

Commonwealth Space Requirements in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia



A REPORT OF THE
JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

SESSION OF 1951

The Joint State Government Commission was created by Act of 1937, July 1, P. L. 2460, as amended 1939, June 26, P. L. 1084; 1943, March 8, P. L. 13, as a continuing agency for the development of facts and recommendations on all phases of government for the use of the General Assembly.

JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

Honorable BAKER ROYER, *Chairman*

Honorable JOHN M. WALKER, *Vice Chairman*

Honorable W. STUART HELM, *Secretary-Treasurer*

Senate Members

JOSEPH M. BARR
LEROY E. CHAPMAN
JOHN H. DENT
G. GRAYBILL DIEHM †
ANTHONY J. DISILVESTRO
JAMES A. GELTZ
FREDERICK L. HOMSHER *
A. EVANS KEPHART
JOHN G. SNOWDEN
O. J. TALLMAN
M. HARVEY TAYLOR
PAUL L. WAGNER
JOHN M. WALKER
T. NEWELL WOOD

House Members

HIRAM G. ANDREWS
ADAM T. BOWER
HOMER S. BROWN ‡
CHARLES H. BRUNNER, JR.
EDWIN C. EWING
W. STUART HELM
EARL E. HEWITT, SR.
THOMAS H. LEE
JAMES E. LOVETT §
ALBERT S. READINGER
BAKER ROYER
CHARLES C. SMITH
HERBERT P. SORG
IVAN C. WATKINS

GUY W. DAVIS, *Counsel and Director*

PAUL H. WUELLER, *Associate Director in Charge
of Research and Statistics*

ANTOINETTE S. GIDDINGS, *Administrative Assistant*

* Deceased.

† Appointed to fill the vacancy created by the death of Frederick L. Homsher.

‡ Resigned.

§ Appointed to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Homer S. Brown.

JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE REQUIREMENTS
OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Honorable G. GRAYBILL DIEHM, *Chairman*

Honorable PRESTON A. FROST, *Vice Chairman*

Senate Members

G. GRAYBILL DIEHM

ISRAEL STIEFEL

LLOYD H. WOOD

House Members

PRESTON A. FROST

LEWIS M. MINTESS

J. P. MORAN

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

*To the Members of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth
of Pennsylvania:*

Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 74, Session of 1949, there is presented herewith a report dealing with space requirements of the Commonwealth in the cities of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

The report takes cognizance of the magnitude, geographic location and present rental costs of office space utilized by various Commonwealth agencies in these cities. Heads of Commonwealth departments, boards, agencies and commissions have been polled concerning the desirability of combining Commonwealth operations in Pittsburgh and in Philadelphia.

In accordance with Act of 1943, March 8, P. L. 13, Section 1, the Commission created a subcommittee to facilitate this study of Commonwealth space requirements outside the city of Harrisburg.

On behalf of the Commission the cooperation of the members of the subcommittee is gratefully acknowledged.

BAKER ROYER, *Chairman.*

*Joint State Government Commission
Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
SECTION I. INTRODUCTION	1
SECTION II. COMMONWEALTH SPACE REQUIREMENTS	3
A. Pittsburgh Facts	3
B. Philadelphia Facts	7
SECTION III. CONCLUSION	11

MAPS

Commonwealth-Leased Offices in Pittsburgh	5
Commonwealth-Leased Offices in Philadelphia	9

APPENDIX

Replies to Questionnaire on Departmental Space Requirements and Advisability of Consolidation with Other State Agencies in the Same Area—January, 1950	14, 15
--	--------

Section I

INTRODUCTION

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMONWEALTH for office space in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have been the subject of frequent discussion.¹

As regards Commonwealth requirements for office space, it may be noted that the General Assembly of 1937 attempted to solve the problem by the Act of 1937, July 1, P. L. 2687, which provided:

"That the Secretary of Property and Supplies, with the approval of the Governor, shall have power to enter into contract with any person, firm, or corporation which shall agree to erect within the city of Pittsburgh or the county of Allegheny, or within the county of Philadelphia, at a location suitable to the Governor and the Secretary of Property and Supplies, a suitable office building in each of the respective counties above mentioned, for the use of agencies of the Commonwealth, and to agree, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to lease said building for a period of thirty years from the time of the completion thereof, at such rental and subject to such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon. No such contract shall be entered into until the plans and specifications for such proposed building shall have been approved by the Department of Property and Supplies. Any such contract shall provide that upon the termination of said thirty year lease the building so constructed and the ground upon which the same is situated shall become the property of the Commonwealth."

THE 1937 ACT, which was not given administrative effect, was amended in 1945 to read as follows:

"That the Secretary of Property and Supplies, with the approval of the Governor, shall have power to enter into contract with any person, firm, or corporation which shall agree to *lease* within the city of Pittsburgh or the county of Allegheny, or within the *city of Philadelphia or* county of Philadelphia, at a location suitable to the Governor and the Secretary of Property and Supplies, a suitable office building in each of the respective counties above mentioned, for the use of agencies of the Commonwealth, and to agree, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to lease said building for a period of *not more than* thirty years, at such rental and subject to such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon, *and any* such contract shall provide that upon the termination of said thirty year lease the building so *leased* and the ground *on* which the *property* is situated shall become the property of the Commonwealth, *and any such lease shall provide that at any time during the period of said lease the Commonwealth is empowered to accept title in fee simple to any such land and building under said lease: Provided, That no additional moneys are paid in consideration for the said deed.*" (1945, May 22, P. L. 854.)

¹ See, for instance, "Report on a Proposed State Office Building," Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Sept., 1949; A. S. Fought, "New Quarters for State Courts in Philadelphia," *The Shingle*, January, 1947.

IN ADDITION, the General Assembly of 1945 (1945, June 4, P. L. 1395) authorized the Department of Property and Supplies, with the approval of the Governor, "to acquire, by purchase or condemnation, land or land and buildings in the city of Philadelphia, and within the city of Pittsburgh, or the county of Allegheny, for the purpose of obtaining or constructing suitable office buildings for the use of the Commonwealth."

The sum of \$1,500,000 was appropriated to carry out the purpose of this act.

The Act of 1945, June 4, was repealed by the Act of 1947, July 7, P. L. 1196.

As of November, 1950, the permissive legislation of July 1, 1937, as amended by the Act of 1945, May 22, had not resulted in the consummation of a lease in either metropolitan area.

Section II

COMMONWEALTH SPACE REQUIREMENTS

WITH A VIEW to providing a factual basis for judgments, the Commission has compiled, for both Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, the following data relating to office space requirements:

1. Names of departments and other Commonwealth agencies renting office space.
2. Number of square feet rented by departments and other agencies of the Commonwealth.
3. Prices of rented space, per square foot.
4. Geographic location of rented space.
5. Attitude of departments and other Commonwealth agencies toward consolidation of all Commonwealth operations in one suitable location in each city.

To facilitate ready visualization of the space requirement problem, maps of downtown Pittsburgh and Philadelphia have been prepared. On the maps, departments and other Commonwealth agencies are identified by letters appearing in colored blocks; the color in each indicates the per square foot rental group.

A. Pittsburgh Facts

The map of Pittsburgh shows that seventeen Commonwealth agencies maintain a total of twenty-seven offices in the downtown section of the city (see page 5). The agencies with offices at more than one location and the number of locations are as follows:

Department of Labor and Industry	8
Department of Public Assistance	3
Liquor Control Board	2

The annual rental for Commonwealth offices in Pittsburgh ranges from \$.60 to \$4.06 per square foot.

In the area covered by the map, the Commonwealth leases a total of 122,000 square feet, for which it pays a total annual rental of \$259,088, which is but another way of saying that the average rental per square foot is \$2.12 annually ($\$259,088 \div 122,000$).

In connection with the appraisal of the location shown on the map, it should be noted that six Commonwealth agencies maintain offices at fifteen locations not in the downtown section. The total space leased in other than downtown locations is 76,700 square feet, for which an annual rental of \$99,508 is paid. In other words, the average annual rental per square foot paid for other than downtown locations in Pittsburgh is \$1.30, as compared with \$2.12 per square foot in the downtown district.

In passing, it may be noted that the location of offices in neighborhoods other than downtown Pittsburgh is largely determined by proximity to the segment of the public which is served by these offices.

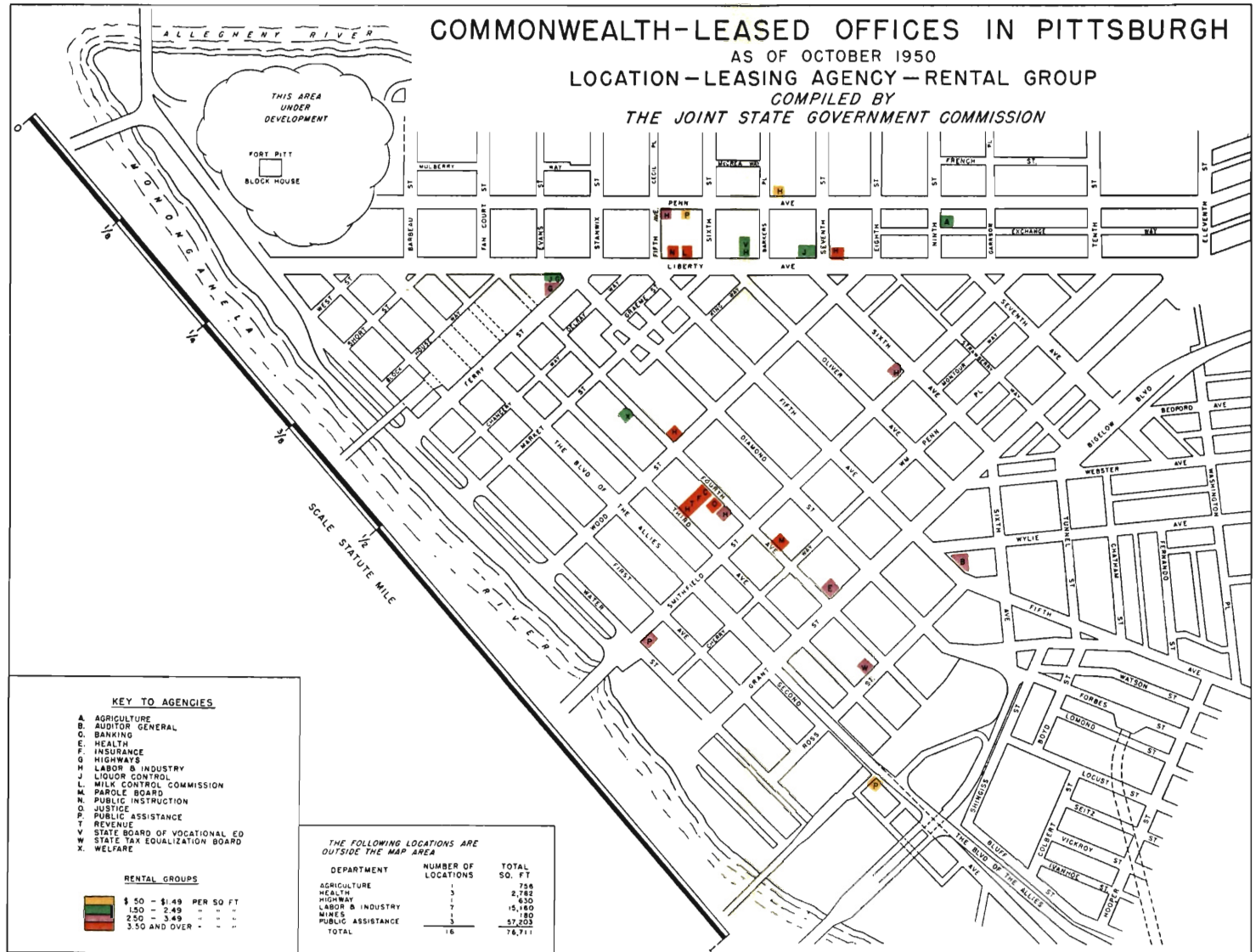
COMMONWEALTH-LEASED OFFICES IN PITTSBURGH

AS OF OCTOBER 1950

LOCATION-LEASING AGENCY-RENTAL GROUP

COMPILED BY

THE JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION



B. Philadelphia Facts

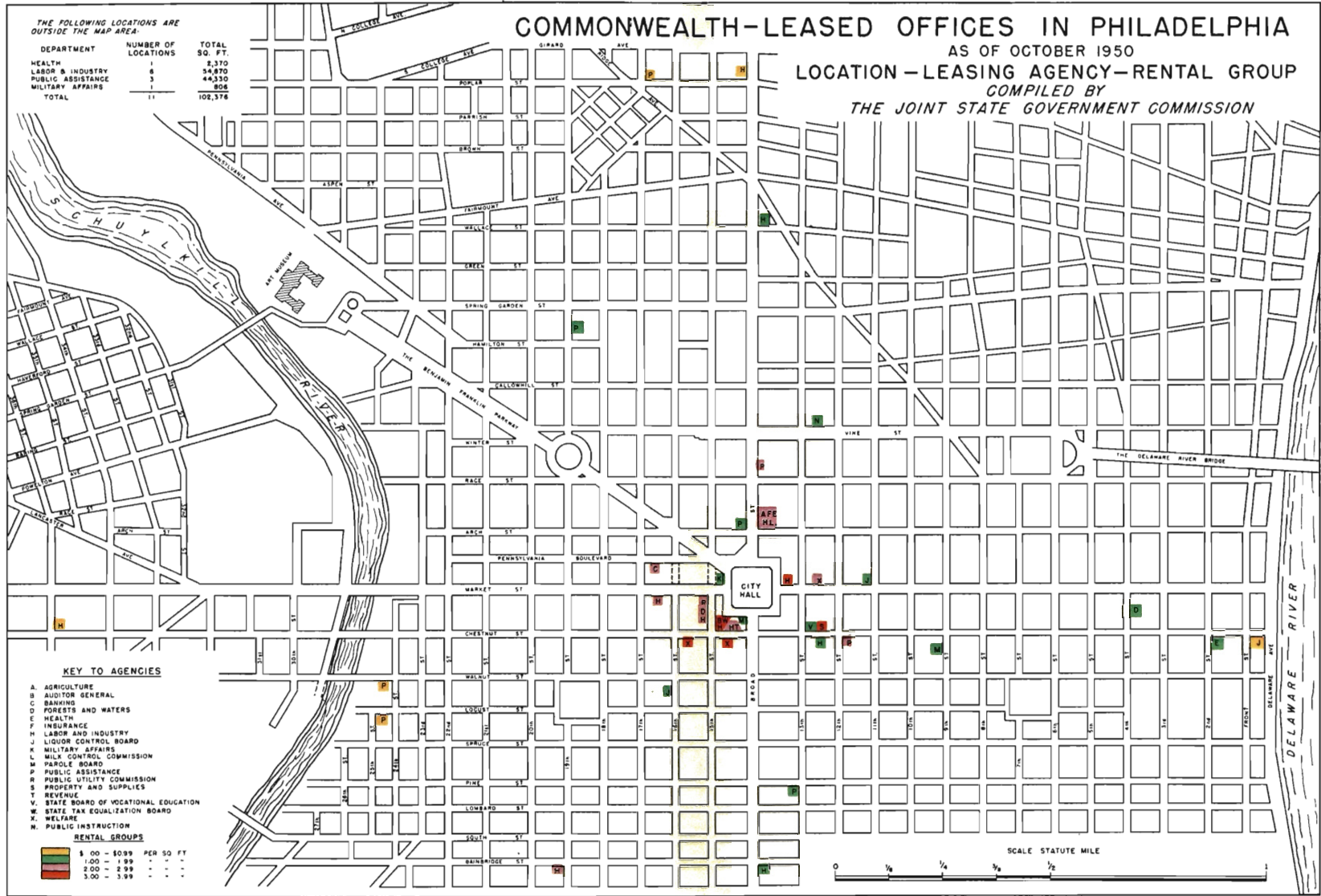
As indicated on the map on the following page, nineteen agencies of the Commonwealth maintain a total of forty-three offices in the central section of Philadelphia. The agencies with offices at more than one location and the number of locations are as follows:

Department of Labor and Industry	11
Department of Public Assistance	8
Department of Welfare	3
Liquor Control Board	3
Department of Health	2
Department of Forests and Waters	2
Board of Parole	2

The annual rental for Commonwealth offices in Philadelphia ranges from \$.40 to \$3.74 per square foot.

In the area covered by the map, the Commonwealth leases a total of 263,111 square feet, for which it pays a total annual rental of \$404,342, or an average annual rental per square foot of \$1.54. ($\$404,342 \div 263,111$.)

In connection with the appraisal of the locations shown on the map, it should be noted that four Commonwealth agencies maintain offices at eleven locations not in the central Philadelphia area. The total space leased in other than central city locations is 102,376 square feet, for which an annual rental of \$133,710 is paid. In other words, the average annual rental per square foot paid for other than central city locations in Philadelphia is \$1.31 per square foot, as compared to \$1.54 per square foot in the central Philadelphia area.



Section III

CONCLUSION

PERUSAL OF THE Philadelphia and Pittsburgh maps indicates that Commonwealth offices are widely scattered in both cities. The wide scattering of these locations causes serious inconvenience to citizens who have business with more than one office.

The overwhelming majority of the heads of the agencies maintaining offices in the above cities are of the opinion that consolidation of all Commonwealth operations in one suitably located building in each city would not impair their operating efficiency.²

Under the circumstances, the conclusion seems inevitable that the leasing of one building or the construction of a building to house all Commonwealth operations is desirable from both a public and an operational point of view.

² For replies to the questionnaire sent agency heads, see Appendix, Page 14.

REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON DEPARTMENTAL SPACE REQUIREMENTS AND ADVISABILITY OF CONSOLIDATION WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES IN THE SAME AREA—JANUARY, 1950

<i>Department, Board or Commission Leasing Space—and Type of Space When Given</i>	<i>1. What general factors do you consider important in the selection of leased premises for your Department?</i>	<i>2. Would you consider it feasible or advisable to consolidate your leased premises under one roof in the same area in which they are now located?</i>	<i>3. Would you deem it advisable from the point of view of the operating efficiency of your Department to consolidate with other State departments in the same area where leased premises are now located?</i>
1. Department of Forests and Waters.	Geographical location with respect to area and boundaries of flood control districts, forest districts and park districts involved. Parking space.	Yes, is done where feasible.	Yes.
2. Department of Public Instruction.	In Philadelphia, city ordinance requires industry using inflammable films to be in restricted area where facilities are now located. Dormitory for college.	Does not apply—do not have more than one lease in same area.	No objection.
3. Department of Health 1. Office space for Administrative personnel. 2. Clinic Space. 3. Laboratory Space.	In or near hospitals.	Rarely feasible—though now done in Wilkes-Barre.	No objection.
4. Department of Public Assistance.	1. First floor space sufficient for handling of applications. 2. Located in county seat.	Preferred but not always feasible.	Yes.
5. Department of Welfare.	First floor or in building with elevator service for convenience of blind clients.	Does not apply—do not have more than one lease in same area.	No objection.
6. Department of Revenue.	In vicinity of the Court House.	Leased premises are now at one location.	No objection.
7. Department of Banking.	Readily available to banking interests in city wherein premises are to be leased.	Does not apply.	Yes, if available to banking interests.
8. Department of Military Affairs 1. Armories. 2. Office space for Regimental Headquarters of National Guard organizations.	Must provide adequate security to protect Federal property issued for training purposes—as required by Department of Army. Garage space.	No, because of size and facilities required.	No, for reasons of security.
9. Department of Mines.	Room in home of each of the 55 mine inspectors—office furniture furnished by state—rent paid to inspector \$15 per month.	Does not apply.	No objection in case of five Division Engineers' offices.
10. Milk Control Commission.	Accessibility to the public, congenial working conditions for office personnel.	Does not apply—leased premises now at one location in each area.	Yes.

11. Board of Parole.	Accessible to courts and other county units concerned with administration of justice. Each parole agent should have privacy for interviews—In district having greatest concentration of parolee population access to building at night—elevator service after regular hours. Garage space.	Feasible in Philadelphia.	Yes.
12. Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board 1. District offices. 2. District Enforcement offices. 3. State stores.	1. Close to greatest number of State stores. 2. Accessible to licensees. 3. Same as for any retail outlet—as population density, business and shopping districts, etc.	Yes, in some cases is already done.	No objection but no advantage.
13. Pennsylvania State Police Troop and Substation headquarters.	Availability to public, proper accommodations for members of State Police.	Does not apply. Only one lease in any one area.	No objection.
14. Pennsylvania Game Commission.	Convenient to public and personnel—to operate with minimum inconvenience and expense.	No objection.	Yes, advisable.
15. Insurance Department	Central location	Already done where feasible.	No objection.
16. State Tax Equalization Board.	Convenient for field supervisor and territory assigned him and for those having business with the area office.	Does not apply—(only three leased premises).	Might be possible.
[15] 17. State Civil Service Commission. All leases are "short term," 1-2 days, for examinations.	Space and facilities must be adequate for giving examinations—desks, chairs, etc.	Already done where possible.	No, because of short-term need for space.
18. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.	Central location and convenient for those who may attend hearings.	Already done where possible.	No objection.
19. Department of Labor and Industry.	Central location to transportation systems, court houses, or other government buildings; proximity to places of business and/or industry transacting business with field offices.	Generally speaking, yes. However sub-offices should be located in or near employment center.	No opposition if adequate facilities could be provided.
20. Department of Agriculture.	Depends on type of work to be done. Location should be based on amount of work for particular area, accessibility, efficiency.	Already done where feasible.	Not as a general rule, but in few cases such consolidation might be possible.
21. Department of Internal Affairs. Only agency leasing space—Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey.	Field offices near gas and oil fields. Quarters with space for examinations and storage of rock specimens.	Does not apply—do not have more than one leased premise in any city.	No objection.
22. Department of the Auditor General.	Office space in Pittsburgh and in Philadelphia.	Does not apply.	Worthy of consideration.
23. Department of Highways.	1. Use for which property is required. 2. Location with respect to the area for which the facility to be housed is located.	Inadvisable.	No, except in metropolitan areas.