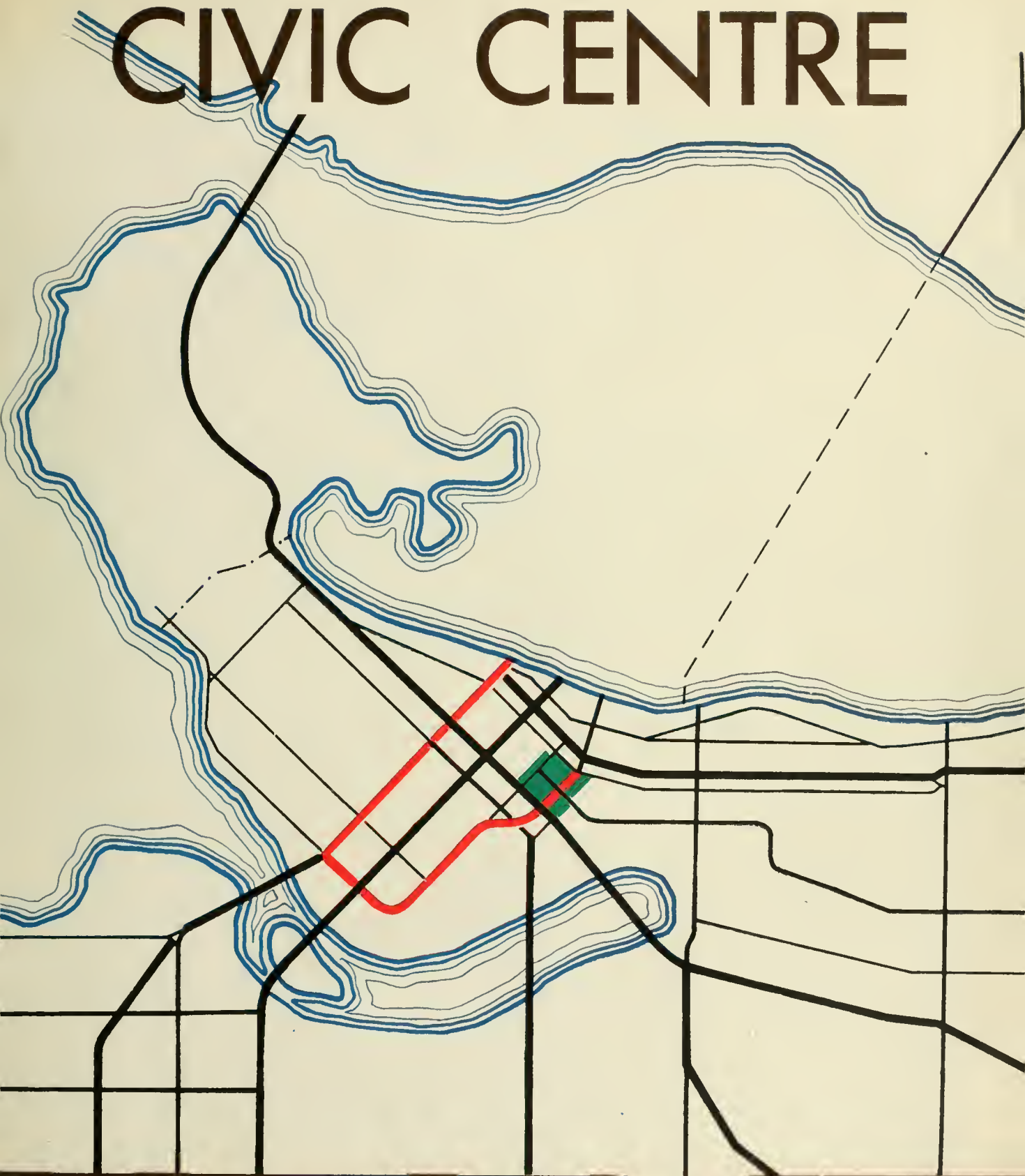


# CIVIC CENTRE



VANCOUVER  
TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

JANUARY, 1946



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A PRELIMINARY REPORT  
UPON  
PUBLIC BUILDINGS  
AND  
CIVIC CENTRE

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER  
TOWN PLANNING  
COMMISSION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA



HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES  
TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI  
29th June, 1945

Price: \$0.25

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1945

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317 NORTH ELEVENTH STREET  
SAINT LOUIS 1, MISSOURI

29th June, 1945.

Town Planning Commission,  
Vancouver, British Columbia.

Gentlemen:

We are pleased to submit the following report upon Public Buildings and a Civic Centre. This is one of the series of reports comprising your revised Town Plan.

This report contains an analysis of existing public buildings and of future requirements for public buildings, and studies of the grouping of certain public buildings in a Civic Centre adjacent to the central business district. This study indicates the need for and the desirability of such a grouping of public buildings. Vancouver has an unusual opportunity to develop a most outstanding arrangement of public structures that would return many benefits to the people of the city.

We wish to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and co-operation that has been given us by local officials and citizens in the preparation of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

*by Harland Bartholomew*

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## INTRODUCTION

Many public buildings are required in large cities. Some of these buildings, such as schools and fire department stations, must be distributed throughout the city where they can conveniently serve the surrounding residential districts. Other public buildings such as the city hall, court house and library should be at a convenient location in the central section of the city. It is with the latter type of public buildings that this study is concerned.

Most public buildings are designed to reflect the dignity and authority of government. It has long been the custom to provide open areas about them and, where possible, to place them in a commanding position. When several public buildings are needed there may be an advantage in creating a harmonious group or Civic Centre. The determination of the location for individual public buildings or for a public building group is an important town planning function.

A Civic Centre comprised of several large public buildings so designed as to create a harmonious composition represents one of the highest forms of municipal accomplishment. It reflects great public spirit and is a stimulation for future civic interest and achievement. Few cities have built such groups because there has not been opportunity for construction of several buildings within the course of a few years. Furthermore, it is not practical to undertake a Civic Centre unless an appropriate location can be found which is suitable for the group as a whole, as well as satisfactory from the standpoint of the several individual buildings.

In addition to the inspirational value of a Civic Centre there are many practical advantages in the grouping of public buildings. The first of these is the greater public convenience thus made possible. There is not merely considerable interchange between various governmental offices and departments but persons having business in more than one public office are saved the time and inconvenience of several trips where public buildings are in scattered locations.

A well established Civic Centre should become a dominant focal point in the city structure. As such it should facilitate improved design and arrangement of streets, mass transportation facilities and the use of adjoining land, particularly the central business district with which it is most intimately related. A large group of public buildings should complement the business district in such a manner as to create an orderly design, vastly improved public convenience and greater permanence and stability of land uses and property values. One of the marked difficulties of modern cities has been the disastrous shifts in central business districts.

When public buildings are built in separate scattered locations, site costs are increased because of the greater land areas required. Even though more expensive land is taken for a Civic Centre, the total cost may be no greater than for scattered sites. An even higher price could be justified for a Civic Centre site because of the greater public benefits obtained. In some instances it has been found that considerable economy is possible in servicing and maintenance costs of a public building group as compared with scattered public building sites.

## NEED FOR REAPPRAISAL

The earlier Town Plan published in 1930 contained recommendations for the development of a Civic Centre site. No public building has been erected upon this proposed site, and since the 1930 Plan is now being re-studied and re-adjusted to changing conditions and to meet probable future needs, it is appropriate to make a new study of public building requirements. This report contains an analysis of the factors affecting the location of public buildings, the anticipated need for public buildings, a description of certain changing conditions within the city, and recommendations regarding the location of the public building group.



# VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

## DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

### LAND USES

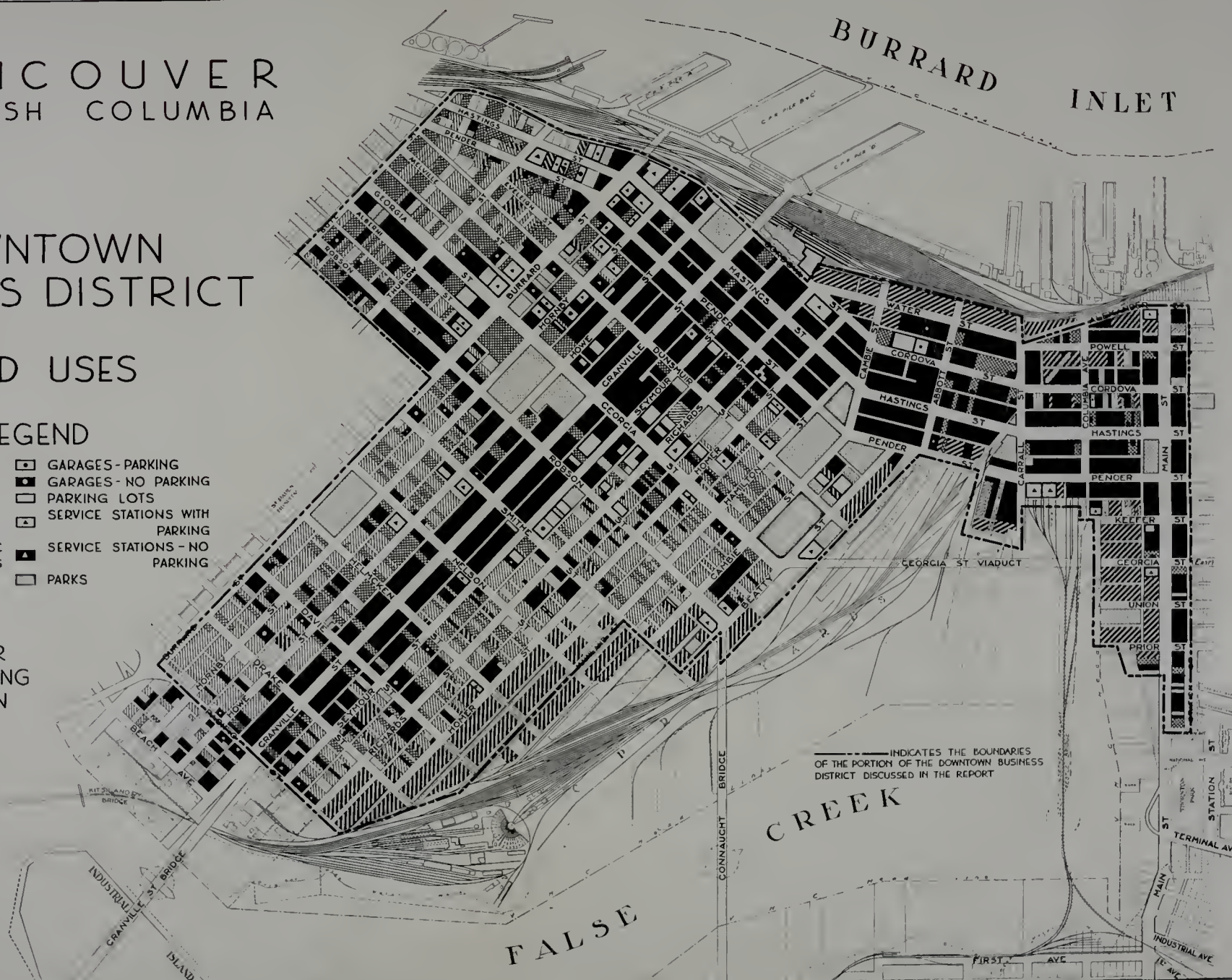
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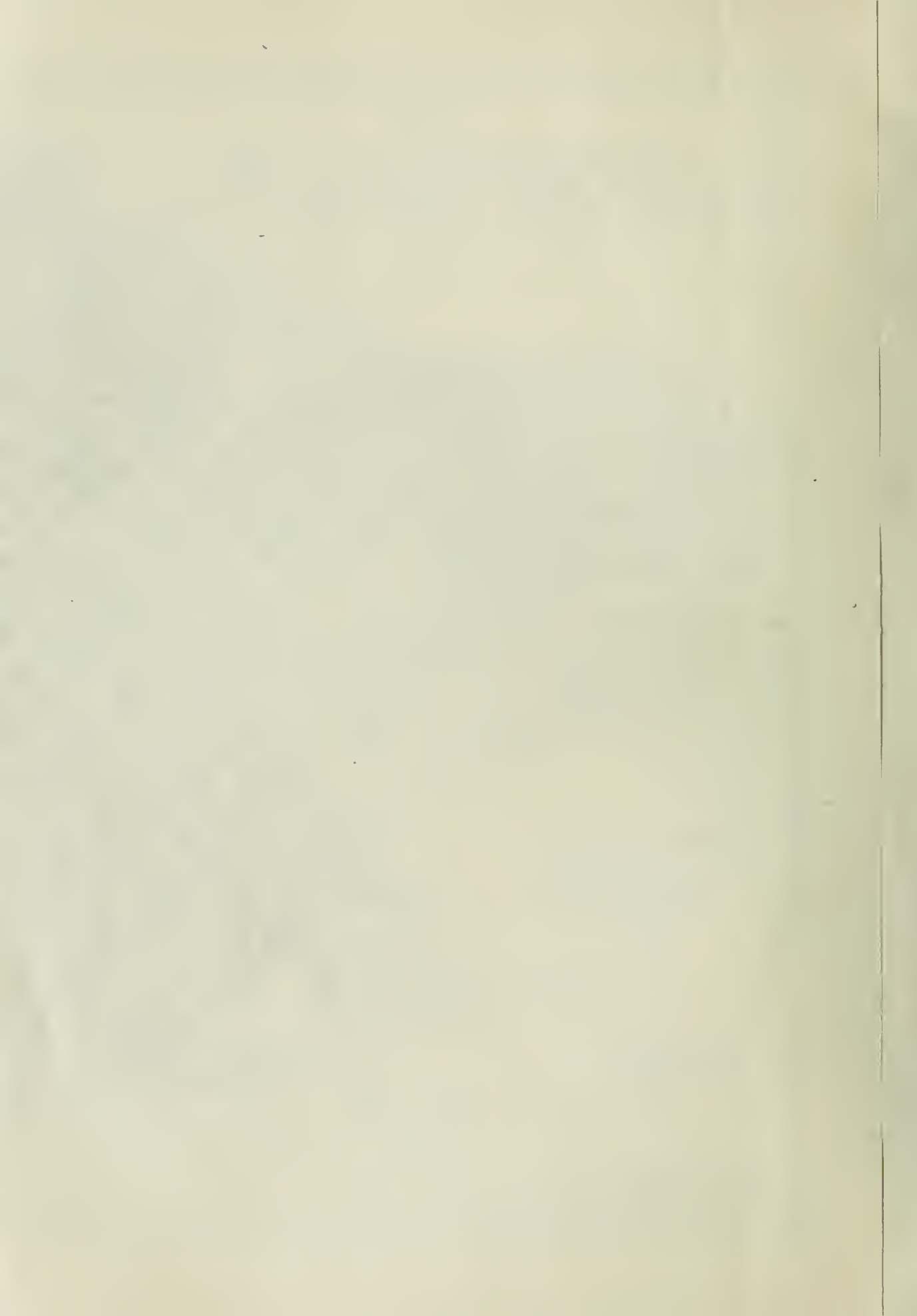
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| COMMERCIAL                             | GARAGES - PARKING                |
| INDUSTRIAL                             | GARAGES - NO PARKING             |
| HOTELS, APARTMENTS<br>& ROOMING HOUSES | PARKING LOTS                     |
| 1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLINGS                 | SERVICE STATIONS WITH<br>PARKING |
| PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC<br>BUILDINGS      | SERVICE STATIONS - NO<br>PARKING |
|  | PARKS                            |

VANCOUVER  
TOWN PLANNING  
COMMISSION  
1945

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW  
& ASSOCIATES  
TOWN PLANNERS

SCALE IN FEET  
0 100 200 300 400 500 600







## FACTORS AFFECTING THE LOCATION OF A CIVIC CENTRE

The 1930 Report listed four major factors that must be considered in the selection of a Civic Centre. These were: (1) Proximity to central business district; (2) focal position; (3) character of site and surroundings, and (4) character of buildings comprising the group. These factors are equally important today. It is now proposed to re-examine them in the light of present conditions.

### (1) PROXIMITY TO CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

This factor has even greater significance now than when the 1930 study was made. The majority of the people who have business to conduct in the public buildings either work in or visit the central business district during the average day. Thus a location near this district will be the most convenient for the great majority of citizens. Civic Centres usually contain a public auditorium. One of the main uses of a public auditorium is for conventions, which is about the most profitable form of business a city can invite. Convention attendants stay at hotels and hence it is imperative that the auditorium be located within easy walking distance of the hotels, most of which are in the central business district.

Since the business district contains the most valuable property in the city it should be conserved and protected most carefully. A properly located group of public buildings can exert a most beneficial influence in stabilization of the central business district.

### (2) FOCAL POSITION

More citizens and visitors will see and enjoy daily the Civic Centre if the site is in a dominant focal position. When the Civic Centre is designed integrally with the business district, the Civic Centre assumes the strategic position that is most desirable. It should not be relegated to an obscure or inaccessible location nor placed at one extremity of the business district no matter how good the site, for so placed, it would not be a genuine "centre". It should be accessible to a great majority of the major streets that extend to all sections of the city which again means a site which is integral with the business district since this is the major objective of most vehicular traffic. It must also be equally accessible to transit facilities—street cars, trolley coaches and motor busses. Here again the Town Plan provides for the concentration of these facilities within the central business district and thus a site integral therewith, would be the most acceptable.

### (3) CHARACTER OF SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

When variation in ground elevations permit selection of a site on high ground, the Civic Centre can be given an unusually dominant location. A sloping ground

is preferable to a completely level site as it permits of a much more interesting treatment. It may also afford better opportunities for the development of underground parking. In Vancouver a site that could command views over water areas and the distant mountains should be taken advantage of if possible.

The character of the surrounding property is important in the choice of a Civic Centre location. It should not be placed in surroundings that are inharmonious and cannot be improved. However, if the site is sufficiently large, it can to a considerable extent create its own environment. In certain circumstances the public building group might stimulate the rehabilitation and improvement of adjacent property.

#### (4) CHARACTER OF THE BUILDINGS

There are two distinct types of public buildings, *i.e.*, those housing administrative departments and agencies such as the city hall, court house, federal or provincial offices, and buildings of the cultural type such as public library, museum or art gallery. In very large metropolitan cities it may be possible to have both an administrative and a cultural centre. This is seldom the case, however, and in recent years particularly, it has been considered wisest to have the cultural buildings close to transportation and population concentration for wider use and enjoyment of the collections housed.

#### MISCELLANEOUS FACTORS

There are, of course, certain additional miscellaneous factors that should influence the development of a Civic Centre location. The item of cost is present in any municipal undertaking, and the cost of both acquiring and improving the site must be considered. Another factor that should not be overlooked is the assembly of the land and legal problems involved. If there are a number of structures that would be difficult or impractical to remove for many years, this might adversely affect the development of the city even though the building development may be extended over a long period.

Any site must be studied in relation to all the above factors. It is impossible to find any one location in which all of these factors are complete. However, an appraisal of each site in its relation to the several items can clearly indicate the most desirable location. If there is any single factor that should be dominant it is the matter of proximity to the central business district. The values in this central area are so high and mean so much to the welfare of the city that the importance of this factor can scarcely be over-emphasized.

## PUBLIC BUILDING NEEDS IN VANCOUVER

There are an unusually large number of public buildings to be constructed in Vancouver within the next few years. The economic depression during the decade 1930-1940 and the subsequent World War have delayed the erection of public buildings, and thus there is an accumulative need. With the population growth that has resulted from the war, and the probable growth that will occur once building has started in the post-war period, there will be even more serious need for several new structures. The present is an especially desirable time to determine upon a location for a public building group.

The following is a brief summary of the public structures that are now or soon will be needed within the city.

### PUBLIC LIBRARY

The present Public Library is entirely inadequate, and a complete new structure is desirable. There would be no advantage in maintaining the present site unless possibly as a branch library. To best serve the public need, Vancouver's main public library should be constructed near the centre of the downtown business district. Such a building could well become part of a Civic Centre group.

### MUSEUM

Vancouver is the centre of an area that is rich in historical lore and of extraordinary natural resources. The Art, Historical and Scientific Society has long devoted itself to collecting source material and creating wider understanding of its significance. Public interest in these matters will increase greatly in the future. There is a genuine need for an adequate museum to properly house and display the present collections and future additions. The educational value of such a museum for children as well as for adults and for tourists will increase immeasurably with the passage of the years.

### ART GALLERY

The Vancouver Art Gallery is now located on Georgia Street between Thurlow and Bute Streets. This is a small structure on a restricted site which has been financed to date by private subscription. An excellent collection has been started which has already outgrown the building. Larger quarters in a more central location is the immediate need. Many cities equal to Vancouver in importance and population have built large public art galleries, of the type here proposed.

### AUDITORIUM

There is much local interest and need for an auditorium that could accommodate conventions, local meetings, musicals, theatrical presentations, and the like.



The city is without an adequate structure of this type at the present time. This building should contain several small and large committee rooms and an auditorium of 2,500 to 3,500 seating capacity, preferably designed as a music hall of the opera house type. Several of the more modern public auditoriums also have a large hall or arena, with level floor for exhibitions, which could also be used for large public gatherings with seating capacity of 6,000 to 8,000 persons. This should be anticipated in any new public auditorium for Vancouver.

#### SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION OFFICES AND CENTRAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

The School Board will require facilities for its offices, and consideration is also being given to the construction of a downtown vocational school. These two uses might well be combined in a single structure.

#### FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDINGS

The Dominion Government has under consideration the construction of two buildings, one for the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the other to accommodate the various federal offices now scattered in many of the downtown office buildings. A temporary building for the administration of Veterans' Affairs is now under construction in order to provide for this Department's immediate requirements. These buildings could advantageously be located within the Civic Centre group as detached or semi-detached structures.

#### PROVINCIAL OFFICE BUILDING

The Provincial Government recently announced its intention to erect an office building opposite the Court House on property long held for that purpose. It is apparent, therefore, that this would preclude its inclusion in any public building group scheme.

#### CITIZENS' WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING

There is much local interest in the construction of a War memorial building to commemorate the services of the many men and women of Vancouver during the present war. This structure might serve as a major community centre with ample rooms for meetings, as well as a repository of military records. It should be an unusually imposing structure of special design and construction.

#### POST OFFICE

A new Post Office building will undoubtedly be needed at some future date. This will probably be in the nature of a receiving and sorting station and should be within reasonable access of railroad facilities. It is not apparent whether or not this should be within the public building group.

#### COURT HOUSE

The present Court House on Georgia Street has an adequate and desirable site. The building is attractive in design and of fairly modern construction.

Since it will not require enlargement it should not be considered in any new public building group.

## CITY HALL

The present City Hall south of False Creek is a new and modern structure which should be adequate for many years. It has an attractive site but is unfortunately located with respect to the central business district and the main concentration of major streets and mass transportation facilities. It is almost the universal custom to have the City Hall as the predominant building of a Civic Centre. Since the present City Hall is a comparatively new building it cannot be.

From the foregoing it is evident that a large number of public buildings are now needed in Vancouver. It is unusual to find such an immediate need for so many public structures. Here is an unparalleled opportunity to develop an extraordinary Civic Centre. Few cities have had such favorable circumstances attending the construction of their public buildings.

## CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND POSSIBLE CIVIC CENTRE

As indicated previously, there must be a close relationship between the Civic Centre and the downtown central business district. Each requires special design but the two designs must be carefully coordinated. No modern city attempts to design a Civic Centre independent of or unrelated to its central business district. Before discussing possible Civic Centre sites in Vancouver it is necessary to consider the form, the size and the trends of Vancouver's central business district.

### LOCATION AND CHARACTER OF BUSINESS DISTRICT

Plate Number 1 graphically shows the existing land uses within Vancouver's central business district. Its boundaries include the same area as the "General Business District" in the present Zoning By-law.

Commercial and retail uses should absorb the dominant portion of the central district. Vancouver's business district, and especially the commercial uses, are located in the shape of an "L"—the pivot point or the centre being about at Hastings and Granville Streets, with development extending eastwards along and paralleling Hastings Street and southward along and paralleling Granville Street. The most compact and intensive commercial development is around the intersection of Granville and Hastings, where several blocks are almost completely absorbed by retail uses. In general, the commercial development is at least two or three blocks wide in practically all portions of the business district from Main Street on the east, to Smithe Street on the south. Beyond Smithe Street is found more of a string development along both sides of Granville Street with only scattered commercial uses along the paralleling streets.

A compact business district in which the commercial uses absorb several blocks in all directions is far more preferable than an elongated growth. The former type is much more convenient for the shoppers, it can be better served with transit facilities and is less subject to congestion. In the compact business district there is also less tendency for shifting of the business centre and thus there is less difficulty in stabilizing property values. The present tendency toward a string development along Granville Street presents serious problems, and every effort must be made to encourage a more compact commercial development. A special report on Vancouver's Downtown Business District is in course of preparation as part of the revision of the Town Plan.

While Plate Number 1 does not show the comparative property values it is well known that values have declined in the older northern and eastern sections of the business district. Here are many buildings that should be removed and rebuilt. Much of this section is well suited for good retail development. There is no sound

reason why it should be abandoned. In the long run there is nothing to be gained and much to be lost by a complete shift to the Granville Street area. However, this is inevitable so long as no concerted effort is made to bring about a balanced development in both areas. This is not solely a property owner's problem. It is a municipal problem of the first magnitude. Not merely is the city concerned in the maintenance of taxable values but, of still greater significance, the city is concerned with the annual costs of servicing the business district with innumerable special facilities ranging from high pressure water service to traffic police. If these costs are increased because of abnormal expansion and bad design and arrangement of the business district, there must be an increase in taxes. Thus the municipality must co-operate with property owners in facilitating stabilization and reconstruction. New street improvements, good mass transportation facilities and the development of off-street parking spaces are among the type of improvements that can facilitate this objective. The studies show also that a new Civic Centre, properly located, will do much to bring about a more stable and well balanced business district.

## AREA OF CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The central business district, as shown on Plate I, is more than adequate to accommodate the probable future commercial and retail development. Of the 300 acres (exclusive of streets and lanes) in the total area, only 117 acres or 39 percent is now used for retail and commercial purposes. More than 20 percent, or something over 60 acres, is now occupied by residential development.

On the basis of the present ratio between commercial development and population, not over 200 acres would be required for commercial uses in the future business district. Property values would probably be even higher if a more intensive use was made of a smaller area. However, the estimate of 200 acres is quite liberal, particularly when it is realized that a substantial portion of the old and more obsolete commercial structures should be replaced by more modern facilities.

While the central business districts of large cities may experience some further loss of business due to decentralization of retail business, it is usually believed that the greatest volume of business decentralization has already occurred and that more rebuilding of both old residential and commercial areas will tend to give new strength to central business districts. It is especially important that Vancouver's downtown business district be arranged in the most orderly manner possible from and about its present focal point at Hastings and Granville Streets.

## POSSIBLE LOCATION OF CIVIC CENTRE SITES

Three possible locations adjacent to the future central business district were analyzed to determine their comparative advantages for the public building group. These three included:

1. The site proposed in the earlier Town Plan, which comprised the area bounded by Burrard, Davie and Bute Streets, and English Bay.
2. The Central School site, which included generally the area bounded by Georgia, Beatty and Pender Streets and the lane between Richards and Homer Streets.
3. The site bounded generally by Burrard, Alberni, Bute and Pender Streets.



The latter site was studied because of its proximity to the business district, its desirable surroundings, and the possibilities of obtaining views of the inlet and the mountains. Because of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company's docks, it is an important gateway to the city. However, no completely satisfactory arrangement of buildings could be developed upon this site. This was primarily due to the requirements for the several individual buildings rather than to difficulties of the site. Furthermore, this area was not as conveniently related to existing and proposed mass transportation facilities and thus would be less accessible to the large number of persons using the centre. Land costs here are also surprisingly high. Because of these disadvantages a further consideration of this site was abandoned.

It will be recalled that sites, Numbers 1 and 2 above, were the ones that received major consideration in the earlier Town Plan. At that time the Central School site was admitted to be the most conveniently related to the central business district and contained excellent possibilities. The major objection was the character of the surrounding development and the fact that it would not have as excellent a setting nor would the site afford the wonderful panorama of marine and landscape as would the site adjoining Burrard and Davie Streets.

Conditions have changed greatly since this first study was made. The great economic depression of the 1930's altered national and local population trends, new discoveries in the quantitative aspects of the uses of urban land, decentralization trends and such, have brought wholly new influences to bear and new considerations in the location of Civic Centres. A reappraisal of these matters in Vancouver follows:

#### 1. RELATION TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

When the original Town Plan was developed, cities throughout the country had been growing for many decades at an unusually rapid rate. A population of at least one million persons seemed possible for Vancouver within the period covered by the Plan. Population growth throughout both the United States and Canada experienced a sharp change in the 1930-40 decade. Statisticians agree that population will grow much less rapidly in future years and may even cease to grow after 1980. Estimates made as part of the present planning programme indicate a population of about 500,000 for the City of Vancouver by 1971, although Greater Vancouver may obtain a population of between 600,000 and 700,000.

The earlier population estimates indicated the central business district would have expanded to the south and west so that the English Bay site would have been immediately adjacent to this enlarged business area. However, on the basis of the revised population estimates, less than two-thirds of the originally proposed business district will be needed or can be expected to develop for commercial uses. The former site on English Bay would not be conveniently related to the future business district. It would encourage an unwarranted scattering of commercial development to the southwest rather than the desirable compact extension from the intersection of Granville and Hastings Streets. The Central School site is ideally related to the existing and logical future business district and would have many beneficial influences upon protecting and even improving property values in the downtown area.

## 2. HIGHWAYS

A new highway improvement has also been proposed which was not anticipated in the original study. This is the proposed Express Highway from New Westminster. Vancouver is the terminus of many thousands of miles of highways including the Trans-Canada Highway and the comprehensive 40,000-mile system of Inter-regional or Interstate Highways that has been initiated within the United States. Included in the latter, of course, is the United States portion of the Pacific Highway from South and Central America and Mexico. A large proportion of the tourists to Vancouver, as well as many citizens of Greater Vancouver, will use this highway to reach the central business district. The highway is proposed to enter this area from the southeast across False Creek and terminate on Georgia Street. Thus, the Central School site would be immediately adjacent to this important entrance to the business district, and a fine view of the public building group would be afforded the large number of persons using the highway.

While the English Bay site would adjoin the important Burrard Street it is not served directly by the several other important major streets. This site would also be served by the Cambie Street portion of the proposed Distributor Street, by Dunsmuir Street (which is to be connected to the Georgia Viaduct) and by Pender Street as well as by the before-mentioned Expressway to the city. Vehicular accessibility to the Central School site is now and will continue to be much better than to the English Bay site.

## 3. HOTELS

Since the present public building group is to contain an auditorium as well as other buildings that will be used by both visitors and local citizens, it should be closely accessible to the hotel facilities. From this standpoint, the Central School site has many advantages over the original site, particularly since hotels and commercial uses cannot be expected to extend to the southwest as far as the English Bay site.

## 4. MASS TRANSPORTATION

Street cars, trolley coaches and busses are vitally important to the location of the Civic Centre site. Under both the existing and proposed transit routings, a far larger number of transit routes are conveniently related to the Central School site than to the Burrard-Davie Street site. The Central School site would be accessible to the north and south lines located on Richards and Granville Streets as well as to the heavily travelled lines on Hastings and Cordova Streets. The English Bay site is served only by the important Davie Street line.

## CHARACTER OF SURROUNDINGS

The character of the surrounding property and the views that can be obtained from the sites are more satisfactory in the English Bay site. It would be difficult to find a more desirable location from this standpoint. However, if the Central School site is developed in a spacious manner and contains gardens and open space,

its appearance can be most creditable and quite satisfactory. The latter site, properly developed, should even have a beneficial influence in the redevelopment of the northern section of the business district and in the rehabilitation of the area to the south.

## COST OF SITE

The 1945 assessed valuation of the Central School site is approximately \$1,782,000 but nearly \$775,000 of this amount represents public land and buildings. The Burrard Street site—land and improvements—is assessed at approximately \$1,079,000 of which \$131,400 is the assessed valuation of publicly owned property. The area of the originally proposed site was 33.6 acres, and the area of the Central School site is 20.2 acres, including streets within the boundaries.

## SUMMARY

In summary, the Central School site affords so many advantages from the standpoint of accessibility and convenience, proximity to mass transportation as well as its stabilizing effect upon the central business district, that there can be no doubt as to the most logical location. The Central School site is recommended as the proper location for a new public building group.



## SUGGESTED GROUPING OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Plate Number 2 shows a suggested arrangement of public buildings on the Central School site. A most satisfactory arrangement of buildings and an attractive design can be created on this site. The scheme indicates how the buildings can all be well related to each other and to the downtown business district, and that there would be adequate open space to permit good landscape architectural design. The provision of lawns, shrubs, trees and gardens should be a most important part of any proposed public building group in Vancouver.

The Citizens' War Memorial Building is the focal structure of the entire development. A portion of this structure should have considerable height—in effect a memorial tower—so that it would dominate the entire group of buildings. A distinctive feature of the tower, and one that would add greatly to its significance as a memorial and interest and charm to both the tourist and citizen, would be the inclusion of a carillon. The bells could be procured later but the tower should be constructed with this thought in mind. This building is so placed in the design that it will harmonize with and complement the present Cenotaph, Vancouver's memorial to its heroes of World War I.

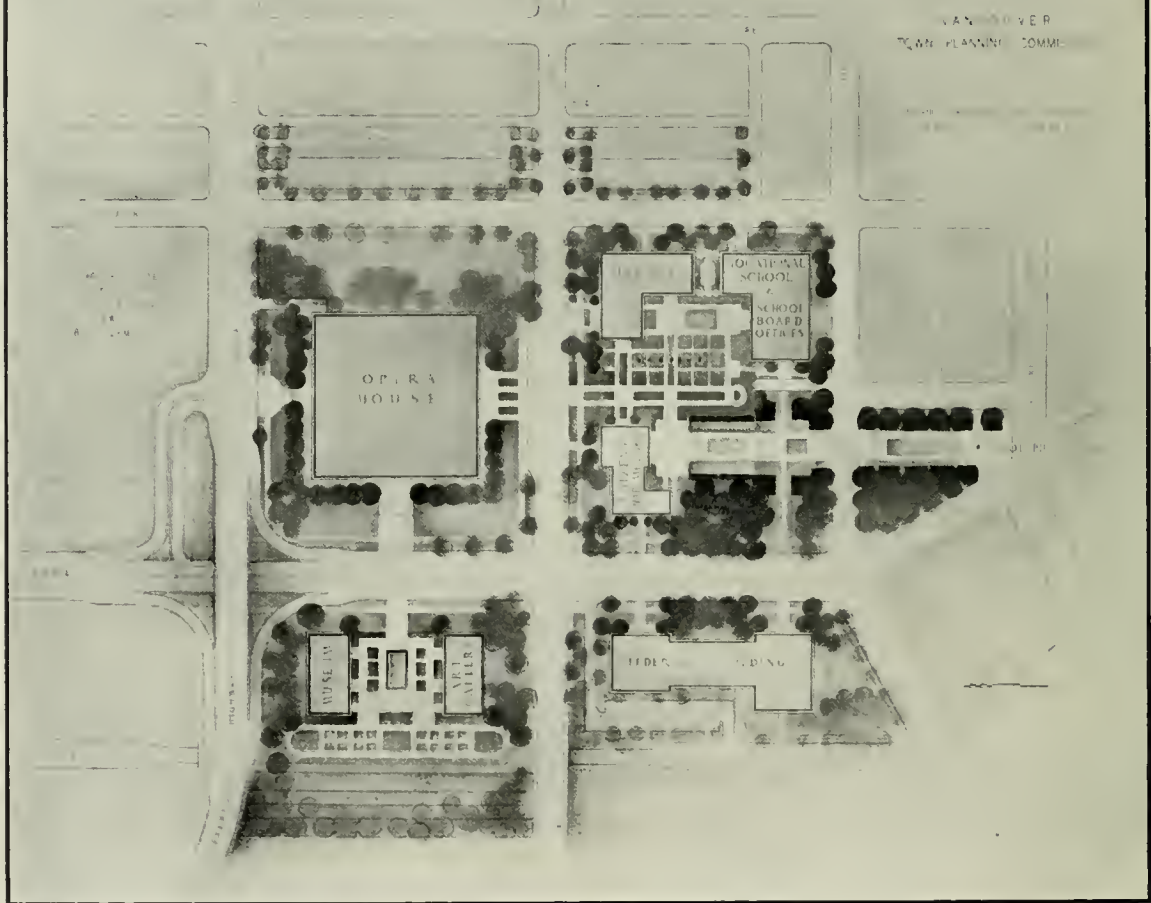
The Federal Building or buildings and the School Board building would be large structures providing a suitable frame for the Memorial Building. These could accommodate a large number of offices and other facilities, and because of their size, the Federal buildings would screen some of the less attractive views from the Civic Centre, especially views of industrial and warehouse areas to the east. The Library and the School Board buildings would be used so frequently that they are placed closest to the centre of the business district and to mass transportation facilities.

The Opera House or Auditorium is located most conveniently in relation to the major streets and is also within walking distance to all of the leading hotels and mass transportation facilities. This building is intended to contain a music hall having a seating capacity for 2,500 or 3,500 persons and appurtenant facilities, including numerous committee rooms. Convenient service facilities for this structure can be provided from Homer Street.

The Art Gallery and Museum composition would be one of the most distinctive features of the Civic Centre both from the standpoint of architecture and of landscape treatment. The large area surrounding these structures can be improved with lawns and gardens, and a fine setting could be provided. The view from the Express Highway over these gardens at one of the most important entrances to the business district would add great dignity and beauty to this city.

The site also permits certain flexibility in the location of public buildings. For example, both the Art Gallery and the Museum could be located upon the block occupied by the Opera House and the area proposed to be occupied by these two

# *The* CIVIC CENTRE VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA



*Plate 2*

buildings could be improved with gardens until it was needed by another public building such as a sports arena. While this arrangement could not permit of obtaining the best views of the Centre from the Express Highway and would not give the desired degree of spaciousness, there is much logic in grouping the three cultural buildings in a compact area. The possibility of this arrangement is mentioned to indicate potential readjustments if adequate area is acquired.

Extensive off-street parking facilities to accommodate a total of 1,000 automobiles is suggested as a part of the improvement. Some of these (550) could be provided in an underground garage located under much of the block bounded by Dunsmuir, Homer, Pender and Cambie Streets. The topography of this block is well adapted for development of an underground garage. Additional underground parking facilities could also be provided under other portions of the Civic Centre area although they are not indicated on the accompanying plan.

The surface parking lots would not only accommodate persons visiting and working in the area but being adjacent to the business districts, would also provide off-street daytime parking facilities for businessmen and shoppers in the central area. The parking spaces would also be very desirable at night to accommodate large crowds attending activities at the Auditorium or the War Memorial building.

The area is exceptionally well served by several major streets. It is indeed a focal point of major streets and hence would serve as an unusually fine entrance to the central business district. It will be noted that the Cambie Street distributor, Pender Street, Homer Street and Dunsmuir Street, which will be connected with the Georgia Street viaduct, all pass through this area. Cambie Street should have a width of 120 feet, and Dunsmuir Street should be widened to 80 feet through the Civic Centre area. The only existing street that would be closed by the development is Hamilton Street. The small loss of the traffic carrying capacity of this street would be more than offset by the improvement of the Cambie Street distributor.

The plan shows a grade separation where the Express Highway crosses the proposed Cambie Street distributor, with provision being made for traffic interchanges. Right hand turns could be made in all four directions and provision is also made for southbound traffic on Cambie Street to turn west in order to proceed east on to the Express Highway without crossing any traffic lines. Provision for this latter movement will involve acquisition of additional property south of Georgia Street. This separation would permit the movement of large volumes of traffic without delay or congestion, yet would not detract from the appearance or desirability of the public building group. While the separation structure may not be needed until there is a pronounced increase in vehicular traffic, since about 2,000 cars per hour in each of the four directions could be accommodated without grade separation, provision should be made in the plan for the future improvement of this separation.

The plan also shows a suggested improvement of Beatty Street between Pender and Robson Streets. This consists of carrying Beatty Street through an underpass east of the Art Gallery and Museum sites as well as under Georgia Street, and bringing it to grade at about Robson Street. This would provide an excellent truck route around the business district, yet would not interfere with the public building group since the buildings would either rear upon it or it would be placed under-



ground. The improvement is badly needed to provide a street with a satisfactory grade for the movement of truck and commercial traffic around the eastern portion of the business district. This improvement is especially needed to provide another outlet from the Connaught Bridge.

This site provides an unusual opportunity for the improvement of lawns, gardens and terraces. The sloping terrain is especially adaptable for this type of development, and Vancouver's climate is most favourable for the growing of flowers and shrubs and for the maintenance of gardens. Many people, even Vancouver citizens, frequently refer to the attractive gardens and plantings in Victoria which are such a distinctive feature of that city. This proposed public building development affords an opportunity for Vancouver to have an equally distinctive and attractive treatment which will not only attract many tourists but will be a source of pride to local citizens and an important factor in having the city favourably referred to and remembered. Because of the importance and possibilities of the landscape treatment, it is especially imperative that the site be kept spacious and that it not be permitted to become congested with buildings.

The plan also suggests the possibility of providing additional public or semi-public buildings on the south side of Georgia Street. These sites could accommodate future public structures that may not now be needed and would be well related to the other development proposed in the plan. However, they would not adversely affect the Civic Centre development in the event that they were never occupied by public structures.

A bus terminal would be very desirable on one of the locations, especially to the southeast of the intersection of Georgia and Homer Streets. The site recently acquired within the proposed Civic Centre development for this terminal would seriously and adversely affect the public building group.

It would be both logical and desirable to control the height of future buildings surrounding the Civic Centre. This would prevent the erection of structures to such a height that they would tend to dwarf and otherwise detract from the public structures. This control of building heights is especially desirable in the area north of the Centre, in order to provide views of the water and mountains.

It is also imperative that all buildings within the group have a harmonious and similar architectural treatment. Even though financed by several different agencies, they should complement rather than conflict with each other. It would probably be desirable to create a local board or commission that would pass upon all building and landscape plans within this area.

The proposed site presents such unusually fine opportunities not only because of the possibilities of an attractive development but also because of its excellent relationship and beneficial influence upon the central business district, that early steps should be taken to adopt a comprehensive plan for financing, acquiring and developing the project. It is especially important that early plans be prepared for the individual structures and that a carefully studied grading and landscape plan be prepared for the entire tract.









