

utilization to determine areas suitable for field crops, reforestation, watershed protection, recreation, summer residence, and urban expansion in order to prepare a long-term development program of major State improvements; facilitates urban planning in cities and other municipalities; and generally makes available information on subjects affecting the health and welfare of the people of Maryland (Code 1951, Art. 88C, secs. 1-18).

To carry out these functions the Commission is currently: (1) surveying the capital improvements needs of the various State agencies and the financial problems pertaining thereto; (2) collecting data about economic and social trends within the State; (3) advising local and regional planning and zoning agencies; (4) cooperating with out-of-state firms seeking new locations, and maintaining for this purpose a current inventory of vacant industrial plants in Maryland; (5) assisting municipal and county groups in preparing evaluations of their communities to further their economic growth; (6) and reviewing the State's medical care needs and responsibilities.

Recent publications of the Commission include: "Medical Facilities, Survey and Plan," April, 1956; "Capital Improvements Authorized by General Assembly, Ten Year Period, 1947 Through 1956," May, 1956; "Lonaconing—An Economic Survey," October, 1956; "Self-Liquidating Capital Improvement Projects," August, 1956; "Employee Housing Policy of the Maryland State Planning Commission," February, 1957; "Economic County Data Book," revised in June, 1957. With the cooperation of the county planning commissions, the Commission began a monthly tabulation of new dwelling units authorized in the census tracts of the Baltimore area and issued a summary for the year 1956, in addition to the annual tabulations of "Building Permits Authorized" in the counties and cities of Maryland. The Commission makes an annual survey of planning and zoning agencies, and it compiles new directories of the local agencies each year, along with a summary of the planning programs, budgets, and staffs of these agencies. A subcommittee of the Committee on Medical Care is currently studying services and facilities for handicapped children in Maryland. In addition, the Baltimore Regional Planning Council, an agency sponsored by the Commission, is undertaking a two-year program of studies in order to prepare a comprehensive plan for the Baltimore region. For this project, the Federal Urban Renewal Administration has granted an award of \$100,000 to match the appropriations made by the Commission and local participating jurisdictions.

Appropriations	1957	1958
General Funds	\$ 90,018	\$117,143
Staff: 16		

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

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The Department of Public Improvements was created by the Legislature in 1947. The Director of Public Improvements, the designated head of the Department, is appointed by the Governor for a four-year term.