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Urban Square - A Link Between Two Cities

Twin City Recreation Center for Minneapolis and Saint Paul,
Minnesota

Margaret Clark

ARC 505
Thesis Preparation
March 23, 1991

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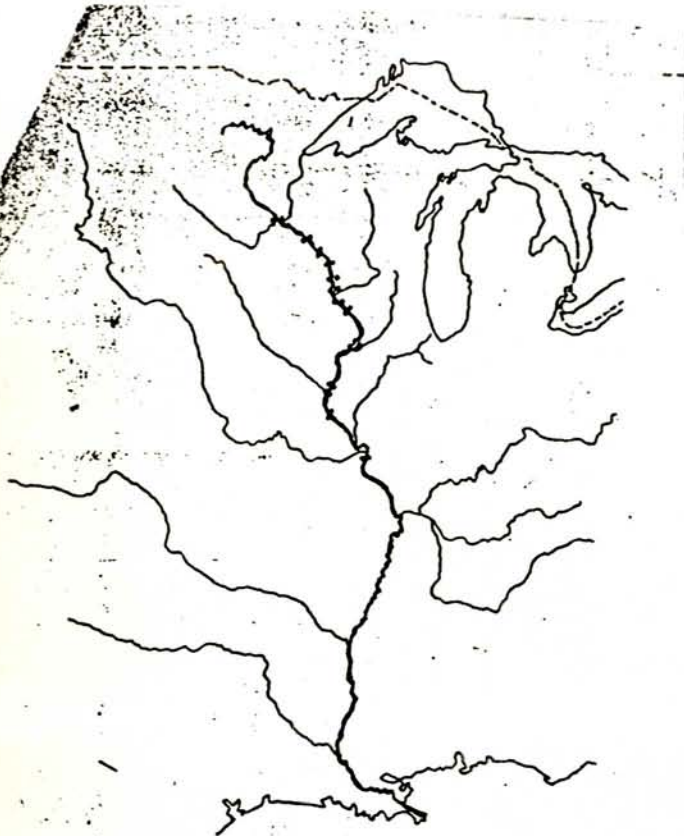
PRECIS

I will investigate the linking of two cities through the introduction of an urban square and its continuity with an urban street, with an urban bridge between the cities, and with an urban park system. The program for the square will be a recreation center for residents from both cities, thus creating a common urban place to reinforce the interdependence and cooperation of the two communities.

Two cities with parallel histories and common borders should be linked both physically and conceptually. Despite their differences (or because of their differences), the cities should benefit from their coexistence and interrelationship. The phenomenon of two cities developing very close to one another and sharing a common border is quite common along rivers in the United States. Despite the unique development of each set of these twin cities, the method used in joining two of them could have applications throughout the country. Specifically, I will investigate the twin cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Minnesota.

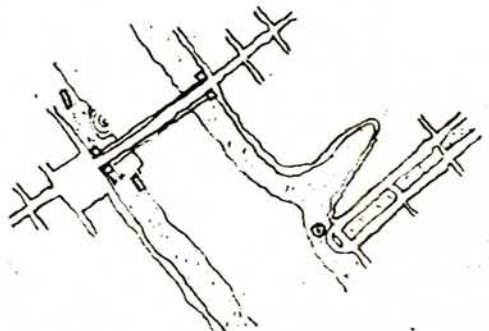
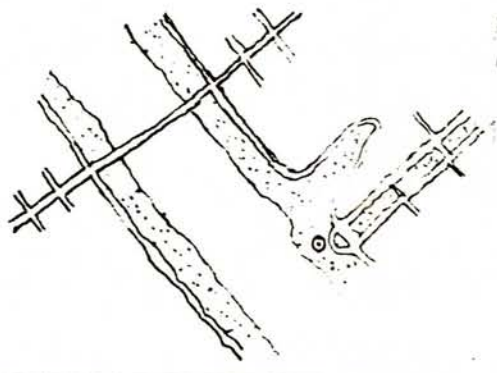
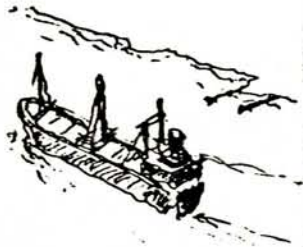
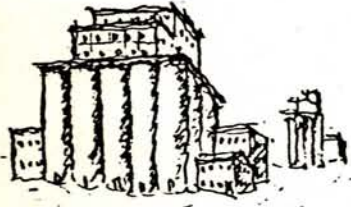
Minneapolis and Saint Paul must remain distinct cities with their own identities, but together they can provide a civic amenity beneficial to both of them. The cities are dependent upon one another for the character of their common border. An urban corridor park along this border would provide a fantastic civic amenity for both cities and would provide a common urban place for the interaction of the two communities. The urban square and recreation center at the bridgehead in Minneapolis and the new bridge, that I propose, will provide the essential physical and programmatic connections between the two cities and between their park systems.

DIAGRAMS:



GRID OF STREETS - DOWNTOWNS SKEWED AGAINST NORTH-SOUTH GRID,
RELATES CITIES.
RIVER BECOMES BOTH CONNECTOR AND DIVIDER.

TWIN CITIES ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER



RESEARCH

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINNEAPOLIS AND SAINT PAUL:

Minneapolis and Saint Paul developed because of their position at the head of the navigable Mississippi River. They formed the edge between water transport and overland transport for the upper Midwest. Saint Paul became an important trading post for furs and supplies and a major transportation center for the region. Saint Paul remains an important regional center of finance, commerce and transportation. Saint Paul is also the capital of Minnesota. Minneapolis developed around the falls of St. Anthony, the power source for its lumber and flour milling industry. Although these industries died out, Minneapolis remains an important regional center of commerce and industry.

The cities' long history of competitiveness in industry and trade lead to an animosity between the residents of the two cities. As a result, the residents identify with one city or the other and effect a strong distinction between the two cities.

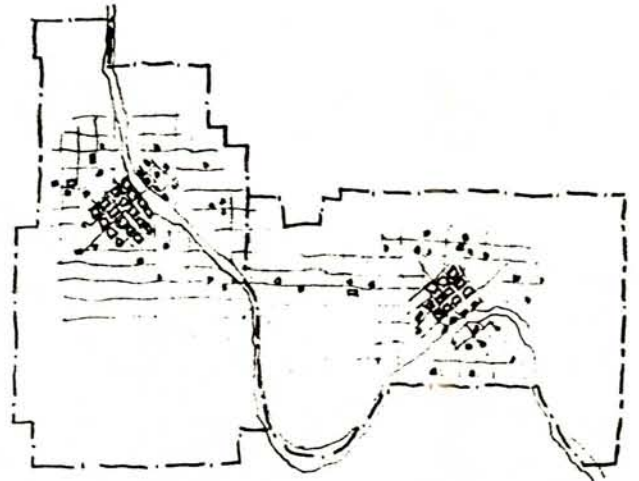
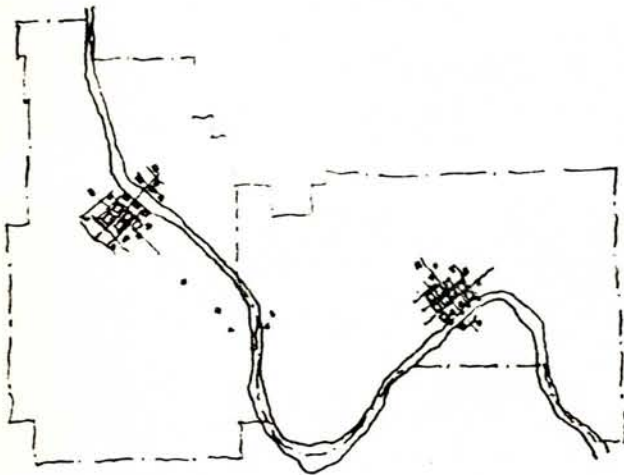
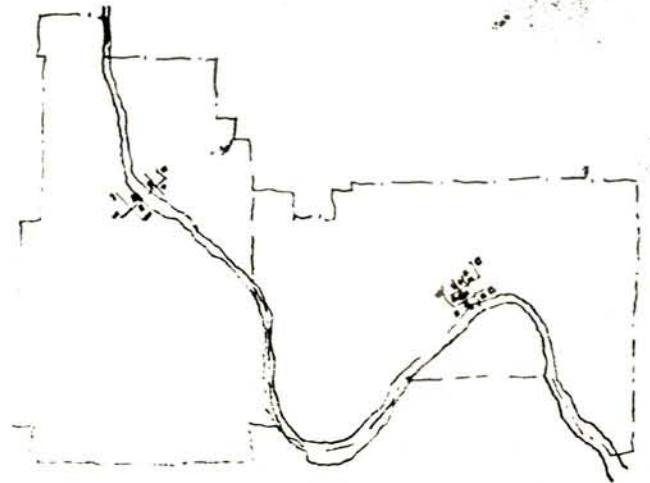
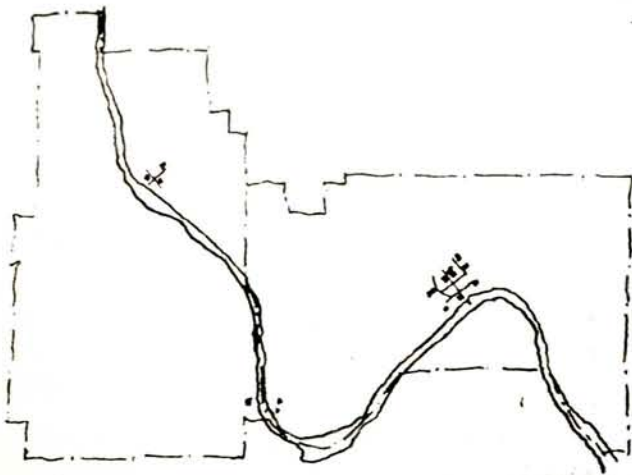
Saint Paul is essentially a blue collar town with more jobs in manufacturing, transportation, and public administration. Minneapolis, on the other hand, is essentially a white collar town with more jobs in finance, trade, and services. Despite their differences, they are interdependent for their culture and recreation. This interdependence benefits both cities and should be reinforced.

Architecturally, there is little to distinguish Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Their ethnic diversity and their acceptance of experimentation has not allowed for the development of a distinct architectural character for either city. Topographically, they are quite different. Saint Paul was built amongst some hills, while Minneapolis was built on flat terrain.

Today, the line which separates the cities is imperceptible. The Mississippi River runs between the two cities, but does not entirely define their common border because part of each city is located on the opposite side. Thus the corridor park that I propose, and the connections that it makes, must accommodate two distinct border conditions, land and river. Both cities are organized by a north-south grid, yet both downtowns are skewed from that grid in response to the river. Thus, the river is physically a separator and conceptually

a connector between the two cities. I will concentrate my efforts on the connection of the two cities across the Mississippi River, where there is an existing bridge.

Development of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

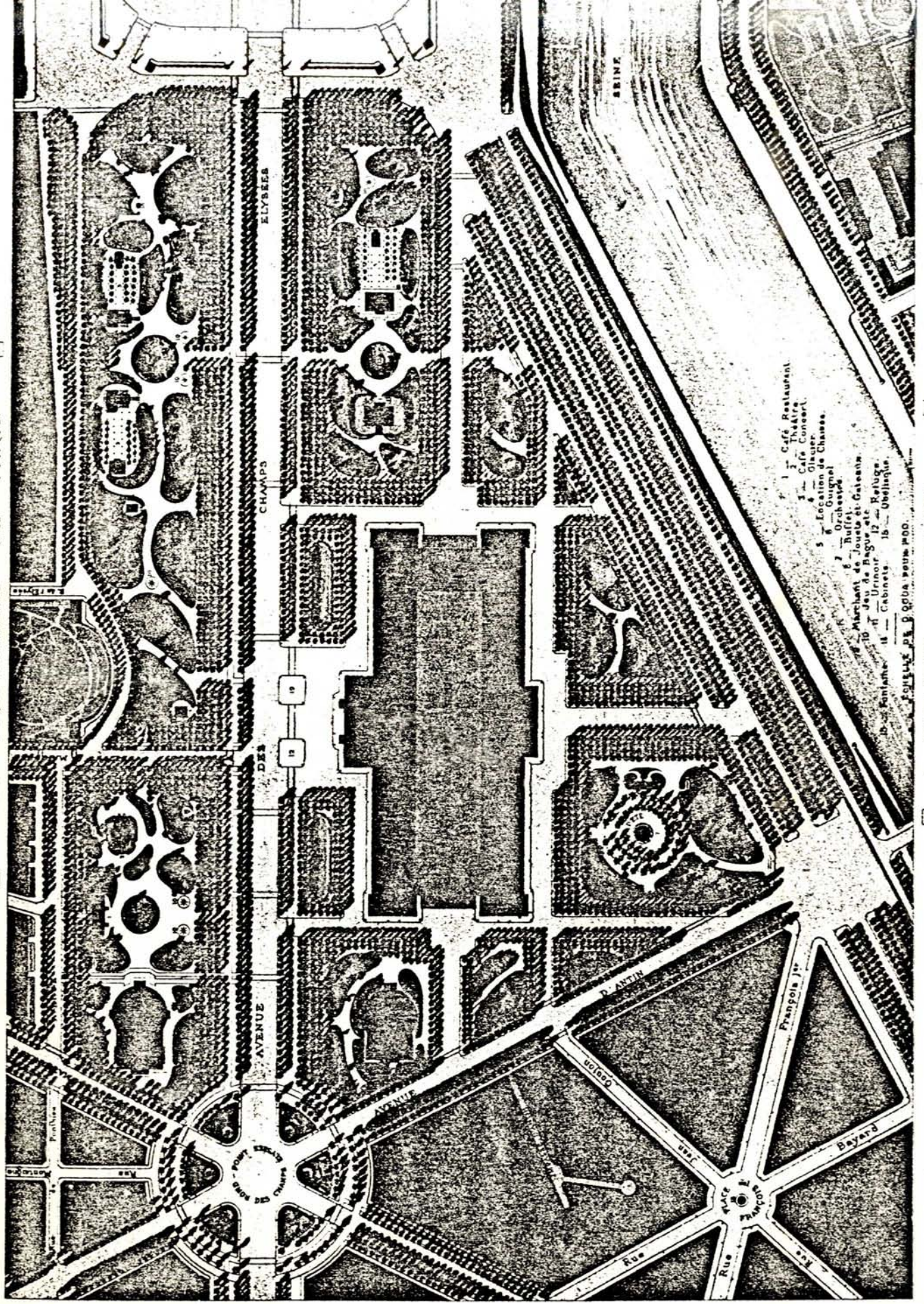


URBAN SQUARES:

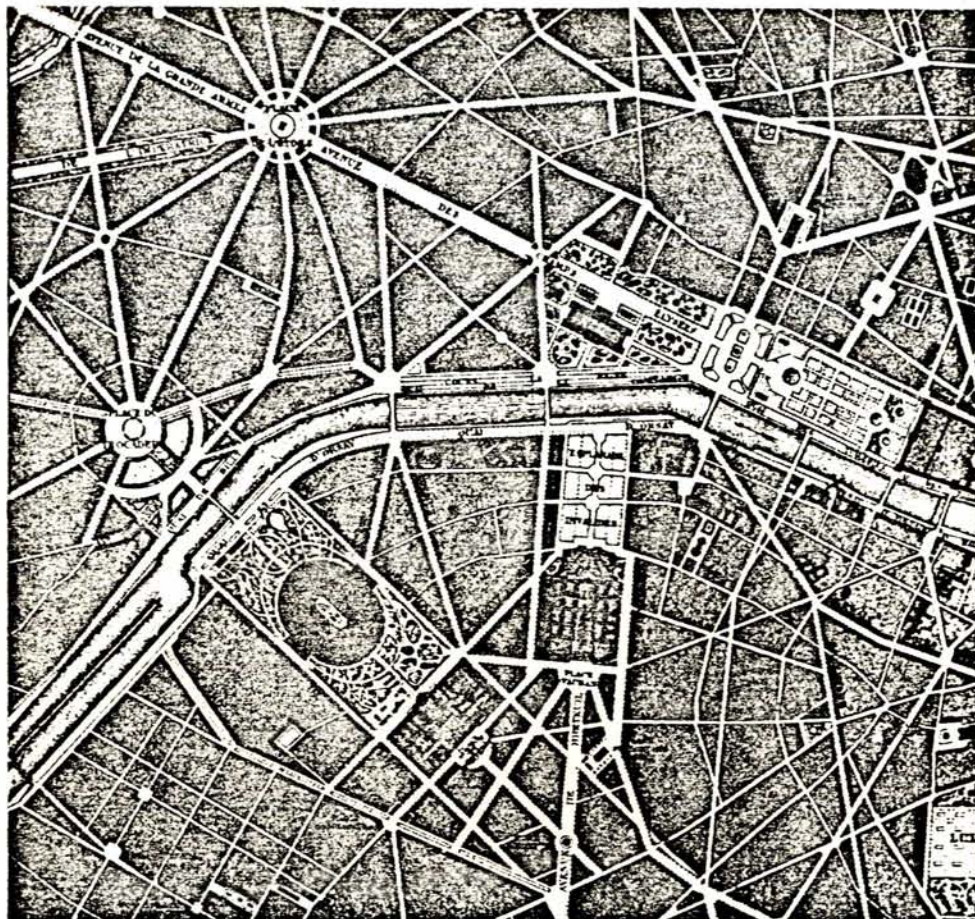
The head of this bridge is a major entry point for each of the cities and should be celebrated. As yet, neither city has attempted to celebrate this transition from one city to the other, particularly not spatially. I have not found such an attempt at a bridgehead in the United States. I will design an urban square at the Lake Street bridgehead in Minneapolis, as entry and connector. For precedents, I will look at urban squares in Paris, London, Barcelona, and Washington, D.C. I will look at them for connection, spatial definition and circulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

The space at the bridgehead in Minneapolis will be defined by a recreation center, which will augment the public amenities in the area. The space will be purely public in nature and will provide the physical and programmatic connection between the Jewish Community Center, the local academy, and the commercial strip of Lake Street. The square will be connected to the water's edge with landscape elements and a boathouse.

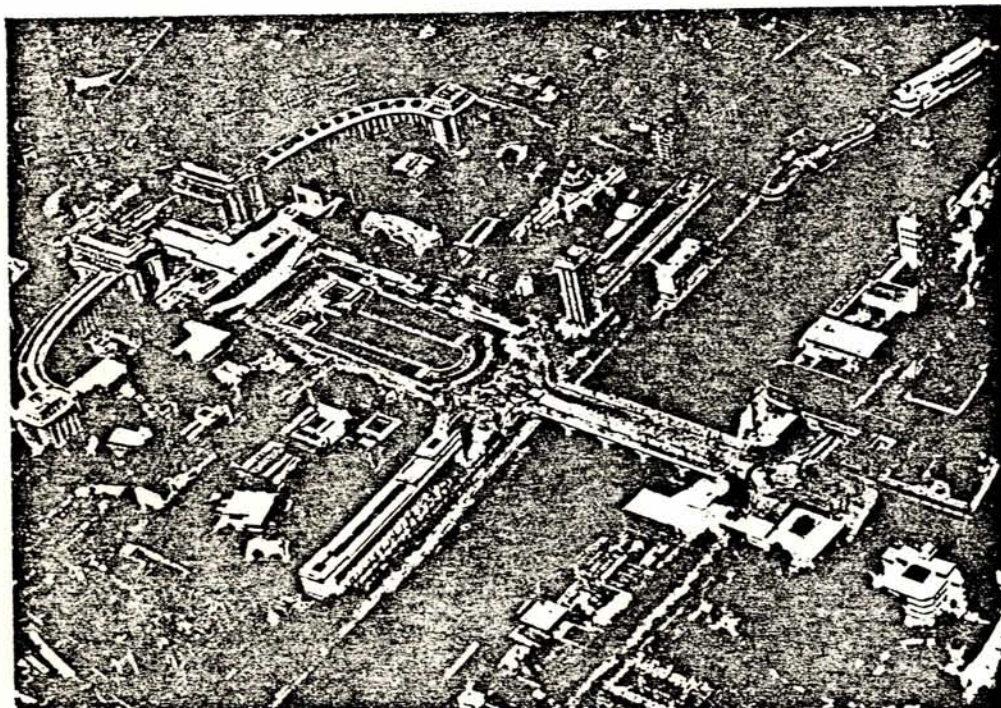
Currently, riverway traffic is separated from bridge traffic at the Saint Paul bridgehead (soon to be true at both). This freeway mentality simplifies vehicular circulation across the bridge, but uses up a lot of valuable land and defeats any attempt to integrate the bridge and the city. In my proposal, the traffic will not be separated and the park will be continued under the bridge.



- 1 - Café Restaurant
- 2 - The Arc de Triomphe
- 3 - Café Concert
- 4 - Glacier
- 5 - Location de Chaises
- 6 - Omnibus
- 7 - Buffet
- 8 - Marchant de Jouets et Galeries
- 9 - Jeu de Bagues etc
- 10 - Urinoir
- 11 - Refuge
- 12 - Cabarets
- 13 - Fontaine
- 14 - Opéra
- 15 - Opéra pour 1000

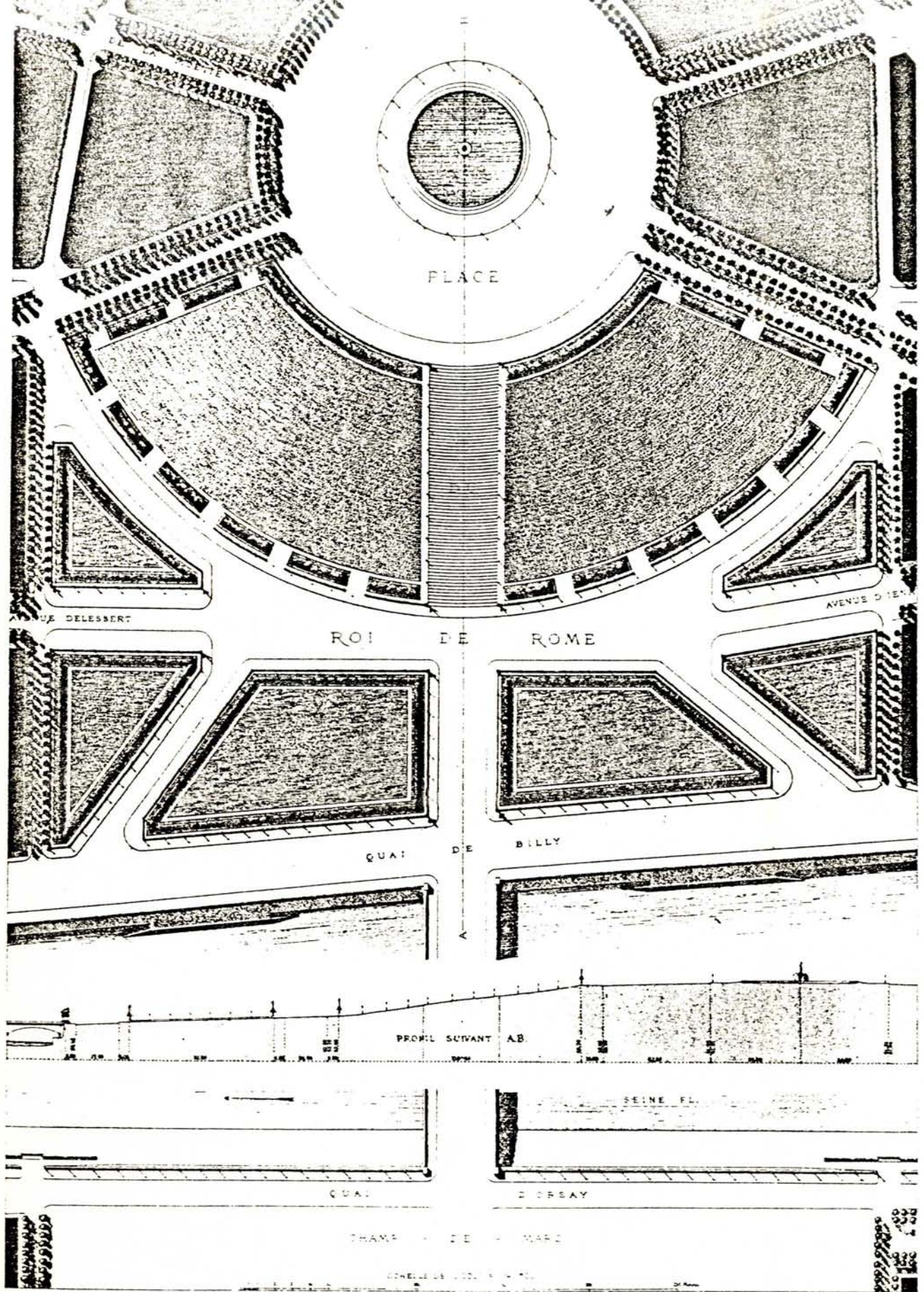


Paris Promenades



Paris Exhibition 1937

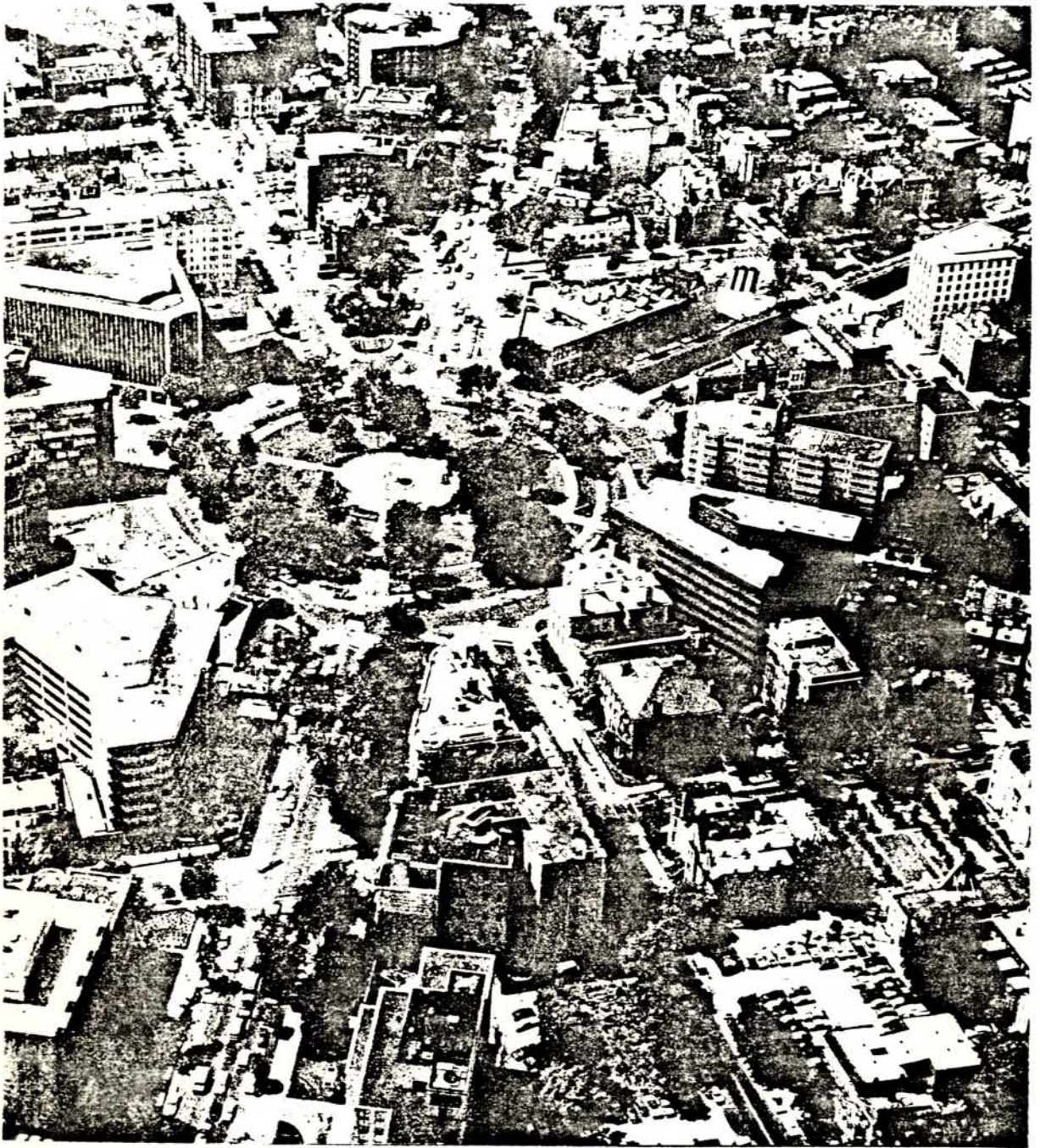
SPATIAL CONNECTION



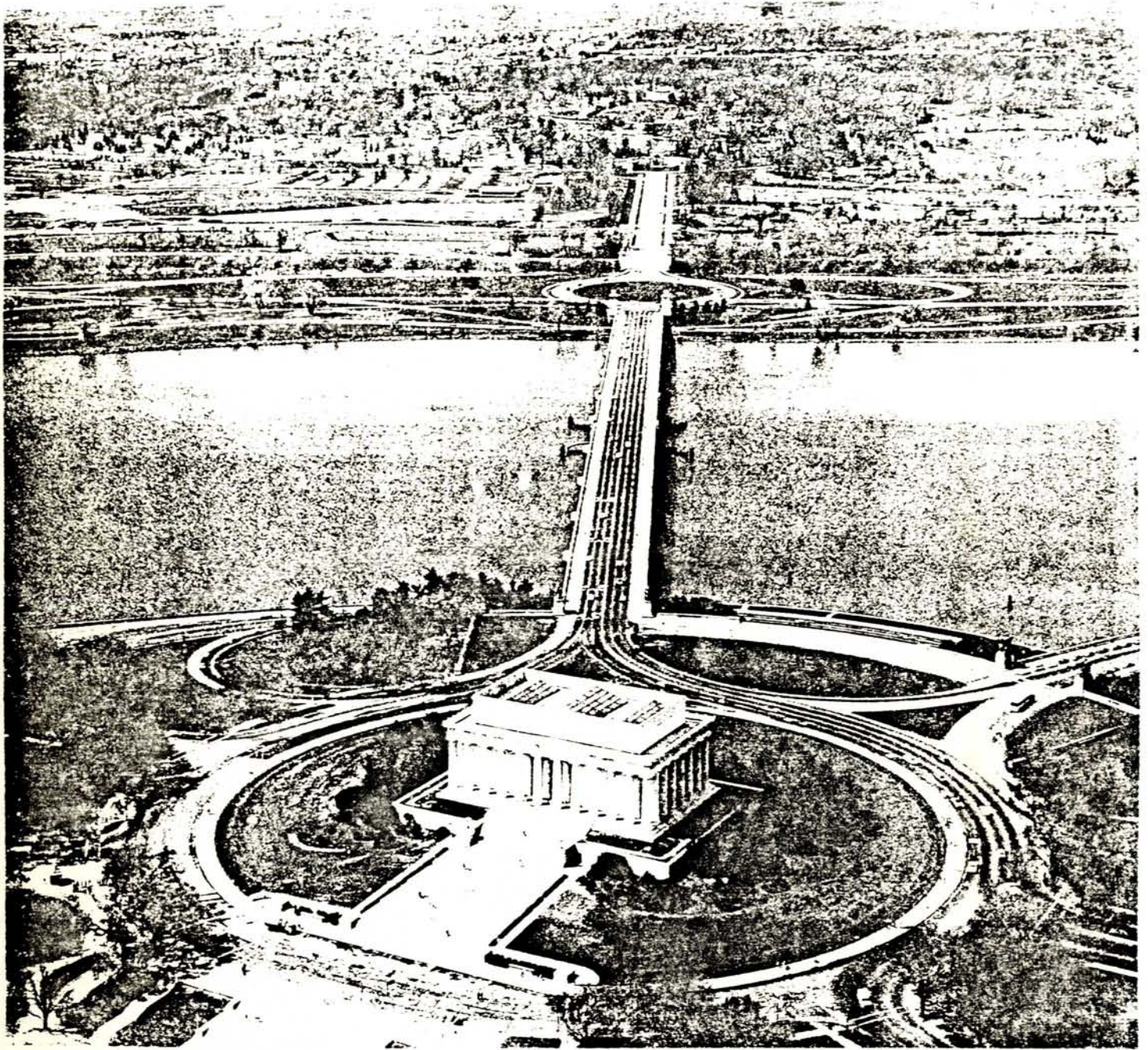
PLACE DU ROI DE ROME

CIRCULATION

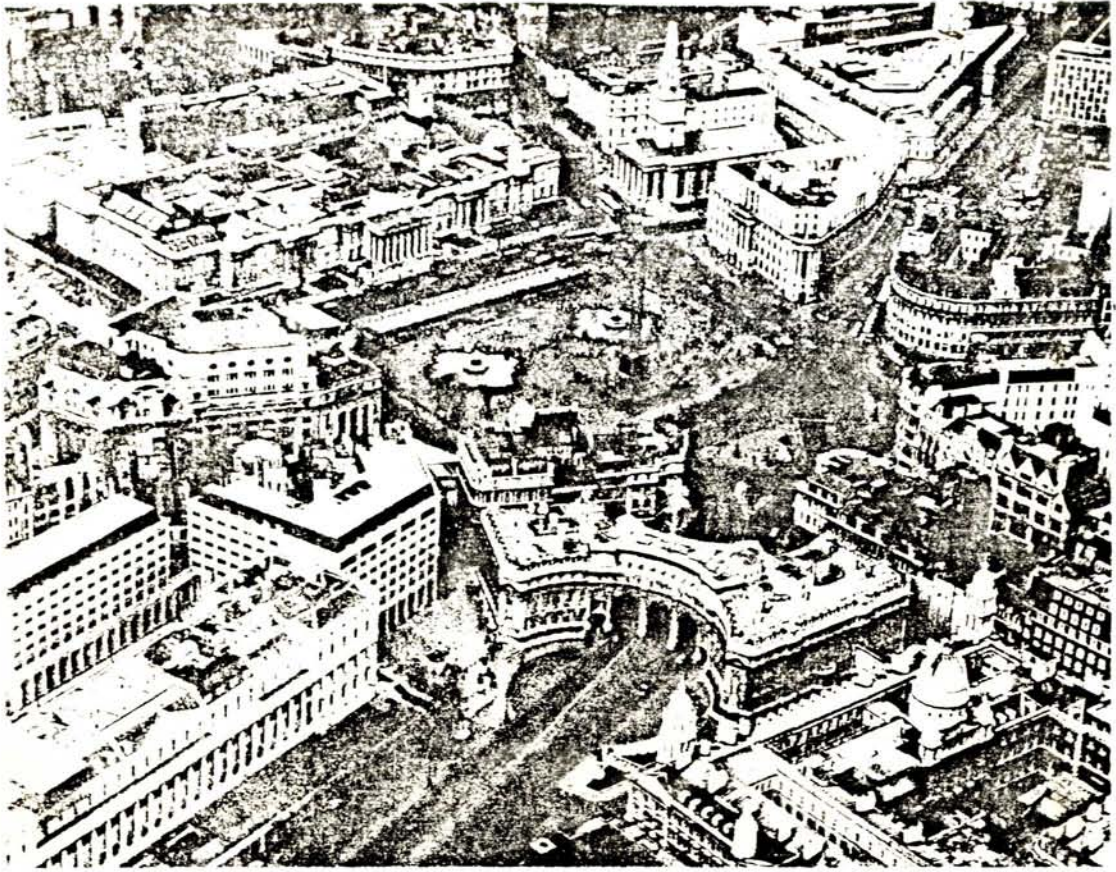
Place De Rome, Paris



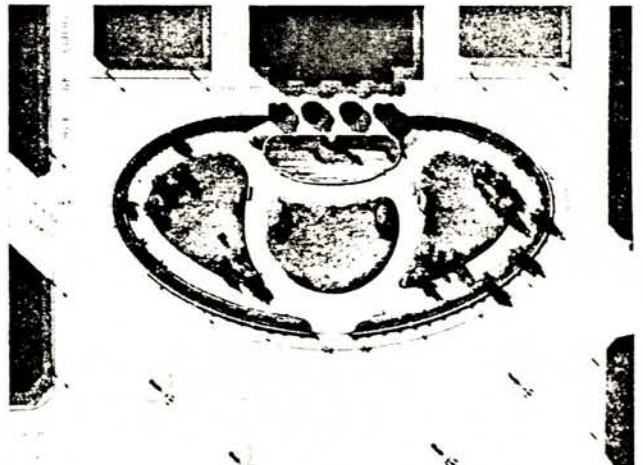
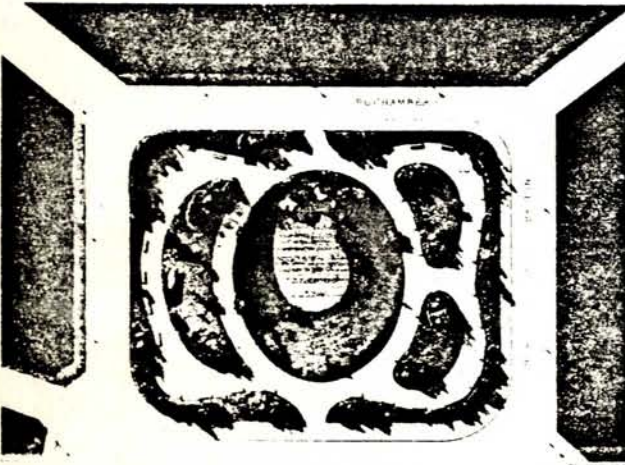
Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C.



Lincoln Memorial/Arlington Cemetery
Washington, D.C.



Trafalgar Square, London



GATEWAY - SCALE

Square Montholon, Paris

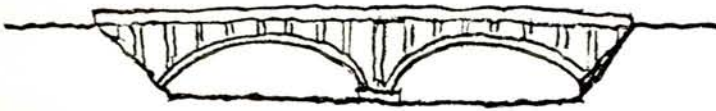
Square De La Trinite, Paris

URBAN BRIDGES:

The Lake Street Bridge is consistent with the other bridges in this area of the Mississippi. They are entirely functional, steel or concrete framed bridges, with no structure above their decks. Their predecessors were much more spatial and honorific with enormous structures above their decks. This is much more appropriate as part of an urban sequence. I will re-design the Lake Street Bridge with this in mind.

Currently, the bridge accommodates two lanes of vehicular traffic and a small amount of pedestrian traffic and is purely designed for circulation from one side of the river to the other. The new design will accommodate four lanes of vehicular traffic, two lanes of bicycle traffic, and two lanes of pedestrian traffic and will provide stopping places for the bicyclists and pedestrians to enhance their experience in crossing the river.

CATENARY ARCH



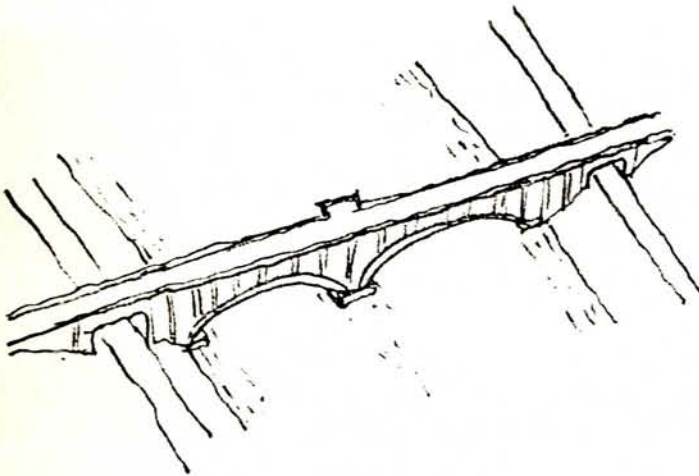
FLAT ARCH



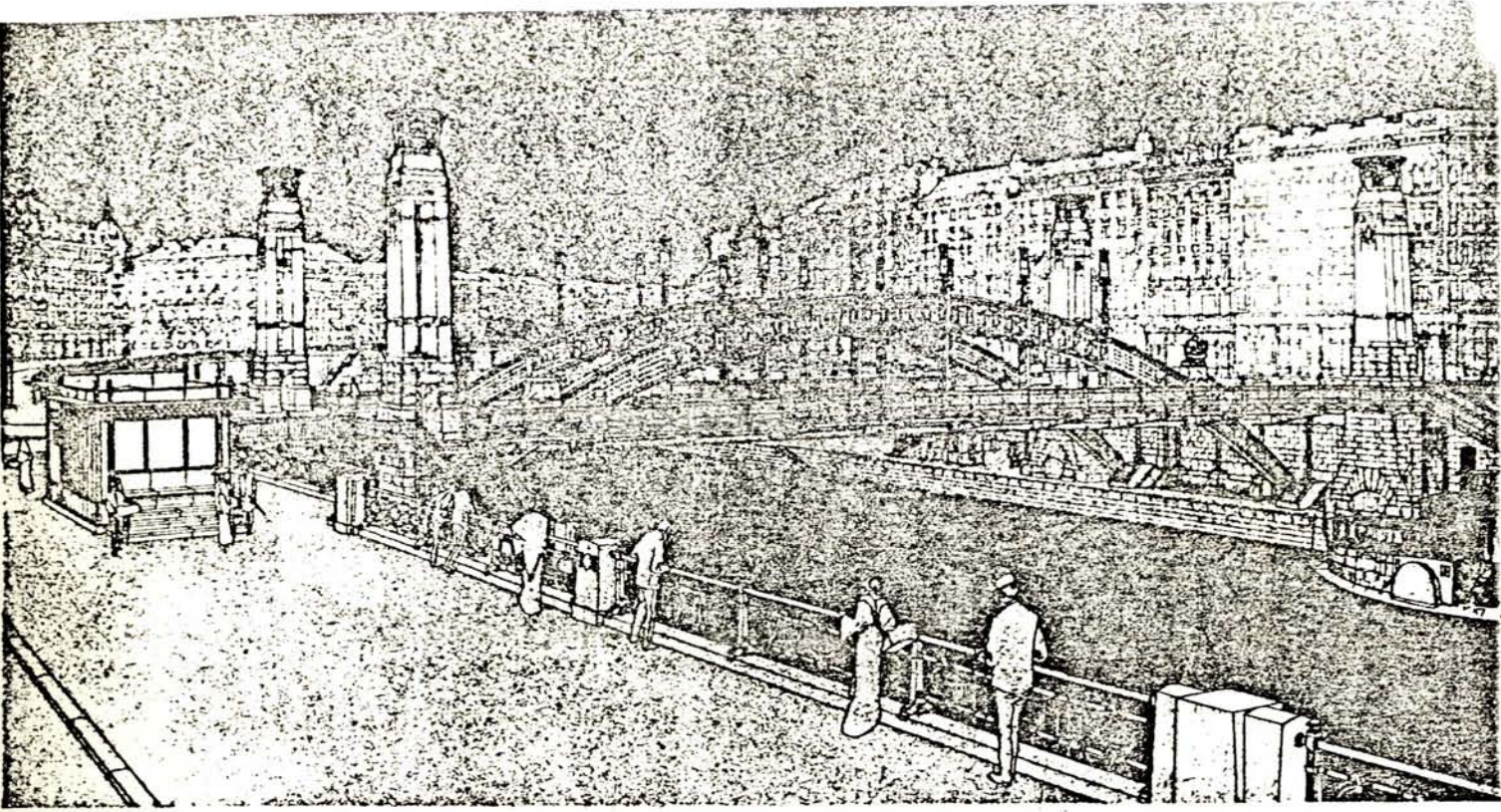
STEEL OR CONCRETE FRAMED ARCH BRIDGES



BRIDGE CONNECTING CAPITAL BUILDING WITH SAINT PAUL CATHEDRAL



LAKE STREET BRIDGE

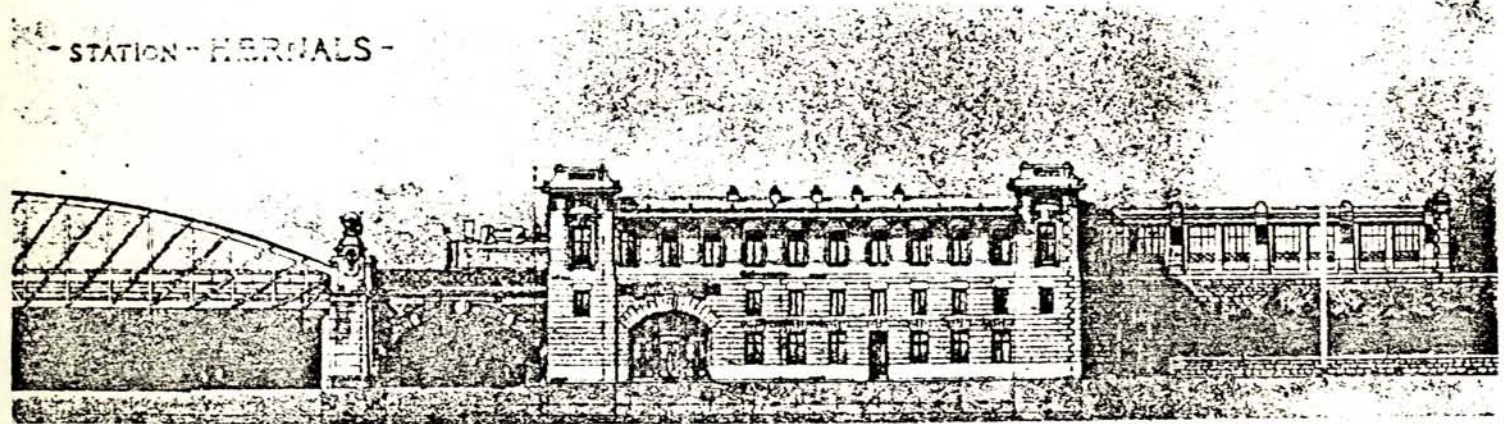


PROJEKT FÜR DEN NEUBAU DER
FERDINANDSBRÜCKE IN WIEN
PERSPEKTIVISCHE ANSICHT

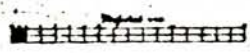
OTO WAGNER
KHOBERBAUER

Vienna

- STATION - HERNALS -



1:100

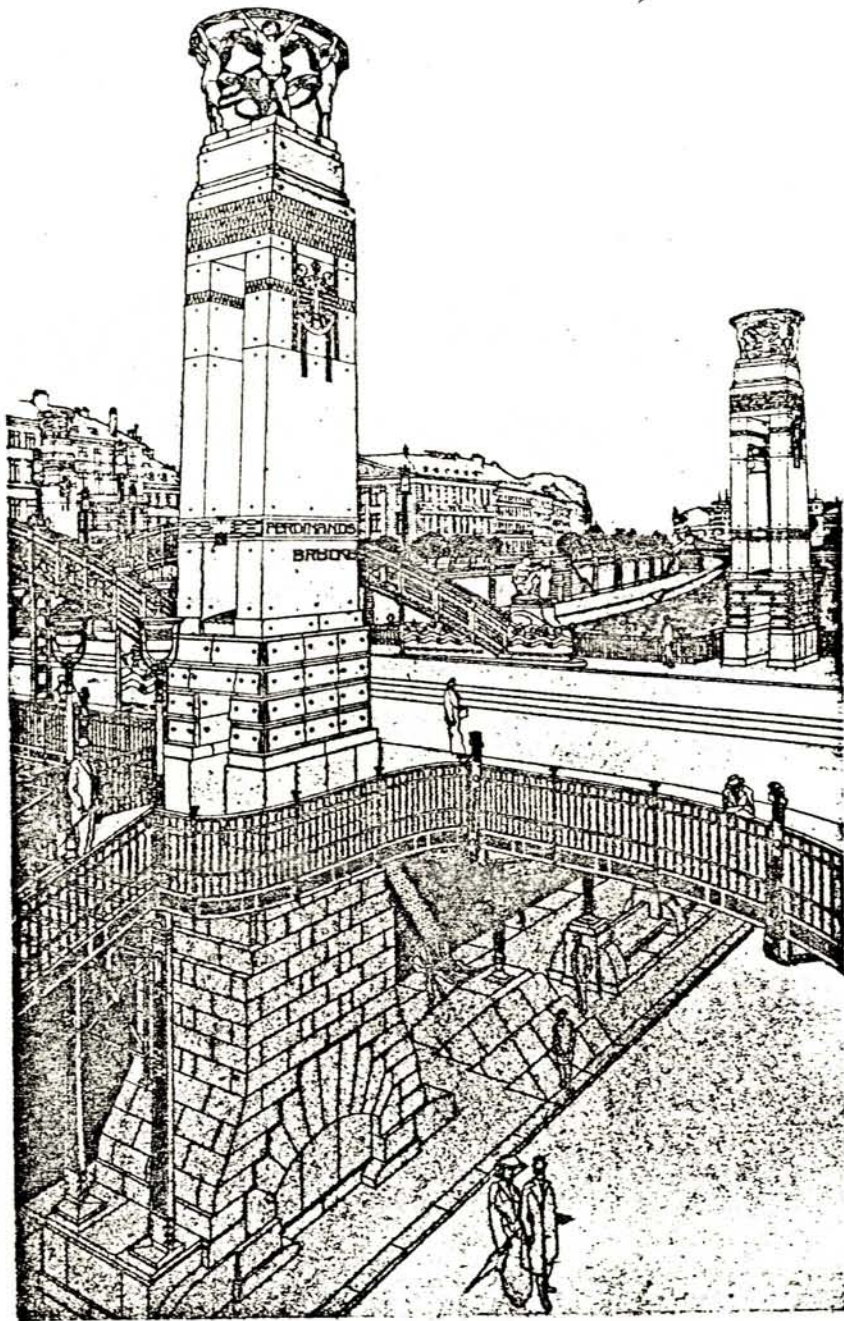


Architekt O. Wagner
1878

Maximilianstraße

Vienna

GATEWAY - SCALE



PROJEKT FÜR DEN NEUBAU DER
 FERDINANDSBRÜCKE IN WIEN
 PERSPEKTIVISCHE ANSICHT

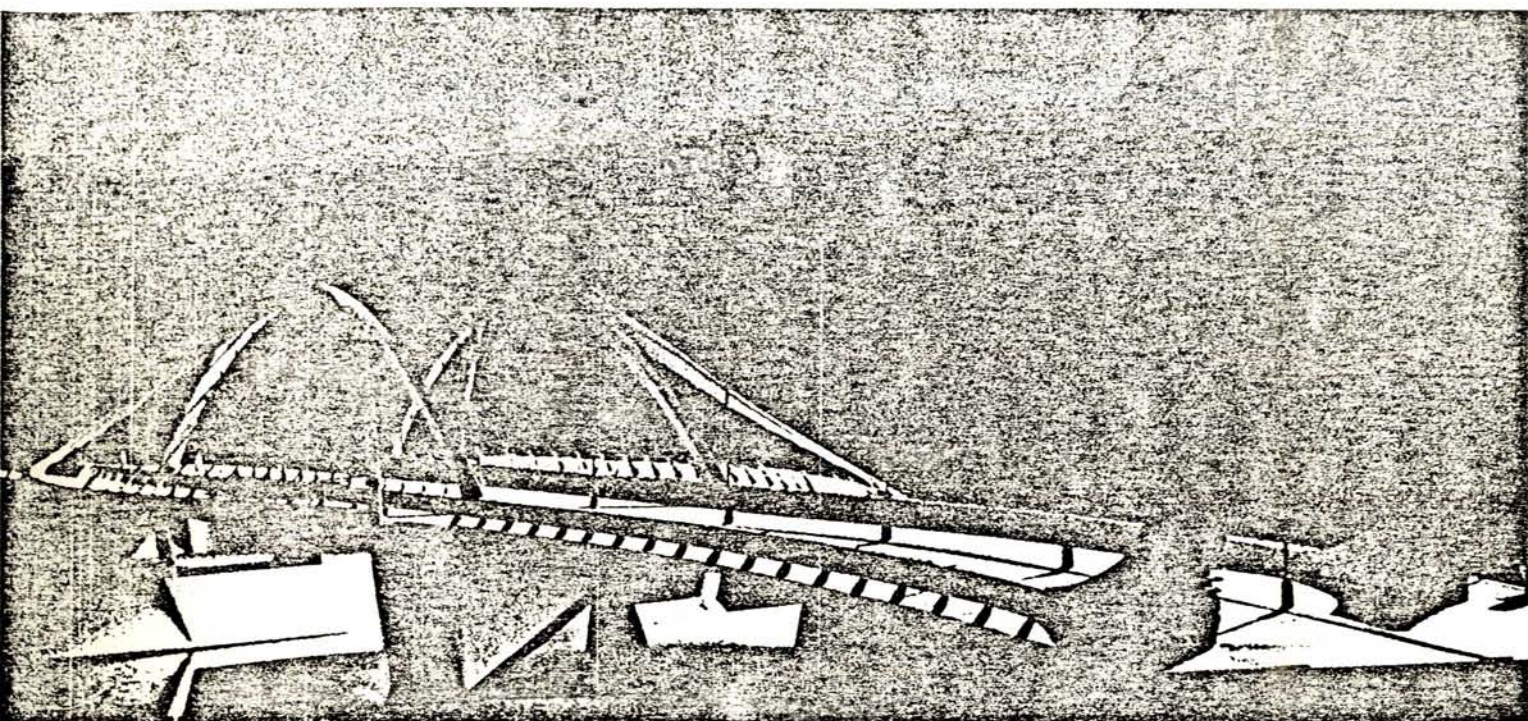
OTTO WAGNER
 KUNSTBERAT

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Veröffentlichung vorbehalten

Helogravure des k. u. k. Militärgeogr. Inst.

Vienna

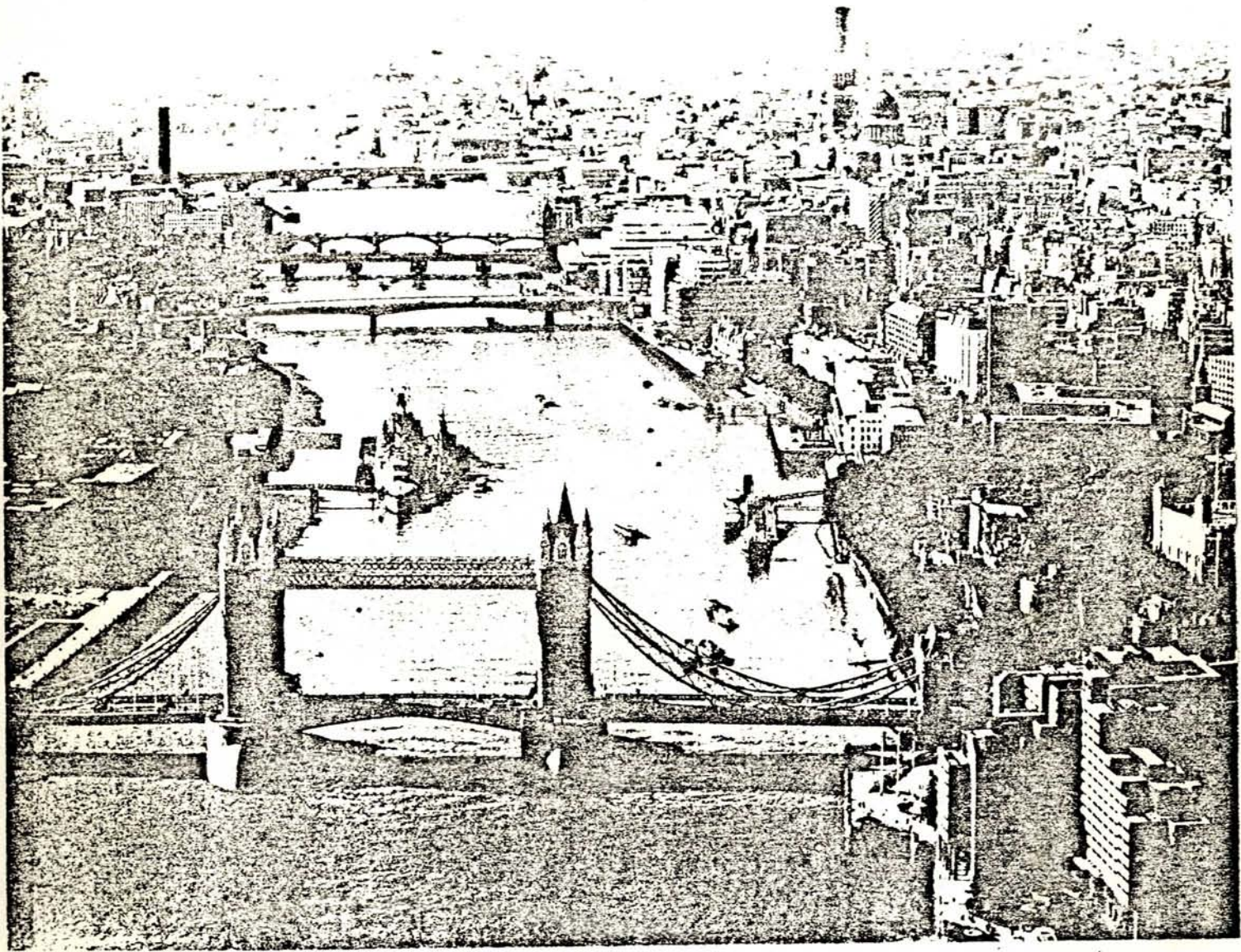


Barcelona



Barcelona

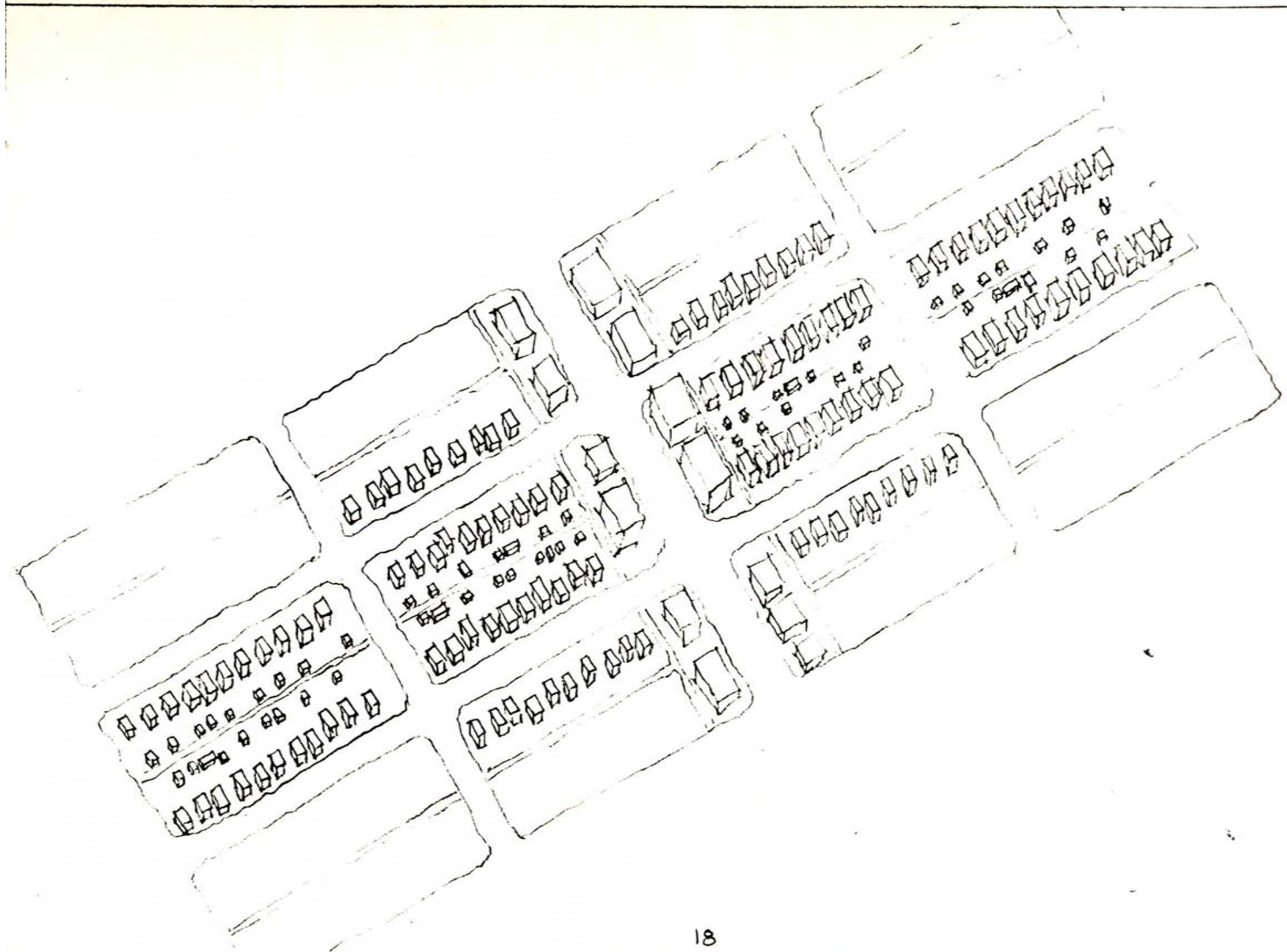
GATEWAY - SPACE



London

BLOCK TYPOLOGIES:

The typical block in this area is populated by single family residences and is bisected by an alley. The make up of the block pattern changes at major through streets and along the river. The blocks along Lake Street/Marshall Avenue contain both single family and commercial/apartment buildings. The alley no longer bisects the entire block. Some of the blocks along Lake Street/Marshall Avenue have complete edges with mixed commercial and residential uses. The blocks along the river contain much larger residences and apartment buildings. This evolution towards filling out the block along major through streets and along the river will continue in this area of the city, especially with the introduction of a fantastic urban park.



URBAN PARKS:

The riverway park extends north and south of the Lake Street Bridge, but the area south of the bridge links this two-city connection with a park avenue which leads into downtown Saint Paul. The southern area of the park between the bridge and the park avenue is, thus, the more important segment of the park. There are small stopping places connected by a pedestrian and bicycle path in this area of the parkway. Also, there is a veteran's monument at the head of the park avenue.

Each node of the park system will have its own local character, dependent upon its local context, site history, and location in the overall system. Yet, the park system must have an overall design idea. The design of the urban square at the Minneapolis bridgehead will begin to suggest the organization of the park system.

The ideal American urban park is a result of the accumulation of the positive aspects of urban parks and squares through history. The urban park concept began in ancient Greece with the formation of the 'agora'. The 'agora' was a central public space in the dense fabric of the city for men to gather to discuss their government, to market their goods, and to be entertained. It was formed by a loose grouping of object-like buildings whose visual relationship created the power of the space.

There is no attempt to ape nature in the man-made forms, nor is there any blurring of the boundaries between what is man-made and what is natural. Yet there is utmost sensitivity in the placing of each element in relation to other elements in the natural setting. It is through such clarity of expression that the Greeks achieved harmony between man and nature. p. 77, Design of Cities.

The Greek agora became the ancestor of the city park, the town square, the market place, the campus, and the shopping mall. In many of its transformations, the sensitivity of the relationship between man and nature has been lost. In the ideal American park, it is essential.

London's city parks were designed as hunting grounds for royalty, isolated from the urban chaos of the city. They were designed naturalistically, often with man-made 'natural' features, for

complete contrast with the rigidity of the city. Their loose design has made them more easily adaptable to public park needs.

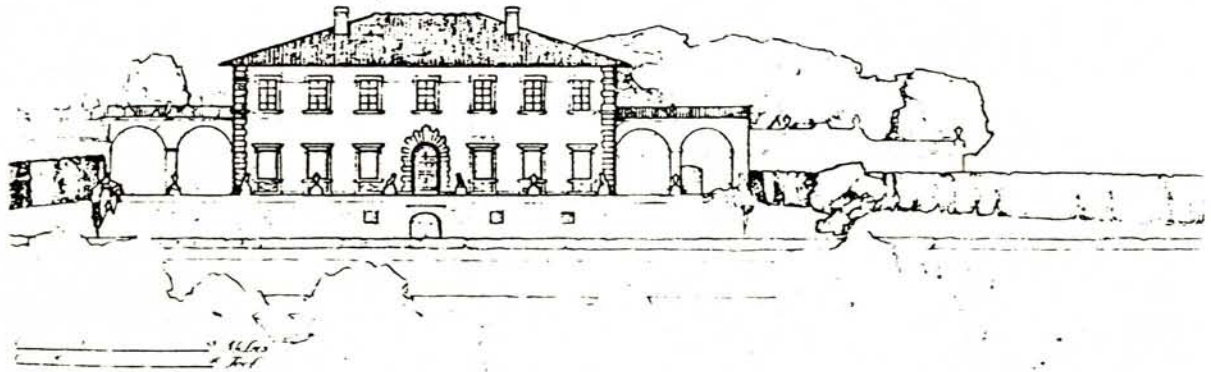
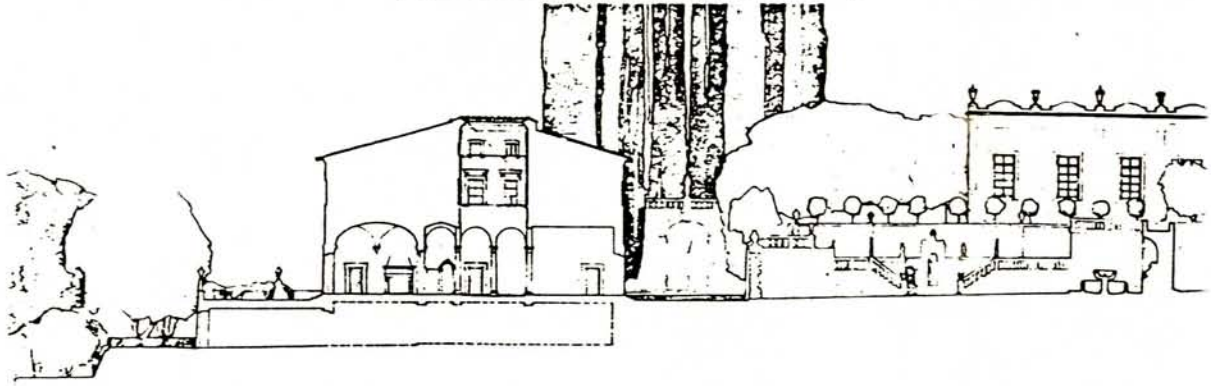
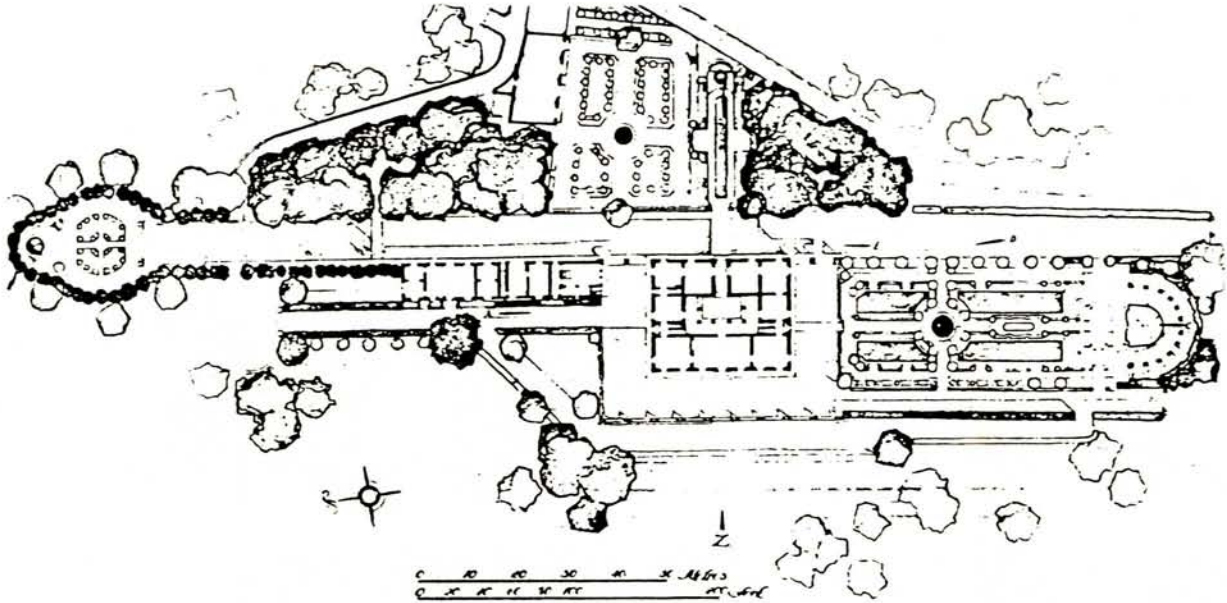
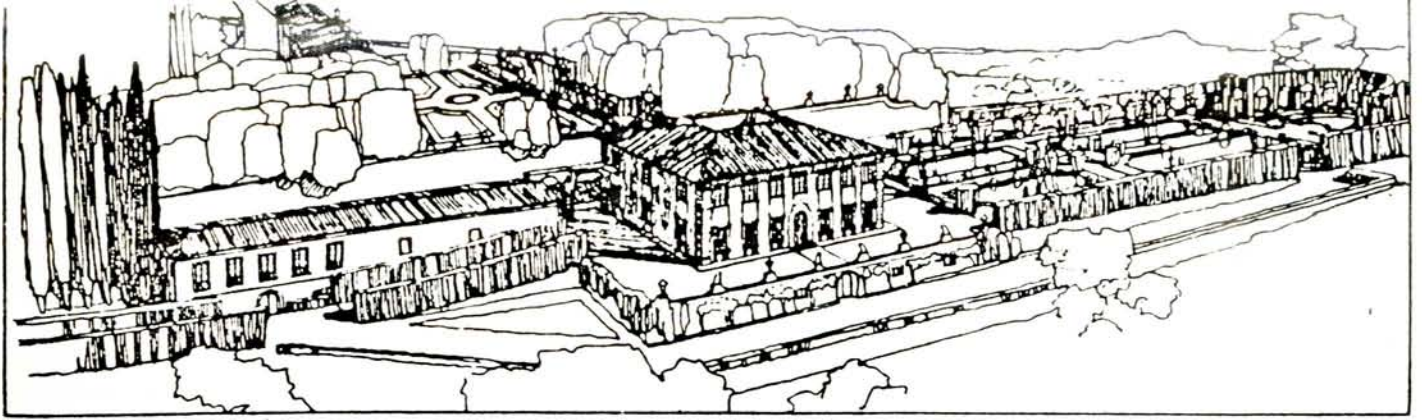
Today the English natural style of the late 18th century remains the dominant design element in most of the traditional city parks of Europe and the United States...p. 15, Urban Green.

Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park in New York City provides an area of retreat in the city. Its man-made naturalistic style is in marked contrast with the organization of the rest of the city and makes no attempt to connect with the network of streets which lead to it. It is complete within itself. The perimeter of the park is surrounded by apartment buildings of a consistent character, providing spatial enclosure and a sense of place. Vehicular traffic and foot traffic are entirely separate, enhancing the isolation of the pedestrian.

Today, the city is viewed as a positive element in society. A complete escape from city living is not necessary. The urban park must provide areas of relief, but, at the same time, must provide circulation through the park, linked with the circulation of the city. The city and the urban park must enhance one another.

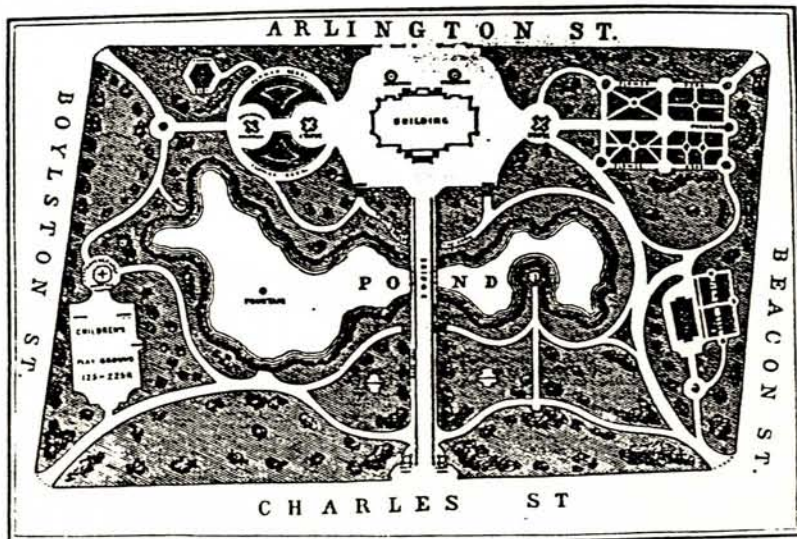
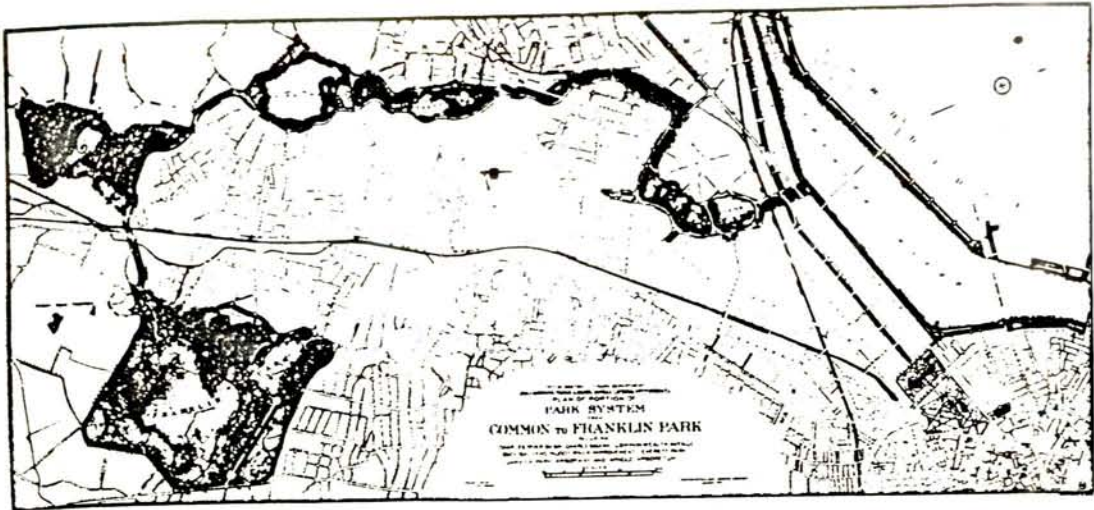
The Emerald Necklace chain of parks of the Boston park system is integrated into the organization of the city. Direct connections are made to the streets which lead to the parks.

The ideal American urban park must be designed with the utmost sensitivity about the relationship between man and nature, or the built environment and nature. The park must not be viewed simply as an escape from the ills of the city, but as an integral part of the city, reinforcing its organization. It should operate as a circulation device and as a relief from the intensity of the city. The ideal American park must offer transitional spaces, recreational spaces, and resting spaces. It should be designed with flexibility in mind, so that it can be transformed as the city evolves.



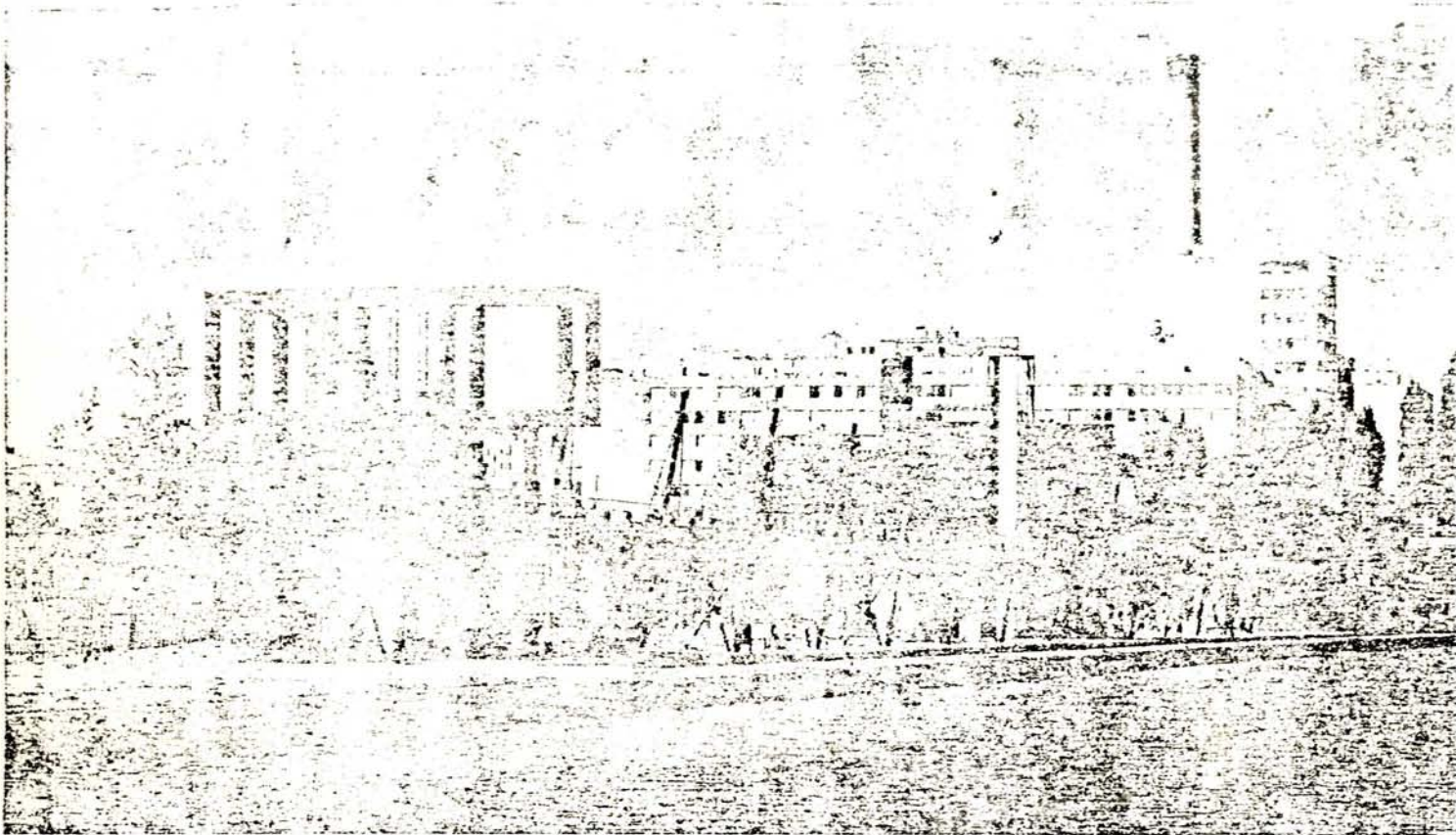
Villa Gramberaia

LANDSCAPE/BUILDINGS SPATIAL DEFINITION

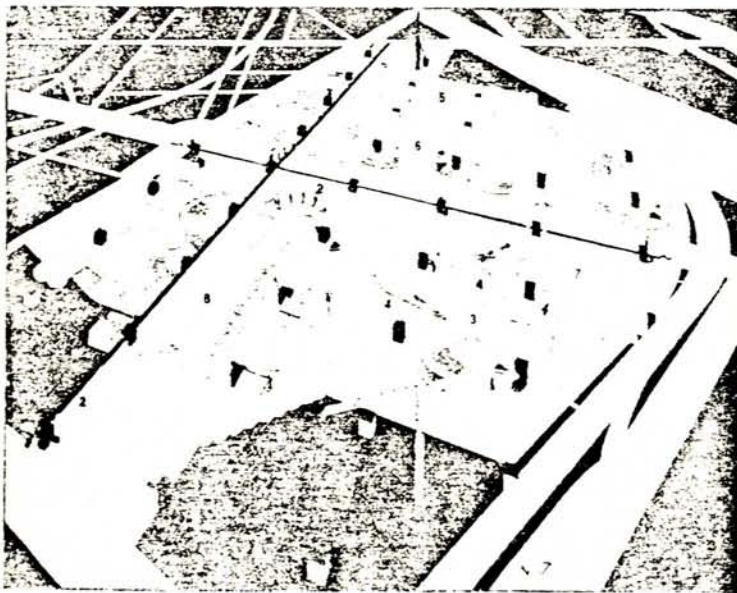


CONNECTION/INTERACTION

Boston Park System

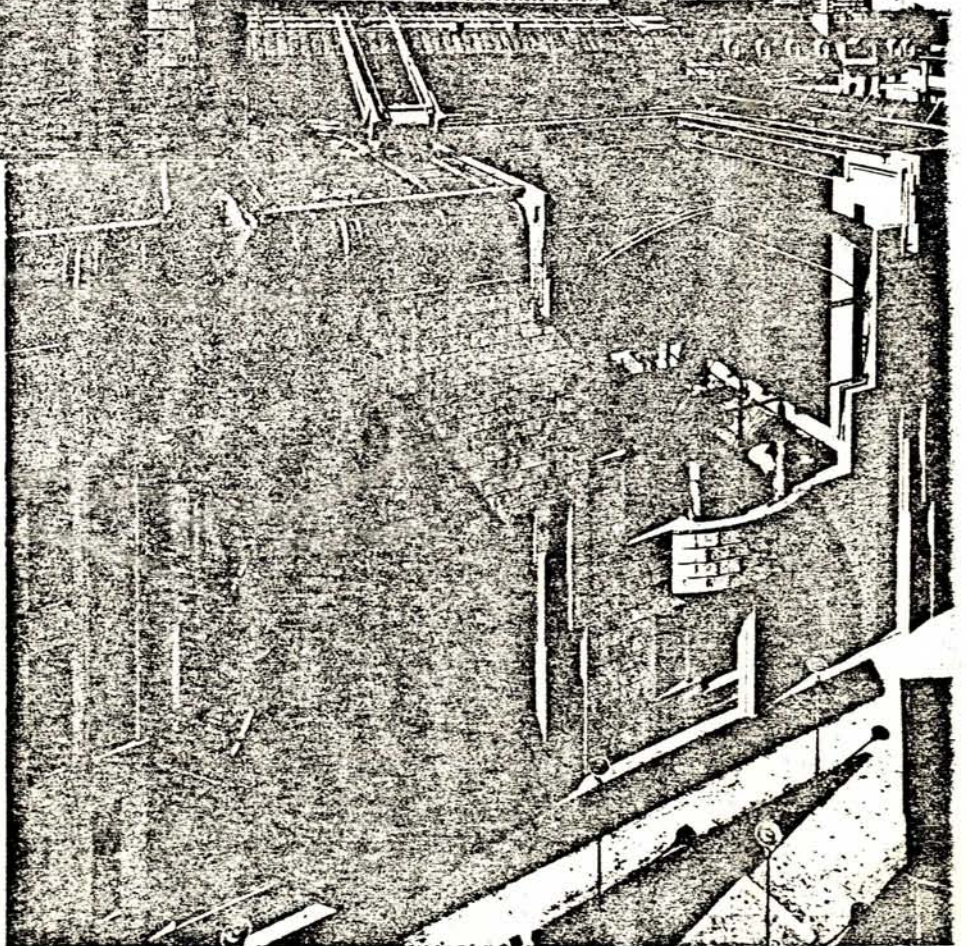
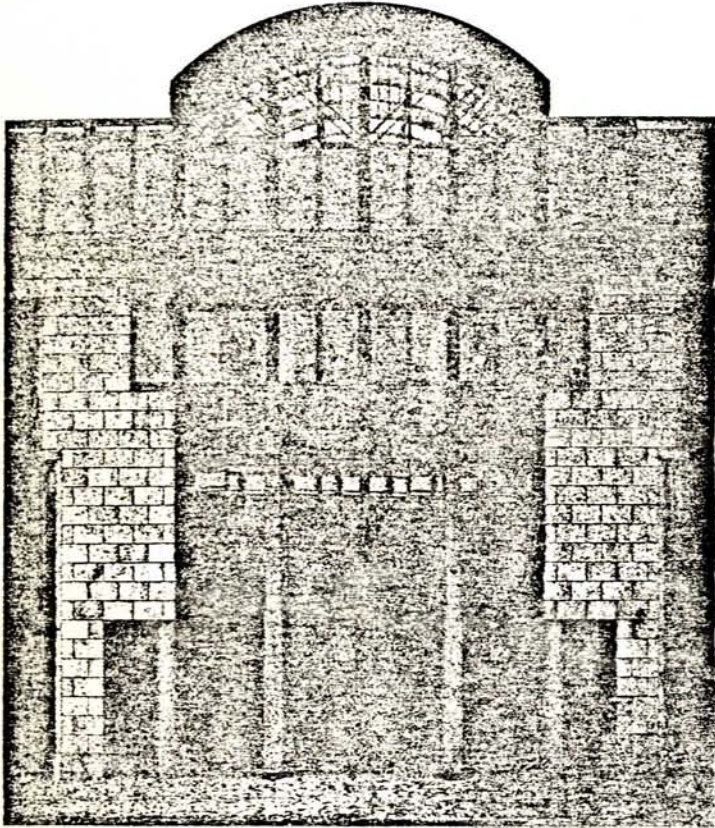
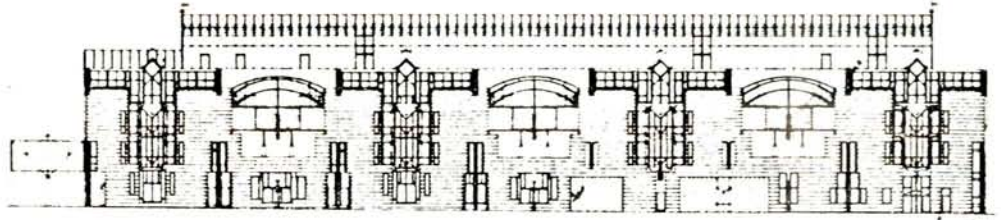


Park de la Villette, Paris



Park de la Villette, Paris

ORGANIZATION - CHARACTER



BUILDING CHARACTER

ADDENDA

PROGRAM:

Recreation Center	
gymnasium	8000-9000 s.f.
(doubles as auditorium)	
lobby	1200 s.f.
3 meeting rooms	400-900 s.f.
2 crafts rooms	400-900 s.f.
photography room	100 s.f.
kitchen	300 s.f.
3 offices	200 s.f.
2 locker rooms	400 s.f.
2 rest rooms	200 s.f.
<u>storage</u>	<u>800 s.f.</u>
Total	14500-18000 s.f.

Bridge(80'wide)
(accommodate 4 lanes vehicular traffic, 2 lanes bicycle traffic, and 2 lanes pedestrian traffic)

Boathouse	
boat storage	1000 s.f.
lounge	500 s.f.
kitchen	100 s.f.
<u>2 restrooms</u>	<u>200 s.f.</u>
Total	1800 s.f.

Ampitheater	
1500 seats	15000 s.f.
<u>box office</u>	<u>100 s.f.</u>
Total	15100 s.f.

hockey rink(200'x85') 1700 s.f.
2 sand volleyball courts(72'x42') 3024 s.f.
bike lanes(4'-8')
walk lanes(2'-8')
500 parking spaces

CODES: flood walls @18' above normal river height

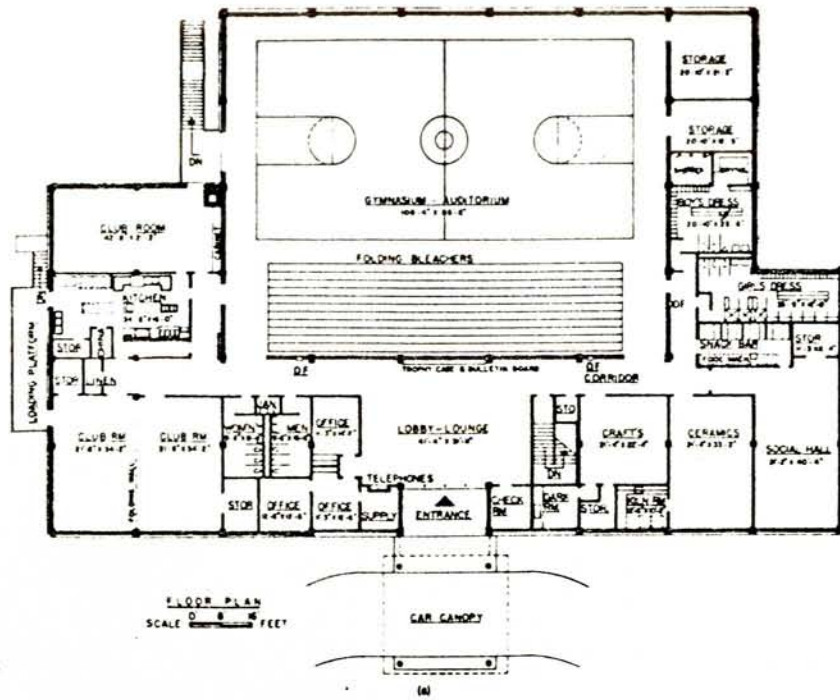
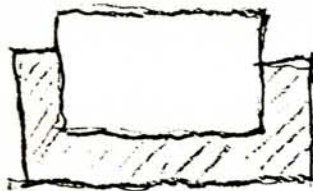
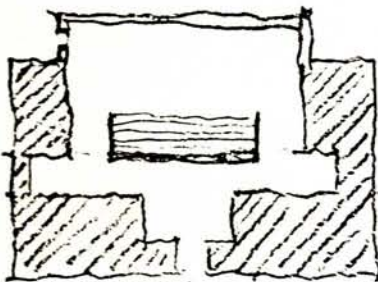


Fig. 1 Collet Street Recreation Center, Morganton, N.C.



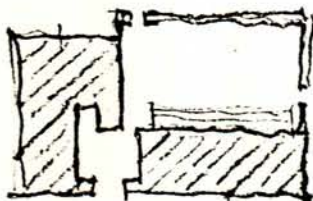
basic parti -
major space enclosed in more minor
smaller functions.

Collet Street Recreation Center, Morganton, N.C.

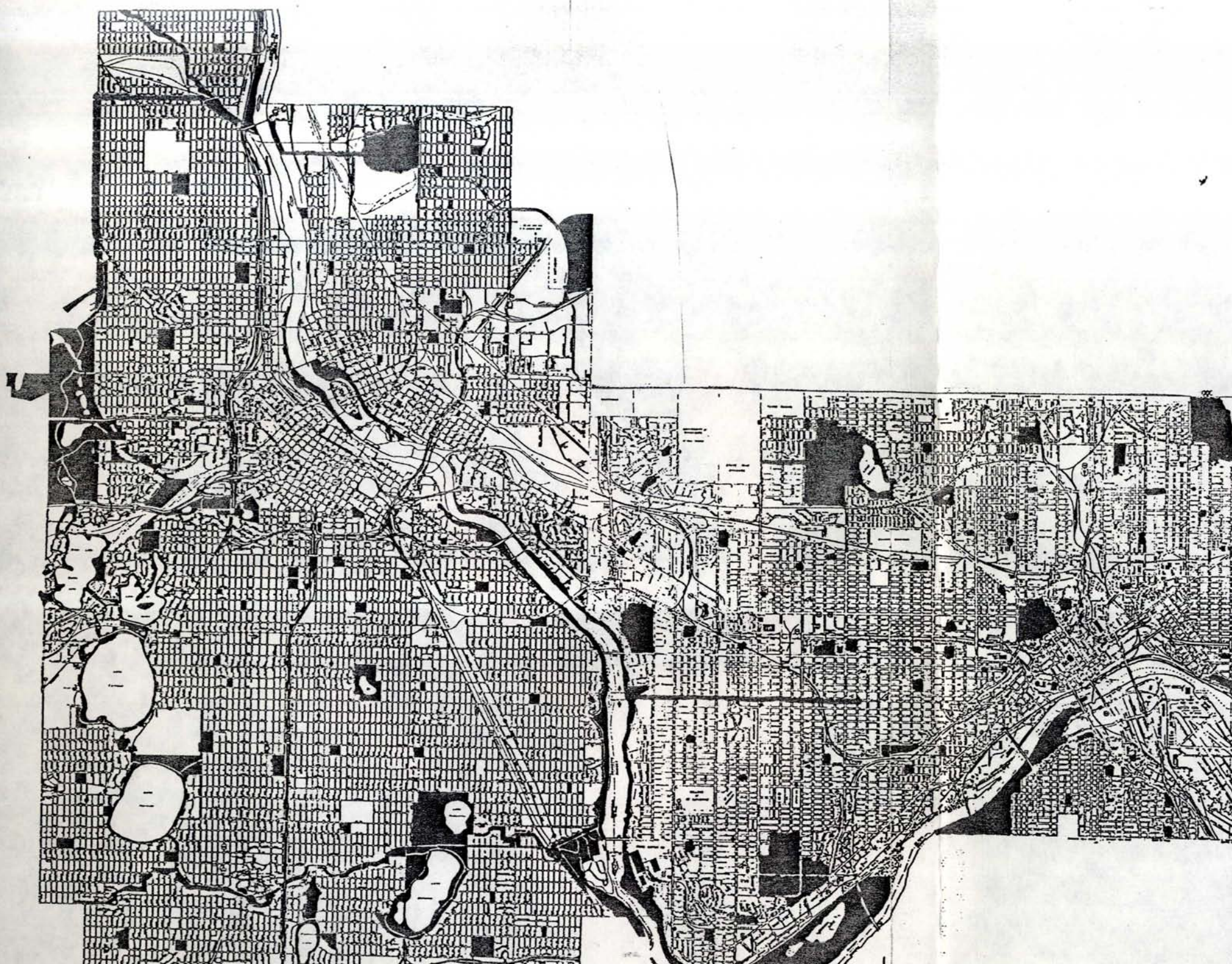


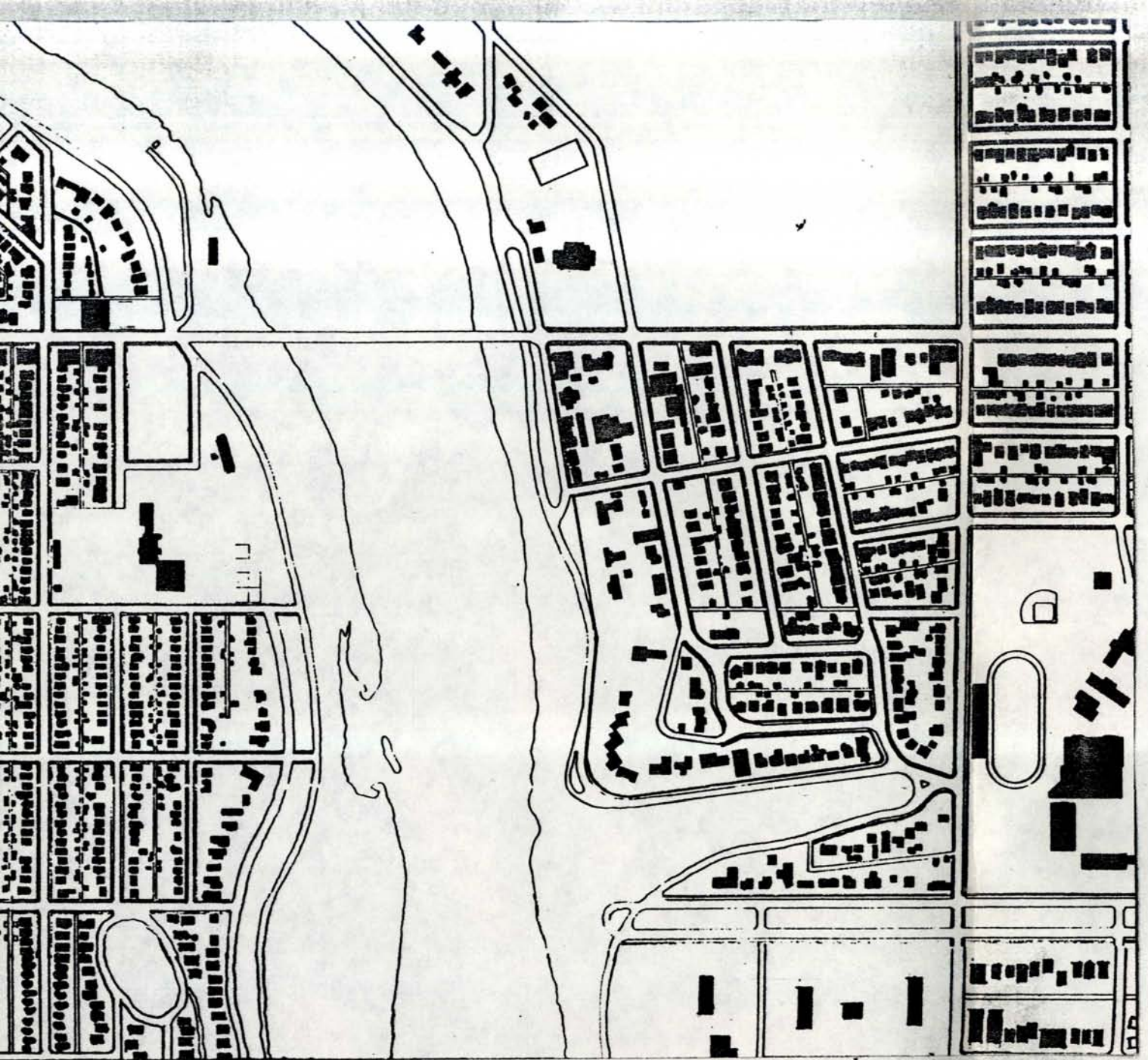
noli -
major space (gymnasium - Auditorium)
major sequence to gym.

Glenwood Community Center, Greensboro, N.C.

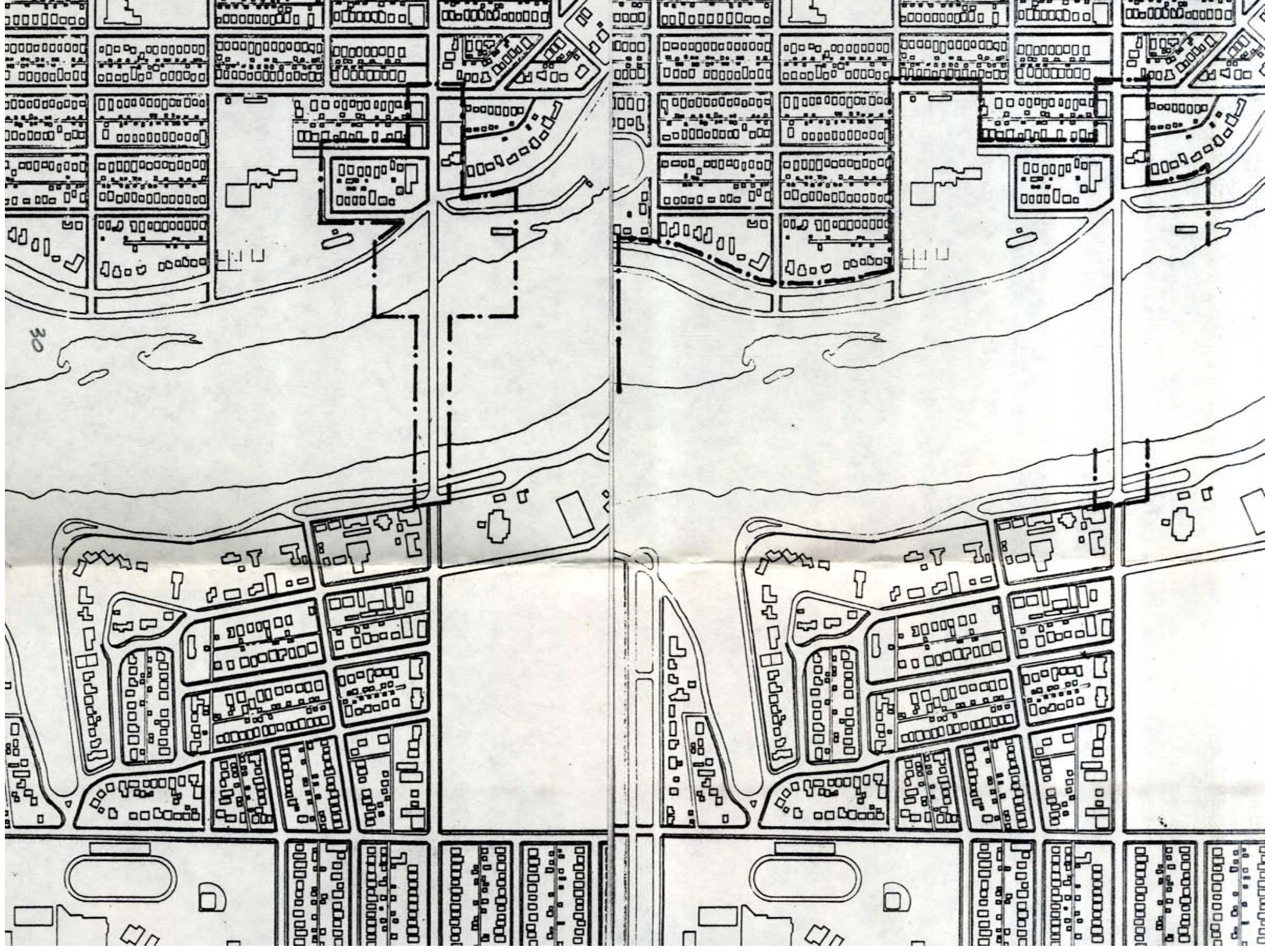


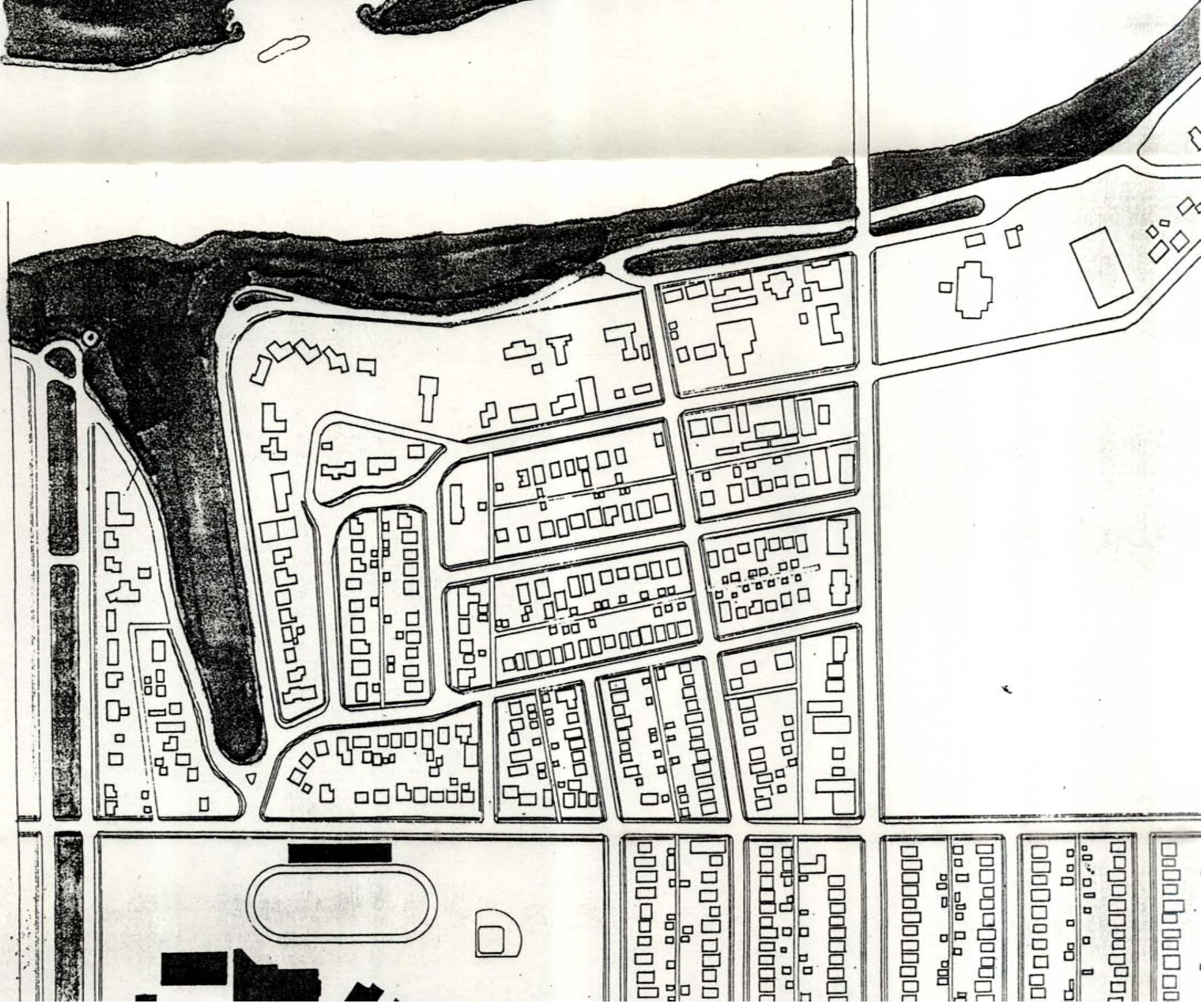
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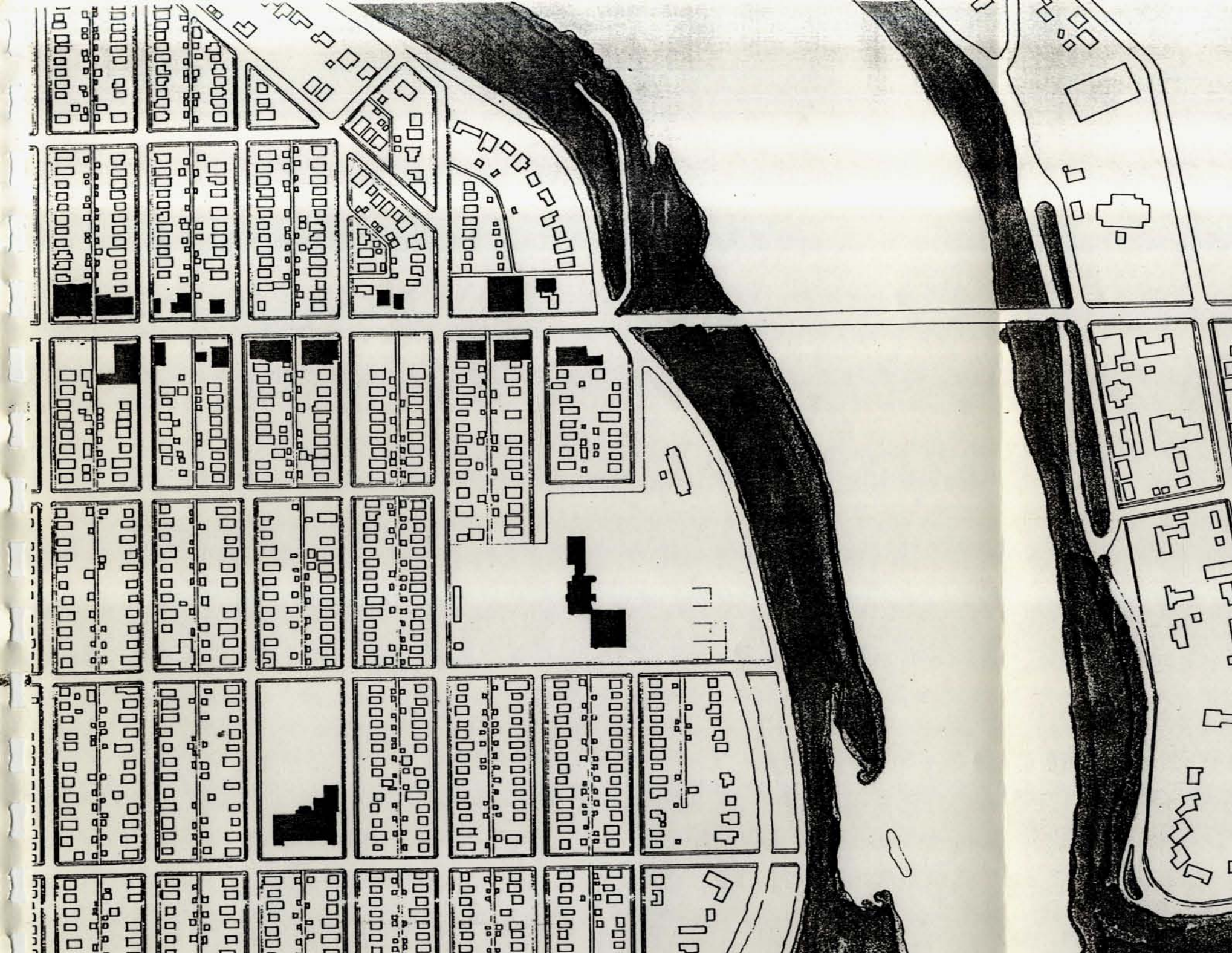




GROUND 1" = 500'







EXISTING SITE SECTION 1" = 400'



SECTION AT LAKE STREET



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ALONG LAKE STREET



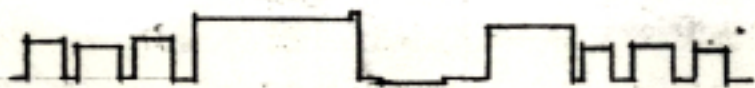
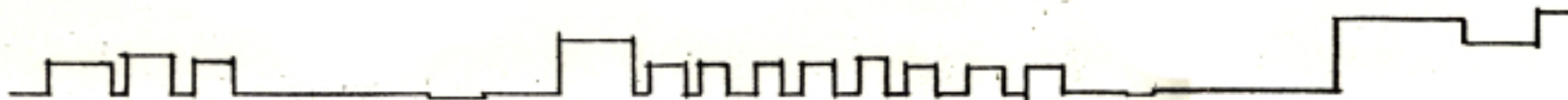
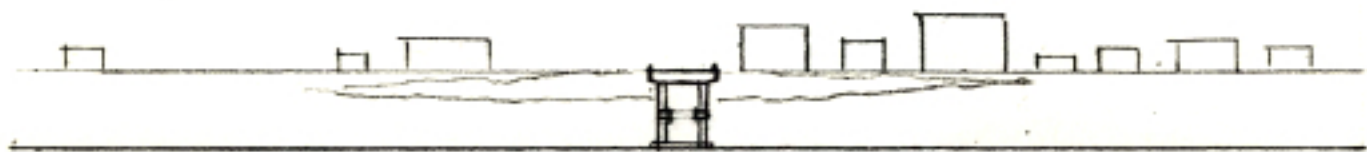
TYPICAL HOUSING BLOCKS
MINNEAPOLIS



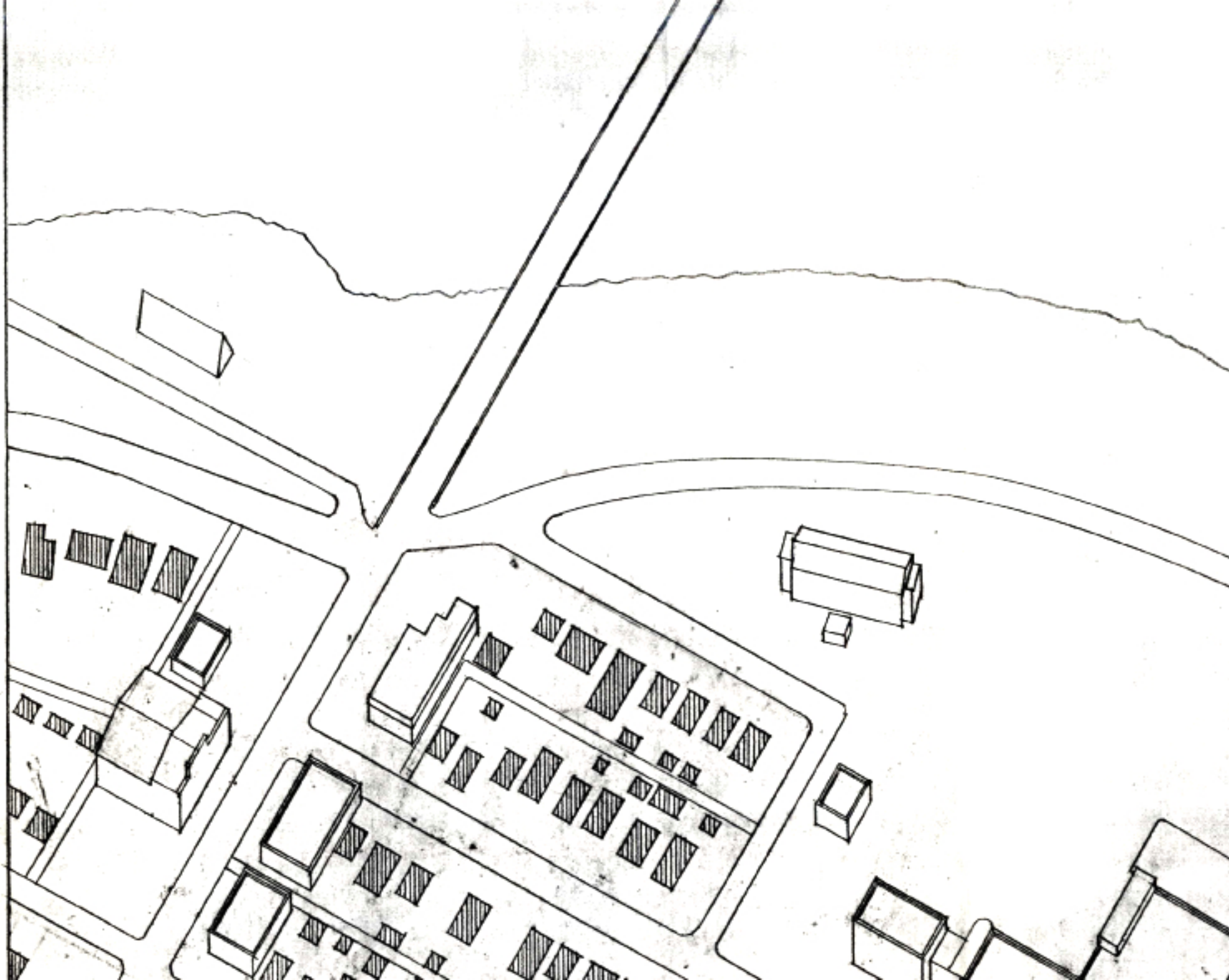
CROSS SECTION

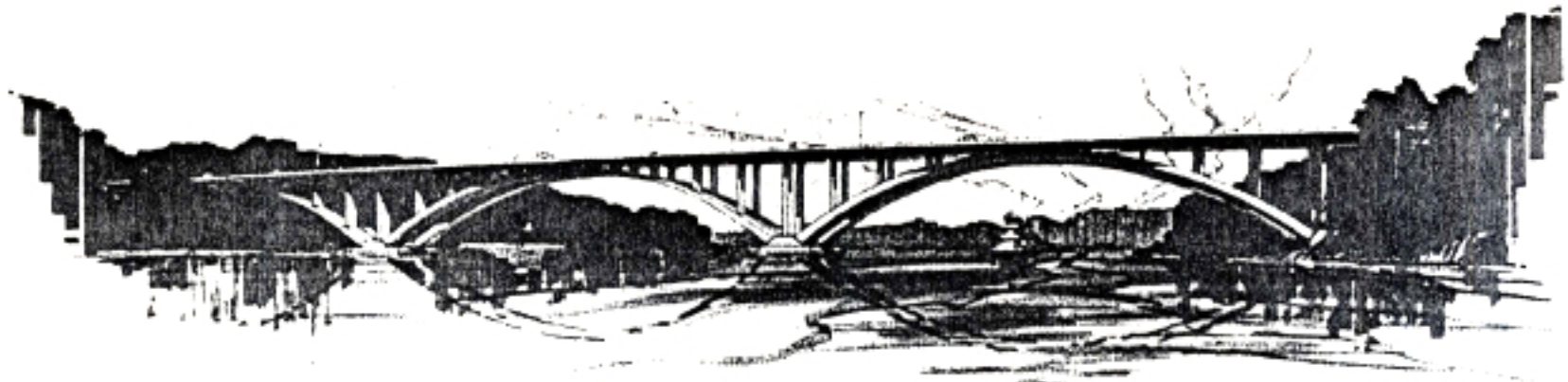


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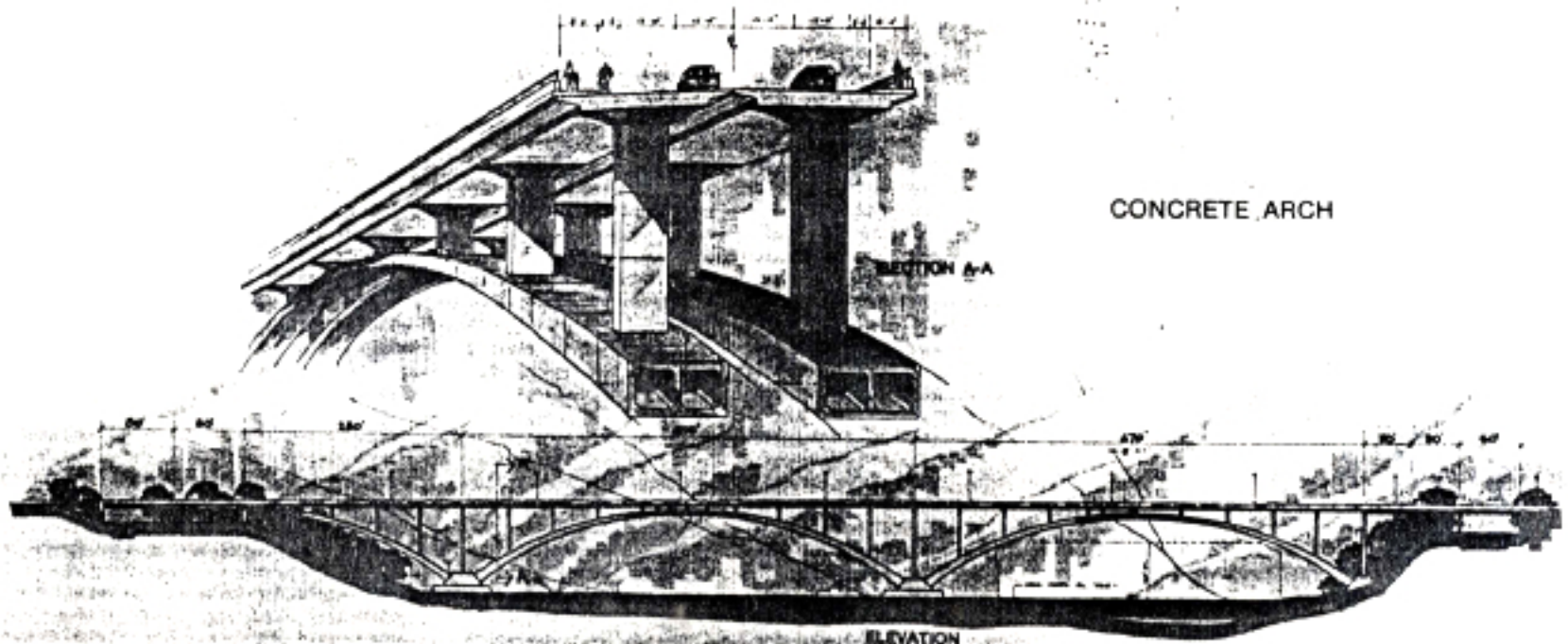








VIEW LOOKING NORTH



CONCRETE ARCH

ELEVATION

Lake Street / Marshall Avenue Bridge
T.H. 212 OVER MISSISSIPPI RIVER

CONCEPT STUDIES

HOWARD NEEDLER TAMMEN & BERENSONOFF

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