

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Seattle was one of 63 cities named in November 1967 to start planning in the Model Cities program. Subsequently it received a \$209,720 planning grant to develop a plan for a 2.25 square mile area in the center of the city.

About 10 percent of the city population, or 58,000 people live in the model neighborhood on two percent of the city's land area. The model neighborhood contrasts sharply with the general prosperity of Seattle, which is considered a "white collar" city with a median average income of \$6,942.

Unemployment in the model neighborhood is three times the city rate, median annual income is 27 percent lower, nearly half (45 percent) of family heads did not finish high school, and one-third of the families live at or near the poverty level.

Eighty-five percent of Seattle's Negro population live in the model neighborhood, making up more than half the neighborhood population. The area also includes Japanese and Chinese communities as well as small numbers of American Indians, Eskimos and Filipinos. Ten percent of the residents are white.

Citizens Involved

Seattle's five year program for upgrading this area incorporates the work of 10 citizen planning task forces working closely with volunteers from public and private agencies at the local, State and Federal levels.

During seven months of weekly and semi-weekly meetings, over 1700 citizens participated in task force planning. Proposals approved by the task forces were passed on to the Seattle Model City Advisory Council, composed of 86 representatives from neighborhood organizations, ranging from church and fraternal to militant civil rights groups. The City Demonstration Agency (CDA) staff, a group of 23 professionals, including seven persons on full time loan from city, county, State agencies and private enterprise, worked closely with the task forces and the Council to develop the final plan for approval by the Mayor and City Council.

Five Year Strategy

Seattle's five year program aims at a turn-around of all aspects of life in the target neighborhood.

"Solutions will be aimed as much at the inherent contradictions of our institutions as the individual victim of these contradictions" the Seattle program says. "We need altered ways of life as well as altered lives."

To accomplish this, Seattle looks to both public and private support. Two key elements of the plan, an economic development corporation and a housing development corporation, are expected to bring several million dollars of private and other non-federal funds into the neighborhood and multiply the impact of this money by keeping it in the neighborhood.

Backing up these programs will be concentrated manpower training and supporting health and social services to give model neighborhood residents the chance to get the jobs involved in the physical and economic improvement of the neighborhood.

At the same time, fundamental improvements in the education system -- dealing with what is taught, how it is taught and how parents and children in the neighborhood look at the schools -- are projected as essential to the long range self-sufficiency of individual residents and of their community.

Coordination of these various efforts will take place both at the city level, where similarly operated agencies have gained new experience working together, and at the neighborhood level, where the Model Cities program already has opened new channels for participation in governmental and other decisions affecting the neighborhood.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Economic Development and Employment

Seattle's basic approach is to provide adequate family income to overcome poverty in the model neighborhood and at the same time increase the amount of economic leadership in the neighborhood and eliminate marginal employment by upgrading skills. The City hopes to double in the next five years the number of model neighborhood families who own or control economic resources. A key element for developing new resident-owned businesses in the neighborhood is the United Inner-City Development Foundation now being organized with the cooperation of some 30 groups in the area. This Corporation would draw on the resources of the Washington State Development Corporation and private and Federal resources to increase tenfold an initial capitalization of \$3 million.

The economic development program will be backed up by changes in the delivery of manpower services, expanded skills and management training and an extensive consumer protection program. To coordinate existing employment counselling, training and placement now provided by 12 agencies, the plan calls for an Employment UniCenter with outreach and one-stop services. Among other activities, the UniCenter would immediately start a Management and Intern program designed to bring residents into supervisory and policy making positions in government and eventually in the private sector.

A City Trainee program would also be started to give special training and placement to model neighborhood residents normally ineligible for city jobs.

Housing, Physical Planning and Environment

The Housing program in carrying out its objectives to increase the supply of housing and the degree of homeownership in the neighborhood will be another key element in the economic development of the neighborhood. A non-profit Housing Development Corporation is expected to bring \$6 million into the neighborhood to meet a goal of 5,400 housing units over the next five years. The Corporation will be owned by stockholders from industry, government and the neighborhood, with neighborhood stockholders electing the Board of Directors. Planning is under way for the first 150 units of new and rehabilitated housing. A start would also be made on establishing a Land Bank to purchase vacant land in the neighborhood for housing use.

The Physical Planning and Environment program focuses on expanding recreation areas in the neighborhood, transportation needs of residents, and resolving problems caused by two proposed transportation corridors through the neighborhood.

Planning will continue on a public transportation and development corridor to include parks, recreation-entertainment centers and public facilities along the proposed R.H. Thomson motorway running north-south through the entire length of the neighborhood. A similar study for a housing and park complex is scheduled for the proposed I-90 which would cross the neighborhood in an east-west direction.

The start of several recreation projects and block development to provide small recreation areas in each block is scheduled immediately. The program also includes a project in which residents will operate a roving "Fix-it" wagon to provide minor home repair services at cost to neighborhood families.

Education

Despite four years of compensatory education programs, model neighborhood students are four years behind other city children at the end of high school. Seattle's goals -- enriching education, making education a better preparation for work life, and broadening parent, teacher and student participation in the schools -- are designed to deal both with felt and expressed needs and realization of institutional change.

Seattle has given priority to the socio-economic integration of schools as a means of enriching education when combined with curriculum redevelopment and staff training and retraining. As the first in a series of educational complexes planned by the Seattle public schools, a Middle Schools Educational Park Demonstration for grades 5-9 would be planned and built on the edge of the University of Washington campus.

Since no complete program for vocational education now exists in the schools, Seattle plans an early start of an extensive Occupational Skills and Incentive program to provide technical training for 6,000 students immediately. As a start towards its objective of doubling employment of model neighborhood residents in schools, Seattle would begin a project to hire 100 students as apprentices and tutors, and 200 adults in a New Careers program for education. These activities, combined with Youth Leadership Development and counselling, are designed to better prepare model neighborhood students for work.

Several activities are also aimed at increasing neighborhood participation in the schools, including a Model Neighborhood Educational Advisory Council and an office to handle complaints or problems of teachers, pupils and parents.

Welfare

Seattle's welfare program is based on an assumption that the quality of social service is directly related to those requiring the service. Tying in closely with economic development, the welfare program aims to eliminate poverty in the model neighborhood, heighten the dignity, status and self-esteem of recipients and strengthen and coordinate social services.

As a part of its coordination and concentration of social services, the city plans comprehensive day-care services for 5,000 children; neighborhood centers to coordinate social service delivery, and expanded services for the elderly.

To test possible modifications in the welfare system that would offer incentives for reducing welfare rolls, the city proposes a Direct Income Grant Demonstration program for a limited number of model neighborhood families. This is one of two in the nation under serious consideration by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

As a means of improving communication between welfare recipients and the Welfare Department, the program calls for special support to the ADC Motivated Mothers Council.

Health

The Health program focuses on delivery and increased use of health services by model neighborhood residents to achieve a level

of health in the neighborhood comparable to that of the city. One approach will be a multi-service health center with outreach into the neighborhood through health stations that would provide 24-hour emergency treatment and transportation services. Another element will involve Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound and Blue Cross-Blue Shield with services being financed through a prepaid health insurance plan.

The program also calls for a Detoxification Center to treat alcohol and drug abusers. All health activities in the neighborhood would be coordinated through a special Model Neighborhood Health Advisory Board.

Law and Justice

The Law and Justice program focuses on both the short-range problems of easing racial and community tensions around law enforcement and the long-range impact of changes in the judicial and institutional systems.

As a start toward increasing the minority representation on the police force, the city would establish a Public Safety Trainee program for residents, leading to a career in the Police Department. Other activities to improve police-community relations include paying officers for time spent in non-enforcement functions and employing residents in non-enforcement duties and as observers to record police and resident interaction.

To improve legal services for residents the city would expand the public defender system, and continue planning to provide legal help to the marginal poor, and work toward increasing the number of judgeships.

Culture and Arts, Youth

The Arts and Culture program is designed to help give Negroes in the model neighborhood an opportunity for cultural identity and to increase the numbers of residents in art related careers. A priority project to start immediately is the conversion of a former synagogue into a multipurpose neighborhood center with an auditorium for movies and the performing arts, and space for other community activities including a Teen Canteen. Also planned immediately is an Afro-American Arts Museum which would display the work of residents and well-known artists and include a bookshop and arts shop. The plan calls for a revised school curriculum to include courses in African arts and culture.

The Youth program focuses on economic life chances of youth through a special employment service and registry for part time jobs. To promote managerial skills the program proposes developing businesses such as a youth-operated Maintenance Service that would contract with local businesses and apartment buildings and a Youth Transport Service to provide minibus service to the model neighborhood.