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The American Institute of Architects

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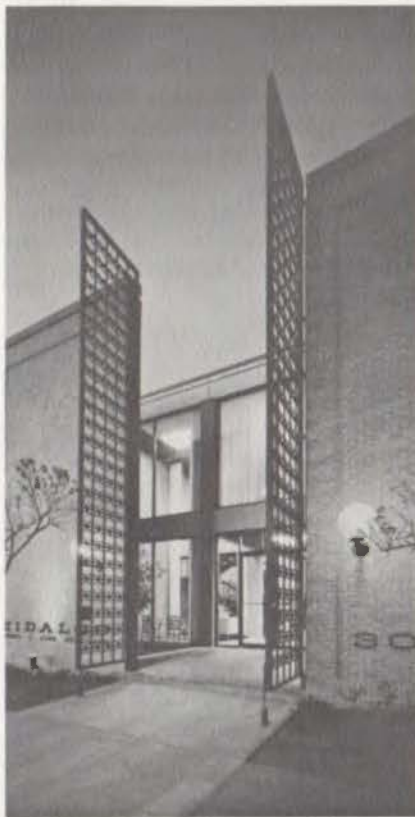
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THE TEXAS ARCHITECT

VOLUME 20 / MAY, 1970 / NO. 5

3 Massive masonry walls surround and set the stage for a variety of controlled spaces and environment of Hidalgo Savings and Loan association building in the Texas Valley. The Texas Architecture 1969 selection reflects the regional character of the area and provides dignity for a financial institution in the community.



9 Texas, Too, is feeling pressures of urban congestion in its cities—a national crisis fed by the addition of 10,000 autos to roads daily and dwindling public transit riders. The transportation crisis picture is reviewed in **How Do We Go From Here?**



14 Memories of the days gone by are relived as the Texas Historical Architectural Series features the **Culberson County Court House** located in Van Horn, Texas.



8 Texas Society of Architects is honored to feature five of its members who have received Fellowship in the American Institute of Architects.

Texas Architect Advertisers:

- P. 20 Mosher Steel Company
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TEXAS
ARCHITECTURE
1969

Editor's Note: One Hundred and Seventy entries were narrowed down to ten finalists by the Texas Architecture 1969 awards jury. The jury selected three projects from the finalists to receive Honor awards. The three Honor award projects were featured in the January, February and March 1970 issues of The Texas Architect. This month The Texas Architect is pleased to feature one of the other seven finalists.

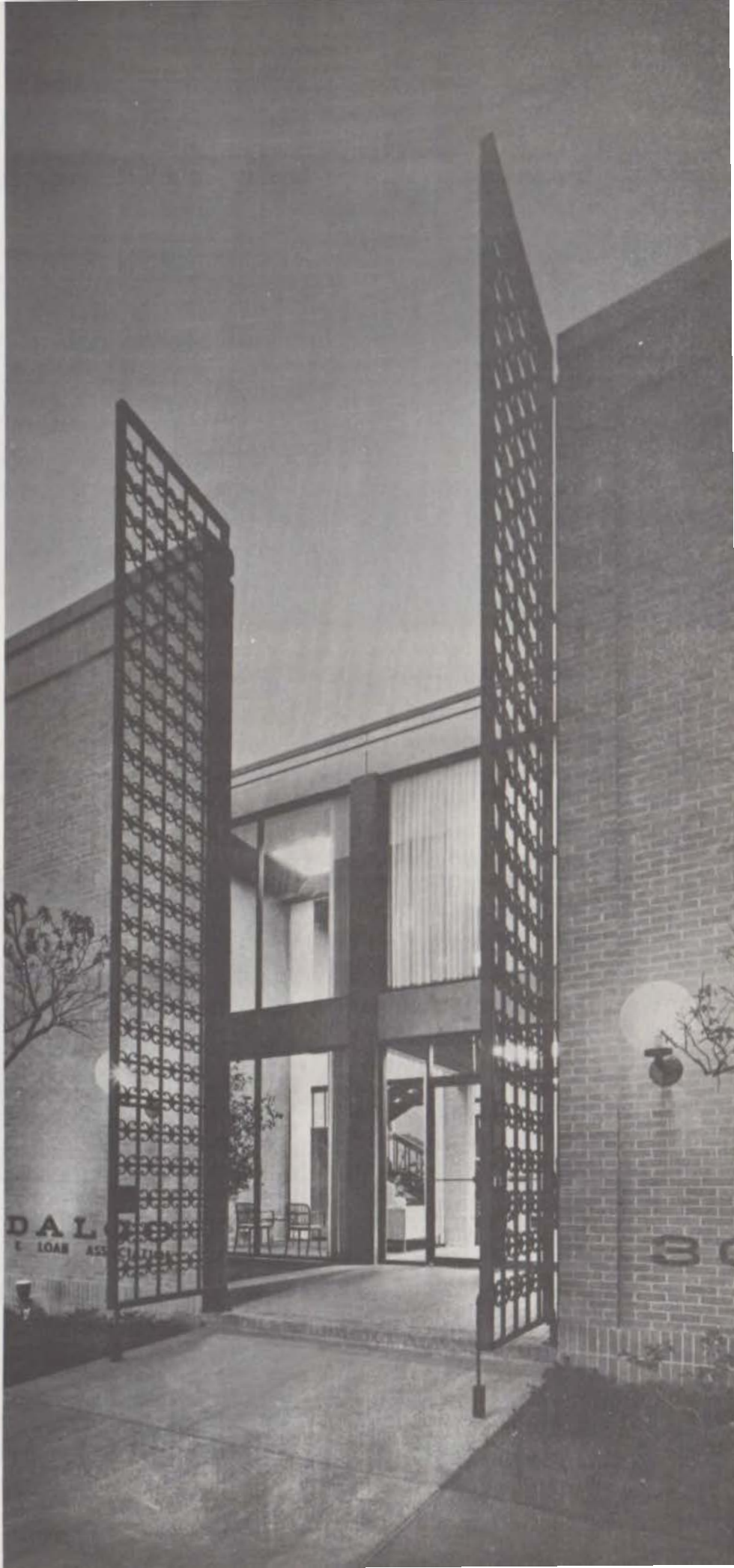
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
KARL KRAUSE

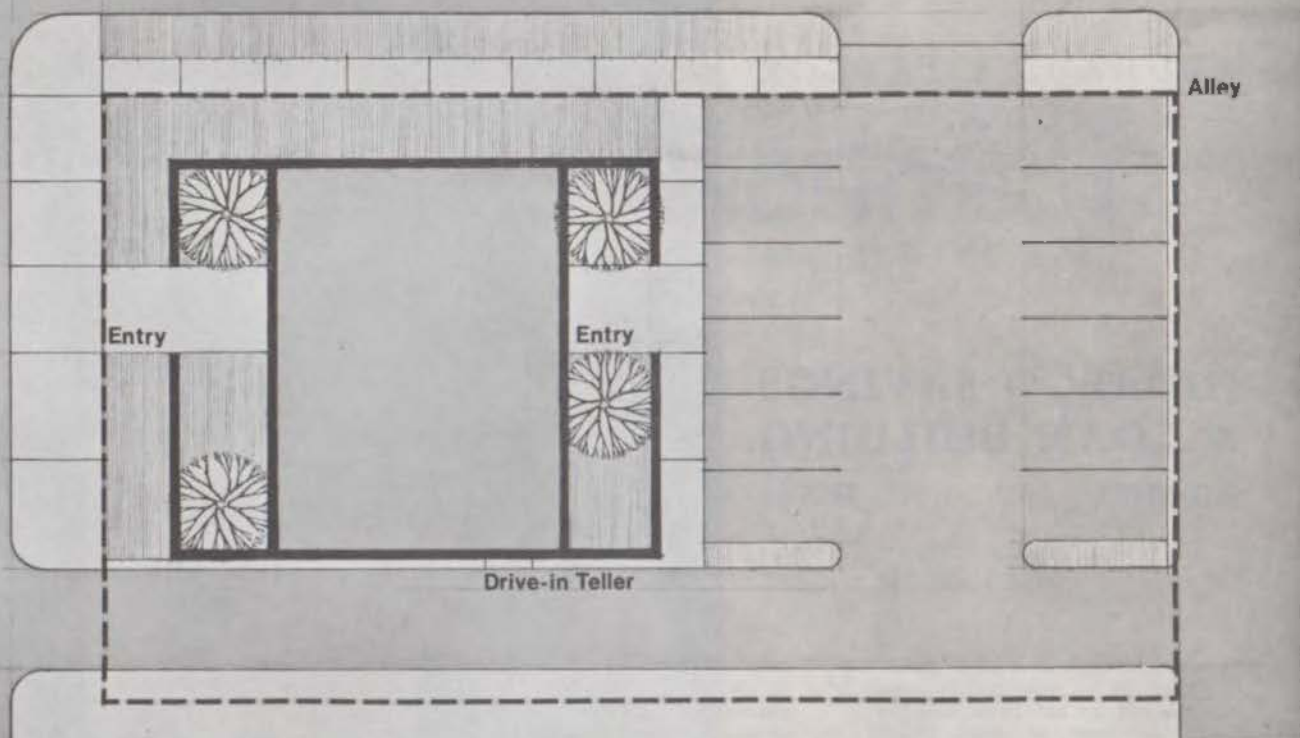
MECHANICAL AND
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS:
CHENAULT AND BRADY

CONTRACTOR:
HARVEY CONSTRUCTION
COMPANY

PHOTOGRAPHER:
FRANK LOTZ MILLER

MAY, 1970



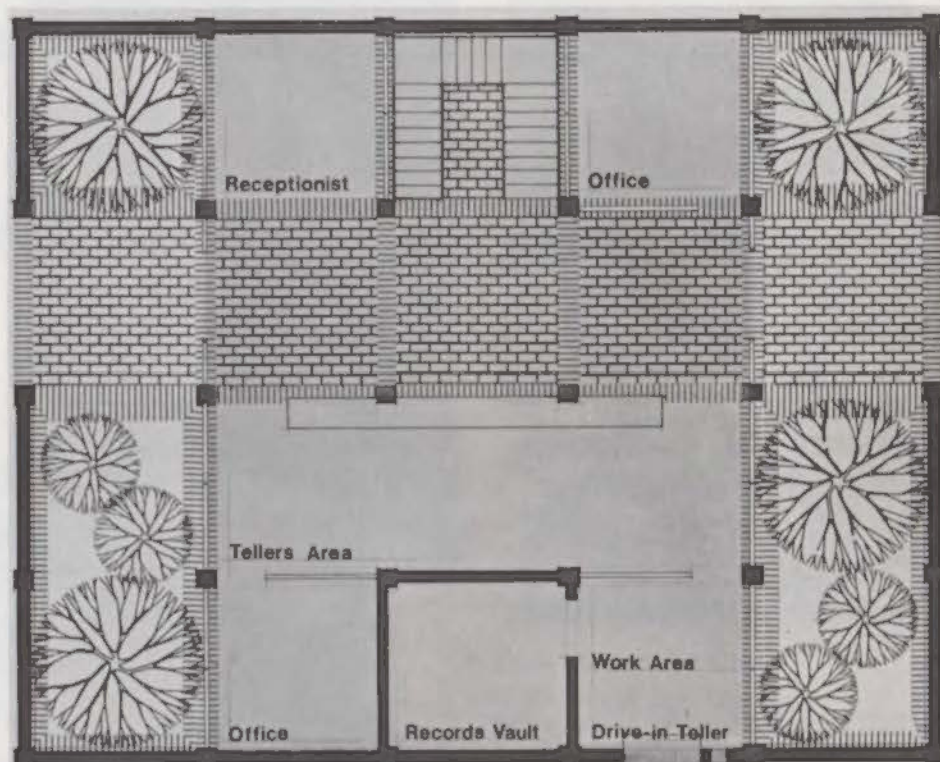


Site Plan

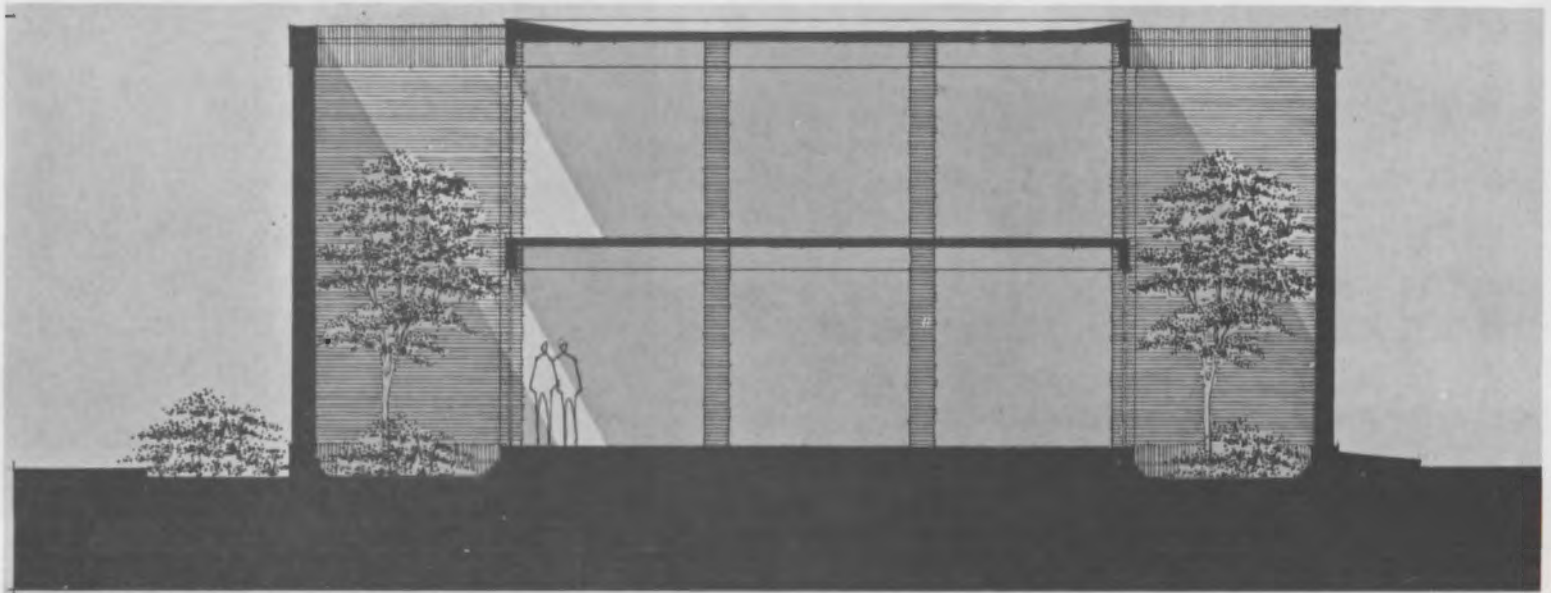
The Problem: To design new facilities for a savings association in the Texas valley near the Mexican border. The site fronts on a main street with a secondary street to the north. The Client desired to reflect the regional character of the area and provide identity with a financial institution which deals primarily in residential loans.

The Solution: A contemporary interpretation of regional architecture uses the heritage and proven attributes of climate control, introspective spaces, and basic simplicity of materials. The exterior masonry walls completely enclose the 3,500 square feet of interior space. Gates twenty-five feet high open to patios

on the two entry sides of the building. This controlled environment provides a transition from the relatively flat and open character of the town to the intimate quality of the interior. The simple massive walls achieve the visual impact of a much larger building. The large gates, simple graphics



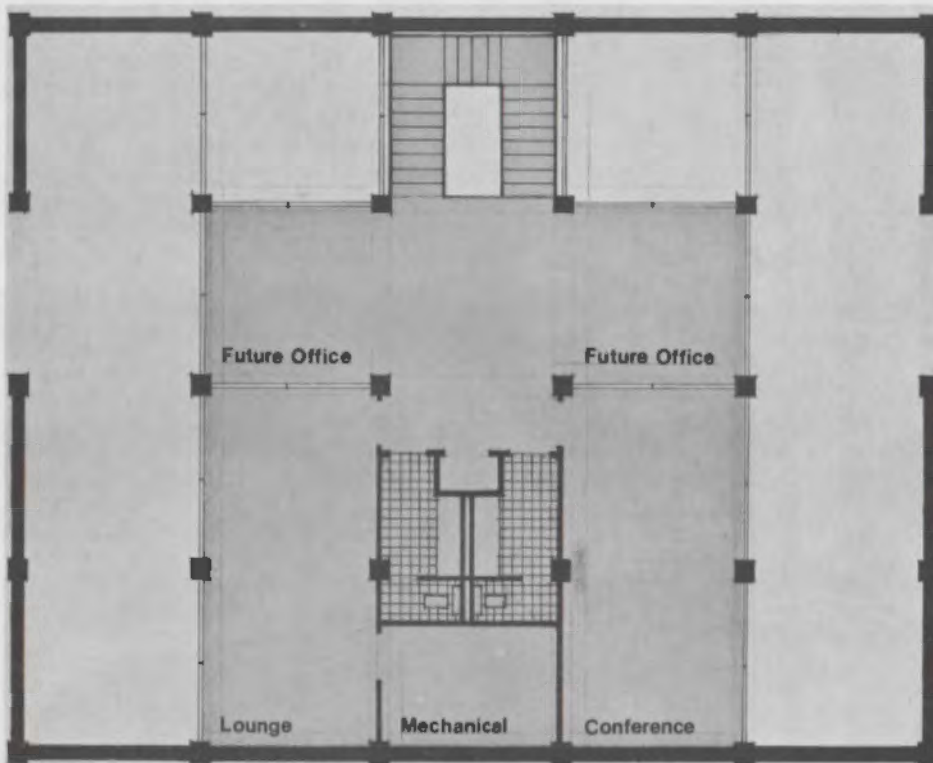
First Floor Plan



Longitudinal Section

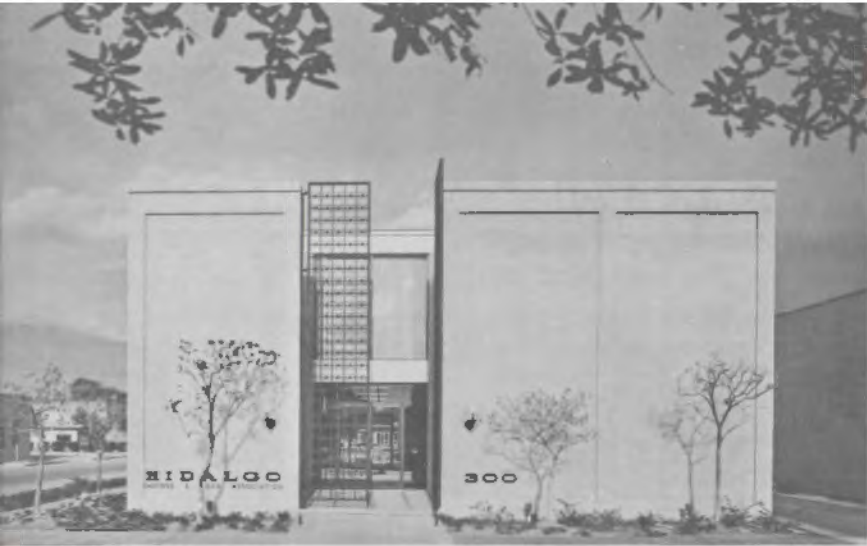
and light fixtures also accent the walls. The interior contains two-story volumes which "borrow" the space to the exterior and provide vertical relief to the small floor areas. A wood cedar board ceiling throughout complements walls of masonry and glass.

Materials and Construction: The structure is masonry bearing walls and columns with a flat slab roof and second floor. A strict 12-foot brick column module provides continuity. Flooring in the public area is brick pavers with carpeting for the offices, tellers and accounting. The second floor uses vinyl asbestos tile with carpeting in the Board Room. Except for gypsum board partitions enclosing restrooms and mechanical area, all other partitions are glass or brick.



Second Floor Plan

The Architect was also responsible for the design of the interior furnishings and accessories, landscaping, lighting and graphics.







FAIA

A.I.A. FELLOWSHIPS

The American Institute of Architects has announced the elevation of five members of the Texas Society of Architects to the rank of Fellow, a lifetime honor bestowed for distinguished contribution to the profession. Advancement of the new Fellows will bring the total membership of the College of Fellows to 943, representing 3.9 percent of the corporate membership of the 24,000-member professional organization.



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TEXAS ARCHITECT

HOW DO WE GO FROM HERE?

BY WELDON HART

Reprinted with permission from *Texas Parade Magazine*.

Texas, too is feeling pressures of urban congestion in its cities—a national crisis fed by the addition of 10,000 autos to roads daily and dwindling public transit riders.



THE PROTOTYPE TEXAN of yesteryear, who galloped exuberantly over the prairies and tied his horse in front of the best saloon in town, left many spiritual descendants. Nearly all of us, in fact.

Few of us question the right of a red-blooded Texan to get in his automobile, drive to wherever he wants to go and park right in front of the place when he gets there. When hundreds or thousands

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Few of us question the right of a red-blooded Texan to get in his automobile, drive to wherever he wants to go and park right in front of the place when he gets there. When hundreds or thousands

of red-blooded Texans have the same idea at the same moment, it causes great loss of time and temper, parking frustrations, traffic tickets, mashed fenders and hurried calls for the wrecker, the ambulance or—sadly—the hearse. We call it “urban congestion.”

Texans who support the one-man-one-car doctrine are being asked to stop and look at the problem they are making and to think about it, if that is not too much trouble.

The 61st Legislature created a six-member Mass Transportation Commission to worry about it officially at the state level. Up to now city mayors, managers and councilmen have been left to worry on a local basis.

Really, it is hard for distance-minded, horizon-eying Texans to grasp the critical state of public transportation. Texas is not, after all, Manhattan Island or Chicago. It isn't even Philadelphia. There is still a lot of riding-around room in Texas.

Not, however, in a growing number of Texas cities at peak-load hours. Houston, Dallas and San Antonio are feeling big pressures. Trouble is beginning to bubble at Fort Worth, Austin and around. Six Texas cities have already taken over their transit systems (Dallas, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Amarillo, Abilene, San Angelo). Franchised private operators are caught in a controlled fare-rising cost squeeze, and also on the horns of a dilemma. (It is easy to see that those people are in a fix.)

The dilemma, simply stated, is this: While the need for mass transportation is growing, the number of riders is dwindling.

John A. Volpe, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, said in Austin last September that the number of public transit passengers had fallen from almost 24 billion a year in 1945 to about eight billion. Instead of making \$149 million as of then, transit systems showed an \$11 million deficit last year.

Meanwhile, Mr. Volpe pointed out, automobile registrations nearly tripled in that period. *We are adding an average of 10,000 automobiles to our roads and streets every day.*

The DOT Secretary is believed to be a car-and-road man at heart, but he says:

“Our highway system—extensive and effective as it is—needs company. It needs efficient public transportation.”

By “public transportation” Mr. Volpe means both rapid fixed-rail transit and bus systems. He has been quoted as saying that so-called rapid transit is economically feasible only in large cities where corridors of population concentration exist. An arbitrary minimum population figure is half a million, which would leave out all except the three largest Texas cities. The rest probably will continue to use buses, although not the typically old, slow, smelly, uncomfortable vehicles found on many lines today. At least, Secretary Volpe hopes not.

His dream of car people riding in buses comes in technicolor against a background of “clean, comfortable, fast service.”

Who will pay for that type of equipment and service?

Volpe and many other expert diagnosticians of the mass transportation trauma believe government—federal, state and community—will have to provide a subsidy for capital costs. (This means us.) They believe “improved” transit systems can pay their way “if you don't take the principal and interest into consideration.”

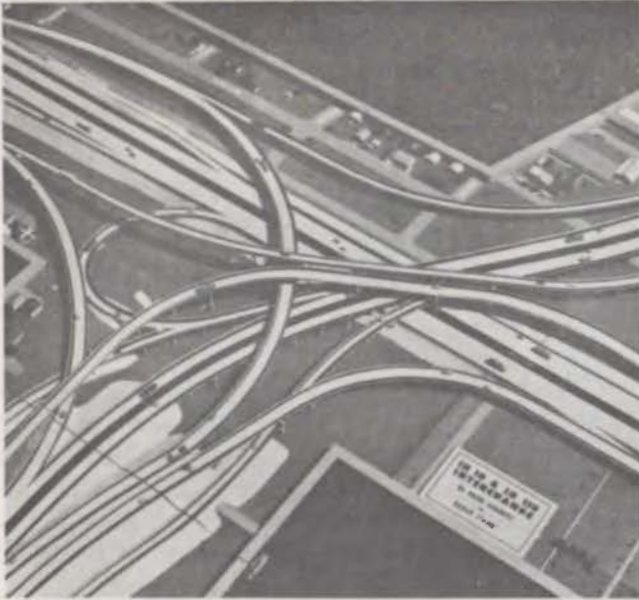
Why not increase fares?

Well, some, maybe. The peculiar role of mass transportation as a social, economic and political (as well as people-moving) factor puts great pressure on operators, public or private, to hold fares as low as possible. Public transportation is most vital to people who don't have automobiles, and nationwide that's said to be 25 per cent. These people, by and large, can't afford high fares.

Lack of transportation to jobs, hospitals, schools, recreation areas and even shopping centers has contributed vastly to the so-called ghetto syndrome. It is one of the big holdbacks to improvement. Older persons who do not drive and youngsters who can't are others who require public transportation.

John Volpe says all the opportunities being developed for job training, health and better housing “. . . will never be fully utilized if the people cannot get to them inexpensively, safely and efficiently. We must have a new mobility in this nation if we are to fulfill our pledges to the disadvantaged, the young, the poor, the elderly and the physically handicapped.”

Mayor Louie Welch of Houston says the Greater Houston Homebuilders' Association sponsored an ambitious program to train unemployed men for



home construction work, but then the trainees didn't show up for their jobs—because there was no public transportation to the subdivision where the jobs were.

So an adequate mass transportation system has to be city-wide, not merely in the disadvantaged areas. In fact, Secretary Volpe decries any attempt to put a "poverty" label on public transportation. He says:

"We've simply got to get more than just the poor people to ride the trains and buses."

Anything less would do nothing about the downtown driving and parking perplexities that bother Mr. Volpe—as well as downtown drivers and parkers.

Speaking of fares, there is a strong suspicion that a great many people wouldn't use today's public transportation even if it was free.

In 1968 the Department of Transportation investigated "the economic, social, technological and financial ramifications" of a no-fare type of mass transit and came to this rather startling and discouraging conclusion:

"Elimination of fares would not significantly increase use of mass transit facilities."

Major improvement in service quality would be necessary, and service would have to be extended to areas not now being served, before any substantial number of citizens would park their cars and use the bus. The cost of "free" transportation of this type was estimated at \$2 billion a year.

Another startling conclusion is about to be reached in another experiment, this one in Flint, Mich. The DOT put some money into that, too. Luxury air-conditioned buses have been picking up automobile workers at their homes, giving them a fast ride to the factory door while stereophonic music soothes them, and taking them home after work in the same friendly manner.

Although the cost was set low (\$9 to \$18 a month, depending on the length of the ride), the 26 plush "maxicabs" have been picking up only 300 a day of Flint's estimated 100,000 commuters. The project is losing \$200 a day, although it would break even if only half the seats were filled each rush hour. The experiment apparently is about to fold.

Questioners found that workers want the flexibility and freedom of their own automobiles, even

at extra expense. A contributing factor, no doubt, is the availability of ample parking space at the factories. A union official was quoted:

"The only thing that will drive people out of their automobiles to any degree is a lack of parking spaces."

That, or (as in some big cities) skyhigh cost of parking spaces.

These, then, are some things the Texas Mass Transportation Commission members can talk about for awhile:

—What and where in Texas are the most urgent needs for mass transportation improvements?

—How much money will it take to meet them?

—Who will put up the money?

—What will it take to get more people on board?

About the first question—locating critical needs—all Texas cities of over 50,000 have a master transportation plan from which most of the hot-spots can be identified.

About money: There's no state money to speak of (a little in the Governor's Office for planning). Federal money is available in very limited amounts—so far. President Nixon has proposed a 12-year, \$10-billion mass transportation subsidy from General Revenue, to be matched by the state or city 1 to 2.

(There is congressional opposition to the President's plan, both from members who don't want to spend that much and from those who want to set up some sort of trust fund—like highways have—instead of taking Nixon's "contracting authority" that would always run two years ahead of actual appropriations.)

Surely the federals will come up with some cash from somewhere, and Texas cities will get a share of it. Under another bill passed this year, the cities can deal directly with Washington for any kind of mass transportation aid. They had been limited to the bus type.

What do the highway people think of all this? For years they have looked somewhat skeptically at mass transit. The reason is not hard to find: Highway users, builders and taxpayers are fear-

ful of raids on highway trust funds, particularly the federal. In Texas, thanks to the Good Roads Amendment, highway money is protected now against frontal assaults.

There does not seem to be a clear and present danger in Washington, either. Secretary Volpe is pledged to preserve the integrity of the Federal Highway Trust Fund. Roads have good and trusted friends in the most important congressional places.

One hurdle exists: The Federal Trust Fund expires October 1, 1972, as the law now reads. It must and will be renewed and extended, at least to complete the Interstate System. Bills have already been introduced to broaden the plan to include mass transportation. Some sort of tradeout is not impossible, although not probable.

Highway money does contribute in a real way to mass transportation in Texas, where they use buses. More than half of the spending now is in and around Texas cities and on urban freeways. Whatever is done to improve streets and roads for automobiles improves them for street-using buses.

With the street upgrading program called TOPICS already going on in a number of Texas cities and a great urban program due to come after the Interstate is completed, it seems as if automobiles and buses can live together in reasonable compatibility a while longer. One of the interim projects will be to give buses priority (on special ramps) while entering freeways. Other entering vehicles will be held back by computerized lights until the bus slips into the traffic stream. Such a system has already been studied by Texas Transportation Institute and probably will be tested soon on the Gulf or the Eastex Freeway (or both) in Houston.

And so, on it goes over Texas, this increasingly serious talk and action on the public transportation front. It is fondly to be hoped that the talk will be sensible and the action realistic. For most millions of Texans, automobiles will continue to be the only practical means of getting from one place to another. The thing to do about mass transportation is neither to ignore it nor try to make it a cure-all for urban traffic ills (which it assuredly is not).

As the Wall Street Journal recently put it: "For the nation in general, the wisest course lies in the middle of the road." ■

IN MEMORIAM



S. B. Zisman, noted city planner and planning consultant, died in San Antonio, March 25, following a short illness.

Zisman was known throughout the United States and abroad as a planner, architect, educator and writer. He was a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and served on its faculty in architecture for five years. He was also Professor of Architecture at Texas A&M University, Visiting Professor of Architecture at the University of Utah, Adjunct Professor of Urban Affairs, Trinity University, and Visiting Professor of Planning at Our Lady of the Lake.

Zisman was a member of the American Institute of Planners and of the American Institute of Architects. He was on committees of the AID on Urban Design, Regional Development, a member of the AID Committee on Licensing and Registration, the ICED Task Force on Licensing and Registration, and a Consultant to the Board of the National Counsel of Architectural Registration Boards.

Zisman served as planning consultant in a wide range of programs, including city, state and reg-

ional planning, urban renewal and downtown planning. Among the cities where he consulted were Washington, D. C., Little Rock, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, Fort Worth, Syracuse, Oklahoma City, Topeka, Independence, Missouri, and Lockhart, Texas. He was associate consultant for the Planning Program of the Island of Guam.

Zisman served the Federal Government as consultant and urban planner for the National Resources Planning Board, as consultant for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and as visiting expert on planning for the Department of Defense. He was a member of the Advisory Committee on Design and Planning for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He recently completed a study for the U.S. Department of the Interior on Open Space Planning.

Zisman was formerly Director of the Council on City planning in Philadelphia, Chairman of the Housing Authority of the City of Bryan, Texas, and served in other public and professional offices.

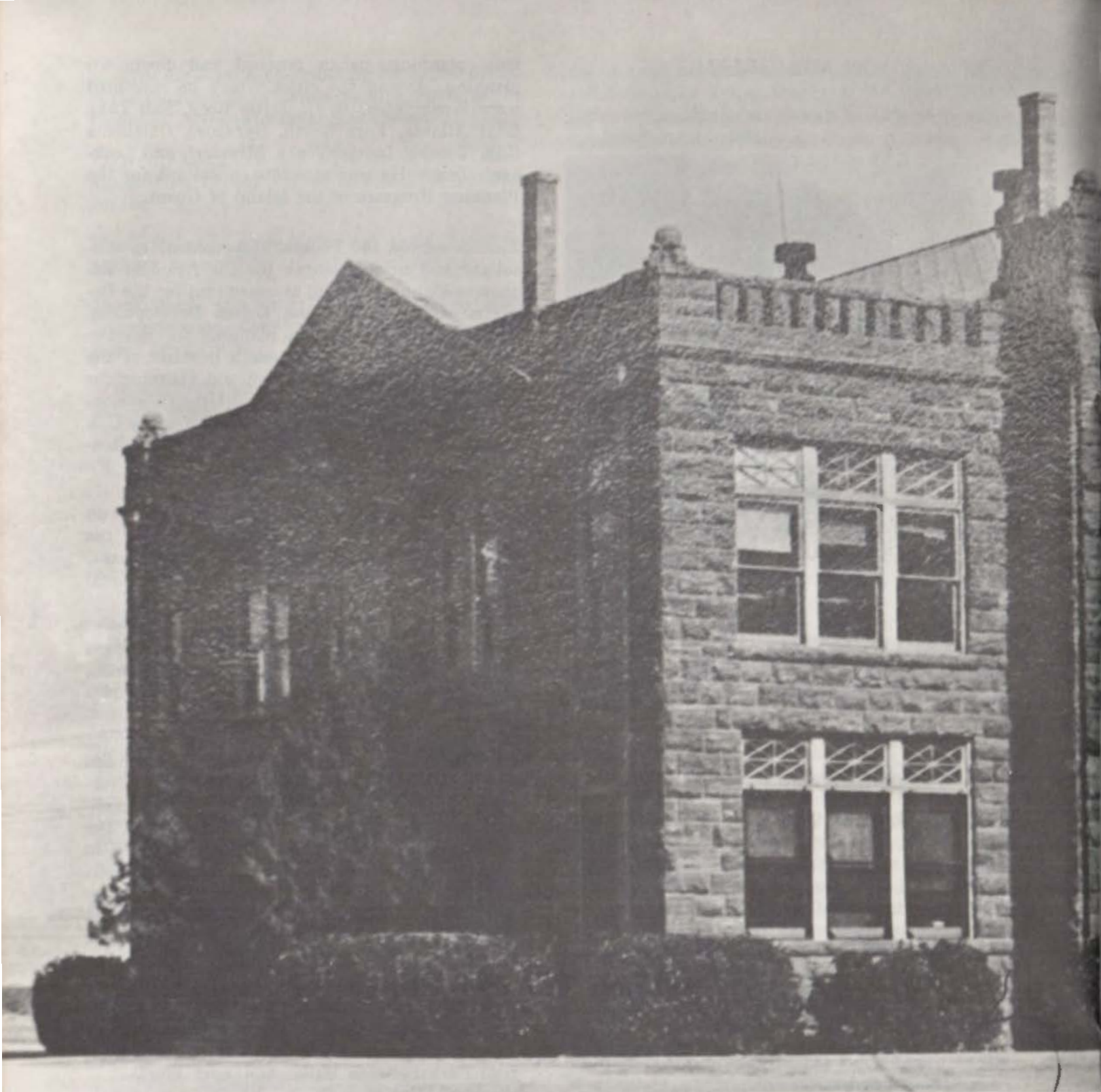
He served as a consultant to the Rockefeller Foundation, the Educational Facilities Laboratories, Inc., and served as a consultant in South America for the Ford Foundation.

His professional work included the preparation of campus plans for colleges, schools and universities throughout the country. He was a consultant on campus planning for the New York Department of Education. He was also engaged in in the planning and development of a new campus for Skidmore College at Saratoga Springs, New York, a new campus for Puerto Rico College at Caguas, Puerto Rico, and a campus plan for Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio.

His work also included industrial planning for the Dallas Campus of Texas Instruments, and he was the planner for the Great Southwest Industrial Park between Dallas and Fort Worth.

In San Antonio, Zisman was long active in numerous civic activities, including the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, McNay Art Institute, the Witte Museum, and the San Antonio Conservation Society.

The S. B. Zisman Scholarship Fund has been established and donations may be sent to 528 King William, San Antonio. ■



CULBERSON

TEXAS HIS

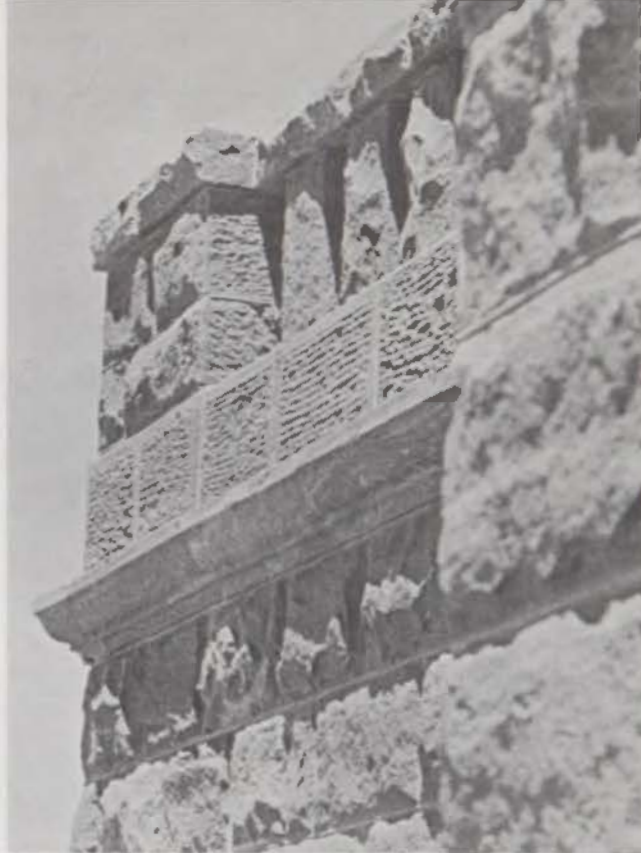


COUNTY COURTHOUSE

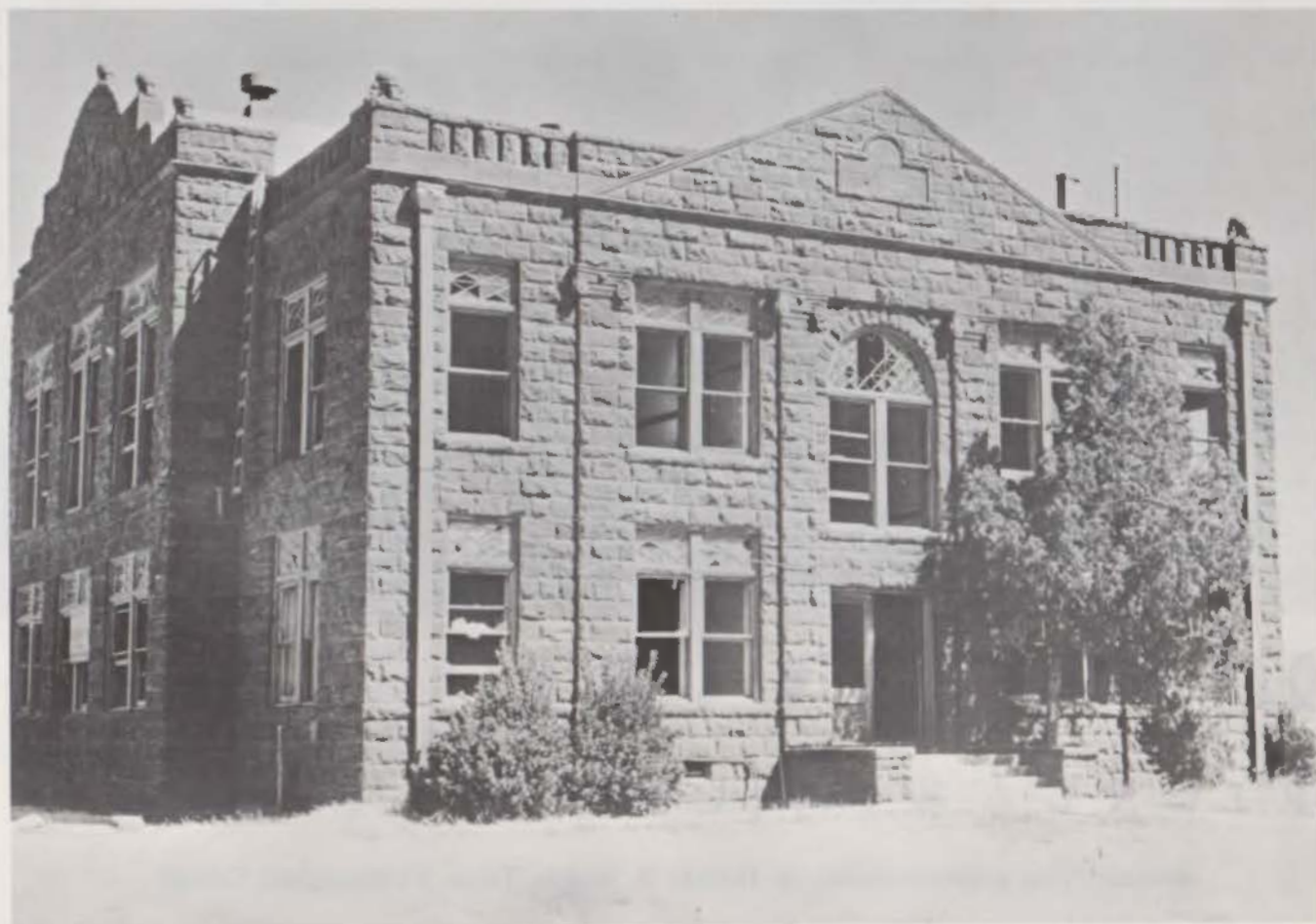
T O R I C A L A R C H I T E C T U R E

excerpts from graphical essay by Dennis B. Roach, Texas Technological College

In January, 1912, the county of Culberson was organized and county offices were set up in a suite of private offices and meeting rooms, above the Van Horn Store. First mention of the Culberson County Courthouse Architect appears in the *Court Minutes* of March 11, 1912 when one E. E. Churchill of Fort Worth submitted plans and specifications for the proposed structure to the Commissioners Court for approval. Modifications in the plans to include Van Horn Sandstone on the exterior were required, and final approval of the documents was delayed until April.



The typically-Renaissance Balustrade with its play creates a handsome capping of light and shadow which reflects a sense of shelter within from the hot West Texas winds.





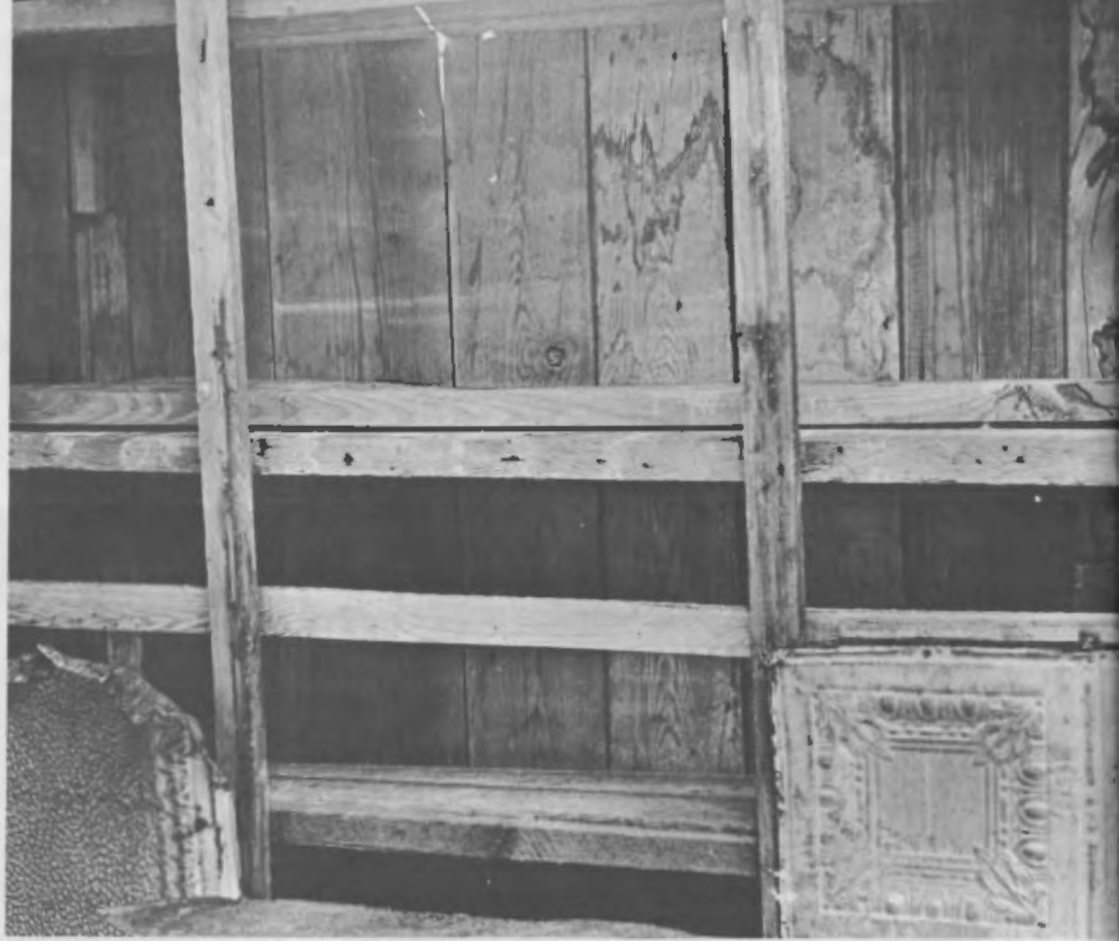
The Ionic columns of the portico were hand carved from sandstone.



The next step toward realizing a permanent courthouse for the county came on May 5, 1912, when the Commissioners Court met in closed session to open bids for construction of the proposed building. Bids were submitted by E. G. Whithers, \$31,640; and E. E. Churchill, \$53,000. After long closed deliberation by the commissioners, Churchill was informed that if he would be willing to accept \$50,000 of the bonds, or if the bonds could be sold before completion of the construction accept instead \$40,175 in cash the contract would be awarded to him. Churchill accepted the offer and the final phase of acquiring a permanent courthouse was begun on May 15, 1912, with the signing of the construction contracts. After 2 years of construction time, with many delays, the courthouse was accepted and final accounting of money owed to Churchill for his services as Architect and Contractor were made on November 21, 1914. The courthouse which was to become the business and social center of Culberson County, until abandonment in 1965, was completed at a final cost of \$44,335.

The Architect provided a large open courtroom space with movable furniture to accommodate the various functions required of it. A balcony was located over the main entrance and at the rear

Illustrated is the plank and joist roof system. Note the wood nailer strips for hanging the metal ceiling.



Illustrated is the concrete floor with wooden strips embedded in the concrete to serve as nailers for the applied wood flooring.



of the courtroom. The balcony served as a place to call the court to order, as well as a spot for relaxation during a social event, and a place to watch for Van Horn's chief contact with the outside world in 1914, the train. Also located on the second floor were judges chambers, jury rooms, and toilet facilities. The first floor of the edifice housed the offices necessary to carry out the counties business and store its records.

The plan is formal in nature with a symmetrical pattern of spaces, broken only by the omission of a rear entrance, split by a double axis with the main axis housing the front entry below and the courtroom above. The minor axis houses the cross and vertical circulation, elements. Such an arrangement provides convenient access between exterior and interior spaces and between interior spaces.

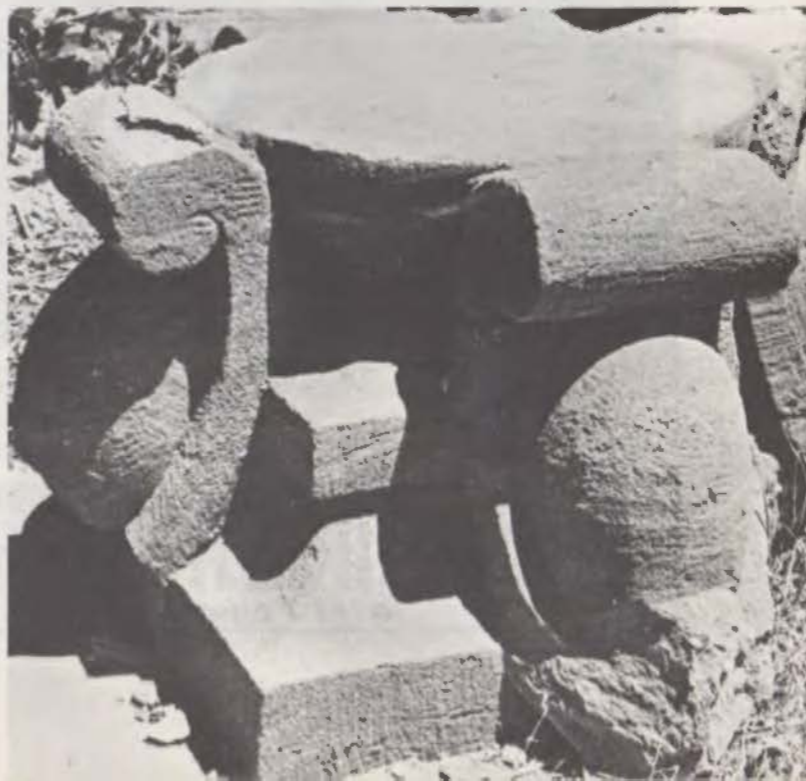
The Van Horn Sandstone used in all loadbearing walls and other structural members was hauled to the site in large pieces from a quarry 5 miles from the courthouse site, and cut into ashlar blocks under the supervision of stone mason, C. F. Toolen. The massive quality of the sandstone and the use of thick heavy load bearing walls lend themselves to the use of the term firmness as an element of the building. Other major materials used structurally in the building are; wood, concrete and steel. Predominate non-structural materials include; wood, sheet metal and glazed tile.

First study of the building shows elements which were derived from Italian, English, and Spanish Renaissance, as well as elements which seem to be American in origin. Moving to general features, the front elevation, would, if the rounded pediment form, and the large window openings in the flanking masses were removed, become Italian Renaissance in appearance. The squared recess in the stone over the arched openings are the least frequently seen element in Italian, being more characteristic of the buildings of the English Renaissance. It is possible however, that the recess was an attempt by the architect to further unify the facade. The side elevations could easily fit into the Renaissance except for the side window treatment.

In 1962, the courthouse of Culberson County was awarded a medallion by the Texas State Historical Committee.

article layout by B. Canizaro

MAY, 1970



The \$600 million Port of New York Authority World Trade Center with its two 110 story tower buildings, the world's tallest, has set a new standard in construction.

Mosher in Manhattan With Steel in the World's Tallest Buildings

Most of the steel is on the outside not the inside. The only interior columns are in the core which contains the elevators . . . and this is where Mosher's steel is located. Over 13,000 tons, including two 56 ton steel columns, comprise the lower core of these towers.



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PRATT BOX HENDERSON

Thomas O. Williams, Lawrence Tabony and Roy Jack McCarroll have been made associates in the firm of Pratt Box Henderson & Partners, architects/planners, Dallas.

Williams holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Texas A & M University 1955. He has been with the firm since 1962.

Tabony holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Texas A & M University 1960. He worked with architectural firms in Brownsville and in Denver and Colorado Springs, Colorado. Tabony joined Pratt Box Henderson in 1964.

McCarroll holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Texas 1962. He worked with several other Dallas architectural firms before joining Pratt Box & Henderson in 1966.

ROYDEN BAIR

Royden Stanley Bair, a Houston architect, has been elected Director, Region 9, of The Construction Specifications Institute. The Institute with headquarters in Washington D. C. is a technical society comprised of architects, engineers, specification writers, material suppliers, educators, attorneys, contractors and others interested in construction specifications and currently has over 11,000 members.

Mr. Bair served the Dallas Chapter as Vice President, President and as chairman of several committees, and has served the Houston Chapter as Chairman of the Education Committee and as a member of the Board of Directors. He was a featured speaker at the Institute's 1965 convention and became a member of the Institute Education Committee in 1968 and assumed the chairmanship of the committee in 1969.

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

People concerned about destruction of the natural landscape and loss of open space in urban areas may soon find themselves in an unexpected alliance with the traditional "enemy"—the housing developer. The possibility is posed in "*Cluster Development*," a 138-page report by William H. Whyte, published by the American Conservation Association.

The basic idea of cluster development, as the brochure notes, "is ancient enough: by grouping the houses more tightly together, as in the New England village, the bulk of a tract can be left open for parks and recreation." For years planners have urged that developers use this approach, but developers were not much interested, and even if they had been most local governments wouldn't

change their zoning to permit it. Just in the last few years, however, both developers and local governments have begun to realize the need for the cluster principle.

Developers like the idea of *decreased costs of roads, sewers, and other utilities through concentration of building*. More important, through careful site planning, wooded areas, marshes, streams and other natural features can be retained to provide usable open space. In the typical postwar subdivision, the entire subdivision site is occupied by streets and larger but only partially useful individual lots.

Citizen organizations with conservation interest, planners, municipal and county officials and educators—as well as park, recreation and conservation professionals, landscape architects and builders—will find "Cluster Development" worth reading. Where existing zoning regulations prohibit cluster, Mr. Whyte's book may be an opening wedge with planning officials for desirable changes. ■

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Gifford-Hill has many exciting style-color combinations in their complete line of tile roofing... one just right for you. You'll find that the distinctive textures and non-fading colors will complement your home or business.

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A study and analysis of increasing pollution problems threatening Barton Creek, will be a priority project of the newly-formed Austin Environmental Council. Dense residential development along upper Barton Creek and the increasing pollution from waste materials dumped directly into Barton Creek can lead to eventual destruction of the creek and Barton Springs swimming pool. The

City of Austin Planning Department and the City's Parks and Recreation Department have developed a model plan for Barton Creek, aided by contributing efforts from various state and federal agencies, including the Corps of Engineers, Texas Water Quality Board, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U. S. Geological Survey and University of Texas Architecture School representatives. The

plan calls for the establishment of green belts and parkway areas along the creek, and complete environmental and pollution controls.

A group of Austin citizens recently filed suit for a declaratory judgment to declare Barton Creek a navigable stream, to preserve the rights of the general public to use the creek, its bed and banks. Under Texas law, a stream is considered navigable if it maintains an average width of 30 feet from its mouth through the area in question. The suit contends that riparian landowners along the creek seek to deprive the public of their rights of access to the stream for recreation and other purposes.

The State of Texas, through the Attorney General's office, joined the plaintiffs in a suit of intervention filed in 53rd District Court here. "Barton Creek, from the mouth of the Colorado River up to and including that portion described in plaintiffs' original petition, is a navigable stream both in law and fact," the plea said. "The bed and banks of said Barton Creek are owned by the State of Texas in trust for the benefit and use of all the public of Texas, which right of public use includes the right of ingress and egress at all times for recreational purposes".

It is also feared that dense development along the upper reaches of Barton Creek, including construction along the creek's flood plain, will lead to further pollution of the creek and eventual destruction of Barton Springs swimming pool. Studies made by the U. S. Corps of Engineers indicated that floods along Barton Creek have occurred at fairly regular intervals over the past 50 years. Construction in the creek's flood plain will add further pollution hazards. The flood plains have been clearly defined in the Corps of Engineers Report. ■

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