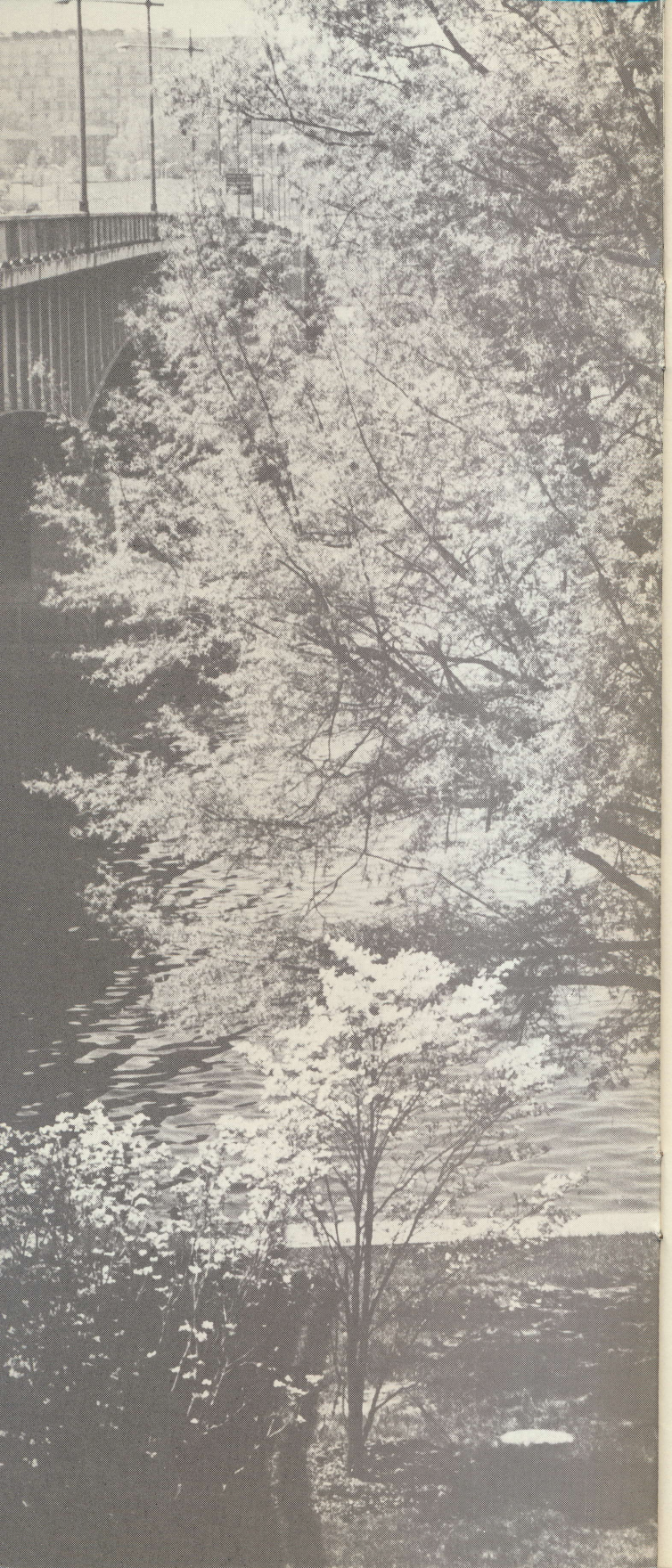
# THE CITY AS A PARK

The Urban Ecosystem



## Introduction

Over the centuries the word park has come to have many meanings. Originally, the word was used to describe an enclosed area of forest or meadow set aside for the chase, a hunting or grazing area. Parks in this sense of the word were part of the great estates with their castles and manor houses. They were private lands reserved for the exclusive use of the owners and where poachers might be dealt with quite severely.

Parks in the sense of public recreation areas came into being in western Europe in the 17th century and were lands set aside in or near cities, towns, or villages for the common use of the townspeople or villagers. Undoubtedly these public parks were closely related to the commons, where livestock were grazed and held prior to their sale or use in the villages or towns. Cities throughout the world may still have remnants of these parks and commons, and the city of Boston, as well as many of the New England towns, is still famous for its commons. Now, of course, such areas are used exclusively as parks for public recreation. Almost all towns and villages have parks, and large cities may contain within their borders thousands of acres of parkland all lineal descendants of the parks of the 17th century towns and villages.

The word park, in addition to its use to describe recreation, may also apply to a great diversity of activities and circumstances. In each case the park in question is a tract of land set aside for a special purpose. There are ball parks, industrial parks, air parks, amusement parks, playgrounds that are referred to as parks, memorial parks, historical parks, military parks, and others. In 1872, the term park in the sense of a "national park" entered the English language with the enactment of the Yellowstone National Park Act of that year.

The common element in all these uses of the word park lies in the sense of reservation and dedication to special-purpose use. It is clear that the diverseness becomes simplified when the purpose and uses for setting aside land are classified. Then it is apparent that the spectrum of meaning for the word park extends from wilderness areas, where the purpose in setting aside land is to preserve natural ecosystem processes, to areas set aside as places for man's technology. Parks, in this context, contain proportional elements representing either wilderness or naturalness or

technologically developed special-use areas. In a broad sense, the park is a setting or habitat for some activity or process that is considered to be of value to man.

If this global view of park is set aside temporarily and attention is focused on parks for recreational purposes alone, the factor that tends to distinguish these areas is their state of wilderness or naturalness or their contrast with development for the accommodation of man.

Parks that are parts of cities are often considered as places to escape from the city. Spending the day in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco is to spend the day in an island where the pressures of the city are left behind. The great barrier beach and shore areas adjacent to major cities on the coasts all have beach parks with beach homes that become places to escape from the cities' summer heat and frenetic activity. City parks are places that contrast with the city; natural areas set aside for the pleasure and enjoyment of the public. Public beaches, such as Coney Island, with their accompanying amusement parks are places to get into the sun, have fun, and spend a day away from the city. In recent times, many of these coastal beach areas have become year-round communities that support resident populations who live there and commute to the city to work instead of commuting to the beach for recreation.

Many of the "new town" developments of metropolitan suburban areas advertise themselves as "recreation communities" and include swim clubs, private beaches, tennis and golf clubs, and bridle paths, located in rural settings where the residents "live in a recreational setting the year around." And, of course, the famous parks of great cities that are considered outstanding achievements in the history and development of landscape architecture strived to provide this variety of environment and habitat so that visitors could enjoy the experience of formal gardens, fountains, and the naturalness of pastoral scenes in the city. Two outstanding parks, Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn, were built during the peak of human labor input at the time of the Industrial Revolution and were places to escape from the drudgery of industrial living.

Some city parks are, in their own rights, botanical gardens. Kew Gardens outside London, for instance, is a scientific collection of living botanical specimens as well as a popular park. The Missouri Botanical Garden and the New York Botanical Garden are parks as well as scientific collections, as is the Boyce Thompson Desert Arboretum at Superior, Arizona. The flower garden on the Quai Wilson on the shores of Lake Le Mans in Geneva, the carefully landscaped botanical gardens of Kiev, and the many Australian cities and towns that have botanical gardens are all examples of the combination of utilitarian scientific collections and city recreation. Chapaultipec Park in Mexico City is perhaps one of the world's outstanding examples of the city park, and includes historical monuments, gardens, lakes for boating, restaurants, museums, historical residences and palaces, art galleries, zoos, and open space where people can play or stroll or picnic or sit and talk in natural settings in the heart of the city. And, of course, the National Museum of Anthropology in the heart of Chapaultipec Park is perhaps the finest example in the world of a blend of architecture and design that demonstrates the early history of man and his technological development.

While not designated as such, the older parts of many cities are parks in the sense that their restoration has revealed the aura and ambience of life of a past era and provides enjoyments associated with the look and feel of the early city. The French Quarter in New Orleans, Greenwich Village in New York, and Georgetown in the District of Columbia are all good examples of restored old towns that have become highly desirable places to live and popular places to visit for their shops and restaurants, quaint streets, and pleasant settings. In the general ecological viewpoint, parks, all parks, are special habitats. They serve special functions and their environments are structured to favor certain activities. Some public parks emphasize aesthetic qualities and are designed and developed to feature formal gardens and walks, hedgerows, fountains, and sculpture. Others, Yellowstone National Park for example, remain as close to their natural state as possible. One of the primary functions of this type of park is to serve as a sanctuary for plants and animals.

But whatever their size or function recreational parks are places for getting away from it all; places to renew our spirits, our vitality, and our outlook. In this sense the recreational function of the park is to enhance our feelings of well-being, whether as a place to have fun or as a place to observe nature in its unspoiled state.

Man invented parks to fulfill his needs for special habitat and to serve as sanctuaries. Whether a park is a habitat for industrial activity, for recreation, or sport or a sanctuary for wildlife, the park's success depends upon ecological and environmental management. One does not normally think of urban and suburban development as ecological problems; these activities are more easily understood in terms of city planning and city engineering. Furthermore, the principal engines of urban and suburban development are and have always been economic, a condition that has prevailed in all countries of the world regardless of political or economic systems. Only recently has man regarded a city as an ecological entity, and even now this view is confined to those population elements least likely to control economic activity except through the powers granted citizens acting as individuals. There may be a lesson to be learned from the study of ancient cities and those parts of major cities that have been preserved as examples of history and antiquity. Many of these areas have been declared historic parks and districts and many of them, in their restored conditions, have become extremely fashionable places to live. But whether they are London townhouses restored to Victorian elegance or Sturbridge Village (a "colonial town" synthesized from authentic buildings moved from all parts of New England to a common site at Sturbridge, Massachusetts), they all have common elements that relate to the way man lived in an environment that conceived and contributed to his requirements, unaided by high-speed transportation.

Georgetown, in the District of Columbia, is the oldest portion of the city and is undergoing a renaissance. New construction follows the style of earlier buildings and many of the older buildings are being reconstructed and restored. Georgetown was built as a port on the Potomac River and was a gateway to the Chesapeake Bay and ocean commerce. Georgetown was the starting point of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and was once a busy warehousing depot and trade area. Its origin and relationship to the canal and the river are now obscured by an elevated freeway that completely obstructs the view of the river and by a shift of commercial activity away from the canal to the busy streets. Portions of the canal have been restored, and areas along the waterfront are capable of reclamation, but the full potential has not been exploited. Georgetown was not built in the nation's capital as a charming, fun place with quaint buildings. It was built to serve the commercial interests and needs of the times. Its present recreational value and desirability as a place to live are due to the fact that its characteristics and qualities relate to activities that accommodate man in his size, shape, and speed of travel.

Harpers Ferry in West Virginia is being restored in part to its original condition. It is and was a small factory town at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, and it was the site of important events just prior to and during the War Between the States. Some of the historic view of Harpers Ferry has been obliterated by railroad bridges and rights-of-way. The old factories that relied upon the ready source of water power are gone. Nevertheless, the compactness and arrangement of the city, despite the narrow flood plain and fairly steep valley slope it occupies, give it a quaintness and charm that attract large numbers of people who visit there to immerse themselves in history and move about the narrow streets and walkways propelled by their own power. Their reward, as Thomas Jefferson expressed it, is a vista "being in itself worth an Atlantic crossing to see."

Old Economy, located in the small steel town of Ambridge, Pennsylvania, 16 miles down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh, has been restored and is a fine example of the busy industrial farming and commercial riverside settlements of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

In Greenwich Village, one of the oldest portions of New York, charming housing has been fashioned from what were formerly stables, and today Greenwich Village fights for its life amid the clamor for redevelopment in lower Manhattan. The integrity of the area has been preserved primarily because the population in residence is able to politically withstand the economic forces of "development." What they are fighting to save was originally built to accommodate the business and economics of a century or more ago. The original designers and builders of Greenwich Village did not have the same values in mind when they built the city as do the present residents who are fighting to save it.

Mystic, Connecticut, a seaport on Long Island, daily looks more like the 19th-century whaling village that it once was. Williamsburg,

Virginia, is a classic example of historic restoration that has set the example for similar projects elsewhere. The urban center of Savannah, Georgia, is being converted from a ramshackled slum with deteriorating and derelict buildings in various stages of decay to an alive, vibrant community whose beauty and elegance have been extolled by some present-day architects as a model of city planning for our time.

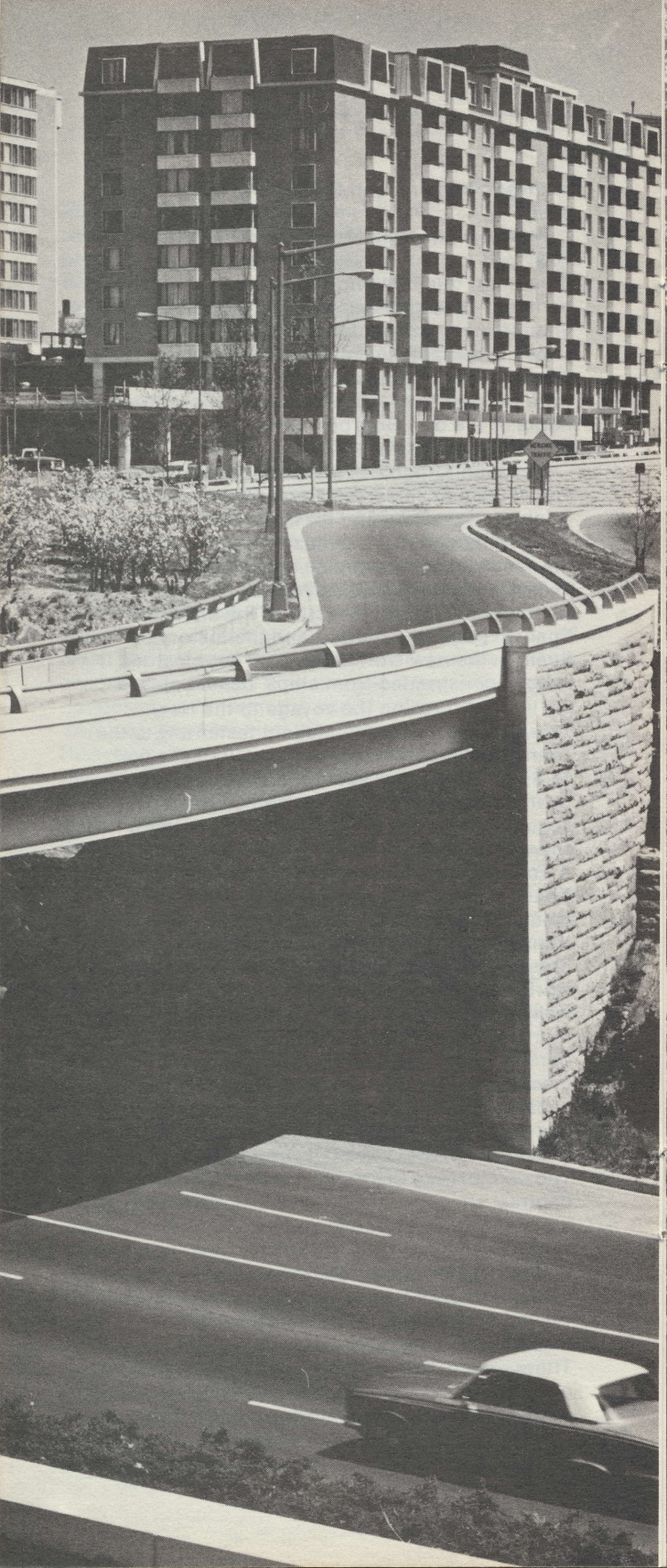
The charm, beauty, quaintness, vitality, and curiosity-compelling historic fascination of these towns, villages, and river ports do not stem from the fact that they were built as recreational areas, but from the fact that they represent the habitat of man, the places where he lived and worked, was born, begat children, and died. They are living examples of simple engineering and architectural design created when the principal technological device to be accommodated was man himself. They were not designed for man the social animal; they were designed for man the draft animal. However, since they were designed for man, they are easily adapted in these times to provide the amenities that make urban living worthwhile. Those amenities are convenience, the ready identification with the community as a whole, and the interest and curiosity that stem from variety and diversity. It must be emphasized strongly, however, that when Georgetown, Greenwich Village, Williamsburg, Mystic, and other such desirable urban communities were built, it was not to satisfy the requirements of modern urban living. These communities were designed for utilitarian purposes. They were built as trading posts, fortifications, or settlements necessary to run mines or operate factories.

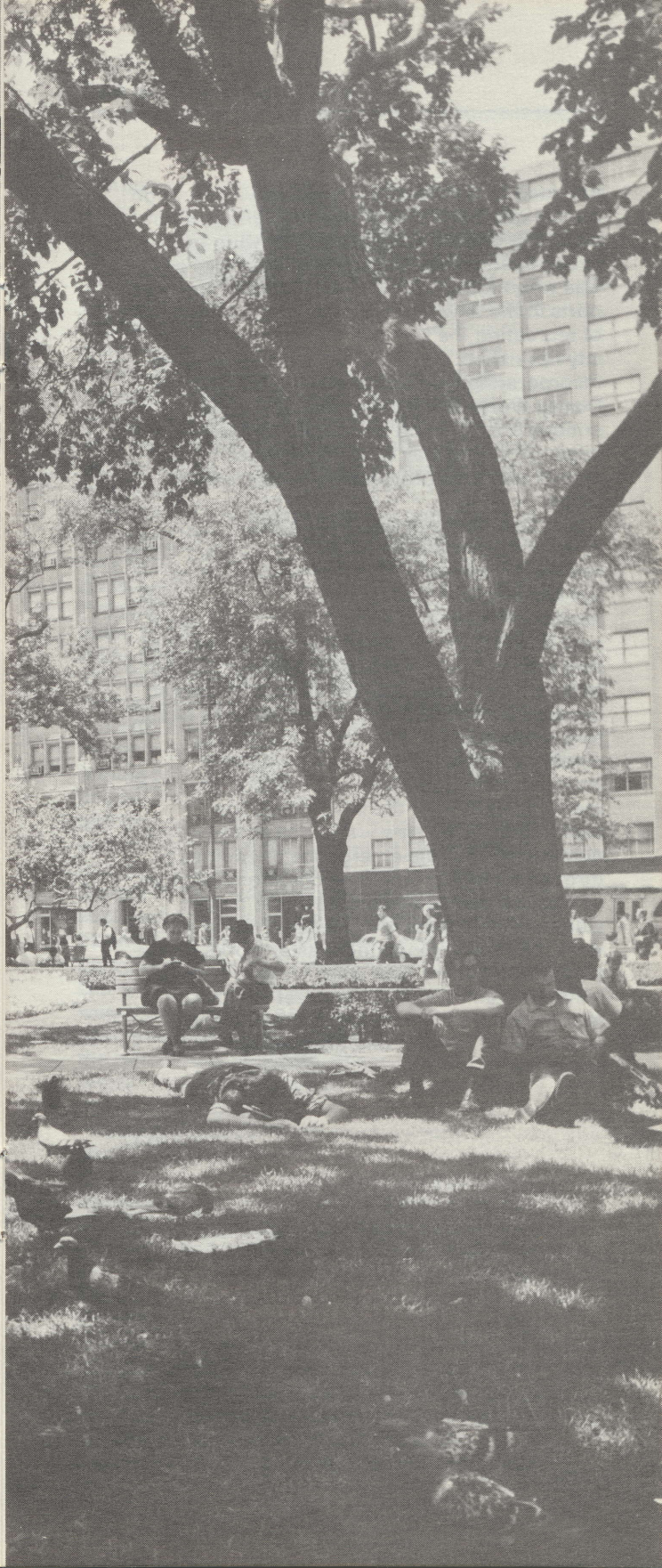
When the areas were rehabilitated, they were not intended as parks but each fits the definition of the term in that all are easily accessible to the public and have great recreational value because they refresh the human spirit and provide enjoyment while allowing us to recreate in our own minds the historical periods for which these areas are living monuments to those who inhabited them. The events in the lives of these people are secure in history and preserved in the historical habitat in which they occurred.

As a footnote, we should comment on the problems that arise when one device of modern technology—the automobile—is added to one of these charming and fascinating relics of our past.

Bourbon Street, in New Orleans, is part honky tonk, part carney show, part hokum, but it is a progenitor of a bona fide aspect of our musical heritage—New Orleans jazz—which flourishes unaffected by the exploitative aspects of the street. When autos used the street, pandemonium and chaos ensued; when cars were banned from 7 p.m. to 3 a.m., the vibrant hours of the day, Bourbon Street was once again part of the Vieu Carre.

San Juan Antigua, is a similar case in point. The 450th anniversary of Puerto Rico was celebrated recently and for many of those four and a half centuries San Juan Antigua occupied the same space it occupies today. The old town in areal extent is small, but packed in that smallness is the whole world of the ancient Spanish ports, the harbor, and the history of Spain in the new world. The blue cobblestone streets, constructed from ships' ballast picked up in the Azores on the voyage to the New World, are a simple but elegant testimony to the tonnage of material that moved out of the port to Spain. That small section of modern San Juan contains all the variety and diversity required to service and operate what was for the day a major port of the world. San Juan was a transshipment port where cargoes of the new Spain, shipped by smaller sailing vessels over calmer waters of the Caribbean Sea, were transferred to larger vessels for the Atlantic crossing. Everything needed to make that port work was contained inside the impregnable walls of the great Castillo de San Filipe El Morro and Castillo de San Cristobal. Man, horses, and donkeys were the draft animals and machinery consisted of simple levers, pulleys, capstan, and the like. Now that the automobile has descended upon San Juan Antigua, movement in the district is virtually strangled. The congestion, bustle, pollution, and noise contrast sharply with the simple but elegant architecture, the interest and variety of the shops and stores, and the artistry of streets, buildings, plazas, and churches. The beauty and splendor of San Juan Antigua now must be viewed through the muddled screen of disparate and incongruous modern technology. There are no great distances to travel in the old city—there is time enough to walk from one end to the other, from the waterfront to Castillo San Cristobal, from Plaza de Cristobal Colon to El Morro. Transportation, if required, could be





provided by continuous shuttle service through the old quarter and thus eliminate most, if not all, of the present congestion. Allowing people to live in and move through old San Juan as it was when it was one of Spain's most important ports in the new world brightens the experience of recreating the sense of the times when the city flourished. A competent systems analysis incorporating the people-moving concepts of Disney World, but without disturbing the antique arrangement and aspect of the city, might go a long way to the restoration of the district and to improvements in cost:benefit ratios.

San Juan Antigua was an important 17th-century industrial city. Today it is a park. People live there, modern commerce goes on there, but it is a park. A park because it is a desirable habitat for man. A park because it looks like a park and makes residents and visitors feel that they are in a park. Although it was not built to entertain or inspire modern visitors, it does so because the modern visitor can instantly relate to it, understand it, and consequently, can emotionally interact with it. Although the visitors interacting with it are modern, they can readily identify with the plate fleets, the exploration of the new world, the struggles for dominance, and the emergence of commerce through historical time. The common heritage of Western man is embedded in the ballast stones in the streets, the plaster of the stucco walls, and the engineering master works of the great fortifications. San Juan Antigua is being restored architecturally; its street life should also be restored by recreating the physical ambience of its 16th- and 17th-century existence.



Another aspect of the park-like quality of many American cities is the way they attract large numbers of people at certain seasons of the year. Mardi Gras in New Orleans is world renowned. Thousands upon thousands of people come to the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C., and to predict the time of peak flowering is almost an occult art. The spring flora displays of Charleston, South Carolina, Atlanta, Georgia, Jacksonville, Florida, and many other cities attract visitors who enjoy these places when they are decked out for spring in rhododendron, azalea, and magnolia.

In spite of the lament over the conditions of our cities, there is considerable evidence that very large numbers of people leave one city and go to another for their recreation. Going to San Francisco, New York, Seattle, Honolulu, San Juan, London, Paris, or Rome is vacationing for many people. In Washington, D.C. as many as 16 million visitors a year visit the museums, monuments, and Congress to experience the cultural, historical, and political life of the nation's capital. And it is not only the public buildings and monuments that attract these people but the range and variety of things to do and places to go, including shops, restaurants, quaint sections of the city, night life, theaters, and nightclubs. The Factory and Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco are enormously successful as business enterprises as well as having high recreational value because of the enjoyment of being in them. Architecturally Ghirardelli Square is a great ornament that wears people. They are attracted there by the beauty and charm of the structure itself, and by the rich variety of places, shapes, levels, shops, restaurants, and views that can be used and experienced.

Downtown department store owners, concerned about the downward trend of their inner-city business, might seriously consider converting the departments of their stores into an appearance of separate shops, each visually separated and with its own characteristic style and decor. This would relieve the appearance of bigness that now exists where most of a single floor, with many types of goods, can be seen at a glance. In Alexandria, Virginia, a merchandising enterprise called *Dockside*, specializing in imports that arrive in the port of Alexandria has spurred the redevelopment of a run-down industrial area. It includes the conversion of part of an abandoned ordnance

factory into an art center (the Torpedo Factory Art Center) recapturing part of the flavor of The Factory in San Francisco but retaining much of the ambience and style of Colonial Alexandria and its ocean shipping and port activities.

The monolithic, solid, gray areas of the cities have little attraction either for the people who live there or for visitors. It is the mosaic of architectural patterns, the variety of activities, and, more importantly, the distribution of activities available throughout the 24-hour day that determine and establish the interest and curiosity that the area will inspire in people and hence its entertainment and recreational value. These factors in turn establish the ecological stability of the area.

Cities, then, are habitats of man and meet his needs well, indifferently, or not at all, depending upon the richness and variety of the city and the manner in which the city is perceived by its residents and visitors. If the city creates feelings of well-being, comfort, and security, people will be happy there and visitors will seek it out. Cities or portions of them that fail to provide these simple ecological needs are feared and shunned or simply avoided and are not considered residences of choice even by those who must reside in them. Other areas of sameness and monotony may not be dangerous and may even be considered residential areas of choice, but they lack entertainment and recreation and serve merely as the bedroom for some other part of the community.

The city provides great contrasts in recreational values that represent our national, cultural, and historic heritage. It seems almost random or accidental when the right combinations are encouraged and the delights of sound ecological community living are achieved. Cities are not and have never been established as parks, but if a park is a habitat for the conservation or preservation of a value or values considered important to man, then in the broad sense the city too must be a park, whether by accident or design. What are the values that man seeks to preserve in cities? Traditionally, these values have been man's technology, his business, industry, and commerce, and only incidentally man himself. It is clear that the continued development of technology, without reference to the comfort, well-being, and security of man, is destroying the city as a habitat for man. Man still is the interconnecting link between the machines that produce or communicate, and it is not sufficient to consider only the ecological requirements for the machines but the ecological requirements for man as well. Man is a social animal and lives in communities. These communities have requirements that go beyond simple technology, although it is technology that makes modern communities possible. The question simply put is, does the furtherance of technology for its own sake take precedence over the utilization of technology to promote the welfare of the community of man? An affirmation that technology will be used to promote the welfare of man will insure that habitat maintenance and preservation of man in the city will occur, and that, in essence, defines the city as a park.

In that context, then, it is valuable to discuss the park-like qualities of cities in the same ecological terms that we might use to discuss the habitat requirements and community relationships of any higher form of life.

The city as man's habitat is a complex concept. It must include all of the elements necessary to man's survival—those elements that are necessary to his comfort, well-being, and security. But in addition, the city as habitat for man must include all the elements of man's technology—his industry, his work, his business.

The city habitat of man is not isolated, but forms a continuous environment with the surrounding countryside. Depending upon the climate, latitude, and physiography, the hinterland may be farmland, forest, mountain, desert, or any of the other conditions that prevail on the surface of the earth.

Wherever man builds cities he does so for the purpose of generating the wealth to be derived from natural resources, communications, knowledge, and information. The mass migrations from rural areas to the cities did not come about because the land could no longer support the people but because the cities beckoned with their increased economic opportunities. Since World War II, the natural reproduction processes have caused city populations to swell further.

Yet, even today, the sizes of the cities that man has created vary widely. Some remain quite small communities centered around a single industry or around one or a few mineheads. Others are enormous metropolitan complexes that contain many communities. But whatever the size—single-purpose city or multi-purpose megalopolis—each resident relates only to those areas that touch his daily life. For most people, these are the neighborhoods where they live and raise their families, the area where they work and earn their livelihood, and the area where they play and enjoy their hours of recreation. This is true no matter what the size of the city and differs only in that large cities offer a greater variety of employment opportunities, recreational facilities, and variety of housing than do small ones. Such differences are quantitative not qualitative.

If one considers the reasons for setting aside great national areas for parks as contrasted to cities, they are relatively simple but similar. First, with the Yellowstone Act came the concept of the preservation of ecosystem processes and public policy to preserve certain areas together with plant and animal communities in their natural state. Many parks have been established as a result of this policy, including most of the great national parks.

Following the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, many areas were added as parks because of their great scenic beauty or because they were outstanding examples of particular geological, plant geographical types, or because they were habitats for the vanishing animal populations of the continent. The National Park Plan is based upon the recognition of the desirability of having examples of all physiographic regions of the nation represented along with the plant and animal life.

Once these national area parks are established their maintenance depends upon an understanding of the ecological and environmental factors that produced them in the first place. It is axiomatic in the principles of ecology that natural ecosystems will come into equilibrium or balance with the totality of physical and biological factors that produced them.

Managing natural park areas is a matter of arranging those environmental factors that are most likely to produce the stable ecosystem that will preserve the natural state of the vegetation and the resident animal population. If one compares the basis of maintaining and managing the natural environment of man to that of the natural areas of national parks, there is a great deal of similarity.

Man lives in family units, and families, in turn, are gathered together into neighborhoods. These neighborhoods, together with the technological means for providing man's livelihood, form communities. The predominant organisms of this community are human beings at various stages of growth and development. The ecosystem of man may also include other plants and animals, the products of man's technology, and the means of operating that technology.

The ecosystem processes that operate in the community of man are the biological and physical ones that operate in natural ecosystems and which have essentially the same properties common to any natural ecosystem.

In man's ecosystem, the biological processes are those that occur without the aid of man as well as those that are created by his technology. As a matter of fact, the environment of man may have been modified and shaped extremely to accommodate his machines, although man himself and his biological requirements remain the most

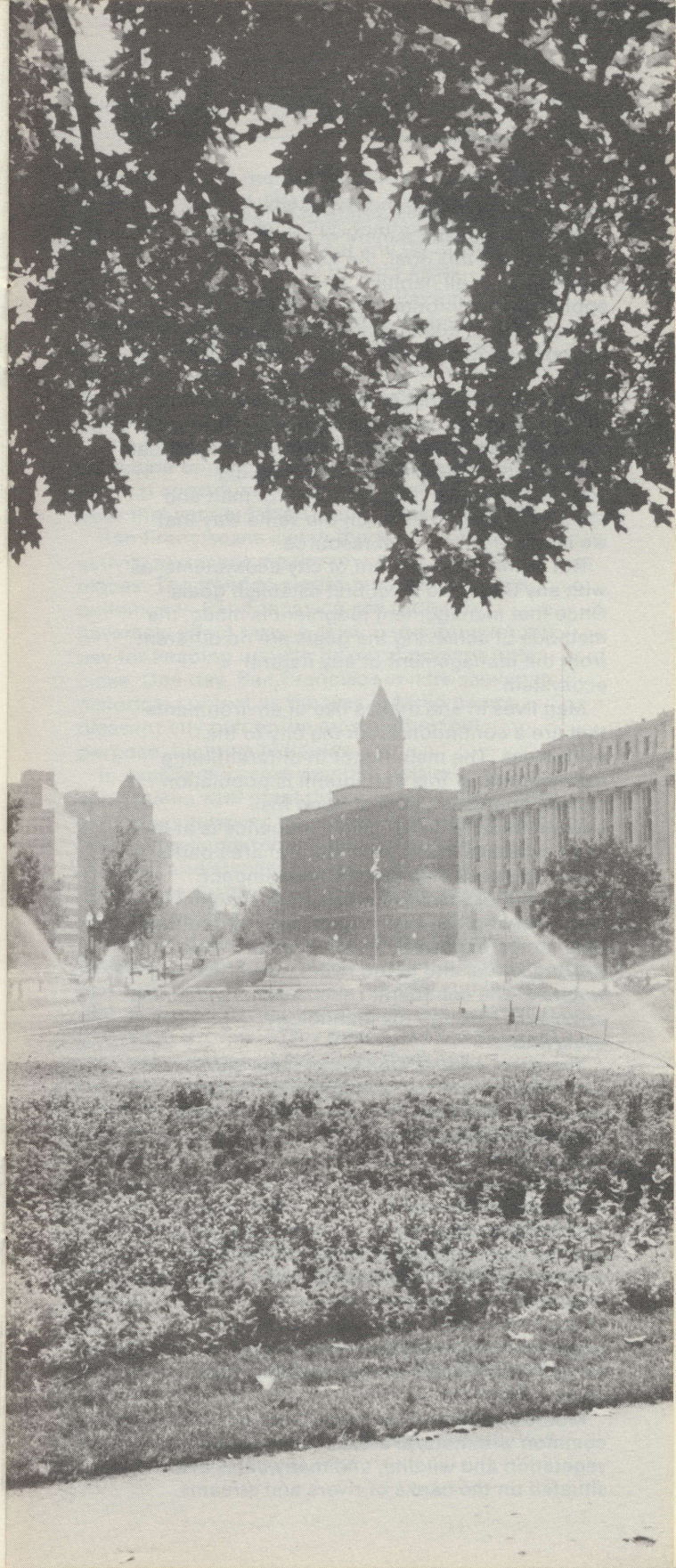
important element in his own ecosystem.

The principal technological influences in man's ecosystem are the houses and buildings that contain man and his machines and the development of a means of transportation. Ribbons of concrete and asphalt connect the places where man lives and the places where he works, and ribbons of concrete and rails of steel connect and transport people and goods to cities. The airlanes between the major ecosystems of man are virtually filled with transportation devices also carrying goods and people from city to city, i.e., from ecosystem to ecosystem. Rivers and harbors are dredged, engineering projects contain floods and create shipping channels, rivers are rechanneled to provide areas for development, and canals are dug to carry water for municipal and agricultural purposes or to transport manufacturers' goods.

In many respects, the biological properties of man have been only superficially accommodated to the machines he must use and with which he must live. The history of technology is replete with examples of man being used as a link between machines or as a human force of power to manipulate primitive, simple tools in the construction of complex engineering works.

Man may live in substandard housing, he may drive unsafe automobiles, or work in occupations that are hazardous or detrimental to his health or he may live, work, and play in the most salubrious environments, environments that are most conducive to the realization of his humanity. Regardless of the exact circumstances or details, the environment, together with man and his technology forms the ecosystem of man. The fact that some communities are dangerous or hazardous or inhuman simply points to the array of physical and biological factors that are driving the ecological balance away from that which is most favorable to man.

Desirable and/or human communities, on the other hand, are also the result of ecological factors that promote the desirable or favorable balance or equilibrium. Cities act no differently from natural communities in responding to the inevitability of achieving a balanced equilibrium among all the forces that impinge upon them. Change in the equilibrium point, that is, where improvement or deterioration of community conditions occurs, is always accompanied by a mix in the ecological factors. Thus, the



management of cities differs in no conceptual way from the management of any ecosystem.

To achieve this goal, the habitat of man, in common with all habitats, should incorporate appropriate environmental constraints and environmental management practices in order to create ecosystems that promote the common weal.

It is in the city that most people spend most of their time. It is here that man earns his living and seeks his recreation. The city is a biological community or a collection of biological communities; it is the ecosystem of man and must be managed in much the same way that we manage any natural resource.

But in the management of city ecosystems, as with any other, we must first establish goals. Once that management judgment is made, the methods of achieving the goals are no different from the management of any natural ecosystem.

Man lives in and makes use of environments that are a continuum from the city to the wilderness. The main factor in differentiating the elements of this continuum is population density and man's impact upon his environment. In a city, man's influence is at its peak, whereas in the great natural area parks and wilderness man has the least impact. Between these two extremes, man's impact is felt to varying degrees in cultivated agricultural land, in the managed timber forests, in the grazing lands, and in the rivers, estuaries, and waters of the continental shelf. Man's influence, principally through his technology, is present everywhere.

The great natural area parks have many urban-like properties, and many of them are steady-state communities in their own right. Yosemite National Park, for instance, is a steady-state city of 50,000 people during the height of the season. It has a mayor in the form of a superintendent, a chief of police, street maintenance personnel, grocery stores, and sewage disposal plants. In fact, it has all the elements and requirements of a city of 50,000 inhabitants. The people who inhabit the park change from day to day, but this shifting population requires essentially the same services that would be required by a static community.

Moreover, cities have many features in common with natural areas, including natural vegetation and wildlife, and many cities are situated on the banks of rivers and streams.

Man seeks out those places in the cities that are of interest and where there are other people and pleasing activity. A part of the charm of cities is the extent of diurnal and nocturnal activity. Places in the city that are most enjoyable are often those where people are on the streets anywhere from 12 to 18 hours each day. The most hazardous areas in cities are those that are in use only during the working hours of the day and which are deserted the rest of the time.

The most popular cities are those populated by people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, where cultural opportunities abound, and those that offer that variety fabled to be "the spice of life."

San Franciscans live in the areas of greatest activity and make maximum use of their public places. The trend to single-purpose, highrise buildings in San Francisco will probably adversely effect this—a price San Francisco will pay for keeping up with its more modern sister cities. One day, San Francisco will be viewed in historical context as the way to build a very pleasant city before the advent of single-purpose, highrise buildings.

In exactly the same way that natural ecosystems with great diversity are stable, cities with great diversity are stable. In the same way that ecotypic interchangeability leads to diversity and stability, so it is that many competing entities produce greater economic stability in cities.

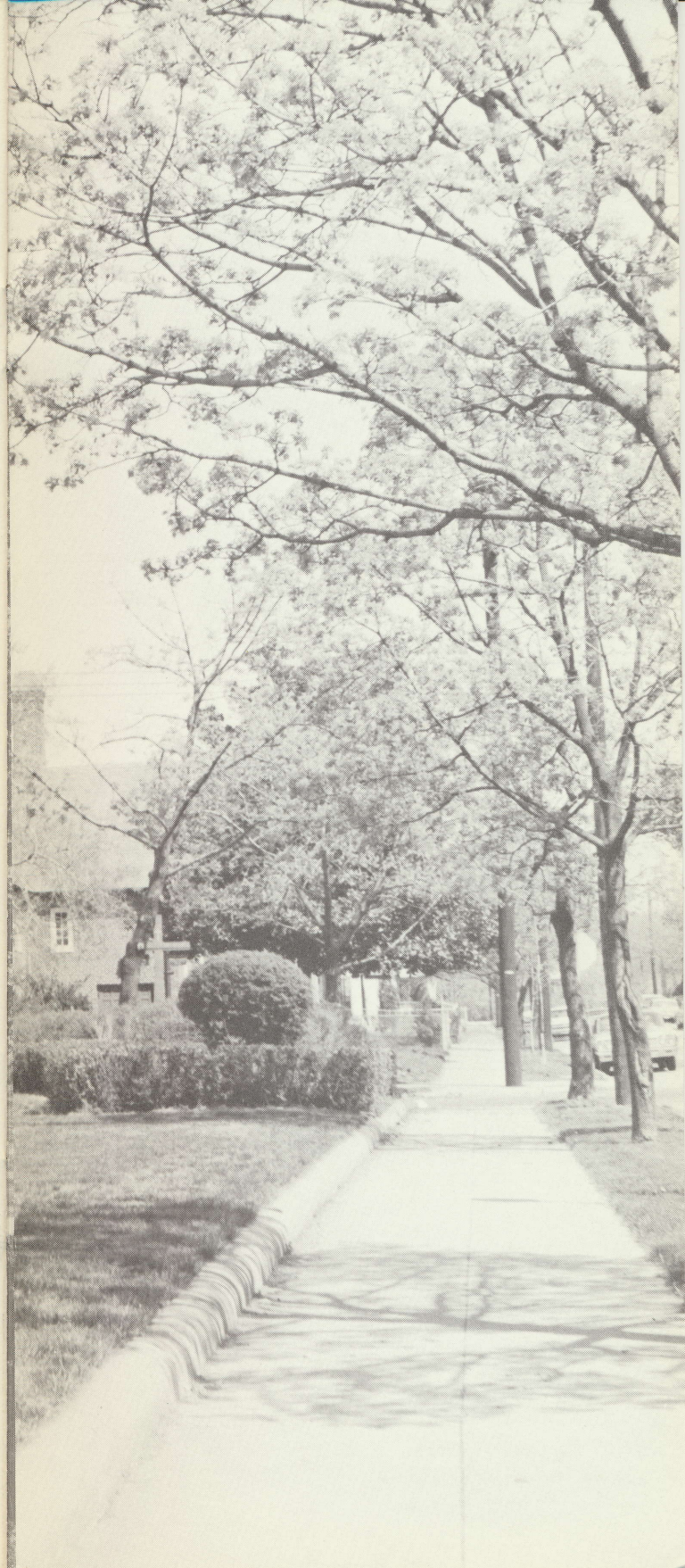
If we set aside great areas of the natural landscape to preserve the natural ecosystems and call these places parks, we can and must look at our cities as great natural ecosystems and make provisions for their preservation—not only preservation of the relics from our heritage, essential as that may be. We must also preserve the processes that produce stable, wealth-producing cities that provide the basic elements of comfort, well-being, and security. To that we must add pleasure, recreation, and the full range of ecosystem interactions necessary to man. Such a city is, in fact, a park by all the standards we have defined.

To bring about these changes requires not wealth (that is generated by the growth of the city itself), but direction. Much has been done already and a growing public awareness of ecosystem interactions suggests that the trend will continue. We look forward to a period of great development during which the form and function of future cities will be determined. Will they be ecologically sound?

Our present population of 200+ million will increase to 260 million by the year 2000. How will this growth be accommodated in our present urban structure? Will we build more cities? Rebuild the ones we have?

Whatever the choice, the thrust and force of the future is at our backs. In making the choice, we can begin with the premise that man is more comfortable and more at ease in a living environment. Man needs cities that are viable communities, with safe and pleasant streets, adequate transportation, and a minimum of pollution. Economics and aesthetics demand that our cities be made livable again. There is no alternative, for we cannot desert them and we are not about to perish in them.

***Theodore W. Sudia***



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