

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

ANGELO J. ROSSI, MAYOR

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY HALL



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MARK JORGENSEN
SECRETARY

April 4, 1940.

Honorable Angelo J. Rossi, Mayor
City and County of San Francisco,
City Hall,
San Francisco, Calif.

Re: Wood Model of San Francisco

Honorable Sir:-

This Commission sponsored a WPA project for the making of a Wood Model of San Francisco. This model has been installed in the Registrar's Office, City Hall. It is completed and ready for formal acceptance and delivery to the City.

This model has taken some two years to build and it is believed a project of this magnitude should be accepted at some formal dedication ceremonies, at which time Mr. Lawson, State WPA Administrator, would be present to convey to you formal title to the property to be accepted by you and, in turn, formally placed in the custody of the Planning Commission.

It is respectfully requested that you agree to preside at these ceremonies to be held 4:00 p. m., Tuesday, April 16, 1940, if this time is agreeable to you. We would appreciate being advised as soon as possible if these arrangements meet with your approval.

Yours truly,

Mark Jorgensen
Mark Jorgensen, Secretary
City Planning Commission

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8/1/49 = B Kline - City Planning Commission, crated etc.

Apr. 10, 1940.

Dedication of the wood scale relief map of San Francisco, built by the W. P. A. under the sponsorship of the City Planning Commission, will be held in the City Hall, Tuesday, April 16, at 4:00 o'clock P.M., Mark Jorgensen, Secretary of the Commission, announced yesterday.

Workmen now are completing its installation in the Registrar's Office there.

Date for the ceremonies was set after a series of conferences had been held between Northern California Works Progress Administrator, William R. Lawson, Mayor Angelo J. Rossi, Mrs. Albert W. Stokes, President of the planning group and Jorgensen.

Speakers at the dedication will include Lawson, who will transfer Federal ownership of the scale map to Mayor Rossi, as the representative of the City. Mrs. Stokes, President of the Planning Commission, will accept custody of the project from the Mayor.

Constructed principally for use in making studies for a master plan for the physical development of the City in all its phases, it will be invaluable to such engineer, planner or other technician who may undertake the solving of the City's traffic and transportation problem. It will enable the layman to envision any proposed improvements in any street, highway, park, recreation or other physical development.

The model -- set upon a 41 by 37 1/8 foot platform of "knock down design" -- was made to the scale of one inch to one hundred feet, both horizontal and vertical. Where considerable carving was required, poplar and sugar pine were the woods used. Shrubbery "growing" on the map is made of wire wool, pieces of sponge and beet seeds.

Its total cost was \$102,750. the Federal government's share being expended principally in wages for employees. It provided field investigators, draftsmen, modelers, craftsmen and engineers, who began work on it early in 1938, with 1,200 man-months of labor, according to W. P. A. records.

Composed of 138 sections of various sizes and shapes, all fitting together like a jigsaw puzzle, the model includes all of San Francisco and a small portion of San Mateo county; gives the locations of the main highways entering the city; and shows the natural topography, street grades, general proportions and sizes of buildings and lots, and the physical relationship of the various parts of the metropolis to each other and to surrounding areas.

"The honey-comb type of construction used, permits the removal of city blocks from between the streets to permit the addition or elimination of buildings, the cutting through of new streets or highways, and the reduction of grades," Lawson explained yesterday. "After necessary changes have been made, the blocks may be replaced as altered.

"Information for modeling the buildings was obtained by actual field investigation, from block maps, U. S. Navy and Military authorities, from detailed plans or sketches provided by the architects who designed the structures, as well as private industrial concerns. Moreover, by means of 164 overlapping aerial photographs, inaccessible interiors of city blocks, scattered buildings in outlying districts, together with the wooded areas and placement of trees -- otherwise unobtainable -- were incorporated into the completed project.

"Bright colors were used in painting the model, because pilots who had flown over San Francisco frequently explained that from an altitude of several thousand feet the city took on more of the brighter pastel shades, especially in sunshine," Lawson concluded.

In predicting the trend of San Francisco's future development -- extensions of business, industrial and residential areas -- it always will be necessary to pay much attention to the physiography of the ground because of its great influence on natural growth. Planning Commission Secretary Jorgensen pointed out.

"Therefore," he continued, "in such planning, the wood scale map is of the greatest aid because, to laymen and many engineers, a contour map does not present the necessary all-inclusive picture of ground formations.

"It also has a tourist as well as an educational value. By studying it, visitors who are unacquainted with San Francisco, and school children may secure a comprehensive picture of our streets and main highways; our residential, industrial and business districts; our historical landmarks, parks and playgrounds."