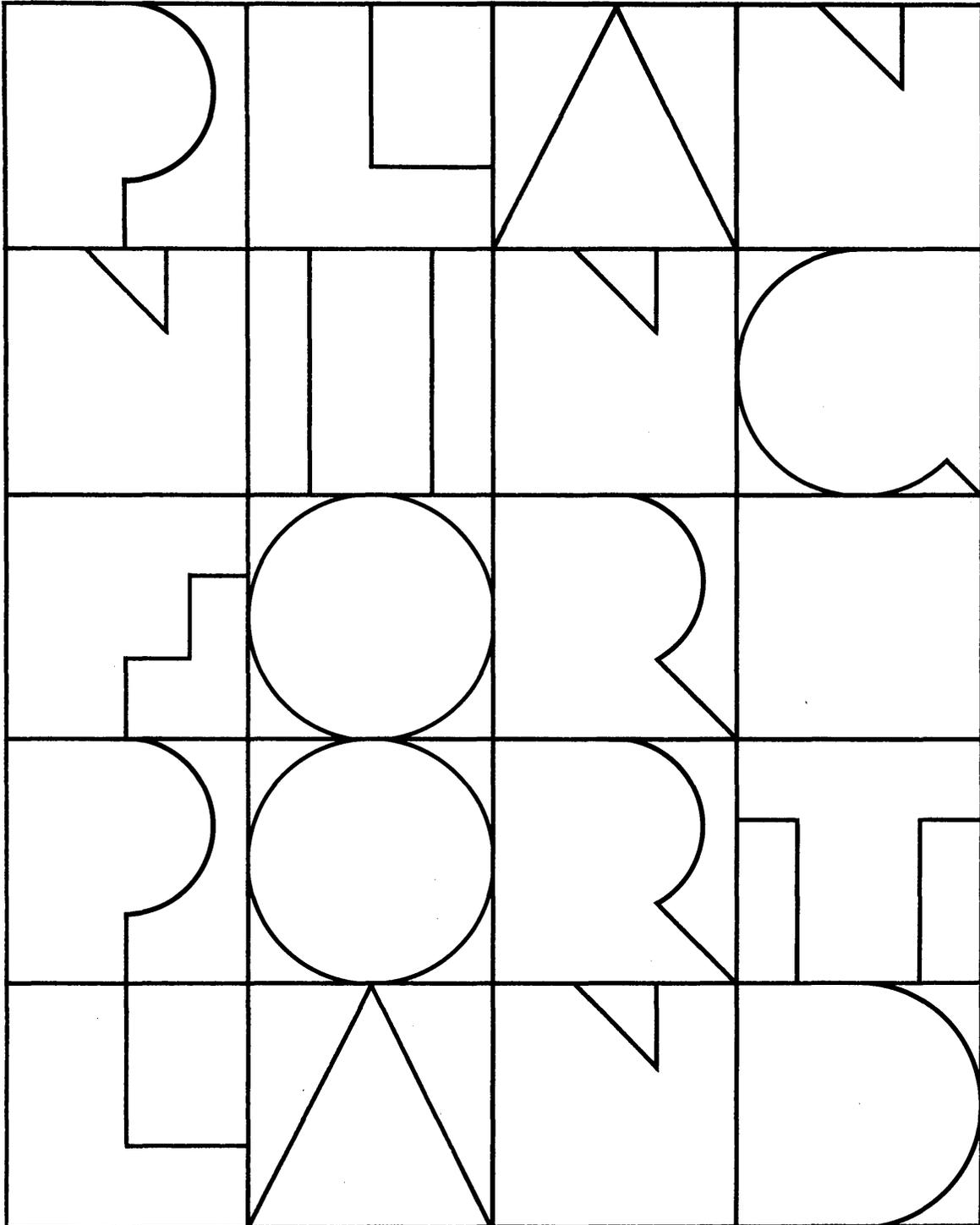




Planning For Portland Summary

Program design of a comprehensive
development planning process and
policy plan for the city of Portland





Planning
Urban Design
Architecture
Systems Building

1133 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon
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January 31, 1973

Mr. Dale Cannady, Acting Director
Portland City Planning Commission
424 S. W. Main
Portland, Oregon

Dear Dale:

In accordance with our agreement with the City of Portland, I am pleased to submit our summary report on comprehensive planning in the City. As you are aware, the report recommends a major role for the City Council in planning and increased powers and responsibilities for the Planning Commission and its staff. In addition the report recommends a strong policy oriented focus for planning decisions. Without these prerequisites, any attempt to formulate a new comprehensive plan will fall far short of meeting the needs we have identified.

At this opportunity I would like to acknowledge the suggestions you have offered. In addition, I would particularly like to thank Lloyd Keefe and John McCormick for their continued support and advice throughout the study. I would further like to express my appreciation to Earl Bradfish, Bill Scott and Dennis West whose comments and insights were extremely helpful.

Planning holds great promise for Portland. Let us work together to insure that through this study and others being conducted, enough people see this promise and rise to the occasion. Only through aggressive governmental-citizen coordination and planning will Portland retain its unique qualities and amenities in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

SRG PARTNERSHIP

J. David Richen, AIA, AIP
Partner

JDR/dag

SUMMARY REPORT

PLANNING FOR PORTLAND:
PROGRAM DESIGN OF A COMPREHENSIVE
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS AND
POLICY PLAN FOR THE CITY OF PORTLAND

CITY OF PORTLAND

January 31, 1973

The preparation of this report was financed in part through an urban planning grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended.

The logo for SRG Partnership consists of a stylized, abstract graphic. It features a thick, black, curved line that starts on the left, curves upwards and to the right, then loops back down and to the left, forming a partial circle. The text "SRG Partnership" is positioned to the left of this graphic. To the right of the graphic, the text "Planning Urban Design Architecture Systems Building" is stacked vertically. Below this, the address "1133 S.W. Park Avenue Portland, Oregon" and the phone number "97205 (503) 222-1917" are listed.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
I. PLANNING PROCESS	2
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	4
CHAPTER I SUMMARY	6
II. POLICY PLANNING	8
III. A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY PLAN FOR PORTLAND	10

INTRODUCTION

Present trends and conditions in Portland City government and city planning point to the need for a greatly improved comprehensive planning process as well as council adopted goals and policies for directing the growth and change of the City. These should be developed for all areas of city government. However, the primary focus of this program has been the physical-environmental development processes.

This summary report attempts to reduce to a few pages the three central themes of the main report and appendix:

- a. Analysis of the present planning process in the city
- b. Policy planning
- c. The development of a comprehensive policy plan for Portland

Suggestions are made for changes in the planning process and a framework for policy planning is outlined.

I. PLANNING PROCESS

The process by which we formulate plans has come to be recognized as of equal, if not more significance than the resulting plans themselves. The credibility and legitimacy of any plan is dependent on the openness and rationality of the process through which it was developed. This is particularly true of comprehensive planning which should represent the views of a broad range of interests.

For a variety of reasons, no one in the City is taking a comprehensive, long range view of the future and trying to formulate goals, policies or plans to meet that view. The City is always in the position of responding to stimuli rather than initiating or directing change. The typical planning process is a piecemeal, project approach. Because the process is so loosely structured, developers, commissioners, department heads, administrative assistants, and staff personnel have all had to develop their own networks for getting things done. The result is a spate of plans, programs, ideas and projects with little thought given in most to interrelationships and implications beyond the immediate task at hand.

In addition to a proliferation of disparate plans and programs the present process contains many injustices. Without policies to guide them, developers and property owners are often subject to arbitrary and capricious judgments by representatives of the City, ipso-facto design review, conflicting departmental attitudes on design standards and similar occurrences. Other agencies, also, are in a state of uncertainty regarding the City's attitudes and priorities.

Most importantly, the breakdown in planning process results in the dilution of the things we should care most about. This includes citizen confidence, quality of development, and new ideas and innovations to meet the City's problems.

On the following pages general recommendations are identified in the planning and policy making process which need to be implemented if comprehensive planning is to ever mean anything in Portland. These recommendations are grouped into the following general areas:

- A. Council Support and Enabling Legislation
- B. Citizen Involvement and Community Support

- C. Coordination and Cooperation
- D. Goal and Policy Formation
- E. Implementation of Plans and Policies
- F. Planning Commission Staff Limitations

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The general recommendations summarized below are followed by many detailed alternatives outlined in the body of the main report, Volume I. Charts outlining the implementation of these recommendations will be found in the back of the main report.

- I. A. 1. The City Council should mandate the comprehensive planning function of City government.

- I. B. 1. Clarify the role of citizens in the comprehensive planning process and create a responsive focus for their input.
 2. Create continual, informal access points in the planning and policy making process for citizen information and input.
 3. Increase the capacity to direct and respond to planning and policy proposals generated by citizens.

- I. C. 1. The Commissioners should commit (through ordinance or resolution) to the policy that all activities having to do with physical developmental programs and plans be thoroughly coordinated with the Planning Commission and other bureaus.
 2. Strengthen coordination of physical development activities at the bureau level.
 3. Increase coordination between the City of Portland and other agencies.

- I. D. 1. The City Council should initiate a process to formulate goals for the City.
 2. The City Council should initiate a process to identify and formulate citywide policies.
 3. The City Council should initiate a method for on-going identification and recording of policy.

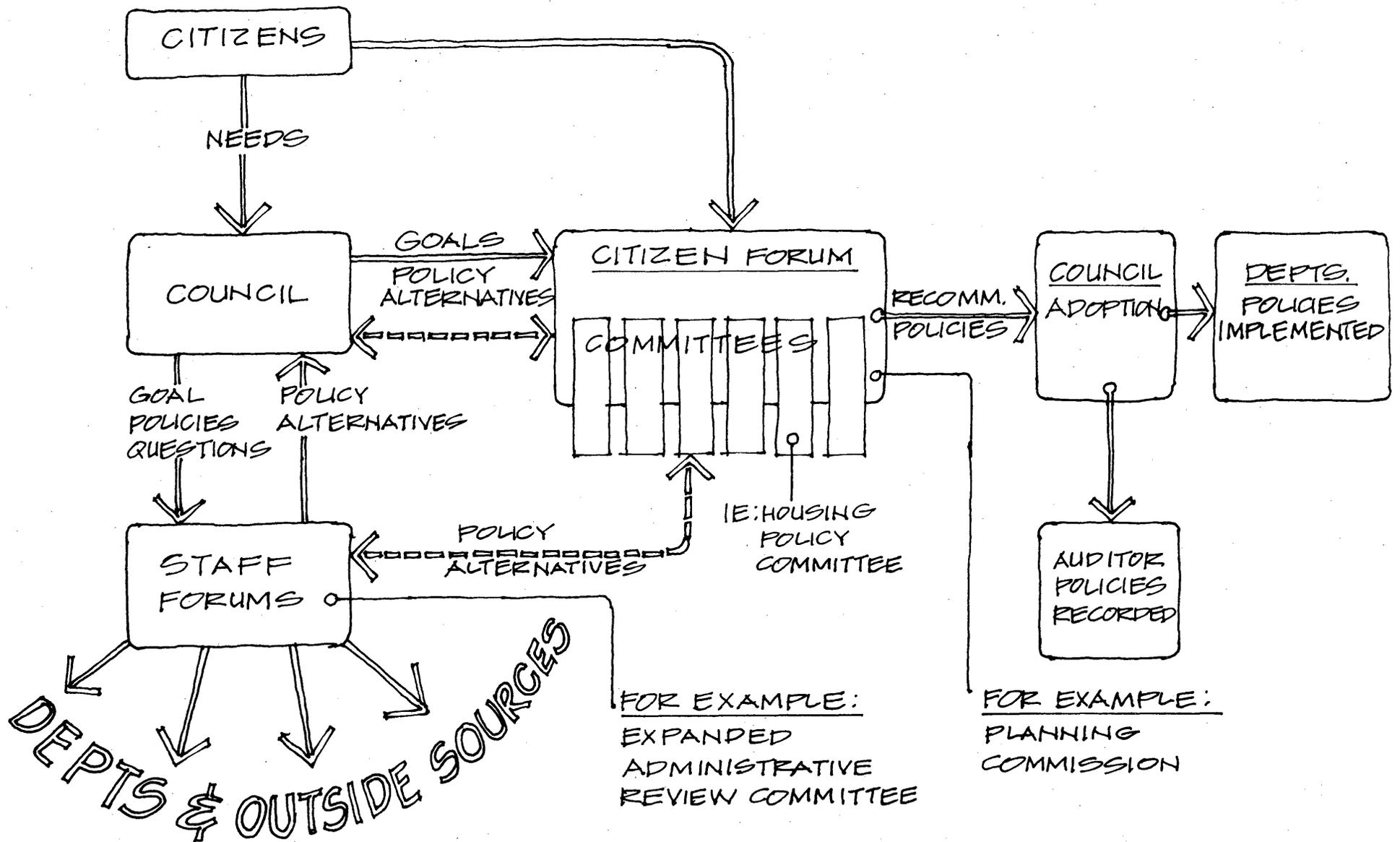
- I. E. 1. The Council should take a more active role in the formulation and ultimate implementation of plans. This includes the most important step of adopting policies and plans and using them as guides to Council action.
 2. A comprehensive review of implementation techniques should accompany comprehensive planning and policy making.
 3. Place major emphasis on expanding and strengthening controls and organizations dealing with the qualitative aspects of planning and city development processes.
- I. F. 1. Rationalize the Planning Commission work load to allow for an on-going comprehensive planning and policy making function.
 2. Expand the range of disciplines involved in the planning process.
 3. Strengthen supportive systems within the Planning Commission.
- III. A Comprehensive Policy Plan should be developed for Portland to govern physical-environmental development.

CHAPTER I SUMMARY

Chapter I discusses in detail many problems in the process by which the City makes plans and policy decisions. A large number of recommendations are made to improve this process and these may tend to confuse the basic theme underlying them all. This basic theme is, that without active and aggressive leadership from the Council, planning is largely a waste of time. Nearly all of the recommendations seek to enhance the effectiveness of planning by focusing on policy issues and techniques for arriving at policy in a constructive and democratic way. The basic elements of this process are:

- A. An active aggressive role by Council in formulation of goals and policies.
- B. Identification of a citizen focus or forum for receiving input and feedback on goal and policy recommendations.
- C. Creation of an interdepartmental forum(s) for generating feedback and new policy.
- D. Creating a policy focus and context for decision making.
- E. Increasing the effectiveness of policies and plans by seeking improved means of implementation, programming and co-ordination.
- F. Reinforcing and expanding the staff function supporting comprehensive planning in all of its ramifications.

The many recommendations contained in Chapter I are summarized in charts at the back of the main report. These charts indicate the necessary steps toward implementing the recommendations and those participants in the implementing process. If the major recommendations were implemented, the comprehensive planning and policy making process would look something like the diagram in Figure 1. on the following page.



GOAL AND POLICY MAKING PROCESS

II. POLICY PLANNING

The most important goal of improving the comprehensive development planning process as outlined on the previous pages will be a body of council adopted policy governing City development. The remainder of this summary report discusses policy, a policy plan approach, and outlines a program for accomplishing a comprehensive policy plan for Portland.

A. POLICY

While goals and objectives help to paint a vision of the future, policies form the actual means of getting there. Since policies require a firm commitment they are taken much more seriously than goals and objectives. Policy decisions are the level at which meaningful political debate can take place and relative costs and benefits can be assessed. Although a policy carries no legal force and is not irrevocably binding, it nevertheless, is a settled or definitive course of action.

Policies set the broad framework for action and form the basis upon which more detailed development decisions must be made. To be effective, policies should fall at the mid-level, between platitudes and highly specific plans and recommendations. Policies may be expressed in many different ways. They may be a.) intentional - where they are written or explicitly stated, such as found in some ordinances and plans, b.) intuitive - where they are intentional but not completely thought out as to their full implications and c.) incidental - where they are unintentional or accidental.

Examples of Policy - (Samples only)

Major arterials should be located on neighborhood boundaries.

Neighborhood business areas should be located from 1½ to 2 miles apart.

Districts shall have varying densities dependent upon the types of development, location and degree of improvements.

B. THE POLICY PLAN APPROACH

One innovation in comprehensive planning, which appeared as long as eight or nine years ago in King County, Chicago and several other cities, is the policy plan approach. This approach has great potential for Portland.

The policy plan builds on the most effective features of the previous approaches to comprehensive planning but avoids many of their shortcomings. Where in the past, policies governing development were implied, intuitive, or inconsistent, the policy plan method seeks to state explicitly in one document a coherent, unified set of policies by which the governing body can make decisions. This document is generally, but not always, accompanied by a map(s) indicating those areas of policy which are tied to geography, such as utility systems and transportation network.

The policy plan lays a broad foundation for all the major aspects of areas of city concern such as transportation, housing, land use, open space, etc. It serves as both a prophecy of public reaction to any proposal and as a guide for administrative action. The policy plan serves as a directive to departments of council intention and can save a great deal of council time by both allowing decision making at lower levels and by screening out proposals which conflict with policies.

Policy planning in itself provides no guarantee that the public will become involved, but it greatly facilitates their involvement by shifting attention away from design details and specific proposals to the essential characteristics of the future community. Specific examples and details are shown as illustrative only rather than as fixed decisions. Because the entire plan is not necessarily tied to a two dimensional map or physical designs and locations it remains much more flexible and resilient to change. It has the potential for greater longevity and can outlive and stand independent to its authors. Also, if properly designed, it can be altered and updated by piece or element without major revision or republishing.

III. A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY PLAN FOR PORTLAND

The policy plan approach outlined on the previous pages holds the most promise as a model for comprehensive planning in Portland. Of course, each locale is different in terms of political makeup, traditional ways of decision making, and ability to affect change. Therefore, the remainder of this summary report contains recommendations on how a Comprehensive Policy Plan can be accomplished in Portland.

A. CONDITIONS. The Comprehensive Policy Plan for Portland must meet the following conditions if it is to be effective. The Comprehensive Policy Plan....

1. Must recognize comprehensive planning as encompassing three policy levels:

Regional policies
Citywide policies
District policies

2. Must reflect Council policy where identifiable
3. Must be product of interdepartmental cooperation
4. Should build on progress to-date including the Downtown Plan, Model Cities Plan and Northwest Plan
5. Must be capable of Council adoption
6. Should include social and economic elements
7. Must have citizen input
8. Should be as dynamic as possible
9. Must be capable of update and revisions
10. Must be a working tool not just a glossy public relations effort
11. Must be made operational in the minimum amount of time

B. ELEMENTS

The Comprehensive Policy Plan should include policy on the following functional elements:

Physical Elements

- Housing and Residential Development
- Neighborhoods
- Commercial Development
- Industrial Development
- Transportation
- Parks, Open Space and Conservation
- Utilities
- Public Facilities
- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Character and Amenities
- Annexation

Social Elements

- Population
- Social Opportunity and Welfare
- Justice and Safety
- Recreation
- Governmental Organization
- Community Involvement

Economic Elements

- Economic Growth
- Employment
- Commerce and Trade
- Economic Resources
- Taxes and Finance

One fundamental role of the Comprehensive Policy Plan would be to identify and distinguish for each functional element, Citywide policies from regional or district and/or neighborhood level policies. The policy plan would in effect outline the prerogatives of the City with respect to regional decision making bodies and district planning organizations.

The Comprehensive Policy Plan would focus on those areas of Citywide policy. This would take place within the context of regional policies identified in the "policy spheres" process. In the absence of regional policies, the City will have to take the initiative based on assumptions (see Yaden report in Appendix, Exhibit J).

At the opposite end of the scale from the regional context, the Policy Plan will have to address neighborhood and district issues as they affect Citywide concerns. Some areas of Citywide policy with respect to neighborhoods and districts will be fixed while others should remain negotiable. These could include some aspects of the zoning pattern, minor street closures and variations, and location of mini-parks. The distinction between fixed policies and those negotiable or proposed should be made clear in the plan and any accompanying maps.

The Comprehensive Policy Plan would form a basic framework within which would fit individual district plans. The plan would not be merely an amalgam of neighborhood and district plans but would seek to give form and direction to these plans and serve as a "plug-in" framework. In conjunction with this concept, a uniform format and set of guidelines for neighborhood and district planning should be developed as soon as possible. This would include the elements to be included, kinds of policies to be resolved, required graphics and background information, and a common scale base map. These guidelines, together with the areas of policy prerogative identified for district level plans would form the basis for neighborhood plans and facilitate their integration into the Comprehensive Policy Plan framework.

As noted in the list of functional elements, social and economic policies should be included in the Comprehensive Policy Plan. Initially, however, research should be limited to the socio-economic factors of the physical elements such as housing, neighborhoods and transportation. Eventually, with the development of the Bureau of Human Resources, policies falling under the Social and Economic Elements of the Plan can be hammered out. The actual development of a "Social Plan" and social planning should be under the aegis of the Bureau of Human Resources.

In addition to Citywide policies for functional elements, the Comprehensive Policy Plan should have a section for City Policies on special areas or districts. This should not be confused with District Plans but would include such things as policies on Forest Park, the Urban Renewal Area, the industrial waterfront, etc.

C. PLAN DESCRIPTION

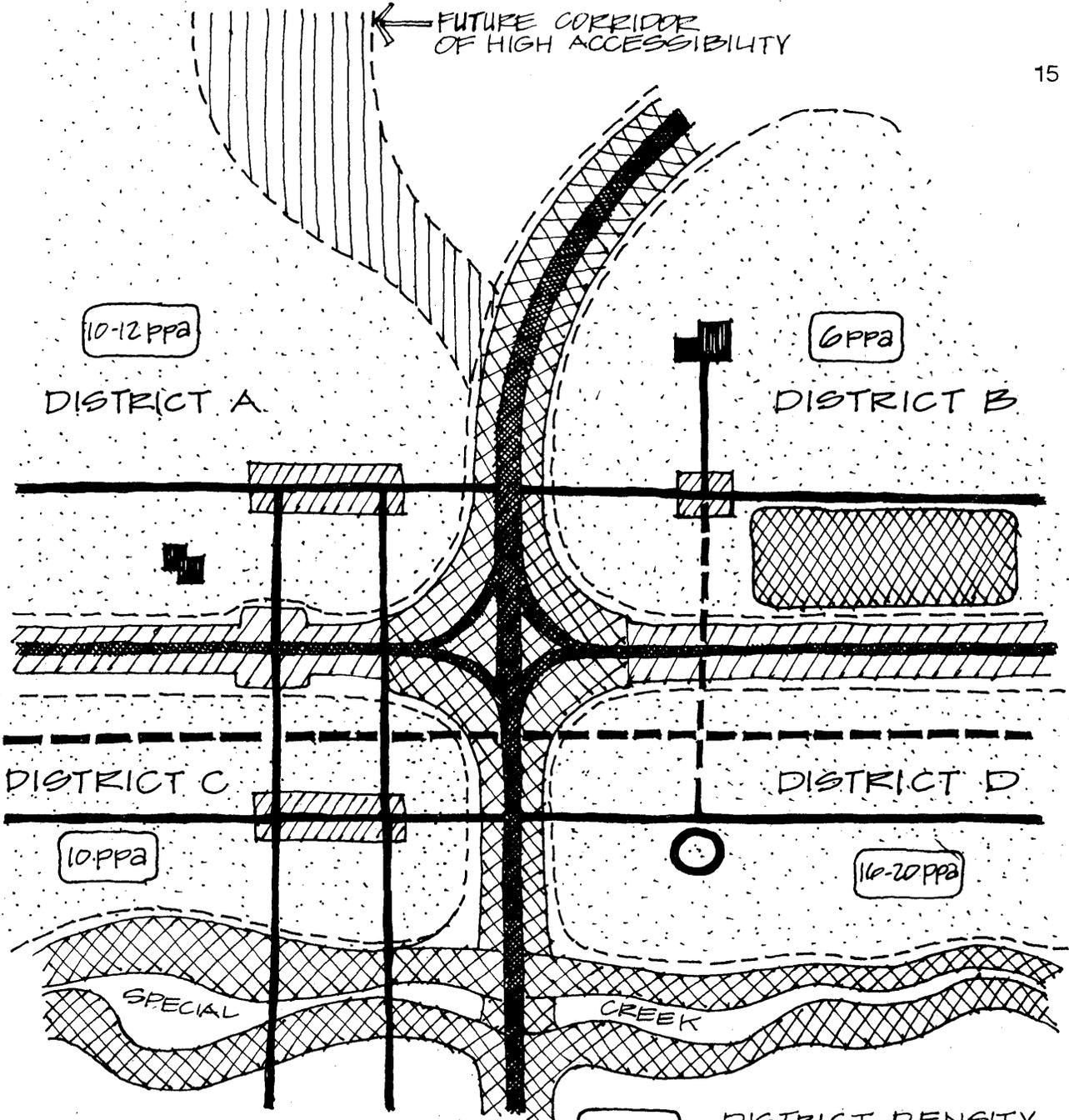
The Comprehensive Policy Plan would consist of a written document and a map(s) illustrating those policies which are capable of being mapped.

The initial policy document may not necessarily be fully comprehensive but would form a framework which could be added to or altered over time. The San Diego Council Policy Manual with separate pages for each policy or cluster of policies is an excellent model for this approach (Exhibit M). Each policy or set of policies could be preceded by a brief descriptive background statement and followed by references to additional source materials. In addition, there should be a short identification of the devices for implementing the policy(ies). Backup material and support data would be in separate volumes. This would allow for ready identification of policies on all functional elements within one reasonably sized document. Figure 2 illustrates this conceptual format.

SUBJECT	RESOLUTION/ ORDINANCE NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
<p>○ _____</p> <p>BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION _____ _____ _____</p> <p>POLICY : _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____</p>			
<p>○ _____</p> <p>IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES : _____ _____ _____ _____</p>			
<p>○ _____</p> <p>REFERENCE SOURCES : _____ _____ _____ _____</p>			

The Comprehensive Policy Plan Map should be inexpensively reproduced (i.e. Northwest Plan) annually or biannually and reflect any changes adopted by Council. Figure 3 shows schematically some of the possible uses for such a map.

← FUTURE CORRIDOR OF HIGH ACCESSIBILITY



- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|
| | FIXED FREEWAY LOCATION | | DISTRICT DENSITY ALLOCATION |
| | FIXED ARTERIAL LOCATION | | FIXED USE POLICY |
| | PROPOSED ARTERIALS | | LAND USE POLICY WITH MINOR CHANGES ALLOWED |
| | FIXED PUBLIC FACILITIES | | PLANNING DISTRICTS WITH SPECIFIED LOCAL DECISION MAKING PREROGATIVES: |
| | PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES | | • DENSITY DISTRIBUTION |
| | | | • MINOR STREET CLOSURES |
| | | | • MINI-PARKS, ETC. |

COMPREHENSIVE POLICY PLAN MAP

INDICATING CITYWIDE POLICIES AND DISTRICT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

D. PROGRAM

To initiate the development of a Comprehensive Policy Plan, two recommendations from the preceding chapters must be acted on immediately:

1. The Council must mandate comprehensive planning
2. Full time staff must be assigned to comprehensive planning

Due to staff and resource limitations, it is recommended that the first sixteen months be spent developing policies in the following four areas:

Housing and Residential Development

Neighborhoods

Commercial and Industrial Development

Transportation

These are the areas of greatest public and political interest and will form the backbone of the Plan. The remaining areas of policy development such as Parks, Utilities and Public Facilities are basically supportive of the primary four and should be pursued during the second and third planning years.

It is important to remember that with the policy plan framework each element does not have to be 100 % comprehensive or complete. The important thing is to get the process underway, establish an initial base of unified policies and then build and expand upon those.

To formulate the Comprehensive Policy Plan at least four tasks must be taken - preferably simultaneously. These four activities are discussed in the main report.

1. A "policy audit"
2. A needs analysis
3. A goals and alternate futures exercise
4. Policy synthesis

E. STAFF AND SCHEDULE

The following outline represents an updated version of the previous 701 application for 1973 and is based on the recommendations in this report. Due to present uncertain administrative conditions at the Planning Commission as well as the role the Council elects to play in the formulation of the Plan, the proposed staffing and scheduling outline below should be viewed more in terms of concept than detail.

As noted the first sixteen months would focus on developing policy in the areas of:

- Housing and Residential Development
- Neighborhoods
- Commercial and Industrial Development
- Transportation

The remaining functional areas of the Policy Plan should be developed in the second and third planning year. This would include an active role on behalf of the Bureau of Human Resources in the development of the Economic and Social policies elements. The following diagram sketches out the three year program.

To develop policy in each of the initial four areas (Housing and Residential Development, Neighborhoods, etc.) there would have to be a:

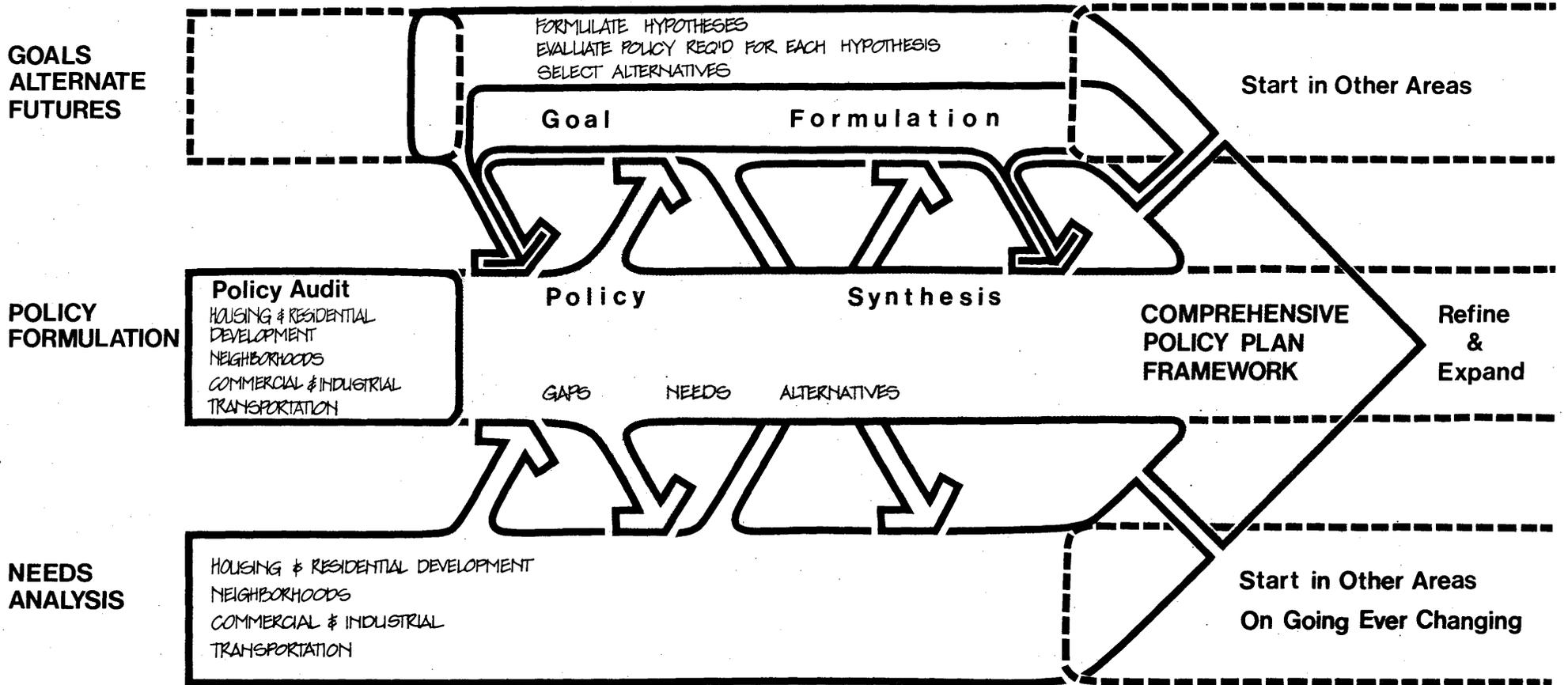
Policy Audit
Needs Analysis
Goals and Alternate Futures exercise
Policy Synthesis

Given the staff requested for the 1973, 701 application and extending it to sixteen months the following breakdown of staff time is proposed.

	man/months		
	senior pl.	city pl.	asst. pl.
Project Management	2.0		
Policy Audit	1.0	4.0	4.0
Needs Analysis	4.0	8.0	8.0
Goals & Alternate Futures	4.0	8.0	8.0
Policy Synthesis	4.0	6.0	6.0
	15.0	26.0	26.0

The following schedule for formulating the Comprehensive Policy Plan covers the initial sixteen month period.

months 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18



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SCHEDULE · COMPREHENSIVE POLICY PLAN