

THE WAMEGO PARK SYSTEM

BY

BRYAN D. KLEIN

A NON-THESIS PROJECT

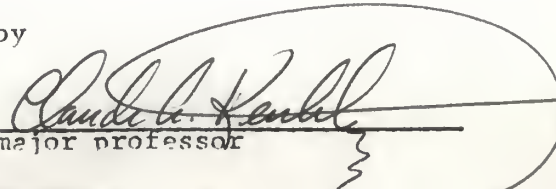
submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
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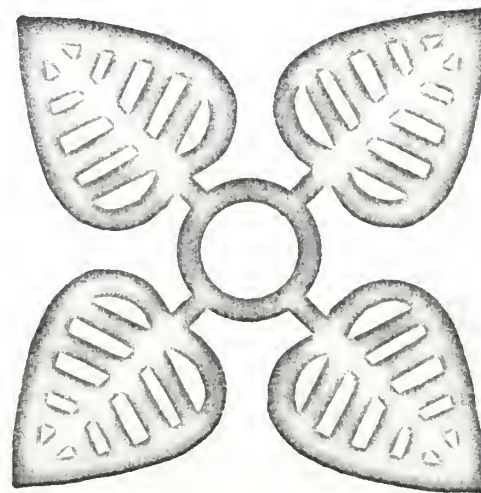
  
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# THE WAMEGO PARK SYSTEM

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*a guide for growth*

BY BRYAN D. KLEIN  
REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



For a century Americans labored to settle and subdue a continent. For half a century they called upon unbounded invention and untiring industry to create an order for all. A challenge of the next half century is whether we have the wisdom to use that wealth to enrich and elevate our lives to advance the quality of our civilization.

- Clayne R. Jensen

PREPARED FOR  
THE CITY OF WAMEGO, KANSAS  
BY

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Mrs. Ruth Eichman - School Board  
Garey Bartley - Planning Commission  
Ron Holmes - Recreation Commission  
Art Geisler - Chamber of Commerce  
Byron Jacobson - City Commission  
Bill Owens - City Manager, Chairman

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

BRYAN D. KLEIN  
MASTERS PROGRAM  
REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 1975

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Gratitude is here expressed for the diligent work done by the officials that constituted the Recreation Advisory Board which was responsible for the development of the basic policies found in the plan.

The author also takes this opportunity to thank Professors Keithley, Weisenburger, and Austin at Kansas State University for the guidance that was provided on the academic development and preparation of a recreation plan.

In final thanks, the author expresses deep appreciation to his wife for her support and assistance in bringing this report from draft stage to the final document.

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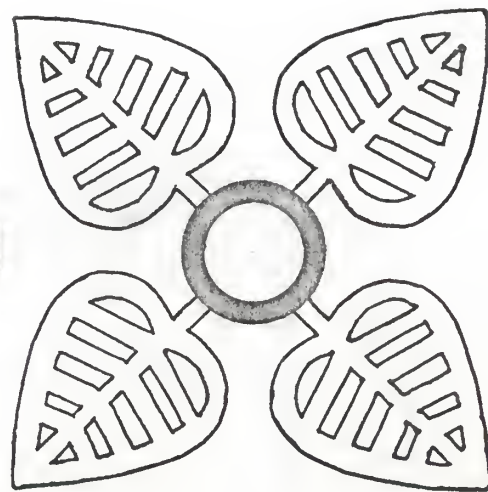


## INTRODUCTION

A major part of the social amenities for a city such as Wamego is found in the recreation facilities of the community. To date, there exist only a few recreational opportunities, concentrated in one area of the city. The City needs to address the location of facilities for the expanding residential population so that adequate opportunities are made available to all of the citizenry. To this end, this report conducts an analysis of the current facilities, the cities' growth potential, and the direction of that growth, and has proposed the acquisition of some lands and the development of facilities to meet anticipated future needs. The major purpose of this report is to serve as a guide for the development of park and open lands within the city. This document proposes the development of certain facilities on specific lands, but does not provide the physical site drawings for specific parks. It is felt that flexibility in design of the park lands should remain until the parks are scheduled to be constructed.

This recreation plan has also been written as a community document, as opposed to a technical document exploring the cost-benefit of various facility locations. The plan must be easily read and understood by city officials in order to effect its total understanding and acceptance. It is felt that this will lead to a more complete community acceptance of the plan and insure its total implementation.

**BACKGROUND  
INFORMATION**



## TYPES OF RECREATION AREAS

The location of recreational facilities is related to two major factors: function and geography. Each facility is sited to specific geographic conditions, and with certain functions or capabilities in mind. Some areas may display intrinsic natural value while others are physically located in areas where demand for usage is high. Types of recreational facilities are planned on the basis of site characteristics and location to the prospective users. There are many levels of recreational intensity and each correspond to the primary users and the governmental level that the facility is intended to serve.

### NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

These areas include those that contain a nationally recognized resource. This group may contain such natural features as waterfalls, scenic areas, virgin stands of timber, or ecologically fragile resource. These facilities are generally managed and protected by the federal government.

### STATE AND FEDERAL RECREATION AREAS

These are public recreation areas intended to complement local and regional opportunities and needs for recreation. They are mainly provided to serve the needs of large metropolitan populations. Areas for nature study, camping, and scenic viewing are typical in this category.

### REGIONAL PARKS

This type of park is generally one that directly supplements the local or county parks. It may consist of a reservoir or large tract of open land with camping, swimming, boating, sailing, and other related facilities not found at the local scene.

OPEN SPACE OR OPEN LAND

This category includes land that has been specifically identified and set aside by the local government for preservation, but not necessarily active development. Depending upon the nature of the characteristics of the land, it may be developed as a portion of the total city recreation program.

COMMUNITY OR CITY PARK

This park is provided by the local government and is intended to serve the general needs of all age groups. A community park should be centrally located within the community for ease of access. Facilities may include a swimming pool, tennis courts, provisions for open field sports, picnic areas, childrens' play, nature study, etc.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK OR PLAYGROUND

The neighborhood facility is provided mainly to serve the needs of children for safe and many times supervised play areas within a reasonable distance from their homes. It may include areas with play apparatus, open fields, picnic areas, and a shelter with restrooms.

## EXISTING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Recreation can be defined as any activity that man undertakes during leisure which is done purely because of the enjoyment and satisfaction that is derived from it. It is generally considered to be a physical act that has a renewing or refreshing effect. This broad definition implies that recreation may occur any time and any place with little constraints to the surroundings. Things like having a barbeque, playing baseball, sightseeing, or walking for pleasure are all considered to be recreation. Although many activities can be classified as recreation, this report will deal only with those that are intended to occur in the public arena, for which services need to be provided. Likewise, this report will only discuss those activities and opportunities that will be provided by the city on public lands.

The City of Wamego currently is the largest and only city (based on a U.S. Census definition) in Pottawatomie County. With the exception of other small and scattered facilities, the parks in Wamego comprise the vast majority of the publically available lands for recreation in the county. Projections for future population in Pottawatomie County and its subdivisions indicate that Wamego will continue to dominate the county, and will thus command the greatest need for recreational services.

### Existing Parks in Wamego

City Park, the largest and oldest of Wamego's park lands is comprised





of approximately 18.7 acres of land directly to the east of the central business district. When the park was originally laid out, it more than adequately served the needs of the community. It served and still serves as a gathering place for families and friends during the weekends. Areas exist for relaxation and picnicking. One of the prominent features of the park is an old Dutch Mill that was constructed in the 1870's near Wamego by an immigrant from Holland, for feed and flour milling. The mill was reconstructed in the park in 1925 to remain there on permanent display. It is enhanced by a reflective pond, which also serves as a fishing pond for young children. In the eastern portion of the park there is a large and well developed baseball diamond with seating capacity for approximately 250 people. In the recent past, other facilities have been added to the park to serve the increasing needs of the citizenry. A swimming pool, and wading pool for young children, has been constructed in the park to provide the community with supervised outdoor swimming during the summer months. Other facilities located in the park include four tennis courts, two basketball goals, childrens' play apparatus, picnic tables, a shelter house, and restrooms.

Depot Park is the only other publically available and developed park space now existing in the city of Wamego. It is a small parcel of land located at the south end of the downtown area, directly adjacent to the Union Pacific railroad tracks at the corner of Fourth and Lincoln streets. The land was a gift to the city of Wamego from the railroad, and serves

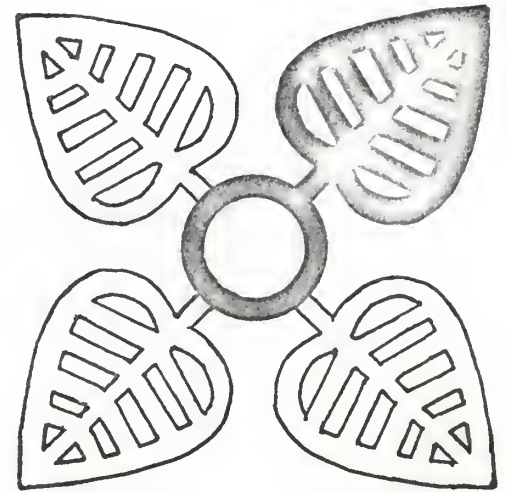
mostly as a piece of open space rather than an active recreational area. A drinking fountain and some park benches are provided.

The City has recently acquired through subdivision donation another piece of park land. It consists of approximately 4.3 acres and is located between Walnut and Lilac, and Eighth and Tenth streets. The land was given to the City with the stipulation that it be known as Pennyland Park, and that the land be used as a childrens' playground. The name of the park is in memory of the donors' late daughter Penny. Plans were drawn for the layout of the park in the fall of 1974, but as yet the construction of facilities has not begun. Since the park has already gone through the planning stages, it will be discussed in this report as an existing facility. The City is currently in the process of searching out funds to bring the plans into reality.

Other recreational facilities are available in the community, but are of a semi-public or private nature and cannot be considered in the inventory of publically available resources. All three of the schools in Wamego have limited facilities within their boundaries for physical education classes. On a limited neighborhood basis, the school grounds provide an area for childrens' play during the after school hours, but the main intention of the school facilities is for physical instruction during school hours. The Wamego Country Club provides the only other semi-public facility , a nine hole grasses greens golf course for members.



# **PLANNING PROCESS**



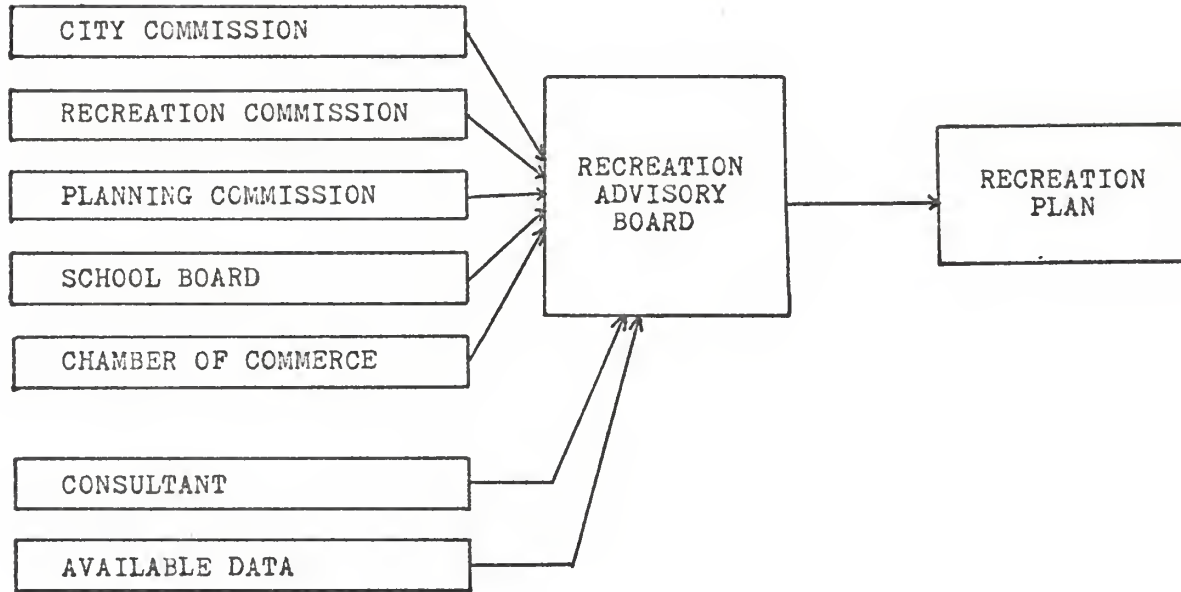
## PROCESS UTILIZED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The community facilities that are planned and located for future use will describe the eventual character of the community. These facilities, as an end to the years of planning process, are only as good as the process that was utilized in their derivation. A strong analytical process used in the development of a plan will help to insure the correct number and placement of community facilities. This will also aid in the minimization of duplication and expense. The process utilized in the development of this plan was intended to incorporate many views and ideas from local citizens in the community so that the plan would correctly address the perceived needs and desires of the citizens.

### The Recreation Advisory Board

In order to plan for the orderly location and distribution of recreational facilities in the city of Wamego, an ad-hoc advisory board was established. The board was made up of elected as well as appointed local officials from the City Commission, Planning Commission, Recreation Commission, School Board, and Chamber of Commerce. It was chaired by the City Manager who acted as the liaison between the board and the consultant. The board was mainly responsible for the formulation of the policies that would lead to the delineation of recreation sites that would comprise the recreation and open land plan. The board would then forward the finalized plan to the City Commission with its recommendation

FLOW DIAGRAM OF THE PLANNING PROCESS



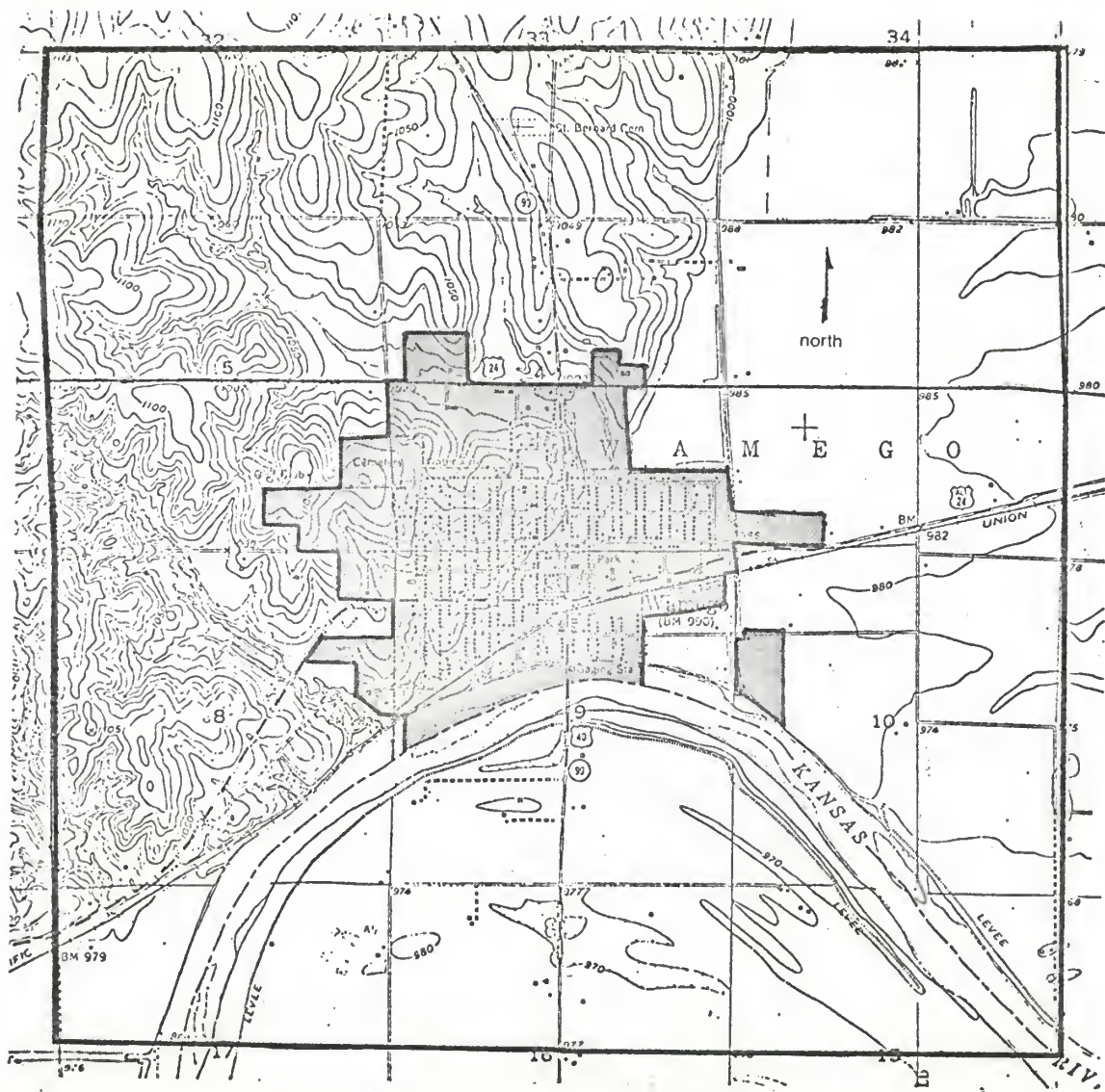
regarding formal adoption. During the entire process of plan analysis and development, the consultant would continually be interfacing the board for evaluation and guidance. This process combines the knowledge and experience of the consultant with the knowledge of the community and its perceived needs and desires through the advisory board. This constant interaction is intended to insure that the plan is correctly attuned to the community.

#### Study Area

The study area that was used in the development of the plan included the present corporate boundaries of the city of Wamego, plus one mile in each geographic direction. It was felt that analysis of this large area would provide the basic data that was necessary for identification of potential future recreational areas. An analysis was also carried out within the current city limits.

#### Limitations to the Study

It is possible that the analysis of an area can become severely limited because of the lack of necessary information. The consultant then must assess what the impact is of the missing information. It is possible that the outcome of the planning process could become limited because of the missing data. In this study the limiting data was mainly of a socio-economic nature. Since the city of Wamego was not of sufficient size (2500 population) before the 1970 Census was taken, there were no statistics generated and readily available for the



PLANNING STUDY AREA

Existing City Limits



population composition. Further, there were no existing data on the participation and demand for recreational facilities in Wamego. These two restrictions were circumvented by the use of data including county, regional, and state information. The purely physical portion of the planning process was hindered by the absence of adequate soils and topographic maps for the study area. Substitutions in these categories were obtained in bits and pieces from other sources and documents. The plans that are presented in the proposals section of this report are intentionally general in nature so that the community does not find itself specifically locked into a particular design. It is hoped that the community recreation program will evolve with the city's needs and desires. Because of the general nature of the plans, the limitations enumerated above have not significantly affected the outcome of the plans.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

Planning for community facilities is a continuing process of determining community needs and desires and balancing them with all forms of available resources. When this process is carried out for a period of time, it becomes known as comprehensive planning. In order for the community planning process to be totally effective, there needs to be a continually evolving set of plans for future development. These plans are based on analyses of the community, and the first step in the analysis process is the development of goals and objectives that will express the communities' perceived needs and desires. The statement of goals and objectives will then form the framework for prescribing the eventual appearance of the community. It is very important that this stage be carefully developed so that programs are correctly directed. Although expressed goals may be very broad in nature, they set the parameters that will be used to guide the development of the plan. The goals and objectives derived and agreed upon by the Recreation Advisory Board are as follows:

### Goals

1. To provide the people with quality recreation opportunities.  
All people should have ready access to outdoor recreation areas. Outdoor recreation facilities should be available to citizens and visitors and all groups regardless of sex, color, or disability. To satisfy all recreation needs, a variety of facilities should be developed, not only to meet the needs of

the people using them, but also be of the nature that can be efficiently and economically developed.

2. Special consideration should be given to the preservation of potentially unique outdoor areas for the use and enjoyment of the people. In many areas there exists significant unique natural, scenic, or historic areas which should be acquired and made accessible to the public, so as to preserve these features for future generations. Special emphasis should be given to areas which possess unique environmental characteristics such as streams or large bodies of water.
  
3. Maintain an efficient and effective outdoor recreation plan in cooperation with the county and the region. The city should establish and maintain a continuous planning program for recreation. This program should be coordinated with all levels of government in the region so as to increase the availability of necessary public recreation facilities and to minimize duplication of facilities.

#### Objectives

1. To provide the population of the city with recreation facilities that are appropriate, accessible, and varied to meet the needs of all age groups.



2. To preserve for future generations unique areas which have unusual features or characteristics that may be threatened by increased urbanization. This should be done to the extent that the city taxing authority has the capacity to carry out this objective.
  
3. To provide for open space and recreation that compliments, and not duplicates, the facilities provided in other areas of the community.

## POPULATION

The city of Wamego in 1970, with a population of 2507, comprised nearly one-fourth of the entire population of Pottawatomie County. In the Land Use and Open Space Plan for Riley and Pottawatomie counties, projections have been made which indicate that Wamego will continue to dominate the county in terms of population.

The Comprehensive City Plan for the city of Wamego, which was prepared in 1970, indicates the city will continue to grow at a rate similar to that of the past twenty years. Internal and external growth of industry and commercial activities are projected to increase an additional five hundred to eight hundred people to the population base in 1970 of around 2500. This population projection has been made for the year 1990.

In addition to the cities' potential for growth, Kansas 2000, a publication of the Division of State Planning and Research, State of Kansas, has identified the corridor from Kansas City to Manhattan as having a high potential for population growth in the next twenty-five years. This projection includes the area now occupied by Wamego, and may have the effect of enhancing growth in this portion of the state.

In the past, plans have been made for specific periods of time, such as an economic plan for the year 1980 or a comprehensive plan for 1990.

Projections were then established to the respective years, and the total projected future was elaborated in the text of the report. Recently, a new approach has been utilized in the making of plans.

Plans were primarily based on a time projected population. This route assumed that the population growth would not deviate from the projections. If it did, the plan would be rendered "out of date".

This recreation and open land plan will be based in total on a future population, with no mention made of a future date. This process has the distinction of stating that the plan is in effect until the city of Wamego reaches a specified population, whether it occurs in five years or fifty. Since the city of Wamego lies within a region that is experiencing substantial recent growth, and is also within the growth corridor outlined by the Kansas 2000 plan, the upper limit population projection of 3200 from the Comprehensive City Plan will be utilized in the determination of needs of the community.

#### DIRECTION OF GROWTH

Growth in the city of Wamego over the past twenty years has occurred in the North and West directions. Growth to the North was halted until recently by the existence of U.S. Highway 24. In the last five years, two developments have located North of the highway. Most of the

growth for the future will probably concentrate to the West of the present city. This will undoubtedly be accelerated when the new high school is built on land currently owned by the Unified School District No. 320.

### STANDARDS

One of the services that cities provide for their citizenry is park and playground land and facilities. The need for land and facilities is derived through the use of standards. Standards are formulas which are based on past experiences, or anticipated needs within a given locality. Two types of standards are generally used for recreational facilities; space standards and service radius standards. Service radius standards basically state that a given facility can be expected to serve only a certain area of a city--possibly one-half mile radius. Area standards dictate the quantity of acreage that is needed to adequately serve the communities' needs. In this plan, both approaches are used in determining the location and extent of facilities. It should be pointed out that standards are merely a yardstick stated in terms of an accepted minimum.

The Recreation Advisory Board has devised and agreed upon the following minimum standards for park land for this plan:

FUTURE RECREATION STANDARDS

	NEIGHBORHOOD PARK	VEST POCKET PARK*	COMMUNITY PARK
AREA REQUIRED PER 1000 PEOPLE	5.0 acres	---	10.0 acres
SERVICE AREA	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile	---	1 mile
PREFERRED LOCATION	center of neighborhood	on suitable land	on suitable land
AGE GROUPS SERVED	ages 1-14	variable	all ages
TYPES OF FACILITIES DESIRABLE	area for open field play play apparatus low profile organized sports picnic facilities shelter house restrooms	usually dependent upon location of site.	play equipment organized sports baseball tennis football swimming bicycle trails nature trails open field for play shelter restrooms

\* Vest Pocket Parks have become commonplace in many large American cities. Usually they are vacant pieces of land that the city acquires and converts into park. They are usually less than one acre in size. Their location in the community dictates their use. Here they are considered to be part of the Neighborhood Park standard.

## FACILITIES

Space and area standards dictate the areas of the city and the quantities of acres that are needed to accomodate present and anticipated future demand. They do not, however, describe how these tracts of land are to be specifically developed. Standards for facilities are used to provide the balance of the formula for park development. Just as there are many types of parks to serve all types of populations, there are also a multitude of facilities that communities can provide for their citizens. Some activities may be deemed more desirable or appropriate for the community to provide for its citizenry than others. Reasons for the undesirable rating of some facilities may include safety or the need for continual supervision. The list of facilities that were determined to be appropriate for the city of Wamego are listed below with their corresponding standard.

	<u>facility standard*</u>
1. baseball diamonds	one per 830 population
2. basketball goals	one per 2046 population
3. tennis courts	one per 578 population
4. picnic tables	one per 312 population
5. bicycle paths (miles)	one per 2000 population
6. hiking paths (miles)	one per 3000 population
7. nature study areas (acres)	one per 2000 population
8. handball courts	one per 625 population

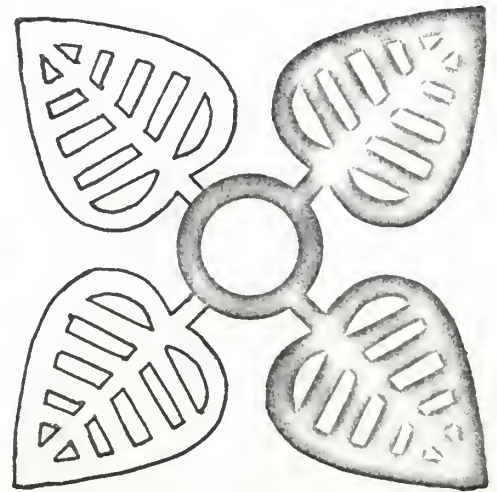


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|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 9. seats for spectator sports | one per 11 population |
| 10. swimming (square feet)    | one per 1 population  |

The implementation of the various proposed increments of this plan should consider the above facility standards as well as the consideration for special populations of the community. The City should insure that plans for facilities include the federally mandated requirements for the elderly or disabled individuals in the locality.

\* "An Outdoor Recreation Plan for Central Kansas" , Kansas Park and Resources Authority, August 1972

**PRESENTATION  
OF FINDINGS**





## PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The process of current land use analysis in the study area together with the utilization of the stated goals, objectives, area standards, space standards, facility standards, and projected growth in population, and expected direction of that growth lead to the development of the charts and maps found on the following pages.

### Needs of the City

The city of Wamego has a current deficit in park acreage. Wamego needs an additional 7 acres of neighborhood park and 9.8 acres of community park land. When the community grows to 3200 in population, the figures will grow to 9.7 acres and 15.3 acres respectively. The city is also currently deficient in its supply of recreational apparatus or facilities. Needed at present are an additional 2 baseball fields, one tennis court, 1.3 miles of bicycle paths, 0.9 miles of hiking paths, four handball courts, and approximately 1.3 acres of nature study. The eventual future population will need more of the above facilities as well as





more basketball courts and picnic facilities.

#### Anticipated Growth Direction

The Comprehensive City Plan of Wamego indicates that growth in residential land use will occur primarily to the west of the present city. There is sufficient land available to accommodate projected future populations in this area. Development has already occurred to the southwest of the city with the recent platting of the Riverview subdivision. Another influence and possible enhancement to growth in this area is the planned site of the new high school on a parcel of land directly west and adjacent to the Wamego Country Club.

#### Location of Future Facilities

Since growth is expected to continue in the western portion of the city, facilities should be identified well in advance of development and land purchased so that the city can assemble a complete and coordinated system of park lands for future generations. There is a present need for a neighborhood facility in the southwest portion of the city to better serve the needs of the people in that area.

Total Recreation Acreage Demand

	<u>Neighborhood Parks</u>	<u>Community Parks</u>
Current City Park	2 acres	16.7 acres
Pennyland Park	4.3 acres	---
Present City Need (2659 population)	13.3 acres	26.5 acres
Deficiency	7.0 acres	9.8 acres
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Future City Need (2800 population)	14.0 acres	28.0 acres
Deficiency	7.7 acres	11.3 acres
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Future City Need (3200 population)	16.0 acres	32.0 acres
Deficiency	9.7 acres	15.3 acres
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Total Future Acreage	16.0 acres	32.0 acres



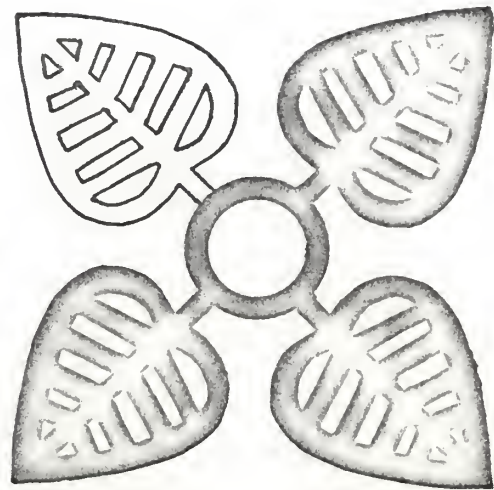
Recreation Inventory Table

	one per x population	City Park	Depot Park	Pennyland Park	Total
Baseball (diamonds)	830	1	0	0	1
Basketball (goals)	2046	1	0	0	1
Tennis (courts)	578	4	0	0	4
Spectator Sports (seats)	11	240	0	0	240
Swimming (square feet)	1	4500	0	0	4500
Picnicking (tables)	312	30	0	5	35
Bicycling (miles)	2000	0	0	0	0
Hiking (miles)	3000	0	0	0	0
Nature Study (acres)	2000	0	0	0	0
Handball (courts)	625	0	0	0	0

Future Facility Inventory Table

	needed at present (2659)	deficient	needed for future (2900)	deficient	needed for future (3200)	deficient	total for future 3200 population
Baseball (diamonds)	3.2	2.2	3.4	2.4	3.9	2.9	4
Basketball (goals)	1.2	0.2	1.4	0.4	1.6	0.6	2
Tennis (courts)	4.6	0.6	4.8	0.8	5.5	1.5	6
Spectator Sports (seats)	241	1	255	15	291	51	291
Swimming (square feet)	2659	-	2900	-	3200	-	3200
Picnicking (tables)	8.5	-	9.0	-	10.3	-	10
Bicycling (miles)	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	2
Hiking (miles)	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.1	1
Nature Study (acres)	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	2
Handball (courts)	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.5	5.1	5.1	5

**PROPOSED PARK  
DEVELOPMENT**





## PROPOSED PARK DEVELOPMENT

The development of a park system to serve Wamego's citizens has been approached from two basic concepts: preservation of natural beauty, and provision of services and amenities for residential areas. There are areas west of the present city that display very natural and beautiful characteristics. These areas then can be identified and utilized for the enhancement of the local residential areas. It also becomes important to provide these same considerations for the development of other recreational facilities, and the renovation of existing park lands in other areas of the city.

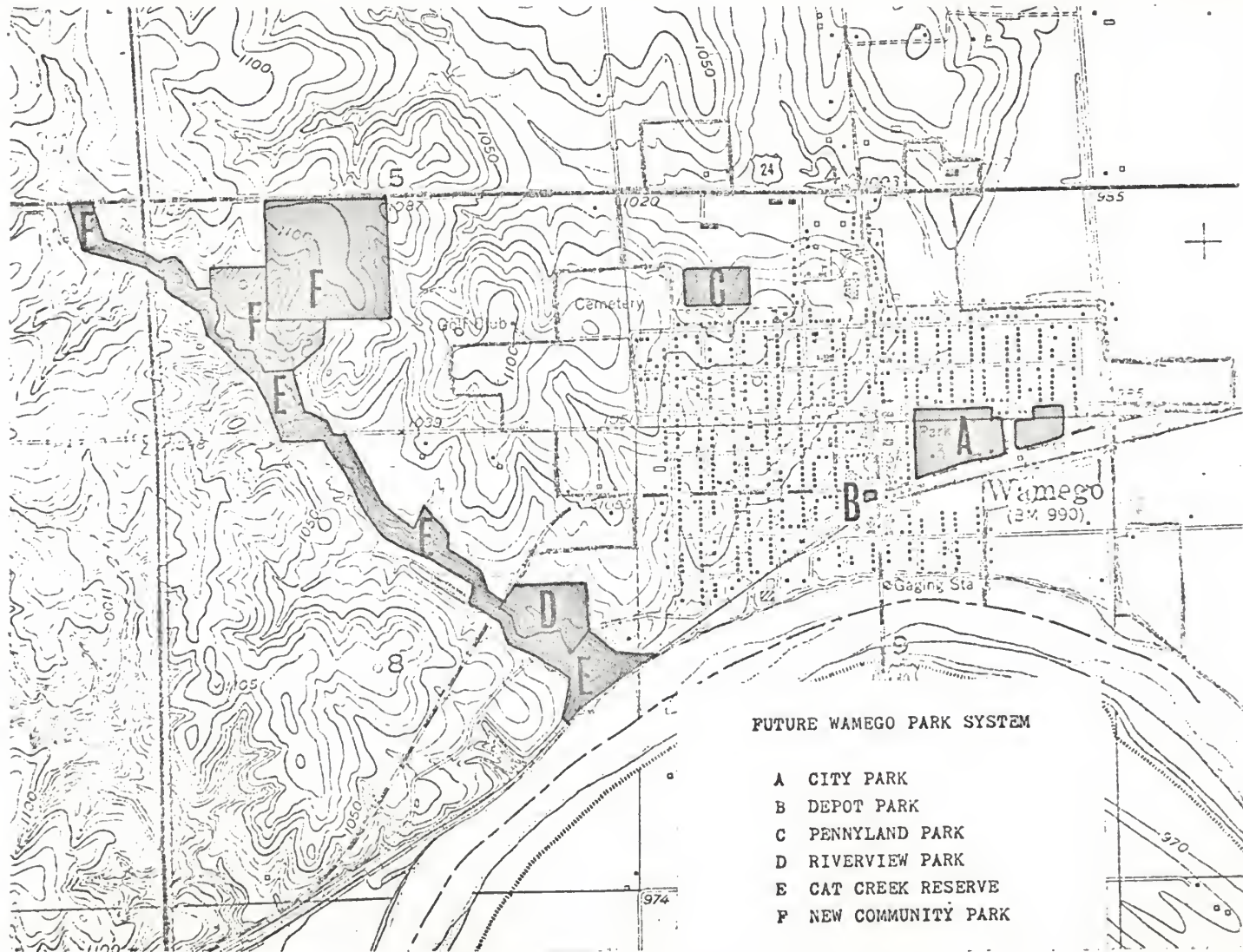
The city of Wamego will need to add to its current recreational facilities in order to meet the needs of expected growth in residential populations in the western portion of the city. The proposed park development scheme enumerated in this report will address this anticipated need, and will outline areas for future park sites. The sites themselves will be specific in nature, because certain tracts of land must be purchased to complete the park system, but the facilities to be placed on the land will be presented in a more general fashion. This is being done so that the flexibility of design remains. Some of the proposed areas are suggested to be implemented immediately, whereas others may not be developed for many years. If new concepts of park and recreation design are discovered in the interim, the option will exist for changes in layout of the particular sites without drastically affecting the park system concept.

The timetable for development must remain flexible, also, so as to directly respond to the population growth, and thus the magnitude of the needs of the citizens. If growth in population develops in this portion of the city slowly, there will not be an immediate need for the expenditure of funds for development of the entire park scheme.

The development of adequate park lands to meet the future needs of Wamego has been pursued in terms of an integrated system that will serve the needs of all areas of the city with good recreational opportunities and with minimal duplication of facilities. This approach utilizes the multi-purpose use of areas that may otherwise have served only single interests. This allows for some streamlining in the quantity of facilities that are provided. For this reason, it is important that the city implement the system as a package. The proposed developments are intended to provide the citizen with a wide variety of recreational experiences in a relatively short distance from his home. Areas for field sports, picnicking, hiking, bicycling, and childrens play are provided in various neighborhood and community facilities.

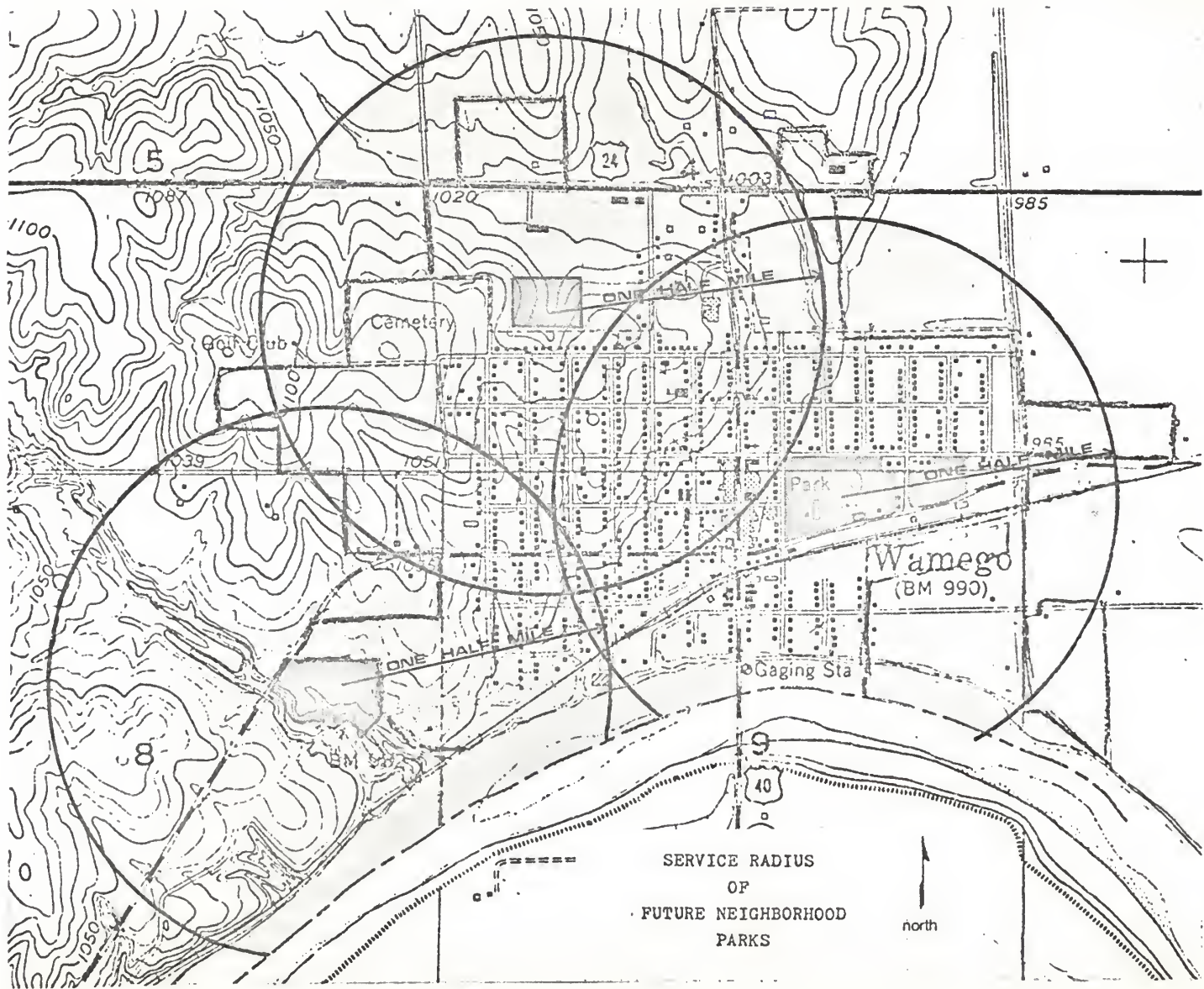
#### The Wamego Park System

The system of parks that is proposed for the city of Wamego will combine facilities of a community and neighborhood nature to provide the citizens with balanced recreation opportunities. There are active and passive sport areas planned in these parks, so that the potential user has a wide variety of choice. The current City Park will remain as the









SERVICE RADIUS  
OF  
FUTURE NEIGHBORHOOD  
PARKS

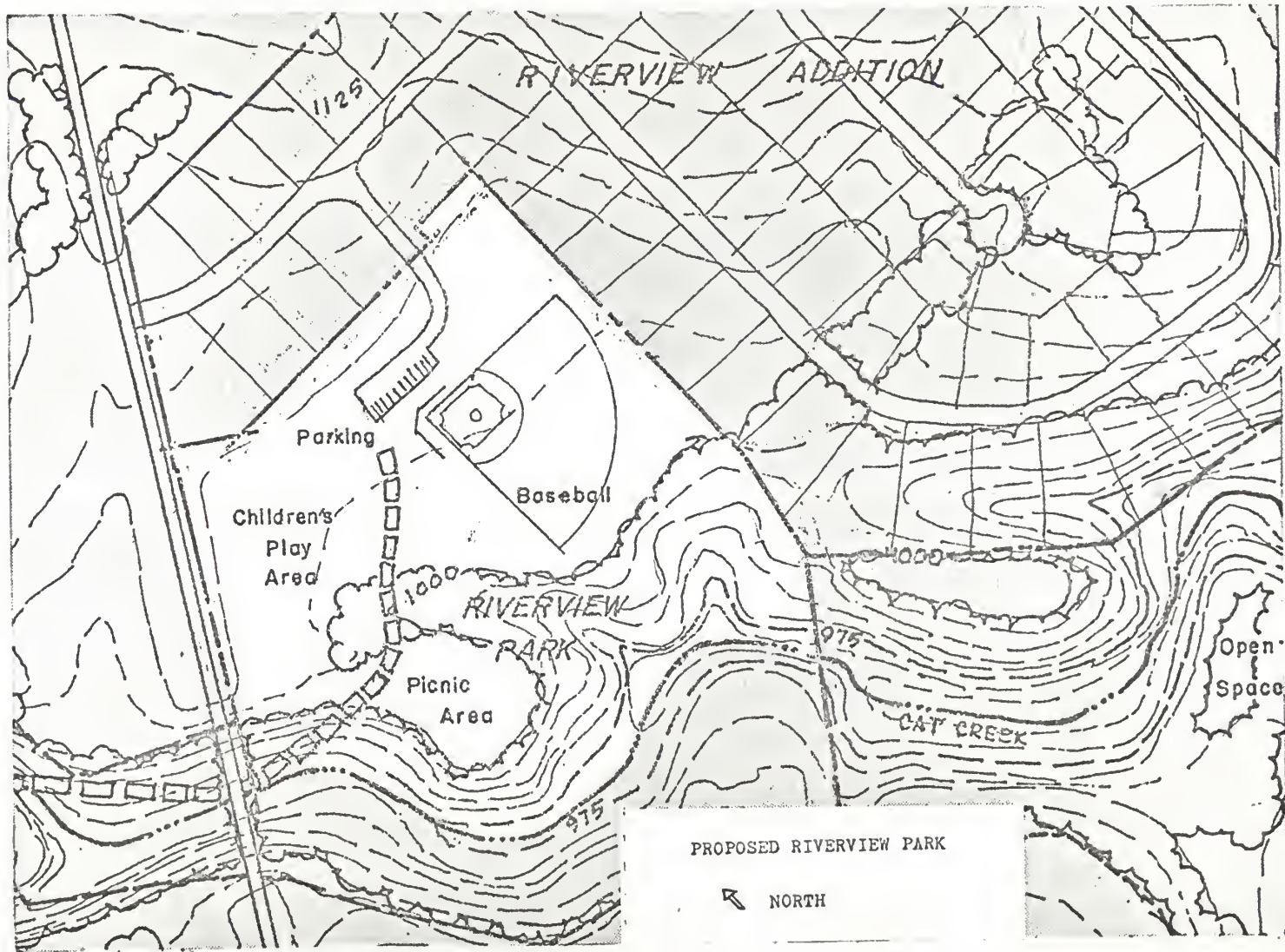
north

primary community-wide facility for the near future, and will be supplemented by several neighborhood parks. The major growth to the west of the present city will be handled by the development of two parks, one community and one neighborhood park.



## PROPOSED RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

The proposed neighborhood facility to serve the southwest part of Wamego is located directly adjacent to and west of the present Riverview Subdivision. It is approximately nine acres, lies south of the old U.S. Highway 24, and consists of all of the vacant land from the subdivision to Cat Creek. This area will provide the potential user with a variety of experiences ranging from baseball to picnicking or children's play. The park is intended only to serve the neighborhood's needs, so entrance is from the subdivision rather than from the old highway. A small parking area has been provided next to the softball field for the convenience of motorists. The baseball field is mainly intended to be used by small children for softball. A children's play area is located to the west of the baseball field. Apparatus can be provided in this area with relative assurance of a safe and stimulating environment. The play apparatus should be located in both open and tree covered areas to give children a variety of play experiences. One other area, a picnic site, has been indicated in this park. This should include picnic tables, restrooms, and possibly outdoor fireplaces. The underbrush in the area could be cleared and selective cutting could be used to establish a very amenable picnic site.



PROPOSED RIVERVIEW PARK

↖ NORTH

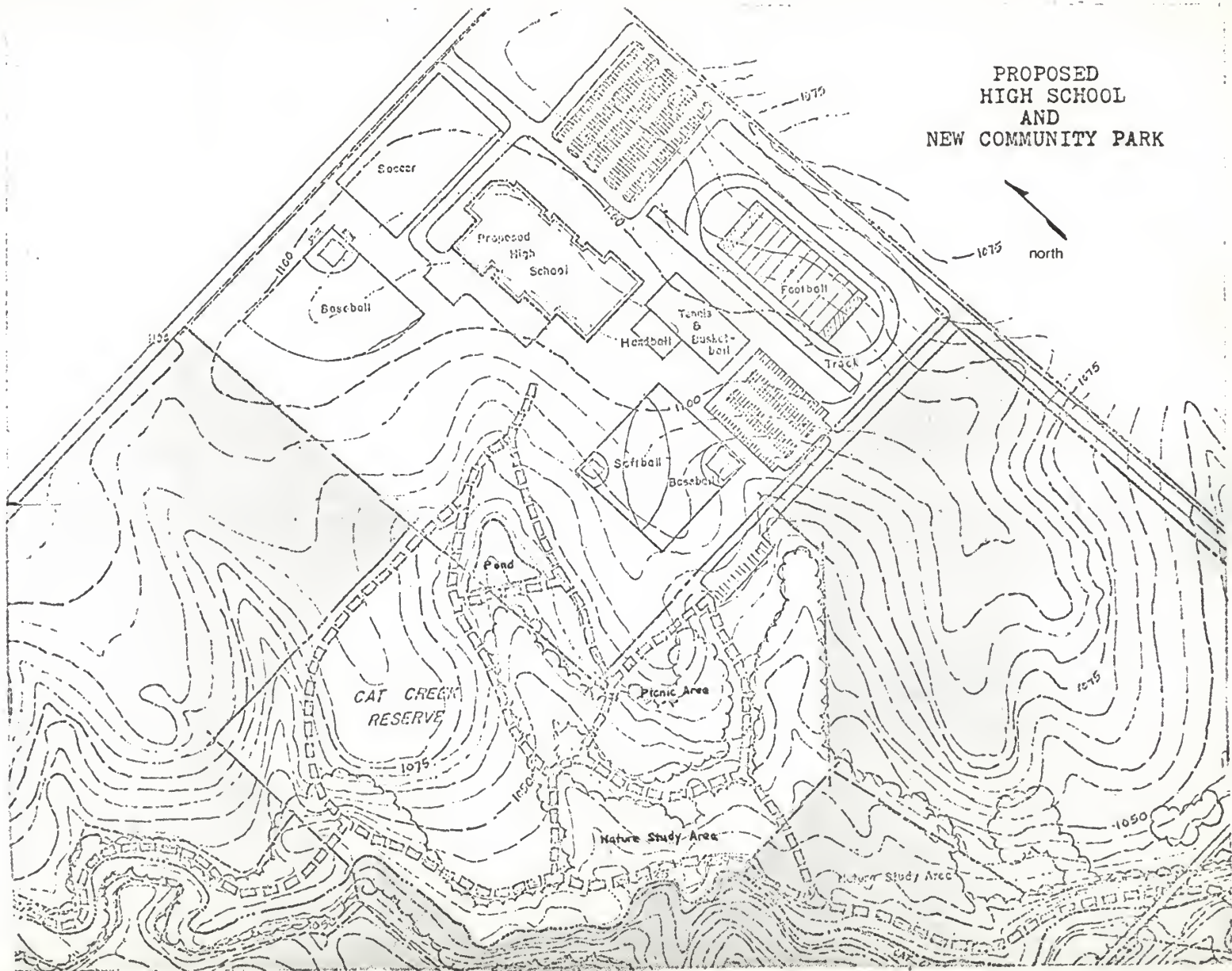
## NEW COMMUNITY PARK

The analysis portion of the park development process indicated a need to include a new community park in the future scheme. The provision of facilities today is extremely expensive, so duplication of services or lands must be minimized. The location of the site of the proposed new high school presented the opportunity of locating services for the needs of the physical education classes and also the nearby residential area. In this effort, facilities could be concentrated on one site that would benefit both purposes and not elsewhere be affordable. The location of the new high school site also is situated adjacent to a very scenic and relatively natural parcel of land. The opportunity thus exists for linking the high school to a park and the park to a scenic streambed. This would be to the benefit of all, and in the interest of preserving one of the naturally unique spots in the Wamego area.

The above considerations became the conceptual formula for the location of the new community park on sixteen acres of land adjacent to the new high school site. In an effort to make the two uses, park and school, flow well together, the design and location of athletic fields around the school was rearranged. It was found that the proposed site configuration responded the best to the natural features and ecology of the area. Because of the topography of the site and the logistics of the various activities, the school site will be utilized for the majority of the active field sports, while the remainder of the community park will handle



PROPOSED  
HIGH SCHOOL  
AND  
NEW COMMUNITY PARK



more of the passive activities.

The school site will have fields for soccer, football, and track as the school board had originally planned, but the layout of the other facilities have been somewhat modified. The original plans called for four practice size baseball fields. The design concept calls for the location of two practice fields, as well as one large, lighted baseball field with seating capacity of about two hundred. This field would serve the school's baseball team, and also serve the added needs of the community for summertime baseball programs. Four tennis courts and four handball courts have been located to the south of the proposed school building. The process portion of this report indicated a need for tennis and handball courts in the new community park. Handball courts are located directly adjacent to the tennis courts because they are similar activities, and because the handball courts are often used as practice courts by tennis players. These facilities are made more accessible to the public by the inclusion of an access road and parking in the area directly to the south of the tennis courts. This parking area can then be used by people participating in baseball, tennis, handball, and football.

The passive activities of the community park are provided in the more rugged topography to the south and west of the school site. Access to this area has been provided via means of a road south of the school site, but limited so as to protect the natural beauty and ecology of

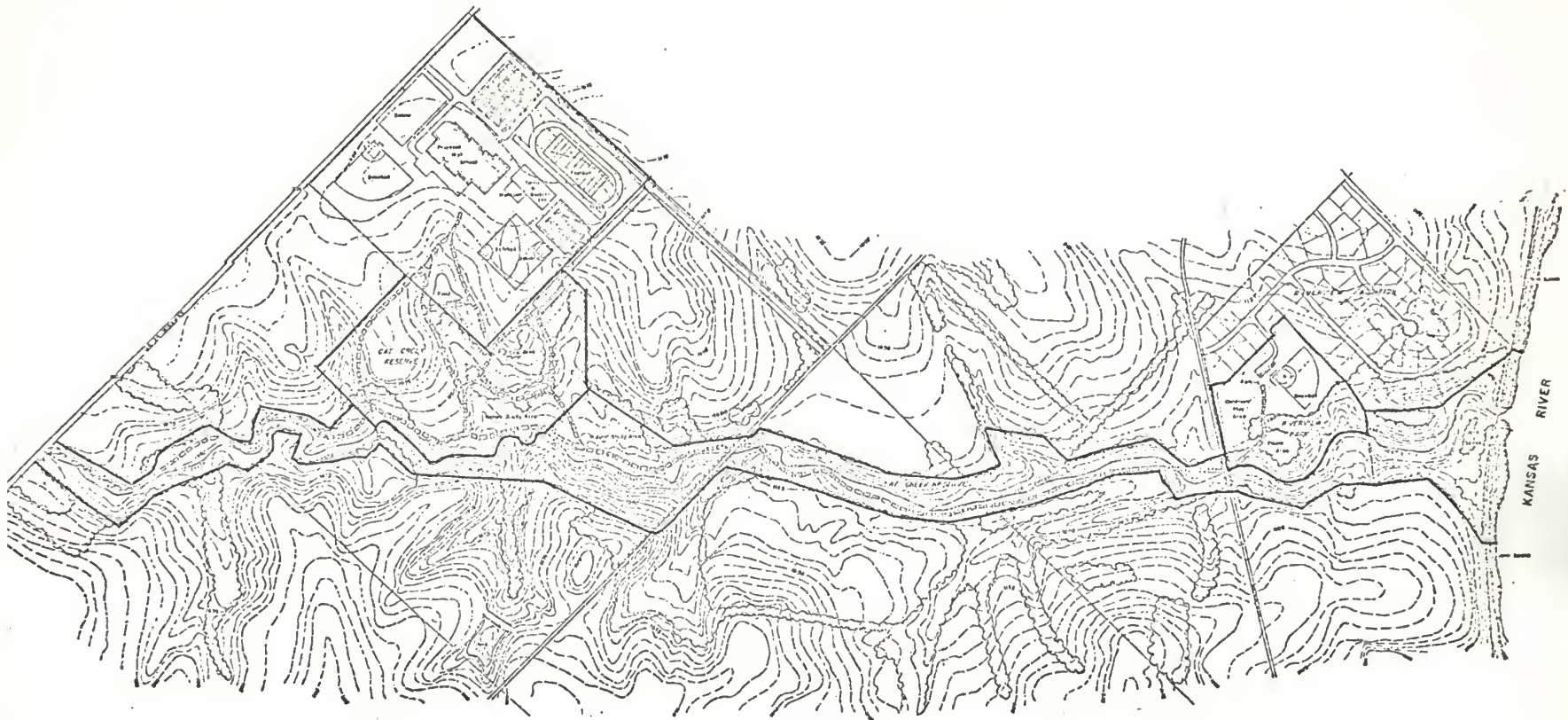
the stream area. From the parking area inside of the community park, citizens have easy access to the picnic area and nature study area by a trail system. The picnic and nature study areas have been separated and contained in certain specified spots of the site to retain the natural character of the site, and protect the park from overuse which could lead to degradation of the plant cover. The entire lower portion of the community park has been made more accessible to the general public by the development of a bikeway system. This knits the school to the park and the various parts of the park to the stream. More of the site can be visited and enjoyed by citizens with the inclusion of such a system. Although portions of the site will be actively used by people, the site is large enough to contain areas that will remain in their natural state. An example of this is the area just to the west of the pond on the school site. This area is a wide open grassy slope that leads down to the stream bottom. No development has been programmed in this area so that it will retain the natural plant cover.



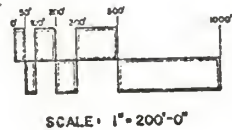
## CAT CREEK RESERVE

Riverview Park provides neighborhood facilities and the new community park supplies the community with city wide facilities. The natural character of the Cat Creek area lends itself to the development of a linear link that would enhance the two separate parks, provide access to the two sites, and protect the creek from eventual encroachment and destruction from residential development. Such a linear park or linear open space would also provide the city of Wamego with a "container for growth". The city could program its capital improvements to include only those areas east of the creek bottom, and thus limit its residential sprawl by use of this natural container. The primary concern of this report, though, is the protection of the creek and the linking of the two separate park lands.

Cat Creek is a stream that has been allowed to remain in its natural state primarily because of its inability to be developed. Its banks in some spots are very steep and the soil is easily eroded. This combined with the rugged topography in the immediate area has kept development of any sort a good distance away from the stream. Although these characteristics have been negative to human development, they have led to the establishment of a very stable ecology of the stream area. The stream flows year round and the local water table is high enough to support tree growth in the immediate area of the stream and



PROPOSED PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
 for  
 WAMEGO, KANSAS



its drainage valleys. Dense growth is present in the stream bottom, with tree and shrub growth diminishing over distance and elevation from the stream.

A proposal is made here for the delineation of those areas along the stream that display scenic and natural characteristics, for their protection and preservation for present and future generations. The area that is indicated on the enclosed map includes mainly the stream bottom plus most of the tree covered portions of land adjacent to the stream. This should provide sufficient protection for the stream and its biotic inhabitants. The specific land boundaries for the linear open space will have to be mapped in detail when the city is in a position to implement this portion of the plan. Although the major concern here is the part of the stream that connects the two parks, eventually the city should also gain control of the two small pieces north and south of the two parks. This would insure control of the entire stream from U.S. Highway 24 to the Kansas River, and would guard against the possibility of development occurring along these two small pieces of streambed that could jeopardize the scenic or natural value of the area. As a system, the Cat Creek Reserve blends well into the existing structure of Wamego, and also with the Kansas River to provide the citizens with more than adequate recreational opportunities within reasonable distance from their homes.

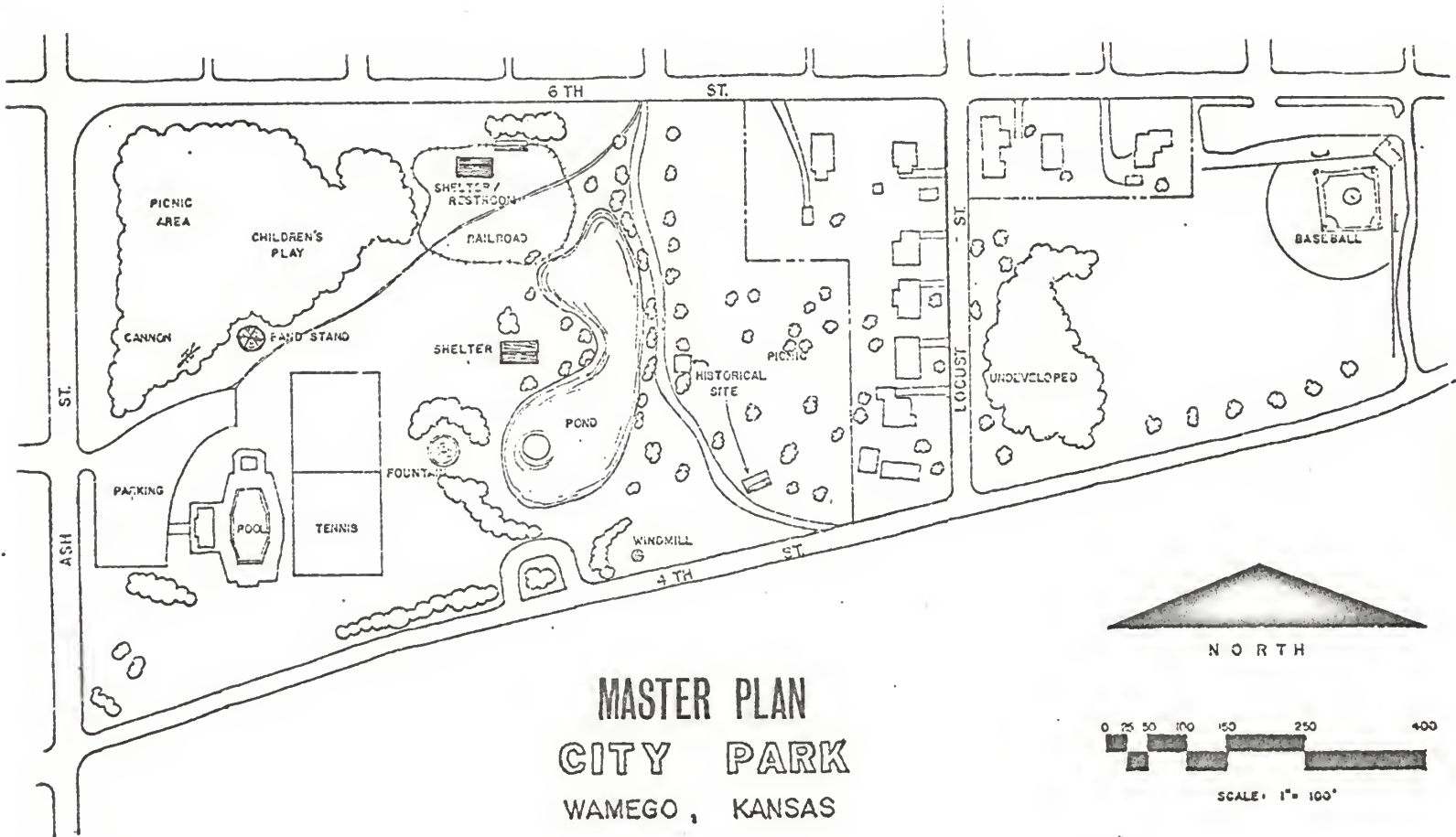
## RENOVATION OF CITY PARK

The present City Park has served well as a community wide facility, but can use some renovation to again become an optimum facility. City Park has served the community for many decades as a primary place for family gathering on weekends, but has recently had to respond to the changing needs of the citizenry. This factor, combined with the problems of removal of diseased American Elm trees have together resulted in a city park that is very different than it was just ten years ago. There is a very definite need to renovate and recreate some areas in the park to make it more pleasing and refreshing. This renovation can be accomplished by several relatively elementary steps.

Activity areas should be consolidated and reinforced. This calls for the compaction of the picnic and childrens play areas so that both can retain their separate identity with minimal interference to each other. Some additional apparatus for childrens play should be acquired and placed in the area labelled 'childrens play' in the attached Master Plan for City Park. Minor alterations in the topographic relief could provide the children with a more interesting area for play.

The picnic areas indicated on the master plan could be made much more pleasing by the addition of some new and varied vegetation. The American Elm trees that were diseased and removed should be replaced





by several other types of trees to assure that the park is not again hit by a disease that would severely destroy its appearance. Shrubbery could also be utilized in the picnic areas to break up the visual appearance of the vicinity, provide privacy, and add to the feeling of closure.

Another change suggested by this report is the closing of the interior roads in the park. They were apparently constructed to give the public added automobile access, but the roads limit the usefulness of the park as a whole by effectively dividing it into two pieces. Ample parking is available on the perimeter of the park, so that the interior roads become of very little additional use. It would be sufficient to merely blockade the entrances of the roads, which would leave the roads for pedestrian and bicycle use. A small turn around should be constructed in the vicinity of the old Dutch mill so that motorists have a chance to safely stop and view the mill without congesting traffic on Fourth Street.

The area to the east of the Dutch mill should be developed as a historic site to include a display of cultural artifacts. Some progress has been made in this direction already with the relocation of a pioneer log cabin in the area. Another old limestone railroad building could serve as a museum. Picnic facilities should also be located in the area for the convenience of visitors.



The miniature railroad in the north part of the park should be repaired and used on weekends during the summer to make the park a more pleasing place for children and parents.

Selected plantings along the southern boundary of the park could greatly enhance the scenic appearance of the view in the vicinity of the Dutch mill. Care should be taken to select a variety of types of vegetation that will survive in the climate of this part of the country.

The eastern portion of City Park is separated from the main City Park by a row of houses and a street. Since it is unlikely that the City will ever be in a position of gaining access to these parcels, the two parks must be developed separately. City Park east consists mainly of a baseball diamond and some open space in the form of a large stand of trees. The baseball diamond to date is the only available lighted, regulation size field in the city. For this reason it is heavily used and the area should be upgraded. The rest rooms and scorekeepers building should be renovated and repainted, and the parking area to the north of the field should be enlarged and regraded to handle more cars. The baseball field proper needs no repair.

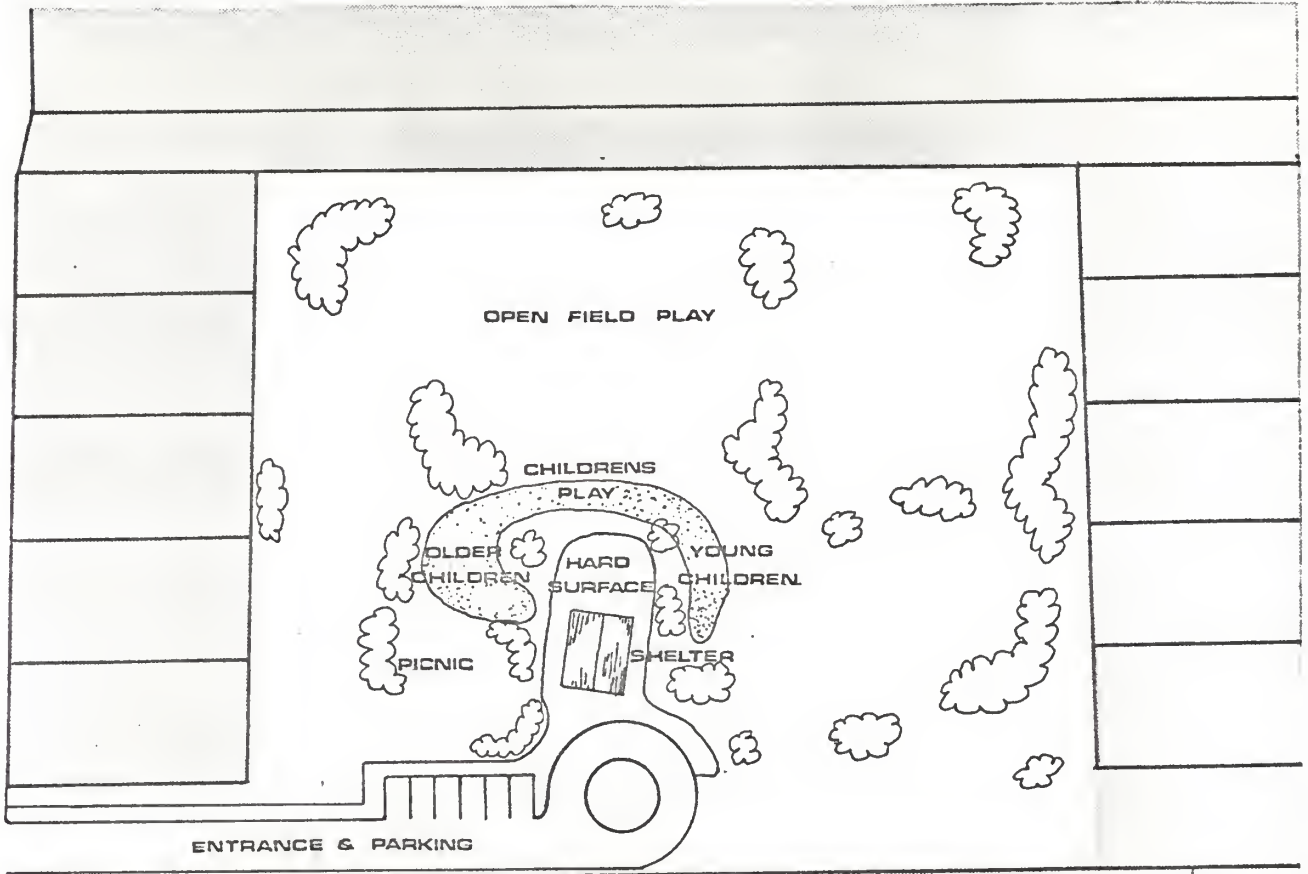
The remainder of the park should stay in open space and be left undeveloped. A large stand of trees in the southwest corner of the park provides the potential user with a relaxing and enjoyable break from the activities of the rest of the park.

## Pennyland Park

The subdivision of a parcel of land in the northwest corner of the city in 1974 lead to the donation of about 4.3 acres of land to the city for recreation. The land transfer stipulated that the property be named Pennyland Park and that it was to be developed into a childrens' park. The land is situated on both sides of a drainage ravine. A design for the development of the park was drawn in the fall of 1974 with the cooperation of a local citizens group. It was determined that the park should contain a balance of actively developed areas and open land for multiple use by children. The final decision was to develop and offer facilities on the southwest one-fourth of the acreage, with the remainder being undeveloped at present. The design for the developed portion was to include facilities that would correctly address the recreation needs of various ages. Also to be included is a picnic site, a shelter house, a parking area, and rest rooms. The final design of the park that appears on the following page has been planned to incorporate locally available materials in the construction of the apparatus. This was done to minimize cost and also to better orient and familiarize children with materials that are native to their geographic area.

The shelter house acts as the focal point for the active area in the park. A hard surface play area is provided to the north of the shelter

WALNUT STREET



ENTRANCE & PARKING

MASTER PLAN  
PENNYLAND PARK

↑ north

where small group activities and games may occur. The apparatus for play is arranged in a linear fashion surrounding the hard surface area. The apparatus area has a sand base for safety, and is arrayed according to age groups. Facilities for young children have been located to the east of the hard surface, and for older children in the western area near the picnic site. Apparatus for childrens' play have been graduated to the specific growth and development needs at various ages. Thus, apparatus for older children requires them to have more developed muscles, balance, and hand-eye coordination.

A picnic site has been located to the west of the shelter house but within close distance of the play area for parental supervision of play activities.

Parking and circulation have been segregated for safety reasons from the activities of the park, and have been contained to the southern fringe of the site.

Since the site is currently void of trees, an important consideration is the planting of trees to mitigate the summer sun and provide for more of a park atmosphere and a sense of closure. An active tree planting effort should be made in the developed part of the park, but should allow the remainder of the site to stay in open grass slopes.

Before the site is developed for active use by children, the drainage area that flows through the site in a south to north direction should be changed. Currently, water flows from storm sewers on Eighth Street underground to the southern boundary of the site, and then flows above the ground through the site to the north. This occurrence should be corrected prior to the opening of the park to children.

## Depot Park

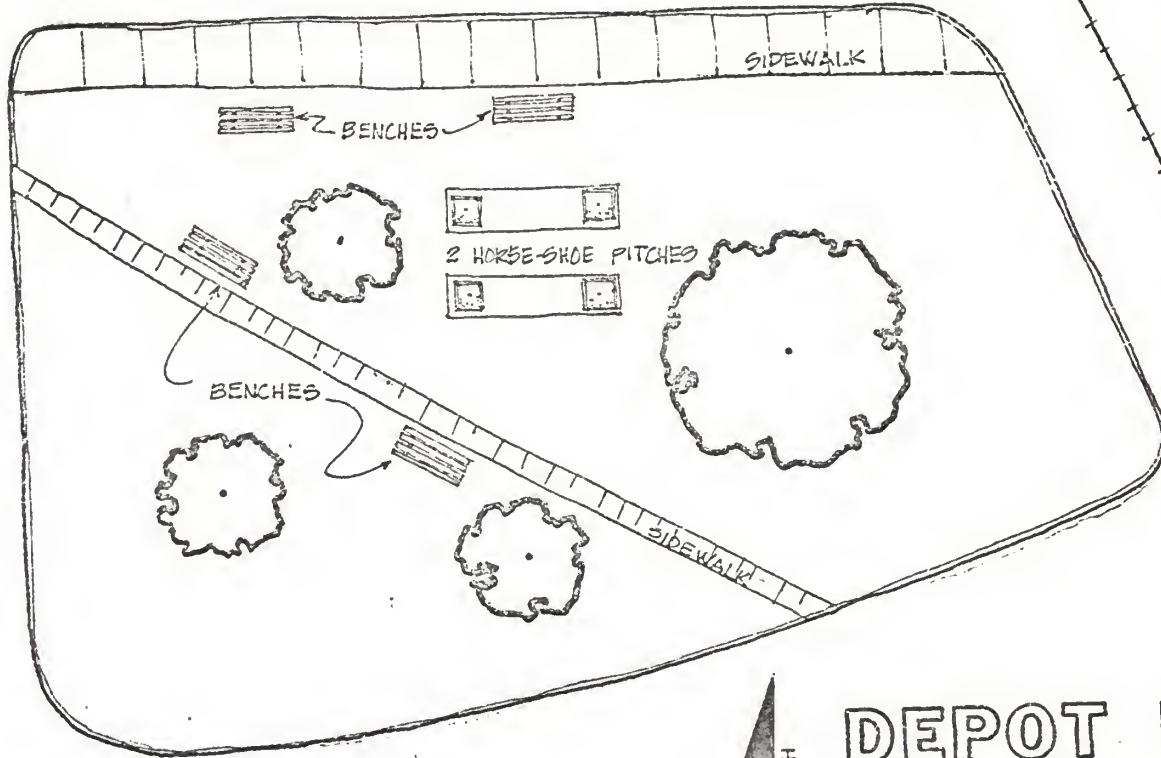
A small parcel of land given to the city by the Union Pacific Railroad for park use makes up the cities' only vest pocket park. The land is about one-third acre in size and is located at the corner of Lincoln and Fourth Streets. The park has been utilized in the past as a rest area near the business district. Since there is little likelihood that the park can ever be enlarged, it is best to retain it as a piece of open green space.

Depot Park currently has some park benches and a water fountain. It is used mainly by older folks as a place to sit and talk on hot summer days. The only improvement that is suggested for the park is the addition of two horse-shoe pitches. This is intended to provide the older folks with a form of semi-active recreation. At present the only horse-shoe pitches are located in the middle of the picnic area in City Park. The inclusion of this opportunity is hoped to make the park more appealing to the users.



LINCOLN ST.

4TH ST.



SIDEWALK

BENCHES

2 HORSE-SHOE PITCHES

BENCHES

SIDEWALK

RAILROAD TRACKS

# DEPOT PARK

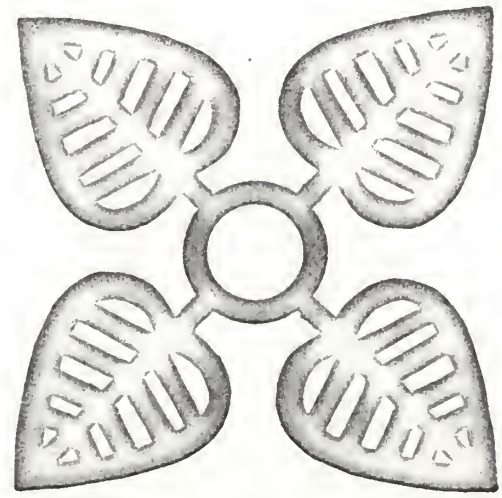
## WAMEGO, KANSAS

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SCALE: 1" = 20'

**IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE PLAN**



## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The process for the development of a recreation plan has covered an elaborate and thorough analysis stage and has presented some future development sites for recreation areas, as well as the renovation of present facilities to upgrade and obtain optimum use from them. This complex process is lost, though, if the implementation of the proposed sites is not correctly and completely carried out. The plan has outlined in general terms what the city will need in acreage and facilities to meet the needs of the citizens of Wamego as the city grows to the population of 3200. These plans are general in nature to allow flexibility, but specific in site locations so that park lands are properly situated to serve the respective needs of residential growth in the future. The city must take an aggressive stand to insure that the development of parks in the city is in advance of residential growth.

### Staging of Park Development

The development of park lands in Wamego should be arranged on a schedule similar to that of a capital improvements budget. In this manner, certain improvements will be made each year until the park system is complete. This must be tempered with according to the growth of the population. If growth increases rapidly, so should the development of park lands. Likewise, if growth slows, park developments may need to be cut back. Since the staging of capital expenditures for park development is equated with population growth and not time, this report will outline a general

schedule for the acquisition of park lands and the development of facilities on those lands. The scope of this plan is a population of 3200 inhabitants. An intermediate growth point of 2900 population will also be used to indicate the improvements that are necessary when the city reaches that population.

Population of 2659 (present)

The City should immediately undertake the renovation of City Park, and Depot Park, and should immediately implement the design for Pennyland Park. These improvements should be considered as a number one recreation priority at the present. This completion would insure the City of adequate and high quality recreation lands for the present population. The location of these facilities compliments the current distribution of population in Wamego. The implementation of this part of the recreation plan should encourage local service groups to donate time and resources toward the completion of the above listed park lands. Aid from the community in the form of service groups could minimize the overall cost. This could speed the process of upgrading the present park system.

A secondary priority at this time is the acquisition of lands for the new community and neighborhood facilities in the Cat Creek area. The City should be constantly monitoring the land development situation in that area to insure that the implementation of Cat Creek Reserve is not jeopardized by any residential development.

### Population of 2900

At the point when the city of Wamego reaches the population of 2900, the completion of the previous stage must be realized. The addition of nearly 250 population to the 2659 base will mean the necessity for further implementation of the plan. The City should now be in a position of acquiring and assembling the lands necessary for the construction and completion of the new community and neighborhood parks. It is important to stress the acquisition of all of the lands outlined in the Cat Creek Reserve proposal. This will insure the eventual completion of the whole system and safeguard the entire creek from residential encroachment. It will also provide the city with the opportunity of controlling growth in and around the creek by the establishment of a city regulated strip of land from U.S. Highway 24 to the Kansas River. This can aid the City to control residential sprawl. The actual timing of this stage is guided by two variables---population and the construction of the new high school. Normal residential growth in a westerly direction would demand the proposed services, but the assembling and development of park lands should be accelerated when the new high school is built.

A secondary priority for this stage is the researching of local funding capabilities for the development of the facilities on the park lands. Arrangements should be made, and grants written in this stage to provide for the necessary monies to carry through to the completion of the total Cat Creek Reserve in the next stage.



It is also necessary at this stage to review the proposed uses of the park lands and insure that they are in compliance with community desires. It is quite possible that the facilities that were developed in this plan may need to be modified to better serve the citizens. This stage should also include a reevaluation of the goals and objectives of the plan and a serious look at the future. If the City grows at a rapid rate, the plan may be implemented in a matter of five to ten years. In this case, another plan should be undertaken by the City for the provision of services beyond the 3200 population point.

#### Population of 3200

At this point the facilities on the Cat Creek Reserve lands should be funded and in the process of being finalized. The City has now developed facilities in its new community park, Riverview Neighborhood Park, and the connecting link in and around Cat Creek. The City also has administered programs and facilities in Pennyland Park, City Park, and Depot Park. This system of parks then serves the entire city with neighborhood and community wide activities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The limits of this plan will be exhausted and it will be necessary to have another plan drawn for the future. The optimal situation is one where there is no lapse in time between the two plans. This means that the City should engage a consultant to work with the community and prepare a plan that would be adopted when the City reaches a population of 3200.

### Land Acquisition

There are many means of obtaining land for park development. They range from outright purchase to legal condemnation. The most desirable and effective way for a city to have total control over a parcel of land for an infinite time is through the purchase of the property. This is many times expensive and not always necessary. It is possible to preserve a scenic mountain range by the purchase of the entire mountain, but equally possible to preserve the scenic nature for future generations by the purchasing of the right to develop on the mountains. This is usually less costly and can provide the purchaser with all rights to develop or destroy anything above, on, or under the property.

It is also possible to purchase an easement into a parcel of land. This means that the purchaser has the right of access to the property. This process is used by utility companies to gain access to private property to install and service electric, gas, and other utility lines. In both the purchase of development rights and an easement, the land itself stays with the original land owner, but certain rights are sold.

The above concepts are relatively new to the field of recreation, and for this reason must be carefully approached with the aid of a trained attorney. They can provide the City with new opportunities for the use and control of recreation lands, but only when correctly acquired.

The acquisition of land for park purposes in the city of Wamego will become necessary in stage two when the City reaches a population of 2900. This stage has scheduled the acquisition of lands for the new community and neighborhood facilities as well as the connecting link through Cat Creek.

The land necessary for Riverview Neighborhood Park (approximately nine acres) and the new community park (approximately sixteen acres) should be purchased so that the City has full title to the land. This allows the City to completely develop these two facilities and insures that the two parcels will always remain in the public trust. The cost of outright purchase should not be an unrealistic burden on the cities' finances since there is only twenty-five acres needed to be purchased.

The land that will connect the two parks to each other and the final two parcels that will complete the link to Highway 24 and the Kansas River should be obtained through another method. This land constitutes about forty acres and could be quite costly. It is here proposed that the City initiate negotiations to purchase a scenic easement through Cat Creek from the Kansas River to U.S. Highway 24. The purchase of an easement through this area would insure the preservation of this locally unique natural resource and provide for its use by future generations. The City should seek an easement that gives the City access to and development rights over the creek bottom and its adjacent lands. The title to the affected lands would remain in the hands of the original landowners,

but all other rights would be sold to the city of Wamego. The City may want to remove the land obtained by easement from a taxable status since the benefits derived from said land are accrued mainly by the City and not the landowners. The purchase of the two park lands and an easement to the linear connecting strip will provide the City with the basic resources upon which to build the facilities outlined in the analysis of this report.

### Coordination with other Agencies

The city of Wamego could finance and construct all of the outlined facilities. There are, however, other means of accomplishing the same goal. Wamego now constitutes the only U.S. Census recognized city in Pottawatomie County. The text of this report also indicates that Wamego is projected to continue its urban dominance in the county for the next few decades. For this reason it is not unreasonable for the City to approach the County and ask for some assistance in the implementation of the plan. The major proportion of the users of Wamego's parks are citizens of Wamego, but the parks also serve the non-urban part of Wamego and other nearby parts of Pottawatomie County as well. The County should begin a program supporting the development of such facilities in the city of Wamego, since a large proportion of its citizens derive the direct benefits of the park system. The City of Wamego and Pottawatomie County should jointly work toward the development of the proposed facilities, and continue to plan for the location and provision of future facilities.

Likewise, the City together with the County should work with and coordinate services with the Big Lakes Regional Planning Commission. A continual planning effort will aid in the coordination of plans and minimization of costly duplication of facilities. The three agencies also have access to three separate sources of funding that can assist in the funding of projects.



### Sources of Monetary and Technical Assistance

The implementation of the recreation plan will necessitate the coordination of the Cities' financial resources, and should also include a search for outside assistance. There exist several sources for the funding of outdoor recreational facilities that assist and supplement the general funds of the City. A careful analysis of the financial environment should be undertaken at the time of implementation to expose possible new means or programs at the intergovernmental level for such monetary aid. The more traditional ways of financing capital improvements will be discussed in this report.

At the local level, general funding from the Cities' budget is the most elementary procedure for implementing capital improvements. This procedure can be supplemented by the issuance of bonds. Another process that can be utilized is the involvement of local service groups. Community groups frequently can be organized and their talents directed in a neighborhood project such as the construction of apparatus or buildings. This method has serious potential, but is not frequently used. The subdivision of new land within the city can provide another source of park resources. Subdivision regulations state that a developer can be required to donate or reserve land within the subdivision for recreation lands at a rate equal to the city standard for recreation. The City Planning Commission needs, though, to carefully watch over the land donations so that an organized series of lands are assembled to the avoidance of scattered small parcels of unusable property.

Contributions of property or gifts can also be received by the City. While this method is not predictable, it can lead to substantial community support and acceptance of a recreation system.

The City should definitely strive to work closely with the County in the site planning and development stages of the recreation system. The City should actively involve the County in all aspects of the process, of which implementation is one of the most important. The County should be approached concerning the monetary funding of the various facilities. As was mentioned earlier in this report, the County has a vested interest in the completion of this plan, and thus should obligate itself with financial support to assure swift and total implementation.

The Big Lakes Regional Planning Commission can also be of assistance to the City, since it has access to a large number of federally sponsored programs for the acquisition and development of park lands. It is advisable that the City become more familiar with these federal grants because of the positive impact that such assistance could have on the Wamego Park System.

Intergovernmental cooperation can provide much assistance and access to necessary materials or sources that are otherwise obscured from local

city offices. The City of Wamego has much to gain from continued efforts in this direction, and should actively pursue this route.

Technical assistance is necessary to bring the concepts in this report to the public in the form of park lands and facilities for their use. Site designs will need to be prepared when the implementation of various lands occurs. The City should assure its citizenry of properly designed and oriented facilities by the contracting of consultant services. Consultants can provide the City with technical assistance to bring the park system into completion. Technical assistance can also be sought from the Forestry Extension Service at Kansas State University in Manhattan. The Extension Service can provide the City with planting programs, or assist in the design of facilities. Although the Forestry Extension office serves many communities in this part of Kansas, the City of Wamego can receive minor technical assistance from this source.

Responsibility for Implementation

The responsibility for implementation of this plan lies in part with the City Commission of Wamego. It is this body that will make the policy decisions which will effect the administration of funds toward the completion of the recreation system. While a policy decision on the allocation of funds is of high importance, the day to day work of the City Manager will be of greater overall magnitude. The members of the City Commission are elected to their office, and are subject to removal or retirement from time to time. The City Manager, though, is an appointed official to oversee the day to day affairs of the City, and is more likely to politically outlive the commissioners. The City Manager also is a key person in the implementation of this recreation plan since he is in a position to continually monitor and administratively direct the capital improvements programs of the City. It is the City Manager that will be responsible for the maintenance of the staged acquisition, development, and completion of this recreation and open land plan.