

space as well as eliminate Albany Street from the very confused intersection of Main Street, State Street, and Albany Street. Both affected blocks of Albany Street would be made one-way, further to assist in clarifying traffic at this intersection.

A second parking area is proposed across Mary Street from the County Building, extending to the new addition of the Herkimer Hotel and between the rear of the buildings on Main Street and the Elks Lodge. Some of this area is presently being used for parking, but the goal is to combine all such spaces into larger, more efficient and easier to use parking facilities. In all cases it is recommended that as many spaces as possible be metered in order to promote the greatest use of the spaces available. The revenue which would be realized from these spaces will also greatly assist in the provision of additional downtown parking spaces in succeeding stages.

Of particular interest in the first stage is the renewal of the portion of Main Street between Park Avenue and the Acme Store. Several considerations are involved in this area, including the Library, the existing Village parking areas, the parking required by the Prospect Hotel and the need to encourage the development of pedestrian oriented business in this area. As shown in the Master Plan, the parking areas would be reoriented so that more parking spaces would be located close to Main Street yet the Hotel would have the same number of spaces as at present. Reasonable land area would be provided on the corner of Park Avenue and Main Street next to the Library for the development of a commercial building, especially with the better provision for access to the Village parking area. Additional land would also be made available to the north of the Library for modern commercial buildings which would also have direct pedestrian access from the parking area. It is also recommended that the area devoted to the

public in front of the Library be increased and benches and other amenities should also be provided. The object is to provide a space for the pedestrian shopper to rest in the shade of the wonderful trees at the Library, and to provide a more pleasant visual setting for the Library.

As shown, the new building on the corner of Park Avenue would be set back perhaps twenty feet in order to provide additional pedestrian space and allow for sidewalk activities by the merchants that are now nearly impossible. Such a change in the building line would also be far more interesting from a visual point of view, particularly considering the length of the shopping area.

Stage two of the Redevelopment Plan shows how the basic principles for redevelopment would be applied to another major area of the Central Business District. In this stage most of the block between State Street and Green Street on the east side of Main Street would be modernized and additional parking spaces provided at the rear of these buildings through to Washington Street. Again, the concept of the plan as applied to this area is clearly seen. It is, simply, to provide parking where the shopper arriving by automobile can easily find it and where the walking distance from the parking space to the stores is very short, preferably less than 300 feet. It should be noted that for any stores in this area to take full advantage of the parking provided, new store "fronts" would be required at the rear of these stores. These new entrances could provide new frontage for these stores and would be most effective if sidewalks with a canopy were provided.

What is really needed here, and this applies to all of downtown as well, is more attention to the needs and desires of pedestrian shoppers. Where an area is made attractive to customers through adequate parking, short walking distances, protection from sun (on hot summer days) and rain or

snow, pleasant surroundings and last but certainly not least, modern merchandising methods, business will prosper. When other shopping areas, or new suburban shopping centers, provide these facilities the area that does not will not prosper. While the Central Business District in Herkimer is in an enviable position at the moment as far as nearby communities are concerned, the dollar volume of sales, adjusted to account for the present value of the dollar, shows an absolute decrease. If this trend is not reversed, and this in a short period of time, the business presently being lost bit by bit will be very difficult to recapture. The statistics show that a very serious problem is developing and action should be taken immediately to counteract and reverse present trends.

Stage three is similar to stage two in approach, but is concerned primarily with the block from Park Avenue to State Street on the west side of Main Street. In this area it is likely that some of the existing buildings would have to be cleared. Advantage should be taken of this to vary the building line to obtain more variety along Main Street. In this case, advantage is also taken of new construction to close the intersection of Park Avenue and Green Street to vehicles. It would then serve as a small pedestrian area, and could also be the location of sidewalk displays. As there are utilities underground in the street, no building should be built here.

Stage three is also concerned with the provision of a new fire headquarters and Municipal Building. These are proposed to be located adjacent to the Elks Lodge for the former and adjacent to the County Buildings across from the new fire headquarters for the latter. The parking area, also shown on the Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Area, is proposed for use by the County personnel as well as for the use of people

in the Municipal Building. If the fire headquarters were to be located along State Street, and this would have certain advantages, additional parking for government personnel should be developed on the site shown on Mary Street.

With a new Municipal Building and Fire Headquarters, the existing structure could be redeveloped for commercial purposes, again with the advantages of the large parking area at its rear. It will be noted that the churches are being encouraged to remain in their present locations as they too, along with the commercial buildings in the downtown area, will benefit considerably from the improved parking available under the plan. As these buildings are not in particularly desirable locations for commercial use, it would seem best to retain them, as quasi-public uses, on their present sites as their parking requirements are generally highest when the parking spaces are most available, on weekday evenings and on Sunday.

Stage four shows the redevelopment of the downtown area in its final form. No new principles are shown, only the continuation of the approach outlined in the first three stages applied to the remaining areas. Refinements are indicated, however, including the reintroduction of trees throughout the downtown area. This should not be held until the fourth stage, of course, but should proceed along with other renewal. Specific changes included in this fourth stage are the closing of Green Street for use only by pedestrians and the development of parking areas to the rear of buildings north of Green Street, including the site of the Bills School, as by the time this stage is reached a new elementary school should be built in a more suitable location. On the west side of Main Street the plan shows redevelopment of the present industrial site with new commercial buildings and a pedestrian access walk generally opposite from Bellinger Avenue, additional parking area development at the rear of the new Montgomery

Ward store and the redevelopment of the jail property for commercial purposes.

The map of stage four also shows the traffic pattern which should evolve as necessary by the time stage four is reached. Essentially, it is proposed that a loop be formed consisting of State Street, Prospect Street, Church Street and Court Street with improvements at the corners of these streets and Main Street, and, completing the loop, Washington Street. This loop would be considered to be primary thoroughfares and would be the primary traffic arteries for all traffic downtown. This loop would also serve as direct access to all parking areas throughout downtown.

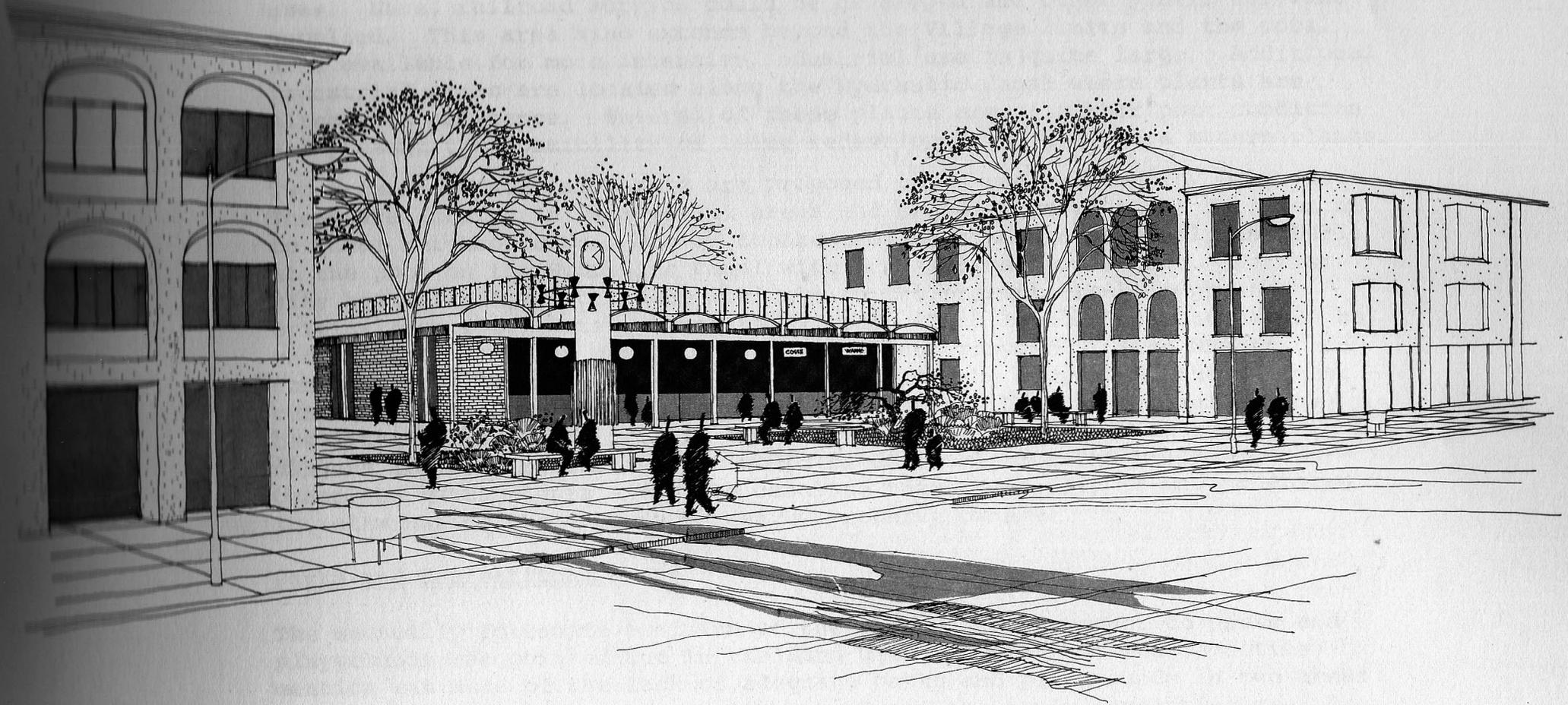
Main Street is therefore reduced in importance as far as vehicle traffic is concerned and increased in importance for pedestrian traffic. It would be retained in its present form, though perhaps with wider sidewalks, to provide access for emergency vehicles and additional parking spaces. It would also be possible, though presently little advantage is seen, to convert Main Street to a pedestrian mall. This should be subjected to further study when redevelopment is well along, to determine how such a change would affect the downtown area. At present it would appear that the parking space, especially for short period parking, would be the most valuable use of Main Street and that it should be retained.

In order to explain more clearly the concept of providing a more pleasant and attractive shopping area, an architect's sketch is included to indicate how such redevelopment may provide new and exciting areas for the pedestrian shopper. The sketch shows how imagination and thought can result in a far more interesting and pleasurable area, with the resulting attraction for new shoppers. Such an atmosphere is also conducive to more leisurely shopping with its greater likelihood for increased shopper movement in the downtown area, also leading to greater sales.

It should be noted again that such a redevelopment plan as outlined in this Master Plan will require an extended period of time to achieve. It also will require much more detailed study than possible under this general planning study. It is therefore recommended that the Village take the initiative in this area and, with the active cooperation and support of the local merchants, to undertake the detailed studies to carry out the plan. Further recommendations concerning the possibility of Urban Renewal assistance for these activities will be found under the heading "Urban Renewal" later in this report.

Industrial Land Use

Two major industrial areas suitable for more concentrated industrial development or redevelopment are shown on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, together with some areas presently developed in industrial use. The most important area, from the viewpoint of additional industrial development in the Village is the area along the West Canada Creek, including the site of the generating plant. This area was selected for industrial use for three primary reasons. First, large portions are presently undeveloped, yet bordering on developed industrial land. Second, railroad services are already supplied and public utility services can be provided at small cost, and third, the area is cut from the remainder of the Village by the railroad and the new portion of Route 28 and therefore not suitable for residential use. It is for these reasons, and in addition because of the lack of public supporting facilities for residential uses, that it is also proposed to remove the residential uses from this area, thereby increasing the area available for industrial growth.



The second major area proposed for additional industrial development is the area in the western part of the Village again adjacent to existing industrial uses. Here, railroad service could be developed and other public services supplied. This area also extends beyond the Village limits and the total area available for more intensive industrial use is quite large. Additional industrial areas are located along the Hydraulic Canal where plants are already in existence. Several of these plants are in rather poor condition and present the possibility of being redeveloped for new, more modern plants.

Two present industrial plants are proposed to be redeveloped for other uses. These are located in residential areas and are considered to be detrimental to these neighborhoods. One is located adjacent to the Hospital, another at the pool on the Hydraulic Canal with access from Dore Street. Neither site has advantages for industrial use at the present time though when originally built, certain benefits existed. Each is obsolete and should be redeveloped. In both cases, the redevelopment proposed in the Master Plan concerns schools and recreation facilities for the support of the adjacent residential neighborhoods. It is also suggested that the Hydraulic Canal has little reason left for its existence, particularly in view of the dangers to local residents. It would be desirable for the Village to purchase the water rights along the canal so that eventually it may be filled in, eliminating the dangers to nearby property owners.

Parks and Recreational Areas

The unusually fortunate position of the Village with respect to parks and playgrounds was pointed out in the Land Use Analysis. At the same time, mention was made of the lack of adequate parks and playgrounds in two areas of the Village; the southern neighborhood and the newly developing area in

the northwest portion of the Village.

It will be noted on the map entitled "Recreational Facilities Plan" that several new recreational areas are proposed. Of particular interest is the park and playground adjacent to the Tugar School, which itself is shown with increased land area. Land for both the school and the proposed additional park and playground space must necessarily come through the redevelopment of land presently in other uses. There is no vacant land in this area. The small park at the corner of South Washington and Smith Streets extending to the Hydraulic Canal is intended to act as a buffer between the large industrial plant to the north as well as to provide the needed park facilities in this area. The playground to the north of the Tugar School is to provide playground space to complement the South Field which is somewhat remote for many of the local residents.

Another park development is proposed along the West Canada Creek on land presently owned by the Village and essentially undeveloped at the present time. A considerable area is available here and development could be easily carried out. This park would serve the entire Village and be an excellent addition to the Village park system.

There is also a park proposed around Little Lake which would serve both as a neighborhood park and could offer unusual facilities, perhaps boating, to the entire Village.

In the northwest portion of the Village a combination park and playground is proposed. The development, as shown, would also be adjacent to the proposed school in this area. The land concerned is at present generally undeveloped though if development continues as it has recently, this land will be unavailable for park purposes in the near future. This park and

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES PLAN
VILLAGE OF HERKIMER
 HERKIMER COUNTY, NEW YORK

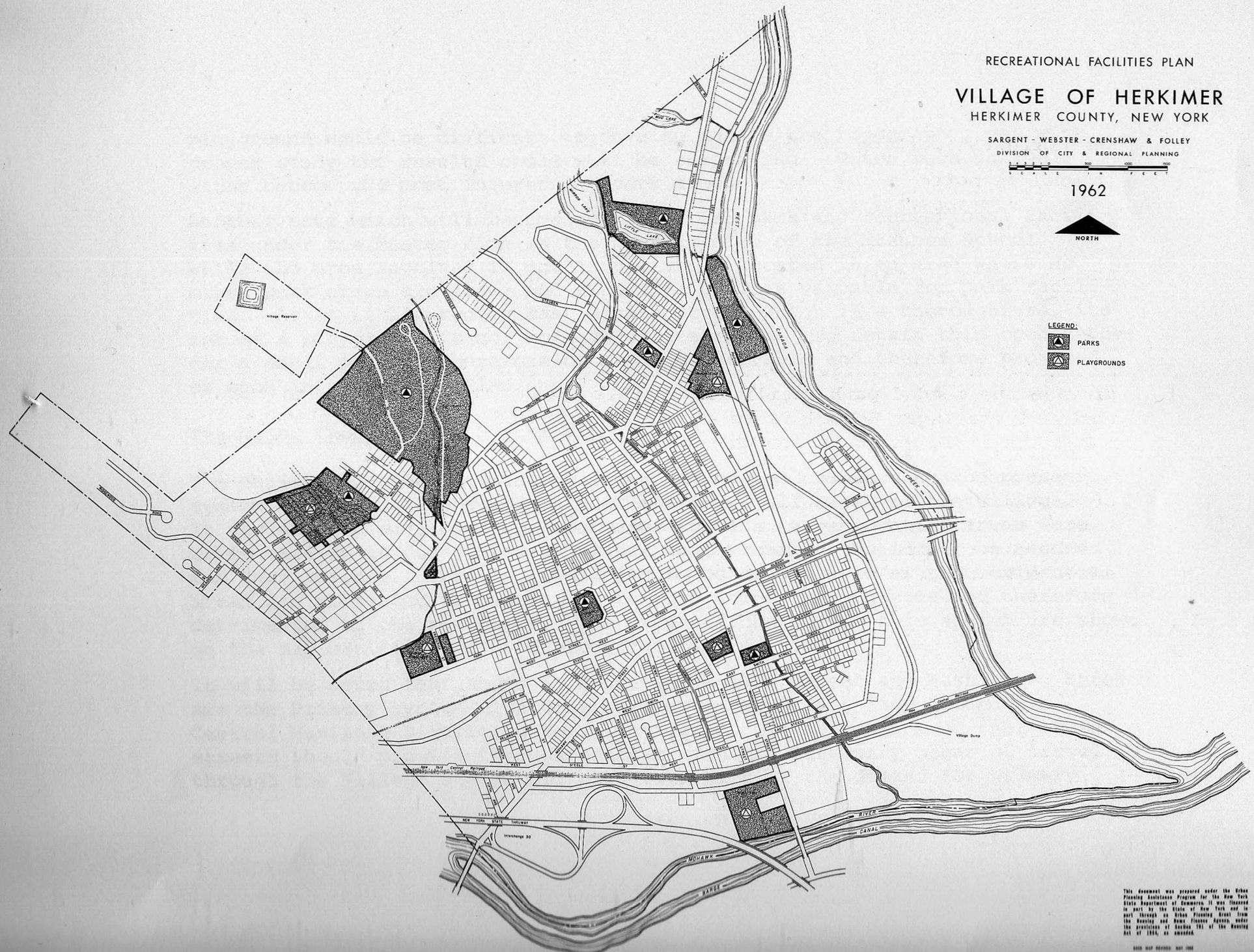
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1962



- LEGEND:
- PARKS
 - PLAYGROUNDS



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