

Clearly, the State role in authorizing local government modifications is one of prime importance. Martin comments on the significance of the State in metropolitan decisions that:

*** a city or even a county may be permitted to ignore the fact for long periods; but in the end an issue always arises which hauls it up short before this most fundamental fact of local government law: Every action by a local government is taken under a grant of power from the State. *** In any appraisal of metropolitan decisionmaking, the role of the State must be judged to be of fundamental importance.⁴¹

Finally, Martin notes the increasing importance of the Federal Government in metropolitan decisions—a subject to be considered at some length in the following chapters—and suggests that increased Federal activity in this field is likely in the future.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING

The problems posed by inadequate local jurisdictions in metropolitan areas have led not only to efforts to widen these jurisdictions through the reorganization methods described above, but also to a notable movement to plan for local services and coordinate local programs and policies on an areawide basis. For many urban services and regulatory functions—water supply, transportation, land development controls—it may well be more important to coordinate local actions through joint planning than to transfer responsibilities to an areawide jurisdiction, such as a metropolitan special district. Where governmental reorganization is not feasible, joint planning may provide many of the same benefits. Even where reorganizations are successful, metropolitan-wide planning and coordination are still needed to assure effective performance. The need for coordination applies to all levels of government whose activities have an impact in metropolitan areas: unless the work of a metropolitan transit authority is coordinated with efforts of the State highway department (operating with Federal aid) and of local public works departments responsible for street construction and maintenance, the overall transportation needs of the metropolis are not likely to be served very effectively.

The results of poor coordination have been particularly evident in programs dealing with the physical development of metropolitan areas—with land use controls, transportation, public services, and facilities such as hospitals and schools. Within individual localities, city planning has emerged as a major function of government responsible for coordinating the work of local agencies responsible for these activities. As the spread of metropolitan growth has made local boundaries inadequate for many purposes, metropolitan planning agencies have been created to carry on similar functions for entire urban areas.

The kind of coordination that is needed in metropolitan development can be illustrated in the case of water supply. In large urban areas, the economies of sharing water supply systems can be considerable, as noted in chapter III. As a result, many communities have joined together by means of intergovernmental contracts or metropolitan water districts to make use of common reservoirs, purification plants, and trunklines. For economic use of the metropolitan

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 133.