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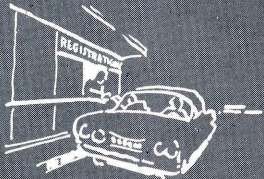
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Tourist and Resort Series

Circular R-307

MOTELS AND RESORTS

A GUIDE TO BETTER PLANNING



By C. A. Gunn

SCHOOL OF HOTEL, RESTAURANT,
AND INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, E. LANSING

Motels and Resorts

A GUIDE TO BETTER PLANNING

FOREWORD

This circular briefly summarizes the more important aspects of planning motels and resorts. It does not attempt to tell you how to do every phase of planning, but should add to your knowledge and understanding of this specialized type of planning.

There is no substitute for the professional planning of your personal project. It is up to the professional designers to do the precise job of planning facilities, just as it is up to special tradesmen to build and equip your facilities. This information is intended to supplement what they will do for you and assist you in your cooperation with them.

The scope of this circular includes only planning — not operational management. Information on financing, advertising, promotion, and business operation can be found elsewhere. (See references on page 31.) Nor should this material be construed to encourage overdevelopment of new facilities. How many resorts or motels an area can support at any one moment is a subject far removed from the scope of this circular.

This information is based upon several sources. Over the past fourteen years, more than a thousand places of business have been inspected, and as many operators have given freely of their observations and experiences in serving travelers and vacationists. Tourist, resort, motel, hotel, and architectural journals have been reviewed for current information on design trends. It also reflects the thinking of many planners, recreation specialists, tourist and resort leaders, and designers with whom the author has had close association.

It is hoped that this will encourage you to do a more thorough job of planning, resulting in better satisfaction for the guest and greater business success for you.

By C. A. Gunn¹

INTRODUCTION

Will the millions of dollars being spent on motels and resorts today yield the financial return expected by the owners tomorrow? Will the facilities provide the type and quality of accommodations desired by the majority of travelers and vacationists?

If past experience can be used as a guide, the answer is "yes" for some but a definite "no" for a great many others who continue to make hasty or shoddy plans. Mr. Smith, located in an upper Michigan area, has been trying to sell his \$6,000-a-room motel for three years at a sacrifice because his location yields such small occupancy. Mr. Jones, in lower Michigan is now abandoning his motel because his building appearance and layout are obsolete. Yet, both Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones are the finest of hosts, operate under the best business ethics, and maintain the cleanest facilities anywhere.

Unfortunately, they are not alone, but are typical of many other owners. Nation-wide sources indicate similar mistakes in other areas as well as Michigan.

Invariably, the most successful businesses are well located, designed for efficiency and appeal, and planned with an eye toward the future. Owners of such businesses are pleased with the response they get from the guests and are very happy with the financial returns upon their investments.

Since 1945, when the Cooperative Extension Service first focused attention upon the tourist and resort interests of Michigan, the significance of planning has become so vital that one can now predict failure if plans are inadequate. The contacts through this Service have provided a valuable pool of information from which some worthwhile conclusions can be drawn.

IT'S YOUR MONEY

This is not to say that superior management or promotion are not of extreme importance. But let us suppose that today you build a motel or a resort. As you operate the business in the next few years you discover that you are using ineffective advertising or your daily upkeep is not what it should be. These things you can change rather quickly and at relatively low cost.

If your buildings, which cost you over \$100,000 to build, are poorly located, or the rooms are of the wrong size or arrangement, or the parking is inadequate, what will you do? Many operators have asked what they should do in this situation. Obviously, the question is coming too late and any solution will cost thousands of dollars — both in new building investment and lost income during construction.

So many unpredictable things can happen to influence your success that you certainly should reduce the risk by being well informed.



Although individual situations are different, it is hoped that the above difficulties can be avoided by following the suggestions outlined in this circular. Enthusiasm and a strong

desire to succeed are virtuous but it takes more than a dream to succeed.

SO, YOU PLAN

More specifically, what can result from careful, accurate, thorough, and well-informed planning? Let's sum it up this way: *greater demand* for motel and resort services and therefore *higher occupancy*. To get this higher occupancy, and therefore *greater success*, consider:

A desirable location. Building construction costs no more at an attractive, accessible, usable location. Some locations are definitely one-season, severely limiting gross income.

¹Associate Professor, School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management, Michigan State University.

An appealing first impression. Distinctive styling, a single decorative theme, attention-getting color, and design make guests out of travelers and vacationists.

Room design which expresses comfort and convenience. To the four walls, beds, and baths must be added fresh styling, tasteful use of color and materials, and equipment to satisfy all needs.

Impeccable neatness. Guests expect rooms to appear as though they are the very first to ever use them. Superior upkeep encourages repeat business.

Fashionable extras. Although costly and difficult to plan for, allowance must be made for "keeping up with the Joneses." The public is fickle enough to be attracted to new gimmicks.

These customer advantages can result from better planning, but don't lose sight of your own angle. What about the ease of expansion? The saleability if a quick sell is necessary? The obsolescence—that silent destroyer of value? These may mean dollars in your pocket or they may be financial losses, depending on how much they were considered in the planning stage.

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Some of you will begin digging for the foundations, following nothing more than your memory of a motel you saw somewhere. Some will use the price you paid for a room on a recent trip, multiply it by 365, and with Uncle George's estimate of \$1,500 a room, begin building your 50-unit motel, and hope to double your money the first year. Others will hire an architect to design a resort on your presently-owned (but almost forgotten) property on No-Bottom Lake in Mosquito Hollow.

Exaggerated? Hardly. Hundreds of similar true-life examples could be cited.

A better organized approach certainly should prevent many errors and save you considerable money. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you prepare a well-studied and complete report of your intended project: a prospectus.

A prospectus is merely an explanation in words and sketches of what you intend to do. Without long-winded conversation, such a report can, convey to a banker, a friend, or a lending agency, a concise idea of your intentions.

What should be in the prospectus? Following is a suggested outline of six chapters:

1. An analysis of the proposed location and site; both advantages and disadvantages for the intended use.
2. Proposed layout of all development, including

buildings, drives, water supply, waste disposal, play areas, signs, waterfront development, etc.

3. Proposed building plans; at least rough floor plans and suggested exteriors with some notes about specifications.

4. Estimated costs of building construction, equipment, furnishings, and all site development—all the costs to get the business started.

5. A business prospectus—an estimate of fixed costs, operating costs, possible income and return on the investment.

6. Personal qualifications of the owners or managers; justification for your establishing this business.



WHO WILL DO IT?

Helpful hints on most of this will be found in this circular. But the job of collecting your own data will be yours—or that of those you hire. The only consistent party throughout all planning, development and operation is you—the owner. No one else can do your job for you.

But you will need help and a lot of it. Although seemingly awkward and involving some expense, this approach will save you many dollars and many headaches.

To help evaluate a location and site, visit existing business places having similar situations and interview the owner-manager. If possible, interview some guests. Also, discuss your location with city planners, zoning and building code administrators, and local health officials. Have an attorney advise you concerning building or zoning regulations or other restrictions on the property.

If state-owned hunting, fishing or recreational lands are involved, consult the specialists of the Michigan Department of Conservation in divisions such as lands, fisheries, and forestry. They also can assist you in matters involving lake or river problems. If Great Lake shores are involved, you may wish to contact the Water Resources Commission, the Corps of Army Engineers, and the Michigan Waterways Commission.

Information on soils, geology, climate, land situation, and local tourist and resort trends can be obtained from most Cooperative Extension offices located throughout Michigan. Review back issues of tourist and resort, motel, hotel, and travel journals for informative articles.

And consult the Michigan State Highway Department for information on highway trends, accessibility, year-around maintenance, and rules for signs and

entrances. Throughout your study, try not to excite too much local interest in your proposal or you may find property costs soaring beyond reasonable reach.

For advice and plans for the development of the site, consult a landscape architect. His knowledge of site planning and landscape plantings will help you when you select a site. He will need a great amount of information from you and your building architect in order to make proposals which will be best for the anticipated buildings and type of business.

While your prospectus will not require detailed working drawings, a site proposal is needed to obtain estimates of costs of grading, paving, construction of courts, pools, play areas, waterfront, additional plantings and lawns (and water supply and waste disposal if required on the site).

Before setting a building architect to work on your project, you should have made some study of business type and building costs. While you will not have a very accurate estimate of costs until a proposed sketch is prepared, you will eliminate unnecessary fees by avoiding too many revisions in plans. Tell the architect about how many units will be required, the price class of the clientele, and budget limitations. Have him inspect the proposed site and confer with the landscape architect.

Based upon the two sketches above — layout plan and building plan — landscape and building contractors can make reasonably close estimates of the costs of your project. This is no place for guesswork. Have several estimates made for comparison. In addition, you must obtain estimates of all furnishings and equipment.

At this stage you can prepare a business prospectus which should give you some hint regarding the possible financial success of the enterprise. Accountants familiar with motel and resort financing and operation can help you. The outline on page 30 should also be of help.

Before proceeding too far, you should have some notion of financial backing. Consult your bank or loaning agency early, but the most effective contact will be after you have prepared your prospectus. He will have a much better idea of the size, quality, and anticipated return on the proposed financing and may be convinced that you are a safe risk.

After you decide to go ahead, and have your plans and are ready to build, you must make certain the project will be carried out as planned. Your builders, installers of equipment, and many tradesmen on the project have a great influence upon the speed and quality of construction. Even with the best plans, you are not assured of the best buildings and other facilities unless the work is performed by competent persons.

TODAY'S TRENDS

As you look about you, you will see nearly all the new churches, shopping centers, schools and homes with a new and fresh styling. The same thing is happening to motels and resorts. Modern travelers want modern facilities. In fact, some investors have complained about how rapidly their buildings have become obsolete. Some excellent rooms are now hard to sell because the total establishment appears to be dated.

While some may argue that the present "contemporary" architecture may be outdated in a few years, there is no proof that older "period" styles will last any longer. Considering this and the fact that a new motel or resort building should receive all the promotional attention it can get, it would seem most desirable to give the new establishment the most modern dress.

The trend is also toward more and more comforts and conveniences. Offering a new convenience, at least for a period, tends to give a business a competitive advantage. However, as all others in an area conform to the standard, you must seek a newer gimmick.

Now the race is on, and it appears that soon the swimming pool will be as standard as the inside bath. More services, such as soft drinks, coffee, ice cubes, etc., are being offered on a self-service basis.

When planning a motel today, it is worthwhile to consider a restaurant (either as a part of the business or adjacent thereto). Some consider a bar equally important. Others emphasize the need for special rooms, such as recreation rooms, convention rooms, display rooms. Some now believe other shops, such as for souvenirs, sporting goods, etc., are desirable.



In order to hold vacationists at resorts today, special inducements of entertainment and activity, sometimes complicating the design, are offered. Some now boast electronic "baby-sitting" services. Many of these services require special rooms or equipment.

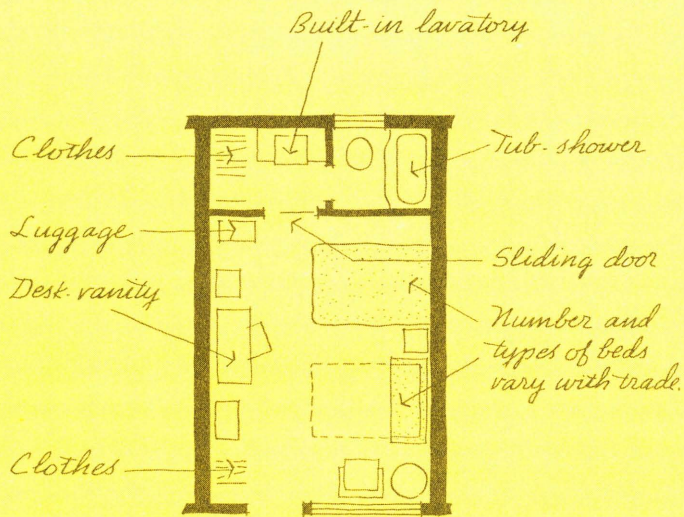
Many motel and resort businesses are becoming more highly specialized at the same time that they are becoming more flexible. This, even though contradictory, indicates an ever-increasing attempt to match demand with services. Some motels, for example, are built for air travelers, locating at airports;

others boast family rooms as well as businessmen's suites in hopes of capturing a variety of trade to avoid vacancies.

A present trend is toward bigness. Certainly this influences design. Even though you are starting small, it seems desirable to consider a great amount of expansion if you are to make the most profit. Whether or not you can enter on a "big" basis depends most upon your ability to finance. As mentioned before,

there may be a continuing place for the "small" business but make sure your profits will not be smaller than drawing interest on the same money if invested elsewhere.

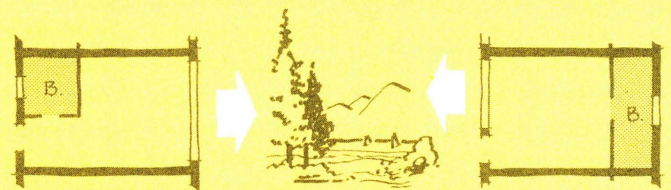
Most motels or resorts today are out of the do-it-yourself construction class, which has dominated this type of building in the past. The new materials, methods of construction, and complexity of design are beyond the experience of the average week-end



TYPICAL PLAN

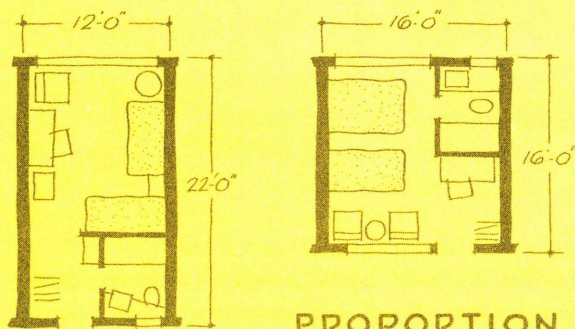
ONE-ROOM UNIT

Review these suggestions for size, proportion, orientation to view, and arrangement of this popular type of rental unit.



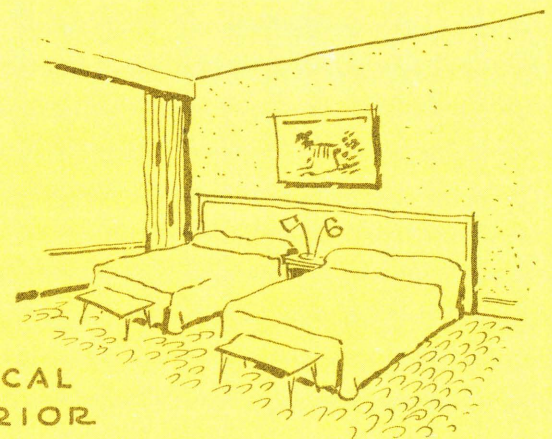
PLAN FOR VIEW

Place bath so that lounge has the best view



PROPORTION

Use narrow units if building length is limited - wide units if exposure is important



TYPICAL INTERIOR

Tourists like twin double beds.

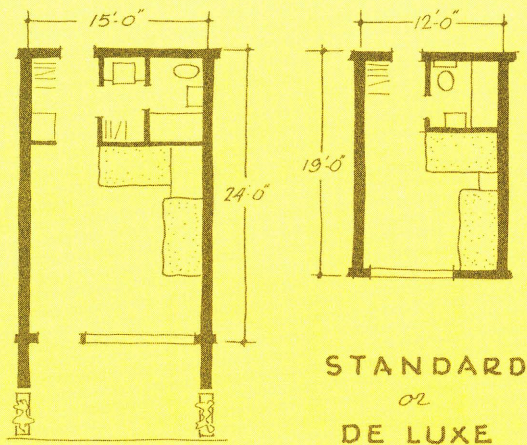
or would-be builder. The great number and specialization of trades involved in modern building tend to minimize your efforts and the actual savings that you might realize by doing your own work.

Today's buildings utilize an array of new products and materials unknown a generation ago. Today we see plastic-glass mixtures for wall and roof openings; pre-cast concrete with stone chip surfaces for wall panels; virtually indestructible plastic for

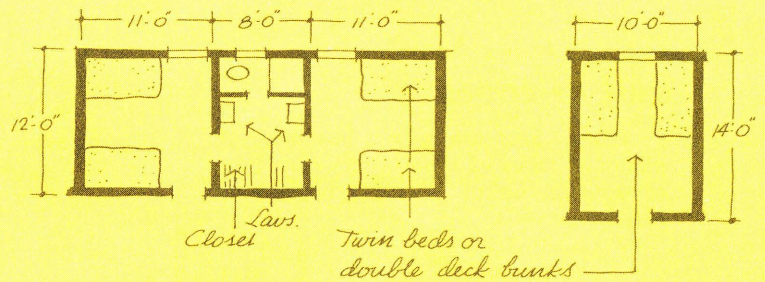
furniture tops and walls; expanded plastics and glass for insulation; wood fibers compressed into a variety of new products; aluminum doors, windows, and trim; to mention a few.

THE GUEST ROOM

First and foremost in the minds of most people when considering motel or resort facilities is the

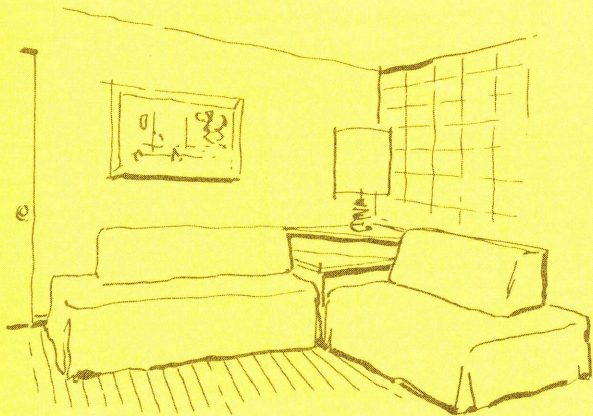
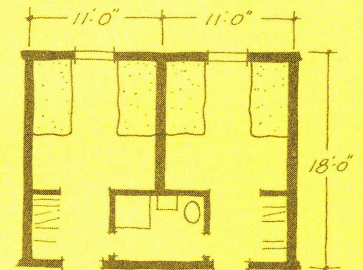


The number of "extras" depends upon the nature of your anticipated trade.



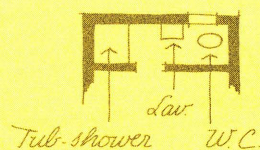
DORMITORY UNITS

The use of connecting baths is a compromise between the unit with bath and the unit with a central bath.



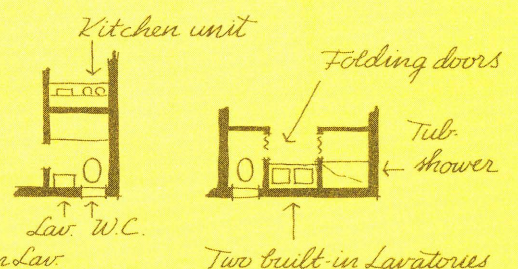
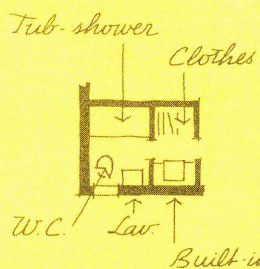
STUDIO ROOM

Commercial trade prefers this type.



BATHS

Review these and the other plans in this circular for ideas.



guest room. This is where the guest usually spends a great deal of his time; this is the item which generally costs most to build; and this is also an item subject to considerable change in guest's desires and tastes.

Today, three basic types of rentable units seem to be well adapted to motel and resort businesses: The One-Room Unit; The Suite of Rooms; and The Cottage or Vacation Apartment.

The sketches and plans shown here illustrate

important planning ideas. Do not copy them without the advice of your designer.

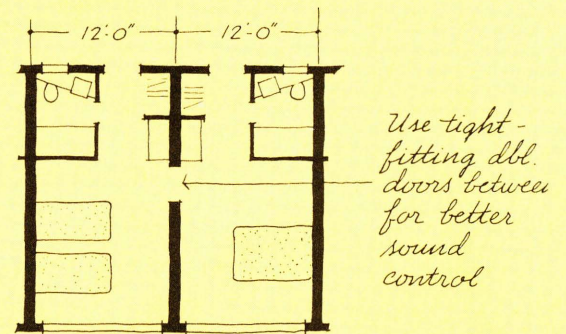
PLANNING THE ONE-ROOM UNIT

The room with bath has become a standard rentable unit for motels and is equally well adapted to new resorts. The following factors are worthy of consideration:

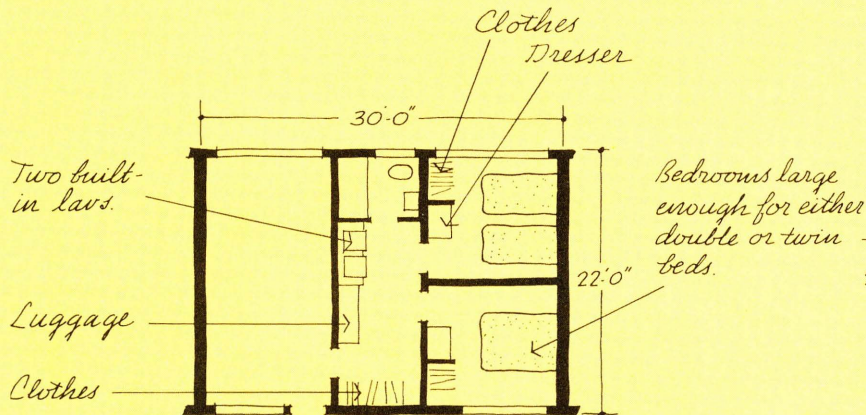
✓ Plan from inside out. Plan for basic furniture

SUITE OF ROOMS

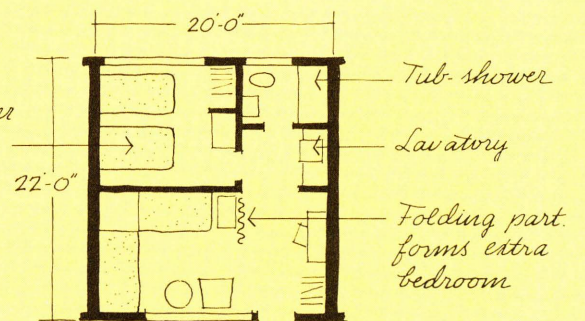
Shown here are only a few ways of planning suites of rooms. Consider type of demand before deciding upon your plan.



CONNECTING ROOMS



TWO - BEDROOM



ONE - BEDROOM

first, then allow space for movement: influences room size and proportion.

- ✓ Use studio type room (twin beds serving as day-time seating) for businessmen's trade; twin double beds for tourists; combinations for variety of trade.
- ✓ Minimum size: large enough to be furnished with two double beds, even though not always furnished this way.
- ✓ Deluxe rooms may be larger, but should also include added features: more chairs, larger desk-

vanity, dressing area enclosed, compartmented bath, more luxurious interior.

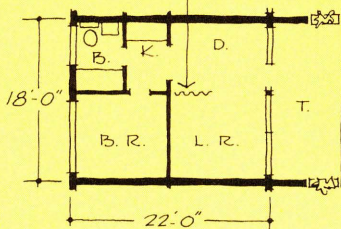
- ✓ First impression on guest should be good: good taste, comfort, and cleanliness.
- ✓ Open rack for coats, boots should be placed near entrance door — prevents tracking floor.
- ✓ Consider desirable views. Create new views if necessary: enclosed patio with picture window, perhaps door in deluxe units.

COTTAGE OR VACATION APARTMENT

Before deciding upon your cottage or apartment plans, review these ideas on planning.

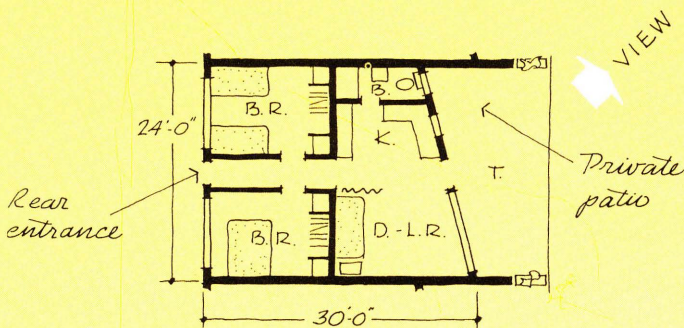
Folding partition in Livingroom makes a Bedroom at night

A rear entrance is convenient, but not always possible



ONE BEDROOM UNIT

VIEW



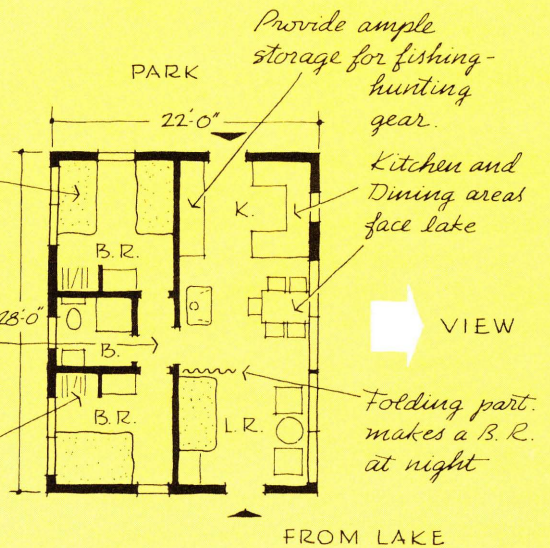
TWO-BEDROOM UNIT

VACATION APARTMENTS

One bedroom should be large enough for twin beds

All sleeping areas should have private access to Bath

Provide for storage



VACATION COTTAGE

On the next few pages are suggestions for arranging these rental units.

Tourist Motel	12
City Motel	14
Cottage Resort	18
Summer Resort	22
Dude Ranch	24

Baths must be of high quality and well-planned. Trend toward lavatory outside bath; serves also as vanity in dressing area. Use separate compartments for luxury units. Tub-shower usually preferred; use accident-proof sliding door. Large mirror better than medicine cabinet with mirror except perhaps for some resort trade.

The room without bath is usually thought to be obsolete but seems to be satisfactory in dormitories for Dude Ranches and Winter Sports Resorts. Usually minimum in size, it connects to a central bath by a common corridor.

Some have used units with connecting bath. This is a compromise and may be satisfactory for some types of trade. Perhaps one-room units with bath would be a wiser investment, considering the trade at other seasons.

PLANNING THE SUITE OF ROOMS

For some types of business, the suite of rooms (often two-room, sometimes three) is desirable. Double couples, families, and several businessmen traveling together like this type of unit.

Just merely making a room larger to increase bed capacity is unsatisfactory. Curtains do not offer enough privacy to use as room dividers.

Connecting rooms are a good compromise. Good sound control is sacrificed for flexibility of rental.

Two separate rooms with connecting bath is excellent. The first room entered is usually a studio type room and the second furnished primarily for sleeping. Each room should have private access to the joining bath.



PLANNING THE COTTAGE OR VACATION APARTMENT

This unit is best adapted to resort facilities, although some motels include some housekeeping units. The additional investment in equipment and regular cost of upkeep must be justified by increased income.

Plan units to face the best view, especially from dining and kitchen areas.

One entrance will do, but a rear entrance affords better access for swimmers, fishermen, to waste containers, drying lines, parking, etc.

Sleeping rooms can be small, but should be large enough for ease of bed upkeep, dressing, and clothes storage.

Lounge area should be planned to double as a bedroom at night.

All sleeping areas should have private access to bathroom.

Kitchens can be compact, but not at the sacrifice of adequate refrigeration, cooking space, and sink capacity.

Use table rather than counter top for dining — is much more flexible for playing cards, viewing maps, tinkering with fishing tackle.

Keep all areas large enough for easy use but not so large that the guest becomes weary of daily upkeep.

Don't forget storage space. Cottage guests need some room for swimming and fishing gear, cameras, sports equipment, as well as changes of clothing. Use open storage space to encourage the guest to remember to take home all his belongings when he leaves.

To summarize, all rentable units should be planned to provide comfortable, convenient, clean and attractive quarters. You begin with the anticipated trade and develop the best quarters for them. This is the best way to have a successful operation.

The confusion of names — motor courts, motor hotels, highway hotels, highway inns, grand motels, and many others — makes description and guidance difficult. However, most people agree that a motel is *modern* (of today, rather than a past era), *convenient* (both in room plan and in provision for parking), and *informal* (in operation as well as design).

Even so, the structure may be short, tall, large, small, striking design, conservative, on spacious grounds, or on a small lot — and succeed. Does this apparent lack of conformity mean the complete absence of any fundamentals of planning? Hardly. This circular outlines some basic aspects of planning.

TYPES

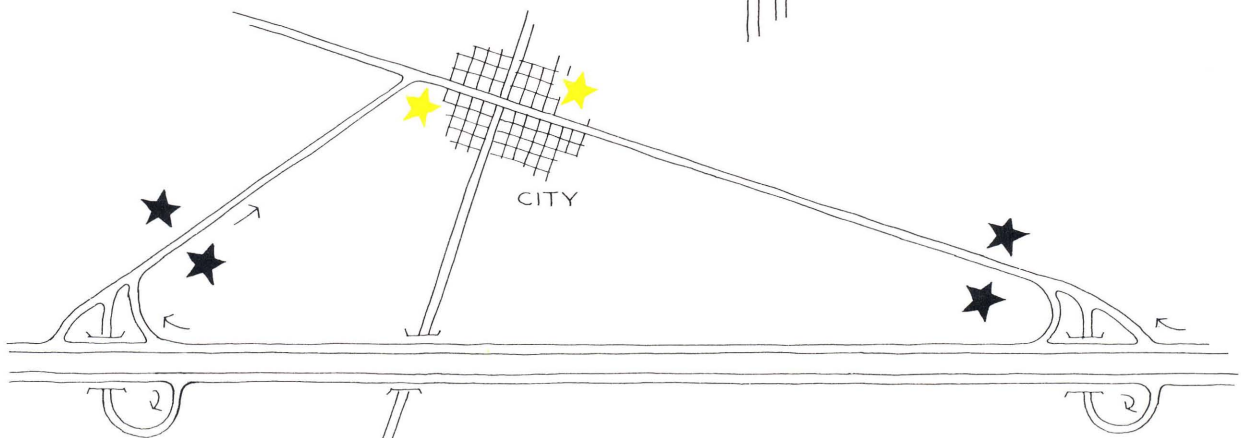
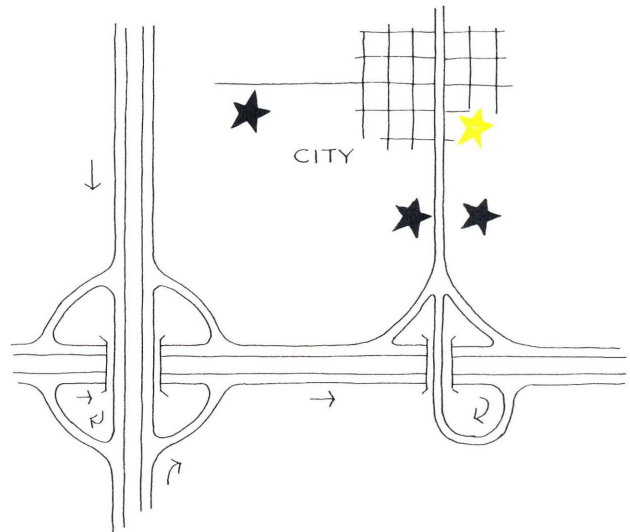
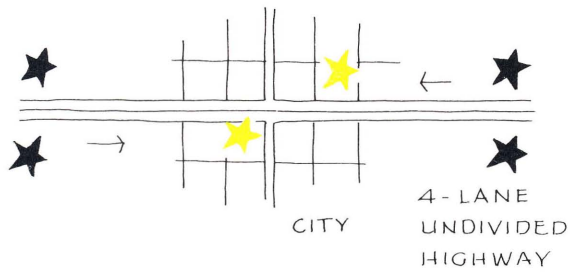
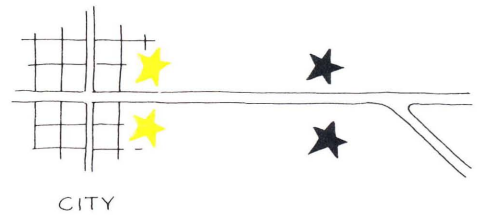
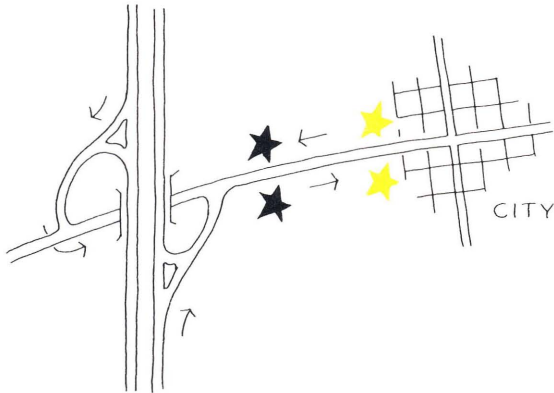
Enough difference exists between those motels catering primarily to tourists and those having primarily businessmen's trade to make a rough classification of CITY MOTELS and TOURIST MOTELS.

The CITY MOTEL is a departure from the traditional motel which grew from the tourist cabin of

Suggested Motel locations, assuming that other factors (such as: zoning, land cost, site size, soil, accessibility, availability) do not limit motel use.

MOTEL LOCATION

- ★ CITY MOTEL
- ★ TOURIST MOTEL



the Thirties. In fact, it may have little or no tourist business and outwardly resembles its relative in name only.

The TOURIST MOTEL continues to thrive in those areas which have high concentrations of tourists. Tourists can increase the demand as much as two, three, or even ten times during certain seasons.

COSTS

The only true estimate of the cost of building a motel is that made by a building contractor, based upon a specific set of plans and specifications, on a certain date of a given year.

When discussing costs, make sure everyone means the same thing. The cost per room can mean just the bare building cost of one room or a figure found by dividing the cost of the entire motel project (rooms, furnishings, lounge, apartment, parking, drives, sign, water supply, waste disposal, pool, etc.) by the total number of rentable units. Another variable factor is number and quality of comforts and conveniences. So many, many parts go to make up a motel that differences in the cost of each can influence total cost by as much as two or three times.

For example, a 50-unit motel today could cost all the way from \$250,000 to \$700,000 or more, depending upon what is offered. Roughly, land cost ranges from 10% to 15% of total cost. If your site is to cost over 15% of the total, you may have land more valuable for some other use. The bare building costs generally run from 75% to 85% of the total cost. Land improvements vary considerably (swimming pools, landscaping, parking, signs, outdoor lighting, etc.) and may vary as much as 1% to 5%. Furnishings can range from 7% to 11% of the total. These estimates do not include any other construction than the motel proper; manager's apartment, restaurant, gift shop, car service, should be estimated separately.

After reading the following discussion of location, site development and building planning for both the TOURIST MOTEL and the CITY MOTEL, make comparisons. It may help you in your decision on building plans, and possibly in the selection of a location which will be most profitable for you.

The Tourist Motel

If you are most interested in catering to tourists, you will want to study those aspects of location, site selection, site development, and building planning which are best for this trade. The seasonality of the Tourist Motel is one of its major problems and must be considered before building.

1 The sign should be the first item seen; simple, neat, legible, in keeping with building style.

2 Two entrance drives are preferred; a single drive permissible in slowed traffic zone.

3 Registration desk readily accessible; some use drive-in window. Plan space around desk for guest to get information, register, and buy sundry items. Desk must include equipment and records necessary for daily management.

4 A lounge is not essential but many find it desirable, even when small. May be used as "TV" or "Coffee" room.

5 Private office for manager is desirable to keep records; files; handle private business.

6 Manager's home or apartment with motel is convenient, but makes private family life difficult. In estimating costs and returns, do not figure the home as part of the business investment.

7 Make good first impressions with good layout. Swimming pool, shuffleboard court, appealing grounds and buildings should be seen first.

8 Parking should be laid out for easy use by the guest. Marking is easier when parking is surfaced.

11 Place buildings so that best views can be obtained from the guest rooms.

12 One story construction preferred; more stories acceptable; but use only when site limitations force building design upward.

13 Build central room for storage and control of linens. A separate maid's room should be provided for each 10 units of the motel. At least one locker room with toilet and lavatory should be placed on each floor.

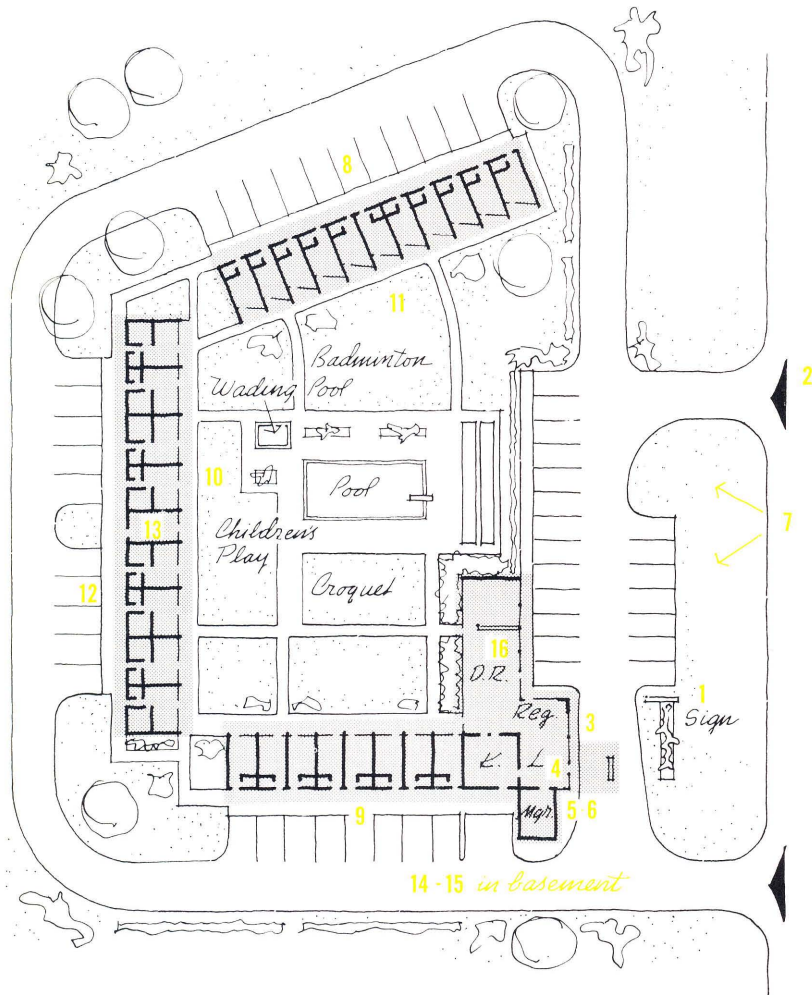
14 Place controls of electrical, heating, plumbing and air conditioning systems in one room easily accessible by the manager. Provide a separate room for tools and equipment for making minor repairs.

15 Consider some area for storage of seasonal and other necessary items. Don't let it become a catch-all.

9 Tourists prefer direct access from car to room. They tend to resist interior corridors.

10 Row-type construction is usually preferred, but detached units or duplexes are also used (sometimes dictated by terrain.)

16 Supporting businesses, such as food service, car service, souvenir sales, are desirable with the motel or adjacent thereto, but must be planned according to their own factors of success.



LOCATION AND SITE

- ✓ **Along a main highway.** It is essential to check the traffic count and make sure that a high volume of tourists travel the highway. Ask Michigan State Highway Department, Lansing, about future route changes and entrance drive permits.
- ✓ **Near a natural stopping point.** You cannot give the tourist service until he stops. If food service, car service, drug stores, or several other businesses or tourist attractions are present, the tourist will more likely stop for rooms.
- ✓ **A spacious site.** Tourists like play areas (pool, playground equipment, shuffleboard, lawns) which take extra land. Purchase enough land for expansion.
- ✓ **Easily accessible.** Tourists hesitate to seek out remote accommodations even if they provide quieter rooms. Visibility should be good. Complicated access (often created by expressways) should be avoided.
- ✓ **Reasonably level land.** Abrupt changes in grade cause construction problems and more upkeep. Building should be given good setting; good drainage.
- ✓ **Desirable soil.** Building construction, drives, parking, landscape development (possibly sewage disposal) require the best soil conditions.
- ✓ **Protected land use.** Good zoning should protect your use and prevent adjacent uses which will detract from your property use.

BUILDING AND SITE PLANNING

Site planning should be integrated with building planning. There should be very close cooperation between you, the landscape architect, and the building architect. Each site will have different opportunities or limitations for design.

Study the layout, plan, and notes on the following pages for general ideas on Tourist Motel planning. This example is not the only way of designing a motel for such a site, but may provide a basis for checking your proposed project.

HOW BIG?

The size and number of units varies with the individual situation. Traditionally, 10 to 15 units has been the maximum number most couples have wished to own and manage without hiring help. Today, however, the trend is toward investment building, using a hired manager. Some believe that at least 50 units are necessary to earn adequate returns for the investor as well as to provide wages for a manager and his staff. Others indicate that over 50 units are required for greatest efficiency.

WHAT ARRANGEMENT OF UNITS?

In any case, the selection of units for rent is a compromise, based upon the anticipated trade today and in the future. A great variety of room types is discouraged. It seems wiser to build a majority of rooms alike but of a size and arrangement that will satisfy the most popular range of trade and a minority of different size rooms to satisfy the others.

By using a majority of similar units, the initial construction cost is less per unit; the rooms are easier to clean and make up each day; the rooms are repaired and furnishings are replaced with greater ease and less cost.

For example, a 20-unit Tourist Motel might be planned as follows:

- 14 rooms suited to 1, 2, or possibly 3 adults; or families with one or two small children; those who want a single unit with bath.
- 6 rooms suited to 2 to 4 adults; or families with up to 4 children; for those who want 2 rooms with bath.

The City Motel

In the past few years, many motels have found that the only way to obtain fair returns on the relatively high investment is to rent to traveling salesmen or other businessmen during the so-called "off-season." As long as they offered the best room in town, they could ignore some of the other desires of these travelers (such as preferred location) and get their trade.

Many older hotels are making a striking comeback by remodeling and offering motel-type services. Their greatest advantage often is location and some motels which had businessmen's trade for awhile are again losing it to the hotels. This emphasizes the significance of location, if one intends to build the CITY MOTEL, which is a hotel in many respects.

LOCATION AND SITE

- ✓ **Close in to a city.** City influences are greater, than rural or suburban influences, on this type of motel.
- ✓ **Near demand.** Nearness to business, industry, convention halls, public buildings, colleges, universities, hospitals, or other places of assembly is important. Nearness to other services, such as food, entertainment, car service, etc., is an asset.
- ✓ **On a main street.** Side streets are hard to find. Your location should be reached easily from the inter-city and state highway systems.

✓ **Easily accessible.** Avoid abrupt changes in grade. Check city plans for changing direction of traffic; may limit business in future.

✓ **Desirable neighborhood.** Other factors above (nearness to demand) may take precedence over the attractiveness of neighboring properties. While good neighbors are desirable, you may be forced to develop your own environment.

✓ **Adequate size.** Just because city properties cost more, don't skimp on property. Obtain enough for adequate parking (usually 1 to 1 ratio; check local codes); building construction and desirable setbacks. For deluxe facilities, allow more space for swimming pool, landscape development.

✓ **Desirable soil.** Building construction, perhaps several stories, requires the best of soil.

✓ **Legal requirements.** Building codes, zoning ordinances, and health regulations sometimes impose unrealistic rules upon motels. Have your attorney check these carefully, noting trends which might restrict your expansion in the future.

BUILDING AND SITE PLANNING

Because less spacious sites are generally used for CITY MOTELS, the building and parking arrangement are extremely important. You, your building architect and landscape architect must work very closely together.

The example on the following pages illustrates the basic planning considerations for the City Motel. Other arrangements could also be used. Check your own plans against the notes listed here.

HOW BIG?

Generally, the trend for the City Motel is toward operations of 100 rooms or more. The investment in building construction is usually in better relationship to site cost and the size is better justification for an adequate managerial staff. The optimum size, de-



pends upon the type of management, location, demand and other factors. Before deciding upon the size, you should estimate both the costs and the earning power for two or three sizes of motels. For your particular set of conditions, it may be wiser to invest in 50 or 200 rooms, rather than 100.

ARRANGEMENT OF UNITS?

You will have one serious problem that can be solved only by a compromise. Once construction is completed, the buildings are fixed in size and arrangement. But since the trade varies from day to day, month to month, and year to year, you must select room types on the basis of flexibility of rental; you must recognize the need for change.

The City Motel's "bread-and-butter" business comes from salesmen and other businessmen. Tourists constitute a very small portion of the trade. Study your local conditions before deciding on room types. If the community is a center for basketball tournaments or other sports events, a higher-than-average demand for rooms will occur during these events. Careful analysis of local business, industrial, and cultural activities of the community may clue you to the type of room which will be filled the greatest number of days per year.

While variety in design is good, economies of construction, upkeep, and better rentability encourage you to standardize on room type as much as possible. The entire motel should have the room pattern which will be best for your anticipated trade.

While no rules can fit all situations, the following might be an arrangement of a 100-room motel:

- 40 Deluxe rooms (studio type); maximum 2 persons.
- 10 Regular rooms (studio type); maximum 2 persons.
- 26 Regular rooms; maximum 4 persons.
- 12 Two-room suites; maximum 4 persons.
- 12 Regular rooms (studio type); maximum 2 persons each room, but interconnected in pairs.

1 The identifying sign must be easily read from both directions and may be a part of the building design.

2 Site conditions may dictate a loop or single drive entrance, which is usually acceptable because of slowed traffic.

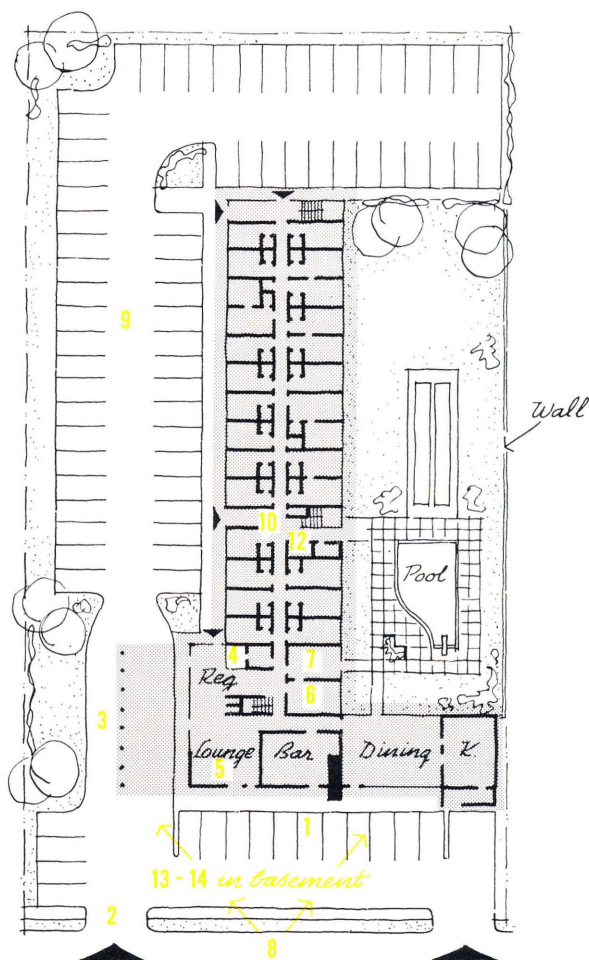
3 The entrance canopy, reminiscent of the carriage stop, is again becoming popular. Leave an open drive for high trucks and car-top carriers.

4 Registration and information desk should be easy to find as one first enters the motel. The front desk area may also include sales of souvenirs, magazines, newspapers, cigars, cigarettes, as well as space for mail and phone calls.

5 A lounge is needed but can be of small size. Plan it as a separate area—not a passageway.

6 An office for correspondence, auditing, bookkeeping, and all record-keeping is desirable. In larger motels it should be separate from the manager's private office.

7 A small apartment is desirable for the manager, but most operators prefer their home elsewhere for greater family privacy.



8 A favorable first impression should be created by the exterior design and upkeep.

9 Parking may or may not be visible from the entrance as long as it is reasonably convenient to building entrances.

11 SECOND FLOOR

RESORTS

10 Interior corridor access is acceptable and reduces construction and upkeep costs. A few outside entrances (and stairwells, if more than one story) can offer convenient access to all rooms.

11 Several stories seem to be acceptable. However, over two stories requires an elevator properly located in relation to building entrances, guest rooms, and other public areas.

12 A central storage and control for linens is important. Provide separate maid's room for cleaning equipment, supplies, and extra room supplies for each 10 units of the motel. Also provide at least one staff locker room with toilets and lavatories for each sex.

13 A separate room for all electrical control panels, plumbing, heating and air conditioning controls should be centrally located. Another room should be provided for making minor repairs.

14 Some space must be provided for storage of tools, equipment and supplies which must be kept on hand but are not in use most of the time.

15 Dining room, souvenir shop, snack bar, cocktail lounge, barber shop, and other shops are important adjuncts to this business but each one has its own specific requirements of location and planning.

Generally, the word resort, as distinguished from the motel, means a place where vacationists can spend more than a day, enjoying one or many activities or attractions. Today a variety of names seem to apply: resort motel, cottage, resort hotel, lodge, inn, dude ranch, ski resort, and many others. Some are descriptive — others are not.

Fundamentally, all attempt to provide lodging, vacation activities, food service (either by dining areas or cooking privileges). The establishment of every one involves planning problems such as location, site selection, drives and parking areas, guest rooms, and a variety of recreation activities.

TRENDS

Even though many people are accepting congestion and compact living, even in resort areas, there is no need for wanton destruction of the landscape when developing a resort. After purchasing a resort site, resist the temptation to start cutting trees. If you strip property thoughtlessly and unnecessarily you may be destroying the very basis of your business

— an attractive vacation setting. If the guest is to see only building walls and pavement when the project is completed, he might better stay home — and he will, or go elsewhere.



More and more motel-like structures are appearing at resorts. This style implies more modern convenience and comfort. The compactness of this design actually saves land (leaving more for recreation). It is more efficient to manage, and may save some investment costs. This is not to say, that detached buildings are obsolete. Sometimes they are to be preferred, especially when the terrain is rugged.

More new operators and owners are recognizing the importance of keeping various parts of the investment in proper balance. At ski resorts the cafeteria or snack bar should have a capacity roughly equal to the number of skiers accommodated on the slopes. Complete food service (including evening dinners and breakfasts) and lodging need not be of this capacity because many skiers stay for just the day. Each resort situation must be individually planned.

Your plans should include features and attractions which will help hold guests for more than one day. This is your only hope of counteracting the trend toward touring vacations.

TYPES

A high degree of specialization seems to dominate resort business. Some separate and distinct types in operation are: *the Cottage or Vacation Apartment Resort*; *the Summer Resort*; *the Dude Ranch*; and *the Hunting-Fishing Club*. Suggestions for location, site selection, site development and building planning for these are described in this circular.

As investments in facilities increase, the need for greater financial returns also increases. This creates a desire to stretch the season of operation. As a result, a new concept of *The All-Season Resort* is gaining interest. While the summer vacation dominates the resort trade in the Great Lakes area, other seasons have increased greatly in interest and demand, lending support to the 2-, 3-, or even 4-season resort. Some suggestions for planning this type of resort are also included here.

The Cottage or Vacation Apartment Resort

This is probably the oldest and yet continues to be one of the most popular types of resorts in this region. The traditional unit type of building, the cottage, has encouraged the average handy-man seeking part-time income to enter the business. While this type of operation probably will continue to some degree, many families of today seek accommodations where more services are available, necessitating a more business-like approach.

This means more units, more recreation activities and services—and higher investments. To obtain greater returns on the investment, a longer season is desirable. Therefore, you should carefully consider your location. It costs no more to build on a good location than on a poor one.

LOCATION AND SITE

Although vacation apartments or cottages appear to succeed in many different locations, the following factors seem to be important to all. Check your proposed location and site against these to learn of its assets or liabilities.

✓ **Lakeshore.** The old rule, the better the lake and beach, the better the site, still applies but pools are becoming more popular. The Great Lakes are chosen for their grandeur, surf, cool air, fishing, and broad sand beaches. Inland lakes are selected for greater variety of fishing, warmer waters, and more intimate setting.

✓ **New environment.** Some like to commune with nature in solitude; others seek busy resort community

1 The sign on the highway as well as the entrance (sometimes the same) must be simple, legible, designed in harmony with the resort, and given an attractive landscape setting.

2 Either double or single entrance drives are acceptable. Consult Michigan State Highway Department for entrance drive permits, and rules on sign set-back, type and lighting.

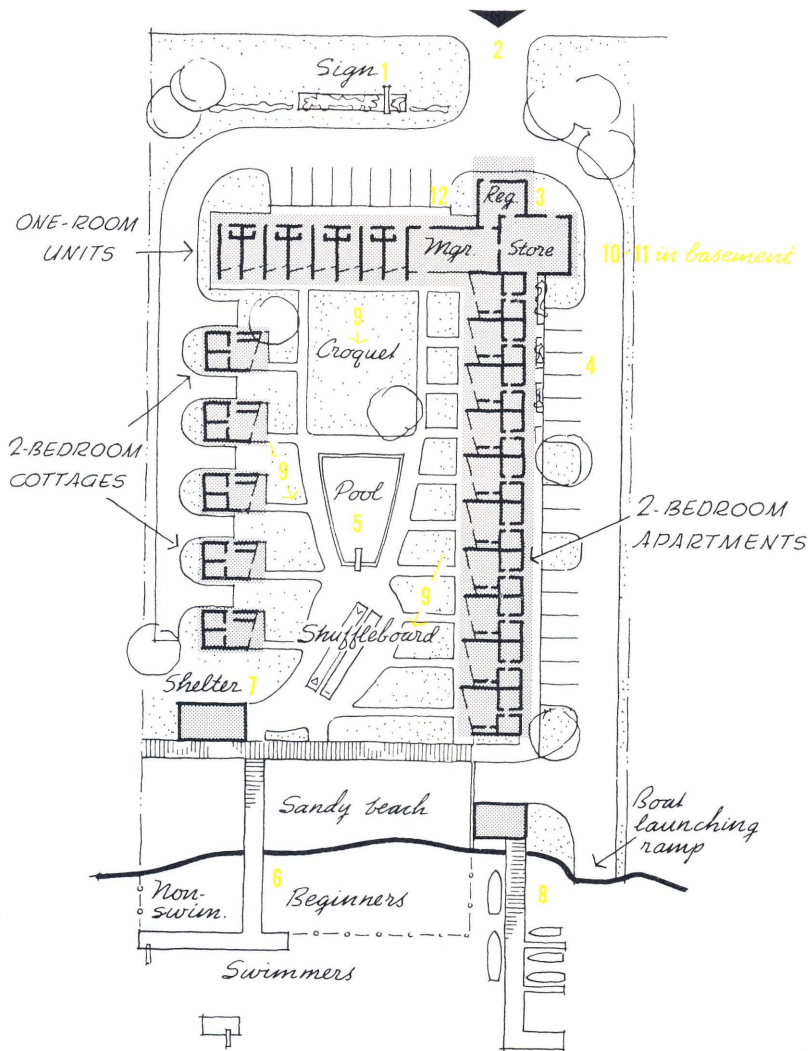
3 As soon as the guest enters the resort proper, he should easily find the registration office. This office should be located to give the manager complete control of the property.

4 Parking should be of the right size and shape; more than 1 to 1 ratio is desirable. Guests prefer parking near units, but will walk a reasonable distance. Keep view open.

5 Most commonly used play activities (pool, shuffleboard) should be centered to create unity and fellowship among guests. Consider safety when locating horseshoes, archery.

6 Waterfront activities can provide fun for all ages, but must be planned for safety as well. A dock for swimmers and sun-bathers should be separated from the boat dock. Zones for non-swimmers, beginners, and swimmers should be clearly marked.

8 For fishermen, provide a separate dock, launching ramp, lockers for their gear, fish cleaning house, and maybe freezing privileges.



9 All units (detached or in one building) should have view to lake. This takes careful study, considering future construction as well as present needs.

10 Plan for some storage so that it can be enclosed. This can eliminate a tendency on many resorts to have cluttered and unsightly storage areas.

11 A small shop for minor repairs is essential. Hand and power tools, together with spare parts are needed for the upkeep of the great number of buildings and equipment on the property.

7 A screened-in shelter at the waterfront gives parents a chance to relax while supervising children's play. Rainy-day fun can be centered here and the building can provide boat storage in winter.

12 Someone in charge must be available at all times. However, some managers prefer to have their own home or apartment elsewhere for greater family privacy.

life. In either case, a great number of natural or man-made attractions are desirable.

✓ **Easy access.** Avoid excessive grades or hazardous curves. Hard surfacing is essential.

✓ **Desirable setting.** A tree-covered site in a forest setting puts the guest in the resort mood. Views within and beyond the site should inspire resort activity. Buy an adequate buffer of land or make sure that your land use is protected by good zoning.

✓ **Adequate area.** Ample land area is preferred but smaller sites seem to succeed. Enough land must be available for the finished building program, parking, recreation areas, and utilities.

✓ **Stabilized water level.** Check the history of the levels of the lake. Fluctuations, causing great changes in beaches are undesirable. High levels of the Great Lakes can completely destroy a resort unless set back beyond reach of erosion.

✓ **Near services.** Although tourists profess "roughing it," they like to have a community and all its services nearby. Restaurants, post office, car service, doctors, theaters, drug stores, sporting goods and other shops are desirable. Consider the business climate; good community advertising and promotion are often worth more than your own.

✓ **Good soil.** Building construction, drives, parking, and plantings require good soil. Check soil regarding water supply and waste disposal problems. Beware of muck or peat lake bottom or beach.

✓ **Utilities.** "High line" electricity is essential. Fuel for cooking and heating should be available at a reasonable rate and supplied with good service.

BUILDING AND SITE PLANNING

In order to keep from losing money in this business, the property must be carefully planned. The relatively high investment per unit together with the shortness of season force you to plan the most attractive and useful buildings and grounds with the lowest investment.

The illustration may provide you with some important planning ideas. Other plans could be just as satisfactory.

HOW BIG?

For part-time income, one unit is enough. More are necessary if you are to depend upon the business for your entire income. Some owners indicate that at least 20 are necessary and others prefer 50 as a minimum. Only by setting up your own business prospectus for your own situation will you be able to answer this question.

WHAT ARRANGEMENT?

Should all units be alike? If not, how many of separate types?

This business traditionally depends most upon family trade. To house the family in a vacation cottage or apartment requires virtually a small home. Families are increasing in size. The need, then, is a unit that is suitable for larger families and yet rentable to couples.

From the investment standpoint, it seems wiser to build larger units, at least of the two-bedroom variety. Couples can rent larger units (and you can offer them at a reduced rate) but larger families cannot use "honeymoon cottages." A large portion of the investment in each unit regardless of number of bedrooms is in the kitchen and bath.

If you were building a resort of this type using 20 units, you might consider the following arrangement:

12 units suited to the larger family; probably should accommodate a maximum of 8, but more frequently 4 to 6.

8 units somewhat smaller; probably would sleep a maximum of 6, but more frequently 2 to 4.

This arrangement provides for as many "standard" units as possible for economy of construction and upkeep, but offers adequate flexibility for the majority of trade. Each resort, however, must be planned to suit individual needs of the location, site, and anticipated trade.

COSTS

Today, it is difficult to build a two-bedroom cottage of rentable quality for less than \$6,000 and may easily reach \$10,000 or more. This is exclusive of land costs, furnishings, and land improvements, such as water supply, waste disposal, drives, etc. Do not expect great savings by doing your own work or by using cheap building materials. Take advantage of all opportunities to keep the investment down but do not do so at the sacrifice of guest satisfaction (usually reflected in lower rate and lower occupancy), or ease of upkeep.

There is no substitute for getting adequate building plans from an architect, followed by building estimates from several reputable builders.

A 20-cottage resort, complete with docks, boats, and land improvements, could easily cost upwards of \$200,000 today. Make sure that this large an investment will bring adequate returns before you place it in a vacation apartment resort.



Unique sign, with motif repeated on building, makes motel easy to remember.



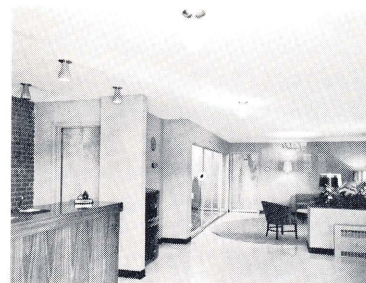
Resort cottages staggered for best view to lake; effective night lighting.



Even in areas where lakes are plentiful, swimming pools provide extra fun and have considerable promotional value.



Both motels and resorts need an ample amount of good parking.



Make a good first impression with your desk, lobby, lounge.

The Summer Resort

For many years, the summer resort, offering food service, lodging, and some entertainment has been popular. It all began when railroads and steamboats first brought vacationists to resort areas, especially along the Great Lakes.

Many vacationists still prefer this type of facility, where they can get "everything." To establish a summer resort today, one must recognize that today's vacationists are more active, more demanding, and much more restless than those of the past. "Sitting and rocking" and "enjoying the salubrious breezes from the veranda," no longer dominate vacation activities.

When you estimate the costs of building a new business of this type, you may become actively interested in other seasons as well. Therefore, it would be well for you to compare the characteristics of this type with others which may prove to be more profitable.

LOCATION AND SITE

The Summer Resort requires virtually the same location and site characteristics as the Cottage or Vacation Apartment Resort. Review the items listed on pp. 18, 20, which are: Lakeshore; New Environment; Easy Access; Desirable Setting; Adequate Area; Stabilized Water Level; Near Services; Good Soil; Utilities.

BUILDING AND SITE PLANNING

A summer resort requires even larger investments than the Vacation Apartment Resort and includes many more items. Make a thorough study of your project before beginning construction.

Perhaps a close review of the illustration will prove helpful to you. While it shows only one solution to a design problem it contains the basic principles important to all similar resorts.

HOW BIG?

You will need enough rentable units to obtain a reasonable return on the investment. Usually, the greatest number of staff personnel at a resort of this type are required for the food service. Therefore, many consider it not worthwhile to be in business with less than 50 guests; others argue for a minimum of 100 guests.

To operate for about 100 guests requires 30 to 40 rooms; kitchen and dining room to serve at least 100 at a meal; and all the other facilities mentioned above that go to make up a complete resort of this type.

1 Identifying sign should be simple, legible, and in harmony with the entire resort. The entrance drive should make the most of attractive views, yet free from hazardous curves or grades.

2 Plan parking areas to be useable at all seasons of operation. Staff and service drives and parking should be separated from those for the guests.

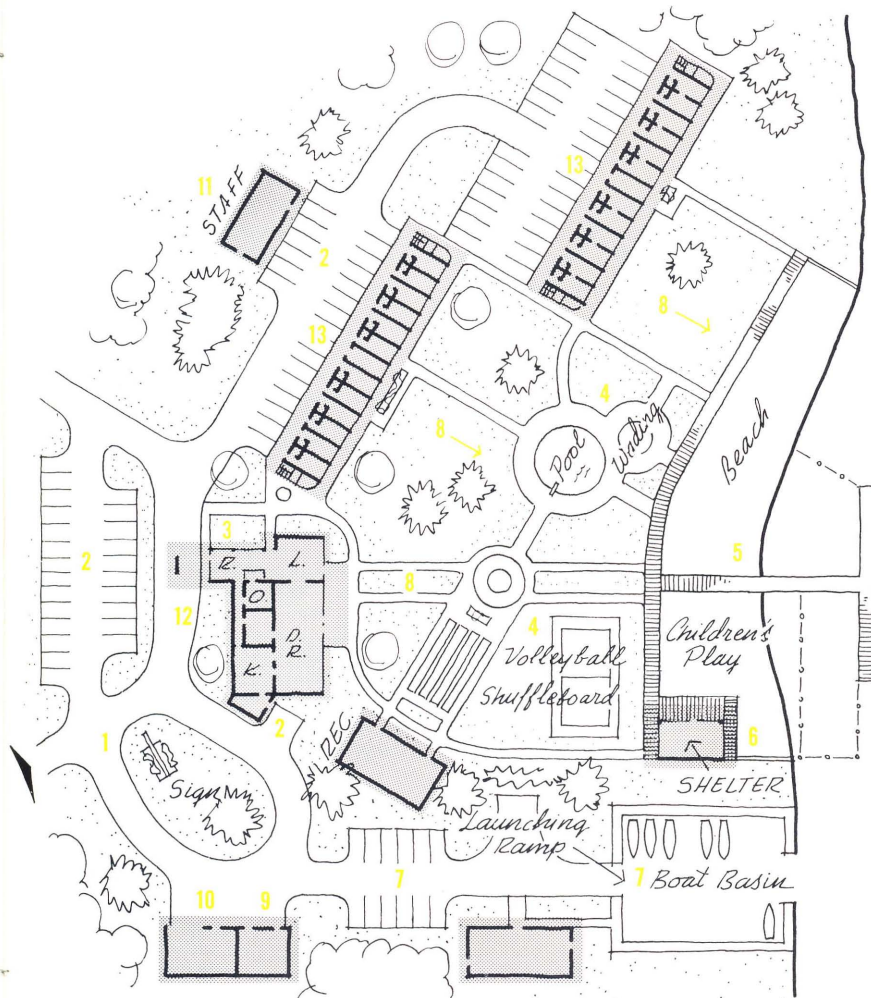
3 Registration should be readily and easily accomplished. Give the guest glimpses of resort interior as he registers.

4 Resort fun is so significant that it needs good planning. Provide facilities, courts, and equipment for all ages. Consider interest, imaginative play, and safety.

5 Waterfront play should be well organized; separate the fishermen from others by building dock for swimmers and sun-bathers; zone water areas for non-swimmers, beginners, and swimmers.

6 A beach shelter is enjoyed by mothers watching their children at the water's edge; can provide for rainy day fun.

9 Do not forget to provide space for storage of many items which should be kept out of sight. If properly planned, this building, room or area can be neat, orderly and handy to use.



10 A maintenance shop is needed to house tools, repair parts and paints—usually next to garage for grounds maintenance equipment.

11 While someone must be in charge at all times, many managers prefer to have their home at another location for greater privacy. In remote locations, provision for the staff is necessary; many prefer not to house staff on the property.

12 Size and layout of the central lodge will vary with the business, but consider: kitchen, desk-lobby, lounge, manager's office, and dining room(s). Sometimes it includes recreation rooms, bar, cocktail lounge and staff quarters.

7 Provide individual dock, boat well, launching ramp, fish-cleaning house and lockers for fishermen and those interested in boating. If other than guests use the marina, provide extra parking.

8 All sleeping units, dining services, and lounge should face the lake. Include game areas in this central view, if possible.

13 The modern approach is to have guest housing in motel-type buildings, either directly attached or nearby. The one-room unit with bath is best adapted to this business, but other types of units may also be needed for specific situations. Two-story buildings are acceptable and especially well adapted to small sites.

WHAT ARRANGEMENT?

It is difficult to determine the best pattern of rentable units until one has a firm idea of the trade. With only the summer season of operation in mind, the suites of rooms (for family use) might appear to be the best choice. However, if any extension of season is anticipated, it will probably be by couples, who are not well satisfied with the suites. Therefore, a reasonable compromise might be as follows:

- 10 suites of rooms; suited to a maximum of 8 guests; more frequently for 4; one bath but no housekeeping facilities.
- 14 one-room units; suited to a maximum of 4 persons; more frequently for 2; one bath.
- 6 one-room units, as above, but interconnected in pairs; allows flexible rental – separately by 2's, groups of 4, 6, possibly 8.

COSTS

According to present construction costs, and building to the standards one should offer today, the 100-guest capacity resort described above would cost from \$350,000 upward. For strictly a summer season operation, this raises the important question of return on the investment. It should encourage you to consider locating this resort where more than one season of business might be obtained. The buildings will cost you no more to construct.

The Dude Ranch

Most dude ranches in the Great Lakes area appeal to the young. They feature a wide variety of both indoor and outdoor recreational activity. The fact that seldom, if ever, is livestock produced detracts not a bit from the significance of a dude ranch as a resort type. Horseback riding is usually the dominant activity, but most operators try to provide a variety of fun.

While most dude ranches are patronized by single young people, the appeal to families is increasing. You must decide early in your planning whether or not you can mix these guests on one property or whether it is wiser to specialize.

To establish a new dude ranch is relatively costly. The extra recreational activities require more land, more buildings and other facilities than the average resort. Therefore, today's operators keep looking toward increasing their business profits by extending the season. While this may help make the business more profitable, it may complicate its design.

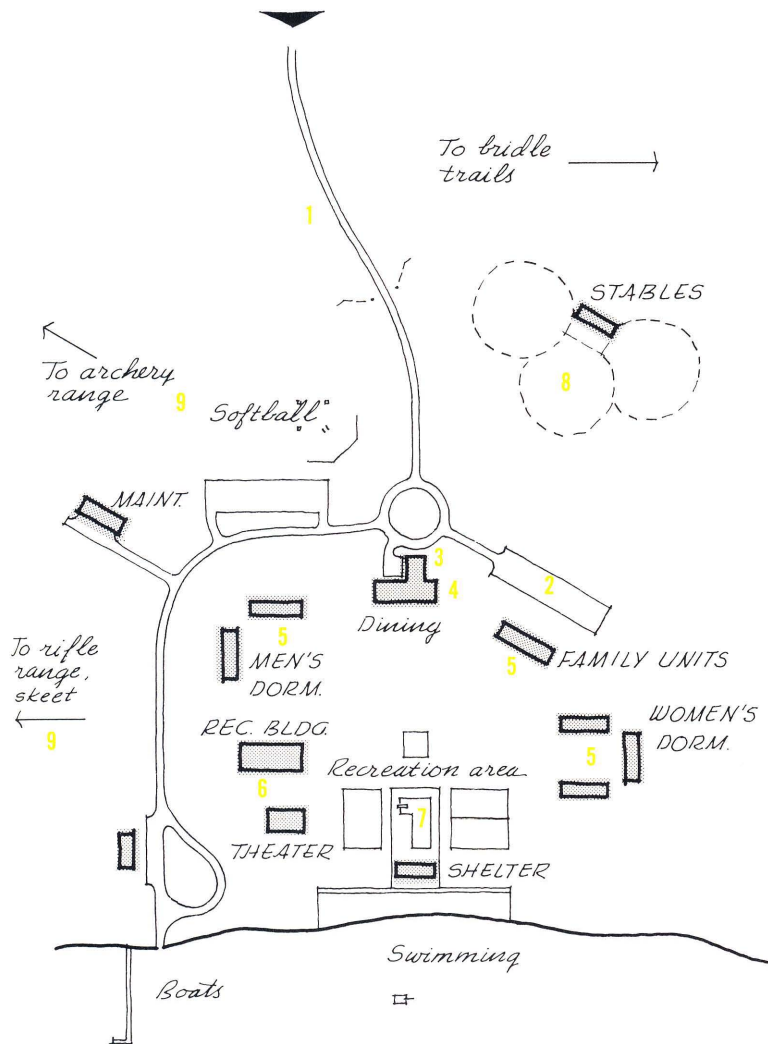
1 Plan entrance drive for quick and easy access over surfaced drive through proper setting. Avoid dangerous curves or grades, especially if winter use is anticipated.

2 All parking must be laid out to proper rules; may be placed a slight distance from housing. Plan separate drives and parking for service and for staff.

3 The layout should offer the guest quick access to the registration and information center as well as provide the manager good control. Entrance arrangement and decor should set the pace for all Dude Ranch activity.

4 Central lodge usually contains: desk-lobby; manager's office; kitchen; dining room(s); lounge; and storage space. It often includes recreation rooms, gift shop, and staff housing.

6 Recreation building(s) are essential: table tennis; movies; dancing; little theater; arts and crafts; and a variety of rainy-day fun. Plan for easy use, easy upkeep, include ample storage for play equipment and perhaps a snack bar.



7 The swimming pool and court games can foster community spirit if located centrally. Guests gain interest in new activities by first watching others have fun.

8 The core activity of all Dude Ranches is horseback riding. Areas should be planned for instruction and you may use several rings to separate beginners from experienced horsemen. Some use temporary stables and lease horses from a nearby farm.

5 Guest housing is of two types: dormitories for single men and women; apartments or suites for families and married couples.

9 Consider a variety of outdoor activities, such as softball, baseball, archery, rifle range, nature trails, golf, etc.

LOCATION

The following location characteristics may help you to plan a Dude Ranch. After comparing your proposed site with these factors, consider the possibility of using the same facilities at other seasons. You may wish to consider a new location.

✓ **Lakeshore.** By building a pool, a Dude Ranch can succeed without lakeshore; a great amount of water fun (water skiing, canoeing, fishing) can be included in your offerings if you have frontage on a good lake.

✓ **Adequate area.** Much of Dude Ranch fun is extensive, requiring more land than most other resorts. While an eighty-acre tract might be sufficient for most activities, more land should be leased or owned for bridle trails, field archery, etc.

✓ **Easy access.** As for all resorts, guests resist dusty entrance drives. Surfaced drives, free from complicated curves or grades are needed. Consider the setting to put the new guest in the ranch mood.

✓ **Environment.** Neighboring lands should be farms or forests. If use of nearby land is changing, buy a buffer strip of property to protect your use in the future. Consider both man-made and natural attractions.

✓ **Desirable setting.** The property itself should possess land characteristics which suggest ranching: level, rather than rugged terrain; some open fields, rather than all forest; enough elevation to provide attractive vistas.

✓ **Utilities.** Modern resorts require all the modern utilities: electricity and fuel for heating and cooking. Check sources, costs, and dependability. Water supply and waste disposal may present serious problems.

BUILDING AND SITE PLANNING

Much Dude Ranch planning is similar to that of other resorts. On pages 24-25 are some suggestions for your guidance. Review the illustration for planning ideas which might be helpful to you if you expect to build a Dude Ranch.

HOW BIG?

Dude ranches seem to succeed in various sizes, but less than 50 guests would be too small for efficient operation. Others, as in the Summer Resort, would favor a minimum of 100 guests. Some operate on a larger basis. Only when you set up a business prospectus can you have a better idea of the relationship of size to your own conditions of location, site, trade, and operating expenses.

COSTS

A Dude Ranch is probably the most costly resort to establish if all facilities are to be of the best quality. Based upon present-day building costs, a Dude Ranch for 100 guests may cost \$350,000 or over. Dormitory housing for guests costs much less than accommodations for the Summer Resort. But the many more recreational buildings and areas increase the total cost of the Dude Ranch.

Provision for winter sports would add another \$75,000 to \$200,000 to the estimates of investment in land, buildings, grounds, and facilities.

The All-Season Resort

Increasing interest in fall, winter, and spring vacations lends some support to the contention that it is possible to expand a resort operation beyond the summer months. While these other seasons still do not enjoy the overwhelming popularity of summer and have some real limitations, they have become much more significant in the last few years.

Why? Highways are better maintained at all seasons. More people have paid vacations and more freedom of choice of vacation time. As the growing millions of young people marry in the next few years they will create a boom in the honeymoon vacation demand (which usually favors the spring months).

More people are living longer, retiring earlier, and choose "off season" vacations. A significant number of families believe in the educational values of travel and take vacations during the school year. Many year-around vacation activities have become much more popular: winter sports, fall color touring, bow-and-arrow hunting, spring fishing. Industries and organizations now like to arrange staff conferences in vacation areas — preferably at times which do not interfere with the traditional summer season.

Consider, then, when you plan a modern resort, the possibility of locating where you can draw the greatest potential business. Although it may take



Consider the four-season approach when you

years to develop at such a location the investment costs will be the same as on a site with known seasonal limitations.

LOCATION AND SITE

There is no substitute for careful investigation of a location. Travel the area, ask questions, and study all literature pertaining to a local area.

First, your location should possess all the attributes described for the Cottage or Vacation Apartment Resort: Lakeshore; New Environment; Easy Access; Desirable Setting; Adequate Area; Freedom from Flooding; Near Services; Good Soil Characteristics; Utilities. These are described in greater detail on pp. 18, 20. In addition, consider the following:

✓ **Ski slopes.** Either on your own property or nearby should be land of the right area and characteristics for the development of ski slopes. Guidance for evaluating such land is found in the R-306 "Planning Winter Sports Areas." This aspect deserves very careful consideration because it is the primary source of winter trade.

✓ **Hunting lands.** Although you may not be able to own enough hunting land, you should locate near lands known to have high deer, rabbit, grouse, or other game populations. Some operators refuse trade from hunters; others solicit it, recognizing that today's hunters are different from the rough-and-tough riflemen of the past. The increased interest in bow-and-arrow hunting (preceding the rifle season) has filled in a much-needed gap in resort season trade.

✓ **Fall color.** Rising interest in color photography and travel during cooler weather has stimulated fall touring. Spectacular scenery results when the leaves change from summer green to the reds, yellows, and other hues of autumn. This trade is more tourist than resort but does add to both food and lodging business at many resorts at a time when little other is available.

✓ **Spring fishing.** Some streams and lakes have special appeal in spring because of the smelt, trout, or wall-eyed pike. While this may be restricted to only a few areas, it is a definite asset to an all-season resort location.

✓ **Others.** In choosing an all-season location, be alert to all recreational and vacation attractions. Some communities are noted for their summer theaters, pageants or festivals. This gives a location added publicity which, in turn, helps you. Unusual historic attractions, interesting folklore, geologic formations, as well as stock car races, boat races, or golf courses add to the desirability of a location.

Hunting and Fishing Club

Perhaps the oldest (and still popular) resort type in Michigan is the private Hunting and Fishing Club, usually consisting of a large acreage of recreation-forest land with appropriate housing and food service facilities. Few new ones are being developed but the type is included here because some offer services to the public and they dominate resort activity in some areas.

Smaller clubs (less than 1,000 acres) are finding it necessary to work very closely with adjacent land owners (often other clubs) on programs of forest and game management. This tends to favor the idea of relatively large land holdings in this type of resort.

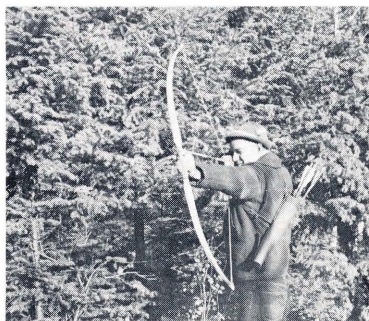
Recently, the tendency has been to increase the total vacation program at such clubs, while originally the interest was principally hunting and fishing. Club members are beginning to recognize that the family of today desires a greater amount of activity than the family of 1900 (when many clubs began).

Therefore, the land area, location, site development and facilities for hunting and fishing clubs of today could be the same as for resort types. A new club could be similar (in physical development) to the Summer Resort, the Dude Ranch, and even the All-Season Resort. Much will depend upon the objectives and policies of the club.

Combinations

It would be misleading to imply that those types of motels and resorts described are the only possibilities in this area. Modifications and combinations of these types now occur and probably will become more numerous in the future.

The emphasis here has been to indicate some significant aspects of location, site, and physical planning, that are essential to attracting the best possible



locate and plan your new motel or resort.

business. Each site, each location, and each owner will have its own special planning limitations and opportunities.

Make your own search for information and study your own project. There is no substitute for this approach.

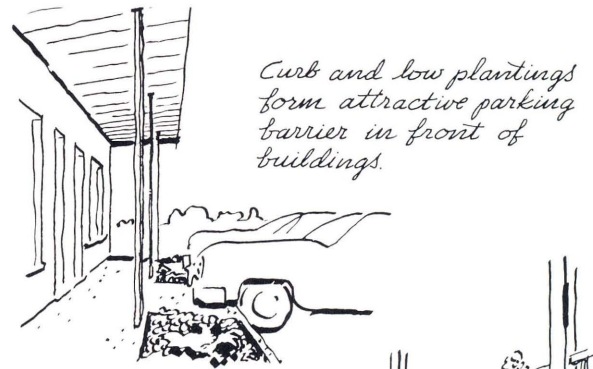
SPECIAL PLANNING PROBLEMS

In many respects, motel and resort construction is similar to home building. But, there are important differences.

SOUND CONTROL

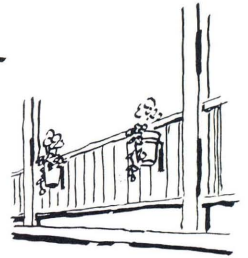
Because restful sleep is the most important service offered in this type of business, noise must be controlled. Much of the problem can be prevented by good planning and building. Here are some suggestions:

- ✓ Avoid sites with disturbing noises from airlines, whistles, industry, railways, traffic, or other sources. While some construction methods can minimize these, it is better to avoid such situations, if possible.
- ✓ Use all those materials and methods of construction which minimize the transmission of sound from room to room. This requires the help of a specialist in sound control. Avoid openings (even the smallest cracks) between rooms; especially any ductwork for heating which directly connects rooms. Generally, a plastered wall (no matter whether over wood, steel, or masonry) is superior to walls without plaster. Wood, plasterboard, plywood or other materials are satisfactory for surface treatment. Use special mountings for clothes racks or plumbing fixtures placed on party walls. Use acoustic tile on ceilings.
- ✓ Select room furnishings which will absorb the greatest amount of sound. A carpeted floor is much superior to others, especially for control of sounds vertically on multi-story construction. The normal use of window coverings, bedspreads, and chair cushions help greatly in absorbing sounds within the room.
- ✓ Choose quiet-operating equipment and install it in a manner which minimizes sound problems. Water pumps, furnaces, water heaters, refrigeration machines, toilet flush valves, ventilating equipment, and laundry equipment sometimes cause trouble. Some manufacturers have considered this in the design of their equipment. Check carefully before purchasing. Also, the use of effective sound-isolating installation methods can greatly reduce the transmission of vibration and noise throughout the structure.



Curb and low plantings form attractive parking barrier in front of buildings.

Use colorful plantings in pots or boxes to make monotonous balconies more interesting.



Keep as many native trees and shrubs as possible.

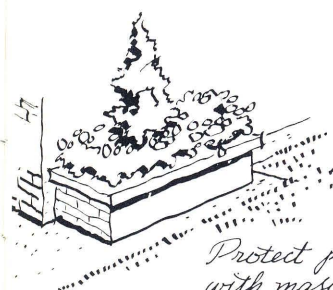
- ✓ Consider sound control in the layout of the facilities. Often special site problems or noisy features of the business can be reduced greatly by proper placement of the building and arrangement of the rooms.

HEATING AND COOLING

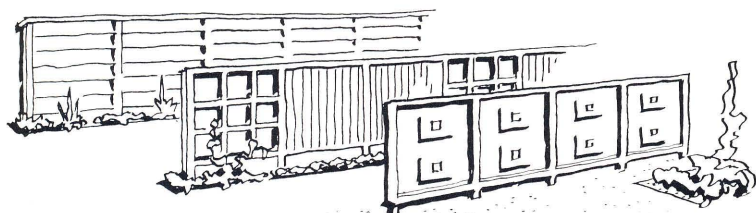
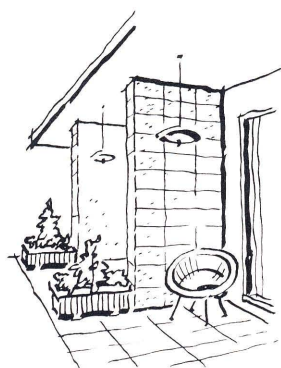
Temperature control in all guest rooms is extremely important today. In fact, lack of individual room temperature control is very high on the list of guests' complaints. Not only are guests better satisfied, but some owners claim actual savings in fuel costs when each guest can regulate his own room temperature.

For year-around heating of motels and resorts, the most popular system is hot water, using baseboard or convactor radiation. Its operation is quiet, easily regulated, even, and reasonably rapid to respond. Some have used a new type of steam system with equal satisfaction. Some guests complain about the noise of fans in room heaters. Electric heating is becoming more and more popular. It also is quiet, very easily regulated (from the office as well as guest room), even, and reasonably rapid to respond. Its installation cost is much less than other systems. Operating costs depend upon the relative prices of oil, gas, and electricity at your site. Consult your fuel supplier for advice before deciding upon a system.

Use plant boxes or tubs as dividers and where paved surfaces prevent ground plantings.



Protect plants with masonry or wood enclosures.



For quick screening against a poor view, build an ornamental fence

Even in summer, nearly every location needs to have some heat. Individual room units, such as oil burners or gas wall heaters, have been very popular in the past. Some guests object to the noise and possible dangers of some gas space heaters and the difficulty of lighting and controlling oil burners. This has led to an ever-increasing popularity of electric heating units. Fan-blown resistant element units, either portable or wall-mounted, seem to be very satisfactory.

Guests generally want more heat in the bathroom than other rooms, and yet very often it is poorly heated. Usually, the normal heating installation in the main room is insufficient for the bathroom. But it is best to install another unit of the main heating system controlled by a separate thermostat, or an electric bathroom heater. Consider guest safety as well as comfort when choosing the heater and installing it.

For air cooling in summer, many locations in Michigan need no more than normal air circulation. Some owners of both motels and resorts feel that air cooling is justified. The hot water-chilled water system appears to be very satisfactory for the new year-around installation. The same fan-blown convectors carry hot water in winter, and cold water—from a well or refrigeration machine (depending on local codes and conditions)—in the summer. For

summer operation (and many prefer it year-around) the window air conditioning unit is acceptable, if the noise is not excessive.

To get the most for your money in heating or cooling equipment, it is suggested that you:

- ✓ Anticipate the needs of your guests and the climatic conditions at your location during the season you are open for business.
- ✓ Review all the types of equipment and systems to determine the best one or ones to use. (Seek the unbiased advice of an independent heating engineer.)
- ✓ Purchase and install equipment that is designed to do the job required of it; obtain guarantees of performance before making final payment for either equipment or its installation.

LANDSCAPING

Effective landscaping—that which brings you the greatest return—is more than just adding a few “pretty posies” here and there. It begins with the site selection; is a part of the site development; and certainly, is a part of your every-day and every-month maintenance. Why not give the grounds the same meticulous care you give your rooms?

As land costs go higher, as motel and resort sites become more compactly developed, each one is less and less dependent upon the natural landscape and more and more dependent upon developed or “created” environment. This is placing more and more emphasis on how the land is graded, built upon and planted. This becomes a special problem for every site and business situation; the best solution will be to utilize the talent, training and experience of a professional landscape architect.

Greater emphasis is being placed on patios and other outdoor areas in the immediate vicinity of the building. Paving materials, enclosures, and the use of lawns or other plantings must be selected with care. Their survival in the climate, their ease of upkeep, and their esthetic appeal must be considered. Their attractiveness is important at all seasons of the business operation.

On sites with intensive development, there is little space for plantings. Here, the various types of planters, such as tubs, pots, boxes, buckets, and other containers can provide an added decorative effect as well as hold the soil. As the plants need disease control or replacing, they can be maintained with greater ease than those in the ground, though they will require more watering.

In all cases, consider the total landscape from the guest's point of view. Avoid cluttering up a

beautiful, open lawn expanse with a scattering of trees and shrubs which create serious maintenance problems and in no way increase the attractiveness. Avoid using tall-growing trees or shrubs in places requiring low, slow-growing, dwarf varieties. Use the

right plants for erosion control, shade, background, screening, and a sparkle of color here and there. Use annuals for special color effects, but remember up-keep when selecting plants. Use more colorful and fragrant plantings near walks and entrances.

FINANCIAL ESTIMATING

Often it is necessary to revise plans because they would cost too much to execute. The following outline will assist you in making your own estimate of financial situation.¹

In order to fill this in, you will need to follow the suggestions presented earlier in this circular. For estimated income from other businesses such as restaurants, gift shops, vending machines, etc., consult those familiar with their costs and returns.

The estimated operating expenses of motels and resorts is suggested as 52% of the gross room sales. This is a general average and could be slightly higher or lower depending on your situation. For example, an estimated 6% of gross room sales is allowed for

managerial salaries and an estimated 12% is allowed for employees' wages. Other operating expenses (the total of 52%) are: payroll taxes, laundry, dry cleaning, linens, guest room supplies, cleaning supplies, advertising, commissions on sales, telephone and telegraph, fuel, electricity, water, repairs, maintenance, office supplies, and other controllable expenses.

Among fixed expenses, most items shown are self-explanatory, but you may wonder about a few. Space is allowed for your payment of rent if you rent some of your buildings. Some operators lease furnishings rather than buy them; hence you may have such an item of expense. Be sure to include allowance for depreciation on equipment, furnishings, signs and many other items as well as on buildings. Your own situation will indicate the amount of interest on mortgage to allow in your estimating.

¹Prepared by Robert W. McIntosh, School of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management, Michigan State University.

INCOME

Estimated Gross Room Sales:

No. of units \times days (weeks) \times % occupancy \times average rate..... \$ _____
 Estimated all other gross income (restaurant, souvenirs, etc.) _____
TOTAL GROSS INCOME \$ _____

EXPENSES

Estimated operating expenses (52% of Gross Room Sales)..... \$ _____

Estimated all other expenses (restaurant, souvenirs, etc.)..... _____

Fixed Expenses:

Rent for buildings \$ _____

Lease charges for furnishings..... _____

Insurance _____

Licenses and taxes (real estate, property) _____

Interest _____

Depreciation _____

TOTAL FIXED EXPENSES _____

TOTAL EXPENSES _____

NET INCOME \$ _____

(This figure must be large enough to pay: (1) interest on owner's equity; (2) the owner(s) wages for labor and management; (3) income taxes; and (4) repayment on mortgage principal.)

NOW, THE DOUBLE-CHECK

Before you turn the first shovel-full of earth, double-check your plans.

1. Have you chosen a location that has promise of high demand for your services over several seasons of the year?

2. Does your site have the qualities which make it suitable for your anticipated business? Will the costs of filling, grading, or other improvements be excessively high?

3. Have you consulted health officials regarding water supply and waste disposal; utility companies

about power supply; and an attorney about local regulations?

4. Have you decided upon site development and building plans which will provide the most usable, most appealing, and most distinctive facilities when completed?

5. Have you studied travel and vacation trends and planned for as much flexibility as possible?

6. Finally, have you overestimated your returns and underestimated your costs when figuring the possible financial success of the business?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Space does not permit the listing of all those who have so generously contributed to this publication. Leaders of travel promotion and advertising have given valuable guidance on vacation and travel trends. Many research, extension, and teaching specialists of Michigan State University have given freely of their time and knowledge, especially those who reviewed the manuscript and made worthwhile criticism.

Even so, it could not have been written except for the many years of close contact with owners and operators of these businesses. The cooperation of those who have permitted inspection of properties and rather intimate discussions of their own location, site, and design problems has been extremely helpful. To this can be added the experience of those who during the last few years have used and tested recommendations similar to these. The author extends his sincere thanks to all who have provided the research foundation which has made this circular possible.

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See Also

Check These in Your Library, or purchase:

American Motel Magazine, 5 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

The Modern Marina, a complete guide to marina development; prepared by National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers, Inc., New York, New York.

"The Motel Free-For-All," an informative article by Seymour Freedgood; *Fortune Magazine*, June, 1959.

Motels, an architectural book by Baker and Funaro. published by Reinhold Publishing Corporation, New York.

Resort Management, P. O. Box 5747, 1509 Madison Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee.

Swimming Pool Data and Reference Annual, issued new each year by Hoffman-Harris, Inc., New York, New York.

Tourist Court Journal, Temple, Texas.

Available from Bulletin Office, Michigan State University, East Lansing or your Cooperative Extension Office:

Ornamental Vines for Michigan, Circular E-3, by Carl Gerlach.

Outdoor Lighting, Circular E-4, by D. Newton Glick.

Ornamental Shrubs for Michigan, Circular E-5, by Carl Gerlach.

Landscape Paving, Circular E-6, by Harold Breen.

Nature Trails, Circular E-10, by Harold Schick.

Planning Better Water Supply, Circular R-305, by C. A. Gunn and Walter Sheldon.

Planning Winter Sports Areas, Circular R-306, by C. A. Gunn.

Business Methods for Motels, Circular R-602, by R. W. McIntosh.

Business Methods for Cottage Resorts, Circular R-603, by R. W. McIntosh.

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