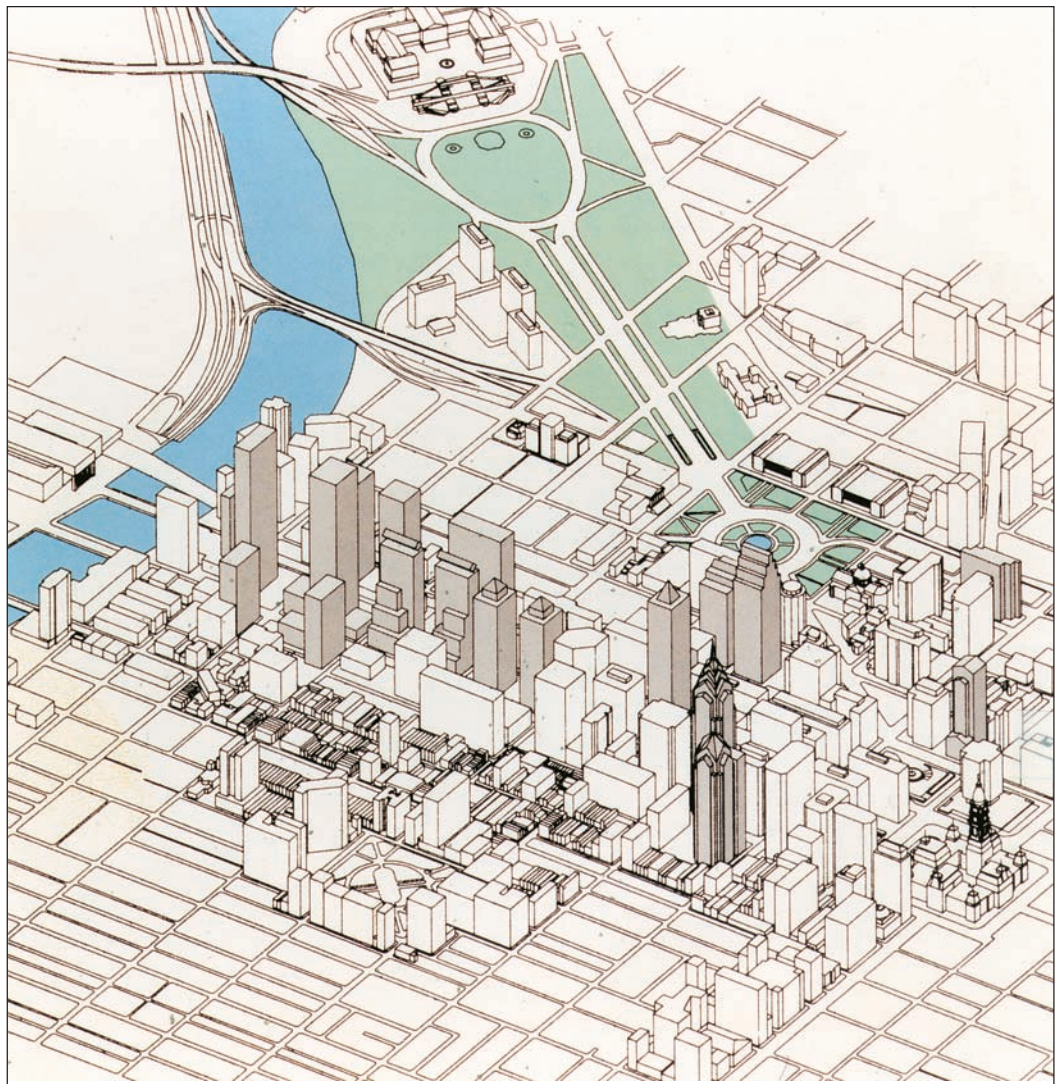


URBAN DESIGN • PLACE PLANNING

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission retained Robert Brown, of Brown & Keener Bressi, to collaborate with commission staff in the making of the third plan for Center City's development. Continuing the precedents set by William Penn's plan of 1683 and Edmund Bacon's tenure as planning director from 1960 to 1963, the team developed new urban concepts and guidelines and produced design studies for zoning to ensure the orderly, rational development of Philadelphia's Center City.

The major objectives of the new plan were to balance development and conservation as well as balance physical design and social community. The plan particularly emphasized streets, sidewalks and "streetwall buildings." Many of its major recommendations, such as a new downtown zoning code, the creation of an arts district, the preservation of historic buildings and districts, and the creation of a Special Services District, have had a profound impact on the shape of Center City today.



PLAN FOR CENTER CITY
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

More specifically, the plan has guided public and private investment during Center City's economic renaissance to:

- Establish criteria for open spaces that are intentional rather than residual. The well-known lessons of William H. Whyte's research guided these criteria in making habitable, useful, vital pedestrian places.
- Establish criteria for the relationship of individual buildings to streets and open spaces. Details such as shop windows, building entrances and architectural elements that give scale and character became extremely important in this regard.
- Establish criteria for the location and design of parking garages.
- Create a Special Services District to provide much needed services in making the city clean, safe, livable and marketable.
- Promote the preservation of historic buildings, of groups of historic buildings, and of the quality of neighborhood life in Center City. The residential areas of Center City were viewed as not only a local asset but also a local treasure.

- Promote the expansion of culture and the arts, in a yet-to-be designated arts district.
- Promote increased use of public transit by improving Center City stations and by not encouraging new garage development.

The first steps that the city has taken, with the assistance of Mr. Brown, were the creation of the Center City Special Services District and the approval of a revised Center City Zoning code. Largely as a result, the other recommendations soon followed.

CLIENT:
PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING
COMMISSION

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