

CHICAGO
PARK
DISTRICT
come out
and play

LAFOLLETTE PARK FRAMEWORK PLAN



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Executive Summary

LaFollette Park is a neighborhood park located on Laramie Avenue in the Austin neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois. The Chicago Park District (CPD), in the interest of the revitalization and historic preservation of LaFollette decided to further study the LaFollette area to determine appropriate steps for its modification and rehabilitation. Through facilitation efforts by the Thompson Dyke and Associates, the CPD sought help from its community to identify the goals and structure of the study in the form of a Framework Plan. The community process began by holding personal interviews with stakeholders in the community which included alderman, the principals of the neighborhood schools, the LaFollette Park Advisory Council, faith based organizations and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). Regular steering committee meetings were held to solicit the input of community members. During these meetings with the community and the region, the team identified four goals of the Framework Plan. These goals are organized within four themes: 1) the integration of the Park with the community; 2) the integration of the school, Park and Fieldhouse; 3) the improvement of circulation, parking, and accessibility; and 4) the assessment and renovation of facilities in the interest of usage and historic preservation.

The primary approach of the LaFollette Framework Plan was to examine existing uses and recommend changes that promote safety, provide diverse recreational opportunities, and enhance the neighborhood aesthetically. To achieve this goal, both facility and park programming needs were explored in relation to each other. Also, the plan responds to the

needs of the residents and identifies the Park as an agent for neighborhood revitalization.

With the structure and preliminary goals of the study identified, the Framework Plan began with a site analysis and historical review. The site analysis was completed in conjunction with the CPD's structural analysis of the Fieldhouse, a newly appointed park staff and a focus on current park renovations. Existing park conditions were examined including an inventory and analysis of circulation, parking, safety, programming, facilities, and amenities. The physical layout of the Park was also considered and the Park was organized with an axial focus.

The Framework Plan also addresses the changing demographics and economic status of the Neighborhood Study Area and how they have affected zoning districts and land uses. Analysis of the neighborhood shows a K-8 school to the north, residences farther east on Hirsch, residences all along Potomac, the Fieldhouse at the west end of the Park, and several churches in close proximity. The needs of several segments within the community were reviewed, especially those of Leslie Lewis Elementary School.

Lastly, a historic review was conducted to understand its design development and the vision of the Park's original designer, Jens Jensen. The review confirmed that the neighborhood, Fieldhouse, the Park, and the location of the school should be integrated and allowed to function more as a community-building catalyst.



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In completing a comprehensive review, opportunities to improve the Park through programming and rehabilitation were identified and have been further outlined in the Framework Plan. The Framework Plan also addresses significant programming elements by identifying the different “rooms” contained in the Park.

This Framework Plan was developed with the support of the school and a broad range of individuals and community groups. This plan lays the foundation for future capital improvement projects in LaFollette Park. Capital improvement identified in this plan include structural improvements to the Fieldhouse; improving accessibility; making connections between the school and park; adding or improving recreational and educational facilities; creating a plaza for public events; replacing or adding walkways, comfort station, lighting and irrigation; and landscaping.

Project Approach



The Italian Renaissance style fieldhouse was completed in 1929.

Chicago Park District Mission

- To enhance the quality of life in Chicago by becoming the leading provider of recreation and leisure opportunities;
- To provide safe, inviting and beautifully maintained parks and facilities;
- To create a customer-focused and responsive park system.

METHODOLOGY

The Chicago Park District worked with the LaFollette Park Advisory Council and Steering Committee familiar with LaFollette Park to identify the needs of the neighborhood. Chicago Park District representatives and TD&A team members conducted one-on-one interviews to obtain information about the Park and the neighborhood. TD&A then prepared illustrations of existing conditions and presented the information to the LaFollette Park Steering Committee for its input. Using this information, TD&A and the Park District created a number of concepts for the Park. After internal evaluation with the Park District, two concepts were developed and presented to the LaFollette Park Steering Committee. A Framework Plan was then prepared and presented to the Steering Committee. Input was gathered at each of these Steering Committee presentations and integrated into this final study.



Neighborhood surrounding La Follette Park.

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY AREA

The Austin Community is spatially defined by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad on the north; the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad on the east; Roosevelt Road on the south; and Austin Avenue, and later Harlem Avenue, on the west. The Neighborhood Study Area lies within the larger Austin Community. A major street network defines the Study Area. The network consists of North Avenue on the north, Cicero Avenue on the east, Division Street on the south and Central Avenue on the west.

Demographics

The Austin Community as a whole has approximately 114,000 residents. Census data from 1990 reveals that the Austin Community was approximately 86% African American, 10% white, and 4% of Hispanic origin. There were 3.3 persons per household and 3.8 persons per family. The Austin Community can be generally characterized as a middle class, predominantly African American area with a majority of single-family, two-family and three-family dwelling units (Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 1994).

The Neighborhood Study Area primarily consists of census tracts #2507 and #2508. (Only a small portion of the study area in the southeastern corner between Lamon and Cicero is not within one of these two tracts.) In 1990, the two census tracts totaled 10,292. In 1990, this Neighborhood Study Area was approximately 92% African American, 5% white, and 4% of Hispanic origin. There were 3.5 persons per household

and 4.0 persons per family. Of the 3,141 dwelling units in the study area, 23% were single-family, 51% were attached single-family or two-family, 14% were three-family, and 12% were multiple-family (Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 1994).

By comparison, the demographic characteristics of the Neighborhood Study Area reflect a community that closely resembles the larger Austin Community but has a slightly higher African American population, a correspondingly lower white population, and slightly higher household sizes. The Study Area is dominantly single-family, two-family and three-family residences with a relatively small number of multiple-family dwellings.

Neighborhood

In the last several years, the neighborhood has shifted from an aging, middle-class population to a rising population of younger professionals. Property taxes have risen substantially in the last 15 years resulting in financial stress for those long-term residents with fixed and modest incomes.

There are several religious organizations within close proximity of the Park that offer a variety of services.

- Pleasant Valley Methodist Baptist Church, located on the southwest corner of Potomac and Laramie
- New Genesis Assembly of God Baptist Church, located on the northwest corner of Hirsch and Laramie

- St. Peter Canasius, located on the southeast corner of LeClaire and North Avenue
- St. Anne's Senior Housing (165 residents), located south of Division on Thomas.

All are active in the community and located within three blocks of the Park.

In addition, there are two public elementary schools within four blocks of LaFollette Park. Leslie Lewis Elementary School is located north of the Park between LeClaire and Leamington. Hay Elementary School is located south of the Park three blocks on Laramie Avenue.

Land use and zoning

Land use is primarily commercial along the streets bounding the study area with a mix of single-family and low density multiple-family housing along the interior street network. A shopping center is currently under development at the southwest corner of North Avenue and Cicero Avenue and will be anchored by a Cub Foods Store. An Ames Department Store now occupies an existing building immediately to the south of the new development. This shopping node will be supported by ample on-site parking and will increase retail opportunities for neighborhood families.

Land uses immediately surrounding the Park are either residential or educational. The south and west sides are occupied by single-family, two-family, and three-family buildings. The north and east sides are occupied by low density multiple family buildings. Leslie Lewis Elementary School is immediately north of the Park.

Zoning districts determine the location of the uses noted above. Typically, business (B) and commercial (C) districts are designated along the major streets, and residential (R) districts are designated along the interior streets. This pattern is evident within the Neighborhood Study Area (See Zoning Districts Map). Business and commercial districts are located on streets such as Cicero and North Avenue, while residential districts are located on streets such as Hirsch and Lavergne.



The New Genesis Assembly of God Baptist Church is located on the northwest corner of Hirsch and Laramie.

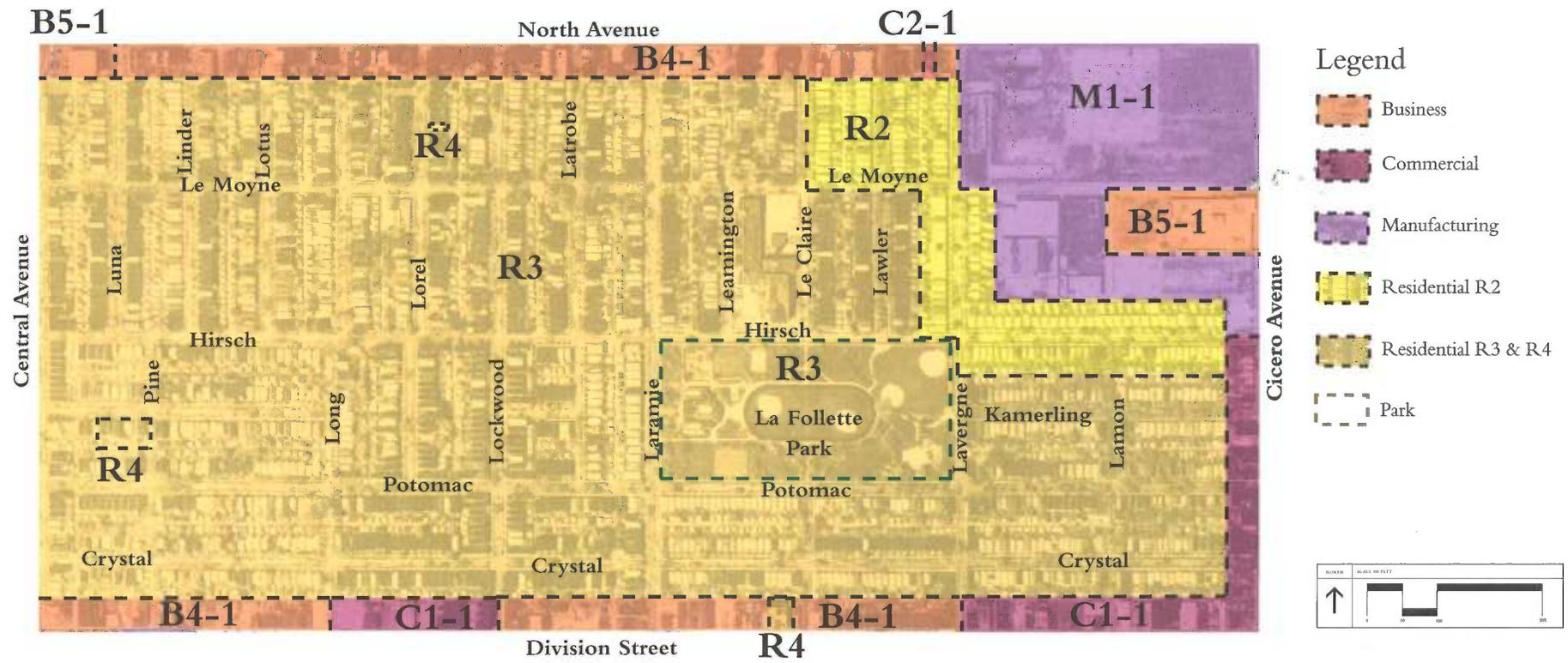
The general zoning districts are then further subcategorized. For example, within the Neighborhood Study Area, the business districts subcategorized as B4-1 and B5-1 allow for a wide variety of retail uses and buildings. The business districts subcategorized as C1-1 and C2-2 districts allow for a wide variety of retail and service commercial uses. The Park itself is zoned R-3 as is most of the surrounding neighborhood. The R-3 district allows one-family, two-family and multiple family attached dwellings. A small portion of the neighborhood is zoned R-2, a district that permits only one-family detached dwellings. A limited number of parcels are zoned R-4, a district that permits the same residential uses as the R-1 and R-2 districts. However, the R-4 district also permits townhouses and housing for the elderly (Chicago Zoning Ordinance, 1999).



An example of a residential district, located on streets such as Hirsch and Lavergne.

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY AREA

Zoning Districts



Source: City of Chicago



1
New Genesis Assembly of God Baptist Church



2
Homes on Potomac Avenue



3
Leslie Lewis Elementary School - East View



4
Leslie Lewis Elementary School - West View



5
Leslie Lewis Elementary School - South West View

Historic Review

The Austin neighborhood, LaFollette Park, the Fieldhouse and the Park designers all have been influential throughout the development of the Park and the surrounding community.

NEIGHBORHOOD

In 1865 a local developer, named Henry W. Austin, purchased land and laid out the Austin Community as a lovely 280 acre subdivision in Cicero Township with wide streets and shade trees. In 1868, Mr. Austin then donated a four acre block to the township of Cicero, originally known as Holden Park, for a park and a town hall. Construction of both was completed in 1871. The elevated railroad was later extended from Chicago to Austin Boulevard in 1898, resulting in the annexation of the town into the City of Chicago the following year. These factors accelerated the building of apartments and bungalows on the north side of Austin and the population of the area grew rapidly. The town reached its residential maturity in the 1920's. Today, this area of Chicago is known as Central Austin.

In the early 1900's Austin was an ethnically diverse community of Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, Germans, Italians, Germans, Russians and others. South Austin was still a predominantly white community by 1960. It then dramatically shifted to a predominantly African-American community beginning around 1970. By 1980 North Austin had also become predominantly African-American. Comparatively, South Austin had a lower percentage of owner occupied-housing

units than North Austin. However, the overall percentage of owner occupied units for both North and South Austin did not change substantially between 1970 and 1980 (Bachrach and Patterson, 2000).

The relatively high percentage of single family homes, and two and three-unit buildings promotes stability in the neighborhood. Many people have lived in their homes for decades and have a feeling of "ownership" for the Park and the Fieldhouse. Their memories of shared events and experiences at the Park are resources that form the basis for future planning.

LAFOLLETTE PARK

Jens Jensen, renowned landscape architect, envisioned the creation of a new type of neighborhood centers. These centers would be developed around schools. Jensen felt these neighborhood centers should provide a "school building and grounds that would stir a child's imagination and serve as a cultural and recreational center for young and old alike" (Grese, 1992, p.90). In 1918 Jensen recommended the acquisition of land for park development adjacent to Lloyd School (now Leslie Lewis Elementary School) and the demolition of the existing school to connect the adjacent park properties.

Jensen felt that many school buildings of this period were cold, barren and institutional, with nothing to stimulate the

imagination. "Gardens," he said, "create a love for the soil in the minds of the children". In adults, this love of the soil will develop into a desire for better, cleaner and healthier homes. Jensen believed in elevating mankind by appealing to their finer sentiments (Grese, 1992).

Jensen's 1918 plan for Lloyd School Center included school gardens, playing fields, naturalistic swimming pools, tennis courts, council rings, story rings, a prairie, a "players hill" and an "old folks corner." The plan included flowers, trees and shrubs to attract varieties of birds and other wildlife (Bachrach and Patterson, 2000).

In 1919, The West Park Commission acquired the site and began negotiating with the Board of Education. The following year, following political changes, Jensen was dismissed from the West Park Commission. The new Board abandoned Jensen's plans for Lloyd Center.

The site remained unimproved for several years. In 1925, the Commissioners received a letter from the West Town Chamber of Commerce stressing the need for park improvements. One hundred thousand citizens submitted petitions requesting a tribute to Robert M. LaFollette (1855-1925).

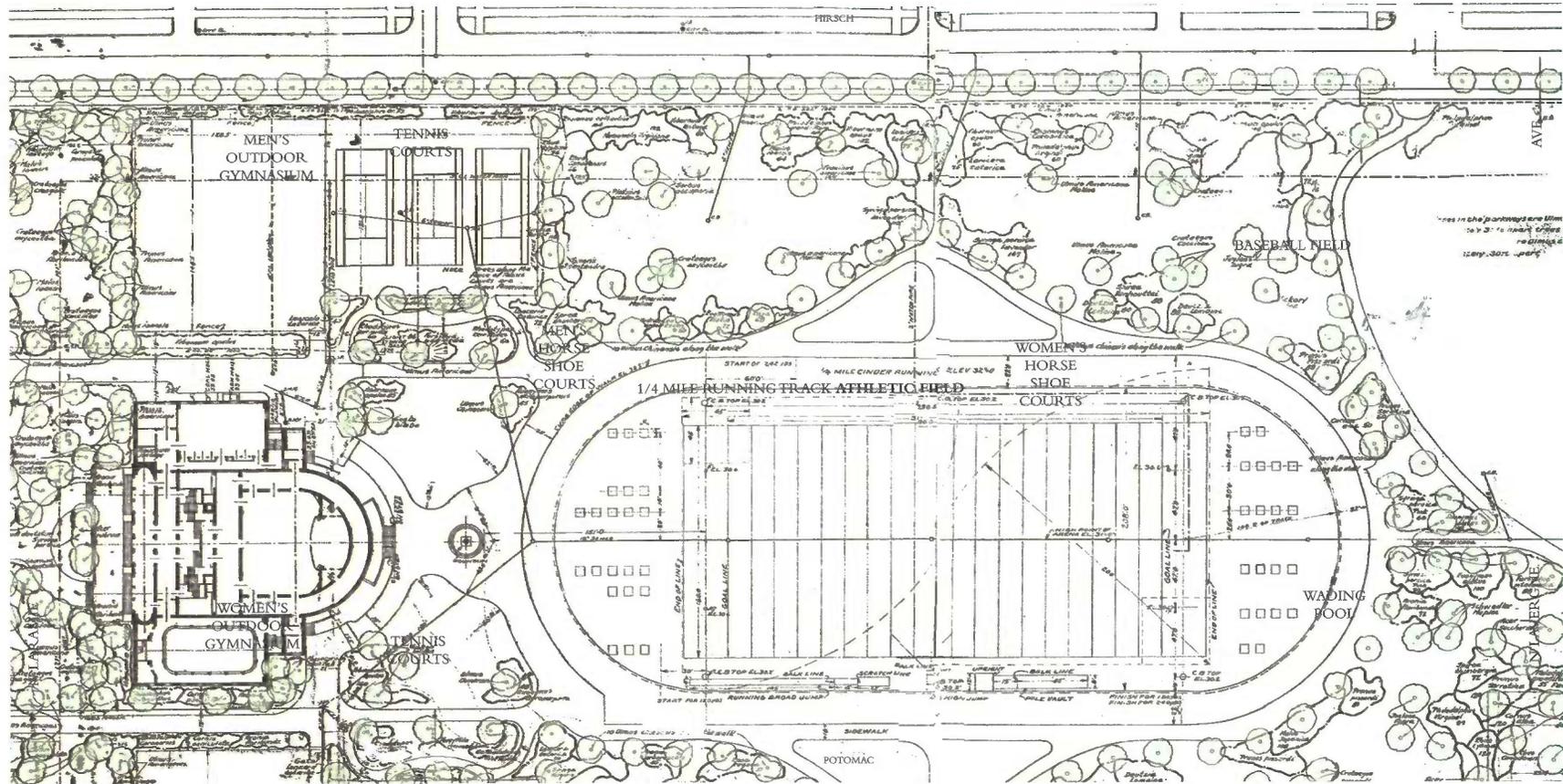
Robert Marion LaFollette first entered public life as a county district attorney (1880-84) and, later, as a congressman from southwestern Wisconsin (1885-1891). LaFollette became governor of Wisconsin in 1900 and

held that office until 1906, when he was elected to the U.S. Senate. As a Senator, he championed the causes of the Progressive Movement. He also became widely known for his promotion of conservation and the development of parks, open-space and other publicly beneficial facilities (Bachrach and Patterson, 2000).

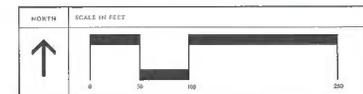
In 1927, voters approved a 10 million dollar bond issue allowing the West Park Commission to construct a number of new park buildings and landscape improvements (West Park Commission, 1927). The initiative included \$600,000 for a fieldhouse in LaFollette Park designed by the architectural firm of Michaelsen and Rognstad. This architectural firm was also responsible for the field houses at Humboldt Park and Douglas Park, the Golden Dome at Garfield Park and the On Leong Chinese Merchant's Association Building in China Town. The LaFollette Park Fieldhouse is an impressive Italian Renaissance Revival Style Building with a large auditorium, two gymnasiums, an indoor swimming pool, lobbies, promenade and gallery. This 25,000 square foot building footprint was constructed by the Duvall Construction Company and was completed in 1929. (n 17, Chicago Park District)

A Landscape Planting Plan for the Park was prepared in 1928 by Wm. J. H. Schultz, Superintendent of Small Parks and Playgrounds. Although his plan did not provide for the unification of the school and park, as Jensen had intended, it did provide for the magnificent Fieldhouse and community

Historic Condition in 1928



Information provided by Chicago Park District



Existing Park Conditions

OVERVIEW

LaFollette Park is a model of multi-cultural activity. The neighborhood in which it resides is primarily African American, but many other ethnic backgrounds are present as well. These cultures are represented in the Park on a daily basis and contribute to an active community.

LaFollette Park is 17.35 acres in size. The Fieldhouse within the Park is a two-story building with basement. It contains approximately 62,600 square feet and services a diverse population drawn from the surrounding Austin Community, ranging from children to senior citizens. The Park is classified as a regional park rather than a community park because of its large size, the presence of the track, and the recreational activities contained in the Fieldhouse. However, the Park functions as a community park and principally serves residents within a 1/2 mile radius.

The Fieldhouse and the Park's interior walkways are in the process of being upgraded and modernized. Two million dollars have been spent in the last 18 months for interior renovations to the Fieldhouse, infrastructure repair, repairs to the track, field, and spray pool.

Despite its compromised condition, the Park has recently hosted events such as big band performances, fairs and cultural gatherings that have attracted seniors and other community

members. Many organizations such as Safe Haven and Kids House use the Fieldhouse for their programs.

Vehicular Circulation

The main arterial to the Park is Laramie Avenue. Laramie intersects with Hirsch Street, which is an eastbound one-way street. The traffic volume on these streets creates difficulties for pedestrians accessing the Park and creates a safety hazard for school children moving back and forth during the day.

Pedestrian Circulation

The well-defined pedestrian paths are included in the original circulation plan. City sidewalks encircle the Park and provide easy access for park visitors. These sidewalks are in poor condition and should be replaced. Interior circulation focuses on the track. In general, most traffic through the Park is the result of trips between the school and various points throughout the Park. Pedestrian flow is inhibited by the separation of the Fieldhouse front entrance from the rest of the Park. A bus stop with shelter is located at the corner of Hirsch and Laramie and provides easy access to the Park and Fieldhouse for those not residing in the immediate neighborhood.

Parking

Parking with universal access is currently located behind the Fieldhouse building. Services such as garbage pick-up and deliveries occur along a drive on the north side of the

building between the Fieldhouse and the play area. Parking is permitted on both sides of the streets that surround the Park.

Safety

Safety concerns are a central issue for park users. Drug and gang issues exist in the immediate neighborhood. There are several areas of shrubs that impede observation by law enforcement. The stairwells along the east side of the building are particularly remote, with no visibility from surrounding areas. The many corridors and rooms within the building also provide hiding places and doors must be locked when not in use. In particular, the east side of the building evokes an isolated feeling.

PARK INVENTORY

Today the Park maintains most of the same features included in the original layout, with only a few changes. The running track remains the central outdoor feature. Tennis courts are now located only on the south side of the Park, and the former north side tennis courts are now used as a hard surface multi-use facility. The horseshoe courts have been removed. The spray pool on the southeast corner of the Park has been renovated. A basketball court has been added on the north side of the Park. Two ball diamonds have been placed in the track area. Tree masses have been maintained, but most shrub areas have been removed from the Park.

PARK ANALYSIS

Access to the Park

Access to the Park is primarily pedestrian via the surrounding street intersections. North Avenue and Cicero Avenue are a minimum of two blocks from the Park and connects the neighborhood to other areas of the City. School children from Leslie Lewis Elementary School access the Park by crossing Hirsch Street. Visual access is primarily from Laramie Avenue, the busiest of the four streets surrounding the Park.

Intensity of Park Use

Currently, the Park and Fieldhouse building are underutilized. The Park has degraded over the last several years and residents of the neighborhood have chosen other Park District facilities for their activities. Minimal use of the Park by the public is also due in part to a lack of programs provided. The current park staff is developing new programs that are aimed at increasing participation.

The Fieldhouse primarily consists of an auditorium, gymnasiums and meeting rooms, most of which are currently being used for night programming. The meeting rooms have limited use because of the noise generated by the men's gym located above.

At night, the Park is perceived as unsafe because of a lack of sight lines and adequate lighting. During the day, the track is the most active program element and is used for jogging, walking and running.

A limited number of off-street parking spaces are informally located behind the Fieldhouse. These spaces are occasionally used by park employees, but the spaces are particularly for senior citizens and the disabled. Currently, the spaces are accessed from a drive extending from Laramie Avenue between the north side of the Fieldhouse and the playground. This drive is also used by District vehicles to service the Park, and is used to access the Fieldhouse building.

The location of these parking spaces and the service functions are problematic because they require the insertion of vehicular traffic into an area frequently traversed by children. Also, the parking spaces for mobility-impaired individuals are poorly placed. Because the accessible entrance is on the lower level of the north side of the Fieldhouse, individuals who want to access the swimming pool have difficulty. The accessible entrance door is kept locked, and a staff member must be contacted to unlock the door.

The western face of the building is an ornate facade that presents a strong positive image to the street. This entry gives the building a position of prominence in the community.

The Fieldhouse and the Park are not visually and functionally integrated. The eastern facade of the Fieldhouse visually “reads” as the rear of a building, and it does not embrace the Park in the manner that Jensen had in mind with his concept plan. Functionally, the lower level of the building exits to a wrap-around stairwell with steps provided up to grade. The stairwell has some hidden spaces that may cause safety issues.

The area between the top of the steps and the track is a hard surface area with a flag pole as the focal point. This hard surface area is the site of various events, but is not configured in such a way that a stage and seating can be easily provided. This area is sterile and is devoid of character.

Recreation Facilities

Track

The track is a uniting influence in the neighborhood, used by all age groups from early morning to evening hours by senior walkers, joggers, and members of all age groups. The interior of the track is used for a number of activities including football, softball fields, and soccer.

Spray Pool

The newly constructed, interactive spray pool continues to be a summer time asset for the community. Current access to the spray pool is from outside the Park at the corner of Lavernge and Potomac. In addition to the new spray pool, the pergola has been restored and offers a shady respite for the users of the spray pool.

Multi-purpose Play Area

The Park contains two play areas. The most heavily utilized is in the northwest corner of the Park. The play equipment in both areas is also used for the summer programs. This equipment is in need of repair and/or replacement. Seating options throughout the play area are limited. There is a very

poor physical and visual connection between the play area and the remainder of the Park and School.

The second play area is in the southeast corner of the Park and is completely enclosed by the spray pool fence. This play area has a mulch play surface that is inappropriate for children's bare feet while playing at the spray pool.

Basketball Court

The basketball court primarily serves teens and young adults. Younger children are displaced when older players want the court. Opportunities for younger children are needed.

Comfort Station

The comfort station associated with the spray pool is under-utilized. The roof and various structural elements of the comfort station are in need of repair. The building is ideally located to service the spray pool and ball fields as a Eastern outpost in the Park.

Softball Fields

There are four softball fields, two at the northeast quadrant of the Park, and two informal fields in the interior of the track. The field at the northeast corner of the site is lighted and has a small set of wooden bleachers. Interest in softball has been waning, and the two informal fields interior to the track may not be required in the future.

Tennis Courts

The courts on the south side of the Park have been recently renovated. Interest in tennis is rising, in part, because of the success of the Williams sisters and other players on the professional tour.

Fieldhouse

The Framework Plan includes an analysis of accessibility and ADA compliance for the LaFollette Park Memorial Fieldhouse. Many of the hallways and passages show water damage due to a leaky roof and other plumbing and infrastructure problems.

Swimming Pool

The swimming pool was recently repaired and is now operating. The pool is a fairly small indoor pool with none of the amenities associated with pools built in the last ten years. It lacks appropriate deck room around the perimeter of the pool. The tank portion of the pool is constructed of small tiles with a pattern that is particularly ornate and displays a level of craftsmanship not found in today's pools.

Men's and Women's Gyms

Both gyms are small for full-court basketball, but the floors are in acceptable condition. The women's gym is currently being used for gymnastics.

Auditorium

The Auditorium and stage are the Fieldhouse's biggest asset. They could be the heart and soul of a future LaFollette Park.

The Auditorium is built in the grand style with a large stage that includes a small but workable backstage area. It has a balcony that brings the total seating capacity to approximately 600 people. The sound and the projection booth at the top of the balcony is in disrepair.

Multi-purpose Rooms

Multi-purpose rooms are in various states of repair. The room used for meetings is directly under the men's gym and is therefore noisy during basketball games. Many of the other multi-purpose rooms scattered throughout the building are in need of various improvements.

Craft Rooms

The wood shop and craft room is serviceable and programs are currently run out of this room. The woodshop is a very popular location for young men's programs and offers patrons the opportunity to learn vocational skills that may be useful to them in job placement.

Park Amenities

Lighting

Because park lighting is sparse, the Park user is not comfortable in many areas of the Park during the night. As a result, little nighttime use of outdoor park facilities and fields occurs.

Sidewalk

The city sidewalks at the Park periphery need replacement.

The most heavily used sidewalk is the walk around the track. It is used for cycling, roller blading and walking. Many of the walkways throughout the Park need replacement and realignment.

Drinking Fountains

The drinking fountains on site do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) but are well located. Additional drinking fountains may be required adjacent to the play area and attached to the outside of the comfort station.

Landscaping

Mature trees on site have been retained, but most shrubs have been removed. Flower beds have been eliminated. Over the years lilacs and roses have been eliminated. Their removal affects the visual appeal of the Park and eliminates scents that long-time residents of the neighborhoods identify with the Park.



Many of the City sidewalks are in need of replacement.

Fencing

The outer park boundary is not fenced. Fencing surrounds various internal elements, including the spray pool area, the multi-purpose play area, the tennis courts, and the softball field at the northeast corner of the Park.

ISSUES OF ACCESSIBILITY

The historic Fieldhouse building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes should be identified prior to planning for adequate accessibility. This identification will allow for an accessible plan while minimizing alterations to historic elements. For every attempt to furnish disabled access, the preservation of historic features should be considered in order to achieve a solution that balances these competing goals. In some instances, it may be advantageous to design new or additional means of access in a historically respectful manner (following similar guidelines for new additions).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Requirements

The requirements and costs for corrective actions to achieve required accessibility at LaFollette Park are of a general nature. Actual in-depth architectural surveys of the buildings and site are recommended. These surveys will identify specific actions for improvements and are not a part of this document.

The preliminary requirements represent identification of

structural and nonstructural corrective actions to achieve required accessibility. For areas or elements that are used by adult members of the public, the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) are used (ADAAG Manual, 1998). For elements used by children, such as in the daycare center, standards utilized are adapted from the Federal Register, Vol. 61, No. 141, Monday, July 22, 1996: Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities; Children's Facilities; Proposed Rule, Part II, Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, 28 CFR Part 38 and Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, 36 CFR Part 1191. Accessibility requirements are also established by the Illinois Accessibility Code (Illinois Accessibility Code, 1997).

Standards and Requirements*Parking*

Accessible spaces, correctly sized and demarcated with signage and paint, must be provided in an area of the parking lot within the shortest distance from an accessible entrance to the Fieldhouse. Access aisles to these spaces must reach a common elevation with an accessible route to the building. Access to the building must be easily attainable. The number of off-street parking spaces provided in that lot determines the minimum number of accessible spaces.

Accessible Routes

An accessible route must be provided to serve all accessible

spaces and elements on the site. Such spaces and elements include public transportation stops, accessible parking lots, accessible passenger loading zones and buildings accessible to the public. An accessible route must also be provided to accessible facilities on contiguous sites, e.g. Leslie Lewis Elementary School and the nearest public transportation stop, if none exists on the site. Accessible routes include exterior routes, at least one accessible entrance, a means of egress, and interior horizontal and vertical circulation routes. These routes satisfy the requirements for width, passing space, headroom, ground surfaces, floor surfaces, slope, changes in level, doors, egress, and protruding objects as described in ADAAG.

Entrances and Exits

At least fifty percent of all public entrances to the Fieldhouse must be accessible and at least one must be a ground floor entrance. An accessible entrance must be part of an accessible route, which serves all accessible spaces within the building. Items which will need to be addressed are: maneuvering clearance at the doors; for a vestibule, adequate clearance between the two doors in series; thresholds; door hardware; door closers and door opening force.

Elevator

The passenger elevator in the Fieldhouse must be on an accessible route and serve all levels of the building open to public access. Elevator operation shall be automatic. An architectural survey is necessary to determine if doors,

call buttons, visible and audible signals, signage, layout, floor surfaces, illumination, car controls, handrails and emergency communications systems are compliant with the requirements of ADAAG.

Wheelchair Lifts and Ramps

For access to areas not served by the elevator, a ramp or wheelchair lift will be necessary. A wheelchair lift may be used where site or physical constraints make the use of a ramp infeasible. A wheelchair lift will also be necessary to provide access to the stage in the auditorium.

Stairs

An architectural survey will be necessary to determine if existing interior and exterior stairways serving as a required means of egress comply with the following requirements: tread depths and riser heights, nosing profiles, handrail heights, dimensions and construction. Handrails shall be continuous along both sides of the stair. If handrails are not continuous, extensions as specified by ADAAG shall be provided.

Exterior and Interior Signage

Appropriate signage is necessary to designate accessible entrances or to provide direction to accessible entrances when all entrances are not accessible. Appropriate signage shall be provided at all permanent rooms and spaces. Accessible toilet rooms, bathing and shower facilities shall also have appropriate signage. Inaccessible facilities shall have directional signage indicating the nearest accessible facility.

Areas of Rescue Assistance

If the Fieldhouse does not have an automatic sprinkler system, then areas of rescue assistance shall be provided on each floor that does not have an accessible exit at the ground level. The number of rescue assistance areas per floor is determined by the number of required inaccessible exits for that floor. Each area shall be properly designated and provided with an emergency two-way communication system and instructions for the use of the system.

Alarm Systems

Where emergency warning systems or alarms are provided or required by State or local building codes, life safety code or fire protection regulation, such systems must comply with the requirements of ADAAG. These systems must be both visual and audible.

Detectable Warning Surfaces

Detectable warning features on walking surfaces must be provided at stairs and hazardous vehicular areas. Tactile warnings on doors to hazardous area shall be provided.

Administrative and Staff Areas

If an administrative and staff area has an area for the reception of the general public, an accessible route must be provided to such area. If counters are provided for public use, an accessible counter, pull-down shelf or accessible table must also be provided.

Meeting and Program Rooms

Areas of the building that are designated for public use for meetings or programs must be provided on an accessible route. In rooms with fixed or built-in tables, seating and work surfaces, access shall be provided to at least five percent of the furnishings. For programs requiring special equipment, five percent of the work surfaces shall be accessible. Modifications to or assistance with equipment shall be accommodated on a case-by-case basis.

Auditorium

Wheelchair seating area must be provided to allow people with physical disabilities a choice of admission prices and lines of sight comparable to those available to other members of the general public. In the case of balcony seating, accessible viewing positions may be clustered. The number of fixed seats determines the number of wheelchair seating locations. A listening system shall be provided for four percent of the seating capacity.

Food Service

Food service lines shall have a minimum clear width of thirty-six inches, and the height of the tray slide may not exceed thirty-four inches above the floor. A service counter shall have a minimum thirty-six inch long counter with a maximum height of thirty-four inches above the floor and shall be located on an accessible route. Self-service shelves, tableware, condiments and beverage dispensers shall comply with the standard reach ranges. Vending machines shall

have adequate clear floor space for operation and shall be located on an accessible route. If dining areas are provided, five percent of all fixed tables shall be accessible and shall be located on an accessible route.

Gymnasiums and Adjacent Spaces

The gymnasiums and adjacent spaces are currently not on an accessible route. Either a ramp or wheelchair lift will need to be provided to at least one wing. Access to both sets of locker rooms will need to be made from the elevator.

Pool and Weight Room

The accessible routes to the pool and weight room and their connections with the locker facilities will need to be verified. This plan indicates a level change, so that a ramp or wheelchair lift will be necessary. The pool will require a means of access into the water via a ramp or portable sling.

Locker Rooms

Locker rooms for both genders shall be on an accessible route. At least five percent of the lockers or dressing areas in each room shall be accessible and on an accessible route.

Drinking Fountains

At least one drinking fountain per floor needs to be accessible both to individuals in wheelchairs and individuals who have trouble bending or stooping. A

two-tiered fountain can fill this need. If there is more than one fountain per floor, at least fifty percent of the fountains must meet the requirements of ADAAG 4.15.2. All public fountains need to be located along an accessible route.

Public Phones

For every floor with a pay phone, at least one phone per floor shall be accessible. The accessible phone shall be compatible with hearing aids and be equipped with a volume control. If there are four or more phones in the building, at least one must have a public TTY. Signage at the other pay phones should indicate the location of the TTY.

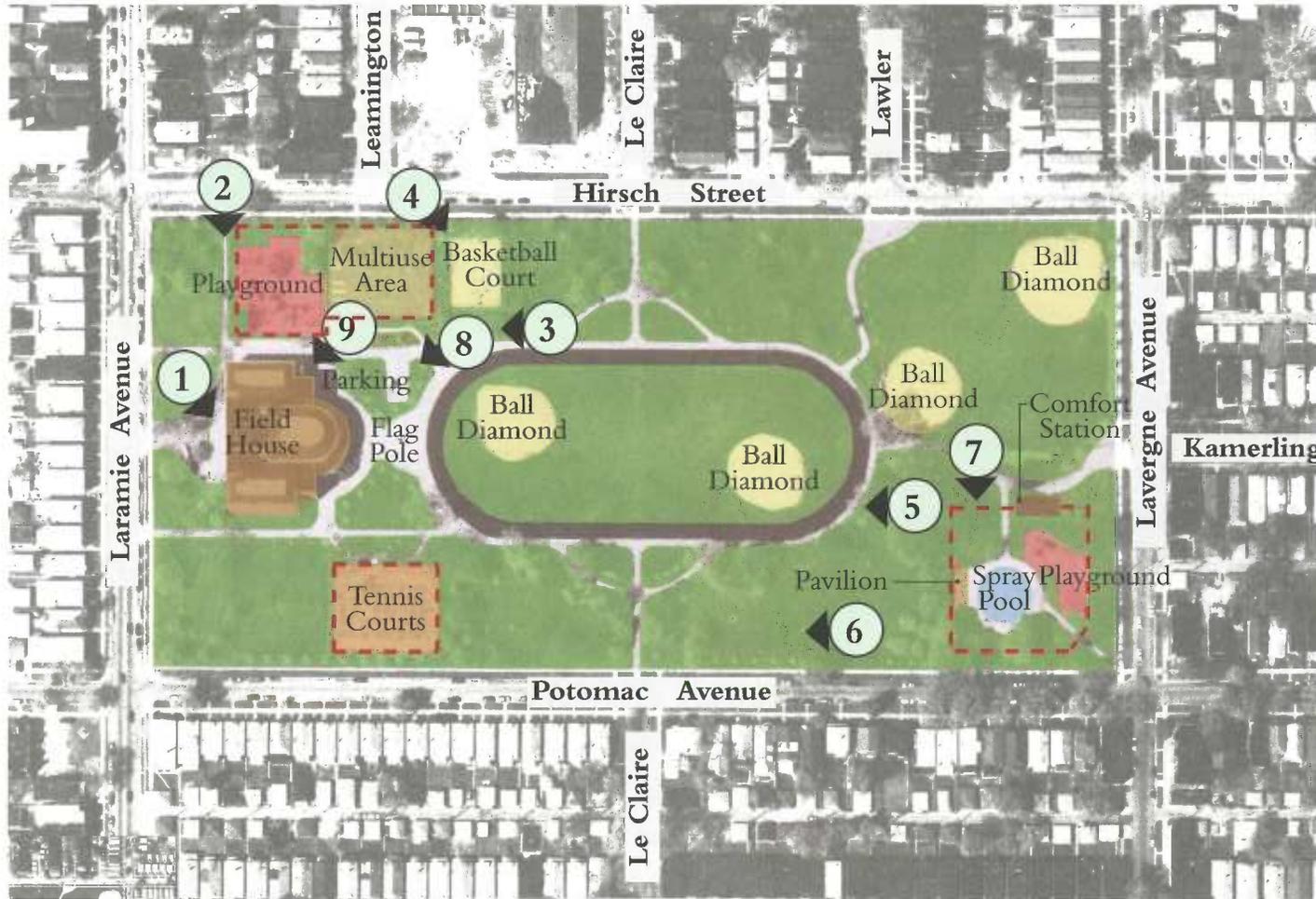
Toilet Rooms, Bathing and Shower Facilities

Public toilet rooms shall have accessible toilet rooms and related fixtures for each gender on an accessible route. If toilet stalls are provided, at least one must be a standard accessible stall. If urinals, lavatories and mirrors are provided, at least one shall be accessible. If controls, dispensers, receptacles or other equipment are provided, at least one shall be accessible and on an accessible route. Toilet rooms, which are part of locker room facilities, shall comply as well.

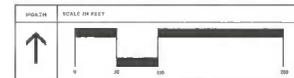
Bathing and showering facilities shall have at least one accessible unit for each gender on an accessible route.

Existing Park Conditions

Site Inventory



1 See Photograph on Page 25



Existing Park Conditions

Site Inventory



1
Fieldhouse



4
Existing Basketball Court



7
Spray Pool



2
Playground



5
Ballfield inside of Track



8
Parking



3
Fieldhouse



6
Existing Landscape

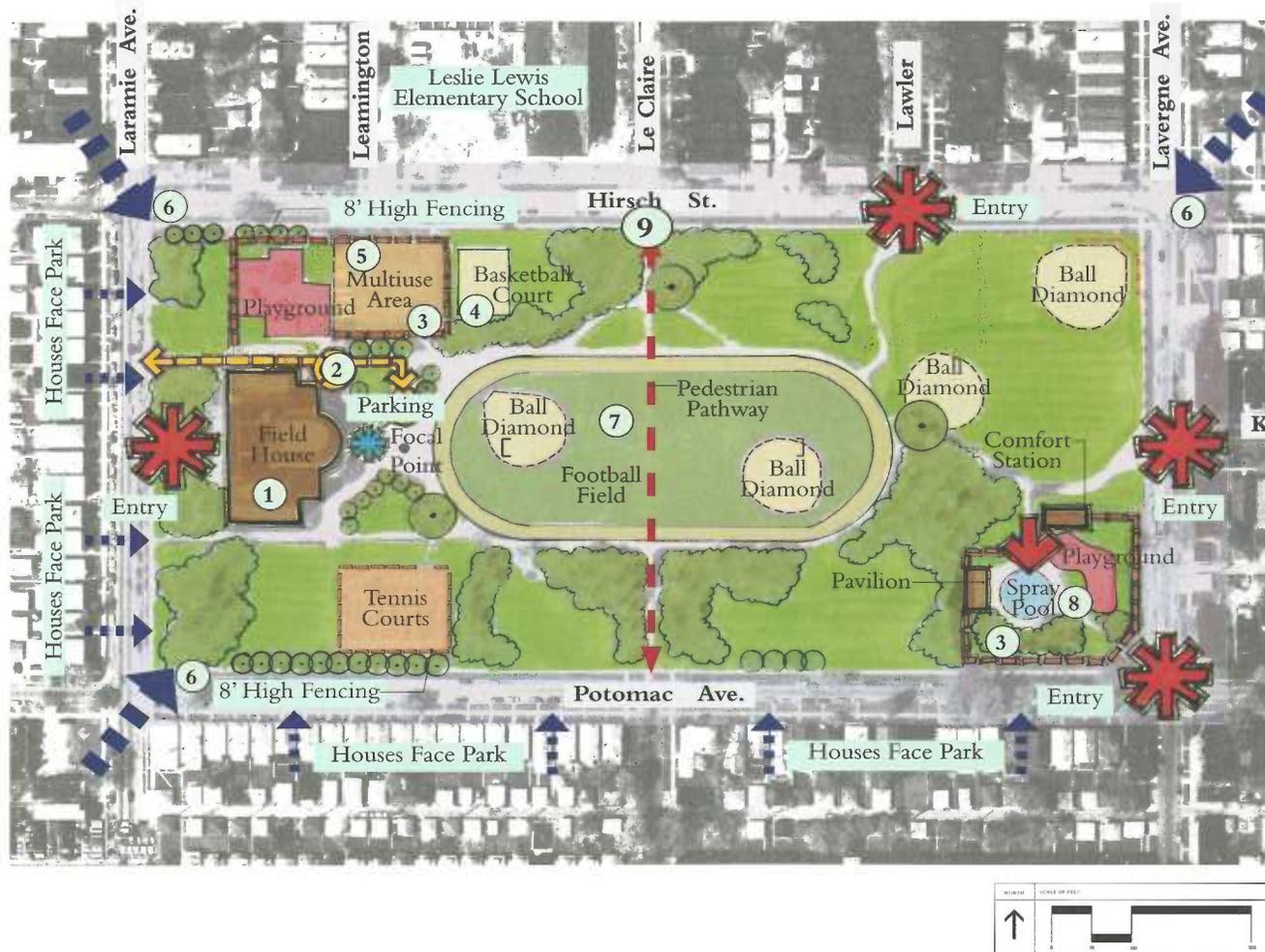


9
Fieldhouse Parking

0-4

Existing Park Conditions

Site Analysis



Issues:

- ① Indoor Swimming Pool
- ② Parking Behind Field House
- ③ Fencing Visually Restricting & Obtrusive
- ④ Adjacent Incompatible Uses on Site
- ⑤ Multi-use Area Underutilized
- ⑥ Obstructed Visual & Physical Access
- ⑦ Undesirable Sports Orientation
- ⑧ Isolated Spray Pool Facility
- ⑨ School/Park Separation

Existing Park Conditions

Site Analysis

Opportunities

- Improve placement of on-site recreation area (3, 5, 6)
- Strengthen link to school (8)
- Control and organize vehicle access/parking
- Improve programmed site uses near fieldhouse (3)
- Integrate new spray pool with park (1)
- Evaluate appropriate location for running track (3, 5)
- Save mature trees and create new landscape framework for park (1, 4, 5)
- Establish gateways to neighborhood (2, 7, 9)



① Spray Pool



② Bus Stop at Hirsch and Laramie



③ Track facing west to Fieldhouse



④ Area along Potomac Ave.



⑤ North side of track facing west



⑥ Baseball fields facing north from east entry



⑦ New Genesis Assembly of God Baptist Church



⑧ Football field across from track



⑨ Neighborhood

Framework Plan

The Framework Plan has been prepared to accomplish several important goals. These goals are organized within four themes: 1) the integration of the Park with the community; 2) integration of the school, park and Fieldhouse; 3) the improvement of circulation, parking, and accessibility; and 4) the assessment and renovation of facilities in the interest of usage and historic preservation. Specific goals are listed beneath each theme.

GOALS

1) Revitalize LaFollette Park

- Respect community needs. A refurbished Fieldhouse and park and a revitalized park program will provide local residents with enhanced opportunities.
- Restore the community image of LaFollette Park.
- Maintain flexibility. Avoid programming all areas with dedicated facilities.
- Maintain key existing features of the Park based on neighborhood satisfaction. Such features include the running track, the hard-surface play area, and the tennis courts. However, some of these facilities have exceeded their expected life cycle and need replacement.
- Establish the Park as a focal point for neighborhood activities and provide more activities for children and families.

2) Integrate the Facilities of Leslie Lewis Elementary School, Park and Fieldhouse

- Create a connection with the Leslie Lewis Elementary School, as in Jensen's original concept. This will give effect to Park District directives to connect schools and parks.
- Integrate the Fieldhouse and the Park, both visually and functionally.
- Eliminating a portion of Hirsch Street between Leamington and Le Claire will reduce vehicular volume, especially higher speed through-traffic. In addition, the break will prevent some cut-through traffic to the new shopping area.
- Group the facilities for younger children on the north side of the Fieldhouse. This will increase access for school children.
- Create space for outdoor learning on the school site.

3) Improve Circulation, Parking and Accessibility

- Relocate parking and service facilities to the south side of the building. Currently, they are located on the north side of the building where they conflict with play facilities for younger children. ADA compliant parking can also be placed in this new location.
- Maintain a sidewalk between Leamington and LeClaire that links with the existing sidewalk system on the north side of Hirsch Street.

- Re-direct the existing one-way street system by changing Leamington to northbound and LeClaire to southbound. This re-direction will allow for convenient access to the Leslie Lewis Elementary School.
 - Provide greater accessibility to Park facilities and to the Fieldhouse.
 - Move the vehicular access for parking and service from the north side to the south side. This location change will not conflict with the playground and will improve access to the proposed ADA compliant entrance on the south side of the Fieldhouse
- 4) **Renovations of facilities in the interest of usage and historic preservation**
- Unite the School and Park facilities to improve park usage.
 - Retain the concept of “rooms” within the Park. Group similar activities and age groups together. The barriers can be created through landscape.
 - Install amenities with details that are appropriate to the style and period of the architectural structures and elements on site. Amenities should include lighting and seating.
 - Adhere to the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structures.

Recommendations

The recommendations listed below are suggested improvements to the facilities within LaFollette Park.

Plaza

- Provide a plaza area on the east side of the Fieldhouse for public gatherings and performances.
- Lower the grade of the plaza to match the lower level of the Fieldhouse.

Goals

- 1) **Revitalize and integrate the Park with the community**
- 2) **the integration of the School, Park and Fieldhouse**
- 3) **the improvement of circulation, parking, and accessibility**
- 4) **the assessment and renovation of facilities in the interest of usage and historic preservation.**

Track

- Completely rehabilitate the track.
- Add long jump, high jump and pole vault pits. Add all weather surfacing to the track.
- Maintain the current location and orientation of the track as the central focus of the entire park.

Spray Pool

- The spray pool has been recently replaced and will remain in its current location.
- Move the spray pool access point from the exterior southeast corner of the Park to an interior point that connects to the Park's internal pedestrian circulation system.
- Replace the current fencing around the spray pool with ornamental iron fencing.
- Add floral plantings around the perimeter.

Multi-purpose Play Areas

- Replace the play areas' equipment.
- Develop the play area in the northwest portion of the site as a community playground. This could be accomplished through the installation of play equipment that develop children's social and physical skills.
- Develop seating opportunities for care givers and children.
- Relate seating and the development of the play area adjacent to the spray pool to spray pool uses. The play area will only be accessible when the spray pool is in operation.

- Replace the play surface in both play areas with rubberized surfacing to promote ease of access, critical fall height safety zones and maintenance reduction.
- Integrate the spray pool surface and the play area surfacing.

Basketball Court

- Replace the full basketball court and relocate it further east to a location adjacent to the existing ball field backstop. Install seating in shaded areas.
- Formalize seating around the basketball court for on-side players.
- Install a circular basketball court containing three half-court basketball hoops. Place this court in the corridor between the school and park to be adjacent to the play area and the multi-use court. This location will give the younger children an opportunity to play basketball if the full court is not available.

Pergolas

- The existing pergola adjacent to the spray pool has recently been refurbished and is to remain.
- Construct new pergolii at the plaza east of the Fieldhouse to offer shade seating and to enclose the plaza.
- Construct a new pergola on the east end of the track to offer opportunity for rest and act as a shelter from the elements. In addition, this pergola will offer an aesthetic balance to the large Fieldhouse structure on the west side of the site.

Comfort Station

- Repair and refurbish the comfort station.
- Improve the operability of washrooms and improve access from the spray pool.
- Create an outpost or a Park District Building on the east side of the Park to add to the sense of safety for the residents.
- Incorporate a small concession area for the sale of candy and soda.

Softball Fields

- Improve the two softball diamonds in the northeast corner. Change the backstop fencing to vinyl-coated chain link.
- Add drainage to the fields and formalize the bench and seating areas.
- Remove the baseball diamonds from the track areas to create an uninterrupted field area.
- Add irrigation to improve drainage.
- Add an all-weather surface to the track and improve the football and soccer field in the center of the track.

Tennis Courts

- The surfaces of the tennis courts are in acceptable condition and do not need improvement.
- Provide a vinyl coated chain link fence and additional seating opportunities.

Volleyball Court

- Provide a volleyball court adjacent to the spray pool area. Locate the volleyball court for easy accessibility from the picnic area and spray pool.

Landscaping

- Preserve existing mature trees.
- Supplement landscaping with trees, low shrubs and flower beds. The long-term goal for landscaping is to re-establish more open views of the Fieldhouse from Laramie.
- Screen hard surfaces on the northwest corner of the Park with subtle grading.

Fieldhouse

- Complete the rehabilitation of the Fieldhouse and its facilities, especially the swimming pool.
- Provide meeting space for after-school programs and neighborhood based organizations.

Additions to Historic Buildings

Proposed work to the building should be consistent with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Chicago Park District staff reviews projects undertaken in historic parks to determine whether they meet the criteria outlined in The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The amount of review necessary for proposed work on the building will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The Planning and Development Department of the Chicago Park District generally performs a “preliminary review” to determine if and how the project will affect elements that contribute to its historic significance.

New additions to historic buildings should only be considered when the desired improvement can not be accomplished by altering existing, non-character-defining interior spaces.

New additions should not radically change or subtract from character-defining features of the historic building. A design that achieves the least possible loss of historical material should be sought. The design of the addition should not attempt to replicate historic features; instead it should be respectfully differentiated. This can be best achieved with compatible massing, materials, spacing, and color. Furthermore, it is recommended that the new addition not use the same wall or roof plane, or replicate window designs and other historic facade features to appear as a part of the original historic building. However, it is appropriate for the addition to reference design motifs from the historic building.

The size and scale of the new addition should be limited with respect to the size and character of the historic building. The relationships between the historic building

and the addition should not be out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character of the building.

Cutting new entrances on a primary elevation of a historic building should be discouraged. New entrances, when necessary, should be added in a manner that preserves the historic character of the building. They should be compatible in size and scale and should detract as little as possible from original character-defining features. Furthermore, such additions should be limited to non character-defining elevations.

Framework Plan



Framework Plan

Section-North



Architectural Review

Exterior Recommendations

As mentioned in the previous ADA narrative, an accessible route must be provided to all accessible spaces and elements on the site of major concern. Access to at least fifty percent of all public entrances to the Fieldhouse is provided with the implementation of the new site plan. This plan provides new ramps down to the basement level of the building on its east side. Through interior interventions, an accessible route from this entrance to all accessible spaces within the building is possible.

For the Laramie Avenue entrance of the building to be accessible, a ramp will need to be designed and provided. Number of runs, overall length and other design details will need to be determined in a separate design phase.

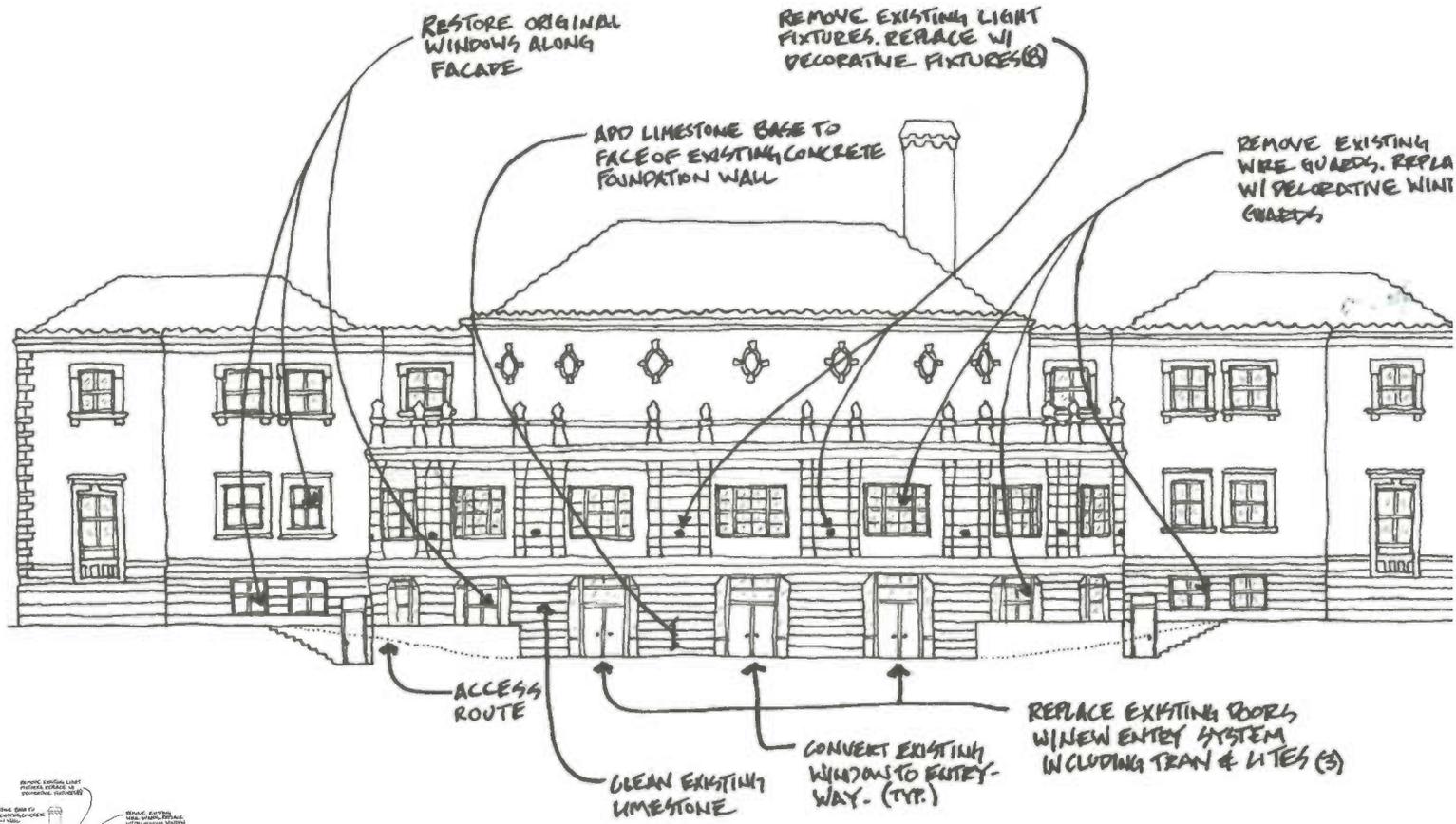
Interior Recommendations

In a preliminary interior building program review, the relationship of the spaces in the building to their programmatic uses and their ease of public access were examined. Of primary concern are the level changes, which occur on every floor of the building. In the basement a half-flight of stairs separates the pool level from the level of the elevator. The eastern half of the basement is also separated from the elevator level by a flight of stairs. On the first floor, the auditorium and its associated spaces are separated from the front entrance, elevator, staff areas and meeting rooms by a half flight of stairs. On the second floor both gymnasiums and adjacent activity and storage rooms are depressed a half level below the elevator level.

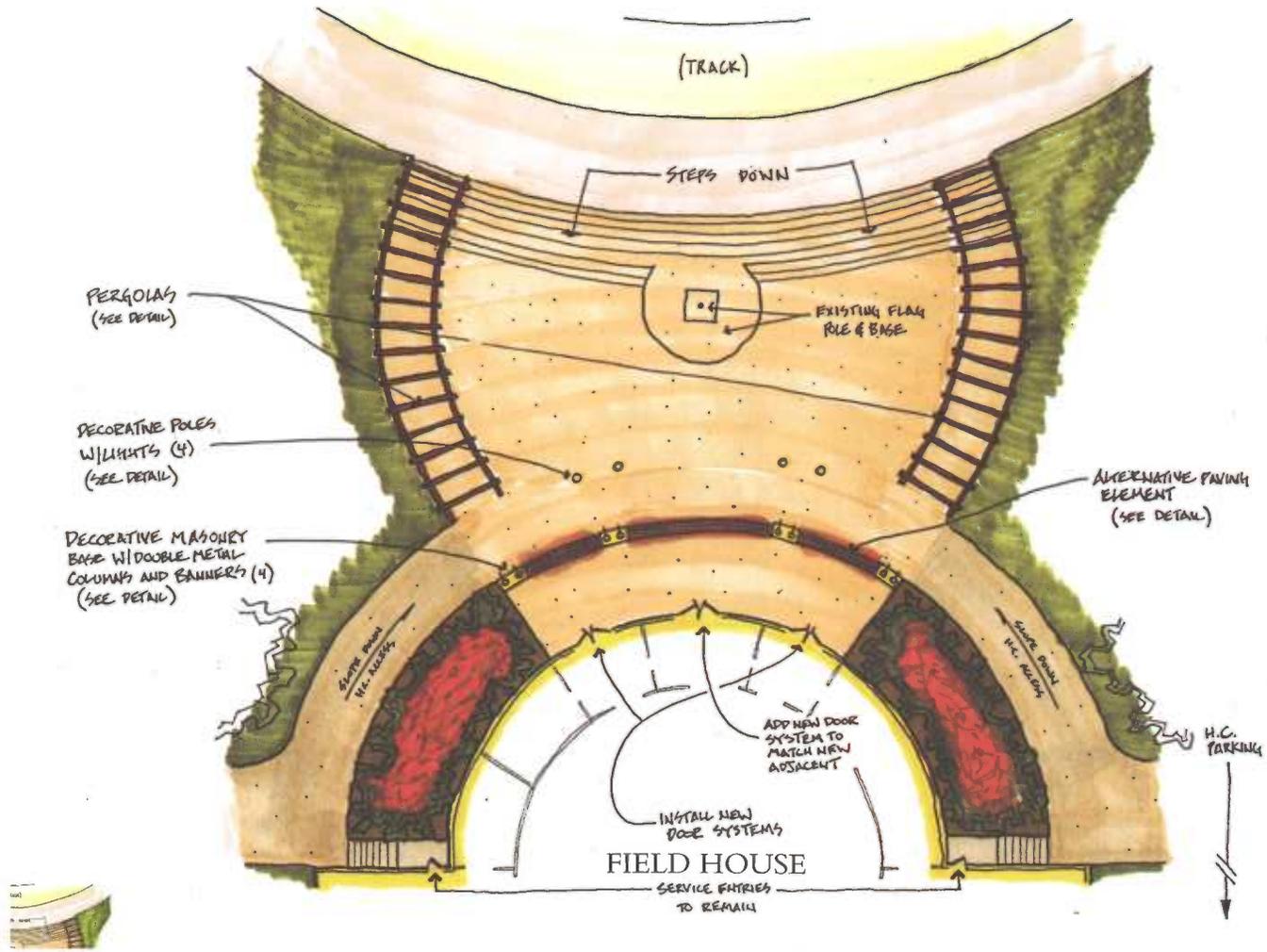
Due to the fact that activities requiring public access are distributed over the entire footprint of the building, the building cannot be easily segregated into accessible (for the public) and non-accessible (for the staff and limited public access) components. In particular, the only means of access to the northern half of the second floor is via the auditorium balcony, which is not an acceptable accessible route. The solution entails either a physical reconfiguration of the second floor to provide an accessible route to these spaces or a programmatic change. Such a programmatic change may include scheduling accessible activities only for the south side spaces. Another programmatic concern involves those activities, which would benefit from immediate access to an exit level, such as the daycare program. The therapeutic recreation program is another activity, which would be better served on a level with ground access.

A comprehensive study of the building and its programmatic requirements would determine which, if any, of the building areas could be segregated from public access through reassignment of uses. Once spaces are allocated, a determination can be made of the necessary accessible routes to link all accessible spaces. At this point, a complete ADA survey with actual recommendations and costs estimates can be made. This study would require a thorough building survey and extensive meetings with the Park District and the community. Such a study is outside the scope of the present document.

East Building Elevation

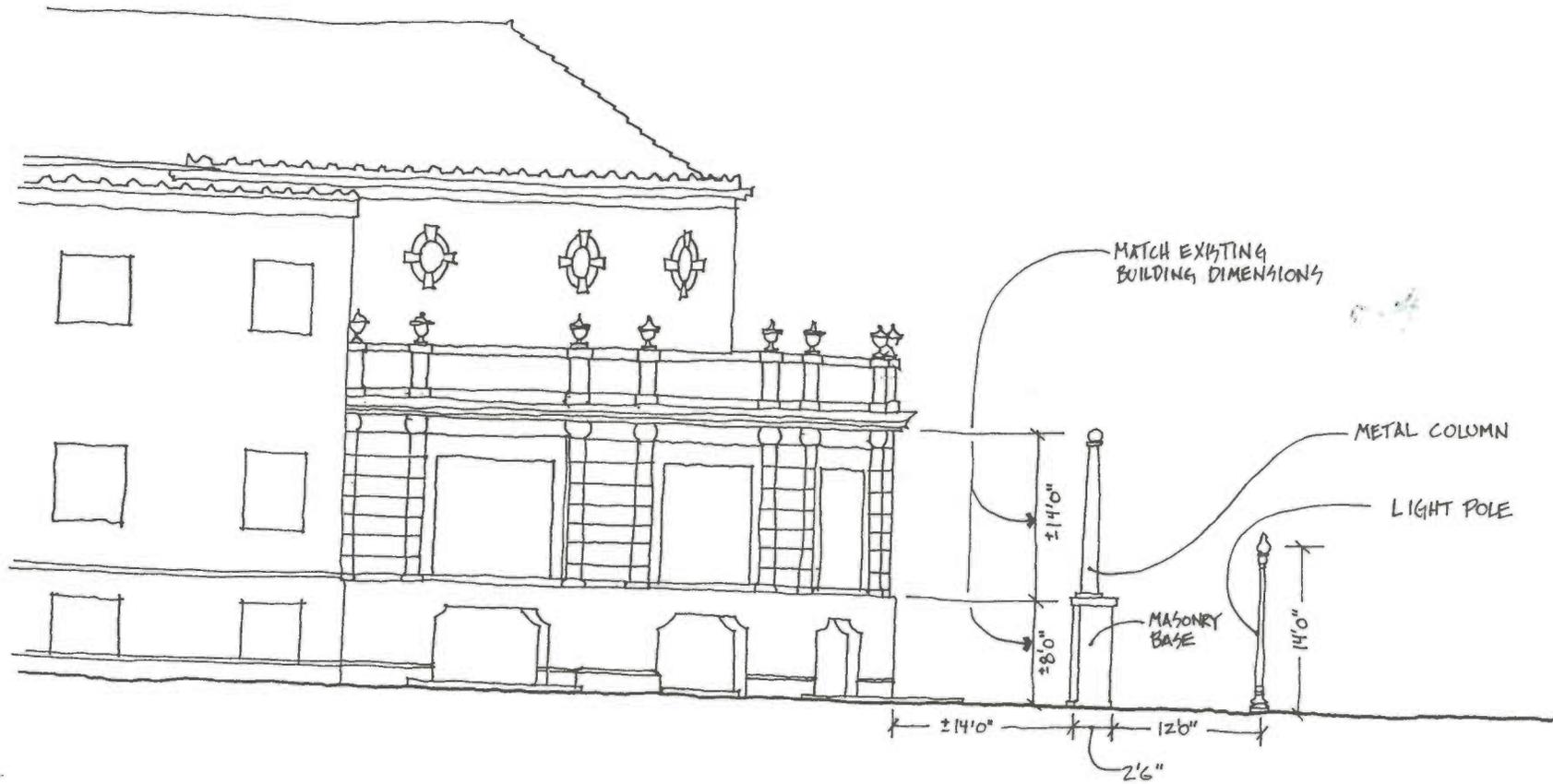


Plaza Site Plan

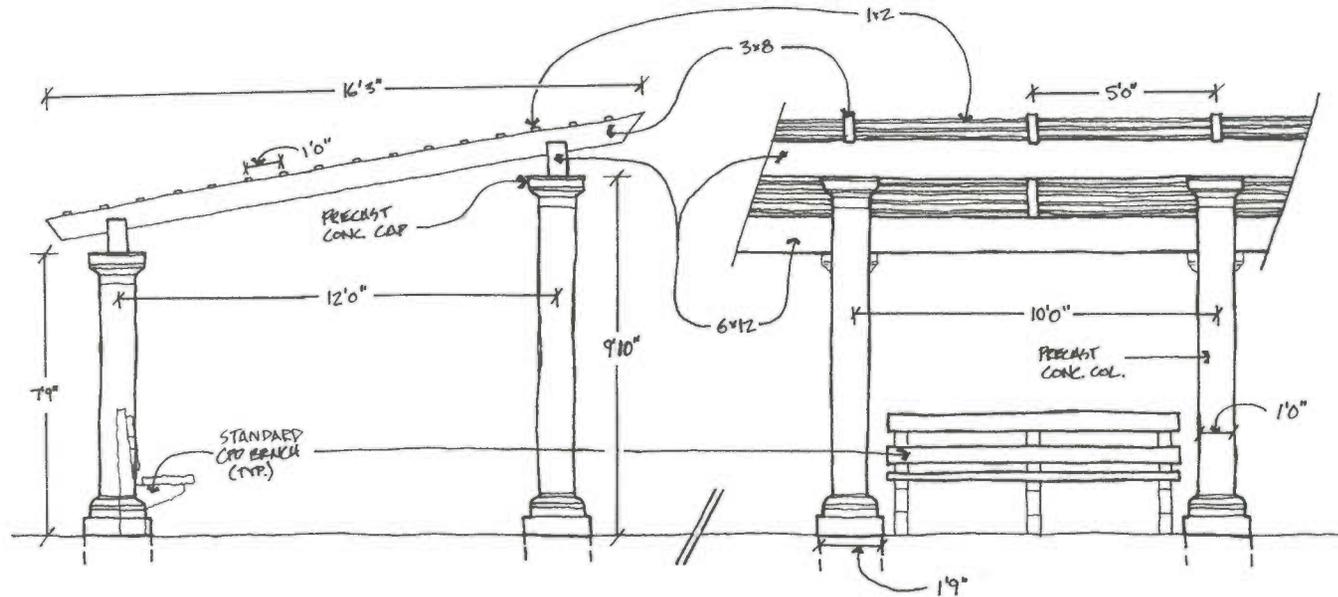


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North Building Elevation



Pergola Elevations

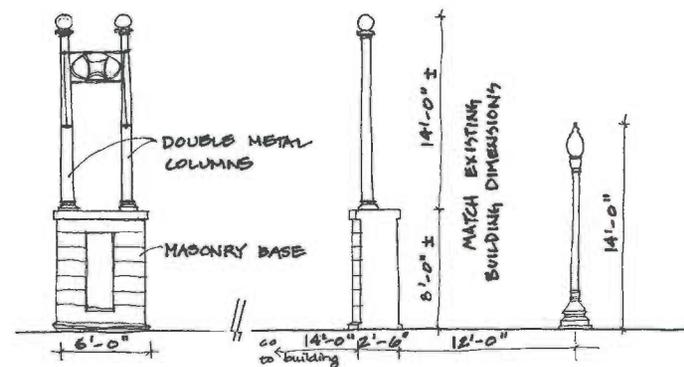


CROSS SECTION

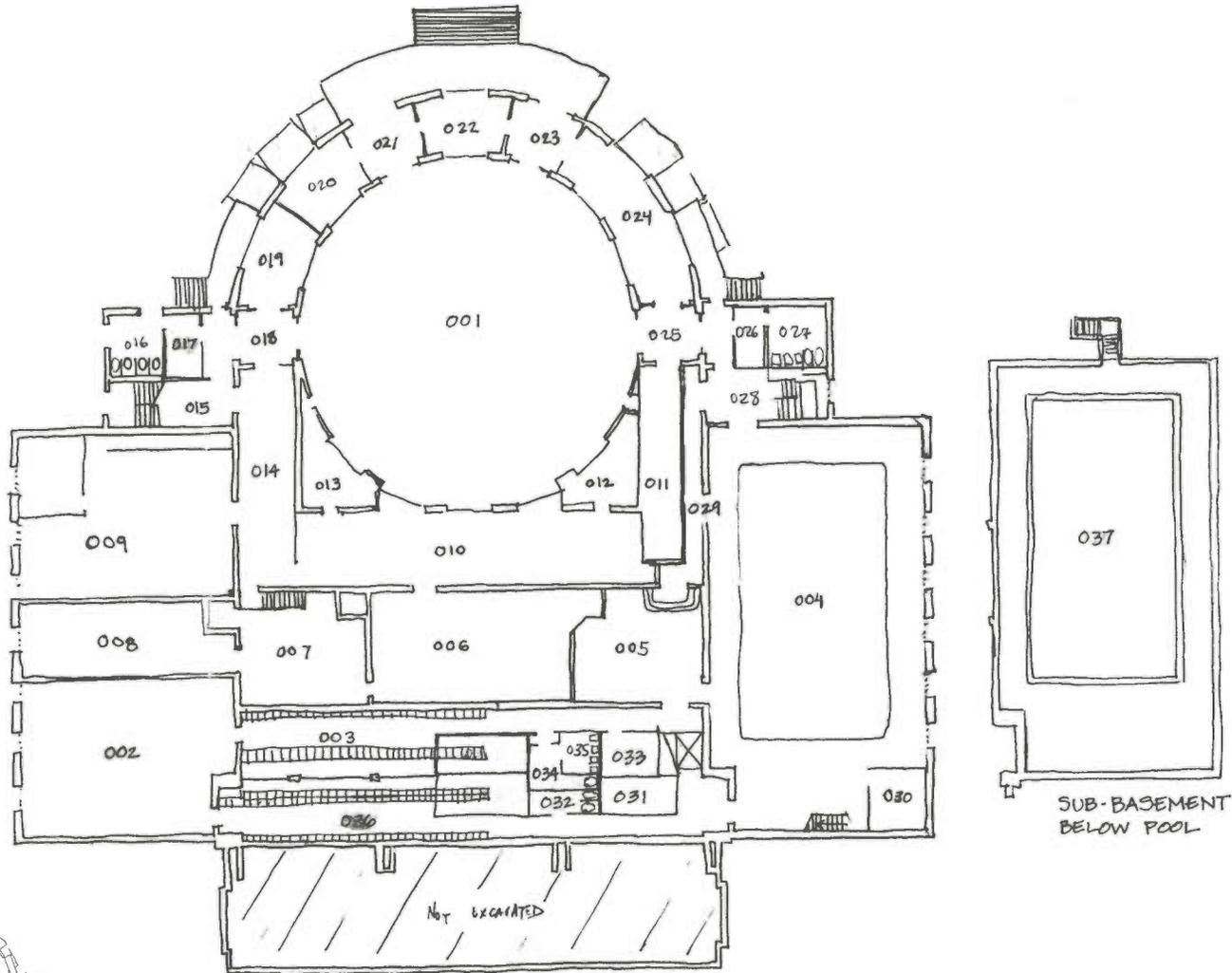
LONGITUDINAL SECTION

FRONT ELEVATION

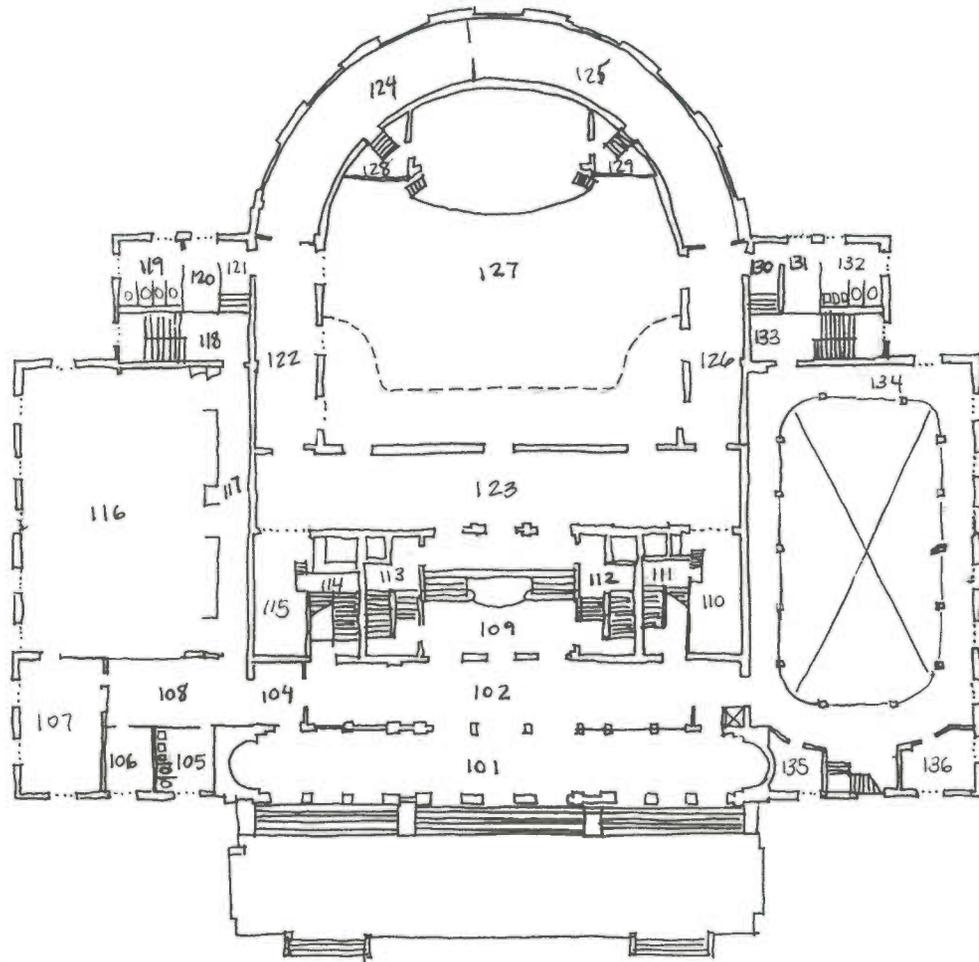
SECTION / ELEVATION



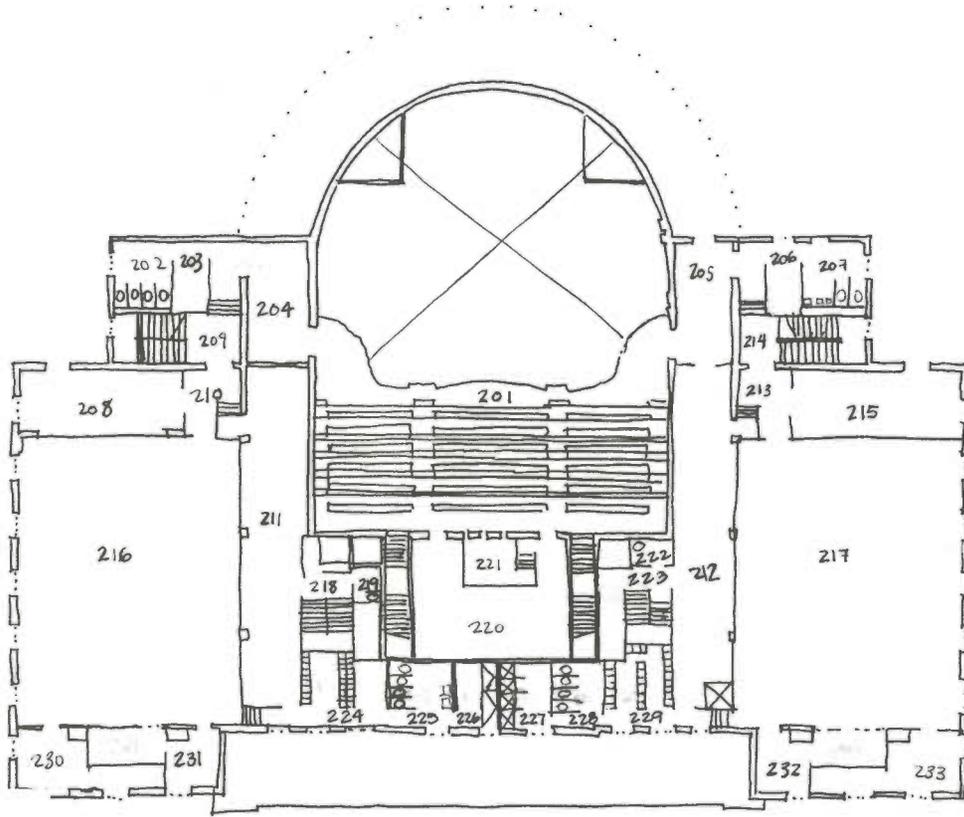
Basement Floor Plan



Mezzanine Floor Plan



Floor Plan



Implementation

This capital improvement list is organized into blocks or units that must be completed simultaneously. The list is generally in order of development.

- 1) Complete structural improvements to the building, including the roof and drainage.
- 2) Address ADA accessibility for the interior and the exterior of the Fieldhouse.
- 3) Close Hirsch Street to allow for the connection of the school and park. Replace and add basketball courts, outdoor classroom, play area, and multipurpose area. Relocate the handicap parking to the south side of the building.
- 4) Restore and reconfigure the comfort station on the east side of the site.
- 5) Add a volleyball court and replace the play area adjacent to the spray pool. Reconfigure the fences to provide access to the spray pool.
- 6) Improve the plaza area on the east side of the building with a façade to create a grand space for events and building entry.
- 7) Add track surfacing and long jump and high jump pits.
- 8) Replace walkways. Add irrigation and lighting.
- 9) Add landscape trees, shrubs and perennial plantings over the course of the project.

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