

## Fort Sands: Main Post Center and Family Center

### a. Post Situation and Population

**(1) Surrounding Context.** Fort Sands is located in an isolated desert area of the Western United States. The terrain is flat, with sparse vegetation and rocky soil. Hot winds make unprotected outdoor areas uncomfortable. Distant views of mountains to the north provide a welcomed relief to the landscape. The nearest town is forty miles away along a barren road, and provides only minor services to the post population.

**(2) Post Mission and Population.** Fort Sands is a training facility for desert warfare. Large contingents of troops visit from other posts, and spend weeks at a time away from the Fort Sands cantonment, on maneuvers in the installation's vast training grounds. The population of the post is rapidly increasing to the projected permanent party strength of 3,200. Housing units for 1,000 families are anticipated on post, which will leave roughly 1,000 more military families living off-post, but still dependent on the post for many services. Of the 3,000 children among these families, on-post and off, approximately 30% are of school age and 70% younger.

**(3) Geography.** As one enters along the main road from the south, the general organization is apparent. Post headquarters and troop housing are to the right, with operations and support areas to the east and the north. Family housing areas, including trailer sites are to the left, with two elementary schools and a future high school sited (see figure 6 - 34). However, the existing community and service facilities are dispersed, creating no sense of a center for the installation.

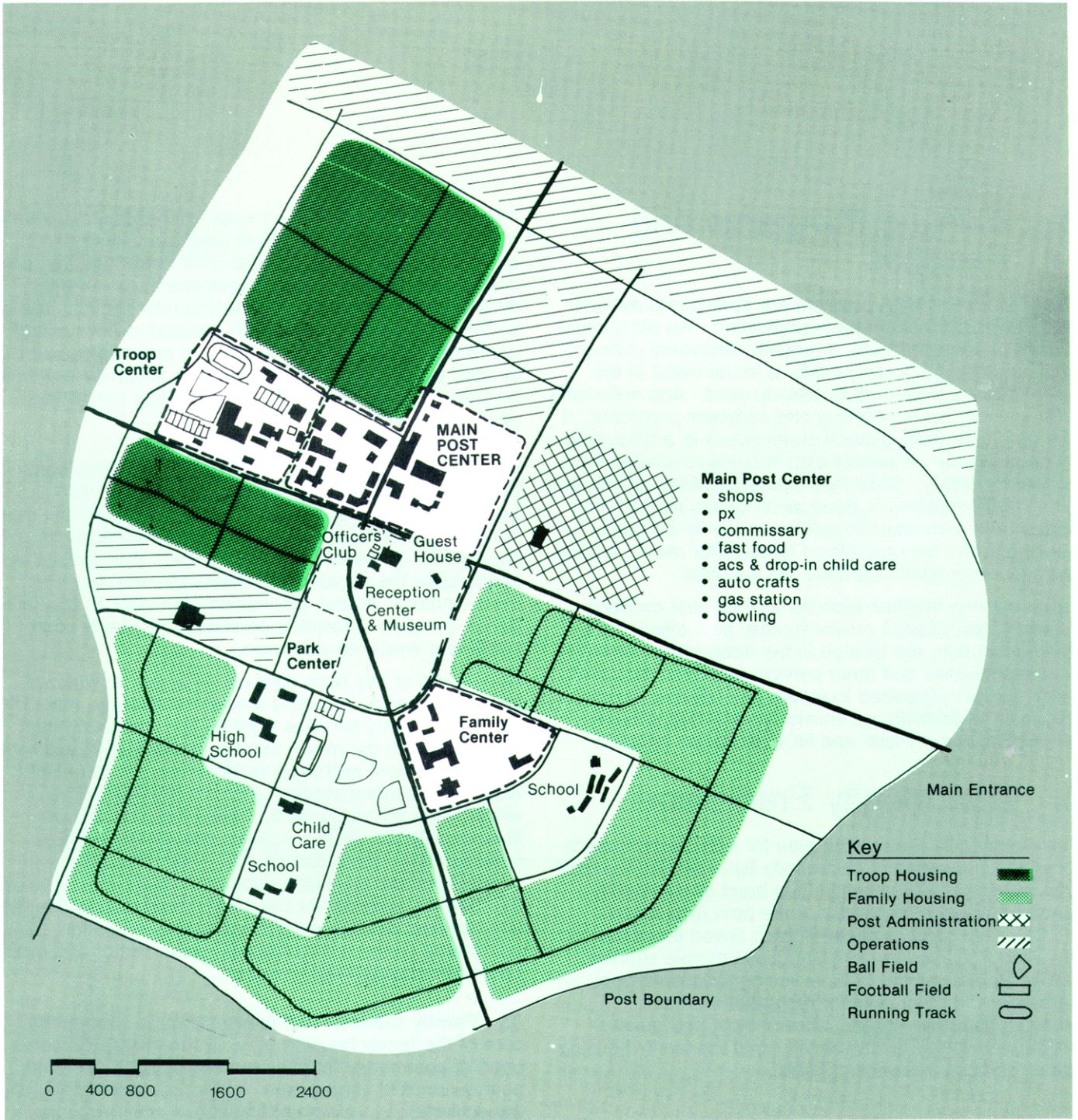


Figure 6 – 34 Fort Sands: Community Framework Plan

## b. Existing Programs and Facilities

Facilities for the MSA program are inadequate even for the present permanent party population. An old gymnasium with a weight-room, a recently-renovated outdoor pool, and nearby playing fields, is in the midst of the troop-billeting areas and is actively used. Arts and crafts offer lapidary, wood-working and ceramics programs. It has an under-sized general crafts space in a renovated found structure. A service club is being renovated for a temporary library. Child care operates infant, toddler and pre-school programs in three small rooms recently converted from a community service center in the family housing area. No specialized facilities for music, drama, recreation nor youth activities are provided.

Other existing facilities such as a small post exchange, bowling alley, chapel, movie theatre, post office, bank, and gas station, are located in the troop billets, mixed in with warehouses and other service activities. However, these are not organized to create any coherent focus for the post. In addition, an enlisted men's club is being renovated, and officers' and NCO clubs are planned.

## c. Community Framework

The Community Framework plan for Fort Sands intends to establish a sense of community by clustering the facilities and developing a continuous band of community functions through the center of the post (see figure 6 - 34). This band consists of three linked elements, 1) the Main Post Center, including troop morale support center, 2) The central park, including swimming pool, barbecue and other outdoor recreation facilities, museum/reception center, officers' club, and guest house, and 3) the family center, amid the family housing areas, schools and playing fields.

The centers are planned as heavily landscaped clusters of buildings, enclosing outdoor courtyards, with parking at the periphery. Buildings are sited close together, preferably with outdoor space dimensions of no more than thirty feet. Courtyards and pedestrian connections are to be intensively landscaped, with covered walkways and perforated masonry block screens to create pleasant, shaded places. These developments are to be achieved by fitting new facilities among the existing permanent community buildings,

**(1) Main Post Center.** The Fort Sands center combines a central cluster of commercial function with a troop morale support center. It is located along the main street of the post, adjacent to the post headquarters and central park in the troop billeting areas. It organizes and builds upon the existing post exchange, bowling alley, movie theatre, chapel, gymnasium and pool, to create a dense complex of facilities connected by shady courtyards and sheltered walkways.

At one end of this main post center is the "downtown" commercial area, including a new commissary, main PX, Army community services building and fast food outlet integrated with the movie theatre, bowling alley and renovated small post exchange retail stores. In the middle area are the moral support and community facilities which serve the entire post. These include a new library/education center, multiple crafts center, MSA administration, the existing bank, post office, and chapel/religious education complex. At the other end are the facilities primarily for troop use, multi-purpose recreation building, outdoor pool, combination recreation, music and drama center, new physical fitness center and indoor pool, with playing fields beyond.

**(2) Family Center.** The family center is sited at the core of the family housing area, at the intersection of a band of community facilities running through the Main post center and central park, and a band connecting all the schools and their playing fields. A family-oriented complex of shopping, family, morale support and child care functions is planned for this site, as presented in paragraph d, below.

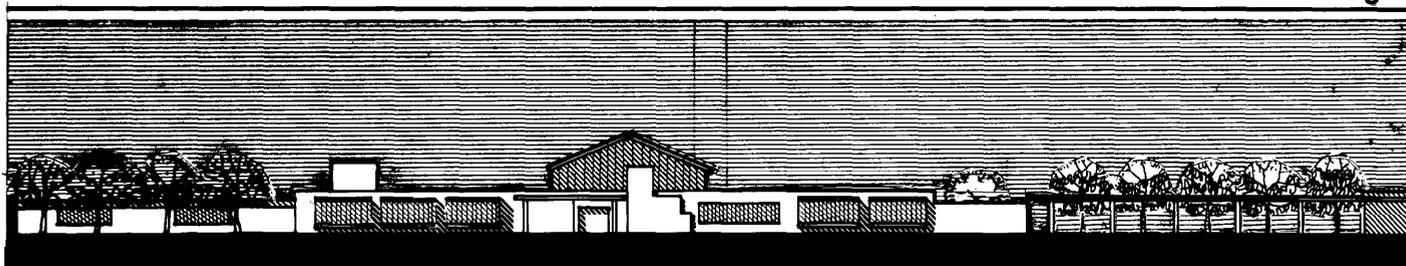


Table 6 - 8 Fort Sands Family Center: Space Program

Function-Space	Area (Gross Square Feet)	
<b>1. Family Morale Support</b>		
Social Activities		8,080
Small Group Activities		5700
• Active Games	2890	
• Electronic Games	180	
• Television Lounge	440	
• Lounge	740	
• Meeting/Multipurpose	1450	
Administration		610
• Offices	260	
• Control	350	
Refreshment		1770
• Snack Bar	1535	
• Kitchen	235	
Arts and Crafts		1,890
General Crafts	1535	
Photography	355	
Music and Drama		7,250
Multipurpose Auditorium	6370	
Music Practice/Listening Room	880	
Physical Fitness		1,950
Exercise/Meeting Room	1650	
Storage and Control (incl. for crafts)	300	
General Support		1,290
Maintenance/Mechanical	470	
Toilets	470	
General Storage	350	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,460</b>
<b>2. Child Care</b>		
Primary Indoor Activities		9,590
Infants	2800	
Toddlers	3410	
Preschoolers	2950	
School Age	430	
Support		1,450
Administration and Staff Lounge	720	
Reception	280	
Food Preparation and Storage	450	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11,040</b>
<b>3. Convenience Shopping</b>		
Branch PX		4,600
Cleaner/Laundry		2,400
Deli		2,920
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9,920</b>

## d. Family Center

**(1) Program.** This family center is programmed to serve the residents of all the 1,000 family housing units on Fort Sands. It consists of three major components, the family morale support facility, child care center, and convenience shopping center. A detailed program of functional spaces and areas is presented in table 6 - 8.

**(2) Design Solution.** The design of this family center (see figures 6 - 36 and 6 -37) reflects the following concepts:

- The three components of the center - family morale support, child care, and shopping - are built as three identifiably separate but connected structures. Each can function separately, with its own entrance, parking and drop-off areas.
- The buildings are packed together closely on the site with all elements connected by covered walkways and space-defining walls, defining enclosed, sheltered outdoor spaces.
- Each of the three building components define and enclose their own outdoor courtyard or courtyards, each of different scale and landscaping character, appropriate to adjacent functions.

**(a) Family Morale Support Facility.** This is located in the center of the site, connected to both the child care center and convenience shopping center. Surrounding the main entrance are all the social activities spaces (games, snacks and lounge areas) which are interconnected. They are visible to each other as well as from the main entrance and control desk. To the right are the controlled activities, meeting room, music practice, and related storage. From all the social activities spaces, as well as the control desk, there are good views into the multipurpose auditorium, which is at a lower level. Circulation through the edge of this auditorium provides access to the exercise/meeting room, general crafts and darkroom areas. These latter have their own control areas and their own external access leading to the outdoor pools. In this way, they can be operated at different times than the rest of the facility. The snack bar and central circulation open onto a large landscaped courtyard, also served by the deli. On the other side, the multipurpose auditorium opens out onto an outdoor performance area, backed by shade trees which are an extension of the child care outdoor space.

**(b) Child Care Center.** The child care center is on the housing end of the site, with its own drop-off, parking and entrance. The facility consists of four blocks, three of which provide separate pairs of classrooms for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Each block has its own toilet and cloaking spaces, and enclosed outdoor play yard. A room for children brought on a hourly basis is adjacent to the main entrance, sharing exterior play space with the preschoolers. A separate space is provided for school-age children who help in the child care operation, with their own entrance toward the central family facility. The fourth block of this building is next to the main entrance, and accommodates administration, staff lounge and food preparation areas.

**(c) Convenience Shopping Center.** Located near the main post center, this retail complex provides all family-oriented local convenience services. A branch post exchange, laundry/dry cleaner and deli frame a small courtyard with direct access to parking. The deli also opens out onto the large landscaped courtyard extending to the family morale support building, with connecting covered walkways and tables. This space serves users of the deli, the snack bar and auditorium.

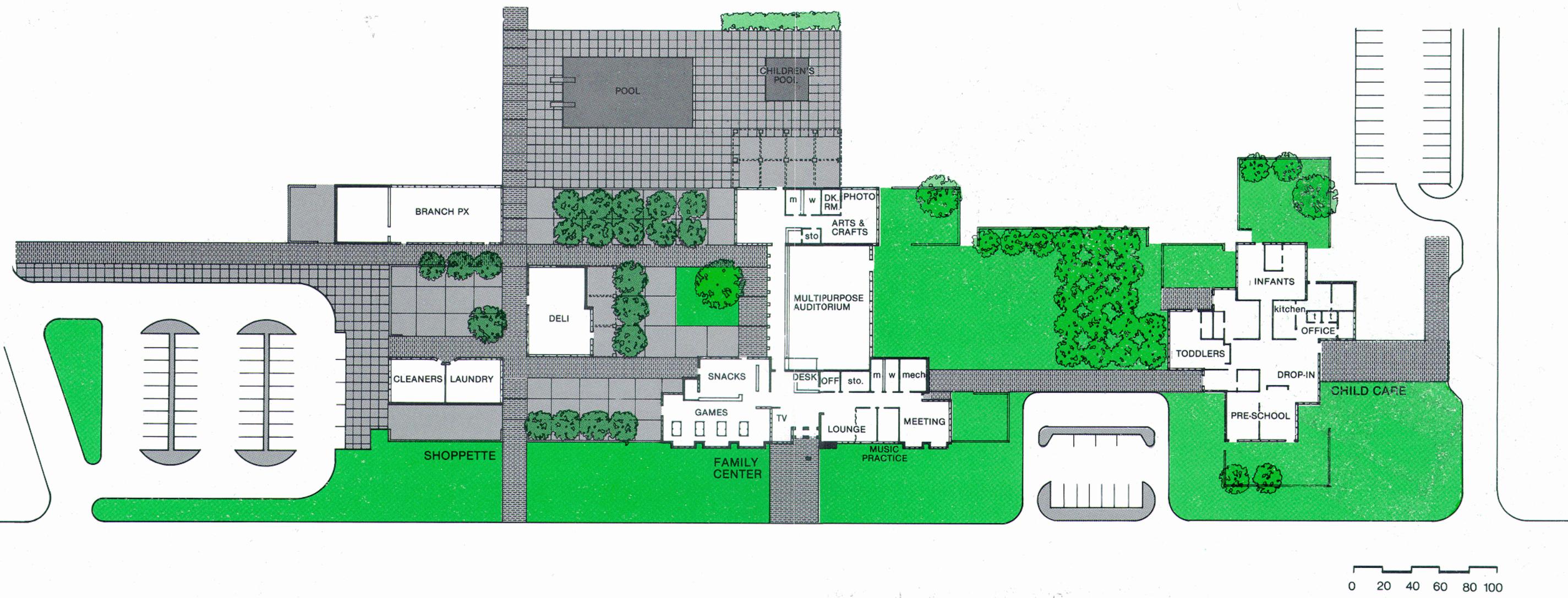


Figure 6 – 37 Fort Sands: Family Center Plan

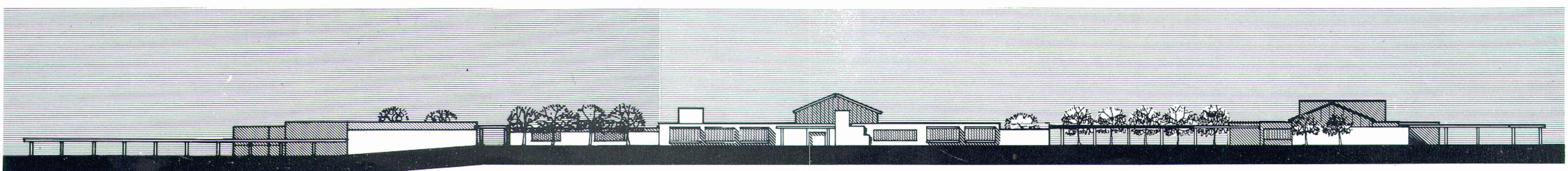


Figure 6 – 35 Fort Sands: Family Center-Elevation

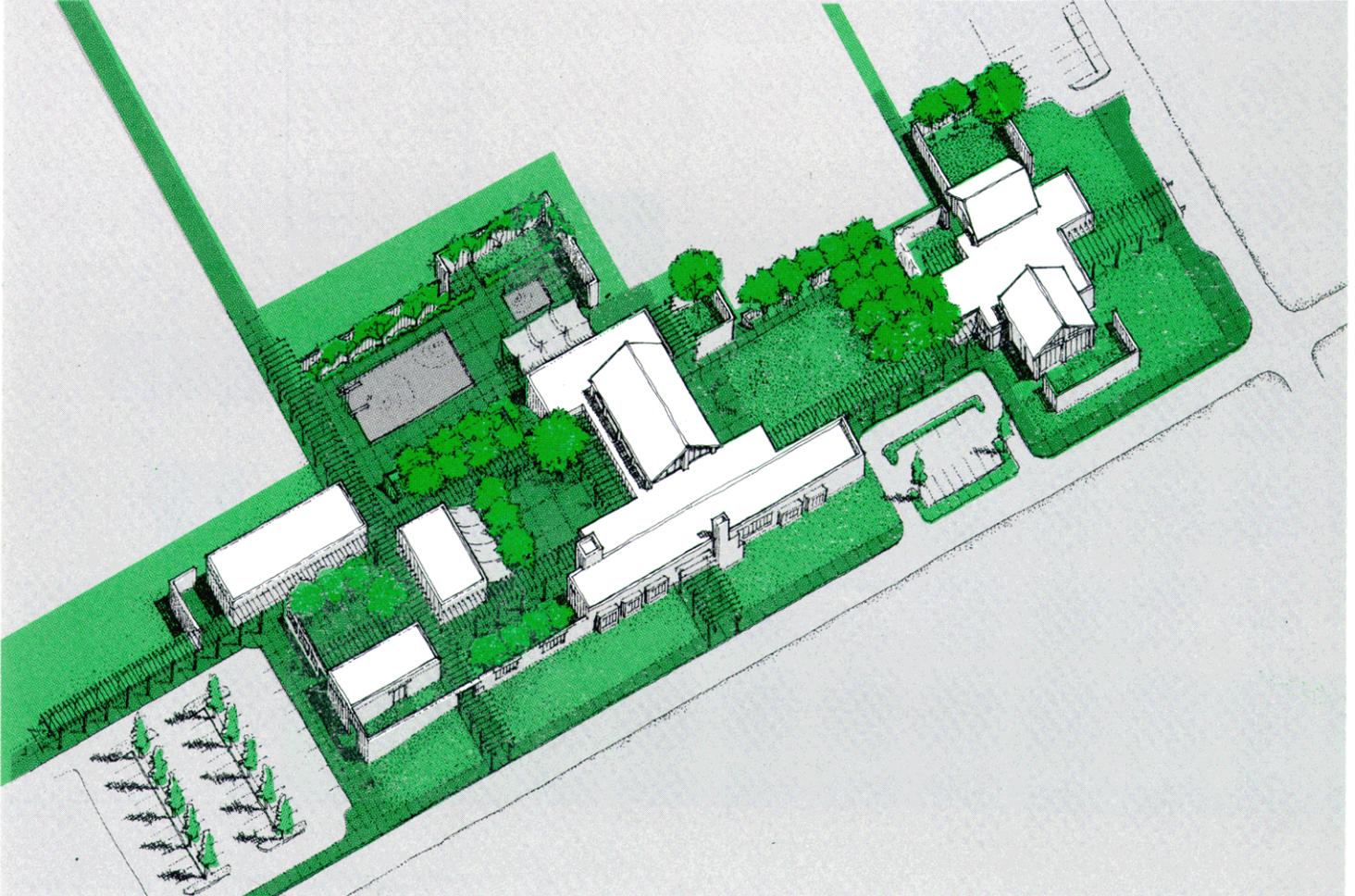


Figure 6 – 36 Fort Sands: Family Center-Isometric View

Fort Sands  
**Family Center**

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