
**VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN**

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History and Background

Historically, planning for the Village's park and recreational needs has been included as a component of the Village's comprehensive plan. Prior to the mid-1960s, the Village government owned very few parklands and ran virtually no programs for recreational activities. A Recreation Advisory Board was established by Village Council in 1958. Its stated purpose was to help prepare plans and programs for parks/recreation and advise Council on ways to respond to the community needs. Around 1974, the Board was re-named the Community Activities Board. The Board's charge was to define the recreations, cultural and leisure time needs of Village residents and provide policy guidance to the Village Council to address those needs. The Board was in existence until 1990, when it was disbanded by action of Village Council. The sentiment at that time was that the Parks and Recreation Department was operating and maintaining the Village's recreational resources sufficiently and, with no programs to oversee, the Board was not needed.

For about the last twenty years, the Village's position and support regarding parks and recreation has focused, almost exclusively, on providing physical facilities only. Prior to that time, programs were a major function of the department. At a point in the late 1970's, the Council decided that the Department needed to reduce its operation and, consequently, its budget. Following that downsizing, the Village government focused on maintaining and operating the existing parks system and providing some minimal support to volunteer efforts at programming. The Department has continued some annual traditions such as the Kings Island trip and a few organized skating parties for the community. During 1997, a volunteer group gathered to organize recreational events for local youth. This group sponsored a few events with the assistance of the Village's Parks and Recreation Department. The future of this interest and effort is unknown at this time.

Past Planning Efforts

Throughout the years, various parks have received differing degrees of attention based on their role in the larger community picture. A significant investment has been given to Gaunt Park with an emphasis on creating active recreational facilities. The same is true of the John Bryan Community Center which has evolved from near abandonment to the present government offices/recreational hub. Conversely, the neighborhood parks which were established within residential areas as a means of providing play areas for the surrounding neighbors, have come to serve a more passive, open space role in the community. These areas have few, if any, park amenities and basically provide an open space within residentially-developed lots.

The 1966 Comprehensive Plan for the Village indicated that Gaunt Park was the only public park in the Village. At that time, what is now known as Ellis Pond/Park was still considered the former well field but was available for recreational needs. Also at that time, the Mills Lawn School property, the Glen Helen and the John Bryan State Park were seen as adequately serving community residents for recreational purposes. The 1966 Plan identified a need for neighborhood parks that would serve the active and passive recreational needs of local areas/neighborhoods.

The 1977 Village Plan recognized the addition of various neighborhood parks to the Village's inventory and noted that, in most areas of the Village, parkland is less than one-half mile away. The absence of a neighborhood park south of Allen Street was also noted. To support and encourage this continued enhancement provided by neighborhood parks, the Plan suggested the reservation of land for parks in conjunction with residential development.

The 1984 Village Plan Revision identified two poorly located mini-parks: the lot on the southeastern corner of Allen Street and Xenia Avenue and another at Whitehall and Northwood Drives. It highlighted Gaunt Park and the Bryan Community Center as facilities that are well situated and utilized by many community members. The bike path system developed throughout town was recognized in this document as another recreational asset to the community.

The 1996 Comprehensive Land Use Plan lists the following specific goals for the Village's Parks and Recreational system: 1) collect information regarding the recreational needs of the community and evaluate the present park system to determine if needs are being met; 2) continue to improve active recreational facilities as deemed appropriate, and 3) recognize and promote the Bryan Community Center as a cultural center.

The 1996 Plan also indicates that neighborhood parks should be evaluated to determine appropriate uses. Options for restructuring the use of these areas should be explored and changes made where deemed necessary. This document will attempt to do that.

National Standards and Trends for Parks

For the last thirty years, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has been responsible for establishing recommended guidelines and standards for parks and associated recreational uses. Traditionally, the standard of ten acres of park and open space per 1,000 population within an urbanized area plus an equal area in parkways, large parks, forests and the like either within or adjacent to the urban area has been used. This national guideline can provide some measurement of what is reasonable and adequate with respect to the delivery of a service and/or facility. Today, this and other standards are seen as a beginning point where a specific community can determine appropriate modifications to the standard based on the community's interests, desires and commitments towards parks and recreational areas.

The national agencies and organizations that have been involved in the parks and recreation field have gone through significant evolution over the last few decades. Changes with regard to environmental concerns, consumer demands for programs and facilities and the general growing interest in physical fitness have resulted in an alteration of the focus by these agents. One particularly significant national event that effects local plans for parks and recreational needs was the enactment of the 1992 Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), which mandates equal access to all users of public (and private) facilities. This legislation requires that park areas and facilities shall provide reasonable accessibility and usable by all populations. This Act has resulted in significant changes in the procedures used to plan, design and utilize public parks and recreational areas. The US Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board of the Recreation Access Advisory Committee, a National agent, has generated design standards to address accessibility issues for recreational areas and activities. In the broadest sense, the ADA requires that: 1) all newly constructed buildings and facilities must be accessible, 2) renovations or alterations to existing facilities must incorporate accessibility elements, and 3) barriers to accessibility in existing facilities must be removed when "readily achievable." These standards have been recognized and have been used by the Village in the design and construction of improvements in the last few years.

There are national trends within the larger society which will influence local efforts to address recreational needs. Many have come to recognize the important role of our parks and recreational facilities in the larger community. These facilities add to the cultural fabric and quality of life for Village residents. Specific national trends that are seen as significant and, therefore, incorporated into recommendations outlined in this plan include:

1. the aging of the society
2. the increased importance of park and recreational amenities by community members
3. ongoing and changing environmental interest/concerns

4. a general increase in stake-holder involvement (i.e. local adopt-a-park programs/volunteerism, stewardship, etc.)

5. changing trends in recreational activities and the required support facilities

It is also important to look at the Village's parks and recreation system and how it weaves in with similar facilities that serve the larger region. It is particularly important, here in the Village, to recognize the larger regional recreational interests and actions and how they influence our local parks system. The presence of the Glen Helen Ecological Institute, the Little Miami Scenic Trail, John Bryan State Park and Clifton Gorge, within our immediate surrounds sets the stage for local involvement and influence in area-wide recreational activities.

There are many components to be addressed in a comprehensive plan for parks. A vast amount of information ranging from national trends and standards to the specific interests and concerns of community members should be acknowledged and incorporated into the planning effort. The assessment and evaluation of those elements are guided by an overall purpose and tone which should be established early on in the creation of a plan. To this end the general purpose of this plan is:

1. to evaluate the present and future need for recreational facilities here in the Village;
2. to identify options in meeting the anticipated needs;
3. to evaluate the projected costs of meeting the needs;
4. to provide a guidance tool for those involved in making decisions about future park needs.

The recreational facilities within a community represent an essential infrastructure element and, therefore, should be subject to the standard procedure used to determine a minimum Level of Service (LOS) which meets the demand. Once the LOS is established, the effectiveness of the existing recreational system can be evaluated. The use of a national guideline to serve as an expression of reasonableness in the delivery of such service is an accepted practice in the planning field. This LOS is an expression of the essential ingredients needed to provide the level of services deemed acceptable by the various vested parties. The LOS should be practicable and achievable and should provide adequate access to facilities for all citizens.

An established LOS serves as: 1) an expression of minimum acceptable facilities for citizens; 2) a guideline to determine land requirements for parks and recreational areas and facilities; and 3) a basis for relating recreational needs to land development opportunities which results in an effective and desirable community-wide system of parks and open spaces.

The approach adopted in this plan is to assess the existing system and residents' needs and incorporate that information into a framework for the creation of a parks system that safely and adequately addresses those needs. This approach must be accompanied by a commitment to continually assess the leisure needs and interests of the community through ongoing survey and inquiry. A specific LOS is not presented within the context of this document at this time. It is felt that a standard can be established once a comprehensive needs assessment has been completed. At present, the focus is to develop and enhance the existing facilities based on perceived need.

This plan should be incorporated into the Village's comprehensive land use planning efforts and capital improvements plan, either by reference or as an appendix/attachment element. An annual review of this document should be completed by the Parks & Recreation Department staff, with input from vested parties.

The plan's focus is to establish and operate from a perspective that combines the unique resources of the community and the desires and needs of the citizenry into a successful balance. The general basis for most of suggestions presented here is the day-to-day observations of the facilities and how the community is using them. In order to fulfill the purpose of the plan, as stated above, a more formalized and consistent

method of surveying and collecting input from facility users should be instituted. Typically, this feedback is relatively easy to collect from users of facilities such as the swimming pool and the community center. Simply survey those users as they visit the site. Other areas, such as neighborhood parks and open spaces, are more difficult to get feedback about with regard to use and importance. As was done a few years ago, the assumed users (i.e., neighbors of the park areas), should be surveyed for feedback on use and suggested enhancements.

The Village Park System: Present and Future

The Village's park facilities have been categorized using established National standards for such facilities. These are described in detail below and are depicted in the site plans in Attachment "A".

Community Parks

In general, the purpose of a community park is to meet community-based needs, as well as to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. These areas typically allow for group activities and offer recreational opportunities not available, or desirable due to related impacts, at the neighborhood level. Both active and passive activities should be accommodated at these facilities. Active recreational facilities in these parks are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner with some reserved and programmed use to a compatible level.

The site of a community park should be serviced by collector or arterial streets and be easily accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails for vehicles and pedestrians.

Amenities for community parks should include, at a minimum, designated parking areas and public restroom facilities.

In the existing Yellow Springs Parks inventory, Gaunt Park, Ellis Park and the John Bryan Community Center fall within the category of community park. Each of these has a unique role in and contribution to the larger community.

Wheeling S. Gaunt Memorial Park

Gaunt Park was the first Village-owned land used for recreational activities. According to historical records, the Village took ownership of this land around 1894 after the death of Mr. Gaunt. In 1939, the Village Council authorized the "Community Youth Council" to work on the development of a plan for the "Wheeling Gaunt Land" to be developed for the community's recreational needs. Later that year, the Council dedicated the land for recreational purposes and established the required "Flour Fund" which was included in a bequest of Gaunt that the Village distribute flour to the widows in the Village. The specific stipulation was that rent revenues from the use of the land go toward the purchase of the flour. In 1956, with the opening of the Village swimming pool, the surrounding 17-acre tract of land, originally gifted to the Village became a vital community park. The park was subsequently dedicated to Gaunt's namesake.

Gaunt Park is located in the southwest quadrant of the Village. Based on its historical use, this park serves the largest population of all the Village's parks. The facilities here serve the broadest community in that patrons from well-outside the Village come to the park for the active recreational activities it offers. It houses a swimming pool, one baseball and one softball field, and two soccer fields. A large hillside has historically been used for winter sledding. The park has traditionally been the site for the annual July 4th fireworks display. About three acres of the property, added to the original land in 1958, is separated by fencing from the larger park and houses the Village's two water storage towers.

Historically, demands related to physical improvements within the park have mostly been associated with the swimming pool. From its original construction, the pool has been a product of complete support, including financial, from community members. Several significant improvements have been made to the pool and other facilities in the park in the last few years. In 1995, improvements to the poolhouse were

completed. A new diving board and new lifeguard stands were installed at the pool in 1997. During 1996 and 1997, permanent lighting was added to each existing ballfield. Some field improvement work, new backstops and fencing, was also completed. Playground equipment has recently been constructed in the front northwest area of the park.

The future for Gaunt Park is, basically, a continuation of its role as the focal point for the active recreational needs of the community and, to a manageable sense, the larger region. The location meets the standard criteria for a community park and no immediate expansion is recommended at this time. From a longer range (10-15 years) view, any expansion plans should consider the incorporation of the adjacent land to the south of the existing ballfields and east of the water tower area park. Presently, this land is outside the Village corporation limits and is being actively farmed.

Anticipated additions for the next five years should include: 1) a permanent concession area to replace the present one. This would be an expansion of the existing stand. A structure that would be plumbed and have permanent electricity is recommended. If possible, restrooms should be included. 2) improvements to the designated parking area to include proper striping and curbing and a possible redesign with some minor expansion to provide for more parking. The scope and details of any expansion of the parking area will be developed with the assistance of an engineer. 3) a renovation of the swimming pool which would expand the "poolside" area and expand the pool itself to include a "zero-depth" transition area where patrons who have physical limitations and/or who are very small can be accommodated. Additional pool amenities such as fountains and playpools should also be considered. It is presumed that any expansion would occur in the concreted area presently surrounding the pool. This addition would, most likely, be relatively costly and will not be implemented until significant input from pool patrons, staff, and design professionals is obtained. Also, based on the anticipated cost, any improvements will most likely be completed in phases over several years.

The estimated cost of each of these items in order of preferred priority is as follows:

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|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Permanent Concession Facility | \$30,000 |
| 2. Parking Lot Improvement | \$25,000 |
| 3. Pool Renovation | \$80,000-\$100,000 |

Ellis Park

This park originally operated as the Village Water Works and well field. The approximate 17-acre parcel was dedicated as a park in 1955 in recognition of Charles Herbert Ellis, a former Superintendent of Public Utilities for the Village. The focal point of this park is the 3-acre pond which came into existence when, around 1948, metal sheet pilings were driven into the ground across the existing Yellow Springs Creek. About seven years later, the pond was dredged for increased depth, the banks widened and a concrete spillway was constructed to replace the pilings. The pond has been periodically stocked with fish. Ice-skating on the pond has been allowed in the past. There is a picnic shelter near the pond which was donated by the local Girl Scouts.

In 1976, improvements were made to the dam to fix existing leaks. Minor repairs have been completed on the dam since that time. Currently, it is in dire need of redesign and replacement.

Minor improvements and enhancements have been made at the park throughout the last twenty years. A restroom facility was constructed and playground equipment, which has subsequently been removed, were two such amenities. The Yellow Springs Tree Committee has been developing various tree groves throughout the park. During the last few years, they have been working to establish an arboretum in the southwest quadrant of the park. The arboretum is dedicated to Lloyd Kennedy and the many years he gave to the Tree Committee and the community at large. Other additions during the last few years include new picnic tables at the shelter house and also scattered throughout the park. Some existing benches that surround the pond will be replaced with new benches.

Ellis Park is considered a community park that it is used, predominantly, by community residents and a limited number of patrons outside the immediate area. The park caters to passive recreational activities, although a playground was present in the past. The pond will continue to be the focal point with amenities that compliment it to be considered. It is recommended that a walking path that would meander around the pond and also take in the tree groves and the arboretum be designed and constructed. It is also suggested that, if the opportunity should arise, the Village should pursue acquiring an access path that would link the park with the bikepath to the west. With the scheduled extension of the bikepath to the north, a paved spur from the bikepath to the park would provide an important link between the two facilities. At present, it appears that the spur should connect to the park at the south end. This runs parallel to an existing tractor path on the Whitehall Farm side of Polecat Road. A separate bike path should then be located along the southeastern edge of the park to connect with the parking lot. Also, if this connection is developed, some minor expansion of the parking area should be considered. The existing lot is gravel now and is recommended to remain. Any new parking area should also be graveled or be constructed with the porous pavement products now available.

The park has two rather immediate needs: improvements to the pond and permanent restroom facilities.

Future enhancements planned for Ellis Park include:

- 1) the addition of another shelter to be located where the original pump house was located, along the northwest edge of the existing parking area. This shelter will be dedicated to Charles Mundy, a long-time Village employee who helped create and construct the amenities presently at the Park.
- 2) the placement of several park benches along the perimeter of the pond. Some will replace existing benches and others will be new additions. If the supply allows, consideration should be given to creating a sitting area around the large evergreen trees at the northeast corner of the park. The new benches have been purchased through a 1997 ODNR Grant.
- 3) the addition of picnic tables to the existing shelter houses. These items have also been purchased in 1997.
- 4) a multi-year staged effort to dredge the pond and create areas of depth. This will involve a process whereby the perimeter of the pond, beginning at the existing edge and moving inward about six feet, will be dug out as the first step. Over time, expected to be about one year, some silt will move from the center of the pond into this increased-depth perimeter. Once again, the perimeter will be dredged (step 2). This process will be done an estimated three to four cycles. The result will be an overall dredging of the silt and debris at the bottom of the pond. An area near the dam will also be dug out to create an increased-depth area, and
- 5) the construction of permanent restroom facilities. The location will, most likely, be where the present "substandard" facility is now, and
- 6) the development of walking paths throughout the park that would link the various tree groves, the arboretum, picnic shelters and restrooms together. The path should be paved, with several outlooks/fishing "docks" along the pond, with a width of no more than five feet. A foot-bridge across the ditch will need to be included in the area that leads to the arboretum.

A final potential enhancement to be incorporated into the Park is non-consumptive wildlife recreational activities. These typically include bird-watching, insect study, plant life study, wildlife feeding and photography. These activities are supported through guided paths (the suggested walkway) that move through environments that are attractive to the birds and insects and vegetation being observed. There can be pausing areas along the way where one can sit and observe the surrounding environment. These paths can also include information signs and exhibits that describe the wildlife and/or vegetation present. This concept seems to compliment the existing tree groves and the planned walking path system. Further design details and associated costs would need to be explored.

The estimated cost of each of these items in order of preferred priority is as follows:

1. New Shelter	\$20,000
2. Pond Dredging	\$70,000
3. Restroom	\$15,000
4. Walking Path/pond docks/ditch bridge	\$18,000

John Bryan Community Center

The Community Center is located on 13 acres of land which was donated to the Village in 1923 upon the death of John Bryan. Mr. Bryan's request regarding use of the property was that it be used for educational and/or recreational purposes. The existing building was built in 1929, with the stone amphitheater and an dam being constructed on the site during the 1930 as a WPA project. The building served as the district high school until 1963. It later housed grades 6-8. In 1971, it began operating as a community center with many programmed activities occurring there. A significant remodeling of the building, to better serve the various scheduled activities, was completed in 1976, with funding assistance from the Federal Housing and Urban Development Program. After many years of use strictly for recreational and community activities, the Community Center was renovated and reopened in 1993. It presently houses the Village government offices and community meeting/conference space and recreational facilities. Behind the community center and adjacent to the parking area is a paved complex that houses two tennis courts and two outdoor basketball courts. Directly adjacent to the east of that, is a toddler playground, and the pottery shop.

The property has significant physical features, the most important being the Yellow Springs Creek and its valley. The entire property is located in the floodplain of the Creek. There are also several mature hardwood trees throughout the property that are important assets to the overall setting of the Center.

The portion of this property located between the creek and Cemetery Street has been used for overflow parking. It is recommended that this area continue to be used in this manner. As has been the case in the recent past, organized events associated with the bikepath and downtown events, will be encouraged to utilize this parking area.

The Bryan Center presently serves the recreational, cultural and social needs of the local community and, oftentimes, the larger regional community. The community center itself is the focal point of these activities which fall into a general category of "leisure activities" such as arts classes, dance and martial arts instruction, as well as volleyball and basketball in the gymnasium. The 1993 renovation has created a facility that is seen as meeting those needs well into the future with anticipated improvements being those associated with the ongoing operation and maintenance of the facility.

In general, future improvements are recommended for the area outside the community center. These include the design and construction of a walking path that would link the areas at the front and back of the building. This would lead users through the picnic areas to the playground/tennis court/skatepark area and also link with the adjacent bikepath. If constructed, consideration should be given to the construction of a bridge over the creek to connect the Cemetery Street area to the Center.

Another improvement to consider is the redevelopment of the amphitheater area. Several attempts at this have been made in the past with no success. If it is determined that the community sees this as a worthwhile enhancement to the area, attention should be targeted toward the effort.

The significant physical features present on the property, specifically the creek and the "woods" could be conducive to the creation of non-consumptive wildlife recreational activities. Paths through this area which would allow bird-watching, photography and environment study should be considered. This would be similar to the facilities described for Ellis Park. Again, specific design details and associated costs would need to be pursued.

Future plans for the Bryan Center include: 1) the addition of a skatepark facility just north of the existing tennis courts pending further details on design, construction costs and ongoing maintenance obligations. At a minimum, this facility should serve as wide a range of users as possible and be relatively self-sufficient in terms of personnel demands/requirements. 2) the completion of a landscaping plan that will highlight the building and soften to asphalt parking area, as per Yellow Springs Tree Committee recommendation, February, 1995. 3) continue vegetation clearing along Xenia Avenue/Dayton Street line of property and of area between the parking lot and the adjacent bike path, 4) install a crosswalk

across Dayton Street to Hilda Rahn Park which will link up to a walkway through that park area to the proposed Yellow Springs Station facility, and 5) develop the proposed walking path

The estimated cost of each of these items in order of preferred priority is as follows

1. Vegetation Clearing	\$3,000
2. Skatepark	\$65,000
3. Landscape Grounds	\$15,000
4. Walking Path	\$10,000

Little Miami Scenic Trail

The Village owns a three-mile stretch of the Little Miami Scenic Trail from Yellow Springs-Fairfield Pike to Jacoby Road. The Trail is an 80-mile paved multi-purpose path stretching from Milford to Buck Creek State Park near Springfield. The present northern terminus of the path is a bridge across Yellow Springs-Fairfield Road. Construction on the remaining section is scheduled to begin in 1999. This path has been a long time in the making. The city of Xenia, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Village pursued acquisition of the railroad right-of-way between 1973 and 1983. In 1986, the project received funding from the Federal Highway Administration to construct an alternative means of transportation. Actual construction of the path began in July of 1990. The trail opened in October of 1991. For a few years, the Village paid the Greene County Parks and Recreation Department to maintain the path. Beginning last year, the County is providing that service at their cost.

Recommended improvements to the path should be closely coordinated with Greene County. There is an interest by those jurisdictions who have bikepath(s) in their areas to provide some uniform identification to the bikepath system. Amenities such as park benches, picnic tables and waste containers should be of a uniform design throughout the bikepath system. The Village will continue participation in those discussions and incorporate amenities as determined through this larger scope.

In 1997, a group of interested community citizens introduced an idea for a park area to commemorate women, to be located between Corry Street and the Bikepath, just south of the Antioch Theater. This would be a long, relatively narrow park with a walking path through it. Along this path would be sitting areas and finished landscape areas with information about particular women and their contribution to the community. The path would connect on each end to the Bikepath. To date, the Village Council has approved the use of the described area for such a park, contingent on an agreement to a final design for the site. Progress toward this end is anticipated to occur in 1998.

Neighborhood Parks

The Village has several neighborhood parks and/or open spaces at various locations throughout town. Some of these were the result of a previous requirement for the dedication of such land as housing developments occurred. Others have been donated to or purchased by the Village.

Neighborhood parks are considered the basic unit of a park system which serve the recreational needs of a neighborhood and often times as the social focal point. A neighborhood park should be developed for both active and passive activities, as specifically desired by those living in the neighborhood. It is important that the neighborhood park serve a variety of populations with regard to age and activity level.

A neighborhood park should be centrally located within a typical 1/4 to 1/2 mile service area. Access should be available through low-volume residential streets and paths/sidewalks/trails for pedestrians. Ease of access and walking distance are critical in the successful use of a neighborhood park. Recognizing that one of the main motivations for visiting a neighborhood park is to have a positive outdoor experience, the site should have some innate aesthetic qualities. Amenities such as mature trees, finished landscaping and the enhancement of any topographic features should be incorporated into the overall design.

In a planning sense, given the importance of location, neighborhood parks should be selected while a proposed subdivision is being platted and then the designated land acquired as part of the development process.

Neighborhood input and participation in the development or improvement of these areas is essential. It is important to seek a balance between active and passive park uses, as the surrounding neighborhood desires. Active uses are intended to occur on an informal and unstructured level. Programmed activities are not intended to be accommodated at these park areas. The creation of an appealing atmosphere is also critical to the success of the park. Safety must be addressed in all design aspects.

Many of the recommendations for improvements to these parks include playground equipment. At this point in the planning stage, the area to be occupied by that activity is identified. The actual elements of the play area can involve the typical structured play equipment such as play structures and swing sets but could also include amenities such as a play fort or "treehouse" and climbing rocks. The specific desires and physical limitations will aid in determining further specifics.

Hilda Rahn Park

The park known as Rahn Park was donated to the Village in 1904 by the Grinnell family. It encompasses about 3/10 of an acre at the north end of the Village where Dayton Street intersects with Xenia Avenue. In 1976, it was officially dedicated to Hilda Rahn, who served as Clerk of Council for (years).

Historically this park has served as a space that softens the entrance into the downtown area with an emphasis on the creation of an aesthetically-pleasing space. A local group, the Friendly Gardeners, have taken great responsibility and pride in creating attractive flower beds in the park. The Yellow Springs Tree Committee has also planted several flowering trees in the park. From Spring to Fall of each year, the small space provides a distinctly soothing space within the surrounding downtown. In the last few years, a few picnic tables have been added to the park.

In 1996, the Village developed plans to construct permanent public restrooms in the park to address concerns from downtown businesses regarding the lack of such facilities in the area. With its proximity to the bikepath, a restroom facility in Rahn Park seemed appropriate. Soon after that proposal, a group of community members began pursuing the idea of recreating the train station that was once a focal point of the Village. During the last year, plans for such a facility have solidified, along with the necessary funding. This facility will house public restrooms, office space for the Yellow Springs Chamber of Commerce and some public exhibit/information space. A site plan that incorporates the Yellow Springs Station into the park has been developed by a local architect and landscape architect. That plan is incorporated into this document, by reference, as the plan for Hilda Rahn Park.

Construction of the Yellow Springs Station is planned for the Spring of 1998 with completion soon thereafter. By the end of 1998, the Station will be in full operation. Remaining site improvements, as depicted on the plan, will be completed by Spring of 1999.

Anticipated costs of these recommended improvements are as follows:

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| 1. Construction of Train Station | \$185,000 |
| 2. Landscaping/ Site enhancement(s) | \$15,000 |

Bill Duncan Park

Located at the point where Limestone and Dayton Streets intersect, this park serves as a significant focal point at one entrance into the Village. Traditionally this park has functioned as an open space with some minor passive recreational facilities such as benches and picnic tables present.

In total, the park encompassed about one and one-half acres. Other than the Parks Department crew, the Yellow Springs Tree Committee has been the predominant steward of this park. planting trees on a

routine basis. In the early 1990's, a sidewalk was constructed along the eastern side of the park, running between Limestone Street and Dayton Street.

Recently, the Village received a request from a nearby neighbor for the installation of playground equipment in Duncan Park. The Kingsfield development, located on King Street just north of Dayton Street, houses many families with children who would benefit from this addition. The present layout of the park could accommodate a playground, with further design details and requirements still needing to be worked out.

The western quarter of the park presently supports several trees of substantial size and relatively low canopies. This area is difficult to mow without risking damage to the low-lying tree branches. Additional smaller, younger trees have also been planted in this area. It is being suggested that the area be mulched and finished off, possibly in a planted area with flowers and other ground covers, to enhance its visual role as it relates to the surrounding areas, and to eliminate need for mowing.

Additional picnic tables and benches should be added to the park, as depicted on the site plan in Attachment "A." If the playground area is developed, a drinking fountain should be included adjacent to the playground.

This is one of the Village's parks that is probably just fine as it is. The recommendations for improvements and additions to this park are suggested to enhance the existing park and to incorporate additional amenities that would increase the use of the park.

Future plans for improvements to the park include: 1) the addition of a playground area and associated drinking fountain; 2) the redesign of the western quarter of the park to be mulched, flower beds be added and groundcover be established; and 3) additional picnic tables and park benches be added to various areas of the park.

Anticipated costs of these recommended improvements are as follows:

1. Playground Area	\$10,000 - \$12,000
2. Mulched/finished Area	\$5,000
3. Tables & Benches	\$4,000

68/Allen St. Park

The Village purchased this tract of land in 1963 from the estate of Paul H. Dawson. This park originally contained just over one acre. Sometime in the 1970s, about one-quarter acre was sold to adjacent property owners.

About seven years ago, a stormwater catchbasin was installed in the park. The surrounding area was graded to allow for the collection and temporary detention of stormwater from the Shawnee Drive. The collected water continues to move off the site, through a storm sewer, to the south. Any plans, modifications or improvements to the park must incorporate the presence of this infrastructure.

Although this land is considered "park," it mostly serves an "open space" role. There are presently no amenities to support any recreational use of the land. There are trees planted there by the Yellow Springs Tree Committee.

It is recommended that this land continue to serve predominantly as an open area and not considered available for active recreational uses. Portions of this park appear to be good locations for the planting of ornamental grasses and prairie-type vegetation, mostly in the south east quadrant as depicted on the Site Plan in Attachment "A". Further details to determine the feasibility of such design should be pursued. If such an area can be developed, amenities such as sitting benches and maybe a picnic table should be incorporated into that area.

Anticipated costs of these recommended improvements are as follows:

1. Development of "planted area" to contain items such as ornamental grasses, prairie-type plantings, groundcovers, etc. \$5,000
2. Benches/Picnic Table(s) \$3,000

One footnote regarding this park: it needs a name. There is no identification that this is "parkland" which is owned and maintained by the Village. The surrounding neighborhood as well as the entire community should be surveyed to determine an appropriate name for this park.

Fair Acres Park

This park, which contains about three-tenths of an acre, was dedicated to the Village as part of the Fair Acres subdivision development. During the time of the dedication, the Village was requiring a percentage of the total land being developed to be dedicated for parkland or a fee paid to the Village in lieu of that dedication.

Historically, this park has been used by the surrounding neighbors for predominantly informal and unstructured activities. Youngsters would play ball there and neighbors would collect for a picnic. The park has no park amenities on the site and presently functions mostly as an open space within the neighborhood.

A 1996 neighborhood survey of Fair Acres subdivision (Gardendale, Whitehall, Northwood Drives) was completed in an effort to guide future needs for the neighborhood park. The general feeling of survey respondents was that the park area provided a welcome open space and was considered an asset to the neighborhood. There was some interest in adding park benches and picnic tables to the park to allow better use by interested neighbors. Respondents were not supportive of eliminating the park.

It is recommended that amenities to support the passive recreational use of the park be added. This should include picnic tables and park benches. If feasible, as determined by the physical allowance of the land and the genuine interest by the neighborly, a small playground area could also be developed.

The estimated cost of the recommended improvements is as follows:

1. Tables & Benches \$4,000
2. Playground Equipment \$6,000

Beatty-Hughes Park

This park was added to the Village's inventory in 1968 and was a homesite of William and Ethel Beatty. It is located on Corry Street just south of the downtown area. There are several mature trees in the park which are important assets to the overall park setting. The park encompasses about one-quarter acre of land.

This park serves and compliments the downtown area and the nearby bike trail. In the past, a playground area was included in the park. Presently there are a few benches and a drinking fountain. The fountain was donated by the Leo Hughes family, upon his passing in 1995.

Another relatively new addition to the park is located at the northwest corner and is dedicated to the memory of Deborah Sirkin, a long-time resident. The corner has been designed for plantings and finished landscape which include a park bench. A detailed plan for this area is included in Attachment "B"

It is recommended that this park continue its role as a "resting place" within the downtown area. Additional picnic tables and benches should be considered. There appears to be a small area that could support some playground equipment. That area has been designated on the site plan (Attachment "A").

The specific equipment selected will determine how many pieces might be placed within that designated space.

Anticipated costs of these recommended improvements are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| 1 Picnic tables/benches | \$3,000 |
| 2 Playground equipment | \$4,000 |

Other Park/Open Spaces in the Village

There are several other, non-Village-owned lands in the Village that should be acknowledged as part of an inventory of such spaces. These are places that are typically available to the public and house many social and cultural events. Most community members think of them as parks in their use of them. These areas include the "Golf Course" on the Antioch campus, the Mills Lawn School property, and the Yellow Springs High School/Middle School campus. The Yellow Springs School properties support some organized recreational activities and also are viewed as "parklands" by the Yellow Springs Tree Committee for tree-plantings. Specifically, the High School campus contains a football field and track and soccer fields. The Mills Lawn School property has two tennis courts, playground equipment and an informal baseball field. The "Golf Course" is an open tract of land containing over 20-acres with few significant physical features and no man-made improvements.

Future Needs

Past planning efforts have highlighted the perceived need for neighborhood parkland in the area south of Allen Street and also questioned the role and/or need for existing park/open space. With the Antioch "Golf Course" no longer owned by the Village, residents living in the area south of North College Street and east of Xenia Avenue are not served by a neighborhood park. The bikepath provides an appropriate link to the Beatty-Hughes Park and the Bryan Center but there is no specific park facilities for that area.

This area contains, roughly 250 residences. At an average of 2.2 persons per unit (1990 Census), the area contains approximately 550 people. Applying the National standard of 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people, this "neighborhood" should have about 5.5 acres of parkland available for use.

There is no obvious site to propose for the subject neighborhood park. Two possible options are: 1) approach Antioch University about a possible purchase of a tract of land from the "golf course" somewhere along Allen Street, and 2) research the possibility of developing the open space associated with the Greene Metropolitan Housing Authority development along Corry Street. Both of these options would require further research and validation from other vested parties. Another option could involve the dedication of land for park use if and when the remaining undeveloped areas in the very southern reaches of the Village are considered for subdivision. This would not address the needs of those in the northern portion of the target area.

It is suggested that the residents living south of North College Street between Corry Street and Xenia Avenue be surveyed to determine their interest in and perception of future parkland in that general area. Upon completion of that survey, additional options and considerations can be pursued.

With regard to unmet recreational needs, the Village's facilities for soccer are considered insufficient by most that are involved in using the facilities. The demand for more fields is very strong and it appears that the interest in the sport is solid. The two fields at Gaunt Park need attention and contribute a small piece into the large organized program. Those using the fields are also using the fields at the Yellow Springs High School. It is suggested that additional land be secured for a relatively large-scale (4 to 6 fields) facility be considered. A parcel of five to seven acres of land would be quite adequate for the suggested development. If a new tract is developed, additional amenities such as outdoor volleyball court(s), horseshoe pitching pits and general picnic areas should be considered.

In the past few years, concerns regarding the Village's youth and options available to them to occupy their free time were expressed. These concerns were connected with various events as they occurred over time - the presence of young people downtown, incidents occurring at the Youth Center, etc. Early in 1997, a group formed to attempt to address these concerns. The Youth Center Coordinating Committee was formed. The structure of the Committee was formalized to consist of four youth representatives, three adult volunteers and a Parks & Recreation staff representative. After some discussion, the Committee developed a Mission Statement: The Committee consists of adults and youth who coordinate, plan and implement programs and activities through the Youth Center to involve a maximum percentage of the community's youth. Duties were further defined to include: monthly meeting, solicit volunteers to help with projects/activities, serve as vehicle to foster youth leadership, and be available to hear topics of concern at Youth Center.

In April of 1997, the Committee and the Village Mediation Program held a Teen Training, which was held for five days for a total of eight hours. The purpose of the training was to help create a more satisfying experience for teens who used the Teen Center. This purpose was addressed by teaching those in attendance skills to more effectively resolve conflicts and solve problems and convey ways to treat people and property with respect. The sessions addressed issues such as teambuilding, resolving conflicts, managing anger, and ideas about improving the Youth Center environment.

As a result of this group's efforts, several activities were held in the Fall of 1997 for the community's youth. These included a Family Halloween Party, a hayride and story-telling at Ellis Park and a dance at the Bryan Center. There was also a partnership established with Antioch College's Bonner Scholar Program, whereby the Antioch students in the program would create and oversee activities for interested youth. One such program was held at the Youth Center over several weeks and involved drum-making.

In general, this effort was beneficial but was only an initial step in the ongoing need and concern to involve the youth of our community in positive, recreational and cultural activities. The interest and willingness of members of the community will determine the future direction of this recent effort.

Financial History and Future Needs

The Yellow Springs Department of Parks and Recreation is funded by Village income tax revenues. Currently, the Department is managed by the Parks and Recreation Director who oversees one full-time Maintenance Worker. Additional staff are part-time building monitors for the Bryan Center, and summer staff for the swimming pool and parks maintenance crew.

In 1972, when the Department was at its operational peak with both facilities and programs, the Village Council adopted an ordinance that restructured the Village's building permit fee to include an additional sum which went into a Park Fund and did the same in 1977 with regard to fees collecting for zoning permits involving residences. The revenue collected was to be used to acquire land for parks and other facilities. Also in 1972, the Council adopted a regulation that required any land of twenty acres or more, that was being subdivided, to include a dedication of 5% of the total acreage for parkland. In 1986, the Village Council repealed both requirements, stating that the needs for parkland had been adequately met for the foreseeable future and that this cost was seen as going against the goal of moderate, controlled housing growth.

For several years after 1986, the Parks and Recreation Department utilized the limited revenues from the local income tax to simply maintain the existing facilities with limited improvements. Annual budget information from 1994 to 1997 is further detailed in Attachment "C". Since 1995, a significant amount of revenue has been secured from grant sources of the State of Ohio. These moneys have contributed towards the purchase of the ballfield lights at Gaunt Park, the new toddler playground at the Bryan Center, the planned Yellow Springs Station along the bikepath and amenities such as picnic tables, park benches and trash containers. Two of the major funding sources for these improvements are predicted to become much less accessible with limited funds available. The Greene County GRJP Grant Program and

Community Public Improvement Fund appear to be solid and reliable sources for funds for future ventures.

Based on the apparent trend of income tax revenues remaining level to declining and the inherent assumption that operational costs are on the rise, the staff is committed to continue pursuing other, outside funding sources for the recommended improvements. It seems reasonable to expect that there will never be a perpetual outside source for funding and it is recommended that the Village study all prospects for revenue. This should certainly include consideration of increased user fees for use of the facilities, additional fees on other, related permits as was done in the past, and additional millage voted in on taxes.

Another option to help offset rising costs is to explore the development of a volunteer program to help facilitate the delivery of desired services to the community. Many communities in the Miami Valley Region and nationwide operate successful volunteer programs. Volunteer groups can assist with park beautification by tending flower beds and landscaped areas and also assist with ongoing programs focused on youth or particular recreational interests. Programs coordinating "Adopt-a-Park" activities have been very successful elsewhere. The first step at pursuing this option should be to survey the community and determine if there is a potential volunteer pool to participate in such a program.

Based on the information provided in this plan, the next two years are relatively secure with regard to anticipated revenues and expenses. It's after that, with the proposed pool renovation and pond dredging, that expenses reach a difficult level.

The following annual expenditures result from the plan, as outlined in the previous pages:

1998	
Hilda Rahn Park Train Station	\$185,000 ¹
Gaunt Park Permanent Concession Facility	\$30,000 ²
Ellis Pond Picnic Shelter	\$8,000 ³
Bryan Center vegetation clearing	\$3,000
Bryan Center skatepark	\$35,000 ⁴
Duncan Park playground area	\$6,000-\$8,000
TOTAL	\$267,000 - \$269,000⁵

1. Various grant sources @ \$104,300 (\$36,250 pending) & local (non-govt.) fund-raising
2. Pending GRIP Grant approval - \$9,000 Village cost
3. Some materials have been purchased
4. Phase 1, pending GRIP Grant approval - \$6,500 Village cost
5. Includes \$151,180 in anticipated grant & local non-govt. moneys

1999	
Bryan Center skate park	\$35,000 ¹
Beatty-Hughes Park picnic tables/benches	\$3,000
Beatty-Hughes Park playground equipment	\$4,000
Duncan Park mulched/finished area	\$5,000
Duncan Park tables & benches	\$4,000
Ellis Park Pond Dredging	\$70,000
Bryan Center landscape grounds	\$15,000
Xenia Ave./Allen St. Park planted area	\$5,000

Xenia Ave./Allen St. park benches/ table(s)	\$3,000
---	---------

Xenia Ave./Allen St. park benches/ table(s)	\$3,000
TOTAL	\$146,000

1. Phase 2. with grant assistance

2000	
Ellis Park Restroom	\$15,000
Bryan Center walking path	\$5,000
Gaunt Park parking lot improvements	\$25,000
Gaunt Park pool renovation	\$40,000-\$50,000 ¹
Fair Acres Park tables & benches	\$4,000
Fair Acres Park playground equip	\$6,000
TOTAL	\$95,000-\$105,000

1. Phase 1 upon completion of overall improvement plan

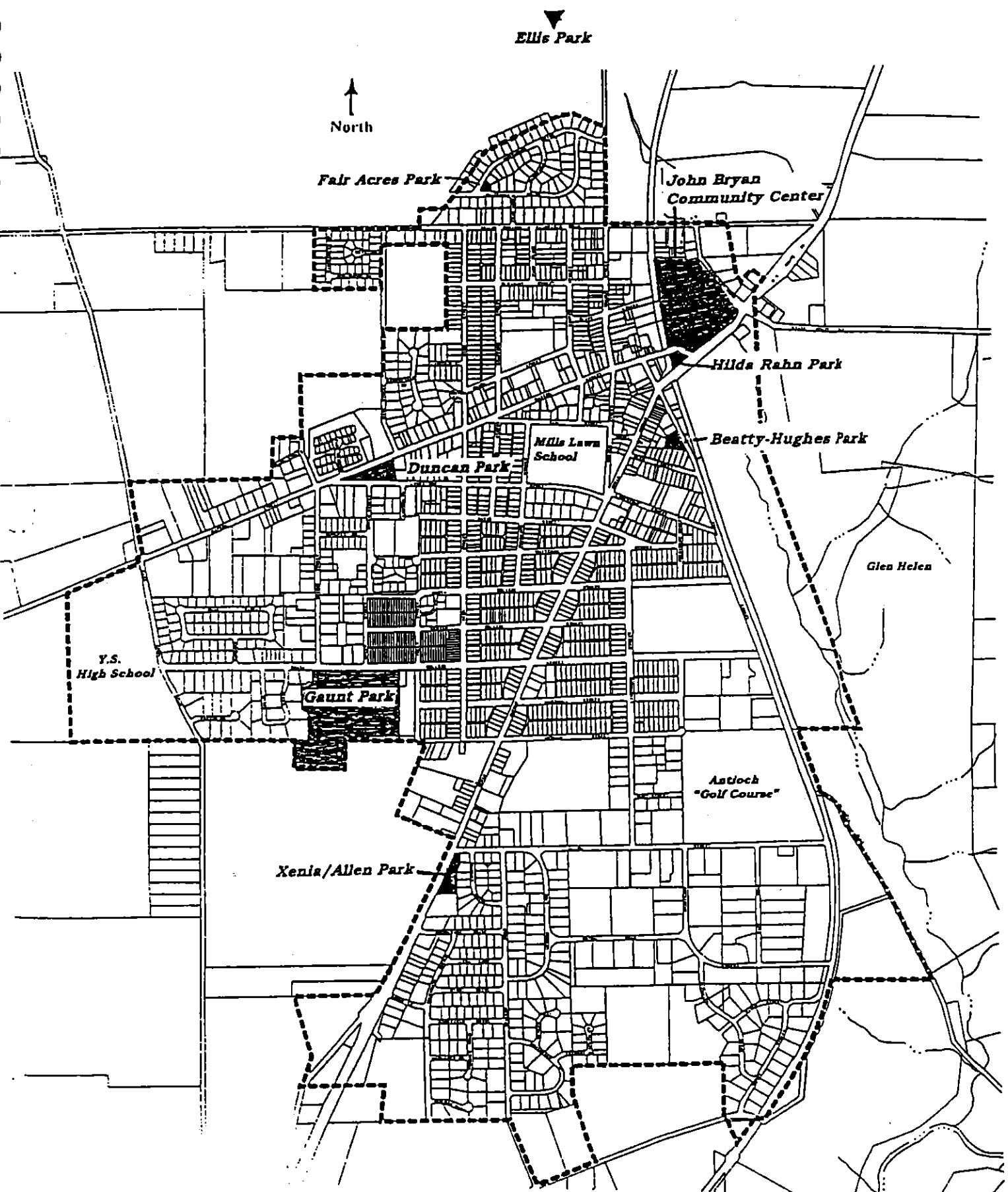
2001	
Gaunt Park pool renovation	\$40,000-\$50,000 ¹
Bryan Center walking path	\$5,000
Ellis Park walking path	\$18,000
TOTAL	\$63,000-\$73,000

1. Phase 2

2002 and Beyond	
Soccer Field development	\$70,000-\$100,000
Gaunt Park expansion	\$50,000-\$90,000
New Neighborhood Park	\$30,000-\$60,000
TOTAL	\$150,000-\$250,000

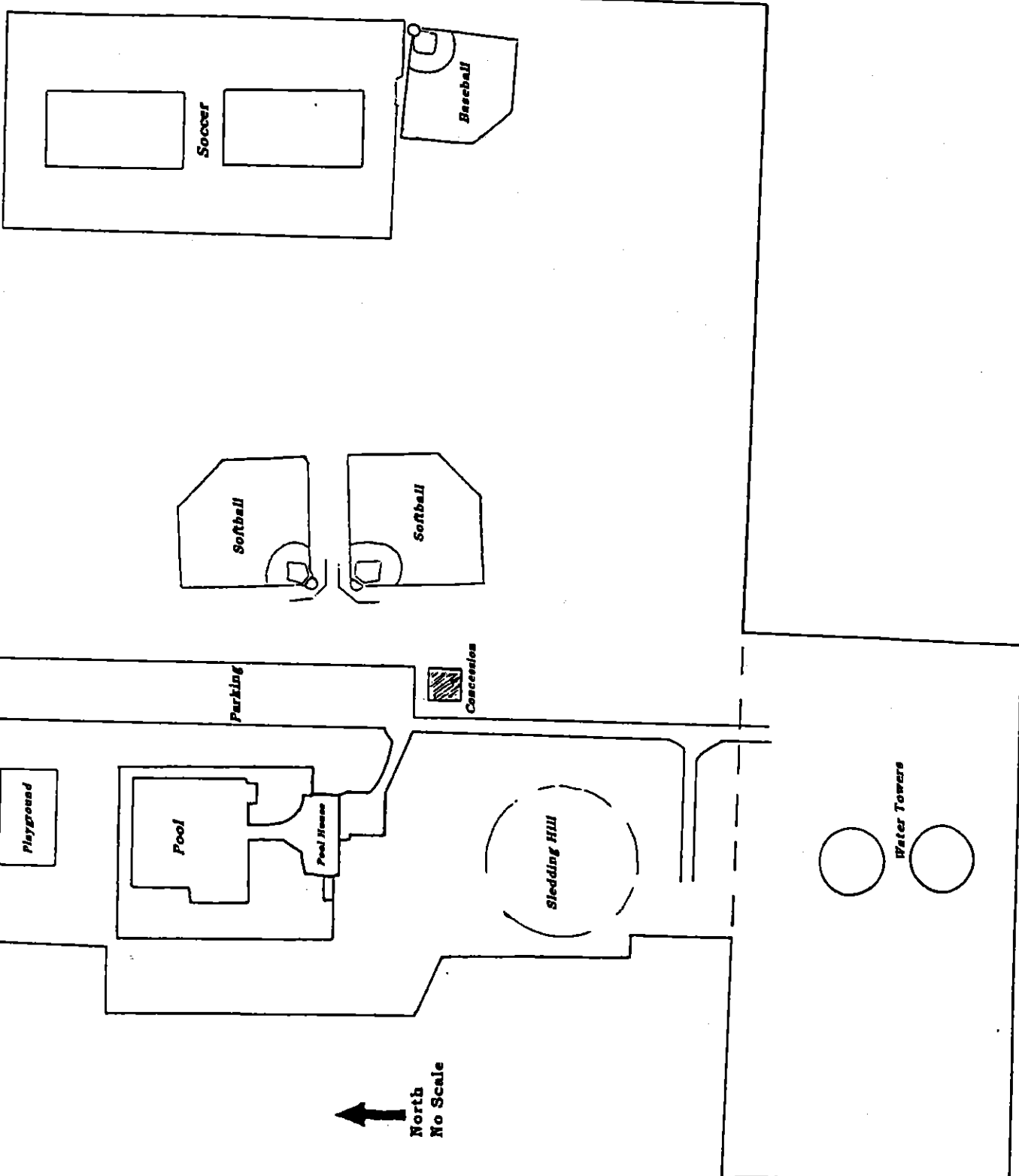
ATTACHMENT "A"

1998
Village Parks
Locational Map



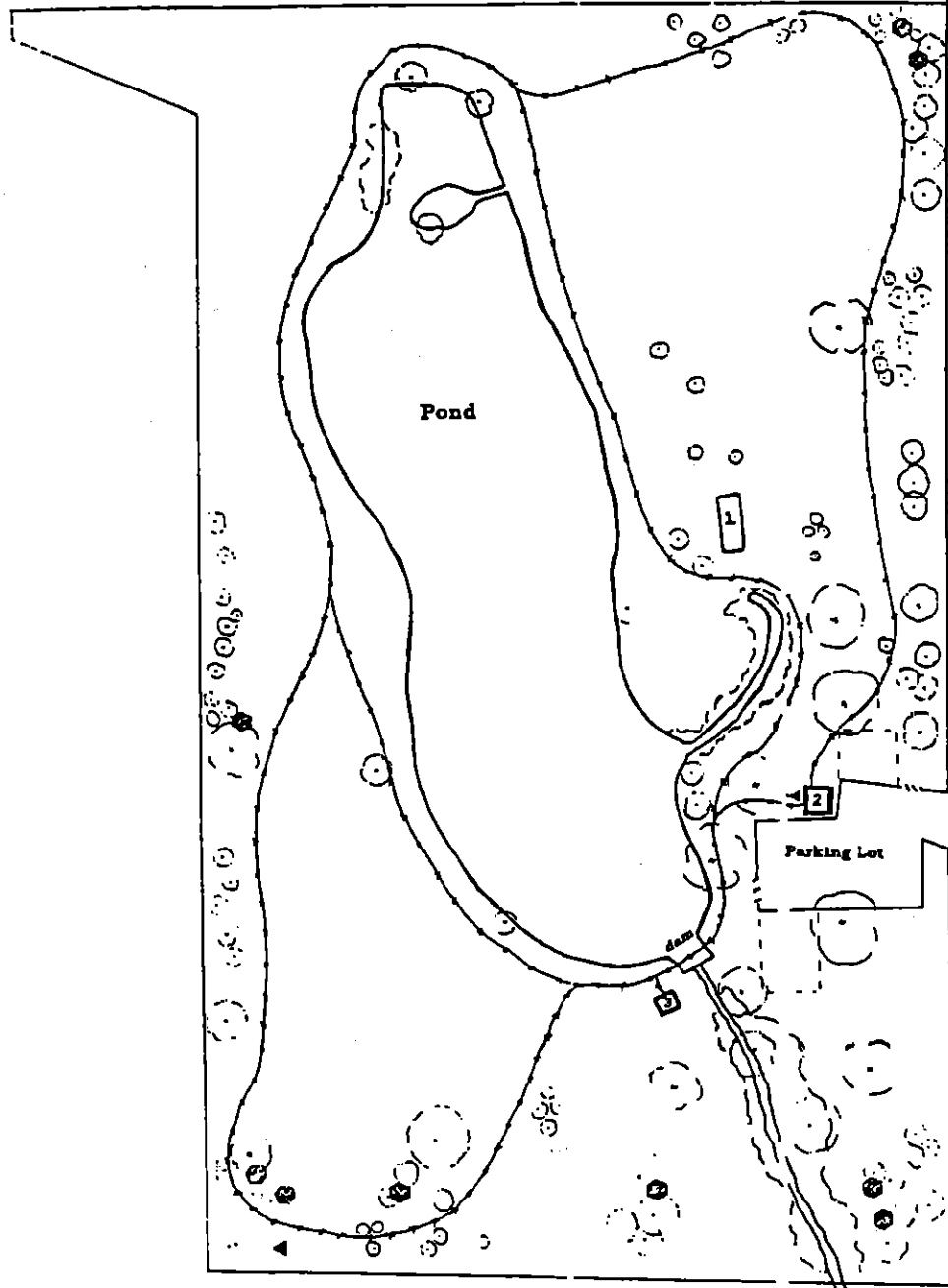
Gaunt Park Plan

South College St.



North
No Scale

Ellis Park Plan



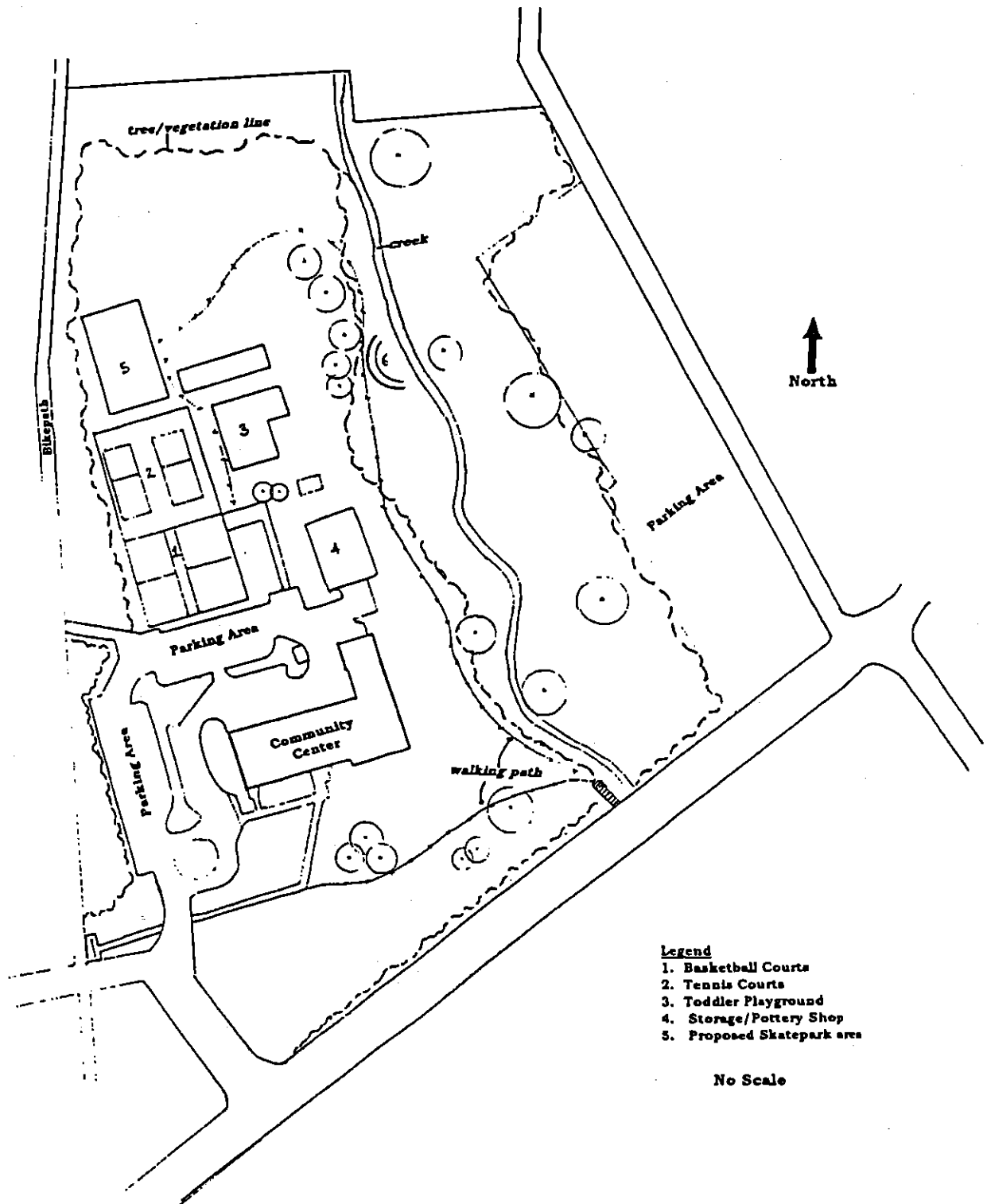
Legend

- 1. Picnic Shelter
- 2. Picnic Shelter
- 3. restroom
- walking path
- ▲ drinking fountain/water
- benches/tables

NO SCALE



John Bryan Community Center Plan



Legend

- 1. Basketball Courts
- 2. Tennis Courts
- 3. Toddler Playground
- 4. Storage/Pottery Shop
- 5. Proposed Skatepark area

No Scale

Rahn Park Plan
shown on

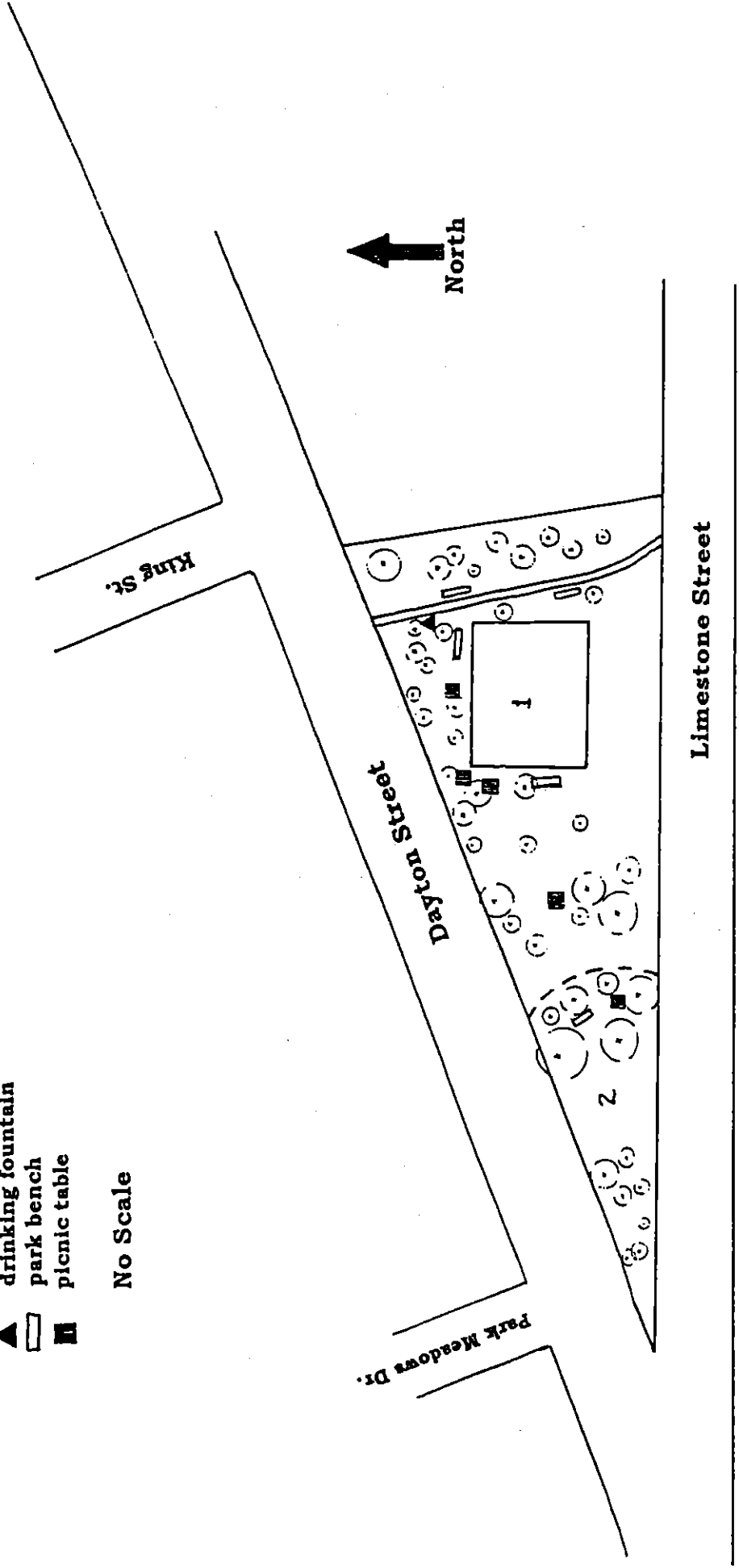
Train Station Site Plan, Attachment "B"

Duncan Park Plan

Legend

- 1. Playground
- 2. Area to be mulched/flower beds
- ▲ drinking fountain
- ▭ park bench
- picnic table

No Scale



Allen Street



No Scale

U. S. 68

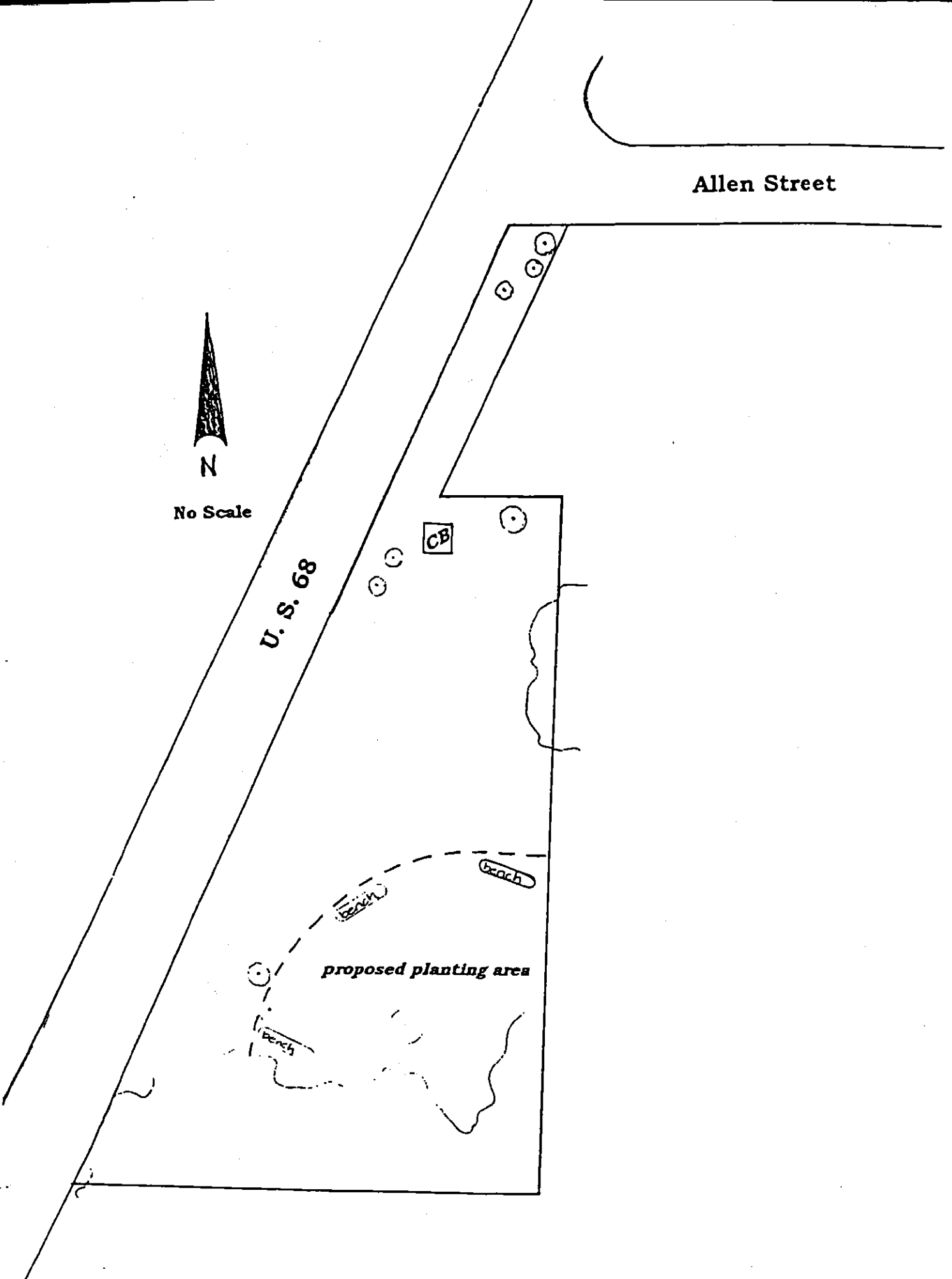
CB

proposed planting area

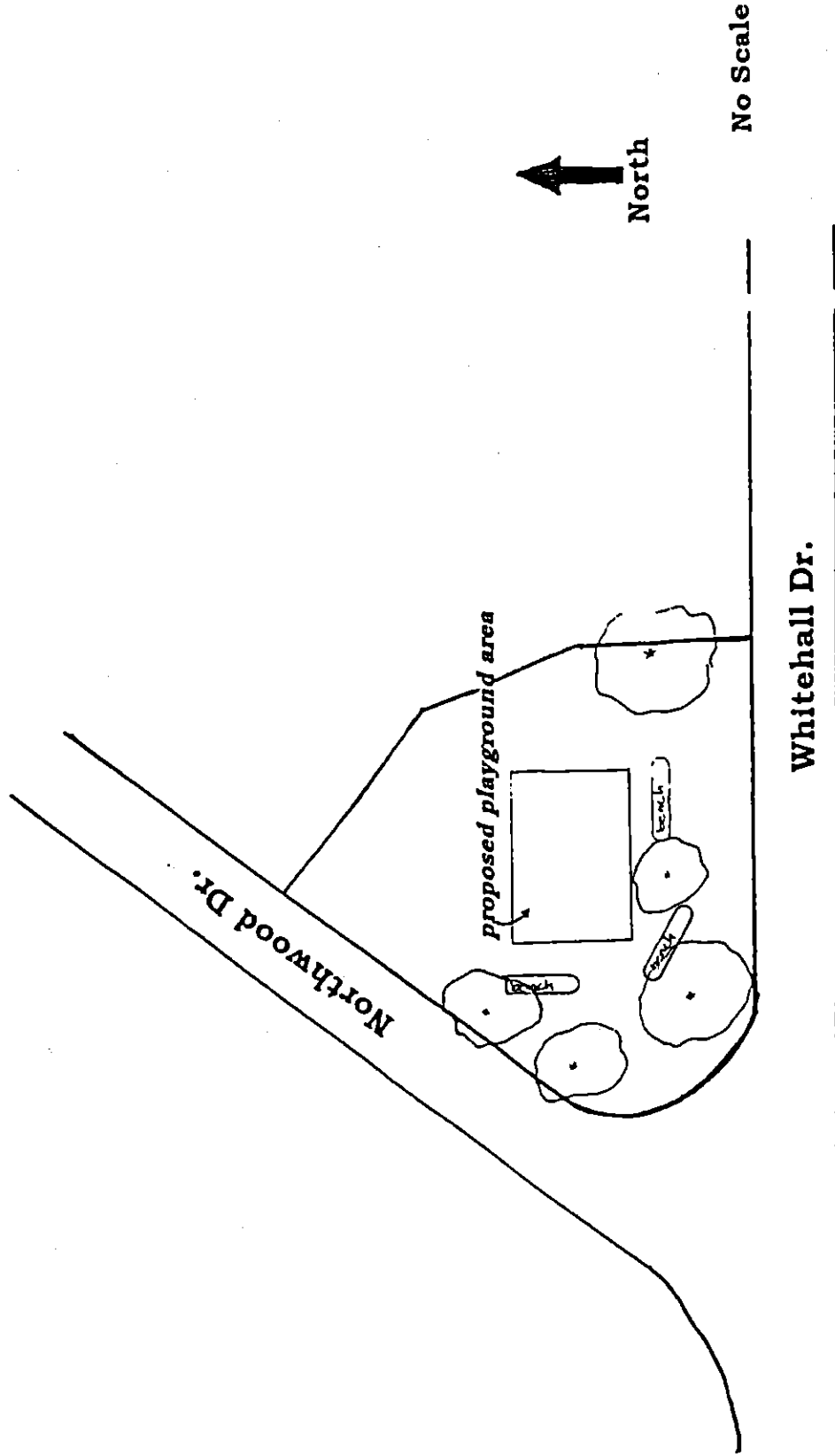
bench

bench

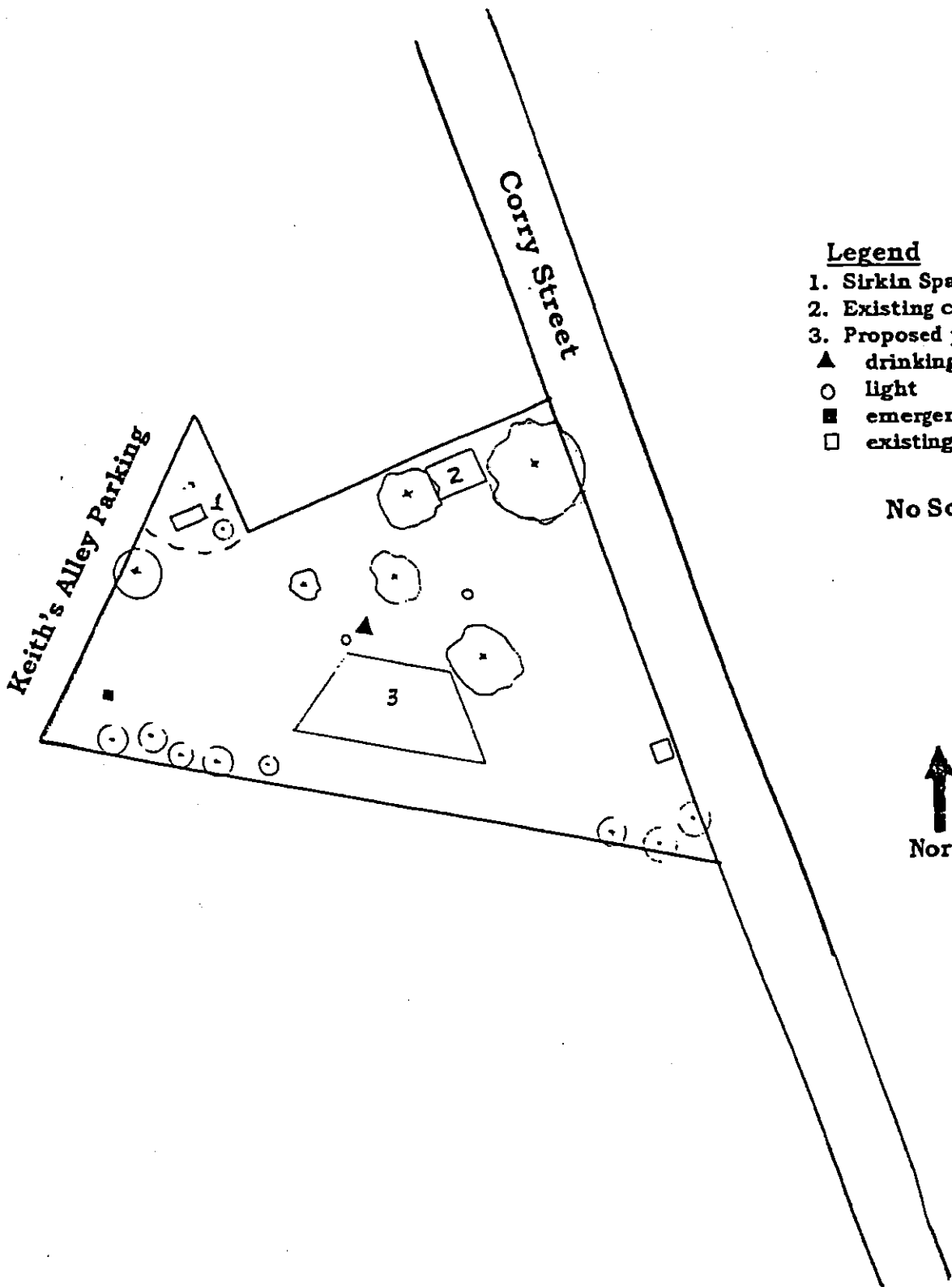
bench



Fair Acres Park Plan



Beatty-Hughes Park Plan



Legend

- 1. Sirkin Space
- 2. Existing concrete pad
- 3. Proposed playground area
- ▲ drinking fountain
- light
- emergency alert siren
- existing stone column

No Scale



ATTACHMENT "B"

Sirkin Pl² and Area
Beatty-Hughes Park

EXISTING WOODED FRAGMENT
→ SELECTIVELY THIN/PRAUNE

GRASSY

PARKING LOT

EXIST. 'P'
3. 'I'

3. 'K'

EXIST. 'G'

EXIST. 'P'

3. 'C'

2. 'B'

3. 'N'

EXIST. 'P' REMOVED

BENCH

3. 'L'

1. 'M'

1. 'H'

1. 'F'

EXIST. 'J'

MUCH BED EDGE

1. 'O'

1. 'N'

KEY PLANT

- A Vernal Witch Hazel
- B Red Bud Tree
- C Flowering Almond
- D Indian Magic Crabapple
- E Sekirk Crabapple
- F White Dogwood
- G Kousa Dogwood
- H 'Betty' Magnolia
- I Variegated Redtwig Dogwood
- J Sweet Bay Magnolia
- K Oakleaf Hydrangea
- L Hedge Rose
- M Ivory Silk Tree Lilac
- N Blue Mist Spirea

- O Japanese White Pine
- P Arborvitae

HT/SPD

- 8'
- 12'
- 4'
- 15'
- 15'+
- 20'
- 16'
- 10'
- 6'
- 10'
- 4'
- 6'
- 20'
- 4'

FLOWER COLOR

- Yellow
- Lavender Pink
- Pink
- Red
- Rose Pink
- White
- White
- Reddish-Purple
- White /Red stems
- White
- White
- Pink/Red
- White
- Blue tinged

WHEN

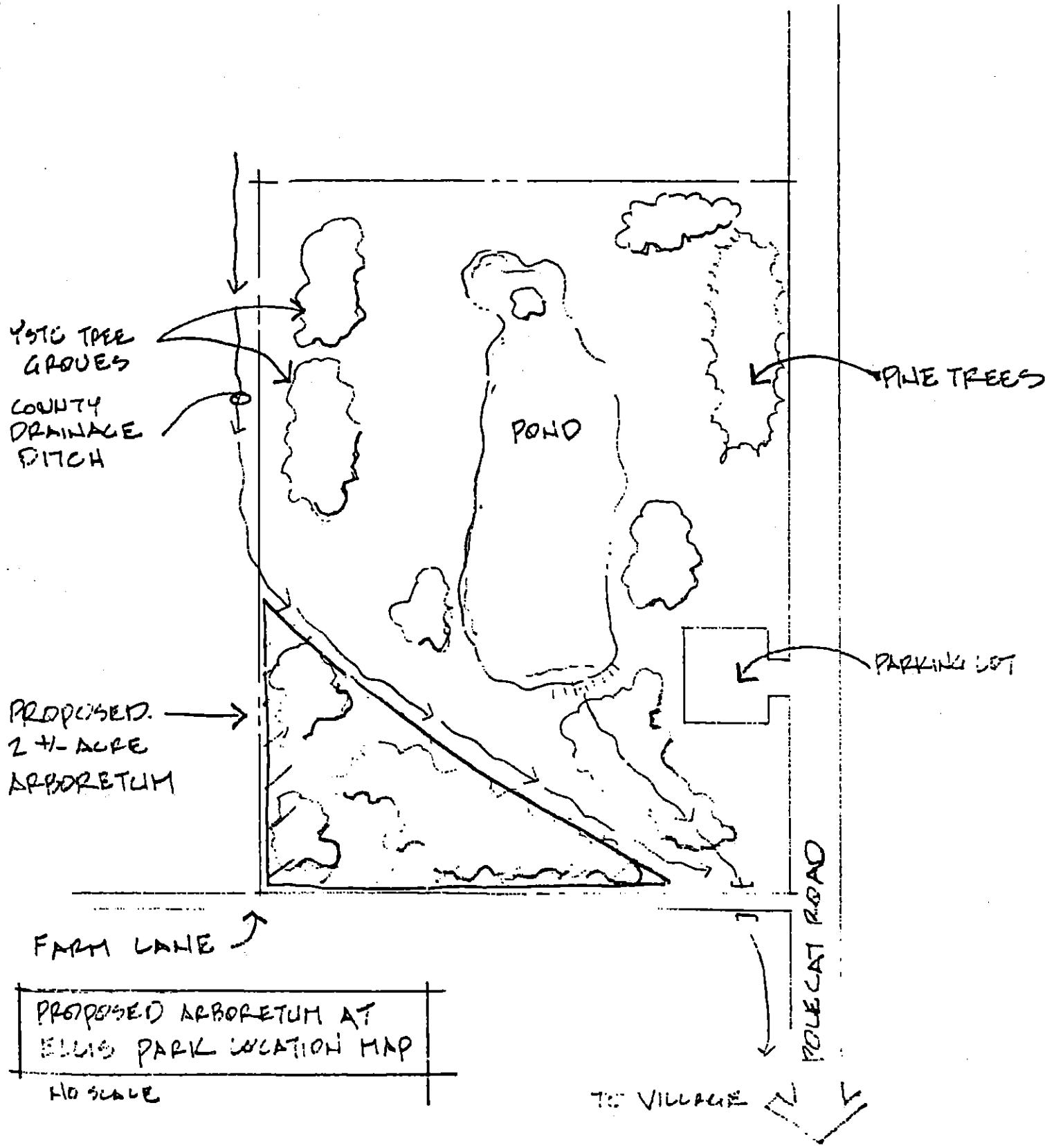
- March
- Early April
- April
- Late April
- Late April
- Late April/May
- Mid-May
- May
- May
- Late May/June
- Late June/July
- June-Sept.
- Early July
- August

1. 'D' 1. 'E' LOCATED ON SITE

CORRY ST. →

1/8" = 1' +/-

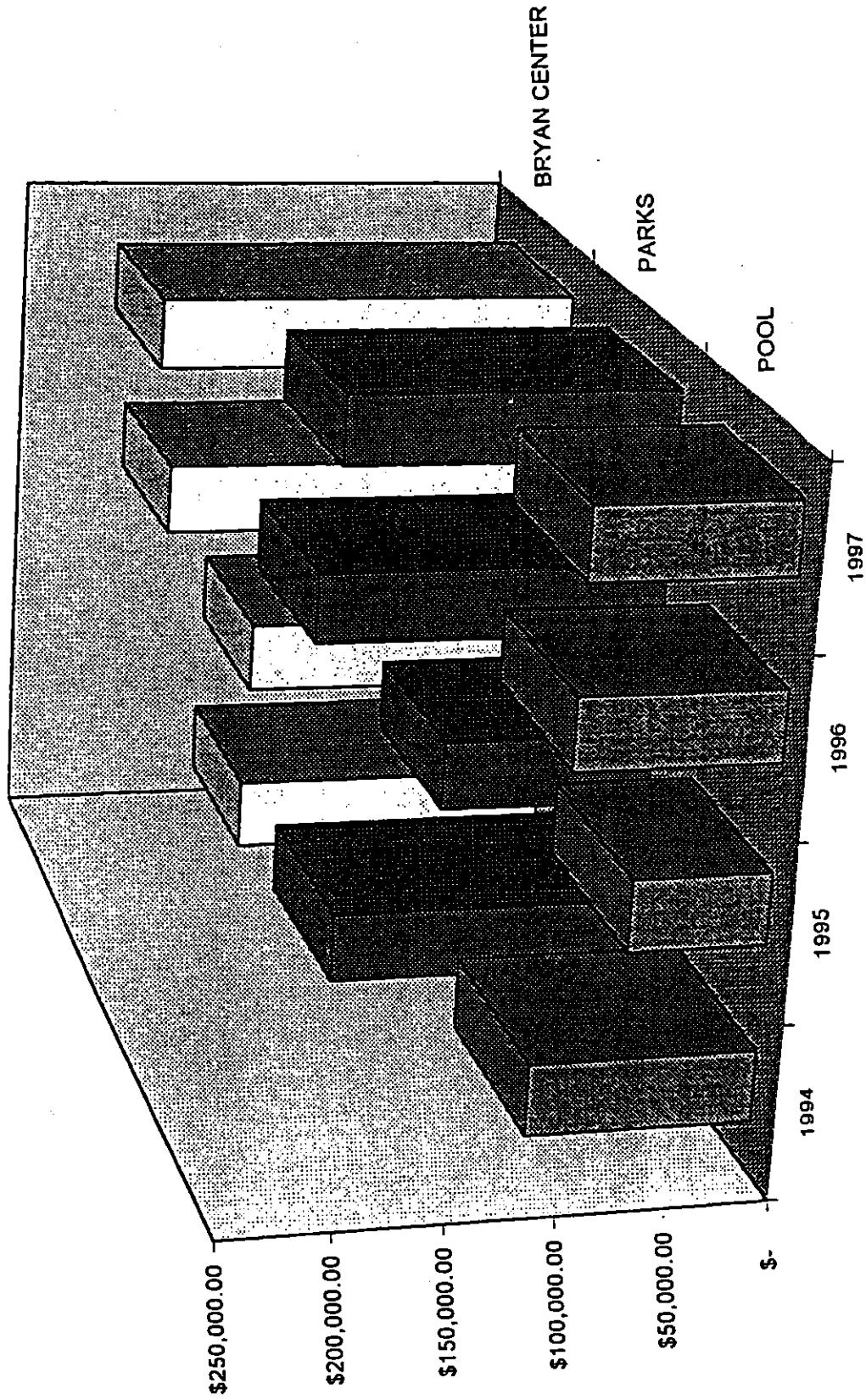
5/14/76



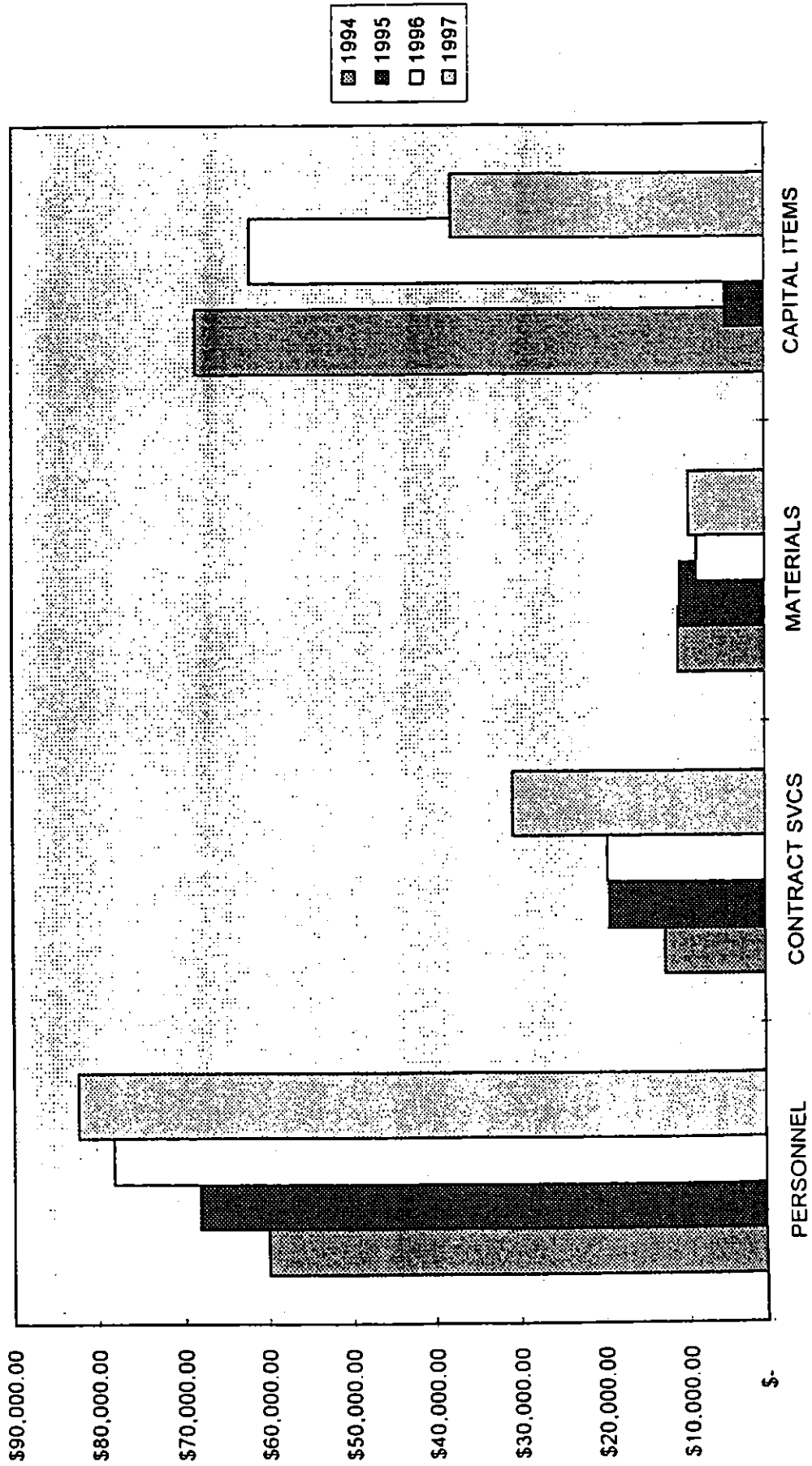
PROPOSED ARBORETUM AT
 ELLIS PARK LOCATION MAP
 NO SCALE

ATTACHMENT "C"

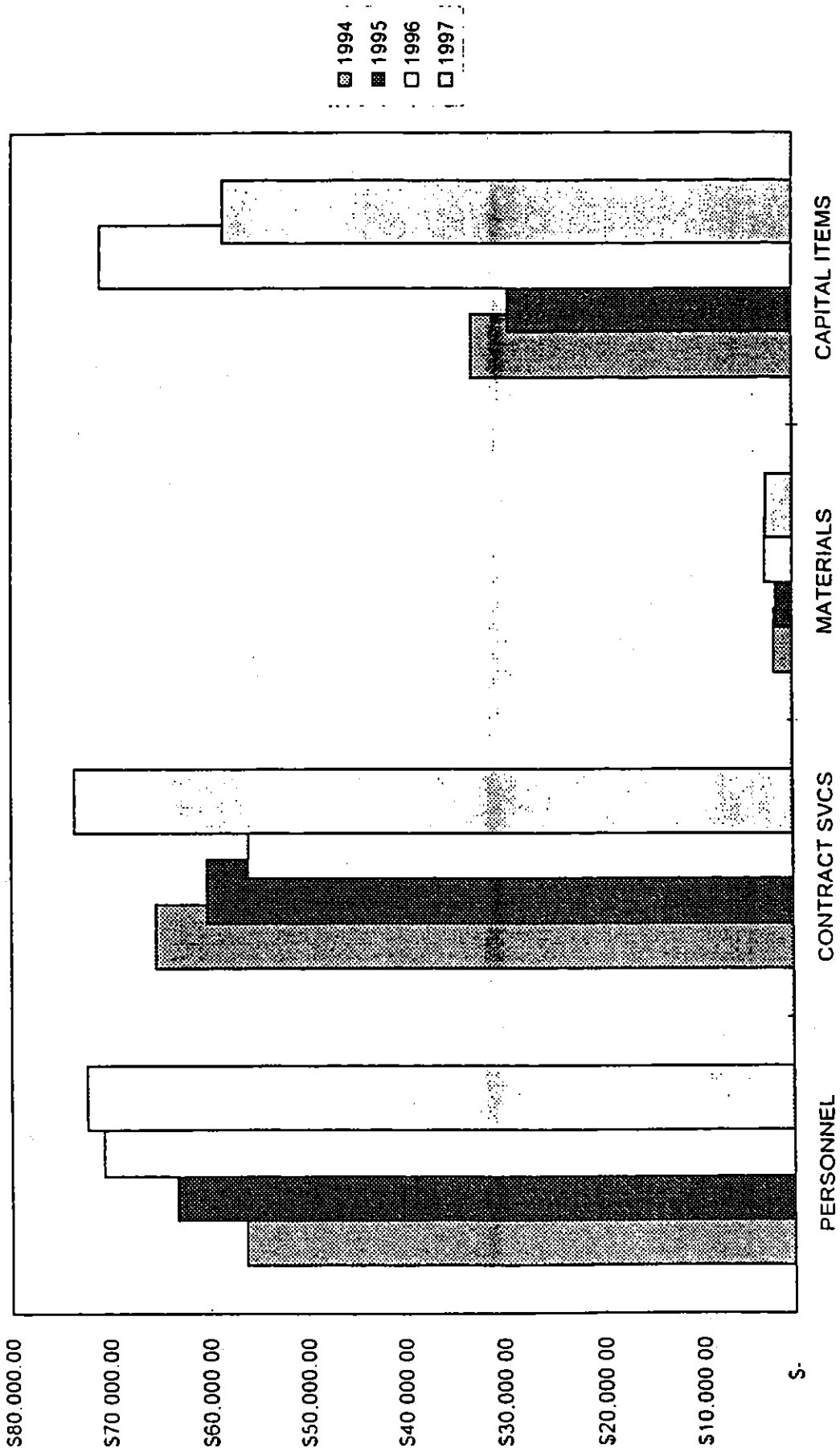
Revenue Distribution 1994-1997 Parks & Recreation Department



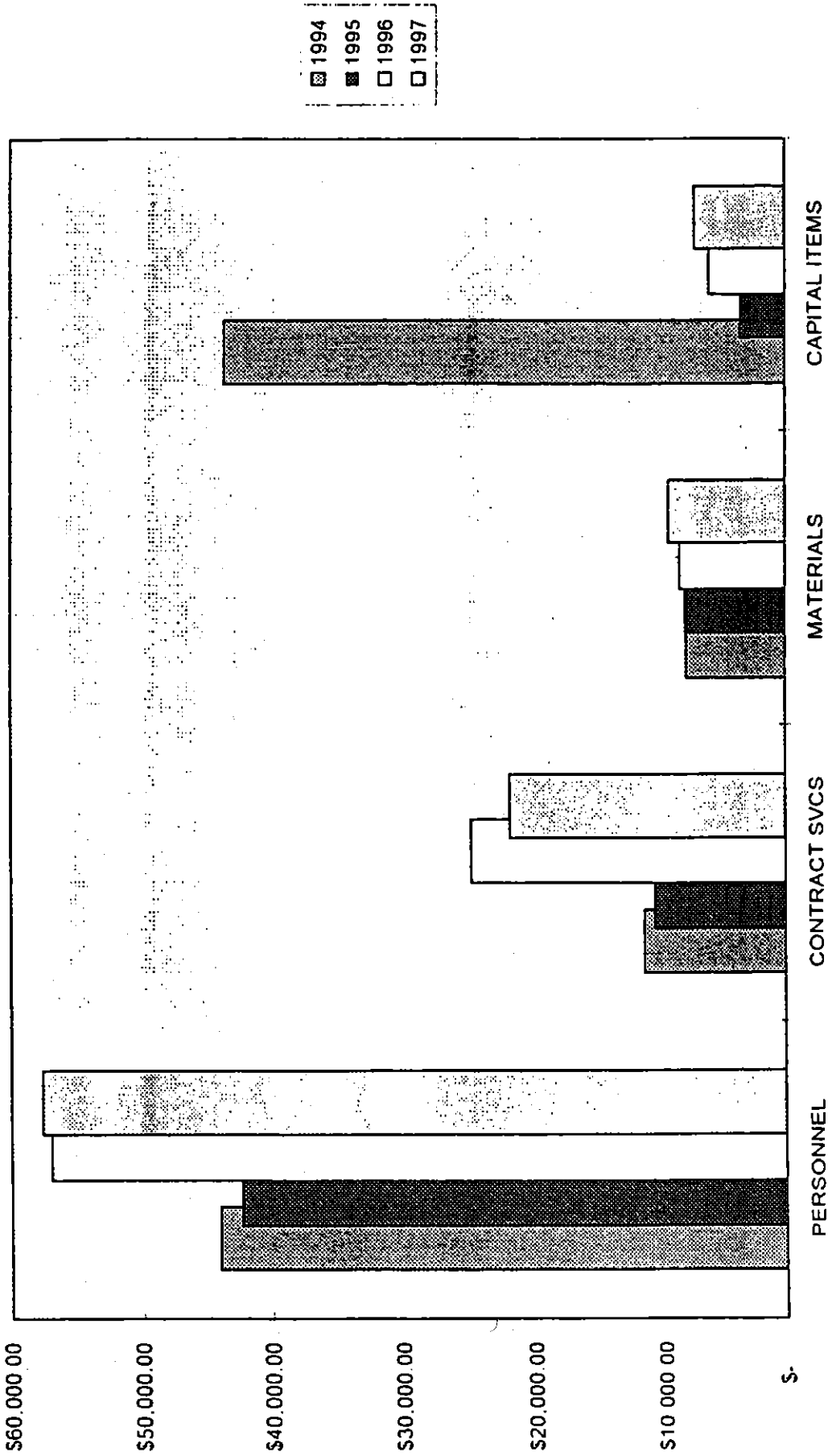
Cost Distribution 1994-1997
Parks



Cost Distribution 1994-1997
Bryan Center



Cost Distribution 1994-1997 Pool

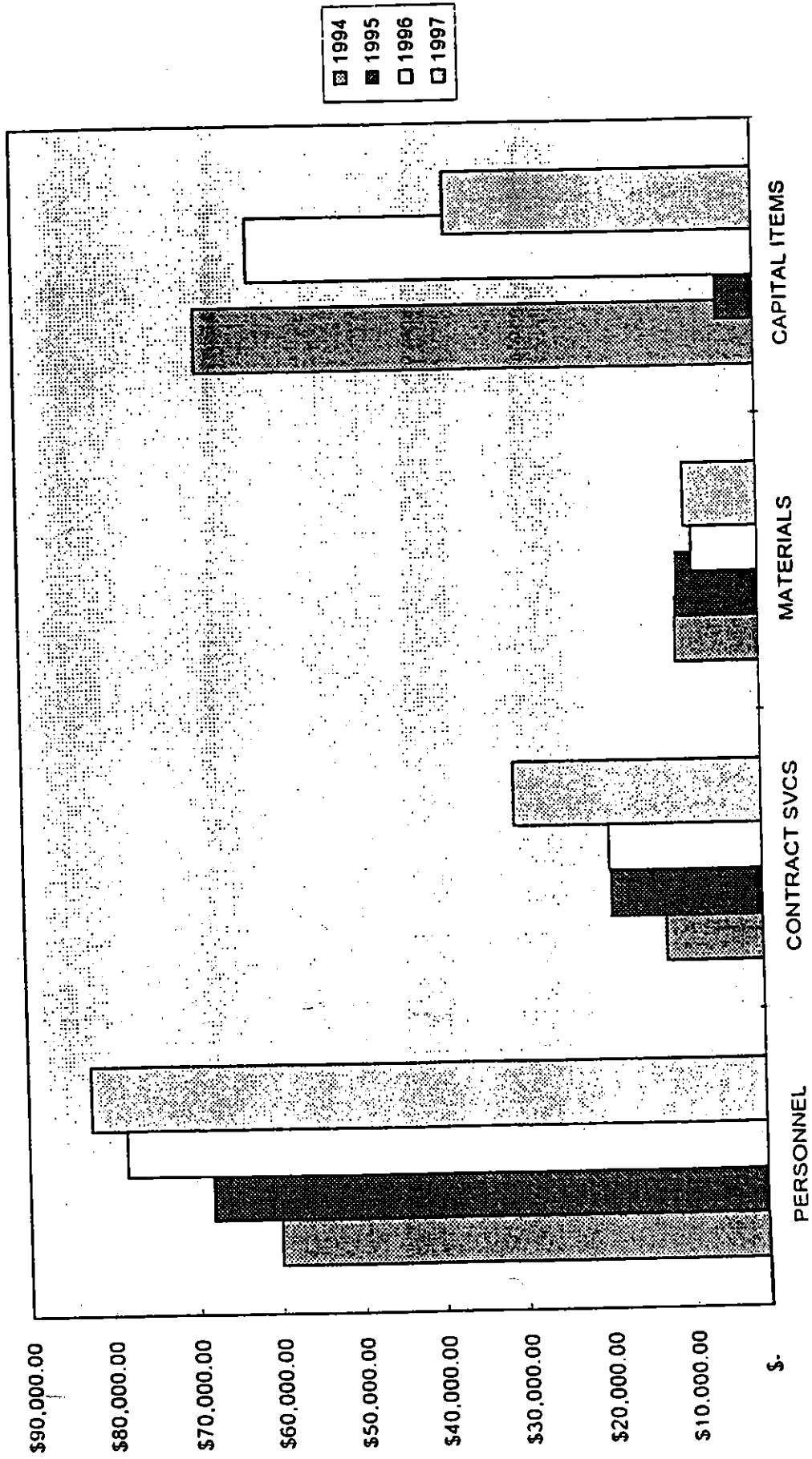


**PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
GRANT REVENUES 1996-1998**

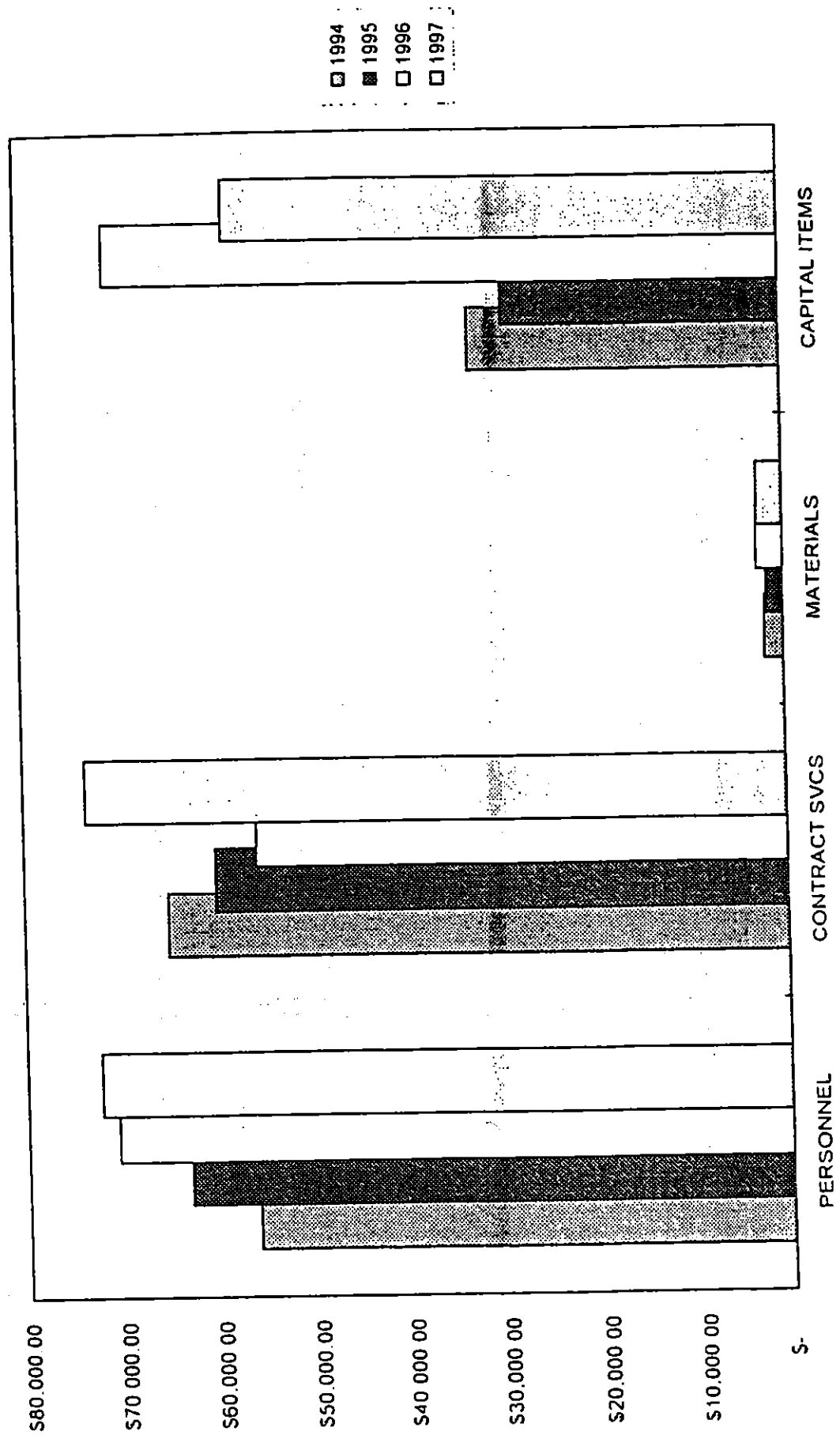
	Grant Amount	Local Match	Total
1996 NatureWorks	\$ 36,760.00	\$ 12,255.00	\$ 49,015.00
1996 GRIP Grant	\$ 19,400.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 25,900.00
1996 ODNR Buy Recycled	\$ 24,720.00	\$ 7,620.00	\$ 74,915.00
1996 TOTAL	\$ 80,880.00	\$ 26,375.00	\$ 107,255.00
1997 NatureWorks	\$ 29,250.00	\$ 7,320.00	\$ 36,570.00
1997 ODNR Buy Recycled	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
1997 GRIP Grant	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 51,570.00
1997 NII Trails Rec Fund	\$ 49,900.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 59,900.00
1997 TOTAL	\$ 100,150.00	\$ 23,320.00	\$ 123,470.00
1998 GRIP Request*	\$ 50,630.00	\$ 16,750.00	\$ 67,380.00
1998 Greene Co CPI Request*	\$ 36,250.00		\$ 36,250.00
1998 TOTAL	\$ 86,880.00	\$ 16,750.00	\$ 103,630.00
 1996-1998 TOTAL	 \$ 267,910.00	 \$ 66,445.00	 \$ 334,355.00

*Approval pending

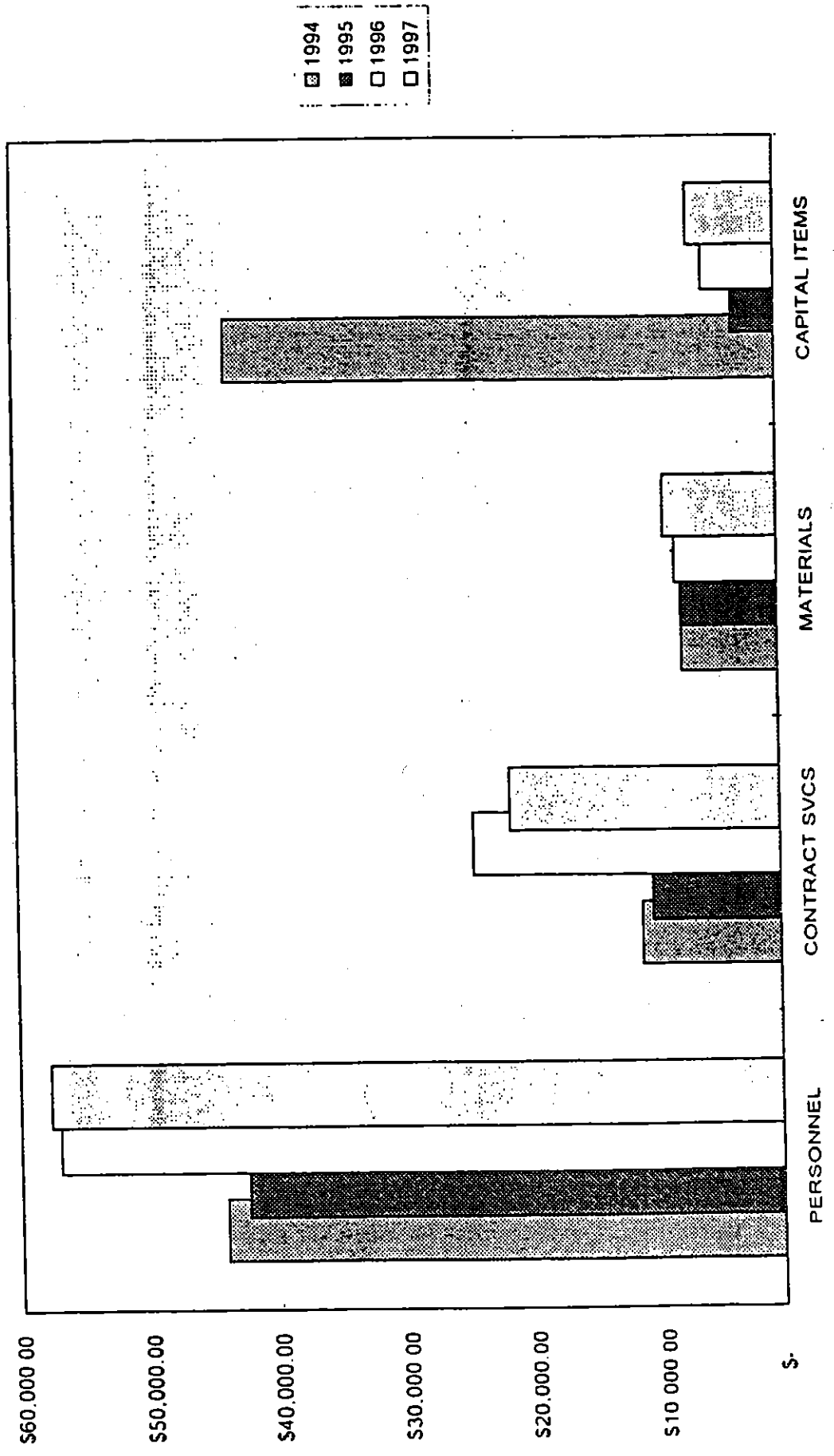
Cost Distribution 1994-1997
Parks



Cost Distribution 1994-1997
Bryan Center



Cost Distribution 1994-1997
Pool



**PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
GRANT REVENUES 1996-1998**

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