

## Community Buildings

The term community building or assembly building is broad in meaning and depending upon specific circumstances may serve larger or smaller community areas for recreational, cultural and/or social functions. Perhaps the most important assembly building resource in smaller communities is the public school. Classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, auditoriums and gymnasiums can accommodate community-wide events, spectator sports, participatory recreation activity, and cultural programs for learning or entertainment. Houghton and Hancock have the added resources of Michigan Technological University and Suomi College.

It is a difficult task to assess community building needs without liaison with citizens and groups who utilize the facilities. Moreover, even a positive expression of need or desirability may be nullified by attempts to secure local financing. Therefore, outside matching grants from state or federal sources may be necessary to stimulate action on any given project.

TABLE 17 lists the major community buildings that are available to citizens in the Hancock-Houghton community. Each facility is rated on a one through 10 scale to evaluate its relative service to the community.

Facilities that are most difficult for vehicle access and pedestrian access are: (1) the Naval Reserve Center, (2) the Power House Teen Center, (3) the MTU Ice Arena, and (4) Dee Stadium.

Those facilities with the most favorable vehicle and pedestrian access characteristics include: (1) Hancock High School, (2) Hancock City Hall, (3) St. Ignatius School, (4) Houghton City Hall, (5) Houghton High School, (6) Paavo Nurmi Center, and (7) E.L. Wright School.

Facilities that rated high on the basis of combined score include: (1) Sherman Gym, (2) St. Patricks School, (3) Paavo Nurmi Center, (4) MTU Ice arena (new), (5) R.O.T.C. Hall, (6) Lakeview Manor, (7) E.L. Wright School, (8) Houghton City Hall, (9) Houghton and Hancock High Schools, and (10) St. Ignatius School. The combined scores are influenced considerably by factors related to site area and new construction. University and College buildings were rated from a total community viewpoint.

The rating system developed herein may be used to guide the selection of sites for new community buildings. However, every site will present some compromise locational criteria depending on the importance of site area, vehicle access, walk in traffic, off-street parking or other features, since 100% compliance with each of these is rarely possible.

**TABLE 17**  
**COMMUNITY BUILDING RATINGS**  
**Hancock-Houghton Region**

<u>Community Building</u>	<u>Rating by Facility Characteristics</u>					<u>Total Score</u>
	<u>Site Area</u>	<u>Auto Access</u>	<u>Walk-in Access</u>	<u>Building Condition</u>	<u>Parking Space</u>	
City of Hancock:						
St. Patricks School	2	2	4	1	1	10
Paavo Nurmi Center(Suomi)	5	3	1	1	1	11
Lakeview Manor	5	1	4	1	3	14
E.L. Wright School	5	2	2	5	5	19
Hancock High School	5	1	1	6	7	20
Ryan School	7	3	2	7	6	25
Council Chambers	9	1	2	7	8	27
Intermediate Schools	7	3	3	7	7	27
Naval Reserve Center	5	4	8	7	5	29
City of Houghton:						
Sherman Gym (MTU)	1	1	5	2	1	10
New Ice Arena (MTU)	1	5	6	1	1	14
R.O.T.C. Hall (MTU)	5	3	5	6	3	22
Council Chambers	7	1	3	5	7	23
Houghton High School	9	3	1	5	8	26
St. Ignatius School	9	2	1	6	8	26
Power House	9	5	6	5	7	32
Dee Stadium	9	4	6	8	8	35
Fire Hall	10	1	4	10	10	35

NOTE: A high score indicates greater deficiencies and a low score lesser deficiencies.

SOURCE: Community Facilities Analysis, October 1971.

If sufficient land were available, it appears that the following general locations are well adapted for community building usage:

- . Hancock High School — Suomi College Area
- . Hancock City Hall
- . The south frontage of Montezuma Avenue in Houghton
- . St. Joseph's Hospital Area
- . Houghton High School - St. Ignatius School areas

Every facility, will require detailed locational analysis at the time of construction, and must answer the traditional conflict between more distant locations with larger sites, or close in central locations where land is scarce but better serviced.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The communities of Hancock and Houghton are at the population center of Houghton County. These communities had a total 1970 population of 10,887 persons, giving credence to the concept that the two-city region is also at the center of greatest county activity. These regional characteristics influence the location of other services which endeavor to achieve convenient and accessible locations to the greatest number of people.

The preliminary Community Facilities Plan report listed 42 major public service agencies that are currently located in Hancock and Houghton. Each was rated for its adaptability to locate in a civic center type facility, or relative compatibility with other public services. There are a number of community service agencies that are located in buildings rated to be in fair to poor condition. Also access is difficult in several instances because of a lack of parking, long second story stairways, and obsolete building design. These would have priority consideration in any endeavor to consolidate services into centrally located community type buildings.

Because of the nature of the Houghton County economy, it is likely that the area could qualify for a Community Facilities Grant that may dovetail with local efforts to construct vocational facilities, sheltered workshops, and drop-in centers for youths, teenagers and/or senior citizens. Other social and welfare service function may be included.

## **HANCOCK CITY HALL**

Hancock's City Hall is located on Quincy Street at the west end of the Central Business District. The red sandstone building is somewhat typical of public and institutional buildings constructed in the Upper Peninsula in the late 1800's and early 1900's. These structures have fortress like features and rarely show deterioration in supporting walls or foundations. The aging process is most evident in terms of general layout and obsolescence.

On the basis of floor space need, location in the community, and historical significance, no major City Hall changes would be warranted. Functionally, however, there are problems that may be very difficult to overcome in the present structure. Administrative offices on the second floor make access difficult for older citizens. Quarters for police and fire department personnel appear limited and poorly adapted for their operations. On site parking is negligible, although visitors may use the High School parking lot.

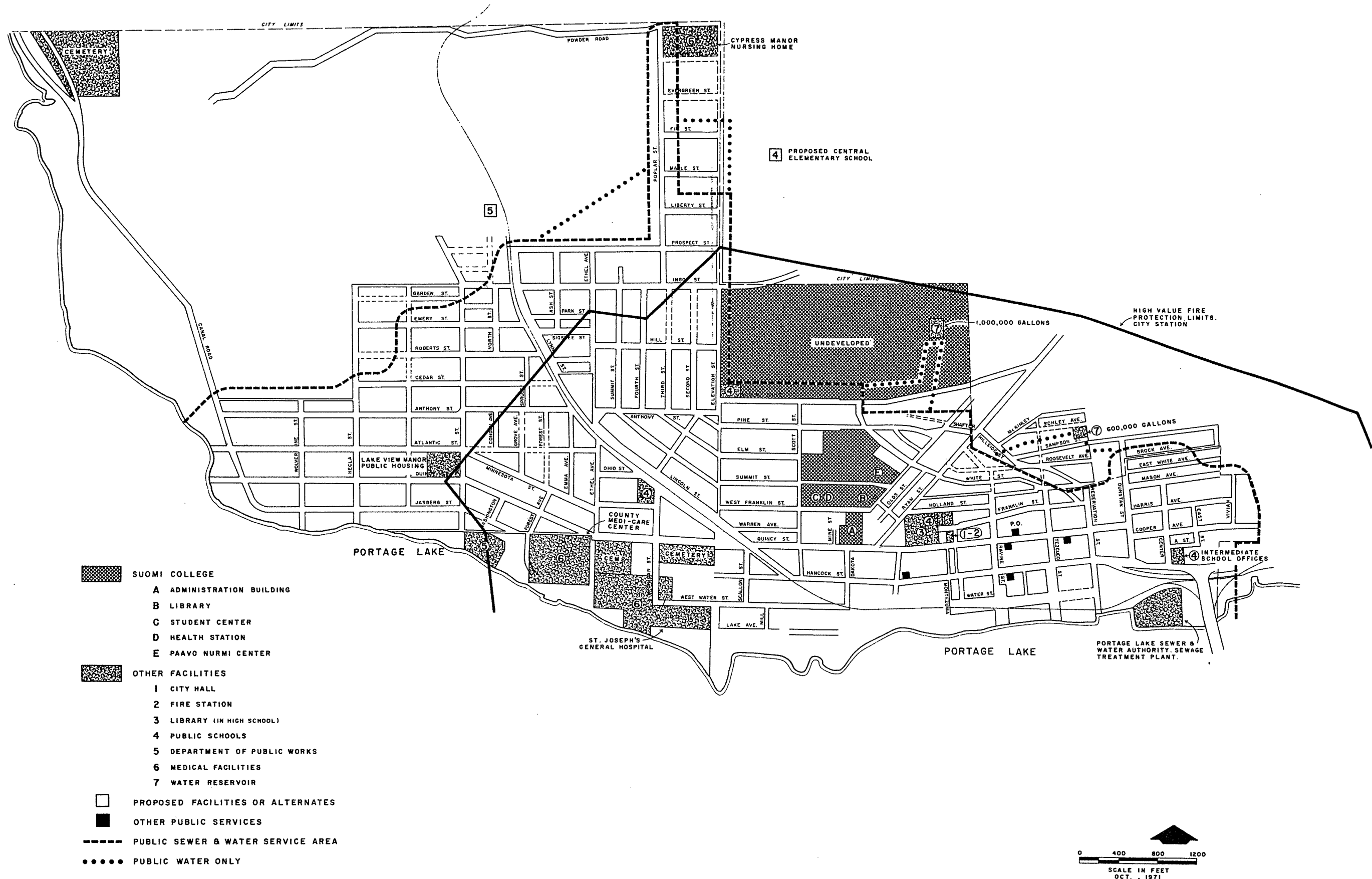
Some future alternatives for City Hall include the following:

1. Retain the present structure for historical and economical reasons and effect a complete renovation, including more off-street parking, perhaps on the high school site.
2. Move the City offices to another building in the vicinity of the Central Business District. Retain the present building for the fire and police functions (public safety department). The second floor could be renovated for the Council Chamber and/or multi-purpose meeting room.
3. Completely abandon the present City Hall, raze the building, and move into new or other quarters.

Whatever positive action is taken, the results will improve accessibility for citizens, generate local pride in the community, enhance the community image to visitors and others, and provide a better working environment for City employees.

## **HOUGHTON COMMUNITY BUILDING**

The Houghton City Hall is in reasonably sound physical condition, has three useable floors, and has a good location at the edge of the Central Business District. Topography permits the two lower floors of the building to have ground level access, hence, and all City offices may be reached from the outside without climbing a flight of stairs. Several other community services are also housed in the



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## CITY OF HANCOCK MICHIGAN

vilican leman & associates inc.  
community planning consultants

City Hall (community building). The structural characteristics of the community building are sound and there has been good maintenance. Nonetheless, there are some problems associated with the structure for City Hall use.

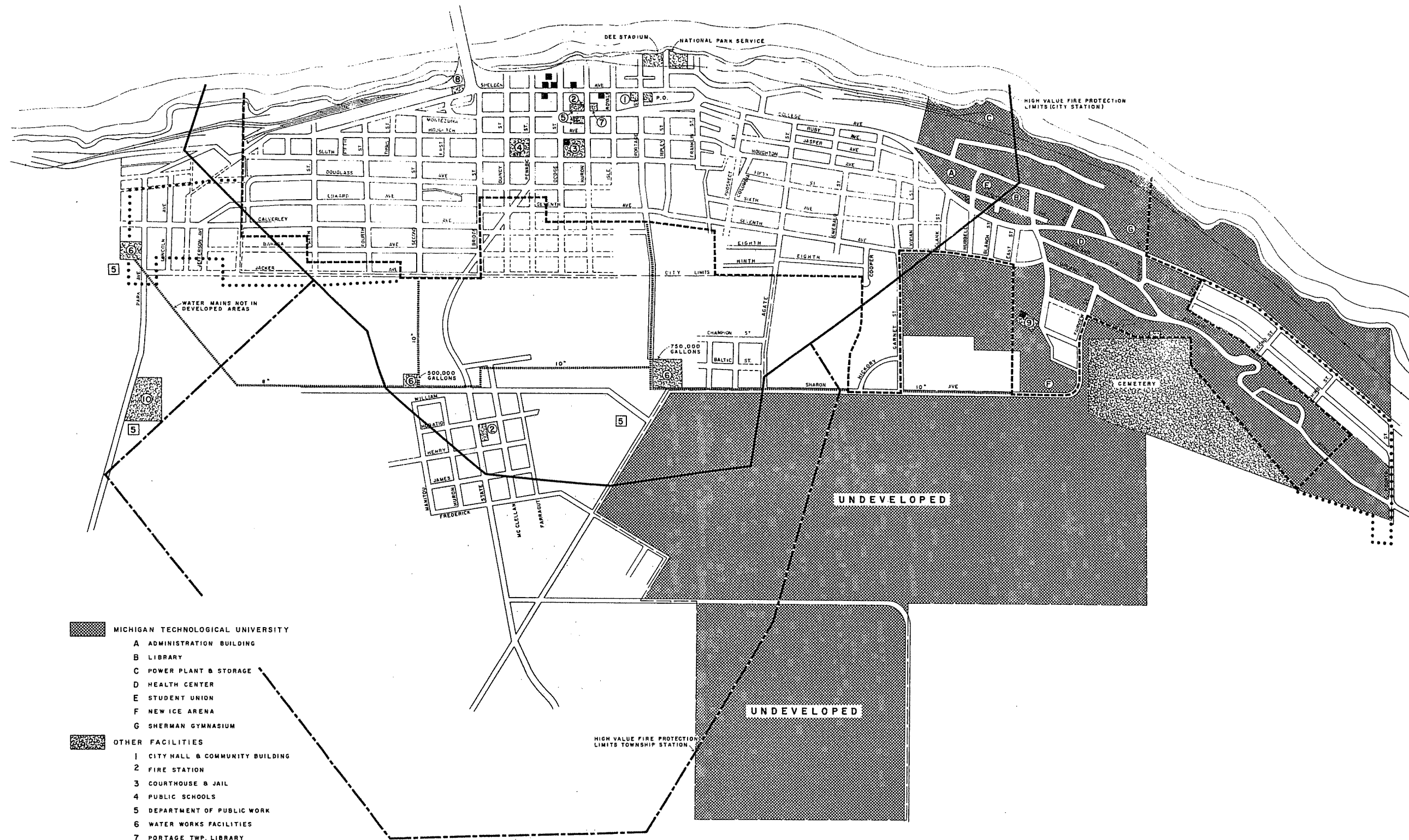
1. The building was originally designed to house a private club and not City Administrative functions.
2. The Council Chambers need re-designing for better communication relationships with citizens and others who attend Council sessions.
3. Existing administrative offices function with a poor internal traffic pattern. Recent remodeling has improved this condition.
4. Interior work is needed on wiring, fixtures, stairways, and floors.
5. Existing parking is limited. Angle parking on Portage Street is available and an adjacent off-street gravel lot is restricted by a steep incline.

In the immediate future, Houghton should plan to remain on the present site in the existing Community Building. An architectural analysis of the building should be completed to guide future renovation for both the interior and exterior. Some future events that may affect City Hall are municipal consolidation and/or City-County Building programs.

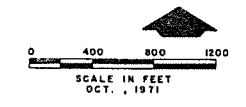
## **LIBRARIES**

Portage Township operates a 16,000 volume library in Houghton. It is located at Montezuma and Huron Streets in the Central Business District, one block uphill from Sheldon Street. Access is rather difficult for pedestrians and there is a lack of any off-street parking. The fast, high volume traffic on Montezuma tends to limit access for children living in adjacent neighborhoods.

Library services in Hancock are provided in conjunction with the High School and there are approximately 11,000 volumes for general public service. Because the library serves both school and public needs, there are some use conflicts. As a minimum, the Hancock library should be carpeted to deaden noise, and interior remodeling should consider some reserved areas for general public use.



- MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
  - A ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
  - B LIBRARY
  - C POWER PLANT & STORAGE
  - D HEALTH CENTER
  - E STUDENT UNION
  - F NEW ICE ARENA
  - G SHERMAN GYMNASIUM
- OTHER FACILITIES
  - 1 CITY HALL & COMMUNITY BUILDING
  - 2 FIRE STATION
  - 3 COURTHOUSE & JAIL
  - 4 PUBLIC SCHOOLS
  - 5 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORK
  - 6 WATER WORKS FACILITIES
  - 7 PORTAGE TWP. LIBRARY
  - 8 POWER HOUSE (TEEN CENTER)
  - 9 U.S. FOREST SERVICE LAB.
  - 10 SANITARY FILL
- PROPOSED FACILITIES & ALTERNATES
- OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES
- PUBLIC SEWER & WATER SERVICE AREA
- PUBLIC WATER ONLY



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## CITY OF HOUGHTON MICHIGAN

vilican leman & associates inc.  
community planning consultants

Foreseeable library services in Hancock and Houghton may continue to rely on the two basic facilities currently in operation. Improvement should follow the general guidelines for improved acoustics, expanded floor area as warranted, and design techniques to recognize use by children, adults, senior citizens and high school age persons. Ultimately, citizen use demands for library services determine library construction programs. This also relates to the attitude of citizens on the desirability of library facilities and their adequacy. A high level of public support can justify voted millage to underwrite new or expanded facilities, perhaps to include a County library system.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

Houghton's public works garage dates back to 1938 and is rated to be in fair condition. A large open vehicle storage lot is located across the street from the D.P.W. garage. Problems associated with this facility relate to lack of site, insufficient enclosed storage area, and the inability of the present structure to support an overhead hoist. Office space for the D.P.W. Superintendent is needed and from an operational standpoint there are serious conflicts with through traffic on Montezuma Avenue.

Hancock has a larger and more adequate public works garage that was constructed in 1963. The City is endeavoring to lease an adjacent building and site for D.P.W. purposes, and if acquired will result in a more adequate site.

A consideration in future D.P.W. facilities is the possibility of consolidation between Hancock and Houghton, if not political, at least the administration of D.P.W. services and facilities. The decision to cooperate further or consolidate D.P.W. services should be made in the near future, since Houghton has a fairly urgent need to consider new facilities. The size and extent of these facilities will be governed by the space requirements of a combined program minus adequate available space in Hancock. Not explored in the consolidation study was the possibility of both cities utilizing County Road Commission lands, facilities, or services. If this were feasible and economically justifiable, City investments in D.P.W. garages may be minimized further. The location of Public Works garages and facilities should follow the general requirements for industrial uses



## WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES

Subtle but important factors in community growth dynamics are domestic water supplies and sanitary sewage collection and treatment facilities. Without these basic services the community cannot compete effectively in an economic sense and there is less positive control over the direction and density of future development. Also, these central utility services are key elements of programs aimed at resource protection and pollution control.

The details of water and sewer planning are the province of engineering studies which equate the physiography of the community with current demand, economic feasibility and growth projections. Hence, this report will not deal with specific engineering details of utility planning, except to report on basic services as they relate to the Comprehensive Plan. At the present time, Hancock and Houghton are generally being included in a Water and Sewer Plan for Houghton County. Further, the Hancock-Houghton Regional Planning Commission is preparing a Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan as a supplement to this report. The Plan includes projected service areas for water, sanitary sewers, and storm sewers on a staged basis covering three 10 year periods.

Sanitary sewer services are provided through the auspices of the Portage Lake Sewer and Water Authority. Hancock and Houghton share equally on capital outlay costs, and share proportionately on operation costs (based on volume flow into the plant).

The sewage treatment plant has a design capacity of 1.8 million gallons per day and current flow averages 1.6 m.g.d. Because the combined system also collects storm water (15% to 25% during dry weather) the Cities will have to embark on a sewer separation program. This will effect an immediate and needed capacity increase.

Both Cities purchase domestic water from a "mine" source in Painesdale. Studies are now in progress to investigate visible alternative sources, one of which is Lake Superior. These efforts are encouraged to proceed cooperatively among all the affected municipalities.

Existing areas covered by community water and sewer services are illustrated on the "Community Facilities" maps for Hancock and Houghton.

## **FIRE STATIONS**

The City of Hancock operates and maintains one fire station on the ground level floor of the City Hall. The fire company is composed of 12 volunteers. On a rotation system, one volunteer is always stationed in the fire hall to move vehicles to the site of the fire during an emergency.

Houghton's fire station is located adjacent to the D.P.W. garage on Montezuma Street. This station was constructed in 1883 and is rated to be in poor condition. Houghton's fire company supports three full time firemen and 17 part time (volunteers).

In the Hancock-Houghton area, overlapping and supporting fire protection accrues from nearby stations in Atlantic Mine, Hurontown, Ripley and Franklin Township.

The total effectiveness of a community's fire protection system is reflected by insurance rates. On a scale of 1 to 10, where one is excellent, Hancock and Houghton carry a class seven fire rating.

Several factors bear on the insurance rating of a community. These include trained personnel, water systems, type and condition of equipment, construction materials, density of development, and the response capability of the fire department. Response capability includes fire station locations related to prescribed distance standards.

In Hancock, nearly all high value areas and uses are located within one mile of the fire station. The Lakeview Manor public housing complex is one mile from the fire station and hospital facilities on west Quincy Street are less than one mile distant. The Cypress Manor Nursing Home is on a one mile radius from the fire station, but nearly 1½ miles via City streets.

The one mile high value service area in Houghton adequately covers all of the City's high value area with the exception of Michigan Technological University. Most of the dormitories and student housing facilities fall within a two mile service area.

### **Future Fire Stations**

For the most part existing fire station locations in Hancock and Houghton provide good high value coverage, and all City Limits fall within a two mile service area. Any need for new stations will be related to the adequacy and future life of existing buildings.

If a new fire station is provided in Hancock, it could be sited farther west on Quincy Street, but should not be past Elevation Street. An uphill location may offer better response capability during winter conditions, although the fire chief indicated few response limitations because of topography. A good uphill site would be in the vicinity of Lincoln Drive (US-41) and White Street.

The City of Houghton is likely to have an opportunity to expand the present fire station into the adjacent D.P.W. garage (when vacated). This will enable the City to select the best of two structures. In the future, Houghton may elect to construct a new fire station on an uphill site, perhaps on Seventh Street between Bridge and Portage. This location may eliminate the need for a fire station in Hurontown.

Even though there is good fire station overlap with nearby Township stations, there are questions of whether or not some rural stations would be needed if fully equipped and fully manned central fire stations are developed in the Hancock-Houghton urban area. The response capability of fully equipped and staffed facilities would probably be more effective than smaller volunteer units.

#### **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SERVICES**

Universities and colleges have far reaching influences on their home communities. To the Hancock-Houghton region, the economic impact is perhaps the most critical element as both MTU and Suomi afford a strong stabilizing input within a region characterized by cyclic economic trends and long term mining-manufacturing job losses. However, as a community facility, citizens in the Hancock-Houghton region have the opportunity to receive a full college education without traveling to or living in distant communities. Through MTU the State provides the area with over 250 academic teaching faculty, and all of the facilities and services required to operate a University.

The classrooms, auditoriums, recreational buildings, library and research labs are provided without a local property tax assessment or general obligation bonds as is necessary for most other municipal services, and community colleges.

Suomi College in Hancock is a private two year educational facility operated by the Lutheran Church. Current enrollment is about 400 students and the main campus encompasses some 15 acres of land between Quincy, Scott, Lincoln, White and Finn Streets.

The dominant land use in the Hancock-Houghton region is Michigan Technological University, located in the eastern areas of the City of Houghton. MTU is an independent State University renowned for its curriculum in engineering. Equally important are the University's achievements in mining and

forestry research. Enrollment at MTU increased from 2,672 in 1960 to 4,903 in 1970 and to 5,002 in 1971.

The main campus of MTU encompasses some 200 acres of land. In addition, there are more than 460 acres of undeveloped land south of the main campus, for a combined area in excess of one square mile. The Portage Lake Golf Club south of Houghton, the Mount Ripley Ski area east of Hancock, and the Ford Forestry Center in Alberta (Baraga County) are in addition to the Houghton campus. The campus is expanding in terms of a Comprehensive Campus Development Plan.

### **MEDICAL FACILITIES**

Medical services reflect the character of the population in the region. Because of a general population decline in the County there appear to be somewhat lower demands for general acute care beds.

However, the increasing average age of the population generates a larger demand for supervised nursing home care. Area planning for these services must detail needs for the entire County (or multi-county) and weigh these against available facilities, whether public or private. Facilities in the Hancock-Houghton Region include St. Joseph's Hospital, County Medical Care Unit, Cypress Manor Nursing Home, MTU Health Center, and Suomi College Nurse Station.

The Hancock-Houghton communities are a major medical service center for a large region and therefore should enhance the appeal of the area for medical staff as well as ancillary health services.

### **SUMMARY**

One of the inherent difficulties with community facility needs is the mutually independent character of the demand. A community can program or choose which facilities shall be acted on first and which shall be delayed. However, the delayed service continues to be needed. For example, a community may need sanitary sewer system improvements and a new library simultaneously. Providing new sewers, in no way reduces the need for the library or any other services that may compete for municipal budget priority.

The accompanying TABLE endeavors to assess the relative priority of each community facility considered. Needs reflect new facilities and/or improved facilities.

TABLE 18

PRIORITY RATING OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES  
Hancock-Houghton Region

Facility	Estimated Priority of Need for new or improved facilities		
	Low	Medium	High
City Hall, Hancock			X
City Hall, Houghton	X	X	
Fire Hall, Hancock		X	
Fire Hall, Houghton		X	
D.P.W. Garage, Hancock	X		
D.P.W. Garage, Houghton			X
Community Building		X	
General Hospital	X		
Nursing Home		X	
Supervised Care		X	X
Source of Domestic Water		X	X
Sewage Facility Improve- ments (storm separation)			X
Sewage phosphate removal			X

SOURCE: Community Facilities Analysis, October 1971.