This is the story of a downtown business center. It is a place where office workers pause at the entrance to a gleaming skyscraper and view their surroundings... graceful plazas, gardens, terrazzo walks. Once inside they enjoy comforts and conveniences well beyond the usual commercial office building. It is not a typical office building nor a typical business environment. This well-ordered business district—open to the sun, and green with grass and foliage—is a foretaste of the future. It is Gateway Center in Pittsburgh, the nation's first comprehensive downtown business redevelopment accomplished without federal aid. The builder and owner of this massive real estate project is a private business enterprise, a life insurance company... The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States.
Every weekday morning, millions of Americans "go to the office." For many, this means going from a relatively new quiet residential suburb into an old noisy, congested, masonry-and-asphalt downtown business district.

To a small but growing segment, it means something refreshingly different. These people enter a new kind of downtown . . . a downtown committed to the benefits of open landscaped space and wide boulevards.

The new downtown is the result of rebuilding on a grand scale. It is not just a matter of removing an old office building and erecting a new one in its place. Today, many of our major cities are either rebuilding or planning to rebuild entire business centers, erasing areas of blight and decay in the process. Indeed, the social and economic well-being of a city may well depend upon the removal of obsolescent districts that were created for another age, and replacing them . . . not only with new buildings, but also with new traffic patterns and new facilities in keeping with the needs of today and of the foreseeable future.

This is what is happening in Pittsburgh . . . initiated back in 1943 when some of its leading citizens banded together to discuss and plan postwar community development.

These very-important-Pittsburghers had correctly anticipated the need for concerted community action. Pittsburgh, the city of steel, was to enter the postwar world with dirt and grime on its face, a heavy inventory of obsolete factories and mills, and a generally discouraging business outlook. But it also had the determination to do something about its dim prospects . . . to renew and rebuild itself. First on the postwar agenda was some unfinished business; flood and smoke control.

**FLOOD CONTROL**  Along the apex of Pittsburgh’s "Golden Triangle," the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers meet to form the Ohio. These strategic rivers have made Pittsburgh America's largest inland port, channeling more tonnage than the Panama Canal. At times, however, they have also been instruments of disaster. On St. Patrick's Day in 1936 the rivers crested at 21 feet above flood level leaving muck and misery in their wake . . . and the threat of a recurrence to inhibit the city's growth. Following World War II, the city renewed its efforts to eliminate this threat. The United States Army Corps of Engineers was brought in and by 1953 had completed ten dams designed to regulate the level of the waters of Pittsburgh's rivers.

**SMOKE CONTROL**  For more than a century, Pittsburgh was under a black cloud of its own making. Busy mills filled the air with smoke and chemical fumes. Dense smog coated the city with grime and soot, turned day into night. Effective smoke control began in 1946 when the smoke producers themselves willingly agreed to new regulations that applied to users of solid fuels. By 1955, there was a reduction of 96% in heavy smoke, and 88% in total smoke. People who visit Pittsburgh today for the first time may well wonder why it was ever called the "Smoky City."

As it became apparent that the flood and smoke problems were being solved, Pittsburgh's "Renaissance" began. It began where Pittsburgh itself began . . . at the Point. It was here in 1758 that General John Forbes captured Fort Duquesne to win one of the most important victories of the French and Indian War, and gave the area the name of "Pittsburgh." The Fort Pitt blockhouse, built in 1764, still stands today on its original site at the Point.

The strategic Point area, scarred by overpowering industrialism, was no better than a commercial slum when, in 1945, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania announced that it would create a 36-acre State Park to restore and perpetuate the beauty of this historic tract of land.

Then in 1946, a decayed area adjoining the Point State Park site was largely destroyed by fire, and the city took this opportunity to enlarge the area of redevelopment by 23 acres. Pittsburgh established the Urban Redevelopment Authority with the right of eminent domain in areas designated as blighted. The Authority set about acquiring the 23 acres adjoining the Point and negotiations were opened with the Equitable to interest the insurance company in the role of planner and redeveloper of the site.
A. Before smoke control—the city engulfed by smog.
B. It's 11 o'clock ... in the morning!
C. March 16, 1938: Before flood control.
D. Scene in the 23-acre area before Gateway Center.
E. By 1936 the Point began to bloom.
THE VISION

The plan that emerged was for the creation of a business and commercial center. But it would be no ordinary center. For a start there would be new skyscrapers of steel, aluminum and glass, totaling about a million square feet of office space. There would also be another kind of space... outdoor space: space for plazas, walks, trim lawns and plantings; space to savor the new, smokeless air; space to view the sparkling new sights of the city. About 70% of the 23 acres would be devoted to this park-like setting.

It would be a challenging engineering job, beginning with the demolition of ninety-three buildings, and including the changing of street patterns, the relocation of utilities, the re-routing of transportation facilities, the removal and replacement of bridges... while the city continued to work.

It would change the face of the city's oldest business district.

It would be the first privately financed large downtown redevelopment project undertaken in this country.

It would be an innovation in investment by an insurance company.

Much fact and opinion had to be sifted before it was determined that the job could be done. The concept of a privately-financed Gateway Center had to prove itself in the courts, on the drawing boards of architects and engineers, and under the Equitable's own investment scrutiny.

The problems were substantial, the questions were searching ones. But the benefits envisioned were enormous: for Pittsburgh—the beginning of a renaissance, a reversal of declining values, a strengthening of the whole fabric of the city; for Equitable—a soundly-conceived real estate investment in a city raring to rebuild. Typical of the city's zeal: a number of Pittsburgh's great companies pledged their tenancy in the new business center.

State legislation set the stage for the Point's redevelopment. The Urban Redevelopment Law enacted in 1945 by the Pennsylvania Legislature gave cities the power to acquire privately owned land through public measures, clear the land of slums and sell it to private developers. In 1947, the Legislature approved amendments to the Insurance Act, and thus permitted insurance companies to invest in real estate and housing in Pennsylvania. These and other new laws that applied to plans to redevelop the Point were tested and overwhelmingly upheld in state and federal courts.
Equitable Plaza... a popular place for outdoor art shows.
Pittsburgh's planning includes solving traffic problems.
Modern skyscrapers replace obsolete buildings.
Instead of smog, there's music in the air.
Benches... so one may relax and enjoy scenery.
With legal obstacles cleared, Equitable signed a contract with the Urban Redevelopment Authority in February 1950, purchased the land from the Authority and, in June of that year, began construction of Gateway Center.

**THE NEW BUILDINGS** To start—three office buildings were constructed, from 20 to 24 stories high. The buildings—One, Two and Three Gateway Center—were among the first to be clad in stainless steel, and share a distinctive cruciform shape. They opened in 1952 and 1953 and provide 1,000,000 square feet of office space. As the Center became established, other buildings followed: the 16-story State Office Building in 1957; the 12-story Bell Telephone Building in 1958; the three-story 750 car underground garage in 1959; the 22-story Hilton Hotel in 1959; the 22-story glass-curtained Four Gateway Center office building in 1960; the unique 13-story IBM Building in 1963; and the 27-story Gateway Towers luxury apartment house in 1964.

But Gateway Center is not only buildings. It is also Equitable Plaza, a two-acre park with spray pools, trees and shrubs, colorful flower beds and trellis-like pergolas. It is another five acres of delightful walks along spacious lawns and wooded areas. It is a landscaped setting surrounding each building. It is the quality of freshness and openness that extends to the very borders of Gateway Center. Beyond the border, there is more beauty—a 36-acre “front yard” of meticulously groomed greenery—the soon-to-be-completed Point State Park.

This is the heart of downtown Pittsburgh. Less than 15 years ago it was the worst blight of a grimy, decaying city. Today, housing 20,000 people—the population equivalent of a large town—it is one of the most distinctive and prestigious office environments in the world... in a city inspired to set itself the task of rebuilding its downtown as part of a gigantic Master Plan. The success of a city in solving immense problems of age and decline, of smoke and flood... and the success of Equitable’s Gateway Center... have moved and are moving Pittsburgh to even more wondrous achievements.

One revealing fact concerning Equitable’s investment in a city’s renaissance: Pittsburgh is now second only to New York in office space built since the end of World War II—and all of its postwar office buildings enjoy either 100% or near-100% occupancy.
The success of Gateway Center may be measured in many ways.

It is an achievement in urban planning that has been studied by visiting delegations from other countries as well as from other cities in the United States, and has gained world-wide recognition for its sheer beauty.

It is the success of man's efforts to improve his environment—not merely by building outward, farther and farther into the suburbs and abandoning the decay, but by rebuilding the obsolete central core of his city.

It is the personal triumph of many public-spirited citizens who actively participated in the rebirth of their city.

It is the story of a sound, profitable, long-term investment in urban redevelopment by private enterprise.

It is a case history of the significant social and economic results that can properly flow from the investment of life insurance policyholders' funds.

In its February 1947 issue, Fortune Magazine noted: "Pittsburgh is the test of industrialism everywhere to renew itself, to rebuild upon the gritty ruins of the past a society more equitable, more spacious, more in the human scale."

In its March 1963 issue, sixteen years later, Fortune Magazine called Gateway Center "the most conspicuous evidence of the city's famous 'renaissance'."

On the following pages is that "evidence."
ONE GATEWAY CENTER

This cruciform-shaped 20-story office building was one of three designed and built as a group, the first structures in Gateway Center. The pattern of land use was set for all the buildings to follow: beautifully planned open space around each for permanent detachment and protected views.
Steel exteriors reflect the crisp brightness of the daytime, and the glow of the city by night.

TWO AND THREE GATEWAY CENTER
Part of the trio of buildings that was completed in 1952 and 1953, these two skyscrapers of 20 and 24 stories brought Gateway Center’s rentable space to approximately 1,000,000 square feet—built, owned and managed by Equitable.
GATEWAY OUTDOORS

Outdoor living in Gateway Center can be a community art show, dining in the Hilton garden, or just pausing to delight in the fresh air and bright views of what was once a smog-filled commercial slum. Equitable Plaza, Gateway's center-piece of richly-landscaped gardens, terraces and benches, tops a vast underground three-level garage which brings the total underground parking facilities to over 1,200 cars.

A The Fort Pitt blockhouse still stands on its original site.
B Four Gateway Center's soaring lines of glistening stainless steel create visual drama.
C Equitable Plaza during lunch hour—a beautiful place in the sun.
D One of the Plaza's three trellis-like pergolas.
E Outdoor dining in the Queen's Garden of the Hilton.
F Equitable Plaza, aerial view.
As Pittsburgh lights up
for its annual "Preview of Christmas"
—Equitable Plaza reveals itself in
resplendent nighttime glory.
STATE OFFICE BUILDING
The 16-story blue and white “Capital Building of Western Pennsylvania”, built by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on land purchased from the Equitable, is one of the first office buildings in the nation to have an exterior of colored anodized aluminum. Its base is trimmed with white Vermont marble. Opened in 1957 the State Office Building houses over 50 governmental agencies with 2,500 employees. Shown opposite is the side facing Equitable Plaza; above right is the street side.
BELL TELEPHONE BUILDING

When the 12-story Bell Telephone Building was opened in 1958, it brought together some 1,500 Bell employees who previously worked in 15 scattered locations to form the Western Headquarters of the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania. The structure, built by Bell on land it purchased from the Equitable, has an exterior of aluminum and glass framed in Minnesota granite.
PITTSBURGH HILTON HOTEL
The city's first new downtown hotel in 30 years, these 22 stories of internationally famous Hilton sophistication opened in 1959. The building has a golden aluminum exterior facing, and contains over 800 rooms and full convention facilities including a private dining room capable of seating 2,600 persons for a meeting or 2,000 for a banquet.

The Queen's Garden, Hilton's outdoor restaurant, favors diners with the Center's open views.

In the Hilton tradition, the lobby is large and luxuriously decorated.
FOUR GATEWAY CENTER

As Gateway Center grew, demand for its office space also grew... and became nationwide. Large established Pittsburgh companies as well as new ones, and the regional offices of national firms which have close ties with Gateway's major corporations, sought space here. Four Gateway Center, completed in 1960, added 400,000 square feet of office space contained in 22 stories and encased in a striking new glass-walled design. The building's service core is in a windowless outside glistening steel tower, instead of in the center of the building. Thus floor areas are virtually unobstructed and permit maximum flexibility in office arrangement.
GATEWAY INDOORS

The floor layout may begin with a large reception room... or a display area... or a combination of both. Beyond may be an open office plan... or a maximum number of enclosed offices. The high ratio of window area to floor area means a greater proportion of offices with windows. In sum, this is office space planned for variety, flexibility and adaptability... modern, quality office space in Gateway Center's five multi-tenant office buildings: One, Two, Three, Four and Five Gateway Center.

A A lobby in Gateway Center.
B Reception area of Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co.
C Reception area of Westinghouse Electric Co.
D The King's Garden, main restaurant in the Hilton, is a glass-walled, fully-enclosed room atop the massive entrance marquee.
E Indoor access to Mellon National Bank and Trust Co.
F An executive office of the Equitable.
G Office and showroom of Art Metal Co.
H Interior detail in the lobby of the Pittsburgh Hilton.
Because of its unique design, the IBM Building attracted far more than the usual number of "sidewalk superintendents" and photographers during its construction. It has been described as an "inside-out" structure because it wears most of its structural steel framework on the outside.

FIVE GATEWAY CENTER—IBM BUILDING
Diamond-shaped truss walls dominate the appearance of the IBM Building, certain to be one of the most readily identified office buildings in the world. 13 stories in height, it is owned and operated by Equitable.
GATEWAY TOWERS
A 27-story apartment residence undertaken by Tishman Realty and Construction Co., Inc., Gateway Towers is located opposite Point State Park with a commanding view of the beautiful Ohio River. Completion in 1964 adds 314 luxury apartments to the Gateway Center complex.
Gateway Center has become a gateway to profitable investment for today and for many years into the future. It fulfills the obligation of an Equitable investment: the safe, secure, profitable use of life insurance policyholders' funds.

Gateway Center has become a gateway to municipal improvement. It has benefited an entire city and its working population. It has inspired imitation by showing others how they, too, could improve their urban environment.

Gateway Center has become a gateway to national betterment. It is an example of the use of life insurance policyholders' funds produced by individual thrift and put to work by the insurance industry to stimulate the economic and social growth of the country.
The diagram above will help you locate the following buildings shown in this brochure:
1) One Gateway Center, 2) Two Gateway Center, 3) Three Gateway Center, 4) Four Gateway Center, 5) Hilton Hotel, 6) Gateway Towers, 7) State Office Building, 8) Bell Telephone Building, 9) Five Gateway Center — IBM Building.

Prepared and produced by Ben Rosen Associates, 4/64.

The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the following for their assistance in the preparation of this publication: Allegheny Conference on Community Development; Aluminum Company of America; Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania; Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Pittsburgh Photographic Library; Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh Post Gazette; The Pittsburgh Hilton; The Pittsburgh Press; Tishman Realty and Construction Co., Inc.; United States Steel Corporation; Westinghouse Electric Corporation.