



Southside Park Master Plan



DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT/DIVISION OF PLANNING

For: Department of Parks and Recreation

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SOUTHSIDE PARK

Southside Park, 1941 East Hanna Avenue, is eight acres of green lawn and shade trees that has served its neighborhood for over twenty years. William Brandes School #65, 4065 Asbury Street, sits on ten and a half acres adjacent to Southside Park. Cooperation between the Department of Parks and Recreation and Indianapolis Public Schools in jointly using the properties will provide increased recreation opportunities for School #65 students and for the whole neighborhood. This master plan was developed to guide the future of the park and the schoolyard as recreation resources.

The parks of Marion County are divided into four categories -- regional, community, neighborhood and sub-neighborhood parks -- each serving different populations and performing different functions. Southside Park is a neighborhood park. Neighborhood parks are generally characterized by intensive use of a small area (5 to 25 acres). Typical facilities are playgrounds, play courts, play fields and picnic areas. The population served by neighborhood parks are usually those people within walking and bicycling distance.

This plan is divided into two major parts. The first part will be an analysis of the site and the neighborhood including history, current conditions, and specific problems and opportunities. The second part will be recommendations for future development of the site.

ANALYSIS

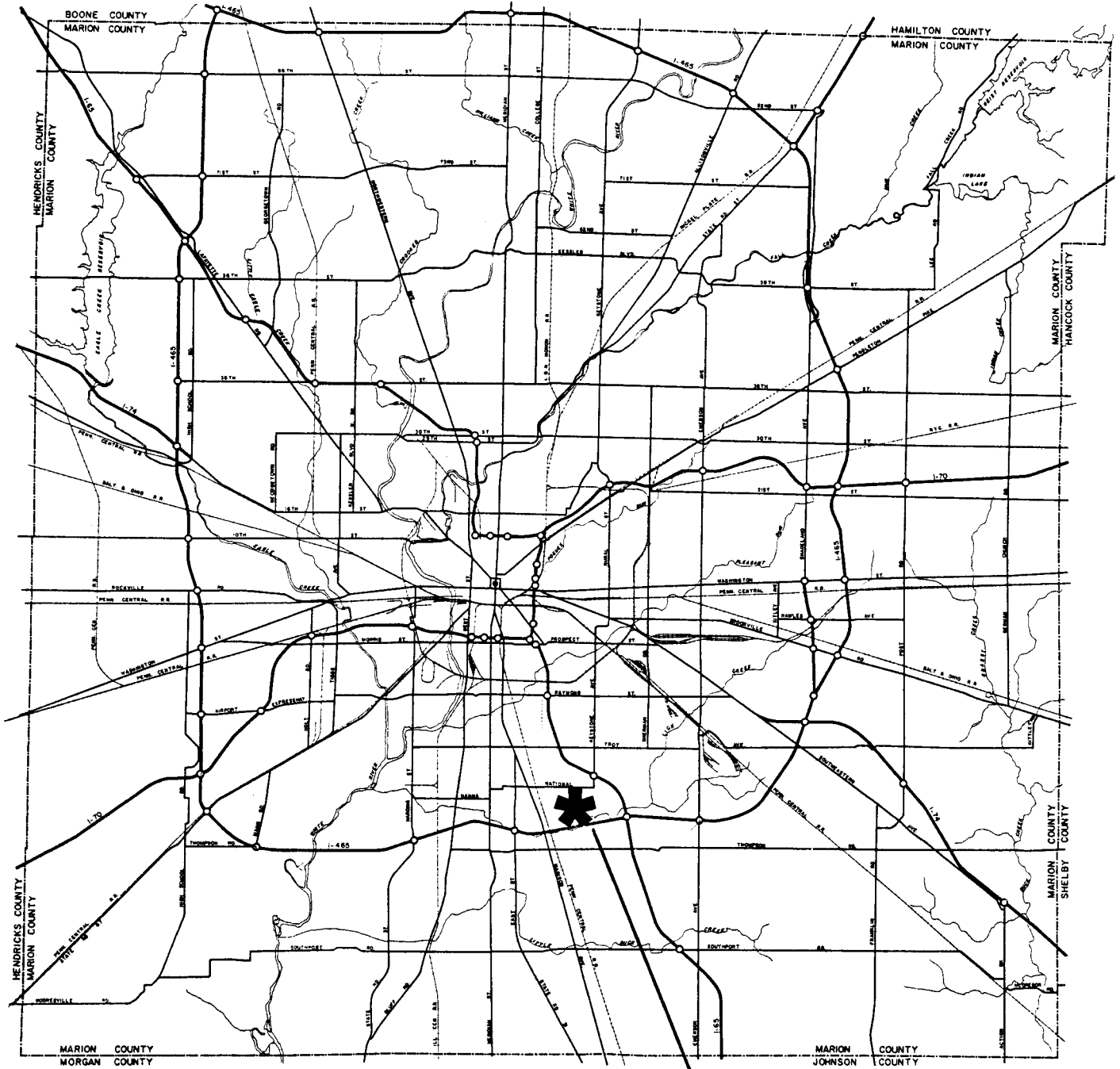
HISTORY

Prior to its purchase by the city in November, 1966 the site of Southside Park was a dairy farm. Two barns in the park are remnants of that time. The larger barn with an attached silo was built in 1936 and the smaller barn was constructed in the early 1940's. The barns were used as a community center until 1983 when they were closed due to high maintenance costs and unsafe conditions. Since that time the large barn has been used by the Indianapolis Shakespeare Festival for offices and storage.

The community west of the park is known as University Heights and dates from the earliest part of this century. It was developed due to the presence of Indiana Central University. The University opened in 1905 with 74 students and 10 faculty members on an eight-acre campus. University Heights became part of the city of Indianapolis in 1923 and today is an area of well-kept, older homes set amid mature shade trees. Indiana Central University is now called the University of Indianapolis and has a student body of over 3000 on a 75 acre campus. The areas east and south of University Heights and the college were annexed to Indianapolis in 1950 and 1955. These areas were developed throughout the 1950's and early 1960's. School #65 was constructed circa 1962.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

For the purpose of this plan the area served by Southside Park is delineated as the area east of Shelby Street, south of Troy Avenue, west of I-65 and north of I-465. Demographic data for the service area (table 1) indicates that the area has twice the proportion of 18-21 year-olds as the county as a whole. The presence of the University of Indianapolis in the area would account for this. University students probably also partially account for the low proportion of people living in family households and the high proportion of households with incomes under \$15,000. However, University students rarely use Southside Park because of their access to recreation facilities on campus.



SOUTHSIDE PARK



LOCATION MAP

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

| | Southside Park Neighborhood* | | Marion County | |
|--|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| Population by Age | | | | |
| 5 and Under | 861 | 9.0% | 67,973 | 8.8% |
| 6-17 | 1601 | 16.7% | 148,430 | 18.4% |
| 18-21 | 1425 | 14.8% | 56,388 | 7.4% |
| 22-34 | 2534 | 26.4% | 180,899 | 23.6% |
| 35-54 | 1696 | 17.7% | 159,198 | 20.8% |
| 55 & Over | <u>1469</u> | 15.3% | <u>152,405</u> | 19.9% |
| | 9600 | | 765,233 | |
| % Living in Family Households | | 78.3% | | 84.6% |
| Household Income | | | | |
| 0-15,000 | | 39.0% | | 31.9% |
| 15,000-30,000 | | 45.8% | | 42.2% |
| 30,000 & Over | | 15.3% | | 25.9% |
| Education Attained by Persons Over 25 Years Old | | | | |
| 0-11 Years | | 41.0% | | 32.5% |
| High School Graduates | | 38.1% | | 36.8% |
| Some College | | 20.9% | | 30.7% |

*Census Tracts 3803 and 3805.2

The residential area north of the park is densely populated with about four and a half homes per acre. Housing of this density does not leave much outdoor yard space. Directly across Hanna Avenue from the park are several homes converted to office uses and the University Heights Baptist Church. Residential areas to the west and south of the park/schoolyard are less densely populated with about two homes per acre. East of the park are the Rosedale Hills Apartments, five buildings around a central courtyard. Between the apartment buildings and the park is the apartment parking lot, which is unscreened from the park. The apartment complex does not provide any recreation facilities to its residents. South of the apartments and east of the park is an open field. Across the field, the back of a shopping center and the center's loading areas are visible.

Hanna Avenue, where the park fronts it, is an undivided four lane street. It handles an average of 12,500 vehicles a day (1986 information). Long range plans for Hanna Avenue include its widening to a divided four lane. Sidewalks run along each side of the street, however there is no crosswalk in close proximity to the park. Lack of a crosswalk is a problem for people, especially children, who walk to the park. Asbury Street is a low-traffic local street. No long-range plans for widening have been made for Asbury. The only sidewalk on Asbury is directly in front of School #65.

Local recreation facilities are limited in the neighborhood around Southside Park. The Ruth Lilly Center on the University of Indianapolis campus is occasionally open to the public. The Lilly Center has a gym, racquetball courts, a pool and rooms for weight lifting, wrestling, indoor golf and indoor baseball. The University's outdoor ball fields and tennis courts are open to students and alumni but not to the general public.

The Little League operates a four-diamond baseball complex nearby on Keystone Avenue at I-465. Expansion of this facility is planned.

No high schools or junior high schools exist in the neighborhood to provide recreation facilities. The only elementary school located in the neighborhood is School #65.

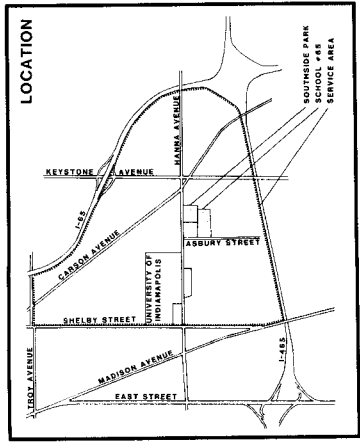
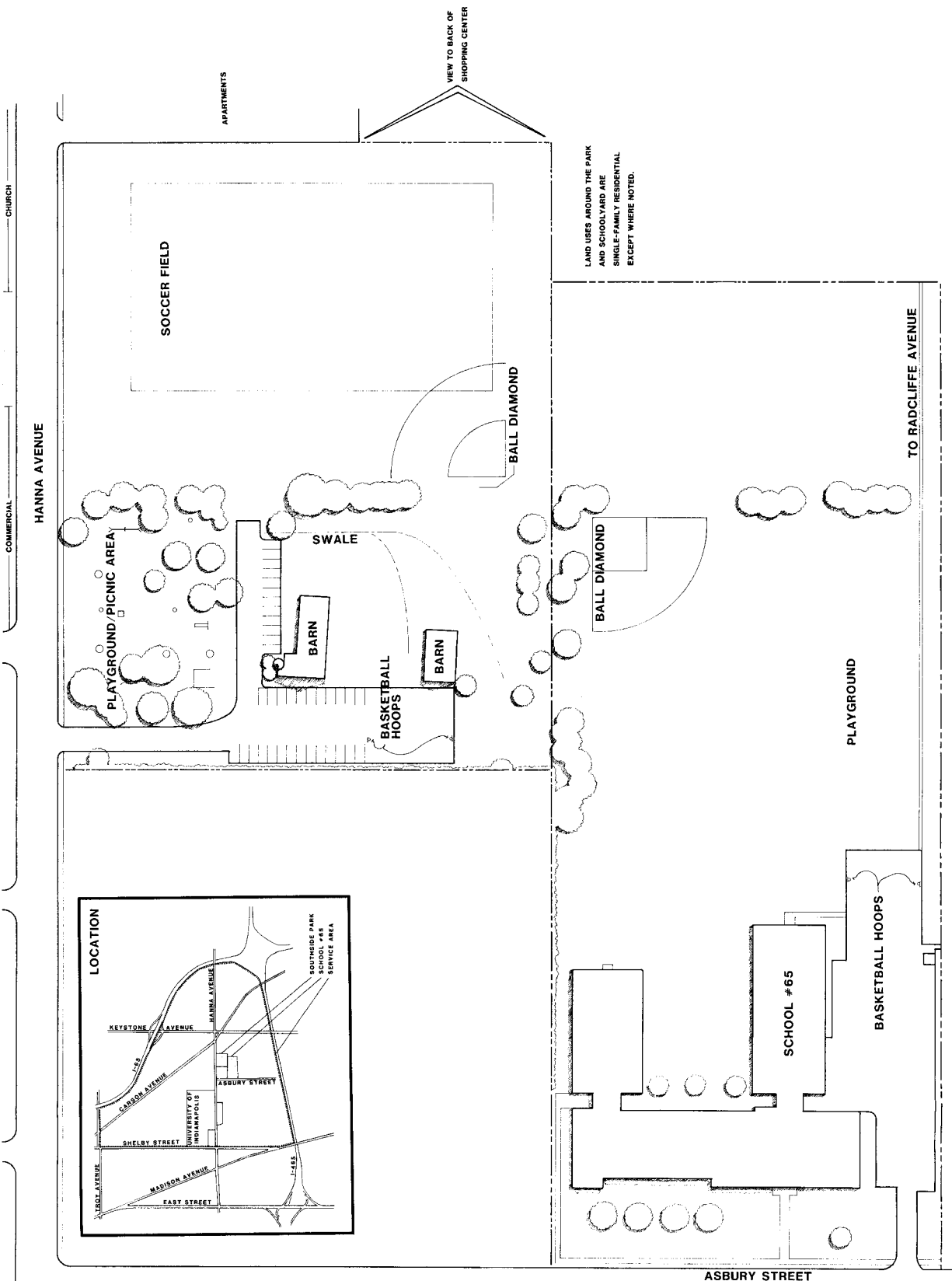
SITE CONDITIONS

Soils and Vegetation. The park and schoolyard are basically level and are underlaid by two soil types. Both types -- Urban Brookston and Urban Crosby -- are poorly drained. Drainage swales and subsurface drainage have been constructed on the site to help alleviate the poor drainage.

Vegetation in the park is lawn throughout, with canopy trees on the western half. Tree species include several varieties of oaks, plus hickory, Norway maple, white ash, hackberry, hawthorn, Chinese elm, mulberry, walnut, apple and crabapple; a large variety for a small area. However, several of the trees are not appropriate for an intensely used park because of the fruit they drop. The apple and mulberry are the worst offenders. Also some of the park's trees are fully mature and starting to decline. The oaks, in particular, are in this category. The fence line bordering the west boundary of the site has grown in with species typical of fencerows and provides an effective screen of the neighboring properties.

The schoolyard is also lawn throughout. A few mature trees stand on the schoolyard/park boundary and an intermittent row of mature trees run across the property near its eastern end. Typical fencerow vegetation is growing in the north fencerow.

Picnic Area/Playground. The shade trees make this a very pleasant part of the park. Playground equipment is dispersed



LAND USES AROUND THE PARK AND SCHOOLYARD ARE SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL EXCEPT WHERE NOTED.

SOUTHSIDE PARK

EXISTING CONDITIONS



throughout the picnic area. The play equipment has been well-used for a long time and some of it is in need of repair or replacement. A problem with the playground is its location next to busy Hanna Avenue, causing an uncomfortable juxtaposition of children and vehicles.

Barns/Parking. The larger north barn is a wooden structure built on a four-foot high concrete block wall. A short concrete silo is attached to the barn. The smaller south barn is a wood structure. Both buildings are difficult to maintain and are fire hazards.

The north parking lot holds twelve cars and serves the picnic area, north barn and soccer field. The older, west parking lot holds 25 cars and serves both barns. Basketball hoops have been set up on the southern portion of this parking lot, but parking is still possible. The mix of cars and basketball on the same piece of pavement is not a good situation. Parking is adequate for the park at present, except during special events when people have to park on the grass. A problem with the parking arrangement is its use by people "cruising" in through the parking lot, across the basketball court, onto the lawn and out through the School #65 parking lot.

Playing Fields. The baseball diamond has a backstop and a dirt infield. The soccer field is marked and has backstops. It has been used for large sporting events in conjunction with the soccer fields at the University of Indianapolis. Portable bleachers are erected at the sidelines of the field. Unfortunately the soccer field and the ball diamond overlap, so only one or the other sport can be played at one time. Between the two buildings, standards have been set up for volleyball nets.

Schoolyard. There is approximately seven acres of open playspace behind the school building. Along the northern edge is a ball diamond and on the end of the parking lot are low basketball hoops. Playground equipment is located in the south central part of the site. Like the play equipment in the park, these pieces have been well-used and are in need of replacement. A sidewalk runs along the southern end of the site and connects the school to Radcliffe Avenue.

Neighborhood Needs. As part of the master planning process, public input was gathered. Part of the input involved the public perception of what was positive and negative about the park. Public comment indicates that the park is a vital part of the neighborhood and is used frequently by those living nearby. The park's tree cover is especially valued by the community. However, several areas needing improvement were voiced by the public. Chief among these are reopening of a community center, cooperation with School #65 to provide recreational programs and provision of a crosswalk on Hanna Avenue. Deficiencies noted were the condition of the play equipment and the lack of restrooms and drinking fountains.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the analysis phase of the master planning process, recommendations for the future of Southside Park have been developed. The recommendations include the addition of new facilities, upgrading of old facilities and general ideas regarding the character of the park.

Community Center. The major addition to the park recommended by this plan is a community center. The center should provide meeting rooms, a kitchenette, restrooms, drinking fountains and storage. A library room staffed by the Indianapolis Public Libraries is another possibility for the community center. Gym facilities could be provided at School #65 in cooperation with Indianapolis Public Schools. The suggested location of the community center has several advantages. The building would be accessible to all the park's use areas without crossing traffic or parking lots. The center would also be visible from the street to provide surveillance and would separate the picnic area from the active parts of the park to provide a buffer.

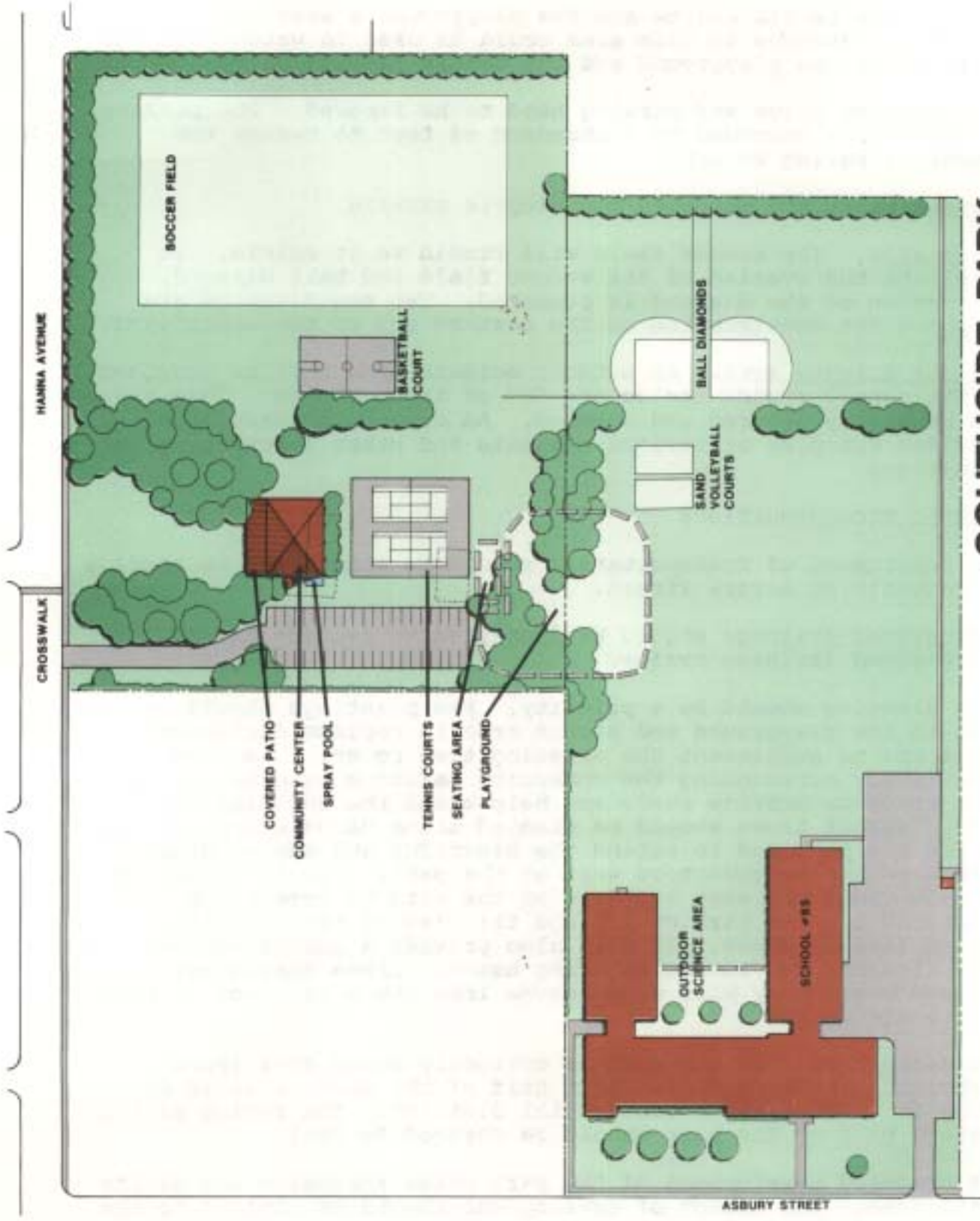
Design of the community center should be appropriate to and in harmony with the neighborhood along Hanna Avenue: one and two story wood residential buildings built prior to the 1950's.

On the sunny southwest corner of the community center a children's spray pool is proposed. On the north side of the center, facing the picnic area, a covered patio is proposed. The patio would provide a space for public events and would double as a picnic shelter.

Picnic area/Playground The picnic area will remain where it is presently located under the large shade trees along Hanna Avenue. However the number of picnic tables and grills should be increased. The playground should be moved out of the picnic area to an area straddling the park/schoolyard property line. In that location, the playground can be used by children from both the park and the school and can be monitored by staff from both the schoolhouse and the community center. The new location is distant from the street, so the worry that children will run into traffic is alleviated. Several pieces of play equipment will be left in the picnic area for use by the youngest children while parents picnic.

Barns/Parking/Play Courts. The two barns will be razed. However, members of the neighborhood have expressed an interest in maintaining some reminder of the site's farm history. The silo now attached to the north barn could stand independently as an agricultural symbol, as well as function as a storage space.

The basketball court will be moved from the parking lot to a site adjacent to the soccer field. The basketball court and soccer field combination concentrates the facilities primarily used by teenagers and young adults. This provides separation between them and facilities primarily used by adults and families with children.



SOUTHSIDE PARK

MASTER PLAN

Two tennis courts are proposed for to the park. They are located close to the parking lot for easy access.

Between the tennis courts and the playground a seating area is proposed. Benches in this area could be used to watch both the children on the playground and the tennis players on the courts.

The entrance drive and parking need to be repaved. The parking lot should be narrowed to a standard 64 feet to reduce the amount of paving on site.

Bicycle racks are proposed for bicycle parking.

Playfields. The soccer field will remain as it exists. To eliminate the overlap of the soccer field and ball diamond, relocation of the diamond is proposed. Two new diamonds are proposed for construction on the eastern end of the schoolyard.

Outdoor Science Area. An outdoor science area will be provided by the school system inside the "U" of the building. This area can be easily secured and watched. An outdoor science area provides examples of various habitats and other learning situations.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Transportation should be encouraged to provide a crosswalk at Aurora Street.

Underground drainage should be installed to replace the steep-sided drainage swales.

Tree planting should be a priority. New plantings should be made in the playground and picnic area to replace declining trees and to supplement the existing tree cover. The area immediately surrounding the community center should be planted with trees to provide shade and help blend the building into the site. Street trees should be planted along Hanna Avenue to help define the park and to extend the beautiful and mature urban forest in the neighborhood west of the park. Plantings should be made along the east boundary of the site to screen the apartment complex parking lot and the view of the shopping center loading docks. It will also provide a buffer between the ball diamonds and the neighboring homes. Trees should not be planted where they will drop leaves into the spray pool or onto the tennis courts.

The eastern half of the park is correctly zoned PK-1 (Park District). However the western half of the park is zoned D2 which is a low density residential district. The zoning of the western half of the park should be changed to PK-1.

The proposed development of the park makes intensive use of its small area. The amount of development should be limited to the proposals in this plan.

CONCLUSION

The process undertaken to develop this master plan involved a variety of people with a variety of interests and concerns. Their involvement in the process has helped ensure that the recreational needs of the neighborhood are satisfied.

So that Southside Park may continue to be responsive to the needs of its users, this master plan should be frequently reviewed and periodically updated.

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

DOCKET NO. 88-CPS-R-5

RESOLUTION 88-CPS-R-5, AMENDING A SEGMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, SOUTHSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, that, pursuant to I. C. 36-7-4, the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, hereby amends the COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN FOR MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, by the adoption of the SOUTHSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN, which is attached hereto, incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof and by hereinafter designating same as an AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Metropolitan Development Commission certify copies of this RESOLUTION 88-CPS-R-5, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, SOUTHSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development is directed to mail or deliver certified copies of this RESOLUTION 88-CPS-R-5, upon final adoption, as an AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, to the legislative authorities of all incorporated cities and towns in Marion County, Indiana, the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, the City-County Council of Indianapolis and Marion County, and the Board of Commissioners of Marion County, Indiana. The Director shall also file one (1) copy of the Resolution in the office of the Recorder of Marion County.

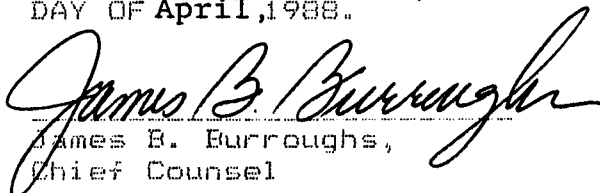


Presiding Officer
Metropolitan Development Commission



Secretary
Metropolitan Development Commission

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM
AND ADEQUACY THIS 28th
DAY OF April, 1988.



James B. Burroughs,
Chief Counsel

GENERAL RESOLUTION NO. 43, 1988

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS THAT:

The agreement by and between the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of Indianapolis and DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT in the amount of N/A calling for APPROVAL OF SOUTHSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN

the form of which is to be approved by the Department Attorney, be and is hereby APPROVED.

FURTHER, RESOLVED, that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to execute such agreement for and in behalf of the Department.

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

By:

Franz Arthur Strong
Franz Arthur Strong, Chairman

Richard Laht
Richard Laht

Barbara O'Laughlin
Barbara O'Laughlin

Archie Mabon
Archie Mabon

Charles Kendall
Charles Kendall

W. H. Buckley
Assistant Corporation Counsel

Deborah S. Hamilton
Deborah S. Hamilton,
Board Secretary

April 14, 1988
Date



SOUTHSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN

1988

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