

In addition, there is a current need to install or improve upon the safety surface material under all new, replaced or existing play equipment in the parks. Handbooks on Public Playground Safety published by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission stress the need and types of safety surface materials under all play equipment. It has been determined that a cushioning material of woodchips or pea gravel, installed with adequate drainage, is the best for Madison area parks. Meeting this need is extremely costly. To date, installation of safety surface material at the time of new play equipment installation has cost fifty percent of the equipment cost. Another requirement to meet safety standards is to incorporate a regular inspection of playground equipment into our maintenance program. Additional positions have been requested for the operational budget.

Every park need not have a playground. Instead, every residential concentration of children in Madison should have a playground available within a quarter-mile radius. Non-park playgrounds at schools or churches and in private housing projects may fulfill this need or it may be met by playgrounds on parkland. Satisfaction of this need should not be duplicated. Also, every playground need not have the same extent of equipment. The equipment of a playground should relate to the numbers of children of varying ages to be served. For example, if there are no or very few preschool age children, tot equipment should not be provided. And, as the age distribution of the child population changes for the service area of a playground or park, playground equipment may be added to some and removed or eliminated from others.

#### Outdoor Ice Skating

In past years, ice skating was included in the plans of many parks, even the smaller neighborhood parks. In recent years, the increase in ice skating has not kept pace with other activities and, only Vilas and Tenney Parks have a heavy attendance on a regular basis. This lack of ice facility use coupled with personnel limitations has led to a de-emphasis of providing small neighborhood land rinks.

The expense of operating a larger pond rink facility with hockey boards, lights, shelter and parking is substantial, estimated at \$25,000 per year. Where use is heavy, such as at Vilas and Tenney Parks which each have approximately 20,000 skater-visits per year, the operating effort and expense is justified. However, each of the nine other complete rink facilities have only from 1,000 to 5,000 skater-visits per year.

The recommendation of this plan is to have a moratorium on construction or operation of any new pond rink facility and to consider eliminating the operation of those pond rinks which are low in use or which have other rinks nearby. Future new pond rinks will be considered only within community parks, which have a 2.5 mile service radius, and only in those instances where accessory lights, shelter and parking are already existing.

Land rinks, which are built on flat, frozen ground by building up layers of ice with a flusher truck, will be considered as a temporary facility for those area parks serving the short-term demands of neighborhoods with many small children. These land rinks will not have hockey boards or heated shelters and will be terminated if the use does not justify their operation.