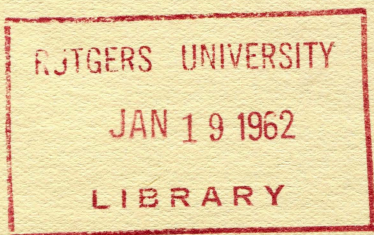


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A PUBLIC
RECREATION SYSTEM
FOR NEWARK



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SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BY THE

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

NEWARK, N. J.

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Commercial recreation, from movies to saloons, helps a little and the latter could help far more if they were improved instead of being condemned.

The streets will be used as playgrounds until better places are provided. And streets are dangerous for both young and old and not fit to promote the wise use of leisure hours.

More recreation can be and should be secured through pageants, and festivals and celebrations.

The newer parts of the city should be provided with play space at once, while land is cheap.

The recreation work of the Park Commission, the Playground Commission and the School Board should be united under a Public Recreation Commission with power "to manage, direct and care for whatever provisions are made by the city for playgrounds, playfields, indoor recreation centers, debating clubs, gymnasiums, public baths, and to make the necessary inspections as provided by the ordinances of the city for maintaining wholesome and moral quality of all forms of commercial recreation for which licenses are required by the city."

A Public Recreation System for Newark

I. Some General Statements—Introductory

The purpose of the City Plan Commission in this review of Public Recreation is to awaken public and official interest in the present and future needs of Newark for a comprehensive system of year-round recreation. A detailed and elaborate survey would be the basis of administrative efficiency in meeting these needs. But the first need is a general awakening to the immense value of an adequate system of public recreation as one of the prime necessities in the life of a well-ordered and efficient city. Newark already is doing much for public recreation. The peril is grave, however, that our great and rapidly growing city shall fail to use to the full existing facilities; fail to provide for urgent immediate needs; fail to exercise due foresight in providing for the needs of a rapidly growing population within existing areas already much congested.

Three agencies now administer Newark's public recreation: the Board of Education, the Essex County Park Commission, the Board of Playground Commissioners.

In the aggregate these three administrative groups control the use of millions of dollars' worth of public grounds and buildings, paid for and maintained by common taxation, and, as trustees on behalf of all the people, these three groups should feel that their service to the people should be as effective and harmonious and economical as possible.

The recreational work of these three agencies deserves praise and their recent reports reveal a keen sense of the

inadequacy of present facilities, the need of new structures, larger grounds, better equipment, better supervision, teachers of higher quality and training, and more funds for the work. Yet a general view of the needs, compared with the rate of progress in meeting them, suggests that Newark, like other cities of its class, must undergo a great awakening before adequate bond issues and annual appropriations can be secured.

Shall Newark Have a Comprehensive, Well-unified, Year-Round System of Public Recreation?

Shall legislation be secured establishing a Public Recreation Commission under which the recreational operations of the parks, schools, baths, together with co-operating private agencies, shall be administered essentially as one department, preventing waste and duplication, and assuring more adequate development and funds?

Shall the existing facilities of the parks and schools be open throughout the year and upon Sunday—the one full free day for rest and recreation of the masses of the people, and during the evening hours, for the multitudes whose free hours are now so largely barren so far as the use of these properties is concerned? Shall public policy be mainly prohibitive and repressive as regards saloons and commercial recreation? Or shall Newark's policy be marked by aggressive measures to make accessible to all the people, so far as possible, wholesome facilities and leadership in a creative and constructive use of hours of leisure? Shall the city merely condemn, and restrain, and forbid; or shall it be liberal, and progressive, and guide, and upbuild, and improve?

II. The Basis of a City Plan Commission's Interest in Establishing an Adequate System of Public Recreation

The typical cities of today, as shown by new charters and legislation, are increasingly taking the constructive view that prevention is wiser, as well as cheaper, than caring for wreckage, and that a high moral death rate is as disgraceful as a high physical death rate; that investments in the interest of public welfare and happiness include the "necessities" which are "foods" for the whole man's life along with those more commonly accepted "necessities" related to physical comfort and safety, such as streets, sewers, police and fire protection, and the like. It is recognized that a city may be essentially "unfit to live in," however well provided with the physical necessities, if the larger and paramount interests of the people, in the realm of real personal living, be neglected and denied.

"Departments of Public Welfare," under which are placed those divisions of municipal administration primarily related to health, moral well-being and general happiness, are found in such new charters, for example, as those of Cleveland, Dayton, and the charters recently submitted for approval in Cincinnati and Detroit.

City Planning is fundamentally concerned with these problems of human welfare, quite as much as with the more obvious problems of transit and transportation, industrial growth and a harmonious expansion of parks, plazas and boulevards. Comfortable homes, accessible neighborhood playgrounds and recreation centers, athletic fields and play-parks, swimming pools and baths, and the like, are quite within its province as important factors in a city's efficiency.

III. The Value and Meaning of Public Recreation Briefly Interpreted

Leisure well used constitutes one of the greatest forces for human progress. Leisure misused is the gravest menace of civilization. The obligation of the city to make adequate provision for wholesome leisure time activities, in such forms as are beyond the reach or control of individuals or private groups, is being recognized as quite as binding a duty as providing for public education, and equally necessary as a foundation for good citizenship and a sound democracy. The notion that the advocates of recreation systems are promoting "fads" or "luxuries," or that such things, while good in their way, must be postponed or meagerly developed until prime essentials are provided, has no defenders among competent leaders in the fields of industry, education, scientific charity, jurisprudence or religion.

To safeguard and "make good" the investments in homes, schools, churches, libraries, industry, commerce and government, the leaders in every field of thought are striving to organize for creative effect the immense resources now so largely wasted in the relatively low type of recreations of the people as a whole.

IV. The Relation of Public Recreation to Various Interests

1. Homes.

The ideal or model home will always do much and should be helped to do more for the play-life of the young children and for all members of the family in ways compatible with the limited space of rooms and home-yards. But for children, and adults, many of the most necessary

and valuable play activities are social in nature, demand groups often of large numbers and extended space both indoors and outdoors, for their enjoyment. Thus children are forced into streets, vacant lots, neighborhood parks or school yards, and into larger halls or buildings for such games as require large areas.

If streets are unsafe and unsanitary, if there be no neighborhood park and no school yard accessible and no suitable hall for assembly, then the healthful outdoor and indoor sports are denied children and youths no matter how "good" and "careful" the parents may be. Being denied facilities for wholesome outdoor games and sports, idleness with all its injurious by-products, or excessive indulgence in passive forms of commercial recreation, begin their often fatal inroads upon health and character.

The homes of a large majority of the city dwellers are quite as cramped and ill-adapted to effective recreation indoors as outdoors, and therefore public provisions must be made for these vital human needs.

Public systems, resting upon taxation, must provide these common necessities for the common good, and treat them with due recognition of their importance as adjuncts of the normal and effective home. It is simply impossible for the home privately to supply these needs. And without such provisions no home can be effective in its essentials.

All that has been said applies with essentially the same force to the homes of the well-to-do and middle-class as to the homes of the congested slums. Playgrounds and recreation centres are no longer regarded as needs alone for the slum. In proportion to their number, the wreckage

from idleness and misdirected recreation is quite as large among the "better classes" as among the "poor of the slums." These play needs are purely human, and limited to no class, or condition, or race.

2. Schools.

With billions invested in public schools and millions more in private schools, academies and colleges, this nation seeks to produce "good citizens", safeguard democracy and create the "socialized individual" and the "perfected personality."

In many municipalities the budget for schools equals, if it does not exceed, all other public expenditures, and in practically all the school budget is far larger than that of any other department.

Now, education alone is not a guarantee of good citizenship. Good citizenship depends upon loyalty, courage, honesty, fair-play, initiative, sympathy, coöperation, team-spirit, kindness, neighborliness, patriotism; and these qualities are mainly built up by activities which enlist the whole personality and bring the will especially into play. These are the very qualities best built up by supervised games and play, athletic sports, and those forms of education which fill the time of the student with active training in hand and brain, rather than by precepts, maxims, book instruction or any sort of passive reception of good counsel whether at home, or church, or school. Example, doing, action, "getting into the game," the contagion of high standards in sports and the sense of honor and fair-play and team-work—these are essential factors in education for citizenship.

Hence we see the growing demand that the value of play in education shall be reflected in the architecture, curriculum, teaching, grounds and equipment of our schools.

Part of the same demand is that for the "wider use" of school buildings and grounds as neighborhood recreation centers, social centers, "people's forums" and the like, and for continuation schools, vacation schools and all-year schools, with special schools for the defective and abnormal.

The desire to secure a greater return, approximately 100% on the investment, justifies the additional expenditures required to secure this greater educational efficiency and wider service in a year-round continuous ministry to the entire people.

With a school building in each neighborhood, why not combine therein the park-field house and the park as a part of its setting, the gymnasium, baths, swimming pool, gardens, etc., rather than duplicate buildings, grounds, supervising and teaching force, and cost of general up-keep? The tendency in many cities, is to consider an entire block of generous size as a minimum area for new schools; and the building of new standard types of schools have all the essentials of the park-field house and the social center added to other school requirements. The cost of these new types of schools is surprisingly little more than of the old style.

Some cities are making it the rule to acquire grounds of from 6 to 12 acres for all schools, mindful of these wider needs and a broader social service.

The cost of High School Education ranges from \$100

per pupil upward, of grade schools from \$30 upward. The cost of year-round supervised play per person ranges from \$2.50 to \$4.00, while in the estimates of cost for ordinary playground activities supervised for the summer the cost is estimated at from 2½ to 6 cents per child.

It is thus obvious that the cost of providing high-grade, year-round play-teaching and supervision, with adequate equipment, is easily within reach. No city should challenge the wisdom of this investment even if viewed only in the way of an investment to safeguard and make effective the millions already invested,—to accomplish the purpose for which it all stands, viz., the production of good citizens, by promoting sound health, good moral character, and wholesome life-habits in the use of leisure hours.

3. Parks.

A chain of outlying parks, connected, if possible, with interlaced parkways and boulevards, although costly, is now accounted a necessity for a well-planned city. But along with these parks of rural landscape type are demanded inside parks for recreational use, in size and number sufficient to meet the needs of the people for athletic fields and such sports as require more ground than the neighborhood play-park affords.

It is generally felt that neighborhood playgrounds should be established in centers of population with radii of not more than one-quarter to one-half a mile. This is about the relative area in residence sections which public schools must serve and suggests a natural reason for making the neighborhood play-park a part of or very near to the neighborhood school.

The playfields or athletic parks are advocated in areas of a mile or so of radius, and approximately one such playfield for every 15,000-20,000 of a city's population. These playfields should have from eight to fifteen or twenty acres, as available ground and funds permit, and should be equipped with several baseball and football fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, handball courts, grounds for basketball and volley-ball, a running track and jumping pits, and suitable buildings for dressing-rooms, baths, club-rooms and the like. Under supervision, lighted for evening use, adapted also for winter sports, these playfields and field-houses furnish most valuable opportunities for wholesome recreation, within convenient walking distance of the patrons to be served.

Any city which has provided parks of these various types should see to it that they are used the year round and during the evenings and such hours upon Sunday and holidays as shall meet the needs of the largest number. Failure to provide proper lights for evening use, effective supervision, suitable buildings for the comfort of frequenters, or to make the grounds accessible at times when the largest number of people can profit by them,—notably on evenings and on Sundays,—is a serious defect of policy.

With reference to this year-round use of parks for recreation, we cite briefly from the last report of the Philadelphia Board of Recreation, as follows: "The attendance at Philadelphia's 22 Municipal Playgrounds and Recreation Parks in 1913 was 2,510,422 persons, compared with 1,371,315 in 1912 on 13 playgrounds. The increased attendance over the previous year was 1,139,107, or 84%. This great increase is due, not only to the increase

in the number of grounds, but also to the growing habit among large numbers of young people to regard the Playground as much a part of daily life as the school or home. The Playground offers more kinds of active interest than any of the counter attractions of the city. *The Playground is a year-round institution in Philadelphia.* Nothing is more gratifying than that the attendance in the month of December was over 200,000 persons on a total of 13 Playgrounds—almost two-thirds of the attendance of August on a total of 22 Playgrounds.”

The playgrounds and centers under the Newark Playground Commission are being kept open the year through with gratifying results, despite the very inadequate structures and facilities. Why not adopt a year-round and all Sunday policy of supervised recreation in Newark's Schools and in the Essex County Parks within Newark's bounds?

4. Private Institutions—Churches, Fraternities, Clubs, Etc.

Many churches, fraternities, clubs, and the like, have buildings adapted to various recreational and social uses, which could well be used in coöperation with the public system, at times and upon terms mutually agreed upon, without interfering with their use by the bodies primarily concerned. This method of wider use of churches and other private properties is in line with the general purpose for which they exist. The combined use of all available public and private facilities will not serve, for many years to come, the full recreational needs of any city. The extensive and systematic use of such private facilities for strictly community service will tend to bind the people of neighborhoods together across racial, social

and religious lines, and also to increase the general loyalty of the people to organizations leading this coöperation.

5. Industry and Commerce.

Great industrial corporations and commercial establishments are providing facilities for indoor and outdoor recreation rivaling the best types of public facilities,—playgrounds and athletic fields, club-houses and recreation centers, with supervision and leadership of the best training and experience. The concentration of industrial leaders upon the elimination of waste, the increase of efficiency, the promotion of safety and health, have led to a realization that the human factor is after all the chief asset of industry. Highly paid experts in efficiency methods, serving these industrial corporations, have observed the constructive results of public recreation in the building up of health and character, in rapid assimilation of foreign elements, in developing forceful and self-controlled personalities, and hence the great industries are adopting these methods of producing reliable material for employment in years to come. The attitude of industry shows enlightened “common sense” in this line of investments. It is not “charity” but sound business policy which sanctions such expenditures. The treatment of employees, not as insensate machines, but as sensitive personalities, proves financially profitable and promises to give the soundest basis for meeting the strain of competition.

Chambers of Commerce and trade organizations generally in leading American cities are active in securing new charters and legislation providing for year-round

recreation systems. They recognize that a happy wholesome life is the best guarantee of prosperity, and that cities affording the best provisions for such a life to the largest numbers attract the best types of residents and hold them as permanent upbuilders of the city's life. The growing of hogs and cattle of better types and the eradication of diseases affecting them, improving grains and fruits and forests, are now understood to be no more logically the concern of Chambers of Commerce than the promotion and protection of the happiness and health of all the people and especially of plastic youth,—the foundation of reliable prosperity and sound city growth.

6. Commercial Recreation.

Commercial recreation includes all forms of amusement and recreation conducted for profit, such as theatres, moving pictures, pool and billiard halls, bowling, skating rinks, dance halls and the like. Saloons, in so far as they afford recreational and club features, might be included. Such recreations are customarily licensed more for social control than for revenue,—the saloons possibly excepted.

On the whole, commercial recreations serve to help on human happiness and should be encouraged. Generally speaking the standards and quality of commercial recreation improve with the advance of civilization. Such recreations need to be balanced and stimulated by the more active outdoor sports and games, and by the development of amateur participation in dramatics, music, choral singing, and the like.

The best modern policy of municipal administration is applied to commercial recreations, not in a prohibitory,

repressive or inquisitorial way, but solely to insure the wholesome influence and quality of such recreations. Only a small minority of those who furnish such recreations require prosecution or suppression, and the best representatives of these lines of business are as much concerned for the elimination of their evil features as is the general public.

Typical examples of the constructive regulation of commercial recreations are seen in the new charters of Cleveland, Seattle, Dayton, and the amended charter of Detroit. These charters provide for a department of public welfare, with public recreation as one of the main divisions. To this department is assigned the duty of the inspection and supervision of all forms of commercial recreation for which licenses are required, under the terms of ordinances designed to insure their good quality and wholesome social effects. Such stable control by a responsible board is much to be preferred to occasional prosecutions or blundering censorship.

With the advance of urban civilization almost unlimited scope in this field of commercial recreation invites the investor. There is no expectation that public recreation will invade this ground of legitimate business. Side by side, each within its proper limits, commercial and public recreation will be developed. In both, the ruling principle is bound to be that of constructive and wholesome influence.

Instead of continually repressing the natural tendency of the average man of limited income, and especially the man of small daily wages, to find in the saloon the pleasures of companionship of friendly gathering in

attractive quarters, a city should, by reasonable regulations, encourage these same citizens to insist that the saloons they visit be as wholesome and helpful as the best of homes.

The well-to-do have their clubs, where they get for themselves the kind of recreation with such accompaniments as each may ask, which the poorer man finds he can secure, as yet, only in a saloon. More thought should be given to making the saloon, not illegal, not of ill repute; but so attractive, decent and wholesome that to any of them in the whole city any citizen may take his wife and children as readily as he would go himself. There is nothing in the nature of American cities, there is nothing in the character of the working men of American cities, to prevent the places in which a man may get what drink he will, within reason, from being as clean and as properly recreational as they are in many cities in Europe. Let us use human nature's desire for companionship in comfortable quarters, and not oppose it. Let us improve this universal institution which meets the needs of so many of our fellows, and not forever be trying to make it disreputable by putting it under the ban of rules and regulations which are obnoxious to most of our fellows.

Dancing is one of the most enjoyable of all forms of recreation. It appeals to all of every age, save the crippled, the senile and the child in arms. Even those who cannot or will not dance like to see others dancing. It calls for no apparatus, no large areas, and for a very slight expense in music. Every young person in Newark should have, especially in winter, opportunities to dance for an hour or more two or three times each week, under health-

ful and wholesome conditions and at slight expense. Commercial dance halls should be encouraged, so long as they are clean, decent in every way and properly conducted. The danger of immoral results from the well-conducted dance hall is not half as great as it is from the repression of the energy and fire of life in young people when they have no room to play vigorously at home, no form of exercise available evenings but walking the streets, and few good opportunities to associate on terms of frank companionship with the opposite sex.

There is no better sign of progress than the growth of healthful play in a community.

Of all forms of healthful play the world seems never yet to have found one better than the dance.

7. Streets—Perils and Attractions.

In settled portions of most cities the streets and alleys offer often twice the space of the combined home yards, vacant lots and school-yards. From one-fourth to one-third of every city is given to streets and alleys. The streets, moreover, are common ground. They offer large freedom, companionship, movement, possible adventures and often the thrill of exciting things to be seen and done. While home yards are cluttered with out-buildings, gardens and fences, the streets are well-surfaced, attractive for play and lead to neighbors and friends and off to the fascinations of "down-town."

A badly surfaced, cramped school-yard, or playground congested with apparatus, play-surface covered with coarse gravel or ugly cinders, cannot compete with the superior attractions of the smooth-paved spacious streets.

Yet in most cities street play has become so dangerous to life and limb that it is forbidden, and in no city can the streets be approved as permanent or satisfactory playgrounds. Yet the streets exist and play-yards and grounds and parks adapted to play and easily accessible do not. In many congested sections of cities street play must be made safe and helpful until other provisions are made. Certain streets of fit surface and location should be freed of traffic under police regulation at certain hours and organized play as well as free play, be thus provided for the children in congested districts.

8. Public Celebrations, Festivals, Pageants, etc.

As organisms, with a rich and growing life, our cities seek self-expressions more and more in celebrations, festivals, pageants and holiday observances. The organization and preparation for effective civic expression through such celebrations are natural features of the service of public recreation systems. The staff of trained workers, their close knowledge of the recreational resources of the people, their facilities for preparation and drill of the children and adults for such celebrations, requiring often the careful training of thousands over months of time for the performances, are invaluable in their services to the city as a whole.

9. Real Estate Additions and Play Space.

In certain sections of the country real estate men are voluntarily setting aside areas of generous size and donating them for neighborhood parks and school sites. This is enlightened business policy and responds to good ideals in city-planning. Legislation in one western state

proposed to make obligatory the gift to the city of ten per cent. of the areas of new additions platted, after due provision had been made for streets and alleys, as a condition of the city's acceptance of a platted addition. It is significant that real estate men are voluntarily doing what this legislation sought to make legally binding. It is contended that such provision for playground and park space more than pays for itself through increase of value of neighboring property.

The duty of securing, either by grant or purchase, suitable areas for future needs while land is open and relatively inexpensive cannot be too sharply pressed upon public attention.

V. Existing Facilities and Needs in Newark.

Newark has a population of approximately 400,000 and will have 500,000 in 1920 and 600,000 in 1925. It occupies some 23 square miles of area. Its average density per occupied acre in 1910 was 58.2, while in the most congested wards, such as the 14th and 3rd, it is 126 and 123. In certain other wards 98, 86 and 82. Some sections of other wards are quite as highly congested.

Newark's Congested Ward-Cities.

The 14th and 3rd wards cover less than 300 acres, less than half a square mile, yet they hold populations of 35,828 (1910) and 36,912 (1910) respectively, with a density equivalent to 80,840 and 78,720 per square mile respectively. Each of these wards has a population larger than any of the following cities whose populations range from 35,000 to 30,000: Lexington, Ky.; Joliet, Ill.; Pittsfield, Mass.; Pasadena, Cal. These cities have ample space, are

provided with parks and other recreational facilities and are surrounded with open country, while Newark's congested ward-cities are huddled within 300 acres and surrounded with other congested sections. Neither of these wards has a park, school yards are cramped and the need of general play facilities and open-space is imperative.

The population, moreover, is largely foreign, over 70%,—the Italians, Jews and Germans predominating, but with many Irish and Slavs. These people by religious training and personal habits seek recreation Sunday afternoons and evenings in the open country, in parks and in active out-door sports and indoor festivities. The prevailing custom of closing the parks, playgrounds, recreation places, commercial and other, on Sundays and largely during evenings and in winter, creates an enormous pressure amongst these people for some outlet for their energy and their play-hunger. The situation thus created serves to accentuate enormously the evils of idleness, the tendencies to frequent places of evil resort, to leave the home city for week-end carousals or expensive excursions and to an undue use of saloons. The streets are flooded with youths of both sexes aimlessly walking the streets or standing upon the curbs with nothing to do and nowhere to go. In theory it may be supposed the people should be either in church or at home. If all were to attend church only a fraction of the invaluable day of rest and recreation would be occupied. Thousands live under such home conditions as to make hours spent there intolerable, and other thousands live in boarding houses and have no home in any proper sense.

These are the big facts which should shape the policy

of the city and the sentiments of the people in regard to the use of existing facilities to the full and enlarging such facilities rapidly.

1. Newark's Schools.

The aggregate value of Newark's public school properties is ten millions of dollars (1913 Report). Value of sites: \$1,753,375; buildings, \$7,182,000; furniture and equipment, \$430,100; total, \$9,365,475. The annual cost of maintenance, \$2,429,682. Enrollment, 66,217 (1913), or 16.6% of the city's population. The 14th city in the United States in population, it stands 11th in the number of pupils enrolled. Its total teaching staff numbers over 1,600. Newark has a notable reputation for the excellence of its school system and the distinction of primacy in such progressive educational expansion as summer schools, all-year schools; and its evening schools, lecture system, special schools, and the like, are worthy of highest commendation.

Its provisions for physical training conform to the best modern standards and the policy of supervised summer playgrounds seems to be well intrenched. The recent school reports show a keen sense of the need of enlarged grounds and new buildings, responding to the larger conception of the schools as community centers.

The attendance at summer playgrounds is given as 9,926. The cost per attendant as \$2.13 (classified as cost of "special activities").

The cost of High School education per pupil is given as \$106.69; Elementary, \$31.79; Evening High, \$21.70. Evening Elementary, \$13.40; Industrial Schools, \$35.39;

Special Schools for the defective, blind, deaf, tuberculous, etc., \$110.90; Summer Schools, \$3.28.

Comparing the above costs per pupil one may ask why the extension of the playground work, with its unquestioned benefits, as compared with its relatively low cost, might not be much enlarged.

The reports also indicate the need of more teachers trained for playground work and sustaining a more stable relation to the school system throughout the year.

The Schools are following the methods of the "Public Schools Athletic League" with notably good results.

One athletic field has been acquired and improved in part at a cost of some \$65,000, of ten acres in area, with running track, football and baseball fields inside the oval, tennis courts on one side and two field houses for toilets and dressing rooms. Temporary "bleachers" accommodating 1,000 persons and a concrete fence eight feet high fit the grounds in part for athletic games and field meets with paid admissions. The attendance from June "opening" to Sept. 1st is given as only 21,259, including the public school field days with seven thousand pupils participating.

This relatively small attendance challenges attention. One explanation is the location of the ground on the extreme outskirts of the city and far removed from the most congested residence sections. This field, when its equipment and structures are completed, and it has been adapted to year-round and evening use, will accommodate an aggregate of several hundred thousand attendants in each year.

It is clear that Newark's School Board and officials

are cordially interested to develop the schools as social and recreation centers, and to enlarge the supervised play activities throughout the year; but manifestly there is much need of larger funds.

A system of physical education and physical training, as a part of the formal day-school program, is not equivalent to, nor to be confused with, the broader playground and recreational work for those not enrolled in schools, youths and adults and all, during evenings, and vacations and holidays. This broader and more complex field of recreation constitutes a special department or method of activities and demands recognition in the administrative plans of the city and the School Board.

2. The Board of Playground Commissioners.

The Board of Playground Commissioners, five members appointed by the Mayor, administers seven playgrounds, partly on rented or loaned property, and the Public Baths, one new and three old.

The annual report of 1913 is comprehensive and clear in its analysis of needs and its constructive suggestions. It indicates a total budget for playground work of \$34,644, and \$16,793 for the maintenance of the baths.

The reported attendance, based upon estimates made in the customary manner, indicates an aggregate use of these small and meagerly equipped grounds for nine months (Total attendance of 575,739) ranging from 163,550 (Prince St.); 106,220 (Oliver St.); 116,731 (Lafayette St.), to 53,882 (Newton St.). This attendance is a clear index of the appreciation of whatever facilities are offered, and but slightly shows what the response would be to grounds

and buildings adequate and attractive, such as the Commissioners in their report make an earnest plea to have provided as soon as possible.

During the present year the Commission has been able to spend some \$4,000 in repairs on the modified dwelling houses on certain of its grounds, which are used for recreation centers. These repairs will make the buildings sanitary and temporarily usable; but these structures should be speedily replaced by adequate buildings, affording auditorium, gymnasium, baths and club-rooms of standard recreation centers.

The athletic meets, club organizations, coöperation by neighborhood committees, formal gymnastics and setting-up drills coupled with free play and organized games, the hikes and picnics in summer, and moving picture parties in winter, band concerts, moving pictures, entertainments, occasional social dances, library extension work, story-hours, demonstrations and exhibitions, winter-sports, and the like, show a resourceful efficiency in organization and leadership, in view of limited funds and the difficulty of securing persons well-trained and of attractive personality for the play-leadership under existing civil service restrictions.

The plea for new public baths, with swimming pool and club-house and gymnasium in connection, in congested sections of the city, hardly needs reinforcement.

3. The Essex County Park Commission.

The Essex County Park System comprises 13 parks with a total area of 3,206 acres. The aggregate investment exceeds six millions. The largest parks are South

Mountain Reservation, 1,983 acres; Weequahic, 315 acres; Branch Brook, 280 acres; West Side, 23 acres; East Side, 12 acres; Riverbank, nearly 6 acres.

In Newark the Essex County Park Board maintains two playgrounds in Branch Brook Park, one each in West Side, East Side and Riverbank Parks. There are wading pools at Branch Brook, West Side and Riverbank.

There are playfields for football and baseball at Branch Brook, northern and middle divisions, and Weequahic; tennis courts at Branch Brook, East Side, West Side and Weequahic Parks; cricket fields at Branch Brook, croquet and roque at East Side and West Side respectively, and golf at Weequahic. In the larger parks boating, fishing and skating are possible. Field hockey can be played at Branch Brook.

There are athletic grounds at Branch Brook and West Side Parks with shower baths and dressing rooms in the field houses. Separate divisions for boys under 16 and adults in the playfields are provided. Fields are open to boys until 6 P. M. and to men from 7 until 10 P. M. The attendance at these various park play centers aggregate nearly a million annually.

One of the most glaring recreational needs in Newark is facilities for swimming in sanitary and safe water. The canal and river are unsafe and probably unsanitary under existing conditions, although the future may make these waters available.

Out-door and in-door swimming pools, connected with adequate field houses and gymnasiums, in the Newark Parks, with pavilions suitable for municipal dances under good supervision, would immensely multiply the social

service and recreational value of these parks. Provisions should be made also for their year-round use under constant supervision. Access to the recreation facilities evenings and on Sundays for play and wholesome games would also add immensely to the health and good order of the citizens as a whole.

The Essex County Park Commission has developed wonderfully, with limited funds, an extensive park and playground system, and would be responsive to feasible constructive measures to widen the usefulness of the system and extend the supervision and range of play activities as funds and public sentiment may make possible.

VI. Recommendations—Summary of Constructive Suggestions.

We recommend that the legislation be sought creating a Board of Public Recreation, with scope and powers similar to Recreation Departments of Commissions now in operation or being sought for in other cities of its class in the United States, with ample power and funds for the development of a comprehensive system of recreation, thus avoiding waste, duplication and friction.

The Cleveland charter, in force January 1st, 1913, provides (Section 97) among the general powers and duties of the Department of Public Welfare, that "the director of public welfare shall manage and control * * * the use of all recreational facilities of the city, including parks and playgrounds, public gymnasiums, public bath houses, bathing beaches and social centers. He shall have charge of the inspection and supervision of all public amusements and entertainments."

The amendment to the Detroit Charter adopted last November by 10,000 majority provides for a "Recreation Commission" on which the Superintendent of Schools, Park Commissioner, Librarian of the Public Library, the Police Commissioner and the Commissioner of Public Works are represented *ex officio*, together with five citizens appointed by the Mayor to represent the city at large.

This Commission is given power "to manage, direct and care for whatever provisions are made by the city for playgrounds, playfields, indoor recreation centers, debating clubs, gymnasiums, public baths, and to make the necessary inspections as provided by the ordinances of the city for maintaining wholesome and moral quality of all forms of commercial recreation for which licenses are required by the city."

The essential principles of this charter amendment providing for the Recreation Commission in Detroit underlie most of the recent legislation secured or sought by cities in order to unify and harmonize and duly develop the recreational systems.

The legal rights of the respective departments to control their properties and protect their primary uses from impairment are amply safeguarded, but at the same time legal provisions are made for funds and rights of operation, in plans approved by the respective boards, upon the properties of the parks, schools, and other departments. In typical instances the power to receive funds in trust, and administer private properties for public recreation is also given in the legislation.

We can see no reason why legislation, conforming to these general principles, should not be secured which

shall thus unite the Essex County Park Commission and School Board, with representative citizens, in a Public Recreation Commission, whose powers shall be similarly defined.

It is our conviction that this is the next most important step for the advancement of recreational interests in the public policy of Newark.

The piecemeal, uncoordinated development of these interests, under three or four legally independent boards, or any informal and advisory coöperation between them, can hardly secure that commanding place and authoritative recognition which a Recreation Commission, specifically carrying the weight and sanction of these boards and backed by citizens at large represented upon the Commission, would seem bound to carry.

If legislation is needed to legalize the use of park properties for amateur sports and active games on Sundays, in the interests of the large public good, that problem deserves fair-minded treatment, in view of the enormous moral perils and vital waste involved in the present prohibition of the use of the public recreation properties on Sundays.

TABLE 1. PUBLIC BATHS, 1914

Name	Location	Showers	Average Daily Attendance		Receipts
			Men	Women	
Morris Ave.....	Morris Ave., between So. Orange and 14th Aves...	25	180	47	\$783.17*
Montgomery St...	Montgomery St., cor. Charlton St.....	95	1060	347	2,451.13
Summer Ave....	Summer Ave., cor. D'Auria St.	29	164	33	702.68
Walnut St.....	Walnut St., between Van Buren and Tyler Sts....	25	168	26	897.76

* Eight months only.

TABLE 2. PUBLIC RECREATION BY WARDS, *1914

Ward	Population 1910	Area, Acres	Density Per Acre	Parks	Area, Acres	City Playgrounds	School Playgrounds	Baths	Ball Fields	Tennis Courts	Wading Pools	Play Fields	Athletic Fields	Miscellaneous	Average Home Facilities	General Conditions
1	13,919	315	44	Orange Lombardy Half Military Washington	0.16 0.22 3.22+ 3.35	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Poor	Children need facilities for play. Recreation center, school and other play-grounds and bathing facilities needed.
2	13,736	245	56	Clinton Court House	0.41 0.12	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Poor; some fair	Only one summer playground for a large population. Need especially for recreation center, open space for boys. Mostly street play.
3	36,910	300	123	.....	...	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Very poor	Congested district. Large families. Small homes. Foreign quarter. Park and open spaces needed, with social and recreation centers.
4	13,756	285	48	Half Military	3.22+	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Poor	Business district. Two play-grounds serve great need, also Military Park.
5	17,970	210	86	Riverbank† Union	5.75 0.14	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	1	.....	Poor	Many small houses and large families. Recreation and social center greatly needed. Demand for play in district.
6	20,944	255	82	.....	...	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Fair	Homes of middle class; some poor. No available open spaces or bathing facilities. Recreation center would do good.
7	22,474	295	76	Small Part Branch Brook† Wallace Sussex	... 0.17 0.13	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	1	.....	Poor	Small houses. Little home life. Few open spaces. Children thrown on own resources. Street play. Athletic field and more playgrounds, also baths, needed.
8	20,166	1,405	14	Half Branch Brook† Mt. Prospect Phillips	140.32+ 0.35 0.53	1	..	..	8	49	..	..	..	3 Cricket 2 Rugby 2 Soccer 2 Croquet	Good	Mostly good homes with ample opportunity for play and recreation. One section west of Branch Brook Park in need of strong play director and housing or settlement instruction.

TABLE 2. PUBLIC RECREATION BY WARDS, *1914—Continued

9	15,805	2,455	6	Jackson Weequahic† Lincoln Milford	0.36 315.08 4.17 0.97	..	1	..	7	63	..	..	..	Boating 3 Soccer 9 Hole golf 3 Rugby Race track	Good	Much open space and good park. A growing district.
10	24,430	3,655	7	East Side†	12.69	1	1	..	..	2	..	1	1	2 Croquet	Fair	Mostly good houses, small. Working people. Industrial district. Industrial growth will demand increased recreation facilities.
11	22,408	630	36	Central	0.61	..	1	..	2	4	..	..	1	¼-mile track, 2 Field houses, with Shower Baths at athletic field.	Fair	Mostly good homes. Children have considerable home life and recreation. Branch Brook Park near.
12	19,789	1,760	11	.....	...	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..		Poor	Industrial district. Little home life. Parents mostly hard working. Children thrown on own resources. Open spaces not used. Playgrounds, athletic fields and recreation center needed.
13	18,951	1,245	15	West Side† Vailsburg	23.04 0.48	..	..	..	..	5	1	1	1	1 Roque 1 Croquet	Fair	Homes supply much recreation. A growing district. An additional park advisable. Much unused open space.
14	35,828	285	126	.....	...	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Poor	Congested section. No parks or open spaces. Small houses, large families. Much street play. Need of park, recreation center, athletic field and playgrounds.
15	19,622	340	58	Half Branch Brook†	140.32†	1	1	1	9	..	1	1	..	1 Rugby Boating 4 Soccer	Very poor	Part badly congested. Branch Brook Park near, but not used extensively. Need of recreation center and strong directors.
16	30,761	780	39	Herpers	0.45	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	.....	Fair	Many large homes with yards and attractive home life. One section quite congested. Need here of recreation center, playgrounds and baths.

* 1910 Census and ward lines used.

† County Parks.

TABLE 3. PUBLIC PLAYGROUNDS, 1914

Controlled by	Name	Location	Size Acres	Average Daily Attendance	Character
Playground Commis- sion.	1. Canal St.....	Canal and Commerce Sts.....	0.35	322	Boys and girls; open all day, nights and on Sundays.
	2. Prince St.....	Prince St. and Waverly Ave.....	0.24	750	Boys and girls; open all day, nights and on Sundays.
	3. Newton St.....	74 Newton St., bet. Bank St. and 13th Ave.	0.64	298	Boys and girls; open all day and at night.
	4. Lafayette St.....	Lafayette St. and N. J. R. R. Ave.....	0.83	215	Boys and girls; open all day, nights and on Sundays.
	5. Oliver St.....	Oliver St., bet. McWhorter and Pacific...	0.43	308	Boys and girls; open all day, nights and on Sundays.
	6. Belleville Ave....	Belleville Ave., cor. Arlington Ave.....	1.50	456	Boys and girls; open all day and at night.
	7. Summer Ave....	Summer Ave., cor. D'Auria St.....	0.11	262	Boys and girls; open all day and at night.
	8. Morton St.....	85 Morton St., bet. Howard and Broome..	0.23	†	Boys and girls; open all day.
	9. Vailsburg	So. Orange Ave., near Devine St.....	2.07	615	Boys and girls; open all day.
Essex County Park Commission.	Branch Brook Park...	8th and 15th Wards.....	61	2712	Open to all ages.
	East Side.....	10th Ward.....	2.2	1164	Playground instruction is dis- continued after Oct. 15th, but playgrounds are open under supervision of park attendants.
	Riverbank	5th Ward	5.6	1040	
	Weequahic	9th Ward	28.4	150	
	West Side.....	13th Ward	3.8	1967	

TABLE 3. PUBLIC PLAYGROUNDS, 1914—*Continued*

Controlled by	Name	Location	Size Acres	Average Daily Attendance	Character
Board of Education.	Avon Ave.....	Avon Ave., opp. Seymore Ave.....	0.74*	592	Open July 6 to August 21. Five Days a week, 1-5 P.M. Boys, Girls and Parents.
	Bergen St.....	Bergen St., cor. Bigelow.....	0.41*	521	
	Bruce St.....	Bruce St., near Bank.....	0.36*	380	
	Camden St.....	Camden St., bet. 15th and 16th Avs.....	0.46*	555	
	Central Ave.....	Central Ave., cor. Dey St.....	0.19*	325	
	Eighteenth Ave.....	18th Ave., near Irvington St.....	0.34*	880	
	Elizabeth Ave.....	Elizabeth Ave., cor. Bigelow St.....	1.00*	388	
	Fourteenth Ave.....	14th Ave., cor. Eighth St.....	0.16*	537	
	Franklin Ave.....	Park Ave., cor. Cutler St.....	0.41*	508	
	Hamburg Place.....	Hamburg Pl., near Ferry St.....	0.11*	561	
All at School Buildings.	Hawkins St.....	Hawkins St., near Ferry.....	0.31*	328	
	Monmouth St.....	Monmouth St., near Spruce.....	0.30*	474	
	Morton St.....	85 Morton St., bet. Howard and Broome..	0.26*	1039	
	Newton St.....	142 Newton St., bet. S. Orange & 14th Avs.	0.17*	511	
	South St.....	South St., cor. Herman.....	0.15*	342	
	S. Eighth St.....	S. 8th St., near Central Ave.....	0.30*	433	
	Sussex Ave.....	Sussex Ave., cor. 3rd St.....	0.34*	449	
	Thirteenth Ave.....	13th Ave., cor. Richmond St.....	0.23*	802	
	Warren St.....	Warren St., cor. Wickliffe.....	0.11*	373	
	Washington St.....	Washington St., near W. Kinney.....	0.36*	356	
	Webster St.....	Webster St., cor. Crane St.....	0.16*	454	

* Approximate size.

† Attendance not available.

