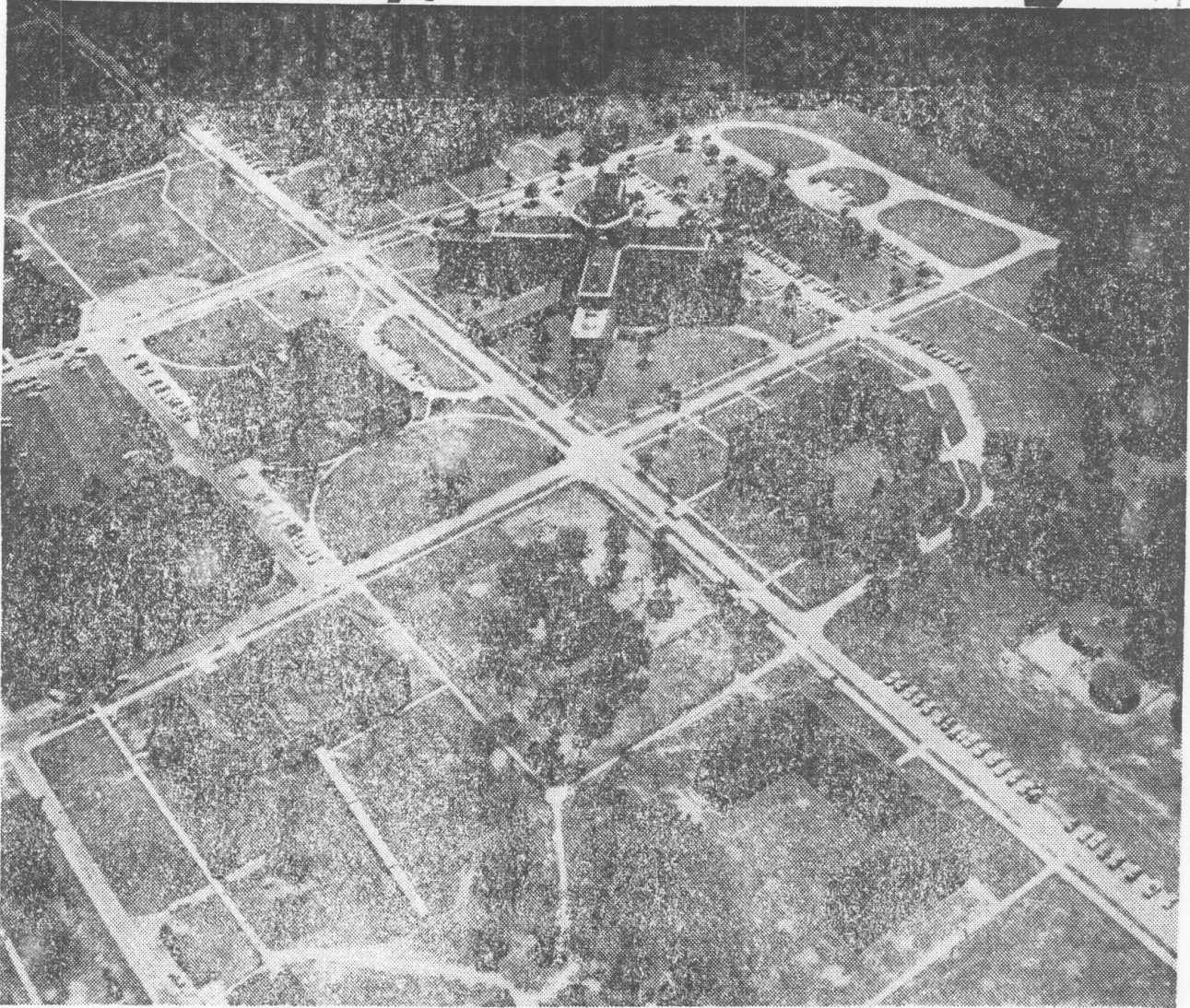


Willowbrook to be park, university, medical college?



An aerial view of the Willowbrook Developmental Center shows some of the buildings and tree-lined streets which may eventually become part of a medical college or a city park.

S.I. Advance Photo

By ROBERT MIRALDI
The sprawling campus surrounding the Willowbrook Developmental Center may, in the 1980's, be turned into a city park, a medical college or a private university.
Those are three of the options now facing the City Planning Commission which has been asked by the state Department of Mental Hygiene to come up with land-use proposals for the 386 acres of land housing the 2,600-bed home for

the retarded.
Willowbrook is under a federal court edict to reduce its population to 250 residents by 1981 and, according to City Planning officials, it will need only about 120 acres of land.
What to do with the remaining 260 acres, however, is the issue which now faces the state and the city. "We've got to find a way to turn the land into a productive use," says Wilbur Woods, director of the Island office of the City Planning Commission.

In these years of constant fiscal crisis, what city officials would like most is to turn the area into a money-maker, producing tax revenue for city coffers. Woods calls it a "fantastic opportunity" for sound planning.
The Willowbrook campus, once called "a little town" by a state official, indeed presents endless planning opportunities for city and state planners.
There are approximately 40 buildings on the grounds,

which are bounded by Victory Blvd., Forest Hill Rd., and Willowbrook Park. The buildings have housed up to 6,000 persons at one time and during World War II over 140,000 veterans utilized the facility when it was a hospital.
On Forest Hill Rd., adjacent to the main campus, is the \$12-million Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation. On the other side lies Willowbrook Park, which is 162 acres of trails, ballfields, barbettes and horseshoe courts.