

ter service and use of the recreational areas by the public. Included in land acquisition items mentioned are appropriations for the Gunpowder River Valley State Park system, as well as funds for acquisition of Assateague Island State Park, which will provide an ocean front recreation area.

This past summer we initiated a special study to assess the potentialities and delineate a program for the development of the Patuxent River State Park which will serve another region of heavily increasing population. This study will soon be completed. Finally, we recently activated a real estate unit in the Department of Public Improvements centralizing responsibility for all and transactions of the State. This action is designed to expedite the acquisition of land needed for State purposes, including park and recreation lands.

In 1959, we abolished the old State Roads Commission and created a new State Planning Department to function as the Governor's staff agency in planning matters, and to prepare, recommend and keep up-to-date a balanced, integrated program for the development and effective employment of the natural and other resources of the State. The Department is responsible directly to the Governor. This Department has not only continued to review requests for State capital improvement funds and make recommendations to the Governor thereon, but it has studied operations of State departments in the water resources and management field and, with the assistance of a top-level consultant in this area, has prepared recommendations for the improvement of administrative operations of these agencies. Perhaps foremost in the accomplishments of the Planning Department has been increased activity in the area of local and regional planning.

The Department has alerted local governments to the necessity for community planning at the local level. This emphasis is of particular importance at this time because of Maryland's tremendous population growth with its attendant problems arising from burgeoning new communities and development and expansion of older communities. The Federal government, in recognition of the acuteness of the problem involved and the terrible cost and waste occasioned by lack of adequate planning, has provided for planning funds to county and local governments. Federal funds are also available for urban renewal. Urban renewal eligibility, of course, assumes a sound planning base.

The State Planning Department has emphasized to local officials the importance of local planning; it is administering and supervising local planning programs in some localities of the State; it has obtained