, as well as commercial and industrial development. Some proposals to facilitate neighborhood revitalization include instituting a light manufacturing zone surrounded by buffer areas to recruit and retain industry and to enhance employment opportunities; utilizing Redevelopment Authority powers to package land around tax foreclosure property, especially for housing; offering tax deferrals and abatements especially for affordable housing and small business recruitment.

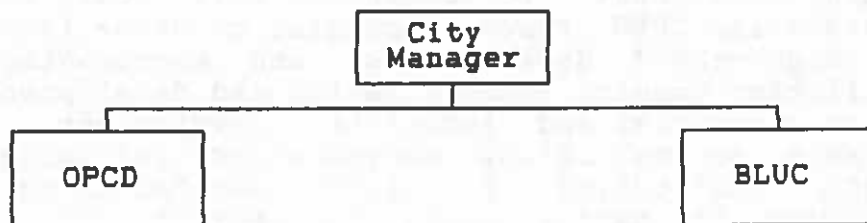
3. The Assistant City Manager should also serve as Director of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority. The WRA Board should be actively looking to utilize its broad powers especially for neighborhood revitalization.

4. The Research Bureau, while aware of the financial constraints facing the City, recommends that hiring an Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development and reorganizing departments to focus on these areas be given the highest priority.

5. The City Manager should also consider recommending the creation of a Public Building Authority (as in Providence) with the power to float bonds for maintaining old and building new public buildings.

6. If this initial reorganization is successful, the City Manager should consider a long-term reorganization similar to Hartford's plan, whereby all departments are placed under management clusters, each headed by an Assistant City Manager responsible for his cluster and reporting directly to the City Manager. In addition to an Assistant City Manager for Planning and Development, Hartford has one each for Human Services, Administrative Services, Physical Services, and Public Safety.

Current Organization*



-long-range planning

-WRA activities

-administration of
CDBG funds

-economic development

-housing

-human service programs

-legislative affairs

-city wide grants
administration

* partial list of functions

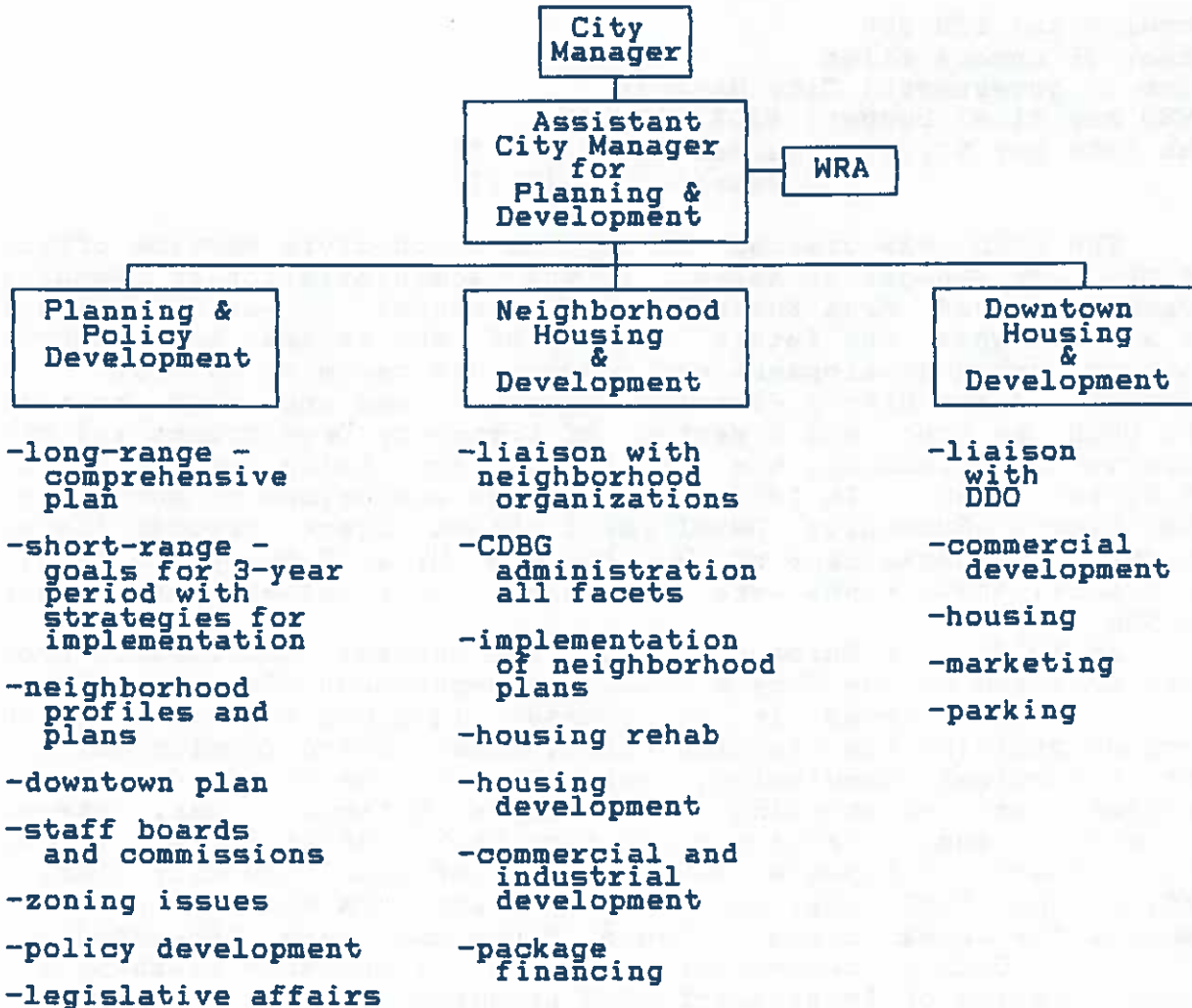
-staff for boards and
commissions

-demolition program

-tax title custodian

-land use and zoning
activities

Prepared by: Worcester Municipal Research Bureau

Proposed Reorganization*

* This constitutes a partial list of suggestions

Prepared by: Worcester Municipal Research Bureau

Eight City Survey of Planning & Development Operations**WORCESTER**

Population: 165,000

Area: 38 square miles

Form of government: City Manager

FY88 municipal budget: \$203,000,000

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - \$13.39
commercial - \$21.27

The OPCD was created in 1972 as a non-civil service office of the City Manager to assist in the administration of planning grants received from the federal government. It was established at a time when the future decline of the federal government's role in urban development and renewal was becoming evident. The director of the City's Planning Department was appointed to head the OPCD as both the Director of Community Development and the Director of Planning, the latter position being remunerated at \$1.00 per year. In 1974, the OPCD was authorized to administer the City's Community Development Block Grant program funded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Initially, these funds were used mainly for physical improvements in the City.

In 1976, the Bureau of Land Use Control was created from what remained of the City's Planning Department (Executive Order #17). Its purpose is to oversee land use functions, which include staffing the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and the Historical Commission, coordinating the City's demolition program, and maintaining the City's Official Map, street directory, census tract map and fact book. While appeals to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) are filed with the City Clerk's Office, the BLUC compiles the list of abutters and maintains the records for appeal cases. These functions were separated out from the OPCD's responsibilities for long-range planning and administration of federally-funded programs.

As a result of these decisions, Worcester's planning activities were divided between two offices: the Office of Planning (which falls under the OPCD's jurisdiction) and the Bureau of Land Use Control, which retained civil service status. (This arrangement was formalized in Chapter 2, Article 19, section 6, Revised Ordinances of Worcester). The Planning Director and the Director of the Bureau of Land Use are each responsible to the City Manager (they serve at his pleasure, except that the current Director of Land Use retains his right to tenure under civil service law). The Planning Director, who is simultaneously the Director of Community Development and the Director of the OPCD, was given responsibility for long-range planning of the "resources, possibilities and needs of the city and its metropolitan area" and for the preparation and updating of a comprehensive plan of development for the city. The Director of Land Use was given responsibility for planning with respect to land use and for performing duties required by zoning, subdivision and other related laws.

In 1982, due to cutbacks in federal funds and the constraints of proposition 2 1/2, the Office of Human Service Programs (OHSP), which had been established in 1974 to administer Federal grants for all social service programs, was merged into the OPCD. (Programs under its supervision include the Neighborhood Centers, the Crisis Center, the Gateway Cities program, and the Hepatitis B program, among others). A year later, Law Enforcement Administration Programs were also consolidated in the OPCD. During the past few years, various contractual and financial functions of the Commission on Elder Affairs and the Office of Handicapped Affairs have also become the responsibility of the OPCD.

In 1985, following the near-completion of its renewal programs, the OPCD assumed the administrative functions of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA). Those responsibilities include property management for tax title buildings, emergency relocation functions, WRA land disposition functions, and WRA Board administrative assistance. The OPCD is also responsible for special projects assigned it by the City Manager. Thus, over its fifteen years of existence, many functions have been added to the OPCD on top of its original planning, community development and grants administration functions.

These various functions of the OPCD are performed by 38 people. (Before the mergers, it is estimated that all these functions were performed by about 100 people.) The Office's budget is \$1.2 million, of which \$400,000 or 32% comes from tax levy and \$857,000 comes from Community Development Block Grant funds. The Bureau of Land Use Control (BLUC) has a staff of 9 and a budget of \$238,000, all of which is funded by tax levy. The total amount Worcester currently spends for staff and operating expenses of the OPCD and the BLUC is approximately \$1.44 million¹. This figure of \$1.44 million does not include program money, nor does it attempt to estimate how much private and public money is leveraged as a result of municipal expenditures on planning and development.

Office of Planning & Community Development

Staff: 38

Budget: \$1,257,000

Source of funds: \$857,000 CDBG

\$400,000 tax levy

In order to fulfill its planning and development responsibilities, the OPCD is divided into several sections:

A. Planning: The planning section was organized two years ago to deal with long-range planning. It is staffed by a coordinator, a

¹This total does not factor out money expended on non-planning and development operations. Those sums were left in for other cities as well in departments whose primary responsibilities are planning and development.

planner, and an environmental planner who was recently added. Its primary responsibility thus far has been to manage and coordinate the Worcester Master Plan/Zoning Ordinance process. It is expected that the staff will assist in the updating and implementing of the Master Plan and the new ordinance. The Planning Section currently provides advisory opinions to the Planning Board, the ZBA, the Conservation Commission, and the Historical Commission. (The role of the BLUC, which is responsible for processing plans that go before the boards and commissions from inception to completion, will be elaborated below). The Planning Section is also responsible for managing the City's open space planning process, involving land acquisition and other strategies to preserve open space. It assists in transportation planning and environmental reviews of projects. It provides technical assistance to developers and to neighborhood groups. The Planning Section plays an advisory role in the site plan review process.

B. Housing and Community Development: This section, with a 5-member staff, is headed by an assistant to the director. Its primary responsibility is the physical development aspects of Worcester's community development effort, including housing, parks and public works. This effort is financed primarily through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which currently total over \$4 million. The Housing and Community Development Section prepares the CDBG application to HUD and administers the CDBG funds that have been granted by the federal government. In coordinating requests for funds and determining the allocation of funds, it meets with the Community Development Advisory Committee, the Planning Board, and the City Council's Community Development Committee. It also coordinates the City's housing policy, which is currently aimed at increasing the number of affordable homeownership and rental opportunities for low and moderate income groups, and also at upgrading the quality of older properties in the City through rehabilitation and inspection programs. CDBG funds are used to leverage money from state programs (for which applications must be made) and bank loans for housing rehabilitation. In addition, Housing and Community Development has been administering funding to organizations such as WCCI and New Housing Ventures for development of affordable housing. It also compiles housing studies, and provides emergency relocation assistance and homeless shelter assistance.

C. Economic Development/Intergovernmental Affairs: This section consists of a coordinator and three staff members. It has been funded primarily by a planning grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). This is no longer the case, because the federal government believes the unemployment rate and level of economic distress in Worcester is too low to warrant federal funds for this purpose. The section is responsible for researching and reporting on economic activity in Worcester, administering economic development activities supported by CDBG funds, providing technical assistance to developers and

neighborhood economic development associations, serving as a liaison for the City to state and federal officials (especially grant administrators), and coordinating and monitoring legislative initiatives of interest to the City. It collaborates with the WBDC in marketing the city's industrial parks. The OPCD is staffing the Downtown Development Division in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and chairing the Research and Planning Subcommittee of that division. It conducts research and provides recommendations on bills of interest to the City, assembles the annual legislative package, and provides updates to the City's legislative delegation.

D. Redevelopment: The Redevelopment Section comprises the staff of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority (WRA), a semi-autonomous authority established by state law with a board appointed by the City Manager (plus one member appointed by the Governor) which was funded directly by federal money until the advent of General Revenue Sharing (GRS) and CDBG funds in the early 1970's. Since that time, the WRA, like redevelopment agencies in other cities, has been dependent on funds funneled through the city. The redevelopment section consists of an assistant to the director and two staff members who became part of the OPCD in 1985. They are responsible for the maintenance and disposition of property that had been taken by eminent domain for urban renewal. The goal is to make necessary improvements on properties remaining under the WRA's jurisdiction, and then convey them back to the community. The redevelopment section's responsibilities also include property management of surplus schools, fire stations, and tax-title buildings. It provides staff assistance to the Designer Selection Board, including solicitation and screening of proposals and preparing for public hearings.

There are two other important aspects to OPCD operations besides planning and development functions: (1) public services, primarily the administration of human service programs (especially neighborhood centers); and (2) finance and contracts that relate to budgeting, monitoring and auditing contracts, processing payments for grants, assisting other agencies and neighborhood centers with financial matters and administration of grants, and acting as a clearinghouse for filing of grants.

Bureau of Land Use Control (BLUC)

Staff: 9

Budget: \$238,000

Source of funds: tax levy

The Bureau of Land Use Control (BLUC) is responsible for the development of the City through the administration of the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Control Regulations. It assists the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, and the Historical Commission by preparing reports, plans, and mailing lists for their meetings. Developers must bring their plans to the BLUC. This office discusses and evaluates plans with developers,

informs them of procedures for processing plans, coordinates departmental comment on plans, provides the Planning Board with information and recommendations, files definitive plans, coordinates bonding with the Law Department, and tracks projects in the building stage. The BLUC is also responsible for the sale of tax title property through public auction and for the administration of the CDBG funds for demolition and removal of condemned structures. The BLUC records changes in the Official Map of the City and keeps it current. All these functions are concerned strictly with land use, insuring that requests are in conformity with existing regulation.

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Budget 1972-1988 -

| <u>FISCAL YEAR</u> | <u>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</u> | <u>TAX LEVY SALARIES</u> | <u>TAX LEVY O.M.</u> | <u>FEDERAL SALARIES</u> | <u>FEDERAL O.M.</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| * 1/1/72 - 12/31/72 | | | | | | |
| 1/1/73 - 6/30/74 | 15 | 19,376.00 | 30,000.00 | 226,710.40 | -0- | 276,086.40 |
| 7/1/74 - 6/30/75 | 15 | 45,460.00 | 17,575.00 | 140,286.74 | 16,650.00 | 219,971.74 |
| 7/1/75 - 6/30/76 | 30 | 109,809.90 | 12,240.00 | 258,859.48 | 25,000.00 | 405,909.38 |
| 7/1/76 - 6/30/77 | 30 | 114,653.58 | 11,880.00 | 250,058.20 | 86,610.00 | 463,201.78 |
| 7/1/77 - 6/30/78 | 30 | 121,918.85 | 11,450.00 | 277,280.18 | 73,180.00 | 483,829.03 |
| 7/1/78 - 6/30/79 | 32 | 123,015.57 | 10,500.00 | 327,813.31 | 66,620.00 | 527,948.88 |
| 7/1/79 - 6/30/80 | 39 | 133,421.25 | 11,300.00 | 438,628.03 | 76,160.00 | 659,509.28 |
| 7/1/80 - 6/30/81 | 39 | 191,271.01 | 11,750.00 | 409,249.87 | 118,228.00 | 703,498.88 |
| 7/1/81 - 6/30/82 | 39 | 166,451.25 | 11,750.00 | 409,249.87 | 116,370.00 | 703,821.12 |
| ** 7/1/82 - 6/30/83 | 38 | 131,539.13 | 10,525.00 | 495,039.31 | 112,370.00 | 749,473.44 |
| 7/1/83 - 6/30/84 | 38 | 130,642.41 | 10,525.00 | 525,630.00 | 114,670.00 | 781,467.41 |
| *** 7/1/84 - 6/30/85 | 36 | 124,941.76 | 10,525.00 | 675,164.04 | 112,370.00 | 923,000.80 |
| **** 7/1/85 - 6/30/86 | 37 | 274,457.64 | 12,725.00 | 622,580.40 | 203,900.00 | 1,113,663.04 |
| 7/1/86 - 6/30/87 | 37 | 329,183.76 | 27,725.00 | 560,507.76 | 203,900.00 | 1,121,316.52 |
| 7/1/87 - 6/30/88 | 38 | 373,765.92 | 26,415.00 | 641,819.84 | 214,900.00 | 1,256,900.76 |

* 1/1/72 - 12/30/72 Still being researched

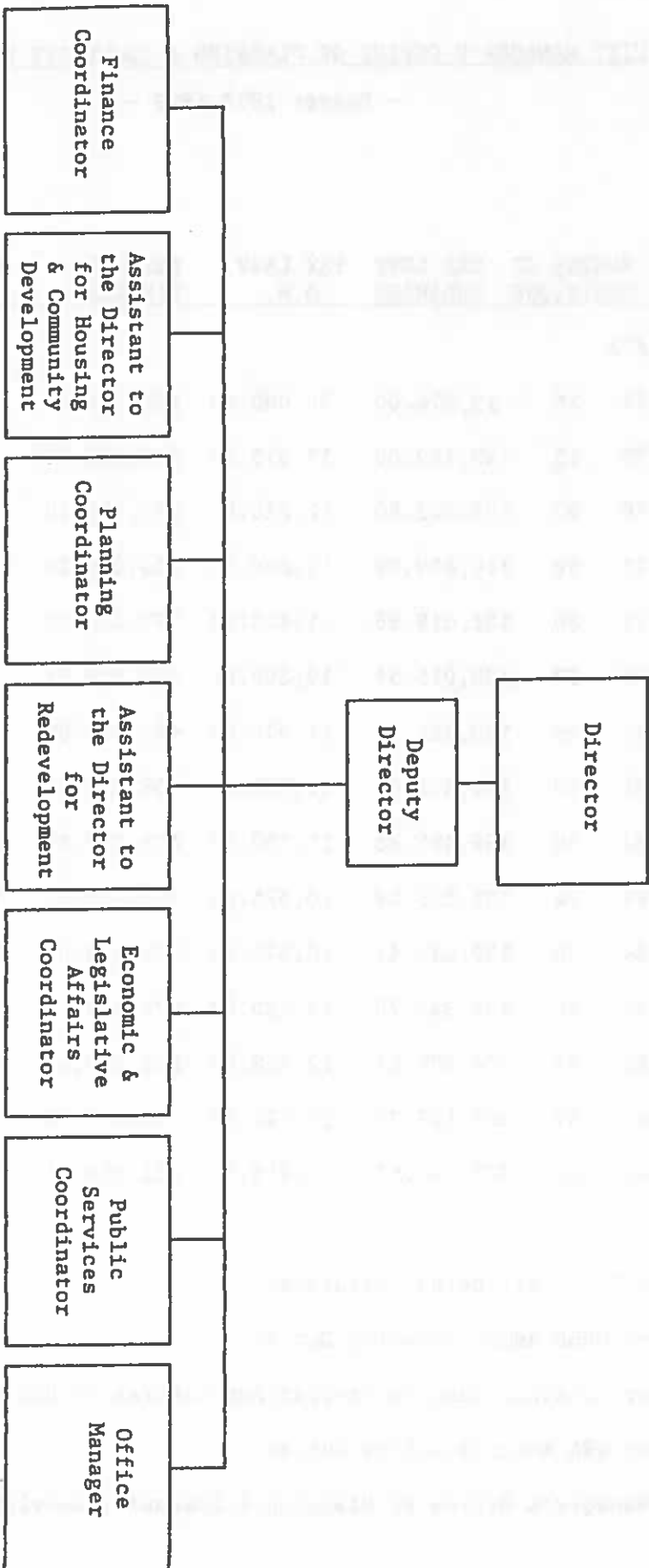
** OPCD takes over OHSP Administrative Duties

*** OPCD takes over Criminal Justice Program Administrative Duties

**** OPCD takes over WRA Administrative Duties

Prepared by: City Manager's Office of Planning & Community Development

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Prepared by: City Manager's Office of Planning & Community Development

BOSTON

Population: 562,993

Area: 42 square miles

Form of government: strong Mayor

FY88 municipal budget: \$1,200,000,000

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - \$10.77
commercial - \$21.66

Planning and development functions in Boston are performed primarily by three agencies: the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Public Facilities Department, and the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation.

Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA)

Staff: 313 non-civil service

Budget: \$30 million

Source of funds: self-financing through sale and long-term lease of agency-owned property

The BRA is responsible for both planning and (re)development functions for the entire city. Planning operations were combined with the redevelopment agency by special act of the legislature in 1961. The BRA director and board are mayoral appointees. The Agency was reorganized in 1986 to emphasize housing and neighborhood planning and linking those to Boston's growing commercial economy in the downtown. There are nine departments--three policy-oriented and six programmatic. There are several departments in the BRA performing functions that may be of particular interest to Worcester.

The Policy Development and Research Department is responsible for performing research relevant to all aspects of development and redevelopment in the city. It regularly prepares studies on population and employment trends, housing needs, office and hotel market trends, private development trends, and public investment opportunities. It has developed and keeps current neighborhood planning profiles. It is also responsible for formulating and recommending policy options.

The Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department, in addition to staffing the Zoning Board of Appeals, is responsible for neighborhood planning and zoning activities. It has instituted Interim Planning Overlay Districts (IPODs) in six of Boston's neighborhoods and will do so as needed in other neighborhoods through an extensive community review process. The IPODs include plans for housing, open space, transportation, industrial and commercial areas and public space. The interim zones remain in effect for two years before any permanent zoning changes are made.

The Urban Design and Development Department is responsible for coordinating and reviewing all major downtown development, designing and distributing developer kits, and managing the disposition of publicly-owned downtown development parcels. It coordinates the development process including design review.

More than half of its staff are registered architects.

The Neighborhood Housing and Development Department is responsible for formulating and implementing plans to improve the physical and social conditions of Boston's neighborhoods. This includes formulating a comprehensive housing policy, and developing projects to expand the supply of housing at both market and below-market prices. It is also responsible for land assembly, development planning, and public improvements in the neighborhoods.

Public Facilities Department

Staff: 310

Budget: \$14 million

Sources of funds: \$8 million tax levy
\$6 million CDBG

In 1985, the Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency was merged into the Public Facilities Department to create an organization the purpose of which is to revitalize Boston's neighborhoods. The objectives of this department are:

1. To plan, design, site, and rebuild the city's infrastructure and public buildings.
2. To manage CDBG funds for housing and community development (currently \$17 million).
3. To transfer city-owned land and buildings for housing and commercial development.
4. To act as the conduit for the expenditure of state housing funds.
5. To revitalize the city's neighborhood business districts.

These objectives are expected to be implemented through several different divisions, some of which may be relevant to Worcester's needs.

The Planning and Policy Division is responsible for the development with local residents of concrete, action-oriented, comprehensive plans for neighborhoods, guiding the allocation of scarce public resources, and targeting critical neighborhood development opportunities.

The Neighborhood Development Division is responsible for overseeing all large-scale property dispositions, and major real estate financing programs, both residential and commercial. It will provide a "one-stop shopping" service for neighborhood developers. The CDBG funds will be used to leverage private, state and federal funds to bridge the financing gap.

The Rehabilitation and Housing Services Division is responsible for managing all of the Department's contracted services, as well as establishing rehabilitation and financing agreements with homeowners, non-profit agencies, and investors.

In addition to these planning and development related activities, Public Facilities employs a 140-member Security Division at a cost of \$3.2 million. It is responsible for taking measures to protect city-owned property from vandalism, arson, and theft through improved security and fire alarm systems, and for enforcing the Mayor's anti-dumping campaign through aggressive enforcement of illegal trash disposal and littering.

Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC)

Staff: 54 - office staff

100 located in industrial parks and Boston Technical Center (BTC) all non-civil service

Budget: \$7 million

Sources of funds: self-supporting from revenues produced by lease of industrial parks

The third agency that plays a role in development in Boston is the EDIC. Its purpose is to promote job opportunities for Boston residents through economic and industrial development. It was originally formed in response to the decline in blue-collar employment in the City. The EDIC was founded in 1968 as a commission within city government; it became a quasi-public corporation in 1971 responsible for economic and industrial development. The Mayor appoints the director, who has department head status, and the Board of Directors. All economic development areas must ultimately be approved by the City Council. The EDIC has 4 divisions to promote economic and industrial development:

Financing:

EDIC packages financial assistance to businesses through SBA loans, a revolving loan fund available through the Boston Local Development Corporation, industrial development bonds issued by the Boston Industrial Development Finance Corporation, and other sources of federal, state and private financing.

Real Estate Services:

EDIC assists companies in locating appropriate space through its real estate referral programs.

Policy Planning & Development:

EDIC has developed over 200 acres of industrial parks that it markets and manages.

Education:

EDIC, through its Boston Technical Center, Inc. a licensed trade and business school, trains Boston residents in occupations that pay well and are compatible with the needs of the city's companies.

The EDIC is currently trying to preserve and promote light manufacturing through the implementation of an industrial districts program, a light manufacturing zoning category and the further development of industrial parks. The industrial

districts program, the first of which is the Newmarket Industrial District in Roxbury, is made possible by the BRA's introduction of a light manufacturing zone. In the industrial district, EDIC will attempt to assist existing industrial firms through improving infrastructure, locating appropriate space, securing financing and job training. This zone allows manufacturing uses, wholesale trade, and distribution subject to performance standards. It excludes office use and noxious uses. As part of the Newmarket program, the state will spend about \$40 million on infrastructure, roads and green space for buffer areas between residential neighborhoods and the industrial district.

EDIC has located five potential sites for additional industrial parks. In all, it hopes to identify about 200 acres from surplus government land.

FITCHBURG

Population: 40,000

Area: 28 square miles

Form of government: strong Mayor

FY88 municipal budget: \$40,300,000

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - \$17.77

commercial - \$24.50

Planning and development activities in Fitchburg are the responsibility of the Office of the Planning Coordinator and the Industrial Development Commission.

Office of the Planning Coordinator

Staff: 11 of whom 6 are professional planners (2 civil service; Planning Coordinator is appointing authority for all other employees).

Budget: \$389,000

Source of funds: \$83,000 tax levy

\$245,000 CDBG

\$60,000 grants

The Office of the Planning Coordinator has three primary responsibilities:

1. It staffs the Planning Board.
2. It administers federal and state grants for community development.
3. It administers capital improvement programs which have been assigned to that office (e.g., construction of new police station, renovation of City Hall).

The Mayor and the City Council frequently assign other projects to the Planning Coordinator as well.

Industrial Development Commission

Staff: 1 planner, 1 secretary, reports to 5 member board appointed by the Mayor

Budget: \$80,000

Source of funds: \$50,000 tax levy
\$30,000 CDBG

The Commission is responsible for economic development and promotion of the city. The IDC also houses the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority and the Fitchburg Industrial Development Financing Authority, which issues Industrial Revenue Bonds. The Director of the IDC is also the president of the Fitchburg Area Economic Development Corporation, a local development corporation that is independent of the city. The Commission, the Redevelopment Authority, and the LDC use their powers and revenues to bring new business to Fitchburg and to expand existing industry.

HARTFORD

Population: 136,326

Area: 18.4 square miles

Form of government: City Manager

FY88 municipal budget: \$297,817,920

Tax rate per \$1,000: \$72.9 flat rate (70% valuation)

Since 1984, Hartford has been in the process of reorganizing the city government to improve the reporting structure and productivity. This process will ultimately place all 23 existing departments under five management clusters, each headed by an assistant city manager responsible for his cluster and reporting directly to the city manager. The five clusters are (1) Human Services - Social Services, Health, Senior Services, Employment and Training; (2) Administrative Services - Personnel, Finance, Purchasing, Data Processing, Human Relations; (3) Physical Services - Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation; (4) Public Safety - Police, Fire ; (5) Community Development and Planning - Planning, Development Policy and Program Administration, Housing and Community Development, Hartford Redevelopment Agency, Licenses and Inspections, and the Office of Cultural Affairs.

Community Development and Planning Cluster

The Community Development and Planning cluster, headed by an assistant City Manager who does not have civil service status (all other employees in the cluster do), was organized almost two years ago to play a more active role in development issues and to guide development toward the city's needs, among which housing is crucial. It consists of the following departments:

1) Planning Department

Staff: 17

Budget: \$650,000

Source of funds: tax levy

The Planning Department has six people working on both long and short-range planning, which includes the formulation of a comprehensive plan of development, as well as a 3-5 year plan for implementing the plan of development. There is also a planning document for each of the 17 neighborhoods. The department is responsible for data collection and analysis and maintenance of updated neighborhood profiles that can identify neighborhoods in transition. It provides planning data for other departments, including the Board of Education, the housing authority, and the police department. There are 5 architects and draftsmen assigned to the Urban Design unit, which is responsible for site planning and design, graphics, and staffing the Design Review Board and the Historical Commission. The zoning unit of 2 is responsible for developing land use regulations, proposing zone changes, and providing staff resources to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

2) Hartford Redevelopment Agency

Staff: 13

Budget: \$450,000

Source of funds: tax levy

The HRA is headed by a 5-member board appointed by the City Manager. It consists of a project progress and planning division (which supervises projects and conducts site planning) and a real estate and management division (responsible for packaging land development proposals, acquisition and disposition of land, and appraisals). The proceeds of land sales must go toward capital improvements, help finance the particular project, or be returned to the CDBG fund. Some land is still being acquired with CDBG funds and matching state grants.

3) Policy Development and Program Administration

Staff: 14

Budget: \$900,000

Source of funds: all but 2 funded by CDBG

This is not a full-fledged department, but a group of staff people who report directly to the Assistant City Manager. It is responsible for administering \$4 million of CDBG funds, UDAGs, and other grants the city may acquire from state and federal funds. It is expected to keep an inventory of grants available and apply for them when appropriate. Staff is also responsible for developing policies that cross department lines. For example, it is developing a policy on non-traditional housing—where group homes and transitional housing should be located, how supportive services will be provided, etc. This staff will focus more of its efforts on policy development to better allocate scarce resources.

4) Housing and Community Development

Staff: 32

Budget: \$1.5 million

Source of funds: \$1 million tax levy, \$500,000 CDBG

The Housing and Community Development Department, which resulted from the merger of two departments, is comprised of two divisions: housing services and project management. Housing services, with a staff of 20, provides basic housing services such as fair rent and relocation assistance, and administers all housing loan programs and tax deferral and abatement programs. The project management division, with a staff of 9, works to expand the city's economic base and housing stock by initiating and/or managing development activity and implementing development projects resulting from the city's strategic planning process. The Project Management Division also is working to implement the economic development strategies recommended in the Plan of Development and, through its Business/Industrial Recruitment and Retention Office, attempts to attract and keep businesses in Hartford. In addition, the director's office administers the city's Section 8 program through a contract with a private corporation.

The City of Hartford has several tax programs to encourage housing production which may be of interest for Worcester:

1. Assessment Tax Deferral Program - This program is designed to stimulate new construction, rehabilitation and restoration of vacant and/or deteriorated housing that will be available in part to low and moderate income households. In return for improving the property or developing new housing, the developer's assessment is fixed during the period of improvement. Upon completion of the improvements, the added assessed value is spread out over a 10- year period at increments of 10% each year.

2. Payment-In-Lieu-Of-Taxes (PILOT) - Chapters 128, 130, and 133 of the Connecticut General Statutes allow the State Commissioner of Housing to extend financial assistance to local housing authorities and municipalities for payment in lieu of taxes. The grant-in-aid payment to the City of Hartford is for projects owned and operated by the Housing Authority. During the 1987-88 fiscal year, the State approved a payment of \$766,098.00.

3. Tax Abatement Program - The State of Connecticut reimburses the city for 22 moderate income, privately owned projects. During the 1987-88 fiscal year, the State will reimburse the City for payment in lieu of taxes in the amount of \$861,000. The remaining taxes due on the projects are paid by the individual owner.

5) Licenses and Inspections Department

Staff: 77

Budget: \$2,300,000

Source of funds: tax levy

The Licenses and Inspection Department is responsible for administering the state building code, housing code, and zoning code.

According to the city's Deputy City Manager, the reorganization has been quite successful, and the city has attracted a number of highly qualified professionals into key positions. It has also reduced the number of departments and eliminated a number of redundant deputy director positions. The city's current focus is on a major organizational development effort that includes a labor-management cooperation program, technology management and training.

Downtown Council

Staff: 20

Budget: \$1,500,000

Source: private donations

In addition to the city's planning and development agencies, the Downtown Council plays a key role in promoting and encouraging development in the CBD. First formed in 1974, the Downtown Council became part of the Chamber of Commerce in 1983. Its annual budget is about \$1.5 million, all from private sources. There are three corporations under the Downtown Council's leadership: Capitol Partnerships, Inc., which acts as a vehicle for investments by Hartford's corporate community in downtown development projects; Hartford Attractions, Inc., which promotes and partially owns the Hartford Whalers; and the Bushnell Park Carousel Society, which runs the Park's carousel that has become a symbol for the city. The Downtown Council sponsors festivals such as a winter carnival and a children's festival. It employs its own clean-up crew that costs \$75,000 per year for downtown streets, and its own security force, consisting of uniformed off-duty policemen, to supplement regular police patrols. It costs \$170,000 per year to patrol the downtown area eight hours per day.

LAWRENCE

Population: 68,000

Area: 6.5 square miles

Form of government: strong Mayor

FY88 municipal budget: \$95,000,000

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - \$8.05
commercial - \$24.00

Planning and development functions in Lawrence have been undergoing reorganization during the last year since the city changed from a commission to a strong mayor form of government. The new director of the Department of Planning and Community Development was formerly the deputy assistant secretary of the state's Executive Office of Communities and Development (EOCD).

Department of Planning and Community Development

Staff: 25

Budget: \$1,035,000

Source of funds: \$535,000 CDBG funds
\$500,000 tax levy

The purpose of the department is to improve the city's planning capacity, staff the various boards and commissions (ZBA, Planning Board, Historical Commission, Lawrence Redevelopment Authority, Conservation Commission), and administer the CDBG funds.

The department has five principal areas of concern: administration, planning, economic development, housing, and transportation. The planning area will stress neighborhood planning to help local groups develop a plan for each neighborhood and guide development in their neighborhood. The economic development area will focus on downtown development, industrial development, and marketing the city.

The director is in the process of hiring a number of new planners: historic planner, land use planner, parks planner, housing planner, neighborhood planner, project planner for downtown, design review officer (architect), transportation planner and capital projects director. Each of these planners will be responsible for developing a plan for the city within his particular area of expertise. Five of these new positions are being funded by the city.

The city has also hired Edward Logue's Development Corporation to oversee a major project whereby Emerson College will move its campus to the banks of the Merrimac River in Lawrence.

LOWELL

Population: 95,000

Area: 14.2 square miles

Form of government: City Manager

FY88 municipal budget: \$111,000,000

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - \$11.86
commercial - \$21.79

Planning and development activities in Lowell are the responsibility of the Department of Planning and Development in conjunction with the Lowell Plan, a private non-profit organization established in 1979 to attract investment in Lowell.

Division of Planning and Development

Staff: 32 (non-civil service)

Budget: \$700,000

Source of funds: \$560,000 CDBG funds
\$140,000 tax levy

The Division of Planning and Development has two parts:

1. The Planning section has 5 planners who are responsible for city-wide planning and for the administration of \$2.8 million of CDBG funds and other federal and state grants. Planning activities include evaluation and planning of open space, recreational needs, population, school needs, and neighborhood planning. CDBG and other grants focus on neighborhood strategy areas, refurbishing parks, and facade and sign improvements. There is some concern among the staff that long-range planning and capital improvements are sacrificed for more pressing needs.

2. The Operations section is responsible for economic development, relocation, redevelopment, and promotion through activities such as festivals. It works closely with the Lowell Plan. Lowell Redevelopment Authority powers were transferred by special act of the legislature to the Lowell City Council in 1976.

Lowell Plan

Staff: 7 total, 4 full-time, 3 part-time

Budget: \$150,000

Source of funds: private donations

The Lowell Plan, Inc., and the Lowell Development Financial Corporation (LDFC) constitute an extremely significant private element in the partnership with the city. The Lowell Plan was devised by then Senator Paul Tsongas and former City Manager Joseph Tully in 1979 to assist Lowell in economic development initiatives. The Lowell Plan provides funds for economic development activities and tries to have those funds matched by other sources. To date, it has raised \$2.7 million from businesses and individuals. Lowell's revitalization has been enhanced by the financing activity of the LDFC, founded in 1975 by the local banking community to provide incentives for property owners to improve the appearance of their buildings in the CBD. The LDFC makes loans at 40% of the prime lending rate for facade restorations and for industrial and commercial development, as well as mortgage assistance and equity grants for residential properties. The LDFC has lent \$3.2 million, which generated \$30 million in private investments. It currently has assets of \$12 million.

PORTLAND

Population: 61,572

Area: 21.6 square miles

Form of government: City Manager

FY88 municipal budget: \$98,548,192

Tax rate per \$1,000: \$31.08 flat rate

The City of Portland reorganized its planning and development functions in 1980 when a new City Manager took office. Until that time, the Planning Department did development review, specialized studies, collected data and updated the

zoning ordinance. It was not connected with CDBG funds, economic development, loan programs or building inspection. In 1980, all these functions except economic development were consolidated into the Department of Planning and Urban Development in order to tie the planning function with an action-oriented program. According to the former City Manager who was responsible for this reorganization, in retrospect, long-range planning was sacrificed for immediate problems under the new operation. When the pace of development quickened in the mid 1980's, the city had no overall vision of what it wanted to happen. While the former City Manager would keep the planning and development functions together, he believes there should be some entity that is responsible for long-range planning.

Portland currently has 7 people with solid planning credentials. The present City Manager is considering adding two more: one for long-range planning and an introductory position to do data gathering. Consultants are used for specialty planning areas. The City Manager is planning to relocate economic development in one of two ways: either as a part of the Community Development division under the Planning and Urban Development Department or to form two separate departments, one of planning and the other community and economic development.

Department of Planning and Urban Development

Staff: 42 (non-civil service)

Budget: \$850,000

Source of funds: \$310,000 CDBG

\$540,000 tax levy

The Department is divided into three divisions:

1. The Planning Division - This division has 7 professionals who are responsible for planning, zoning revisions, development reviews, subdivision reviews, applications for and administration of federal and state grants. The division is currently overseeing a review of Portland's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. The review is being done section by section primarily by staff and will take about 6-8 years to complete. Those sections which cannot be done in-house will be done through consultant contracts. For example, the staff is working on a downtown plan. A \$100,000 parking study for the area is being done by consultants, for which the business community is paying 50%. Another major consultant contract is for a height study of the downtown for this new plan.

2. Community Development Division - This division with a staff of 4 is responsible for the administration of the CDBG funds (\$1.8 million), and a housing and economic development fund that is used for housing rehabilitation and commercial loans for facade improvements and business expansion (funded by UDAG repayments and other loan repayments). It is also responsible for neighborhood plans and development. Economic development may be merged with this division to enhance Community Development's ability to put development packages together. Until recently,

this was not a problem because market forces were very strong without the city acting as a catalyst.

3. Code Inspection - This division performs functions similar to those of the Code Inspection Department in Worcester.

The Office of Economic Development with one staff member has been responsible for building one industrial park area and finding tenants for five. It works with businesses to identify and resolve problems that may be preventing them from competing successfully in the city. Its lack of staff and resources to actually promote the city and arrange packages to attract new development is apparently what is responsible for considering new organizational arrangements.

PROVIDENCE

Population: 156,804
 Area: 20 square miles
 Form of government: strong Mayor
 FY88 municipal budget: \$203,545,892
 Tax rate per \$1000: \$75.79 flat rate

Providence reorganized three years ago by merging the Mayor's Office of Community Development, the Office of Economic Development (funded by CDBG), and the Department of Planning and Urban Development (staff to the Planning Commission and Redevelopment Agency) into a new Department of Planning and Development. This Department is responsible for planning and development functions. The department provides "one-stop shopping" and runs interference for developers. The Director of Planning and Development, who also serves as Director of the Providence Redevelopment Agency, was formerly a deputy director of the state economic development department. The Providence Foundation and the Providence Company, both affiliates of the Chamber of Commerce, assist with downtown development. (The executive director of the Providence Foundation and Providence Company was formerly director of the Department of Planning and Development).

Department of Planning and Development
 Staff: 75 (non-civil service)
 Budget: \$2.6 million
 Source of funds: \$1.9 million - tax levy
 \$1.7 million - CDBG

The Department is divided into four divisions:

1. Planning Division - This division has 2 professional planners, a traffic planner, 3 land use planners, 2 architects, a researcher/librarian, an environmental planner, and 2 graphic draftsmen. It is responsible for keeping the Master Plan current, and preparing neighborhood plans, land use plans, and

redevelopment plans. It maintains a data base on uses of property and engages in grant writing. According to the Director of Planning, long-range planning has sometimes been sacrificed in favor of short-range projects, but the city is making a concerted effort to rewrite its master plan and zoning ordinance over the next couple of years.

2. Neighborhood Development - This division is responsible for all neighborhood housing policy, the administration of CDBG funds for housing rehabilitation, and all other loan programs dealing with the construction and rehabilitation of neighborhood housing.

3. Project Management and Construction - This division is responsible for the management and coordination of all major projects. Its staff of 15, which includes engineers, architects, landscape architects and site inspectors, establishes project schedules and works with contractors and consultants so as to see each project to completion.

4. Economic Development - This division is responsible for promoting, packaging, and coordinating the city's business development efforts. It provides information and assistance with loan programs, UDAGs, etc. The staff works closely with the economic development administrator in the mayor's office, who is responsible for promoting the city, and with the current mayor who, because of his real estate development background, is personally involved in the recruitment of new businesses.

When HUD funding for redevelopment projects terminated, the City issued \$25 million in bonds to continue its redevelopment efforts. Most of that money has now been expended and the Planning Division has been asked to develop new proposals for which it is expected that bonds will again be authorized.

Providence Foundation and Providence Company

Staff: 3

Budget: \$300,000

Source of funds: Business contributions

The Providence Foundation, which is affiliated with the Chamber of Commerce but directed by a separate board, was a catalyst for economic development in the 1970's. Today, the city itself has assumed the initiative for economic development. The city contracted for a study of downtown that recommended more housing be built in that area. The Providence Company, created by the Foundation, the city and the Chamber of Commerce, was founded specifically for this purpose. It has developed a \$20 million capital pool for downtown housing (\$4 million from the city from the sale of UDAG revenues to the state housing agency and \$16 million put up by local banks) to be lent at 75% of the prime interest rates.

Providence Public Building Authority (PBA)

The city has recently formed the PBA which will be used to finance through bonding the following projects: a new public safety building; a school administration building; and watershed land for the city's reservoir.

SPRINGFIELD

Population: 152,319

Area: 33.1 square miles

Form of Government: strong Mayor

FY88 municipal budget: \$191,423,424

Tax rate per \$1,000: residential - 17.37
commercial - 32.37

The major municipal agencies responsible for planning and development activities in Springfield are the Planning Department, the Community Development Department, and the Springfield Redevelopment Authority. In addition, there are local development corporations (LDC's) that play significant roles in planning and development for projects that fall within their mission and scope of services - Springfield Central (downtown); Mason Square Development Corporation (Mason Square neighborhood commercial area); Brightwood Development Corporation (North End). Citizen participation in planning for neighborhoods is channeled through ten CDBG-eligible neighborhood councils and four private neighborhood civic associations.

Planning Department

Staff: 17 of which 13 are planners (all civil service except for Director)

Budget: \$538,000

Source of funds: tax levy

The Planning Department is responsible for planning of urban renewal areas, community development areas, the school department, and providing technical assistance for projects proposed by Springfield Central. It prepares profiles of all 18 neighborhoods, which are updated every five years. Five staff members work with 10 neighborhood councils, which were created by CDBG funds, and with 4 active civic associations in the remaining neighborhoods to develop these profiles. It is active in obtaining tax title property, which is auctioned off as quickly as possible.

The Planning Department staffs the various boards and commissions that must approve projects. It is also responsible for zoning amendments.

The Planning Department establishes a schedule of all the steps a developer must complete. Meetings with the developer and all the key departments are held in the Mayor's office as often as necessary to facilitate the development process. The Mayor

attends these sessions and is personally involved in economic development.

Community Development

Staff: 13 (non-civil service)

Budget: \$400,000

Source of funds: CDBG

The Community Development Department was established in 1975 with CDBG funds. A recommendation that the Planning Department be merged with Community Development was resisted by the Planning Department on the ground that there would be planning only for CDBG-eligible neighborhoods, as opposed to the city as a whole. Community Development is primarily responsible for the administration of \$3.8 million of CDBG funds. The main focus of these funds has been housing rehabilitation. In 1980, the City of Springfield and a consortium of thirteen local banks and financial institutions created a \$20 million Downtown Mortgage Pool which was designed to provide more attractive interest rates to targeted downtown development projects. Since the creation of the Urban Development Action Grant program (HUD), the Community Development Department has applied for and received nearly \$31 million in UDAG grants. The recent decline of federal housing funds led to the creation of a \$10 million Neighborhood Housing Mortgage Pool (1986) modeled after the highly successful Downtown Mortgage Pool (1980).

The Community Development Department utilized the income stream from early UDAG loan paybacks to pay the debt service on a pool of money (Springfield Business Development Fund) which provides below market interest rate "gap financing" to small Springfield businesses that wish to expand or modernize and will create new jobs as a result. This loan fund is a method of linking major downtown initiatives with the needs of neighborhood businesses.

Springfield Redevelopment Authority

Staff: 35

Budget: \$1.2 million

Source of funds: CDBG

The Director of Community Development serves as the head of the Springfield Redevelopment Authority. Its staff consists mainly of relocation workers and construction workers. It is currently engaged in several major neighborhood projects, the initial work for which is being funded by state and municipal bonds. In the Mason Square project, the SRA plans to take 31 properties for development, and 12 more if the owners do not repair them to meet building, housing and health codes. Springfield continues to stress urban renewal initiatives as tools for bringing new private investments into the city.

Springfield Central
Staff: 9
Budget: \$600,000
Source of funds: 1/3 CDBG
 2/3 private

Springfield Central was created in 1978 to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental character of downtown. Since that time, there has been over half a billion dollars in investments downtown, three-quarters from private sources. Springfield Central is the only organization devoting full-time attention on downtown. Since it is not an affiliate of the Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Central claims to represent the community, not just business. It is engaged in research, planning (including a master plan for downtown), development of specific projects, "marketing" the downtown area, and sponsoring activities and festivals to promote public involvement in downtown. It works very closely with the public sector.

Roberta R. Schaefer, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Appendix A

Overview of the Office of Planning and Community Development Section by Section

I. Financial Management

Responsible for:

- A. 89 contracts including CDBG and tax levy accounts
- B. Annual audits
- C. Grantee Performance Report
- D. Financial administration of miscellaneous grants including Hepatitis B, UDAG, CDAG, Incentive Aid, rental rehab, Gateway Cities Program, EDA, housing programs, etc.
- E. Financial assistance to non-profits, Office of Handicapped Affairs, Office of Elder Affairs.

II. Contracts/Redevelopment

Responsible for:

- A. Adherence to federal, state regulations and guidelines
- B. Pre-bid meetings, bid openings, pre-construction meeting
- C. The production and preparation of all grant applications
- D. WRA activities as related to urban renewal
- E. Technical assistance to contractors and developers
- F. Staff support to the Designer Selection Board
- G. Property management

III. Community Development/Housing

Responsible for:

- A. Preparation of annual CDBG program application
- B. Administering, monitoring, evaluating annual CDBG program
- C. Staffing Housing Partnership and Housing Committee of the City Council
- D. MHP housing initiatives including technical assistance, SHARP, HOP, MAP, CDAG's and grant applications.
- E. Emergency relocation assistance
- F. Housing studies, surveys and analysis
- G. Homeless shelter assistance.

IV. Economic Development/Legislative Affairs

A. Economic Development

Responsible for:

1. Updating economic analysis study relating to employment and inclusive of shift share and location quotient statistics.
2. Assisting the Research Committee of the Downtown Development Committee with vacancy rates, absorption rates, and parking needs.
3. Completing data base for vacant land and/or buildings within the Central Business District.
4. Working with the Chamber of Commerce and other private entities to determine retail and commercial needs in the Central Business District.
5. Working with the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Development Committee and the Main Street Program representatives to carry out goals of the Main Street Program.
6. Working with present and prospective private entities at the Worcester

- Airport Industrial Park.
7. Providing technical assistance to the Worcester Cooperation Council, Inc. to develop start-up incubators.
 8. Responding and assisting research organizations, developers, real estate agents and the general public with information relative to economic development activities in the City.
 9. Attending Council and City Council Committee meetings as necessary.

B. Legislative Affairs

Responsible for:

1. Conducting research relative to bills of interest to the City and develop reports/recommendations thereon.
2. Developing monthly updates and summaries relative to the status of bills of interest to the City.
3. Working with the Massachusetts Municipal Association relative to acquiring and assisting in research efforts of bills of interest to the City.
4. Assembling annual legislative package the City files with the Commonwealth.
5. Monitoring and providing updates relative to funding for Union Station.
6. Providing updates to City's legislative delegation relative to bills and grants of interest to the City.

V. Planning

Responsible for:

- A. Comprehensive Planning - Worcester Master Plan and updates thereof; participation on the Executive Board of the Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission.
- B. Open Space Planning - Broad Meadow Brook Master Plan, grantsmanship, management appraisal review for all priority open space parcels and open space management analysis.
- C. Transportation Planning - Involvement with the Route 146 and Route 9 Task Force. Coordination of efforts between the MBTA and City relative to possible commuter rail service.
- D. Environmental Planning - Federal environmental protection reviews for rental rehabilitation program, Urban Development Action Grant Program and Community Development Block Grant Program; State MEPA reviews for CityPlaza, Urban Village; Community Development Action Grant and Public Works Economic Development environmental reviews.
- E. Computer Assisted Planning - Geographic Information System (GIS) maintenance, operation and review of use for other municipal departments.
- F. Parks & Recreation Planning - Assistance in the development of the 5 Year Plan; management planning.
- G. Technical staff support - Worcester Planning Board, Elm Park Advisory Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals, Worcester Historical Commission, Central Mass. Regional Planning Commission.
- H. Zoning Task Force support - Review of proposed Zoning Ordinance.
- I. Staff support - Attendance at relevant City Council Committee meetings; preparation of reports, studies, and special assignments as designated by the Director.
- J. Site Photography - Inventory of pictures of vacant buildings, land and completed projects.

- K. Cartography - Map production and reproduction.
- L. Technical assistance to developers.
- M. Technical assistance to neighborhood groups including: Webster Square Merchants Association (street scape planning) and Green Island Neighborhood Task Force (land use planning.)

VI. Public Services

Responsible for:

- A. 23 programs funded through CDBG and tax levy
- B. Monitoring and evaluating public services programs
- C. Application and administration of the Hepatitis B., Gateway Cities Programs
- D. Technical assistance and coordination of public services programs.

V. Miscellaneous Assignments

- A. Preparation of the City's Annual Report.
- B. Preparation of the "Management News."
- C. Preparation and completion of surveys, questionnaires, and general information relative to requests from private groups, associations, developers and other cities.
- D. Research laws relative to updating the record storage system for the City's public documents.
- E. Continue to work with the International Center of Worcester, Inc. relative to coordinating visits with representatives from other countries. Recent visits included individuals from Paris, France; Zimbabwe, Africa; and Ireland.

Prepared by: City Manager's Office of Planning and Community Development

Overview of the Bureau of Land Use Control

The Bureau of Land Use Control has the following responsibilities:

1. To complete, analyze and interpret data pertaining to land use;
2. To prepare, as requested, land use plans and recommendations for submission to the City Manager;
3. To act as technical advisor to the City government and its agencies on planning matters relating to the use of land and to maintain liaison with all other public and private land use planning groups;
4. To perform the duties required by the zoning, subdivision and other related laws;
5. To serve as the Custodian of Tax Title property;
6. To dispose of tax title property through public auction or negotiated sales;
7. To participate and cooperate with the Historical Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board and the Board of Appeals in the performance of their duties;
8. To coordinate all administrative staff activities for the condemnation and demolition program;
9. To update and reprint the Official, Zoning, Ward & Precinct, Census Tract and other maps as necessary.
10. To prepare and publish the City's fact booklet, street guide, and street directory.

Prepared by: Worcester Municipal Research Bureau



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