RECREATION

The purpose of the recreation analysis is to determine local recreation needs and present a plan to adequately meet the requirements of the Hancock-Houghton Region. Local recreation areas are those which serve the surrounding residential areas, and include neighborhood and community recreational facilities. Larger County and State operated facilities are the province of plans dealing with parks and regional recreational facilities.

The fact that Hancock and Houghton have frontage on Portage Lake, are in the immediate influence of Lake Superior, and are in a region characterized by rugged topography with a summer-winter climate, enables the two Cities to offer recreational programs and facilities not feasible in many other locations of the nation. The physiography of this region stands in contrast to the Great Plains, the Everglades, and Desert regions of North America.

EXISTING RECREATION

TABLES 12 and 13 list recreational facilities that serve the Cities of Hancock and Houghton. These have been classified according to their primary service function either neighborhood or community-wide. Also shown are pertinent regional and quasi-public facilities. Hancock has many recreational facilities which are widely distributed throughout the City. TABLE 12, shows that there are 279.1 acres of land in the City. Of this 136.0 acres are in City or School District ownership. Four acres are in quasi-public ownership.

TABLE 12

RECREATION INVENTORY - CITY OF HANCOCK
Hancock - Houghton Region

Facility	Ownership	Acreage
Neighborhood		
School Site (Proposed K-6		
Central)	School	15.0 acres
Ryan School	School	.7
E.L. Wright School	School	.9
Terrace Park City	City	1.3
Montezuma Park	City	.4
Laurn Grove Playground	City	1.3
Third Street Playlot	City	.5
Total	,	20.1 acres
Community-Wide		
Lake Ballfield	City	.8 acre
Hancock High School	School	2.9
Condon Field	School	2,1
Driving Park	City	16.3
Montezuma Square	City	.1
City Park	City	46.8
Hancock Beach	City	46.6
East Street Plaza	City	.3
Total		115.9 acre
Total City		136.0 acre
Quasi-Public and Others		
U.S. Naval Reserve Hall	Federal	.4 acro
St. Patrick's School	Church	2.1
Gloria Dei Playground	Church	.3
Paavo Nurmi Center	Suomi	.4
American Legion Hall	Legion	.3
White Street Rink	Private	.5
Lakeview Manor	Housing Comm.	N/A
Total		4.0 acr

Regional Recreation

Portage Lake Access	State	2.3 acres
Roadside Park (US-41)	State	.4
County Marina	County	1.4
Mt. Ripley Ski Hill	MTU	135.0
Total		139.1 acres
Grand Total		279.1 acres

SOURCE: Comprehensive Recreation Plan, May, 1971.

Data current to 1972 by updating.

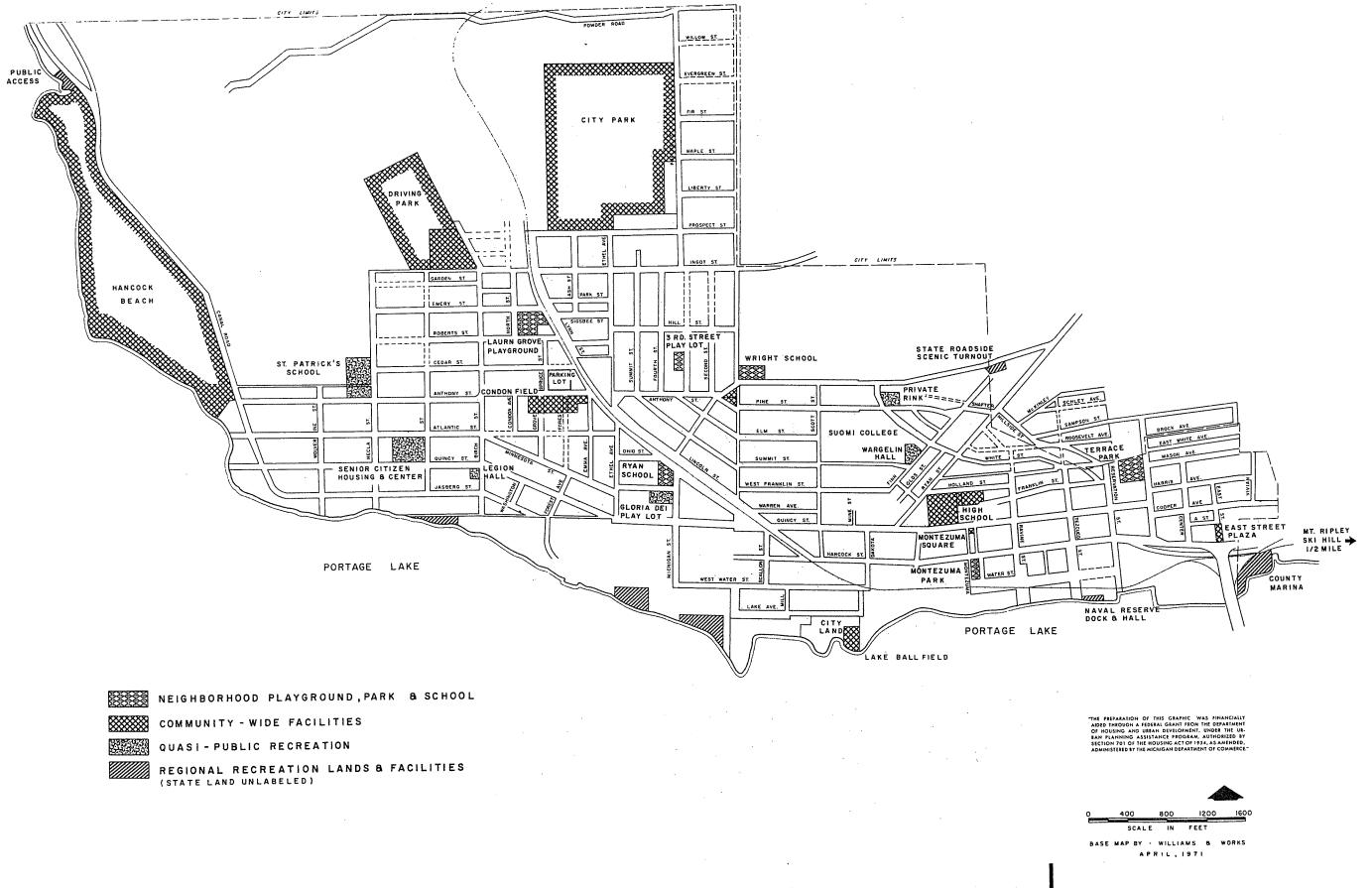
A new 15.0 acre school site in Quincy Township has been added to the recreation inventory because it is adjacent to the City Limits. Should any existing school site be abandoned or sold to a nonpublic entity, the local recreation land inventory would be lowered by that area.

In addition to 4.1 acres of regional recreation area in Hancock, Michigan Technological University operates the Mt. Ripley Ski Hill just east of the corporate City Limits. This is a large regional service facility on 135 acres of land.

Hancock has 115.9 acres of land in the community-wide classification. However, a considerable amount of this acreage is in land that can be classified as reserve recreation or public open space. It is not all used or useable for community recreation at this time. Also, Montezuma Square on Quincy Street (across from City Hall) and the East Street Plaza on south East Street are ornamental parks.

The City is currently applying for State recreation monies to improve services at the Central High School, Laurn Grove Park, and the Hancock Beach. Gloria Dei Church is developing a playground area for congregation and community use.

Compared with Hancock, the City of Houghton has considerably less recreation area and there are no large reserve-open space lands dedicated for recreation purposes. The School District and recreation organizations own more facilities than the City. Sunshine Beach is the largest City owned recreational facility, but it is located about one and one half miles east of the City Limits on Portage Lake. As evident from TABLE 13, most of the recreation land and facilities in Houghton are owned by Michigan Technological University. All recreation sites are illustrated on the "Recreation Inventory" map.



RECREATION INVENTORY VILICON - Le Planning

vilican · leman & assoc. inc. planning consultants There are 2.8 acres of city-school land that is classified as neighborhood park. Of this acreage the City is developing the East Houghton playground to serve surrounding residential areas, a much needed facility in view of the general lack of recreation land. The West Houghton Athletic Field has primary service as a winter skating rink.

A local recreation area outside the City Limits is located to the south in Hurontown. Although out of the City it does fall within a future planned neighborhood.

Eleven recreational facilities make up the community-wide recreation inventory of 14.8 acres, including a small ornamental park. Dee Stadium, though owned and operated by MTU is an enclosed skating surface (artificial ice) that is used by the Hancock-Houghton communities as well as by the University. Hubbell Field on Sharon Avenue is owned by the State and the Portage Township Recreation Commission operates it on a lease basis. The two ballfield areas on Sharon Avenue are used cooperatively for University and community ballgames.

TABLE 13

RECREATION INVENTORY - City of Houghton Hancock-Houghton Region

Facility	Ownership	Acreage
N eighborhood		
New K-3 School Site	School	15.0 acres
West Houghton Athletic Field	School	.7
Central School Playground	School	1.1
East Houghton Playground	City	1.0
Total		17,8 acres
Community-Wide		
Sharon-Garnet Park	City	1 acres
High School (Central)	School	1.1
Hubbell Field	State/Twp.	5.0
City Fire Hall	City	.1
Teen Center	U.P. Power	.2
People's Park	Church	1.9
College Avenue Square	City	.2
Public Fishing Sites (2)	City	.1
Horseshoe Courts	Private	.1
Dee Stadium	MTU	1.0
Sunshine Beach	City	5.0
Total		148 acres
City Total		32.6 acres
Quasi-Public & Other		
4-H Clubhouse	4-H	.2 acres
St. Ignatius (M.P. Room & Hall)	Church	1.3
Sherman Gym & Field	MTU	2.4
Ice Arena (New)	MTU	2.5
Princess Point	MTU	2.0
Good Shepherd Hall	Church	.5
Portage Township Fire Hall	Township	.5
Sharon-Garnet Ballfields	MTU	3.0
Sharon-Fairview Ballfields	MTU	6.5
R.O.T.C. Hall	M TU	1.0
Hurontown Ballfield	Township	3.0
Total		22.9 acres

Regional Recreation

Portage Golf Course	MTU	190.0 acres
National Park Cruise	Federal	.5
Bridge Square	State Highway	.8
Total		191.3 acres

GRAND TOTAL 246.8 acres

SOURCE: Comprehensive Recreation Plan, May, 1971.
Data current to 1972 updating.

The Teen Center is developed in a former "power house" owned by the Upper Peninsula Power Company. This facility may be deeded to a community recreation group.

Quasi-public recreational facilities total 22.9 acres dominated by the new \$2.6 million MTU student ice arena adjacent to Hubbell Field. This facility may also serve community recreation needs, but priority use will be for MTU athletic programs. Sherman Gymnasium is an MTU athletic facility that includes a football practice field (hockey rink in winter), tennis courts, and a swimming pool.

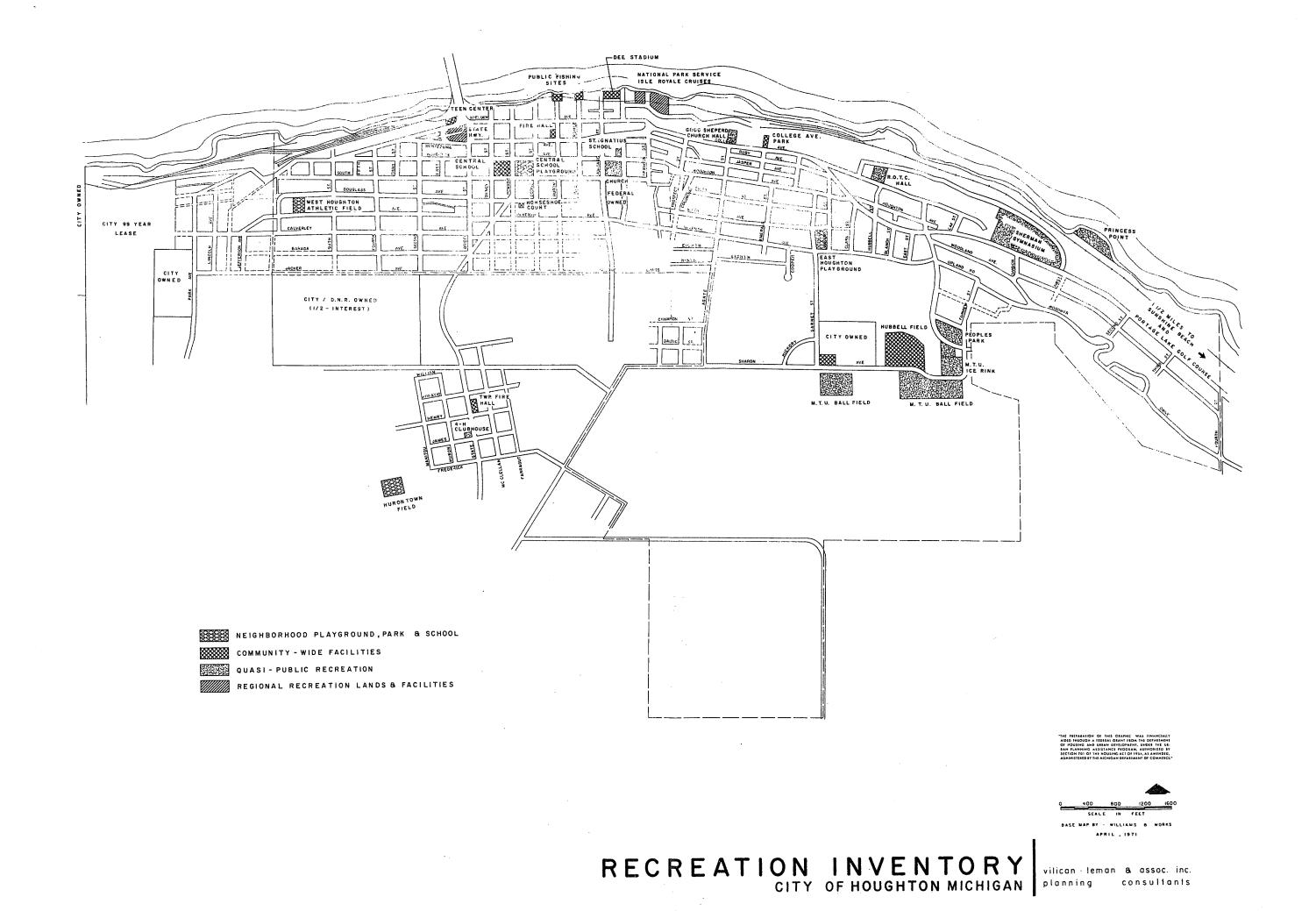
A large quasi-public recreation facility is the Portage Lake Country Club, which is now an eighteen (18) hole golf course owned by MTU. This facility is located south and east of the City on a 190 acre site.

People's Park, the Good Shepherd Church Hall and the St. Ignatius Hall and multi-purpose room are church owned properties that provide recreational services to their congregrations and the community. People's Park is a nature oriented park that was groomed and developed by students on Earth Day 1970.

RECREATION NEEDS

There are multi-level recreation demands in the Hancock-Houghton communities that make precise need determinations difficult. These are listed below:

- 1. University and college students. The 1970 Fall enrollment at MTU and Suomi included 3,807 in-migrated students. This represents 28% of the 1970 Hancock, Houghton and Portage Township population.
- 2. Permanent families and residents including a large portion of persons over the age of 64 years.
- Tourists and other visitors who frequent the Portage Lake area.



Each of the foregoing demands overlap and facilities provided to serve one also serves the other two in some respects. The discussion which follows will empahsize recreation needs on the basis of:

- . Population and land area relationships
- . Geographic distribution
- . Special service needs
- . The resource base

Population-Land Needs

TABLE 14 highlights gross recreational land needs in Hancock and Houghton. Without qualifying for neighborhood or community-wide level demands, it is apparent that Hancock supports a comparatively large recreation land inventory. Hancock's 72 acre "surplus" is attributable in part to the land resources provided by City Park and Hancock Beach.

Houghton's recreation land inventory is near equal to the population demand. By adding in the MTU student population, a 10.7 acre deficit results.

TABLE 14

TOTAL RECREATION LAND NEEDS
Hancock-Houghton Region

Community	Existing Local Recreation Land	Land Need Based on 1970 Population	1970 Surplus or Deficit
Hancock	136.0 Acres	48.2 Acres	87.8 Acre surplus
Houghton: Less Students 1)	32.6 Acres ²⁾	30.7 Acres	1.9 Acre surplus
Total	138.6 Acres	78.9 Acres	89.7 Acre surplus
Houghton: With Students 1)	50.Acres	60.7 Acres	10.7 Acre Deficit

SOURCE: Comprehensive Recreation Plan, May, 1971.

NOTES:

(1) The estimated number of MTU students who live in the City of Houghton increases the acreage need. However, MTU owned recreational facilities (17.4 acres) offset the acreage need to some indeterminant extent.

(2) The Local recreation acreage has been increased by 15.0 acres in each city to account for the new elementary school sites recently acquired in locations adjacent to Hancock and Houghton. These were not inventoried in the May 1971 Comprehensive Recreation Plan.

The demands and acreage inventory in the two Cities can be combined for general statistical purposes. This results in a total surplus of 89.7 acres.

Geographic Distribution

The distribution of families and neighborhoods has a direct bearing on the determination of recreational facilities on a geographic basis. TABLE 15 translates the critical elements of the Hancock-Houghton Neighborhood Unit Plan into neighborhood recreation needs for 1971 and capacity development. These are minimum land needs that can be doubled to approach a higher optimum standards of adequacy. The minimum figures are used in response to the open space resource character of the surrounding region, especially in Houghton and Keweenaw Counties. The planned neighborhood boundaries are superimposed on the "Recreation Plan" map.

In the May 1971 Comprehensive Recreation Plan, neighborhood park needs were based on the application of minimum recreation standards. Minimum standards were used because the communities of Hancock and Houghton are comparatively small, and each approximates the size of one neighborhood unit. With the purchase of two new school sites, the neighborhood recreation needs are expanded to encompass both minimum and optimum needs.

At the present time additional recreation land is needed in three neighborhoods: two in Houghton and one in Hancock, Five of the six units will need additional recreation land at capacity development.

TABLE 15 MINIMUM-CAPACITY NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION NEED Hancock-Houghton Region

Primary City	Existing Neighborhood Recreation-School	Gross Park, School, and Playground Land Needs		Existing reignpormoud Playeround Land Noode Not No		Net Needs		
Neighborhoods	Land in 1972	Minimum	Capacity	Optimum	Minimum	Capcity	Optimum	
Hancock:								
A. Laurn Grove	1,3 ac.	3.0 ac.	11.8 ac.	4.0 ac.	1.7 ac.	10.5 ac.	2.7 ac	
B. Wright School	3.8	3.0	14.6	6.0	.0	10.8	2.2	
C. City Park	<u>15.0</u>	<u>3.</u> 0	19.7	8.1	.0	4.7	.0	
	20,1 ac.	9.0 ac.	46.1 ac.	18.1 ac.	1.7 ac.	26.0 ac	. 4.9 ac	
Houghton:								
A. East US-41	.0 ac.	3,0 ac.	17.0 ac.	7.0 ac.	3,0 ac.	17.0 ac	. 7.0 ac	
B. Central	2,1	3,0	12.4	5.4	.9	10.3	3.3	
C. West	<u>15,7</u>	3.0	<u> 15.4</u>	<u>6.3</u>	0_	0	0_	
	17.8 ac.	9.0 ac.	44.8 ac.	18.7 ac.	3.9 ac.	27,3 ac	. 10.3 ac	

Updated information from the comprehensive Recreation Plan, May 1971. 1) Refer to: Vilican-Leman & Associates, Inc., Neighborhood Unit Plan, Hancock-Houghton Area, March 1970.

The value of the capcity recreation figure may be questioned for its foreseeable applicability in either Hancock or Houghton. However, it serves the purpose of dramatizing recreation land needs (and school) on a "local area" basis and it underscores the substandard site sizes that exist today.

Because of the qualifying land demand factors in the Hancock-Houghton Region, it is suggested that basic site acquisition programs follow the optimumguidelines in TABLE 15. This is for neighborhood recreation purposes only and some of the responsibility will be Township, School, and/or City.

Community-wide recreation surpluses in one community can serve community-wide recreation deficiencies in an adjacent or nearby community. Whether they in fact do in any given community can only be determined by the citizens of the communities involved. TABLE 16 suggests that there is adequate 1970 land area in public ownership to satisfy community-wide needs in the two Cities combined. At capacity development, however, some 34.5 acres of community-wide recreation land will be needed. Since the statistical shortage is attributable to the City of Houghton, much of the 34.5 acre need should be provided on the south side of the Portage Canal.

TABLE 16

COMMUNITY-WIDE RECREATION NEEDS Hancock-Houghton Region

	Hancock		Hough	rton
	1970	Capacity	1970	Capacity
a. Land need at 10 acres per 1000 population	48.2 ac.	129.9 ac.	30.7 ac.	126.2 ac.
b. Deduct optimum Neighbor- hood Recreation Need				
(Table 15)	18.1 ac.	46.1 ac.	18,7 ac.	44.8 ac.
c. Sub Total "a" & "b"	30.1 ac.	83.8 ac.	12.0 ac.	81.4 ac.
d. Gross Community-wide				
recreation need	30.1 ac.	83,8 ac.	12.0 ac.	81.4 ac.
e. Deduct Existing Com-				
munity-wide recreation				
acreage	115.9 ac.	115.9 ac.	14.8 ac.	14.8 ac.
f. TOTAL NEEDS	+85.8 ac.	+32.1 ac.	+2.8 ac.	-66,6 ac.

NOTES:

These figures are the optimum playground-park areas determined for capacity development in the neighborhood units. It is used as a 1970 need figure in this TABLE because it is a better planning objective and it produces a more realistic balance between neighborhood and current community-wide acreage needs. The 1970 needs may be assumed as current or 1972 needs.

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SOURCE:

Comprehensive Recreation Plan, May, 1971.

SPECIAL SERVICE NEEDS

Special recreation services relate to demands that arise from the University-College population and tourists. Although students use community recreational areas, an area of demand overlap, educational institutions also provide basic recreational facilities. These currently involve: The Paavo Nurmi Center, Sherman Gymnasium, MTU ballfields, and the new MTU ice arena. Both the Suomi and MTU Campus plans include athletic and recreational complexes to meet this need.

Tourists and visitors in the Hancock-Houghton communities also seek out recreational services. Even though much of the tourist recreation demand is met through regional facilities (State, Federal and County Parks), cities and local communities should consider this demand in their planning. Primary tourist services will be commercially oriented. Motels, hotels, restaurants, theatres, gift shops and antiques are some demand elements. However, museums, historical buildings, rest areas, and downtown plaza or park services will be needed.

The Resource Base

Often the most satisfactory recreation system evolves from potentials related to the resource base. For example, Mt. Ripley is possible because of the steep topography that parallels the Portage Canal and the areas winter climate. Likewise, the County marina in Hancock is possible because of Portage Lake. A landlocked community is vastly more limited, as is a single season community. The resource base appraoch to recreation planning logically leads to the subjects of environment, ecology and community character.

In its more detailed aspects, resource base recreation-planning is beyond the scope of this report. However, basic community resources are open space recreation objectives that incorporate such features as: Portage Lake, interesting land formations, natural tree stands, soils, and related. These resource elements of the recreation demand should not be strictured by adherence to acreage-population formulae.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Regardless of acreage demand conclusions, the functional availability of a given recreation use or park is more critical than the attainment of exact acreage standards. For example, a scenic natural feature may be available in the community, and although there may be surplus recreation land, this scenic feature is desired by citizens and it would enhance community character. Other features such as historical monuments, ski slopes, recreation buildings, and the like, should be added if local sentiment favors these developments. Acreage calculations should be viewed as reasonable guides to land acquisition but not as absolute land requirements.

The accompanying "Recreation Plan" map illustrates a proposed system of neighborhood and community-wide recreational facilities for the Hancock-Houghton Region. These are basic recommendations that may be re-evaluated and modified on the basis of preferred action or in response to changed future conditions. Existing recreation features shown on the "Recreation Inventory" maps should also be regarded as planned facilities.

Following is a discussion of the salient elements of the Recreation Plan for Hancock and Houghton:

City of Hancock

- 1. Condon Field is a relatively small and intensively used community-wide park in a residential area. It should be promoted as a neighborhood park, playground or school site in future years.
- 2. The Third Street Playground and E.L. Wright School Playground are only one block from each other. If the school is ever discontinued, the school grounds should be retained for recreation and the Third Street Playlot eliminated.
- 3. Housing along Hancock Street and the south side of Quincy Street have restricted park access. Montezuma Park and the Gloria Dei Playground may need to be supplemented by small tot lots.
- 4. Recreation access for smaller children is restricted in the areas west of Suomi College and a playlot may be desirable in this area.
- 5. The Hancock Beach, will evolve as an area-wide recreational facility. A trailer court, nearby apartments, and the senior citizens housing complex suggest the desirability of establishing a passive recreation site in this area, perhaps on the St. Patricks school site.

- 6. The Portage Canal has 3.36 miles of frontage in the City. Nearly one fourth of the shoreline is now in recreation use, and over 50% is in State and/or City ownership. Hancock has a waterfront committee working to place Canal frontage lands in recreation use, including trails, scenic overlooks and the like. This objective should be pursued as an important element of community character.
- 7. Develop marina and boat launching facilities on the Portage Canal and expand the Marina to serve large as well as small boats.

City of Houghton

- 1. Except for certain specilaized recreation activities, the City should ultimately prepare to have more recreational services that are separate from Michigan Technological University. There is no apparent concern or use conflict as of this writing, but as M.T.U. increases in enrollment and enlarges its curriculum, the community use of facilities is likely to become more difficult.
- 2. Work with other public bodies to obtain and feasibly maintain Dee Stadium for a community ice arena.
- 3. Houghton does not have a large general community park for picnicking, hiking, sledding, snowshowing, etc. There are three potential sites that could adapt to community-wide park use. These include:
 - . City owned land west of Hubbell Field.
 - . City and Department of Natural Resources site south of Jacker Avenue.
 - Houghton owns over 100 acres and leases over 50 acres of land west of Park Avenue (M—26) for watershed protection.
- 4. There are 2.4 acres of Federal land south of the St. Ignatius Church that may be used for a neighborhood recreation site.
- 5. The Central School site is over used because of dual high school and elementary school use. The new elementary school and elementary school facility may resolve current over-use problems.
- 6. There is need for a community gymnasium. This facility would best be provided by the School District in conjunction with any new or expanded schools.

- 7. In coordination with Hancock, pursue a long range program of waterfront beautification. The need is based upon the general neglect of this recreation resource and the image of the waterfront to boating enthusiasts, and visitors who are attracted to the canal.
- 8. The large student population at MTU suggests the desirability of establishing trails to link the Campus with major community areas such as the Central Business District, Sunshine Beach and Portage Lake Golf Course.

As a general policy in Hancock and Houghton improve park areas and playgrounds by adding facilities and apparatus as desired by the area residents. However, recreation sites should not be developed beyond their effective use capacity. Boat ramp and marina locations may also be established after a detailed analysis of specific site characteristics.

The two Cities should anticipate a long term implementation program for recreation- school sites in accordance with the Neighborhood Unit Plan. Existing school grounds should be retained for recreation unless and until equal recreational areas are provided in the same neighborhood. Additional neighborhood level recreation is needed in the following units:

- A. in west Hancock
- A. in east Houghton
- B. in central Houghton
- B. in central Hancock

The C neighborhood units in both Cities are now served by new 15 acre school sites.

In the future some area-wide facilities may be provided cooperatively among area School Districts, MTU, Suomi College, Houghton County and the Cities of Hancock and Houghton. Benefits may accrue in the development and operation of the following: gymnasium, auditorium, and pool; ice arena, zoo, botanical garden, arboretum, historical interest features, boating facilities, and other cultural or recreational services of an area- wide nature.

Regional Recreational Facilities

Regional recreational facilities have County or multi-County service areas with patronage from beyond local community areas. The Mt. Ripley Ski facility, is perhaps the most dominant regional recreational facility near Hancock and this facility should be evaluated further for complimentary year around services. The Quincy Hill Mine historical restoration proposal can be tied in with the Mt. Ripley winter resort complex.

In Houghton, the Portage Lake Golf Course is an important area-wide facility. However, a more far reaching recreation attraction is the Isle Royale cruise ships that link Hancock and Houghton with the National Park. Visitors from throughout the nation are attracted to the Portage Canal area by the National Park.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A compelling reason for the existence of communities is providing services. Moreover, services are needed wherever people congregate in industrial production, resource harvesting, or the operation of major facilities both public and private. Every community is obliged to provide services for the convenience, health and safety of the population.

As may be expected, urban communities provide a broader and more sophisticated range of services than do rural communities. Legally, urban communities have greater legislative authority with which to provide and maintain services. However, local services are provided by incorporated cities and villages, school districts, townships, counties, and various special service districts.

The services considered in this report reflect the Cities of Hancock and Houghton. Some services discussed herein are considered essential services, and include safe water supplies, adequate sewage disposal, street maintenance, fire and police protection, and medical facilities. Other less vital but important services include libraries and community buildings. City halls are centers from which most urban services are administered, both from the standpoint of type of service and continued operations.

During 1970 and 1971, the area of North Houghton County was included in a "Plan for Consolidation of Public Services". Where applicable references to these findings are included herein. Specific recommendations were made on the economies of consolidating services, and alternate costs were cited in terms of political consolidation versus administrative or facility consolidation. If any future consolidations are implemented they will evolve either from local policy decisions or through pressures applied by state-federal funding agencies (e.g. no consolidation no funds).

Following is a list and general analysis of community facilities as they relate to the Hancock-Houghton Comprehensive Plan:

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Ernst & Ernst, Plan for Consolidation of Public Services, Houghton County, Lansing, Michigan, June 30, 1971.

