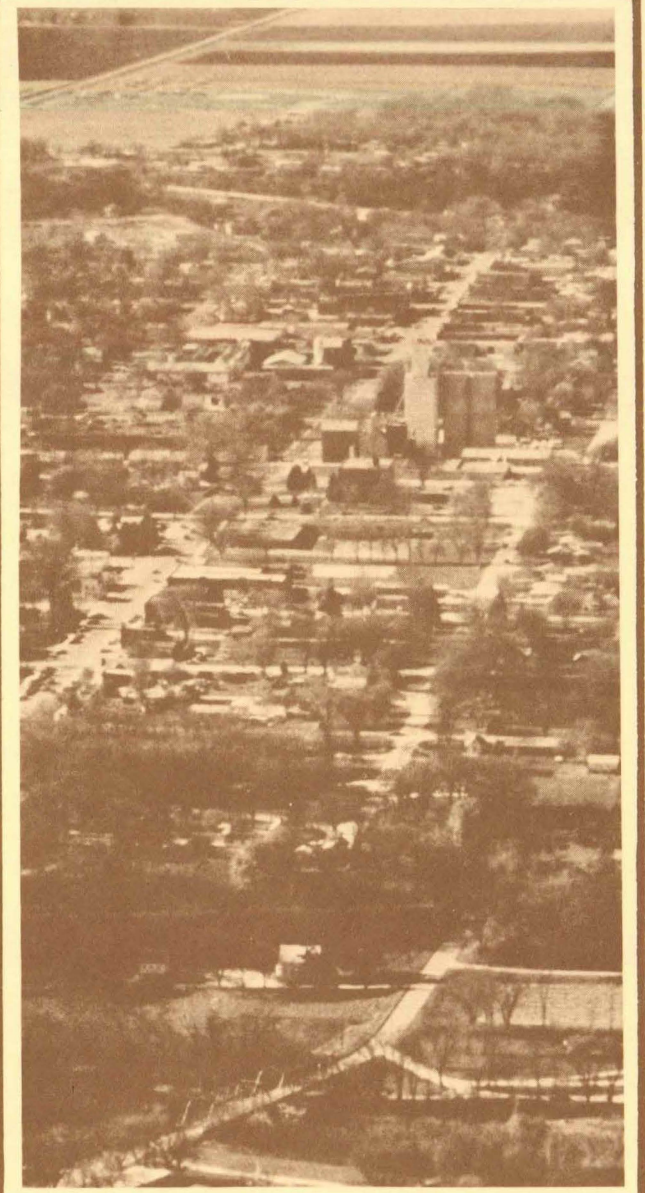


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**A COUNTY-WIDE CONSERVATION, OPEN SPACES &  
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN FOR  
HUMBOLDT COUNTY 1974**



This study was begun in the autumn of 1973 as a mutual venture of the Humboldt County Conservation Board and MIDAS Regional Planning Commission to provide a succinct and definitive plan of action for Humboldt County's Conservation, Open Spaces and Outdoor Recreation program.

Humboldt County had to this point operated admirably well without the benefit of a land resources plan. However, it was becoming readily apparent that a thought-unifying, long-range plan and a five-year plan of action would greatly assist the county in making resource development decisions.

At the same time, the need for some sort of planning assistance for the communities of Humboldt County was readily evident. Thus the concept of the planning process enlarged to accommodate the delivery of community recreation plans for Humboldt County's twelve communities.

MIDAS Regional Planning Commission, which is a relatively young public agency, accepted this challenge of studying Humboldt County's recreation potential and demands as a pilot project. Many of Iowa's counties have prepared conservation plans for the purpose of meeting outdoor recreation needs at the county level. It is, however, the contention of this study that a single plan can be prepared addressing itself to the needs of all of the residents and all of the land of a county.

The objectives of this study, then are: 1) to present an objective view of Humboldt County's recreational needs and opportunities; 2) to illustrate the social and economic atmosphere regarding recreation which might persist in the future; 3) to identify the existing natural resources which may accommodate development for recreational purposes; and 4) to develop a concept toward recreation with guidelines which outline priorities, financing and administration of the proposed facilities.

## **A PLAN FOR HUMBOLDT COUNTY AND ITS COMMUNITIES**



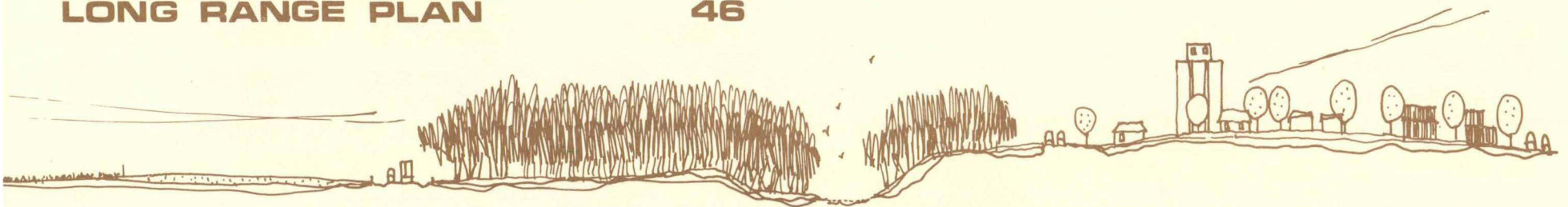




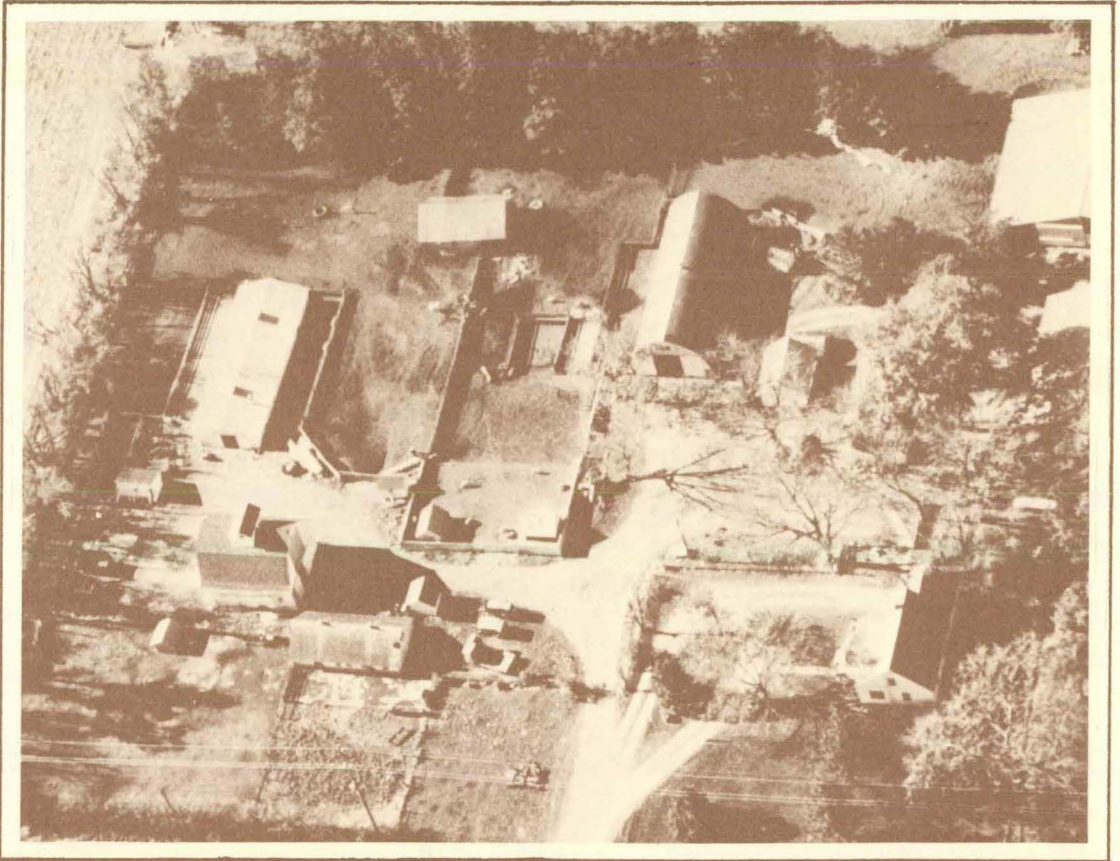
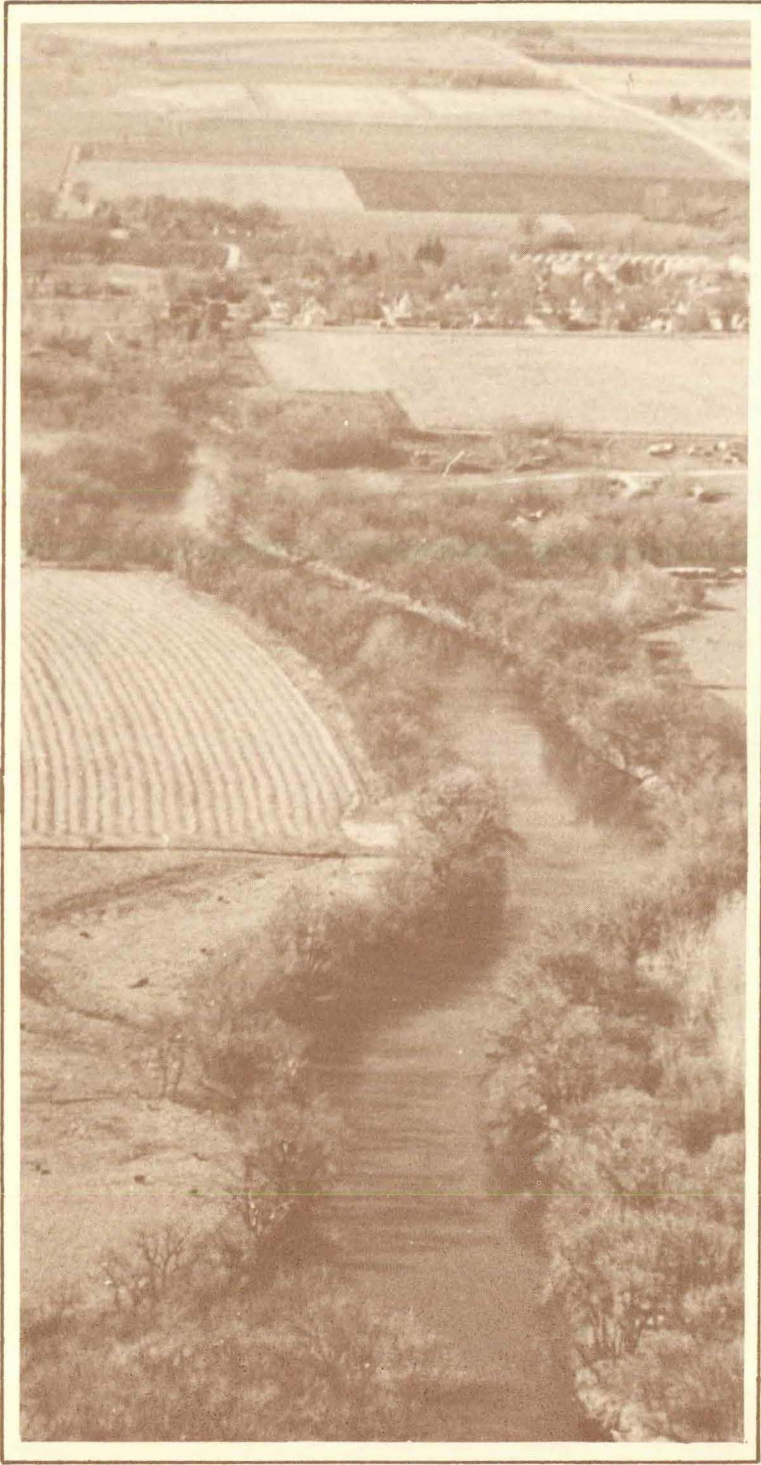
A native and long time friend of Humboldt County remembers when deer and other game were seldom seen anywhere on the county's landscape. The buck at the left was one of the state-wide prize trophies of 1911. In bringing this fact to the attention of this study, he commented, "That just shows that we can make changes for the better." How true that is, if only we consciously decide that we want a better rapport between ourselves and the "whole" of the landscape. We can have it if we want it...

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# FORMAT









Based upon previous recommendations and the inherent wisdom of the citizens of the county, many effective and proper developments have been created upon the land to satisfy the needs of the people of Humboldt County. This study is fortunate to have such a good basis from which to begin. The outdoor recreation and open spaces efforts of the past form a proper nucleus from which this study may offer suggestions for amplification and expansion of developments to satisfy the local demands of leisure time and aesthetic hunger.

In this case, a plan whose scope embraces the total aspect of the county and all its citizens is being developed. This is as it should be, because with such a unified approach, redundancy and overlap of developments may be avoided.

This study will begin with a perspective of Humboldt County derived from an historical atlas published in 1875. Together with maps showing the county in 1832, 1875, and 1974 some comprehension of the physical and social heritage of Humboldt County should be derived. Following this, a brief look at the two major landscape types should give the study a sense of orientation toward the landscape of Humboldt County.

The philosophy that open space and outdoor recreation are but extensions of a conservation attitude will be illustrated, and the words of the father of modern conservation will shape the direction of this study.

Outdoor recreation activity, space, and location standards will be thoroughly discussed. The recreation environs of Humboldt County will be illustrated and a cursory listing of the available recreation resources will be tabulated.

A "new" concept of community will be defined and correlated to the development of this study. The socio-economic factors of Humboldt County will be charted, and a close look at the projected physical plan for the county will be provided.

The existing in-county recreation facilities will be inventoried. Their service areas will be illustrated and areas of deficiency will be noted. Proposals for resolving some of that deficiency will be made.

A land pattern analysis will be derived culminating in an understanding of the natural landscape corridors inherent to Humboldt County. The concept of landscape conservation fitted to an "ecological conscience" through an interpretive program will follow. Attention will be given to the preservation of the county's cultural features.

A long range plan for outdoor recreation for Humboldt County will be presented. Plans for area-by-area development of the county's recreation facilities will be developed.

The concept of community recreation areas will be specifically presented, and proposals will be made for each of the twelve communities of Humboldt County.

In conclusion, the study will attempt to define the responsibilities of the county and community representatives. Procedures to insure the implementation of the concept of this study will be in hand. Five-year action programs for future development will be presented. Channels of financial assistance will be discussed, and a charge will be made with an eye toward the future, seeing Humboldt County as a place providing a wonderful lifestyle surrounded by the wealth of the landscape.

# INTRODUCTION

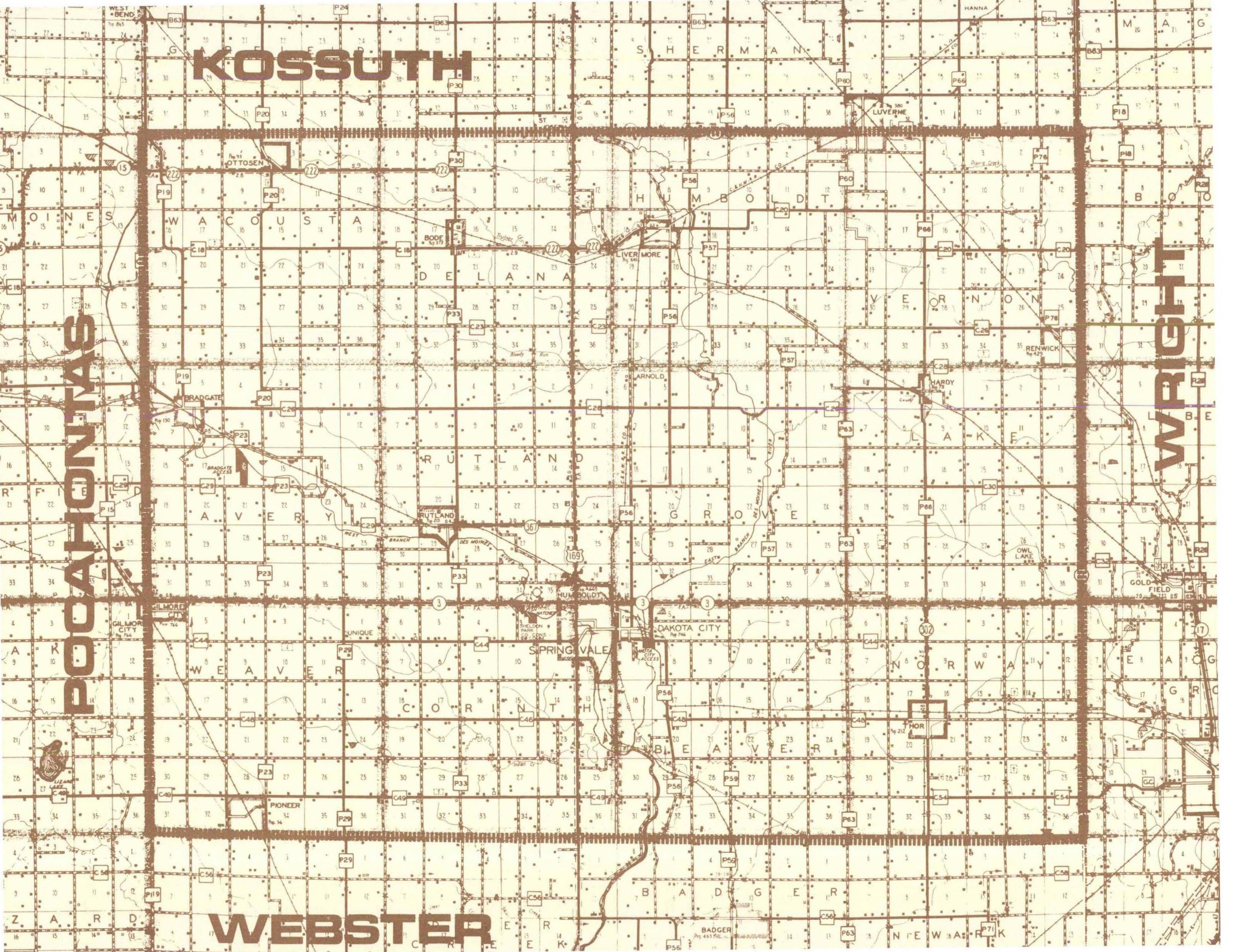
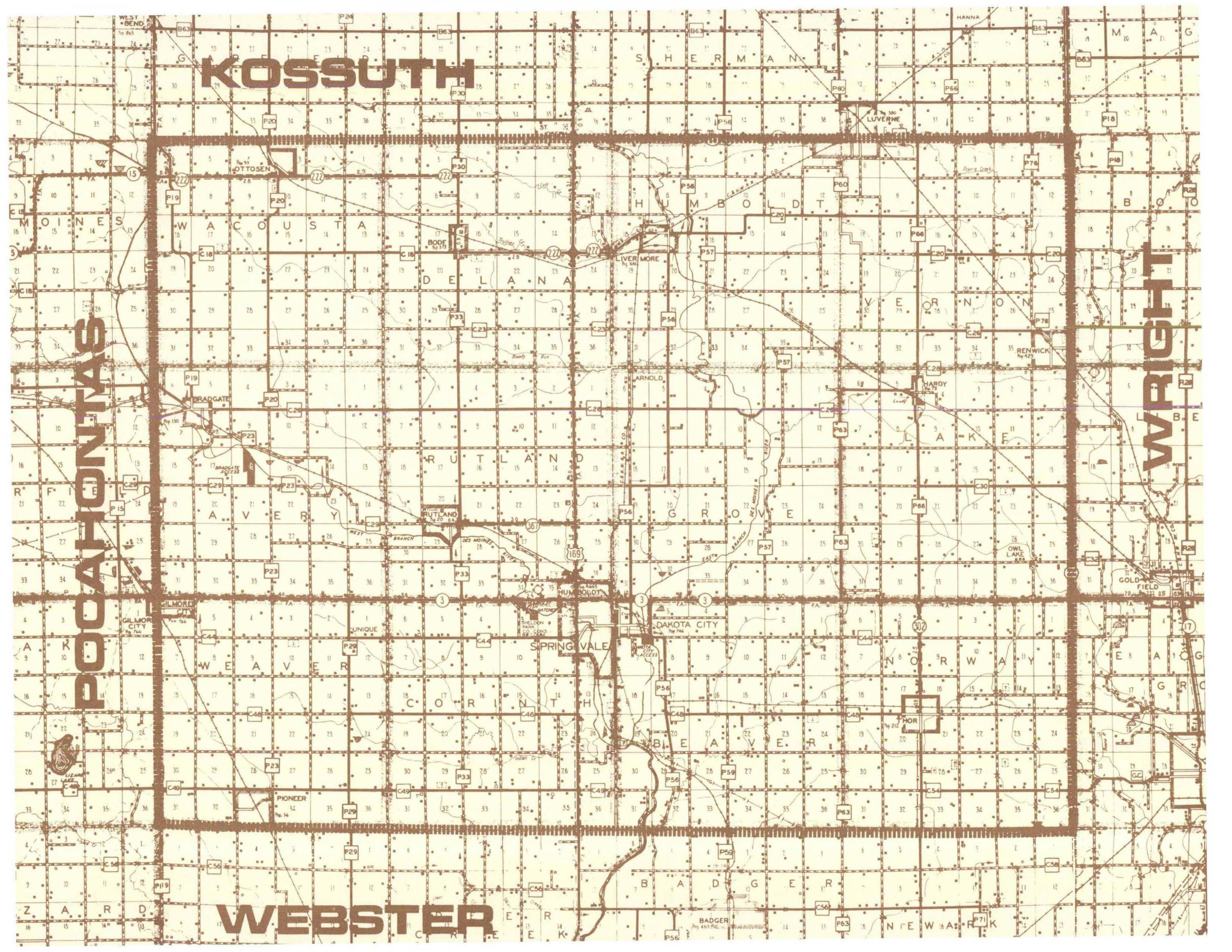


# KOSSUTH

# POCAHONTAS

# WRIGHT

# WEBSTER





"Humboldt County is...eighteen miles north and south, by twenty four miles east and west, its superficial area being 432 square miles, 276,480 acres.

"Few counties in the state are better supplied with pure running streams of water. The principal streams are the two branches of the Des Moines River, the Boone River, Lott's Creek, Indian Creek, Beaver Creek, and Badger Creek. The west fork of the Des Moines enters the county near the northwest corner, and runs in a southeasterly course, uniting with the east fork near the south line. The east fork crosses the county from north to south near the middle. The Boone River crosses the northeast corner township (Vernon), passing into Wright County and flowing south not far from the east line of Humboldt County. Lott's Creek is a stream of considerable size. There are considerable bodies of timber bordering these streams, and also some groves, along the smaller creeks. A large portion of the county is prairie, but not a part of it is more than eight miles from a grove of timber. The larger bodies of timber are found along the two branches of the Des Moines River. The timber consists chiefly of oak, ash, walnut, hickory, elm, linden, and maple. There is an aggregate of about five thousand acres of native timber distributed through the county.

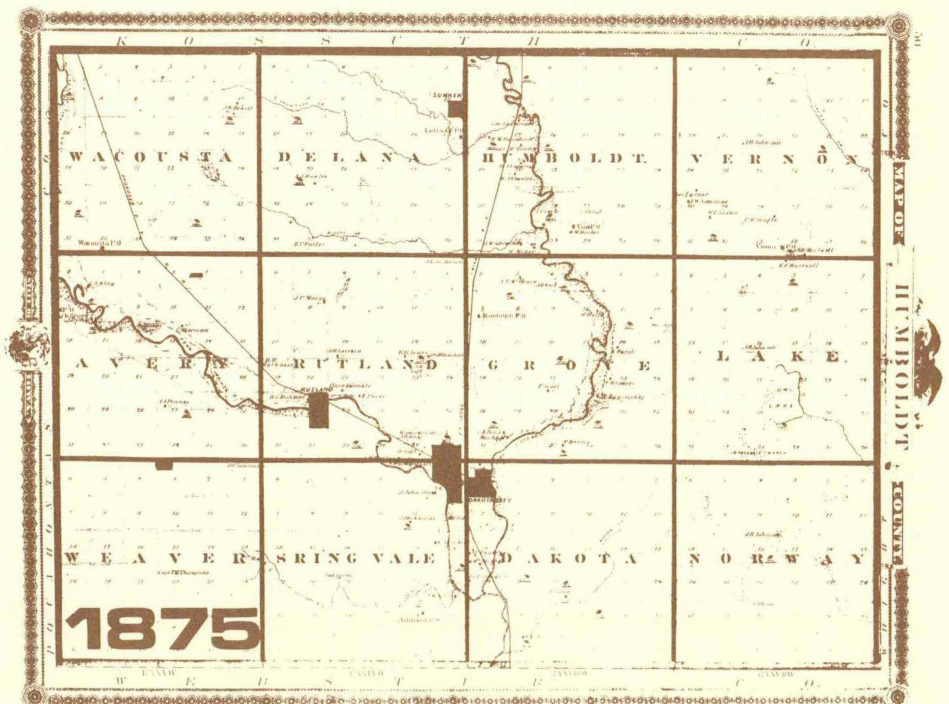
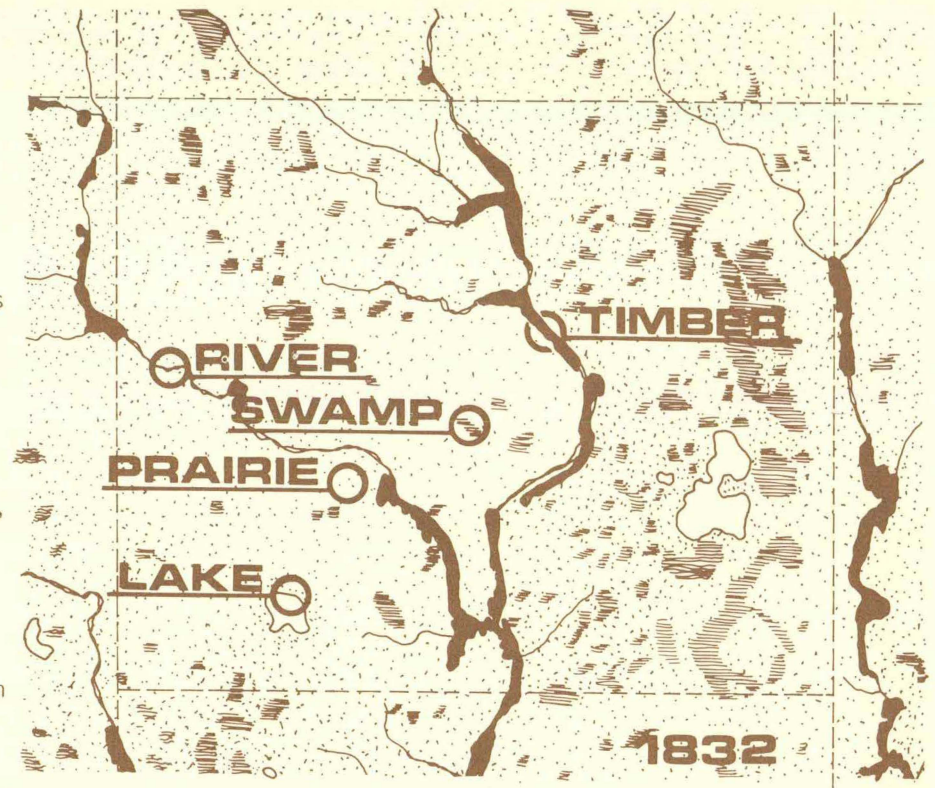
"The surface is generally rolling, except a small portion on the east side of Owl Lake, where there is a series of grassy marshes, which, however, may be easily drained.

"The soils of the county are the warm, mellow drift peculiar to northern Iowa... Beds of limestone...are exposed along both branches of the Des Moines River... both branches of the Des Moines River supply an abundance of fine water power, which, when improved and fully developed, will constitute an important element in the future wealth of the county.

"Henry Lott was the first white man who is known to have erected his cabin in Humboldt County. In 1852, Lott and his step-son went up from Webster County...they cleared an acre or two of ground in the timber, while thousands of acres of the finest prairie lay spread out before them in every direction. A short distance below the mouth of Lott's Creek, on the west bank of the east fork of the Des Moines River, the Indian Chief, Si-dom-i-na-ta, and his family, nine persons in all, at that time had their lodge. In 1846 this Indian had been instrumental in ejecting Lott from what was then Indian Territory, near the mouth of the Boone River. Burning with revenge for the old offense, Lott conceived and carried into execution the horrible project of murdering the chief and his family. The murders committed in the Winter of 1852-53 were avenged by Ink-pa-du-tak and his band in the massacre of the white settlers at Spirit Lake. The creek on which the chief and his family were murdered has since been known as Bloody Run.

"The first who arrived and made permanent settlement and improvement in the county came in the Fall 1854. The first settlements were made on the east fork of the Des Moines River, at and above Dakota City..."

A.T. ANDREAS, ILLUSTRATED HISTORICAL ATLAS OF THE STATE OF IOWA, 1875



## 4 A PERSPECTIVE



Originally, as the Andreas quote on the previous page notes, much of Humboldt County was covered by lush, colorful prairie. Due to extensive cultivation and grazing, most prairie is essentially extinct in Humboldt County. Today "prairie" is found in places where it is out of the way of human activity: railroad rights-of-way, steep slopes, sandy soils, unplowed drainage ways, fence rows, and ditches may contain remnants of the prairie. Most of the areas shown as sloughs, marshes or lakes on the map of Humboldt County in 1832 have been drained and are now cultivated. In a few scattered areas, it has not yet become economical to tile the fields converting the wetlands to croplands.

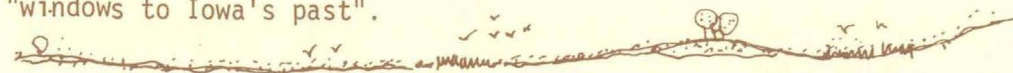
The dry prairies of Humboldt County are today represented by scattered areas of grasses ( side oats grama, little bluestem, porcupine grass, and prairie dropseed). Growing with the grasses are many herbaceous plants, known collectively as "forbs". These include the asters, purple prairie clover, purple coneflower, whorled milkweed and many others. This study area contains a number of small, dry prairie patches.

"Mesic" prairies, or the lush, tall, colorful prairie which once covered Iowa are today represented by big bluestem (turkey foot), Indian grass, and switch grass. The wildflowers associated with these areas include: spiderwort, prairie violets, blazing star, black-eyed Susan, compass plant, purple coneflower, rattlesnake master and many others.

The marsh community is present on poorly drained areas where shallow standing water occurs at least some of the time each year. Striking zonation patterns often result due to water depth and water chemistry. Hardstem bulrush, river bulrush, giant bur-reed, cattails, sedges, reedgrasses, arrow-head, and blue joint are the prevalent species.

Prairie potholes are a special category of marsh vegetation and once contributed to a major part of the Mid-Iowan landscape. The vegetation of such areas is distinct from that of the adjacent prairie. Bulrushes, sloughgrass, and reed canary grass blend into a mixture of mesic prairie species.

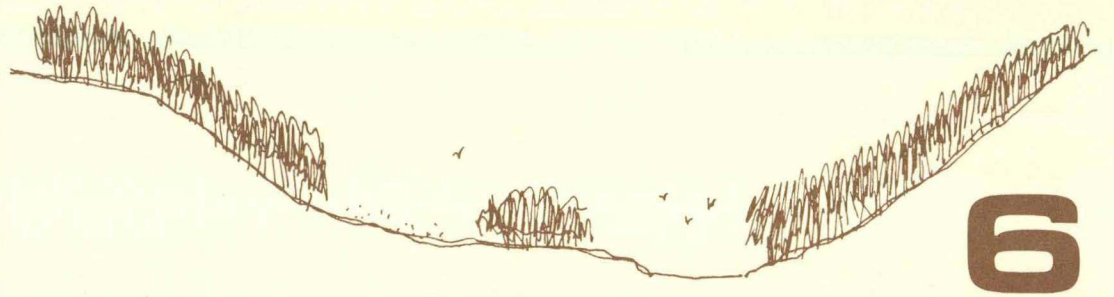
The reason for consideration of these types of prairie and their respective plant species is that such areas are essentially relics of a now changed landscape. With proper attention, representative areas can be set aside for educational purposes and can really act as "windows to Iowa's past".



# THE PRAIRIES







At quarry spoils, along some fence rows, lining creek beds, in wooded pastures, as windbreak or orchards, in savana-like areas, or in the complex woodlands of the river corridors, the remnants of Humboldt County's forest remain. Upland forests, north-slope and south-slope timber areas, and flood plain forests are to be found in Humboldt County. Hillsides covered with junipers (red cedars) prevail.

But there is much room for understanding the merits of appreciation and preservation of such areas. Not only do the "woody species" require attention, but the numerous herbaceous plants offer many hours of interesting nature study.

The woody species of Humboldt County include: American elms, oaks, hickories, hackberries, ash, willows, cottonwoods, linden or basswoods, black cherries, maple, ironwood, choke cherries, serviceberries, honey locusts, sumac, butternuts, and many, many more. On the forest floors can be found gooseberries, bedstraw, poison ivy, virginia creeper, ferns, fungi, and mosses.

The important thing to realize is that there is much each of us can learn through association with areas of natural environment. Considering the lowly sumac, for instance, we have the opportunity to see a plant fulfilling a specific function. The sumac occurs as a "living fence" between the forests and grasslands. As climatic and land-use changes occur, the sumac advances or recedes, acting as a buffer zone. Actually a clump of sumac is a nursery for young forest seedlings. When we understand its purpose, the way it fills its "niche", we can come to understand better the purposes of our respective lives.

Such is the purpose for this consideration of natural areas. As we come to understand the landscape upon which we live, we will better understand our lives. In understanding ourselves better, we will see that we are but "stewards" of the land and we will conduct more ecologically sound use of the land. That's "conservation".

# AND FORESTS



While this plan is essentially a study of Humboldt County's outdoor recreation and open space requirements, more importantly, it deals with conservation. Conservation, rather than being an established set of actions, is really a frame of mind. As such it should influence every land-based decision we make in our lifetimes.

On the following page, Aldo Leopold, the father of modern conservation attitudes, speaks eloquently of an "ecological conscience".

If this study does nothing more than specifically convey ways in which we as residents of Mid-Iowa can become more "conservation-minded", it will be a noteworthy success.

Stated very simply, we as men and women are seeking to accommodate our lifestyles and those of our children upon a specific landscape, Humboldt County's 276,480 acres.

As we proceed to make developments to augment our lifestyles, we should look carefully about us and see that there is only so much land. Our demands must be limited to the landscape's inherent capability to accept them.

Or, the "man patterns" we seek to impose on the landscape must be in harmony with the "land patterns" of that landscape. Only then can we expect that a satisfactory lifestyle can be sustained.

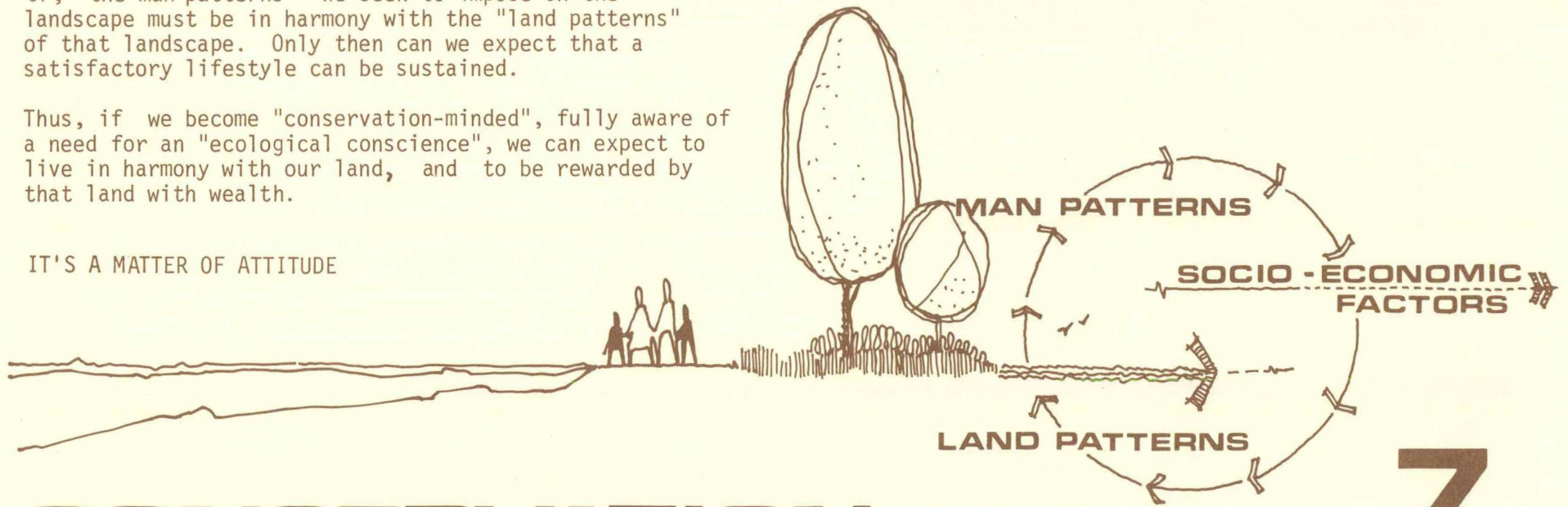
Thus, if we become "conservation-minded", fully aware of a need for an "ecological conscience", we can expect to live in harmony with our land, and to be rewarded by that land with wealth.

IT'S A MATTER OF ATTITUDE

**LAND PATTERNS**  
CLIMATE, TOPOGRAPHY  
SOIL, WATER FEATURES & VEGETATION

**MAN PATTERNS**  
LAND USES, TRAFFICWAYS, UTILITIES

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS**  
POPULATION, EDUCATION, OCCUPATION  
INCOME, LEISURE TIME & MOBILITY



**CONSERVATION:**  
**OPEN SPACE & OUTDOOR RECREATION**



"Everyone ought to be dissatisfied with the slow spread of conservation to the land. Our 'progress' still consists largely of letterhead pieties and convention oratory. The only progress that counts is that on the actual landscape of the back forty, and here we are slipping two steps backward for each forward stride.

"The usual answer to this dilemma is 'more conservation education'. My answer is by all means, but are we sure that only the volume of educational effort needs stepping up? Is something lacking in its content as well?

"The basic defect is this: we have not asked the citizen to assume any real responsibility. We have told him that if he will vote right, obey the law, join some organizations, and practice what conservation is profitable on his own land, that everything will be lovely; the government will do the rest.

"This formula is too easy to accomplish anything worthwhile. It calls for no effort or sacrifice; no change in our philosophy of values. It entails little that any decent and intelligent person would not have done on his own accord.

"No important change in human conduct is ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphases, our loyalties, our affections, and our convictions. The proof that conservation has not yet touched these foundations of conduct lies in the fact that philosophy, ethics, and religion have not yet heard of it.

"I need a short name for what is lacking; I call it the ecological conscience. Ecology is the science of communities, and ecological conscience is, therefore, the ethics of community life. I will define it in terms...which I think show the futility of trying to improve the face of the land without improving ourselves.

"...There has been visible progress in such practices as strip-cropping, pasture renovation, and soil liming, but none in fencing woodlots or excluding plow and cow from steep slopes. The farmers, in short, selected out those remedial practices which were profitable anyhow, and ignored those which were profitable to the community, but not clearly profitable to themselves.

"I hasten to add that no one has ever told farmers that in land-use the good of the community may entail obligations over and above those dictated by self-interest. The existence of such obligations is accepted in bettering rural roads, schools, churches, and baseball teams, but not in bettering the behavior of the water that falls on the land, nor in preserving the beauty or diversity of the farm landscape. Land use ethics are still governed wholly by economic self-interest, just as social ethics were a century ago.

"To sum up: we have asked the farmer to do what he conveniently could to save his soil, and he has done just that, and only that. The exclusion of cows from woods and steep slopes is not convenient and is not done. Moreover, some things are being done that are at least dubious as conservation practices; for example, marshy stream bottoms are being drained to relieve the pressure on worn-out uplands. The upshot is that woods, marshes, and natural streams, together with their respective faunas and floras, are headed toward ultimate elimination.

"The practice of conservation must spring from a conviction of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. It is right only when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the community, and the community includes the soil, waters, fauna, and flora, as well as people.

"It cannot be right, in the ecological sense, for a farmer to drain the last marsh, graze the last woods, or slash the last grove in his community, because in doing so he evicts a fauna, flora, and a landscape whose membership in the community is older than his own, and is equally entitled to respect.

"It cannot be right, in the ecological sense, for a farmer to channelize his creek or pasture his steep slopes, because in doing so he passes flood trouble to his neighbors below, just as his neighbor above passed it on to him...

"It cannot be right, in the ecological sense, for the deer hunter to maintain his sport by browsing out the forest, or for the bird hunter to maintain his by decimating the hawks and owls, or for the fisherman to maintain his by decimating the herons, kingfishers, terns and otters. Such tactics seek to achieve one kind of conservation by destroying another, and thus they subvert the integrity and stability of the community.

"If we grant the premise that an ecological conscience is possible and needed, then its first tenet must be this: economic provocation is no longer a satisfactory excuse for unsocial land use (or, to use somewhat stronger words, for ecological atrocities).

"We must cease being intimidated by the argument that a right action is impossible because it does not yield maximum profits, or that a wrong action is to be condoned because it pays. The philosophy is dead in human relations, and its funeral in land-relations is overdue."

# AN ECOLOGICAL CONSCIENCE... ALDO LEOPÖLD

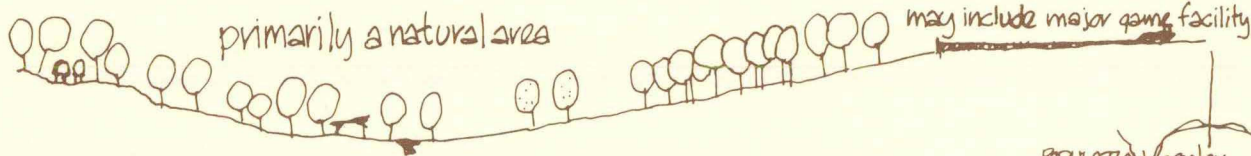
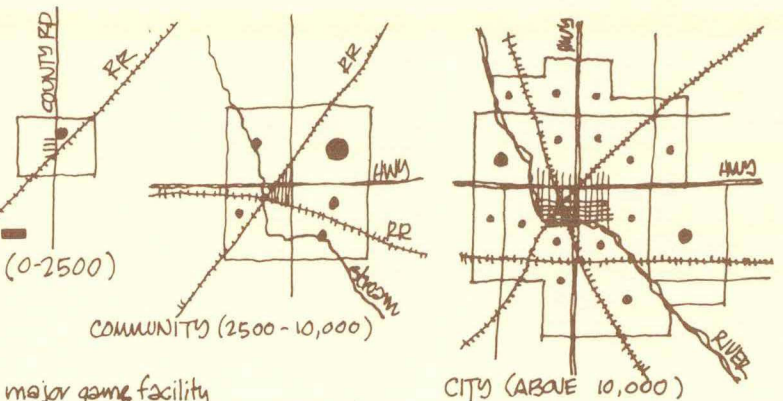
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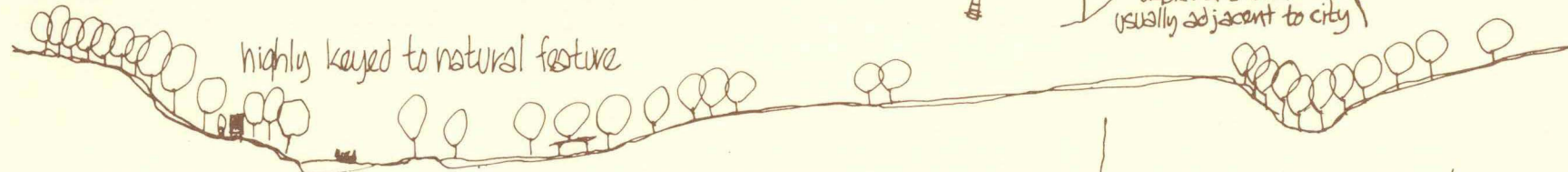
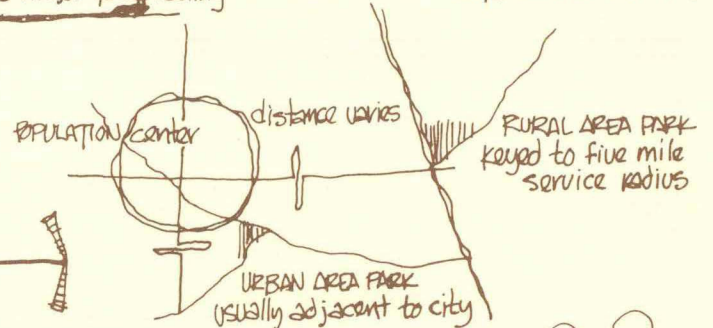
areas designed to meet high density recreation needs; must provide activity areas, picnic & passive uses, landscape plantings within walking distance from residences



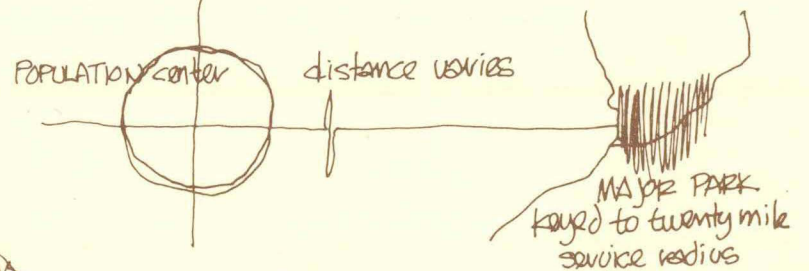
## CLASS I: TOWN, NEIGHBORHOOD & CITY PARKS



## CLASS II: URBAN AND RURAL AREA PARKS



## CLASS III: MAJOR PARKS



## SPECIAL USE AREAS

feature-dependant uses or uses requiring special development of facility



At the outset of this study, it is well to define some concept of standards which hopefully can be fulfilled through the development of this study's plan. In terms of identifying recreation use areas, a class system presented in the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission Report of 1966 will be utilized with minor modification. The adjustments are a result of an Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Element of 1973.

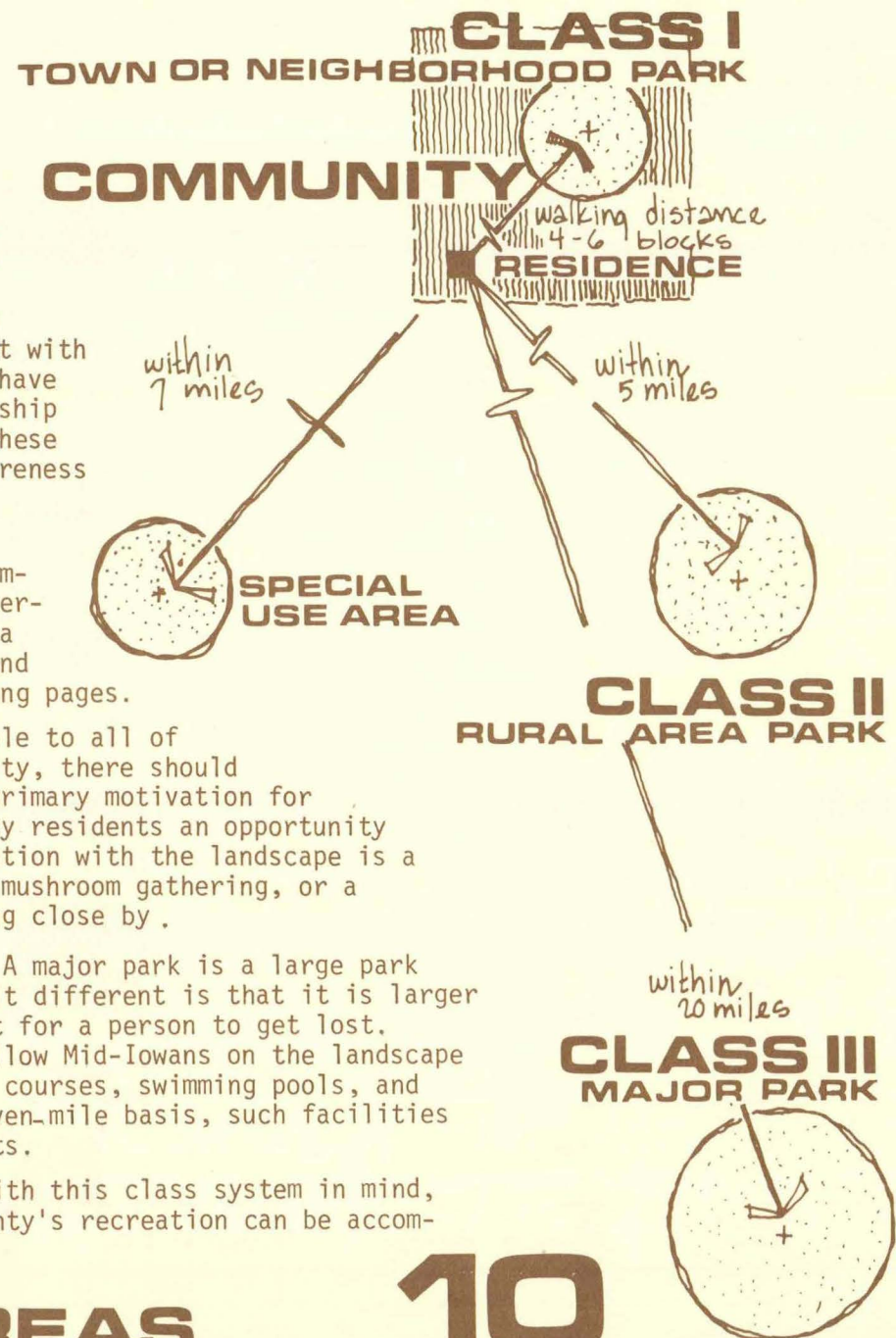
To the left are shown four basic types of recreation areas, as well as a sketch map indicating their relative positions on the man-developed landscape. To the right, the positioning of these recreation areas, with respect to an individual's residence and community, is indicated. In addition to being areas for leisure time activity, such parks become the public areas of involvement with the landscape. It is in them that we as residents of our land have an opportunity to become particularly cognizant of our relationship with the land. Thus, in addition to being recreation centers, these public parks can become the starting point for a developing awareness of our relationship to the landscape.

This study contends that each community has a responsibility to provide for its residents a recreation area. The need for a community to provide school, health, commercial, and utilitarian services is well recognized. A park is but another service which a community should provide. The definition of a community park and some standards for its make-up will be described in the following pages.

By the same token, larger, more natural areas should be available to all of Humboldt County's residents. Within five miles of each community, there should be at least one rural area park of thirty acres in size. The primary motivation for the provision of this park should be that of offering the county residents an opportunity to associate personally with their landscape. Personal association with the landscape is a walk in the woods, an afternoon of fishing, a spring evening's mushroom gathering, or a picnic with friends under a bur oak grove, with the river running close by.

Within twenty miles of each community should be a major park. A major park is a large park like A.A. Call State Park or Dolliver State Park. What makes it different is that it is larger than the thirty acre-rural area park. It has enough room in it for a person to get lost. Spending a day there full of experiences by oneself or with fellow Mid-Iowans on the landscape should be regarded as a right. Special use areas such as golf courses, swimming pools, and wintersports areas should be provided as well. Spaced on a seven-mile basis, such facilities would become mutually available to all of the county's residents.

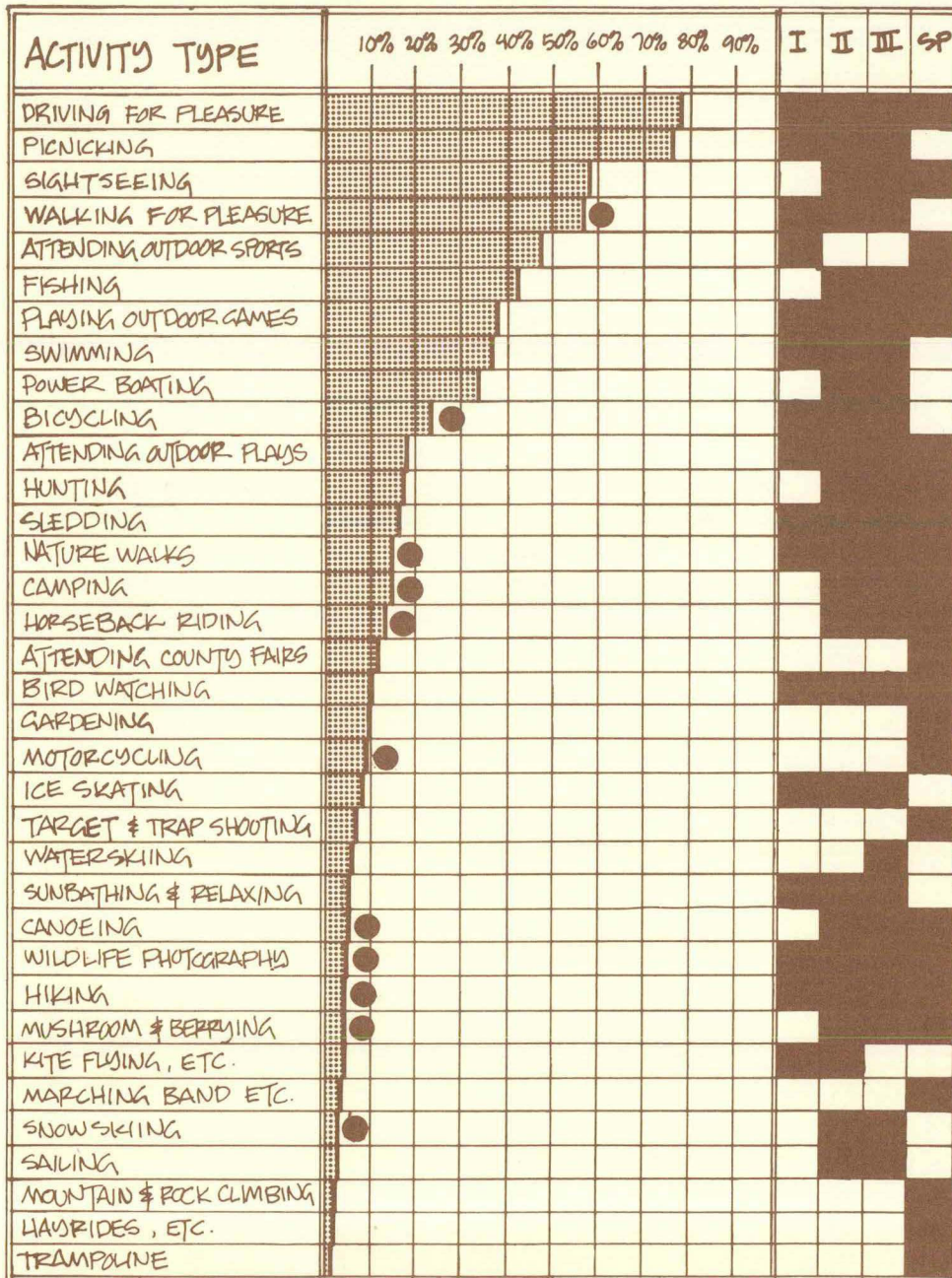
If the provision of defineable recreation areas is approached with this class system in mind, perhaps the subsequent development of the communities' and county's recreation can be accomplished in a hand-in-hand, cooperative manner.



# RECREATION USE AREAS



# OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES & AREAS



● apparent increase in activity participation percentage

## CHILDREN

Scavenger hunts  
Nature games  
Pet Shows  
Sand play  
Gymnastics  
Calisthenics  
Rope Jumping  
Archery  
Bicycle Riding  
Kite flying  
Stilt walking  
Tetherball  
Flag football  
Soccer  
Tug-of-war  
Tag games  
Drama  
Field Events

## FAMILIES

Banquets  
Reunions  
Potluck  
Suppers  
Picnicking  
Skating  
Badminton  
Croquet  
Baseball  
Paddle Ball  
Tennis  
Basketball  
Softball  
Touch  
Football  
Volleyball  
Fairs  
Arts & Crafts

## ELDERLY

Gardening  
Shuffleboard  
Horseshoes  
Arts & Crafts  
Picnicking  
Reunions  
Banquets  
Club meetings  
Spectating  
Conversation

# 11

In 1966 an Iowa Recreation Survey was conducted by Iowa State University. It was directed toward determining which outdoor recreation activities are most popular in the State of Iowa. The results, as shown at the left, indicated that driving for pleasure, picnicking, sightseeing, and walking for pleasure were the most popular activities. (Apparent increases in activity desires since 1966 are indicated),

Each activity, in turn, is correlated with the type of area which best accommodates the activity and user. Persons charged with developing recreation areas should seek to provide the largest range of activities possible within each type of recreation area.

The recreation checklist shown above typifies the list of activities which should be accommodated in a Class One Community Park. Such lists can and should be considered in the design development of rural area parks, major parks and special use areas as well.

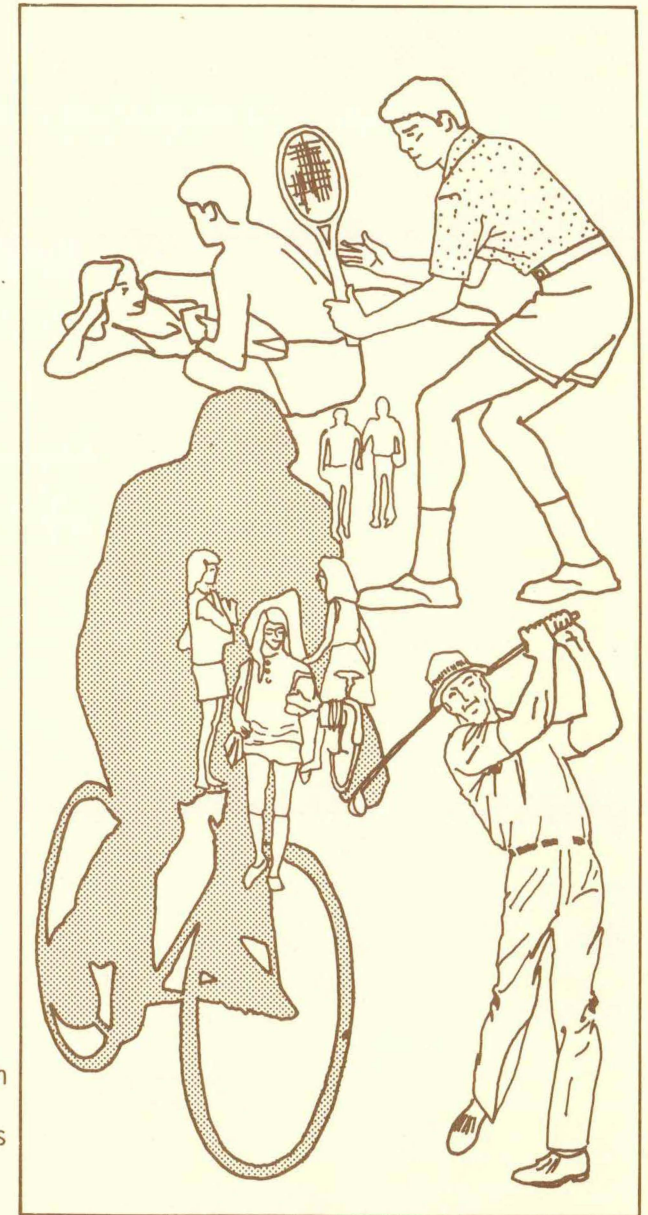
# RECREATION DEMAND





On a State-wide basis, the Iowa State Conservation Commission has charged all environmental agencies with the primary responsibility of acquiring and holding the remaining fragile and intrinsically valuable natural lands (Class VII; ORRRC system) of the State. In terms of development, the Conservation Commission's projections on a regional basis indicate that Humboldt County should address itself to the provision of the following activities: 1) golf (private or commercial); 2.) fishing; 3.) nature walks; 4.) camping and boating; and 5.) picnicking, pool and environmental swimming, and water skiing.

It is the charge of this plan, then, to identify potential development areas which can accommodate the activities defined on these pages. If this study produces a schematic plan illustrating an outdoor recreation system enjoining these activities within the parameters of land capability, it will have accomplished its initial purpose.





Class One or Community Parks are those little chunks of green space set aside in a town which act as a bit of quiet in the hustle-bustle of community life. At times, however, they may be the hub of activity, playing host to the community's celebration days, family reunions, or athletic events.

This study is convinced that each community has the public responsibility to set aside such an area as a service to its residents.

The "Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces Element" states that "Each town should have at least one Class One Area ('town park') of not less than four acres in size. In larger towns, above 500 in population, the acreage should increase proportionately at a rate of one acre per additional 500 population...Each community, 2500-10,000 in population should have one neighborhood park (equivalent to a town park) per neighborhood (definable wards or precincts of a community created by barriers such as primary roads, railroads, or even rivers or streams), and one of these areas should be expanded to act as a community park. The neighborhood parks should be 4-6 acres in size. A community park should be 8-10 acres in size.

"...These areas should accommodate passive and active recreation activities, while providing lawn, shrub and shade plantings. It is desirable to combine such a park with a playground, school or community center. Additional amenities as shelters, game courts, ball-fields, toilets, drinking fountains, and electricity remain optional. In all cases these parks should be within a 1/2 to 3/4 mile (walking distance) service area."

## COMMUNITY PARKS



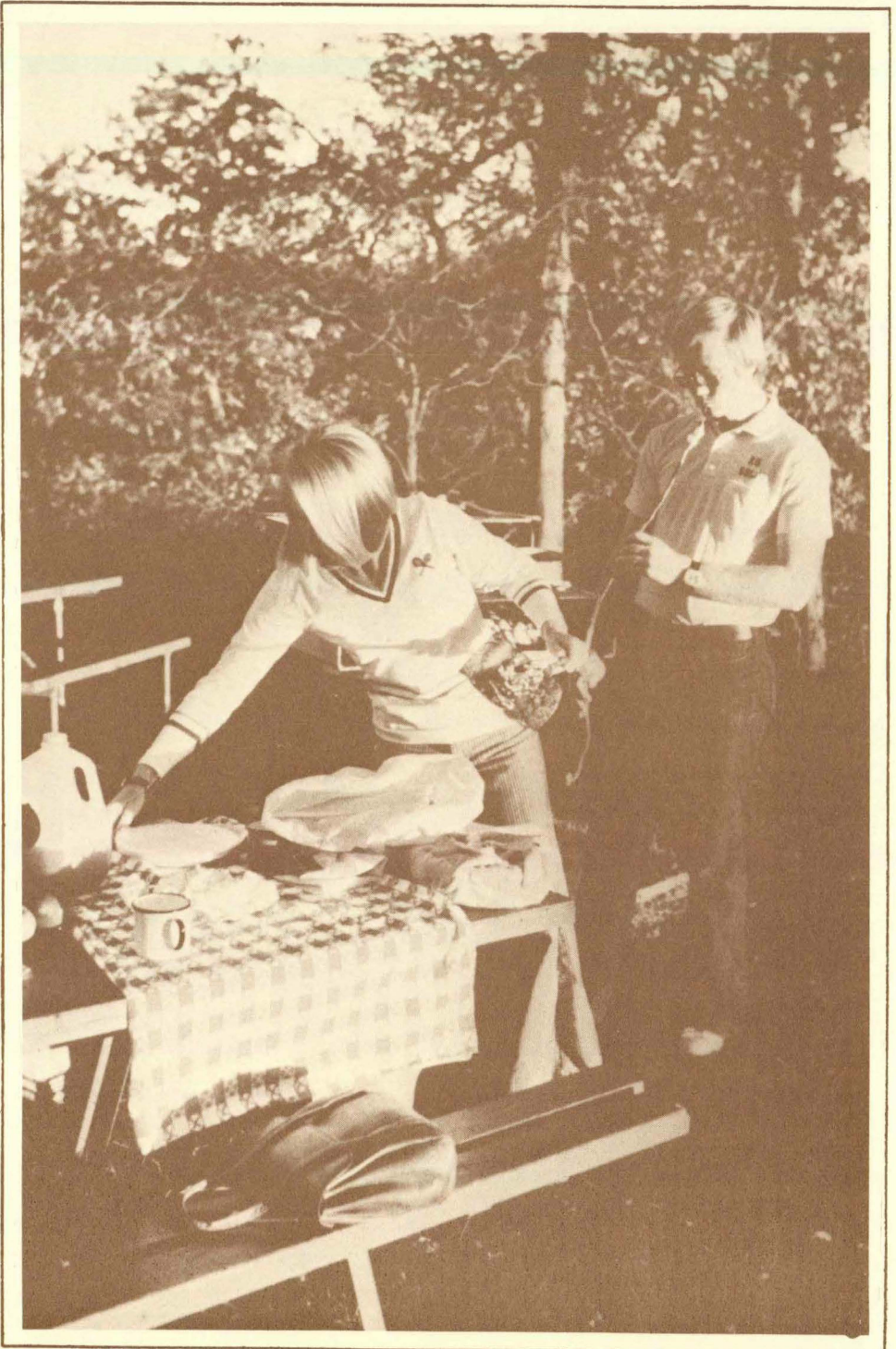


# 14

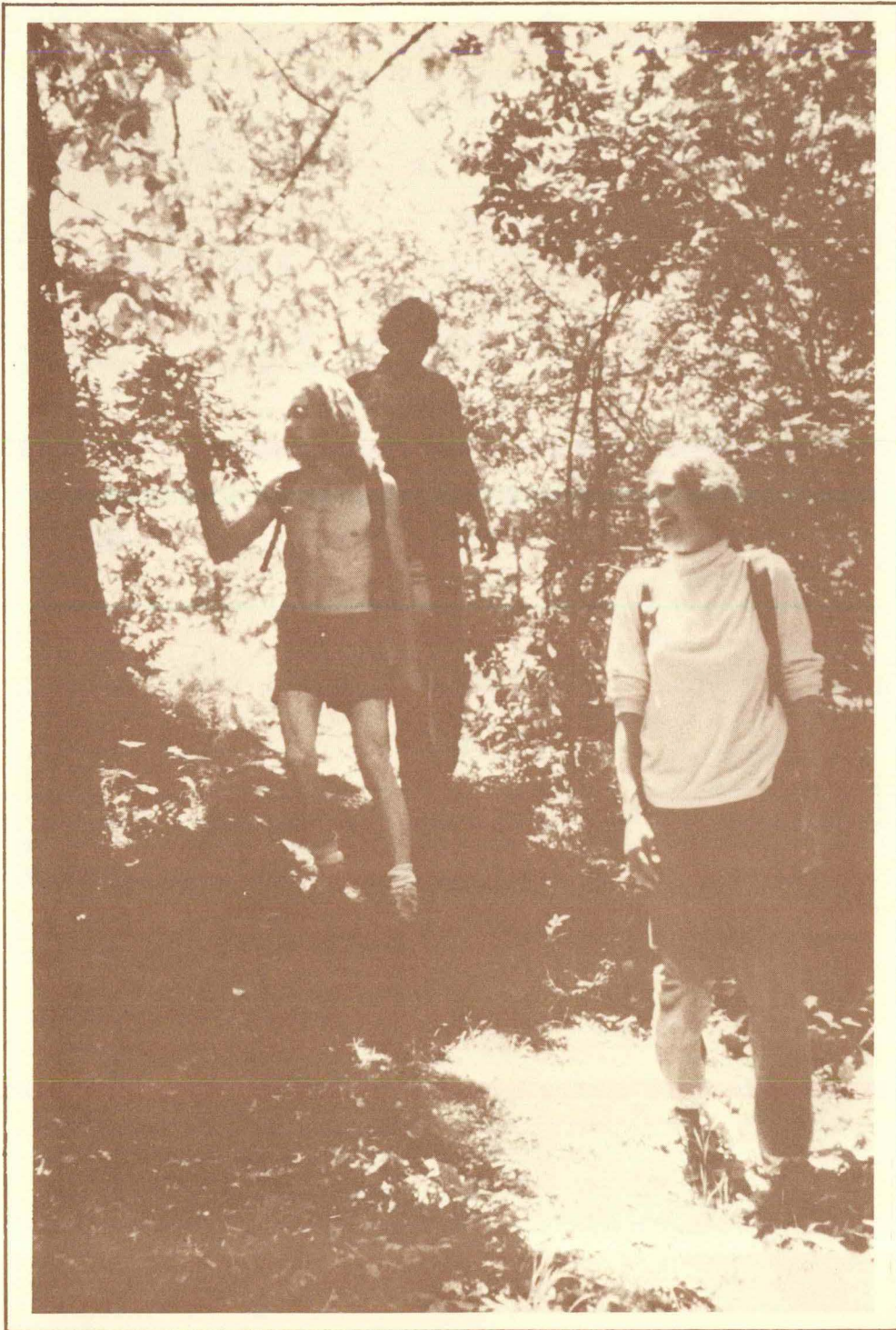
"Rural Area Parks... are parks within a rural area pledged to providing services to a variety of towns, communities, and cities. This study holds the view that such parks should be of a minimal 30 acres in size and should only be required to cover a 5 mile service radius...these types of areas should provide for group picnicking, day camping, nature study, horseback riding, boating, swimming, fishing, wintersports, biking and hiking trails and canoeing. They should utilize natural features including a river or lake, open meadow, and timber which offer an attractive setting for activities not possible in smaller recreation areas." Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces Element.

Areas such as Lott's Creek Area, near Livermore, or Oakdale Park, near Renwick, aptly fulfill this category designation. These ultimately are the parks shared by several communities, maintained by the county, and distributed throughout the county for the best service possible. However, they should align with the marginally productive areas of the county. Such a requirement may ultimately stretch the service radius to a degree.

## RURAL AREA PARKS







# 15

"Class Three Facilities, or major parks, are areas of significantly larger size, 500-1000 acres, providing a highly diversified range of services intended to accommodate a much larger service-radius. Each major park, of course, fulfills the role of a Class Two facility for its immediate environs...

"A major park's provisions are very similar to those of a Class Two Facility with the notable difference that more space is provided each use and much more natural space is included within the facility by virtue of its larger size." Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces Element.

Areas such as A.A. Call State Park, Dolliver Memorial Park, and Kennedy Park function as major parks to their service areas. These recreation areas on a large scale meet demands for longer term recreation activities than can the rural area parks. By virtue of concentrating more diverse facilities within a park unit, they can accommodate a wider range of demands.

Essentially these major parks become the hubs of activity for the recreation system of a given county. While the community parks function to provide service within walking distance, the major parks attempt to meet area-wide demands. The rural area parks function in an intermediate role to provide a close-to-home primitive park experience.

## MAJOR PARKS



# 16

Special Use Areas are a category of and by themselves. Such areas may occur as an integral park of a Class One, Two, or Three Area or they may be disjunct, standing by themselves. Examples of Special Use Areas: golf courses, swimming pools, wintersport areas, travel trailer camps, motorized vehicle rally points, dragstrips, rifle ranges, summer cottages, and resorts.

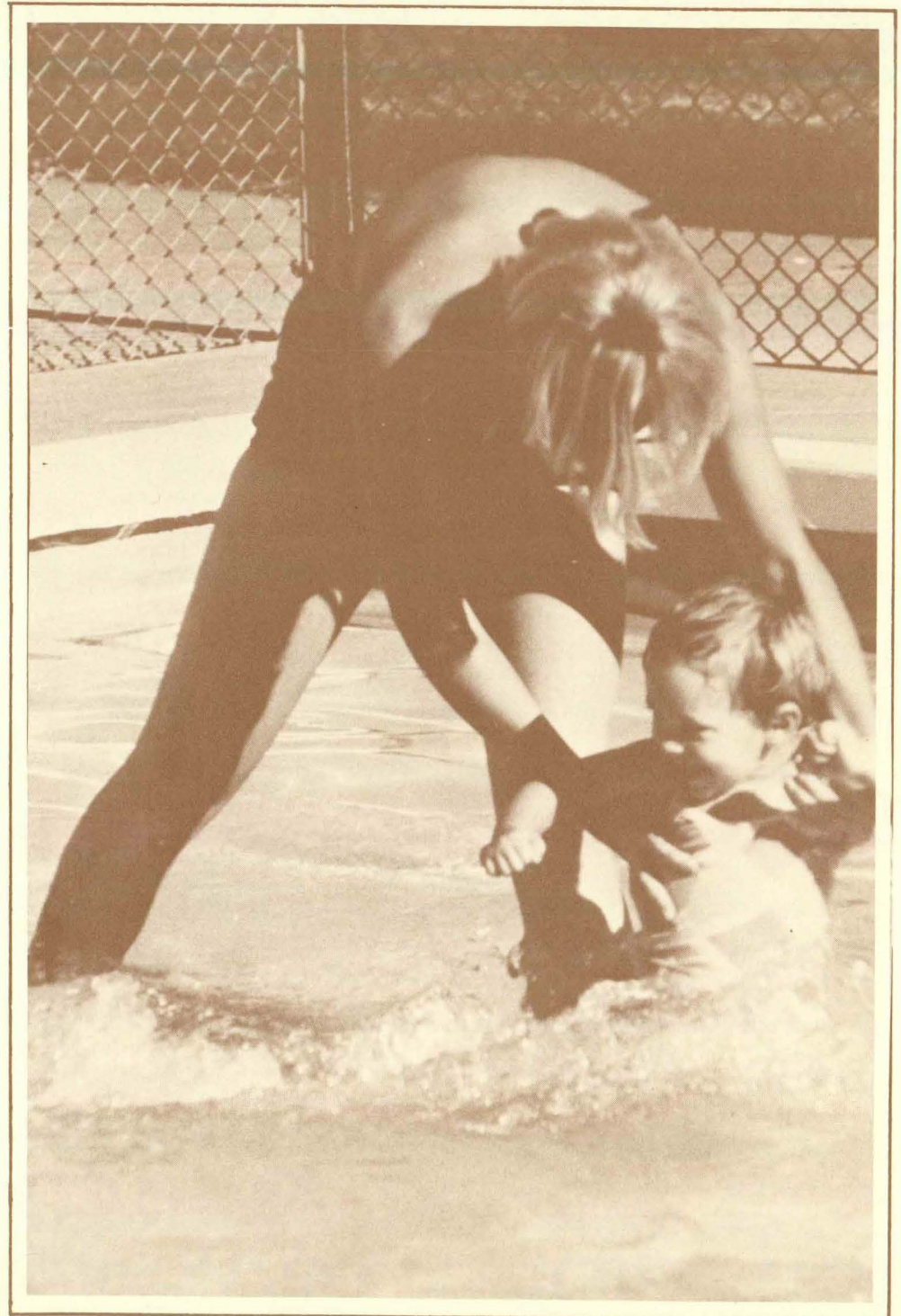
Special Use Areas may be privately, publicly, or commercially developed and maintained.

Special emphasis, however, is placed in this study upon the disposition of golf, swimming, and wintersports facilities. This study envisions that such areas are almost equivalent to the natural-experience orientation expected of rural area parks.

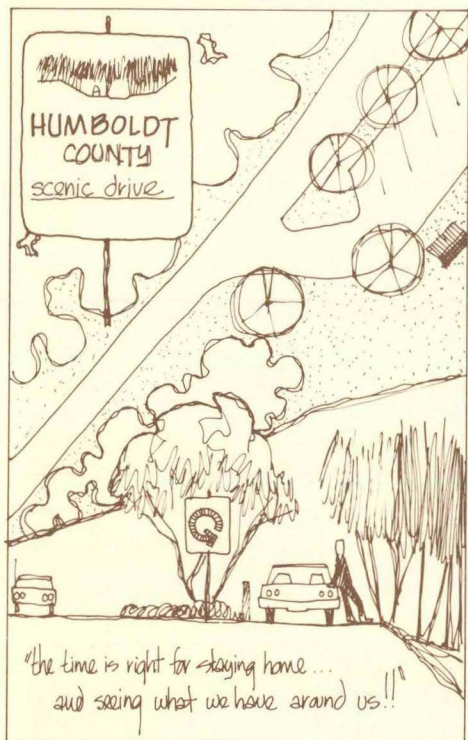
Such areas for golf, swimming, and wintersports should ultimately be provided upon a seven-mile service radius, provided resident population demands merit their development. As stated they may be an integral part of a Class One, Two, or Three Area; or they may be a separate entity. They may be private, public, or commercial. It is primarily their relative availability which is of concern.

Sufficient studies should precede their development to assure their continued economic feasibility.

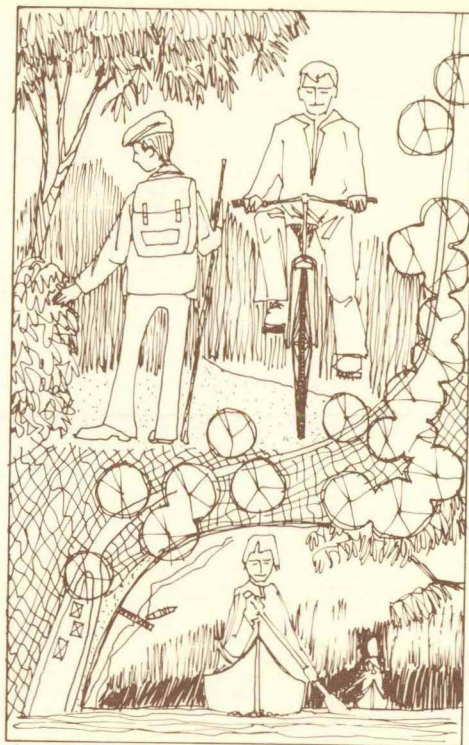
## **SPECIAL USE AREAS**







"the time is right for staying home ...  
and seeing what we have around us!!"



Such a slow mode of travel allows us to pause to look at a bumblebee on a prairie flower ...to see the yellow of the bee and the purple of the flower...to understand what harmony is...to understand our lives and our land.

The concept of trailways up and down the river corridors will not be easy to achieve. The better things are, the harder they are to get.

Doesn't it make sense that if we slow down and spend more time with our land, we will learn more about it? The more we learn about it, the more we will come to respect it. If we use the slower modes of transportation such as hiking or bicycling, horseback riding, or canoeing, we're going to learn a lot through association.

Slow mode, multi-modal trails will come. It won't be easy, but they will come. What we need to do is decide we really want them.

It is possible now to use the branches of the Des Moines River as a water trail. No hassles. Pretty soon a lot of us will be able to use hiking boots or bicycles as well. But we're going to have to decide to work for it.

A linear parkway such as a trail stretching from a community to a rural area park such as the Bradgate Access or Frank A. Gotch Area allows the experience with our land to begin at our door as we leave and continue until we return.

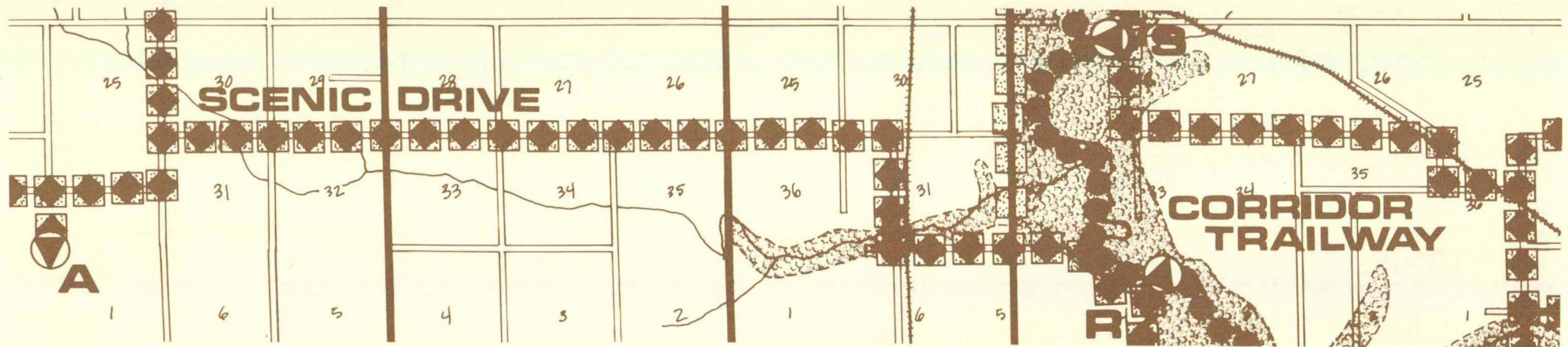
In a similar vein, and much more easily achieved, is the concept of "Scenic Drives". We have here an opportunity, at minimal cost, to stimulate personal awareness of the landscape and our heritage. A scenic road becomes a "Scenic Drive" when someone decides to put up a sign informing everyone that it is such.

"Scenic Drives" merely assist us as people to make the correct choice, to turn at the right corner, to have a pleasurable and meaningful drive through the countryside. Of course, it would not hurt if rest stops with comfort stations were ultimately developed along the way. Just think of how much more opportunity we'd have to go fishing if here and there along the country roads a river access consisting of one, two, or three acres of land was used as a way to get to the river, just to drop a line or launch a canoe. Such non-productive land could quickly become small parklets, access areas.

Scenic roads now connect parks and historic points, parallel the river and yield terrific "postcard views" as they cross the ridges of the valley. "Scenic Drives" would merely encourage more people to become aware of our inherent wealth.

## **CORRIDOR TRAILWAYS, SCENIC DRIVES AND ACCESS AREAS**



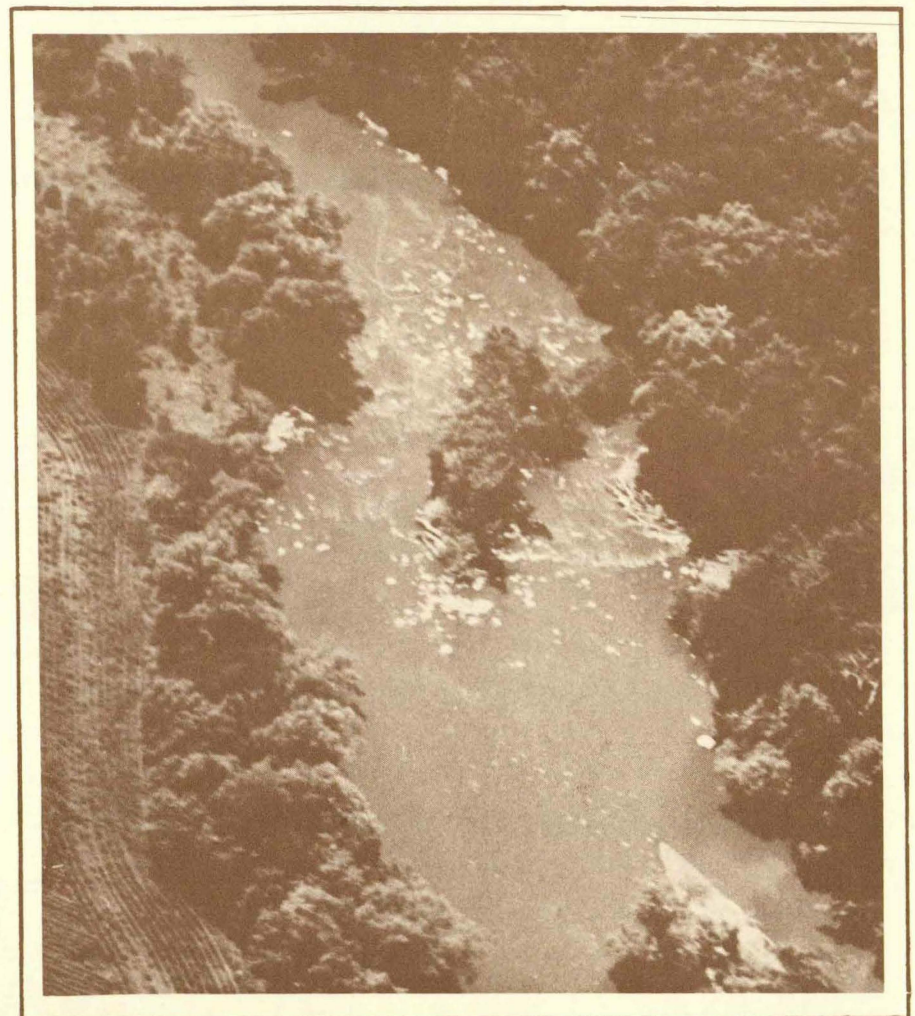


The "access areas" just mentioned serve a significant purpose. As these nuclei of open space are acquired and dedicated to public trust, everyone has an opportunity to become involved in the issue of public open space. They provide a method of preparing a system of open space acquisition.

The charge of the Conservation Commission that primitive and natural lands be acquired and held is a tenuous and highly intangible, however worthwhile, goal. Land, even non-productive land, comes at a premium nowadays. But, Hardin County and Cerro Gordo County have proven that it is possible to acquire and hold river corridor lands. The Iowa and Shell Rock River Green Belts, respectively, are the evidence of their labors.

When only three per cent of our state's land exists as natural land, we should obviously be concerned that at least that three percent remains as open space for the generations of future Iowans.

The beauty of it all is this: acquisition and public control of the river corridor land does not have to be in conflict with the ownership and land use ethics of the state. Production, Iowa's middle name, can continue and the aesthetically and ecologically valuable river corridor lands can become preserves and public trusts for the benefit of all the residents of the land's community.



# OPEN SPACES 18 ACQUISITION



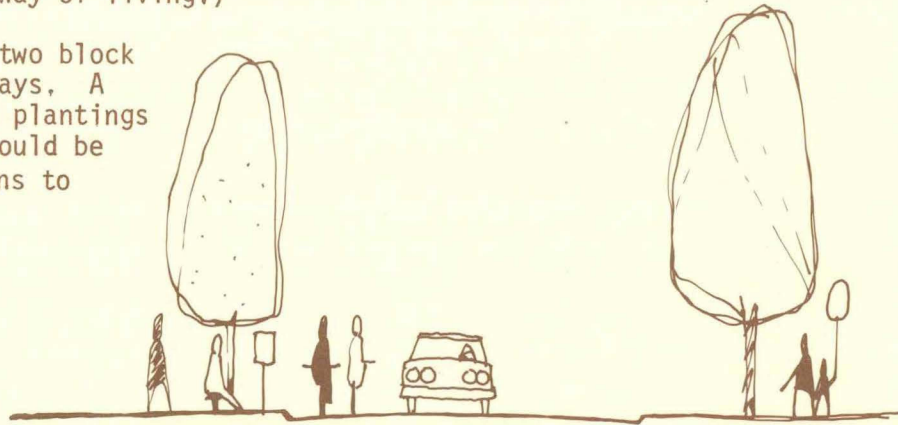
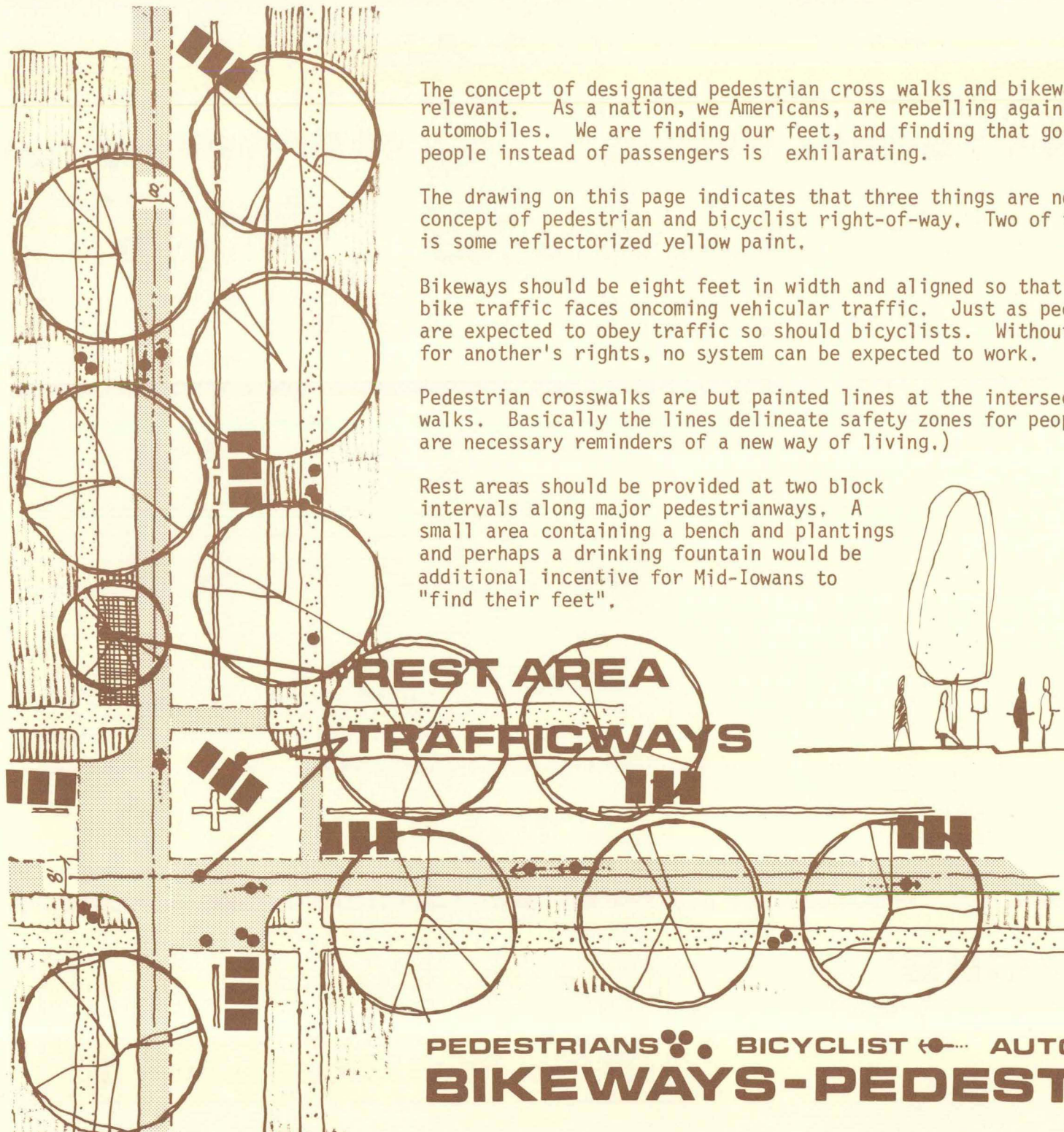
The concept of designated pedestrian cross walks and bikeways is becoming increasingly relevant. As a nation, we Americans, are rebelling against the containerized life of automobiles. We are finding our feet, and finding that going slow is pleasurable. Being people instead of passengers is exhilarating.

The drawing on this page indicates that three things are necessary to implement the concept of pedestrian and bicyclist right-of-way. Two of them are signs. The third is some reflectorized yellow paint.

Bikeways should be eight feet in width and aligned so that the outside lane of the bike traffic faces oncoming vehicular traffic. Just as pedestrians and automobiles are expected to obey traffic so should bicyclists. Without respect on every level for another's rights, no system can be expected to work.

Pedestrian crosswalks are but painted lines at the intersection connecting two sidewalks. Basically the lines delineate safety zones for people on foot. (The signs are necessary reminders of a new way of living.)

Rest areas should be provided at two block intervals along major pedestrianways. A small area containing a bench and plantings and perhaps a drinking fountain would be additional incentive for Mid-Iowans to "find their feet",



**REST AREA**

**TRAFFICWAYS**

**IN**

**IN**

**IN**

**IN**

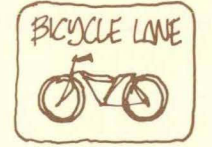
**IN**

**IN**

**IN**



**19**



**PEDESTRIANS ●● BICYCLIST ← AUTO ■■■**  
**BIKEWAYS-PEDESTRIANWAYS**



In addition to the customary game facilities such as ball diamonds, game courts, and swimming pools which may be provided in any recreation area, three basic group activity areas exist. These are picnicking areas, areas for the elderly, and totlots. Each should be provided as the function of the recreation area and as site design parameters dictate and afford such amenities.

Picnicking facilities should be provided at a rate of one "picnic unit" per 75 persons in the community or communities which the recreation area serves. A "picnic unit" is comprised of one picnic table (eight person capacity), one-half of one trash container, one sixteenth of a water faucet, and one sixteenth of a shelter and sanitary facility. In other words, every two picnic tables require a trash container. Every sixteen picnic tables should be accommodated by one water faucet, shelter, and toilet. Each unit should be placed at least 100 feet from the next units for privacy. (A community of 3000 population requires at least forty picnic units, 40 picnic tables, 20 trash receptacles, 3 faucets, 3 shelters, and 3 toilets.)



**PICNICKING**

Senior Citizens Areas should be developed in conjunction with all parks and "people places". These may be no more than simply a few comfortable benches, plantings, and a drinking fountain, or they may be developed to contain horseshoe courts, shuffleboard areas, bingo tables, and so forth. The development of such areas should be commensurate to the resident elderly population. (All Iowa communities should give such areas high priority.)

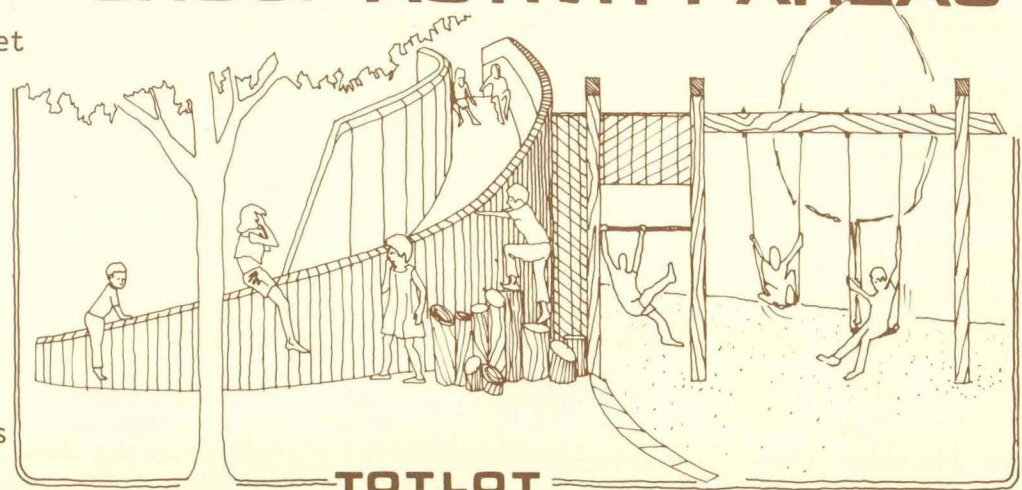


**ELDERLY**  
A SOCIAL PLACE

And finally, totlots should be innovatively provided to challenge youngsters with a multitude of opportunities to climb, sit, slide, play in sand, run, swing, and to meet friends. The hulk of an old tree when installed in a totlot can become a natural jungle gym, or space rocket to a child. Who says that strap swings are better than the old tire swing? Tastefully designed, such innovative totlots can provide an educational and recreational environment.

**GROUP ACTIVITY AREAS**

Each community should provide a totlot in conjunction with its park, in addition to its school areas. As the community size increases, occasional parklets with totlots may be required. No child should have to travel more than 3 - 4 blocks to a totlot.



**TOTLOT**

CLIMB, SIT, SLIDE, SAND, RUN, SWING, PLAY WITH FRIENDS ..... LEARN

General examples of community parks with these three areas designated are shown on page 65. As a community decides to develop a park, specific site designs should be prepared detailing sizes, colors, and construction techniques.



**CALHOUN COUNTY**

- 1 N. Twin Lake Access
- 2 Lake Access
- 3 Featherstone Mem. Park
- 4 Wildlife Preserve

**HAMILTON COUNTY**

- 1 Briggs' Woods

**HANCOCK COUNTY**

- 1 East Twin Lake Park

**KOSSUTH COUNTY**

- 1 A.A. Call State Park
- 2 Kossuth County Park
- 3 Whittemore Area
- 4 Steele Wildlife Area
- 5 Buffalo Creek
- 6 Union Slough

**POCAHONTAS COUNTY**

- 1 Lizard Lake Access
- 2 Cooper's Cove Park
- 3 Pilot Creek Area
- 4 N.W. Recreation Area
- 5 Little Clear Lake Park
- 6 Kalsow Prairie
- 7 Feldman Park
- 8 West Roadside Park
- 9 Havelock Wildlife Area

**WEBSTER COUNTY**

- 1 Kennedy Park
- 2 Dolliver State Park
- 3 Brushy Creek
- 4 Carlson Tract
- 5 Woodman's Hollow
- 6 Liska-Stanek Prairie
- 7 Lizard Creek Area
- 8 Deer Creek
- 9 Rossow Prairie

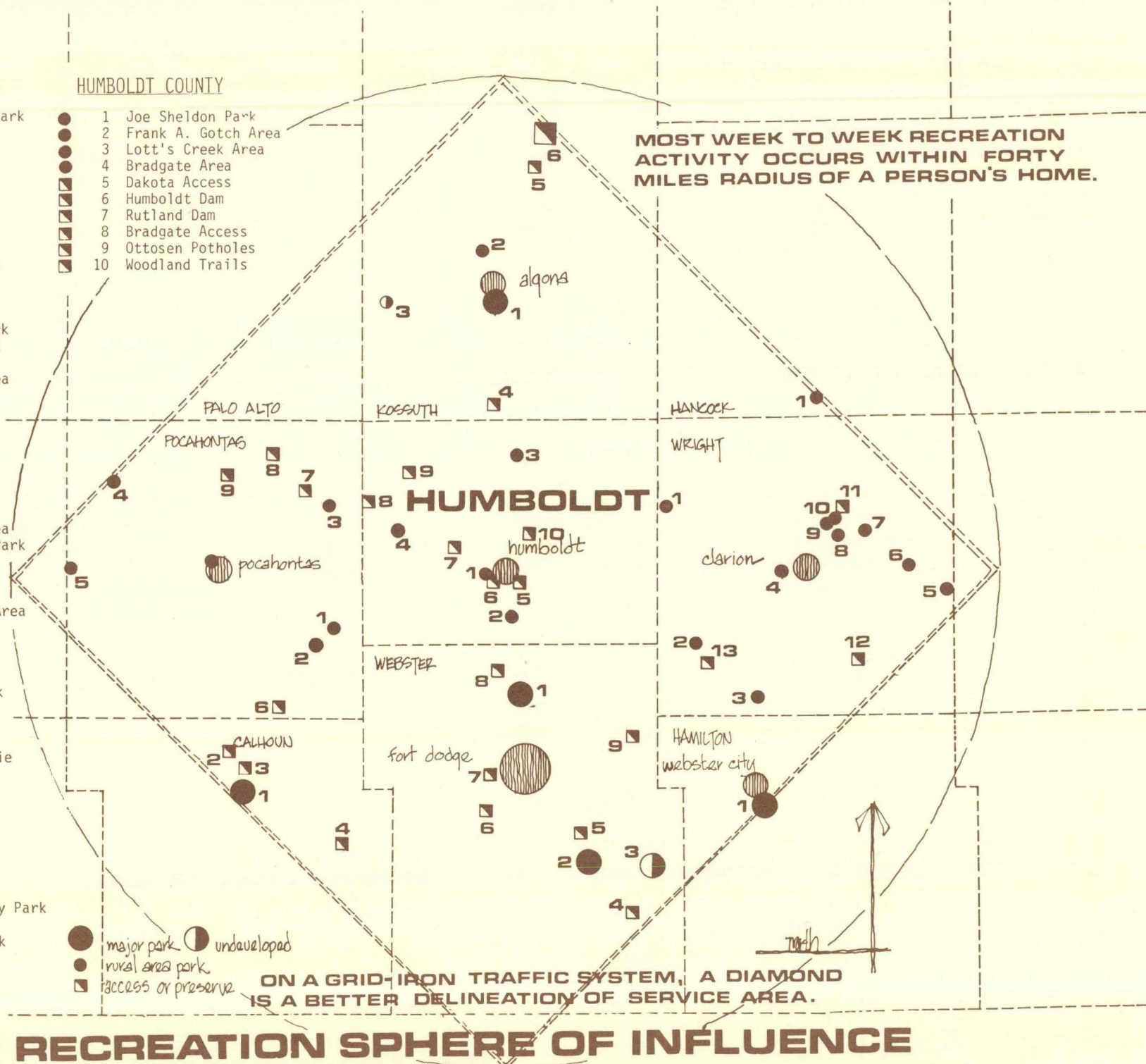
**WRIGHT COUNTY**

- 1 Oakdale Park
- 2 Sportsman's Park
- 3 Woolstock Community Park
- 4 Benson Park
- 5 Dows Community Park
- 6 Bingham Park
- 7 Pikes Timber Park
- 8 Elm Lake
- 9 Eldridge Park
- 10 Lake Cornelia Park
- 11 Walker Slough
- 12 Big Wall Lake
- 13 Troy Roadside

**HUMBOLDT COUNTY**

- 1 Joe Sheldon Park
- 2 Frank A. Gotch Area
- 3 Lott's Creek Area
- 4 Bradgate Area
- 5 Dakota Access
- 6 Humboldt Dam
- 7 Rutland Dam
- 8 Bradgate Access
- 9 Ottosen Potholes
- 10 Woodland Trails

**MOST WEEK TO WEEK RECREATION ACTIVITY OCCURS WITHIN FORTY MILES RADIUS OF A PERSON'S HOME.**



**RECREATION SPHERE OF INFLUENCE**

**ON A GRID-IRON TRAFFIC SYSTEM, A DIAMOND IS A BETTER DELINEATION OF SERVICE AREA.**

● major park  
○ undeveloped  
● rural area park  
□ access or preserve



The functional economic area of influence map on the preceding page reveals the proximity of recreational facilities within a 40 mile radius environment of Humboldt County. The residents of Humboldt County and its communities cannot and should not expect to meet all of their recreation needs within their immediate area. The need for certain facilities must be tempered with the nature of the activity, the community's or county's ability to afford their cost, the desire for such an activity, and finally, the proximity of the activity in another recreation area.

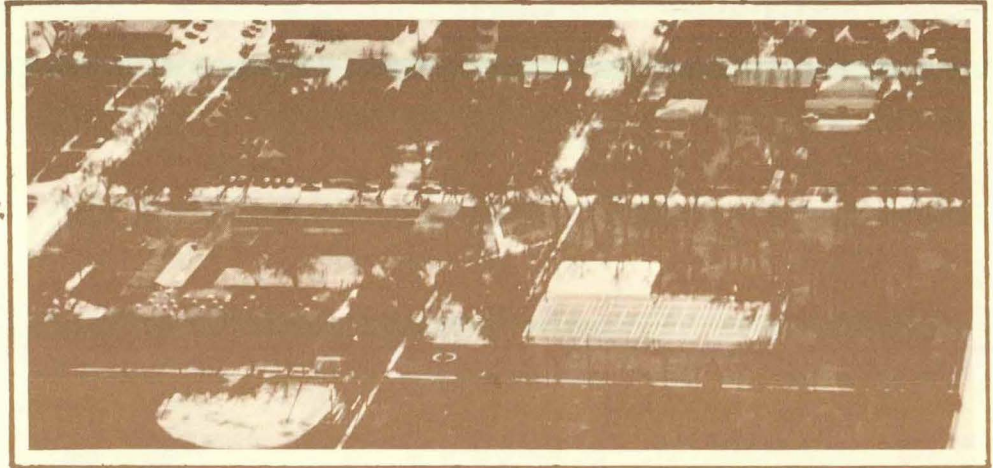
The Humboldt Community Park pictured at the left is a Class One Park. Although each of the towns are not shown on the preceding map, it has been shown in the Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces Element that "...each town...because it acts as a service center, not only for its residents, but for the surrounding farms as well, needs to fulfill a portion of the demand for recreation areas. Each town should have at least one Class One Area ("town park") of not less than four acres in size."

Frank A. Gotch Area, located at the confluence of the East and West branches of the Des Moines River, typifies a Class Two or Rural Area Park. Similarly the Lott's Creek Area, Oakdale Park, and the Bradgate Area are or can become functional Rural Area Parks. Their service supplements the recreation areas of Humboldt County.

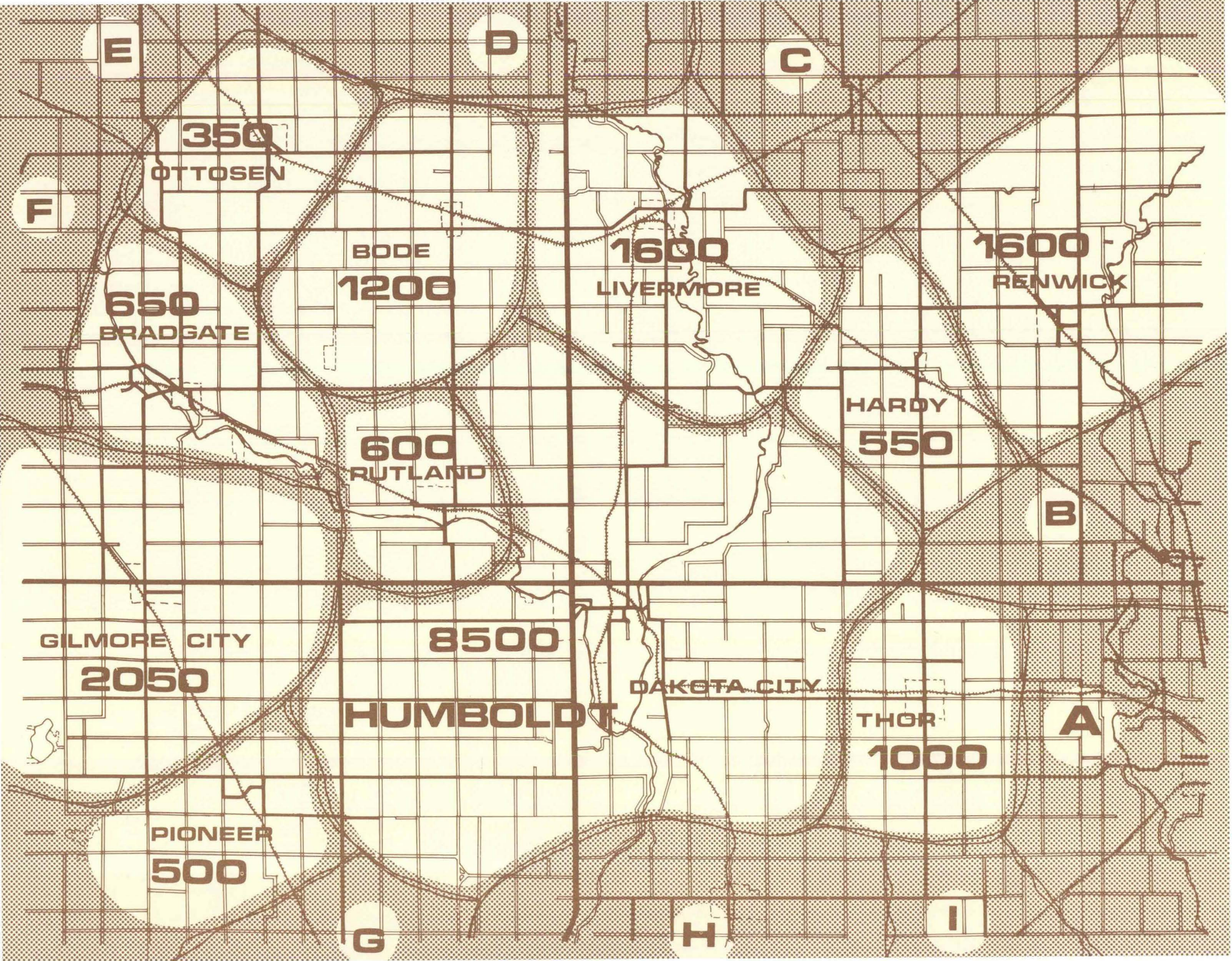
Kennedy Park, however, is a Class Three Major Park. A.A. Call State Park in Kossuth County near Algona, and Dolliver Park south of Fort Dodge as well act as major parks. These major parks are primarily significant to Humboldt County as large areas for a fuller experience with the landscape.

Hopefully, this map and its associated photos and narrative have succinctly defined the vocabulary of recreation areas in a personal way for Humboldt County. The County and its communities are fortunate to have a good start on a complete recreation system. The sites for potential parks are, in addition, situated such that a truly admirable system can be realized.

## RECREATION ENVIRONS







E

D

C

F

350

OTTOSEN

BODE

1200

1600

LIVERMORE

1600

RENWICK

650

BRADGATE

600

RUTLAND

HARDY

550

B

GILMORE CITY

2050

8500

HUMBOLDT

DAKOTA CITY

THOR

1000

A

PIONEER

500

G

H

I



This study finds it erroneous to think of the communities of Humboldt County as made up of twelve areas shown by lines of incorporation on a road map. Actually there are two levels of community in Humboldt County. At the first level, each of the twelve towns, with their incorporated populations and their outlying rural populations who depend upon the respective towns as service centers, are individual agri-business communities. On the second level there is the joint community of Humboldt County comprised of the area dependent upon the City of Humboldt for economic and social identification.

As a unit, then, or as a part of a larger unit, the term "community" takes on a very special meaning. Mostly it is the commonality shared by all its members.

For instance, the incorporated population of Livermore is 510 persons, but actually the community size is approximately 1600 people. Farmers from miles around recognize Livermore as their "home community". Their sons and daughters participate in the little league and rodeo events, they market their grain and buy the necessities of life in Livermore. Probably their church and social functions center in Livermore. That is the definition of "community".

The other "communities" delineated on the map at the left function correspondingly. The communities of Humboldt County are: Humboldt-Dakota City, Gilmore City, Livermore, Renwick, Bode, Thor, Bradgate, Rutland, Ottosen, Hardy, and Pioneer. Surrounding communities have an effect upon Humboldt County as well: A-Eagle Grove, B-Goldfield, C-LuVerne, D-St Joseph-Algona, E-West Bend, F-Rolfe, G-Clare, H-Badger, and I-Vincent.

In order for a community to remain viable it must offer a fulfilling lifestyle. When there are good things happening in a town, the people want to feel, and do feel, that they belong to a group. Therein lies the strength of the community concept.

Communities which appear as happy, tight-knit groups of people living together through choice are the best evidence which we can offer as "the good life of Mid-Iowa". When our communities meet the needs of their residents to the fullest extent is when we can expect a reverse in the trend of out-migration.

It is fully comprehensible that an all-important industry would select a community as its "home" primarily upon the basis of that community's self-identity. Given a choice, anyone wants to live with happy and proud people. Thus, the better our lifestyles, the better are the chances of our community to remain a viable and living economic entity.

Nothing's to say, however, that communities can't join forces to achieve goals outside the reach of themselves individually. Already joint school systems exist. Why not joint golf course districts?

With the added impetus, the modernization of an existing park or the development of a new community park, all of a sudden, a town becomes infected with a good dose of community spirit. Insurgent pride takes hold and soon the traditions of earlier days, community family picnics on summer Sundays, frog jumping contests, sack races, the whole gamut of togetherness takes hold.

With such spirit it's not long before clean-up, fix-up, and planting operations are in action. When a visitor comes to town, he sees this and leaves a little envious. That's the way to be viable. And proud...

Finally, since we have said much of community in a sociological sense, let's retreat a minute to Aldo Leopold's words of an "ecological community". As we look to the land we see the major role that the word "community" plays. In it we discover the differences of upland communities and corridor communities, and we come to respect the responsibilities that our place in the landscape gives us.

In an ecological sense, all of the communities are tied together into the web of life systems. Gophers and pheasants belong to the communities of mayors and industrialists. Our actions should be commensurate to our responsibilities.



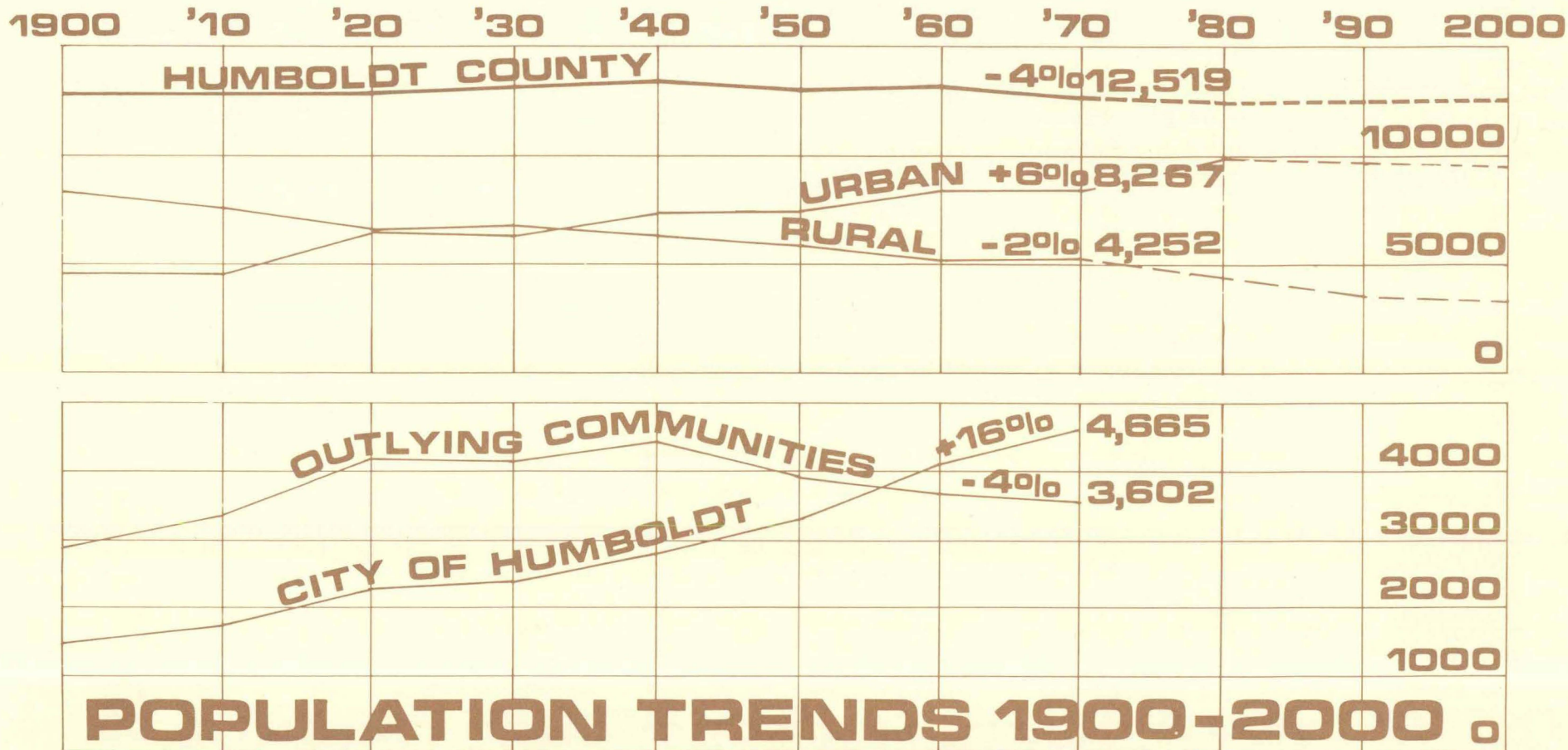
In 1934 or so, Humboldt County became a population of town dwellers more than an area of outlying farms. In 1956 or so, the City of Humboldt became larger than all of the outlying communities put together. These population trends tell us much about where we have been and where we are. They allow us to guess what will happen to us if we hold to status quo.

From perusal of these associated charts, we should evolve concepts of what we must do if we want to change or stabilize a trend.

In a time of excess population on a national basis, it is a quirk of sociology that Humboldt County and its communities have generally lost population. The fortunate exceptions are the three largest communities, Humboldt, Gilmore City and Dakota City.

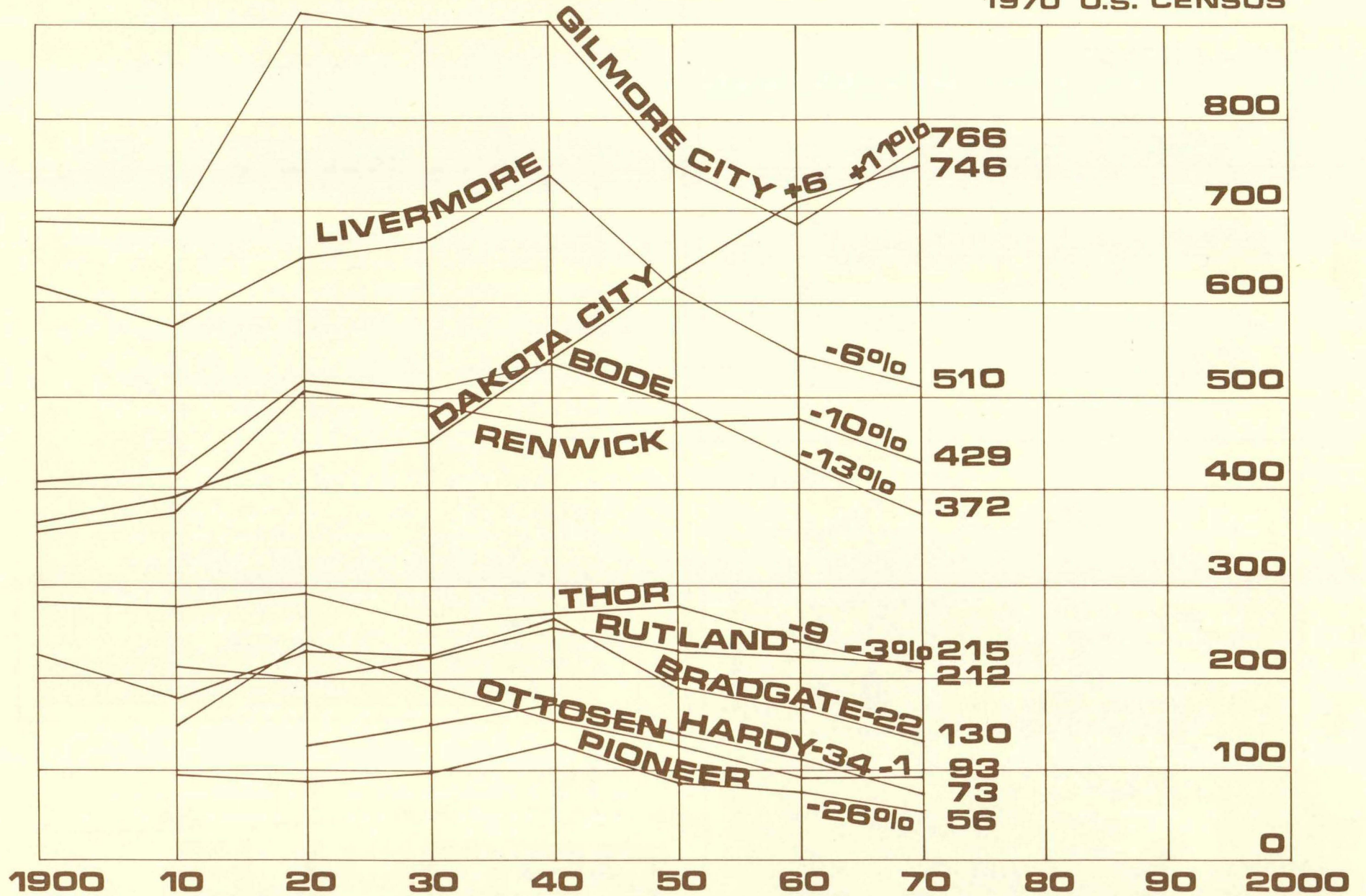
Obviously, needing people is better than having too many. All that needs to be done is to develop better lifestyles and we can hold residents and selectively invite immigrants. That's why this attempt to develop a plan for the amenities which augment lifestyles is so meaningful.

Hopefully the objective view which we are taking of ourselves can help us to better direct our actions with positive socio-economic benefits as a result.

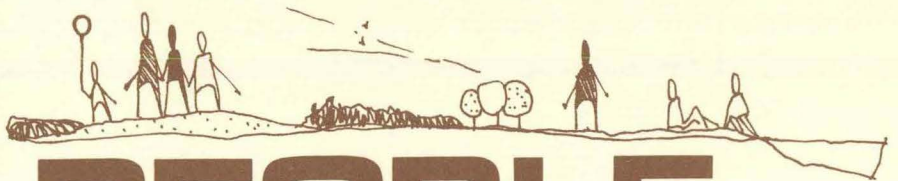
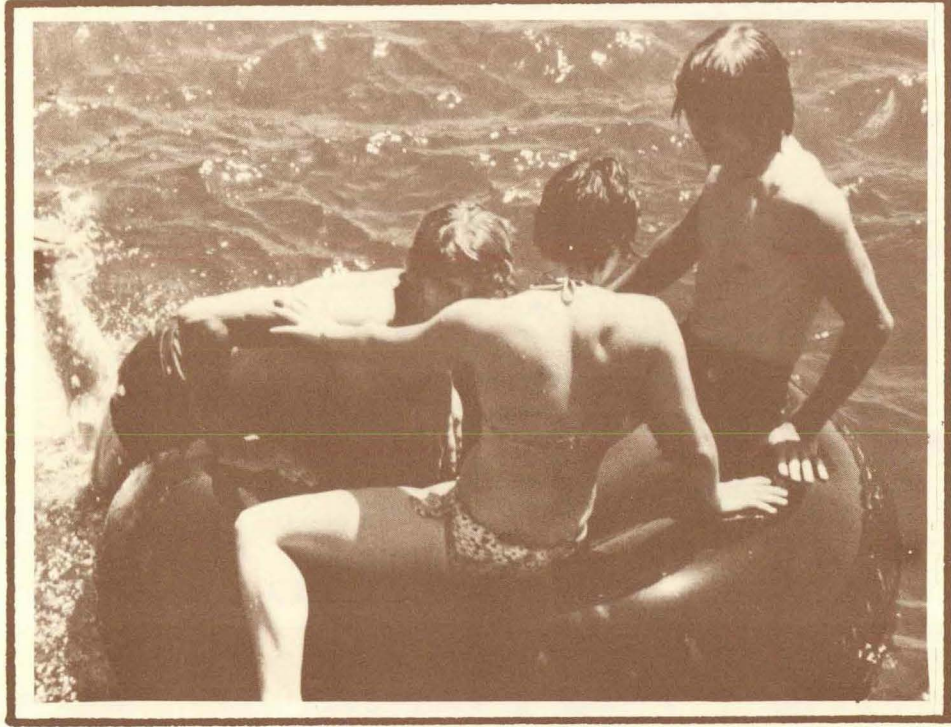
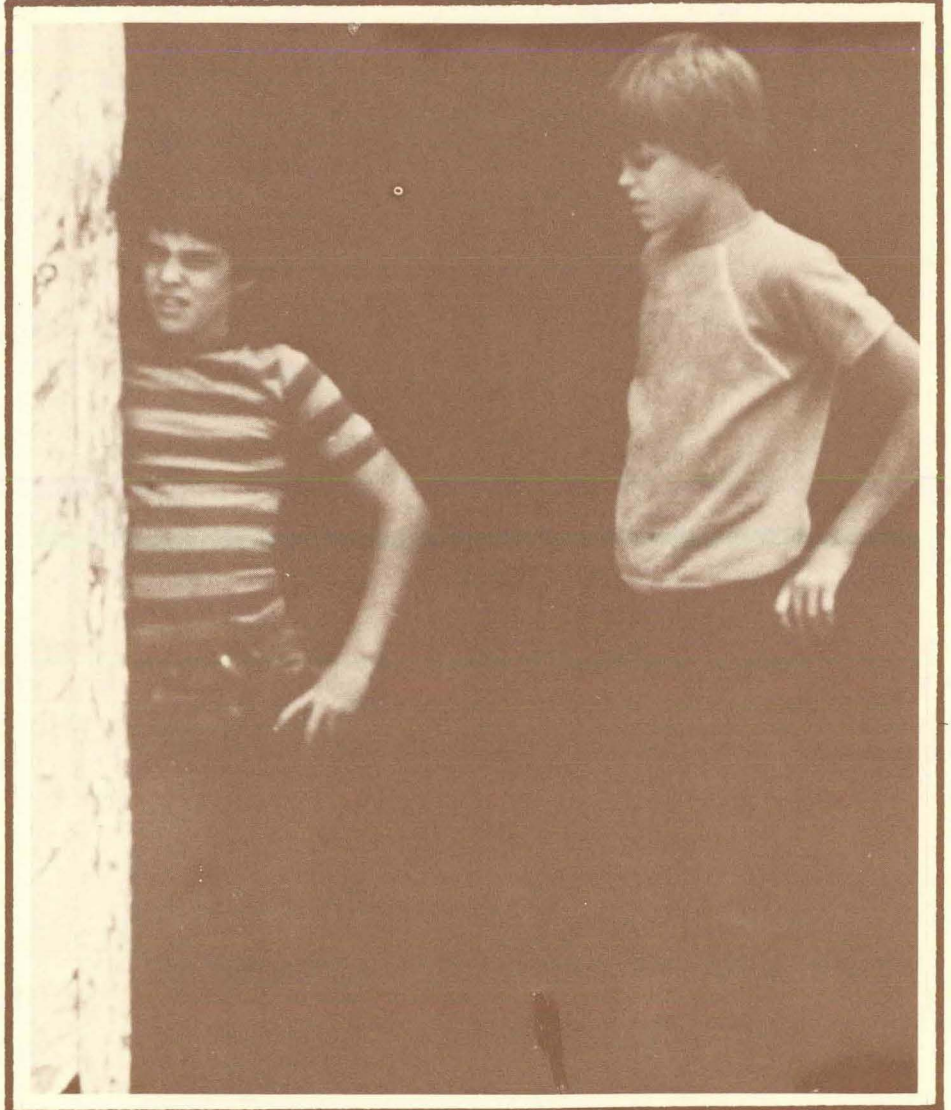




THE DATA ON THESE AND THE FOLLOWING CHARTS WAS DERIVED FROM THE 1970 U.S. CENSUS







**PEOPLE**



<b>COUNTY-WIDE STATISTICS</b>						
<b>MEAN AGE GROUPS</b> 32.4 12,519	5	15	25	45	65	
	896	2730	1746	2569	2864	1714
<b>RESIDENCE</b>	<b>RURAL</b>		<b>URBAN</b>			
	4252	34%	8267	66%		
<b>MEAN EDUCATION</b> 12.25 YEARS	0 YEARS		8	12		
	2432	10,087	4962			
<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>FARM</b>	<b>LABOR</b>	<b>MERC.</b>	<b>SERV.</b>		
	24%	34.6%	19.7%	21.9%		
<b>MEAN INCOME</b> \$8268	\$3000	6000	9000	12000	15000	
	383	591	884	658	367	420
<b>COMMUNITY AGE GROUPS</b>						
<b>MEAN HUMBOLDT</b> 33.0 4,665	5	15	25	45	65	
	329	960	640	1037	960	739
<b>GILMORE CITY</b> 36.0 766	5	15	25	45	65	
	58	142	116	120	175	155
<b>DAKOTA CITY</b> 26.4 746	5	15	25	45	65	
	62	178	122	158	140	86
<b>LIVERMORE</b> 37.4 510	5	15	25	45	65	
	38	108	61	73	132	98
<b>RENWICK</b> 39.9 429	5	15	25	45	65	
	33	65	64	70	103	94
<b>BODE</b> 40.5 372	5	15	25	45	65	
	19	66	40	83	89	75
<b>THOR</b> 46.4 212	5	15	25	45	65	
	10	36	19	37	61	49
<b>RUTLAND</b> 29.1 215	5	15	25	45	65	
	20	52	26	44	45	28
<b>BRADGATE</b> 43.0 130	5	15	25	45	65	
	8	22	16	20	25	39
<b>OTTOSEN</b> 42.9 93	5	15	25	45	65	
	9	15	7	17	19	26
<b>HARDY</b> 54.3 73	5	15	25	45	65	
	2	13	5	10	30	16
<b>PIONEER</b> 35.0 56	5	15	25	45	65	
	3	6	15	11	13	8

The demand for recreation facilities in a community or area is based upon several variables. As we saw on page 7, to be justifiable, a recreation use must relate positively to the natural patterns of the land, man's patterns of land utilization, and the all important socio-economic factors. This section is devoted to socio-economic factors of population, income, occupation, education, leisure and mobility. (As we just noted, the barometer of a population trend line can tell us much about our future and the changes or stabilization required if we are to continue having a "good life".)

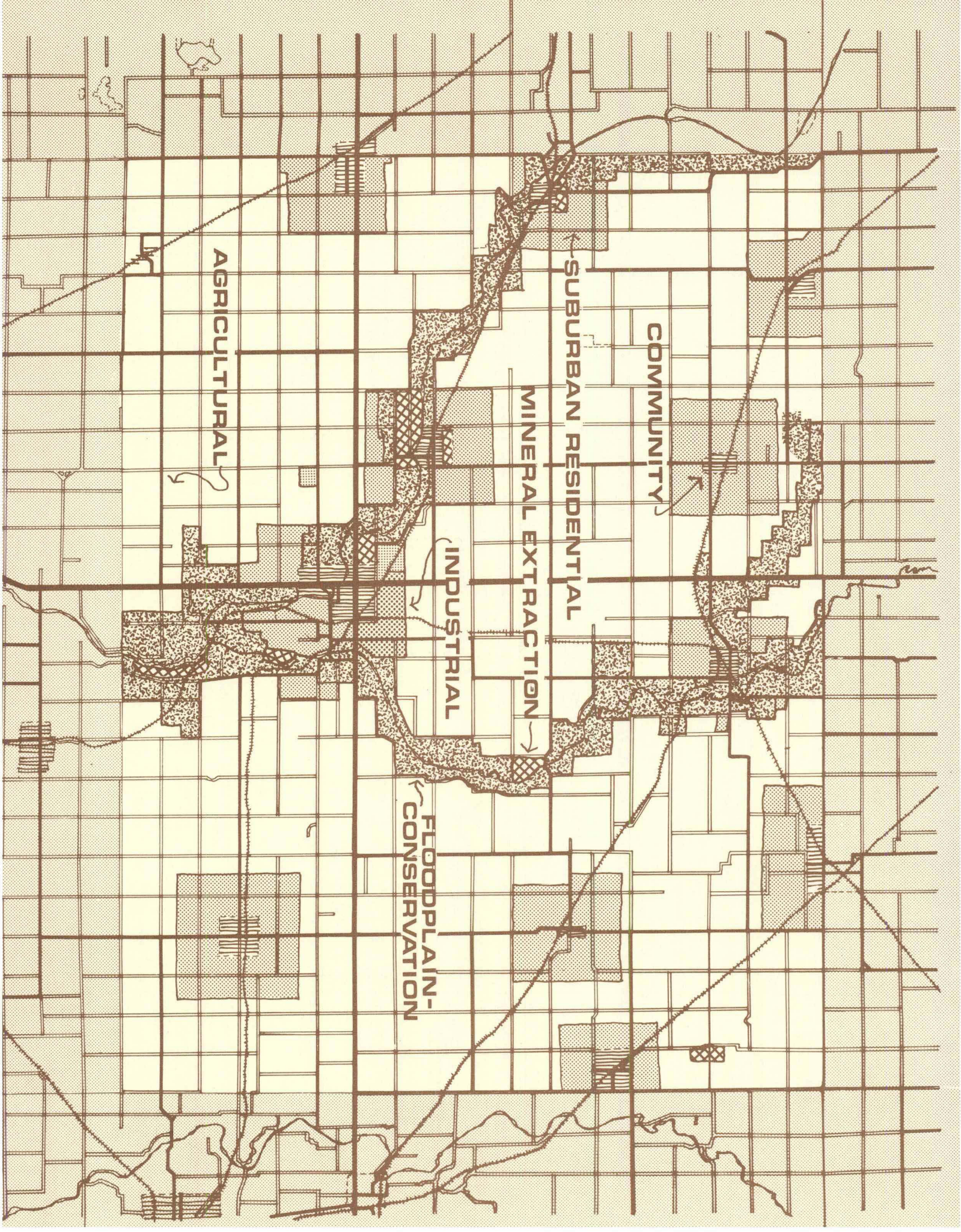
The age of the resident participants also certainly has an effect upon the demands of recreation uses. Humboldt County's population is stacked in the upper three brackets of age grouping. There probably is a greater demand for picnicking areas and senior citizens areas than totlots. (The urgency which a study like this can draw from a look at the age groups is this: Everything possible should be done to create a social and physical environment attractive enough to retain residents.)

Even if the total population remains constant, an increase in family income would mean an increase in recreation demand. In 1970, the median income in Humboldt County was \$8268. This is expected to rise by at least 50 percent by the year 2000. Occupations and education are also socio-economic factors which merit consideration in the definition of recreation demand. With a trend toward single-operator, large-area farms, more residents find themselves with regular hours and more leisure time. Comparably with higher levels of education, the residents of the community will require more highly developed facilities for recreation-demand-satisfaction.

Any increase in the amount of leisure time will increase the demand for recreation. The work day and work week have declined and the number of vacation days have increased steadily over the years. The individual's leisure time is expected to increase by 40 percent from 1970 to 2000.

Mobility is also an important factor in determining recreation demand. The almost total reliance on the automobile presents special problems in this day of "Energy Shortage". Each community of Humboldt County should attempt to provide more recreation uses in town than in previous years of more plentiful fuel supply. A community should also place special emphasis on provision of recreation facilities for the elderly, whose mobility is usually rather limited. Finally, each community should seriously explore other modes of transportation to larger recreation areas and communities. Time was we could hop on a passenger train. Why not trains and multi-modal trails as well?







At the left is a map which is an adaption of Humboldt County's Zoning map. The zoning map best typifies the projected patterns of land use.

Indicated on the map are the county's communities, areas of suburban residential growth, mineral extraction areas, a heavy industrial zone, areas of floodplain/conservation, and productive agriculture lands. Humboldt County is indeed fortunate to have such a zoning system. From it, the future developments of the county can be more assuredly guided.

Most importantly, the agriculturally productive lands are delineated. Development for short term benefit on prime agricultural lands should be highly discouraged. It would be almost as improper to develop a park or golf course on prime land as it is to turn such soil into another piece of suburbia.

The communities of Humboldt County should look at concentration and revitalization of the community core rather than suburban expansion.

The most significant element of the map in terms of this study, however, is the zoning of floodplain/conservation lands. The river and stream valleys, the natural landscape corridors of the county have been established as conservation areas. Beautiful!

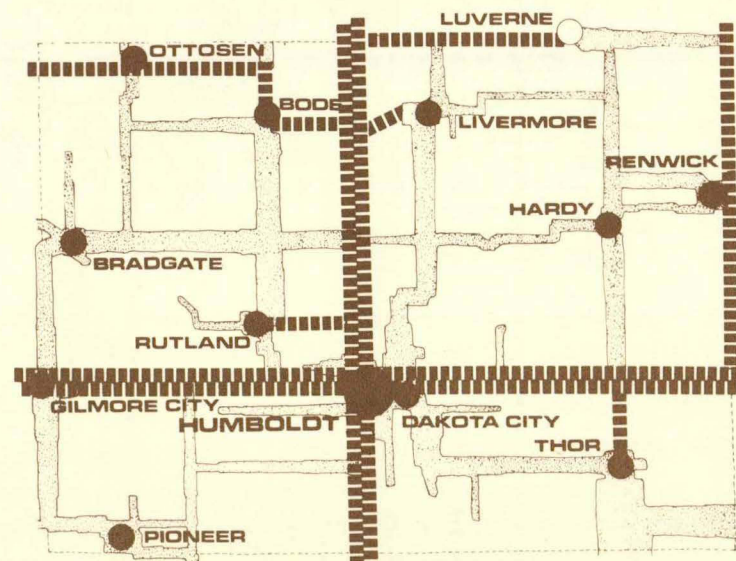
This study will proceed to identify these same lands in a detailed system. It will arrive at essentially the same delineation. These are the lands upon which the major outlying recreation areas may be developed at no cost to agricultural production and to the mutual benefit of the land and recreationist.

The map on the right indicates the dominant traffic patterns of Humboldt County. This information is highly relevant to the development of a recreation system for the county. The facilities proposed for development must lie in harmony with the circulation patterns in order to realize maximum utilization.

The major highways (Highway 169 and Iowa Highway 3) criss-cross the county at the city of Humboldt. State highways then connect all but two of the county's communities to the major roads. In a supplementary intra-county fashion, farm to market roads then link together the outlying areas of the county.

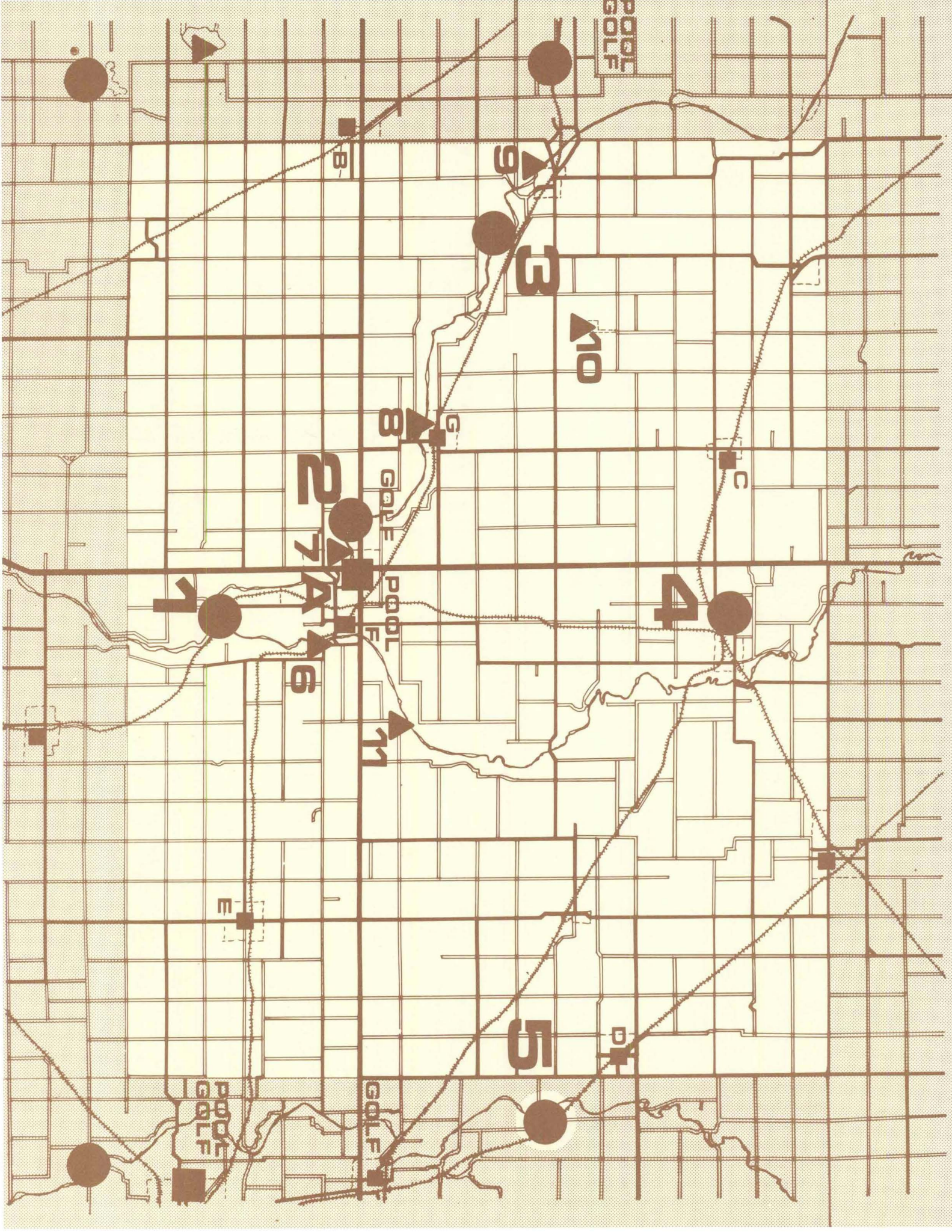
Ideally a park development should be accessible from a hard-surfaced thoroughfare. However, the proximity of a major trafficway can have a deleterious effect upon the aesthetics of a park's use. When located near major trafficways, a recreation area should be developed with visual and acoustical screening through plantings or facility placement.

## LAND USE AND TRAFFIC PATTERNS



MAJOR TRAFFICWAYS





POOL  
GOLF

3

10

8

GOLF

2

7

1

6

11

4

15

POOL  
GOLF

GOLF



	Acres	Own	Ms't	Class	Park Uses
1. Frank A. Gotch Area	67	S	C	II	c,p,t,sh,pg,b,f,h,e,w
2. Joe Sheldon Park	81	C	C	II	c,p,t,sh,pg,tl,ba,b,f,h,e,w
3. Bradgate Area	109	S	C	II	c,p,t,f,h,e,w
4. Lott's Creek Area	39	C	C	II	c,p,t,sh,pg,tl,f,h,e,w
5. Oakdale Park	20	C	C	II	c,p,t,sh,pg,tl,f,h,e,w
6. Dakota City Access	1	S	S	AC	u,f,h,
7. Humboldt Dam Access	1	C	C	AC	u,f,h, S-state, C-county, A-agency II-rural area
8. Rutland Dam Access	1	C	C	AC	u,f,h, park, AC-access, c-camping, p-picnicking,
9. Bradgate Access	81	S	C	AC	u,f,h, t-toilet, sh-shelter, pg-playground,
10. Ottosen Potholes	106	S	S	AC	u,h, tl-trails, ba-b at access, b-boating,
11. Woodlands Trails	2	A	A	AC	u,f,h, f-fishing, h-hunting, e-electricity, w-well

An inventory of the existing recreation areas in Humboldt County and its communities indicates that there are approximately 560 acres of public recreation space available to the 12,519 residents of the county. While quantitatively an average of nearly four and a half acres of public space per 100 residents appears to be an excellent and commendable open space/population average, qualitatively some improvements can be accomplished.

On a county-wide basis, the existing facilities inventory indicates a strength in river corridor oriented open space. This is an admirable characteristic because concentration of public open space in corridor lands fulfill the Conservation Commission's primary change of acquiring the primitive and natural lands of the state.

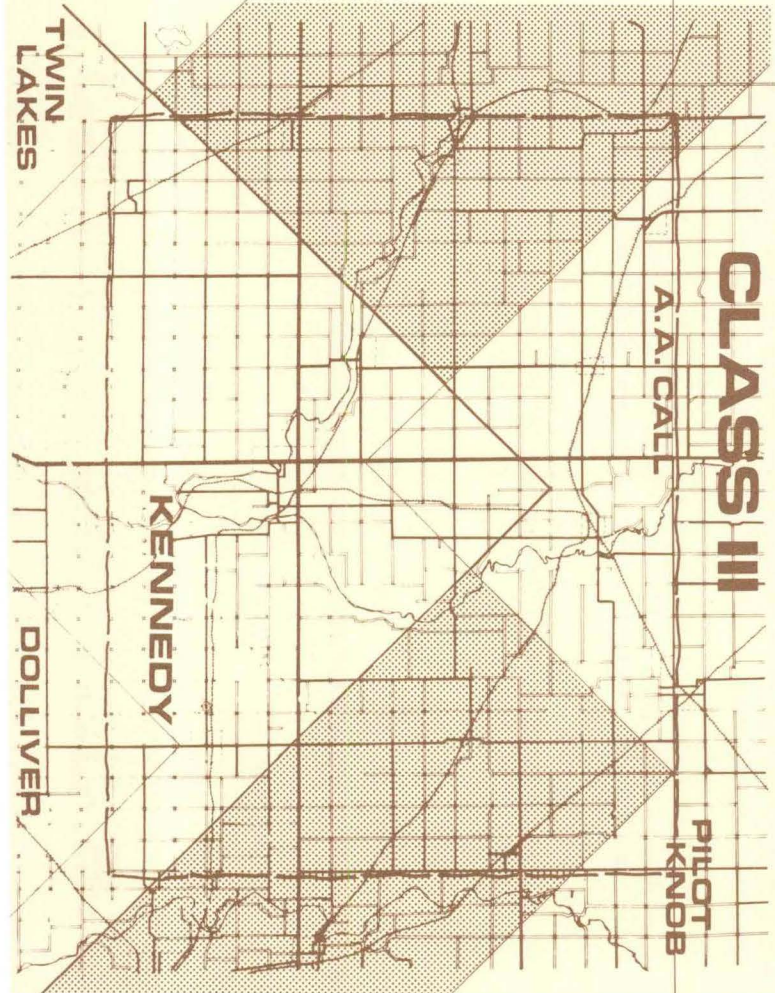
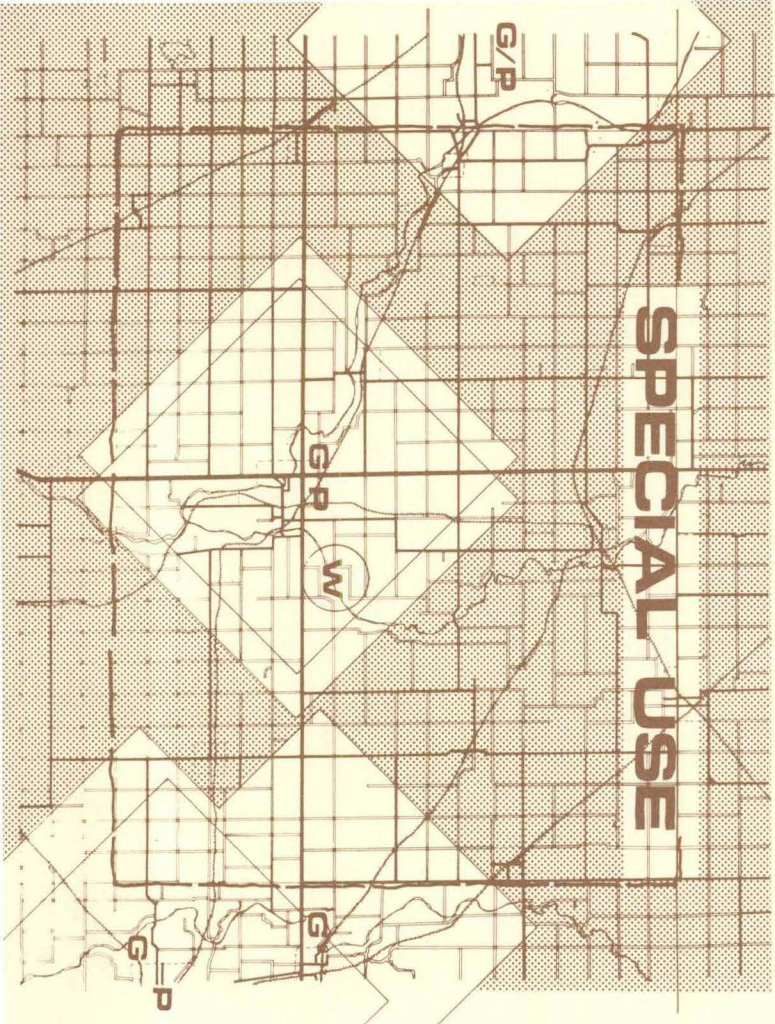
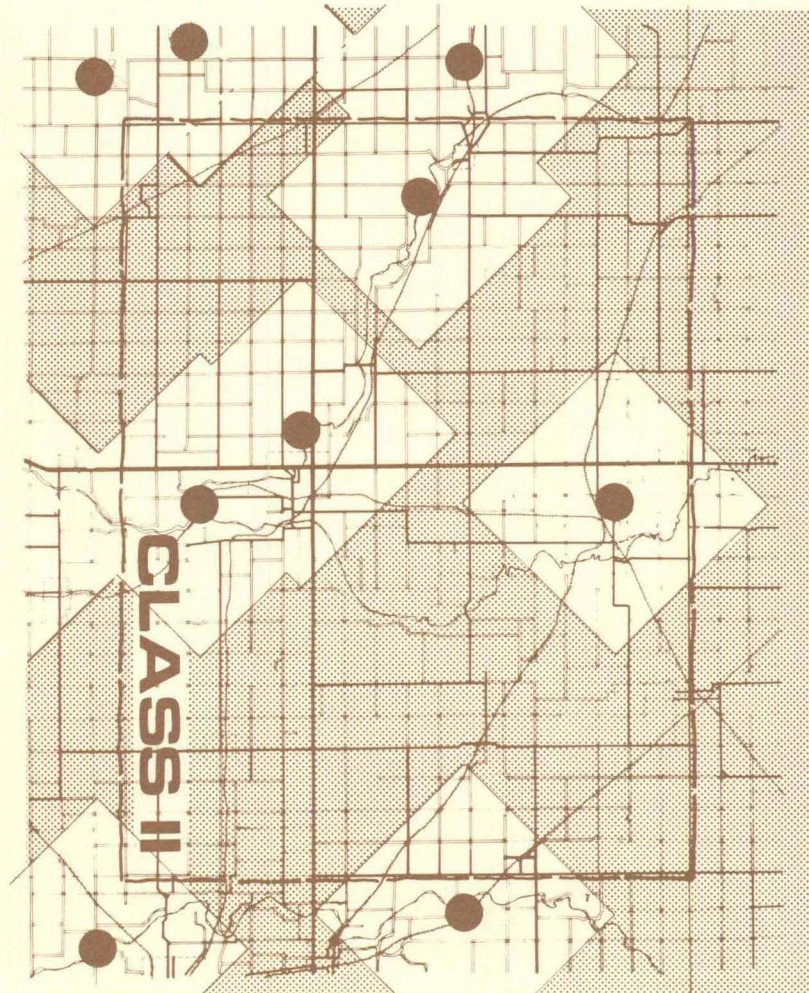
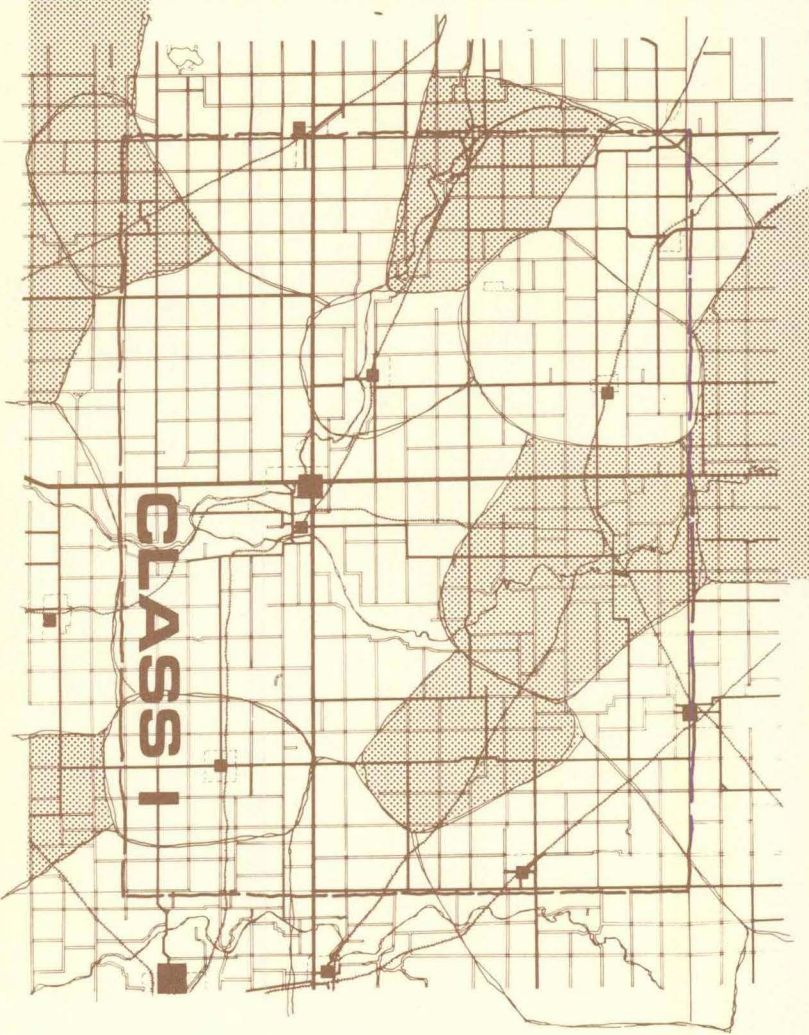
In the above chart, the county level facilities are tabulated by size, ownership-management, class, and use. Recreational pursuits of camping, picnicking (with shelter, toilets, electricity, and wells), playgrounds, trails, boating and boating access, fishing and hunting, are available to the county residents.

Eight of the twelve communities of Humboldt County have recreation areas. The tabulation of community recreation areas, and their size and use is inventoried with each community's park plan. It is sufficient to note at this point that eight towns do have parks, while four need to develop areas for their residents.

Additionally, this inventory notes that a swimming pool, golf course, and wintersports area do exist in Humboldt County. Other recreational facilities in the county include: an Izaak Walton League Club, boat club, shooting range, dragstrip, and commercial travel trailer camp.

In the next section of this study an attempt will be made to evaluate the actual service of the areas inventoried in this section. From that an attempt will be made to empirically annotate areas where some recreation area deficiencies might be resolved.





TWIN LAKES

DOLLIVER

KENNEDY

CLASS III  
A.A. CAL.

PILOT  
KNDB



This section is entitled Recreation Service Analysis. According to the parameters established and espoused in this study and "Iowa Region Five Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces Element", there are classes of recreation service. To the left the areas served by each class of recreation activity are shown as white areas. The toned-pattern areas indicate areas that lack facilities. On the right is repeated the simple guide for placement of a recreation area for most propitious service.

Class One Community Parks exist for eight of the twelve communities of Humboldt County. Additionally community parks in towns adjacent to Humboldt County provide service to Humboldt county residents.

Class Two Rural Area Parks are shown as they serve Humboldt County on a five mile service radius. Large areas of considerable deficiency are apparent. And if physical constraints to circulation, such as the lack of bridges connecting the southeast portion of Humboldt County to the Gotch area, were indicated, even larger voids would be apparent.

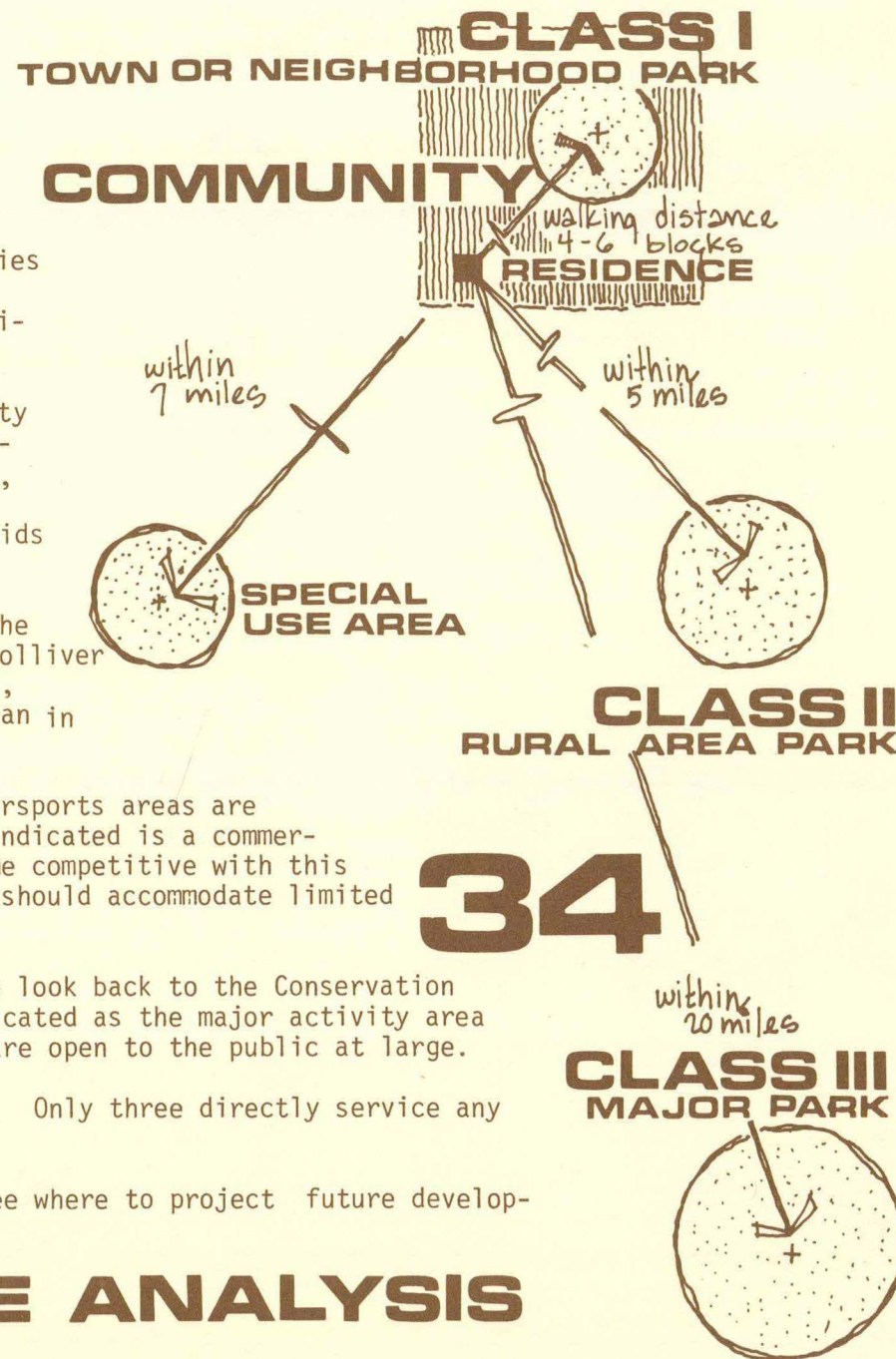
Class Three Major Parks show a borderline service character in the analysis to the left. A.A. Call State Park, Kennedy Park, and Dolliver Park all provide some service to the county. Apparently however, Humboldt County would benefit considerably from the creation of an in county major park.

The Special Use Areas of golf courses, swimming pools, and wintersports areas are also shown in white by service area. The one wintersports area indicated is a commercial area. Future park developments should not attempt to become competitive with this admirable venture, but the rural area parks and community parks should accommodate limited wintersports areas.

Golf courses (G) actually serve a minimum of the county. If we look back to the Conservation Commission projections on page 8, we can see that golf was indicated as the major activity area demand for the region. Only two of the four indicated courses are open to the public at large.

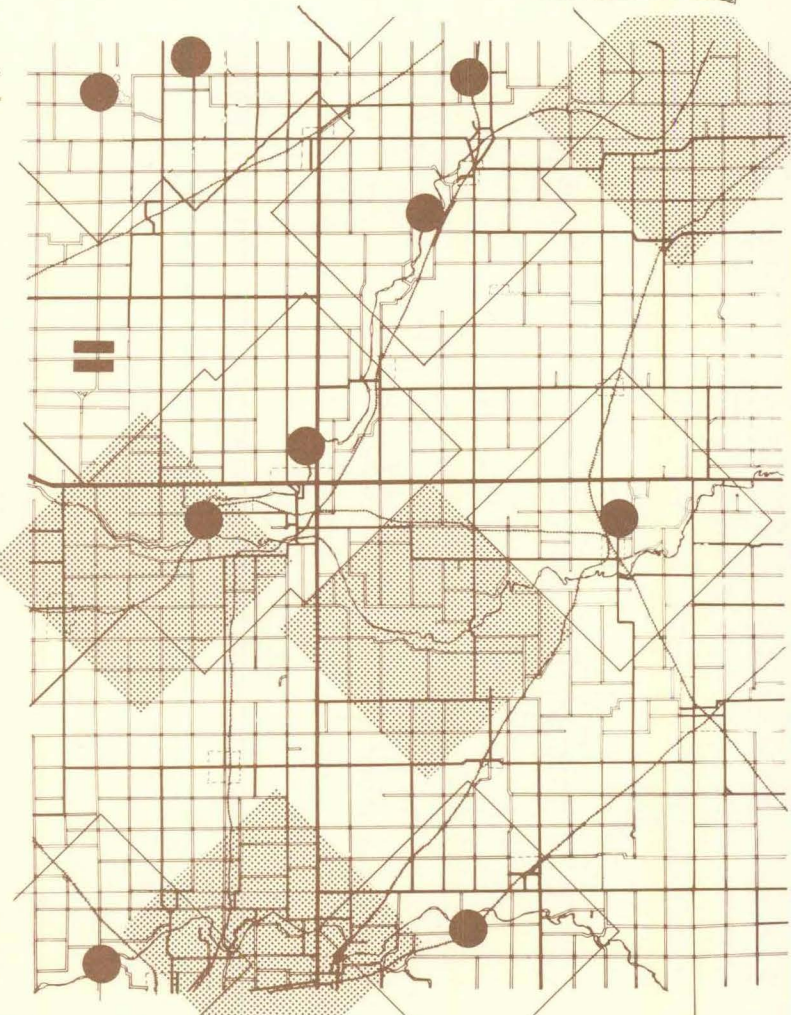
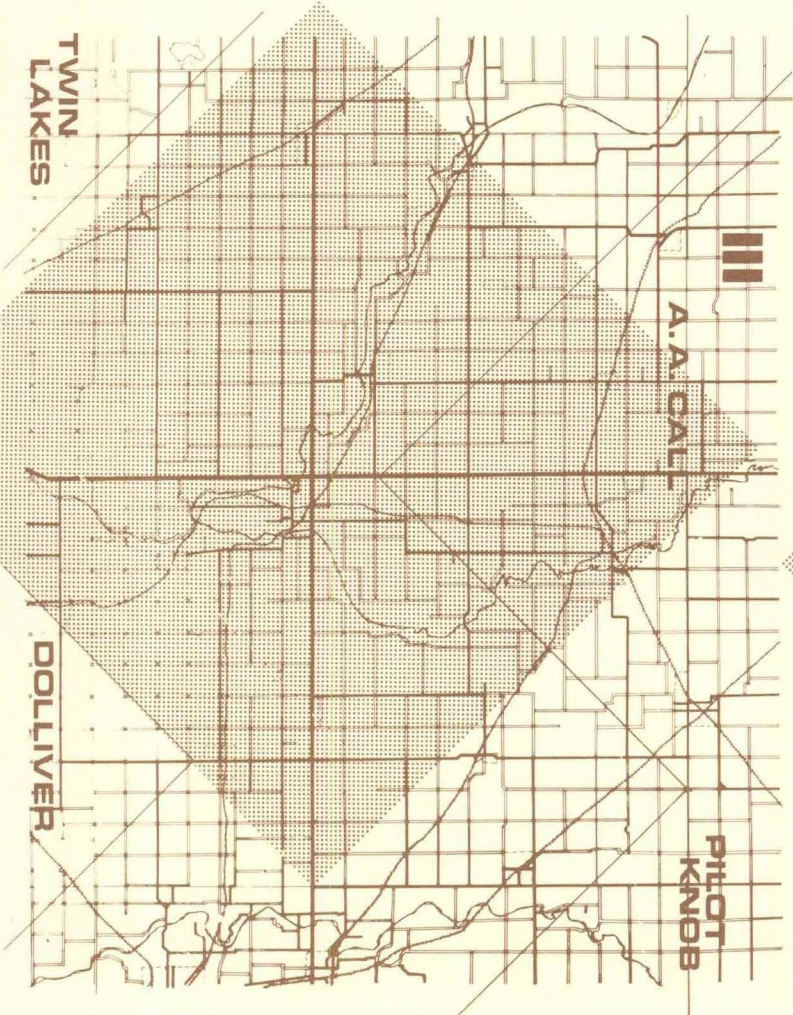
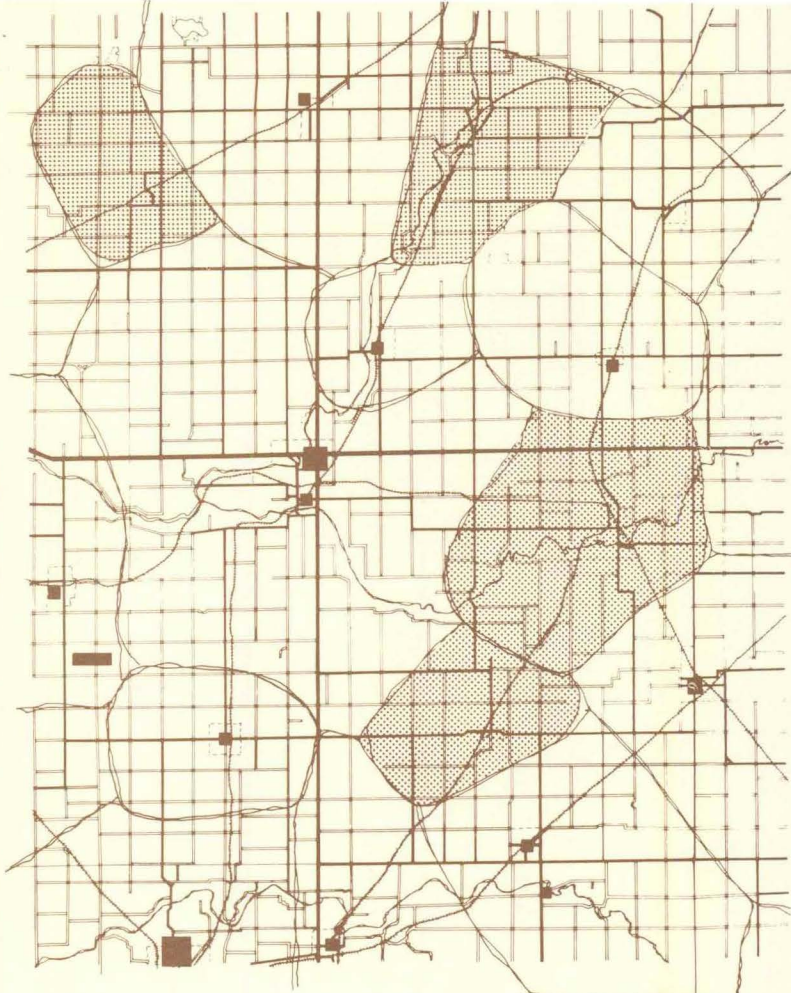
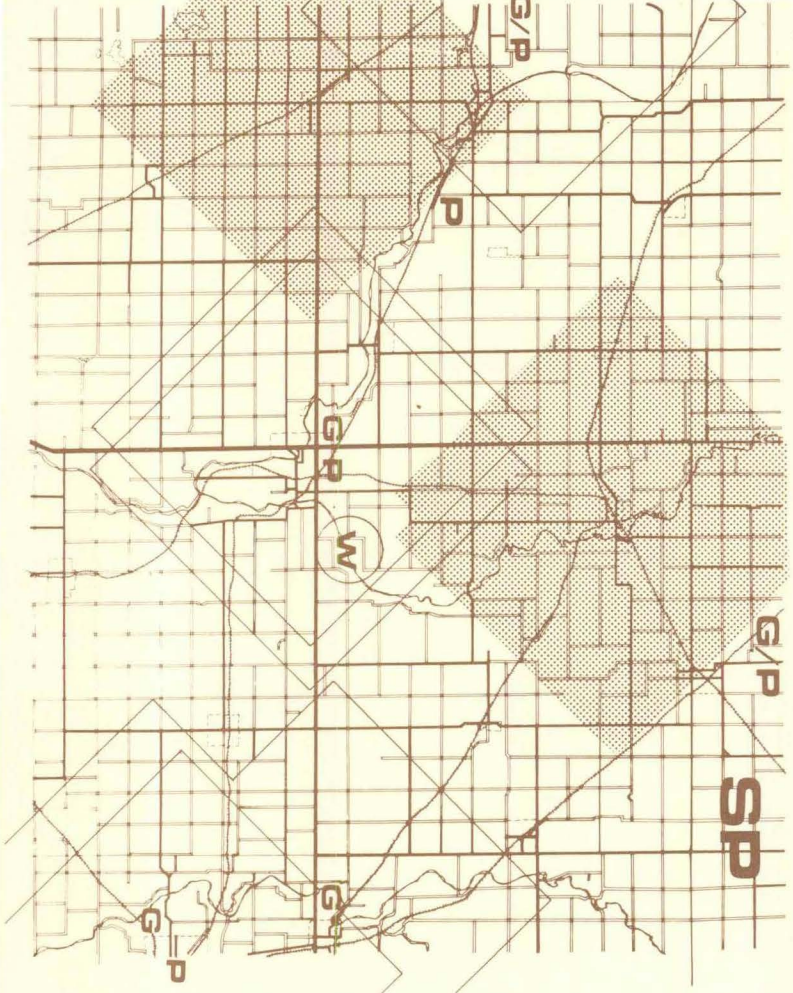
And, there seems to be a dearth of swimming pools for the county. Only three directly service any portion of the county.

Through such graphic analysis such as this, hopefully, we can see where to project future development sites to best accommodate in-county service.



# RECREATION SERVICE ANALYSIS







# 36

Entitled Recreation Area Deficiencies, this section seriously attempts to prescribe positions at which future developments would yield maximum benefit. Areas of deficiency resolution are indicated in the toned-pattern.

Obviously the four communities without community parks should do all in their power to develop such a park as a service to their residents. The remaining communities should work to alleviate qualitative deficiencies within their community parks.

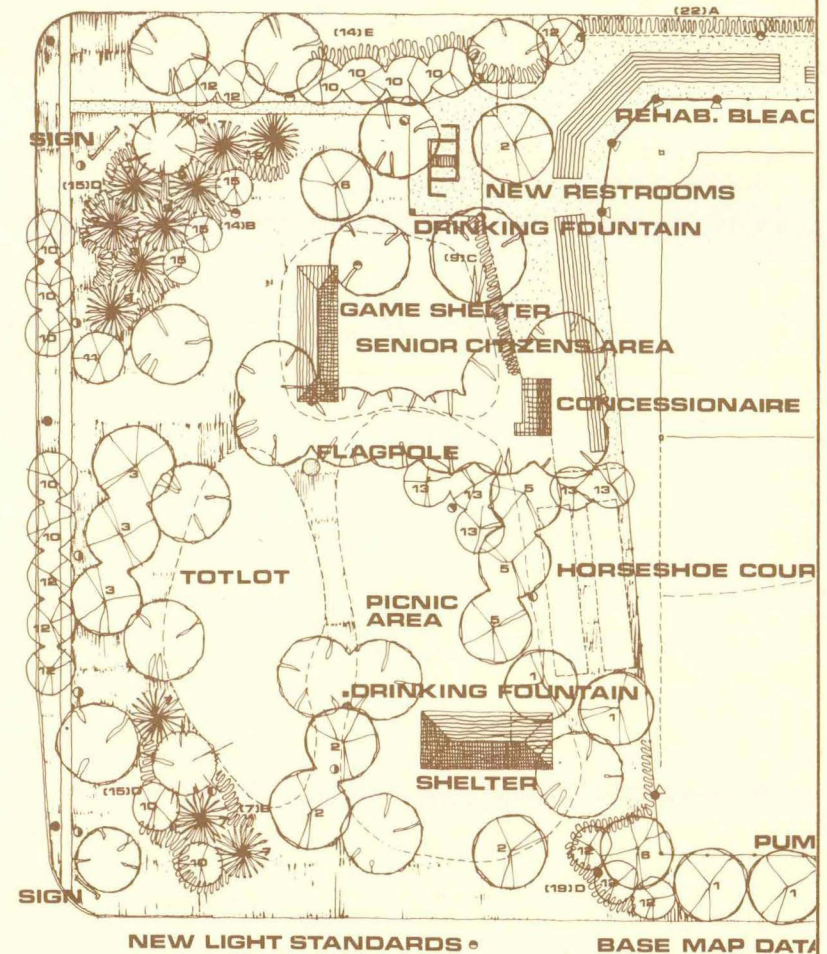
The deficiency in rural area parks can be resolved in four instances. A rural area park, by virtue of its definition, must fall on a river corridor. Four such sites in or near Humboldt County exist. Residents of upland areas deficient of rural area park service must inherently travel further or rely upon more completely developed community parks for service.

The two proposed rural area parks that are indicated lying outside the county should be cooperatively developed by the Humboldt County Conservation Board if the resident county so requests. A park is proposed in Pocahontas County which meets a service deficiency for both counties. Wright County and Humboldt County could jointly meet area service needs by developing a park at the indicated position on the Boone River ( a beautiful site exists).

Ideally, Humboldt County's need for a major park could be resolved through the expansion of the Joe Sheldon Area into the major park proposed in this study.

Two additional swimming pools to serve the county, and an additional golf course seem possible. The communities of Gilmore City and Livermore should be encouraged to such ends.

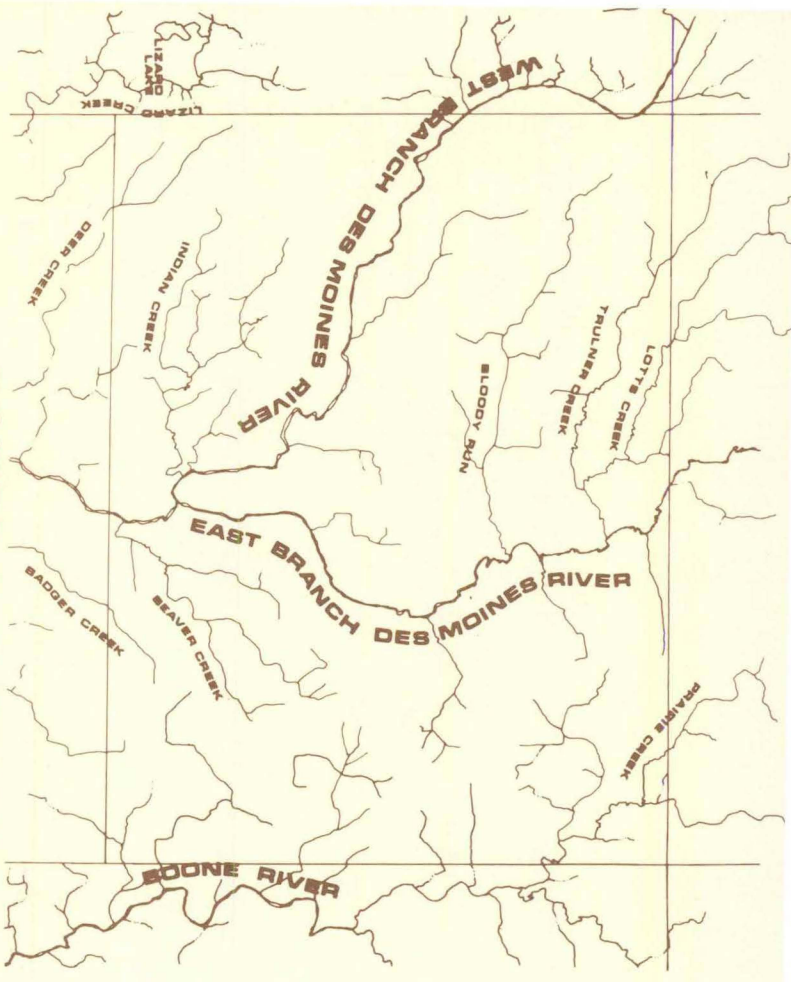
## RECREATION AREA DEFICIENCIES



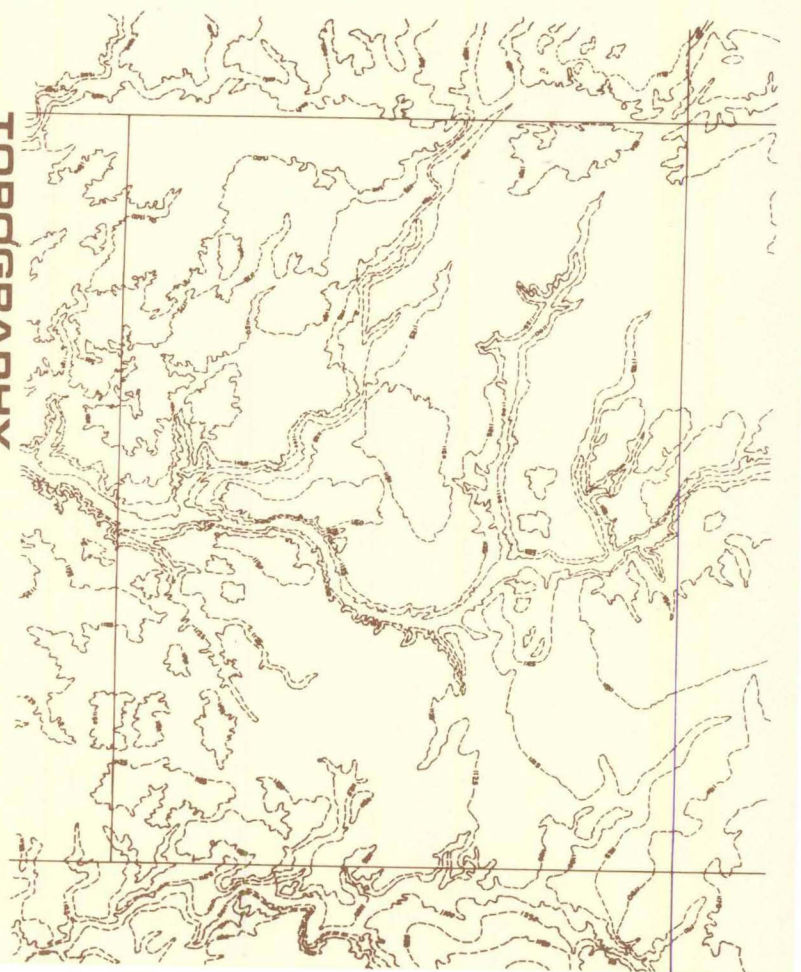
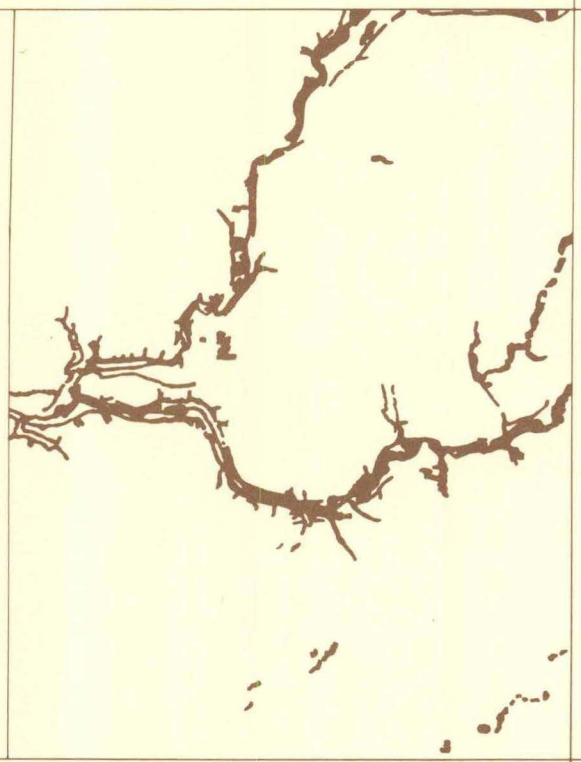
### PRIORITIES '74

- develop totlot, picnic, and sitting areas with appropriate play facilities, tables, and benches, etc.
- replace existing restrooms at indicated location
- rehabilitate or replace existing bleachers; provide indicated sidewalk and gravel spectator area with permanent top
- complete planting program; see planting list and detail
- install new lighting system; use low level globe lights (1' standards) place all wiring underground
- coordinate park color scheme; use one color - dark brown - for all blocks - poles - bleachers, etc.
- coordinate park graphics; use same lettering style

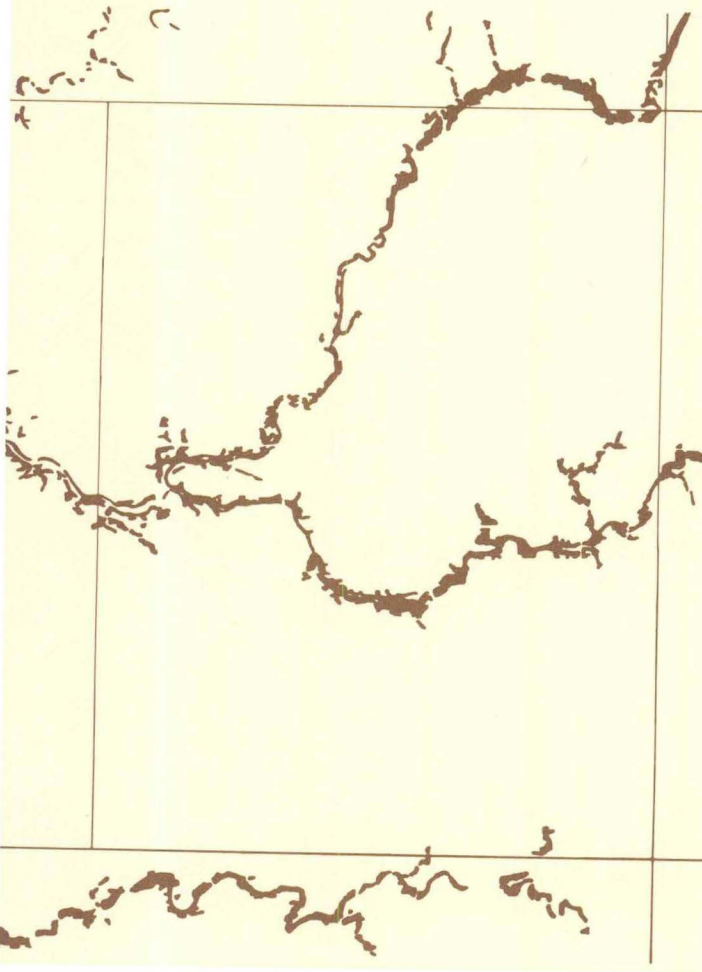




**RIVERS & STREAMS  
MARGINAL SOILS**



**EXISTING TIMBER  
TOPOGRAPHY**





# 38

Now that we have abstractly analyzed the recreation areas and needs of Humboldt County, let's look specifically at the land patterns that come together to host new developments.

The rivers and streams, topography, marginal soils and existing timber readily imply a land patterns system which we should respect in our proposals. If we study these individual maps carefully and then combine them in our minds, we see that the rivers and streams become the center-lines of readily apparent natural landscape corridors.

Rivers and streams are going to do their thing despite our most concerted efforts to align them to our concepts of efficiency. This study contends that perhaps they know best; it subsequently seeks to fit to their pattern.

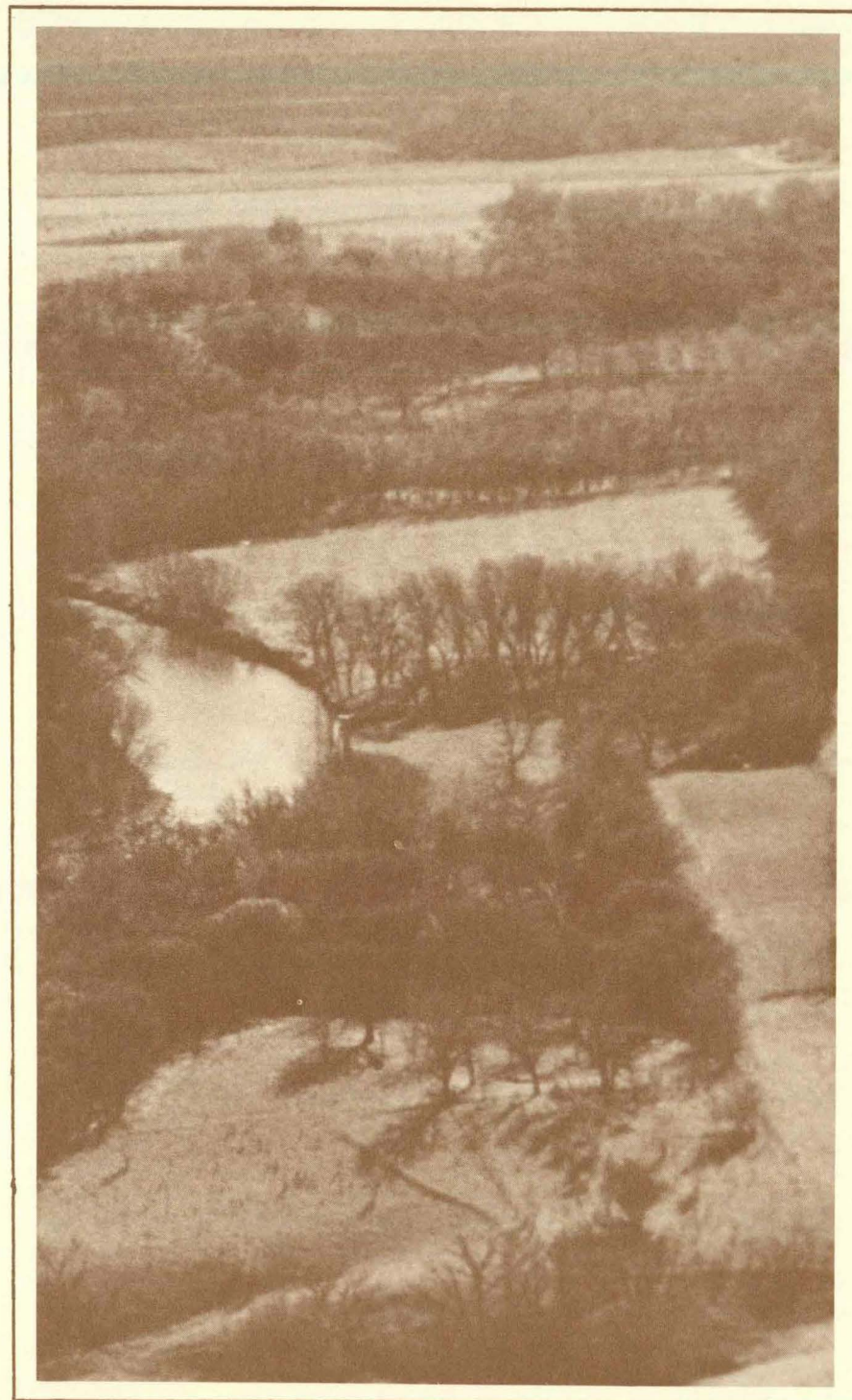
The associated topography of the county reads like a book. The valleys of the major rivers stand out readily.

In conjunction with those river valleys, the marginally productive soils (interpreted from the Humboldt County Soil Survey's class IV, V, VI, and VII soils) repeat the corridor alignment.

Coincidentally the existing timber stands lie in the river corridors. Generally in Iowa, the seven percent of our land which is forested is also marginally productive.

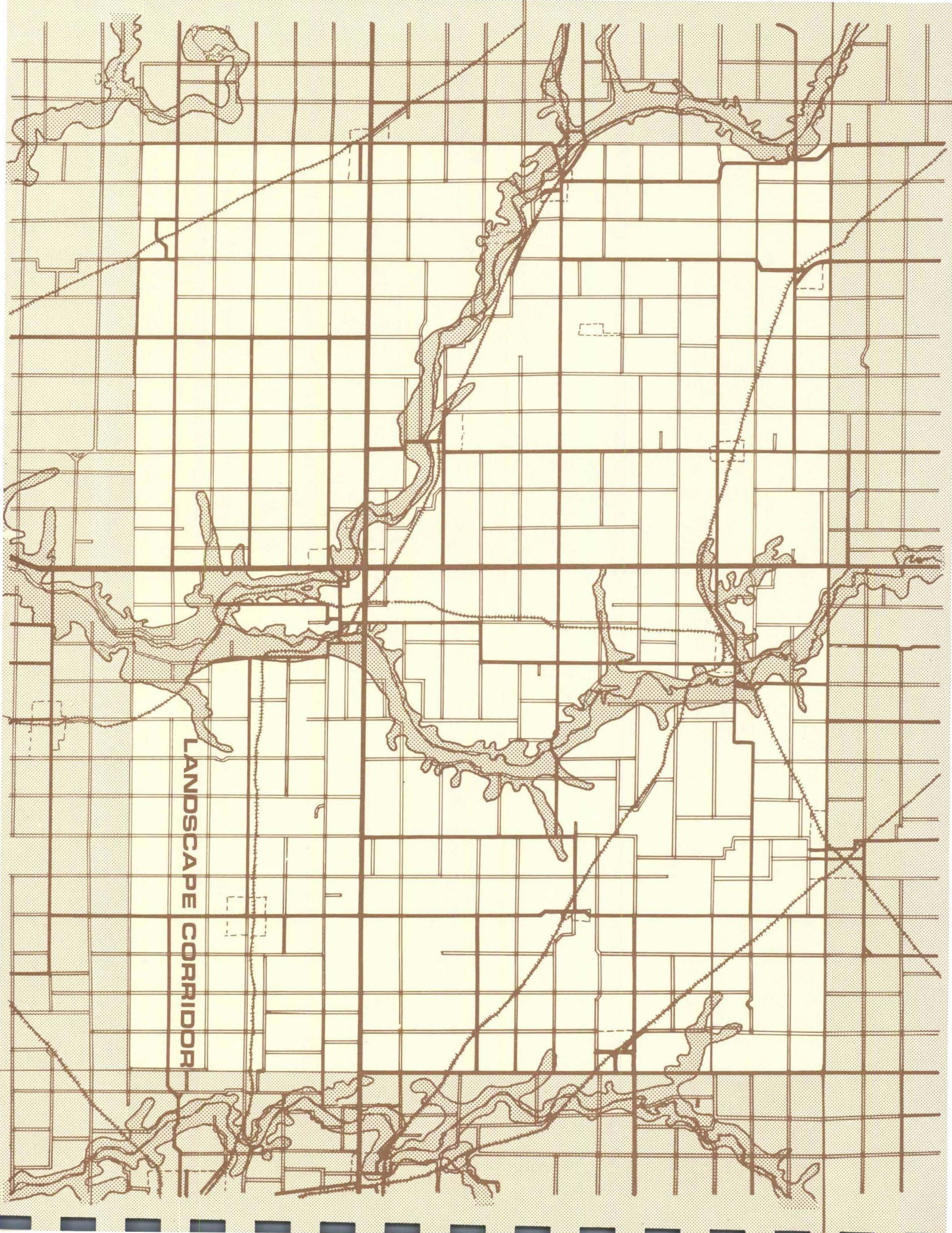
It's remarkable that the places we take postcard pictures of are also corridor aligned.

## LAND PATTERNS ANALYSIS





LANDSCAPE CORRIDOR





# 40

By overlaying the four previous maps, a delineation of the actual boundaries of the natural landscape corridors of the county may be made. Essentially, these corridors represent the land from valley ridge to valley ridge.

Through long term and widespread experience, these areas have become well known as the most fragile landscapes of the region.

Indiscriminate tillage within these corridors is certain to be met with too great a runoff factor with subsequent erosion or too little runoff and drowned crops.

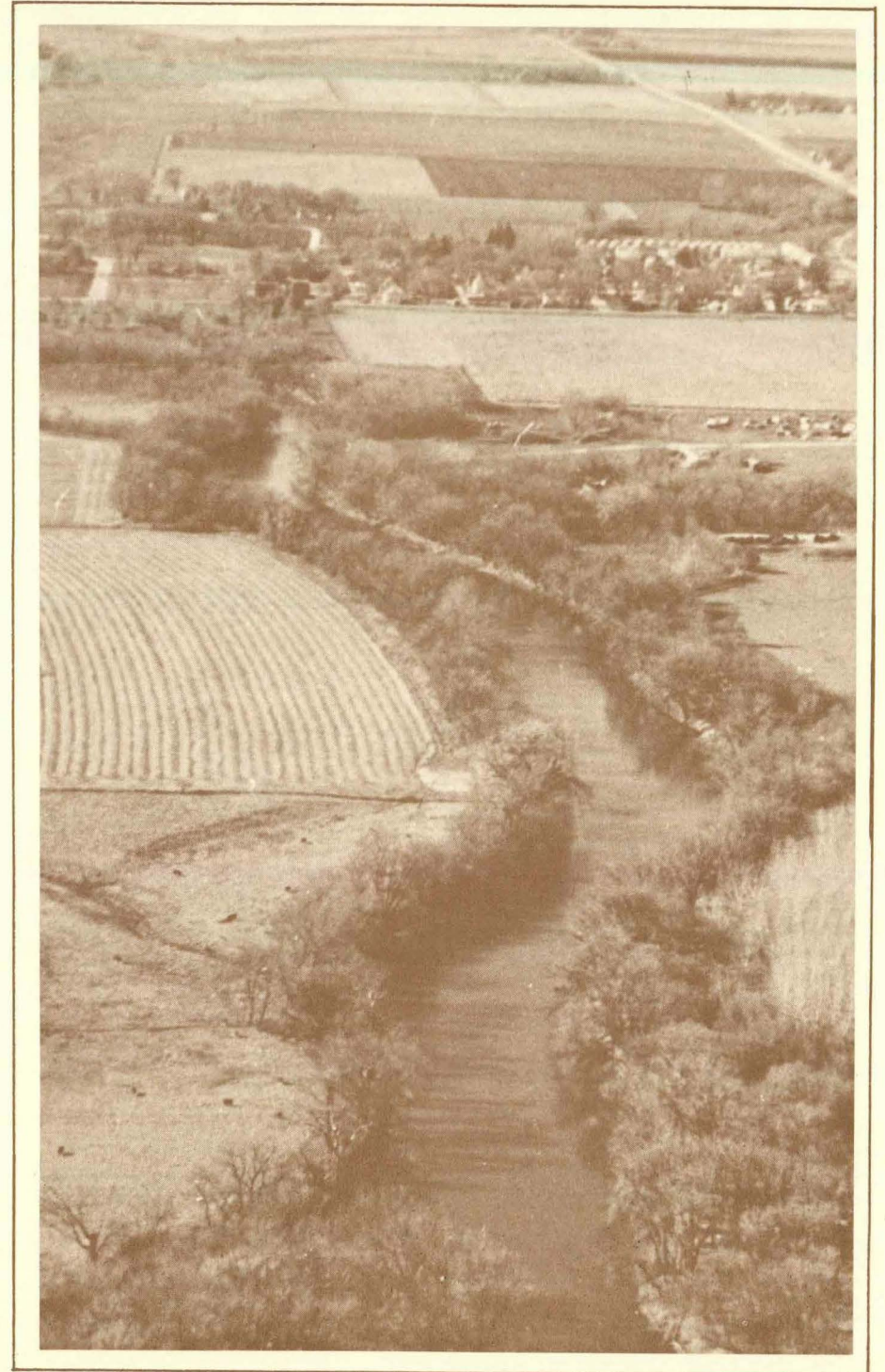
Not by sheer coincidence, these are the lands which appeal aesthetically to area residents; all of the existing recreation areas detailed in this study lie within these corridor lines (or in adjunct upland wetlands).

The toned, tree-like pattern indicates the natural landscape corridors of Humboldt County.

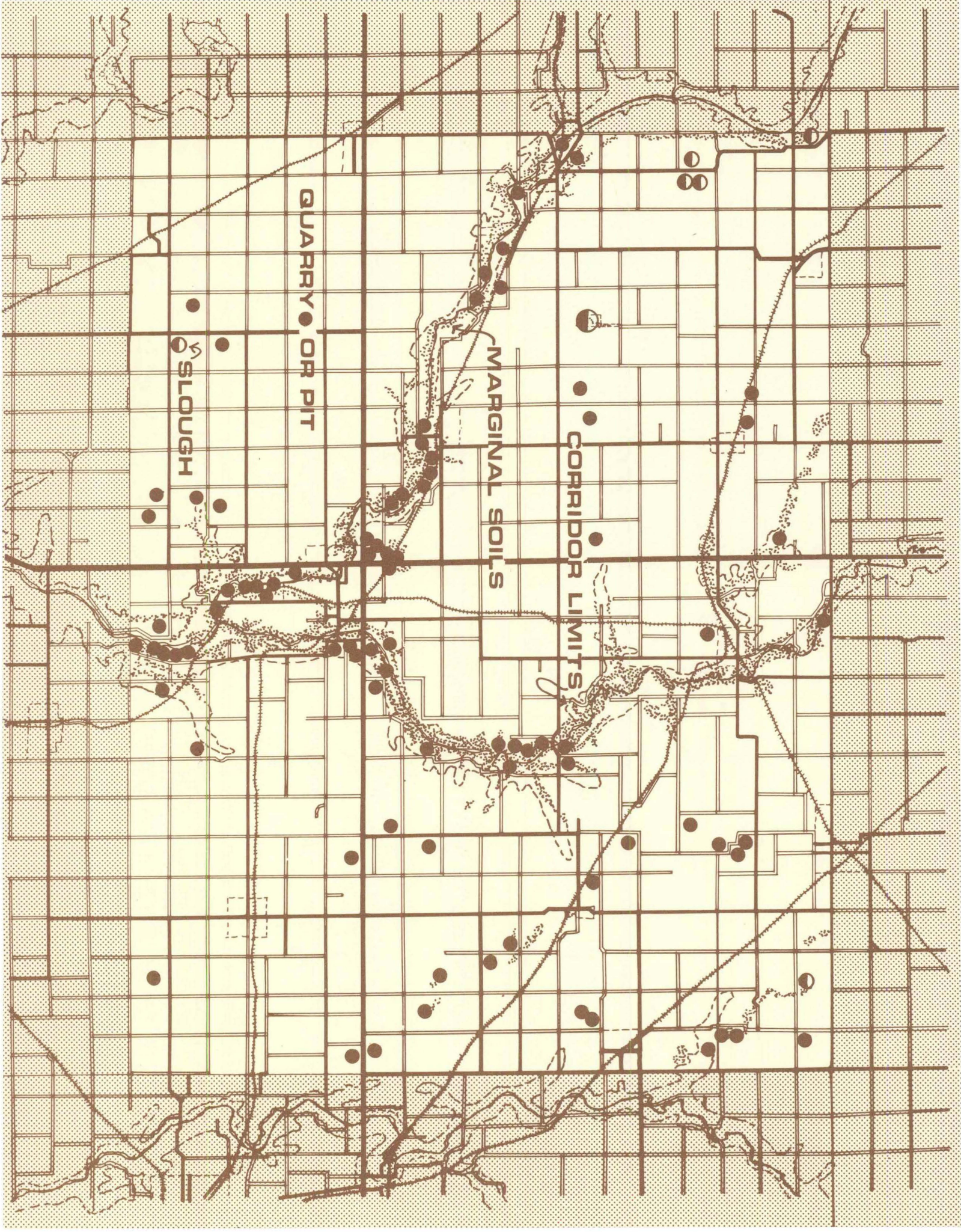
It is here that efforts should be made to meet the outdoor recreation and open space needs of the county. It is here that the need for conservation through an ecological conscience is so readily apparent.

These are the marginally productive, ecologically sensitive, and intrinsically valuable lands of the county.

## LANDSCAPE CORRIDORS









At the left, the areas requiring conservation attention are delineated.

Of course, all 276,480 acres of the county require conservation attention. All are a part of the various communities of life. However, key areas are identifiable as in need of greater concern.

Obviously the natural corridors with their marginal soils are such areas. (However, if upland practices are not conservation-oriented, it is much too late to conserve the land as it passes through the corridor on its way to the Gulf of Mexico.)

Additionally, the remaining upland sloughs merit conservation and preservation status on a "relic" basis. They represent a landscape long since altered, and are valuable as historic indexes as well as being the few limited areas of upland wildlife habitat.

Finally the gravel pits and quarries of the county deserve special conservation attention. These are man-created ulcers on the landscape. It is our ecological responsibility to see that these wounds are healed. (We should remember that in many cases these areas tie directly to the aquifers which hold the water we drink from our wells. If we are careless about healing these wounds we may eventually drink the infectious materials dumped into them.)

Landscape conservation means that we as human beings learn the ways of ecology through sympathetic experience with the land. With such an understanding we will be more apt to act appropriately when we make land-oriented decisions.

With the physical development of Humboldt County's parks and open spaces should come the development of an interpretive program. Such a program could, hopefully, most effectively translate bits and pieces of information about the landscape, its origin, current condition, and ecology to the residents of the county. "Conservation" would then assume a new meaning.

Soundly based upon ecological interpretation of the landscape, the program, through use of self-guiding nature trails identifying natural associations, could translate information about the landscape into a tangible understanding held by the park users.

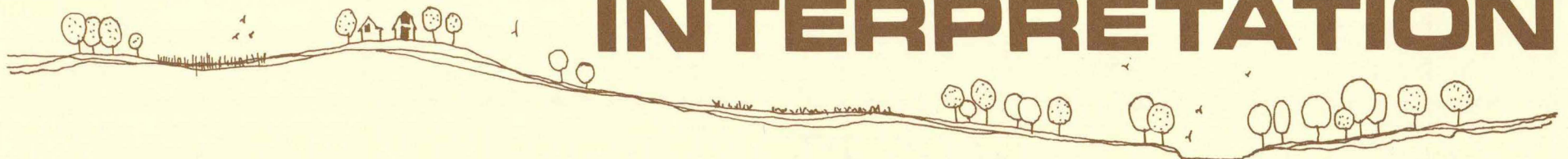
For instance, if along a trail, an area identified as a stand of virgin or restored prairie were described, the recreationist pausing to read a narrative sign could look up to see the words and pictures on the sign become real soil, plants and animals. A genuine appreciation of the complexity of the landscape would ensue.

It's one thing for a child, or even adult, to know that a bobolink is an Iowa songbird. An it's another thing for that person to understand that a bobolink is peculiarly associated with "prairie". Learning that the bobolink is adapted to life with the grasses, flowers, and insects of the prairie can help a person to learn to adapt to his life and its surroundings. Learning that a bobolink "sings on the wing" because a prairie is void of trees has a special meaning.

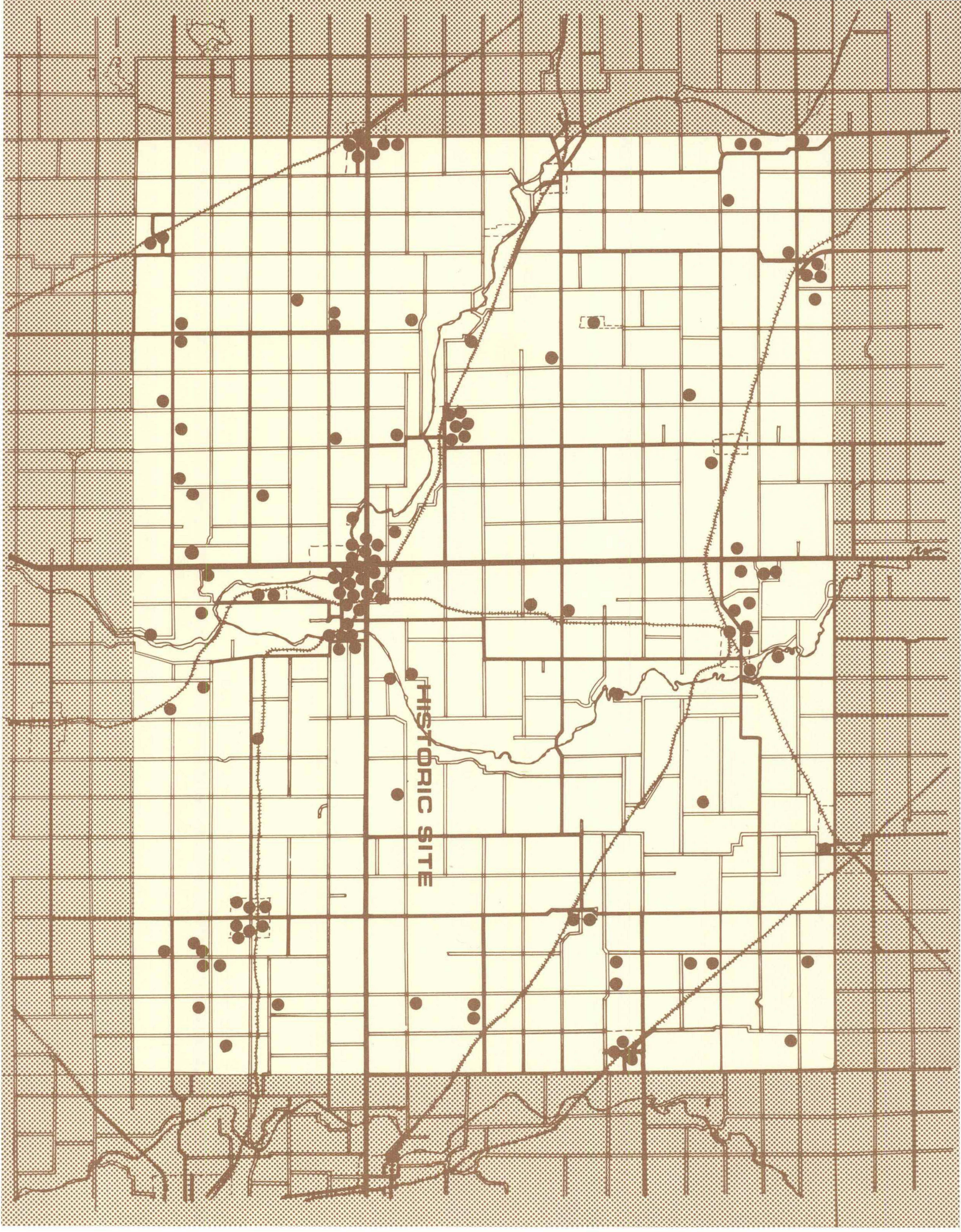
The forests, marshes, savannas, and rivers and streams could be similarly described. In time, perhaps, a naturalist could be employed to coordinate the program.

# LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION & INTERPRETATION

# 42







HISTORIC SITE



# 44

Shown at the left are dots representing the positions of over 125 scenic and cultural features on the Humboldt County landscape. These sites were recorded as a part of the ongoing Historic Site Inventory and Preservation Study being coordinated by MIDAS Regional Planning Commission. The sites and pertinent data were retrieved by county residents as features they considered worthy of historic attention.

The sites range from prairie sloughs to stage coach stops to Indian mounds to cemeteries.

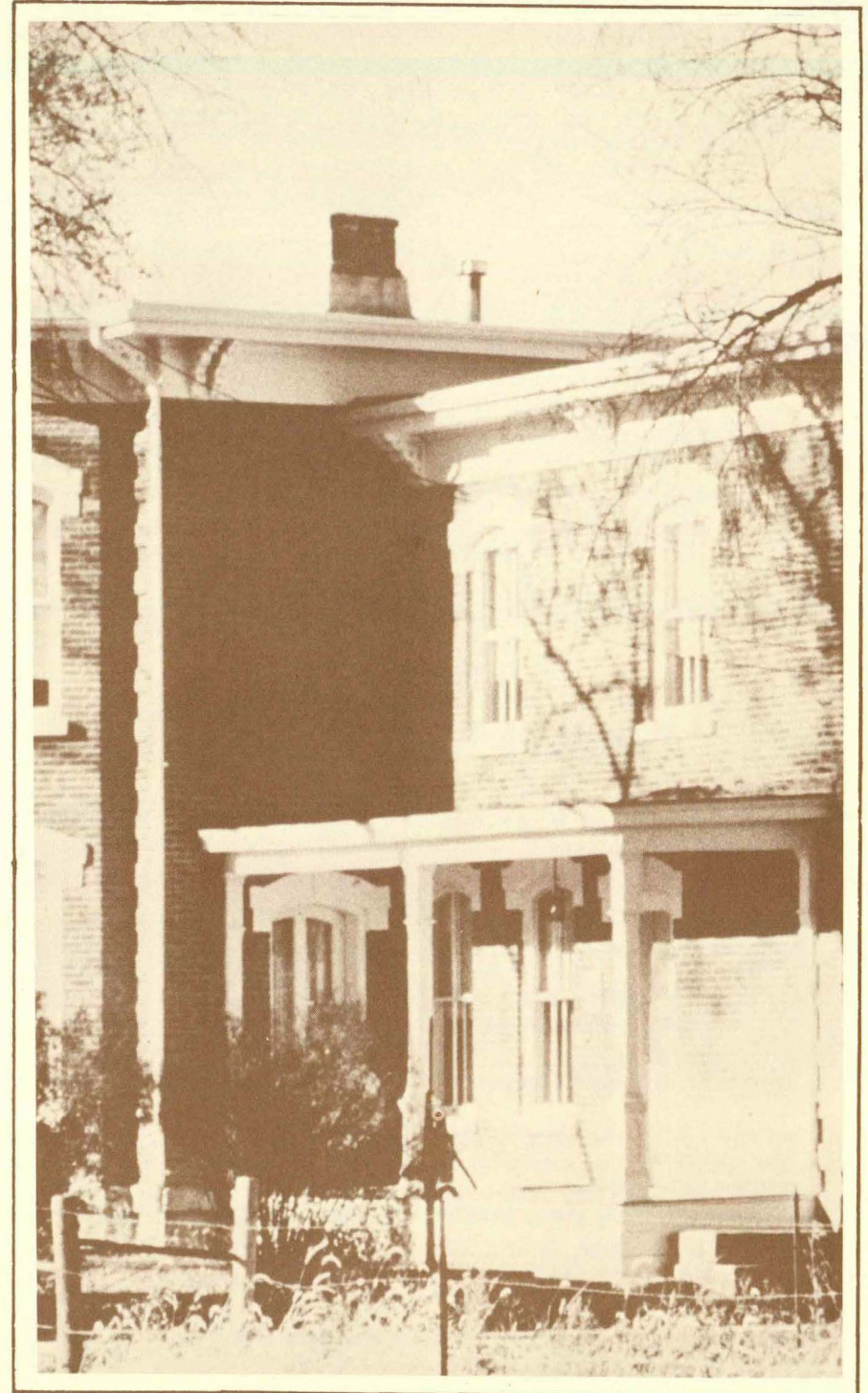
"Preservation" is but another word for "conservation". Preservation is the retention of key features of our heritage...for future generations.

A study such as this is justifiably concerned with such features because in many cases the open space and outdoor recreation desires of the county residents center about such cultural features. This study urges that continued full cooperation exist between the Humboldt County Conservation Board and the Humboldt County Historical Society.

Only with such ongoing cooperation can any hope exist for the tangible preservation of a record of Humboldt County's History.

The photo at the right illustrates the degree of success such interest in an area's history can have. The brick house in the photo was the early Brown Mill residence. Not long ago it stood dilapidated and ill-kempt. Today through the efforts of historically-minded Humboldt County residents, the structure and its inherent history are preserved intact for the benefit of current and future generations of Mid-Iowans. Many of the indicated 125 features at the left could become such historic benchmarks.

## CULTURAL FEATURES





HUMBOLDT 1, GILMORE CITY 2, DAKOTA CITY 3, LIVERMORE 4, RENWICK 5,  
 BODE 6, RUTLAND 7, THOR 8, BRADGATE 9, OTTOSEN 10, HARDY 11,  
 PIONEER 12

**CLASS ONE**  
 TOWN PARKS  
 (12 COMMUNITIES)

**CLASS TWO**  
 RURAL AREA PARKS  
 (12 AREAS - 8 EXISTING)

**CLASS THREE**  
 MAJOR PARK  
 (TO BE DEVELOPED)

**SPECIAL USE AREAS**

- GOLF COURSES  
FOUR EXIST. - ONE PROPOSED
- SWIMMING POOLS  
THREE EXIST. - TWO PROPOSED
- WINTER SPORTS  
ONE AREA EXISTS

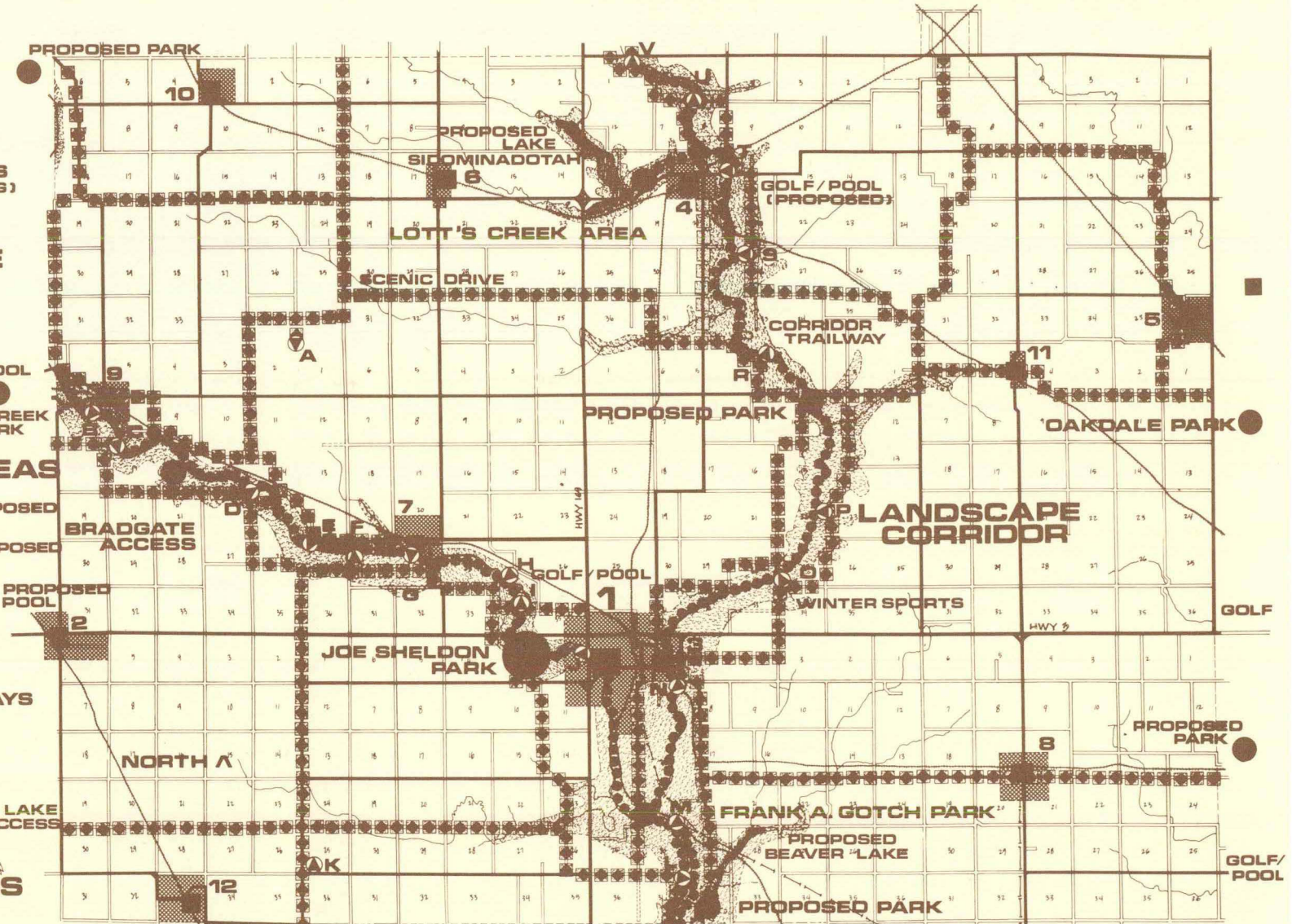
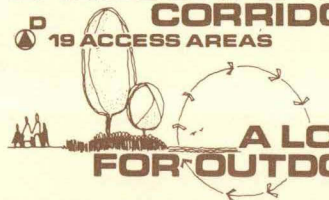
SCENIC DRIVES  
150 MILES PROPOSED

CORRIDOR TRAILWAYS  
50 MILES PROPOSED

(SEE TEXT FOR SITES OF  
 HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE  
 OR IN NEED OF REDRESS.)

**LANDSCAPE  
 CORRIDORS**

19 ACCESS AREAS



COOPER'S COVE PARK (\* SEE TEXT FOR DETAILED AREA PLANS) SPORTSMAN'S PARK

**A LONG RANGE PLAN FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION HUMBOLDT COUNTY**



At the left is the long range open space and outdoor recreation development plan for Humboldt County and its twelve communities. Based upon the foregoing presentation of standards, definition of policies and analysis of existing conditions, this long-range plan for recreation is presented for consideration. Obviously there is much to be done, if this plan is ever to be realized in total.

In terms of Class One Community Parks, this plan anticipates the creation of such a facility for each Humboldt Community. With at least a four acre community park for each of the towns and a community park system for the city of Humboldt, a large share of the inherent recreation demand of Humboldt County would be met. Eight of the twelve Humboldt County Communities need only amplify existing parks; four communities need to acquire and develop parks for their residents' use.

The existing and proposed Rural Area Parks of Humboldt County's plan are indicated by a medium sized circle with the name of the facility nearby. Ultimately, Humboldt County should be served by the eight existing Class Two parks and four proposed facilities. The Humboldt County Conservation Board has responsibility for four of the existing areas and two of the proposed areas. (As with Oakdale Park, the county board should, if requested, cooperatively develop the two areas proposed adjacent to Humboldt County lines). With full development of these rural area parks, the residents of Humboldt County would have available to them the maximum system of Class Two facilities.

A Major Park (Class Three) is proposed for Humboldt County. Situated on the West Branch of the Des Moines River, stretching from the town of Rutland to the city of Humboldt, this major park would include the current Joe Sheldon Area as a unit of its development. With such a park fully developed in their county open space and outdoor recreation system, Humboldt County residents could enjoy a more total experience with their land. (Considerable natural and man-affected features exist along this stretch of the river. Development would require little major work to ensure their availability and use by county residents.)

In addition, a system of 150 miles of proposed scenic drives is delineated on the plan to the left. These roads generally are the seldom-travelled secondary roads lying adjacent to the county's waterways. Particular attention has been directed toward alignment of the scenic drives where minimum accident liability and maximum aesthetic reward would occur.

Concurrently a system of multi-modal corridor trailways (50 miles proposed) are indicated in the plan. These are natural corridor aligned and are compatible with the Iowa State Conservation Commission intention for trail development.

Nineteen access areas are shown on the plan. Six of these currently exist; 17 of the areas are river corridor aligned and two of the areas are situated at upland sloughs. As these nineteen areas become publicly available for access, greater opportunity will exist for public interaction with the landscape. Development in these areas should be restricted to a minimum level, accommodating only access to the natural feature.

This plan proposes developments much beyond the current five-year action program's capacity. Perhaps it will take one or two decades to see full development. Future time may necessitate some modification in the actual recreation system's development. But, at least, with the plan at the left, Humboldt County has "an idea" of what it should do to best serve its residents and its land.



At the right is the proposed plan of "Indian Trail Park". Named for the still existing remnants of the historic "Indian Trail" of Humboldt County the proposed park attempts to meet the need of a Major Park for the County. Over 600 acres in extent, the park, when developed, would provide, in the heart of the county, a sizeable chunk of natural environment available to all Mid-Iowans.

Already a portion of the proposed park exists as Joe Sheldon Park. (Joe Sheldon Park is currently the 81 acre central park of the county's recreation system.) This plan merely envisions the extension of that most successful area, in a linear fashion, to link the communities of Rutland and Humboldt. Such a development is a "natural", self-apparent concept.

Nine specific areas are shown within the major park; the major park would have three sizable units. Area one is the Humboldt Dam for which the Conservation Board has responsibility. Already this feature serves as a fishing access area and an area of great scenic intrigue. Area two is envisioned as a proposed recreation area providing wintersports, picnicking, camping, fishing, and trail developments. At the very edge of Humboldt's city limits, it would certainly see use.

Area three is an outdoor classroom related directly to the environmental learning center of area four. In such an outdoor laboratory, the benefits of conservation ethics could be learned by Humboldt County residents. Area four, as mentioned, is proposed to contain an environmental learning center, a lodge-like facility suitable for teaching programs. In addition a day-camp and group-camping area is proposed to be concurrently developed.

Area five is the proposed major camping, picnicking, and game field area of the Sheldon Unit of Indian Trail Park. Already a boat ramp exists to permit recreation use of Lake Nokomis, the impoundment created by the Humboldt dam.

Area six is the existing trailer camping and picnic area which serves as the doorway to the Sheldon Unit.

The interval between areas six and seven is intended as a wildlife preserve.

Area Seven, then, is for want of a better name called the "Middle Unit" (Hopefully a more significant name can be derived). The middle unit centers upon a gravel excavation area. Its development can begin only after the borrowing action is completed. The proposal that this area become a park, however, ensures that reparation will be accomplished.

Semi-isolated, the Middle Unit would permit a great opportunity for recreationists to settle into the land and learn to know it.

Again the intervening space between areas seven and eight is intended as a wildlife preserve.

Area eight, however, with its lakes created through borrow and quarry operations offers a truly significant opportunity for the creation of a major recreation feature in a county shy of lakes. The man-affected landscape of this region could easily come to house a multitude of recreation activities. Linked to area nine, the Rutland Dam, (for which the County Conservation Board also has responsibility) this area would become the Rutland Unit of Indian Trail Park. The creation of recreation facilities in this area would make the concept of the linear park work.

The Rutland Unit would serve as a destination for park users originating at Humboldt, on the Joe Sheldon Unit. Think for a minute of an early morning hike along the river from Humboldt to Rutland. Deer, great blue heron, fish, woodchucks, and quail would greet you. After such inspiration, a leisurely canoe ride back down the river would cap a wonderful day of experience with the land.

The plan on the right anticipates full development of multi-modal corridor trails to link the park units. Once such a major undertaking has succeeded, the purpose of open space will need no further elaboration. The concept of corridor lands held in public trust will be self-defining.



HWY 367



**RUTLAND UNIT**

**MIDDLE UNIT**

C&NW RR

HWY 169

HWY 3

**GOLF**

**SHELDON UNIT**

CITY

**ANALYSIS**  
 RIVER & TIMBERLANDS

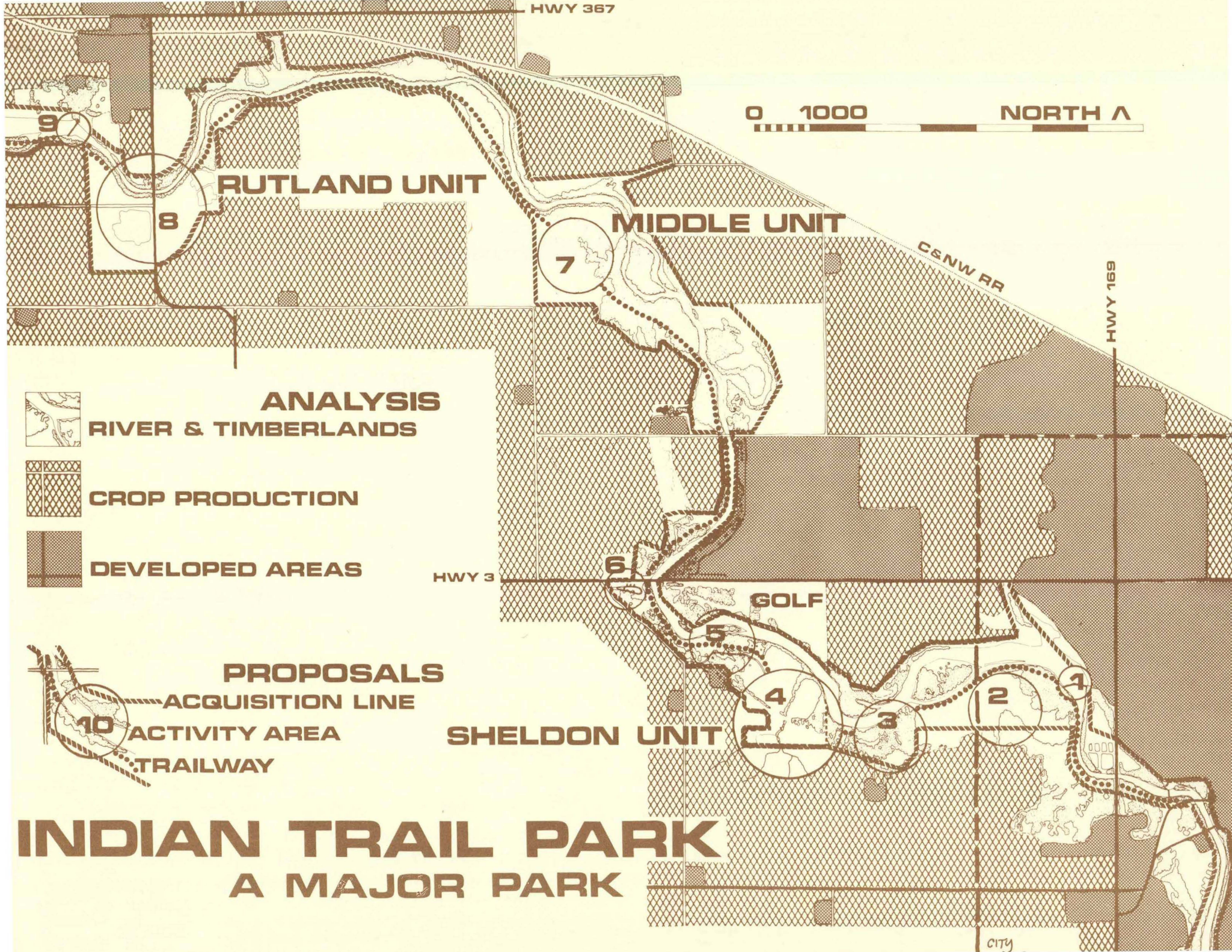
 CROP PRODUCTION

 DEVELOPED AREAS

**PROPOSALS**  
 ACQUISITION LINE  
 ACTIVITY AREA  
 TRAILWAY

# INDIAN TRAIL PARK

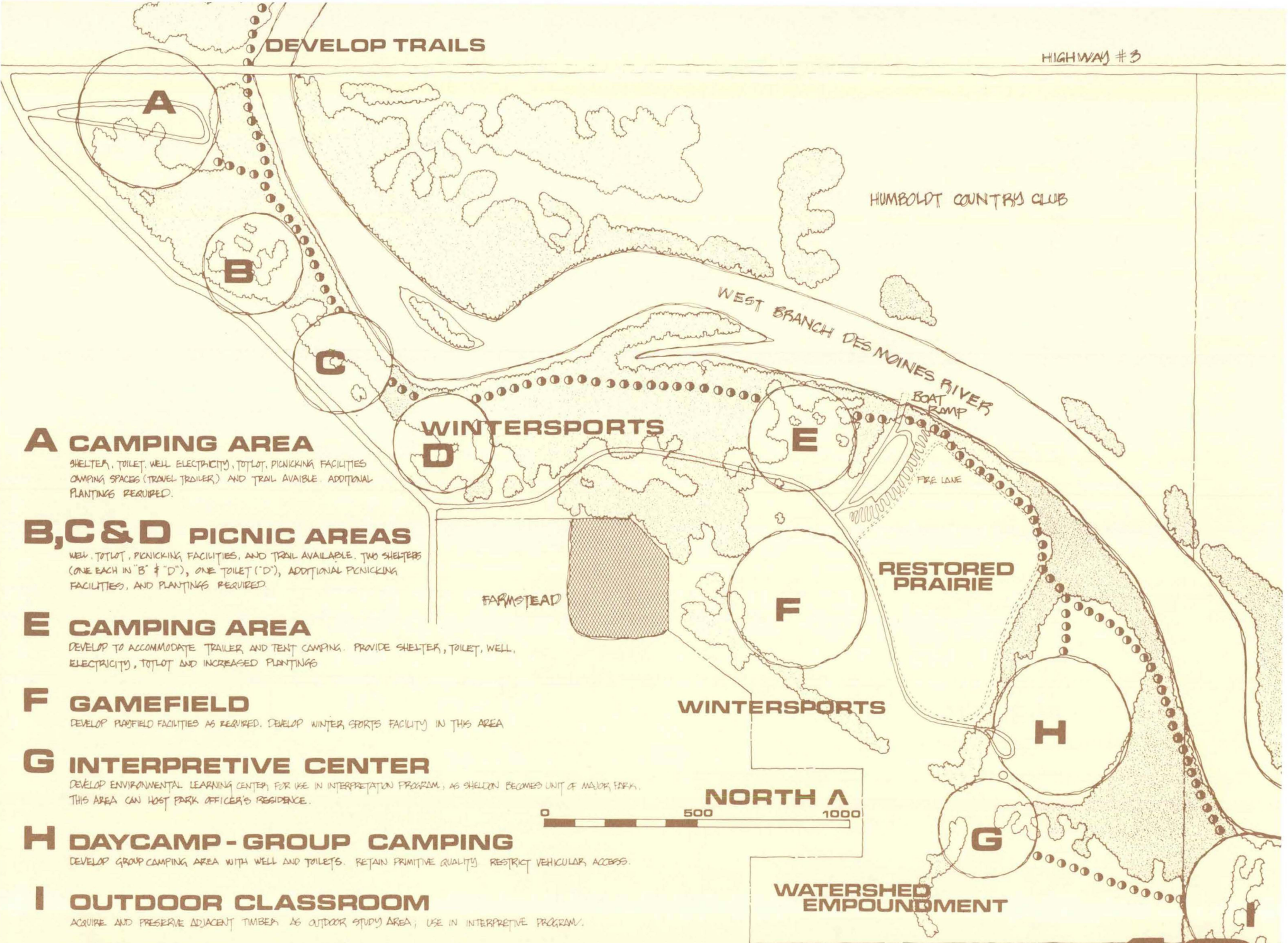
## A MAJOR PARK





DEVELOP TRAILS

HIGHWAY #3



**A CAMPING AREA**

SHELTER, TOILET, WELL, ELECTRICITY, TOTLOT, PICNICKING FACILITIES, CAMPING SPACES (TRAVEL TRAILER) AND TRAIL AVAILBLE. ADDITIONAL PLANTINGS REQUIRED.

**B,C&D PICNIC AREAS**

WELL, TOTLOT, PICNICKING FACILITIES, AND TRAIL AVAILABLE. TWO SHELTERS (ONE EACH IN "B" & "D"), ONE TOILET ("D"), ADDITIONAL PICNICKING FACILITIES, AND PLANTINGS REQUIRED.

**E CAMPING AREA**

DEVELOP TO ACCOMMODATE TRAILER AND TENT CAMPING. PROVIDE SHELTER, TOILET, WELL, ELECTRICITY, TOTLOT AND INCREASED PLANTINGS

**F GAMEFIELD**

DEVELOP PLAYFIELD FACILITIES AS REQUIRED. DEVELOP WINTER SPORTS FACILITY IN THIS AREA

**G INTERPRETIVE CENTER**

DEVELOP ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER FOR USE IN INTERPRETATION PROGRAM, AS SHELTON BECOMES UNIT OF MAJOR PARK. THIS AREA CAN HOST PARK OFFICER'S RESIDENCE.

**H DAYCAMP - GROUP CAMPING**

DEVELOP GROUP CAMPING AREA WITH WELL AND TOILETS. RETAIN PRIMITIVE QUALITY. RESTRICT VEHICULAR ACCESS.

**I OUTDOOR CLASSROOM**

ACQUIRE AND PRESERVE ADJACENT TIMBER AS OUTDOOR STUDY AREA; USE IN INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM.

**A UNIT OF THE MAJOR INDIAN TRAIL PARK**

**JOE SHELDON PARK**

**49**



The eighty-one acres of Joe Sheldon Park are most certainly to be the Humboldt County Conservation Board's prime developmental responsibility. At the left, on the plan of the park, are shown the prime developmental charges. These are concurrent with the anticipated development of Indian Trail Park.

Areas "A", "B", and "C" are already primarily completed. The notes on the plan indicate the additional facilities required. Area "D" is proposed as an extension of the picnicking use of the ridge top portion of the park's landscape with the development of an all season shelter and sliding hill.

Area "E" is anticipated to hold, in the future, a major tent and trailer camping unit. Picnicking facilities should as well be provided. This area's close association with the recently constructed boat ramp ensures beneficial use.

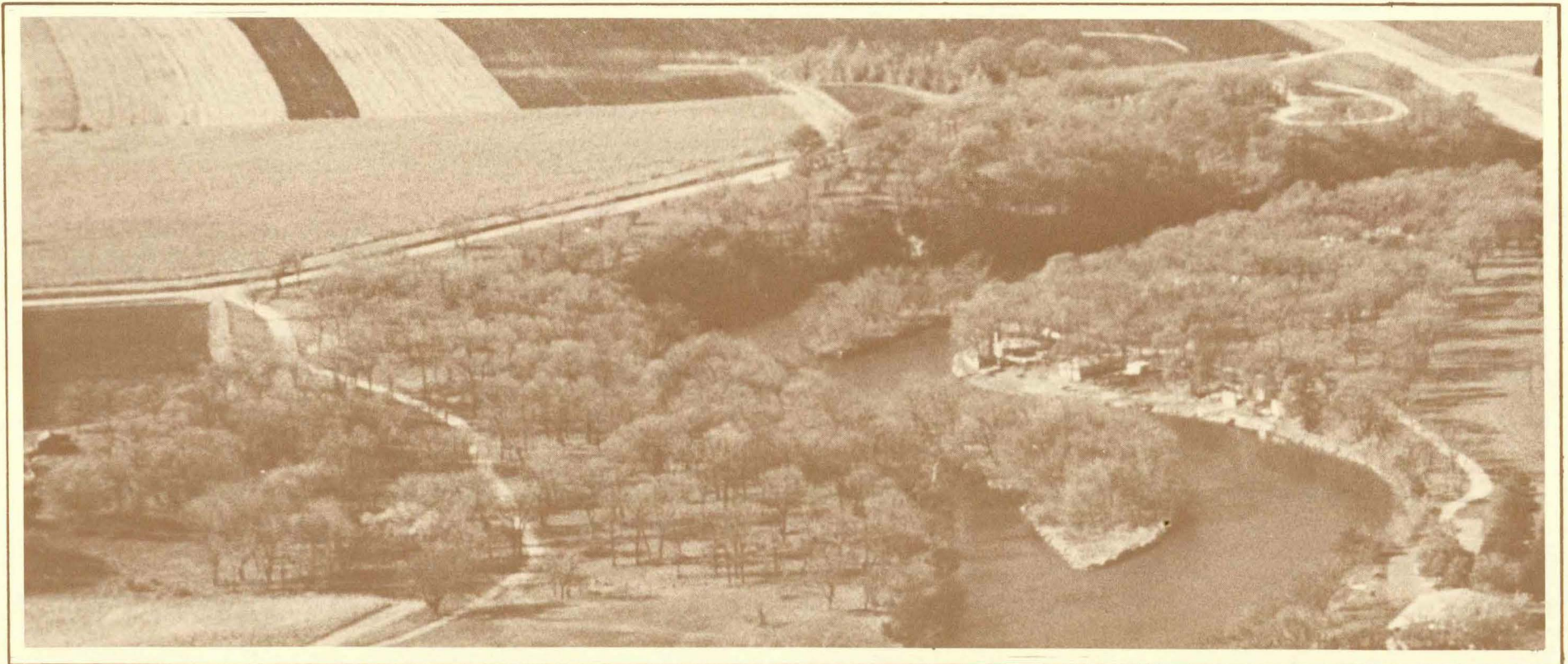
Area "F" is proposed to contain gamefields such as ball diamond, soccer field and wintersports facilities.

Area "G" is the proposed "interpretive center" where environmental education can be pursued (See page 42 for suggestions for this program's development).

Area "H" is the proposed daycamp and group camping area. This should be developed as supplementary to the environmental education program.

Area "I" represents the anticipated acquisition of the timber stand adjacent to the current park for outdoor classroom purposes. Here, learning of herbs, tree species, forest wildlife and woodland ecology can occur.

The large open space labelled "restored prairie" is not a development. Rather, it is a return of land to its prior state. With such action much can be learned of the landscape upon which we live.





# FRANK A. GOTCH AREA

## A RURAL AREA PARK

### A & D FAMILY PICNIC AREAS

ONE MAJOR SHELTER, TOILET, WELL & ELECTRICITY -  
TOTAL LOT AVAILABLE. EXPAND PICNIC FACILITIES, PROVIDE SHELTER IN "D"

### B, C & E CAMPING AREAS

SHELTER, TOILET, WELL, ELECTRICITY AVAILABLE - "C" REQUIRES REDRESS &  
PLANTING. "E" ASSOCIATES WITH BOATING & FISHING

DEVELOP  
TRAILS

EAST BRANCH

ENTRY

LIMIT OF CURRENT USABLE AREA

REDRESS  
GRAVEL SPOILS

MONUMENT

FIRE LANE

CONIFERS

RESTORED  
PRAIRIE

DEVELOP BOAT RAMP

WEST BRANCH DES MOINES RIVER

NORTH A







Frank A. Gotch Area, located at the confluence of the two branches of the Des Moines River, four miles south of Humboldt-Dakota City, is a beautifully-sited park. In pre-history this was a tremendously significant Indian site. Such history should be annotated in the park.

Currently areas "A" and "B" are developed. Additional development should be minor refinements of the existing facilities. Area "D" represents a picnic area to be reclaimed from the gravel spoils of the park. Area "C" and "E" are proposed camping units. A boat ramp should be created at the indicated position.

Again, multi-modal corridor trail development is anticipated.

The restored prairie area shown on the plan has a similar educational purpose to the area of Joe Sheldon Park. In both cases fire lanes should be created to contain controlled and uncontrolled burnings.

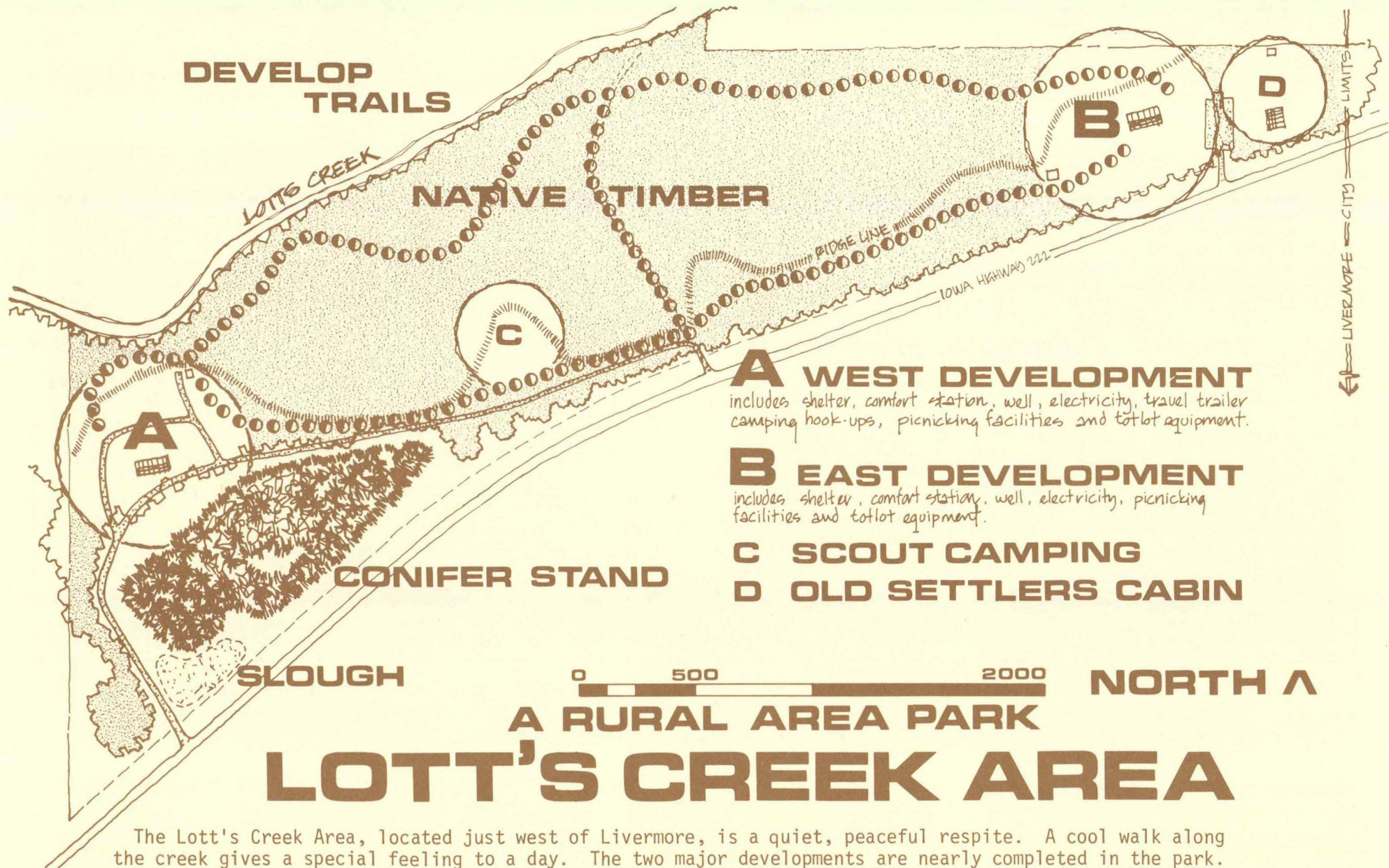
A major reparation responsibility in this park is the reclamation of the gravel spoil area. With such reclamation the use area of the park would increase considerably.

Development of this area should occur within this five-year action program.









**DEVELOP TRAILS**

LOTT'S CREEK

**NATIVE TIMBER**

RIDGE LINE  
IOWA HIGHWAY 222

LIVERMORE CITY LIMITS

**A**

**A WEST DEVELOPMENT**  
includes shelter, comfort station, well, electricity, travel trailer camping hook-ups, picnicking facilities and totlot equipment.

**B EAST DEVELOPMENT**  
includes shelter, comfort station, well, electricity, picnicking facilities and totlot equipment.

**C**

**C SCOUT CAMPING**

**D OLD SETTLERS CABIN**

**CONIFER STAND**

**SLOUGH**

0 500 2000

**NORTH A**

**A RURAL AREA PARK**

# LOTT'S CREEK AREA

The Lott's Creek Area, located just west of Livermore, is a quiet, peaceful respite. A cool walk along the creek gives a special feeling to a day. The two major developments are nearly completed in the park.

The Old Settler's Cabin and Scout Camping areas are worthwhile uses of the park area. Only minor refinements of the existing developments are required, but the development of a self-guiding nature trail would add considerably to this area.





Oakdale Park, a rural area park managed jointly by Wright and Humboldt Counties, lies in Wright County two miles from Renwick. This gentle park represents the product of cooperative actions on the part of adjacent counties. Without cooperation, neither county could probably justify development of the area to meet limited population demands. With the combined population and combined county efforts a remarkable area has resulted.

In addition, this park hosts a special group use area, the Izaak Walton League Clubhouse, to the mutual advantage of the park and the club.

Areas "A", "B" and "C" are primarily developed. Minor refinements would enhance their use.

Areas "D" and "E" represent an opportunity for the creation of a daycamp and group-camping area similar to the area described for Joe Sheldon Park. The distance from this area to Joe Sheldon is such that two areas of similar purpose would not need to become competitive.

Additionally, acquisition efforts should be made to incorporate the river bank area, adjacent to the west, into the park area. Trails could then be developed, completing the development of this park.





DEVELOP TRAILS

LAKE

BOONE RIVER

FARMSTEAD

RAIL ROAD

NORTH >

PLANTINGS

**A SOUTH AREA**

TRAILER & TENT CAMPING - SHELTER, WELL, ELECTRICITY, PICNICKING FACILITIES PRESENT

**B FAMILY PICNIC AREA**

SHELTER, PICNICKING FACILITIES, TOILET, ELECTRICITY & WELL PRESENT, CONSOLIDATE TOTLOT. PROHIBIT VEHICULAR ENTRANCE.

**C CLUBHOUSE**

IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE CLUBHOUSE, CONCESSIONAIRE, SHOOTING RANGE, WELL, ELECTRICITY

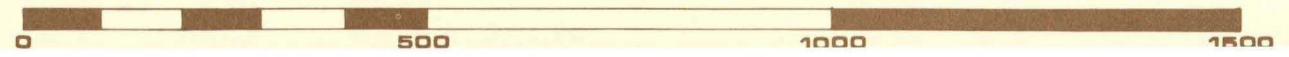
**D, E DAYCAMP**

D. PROVIDE SHELTER, TOILET, WELL, PICNICKING FACILITIES  
E. PRIMITIVE TENT CAMPING, SCOUTS, ETC.

**56**

**OAKDALE PARK**

A RURAL AREA PARK MANAGED BY WRIGHT AND HUMBOLDT COUNTIES





The Bradgate Area, two miles southwest of Bradgate, is the least developed of all of Humboldt County's Rural Area Parks. Only a small portion of the 109 acres lands itself to development. Largely, the area must remain, by virtue of its topography, as floodplain habitat areas.

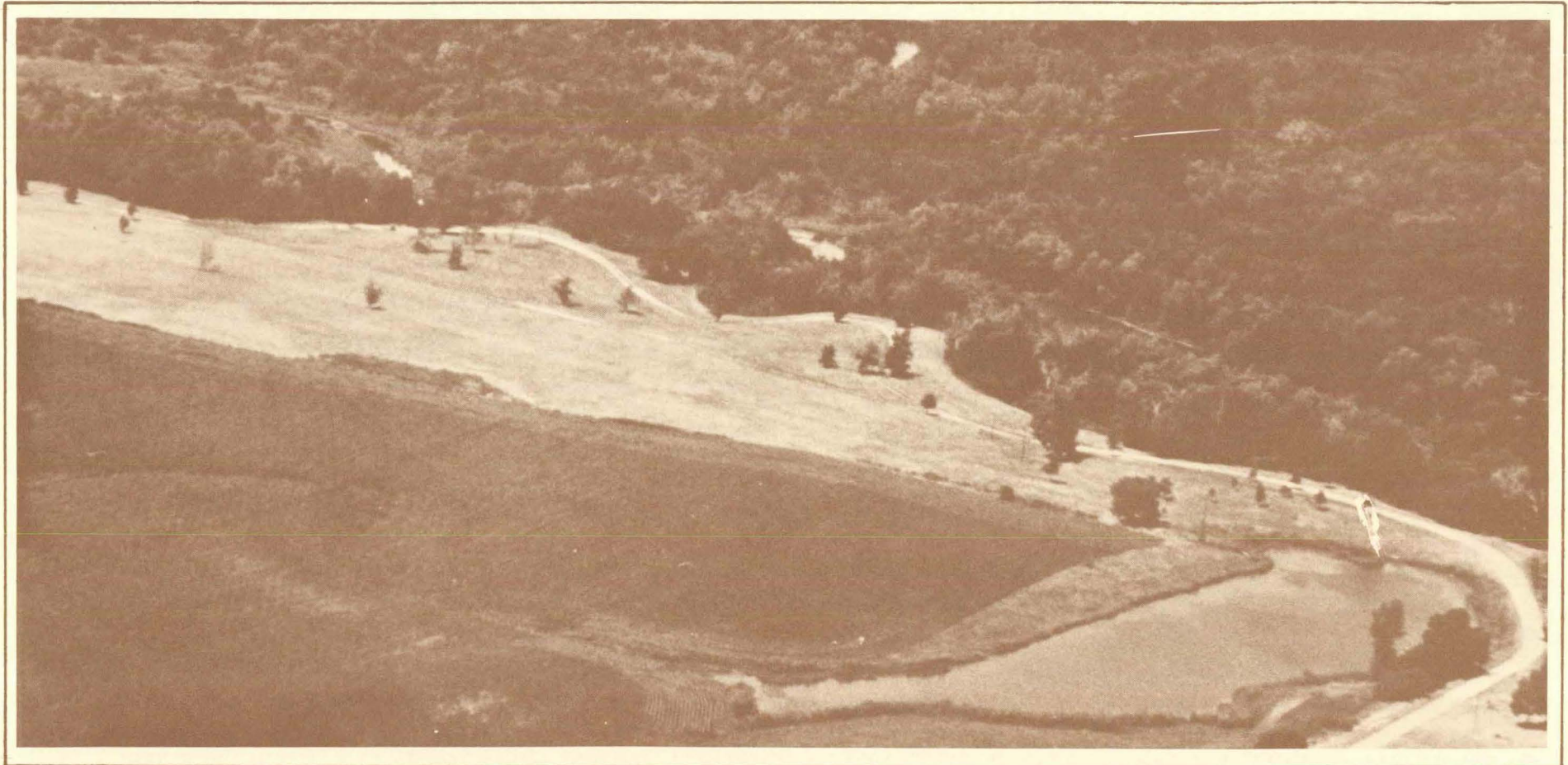
Sufficient space exists, however, to allow for the development of a major picnic area ("A") and three camping units ("B", "C", and "D").

Serious thought should be given to restricting vehicular access from area "D" so that it can remain a primitive camping area.

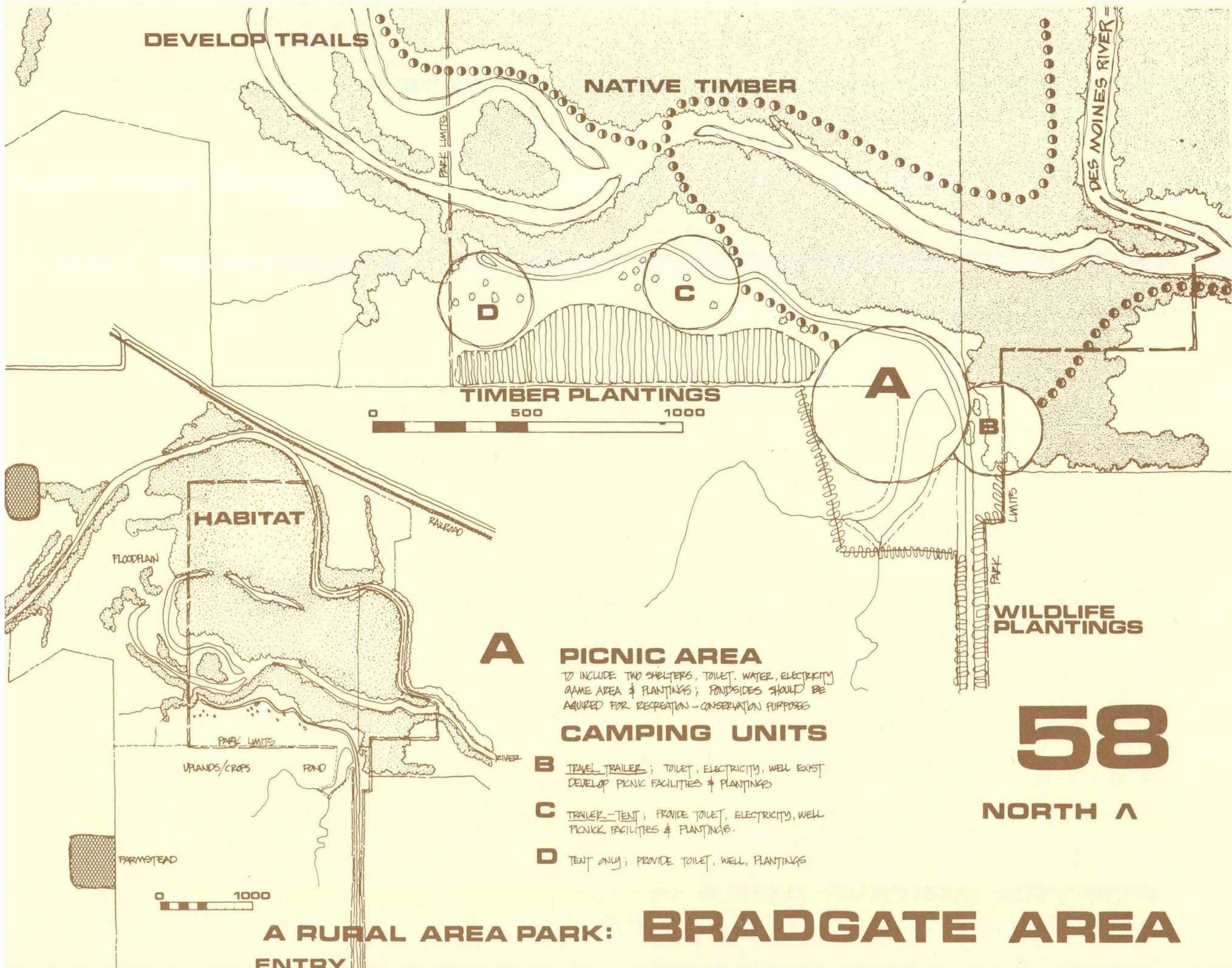
The land adjacent to the small watershed empoundment should be acquired for conservation purposes. Upland wildlife plantings should line the long access road.

The area designated as "timber plantings" could be developed cooperatively with the State Conservation Commission or Iowa State University Extension Service as an example of a timber harvest area. Such an example could encourage the conservation principle of care for woodlots and economic reward at the same time.

Development of this area should be contingent upon area resident demand.







DEVELOP TRAILS

NATIVE TIMBER

DES MOINES RIVER

D

C

A

B

TIMBER PLANTINGS



HABITAT

FLOODPLAIN

RAILROAD

WILDLIFE PLANTINGS

**A PICNIC AREA**

TO INCLUDE TWO SHELTERS, TOILET, WATER, ELECTRICITY  
GAME AREA & PLANTINGS; PONDSIDES SHOULD BE  
ACQUIRED FOR RECREATION-CONSERVATION PURPOSES

**CAMPING UNITS**

**B TRAVEL TRAILER**; TOILET, ELECTRICITY, WELL EXIST  
DEVELOP PICNIC FACILITIES & PLANTINGS

**C TRAILER-TENT**; PROVIDE TOILET, ELECTRICITY, WELL  
PICNIC FACILITIES & PLANTINGS.

**D TENT ONLY**; PROVIDE TOILET, WELL, PLANTINGS

**58**

**NORTH A**

UPLANDS/CROPS

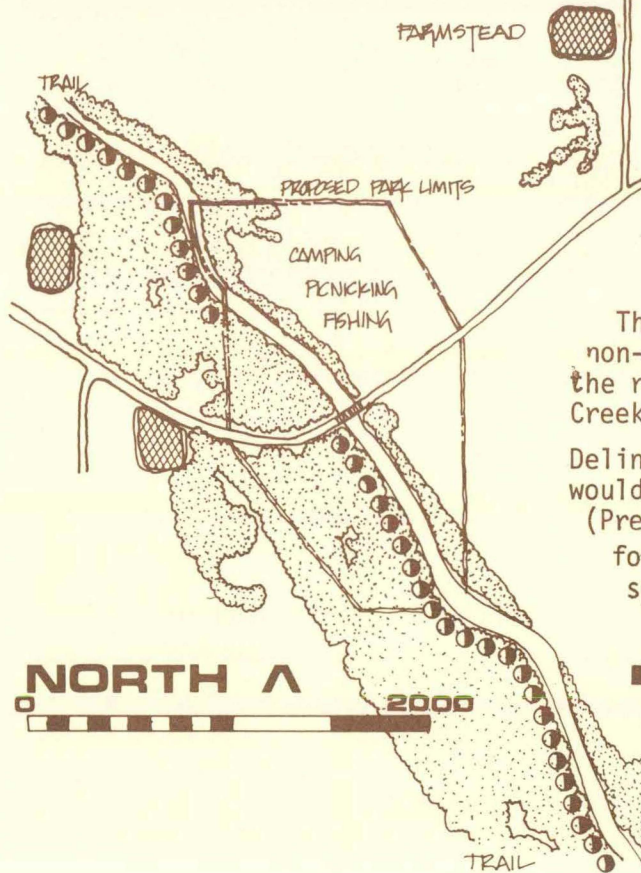
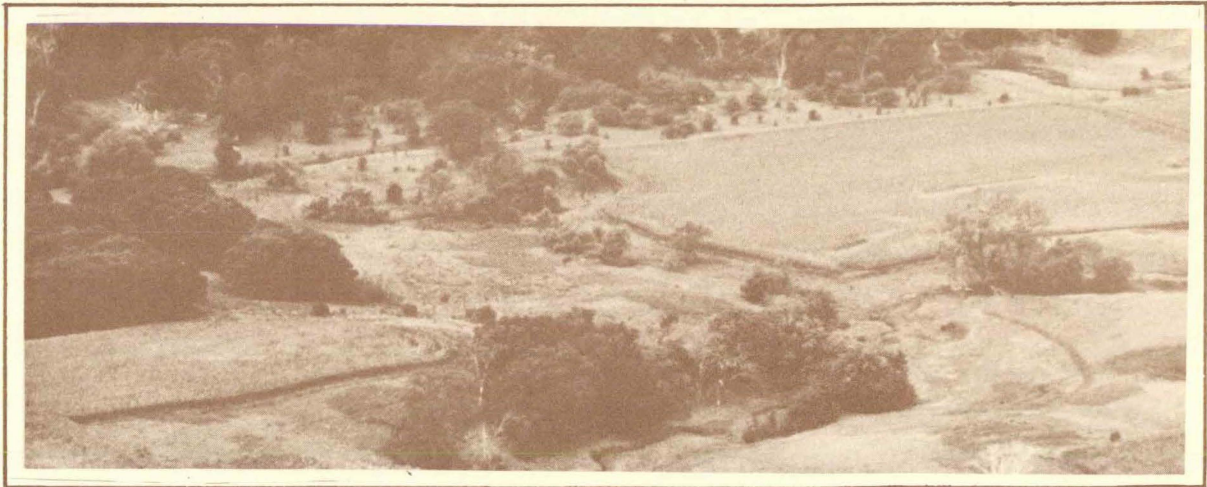
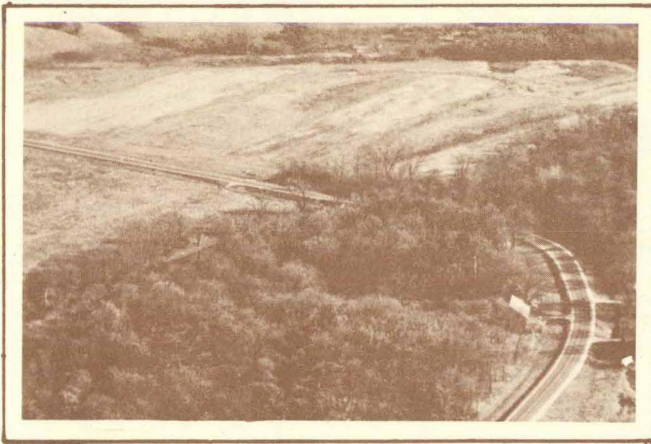
POND

FARMSTEAD



**A RURAL AREA PARK: BRADGATE AREA**  
ENTRY





The two in-county proposals for rural area parks that would fulfill (as well as possible), the county's park system are the Foster Bridge Area and the Beaver Creek Area. Acquisition and development of the Foster Bridge Area (30 acres or so) should occur on a willing seller basis and in-line with expressed area resident demands. A specific site development plan should be prepared prior to site development.

The Beaver Creek Area, when acquired on a willing seller basis and developed, would act to meet the needs of the southeastern quadrant of Humboldt County. This portion of the county is primarily upland and natural lands are practically non-existing. While the Gotch Area shows service to this quadrant of the county, the river with limited bridges actually constrains the park's service. The Beaver Creek Area would, then supplement service to a large area of the county.

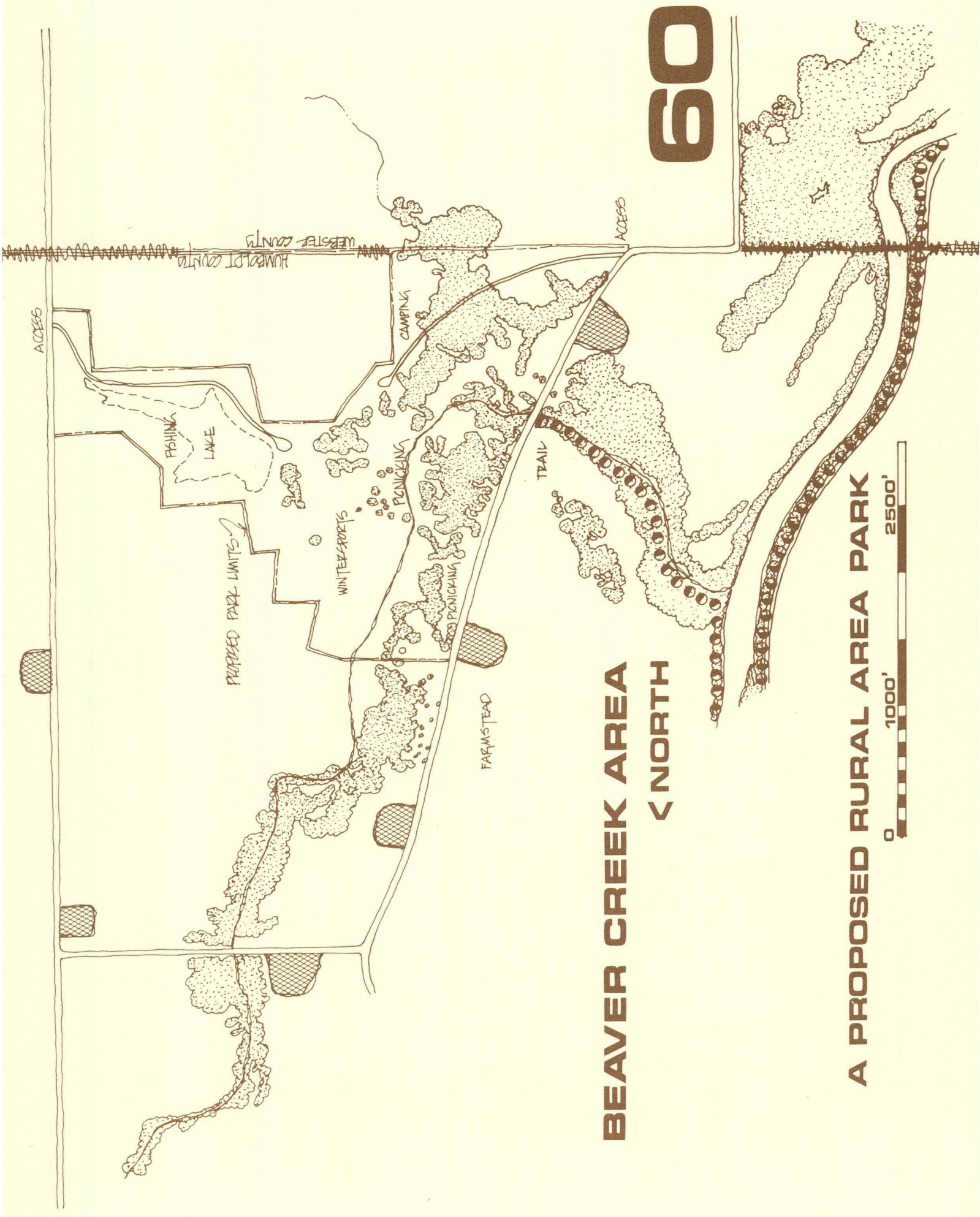
Delineated on the plan to the right are the proposed park limits. The park itself would probably approach 100 acres in extent. A watershed empoundment is possible. (Previous plans for a major empoundment of Beaver Creek itself should be deferred for the foreseeable future). Development of the area should proceed from a specifically developed site design.

## TWO PROPOSALS

Development of these two areas should be deferred until the next five year action period (1979 - 1983).

### FOSTER BRIDGE AREA A PROPOSED RURAL AREA PARK



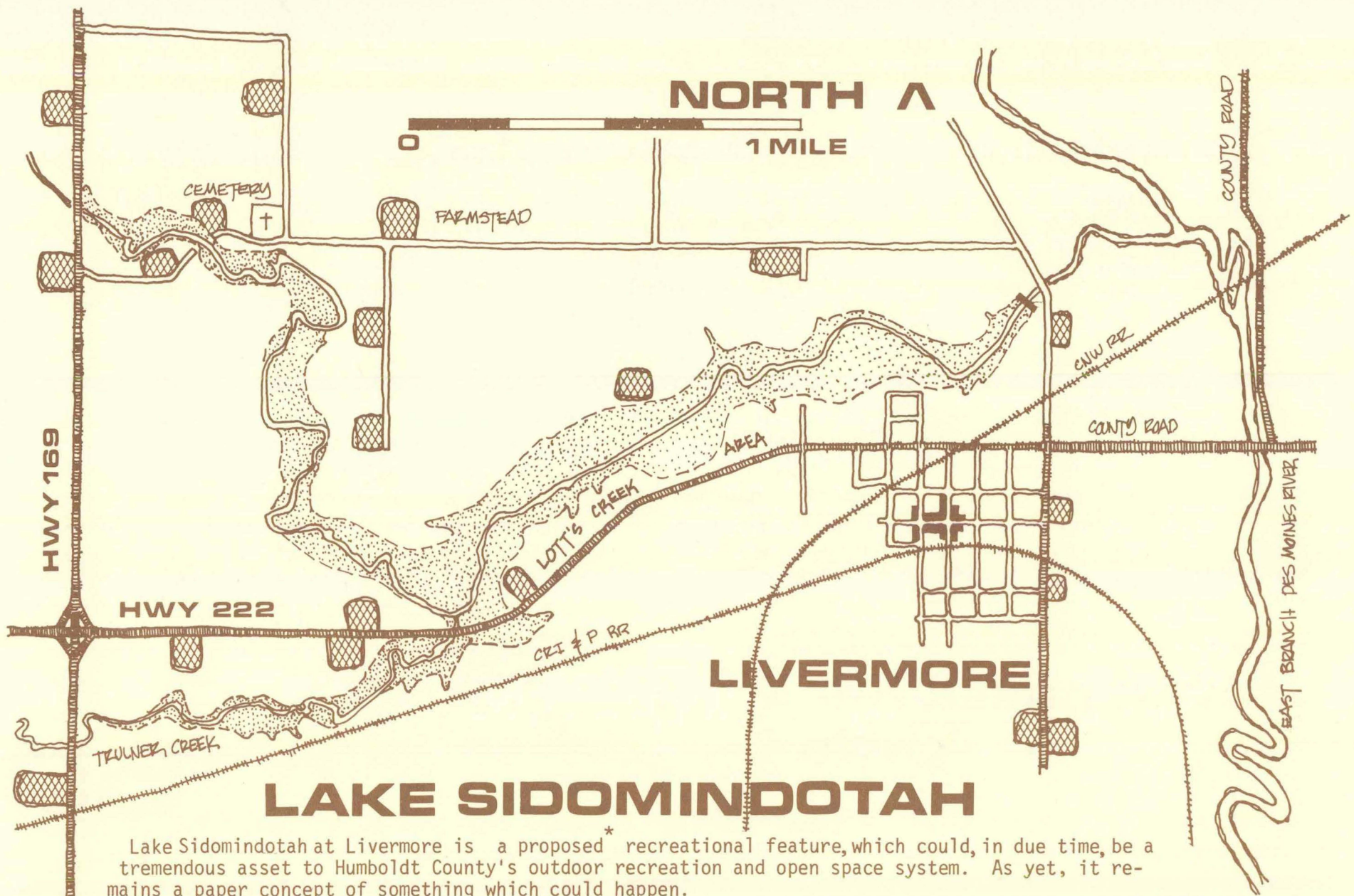


**BEAVER CREEK AREA**  
**< NORTH**

**A PROPOSED RURAL AREA PARK**







## LAKE SIDOMINDOTAH

Lake Sidomindotah at Livermore is a proposed\* recreational feature, which could, in due time, be a tremendous asset to Humboldt County's outdoor recreation and open space system. As yet, it remains a paper concept of something which could happen.

All of Humboldt County's residents would undoubtedly benefit from its development. This study endorses the concept of the lake on the basis of its location and the fact that its empoundment would only inundate marginal soils. The lake itself would be a watershed conservation facility.

However sufficient environmental studies should be done prior to any decision to construct the reservoir. If such studies prove the lake to be compatible with the ecology of the area, the county and surrounding communities should join forces to implement its construction.

\*Reference: "Lake Sidomindotah", October 1966, Associated Engineers, Inc. Fort Dodge, Iowa



*a gentle experience with the land...*

The supplementary development of multi-modal corridor trails, scenic drives, and access areas should be pursued on an actively consistent basis.

The scenic drives will require only detailed planning and the installation of several signs. Access areas at the nineteen indicated positions will require willing-seller purchase of the land and minor access developments.

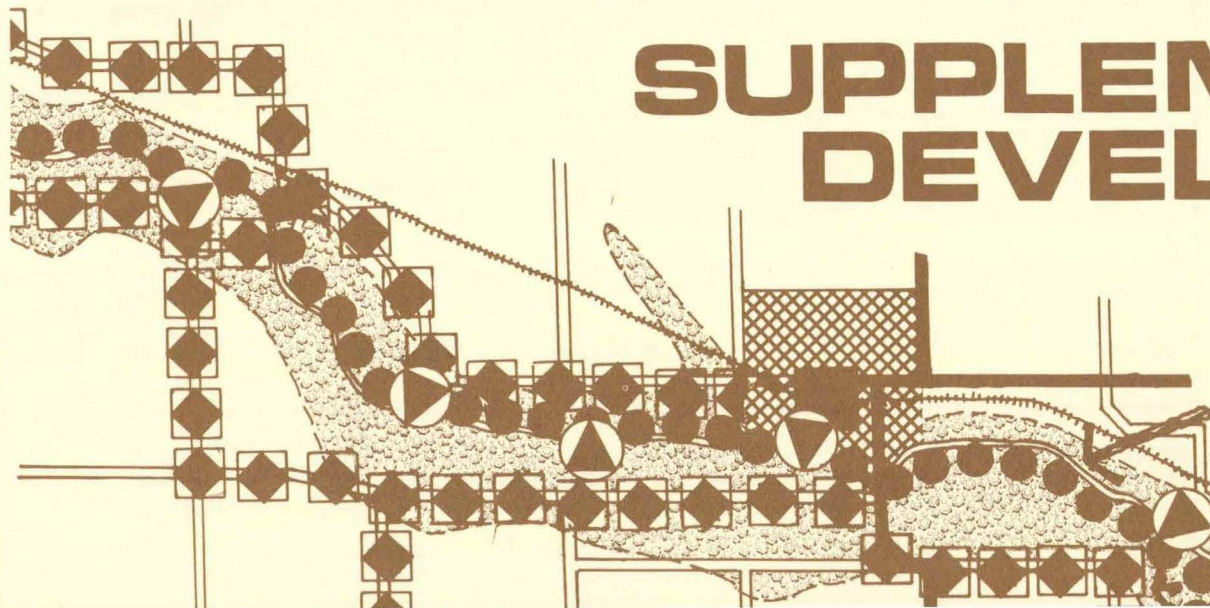
The corridor trails will be developed only after considerable thought and experimentation within the existing park areas. The concept is highly important but it will be difficult to deliver. First, the entire county must decide it wants the trails. The hassles of property acquisition will have to be worked out. The techniques for creating the trails will have to be evolved.

Trails are being developed in various parts of the state. Close attention should be paid to these efforts and their relative success. With enough prior planning and conscious effort, trails are obtainable.

We could begin utilizing the rivers as water trails by encouraging canoe rental establishment and creating shuttle services.

# SUPPLEMENTARY DEVELOPMENTS 62

CORRIDOR TRAIL  
ACCESS AREA  
SCENIC DRIVE





# BUDGETS '69-'73

## RECEIPTS 1969

BALANCE	\$31,736.32
TAX LEVY	42,514.08
MISC.	5,136.65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$79,387.05</b>

## EXPENDITURES 1969

OPERATING	\$18,167.47
DEVELOPMENT	7,248.98
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,416.45</b>
BALANCE	\$53,970.60

## RECEIPTS 1970

BALANCE	\$53,970.60
TAX LEVY	53,126.10
MISC.	22,630.59
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$129,727.29</b>

## EXPENDITURES 1970

OPERATING	\$25,141.28
DEVELOPMENT	97,330.58*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$122,472.86</b>
BALANCE	\$5,172.55

## RECEIPTS 1971

BALANCE	\$ 5,172.55
TAX LEVY	54,202.92
MISC.	11,607.84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$70,983.31</b>

## EXPENDITURES 1971

OPERATING	\$21,806.62
DEVELOPMENT	32,689.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$54,496.37</b>
BALANCE	\$16,486.94

## RECEIPTS 1972

BALANCE	\$16,486.94
TAX LEVY	27,212.01
MISC.	3,995.63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$47,694.58</b>

## EXPENDITURES 1972

OPERATING	\$24,131.52
DEVELOPMENT	3,359.16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$27,480.68</b>
BALANCE	\$20,213.90

## RECEIPTS 1973

BALANCE	\$20,213.90
TAX LEVY	42,917.27
MISC.	7,672.98
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$70,804.15</b>

## EXPENDITURES 1973

OPERATING	\$30,240.27
DEVELOPMENT	6,578.10
PROGRAM	1,660.00**
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$38,478.37</b>
BALANCE	\$32,325.78

\* Major Repair of Humboldt Dam  
 \*\* Sec. 111.A Authorized Funding of County Historical Society

## CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURES 1969-1973

OPERATING	\$ 119,487.16
DEVELOPMENT	147,206.57
PROGRAM	1,660.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 268,353.73</b>

## FUNDS FOR FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN 1974-1978

BALANCE	\$ 32,325.78
FIVE YEAR TAX LEVY	297,500.00***
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 329,825.78</b>

\*\*\*Projected Five Year Tax Levy Based on 1974 One Mill Figures

## PROJECTED FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

OPERATING	\$160,000
LAND ACQUISITION	\$ 50,000
DEVELOPMENT	\$ 70,000
PROGRAMS	\$ 15,000
CONTINGENCY	\$ 32,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$327,000</b>
BALANCE	\$2,825.78

# FIVE-YEAR BUDGET

## LAND ACQUISITION PRIORITY SCHEDULE 1974-1978 \$50,000

INDIAN TRAIL PARK (JOE SHELDON PARK)	1974-1978	\$25,000
OAKDALE PARK	1975-1978	\$ 2,500
BRADGATE AREA	1975-1978	\$ 2,500
FOSTER BRIDGE AREA	1977-1978	\$ 5,000
BEAVER CREEK AREA	1977-1978	\$ 5,000
ACCESS AREAS	1974-1978	\$ 5,000
CORRIDOR LANDS	1974-1978	\$ 5,000



## DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY SCHEDULE 1974-1978 \$70,000

JOE SHELDON PARK	1974-1976	\$35,000
FRANK A. GOTCH AREA	1975-1977	\$ 5,000
LOTT'S CREEK AREA	1977-1978	\$ 2,500
OAKDALE PARK (½ cost)	1977-1978	\$ 2,500
BRADGATE AREA	1977-1978	\$10,000
FOSTER BRIDGE AREA	1979-1983	_____
BEAVER CREEK AREA	1979-1983	_____
ACCESS AREAS	1974-1978	\$ 5,000
SCENIC DRIVES	1974-1976	\$ 5,000
CORRIDOR TRAILS	1974-1978	\$ 5,000

## PROGRAMS PRIORITY SCHEDULE 1974-1978 \$15,000

HISTORICAL SOCIETY	1974-1978	\$10,000
INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM	1976-1978	\$ 5,000

**\* ACTION PRIORITIES**

# FISCAL SCHEDULE



Specifically, within the next five-year period (1974-1978), the Humboldt County Conservation Board should conscientiously attempt to complete the projected five-year action plan at the left. In doing so, maximum efforts will be directed toward the fulfillment of the goals evolved within this study.

If it chooses to operate at its allotted one mill levy, the Conservation Board has an estimated annual budget of \$59,500 (based upon the estimated one mill levy for Humboldt County 1974). Such a budget would be sufficient to accommodate many of the recommended projects. All available unforeseen funds beyond the required operating costs and essential developments should be directed to the acquisition and preservation of available corridor lands for incorporation into the open spaces and public trust lands discussed within this study.

In the past, Humboldt County has not availed itself of the federal matching funds available from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation through the Lands and Waters Conservation Fund Act (LAWCON). These monies are a tangible return of federal tax dollars for the specific purpose of furthering outdoor recreation and conservation projects. When regarded on a supplementary, not substitutionary, basis, such funding can be a great assist in the furthering of such conservation/recreation goals.

To the degree to which LAWCON funds remain available, the county should begin to avail itself to such assistance. If the annual federal allocation to the State of Iowa is insufficient, the development of this study's goals must necessarily be accomplished through the one-mill county levy.

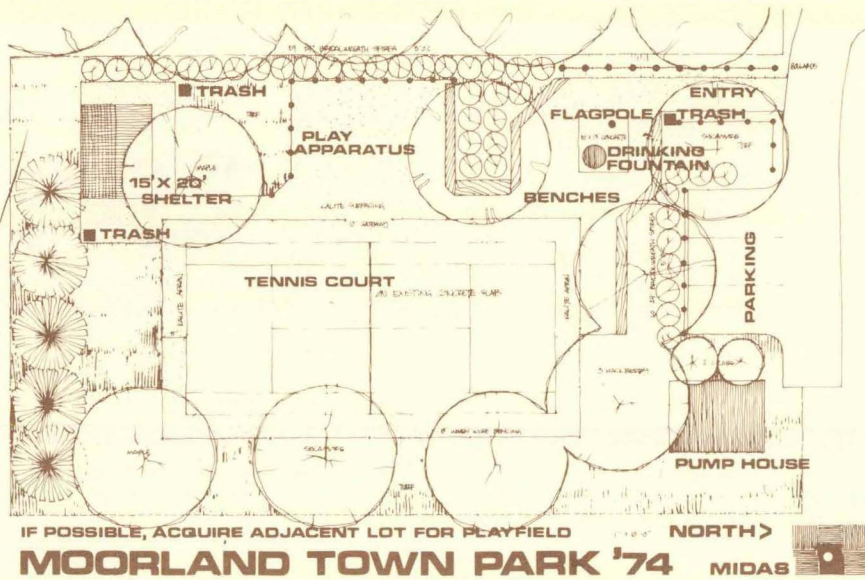
The proposed operating, acquisition, development and program schedule, then, is keyed to only the budget provided by local monies. The budget is quite schematic in response to current inflation, but actions should be taken along the indicated priority basis and as many of this study's goals should be accomplished within the next five-year period as possible.

Should operation at the full one-mill levy be infeasible for a portion of the five-year period, pro-rated adjustments should be made within the development phase of the proposed budget.

The budget at the left hopefully presents a flexible and yet direct orientation which the Conservation Board may utilize to its advantage in the development of its annual budgets. Should a major eventuality, such as the repair of the Rutland Dam, impose considerable restraints upon adherence to the projected schedule, the five-year plan will necessarily be delayed in its completion. In such an event, every possible effort should be made to secure local, state, or federal supplementary assistance to insure continued scheduled development of Humboldt County's Outdoor Recreation and Open Spaces System.

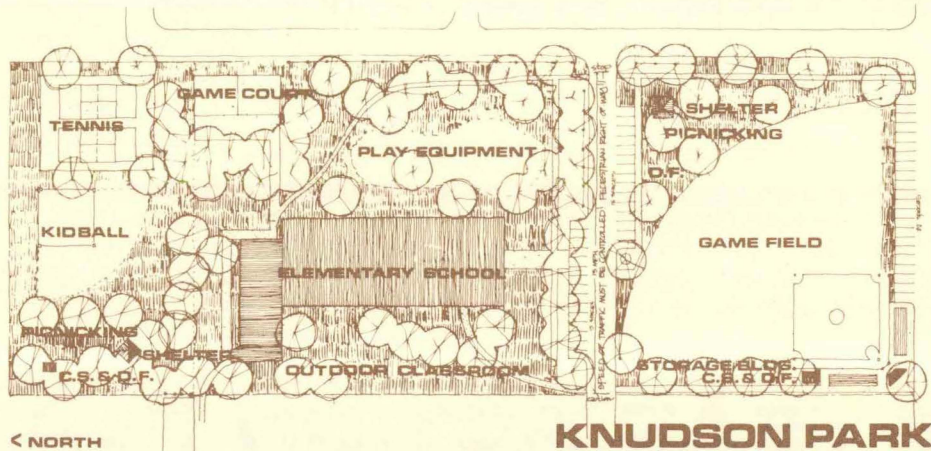
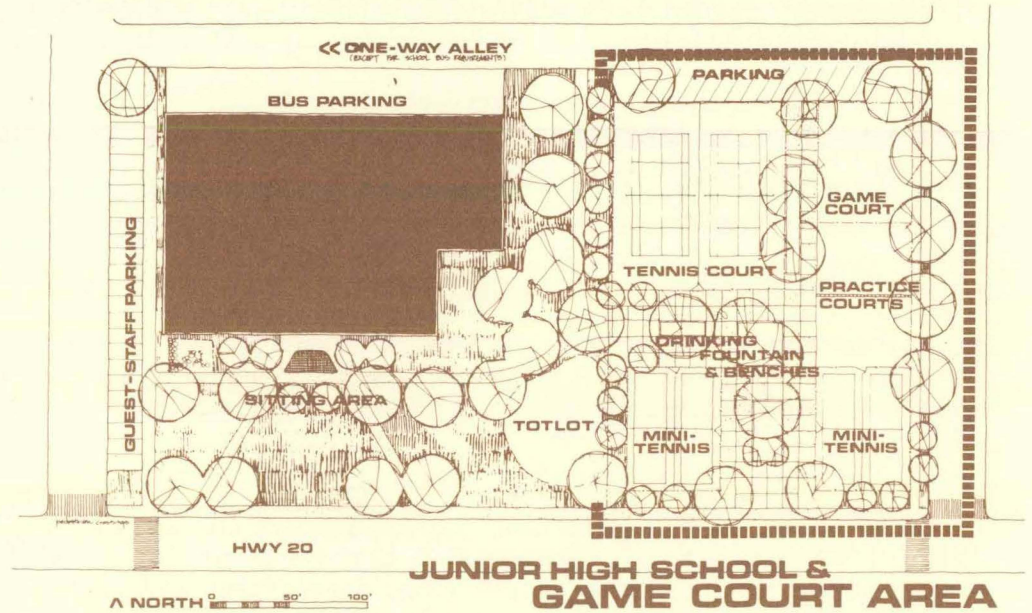
## **COUNTY FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLAN**





The example at the left shows what a community of 269 people is trying to do. The developed park itself would be much smaller than the prescribed "four acres" but it is a start in the right direction. It could well be that such an area would be sufficient in itself, or a similar area elsewhere in the community could finally fulfill the community's recreation requirements.

At the right a game court is proposed to supplement a schoolgrounds development. The city and school are jointly engaged in its development. Such action is truly commendable.



And, a full-scale community park centered on the school shows how harmonious community developments can be. Optimally, the road would not penetrate the area, but a decent compromise has been achieved.



Community recreation areas are highly important to all of the residents of Mid-Iowa. In a community situated in the uplands of the county, such an area may be the only public open space available on a daily basis to a community's residents. When you're a kid in a small town there's not all that much to do. With a park in which to meet and play with friends, life is a lot happier. Many of Mid-Iowa's smaller communities have a large percentage of elderly. Town parks provide such people with an opportunity to vicariously participate in the activities of the younger "set".

This study finds the goal that each community have such a public area developed for its residents unquestionable. Collinearly, the more active the town is, the more auspicious will be its park developments.

On the following pages an inventory of the communities of Humboldt County and their recreation facilities will be entertained. Suggestions for amplification of existing developments and proposals for new developments will be offered.

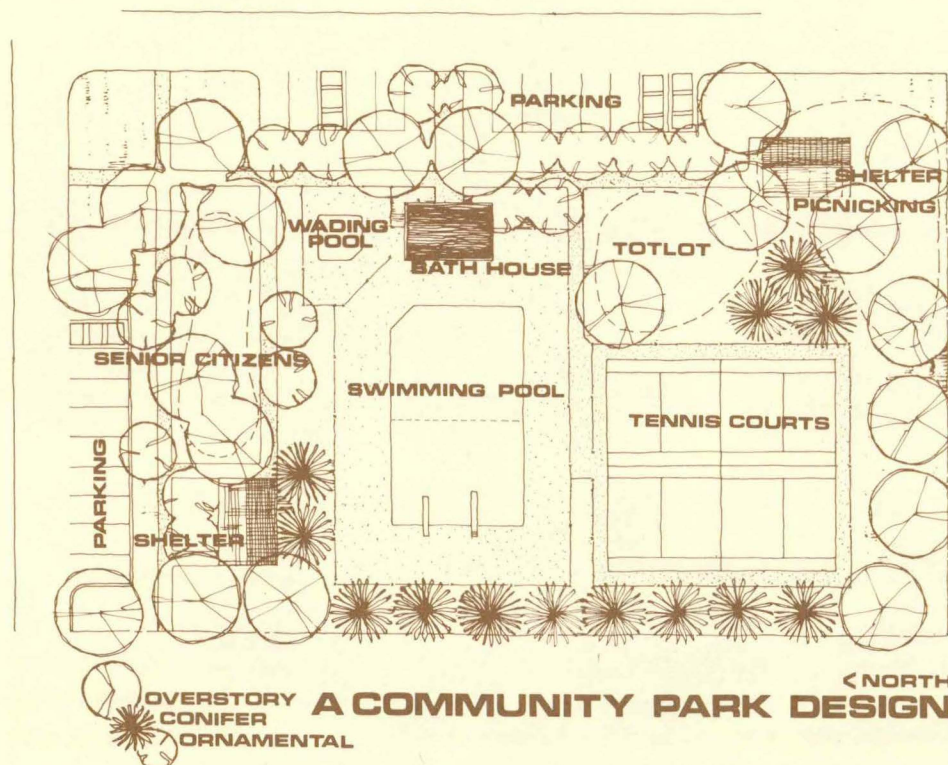
In all cases the conclusions drawn by this study are singularly those of this study. Any action from them will depend upon the community's positive reaction to the suggestions and upon the community's resident willingness to create a better life-style for itself.

This study embraces the concept of community recreation areas only upon the basis that a complete plan for the county's recreation system must give attention to the facilities resident within the communities of that county.

With the one exception, when this study is presented, the suggestions it contains will be new to the community. The exception is the Town of Livermore, whose residents have chosen to work closely with the plan's development.

After a town-by-town analysis of existing facilities and proffered suggestions, examples of how parks may be developed according to plan will be illustrated.

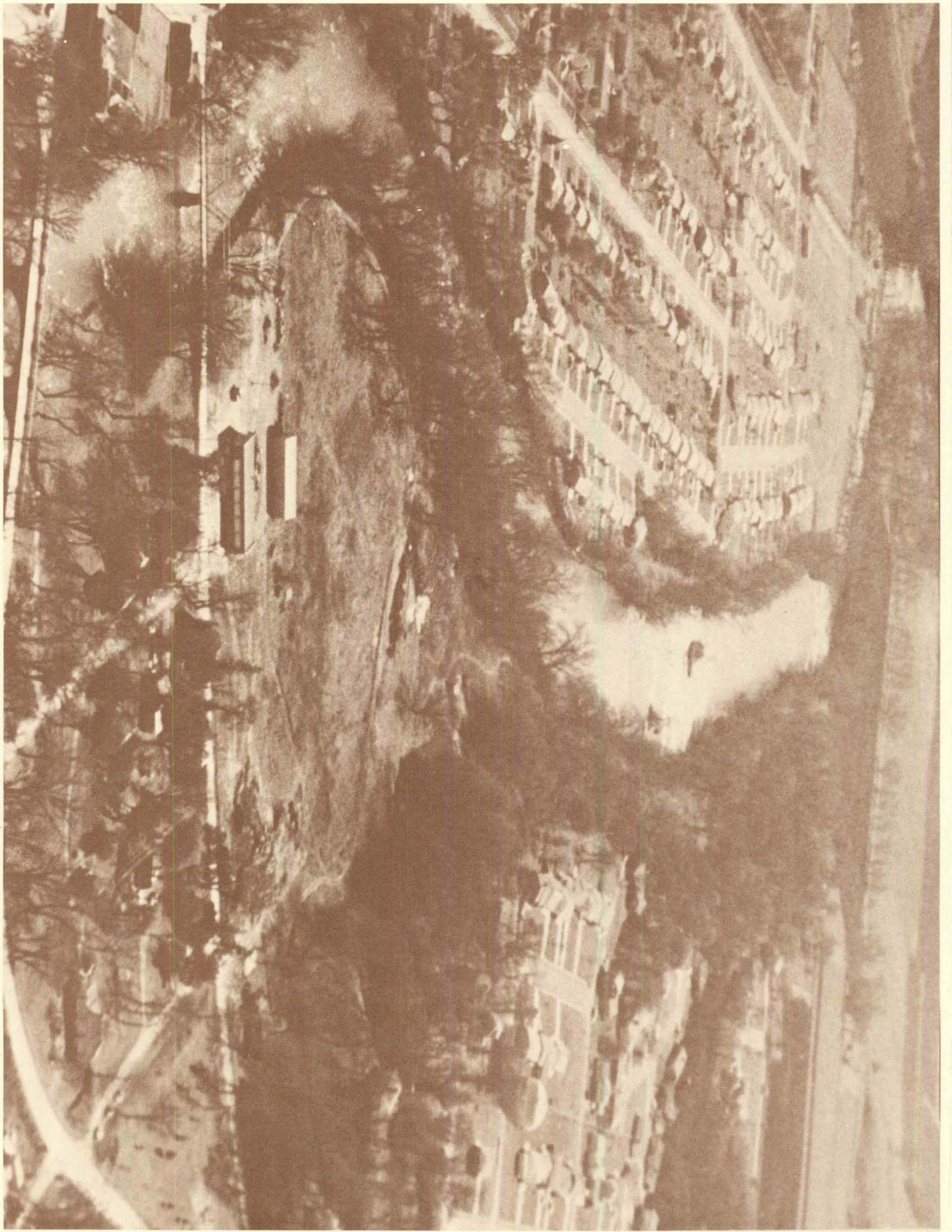
It is with high hopes that this study presents the following reviews and suggestions.



## COMMUNITY RECREATION AREAS

# 66







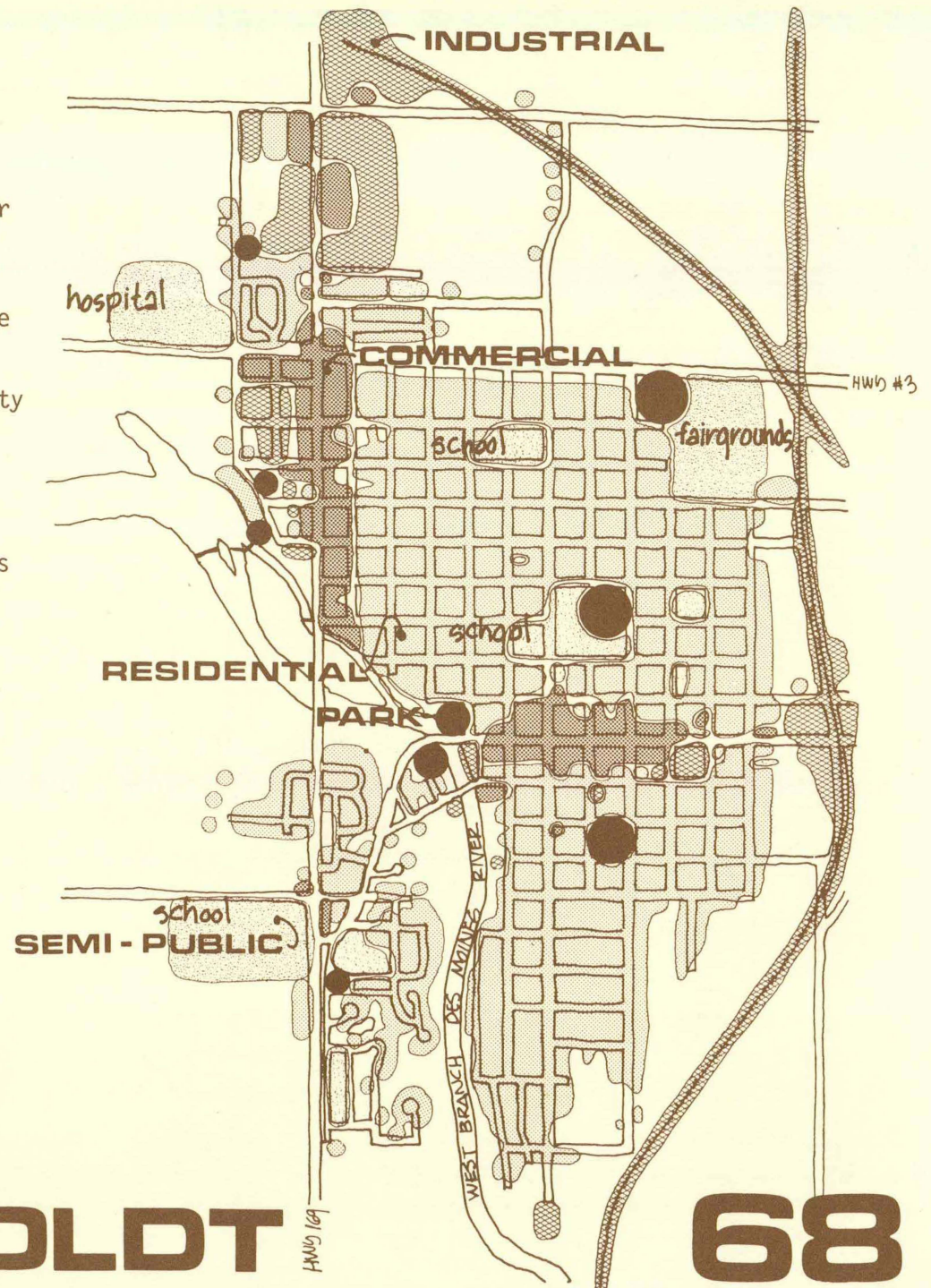
The City of Humboldt shoulders a major responsibility for the provision of community recreation facilities for its 4,665 incorporated residents, the 8,500 residents of its community and the 12,000 plus residents of the county. With such a responsibility, the development of a complete park system should be regarded as a prime function.

With nine park developments, it appears that the community understands its role very well.

This study has but one additional comment. Because Humboldt is situated on such a grand segment of the Des Moines River, a special responsibility falls to the city and its residents. When such a grand environment is available to a community, everything possible should be done to maximize resident exposure and use of the City's natural landscape. This study can easily envision the development of a linear river parkway commencing as the river enters the city limits and continuing along its course throughout the community.

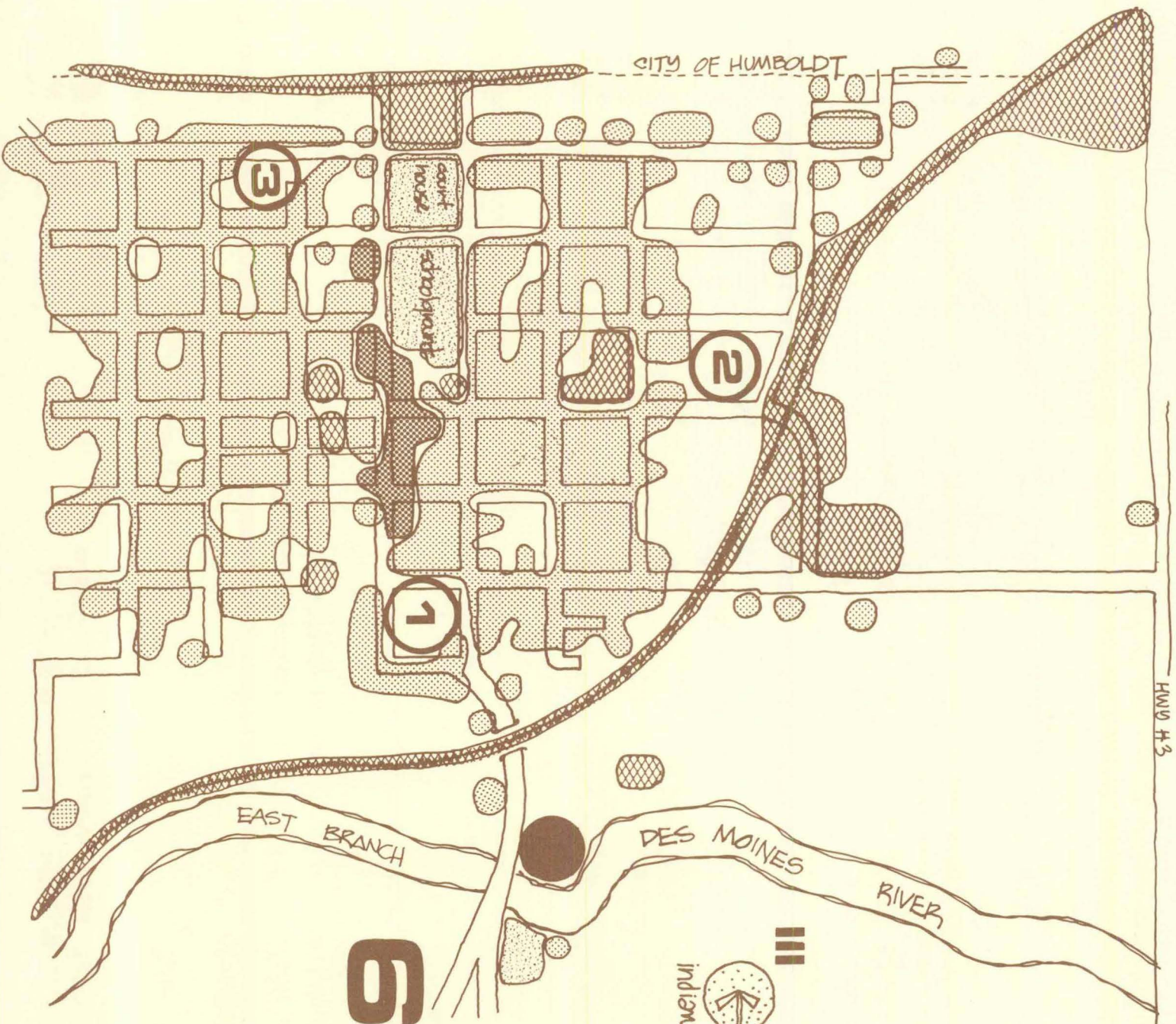
While it is beyond the scope of this plan to develop a detailed recreation plan for the community of Humboldt, this study recommends that the city avail itself to consultant services to plan the development of such a grand linear parkway. Undoubtedly the plan could as well point out some suggested areas of park development that would further meet neighborhood recreation needs.

This study sincerely hopes that Humboldt will proceed in the development of a complete community recreation plan. The MIDAS offices remain available to assist in whatever way possible.



# CITY OF HUMBOLDT

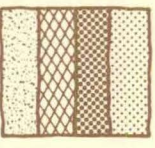




**69**

**NORTH A**

- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- SEMI-PUBLIC
- PARK



frank a. potch  
area  
(3 mi.)

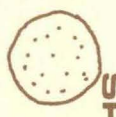
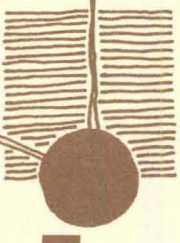
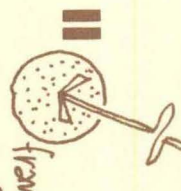
indian trail park  
(3 mi.)

SP  
golf

pool

winter sports

SP





Dakota City is one of the "boom-towns" of Humboldt County. As the phenomenon of centralization occurs, the country residents move to the larger communities. Dakota City experienced a six per cent increase in the decade between 1960 and 1970.

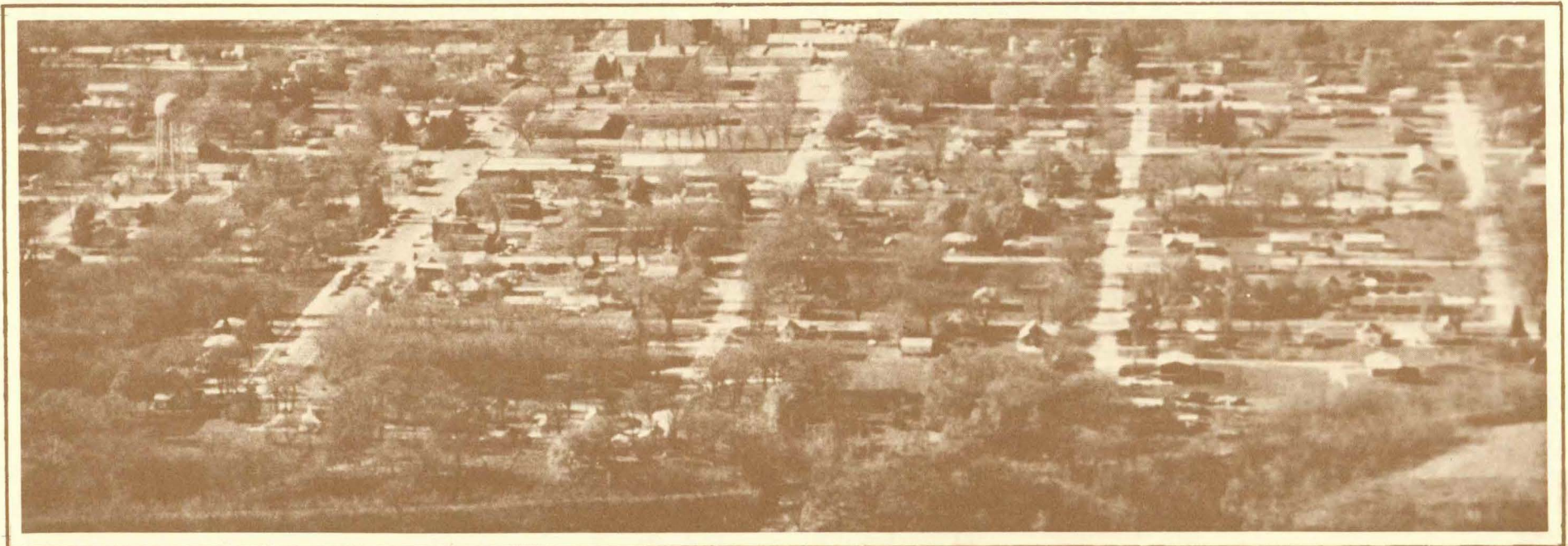
The population trend line on Page 26 shows a consistently positive inclination. In 1970 there were 240 children in the community and 226 persons over 45 years of age. Such facts are positive indicators of the community's continued viability. A drive through town amazes one with the number of new housing "starts".

Situated on the high plateau above the Des Moines River's east branch, the community has the best of both worlds. The dry uplands and river corridor excitement are equally available.

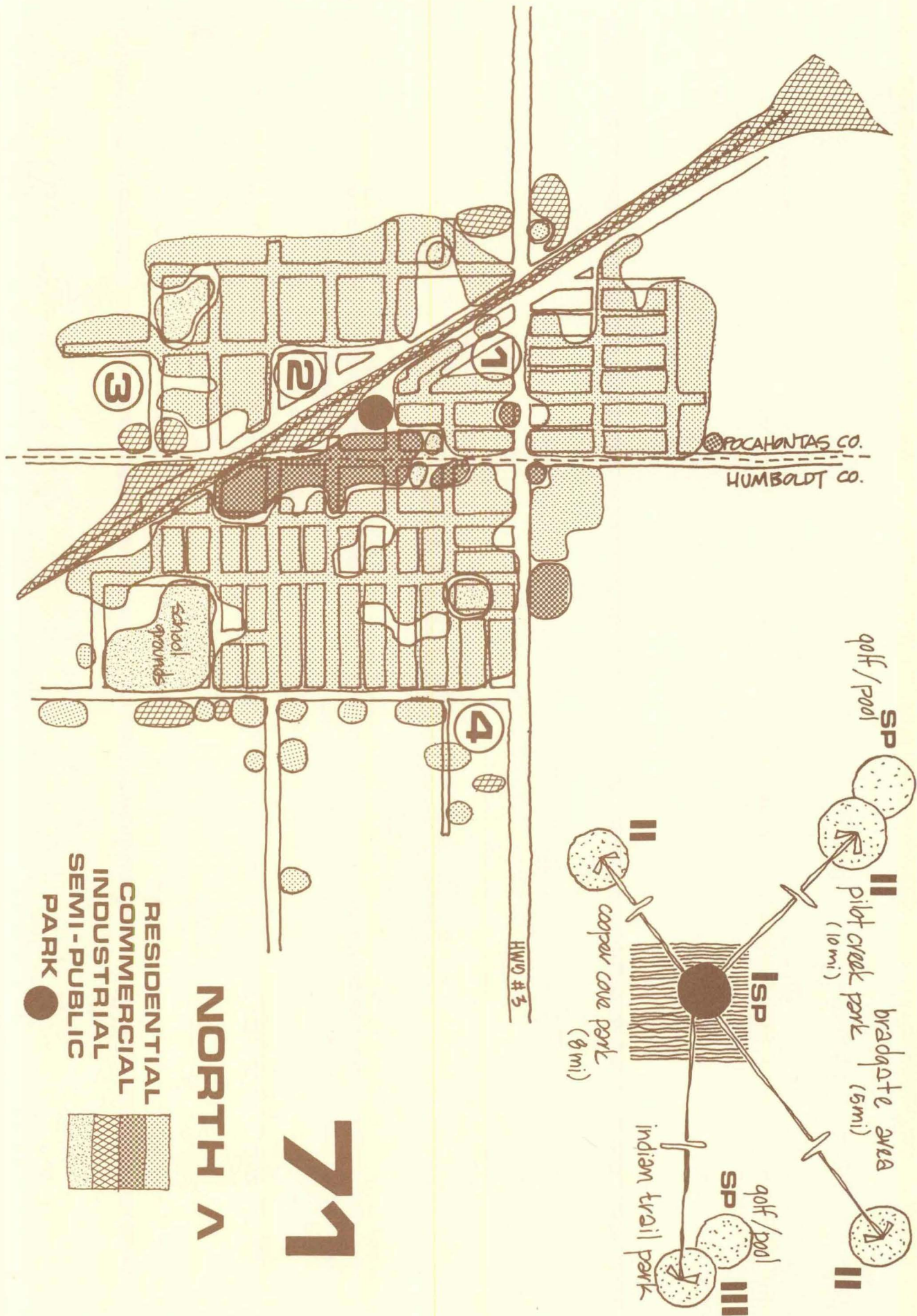
The currently developed riverside park is a fine example of a community's effort to augment its lifestyle. Just across the river, the historic site of the Brown Mill House is gratifyingly preserved. Class Two, Three and Special Use facilities are readily available.

In order to develop itself to a finer level, the community should seriously consider development of one or all of the indicated potential park sites (1, 2, or 3). The current park is a fine effort, but its relative isolation reduces its availability. There is a need for in-town neighborhood facilities. It would not be out-of-line for Dakota City to provide for an \$80,000 five-year action program of acquisition and development of at least one of the available annotated park sites.

## DAKOTA CITY







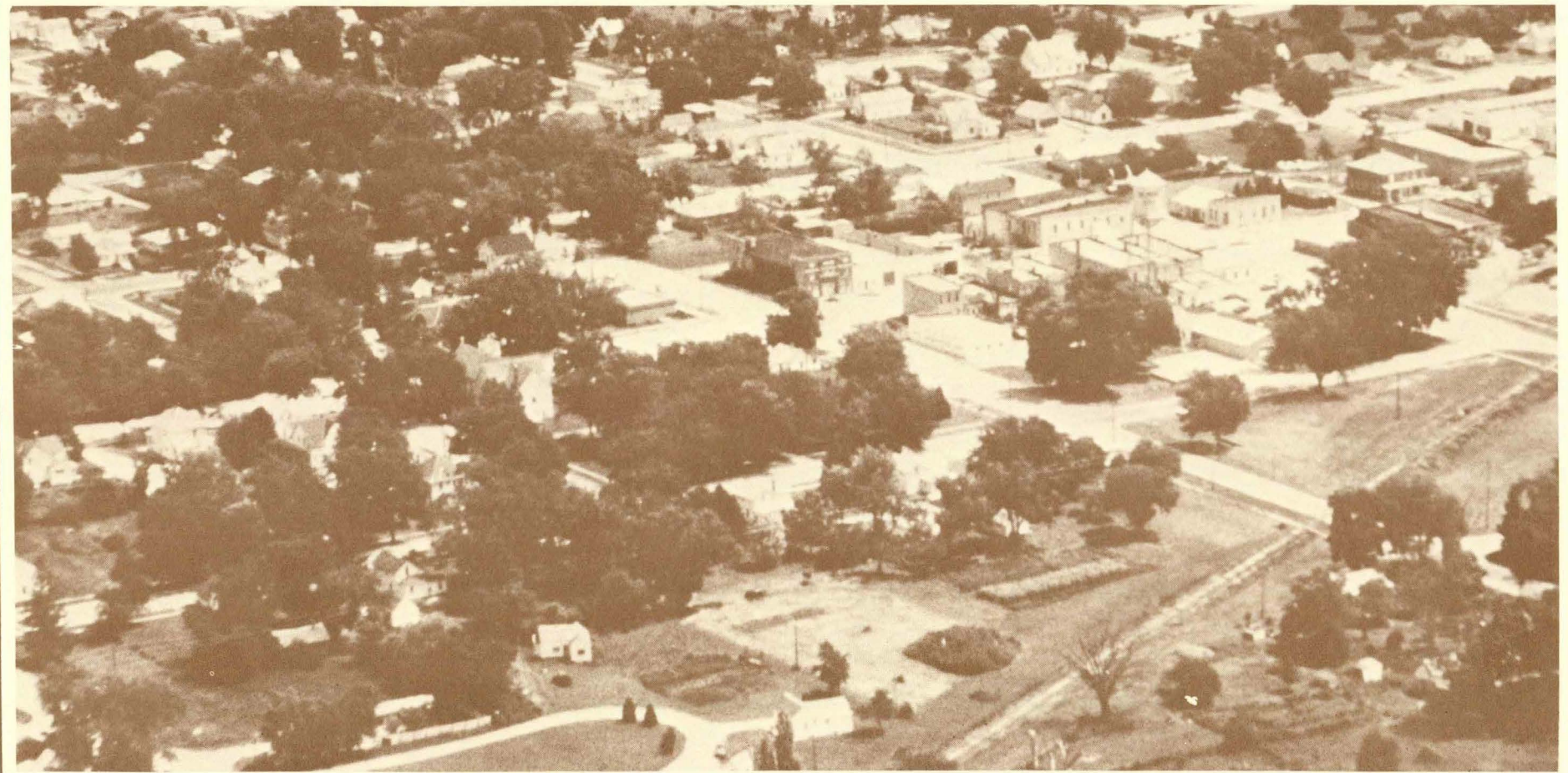


Gilmore City is definitely a boom town. The decade of 1960-1970 saw it reverse a downward trend with an eleven percent growth factor. In 1970 its 200 children compared well to 330 persons over 45 years of age. However, the high percentage of aged persons in the community does have influence upon park use projections.

Gilmore City is an "upland community" situated a considerable distance from the nearest river corridor. Consequently the provision of good recreation facilities in the community is highly important. In addition, Gilmore City has a special opportunity to provide for itself and its surrounding area the Special Use facility of a swimming pool.

While its existing park is an admirable development, the space allotted it is rather constrained. It would be well for the community to augment its public facilities with development at one of the indicated park sites (1,2,3, or 4) of a combined swimming pool-community park area. The existing community park should be retained for additional service.

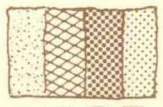
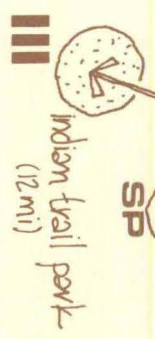
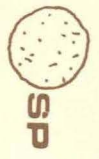
A five year action program of \$120,000 allotted to acquisition and development would not be inappropriate.



# GILMORE CITY

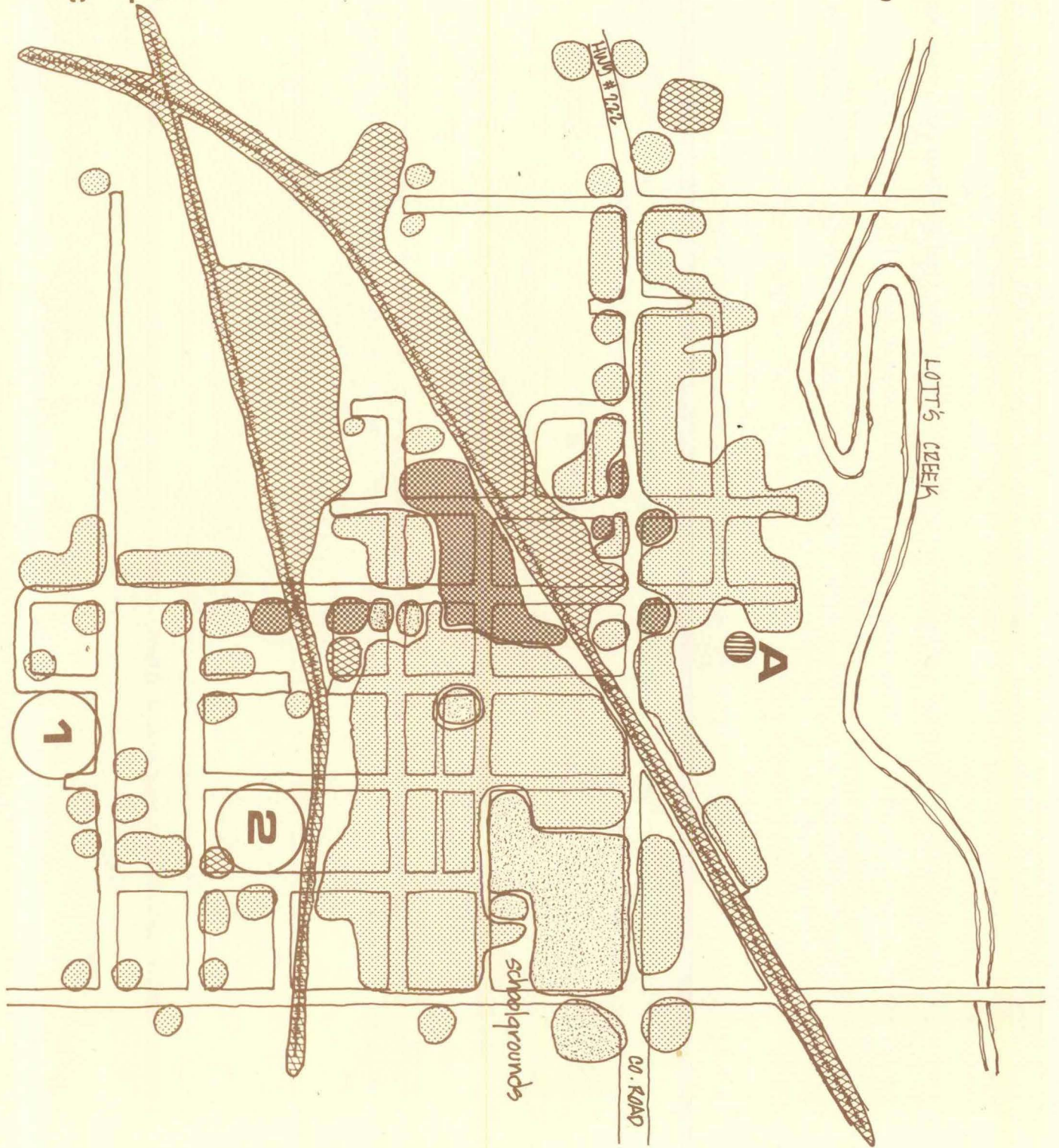


proposed golf

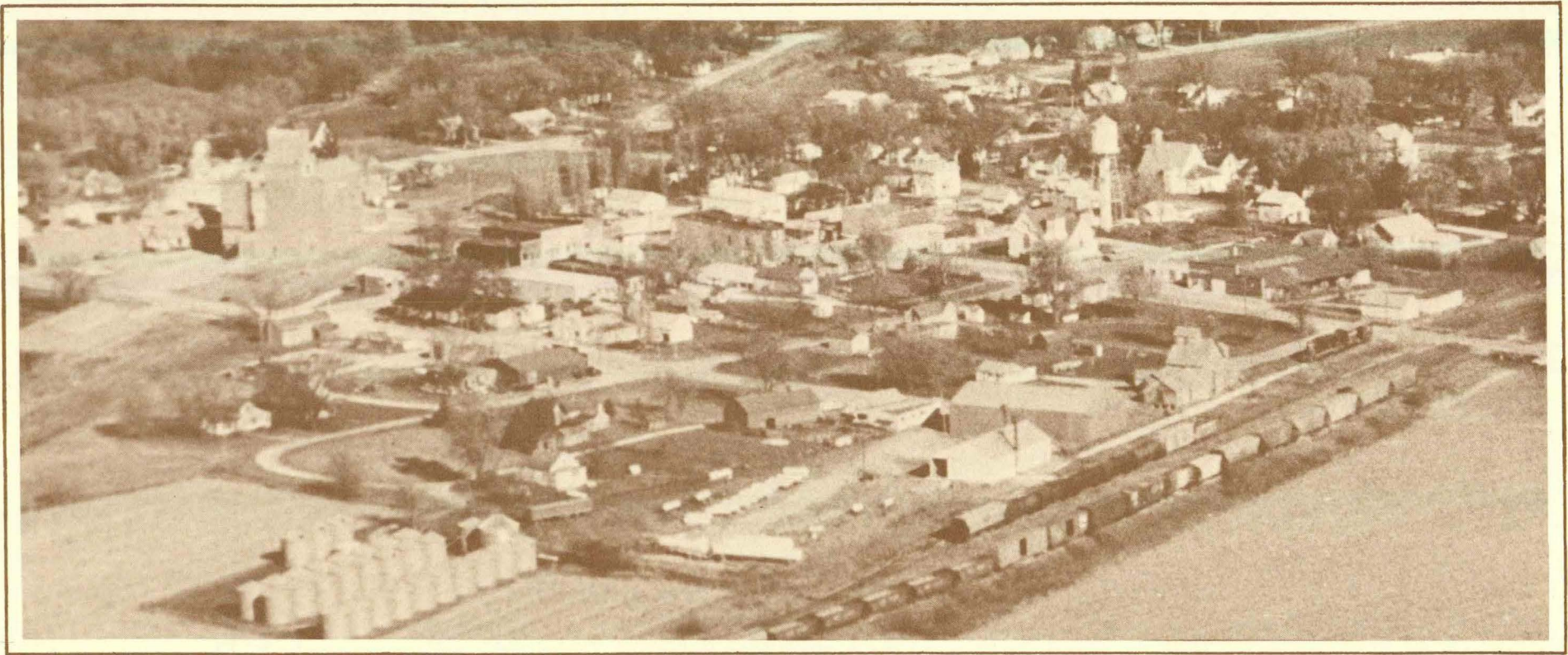


RESIDENTIAL  
COMMERCIAL  
INDUSTRIAL  
SEMI-PUBLIC

NORTH A







Livermore, as stated, has worked closely with the development of its proposed community recreation plan. Although its last 10 years growth trend is not all that positive, the attitude one senses when visiting the town belies a vitality which says that Livermore is here to stay.

Situated near the confluence of Lott's Creek and the East Branch of the Des Moines River, Livermore has a remarkable landscape on which to build. The natural beauty of the area will continue to make the town a wonderful place to live.

Currently Livermore is without community park service. Lott's Creek Area less than a mile to the west meets many of its demands, but an in-town park is apparently needed. Additionally this portion of the county is without ready service of a swimming pool. Golf facilities are also lacking.

The town of Livermore would do well to concentrate upon creating a four acre community park with a swimming pool. Just as it has provided an excellent trap-shooting range ("A"), and has supported an annual rodeo, the community can be expected to meet this challenge. A privately developed golf course is proposed for an area just north of the community.

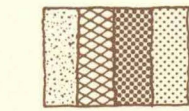
Either of the two indicated sites (1 or 2) would be an excellent place upon which to create the Livermore Community Park. (On page 82 is a sketch plan for that park's development).

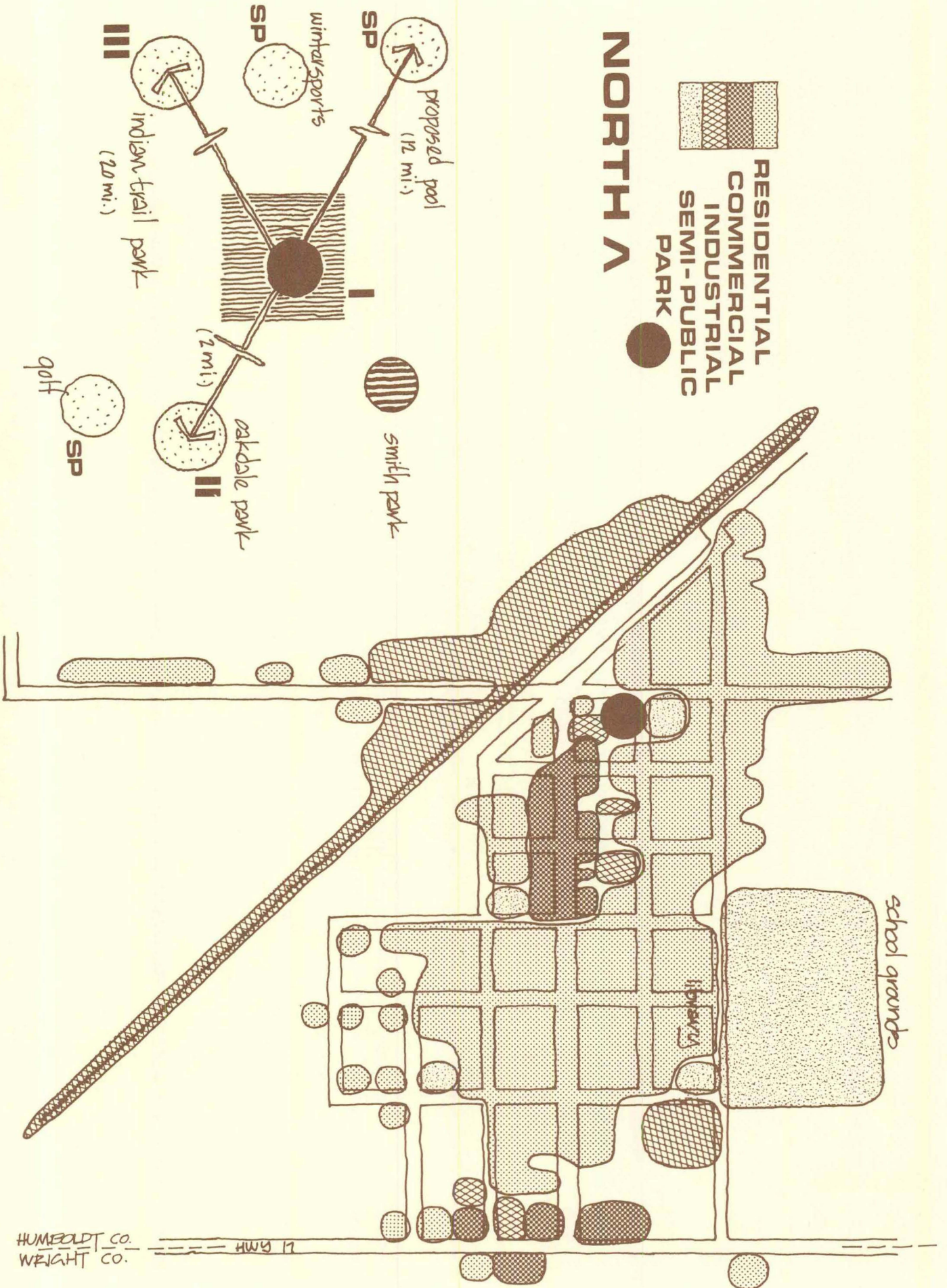
Livermore should anticipate a \$120,000 five year action plan for acquisition and development.

**LIVERMORE 74**



# NORTH A


  
**RESIDENTIAL**  
**COMMERCIAL**  
**INDUSTRIAL**  
**SEMI-PUBLIC**  
**PARK**







Renwick is a tight-knit, comfortable town. A new library, new industry, and the positive attitude of the community speak well for its residents.

Renwick is unique in that it maintains a special park of nearly 40 acres on the Boone River northeast of the community. The park was donated to the community and is known as Smith Park.

A comfortable downtown park and extensive schoolgrounds meet well the community's recreation needs. The community is somewhat shy of swimming pool services. Both the existing Humboldt pool and the proposed Livermore pool are over twelve miles away. Renwick should entertain the concept of developing a pool, but at any rate, it should amplify its services by expanding the recreational facilities at the schoolgrounds.

Foregoing the option of a swimming pool's development, Renwick should anticipate a \$30,000 five year action program for amplification of its recreational facilities at the schoolgrounds and development of Smith Park.

# RENWICK

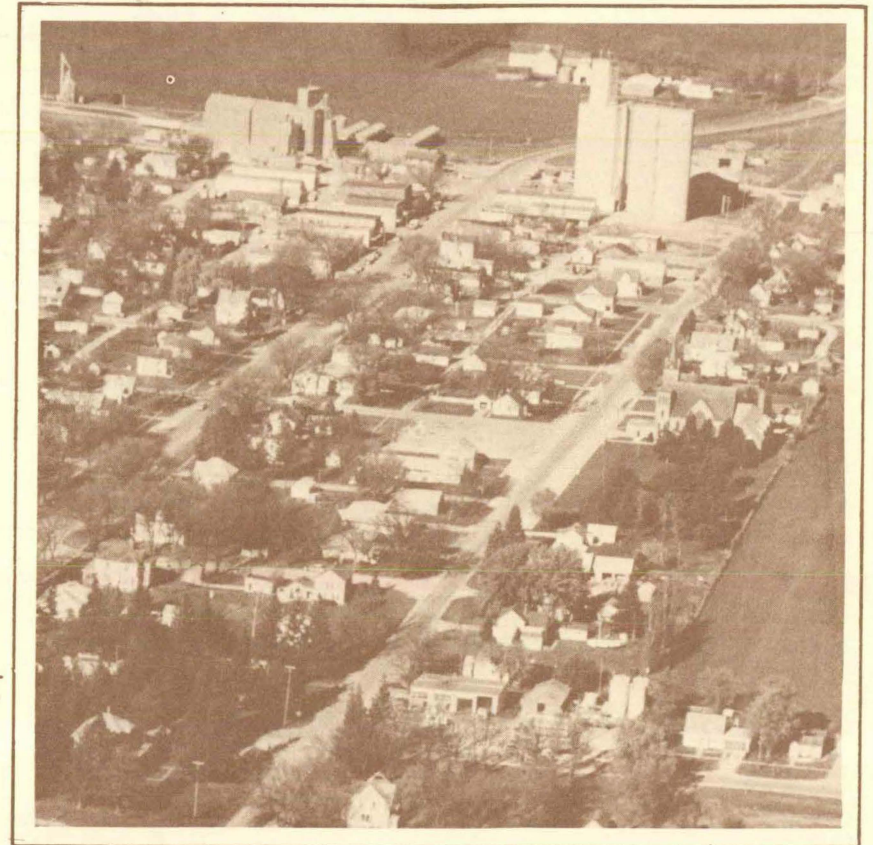
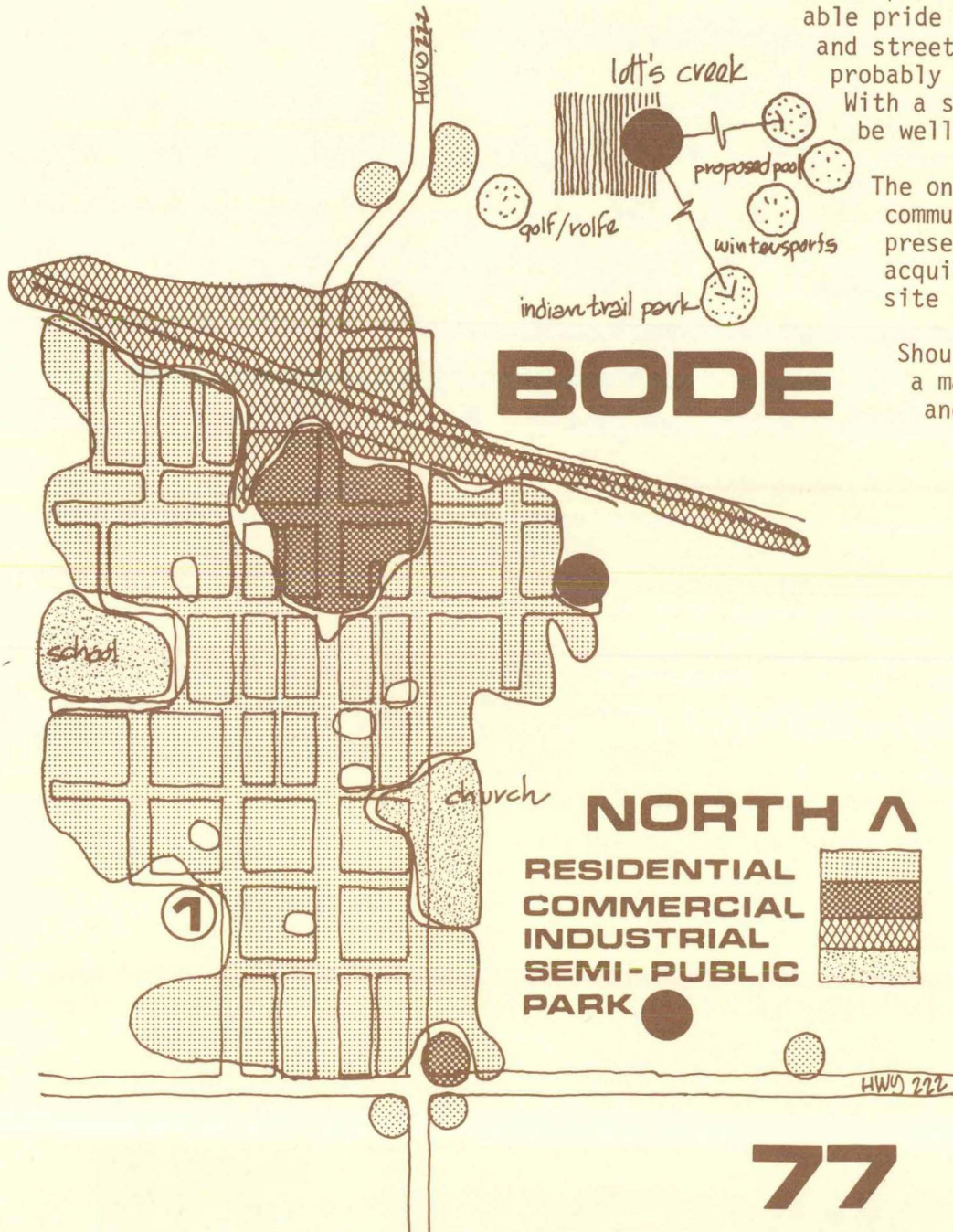
# 76



The community of Bode appears as a solid, got-it-together community of 372 persons. It is very attractive and well developed. Considerable pride is evidenced by the well-kept appearance of the homes and streets. The community hosts a well developed park which probably meets the needs of its residents to a fine degree. With a swimming pool established in Livermore its service will be well met.

The only suggestion this study can make is that perhaps the community park service could be enlarged at the site of the present park, or that service could be expanded through the acquisition and development of a parklet at the indicated site (1).

Should the community desire to expand its amenities in such a manner, a \$25,000 five year action program of acquisition and development would seem appropriate.

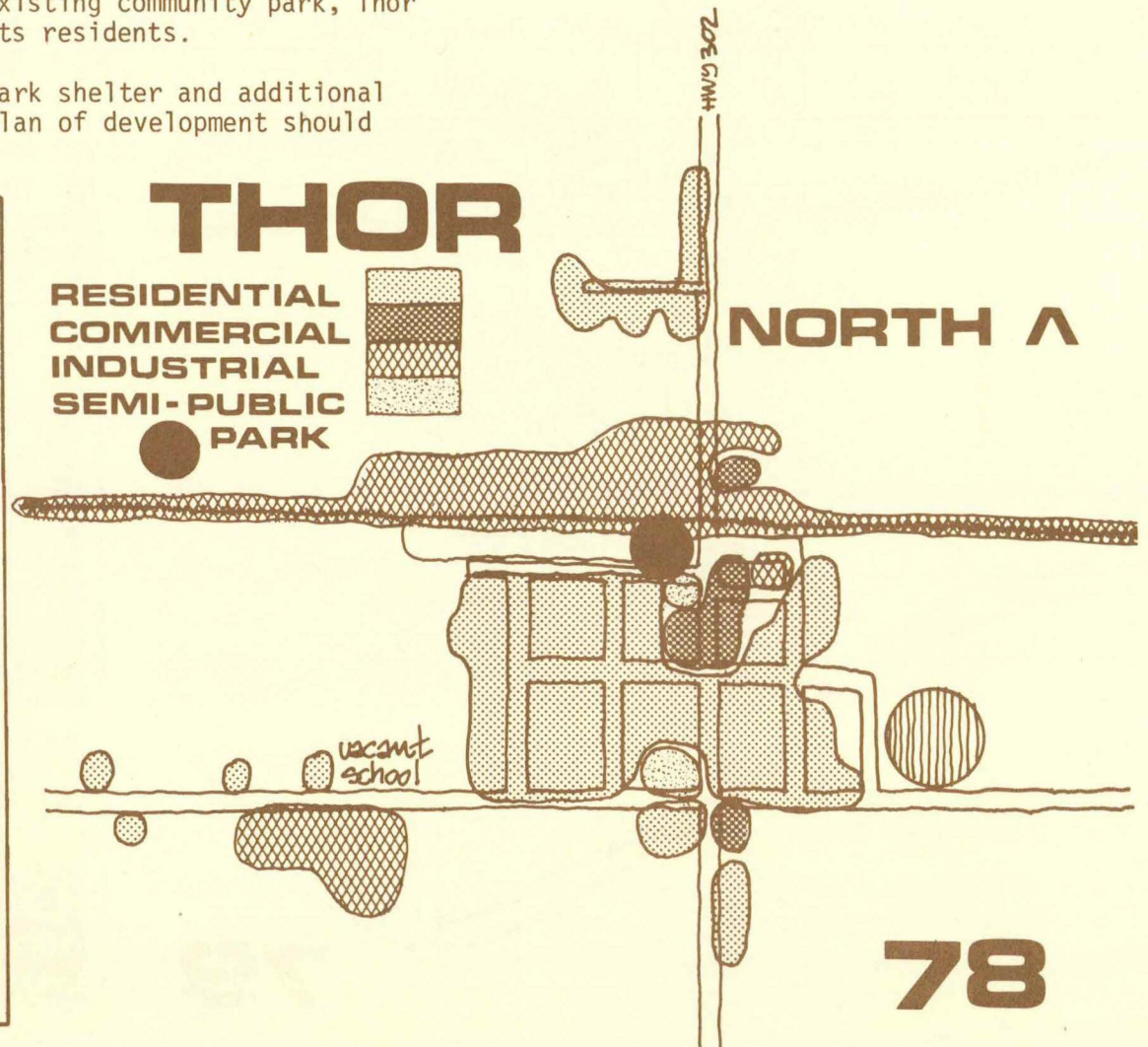
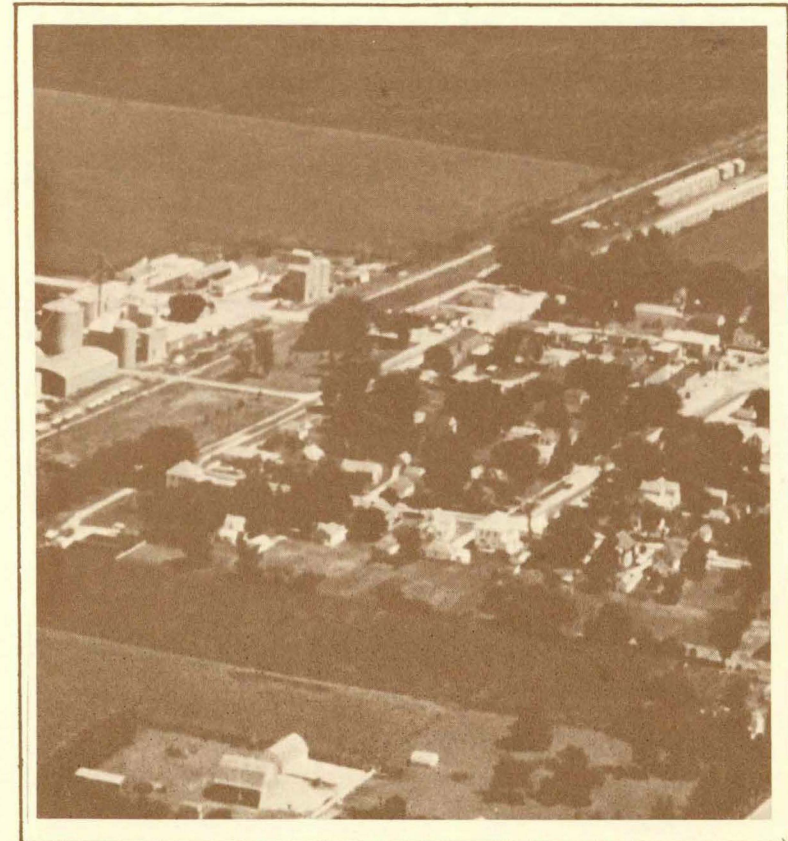
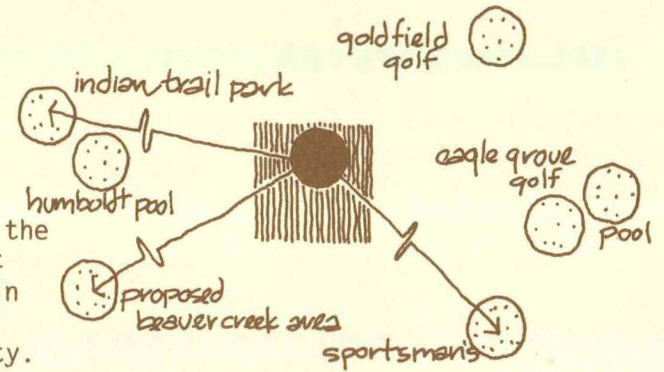




Thor is an upland community in the previously discussed southeast quadrant of the county. What it does to meet its residents recreation needs is very much what will be available to its residents. Pool and golf facilities are to be found in nearby Eagle Grove. The proposed rural area parks at Beaver Creek and on the Boone River in Wright County would be beneficial to this Scandinavian community.

Judging from the apparent planting efforts in the existing community park, Thor can be expected to maintain its park services for its residents.

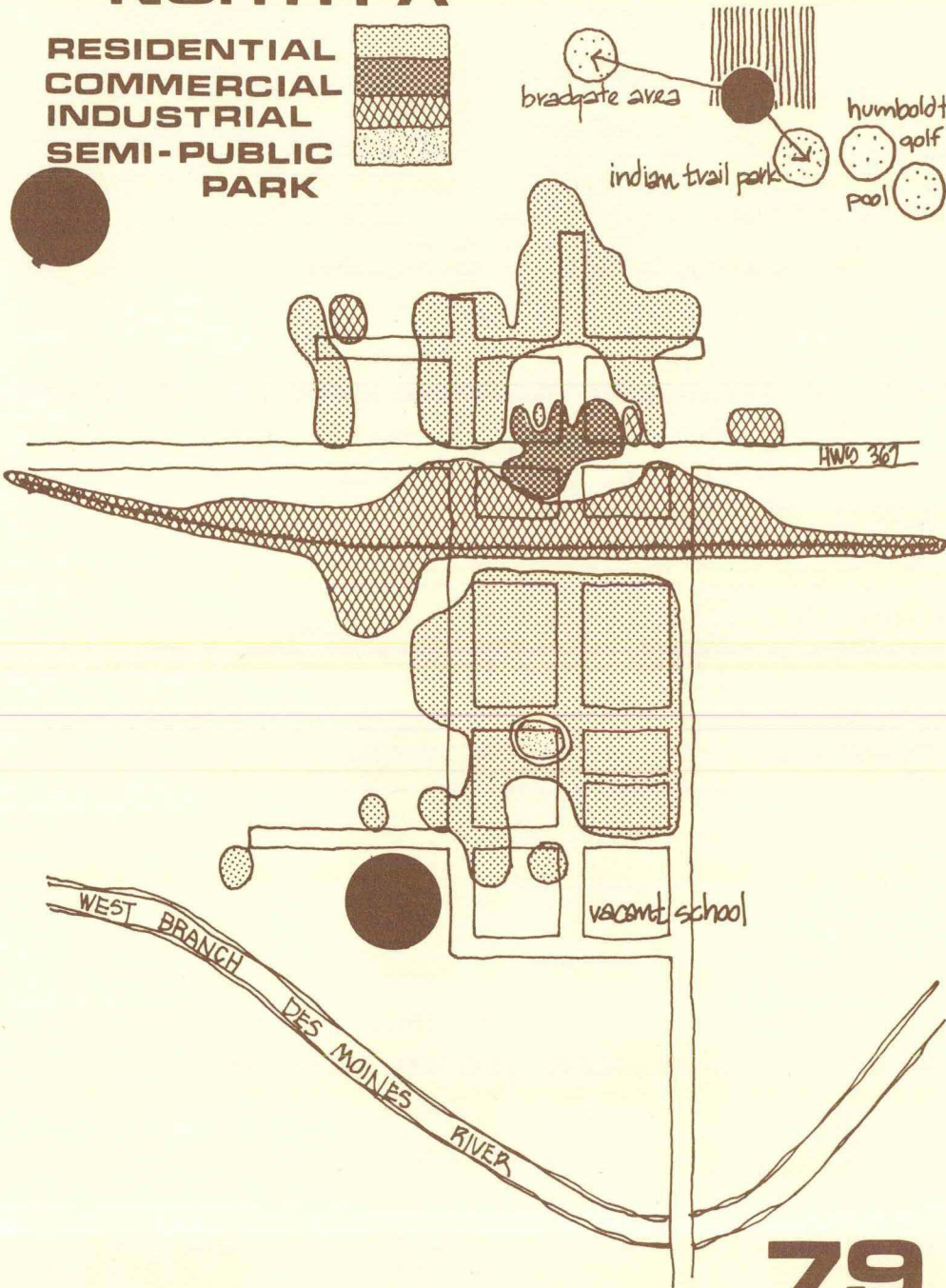
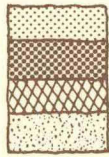
This study would urge the community to develop a park shelter and additional picnicking facilities. A \$12,000 five year action plan of development should suffice,





# NORTH A

RESIDENTIAL  
COMMERCIAL  
INDUSTRIAL  
SEMI-PUBLIC  
PARK

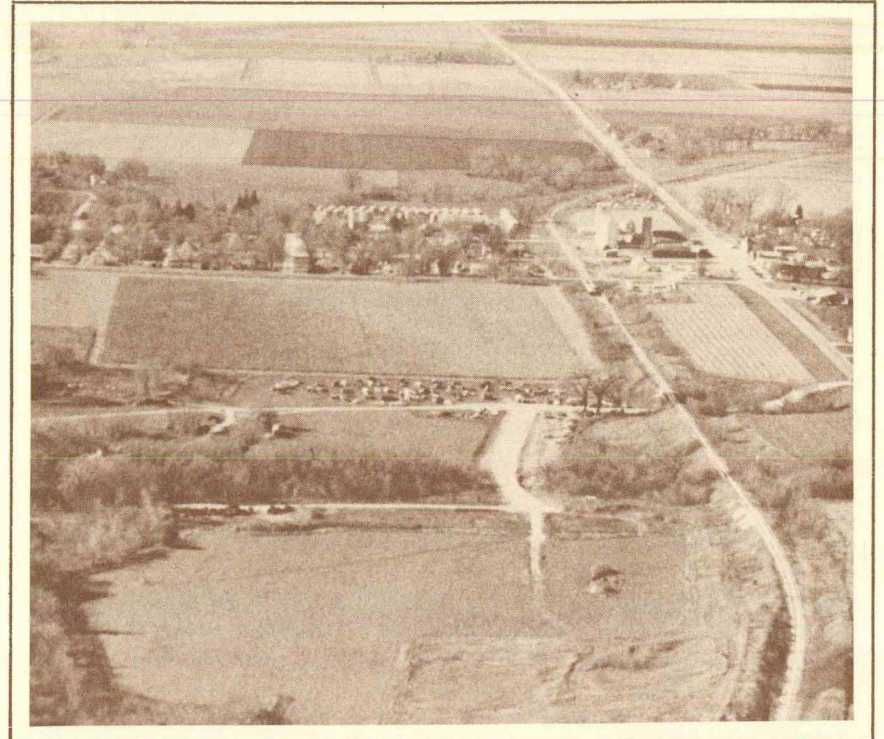


Rutland is a relatively young community (mean age 29.1) situated on the West Branch of the Des Moines River. With the development of Indian Trail Park, Rutland would experience a considerable influx of residents.

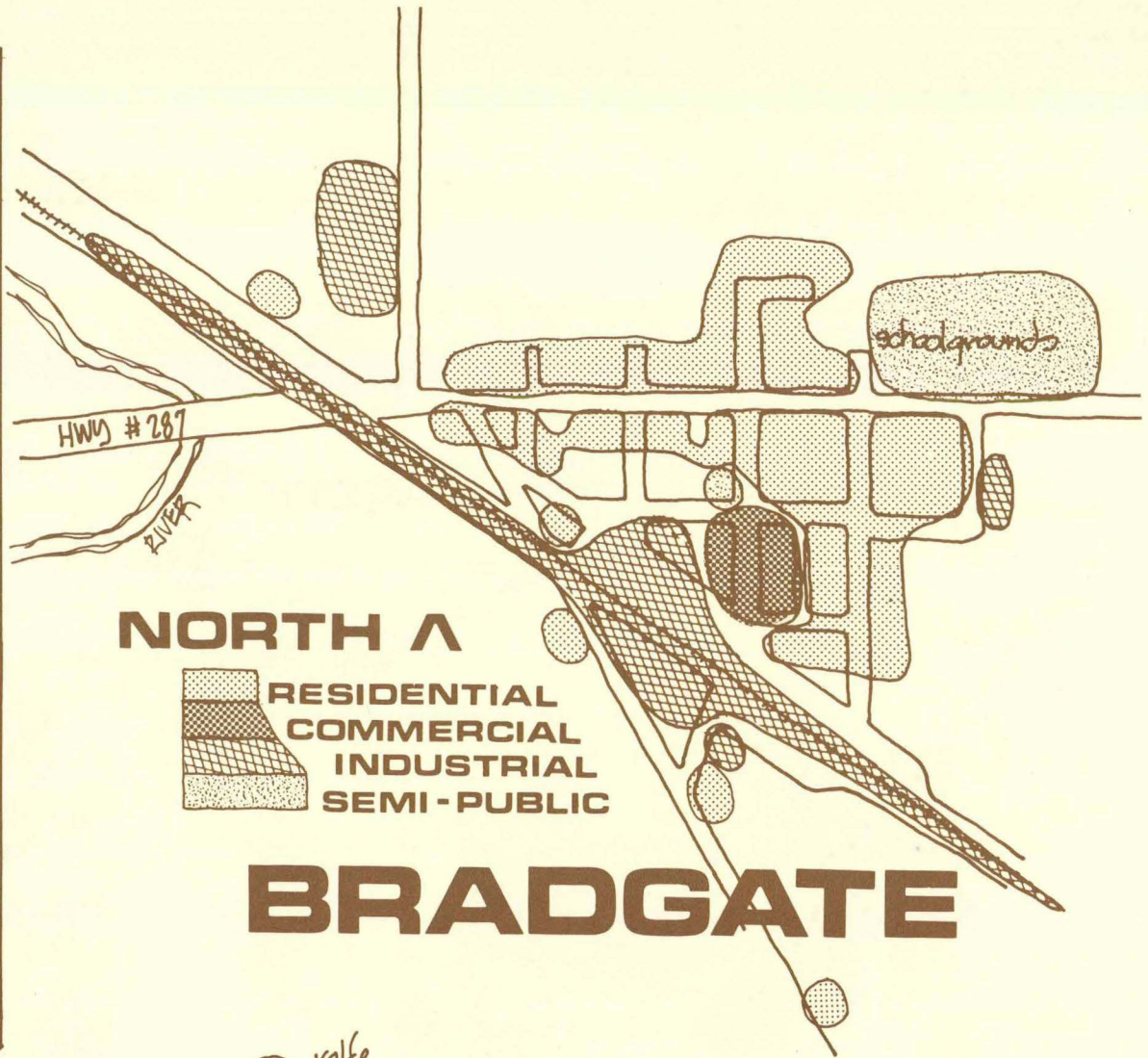
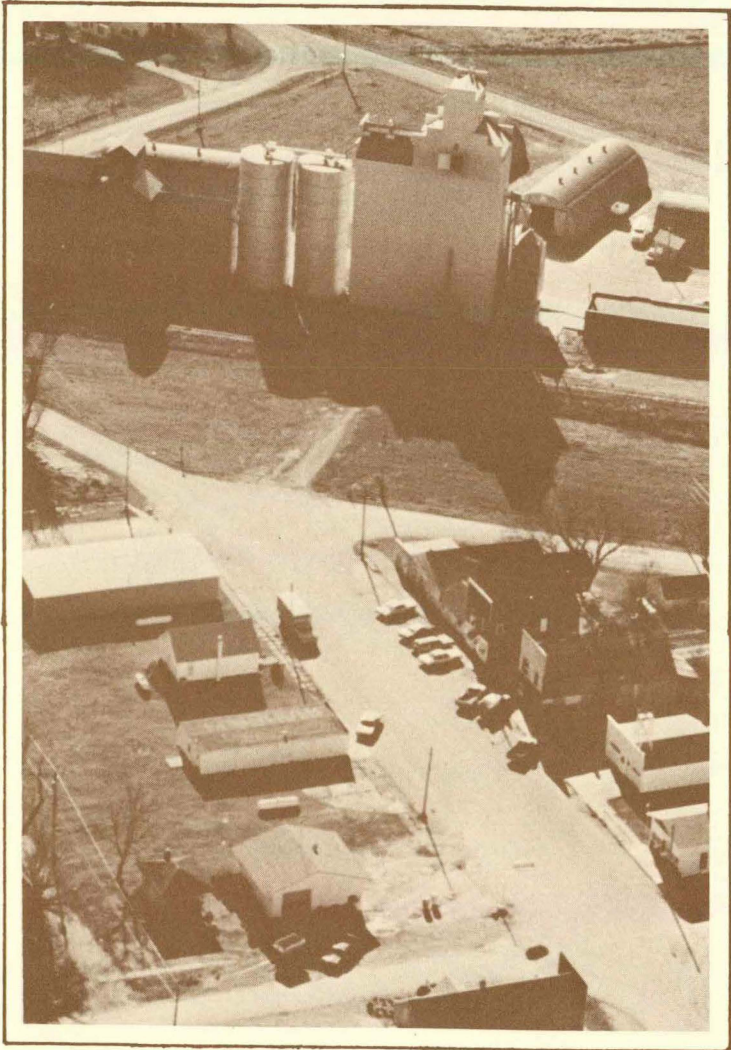
Already Rutland has a beautiful park site near the Rutland dam. Pleasant grassy areas and magnificent bur oaks make it an appealing place for leisure time pursuits.

This study recommends that Rutland develop a five year action program of \$10,000 aimed at developing shelter, picnic and game facilities for its park.

# RUTLAND



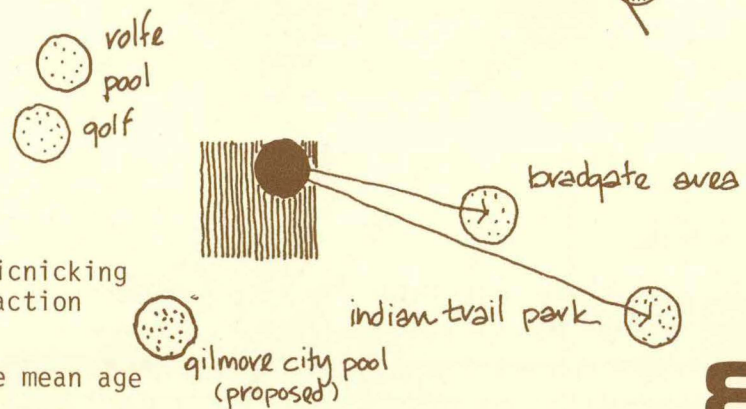




The community of Bradgate lies near the West Branch of the Des Moines River. Currently no area that can be described as a park exists in the community. However, the schoolgrounds are large enough to adequately host any development the community would decide to create.

This study would recommend the construction of a shelter and picnicking facilities at the schoolgrounds with an anticipated five year action development budget of \$6000.

Special efforts should be made to accommodate the elderly. The mean age of Bradgate is 43 years.

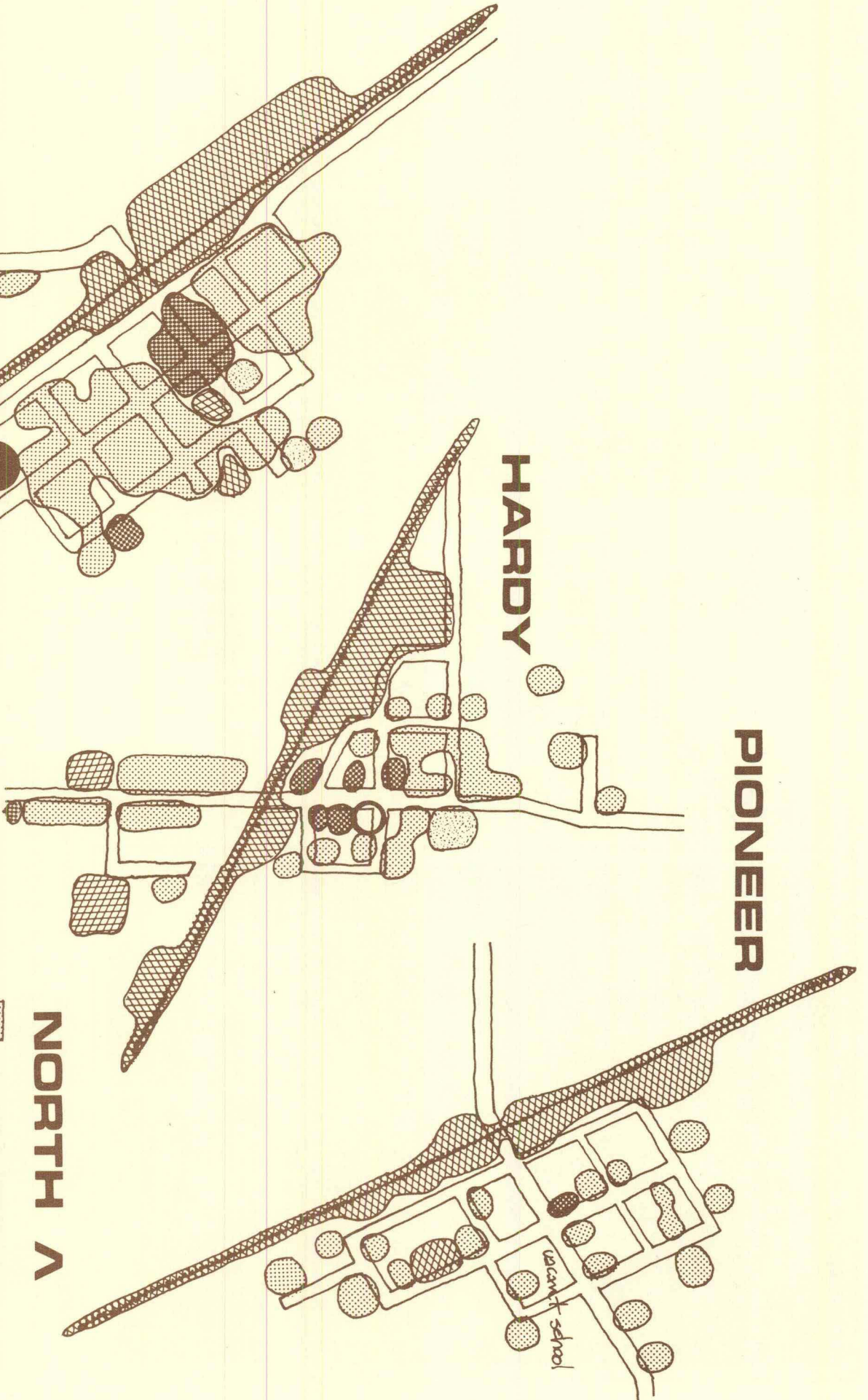




**PIONEER**

**HARDY**

**OTTOWEN**



**NORTH A**

RESIDENTIAL  
COMMERCIAL  
INDUSTRIAL  
SEMI - PUBLIC  
PARKS

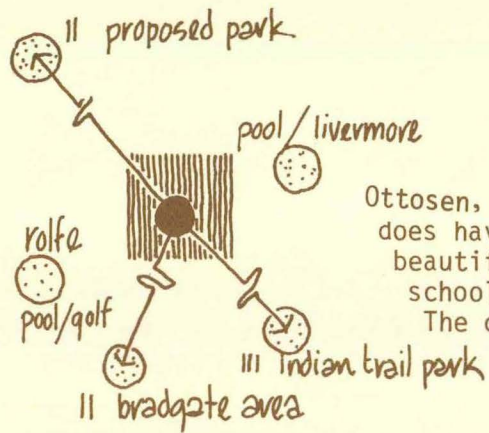
**81**

HWS 222

Wesbank school

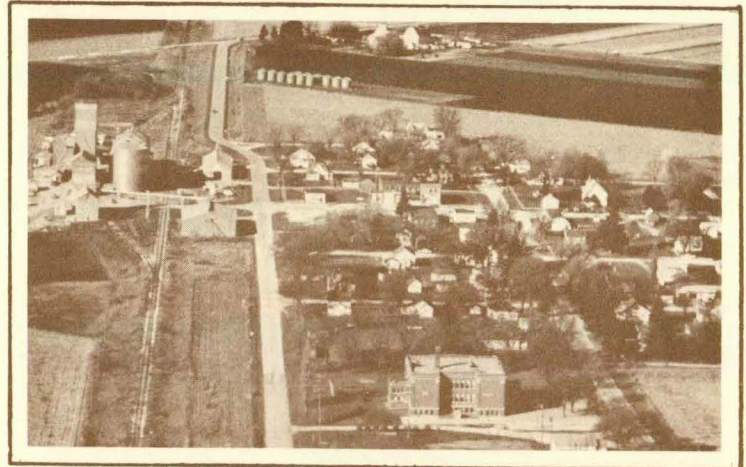
Wesbank school



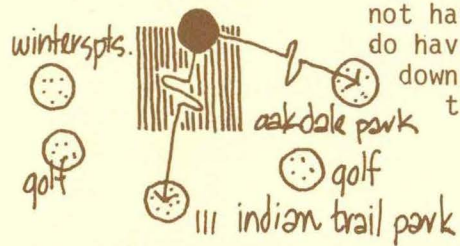


Ottoesen, in the far northwest of Humboldt County, does have a fine small parklet set beneath some beautiful shade trees. Just north of the vacant school this area could be amplified by a shelter. The development budget for this should be \$5000.

## OTTOESEN

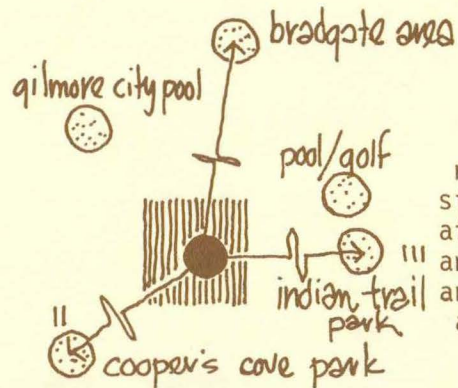
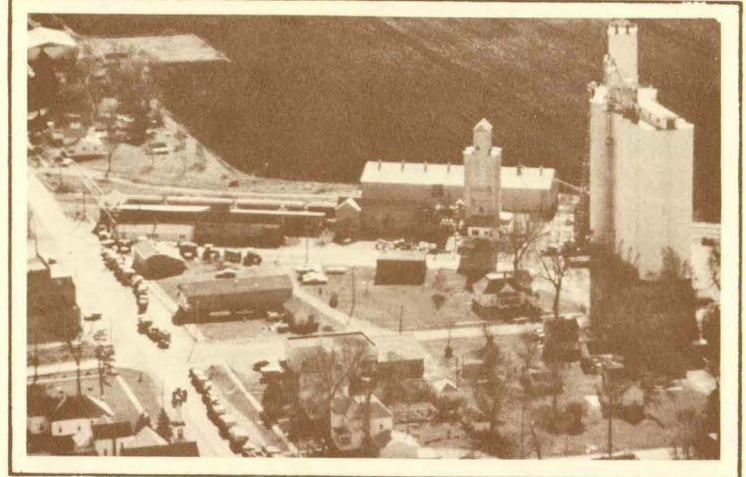


● livermore pool



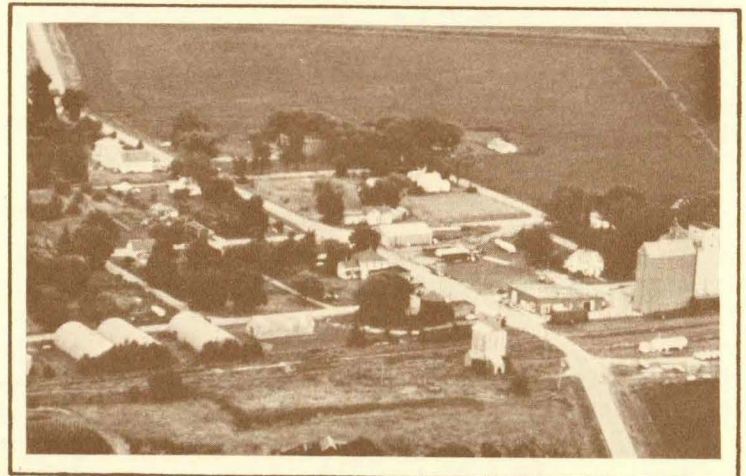
The town of Hardy, just west of Renwick, does not have a park. The residents of Hardy, however do have an opportunity to provide a serviceable downtown park at the indicated position. Acquisition and development of such a recreation area should be accommodated by a \$5000 five year action plan.

## HARDY

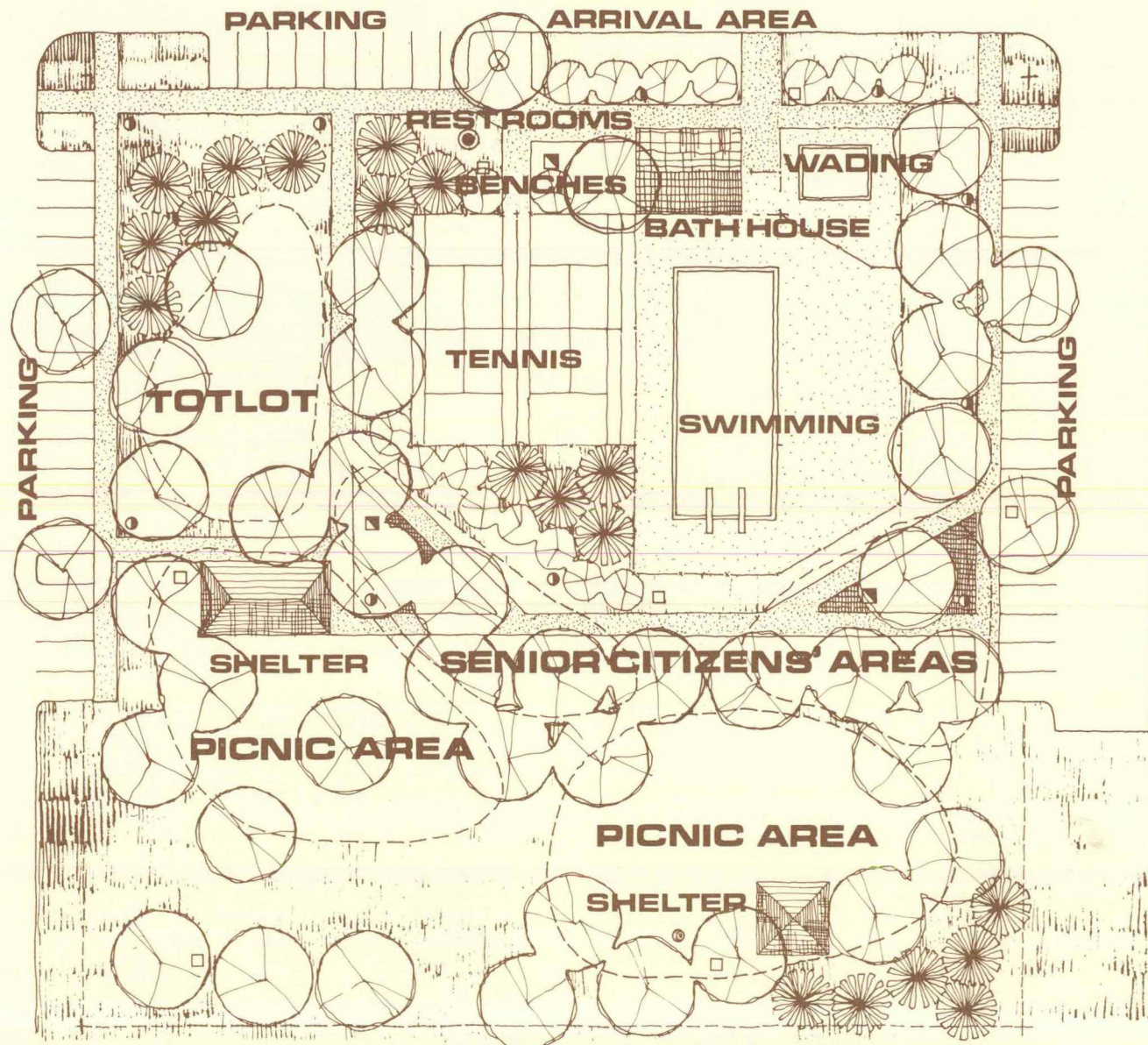










It's a long way from Pioneer to the nearest recreation facility. Because Pioneer's mean age is only 35 years of age, this study sincerely recommends that the community attempt to develop a small community park on any of the vacant lots in town. Acquisition and development of such an area would probably require at least a \$5000 five year action program.

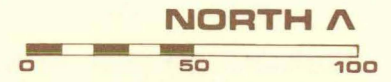
## PIONEER







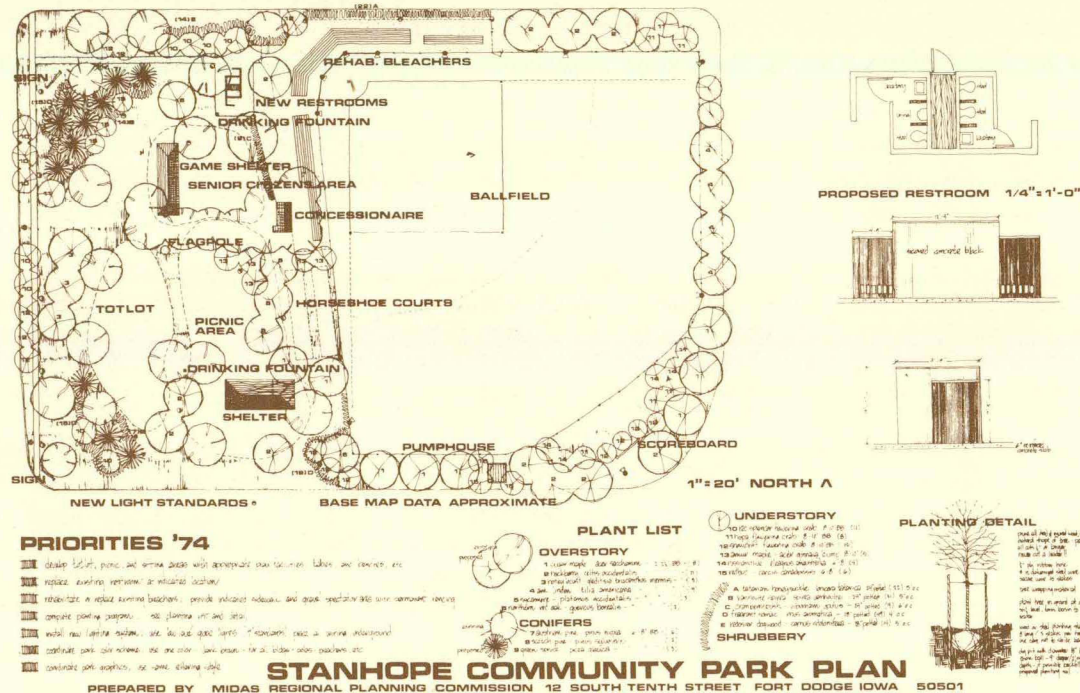
-  **CONIFER**
-  **OVERSTORY**
-  **UNDERSTORY**
-  **ORNAMENTAL**
-  **FLAGPOLE**
-  **LIGHT STANDARD**
-  **DRINKING FOUNTAIN**
-  **TRASH RECEPTACLE**



BASE MAP DATA APPROXIMATE

# LIVERMORE COMMUNITY PARK PLAN **83**





The park plans on these pages are presented to facilitate action on the part of the suggestions for community park developments proposed within this study.

In order for general suggestions to become specific development intentions, detailed park plans must be developed. As a community sits down collectively to plan its future park or present park's amplification, it is important that "paper plans" present the consensus opinion of what should be constructed. When all parties concerned are able to see graphic presentation of their collective goals, there is less opportunity for misunderstanding and much greater assurance of future satisfaction.

While the Stanhope Community Park Plan was prepared for a community many miles from Humboldt County, it is relevant to this study as an example of how an existing park can be modernized. It is the more specific of the two. This is

## EXAMPLE PARK PLANS

possible because on-site reactions to existing conditions were possible. Through phased implementation, the Community of Stanhope is guaranteed of maximized utilization of its existing park space.

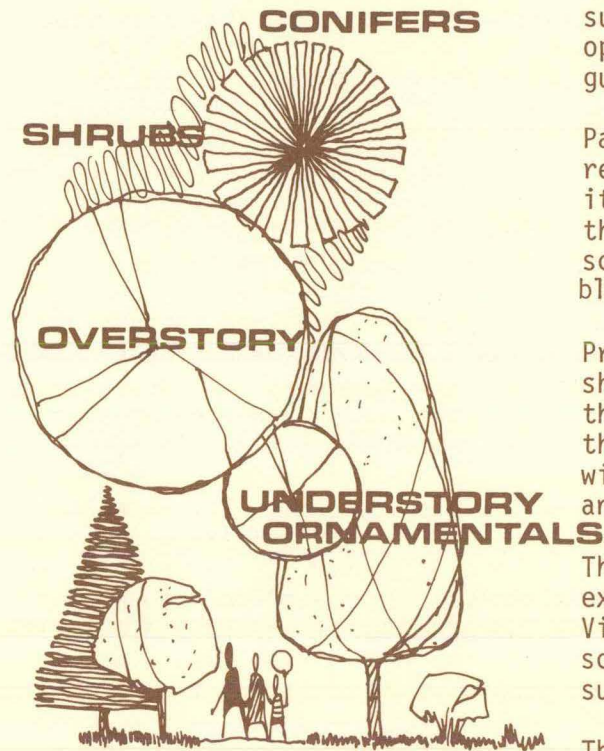
The Livermore Community Park Plan was prepared in cooperation with a committee of Livermore residents who met throughout this study to formulate goals for the creation of a park within their community. The plan is necessarily conceptual in nature. Much specific site design and engineering remains to be done. But the plan as is provides a unifying approach to the fulfillment of a community need.

With these examples and those shown on pages 81 and 82, it is hoped that the communities of Humboldt County will realize that it is possible to amplify their "community lifestyles" through concentrated effort.

The procedure for creating or amplifying a park is relatively simple. The need must be recognized; a recreation committee consisting of concerned citizens should be appointed by the town council; the committee should meet to evolve its goals; a conceptual plan should be prepared (such plans do not necessarily have to be works of art, crayons on butcher paper can get the job done as long as full consideration is given to design details); specific site designs and engineering or architectural plans may need to be prepared (there are many qualified consultants who can deliver such services); itemized cost estimates should be derived; and finally, with community support, the project should be constructed (in phases, if necessary).

That's not too rough. The difficult part is the recognition of need. When developed, the parks for which such prior planning has been done will truly be a source of pride to the community, and the community will have a better lifestyle.





As this study reaches its completion, it is appropriate that some very general suggestions be offered as techniques through which the most satisfactory developments may be created. These suggestions will essentially be a potpourri of guidelines which may answer some developmental questions.

Park planning assures the proper balance of man-made development with the physical resource. Oftentimes, one of the best things a community can do at the start of its park development is hire a competent consultant designer to objectively guide the community to its successful completion of the park. The expertise of a landscape architect or engineer can often prevent a problem from becoming a stumbling block.

Prior to acquiring or developing any park facility, a complete feasibility study should be prepared. This study should include: a) a determination of need for the development of recreation facilities; b) type of facilities required to meet the needs of prospective users; c) land characteristics and their capability to withstand various uses; d) climatological data; and e) surrounding uses, existing and proposed.

The design of park facilities should specifically consider the park visitors' experiences in the park, including arrival, on-site circulation and facility use. Visual experiences should be sequentially planned, undesirable views should be screened, and all man-made structures should blend sympathetically into their surroundings.

The plants which are selected for park plantings should harmonize with the existing vegetation and should be of assured hardiness. Planting operations should be carefully completed to insure the greatest survival rate possible.

While there are several sources of nursery stock and tree spades available, prairie plantings are more difficult to find. Prairie restoration will either require a whole lot of hand collection from railroad rights-of-way or contact of professional seed farms for plant materials. Wilson Seed Farm, Polk, Nebraska, is the closest source to this region.

Site considerations for any development include: the existing topography and its future development; subsurface conditions; sun orientation; wind direction; air and water drainage conditions; availability of utilities; means of access; locations of trees to be preserved and other natural features such as rock formations or overlook areas; and necessary winterizing considerations for summertime facilities. Sympathetic aesthetics should be a constant goal.

The park visitor's use of an area, his experiences with the park and the land should be accommodated through interpretive and skill development programs. In major and rural area parks, great opportunity exists for development of interpretive facilities such as self-guiding trails, outdoor classrooms, environmental learning centers and museums. Specific programs can be implemented. (A thought worth pondering: Wouldn't it be great if a public school science or biology teacher spent his summer conducting an interpretive program in lieu of a full-time park ranger.)



Community parks have a great opportunity to host summer crafts classes for community youths. The gentle skills obtained in such classes can shape a child's life.

Accommodations should be made for the use of all park facilities by the handicapped. Presently, at-grade entrances to latrines and ramps do facilitate use of many of the parks by the handicapped. In the future, whenever possible ramps should replace steps, safety rails should accompany steep slopes, and concerted efforts should be directed to make the whole of the park useable by all park visitors.

Maintenance operations of a park or park system must not be neglected. Most certainly litter-strewn, ramshackled facilities discourage use and are deleterious to a community's or county's pride.

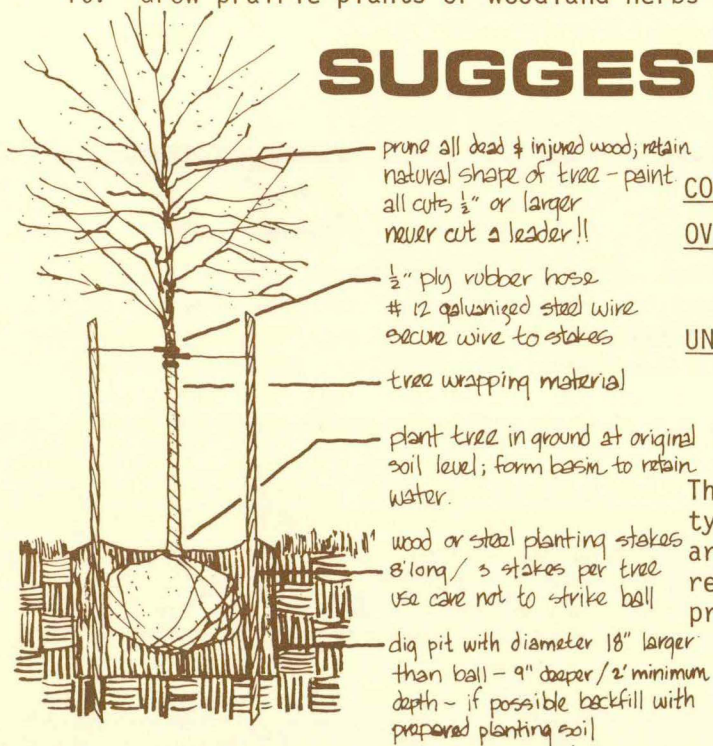
Maintenance is no easy operation. There's a lot of land to any park. Maintenance crews are consistently understaffed because of tight budgets. Public education and its ensuing respect of facilities eases the burden considerably. A suggestion offered for consideration is that a "park superintendent" be appointed (one of the park's neighbors) to simply keep an eye on the park. In the country, especially, and even in town, such a person on a token salary would more than earn his pay through his nearby presence alone.

In time, the Humboldt County Conservation Board should employ a trained executive officer to administer its park system. The major park of the system, in Humboldt County's instance, Indian Trail Park, should have a resident park officer. (A staff park ranger would also be ideal). Maintenance personnel, then, could coordinate with the major park's officer and rural area park's "superintendents" to service the parks on a circuit rider basis. In cases of emergency, there would be someone close to call the roving maintenance crew's attention to the special problems.

In closing, use earth colors, browns, ochres and olive greens for park facilities; let the people wear the color to the park. Develop spaces in a natural way; use natural plant materials. If an area is not used for activity, don't manicure it. Grow prairie plants or woodland herbs there instead.

## SUGGESTED TECHNIQUES

# 86



**CONIFERS:** Scotch pine, Austrian pine, white pine, white fir, Blackhills' spruce

**OVERSTORY:** black ash, green ash, seedless white ash, catalpa, black cherry, Kentucky coffeetree, ginkgo, hackberry, thornless honeylocust, American linden, littleleaf linden, black maple, red maple, sugar maple, bur oak, red oak, pin oak

**UNDERSTORY (ORNAMENTALS):** European birdcherry, flowering crab, Cornetian dogwood, pagoda dogwood, tree lilacs, common lilacs, amur maple, American plum, Newport plum, russianolive, hawthornes, serviceberry, wayfaringtree viburnam, cranberry-bush viburnam, witchhazel

The above list of plant materials is intended only as an index of recommended plant types. While it is not all-inclusive, the list contains those species of secured area-hardiness and effective character. The intermix of plant types and their siting requires some expertise. This study would recommend consultation with a qualified professional prior to actual plant selection.



The development of a plan such as this is an attempt to create guidelines by which the lifestyles of an area and its communities may be augmented. However, any plan is only a plan, hopefully keyed to an objective and knowledgeable understanding of existing conditions. Times change, and a plan must be flexible enough to endure such change...

Now that this plan is at its conclusion, the responsibilities and procedures for the implementation of this plan must be discussed. It is the responsibility of Humboldt County and its respective communities to accept the charges of this study and to work toward the implementation of the plans on a continuing basis.

The Humboldt County Conservation Board and each community which endorses the study should officially adopt this plan. The communities should then appoint an individual as project director to coordinate community park development efforts. The Humboldt County Conservation Board should naturally coordinate such efforts for county recreation areas.

The Board of Supervisors and respective town councils will need to be receptive to budget recommendations within their funding capability.

Financial assistance for the implementation of the plans developed within the study may be sought from: Superintendent, Grants-In-Aid Section, Iowa Conservation Commission, 300 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. The assistance, if available, will be in the form of 50 per cent cost sharing on the costs of acquisition or development of the proposed project. Other funds might be derived from donations, user fees, endorsed finance bonds, community clubs, or special community fund-raising drives. The objectives are achievable if enough effort backs the projects.

The communities and county will need to perform these other important steps prior to the implementation of any projects within their Five-Year Action Programs, if federal assistance is to be solicited:

1. Obtain appraisal reports (as per Grants-In-Aid Section stipulations) on any lands to be acquired.
2. Obtain detailed site designs based upon topographic surveys of the areas to be developed. More detailed landscape plans should be developed for all project areas.
3. Obtain construction floor plans and elevations of any proposed structures.
4. Obtain accurate cost estimates for acquisition and development.
5. File detailed applications for outside financial assistance.

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In the case of projects where outside financial assistance is not sought, the four initial procedures are equally valid. (The communities and county should realize full well that any grants received should be regarded as supplementary and not substitutionary.)

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Broad community support should be sought for the implementation of the projects presented within this report. The community services organizations are charged with the recommendation of providing both financial and manpower assistance as needed.

MIDAS Regional Planning Commission can be expected to now fulfill an advisory function in recommending more detailed procedures and in assistance in applying for any available federal, state, or private funds. We at MIDAS are encouraged by the amount of local support that this plan has received. Our appreciation is expressed to the Humboldt County Conservation Board and Recreation Committee which provided invaluable input for the study process. We would be remiss, however, if we failed to state that this plan may remain only a plan unless the entire, unified community of Humboldt County puts its efforts behind the implementation of the various projects.



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## CREDITS '74

We wish to extend our appreciation to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors of 1973-1974 who authorized the development of this study. Their concern for the betterment of the county's recreation system is indeed gratifying.

The Humboldt County Conservation Board met many times and spent many hours in the development of this study. Truly they are and will be the guides to a full and complete conservation, open spaces and outdoor recreation system.

In addition, this study expresses its gratitude to the Livermore Community Recreation Committee (Arlene Schultz, Freda Cran, Shirley Wonderly, Clarence Carlson, Everett Andersen, Reverend Stock, Harold Willey, and Gary Schluter) for its invaluable advice and concern. Livermore will be better for their efforts.

In the coming five years, the responsibility for implementation of this study's goals falls to the County Conservation Board and to the elected officials of the various communities. But mostly, the credit for implementation of the plans will rest with the 12,519 residents of Humboldt County. We hope that every citizen of Humboldt County will contribute to the successful completion of this effort. The continuation and maintenance of fine recreation areas is the responsibility of every resident.

MIDAS Regional Planning Commission is a relatively young public organization charged with a definite role in regional development. As such, in the preparation of this report and similar reports for the Communities of Badger and Rockwell City, every attempt has been made to develop a prototypical model of recreation planning for utilization by all of Iowa Region Five's counties and communities.

We at MIDAS sincerely hope that these plans can help to enhance the quality of life available to all Mid-Iowans. This sort of "home-grown" planning is essentially the way we, as Mid-Iowans, can "do for ourselves" a task sorely in the need of doing.

We wish to thank all of the innumerable persons who have entered into this study process, and we remind Humboldt County, its communities, and all of Mid-Iowa that we are ready and willing to help in whatever way possible.

*damon chlerking landscape architect*

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# MIDAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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