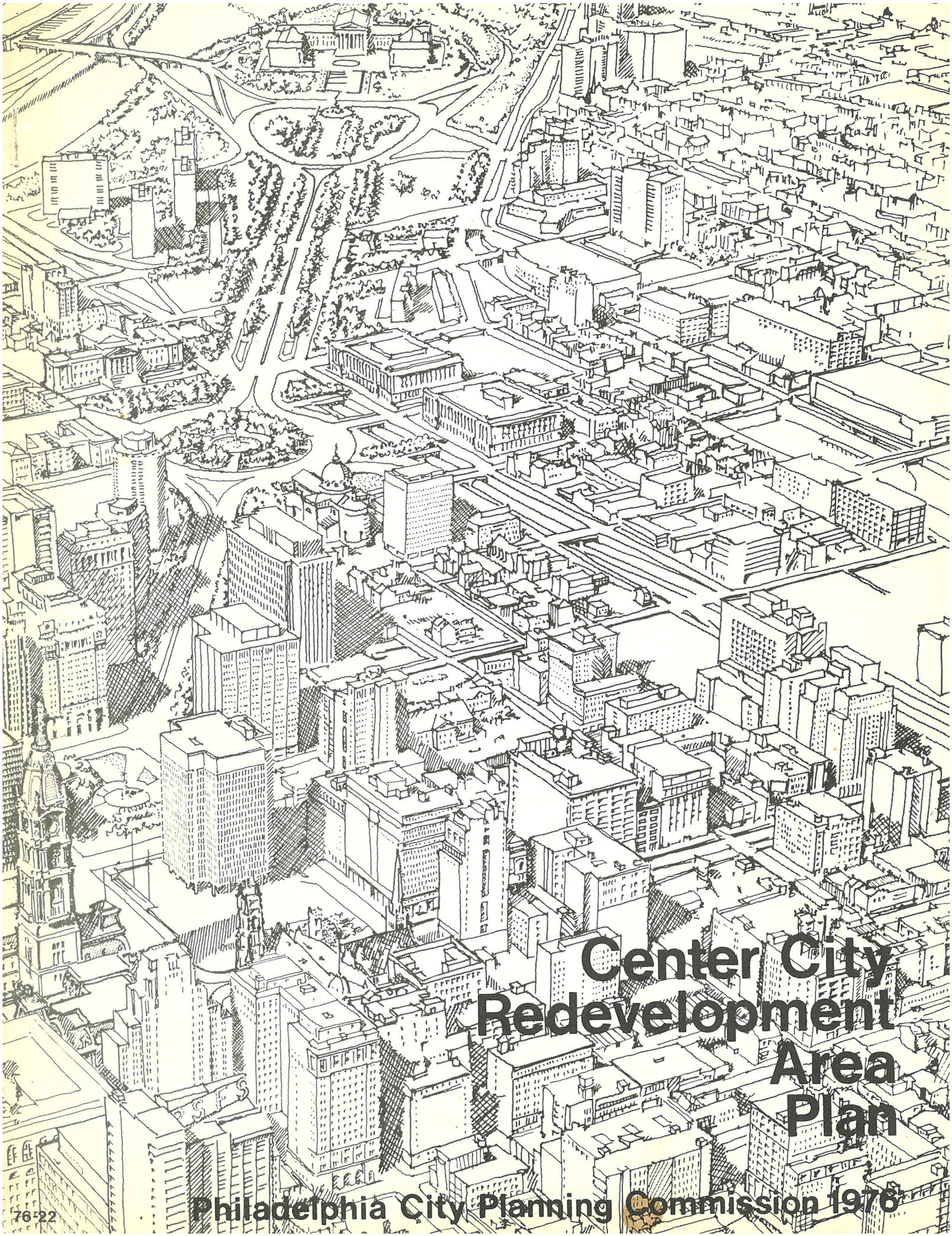

Center City Redevelopment Area Plan

Philadelphia City Planning Commission 1976

76-22

CENTER CITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

MAY 6, 1976

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

FRANK L. RIZZO, MAYOR

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

BERNARD C. MELTZER, CHAIRMAN
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G. CRAIG SCHELTER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Philadelphia City Planning Commission 1976

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CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
13th Floor City Hall Annex
S. E. Cor., Juniper & Filbert St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19107
MU 6-1776

BERNARD C. MELTZER, Chairman

JOHN C. MITKUS, Executive Director
ROBERT H. LURCOTT, Deputy Executive Director
G. CRAIG SCHELTER, Deputy Executive Director

July 15, 1976

Mr. Peter D. Carlino, Chairman
Redevelopment Authority of the
City of Philadelphia
1234 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Dear Mr. Carlino:

Transmitted herewith is the amended Center City Redevelopment Area Plan which has been prepared by the City Planning Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Redevelopment Law of May 24, 1945, P. L. 991, as amended.

This Redevelopment Area Plan covers the area bounded by Spring Garden Street, Pierhead Line of the Delaware River, South Street, and the Schuylkill River. It updates the previous Center City Redevelopment Area plans published in February, 1963 and December, 1967; the document of amendments published in August, 1971; and certain later revisions. This Redevelopment Area Plan is in conformity with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Philadelphia dated May 1960, as amended and was approved by the City Planning Commission at its meeting of May 6, 1976.

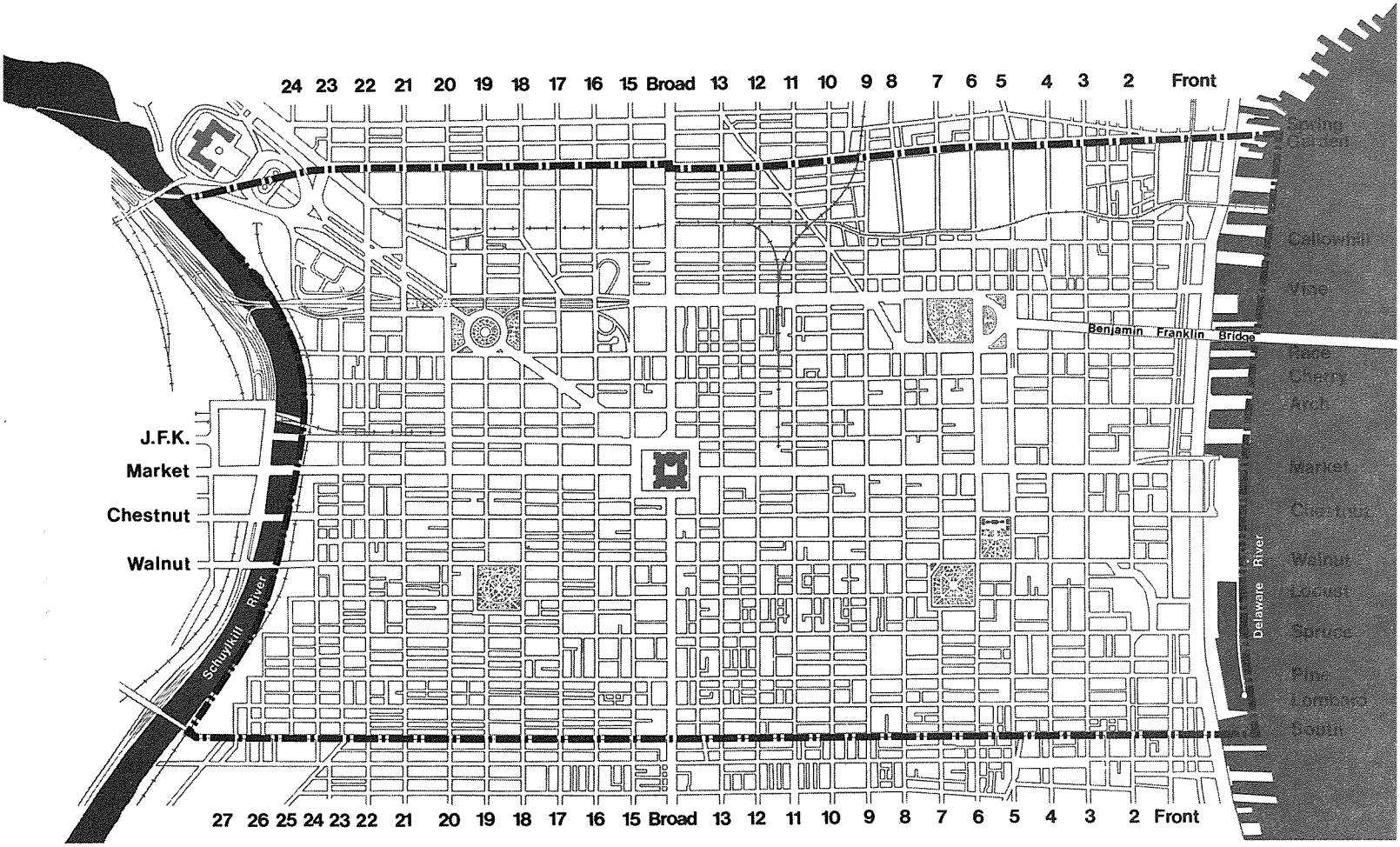
Sincerely yours,

Bernard C Meltzer

Bernard C. Meltzer
Chairman

Boundaries

The Center City Redevelopment Area Plan covers that area included within the Center City Redevelopment Area certified by the City Planning Commission on January 8, 1963, bounded on the north by Spring Garden Street, on the east by the Pierhead Line of the Delaware River, on the south by South Street and on the west by the Schuylkill River. The boundaries enclose an area of 2110 acres. The boundaries of this area are shown in the accompanying Map A.



Center City Boundaries **A**

History

The City Planning Commission on January 8, 1963, certified the Center City Redevelopment Area and published the Plan for Center City which outlines the overall policies to be used in the redevelopment of the Center City area.

In February of 1963, the City Planning Commission prepared and published the Center City Redevelopment Area Plan. In December of 1967, the City Planning Commission published an amended Center City Redevelopment Area Plan. This amended plan, which superseded the 1963 plan, incorporated the Washington Square Redevelopment Area Plan, Independence Mall Redevelopment Area Plan, Market West Redevelopment Area Plan, South Triangle Redevelopment Area Plan, Schuylkill River Park Redevelopment Area Plan and the Franklin Redevelopment Area Plan into the Center City Redevelopment Area Plan. The 1967 amendment provided further that where the above-mentioned plans contained proposals and controls not specifically incorporated into the amended plan, those proposals and controls will continue in effect.

In August of 1971, the 1967 Center City Redevelopment Plan was amended to revise criteria for development of the northwest quadrant of Center City.

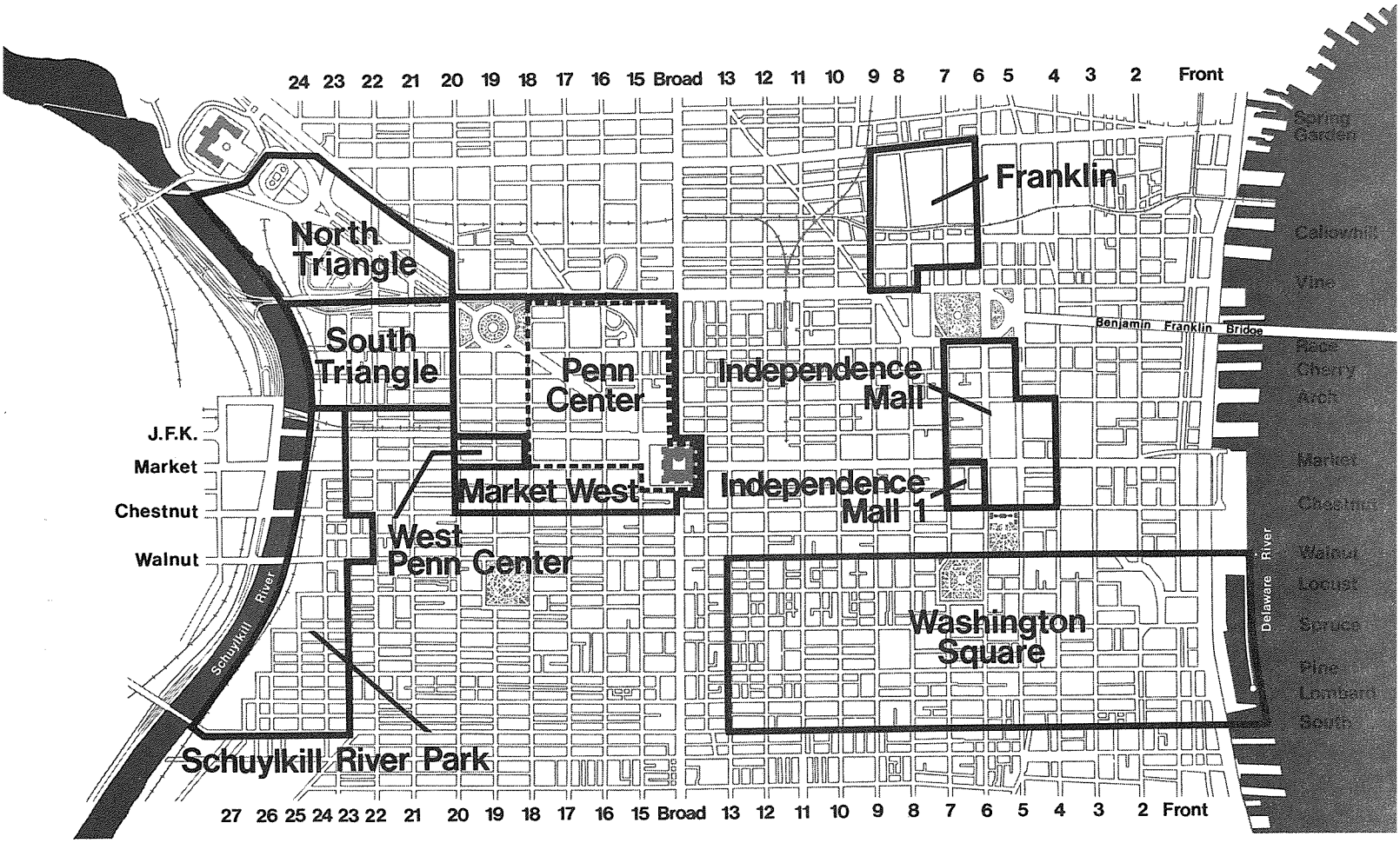
This 1976 amended Center City Redevelopment Area Plan makes certain changes to the amended Plan published in August 1971.

The Amendments to the Redevelopment Area Plan are in accord with the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Philadelphia dated May 1960, as amended.

This amended 1976 Center City Redevelopment Area Plan supersedes all previous plans. It also incorporates portions of the following redevelopment plans within Center City:

North Triangle —	Published September 1950
South Triangle —	Published August 20, 1963
Penn Center —	Published August 1952, superseded by Center City Redevelopment Area Plan December 19, 1967
Washington Square —	Published June 1957; amended September 1961.
Independence Mall I —	Published June 1961; superseded by the Independence Mall Redevelopment Area Plan, October 1962.
Independence Mall —	Published October 1962, amended November 26, 1963, December 1963 and January 1966.
West Penn Center —	Published May 1963.
Schuylkill River Park —	Published October 1964.
Market West —	Published May 18, 1965.
Franklin —	Published July 1965.

See Map B for boundaries of these Redevelopment Area Plans.



Redevelopment Areas B

Existing Conditions

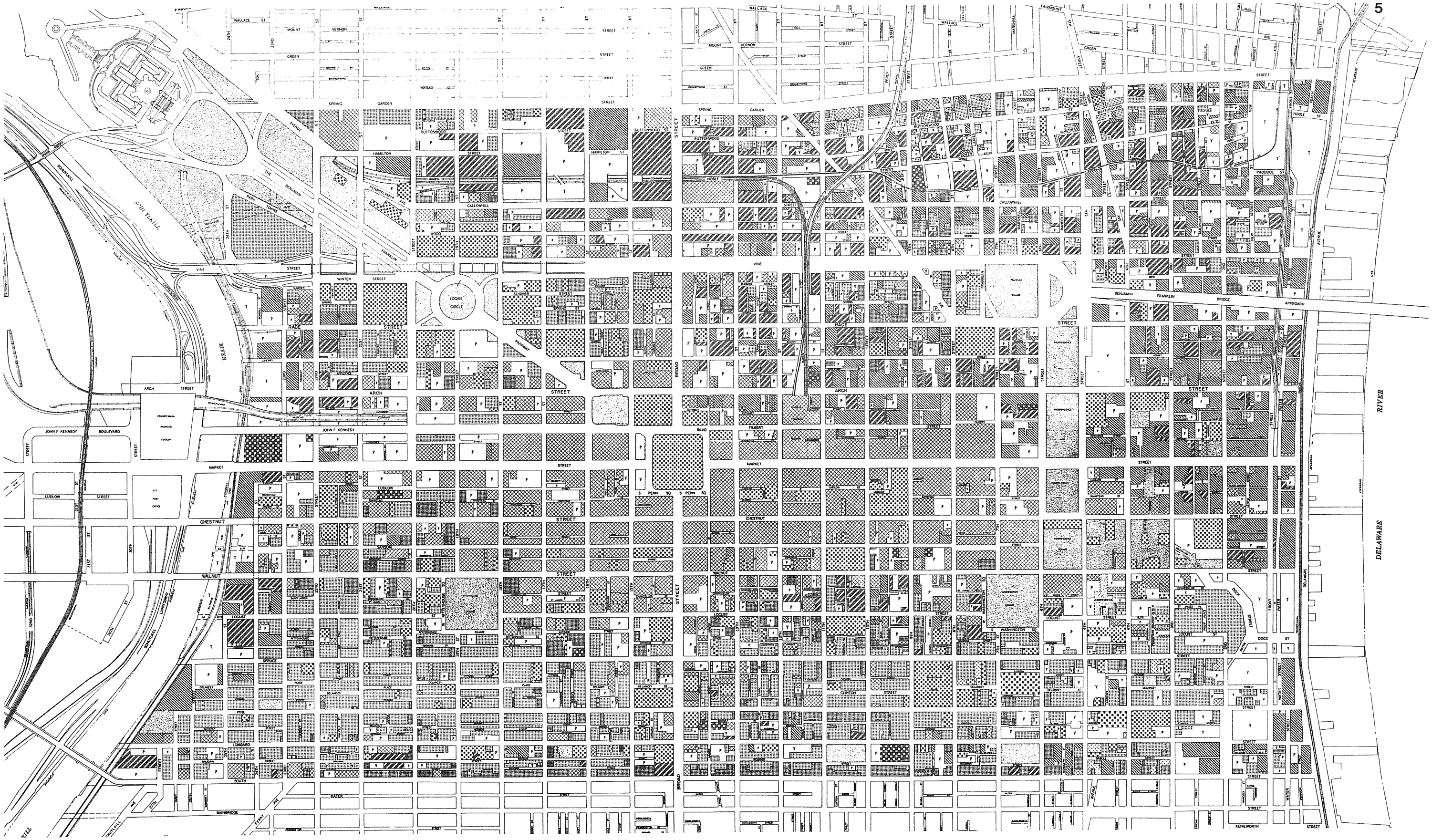
The Center City Redevelopment Area exhibits the following characteristics which warrant its designation as a Redevelopment Area:

a. Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded condition of certain buildings;
b. Inadequate planning of the area;
c. Excessive land coverage;
d. Lack of proper light, air, and open space;
e. Faulty street and lot layout;
f. Defective design and arrangement of buildings;
g. Economically undesirable land use.

Within this area there are certain blocks with a high percentage of deterioration and dilapidation, as shown by the 1960 Census. Many of these deteriorated houses are located in areas proposed for industrial re-use. Many of the streets within Center City are inadequate to handle moving traffic and servicing of the commercial buildings. Loading and unloading from the streets, caused by crowded site conditions, seriously impedes traffic. The layout of many parcels is the result of previous residential use. By today's standards many of these are defective in their present state.

Because of modern improvements in the functioning of commercial and industrial buildings, many are becoming obsolete in terms of present usage. The combination of inadequate maintenance with generally non-fireproof construction constitutes a continuing hazard. Some of these structures are being rehabilitated for mixed commercial and residential uses, while others are demolished, and the resulting sites converted to surface parking or left undeveloped. There has been no new construction in some areas in recent years due to the unwieldy sizes and shapes of many lots. Throughout the core area, there are pockets of uneconomical land uses, and in the remainder of Center City there are many uses which are incompatible with adjacent areas, as illustrated on Maps C and D.

Although some of these conditions can be alleviated by private action, redevelopment is required in most cases to re-establish values and incentives for reconstruction.



RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

COMMERCIAL

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

INDUSTRIAL

INSTITUTIONAL

PARK

PARKING

VACANT

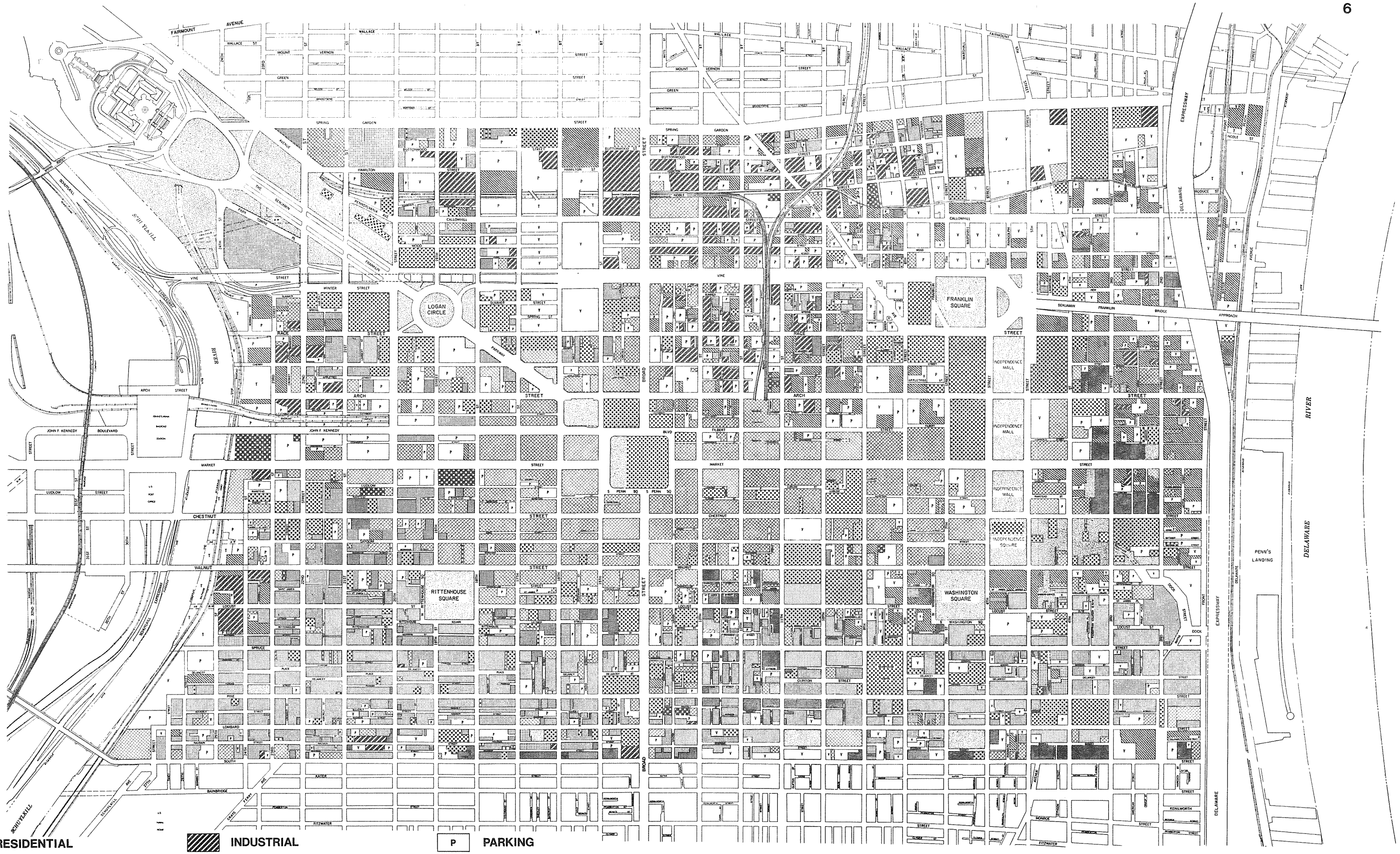
TRANSPORTATION

UTILITIES & COMMUNICATIONS

0 1000 2000 FEET

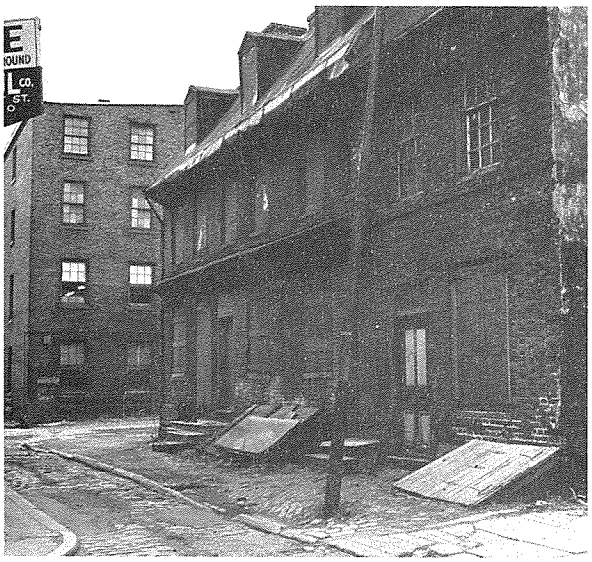
PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

1965 Land Use C



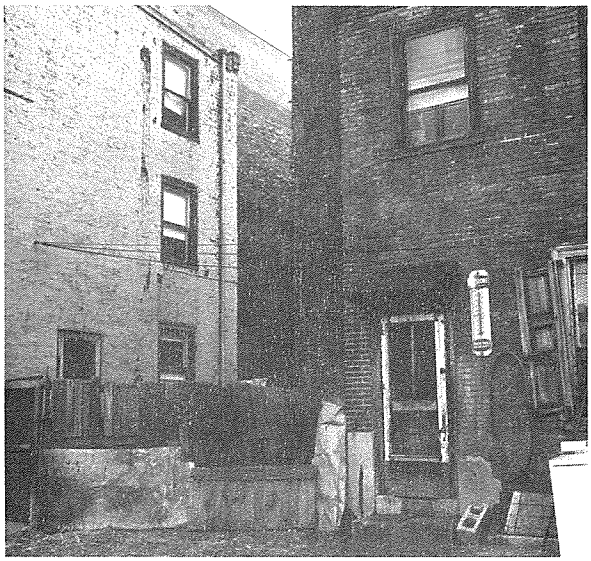
1976 Land Use D

Illustrative Photographs

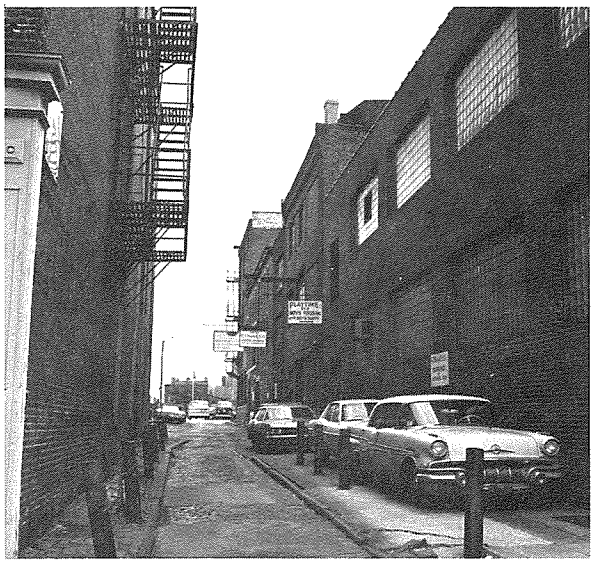


Unsafe, unsanitary,————condition of certain buildings

Faulty street and lot layout



Lack of proper light, air and open space



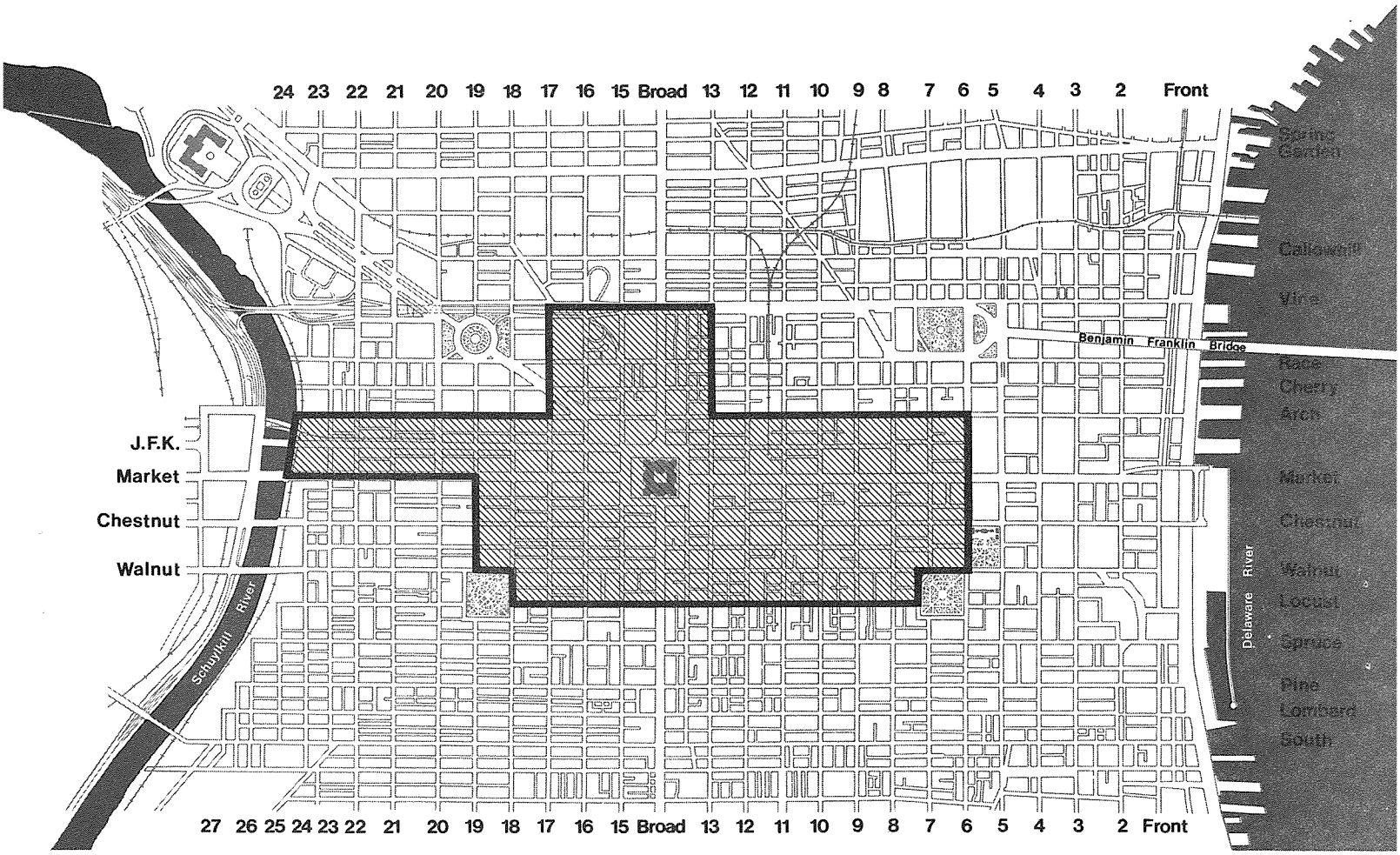
Inadequate planning of the area

Defective design and arrangement of buildings

Economically undesirable land use

Proposed Land Use

The Proposed Land Use Plan (see Map F) has been developed from the principles set forth in the Plan for Center City published January 1963. The central portion of the area generally bounded by Sixth Street, Nineteenth Street, Arch Street, and Locust Street was designated as the Core Commercial Area. Recent development proposals in Market Street West and Franklin Town meet the criteria for core area development, therefore, the core area was expanded to encompass them. Generally, the core also includes the area northerly from Arch Street to Vine Street between 13th and 17th Streets and westerly from 19th Street to the Schuylkill River between Arch and Market Streets as illustrated on Map E.



The Core Area E

The areas in the northeast quadrant of Center City above Vine Street are proposed for heavy commercial and industrial service to the Central Business Area. These areas are proposed to be used for wholesaling and manufacturing industries with high employment.

The area of Chinatown bounded by Vine Street, Arch Street, 9th Street and 11th Street is designated for mixed commercial and residential use in order to encourage the development of the Chinatown Community.

The area east of Fifth Street to Front Street and south of the Vine Street Expressway to Walnut Street is proposed for mixed commercial and residential use. This area is proposed for the development of commercial establishments and accommodations for tourist activities.

The area along south Broad Street between Walnut and Pine Streets is proposed for development as a center of the performing arts.

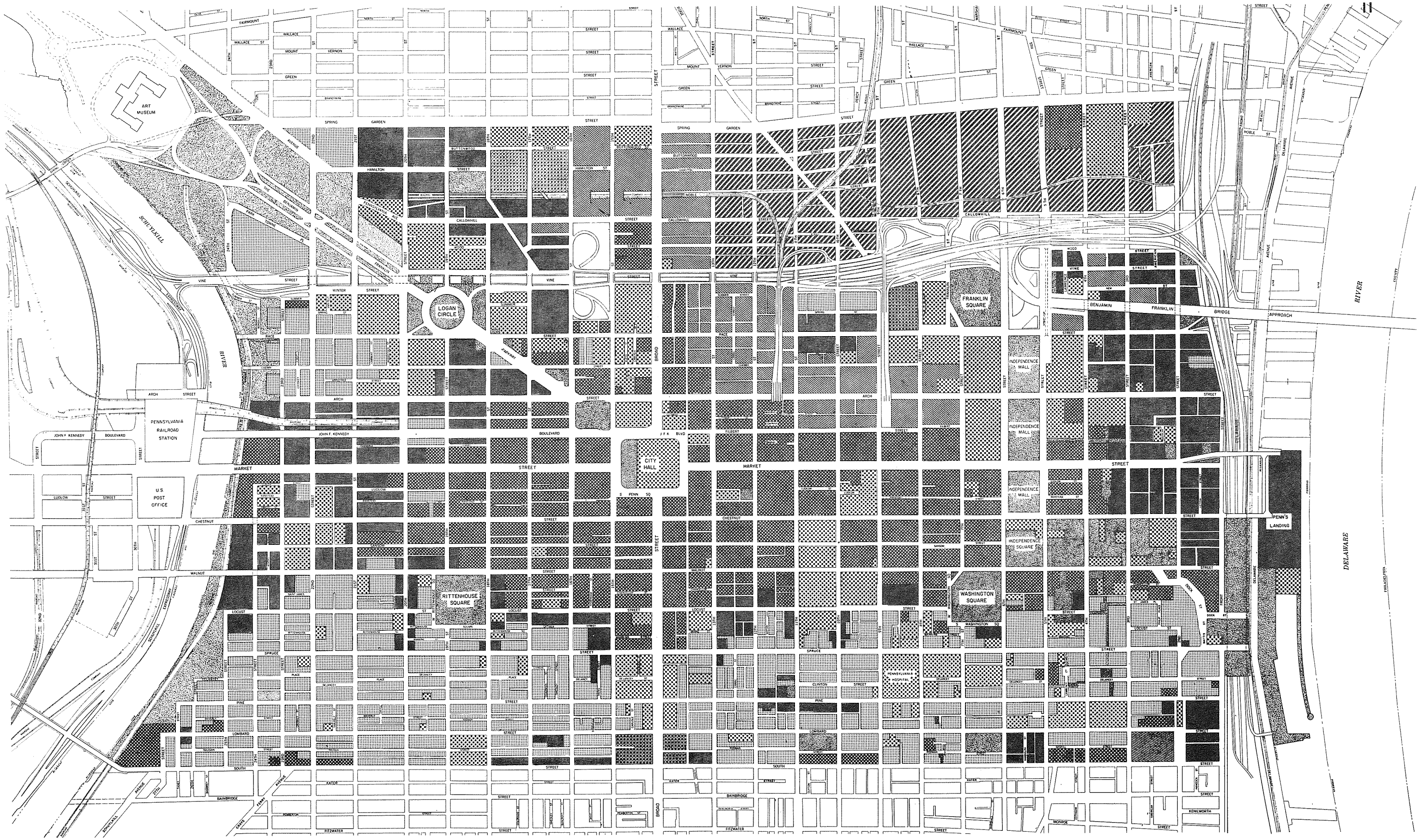
The areas along the southern edge of the Center City Area are proposed for residential use. This residential development is proposed to be primarily the rehabilitation of existing houses, and construction of new low rise housing.

The area along the Schuylkill River is proposed to be developed as a park, extending Fairmount Park southerly to Lombard Street.

Certain areas adjacent to Dock Street, Washington Square, Rittenhouse Square, and the proposed Schuylkill River Park are proposed for high-rise residential development.

The areas along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and around Logan Circle are proposed for development with institutions and high-rise apartment buildings. New and rehabilitated housing is proposed for the area in the vicinity of Twenty-first and Cherry Streets.

The areas north of Vine Street and west of Broad Street are proposed for mixed residential and commercial use as a complement to existing institutions and industries in the area. Proposed development will generally include but is not restricted to rehabilitation of existing houses, construction of new medium and high-rise apartments with commercial uses on the ground floor and new single family dwellings. Furthermore, the area south of Spring Garden Street between 16th and 18th Streets to the Reading Railroad right-of-way is proposed as a new mixed-use district. Joint development is proposed for the expansion of the Philadelphia Community College, and private residential and commercial developments in the adjacent area.



RESIDENTIAL

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL

COMMERCIAL

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

INDUSTRIAL

INSTITUTIONAL

PARK

0 1000 2000 FEET

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Proposed Land Use F

Proposed Development Standards

In addition to the zoning regulations, the following standards shall serve as guides for rehabilitation of existing buildings and as controls for the development of new buildings.

The controls for the Benjamin Franklin Parkway (Section 14-2002 of the Philadelphia Code of Ordinances), Independence Mall and National Historical Park (Section 14-2005), Rittenhouse Square (Section 14-2006), shall also be part of the urban renewal controls.

In order to enhance the pedestrian environment within the core area, varied and active ground floor retail uses shall be promoted. Continuity of retail space along Market Street, Chestnut Street, Walnut Street, and Kennedy Boulevard should be maximized and linked by the north-south streets and by pedestrian connections through the middle of the blocks.

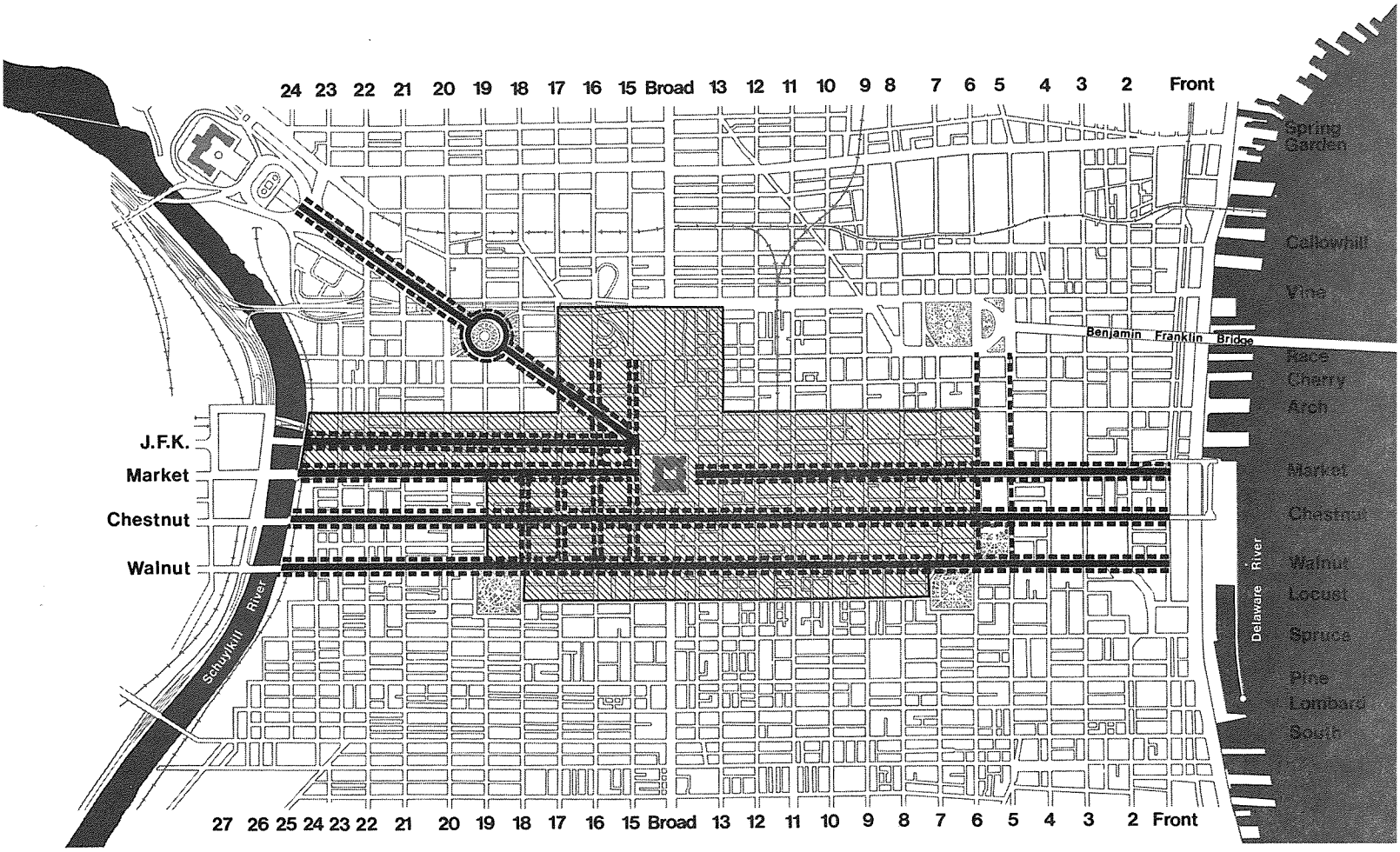
PARKING CONTROLS (Map G)

A. No ground floor parking in buildings shall be permitted on the front half of lots abutting Market Street, Chestnut Street, Kennedy Boulevard and Walnut Street between the Delaware River and the Schuylkill River or along the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

B. No access to parking and servicing shall be permitted from the Benjamin Franklin Parkway; and from Market Street, Chestnut Street, and Walnut Street, between the Delaware River and the Schuylkill River; 5th Street, 6th Street, 15th Street and 16th Street between Walnut and Race Streets; 17th Street and 18th Street between Market and Walnut Streets. Entrance to all new garage structures located between Kennedy Boulevard or Filbert Street and Walnut Street shall be made from Commerce Street, Ludlow Street, Ranstead Street, Ionic Street, Sansom Street or Moravian Street.

C. Parking lots as a principal use shall not be permitted in the core area.

In areas proposed for row house development, the minimum lot size for lots containing their own parking shall be 1000 square feet. Where parking is provided in adjacent facilities, the minimum lot size shall be 750 square feet.



A —— B ------ C

Parking Controls G

HEIGHT CONTROLS (Map H)

A. The maximum height for buildings east of Independence Mall shall be 55 feet except for residential buildings fronting on Dock Street where it shall be 300 feet, and the block bounded by 4th Street, Ludlow Street, 5th Street, and Christ Church Walkway where the maximum height shall be 150 feet.

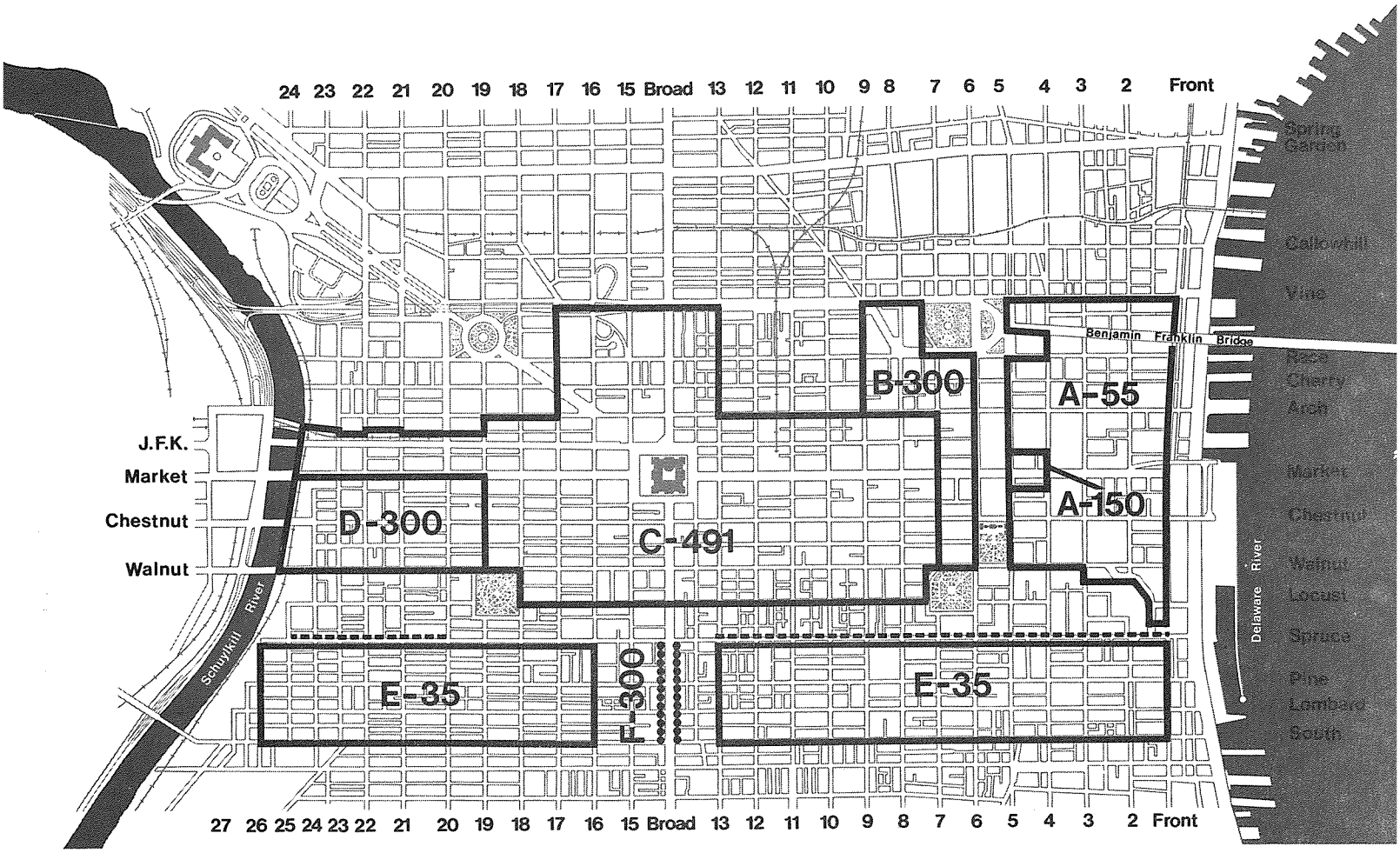
B. Buildings fronting on the west side of Independence Mall; the south side of Independence National Historical Park between 5th and 6th Streets; and on Washington Square shall have a maximum height of 300 feet.

C. The maximum height for buildings in most of the Commercial Core Area shall be 491 feet, which is the elevation of the base of William Penn's statue on top of City Hall.

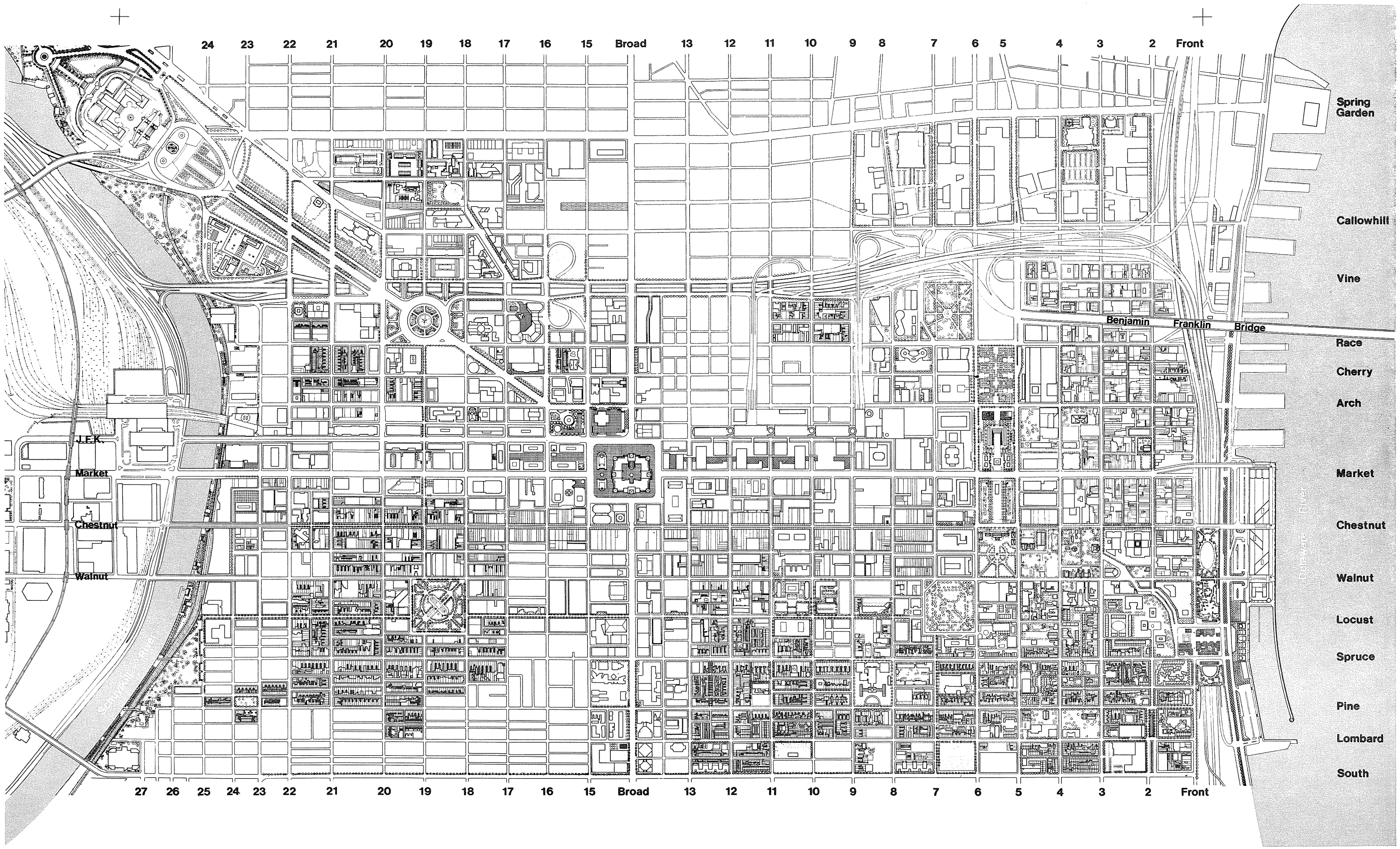
D. The maximum building height west of 19th Street between Market Street and Walnut Street shall be 300 feet.

E. The maximum height for buildings fronting on both sides of Spruce Street between Front Street and 13th Street, and between 16th Street and Taney Street shall be 35 feet, except for the north side of Spruce Street between 16th Street and 20th Street. The 35 foot maximum height limit shall also apply to the areas between Spruce Street and South Street between Front and 13th Streets, and between 16th and Taney Streets. An exception to the 35 foot maximum height limit shall apply where there are less than four new houses built in a row, in which case the new construction may be of the height of the lower of the adjoining buildings, but may not exceed 50 feet.

F. The maximum height of buildings fronting on Broad Street between Walnut Street and South Street shall be 300 feet.



Height Controls H



0 1000 2000 FEET

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Illustrative Site Plan

Required Actions

STREET CHANGES

The Site Plan and the proposed Land Use Plan show the major expressway construction and major arterial street improvements within the Center City Area. The Vine Street and Delaware Expressways will be the major street revisions in the Center City Area. In addition, Fifth and Sixth Streets between Chestnut and Spring Garden Streets have been widened and Fifteenth and Sixteenth Streets from Ranstead Street to Vine Street will also be widened. Many minor streets will be closed in order to assemble parcels for development and to provide a better circulation system. These minor street changes are indicated on the proposed Land Use Plan.

RELOCATION

Estimates of the number of families being displaced by the recommendations of the Plan have been developed on a project basis. Provisions have been and will be made by the Centralized Relocation Bureau of the Redevelopment Authority to assist in the relocation of any family or individual displaced by the proposed redevelopment program.

PROPOSED ZONING

It is proposed to rezone certain portions of the Center City Redevelopment Area to be in accord with the proposed land use and density plans. The areas of low density residential will be rezoned to permit only row houses, low apartment developments and certain local service commercial uses. The areas of high density residential will be rezoned to permit high-rise residential buildings, in addition to other residential types. The areas of mixed residential and commercial will be rezoned to provide for these uses either in a purely commercial category or in a residential category which permits limited commercial uses. The proposed industrial areas will be rezoned in the most liberal Limited Industrial district. Institutional areas will be rezoned Institutional Development district where applicable, and an appropriate Residential district elsewhere. Park areas will be rezoned Recreational where applicable.

ESTIMATED COST OF ACQUISITION

Estimates of land acquisition costs to carry forward the proposal of this plan, including those projects already underway was calculated to be $310,000,000.

CONTINUING CONTROLS

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, P. L. 991, as amended, and the United States Housing Act of 1949, as amended, regulate Philadelphia's redevelopment and urban renewal.

The approval by the Planning Commission of Urban Renewal Plans prepared for the Redevelopment Authority will act as an amendment to this Redevelopment Area Plan. Proposed development will be in accordance with the requirements of any Urban Renewal Plans prepared by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia for this area, and will comply with the provisions of the Code of General Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia.

All plans and proposals prepared by the Redevelopment Authority will be subject to the recommendations of the City Planning Commission and the approval of the City of Philadelphia.

Illustrative Site Plan

The illustrative site plan describes the physical layout of Center City. This plan illustrates the existing fabric in conjunction with the proposed projects.

In the Washington Square East Area, parks and greenways link historic sites and provide open space in conjunction with rehabilitated housing and limited new construction. The greenway system extends throughout the entire eastern portion of Center City connecting on the east with the Society Hill Towers development and with Penn's Landing by way of the proposed Delaware Expressway cover; on the north it connects with Independence National Historical Park and Independence Mall, and from there eastward along the Christ Church Walkway.

Throughout Center City major projects have been developed along the Market Street transportation spine. These include: Penn's Landing along the Delaware River, an exhibition and waterfront recreation area organized around high-rise towers at the foot of Market Street; the Independence Mall project, a new office center organized around Independence Mall at the eastern end of the retail core; the Market East transportation and commercial center linking the major department stores by way of a new enclosed pedestrian shopping mall, serviced by public transportation; the Penn Center Area, west of City Hall, containing new office construction in conjunction with the development of major public spaces surrounding City Hall; an underground pedestrian circulation system linking most office buildings and transit stations; Schuylkill River Park, extending Fairmount Park southerly to Lombard Street, into the residential areas.

The plan also illustrates the development of other significant locations within Center City such as the South Broad Street Center for the Performing Arts; the development of Franklin Town, a new neighborhood; the extension of developments along Kennedy Boulevard west to the Schuylkill River; the Callowhill East and Franklin industrial renewal areas north of Franklin Square; and the expansion of major institutions such as the Pennsylvania Hospital, Thomas Jefferson Hospital and Hahnemann Hospital.