

SPREAD OF ZONING LAW.

Cities All Over the Country Follow Example of New York.

By EDWARD M. BASSETT.

The City of New York was the originator of the zoning system which is now being generally adopted throughout the cities of the United States. Prior to July, 1916, when New York's zoning law went into effect, there had been attempts at partial zoning in Boston, Baltimore, and Los Angeles, but they affected only a few blocks and the height of buildings on certain streets. The zoning of New York was the first comprehensive plan covering the whole municipal territory adopted by any American city, and extending its protection to height of buildings, use of land and buildings and the proportion of lot covered by new buildings. Immediately on the adoption of the New York law other cities began to take a great interest in the progress of zoning. During the last three years hardly a week has passed that delegations of public officials from various large cities of the United States have not called at the office of the Board of Estimate to learn about the new law and its operation. Maps, copies of the zoning ordinance, and other information has been sent by the board to cities in every part of the country.

The Western cities are especially interested in keeping tenement houses out of their private one and two-family residential districts. Cities more and more realize that it does not pay to drive the private home owner out of the city for fear that his home will be injured by garages, factories, and apartment houses. All of the great cities find that they must control the placing of garages.

St. Louis adopted a complete zoning plan similar to that of New York about a year ago. Philadelphia has been working on its zoning for two years past, has its maps prepared, and it is expected that the new administration will put zoning into effect. Newark will probably adopt its zoning plan within a few weeks. The plan has been prepared under the direction of Herbert S. Swan, one of the experts on the zoning of New York, has already gone to first reading in the council, and is meeting with almost no opposition. Rochester has its maps nearly prepared. Berkeley and Alameda, Cal., have adopted complete zoning plans. Chicago, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cleveland, Omaha, and Akron are taking up the subject in earnest, although their maps are not yet prepared in final form. Minneapolis and Duluth have adopted partial zoning plans under a somewhat incomplete State law. Other cities throughout the country are trying to get started by sending out investigation committees. In practically every great city of the United States the Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce are urging their respective cities to adopt zoning.

Zoning is done under the police power and not by condemnation. Consequently no damages are paid to private owners. The courts are supporting zoning quite uniformly throughout the United States. A number of cases have gone to the United States Supreme Court, which has in imposing the protection of zoning uniformly upheld the States and cities