

try on earth is because of our lack of such protection of property investments.

Zoning or districting is the first necessary step in sensibly planning the city for the future. All American cities, almost without exception are in a jumble, mixed-up, unhappy and unhealthy state for lack of orderly building regulations. In self-defense, progressive city governments throughout the country are now taking up zoning in a businesslike way. Admitting carelessness and lack of planning in the past, the least we can do is to see that no worse conditions are allowed to grow up in the future.

There are many reasons why building zone regulations should be adopted in some form by every incorporated city, large or small. Chief among these is that there should be on the one hand a safe, unhampered place for industry with the highest facilities of fire protection, transportation, haul-

ing streets, etc., side by side with a protected home neighborhood where workers may live in health, comfort and contentment, without fear of intrusion. These two requirements are of equal importance. The city's protection and regulation of them must be made for economic and social reasons, Esthetic considerations do not enter in, and yet the orderly results of such regulated growth make unquestioned esthetic gain to the city.

Three kinds of districts seem to be necessary to give the proper protection:

Use districts are necessary to prevent the scattering and intrusion of inappropriate and destructive uses of buildings and property which make uncertain and decrease property values and are contrary to public welfare, health and convenience.*

Height districts are necessary to maintain proper light and air and for economic reasons. Thomas Adams says: "In our Canadian cities, the skyscraper is the stepbrother to the vacant lot, only that for every skyscraper there are probably a hundred or more vacant lots. This is an unhealthy and uneconomic condition and is causing us to try and get a more even and less scattered form of development by restricting the use and height of buildings."

Area districts are necessary to prevent overcrowding and for the protection of residence neighborhoods particularly.

The establishment of use districts alone would not fully accomplish the protection sought. Height and area district regulations are equally necessary to prevent congestion and to secure light and air. Each is an inseparable supplement of the others. As long ago as 1909, the U. S. Supreme Court upheld the City of Boston in its right to establish a lower height limit for outside residence districts and a higher limit for down-town business districts.

The degree of use, height and area district regulations necessary will vary according to locality, tendencies of development and natural conditions. Each city has its own problem.

However, on the Pacific Coast at least we have recently followed a more or less standard number of classes of use, height and area districts to start with in each city, adding special classifications in addition only when necessary. The best recent example that I know of is found in the new Alameda zone ordinance, adopted February, 1919, which may be taken as a standard test, now being used also in Portland, a more complete outline of which is given elsewhere in this number.† It is not safe, however, to copy arbitrarily and outright the zone ordinance of any other city. The Courts have repeatedly held that the use of police power, arbitrarily, is unconstitutional. A reasonable following of existing uses and tendencies of growth in the city itself is fundamentally necessary. To discover what these tendencies and existing conditions are requires most careful analysis and thorough preparation of maps showing the existing uses and heights of all buildings in consultation with each neighborhood of the city, as to the development most desirable to it, and the preparation of a reasonable zoning plan based on the investigations and tendencies so discovered.

Determining reasonable boundaries of the various business, residence and industrial or height and area districts is different but in no way impossible. In New York City, which has more people and buildings than all the principal cities of the Pacific Coast west of the Rocky Mountains put together, it took nearly three years to work out.‡ In Alameda, with 35,000 population, it took about six months.

*For fuller statement of the reasons for zoning see "Zoning and City Planning for Portland," published by the City Planning Commission, City Hall, Portland, Oregon, July, 1919.

†Copies of the Ordinance can be had on application to the City Clerk, City Hall, Alameda, California.

‡For complete Use Zone Ordinance, with maps, diagrams and explanations, see "Building Zones," published by the Lawyers' Mortgage Co., 59 Liberty Street, New York City; also "Report of the Commission of Building Districts and Restrictions," care Secretary Board of Aldermen, Municipal Building, New York City.

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