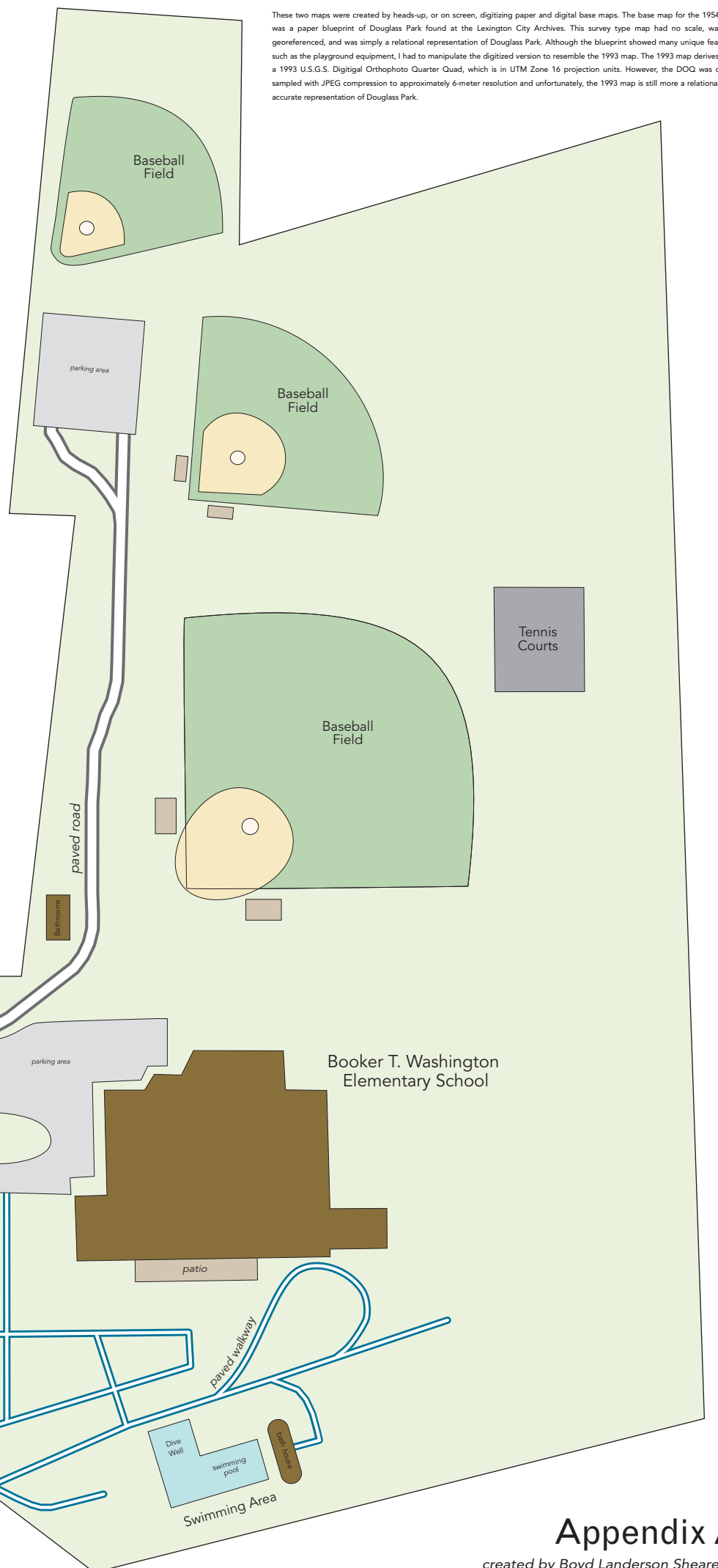


Douglass Park, 1954
Source: 1954 Landscaping Blueprint

The Evolution of a Landscape: Douglass Park, 1954 to 1993

These two maps illustrate how time and recreational tastes change a landscape. In 1954, Douglass Park had a large proportion of its area used as a golf course, had more tennis courts than basketball courts, and did not have large parking lots. The band stand, recreation center, and playground composed the heart of the park. By the 1993, the park had almost doubled its acreage and different recreational programs marked their existence on the landscape. Most striking in the 1993 map is the additional area. The City of Lexington expanded the park to its 1993 border in exchange for building the Booker T. Washington Elementary School in the center of the park in 1971. The school marks a second dramatic change in the park's geography. This new area to the northwest became primarily a baseball complex. The third obvious difference in these maps is the spread of pavement and parking spaces, indicative of the increased use of the automobile and lack of available public parking outside of the park. The golf course was abandoned after African-Americans could use larger and better maintained city golf courses. Tennis, croquet, and horse shoes fell into the shadow of basketball by the 1990s. The heart of Douglass Park today is the two basketball courts that hold the annual Dirt Bowl Tournament, which began in the park in the early 1960s. The name of this event originated from organizing competitive basketball leagues on the dirt courts represented on the 1954 map (Cunningham, March 1997). Douglass Park is the only park in Fayette County that contains a public school within its borders (City of Lexington, 1997).

These two maps were created by heads-up, or on screen, digitizing paper and digital base maps. The base map for the 1954 map was a paper blueprint of Douglass Park found at the Lexington City Archives. This survey type map had no scale, was not georeferenced, and was simply a relational representation of Douglass Park. Although the blueprint showed many unique features, such as the playground equipment, I had to manipulate the digitized version to resemble the 1993 map. The 1993 map derives from a 1993 U.S.G.S. Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quad, which is in UTM Zone 16 projection units. However, the DOQ was down-sampled with JPEG compression to approximately 6-meter resolution and unfortunately, the 1993 map is still more a relational than accurate representation of Douglass Park.



Douglass Park, 1993
Source: 1993 USGS Aerial Photography