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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS OR ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE UNITED STATES*

C o n t e n t s

	Page
Introduction.....	1
Areas involved.....	2
County planning commissions in California.....	2
Regional planning as related to city planning..	3
Other groups of limited activities.....	4
Rural planning committees in Wisconsin.....	5
State planning organizations.....	7
Cooperation in reporting activities.....	9
Regional planning commissions or organizations..	11-19
(by states)	

Introduction

In the following pages are listed the names and addresses of the regional planning commissions or organizations in the United States as reported to the Division of Building and Housing.

These 82 organizations may be divided into two general groups. One includes 23 unofficial organizations, which act in a voluntary advisory capacity with a view to bringing about adherence to a regional plan. The other group comprises 59 official commissions created under the authority of a legislative act. Forty-six official county planning commissions or boards are included in the list. Twenty states (including the District of Columbia) are represented in the list as having regional planning organizations, the leading states being as

*A report prepared by Lester G. Chase of the Division of Building and Housing.

follows: California (26), New York (12), Illinois (6), New Jersey (5) and Pennsylvania (5).

Areas involved

The areas and the political subdivisions involved in the work of these various organizations vary widely. Parts of several states are involved in the plans of some, as for example, The Regional Plan Association, Inc., of New York, which covers a region consisting of the city of New York, several of the counties of New York State, and parts of New Jersey and Connecticut; the Regional Planning Federation of the Philadelphia Tri-State District, which includes parts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, and the Chicago Regional Planning Association, which is assisting in the coordination of local plans in parts of Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin adjacent to Chicago. Other regional planning organizations aim toward the development of parts of more than a single county, as for example, the Niagara Frontier Planning Board, covering Niagara County and Erie County in New York State. Other commissions, for the most part official county planning commissions, confine their activities to one single county. In still other cases the work of the regional planning organization is limited to an area immediately adjacent to a city (within a radius of from 3 to 6 miles), as in the case of the Oklahoma regional planning commissions.

County planning commissions in California

The status of county planning in California, where 25 county planning commissions are now functioning, deserves special

mention. The revised planning act of that state (Laws of 1929, Chapter 838) provides that "any city, city and county, or county" may adopt a master plan and that the "legislative body of each city, or city and county, may, and of each county shall, create by ordinance a planning commission." Most of the 25 county planning commissions in California were established under the provisions of that act, although several of them had been established under earlier laws. While the act by its terms makes the creation of county planning commissions compulsory, no time is specified within which such commissions must be established. In a paper* read before the Convention of the County Supervisors' Association of the State of California in February, 1932, Mr. Stanley Abel, Supervisor of Kern County, stated that of the 25 county planning commissions in California 23 are representative of conditions generally throughout the state; that 7 of these have been doing notable work, and practically all of the others have been making progress, largely in becoming familiar with the purposes of planning and in public education, and in some cases in necessary basic studies.

Regional planning as related to city planning

In connection with the subject of regional planning as related to city planning, the Advisory Committee on City Planning and Zoning of the Department of Commerce in a note to

* "County Planning in California up to Date," reprinted from April, 1932, issue of The American County.

its "Standard City Planning Enabling Act"* has stated:

"The actual territory of urban development seldom corresponds, in its location or extent, with the legal or political boundaries of any single municipality. Our urban communities consist usually of a large or major city with one, two, or many tributary or satellite towns, villages, and cities, with also a fringe, at least, of compactly built or rapidly building unincorporated territory; or sometimes there are groups or series of municipalities strung along a highway or railroad or waterway, none of such municipalities being the central or major one, but all of them together constituting a more or less compactly developing urban community.

"The consequence is that there are few problems of development the factors of which are all located within the confines of a single municipality or the solution of which falls within the control of the government of any single municipality. Sewer systems, highway systems, transportation systems, park systems, all need to be planned from the point of view of the whole urban district, and the ultimate intelligent development will be dependent either upon the cooperative action of many municipalities or upon the creation of regional or metropolitan governmental organs.

"For the reasons here outlined, there are few municipalities for which the municipal plan alone will suffice, and most American urban regions have reached or are rapidly approaching the stage at which the municipal plan needs to be conceived of as a part of or a supplement to or an introduction to the regional or metropolitan plan. Consequently, provision for regional planning forms today an integral part of city planning legislation....."

Other groups of limited activities

In preparing the accompanying list, the Division is not unaware of the work of a number of other groups, which have not been included in the list, but whose functions are somewhat less comprehensive or are different from those suggested by the

*See "A Standard City Planning Enabling Act" by the Advisory Committee on City Planning and Zoning, Department of Commerce, price 15¢. Apply to Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

Advisory Committee on City Planning and Zoning in the statement quoted above. Among such groups might be mentioned local planning committees or councils assisting in an advisory capacity in a given area the regional planning organization for that area; county zoning commissions, whose functions are limited solely to zoning; county park boards whose duties are restricted to park development; and others whose functions are less comprehensive than those of an active regional planning commission.

Rural planning committees in Wisconsin

One group which has not been included in this list is a group of rural planning committees in Wisconsin. The laws of Wisconsin (Section 97.17) define rural planning as "planning for the health, general welfare, and amenity of the settler; planning for the establishment of the best possible transportation facilities; planning for the creation and development of the most logical community centers where country people can come together for social and business relations; planning for the setting aside of country parks, recreation fields, county fairgrounds, community woodlands, places of local and historic interest, and for the reservation of land for public uses along river fronts, lake shores, fine outlooks from hilltops, and for the preservation of our native landscape."

This law provides for a county rural planning committee in each county. Among the duties of the committee are the following: "To keep itself informed of the progress of rural planning in this and other counties; to report to the county,

town, or village boards upon the architectural design of any public building or bridge, the geographical location of community centers, the location or design of any statue or memorial, works of art and mural decorations in public buildings when such are proposed, to the end that such matters may be made in the highest degree effective, permanent, dignified, and fitting, through proper design, form, and situation; to advise regarding the planting and protection of trees, shrubs, and flowers along all highways within a county to the end that they shall be so located as not to interfere with the maintenance of said highway and that only trees, shrubs, and flowers native to Wisconsin be used for this purpose; to consider and provide for the establishment of community parks and woodlands, proportioned and situated so as to provide ample and equal facilities for the residents of the county; and to propose to the county board the setting aside of places of historical interest and the protection and preservation of unique and picturesque scenery along rivers, lakes, and streams, or other scenery or features remarkable, to the end that they may be continued and preserved."

The law also provides that any county wherein there exists a county park board shall not create a county rural planning committee, but in such county the park board shall exercise the duties imposed upon the rural planning committee by this law.

It has been reported that a number of counties in Wisconsin have these rural planning committees or county park boards.

While reports as to their activities have not been received from all of these groups, it is of interest that some are engaged in one or more of such activities as the study of land for the purpose of classification as to agricultural, forest, and recreational use; highway beautification; tourist accommodation; development of recreation areas; county park development; and general county development. In some cases the work of these rural planning committees includes an area embracing parts of two, three, or four counties. While these rural planning committees are not included in the following list of regional planning commissions or organizations, it is believed that their work is of interest in the field as it might serve to create a ground work for more comprehensive county or regional planning.

State planning organizations

In the list on the following pages are included three official state planning organizations; two in Wisconsin, and one in Pennsylvania. Besides these organizations there are other groups, not mentioned in this list, which are much interested in this subject, but their powers in connection with state planning are either limited or of an entirely unofficial character. Among such organizations might be mentioned the State Department of Public Welfare of Massachusetts, and the State Department of Internal Affairs of Pennsylvania, both of which are official branches of the State Governments.

In Illinois, the State Chamber of Commerce has been making studies to determine the advisability of forming a unified

systematic plan for the development of the State's resources; and a temporary State planning commission was appointed by the Governor in 1931 to make a study of the subject and to submit a comprehensive plan for the protection, preservation and development of the resources of the State.

In Iowa, under the auspices of the State University at Ames, certain state-wide studies of land area have been made, but these are more in the nature of an industrial survey. The State Board of Conservation and the State Fish and Game Commission have made a study and issued a report on a 25-Year Conservation Plan. Among the projects included in this plan are the conservation of the soil, waters, woodland, wild life and game, and fisheries resources; and the development of State preserves, parks and highways.

In New York, studies of wide scope were made by the Bureau of Housing and Regional Planning in 1924-25; after the work of that bureau was taken over by the State Board of Housing, efforts along the lines of regional and state planning were to a great extent replaced by work relating directly to housing. Recently, the Governor's Agricultural Advisory Commission, composed of representatives of agricultural interests, state colleges and state departments, and others, has undertaken a state-wide survey of not only physical but economical and social factors, involving among other things a comprehensive study of the present use and occupancy of land. This survey bears a direct relationship to the state program of

reforestation of sub-marginal land which has already been inaugurated.

While advance has been made in certain phases of state planning, particularly in connection with highways, roadside development, parks and recreation areas, definite progress in the way of actual comprehensive state planning has been less marked. Impetus is being given the movement for nonurban planning by the activities of the National Land Use Planning Committee, composed of representatives of various Federal Departments and the Land Grant Colleges, the purpose of which is to determine and plan for a suitable use primarily of rural land areas. These activities are receiving some support from other interested groups. It is believed that out of this activity and with the continued interest, cooperation and activities of other groups, a momentum has been and is now being gained which should be productive of results. These other groups include the National Conference on City Planning, the various state conference such as the Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards, the Ohio State Conference on City Planning, and the Pennsylvania Association of Planning Commissioners, the various regional and county planning associations, housing associations and state municipal leagues.

Cooperation in reporting activities

The list given on the following pages has been compiled from the records of the Division of Building and Housing, and from information furnished by State, regional, county, and

municipal officials, city planners, and others. The Division will appreciate being informed of any new regional planning organizations that may be established or of any changes that may take place in existing organizations or their status that affect the accuracy of this list.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS OR ORGANIZATIONS

(Organizations marked with an asterisk are official, those marked *C are official county commissions, and those marked *S are official state organizations.)

<u>State and Region</u>	<u>Name of Organization</u>
CALIFORNIA	
Alameda County	*C The Alameda County Planning Commission, 454 Fifth St., Oakland, Calif.
Alameda County (Oakland)	East Bay Regional Planning Association, #801 Syndicate Bldg., Oakland, Calif.
Contra Costa County	*C The Contra Costa County Planning Commission, Court House, Martinez, Calif.
Del Norte County	*C The Del Norte County Planning Commission, Court House, Crescent City, Calif.
Humboldt County	*C The Humboldt County Planning Commission, Court House, Eureka, Calif.
Kern County	*C The Kern County Planning Commission, 319 Haberfelde Bldg., Bakersfield, Calif.
Los Angeles County	*C The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission, Hall of Records, Los Angeles, Calif.
Marin County	*C The Marin County Planning Commission, Court House, San Rafael, Calif.
Monterey County	*C The Monterey County Planning Commission, 126 Bonifacio Pl., Monterey, Calif.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

California (continued)

Orange County	*C	The Orange County Planning Commission, Court House, Santa Ana, Calif.
Placer County	*C	The Placer County Planning Commission, Court House, Auburn, Calif.
Riverside County	*C	The Riverside County Planning Commission, Court House, Riverside, Calif.
San Bernardino County	*C	The San Bernardino County Planning Commission, Court House, San Bernardino, Calif.
San Diego County	*C	The San Diego County Planning Commission, Administration Bldg., Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif.
San Francisco County (See footnote)	*	The San Francisco City Planning Commission, San Francisco, Calif.
San Joaquin County	*C	The San Joaquin County Planning Commission, Court House, Stockton, Calif.
San Luis Obispo County	*C	The San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission, Court House, San Luis Obispo, Calif.
San Mateo County	*C	The San Mateo County Planning Commission, Court House, Redwood City, Calif.
Santa Barbara County	*C	The Santa Barbara County Planning Commission, Court House, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Note: San Francisco County is included in this list although its commission is in reality a city planning commission serving the compacted urban area constituting the City and County of San Francisco. It is not, however, included in the total of county planning commissions.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

California (continued)

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| Santa Clara County | *C | The Santa Clara County Planning Commission, Court House, San Jose, Calif. |
| Shasta County | *C | The Shasta County Planning Commission, Court House, Redding, Calif. |
| Stanislaus County | *C | The Stanislaus County Planning Commission, Court House, Modesto, Calif. |
| Sutter County | *C | The Sutter County Planning Commission, Court House, Yuba City, Calif. |
| Tuolumne County | *C | The Tuolumne County Planning Commission, Court House, Sonora, Calif. |
| Yolo County | *C | The Yolo County Planning Commission, Court House, Woodland, Calif. |
| Yuba County | *C | The Yuba County Planning Commission, Court House, Marysville, Calif. |

CONNECTICUT

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| Fairfield County | | Fairfield County Planning Association, c/o Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce, Bridgeport, Conn. |
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DELAWARE

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| New Castle County | *C | The Regional Planning Commission of New Castle County, Wilmington, Del. |
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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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| Washington and Environs | * | National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 18th Street and Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. |
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Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

GEORGIA

Glynn County *C The Glynn County Planning Board, County Court House, Brunswick, Ga.

ILLINOIS

Chicago Chicago Regional Planning Association, Burnham Building, Chicago, Ill.

Madison County *C The Madison County Planning Commission, Granite City, Ill.

Moline and Environs Moline Regional Planning and Zoning Committee, c/o Moline Association of Commerce, Moline, Ill.

Monroe County *C Monroe County Planning Commission, Waterloo, Ill.

St. Clair County *C St. Clair County Regional Planning Commission, 245a Collinsville Avenue, East St. Louis, Ill.

Madison, Monroe and St. Clair Counties The Tri-County Regional Planning Federation, c/o St. Clair County Regional Planning Commission, 245a Collinsville Ave., East St. Louis, Ill.

MARYLAND

Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties * Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, County Building, Silver Spring, Md.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston * Division of Metropolitan Planning, Boston Metropolitan District, 20 Somerset St., Boston, Mass.

Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties Old Hampshire Planning Council, c/o City Planning Board, Springfield, Mass.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

MICHIGAN

Detroit Region

Citizens' Advisory Park and Planning Committee, Pontiac, Mich. (Appointed by Oakland County Road Commission.)

Detroit and Wayne County *

City Planning Commission of Detroit, Mich. (In cooperation with various county boards.)

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis, St. Paul and Environs

Metropolitan and Regional Planning Association of Minneapolis, St. Paul and Environs, 738 McKnight Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn. (See footnote No. 1)

do

Joint Correlating Committee of the City Planning Commission of Minneapolis and the City Planning Board of St. Paul, Minn. (See footnote No. 2)

MISSOURI

Jackson County

The Jackson County Court, Independence, Mo.

Kansas City

Greater Kansas City Regional Plan Association, 303 American Security Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

NEW JERSEY

Bergen County

*C The Bergen County Planning Commission, 263 Henry St., Hasbrouck Heights, N.J.

(1) The Metropolitan Regional Planning Association is reported as inactive at present, owing to existing business conditions, but plans are under way by which it may be revived.

(2) This Committee, established by the planning commissions of Minneapolis and St. Paul, is composed of members of both of these commissions, and is of recent origin. It aims to coordinate the planning activities of the two cities and to bring about their future development from a regional planning point of view.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

New Jersey (Continued)

Mercer County	*C	Mercer County Planning Commission, Princeton, N.J.
Middlesex County	*C	Middlesex County Planning Commission, New Brunswick, N.J.
Passaic County	*C	The Passaic County Planning Commission, Court House, Paterson, N.J.
Passaic County		Passaic County Planning Association, 315 Fabian Bldg., Paterson, N.J.

NEW YORK

Dutchess County	*C	Dutchess County Planning Board, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
Monroe County	*C	Monroe County Regional Planning Board, 410 Terminal Building, Rochester, N.Y.
New York City		The Regional Plan Association, Inc., 400 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y.
Niagara Frontier	*	The Niagara Frontier Planning Board, 10 Niagara Power Building, North Tonawanda, N.Y.
Niagara Frontier		Niagara Frontier Planning Association, 10 Niagara Power Building, North Tonawanda, N.Y.
Onondaga County	*C	Onondaga County Park and Regional Planning Board, 407-C Court House, Syracuse, N.Y.
Orange County	*C	Orange County Planning Board, Newburgh, N.Y.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

New York (continued)

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| Putnam County | *C | The Putnam County Planning and Development Commission, Carmel, N.Y. |
| Rockland County | *C | Rockland County Planning Board, West Nyack, N.Y. |
| Suffolk County | *C | Suffolk County Regional Planning Board, 181 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| Sullivan County | *C | The Sullivan County Planning Board, Monticello, N.Y. (See footnote No. 1) |
| Westchester County | | The Westchester County Planning Federation, 144 Main St., White Plains, N.Y. |

OHIO

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| Cleveland | | Cleveland Highway Research Bureau, 1600 Terminal Tower, Cleveland, Ohio. |
| Hamilton County | *C | Regional Planning Commission of Hamilton County, Hamilton County Court House, Cincinnati, Ohio. |
| Maumee Valley | *C | The Lucas County Planning Commission, Toledo, Ohio. |

OKLAHOMA

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| Oklahoma City | * | Regional Planning Commission for Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City, Okla. |
| Ponca City | * | Ponca City Regional Planning Commission, Ponca City, Okla. |
| Tulsa | * | The Tulsa Regional Planning Commission, Tulsa, Okla. |

(1) The Board of Supervisors of Sullivan County has been reported as having voted to establish a county planning board, but the members had not been appointed at the time of the preparation of this circular.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

PENNSYLVANIA

- State *S Greater Pennsylvania Council, Dr. Charles Reitell, Director, Capitol, Harrisburg, Pa.
- East Pittsburgh The Valley Planning Association, East Pittsburgh, Pa.
- Harrisburg (West Shore) West Shore Regional Planning Federation, Lemoyne, Pa.
- Philadelphia The Regional Planning Federation of the Philadelphia Tri-State District, Suite 915, 1420 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.
- Pittsburgh *C Allegheny County Planning Commission, 416 County Office Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa.
- Reading The Community Council of Berks County, Reading, Pa.

TENNESSEE

- Shelby County * The Shelby County Planning Commission, Room 17, Police Headquarters, Memphis, Tenn.

VIRGINIA

- Norfolk Suburban Planning Commission, Norfolk, Va. (An advisory unit of the Norfolk City Planning Commission.)

WASHINGTON

- King County *C King County Regional Planning Commission, Seattle, Wash.
- The Pacific Northwest Regional Planning Conference, 410 Liggett Building, Seattle, Washington.

Regional Planning Commissions or Organizations

WISCONSIN (See footnote No. 1)

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| Kenosha | The Wisconsin City and Regional Planning Association, Kenosha, Wis. |
| Milwaukee County | *C The Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department (a regular county office), Court House Annex No. 2, 325 E. Kilbourn Ave., Milwaukee, Wis. |
| State | *S Director of Regional Planning (under the State Highway Commission) - an office authorized by Wisconsin Laws of 1929, Chapter 276. Address: M.H. Torkelson, State Director of Regional Planning, Madison, Wis. |
| State | *S State Regional Planning Committee. (Created by Wisconsin Laws of 1931, Chapter 124.) Mr. M. H. Torkelson, Secretary and Executive Officer, Madison, Wis. |

(1) See text, pp. 5-7.

