



PLAN FOR THE
INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

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OTHER REPORTS IN THIS SERIES:

Preliminary City Plan
Background for Planning
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Recommended Zoning Ordinance
Preliminary Planning Notebook Chapters
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Acknowledgement

In addition to photographs taken by the planning staff, the Planning Commission wishes to thank the Boise Cascade Corporation for the use of many of the photographs used in this report.

The preparation of this report was financially aided through a federal grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 as amended, and administered by the Division of Community Planning of the Minnesota Department of Business Development.

November 1966



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INTRODUCTION

The International Falls Urban Area has experienced considerable change from the tiny village of Koochiching, which consisted of a handful of settlers, lumberjacks, and two general stores in 1900. Although growth has not been rapid, the city has witnessed a steady population increase throughout its history. Today, International Falls is the center for a large wood products industry and a major shopping and trade outlet for virtually all of Koochiching County.

While growth and change have meant increased investments, greater business development, more homes, and a never ending expansion of community services and facilities, they have also created numerous problems and conflicts. Certain portions of the urban area have become blighted with deteriorating and dilapidated buildings. Major streets and highways have been made unsafe because of adjacent commercial "strip" development, which has reduced traffic efficiency and created accident hazards. Patterns of incompatible land uses have developed within the older sections and suburban "sprawl" has created a pattern of land use which is uneconomical, unattractive, and difficult to service. In effect the International Falls urban area contains most of the current problems faced by large metropolitan centers, although at a much smaller scale.

Recognizing a need for dealing with these complex problems, as well as the need for guiding growth in the future, the city officials created a planning commission to make recommendations regarding city development. In the fall of 1964, the city obtained a financial grant for planning under the Federal government's Urban Planning Assistance Program and employed professional planning consultants.

For the past two years the members of the planning commission and their consultants have been working toward a realistic, comprehensive plan of development for the entire International Falls urban area. The planning program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Business Development's Division of Community Planning.

Present urban development is not limited to the corporate boundaries of International Falls, but includes the Village of South International Falls and beyond. In recent years most growth has taken place within the outer environs of the city, the village, and adjacent unincorporated areas. For this reason a planning area was chosen that would encompass the urban complex and nearby, undeveloped areas which are likely to become built-up during the future years.

This report presents a composite picture and updating of eight preliminary reports prepared during the period of the consultant's contract. All preliminary reports may be read at the Public Library and published reports are available in limited quantities from the Planning Commission Secretary or from the City Clerk. In May, 1966, a folder entitled "Preliminary City Plan" was widely circulated door-to-door by the League of Women Voters. The review of this plan and suggestions made by citizens and governmental officials have resulted in the revised and more detailed plan contained in this report.

For background data covering the human, economic and natural resources of the urban area and the county, readers are advised to consult the report entitled "Background For Planning International Falls and Koochiching County, Minnesota", published by joint efforts of the planning commissions in November, 1966.

EXISTING LAND USE AND STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

Before realistic plans can be formulated for the future growth and development of a city or an urban area, it is first necessary to take stock of existing patterns of land use. The present arrangement and extent of various uses of the land, such as the many homes, stores, public buildings, parks, and industrial plants, represent the physical summation of countless past decisions made by individuals and groups within the area of International Falls.

It is not the purpose of the planning program to make drastic changes in the basic structure of the city and its urban area in order to create an ideal, but unattainable, city of tomorrow. However, through the analysis of present land use, building conditions, and other related studies, a plan will emerge which is rooted to reality and can be implemented to form the new International Falls environment. It is the purpose, then, of this study of present land uses to serve as a basic framework or "stepping stone" for preparation of the long-range plan.

Certain uses, because of their necessity, desirability, or economic and physical rigidity, will remain in the years ahead. Other uses will be transformed into functions more compatible with the character of their neighbors, and to better serve the city and its surrounding area.

EXISTING LAND USE

The map of existing land use graphically illustrates the present pattern of development as it appeared at the time of the 1965 field survey. Land use, together with building conditions and occupancy data, was investigated and mapped on the basis of each parcel of land within the urban or urbanizing area. Where available, plat maps at the scale of 200 feet to the inch were used to tabulate (by acreage) the amount of each category of land use. In all cases, land use was then transferred to the 440 feet to the inch base map used for general display. The small map in this report has been generalized for reduction and publication.

The present pattern of land development within the "Falls" area is characterized by a compact arrangement of densely built-up uses within the City of International Falls and within the northeast quarter of the Village of South International Falls. These areas, together with adjacent Fort Frances, Ontario, form the major portion of the urban area. Considerable "sprawl", or uncontrolled, scattered development, is found along major highway routes leading southward.

Little in the way of planned, coordinated subdivisions have been constructed within these unincorporated urbanizing or suburban districts. Rather, linear patterns of land uses have grown up at random locations along the area's major highways. They are typified by single family homes interspersed with traffic oriented commercial establishments. Not only does such development reduce the traffic carrying capacity and safety of the adjacent highway facility as a result of numerous "curb-cuts" or service drives, but also such patterns create a very uneconomical arrangement for present and future provision of utilities and services. This scattered development may also have consumed land which is better

suitable for industrial expansion, planned shopping centers, or other non-residential purposes.

Residential Land

As is true of most urban areas, land used for housing accounts for the major portion of the built-up land within the "Falls" area. Within the city proper, residential land is composed of compact neighborhoods located within the western and southern environs. The more centrally located residential districts, or those which lie just to the southwest of downtown, are composed of a mixture of single family homes, two family dwellings, and apartment buildings. These older residential sections of the city contain its greatest concentration of substandard housing conditions. They are further characterized by a "gridiron" platting of small residential blocks and high densities of structures and people. Many houses are over fifty years of age and located on lots below standards set by modern subdivision regulations. Many lots have only 25 feet of frontage and contain an area of less than 3,600 square feet.

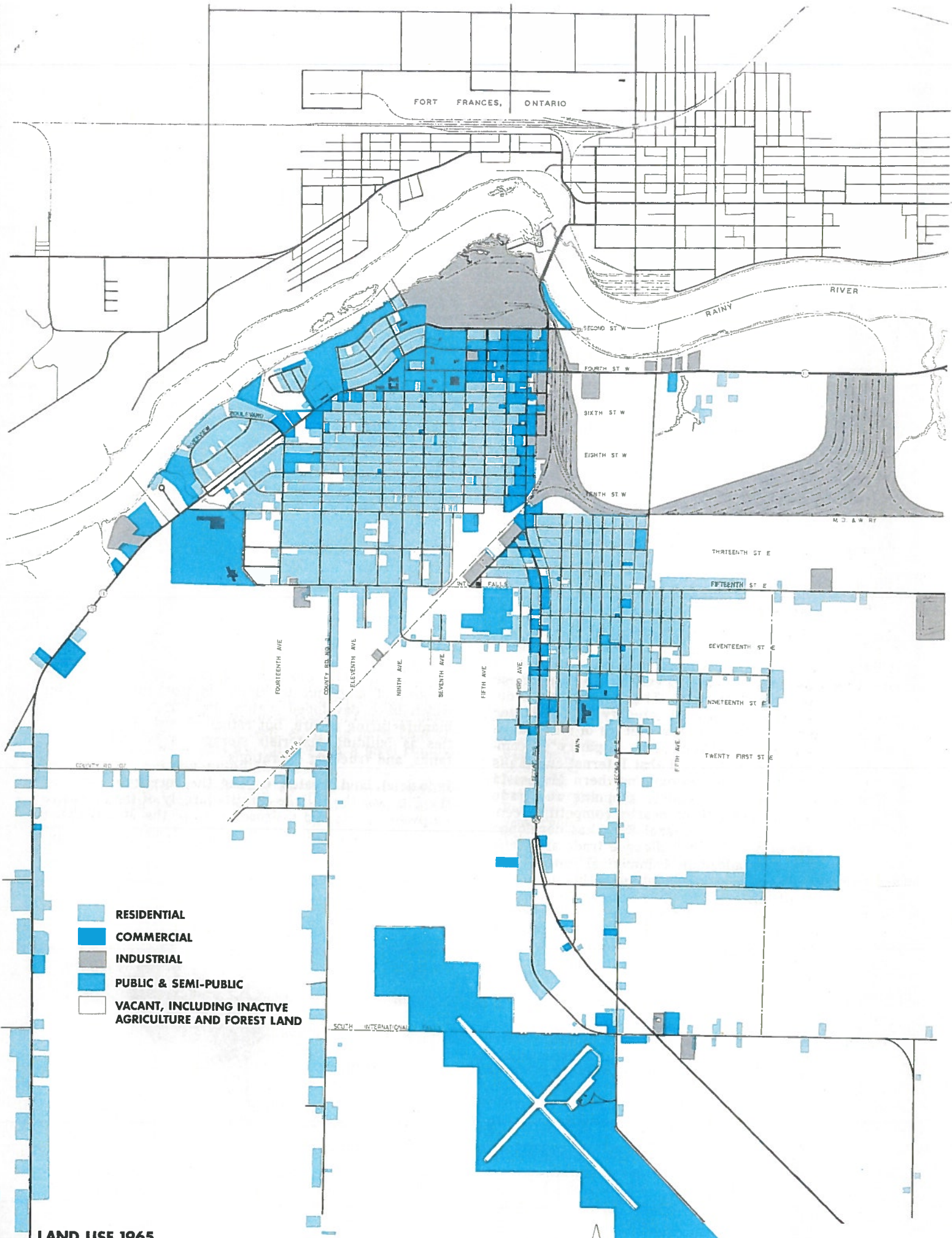
To the south and west of this older residential area are located the newer homes of International Falls, most of which have been built since the end of World War II. These areas are characterized by single family, generally sound, houses on large lots. Many lots, particularly those immediately south of Eleventh Street, were originally divided into tracts in excess of 30,000 square feet. More typical, however, are the newer subdivisions near the western limits of the City, where lots average about 12,000 square feet.

Other residential areas, mostly single family homes with only a very few duplexes or two family dwellings scattered among them, are concentrated within the southeastern portion of the city and the northeastern quarter of South International Falls. This area is composed of small, rectangular blocks which are quite densely developed. Lots of about 6,500 square feet are common. There is also a concentration of substandard housing within this general area, and many vacant units are noticeable. Outlying residential land use consists of the previously mentioned strip development along the highways to the south. This development is made up entirely of single family homes constructed on very large lots, many of which are in excess of one acre. Dilapidated and deteriorating housing units are randomly scattered throughout these linear patterns of residential development.

Commercial Uses

The greatest concentration of retail businesses and services, which make up this land use category, are, of course, found within the downtown or central business district of the City of International Falls. Probably the most distinctive characteristics of this district are its relatively compact arrangement and its convenient location with respect to the people of the "Falls" area. A much more detailed discussion, with an analysis and development plan for the downtown area, is given in the chapter, "Central Business District".

Apart from the International Falls central business district, other commercial establishments are mostly located along major traffic arteries, particularly U. S.



LAND USE 1965
INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY ASSISTED THROUGH A FEDERAL GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 701 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954 AS AMENDED, AND ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF COMMUNITY PLANNING OF THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Highways 53 and 71, where they contribute to the inefficiency of these facilities. Such strip development of commercial uses along heavily traveled thoroughfares causes traffic hazards and accidents through conflicting turning movements to and from these businesses. As mentioned previously, the traffic carrying capacity of these affected thoroughfares is greatly reduced. The greater number of these businesses are highway oriented — that is they consist of such facilities as gasoline service stations, motels, drive-ins, and various commercial tourist attractions. This type of strip development lacks the convenience of the newer, compact shopping center and definitely has a deleterious affect on adjacent and nearby homes. Through the adoption of effective, modern zoning ordinances by the Village of South International Falls and the City of International Falls, future spread of this poor pattern of commercial development could be controlled.

In addition, there are other "spots" of commercial use which are located within several residential neighborhoods. Such establishments are particularly noticeable in the older districts of the city and within the more densely developed portion of South International Falls. While some of these small businesses, such as the "corner" grocery, are not generally objectionable, certain others have a definite blighting affect over nearby homes. Automobile repair shops and similar business establishments are certainly not desirable neighbors in residential areas. Again, through the development of a land use plan and zoning for the entire urban area, this unfortunate mixture of residential and commercial, as well as "nuisance-type" industrial uses can be avoided.

Through a study of accompanying tables, one can see several differences in the land use of the International Falls area as compared to similar sized northern Minnesota communities. In the case of commercial land, these differences are most apparent. The proportion of developed land in the commercial category is 50% larger in International Falls than in the average of four Range cities with similar populations. This disparity in commercial use stems from the fact that International Falls is the only community in extreme northern Minnesota which is developed as a complete shopping and trade center. Because of the lack of nearby competitive centers of a similar size, International Falls has developed as "the" center of a large, unchallenged trade area, and subsequently has expanded its commercial functions in keeping with its trade area population, rather than just its immediate population. The four Range cities, on the other hand, are within close proximity to one another and to the larger centers of Hibbing and Virginia. Although population is more densely concentrated within the trade areas of the Range cities, competition is keen and commercial land needs proportionally smaller in most instances.

South International Falls is also well endowed with commercial land. Its percentage share of developed land is more than twice that of an average of eight Range towns with populations between 1,500 and 3,500. In this case, however, it is the extensive development of highway service facilities along U. S. 53 which creates this enlarged proportion of commercial uses. Highway 53 traverses the village in a north-south direction and, with the close proximity of the city, has stimulated a considerable amount of highway and tourist oriented business investments. In the absence of these highway businesses, commercial use would more nearly conform to the

eight community average and quite possibly would be far less, since the Village of South International Falls borders the city and many residents depend on the city's commercial resources exclusively.

Industrial Development

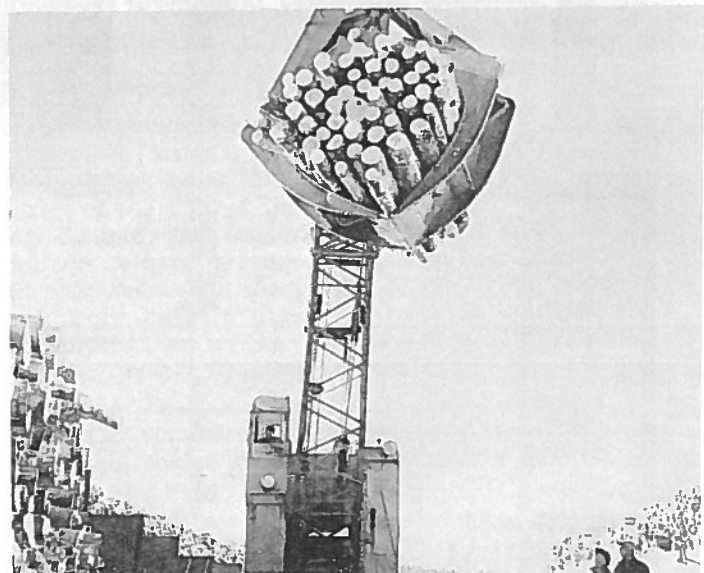
As in the case of commercial development, the City of International Falls also has an inordinately large portion of its developed land devoted to industrial operations. While three of the four Range cities are mining centers with little in the way of industrial development within their corporate limits, International Falls is dominated by the giant industrial complex of the Boise Cascade Corporation, which accounts for nearly 82 percent of the City's total industrial land. Other industrial uses within the City consist of storage and warehousing operations, bulk fuel tanks, auto salvage yards, railroad shops, and a limited amount of other small manufacturing or processing activities.

The pattern of industrial uses within the city is relatively distinct. There is little evidence of an incompatible mixture of industry with residential use. The few locations of such mixed land uses affect only a small number of homes, most of which fall within decidedly industrial or commercial districts and not within the bounds of residential neighborhoods.

Many industrial uses form a linear pattern along the railroad yards and lines. Others, not dependent on rail transportation, are located immediately to the southeast of down town and on State Trunk Highway 11. All industrial locations have good access to the major highway or thoroughfare system within the city.

Because of its development as a residential community for people employed mainly within the City of International Falls, South International Falls has a very meager amount of land put to industrial use. Industrial uses which have developed within the village are not of a manufacturing nature, but rather consist of such activities as building materials storage yards, propane gas tanks, and trucking operations.

Industrial land located beyond the corporate limits of the City and the Village consists largely of the extensive pulpwood yards and railroad spurs of the M & O Paper Company. This large heavy industrial use accounts for over 95 percent of all industrial use within this large outlying area. Automobile salvage or junk yards are also found in several areas within the unincorporated portion of the urban area.



Public and Semi-Public Uses

Land used for school sites, parks, public buildings, churches, institutional and fraternal organization buildings, cemeteries, and public service or utilities represents a smaller share of developed land within both International Falls and the Village of South International Falls as compared to the Range communities. In the case of the City, this apparent inequity is partially explained by the fact that the largest single parcel of public land, the senior high school, is situated just outside of the City's western edge.

Of more importance than the total amount of public space is the extent to which the land is developed. The City has put most of its public land to good use, particularly its attractive civic center, which lies immediately west of the central business district. The civic center, together with the surrounding public and parochial educational and recreational facilities, forms a handsome, convenient, and efficient complex for all the people of the "Falls" area.

Because of its extremely close proximity to the City, South International Falls has not developed as many public facilities as would be required if it were located at a greater distance from a larger community. Public land within the Village is limited to a well located elementary school site, playgrounds, Village office and storage yard, and a portion of the cemetery.

Streets and Railroads

Land used by transportation routes is second only to residential acreage, and compares favorably with the four Range cities. However, because of the extremely small blocks within the more central areas, an excessive amount of land used for street rights-of-way exists within this portion of the City. Short blocks, with several unnecessary cross-streets, have contributed toward higher maintenance and snow removal costs. Enlarged blocks within the City's southwestern environs have kept the percentage share of this use category at a level comparable with other communities.

The large share of land used by streets and roadways within South International Falls is due largely to the presence of U. S. Highway 53, which cuts a wide swath across the Village.

Vacant or Undeveloped Land

Vacant land within the City of International Falls is disappearing rapidly. In 1965, less than 19 percent of the City's total land area was vacant. Much of this has since been occupied by new housing in the western portion of the City. In contrast, less than one-half of the available land within the average of the four Range communities has been developed. Since significant areas of undeveloped land within the City are marginal, or unsuited for construction of buildings, available areas of good land are placed at a premium. Vacant land, which is satisfactory for additional residential construction, is practically exhausted within the City limits.

South International Falls, as opposed to the situation within the City, has an abundance of usable vacant land as well as scattered areas of wet lowland. Slightly more than 21 percent of its total area has been put to urban use, while more than 35 percent of total area within an average of eight similar sized Range communities has been developed.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS LAND USE — 1965

	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Average of 4 Range Cities % of Devel. Area*
Developed Use			
Residential	293.4	42.2	38.5
Commercial	33.4	4.8	3.2
Industrial	65.8	9.5	2.6
Public Service	2.1	0.3	1.9
Public	40.6	5.8	12.7
Semi-Public	5.3	0.8	2.2
Streets and Railroads	253.9	36.6	38.9
Total	694.5	100.0	100.0
% Developed to Total Land Area		81.3	49.1
Vacant Land	159.6		
Water	110.4		

*Average of 4 communities of between 5,000 and 8,000 population (Chisholm, Eveleth, Ely, Grand Rapids)

SOUTH INTERNATIONAL FALLS LAND USE — 1965

	Acres	Percent of Developed Area	Average of 8 Range Cities % of Devel. Area*
Developed Use			
Residential	157.7	45.2	44.8
Commercial	20.3	5.8	2.7
Industrial	6.6	1.9	2.6
Public Service	0.2	0.1	0.9
Public	16.3	4.6	14.8
Semi-Public	1.2	0.4	1.0
Streets and Railroads	146.3	42.0	33.2
Total	348.6	100.0	100.0
% Developed to Total Land Area		21.2	35.6
Vacant Land	1,298.3		

*Average of 8 communities of between 1,500 and 3,500 population (Aurora, Babbitt, Biwabik, Gilbert, Hoyt Lakes, Keewatin, Mountain Iron, and Nashwauk)

INTERNATIONAL FALLS URBAN AREA LAND USE — 1965

	Unincorporated Area (in acres)	Total Urban Area (in acres)*
Developed Use		
Residential	179.8	630.9
Commercial	13.9	67.6
Industrial	148.3	220.7
Public Service	6.1	8.4
Public	64.2	121.1
Semi-Public	7.6	14.1
Total	419.9	1,062.8

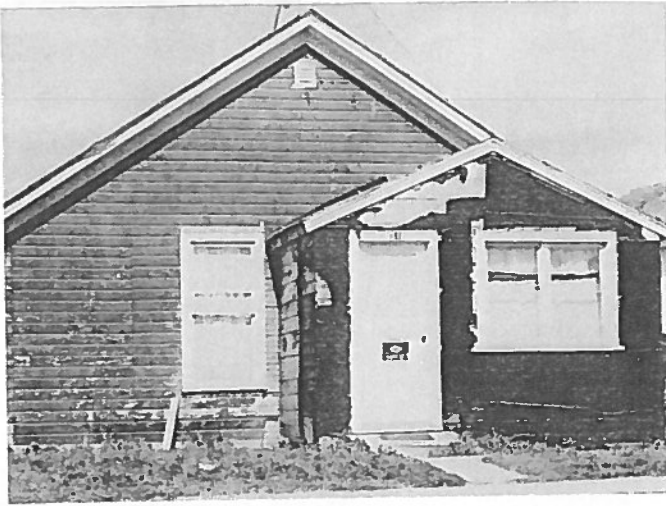
*Includes City of International Falls, Village of South International Falls and outlying unincorporated area.

STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

The map, "Condition of Structures" (Page 44), shows the location of all principal structures in bad (dilapidated or abandoned) and poor (deteriorating) condition. All other principal structures were in fair or good condition at the time of the 1965 survey. While deteriorated accessory buildings and littered yards were noted on field inspection maps, only the condition of main buildings, or principal structures, on each lot is represented on the map and table.

Conditions of structures were rated according to the following system:

Bad (dilapidated) — Appearance indicates that removal is warranted. Structure is out of plumb, has sagging roof, excessive cracks, etc. Also includes derelict or abandoned structures.



Poor (deteriorating) — Depreciating, run-down structures that are without proper maintenance, and require major repairs to foundation, walls, or roof. Outward appearance indicates structure is worth saving.

Fair to Good (sound) — Structurally sound appearing, substantial buildings that require only painting, or minor repairs.

While the survey was based on an exterior inspection only, experience in other cities has shown this system to relate quite accurately to detailed surveys of the interior of the properties.

The survey was conducted to give an area-wide indication of the extent of blight and show patterns of problem areas where urban renewal, code enforcement, and other forms of rehabilitation, redevelopment or construction of neighborhoods is needed.

All principal structures are shown on the map, while the table is divided into residential and non-residential structural conditions found outside the Central Business District. The chapter, "Central Business District", provides greater detail regarding conditions within the downtown area.

As shown in the accompanying table, 80.7 percent of the 2,352 residential units in the Falls Urban Area are in sound condition. Bad and abandoned structures (dilapidated beyond repair) accounted for 12.6 percent of the total when the land use and condition survey was prepared in 1965. This compares with an average of 4.0 percent, in this category, in the Range communities having the same population classification. There were 159, or 6.7 percent, residential units in poor condition (compared with 9.2 percent for the Range communities).



These units were not considered to be beyond repair, but were in need of major repairs.

Considerable improvements have been made within the past year in rehabilitation and general improvement of homes in the City as well as the entire urban area. A new survey would undoubtedly show a smaller percentage of bad and poor housing at the present time. Of the 1,543 residential units in International Falls, 86.4 percent were considered to be in sound condition, while 6.5 percent were in poor condition, and 7.1 percent were in bad condition or abandoned. At the time of the survey, there were 22 vacant dwelling units counted in the City. The Village of South International Falls, with 642 residential units, had 73.9 percent in good condition and almost 20 percent in bad condition. Of the dwelling units located in the unincorporated area, 53.9 percent were in sound condition while 35.9 percent were considered dilapidated beyond repair.

Vacant buildings, as well as those in poor or dilapidated condition, are generally concentrated in the older neighborhoods and areas which were first settled. This is evidenced by the pattern found in the core of the Central Business District and its periphery in International Falls, and also in that portion of South International Falls east of U. S. Highway 53, and south of the International Falls City limits. Within this fourteen block area there were 60 buildings considered dilapidated beyond repair, with 11 poor structures, and 25 vacant buildings. There were also concentrations of poor and dilapidated buildings strung out along County Road 2, and along Seventeenth Street, from Ninth Avenue to Highway 53, in the Village of South International Falls. Many of these are due to inadequate original construction which can be prevented in the future through the enforcement of building codes and other ordinances.

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

	Sound		Poor		Bad & Abandoned		Vacant		Total Number
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
International Falls	1,333	86.4	100	6.5	110	7.1	22	1.4	1,543
So. International Falls	474	73.9	42	6.5	126	19.6	38	6.0	642
Unincorporated Area	90	53.9	17	10.2	60	35.9	8	4.8	167
Total Urban Area	1,897	80.7	159	6.7	296	12.6	68	2.8	2,352

NON-RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS*

	Commercial		Public		Semi-Public		Industrial	
	# Bad	# Poor	# Bad	# Poor	# Bad	# Poor	# Bad	# Poor
International Falls	12	5	1	0	0	1	6	1
So. International Falls	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unincorporated Area	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Urban Area	16	5	1	0	0	1	6	1

* Excluding the International Falls Central Business District (See chapter on the "Central Business District")

CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION

From the earliest water routes and overland trails, man has depended on some type of transportation system for the movement of people and goods. Today, with the widespread use of the automobile, this dependency has expanded to encompass most aspects of our daily lives. Large numbers of people and great quantities of goods are transported everyday, and at speeds which were not even dreamed of sixty years ago. The airplane has added a third dimension to our many highly developed surface methods and systems of transportation. However, despite the great technological advances made in methods of transportation, the efficiency and safety of traffic movements rests largely on the adequacy of our present highways, streets and roads. In most urban areas of our country, obsolete streets — constructed originally during the horse and buggy era — are still being used. However, they are gradually being replaced by thoroughfares and streets designed for motor vehicles.

It is the purpose of this chapter to present an analysis of the existing transportation system within the International Falls urban area and to recommend proposals for its improvement. While the main emphasis of this study is on streets and highways, the needs of other forms of transportation have also been considered.

GENERAL STREET AND HIGHWAY CONDITIONS

As described earlier in the chapter, Land Use and Structural Conditions, land devoted to highways, streets, and railroads represented the second largest land use within the city as well as South International Falls. Nearly 37 per cent of the City's developed area is absorbed by transportation channels. This important function represents 42 per cent of the developed land within the Village of South International Falls. When only the highways and streets are considered, land used still represents about 30 per cent of the developed area within International Falls and 40 per cent within the village.

The division of the inlying and older sections of the city into very small blocks (300 feet in length) by many cross-streets has added greatly to the excessive amount of land used for street rights-of-way within these areas. Blocks are about half as long as the minimum block lengths included in most new subdivisions. Many of these cross-streets are little used. They do, however, contribute to higher expenses for street maintenance and snow removal. The redevelopment of certain of these vacated streets as "tot-lots" or playgrounds for neighborhood children is a possible future use. These "lots" would be particularly suitable within the inlying, densely developed residential areas where little space for recreation is available.

The City's street system is characterized by wide rights-of-way, and is generally capable of handling the present traffic volumes. However, some traffic congestion is evident within the downtown area during periods of peak activity. With few exceptions, all platted streets are of at least sufficient width to meet the standards of good residential or minor street design (66' right-of-way). However, there are several streets which are limited to 60' rights-of-way. Major east-west streets are eighty feet wide.

International Falls contains 23.5 miles of streets and highways, most of which are in reasonably good condition. Fifteen and a half miles (about two-thirds of the above total) consist of concrete or bituminous pavement. There are a few segments of streets, within the southern and southwestern environs of the city, which are presently surfaced with gravel or stone. They account for a combined length of only 2,500 feet. Nearly a third of the city's total street length is made up of graded and drained earth roads. Most of these earth roads or streets are located along the city's southern edge, and serve areas which are still under development.

In addition to state highway routes within International Falls, there is a total of 4.17 miles of state-aid streets. This figure is only about 50 feet less than the maximum allowable within the city. County state-aid highways within the city account for slightly more than two miles of streets.

TRAFFIC FLOW

Traffic flow maps, prepared by the Minnesota Highway Department, reveal a great deal about vehicular movements within the International Falls area. Volume records are kept which indicate the average number of vehicles using the area's streets during a twenty-four hour period. As should be expected, the heaviest volumes occur on U. S. Highways 53 and 71 and State Highway 11. Average daily volumes in excess of 11,000 vehicles have been recorded on U. S. 53, immediately south of the downtown area, during late summer. Nearly 6,500 vehicles have been counted on State Route 11, to the east of the city, during the same period. Over 8,000 vehicles travel over U. S. Highway 71, to the southwest of the International Falls central business district. Other important traffic carriers consist of County State-Aid Highways 2, 24, and 129. Volumes in excess of a thousand vehicles per day are found on many streets and avenues within the more central areas of the city, particularly within the downtown or central business district.

The problem of high traffic volumes within the central business district is largely the result of the fact that all major highway facilities pass through this busiest section of the urban area. Many vehicles, such as pulpwood trucks, pass through the area adding to traffic congestion and conflicts during peak periods of shopping activity. Improvements to aid present and future traffic circulation within downtown are greatly needed. A bypass route, or outlying major highway "beltline", would also reduce traffic flow through the downtown by permitting through traffic to move between the major highways, unhampered by downtown oriented traffic.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS AND SAFETY

As shown by the traffic accidents map, there were 432 accidents within the International Falls urban area during the three year period, 1962-1964. Although only two of these accidents resulted in a loss of life, 118 involved bodily injury. Property damage alone made up the remaining, greater share. About 85 per cent of the total number of accidents occurred within the limits of International Falls. Of the 369 accidents within the city,

FORT FRANCES, ONTARIO

RAINY RIVER

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

	1962	1963	1964
DAMAGE	○	□	△
INJURY	○	□	△
DEATH	●	■	▲

LAND USE 1965
INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY AIDED THROUGH A FORMAL GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 101 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954 AS AMENDED AND ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF COMMUNITY PLANNING OF THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

130 took place within the central business district. There was also a large concentration of accidents along U. S. 53, between the southern City limits and Fourth Street. This short (.82 mile) section of highway was responsible for 90 accidents.

Traffic accident patterns are concentrated within areas of rather dense development and high vehicular volumes. Uncontrolled curb cuts on major highways add greatly to traffic hazards and accidents. This is particularly true along U. S. Highway 53. The same short section of this major facility, which was the scene of the 90 accidents mentioned above, had 64 separate curb cuts, or entrances and drives to individual homes, commercial establishments and other functions. This figure does not include highways intersecting with streets. In addition to creating dangerous driving conditions vehicles turning into or leaving commercial establishments conflict with the efficient flow of traffic along the highway. Because of inadequate parking areas, or space for "turn arounds", it is often necessary for cars to back out into the highway, thus compounding the dangers. Although certainly not as severe as the conditions found along U. S. 53, other major highway facilities are also impaired by uncontrolled curb cuts.

Railroad crossings at grade represent other potential dangers within the International Falls area. Delays at these crossings add further to problems created by railroads within the city. A particularly bad condition exists where the Northern Pacific Railroad crosses Highway 53. A number of street intersections and commercial establishments located within this general area create

additional conflicts and hazards. This problem area should be rectified when engineering is completed for the new International bridge.

Poor street alignment, or "jogs", and acute angle intersections, also impair traffic efficiency and safety. Streets which intersect at acute angles reduce motorists' effective sighting distance. Such conditions are especially dangerous when they occur at intersections with major highways, as evidenced by several heavily used, east-west streets intersecting Highways 11 and 71 at acute angles.

IMPROVEMENT THROUGH CONTROL

Many of the problems described above can be minimized, or eliminated entirely, in the future. Establishment of controls through zoning and subdivision regulations are probably the most effective measures for insuring improvement in the years to come. Sufficient setback and ample off-street parking along well-traveled thoroughfares would add greatly to highway safety and efficiency. The use of service roads along heavily traveled routes, such as those in use at Riverside Addition, reduces access points and curb cuts. However, these improvements can only be achieved through diligent application of zoning, subdivision platting standards, and other controls. It will be the responsibility of the planning commission, city officials, and other concerned groups to work toward these ends. Obtaining support of all the people in getting these controls established is also very important.

RECOMMENDED TRUCK BELT-LINE ROUTE

The greatest traffic circulation need of the Falls Urban Area is to provide a relief route for pulpwood trucks which pass through town. Presently, pulp trucks entering the Falls from the west must use highways through the city, passing most existing schools, playgrounds, and other recreation areas. They must also pass through the civic center into the congested central business district in order to reach the wood yard east of the mid-town area. (See accompanying map of existing routes used by pulpwood trucks.)

A belt line or by-pass route for the use of logging trucks making deliveries to the huge pulpwood yards on State Highway No. 11 has long been discussed by the city and county planning commissions, other groups and individuals within the area.

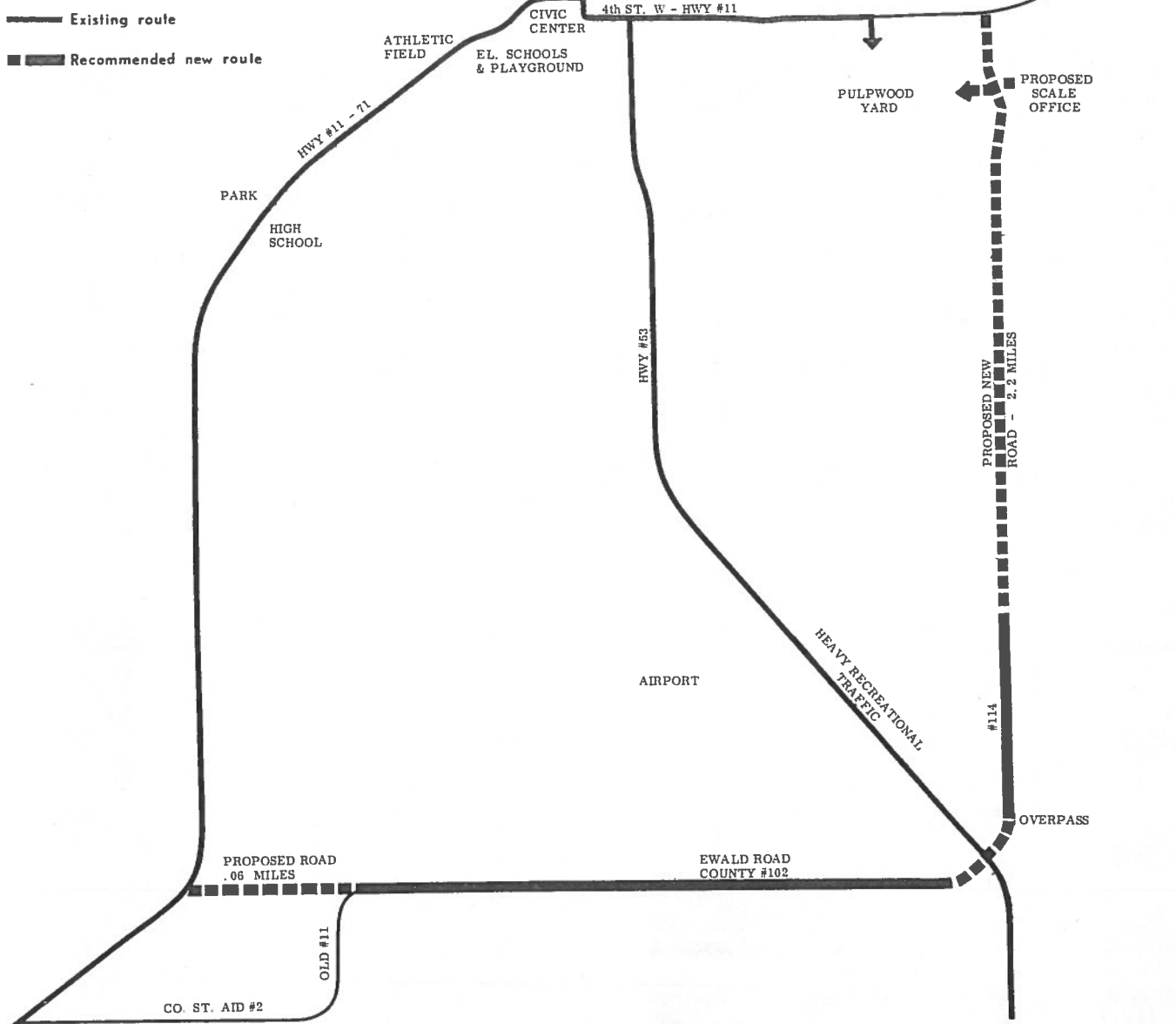
A preliminary plan for a proposed truck by-pass route was drawn in 1962. On the recommendation of the Koochiching County Planning Commission and County Engineer, the County Board has asked the Minnesota Highway Department to study this route and establish a priority for its addition to the State-aid highway system.

The planning consultant has suggested one change in the 1962 proposal which has met with the approval of both planning commissions and the officials in charge of the wood yards. The change results in a route that is two miles shorter, requires 4 miles less new roads and avoids the use of the Burner Road (Co. S.A. No. 24) and State Trunk Highway No. 11 altogether.

This route, shown on the accompanying map, will require the relocation of the scale office from Highway 11



PROPOSED BELT-LINE OR BY-PASS RELIEF ROUTE
FOR PULPWOOD TRUCKS



to a point east of the wood yard. Utilities and other facilities are presently in this location and existing fire-breaks and roads through the wood yard make it possible for a pulpwood truck to have logs scaled or weighed, unloaded and return to the belt-line without entering Highway 11. Preliminary route maps and aerial photographs of the proposed route were studied and found acceptable to Mr. T. C. Basterash and Mr. Owen Miggins of the Boise Cascade Corporation prior to the revision of the plan as recommended.

This route was shown as part of the Preliminary City Plan published and circulated in May, 1966. Mr. L. H. Miller, District Engineer, Minnesota Highway Department, commented that "the plan concerning trunk highways appears acceptable for future development". District State-Aid Engineer, N. E. Schmidt, agreed to the need "for a route from the west, south of the airport, for pulp trucks to go to the wood yard without going through the city".



INTERNATIONAL FALLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

The Municipal Airport is jointly owned by the City of International Falls and Koochiching County. North Central Airlines operates daily flights to Minneapolis with stops at the Chisholm-Hibbing and Duluth Airports. Three round trip flights are made daily during the summer months. Einarson Brothers Flying Service provides charter flights, hangar rental, repair facilities and other services for transient aircraft. The U.S. Customs and Weather Bureau maintain offices in the Airport terminal building.

The airport is located with good access to U.S. Highway 53. A small portion of the airport property lies within the Village of South International Falls while terminal facilities, service buildings, and most of the runways are in the unincorporated portion of the County.

There are two bituminous surfaced runways, 5,000 and 3,000 feet in length, which are also lighted for night use. In the near future a 2,000 foot runway extension will be needed to accommodate medium-range commercial jets which require 7,000 foot runways. The crowded terminal building is greatly in need of enlargement. Preliminary plans have already been drawn for this purpose. A control tower is also needed during the months of heavy recreational flying (May through October). The Minnesota Department of Aeronautics has been asked by the Joint Airport Commission to explore the possibilities of at least a part-time control tower during this busy season.

All types of air traffic have been steadily increasing during recent years at the Falls airport. Boardings for North Central Airlines totaled 12,860 for 1965 and by June, 1966 had already reached 7,071. Among the needed improvements at the airport are the following:

1. Expansion of terminal building
2. Extension of main runway for jets
3. Additional Taxiways
4. Additional private hangers
5. Fire fighting equipment (Jeep type portable unit)
6. More parking space for transient aircraft
7. Control Tower
8. Better entrance road, auto parking and circulation
9. Landscaping, general clean-up and beautification including removal of abandoned county rest home structure. (See chapter on Community Appearance)

Federal and state funds are available for most airport expansion and improvement facilities. These are on the basis of one-half Federal, one-third State, and the balance from the city and county.

FUTURE CIRCULATION

The plan for future circulation recommends a system of major and secondary thoroughfares and collector streets to carry traffic to and from local neighborhoods. (See centerfold map "Plan For The International Falls Urban Area").

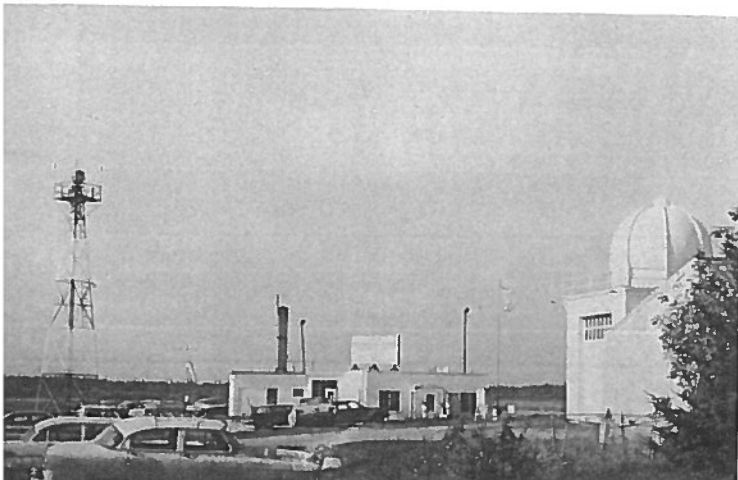
Major Thoroughfares — The only new section of highway classified as a major thoroughfare is a link between Third and Second Avenues, connecting with a proposed location for a new international bridge, which would replace the present inadequate structure now crossing the river into Canada. Preliminary studies have been made, and a near downtown location is favored by Ontario and Minnesota Highway officials and businessmen of both International Falls and Fort Frances. The commercial congestion which now exists on Third Avenue makes the cost of necessary widening prohibitive. Redevelopment of Second Avenue, on the other hand, could provide a direct and more attractive entry into Canada; as well as create a better impression for visitors entering the United States at this point. The plan recommends removal of through traffic on Third Street through the business district in favor of a one-way major thoroughfare system on Second and Fourth Streets. This is covered in more detail in the chapter "Central Business District".

Secondary Thoroughfares — The proposed belt-line, or by-pass, for pulpwood trucks described earlier would be the principal new secondary thoroughfare route. In addition, a cross-town secondary thoroughfare is recommended to connect County Highway 107 with the Cemetery Road, which would be extended to the proposed belt-line. Short sections are recommended to connect Eleventh Street with Third Avenue, including elimination of off-set jogs on Eleventh Street at Seventh and Fifteenth Streets.

Collector Streets — A system of collector streets is shown in a generalized way. Since most of these are in undeveloped portions of the urban area, their locations are subject to considerable adjustment as land is platted. Low lands and areas unsuitable for urban development have been avoided. Through the enforcement of subdivision platting regulations (now lacking only in the Village of South International Falls), it will be possible to establish collector streets to provide safer and more direct traffic circulation without excessive traffic on minor streets within neighborhoods.

Scenic Roads — Thoroughfares and collector streets are further identified as scenic roads, parkways or streets that should have special landscape treatment. U. S. 71 and State Highway 11 southwest of the City are part of the Great River Road, and will someday be built to parkway standards with special restrictions to preserve the natural scenery. Highway 11 to the east should also have special attention as the gateway to Rainy Lake and its many scenic and recreational attractions. The proposed truck belt line on the east can also serve recreation seeking visitors and should be designed and protected as a scenic route, as well as a truck by-pass.

Special landscape treatment is called for the airport entrance road (Second Avenue East, south of U.S. 53) and the pedestrian-ways within the downtown area as detailed in the Central Business District Plan.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Although International Falls is well endowed with a high level system of community facilities, public land holdings within the city are comparatively small. The land use study reported only 40.6 acres of public land (5.8 percent of the developed area, as compared to 12.7 percent for similar sized Iron Range communities). However, an additional 131 acres have been partially developed adjacent to the western boundary of the City. The "Falls" High School and a new elementary school, presently under construction, occupy 54 acres of the site. A large parcel of land to the south (77 acres) is being held for future development as a junior college. While there is an ample supply of land held for public use, its distribution is not equitable throughout the City, or its adjacent urbanizing areas. There is a noticeable lack of parks and other public open space within the older, more densely developed neighborhoods in the center of the City, south of the Civic Center.

THE CIVIC CENTER

The City of International Falls is indeed fortunate to have an attractive, commodious governmental center within the heart of its central area. With the exception of public service and maintenance facilities, all municipal functions are located within this three block area to the west of downtown. The Koochiching County Courthouse and the Falls Junior High School are also located facing this attractive, pleasantly landscaped Civic Center complex.

Library and Community Building

City library services are located in the Community Building on the western portion of the Civic Center. Built in 1938, this structure was designed to complement the Municipal Building, which faces it across an imposing central mall. The library contains approximately 46,000 volumes, which are primarily oriented toward depth and knowledge rather than popular fiction. The library is administered by a nine member board and a staff of two professional librarians, a secretary, three clerks, and several pages or student assistants. Through contracts with the County and two school districts, services are also supplied to schools and all rural people as well as city residents.

Although the building is in good condition, it is no longer adequate to meet the requirements demanded of a modern library facility. With only one-half of the building presently used for library purposes, office and book storage space is at a premium. Through extensive remodeling, at least a portion of the structure, which is presently used as meeting rooms, might be employed for future library expansion. However, a new building will be needed within the next 15 to 20 years. It is recommended that a new facility be constructed within the northeast corner of the Civic Center grounds for accessibility and proximity to other civic functions, while still within only a short distance of the central business district.

Municipal Building

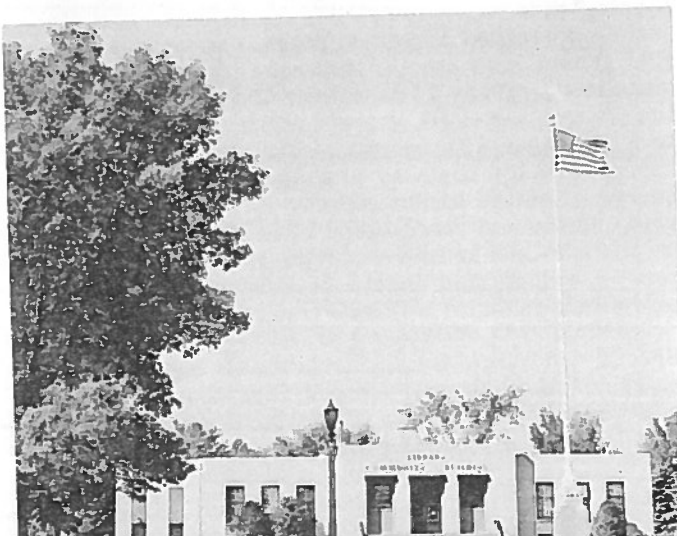
FIRE PROTECTION. The International Falls Fire Department is housed within a portion of the Municipal Building, built in 1938. The department equipment consists of two 1,000 gallon pumpers, an ambulance, and a 500 gallon pumper which is owned by the Rural Fire Protection Association. All vehicles are modern and in good repair.

In addition to service to the City, fire protection is supplied to approximately 600 rural families scattered over a wide area. These families pay an annual charge of \$5.00 for this service. There is also a mutual protective agreement with Fort Frances, Canada, in the event of extreme emergency.

Personnel consist of a fire chief, four paid drivers, and 21 volunteers. There is presently a need for more manpower, as Fire Underwriters recommend at least 21 men on an average call.

Fire Department quarters include a 10-bed dormitory, (presently unused), toilet and shower facilities, a locker room, and meeting room. All are located on the second floor level of the Municipal Building. Truck storage space is completely absorbed by the four vehicles mentioned above and additional equipment items.

In view of current needs — which include an 85 foot aerial ladder truck, a small utility or salvage truck, and possibly a new pumper — an addition to the present



station is needed. It is recommended that the present station be enlarged to accommodate at least four more fire fighting vehicles, a drill tower and better driveway and parking facilities.

The provision of the above facilities and equipment, in addition to smaller equipment items, would raise the current Underwriters' classification of six to five. The City has adopted the National Fire Prevention Code and the National Building Code's fire proofing regulations. Fire proofing of new construction is required within a Fire Zone, or the central portion of the City.

POLICE PROTECTION. The City's Police Department is also quartered in the Municipal Building. The Department is composed of a chief, a captain, a sergeant, and eight patrolmen. The Department presently operates two late model patrol cars. During the next 15 years, it is likely that an additional car will be required, as well as five more patrolmen.

Existing police facilities are extremely crowded. Present office and jail space need to be expanded by at least 50 percent. The basic need is for an expansion of jail cells from the existing two to four, to provide a greater degree of separation of various types of prisoners. Provision of an interrogation room, which would allow separation of this procedure from normal office activities, is also of importance.

Additional vehicular storage is also needed by the department. It is felt that a minimum of two parking spaces are required for confiscated vehicles and other equipment.

As with the Fire Department, it is proposed that additional space be developed through expansion of the present building. Space needs for both Police and Fire Departments should be satisfied by one, well designed addition to the present building. Such an expansion would create better space utilization, and avoid a piecemeal approach to solving future space requirements. Architectural studies for overall future requirements of the building will avoid the rather unsatisfactory results experienced by recent minor construction. While the new construction provided a new entrance for the Police Department, heat loss, and furniture and file arrangement problems were created.

Other Municipal Building Needs

At the present time, there are no pressing space needs of other departments within the Municipal Building. However, as the City grows during the years to come, additional offices and meeting rooms are sure to be needed. Added municipal employment and an ever expanding system of municipal services will require further expansion of the Municipal Building, or the construction of new buildings within the ample grounds of the Civic Center.

The Public Works Department has plans to build a 4,000 square foot addition to the present City Garage on Second Avenue. More storage space is needed for sand, gravel, and other materials used in street maintenance. An area adjacent to the sewage disposal plant is being considered as a possible storage facility for these materials. This, or any other location chosen for this purpose, must consider ample screening so as not to create an additional "eyesore", so common to such storage areas.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

School District No. 361 ("Falls" District) contains 76 per cent of the county's enrollment. During the 1965-66 school year, nearly 3,700 students were enrolled in eight schools, six of which are located within the International Falls urban area. Increasing enrollments since 1920 have necessitated the construction of new schools and the expansion of most of the older facilities. Enrollments have more than tripled over the past 45 years (1,020 in 1920 as compared to 3,713 in 1964) and further increases are inevitable as the urban area grows and prospers in the future years.

Existing Schools

The following presents a discussion of each individual school within the "Falls" urban area:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. Alexander Baker, Backus, and Forestland Schools are located on the same eight acre site bounded by Third and Fifth Streets, and Ninth Avenue. Built respectively in 1913, 1937 and 1947, all three buildings are of brick construction and in good structural condition. The combined enrollment, which includes kindergarten through the sixth grade, totaled 1,012 pupils during the 1965-66 school year. This figure exceeds the schools' rated capacity by some 130 children. However, the construction of the new elementary school at 15th Avenue and 15th Street will relieve this overcrowding.

Unfortunately, the buildings crowd the site to the point where very little space remains for outdoor play activities. In addition to inadequate space, the playground, containing typical equipment, is entirely covered with asphalt. Because of the dangerous traffic conditions on Third Street (Trunk Highways No. 11 and No. 71) a chain-link fence encompasses the entire site. While it would be difficult and costly to expand the site, much can be done through proper landscaping to improve its appearance.

The Holler and Old Holler schools are both located within the Village of South International Falls. Built on spacious sites, the two structures are separated by Nineteenth Street East. While both schools are in good structural condition, the older building is of frame con-



struction and inadequate in design for modern, safe education. Present plans call for its abandonment in the future. The newer brick building, constructed in 1952, will require an addition within the near future, especially if the older building is taken out of service. An ample site is available for any needed expansion, in addition to a 40 acre site owned by the school district immediately to the south.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. The Junior High School, built originally in 1922 as a high school, is in good structural condition and current enrollments are below the building's rated capacity. While the site is quite confined (two acres) it is attractively landscaped with an open lawn providing a minimum area for informal play on the Fifth Street side. No organized play facilities exist on the site. Minimum facilities for this age group should be added. These might include one or more multi-purpose paved areas for court games and basketball practice.

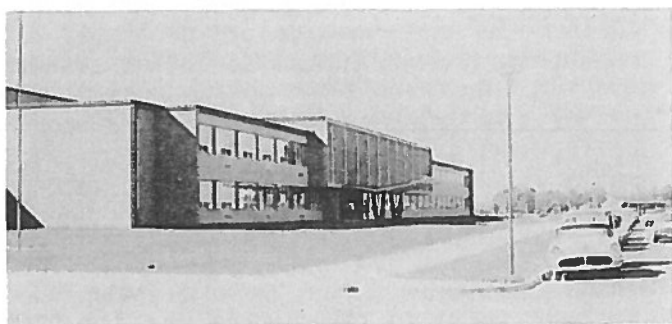
HIGH SCHOOL. The International Falls High School was constructed in 1961 on a 34 acre tract of land. The building is in excellent condition, and a 15 classroom addition is now (1966) being constructed to meet increasing secondary school enrollments. About one-half of these classrooms will be used by the proposed Junior College as temporary quarters. Long range plans call for a new college complex to be constructed on the site reserved for this purpose south of the High School. It is anticipated that the first separate college building will be under construction by 1969.

While the High School site is certainly ample, it is devoid of any natural amenities, such as trees. General site improvements and landscaping are greatly needed and are under consideration, as recommended in the section on Community Appearance.

New Schools

A new 24 classroom elementary school is under construction on municipally owned land to the south of the High School. This new facility, at the intersection of Fifteenth Street and Fifteenth Avenue, is expected to open in 1967. As previously mentioned, the new school will do much to relieve the crowded conditions at the existing elementary schools, and will be in closer proximity to the newer, expanding neighborhoods within the western and southwestern portions of the city.

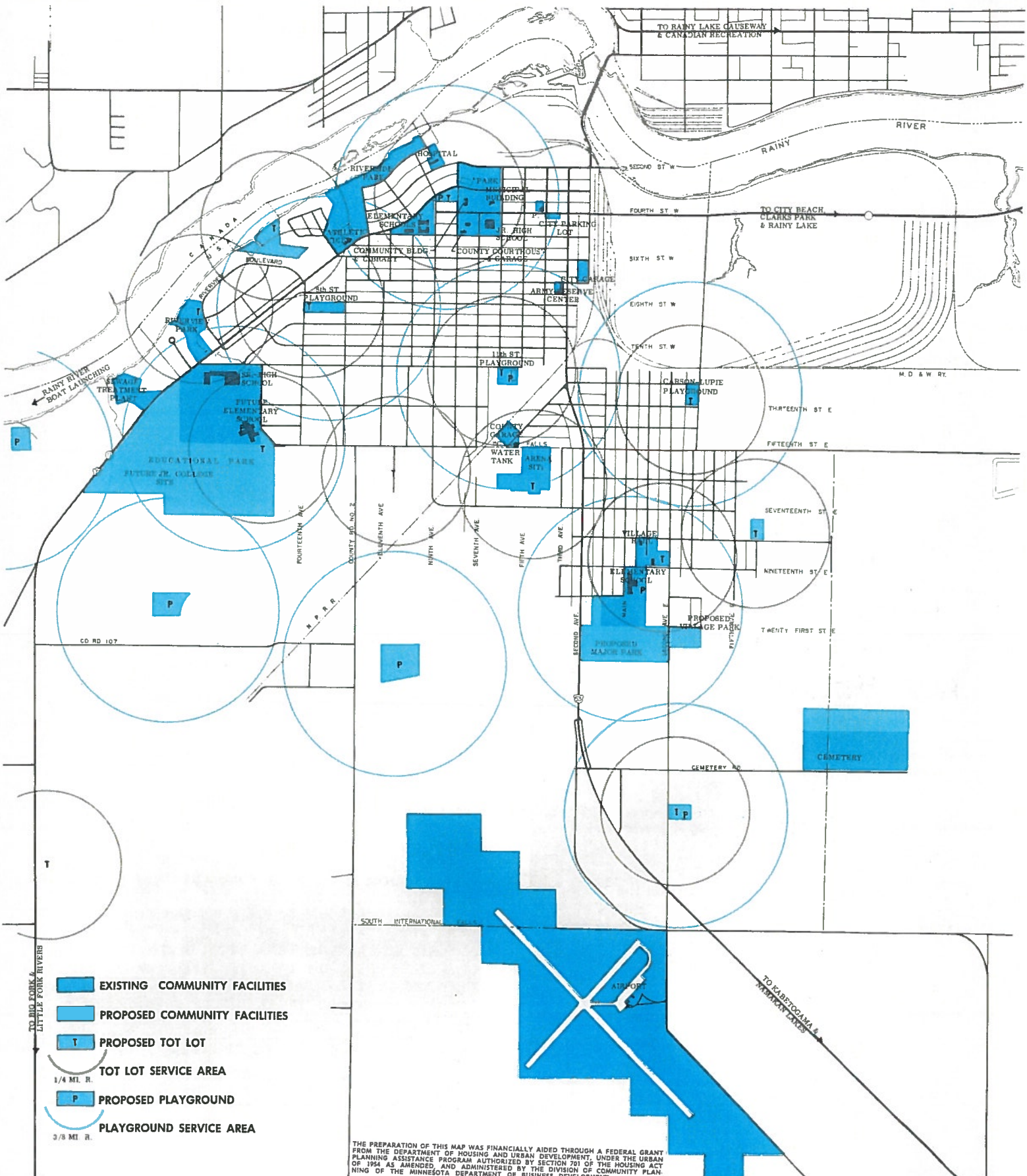
With continued growth of the urban area to the south and west, it is probable that three additional elementary schools will be needed before 1980. An elementary school-recreation site of at least 10 acres is indicated on the Community Facilities Plan, on the west central edge of South International Falls. Other schools may be eventually needed to serve such developing areas to the southwest of the city as the new residential subdivision along the Rainy River and the high density housing areas to the east near Rainy Lake. The school district should acquire sites as soon as possible in these areas, while choice locations are still available.



FORT FRANCES, ONTARIO

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

ALVAN J. WING WHITEHEAD ROSSER
1225 EAST SUPERIOR STREET DULUTH MINNESOTA 55812 TEL. 218-724-6028



HOSPITAL FACILITIES

The present Memorial Hospital, consisting of a well administered facility, is located in the north-central section of the city. Although in sound structural condition, its present 46 bed capacity is inadequate to meet present and future demands. While the hospital contains most of the services normally expected of a facility of its size, the city is in need of expanded services and facilities.

A proposal made by the City's hospital consultant, Gerhard Hartman, Ph. D., calls for the construction of a new 65 bed facility, or the expansion of the present hospital to meet these requirements. Should a new hospital be built, the present facility might be converted to a nursing home. Largely due to a general lack of suitable vacant land within International Falls, a tentative new hospital site has been selected near the southwestern city limits, between the River and Highway 11-71. This site is convenient to the Jr. College site, which might eventually provide a nursing school or other courses related to hospital staffing or administration.

PARKS AND RECREATION

With the availability of nearby Rainy Lake and the fishing, boating and other outdoor recreation provided at various natural areas convenient to the Falls Urban Area, it is perhaps not too unusual that parks and recreation within the area are far below minimum standards used in other cities. It seems particularly ironic, however, that a city noted for its championship hockey teams and the home of one of America's all-time football stars should have done so little to provide parks and recreation for residents of various age groups. Even with all the tourists that pass through the city there is little to retain them. For example, there is no existing public park containing benches where a visitor might look at the very scenic Rainy River or across the International border into Fort Frances, Ontario.

The International Falls urban area, as encompassed by the planning program, does not contain a single major park where a wide range of both active and passive recreational pursuits may be enjoyed. There is no public swimming pool provided for the more than 11,000 persons in the urban area. Needless to say, the one public beach on Rainy Lake is the most popular recreational spot in the region during the short period when the weather permits lake swimming.

Planners are not the only ones aware of the shortcomings in the local parks and recreation. In the 1966 public opinion poll, conducted by the City and County Planning Commissions, recreation opportunities ranked very high in the way of "dislikes" and were listed most frequently as the facilities that need most improvement. More recreation was a close second to better hospital facilities within the City, but was at the very top of the list in the Village of South International Falls and within the adjoining suburban area.

The opinion survey showed that six of the top seven items that received a "poor" rating had to do with parks and recreation. These were rated as follows:

1. Indoor Recreation Facilities
2. Recreation for Teenagers (13-19)
3. Recreation for Adults
4. Recreation for Girls (12 years or under)
5. Appearance of Village or City Entrances
6. Recreation and Attractions for Tourists
7. Appearance of Parks

Fortunately, there is an excellent recreation potential for the area, using some of the undeveloped public lands that need only minor development to make up for current deficiencies.

Existing Park and Recreation Facilities

Each park, playground, and other recreation facility in the urban area was carefully inspected and a detailed form filled out to help in the analysis and recommendations. The chart provides a summary of existing conditions and recommendations for future improvement. Several of the sites recommended for improvement also appear in the Koochiching County Outdoor Recreation Plan (September, 1966) since they also serve tourists and regional residents.

Existing facilities are listed on the chart (Page 42) clockwise, beginning from the left (west on the map). At the end of the list are the two City owned facilities, City Beach and Clarks Park, which are located outside the City and east of the urban area.

Proposed New Parks and Facilities

"EDUCATIONAL PARK". As stated earlier, the Falls area has an unique opportunity to develop a well planned campus adjoining the new high school on the western edge of the present City limits. The elementary school, now under construction, and the future Junior College can combine with the high school into a planned "Educational Park". Careful site planning is needed to best utilize the land and provide recreational facilities, parking and circulation areas, open spaces and landscape treatment. The proposed location for a new hospital, opposite Highway 11-71, plus other public properties on the riverside in this vicinity, further add to this large public space that can make an excellent first impression for the visitor arriving from the west by way of the "Great River Road" and future Rainy River Parkway.

MAJOR PARK. A site of 30 acres, immediately south of the New Holler School and owned by School District 361, is recommended to be held in reserve for a future major park. The site is rather low and over the years has provided a source of gravel. It is possible that a pond could be created as a major feature of the proposed park. While the park would be easily accessible to the entire urban area, it would fill a particular need for the Village of South International Falls, which is presently without park facilities of any type. The village-owned site on the east side of 2nd Avenue East is planned as a neighborhood playground and would be complementary to the larger park.

ARENA PARK. The site chosen for construction of the new hockey arena and indoor sports center is just south of 15th Street, near Industrial Avenue. Centrally located, the site is adequate in size (10 acres) for other

needed sports and recreation facilities, such as an indoor swimming pool. While an indoor-outdoor type of pool may prove to be advisable, certainly the investment required for a much needed public swimming pool should assure that it be usable the year around. The arena area is also recommended for a "tot-lot" location, as will be described later.

CITY DOCK PARK. Adjoining the historic City dock is a park area of about four acres owned and maintained by the Boise Cascade Corporation. One picnic table and two refuse cans exist, but litter is a constant problem. The dock, located just above Koochiching Falls, was the point of entry of early settlers and later day visitors who used water transportation to reach the City or to cross over into Canada. The new international bridge, to be built in the future, will undoubtedly pass over this park area. In the meantime it should be better identified as a park and promoted for its history and excellent view point of log booms. Its park-like setting and interesting industrial activities justify it as a "park" even if not in public ownership.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUNDS. The map entitled "Existing and Proposed Community Facilities" indicates the ultimate distribution of neighborhood playgrounds in relation to a service radius of $\frac{3}{8}$ mile, which is the recommended standard for such facilities. New locations are suggested for future neighborhood playgrounds on the southwest and southeast sectors of the urban area. Three additional new playgrounds are recommended in connection with new schools as "park-school" facilities.

"SCHOOL PARKS". Parks and playgrounds located on contiguous sites with schools can result in savings in initial construction and maintenance. Many communities have proven the benefits to both the school population and the neighborhood through this combination. School parks are recommended at the new elementary school at Fifteenth Avenue, at New Holler School, and at the site recommended to be purchased for such purposes east of the intersection of County 2 (old Highway 11) and County 107.

"TOT-LOTS". Sometimes referred to as playlots, "tot-lots" are sub-neighborhood play areas not accessible to a larger park, and sometimes located in a corner of a neighborhood playground. The plan has been designed so that a service area, not to exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ mile radius from

residential areas, is served with the proposed facilities. Program emphasis and equipment (climbing, digging, and jumping types) would be geared to pre-school and primary grade children. Locations recommended require a minimum of street and highway crossings. Among the design features would be benches and small shelters for mothers who would normally supervise this type of playground.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

The city owns and operates a 20 acre refuse dump within the urban area near the Northern Pacific Railroad tracks west of 11th Avenue. It is felt by municipal officials that this facility should prove to be adequate for approximately 20 years in the future. Garbage collection is contracted privately. It is the responsibility of the contractor to maintain the dump and practice sound sanitary landfill operations.

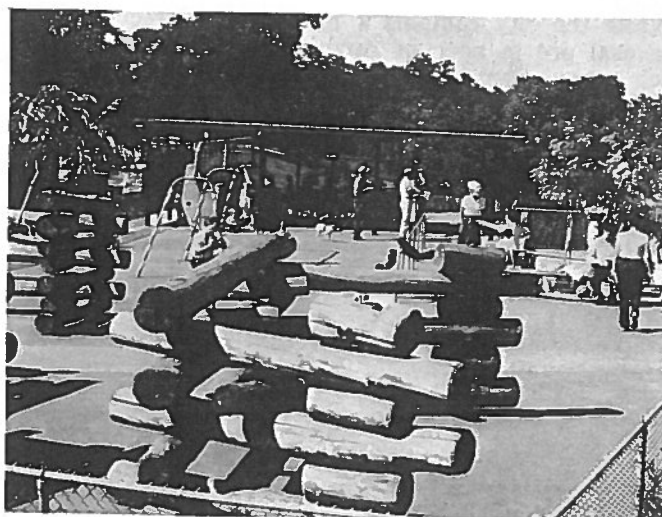
Depending upon wind conditions, the residential areas nearby are affected by the present dump location. Consideration should be given to locating a site further removed from residential development, possibly east of the urban area.

VILLAGE OF SOUTH INTERNATIONAL FALLS MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

The Village Hall consists of a single story, masonry building, which was completed in 1950. The building contains a large meeting room, an equipped kitchen, an office, and two vehicle stalls. The structure was designed to facilitate the addition of a second floor, should additional space be needed in the future.

At the present time, the village operates a 500 gallon pumper fire engine, which occupies one of the two vehicle stalls. The remaining space is used as a maintenance garage. The Fire Department is manned by a 32 man volunteer force which also has a reciprocal agreement with the City of International Falls.

Current Village plans call for construction of a separate maintenance garage near the proposed park site, at Second Avenue East and 22nd Street and the purchase of a new tractor "cat" unit. No other major improvements or purchases are being considered at this time.



COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Community appearance has always been considered an important element in city planning, and in light of events in recent years this importance has expanded greatly. The Federal Government's current Urban Beautification and Improvement Program (Title VII) is but one example of this growing concern with improving the visual impressions of our cities and towns and supplying them with greater amenities.

Improved community appearance is not only a source of satisfaction, civic pride, and enjoyment for local people, but it also presents a more favorable image to visitors and tourists. The traveling public is attracted to centers which are known for their pleasant surroundings and well developed facilities; consequently, they are willing to stay longer at such locations.

With the expected increase in tourism within the United States and northern Minnesota, it is essential that the "Falls" area improve its "drawing power" as a vacation center. One way to accomplish this task is through an appearance or beautification plan. As reported through a tourists' questionnaire conducted during the summer of 1965, many visitors commented on the need to improve tourist attractions and facilities of the area.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE COMMUNITY

The accompanying map, Impressions of the Community, presents a graphic record of assets and liabilities within the International Falls urban area. These "impressions" of the community were drawn from field notations made by the consultants during several reconnaissance tours of the "Falls" area. While it is true that many of these features would not be noticeable to the average visitor during the course of a single visit, many would be seen by the most casual observer. No attempt was made to evaluate every area or building within the city, but rather the consultants concerned themselves with the most outstanding visual assets and liabilities.

As indicated by the map, community assets consist mainly of public buildings, churches, the civic center, and other related facilities. The newer neighborhoods within the city's western environs also enhance the overall appearance or image of the "Falls" urban area. Of particular interest are such community focal points as the well defined civic center and handsome church spires. While the city contains a number of attractive parks, several are in need of further development and landscape improvements. School grounds are also generally in need of improvement.



Highway approaches, or entrances to the city, represent most of the visual liabilities. Exposed junkyards and dilapidated buildings, excessive numbers of poor appearing billboards, spots of substandard housing, and unsightly truck terminals are representative of the worst offenders. Strip commercial development along Highway 53 and immediately south of downtown add such safety hazards as numerous curb cuts, inadequate parking facilities, and points of traffic congestion to an environment that is typified by a clutter of signs, a number of deteriorating commercial and residential structures, inadequate setback of buildings, and a lack of any type of landscaping. As reported in the central business district study, downtown is plagued by a large number of ugly, deteriorating buildings. Many of these structures are vacant and yet occupy prominent sites within downtown. Spots of blighted housing and overcrowded conditions are typical of other undesirable features of the urban area.

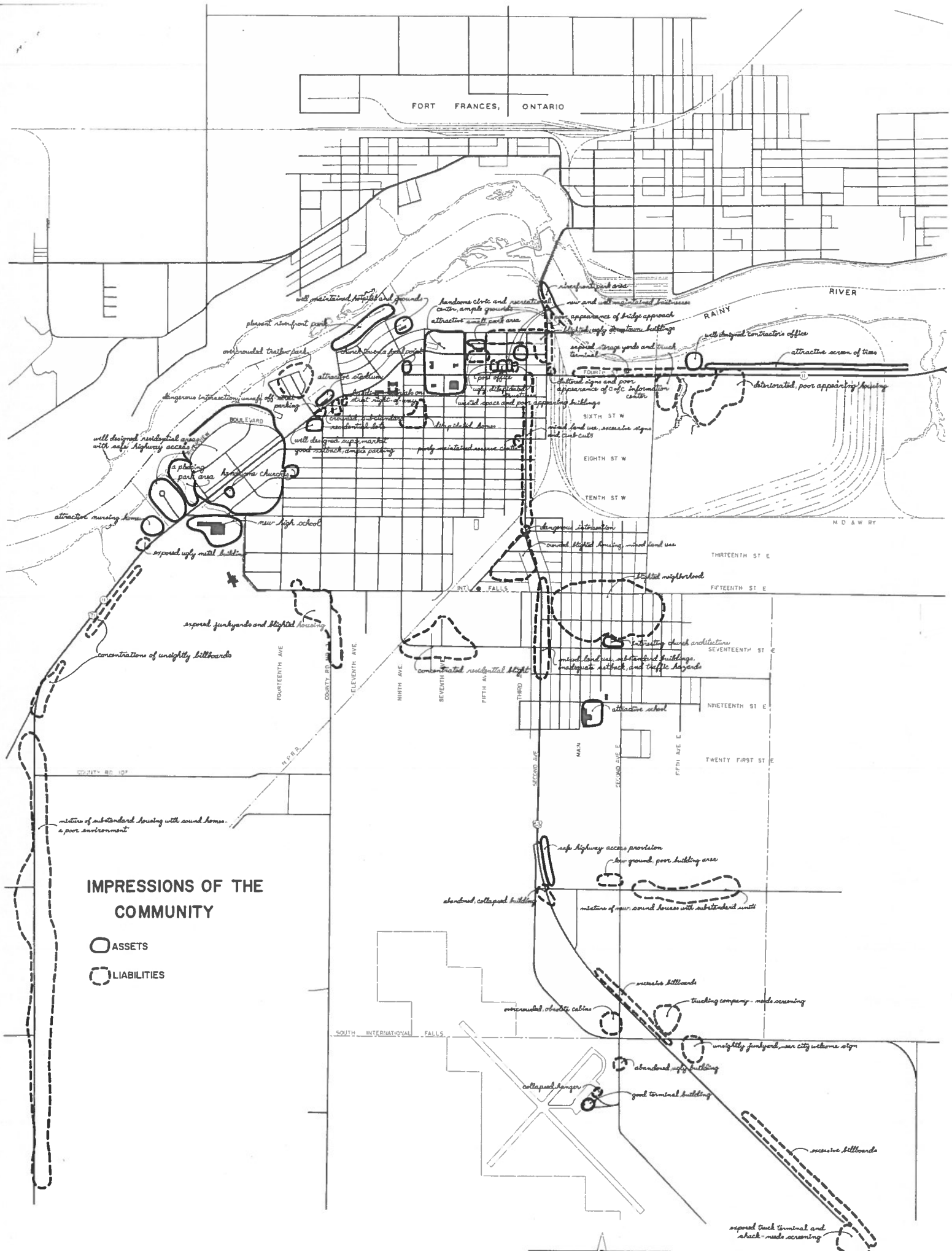
It is interesting to note that many citizens of the "Falls" area have similar views of the urban area. Through the use of a recent public opinion questionnaire, it was learned that the majority of city respondents (86%) regarded the appearance of city entrances as being poor or only fair. Forty per cent stated that they were poor. As opposed to this, forty-three per cent of these people felt that the general appearance of public buildings was good. Only 12 per cent replied in the negative.

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE PLAN

Major recommendations for improving the overall appearance of the International Falls urban area are indicated geographically on the Community Appearance Plan. Since recommendations for the downtown area are covered in considerable detail in the Central Business District Plan, only generalized projects are shown for this important part of the city.

Projects indicated fall into two main categories: those which are eligible for Federal financial assistance under the Urban Beautification and Improvement Program and those which must be carried out by some other means. Under the new Federal program (Title VII), as much as 50 per cent of the cost of improving the appearance of streets, parks, and other public places will be covered by a Federal grant. However, projects must fit into an overall community beautification program (including private as well as public resources) and be consistent with local comprehensive planning.





FORT FRANCES, ONTARIO

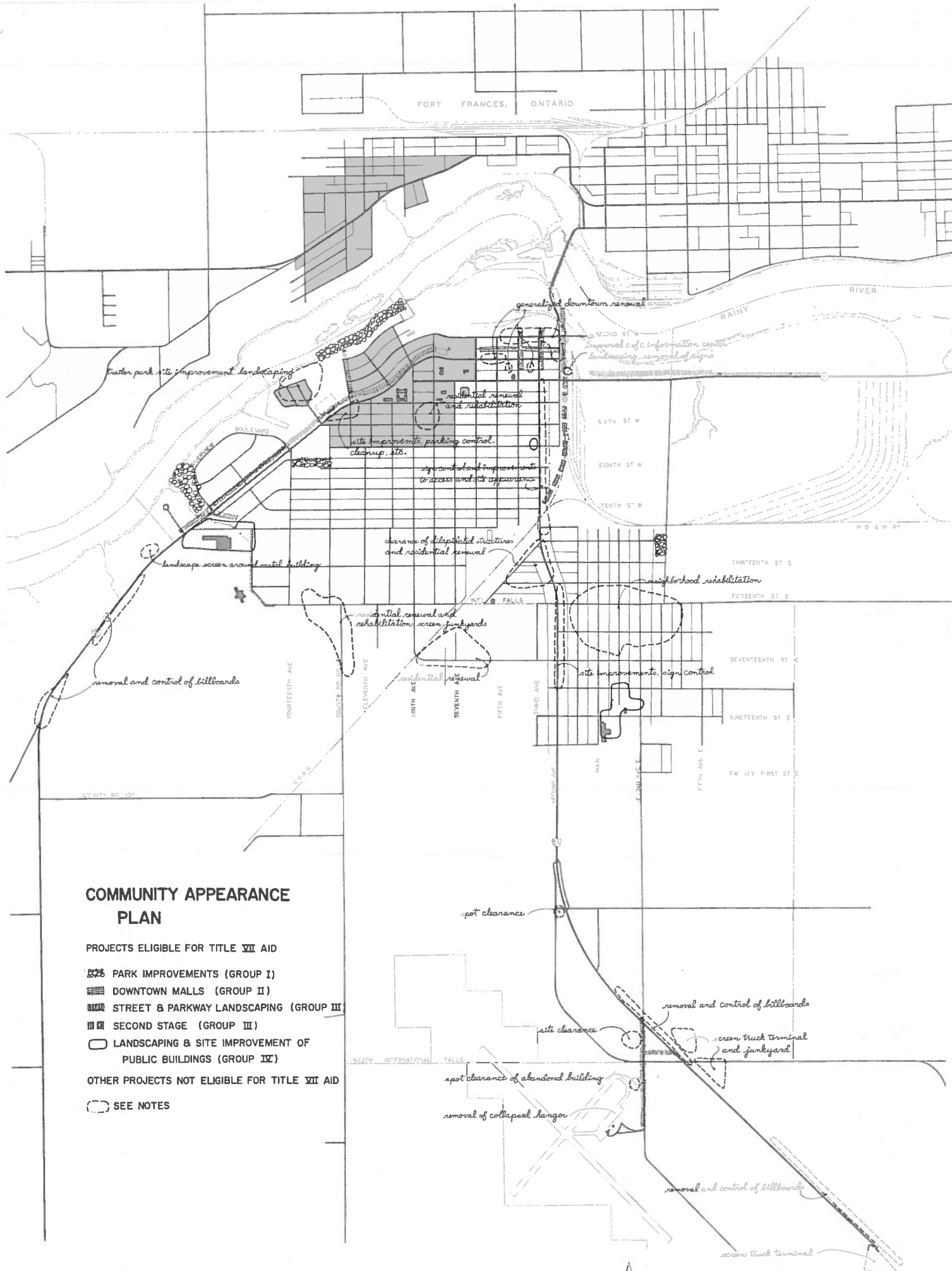
RAINY RIVER

IMPRESSIONS OF THE COMMUNITY

- ASSETS
- LIABILITIES

INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALY AIDED THROUGH A FEDERAL GRANT FROM THE DEPT. OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 204 OF THE HOUSING ACT



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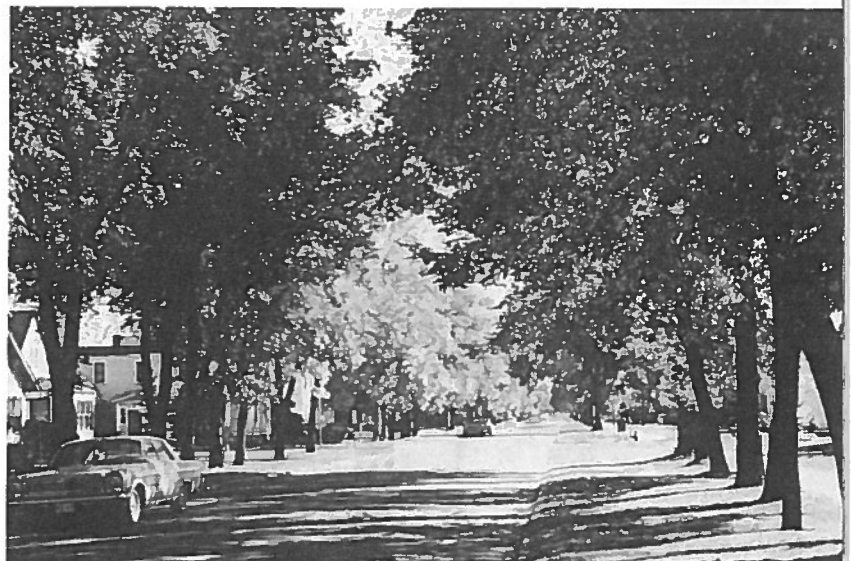
The plan was tailored to fit the general requirements of the Title VII program. The four groups listed refer to the four different types of projects which are eligible for Federal assistance. Most of these projects could be carried out over a five year period. Second stage Group III projects (landscaping along Second Avenue) are proposed for a later date, after improvements to this major thoroughfare have been completed.

In addition to the Title VII projects, there are a number of others that must be implemented by various public and private methods. The proposed zoning ordinance will supply the legal means to rid the urban area of such nuisance factors as excessive numbers of billboards and junkyards. However, a more positive method of improving these "trouble spots" would be by enlisting the cooperation of individual property owners to clean up such conditions. Community appearance can be greatly enhanced by such projects as landscape screens around junkyards and storage areas and removal of unneeded, outmoded outdoor advertising.

Billboards can be improved by better design and landscaping around their bases; however, a better solution is through the concentration of advertising and information at a central point. An attractively designed visitor orientation center, complete with a listing of com-

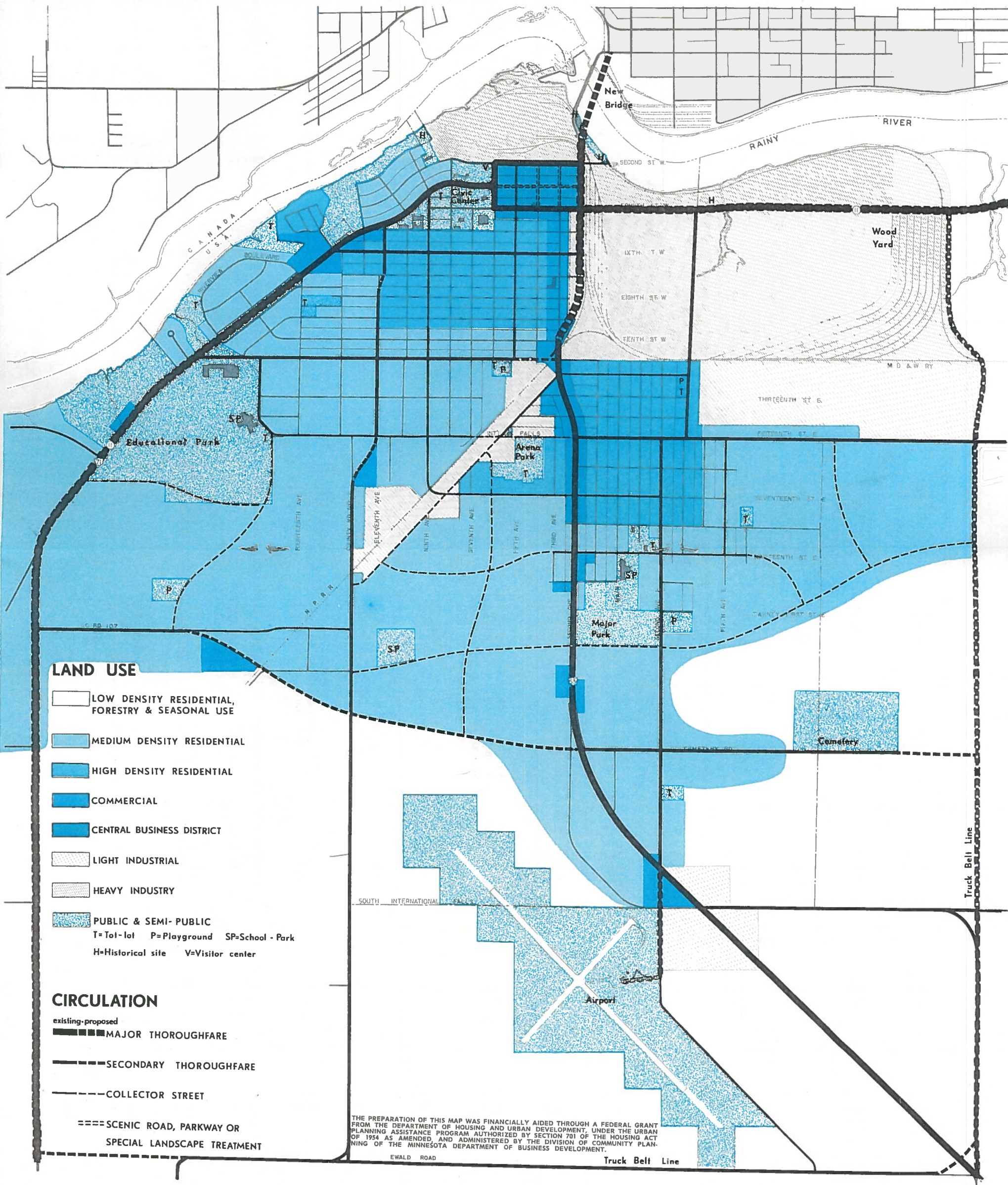
mercial services, recreation facilities, resorts, and tourist points of interest, would make a handsome substitute for garrish signs along the highway approaches. The center's structure should be constructed in a style which accents the northwoods atmosphere as well as the "Falls" area's role as an important gateway to Canada. Flags, landscaping, and features of an international flavor should be a part of its site design. The Central Business District Plan recommends such a facility as part of the new historical museum near "Smokey the Bear".

While there are a number of other projects related to community appearance that could be aided by Federal assistance, such as downtown urban renewal and state highway beautification, many small but worthwhile undertakings can be accomplished entirely by local groups and individuals. Several dilapidated structures have been razed by the Job Corps within the downtown area. Similar projects could be initiated by civic-minded groups to bring about immediate improvement to appearance. Vacant lot clean-up, home improvements, and private landscaping projects are just a few of these small but important undertakings. The extension of the highly successful spring clean-up, paint-up, fix-up campaigns to a year around basis would prove to be most beneficial. It should be kept in mind, however, that all projects be coordinated into the overall community appearance plan.



PLAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

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EWALD ROAD

Truck Belt Line

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The general goal of the Plan for the International Falls Urban Area is to create a land use arrangement which separates the living, working, commercial, and recreational areas in order to create the best possible environment for each. The plan allows ample space for future needs of housing, shopping, industry, and public serving facilities.

Within the framework of this general goal, the plan and its policy recommendations reflected in zoning and other standards makes specific proposals based upon the following objectives:

1. **Provide for new residential neighborhoods to assure a living environment of high quality for the 14,900 people projected to be living within the urban area by 1980.**

A broad range of choice is available for families who prefer a suburban or waterfront environment as well as urban locations for medium and high density housing. A variety of housing types is encouraged within standards established by subdivision and zoning regulations. Substandard housing should be replaced with adequate dwellings so that all residents of the urban area may be decently housed. While population should be concentrated so that adequate public services may be provided most economically, overcrowding is avoided with provisions made for health, safety, light, air and privacy.

2. **Limit Commercial development to compact units or centers and establish standards of off-street parking, more efficient traffic and pedestrian circulation and improvements to the appearance of the central business district.**

Neighborhood and highway serving commercial areas should be limited in size and future expansion should await a demonstration of demand or economic analysis. Shopping centers of all types should have adequate parking and loading areas and be designed and maintained to add to the visual quality of their neighborhoods. If the central business district is to continue as the major commercial, cultural and administrative center of the region, it must be completely rehabilitated with more attention to pedestrian needs, modernized stores, landscape treatment, regulation of signs and similar elements for appearance and functional improvement.

3. **Reserve ample land for industrial, manufacturing and related job opportunities to provide for a more diversified economic base where young people now leaving the community may earn their livelihood.**

All industrial sites should be large enough to provide off street parking, loading, landscaped buffers and space for future expansion. Heavy industry (intensive manufacturing causing noise, fumes, or unattractive conditions) should be separated from residential areas wherever possible by light industrial uses, commercial districts or landscaped buffer areas. Diversified industrial ac-

tivities are provided a variety of sites with rail, highway and airport locations considered along with the availability of utilities and other services.

4. **Provide for future public and semi-public sites for educational, cultural and health facilities, parks and recreation areas, churches and other private establishments that serve community-wide needs.**

Since most of these facilities are built with public funds and are under the direct control of public or quasi-public bodies, their location can play a key role in the development of the plan for the urban area. Each site and facility should be located for maximum public use and sites should be purchased well in advance of need before urban development causes an increase in land value. Substantial savings to the taxpaying public is made possible by the combining of certain facilities so that they serve a multiple purpose. An example is the school-park concept where buildings and sites are designed for a combination of education, recreation and neighborhood social center.

5. **Classify streets and highways into an integrated network of circulation for the efficient, convenient and safe movement of people and goods.**

Major and secondary thoroughfares and collector streets should be defined and classified for future construction and improvement for such a system establishes the pattern of development for an area. Traffic safety can be "built-in" when new subdivisions are laid out. Traffic congestion, accidents and other problems will intensify in the future due to population growth and greater use of automobiles and motor transport thus demanding changes, relocations and entirely new route locations.

6. **Preserve the beauty of the International Falls Area and add to the attractiveness of the urban landscape.**

By the planting of street trees, creation of parkways, downtown plazas, pedestrian malls, landscaping and site planning of new school sites and other public buildings, the character of the Falls environment will become more visually satisfying. New highways should not simply solve traffic and engineering problems but should enhance the visual quality of the area through which they pass. Scenic roads, parkways and streets requiring special landscape treatment are identified in the plan.

7. **Integrate urban area planning with county-wide planning considerations.**

The urban area plan has been developed simultaneously, and closely coordinated, with the general plan for Koochiching County. Circulation routes, recreational sites, economic change and planning tools such as zoning and subdivision standards are among the many basic considerations reflected in the urban plan within the framework of the larger county plan.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Located in the north-central portion of International Falls, the downtown or central business district represents the major retail and service outlet for the city and the entire urban population of Koochiching County. For about 60 years it has served this important function, and several of its buildings date from the City's founding. While the central area is a viable, essential part of the Falls urban environment, it is beset by problems which accompany age and intensive use. Decaying and obsolete buildings, inadequate parking, and traffic hazards have plagued the area in recent years. Certain businesses have also felt a decline in sales. While downtown does not face any real competition from other shopping districts, at least not for the present, there is a strong possibility that new, outlying shopping centers will be developed in the future. All of these conditions dictate that a long-range improvement plan for the central business district is most timely, and its inclusion as a major part of the International Falls planning program is most appropriate. Therefore, it is the purpose of this report to present an analysis of existing central area conditions, a plan for future improvement, and realistic methods of achieving the goals of the plan.

THE TRADE AREA

The trade area for International Falls is considered to be the entire area of Koochiching County, which is based on the designation made by the Upper Midwest Economic Study. The trade area boundary, although fixed to the limits of the county, is the transition zone. Generally, inside this boundary the net movement of business will be toward the City of International Falls; beyond the boundary, most business will move toward such centers as Bemidji, Hibbing, or Virginia.

The Falls trade area has been further divided into a primary trade area and a secondary trade area. The urban portion of the county is considered as the primary trade area, and people within it (some 11,300 in 1960) rely on the city for practically all of their shopping needs. The secondary trade area, the remainder of the county, utilizes the city for only major purchase items. People within the secondary trade area generally use local village shopping facilities for their daily needs. Because of the large area of the county and its sparse settlement pattern beyond the falls urban area, the City remains unchallenged as the only complete shopping facility within Koochiching County.

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT STUDY AREA

The International Falls Central Business District (CBD) occupies an area of some 86 acres and covers 22 blocks within the city's center. The rectangular shaped CBD is well defined by distinct physical barriers and use changes at its edges. The extensive Boise Cascade Corp. industrial complex at Second Street forms its northern border, while Sixth Street and a residential neighborhood marks the southern boundary. To the east of Second Avenue, the wide railroad yards create a sharp edge to the CBD. The large civic center and recreational complex form its western limits.

Within the CBD proper there are four distinct functional units: The civic center and recreational area; the retail core; a rather high density residential area; and an ex-

tensive area of independent commercial, wholesaling and industrial uses. While all of these functional units must be considered in planning for the CBD, it is the six block retail core which will receive special attention in the plan for downtown. This core area represents the greatest concentration of commercial activity within the Falls area, and as such is pedestrian or comparative shopping oriented.

In sum, the four CBD functional units represent the aggregation of land uses which together create the most unique and important area of the City. The CBD not only provides the greatest choice of goods and services, but also serves as the Falls area's governmental, transportation, and communication center.

EXISTING LAND USE

The pattern of building within the CBD is characterized by two-story structures with some single and three-story buildings interspersed among them. Within the main concentration of commercial establishments (the retail core area) there is a high density of development. Buildings adjoin one another and cover most of their sites. To the south and west of this core, the structural density is considerably lessened by the presence of open-space surrounding most of the individual buildings. This fact is strongly borne out by the civic center, which has commodious grounds around all of its buildings.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT — EXISTING LAND USE

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Residential	15.7	40.6
Commercial	14.5	16.9
Industrial	3.0	3.4
Public	14.3	16.8
Semi-Public	1.2	1.3
Streets, alleys and railroad	35.1	40.6
Parking Lots	1.9	2.1
Vacant	0.6	0.7
Total	86.3	100.0

As indicated by the accompanying table, the transportation network is the largest single user of land. While the railroad and alleys contribute only a tiny fraction to this main use category, the main streets that divide the CBD into numerous, small blocks absorb fully 38.5 per cent of the downtown land. Residences consist of closely spaced single-family homes, a scattering of two-family dwellings, and about four acres of land used for apartment or multi-family buildings account for the second largest share of land. While there are numerous second and third story apartment units over many of the commercial buildings within the core area, most residential land use is found within the southwestern section of the CBD.

Commercial uses (composed largely of the retail core) and public land are also significant land users. Commercial uses include all retail trade stores, consumer services (restaurants, laundries, barber shops, etc.) and professional offices. The CBD accounts for nearly 50 per cent of the city's commercial land. Public land is

largely devoted to the civic and recreation center and consists of the city and county buildings and grounds, the large park and recreation area north of Third Street, and the junior high school. The post office and the Minnesota Highway Department's maintenance garage utilize about an acre of the remaining public land. The remaining 7.5 per cent of the CBD is made up of light industrial activities (wholesaling, warehousing, printing, and a very limited amount of manufacturing), parking lots, semi-public uses, and vacant land. Semi-public uses within the CBD consist of three churches and several fraternal organizations. As shown by the above table, little land remains vacant or used for off-street parking. The very nature of central business district development precludes much vacant land; and similar to most cities of its size, curb space is employed to meet most of the parking demand.

BUILDING CONDITIONS

During the field survey, it was discovered that of the 218 buildings (excluding garages and other accessory buildings) located within the CBD, sixty-eight are either in poor or bad condition. This figure represents 31.2 per cent of total buildings within downtown International Falls. While those in poor condition (deteriorating) could possibly be renovated through extensive major repairs, the bad or dilapidated structures should be razed and replaced by new uses. Since this survey was by exterior inspection only, a more detailed examination could quite possibly reveal additional structural deficiencies.

As shown on the accompanying map, "Building Conditions", substandard structures are heavily concentrated within the six block retail core, with some grouping of poor and bad buildings near the southeast quarter of the CBD, and also to the west of the core. Blocks within the retail core, and immediately north of Third Street, account for 60 percent of downtown International Falls' poor and bad buildings. It is within these three blocks that most of the city's oldest structures are located. The area is characterized by decaying frame buildings containing a mixture of commercial and residential uses and numerous vacancies. Many of these structures are obsolete and suffer such extensive deficiencies that they have been unoccupied for many years.

An unfortunate mixture of dwellings and commercial establishments also exists within this three block area. There are several instances where single family houses occupy the rear lot portion of a business or another residential use. Dwellings within this area not only suffer

from physical deterioration, but are also adversely affected by such environmental blighting conditions as incompatible neighbors (adjacent business activities) and a lack of open space. Additional noise and traffic hazards also make this area a poor place for homes. Although not as severe, a poor mixture of residences with commercial and industrial buildings also exists to the south of the retail core and along Third Avenue.

TRAFFIC

As indicated by traffic volume surveys conducted by the Minnesota Highway Department, the CBD is the focus of most vehicular movement within the City of International Falls. Over 10,000 vehicles per average 24 hour period enter or leave the CBD by way of Third Avenue alone (Highway 53 to the south). Approximately 8,000 cars and trucks pass through the western limits of the CBD along Third Street (Highways 11 and 71), while volumes in excess of 5,000 vehicles travel through its eastern edge (Highway 11) each day. In effect, all traffic, whether it has a downtown destination or not, must pass through the CBD. Not only does this mixture of through and local traffic congest the streets, but numerous accidents also result (see Transportation Chapter).

Despite the heavy traffic volumes within the downtown, vehicular movement is relatively efficient. During the course of the survey of shoppers and businessmen, the majority of respondents felt that the street system within the CBD was either good or fair. Less than 20 per cent considered the street system as being poor, although several people indicated that improvements were needed.

While the streets within the CBD are able to handle present traffic volumes, future demands may prove to be too great for existing street arrangement. The fact that the main shopping street, Third Street, is also used as a state through highway results in a conflict of interest. The major concentration of shopping facilities is severed by his main artery and disrupts the free flow of pedestrians to and from the establishments located along both sides of the street.

PARKING

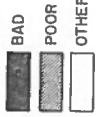
Similar to most cities of its size, International Falls relies heavily on its curb parking supply to meet parking demands within the CBD. Shoppers expect to park as near as possible to their primary destination downtown, and core area merchants are well aware of insufficient nearby parking. Parking lots, which handle most of the parking demands in the majority of large cities, are not well developed within the International Falls CBD.

During the recent parking survey, it was revealed that there are 654 parking spaces within the effective limit for parking serving the shopping core. This limit includes all parking spaces within 500' of the major retail concentration along Third Street, between Third and Fifth Avenues. Employee and private parking areas are not included in the survey since they are unavailable to the general shopper. Curb parking consists of 463 spaces, while available off-street parking is limited to 191 spaces. Curb parking is composed of 101 spaces which are not metered (21.8%) and 362 metered spaces (78.2%). While practically all of the metered spaces are limited to a maximum of two hours, ten short term (12





BUILDING CONDITION



minute) meters are in use along Third Street and within the area of greatest demand.

Despite the fact that the number of parking spaces represents only 63 percent of the desired supply, many of the available spaces are under used. During the recent parking survey, it was discovered that of the 654 available spaces, only 433 were in use. Since the survey was conducted in mid-afternoon during the summer (August 17, 1965), it is felt to be representative of near peak parking demands in terms of shopper and tourist usage. Saturday afternoon would probably show greater demand and fewer vacant spaces.

Although only 66 per cent of the total parking supply was in use during the time of the survey, the more popular parking locations were fully occupied. Metered locations along Third Street, between Third and Fifth Avenues, were all in use. Moving away from this intensely used area, the demand for parking space gradually declines. Within the more remote blocks, particularly to the south and east of the core, parking demands drop off considerably. Some streets show less than 20 per cent space utilization. The large municipal parking lot, immediately south of the core, was only 50 per cent utilized during the survey. Unmetered curb parking areas along the northside of Second Street were completely filled. It is assumed that employees of the Boise Cascade Corp. utilize most of this street frontage.

The desire of most shoppers to park as close as possible to the retail concentration is, of course, reflected by the above described parking usage and the results of the shopper's questionnaire. Several merchants felt that many local people will pass by downtown if they cannot find a convenient place to park.

BUSINESS TRENDS

As indicated by the results of the businessman's survey, the great majority (62.1%) of downtown merchants felt that business had been good in recent years. While a substantial minority considered business as fair, only three of the 29 businessmen interviewed stated that business was poor. Despite the fact that every person interviewed cited problems and undesirable features within the CBD, most merchants appeared to be satisfied with the present business climate and several were optimistic about the future. Good faith in the local economy and a willingness to improve and modernize conditions were well demonstrated by the fact that of the 29 stores and shops visited, nineteen underwent some remodeling during the past ten years. While most were only moderate in cost, several improvement projects consisted of complete remodeling and refurbishing.

As shown by the figures below, the above observations are borne out by the past three Censuses of Business, Retail Trade in Minnesota. While the sales shown are for all establishments within the city, the CBD core area is responsible for the major bulk of transactions. It should also be noted that although total retail sales within the county have been increasing since 1954, International Falls has absorbed most of this upsurge in business. The City's share of total sales within the county has increased from 74 percent in 1954 to 79 percent in 1963. The remainder of the county has actually felt a decrease in business volume.

RETAIL TRADE SALES TRENDS

	1954	1958	1963
International Falls	12,127	13,316	15,139
Remainder			
of Koochiching County	4,269	4,920	4,041
Koochiching County Total	16,396	18,236	19,180

(all figures in \$1,000)

Source: U. S. Censuses of Business, 1954, 1958, and 1963.

APPEARANCE

As indicated by the surveys of businessmen, shoppers, and tourists — few people considered the appearance of downtown buildings as being good. The majority of respondents felt that the appearance of downtown was only fair, while a rather large group replied that it was poor.

Despite improvements, such as new buildings downtown and some remodeled store fronts, the appearance of the CBD has changed little over the years. Unused, dilapidated structures create "eyesores" throughout many of the blocks within the retail core, and the lack of such amenities as landscaping and open space is most apparent. There exists a strong contrast between the major shopping blocks and the handsome civic center to the west, where ample open-space and attractive trees are found.

While the majority of stores and shops have pleasant interior spaces with attractive displays of merchandise, the buildings' exteriors leave much to be desired. The visitor or shopper walking along Third Street is confronted by an agglomeration of haphazardly placed signs, awnings, and other poor appearing features. Many buildings appear dull due to a lack of imaginative but harmonious color accents. Vacant lots and buildings also adversely affect the appearance of downtown. They are "dead" spaces, which are often used as merely junk or litter depositories.

THE SURVEY OF SHOPPERS AND TOURISTS

The City Planning Commission and its consultants, in cooperation with local merchants and Chamber of Commerce, conducted a survey of tourist and shopper attitudes within the downtown area. Several thousand opinion questionnaires were distributed among downtown merchants and were filled out by visitors to business establishments. The questionnaires were distributed on August 24th and 28th, 1965. The dates chosen were selected in order to derive the greatest response (one day being pay day at the Boise Cascade Corp. and the other a Saturday). As indicated by the accompanying summary of results, the questionnaires were designed to elicit a good, fair, or poor answer to each question with sufficient space for comments.



SHOPPER'S SURVEY

International Falls and South International Falls —
787 Respondents

Question	Answers By Per Cent of Total Response			
	Good	Fair	Poor	Unanswered
1. Appearance of downtown buildings	10.4	63.6	24.7	1.3
2. Appearance of downtown streets, sidewalks, etc.	27.6	59.3	12.5	0.6
3. Adequacy of parking in downtown	16.5	37.0	44.1	2.4
4. Location of parking to stores and offices	23.9	43.5	29.3	3.3
5. Traffic or street system downtown	35.7	43.1	17.5	3.7
6. Courtesy of sales people	64.4	29.2	5.5	0.9
7. Choice of goods	29.0	43.3	23.1	4.6
8. Accessibility of downtown to your home	69.1	27.4	2.5	1.0

Outlying Communities and Rural Areas — 193 Respondents

Question	Answers By Per Cent of Total Response			
	Good	Fair	Poor	Unanswered
1. Appearance of downtown buildings	23.8	63.2	11.9	1.1
2. Appearance of downtown streets, sidewalks, etc.	31.6	60.6	5.7	2.1
3. Adequacy of parking in downtown	17.1	36.3	40.9	5.7
4. Location of parking to stores and offices	28.0	39.9	29.01	3.1
5. Traffic or street system in downtown	38.9	44.9	9.3	7.2
6. Courtesy of sales people	74.5	18.7	4.7	2.1
7. Choice of goods	34.2	45.6	16.1	4.1
8. Accessibility of downtown to your home	48.2	19.2	7.2	25.4

Frequent Comments By Respondents

Need to improve appearance of downtown.
Need more parking spaces.
Poor merchandise selection.
Need restaurants with cocktail lounges.
Need public restroom facilities.

Tourist's Survey — 120 Respondents

Question	Answers by Per Cent of Total Response			
	Good	Fair	Poor	Unanswered
1. Points of interest (historical, cultural sites, etc.) in Falls area.	45.8	35.0	10.8	8.4
2. Adequacy of information regarding items of interest to the Falls area visitor	29.0	46.6	19.1	5.3
3. Choice of vacation goods and services	47.3	45.0	4.6	3.1
4. Range of recreational opportunities (things to do) in the Falls area	40.0	27.5	20.0	12.5
5. Overall vacation atmosphere of the Falls area.	53.3	32.5	7.5	6.7

Frequent Comments by Respondents

Enjoyed visiting the Falls area.
People are friendly.
Need restaurants with cocktail lounges.
Need to improve tourist attractions and camping facilities.

THE BUSINESSMAN'S SURVEY

Similar to the survey of shoppers and tourists, interviews were held with 29 merchants within the retail core area. No study and plan for the downtown would be complete without including the views and opinions of the people most directly concerned with downtown — the CBD businessmen. The comments, attitudes, and recommendations of these people will prove to be invaluable aids in the formulation of a plan for the future downtown. The following is a brief summary of the findings of this survey:

Question	Answers by Per Cent of Total Response		
	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Appearance of downtown buildings	3.5	58.6	37.9
2. Appearance of downtown streets, sidewalks, etc.	20.7	65.5	13.8
3. Adequacy of parking in downtown.	17.2	34.5	48.3
4. Location of parking to your business	31.0	34.5	34.5
5. Traffic or street system within downtown	44.8	44.8	10.3
6. State of business volume in recent years.	62.1	27.6	10.3
Own building—27.6% Lease building—27.6%			
Rent building—44.8%			
Do you presently have enough space for your business?			
Yes—55.2%			
No—44.8%			

Total additional space needs of those requiring more space.

Retail Trade	Consumer Service	Professional Service
76,900 sq. ft.	40,000 sq. ft.	5,000 sq. ft.

Have you made improvements to your property in recent years?

Yes—65%

No—35%

Most Frequently Mentioned Improvement Needs of Downtown:

Modernize and remodel store fronts.
More nearby, off-street parking.
Fill up vacant stores.
Tear down dilapidated structures and "eyesores".
More tourist facilities and attractions downtown.
Taxes too high.
Need cocktail lounges or good supper clubs downtown.
Stop use of Third Street as a "drag strip" by teenagers.
Keep stores open one night each week.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CBD PLAN

The major goal of the plan for downtown International Falls is to retain and improve this most important area of the City as the primary shopping facility for the entire Falls region. In order to accomplish this task, several objectives had to be considered — all necessary to the success of the plan. These objectives follow below:

1. Adequate space for the present and future needs of business.
2. Improvement to the circulation system, both vehicular and pedestrian, to create efficient and safe traffic movement patterns.
3. An expanded and integrated system of parking that is convenient to the street system and the downtown stores.

4. An attractive and pleasing shopping environment that complements the present civic center to the west and increases the enjoyment of those downtown.

DESIGN OF THE PLAN

Because the CBD core area is dependent on the pedestrian or comparative shopper, it is important to retain its present compact arrangement. In order to preserve this closeness of commercial functions, future expansion of the core should be limited. It is felt that space needs could be reasonably satisfied by the present six block area, and largely through replacement of the numerous obsolete and deteriorating buildings by new commercial structures. It is also felt that the two blocks immediately west of Fifth Avenue, and between Second Street and Fourth Street, would be logical areas for the eventual extension of core area activities. These two blocks presently form a bridge of undeveloped land, inappropriate uses, poor buildings, and a limited amount of core types of commercial use between the existing CBD core and the civic center. Their future development or redevelopment would provide needed space for new commercial buildings and would also serve as a strong, attractive link between the civic center and the existing core area.

The design of the expanded CBD core area (which is shown as eight blocks rather than the present six) includes a circumferential or loop system of thoroughfares around the major shopping concentration. Heavy vehicular traffic is thus kept out of the heart of downtown. Parking facilities are located within the core area, but at its periphery where they are readily accessible from surrounding thoroughfares and close to downtown stores. Through the closing of two streets (Third and Fourth Avenues) and by restricting through traffic on Third Street, the central area is made free for safe and easy movement of pedestrians and shoppers. With the addition of landscaping and attractive malls or walkways, an environment is created which will enhance the area, increase the enjoyment of being downtown, and tend to stimulate business.

FUTURE SPACE NEEDS

There are no methods of projecting future commercial space needs which are entirely reliable. However, estimates based on a forecast of trade area population are generally considered to be the most valid. This method, along with the present space needs reported through the Businessman's Survey, provided the basis for estimating future space requirements.

As has been previously reported by the study of human resources, the International Falls urban area population (the primary trade area population) is expected to increase from 11,300 in 1960 to 14,900 by 1980. The present population is estimated to be 12,200, and should increase by 22.6 percent during the next fourteen years. This interval is considered to be the planning period for the CBD, during which time the plan can be carried out.

The table below shows present and future space totals within the core area. Existing commercial space (retail

trade, consumer services, and professional services) were increased by 22.6 percent, with the present needs of the core area businessmen added to these projected space totals. Some uses, such as the numerous taverns and non-central business district oriented activities, were not included in the 1980 space needs. It is assumed that some of these businesses, particularly those housed in deteriorating or dilapidated buildings, will be eventually replaced by a higher order of commercial use. Other establishments, not dependent on being downtown, will move out of the core area in the future.

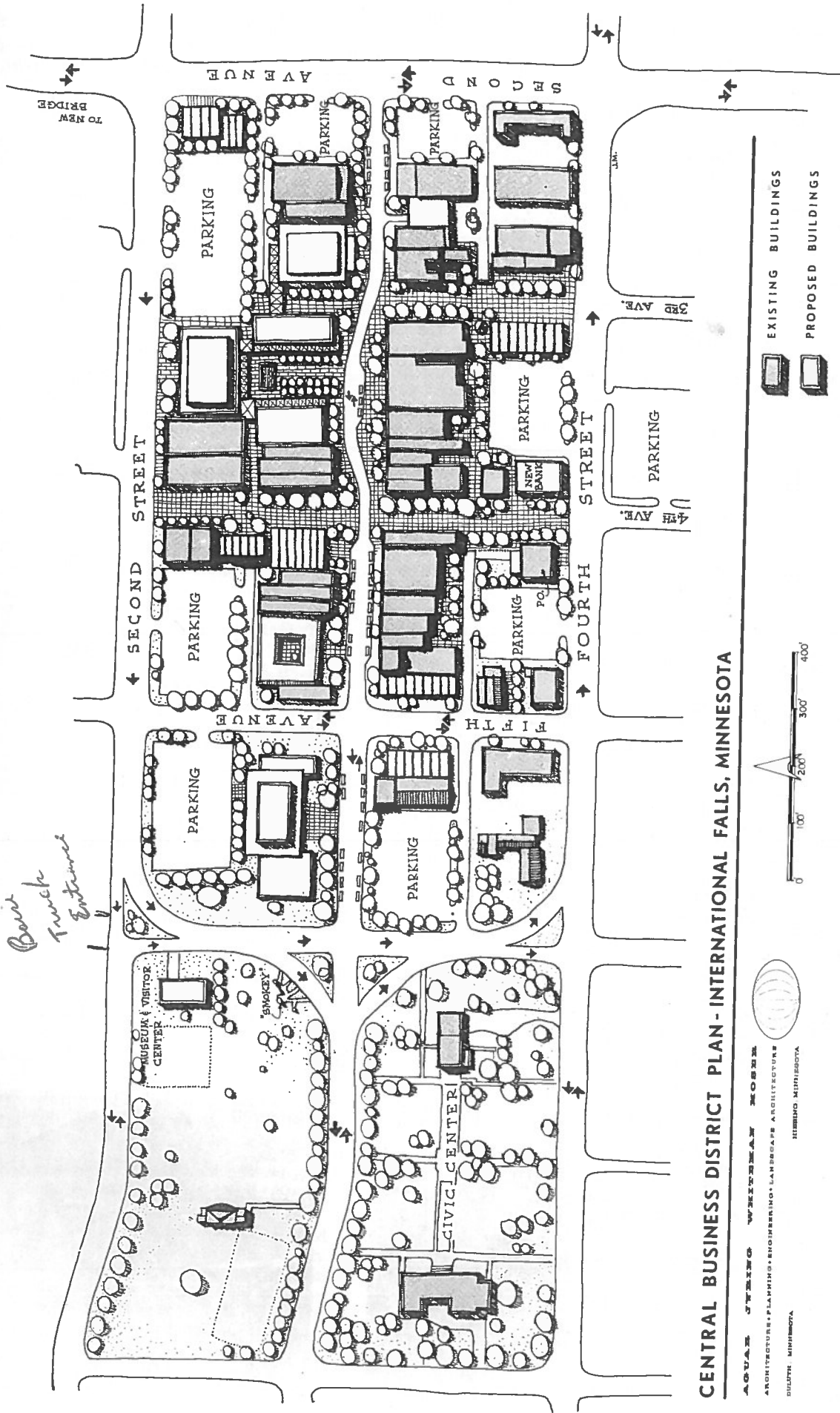
SUMMARY OF CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT CORE AREA SPACE NEEDS

Function	Floor Area in Square Feet		
	1965	1980	Net Change
Retail Trade	170,275	249,700	+79,425
Consumer Service	133,865	174,800	+40,935
Professional Service	43,715	58,600	+14,885
Public	5,250	6,000	+ 750
Semi-Public	26,675	26,675	
Light Industry	4,200	4,200	
Off-Street Parking	41,375	211,600	+170,225
Vacant Buildings	67,150		-67,150
Total	492,505	731,575	+239,070

With the anticipated future needs for more commercial space coupled with present deficiencies, it is unlikely that non-commercial uses will expand much beyond their existing levels. The plan assumes that these uses (also listed on the above table) will remain largely unchanged. A slight gain in public space is shown as the result of an enlarged office (U.S.D.A.) in the newly remodeled theater building. This office will replace the present facility, which is located in the Frederick Hotel. Although over 67 thousand square feet of vacant building space exist within the core area, only about 48 thousand square feet are within sound buildings. Most of the future needs would have to be accommodated by new structures, many of which would replace the numerous poor and bad buildings. It is proposed that some 55 such structures be demolished to pave the way for new business investment and expansion. It is recommended that all residential structures be razed and replaced by uses more compatible with the core area's function.

PARKING

There is a present deficiency of 375 parking spaces within the service limits of the CBD core. This figure is derived from acceptable standards for smaller cities which advise a ratio of one square foot of parking for every square foot of space used for retail trade and consumer services (a parking space for every 300 square feet of these two uses). In addition to this ratio, there should be one parking space for every 1,000 square feet of space devoted to professional service, public, semi-public, and light industrial uses. These standards were applied to the projected space needs to determine parking requirements by 1980 (see figures below).



CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT PLAN - INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA

AGUAS JYRRO WETTERMAN MOORE
 ARCHITECTURE • PLANNING • ENGINEERING • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
 DULUTH, MINNESOTA



INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT CORE AREA PARKING SUMMARY

	Number of Spaces*		Net Change
	1965	1980	
Curb Parking	463	370	- 93
Off-Street Parking	191	1130	+939
Total	654	1500	+846

* Number of parking spaces within 500 feet of the Core Area's shopping concentration (the service area).

The plan indicates eight parking lots near the periphery of the core area. These lots would accommodate 710 automobiles, with an additional 370 parking spaces found on the nearby streets. Curb parking on Third Street would be restricted to short term meters. Existing lots, which are immediately south of the core, and typified by the municipal parking area, would bring the total parking supply to 1220 spaces within 500 feet of the core area. Despite the loss of 93 curb spaces through proposed street closings and modifications, the core area would increase its parking supply by 566 spaces through completion of the plan. In order to reach the desired goal of 1500 nearby spaces, it is recommended that additional parking areas be acquired immediately south of the core area as increasing demands in the future warrant their addition. These would be particularly suitable for long-term parking by merchants and their employees. The core area spaces would thus be more readily available for shoppers.

CIRCULATION PLAN

It is recommended that a system of circumferential thoroughfares be developed to serve the shopping core. Most traffic would be shifted from Third Street, between Second and Sixth Avenues, to Second and Fourth Streets, which would become the major loop streets in the system. Third Street would be narrowed and redesigned to discourage its use by other than short-term parkers, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles. To the West of Sixth Avenue, Third Street would remain as it presently exists. The major north-south highway entrance to the CBD core would be moved from Third Avenue to Second Avenue, in order to create a more efficient traffic flow around the core and to improve the alignment with the existing as well as the proposed new bridge to Canada. Second Avenue would have to be widened to accommodate four traffic lanes.

It is further recommended that Second Street and Fourth Street be developed as one-way thoroughfares. The traffic carrying capacity of each of these streets would be about 22 percent higher than that which can be carried by Third Street as it exists today. In effect, nearly 2½ times as many vehicles could be moved by these two streets than by Third Street, which presently accounts for most of downtown's through and local traffic.

The primary purpose of the circulation plan is to provide for an efficient movement of automobile traffic around the CBD core, and yet allow the motorist convenient access to area parking facilities. The circulation system must serve downtown but not conflict with its real purpose — pedestrian oriented shopping.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT AND APPEARANCE

As mentioned above, the plan calls for the narrowing of Third Street to discourage its use by automobile traffic. For the same reason, the plan also recommends that Third and Fourth Avenue be ultimately closed to automobiles (between Second and Fourth Streets) and that they be redeveloped as pedestrian walkways or malls. Such an arrangement would do much to tie the core area together into one unified whole. Shoppers could move about easily and safely within the area as street crossings would be reduced to a minimum.

A system of malls and walkways are proposed linking the major shopping concentrations, and parking facilities, as well as uniting the core area with the civic center to the west. It is hoped that, where possible, all stores will have double frontage for shopping and servicing conveniences. It is recommended that existing stores be equipped with rear facades and entrances to serve parking lots and new walkways.

The visual improvement of downtown will depend on the provision of landscaping, attractive paving materials on the malls, street furniture (benches, attractive trash receptacles, etc.), and the face lifting or remodeling of many sound but poor appearing buildings. The replacement of old, substandard structures by new commercial buildings will rid the area of many "eyesores", and create an atmosphere that will stimulate additional investments and improvement. The plan presents only a skeleton for the improvement of downtown. In order for the plan to be truly realized, it will require more detailed planning and study of each building facade, street scene, and other individual physical parts. All improvement must be related to one another to create a shop-



ping environment which is visually pleasing throughout. Everything done should add to the enjoyment of being downtown. Some thought should also be given to enhancing the international flavor of the city center.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The plan for the future of the International Falls Central Business District would be of little value unless its proposals could be carried out in the years ahead. There are many effective "tools" or techniques for developing the plan — all must be used together for complete realization of the core area plan. The following are among the most important:

1. **Urban Renewal** is the most effective tool in eliminating substandard structures and opening up their sites for new development. Federal assistance is available under which the government will absorb the major portion of the net project cost of an urban renewal area (usually two-thirds). The net project cost is the difference between the cost of the project (property acquisition, demolition, site improvement, etc.) and its sale price. In order to induce new investment, the sale price is usually lower than the cost of the project. Any public improvements to the area, such as facilities, malls, and utilities, can qualify as a part or all of the local share. The International Falls CBD core area contains several blocks, particularly within its northeastern portion, that would be eligible for redevelopment through the Federal Government's urban renewal program.
2. **Zoning** provides the basis for insuring that commercial or office uses develop in the core area. A new zoning ordinance would divide the core into districts which match the goals of the plan. Other uses, such as residential and industrial activities, would not be permitted to absorb land needed for commercial expansion. The zoning ordinance would also provide the legal "teeth" for controlling signs, off-street parking space, and building height and bulk in the future.
3. **Organization** of the many groups and individuals concerned with downtown improvement is vital to the success of the plan. Coordination of these people into an effective working body is essential. It is suggested that a downtown development committee be organized and charged with the task of "getting the plan moving". More specifically this group would enlist the cooperation and support of citizens, promote and expedite major and minor projects, act as a clearing house for information on suggested design elements, and bring together merchants and property owners for block-by-block projects. Membership should include, but not be limited to, downtown businessmen, property owners, and public officials. People directly engaged in the building industry, such as realtors and contractors, could also add much to this committee. A working relationship must also be established between the committee and the Minnesota Highway Department to implement the circulation plan. Much would depend on their cooperation and interest.
4. **Capital Improvements Programming** is needed to budget municipal funds for such public im-

provements as malls, walkways, new utilities, and modifications to the street system. While more detailed planning is needed before these costs can be estimated, they should be considered as necessary investments in the success of the plan. The provisions of this program will gear improvements to the financial capabilities of the City.

5. **Beautification Projects** as indicated by the plan could be carried out with the help of grants amounting to 50 percent of total costs under the new Federal Urban Beautification and Improvement Program. Eligible activities, such as malls, squares and plazas, include the installation of fountains, decorative pavement, lighting, trees, street furniture, and similar improvements. Detailed design costs, such as preparation of plans and specifications, are also eligible for matching funds.

A prerequisite to receiving federal funds is that the City must officially adopt a "beautification program". This has been prepared as part of the current planning services and appears under the Community Appearance section of this report.

STAGING OF THE PLAN

The realization of the plan cannot be accomplished "overnight". It will require continued effort over a long period of time to create a new downtown in International Falls. A development period of fourteen years has been set in order to give a long-range perspective to core area changes and needs. The target date of 1980 is not "magic". It does, however, allow sufficient time to complete all elements of the plan. It should be thought of as a yard stick to gage progress and not as an absolute limit or fixed time period.

The completion of the plan has been divided into two stages. The first stage would include urban renewal of the worst sections of the core, addition of more off-street parking, and a limited amount of new commercial space. Blocks in the eastern portion of the area would be redeveloped during the first stage (first half of the development period). The closing and subsequent reuse of Fourth Avenue as a pedestrian mall should also be included in this first stage. To insure success of the plan, it is important that the circulation or street system be completed during this period.

The second stage would consist of further redevelopment, parking lot expansion, and completion of pedestrian malls and landscaping to the west. Most redevelopment would take place in the western half of the core area during the second stage, and would include expanding the core to the civic center area.

Many worthwhile projects can be started immediately. The downtown development committee should be organized as soon as possible. They could initiate many short term projects and began preliminary work on the major plan recommendations. Store front remodeling, cleaning up vacant yards, and the planting of some landscaping features could be done now, although they should be coordinated through the committee. Enlisting the support and cooperation of all civic organizations and the people of International Falls is perhaps the most important immediate job. The final outcome of the plan will depend on the willingness to work of all concerned about the future.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the 1967-1970 Capital Improvement Program* is to present to the City of International Falls an orderly schedule of capital improvements for the next five years through a well-rounded method of scheduling capital expenditures of the City. With annual review, the programming procedure becomes a continuing process, allowing an up-to-date schedule of projects to be maintained. Thus each year the best possible use may be made of personnel, equipment, and available funds. Many communities throughout the country are developing projected capital improvement programs because of rising costs in government operation brought on by public demand for improved facilities, higher wages by public employees, and higher costs encountered when making equipment purchases.

The capital improvement program is actually dealing with a small percentage of the city's yearly budget because most yearly expenditures pertain to direct department costs in wages, supplies and equipment. The only real expenditures that the Planning Commission could consider for future public improvements would be the International Falls Capital Outlay Fund, the Park Fund, and miscellaneous General Fund expenditures. The bulk of the \$700,000 plus annual budget is tied to operational costs, maintenance projects, bonded indebtedness, and other ordinary departmental expenditures.

TAX STRUCTURE

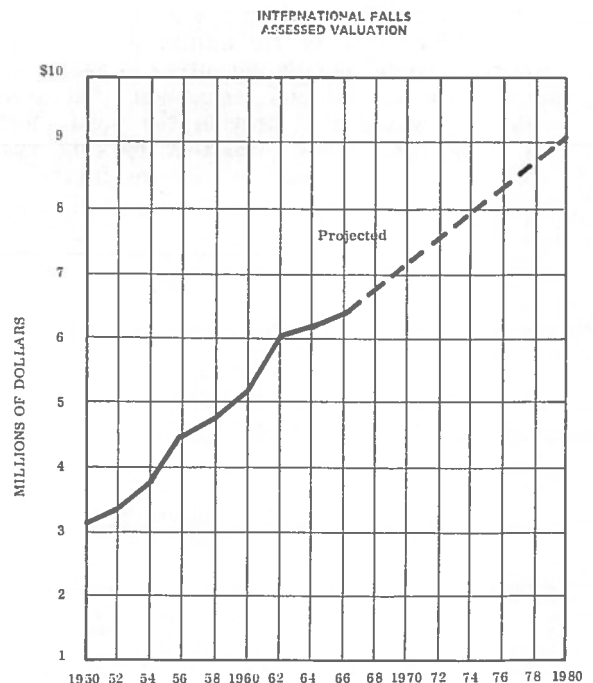
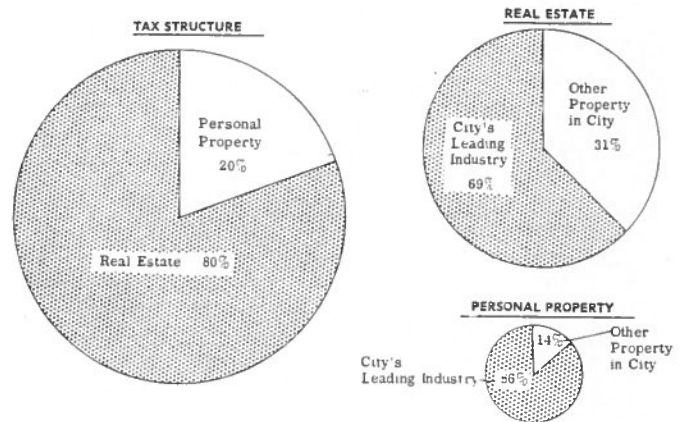
The main source of revenue in International Falls is derived from a real estate tax on all property within the City. The following chart illustrates all taxes levied in the City through the County Auditor's office. In 1965 the City's leading industry paid 69 percent of all real estate taxes in the City and 86 percent of the personal property taxes.

* For a more detailed report, refer to the chapter dated October, 1966.

The assessed valuation, a key to any tax structure, has doubled since 1950, and needless to say, revenue has more than tripled. The accompanying graph, "International Falls Assessed Valuation", shows this steady increase from 3.2 million dollars in 1950 to 6.4 million dollars in 1966, and is expected to continue rising to a little more than 9 million dollars by 1980. This sound valuation places the city on a solid base for its fiscal future. It will allow the city to look ahead and strive to continually build a city that is not only comfortable to live in but attractive to outsiders as well, particularly if it wants to continue to be the business hub of an area many miles around it. It is anticipated that increased valuation within the city will be tied to continued residential, industrial and commercial development. However, this growth, particularly in residential construction will be more limited than in the past because of lack of open space. Presently 81% of the land within the city is already developed.

MILL RATE

In 1966 the total mill rate in the city was 453 mills or an increase of almost 200 mills over 1950. Of the 1966 total, International Falls accounts for only 21%, increasing 26 mills since 1950. The mill rate chart shows



Projections based on new construction amounting to \$3,620,000 over the next 15 years and past 15 years experience on Industrial and Commercial development.

Source: County Auditor's Records.

that 49 percent of the mill rate goes to educational needs, 26 percent to the county, and the balance of 4 percent to the state.

The City is limited to a per capita tax which specifically covers the General Revenue or General Fund. Special laws cover such funds as the library, musical entertainment, recreation, parks, special street, bonded indebtedness, permanent improvements, firemen's relief, Public employees, and civil defense.

In the past, the City has figured out its annual budget and subtracted from the total estimated revenue from the liquor operation and other miscellaneous receipts. This is one of the reasons why the City has not had to levy up to its maximum.

BONDED INDEBTEDNESS

Bonded indebtedness is limited to 20 percent of the City's valuation. The accompanying graph shows that the City is not deeply in debt, but this figure actually indicates a more troubled picture since one of the outstanding bonds, a sewage treatment plant bond, is being partially paid off by a percentage of the net profit from the liquor operation, and water and sewer revenue. In other words, the only bond that is being paid off in full by a \$30,000 annual levy is a water tank bond. Both will be retired by 1982. Fortunately, the projects as outlined later in this report will be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis, eliminating indebtedness and high interest payments. This does not mean, however, that the City might not in the future deem it desirable to float a bond for a large item. This figure merely shows that the City is in good position to bond itself, if required.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

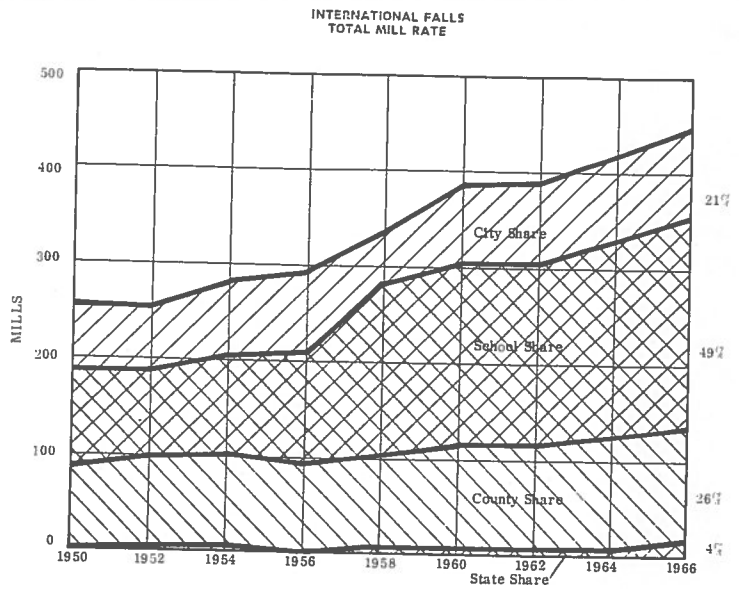
For the purposes of this report, since it is dealing with capital improvement projects under the control and jurisdiction of the city council, the revenue received in the General Fund, Capital Outlay and Park Funds will be examined. Other funds in the City will also be reviewed, but most are already committed to certain programs, such as civil defense, library, firemen's relief, public employees' retirement and similar phases of government.

Future Revenue

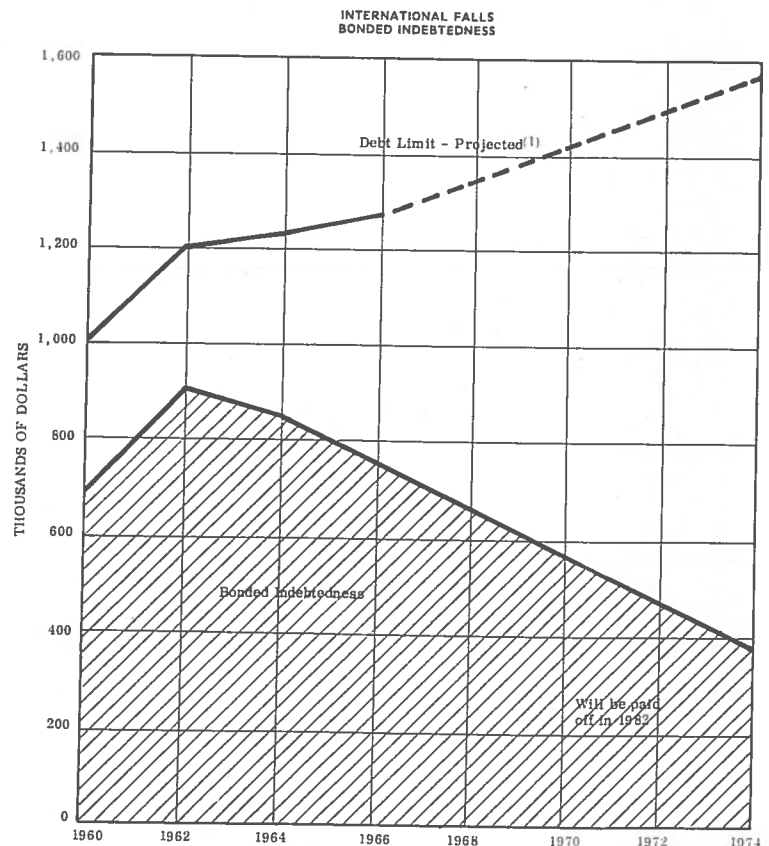
The tax levy in this report as shown on the following table is based on the per capita limitation of \$70, assuming that the city will levy to its maximum for budget purposes, and reduce the amount requested by receipts from the liquor operation, parking meter fund and similar revenue producing accounts. It is also anticipated that in 1970 the per capita limitation will be based on an assumed population of 7,268 people. In the estimated five year revenue, it has also been assumed that the other funds will be levied in accordance with the past five year experience, with the exception of those funds that have shown a constant increase per year, or in the instance of the park fund where the levy would directly tie in with the capital improvement projects as listed in the accompanying table.

ESTIMATED FIVE YEAR BUDGET

Wage adjustments added to the past five year average have provided the means for establishing a base to project future expenditure through 1971. The streets,



Source: County Auditor's Records.



Source: City Financial Reports.

(1) Debt Limit Based on 20% of Estimated Valuation.

curbs and gutter, and storm sewers have been averaged out and are included in the Permanent Improvement Fund. In the Electrical Fund, for example, \$7,000 per year is included for upgrading street lighting. Normally, this would be a capital improvements item. However, the City prefers to have this charged to the Electrical Fund, and, therefore, this item will not be included in the capital improvements program.

The General Fund includes a patrolman to be added to the police department in 1969. This will not provide the staff that the Police Chief suggests, but possibly coordination between the County Sheriff's Department and the City Police Department could provide the investigating staff required by both.

PROPOSED PROJECTS (IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM)

The table, "Estimated Heavy Equipment Replacement", details a \$116,605 estimated heavy equipment replacement schedule anticipated for the next five years. Police vehicles, amounting to \$7,500, are included in the Police Department's budget listed under the General Fund. It is noted that for the peak years 1967 and 1970, purchases might amount to \$48,000 and \$30,000 respectively. A good replacement program is a necessity in a city of this size. Too many communities ignore the condition of equipment, suffering in the end with high maintenance costs. The City carefully reviews this program each year and is made fully aware of what might require replacement. The City administration has an excellent inventory of all City equipment including years of estimated life. This program should be brought up to date periodically.

Proposed Landscape and Park Developments

CITY BEACH. It is anticipated that over the next five years approximately ten picnic tables per year will need replacing.

STREET TREES. The street tree program should be started within the five year program, particularly within newer neighborhoods where lack of street trees is in complete contrast to older sections of the City. This item is scheduled for 1970 and could qualify for Urban Beautification and Improvement Funds. The City's share could either be paid by the City or assessed to the property owner.

RIVERSIDE PARK. This narrow stretch of land along the Rainy River, adjacent to a residential area, could be developed into a fine city park. It is recommended that in the next five years, ten picnic units be built and a comfort station be constructed on the site. Water and sewer lines are within close proximity and if constructed out of masonry materials and closed in the evening hours, vandalism could be limited. Because of deep water hazards along the river, this area should not be developed as a children's "play lot".

ELEVENTH STREET PLAYGROUND. This playground is in a good location but needs considerable rehabilitation. The present building should be reconstructed during the next five years along with considerable landscaping and installation of new modern playground equipment. A revamped playground in this area would add much to the neighborhood environment of the surrounding area.

CARSON-LUPIE PLAYGROUND. This neighborhood playground is also in need of considerable landscaping. It is also recommended that new equipment be installed within the next five years.

CIVIC CENTER AREA. Shade trees and coniferous shrubs should be planted in the Civic Center area, and if the band shelter park is to be maintained, shade trees are also needed for that area.

RIVERVIEW PARK. Adjacent to the new subdivision and across from the high school area, this beautiful park is nicely wooded and should be developed into a picnic area that would also include a comfort station.

CLARK'S PARK. Development of this park should receive high priority. Included in the plan should be a sanitation system and sufficient landscaping to be attractive for residents of the area and outside visitors.

DOWNTOWN BEAUTIFICATION. The program includes street trees or planters in a limited amount. If the central business district plan is adopted and an Urban Renewal Program begun, the downtown beautification program should be closely tied in with it.

AIRPORT LANDSCAPING. The first impression of the City by people flying into International Falls is the environment of the airport. Landscaping could add greatly to this impression.

Other Projects

PARKING LOT: A 25 vehicle parking area near the city hall is badly needed, since at the present time there is no off street parking in the area, with the exception of the Fire Department entrance.

LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT: Expansion of the present library into the entrance area will provide additional stack space. Revamping of the library is also recommended.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Possible city hall expansion, a continued street tree program, park improvements, improved central business district, and possibly a municipal swimming pool are projects for the future. The advantage of a five-year capital improvements program is that it can be updated each year. If money is available, projects can be advanced and new projects added. A five year outlook will continuously be available to city officials.

PROJECTED REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Income

The table of "Projected Revenue and Expenditures" summarizes income from all sources, and deducts operating expenses and items mentioned in the capital improvement program. The balance for other projects and emergencies is substantial. However, it should be emphasized that the income, as suggested, was derived from using the per capita limitation to its maximum. If the city desires to carry on as it has in the past, it still could levy for less and carry on the program as recommended. It should also be pointed out that these figures do not reflect income received annually from the liquor store operations, nor does it include income

from the parking meter fund, possible water and sewer profits or any other miscellaneous income derived from special funds.

Federal Assistance

The proposed projects as shown on the following table

clearly show that the anticipated budget includes a large estimated federal or state participation expenditure. In fact, over half of the proposed projects should qualify for federal or state participation under either the Urban Beautification and Improvements Program, or from the Land and Water Bill.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS ESTIMATED 5-YEAR REVENUE (GENERAL AND SPECIAL FUNDS)

General Fund	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Tax Levy (1)	\$474,460	\$474,460	\$474,460	\$516,460	\$516,460
Capital Outlay	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Subtotal	\$474,460	\$474,460	\$474,460	\$516,460	\$516,460
Licenses & Permits	\$ 6,330	\$ 6,330	\$ 6,330	\$ 6,330	\$ 6,330
Court Fines, Fees	16,090	16,090	16,090	16,090	16,090
Int. & Prop. Income	8,130	8,130	8,130	8,130	8,130
Other Taxes					
Cig. Tax	11,900	11,900	11,900	11,900	11,900
Liq. Tax	7,850	7,850	7,850	7,850	7,850
Mobile Home Tax	2,000	2,100	2,200	2,300	2,400
Charges for Services	5,690	5,690	5,690	5,690	5,690
Other	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,600
Subtotal	\$ 62,590	\$ 62,690	\$ 62,790	\$ 62,890	\$ 62,990
Total (Gen'l Fund)	\$537,050	\$537,150	\$537,250	\$579,350	\$579,450
Library Fund					
Tax Levy	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500	\$ 26,000	\$ 26,500
Other	23,300	24,100	24,950	25,350	25,800
Subtotal	\$ 48,800	\$ 49,600	\$ 50,450	\$51,350	\$ 52,300
Musical Entertainment					
Tax Levy	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Subtotal	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Recreation Fund					
Tax Levy	\$ 21,900	\$ 20,800	\$ 20,840	\$ 21,380	\$ 21,910
Subtotal	\$ 21,900	\$ 20,800	\$ 20,840	\$ 21,380	\$ 21,910
Park					
Tax Levy	\$ 4,300	\$ 7,250	\$ 8,250	\$ 9,250	\$ 6,500
Subtotal	\$ 4,300	\$ 7,250	\$ 8,250	\$ 9,250	\$ 6,500
Special Street					
Tax Levy	\$ 32,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Subtotal	\$ 32,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Bond & Interest					
Tax Levy	\$ 29,200	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Subtotal	\$ 29,200	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Permanent Improvement					
Tax Levy	\$ 30,000	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700
Subtotal	\$ 30,000	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700	\$ 31,700
Public Employee Retirement Assoc.					
Tax Levy	\$ 29,200	\$ 27,000	\$ 29,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 29,000
Subtotal	\$ 29,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 29,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 29,000
Firemen's Relief					
Tax Levy	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Subtotal	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Civil Defense					
Tax Levy	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Subtotal	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Total — Special Funds	\$201,400	\$200,850	\$205,240	\$295,680	\$260,410
Total Gen'l & Special Funds	\$738,450	\$738,000	\$742,490	\$785,030	\$785,860

(1) Based on a \$70.00 per capita limitation.

(2) Included in Gen'l Fund Tax Levy.

**INTERNATIONAL FALLS ESTIMATED 5-YEAR BUDGET (EXPENDITURES)
(GENERAL AND SPECIAL FUNDS)**

	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
General:					
Administrative	\$104,000	\$104,890	\$111,460	\$114,510	\$120,660
Assessor	10,000	10,570	11,170	11,810	12,490
Engineering	17,300	18,300	19,400	20,510	21,770
Garage	25,700	26,090	26,500	26,940	27,400
Electrical	44,800	45,590	46,480	47,420	48,420
Street Dept.	87,800	90,900	94,600	94,600	98,300
Grounds	31,900	25,680	26,460	27,270	28,130
Fire Department	52,100	54,620	57,290	60,120	63,120
Police Dept.	91,900	101,930	107,150	112,690	118,560
Capital Outlay (1)	45,900	12,300	16,000	30,300	4,600
Subtotal	\$511,400	\$490,870	\$515,510	\$546,170	\$543,450
Special Funds:					
Library	\$ 48,800	\$ 49,600	\$ 50,450	\$ 51,350	\$ 52,300
Musical Entertainment	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Recreation	21,900	20,300	20,840	21,380	21,190
Park (2)	4,300	7,250	8,250	9,250	6,500
Special Street	32,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Bond Interest—Sewerage	29,200	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Permanent Improvement	30,000	31,700	31,700	31,700	31,700
Public Employee Retirement	29,200	27,000	29,000	27,000	29,000
Firemen's Relief	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Civil Defense	2,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Subtotal	\$201,400	\$200,850	\$205,240	\$205,680	\$206,410
Total Gen'l & Special Funds	\$712,800	\$691,720	\$720,750	\$751,850	\$749,860
"Other" Proposed Improve.	\$ 12,000	\$ 3,400	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total Anticipated Budget	\$724,800	\$695,120	\$720,750	\$751,850	\$749,860

(1) Estimated heavy equipment replacement other than Police vehicles.

(2) Proposed projects (local share) Capital Improvement Program.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS ESTIMATED HEAVY EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT

Replacement Due	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	Total Estimated Cost
Police car (1)	\$ 2,500 (1)		\$ 2,500 (1)		\$ 2,500 (1)	\$ 7,500 (1)
Stude. 2-ton truck				\$4,400		4,400
Dodge 2-ton dump				4,900		4,900
White 8-ton truck	5,300					5,300
Elgin street sweeper	16,000					16,000
Allis Chalmers motor patrol	20,000					20,000
Low Boy trailer		\$1,800				1,800
Mich. Front End Loader			16,000			16,000
Chev. 1/2 — ton truck	2,400					2,400
Dodge 1/2 — ton truck					2,400	2,400
Car — parking meter					2,200	2,200
Arch Walden Ambulance		10,500		5,000		5,000
Sedan (Engr.)	2,200					10,500
Fire Truck (pumper)				16,000		2,200
	\$48,400	\$12,300	\$18,500	\$30,300	\$ 7,100	\$116,600
Less: Police Budget Item (2,500)			(2,500)		(2,500)	(7,500)
Capital Outlay	\$45,900	\$12,000	\$16,000	\$30,300	\$ 4,600	\$109,100

(1) Included in Police Department Budget.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS PROPOSED PROJECTS (IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM)

	Total Estimated Cost	Est. Fed. or State Partic.	City Estimated Cost	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Landscaping & Park Development								
City Beach	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500 (2)	\$ 500					
Street Trees	7,500	3,750 (2)	3,750 (3)	\$ 500	\$	\$	\$ 3,750	\$
Riverside Park	11,000	8,350 (2)	2,750					
11th St. Playgr.	12,000	3,500 (1)	8,500		2,750			
Carson-Lupie Playgr.	7,000	3,500 (1)	3,500		1,000	5,000		2,500
Riverview Park	10,200	7,650 (2)	2,550			1,000	1,000	1,500
Clarks Park	26,000	19,500 (2)	6,500				2,500	
Civic Center Area	5,000	2,500 (1)	2,500	3,000	3,500			
Downtown Beautif.	7,500	3,750 (1)	3,750	800		1,000	700	
Airport Landscaping	2,500	1,250 (1)	1,250			1,250	1,250	1,250
Subtotal	\$ 90,700	\$ 55,150	\$35,500	\$4,300	\$7,250	\$8,250	\$9,250	\$6,500
Other Projects:								
Park lot - City Hall	\$ 3,400		\$ 3,400		\$3,400			
Library Improve.	12,000		12,000	12,000				
Subtotal	\$ 15,400		\$ 15,400	\$12,000	\$ 3,400	0	0	0
Total	\$106,100	\$ 55,150	\$ 50,950	\$16,300	\$10,650	\$8,250	\$9,250	\$6,500

Future Projects (Beyond Five Years):

Clarks Park (con't)
Central Bus. Dist.
Library Development
City Hall Expansion
Street trees (con't)
Park Improve. (con't)
Municipal Swimming Pool
Tennis Courts

- (1) Estimated Federal grant from the Urban Beautification and Improvement Program.
(2) Estimated 3/4 grant from the Land and Water Bill.
(3) Trees could be planted by property assessment in certain sections of the city.

INTERNATIONAL FALLS SUMMARY OF PROJECTED REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

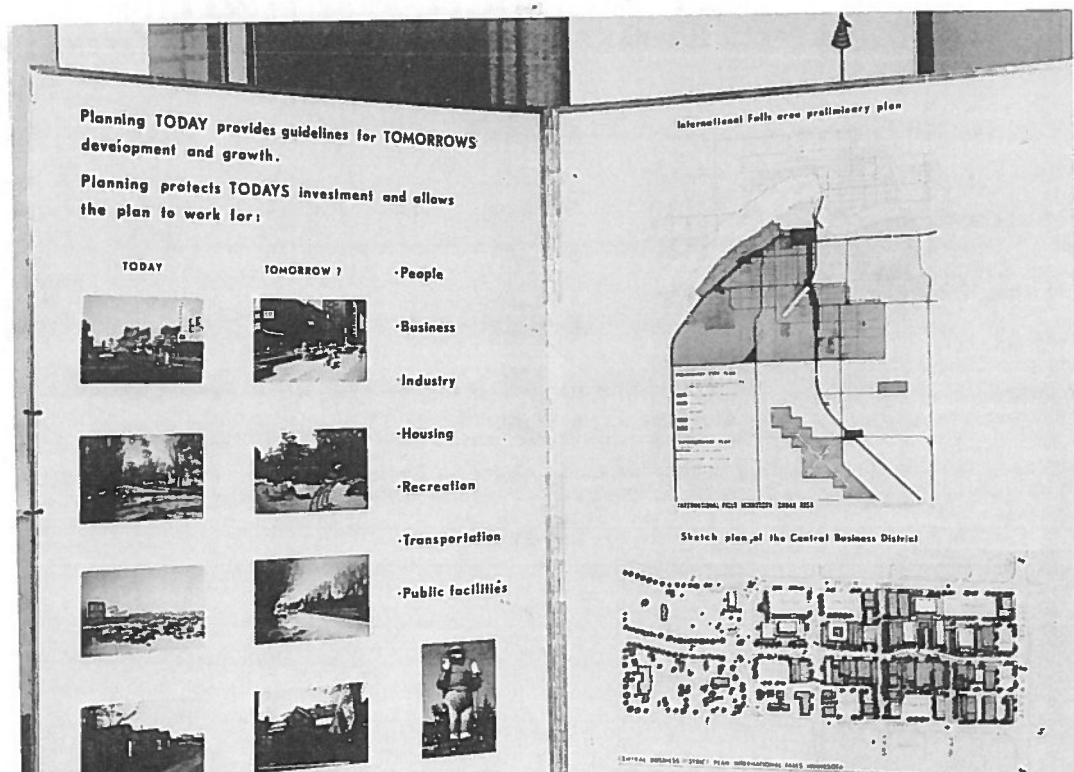
	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	5 Years Totals
Income from all sources (1)	\$738,450	\$738,000	\$742,490	\$785,030	\$785,860	\$3,789,830
Less:						
Normal Operat. Exp. (2)	465,500	478,570	499,510	515,870	538,850	2,498,300
Subtotal	\$272,950	\$259,430	\$242,980	\$269,160	\$247,010	\$1,291,530
Exp. of Special Funds (3)	197,100	193,600	196,990	196,430	199,910	984,030
Subtotal	\$ 75,850	\$ 65,830	\$ 45,990	\$ 72,730	\$ 47,100	\$ 307,500
Anticip. Heavy Equip. Replacements Cap. Outlay	45,900	12,300	16,000	30,300	4,600	109,100
Subtotal	\$ 29,950	\$ 53,530	\$ 29,990	\$ 42,430	\$ 42,500	\$ 198,400
Proposed Projects — Capital Improve. Program	16,300	10,650	8,250	9,250	6,500	50,950
Balance for Other Projects and Emergencies	\$ 13,650	\$ 42,880	\$ 21,740	\$ 33,180	\$ 36,000	\$ 147,450

- (1) Tax levy and other income including county or school share in library operation. Revenue anticipated but NOT included are: liquor operations, water and sewer, ambulance, airport, state aid streets and parking meter fund.
(2) Estimate from Table VI, General Subtotal less Capital outlay.
(3) Estimate = Subtotal of Special Funds, Table VI, less Park Fund.

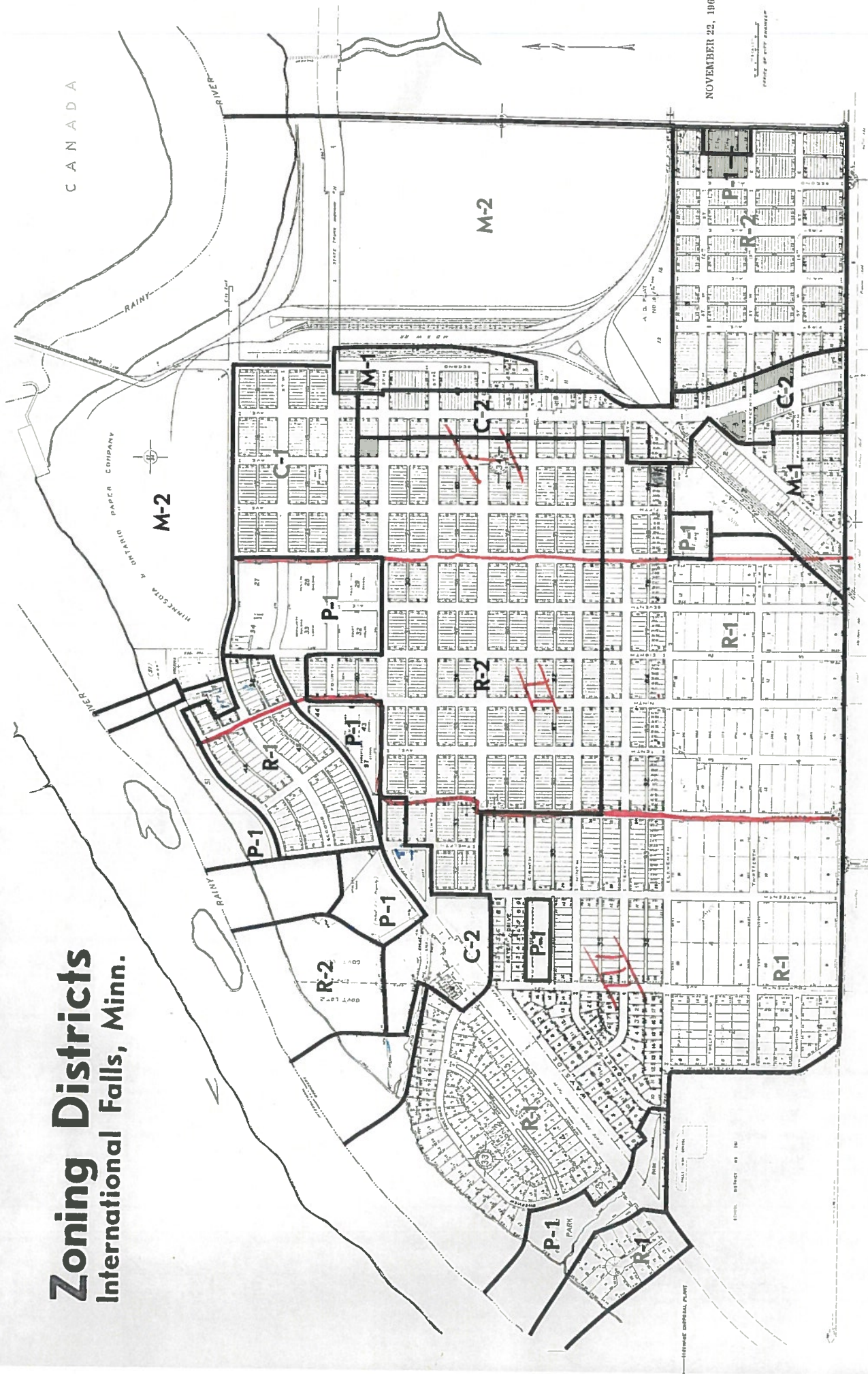
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A number of steps will be necessary to carry out the recommendations of the Urban Area Plan. Some steps, such as the adoption of Subdivision Platting Regulations and the creation of a Housing and Redevelopment Authority have already been taken. The most important steps remaining are outlined below:

1. Adoption by the City Council of the recommended zoning ordinance as revised following the public hearing held on November 22, 1966. The appointment of a Zoning Officer and a Board of Adjustment will be needed to begin the enforcement of this new ordinance created to carry out the city portion of the urban area plan.
2. The Village of South International Falls should adopt subdivision platting regulations and a comprehensive zoning ordinance with the same general standards as that of the City.
3. The Koochiching County Board of Commissioners should be encouraged to adopt the subdivision standards applicable to the unincorporated area beyond two miles of the city limits as well the new zoning ordinance for all unincorporated areas of the county as recommended by the County Planning Advisory Commission.
4. The City Council should adopt the Capital Improvements Program as a guide to capital expenditures over the next five years and make arrangements for annual review and updating.
5. The City Council and School Board of District No. 361 should adopt the Community Appearance Plan as the Official Beautification Plan and Improvement Program and make application for Title VII funds for the landscaping of school sites, planting of street trees and making other improvements to beautify the urban area.
6. Continue the program of citizen participation by making use of the colored slide programs and scripts available to keep the subject of long-range planning before individuals, private organizations, civic clubs, and public bodies.
7. The planning commission should work with various groups to prepare specific plans and programs in respect to the following key proposals of the plan:
 - a) Improved housing conditions including low rent housing for the elderly.
 - b) Urban renewal projects within the Central Business District and other eligible areas.
 - c) Parks and recreation areas.
 - d) Beautification projects.
 - e) Coordinate plans with Fort Frances, Ontario and with city, state, and county highway departments regarding the new international bridge, and other highway improvements, and major land use decisions of interest to the urban area on both sides of the border.
 - f) Work with the Chamber of Commerce, Retail Merchants Association and other organizations to carry out the Central Business District Plan.
 - g) Collaborate with the appropriate groups and organizations to carry out the features of the Workable Program for Community Improvement, help in establishment of the Junior College, new hospital, truck belt-line route, airport expansion, library improvements, arena and other facilities that should be planned in accordance with the frame of reference provided by the urban area plan.



Zoning Districts International Falls, Minn.



NOVEMBER 22, 1966

SCALE: 1" = 100'

EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES — INTERNATIONAL FALLS URBAN AREA

Name	Location	Size in Acres		General Condition — Aug. 1966*			Special Features; Existing Facilities & Equipment	Recommendations; Suggested Improvements
		Exist.	Pot.	Facilities	Maintenance	Environment		
Riverview Park	West of Riverview Addition	7.5	10.5	G	G	G	Wooded ravine with creek, views of Rainy River and Canada. One acre developed with new playground equipment: 4 large swings, 3 seat swings, 3 see saws, 1 small slide, 1 "monkey bar".	Provide drinking water and sanitary facilities, scenic overlooks with benches, picnic tables, separate "tot-lot" with modern play sculpture equipment, trails to river, protective fence along riverbank.
Eighth Street Playground **	Between 13th & 14th Aves. & 8th St. (Vac.)	2.2	2.2	G	F	G	Flat site, few trees. One-half of site dev. with concrete block warming house, lighted hockey rink, basketball back-stop, 6 seat swings, 4 large swings, 3 see saws, 1 small slide, 1 "monkey bar", 1 merry-go-round, 1 sand box.	Needs landscaping, additional shade trees and planned separation of age groups. "Tot-lot" with new equipment, few benches are recommended for western end of block.
Athletic Park	3rd St. West of 12th Ave.	12.3	12.3	G	G	G	Excellent stadium and athletic field. Reported to be one of the best constructed football fields in the state. School district owns 6 acres; city 6.3 acres. City property has wooded section that slopes steeply to Rainy River. Lighted baseball, and football practice field and basketball.	Off-street parking is greatest need. Consideration has been given to removing the ball diamond. This site is presently under consideration for elderly housing. Under any redevelopment plan, off-street parking must be added. Landscaping is needed to screen out adjoining trailer park.
Riverside Park	North side Riverside Drive	6.0	7.0	None	F	G	Fine view of Rainy River islands and Ft. Frances, Pot. for dev. as a visitor park if min. facilities are provided. Good trees. Recent clearing of underbrush and new street lights has greatly improved site. Safety fence is needed near water's edge. Maintenance must be given high priority if developed as tourist park.	Excellent potential for hiking trail west along Rainy River with "scenic overlooks. Historic "Bakers Acre" should be added to park and burial site of the city's first white settler should be identified with an attractive historic plaque. Site should be developed with 10 picnic tables, sanitation fac. and benches.
Smoky Bear Park	North side 3rd at Civic Center	4.8	4.8	F	G	F Adjoining Commercial uses to the east need cleaning up and sign control	"Smoky the Bear" statue is area's most photographed subject. This is the only "tourist park" now located within the city. New Historical Museum and Visitors' Information Center under construction. Site contains 2 tennis courts, band concert shell, lighted hockey rink, 5 benches, 4 picnic tables (2 with sun shelters).	Additional shade trees and landscaping for new building needed. Band shell is in need of repairs. This is poor location for picnicing. Tables should be moved to Riverside or Riverview Park.
3rd St. Playground**	3rd St. W. of 8th Ave.	1.0	1.0	F	F	F	Crowded site with no room for expansion. Tiny toilet building, dead tree stump and 5' chain link fence gives poor impression of a space designed for "fun". Site contains 5 large swings, 3 chair swings, 4 see saws, 3 small slides, 1 merry-go-round, 2 horizontal bars, 1 "monkey bar", paved basketball court. Few trees.	More imaginative equipment and good painting and landscaping could do much to improve appearance. Equipment for each age group should be separated. Model "tot-lot" could be developed here convenient to public and church schools.
11th St. Playground**	11th St. & 6th Ave.	2.3	5.0	F	F	F	Barren site, no trees or landscaping. Poorly built warming house needs rehabilitation. Earth hill for sleding, hockey rink and equipment: 5 large swings, 4 see saws, 1 small slide, 1 merry-go-round, 1 "monkey bar", sand box, 1 basketball standard.	Needs plan for better organization of site and equipment. Building repairs, landscaping and "tot-lot" equipment. Site could be expanded but is adequate for present type of use.
Carson-Lupie Playground	3rd Ave. E. & 12th St.	2.0	2.0	G	F	F	Same as 11th St. playground with addition of set of 3 seat swings. Equipment is placed in row along 3rd Ave. E. (Burner Rd.) dangerously close to this industrial route. Building is in good condition.	Same as 11th St. Playground. Also needs fence to protect children on 3rd Ave. side.
City Beach	Rainy Lake Sec. 30, 71/23	4.6	?	G	G	G	Beautiful sand beach, birch grove picnic area. Capacity for 400 swimmers. About 30 picnic tables — some in poor condition.	Excessive informational signs and obsolete out-buildings should be removed. Expand site if at all possible. Replace picnic tables as needed.
Clarks Park	Near Rainy Lake Sec. 29, 71/23	15.0	15.0	F	F	G	Site has been overcut, many good trees lost. Ten campsites and a few picnic sites are not well defined — afford no privacy. No views of lake but small public access is nearby. Site is adjacent to new Highway No. 11.	Needs overall plan, better sanitation facilities, reforestation. Coordinate improvements with other recreation developments proposed nearby by County's Outdoor Recreation Plan.

* General Condition:

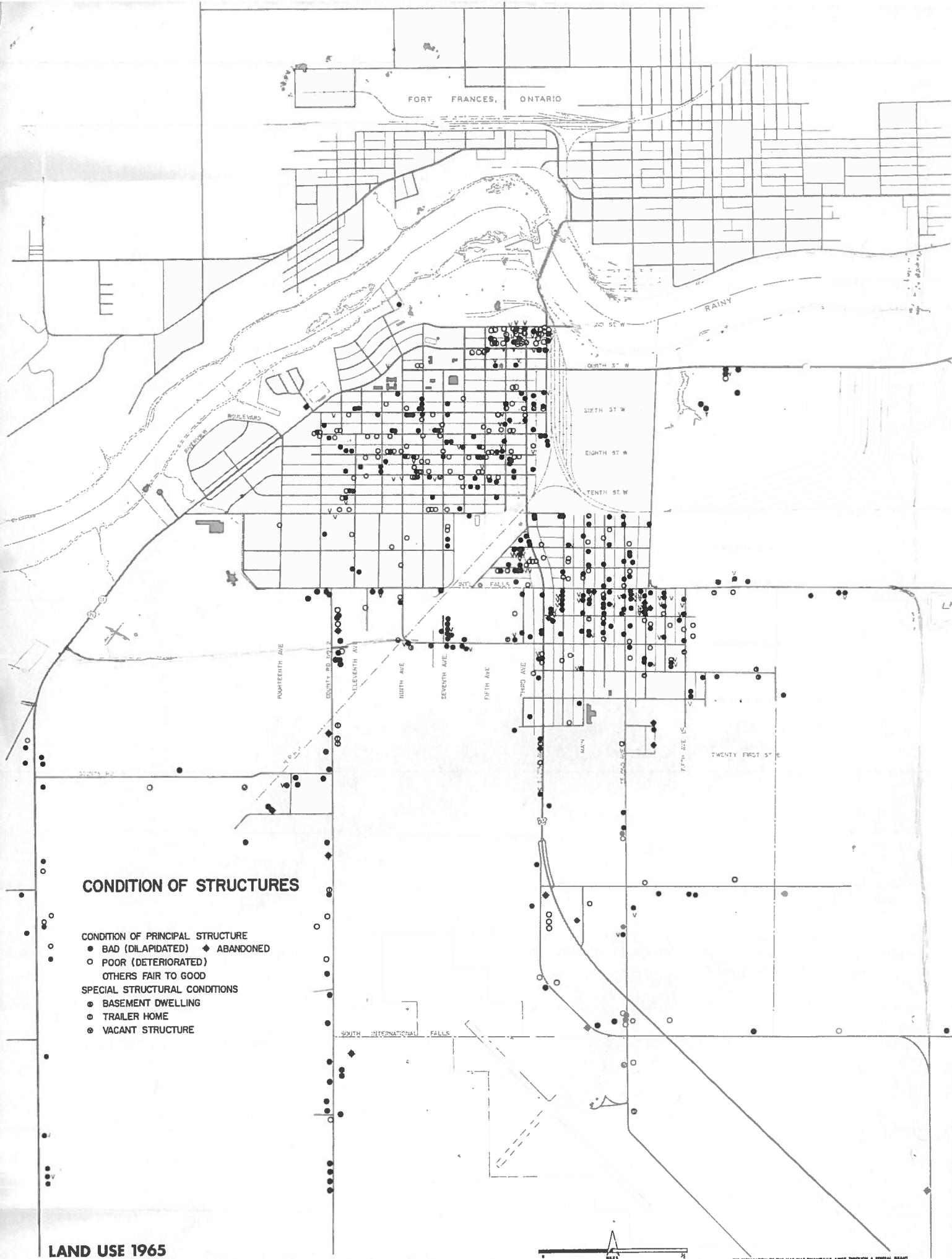
G — Good

F — Fair

P — Poor

** All parks and playgrounds should be named. Historical names or early pioneers might be used in place of street locations currently used.





FORT FRANCES, ONTARIO

RAINY

FOURTH ST W

SIXTH ST W

EIGHTH ST W

TENTH ST W

SEVENTH AVE

EIGHTH AVE

NINTH AVE

TENTH AVE

ELEVENTH AVE

THIRTEENTH AVE

FOURTEENTH AVE

FIFTEENTH AVE

SIXTEENTH AVE

SEVENTEENTH AVE

CONDITION OF STRUCTURES

- CONDITION OF PRINCIPAL STRUCTURE
 - BAD (DILAPIDATED)
 - POOR (DETERIORATED)
 - OTHERS FAIR TO GOOD
- SPECIAL STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS
 - ◆ ABANDONED
 - ◐ BASEMENT DWELLING
 - ◑ TRAILER HOME
 - ◒ VACANT STRUCTURE

LAND USE 1965
INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA URBAN AREA

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY ASSISTED THROUGH A FEDERAL GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 101 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1949 AS AMENDED, AND ADMINISTERED BY THE DIVISION OF COMMUNITY PLANNING OF THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT