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# **PARK ADVISORY BOARD FINAL REPORT**

**November 10, 1998**

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# **Colerain Township Parks Advisory Board**

## **A Report to the Trustees**

**11/10/98**

# **Report to the Trustees**

## **Colerain Township Parks Advisory Board**

Appointed by the Colerain Township Trustees, the Parks Advisory Board members are Jim Rahtz, Chair; Dave Crum, Skip Mackay, and Leo Sampson. They were charged with assessing the existing situation with parks in Colerain Township and compiling recommendations for needed improvements and funding. To give the Parks Department additional direction for the future, the Advisory Board also created a mission statement for the department.

## **Mission of the Colerain Township Parks Department**

*To provide safe, well maintained outdoor facilities, open space, and community oriented activities for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Colerain Township.*

How is this mission being accomplished and how should it be accomplished? The Advisory Board conducted a thorough investigation of local and regional park and recreation needs and usage, gathering the information needed to provide productive and reasonable recommendations to the trustees. Included in the investigation were a search for park “standards,” surveys of citizens and other local governmental agencies, on-site inspections of properties, and dissection of the Township’s budget for parks. The compiled information was then used to help determine initial recommendations and long term goals of the Advisory Board.

## **Benefits of Parks**

While apparent to many, not everyone is familiar with the benefits of having a strong park system within Colerain Township. There are many benefits. In fact, the National Recreation and Parks Association’s slogan is that “The benefits are endless.” The association categorizes the benefits into four areas, all of which are applicable locally. They are individual, community, economy, and environment. Studies in the area have proven that recreational activities boost immune systems, extend life spans, and lower health care costs; quality parks improve community spirit and raise property values; and protected greenspace reduces pollution, urban flooding, and summer heat.

## **Demographics**

The population of Colerain Township is near 57,000. According to guidelines suggested by the National Recreation and Park Association, local parks should consist of ten acres of park land for every one thousand residents. Nearby regional parks should provide an additional twenty acres. Based upon this formula, there should be 1,710 acres set aside in local and regional parks. Within the township there are four Hamilton County Park

District Parks totaling 524 acres. Colerain Township maintains an additional six parks totaling 56 acres. While 580 acres is barely one third of the recommended acreage, Township residents also benefit from nearby Winton Woods, Miami Whitewater Forest and Mitchell Memorial Forest, regional park facilities which together total 6,500 acres. These parks provide opportunities for "regional" activities such as picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, golf, and camping, as well as "local" type facilities such as playgrounds. The Park District also provides a strong presence in the nature programming area. In 1997, 167 programs were presented just in Colerain Township; attended by 10,266 people.

The six parks maintained by Colerain Township are:

Colerain Park - 19 acres on Springdale Road. Facilities include two shelters, restrooms, sand volleyball, basketball, play equipment, and a ball field.

Clippard Park - 14 acres in the Seasons Drive Subdivision. Facilities include a shelter, play equipment, three ball fields/two soccer fields, restrooms, and tennis courts.

Meehan Park - one acre on John Gray Road. Facilities include play equipment and basketball.

Dravo Park - 16 acres on E Miami River Road. Facilities include three ball fields and three soccer fields.

Skyline Park - two acres on Pippin Road. Facilities include play equipment, basketball, and a community center.

Palm Park - two acres on Springdale Road. Facilities include basketball.

Former MSD Property - two acres on Springdale Road. A soccer field is under construction.

In addition, the Parks and Services Department has numerous other responsibilities, including assisting other departments, and mowing pioneer cemeteries and road berms. These other responsibilities use approximately 40% of the available labor of the department.

### **Funding for Colerain Parks**

Colerain Township Parks receive their funding from the Township General Fund. Any income received is turned over to the Township. The 1997 overall Township expenditures were approximately fifteen million dollars. The Parks and Services Budget for that year was \$393,000, or 2.6% of the overall expenditures. The amount budgeted is not what is spent, however. In 1997, \$265,390, or 1.8% of the Township's expenditures were spent

on Parks and Services. Removing departmental spending on non-park responsibilities brings 1997 spending down to approximately \$159,234, or 1.1% of the budget.

Other local cities, villages and townships were contacted and asked, "Approximately what percentage of your annual operating budget is spent on your park operations and park sponsored events?" The results are listed below.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>% Spent on Parks</b>
Wyoming	20%
Mt. Healthy	12%
Mason	10.6%
Reading	10%
Greenhills	9%
Liberty Township	8%
Green Township	7.7%
Fairfield	6.7%
Fairfax	5%
Hamilton	5%
Montgomery	5%
Madeira	4%
Springfield Township	4%
Forest Park	3.3%
Indian Hill	3.3%
N. College Hill	3%
Miami Township	2.8%
Woodlawn	1.4%
<b>Colerain Township</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

While it is clear that much of the funding of Colerain Township comes from specific levies and is not discretionary, the chart above is useful to compare what various municipalities spend for park services in relation to their total spending. (The 1997 Colerain Township General Fund was \$4,605,000.)

(The 1997 Colerain Township figures do not include the estimated \$65,000 cost to operate Skyline Community Center. Any projections for future funding will need to take this additional need into consideration.)

### **Citizen Survey**

A survey designed to help determine the needs and concerns of the Township residents was distributed through the Northwest Press newspaper, in their November 6, 1997 edition, and also through the Township offices, senior center, and Skyline Center. A total of 240 surveys were returned, providing the respondents' priorities to the Advisory Board. In general, the top priorities for parks were:

1. To provide play areas for youth

2. Help neighborhoods to be more attractive
3. Protect open space

Respondents thoughts on how to best accomplish the priorities included the following recommendations:

1. Larger parks over many parks
2. Fix existing parks over expansion
3. Expansion over more supervised programs

When choosing from a list of activities that respondents enjoyed at the park, the most popular answers were:

1. Playground
2. Walking
3. Picnic
4. Relaxing

The top listed services to provide were:

1. Summer recreation programs
2. Special events
3. Teen programs

Respondents were asked to gauge the importance of a long list of possible facilities within a park. In order of importance, they were:

1. Restrooms
2. Picnic areas
2. Playground equipment
4. Parking lots
5. Natural areas
6. Athletic fields

Other facilities listed by a majority of respondents as at least somewhat important were

7. Shelters
8. Hiking trails
9. Basketball courts
10. Paved trails

Literally pages of comments were compiled from the surveys. Those that appeared to be important to a substantial portion of the respondents involved:

1. Restroom conditions in the parks
2. Positives on Megaland - both the facility and community spirit evident during construction

3. Concerns with development and loss of open space
4. General lack of maintenance in the parks - litter, infrastructure
5. Need for supervision/programs for teens
6. Comments on taxes - both viewpoints

## **Existing Status of Colerain Township Parks**

With the priorities set by the residents in mind, we looked at the parks and found:

### **Colerain Park**

1. The entrance did not look at all like a park and was actually difficult to notice.
2. The entrance drive and parking area asphalt was in terrible shape.
3. Graffiti in the walkways.
4. Shelters were well used.
5. Adjacent property has much potential.
6. Football field/track used by school district was run down.
7. There was a serious drainage problem through the center of the property.
8. The same area was obviously also a gathering/hiding place for kids.
9. The basketball court drained so poorly that it could support fishing.
10. The restroom was in terrible shape.
11. Megaland is a tremendous asset to the park.
12. Summer camp is popular but, there are minimal facilities to operate it.

### **Clippard Park**

1. Land is well suited for ball fields.
2. Play equipment is old and is located near shelter; very distant from the restroom.
3. Restroom was dark and had been vandalized.
4. Tennis court will need attention in the near future.

### **Palm Park**

1. Mainly just a basketball court which was also used as a parking lot.
2. Very well used facility.

### **Meehan Park**

1. No access by either vehicle or sidewalks.
2. The sight distances are such that parking could not be safely constructed.
3. The closest neighbors are mostly Butler County residents.
4. The playground was very old.
5. The ball field was undersized.
6. The park is not well used.
7. The property has little potential for other recreation.

### **Dravo Park**

1. Land is well suited for ball fields.
2. Land is in flood plain so any major development would be difficult.



3. Access to the Great Miami River has potential as a canoe launch

#### Skyline Park

1. Playground was old.
2. Community Center seemed well used.
3. Building appeared to be in need of upgrade but, still clean and attractive.

#### General

1. Events and programs are well received and generate substantial visitation.

Several of the obvious items have already been corrected. Restrooms have been repainted and new doors installed. The Parking at Colerain Park has been repaved. Gates have been installed to block vehicular access to Palm Park. Plans are underway to replace the restroom at Colerain Park.

### Recommendations

The short term corrections are a good start. To ensure the continued health and improvements of Colerain Parks, and therefore the Township at large, the following recommendations are submitted to the Trustees.

**1. Provide adequate, dedicated funding:** The survey of other municipalities graphically showed how low spending for Colerain Parks is compared to other local municipalities. The Advisory Board feels that the shortcomings of Colerain Parks are not management problems, but funding problems. A major change in the budget is not needed however. If Colerain Parks were to spend what has been historically budgeted, great improvements could be made. In 1997, \$128,000 of the Parks & Services Budget was not spent. 1996 was much the same with a \$129,000 carryover. This level of funding, applied to capital improvements, could, over time, dramatically improve the condition of Colerain Township Parks.

The 1998 budget for Parks and Services (including \$65,000 for Skyline Community Center) is \$504,000. Assuming overall Township expenditures remain near fifteen million dollars, spending on parks (and non-park services handled by the department) could equal up to 3.4% of overall spending. Even though much less than the median of other communities surveyed (5%), if the Colerain Parks and Services Department wisely spent 3.4% of the Township's expenditures, the Advisory Board's Master Plan could be fully implemented. The Advisory Board recommends that Colerain Parks receive and be permitted to spend a minimum of 3.4% of the Township's budget each year.

#### **2. Master Plan:**

If spending for Parks and Services reached the budgeted amount, 3.4%, then an additional \$125,000+ could be spent annually. (Inflation being ignored.) With this amount of funding, the following could be accomplished:

YEAR	PARK	PROJECT	COST
1999	Colerain	Restrooms/Craft Room*	\$25,000.00
1999	Colerain & Skyline	Resurface BB Courts*	\$15,000.00
1999	Skyline	Refurbish Gym Floor*	\$5,000.00
1999	All	Additional Seasonal Hours	\$20,000.00
1999	Clippard	Master Plan	\$10,000.00
1999	Clippard	Playground	\$25,000.00
1999	Clippard	Refurbish Restroom	\$15,000.00
1999	Meehan	Abandon	\$5,000.00
1999	Hillendale	Offer or Option to Purchase	\$3,000.00
<b>1999 Total</b>			<b>\$123,000.00</b>
2000	All	Seasonal Hours	\$20,000.00
2000	Skyline	Playground	\$25,000.00
2000	Skyline	Pathway from Playground to Center	\$25,000.00
2000	Hillendale	Purchase	\$20,000.00
2000	Colerain	Master Plan	\$20,000.00
<b>2000 Total</b>			<b>\$110,000.00</b>
2001	All	Seasonal Hours	\$25,000.00
2001	Clippard	Refurbish Tennis Courts	\$30,000.00
2001	Clippard	Pave Parking	\$40,000.00
2001	Clippard	Landscape	\$10,000.00
2001	Hillendale	Master Plan	\$10,000.00
<b>2001 Total</b>			<b>\$115,000.00</b>
2002	All	Seasonal Hours	\$25,000.00
2002	Hillendale	Initial Grading, Infrastructure	\$70,000.00
2002	Dravo	Canoe Launch*	\$15,000.00
<b>2002 Total</b>			<b>\$110,000.00</b>
2003	All	Seasonal Hours	\$30,000.00
2003	Hillendale	Playground	\$25,000.00
2003	Hillendale	Picnic Shelter & Tables	\$25,000.00
2003	Hillendale	Landscaping	\$20,000.00
2003	All	General Improvements	\$20,000.00
<b>2003 Total</b>			<b>\$120,000.00</b>

\* Assume partial grant funding

Of course all priorities are subject to change due to funding variations, unforeseen needs and additional park land availability. All unmet funding needs from master plans should be revisited by 2003, or sooner, to update the five year plan and also to consider the need for a levy in 2004 for major capital improvements, service expansions and land acquisition. In addition, other smaller projects will hopefully be funded through a volunteer program and/or increased revenue generation.

#### Master Plan Highlights

New Playgrounds: Play areas for youth were a top priority throughout the resident survey, and the success of Megaland has proven that quality playgrounds will attract residents to the parks. Existing playgrounds in Colerain Parks are small, antiquated, and not up to existing safety standards.

New Restrooms: According to residents, restrooms are the most important facility in a park. When the Advisory Board was created, the restrooms at Colerain Park and Clippard Park were old, dark, uninviting and vandalized. They have been improved to old and uninviting. Anyone who has been in them knows they need to be replaced.

Higher Level of Maintenance: It is well known in the field of Parks and Recreation that parks cannot be successful unless they are perceived as clean and safe by the public. To consistently attract families to Colerain Parks, more labor must be expended on mowing, litter pick up, graffiti removal, timely opening and closing of parks, and the like. This will only be accomplished with increased staffing levels.

Abandon Meehan Park: Situated on John Gray Road on land leased from Hamilton County, Meehan Park's two acres are used regularly (once per month or more) by only two percent of those who responded to the survey. There is no parking at the site and no sidewalks to the park. The sight distances are such that parking could not be safely constructed. The closest neighbors are mostly Butler County residents. The playground is very old, the ball field is undersized and the property has little potential for other recreation. Abandoning this park could save precious maintenance and capital dollars for use at other parks.

Purchase and Development of Hillendale Property: Located on Menominee Drive, this property consists of 3.8 acres in the Hillendale Subdivision, an area that does not have close access to a Colerain Township Park. The site, a former swim club, has potential for parking, playground, picnicking, and a walking trail. The property could hopefully be purchased at a low price and become an attractive neighborhood park.

**3. Greenspace Resolution:** When the residents were asked to rate the importance of possible park priorities, two of the three most highest rated items dealt with greenspace. Of survey respondents, 79% felt it was important to protect open space and 82% agreed with the importance of parks in making neighborhoods more attractive. Several comments were received which raised concerns about the loss of greenspace and continued development in the Township. Citizens upset with development and/zoning changes near existing residential areas seems to be in the news continually. While it will not express an opinion on any particular development, the Advisory Board feels that the Trustees and Zoning Board should place a high priority on the preservation of greenspace.

Although state laws concerning the power of townships limit the extent to which the Trustees can protect greenspace through ordinance, it is recommended that the Trustees request both the Zoning Board and the Township Administrator investigate legal options

for placing greenspace requirements on new developments or requiring payments toward parks in their place.

With or without an ordinance, it is the Advisory Board's recommendation that the Trustees impress upon the Zoning Board and Administration that greenspace protection is, as a quality of life issue for the residents, an important function of the Township. A reading of the Township's web site, for example, finds development promoted repeatedly. As the site says, "Obviously, Colerain Township is open for business." A similar promotion of open space could possibly result in more environmentally sensitive development and possibly donations of land for additional parks.

**4. Creation of a Volunteer Organization:** As the creation of Megaland proved, there is a large number of people living in Colerain Township that have a volunteer spirit and feel that parks are important. Skyline Community Center volunteers also show this spirit on an ongoing basis. A non-profit Colerain Parks Volunteers Organization could assist the Township Parks in many important ways. These include:

- a. Provide a labor pool for improvement projects
- b. Oversee a teen program - also work with schools.
- c. Become an additional revenue source for the parks (i.e., operate concessions at events)
- d. Provide grant writing assistance as well as be the recipient of grants
- e. Create stronger local "ownership" in the Parks through additional community involvement

The Advisory Board recommends that the \$2,000 grant donated to the Board by Cinergy be used to create a non-profit organization with a mission to improve and support Colerain Township Parks. An initial Board (of at least seven) for this organization would be chosen by the Trustees.

**5. Continuation of Advisory Committee:** Either as a function of the Volunteer Organization or as a separate entity, the Advisory Board recommends that some type of park advisory panel continue after this report is presented to the Trustees. Whether the existing members would be asked to continue would obviously be at the discretion of the Trustees. However, the Board feels that the present number of members (four) is too small and should be enlarged. The Board could:

- a. Continue to provide the Trustees with updates concerning the conditions of the parks.
- b. Update and fine tune the Master Plan on a regular basis. Priorities and land acquisition opportunities are always changing.
- c. Provide an ongoing community voice for park matters and funding in Colerain Township.
- d. Work toward the long term implementation of the Colerain Park Master Plan.
- e. Reexamine the Parks Department on a regular basis. For example, the Township Administration has thus far been open and responsive to the suggestions of the Advisory Board. If this working relationship would degrade in the future, the Board

could once again investigate the pros and cons of the creation of a separate Township Park District as allowed under Ohio Revised Code section 511.

**6. Continue Long Term Planning:** One long term (beyond five years) goal of the Advisory Board is the upgrade of Colerain Park into a “crown jewel” park for the Township. Per the Master Plan drawn up for this site with assistance from the Hamilton County Park District, this project would involve tying together the existing park with newly acquired adjacent property and property now being used by Northwest School District into a hub of activities for Township residents. New facilities could include a paved walking path, additional picnic shelters, upgraded play fields, and an elimination of existing drainage problems with a pond. The project is considered long term because it is contingent upon several factors

- a. Movement of the Public Works Department off site. Existing Buildings could house the Parks Department.
- b. Completion of and upkeep of needed upgrades planned for existing facilities, proving to the residents that parks are, and will continue to be, a high priority for the Township. This proof will be needed before the residents can be approached concerning the next factor.
- c. Establishment of a funding source to cover the approximately one million dollar cost of the project. A capital improvement levy is one possibility.
- d. Negotiate lease arrangements with the Northwest School District for use of land. (Initial reaction from the District Superintendent was very positive.)
- e. Meet with nearby residents to alleviate concerns and improve the existing plan.

A second long term goal would be additional land acquisition. At the present time, improvements at existing parks are considered by both the resident’s survey and the Advisory Board to be a higher priority. As the Township continues to develop and grow in population however, the amount of local parkland will continue to fall further and further behind suggested guidelines. As with the Colerain Park Upgrade Plan, major land acquisition will need the establishment of an additional funding source.

All of the above short term recommendations appear to be fundable within the existing Township budget. As shown in the earlier survey of park spending, the median level of spending by other local municipalities is five percent. This report requests a spending level of only 3.4% of the budget (or some equivalent method that guarantees funding will grow with the Township). The Colerain Parks Advisory Board has strived to provide recommendations to the Trustees that are reasonable, attainable and will provide the citizens of Colerain Township with a park system they will use and be proud of. It is hoped that accomplishing the five year master plan will generate public support to continue to improve and expand Colerain Township Parks. With the support and diligence of the Trustees and Township Administration, the improvements called for in this report can become reality, helping to fulfill the mission of the Colerain Township Parks Department:

*To provide safe, well maintained outdoor facilities, open space, and community oriented activities for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Colerain Township.*

The Colerain Township Parks Advisory Board would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their invaluable assistance with this project:

Township Trustees Joseph Wolterman, Keith Miller, Thomas Hart, Keith Corman, and Diana Rielage.

Township Administrator David Foglesong  
Assistant Administrator Frank Birkenhauer  
Skyline Community Center Manager Buddy Campbell  
Community Press Reporter Jennie Key  
Cincinnati Enquirer Reporter Lew Moores  
The Hamilton County Park District and Park Planner Tim Zelek  
Northwest School District Superintendent Ken Dirr  
Cinergy Foundation Inc.  
Ohio Parks and Recreation Association

Special Thanks to Colerain Township Parks & Services Supervisor Greg Snyder for all his time and effort without which this project could not succeed.

Colerain Township Advisory Board  
Jim Rahtz, Chair  
Dave Crum  
Skip Mackay  
Leo Sampson

# Colerain Township

## Colerain Township Parks and Colerain Township Park Advisory Board

*WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT  
COLERAIN TOWNSHIP PARKS*

*To meet the Township's future needs for parks and greenspace, the Colerain Township Park Advisory Board invites you to complete this survey. All responses will be kept confidential. But every reply will help ensure Colerain Townships Parks remain responsive to the needs of the community.*

*So take just a few minutes to fill out this brief survey. Then fold so that the return address panel is facing out. Tape the ends (no staples, please) and return it to us at the Colerain Township Administration Building.*

***Please return completed surveys by December 1, 1997. Thank You!***

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### BACKGROUND

The Colerain Township Trustees Parks & Services Department maintains nearly 55 acres of Colerain Township parkland. There are a total of seven parks maintained by the Township. These are:

- Colerain Park** at 4725 Springdale Road, next to Colerain Elementary School
- Clippard Park** at 10243 Dewhill Drive in the Seasons Drive subdivision
- Dravo Park** on East Miami River Road, 1 mile southwest of Blue Rock Road
- Meehan Memorial Park** at 2451 John Gray Road
- Palm Memorial Park** at 3251 Springdale Road
- Skyline Park** at 8500 Pippin Road
- Coleraine Heritage Memorial**, 4200 Springdale Road

These parks are funded by the Colerain Township General Fund and additional grants. Volunteers from community sports leagues, citizen groups and the school district work with Township Administration to provide recreational activities and community events.

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= not important and 5 = very important, please rate each of the following park and recreation functions according to their importance to the quality of life in your neighborhood. (Circle the number that indicates your rating.)

	not at all		somewhat		very
Protecting open space from development	1	2	3	4	5
Making neighborhoods more attractive	1	2	3	4	5
Providing play areas for our youth	1	2	3	4	5
Creating areas where neighbors can get to know each other	1	2	3	4	5
Offering recreation facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Offering recreation facilities for teens	1	2	3	4	5
Offering recreation facilities for small children	1	2	3	4	5
Sponsoring special events and festivals	1	2	3	4	5

2. Public agencies are often faced with difficult choices in their efforts to provide quality park and recreation services to all residents. Of the pairs of services listed below, select one in each pair that you would prefer.

Should Colerain Township...

- 1(a) Develop more smaller parks used by neighborhood groups; OR  
 1(b) Develop a few but larger parks and/or recreation center for use by all area residents?

- 2(a) Fix-up existing parks and recreation areas; OR  
 2(b) Buy more parkland in developing areas.

- 3(a) Spend more time/money on supervised recreational programs; OR  
 3(b) Spend money on building more park and recreation areas.

3. How often do you and /or your family visit the following Colerain Township parks? Indicate the number next to each park that indicates how often you visit.

1=daily      2=once a week      3=once a month  
 4=once every three to six months      5=once a year      6=never

\_\_\_\_\_ Colerain Park      \_\_\_\_\_ Clippard Park      \_\_\_\_\_ Dravo Park  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Meehan Park      \_\_\_\_\_ Palm Park      \_\_\_\_\_ Skyline Park  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Coleraine Heritage Memorial

4. What do you/your family enjoy when you visit the parks? (Check all that apply.)

\_\_\_\_\_ baseball      \_\_\_\_\_ neighborhood events      \_\_\_\_\_ soccer  
 \_\_\_\_\_ basketball      \_\_\_\_\_ observing wildlife      \_\_\_\_\_ t-ball  
 \_\_\_\_\_ movies      \_\_\_\_\_ picnics      \_\_\_\_\_ tennis  
 \_\_\_\_\_ concerts      \_\_\_\_\_ playground equipment      \_\_\_\_\_ watching sports  
 \_\_\_\_\_ walking      \_\_\_\_\_ hiking      \_\_\_\_\_ relaxing  
 \_\_\_\_\_ summer youth program      \_\_\_\_\_ other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



5. Which of the following programs/activities do you believe Colerain Township Parks should offer?  
(Check all that apply.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> adult athletics            | <input type="checkbox"/> programs for residents with special needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> teen programs              | <input type="checkbox"/> children's camps                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pre-teen athletics         | <input type="checkbox"/> senior adult recreation                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> in-school programs         | <input type="checkbox"/> scout assistance programs                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> summer recreation programs | <input type="checkbox"/> special community events                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pre-school programs        | <input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify)                    |

6. Please rate the following, based on what you think the Township parks should offer:

1=must have      2=somewhat important      3=would be nice      4=don't need

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> athletic fields    | <input type="checkbox"/> parking lots         | <input type="checkbox"/> shelters         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> basketball courts  | <input type="checkbox"/> picnic areas         | <input type="checkbox"/> tennis courts    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paved paths        | <input type="checkbox"/> playground equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> natural areas    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> concession stands  | <input type="checkbox"/> amphitheater         | <input type="checkbox"/> frisbee golf     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hiking trails      | <input type="checkbox"/> sand volleyball area | <input type="checkbox"/> shuffleboard     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parcourse fitness  | <input type="checkbox"/> restrooms            | <input type="checkbox"/> horseshoes       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> swimming pool      | <input type="checkbox"/> skateboard area      | <input type="checkbox"/> rollerblade area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rollerblade hockey | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation center    |   |

7. Please tell us about yourself ...

(a) How long have you lived in Colerain Township? (check one)

- under one year       between 1 and 5 years       between 6 and 10 years  
 11 to 20 years       20 years or more

(b) How many people living in your household? (indicate number)

- Adults 18 to 24 years       Adults 35 to 54 years  
 Adults 55 to 74 years       Adults 75 years and older  
 Children under 5       Children 6 to 12 years  
 Children 13 to 17 years

(c) Do you live within two miles of one of the seven Township-maintained parks?

- Yes       No  
 If yes, which park(s)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you/your family visit this park?       Yes       No

8. Would you support a capital improvements tax levy to provide major renovations and new facilities in Colerain Township Parks?

- Yes       No       Maybe; need more information

9. Would you support the creation of a Colerain Township Parks District which would be separate from Township government and would manage our local parks?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No      \_\_\_\_\_ Maybe; need more information

10. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ male    \_\_\_\_\_ female

11. Please indicate your total household income range:

_____ under \$15,000	_____ \$16,000 to \$25,000
_____ \$26,000 to \$50,000	_____ \$51,000 to \$75,000
_____ \$76,000 to \$100,000	_____ \$101,000 or more

12. Any other comments? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

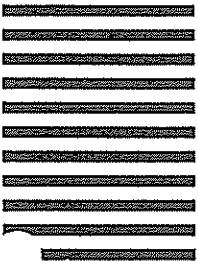
Remember! **DO NOT STAPLE!** ,fold, tape and mail or return the survey by December 1 to;  
Colerain Township Parks Advisory Board c/o Colerain Township Administration Building at  
4200 Springdale Road, Cincinnati OH. 45251.      Thank you!



COLERAIN TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES  
4200 SPRINGDALE RD  
CINCINNATI OH 45251-9946

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
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Trustees  
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JOSEPH R. WOLTERMAN



Clerk  
KATHY MOHR  
Administrator  
DAVID L. FOGLESONG

4200 SPRINGDALE ROAD CINCINNATI, OHIO 45251-1419 (513) 385-7500 FAX (513) 385-1518

### Colerain Township Parks

Hey kids... tell us what you think!

1. Why are parks important to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do you go to parks? (check all that apply)

- hiking       play with friends       rest/relax       sports  
 playground       programs       watch wildlife  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your favorite park? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you like about it? \_\_\_\_\_

4. If you could do one thing to make your favorite park even better, what would it be? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What are your favorite park programs? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What else do you want to tell us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Age \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating!!

---

**COLERAIN TOWNSHIP  
PARK ADVISORY SURVEY  
RESULTS 12-30-97**

1. Please Rate According to Importance:	Not at All	Somewhat			Very
Protect Open Space	5%	3%	13%	23%	56%
Make Neighborhoods More Attractive	4%	2%	12%	29%	53%
Provide Play Area for Youth	3%	1%	11%	26%	59%
Create Areas Where Neighbors Get to Know Each Other	6%	8%	29%	32%	25%
Offer Recreation Facilities	3%	5%	21%	33%	38%
Recreation Facilities for Teens	3%	7%	22%	31%	37%
Recreation Facilities for Small Children	2%	4%	20%	30%	42%
Sponsor Special Events & Festivals	5%	7%	2%	30%	29%

**2. What Would You Prefer?**

1(a) Smaller Parks Used By Neighborhood Groups	40%
1(b) Few Larger Parks Used By All Residents	60%
2 (a) Fix Up Existing Parks	65%
2 (b) Buy More Parkland and Develop New Parks	35%
3 (a)Spend More Time Money on Supervised Rec Programs	43%
3 (b)Spend Time / Money on Constructing New Park Areas	57%

**3. How Often Do You / Your Family Visit Parks ?**

	Daily	1 / week	1 / month	1 / 3-6 months	1 a year	never
Colerain	6%	16%	23%	27%	15%	13%
Meehan	0.05%	0.05%	1%	2%	3%	93%
Heritage	2%	1%	4%	1%	22%	57%
Clippard	2%	1%	1%	16%	16%	53%
Palm	0.05%	0.05%	1%	3%	6%	89%
Dravo	1%	4%	8%	16%	18%	52%
Skyline	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	96%

**4. What Do You / Your Family Enjoy When You Visit Parks?**

Baseball	5%
Basketball	3%
Movies	5%
Concerts	6%
Walking	11%
Summer Youth Program	4%
Neighborhood Events	5%
Observing Wildlife	8%
Picnics	11%
Playground Equipment	12%
Hiking	6%
Soccer	4%
t-Ball	1%
Tennis	2%
Watching Sports	4%
Relaxing	11%
Other	1%

**What Do You Believe Colerain Township Parks Shoud Offer?**

Adult Athletics	6%
Teen Programs	12%
Pre-Teen Programs	9%
In-School Programs	6%
Summer Recreation Programs	15%
Pre-School Programs	8%
Programs For Residents With Special Needs	8%
Childrens Camps	9%
Senior Adult Recreation	8%
Scout Assistance Programs	6%
Special Community Events	13%
Other	0%

**COLERAIN TOWNSHIP  
PARK ADVISORY SURVEY  
RESULTS 12-30-97**

6. Rate Based On What You Think The Township Should Offer?	Must Have	Somewhat	Be Nice	Don't Need
Athletic Fields	54%	25%	15%	6%
Basketball Courts	32%	35%	24%	9%
Paved Paths	25%	28%	33%	15%
Concession Stands	6%	15%	47%	32%
Hiking Trails	35%	33%	26%	6%
Parcourse Fitness	8%	20%	43%	29%
Swimming Pool	11%	9%	38%	41%
Rollerblade Hockey	6%	12%	36%	45%
Parking Lots	71%	17%	9%	3%
Picnic Areas	69%	21%	9%	1%
Playground Equipment	70%	20%	6%	4%
Ampitheater	5%	17%	49%	29%
Sand Volleyball Area	8%	16%	55%	20%
Restrooms	80%	14%	5%	1%
Skateboard Area	5%	11%	39%	45%
Recreation Center	15%	25%	47%	14%
Shelters	48%	28%	23%	1%
Tennis Courts	13%	26%	42%	19%
Natural areas	55%	25%	15%	5%
Frisbee Golf	5%	12%	47%	36%
Shuffleboard	3%	10%	49%	38%
Horseshoes	4%	26%	56%	14%
Rollerblade Area	6%	15%	46%	33%

**Tell Us About Yourself?**

**(a) How Long Have You Lived In Colerain Township?**

Under One Year	1%
Between 1 and 5 Years	11%
Between 6 and 10 Years	10%
11 to 20 Years	16%
20 Years or More	62%

**(b) How Many People in Household?**

Adults 18-24 Years	10%
Adults 25-54 Years	39%
Adults 55-74 Years	14%
Adults 75 Years and Older	4%
Children Under 5	10%
Children 6-12 Years	13%
Children 13-17 Years	10%

**( c ) Do You Live Within Two Miles of One of Township Parks**

Yes	66%
No	34%

**If Yes Which Park?**

Colerain	47%
Meehan	3%
Heritage	16%
Clippard	21%
Palm	5%
Dravo	2%
Skyline	5%

**8. Would You Support a Capital Improvement Tax Levy?**

Yes	25%
No	19%
Maybe	57%

COLERAIN TOWNSHIP  
PARK ADVISORY SURVEY  
RESULTS 12-30-97

9. Would You Support Creation of Park District?

Yes	20%
No	15%
Maybe	65%

10. Gender

Male	36%
Female	64%

11. Please Indicate Your Total Household Income:

Under 15,000	3%
\$16,000-\$25,000	8%
\$26,000-\$50,000	37%
\$51,000-\$75,000	34%
\$76,000-\$100,000	10%
\$101,000 or More	8%

12. Any Other Comments: (see attached)

CHILDREN'S SURVEY

**What do You like To Do**

Hiking	434	33%
Meet Friends	823	64%
Playground	620	48%
Walking	553	43%
Play Sports	780	60%
Programs	121	9%
Ride Bikes	659	51%
Play Games	576	44%
Watch Wildlife	309	24%
Total	4875	

**Favorite Parks**

Colerain	65%
Dravo	6%
Palm	1%
Clippard	18%
Meehan	1%
Skyline	9%

**Park Programs**

Summer Youth	15%
Field Trips	20%
Movies	18%
Magic Show	9%
Evening Activities	11%
None of These	27%

**Tell Us About You**

Boy	50%
Girl	50%

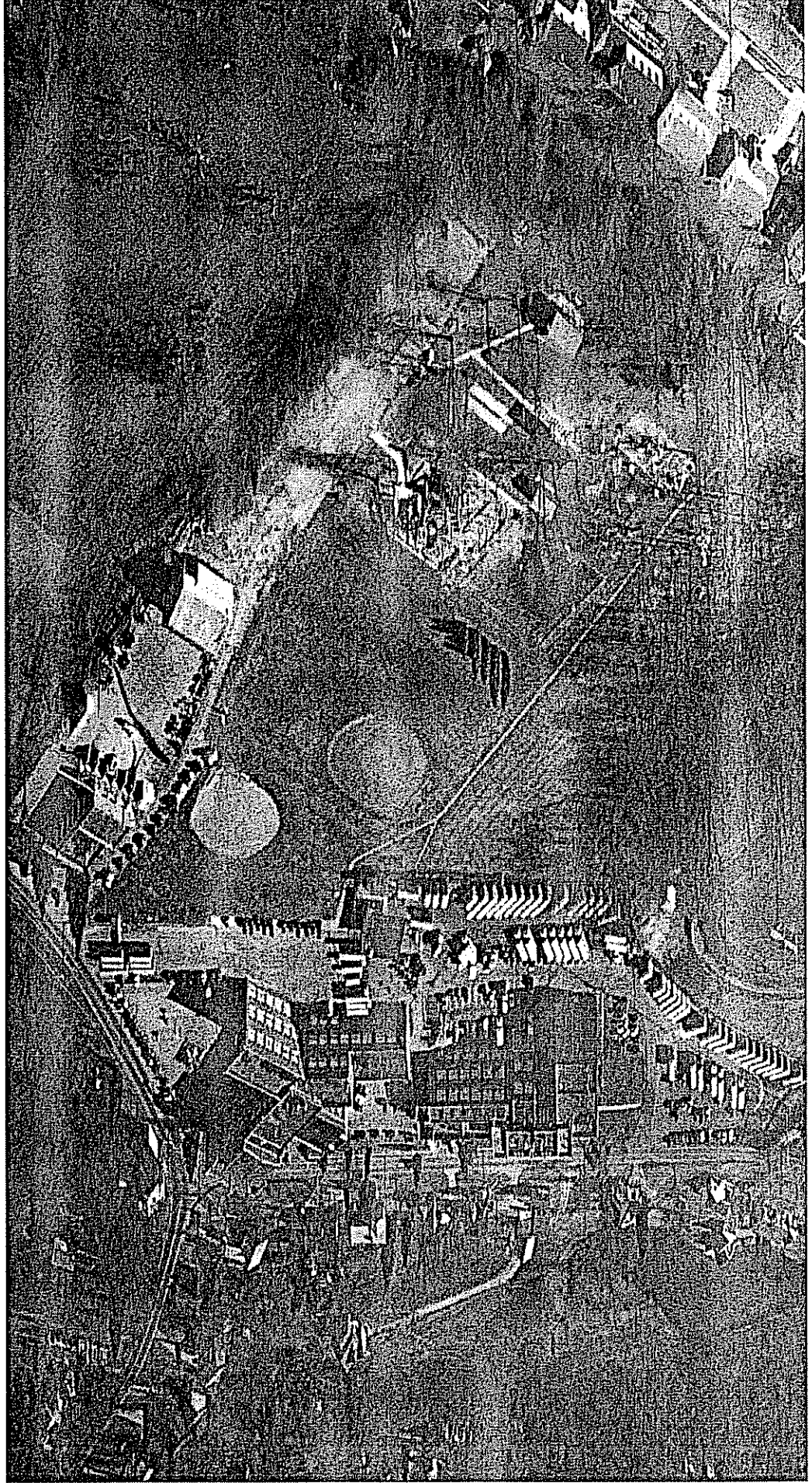
**Age**

under 6	2%
6 thru 9	12%
10 thru 12	32%
13 thru 15	40%
16 years up	14%





# Colerain Park Aerial



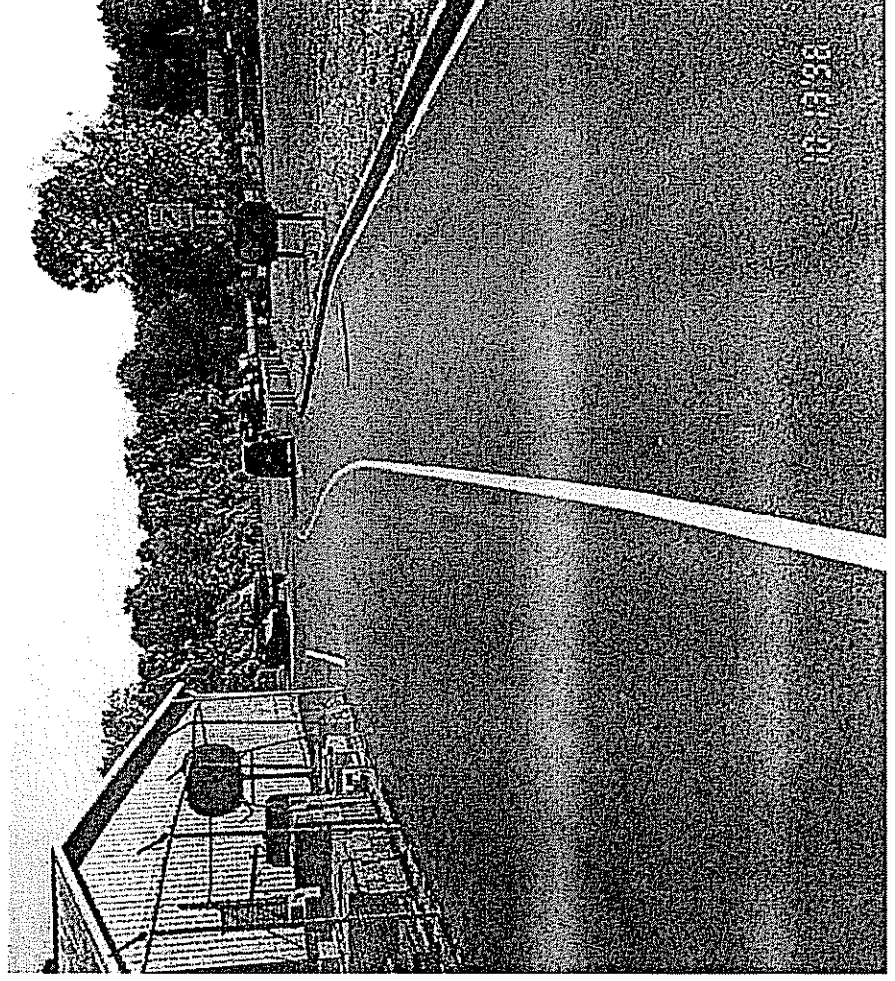
# Colerain Park Approach

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■ Before



■ After



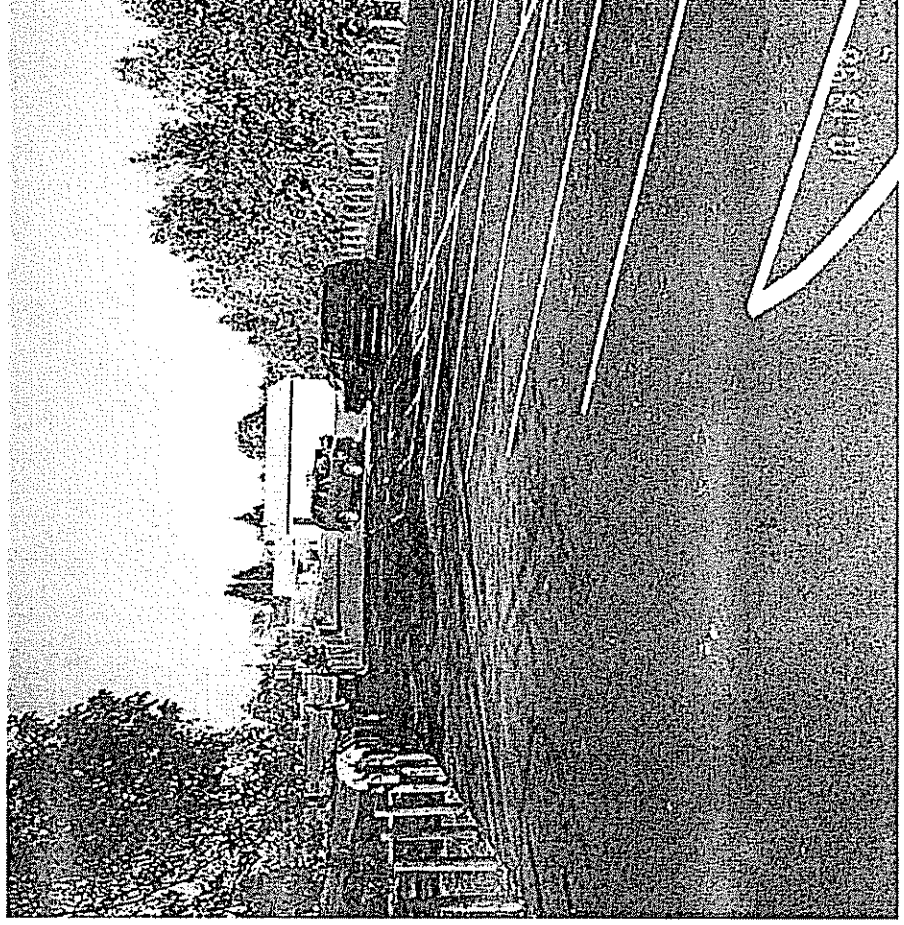
# Colerain Park Parking Lot

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■ Before

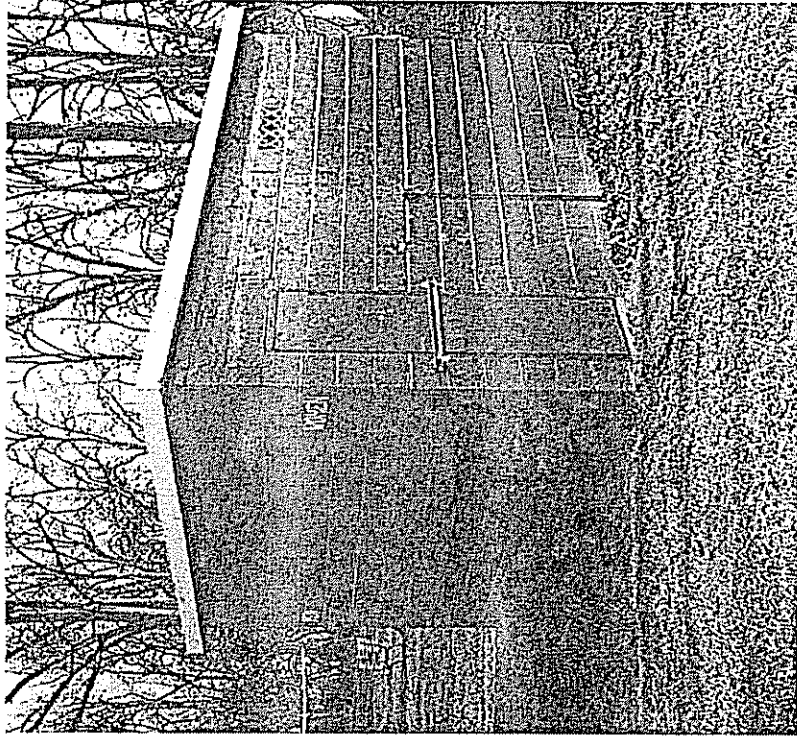


■ After



# Bathrooms Exterior

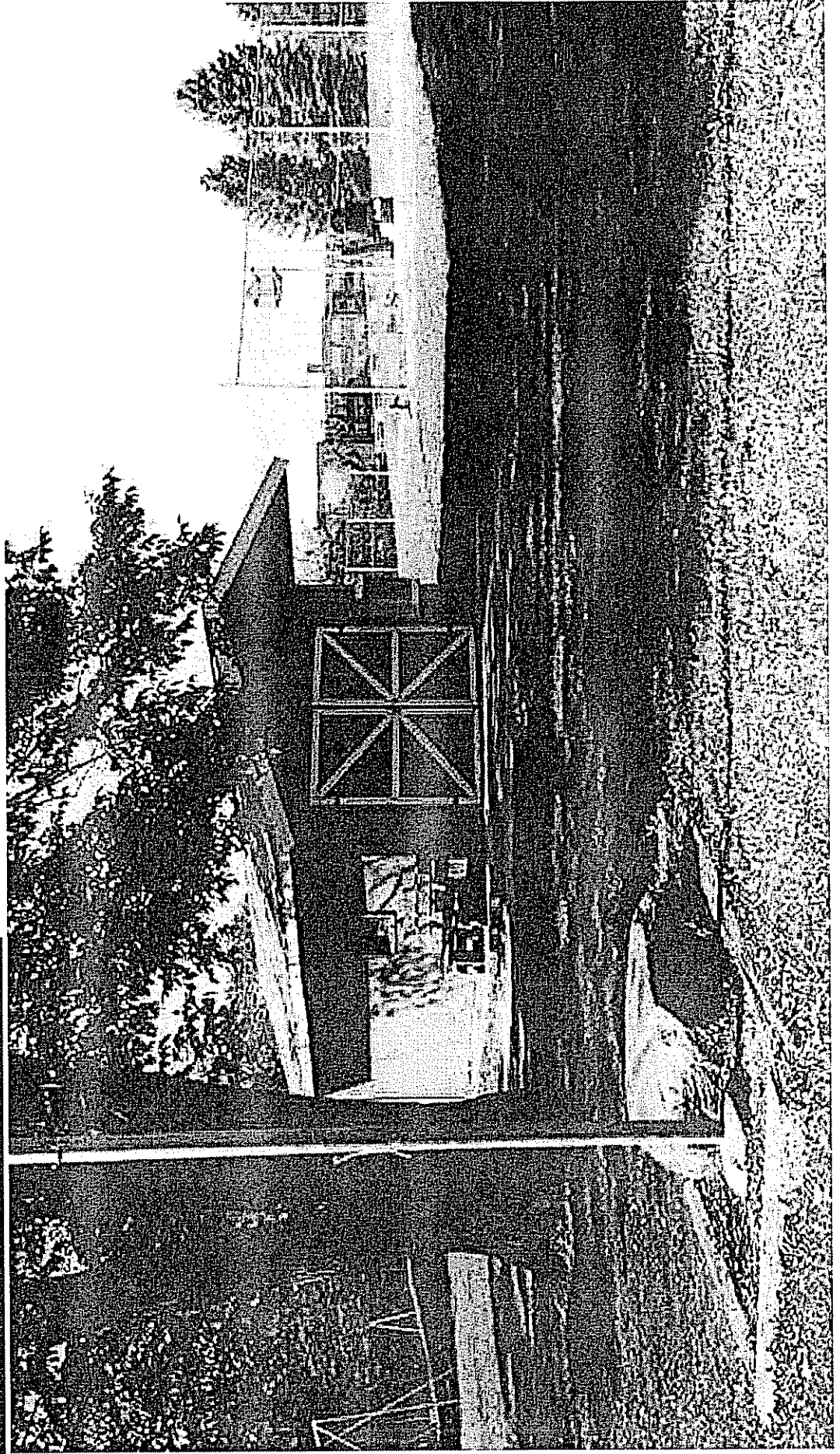
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# Colerain Park Bathroom

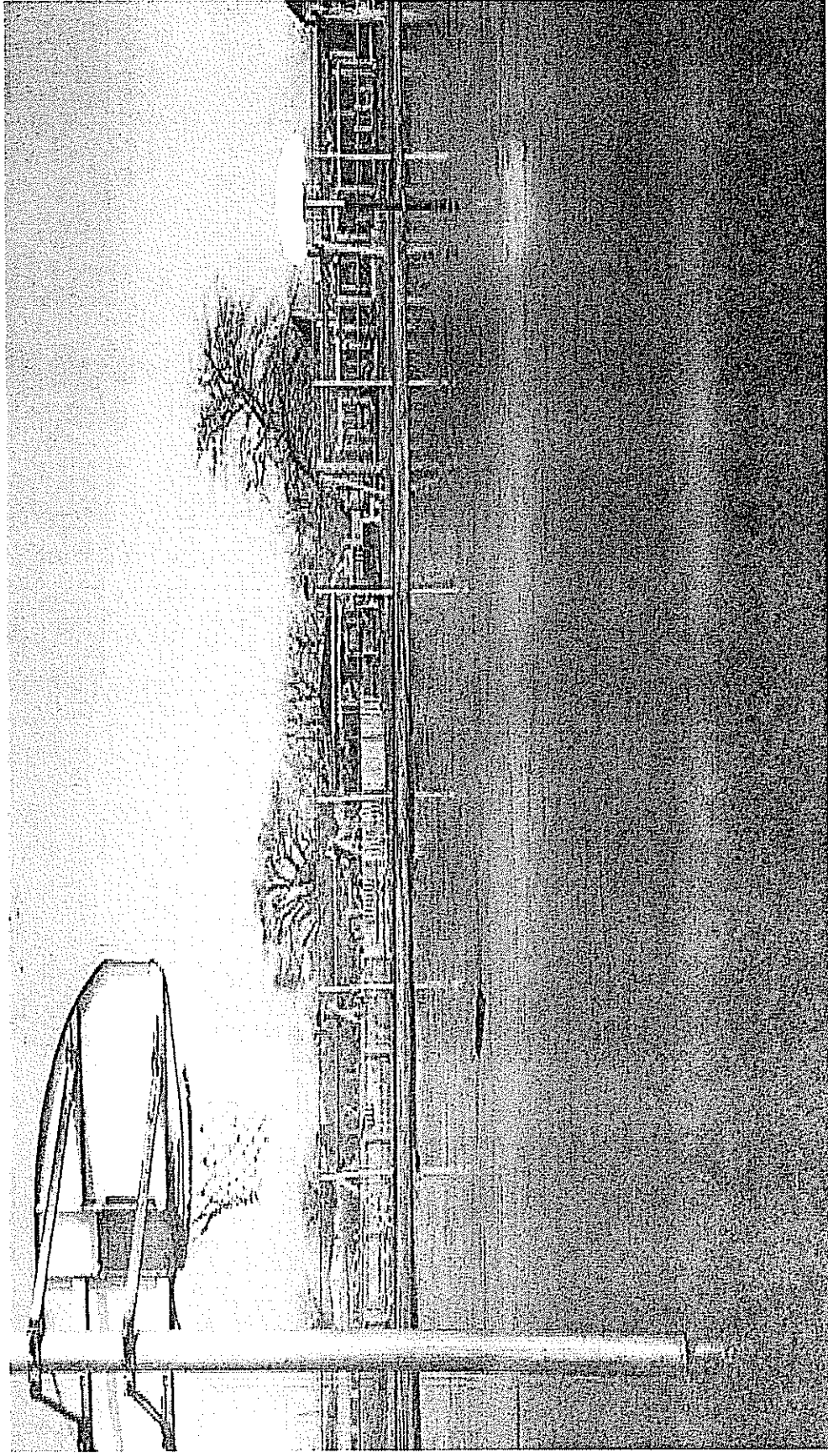


# Colerain Park Storage Shed



# Colerain Park Basketball Court

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# Clippard Park Aerial

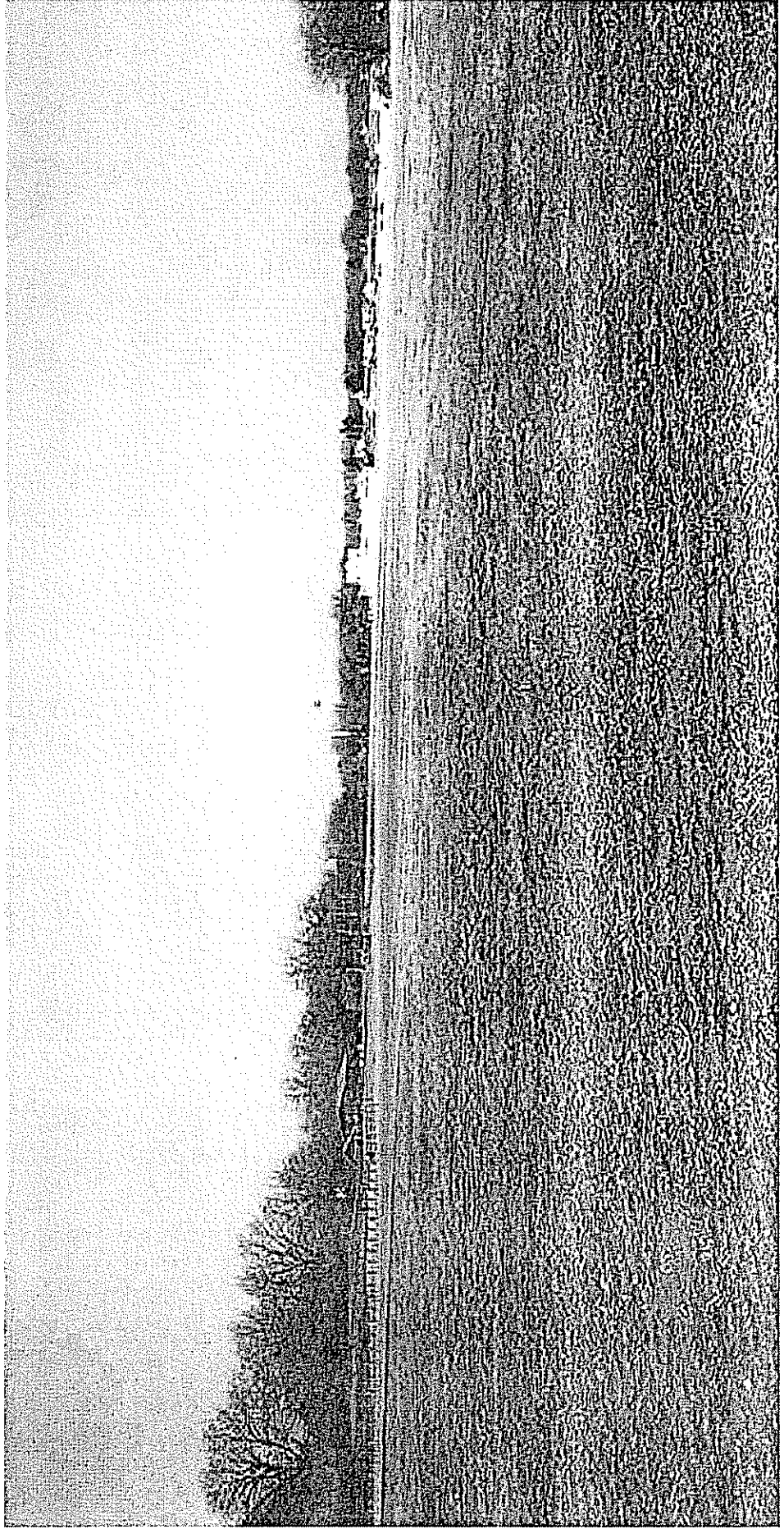
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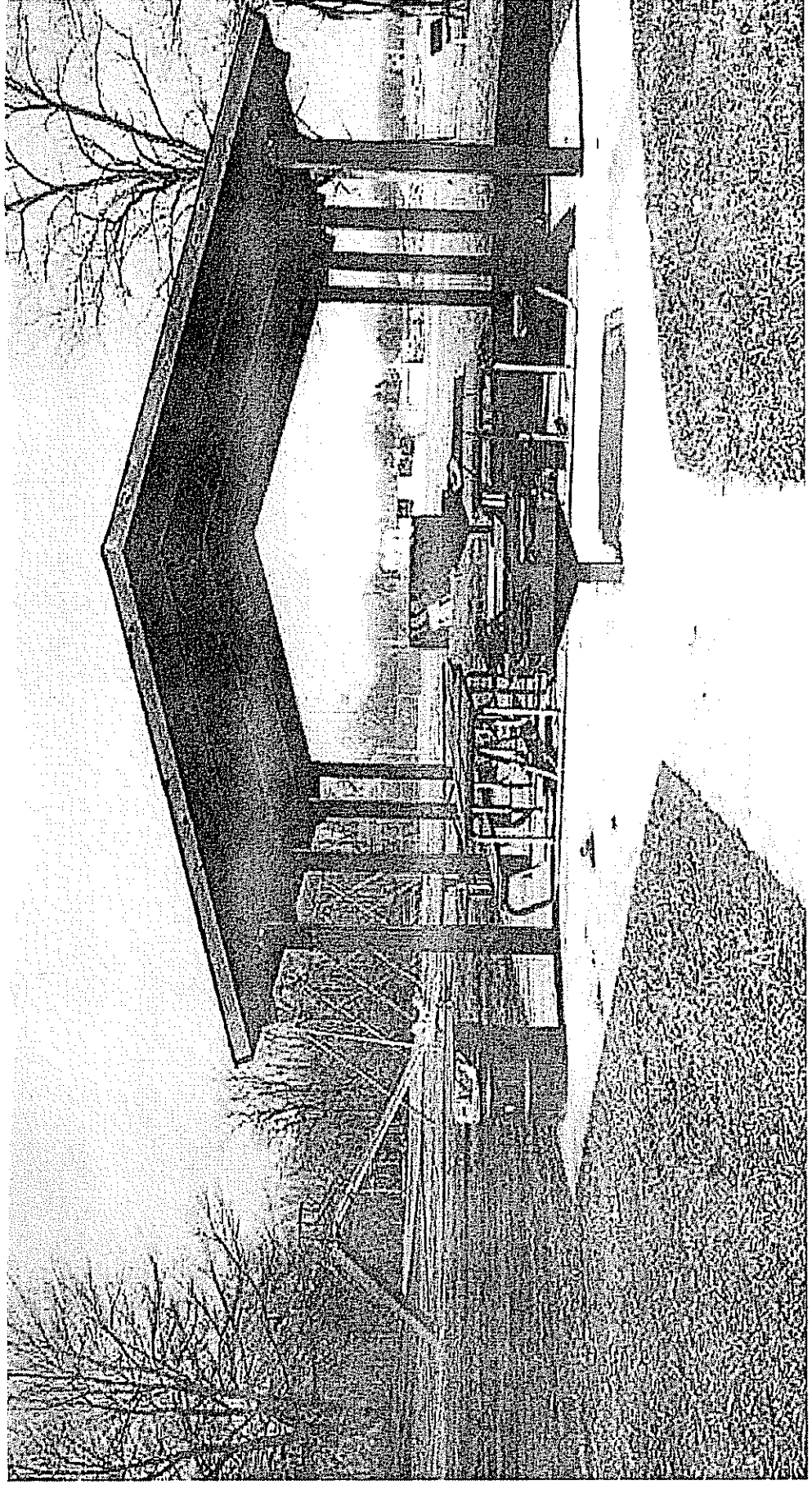
# Cippard Park

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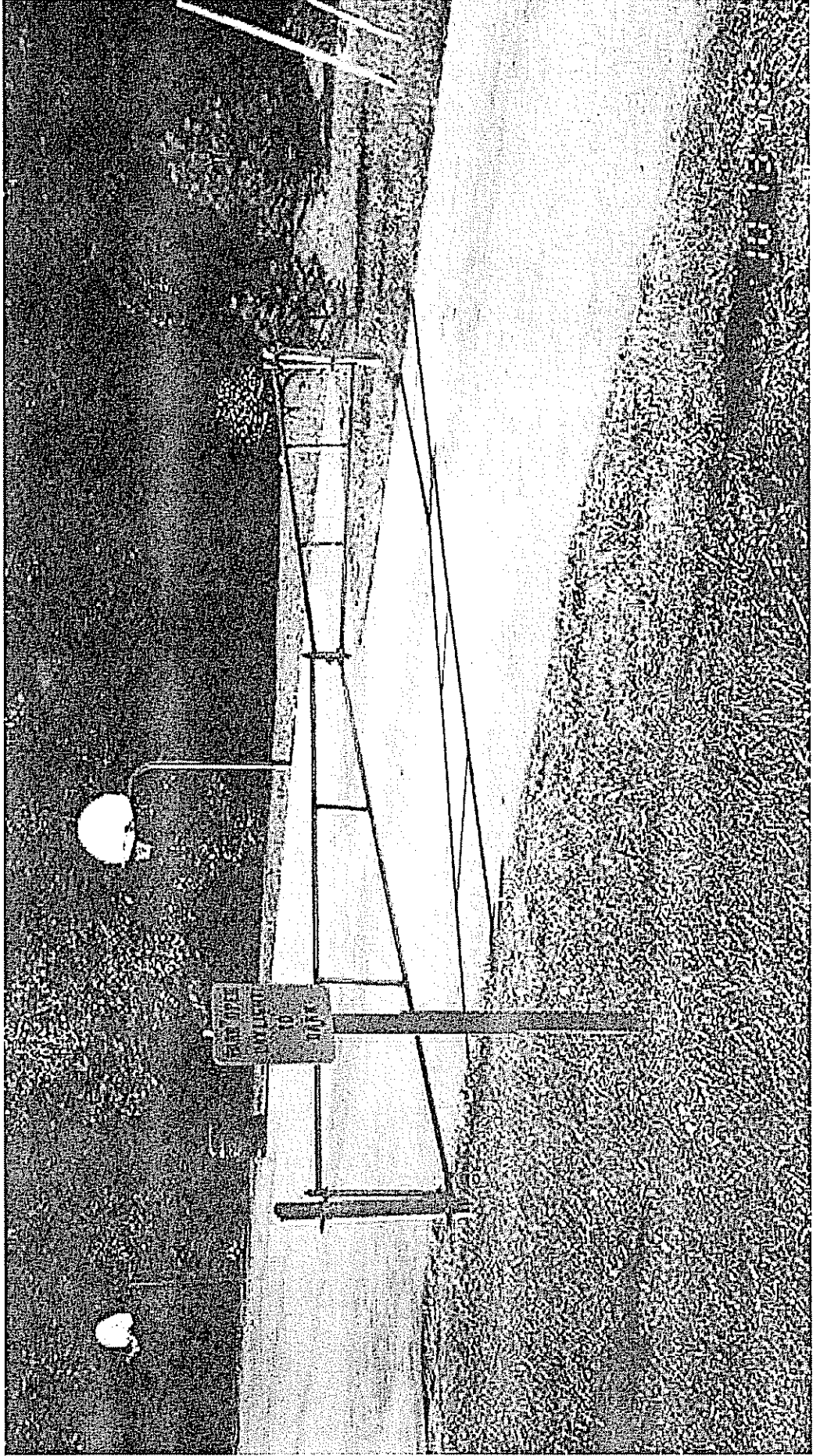


# Clippard Park Shelter

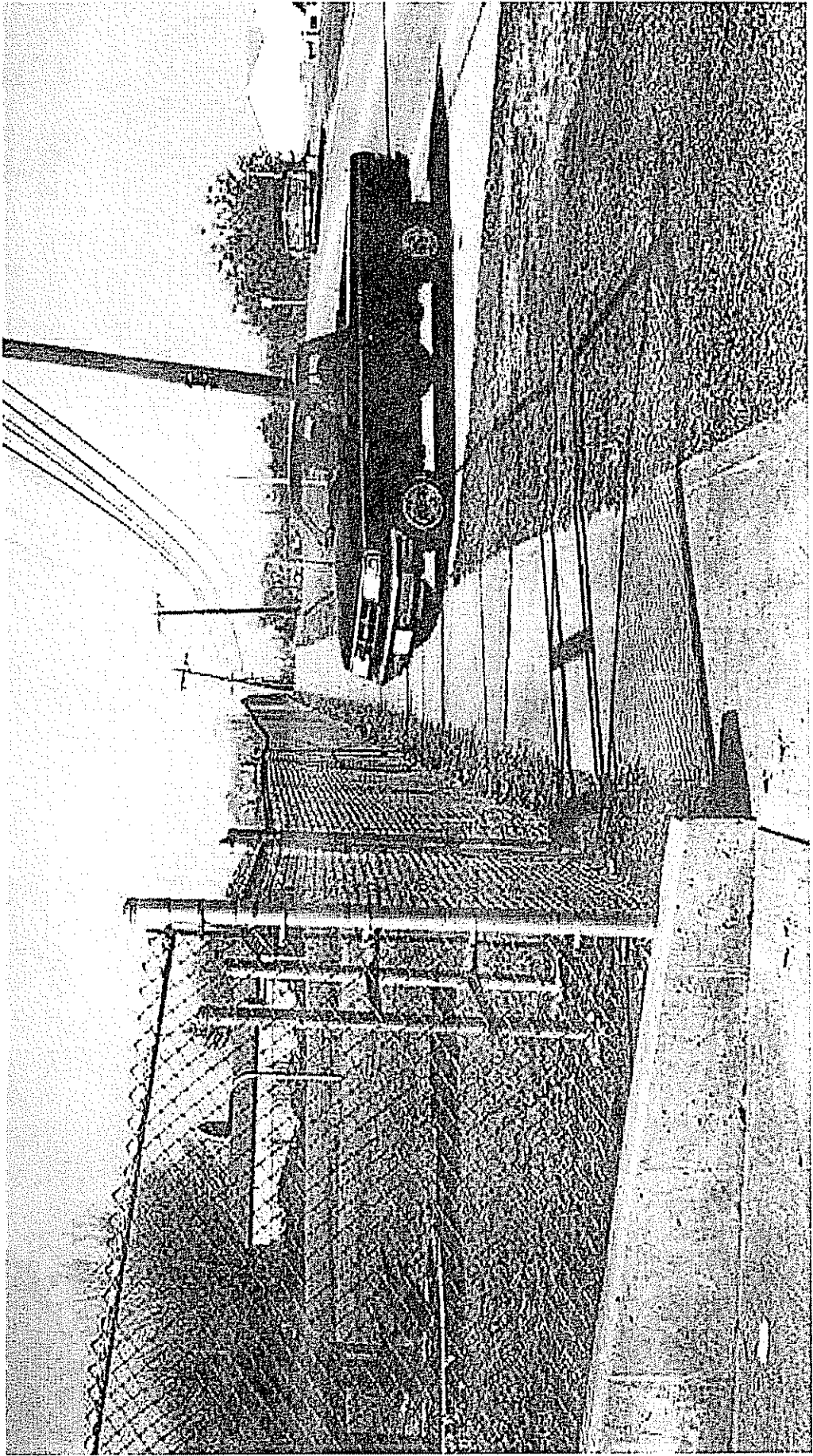
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# Palm Park



# Meehan Park

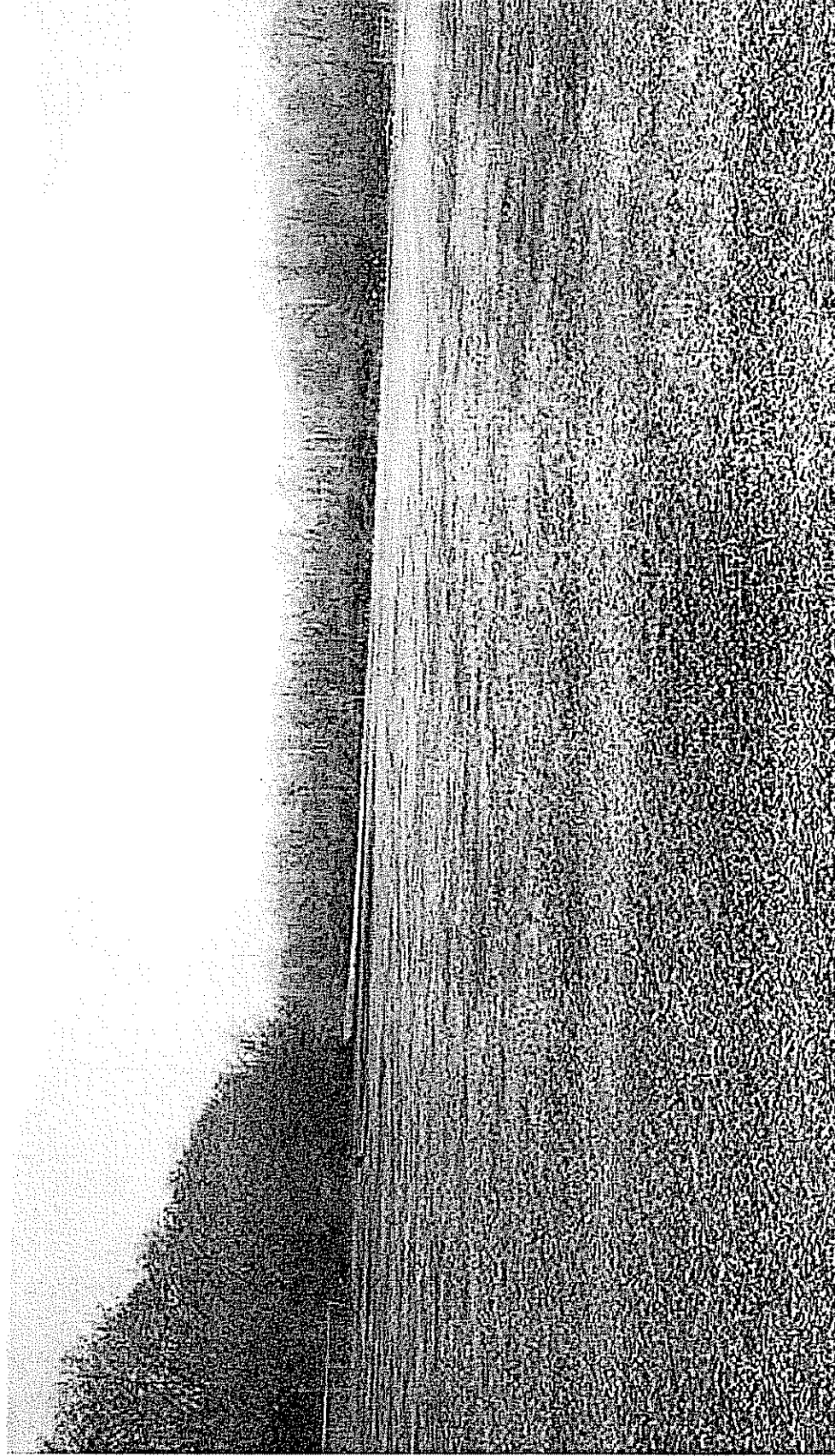


# Dravo Park Aerial



# Dravo Park

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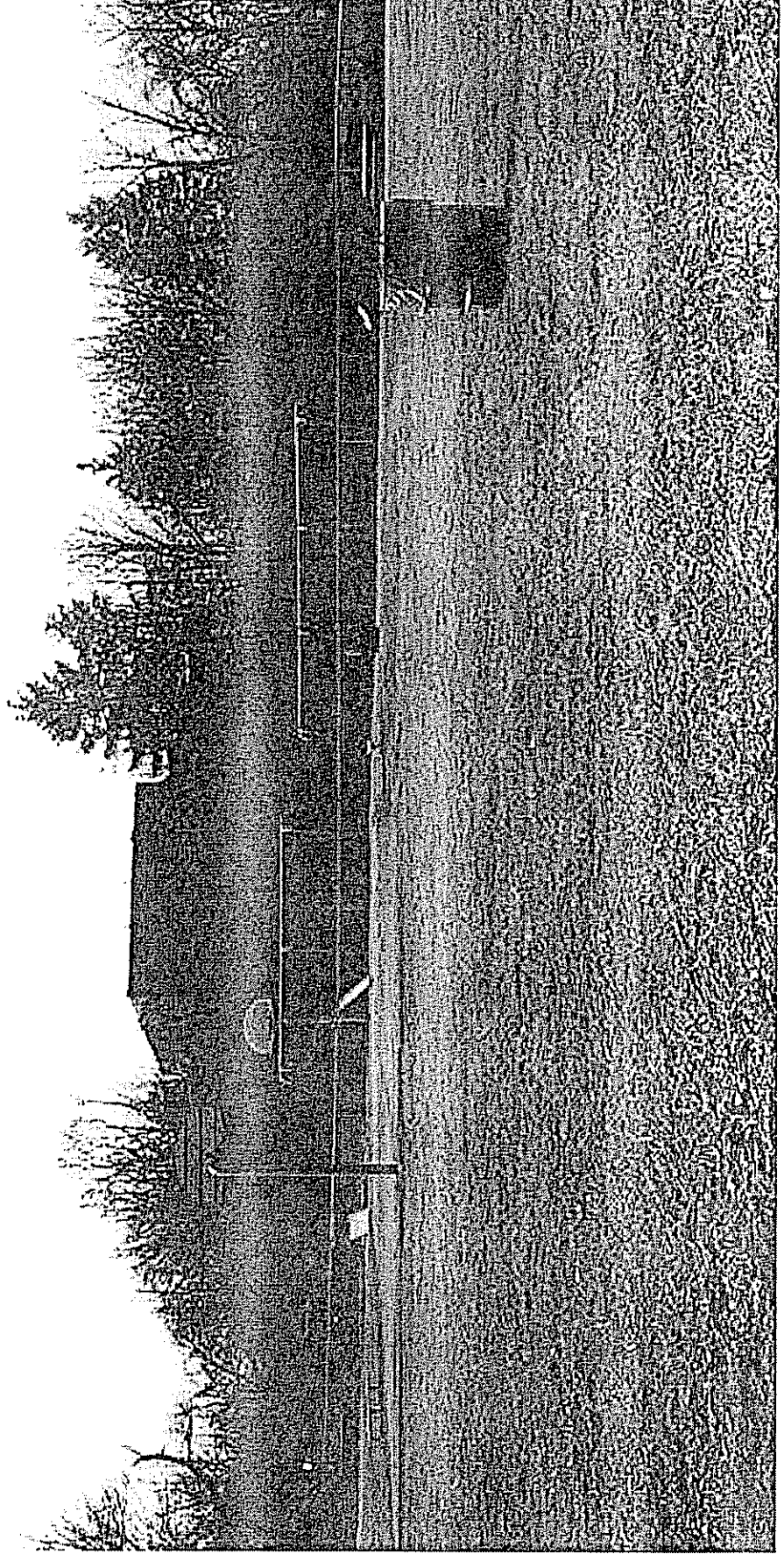
# Great Miami River

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# Skyline Park

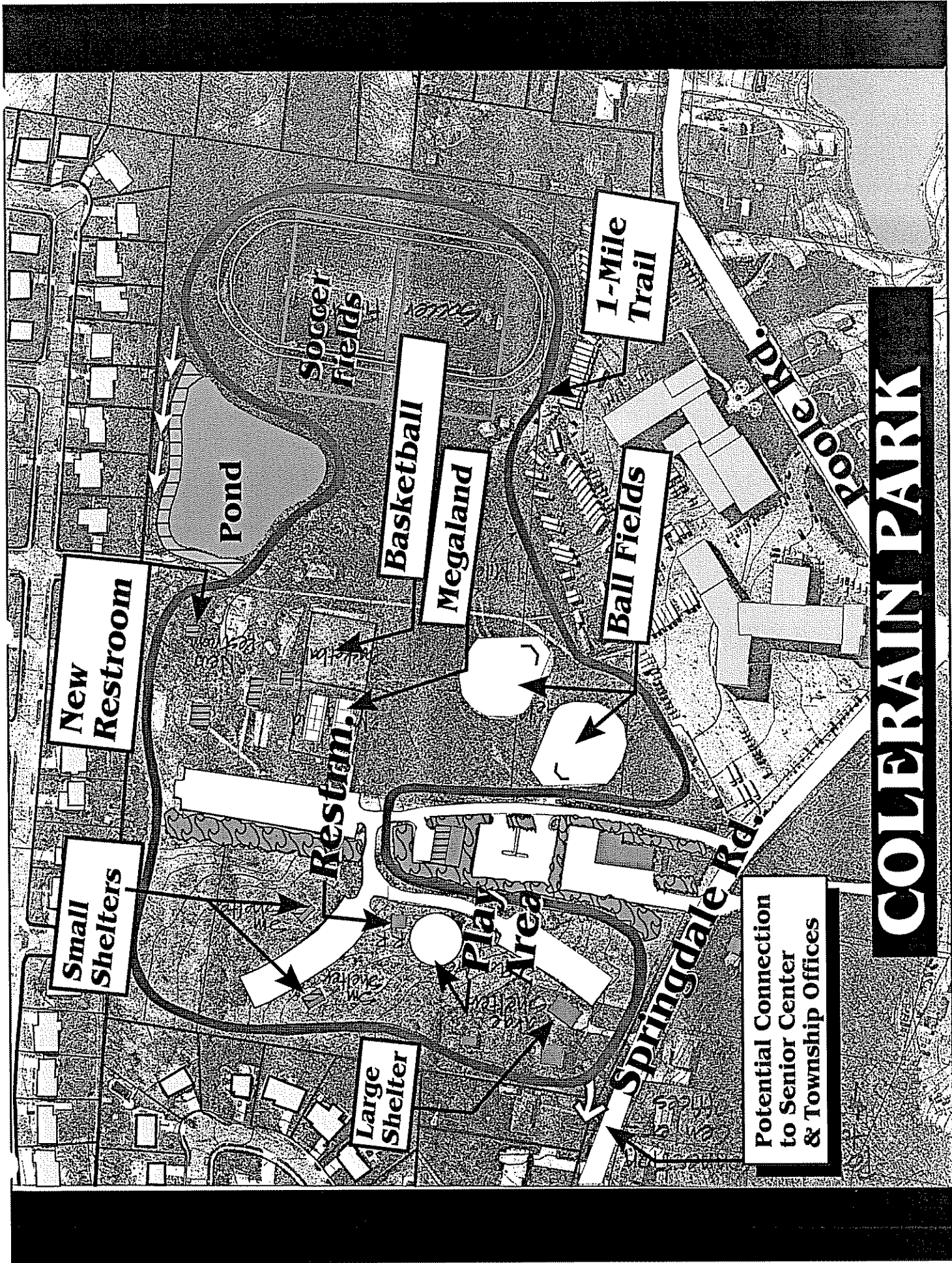
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# Hillendale





# COLERAIN PARK

New Restroom

Small Shelters

Large Shelter

Pond

Soccer Fields

Basketball

Megaland

Play Area

Ball Fields

1-Mile Trail

Springdale Rd.

Potential Connection to Senior Center & Township Offices

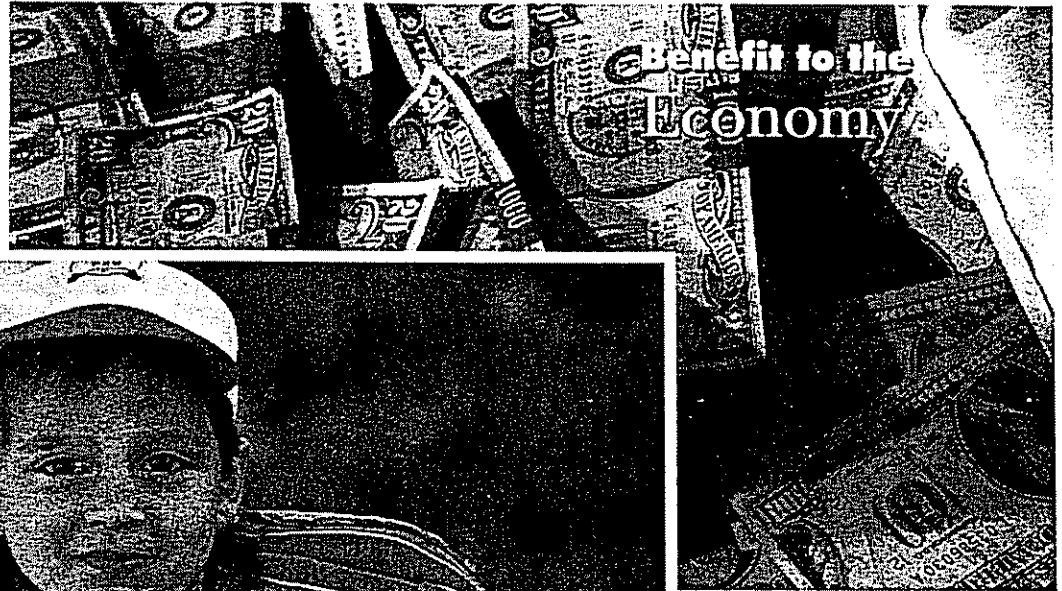
Pool Rd.

# Ohio Parks and Recreation . . .

. . . The Benefits Are Endless. . .

TM

© National Recreation & Park Association



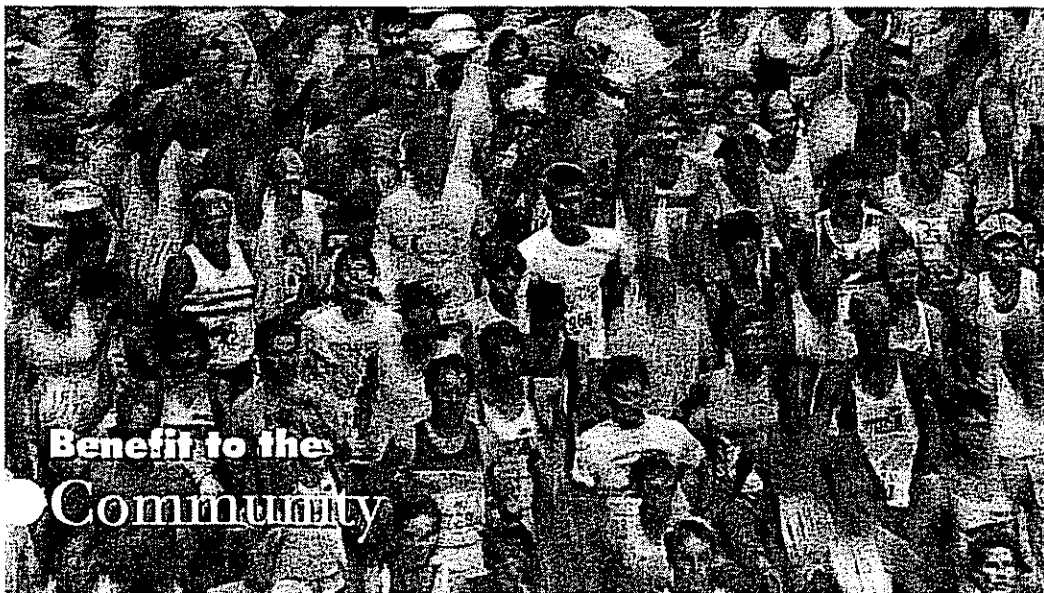
**Benefit to the  
Economy**



**Benefit to the  
Individual**



**Benefit to the  
Environment**



**Benefit to the  
Community**

## Beyond Fun and Games

Often people need to be reminded of how vital parks and recreation are to the quality of their lives. While fun, happiness, and play are vital to growth and development, the expanded role of public parks and recreation is more critical than ever. Whether we know it or not, programs, services, events, and opportunities offered by local, state, and national park and recreation agencies positively impact lives and society as a whole. National and local research documents this.

## Four Major Benefit Areas

American and Canadian organizations have identified four major benefit categories: Community, Individual, Economy, and Environmental. Within each category are specific benefits which are substantiated by facts, field studies, testimonials, and research findings. The following pages highlight some of the few ways that Ohio's parks and recreation work for you, your neighbors, your kids, and your communities.



- "For a relatively modest investment in what we generally term preventive programs, the return is extraordinary. A choice between prision and preventive services is a false choice. Simply, we do not we a choice." Pete Wilson, Governor of California.
- "You can pay me now or pay me later!" Tag line from a car repair commercial that emphasizes prevention!
- "In Ohio, citizens paid approximately \$40 per person for parks and recreation services as compared to almost \$40,000 to jail one teenager. It costs almost 100 times more for incarceration versus recreation." Michelle Park, Ohio Parks & Recreation Association.
- Nonusers tend to be highly involved in extracurricular activities, spend more time with their family and less time with peers/friends than do drug abusers (Shilts, 1991).

• The Center for Urban Studies in Youngstown, Ohio identified estimates of the financial contribution of selected activities provided by the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District to the local economy:

Golf .....	119,700 rounds at \$4/round .....	\$478,800
Hiking .....	63,000 user days at \$4/day .....	\$252,000
Jogging .....	69,300 user days at \$3/day .....	\$207,900
Bike riding .....	49,000 user days at \$4/day .....	\$196,000
Tennis .....	40,600 user days at \$4/day .....	\$162,400
Football .....	700 participants at \$180/year .....	\$126,000
Baseball/ softball .....	1,000 participants at \$120/year ..	\$120,000
Fishing .....	30,000 user days at \$3/day .....	\$90,000
ockey .....	160 participants at \$200/year .....	\$32,000
Soccer .....	300 participants at \$80/year .....	\$24,000
Boating .....	4,000 user days at \$4/day .....	\$16,000
Total .....		\$1,710,700

- Park visitors spent over ten million dollars at Hamilton County Parks in 1996. Since they can offer local, high quality recreational facilities, many citizens spent their leisure time locally, saving themselves time and keeping their recreational dollars, as well as tourist dollars, at work in the local economy. Also, the Hamilton County Park District conducted business with 2,169 different vendors in 1996, adding to the economic stability of the county.

- In Xenia, a major 300+ unit bicycle-friendly housing development is under construction; a new bicycle-friendly McDonald's is now open; and, downtown Xenia is being revitalized resulting from a new bikeway system.

- "In Miamisburg, the proximity of a new golf course encouraged the growth of upscale housing. Before the construction of a golf-course, there were fewer upper-middle and upper-class housing developments, whereas following the golf course \$250,000 to \$400,000 houses emerged in the surrounding neighborhoods. This emergence of upscale housing contributed significantly to tax and service revenues." Becky Benna, City of Miamisburg.

- According to the National Sporting Goods Association, Americans spent \$3.25 billion on sports equipment in 1992.



- "You can learn more about a man in one hour of play than a lifetime of discussion." Plato

- "In Columbus at 6:10 a.m., twenty some early risers walking or jogging with gusto around the warm brightly lit gym . . . are not members of some private club. They are

### *Benefits to the Individual (continued)*

participants in *Pace Yourself for Life*, a program for individuals interested in staying active year round." *The Dividend*, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. A study conducted by Brown University stated that the nation could save \$20 billion per year in the United States if every sedentary American walked an hour a day.

• "In the City of Swanton, 75% of the senior high school students stated in their exit surveys that their 6th grade, week-long visit to 4H Camp Palmer was the most memorable experience in their school careers." Betty Jo Sadowsky, Teacher at Crestwood Middle School.

• "The opening of the Villa Angela addition in the Wildwood Park section of Cleveland Lakefront State Park in August not only enhances the service of public access to Lake Erie for boaters, anglers, and swimmers, but also attracts picnickers, joggers, and bicyclists and boosts tourism in the Cleveland area." 1995 Annual Report, Ohio State Parks.

• "Your 1994 summer camp program was fantastic! My daughter Marissa had a most rewarding, fun, and enjoyable time. She made lots of new friends and learned valuable information and exercises to help in her "dramatic career." Letter from a mother to Mike Schertzinger, Director, Davis Youth Program, Columbus Parks and Recreation.

• In a recent community survey performed by Saperstein Associates, nearly all of the respondents (93%) believe that the Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks contribute to the quality of life in central Ohio. Most (77%) also believe that the Metro Parks contribute to their own quality of life.

• A senior from Stow wrote to the Parks and Recreation Department recently and said, "Thank you for accepting me into the 'Stow Sunshiners.' I've been down in the dumps for a while. By being a member, my self-esteem has gone way up." Ann Ceranic, Stow Resident.

• In Kettering, the 1996 Citizen Leisure Survey found that 94.4% of the respondents felt that parks provide safe areas for youth (ranked #2).

• "Frank L. Smoll and Ronald E. Smith, two pioneering University of Washington sports psychologists who have studied youth sports for 25 years. . . ." Smoll says, "Youth sports are not viewed as a baby-sitting experience. They are more than a recreational experience for children. This is an important opportunity for children to learn lifetime coping skills." *USA Today*, September 11, 1996.

• A comprehensive literature search related to the potential of recreation in delinquency intervention found that there were increases in self-esteem and improved overall self-concept, and there were decreases in the sense of hopelessness of at-risk or delinquent youth (McKay, 1993).



• The Hamilton County Park District protects approximately six million trees within its 12,000+ acres. These trees have the ability to absorb 240 million pounds of air pollutants each growing season. The oxygen meets the daily needs of over 75,000 people.

• Mill Creek Park Makes Region Livable: "When asked my reasons for moving here, and I reply Mill Creek Park for one, most people raise their eyebrows in disbelief. As urban sprawl continues to devour the remaining wooded areas in Boardman and the surrounding communities, it is such a relief that Mill Creek Park will be left intact for future generations. Mankind's survival depends on a healthy environment, and I'm proud to live in a community that recognizes the necessity of preserving a piece of the natural world." Linda Boardsman, *The Vindicator*, Youngstown, Ohio.

• "The University/Parks Trail in the Toledo area opened in 1995 and connects the main campus of the University of Toledo with Wildwood Preserve Metropark and on to King Road, a distance of over six miles. Demand for the trail was so great that thousands of people used it before it officially opened to the public. The project is an important urban to rural connector; offers a path for walking and biking and can accommodate people with disabilities; protects natural habitat as an uninterrupted wildlife corridor; and economically impacts numerous bicycle shops in and around the Toledo area." Jack Gallon, Toledo attorney and Park Board Commissioner.

• Approximately 625 acres of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District's landholdings were farmed this year through contracts with local farmers to prevent weed growth on land awaiting restoration or development. Planned crop rotation and other soil conservation practices preserve the quality of the soil for the future.

• With volunteer assistance, over 4,000 seedlings of native wetland plants were transplanted into the Shake Trace Wetlands, part of Hamilton County Park District. These rare plants will add valuable wildlife food and cover at the wetland. The Park District is also home to 44 species of rare plants, twenty of those were re-established by the Hamilton County Park District. To date, a total of 20 state endangered, 2 threatened, and 18 species of special interests have been seen in the Park District.

• In response to a survey conducted by Saperstein and Associates, respondents stated that the Columbus and

### Benefits to the environment (continued)

Franklin County Metro Parks should give highest priority to developing parks along rivers and streams throughout Franklin County. The next highest priority is purchasing land before development occurs and holding it until additional Metro Parks are needed.



• "We have an obligation to try to do something to counter this social and spiritual plague. Too many people have simply given up." Arthur Ashe in *Days of Grace*.

• "Upon opening a community center in a Cincinnati neighborhood, the overall crime rate dropped 40%"—Myra Madison, North Fairmont Community Center Director.

• In Kettering, the 1996 Citizen Leisure Survey found that 95.8% of the respondents felt that parks make their communities more attractive places (ranked #1) and 89.3% stated that parks protect open space from development (ranked #3).

• "On behalf of the Ohio Hispanic Coalition I would like to express our sincerest appreciation to the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department for its first Festival Latino held on Friday, June 21, 1996. Its success can be attributed to the spirit of collaboration of those who worked hard to see it happen, bringing together not only Latinos from central Ohio, but a much larger and diverse population." Julie Arbin Carbonell, Ohio Hispanic Coalition.

• "The City of Stow is to be commended for its role in the creation of the Stow Bikeway . . . a resource regularly used by many residents. Stow is experiencing a dramatic growth in bicycle use. One can cite several advantages to encouraging bicycle use: it is a low impact, health promoting activity; it gets people back to nature; it is nonpolluting; it does not use scarce resources (oil); it reduces traffic congestion; and it supports two of the largest bike stores in the area, both of which are in Stow." Tim Teyler, Stow Resident.

• The Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC) realizes that the underlying causes and risk factors of youth crime and violence cannot be eliminated, but their impact can be reduced through effective programs. In a 1996 master plan, commissioned by CRC and conducted by Brandstetter/Carroll Incorporated, respondents indicated that those aged 13 to 17 years were the most important segment of the population to serve. City residents felt that "CRC's primary role should be in providing activities to help keep teens out of trouble."

• "In a time when all we hear about in the media is the drug use, gang violence, and teenage pregnancy, it is refreshing to see this age group do and be interested in giving enjoyment to others." From a letter to Columbus Parks and Recreation commending the members of their dramatic group.

• "I want to say how much I appreciate the Ford Nature Center being a resource for all people, young and old, to help us learn about the many interesting life forms and nature that surround us in this community." Callum B. Johnston, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education, Youngstown State University.

• "Your staff's participation also reinforced to our students that members of our professional community do care about where our children's futures are heading." Officer John W. Angelo, GREAT/DARE officer, Jackson Township Police Department in a letter to Jackson Community Parks, Massillon, Ohio.

• The Ohio State University's Polymetrics Lab performed a random telephone survey for Ohio State Parks and found that on the average, current park users were middle income families with three members, . . . and drove approximately 37 miles to reach their most frequently visited state park. . . 1995 Annual Report, Ohio State Parks.

• "The National Recreation and Park Association released a nationwide study of prevention programs, which offered compelling evidence that recreation and training can contribute directly to declines in crime and juvenile-arrest rates." *Time*, November 14, 1994.

## Historical Perspective

Historically, public parks and recreation programs have been a critical part of our heritage locally, regionally, nationally, and even globally. Born out of need, park and recreation programs constantly evolved due to changing cultural, societal, and demographic demands and desires. Why then, are park and recreation budgets, staff, and programs the first to be cut?

## Everyone Benefits

Everyone in the world has somehow benefited by public park and recreation programs at some time in their lives—directly or indirectly. The time has come to make the connection between past experiences and today's success, yesterday's activities, and tomorrow's physical and mental wellness, and today's taxpayer support and safe communities for our children and grandchildren! So, whether an avid participant or occasional observer, enjoy the benefits. It's everyone's right.

To find out more about the benefits of parks and recreation, contact the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association at (614) 895-2222.