

William White, General Manager - Designate

3-1977

John B. Clinton, Office of Program Policy
and Management, KP

Potential NTIT Projects

Attached is material concerning a possible redevelopment effort in the Bronx, New York which would appear to qualify for consideration as a new-town-in-town project.

I suggest that it be included in our inventory of such projects for closer consideration if and when we are prepared to open the Program.

Deputy Administrator

Attachment

cc: McLaughlin
Fain
Goldner

KP Clinton/Chron., 7143

KP:GOLDNER:dd 5/2/77

BOOZ · ALLEN & HAMILTON Inc.

Development Research Division

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STEPHEN D. JULIAS
VICE PRESIDENT

April 20, 1977

Mr. Lester Goldner
Department of Housing
& Urban Development
451 Seventh Street, Room 7143
Washington, D. C.

Dear Les:

As I mentioned to you on the phone last week, the enclosed is an example of the direction that new towns, or "new urban communities", might take. Assuming that the assumptions behind this draft proposal were to hold up under analysis, this urban center would have the basic advantage of a rational location within a regional scheme of urban growth, which would ensure local support and a good market. Further, implementation would enjoy the advantages of a reasonably clear site, mixed use, relatively high density, excellent access, and joint development. Naturally, development in this area would have to overcome the problems created by a severely depressed neighborhood. I do not mean to belittle these problems, but a possible solution would strike me as something that would be appropriate for HUD's interest.

Richard M. Rosan is director of the Mayor's Office of Development in New York City. Although he appreciated the potential of such an undertaking, he feels there is inadequate support, particularly in the form of Federal programs, to justify his attempting to initiate the project at this time.

Thought you might be interested.

Yours truly,



DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH DIVISION

Stephen D. Julias, III
Vice President

rw

Enclosure

December 15, 1976

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard M. Rosan

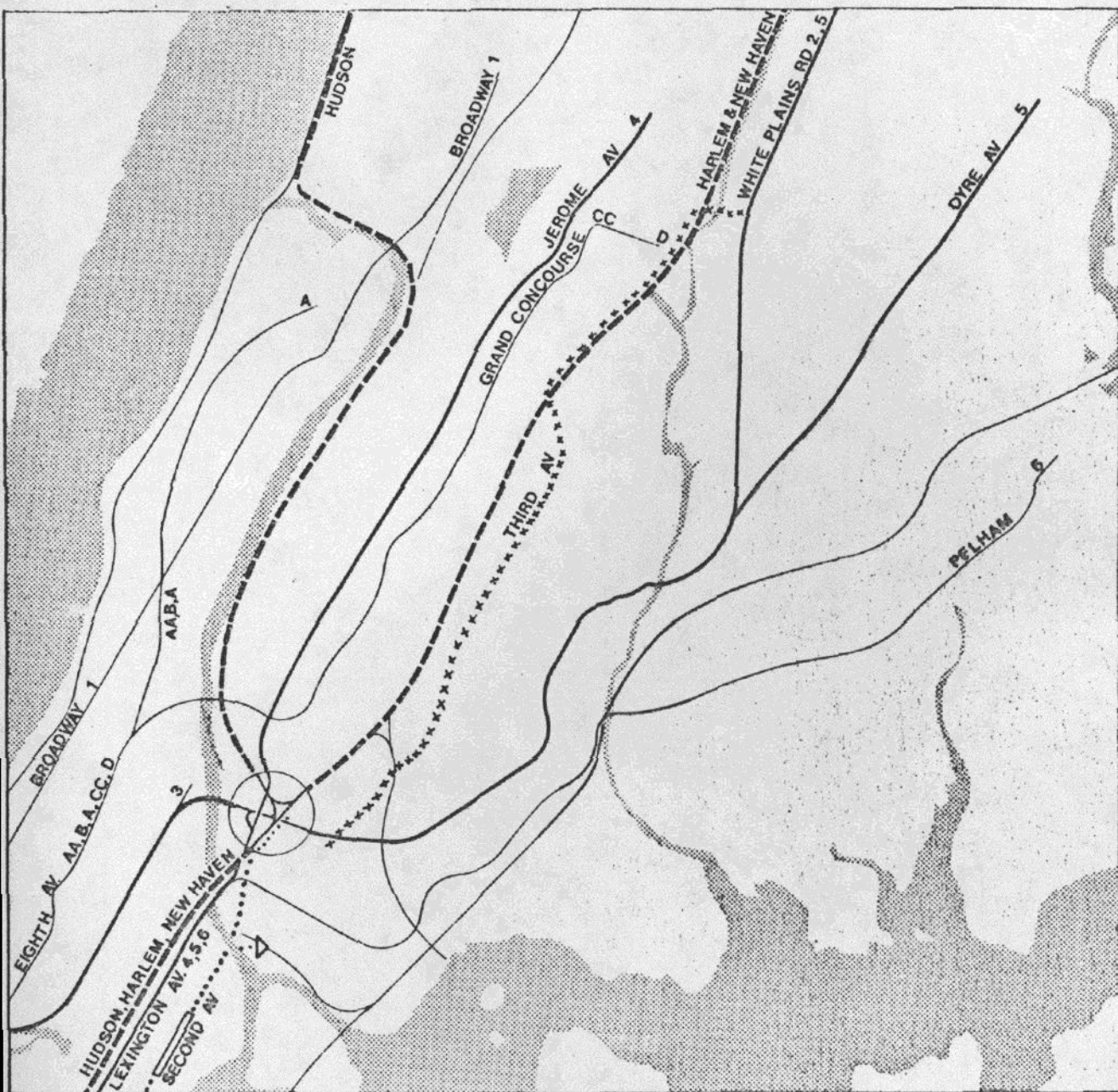
FROM: John West

RE: Bronx Center Access and Development Study

The Bronx lacks a downtown. Like the rest of the region, The Bronx depends on Midtown and Lower Manhattan for jobs, shopping, and services. This is appropriate to the extent that activities are best or most efficiently provided there; however, many uses are of a more local nature and can be conveniently located outside of Manhattan. Downtown Brooklyn, Jamaica, Yonkers, Newark -- each constructively complements the Manhattan central business district.

Properly planned, designed, and developed a new regional subcenter in The Bronx could be of substantial economic benefit to the City and a key to the revitalization of the South Bronx. Such a center would generate new real estate and business taxes. It would provide the services, shopping, and environment necessary for new housing and offices. It would attract expenditures for goods or entertainment that might otherwise occur outside the city. It would even encourage private investment in the center and the surrounding area.

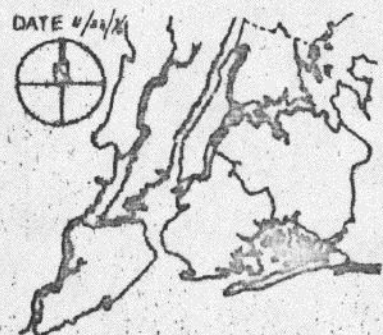
In addition to a convincing and flexible plan for the project -- and, of course, public and private support -- the successful development of a downtown in The Bronx depends on the selection of an appropriate site. A center will require excellent access both by transit and by highway; a large amount of vacant or underutilized land, preferably publicly owned or inexpensive; and



149 STREET INTERCHANGE

- RAILROAD
- SUBWAY
- DEMOLITION
- CONSTRUCTION
- PROPOSED

DATE 4/21/81



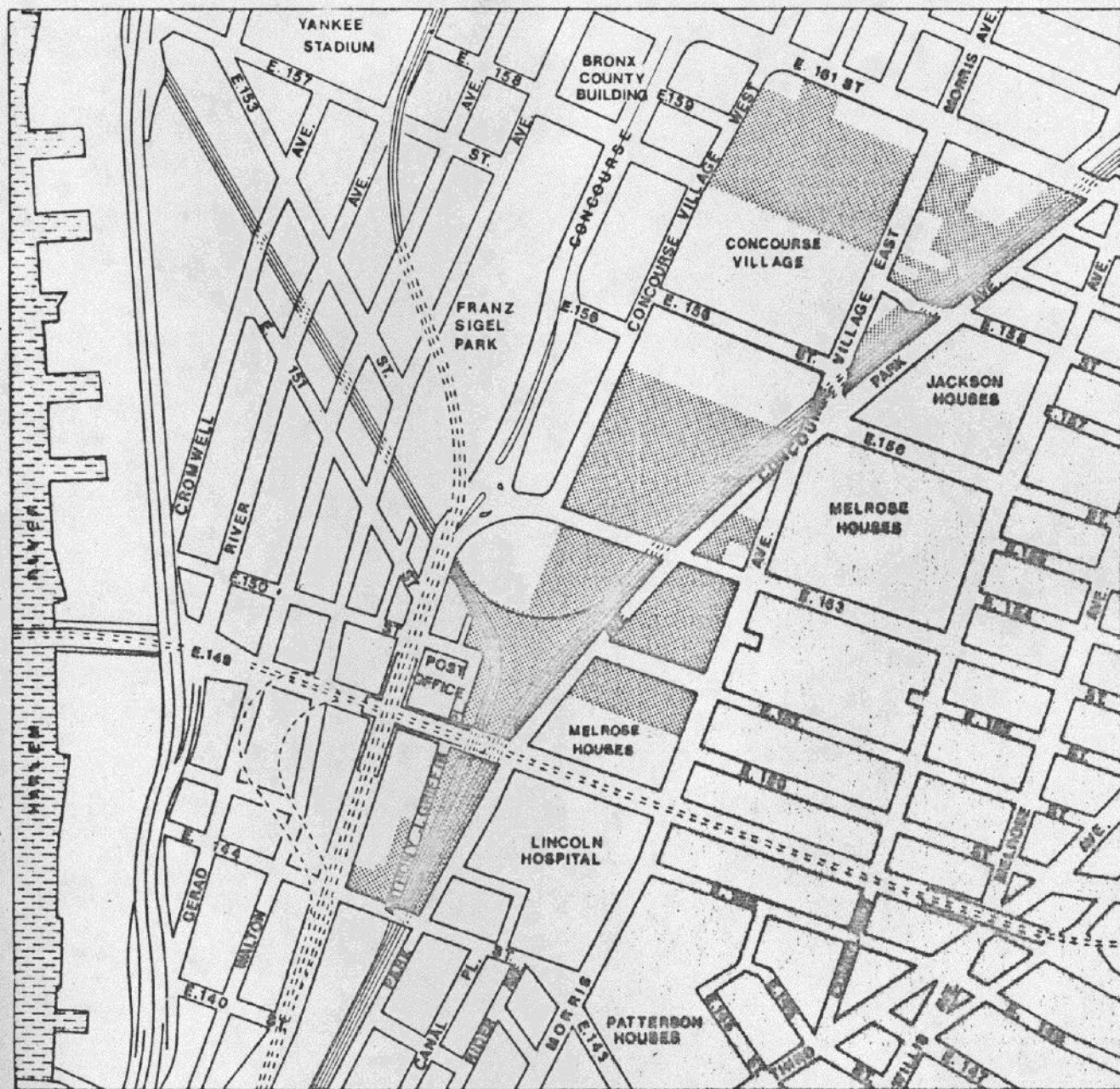
supporting or compatible neighboring land uses, including conveniently located services, such as schools and hospitals. If most of these conditions already exist the amount of public investment that will be needed is minimized.

There is one location in The Bronx that very nearly meets the^se criteria: the area north and south of 149 Street just east of the Grand Concourse.

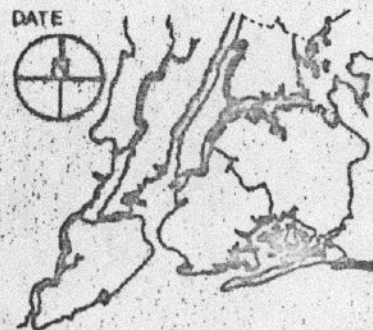
This is potentially one of the most accessible spots in the city. It is the intersection of the Jerome Avenue, White Plains Road, and Dyre Avenue branches of the Lexington and Seventh Avenue IRT subway lines. It is the junction of the Hudson, Harlem, and New Haven rail lines to Grand Central Station. It is also convenient to the Grand Concourse, the Major Deegan expressway, and the local street system. The bus system is focused a few blocks east at 149 Street and Third Avenue.

There is plenty of land for new development. More than 50 acres are now vacant above ^{and} the adjacent to the railroad right of way. North of 149 Street most of this is planned for housing and a community college which, under current circumstances, are unlikely to be built. Additional sites contain small, decrepit buildings and vacant lots. Property values are generally low, reflecting the problems of the South Bronx, and much of the land is in public ownership.

The area is bounded by relatively stable neighborhoods. To the north, along the Grand Concourse, there are old but apparently sound apartment buildings. Also to the north is Concourse Village and, at 161 Street, the Bronx court buildings. To the east are Jackson, Melrose, Patterson, Mott Haven, and Mitchel Houses, providing some insulation from the burnt-out portions of the South Bronx. On the four corners of 149 Street and the railroad cut are an office building, a post office, a recent U.D.C. housing project, and the new Lincoln Hospital.



DEVELOPMENT SITES



In short, the site is remarkably favorable for redevelopment as a regional subcenter -- a new town in town. The City has the opportunity, with modest additional public investment, to obtain substantial economic benefits and to establish an anchor for the redevelopment of the South Bronx.

Joint Development

A technique that would be particularly appropriate at 149 Street and the Grand Concourse is "joint development". This is a current term for cooperation between private entrepreneurs and public agencies in putting land to new uses. In particular it is used to describe the construction of privately financed buildings constituent with new or improved public transit facilities. Typically these are new offices, apartments, or stores adjacent to a new subway, rail, or bus station.

Joint development uses special zoning, mapping, and other controls to ensure coordinated design. It involves the public acquisition of land and its multiple use, both during the various stages of construction and afterwards, so as to provide adequately large and properly located sites at appropriate times and reduce the land, the construction, and the financing costs that must be borne by both the private and public components of the project. Joint development also uses land leases, special ⁵⁵ assessments, or tax increment districts to recover a portion of the increase in property value and to help finance some of the public improvements.

The essence of joint development, however, is in the complementary markets for built space and for transit that are induced by a properly located and well designed project. New accessibility provided by the transit improvement can

increase the attractiveness of the affected land for a concentration of new uses that in turn can increase the use of the transit system. The potential to realize these advantages varies, major consideration being location, the interface with other means of transportation, the compatibility of neighboring land uses, and the degree of anticipated increase in land value.

Improved Access

The first opportunity for increased access is to establish a stop on the rail line and provide a convenient interchange with the subways and buses. This would give rail commuters alternative routes to destinations not convenient to Grand Central and facilitate reverse commuting for residents of The Bronx to jobs in the suburbs. By itself this is simply a new transfer between modes; however, properly designed in combination with new buildings and activities it establishes the concentrated accessibility to an attractive place necessary for a downtown to begin to grow in The Bronx.

Other opportunities to improve access rest (i) in the institution of a local service on the rail lines priced competitively with the subway, (ii) in a policy to limit express bus service to Manhattan in favor of transfers to rail or subway at 149 Street and the Grand Concourse, (iii) in the construction of the Second Avenue subway to a temporary terminal in the railroad right of way at 149 Street and the Grand Concourse, (iv) in the extension of the Second Avenue line north and/or east of that temporary terminus (possibly replacing existing elevated lines), (v) in the establishment of a bus terminal (perhaps with ramps directly to the Major Deegan expressway) for local, express, and even inter-city buses, and (vi) in the provision of public parking and an improved street

system. Although any such stops would enhance accessibility, it is not now obvious what improvements might be necessary or most useful.

Mixed Use Development

The watchword in designing a successful urban center is "mixed use". This is because a combination of uses has greater economic strength and generates a more interesting environment than does a single or dominant use. For example, a restaurant in an office district might be open for lunch five days a week, in a residential district it could expect a market for dinner every night, near a group of theaters there would also be demand for a late supper. In an area that contains offices, residences, and theaters the same restaurant would expect to sell many more meals each week. In fact, the stronger market for meals might support enough restaurants and the competition might increase the quality and variety of the restaurants such that they would begin to attract business from a much larger area.

In as much as individual uses gain economic strength in appropriate combinations with other uses, a mixed use development provides a higher rate of return on investment, more jobs, and more public revenue than if the uses were developed separately. However, in addition to making the most efficient use of an exceptionally accessible location, a mixed use development has the potential of producing a superior urban environment -- a fortunate linking of economic and social benefits.

The ^{kinds of} uses that might eventually be incorporated in a center at 149 Street and the Grand Concourse include office, residential, retail, hotel, entertainment, and services. The best combinations of uses, as well as when and in what amounts they should be provided, would have to be studied.

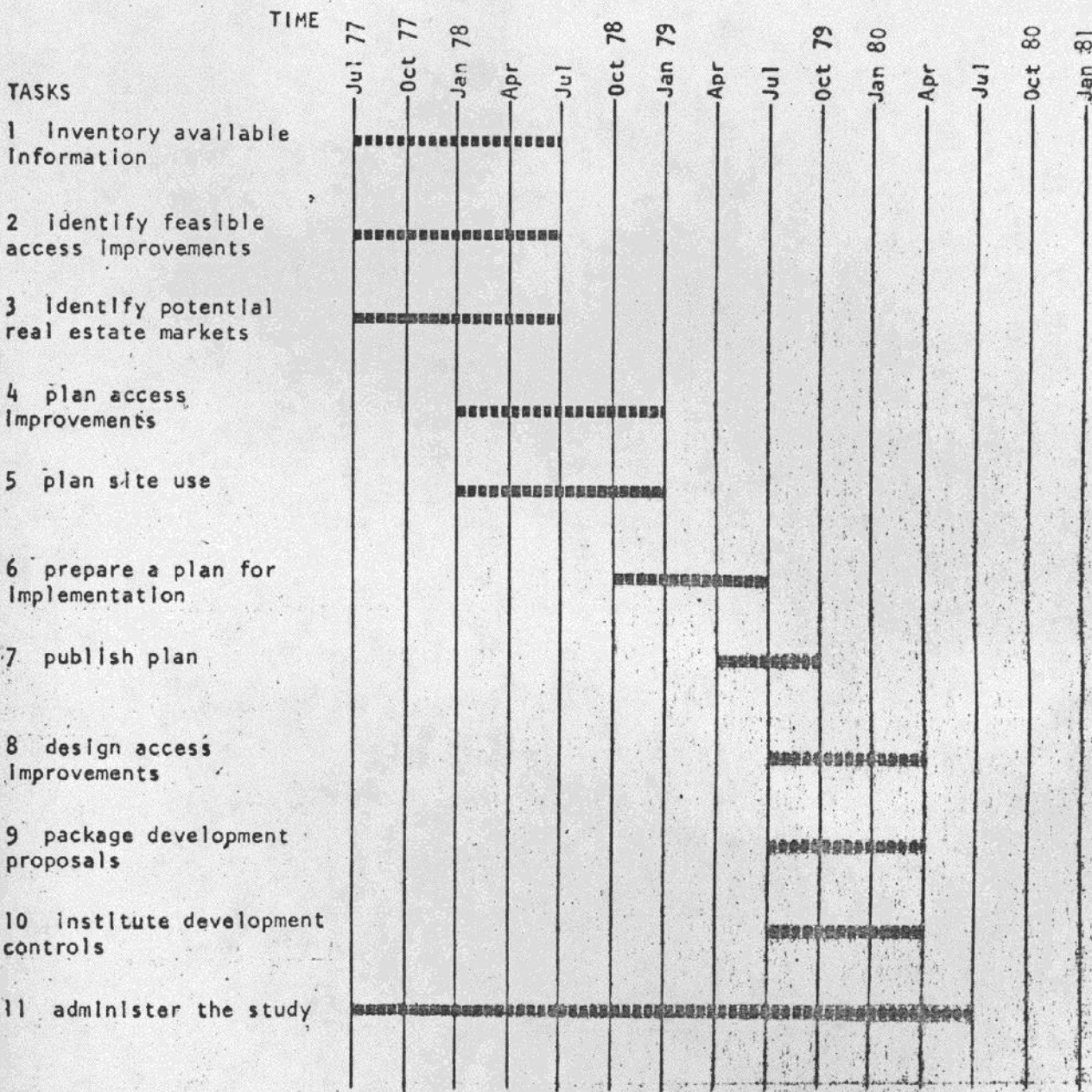
Some uses are already present. The majority of buildings to the north and east are residential. There is a modern office building at the south east corner of 149 Street and the Grand Concourse, but it is apparently vacant. Services include Lincoln Hospital, the post office, and a number of schools.

It might be best if the center initially concentrated on retail and entertainment uses -- a shopping mall with two or three department stores, a group of movie theaters, and some restaurants -- in combination with some residential and a small amount of office space.

The shopping would aim at a regional market, accessible by either transit or cars, and would serve a much larger area than do the stores on either Third Avenue or Fordham Road. Although the new shopping would compete through proximity with even the neighborhood aspects of the existing shopping on Third Avenue, its effect on Fordham Road, or 125 Street in Manhattan, would be much less.

The lobbies of the residential portions of the project might open onto the shopping mall, using it as a kind of main street for the center. Although the nature of the residential market remains to be determined, if the project were properly designed and developed at an adequate scale, it seems probable that a mixture of tenancies, including middle and even upper income, would be possible.

The current market in the City suggests that at first a small amount of office space should be built. Some might be occupied by professionals -- lawyers doing business at the courts on 161 Street, doctors serving the new and existing residents -- and some by the City or other governmental agencies. Additional



ESTIMATED SCHEDULE



space would be built later, when the center is established and the market for office space improves.

Other uses that might best be included in later stages of the project are cultural facilities -- such as a library or theater -- and perhaps a hotel. Like office and residential space these also add to the market for retail uses. The concentrated mix of activities tends to create an active, varied, safe, and interesting environment and, not incidentally, to increase the use of transit throughout the day.

A Program of Work

The objective of the following work program is to provide the integrated planning and to generate the interest and commitment necessary to establish a successful regional subcenter in The Bronx. It includes analyses of the market for development of such a center and of ways to improve access to the site. It prepares a flexible plan for the area based on these analyses and other considerations. It translates the plan into a system of controls and incentives -- mapping, zoning, financing, urban design, condemnation -- to coordinate public and private efforts. All of this is organized so as to elicit the approvals and obtain the commitments necessary to begin building the center.

The work program is divided into eleven tasks which are organized in four phases, during which groups of tasks are conducted concurrently. The first phase consists of gathering information about the site, including a market analysis and an assessment of possible access improvements. The second phase includes the design of various transit improvements and development configurations and consideration of their effects on the marketability of the project and its relationship to its surroundings. The third phase resolves the best

It is expected that once the study began, and both the project staff and consultants were able to begin work, phase one would require six to nine months, phase two nine months to a year, phase three six months to more than a year, and phase four about nine months -- a total of two and a half to three and a half years.

Task 1 - Inventory Available Information

This task will assemble existing information in a format useful to the study. Although additional information will be gathered in other tasks as it is needed, this task will provide an inventory of what is available and prepare common items, such as base maps. The task consists of four parts: (i) preparing an inventory of information and sources, including a bibliography of relevant books, reports, articles, and other items, (ii) adapting or drafting base maps at several scales and to a standard format, (iii) recording land use, utility, transportation, and other information on appropriate base maps, or as tables, graphs, or other kinds of displays, and (iv) making a collection of slides descriptive of the project area.

(i) The inventory of information will include maps of the project area; plans of the railroad and of the nearby subways and stations; basement, ground floor, and other plans of selected buildings; utility drawings; land use; assessed values; property ownership; subway, rail, and bus routes, volumes, and schedules; traffic counts; census data; planning reports; and other items relevant to the area or the project.

(ii) Base maps of the region or the South Bronx will be adapted from existing maps from the Department of City Planning or others. A base map of the project area (at perhaps 1" = 200') will be updated and redrawn from other maps. A

set of detailed base maps (at perhaps 1" = 80') of portions of the project area showing conditions at, below, and above street level will be compiled from tax maps, building plans, subway plans, and other drawings. All of the new base maps will be to a standard format.

(iii) Selected information from the inventory will be displayed either on the base maps or using other forms such as tables or graphs.

(iv) Slides will be made showing the existing conditions and activities in the project area. This will be a comprehensive collection useful both for reference and, in combination with slides of graphic materials from this and other tasks, for making presentations of various aspects of the study.

This task will be the responsibility of the project staff. Its documentation will include a bibliography, source lists, base maps, graphics, and slides.

Task 2 - Identify Feasible Access Improvements

This task consists of three parts: (i) describing an inclusive list of possible access improvements, (ii) obtaining transportation and population data and projections for the area likely to be affected by the improvements, and (iii) analysing the possible improvements to determine their usefulness.

(i) A list of possible improvements would include: a new railroad station at 149 Street with convenient transfer to subways and local buses; rerouting local buses to this rail/subway interchange; a terminal (with storage?) for both local and express buses with convenient transfer to both subway and rail; an inexpensive and frequent local service on the rail lines; public parking both for local access and for transfer to transit; preferential or exclusive

lanes and ramps for buses; a temporary terminus of the Second Avenue subway in the railroad right of way at 149 Street (with the Mott Haven yard for storage?); extending the Second Avenue subway to the Grand Concourse line; extending the Second Avenue subway in the Park Avenue railway cut; extending the Second Avenue line in a new underground route, possibly along Boston Road, to the Dyre Avenue line; and replacing the Westchester Avenue elevated (and the former Third Avenue elevated) with a new IRT subway, possibly along Boston Road, between 149 Street and Third Avenue and the Dyre Avenue and White Plains Road lines.

For comparison it will also be necessary to identify other proposals for improved circulation in The Bronx that may not improve access to 149 Street and the Grand Concourse.

(ii) In order to determine the effect of various possible improvements, current information and projections will be obtained on the distribution and characteristics of population and on the use of transportation. The area to be covered is The Bronx and portions of Manhattan and Westchester. It is anticipated that all necessary data will be available from the census, from transit operators, and from local planning agencies. No survey is planned; however, it will be necessary to organize the data and recast projections in a form useful to this task.

(iii) The possible improvements will then be examined to determine the nature and degree of increased accessibility to the vicinity of 149 Street and the Grand Concourse. Their effect on circulation within The Bronx and the region will also be estimated. The assessment of the feasibility of each possible improvement will be in terms of the numbers, characteristics, and locations of people served; the frequency, capacity, and speed of service; approximate

capital and operating costs and efficiency; and the relationships of various improvements with each other and the existing systems.

This task will be the responsibility of the transportation consultant. The list of possible improvements will be compiled in cooperation with the project staff and knowledgeable individuals such as may be found at the Department of City Planning, the Transportation Administration, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Tri-State Regional Planning Commission, the Regional Plan Association, and elsewhere. The conduct of the task and its conclusions will be fully documented in a technical report by the transportation consultant.

Task 3 - Identify Potential Real Estate Markets

While task two considers the nature of the improved access that would be provided by certain improvements, task three will consider and conditions, including improved access, necessary for the success of various combinations of uses in the vicinity of 149 Street and the Grand Concourse. The task will consist of three parts: (i) Identifying the overall market, (ii) Identifying the conditions necessary to attract parts of that market to the project area, and (iii) determining the best mixture and the proper staging of uses in the project area. In each part, the probable effects of the center on neighboring and other areas will be estimated.

(i) The analysis of the overall real estate market will identify current demand and project the probable demand for several categories of use within the New York City region during the next two or three decades. The categories would include retail and service (by type of activity and income level of clientele), residential (by type and size of dwelling unit and income level of tenants), office, community facility, and institutional uses.

(ii) The analysis of conditions necessary to attract uses to the project area will identify both physical improvements and programs. Access will be considered generically rather than as specific improvements as in task two. Other conditions might include the convenience of recreation, shopping, or services, the perceived safety or cleanliness of the area, or the cost or quality of space.

(iii) Within the constraints of the overall market and the general conditions of the site, the character of the development is an important factor in determining its attractiveness. This includes the mixture of uses within the project area, the amount of each use and the order in which uses are built, and the nature of the relationships between new development and the adjacent neighborhoods.

This task will be the responsibility of the real estate consultant. The conduct of the task and its conclusions will be fully documented in a technical report by the real estate consultant.

Task 4 - Plan Access Improvements

This task will prepare preliminary plans for the access improvements designated in task two (identify feasible access improvements) showing alternative ways of accommodating them in the project area.

It is anticipated that there will be several sets of plans showing different combinations and configurations of improvements. Each alternative will be designed to allow flexibility both as to the order and as to which of the parts are eventually built. They will indicate how construction might be staged so as to least disrupt current activities. The plans will be in adequate detail to show platform locations and track alignments for railroad and subway, bus

routes and terminals, parking, traffic, pedestrian circulation, and transfers between modes. They will also include approximate costs.

This task will be the responsibility of the engineering consultant. It will be coordinated with concurrent work by the project staff in task five (plan site use). The task will be documented by the engineering consultant with plans, sections, and other material necessary to fully describe the best solutions. This will be in a form useful for task six (prepare a plan for implementation).

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Task ~~A~~ - Plan site use

This task, based on the likely programs of land uses determined in task three (identify potential real estate markets) and in coordination with the plans for access improvements being prepared in task four (plan access improvement), will prepare preliminary plans showing alternative ways of redeveloping the project area.

These plans will be concerned generally with the entire area approximately within walking distance of 149 Street and the Grand Concourse, but they will concentrate on the use of the area above the railroad right of way and adjacent vacant or underutilized properties. They will show alternative uses, densities, and staging reflecting different strategies for development based on such factors as the availability of financing (including subsidies), the relationship of public and private components, the timing of various access improvements, and ranges of market expectations. The plans will show the relationships among public areas, new buildings, and access improvements ¹/_A particularly where there are opportunities for joint development. They will also indicate how new development fits into the existing context, the staging of construction and the temporary use of some areas.

This task will be the responsibility of the project staff. It will be coordinated with concurrent work by the engineering consultant in task four (plan access improvements). The task will be documented by the project staff with plans, sections and other material necessary to fully describe the best solutions. This will be in a form useful for task six (prepare a plan for implementation).

Task 6 - Prepare a Plan for Implementation

This task consists of four parts: (i) discussing the various plans for access improvements and site use with interested parties, (ii) deriving a best set of proposals, (iii) obtaining necessary or appropriate preliminary approvals and commitments, and (iv) refining the plan to the point that its various elements can begin to be implemented.

(i) The documentation of the previous tasks, particularly tasks four (plan access improvements) and five (plan site use) will have produced most of the material necessary for presenting the various plans for improved access and for the redevelopment of the project area. This documentation will be used as a basis for discussions with representatives of the adjacent neighborhoods, of affected agencies, property owners, institutions, businesses, prospective developers, and others.

(ii) On the basis of these discussions and further analysis, the preliminary plans for access improvements and site use will be reduced to a single set of proposals that are agreeable to most parties and are most likely to realize the potential of the site.

(iii) This process of discussions leading to a best set of proposals is also intended to obtain preliminary or conditional support from those individuals and groups that will be affected and to begin to elicit interest from developers, sources of financing, and others necessary for implementation.

(iv) As the plans are adjusted to better reflect reality and to achieve general acceptance, they will also be translated into the legislation, approvals, and commitments necessary to effectively encourage and coordinate implementation. This will include recommendation^s_A for special zoning, urban renewal, joint development, special agencies, mapping, funding, taxing, land acquisition, and public improvements, as may be useful.

This task will be the responsibility of the project staff; however, it will require the support of the transportation, real estate, and engineering consultants -- and possibly of special consultants in such areas as real estate law or finance -- in presenting and refining the proposals and outlining some of the necessary controls and incentives. The result of this task will be a detailed program of work for tasks eight (design access improvements), nine (package development proposals), and ten (institute development controls). It will also provide the basis for task seven (publish plan).

Task 7 - Publish Plan

Task six will provide an agreed plan for improving access and redeveloping the vicinity of 149 Street and the Grand Concourse. It will also have considered the environmental and other implications of these proposals. Task seven will organize that material and publish it as a report, possibly titled "Bronx Center Access and Development".