

Complex in Boston Is Radically Designed

State Center Project Striking Departure in Urban Planning

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

The most conservative city in the United States has unveiled what may be the most radical design for a Government Center.

A \$29 million project for a group of state office and administration buildings was announced in Boston yesterday by the Massachusetts Government Center Commission.

The buildings will be part of a complex that has been hailed as the most progressive public building program in the country.

The new structures will include the Division of Employment Security, a Mental Health Building, and a Health, Welfare and Education Building. They will be on a large, irregular-shaped site bounded by Staniford, Merrimac and New Chardon Streets.

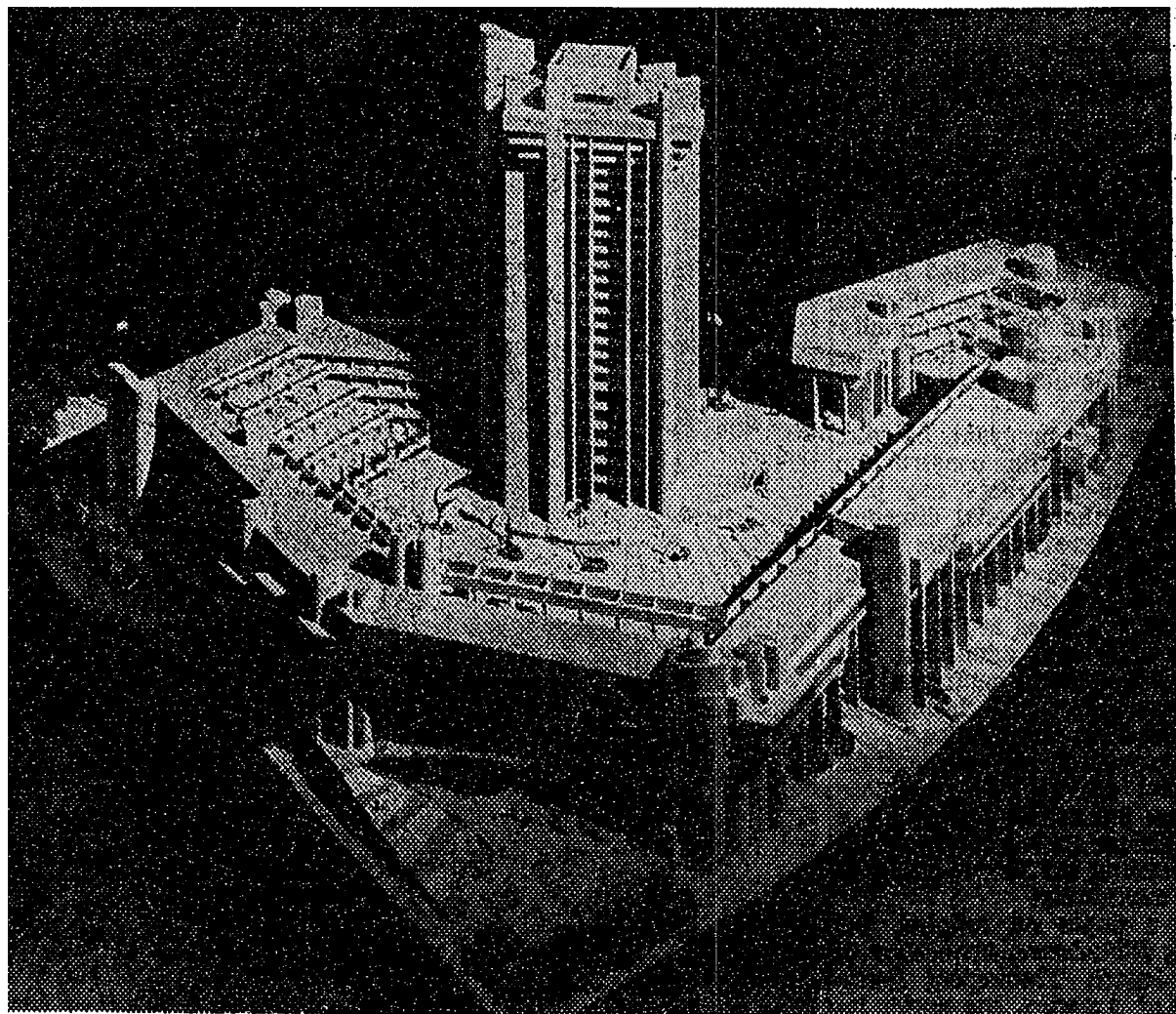
A state office building is already under construction, but most of the project is to begin early next year, with completion estimated in two-and-a-half years.

Huge Renewal Program

The center will also contain Federal and city buildings. It will be part of a \$200 million, 60-acre redevelopment program carried out under urban renewal in the Scollay-Bowdoin-Haymarket Square area in the heart of downtown Boston. The section is known for honky-tonk bars, tattoo parlors and burlesque shows. Much of the land has been cleared.

A design for a new City Hall, as extreme as the state buildings and similar in style, was obtained through a competition won last year by Gerhard M. Kallmann, Noel M. McKinnell and Edward F. Knowles, New York architects.

The master plan for the area was drawn by another New York architect, I. M. Pei, work-



A model of \$29,000,000 Massachusetts Government Center, which is to be built in Boston

ing with the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

In a city that traces its architectural traditions to Beacon Hill and Bulfinch—Faneuil Hall will be a neighbor of the new City Hall—the Government Center project is considered a striking departure in urban design.

The state buildings represent the most advanced form of a progressive trend that will soon be punctuating the bland, glass-walled vistas of American cities with rugged, concrete buildings in eccentric, sculptured form.

The dramatically unconventional state building plan follows this new pattern. It incorporates all three buildings into a unified superblock structure that winds around the site like a pinwheel and terminates in a central tower.

The interior of the block is

hollow, forming a three-level pedestrian plaza that joins the buildings.

Irregularly shaped, the plaza is made up of many steps and swirling terraces suggesting the famous curved plaza at Siena, or baroque city squares. The material will be rough concrete, molded into bold shapes.

The long, low continuous part of the structure is divided into two parts: the \$9.7 million Division of Employment Security, for which the architects are Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott, and a \$7.1 million Men-

tal Health headquarters, by Desmond & Lord, with Paul Rudolph as architectural designer.

A \$12.2 million, 23-story tower, the focus of the group, will house health, welfare and education offices. For this section the architects are H. A. Dyer and Pederson & Tilney. Mr. Rudolph is again the architectural designer.

Mr. Rudolph, who has a reputation as a rising young practitioner and one of the most original designers, is coordinating architect for all the buildings.