Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 included an amendment to Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1949, which states in part that: "Planning carried out with assistance under this section shall also include a housing element as part of the preparation of comprehensive land use plans. . . ." This amendment, requiring such a housing element, is a critical part of the national effort to achieve the national goal of "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family." Moreover, relocation problems arising from displacement of persons due to public works and improvement programs have caused increased concern within the Region. One such concern culminated in a request to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission from the City of Milwaukee that the Commission conduct a housing inventory within the Region. In addition, the 1968 Federal Aid Highway Act provides that after July 1, 1970, no federal funds will be available for highway construction in any state unless enabling legislation exists which permits the state to make relocation payments and provide relocation assistance to persons, families, or businesses displaced by highway development.

In light of these factors, the Commission, on July 8, 1968, acted to establish a Technical Advisory Committee on Regional Housing Studies, and on August 12, 1968, applied for a planning grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to partially support a program which would result in the preparation of a Prospectus for a Regional Housing Study.

THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) was created by an Executive Order of the Governor upon the unanimous petition of the county boards concerned in August 1960 under the provisions of Section 66.945 of the Wisconsin Statutes. It exists to serve and assist the local units of government and their citizens in planning on an orderly basis for the physical and economic development of a seven-county Region comprised of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties.

The Commission itself is composed of 21 members, three from each of the member counties. Two of the three Commissioners from each county are appointed by the Governor and one from each county is elected by the county board. The powers, duties, and functions of the Commission are set forth in the state enabling legislation; and the Commission is authorized to employ experts and a staff as necessary for the prosecution of its responsibilities. Funds necessary to support the Commission operations are provided by the member counties, the budget being apportioned among the seven counties on the basis of relative equalized assessed valuation. The Commission is authorized to provide contract services to its constituent units of government and to request and accept aid in any form from all levels and agencies of government for the purpose of accomplishing its objectives. The present committee and staff structure of the Commission is shown in Figure 1.

COMMISSION FUNCTIONS

The Commission exists to serve and assist federal, state, and local units of government in finding practical solutions to areawide developmental and environmental problems which cannot be properly resolved within the framework of a single municipality or a single county. As such, regional planning has three basic functions to perform:

1. Inventory—the collection, analysis, and dissemination of basic planning and engineering data on a uniform, areawide basis so that, in light of such data, the various levels and agencies of government and private investors operating within the Region can better make decisions concerning community development.
2. Plan Design—the preparation of a framework of long-range plans for the physical development of the Region, these plans being limited to those functional elements having areawide significance. To this end the Commission is charged by law with the function and duty of "making and adopting a master plan for the physical development of the Region." The permissible scope and content of this plan, as outlined in the enabling legislation, extend to all phases of regional development, implicitly emphasizing, however, the preparation of alternative spatial designs for the use of land and for the supporting transportation and utility facilities.
3. Plan Implementation—promotion of plan implementation through the provision of a center for the coordination of the many planning and plan implementation activities carried on by the various levels and agencies of government operating within the Region.

Thus, charged with the responsibility for areawide data collection and analysis, long-range planning, and interagency coordination, the work of the Commission is visualized as a continuing planning process providing many outputs of value to the making of development decisions by public and private agencies and to the preparation of plans and plan implementation programs at the local, state, and federal levels. The work of the Commission emphasizes close cooperation between the governmental agencies and private enterprise responsible for the development and maintenance of land uses and for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of their supporting public works facilities. All of the Commission work programs are intended to be carried out within the context of a continuing planning program, which provides for the periodic reevaluation of the plans produced, as well as for the extension of planning information and advice necessary to convert the plans into action programs.

THE REGION

The Southeastern Wisconsin Planning Region is comprised of Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties, as shown on Map 1. Exclusive of Lake Michigan, these seven counties have a total area of 2,689 square miles and together comprise about 5 percent of the total area of the State of Wisconsin. About 40 percent of the state's population, however, resides within these seven counties, which contain three of the five and one-half standard metropolitan statistical areas in the state. The Region contains approximately one-half of all the tangible wealth in the State of Wisconsin, as measured by equalized assessed valuation, and represents the greatest wealth-producing area of the state, about 42 percent of the state's labor force being employed within the Region. The seven-county Region contains 153 local units of government exclusive of school and other special-purpose districts and encompasses all or parts of 11 major watersheds. The Region has been subject to rapid population growth and urbanization and from 1950 to 1960 accounted for 64 percent of the total population increase of the entire state. The population of the Region on January 1, 1969, was estimated to be 1,834,700 persons.

COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMS TO DATE

The initial work program of the Commission was directed entirely toward basic data collection. It included six basic regional planning studies initiated in July 1961 and completed in July 1963: a statistical program and data processing study, a base mapping program, an economic base and structure study, a population study, a natural resources inventory, and a public utilities inventory. All of these initial studies were directed toward providing a basic foundation of planning and engineering data for areawide planning and were documented in six published reports. Their findings provided a valuable point of departure for all subsequent Commission work.

The first major work program of the Commission actually directed toward the preparation of a framework of advisory plans for the physical development of the Region was a regional land use-transportation study initiated in January 1963 and completed in December 1966. This study produced two of the key elements of a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the Region: a land use plan and a transportation plan.

The Commission has also completed plan elements for certain subareas of the Region. These include comprehensive watershed development plans for the Root River watershed and more detailed urban development plans for the Kenosha Planning District. Preparation of comprehensive watershed development plans for the Fox River and Milwaukee River basins is presently underway. The Commission has mounted a continuing regional land use-transportation study effort, a regional sanitary sewage system planning program, and a regional library facilities and services planning program. The Commission also carries on a community assistance planning program, wherein functional guidance and advice on planning problems are extended to local units of government on request and through which regional planning studies are interpreted locally and regional plans are integrated with local plans.
The Southeastern Wisconsin Planning Region is comprised of seven southeastern Wisconsin counties having a total area of 2,689 square miles, or about 5 percent of the total area of the State of Wisconsin. The population of the Region was estimated on January 1, 1969, to be 1,834,700 persons, or about 40 percent of the state's population. These seven counties represent the greatest wealth-producing area of the state, collectively containing approximately one-half of all the tangible wealth in the state as realized by assessed valuation. About 42 percent of the state's labor force is employed within the Region.
The completion of a regional housing study would not only provide additional basic planning data which would assist the Commission in the pursuit of its functions but also would provide an additional element of a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the Region. The kinds of detailed inventory data and in-depth analyses of residential land use, land availability, tax structure, inter- and intra-regional migration, and citizen attitudes and values toward housing types and locations which would be provided by a regional housing study would greatly assist the Commission in the performance of its functional planning responsibilities in such areas as land use, transportation, sewerage, water supply, parks, and community facilities. The data from a regional housing study would not only contribute to the Commission's ability to establish and refine pertinent functional relationships existing between land use and such urban phenomena as trip generation, water use, and sewage contribution but would also greatly assist in the formulation and refinement of highway, transit, sanitary sewerage, water supply, and park plans. A housing study would also serve to strengthen the Commission's community assistance planning function by permitting the Commission to assist local units of government in more rationally considering changes in zoning, land subdivision, and building codes and in the day-to-day administration of these codes, thereby strengthening the implementation of both regional and local development plans. In addition, the data collected with respect to housing supply and demand, land availability, tax structure, and housing sales transactions would be extremely valuable to private developers and investors and would thereby assist the Commission in directing private investment decisions in accord with long-range regional development objectives and plans. By way of specific example, the housing study and the recommendations coming therefrom could contribute directly to the attainment of such specific regional development objectives as the location of 95 percent of the future households within the Region in areas which can be served by public sewerage and water supply facilities, the encouragement of mass transit utilization, and the development of the Region in planned residential development units designed to provide, within the immediate vicinity of each family's dwelling unit, the facilities and services required for day-to-day living and within ready commuting distance of those essential facilities and services which must, for economic reasons, be provided to a broader population base.

CONSIDERATION OF A REGIONAL HOUSING STUDY

In June 1968 the Regional Planning Commission was requested by the City of Milwaukee to "...give serious and prompt consideration to establishing the initiation and execution of (a housing) inventory as its next major program." In July 1968 the Commission, acting upon this request, directed the Commission staff to investigate the need for a regional housing study; determine the desirable scope and content of such a study, if needed; and prepare a recommended time schedule, budget, and cost allocation for the study. The Commission also authorized the creation of a Technical Advisory Committee on Regional Housing Studies to bring to the Commission effort a broad range of expertise in the housing field in order to assist in the preparation of a Prospectus for a regional housing study. The Commission indicated its opinion that a housing study would not only constitute a major contribution to one of the Commission's three principal functions; namely, that of areawide research, but that such a study could assist in the implementation of the adopted regional land use plan. In addition, it was believed that a housing study would facilitate the collection and analysis of a wide range of basic planning data not presently available for the Region as a whole or for specific subareas of the Region; that it would assist local, state, and federal governmental agencies in dealing with housing and housing-related problems within the Region, particularly with regard to the "guidelines" of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which require the coordination of the housing element with the total planning program; and that it would be of great value to private agencies and private investors which deal extensively with housing and housing-related issues on a day-to-day basis throughout the Region. Pursuant to these Commission directives, the Commission's Planning and Research Committee nominated a slate of candidates for membership on the Technical Advisory Committee on Regional Housing Studies; an Advisory Committee was selected and appointed by the Commission, and work begun on the preparation of this Prospectus.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Early in its existence, the Commission recognized that any of its work efforts and programs would necessarily cover a broad range of local, regional, state, and federal interests. Accordingly, in order to pro-
vide the forum for active involvement and participation in the regional planning process by the various governmental bodies, technical agencies, and private interest groups, the Commission has provided, within its basic organizational framework, for the establishment of advisory committees. These advisory committees are of two basic types: those comprised primarily of technicians or recognized experts in established fields of activity, referred to as Technical Advisory Committees, and those comprised primarily of elected and appointed officials representing local interests, referred to as Intergovernmental Coordinating Committees. The Technical Advisory Committee on Regional Housing Studies is patterned after the first type of Committee referred to above. It was established in January 1969 and includes representatives from: the mortgage banking community; private land development firms; the home building industry; real estate appraisers; local citizen groups; church groups; federal, state, regional, and local housing agencies; the university community; and other segments of the private sector of the economy. A roster of Committee members is set forth on page 59.

One of the most important roles of the Technical Advisory Committee on Regional Housing Studies was to place the experience and knowledge of the committee members at the disposal of the Commission during the preparation of the Prospectus. In this role the Committee initiated, reviewed, and approved the proposal for a major Commission work program relating to housing as outlined in this Prospectus. This Prospectus is, therefore, the work of the Committee and constitutes an important first step in the direction of establishing a housing element within the Commission's comprehensive planning program.