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CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT



PRESERVING GREEN SPACE IN METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

a parks and open space commission for the twin cities area

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The Citizens League, founded in 1952, is an independent, non-partisan educational organization in the Twin Cities Area, with some 3,600 members, specializing in questions of government planning, finance and organization.

Citizens League reports, which provide assistance to public officials and others in finding solutions to complex problems of local government, are developed by volunteer research committees, supported by a fulltime professional staff.

Membership is open to the public. The League's annual budget is financed by annual dues of \$10 (\$15 for family memberships) and contributions from more than 600 businesses, foundations and other organizations.

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PRESERVING GREEN SPACE IN
METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

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A PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
FOR THE TWIN CITIES AREA

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Approved
Citizens League Board of Directors
July 2, 1968

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

To preserve and protect the natural beauty of the Twin Cities area for enjoyment of its residents today and in the future, to make the area attractive in the national market for business and industrial growth, to help protect stream valleys from flood plain development, to help prevent pollution of lakes, to provide metropolitan parks, forest preserves, wildlife areas, trails, parkways and special recreational facilities and help give character and livability to the metropolitan environment, *we recommend* that the 1969 Minnesota Legislature establish a Parks and Open Space Commission for the seven-county metropolitan area.

The Commission should be composed of 5-11 members appointed at large by the chairman of the Metropolitan Council with the consent of other members of the Council.

Within guidelines established by the Metropolitan Council, the Commission should prepare a long-range plan for parks and open space and proceed immediately to preserve and protect open land in the Twin Cities area, with particular emphasis at first on landalong lakes, rivers and streams which is susceptible to early development.

Capital budgets and operating budgets would be proposed by the Commission and submitted to the Metropolitan Council for approval. The Commission would hire its own executive director and staff, but would use administrative services, such as purchasing and accounting, as provided by the Metropolitan Council. When working on its long-range park and open space plans, the Commission would utilize the planning staff of the Metropolitan Council.

To take maximum advantage of limited dollars which will be available, and at the same time preserve the most amount of open land possible, the Commission should be empowered to use a number of methods, in addition to acquisition by full fee title.

A minimum of \$4 million annually would be needed for the Commission to finance the most urgently needed acquisitions and other expenses. We recommend a two-cents-a-pack increase in the cigarette tax, levied statewide, with revenues returned on a per capita basis to the Commission in the seven-county metropolitan area and to the counties in outstate Minnesota. Bonding authority in the vicinity of \$50-\$60 million should be authorized for metropolitan parks and open space.

Counties in the metropolitan area and the Commission could negotiate for transfer to the Commission of those county lands to come under Commission jurisdiction. Because of the unique legal structure of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, staff and lands under the District would be transferred automatically to the Commission and outstanding liabilities of the District would be assumed by the Commission.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

There is widespread concern in the Twin Cities metropolitan area today to preserve the quality of the environment. Public officials, conservationists, business interests and average citizens agree on the need. The seven-county area is blessed with an abundance of land and natural resources but is failing to take action to adequately protect this abundance. If we fail to act, it will be purely by accident and default--not by design or necessity. More than enough good land for urban development is available to satisfy the most optimistic growth estimates of this area in the future. Less than one-third of the total square miles of the seven-county area is expected to be urbanized by the year 2000. We can easily afford to preserve open space where needed. However, because this area today has no comprehensive open space plan, no policy for preservation of open land nor any vehicle for carrying out such policy, there is no way to assure that urban development will be kept away from land which should remain open.

Land which should be kept in an open state is being developed without any consideration being given to the additional public costs which will result in the future because of flood damage, flood control projects, or pollution of water, for example. Prime potential park and recreation areas along our many lakes and streams and in wooded, hilly areas are being preempted for private purpose rather than for public use. Residential subdivisions are planned with virtually all of the open space parceled equally on each lot rather than concentrating the open space together to make it more enjoyable, useful and less work.

The first consequence of failing to manage our natural resources will be the loss of a prime asset in national competition for business and industry. A pleasing and healthful environment in the Twin Cities area can add immeasurably to the appeal of this area as against other metropolitan areas in the nation. Frequently today, short-term economic interests appear to be getting the upper hand. A developer himself may reap the profit from being located along a valuable stream or lake, but this immediately rules out the possibility of taking advantage of the natural resource for the entire region.

The second consequence will be the adverse effect on the people who live in the Twin Cities area. The possibility of preserving natural resources for public enjoyment will have been lost. Shoreline which could be distributed between private residential development and public open space will be primarily private. Flood plains will not be protected. New subdivisions will be planned the same as before, without imaginative ways to preserve open space. Large recreational areas will be rare.

The third consequence will be the wholesale destruction of our most prized natural resources. Unrestricted development near our lakes and rivers will contribute to their pollution, which, in turn, will require expensive action to clean them up. The recent report by the Water Resources Foundation points up clearly the problem of development along Lake Minnetonka. Limited forestation will have given way to tracts of single-family dwellings. This generation will have used up the natural resources and left nothing to the future.

Civic leadership in our municipalities and counties, working within limited finances, have revealed tremendous foresight in the actions they have been able to

undertake so far. They have evidenced a dedication to acquisition of land for parks and playgrounds. The Hennepin County Park Reserve District has made significant strides in acquiring large metropolitan-type parks for a part of the seven-county area. Other counties are working on park programs, too. But these efforts have not and will not be sufficient for this metropolitan area. Parks and playgrounds, though an integral part, are not the only type of open space needed in the metropolitan area. An appropriate open space action policy will cover all land which should not be used for urban development.

The longer this Twin Cities area waits to develop an open space policy and carry that policy out, the more expensive it will become. Many opportunities we would have had ten years ago have disappeared today. There is nothing to indicate that this trend will change, unless action is taken.

Specifically we find as follows:

1. Land Along Rivers and Streams Not Being Protected -- Three major rivers--the Minnesota, the Mississippi, and the St. Croix--flow through the Twin Cities area. Out of a total of 310 miles of shoreline along these rivers, less than 32 miles, or about 10%, now are protected from development, according to data gathered by the Metropolitan Council. About three-fourths of the shoreline in public control is located within the corporate limits of Minneapolis and St. Paul, where farsighted action was taken years ago by parks planners. Similar farsighted action is totally absent elsewhere in the metropolitan area today. Even within the city limits of Minneapolis and St. Paul much shoreline is not being protected.

If shoreline is kept open, our rivers and streams will add character to the landscape of the metropolitan area and, if correct measures are taken, can help shape development of the area. They also can provide pleasant amenities to urban living.

A regional policy on open space preservation could have kept industrial development which does not need the waterways from being located along shoreline. Unfortunately, many municipalities have zoned much of the remaining open shoreline for additional industry.

The south shore of the Minnesota River in Dakota County and Scott County is rapidly becoming industrialized. Dreams of such planners as Theodore Wirth of protecting for public use both sides of the Minnesota River from Fort Snelling to Shakopee no longer can be realized, at least on the south shore. There still is opportunity on the north side. A map prepared under Wirth's direction in 1935, in cooperation with the Minnesota Highway Department, shows a proposed park on both sides of the Minnesota River and a parkway system throughout Hennepin County.

Land between Highway 169 and the Mississippi River north of Minneapolis to Anoka could have been preserved for public use if action would have been taken, but today it is too late. Expensive homes dot the shoreline.

There are still, fortunately, opportunities for preservation of our shoreline along the major rivers. The St. Croix River between Afton and Hastings remains essentially undeveloped today, as does a portion north of Stillwater. On the Minnesota River there still remains opportunity for a substantial amount of shoreline to be preserved, including both sides southwest of Chaska.

The Twin Cities area, too, has a number of smaller rivers with tremendous potential for public use -- rivers which could be ideally suited to such popular recreational purposes as floating along in an inner tube, canoeing or hiking along the shoreline. The natural beauty along the shoreline needs to be preserved. An important natural resource is the Rum River, which winds through townships of northern Anoka County and empties into the Mississippi at Anoka. The Rum River today is relatively undeveloped, but government officials fear rapid development if action is not forthcoming soon. The Crow River, which forms the northwest boundary of Hennepin County, can be another prize for public purpose in this area. The Crow may be threatened, too, by the possibility of sewage treatment plants on its shoreline. The Cannon River, along the southern boundary of Dakota County, has some beautiful wooded shoreline and gorges which make it a unique attraction for this area.

In addition to the rivers are the numerous creeks and small streams, such as Minnehaha Creek, Nine Mile Creek, Coon Creek, Shingle Creek, Rice Creek, and Trout Brook. Because urban development has pressed close to many of these small streams, municipal governments have been faced with serious flood runoff problems. The result is that artificial means have to be taken to prevent properties from flooding. For example, because of increasing upstream urbanization, the stream flow of Minnehaha Creek has increased substantially. Thus, downstream in Minneapolis, expensive retaining walls have to be built along the creek. We can only speculate on the tremendous savings that would have been possible if urban development had been prevented in the stream areas in the first place. This not only would have resulted in a savings in flood damage, but also would have obviated the necessity for expensive flood control installations. At the same time, a natural resource would have been preserved for public use. Opportunity still exists, though, to protect the remaining open shoreline along these streams.

2. Land Along Lakes Not Being Protected -- There are some 704 lakes in the Twin Cities area, with a total shoreline of 1,295 miles, according to information gathered by the Metropolitan Council. Of these lakes, 137 are larger than 150 acres. Less than half of these 137 lakes can be reached by the public, even for such purposes as launching a boat. Only 10% of the lakeshore on these 137 larger lakes has been protected for public recreational use and conservation, while 37% has been developed for residential purposes and 11% for other uses. Even though 42% remains undeveloped, it is frequently interspersed with scattered development, thereby reducing the number of potentially usable sites. It is hard to find a lake in the suburban area which has no development around it and conceivably could be used for public recreational purposes. This is in marked contrast with the lakes in Minneapolis and St. Paul, where years ago farsighted parks planners preserved the land along the lakeshores for public purposes. We need only to look at White Bear Lake, Lake Minnetonka, and Prior Lake to see examples of inaction on the part of the public. Once a substantial amount of private development is on a lake, it becomes even more difficult to acquire portions for public purposes. The owners of the property along the lakes come to regard them as their private domain and oppose efforts to allow public access, knowing that this is likely to increase the public use of the lakes.

Early this year, the Hennepin County Board had an opportunity to purchase some of the last remaining open land along Lake Minnetonka for public access. The proposal went down to defeat when the owners of the private homes around the lake objected because they feared too much public use as a result.

Fortunately, because of the large number of lakes in this area there still are some major steps which can be taken to preserve for public purposes. Lake Waconia southwest of Lake Minnetonka, is one of the best examples. Others include Whaletail Lake west of Lake Minnetonka, Chub Lake in southern Dakota County, the chain of lakes in Lino Lakes village in Anoka County, and Big Marine Lake in Washington County.

There is even a possibility that the north shore of Anderson Lakes in Eden Prairie, which is located very close to the major population centers, can still be acquired for public purpose. It is located just off Interstate 494 and is regarded as a very prime scenic natural area and recreational site. It has, however, been zoned industrial and will pass into development very quickly unless action is taken. A lake near Anderson Lakes which recently has been preempted largely by private development is Bryant Lake, which is on the east side of Interstate 494 in Eden Prairie. The Hennepin County Park Reserve District considered the possibility of acquiring the site but ruled it out because of high cost.

Instead of giving way to residential development the chain of lakes in Lino Lakes village, located between Interstate 35E and Interstate 35W, could, with appropriate planning, be developed for recreational and scenic purposes, as are the chain of lakes in Minneapolis.

Another real opportunity exists in relatively sparsely populated Scott County. Scott County has some of the most beautiful landscape and lakes in the metropolitan area, but they are being preempted for private use. The limited resources of Scott County taxpayers are not sufficient to preserve the open land which is being taken by urban development along lakes.

3. Choice Tracts of Open Land Not Being Protected -- Because high-quality residential development generally is attracted to the same type of land that makes good open space for public recreational use, the choice tracts of rolling, wooded lands are very limited today. A survey by the Metropolitan Planning Commission in 1964 identified 47 large potential recreational open spaces, but houses and cottages or ownership patterns eliminated two-thirds of these sites from further consideration for public purpose.

Rolling, wooded land with water features and significant vistas is at a premium in the seven-county area. A survey by the Metropolitan Planning Commission revealed that only seven per cent of the urbanizing area has at least three of the following four natural amenities in combination: (1) sharply differentiated topography, (2) extensive tree cover, (3) water features, and (4) significant vistas. Only three per cent of the area has all four of these in combination.

4. Parkways Not Being Established -- Nothing in any part of the suburban area remotely resembles the system of parkways developed years ago in Minneapolis and St. Paul for the riding enjoyment of those citizens. By the end of this century the central cities will have about one fourth of the total population of the metropolitan area. There is no mechanism now whereby such a system of parkways could be developed in the suburban area.

A recently completed survey for the State Department of Conservation revealed that driving for pleasure is the most popular form of recreation in the state. A leisurely Sunday afternoon drive on a suburban thoroughfare today is practically impossible. As urban growth continues, the few remaining pleasant back roads will be further out and less accessible to the population.

5. Special Uses of Open Land Not Being Provided -- The changing nature of recreational needs for area residents is not being taken into consideration in the development of open spaces. The facilities available for hiking trails, horseback trails, snowmobile trails, cross-country skiing trails, and so forth, are very limited.

The U. S. Department of Interior reported in a major study late in 1966 that the most urgent need for trails is in and near metropolitan areas. The report recommended that for each 50,000 residents there should be 25 miles of foot trails, 5 miles of bridle paths, and 25 miles of bicycle trails. The report urged that trails systems be included as an integral part of broader outdoor recreation planning, and within the framework of comprehensive metropolitan planning.

Public utility rights-of-way offer special opportunity for trails, the report said. Other possibilities are abandoned railroad lands, river banks and quiet streets. An infrequently used railroad between Hastings and Afton, right along the St. Croix River, could be ideal.

6. Inadequate Protection of the Environment -- Many types of land throughout the metropolitan area need to be kept in an open state to protect the quality of the environment. Certain soils, for example, are unsuitable for septic tanks, and therefore, unless public sewer is available, development should not be allowed. Ground water recharge areas need to be kept open. Many swamps and lakes and streams now function as natural drainage areas for storm water. Unrestricted urban development infringes on these areas and results in the necessity of expensive storm sewer construction.

The unrestricted development of cottages and private homes along lakeshore contributes to pollution of the lake from septic tanks, runoff from fertilized lawns, and effluent from sewage treatment plants. Expensive counter measures are required. We are just now finding out that sewage discharge into Lake Minnetonka may have to be discontinued.

7. Demand for Public Recreation Areas Not Being Met -- Existing facilities in the Twin Cities area are over-used and as the population continues to increase this problem will become even more acute. For example, Baker Park along Lake Independence in Hennepin County has annual attendance of from 175,000 to 200,000 persons. According to the superintendent of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, Baker Park is over-crowded. It should have no more than about 100,000 to 120,000 visitors annually.

Certain "municipal" parks attract individuals from throughout the metropolitan area. A survey by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, predecessor to the Metropolitan Council, of a representative sample of the Twin Cities area in 1963 revealed that 66% of the families in the entire metropolitan area visited St. Paul Como Park at least once in 1963; 37% visited the chain of lakes in Minneapolis; 35%, Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis; 21%, Nokomis and Hiawatha Parks in Minneapolis; 19%, Phalen Park in St. Paul; and 14%, Wirth Park in Minneapolis.

An attitude survey conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Commission revealed that 56% of St. Paul residents, 55% of suburban residents, and 30% of Minneapolis residents believe more major parks are needed.

According to a 1965 study of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the U. S. Department of Interior, outdoor recreation participation will quadruple by the year 2000 because of increasing leisure time, rising income and growing population. Population of the Twin Cities metropolitan area is expected to more than double by the year 2000.

A report published late in 1965 by the Minnesota Department of Conservation, titled "Minnesota Outdoor Recreation, Preliminary Plan 1965", revealed that Minnesota had a total of 54,099 acres of high-density recreation areas and general outdoor recreation areas. Of this total, 9,773 acres were located in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. The report also revealed that the state had a total of 6,441,217 acres of natural environment areas of which 21,572 acres were in the Twin Cities area, which has one half of the state's population.

8. Outright Purchase of All Metropolitan Open Spaces Not Possible or Desirable -- An informed, though unofficial, estimate by parks planners in the Metropolitan Council indicates that about 11% or 12% of the metropolitan area should be kept as open space. This is in addition to the various neighborhood and municipal parks. The 11% or 12% applies only to the metropolitan components of an open space system. This includes stream valleys, lakes, selected wooded areas, some wetlands, and metropolitan scale recreational facilities. There are approximately two million acres in the metropolitan area. About 225,000 acres would make up the metropolitan open space component.

If all of these 225,000 acres were to be acquired in fee simple title and if the average cost of acquisition were \$2,000 an acre, this would mean an expenditure of some \$450 million.

Such an expenditure is far beyond the wildest dreams of anyone concerned with preservation of open space in the Twin Cities area. This would amount to some \$15 million a year for the next 30 years simply for acquisition alone. It would remove an unnecessary amount of land from the tax rolls. Furthermore, it is not desirable, regardless of the financial obligation, for this metropolitan area to have 225,000 acres in public ownership on a metropolitan basis. The maintenance and supervision problems of such an area would be much greater than could be justified.

But probably most important of all, it would represent an unnecessary expenditure of public funds to acquire all the land in full title for the public. The goal for the vast majority of the acreage will be no more than to keep it in its open state, preserved from development, and still in private ownership. Active recreation areas undoubtedly will have to be owned outright, but such areas, though substantial in acreage, will be a relatively small portion of the total open space.

9. Many Possible Methods To Protect Open Space Are Not Now Used -- There is a variety of tools available to keep land open, some requiring the expenditure of public funds and others requiring only the exercise of police power. They include the following:

(a) Easements -- It is possible to prevent any construction around a lake or near a stream by purchasing from owners their right to build on the property. This is called the purchase of a development right. It is even possible to exercise eminent domain to purchase development rights. Another form of easement is for a public agency to purchase rights for, say, a public trail on private property.

As far as we know, state law does not specifically prohibit governmental agencies in Minnesota from acquiring easements for conservation and scenic purposes, but there also is no express authorization for such easements. A change in state law may well be needed to clarify this.

We find virtually no examples of purchase of easements for open space purposes either in the Twin Cities metropolitan area or statewide. All state-owned wetlands and state parks are controlled in full fee title. The Hennepin County Park Reserve District and, as far as we can determine, all counties and municipalities in the Twin Cities area have used only the outright purchase of property.

Not only do we find a lack of use of easements, we find a marked reluctance on the part of administrators of various park and open space programs to explore possibilities of less than fee title purchase. Generally, their attitude appears to be that unless the public owns full fee title to land it will be futile to expend funds or try to control open space by other means.

Undoubtedly in many cases the easement cost may be so high that outright purchase is preferable. Yet even high easement costs can be justified, according to Arthur A. Davis, director, Land and Facilities Development Administration, for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In a recent speech, he stated as follows: "If the average open space budget could be expanded by the 10 to 25 per cent saved (by purchase of easements), the total program effort could be increased by an important fraction. And at no added cost. At the same time, the land would stay on the tax rolls where it can continue to carry part of the tax load, and, more importantly, where it does not draw fire from those opposed to further expansion in public land ownership."

Easements have been used by other agencies and in other states. The federal government has widely used easements for its wetlands acquisitions in Minnesota and North Dakota. The State of Wisconsin has acquired scenic easements along the Great River Road on the border with Minnesota.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which administers substantial grants-in-aid for open space, is giving top priority to applications involving less than fee acquisition, according to Dwight F. Rettie, director, division of land development for HUD.

F. Robert Edman, consultant to the Minnesota Resources Commission, stated at a recent open space conference in St. Paul that the funding requests and future need projections are beyond any foreseeable combination of public and private financial resources. He concluded that many ways must be found to stretch the dollar by use of less than fee purchase.

Purchase of an open space easement can be similar to easements which prohibit building above utility pipelines, for example. Another parallel is the purchase of mineral rights by mining companies.

(b) Planned Unit Developments -- Substantial open space in the Twin Cities area can be preserved simply by the orderly planning of new residential subdivisions. This means discarding the traditional idea of every subdivision being divided into approximately equal parcels of about 85 x 135 feet each with a single-family dwelling built on each lot. Instead, dwellings would be clustered in one part of a subdivision, leaving the balance of the subdivision in open space.

Generally, cluster development can be a tool for open space preservation within one subdivision. Nevertheless, with proper planning it could be possible to link open spaces from one subdivision to the next within a municipality and between municipalities. Under such procedures, several thousand acres of public open space conceivably could be preserved without direct expenditure of public funds. Metropolitan planners tell us that we will more than double our number of dwellings at the same time. By strategic placement of new dwellings, open space can be preserved at the same time.

The proposed land use plan for the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, metropolitan area recommends all new residential subdivisions be planned according to the planned unit development, or "cluster" concept.

Planned unit developments have encountered considerable opposition among local governmental units in the Twin Cities area, where local officials have thought principally in terms of the traditional subdivision with equal-size lots. Opposition also has arisen when developers have attempted to increase the overall density of a subdivision with planned unit developments.

Bloomington, Burnsville, New Brighton and Coon Rapids are among a few communities experimenting with planned unit developments. In New Brighton a 245-unit subdivision has been built on 40 acres, with 20% of the space occupied by buildings, 20% by public and private streets, and 60% reserved for open spaces. In Burnsville, a 102-acre planned unit development subdivision includes 28 acres of open space. The 28 acres exclude common green surrounding the town houses. Another example is the "new town" of Jonathan in Carver County.

(c) Tax Techniques -- Owners of open land may well prefer to keep it in such a state, so long as they are not forced to pay abnormally high property taxes. The 1967 Legislature passed a law which provides for deferral of a portion of property taxes for agricultural land near an urban area. The idea behind the law is to enable a farmer to have his land taxed as agricultural property so long as he uses it for agricultural purposes. When it is sold for development, the back taxes will have to be paid. The current law has a four-year limitation, which farm organizations are urging be extended. When deferred taxation is applied in the wrong places, though, it can have the effect of contributing to urban sprawl.

After the adoption of an open space plan for an urban area, persons owning property which should remain open could be granted a tax deferral, if other means were not available to encourage the land to remain open. The longer a tax deferral exists, the greater the incentive to keep land open, because of the size of the back taxes which would have to be paid if the land were developed.

Taxable value of private recreational property, including golf courses, could be held at a level reflecting its actual use, rather than its potential for development, provided guarantees were built in that the property could not be sold for development.

(d) Zoning -- Zoning can be used to require open space uses, if such uses advance the public health, safety or welfare without depriving the owner of his property without compensation. Zoning for agricultural purposes is possible in the outlying areas, but not immediately adjacent to development.

Zoning of flood plains serves a public purpose in helping prevent disastrous effects of floods but apparently cannot be applied to great quantities of land. It could well be used in the immediate vicinity of streams.

Zoning has not been widely attempted in the Twin Cities area to preserve open space. Eden Prairie several years ago zoned the Minnesota River bottoms and the land along Purgatory Creek for open space purposes. In the intervening years some land along the creek has been developed as local officials have granted variances. Attempts of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District to restrict development in flood plains are just beginning.

The federal government in its development of new national parks is utilizing local zoning as a device to protect areas. The Cape Cod National Seashore was the first example. The act provided that the power of the Secretary of the Interior to condemn lands within the seashore would be suspended as long as a local governing body had a zoning ordinance in effect which met the Secretary's standards. According to Harold C. Jordahl, Jr., alternate federal co-chairman, Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission, who spoke at a recent open space seminar in Minnesota, the device has worked fairly well and now is being called "the Cape Cod formula". It has been used also at Fire Island on the East Coast and last year when Congress authorized the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

The act creating the Picture Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan provides that the Secretary of the Interior cannot condemn land within a 40,000 acre buffer zone as long as that land "is being used for the growing and harvesting of timber under a scientific program of selective cutting and forest management."

(e) Official Mapping -- An official map could be adopted outlining the areas which should be acquired in the future for open space. When an owner in such an area proposes to develop the property, the public agency would be given the first opportunity to buy the land or the open space interests in the land. If the public agency did not act, then the owner could proceed. Such a method would enable the public agency to maintain general control over property it wishes to acquire, given the fact that it cannot acquire all lands at once. By the use of the right of first refusal, the public agency could concentrate on areas most susceptible to development.

State law empowers municipalities to adopt official maps designating the location of major thoroughfares and "community facilities". Adoption of an official map does not give the municipality any right, title or interest in areas identified for public purposes, but if any construction takes place without a permit or in violation of the conditions of a permit, the municipality could acquire the land without paying compensation for the buildings. As far as we know, this method of open space preservation is not utilized in the metropolitan area today.

(f) Private Action -- Much of the action to preserve the environment can be taken by the owners of existing open land. Persons may be desirous of permanently keeping land in its natural state and would want the opportunity to be able to deed the land to a responsible agency. Persons anxious to protect their land permanently could insert restrictive covenants limiting the use. Or an individual who sells his property to a developer could stipulate the conditions for development, thereby encouraging cluster development, for example.

Philanthropy has been used, and there is a good possibility this device will be expanded in the future. It was through a donation that the Hennepin County Park Reserve District first got started several years ago, and we understand that there are some holders of large parcels of open land today who would like to turn them over to a metropolitan agency. A Metropolitan Park Foundation has been established in the Twin Cities area to encourage gifts for metropolitan park purposes.

Another example is for owners of private property to preserve open land until such time as it can be acquired by the public. This occurred in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, metropolitan area, where a group of private individuals assembled land for seven large parks and then sold the land to the county when funds were available.

(10) Many Other Metropolitan Areas Have a Head Start on Open Space Planning -- Much more open space planning has already been done in other metropolitan areas in the nation. In the Philadelphia region, for example, an 896,000 open space plan has been developed, of which 85% would remain in private ownership and 15% would require public purchase. One estimate of costs is about \$300 million. A plan for the San Francisco Bay region suggests protecting 865,000 acres by the year 1990. The land use plan for the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, metropolitan area designates about 17% of the total metropolitan area for open space preservation.

No open space plan for the Twin Cities metropolitan area has been prepared.

(11) Existing Governmental Framework Not Sufficient for Open Space Action in the Twin Cities Area -- Currently, there are three levels of responsibility for parks and open space developments in the Twin Cities area. They are the state, counties, and municipalities.

The state, through the Department of Conservation, is the only body with responsibility throughout the metropolitan area. Of course, its responsibility also extends to the rest of the state. The Division of Parks and Recreation has established two parks in the metropolitan area -- Fort Snelling State Park, with a statutory boundary of 2,500 acres, and William O'Brien State Park, 487 acres. The Division of Parks and Recreation has plans to request the Legislature for the development of a linear park along the Minnesota River from Fort Snelling southwest along the river all the way to Le Sueur. The extent of this development is not clear as of this moment. The Division of Parks and Recreation proposed to the 1967 Legislature a 15,000 acre park along the Minnesota River in Carver and Scott Counties. The 15,000 acre park now has lower priority, and the Division of Parks and Recreation is placing greater emphasis on the proposed trails park.

Below the state level in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, responsibility for parks and open space is divided, without any overall plan or policy, among the seven metropolitan counties and the various municipalities. As far as we can determine, these units of government are concentrating exclusively on parks. General

preservation of open space, as such, is not considered. The vast majority of population and financial resources of the seven-county area are concentrated in the two most urbanized counties -- Hennepin and Ramsey. A substantial amount of the urban growth in future years, along with the vast majority of open land which needs to be preserved, is located in the other five counties -- Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington. The western half of Hennepin County also has some potential.

The five outlying counties do not have the resources to preserve the open land, nor should they be expected to provide, by themselves, for the park and recreational needs of people who live in other counties. Scott County, perhaps the least urbanized of the entire metropolitan area, has some of the most choice properties for preservation of open space. For example, taking only a few lakeshore areas in Scott County which have been identified by metropolitan planners as "critical" acquisitions, we find that this totals 4,400 acres. This does not include any land along the Minnesota River or other streams. Scott County has an assessed valuation of about \$15 million. This means that a one-mill levy raises about \$15,000. Cost of acquiring some 4,400 acres over a 20-year period might run to about \$11 million, including interest on debt. Even assuming a substantial federal contribution, this could mean a 10 to 15 mill levy annually in Scott County if the county were to attempt such acquisitions on its own.

The Hennepin County Park Reserve District, while it has been able to preserve large reserves in Hennepin County for public park and recreation purposes, has been limited in its authority to go outside the boundaries of the county. Its acquisition of a 2,700 acre park in adjacent Carver County produced considerable controversy. The Park Reserve District also has not been able to take action to preserve open land along rivers and streams. Further, because of limited financing and a policy of concentrating on acquiring large blocks of acreage, the District has been unable to step in and acquire valuable open land close to the urbanized area.

In summary, the overriding conclusion is that this metropolitan area must unite in an action program on metropolitan parks and open space. It is to this conclusion that our recommendations are directed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

1. Action by Legislature--We recommend that the 1969 Legislature establish a seven-county Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to carry out a broad program of preserving and protecting the quality of the environment in and near the Twin Cities area.
2. Relationship to Metropolitan Council--We recommend that the Commission operate under the general jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council.

II. Organization of the Commission

1. Selection of Members--As a means of underlining its relationship to the Metropolitan Council and to assure a continuing equitable method of selection, we recommend that the Commission members be appointed by the chairman of the Metropolitan Council with the consent of the other members of the Council. The chairman of the Commission should be so designated in the appointments.
2. Representation--We recommend that members of the Commission be appointed at large in the metropolitan area with the appointments widely distributed throughout the area. It must be clear that Commission members will all be representing the entire metropolitan area. This will guard against parochialism on the Commission. Geographical representation already is accomplished through the Metropolitan Council and need not be repeated in the Commission. Commission members should be selected on the basis of their knowledge, abilities, interest and dedication to a metropolitan parks and open space program.
3. Number of Members--The Commission will be primarily a subordinate Commission responsible for program policy and operations. Its membership can and should be fairly small, much smaller than that of the Metropolitan Council. We recommend a Commission of not less than five nor more than eleven members.
4. Terms of Office--We recommend three-year staggered terms.
5. Compensation--We recommend that members of the Commission receive a per diem for attending official meetings of the Commission.

III. Division of Powers and Responsibilities between the Commission and the Metropolitan Council

We envision that the Parks and Open Space Commission would be a dependent special-purpose district to the Metropolitan Council. It is important that the lines of responsibility between the Commission and the Council be clearly understood--to enable the Commission to operate effectively within overall policy guidelines established by the Metropolitan Council. Specifically, we recommend the following relationships between the two:

1. Long-range Plan--Development of a long-range plan for parks and open space in the metropolitan area is urgently needed. The Commission should have the responsibility to prepare such a plan, within any guidelines as may be established by the Metropolitan Council, and submit the plan to the Metropolitan Council for approval. The plan needs to be coordinated with overall comprehensive planning by the Metropolitan Council. Formal provision should also be made for consultation with the affected local units of government during the development of the plan.

2. *Five-year and Annual Capital Budgets and Operating Budgets*--The Commission should prepare five-year and annual capital budgets and annual operating budgets and submit them to the Metropolitan Council for approval. The Council would not involve itself in the day-to-day operations of the Commission.

3. *Commission Executive Director*--The Commission needs to exercise direct control over its immediate staff. The Commission should be empowered to hire its own executive director.

4. *Other Commission Employees*--The executive director of the Commission should be charged with hiring of other Commission employees, but this hiring should take place in accordance with the policies of and within the same personnel system as that of the Metropolitan Council.

5. *Planning Staff for the Commission*--The planning staff for the Commission will have a unique relationship with the Council. Planners working on long-range park and open space plans for the Commission should be employed by the Metropolitan Council. This will maximize coordination of long-range parks and open space plans with comprehensive planning for the Metropolitan area. Staff developing specific park site plans could be employed directly by the Commission.

6. *Administrative Services*--Personnel, purchasing, accounting, data processing and other administrative services should be provided to the Commission by the Metropolitan Council to the greatest extent feasible, thus reducing the need to set up parallel administrative structures for such services.

IV. Type of Metropolitan Parks and Open Space System

1. *General Responsibility*--The Legislature should instruct the Commission to proceed immediately with a program of preservation of open land in and near the Twin Cities area. Although there are certain types of acquisition which need the most urgent attention, we recommend the Legislature give the Commission a broad grant of responsibility for metropolitan parks and open space so it will not be hindered by changing circumstances. The Commission should make proposals to other public and private agencies for open space action where the Commission will not be directly involved. Specifically, the Commission should have authority for at least the following:

- a. Acquisition and development of metropolitan parks.
- b. Preservation of open land along rivers and streams and around lakes and other locations throughout the metropolitan area as part of a metropolitan open space plan.
- c. Forest preserves and wildlife areas.
- d. Trails for hiking, snowmobiling, bicycling, horseback riding and other purposes in linear parks, particularly, but also along such open spaces as utility easements.
- e. Acquisition of excess right-of-way along county or state highways to provide scenic parkways.
- f. Cooperation with other governmental agencies, including watershed districts, for joint acquisition of land for mutual purposes.

- g. Large recreational areas which are beyond the capacity of municipal governments and which serve residents of many municipalities and one-of-a-kind specialized recreational facilities in the metropolitan area.
- h. Acquisition of private open spaces, such as golf courses, if urban development forces sale.

2. *First Priority*--Within guidelines as may be established by the Metropolitan Council, we recommend that the Commission give first priority to the immediate preservation of open land along lakes, rivers and streams and in wooded hills and valleys which, in the determination of the Commission, urgently need to be preserved for metropolitan park and open space purposes in the Twin Cities area and which are immediately susceptible to development. This means that the Council may well determine that, for example, a smaller amount of acreage can be justified at a higher price, rather than using the same amount of money to preserve many more open acres in a more rural and less-susceptible-to-development portion of the area.

The Commission's acquisitions generally will be part of a long-range plan, which, as we recommend elsewhere, should be prepared as soon as the Commission is established. Yet the Commission should not be precluded from taking immediate action, even before its long-range plan is completed, if there are certain parcels which urgently need preservation immediately, and if it is obvious that such parcels would be a part of any long-range plan.

3. *Size of Acquisitions*--We expect that acquisitions generally will be on the order of several hundred to thousands of acres, but this should not rule out the possibility of significant smaller-sized parcels. This is particularly true if there is a very desirable spot along a lake, stream or river which would provide public access to a large water recreational area, but which is beyond the capacity of a local government to acquire and is likely to be taken for private purpose if nothing is done. Small islands also would fit into the category of significant smaller-sized parcels.

V. Methods of Preserving Open Land

1. *Direct Action by the Commission*--Prompt action will be required in a number of locations throughout the seven-county area if the urgently needed land is to be preserved in its open state. The dollar value of all this land will exceed substantially the immediate fiscal resources of the Commission to acquire the land by full fee title. We cannot reasonably expect that good-quality shoreline or valuable wooded areas will be left in their natural state for very long -- certainly not long enough to wait for funds to acquire full title. We therefore recommend that the Commission utilize a variety of devices in addition to outright purchases. They should include the following:

- a. Purchase of Development Rights (Easements) -- Rather than purchasing full title, the Commission could pay a property owner to keep his land in an open state. This could be a permanent open space easement, or the Commission could, at a later date, purchase full title when funds are available.
- b. Official mapping -- Legislation should empower the Commission to adopt an official map outlining the specific areas to be kept open. If owners of land proposed development within the boundaries of the land to be acquired, the Commission would have first chance to purchase the property.

- c. Tax Techniques--Owners of open land might be willing to keep it in such a state if they are not forced to pay abnormally high taxes. Property taxes could be reduced for an owner who enters a binding agreement to keep his land open.

2. *Cooperation of Local Units of Government*--The Commission's long-range plans for open space in the metropolitan area will require cooperation of local units of government for full implementation. Following are two ways such cooperation can be expressed:

- a. Planned Unit Development Zoning--By such ordinances a municipality can maintain whatever residential densities throughout the community it wishes, but it can require that the homes be built closer together, thereby leaving more usable open spaces. The Commission might want to explore the possibility of financial incentives to local governments to require planned unit developments.
- b. Other Zoning--Although much zoning to preserve open space may not withstand a court challenge, municipal governments can exercise much more leadership than they now do in protecting land along their rivers and streams. We recommend extensive flood plain zoning by municipalities. We also recommend agricultural zoning as a way to preserve open space. Here, too, the Commission might want to exercise encouragement with financial incentives to local governments. The Commission in some cases might agree to refrain from acquiring land as long as local governments, by their own regulations, protect such land from urban development.

VI. Eminent Domain

We recommend that eminent domain powers be granted for metropolitan parks and open spaces. Proposed acquisitions of the Commission will be known publicly before the land is acquired, because the Commission, as a public body, will be taking official public action that certain properties are to be acquired. Further, the Commission will not have wide leeway in negotiating for certain parcels as against others. The power of eminent domain will assist the Commission in negotiating for properties at fair, but not artificially inflated, prices, and will indicate that preservation of open space is an important public purpose.*

VII. Financing the Parks and Open Space Program

Although no parks and open space plan has been prepared for the metropolitan area to date, preliminary work by the Metropolitan Council and its predecessor, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, has included the identification of "critical" acquisitions. With this information as a bench mark, we have found that a total expenditure of \$100 million over the first 20 years would not be unreasonable. We can anticipate that federal aid could finance up to one-half of acquisition costs. With this in mind, we recommend as follows:

1. *Source of Revenue*--We recommend a two-cents-a-pack increase in the cigarette tax, levied statewide, with its revenues returned on a per capita basis to the Commission in the seven-county metropolitan area, and to the counties in outstate Minnesota, for parks and open space purposes. A precedent has been established

* An issue not resolved in this report, but which merits attention, is the potential impact on a local unit of government when large amounts of land are taken off the tax rolls for park purposes.

already in Minnesota for using the cigarette tax for natural resources purposes. The two-cents-a-pack tax would raise an estimated \$8 million annually statewide, with about \$4 million earmarked for the metropolitan area.

An alternative would be to increase the state income tax or state sales tax in the metropolitan area by a percentage sufficient to produce \$4 million annually for the metropolitan parks and open space program.

Authority for a property tax levy should be granted, but the property tax should not be a principal source of revenue. Authority for a property tax is needed mainly to guarantee payment of bonds to bond holders. We expect sufficient revenue from other sources to pay off bonds.

2. *Bonding Authority*--Total bonding authority in the vicinity of \$50-\$60 million should be authorized.

3. *Supplementary Sources of Revenue*--User fees can be a valuable source of revenue for operational expenses. We recommend the Commission be empowered to charge user fees for certain types of activities in metropolitan parks. As a general policy, however, fees should not be set to price out of the market any potential users and should be imposed uniformly in metropolitan parks throughout the seven-county area. The Commission should have power to award concessions contracts, with revenue to be used by the Commission.

4. *Gifts*--The Commission should be empowered to accept gifts of land for the parks and open space system.

VIII. Existing County Park Holdings

1. *Commission to Assume Jurisdiction of Qualifying Areas*--We recommend that the Parks and Open Space Commission assume jurisdiction over those county park areas which meet the Commission criteria for a metropolitan system. The Commission can then, through additional acquisitions, extend and coordinate throughout the metropolitan area the park and open space programs begun under the leadership of the various county boards, county park and recreation commissions and the Hennepin County Park Reserve District.

We recommend that the counties in the metropolitan area and the Commission be empowered to negotiate for the transfer to the Commission of those county lands to come under Commission jurisdiction. Because of the unique legal structure of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, we recommend that the staff and lands under the jurisdiction of the District be transferred automatically to the Commission and that the outstanding liabilities of the District be assumed by the Commission. In order to ensure orderly transition, we recommend that provision be made for close liaison between the new Commission and the counties.

2. *Future Role of Counties*--We recommend that county governments continue and expand their present policy of acquiring land for municipalities which may not yet be able to acquire land for municipal parks. Under such arrangements municipalities later could acquire the land or assume operation and maintenance responsibilities. Counties would not be expected to preserve large tracts of land for metropolitan parks and open space.

X. State Parks

1. *Carver State Park*--Because of the urgency for preservation of open land in the metropolitan area, and because of the ideal potential of the proposed Carver State Park, we recommend that the 1969 Legislature approve the proposed Carver State Park along the Minnesota River in Carver County and Scott County, though possibly with less total acreage than previously suggested.

2. *Minnesota River Trails Park*--Preliminary discussions are under way for a trails-type park along the Minnesota River from Fort Snelling to Le Sueur. If properly planned, this can go a long way towards preserving the land in its open state along the Minnesota River. We recommend that the Legislature approve a linear state park in this area.

3. *State Parks in the Metropolitan Area*--The Division of Parks and Recreation has limited plans for additional state parks in the metropolitan area. Because of the relative lack of state parks within the metropolitan area and the fact this area has a number of scenic and historical sites which might meet state parks criteria, we urge the Division of Parks and Recreation to fully develop its tentative plans for a state park near Afton in Washington County and in the Sunrise area north of Taylors Falls, both along the scenic St. Croix River. We further urge exploration of additional possible sites in the Twin Cities area.

XI. Operation and Maintenance

We recommend that operation and maintenance of metropolitan parks be carried out through the Commission or by contract with individual counties or municipalities.

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The recommendations on the relationship between the Commission and the Metropolitan Council are made within the context of the structure of the Metropolitan Council as it exists today. A committee of the Citizens League is reviewing the overall question of how the Metropolitan Council should exercise policy control over metropolitan functions. Recommendations will be forthcoming at a later date.

BACKGROUND OF THIS REPORT

The Citizens League has had a strong interest in areawide parks and open space since its founding in 1952. In December, 1954, the first Citizens League Metropolitan Area Parks Committee, headed by E. P. Chapman (now a Hennepin County Municipal Judge), reported on the need to preserve large wooded, scenic areas in their natural state and provide public access to rivers, lakes and streams in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The committee recommended that the 1955 Legislature pass enabling legislation to permit the creation of single- or multi-county park districts. The 1955 Legislature approved enabling legislation for the metropolitan area counties, but excluded Minneapolis and Ramsey County.

Under this law, suburban Hennepin County communities petitioned for the establishment of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, which was established in 1957. The Citizens League and other groups continued to work for inclusion of Minneapolis in the District. In 1963, the Legislature voted to include Minneapolis in the District. Early in 1965, after the necessary local governmental approval had been obtained -- from the Hennepin County Board, the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, the Minneapolis Park Board and the Minneapolis City Council -- Minneapolis was brought into the District.

In 1961 the Legislature passed a general county parks law allowing counties to establish and operate park systems. The law excluded Hennepin, which, of course, already had its Park Reserve District, and Ramsey County. Other metropolitan counties have begun to establish park systems under this law.

In 1966, the Citizens League Board of Directors approved the establishment of a new research committee to: (a) assess the needs of the whole metropolitan area for parks and open space, (b) review the progress of land acquisition to meet these needs by state, counties, and the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, and (c) determine what actions, if any, should be taken by the Legislature, the counties individually or in concert, or the Park Reserve District, toward meeting area park and open space needs.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A total of 21 Citizens League members participated actively in the work of this committee. Chairman was Clement D. Springer. Other members were Donald G. Brauer, John E. Cummings, Wallace Dayton, Reginald Faragher, Mrs. John Fletcher, Anthony Gasser, James W. Hawks, Don Imsland, Kenneth H. Lee, Charles Lutz, Samuel H. Morgan, George W. Nelson, William K. Nelson, Wayne H. Olson, William R. Priedeman, Alden Smith, Lavern Sykora, Paul Van Valkenburg, Thomas Vasaly and Thomas Veblen. The committee was assisted by Arne Schoeller, Citizens League Associate Director, who resigned from the League staff in mid-1967, and Paul Gilje, Citizens League Research Director

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The committee held its first meeting in mid-June, 1966. The committee met intensively, frequently twice a week, until November, 1966. During this period a total of 20 committee meetings were held.

Extensive testimony was received from several public officials and parks administrators during this time. They included the following:

Clifton French, superintendent, Hennepin County Park Reserve District
David Forester, open space planner, Metropolitan Planning Commission
Jack Provo, Hennepin County Commissioner
John Friedman, director, Ramsey County Recreation Department
Albert Kordiak, then chairman, Anoka County Board of Commissioners
Frederick King, chairman, Hennepin County Park Reserve District
Howard Dahlgren, co-partner, Midwest Planning and Research
Albert D. Wittman, Dakota County planning director
Robert W. Ruhe, superintendent, Minneapolis Park Board
F. Robert Edman, consultant, Minnesota Resources Commission
Wayne H. Olson, former state commissioner of conservation (now a member of the Citizens League Area Parks Review Committee)
Conrad Wirth, retired director, National Park Service
Theodore Wirth, Jr., consultant on proposed Carver State Park
Raymond A. Haik, attorney for watershed districts

Detailed minutes of committee meetings were prepared and widely circulated among civic leaders and others in the Twin Cities area concerned with areawide park and open space needs.

The committee also gathered extensive data on how metropolitan park needs are being met in other parts of the nation.

After examining the present inventory of parks and open space in the Twin Cities area and the urgent need for a dramatic expansion, the committee reached general agreement on the need for a metropolitan parks and open space district, and was in the beginning stages of firming up specific recommendations.

Because of the press of other committee activity on the Citizens League staff in preparation for the 1967 Legislature, the committee suspended its work in November, 1966.

Almost a year transpired before the committee reconvened in October, 1967, to complete its work. Because a few new committee members were added, and because of the need to refresh some of the members on park and open space issues and bring them up to date on recent developments, the committee spent a number of meetings receiving additional testimony.

Barry Peterson, chief, physical development section, Metropolitan Council, briefed the committee on parks and open space inventory and needs. Clifton French, superintendent of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, discussed legislation passed in 1967 relating to the Park Reserve District.

James L. Hetland, Jr., chairman of the Metropolitan Council, told the committee how he felt a metropolitan parks and open space system could relate to the Metropolitan Council. U. W. Hella, director, State Division of Parks and Recreation, discussed state parks development in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and Kurt Bauer, executive director, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, told the committee about open space planning in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, metropolitan area.

The members of the committee took a 1½ hour plane ride over the Twin Cities area to look at potential metropolitan park sites. The flight was taken through the courtesy of General Mills, which provided one of its executive aircraft. The flight gave many committee members valuable perspective on the open land in the Twin Cities area and where action is urgently needed promptly.

A number of contacts were made with park and conservation organizations nationally, as well as with federal and state park and conservation officials. These included the Open Space Action Committee, New York City; American Conservation Association, the Conservation Foundation, the U. S. Department of the Interior, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Several publications on new trends in parks and open space were obtained so that the committee could be kept abreast of the latest developments throughout the nation.

Early in January, 1968, the committee began formulating specific recommendations. A list of questions was prepared to cover the principal issues. Alternative approaches were debated. Several tentative drafts of recommendations were prepared and revised before final agreement was reached. This report represents a consensus of all participants.

During the time of the deliberations, minutes of meetings continued to be widely circulated among some 50 public officials and others in the Twin Cities area concerned with this subject, so they could follow the reasoning of committee members as they developed their recommendations.

From October, 1967, to May, 1968, when the committee completed its work, another 19 meetings were held, making a total of 39 meetings.

DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

General Goals

1. New Concept of Open Space in the Metropolitan Area--The most clearly obvious implication of our findings and conclusions is that we must embark on a program of preservation and protection of the open space in the seven-county metropolitan area. Metropolitan parks, to be sure, will be a very important and integral part of the metropolitan open space system. But it will not be the entire system. We must gear our thinking to the fact that all open space need not be park land. Open space carries with it a new definition--at least a new definition for this metropolitan area. "Parks and open space" may mean the same thing to some people, but open space is much more than park land. As described in the Metropolitan Development Guide prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, open space is the land set aside for uses other than for buildings and roads. It is not simply left over, unbuilt-upon land but land that serves to protect the environment, to conserve resources, to provide amenities and aesthetics in the area and to provide recreational areas. It also includes land in production, mainly agricultural. It can include open land around lakes and along rivers and streams, even though such land is not used for park or recreation purposes. It can include airport approach zones, and space between buildings and between subdivisions, for example. It includes both private and public land.

2. Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan--A comprehensive metropolitan parks and open space plan for the Twin Cities area must be prepared. Fragmented planning will be insufficient and, undoubtedly, inconsistent. Preparation of the plan must be carried out within a governmental framework representative of the people of the Twin Cities area.

3. Coordination with Overall Metropolitan Planning--Open space planning cannot take place in a vacuum. It must be closely coordinated with overall comprehensive planning for the metropolitan area. The location of other public services and the location of major industrial complexes will be affected by where the open space is located, and vice versa. Open space has been identified as a key component in shaping the environment of the Twin Cities area.

4. Responsibility, Power and Financing--The governmental framework within which the open space plan is prepared must be such that there will be adequate interest, responsibility, power and financing to carry out the plan. Otherwise, it could do nothing more than gather dust on a shelf.

It is most important that the above goals be kept in mind as we discuss our recommendations. We have developed recommendations as to what we consider the best vehicle for carrying out these goals. Alternative recommendations were evaluated as to how closely they would meet these goals.

Basic Recommendation on Structure

Our recommendation is that the 1969 Legislature establish a seven-county Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. This Commission should operate under the general jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council.

We first considered several alternatives:

(a) County governments--Each of the seven metropolitan counties is involved in various stages in park development. We felt that the need to prepare an overall open space plan for the seven-county area could not be met by the individual counties. Each is following different park policies, and none appear to be involved in overall open space planning, even within their own boundaries. Further, the ability of a sparsely populated county to carry out its share of an open space plan without resources from the more populated counties does not seem likely. The extent of each county's abilities is limited by the existing financial resources in the county. Presumably the seven counties could, under the Joint Powers Act, prepare a comprehensive open space plan for the metropolitan area. But such a plan would not be coordinated with overall comprehensive planning under the Metropolitan Council. It would involve the establishment of a second metropolitan planning agency. Finally, the ability of such a plan to be carried out by the counties under the Joint Powers Act would be severely restricted, because financing would have to be on an areawide basis. Perhaps most important of all is that a plan for parks and open space on a metropolitan scale in the metropolitan area is such that it cannot take into consideration county boundaries.

(b) Independent Single-Purpose District--Under this approach the Legislature could establish an independent agency, like the Metropolitan Airports Commission, for example, for parks and open space. The Legislature could assure the agency of funding and could instruct it to prepare a comprehensive plan and carry it out. This approach would assure that "the job would get done". It would mean that a dedicated group of individuals interested in parks and open space could be appointed to work for implementation of their plan. But it has a flaw of not being coordinated with overall comprehensive metropolitan planning. A metropolitan parks and open space plan cannot be developed apart from the other components of metropolitan growth. It would place the Metropolitan Council in the position of being a latent review agency. There are further problems with the independent single-purpose district approach. A means of establishing appropriate representation would be very difficult, as is common whenever special-purpose districts are set up. It would be another proliferation of independent special-purpose districts in the metropolitan area, which are governments unto themselves and not easily reached by the public.

(c) Direct Responsibility of the Metropolitan Council--We considered that the Metropolitan Council could itself take on the parks and open space program. Parks and open space could be made an operating department of the Metropolitan Council. All of the goals we outlined above could be met by this alternative. The Metropolitan Council is the comprehensive planning agency for the metropolitan area. We discussed this possibility extensively with the chairman of the Metropolitan Council. We learned that the overall coordinating responsibilities of the Council are occupying its entire energies. The chairman of

the Metropolitan Council feels very strongly that the metropolitan parks and open space program must be closely coordinated with other activity of the Metropolitan Council but he does not believe, at this time, that the Council should have direct day-to-day operating responsibilities for parks and open space.

We are very concerned about the need for immediate, dedicated action on metropolitan parks and open space. We fear that the intensive attention required to this subject would not be forthcoming if all of the parks and open space responsibilities were vested in the Metropolitan Council on top of its present work load.

After evaluating the above alternatives, we concluded, on balance, that the best approach would be to take part of alternative (b) and part of alternative (c). The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission would be a single-purpose board with its members dedicated to the parks and open space program. At the same time, the Commission would be tied closely enough to the Metropolitan Council so that all of our goals would be met.

This relationship does not exist today between the Metropolitan Council and any of the special-purpose districts which have been established. All of them have a greater degree of independence, particularly in the planning field.

In arriving at this recommendation, it was our intention not to involve the Metropolitan Council in the day-to-day matters of running a parks and open space system. The Metropolitan Council would not select specific sites for preservation. It would not determine the layout for a park. The Metropolitan Council would be expected to adopt a general land-use plan for the metropolitan area outlining where the open spaces generally should be and would be expected to outline general guidelines to be followed. The Parks and Open Space Commission would provide an opportunity for persons who are truly interested in the metropolitan parks and open space development to serve and utilize their special talents. Responsibility would be clearly vested for parks and open space. The existence of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District Board has clearly indicated the need for a special board to carry out the parks development in Hennepin County. If this were an operating department of the Hennepin County Board, we would not find that Hennepin County Board members would be able to devote the time to the parks program as the members of the Park Reserve District Board have been able to devote. In summary, we can say that the parks and open space assignment is "too big" to be undertaken at this time by the Metropolitan Council itself. Our recommendation assures that the Metropolitan Council will be involved at the appropriate time but yet not become overly involved.

Division of Responsibility between the Parks and Open Space Commission and the Metropolitan Council

The Parks and Open Space Commission should be established by the State Legislature, and the statute should specify certain relationships between the Commission and the Metropolitan Council. This will assure a good continuing relationship between the two bodies. To assure a prompt action on the development of a specific plan for parks and open space, we believe that this responsibility should rest with the Parks and Open Space Commission, with a requirement that the development of this plan be coordinated with the Metropolitan Council, and that the Council approve

the plan. This coordination can be accomplished by a requirement that the plan for parks and open space be carried out within guidelines that would be established by the Metropolitan Council. Further, the long-range planning staff for the Metropolitan Council could be assigned, as needed, to the Parks and Open Space Commission in development of the long-range parks plan. An informal parallel now exists in the Metropolitan Transit Commission. Some planners for the Metropolitan Council are working with the Transit Commission on an hourly basis.

Within the long-range plan it is important to give the Parks and Open Space Commission the responsibility to initiate the specific five-year and annual capital expenditure program for parks and open space in the metropolitan area. The five-year and annual capital budgets, along with the annual operating budget, would be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for approval. We would not expect that the involvement of the Metropolitan Council in reacting to the five-year and annual capital budgets, as well as the operating budgets, for the Parks and Open Space Commission would be too detailed. The budgets would be examined to see how closely they are carrying out the general goals for metropolitan development as established by the Metropolitan Council.

We evaluated whether all staff members for the Parks and Open Space Commission should be hired by the Metropolitan Council, or whether the Parks and Open Space Commission should have its own staff. On balance we concluded that it is preferable to give the Parks and Open Space Commission jurisdiction over its own staff. This means that the Commission would hire its executive director and other employees. The only exception would be that, in the preparation of a long-range parks and open space plan, planners serving in the Metropolitan Council could be assigned to the Parks and Open Space Commission to assist in the preparation of this plan and assure that it is coordinated with overall metropolitan planning. The direct responsibility of staff to the Commission is a means of underlining the importance of the Parks and Open Space Commission as a responsible body within the field of its authority. It is not just an advisory committee to the Metropolitan Council. It would be making policy decisions on parks and open space within overall guidelines as established by the Metropolitan Council.

The relationship between the Council and the Parks and Open Space Commission could be similar to that of the relationship between the Legislature and the State College Board, or the Legislature and the State Junior College Board. The State Junior College Board and the State College Board both perform important policy-making functions within the limits set by the Legislature.

Another way to envision the relationship between the Council and the Commission is to regard the Metropolitan Council as the "general contractor" with the Parks and Open Space Commission a "subcontractor" carrying out one of the responsibilities in metropolitan development. In the construction of a building there is the general contractor and a number of subcontractors each assigned to fulfill a specific role.

Selection of Members of Parks and Open Space Commission

The decision by the Legislature on representation on metropolitan commissions is usually the most controversial of all decisions. We considered a number of possibilities before concluding on balance that the preferable approach would be to have members of the Commission appointed by the chairman of the Metropolitan Council with the consent of the Metropolitan Council. We considered the following alternatives:

(a) Appointment by County Boards--With the difference in population among the counties of the seven county area, this approach always has the problem of trying to overcome these population differences. Should, for example, Hennepin County and Scott County each be entitled to one representative? Should any members of the Parks and Open Space Commission actually represent a specific county? We felt they should not, and feared that appointments by individual counties could well contribute to such representation. With seven different appointing authorities, it would not be possible to balance the various types of interest that might well be represented on a Parks and Open Space Commission. Finally, it must be clear that no appointee to the Parks and Open Space Commission should be placed there to "look after the interests" of a certain geographical part of the metropolitan area.

(b) Appointment by Municipal Officials--This approach has the same problems as does appointment by county boards, in that it is difficult to divorce the appointments from the idea of "representing a specific area". There are the problems of giving over-representation to one part of the area and not enough to another. Evidence of the type of problem that is encountered when this approach is taken exists with the Metropolitan Transit Commission. This body was established by the 1967 Legislature. In the compromising which took place within the Legislature a very complex method of appointment and representation was worked out. Simply to state the method of representation takes several pages of law.

(c) Direct Election--This approach had a great deal of appeal to members of our committee. However, because of the importance of the Commission's relationship to the Metropolitan Council, which is an appointed body as of now, it was felt that the Commission could not be elective while the Metropolitan Council, the overall policy body, is appointive. Consistent with past Citizens League recommendations we strongly endorse the concept of making the Metropolitan Council elective with other boards appointive. To make the Parks and Open Space Commission elective would be totally inconsistent with this concept.

Our recommendation carries with it not only the advantage of simplicity but also the assurance that appointments will be made by a responsible agency with authority over the entire seven-county area. It is ill-advised, in our opinion, to fragment the appointments to such a board among a number of governmental units. Appointment by the Metropolitan Council will serve to strengthen the close relationship between the two. In future years, as reapportionment occurs, the Metropolitan Council districts undoubtedly will be changed, but there will be no need to change the representation on the Parks and Open Space Commission, because it will be serving under the Metropolitan Council.

We felt that one of the problems in connection with our recommendation is that the Metropolitan Council, now appointive, would be appointing another body. But this disadvantage, in our opinion, is outweighed by all the other advantages. Further, we are hopeful that the Metropolitan Council will become elective.

Representation on the Commission

We considered whether the members of the Commission should actually represent specific districts within the metropolitan area, or whether they should serve at-large and represent the entire metropolitan area. Traditionally, single-purpose districts in the metropolitan area have been named with their members representing certain parts of the area. The Parks and Open Space Commission, however, represents a new approach. Under our proposal the Metropolitan Council is the body with the geographic representation. It is neither desirable nor necessary to provide geographical representation on the Parks and Open Space Commission. We believe it is most important to stress that the members of the Parks and Open Space Commission would be appointed at large in the metropolitan area and that they would not by virtue of their appointment represent any certain part of the metropolitan area. This should be clearly specified in the law. The need to protect the interests of certain parts of the metropolitan area will be carried out through the Metropolitan Council. It is not necessary to repeat representation on the Commission. Continuing a parallel with state government, the members of the State College Board and the State Junior College Board are not appointed according to any location in Minnesota. The Legislature itself provides the geographical representation.

Despite the above statements, we believe it is still important to assure that appointees will not be concentrated in one county or one city in the metropolitan area. Therefore it might be advisable to require that no more than one appointee can reside in a single Metropolitan Council district. There will not be a need in making the appointments to balance the appointees according to the population of the county in which they reside. The appointees can be named on the basis of their interests and qualifications in leading a metropolitan parks and open space system. Although we are not fearful that the interests of outlying areas would receive less consideration, we see the possibility for the appointment of more persons from outlying counties than could be appointed if they were selected by area according to population. Nevertheless it must be stressed that whoever is appointed would not in fact represent an area but would be serving the best interests of the entire seven-county area.

Number of Members on Parks and Open Space Commission

It would be ill-advised to have the same number of members on the Parks and Open Space Commission as on the Metropolitan Council. If this were the case, there would be too great a temptation to name one Commission member from each Council district. We want to guard against the threat of a member of the Commission thinking primarily in terms of parks and open space in his own district. Appointees should not be tied to any political subdivision in the metropolitan area. Because the Commission will be primarily carrying out program functions, a fairly small board would be ideal, because it would be most workable. After considering a number of possibilities we concluded, on balance, that a Commission of not less than five nor more than eleven members is preferable.

Financing the Parks and Open Space Program

Lacking an overall plan for parks and open space in the Twin Cities area, we cannot today come up with an estimate of what the total cost of acquisition will be, and over how many years the acquisitions will have to be spread. We don't know how much land will have to be acquired outright, how much will be acquired with less than fee title, and how much can be controlled in its open state without expenditure of funds. Nevertheless, based on preliminary work which already has been done by metropolitan planners, it is possible to establish a reasonable minimum level of expenditures.

Staff reports in the Metropolitan Council have identified 26 "critical" acquisitions which need to be preserved at the earliest possible moment. These 26 sites have accumulative acreage of about 34,000 acres. This, of course, is only a small part of the total acreage that needs to be preserved in the metropolitan area -- something on the order of 225,000 acres. If these 34,000 acres were preserved for metropolitan parks only, the cost of acquisition and development of these 34,000 acres could reasonably be expected to be in the vicinity \$3,000 an acre. A recent purchase in Dakota County of a large county park went for \$1,700 an acre, exclusive of development costs. It is estimated that development costs for metropolitan parks probably equal acquisition costs. A tabulation of the cost of lands acquired for parks in the metropolitan area between 1960 and 1966 reveals that the costs range from a low of \$289 an acre for an undeveloped park in western Hennepin County acquired by the Hennepin County Park Reserve District, to \$28,000 an acre for a two-acre site on White Bear Lake. Other examples include \$5,293 an acre for 149 acres in Battle Creek Park in Maplewood. The 2,700 acres acquired by the Hennepin County Park Reserve District in Carver County sold for \$1,100 an acre. The 26 critical acquisitions almost all border on lakes, which would have the effect of increasing the acquisition cost.

Assuming, then, that an absolute minimum program would involve 34,000 acres at an average cost of \$3,000 an acre, this totals about \$100 million. We are not suggesting here that all of these 34,000 acres be acquired. In fact, it may well be that a higher priority will be placed on acquisition of only a portion of these sites, with the use of the other funds for preservation of open space along rivers and streams, or in connection with parkways, for example. Also, all acquisitions do not have to be in full fee title.

Substantial grants of state and federal aid, particularly federal aid, can be expected for a metropolitan parks and open space system. Up to 50% of the acquisition and development costs for large metropolitan parks and open space purposes is not unreasonable to expect. Assuming that \$50 million were obtained in state and federal aid, this would leave \$50 million to be raised locally. Again, it must be emphasized that this would be a basic, bare minimum program.

A member of our committee who is an expert in governmental bonding has prepared a chart showing the possible financing program for a metropolitan park and open space program of some \$50 million. This chart appears at the back of this report. The assumption is that a total of \$50 million in bonds would be floated for 10 years in a row beginning in 1969 with \$5 million in bonds issued each year. Total revenue for debt service and other expenses each year is estimated at \$4 million. With such estimates, we find that a total of \$118 million would be raised through 1998, when the last of the bonds would be paid off. A total of \$71 million

in principal and interest would be needed to pay off the bonds, leaving \$47 million over the 30 years for other purposes. Given the mushrooming costs of operational expense in existing metropolitan parks, we believe that this extra money will be needed for operational expense or for other acquisition purposes.

In summary, it appears that a goal of \$4 million a year in continuing financing is a reasonable minimum for funds for acquisition, development and operation.

We considered three basic alternatives as sources of revenue. They were: (a) the property tax; (b) an increase in the present sales or income taxes; and (c) an increase in the cigarette tax. Following is a discussion of these alternatives:

(a) Property Tax--Because of the general feeling that property taxes are too high and must be held down wherever possible, we felt that the property tax should not be the basic source of revenue for the metropolitan parks and open space system. The assessed valuation for the seven-county area now is about \$1,400,000,000, meaning that a one-mill tax levy would raise \$1.4 million. Thus, in the first year, a levy of less than three mills would be needed to raise \$4 million. Undoubtedly, \$4 million would not be needed in expenditures in the first year. We developed some estimates on the debt service costs alone, assuming that \$5 million in bonds were issued each year for the first 10 years. Assuming also that the assessed valuation were to increase at a rate of 4.4% annually, and that the bonds would be 20-year bonds bearing 4% interest, we found that the peak mill rate would be reached in 1979 at a rate of 1.80 mills. Of course, then there would have to be other financing for operational expense. If this were a mill levy also, it would be in addition to the levy for debt service. Currently the Hennepin County Park Reserve District levy is 1.54 mills for debt retirement, applied in suburban Hennepin County, and .4 of a mill for operational expense, applied throughout the county.

We were skeptical about using the property tax, at least levied on the basis of assessed valuation, because the assessed valuation of the central cities has already been used in connection with the development of major parks and preservation of open space in the central cities. To date, in fact, these have been, for all practical purposes, the metropolitan parks for the Twin Cities area. The central cities will continue to make up a substantial portion of the assessed valuation of the metropolitan area in years to come. It could be, though, that a property tax could be levied on some basis other than the total amount of assessed valuation. That is, a levy could be based on so many dollars per capita.

(b) Sales or Income Tax Increase--It would be possible to increase the sales tax or the personal income tax in the metropolitan area by percentage sufficient to raise \$4 million a year. Tapping such a "basic" source for one metropolitan function may be open to considerable question, though. It may well relate to the financing of other metropolitan services. We would be more inclined to go along with this type of an increase if there were other metropolitan services involved.

1 (c) Cigarette Tax--In 1964 the Minnesota Legislature established a precedent in Minnesota by dedicating a one-cent increase in the state cigarette tax to the State Natural Resources Fund. This was intended to be primarily for accelerating natural resources development in Minnesota. Representative Richard Fitzsimons, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said recently that the Minnesota Resources Commission is considering an increase in the cigarette tax for natural resources. State Representative Raymond Pavlak, a member of the Resources Commission, in discussing financing of open space needs in the metropolitan area at a recent conference in St. Paul, said that an increase in the cigarette tax appears to be the only suggested source with any widespread acceptance. The total cigarette tax in Minnesota now is 8 cents a pack. The rate in Wisconsin is 10 cents; Iowa 10 cents; South Dakota 8 cents; North Dakota 8 cents. The highest rate in the nation is 13 cents in Pennsylvania. One state, North Carolina, has no cigarette tax.

A two-cent-a-pack cigarette tax levied statewide raises just under \$8 million a year, of which \$4 million could be earmarked for the metropolitan area on a per capita basis. We understand that the cigarette tax is collected in such a way that it cannot be levied unless on a statewide basis.

Of the above alternatives, we believe that the increase in the cigarette tax is the most realistic and best approach at this time. We are not opposed to the other sources, but believe that the cigarette tax approach may offer the best chance of success.

We are most concerned with the guarantee of a reasonable amount of the cigarette tax for the metropolitan area. We are recommending that the tax be levied statewide, with the revenue distributed on a per capita basis to the non-metropolitan counties and to the Parks and Open Space Commission in the seven-county Twin Cities area. Since the metropolitan area has about half of the state's population, about half of the revenue would be distributed to the Commission.

We cannot stress too much the importance of an adequate share of the cigarette tax for the metropolitan area. The record in Minnesota to date of state funding for natural resource and environmental protection in the metropolitan area against the rest of the state is very small. State parks development, public access to lakes, forestry development, and virtually every other activity of the State Department of Conservation have been concentrated in outstate Minnesota. We do not want to indicate that there are not needs in outstate Minnesota, but the needs are very strong here as well, and a reasonable expectation is that the metropolitan area should get at least as much revenue on a per capita basis as outstate. In fact, it might well be argued that the metropolitan area should receive a greater share because it has not been well considered in the past.

Among other revenue sources, the Commission should be empowered to charge user fees for special activities at metropolitan parks. Although we did not review the question in detail, committee members did not believe that "admission" should be charged. As a basic principle, members felt that metropolitan parks should be free. Nevertheless, fees for camping and other special uses would be acceptable.

The Commission also should have the power to award concession contracts where these may be desirable in connection with development at metropolitan parks. This is not to be construed as endorsing a line of hotdog stands at every metropolitan park, but we acknowledge there will be certain services that need to be provided to users of metropolitan parks, and this would be a good way of providing such services.

Future of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District

Since the time of its organization, the Hennepin County Park Reserve District has been regarded as the beginning of a metropolitan parks and open space system. This was the concept when the law was passed by the Legislature permitting the Park Reserve District to be established. The Board of the Park Reserve District in its official policy statement is on record in favor of a metropolitan system.

The Park Reserve District has acquired some 14,000 acres in Hennepin County and immediately adjacent to the County in Carver County. Two of the District's six large park areas have been developed for public use. An estimated \$15 million would be needed to properly develop the other park areas. Operational expenses for the District are increasing rapidly. It was forced to increase its user fees this year and may have to seek additional financing from the 1969 Legislature for operational expense.

We evaluated whether it would be advisable to establish a metropolitan parks and open space commission for the other six counties of the metropolitan area, excluding Hennepin County. We rejected this approach. It would create an unnecessary division of parks and open space responsibility in the metropolitan area and make overall planning for the area impossible. Although the Hennepin County Park Reserve District has been in existence for some 11 years, it is just beginning to pay off bonds. It would be far easier to absorb the Hennepin County Park Reserve District now than at any future time. It would be incorrect to assume that the acquisitions of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District have been sufficient for the residents of Hennepin County. There are some very highly prized lakes and streams that have not been protected. Undoubtedly, there is a need for open space preservation along the Mississippi River. We feel quite strongly that the Hennepin County Park Reserve District should be absorbed by the Parks and Open Space Commission.

To date, approximately \$8.8 million has been invested in park acquisition and development in the Hennepin County Park Reserve District. Investment in park acquisition is about \$8.5 million and park development is about \$250,000. Approximately \$7,200,000 in bonds remain outstanding, which is being repaid by a levy on suburban Hennepin County.

We felt on balance that the outstanding debt of the Park Reserve District should be assumed by the new Commission. The effect of this is that about one-half of the debt will be carried in Hennepin County including Minneapolis, since Hennepin County has about half of the population and assessed valuation of the metropolitan area.

In terms of dollars already spent by the Park Reserve District for acquisition and development, we feel there are three factors which can be regarded as compensation. First, suburban Hennepin County will no longer have to pay off the bonds by itself. If a non-property tax source of revenue is used to pay off the bonds, then a tax levy no longer will be needed. Second, suburban Hennepin has had the advantage of the parks to date. Third, because these parks already have been acquired, it can be expected that the first development dollars spent by the new Commission would be in these parks.

In terms of benefit for the rest of the metropolitan area, Hennepin County will be sharing equally from now on in new park and open space acquisitions

throughout the seven counties. Also, some of the Hennepin County parks are very readily accessible by residents from other counties. One park, of course, is actually located in Carver County.

The staff of the Park Reserve District should be transferred to the Parks and Open Space Commission. The staff has developed a knowledge and expertise in the field and would provide a good foundation for getting the Parks and Open Space Commission off the ground immediately. There are currently 25 employees on the staff of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District.

Other County Parks

Some parks owned by other counties may be of sufficient importance to have a metropolitan impact. Counties should be able to negotiate for the transfer of some of their parks to the Commission if they desire. The Commission would decide whether the parks should be acquired as part of the metropolitan system. It is not expected that there would be very many transfers of this nature.

Nothing in our recommendations is intended to preclude county governments from continuing and expanding their existing policy of acquisition of land for municipalities. They would no longer be expected to preserve large tracts of land for parks and open space.

Metropolitan Zoo

This committee did not review in detail the need for a metropolitan zoo, and how it would be related to a Parks and Open Space Commission. A previous Citizens League committee has strongly urged the establishment of a metropolitan zoo. That committee's report noted the need to establish a unit of government at the metropolitan level for this responsibility. Based on the limited information we have, it seems logical that a metropolitan zoo could well fit into the framework of a Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission.

It does not seem to us that the Metropolitan Council should have one commission serving under it responsible for a metropolitan zoo, and another commission responsible for parks and open space. We understand that there are important safeguards to be taken into consideration in incorporating a metropolitan zoo into the Parks and Open Space Commission, specifically safeguards concerning the planning for the zoo itself. An advisory committee of various interests in a zoo could well serve under the Commission and supervise the planning. The Citizens League report on a metropolitan zoo said that the appropriate governmental structure could contract with a non-profit zoological society to plan and operate a metropolitan zoo.

It must be clearly understood that our recommendations on financing of a metropolitan parks and open space system in this report do not include financing for a metropolitan zoo. Zoo financing, estimated in the vicinity of \$15 million, would be in addition.

Operation and Maintenance of Metropolitan Parks

The recent experience of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District in operating its metropolitan parks at Baker Park and Hyland Park indicates that operation and maintenance costs for metropolitan parks can be quite high.

We have not evaluated in detail how the operation and maintenance of these parks should be handled. One alternative, and a very feasible one, is for the Parks and Open Space Commission to have direct operating responsibility over them. It should be recognized that this will require the tax levy of a fair amount in order to carry this out. Currently the tax levy for operation and maintenance in the Hennepin County metropolitan parks is .4 of a mill, and this is wholly insufficient, according to the Park Reserve District. The recent action of the Park Reserve District increasing its daily entrance fees to the parks from 50¢ to \$1.00 indicates the pressing nature of the operating costs. We have not explored in detail another alternative, but it might be worth looking into. That is, to let the individual counties, perhaps by contract with the Parks and Open Space Commission, carry out operation and maintenance of the metropolitan parks. Doubtless, the matter of law enforcement will have to be a responsibility of the appropriate local governmental jurisdiction.

POSSIBLE FINANCING PROGRAM FOR METROPOLITAN PARK

ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

(For Illustrative Purposes Only)

Assumptions: 2¢ Cigarette tax distributed on per capita basis
 \$5,000,000 20-year serial bonds issued annually for
 ten years.
 4% interest rate on bond issues.

(All figures in Thousands of Dollars)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bonds Issued</u>	<u>Debt 12-31</u>	<u>Principal Payments</u>	<u>Inter- est</u>	<u>Debt Service Levy</u>	<u>2¢ Cig. Tax Revenue</u>	<u>Cig. Rev. Less Debt Services</u>	<u>Total Available</u>
1969	\$ 5,000	\$5,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 450	\$2,000	\$1,550	\$6,550
1970	5,000	9,750	250	200	890	4,000	3,110	8,110
1971	5,000	14,250	500	390	1,320	4,000	2,680	7,680
1972	5,000	18,500	750	570	1,740	4,000	2,260	7,260
1973	5,000	22,500	1,000	740	2,150	4,000	1,850	6,850
1974	5,000	26,250	1,250	900	2,550	4,000	1,450	6,450
1975	5,000	29,750	1,500	1,050	2,940	4,000	1,060	6,060
1976	5,000	33,000	1,750	1,190	3,320	4,000	680	5,680
1977	5,000	36,000	2,000	1,320	3,690	4,000	310	5,310
1978	<u>5,000</u>	38,750	2,250	<u>1,440</u>	4,050	<u>4,000</u>	(50)	<u>4,950</u>
Total	50,000			7,800		38,000		64,900
1979		36,250	2,500	1,550	3,950	4,000	50	50
1980		33,750	2,500	1,450	3,850	4,000	150	150
1981		31,250	2,500	1,350	3,750	4,000	250	250
1982		28,750	2,500	1,250	3,650	4,000	350	350
1983		26,250	2,500	1,150	3,550	4,000	450	450
1984		23,750	2,500	1,050	3,450	4,000	550	550
1985		21,250	2,500	950	3,350	4,000	650	650
1986		18,750	2,500	850	3,250	4,000	750	750
1987		16,250	2,500	750	3,150	4,000	850	850
1988		13,750	2,500	650	3,050	4,000	950	950
1989		11,250	2,500	550	2,700	4,000	1,300	1,300
1990		9,000	2,250	450	2,360	4,000	1,640	1,640
1991		7,000	2,000	360	2,030	4,000	1,970	1,970
1992		5,250	1,750	280	1,710	4,000	2,290	2,290
1993		3,750	1,500	210	1,400	4,000	2,600	2,600
1994		2,500	1,250	150	1,100	4,000	2,900	2,900
1995		1,500	1,000	100	810	4,000	3,190	3,190
1996		750	750	60	530	4,000	3,470	3,470
1997		250	500	30	260	4,000	3,740	3,740
1998		-	250	10	-	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>
Total	50,000		50,000	21,000	71,000	118,000	47,000	97,000