

"Discovering Collingswood"

A Master Plan for the Borough of Collingswood

Community Facilities Plan Element

JUNE 1999

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A Master Plan for the Borough of Collingswood

Community Facilities Plan Element

Prepared for:

Borough of Collingswood Planning Board as part of the Community's Master Plan Analysis

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June, 1999

(The original of this report has been signed and sealed in accordance with the law)

PPK No. 2800.00

**COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Community Facilities Plan Element of the Master Plan is to provide a comprehensive overview of the Borough of Collingswood's community facilities such as educational facilities, cultural facilities, fire and police stations, and the library. In addition to identifying the location of these uses in the Borough, this report analyzes the relationship of the facilities to their surrounding areas, their condition, and their adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the community. As part of the process of evaluation, the Community Facilities Plan Elements identifies and recommends improvements to meet the needs of Borough employees and residents in Collingswood.

The detailed inventory provided the background for the analysis of the conditions of the community facilities in the Borough of Collingswood. The following sites and buildings are outlined within the inventory section of this report:

- Municipal Building
- Police Department
- Fire Department / Collingswood Ambulance Association
- Municipal Court
- Public Works
- Schools and Educational Facilities
- Collingswood Library
- Senior Center
- Excelsior Scottish Rite Temple
- Recreational Facilities

The goals and objectives, the detailed inventory, and community input were integrated to form a specific list of recommendations. These recommendations are designed to assist the Borough to implement projects to make the Borough's facilities operate more effectively and to their fullest potential. The recommendations are as follows:

- Shared, off-street parking should be established for patrons of the downtown businesses and municipal services.
- A creative mural or architectural facade could be added to the rear of the Municipal building, which faces onto Collings Avenue, to convert a negative view into a design feature leading into the Central Business District.
- The new Municipal building should have an allocation of space to adequately meet the needs of the police department and municipal court.
- The public works facility should be relocated to the existing public facilities site and/or redevelopment area on Newton and Comly Avenues. The relocation would allow for the necessary expansion of storage space and the possible co-location of recreational facilities.

- The neighborhood school system should be preserved and enhanced.
- A strategic plan should be undertaken by the school district to identify the strengths, weakness, opportunities and strengths presented by the high school and the school district as a whole.
- The elementary school recreational facilities should be opened for the enjoyment of all residents through a program of scheduled hours and neighborhood involvement.
- School district services should be physically consolidated into a central location, such as the proposed municipal building. Scatted office spaces should be utilized for specialized classroom and learning facilities.
- Outdated play equipment in the elementary school facilities should be replaced or supplemented with newer, brighter structures
- The public library should undertake negotiations, with the support of the municipality, with the adjacent property owner for a shared parking arrangement.
- Volunteer positions should be used to expand the technical capabilities and hours of operation of the library. Donations and private funding sources should be researched in detail to expand capacities as well.
- Funding should be identified to study and fund the expansion and/or relocation of the library.
- Work with the Scottish Rite to develop a marketing strategy aimed at attracting large, regional performances to the Temple auditorium.
- Use parking facilities at the Temple site to supplement the parking demand at Knight Park.
- Encourage uses compatible with the proposed cultural facility, such as cafes and galleries, in the West Collingswood Business District
- Knight Park should be redesigned to incorporate a number of activities such as community gardens, fitness trails, and improved recreation fields.
- A space plan should be completed for all the Borough recreation facilities, with special focus on the use of the recreation fields.

**COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
I. Introduction	1
II. Inventory of Community Facilities	3
A. Municipal Building	3
B. Police Department	5
C. Fire Department / Collingswood Ambulance Association	7
D. Municipal Court / Teen Center	9
E. Public Works	11
F. Schools and Educational Facilities	16
G. Collingswood Library	23
H. Senior Center	25
I. Excelsior Scottish Rite Temple	26
J. Recreational Facilities	26
III. Recommendations	28
A. Municipal Facilities	28
B. Schools and Educational Facilities	29
C. Collingswood Library	30
D. Excelsior Scottish Rite Temple	31
E. Recreation	31
1. Knight Park	31
2. School Facilities	32

**COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT**

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIGURE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
CF-1	Community Facilities Base Map	2
CF-2	Borough of Collingswood Municipal Offices	3
CF-3	Borough of Collingswood Police Department	6
CF-4	Collingswood Fire House	8
CF-5	Violations Bureau and Municipal Court	10
CF-6	Public Works Department / Municipal Garage	12
CF-7	Collingswood Water Works Water Treatment Facility	12
CF-8A	Proposed Changes to Public Works Area	14
CF-8B	Proposed Changes to Public Works Area	15
CF-9	Elementary School Service Areas	18
CF-10	Tatem Elementary School	19
CF-11	Newbie Elementary School	19
CF-12	Zane-North Elementary School	20
CF-13	Sharp Elementary School	20
CF-14	Garfield Elementary School	21
CF-15	Collingswood Middle School	22
CF-16	Collingswood High School	22
CF-17	The Collingswood Library	24
CF-18	Conceptual Drawing of the Proposed Senior Center	25
CF-19	Conceptual Drawing of the Proposed Municipal Building	29

**COLLINGSWOOD MASTER PLAN
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT**

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this element of the Master Plan is to provide a comprehensive overview of the community facilities that exist in the municipality. Community facilities include government buildings and other uses such as educational facilities, cultural facilities, fire houses, police stations, and libraries. The locations of the community facilities found in the Borough of Collingswood are shown on Figure CF-1.

In addition to identifying the location of these uses in the Borough, this report analyzes the relationship of the facilities to their surrounding areas, their condition, and their adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the community. As part of the process of evaluation, the Community Facilities Plan identifies and recommends improvements to meet the needs of residents in Collingswood.

The information provided throughout this report has been provided by department heads and employees of the Borough of Collingswood. Their input was extremely valuable in the collection and the formulation of ideas, suggestions, goals and objectives.

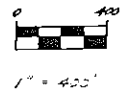
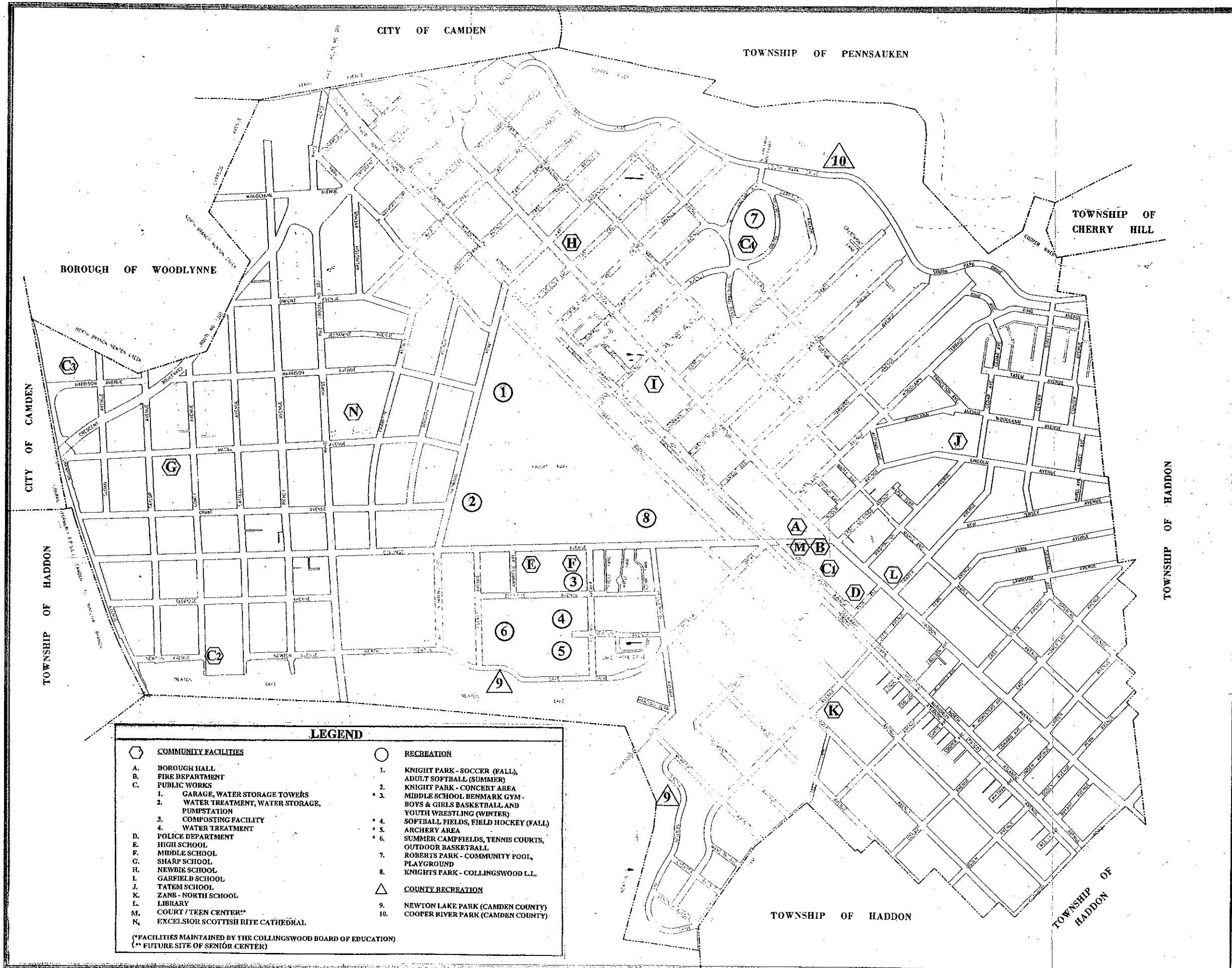


FIGURE CF-1 /
FIGURE REC-1

Borough of Collingswood

Camden County, New Jersey

Community Facilities and Recreation Plan

LEGEND	
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES
A.	BOROUGH HALL
B.	FIRE DEPARTMENT
C.	PUBLIC WORKS
1.	GARAGE, WATER STORAGE TOWERS
2.	WATER TREATMENT, WATER STORAGE, PUMPSTATION
3.	COMPOSTING FACILITY
4.	WATER TREATMENT
D.	POLICE DEPARTMENT
E.	HIGH SCHOOL
F.	MIDDLE SCHOOL
G.	SHARP SCHOOL
H.	NEWDIE SCHOOL
I.	GARFIELD SCHOOL
J.	TATEM SCHOOL
K.	ZANE - NORTH SCHOOL
L.	LIBRARY
M.	COURT / TEEN CENTER**
N.	EXCELSIOR SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL
1.	RECREATION
2.	KNIGHT PARK - SOCCER (FALL), ADULT SOFTBALL (SUMMER)
3.	KNIGHT PARK - CONCERT AREA
4.	MIDDLE SCHOOL BENMARK GYM - BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL AND YOUTH WRESTLING (WINTER)
5.	SOFTBALL FIELDS, FIELD HOCKEY (FALL)
6.	ARCHERY AREA
7.	SUMMER CAMPFIELDS, TENNIS COURTS, OUTDOOR BASKETBALL
8.	ROBERTS PARK - COMMUNITY POOL, PLAYGROUND
9.	COUNTY RECREATION
10.	NEWTON LAKE PARK (CAMDEN COUNTY) COOPER RIVER PARK (CAMDEN COUNTY)

(*FACILITIES MAINTAINED BY THE COLLINGSWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION)
(** FUTURE SITE OF SENIOR CENTER)

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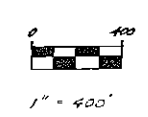
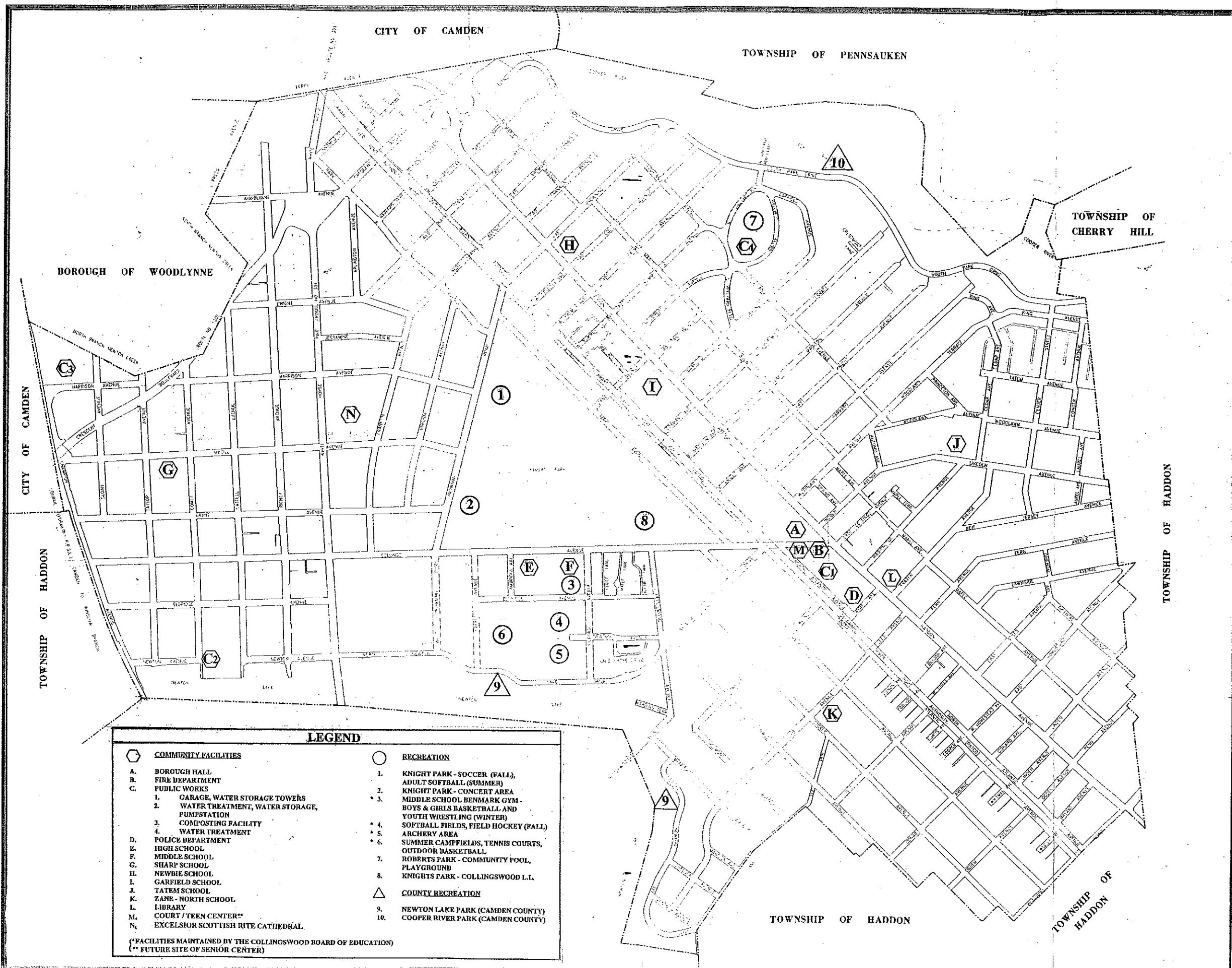


FIGURE CF-1 /
FIGURE REC-1

Borough of Collingswood

Camden County, New Jersey

Community Facilities and Recreation Plan

LEGEND	
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES
A.	BOROUGH HALL
B.	FIRE DEPARTMENT
C.	PUBLIC WORKS
1.	GARAGE, WATER STORAGE TOWERS
2.	WATER TREATMENT, WATER STORAGE, PUMPSTATION
3.	COMPOSTING FACILITY
4.	WATER TREATMENT
D.	POLICE DEPARTMENT
E.	HIGH SCHOOL
F.	MIDDLE SCHOOL
G.	SHARP SCHOOL
H.	NEWBIE SCHOOL
I.	GARFIELD SCHOOL
J.	TATEM SCHOOL
K.	ZANE - NORTH SCHOOL
L.	LIBRARY
M.	COURT / TEEN CENTER**
N.	EXCELSIOR SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL
	RECREATION
1.	KNIGHT PARK - SOCCER (FALL), ADULT SOFTBALL (SUMMER)
2.	KNIGHT PARK - CONCERT AREA
3.	MIDDLE SCHOOL BENCHMARK GYM - BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL AND YOUTH WRESTLING (WINTER)
4.	SOFTBALL FIELDS, FIELD HOCKEY (FALL)
5.	ARCHERY AREA
6.	SUMMER CAMPFIELDS, TENNIS COURTS, OUTDOOR BASKETBALL
7.	ROBERTS PARK - COMMUNITY POOL, PLAYGROUND
8.	KNIGHTS PARK - COLLINGSWOOD L.L.
	COUNTY RECREATION
9.	NEWTON LAKE PARK (CAMDEN COUNTY)
10.	COOPER RIVER PARK (CAMDEN COUNTY)

(* FACILITIES MAINTAINED BY THE COLLINGSWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION)
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II. INVENTORY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A. MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Borough of Collingswood's municipal building is a three-story brick and cast stone structure, designed by architect John T. Brugger. Built in 1926 as a bank for the Collingswood Trust Company, it was converted for municipal use in 1936 and again in 1987. Borough Hall is a historically significant, architectural building with elaborate design details including cornices, pilasters and ornamental bronze security doors. As seen in Figure CF-2, it serves as an excellent example of facade restoration and adaptive reuse.

The Borough Hall is located at 678 Haddon Avenue, which is just west of the intersection with Collings Avenue. As shown in Figure CF-1, *Community Facilities and Recreation Plan*, it is at a key location in the downtown commercial district. It's central location, within both the shopping area and the Borough, make the building easily accessible and convenient for residents, professionals, and merchants. Also, the bank in its restored state of municipal offices, serves as an excellent corner stone for a facade restoration movement in the downtown area.

FIGURE CF-2

BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD MUNICIPAL OFFICES
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

Borough Hall, originally built as a bank, still retains many of the original architectural features, such as its facade cornices and window treatments.

The 14,300 square foot building houses the following departments' offices:

- Mayor's Office
- Commissioners' Offices
- Borough Administrator
- Borough Clerk
- Tax Collector
- Tax Assessor
- Revenue and Finance
- Utilities Billing (Water / Sewer)
- Construction
- Zoning
- Community Development
- Nuisance

There are fifteen (15) full-time employees and eight (8) part-time employees who currently work in Borough Hall.

Parking for Borough Hall can be found to the rear of the building, with access from Collings Avenue. There are 12 spaces in this location: 1 for handicap parking, 2 reserved spaces, and 9 metered spaces. A parking lot across the street, adjacent to the Municipal Court, has approximately 12 parking spaces reserved for some Borough employees. However, for a the Borough Hall alone, at least 28 spaces should be provided for visitors and employees.

Additional parking can be found on the street, primarily Haddon Avenue and North Atlantic Avenue. However, the limited availability of this parking creates a problem, not only for those visiting Borough Hall but for those wishing to patronize the local retail and service establishments. It is recommended that off-street parking be established as a shared facility for patrons of the businesses as well as municipal services. This need should be factored into the Borough's downtown parking plan.

Furthermore, the rear of the building faces Collings Avenue. As such, some form of treatment must be initiated to soften the view of this portion of the building. It is suggested that a creative mural be added to convert a negative view into a design feature leading into the Central Business District.

B. POLICE DEPARTMENT

The police department is located at 735 North Atlantic Avenue in a converted single-family home. There are thirty (30) police officers, three (3) full time and eighteen (18) part-time civilians who work from this location, in extremely crowded and inappropriate quarters.¹

The police station has become inadequate for the day-to-day operations which take place in the building. The building requires major rehabilitation efforts to bring it into compliance with building codes and operational requirements for a police station. The holding areas for interrogation, detention, and lock-up do not meet State standards. Also, the heating and cooling systems are over 40 years old and the electrical wiring cannot accommodate the expansion of necessary computer equipment.

It has been estimated that the space needed to accommodate operational requirements would double the current size of the police station, which is estimated to be 3,500 square feet. It has been recommended that the station be relocated to a joint facility with the fire department. A new community building, connecting the existing Fire Hall to the current Public Works garage (rounding the corner of Collings Avenue and North Atlantic), will provide a central location for emergency services as well as allow for shared parking, increased security, and more efficient service.

¹The thirty (30) police officers are ranked as follows: one (1) Chief, one (1) Captain, one (1) Lieutenant, six (6) Sergeants, and twenty-one (21) Patrolmen.

FIGURE CF- 3

**BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The old, overcrowded building used by the police department does not have the capacity to handle the expanding needs of computer systems, faxes, and phones

C. FIRE DEPARTMENT / COLLINGSWOOD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

The Borough of Collingswood Fire Department and the Collingswood Ambulance Association are located at 20 West Collings Avenue, just south of the intersection with Haddon Avenue. There are 110 members in both departments working from this location (See Figure CF-4).

The fire department consists of two divisions, the eleven (11) career staff and the twenty-six (26) volunteers. The breakdown of career staff is as follows:

- Chief (1)
- Captain (1)
- Lieutenant (1)
- Firefighter (7)
- Civilian/Staff (1)

The ambulance association consists of eight (8) career staff, who are employed by West Jersey Health System but housed in the fire department building.

As stated previously, there are approximately twenty-six (26) active volunteers of the fire department. Ten (10) Boy Scouts are part of the fire department's Explorer program, which trains boys ages 14-17 and allows them to directly enter the fire department at age 18. There are approximately twenty-five (25) ambulance association volunteers (some of which are also volunteer firefighters). Life members, those with over 20 years experience, make up the remaining thirty (30) members of the departments' 110 members.

The building is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of five (5) career firefighters and officers. A minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) emergency medical personnel are on duty Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. A clerical position is staffed Monday through Friday.

The fire company owns the building at Collings Avenue. The Borough owns the vehicles and the equipment which is housed at that location. Those vehicles are as follows:

- Full size pumpers (3)
- 100 ft. ladder truck (1)
- Ambulances (2)
- Marine unit / boat (1)
- Canteen (1)
- Fire Prevention van (1)

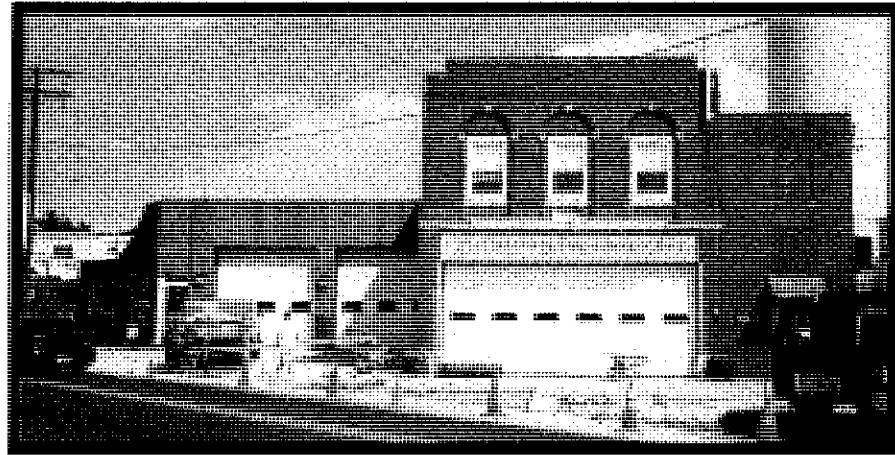
At the present time, the fire department and ambulance association are at maximum capacity for their location. With the anticipated increase in staff (24 hour Emergency Medical Services and additional career firefighters to supplement depleting volunteer force), vehicles (Rescue vehicle, plus two existing vehicles in outside storage), and other resources (staff, administrative offices, civic meeting space, parking), the current location and building will be inadequate.

There is concern from the department about the increasing numbers of vehicles which collect at the traffic light at the intersection of Collings and Haddon Avenues. The light causes traffic to stop in front of the station driveway. To date, this has not caused a problem but with the anticipated redevelopment and subsequent increase of popularity of the downtown, this may cause a backup of traffic directly in front of the station. This can present a serious access problem unless it is rectified.

As mentioned in Section B, a joint facility with the police department has been recommended and is scheduled for construction in Fall of 1999.

FIGURE CF- 4

**COLLINGSWOOD FIRE HOUSE
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The intersection of Haddon and Collings Avenues, is prone to traffic back-up problems which could be exacerbated as redevelopment plans for the downtown cause more cars to enter the area.

D. MUNICIPAL COURT / TEEN CENTER

Municipal court for the Borough of Collingswood, as seen in Figure CF-5, is located at 28 West Collings Avenue. The two story building houses the Violations Bureau on the first floor, the Court Room on the second floor, and a Teen Center in the basement. There is a small office on the second floor which is used by the Prosecutor. The Public Defender uses the kitchen for meeting space when needed.

The Court employs one (1) Administrator, one (1) Assistant / Deputy Administrator and two (2) Clerks.

Court is in session every Wednesday. Parking is not provided on-site for Court attendants but off-street parking is available adjacent to the PATCO high-speed line.

The Court building is at its maximum capacity. The Borough evaluated architectural alternatives for the building as there are no private offices for the employees, only a common office space. An additional staff person is required in the near future although there is no allocated room available for a desk or work area. Also, meeting space for attorneys and their clients is required but not provided.

The Court has been programmed to be included in the new community building which is scheduled to house the police, fire, and ambulance departments, as well as the Senior Center, Teen Center, and other municipal functions.

The Court building should be designed to include private office space for the Administrator and other Violations Bureau officials, the public defender, and prosecutor. General office space and filing areas should be included as well. At least two meeting rooms should be provided for private court-related discussions and community meeting space.

FIGURE CF- 5

**VIOLATIONS BUREAU AND MUNICIPAL COURT
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

*The Borough Court House lacks the required office and meeting space.
Recommendations include moving the offices to the new, proposed community
building which will house multiple Borough departments.*

E. PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works is headquartered at 713 North Atlantic Avenue but has offices at various facilities throughout the Borough. The department consists of two different sections, each with their own superintendent and staff.

Highways and Sewer have eight (8) employees who are based out of the Atlantic Avenue location, as shown in Figure CF-6. This section has one (1) supervisor / superintendent, one (1) foreman, and six (6) laborers.

The Water department employs one (1) supervisor/superintendent, one (1) assistant supervisor, one (1) foreman, one (1) equipment operator, six (6) laborers, four (4) plant operators, and one (1) meter reader. Billing offices are located at Borough Hall and the remaining offices are based at the Hillcrest Ave. and Vineyard Blvd. facility, which can be seen in Figure CF-7.

Public works is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the roads and highways as well as the following municipal-owned properties:

<u>Property</u>	<u>Address / Location</u>
• Municipal Garage	713 N. Atlantic Avenue
• Compost Facility	Sloan and Harrison Avenues
• Storage Sheds	Comly and Newton Avenues
• Water Treatment Facility	Hillcrest Avenue and N. Vineyard Blvd.
• Water Treatment Facility	Comly and Newton Avenues
• Sewer Pump Station	298 Comly Avenue
• Sewer Pump Station	255 Hillcrest Avenue
• Sewer Pump Station	North Newton Lake Drive
• Stand Pipe Water Tanks	713 N. Atlantic Avenue
• Elevated Water Tank	Comly and Newton Avenues
• Wells	Throughout Borough (5 near Roberts Pool)
• Roberts Pool ²	Hillcrest Avenue and N. Vineyard Blvd.

²Roberts Pool is operated and staffed by the Recreation Dept. but maintained by Public Works.

FIGURE CF- 6

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT / MUNICIPAL GARAGE
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The municipal garage, located on Atlantic Avenue, is over capacity, housing at least twenty-three vehicles. Storage facilities at another municipal site on Comly and Newton Avenues, are used to house the over-flow.

FIGURE CF - 7

**COLLINGSWOOD WATER WORKS -- WATER TREATMENT FACILITY
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The portion of the Public Works Department which housed in the Water Treatment Facility, on Hillcrest Avenue and N. Vineyard Blvd., is responsible for the maintenance of the pool as well as the treatment plant.

The sewer pump station is located at Comly and Newton Avenues but is owned and operated by the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority.

The water department service area expands into the neighboring community of Woodlynne and Haddon Township, servicing approximately 1500 sites. The municipality itself has approximately 4500 accounts.

The municipal garage houses approximately sixteen (16) municipal owned vehicles which are used by the department. The inventory is as follows:

- Five (5) dump trucks
- Nine (9) pick-up trucks
- Two (2) automobiles
- Two (2) backhoes
- One (1) front-end loader
- Two (2) street sweepers
- Two (2) mobile units / utility trucks
- Eight (8) tractors

Due to the lack of space at the public works building and surrounding site for expansion, it has been recommended that the site be relocated to accommodate the expanding needs of the department for both office and storage space. Currently the storage sheds contain seasonal equipment for which there is no space at the Atlantic Avenue garage.

The site currently occupied at 713 North Atlantic Avenue may be incorporated into the design for the new community building on the corner of Collings Avenue and North Atlantic Avenue, which will potentially house an expanded fire department, the Senior Center, the Teen Center, the Police Department, and the Municipal Court.

Figure CF-8A depicts the proposed area plans for the public works relocation on Comly and Newton Avenues. Tree-lined buffers and circulation elements have been included. Areas A, B, and C depict possible building site areas. If the space at this area is also inadequate, then the site of Eldridge Gardens should be considered for a fully concentrated facility. This alternative design is shown in Figure CF-8B. In either scenario, recreation facilities have been incorporated to meet the future needs of the recreation department. Land not utilized by the relocation of the public works facility can be used for soccer and baseball/softball fields.

The space that would potentially be vacated by the existing Public Works building on Atlantic Avenue is approximately 10,200 square feet. The total vacation of the site would be over 16,000 square feet. The proposed site on Comly and Newton Avenues offers 198,710 square feet or 4.56 acres and the alternative Eldridge Gardens site offers 128,398 square feet or 2.95 acres. A possible total of 327,108 square feet or 7.51 acres, could be used to accommodate both public works and recreation requirements.

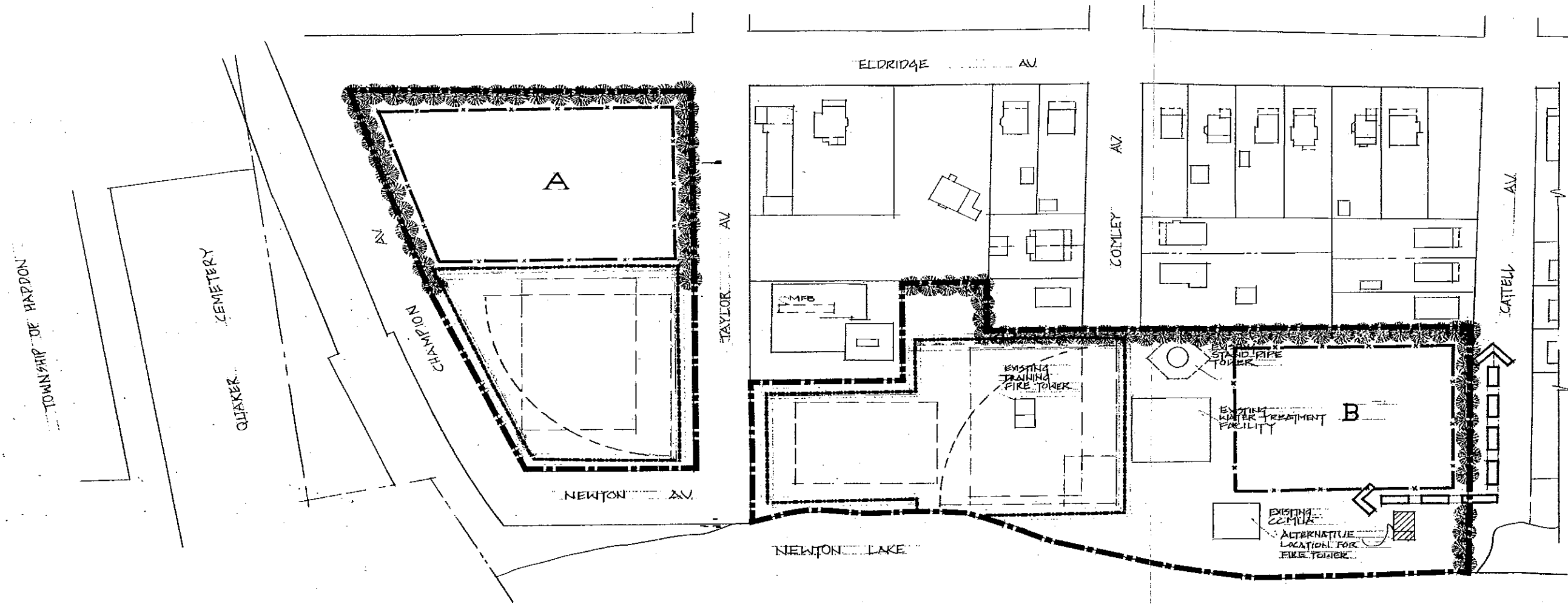


FIGURE REC-24

Figure CF-8B

KEY		ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT OF PUBLIC WORKS SITE AND RECREATION FACILITY	
	PROJECT SITE	BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD CAMDEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY	
	EXISTING BUILDINGS		
	BUFFER	REV:	
	SITE ACCESS	DATE:	
	ESTIMATED AREAS AVAILABLE FOR USE	SCALE: 1" = 50'	
	RECREATION AREAS		
		Peter P. Karabashian Associates, Inc. Professional Planners 27 Gordon's Alley Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401 Phone: (609) 374-0311 Fax: (609) 347-1819	

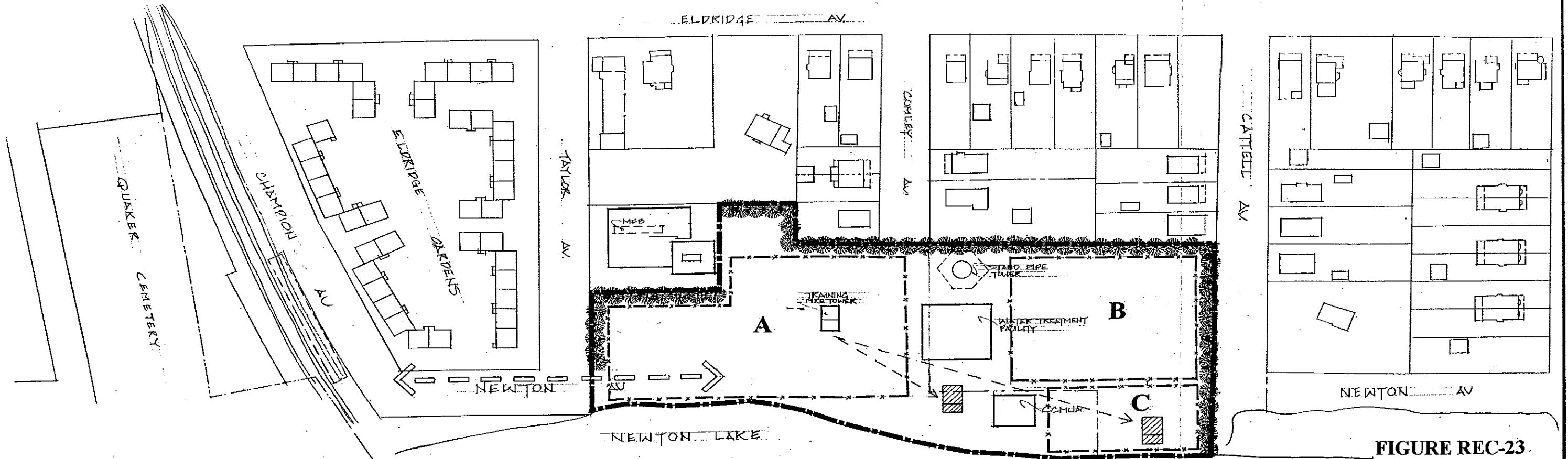
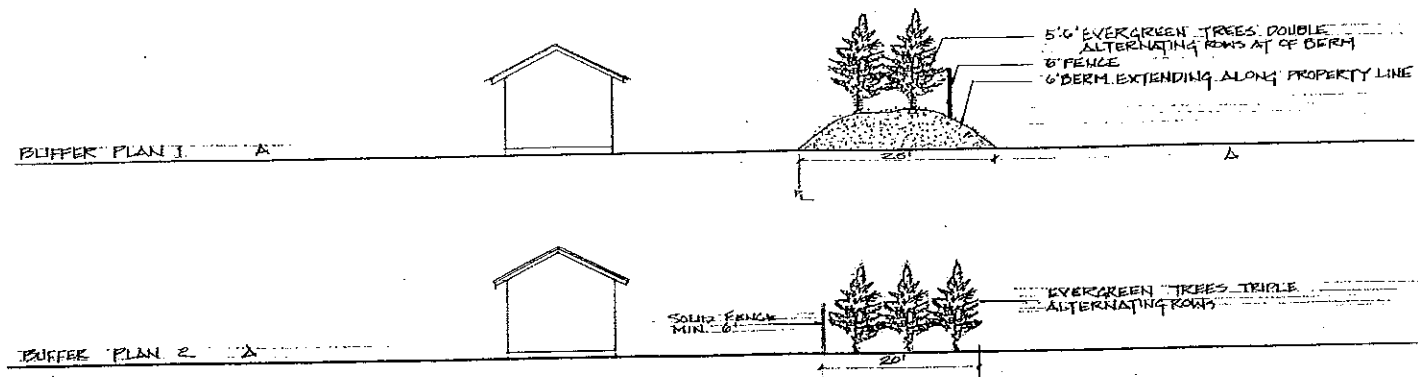


FIGURE REC-23
Figure CF-8A

	PROJECT SITE
	EXISTING BUILDINGS
	BUFFER
	SITE ACCESS
	ESTIMATED AREAS AVAILABLE FOR USE
	ALTERNATE LOCATION FOR FIRE TOWER

CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT OF PUBLIC WORKS SITE
 BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD
 CAMDEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

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F. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The Collingswood Public School District operates seven schools consisting of one (1) high school serving grades 9-12, one (1) middle school serving grades 7 and 8, and five (5) elementary schools serving Kindergarten through 6th grade. The schools are dispersed throughout the community and are within residential areas.

Enrollment for the 1997-1998 school year was reported to be 2,292 students. The breakdown of the enrollment is as follows:

<u>School</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>% of Capacity</u>
Senior High ³	9-12	827	1065	77.7
Middle School	7-8	332	855	38.8
Garfield Elementary	K-6	155	175	88.6
Newbie Elementary	K-6	217	220	98.6
Sharp Elementary	K-6	267	294	90.8
Tatem Elementary	K-6	261	350	74.6
Zane-North Elementary	K-6	233	250	93.2
TOTALS		2,292	3,209	71.4

The forecasted enrollment statistics do not show a significant increase in the number of students or the amount of classroom space required. Currently, the schools are not at capacity and are equipped to handle an increase. However, while the general population is not expected to increase, the number of special need programs is projected to climb. This may cause an additional burden on the district and require an expansion or change in 'specialty' facilities to service this population. Also, due to the age of some of the buildings, renovations may be needed within the next few years. This will range from normal capital improvements, such as windows or roofs, to specific building additions such as a library or media room.

The Collingswood Public School system is unique in its placement within the municipal boundaries. Each neighborhood has its own elementary school to which the children can walk, therefore, bussing is not necessary. The location of the elementary schools within the neighborhoods they serve is

³Collingswood High School serves as a receiving district for the Boroughs of Woodlynne, Oaklyn, and Hi-Nella . Those students are included in the provided statistics.

shown in Figure CF-9. Each of the elementary schools can be seen in Figures CF-10 through CF-14. The middle school and high schools are centrally located in the community as well. These two facilities can be viewed in Figures CF-15 and CF-16.

The neighborhood school system is strategically located creating an extremely desirable relationship between neighborhood elementary schools and the actual host neighborhood. The concept of the neighborhood schools was shelved in the early 1960's and 1970's in favor of centralized schools that required students to be bussed. The experiment was generally unsuccessful and cost tax payers enormous sums for education. Collingswood is very fortunate to have a neighborhood school model. Accordingly, a recommendation of this Master Plan proposal is to enhance and preserve the existing system.

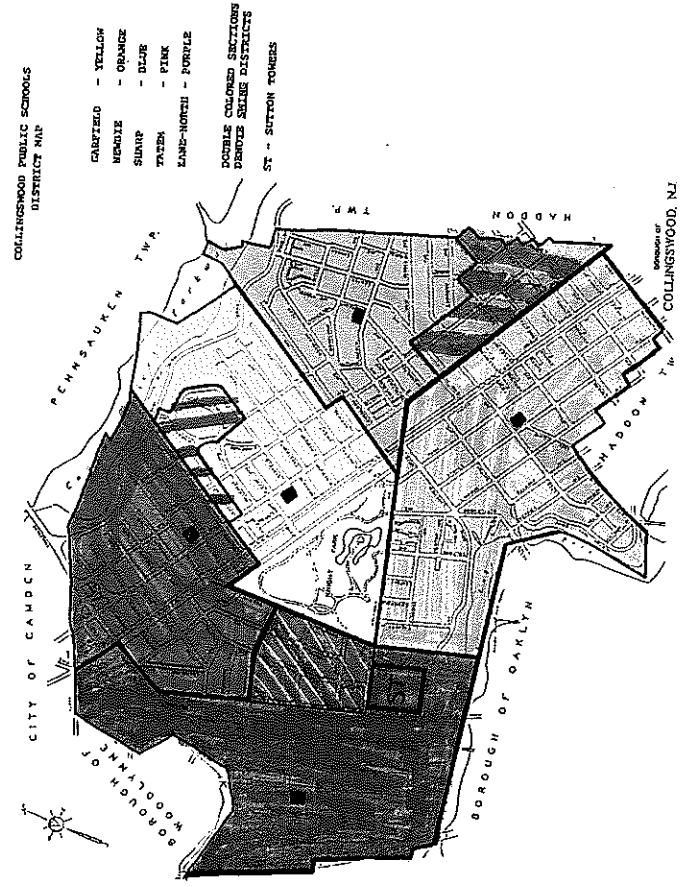
The school grounds serve as recreation centers for many of the residents and are easily accessed due to the central location within each of the neighborhoods. The recreation department utilizes this space for many of their programs. Four of the five elementary schools are used until 6:00 PM for after-school programs.

The community survey, *Discovering Collingswood*, which was completed as part of the Master Plan process, indicated a concern for the high school. It is the unverified opinion of some of the respondents that the high school needs "work". However, the nature of the "work" is not mentioned nor are suggested improvements. This may simply be a perception of a few individuals, however, if necessary, the perception or the problem needs to be explored, addressed and corrected. Further study, beyond the scope of this plan, is recommended. A strategic planning process should be used to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities presented by the high school and/or the district as a whole.

Another recommendation resulting from this study is to consolidate school district services into one area. Currently, school district services, such as buildings and grounds, special educational services, athletics, and business offices are scattered throughout the community. The opportunity to run the district more efficiently would be offered if these services were combined into one building. The newly available space should be used to house the specialty areas needed for the educational development of students such as learning centers, media / computer rooms, and libraries.

FIGURE CF - 9

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SERVICE AREAS
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**

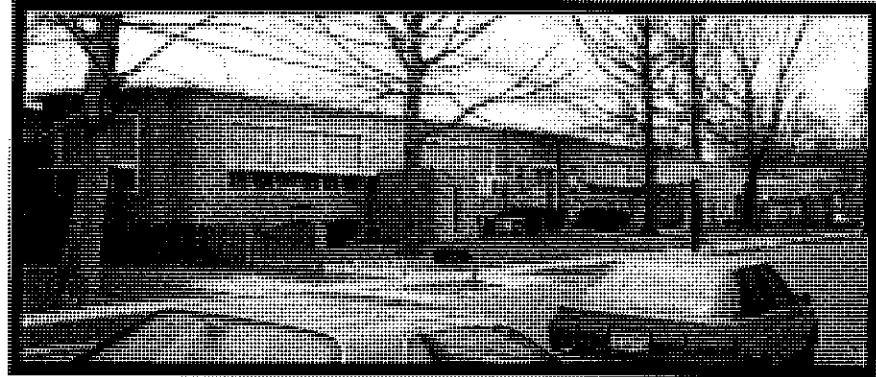


SOURCE: COLLINGSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT, 1998

Collingswood is a perfect example of the neighborhood school system at work. Children in each delineated areas attend their centrally-located, neighborhood school. This eliminates the need for bussing and creates a sense of pride within each neighborhood.

FIGURE CF - 10

TATEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1988

Tatem Elementary, located on the corner of Lincoln and Cedar Avenues, has the largest capacity of the elementary schools in Collingswood.

FIGURE CF - 11

NEWBIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1988

The Newbie Elementary School, located on Browning Avenue between Haddon and Maple Avenues has a basketball court and playground for student use.

FIGURE CF - 12

**ZANE-NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

Zane-North Elementary has a capacity for 250 students. The school currently operates at 93% capacity with 233 students.

FIGURE CF - 13

**SHARP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The Sharp Elementary School, located on the corner of Comly and Magill Avenues, has a picnic table area for students to eat their lunches outside.

FIGURE CF - 14

GARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

Garfield Elementary, located on Haddon Avenue between Gorman and Zane Avenues, is the smallest of the elementary schools, with a maximum capacity of 175 students.

FIGURE CF - 15

COLLINGSWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The Middle School shares a campus with the High School. The Middle School Gymnasium, Ben Marks Gym, is the site of many community recreation activities.

FIGURE CF - 16

COLLINGSWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The Collingswood High School serves as a receiving district for the adjacent communities of Woodlynne, Hi-Nella, and Oaklyn.

G. COLLINGSWOOD LIBRARY

The Collingswood Library is a 2-story, 13,000 square foot building built in 1974. It is a stucco and brick structure as seen in Figure CF-17. It is located at the corner of Haddon and Frazer Avenues. This location is centrally located but is severely limited in its service by the amount of available parking, which includes six (6) metered spaces adjacent to the library.

Hours of operation are 9:30 AM to 8:30 PM, Monday - Friday and 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM on Saturdays. The staff includes six (6) full-time and six (6) part-time employees.

The library's collection includes the following:

- Book collection of 64,000 volumes representing 60,000 titles
- Video tape collection of 450 titles
- Audio tape collection of 1000 titles
- Access to 1.5 million titles through the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative interlibrary loan process
- Magazine and newspaper subscriptions of 150 titles

Internet access is provided at the library through one computer which will be joined by two additional terminals in early 1999. The library has an automated circulation system and public access catalogs. This system is three years old and is expected to handle volumes for another five years.

The library's meeting rooms accommodate a series of groups which gather on a regular basis. Some of these groups include the Historical Society, the Junior Woman's Club, an animated film society, and homeopathic study group.

The library's New Jersey Research Room offers patrons an opportunity to research local history. The library also offers a genealogy club which meets monthly.

The library offers a series of programs for varying age groups, including story and craft hours, reading clubs, and a weekly book discussion group. Other events such as weekly line dance sessions, income tax assistance for senior citizens, weekly scrabble and card groups, and health checks are offered on a regular basis.

Yearly attendance at the library is reported to be good. Parking is a major issue and is seen as a deterrent to increasing useage. The bank owns a parking lot behind the library but does not allow library patrons to park there. It is recommended that the library begin negotiations with the bank to allow

shared parking. It is further recommended that the municipality study the option of assuming responsibility for maintenance and liability of the parking lot in exchange for parking for municipal uses, such as the library and the municipal building which have a limited number of spaces.

The library building itself is nearly at capacity. It was designed to hold a book collection of 40,000 volumes but has over 64,000. Because of the buildings placement on the site, there is no room for horizontal expansion, only vertical. Additional terminals providing internet access will need to be provided in the future. This will require additional space, funding and staff. Also, the library Trustees have discussed the possibility of opening the library on Sundays. While this would be an added benefit for the community and seen as a positive service, the library does not currently have the staff or resources to provide such an option.

FIGURE CF - 17

**THE COLLINGSWOOD LIBRARY
BOOUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: PETER P. KARABASHIAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1998

The Collingswood Library, located in the downtown commercial district, has a lack of parking spaces available to its patrons.

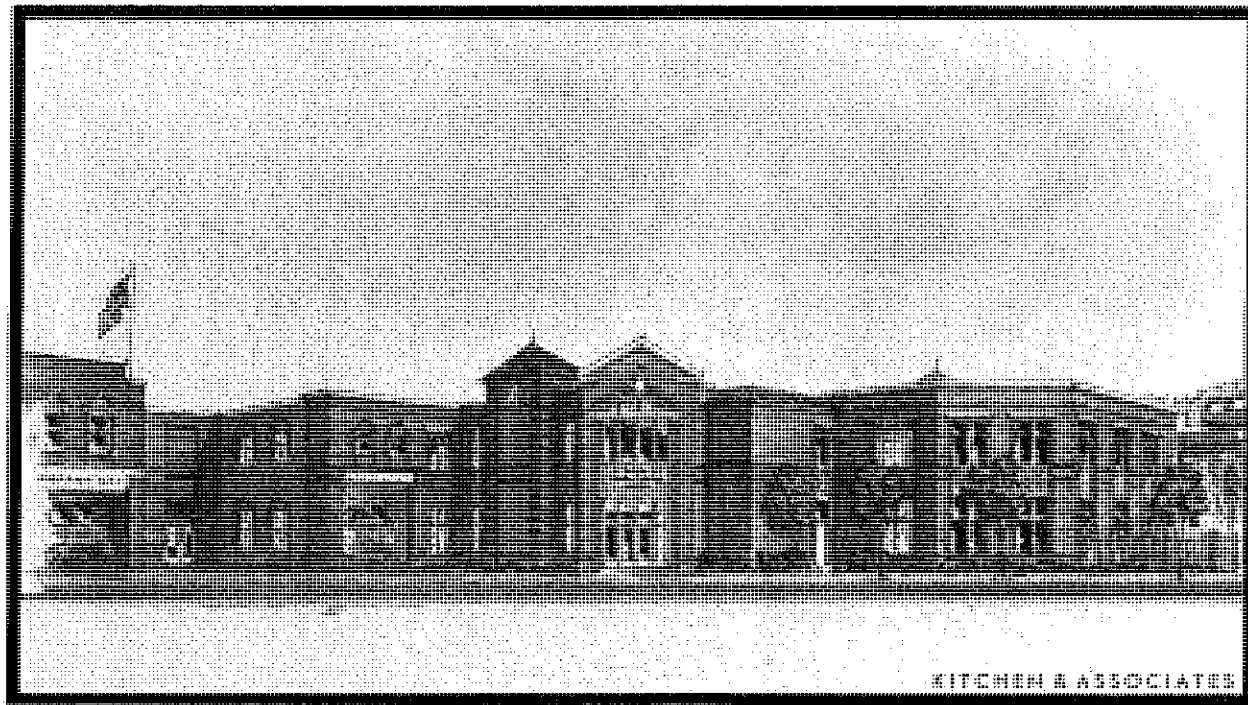
H. SENIOR CENTER

Although not an existing building, the Borough of Collingswood has received Community Development Block Grant monies to develop a Senior Center on Collings Avenue at the corner with North Atlantic Avenue, the current site of the Municipal Court and Teen Center. Architectural drawings, as seen in Figure CF-18, have been developed and if approved, construction is slated to begin in 1999.

The Senior Center is proposed to be two-stories in height, with a clock tower and brick facade to match the adjacent fire department facility. The facility will contain two, large multi-purpose rooms, partitioned spaces for various activities, a game room, a living room, a computer area, bathrooms, administrative space, and an outdoor area for small functions.

FIGURE CF-18

**CONCEPTUAL DRAWING FOR THE PROPOSED SENIOR CENTER
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: KITCHEN & ASSOCIATES, JUNE 1999

The conceptual drawing shows the view from Collings Avenue of the new Senior Center and the expanded Fire House.

I. EXCELSIOR SCOTTISH RITE TEMPLE

The Excelsior Scottish Rite Temple is an art-deco style auditorium located at 315 White Horse Pike. The building is owned by the Excelsior Scottish Rite Bodies, an affiliate of the Freemasons, and has served as their headquarters for at least 60 years. The 1,050-seat auditorium has the potential to serve as a major cultural facility for the Borough as well as the entire South Jersey region.

Although not owned by the Borough, the Scottish Rite Bodies have expressed an interest in actively re-using the site. The auditorium has been underutilized for a number of years and the increasing costs of maintenance have led to the recent focus on using this facility as a concert hall.

The building contains elaborate stained glass windows, stadium-style seating, painted plaster ceilings, carved statues, and a pipe organ. The site has enough parking for 380 cars.

Located within walking distance of the West Collingswood Business District, the Scottish Rite Temple offers the potential for redevelopment in the area. Compatible retail and cultural uses, such as galleries, studios, and cafes, would not only be appropriate in that location, but support the concept of a regional cultural draw.

J. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A detailed review and analysis of the recreation amenities provided in the Borough of Collingswood is included in the Recreation Element of the Master Plan. The following is a brief summary of the pertinent findings of that element.

The Borough only maintains two recreation sites, Roberts Pool and Knight Park⁴. The remaining recreational sites, such as Cooper River Park and Newton Creek / Newton Lake are operated by Camden County. The other playgrounds and ball fields are owned and maintained by the school district. The school district sites are important as they have the potential to serve the recreational needs of the community on a neighborhood basis, thus preserving the neighborhood and creating a "place" for the neighborhood to call their own.

⁴Knight Park is maintained by an on-site groundskeeper through a joint agreement with the Board of Trustees of Knight Park, the actual owners and operators of the Park, and the Borough. The fields are lined and maintained by the recreation department or school district depending on the organization using the facility.

Friends of Knight Park, a volunteer group of concerned citizens who provide technical assistance to the Board of Trustees of Knight Park, have been working since 1996 to develop a Master Plan for the Park. The three community goals that have developed from their work include:

- Balance active and passive uses
- Preserve and enhance the beauty of the park
- Incorporate educational programs and volunteer organizations

Three concept plans for Knight Park have been designed using these goals as well as comments from the community and input from the Recreation Director. Copies are included the Recreation Element of this Master Plan. It incorporates specific design concepts such as community gardens and ball fields. Although the Park is owned by the Trustees, the design addresses future community needs and will need to be presented to the Board for their approval.

The recreation department incorporates all of the available facilities to create a varied sampling of sports, activities, and events for all residents of Collingswood.

The recommendations mentioned in the Recreation Element are very detailed and specific to the individual facilities. A summary of the major points is included in the Recommendations section of this element.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

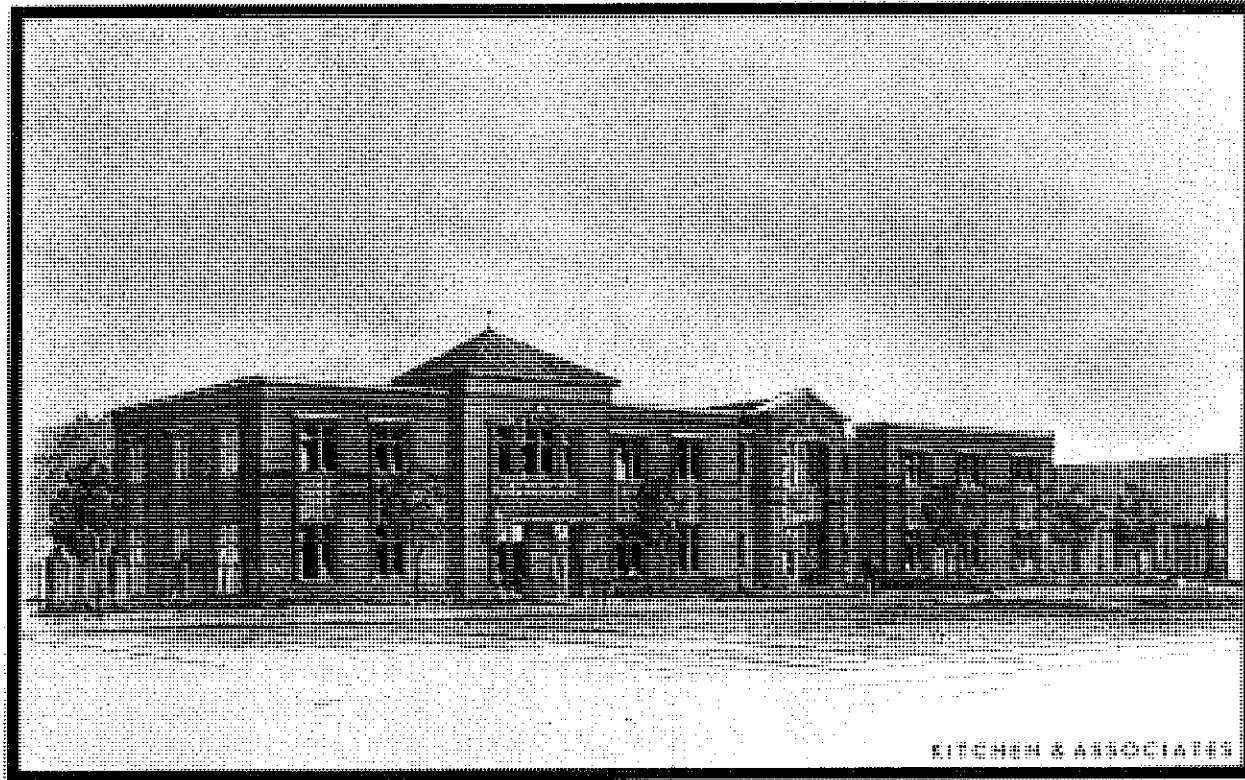
Based on the goals and objectives outlined at the beginning of the Master Plan, the detailed inventory, and community input, a number of specific recommendations have been created to rectify the current aesthetic and functional hindrances of the Borough's community facilities. These recommendations incorporate land use changes, economic development strategies, and good design concepts to make the Borough function more efficiently and effectively.

A. MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

1. Shared, off-street parking should be established for patrons of the downtown businesses and municipal services.
2. A creative mural or architectural facade should be added to the rear of the Municipal building, which faces onto Collings Avenue, to convert a negative view into a design feature that heads into the Central Business District.
3. As shown in Figure CF-18 and CF-19, a new municipal building has been designed to incorporate the area between the existing Fire Hall and the Public Works garage, spanning the corner of Collings Avenue and North Atlantic Avenue. This facility is proposed to house the fire department, the ambulance association, the new senior center, the teen center, the municipal court, the police department, and other municipal offices. Overall recommendations for utilization of this space include:
 - a. The new municipal court area should include private office space for the Court Administrator and other Violations Bureau officials, the public defender, and prosecutor. General office space and filing areas should be included as well. At least two meeting rooms should be provided for private court-related discussions and community meeting space.
 - b. The additional office space should be utilized by the Board of Education so as to centralize their operation. This will allow the currently scattered office space to be re-used as specialized classroom and learning facilities.
 - c. The public works facility should be relocated to the existing public facilities site and/or redevelopment area on Newton and Comly Avenues. The relocation will allow for the necessary expansion of storage space and the co-location of recreational facilities.

FIGURE CF-19

**CONCEPTUAL DRAWING FOR THE PROPOSED MUNICIPAL BUILDING
BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, NEW JERSEY**



SOURCE: KITCHEN & ASSOCIATES, JUNE 1999

The proposed Municipal Building could house the relocated Court facilities, the new Police Department, and consolidated Board of Education offices.

B. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

1. The neighborhood school system should be preserved and enhanced.
2. A strategic plan should be undertaken by the school district to identify the strengths, weakness, and opportunities presented by the high school and the school district as a whole.
3. The elementary school facilities should be opened for the enjoyment of all residents, through a program of scheduled hours and neighborhood involvement.

C. COLLINGSWOOD LIBRARY

1. Short-term recommendations (1-3 years) would include the following:
 - a. Offer volunteer positions to increase library staff. Senior citizens and high school students are good possibilities. In particular, college student interns have the skills needed to provide the technical assistance on the computers and internet. These positions do not require monetary compensation, but college credits or lending priority as an incentive. This would help ease the burden on the existing staff and resources to allow the opportunity for the library to open on Sundays.
 - b. Work with the Friends of the Collingswood Library to further promote their activities and acquire corporate donations. The book sales and special events which they sponsor could raise money for the organization as well as extra funding for computers, internet access, and possible expansion of service hours.
 - c. Work with the bank to arrange for shared-parking. Library parking could be allowed after 2:00 PM through the evening hours and on weekends. The bank could designate certain spaces to be used by library patrons only.
2. Long term recommendations (three to five years) would include:
 - a. Complete a strategic plan to identify the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities present in the library system. This will help to select new programs and facilities needed in the future. It will also help select the items which are preventing the system from progressing. This is especially helpful in identifying and addressing ever-changing technology needs.
 - b. Identify funding to expand the existing library or purchase / build a new library facility. Either option should include space to accommodate new computers, approximately 20,000 new titles, additional meeting space and study areas. It is recommended that if a new location is selected, it be within the downtown district as the library serves as a major attraction to the area.

D. EXCELSIOR SCOTTISH RITE TEMPLE

1. Work with the Scottish Rite Bodies to develop a marketing strategy aimed at attracting, regional-type performances to the Temple auditorium, such as plays, concerts, operas, and ballets.
2. Use parking facilities at the Temple site to supplement the unsatisfied parking demand at Knight Park.
 - a. Work with neighbors and surrounding property owners to determine the best areas for access easements to be established for easy access to and from both sites.
 - b. Create a lighted, signed, and landscaped walkway between the two facilities.
3. Encourage uses compatible with the proposed cultural facility, such as cafes and galleries. Link those with the proposed redevelopment efforts in the West Collingswood Business District.

E. RECREATION

1. Knight Park
 - a. Knight Park should be redesigned to utilize the vast amount of open space for additional recreational opportunities. These opportunities include the following:
 - Fitness trail
 - Family memorial and dedication areas
 - Environmental interpretive signage
 - Wetlands habitat enhancement / Creation of mitigation sites/ Pond expansion
 - Recreation / High School ball fields
 - Creation of a Learning Center
 - Themed gardens / natural landscapes
 - Community gardens
 - Festival areas
 - Sculpture gardens
 - b. A parking study should be undertaken to determine the best means to accommodate parking at Knight Park and for the High School.

2. School Facilities

- a. The elementary school facilities should be opened for the enjoyment of all residents. This may occur during scheduled hours and monitored through a variety of neighborhood efforts.
- b. Outdated play equipment on the elementary school playgrounds should be replaced or supplemented with newer, brighter structures.
- c. The roller hockey rink needs to be upgraded or relocated to meet the demands of the residents.
- d. A space plan should be completed for the recreational facilities, especially the ball fields. This would be completed to prevent over-use of the fields and allow for rotation and seeding. This may also allow for better utilization of field space for additional sports or additional league play.