

State Planning Board ^[1]

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by Kay Haire Huggins, 2006

The State Planning Board was established in North Carolina during the [Great Depression](#) ^[2] as part of President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) ^[3]'s [New Deal](#) ^[4]. In 1933 Secretary of the Interior [Harold Ickes](#) ^[5] created the National Planning Board to advise him in the preparation of the public works program of the [National Industrial Recovery Act](#) ^[6]. The National Planning Board sought to stimulate state planning by offering the services of a consultant to those states that formed planning boards. Most states complied.

Governor [J. C. B. Ehringhaus](#) ^[7], encouraged by the state engineer and the [North Carolina League of Municipalities](#) ^[8], appointed the first State Planning Board in North Carolina in 1935 to facilitate the flow of federal funds to the state. The state board cooperated with the National Planning Board on its national surveys on public works, drainage, and recreation as well as a program to develop the Southern Highlands Region. It designated as major state projects three national programs: rural electrification, control of soil erosion, and rural rehabilitation. The State Planning Board also conducted studies on transportation, industry, agriculture, commercial fishing, population trends, public welfare, and housing for blacks.

As the fear of postwar economic crises subsided, interest in state planning waned. Across the nation, interest in "economic development," with its connotations of free enterprise, was rising. When the State Planning Board was [abolished in 1947](#) ^[9], its functions of economic development and assistance to local planning boards were continued by the [North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development](#) ^[10]. In the 1960s the idea of a state planning agency was revived, and subsequently a State Planning Division was established within the [Department of Administration](#) ^[11] in [Raleigh](#) ^[12].

References:

Koleen "Kay" Alice Haire, "The Evolution of City and Regional Planning in North Carolina, 1900-1950" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1967).

Albert Lepawsky, *State Planning and Economic Development in the South*(1949).

Howard W. Odum, *Folk, Region, and Society: Selected Papers of Howard W. Odum*(1964).

Additional Resources:

[Session laws and resolutions passed by the General Assembly \[1949\]](#) ^[13]; North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources Digital Collections

Subjects:

[Great Depression \(1929-1941\)](#) ^[14]

[Law and legal history](#) ^[15]

[Politics and government](#) ^[16]

[Post War 20th Century \(1946-2000\)](#) ^[17]

[World War II \(1941-1945\)](#) ^[18]

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Origin - location:

[Wake County](#) ^[20]

From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[21]

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