

Transportation Related to Urban Development And Renewal Programs

SUMMARY REPORT OF PANEL 4 ON TRANSPORTATION RELATED TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL PROGRAMS

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Panel 4 discussions were most fruitful as a basis for consideration of research proposals related to the process of public decision making. In particular, the research proposals relate to public decision making in urban development and renewal programs, such as streets and highways, mass transportation, urban renewal, school and hospital construction, open space preservation, and sewer and water systems.

The dynamic interactions among the decisions and the resulting public actions and measures in these different spheres have received little systematic attention beyond some speculative generalizations. Too frequently the response is in terms of righteous indignation by those concerned with one program at the interference or obstacles interposed by those with other interests. The complexity of the interrelationships among these independently administered programs is, indeed, forbidding. Nevertheless, efforts at understanding and improving these relationships can make a significant contribution to more effective public guidance of urban growth and renewal as well as to greater efficiency in the operation of both the public programs and private development activities.

The issues posed by public decision-making must be considered in the context of the economic, political, social and spatial characteristics and trends of urban regions. These characteristics and trends have been explored and described in considerable detail in recent years and some have been elaborated in the reports of other panels.

Public decision-making is multi-dimensional, and present knowledge permits only a broad schematic sketch of the various levels and spheres in which it takes place. Within any single given urban development or renewal program, three major levels or stages of decisions are distinguishable: (a) planning decisions, those relating to proposals of varying degrees of generalization; (b) programing decisions, those concerned with a detailed sequence of proposed actions and their financing; and (c) action decisions, those involving determinations to proceed to build, to buy, and to take other specific public actions. In some programs, planning may be fragmentary and programing of the simplest kind.

For a single project or a group of closely related projects treated as a single package, the time sequence of decisions runs from planning to programing to action. Each programing decision represents an affirmation, a modification, or a rejection of one or more planning decisions. Similarly, each action decision affirms, modifies, or nullifies planning and programing decisions. From this oversimplified description, it is clear that it is extremely important to a program's effectiveness for each level of decision making to take into account the decisions at the other two levels. It is particularly important for planning to take into account the action decisions and for those responsible for action to understand and be in sympathy with what is being proposed in planning.

In practice, decisions are being made constantly and simultaneously at all three levels for a variety of projects and groups of projects which are related to each other in varying ways. Thus, the problem is how those responsible for making a decision for a single undertaking, such as a traffic artery, at any level can take proper account of the decisions at all three levels.

The complex process outlined above for a single program characterizes each of the interrelated urban development-renewal programs with which this panel was concerned. Thus, the decision making for each program needs to take account of the decisions and actions of the other programs. The classic illustration of the result of failure in this respect is the case of the urban highway which cuts through an urban renewal project. There are also cases of urban renewal projects with good internal circulation but with inadequate provision for access to the major highways and to mass transportation.

Finally, the relationship of public to private decisions must not be overlooked. Public decisions can induce private actions that are desirable from the point of view of public policy through the provision of public facilities, services, and other incentives. They also can exert influence on private decisions through exercise of the police power (controls) and taxation. Decisions of private producers and consumers, in turn, condition public decisions and create needs which must be met by public actions.

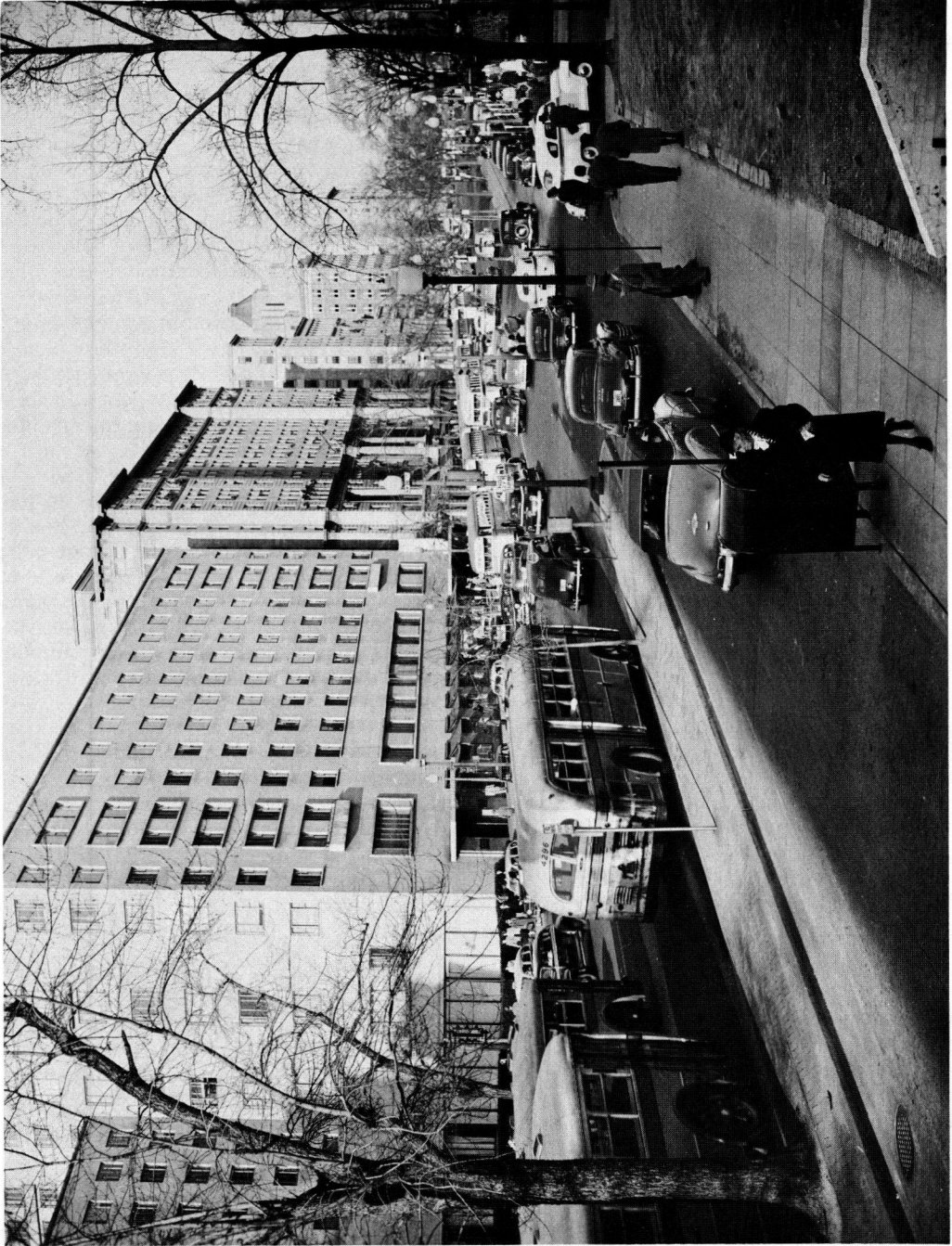
Urban transportation occupies a central position today in all issues relating to urban development and renewal. The relationship between transportation and other development and renewal programs is becoming increasingly more intimate and more complex. Application of research resources to certain strategic aspects of these relationships offers real hope for fundamental improvements in urban transportation programs in a setting of a coherent public policy on urban development and renewal. The other panels have been concerned with research into land-use patterns, economic development, social structure, and political factors. The research proposals below concentrate on the official and informal relationships among the decision making processes for transportation and other urban development and renewal programs.

The research needed and suggested is not general or theoretical but rather the investigation of the concrete decision making processes as they actually take place in the various programs. Moreover, appropriate research techniques as well as study results are not likely to be uniform for the many varieties of urban communities in this country. It is, therefore, proposed that the outlined lines of inquiry be followed in a selected sample of representative urban areas. Separate attention needs to be given to the young emerging urban economies with their multitude of growth problems and to the older regions which are more concerned with revitalization. The sample should also include areas characterized by rather narrowly specialized industries and activities, as well as those with an economic structure of great diversity, and both the smaller urban areas and the great metropolitan complexes.

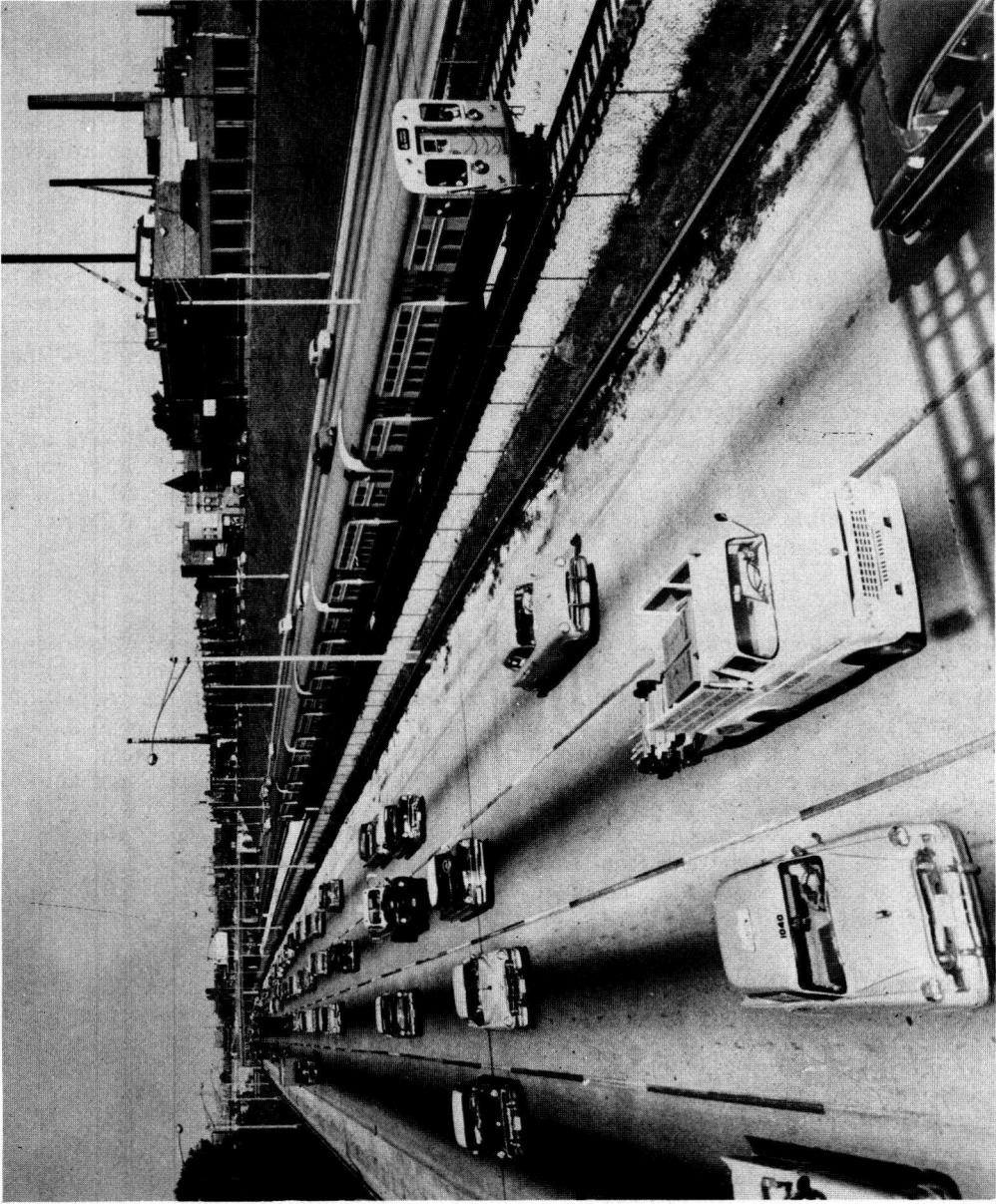
The research would be directed toward the study of selected aspects of the multi-dimensional web of decision making to assemble specific information on how the processes actually operate and to develop suggestions as to how they might be appropriately redirected to achieve better results. More specifically, the research would be concerned with (a) how to avoid or resolve conflicts among the various programs in all their stages from initial planning through the completed projects, and (b) how to strengthen each program by bringing to bear on its decision making current information on related (supporting or potentially conflicting) decisions in this and other programs.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 1

Each urban development and renewal program operates under its own specific enabling and limiting legislation and regulations of the locality and, in many cases, also of the State and Federal governments. Differences and rigidities in the laws and regulations may engender conflicts between programs. A thorough investigation is needed of such built-in conflicts in the standards, requirements and procedures imposed on different programs by specific provisions of Federal, State and local laws and regulations. For example, Federal-aid programs contain requirements for conformity to general plans in the case of the urban renewal, mass transportation loans, and open space grant programs, but not in the airport and urban highway programs. The results of this investigation would provide a basis for determining what changes in laws and regulations are feasible and should be recommended in order to eliminate or reduce program conflicts. It is recognized that some conflicts in legislation and implementing regulations may reflect basic differences in program objectives which can be reconciled



An example of mass transportation by bus.



Highway and rail facilities sharing right-of-way.

only by public policy decisions at the highest political levels. It is the responsibility of administrators, however, to achieve the widest range of reconciliation and cooperative action which is possible under existing legislation.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 2

Policy determination and administration of urban development and renewal programs are fragmented as a result of the multiplicity of local governments in a single urban region and the division of powers among Federal, State and local governments. This fragmentation has led, on the one hand, to conflicts and, on the other, to formal and informal coordinating and meliorating arrangements. For example, different jurisdictions may be unable to agree on routes for highways and water and sewer lines and on arrangements which would permit sewer and water systems of optimum size. A detailed analysis should be made of these conflicts and arrangements, looking toward the improvement of existing mechanisms as well as suggestions for new practical approaches.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 3

More subtle as a source of program conflict than laws, regulations, and division of governmental powers are the differences in practices, procedures, planning assumptions, and professional presuppositions which characterize the various programs. For example, differing assumptions about the role of the central business district and about the volume, density and type of housing in and near it may lead to conflicting programs on highways, mass transportation, urban renewal and school construction. Though practices, procedures and assumptions are generally subject to change without legislation, they have a formidable rigidity hallowed by custom and pride. Their inter-program impacts need to be evaluated by a study of actual program operations, including the ways in which it is feasible to modify and broaden the outlook of underlying operating practices, procedures, and assumptions.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 4

A study should be undertaken of what specific information is exchanged by different decision-making levels within the same program and by different programs and what use is made of such information. This would include an analysis of (a) the content of the information (basic data, planning assumptions and criteria, decisions of all types, and the reasons for them, etc.); (b) the kinds of arrangements for interchange of information; and (c) the extent of formal and informal discussion and negotiation to achieve mutual understanding of the bases for planning, programing and action decisions. The study could then consider the extent to which knowledge about the specifics of planning and programing in one program is useful to other programs, and the ways in which available information might be made more useful.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL 5

An investigation should be made in a large sample of urban areas of the influence of Federal and State assistance programs on local decisions on development priorities for highways, mass transportation, sewer and water systems, urban renewal, open space preservation, and school and hospital construction. To what extent are the major factors in these decisions the relative urgency and the relative total costs of projects proposed under various programs? To what extent are these considerations displaced by the new scale of relative costs to the community established by Federal- and State-aid programs with their different levels and terms for grants and loans for different programs? What is the effect of the tremendous difference in the financial contribution a community must make in order to obtain highways compared with what it must contribute in order to obtain mass transportation facilities? Are the patterns of local decisions on priorities for urban development and renewal programs consistent, in fact, with analyses of current and projected needs of the areas?