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Bibliography - World's Fairs and Their Impact Upon Urban Planning

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WORLD'S FAIRS AND THEIR IMPACT UPON URBAN PLANNING

by

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This bibliography was developed in support of a masters thesis entitled "World's Fairs and Their Impact Upon Urban Planning".

Traditionally, the major purposes of world's fairs have been to provide entertainment, serve as centers of trade and serve as educational experiences. A fourth purpose has evolved in the United States in the past seventy-five years, paralleling the growth of city planning. This purpose is to achieve long-range permanent benefits for the host city. The nature, characteristics, extent and relationship between planning in the host city and world's fairs were the major concerns in the study.

World's fairs require millions of dollars in expenditures, require years of preparation, rarely end with a balanced budget and cause, at times, unwelcome disruptions to the life styles of the citizens of the host city. Yet, in spite of these problems, at least ten North-American cities in the past nine years have made plans and proposals for fairs to be held between 1960 and 1976. One of the major reasons that fair personnel gave when asked why their city desired a fair was that it would serve as needed catalyst and mechanism for urban planning in their community.
The world's fairs as a catalyst and mechanism for urban planning has varied according to the planning philosophy of the era in which it was created. Thus, in order to place the relationship between planning and world's fairs in a proper perspective, the study was divided into four periods. These periods represent the general philosophy of planning that existed during the years that each fair was held. These periods are the City Beautiful (1890-1930), the City Practical (1930-1947), the City Beneficial (1947-1970) and the City of Spreading Amenities (from 1970). The study examined within each of the periods the role of planning in the United States at that time, the specifics of planning in the host city during the fair period, the impact of the fair upon planning and, in instances where it is applicable, the impact upon planning as a profession.

Hypotheses

The two hypotheses utilized in the study were the following:

1) World's fairs have provided a catalytic impetus for urban planning that has resulted in civic improvements, removal of plan implementation barriers, an increase in citizens support of the city planning agency and its functions, and a renewal of private enterprise's confidence in the viability of the host city.

2) World's fairs, through involvement with the planning agencies of the host cities, have evolved into a planning mechanism for development of new land, new communities, and civic improvements.

These dates represent the author's interpretation after reviewing the different opinions of John W. Reps, Russell V.N. Black, John L. Hancock and Webb S. Fiser. They all agree generally to the same period definitions with no more than a three year deviation.
Methodology

Research for the study involved the following:

1) Library research concerning the impact of the various world's fairs,

2) Library research concerning planning in the host city during the period of development, implementation, and disposition of the fair,

3) Correspondence and interviews with world's fair personnel,

4) Correspondence and interviews with host city planning agency personnel,

5) Correspondence with host city historians,

6) On-site field work.

In analyzing the impact of the fair upon planning, the following factors were examined:

1) The "State of the city" in the pre-fair years,

2) The nature and accomplishments of planning in the pre-fair years,

3) The birth of the fair and the reasons for its final location,

4) The role of planning after the fair was announced but before construction,

5) The involvement between the fair and planning,

6) The nature of the fair itself.
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