

For the most effective use of Federal aid in metropolitan developments, projects should be consistent with comprehensive plans rather than single-function plans, and the plans should cover the entire metropolitan area. Hospital construction can be planned best, for example, if a hospital project is not only coordinated with other hospital construction, but also with the anticipated distribution of population and with the network of highways and public transportation serving the site that is chosen.

Most Federal urban development programs require some form of planning, but generally it is special-purpose planning for the specific program only. Only a handful of programs require or encourage comprehensive planning on a metropolitan basis. Several of the more recent ones contain these provisions, and additional encouragement for such planning is likely in future Federal programs. The Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, for example, specifies that grants can be made only to carry out a program "for a unified or officially coordinated urban transportation system as part of the comprehensively planned development of the urban area." And the 1965 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act authorize an additional 10 percent grant for sewage treatment plant projects that are certified by an official State, regional, or metropolitan planning agency as being in conformity with a comprehensive plan of development.

Metropolitan planning for coordinated urban development offers great promise both for dealing with many areawide problems and for the efficient administration of Federal aid programs. The Commission accordingly has recommended that local applications for Federal aid under the major urban development programs be submitted for prior review, but not necessarily approval, to an official metropolitan planning agency. A Federal requirement to this effect would provide powerful incentives to establish metropolitan planning in areas where it does not yet exist. It would greatly strengthen the position of metropolitan planning by requiring additional involvement with local development proposals and by bringing it into the important channel between local governments and Washington. At the same time metropolitan planning agencies can provide the Federal Government with a useful level of information and review close to the local scene but with an areawide perspective.

5. The Commission recommends that the Congress enact legislation to establish the principle of Federal interagency coordination in the full range of programs affecting urban development; and that the executive branch of the Federal Government implement the congressionally stated principle by preparing and adopting a unified urban development policy establishing coordinating procedures.

The number and complexity of Federal urban development programs has created formidable problems of coordination within the Federal Government. Working relationships among different Federal agencies administering related programs have been established in several ways: by legislation, by Presidential direction, by formal interagency agreement, and by informal agreements. Informal relationships between agencies and departments, and between major component units within the larger agencies and departments, are by far the most common. These cover about two-thirds of the programs.