organization in Baltimore of the nation's first common carrier railroad. Other railroads and highways soon followed and, with the ever increasing water transport, the City became an important national traffic and transportation center serving the myriad and diversified needs of the growing nation. With many natural and economic advantages for industry, the City developed from a primarily maritime and commercial center to its position today as one of the country's major industrial and commercial areas.

GROWTH

The actual physical development of the City can be related to its unique geographical and environmental location. The pattern for growth was strongly influenced by the configuration of the harbor and the several branches of the Patapsco River. Early in the formation of the City, development was from east to west along Baltimore Street. The commercial and financial district, including the shipping interests, developed to the south, while residential expansion took place to the north. This pattern has continued to the present. Today, the major commercial area remains in the center of the City adjacent to the inner harbor. Industrial growth has followed the shoreline of the harbor expanding to the south, southwest, and east. The rapid growth and the natural barrier created by the many branches of the Patapsco River encouraged further residential development in those sections of the City on the north, west and northeast.

Since the establishment of the present City boundaries in 1918, the rapid growth in population and the trend toward a greater demand for space for that population has created extensive residential developments in the adjacent counties. This has also been accompanied, until recent years, by increased residential use of existing facilities within the City proper. The shift in character of residences, particularly in the central City area, to meet the increased demands for low rent housing has been accompanied by overcrowding and deterioration of structures and neighborhoods. A large proportion of the residential areas of the City have experienced declining standards. Concurrently, many of the industrial and commercial areas are also experiencing the same effects brought on by old and outdated facilities, overcrowding, and mounting traffic problems. Chief among the areas of the City so affected by declining values, substandard facilities and declining land and property values is the central City area, including the Central Business District.

The Central Business District refers to the major business district of the City of Baltimore which approximates the Fourth City Ward and is the area used by the Census of Business to assemble appropriate retail data. The designations central City area, central City core, and downtown area, are intended in this report to be descriptive rather than definitive. They include not only the Central Business District but the mixed commercial, industrial, and residential sections surrounding and generally associated with it.

URBAN RENEWAL

Since 1957, Baltimore has undertaken an extensive urban renewal program in order to retain and protect the integrity of the central City and