Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program

Master Plan
ELIZABETH PARK

COASTAL ZONE
INFORMATION CENTER

This document was prepared in part
through financial assistance provided by
the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972
administered by the Office of Coastal Zone Management
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Wayne County Road Commission
Dept. of Parks and

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SITE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING • URBAN DESIGN • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE • PARK PLANNING • ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Board of Wayne County Road Commissioners
Department of Parks & Parkways
415 Clifford
Detroit, Michigan 48226

October 20, 1979

Attn: Edwin E. Mika, Superintendent

Gentlemen:

As per your directive, we are pleased to submit this Master Plan for the present and future redevelopment of Elizabeth Park. This plan represents the combined efforts of your staff, the Community Project Task Force, the Downriver Community Conference, citizen groups and our office as park planning consultants.

Particular recognition is extended to the Office of Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Division of Land Resource Programs for their funding assistance toward completing the plan under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

The Elizabeth Park Master Plan has been developed to point up the importance of the park's 60 years of operations as public open space and to insure it's continuance as a valuable segment in the formation of a regional Detroit River public recreation system. Our office together with all concerned look forward to the plan's successful implementation.

Respectfully submitted,
BILLS/CHILDS ASSOCIATES, P.C.

ROBERT W. BILLS, R.L.A.
President

SB485.E41.M5 1979

credits

Board of Wayne County Road Commissioners

Elizabeth Park Redesign Task Force:

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Michael Shea, Director
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Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Division of Land Resource Programs

Bills/Childs Associates, P.C., Landscape Architect, Project Consultants
Orchard Lake, Michigan

summary

History and Existing Conditions

Since its initial development during 1919 under the jurisdiction of the Wayne County Board of Park Trustees, Elizabeth Park has provided rest and relaxation for millions of Detroit area citizens for over 60 years.

Situated within the downriver suburb of Trenton, Elizabeth Park covers 162 acres of beautifully wooded open space with over 1/2 mile of Detroit River frontage. The park site represents a marked contrast to the tightly surrounding intensive urban development that has prevailed since the park's inception.

Elizabeth Park's basic purpose and function is effectively summarized in this excerpt from the December 1,1919 to September 1,1923 report on the Board of County Park Trustees.

"Public Parks are common necessities. The country's need of parks is as self evident as its need of public schools, public highways, public fire protection, public sewer systems, public water supply or any other public service to all the people of an organized community, which can be better supplied through co-operative action than through individual effort.

Public parks are necessities because man, collectively, is so constituted that change is a necessity if he is to best serve his fellows and while the result of an agreeable change is pleasure, the result of pleasure is rest; and the result of rest is health. Parks, then, are pure utilitarianism.

Some of us can appreciate the beauties of art pictorial, while others appreciate the highest and best in music; still others, the beauty which is to be found in the writings of great masters of literature; but all these are developed appreciations of the beautiful in the accomplishments of those who use well their talents; while the appreciation of the beautiful in nature is a gift which is common to practically all of us, born with the gift of life itself, and parks, developed and protected, give us nature and nature's beauty at its best."

Edward N. Hines, Chairman
Wayne County Board of Park Trustees

The Elizabeth Park site over its six decades of existence functioned as a desirable, publicly operated, recreation resource with many family groups patronizing such popular facilities as playgrounds, picnic groves, pony rides, spray pool, botanical gardens, hiking trails, community house and waterfront activities including fishing, ferry boat rides plus boat races. An attractive tourist lodge building was also available off Jefferson Avenue on the east park boundary. Accessible to both local and regional communities, Elizabeth Park has within recent years been subject to a steady deterioration of park facilities that has significantly reduced the park's former structure, particularly as a family oriented waterfront attraction. The principal causes for this reversal can be attributed to changing lifestyles, convenient expressway access to northern Michigan recreation areas, prevailing county maintenance budget constraints, and rising operational costs.

The design approach for required improvements must combine the maximum use of existing park resources while considering such impacts as current recreation interests, increasing construction costs, maintenance surveillance, and energy conservation. Certainly these elements are of vital importance in any meaningful resurrection toward redevelopment as an attractive waterfront recreation

location.

Support data for the above rationale has been taken from the following sources.

1. "Southeastern Michigan Shoreline Study, 1974" United States Department of the Interior", 1974

2. "People and the River, 1977", Wayne County Planning Commission and Office of Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

3. "Detroit River Recreation Study, 1979", Downriver Community Conference

4. Elizabeth Park Redevelopment Plan Task Force

5. "1979 Vehicle Surveys", Safety and Traffic Division, Board of Wayne County Road Commissioners

6. Downriver Area Public Hearings

7. Project Consultant Field Reconnaissance

As indicated from the above sources of design support data, the Elizabeth Park Master Plan for redevelopment as documented herein has been developed as a segment of several current regional efforts to plan a series of waterfront oriented public recreation sites stretching from Metropolitan Beach in Macomb County at the north extremity, south along the Detroit River shore to Pointe Mouillee State Game Area on the south in Monroe County. The public recreation potential of this great river resource has long been minimized in deference to private interests of an industrial, commercial and residential nature. Improvements to Elizabeth Park could greatly assist in offsetting this imbalance of riverfront land use.

By way of summary, seven improvement categories identified within the master plan and considered as urgent, follow in terms of recommended priorities.

1. Utilities

   The majority of the park's utility systems, including electrical, water, phone and sanitary lines have deteriorated beyond a point where spot repairs are adequate. A detailed engineering survey is required of all utility deficiencies (including lighting) toward replacement to serve present needs together with those projected within the master plan.

2. Roads and Parking

   Second only to utilities, park road and parking improvements deserve a high priority. The present road loop drive is obsolete and affords little control opportunity for park operations particularly at the main entrance. Parallel loop road parking, a part of 1920 construction, is hazardous and fails to distribute park users in a desirable pattern throughout the area. Recommended improvements call for utilizing approximately 60% of the existing loop roadbed for access only to specifically constructed parking lots convenient to facilities. This system could utilize either the existing entrance off of Elizabeth Park Drive or a new connector entrance off of Jefferson Avenue north of the lodge building and crossing the Edison Canal. According to a recent Wayne County Road Commission survey (see Appendix) either option would function satisfactorily provided proper park entrance controls are constructed. Total parking capacities would reach approximately 1000 cars with boat launching access continuing with separate access off of Grosse Isle Parkway (includes expansion of boat launching parking).

3. Picnic Areas

The completion of a new road and parking system should be followed with a number of improvements in picnic areas. These include selected tree clearing, turfing and the placement of play equipment. Two totally new picnic areas are recommended requiring shelters and a toilet building.

4. Existing Buildings

Existing buildings particularly toilet facility structures are in urgent need of improvements. Their present locations are workable with regard to master plan recommendations.

A totally new park office/equipment shelter building is recommended for construction at the present park entrance for entrance control purposes and convenient supply delivery. This particular project could be phased initiating construction off an equipment storage structure as the present entrance holding the office section in abeyance until a firm determination is made on the ultimate park entrance location, either off of Jefferson Avenue or Elizabeth Park Drive. In either case, strong consideration should be given to park entry toll charges.

5. Walks

Present hard surfaced park walkways are in extremely poor condition and many do not relate to current use areas. Bikeways are non existent other than the loop road surface. The once popular riverfront walk is beyond repair in its present form and receives little use. High priority should be given to certain segments of the proposed redevelopment plan. Specific examples are slopeside ramps for handicapped access to the waterfront, first phases of a 20 foot boardwalk along the river edges and bikeways linking the park via existing canal pedestrian bridges to the north.

6. Shelters

A once attractive shelter structure constructed during the 1920's and situated in the northeast sector of the park is presently boarded up and serves as a storage shed. This structure along with damaged toilet buildings deserve restoration to their original classic form and function. Two new shelters are also recommended as a part of new picnic areas.

7. Concessions

The present food concession building has within recent years experienced a steady decline in patronage and is expected to be eliminated. The building structure is sound and could be converted to either a bicycle concession or a group picnic shelter.

The pony concession as in the past remains popular to Elizabeth Park visitors and should be continued accompanied by certain improvements. These include relocation of the concession structures to a site near the present stable building together with construction of a small animal exhibit and blacksmith shop.

Other park area improvements of a less critical nature and proposed within the master redevelopment plan are summarized below. Priorities here will, in all probability, be dependent on available funding.

1. Construction of waterfront plaza at equipment/shelter building site features river overlooks, boat docking, and boardwalk extensions.

2. Conversion of equipment/shelter building interior to concession and programmed activities space.

3. Construction of waterfront amphitheater over old former garden site with a seating capacity for approximately 700 persons.

4. Construction of short term large boat docking facility along north sector riverfront.

5. Construction of short term boat docks at northeast end of the Edison Canal.

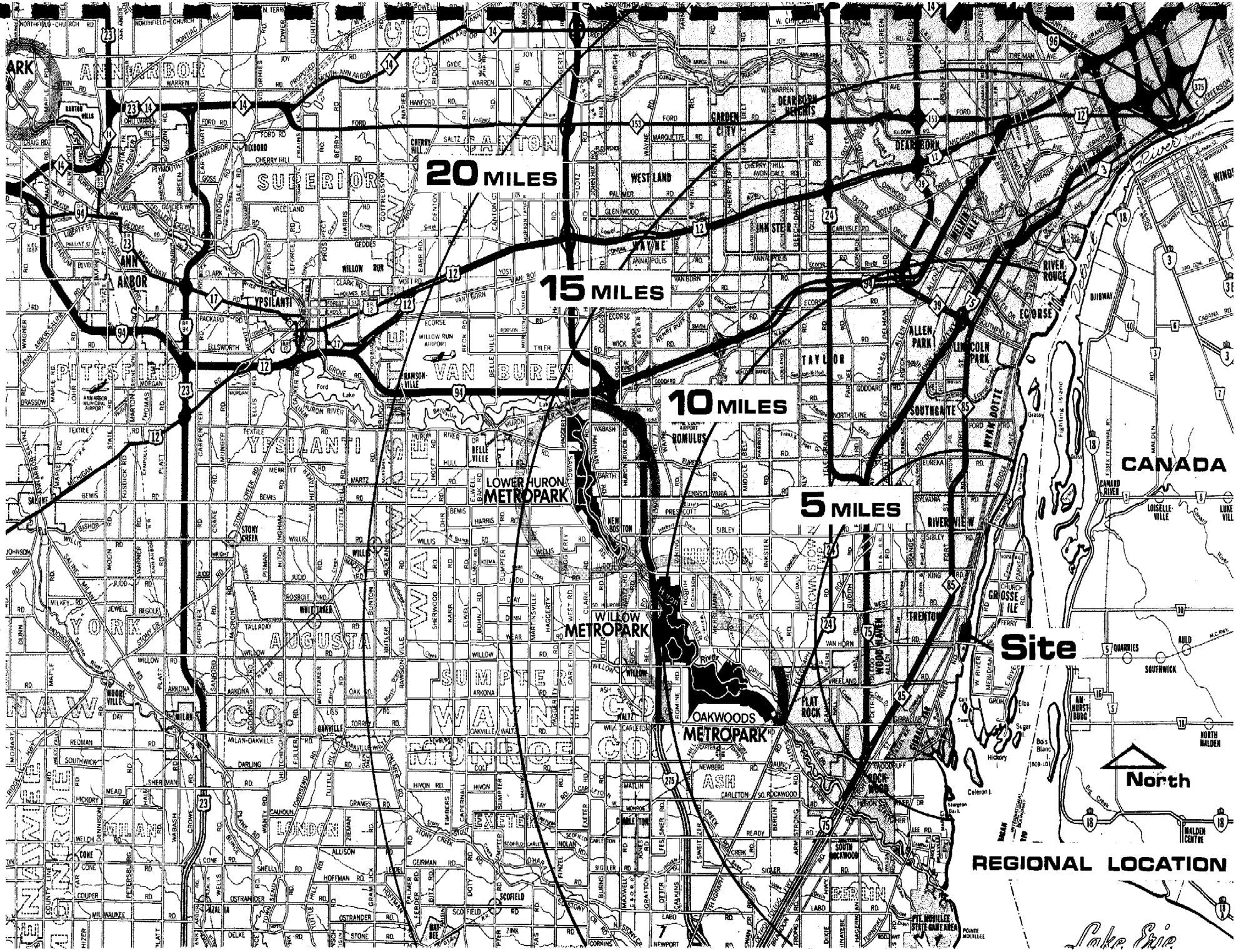
6. Completion of riverfront connecting boardwalk and fishing piers.

7. Winter sports improvements; speed skating rink relocation, toboggan slide construction and improvements to existing winter sports area for all season use.

8. Conversion/expansion of present lodge building off of Jefferson Avenue to a reception hall center with complete support facilities.

9. Miscellaneous improvements; tennis courts, ball fields, signs and landscaping.

The implementation of the redevelopment plan will certainly depend as noted previously on the availability of funds. Various funding programs at all governmental levels should be researched toward the plan's eligibility for application. Short term projects (1 to 5 years) within the framework of the plan should be taken from the seven high priorities listed above. The balance of plan projects as identified herein would be programmed possibly over a 25 year period again depending on funding availability.


20 MILES
15 MILES
10 MILES
5 MILES
Site
North
CANADA
REGIONAL LOCATION
ANN ARBOR
YPSILANTI
DEARBORN
WESTLAND
LOWER HURON METROPARK
WILLOW METROPARK
OAKWOODS METROPARK
Lake Erie

purpose of the master plan

Present day Elizabeth Park operations show an obvious need for both physical and maintenance improvements. The master redevelopment plan has been prepared to identify, organize and assign priorities to needed improvements. It will in addition provide a guide for developing short and long range implementation programs. The plan's design and intent is to also function as a part of regional planning currently in progress to develop the recreational potential along a 14 mile length of the Detroit River. Labeled the "Detroit River Recreation Study" and administered by the Downriver Community Conference, the study area reaches from the river shores of the City of River Rouge south to Celeron Island. Elizabeth Park is a major component of this regional study area.

Located within the City of Trenton, Elizabeth Park is also a significant factor within that City's continuing planning process. Though classified as a regional unit, Elizabeth Park's operations have a recognized impact of Trenton's local community environment. This point has been an important determinant within the plan's preparation.

A large measure of financial assistance toward the completion of the above river study and the Elizabeth Park Master Plan has been provided by the Office of Coastal Sone Management through the Michigan State Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Zone Management Unit. Empowered by the National Coastal Zone Act of 1972, coastal zone offices throughout the United States assist in improvement programs directly relating to the nation's navigable coastline areas.

Of major importance in the production of the Elizabeth Park Master Plan is its use by Wayne County toward the project's eligibility for a number of state and federal assistance programs. County improvement budgets for all public services are presently under extreme inflationary pressure making assistance grants an absolute necessity.

According to the 1978 Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, "Population and Occupied Dwelling Units", Wayne County has average moderate population growth within its component communities south of Detroit. Exceptions are Taylor, Brownstown, Woodhaven and Rockwood where increases over 5000 persons have been recorded. These figures tend to support the county's objective of attempting to hold Elizabeth Park as a needed regional recreation area and to effect improvements insofar as assistance programs allow. No additional land acquisition in addition to the park's present 162 acres is under consideration.

history

Followed by State Act 90 of 1913, the Wayne County Board of Supervisors on October 29, 1919 accepted the 162 acre Elizabeth Park site from its doners, Elliott S. Nichols and his two sisters, Alice S. Church and Charlotte S. Church. It was Mr. Elliott and his sisters desire that this riverfront land be developed and maintained in perpetuity as a public recreation area to be named "Elizabeth Park" in memory of their mother, Elizabeth Slocum Nichols. The Nichols family further stated as a part of the conditions contingent on their gift that a sixty foot wide canal be excavated the length of the site's low eastern margin extending south from the Detroit River to what is now Grosse Ile Parkway.

As a result of the Nichols family gift and its county acceptance, the Wayne County Board of Supervisors also appointed a board of 3 park trustees from among the board of supervisors. A total of one thousand dollars was concurrently appropriated for initial improvements and maintenance of the new Elizabeth Park property.

Wayne County's first park board realized that additional funds would be necessary to fully develop Elizabeth Park and to acquire additional park lands throughout the County, moved during 1921 to set up and approve through state legislature Public Act No. 14 authorizing county boards of supervisors to levy an annual tax of 1/4 mil on county assessed land valuation to acquire, improve and maintain county park properties. Following this action, many substantial improvements were implemented throughout the balance of the 1920's including dredging of the Edison Canal, construction of loop road, walks and bridges. Toilet buildings, lighting, water system, sea walls, docks, bathing beach and a vigorous shade tree planting program. A copy of park board expenditures covering these facilities from 1919 to 1923 is shown on page .

Since its initial development during the 1920 period Elizabeth Park, 22 miles from Detroit, has been a prime attraction to many family groups and individuals seeking rest and relaxation from their intensively developed urban environments. Waterfront activities such as canoeing, boat regattas, excursion ferries, fishing, and visual contact with Detroit River activity were among the park's prime attractions. Spacious shaded picnic groves, walks and pony trails were also available remaining in operation to date.

During the 1930's, 40's and early 50's Elizabeth Park continued to offer most of its original facilities with the exception of swimming, discontinued due to early pollutants of the Detroit River. During recent years heavy family group use has shown a steady decline with predominantly youth groups over the past 15 years comprising the greater percentage of users. Many previous and then desirable park facilities have also deteriorated either due to rising maintenance costs or lack of replacement. The old Slocum family mansion overlooking the river that had for many years served as a pavilion/activities center totally burned in October, 1975. A small ferry boat landing north of the equipment/shelter building is no longer in operation. Use of the waterfront is presently minimal attracting only a few fishermen.

The most recent new facility of major size is the small boat launching site constructed in 1973 at the south end of the park site off of Grosse Ile Parkway. Other improvements have been minor including a ballfield, nature trail and a gravel offroad parking area.

In spite of declining patronage and strained maintenance levels an estimated 400,000 persons visited the park during 1970. Since that date increases have been recorded primarily due to the popularity of the small boat launching facility.

technical analysis

Existing Physical Conditions

Soils

The entire 162 acre Elizabeth Park site is composed generally of soils within the Pewamo-Blount groups. These soils are level to moderately sloping and are poorly to somewhat poorly drained with fine textures.

The Pewamo soils occur along the park site's shorelines and within small interior wet areas, periodically subject to flooding. Principal management concerns are the removal of water and maintaining the tilth. Pewamo soils comprise approximately 15% of the park site with the largest area occurring in the present winter sports area between the Edison Canal and Jefferson Avenue.

Blount soils make up 80% of the park site covering higher elevational areas. These soils formed in loamy glacial till and are somewhat poorly drained. On steep slopes they are subject to severe erosion as evidenced along the park's northeast embankments facing the river. Principal management concerns for park development are removal of excess water, erosion, and maintaining organic matter.

5% of the park site representing a narrow margin between the foot of the northeast embankment and the river shore is composed of fill placed over Pewamo soils. This area is stable and largely turfed. Detailed inspections will be required prior to any construction in this location.

In general, Elizabeth Park's soil characteristics present few limitations for recreation use.

Topography

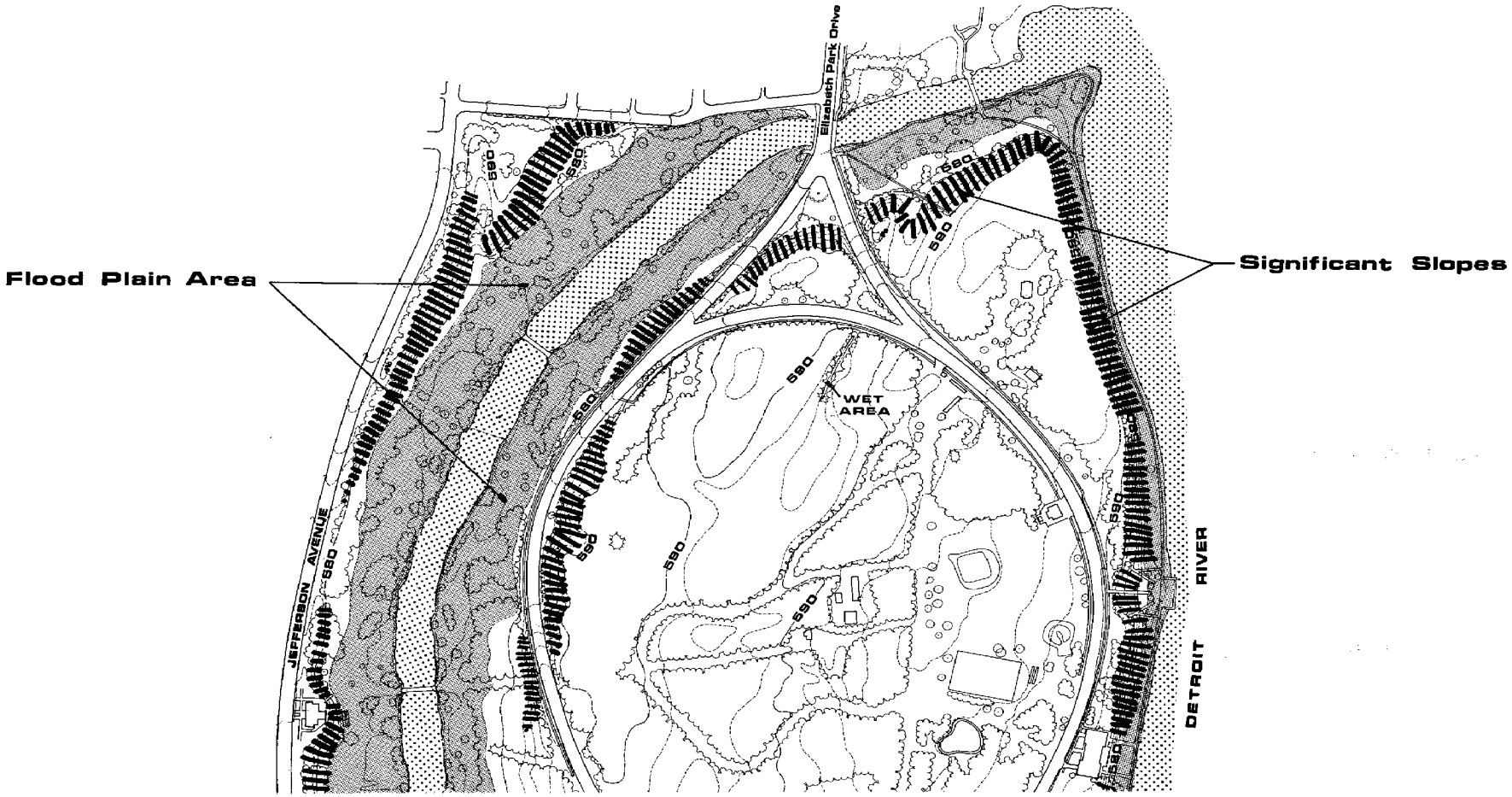
The park site topographic characteristics are basically in the form of a large rolling plateau surrounded by Detroit River floodplain margins. These floodplains extend from the shorelines to the base of a 12 to 15 foot embankment that forms the north, east and west edges of the plateau area. The configuration is shown on the Topographic Map on page .

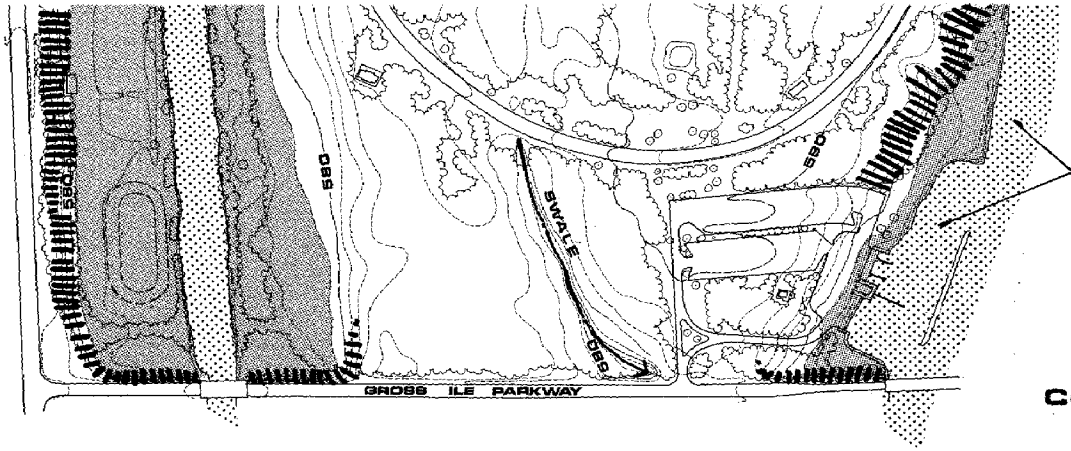
Elevational changes range from a high of 596 at the present baseball diamond and playfield to a low of 575 at the shorelines. This represents a total change of 21 feet throughout the entire 162 acre park site. With the exception of the embankments elevational profiles are level to gently rolling.

Principal drainage courses are composed of a series of swales throughout the plateau area flowing from north to south entering the Detroit River at Grosse Ile Parkway. A number of these plateau drains traverse heavily wooded areas and are clogged with forest debris producing slow movement of runoff.

Vegetative Cover

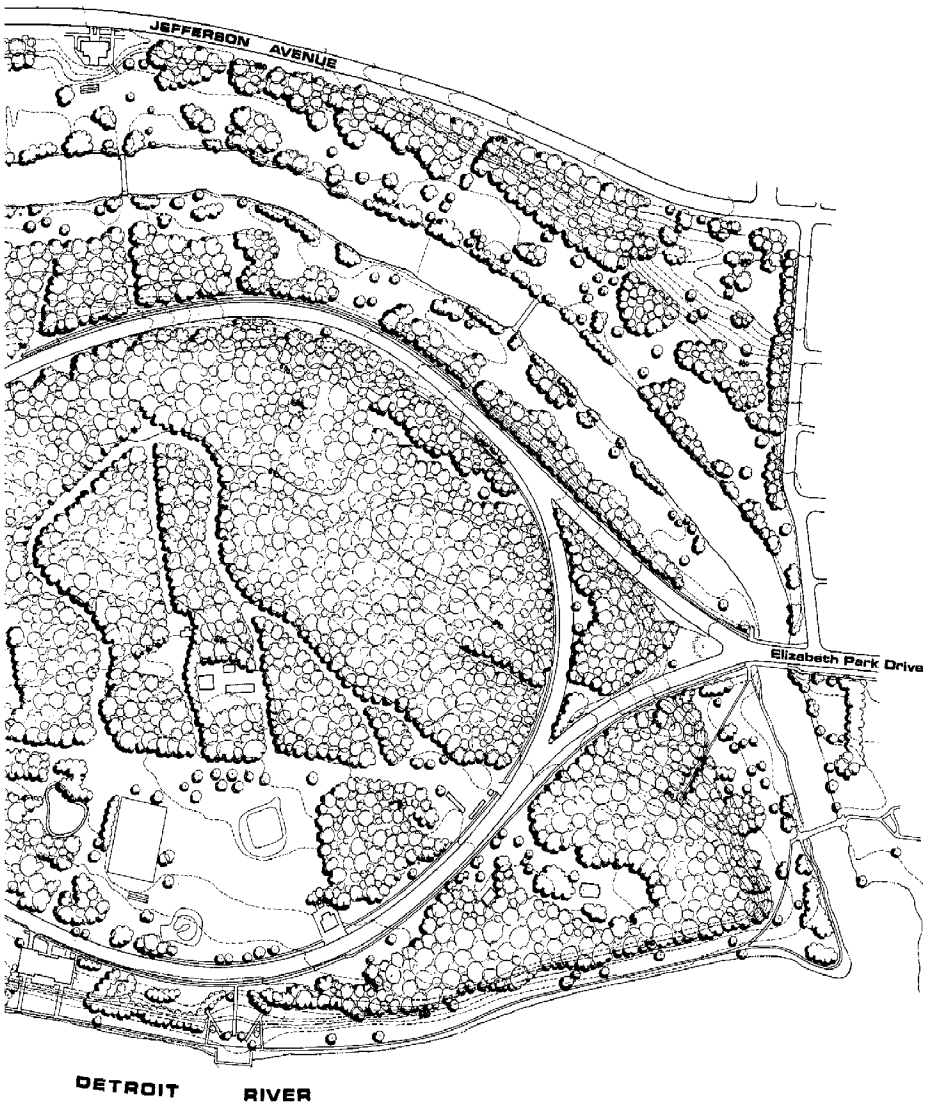
Elizabeth Park is 80% wooded including numerous large mature trees. With the exception of two playfields, the plateau area encompassed by the loop park drive is a dense forest stand supporting a wide variety of native trees, shrubs, vines and wildflowers. Examples of large hardwood tree species include elm, oak, hickory, beech and maple. Softwoods such as Red Maple, poplar willow, basswood, cherry and boxelder are in evidence throughout the entire park site. May large willow, poplar and sycamore trees are thriving

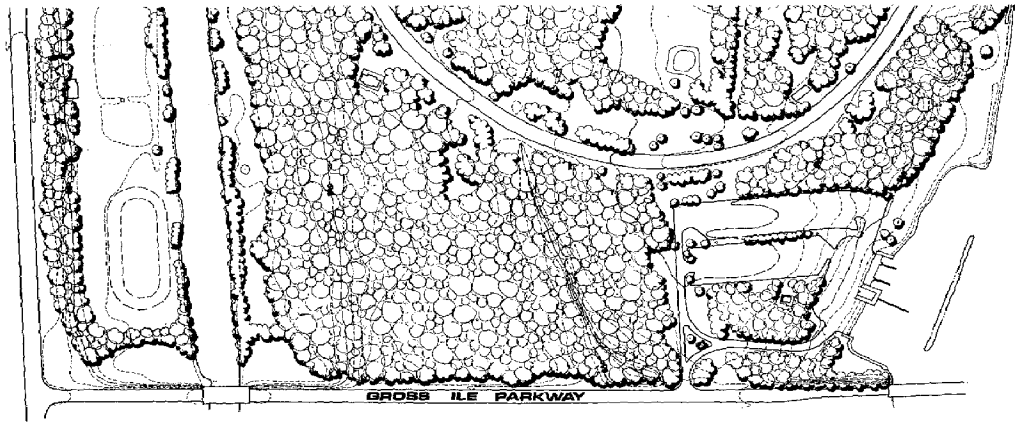

Flood Plain Area
Significant Slopes
Elizabeth Park Drive
JEFFERSON AVENUE
WET AREA
DETROIT RIVER
580
590



TOPOGRAPHY

ELIZABETH PARK · WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT


JEFFERSON AVENUE
Elizabeth Park Drive
DETROIT RIVER



Existing
Tree Cover

NORTH

0 200 400
100 300 600
SCALE IN FEET

VEGETATION

ELIZABETH PARK · WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

along the Edison Canal shores and Detroit River front. The predominance of tree cover is due in part to the county practice during earlier years of annually planting large number of young trees over the park site to reinforce existing cover.

Small trees such as shadblow, hawthorn, dogwood and redbud are scattered through all wooded areas together with a variety of shrub groups. Mass shrub plantings of sumac, honeysuckle, forsythia, viburnum and euonymus have been introduced by park operations over a sixty year period. In some cases these plants have attained record sizes. Conifers in the form of firs, pine and spruce also were introduced earlier and have attained substantial sizes.

Vegetative cover within floodplain areas is for the most part scattered consisting of individual large trees or small groupings. A heavy lineal thicket of brush occurs along the entire Jefferson Avenue park boundary from an effective visual and traffic noise screen. Park locations used for playfields, picnic groves and unprogrammed open space is maintained largely in turf.

Present Park Facilities

Access:

The main public entrance to Elizabeth Park remains in the same location where it was originally constructed by the county road commission during the mid 1920's including a vehicular canal bridge off of Elizabeth Park Drive from west Jefferson Avenue in downtown Trenton. The amin park road is 40 feet wide aligned in a 1.8 mile loop return. This main road was constructed in 1924 of concrete with sufficient width to accommodate parallel parking along the curbs. No public parking within separate parking lots was provided until recently with the construction of a boat launching facility and an unpaved 80 car lot to the south serving a playfield picnic area.

An extensive system of concrete walks was also completed during the 1920 period of initial park improvements. These walks are 4 to 5 feet in width and provide pedestrian access to many scenic park areas. Interior walks connect to the mainland on the north via the main entrance bridge and two attractive concrete canal footbridges. Concrete walkways also parallel most of the main loop road and follow the river shore. To date the larger percentages of these walk surfaces have deteriorated to a level where they are hazardous to both pedestrians and cyclists.

The heavy wooded park interior is traversed by a self guided woodchip nature trail together with a 3/4 mile pony ride concession trail. Each are very scenic and are in good use by park visitors.

Park access by boat is minimal due to lack of docking facilities and low canal bridges.

Buildings:

Present park building structures are listed and described as follows:

1. Equipment/shelter building, covering 7,360 square feet, this building is the largest structure in the park, situated on southeast segment of the loop drive and overlooking the Detroit River. The building serves as a large public shelter with public toilets and an outdoor terrace. The south end of the building functions as a grounds maintenance equipment garage. The shelter area is often programmed for such use as group picnics, wedding receptions, art shows and club meetings.

2. Food concession building, constructed during the 1930's. This building is located on the loop drive 700 feet north of the equipment/shelter building, offering soft drinks, hot dogs, hamburgers, potato chips, etc. to park visitors.

3. Lodge building, located immediately west of the Edison Canal on West

Jefferson Avenue. This brick building covers 3,160 square feet including meeting rooms, public toilets and very limited kitchen facilities. Constructed in the 1930's, the structure served for some time as a tourist information center and rest stop for travelers between Detroit and points south.

4. There are four comfort stations or toilet buildings situated throughout the entire park. Ranging in size from 910 square feet to 260 square feet, two of these units have become non operational due to repeated vandalism. One unit situated within the northeast sector of the park is totally unuseable and has been closed for some time. With the exception of the boat launching site toilets (constructed in 1973), the other restroom facilities were built in the late 1920's and represent a unique architectural design of that period.

5. The pony stable building is an attractive masonry building covering approximately 900 square feet and located at the park's central wooded interior was constructed in 1927 as a stable for ponies. Elizabeth Park has maintained a pony ride concession for most of its six decades of operations and thousands of visitors have enjoyed this facility both summer and winter.

Recreation Facilities:

1. The small boat launching facility located at the southeast extremity of Elizabeth Park off of Grosse Ile Parkway has been heavily attended since it opened in 1973. Since that time over 100,000 boats have been launched on this popular facility with 19,756 of that number launched during 1978.

2. A four court tennis facility is available at no charge immediately west of the large equipment shelter building. Court surfaces are in moderately good condition, however no night lighting is provided.

3. Two concrete shuffleboard courts are available to the public at the east end of the tennis courts. Court surfaces are in fair condition and are frequently used during peak picnic area use.

4. Three main attractive picnic groves are available with two often in use during summer weekends. The most popular area covers approximately 7 acres of shaded ground south of the tennis courts. A playfield, playground equipment, stoves, tables, toilet building and an 80 car gravel off road parking lot are a part of picnic facilities at this location. A large childrens spray pool was once a feature within this location but is no longer operational due to current public health code ordinances.

   A 5 acre picnic grove between the food concession and pony ride office is also patraonized by park visitors although the lack of convenient toilet facilities here tends to discourage users. Stoves and tables are available together with a large adjacent playfield on the south.

   One of the most attractive sites within Elizabeth Park is a six acre area shaded with tall stately trees and overlooking the Detroit River. Located in the park's northeast sector at the top of a 20 foot embankment, this site was formerly occupied by the old Slocum manor house that successfully served as a recreation center until it burned in 1975. The area receives little use by picnickers again due to an absence of toilets and other support facilities.

   Remaining picnic areas are situated in the west park sector along the east side of the loop road and between Jefferson Avenue and the Edison Canal adjacent to the lodge building. The latter utilizes the lodge for toilet facilities.

5. A $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre playfield between the tennis courts and food concession contains a well maintained baseball and softball field. The baseball field receives little use since youthful visitors prefer to utilize the well turfed outfield

for throwing frisbees. In contrast, the softball diamond is popular together with the field to the south particularly in connection with group picnic activity.

6. A self guiding nature trail approximately 3/4 mile in length has been established within the northwest sector of Elizabeth Park traversing a part of the heavily wooded area and following the east edge of the Edison Canal. No naturalist services are available at the present time.

7. The southwest extremity of Elizabeth Park between West Jefferson and the canal is utilized for skating activities. Consisting of a wide turfed field flanked on the west by a long linear parking lot, this area is approximately seven acres in size and is graded for winter flooding to produce a six lap speed skating oval on the south end together with a large free skating surface on the north. A small warm up shed where skaters may build their own fires is positioned on the west side of the parking area. The nearby lodge building is utilized for additional warm up area and toilet facilities. Accessible directly off of Jefferson Avenue, this winter activity area has maintained a good degree of patronage from those seeking cold season public recreation.

   The recent widespread public interest in cross country skiing has shown Elizabeth Park's winter resources to be of high value to this sport. The park's quiet extensive wooded areas, moderately rolling topography and convenient accessibility combine to produce an ideal location for cross country enthusiasts.

   A unique feature in Elizabeth Park's winter program can be found at the pony concession where sleigh rides on the wooded park pony trails are offered to the public from November to March. This facility is particularly attractive to all age groups throughout the year end holiday season.

Surrounding Land Use

North:

Slocum Avenue between West Jefferson Avenue and Elizabeth Park Drive forms the northwest park border. This area is a long established residential section of relatively well maintained homes. The park's main entrance directly from the corner of Slocum and Elizabeth Park Drive is surrounded by this type of development. Four acres of parkland is situated to the northeast on the mainland fronting on the canal and the Detroit River. This mainland site borders the foot of Riverside Drive also a residential section within the City of Trenton. Trenton's central business dirstrict on West Jefferson Avenue is one block north of the park's main entrance.

South:

A large Detroit Edison power plan complex lies immediately south of the park site separated by Grosse Ile Parkway. Land use to the south is largely heavy industrial with a scattering of commercial along the West Jefferson corridor extending into Gibralter.

East:

The Trenton channel shoreline of the Detroit River composes the Elizabeth Park east boundary looking over to Grosse Ile riverfront residences on that island community's west shore.

West:

West Jefferson Avenue, a major north/south thoroughfare forms the west boundary of Elizabeth Park. A large mobile home development borders the east side of Jefferson opposite the entire length of the park site. Land use east of

the mobile home units is an extensive railroad right-of-way serving adjacent heavy industry.

Current Park Operations and Facility Levels

As noted previously, the user patterns of Elizabeth Park since it's initial operations in 1919 have undergone marked changes. During its early years thousands of visitors consisting largely of family groups enjoyed this 162 acre public riverfront resource all seasons of the year. Picnicking, boating, river regattas, garden displays, spray pool and pony rides were but a few of the park's recreational offerings. This type of use prevailed until the mid 1950's when changing lifestyles, the availability of expressways to northern state recreation lands, and increasing individual mobility particularly among young adults has resulted in a decline in the numbers of park visitors representing family oriented groups. Within recent years these family groups have given way to predominantly youth groups searching for public open space in which to mingle with those of like ages and interests. These gatherings for the most part have minimal interest in the park's above remaining activities referring to congregate intensively along the loop road margins to converse and observe others driving continuously around the park drive. During peak use periods such as a hot summer weekend or holiday this traffic pattern often becomes unmanageable producing a backup out and on Elizabeth Park Drive at the park entrance.

The heavy park use by young adults tends to discourage family groups who find the youths loud portable stereo set ups, littering, vandalism and domination of the park's roads abrasive.

Former park facilities that once were heavily attended receive minimal interest the most noteable of these being the park's 1/2 mile waterfront. Much of this is due to the absence of past activities such as well maintained waterfront walks, flower gardens, boat races, excursion boat stops and band concerts. To date waterfront activity is confined to small boat launching, fishing and small boat access to picnic groves along the park canal.

The small boat launching/parking facility is operated totally by the county with present parking capacities acoommodating 90 oars and/or car-trailer spaces. Current rates for user fees stand at one dollar per car with top carrier and two dollars per car with trailer. Access is from Grosse Ile Parkway only with no access other than that for maintenance from the main park loop road.

Present park operations include two services that are managed by a concessionare on a contract basis. These are the food refrectory and children's pony ranch. The food refrectory serving soft drinks and packaged fast food has been operational since the late 1930's. Sales during recent years, however have shown a steady decline paralleling the drop in family group visitors. The majority of current park users bring their own supplies dispensed from their vehicles.

The pony ranch, in contrast to the food concession, continues to enjoy a relatively steady trade primarily during the summer season. The pony ranch's popularity is evident today with 30 ponies providing buggy or sleigh rides from May to September and November to March. Some saddle rides are also available to tethered ponies. Two goats are of interest to young children with many requests by visitors to view other types of farm type animals should they become available. The pony concession, although operated privately, is owned by the county which furnishes the stable buggy storage space, ticket office and watering tanks. The rental lease between the operator and the county is negotiated on a 3 year contract basis. County rental charges to the operator during the 1978 season were $ 1,300.00 for the summer followed by winter charges of $ 300.00.

Other present park operations include group activities programmed through the Wayne County Parks office in Detroit. The equipment/shelter building and the West Jefferson lodge building are in consistant demand by county residents

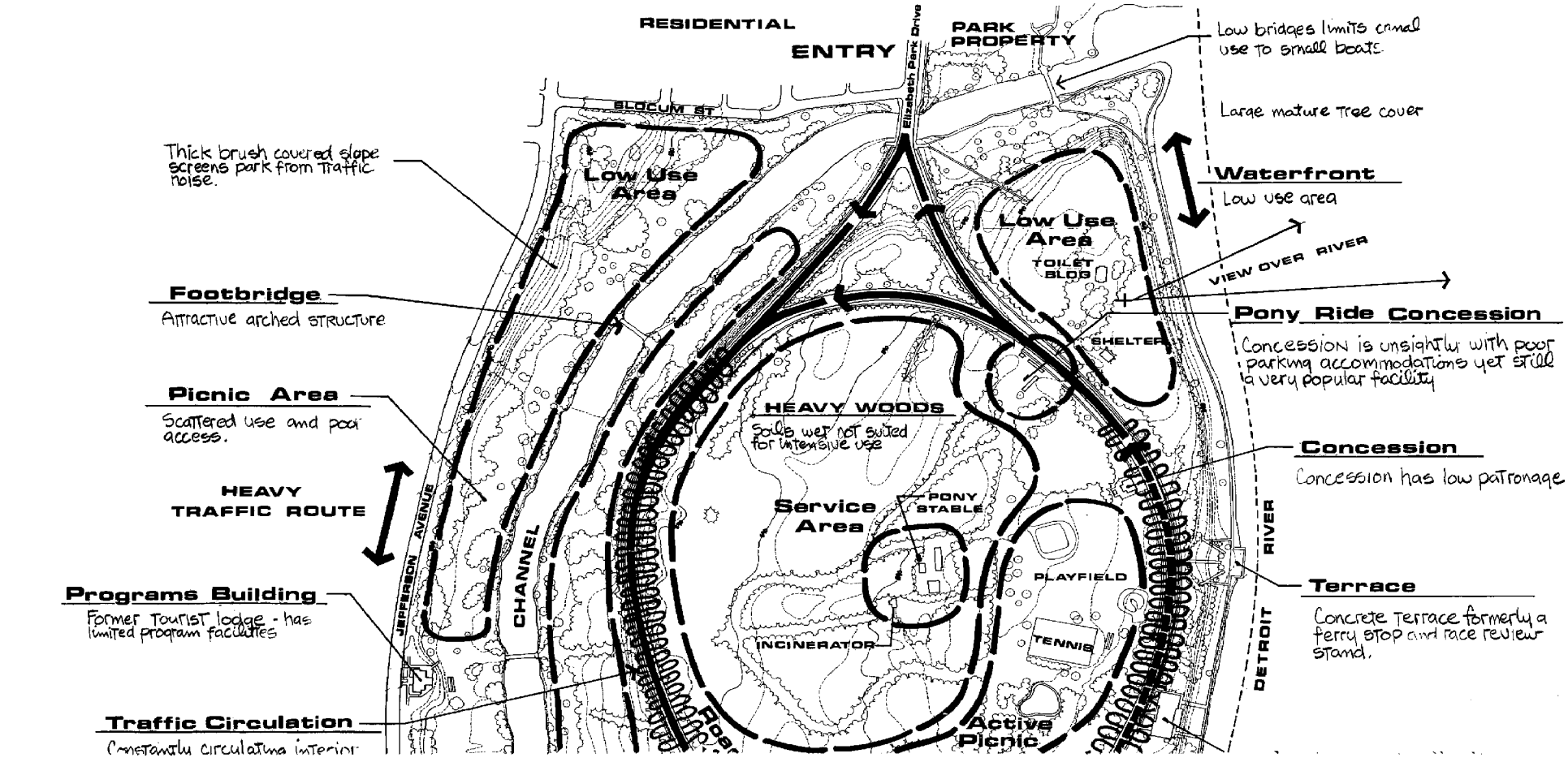
for a variety of activities such as boy scout pancake suppers, wedding receptions, showers and club meetings. The lodge would, in all probability, be in even greater demand if it were not limited to a 75 person maximum capacity. During the past four years, over 300 permits were issued by the county for lodge group use alone.

Of unique interest is a number of recent requests by wedding parties to conduct ceremonies on the approaches of the two ornamental canal footbridges. Inquiries as to what prompted such requests produced an explanation that marriage partners previously "discovered" each other at this location.

Annual county park maintenance budgets have been under pressure resulting in a noticeable decline of needed facility repairs, turf management, park surveillance and other improvements. For example, toilet buildings and park drive lights have been subject to severe vandalism with no replacements of the latter. Two toilet buildings have been totally shut down since repair costs exceed budget allocations.

Park winter operations cover maintenance of use areas such as pony sleigh trails, speed and free skating rink ice maintenance and park drive/parking area snow removal. No snowmobiles or other ATV's are permitted in the park, however use by cross country ski patrons is encouraged. During the winter season food and beverage sales by the refrectory is not operational.

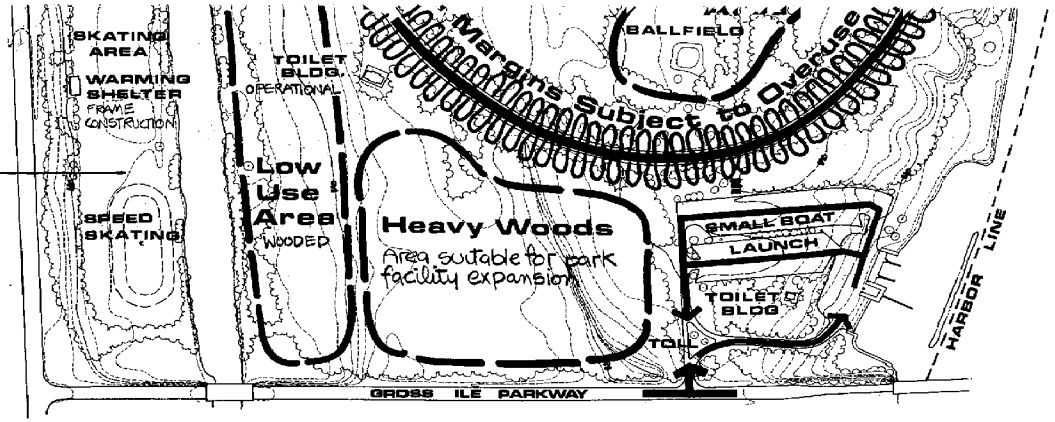
All Elizabeth Park facilities presently available are operated on a dawn to dusk basis with the park hours being 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Throughout the 1970 seasons approximately 400,000 persons visited the park with 100,000 of this total representing winter attendance.


RESIDENTIAL
ENTRY
PARK PROPERTY
Elizabeth Park Drive
BLOCUM ST
Low bridges limits canal use to small boats.
Large mature tree cover
Thick brush covered slope screens park from traffic noise.
Low Use Area
Low Use Area
Waterfront
Low use area
TOILET BLDG
VIEW OVER RIVER
Footbridge
Attractive arched structure
Pony Ride Concession
Concession is unsightly with poor parking accommodations yet still a very popular facility
SHELTER
Picnic Area
Scattered use and poor access.
HEAVY WOODS
Soils wet not suited for intensive use
Concession
Concession has low patronage
HEAVY TRAFFIC ROUTE
Service Area
PONY STABLE
JEFFERSON AVENUE
CHANNEL
PLAYFIELD
RIVER
DETROIT
Programs Building
Former Tourist lodge - has limited program facilities
Terrace
Concrete Terrace formerly a ferry stop and race review stand.
INCINERATOR
TENNIS
Traffic Circulation
Constantly circulating interior
Active Picnic

site Traffic requires control

Winter Sports

Winter sports area requires study for warm season use



Building

Building has desirable architecture. Requires increase use study

DETROIT EDISON CO.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SITE ANALYSIS

NORTH

0 100 200 300 400 600 SCALE IN FEET

ELIZABETH PARK - WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

master plan concept

Research and analysis of Elizabeth Park's 60 year history combined with study of existing resources and present operations provides a strong directive toward physical improvements as recommended within this plan. It should be noted that county fiscal constraints and limited state/federal grant programs demand a practical design approach that offers a workable method for both short and long range action programs.

The following text discusses recommeded basic improvements incorporating the above rationale.

Roads and Parking

Observations of current Elizabeth Park user patterns plus comments recorded during public hearings clearly indicate a major community concern for park visitor vehicle control. The current practice of park user vehicle circulation continuously around the present loop road can be eliminated by utilizing two thirds of the existing drive for access only directing vehicles to a series of specific parking areas. This approach would distribute park users in an organized manner directly to use areas keeping access drives open for emergency or ranger requirements.

Expansion of the present boat launching parking lot from a 90 car capacity to 166 is recommended together with an entrance relocation further west on Grosse Ile Parkway to provide additional back up space. Widening lanes on Grosse Ile Parkway are also recommended to alleviate traffic tie ups.

Totally, an ultimate capacity of 1200 (including boat launching) parking spaces could be provided through the ultimate implementation of this system. An important component of this design is some type of control at the main entrance enabling park personel to close the park when full capacities are reached during peak use periods. Planned roadways, drives and turn-a-rounds total approximately 114,000 lineal feet. Entrance options and control structures are discussed below under Building Structures.

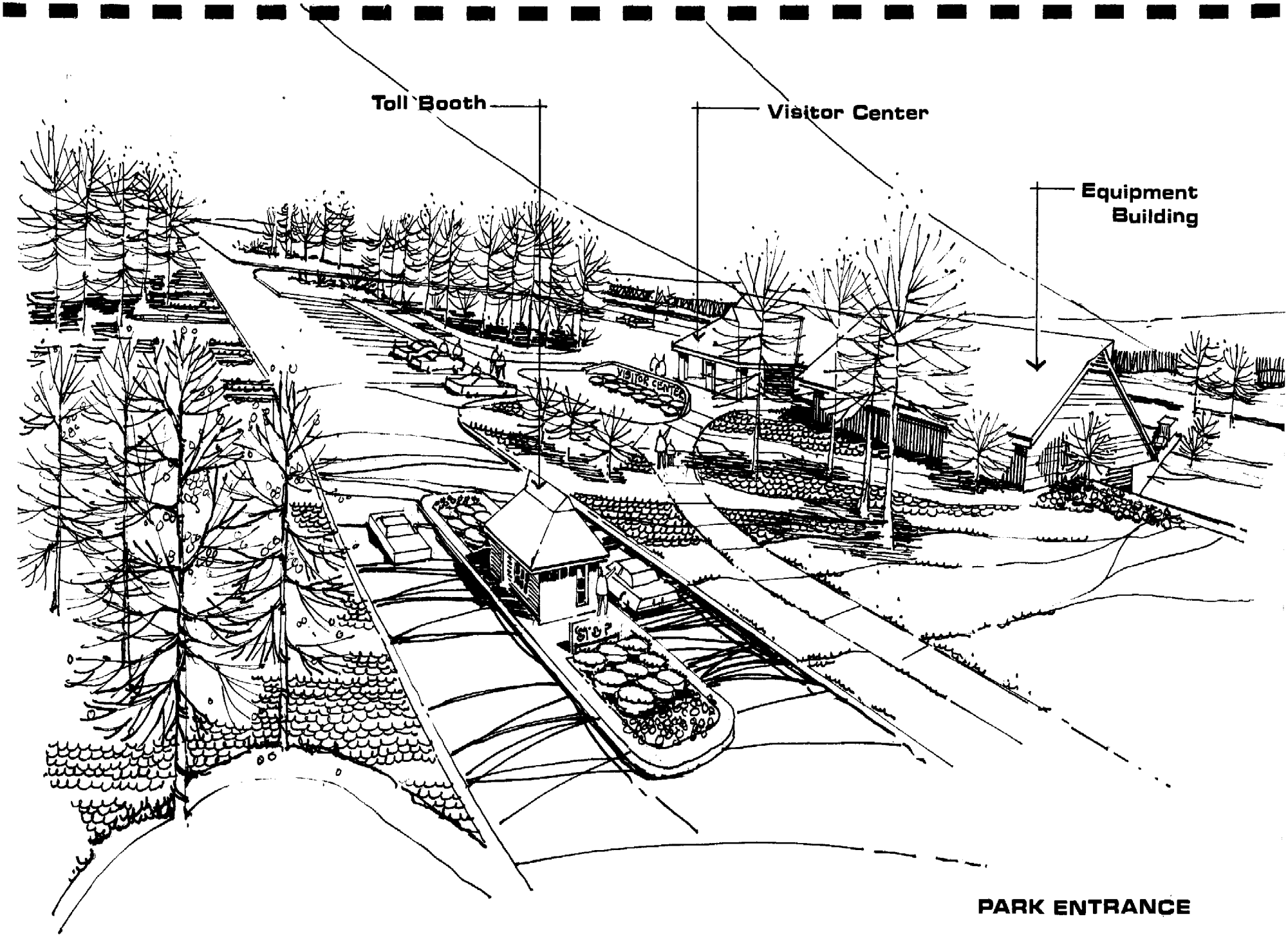
Walks, Trails and Terraces

A prime feature of the master plan is the design of a waterfront timber walkway or promenade functioning as a connector to water facility improvements. This device should be constructed of rot proof timber material dimensioned to a minimum of 20 foot in width to confortably accommodate strolling groups and to provide a visual impact in scale with the park site's resources.

Present area hard surface walks are in poor condition and do not, for the most park, relate to currently desired access routes. New walkways, as shown on the plan total 9,450 lineal feet and should be designed as a combination pedestrian-bikeway facility with a minimum width of at least six feet.

Few alterations are shown for nature and pony trails other than extensions. In the case of the pony trail an addition leading to the lodge building footbridge is specified to function as a pick up point for hay rides. Parking for this group activity would be provided on the other side of the canal off of West Jefferson Avenue. Nature trail improvements and/or extensions should be designed for winter use by cross country skiers.

The main access road following a section of the present loop road is shown terminating at the equipment/shelter building with a 120 car parking/turn-a-round area. A hard surface plaza/terrace facility in connection with increased use of the building could become a principal park attraction and intensive use area.


Toll Booth
Visitor Center
Equipment Building
VISITOR CENTER
STOP
PARK ENTRANCE

Building Structures

Most of Elizabeth Park's building structures constructed during the park's early years of development exhibit an attractive exterior style of architectural design that could not be practically duplicated at current construction costs. Brick and limestone walls with slate roofs and copper flashing carried the structures through the years with a minimum to no maintenance. The shelter/equipment building is the largest of this group and represents a solid enduring architectural appearance. Covering over 7000 square feet of floor space and opening onto a terrace overlooking the Detroit River, this building's external elegance is in sharp contrast to the plain appearing shelter space, public toilets and maintenance equipment garage within.

Plans recommend development of the shelter building to a riverfront pavilion. Within the overall park improvement design, recommended renovations include removal of garage operations and conversion to a park concession offering ski and tennis equipment rentals together with food and beverage services. Improvements to the shelter sector for group use combined with outdoor terraces, ramp walks to the waterfront and a water cascade feature are examples of public requests for facility additions.

Existing toilet building locations relate well to the access road/parking system as proposed, and these structures should be restored with updated interior fixtures while maintaining their original architectural appearance insofar as possible. These recommendations are predicated on the assumption vandal assaults will be reduced through improved control measures operating on a revised access system.

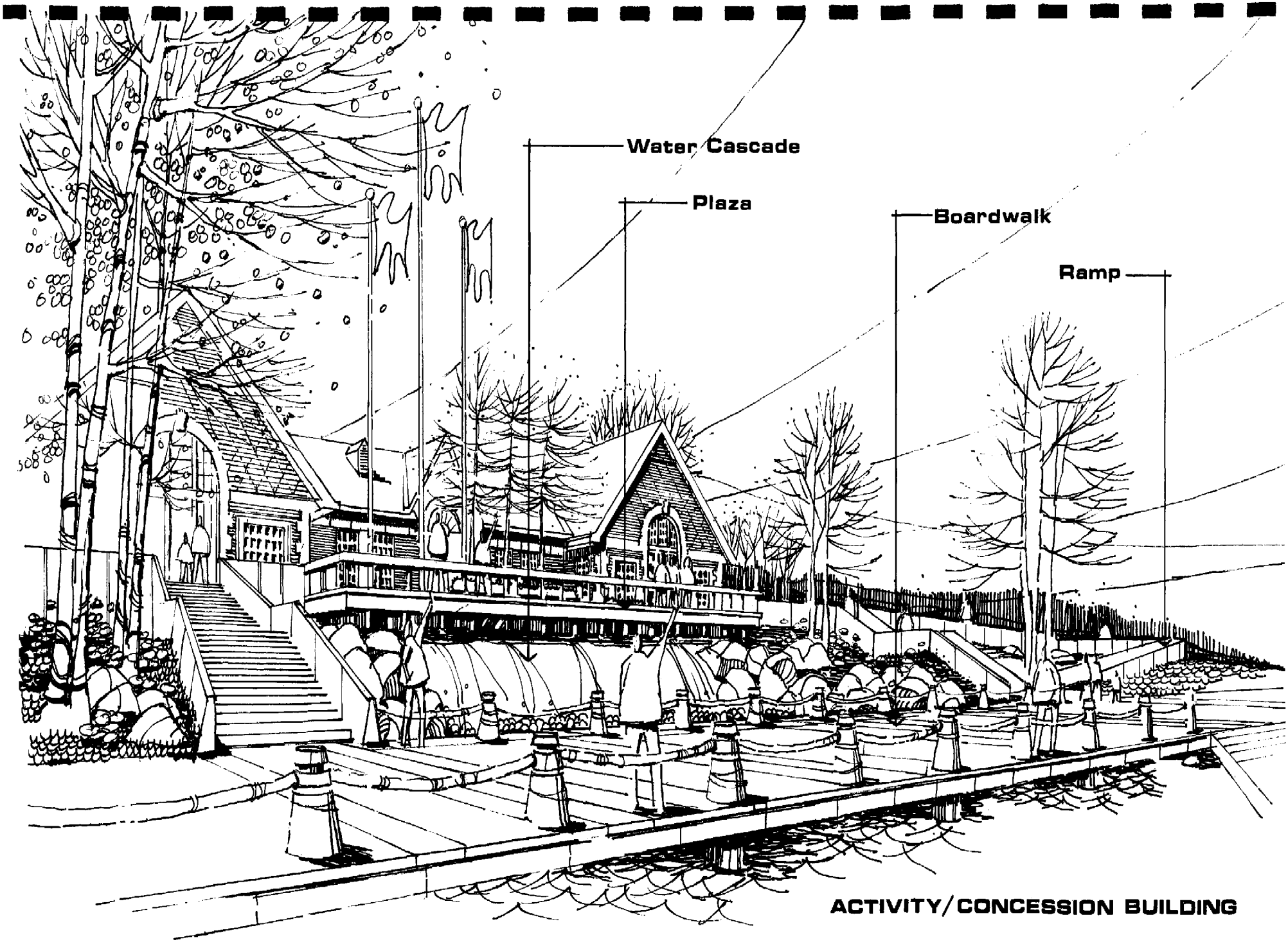
A small masonry shelter structure located to the northeast and presently boarded up serving as a storage area should be returned to its original function as a useable point of interest within a shaded picnic grove. The structure appears to be in sound structural condition and like the park's other buildings, represents a period of architectural design deserving of preservation.

The lodge building west of the canal off of Jefferson presently serves as a programmed group activities facility and remains popular for this purpose in spite of space limitations to 75 persons and almost non-existant kitchen facilities. The market for this type of operation is consistantly strong and adequate facilities when available have proven within other park systems to be substantial revenue producers.

The present lodge building location provides an optimum site for a full service reception hall as indicated on the master plan. Construction of such a facility would be compatible with other park operations accessible directly from Jefferson Avenue in an attractive seeting looking over the canal and linked to the main park area via the existing pedestrian bridge. Meeting rooms, kitchen facilities, dining area, outdoor terrace and a small boat landing could combine to produce an outstanding reception center within the downriver region. A similar operation at Oakland County's Addison Oaks Park has been booked a year in advance since it opened during the late 60's.

Of major importance within the framework of the master plan is a proposal for a visitors center or park office to be located at the main park entrance. Although two park entrance options are presently under consideration, the visitor center concept as a control point would apply in both cases. At the existing entrance on Elizabeth Park Drive the proposed center would include a park office, equipment garage, ranger office, information desk, public toilets, storage and space for establishing a toll or park entry fee collection structure. This site location together with gates and a turn around loop would provide much needed control to public park entry and departure.

An alternate entrance plan shown on page calls for the removal of the present vehicle entrance at Elizabeth Park Drive in favor of entry from Jefferson Avenue bridging the canal and intersecting the main park access road approximately one half way between the lodge building and Slocum Avenue. Under this option the visitors center would be located immediately west of the bridge crossing while positioning the equipment garage in the location shown on the


Water Cascade
Plaza
Boardwalk
Ramp
ACTIVITY/CONCESSION BUILDING

original entrance proposal. Under this arrangment the garage would operate as a separate unit from the visitors structure. This alternate park entry proposal is based on regional plans to extend Jefferson north and bypass the City of Trenton's business district on the west. Elizabeth Park as a regional park would then be linked directly to a regional traffic route accommodating the majority of park visitors who traditionally arrive from the north. The recent county traffic study shown in the Appendix provides additional details regarding each park entrance option.

Smaller building structures proposed within the park master plan include two additional toilet buildings and three shelters to be located in new picnic groves recommended for the west park sector. A control building is also proposed for the winter sports area providing toilets, vending and storage to serve winter skaters and a pitch putt golf facility proposed here for warm season operations.

Facilities and Recreation Use Areas

The Detroit River front should be among Elizabeth Park's major attractions, however a lack of water oriented facilities here has produced minimal interest by the majority of current park visitors. Public open space on Michigan's natural waterfronts are high value resource in disturbing short supply within highly urbanized locations such as the downriver communities. In an effort toward developing the park's 1/2 mile of water frontage, the following proposals are recommended as elements of the master plan.

1. Large Boat Docks

   68 boat slips along the north shore would accommodate boats 22 to 45 feet in length on a short term basis similar to dock operations at Metropolitan Beach on Lake St. Clair near Mt. Clemens. Docks would function as a destination point for boaters to tie up and visit the park. No services commonly associated with commercial marinas would be offered, however a fee for tie up could be charged.

2. Small Boat Docks

   Docking for boats within the 16 to 20 foot range is also proposed at the north shore location and along the Edison Canal to the Elizabeth Park Bridge. 144 slips are shown on the plan which would provide short term tie up points for boaters launching at the south park ramps or other river locations.

   Additional small boat docks are proposed for the present boat launching facility to allow boaters to tie up immediately following launching. The adjacent shady slopes below the pavilion building are planned for picnic grove development convenient to boat launches.

3. Amphitheater

   The former garden display site sloping toward the river and terminating to a large concrete terrace jutting into the water is proposed for redevelopment as a waterfront amphitheater. The terrace was originally constructed as a regatta reviewing platform and also functioned as a landing for river excursion boats. The location could very well operate for docking once again while an amphitheater seating approximately 700 persons would create a unique waterfront feature just north of the pavilion building proposed for special activities and concessions.

4. Boardwalk

   A timber boardwalk 20 foot in width is proposed as a part of planned waterfront improvements to be constructed along the total 1/2 mile of river frontage. This improvement would be an effective means of attracting visitors to the river edge while providing pedestrian linkage to the north and south fishing pier is also planned for construction in connection

with boardwalk components.

5. Pony Concession

Master plan recommendations highly favor the continuance of the popular pony rides in the form of buggies, sleighs and saddle riding on the circle track. Present pony concession operations, however, would be greatly improved with the following alterations.

a. Relocate pony concession structures as shown on plan next to proposed parking lot. This includes the rail where ponies are currently tethered in the hot sun. A new rail location should be in the shade.

b. Clean up and improve the stable building area for public viewing. Develop a childrens animal exhibit structure and blacksmith's shop near the stable building.

c. Realign the north segment of the pony trail to relate to proposed parking lot and childrens animal exhibit.

6. Picnic Areas

The recommended removal of the northeast segment of the loop road develops and improved relationship between the northeast picnic area, central playfield, and the south picnic area. This system would no longer be bisected by a traffic carrier and users would be conveniently distributed from proposed parking areas. The present inoperative toilet building to the northeast should be renovated since its location is ideal with regard to proposed parking and the rejuvenation of this desirable area for picnicking. This approach also applies to the nearby boarded up masonry shelter.

The central playfield regulation baseball field receives minimal use and should be altered for softball play,

The former spray pool within the south picnic area is no longer in operation, and is presently filled with sand. This location could effectively be converted to an attractive childrens play area by installing a combination of interesting climbing devices. There is a unique variety of climbers currently on the market that would be welcomed by youngsters visiting the picnic areas with their parents.

Two totally new picnic areas are shown on the plan for development in the southwest and northwest park sectors. These areas are heavily wooded and have excellent potential for this use. Parking lots off of the main access road are also proposed for these additions together with shelters and toilet buildings.

7. Winter Sports

The park's winter sports activities presently include pony sleigh rides, cross country skiing, free skating and speed skating. The latter activity enjoys a large measure of interest within the region justifying the continuance of this popular facility. The master plan shows the relocation of the speed skating oval to a site immediately west of the boat launching parking with the concept of utilizing this parking area during its off season. The new oval track would be a standard 6 lap design requiring a 190 by 390 foot oval.

An additional proposal for improved Elizabeth Park winter sports is the construction of a toboggan run structure with runs starting at the boat launch parking and extending due west for 650 feet turning north and outrunning along the Edison Canal for a total of 1000 feet. Due to the predominantly level terrain of the downriver region, no natural slopes

are available for tobogganing. Structures such as this have experienced heavy use in other locations and have proven to be desirable revenue producers.

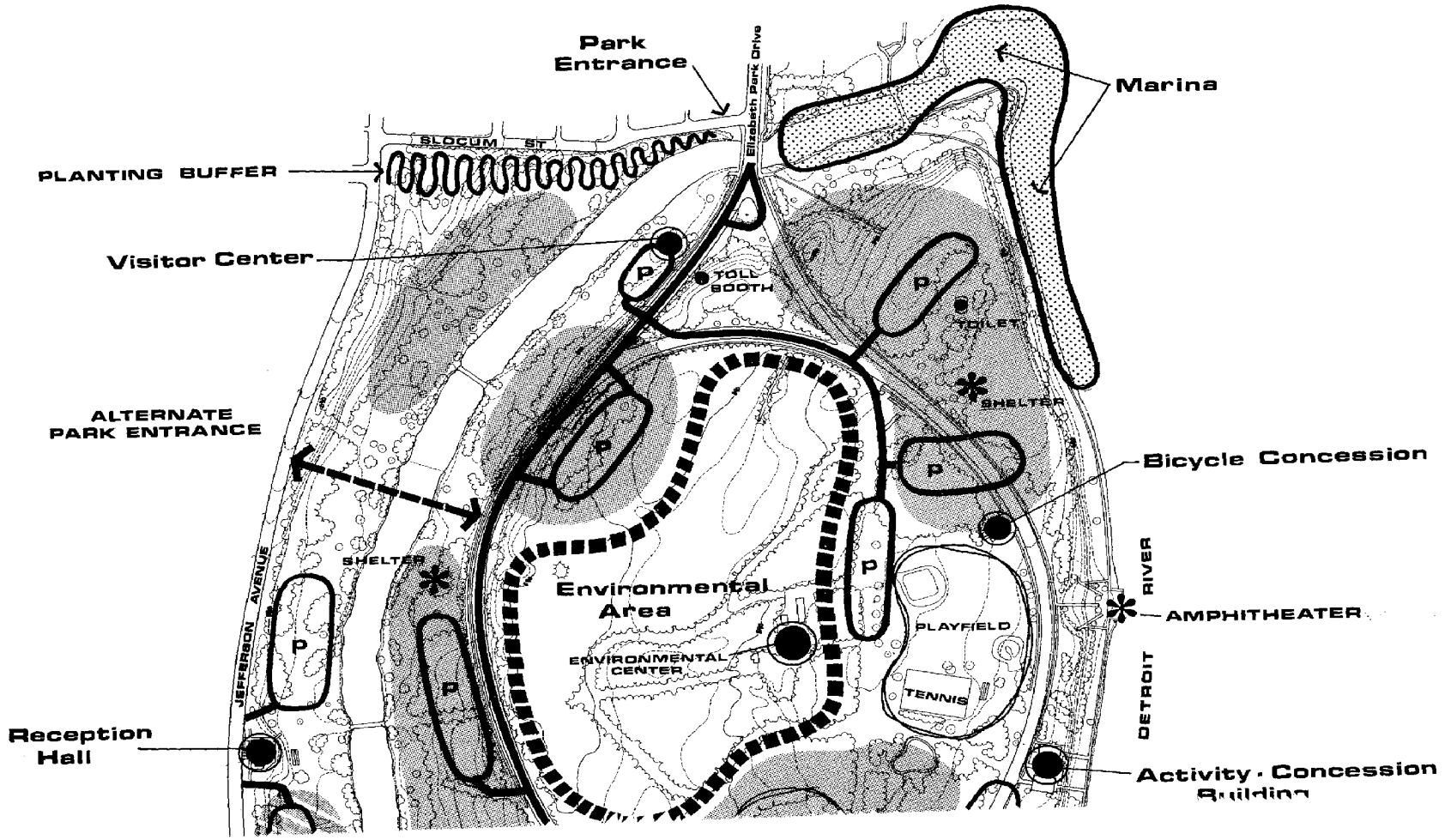
The present winter sports area would retain its free skating rink providing approximately 19 thousand square feet of natural ice surface with ample parking.

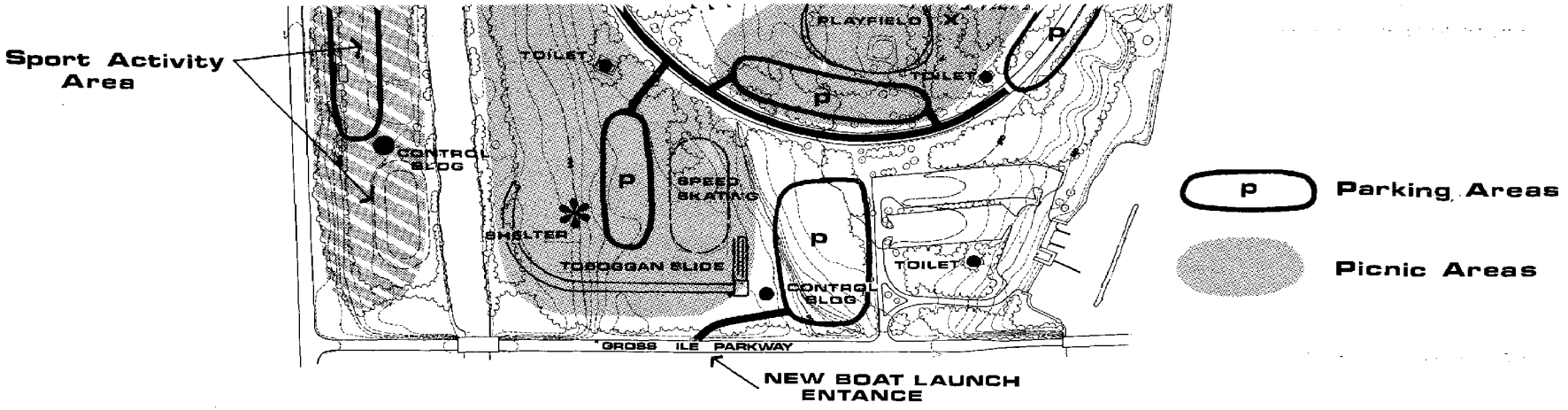
8. Golf and Archery

The existing winter sports area in the extreme southwest corner of the park is vacant throughout warm seasons and offers an opportunity to develop additional park facilities on a multiple use basis. Covering approximately 5 acres the area is planned for the installation of a pitch and putt golf and an archery range facility to be operated either by county personnel or on a concession basis. A control building structure is also proposed providing public toilets, vending machines room and equipment storage. During the winter the building would serve skaters with warm up quarters.

9. General

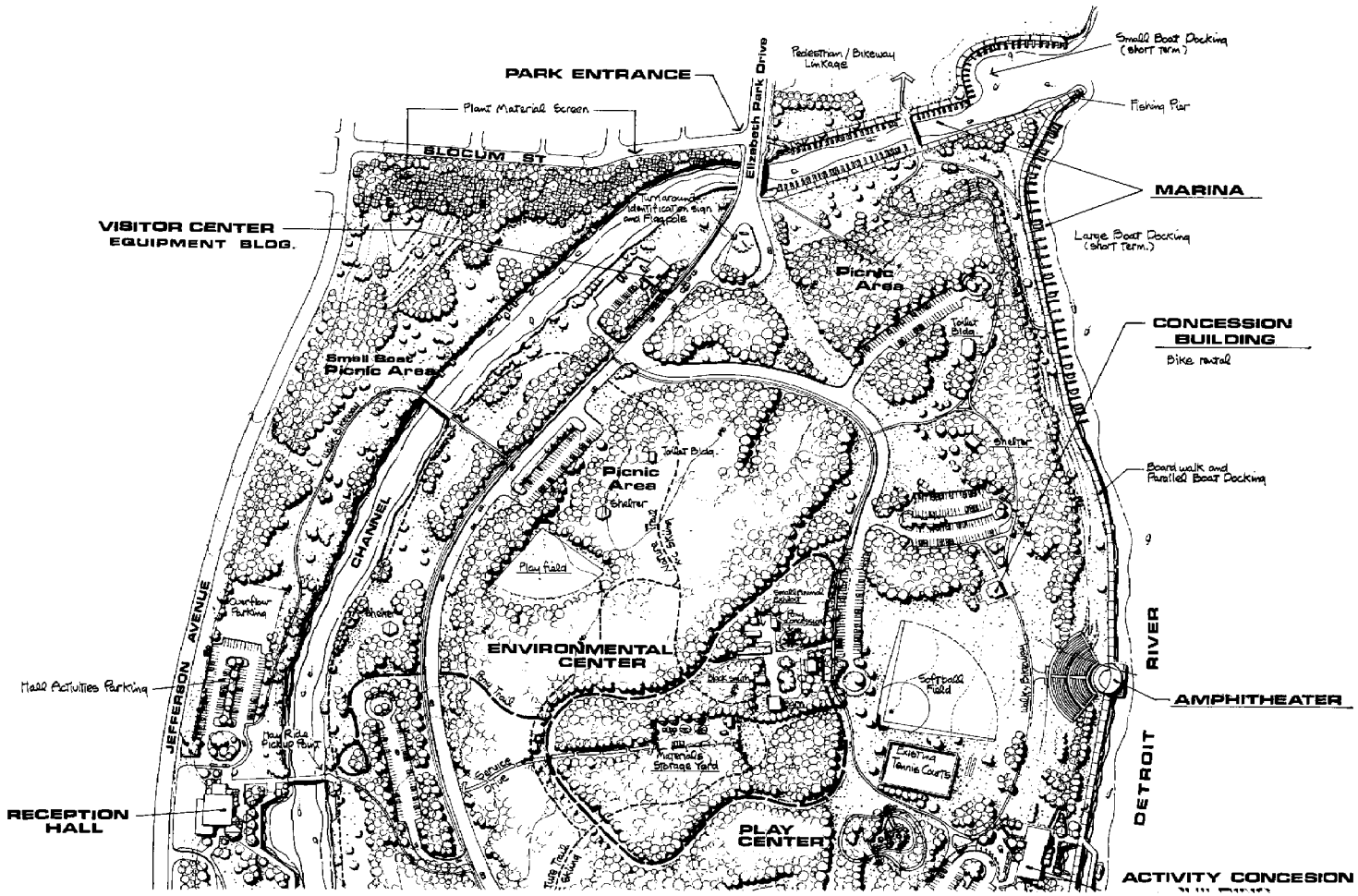
During the programming of the above improvements consideration should be given to general park operational needs such as lighting, signs, gates and the development of an overall maintenance program.

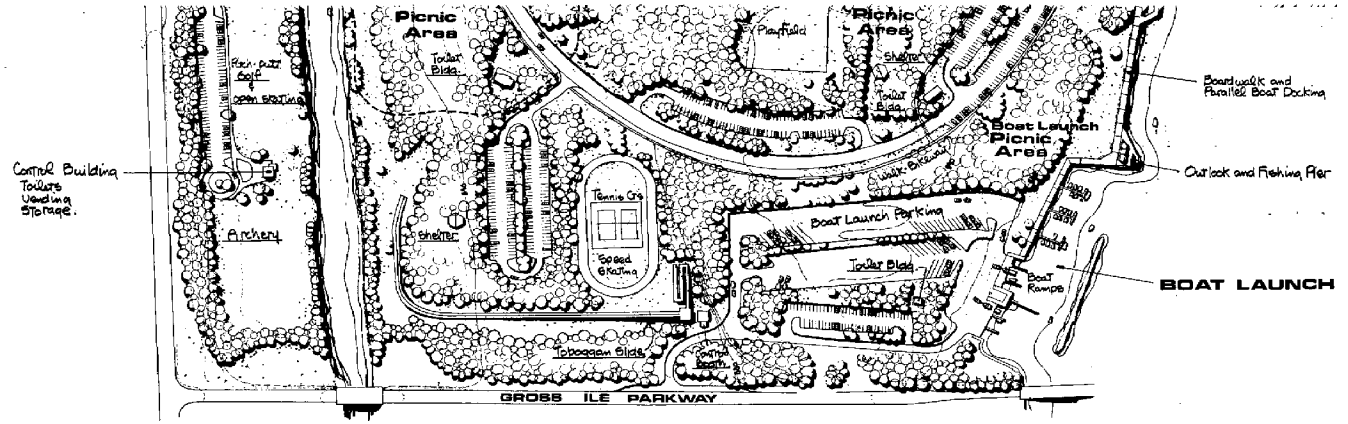

Park Entrance
Elizabeth Park Drive
Marina
BLOCUM ST
PLANTING BUFFER
Visitor Center
TOLL BOOTH
TOILET
SHELTER
ALTERNATE PARK ENTRANCE
Bicycle Concession
SHELTER
JEFFERSON AVENUE
Environmental Area
DETROIT RIVER
AMPHITHEATER
PLAYFIELD
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
TENNIS
Reception Hall
Activity - Concession Building
P



SCHEMATIC PLAN

ELIZABETH PARK · WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT


PARK ENTRANCE
Plant Material Screen
SLOCUM ST
Elizabeth Park Drive
Pedestrian / Bikeway Linkage
Small Boat Docking (short term)
Fishing Pier
MARINA
Large Boat Docking (short term.)
VISITOR CENTER
EQUIPMENT BLDG.
Turnaround Identification sign and Flagpole
Picnic Area
Toilet Bldg.
CONCESSION BUILDING
Bike rental
Small Boat Picnic Area
CHANNEL
Picnic Area
Shelter
Boardwalk and Parallel Boat Docking
Play Field
JEFFERSON AVENUE
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
Mall Activities Parking
Bike Trail
Softball Field
AMPHITHEATER
DETROIT RIVER
Materials Storage Yard
Lighted Tennis Courts
RECEPTION HALL
PLAY CENTER
ACTIVITY CONCESION

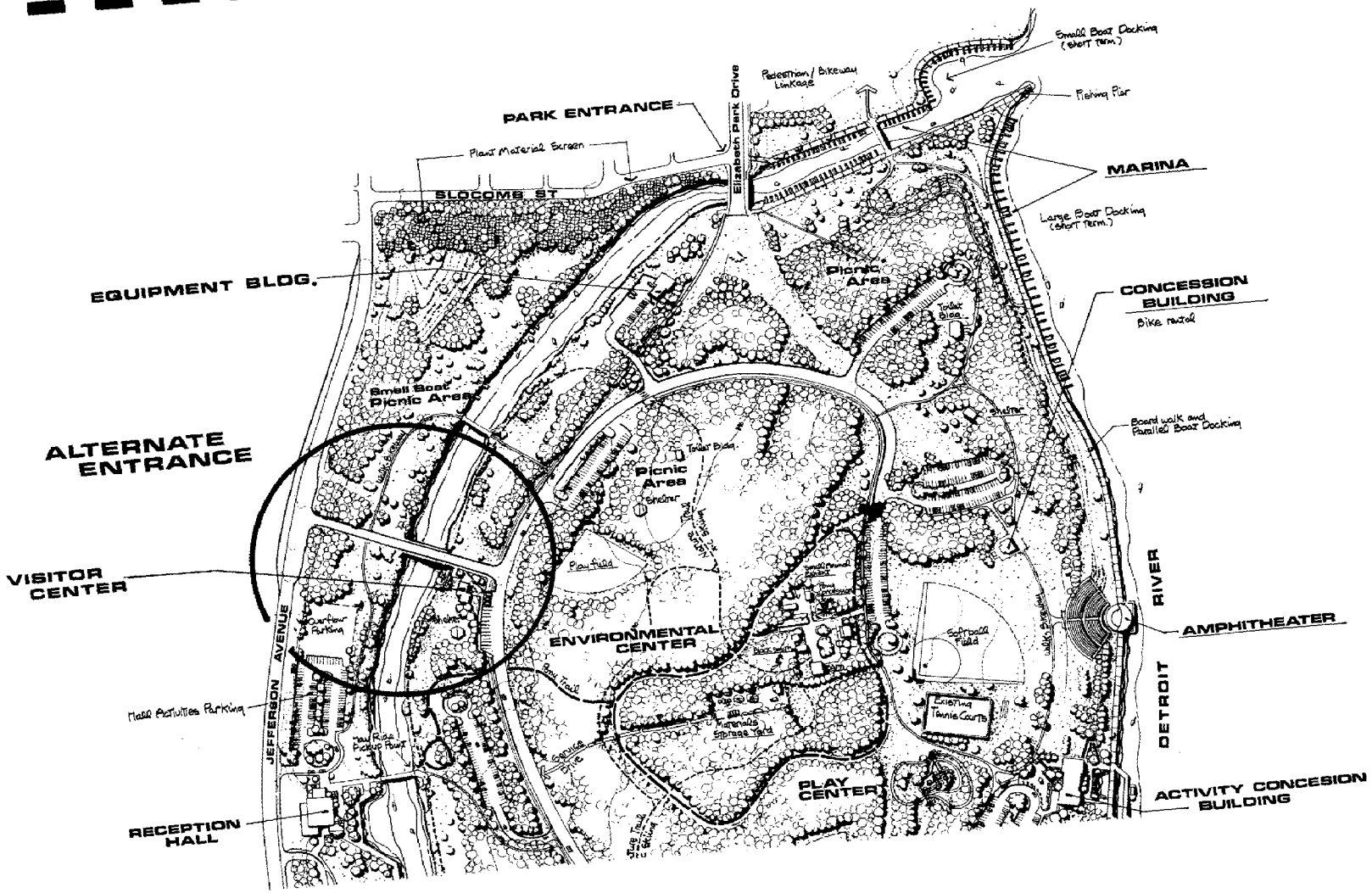


MASTER PLAN

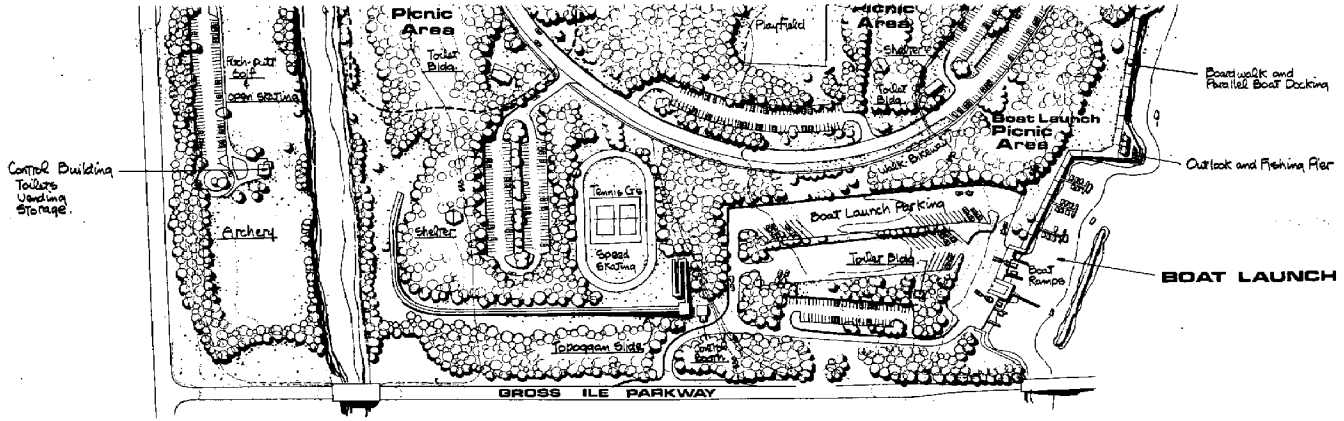
NORTH

0 100 200 300 400 500
SCALE IN FEET

ELIZABETH PARK · WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT



PARK ENTRANCE
Plant Material Screen
SLOCOMB ST
Elizabeth Park Drive
Pedestrian / Bikeway Linkage
Small Boat Docking (short term.)
Fishing Pier
MARINA
Large Boat Docking (short term.)
EQUIPMENT BLDG.
Picnic Area
Toilet Bldg.
CONCESSION BUILDING
Bike rental
Small Boat Picnic Area
Shelter
Board walk and Parallel Boat Docking
ALTERNATE ENTRANCE
Toilet Bldg.
Picnic Area
Shelter
Play field
VISITOR CENTER
Overflow Parking
Shelter
ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
Softball Field
AMPHITHEATER
RIVER
DETROIT
JEFFERSON AVENUE
Hall Activities Parking
Hay Ride Pickup Point
Materials Storage Yard
Existing Tennis Courts
PLAY CENTER
ACTIVITY CONCESION BUILDING
RECEPTION HALL



NORTH

0 100 200 300 400 500
SCALE IN FEET

ALTERNATE ENTRANCE STUDY

ELIZABETH PARK - WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

priorities and general cost estimate

The fifteen categories listed below represent improvement projects as specified within the text of the Elizabeth Park Master Plan. Projects are listed in order of priorities with items 1 through 5 representing a suggested short term (1 to 5 years) redevelopment program, and items 6 through 15 considered as long range (20 to 25 years).

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	GENERAL ESTIMATE
1. Utilities, roads and parking lot construction	$ 580,000
2. Waterfront facilities, phase one a. Small boat launching site dock additions b. Fishing pier c. Shoreline improvements and boardwalk construction	650,000
3. Visitor's center construction, phase one a. Maintenance equipment garage and temporary park office b. Entrance control structures	350,000
4. Existing park building improvements a. Toilet building repairs b. Equipment/shelter building conversion to activities and concession pavilion plaza construction c. Conversion of concession building to group shelter and/or a bicycle rental facility	1,200,000
5. Pedestrian-bikeway system	$ 150,000
6. Pony concession improvements a. Concession structure relocation and north trail alternations b. Construction of childrens animal exhibit and blacksmith's shop	220,000
7. New picnic area development a. Clearing b. Construction of one toilet building and three shelter structures	150,000
8. Visitor's center, phase two a. Construction of park office as addition to equipment garage completed under phase one b. Toll booth	2,500,000
9. Winter sports development for all season use a. Pitch and putt golf facility b. Archery range c. Control building construction d. Existing parking lot improvements	225,000
10. Amphitheater construction	200,000
11. Small and large boat dock construction	3,000,000

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	GENERAL ESTIMATE
12. Relocation of six lap spped skating rink and support building	$ 200,000
13. Construction of toboggan slide structure	250,000
14. Reception hall construction and canal boat landing	3,500,000
15. Miscellaneous minor structures; signs, lighting, landscaping, etc.	350,000
TOTAL.....	$ 13,525,000

Note:

The above total should be increased by a minimum factor of 10% per year to allow for prevailing inflationary trends.

funding methods

Prevailing county budget constraints make it mandatory that the Elizabeth Park improvements as recommended within the master plan be programmed for application to applicable state and/or federal matching grant programs.

FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

The programs listed here are of specific value to addressing various aspects of waterfront recreation development. The major focus of these programs are not directed specifically to waterfront recreation.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974; Community Development and Block Grant Program, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - a major program to aid cities in improving low and moderate income areas by acquisition and development of public works. A 80-20 match program.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965; Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of Interior - a program to provide funds for acquisition of land and water areas and development of facilities for public outdoor recreation. Acquisition of land and water may include new areas or additions to existing parks. A 50-50 match program.

Federal Aid Highway Act of 1976; Federal Aid Highway Program and the Transportation Improvement Program, U.S. Department of Transportation - grants for the acquisition development, improvement and repair of transportation facilities, including bikeways, walkways, and small boat access sites.

Public Works Grant Program of 1961; The Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce - grants and loans for public works and development facilities to assist the nation's sluggish construction industry.

Revenue Sharing - Direct unconditional fiscal assistance to local governments.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act of 1978; Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, U.S. Department of the Interior - Grants to aid economically hard-pressed cities, counties and their neighborhoods in rehabilitating their existing parks and recreation systems. A 80-20 local match program. A 85-15 state match program.

STATE FUNDING

Funds for capital improvements may be obtained directly from direct allocations of the State's Fiscal Budget from department and divisions listed below.

Department of Natural Resources

Fisheries Division	Recreation Services Division
Forestry Division	Resource Recovery Division
Land Resource Programs	Water Quality Division
Parks Division	Waterways Division

Krammer Trust Fund - Grants allocated for acquisition of land for recreational purposes from a fund generated by revenues collected for oil exploration, drilling and foresting on state lands.

PRIVATE

Sources of funds are available through private trust foundations such as; The Kresge Mott and Ford Foundations, private organizations and associations such as League of American Wheelmen, Inc., American Power Boat Association, etc.

appendix

ELIZABETH PARK TRAFFIC ACCESS STUDY

Introduction:

This study evaluates the following three alternative locations for a future main entrance to Elizabeth Park on the basis of traffic capacity, operations and safety:

A. Existing Park Entrance - existing main entrance to the park via Elizabeth Park Drive.

B. Proposed West Jefferson Entrance - proposed new park entrance to be located on West Jefferson Avenue between Slocum Street and Grosse Ile Parkway.

C. Proposed Grosse Ile Parkway Entrance - proposed new park entrance to be located on Grosse Ile Parkway about 1000 to 1500 feet east of West Jefferson Avenue. This entrance would also serve park marina traffic.

Assumptions:

1. The redevelopment of Elizabeth Parkway generate an increase in vehicular traffic to and from the park.

2. Due to the developed character of area land use, significant future increases in non-park traffic are not anticipated.

3. This study assumes that the roadways, parking areas, and toll collection plazas (if any) within the redeveloped park will provide sufficient capacity to prevent entering park traffic from queuing back onto the public road system. This is a critically important consideration and is applicable regardless of the location of the future park entrance.

4. Recreation lodge traffic will continue to be served by a separate driveway to West Jefferson.

5. Marina traffic will continue to be served by a separate driveway unless the future main park entrance is located on Grosse Ile Parkway. If this occurs, the park and marina entrance/exit will be combined.

6. This study assumes that a new north-south arterial road by-passing the City of Trenton CBD may be constructed at some time in the future. A possible south terminus of this by-pass route is the intersection of West Jefferson Avenue and Fifth Street.

Arterial Road Access:

Elizabeth Park is enveloped by West Jefferson Avenue on the north and west and Grosse Ile Parkway on the south. Future vehicular access to the park will involve one or both of these arterial roads. Both roads are currently carrying moderate traffic volume ranging from 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day and, in general, are operating reasonably well.

Traffic congestion and operational difficulties are currently experienced on West Jefferson Avenue north of Elizabeth Park Drive through the City of Trenton CBD. These problems are a direct result of the continued existence of on-street angle parking on West Jefferson which seriously compromises the capacity, safety and operating characteristics of an otherwise adequate roadway.

Some peak hour congestion also occurs at the signalized intersections of West Jefferson Avenue with Grosse Ile Parkway and Van Horn Road. This congestion is caused by large volumes of turning traffic at both intersections which, in turn, are partially a result of the 400 foot offset between the Grosse Ile Parkway and Van Horn Road alignments.

Both of the above-described problems are correctible operational deficiencies and are not primarily a result of unusually high traffic volumes.

Evaluation of Alternatives:

A. EXISTING PARK ENTRANCE

The existing main entrance to Elizabeth Park is located on Elizabeth Park Drive, a county local road, at the bridge over the Edison Canal. Principal access to the park is via West Jefferson Avenue, a county primary road, which intersects Elizabeth Park Drive approximately 700 feet north of the park entrance. Secondary access to the park is provided by Slocum Street, a city major street, which intersects Elizabeth Park Drive immediately north of the park entrance.

The existing park access system, as outlined above, has sufficient excess highway capacity and operational flexibility to adequately accommodate the projected future traffic to Elizabeth Park without significant adverse impacts to through traffic movement or to local traffic circulation. Major road improvements would not be required although selected operational betterments, such as revised signal timing, improved information signing and on-street parking removal, might be beneficial. Of direct and considerable benefit to park and non-park traffic would be the elimination of on-street angle parking along West Jefferson Avenue north of the park.

The signalized intersection of West Jefferson Avenue, Elizabeth Park Drive and Walnut Street has sufficient approach capacity to handle the projected traffic increases generated by expanded park usage and normal traffic growth. A three-phase signal operation could be considered to facilitate future traffic movement.

If the amount of traffic using Slocum Street for park access becomes a nuisance to local residents, Slocum Street could be closed to vehicular traffic at Elizabeth Park Drive.

B. WEST JEFFERSON ENTRANCE (Proposed)

A proposed alternative location for a new main entrance to Elizabeth Park is somewhere along West Jefferson Avenue between Slocum Street and the recreation lodge facility. West Jefferson Avenue in this area is 40 foot wide with 6 to 8 foot shoulders and operates as a four-lane roadway. The existing road right-of-way is 66 feet wide. The acquisition of additional right-of-way on the west side does not appear feasible due to the proximity of existing development. This section of West Jefferson Avenue carries about 13,000 vehicles per day.

In order to provide a new park entrance at this location, the following improvements to West Jefferson Avenue would be required:

1) Reconstruct and widen the existing West Jefferson Avenue pavement at the new park entrance to provide a separate lane for southbound vehicles turning left into the park while maintaining two through traffic lanes in each direction. The approximate length of the re-

quired widening, including tapers, is 800 feet. The necessary additional road right-of-way will be obtained from the park.

2) Install a traffic signal at the park entrance road intersection with West Jefferson Avenue. Signal control is required to accommodate the projected volume of future park traffic.

The preliminary estimated cost for these improvements, exclusive of right-of-way, is $ 250,000. This does not include the cost of a new park entrance roadway or new Edison Canal bridge.

With the above cited improvements, the location of the main park entrance on West Jefferson Avenue is, from a traffic standpoint, acceptable. There will be, however, some adverse traffic impacts. The imposition of a new traffic signal on this section of road will effect delay and disruption to through traffic and will increase accident potential. Particularly hazardous, even with signal control, will be the conflict between northbound through traffic and the expected high volume of southbound traffic turning left into the park entrance.

C. GROSSE ILE PARKWAY ENTRANCE (Proposed)

Another proposed alternative location for the main Elizabeth Park entrance is on Grosse Ile Parkway about 1000 to 1500 feet east of West Jefferson Avenue. The entrance would also serve park marina traffic. Grosse Ile Parkway at this location is 36 feet wide with 6 to 8 foot shoulders. Road right-of-way is 200 feet. There is an existing bridge on Grosse Ile Parkway at the Edison Canal. The bridge roadway is 36 feet wide. Existing traffic volumes average 14,000 vehicles per day. Grosse Ile Parkway is the only public road access to Grosse Ile Township.

The location of the main Elizabeth Park entrance on Grosse Ile Parkway would add 7,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day to the existing traffic. To adequately accommodate this increased traffic, the following major road and bridge improvements would be required:

1) Reconstruct and widen Grosse Ile Parkway to 48 feet from West Jefferson Avenue to the park entrance. An additional 12 foot right turn lane should be provided on westbound Grosse Ile Parkway at West Jefferson. This project would necessitate widening or reconstructing the bridge at the Edison Canal.

2) Reconstruct and widen West Jefferson Avenue to 60 feet through the Grosse Ile Parkway and Van Horn Road intersections. This is necessary to provide sufficient turning lanes for the increased traffic. Additional right-of-way would be required.

3) Install a traffic signal at the park entrance road intersection with Grosse Ile Parkway.

The preliminary estimated cost for these improvements, excluding right-of-way costs is $ 1,250,000. This does not include the costs of needed road improvements within the park proper.

The location of the main park entrance on Grosse Ile Parkway would have several significant negative aspects with respect to traffic movement. Through traffic on Grosse Ile Parkway would be subject to increased delay and accident potential. Traffic operations at the West Jefferson Avenue intersections with Grosse Ile Parkway and Van Horn Road would be complicated by the greatly increased volumes of turning traffic. The majority of park users would have to travel farther to access the park.

Trenton CBD By-Pass Route:

Some consideration is currently being given to the development of a new

arterial road which would by-pass the City of Trenton CBD. The specific location of the proposed by-pass route has not yet been determined.

All of the more likely candidate alignments for the proposed by-pass route, if constructed, would not significantly affect access to Elizabeth Park regardless of the park entrance location. Park access via the existing park entrance on Elizabeth Park Drive may even improve since through traffic volumes on West Jefferson Avenue would be reduced. Conversely, a park entrance location on West Jefferson Avenue may be somewhat adversely affected if the by-pass generated increased traffic at that location.

Conclusions and Recommendation:

1. The projected future park traffic volumes can be acceptably accommodated at any of the proposed park entrance locations. Major road improvements would be required for a West Jefferson Avneue entrance or Grosse Ile Parkway entrance.

2. The proposed Trenton CBD by-pass route would not significantly affect access to Elizabeth Park regardless of the park entrance locations.

3. *From the standpoint of traffic capacity, operations and safety, the existing* park entrance on Elizabeth Park Drive is the preferred and recommended location for the future park entrance.

Prepared By:

The Wayne County Road Commission

August 31, 1979

STATEMENT OF DISBURSEMENTS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT ELIZABETH PARK, FROM DECEMBER 1, 1919 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1923.

	1920 Appropriation	1920 Disbursed	1921 Appropriation	1921 Disbursed	1922 Appropriation	1922 Disbursed	1923 Appropriation	1923 Disbursed
	$1,000.00	.....	$1,000.00	.....	$22,000.00	.....	.....	.....
A. 2 and 4. Salaries—Temporary	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	$10,719.75	$20,000.00	$12,310.16
B.—Contractual Services.								
B. 1 Transportation of Persons	.....	.....	.....	$ 0.12	.....	.....	100.00	.84
B. 2 Transportation of Things	.....	.....	.....	22.00	.....	45.95	100.00	178.17
B. 3 Subsistence and Sup. of Persons	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10.70	125.00	112.50
B. 5 Hire of Motor Vehicles	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	38.40	100.00	133.83
B. 6A Postage	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	50.00	.....
B. 6B Telephone	.....	$14.35	.....	41.04	.....	21.38	250.00	36.21
B. 8 Advertising	.....	.....	.....	105.00	.....	385.33	150.00	92.75
B. 9 Public Utility Service	.....	2.85	.....	40.36	.....	91.89	3,500.00	575.60
B. 10 Repairs to Equipment	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.60	.....	.....
B. 11 Repairs on Improvements	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	*95,448.85	500.00	442.00
B. 11A Improvements to Building	.....	.....	.....	6,170.03	.....	.....	.....	.....
B. 12 Laundry, Ice and Towel Service	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	250.00	
B. 13 Other Services	.....	335.50	.....	339.92	.....	184.90	100.00	139.00
C—Materials and Supplies.								
C. 1 Non-Metallic and Mineral Products	.....	.....	.....	5.70	.....	17.13	10.00	449.40
C. 2 Fuel	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	500.00	.....
C. 6 Metal Products	.....	74.10	.....	.....	.....	182.22	550.00	4,079.39
C. 7 Household Utensils	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	100.00	.....
C. 8 Lumber	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	299.47	900.00	1,727.90
C. 9 Paper and Paper Products	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	250.00	269.50
C. 10 Fibre and Felt Products	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	250.00	.....
C. 11 Paints and Painters' Supplies	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	133.97	200.00	152.66
C. 12 Stationery and Office Supplies	.....	.....	.....	2.74	.....	1.56	50.00	14.50
C. 13 Dry Goods and Notions	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	200.00	.....
C. 16 Rubber and Rubber Articles	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	19.29	350.00	61.74
C. 17 Electrical and Lighting Supplies	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	150.00	28.71
C. 18 Cleansers and Polishes, etc.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	7.37	200.00	44.88
C. 19 Instruments for Cleaning	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	24.28	50.00	.....
C. 21 Miscellaneous	.....	5.00	.....	.....	.....	394.88	200.00	160.67
C. 23 Trees, Shrubs, Seeds, etc	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5,000.00	21.15

D—Sundry Charges.								
D. 4 Insurance	.....	400.00	.....	54.08	.....	.....	300.00	300.00
F—Equipment.								
F. 1 Office and Institutional Furniture and Furnishings	.....	.....	.....	27.30	.....	333.69	2,500.00	2,157.17
G—Land, Buildings and Structures.								
**G. 2 B. Comfort Station	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15,175.00	12,225.26
†G. 3 A. Trestle over M. C. R. R.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	9,000.00	12,621.00
††G. 3 B. Installation of Lighting System	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	22,389.43	12,389.43
‡G. 3 C. Installation Water System	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	20,000.00	21,744.60
‡‡G. 3 D. 1. Dock; 2. Bathing Beach; 3. Sea Wall and Walk	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	92,000.00	49,338.35
G. 3 E. Bridges over Canal	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	25,000.00	.....
G. 4 B. Dredging Canal and Reclaiming Land	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	25,000.00	14,929.39
¶G. 4 D. Huron River Park	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10,000.00	7,717.13
G. 4 Excavation and Grading Elizabeth Park Driveway	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	102,583.91	.....	.....
	$1,000.00	$831.80	$1,000.00	$6,809.59	$220,000.00	$210,976.52	$255,549.43	$154,453.89

*Road $74,149.84
Pavilion 19,966.27
Canal 1,107.74
Hydrants 225.00
$95,448.85

** Contract—Cooper-Weideman Co.
† Contract—Agreement M. C. R. R.
†† Contract—Agreement Edison Co.
‡ Contract—Coalsaet Bros.
‡‡ Contract—Dunbar-Sullivan Dredging Co.
¶ Contract—W. E. Lennane Co.

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