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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

On the basis of its per capita investment in urban renewal, Boston is one of the most significant cities in America. To cover this big subject (page 63) the editors sent eight of their staff to the Massachusetts capital for over 100 man-days of on-site research.

All told, this team interviewed over 200 different people—every one they could find who had an important stake or influence in Boston's physical rejuvenation. And, the wide variety of titles and responsibilities of those interviewed underscores the diversity of interest which plays a part in today's building construction industry.

In the notebook of Senior Editor David Carlson, captain for FORUM's Boston team, are pages reflecting his talks with Mayor John F. Collins, Development Administrator Edward J. Logue, as well as many leading contractors, investors, planners and architects. His notebook is also sprinkled with the comments of 61 Bostonians whose observations could hardly be called expert, but were nonetheless pertinent: 17 cab drivers (including one of Boston's five lady cabbies), three barbers, seven bell hops, eight elevator operators, 19 just plain citizens (in places like Charlestown and Washington Park) and—"in line of duty," he says—7 bartenders. Incidentally, his notes indicate that most of these nonexperts are surprisingly well informed on the city's rebuilding program and that they are generally enthusiastic about what is being done.

Technology Editor Bernard Spring was assigned to cover the transportation phase of the Boston renewal story, and in making his dozen interviews he quickly confronted the problem face to face. "At first I went from interview to interview by taxi," he reports,

"but street traffic snarls fouled up my schedule and made me late for appointments. Then I tried walking, but pedestrian traffic and sore feet worked against me. Finally, I switched to the MTA and, once underground, made good time."

Senior Editor Walter McQuade, who was working on a Boston story for FORTUNE as well as FORUM, alone made 70 personal calls during his 24-day stay in Boston. McQuade later wondered if nearly all of the research might not have been accomplished by moving from table to table of the main dining room of the Parker House Hotel across the street from City Hall during lunch hours. "All the real estate men in Boston seem to turn up there almost daily, and most of the pertinent politicians come pretty regularly too."

Associate Editor Philip Herrera literally covered the waterfront (page 94) as well as the Government Center (page 88); Senior Editor Donald Canty covered Boston's institutional explosion (page 114), and Managing Editor Peter Blake spent six days in Boston tying all the subjects together.

Why all the FORUM research into Boston's urban renewal failures and accomplishments? Because, as a late starter, Boston has had an opportunity to capitalize on the redevelopment mistakes of other cities and to improve on the architectural and financial norm of the national program. Boston has not muffed that opportunity, and every other city stands to benefit by studying what Boston is doing.

That is why the FORUM editorial staff spent most of last month in Boston and has devoted the entire issue this month to its findings.—J.C.H. JR.



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ARCHITECTURAL FORUM, June 1964 Vol. 120, No. 6. Published monthly by TIME INC.
EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE: Please address the Managing Editor, ARCHITECTURAL FORUM, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, N.Y. 10020.

44 FURNISHINGS

SUBSCRIPTIONS: U.S., U.S. Possessions and Canada, one year \$7; elsewhere, one year \$12. Single copies, if available, \$1. Address ARCHITECTURAL FORUM, 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. This issue is published in national and separate editions. Additional pages of separate editions are noted or allowed for as follows: Professional Edition, PE1-PE14. Regional Edition, RE1-RE4. Western Edition, WE1-WE2. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations and Associated Business Publications. © 1964 Time Inc. All rights reserved.

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