



**HEIGHTS
STATE
BANK**

 **THE TEXAS
ARCHITECT**

APRIL

1966

COVER:
AN
OPEN
INVITATION
TO
BUSINESS
IS
FORMED
BY
GRACEFULLY
SCULPTURED
COLUMNS
&
LARGE
AREAS
OF
GLASS
AT
HEIGHTS
STATE
BANK.
THE
HOUSTON
BANK, BY
WILSON,
MORRIS,
CRAIN
&
ANDERSON,
IS
A
"TEXAS
ARCHITECTURE
1965"
SELECTION.

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THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

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"A great profession must now meet a new challenge with a new sense of public responsibility . . . The war on ugliness will not be won by building a few notable structures. It will be won if hundreds of local skirmishes where beauty is at stake are won."

STEWART L. UDALL
Secretary of the Interior



WALTER C. BOWMAN, A. I. A.



CHARLES T. GRANGER, A. I. A.

The Texas Society of Architects Mourn the Deaths of Walter Bowman A. I. A. and Charles Granger A. I. A.

Mr. Walter Bowman served the profession as President of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Chapter; Director to the Texas Society of Architects; Vice president of the Texas Society of Architects and Chairman of the Insurance and Sureties Commission of the Texas Society Architects.

Mr. Charles Granger served the profession as President of the Austin Chapter, American Institute of Architects; National Chairman of Committees on School Buildings and Educational facilities American Institute of Architects.

For more than a quarter century these able and talented Architects served the State of Texas and the profession of Architecture with energy, dedication and dignity.

BLIGHT, A FORETOLD AFFLICTION

By PATRICK HORSBRUGH

BLIGHT is largely the consequences of carelessness, and the deliberate degradation of social standards for financial gain. It is essentially a human phenomenon, even though the term and the symbol has been borrowed from ecological conditions.

It is the reward of the reasoned risk of rapacious real-estate investors who deal in those most precious commodities, human happiness and limited land, but whose humanity and whose foresight is really no worse than our own.

BLIGHT is the result of the cut-rate mentality which creates a condition from which no other outcome is possible. BLIGHT is the most perfect example of poetic justice that I know. BLIGHT is the revenge of nature. It is the inevitable, the inexorable, the inescapable retribution following wayward and wanton action of the kind that no thriving society can tolerate for long and still survive.

BLIGHT is the environmental disease from which no place is now safe. It is contagious. It is a cancer that consumes not only economic resources, but corrodes the lives and the vitality of all whom it surrounds.

If BLIGHT is recognized as a disease, an exema upon the inhabited areas of the earth, if defenses are to be measured against it, if cure is to be wrought, and if its future return is to be prevented, then the subject must be dealt with as if it were a carefully diagnosed medical condition.

If this attitude of mind is justified, if a campaign is to be deployed and victory gained, then nothing less than the full forces of legal and medical authorities must be harnessed under the leadership of those trained in the practice of the Envirial Arts, namely those who devote

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their lives to the landscape, to regional planning, to urban development and to architecture.

Such a campaign calls for steadfast statesmanship and the basic qualities of which leaders are made, for every social strata is involved, every political pressure is applied, every vested interest is violated, while the strands of legal restraints and medical urgencies must be interwoven to give strength and pattern to the fabric of the city, whose design can arise effectively from no other section of the professional society. And further, the grand strategy and bold conceptions must be quickly made, for time and blight are in league, and already the forces ranged against us are immense.

I believe that the architectural profession can, and indeed *must*, provide the necessary design statesmanship to meet the forces that foul our every endeavor. In the history of nations, we are amazed and gratified to see that in times of stress, a man emerges whose leadership gathers others to the task and their combined efforts eventually prevail. I see no logical reason why now, in our extremity of enviral distraction, we cannot expect to see, and even to produce a man of stature who will fulfill the suggestions that the necessary "Architectural Statesmen of such vision are educated men first and technicians only second." And that, "Their discovery, motivation, education, and training require a change from our present concept of architectural education."

I am deeply concerned with the increasing concentration upon specializations and the particular training that this requires, and it is essential to assure that intense specialization is balanced by effective emphasis also upon *generalization* and the cultivation of *generals* to develop the strategy, to design the dispositions and to command the campaign.

We should recognize, also, that BLIGHT may even be of service to us in producing the crisis conditions without which our sophisticated pleadings would pass unheeded. As every positive individual and every vibrant society contains the ingredients of self-destruction, so too, may every detrimental force embody some factor which, if perceived and turned to account, may become the means of ultimate improvement.

To begin with, however, diagnoses of causes are necessary. BLIGHT arises from four principal and interacting forces.

The consequences of these combined forces are so severe as to justify an extension of the Four Freedoms, of Worship, of Speech, and from Hunger, from Fear. A fifth freedom might well have been specified. The Freedom from BLIGHT deserves to be added in summary of all the woeful enviral conditions that follow upon the deliberate or the thoughtless actions in the uses and

misuses by which the people of this most splendid land persist in punishing themselves.

BLIGHT, as an enviroial disease, should certainly justify inclusion among those conditions from which society can reasonably be expected to free itself, and from which a 'Great Society' *must* indeed be free. If this recent designation is to have any meaning, beyond that of an outrageously smug and pompous gesture, which can so easily be turned to ridicule, we must address ourselves to BLIGHT, that which is the cause of so much misery and which is the principal target in the war to be waged upon poverty.

Now, from these observations you will have gained the impression that I am somewhat hostile to this all-pervading condition which applies to the landscape and to the rural economy no less than to the urban environment.

A variety of fortunate experiences have provided me with some particular impressions about the blight-forming forces which I would like to submit to you for your assessment in relation to the problems of Houston.

There are, it seems to me, four principal forces of be-foulment. Their incidental power to produce evil results is beyond dispute, but they are all positive forces and innocent of offense in themselves. They emerge from justifiable, worthy human endeavors whose negative consequences are never anticipated, followed-up or resolved as part of the whole and obvious processes of cause and effect. For instance, it is inevitable that in any matter of quantity, mere multiplication can and does produce conditions of absurdity.

Mass production is therefore a prime example of blight-causing action. An after-use dilemma arises with the manufacture in quantity of every article for which there is a continuing demand, from beer cans to ships, from tires to rocketry. (I read recently that the British are complaining that the quantity of abandoned material in the skies is already so bad that tele-communications are adversely affected, and that some heaven-sweeping device is needed to collect and return this debris to earth, ironically, the only place where it can be absorbed.) Here is a simple problem of accommodation, yet it is one which every manufacturer seems, in some curious way, to be morally absolved from reckoning with. Only in the most flagrant instance of prolonged pollution are laws enacted and reluctantly enforced to curb spoilation arising from the discarding of materials.

Mass movement is another major cause of blight. Every activity and every facility connected with the movement of passengers and freight has produced repellent enviroial conditions, tolerable only for limited working

periods and then to be escaped from as rapidly as other means of movement will allow.

This is a simple problem of basic human emotional reaction. Movement has always been exhilarating to participate in and to watch, at least for a time. Children and adults are always to be found fascinated by the intricacies of the disciplined routines of railroad yards, quay-sides, airports and urban intersections. Yet these reactions are momentary. The fascination fades for those whose daily round is circumscribed by these features.

When a facility becomes a fatigue, blight follows, and the lesson here seems to be one of attitudes of mind. A freight yard is irresistibile to an adventurous child, but an abhorrence to any parent and a place to be avoided, having the disenchantment of danger, disorder, dirt and of being entirely without visual appeal. The consequences of this upon the surrounding real-estate values are obvious, and the same conditions re-apply in varying degrees, to other concentrations of transport services.

The architecturally superlative railroad stations of the late 19th century, with their splendid hotels adjoining, are facade to the acres of dreary trackage that affects so much of the urban environment. Similarly, the bright new air terminals with their lawns and fountains, are but a small gesture of grace against the spread of maintenance hangers, the noise and deserted distances.

The bewildering extent of parking now necessary for Astrodomes, factories, shopping centers, even for beaches and other places of popular resort impose an undoubted penalty for the convenience of ready and rapid movement. This penalty, first paid for at an 'aesthetic price' is only part of the ultimate cost which will follow the inevitable trend of rising and then falling real-estate values as dread disillusionment and visual revulsion overtakes the advantages of temporary convenience. And blight appears triumphant.

The lesson here, I think lies in the comparative brevity of advantage which is to be enjoyed by 'convenience'. Note the pressures now prevailing to bring visual relief to the baking crust of concrete shopping centers where the original attraction of immediate access has become a repellent experience which no merchant can now afford to ignore. It is not astonishing how soon a positive advantage may turn to negative account which warrants the term of blight; and which requires swift remedy if the disease is to be prevented from spreading to the surrounding activities which once benefited from the original enterprise?

These two factors of production and of movement naturally combine to raise the subject of property and

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the rights of use in a society which attempts to balance the individual freedoms with those collective interests that are compatible with our democratic temperament. Blight is contagious. It cannot be confined, neither can the rate of ruin nor the extent of spread be determined. Further, it must be recognized that the conditions promoting the disease bring with them profits which are highly beneficial to those who know how to manipulate human miseries and misfortunes and how to turn taxation tables to advantage.

We are gradually coming to accept that rights of property ownership are also social obligations, but the legal instruments for turning obligation to action are few, slow and seldom applied.

Since we are not all opposed to blight, we must recognize also, the margin of commercial maneuver in which a citizen is free to operate as a member of our 'fairly-free' society.

In the matter of professional remedy there is no parallel between the doctor, who having diagnosed a disease, can count upon the cooperation of the patient, the family and neighbors in effecting a speedy cure.

There is, instead, eventual litigation and maybe the gradual application of painfully accumulated laws to curb and to prevent the worst excesses in the destruction of amenities, but as yet there is very little in the way of legal enforcement for the redemption of those situations which have yielded easy returns. Only when the environment becomes intolerable, and the inhabitants menacing, will remedial action be taken by the civic authority, at public expense, and at a moment of extreme crisis.

It seems, therefore, that the disease of blight cannot be fought, legally, until a state of acute crisis has arisen, no matter how early the condition and the multiple causes may be recognized.

Moreover, the various devices for land use regulations are less than satisfactory. I have seen many instances of the hastening of blight produced by the imposition of zoning, and other restrictions on property uses, which hinder the very refurbishment which is the natural antidote to the conditions of blight. And worse, I have witnessed the immediate blighting effects of zoning ordinances intended to be applied as an earnest blight-banishing expedient!

The legal dilemma is as intense as it is embarrassing. We must acknowledge that the condition of blight is inseparable from our basic concept of property ownership, and of use, and that any restrictiveness raises the whole issue of democratic rights and procedures by setting private aspirations against public amenities. There can be no denial of this dilemma. It must be faced as the prime consideration in any review of the problem of blight.

The attorneys are awaiting guidance in a field of aesthetic endeavor for which they have no training, and for which they profess no great understanding. The initiative lies squarely with us. We are beholden to show cause, and effect, and remedial design, and I can assure you we will not lack support, once we can demonstrate clear proposals, policies and payment.

The freedom of use of property, presumable so basic to our liberty, to our thinking and to our changing economic welfare, must be accepted as a fundamental ingredient of the condition of blight.

In brief, we must recognize the freedom to promote, inadvertently, blight-producing conditions by means of inadequate maintenance, or by deliberate changes in land uses which discourage pride in property and downgrade the neighborhood, all undertaken in the legitimate pursuit of personal profit. The current methods undertaken to prevent such changes of land uses, zoning and deed restrictions, succeed for a time, but as safety measures they may exact other penalties which in turn bring a decline in values and a consequent climatic ripening for the roots of blight. (The refusal to allow the subdivision of large houses for apartments, for instance, often hastens the collapse of a once smart neighborhood.)

Blight, like age, is omnipresent. It may occur at any place, upon any fabric from palaces to trailers. It is the pall that declares the recession of solvency, and it is particularly acute when a society is in the grip of a rearing, free-wheeling economy such as that which I perceive prevails in Houston. Blight afflicts all cities, in every continent, continuously, and for an infinite variety of reasons.

Consider the decline of an Italian hill town of great antiquity, seized by blight as a result of the arrival of transport systems which cannot reach the high location. These essential services have therefore drained the economic life of the town to the valley below where the old community has reformed around the railroad and highway junctions; contemplate, also, the dissolution of a Scottish mining town whose product is no longer competitive, or a fishing town in Maine whose areas of catch are over-fished by Soviet fleets and whose meager produce is better flown in from Japan.

But remember too, that in the fullness of time, blight and its consequences can even become romantic. The medieval villages of Europe, whose bygone atmosphere is such an allure for the high-speed vacationer; the Colorado ghost towns, whose forlorn remains are so skillfully advertised and are so attractive as a contrast to the wall-to-wall comfort of current accommodation; the abandoned resorts of placid Kashmir which are slowly returning to the tourist routine, these are instances of the phase *beyond* blight which make definitions so complex and standards so illusive.

All these variations must be recognized as forming the active and prosperous 'business of blight', and it would be worthless to insist that all these conditions could or should be legally restricted or controlled. Who would pay what to keep the hill town in its original security and to sustain rural produce markets? Yet, in a while, the impoverishment may become an asset for insuring the existence of some place of tranquil remoteness and escape from the humming hive of Houston and a thousand other competitive cities.

Who would maintain the miners of Scotland, of Colorado, and now of Pennsylvania at their accustomed work to prevent the decay that follows the closing of their industries?

The lessons to be learned from such varied instances as these are that change brings blight no less than blight brings change, so that in the analysis of blight we are really addressing ourselves to nothing other than change itself. The lessons include the humbling realization that while we may promote change we always seem to be outstripped by the consequences of change. And further, the architect is trained to design but scarcely to foresee. He possesses neither the ability nor the incentive to see beyond the immediate results of his initial labors. Yet now, through the tightness of time, and by an infamous irony, we are confronted with the consequences of our own endeavors, and like it or not, we, too, are in the 'business of blight'.

You will have noticed that the 'four forces of befoulment' which I have chosen to demonstrate the principal sources from which the disease, inevitable with age, emerges most readily are all indispensable to our own general and personal economic survival, and we cannot stand aside and complain in a 'we' and 'they' attitude of mind. Each of my chosen forces is basically a prime asset, and each is so much a part of our existence that the stability of the national well-being is intimately bound up with their continuance.

Mass production, mass movement, property rights and the business of blight are all interacting forces whose conflicting effects can be counted upon to intensify. For instance, it is clear that there will be more products to use, and therefore to dispose of after use, than hitherto. What legislation can be enacted to insist upon the effective destruction and disposal of the discarded product? Even now, there is the most impelling need for the development of a waste-disposing attitude of mind and routine that has the prestige that it deserves as a principal social service, like nursing, if we are to avoid becoming swamped with our own industrial excrement.

In brief, blight is both a disaster and a stimulant, a paralysis and an opportunity. While 'necessity may be the mother of invention', blight is indeed the very potent child of change, that grows to beget further change and change again. ■

'BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE'

Address by

MORRIS KETCHUM, JR., FAIA

President The American Institute of Architects

Is the American city worth saving?

Some people don't think so. They believe that it is too late to save it and that it is not worth saving. They point out that downtown is dead and the "highwaymen" are carving up the carcass with "stiltways" and "groove-ways." Their solution is to abandon the empty, bulldozed city core for suburbia, the walkways of metropolis for motorized Sprawl City. For them, the battle is over.

Perhaps they are right. Sprawl City lies like a ragged carpet over the Atlantic seaboard from Boston to Washington. Across the continent, it is creeping north to San Francisco and south to San Diego through all the valleys and over the bulldozed mountainsides of the Pacific seacoast. In between, every major city is exploding into the countryside. The majority of Americans are living or will soon live in a wasteful, uneconomic and deadly dull environment, better suited to robots than to men.

Even then, they won't be able to safely enjoy their exurban monotony. By 1980, according to the National Academy of Science, the time will have come when we can no longer use our land, sea and air as a gigantic trash basket without poisoning ourselves and every other form of life on the continent.

America the Beautiful, in all its glory and technical excellence, will have gone down the drain.

In the process, urban life as we know it will have been destroyed. Endless suburbia reduces personal contact, sense of place, awareness of social responsibility and all the cultural and political contacts which have molded our civilization. Even if we try to create or preserve scattered administrative, social and cultural centers throughout the fabric of Sprawl City, these will play

second fiddle to radio, television and all the other canned substitutes for the realities of direct human contact, thought and action.

Sprawl City is not the answer.

As Vincent Scully has said: "For an urban future, we must honor the past." If urban life is to survive and flourish, we must use the lessons of yesterday's urban architecture as a guide to the urban pattern of tomorrow. There is no substitute for the real city. It sets the quality of life for every American. The time has come for all of us to save it from destruction.

By adopting all our technological weapons to the task, taming the automobile, and utilizing all the resources of architecture to create an urban fabric well suited to today's demands and tomorrow's opportunities, we can bring this achievement within our grasp.

It will be a long war well worth fighting. For we are fighting not only for our profession, not only for architecture, but for the very survival of urban life as we know it and *know it can become.*

It would be strange indeed if an architect were not concerned with beauty, but more than aesthetics is at stake. The fact of the matter is that America's urban environment is obsolete, badly equipped and unable to handle its own complex social and economic demands. It is becoming less able to cope with these demands every day. Nor is this condition of obsolescence limited to the urban environment in which most of us are trying to live and work. It extends to the political, economic, and social forces which are supposed to regulate and maintain a healthy urban environment.

Consider the fact that when we talk about cities and glibly compare population statistics for our metropolitan centers, we are already using an obsolete language. If by "city" we mean a densely-populated and heavily built-up urban area whose people depend upon each other for goods and services, then neither New York or Los Angeles is our largest city. It might be the huge urban blotch of the New York-New Jersey area which contains some seventeen million people, or the larger blotch that extends from New England to Virginia and contains forty million people.

If by "city" we mean the political boundaries of municipal New York or Baltimore or Miami, we are indulging in fantasy. The throbbing unhappy urban organism—wherever it sprawls today—cuts blindly across city, county and state lines. The citizens who live and send their children to schools in one political municipality, go to work in a second, shop in a third, and travel regularly across a fourth, care far less about parochial patriotism than they do about being able to live a decent life. And where vitally needed common services must necessarily cross these invisible and generally meaningless boundaries, the political bodies are deadlocked and helpless to provide them on a unified and economic basis.

The most apparent of these failures to use our native wit and technical knowledge for the good of our people is in the field of transportation. We talk glibly about recognizing America's alleged "love affair" with the automobile and we readily accept the principle of a "balanced" transportation system. Yet we continue to act as if the massive use of Federal tax money to build highways anywhere and everywhere is equivalent to the flag, Mom, and apple pie, and the idea of doing the same thing for rail systems is darkly akin to socialism. We put in charge of highway planning people who—as Oscar Wilde said—know the price of everything and the value of nothing. We rip up our cities with motorways and delude ourselves into thinking we are making the most of our technology and doing it in the name of progress. The damage done by this single-minded and politically abetted obsession with building highways is not unlike what foreign towns and cities have suffered at the hands of invading armies. A priceless heritage is thereby destroyed.

Lyndon B. Johnson defined this crisis when he said: "In almost every part of the country, citizens are rallying to save landmarks of beauty and history. The government must also do its share to assist these local efforts which have an important national purpose . . . I hope that, at all levels of government, our planners and builders will remember that highway beautification is more than a matter of planting trees or setting aside scenic areas. The

roads themselves must reflect, in location and design, increased respect for the natural and social integrity and unity of the landscape and communities through which they pass."

The President has spoken. Let us hope that his message reaches those agencies of government which plan and build our superhighways.

Misguided technology is only one of our problems, unfortunately. We have pressing social problems as well. If the current trend continues, every major city in the nation will have the poor and uneducated as its dominant population group within a very few years. The consequences of allowing our cities to become the poorhouses of America had better be recognized while there is still time to avoid them. We will not—I repeat not—be able to contain the frustrations and resentments of the untrained and uneducated in our urban cores while the rest of us live in smug security in suburbia. When the core is rotten, there can be no health in the outer skin. We have been neglecting this problem for a very long time and we will soon pay for it unless we have the courage and mental clarity to face the issues openly and squarely.

We are also just beginning to realize that we are severely handicapped by archaic laws and archaic thinking, not to mention a considerable state of ignorance concerning our own history and heritage.

I remember vividly the comment made by a prominent homebuilder last summer at the successful Columbia University seminar we conducted for the education of the mass magazine press. He had just won several awards for producing a fine single-family subdivision in suburban Maryland. The houses are well-sited and well-designed; the terrain has been respected; trees and even wild underbrush have been preserved; and the utility lines are underground. And yet this builder said he was dissatisfied with what he had done; he had wanted to create a village-like clustering of different forms of housing, together with suitable recreational and commercial facilities. But he couldn't; the local building and zoning laws had been frozen long ago to permit only individual free-standing houses; to put one family on each acre of ground—in short, to encourage wasteful, desolate, expensive suburban sprawl.

Our tax policies are equally absurd. At every level of government, today's tax laws reward the man who lets his property run down and penalizes the man who tries to make it a community asset. We must reverse this policy, tax the slumowner, give a break to owners who add aesthetic extras to the cost of building, and make it tough for people who pollute land, water, and air to the detriment of the community.

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the detriment of the community.

There comes a point—and we have reached it—when “free enterprise” has to be re-defined.

If you give me the freedom to drive my car across your lawn, obviously you lose part of your own freedom. What I gain in following my own selfish wishes may diminish your rights and privileges. Should I have the right to create a commercial slum on the approaches to your neighborhood by putting up bigger and splashier billboards or by littering the highway with carryout stands and towering gas station signs? When does the use of my land for personal profit impinge upon your interest and those of the community as a whole? If you ask a certain kind of individual about these things, he will tell you emotionally that unlimited use of personal property for personal gain is the traditional “American way.”

It may come as a shock to him to learn, perhaps for the first time, that the community leaders of the villages and towns of early America took quite a different view of these things. The hard-nosed Puritans, by law and custom, saw to it that the welfare of the community predominated over individual desires and advantages. We have a rich and valid heritage in community design, as the buildings, streets and squares of old New Orleans eloquently demonstrate. We have forgotten many things our forefathers knew, as the suburban construction around New Orleans demonstrates equally well. We have become spineless enough, in some instances, to surrender our own good judgment to the brutish impulses of short sighted businessmen and insensitive bureaucrats, as the disgraceful plan to build an elevated highway across the river edge of the French Quarter most amply exhibits.

The citizens of New Orleans would do well to emulate the example of the San Franciscans, rise up against the highway builders, and force them to back down. It will be interesting to see whether they will act with equal zeal and public spirit to protect what their ancestors gave them to enjoy.

Ultimately, I believe, we must awaken from our apathy and blind acceptance of outmoded ideas and ask ourselves what kind of people we really are. Secretary Udall recently posed the same question by wondering aloud what kind of people can make the most beautiful spinning reels and rods in the world and then destroy all the places to fish. To put it somewhat differently, why should the nation with the most advanced technology, highest standard of living, best program for mass education, the most stable political system make such an

idiotic mess of its own living environment?

There is no good answer to this question, but there are solutions to the problem of urban disorder and ugliness. They are not easy to come by, but they exist. I submit that it will take four forces to get the job done: An enlightened and sympathetic government; the talents and dedication of the design professionals; the demonstrated ability of business leadership to get things done in the community; and the expressed will of a public that demands a better urban life and realizes it can have it.

This is, in truth, our profession's grand design.

The architect's greatest contribution in this age of ours will not lie in the development of new structures but in awakening the American public to the urgent need to correct the social, political, and educational defects that prevent the flowering of a better urban life. Without these changes, we can aspire to be nothing more than busy cosmeticians—moving slum dwellers from one kind of project to another, building more elaborate civic centers, designing prettier graphics for store fronts. We have an enormous educational task to perform and, in the war on ugliness being conducted by our 160 chapters, in the mass magazine press seminars we are setting up, in the films we are producing for community and school audiences, we have only just begun. We need all the friends we can get.

We are just beginning to receive some help and support from a very powerful friend—our national government. The new Program abounds with bold new ideas and we should applaud it—and, perhaps most important, see to it that it is financed strongly enough to result in more than fond wishes and brave words. We have been immensely gratified by the establishment of a cabinet-level Department of Housing and Urban Development. It is long overdue. The billboard law may have obvious shortcomings but it is a long first step in a praiseworthy direction. The same can be said about the national beautification program. Whether it plants a million rose bushes or only one, it performs the priceless function of spotlighting the issue of urban ugliness in a dramatic manner under the matchless sponsorship of the White House.

We need a great pool of talent and skills—the assembled brainpower of our political leaders, sociologists, physical scientists and educators—to establish a great new urban program. This program can only be translated into physical form in our urban centers by the architect and his allies—the design professions, the product manufacturers, builders, and organizations of craftsmen. Today's building industry is surely one of the most disorganized and outmoded in existence. It must learn to work efficiently and as a unit if we are to perform tasks

of the magnitude that soon must be set before us.

Given a sympathetic government, community mobilization, the full use of professional talents, and a revitalized building industry, imagine what we can do! We can create new urban cores in which business can flourish and people can move freely in beautiful urban spaces, free of congestion and vehicular traffic. We can help to create and integrate transportation systems that recognize the need for a balance of pedestrian, automotive, rail, and air traffic facilities. We can save ourselves from Sprawl City.

We can develop new urban centers which remain lively by both night and day, in which concrete and greenery are not strangers to each other, where people can live, work, shop, and play without traveling many miles from one single-function area to another.

We can halt the desecration of our countryside and replace the sprawling monotony of suburbia with self-contained, well-designed new towns and satellite cities which preserve open space, conserve land, shorten transportation and utility lines, provide for an intelligent "mix" of housing and business, and give us once again the pleasant life of America's early villages. Several of these new towns—Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland—are already coming up out of the ground.

We can, as a matter of national and community policy, reclaim our wasted natural resources, cleanse the pollution from air and water, save our wilderness areas, and preserve the historic structures of our towns and cities. Visionary? Of course. Courage, boldness, and the most ambitious of visions are needed if we are to reverse the deterioration of urban life, reform the greedy and rapacious, bring the lobbies and special interests under community control, and enlighten the ignorant. If it is true that America came into being because of the courage and boldness of pioneers who refused to believe that it couldn't be done, then let us live up to the standards of our own history.

We must discard fixed prejudices and obsolete ideas—that part of the past we need to forget. We need new thinking. We need new public policy, and the dedication to support it and carry it out. We are faced with a gigantic task but a task clearly defined is a problem half solved. The ultimate solution can at least be dimly perceived.

In saving the American city, we can save all the urban values we love so well and enlarge the broad horizon of our architecture. When we succeed, as we must and will, ours will be a public service far greater than any other in our profession's history.

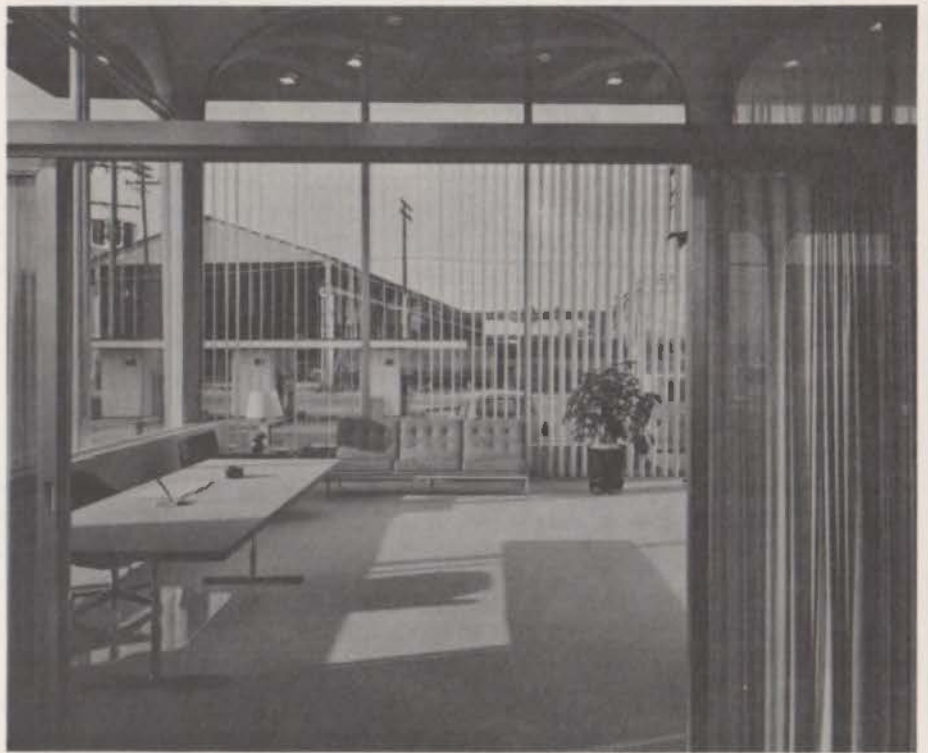
That is our blueprint for the future!



HEIGHTS STATE BANK, HOUSTON

WILSON, MORRISON, CRAIN & ANDERSON

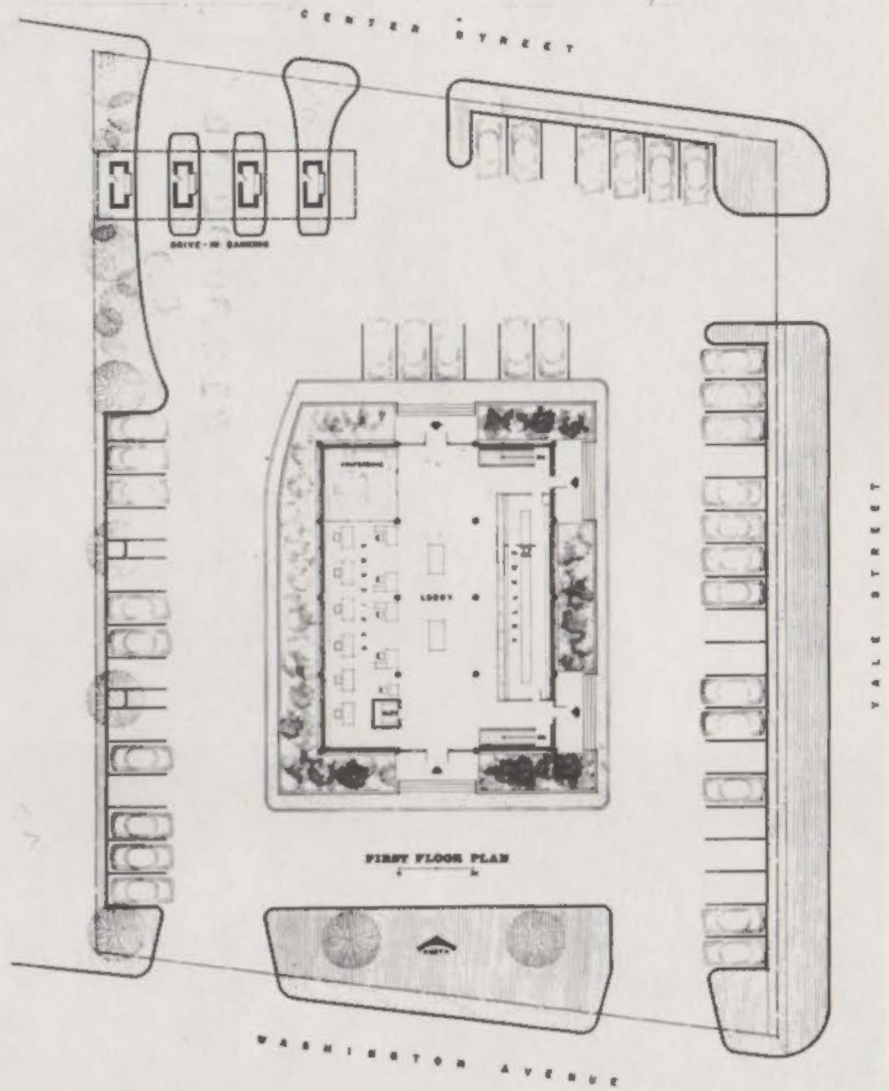
ARCHITECTS



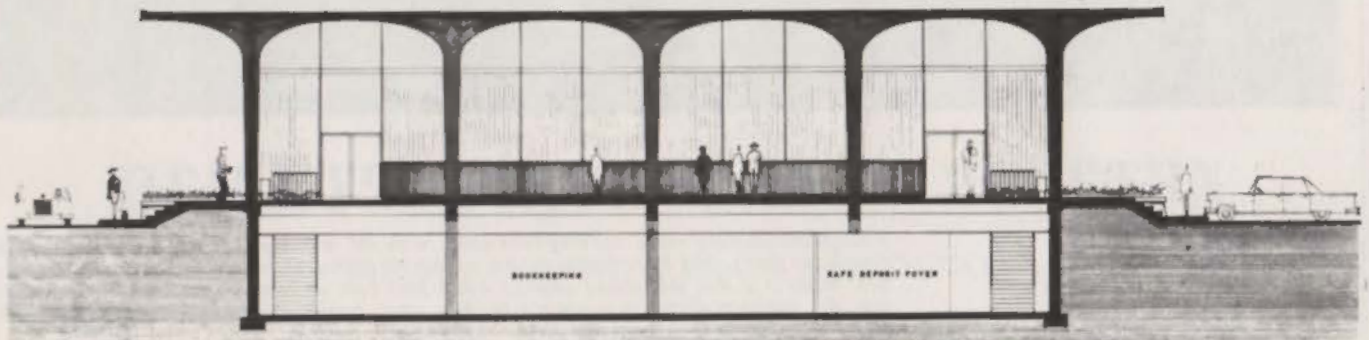
A neighborhood bank which has long been active in an old, unpretty section of Houston desired a new home that would be a dignified oasis among the clutter of industrial plants and used car lots. While it is true that almost anything would have been an improvement over the surroundings, the Architects elected to compose a building which frankly expressed its structure, but with somewhat more order and simplicity than its industrial neighbors.

HEIGHTS STATE BANK

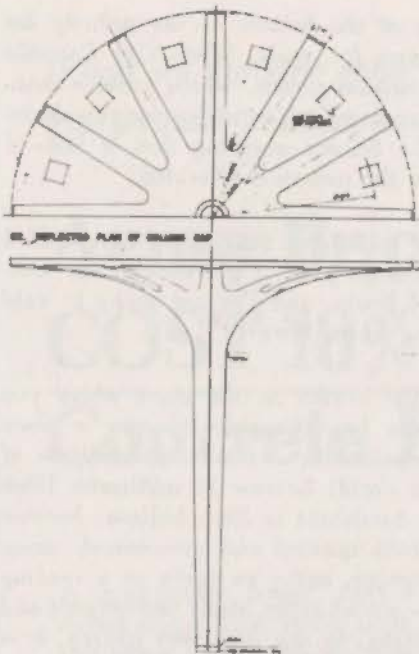
On a tract surrounded by three busy thoroughfares, a pavilion of concrete trees enclosed in glass has been located in a manner to permit auto access from all sides, on-site auto circulation, and maximum access to the drive-in bank. The ground floor of the bank has been raised above the auto-circulation level on a landscaped terrace.



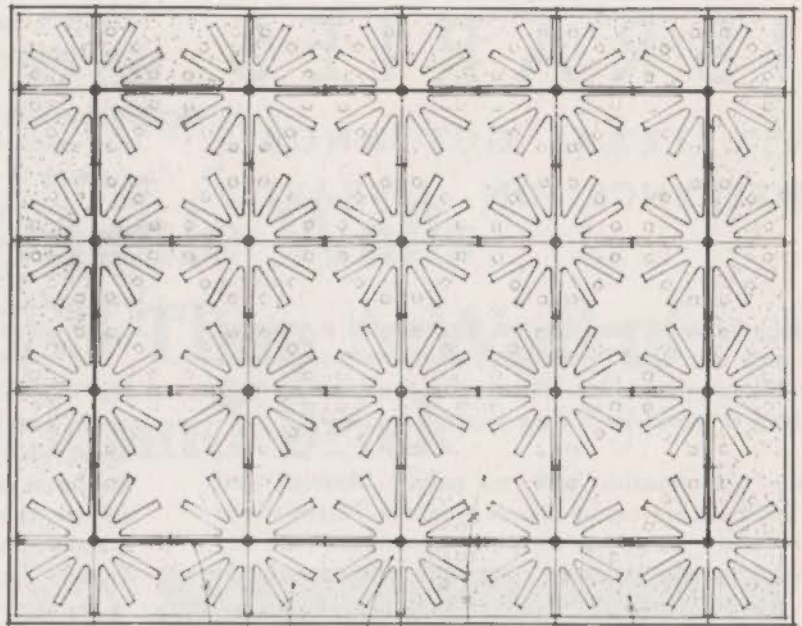
Entrances to the bank are on three sides. The ground floor contains most of the public-contact areas: tellers, officers, and the loan department. The basement houses the vault, accounting and record keeping offices, lounges, storage and mechanical equipment.



SECTION THROUGH BANK - NORTH - SOUTH



03. ELEVATION OF TYPICAL FLARED COL.



REFLECTED CEILING PLAN

Columns supporting the roof were cast in place up to the spring line, and the splayed caps were precast on the ground in fiberglass molds, lifted into place on the caps, and secured to each other; then the roof slab was poured over the entire framework. The underside was finished with sprayed-on acoustical plaster. The nature of the structure provides a seven foot overhang around the building; further sun-control is obtained by vertical louvered blinds. The ground floor is terrazzo. The furnishings in the public areas were selected by the Architects.



Photographs by:
Maris • Ezra Stoller
Assoc's.

LIBRARIES

FIRST TEXAS GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON LIBRARIES

Abraham Lincoln, famed as an example of a self-educated man who read by firelight, would have trouble in 28 Texas counties today. His trouble wouldn't be with the light; it would be finding books.

Twenty-eight counties have no public libraries, and their residents are among almost a million Texans whose public library is so close to being non-existent (one day a week operation in some instances) that they would have to be listed as virtually without public library service.

While the rest of the nation spends \$1.50 per person on libraries, Texas spends 84 cents per person. And even that national average figure is nothing to brag about.

Seven million Texans have library service below the national average and only about one and one-half million can claim access to a public library which spends \$1.50 annually per person.

Libraries have been at the bottom of the priority list for public expenditures for years. When City Councils and County Commissioners courts, which provide money for public library support, consider their budgets, they usually give the library anything that is left—if anything is left after the money is allocated.

One of these policy makers is reputed to have told a librarian making a budget plea, "I got where I am without reading a lot of books, and I'm not going to vote to put a lot of money in the library."

The old image of the library as the place where you check out books only has changed. It's now a place where you: borrow paintings—framed reproductions of the finest art in the world; borrow 16 millimeter films on everything from Aardvarks to Zuni Indians; borrow sound recordings—both musical and non-musical, using them to learn a language, enjoy an opera or a reading of the Bible; borrow sound tapes, study newspapers and magazines on microfilm. In one American library, it is possible to borrow an umbrella on a rainy day!

It is hoped the Conference gave impetus to a new movement in Texas for improved library service with results that would make it impossible for that famed self-educated man, Lincoln, to apply one of his famed descriptive phrases to Texas library service—"as thin as the homeopathic soup that was made by boiling the shadow of a pigeon that had been starved to death." ■

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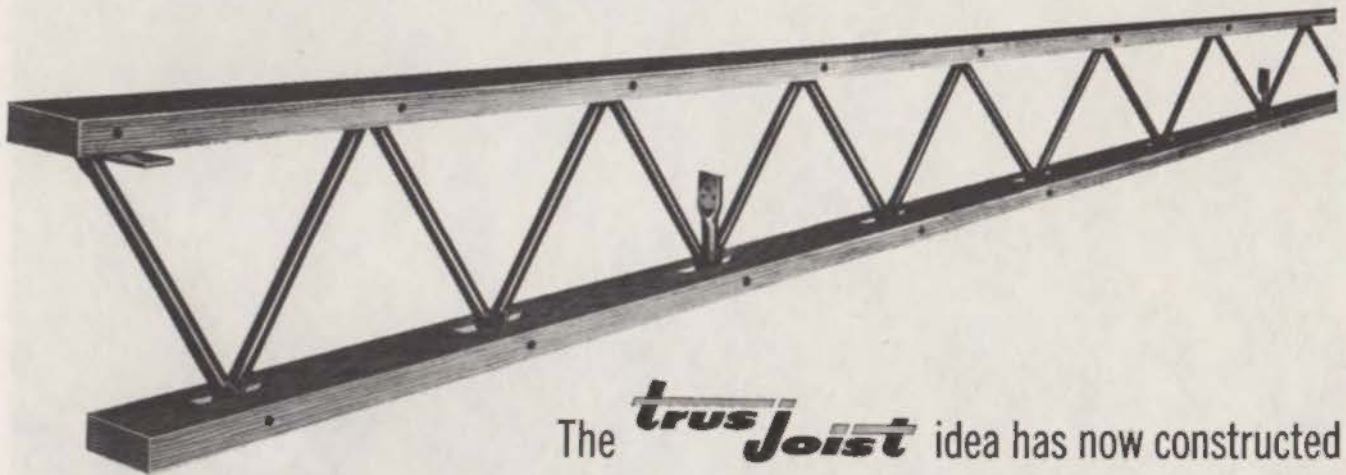
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No army
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an idea
 whose time has come

—Victor Hugo



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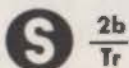
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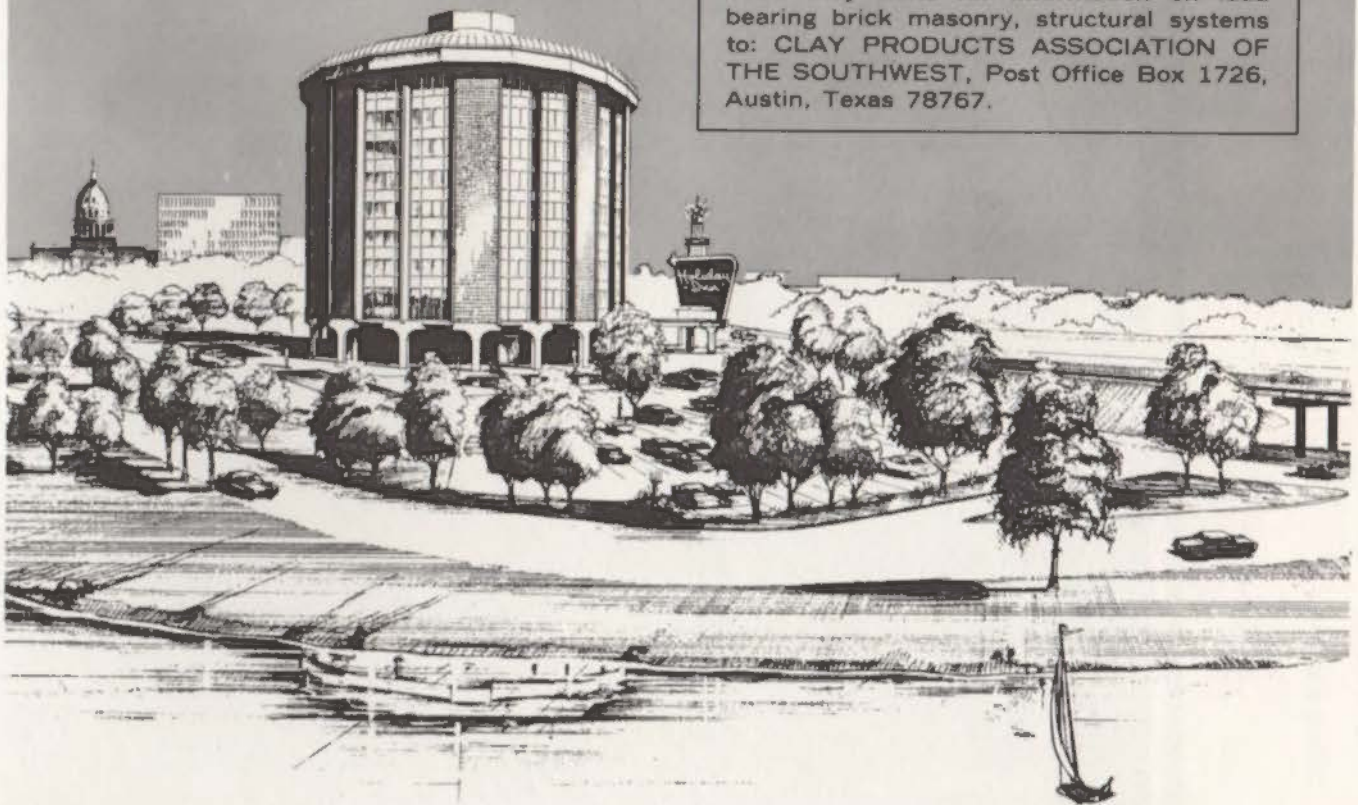
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