

and off-street parking, and a large athletic field. Careful planning of the grounds would permit more recreational facilities without excessive development.

A technical high school has been considered in Utica for some years. The basis of the interest in a technical high school is that the Utica public schools need to emphasize training in skills which will aid graduates to make a living in this manufacturing city; that technical courses may be improved and more varied if they are centralized in one location and in a building designed for shop use; and that basements in the two existing high schools are not the best location for shops.

It is suggested that a decision be reached by the Board of Education as to the relative importance of such a school as a unit of the educational program. It is possible that a technical high school could be included in the construction program to accommodate some of the large high school enrollment which is expected to develop. Pupils will arrive from all parts of the city, so a central location is desirable. Another possibility is to build a technical division on the large Proctor High School site.

(C) THE PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Existing Park and Playground Areas.

Utica's existing parks and playgrounds are shown on Plate 31.

Playgrounds.

The conspicuous fact about existing playgrounds in Utica is that they are too little and too few. Extremely small playgrounds of an acre or two can serve only as playlots for small children. They are very important elements in the playground system, but must not be thought of as meeting the playground needs of their neighborhood. As has been previously stated playgrounds should provide space and facilities for running games, softball, and other team games. The desirable minimum area is five acres. Watson Williams is the only play-

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- ORNAMENTAL PARKS
- PLAYFIELDS
- PLAYFIELDS
- NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
- PARKWAY
- LARGE PARKS
- PROPOSED AREAS
- PROPOSED ADDITIONS

PROPOSED PARK & PLAYGROUND SYSTEM

ground in the city which meets that minimum standard.

Comparison of Plate 31, showing playgrounds, with the spot map showing distribution of pupils in the public elementary schools, (Plate 28) points out the serious lack of playgrounds in areas of heavy child population. Actually, the problem is even more acute than indicated by the spot map, for approximately one third of the children are not enrolled in the public schools. East Utica, Cornhill and West Utica are especially in need of playgrounds to serve the concentrated child population.

Playfields.

These recreational areas, intended for active sports for young people, are also too few in Utica. A tremendous interest in baseball has developed under the sponsorship of the public schools, the public recreation program and service clubs. There are not enough playfields to meet the need for baseball and other sports, nor to relieve the population and structural congestion in the intensively developed parts of the city. The four playfield contain 62.9 acres.

Large Parks.

Utica suffers a serious lack of playgrounds and playfields. The city is in a much better position, however, in regard to large parks and parkways. The F. T. and T. R. Proctor Parks, Roscoe Conkling Park, and the Parkway together contain almost 600 acres of scenic areas, attractively developed. These parks would be a credit to any city, and they are one of Utica's greatest assets.

Proposed Parks and Playgrounds

Plate number 32 shows the proposed system of parks and playgrounds. The analysis of existing recreational areas shows that Utica is rather well supplied with large parks on the southeastern fringe of the city, but that neighborhood parks, playfields and playgrounds are seriously lacking in almost all parts of the city.

Playgrounds.

Public School Grounds should be of ample size, and should be planned and developed, for year around recreation. In almost every case, acquisition of adjacent lots is recommended in order to provide at least enough space for playground apparatus, a surfaced area for court games, and some open lawn for running games.

It is recommended that sufficient additional property be acquired for development of a playlot or small playground at Bagg, Brandegee, Conkling, Lincoln, Potter, Roosevelt, Sunset, Washington and Wetmore Schools. Mary Street School occupies an entire small block and it now has a playground. The entire site is in dire need of planned improvement. The block should be used for playground purposes when the school is abandoned at some future date.

Albany School is recommended for rebuilding and a high priority is indicated. The site now contains 3.94 acres and additional lots are recommended to provide an area sufficiently large to serve as a playground.

Jones School has a site of 4.34 acres and should be carefully developed as a unit in the city playground system.

Kernan School and site are recommended for expansion. The site as proposed will contain about $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

Potter School is located in a section where recreational areas and services are solely needed. All the lots in this block except 17, 18, 19, 2 and 22 should be reserved for playground use. Bigelow Playground is only a few hundred feet away, but it is closed during the school year. It is suggested that the facilities and services of Bigelow and the proposed Potter School Playground could be coordinated so as to greatly expand the recreational opportunities in this area without duplication of services.

Seymour School, with 4.52 acres, has the largest site of any elementary school in the city. It has a children's playground with apparatus, paved courts and wading pool. The school addition now being built uses part of the former ball field. It is recommended that this school ground be increased

in area while the land to the north is still undeveloped. Eight or ten acres should be added, including some open flat land for playfield uses, and the sparsely wooded land lying to the west. The total site would then contain 12 to 14 acres and would be suitable for neighborhood park development with playground and playfields.

Hughes and Kemble Schools have such small sites, and so little prospect of expansion that they do not have any value in a playground system.

A number of new elementary schools are proposed for construction during the next twenty years. Each of these should have a minimum site of five acres. Eight or ten acres should be secured if possible. Each site should be carefully planned and developed so as to make maximum use of each school for neighborhood recreation.

Existing playgrounds which are not connected with the schools include Lincoln, Pixley, Quinn and Watson Williams. Lincoln, Quinn and Watson Williams need surfaced areas for court games. They all need planting and maintenance so that they may be examples of good city housekeeping in addition to providing necessary recreational services. Watson Williams Park needs greater development of playground facilities. In particular, a softball field and surfaced areas for court games should be developed according to carefully prepared plans.

Some existing playgrounds are so small that playground ball and other running games cannot be played on them. They are, in reality, playlots for small children up to about nine years of age. Because of congestion in the older parts of the city and because of the great scarcity of playground space, these playlots are very important. They include the Bigelow, Butler, Chancellor Square, Cooper and Hirt areas.

Bigelow has been previously recommended for operation in conjunction with the enlarged Potter School Playground.

Butler Playlot is very small but is an important unit in the system of play areas. It should be expanded to the west and east whenever possible.

Chancellor Square is intensively developed and heavily used, although unfortunately it is too small for a playground ball field.

Cooper is poorly located and should be abandoned.

Hirt Playlot contains only slightly more than an acre of land, but is developed with playground apparatus, wading pool, and a surfaced area for court games. The site should be enlarged by acquisition of the few properties at the corner of Sunset and Warren Streets. Additional lots should be acquired whenever possible.

A new recreational area is recommended in the Ballou Street area west of Mohawk and north of Arthur. This land, undeveloped at present, is mostly in one ownership. It contains about nine acres and is suitable for park and recreational development.

Playfields.

Murnane Field is a part of Horatio Seymour Park. It is recommended that the park be extended southwestward, taking in the undeveloped property lying on the south side of the proposed Lincoln Avenue extension. This would provide several parcels of land which would be suitable for playground development and would assure a buffer strip between the arterial highway and the Sunset Terrace residential area.

Property has been acquired and plans and specifications have been prepared for a new playfield in South Utica. The location is between French Road, the West Shore Railroad and Lomond Street. The site contains 15 acres, and the plans provide for a children's playground which includes playground apparatus, wading pool, field house and a paved game area. The plans also provide for one baseball and three softball fields.

Neighborhood Parks.

One of the most important park needs in Utica is for neighborhood parks where every member of the family may participate in outdoor recreation. Addison C. Miller Park most nearly provides for such varied interests at present,

for it includes a children's playground, paved areas for court games, ball field, bath house and swimming pool. These different recreational facilities are all provided without loss of its park-like character.

Four new neighborhood parks are proposed. Two of these are in South Utica and two in North Utica.

Hallacks Ravine is an area of 25 or 30 acres south of Proctor Boulevard between Oneida and Genesee Streets. Its outstanding features are the steep topography, the fine woods and the stream. As a neighborhood park these natural features would be preserved and made available for public use and enjoyment. The area recommended also has sufficient level land for a neighborhood playground which cannot be provided at the Hughes School site.

Sauquoit Creek Valley, from Utica's southern corner to Whitesboro, should be preserved as a public recreational area. Further neglect of this scenic resource will result in deterioration of the stream into a drainage ditch. Some abutting lots are intensively developed right to the edge of the stream. Elsewhere, there are large undeveloped areas. This valley is highly desirable as a greenbelt and recreational area south and west of Utica similar to the Proctor-Conkling Parks and the Parkway on the south and east. It connects with the Whitesboro Central School property on the north and the New Hartford High School property on the south.

The proposed Sauquoit Valley recreational area would serve to confine the "urban sprawl" of Utica, Yorkville and New York Mills, and adjacent land values would be enhanced by such a greenbelt area. Most of the area was recommended for park use several years ago.

North Utica has two areas which are desirable for neighborhood parks.

The ravine in the western portion of North Utica, between Horatio Street and Cosby Road is in a location where a neighborhood park will be needed as North Utica grows. The area should be acquired now in advance of the expected

residential growth. In this way, the desirable park area will be preserved, and the quality and pattern of private development on adjacent lands will be improved. The area contains about 35 acres. A portion of the area should be set aside as the site for a future elementary school to relieve overcrowding which will occur in Seymour School as North Utica grows.

The ravine in the eastern portion of North Utica between the Girl Scout Day Camp and Larchmont Avenue near the city line is suitable and desirable for park use. The quality and land value of this area would be enhanced by reservation of the wooded ravine as a neighborhood park. In addition, it will serve park and playground needs of the entire portion of North Utica which lies east of Coventry Avenue. The tract contains about 70 acres. (See Plate number 32).

Large Parks.

The Proctor Parks and East Parkway are very attractive areas and they constitute a real community resource. They should be restudied at this time, however, to determine whether they can provide more facilities for active recreation without loss of scenic values. For example, the area between Welsh Bush Road and East Park Drive is a rather distinct unit. The part west of Starch Factory Creek is attractively developed as Buckley Pool and Boathouse and a large parking area. The part east of Starch Factory Creek is entirely undeveloped. It is large enough for several ball fields and court areas. The nearby parking lot would furnish parking space both for the ball fields and the swimming pool. These developments appear to be feasible without losing the good qualities of the nearby parks.

Similar areas suitable for playground and playfield development may be discovered by careful study of the large parks, the adjacent neighborhoods, and the major street system.

Because of Utica's location as "The Gateway to the Adirondacks", because it is not a highly congested metropolitan area, and because of mobility of the population by private automobiles, additional large parks other than those

previously described are not recommended at this time.

Municipal Stadium.

There has been considerable interest for some years in a municipal stadium for Utica. Many locations have been considered. Factors which must be considered in selection of a site include the following:

- a. Availability of a tract large enough to provide a stadium to seat five thousand or more persons for football and baseball. If the stadium is planned for 5,000 seats, then parking space should be provided for one thousand or more cars.
- b. Accessibility over an adequate system of major streets by private cars and buses. This concerns keeping street congestion to a minimum during the peak periods by having many streets over which traffic may be distributed. It also concerns having sufficient points of ingress and egress to reduce congestion at any one point.
- c. A location free from smoke and noise generally found in and near industrial areas.
- d. A location which, if developed as a municipal stadium, physical education and recreation center, will not constitute a nuisance to an established residential area of good quality.

The former Rhoades Hospital site, now Federal surplus property, is being considered as the site for Utica's municipal stadium. It meets the site objective outlined above. The 170 acre area is ample to provide a stadium site, baseball and football fields, parking areas, and physical education areas and facilities for the local schools and colleges.

It is reasonably accessible from all parts of the city and region over existing streets. Improvement of these streets to Major Street standards will be necessary, however, in order to accommodate the large volume of traffic which will be generated by important sports events.