

providing room in the courthouse for the offices of the Clerks of Court and the Registers of Wills, and the Comptroller must authorize the use of fees collected by the officials for purchase of record equipment and furniture, cooperation between county and State is essential. As advisors to the Comptroller, our primary responsibility is to assist the Clerk or Register in the layout of record areas and in the purchase of appropriate equipment. Occasionally, however, the county also seeks our advice on air conditioning and vault construction. During the year, we assisted the Clerks and Registers in Caroline, Cecil, Harford and Kent counties in planning for new office and records space.

The ever-increasing need for space and the rising costs of construction have caused many county and State officials to realize that the space problem cannot be solved by brick and mortar alone, but that its solution lies in the re-design of current records systems. We have long urged the Clerks to adopt a microfilm system of recording, and we were instrumental in getting legislation in 1962 permitting them to employ such systems. Although many of the Clerks and Registers have for some time used a microfilm projection print program for recording, and the Clerk of the Superior Court in Baltimore City and the Clerk in Prince George's County have been recording Financing Statements on microfilm only, most Clerks have been reluctant to adopt such a system. However, a microfilm recording program for the land records in Prince George's County was begun in January 1966.

This program was the result of cooperative efforts of the Clerk, the very active Court Records Committee of the County Bar Association, and the Hall of Records. The Clerk and the Committee, after observing microfilm systems in Pennsylvania, Texas and Tennessee, solicited our advice and support in developing a system which would be acceptable to the principal users—attorneys, title searchers, and employees of title companies.

In order to ensure that the system developed would maintain the integrity of the land records and have the capacity to respond to demands made upon it, we examined and evaluated several microforms with the Clerk and the Committee: 1) the acetate jacket, a transparent plastic carrier with sleeves to hold the film in flat strips; 2) the aperture card, a tabulating card holding a frame of microfilm; and 3) the magazine, a plastic cartridge to hold the film in roll form.

The advantages and disadvantages of each microform were discussed at length, and the Clerk and the Committee decided to adopt the 16mm