

today's dust heralds
the city of tomorrow

Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority / Eighth Annual Report

for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969



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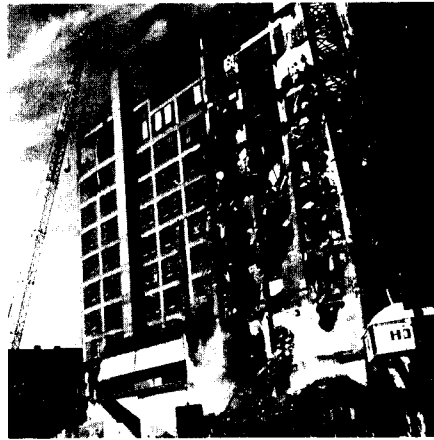
On the cover:

Almost before the dust has settled from the demolition of old buildings in downtown Oklahoma City, there will arise the new look of the business district. A majestic bank tower, right, and the sprawling Convention Center complex, foreground, along with the Oklahoma Tivoli Gardens, will play prominent roles in the revitalization of downtown.

Back cover depicts interior of Convention Center.



A Pictorial Parade



From left, top row, the new Collins Gardens Apartments complex, the signing of a redevelopment contract, groundbreaking for the new Convention Center. At left, second row the Commerce Exchange Building comes down, a home undergoes rehabilitation, Mummers Theatre comes out of the ground, and at bottom, a couple receives one of the newly authorized relocation payments.

the Board of Commissioners for OCURA



W. M. HARRISON
CHAIRMAN
Senior vice president of the First National Bank, he has served on the board since 1964.



DR. F. D. MOON
VICE CHAIRMAN
A long-time educator in the city area, he has been a member of the board since its formation.



R. A. (DICK) HUNTER
SECRETARY
A public relations consultant, he was appointed commissioner two years ago.



HARVEY P. EVEREST
Chairman of the board of the Liberty National Bank, he has been a commissioner since 1966.



**E. M. JIM
LOOKABAUGH**
Former successful football coach at what is now Oklahoma State University, he is in real estate and investments. He became a commissioner in 1966.

The Honorable James H. Norick
Mayor, City of Oklahoma City
Municipal Building
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Mayor Norick:

Once again it is the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority's pleasure to submit to you and the City Council the report for its past fiscal year. This is the Eighth Annual Report and covers the period ending June 30, 1969.

We are indeed pleased with the success that has been achieved during the past months, and we know that it was only through splendid cooperation from you and other city officials that such an accomplishment came about. For this we are most grateful.

As we are sure you realize, Oklahoma City is on the brink of one of the greatest moments in its history. The salvation of its downtown district could well be the hallmark of this century, and we are now watching this plan in action every day.

In a short while we will be seeing many new structures stretching skyward as further construction in Central Business District Project 1-A takes on multimillion dollar proportions. With the redevelopment moving along at such a remarkable pace, it is conceivable that the project could be completed in half the time originally proposed.

While the most obvious progress has been made in downtown renewal, it has not overshadowed the great strides taken in Oklahoma City's other projects, the University Medical Center and the John F. Kennedy area.

At the present time the Urban Renewal Authority is in the process of replanning the University Medical Center project, converting it to a Neighborhood Development Program. The new plan will make possible the construction of one of the largest and finest medical centers in the nation.

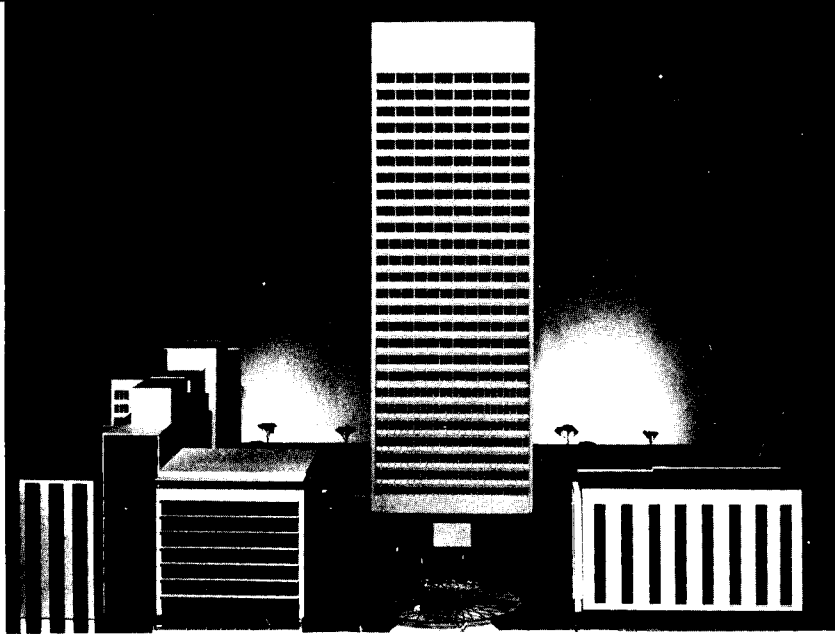
In the John F. Kennedy area, the city's largest project, land has been made available for private redevelopment. Sites will be sold to real estate developers or to individuals who agree to construct homes on them.

We feel that our goal, which is to make Oklahoma City a better place to live, is drawing nearer every day. This report should substantiate those feelings.

The other commissioners, R. A. Dick Hunter, Harvey P. Everest, Dr. F. D. Moon and E. M. Jim Lookabaugh, join me in again thanking you and members of the City Council, the Planning Commission and other officials and citizens for your confidence and support.

Sincerely,

William M. Harrison, Chairman



Central Business District Project 1-A

Rapid progress has been made in all three of Oklahoma City's urban renewal projects during the last year, the most spectacular of which has been in the Central Business District Project 1-A.

The redevelopment of this 138-acre area is shaping up so rapidly, in fact, that the project could be completed in half the time originally proposed.

Project 1-A was projected in the original plan as a seven-year program. Federal funds were received in March 1968. It now appears that urban renewal's part in the project may be completed in the next two years.

Project 1-A is the first, 138-acre phase of the redevelopment of the entire 528-acre Central Business District under a design drawn by I. M. Pei, internationally known architect and city planner. Renewal of the entire downtown area is scheduled for completion by 1989, Oklahoma City's centennial year.

In an effort to keep pace with announced developments, the Urban Renewal Authority early last year assigned priorities to the downtown areas for which development was assured. Top priority went to the site for the new Mummers Theatre, the block bounded by Sheridan, Hudson, California and Walker.

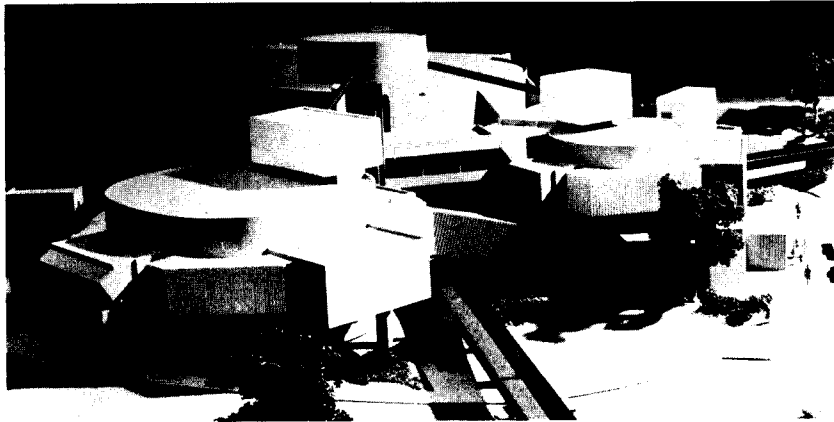
By July 1968 all of this land had been purchased and some of its occupants had been relocated, but demolition did not begin until Oct. 1. Today, a year later, construction of the \$2.8 million complex is well under way.

City voters last July approved an \$18 million bond issue, to go with \$5 million voted earlier for construction of a 15,000-seat Convention Center. The four-block site for this facility, bounded by Sheridan, Robinson, Reno and a new six-lane Santa Fe Avenue that will parallel the Santa Fe tracks, became another priority area.

(Continued on Page 5)



Downtown Oklahoma City is where much of the renewal action has been during the past year, and the above photos show how it's been happening. At top is the architect's model of the new Kay-McGee Center, and below is demolition under way to make room for construction of Mummers Theatre.



This is a model of the new Municipal Convention Center under construction in Project 1-A.

(Continued from Page 3)

A year ago none of this land had been acquired, and nearly 90 business firms in the area were yet to be moved. Today the Authority owns all the land; the occupants have been relocated, and by July 1, 60 of the 74 buildings on the site either had been razed or were being demolished.

The largest to come down, so far, was the 10-story Commerce Exchange Building. Giant cranes with 2- and 3-ton wrecking balls attracted thousands of spectators as they brought the 40-year-old structure to ground level in less than three weeks.

Construction of the huge convention facility, which will have 1,200 spaces of underground parking, is under way.

Another priority area was the site for the 35-story, \$18½ million Liberty Bank Tower, east of Broadway between Main and Park Avenue. The first structure, the 8-story Bankers Service Life Building, was demolished last summer. Later the 22 Park Avenue offices and a number of buildings along Main Street were razed to clear this site for construction. Work on the bank tower got under way July 1.

The Fidelity National Bank and Trust Co. unveiled plans early last year for a new three-story bank and 14-story office building in the block west of Robinson between Robert S. Kerr Avenue and Northwest Third Street. The demolition contractor cleared the site in May and early June, and construction of the \$9.4 million

development is expected to begin this summer.

A block to the east of this site will be the new Kerr-McGee Center, containing a 30-story office tower, a landscaped courtyard, a below-ground-level mall and other features. The site is being cleared and numerous utility lines will be relocated so that construction of the \$15 million complex can begin in the fall.

Meanwhile the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority announced plans for two parking structures containing space for approximately 2,400 cars. A six-story, \$2 million building will be on the north side of Robert S. Kerr east of Broadway, while a seven-story, \$4 million structure will extend from Kerr to Main Street along the west side of the new Santa Fe Avenue. Work on these buildings also is expected to begin in the fall.

Thermal Systems, Inc., a subsidiary of Oklahoma Natural Gas Co., will construct a \$3.7 million central heating and cooling plant to serve the Convention Center and other downtown buildings. Liberty National Bank has announced plans for a drive-in facility on Broadway at Northwest Third, while First National will construct a new office building east of its bank. Other proposed new developments are known to be on the drawing boards but have not been announced.

The largest site for private redevelopment remains uncommitted, although several groups have expressed interest in it. This is the block bounded by Sheridan, Robinson, Main and Broadway. The urban renewal plan calls for the site to contain a free-standing department store building, hotel and motion-picture theater, plus 600 spaces of underground parking. About 30 per cent of the property in the block has been purchased by the URA.

The Authority is moving ahead also with the acquisition of right-of-way for the new six-lane Santa Fe Avenue, which will parallel the Santa Fe Railroad from Interstate 40 to Robert S. Kerr, then angle northwest to connect with Broadway at Northwest 4th.

Land for other uses that have lower priority is being purchased at a somewhat slower but still steady pace. By late June, in fact, 65 per cent of all the property to be acquired in 1-A had been bought or placed under option. Forty-five per cent of all business firms to be moved had been relocated, and approximately 20 per cent of the 346 buildings that will come down had been demolished.

University Medical Center

In Oklahoma City's first urban renewal project, the key phrase this year is "NDP."

The initials stand for Neighborhood Development Program, a new approach to urban renewal that was authorized by Congress in 1968. The Urban Renewal Authority presently is in the process of converting the University Medical Center project, the city's first, to an NDP.

At the time operations in the Medical Center project began early in 1966, the urban renewal plan had set aside about 40 acres for future expansion of the University Hospital and its related facilities. But the hospital and other medical and health agencies meanwhile had formed the Oklahoma Health Sciences Foundation and had announced plans for a \$185 million Oklahoma Health Center covering 200 acres.

The new proposal meant that nearly half of the 240-acre Medical Center renewal project, which had been designated primarily for residential use, now would have to be purchased and cleared to provide land for the health center.

The renewal area extends from Northeast 4th to Northeast 13th Street and from approximately Durland Avenue on the west to Stonewall Avenue on the east. The health center will occupy all of this land between 8th and 13th streets, as well as some 65 acres in the John F. Kennedy renewal project immediately to the east.

When the Neighborhood Development Program was authorized by Congress in 1968, it appeared to offer an ideal method for carrying out renewal activities north of 8th. Under the NDP, a renewal agency schedules and receives federal funds for only the work it plans to carry out during the ensuing year. Near the end of that year, it plans its activities for the following year's operations and is funded for another year.

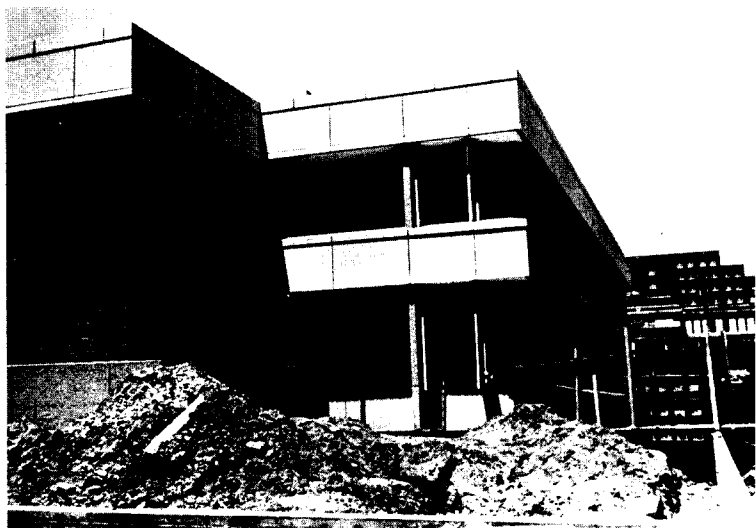
URA consultants are putting the final touches on plans for the first two years of activities under the NDP. The plans have been correlated with those of the Health Sciences Foundation so that the



From groundbreaking to landscaping in just seven months. That's the story of the Collins Gardens Apartments. Top photo on Page 6 shows ceremonies, while below are the apartments ready for occupancy in June, 1969. Photo at top on Page 7 is new Basic Sciences Building at the University Medical Center, and below it is a neighborhood meeting designed to explain the renewal program.

land acquired and cleared during the coming year will be that needed first for the Health Center construction.

It includes sites for a new Presbyterian Hospital, a state Health Department building and underground parking for the first facilities in the center. Among these is a new Basic Sciences Education Building already under construction.



South of 8th Street, operations have moved ahead according to the original plan.

Avery Chapel Housing Project, Inc., an entity of Avery Chapel AME Church, broke ground in November 1968 for a 234-unit apartment complex on the south side of 8th between Lindsay and Laird avenues. Intended for families of moderate income, the apartments went up rapidly and were opened for occupancy in July.

Most of the property owners south of 8th Street have completed or are in the process of remodeling the homes scheduled to remain in the area. Of the 109 houses to be rehabilitated, work has been completed on 50 and is under way on about 20 more. Applications for loans or grants are being reviewed on another 22 homes.

To the north of 8th Street, much of the property that was to be purchased under the original plan — for the Capitol Expressway right-of-way or other uses or simply because of the condition of the buildings — has been acquired. A total of 640 pieces of property had been purchased in the Medical Center project and about 600 dilapidated buildings had been demolished by early this month.

Slower to get under way has been another program that, despite the problems it has encountered, holds promise for urban renewal projects everywhere. Known as "colonization," it calls for the salvage of structurally sound homes located in areas earmarked for total clearance. These houses will be moved to other lots, repaired and remodeled, and offered for rent and for sale to families of low to moderate income.

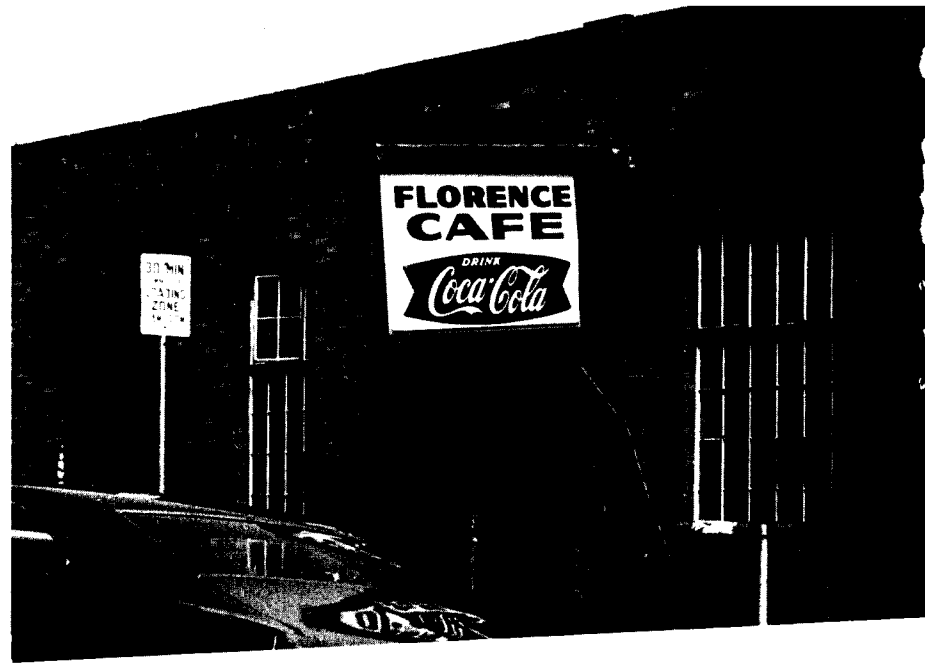
Avery Chapel also is the sponsor of this program, which is the first of its kind in the nation. To carry it out, an entire new set of procedures and regulations had to be developed by the URA and FHA. Then procedures had to be worked out with the city for handling a variety of permits and inspection fees required for moving a house.

Most of these problems have now been overcome. The first seven of 121 homes that eventually will be moved are expected to be on their new sites and ready for occupancy by Labor Day.





The aerial photo at top left gives a bird's eye view of the University Medical Center project, with the Medical Center itself at upper right of photo and the Capitol complex at upper left. Picture at top right is a cafe in the Medical Center project that was relocated to a new building (below) on Northeast 23rd Street.





More than 400 homes, like the one above in the JFK project area, have been rehabilitated through the urban renewal program. Photos show before and after effect.

the John F. Kennedy Project

Oklahoma City's largest urban renewal project passed an important milestone in June when it made land available for the first time for private redevelopment.

Several public agencies will be building in the area — the School Board, Housing Authority and Oklahoma County — but for the first time in the John F. Kennedy project, land is being offered to individuals or private developers.

The Urban Renewal Authority has invited proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of 12 lots scattered throughout the 1,248-acre renewal project. Another 150 to 200 lots are to be offered for sale as they become available to the Authority during the next 24 months.

The lots may be sold to real estate developers or to individuals who agree to construct homes on them. In some cases, houses will be available to be moved from total-clearance areas to the lots, then improved with the help of the URA's rehabilitation program.

Within the last year the Authority has completed the purchase of several areas earmarked for public development and is moving ahead with the clearing of these sites.

Among them are two blocks on Lottie between Northeast 11th and 12th streets that will contain 235 apartments for the elderly; a 2½-block site south of Northeast 20th between Kate and Prospect, where a new elementary school will be built, and a block bounded by Northeast 14th, 15th, Lottie and Kate, to be the location of a new County Welfare Building.

The north block of the elderly site is being conveyed to the Oklahoma City Authority for construction of an 11-story, 201-unit apartment building. The south block will contain 34 units in garden-type apartments, and the entire complex will be known as Marie McGuire Plaza after a former U. S. Commissioner of Public Housing.

(Continued on Page 10)

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The Oklahoma City Housing Authority will spend more than \$13 million in the JFK project for the construction of low-rent housing. Included will be 530 family dwelling units in the area between Northeast 4th and 6th streets from Stonewall east to Eastern Avenue. These homes will range from single-family houses to town-house-type units containing four to six apartments, placed in subdivision-type developments.

Scattered over nearly 100 acres, the new housing will result in a considerably lower population density for the area than existed before the urban renewal project began.

Although all of the school site has been acquired, only the badly deteriorated houses in the area have been demolished. Most of the rest will be moved to cleared lots and rehabilitated to provide homes for families displaced by urban renewal activities.

The URA has acquired about half the block selected by the county for its new Welfare Department offices and clinic. The county is purchasing the rest of the block for construction of a building expected to cost close to \$1 million.

The new developments that will begin in the JFK project during the coming year are expected to add impetus to the rehabilitation program, which already has seen improvements completed or begun on nearly 350 homes. Applications for loans or grants are pending for 260 more, and at least 300 houses are expected to be repaired and remodeled during the coming year.

Under the "rehab" program, owners are provided both technical and financial assistance in fixing up their property. The URA makes available direct federal loans at 3-per-cent interest and, in the case of low-income owners, grants of up to \$3,000 each to finance the work. Some 3,000 buildings are scheduled for rehabilitation in the Kennedy project by the time it is completed in 1973.

The JFK project, where operations began early in 1967, is the largest in area west of the Mississippi. It extends from Northeast 23rd Street south to the Rock Island Railroad near Northeast 2nd and from Interstate 35 on the east to Stonewall and Lottie avenues on the west.

Approximately 13 blocks, or 65 acres, in the west part of the project will be in the area set aside for construction of a \$185 million



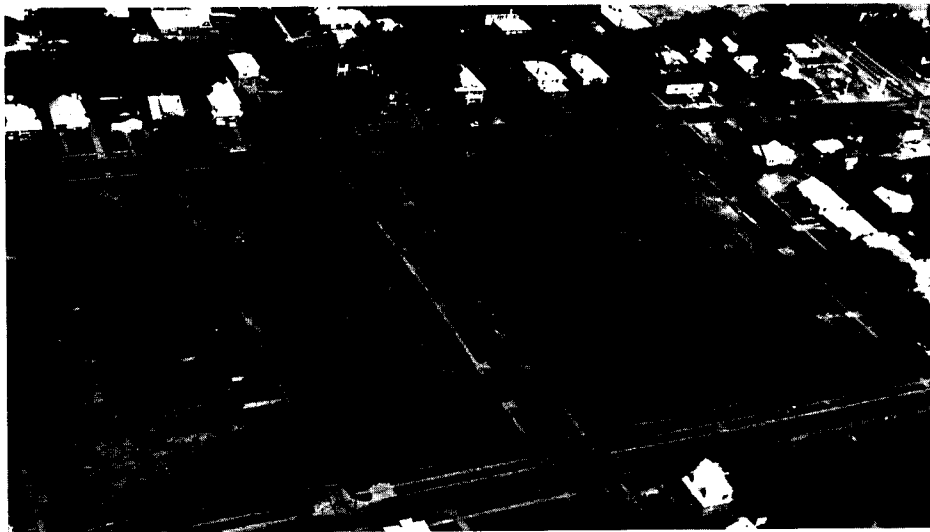
Oklahoma Health Center. The Oklahoma Health Sciences Foundation, the "umbrella" organization that is developing the center, will buy and clear this land for the construction of student housing and other facilities.

The state of Oklahoma, through the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents, during the last quarter of 1969 will be purchasing land bounded by Northeast 12th and 13th streets between Stonewall and Everest. This will be the site of the first high-rise dormitory for medical students. Eventually the state will acquire all of the area between Stonewall and Lottie from 13th to Northeast 8th Street. The URA will offer relocation assistance to all residents of this area.

The net cost of carrying out urban renewal activities in the JFK project is expected to be about \$21 million. Of this amount, the federal government will provide approximately \$14 million, plus relocation and rehabilitation grants amounting to around \$4 million more.



On page 10 there is another example of the results of the rehabilitation program. On this page (above) are before and after scenes of a business that was relocated, while bottom photos are the cleared site (left) for a 207 unit home for the elderly, McGuire Plaza, depicted in artist rendering on right.



Consolidated Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 1969

	OKLA. R-20 University Medical Center	OKLA. R-30 Central Business District 1-A	OKLA. R-35 John F. Kennedy
<u>ASSETS</u>			
Current Assets:			
Cash in Bank	\$ 219,820.79	\$ 2,200,131.88	\$1,379,908.76
Accounts Receivable:			
Revolving Fund (Joint Activities)	8,000.00	50,000.00	71,150.87
Relocation Grants	20,323.60	43,574.01	166,620.03
Tenants	3,835.10	5,890.10	9,548.27
Other	15.00	9,112.90	0
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>\$ 32,173.70</u>	<u>\$ 108,577.01</u>	<u>\$ 247,319.17</u>
Total Current Assets	\$ 251,994.49	\$ 2,308,708.89	\$1,627,227.93
Investments Held:			
U. S. Treasury Bills (At Cost)	0	0	\$ 690,367.71
Project Costs to Date:			
Total Item 1 Project Costs	\$7,876,971.22	\$17,135,648.16	\$6,052,148.64
Less: Sales Price of Land Sold	85,338.45	0	0
Net Item 1 Project Costs	<u>\$7,791,632.77</u>	<u>\$17,135,648.16</u>	<u>\$6,052,148.64</u>
Relocation Payments	\$ 317,535.60	\$ 769,216.01	\$ 433,833.03
Rehabilitation Grant Payments	<u>\$ 29,240.15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>\$ 412,587.52</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$8,390,403.01</u>	<u>\$20,213,573.06</u>	<u>\$9,216,164.83</u>

	OKLA. R-20 University Medical Center	OKLA. R-30 Central Business District 1-A	OKLA. R-35 John F. Kennedy
<u>LIABILITIES and CAPITAL</u>			
Current Liabilities:			
Accounts Payable	\$ 7,182.70	\$ 52,259.24	\$ 76,936.61
Trust & Deposit Liabilities	1,554.20	47,749.50	0
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 8,736.90	\$ 100,008.74	\$ 76,936.61
Accrued Interest Payable:			
To Others	\$ 111,244.46	\$ 297,860.66	\$ 146,283.91
Advances and Loans Payable:			
To Others	\$3,660,000.00	\$ 9,800,000.00	\$4,813,000.00
Capital:			
Local Cash Grants-In-Aid	\$ 473,498.05	\$ 104,663.65	\$ 34,753.28
Project Capital Grant	3,790,148.00	9,141,824.00	3,390,209.00
Relocation Grant	317,535.60	769,216.01	433,833.03
Rehabilitation Grant	29,240.00	0	321,149.00
Total Capital	\$4,610,421.65	\$10,015,703.66	\$4,179,944.31
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	<u>\$8,390,403.01</u>	<u>\$20,213,573.06</u>	<u>\$9,216,164.83</u>



Other Features of the OCURA Program

The 'Human Renewal' Story

The Urban Renewal Authority's emphasis on "human renewal" took visible form during the last year with the establishment of a multi-purpose Social Service Center.

In cooperation with more than a dozen other agencies, the center was opened in December in the Commerce Exchange Building in downtown renewal Project 1-A. When that building was demolished in April to make way for the Convention Center, the Social Service Center was moved to the Mutual Savings Building across the street.

The primary purpose of the new agency is to provide persons living downtown and in surrounding areas with opportunities to resolve such problems as unemployment, poor mental or physical health and financial difficulties.

Joining the URA in the effort are the Department of Public Welfare, Travelers Aid Society, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Vocational Rehabilitation Department, City-County Health Department, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Legal Aid Society, Community Action Program, Sunbeam Home and Family Service, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Community Relations Commission and Oklahoma City Health Department.

The center was organized by the URA and the Community Council and is under the direction of the URA's Community Relations Department. Volunteer workers from several of the participating agencies staff the office from 8 to 5, five days a week.

During its first month of operation the center handled 66 cases, and the load has increased steadily since that time. Although the majority of problems concern the need for food, lodging and employment, cases have ranged from problems of alcoholism to mental competency.

Not a "hand-out" operation, the center's program revolves in-

stead around swift identification of problems and referral to agencies most able to help a troubled individual to help himself. A "team" approach is utilized, with representatives of the participating agencies meeting weekly — or more often if necessary — to discuss problem cases before them.

The undertaking is one of many of the URA Community Relations Department, one of the few of its kind in the nation. Staff counselors are in the field constantly, calling on residents of project areas to explain the renewal program, answer questions, identify specific problems and, with the assistance of other social and welfare agencies, to provide help as quickly as possible.

New Benefits Assist Residents

Residents and property owners in Oklahoma City's urban renewal projects are receiving increased benefits in several fields as the result of legislation enacted by Congress last year.

The greatest benefits of the Housing Act of 1968 are being enjoyed by the owners of property subject to repair and improvement and by persons — especially home owners — displaced by the urban renewal program.

For owner-occupants of low income (generally below \$3,000 a year), Congress doubled the amount of the maximum rehabilitation grant available for property improvement. The maximum is now \$3,000, instead of \$1,500.

Also available are direct federal home-improvement loans of up to \$10,000 for each dwelling unit, which bear an interest rate of 3 per cent and can be repaid over a period of up to 20 years. The new Housing Act liberalized the uses that can be made of these funds.

Many low-income individuals and families relocated by urban renewal in the past have qualified for Relocation Adjustment Payments of up to \$500 each, payable over a five-month period. This payment now ranges up to \$500 a year for a two-year period.

Probably the most significant new benefit is a Replacement Housing Payment to owner-occupants whose homes have been purchased by urban renewal since last August 1. It can range up to \$5,000 for each former owner who, within a year after being displaced, purchases and moves into a house suitable in size and condition for his family.

The amount of each family's payment is based on a set scale of average prices of modest but sound homes of various sizes. The owner who sells his home to urban renewal can receive the difference (up to the \$5,000 limit) between what he was paid for his property and the average price of a house of the proper size for his family.

Because the new payments are retroactive to last August 1, each resident who has been relocated since that time is being contacted by the Relocation Department and informed of any additional benefits to which he may be entitled.



Members of the OCURA Boy Scout troop (top photo) practice knot tying under the eye of counselor Gene Douglas. In center photo, youths hired for the summer in the urban renewal program are briefed by Raymond Farr, operations coordinator. Counselor Mae Carpenter (left in bottom photo) assists at one of the Christmas Human Renewal workshops.



Behind the Scenes

The past year has been a busy time for every department of the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority. And the Community Relations personnel didn't hesitate to carry their share of the workload.

Following their regular duties within the department, several members of the Community Relations staff headed up activities that involved residents of the urban renewal project areas.

As we go into another fiscal year, this policy continues with various summer programs requiring constant assistance from the OCURA Staffers.

A Boy Scout troop, for instance, was organized a few months ago and under the sponsorship of OCURA it has become one of the major programs for the Community Relations staff.

With hikes, cook-outs, camp-outs and paper drives, the Scouts are kept busy pursuing those endeavors that help to mold tomorrow's leaders. Between trips to the great outdoors, the Scouts squeeze in a lot of Little League baseball.

With the assistance of the Oklahoma County Extension Department and the Douglass Center, OCURA also is sponsoring a 4-H Club. The object of the organization is to provide economic education through recreational activities.

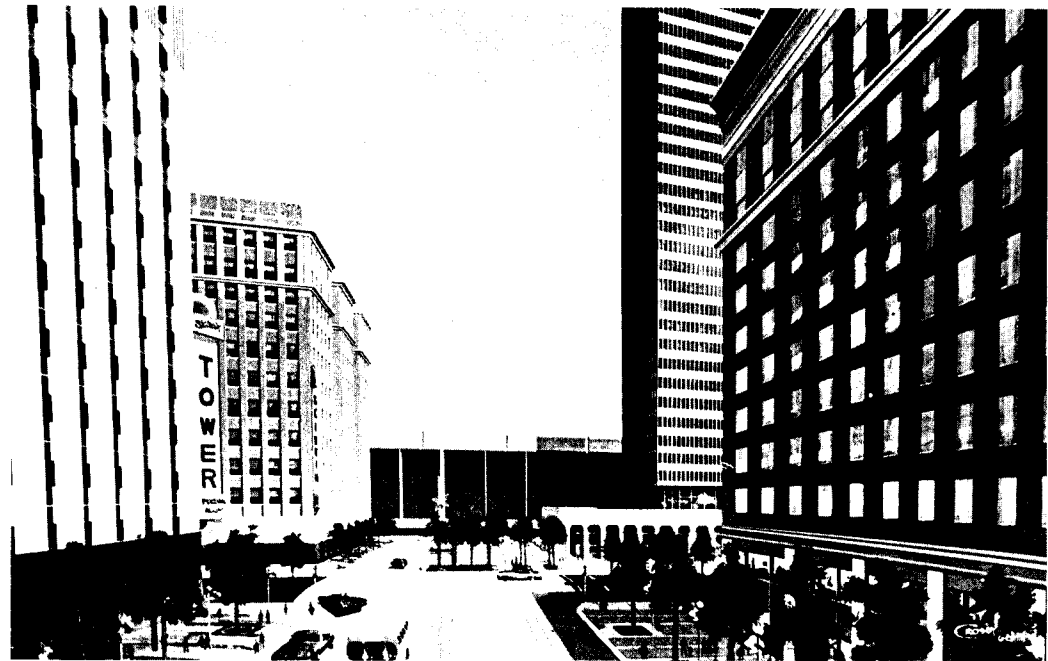
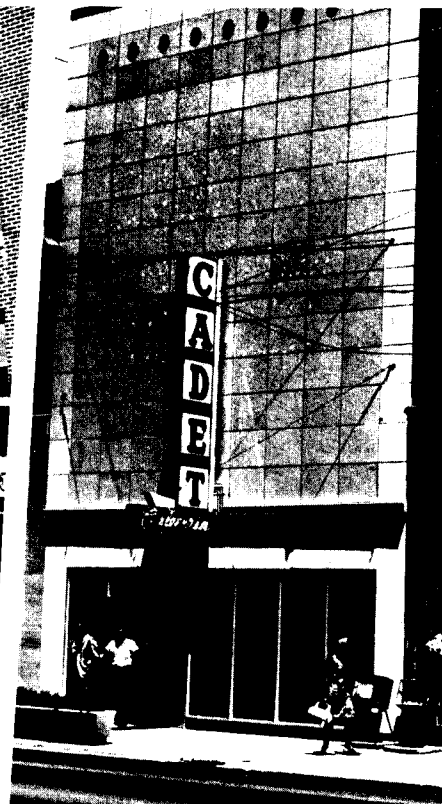
Recently a Brownie Troop and Cub Scout troop have been organized by OCURA representatives.

Other activities taken on include a Consumer Education program, which was set up in conjunction with the Urban League. This course offers classes in "Consumer Frauds," "Cutting Food Costs" and "Automobile Buying."



Relocation Marches On in Downtown District

Urban renewal displaced its own central office in January as secretaries (top row, left) packed up and departed the 22 Park Avenue Building for new quarters (top right) in the Colcord Building. The Cadet Cafeteria (lower left) is typical of many other businesses that have been relocated to better quarters. In artist's rendering at right, the new Liberty Bank Tower stands on the site of the old 22 Park Avenue Building, while the Skirvin Hotels, the 100 Park Avenue Building (right) and a landscaped Park Avenue show the ultimate results of urban renewal.



Open Letter to the Residents of Oklahoma City:

As the Urban Renewal Authority ends the eighth year of its existence, it finds itself well into the third and most important phase of its activities. This is the phase toward which the entire program is aimed: that of re-development.

The period from 1961, when OCURA was formed, to 1965 was devoted primarily to planning the Central Business District, University Medical Center and John F. Kennedy projects.

Then came the necessary clearing of blighted property and of areas marked for new construction, the relocation of families, individuals and businesses and the start of the rehabilitation by property owners of declining but still salvageable and valuable property.

These activities are continuing, and will for some time to come. Meanwhile, 1968 and '69 saw the start of major construction that will accelerate rapidly, in the months and years ahead, in all the urban renewal areas. A \$3.5 million, 234-unit apartment complex, for which Avery Chapel AME Church broke ground in the Medical Center project only last November, is now accepting occupants. The church also has received FHA approval for the moving and rehabilitation of the first of 121 homes that will be relocated from clearance areas to scattered lots throughout the Medical Center project. These houses will be remodeled and made available to low-income families.

In the John F. Kennedy project, a significant milestone was reached this summer when the first 12 lots in the area were offered for sale for private redevelopment. Response was good to the initial advertising, and proposals for redevelopment will be accepted until August 18, after which the developers will be chosen.

The Oklahoma City Housing Authority plans to advertise for bids in mid-August on the construction of a 201-unit high-rise apartment building for the elderly in JFK. Land is being cleared in the same project for a new elementary school, a County Welfare Department office building and clinic and up to 500 homes for low-income families. Work is completed or under way on the rehabilitation of more than 650 private dwellings.

In downtown Project 1-A, progress has been even more visible and exciting. The \$2.8 million Mummers Theatre, on which construction began in January, is expected to be completed next June. Excavation is under way for the 15,000-seat, \$22 million Convention Center and the 35-story, \$18.5 million Liberty Bank Tower.

Work should begin before the end of the year on Fidelity Bank's new \$9.4 million bank and office building, the 30-story, \$15 million Kerr-McGee Center, the Liberty Drive-in Bank and on two public parking structures accommodating 2,500 cars and costing nearly \$6 million. Many other



new buildings are on the drawing boards but have not been publicly announced.

This unprecedented interest in downtown redevelopment has served to push Project 1-A years ahead of its original seven-year schedule. It also will make possible early planning of the next stages of renewal of the Central Business District.

To this end, we are working with the City Planning Department on the preparation of the documentation necessary to make the downtown General Neighborhood Renewal Plan an official part of the city's long-range plan of community development. These instruments will be presented to the City Council at an early date.

The rapid progress that has been exhibited would not have been possible without the counsel and direction of OCURA's dedicated Board of Commissioners, or without the support of the City Council, Planning Commission, other City departments and the citizens of Oklahoma City. We of the Urban Renewal Authority staff wish to convey to all of you our appreciation for your interest and confidence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James B. White". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

James B. White
Executive Director



Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority
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