

PART I. PROPOSAL HIGHLIGHTS

Description of the City

The Atlanta area is currently experiencing an increase in population of 35,000 additional people each year, or an annual growth rate of 3.1 per cent. Much of this increase is attributable to an influx of families from surrounding rural areas of Georgia and the rest of the southern states. A large portion of these people are poor, uneducated and untrained.

Providing urban services to a burgeoning metropolitan area presents complex problems. Atlanta, however, has demonstrated its willingness to face up to its problems by initiating one of the largest urban renewal programs in the nation, by developing an outstanding war on poverty, and by creating a metropolitan council of local governments.

Atlanta is a young, dynamic and progressive regional center. The private sector of the economy has contributed the office buildings and high rise apartments that are transforming Atlanta's skyline. The public sector has created such complimentary facilities as the stadium and the auditorium-cultural center complex. Public and private interests are determined to ensure Atlanta's vital economic role as the transportation hub and capitol of the southeast.

Description of the Designated Area

The City of Atlanta has chosen for its model neighborhood a section of the city which dramatically combines all the facets of blight and deterioration.

The chosen area lies within a mile and a half of the central core of the city and is bounded on the north by the I-20 Expressway; on the west by Lee Street; on the south by the Atlantic and West Point Railroad and on the east by the belt-line railroad.

This area contains 3,035 acres which is about 3.7 per cent of the total city land area of 82,173 acres. Out of Atlanta's total population of 499,000 people, approximately 48,000 live in the model neighborhood area which represents about ten per cent

of the city's total population. Of the city's non-white population, 33,160 or fifteen per cent is concentrated in this area.

The proposed model neighborhood is primarily a residential neighborhood composed of middle and low income white and Negro families. The quality of housing in the proposed model neighborhood area ranges from standard housing to the very worst examples of dilapidated housing. Of the city's housing units, 13,600 or 8.3 per cent are within the model neighborhood. Of these housing units, 3,021 or 21.9 per cent are in standard condition, 9,765 or 71.8 per cent are in substandard condition and 857 or 6.3 per cent are dilapidated. This area, then, contains over 19.8 per cent of the city's total substandard housing units.

The residential construction of the area is predominantly frame. The Grant Park area, east of Hill Street, and Adair Park still possess a small town character primarily because of the architecture, popular around the turn of the century. The remainder of the model neighborhood area - Summerhill, Peoplestown, Mechanicsville and Pittsburgh - was either built as or has developed into low income neighborhoods. Consequently, living conditions are overcrowded, obsolete and unhealthy.

Public utilities and community facilities are grossly inadequate. The area contains a combined sanitary and storm sewer system which is inadequate and obsolete. Few streets have lighting other than at major intersections and many old incandescent lamps are still in use. Flow of traffic is poor primarily because streets are poorly designed.

Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities are insufficient, considering the density of the area. Grant Park, the largest open space in the area, also serves greater Atlanta with its zoo, Cyclorama and playfields. There are several smaller parks, but most of these are either undeveloped or not adequate in size.

Problems of the Model Neighborhood Area

The problems of the model neighborhood are many and varied. The most serious and pressing problem, however, is the overcrowded, substandard and poor quality housing. The 1960 Census indicated that a large percentage of the area's housing units are overcrowded and substandard.

There are a wide variety of factors which have caused the deterioration and inadequate supply of standard housing. One basic problem is poor original design and construction of residential areas. Poor initial planning and construction have resulted in lack of privacy between units and badly deteriorated interior and exterior materials.

Another major contributing element is the presence of mixed incompatible land uses which have contributed to the physical blight of this area. The area contains commerce and industry with many residences scattered among or adjacent to commercial and industrial uses. Adverse influences such as noise, smoke, fumes and traffic are inadequately buffered from residential areas.

Another problem which has compounded the poor housing situation is the low level of income of many of the residents. Nearly half of the families have incomes below the poverty level of \$3,000. This lack of funds has made it difficult for many owners to make repairs. In addition, these low income groups, primarily Negroes, are simply not afforded access to adequate housing choice in this area or other areas of the city.

Within the next five years, a minimum of 6,000 standard housing units will be needed in the model area. Of this number, 4,821 will be required as replacement units for dilapidated structures. Additional units will be required to replace those cleared for new community facilities, for those families paying more than twenty-five per cent of their income for housing, and to provide units for those living in overcrowded dwellings.

Another major element adversely affecting the area is the poor condition of streets. Most of the area's streets are narrow, unsafe, poorly designed and do not adequately serve the residents. In addition, major thoroughfares slice through the area resulting in heavy traffic flow and hazardous conditions for the residents.

A major portion of the model neighborhood is served by an inadequate sewer system, street lighting is poor, and rubbish is scattered throughout the area. The low level of municipal services, together with many of the resident's lack of desire and motivation to improve conditions has combined to create physical blight and decay.

The public transportation through the area is largely radially oriented to downtown and gives adequate service to this destination. Interior and cross-city access, however, is difficult. As a result, residents are isolated from each other and from various public and community facilities within and adjacent to the area.

Educational problems of the residents of this area are many. Poor school attendance is a serious problem in the target area; attendance at ten of the twelve elementary schools in the area averages less than fifty per cent. In addition, a large number of youths within the area drop out of school before finishing high school.

The only health service facility in the vicinity is located at the extreme southern edge and serves a very large area. Since most of the health services are centralized in the downtown area, the transportation and economic problems involved in reaching these facilities present severe obstacles to many residents of the area.

Social service facilities in the model neighborhood are few in number, randomly located, and provide only limited service for a small number of residents.

Within the model neighborhood, almost every human problem can be found and these problems interact and affect each other to produce complex problem combinations.

The health problems and their causes in the model neighborhood are primarily due to malnutrition, poor sanitation, and poor home health practices. Infant mortality and tuberculosis rates are twice that found in middle-class areas; some neighborhoods in the project area have rates three and four times as high.

The model neighborhood area contains 1,764 or 24.6 per cent of the city's separated females. Only 65 per cent of the children in the area live with both parents as opposed to the overall city's figure of 75 per cent.

Crime and delinquency rates within the model neighborhood are among the highest in the city. Measured both by the location of arrests and the residence of convicted offenders, the project area contains some of the major trouble spots for police and law enforcement.

This area, typical of other large city low income areas, suffers from social blight and physical decay. Much of the blight and decay can be directly related to the lack of educational opportunities for adequate employment.

The 1960 Census indicated that approximately five per cent of the residents in the model neighborhood are unemployed while several thousand more can be classified as underemployed; 10.6 per cent of the adults over twenty-five years of age have less than an eighth grade education. Low educational levels, lack of employable skills, a high percentage of one parent families, discrimination, underemployment, and low wages are characteristic of the area.

Goals of the Program

The goals for the model neighborhood area are categorized into several main components.

Number one is the physical improvements component which includes all those goals designed toward making the model neighborhood a more livable and satisfying environment. The goals pertinent toward this end are as follows:

1. Remove or arrest blight and decay in the model neighborhood area by substantially correcting all building and related environmental deficiencies and to provide the facilities and amenities that contribute to making the area a satisfying living environment.
2. Upgrade the area to a sound physical condition by upgrading streets, sidewalks, parks and all publicly owned properties with an increased level and quality of municipal services.
3. Improve and encourage development of stores, theatres and other commercial facilities to support and maintain the residential character of the area.

The goals concerned with meeting the full range of housing needs in the model neighborhood area are listed below:

1. To develop a variety of housing types appealing to and

within reach of families of various income levels and family sizes within the model neighborhood.

2. To achieve harmonious, stable neighborhoods attractive to family groups.
3. To provide for a substantial increase in the supply of standard housing of low and moderate cost and provide for high quality housing throughout the area.

The transportation component is concerned with the physical access of residents to places of employment, commercial and community facilities. To implement this program component, the following goals have been established:

1. To provide a better circulation system which is safe and pleasant as well as logical and easily understood.
2. To provide public transportation that is economical and convenient, providing good access to all neighborhoods in the area as well as downtown.

The goals for the education component are concerned with the provision of high quality, easily accessible educational services to area residents of all ages, in school and out of school. Specifically they will offer a variety of educational experiences and methods of instruction that make education palatable to youth and adults in the area; improve academic achievement of children by means of special remedial help, enrichment experiences and pre-school programs; improve educational level of adults in the community through basic education, night school and adult enrichment programs.

Goals for crime reduction will be to prevent and control the outbreak of crime, rehabilitate criminals and delinquents, and create a safe, healthy environment for all the area's residents. Methods of achieving this goal are listed below:

1. To provide more adequate and more personalized police protection in the model neighborhood with the aim of inhibiting crime before it occurs and fostering a positive attitude toward law and police.

2. To improve the level of citizenship and community concern in the neighborhood; to educate and motivate citizens toward their role in maintaining law and order.
3. To eliminate the social, educational and health conditions that provide the breeding grounds for crime and delinquency.

The primary goal of the recreation and cultural component is to provide a broad range of recreational and cultural opportunities designed to serve the tastes and needs of the area. The achievement of these goals will be accomplished in the following ways:

1. Providing open space sufficient for physical development and to meet the recreational needs of all the residents within the model neighborhood area.
2. Developing positive attitudes toward recreation and informal education that incorporates a well-rounded life experience and constructive use of leisure time.
3. Encouraging the development of artistic skills which result in exhibits or performance of music, dance or drama and contributes to the individual's achievement.

The primary objectives of the employment component will be to reduce the unemployment and underemployment rate of the model neighborhood area. This will be accomplished by:

1. Decentralizing and locating a comprehensive job placement service into each neighborhood of the area.
2. Seeking to induce new industry and business into the area.
3. Increase and improve the occupational skills of employable adults in the area.

The major goal of the health service component is to provide the necessary facilities and assistance to meet the individual health needs of the residents in the area. More specific goals are listed below:

1. To reduce the rates of infant mortality and TB.

2. To increase the health knowledge and motivation of residents to a point where they exhibit adequate sanitation practices, food planning and preparation, home nursing practices, and use of prevention and treatment services.
3. To make services accessible to residents of the project area in sufficient volume to meet their needs.

The goal of social and welfare service programs is to strengthen individuals, families and neighborhoods so that residents possess adequate strength, skill and resources to cope with all phases of life. This basic tenet forms the foundation for these more specific goals:

1. To bring income to a level that provides for adequate financial resources or goods and services to meet their basic needs.
2. To improve the knowledge, skill and motivation of parents for fulfilling their child-rearing responsibilities.
3. To insure that residents have adequate legal resources to maintain their rights and develop individual responsibilities.
4. To improve the home management and consumer skills of residents in the area.

The goal of citizen participation is to provide ample opportunity for the constructive involvements of citizens in the model neighborhood area. Citizen involvement will be accomplished by:

1. Providing neighborhood residents with a meaningful role in rebuilding and restructuring their own community.
2. Soliciting expression of residents' concerns, desires, and needs, and incorporating their expressed views in the planning and execution of the program.
3. Developing and encouraging community neighborhood organizations as well as utilizing existing citizen committees established under other Federal programs.

The City of Atlanta proposes to establish priorities among program goals during the planning phase of the model neighborhood program.

In view of the extent of citizen participation which is proposed in the program, it is the city's intention to provide for maximum citizen participation in arriving at priorities among program goals.

Prior to beginning formal preparation of Atlanta's model neighborhood planning grant proposal, several mass meetings were held in the model area in which the Mayor explained the purpose of the model neighborhood program; in each meeting a questionnaire was circulated to which area residents responded by marking, from 20 choices, the five problems which they felt were most critical to the neighborhood. While response to this questionnaire was enlightening, it can be considered only exploratory as it represents only a small percentage of the area residents. However, this type of approach can be refined and broadened in the development of priorities for the model neighborhood program in order to assure that citizens views are reflected in the system of priorities that is developed during the planning stage.

Overall Program Strategy and Approach

The basic strategy in developing the program components is the development of an interrelated system in which program activities and projects are mutually reinforcing. For example, in the Physical Improvements section a comprehensive range of treatment methods is proposed. This means that the area designated as an urban renewal project and the adjacent code enforcement project area must complement each other in planning, financing, timing and execution. This approach is more comprehensive and precludes the further deterioration of areas surrounding urban renewal projects. In the past nonrelated projects have been undertaken and did not lend themselves to problem solving on a comprehensive interrelated basis. Each program component (Citizen Participation, Housing Choice, Housing Supply, etc.) has been integrated into the general strategy for the entire program. This means that reinforcement and support are provided for both within and between program components. For example, home maintenance or improvement is directly related and dependent upon the provision of training programs in home management and home repair.

The general approach will result in a well-coordinated work program involving every existing agency with resources that can be brought to bear on area problems. Second the program approach will require the decentralization of public services to the model neighborhood area. Some service facilities (a major medical treatment facility, for example) will serve the entire area, others will be made available in each of the four service neighborhoods (such as an employment and placement center), and still others will serve a subdivision of the neighborhood (such as a day care center). The third factor, characteristic of each program component, is maximum involvement of area citizens in the work program, decision making, and educational programs. The fourth general approach is the development of strong neighborhoods which will promote identity, interest, cooperative effort, and will help to sustain gains made through the program.

The program approach proposed for the model neighborhood area differs greatly from the individual project approach which has typically been used in Atlanta in the past. There has been no agency which would coordinate activities in the manner required and proposed for this program. The breadth and scale of activities needed and proposed for the area have been impossible to implement due to a lack of resources. Programs and projects have generally been accomplished on a fragmented basis. Citizen involvement has not been encouraged and aided to the degree presently proposed, nor have service facilities been decentralized to the degree which is required to make a significant impact on the quality of life in this area.

Innovative Proposals

Innovative proposals are not limited to ideas which are entirely new but include concepts which may be new either to the city as a whole or to the model neighborhood area.

Several significant proposals have been made relative to developing extensive citizen participation. First, and perhaps of greatest importance, is the major objective of developing strong neighborhood identity. Everything from the design of streets and the structure of citizen participation to the location of services and the development of neighborhood teams for competitive sports will be oriented toward this goal.

A training program will be developed to train potential neighborhood leaders and to further enhance the skills presently identified as leaders. Group leaders from existing organizations in the area will be used as teachers.

A government education program will be established to teach structure, functions, and financing of government to the residents of the area. Primary emphasis will be on city government.

A series of intergroup relations workshops will be developed in which white and Negro residents can discuss common neighborhood problems and develop a mutual understanding and respect. In addition, a public education campaign will be conducted by the model neighborhood staff, news media and private organizations to provide accurate information regarding the relationship between racial occupancy and property values.

Representatives will be elected from each of the neighborhoods as citizen planners. These neighborhood representatives will actively participate with the model neighborhood staff in making and executing planning decisions.

School facilities will be utilized for extended day and evening hours to offer enrichment, adult basic education, and other programs needed in the community. Facilities will be used for meetings and as a center for a variety of health, education, recreation, and social services. The concept of the school as a "good place to go" will be developed.

Another innovative concept new to the area is the development of numerous opportunities for parents to improve their knowledge and skill of child rearing. Emphasis will be placed on the observation by parents of skilled persons working with their children. Observation will be combined with simplified instruction followed by supervised participation of parents using experience as the teacher rather than just classroom lecture.

Decentralization of city services as well as social, recreational, educational and health services will be encouraged. Another major strategy will be the considerable development of consumer co-ops and credit unions to reduce cost of goods and services.

Several significant proposals have been made relative to improving

the supply and condition of housing in the model neighborhood area. Qualified specialists in the home financing fields will be asked to aid in developing new methods to increase the stock of low income housing financially available to the area's residents. A home improvements fund will be appropriated to provide low-income families with non-profit, long term loans for home improvements.

A council of architects and builders will be formed to offer home improvement counselling to residents of the model neighborhood area. One house in the area will be remodeled as a teaching device to show residents remodeling efforts and how to make repairs.

Professional designers will be used as project staff and consultants to offer advice on interior and exterior design of the houses. Design competitions will be established whenever possible.

Efforts will be made to substantially improve the physical condition of the area. A comprehensive design plan will be developed for the entire neighborhood to demonstrate what can be accomplished when all physical elements of a community are considered as related elements. The model neighborhood area will be a pilot program and the goals and standards developed will be used later on a city-wide basis.

Techniques to visually and audibly buffer incompatible land uses will be improved. The best trees and shrubs to be used for a particular design purpose will be obtained from information now being developed by the State Highway Department.

The design and cultural awareness of the people will be expanded through classes in arts and crafts, a neighborhood arts and crafts festival and garden clubs; courses in school and vocational training programs in maintenance and landscape construction work.

A committee of industrial development specialists will be formed to encourage industry to locate in the area and make recommendations for industrial sites in the area. Contractors and unions will be encouraged to set up on-the-job training or apprenticeship programs on work done in the area.

A committee composed of home builders, union leaders, architects, mortgage bankers and others will be established to advise on new technologies feasible for the area. The use of new types of housing in this area, such as mobile home parks, row housing, high rise, and prefab single and multi-family units will be thoroughly explored.

The city demonstration agency designated to receive planning grant funds and to conduct the model neighborhood program will be the City of Atlanta. A model neighborhood administrative unit, directly responsible to the Mayor, will be established in the Office of the Mayor. This model neighborhood project staff, operating under a project director, will consist of both recruited personnel and personnel on loan from participating agencies.

A five member executive board will be responsible for program policy. This board will consist of the Mayor, who will be chairman, and four other members representing various participating agencies. This executive board will be responsible for determining final program content and recommending the allocation of supplemental grant funds.

The model neighborhood program staff will consist of a director and principal staff members in social, physical and financial planning; it will include support staff for each of the above functions as well as secretarial staff.

The model neighborhood area council, consisting of 24 members (6 from each of the 4 neighborhoods) will be directly involved in developing the program and in making planning decisions. The council will review and make recommendations on each program component and plan before it is presented to the executive board.

A technical advisory board, consisting of representatives from the public and private agencies which have pledged their participation in the conduct of the program, will be established. This board will also review and make recommendations on plans before they are presented to the executive board.

The Citizens Advisory Committee for Urban Renewal will form a subcommittee on the model neighborhood project. This committee will review and discuss important issues related to the project and will provide an important link with the leadership of the community.