

THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT



R.C.A.F. PHOTOGRAPH



VANCOUVER
TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

FEBRUARY, 1946

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A PRELIMINARY REPORT
UPON
THE DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS DISTRICT

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER
TOWN PLANNING
COMMISSION

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA



HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES
TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
October, 1945

Price: \$0.25

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1945

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CITY PLANNERS — CIVIL ENGINEERS — LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

317 NORTH ELEVENTH STREET

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

October, 1945

Town Planning Commission,

Vancouver, British Columbia

Gentlemen:

In accordance with our agreement we are pleased to submit herewith our preliminary report upon the Downtown Business District in Vancouver.

While the downtown area represents only a very small portion of the total city area, it is of major importance from the standpoints of use, service, and valuation. Every effort must be made to improve this vital portion of the city and to make it more accessible and convenient to all citizens within the Greater Vancouver area. The recommendations contained herein briefly discuss the various improvements needed during the next twenty-five years.

During the preparation of this report we have had valuable assistance from many officials, individuals and organizations, all of which is gratefully acknowledged. We especially wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the Downtown Merchants' Association.

Respectfully submitted,

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

By "RUSSELL H. RILEY"

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I. THE MOST VITAL AREA OF THE CITY

Every large city has a Downtown or Central Business District. It is the greatest centre of employment, the focus of the greatest volume of traffic of all kinds, the greatest concentration of property values and hence of taxable wealth—in short, the very heart of the urban community. Here are located most of the large office buildings, department stores, banks, theatres, hotels, specialty shops, wholesale houses, large public buildings, and similar uses.

While the downtown business district requires unusually costly municipal services, such as special police and fire protection, high pressure water service, special street lighting, and many other special services such as building inspection, elevator and sign inspection, and the like, it has been demonstrated in recent years that the downtown business district contributes in taxes hundreds of thousands of dollars, even millions of dollars, of municipal taxes over and above the cost of the services furnished. This extra revenue helps to lighten the tax load upon home owners who pay most of the remaining property taxes. Thus it is apparent that it is imperative to encourage and promote the greatest possible vitality in the downtown business district. The stronger and better the downtown business district, the better will be the city we can build.

VANCOUVER
BRITISH COLUMBIA

DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS DISTRICT

1945 ASSESSED VALUATION
DOLLARS PER SQUARE FOOT
LAND & IMPROVEMENTS

-BLOCK BY BLOCK-

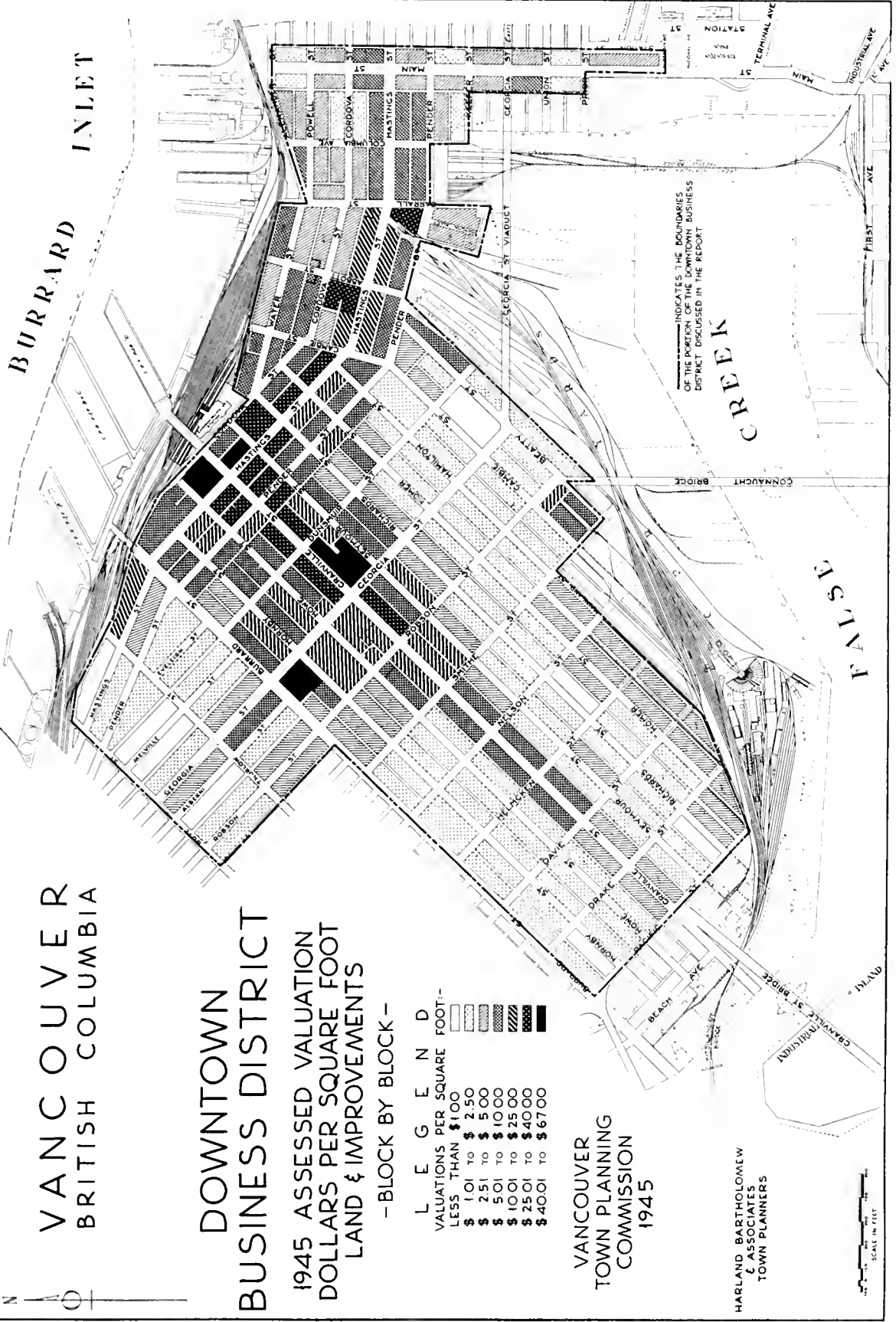
LEGEND

VALUATIONS PER SQUARE FOOT-	LESS THAN \$100
\$ 1.01 TO \$ 2.50	[White box]
\$ 2.51 TO \$ 5.00	[Horizontal lines]
\$ 5.01 TO \$ 10.00	[Vertical lines]
\$ 10.01 TO \$ 25.00	[Diagonal lines /]
\$ 25.01 TO \$ 40.00	[Diagonal lines \]
\$ 40.01 TO \$ 67.00	[Solid black box]

VANCOUVER
TOWN PLANNING
COMMISSION
1945

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SCALE IN FEET

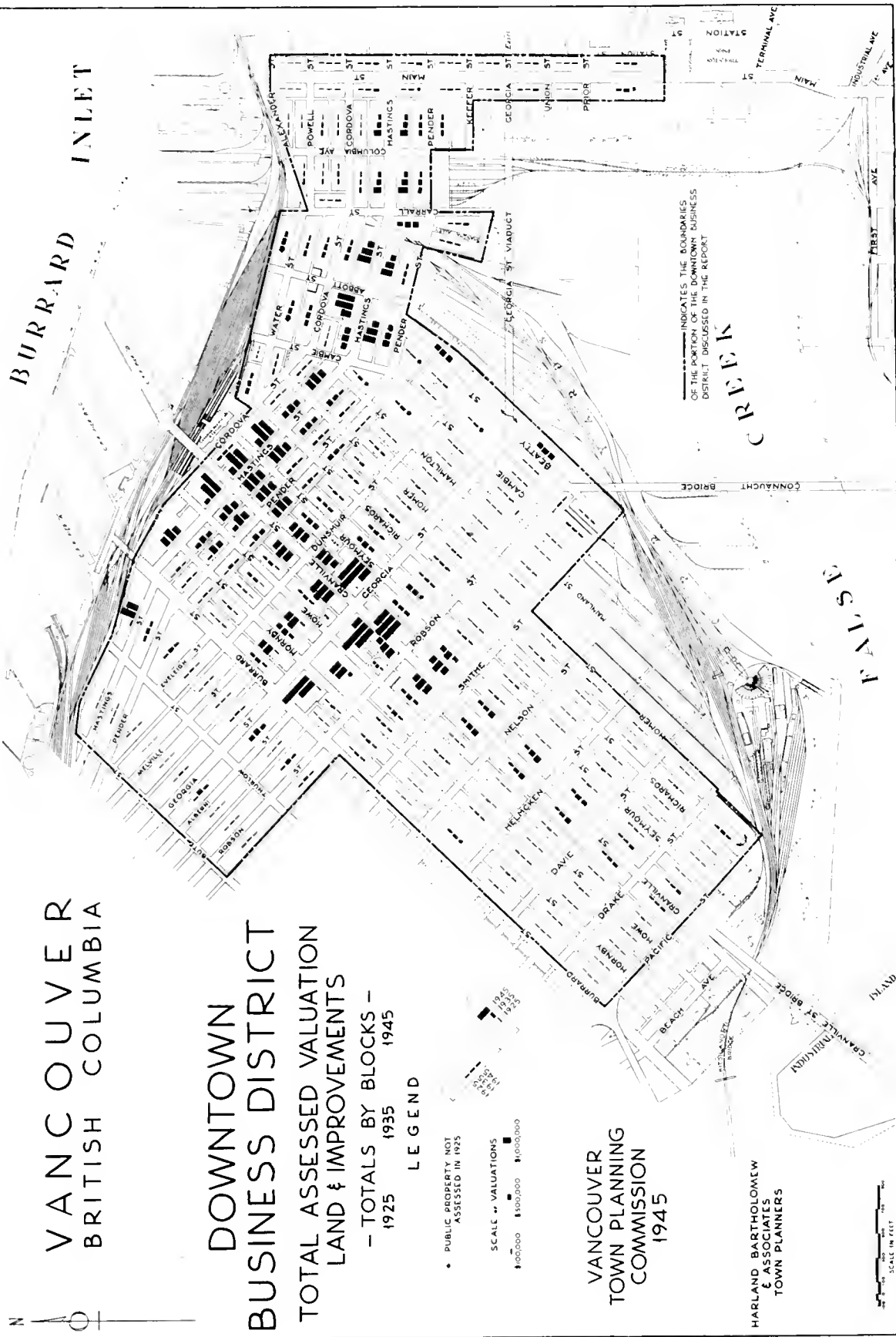


II. THE TREND OF DECENTRALIZATION

When cities were small, and most urban transportation consisted of street car lines, the downtown business districts were correspondingly small and compact. There was comparatively little congestion and only very gradual growth and expansion.

The introduction of automobile transportation in recent years has transformed our cities and their downtown business districts. Cities have expanded greatly in area, travel distances have increased, municipal services have increased in number, in magnitude, and in cost, and downtown business districts have experienced new forms of congestion with corresponding shifting of land uses and particularly in property values. Some new commercial enterprises have sought locations closer to new residential districts.

This transformation in the form and character of cities is still in progress. While we may not now foresee the full extent of future expansion, we are learning rapidly that it is an expensive process in which the costs may exceed the total gains. There can be no question but what some decentralization is logical and desirable, but it is apparent that a completely decentralized city is neither practicable nor possible. We must still have a large central or downtown business district wherein very nearly all customary types of buildings and land uses may find their most natural and logical location. Decentralization has given new significance and new importance to the function of the downtown district as the most vital part of the whole city structure. The excess tax revenues still to be contributed by the downtown business district assume new significance in the uneconomical process of decentralization. Plate Number 1 shows the 1945 Assessment Valuation in dollars per square foot, land and improvements. Plate Number 2 shows the comparative Total Assessed Valuation of each individual block subdivision for 1925, 1935 and 1945, also for land and improvements.



III. THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT MUST BE MODERNIZED

The adage "New times demand new measures and new men" was never more apt than at present. The post-war years will witness many significant changes in urban life, in transportation, in building construction, and in many of our individual habits and activities. The downtown business districts of cities are not quickly adaptable to new trends and new needs. Most large cities on this continent are now making intensive studies of their business districts. Vast improvement programmes are planned for the downtown business districts of such cities as Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Dallas, Los Angeles, and many others. London's central area has been planned and is to be redesigned and rebuilt to meet these changing needs.

Vancouver's business district needs modernization. This does not imply complete or even extensive rebuilding. It means new and improved facilities. New traffic arteries, new bridges, rerouting and modernization of mass transportation facilities are in prospect, and plans have been completed for many of these. This is not sufficient, however. Traffic congestion must be reduced substantially. This means new forms of traffic control and regulation. There is an astonishing lack of adequate automobile parking facilities.

Several new public buildings have been proposed and should be built within the next few years. Here is an extraordinary opportunity for a beautiful Civic Centre that will strengthen, stabilize, and enhance the character of Vancouver's downtown business district. Greater civic interest and leadership is needed to see that these improvements are made to best advantage. Such leadership is also needed to encourage many other forms of improvement, such as building modernization, elimination of unsightly signs, billboards, poles and wires, smoke regulation, and generally improved character and tone of the downtown business district.



VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

LAND USES

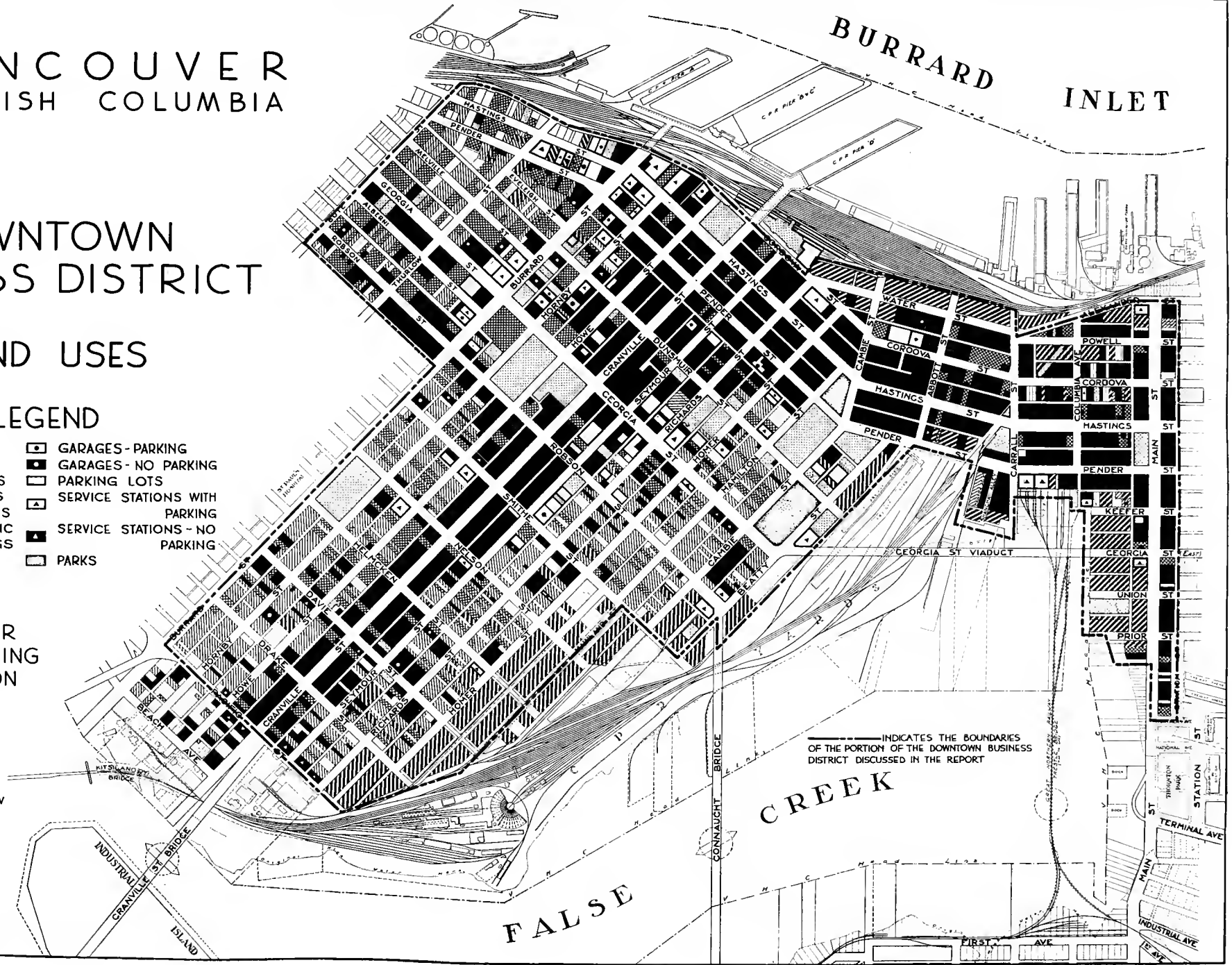
LEGEND

- COMMERCIAL
- ▨ INDUSTRIAL
- ▧ HOTELS, APARTMENTS & ROOMING HOUSES
- ▩ 1 & 2 FAMILY DWELLINGS
- ▤ PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- ◻ GARAGES - PARKING
- ◻ GARAGES - NO PARKING
- ◻ PARKING LOTS
- ◻ SERVICE STATIONS WITH PARKING
- ◻ SERVICE STATIONS - NO PARKING
- ◻ PARKS

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SCALE IN FEET
0 100 200 300 400

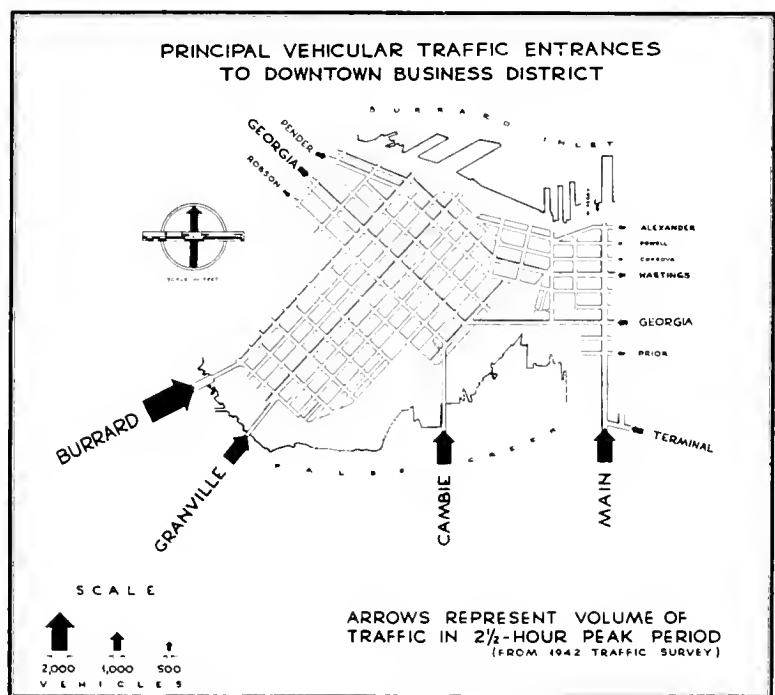


INDICATES THE BOUNDARIES
OF THE PORTION OF THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
DISTRICT DISCUSSED IN THE REPORT

IV. LOCATION, SIZE, DESIGN, AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

The location of the downtown business district is ideal in many respects. It is well located as a centre for the Greater Vancouver metropolitan area. Great highways focus upon the district in a fashion that assures adequate accessibility and, assuming proper traffic control, facilitates freedom of traffic flow and circulation and promotes ease and convenience of travel from all urban areas.

The early business district was established on Water Street, subsequently shifting to Cordova Street, and later to Hastings Street and Granville Street. In recent years there has been considerable development along Pender, Howe, Seymour, and Richards Streets, mostly north of Robson Street. The construction of the Burrard Street bridge has opened up substantial potential commercial areas along Burrard and Hornby Streets.



The construction of the Burrard Street bridge has opened up substantial potential commercial areas along Burrard and Hornby Streets.

Vancouver's downtown business district is somewhat unique in that it has natural barriers on three sides, *i.e.*, Burrard Inlet on the north, and False Creek on the east and south. The business district as defined by the Zoning By-law, "General Business", extends, for the most part, from Burrard Street on the west to those natural boundaries, exclusive, however, of the railroads and industrial property adjoining these waterways. The exact boundaries of the downtown business district as zoned are shown on accompanying Plate Number 3. Within these boundaries is an area of 450 acres, approximately two-thirds of one square mile. This is an abnormally large business area for a city of Vancouver's size,

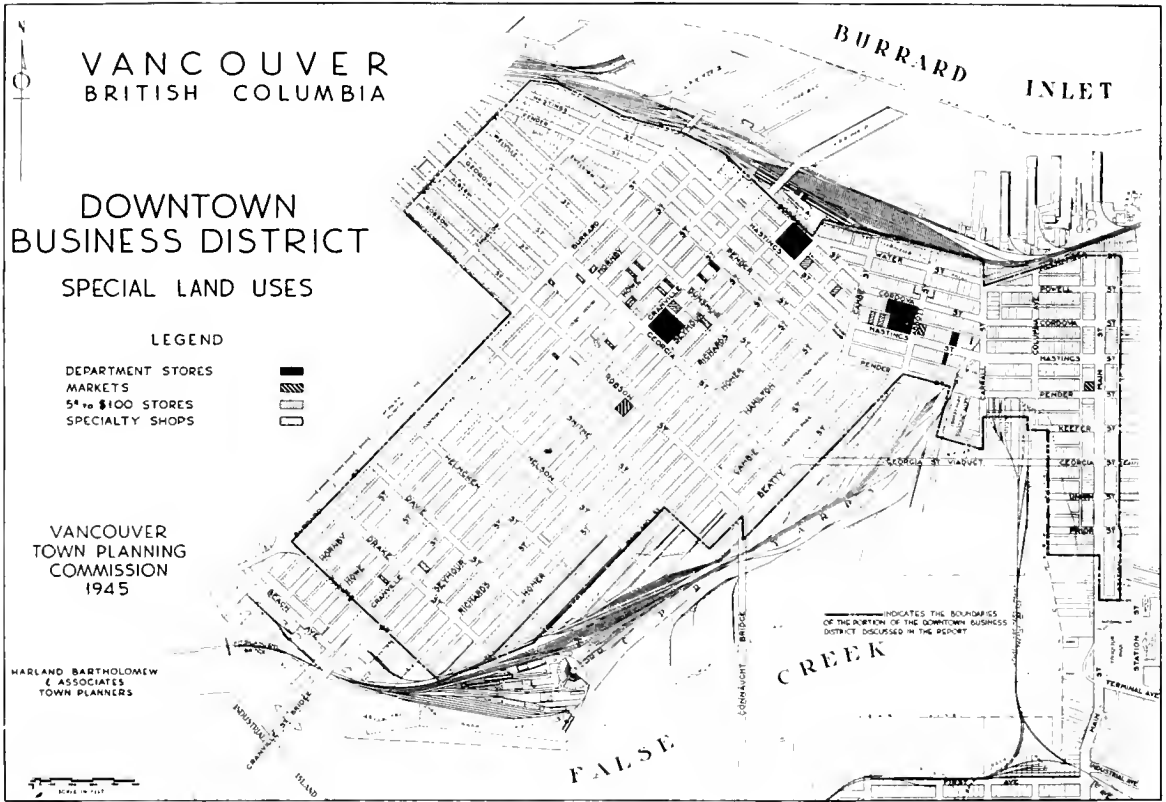


Plate 4

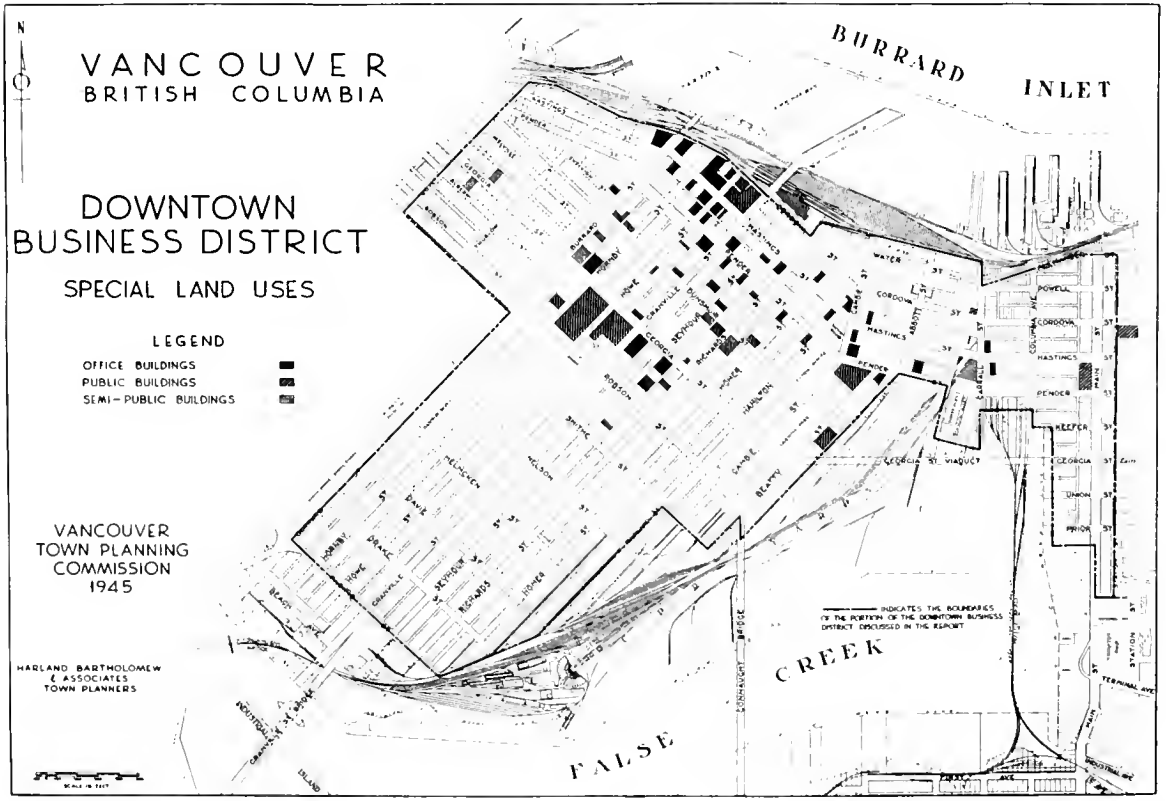


Plate 5

and is more than sufficient to serve the needs of a metropolitan area considerably in excess of 1,000,000 people.

Plate Number 3 also shows the uses of land in this zoned General Business area. It is to be noted that considerable residential property exists along the several streets in the west, southwest, and central eastern sections. Thus, it is apparent that there is no sound reason for excessive congestion or impeded traffic flow.

Plates Numbers 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 show the location of various specialized uses of land and buildings. These plates demonstrate clearly the concentration of business activity in the area north of Robson Street.

Because of the great concentration of these specialized types of business property in the area bounded by Hastings, Cambie, Robson, and Burrard Streets, as well as on Hastings east of Cambie and on Granville south of Robson, there is particular need for traffic control and other measures to relieve traffic congestion here.

From time to time it has been suggested that the business district might shift to the south side of False Creek, or that False Creek might be filled in, permitting expansion of the business district southward to Broadway. There is no sound logic in these suggestions. The area south of False Creek would not be directly accessible to certain sections of the metropolitan area. Extraordinary improvements in arterial thoroughfares would be required, not to mention the enormous losses involved in the abandonment of existing properties and land values in the present business district, so great, in fact, as to be wholly beyond the realm of reason.

To contemplate expansion of the business district by filling in all or portions of the False Creek area is likewise fully impractical from almost any standpoint. The cost of fill would be enormous, the cost of bridging would be prohibitive, and the vast area involved could not possibly be absorbed for commercial use. All central business districts are generally smaller than supposed, and even with substantial new growth, with modernization and a more open type of development, there is still a marked limitation upon the size of a downtown business district in a community of Vancouver's population and size, present and future. Unquestionably, most or all of the future downtown business district of Vancouver can be accommodated comfortably in the area north of Smithe Street.

The design of the business district is in the traditional rectangular pattern, with blocks roughly 250 by 500 feet south of Pender Street, and with blocks 250 feet square between Pender and Cordova from Burrard to Cambie. Streets are generally 66 feet wide, but with certain exceptions such as Georgia and Burrard which are 99 feet wide, and Granville and Hastings which are 80 feet wide. It would be impractical to attempt to change this general pattern. The only real necessity for change in the basic design is to alter or improve certain entrances and to open and widen certain strategically located routes.

Such changes as are made in the present street pattern, together with new traffic control measures, should be designed with a view to bringing about a more functional traffic flow plan. It is impracticable to attempt to accommodate all classes of traffic on each street. Vancouver's new downtown business district should pro-

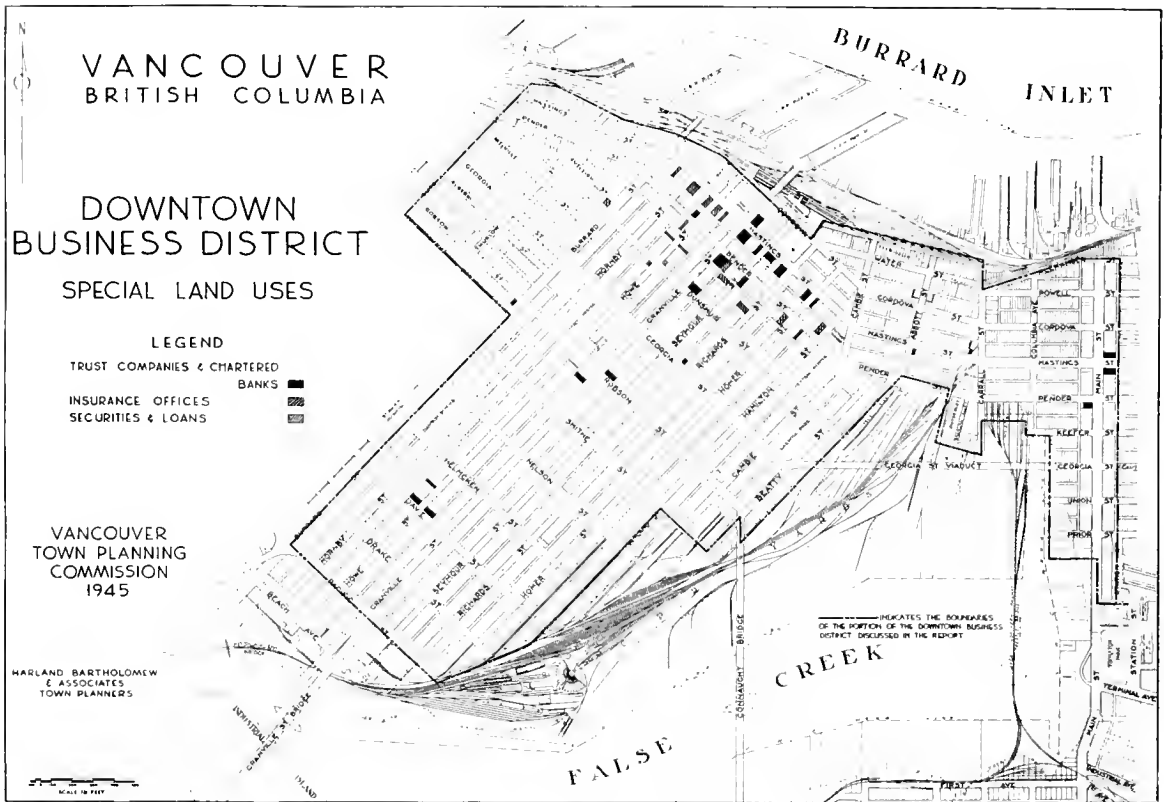


Plate 6

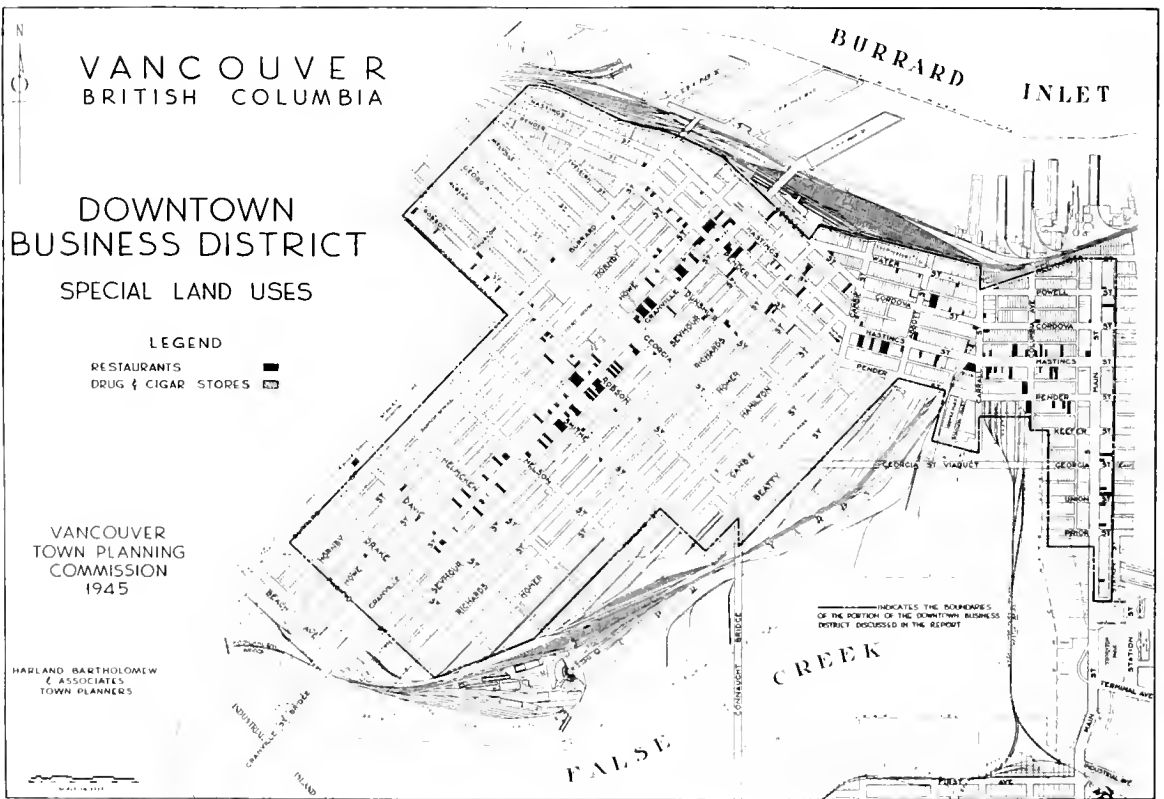


Plate 7

vide for ample opportunity for wide bypass streets and for distribution of traffic entering the district along its peripheries for most expeditious movement, centralization of mass transportation facilities on a selected number of centrally located thoroughfares, with ample opportunity for automobile traffic on the intermediate streets. Burrard Street, for example, is an ideal wide distributor and bypass street at the western boundary of the business district. A similar route on the other four sides of the more congested portion of the business district would be highly desirable. Granville and Hastings Streets have been and should continue to be used predominantly for mass transportation vehicles.

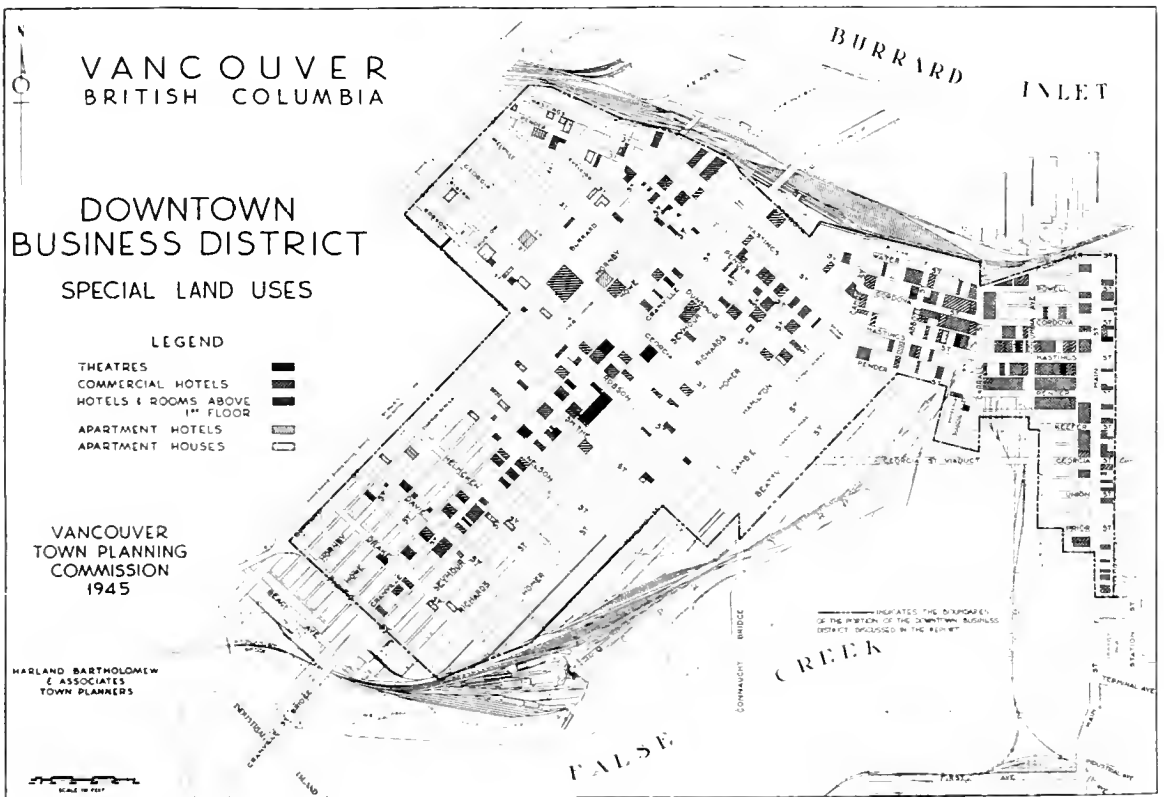


Plate 8

BURRARD INLET

CREEK

FRANCOIS

VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

PARKING DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT

PRESENT PARKING REGULATIONS
OFF STREET FACILITIES

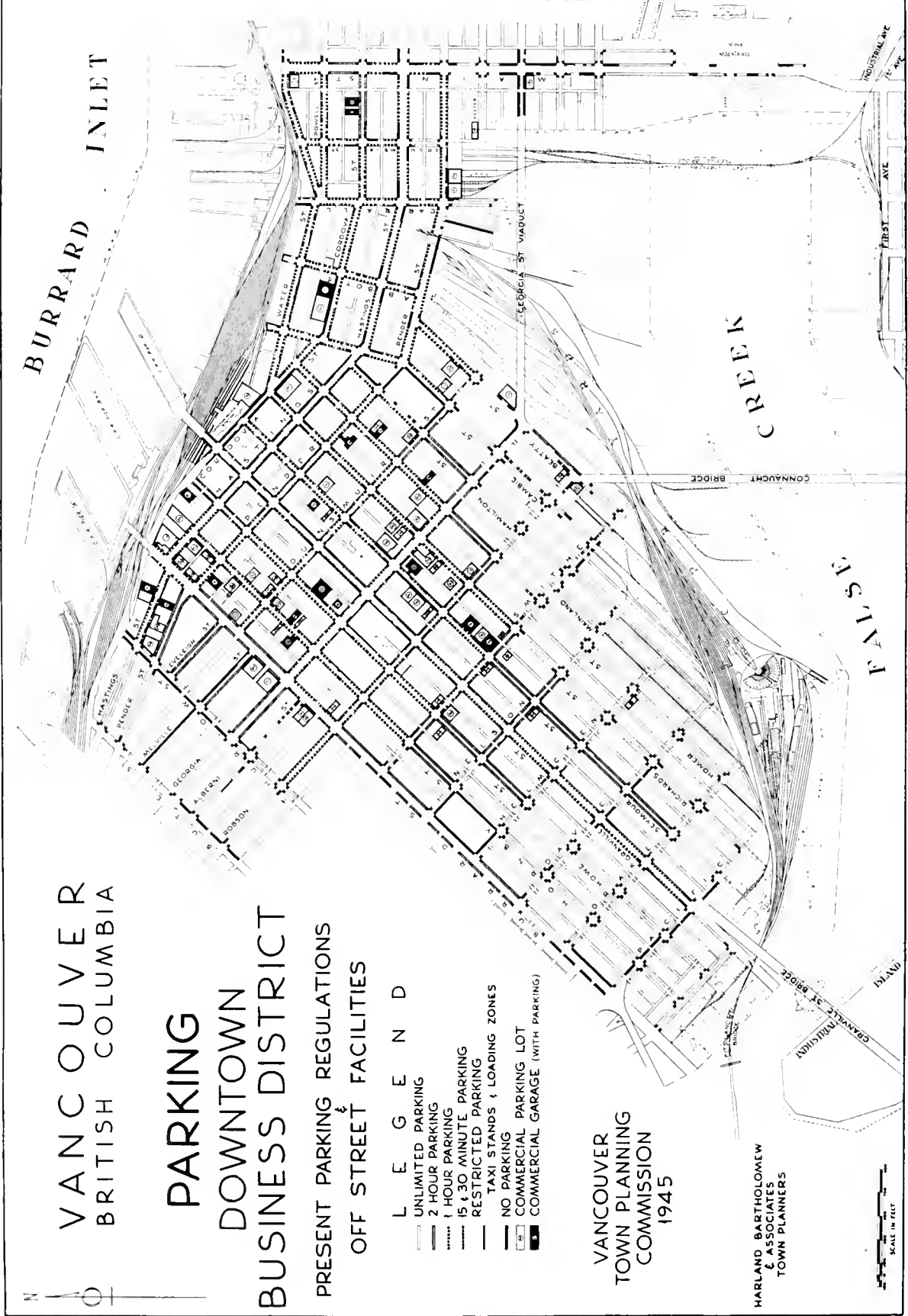
LEGEND

- UNLIMITED PARKING
- 2 HOUR PARKING
- 1 HOUR PARKING
- 15 & 30 MINUTE PARKING
- RESTRICTED PARKING
- TAXI STANDS & LOADING ZONES
- NO PARKING
- COMMERCIAL PARKING LOT
- COMMERCIAL GARAGE (WITH PARKING)

VANCOUVER
TOWN PLANNING
COMMISSION
1945

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW
& ASSOCIATES
TOWN PLANNERS

SCALE IN FEET



V. RECOMMENDATIONS

While many of the following recommendations have been suggested and are more fully described in other reports, they are repeated here because of their direct relationship to any comprehensive modernization programme of the downtown business district.

A. STREETS

1. BYPASS AND DISTRIBUTOR

- (a) Build new distributor street along south and east sides of business district from Burrard and Granville Street Bridges to Cambie and Pender Streets.

This should be a ten-lane street with comparatively narrow sidewalks, built at grade, to serve the same function as Burrard Street does today on the west side of the business district. It should not be designed as a high-speed express highway.

- (b) Extend Cordova Street from Granville west to connect with both Howe and Burrard Streets.
- (c) Widen Robson to 80 feet or six-lane capacity.

This is a most urgent bypass and distributor street for the south side of the more intensively developed central section of the business district.

- (d) Widen the pavement upon Georgia Street by reducing the width of the sidewalks.

2. IMPROVED ARTERIAL ENTRANCES

- (a) Reconstruct Granville Street Bridge over False Creek.
- (b) Build expressway from New Westminster to enter business district on Georgia Street.
- (c) Change west end of Georgia Street Viaduct to connect directly with Dunsmuir Street.
- (d) Construct a new drive along the waterfront from Granville Street to Main Street.

This improvement should connect with the Cordova Street bypass.

B. MASS TRANSPORTATION

1. ROUTINGS OUTSIDE BUSINESS DISTRICT

(a) Provide more direct routes between the residential sections and the central business districts.

(b) Establish express busses upon the proposed express highway.

In the outlying residential sections these busses should leave the expressway and travel over the major streets to unload and to pick up passengers.

(c) Begin substitution of trolley coaches and motor busses for street car operation.

This more flexible type of transit operation should first be established upon the less heavily travelled routes and upon lines that should be extended.

2. ROUTINGS WITHIN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

(a) Wherever possible, such as on the Central Park Line, substitute street car for interurban operation and extend these into the business district.

(b) Route street cars over Granville and Hastings Streets as long as street car operation continues.

(c) Whenever street car operation is completely abandoned, trolley coaches or motor busses should be routed on Granville and Hastings Streets.

(d) Street car operation must be continued upon Richards Street until all street car routes can be operated upon Granville Street without unwarranted congestion. Richards Street should then be used for trolley coach operation.

(e) Use Howe Street for the routing of trolley coaches and busses entering the business district via the Burrard Street Bridge.

(f) Any trolley coach or motor bus lines entering from the south and looping in the business districts must extend north at least as far as Dunsmuir or Pender Streets.

Whenever street car operation is abandoned upon Pender Street, then trolley coaches or motor busses should use Pender rather than Dunsmuir Street.

(g) Any busses entering over Georgia Street from the east and looping in the business district should travel over Howe, Dunsmuir or Pender, and Seymour Streets.

(h) Through rather than loop routing must be provided wherever possible.

C. TRAFFIC CONTROL

1. ENLARGE TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

Traffic control is becoming more and more a detailed and scientific study based upon frequent and extensive observations and counts of traffic movement. The local Traffic Commission must be adequately staffed with experienced and competent employees so that it can perform most effective service, including continuous observations and frequent traffic engineering studies.

2. MAKE ANNUAL TRAFFIC CENSUS

There should be an annual traffic census to show the number of vehicles and the number of persons entering the business district. These data should differentiate between pedestrians, transit riders, and persons in automobiles. Without information of this kind it is difficult to ascertain trends sufficiently far in advance to establish policies and make plans for major needs. As stated previously, special traffic counts and studies should be made from time to time, but these should not be a substitute for a regular annual traffic census. The value of the annual census to all city departments, to business firms, to prospective new commercial and industrial enterprises, and in many other ways, will increase markedly from year to year.

3. ESTABLISH NEW SYSTEM OF TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Vancouver's present traffic signals are obsolete. They are not adjustable to variable traffic flow. There is no recognition of pedestrian traffic movement except for the unique scheme at Granville and Hastings where one interval in the light cycle permits exclusive pedestrian movement in any direction. The volume of automobile and mass transportation vehicles, as well as pedestrian traffic, varies considerably from hour to hour throughout the business day, being heaviest, of course, during the morning and evening rush hours. Traffic signals should be adjusted, in so far as possible, to these variations. It is extremely difficult, however, to provide perfect adjustment, particularly because of the necessity for synchronization of traffic signals to facilitate continuous traffic flow through street intersections in close proximity. This raises the question of the extent to which traffic signals should be installed. Vancouver authorities have wisely refrained from installing a multiplicity of traffic signals. They are to be complimented on this foresight. Were it not for the fact that manual control of traffic in business districts may prove more costly than signal control, it would be best to use the former exclusively. The best traffic movement in the downtown business district of Vancouver will be achieved through limited use of traffic signals and generous use of manual control during rush hours. Without extensive studies it is impossible to suggest definite regulations at this time.

4. INSTALL NEW SYSTEM OF TRAFFIC SIGNS AND MARKINGS

Traffic flow is expedited by clearly discernible pavement markings and by well placed, highly legible signs throughout the business district. An improved modern system of signs and markings should be installed in the near future to meet the increasing traffic load which can be expected upon all minor streets at their intersections with major streets.

5. CONSTRUCT NEW PAVEMENTS

The war has restricted the ability of the city and of the street car company to construct new pavement. While a few of the streets within the business district are now well surfaced with permanent pavement, there is much repair work to be done, and there is particular need for reconstruction in most of the streets where street car tracks exist. A five-year plan of modernization of all pavement in the business district should be prepared and adopted.

6. ESTABLISH LOADING ZONES AND TRAFFIC ISLANDS

When new paving is installed on streets having street cars, consideration should be given to the establishment of protected loading areas for passengers. It is not necessary to construct huge concrete fortress-like islands for this purpose, however. Surface areas, adequately designated by pavement markings and protected by "mushrooms", with lights, will be sufficient in most instances.

Eight-lane traffic thoroughfares should have raised central safety isles at all heavy traffic intersections.

D. AUTOMOBILE PARKING

Downtown business districts are the focal point for an extremely large daily flow of automobiles. Prior to the widespread use of the automobile, the streets of the business district were capable of accommodating the total daily load of horse-drawn vehicles, street cars, and pedestrian traffic. This is not the case today, when many thousands of automobiles have been added to the total traffic flow. The first maxim to be observed, and without which no solution of the traffic congestion is possible, is that streets must be cleared for the *movement* of traffic and not for the *storage* of vehicles or goods even for limited periods of time. In so far as street space is needed for movement of traffic, there must be no parking of automobiles.

1. LOADING OR UNLOADING OF GOODS SHOULD BE PROHIBITED ON BUSINESS DISTRICT STREETS

It is most fortunate that those who laid out the original plan of the business district of Vancouver provided a system of lanes. Many other cities are not so fortunate. All loading and unloading of goods should be provided for on private property through access to and from lanes. There should be little or no cutting of the curb and sidewalks on business district streets for driveways for access to abutting property. The lanes are intended for this purpose. All new buildings constructed should be required to provide ample facilities for off-street loading and unloading of goods. Pending the time that all buildings are adjusted to make full use of the lane, loading zones should be reserved upon the streets and double parking strictly prohibited.

2. FURTHER LIMITATIONS OF CURB PARKING

Present regulations for curb parking have been carefully devised. The greatly increased vehicular traffic which is expected in post-war years will necessitate greater freedom of traffic flow. It is recommended that all curb parking be pro-

hibited during morning and evening rush hours, i.e., from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. and from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., on (a) all streets used by mass transportation vehicles, and (b) all streets north of Smithe Street. On certain streets, such as Granville, Richards, Hastings and Pender, it is suggested that all curb parking be prohibited during the entire business day. There would be such an extremely small percentage of loss of business to merchants by the regulation, and the increased value to the business district as a whole is such, that there can be no debate as to the wisdom and effectiveness of this regulation. Curb parking should also be prohibited during the same hours in shopping districts fronting upon important major streets that serve the downtown area.

3. PROVIDE APPROXIMATELY 6,000 NEW OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES
(PLATE No. 9)

At present the total capacity for automobile parking in Vancouver's downtown business district is as follows:

Curb spaces	1700
Parking lots	1600
Garages	815

Total.....	4115

This is 10.9 spaces per 1000 persons of Greater Vancouver population. This is an exceedingly low figure. In Dallas, Texas, a city of comparable size, there are 45.8 spaces per 1000 population of the metropolitan district. Even in large cities, such as Detroit, St. Louis and Los Angeles, there are 16 parking spaces per 1000 persons in the metropolitan area. Several cities have set a post-war goal of doubling their downtown automobile parking facilities. A most reasonable goal for Vancouver would be 15 parking spaces per 1000 persons of estimated metropolitan district population (650,000) in 1971. This would mean a total of 9750 spaces divided as follows:

Curb spaces	1000
Garages	2750
Parking lots	6000

While the provision of off-street parking has not been a primary municipal obligation, there is, nevertheless, a public interest involved. Many cities in the United States have created off-street parking facilities, and the Courts have upheld the expenditure as a legitimate use of public funds. San Francisco has permitted the establishment of an underground parking garage in Union Square, and Los Angeles is considering a similar provision in Pershing Square in the heart of the downtown district of that city. Many cities in the United States have established municipal parking lots, viz., Grant Park in the City of Chicago, where parking space for 10,000 automobiles was incorporated in the design and construction of that park, and Kansas City, Kansas, which has carried out a comprehensive plan of five public parking lots, paid for jointly by the city and by assessment of all property in the business district. In other municipalities, such as Oakland, California, the downtown merchants have established large parking lots where parking is free to customers making purchases in their stores.

The new civic centre for Vancouver should be improved with a subsurface garage and other off-street parking facilities that could accommodate at least 2000 cars. The municipality should join with downtown business interests in the acquisition of property for the establishment of public parking areas with minimum service charges to provide additional parking of 4000 automobiles. The following areas or similar nearby tracts are recommended for acquisition:

- (a) The block bounded by Water, Carrall, Cordova and Abbott Streets.
- (b) The triangular block bounded by Water, Cambie and Cordova Streets.
- (c) The western half of the block bounded by the Canadian Pacific Railway, Howe, Hastings, and Burrard.
- (d) The block bounded by Hastings, Hornby, Pender, and Burrard Streets.
- (e) The northern portion (at least one-half) of the block bounded by Duns-muir, Hornby, Georgia and Burrard.

Each of the above areas is most conveniently related to the distributor streets serving the downtown district. They might first be improved for surface parking but eventually it will undoubtedly prove essential to provide multiple level parking.

4. INSTALL PARKING METERS

An integral part of the program for solving the parking problem is the installation of parking meters. As off-street parking lots are developed, the meters should be installed upon the majority of the downtown streets north of Smithe Street—except where parking is to be prohibited. They are the most effective means of insuring a rapid turnover and an equitable use of the limited but convenient parking facilities. They also provide a source of municipal revenue.

E. PUBLIC BUILDINGS

1. BUILD CIVIC CENTRE IMMEDIATELY

It is proposed to construct several large public buildings in the post-war years. These include a federal office building, an opera house or auditorium, a new public library, a new art gallery, a new museum, a new Board of Education headquarters building and downtown technical high and trades school, and an adequate memorial structure to commemorate the services of the men and women who made the supreme sacrifice in World War II.

The Civic Centre has been made the subject of a special study and report to the Town Planning Commission, which has recommended the acquisition of the area bounded by Georgia, Beatty, Pender, and Homer Streets for the development of this new Civic Centre.

This is an admirable site for the new Civic Centre from several standpoints. It is not now occupied nor will it be needed in the future for intensive business or commercial use. It is immediately adjacent, however, to the most intensive business development in the Hastings Street and Granville Street areas. Thus, the centre

will be extremely convenient and accessible to the majority of persons in or visiting the main office buildings, banks, stores, and shops. It is likewise extremely accessible and convenient to the large number of tourists and visitors using our hotels, and furthermore, this site is ideally situated with respect to mass transportation facilities, as well as main arterial highways.

In recent years the concept of location of public buildings has changed markedly from that of more or less monumental buildings in more remote, idealistic settings, to that of well designed but more utilitarian structures located as close as possible to the heart of the downtown district. This is a far more practicable viewpoint from the standpoint of both the public convenience and the public welfare. The proposed Civic Centre should substantially enhance and strengthen Vancouver's improved and modernized downtown business district.

F. ZONING

Under the present zoning regulations, the central business district is included in the "General Business District". The most intensive use of property within the city is permitted in this district. No front, rear or side yards are required, except for premises used for residential purposes. The height limitations, 120 feet or ten storeys, seem to be quite reasonable. Reasonable building height regulations are important in downtown Vancouver. The streets are narrow and parking space limited. Consequently, it is desirable that this district have a horizontal rather than too great a vertical development. A business district covering a somewhat larger area with a *uniform* intensity of development is far better than a district containing a few very tall buildings and a great many one and two storey structures.

Due to the difficulty in making deliveries and loading vehicles in the downtown district, the Zoning by-law should require that each new structure provide off-street or off-lane loading facilities.

G. APPEARANCE

I. RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPEARANCE

In a large part the general appearance of the downtown business district is the responsibility of individual merchants and property owners. They alone can undertake the development and improvement of their properties in such a manner as to bring about harmony of design and an attractive appearance in the business district. Vancouver has many attractive buildings in the downtown area now. It will be in the economic interest of owners to replace old, unsafe buildings located in this high value district with new structures in harmony with existing good designs, or to rehabilitate present outmoded structures with modern facades and entrances.

The proper display of merchandise will do much to increase the attractiveness of stores in the downtown business district. Large show windows and effective display advertising add greatly to the over-all attractiveness of the stores. To eliminate congestion and improve appearance the practice of displaying merchandise on the sidewalks should be stopped.

2. SIGNS

Advertising signs and billboards should be carefully located and designed so that they complement rather than detract from the building on which they are placed, and so that they do not interfere with other signs, particularly with traffic signals.

The city has a fairly good Sign By-law but it should be revised with a view to exercising further control as to the size of electric signs and their projection from the building. Some further effort at uniformity with respect to size and amount of projection would create a better appearance. The provisions of the by-laws concerning structural safety are ample.

3. POLES, WIRES, ETC.

The amount of power wiring and poles in the streets in the downtown district has been altogether too great. They are not only ungainly and unsightly but are very hazardous. All wiring should be placed in underground conduits as rapidly as possible.

The type of combination poles or standards for street lighting and trolley wires, which have been in use in much of the downtown business district for many years, have proven to be quite satisfactory.

4. STREET SIGNS

The system of marking streets in the business district should be improved so that the street names are legible both day and night, and readable from a moving vehicle. The addition of the block number to the street name would be an added convenience, especially for strangers.

H. SMOKE CONTROL

At present, smoke is a considerable nuisance in the business district. Smoke from the West End apartment areas and the industries, railways and shipping on False Creek and Burrard Inlet is added to that originating in the downtown area. The wartime restrictions relative to the compulsory use of soft coal in lieu of oil has precluded the enforcement of the city's Smoke By-law. Such control, however, was rather lenient even in the pre-war era. When conditions become normal again the Smoke by-law should be strictly enforced. This is particularly essential in Vancouver since fog conditions are aggravated by the heavy pall of smoke, causing delay in both private and public vehicular movement. If the enforcement of the present Smoke By-law proves unsatisfactory, it should be revised to emulate that of other cities which have been able to improve conditions by proper enforcement of well-drawn regulations.

