

FINAL

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Indianapolis Park & Boulevard System  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number See Continuation Sheet N/A  not for publication  
city or town Indianapolis N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Marion code 097 zip code 64204

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is: <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____ _____ _____	Signature of the Keeper _____ _____ _____ _____	Date of Action _____ _____ _____ _____
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Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System  
Name of Property

Marion IN  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
20	60	buildings
28		sites
109	41	structures
7		objects
164	101	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: Park

TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related

RECREATION/CULTURE: Outdoor Recreation

RECREATION/CULTURE: Sports Facility

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: Park

TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related (vehicular)

RECREATION/CULTURE: Sports Facility

RECREATION/CULTURE: Outdoor Recreation

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

GOVERNMENT: Fire Station

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: City Beautiful

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Beaux Arts

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: N/A

walls: STONE: Limestone

BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other: CONCRETE

WOOD

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_
- COMMUNITY PLANNING & \_\_\_\_\_
- CONSERVATION \_\_\_\_\_
- HEALTH/MEDICINE \_\_\_\_\_
- TRANSPORTATION \_\_\_\_\_
- ENGINEERING \_\_\_\_\_
- ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1873-1952 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1898 \_\_\_\_\_  
1909 \_\_\_\_\_  
1923 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Kessler, George Edward \_\_\_\_\_  
Sheridan, Lawrence \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

NR files \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 3,400

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1				3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tina Jones\*, Meg Storrow\*, Paul Diebold, Amy Walker

organization \*Storrow Kinsella Group date 09-18-2002

street & number 212 W. 10th St. telephone 317-639-3420

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202-3007

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name various

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System – Location

Roughly inclusive of the following parks: Indianola, McCarty Triangle Place, Noble Place, Highland, Fletcher Place Triangle, Willard, Rhodius, Brookside, Garfield, and Riverside, including South Grove, Coffin, and Riverside Golf Courses. Also including the following parkways and associated green space: Brookside from Brookside Park to Fletcher Triangle; Fall Creek from I-465 to White River; Pleasant Run from Shadeland to White River, including Pleasant Run Golf Course, Ellenberger Park, and Christian Park; White River from 38<sup>th</sup> Street to confluence with Pleasant Run; Burdsal Parkway, and Ellenberger Parkway. Also including the following boulevards: Maple Road (38<sup>th</sup> St.) from Fall Creek to White River; and Kessler Boulevard from 38<sup>th</sup> to 56<sup>th</sup> Sts. and from Cooper Road to Fall Creek Parkway. All located in Marion County, Indiana.

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### Summary

The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System is located in Indianapolis, Marion County, in central Indiana. It includes portions of the primary riverine system of the county; the White River, Fall Creek, Pleasant and Pogue's Runs. The city is located in the Central Till Plain physiographic region of the state, characterized by level to gently undulating landscape. The highest elevation in Indianapolis is 915 feet above sea level in the northwest section of the county, and the lowest point is 635 feet at the south county line.

The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan (see the Key Map [KM]) is primarily bounded by the 1909 City limits: 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Emerson, Southern and Tibbs Avenues. Later improvements extended Fall Creek and Pleasant Run Parkways to Shadeland Avenue. The proposed district is composed of three property types: Parks, Parkway, and Boulevards. It includes 12 individual parks encompassing more than 1,118 acres of parkland; 6 parkways, totaling 2153.5 acres and extending 34.8 miles, and 2 boulevards totaling 202.1 acres and extending 15.4 miles. The total acreage is 3,474 acres. Included within these property types are 28 contributing sites, 23 contributing buildings, 58 non-contributing buildings, 104 contributing structures, 39 non-contributing structures, and 7 contributing objects.

### PARKS AS A SYSTEM COMPONENT

The park spaces associated with the Park and Boulevard Plan vary in size from less than an acre to more than 900 acres. They all include trees, turfed open-space and recreation facilities. The character and range of facilities is determined by park size and service area. There are 12 individual parks included in this nomination. The list includes all parks that existed when George Kessler was retained by the City in 1908 (Brookside, Garfield, Highland, Indianola, McCarty Place, Noble Place, Riverside and Willard Parks); one park whose master plan was designed by George Kessler (Rhodius Park) may be referred to but is not included. Those already listed on the National Register (Irving Circle, Military (098-296-01476) and University Parks (098-296-01547). Ellenberger Park, although already listed on the National Register is not included here because it is considered a park site within a parkway, rather than an individual park.

### Parkways as a System Component

The parkways primarily follow the natural, meandering, riverine system as a foundation for their layout, although some parkway layouts were opportunistic when green space was available, or necessary as a component of a designed landscape. When natural landforms and/or acquired property limits allowed, the parkway was constructed on both sides of the waterway. As transportation corridors, the parkway typically featured tree-lined driving lanes and wide sidewalks for pedestrian promenades. The open spaces, between driving lanes and the waterway, were considered a continuous park, and recreation facilities were added when possible. The wide-open spaces of the riverbanks acted as containment areas for floodwaters to protect adjacent residential areas. Where space was limited, seawalls, levees and other flood control structures were built. The Parkway became the basis for city growth within the old city limits by extending dedicated park space, flood control structures and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation as an integrated system.

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The six Parkways included in this nomination are Brookside, Burdsal, Ellenberger, Fall Creek, Pleasant Run, and White River Parkways. Sections of Pleasant Run Parkway have been included in other district nominations, however they are described here as being a part of the whole system.

### **Boulevards as a System Component**

The boulevard system connects parkways to parkways by way of a direct east-west or north-south boulevarded street. The typical boulevard respected the historic grid of the city, but featured wide right-of-ways to accommodate landscaped medians as well as driving lanes and sidewalks. The features that made the boulevard a unique thoroughfare were the shade trees planted in medians to separate the pedestrian from the vehicular driving lanes; the uniform building setbacks; the mix of residential and small commercial establishments bordering the route; and unifying site details such as special street lighting. The two boulevards included in this nomination are: 38<sup>th</sup> Street (Maple Road) and Kessler Boulevard, East, West and North Drives. Other boulevards such as Washington and Westfield Boulevards are not included as part of this project, but should be considered as future additions to this nomination.

### **The Indianapolis Comprehensive Plan Designed by George Kessler**

The combined components of parks, parkways and boulevards compose the first comprehensive plan for Indianapolis. Landscape architect George E. Kessler designed the master plan in 1909, with some alterations in the following years. Kessler unexpectedly died in 1923, and landscape architect, Lawrence Sheridan, expanded the plan to the county limits. The plan is one of eighteen park and boulevard plans that Kessler designed for cities across the United States. It is also one of two-hundred thirty known projects attributed to his one-man office. It is the first Kessler park and boulevard system in Indiana, and was subsequently followed by plans for South Bend, Fort Wayne and Terre Haute, Indiana.

The purpose of a comprehensive city plan is to regulate urban growth, and to maintain or improve the quality of life for its citizens. It also plans for the future growth of the urban area. This nomination, therefore, includes sites that have been improved per the Kessler or Sheridan Plan, sites that have been partially improved, and sites that have been platted as set asides as directed by the plan for future improvements.

Kessler states his vision for the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System in his first "Report of the Landscape Architect" to the Park Board for the year 1908:

"A properly designed system of parks and parkways should accomplish several purposes; particularly it should bring within the easy reach of every portion of a community the pleasant enjoyment of open air spaces for rest and recreation, and form pleasant and attractive means of communication from one part of the community to another, especially along lines which the natural growth of a city radiating from its business center has neglected; namely the communication between outlying residence districts. This at once encourages the building up and tying together of otherwise isolated residence districts which have sprung up along the early lines of traffic. The result of providing these lines of communication is not only of practical benefit

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in the way mentioned, but becomes an economic feature in that it encourages the use of otherwise waste spaces and consolidates the work of those departments devoted to street building and maintenance, sewerage, etc.

The above is an abstract statement of what a proper park system attempts to do and has accomplished in some communities where this movement has been under way for some time. However, in your local problem I find it possible not only to serve all of the ends above alluded to, but to provide at the same time a solution for a number of other questions which have been troublesome to your city.

... This plan is largely determined by the physical features of the city and takes the lines, for the most part, of parkways bordering the various streams which intersect the city. Let me explain at the outset that parkways of this nature do not primarily form merely driveways from one portion of the city to another, although their continuity for this purpose is important, but at variance with the popular idea of the boulevard, they do form a chain of parks or a continuous park which is by its nature brought to the doors of all sections of the community. By obtaining here and there open spaces of considerable extent in addition to the space required for roadways and walks, you will provide a continuous series of small parks and playgrounds which will become very valuable and pleasurable to the neighborhoods in their immediate vicinity. Where such parkways, as they will in your case, follow the lines of picturesque streams, an additional interest is presented, both in preserving the picturesque nature of the scenery and in the use of the streams for boating and bathing purposes. A no less important end is served in planning the bordering driveways in all cases so that they form levees protecting the low-lying land in places of intermittent overflow and this becomes of great practical value in this regard. It will also be necessary, both from the standpoint of park beauty and that of public protection, that careful attention be given to the matter of sanitation, and that in all of these improvements every effort be made to keep the streams perfectly sanitary. The following out of this system will greatly enhance your city, which is already known as a city of beautiful homes, in presenting the most attractive conditions for the building of homes. Its tendency will be to increase and fix property values, as has been the case in other communities ...

The first and most important improvement to your city as a whole is that along the line of White River. It is proposed finally to improve both banks of White River from Riverside Park to the south limits of the city, with a continuous driveway upon each side of the stream. This improvement is primarily a levee improvement, but will provide the greatest addition to the beautification of your city that could well be conceived. ... The importance of this river improvement will immediately suggest the need of an adequate tie between the river front and the heart of your city, and this can perhaps best be accomplished in the form of a plaza extending westward from the State House, adjoining Military Park and reaching directly to the river for connections either north or south. There would be immediately formed a fine and direct connection to Riverside Park from the heart of the city, an improvement the need of which will be recognized by everyone. It is proposed in connection with this improvement to obtain some portion of the present vacant ground along the east bank of the river as near as possible to the congested factory and business center for a complete athletic field. The general nature of the Riverside improvement would be a roadway of generous width, wide promenade-walk and lawn spaces, with occasionally balustrades and steps and a continuous lighting scheme which would make the whole not, as present, a back door for factories, but certainly in parts, the frontage for buildings of the very highest character, both public and private. ...

The Fall Creek parkway is one capable of most picturesque treatment, but is also to a large extent a utilitarian feature. Here again it is contemplated to border each side with a driveway, but the meanderings of the stream are such as to leave many park spaces of very considerable

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extent, as well as the possibility of introducing here and there water surfaces that are directly in the stream or to one side of it of sufficient area to add largely to the attractiveness of the improvement.

. . . it is my recommendation that in all new work the lines be projected wherever possible for greater width both for roadway and park space. This suggestion you are already following in the portion of the improvement now being carried on between Northwestern avenue and Capitol avenue . . . This with the proposed damming of the creek, forming a very considerable water surface, will form at once a neighborhood park available to a region now almost wholly isolated in the matter of parks. . .

A similar improvement is projected for Pogue's Run, passing through Brookside Park and reaching as far into the heart of the city as in time may be proved practical . . . It is my recommendation that Brookside Park should be extended, and in fact the widening of the stream to the southwest should be such as to give the impression of an indefinite extension of this beautiful park.

The improvements along the line of Pleasant Run should be fully as important and attractive as any other portion of the plan. The stream may not permit the broad water surface of Fall Creek, but the parkway may be designed in a manner to be no less attractive and valuable to the communities through which it passes. The needs of the local communities along the line should be considered, and a park or widening of the parkway of considerable extent should be made in connection with each of the more important local communities.

During the year considerable improvement has been made in Garfield Park, and it is my recommendation that additional work of an important character be carried on here during the coming year. Especially the eastern boundaries must be considered on account of the encroachment of buildings needing proper street connections.

It is important that an outlying boulevard and parkway scheme at the outskirts of the present city limits should be projected and acquired in the near future and before the possibilities are largely limited by the advance of private improvement . . ."<sup>1</sup>

### Resource Counts

The vision articulated by George Kessler for Indianapolis in 1908 is far-reaching and encompassing. For purposes of this nomination, the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard plan is viewed as an integrated system. The interconnectivity of this system and the fact that it is still serving the multiple purposes of transportation, recreation, flood control, sanitation, and the improvement of housing values, is proof that Kessler developed a visionary and flexible plan that is still being adapted, tested, and extended today. While an extensive resource count has been developed, it is recognized that the park and boulevard system will still meet the multiple purposes of this vision regardless of whether or not a particular resource is of the historic period.

However, in addition to providing the planning methodology to achieve this system of parks, boulevards and parkways, Kessler and others designed physical places and objects including parks, the spatial organization of the parkways, features, structures, and bridges, and designed the settings for existing or new features, including buildings, structures, and bridges by others. This has resulted in a remarkable wealth of historic places, buildings, bridges and features still in place within the system.

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<sup>1</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 18-25

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labeled as contributing (C) or non-contributing (N/C) are included in the resource count. Certain classes of resources are not counted because of the scale of the nomination and the relatively transitory nature of certain improvements. A resource count is essential to any nomination; and while this count attempts to account for many items, it is understood that with a nomination of this scope, some historic features may have been overlooked. It is also possible that certain items may be considered significant upon discovery of new information.

### Not counted:

- Recreational equipment such as playgrounds, playground equipment, swing sets, and similar apparatus.
- Footbridges, unless historic, are also not counted, but are considered part of the pedestrian circulation system.
- Non-paved recreational fields, such as baseball diamonds, are considered transitory due to the scale of this nomination.
- **Ellenberger Park was included in the Irvington Historic District (NR, 1987) (1 c site).**

### Counted:

- Rights of way which bridge across but technically do not touch areas are counted since they either positively or negatively impact the overall historic plan.
- Paved play areas, tennis courts, and basketball courts. Those, which traditionally have remained in the same location for over 50 years, are considered contributing.
- Concession stands or other permanent park related buildings.
- Pools and adjoining bathhouse or pool house buildings are considered to function as a unit and are therefore counted as one structure.
- Vehicular circulation system geometrics that are formed from the layout of driving lanes and landscaped medians are considered to function as a unit and are therefore counted as one structure.
- Pedestrian circulation system that is formed from pedestrian pathways and sidewalks that provide internal circulation or that connects to adjacent pedestrian circulation is considered to function as a unit and is therefore counted as one structure.
- Spatial organization of views and vistas are considered to function as a unit and are therefore counted as one structure.
- Specimen trees or tree masses that form an allée, bosque, or boulevard that are of the character and age to be original to the Kessler plan, are counted as one structure.

For a project this large, data gaps are expected. There are many features associated with each resource that need further identification and evaluation. In addition, documentation was not readily available for all resources that have the potential to contribute to this historic district. Further research is needed.

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### Narrative Description

#### PARKS AS A PROPERTY TYPE

The park as a property type is a parcel, or parcels of open space, including vegetation, recreation facilities and views to and from the site, whose function is to provide recreation opportunities for residents of Marion County, Indiana. The boundaries of the park typically follow parcel lines, and are generally rectilinear in shape as a response to the gridded plat of the city. They are surrounded on at least three sides by residential development and they may or may not be connected to a parkway or boulevard. The service area, and the quantity and type of recreation facilities increase with the size of the park. Conversely, planned historic park acreage can be decreased by modern improvements such as expressways, the taking of the land for public services such as libraries, fire stations, or schools, or the selling of public park land for private residential development.

The smallest parks in this nomination were the result of the platting of the city or its early subdivisions, where the street layout and configuration resulted in small pockets of open space. Their size and shape limited the quantity of recreation facilities. The larger parks of this district have a service area that includes the surrounding neighborhoods or community. The recreation facilities are both active and passive, and provide activities for citizens of all ages. They are typically several acres in size, and were consciously purchased by the city to provide recreation space in areas of the city lacking parkland. The open spaces within the parkways were to supplant and connect the individual parks within neighborhoods. The largest city parks (100+ acres) attract users from the entire region. They were historically located along the old city limits, and their development was a response to the Park Movement begun by the Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux with their plan for Central Park in New York City. The unique character of each large park---a result of the natural features and setting---and their locations along parkways caused each one to be a major end destination, accessible to everyone within the old city limits via the parkways and boulevards.

The parks that are included in this nomination are parks that existed when George Kessler was hired as Landscape Architect for the city (February 1, 1908), and that remain today. They include: Brookside Park, Ellenberger Park, Fletcher Place Triangle, Garfield Park, Highland Park, Indianola Park, Irving Circle, McCarty Place Triangle, Military Park, Noble Place, Riverside Park, University Park and Willard Park. The list of parks is from the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Park Board Commissioners, for the year 1908. They are included because they are the first parks in Indianapolis and part of the existing city components that formed the basis for Kessler's plan.

One additional park included in this nomination is Rhodius Park. It was acquired during the Kessler era of planning, and Kessler designed its master plan.

Three recreation spaces are included in the Parkway Section because they are located along a historic parkway, but were acquired as individual sites per the Kessler Plan. They include

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Woolen's Gardens, Pleasant Run Golf Course, and Christian Park. Eleven additional parks are described in the Parkway and Boulevard Sections because they were originally large open spaces within the parkway, which, over time, have acquired names as individual parks within the city park system. Those parks are: Fall Creek and 16<sup>th</sup> Street Park, Watkins Park, Barton Park, Fall Creek and 30<sup>th</sup> Park, Lot K, Spades Place, Emhardt Stadium, Orange Park, Brown's Corner, Kin Hubbard Memorial, and Forest Manor Park. Other parks within the current system that were acquired during or after the period of significance are not included here because they did not contribute to the development of the plan of the system proposed by Kessler.

Included in the above list are four parks that are already listed on the National Register: Irving Circle, Ellenberger, Military (098-296-01476), and University Parks (098-296-01547). As components of this nomination, Irving Circle is a small park offering open space within a planned community; Ellenberger Park was the planned terminus of Pleasant Run Parkway in the Kessler Plan; Military Park was the existing, public gathering space along the Kessler planned Central Mall; and the Kessler-redesigned University Park in 1914.

The following park descriptions are organized by size and facilities from smallest neighborhood park to largest city park.

## **THE PARKS**

### **Small Parks in the Kessler Plan**

#### Indianola Park

Indianola Park is located at 1900 West Washington Street, on the near west side of Indianapolis (see Maps P1 and P1a). The 2.05-acre park was acquired in 1898. The Park is bounded by Washington Street (the historic National Road), Elder Avenue and the north and east parcel lines. The parcel lines appear to be the original boundary. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the out side of each boundary street and the north and east parcel lines. Another historic name for the park is Kirkland Place. The park faces Washington Street, and is fully bordered by a residential neighborhood.

The site still functions as a recreational and open space for neighborhood use. Recreation facilities include a play structure, swing set and basketball court. Aerial photographs, taken in 2000, reveal remnant walks curving inward from the northwest corner of the site. The lines indicate historic circulation patterns enabling access to the park from all sides. A walk begins at the southwest corner and ends at the basketball court near the center of the park. A few specimen trees have been planted on the site, but the majority of the park is in full sun.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and date of acquisition. Its resources include:

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Indianola Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Basketball court	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
Park site /design /materials	1 c site	-		-
Pedestrian system	-	-	1 c struct	-
Play structures	Not counted	-		-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>1 c struct</b> <b>1 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

McCarty Triangle Place

This park is located at 1100 W. McCarty Street, on the southwest side of the city, west of White River and north of Kentucky Avenue (see Map P3 and P3a). McCarty Street, Birch and Marion Avenues bound the 1.39-acre, triangular shaped park. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street.

In 1888, Nicholas McCarty designated the site as a public park and in 1898 it was acquired by the city through annexation. The park continues to function as a neighborhood park, providing open green space and a limited number of recreation facilities that are consistent with small neighborhood park design. They include a play structure, slides, swing sets and a basketball court. The park boundary is defined on all sides by round wooden bollards. A few shade trees are intermittently dispersed throughout the park. There are no interior paths, but aerial photographs indicate the general layout of historic walks, leading from the corners to the center of the site.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and date of acquisition. Its resources include:

MaCarty Triangle Place	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Basketball court	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
Park site /design /materials	1 c site	-		-
Play structures	Not counted	-		-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>-none</b>	<b>1 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Noble Place

Noble Place is located at 200 East Prospect, on the near southeast side of Indianapolis (see Map P6 and P6a). One acre of land was acquired in 1910 and the site currently contains 0.94 acres. Madison Avenue, Prospect and Alabama Streets and the right of way for Interstate 70 bound this rectilinear park. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street and the north parcel line along the interstate. Modern realignments of Morris Street, Madison Avenue and the abutting of I-70 appear to have altered the historic shape. Urban encroachment includes a non-contributing building constructed in the center of the site. A few shade trees exist. Noise pollution from the adjoining expressway has diminished its

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original purpose of being a “valuable breathing spot for a section of the city heretofore without any immediate park facilities.”<sup>2</sup>

The site, as an original park still in the system, contributes to the nomination. Its resources include:

Noble Place	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Park site /design /materials	1 c site	-	-	-
Community Building, c. 1970	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>1 n/c bldg</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>

Highland Park

Highland Park is located at 1100 East New York Street, on the near east side of Indianapolis (see Map P7 and P7a). New York and Dorman Streets, and Highland and Marlowe Avenues border it. The park was purchased in 1898. It contains 4.05 acres and is composed of both the rectilinear parcel identified above and a triangular parcel bounded by Dorman, Dickson and New York Streets. The proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street.

Historic names for the park include Highland Square and Highland Place, although the names are both entered in the annual reports of the same year, and therefore one name may refer to the triangular shaped parcel instead. The park is rectilinear in shape with the exception of the northwest corner, which follows the curve of New York Street. The park is surrounded on three sides by residential development, and Pogue’s Run from Brookside Parkway flows into a ditch less than 250 feet away to the west.

There are three important landscape features within this park. The first is the topography of the park that changes approximately 17 feet, with the highest point being in the center of the park. In the gently rolling flood plain and uplands of the White River, this feature makes it one of the highest elevations in Indianapolis.

The second feature is the view at this park from the top of the hill. It is considered one of the best public locations for a view of the downtown Indianapolis skyline. The park has consistently maintained an open space on the west half of the park to prevent the obstruction of this view. The importance of the view is confirmed by the popularity of this park as a place to view the annual Fourth of July City fireworks display.

An extant concrete walk from the southwest corner leads first to a rise, and then to the top of the hill. The lower half of the walk is bordered by a mature shade tree allée, the third contributing resource, whose size and location indicate that they may be historic tree plantings. Other mature shade trees define the park border along the south park boundary. Newer shade tree plantings, along the north boundary, define the boundary and screen the view to the adjoining industrial

<sup>2</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 3

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properties. An historic brick sidewalk is located along the entire length of the east boundary. Recreation facilities are consistent with a larger neighborhood park. The standard swing sets, merry-go round and half-basketball court are enhanced by a large play structure and new open-sided shelter located on a level area near the center of the park.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and date of acquisition. Its most notable historic features include the viewshed, mature trees, "the Hill," and the brick sidewalk. Its resources include:

Highland Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Shelter, c. 2000	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
Park site /design /materials	1 c site	-	-	-
Pedestrian system	-	-	1 c struct	-
Spatial organization/view/vista	-	-	1 c struct	-
Specimen Tree Allée	-	-	1 c. struct	-
Play structures	Not counted	-	-	-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>1 n/c bldg</b>	<b>3 c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Fletcher Place Triangle

This park is located at 1429 Brookside Avenue, on the near eastside of Indianapolis and is currently in private ownership (see Maps BP1). 12<sup>th</sup> Street (formerly Stoughton St.), Arsenal (formerly Woodruff) and Brookside Avenues bound the park. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street. The triangular shaped, flat site contains approximately .82 acres and is bordered by a parking lot, an industrial site, and remnants of single-family residential development.

The city had already acquired the site by 1870, and its original name was Brookside Park. Other historic names include Fletcher Place, Fletcher Triangle and Fletcher Street Center. The location and shape of the park indicate that it may be associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century planned subdivision work of landscape architect, H. W. S. Cleveland.

Pogue's Run was historically located in the block due east of the park, and the park provided an extension of the open space associated with Brookside Parkway.

Existing historic features include granite curbs and interior walks leading from each corner to a central walk. The walks led to a central basin and bronze fountain, no longer extant. Along the street edge of the park, oriental plane trees were planted for boundary definition and shade. Seven of those trees exist today. Modern curb modifications have altered or eliminated the curved corners of the site.

A quit claim deed in 1980 transferred the park from the city to a private industrial company. The entire park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and date of acquisition. Its most notable historic features include the mature trees and historic sidewalk layout. Its resource count includes:

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	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Fletcher Place Triangle				
Park site /design /materials	1 c site	-		-
Pedestrian system	-	-	1 c struct	-
Specimen Tree Allée			1 c. struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>2 c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

**Neighborhood Parks of the Kessler Plan**

Willard Park

Willard Park is located at 1901 East Washington Street on the eastside of Indianapolis. Washington Street (the National Road) borders it to the north, State Street to the west, and park parcel lines to the east and south (see Maps P8 and P8a). It was acquired in 1904 to provide park and playground space on the east side of Indianapolis. It originally encompassed 15 acres. Through various takings of parkland, the park currently encompasses 10.89 acres. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the north side of Washington Street, and the west, south and east parcel lines.

The park is surrounded on three sides by commercial and industrial businesses. A residential neighborhood is located on the north side of Washington Street. A CSX rail yard parallels the south boundary and limits residential access from the south. State Street, abutting the historic west park boundary, was the planned north-south boulevard connecting Pleasant Run and Brookside Parkway.

Willard Park is one of four parks in Indianapolis for which Kessler developed a Master Plan (see Map 7e). The plan was drawn in 1913 and contained a variety of recreational facilities compactly organized in the space. The park plan included a swimming pool, wading pool, playgrounds, tennis courts, ball diamonds, running track, and athletic and play fields. The construction of this designed landscape was not realized, but the oval running track and various recreation facilities were built as funding and recreation trends evolved.

The current park contains an outdoor swimming and spray pool, an open-sided concrete-block shelter, pool concessions, a play structure, grill, sets of swings and basketball courts. Concrete sidewalks border the park on Washington and State Streets. A concrete path leads from the single main entrance at Randolph Street to the play structure. An adjacent parking lot provides access to the swimming pool. Trees, with the exception of a few extant specimens do not line the park boundary, as planned. A fire station and emergency communication cell towers are located in the former western third of the site, and are surrounded by chain link and barbed wire fencing. The pattern of the extant oval running track is somewhat discernable in the aerial photographic map. (See Map P8a).

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function, date of acquisition, and association with Kessler. Its resources include:

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Willard Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Pool /pool-house concession	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
Basketball court	-	-	1 n/c struct.	-
Shelter, c. 1980	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
Park site /design/ /materials	1 c site	-	-	-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>1 n/c bldg</b>	<b>2 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Rhodium Park

Rhodium Park is located at 1001 S. Belmont Avenue, on the near southwest side of the city (see Maps P2 and P2a). It currently contains 24.51 acres and its boundaries are Belmont Avenue, Wilkins and Wyoming Streets, and an east parcel line. The historic park was rectilinear in shape, contained 35 acres and extended eastward to Reisner Street. It was purchased with funds bequeathed by George Rhodium. The proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of the north, west and south boundary streets, and the parcel line to the east.

The park is surrounded by residential development, but the park service area to the north is limited by the construction of Interstate 70. The expressway parallels the north park boundary, behind a row of residential houses.

The park was acquired in 1913 and Kessler designed a master plan in 1915 (see Map 7d). The park was planned to provide recreation space for residents in the southwest area of the city. It continues to serve that function. Many of the component features were built, although the park was never completed per his plan. In 1916 the site was graded and tennis courts and baseball diamonds were installed. Pool and locker houses were constructed between 1921 and 1923. The Seger Coliseum was built in 1925.

According to the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan, Belmont Avenue was the direct link between the proposed Big/Little Eagle Creek Parkway and Riverside Park and the White River Parkway. As a response to that plan, the formal, primary entrance drive to Rhodium Park is located on the southwest corner of the site at Belmont and Wilkins Streets. The drive enters the park at a 45-degree angle before connecting to a curvilinear interior carriage drive that links the northwest corner of the park to drives along the southern boundary. The entrance drive alignment is still extant. Two other extant components of the original plan are the location of the existing tennis courts, and a crescent of earthwork. The pool and Coliseum no longer exist, and a community building does not conform to the Kessler design. An existing outdoor swimming pool is not shaped or located according to the historic plan, and a school and its associated parking lot have been recently constructed on the eastern portion of the site. A row of five residential homes has been built along Reisner Street in the southeast corner of the historic park area.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and association with Kessler. Notable features include the extant historic entrance drive, and site topography. The school and residential units do not contribute to this site, and therefore the boundary has been drawn to exclude them. Its resources include:

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Rhodus Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Pool /pool-house	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
Tennis courts	-	-	1 c struct	-
Vehicular circulation system (formal entrance drive)	-	-	1 c struct	-
Concessions Bldg – hip roof	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
Concession shed next to above – not counted	-	-	-	-
Wooden shelter, c. 1980	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
Shelter	-	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
Baseball diamond	1 c site	-	-	-
Park site /design/ /materials	1 c site	-	-	-
IPS school, 5 houses	Not in boundary			
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2 c sites</b>	<b>3 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>2 c struct 1 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

**Large Parks in the Kessler Plan**

Brookside Park

Brookside Park is located at 3500 Brookside Parkway, South Drive on the near east side of the city (see Map BP2). The boundaries of the park include Sherman Drive, Brookside Parkway North and South Drive, and Rural Street. The northern boundary of the park includes a parcel line that separates the park from an adjoining abandoned industrial site. The eastern boundary of the park abuts the historic Beltline Rail Road, now owned by CSX Transportation, before reaching Sherman Drive. The park originally contained 82 acres when it was acquired in 1904. Twelve more acres west of the park were purchased in 1912, and the park currently contains 101.72 acres. The current shape of the park is rectilinear with the southwest boundary extending west to Rural Street, encompassing and following the meandering of Pogue’s Run. Prior to the 1904 acquisition date, the name “Brookside Park” was associated with the triangular parcel identified as Fletcher Triangle.

The park is surrounded by residential neighborhoods on four sides. However the rail line running north and south along the eastern boundary and several industrial businesses along Sherman Drive detract and hinder pedestrian access from the east. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of the south, west and north boundary streets, and the parcel lines along the east and northeast boundaries.

Brookside Park is one of three large city parks located along the boundary of the old city limits. According to Kessler’s Park and Boulevard Plan, the park was intended to provide substantial acreage on the eastside of the city for a variety of recreational activities. The contiguous Brookside Parkway provides access from the surrounding neighborhoods.

Each large city park in the Kessler Plan (Brookside, Garfield and Riverside Parks) has a unique identity, based on the natural features within the park. Kessler characterized Brookside Park as

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"rustic" and the park's natural features justify this description. The primary natural feature in the park is Pogue's Run, which enters the park near its northeast corner and meanders through the entire length of the park, a distance of approximately 5400 feet, before continuing its course west of Rural Street. The waterway generally bisects the park into a north and south half.

The park's topography is another important feature. It is characterized by rolling hills in the northeast portion of the park, and abrupt elevation changes along the west and north boundaries, where the riverine flood plain is significantly lower than the boundary roads. The surrounding residential area overlooks the park from high embankments from the north and west. The same elevation change occurs along the southern boundary of the park, where the land in front of the Community Center is on grade with Brookside Parkway South Drive, and the rear is substantially below the building. The drive from the front of the community center west and winding down behind the building exhibits some of the rustic nature of the park where remnants of a boulder wall can be seen intermittently along the slope of the drive.

The circulation system within the park also adds to its rustic character. Long winding carriage drives either follow Pogue's Run or provide internal loops that allow a transition from high to low elevation. Mature trees intermittently border the drives in masses, providing more variety in views and scenery. (see photo BP-1). A central asphalt entrance drive extends from the Commuter Center north to Olney Street. Entering the park from this north entrance provides a long view to the formal terrace at the rear of the community center. Mature shade trees located on either side of the entrance drive, north of Pogue's Run, are thought to be remnants of a Memorial Grove of trees planted c1932. The trees provide shade for picnic areas and a shelter. Inscriptions on the stone entrance gates at the north park entrance identify the memorial nature of this section of the park.

Open spaces contain a variety of recreation facilities that can accommodate many users of all ages at the same time. This function has persisted throughout the history of the park. Tennis courts have existed at the park since 1904. A swimming pool and locker house was built in 1923. Today the facilities include not only the standard play structures and swing sets, but also tennis, basketball and horseshoe courts, baseball, soccer and football fields, a Frisbee golf course, a new outdoor spray and swimming pool, and a Community Center.

There are several buildings and structures in the park that contribute to its historic character. They include the Brookside Community Center, two bridges, and the maintenance buildings.

The Brookside Community Center is considered outstanding in the Center Township Historic Sites and Structures inventory (098-295-0993). It is a 2-story brick Neo-Classical Revival building built in 1927, and designed by Harrison & Turnock, architects. It houses an auditorium, gymnasium and assorted meeting rooms and provides year-round recreational activities for the neighborhood. It was constructed on a ridge, south of Pogue's Run in the center of the park. The main entrance of the building faces south to Brookside Parkway South Drive. Access from the north side of the building is via a two story concrete terrace overlooking the central, north entrance drive and Pogue's Run. The terrace overlook is accessed from the entrance drive via two sets of concrete

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stairs that encompass a fountain basin. The two stairways join on the second level of the terrace, above the water basin. The embankment on either side of the terrace is overgrown with shrubs and weeds, and detracts from the formal terrace. The interior of the Community Center was renovated c1998.

Two vehicular bridges cross Pogue's Run within the park boundaries. (Not included here is the bridge at Rural Street, which is described in the Brookside Parkway description.) One bridge crosses Pogue's Run in the west central portion of the park, the other crosses Pogue's Run along the Olney Street Drive, north of the Community Center. Both bridges are identified in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey. One is a National Register candidate in the Concrete Bridge Survey, although the physical condition of the structures makes the exact identification difficult at this time. There is also a newer pedestrian bridge over Pogues Run in alignment with Oxford Street. This bridge is a non-contributing structure.

Other buildings included in the park are the district park maintenance buildings and structures located in the northeast corner of the park. Text in the Annual Reports describes park paint buildings and other maintenance facilities.

The rustic character of the park is still evident in a variety of site furnishings. Cut stone entrance bollards identify the north entrance to the park. A remnant of a cobble stone wall is evident north of Pogue's Run and west of the central drive. Remnant boulder walls and planters exist along the sloping drive that winds around the community center from its front to the lower level (see photo BP-02). Brick gutters are located along the long drive south of Pogue's Run.

A recent project by the city to control flooding and sewer overflows resulted in the [ ] regarding of the entire portion of the park from its western boundary, to Brookside Parkway North Drive on the north, to the west bank of Pogue's Run, on the east. The project produced an overflow containment area that has been planted in turf.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and association with the Kessler master plan. Its most notable historic features include the rolling topography, mature trees and open space, community center, and two historic bridges.

Brookside Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Bridge over Pogues Run (roughly 3200 East)	-	-	1 c struct	-
Bridge over Pogues Run (roughly 3500 East)	-	-	1 c struct	-
Vehicular circulation system	-	-	1 c struct	-
Spatial organization	-	-	1 c struct	-
Terrace and steps behind center	-	-	1 c struct	-
Pool / pool bldg	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
2 modern shelters	-	2 n/c bldgs	-	-
Community Center, 1927	-	1 c bldg	-	-

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Brookside Park (continued)	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Baseball concessions	-	1 n/c bldg	-	-
5 n/c maintenance pole barns or bldgs	-	5 n/c bldgs	-	-
North entrance stone gates	-	-	-	1 c object
Park site / design / materials	1 c site	1 n/c bldg.	-	-
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>1 c bldg</b> <b>9 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>5 c struct</b> <b>1 n/c struct</b>	<b>1 c object</b>

Garfield Park

Garfield Park is located at 2450 South Shelby Street, on the south side of Indianapolis (see Map PR2). Raymond and Shelby Streets, Garfield East and South Drive, Southern Avenue and the Conrail rail tracks to the west, bound the park. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street and to the parcel line to the west.

The park was purchased by the city in 1873. It was the first purchased parcel of land to be used for recreation purposes. It is located on the southern boundary of the old city limits and consequently was called Southern Park. It was renamed Garfield Park after the assassination of President Garfield in 1881. In 1910, the park contained 104 acres; today the park encompasses 123 acres.

The park is surrounded on four sides with residential development. Manual High School is located outside of the western boundary. Indianapolis Fire Station #29 is located at 602 East Pleasant Run Parkway, and the Shelby Branch Public Library at 2502 Shelby Street, both within park limits. As with Brookside Park, the homes facing the park along Garfield Drive overlook the park from higher ground. Elevation change extends into the park where the land west of South Garfield Drive is one of few sledding hills in the city park system. A community center (1922) was built on a ridge in the center of the park, and a shelter in the shape of a pagoda was constructed on nearby high ground. The siting of the building and structure enabled long views of the playgrounds, a swimming pool, and meadow. Distant views to the downtown skyline were also possible.

The park is "L" shaped and located along Pleasant Run, near the south terminus of the parkway. Pleasant Run enters the park along its north boundary and leaves the park along the west boundary. A second waterway, Bean Creek, enters the park along the southeast boundary and connects to Pleasant Run just before it leaves the park. The park plan maintained the natural alignment of Bean Creek, and a lagoon system was created at the confluence of the creek and Pleasant Run by damming Pleasant Run. The lagoons were developed as containment areas for high water, as well as a recreation facility for swimming, picnicking and viewing. Additional flood control measures in the Park included aesthetic and functional realignment of the creek and run and regrading of their stream banks into gentle, wide slopes.

The park is the second of three large city parks that Kessler envisioned as attracting, great numbers of the population to a unique park experience. He characterized this park as more compact and intimate. The park includes more built features than any other park master planned by Kessler in Indianapolis (1912) (see masterplan Map 7b). It maintains that character today by the

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unique facilities located there, and the variety of neighborhood and family-oriented recreation facilities at the park.

The circulation system included a carriage / driving loop, with primary entrances from Raymond Street, Shelby, and Southern Avenue. Park roadways incorporate the extension of the Pleasant Run Parkway through the park, augmenting the drive by locating created-lagoons between the North and South drives of the Parkway. The circumferential carriage drive provided a variety of views and vistas to open meadows, knolls, bridges, lagoons and forested areas. Walks proposed to connect surrounding neighborhoods to major park features. Curving paths create a series of pedestrian loops within the area enclosed by the circumferential driving loop. A small depot was constructed at the west entrance along Southern Avenue when the park was made a stop along the route for the electric train.

Informal massing of trees and shrubs created shaded lawn areas, or enclosed meadow areas. Formal street tree plantings were done along bordering streets. A Memorial Grove (1920) of trees, honoring the local dead from World War I, was located in the northwest corner of the park. Massed plant material along the western boundary screened views of the rail line.

The most important formal landscape feature is the sunken display gardens, where annual plantings and seasonal displays are changed every year. Historically known as the Garfield Gardens, the Sunken Gardens (c1915) (photo PR-10) were constructed in the flood plain of Bean Creek in the southeastern section of the park. The Gardens were built below street level to enhance the perspective view of the floral displays. Site furnishings included benches, planters, lighting fixtures and paving details. The garden beds are planted along a central axis, and a shorter cross axis features raised fountain basins with "dancing" water and light shows at night.

The cross axis parallels a formal concrete overlook (c. 1915), which in turn is aligned with the conservatory. A pool and fountains were located at the conservatory (c. 1912) entrance.

The size of the park enabled a variety of recreational activities to be offered. Passive recreation activities included strolling along the walks in the Sunken Gardens or within the park, climbing the stairs of the two/three story pagoda to view the city, listening or viewing performances in the amphitheater, or picnicking under shade trees or in the meadow. Active activities included a swimming pool and playgrounds located at the base of the Community Center, and a softball diamond located in the southeast corner of the park. Later a horseshoe pitch and shelter were constructed (1979), parallel to the swimming pool.

The importance of the park as a venue for recreational activities also necessitated the provision of year round activities. The hill along the northeast park boundary was used for sledding, and the lagoons for ice-skating. The Community Center provided indoor activities, where the interior space acted as a gymnasium or performance stage. The basement of the Community Center opened out to the pool deck, and consequently, the locker rooms and showers for the pool were located there. A maintenance tunnel extends underground to the interior of the park.

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Decades of park improvement have impacted the historic master plan, although the park still functions as a "large city park" providing a variety of recreational facilities to a large segment of the population. The large meadow space has been preserved. The Memorial Grove is extant, but unidentified and in danger of decline if not conserved. The stream banks are not maintained and invasive, noxious plant species have overgrown the banks. The lagoons have been removed from Pleasant Run. Both Pleasant Run and Bean Creek are overgrown, underutilized site features. Problems exist with flash flooding and water quality during storms (combined sewer overflow) although in low water conditions the streams are running clear.

The circulation system has been altered due to modern issues of funding, maintenance and safety. The south drive of Pleasant Run Parkway has been removed between Raymond and the Conrail tracks. The interior carriage loop has been interrupted. In 1995, site work replaced the driving surfaces with paths, which, to some extent, preserves the carriage drive alignment as part of the interior pathways of the park, however, the pedestrian paths are no longer provided as a looped system. Remnants of the asphalt walks are visible as graveled patches or slight depressions in lawn areas. Steps that connected to paths have been preserved however; the connecting paths are no longer present. The stairway leading from the Community Center to the swimming pool and horseshoe pitch is in poor condition. The two historic entrances to the park along Southern Avenue have been closed, and a new main entrance has been built midway along the southern boundary. New entrance details including planters and bollards have been added.

Major additions and renovations occurred in the park beginning in 1995. The Community Center, now known as the Garfield Arts Center, was not included in this renovation and it is currently in fair/poor condition. A lack of information makes it unclear if the 1995 renovations respected the historic integrity of the building and structures. The Pagoda was renovated, and the Sunken Gardens including the fountains, dancing lights, walks and planters were repaired. A new community center, the Burrello Family Aquatic Center (c1998), features an indoor gymnasium and an outdoor swimming and spray pool. The historic pool was filled in c1998. A parking lot replaced this feature. The bandstand and amphitheater were renamed the P. E. MacAllister Center for the Performing Arts in 1994, and then renovated in 1997. A modern play structure adjacent to the Pagoda has been implemented in a way that respects the historic character of the structure. The horseshoe complex is now a corporate shelter. Five other open-sided shelters also exist in the park. The historic train depot exists but is not used. A park maintenance building, fire station and public library branch completes the list of modern and extant historic buildings.

Six memorial statues have been added or relocated to the park. The Lawton statue is located north of the Sunken Gardens, the Prisoners of War Memorial Statue (photo PR-11) is located at the new south park entrance, the Swift Memorial is located near the Southern Avenue Bridge, and the Al Feeney Memorial (photo PR-09) is located along Bean Creek, west of the Sunken Gardens. These last two memorial statues are associated with the Memorial Tree Grove in the northwest corner of the park.

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The original Conservatory was demolished in 1954 and replaced by an all-aluminum Conservatory considered the first for its type of construction (098-296-016). The production greenhouses have been demolished. The Sunken Gardens and the Conservatory continue to displays plants in colorful annual plantings. Earthen berms and an eight foot black metal fence with ornate locking gates completely surround the Sunken Gardens. The dramatic views of the downtown skyline from the Pagoda and former community center area have been maintained.

There are six historic bridges within the park boundaries, four crossing Bean Creek, and two crossing Pleasant Run. The rail bridges along the west boundary of the park are described in the Pleasant Run Parkway description.

Of the bridges located on Bean Creek, three are included in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey. The bridge at Southern Avenue is a National Register candidate. One bridge is located in the southeast corner of the park along Pagoda Drive (098-296-015). The other two (098-296-008, 098-296-006) are located along Conservatory Drive, near the eastern boundary of the park. The two bridges (098-296-002, 098-296-003) crossing Pleasant Run (see photo PR-05) are included in the Concrete Bridge Survey, and both are considered National Register candidates.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its location, function and association with George Kessler. Its most notable historic features include the Garfield Art Center, the Sunken Gardens, the terrace outlook, the pagoda shelter house, the historic bridges, Memorial Tree Grove, mature trees, carriage drive layout, memorial statuary, and open space. Its resources include:

Garfield Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Shelby Street Public Library	-	1 n/c bldg	-	-
Fire Station #29	-	1 n/c bldg	-	-
Burello Family Aquatic Center (pool, pump shed and pool house)	-	-	1 n/c struct	-
Maintenance pole barn	-	1 n/c bldg	-	-
Pagoda	-	1 c bldg	-	-
Community Center	-	1 c bldg	-	-
P.E. MacAllister Center for Perf. Arts (bandstand/ amphitheatre)	-	1 c bldg	-	-
6 sculptures or monuments	-	-	-	6 c objects
Conservatory	-	1 c bldg	-	-
Wooden shelters, c. 1920 or earlier	-	2 c bldgs	-	-
Laminated beam shelter, c. 1950	-	1 c bldg	-	-
2 modern shelters	-	2 nc bldgs	-	-
Depot-shelter	-	1 c bldg	-	-
Sunken gardens	1 c site	-	-	-
6 historic bridges	-	-	6 c struct	-
RR bridge (two parts); Pagoda Dr., Conservatory Dr. over Pl. Run; dead end over Bean Creek; Conservatory Dr. over Bean Cr.; pagoda Dr. east over Bean Cr.	-	-	-	-
Park site / design/ materials	1 c. site	-	-	-

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Garfield Park (continued)	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Pedestrian circulation system formed from former carriage drives			1 c struct	
Memorial Tree Grove			1 c struct	
Spatial organization			1 c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2 c site</b>	<b>8 c bldgs</b> <b>5 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>9 c struct</b> <b>1 n/c struct</b>	<b>6 c objects</b>

Riverside Park

Riverside Park is located at 2420 North Riverside Drive, on the near northwest side of the city. The site currently designated as Riverside Park is bounded by 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Burdsal Parkway, White River Parkway East Drive, and East Riverside Drive and contains 96 acres. However, for the purpose of this nomination, the boundaries are expanded to the limits of the Kessler Plan for Riverside Park. The park therefore is bounded by Lafayette and Cold Springs Road to the west, the White River north of 38<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, the Indianapolis Water Company Canal and East Riverside Drive to the east, and White River Parkway West Drive south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street to the south (see Maps WR7 – WR10). The proposed National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street. The park is approximately 2.5 miles long and averages ¾ of a mile wide, including the White River. The original park purchase of 953 acres occurred in 1898.

Modern designations for park types based on recreation facilities have resulted in the original park being broken up into sites that are now designated as separate parks. With the inclusion of the current Riverside Park, in clockwise order, those sites include:

Site Name	Address	Acres	Boundaries
Riverside Park, 1898	2420 N. Riverside Dr.	96.0	White River Pkwy E. Dr., Burdsall Pkwy, E. Riverside Dr., 30 <sup>th</sup> Street
South Grove Golf Course, 1902	1800 W. 18 <sup>th</sup> St.	130.0	Burdsal Pkwy., E. Riverside Dr., 18 <sup>th</sup> St., White River Pkwy E. Dr.
Municipal Gardens, 1920	1831 Lafayette Rd.	6.0	Lafayette Rd., Cold Springs Rd., Memorial Grove, White River, the south parcel line
Memorial Grove, 1908	2000 Cold Springs Rd.	5.88	Municipal Gardens, Cold Springs Rd., Coffin Golf Course, White River
Coffin Golf Course, 1904 (see photo WR53)	2401 Cold Springs Rd.	152.0	Memorial Grove, Cold Springs Rd., roughly 30 <sup>th</sup> St., White River
Iron Skillet Restaurant 1870 (see photo WR41)	2489 W. 30 <sup>th</sup> St.	1.42	30 <sup>th</sup> St., Coffin Golf Course
Soap Box Derby Hill, 1953 (Wilbur Shaw)	3001 Cold Springs Rd.	8.66	30 <sup>th</sup> St., Riverside Golf Course
Riverside Marina Restaurant	3001 White River Pkwy. W. Dr.	1.16	White River Pkwy. W. Dr., Riverside Golf Course, White River, 30 <sup>th</sup> St.
Riverside Golf Course, 1901	3502 White River Pkwy W. Dr.	132.0	Soap Box derby Hill, Cold Springs Rd. Crooked Creek, White River
Lake Sullivan Natural Area	3649 Cold Springs Rd.	29.08	Cold Springs Rd., Lake Sullivan Sports Complex, Interstate 65, White River, Crooked Creek

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Lake Sullivan Sports Complex	3700 Cold Springs Rd.	41.38	Lake Sullivan Natural Area, Cold Springs Rd., Interstate 65
Riverside Golf Academy, 1995	3702 White River Pkwy W. Dr.	55.0	Interstate 65, 38 <sup>th</sup> Street, White River
Lake Indy	2610 White River Pkwy. E. Dr.	111.12	White River, 30 <sup>th</sup> St., White River Pkwy E. Dr., 16 <sup>th</sup> St.

The park is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The presence of these neighborhoods fulfilled a goal of the Park and Boulevard Plan to stimulate the creation of quality homes and neighborhoods. This is evidenced by the mansions located on the west side of the western boundary of the park (Stewart Manor, Allison Mansion, Carl Fisher and Wheeler Estates) (see representative photos WR43-44). Other evidence is located along East Riverside Drive, where tidy bungalow homes face the park and are separated from the roadway by wide tree lawns. Many of the homes share a common limestone or glacial-boulder retaining wall that adds to the character and unity of these homes in the Riverside Park neighborhoods.

Riverside Park is the third and largest of the three large city parks envisioned by Kessler. It was considered to be the requisite large country park of the Kessler Park and Boulevard System. Kessler characterized this park as being a retreat from the city, and having restful, peaceful drives. The park's gradual evolution from 1898 to 1908, and subsequent improvements directed by the Kessler Master Plan of 1913, functionally combine the incorporation of a growing national interest in active recreation, the preservation of both banks of the White River corridor and its natural ecosystem of wooded slopes and floodplain terraces (a catalyst for the development of the residential neighborhood to the east), the extensive engineering associated with the flood control system, and the provision for the developing vehicular road system in the growing city. The aesthetic for the park evolved in two phases. Early improvements, including rustic wooden bridges and shelters illustrated the Victorian concept of park as "Nature." The second phase combined informal and formal elements that typified the City Beautiful Era of landscape design, and a hallmark of Kessler plans for the parks of Indianapolis. Interior roadway and path alignments feature sweeping compound curves, passing through or past groupings of plants informally massed to create large meadow spaces or extensive shaded lawns. At the edges of the park, more formal road alignments are lined with uniform street-trees, encouraging the efficient flow of traffic north and south past the park. In the significant eras of the park's existence, a landscape image of the park as "lawn and trees" was maintained.

Kessler designed the master plan for the park in 1913, and in 1915-16, the park was connected to Fall Creek Parkway via Burdsal Parkway. This connection enabled approximately half of the residences within the old city limits access to the largest city park, via a parkway. The southern boundary of the park connected to the White River Parkway, which was planned to extend to the old city limits to the south.

The historic park property was primarily agricultural land located in the floodplain and upland terrace on either side of the White River. The river enters the park along its northern boundary and leaves the park more than three nautical miles south, along the park's southern boundary. Steeply

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sloping topography borders the White River floodplain on the west bank of the river. The east bank topography is much more gradual. A second natural water feature is Crooked Creek, which drains from the north part of the county and enters the park south of 38<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of the river where it eventually drains first into Lake Sullivan and its associated wetlands before draining into the White River.

Three structures included in this nomination are associated with flood control. The dam spanning the White River south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the floodwall constructed along White River Parkway West Drive, south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and the earthen levee along the east river bank (see photo WR37). The dam was constructed c1900. That structure raised the water levels approximately eight feet, creating lagoons from previous backwater oxbows. Information is lacking as to whether the lagoons were completely constructed. The dam also created a wider section of the river, now called Lake Indy. The construction of an earthen levee along the east bank of the river resulted in a narrow piece of land being left on the waterside of the levee. That land and the associated lake in the river encompass more than 111 acres.

The circulation system in the park primarily consists of an outer drive along the western boundary of the park, and an inner and outer drive in the south half of the "east of river" portion of the park. Most of the interior drives of the park no longer exist, although information is lacking regarding their actual construction. The park was to be bounded by thoroughfares, which would serve the dual purposes of arterial streets of the city, and scenic drives bordering the park. Historic photos of the drives reveal shaded, tree-lined roads with decorative light posts equally spaced along the route. West Riverside Parkway was the planned extension of West Drive of the White River Parkway. East Riverside Drive was planned as a formal esplanade, a double boulevard, lined with ash trees, forming the formal gateway to the park from the developing city beyond. The East Drive of White River Parkway was extended through the park as a series of park drives. The curving horizontal alignments suggest that this drive was planned for pleasure purposes. Driving southbound on the east side drive from Maple Road (38<sup>th</sup> Street), the motorist was given a choice of either the interior park drive along the river, or the boulevarded East Riverside Drive leading more directly to the continuing White River Parkway, Burdsal Parkway, and the city. The drives on the west bank of the park are similar; traffic arterials on the outside, park drives to the interior (non-extant). East-west traffic crossing the river was located at Lafayette Road (Emrichville Bridge, 16<sup>th</sup> Street), 30<sup>th</sup> Street, and a vehicular bridge north of Maple Road. The designed configuration, alignment, and integration with north-south roads via "Y" intersections do not appear to project for high volumes of traffic. The Kessler Master Plan indicates pedestrian paths, which informally parallel the interior park drives, loop around the meadow and lagoon feature, or provide pedestrian connections from selected bordering streets.

An inventory of existing vegetation was not included in this nomination. However, Annual Park Board Reports indicate that thousands of trees and shrubs were planted in the park over time. The vegetation was used for bank stabilization, screening of views, park border delineation with street trees, and for massing within the park to create shade spaces and outdoor rooms that were either called golf areas or left as open space. Existing groves of vegetation along portions of west bank

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floodplain and slopes may contain remnants of the historic park vegetation. A Memorial Grove of trees is located on the west bank, south of Coffin Golf Course. Historic photos indicate rock garden plantings at an unknown location in the park.

Similar to Garfield Park, the recreational facilities at Riverside Park were developed as a response to the natural character of the park, Kessler's vision of restful drives, and the need to provide (as a large city park) a variety of activities that appealed to a large segment of the population. Historic recreational facilities included playgrounds, outdoor gymnasiums, tennis courts, and picnic areas. Other facilities included an amusement park, bear pits, monkey cages, and an elk and deer reserve. The majority of the park was and still remains golf courses. Kessler's master plan does not provide structural delineation of golf course fairways, only labeling the open meadows as "golf-links." The three golf courses, Riverside, South Grove and Coffin, are some of the oldest recreational components of the park. Riverside is the fourth oldest municipal golf course in the nation, being established in 1900. South Grove was opened in 1901, and Coffin was established in 1904. Another unique facility located at the park is Soap Box Derby Hill, constructed in 1953 and formally called Wilbur Shaw Memorial Hill.

There are several historic buildings located in the park whose function has changed as a response to changing needs and recreation trends. The current Iron Skillet restaurant (see photo WR-41) located on a knoll on the south side of 30<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of the river, was originally a residence and then served as the park superintendent's home by 1900. It is identified as the c.1870 Italianate, Wacker House, in the Wayne Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey (097-296-55154). The Municipal Gardens Family Center (097-296-55161) located on the west side of the river on the south park boundary, was established as the Casino Gardens in 1920, a private canoe and yacht club, and then popular dance hall. It was acquired by the city in 1927 and renamed Municipal Gardens. It was renovated in 1979 and then c. 1998. It is a Renaissance Revival structure considered notable in the Wayne Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey.

One additional building that is considered architecturally significant is the Naval Armory (098-296-0347) located on the east bank of the river, north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street. It was constructed c.1933 and is considered an outstanding Art Moderne building in the Center Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey.

There are two memorials located in the park. The Camp Robinson Memorial is a statue located in Memorial Grove (097-296-55160), on the west side of the river. It was erected in 1914 and commemorates the Civil War training encampment that was located in the area. The statue is considered contributing in the Wayne Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey.

The second memorial is the Thomas Taggart Riverside Park Monument (098-296-0345) located in Riverside Park at the visual terminus of Burdsal Parkway (see photos WR-48 & WR-49). Landscape architect Lawrence Sheridan prepared the site plan c.1929-31. The memorial was designed by architect C. McCullough and constructed in 1931. The limestone structure is two-stories high and features five open bays defined by arched, columnated supports. The structure is

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constructed on a balustraded terrace, whose parkway-side base includes a semi-circular two-tiered water basin, where water originated from a spigot in the wall of the terrace. Stairs located on either side of the water basin provided access to the terrace. The open sided memorial afforded views to the west of the river and the parkway to the east (see photo WR-38). Historic photos of the Taggart Memorial show a lagoon crossed by a rustic bridge and bordered by rocks and masses of shrubs and perennials in front of the memorial. The memorial is considered a notable Neoclassical structure in the Center Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey.

There are six bridges within the park boundaries. Five bridges span the White River and one spans Crooked Creek. The bridge crossing Crooked Creek at Cold Springs Road is considered a National Register Candidate in the Concrete Bridge Survey. It is a Kessler designed filled-spandrel bridge, constructed in 1914.

Of the five bridges spanning the White River, the 38<sup>th</sup> Street and Interstate 65 bridges are non-contributing. The bridge at 30<sup>th</sup> Street (see Photos WR40 & WR50) is considered a National Register Candidate in the Concrete Bridge Survey. It was designed by H. W. Klausman, and constructed in 1905. It is described as being 326 ft long, with the center span 104 feet long. The Melan system reinforcing is likely, and it is faced with Indiana oolitic limestone; details include refuge bays, stone rail balusters and posts, plaza entrances to the park, and overlook for views up and down river. The bridge at 16<sup>th</sup> Street is contributing (see photo WR34), but the location is believed to be the location of the former outstanding Emrichville Bridge, which was demolished. The fifth bridge is the iron Belt Rail Road bridge located south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and it is considered a National Register candidate in the Iron Bridge Survey.

Views and vistas were an important component of the park features. An iron pedestrian bridge, no longer extant, was constructed across the White River, to afford views up and down river. The open space associated with the golf courses was also another way of adding long views and a variety of scenery to the experience of the undulating parkway drive.

The historic boundaries of the park have been altered by the loss of open space and parkland to residential and commercial development. The losses include the land occupied by the Veteran's Administration Hospital, along Cold Springs Road, and the new residential subdivisions, located north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street along the east side of the river.

Two unique features were located in the park. A Fish Hatchery was constructed in 1911 along Cold Springs Road, south of 38<sup>th</sup> Street. It was subsequently abandoned, and the current Lake Sullivan Sports Complex is located there. The other unique feature was a Tree Nursery constructed in 1909. By the 1920's it was the largest municipal nursery in the United States. It supplied the park system with trees and shrubs and was closed c.1994. The Riverside Golf Academy is located on the site.

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Today, the site remains a contrast between the floodplain terrace of the east bank, and the more rolling topography of the west bank margins. Engineered levees elevate the east bank drives above adjacent playing fields and riverside picnic and fishing access.

The basic structure of the proposed parkway drives remains. The double boulevard of East Riverside Drive has been replaced with a single drive (see photo WR35). Evidence of parallel drives is still evident in partially buried curbing and the remains of street crossings. Cold Springs Road, Lafayette Road, and West Drive White River Parkway, maintain a connection as seen on a city map. However, contemporary traffic configurations, signals, and landscape developments diminish the perception of a continuous flow of parkway. East-west thoroughfares have been substantially widened and used primarily as urban arterials. Interstate 65 has been routed across the northern portion of the park. Realigned 38<sup>th</sup> Street maintains access to both west and east drives of White River Parkway, although detailing is primarily that of an interstate interchange. The 16<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge alignment has been altered, and the connection from White River Parkway East Drive to 16<sup>th</sup> Street has been removed. A new connection has been constructed linking the south end of White River Parkway East Drive to 18<sup>th</sup> Street. Many of the interior secondary park drives have been removed, especially within the golf courses. The north half of the historic formal entrance to the park, connecting Burdsal Parkway and White River Parkway on either side of the Taggart Memorial has been removed, remnants of the realignment can be seen in the turf.

The park maintains the pastoral park imagery of trees and lawn; preserved as an integral component of golf courses, the east bank riverside and roadway plantings. There are many stretches of overgrown and wild riverbank edges, levees, and unused land, primarily in east bank segments north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street and the west bank segments north of Interstate 65. The plantings surrounding the Taggart Memorial have been removed, but the fountain basin has been filled and planted with perennial plants. New plantings of red buckeye trees obscure the formal drive into the park at the Taggart Memorial, and, when mature, will block the historic view from the Memorial to Burdsal Parkway. The lagoons no longer exist.

The Taggart Memorial, 30<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and Naval Armory remain. The first two are part of Kessler park plan. The last was an intrusion into the park landscape of the day, which now, over time, has taken its place as a contributing building. Another intrusion is the recently constructed residential development located north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street along the east bank of the river, on historic park property. Contemporary structures have replaced the historic golf club houses. The amusement park, bear pits and elk enclosures no longer exist.

The current Riverside Park (the east side of the river, south of 30<sup>th</sup> Street and north of Burdsal Parkway) contains a variety of recreational facilities. An aquatic center, family recreation center, five shelters, softball and baseball diamonds, football fields, a basketball court, 12 tennis courts, three playgrounds, two horseshoe pitches, a boat launch, storage building and a section of the paved White River Greenway trail.

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The Interstate 65 construction through the site has created an isolated area/wasteland north of the highway. The view of the interstate and the associated noise further degrades the north park experience.

The Taggart Memorial is in poor condition. It is currently enclosed in a chain link fence as a result of vandalism and the unauthorized removal of limestone balustrades and panels.

Other new recreational facilities located within the historic park boundaries are the Lake Sullivan Sports Complex, including the Major Taylor Velodrome and extensive parking added to the northwest edge of the park as part of the 1987 Pan Am Games venues. The BMX track and concrete Skateboard Park are recent additions in the same location.

The park contributes to this nomination because of its date, function and association with the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan. Its most notable historic features include the open green space designed as golf courses, the interior parkway drives, the Cold Springs, 30<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Street concrete bridges, the iron rail bridge, the Camp Robinson and Taggart memorials, Municipal Gardens Community Center, and the Memorial Grove. Its resources include:

Riverside Park	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Municipal Gardens bldg		1 c bldg		
4 c.1990 bldgs on grounds of S. Grove Golf Course		4 n/c bldgs		
Pump house, Coffin Golf Course		1 n/c bldg		
Club house, support bldgs, Coffin		3 n/c bldgs		
Maintenance bldgs, Cold Springs Rd, Coffin Golf Course		1 c bldg		
Iron Skillet Restaurant		1 c bldg		
Taggart Memorial loggia		1 c bldg		
Family Rec. Center (pool & pool house)			1 n/c struct	
3 modern shelters		1 n/c bldg		
Garage or maintenance barn		1 n/c bldg		
Iron shelter, c. 1900 (n. or 29 <sup>th</sup> St)		1 c bldg		
Modern shelter, n. or 29 <sup>th</sup> St		1 n/c bldg		
Naval Armory		1 c bldg		
Maintenance, for Armory		1 n/c bldg		
W. 30 <sup>th</sup> St. Bridge, c. 1905, filled spandrel arch, H.W. Klausmann, eng.			1 c struct	
Riverside Restaurant, c. 1990		1 n/c bldg		
Soap Box Derby Hill			1 c struct	
16 <sup>th</sup> St. Bridge, C. 1935			1 c struct	
Club House, support bldgs, Riverside Golf Course		3 n/c bldgs		
Maintenance pole barn		1 n/c bldg		
Brick maintenance garage, c. 1910		1 c. bldg		
Riverside Golf Academy, c. 1996		1 n/c bldg		
White River Parkway (within park)			1 c struct	
Canal			1 c struct	
Park site, design, materials	1 c site			

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Riverside Park (continued)	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
3 golf course sites	3 c sites			
Cold Springs. Rd. Bridge over Crooked Cr., 1914, Kessler-designed			1 c struct	
38 <sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and ROW			1 n/c struct	
I-65 Bridge and ROW			1 n/c struct	
Spatial organization			1 c struct	
Specimen Tree allée along Riverside Dr			1 c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>4 c site</b>	<b>7 c bldg</b> <b>18 n/c bldg</b>	<b>8 c struct</b> <b>3 n/c struct</b>	

**PARKWAYS AS A PROPERTY TYPE**

Parkways are long-term planning and implementation projects. Therefore, within each parkway, varying stages of development and construction exist. Additionally, funding, politics, park and recreation trends, and private enterprises all impacted the plan, resulting in irretrievable losses of parkway. The parkways include sections that have been: planned, acquired, and constructed; planned, partially acquired, and partially constructed; and planned, platted, but not constructed.

The parkway (a "broad, landscaped thoroughfare"<sup>3</sup>) is representative of the City Beautiful Era of Landscape Architecture and City Planning, which coupled planned residential and commercial development with the structured development of parks, parkways, and interconnected boulevarded thoroughfares. In Indianapolis, Kessler intended that the parkways serve multiple purposes, including pleasure drives, active and passive recreation, flood control, natural resource stewardship, and a method for encouraging quality residential and commercial development.

The layout of a parkway is composed of a vehicular roadway system laid out in wide sweeping curves (with specific geometries<sup>4</sup>) whose water-side edge consists of a variety of open, green spaces, that include shade trees and shrubs, and sometimes recreational facilities and pedestrian walks. The landside of the parkway typically includes sidewalks separated from the road by tree-lawns, and wide setbacks for buildings, when land was available. The roadway separates the building from the open space along the waterway. The open space becomes a continuous park of varying widths, facilities and character. To provide even more variety in parkway layout, the open spaces varied in size and shape, and the parkway on one bank typically did not mirror the layout of the parkway on the opposite bank. Where driving lanes were constructed on both sides of the waterway, they rarely paralleled each other or the creek. "In working out his plans for this construction, Mr. Kessler did not run the lines of the driveway to be built along the meanderings of the stream, but started his driveway in straight lines, with broad, easy curves, and so laid down as to permit of a wide parkway space between the driveway and the stream."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Merriam-Webster's Deluxe Dictionary, Tenth Collegiate Edition

<sup>4</sup> Myers

<sup>5</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 16

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Buildings along the parkway are typically single-family residential, and may vary from neighborhoods of Bungalow Style, to Colonial Revival, American Four-Square and Tudor Revival. Often intermixed in the residential areas are public and quasi-public buildings located either abutting or in the parkway land. The parkway provides a landscape setting for these public buildings and the building serves to provide visual punctuation along the way, a terminus for a view, and/or as a destination within the parkway. Libraries, schools and churches are examples of this type of building. Bridges designed for vehicular and pedestrian traffic were constructed on the parkways. The majority of them were constructed of concrete and others are constructed of iron. Some of the bridges have been constructed in the Beaux-Arts style, with intricate details; while others are faced with river cobbles, or limestone to look like rough-cut stone in a more vernacular-rustic style.

The parkways radiate from the backbone of the system, the White River, to the outer suburbs of the county. The White River is the primary, natural water feature in central Indiana. It bisects the county, draining from the northeast to the south. The confluence of each of the river's major tributaries (Fall Creek, Big and Little Eagle Creek, Pleasant and Pogue's Run) are also located within the old city limits. These confluences surround the central downtown business area, and the older, more congested residential, commercial and industrial areas. Parkway have been constructed along four of the waterways (White River, Fall Creek, Pleasant Run and Pogue's Run—called Brookside Parkway).

Flood control features were typically an integral part of the design of the parkways, such as seawalls and levees. Where possible, riverbanks were re-graded to gentle slopes. Frequently damming and pond construction were introduced as parkway components that served as aesthetic components while doubling as flood controls. In discussing the White River parkway, a Park Board report states that "A very important thing to be considered in connection with this construction [of the parkway south along the east bank of the White River] is the fact that it will build a levee to protect a large and growing section of the city from overflow in times of flood in White River."<sup>6</sup>

Where the Kessler Plan has been respected, the riverbanks are owned by public or quasi-public enterprises. Keeping the banks in public ownership prevented ownership by industrial companies who typically used the waterways for dumping their waste. Kessler strongly recommended controlling land uses along the parkways to preserve the riverine system as a natural feature and help minimize industrial pollution of the water. This goal on the part of the Parks Board was expressed as "In the days passed, when streams were in city limits, buildings faced away from them, and the banks used as dumping grounds for all kinds of rubbish. To-day the streams meandering through a city offer the best opportunity for beautiful development and sanitary conditions."<sup>7</sup> That this was largely accomplished is evidenced by the lack of industrial businesses that have been allowed along the parkways.

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<sup>6</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 8

<sup>7</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 21

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The parkway system was originally designed for two types of travel. The wide curvilinear, tree-lined driving lanes contributed to the parkway's function as a pedestrian promenade and pleasure drive for carriages and automobiles. Kessler described the second travel type as "lines of communication" connecting the rural outer lands with the downtown business district, and vice versa. The popularity of the automobile and the parkway's increasing importance as a line of communication resulted in alterations in the width and pavement surface for this new mode of transportation. The experience of the route, including views to natural features, open, green spaces and groupings of trees and shrubs, rather than efficient and direct point-to-point travel is the character of the parkway, and Brookside, Fall Creek, Pleasant Run and White River Parkways are examples.

Two additional parkways were planned that are not along the riverine system (Burdsal and Ellenberger Parkway). They do include the dual boundary roadways and a central open green space that includes shade trees. They are linkages between parkways, boulevards or parks, where open space was available (Ellenberger) or where the linkage of two designed landscapes- Riverside Park and Fall Creek Parkway required more space to visually strengthen the connection between components (Burdsal).

Each of the following parkways is a combination of the above components, based on each waterway's specific alignment and location. The parkways associated with the riverine system are described first.

### The Parkways

#### Brookside Parkway

Brookside Parkway is located on the eastside of Indianapolis along Pogue's Run (see Map Series BP1-BP2).

The parkway extends from the former Fletcher Place Triangle east along Pogue's Run to the north right-of-way line of 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the north side of Forest Manor Park, an approximate distance of two and one-half miles. Proposed National Register boundaries extend to the outside right-of-way line of each boundary street.

The planning of Brookside Parkway began with the 1909 Kessler Plan for the Park and Boulevard System, and the already existing Brookside Park, purchased in 1898. The majority of land composing Brookside Parkway is either contained in Spades Place or Brookside Park. Information regarding Brookside Park is located in the Park Section because the park was considered the primary destination along the parkway. The park known as Spades Place is described here because it is composed of open spaces acquired to create the parkway.

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The description of the parkway begins at the southern terminus and follows Pogue's Run upstream. The 1909 Kessler Master plan proposed that the south terminus of Brookside Parkway, North Drive, be located at 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The south drive was proposed to be extended south to Oriental Street, where a boulevard street would extend southward, stepping at street grids to align with State Street, then southward to intersect with Pleasant Run Parkway. This is the only segment of the Kessler plan which is discontinuous with the city's drainageways, isolating the lower portion of Pogue's Run from Oriental Street to its confluence with the White River. However, the State Street Boulevard and Brookside Parkway at 10<sup>th</sup> street were not built and are therefore not included in this nomination.

From 10<sup>th</sup> Street north to Brookside Avenue, Pogue's Run has been rechanneled to flow through open space in the center of the block behind residential lots, instead of continuing north along Arsenal Avenue to Fletcher Place Triangle before turning northeasterly along Brookside Avenue. Platted parcels along the waterway show some intent for open space set-aside.

Before connecting to the extant Spades Place Park, the waterway runs through a linear open space corridor bounded by Nowland and Brookside Avenues. The open space is approximately 100 feet wide and 700 feet long with Pogue's Run defining the long axis. The owner of this space is unknown, however it is thought to be a part of the original parcel of land known as Spades Place. The Annual Park Board Reports describe the location of the park as being along Pogue's Run from Newman to Jefferson Streets, bordering Nowland Avenue, and containing 6 acres. It was referred to as an esplanade. The current parcel, however, only contains approximately 1.5 acres.

The extant Spades Place is located at 1800 Nowland Avenue and contains 30.34 acres today. The park that is owned by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation extends from Commerce Avenue to Rural Street, a 4,743-foot length of Pogue's Run. Commerce, Brookside, Coyner, and Nowland Avenues, Brookside Parkway, North and South Drive, 16<sup>th</sup> and Rural Streets, and the adjoining Brookside Park are the boundaries of Brookside Parkway, with the National Register boundaries being along the outside right-of-way line.

The park is the agglomeration of parcels purchased to create the open space and park components of Brookside Parkway from Commerce Avenue to Rural Street. The irregular shape and boundaries of the park are a result of three factors:

1. The park follows the course of Pogue's Run as it drains from the northeast, southwest to the White River.
2. The broad sweeping curvilinear boundaries of the park are the implementation of the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan.
3. The straight north-south boundaries at Jefferson and Keystone Avenue are the result of a lack of funding to purchase land to complete the parkway plan.

The parkways are within the flat floodplain topography of Pogue's Run, often bordered by homes elevated above the floodplain on high embankments. Single-family residences built along

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curvilinear streets and facing the park surround the park. The planning and layout of the surrounding neighborhood is thought to be the work of landscape architect H. W. S. Cleveland and warrants further investigation.

The first parcel of Spades Place the park was acquired in 1898 and improvements followed the next year. The improvements included a 200-foot long stone wall along Brookside Avenue, walks, plantings and the regrading of the riverbanks. Flash flooding and stream bank erosion were historic problems. Early plans attempted to smooth and stabilize stream banks. Early photos indicate a rough, wild landscape. Turn of the century streambank engineering created a more pastoral scene. This realignment, over time, and as needed changed the spatial arrangement of the park. But, at the same time, it enabled a variety of shaped open spaces to be created. The size and configuration of the open spaces enabled unique or larger recreation facilities to be installed. A band shell was constructed in 1898 and included modern toilet rooms in the basement. A stone and steel, fireproof, hexagonal-shaped pagoda, measuring 24 feet, was built in 1901. A double tennis court was added in 1915 and a playground and playground equipment were added in the period 1931-1940. The original equipment no longer exists.

The existing park currently contains a limited number of built facilities used for active and passive recreation. They include one shelter, a grill, play structure, three sets of swings and one softball diamond. The park is primarily known for its open spaces along Pogue's Run.

The passive recreation components of the park are significant features. They include the open, green spaces and the views to the interior of the park from the parkway. The large expanses of open space conform to the spatial organization of the original Kessler plan. The irregularly shaped sites are intended to provide variety in view, experience and setting along the parkway and within the spaces. The spatial arrangement of the park spaces also defined the roadway alignment (see photo BP-01 for typical parkway character). The open spaces of the park were meant to be experienced in two ways: the first, as being immersed within the open spaces that were wide enough to feature a footpath system and several pedestrian bridges; the second as being viewed from either the moving automobile along the drive or the pedestrian promenading along the sidewalks located on only the residential side of the road. The sidewalks are separated from the road by an 18-foot tree lawn, although few trees exist in this space. Homes are set back another 20 feet to widen the vista even more. The parkway was planned to orient the visitor towards Pogue's Run. Residences, sited on high embankments or at street level flanking the parkway, provide visual enclosure, further orienting towards the center.

The Parkway continues east from the terminus of Spades Place at Rural Street, and encompasses Brookside Park. The South Drive defines the park's south boundary along 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The north drive continues east to Olney Street, where it terminates at the north entrance of Brookside Park. Many of the homes facing the park along this route have stone retaining walls along their front parcel lines, further adding character and identity to the parkway.

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East of Sherman Drive, the parkway exists as open space set aside, with some of the space being in the public domain. Four parcels of open space and waterway are located behind commercial/industrial buildings along 16<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Sherman Drive. The parcel's north and west boundaries abut Forest Manor Park. The Indianapolis Parks Department owns Forest Manor Park, located at 2000 Forest Manor Avenue. It was acquired in 1937, and contains 18.09 acres. It includes baseball diamonds, a shelter and playground. The west bank of Pogue's Run defines the park's western boundary. The park is characterized as open space, filled with recreation facilities, bordered by an overgrown Pogue's Run.

Directly west and south of the public park is a private sports complex that includes concession stands and softball/baseball diamonds. North of 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Pogue's Run is highly disturbed, and there is no evidence of set-aside platting.

Significant structures in this parkway include the series of bridges that cross Pogue's Run. Vehicular bridges are located at Rural Street, Commerce and Jefferson Avenues and two on Nowland Avenue. A sixth bridge is located in the parcel between Commerce and Jefferson Avenue, and is a footbridge. The bridges are included in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey. An iron bridge located on Newman Street is identified in the Iron Bridge Survey; however it no longer exists. A bridge on Nowland Street is the oldest (1903) Luten structure in Indianapolis.

No planting plans have been located for the parkway, and historic photos indicate that the site was heavily wooded. Entries in the Park Board reports mention an existing meadow in portions of Brookside Park, which were regraded and seeded as lawn areas.

Historic site furnishings associated with the parkway include stone curbing along Boulevard Place (19<sup>th</sup> Street/Brookside Parkway North Drive).

Currently, Pogue's Run from 21st Street south to Michigan Street remains a natural looking stream. South of Michigan Street, the waterway enters a culvert where it vanishes, becoming part of the City's storm drains. The stream banks are heavily overgrown. The overall character of park and parkway is dominated by canopy trees, which shade the roadway and park.

The circulation system has been somewhat altered to accommodate modern traffic needs. Both the North and South Drives of the parkway are contiguous from Jefferson to the Brookside Park as planned. One-way traffic at the western segment of the South Drive precludes use of drive for other than local access. Interior park drives in Brookside Park have been modified or removed. Some have been incorporated into the pedestrian path system. Street boulevard connections southward to Pleasant Run Parkway are evidenced only by right-of-way width. The North Drive continues to be primarily a residential street, as planned (two, wide lanes). The South Drive has been widened to four lanes and has been incorporated into the arterial street plan of the City.

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The parkway contributes to this nomination because of its location, function, date of acquisition and association with the Kessler Park and Boulevard System. Its most notable historic features include the open space and historic bridges. Its resources include:

Brookside Parkway	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek			2 c struct	
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
Pedestrian circulation system			1 c struct	
5 concrete bridges over Pogues Run: Commerce Ave, 1911; Jefferson Ave; Nowland Ave (2500 E) Luten arch, 1903; Nowland Ave (2800 E); N. Rural Street, c. 1909			5 c struct	
1 plate girder iron bridge, Newman St. over Pogues Run, c. 1915			1 c struct	
Filled spandrel conc. Footbridge, 1907 (designed by Parks Board)			1 c struct	
1 footbridge in Spades Park greenspace	Not counted			
Octagonal shelter, c. 1980		1 n/c bldg		
Spades Park site, design, materials	1 c site			
Grill, play equipment, softball field	Not counted			
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2 c site</b>	<b>1 n/c bldg</b>	<b>11 c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Fall Creek Parkway

Fall Creek begins in Henry County, near Middletown, Indiana, and meanders southwesterly approximately 36.5 miles to its confluence with the White River, near 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Indianapolis. It is the longest and largest waterway in Marion County to drain into White River. The creek flows through rolling, generally flat farmland before entering Marion County, where it was dammed beginning in 1941, as a means to increase the water supply for Indianapolis. The resultant Geist Reservoir is 7.5 miles long. The parkway road parallels the creek, and responds to varied topographic relationships with streamside conditions. The creek water line is typically, substantially below its bank line and the surrounding properties and roadways. Because the road also serves as a flood-control levee, in most cases the road is elevated above the floodplain terrace. The floodplain terrace has also been re-contoured, to deter bank erosion and broaden the width of the open space as a containment area when the creek floods.

The north limit of the Kessler planned Fall Creek Parkway was 38<sup>th</sup> Street, at the State Fair Grounds. The donation of Woolen's Gardens (6800 E. Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive) in 1909 was an impetus to extend the parkway another six miles. The 1928 Sheridan Plan extended the proposed Fall Creek Parkway, to the northeast county limit. Federal Work Relief Programs of the 1930's built extensions (see Map Series FC1 – FC10).

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The northern Fall Creek Parkway boundary limit for this nomination is Interstate 465 adjacent to Woolen's Gardens, on the northeast side of Indianapolis, a distance of approximately 11.4 miles from its confluence with White River. Beyond the interstate, Fall Creek and Fall Creek Road continue northeasterly to Geist reservoir and Hamilton County. Along its route, all stages of planning and implementation are illustrated. At its mouth, land formerly designated parkland has been redeveloped into an urban university; other land has been developed as planned, with dual roadways following the creek and opening in various places into wide expanses of parkland. At locations where acquisition was never completed, and further north where modern improvements of set asides has increased the length and breadth of the parkway, the open space is limited or discontinuous.

Homes and institutions with deep setbacks border the parkway. Dense, overgrown embankments obscure the view of the stream. Period residential homes are located from 38<sup>th</sup> Street to the Monon overpass, and from 34<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> Street, with newer homes and discontinuous street trees between Monon and 34<sup>th</sup> Street. Compatible institutional uses begin at 30<sup>th</sup> Street to Capitol, where residential uses begin again. The South Drive retains historic width and setbacks to adjacent homes; south drive elements and dimensions are narrower than those of the north drive improvement, creating an urban residential edge, in contrast with more suburban scale of north drive conditions.

The scenic stretch of homes located along Fall Creek Parkway North Drive from 30<sup>th</sup> Street to Woodland Avenue is the proposed Fall Creek Parkway Historic District. Another residential historic district associated with Fall Creek is the proposed Sutherland Avenue Historic District, located along Sutherland Avenue from Park to College Avenues.

The most important component of Fall Creek Parkway is Fall Creek and its accompanying open spaces. Beginning at White River (see photo FC-03) and extending to Stadium Drive, the open spaces include the Indianapolis Water Company land, and the north right-of-way for 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Within this space is the Riverside Pumping Station (098-296-1451, see photo FC-04), 1201 Waterway Boulevard, which is a Beaux arts building, constructed c.1920, by Lewis K. Davis, architect. It is considered Outstanding, in the Center Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey. The Indianapolis Water Company property is included here because of its park-like character along the White River.

North of Stadium Drive to 16<sup>th</sup> Street the open space has been designated a separate park called Fall Creek and 16<sup>th</sup> Park. The eastern boundary is the outside right of way along Fall Creek Parkway, East Drive, and the western boundary is the parcel line. The park includes 59.5 acres of land, west of the parkway. Continuing north to Burdsal Parkway, the open space is restricted by industrial development to a width of approximately 500 feet, with the east right of way for Aqueduct Street being the eastern limit. North of the Indianapolis Water Company Canal, the parkway open space widens to 24 acres of north and south shoreline. South of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Michigan Road, Watkins Park is another designated park space (see photo FC-18). Historically known as Northwestern Park, the 16-acre park includes a Family Center, tennis courts, a play structure and

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open play fields. The park connects the Fall Creek open spaces to Burdsal Parkway, and Riverside Park. South and east of Watkins Park the open space of the parkway is limited to the open space south of Fall Creek Boulevard and extending along the south bank edge. Interstate 65 has been constructed on this section of land (see photo FC-20). Watkins Park includes a significant African-American resource, Flanner House. This non-profit community improvement group has operated out of this community center since the 1930's.

East of the interstate, Fall Creek turns north and then east near Capitol Avenue. Within this area both banks of Fall Creek are defined by wide-open spaces (see photo FC-24), the east, abutting residential homes along Capitol Avenue, and the west, Fall Creek Boulevard. The east bank has been designated Barton Park, a neighborhood park with many trees, a play structure, and open playfields. East of Capitol Avenue to College Avenue, the open space is limited to narrow linear corridors on either side of the creek. North of College Avenue the open space along the north bank is wide enough to support recreation facilities. Historically the space included a wading pool, tennis, volleyball and roque courts, horseshoe pitches, and open playfields. It is known as Fall Creek and 30<sup>th</sup> Park (11.11 acres, see photo FC-44).

On the south bank of Fall Creek, north of 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, an unusually shaped parcel of open space is included in the parkway. The odd shapes of the space are attributed to the piecemeal acquisition of parkland. The space is currently designated parkland known as Lot K. North of the parcel, the open space continues on both sides of the creek (see photos FC-45 and FC-46), but the south space is used as a railroad siding (see photo FC-66). North of 38<sup>th</sup> Street, the open space and proposed national register boundary continues along narrow corridors on either side of the creek (see photo FC-50).

East of Keystone Avenue, the north bank continues as a linear corridor, whose north boundary is defined by Fall Creek Parkway North Drive for approximately five miles to Interstate 465 (see representative photos FC-47 thru FC-63). Along the south bank, a large open space measuring 20 acres is wooded and undeveloped, immediately east of Keystone Avenue. Continuing along the south bank, the linear open space is restricted to the top of the bank. Mr. Woolens donated Woolens Gardens, containing 43 acres of undeveloped parkland to the city in 1909. He named the park Woolens Garden of Birds and Botany, and it continues to be a natural area, with no developed facilities.

The circulation system included facilities for both pedestrians and vehicles, and the vertical alignment of the roadway added another measure of flood-control and natural resource protection. The horizontal alignment of the road included broad sweeping curves and views into the parkway open spaces. Typically wide sidewalks were located along the outside right-of-way of the parkway. In other locations, an interior path was developed for strolls and promenades within the parkway.

Fall Creek Parkway North Drive is the longest continuous parkway in Indianapolis, beginning as Fall Creek Boulevard at Burdsal Parkway, and continuing along the north side of Fall Creek, approximately 9.5 miles to Woolen's Gardens. The parkway was planned as a dual, 2-lane

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roadway, paralleling the stream. It was originally planned for carriages and bicycle travel, but the advent of the automobile obligated traffic controls and widening of travel lanes. The travel lanes are currently four-two-way lanes. The route is a popular arterial in the city thoroughfare system. The south parkway drive is discontinuous, but includes sections between Stadium and 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Capitol and Central Avenue. The south drive does not extend past 38<sup>th</sup> Street.

In addition to the roadway as a circulation system, several concrete bridges were constructed across the creek to carry pedestrians and vehicular traffic. The Board of Park Commissioners mention the need to eliminate "unsightly" iron bridge in their minutes. While this goal is generally reflected in the high number of concrete and stone structures throughout the system, it is especially seen on Fall Creek Parkway.

The bridges located at 16<sup>th</sup> Street (photo FC-10), Senate & Boulevard (photo FC-22), Capitol (photo FC-25 and FC-39), Illinois (photo FC-26), Meridian (photo FC-33), Delaware (photo FC-29), 38<sup>th</sup> Street (photo FC-48), and 39<sup>th</sup> Street (photo FC-49) are listed in the Historic Concrete Bridge Survey. The bridges at Capitol, Meridian, Illinois, and 39<sup>th</sup> Street are considered candidates for the National Register in the concrete survey. The design of the Capitol and Meridian Street Bridges is attributed to George Kessler. Two other iron bridges are associated with Fall Creek. The N & W RR (Nickel Plate) at 4200 north (097-295-06151), and the L & N RR, (Monon) are identified in the Iron Bridge Survey.

The engineering structures associated with Fall Creek are not limited to rail and automobile bridges. Unique flood control structures include the concrete Seawall constructed in 1914 (photo FC-37) along the south bank of Fall Creek, north of Capitol Avenue. The design of the seawall complemented the bridges and parkway. A pile bulkhead was constructed along the west bank.

A recent intrusion into the parkway open space, is the building associated with a new residential development, which hinders views, and detracts from the open space, park character of the surrounding parkway (photo FC-38).

Other engineered features include three dams constructed across the creek, one east of Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard, one north of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and the last constructed west of Keystone Avenue (photo FC-51). The dam west of Keystone Avenue was constructed by the Indianapolis Water Company, and is associated with its pumping facility located along the north side of Fall Creek Parkway, North Drive. The dam is considered contributing in the Washington Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey.

Indianapolis Power & Light, to aid in electric power generation, constructed the dam located east of Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard. However, the original location of the dam was changed, per Kessler's wishes to enhance the parkway setting. Dam abutments were also embellished to conform to the park.

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The most unique engineering structure included in this nomination is the Aqueduct, c.1930, located on Fall Creek at the crossing of the Indianapolis Water Company Canal (see photos FC-11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17). The Aqueduct is still a functioning component of the City's municipal water supply system. It is an arch-spandrel concrete structure.

Open spaces, curvilinear roadways and urban setting define the character of the parkway (see representative photos FC-18, FC-24, FC-44 – 46, FC-56-57, FC-61-63). The unifying component is the vegetation, and in particular the shade trees. Native trees and shrubs were extensively planted along the parkway; some in masses to define open spaces, others to frame views and vistas. Shade trees were also planted along the built side of the parkway, to define its edge, and lead the eye along the route. The trees also provided a cool, shaded environment for strolling along the sidewalks. Annual Reports indicate substantial planting along the north parkland segments.

Under Kessler's direction, north drive improvements were begun in 1908, from Michigan to 23<sup>rd</sup> (1908), 23<sup>rd</sup> to Illinois (1910), Illinois to Meridian (1910), Meridian to 30<sup>th</sup> (c. 1911-1915), and in 1915, 30<sup>th</sup> to Maple Drive (38<sup>th</sup> Street). South Drive improvements from Capitol to Central were begun in 1905-1906 and completed in 1913. North Drive improvements did not extend to the White River as intended. Road improvements associated with Interstate 65 and the King Drive interchange slightly interrupt the physical continuity of the parkway, and in detail create a more contemporary, "highway" aesthetic for this short segment.

Modern alterations of the historic plan include the North Drive from Burdsal to Keystone Avenue being widened to as many as 5 lanes, taking up more of the creekside area, since historic sidewalk, tree lawn and street trees remain at the eastern edge. Substantial clearing and filling of the creekside embankment for improvements in the combined sewer overflow system are in progress. The new bridge at 30<sup>th</sup> Street is of a different scale than other bridges, although an attempt has been made to have the bridge detailing compatible with the remaining older bridges. Wall and revetment work associated with the project matches earlier designs; landscape plantings appear somewhat out of character with surroundings.

The most recent alteration to the parkway is the vacating of the parkway east of Meridian Street and south of the creek. The alterations are associated with a new housing development, along the south parkway. The historic road alignment has been maintained, although vehicular traffic has been prohibited. The triangular green space, east of Meridian Street and south of the creek, is maintained as an open space; however a recently constructed building on the site impacts the character, views, and integrity of the space. Historic site details along the parkway, including the balustrade associated with the Seawall (see photo FC-32), stairs leading to a parkway path, the parkway path, and granite curbs have all been affected by the development.

The parkway contributes to this nomination because of its date, function, and association with Kessler. Its resource count can be tabulated as follows:

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	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Fall Creek Parkway				
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek			2 c struct	
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
Pedestrian circulation system			1 c struct	
Riverside Pumping Station		1 c bldg		
1 pump station ancillary bldg, c. 1920		1 c bldg		
Stadium Drive bridge			1 n/c struct	
Modern shelters		2 n/c bldgs		
16 <sup>th</sup> Street Bridge (4 span filled spandrel, 1934)			1 c struct	
Canal Aqueduct, c. 1930			1 c. struct	
RR Bridge over Fall Creek at Aqueduct			1 n/c struct	
Watkins Park				
Flanner House Center, c. 1935		1 c. bldg		
Tennis court			1 n/c struct	
Play equipment – not counted				
Dr. M.L. King, Jr. St. Bridge, C. 1970			1 n/c struct	
I-65 Ramp Bridge, 21 <sup>st</sup> Street exit			1 n/c struct	
I-65 bridge over Fall Creek			1 n/c struct	
Boulevard Place Bridge			1 c struct	
Capitol Ave Bridge			1 c struct	
Kessler-designed, 1912 Illinois St. Bridge			1 c struct	
Melan arch, blt. By Hoosier Bridge, 1901			1 c struct	
Meridian St. Bridge				
Kessler-designed, 1917 Delaware St. Bridge			1 c struct	
M.E. White, eng., 1924 Central Ave, Bridge			1 c struct	
College Ave Bridge, seawall and baluster rail, roughly btwn Capitol and College			1 c struct	
30 <sup>th</sup> St Bridge, c. 1988			1 n/c struct	
Monon RR Plate Girder/Truss Bridge			1 c struct	
38 <sup>th</sup> St Bridge, c. 1936			1 c struct	
Filled spandrel, conc. 39 <sup>th</sup> St. Bridge, c. 1905 Marion Constr. Bldr.			1 c struct	
Concrete block maintenance bldgs just north of 39 <sup>th</sup> streets		2 n/c bldgs		
Filling station canopy, Evanston and Fall Cr. Pkwy		1 n/c bldg		
Bait shop		1 n/c bldg		
Dam			1 c struct	
Keystone Ave Bridge			1 n/c struct	
46 <sup>th</sup> St Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Emerson Way Bridge			1 n/c struct	
56 <sup>th</sup> St Bridge (1934, WPA-built)			1 c struct	
2 houses, Fall Creek Parkway at Kessler/56 <sup>th</sup>		2 n/c bldgs		
Woolens Gardens (natural conservation	1 c site			

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area)				
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>2 c site</b>	<b>3 c bldgs 8 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>18 c struct 10 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Pleasant Run Parkway

Pleasant Run begins on the east side of Indianapolis, north of Interstate 70, near Enterprise Drive, and flows southwesterly to the White River, a distance of approximately 10.5 miles. The northern limit of the parkway for this nomination is Shadeland Avenue, and the south boundary is the White River, a distance of approximately 10 miles (see Map Series PR1 – PR8). The historic intent of connecting the parkway to the White River was never realized, although the gap is only a distance of 0.66 miles. Open space owned by the Indianapolis Water Company at the White River holds the land in quasi-public domain. Similar to the Kessler plan for Fall Creek and Brookside Parkway, a primary destination along Pleasant Run Parkway was a large city park (Garfield), this time serving the southern half of the Indianapolis population. Other similarities include the residential neighborhoods developed along the parkway, and the sweeping curvilinear drives that provide varying views, spatial relationships with the stream, the opposing drive, and adjacent land uses.

Pleasant Run Parkway differs from the above-mentioned parkways in that the roadways parallel the waterway more closely, thus limiting the number of large open spaces along the route. Instead of many open spaces; the parkway travels through or abuts three large city parks (Garfield, c. 1871, Christian c.1921, and Ellenberger Parks, c.1911), and a golf course (Pleasant Run, c.1922) before ending at Shadeland Avenue, where urban development has stopped the extension of the parkway east of the road. The three large parks are generally equidistant from each other, and the golf course serves as a unique type of recreation open space.

Another dissimilarity is the fact that the open space of the parkway is discontinuous, due to the rail side yard and accompanying Gas and Coke utility constructed on the waterway. Only the north parkway drive is contiguous, using two arterial streets as connectors around the utility. The roadway within those right-of-ways is included in the nomination. The south parkway is discontinuous in this area. See Map PR4.

The North and South Drives of the parkway follow the flat, floodplain topography of the waterway. Topographic variation along parkway alignment provides differing relationships to the streambed. At times there is a gradually sloping terrace to the stream; in other instances the roadway is closer to the stream and on a pronounced embankment. A more pronounced floodplain terrace borders northern segments of the parkway, providing more of a topographic enclosure to the parkway drives.

The boundary of the parkway along its north drive is the right-of way line along the outside of the roadway. Beginning at the south terminus of the North Parkway Drive, at Bluff Road (see photo PR-02), the roadway continues northeasterly past the Saint Joseph & Holy Cross Cemetery (see photo PR-03). The South Parkway Drive does not extend all the way to intersect with Bluff Road as the property is in private ownership. At Meridian Street there is parkway on both sides of the creek

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(see photos PR-04-05). As it follows the creek through Garfield Park, the parkway is characterized by wide sweeping curves, large shade trees, and open space (see photo PR-12). The Parkway passes under Interstate 65 (see photo PR13). This characterizes both north and south parkways to Keystone Avenue. There are small open spaces contiguous with the parkway open space (see photo PR14). At the intersection with State Street from the north, a triangular piece of land associated with the parkway has been designated Orange Park, and is included here as an open space component (see photo PR-16). Parkway character is maintained until Prospect Street (see photos PR-18 and 19). Prospect Street and Keystone Avenue are used as greenway connections around the industrial gas plant (see photos PR 20-21) to the continuation of the north parkway. Along the North Drive, a fairly wide right-of-way is maintained and a landscape treatment maintains a semblance of parkway character as the road parallels the gas plant (see photos PR22-23). The North Drive continues northeast to English Avenue. English Avenue provides the connection to the continuation of the North Drive, 1700 feet to the east (see Photo PR-24). The double parkway drive system then picks up again and continues between English Avenue to Brookville Road (see photos PR-25 and PR-27). The parkway drive is again discontinuous north of Brookville Road to Colorado Avenue, but continues as open space on both sides of the creek. At Colorado Avenue the North Drive begins again (see photo PR-29). From this point, the North Drive is contiguous to Emerson Avenue, and there is open space on both sides of the creek. It passes by Howe High School (see photo PR-30), crossing Washington Street, and abutting Brown's Corner. It stops at Emerson Avenue. On the east side of Emerson, the double parkway drives continue, with the north drive engaging the open space of the Kin Hubbard Memorial, before intersecting with Michigan Street to become a component of the south boundary of Ellenberger Park (see photo PR-33). The North Drive begins again at Ritter Avenue and continues east to Arlington Avenue where it engages the Pleasant Run Golf Course. It begins again north of 10<sup>th</sup> Street (it does not intersect 10<sup>th</sup> Street, see photo PR-40) and continues north to 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The South Drive continues north of 10<sup>th</sup> where it parallels the North Drive to 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The South Drive continues north of 16<sup>th</sup> and crosses Shadeland Avenue, the limits of this nomination.

The Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan of 1909 called for the development of Pleasant Run Parkway from the White River paralleling the creek through Garfield Park, and terminating at Ellenberger Woods. At the same time that initial parkway improvements were being made to Fall Creek Parkway on the north side of the city, and while improvements were being made concurrently at Garfield Park, a segment of Pleasant Run Parkway (north and south drives) was constructed. The first segment was constructed from Raymond to Beecher Street. Under the direction of George Kessler, the Parkway was extended from Beecher to Shelby in 1912. The north drive was extended from Raymond through Garfield Park to Meridian in 1913. The south drive was constructed from Madison to Meridian, also in 1913. Land acquisition and construction of segments of portions of the parkway continued from 1914-1920.

A variety of bridges were constructed connecting north and south parkway drives at cross-streets, ranging in style from utilitarian iron bridges (c.1915), and concrete bridges of the 1920s and 1930s (including some constructed using federal relief work funds of the Depression). Several prefabricated pedestrian bridges date to the contemporary era. Bridges along the parkway that

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have been identified in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey are those located at Cottage, Villa, English, Southeastern, Emerson and Churchman Avenues, Spruce, South State, Linden and Shelby Streets; and Bluff Road. The bridges at Cottage and Southeastern Avenues and Spruce Street are considered National Register candidates.

The rail bridges associated with this nomination are important because they are a component of the existing transportation resources at the time of the Kessler Plan. They include the two rail bridges at Garfield Park, one crossing Pleasant Run, and one crossing Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive, both along the west boundary of the park. The rail viaduct was called a subway and constructed in 1914 to carry the Pennsylvania railroad over Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive. The opening of this subway was an important step in connecting Garfield Park and Pleasant Run Parkway to the neighborhoods and White River to the west. The subway is a reinforced steel concrete structure that spans a 40-foot roadway and two sidewalks. A third important rail bridge is located west of Howe High School, where it crosses Pleasant Run. It is a stone arched bridge.

The circulation system consists of two-way two-lane drives, generally on both north and south sides of the stream. Sidewalks are separated from the roadway adjacent to bordering residential districts. Detailed plans have not been located, which might indicate if walks were planned along the creek. Today, contiguous segments continue as two-way two-lane drives, however, some sidewalk segments are discontinuous.

As with the other parkways, the vegetation is an important component of its parkway character. No planting plans have been located; however, Park Board Annual Reports indicate that 23 different species of trees were planted along the parkway in 1913. Pin Oaks were also identified in the Annual Reports as being the predominant species planted along this parkway. Segments shown in Garfield Park plans indicate naturalistic planting or natural vegetation between the parallel drives, along the creek bed; uniform street tree plantings in tree-lawns are indicated at parkway borders adjacent to residential districts. Today the vegetation is largely overgrown where it flanks the creek, obscuring view and limiting access. Debris and bank erosion also deters the view. Evidence of planted landscapes exist in some southern segments, southwest of Madison Avenue, and in northern segments, northeast of English Avenue. An important example of mature street trees and their effect along a parkway drive is located along the north parkway drive, west of Arlington Avenue, where lines of London Plane trees exist in tree-lawns (see photo PR-36).

Additions and extensions to the Parkway include Christian Park built adjacent to the parkway at English Avenue, and Ellenberger Parkway extending northward from Ellenberger Park (c.1930) to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Christian Park includes significant greenway space, with large, mature shade trees, many sycamores, and hardwoods. The south drive of the parkway continues through Christian Park as a narrow drive flanked by tree-studded open space. Baseball facilities are down in the flood plain. The colonial-revival community center, 1930, was designed by McGuire & Shook. The firm intended the center to harmonize with their plans for adjacent IPS School #82 (NR listed separately).

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The parkway contributes to this nomination because of its date, function and association with Kessler. Resources include:

	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Pleasant Run Parkway			2 c struct	
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek				
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
Pedestrian circulation system			1 c struct	
2 industrial/trucking bldgs, dead end of Southern Ave		2 n/c bldgs		
c. 1930 house and garage		2 n/c bldgs		
Bridge, c. 1920, Bluff Road			1 c struct	
Bridge, Meridian Street			1 n/c struct	
Madison Ave Bridge			1 n/c struct	
RR Bridge south of Beecher			1 n/c struct	
Beecher Street Bridge			1 c struct	
Barth St. Bridge			1 c struct	
Shelby Street Bridge, WPA-funded, 1938			1 c struct	
I-65 Bridge over Pleasant Run			1 n/c struct	
Linden Street Bridge, c. 1922			1 c struct	
Cottage Ave Bridge, Pratt truss, 1889, Indiana Br. Co., maker			1 c struct	
Spruce Street Bridge, plate girder, 1895			1 c struct	
State St. Bridge, 1911, filled spandrel			1 c struct	
Villa Ave Bridge, 1916			1 c struct	
Churchman Ave. Bridge, Park Board-designed, 1923			1 c struct	
Orange Park, site, design, materials	1 c site			
S. Keystone Ave. Bridge			1 n/c struct	
English Ave. Bridge – Lutten-designed, 1922			1 c struct	
Christian Park				
Sherman Dr. Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Community Center, 1930		1 c bldg		
Christian park site, design, materials	1 c site			
Baseball concessions		1 n/c bldg		
3 new shelters		3 n/c bldgs		
Brookville Road Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Penn RR stone bridge/viaduct			1 c struct	
Washington St Bridge, c. 1995			1 n/c struct	
Brown's Corner site, design, materials	1 c site			
Emerson Ave. Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Michigan St. Bridge			1 c struct	
Ellemerberger Park				
Ice rink/pool house/pool		1 n/c bldg		
Ellemerberger Park site	1 c site			
Ritter Ave Bridge, c. 1915			1 c struct	
Pleasant Run Parkway N Dr. Bridge			1 c struct	
Bolton Ave. Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Arlington Ave Bridge				

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Pleasant Run Parkway (continued)	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
Pleasant Run Golf Course				
Club House and ancillary bldg		1 n/c bldg		
Former School #77, c. 1965		1 n/c bldg		
Golf Course site	1 c site			
10th St. Bridge			1 n/c struct	
16 <sup>th</sup> St. Bridge, nr. Shadeland			1 n/c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>6 c sites</b>	<b>1 c bldgs</b> <b>11 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>19 c struct</b> <b>12 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

White River Parkway

The White River in Marion County, Indiana is actually a part of the West Fork of the river, which originates in Randolph County, south east of Winchester, Indiana. The west fork enters the county midway along its north boundary, and exits along its south boundary, a distance of approximately 31 miles. It joins the East Fork south of Washington, Indiana before draining into the Wabash River, near Mt. Carmel, Illinois. Although not navigable, it is the primary waterway in Marion County, and was the backbone of the Olmsted, Powers and Kessler Plans. White River Parkway begins north of 38<sup>th</sup> Street at its intersection with Cold Springs Road, a distance of approximately 1,560 feet. The parkway extends to Raymond Street, a distance of 7.75 river miles (see Map series WR1 – WR10).

As indicated in the Kessler Plan of 1909, White River Parkway was planned to extend from Maple Drive (38th Street) to Southern Avenue. West Drive was planned to connect West Riverside Drive (Cold Springs Road) and southern segments of White River Parkway. The East Drive was planned to extend from Maple Road through Riverside Park to southern segments of White River Parkway, intersecting Burdsal, Fall Creek, a formal mall at the Capitol, and Pleasant Run Parkways. Records indicate construction was underway in 1906, near the Michigan Street Bridge. The alignments parallel the natural watercourse of the river, enclosing remaining streamside topography and vegetation. Because the parkway was a component of the flood control system for the river, major segments of both East and West Drives were planned in conjunction with flood control levees. Most of the river corridor has been altered by these flood control measures, including retaining wall and revetment systems, and damming to create Lake Indianapolis. Segments of the Parkway from 10th to Washington Street enframe a channelized urban waterway, on the scour side of a sweeping curve of the river. Northern segments are part of the Riverside Park drive system; where parkway embankments enframe a more naturalized stream corridor. Plans for the east parkway, from 10th to Michigan Street show a concourse/overlook, planned in conjunction with the proposed Merritt Playgrounds. The Parkway was only partially completed, but public right-of ways, have been held for future development or flood control.

As with the other parkways, the White River Parkway was planned as pleasure driveways with sweeping curves, and gradual or "Y" intersections with other boulevard, major park roads and parkways. The roads were paralleled by walkways, separated from drives by broad tree-lawns. Detailed plans for segments of the parkway indicate a combination of both formal and informal

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plantings, combining an urban street-tree edge, with more naturalistic plantings for streamside areas, and adjacent parkland. As the parkway merges with Riverside Park Drives, the planting master plan indicates formal street tree plantings for outer drive at residential boundaries and informal plantings for inner drives within park.

The constructed segments of the parkway conform to horizontal alignments of the Kessler Plan. The East Parkway from 10th to New York has been incorporated into parking lot drives associated with IUPUI and the IU Medical Center. West Parkway from Lafayette Road to Washington Street has been widened and incorporated into the urban thoroughfare system. Many of the modern thoroughfare improvements such as widening and realignment of intersections have resulted in the obscuring of intended views to the river along some riverside sections.

The parkway connects with Pleasant Run Parkway to the south, near Southern Avenue. Views from the Raymond Street Bridge (photo WR-01) show the sweep of the river, with the downtown skyline in the background.

As the corridor proceeds north, the railroad line between Raymond and the terminus of West Street crosses both the White River (see photo WR-02) and White River Parkway West (see photo WR-04). Parkway drives begin on the north side of Raymond Street on both sides of the river (see photos WR-03 & WR-05).

On the east side of the river, the parkway drive maintains a wide right-of-way with sweeping lawns and massed vegetation. On the west side of the river, the nomination boundary bends at C Street to follow the bank. The White River Parkway West Drive continues, but it is heavily industrialized, and the parkway character was never developed. The Morris Street Bridge, an open-spandrel, Luten-designed structure c. 1929, contributes to parkway character. The White River Parkway Drive East continues past Morris Street into an industrialized section, and then stops at the Interstate 70 bridge (see photo WR-08). The nomination boundaries continue north along both sides of the of the river banks. The Kentucky Avenue Bridge c. 1925 (see photo WR-14) is included in the nomination, a multi-span, segmental concrete arch structure.

As the parkway continues north, the nomination boundaries include the Oliver Avenue bridge (see photo WR-16) and the White River Parkway West Drive between Oliver Avenue to the Washington Street Bridge (see photos WR-17 – 18). From the White River Parkway West Drive you can view the railroad bridge crossing the White River south of Washington Street, a plate girder bridge.

The White River Drive West merges into Washington Street (see photo WR-23), and a new pedestrian path (see photos WR20- WR-22) continues along the banks of the White River State Park, passing the new zoo (see photo WR-19) and tying into the former Washington Street Bridge (see photo WR-24), that has been converted to a pedestrian walkway connection between

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downtown and the White River. These projects were realized over the last thirty-years<sup>8</sup>, finally fulfilling Kessler’s vision of linking downtown with the White River parkway.

Traveling north, the nomination boundaries remain along the banks of the White River (see photo WR-26) until Astor Street, where the west parkway drive picks up (see photo WR-28). The parkway west drive is bordered by a new urban design improvements, including new London Plane street trees, pedestrian pathways, overlooks to the river, and lighting (see photos WR28-31). The east parkway drive is named Porto Alegre Street between New York Street until 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The banks of the White River are shaped by high earthen levees through this area (see photos WR32-33).

At the confluence with Fall Creek the two parkway systems (Fall Creek and White River) merge. From Stadium Drive north, the east parkway is called Waterway Boulevard to 16<sup>th</sup> Street, The White River Parkway West Drive terminates just south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The 16<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge is a segmented concrete arch bridge (see photo WR-34). North of 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the banks of the White River merge with Riverside Park (see earlier description).

The parkway includes several bridges spanning the White River, increasing long views and vistas of the water feature, and providing more access and alternative driving routes along the parkway. Bridges identified in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey that are within the limits of this nomination, include West Washington Street, Kentucky and Oliver Avenues, and Morris Street bridges. The Washington Street, Kentucky Avenue and Morris Street bridges are considered National Register candidates in the Concrete Bridge Survey. The ICRR Iron Bridge is included in this nomination and is also considered a National Register candidate.

The parkway contributes to this nomination because of its date, function and association with Kessler. A count of its resources includes:

White River Parkway	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek			2 c struct	
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
Pedestrian circulation system			1 c struct	
RR R/W between Southern Avenue and Pleasant Run			1 n/c struct	
Raymond Street Bridge			1 n/c struct	
RR Bridge between Raymond and terminus of West Street			1 c struct	
Morris Street Bridge, Luten-designed, 1929			1 c struct	
I-70 bridge			1 n/c struct	
Kentucky Avenue Bridge, 1925			1 c struct	
Oliver Ave Bridge, 1925			1 c struct	

<sup>8</sup> [www.in.gov/whiteriver/about/timeline.html](http://www.in.gov/whiteriver/about/timeline.html)

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White River Parkway (continued)	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
RR Bridge over White River, just south of Washington Street			1 c struct	
New Washington Street Bridge, c. 1985			1 n/c struct	
Old Washington Street Bridge, c. 1910			1 c struct	
New York Street Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Michigan Street Bridge			1 n/c struct	
Flood Levee, 1913			1 c struct	
10 <sup>th</sup> Street Bridge			1 n/c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>11 c struct</b> <b>7 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Burdsal Parkway

Burdsal Parkway is located on the near northwest side of Indianapolis. Its west terminus is East Riverside Drive, and its east terminus is the intersection of Fall Creek Boulevard and 24<sup>th</sup> Street, a distance of approximately 4,800 feet (see Map BD1). The parkway does not include a water feature, but was designed to provide the connection between Fall Creek Parkway and Riverside Park with the extended connection linking White River Parkway. For the most part, the parkway is a tree-lined right-of-way, with a planted median. The parkway is seven blocks long and crosses two railroad lines and the Indianapolis Water Company Canal before it connects to Fall Creek Parkway at Watkins Park. The National Register boundaries extend to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street.

From East Riverside Drive, east, the parkway is lined with bungalow homes of the period 1910-1930 that are oriented to face the parkway. Some in-fill housing, vacant lots, and a small apartment complex have changed the integrity of the setting. The two rail lines are associated with industrial enterprises, located on the north and south parkway boundaries, west of the canal. The parkway crosses the canal and continues for one longer block. The north boundary is again faced with bungalow homes, and the south boundary opens to green space along the banks of Fall Creek. A fire station is the only building located along the south boundary, east of the canal. A new-construction concrete bridge crosses the canal.

The configuration of the parkway consists of a 175-foot wide right-of-way, with the facing bungalows set back another average 17 feet. The principal spatial structure and ordering device of the parkway is the series of block-long central medians, measuring 75 feet wide. 32 feet of adjoining roadway on either long side of the medians include two lanes of traffic and a curbside-parking lane. Granite curbs delineate the historic dimensions and boundaries of the road alignments. A 10-foot tree lawn separates the street from six-foot wide sidewalks, located along the right-of-way line. Historically the medians were planted with shade trees and colorful shrubs and perennials for seasonal color. As a consistent ground cover today, the medians and tree-lawn are planted in turf. The shade trees are arrayed in a double-row straight line, in the center of the tree lawn, and along the long edges of the median (see photo BD-01). They strengthen the long axis of the parkway and orient the eye toward the focal point of the parkway, the Taggart Memorial.

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The shade trees are primarily pin oaks, with some maples as in-fill. Some dieback has occurred, therefore creating gaps in the symmetrical tree plantings.

As a designed landscape the boundaries of the parkway extend past the official boundaries to include the linear extension west into Riverside Park, terminating at White River Parkway, East Drive, behind the Taggart Memorial. The memorial is the focal point of the long view from the tree-lined medians. Extending the designed landscape into Riverside Park to the connecting White River Parkway, strengthens the importance of Burdsal Parkway as the formal connection between Fall Creek Parkway and the back bone of the system, White River Parkway.

This parkway is an integral component of the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan. It was installed as proposed, commencing in 1915, the land being acquired with money from contributions of Mr. Burdsal. It contributes to this nomination because of its date, layout, and association with the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan. Resources include:

Burdsall Parkway	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek			2 c struct	
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
Pedestrian circulation system			1 c struct	
Parkway medians			7 c struct	
Brick industrial bldg, between Canal and RR		1 n/c bldg		
Fire House, Rader and Burdsal, c. 1965		1 n/c bldg		
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>2 n/c bldgs</b>	<b>11 c struct</b>	<b>-none</b>

Ellenberger Parkway

Ellenberger Parkway is located on the eastside of Indianapolis. It extends from Ellenberger Park in a northeast direction to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The parkway consists of two roads, Ellenberger Parkway, West Drive and East Drive, and the linear open space between them (see Map EP1). The function of the parkway is to connect Pleasant Run Parkway and Ellenberger Park to 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the outer drive of Emerson and Maple Road. The 1915 plan of the Kessler Park and Boulevard System shows a rectilinear area of leased parkland, the width of the present day park, and extending to 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The same rectilinear park is illustrated in the 1928 Sheridan Plan. The dates of construction of homes along the parkway and the topographical character of the parkway indicate that the parkland was let go for development. The low, undevelopable land north of Ellenberger Park contained an intermittent stream and provided an opportunity to construct the parkway connection.

Ellenberger Parkway West Drive links to Pleasant Run Parkway at Michigan Street at the southwest corner of Ellenberger Park. The West Drive extends north to St. Clair Street and defines the west boundary of the park. The parkway turns east along the north boundary of the park and

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then turns north to follow the low elevation topography to 10<sup>th</sup> Street, a total approximate distance of 3330 feet.

The East Drive begins on St. Clair Street, midway along the north boundary of the park. It follows the topography, in broad sweeping curves, northeasterly to where it connects with Ritter Avenue before linking to 10<sup>th</sup> Street (see photo EP-01), a distance of approximately 1703 feet. Therefore the proposed National Register boundaries extend from the parcel lines of Ellenberger Park to the right-of-way line on the outside of each boundary street.

The east and west boundaries of the parkway are lined with an eclectic mix of homes constructed from 1920-40, with the majority of homes being built in the 1930s. The architectural styles include Neo-Colonial, English Cottage, Cape Cod, Neo-Classical, and Art Moderne. Six homes along the parkway are identified as contributing in the Warren Township Historic Sites and Structures Survey. The lowest elevation of the parkway extends along the linear centerline of the open space. The elevation gradually slopes westerly. The east slope abruptly rises along the east boundary of the parkway, where the East Drive runs along a ridge, and the adjacent homes are constructed along a parallel higher ridge. All homes over look the parkway from a higher elevation.

The configuration of the designed parkway extending north from the park includes a 70-foot wide right-of-way on either side of the open space. Included in that width is two lanes of roadway measuring 32 feet, and 15 to 25 feet of tree-lawn on the residential sides of each road. The setback lines of the surrounding homes extend the visual width of the parkway because the building footprint is located an average 48 feet from the front parcel line.

The vegetation consists of scattered specimens of shade and ornamental tree in a turfed open space. Linear plantings of shade trees as a tree lawn are not evident. Sidewalks have not been constructed along any of the parkway boundaries. The open space is separated from the road by wood bollards, encircling the space.

The parkway contributes to this nomination because of its date, layout, and association with the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan. Its resource include:

Ellenberger Parkway	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
2 parkway drives, either side of the creek			2 c struct	
Parkway green space site, design, materials	1 c site			
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>3 c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

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**BOULEVARDS AS A PROPERTY TYPE**

The third component of the park and boulevard system is the boulevard. Based on the platted grid system, the boulevards formed a network of transportation corridors for all modes of travel. Pedestrians were accommodated on broad sidewalks on either side of the travel lanes that were typically shaded by one to three rows of shade trees. When electric trains traveled the same route, they were located in the middle of the roadbed. The typical boulevard contained a 100-foot right-of-way, with the center 40 feet being designated for four lanes of automobile traffic. A variable width tree lawn and sidewalks measuring at least five feet wide were included on both sides of the roadway. The tree lawns separated the pedestrian from automobiles, and provided a pleasing environment for all users. The types of buildings along the route also defined the character of the boulevard. A mix of residences and commercial buildings provided a neighborhood unity to the street, and uniform building setbacks ensured continuity of view and unity in the spatial arrangement of the corridors. The commercial buildings were typically only located at the intersections of the boulevard with arterial streets. Site furnishings included specially designed street lighting.

In Kessler's Plan, the boulevards provided two types of connections; a direct route to a parkway, or a circumferential outer drive along the city limits that connected all parkways into one system. The boulevards included in this nomination are as identified in the Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan, or the later Park Board Annual Reports. They are Maple Road (38<sup>th</sup> Street) and Kessler Boulevard East, West and North Drives, the first and second circumferential, outer drives.

**The Boulevards**

Maple Road (38<sup>th</sup> Street)

38<sup>th</sup> Street was the north boundary of the old city limits. Historically it was called Maple Road. As a perimeter road, Kessler foresaw this boulevard as the first outer drive of the city, connecting Riverside Park and White River and Fall Creek Parkways.

The roadway extends from the western to eastern county line. The section beginning at Cold Springs Road and continuing east to Fall Creek parkway is included in this nomination (see Map Series TS1 – TS4). The boulevard is representative of the City Beautiful Era of City Planning, which coupled residential and commercial development with the structured development of parks and interconnected boulevarded thoroughfares.

Work began on the boulevard in 1911 with the construction of the portion between Michigan Road and Capitol Avenue and in 1914 on the portion between Capitol Avenue and Fall Creek Parkway. The segment from Michigan Road/Martin Luther King, Jr. Street to Capitol Avenue was planted with 65 sugar maples in 1912. This segment is flanked for the most part by Crown Hill Cemetery (see photos 38-01-02). The eastern segment, from Capitol to Fall Creek was planned as a commercial and residential boulevard, with structures setback 30 feet from the 40-foot roadway.

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From Fall Creek to Winthrop Avenue, the State Fairgrounds to the north and commercial/institutional land use to the south border the street (see photos 38-03-08). Alignment, widths and landform have highway characteristics, with few street side plantings. From Winthrop to Capitol Avenue, the road is bordered by mixed residential and commercial landuses, most set back from the street at the historic 30' distance, with remnant tree-lawn and setback plantings. The segment from Capitol to Michigan Road maintains its historic boulevard character; the roadway is flanked by the brick pier/wrought iron fencing of Crown Hill Cemetery, and a small segment of bungalow homes. There are remnants of old maple planting, and recently planted maples in the median. The 38<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, at Crown Hill Cemetery, is called the Maple Road Subway, and is considered a National Register candidate in the Indiana Concrete Bridge Survey. The median is maintained from Boulevard Place to slightly west of Clarendon.

The strongest boulevard imagery remains in segments such as that between Broadway Street and Boulevard Place where the road is bordered by early 20th century apartment buildings, mixed with single family bungalows, a bungalow fire station and the Coburn school.

Today the road surface has been widened to accommodate contemporary traffic, losing the center median. The high rise apartment building at Meridian Street (see photo 38-03) disrupts the spatial continuity of low-rise structures which line the rest of the boulevard. While most properties maintain their historic setback, the front yard space has often been in filled with off street parking. At the White River Bridge the boulevard becomes part of the 38th street/I-65 interchange, but does maintain its connection to both the west and east park drives of Riverside Park. The right-of-way width and building setbacks are maintained.

Maple Road (38 <sup>th</sup> Street )	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
1 roadway			1 c struct	
Maple Road Subway (viaduct) – at Crown Hill Cemetery, c. 1926, D.A. Bohlen, designer, E.C. Strathman, engineer			1 c struct	
Parkway spatial organization			1 c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>3 c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

Kessler Boulevard, East, West and North Drives

The 1909 Kessler Park and Boulevard Plan provided a master plan for the city of its time. However, by the early 1920s, an increasing population and growth of the city northward, made it apparent that a second outer drive was necessary. The city contacted Kessler in 1922 to plan this outer route. Park Board meeting minutes name and articulate this route. The establishment of Fort Benjamin Harrison, in 1904, at 56<sup>th</sup> and Post Road, the donation of Woolen's Gardens along Fall Creek at 56<sup>th</sup> Street, and Kessler's designed subdivision, Brendonwood, also along 56<sup>th</sup> at Fall Creek made the choice of a route evident.

See Map Series KB1 – KB 10 for the overall route. The planned outer drive begins where Kessler Boulevard intersects with Fall Creek Parkway at 56<sup>th</sup> Street on the NE side of Indianapolis (see

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photos KB-23-21), and continues west along the route. West of Fall Creek the boulevard, in broad gentle curves (see photo KB-20), turns north (see photos KB-19-18) and then west (see photos KB-17 thru KB-04), crossing the White River and continuing a total of 11 miles before turning south. Crossings at Crooked Creek, Central Canal and White River were all by way of historic concrete spans until the post war era. Only the Crooked Creek span survives. Daniel Luten designed this filled-spandrel arch in 1924. In 1957, county highway officials commissioned Bridge #81 for the Kessler crossing of White River. Boyd Phelps was the consulting engineer. This four-span concrete bridge with segmental arch shaped beams still serves today; with its Late Moderne detailing, it may be considered contributing in due time. At the canal, a concrete bridge likely from the 20's was replaced or greatly modified in 1992. The West Drive continues south, connecting to 38<sup>th</sup> Street (see photos KB-03 thru KB-01). The boulevard was developed between 1923 and 1929. It was incorporated into the 1928 boulevard system proposed by Lawrence Sheridan.

The boulevard is characterized by a 100-foot right-of-way that includes 40 feet of automobile roadway, mature trees in wide tree lawns, and uniform residential building setback. Sidewalks are discontinuous. Bridle paths were also included in the layout and are still evident today. Commercial businesses are limited to arterial road intersections; and churches, schools, estates, and a cemetery adjoin the boulevard.

The boulevard contributes to this nomination because of its date, function and association with Kessler. Its resources include:

Kessler Boulevard	Site	Bldg	Structure	Object
1 roadway			1 c struct	
Traces of bridle paths	1 c site		1 c struct	
Bridge over Crooked Creek, 1924			1 c struct	
Bridge over White River, 1957			1 n/c struct	
Bridge over Central Canal, 1992			1 n/c struct	
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1 c site</b>	<b>none</b>	<b>3 c struct</b> <b>2 n/c struct</b>	<b>none</b>

**TOTAL RESOURCE COUNT**

Contributing Sites	29			
Contributing Buildings		20		
Non-contributing Buildings		60		
Contributing Structures			109	
Non-contributing Structures			41	
Contributing Objects				7

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**Summary**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan is significant under Criterion A because it is associated with broad patterns of national, regional and local history. The Park and Boulevard Plan is a response to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century trend to regulate growth in cities.

It is also significant under Criterion C because it is the work of George Edward Kessler, a master in landscape architecture. The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan embodies the distinctive design characteristics of a master in response to the urban conditions of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

At the turn of the century, the United States was changing from a rural agricultural based country to an industrial world power. This transition brought several challenges, one of which was the articulation of a national identity that would distinguish the United States as a world-class country. Civic leaders in Indianapolis were part of the national movement seeking ways to beautify their city and raise the standard of living for its citizens.

Challenges before them included improving the health and welfare of the growing urban populations of unskilled workers and immigrants moving to the cities for jobs in factories; and the growing concern for the conservation of the country's natural resources, whose limits were beginning to be realized. Indianapolis as the State Capitol, the largest city in the state, and as a growing urban center located on the east-west and north-south crossroads of America, lead the state in addressing these challenges.

The nominated Park and Boulevard Plan is the city's response. The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, is significant as a city plan whose foundation was the existing natural features of the area, and whose visionary design, by a nationally known landscape architect, transformed open space, vegetation, water, and roadways into multifunctional resources designed to improve the quality of life of its' citizens. The plan merges art and engineering into a comprehensive plan that is still being used today.

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**PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan resulted from a combination of early park planning efforts (1873-1907), the visionary system plan of nationally known Landscape Architect George Kessler (1908-1923), and the later improvements that continued his plan or expanded it to the county limits (1924-present). It unites individual parks and curvilinear green spaces with an array of east-west and north-south boulevards to link the city in a network of transportation and recreation corridors that also function to guide urban growth, conserve the natural environment, limit water pollution, and provide flood control. Overall, this urban plan improves the quality of life of its residents, fosters economic growth, equates Indianapolis with other world-class cities, and preserves the natural environment for sustained, long-term growth and development of the city and region.

**A MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**

The visionary system combined components of parks, parkways and boulevards into the first comprehensive urban plan for Indianapolis. Landscape architect George E. Kessler designed the master plan in 1909, with some alterations in the following years. Kessler unexpectedly died in 1923, and landscape architect, Lawrence Sheridan, expanded the plan to the county limits. The plan is one of eighteen park and boulevard plans that Kessler designed for cities across the United States. It is also one of two-hundred thirty known projects attributed to his one-man office. It is the first Kessler park and boulevard system in Indiana and was subsequently followed by plans for South Bend, Fort Wayne and Terre Haute, Indiana. Kessler was a part of the second generation of landscape architects practicing in the United States, following the early pioneers of the profession; Frederick Law Olmsted, H. W. S. Cleveland and Jacob Weidenman. His design work was not a response to the City Beautiful Movement, but rather his own interpretation of the importance of melding classic design and formality with natural resources to improve the quality of life of his constituents.

The plan is significant as a planned urban system, because it uses the classical German city planning tenets to organize the circulation system to accommodate all forms of transportation, from the central downtown business core of the city to the outlying regions, thus laying the foundation for future growth in the city. The conservation of the natural resources of the city and the health of the constituents were the main priorities and the basis of the system. The plan uses engineered structures, such as bridges, seawalls, dams and levees to control flooding, which in turn contributed to the health of both the residents and the environment. The health of the citizens was also a

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component of the plan, where open space, natural vegetation, playgrounds, playfields, wading pools, and strolling paths provided recreation and social opportunities.

To Germans, city planning was a "fine art and a technical science,"<sup>1</sup> planned with deliberate and conscious determination. Kessler skillfully manipulated the resources to serve many functions at one time. Open spaces are more than just green; roads are more than automobile thoroughfares; and water is more than a natural feature. In so doing, the engineered function of a resource was always overlain with an artful hand that used quality of life in human context as the key design criteria.

Kessler is often overshadowed by the work of the Olmsteds, however his talent and designed plans are located throughout the country. An example of his talent is the park and boulevard system located in Indianapolis. The parkways, more than any other property type in this nomination, are a complete synthesis of engineering and art. They merged the City Beautiful tenets of design with the City Practical, where function and beauty were equally considered. Intricate Beaux Arts details on built structures, added art to functionality, solidifying the unity between classic design and modern technology within the natural setting of Indianapolis.

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

- A: The plan is significant in Community planning and development because it is a physical manifestation of the American ideal.
- A: The plan is significant in Community planning and development because it is the first comprehensive urban plan for Indianapolis.
- A: The plan is significant in Conservation because it is an example of a turn of the century response to a trend to protect the natural environment.
- A: The plan is significant in Health/medicine and Social History because it is an example of a response to a trend for government to provide public recreation facilities, open space, and clean water as a means to improving the health of the citizens.
  
- C: The plan is significant in Community planning and development because it is an example of comprehensive German town planning .

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<sup>1</sup> Baxter 72-95

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- C: The plan is significant in Transportation because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type of system (German).
- C: The plan is significant in Engineering because it illustrates turn of the century flood control measures, and construction techniques (bridges, road layout).
- C: The plan is significant in Entertainment/recreation because it is an example of recreation planning at the turn of century.
- C: The plan is significant in Landscape Architecture because it is the work of a master.
- C: The plan is significant in Landscape Architecture because it has high artistic value.

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**Narrative**

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Open space and man's ability to live and thrive within it has been a component of the development of Indianapolis since 1820, when nine commissioners and the governor traveled by horse from southern Indiana to the center of the state to locate a site for the establishment of a new state capital. Prior to statehood in 1816, Indiana was a component of the Northwest Territory, and the territorial capital was located in Vincennes, Indiana, along the Wabash River approximately 120-miles southwest of Indianapolis. Due to both trade and conflict with Native-Americans, the majority of growth and development in the state began along the two primary riverine transportation corridors, the Wabash and Ohio Rivers, bordering the west and southern boundaries of the state. The first state capitol was Corydon, IN located along the Ohio River. The signing of the Treaty of St. Mary's (Ohio) in 1818, requiring the Delaware and Miami Indians to leave the state by 1821, opened the interior to organized settlement, and it was decided by Governor Jonathon Jennings to relocate the capital to the center of the state. A central location, fertile land and access to a navigable river were the three criteria for the location. (See Map 8a.)

The land that the governor and commissioners traveled through is described by Geib<sup>2</sup> as follows:

"The forest was everywhere. Stretching from the moraine hills in the south to the grassy prairies near Lake Michigan, trees dominated the plains of central Indiana in 1820. Virgin timber was the rule. A forest crown of 90 to 120 feet above the ground was common, and individual trees ten feet or more in diameter were not unknown. Fifty or more species could be found, although reports prepared by the government surveyors suggested beeches and sugar maples were predominant in the area, which would become Marion County [the location of Indianapolis].

Beneath the trees was a rich moist soil. Scraped and leveled in earlier times by succeeding glaciers, the land was covered with a thick humus layer created by the decomposition of centuries of fallen leaves. Surface drainage was often poor, creating many ponds and springs to hold the waters not carried off by the

<sup>2</sup> Geib 10

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broad shallow streams and rivers that drained toward the Wabash River. Flora and fauna were remarkably varied. Indiana was the extreme range of many species . . . . "

The commissioners viewed the river's high bluffs from 15 miles north at William Connor's settlement. The site that they chose for the capital, the southeast side of the confluence of Fall Creek and White River "offered safe supports for road bridges; the creek's falls seemed ideal for future milling sites and the level landscape promised both ample farmland and room for extensive urban expansion . . . . They approved the site despite the swampy creeks and bayous that would long plague public health."<sup>3</sup>

The name of the new city was also important to the early state planners. After much debate, the name Indianapolis was chosen. The titling of the city arose from the roots of democracy; the early Roman republic and the ancient Greek city-state the *polis*. The name *Indianapolis* "would serve as an enduring reminder of the special spirit of frontier Indiana."<sup>4</sup>

**Ralston Plan**

The process of creating a city synonymous with being the State Capitol continued with the hiring of Alexander Ralston and Elias Pym Fordham. Ralston was associated with Pierre L'Enfant and the Plan of Washington D.C. Fordham was familiar with Morris Birkbeck's English settlements in Illinois. Together they platted the original plan of the city in 1821.

"Starting with a rectilinear grid of 90-foot wide streets similar to many county towns, they symmetrically shifted the government buildings away from the city center—the Statehouse two blocks west, the Courthouse two blocks east. Next they drew the main business street south of the government buildings, assuring Washington Street's prominence by its special 120-foot width. Then, to provide a focal point for the plan, they chose a rounded hill of sugar maples a block north of Washington Street for a circular meeting of Market and Meridian Streets. Finally, to complete their main design, four diagonals were added, each ending a block short of the Circle."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Geib 13

<sup>4</sup> Geib 14

<sup>5</sup> Geib 14

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With their main outline complete for the "Mile Square," they sketched in several more of the town's unique sites. To the north, between Meridian and Pennsylvania Street they reserved a one-block site for a future state university. To the east, they placed a market across from the Courthouse. And to the south, they paid the first formal acknowledgment of the town's poor drainage by sketching an irregular set of lots along Pogue's Run, a shallow swampy creek named for one of the site's settlers."<sup>6</sup>

The provision of open space was not a priority in the plan because the wilderness was no more than a half-mile walk from anywhere in the city. The plat of the Mile Square however, did provide planned open space. Three sets of triangles positioned along the northeast, northwest and southwest diagonals formed "squares" of green within the residential neighborhoods. With the exception of the southeast quadrant of the plat, the gridded plan was done without regard for the topography or landforms of the area. (See Map 8b.)

As with any urban plan, the actual growth pattern can not be predicted 100 percent, and changes to the plan are inevitable as a part of the process. The first response to the layout was evidenced when the first 314 lots were sold in 1821.<sup>7</sup> The majority of residential units sold were north and east, as far away from the swamps and lowlands of the White River as possible.

"That decision fixed the northside as a fashionable residential neighborhood. It consigned the riverfront area to more than a century of commercial ventures and working-class housing. The early shift away from the river resulted in the addition of the first streets [outside of the Mile Square]. North, South, East and West Streets were included along the edges of the Mile Square to surround the town with a future carriageway."<sup>8</sup>

Three other early changes occurred that affected the open space provisions of the original city. Land was added outside of the original plat for military grounds and the city cemetery. The square originally planned to be occupied by a university became a city park.

<sup>6</sup> Geib, 14

<sup>7</sup> Gray, 1479

<sup>8</sup> Geib, 14

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The university that was to occupy a block in the Ralston Plan was never established, but the Marion County Seminary occupied the site from 1833 to 1853, and the first city high school was located there from 1853 to 1858. The building was demolished in 1860 when the land was needed for training grounds during the Civil War.<sup>9</sup>

After the Civil War, through the efforts of a local citizen John S. Spann, the urban green space was improved with amenities for passive recreation. Improvements included walkways, a fountain surrounded by benches, and a bandstand for social gatherings and entertainment. It officially opened as a city park in 1876 and was called University Square.<sup>10</sup>

Military Park, the oldest park in the city, is located outside of the original Mile Square approximately midway along the western town boundary. Congress donated the land for the 14-acre park to Indiana in 1827 for the primary purpose of being a military training ground and camp. However, public events, such as the first July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration (1822) and many state fairs were also held there. During the Civil War, the park was used as a military camp for recruitment and training, and was known as Camp Sullivan. The park suffered from this heavy use, and it took the efforts of a civic-minded resident, George Merritt to restore it. His efforts resulted in the construction of a pool with a rock island, limestone fountain, playground, civil war relics, a pavilion for social gatherings and a circular drive for strolling and horse-drawn pleasure drives. New trees and shrubs were also planted at this time.<sup>11</sup>

The third open space used for rambling and strolling was the city "bury grounds" established in 1824. The cemetery known as Green Lawn was located along the White River, outside of the corner of the southwest quadrant of the Mile Square. It contained 25 acres. It came into disrepair, particularly with the opening of Crownhill Cemetery in 1864, and the last interment was in 1890.<sup>12</sup>

Connie J. Zeigler describes another example of citizen led city beautification and a broad view of the residential setting in the early years of the development of Indianapolis is in the Encyclopedia of Indianapolis.

<sup>9</sup> Rollin 1375

<sup>10</sup> Zeigler 894

<sup>11</sup> Trulock 1009

<sup>12</sup> Sanford 394

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"Upon her arrival in Indianapolis in 1837, minister Henry Ward Beecher's wife, Eunice Bullard Beecher, noted that the town's homes were not close together (by New England standards) but rather separated by wide backyards, with front lawns facing tree-lined streets. Although the availability of land made these spacious lawns possible, it was their aesthetic appeal, which impressed Mrs. Beecher. Significantly her descriptions suggest that Indianapolis fit the ideals of the national "village improvement" of the 1850s, which sought to beautify towns with parks, parkways, and tree-lined drives. In turn, the movement probably motivated Indianapolis' first "pleasure garden," which John Hodgkins developed around 1850 at the corner of Tennessee [now Capitol Street] and Georgia Streets. Hodgkins planted the grounds with fruit trees and flower beds, built bowers for flowering vines, and placed seats in advantageous spots."<sup>13</sup>

As with the rest of the Eastern and Midwestern United States, the period from 1850 to 1920 was considered a transition time in Indiana and Indianapolis.

"Economic change accompanied social, political, and cultural change and often functioned as the prime mover in transition from a pioneer, rural, agrarian society to a modern, urban, industrial one. By the beginning of the twentieth century Indiana was often cited as the most typical of American states, perhaps because Hoosiers in this age of transition generally resisted radical change and were able usually to balance moderate change with due attention to the continuities of life and culture. . . . And when they [Hoosiers] spoke of progress, as they were often wont to do, it was usually progress of an economic sort. Here was the American Dream, one most Hoosiers fully shared in belief if not always in fact."<sup>14</sup>

The American dream then was being challenged by changes that in themselves nudged and maintained that dream in the 20<sup>th</sup> and then 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The challenges included a county population increase of a magnitude of 700 times, from an estimated 400 to 500 people (in Indianapolis) in late 1821 to county populations of 24,103 in 1850; 102,782 in 1880; 197,227 in 1900, and 348,061 in 1920. The southern migration north after the Civil War increased the county population of African-Americans from 650 in 1850 to 8,038 in 1880; 17,536 in 1900; and 35,364 in 1920. At the same time the population of foreign born rose from 1,949 in 1850 to 14,743 in 1880; 18,724 in 1900, and 18,185 in

<sup>13</sup> Zeigler 894

<sup>14</sup> Madison 146

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1920. The foreign born immigrating to Indianapolis were primarily from two countries. Of a total foreign-born population of 6,713 in 1860; 3,913 were from Germany, followed by 1,748 from Ireland. In 1910 the foreign-born population of 21,023 in the county also immigrated from two primary countries; 8,304 from Germany, and 3,383 from Ireland.<sup>15</sup>

Associated with this increase in population were challenges to health, housing, socialization, and transportation. All quality of life issues and therefore associated with the American Dream for both the new and old residents of Indianapolis.

Health challenges included air borne pollution from factories, open-dumping and sewage flow in the rivers and streams, lack of sunlight in high rise housing and factories, and long hours of work. Housing issues included highly congested urban town centers. Socialization challenges included the assimilation of the new cultural groups and providing egalitarian opportunities for community building. The transportation challenges for Indianapolis were magnified but opportunistic because of its central location. Indianapolis was faced with efficiently moving people and goods within the city, maintaining communication with the rest of the state, and taking regional and national advantage of its location at the crossroads of east-west and north-south transportation routes in the United States. The White River, first assumed to be navigable by large boats, proved otherwise, thus eliminating riverine transportation from the choices.

The industrial revolution aided in solving some of these challenges. The first railroad line was introduced in Indianapolis in 1847, and in 1880 twelve lines radiated from the city. Public mass transit began in 1864 when mule-drawn streetcars were introduced. Indianapolis was electrified in 1882, and the streetcars were completely electrified by 1894. The large number of Interurban lines in the city resulted in it being called the "Interurban Capital of the World."<sup>16</sup> Aiding low-cost, independent travel was the invention of the bicycle in the 1890s. The automobile appeared in Indianapolis in the 1890s and the first section of concrete road was constructed along West Riverside Drive (Cold Springs Road) as a test in 1914<sup>17</sup>

The challenges though, did not deter the American Dream for the growing capitol of Indiana. Promotional literature at the turn of the century called Indianapolis a "city of

<sup>15</sup> Taylor 650, 654, 658

<sup>16</sup> Gray 192

<sup>17</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Report 41

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homes," with the highest percentage of single-family houses (94 per cent) of any large turn-of-the-century American city.<sup>18</sup>

It was in the first two decades of the twentieth century, that renowned landscape architect George E. Kessler made a permanent and lasting impression on the city of Indianapolis.<sup>19</sup> With his 1909 Park and Boulevard plan for the city, Kessler not only changed the urban infrastructure he also popularized the very concept of municipal planning in Indiana. His plan and its implementation demonstrated for both the policymakers and the public of Indianapolis the practicability of coordinated city planning, and other cities in the state soon followed the example he set forth in the capital.

At the turn of the century, many cities across the nation learned the benefits and challenges of planned city development. The rapid urbanization and industrialization of the new century necessitated a thoughtful response to health, transportation, housing and other problems created by many people living in close quarters. Cities also engaged in concerted efforts to improve the aesthetic urban expression, in what became known as the national City Beautiful Movement. During this push for municipal beautification, Kessler first arrived in Indianapolis. The city tasked Kessler with creating a park system to improve the overall appearance of the city, but from the beginning Kessler's ambitious ideas for Indianapolis reached beyond the mere addition of open space or new playgrounds. He envisioned a city not only beautiful but also functional and set forth to bring that vision into reality. While his plan was not entirely realized, it remains a defining step in the evolution of Indianapolis as a city.

A contemporary of George Kessler once reminisced about the landscape architect's first visit to Indianapolis. Upon arriving in the city, Kessler set out to survey the lay of the land, touring various urban areas to better understand the current conditions. He knew that in order to develop a workable park plan, he needed to first determine the present state of things. Toward the end of his tour, Kessler looked at the view of the city afforded on a bridge over Fall Creek at Northwestern Avenue, which is the present day Michigan Road/Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. His view included ramshackle shanties and riverbanks strewn with garbage, things he had seen throughout his inspection of Indianapolis. Undaunted, Kessler said to his companions, "You have beautiful

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<sup>18</sup> Madison 177

<sup>19</sup> Seawell

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possibilities there," and then proceeded to attempt to bring the possibilities seen in his mind's eye into reality.<sup>20</sup>

**City Beautiful Movement**

In order to understand Kessler's seemingly naïve optimism for Indianapolis, a closer examination of the City Beautiful Movement is in order. This national call to beautification centered on the idea that cities could be healthy places to live, aesthetically pleasing to inhabitants and visitors alike. City Beautiful peaked in the first decade of the century, but like all national movements, it began long before receiving a label. This municipal movement can trace its roots to the pre-Civil War "village improvement" efforts of the 1850s. As New England village inhabitants began to gravitate towards cities, various towns and hamlets implemented a range of improvements to stay their declining population. Although these random village efforts never evolved into a cohesive comprehensive planning process, they did anticipate later planning initiatives. The beautification practices established by small towns in order to maintain their populations were ironically implemented by large cities trying to entice more tourists and new residents.<sup>21</sup>

In the eastern United States the man who became the father of the City Beautiful Movement established the specialized practice of park planning. Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., the most influential landscape planner in United States history, planned subdivisions, estates and park and boulevards in New York, Boston and other cities during the second half of the nineteenth century. During this time, these cities founded their first parks in response to the increasing density of population, especially in poorer tenement areas. Rampant pollution and overcrowding resulted in an accurate perception of the American city as being an unhealthy environment. In the years following the Civil War, American landscape architects responded to the increasingly negative urban image by using their art to celebrate and romanticize the restorative powers of rural nature.<sup>22</sup> This popular understanding of the city greatly influenced Olmsted, and his park landscapes included many "large romantic pleasure grounds" such as New York's Central Park (founded in 1857), designed to give city dwellers a place to escape and reprieve from their urban environment.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *Indianapolis News*, March 31, 1923

<sup>21</sup> Wilson

<sup>22</sup> Jackson 57

<sup>23</sup> Scott 11

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City Beautiful historian William Wilson noted that Olmsted's belief in the basic undesirability of cities distinguishes him from the later movement. Kessler for instance, made no such concession to the detrimental effects of city life but sought to improve and redeem the urban experience. Yet despite his differences from later municipal planning efforts, Olmsted greatly influenced the next generation of city planners. He founded the American concept of systematic park and boulevard development, and established landscape architects as the proper professional practitioners to create such urban landscapes. Furthermore, Wilson credits Olmsted with an "intellectual legacy" that emphasized the importance of natural beauty in the urban landscape, the relationship of beauty and utility in urban design and the necessity of expert planning.<sup>24</sup>

The profession of municipal planning took another giant step forward into the public consciousness at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago. More than 21 million people, or 5-10 percent of the population of the United States, visited this celebration of Columbus' journey to the Americas. One of the most influential areas of the exposition was the famed "White City," a beautiful civic center or collection of government buildings of neo-classical design, constructed by exposition planners as an example of the urban ideal. Although many urban historians overemphasized the influence of the "White City" on the City Beautiful, the Colombian Exposition certainly helped shape the movement. While Olmsted demonstrated the importance of nature as a counter-balance to urban living, the "White City" established civic pride as an important underpinning of municipal beautification. The exposition's neoclassic architecture, reminiscent of the simple and stately form of past Greek and Roman Republics, became the architectural form of choice for City Beautiful. Neo-classicism was championed as a way to bring physical materialization to the political ideals of United States democracy.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the clean sanitary conditions of the exposition demonstrated to the nation that the urban environment could provide a positive, healthy experience. A new optimism replaced Olmsted's urban pessimism, and built on his planning model in order to create beautiful cities.

This movement towards a "willingness to accept the city on its own terms" introduced the United States Progressive Era.<sup>26</sup> The Progressives believed in the possibility of positive urban change, and that forward thinking, educated individuals needed to work together to effect that change for the betterment of all. Progressivism encompassed both a

<sup>24</sup> Wilson 22-23

<sup>25</sup> Wilson 62-63

<sup>26</sup> Boyer 278

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political and social reform movement, and the City Beautiful served as its physical manifestation. The term "city beautiful" first referred to an 1899 New York City anti-billboard campaign.<sup>27</sup> Soon it became the label for a wide range of beautification efforts including park and boulevard planning, the establishment of civic centers, tree and flower planting, alley clean-ups, regulating factory smoke pollution, and billboard and trash removal. By 1906, more than 2,000 local improvement societies actively completed beautification projects throughout the United States.<sup>28</sup> The American Civic Association (ACA), established in 1903, served as a national entity dedicated to municipal reform and improvement. ACA president J. Horace McFarland became a nationally recognized City Beautiful advocate.<sup>29</sup>

The movement drew inspiration from the form and function of European cities. Olmsted had studied in Europe, concentrating especially on the landscapes of England and Italy, and the next generation followed his example.<sup>30</sup> As the United States emerged as a world power at the turn of the century, many citizens of the young nation looked to the example of the European renaissance as a model for the cultural movement they wished to duplicate on their side of the Atlantic.<sup>31</sup> The City Beautiful embraced the example of Europe, by combining European design tradition with natural American landscapes and using both imported species and native plants to create a unique brand of landscape design.

City Beautiful attracted supporters in cities across the nation. Mostly white, middle and upper class businessmen and professionals such as attorneys and physicians, as well as the local Commercial Clubs and other organizations to which they belonged, carried out the various urban renewal programs associated with the movement.<sup>32</sup> These individuals and organizations participated in beautification for a variety of reasons. Some became involved because they believed that clean-up efforts could improve the real estate values of their urban property, while making their city more attractive as a place to live or visit. In correspondence, public addresses and newspaper interviews, movement leaders consistently identified the economic benefit of beautification as a motivation for their activities. However, their bottom-line was not the only reason for

<sup>27</sup> Wilson 37

<sup>28</sup> Scott 66

<sup>29</sup> Wilson 50

<sup>30</sup> Wilson 14

<sup>31</sup> Culbertson 101

<sup>32</sup> Wilson 75

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participation in City Beautiful. Wilson has identified a list of factors that combined to make urban beautification an attractive option for the early twentieth century businessman. These factors included the emergence of social recognition of the growing problems of urban pollution; the introduction of Reform Darwinism, which empowered reform movements by emphasizing the potential of human progress; a general non-Marxist "class-consciousness," which led to the development of parks for the enjoyment of the lower classes; and an "enthusiastic welcome of the city" and a rejection of the previous generation's repudiation of urban life.<sup>33</sup>

Later critics and many historians of City Beautiful downplayed the reform benefits of the clean-up efforts and civic planning. They decried the movement as a merely aesthetic alteration of certain aspects of the city, and criticized the fact that many of the park, boulevard and civic center plans were never fully implemented. Critics also colored City Beautiful as a mechanism of social coercion, an attempt by the urban elite to control the general masses through landscape design. They questioned the practical benefit of beautification, and by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, City Beautiful began to give way to a new phase of planning often called City Functional or City Practical.

The critical observations about City Beautiful hold some validity. For instance, the movement never graduated to tackling more complex urban problems such as overcrowded tenement housing. Yet, within the scope of its intended results, City Beautiful ushered in a measure of lasting and remarkable change. The parkways that wind through many modern cities, the urban green spaces that continue to offer natural respite in urban centers and the stately buildings that still function as the governmental hubs of many downtowns, all serve as a physical testament to the movement's success. Perhaps even more importantly, the clean-up initiatives, park and boulevard plans and the development of civic centers laid the necessary groundwork for future and more extensive park planning efforts. The experience of Indianapolis demonstrates this more substantial impact of City Beautiful.

The movement for city beautification began in Indianapolis much as it did in other parts of the nation: Various businessmen and professionals recognized the need for a concerted effort towards city clean ups and park establishment. The City Beautiful Movement in the capital consisted entirely of white males. These men had read about and witnessed the success of such efforts in other cities, and believed that for

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<sup>33</sup> Wilson 76086

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Indianapolis to remain a competitive urban destination it must keep pace with the national urge toward beautification. Particularly, the Indianapolis business establishment focused their attention and their effort on establishing a city park system. In 1910, an *Indianapolis Star* article brought to the public "a most instructive lesson from the statistics of the census this year" that demonstrated "the cities which are making the most rapid gains in population are those like Kansas City and Detroit, where people have learned the value of park improvements, and have attained the highest results along that line."<sup>34</sup> The actual strength of the correlation between the establishment of park systems and urban growth can be debated. However, the business community of Indianapolis certainly believed that the planned implementation of open space and beautification of the urban landscape would improve their city's chances for tourism as well as permanent growth.

City Beautiful did not introduce parks to the capital. In 1864, businessman George Merritt helped revitalize Military Park, the first park that included a playground in the city.<sup>35</sup> The 97-acre Garfield Park became a cornerstone of the Indianapolis park system on the city's south side in 1893, and the city continued to acquire park land sporadically. In 1894 the Commercial Club, a precursor to the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, hired Joseph Earnshaw from Cincinnati, Ohio, to study the possibility of establishing a park system for the city. Earnshaw identified two waterways, White River and Fall Creek, as the most important natural features for consideration in Indianapolis park planning. However, Earnshaw's recommendations proved too expensive for the Commercial Club to implement, so instead they decided to start a city park board to oversee the project.<sup>36</sup>

The next decade of Indianapolis park history featured mixed results in park development. Park advocates gained an important ally in their park-building efforts in 1895, when Mayor Thomas Taggart assumed office. Mayor Taggart was a "strong supporter of parks" and "instrumental in laying the foundations for the parks system." During his administration the city acquired more than 1,100 acres of land, including much of Riverside Park on the city's north side.<sup>37</sup> Budgetary difficulties continually impeded the board from making substantial progress in park development. The Commercial Club again attempted to bring in an outside planner to aid Indianapolis' park

<sup>34</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, September 15, 1910

<sup>35</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, August 25, 1912

<sup>36</sup> O'Day 44-48

<sup>37</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation 84

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efforts. In 1895, John Charles Olmsted, the stepson of the great eastern landscape architect consulted on the plan that focused on Fall Creek and the White River. However, by 1907 only a portion of the Fall Creek Boulevard had been built, comprised of a " distance measured in yards, not miles."<sup>38</sup> That same year the board lost its Superintendent and Engineer for parks, J. Clyde Powers, after many months of investigation into allegations that he used his position as superintendent to further his own business interests.<sup>39</sup> See Map 8c.

Yet these setbacks did not deter the men who believed in the necessity of a viable park system for the benefit of their city. Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, the Commercial Club maintained standing committees on parks and beautification issues. They monitored the progress of the Board of Park Commissioners, especially the board's attempts to build a parkway along Fall Creek.<sup>40</sup> In 1903, the club formed the Indianapolis Civic Improvement Association, which oversaw projects such as passing out flower seeds for school children to plant, holding lawn improvement contests, clearing alleys and cutting weeds in vacant lots.<sup>41</sup>

#### Kessler Plan

Not satisfied with these piecemeal advances towards beautification, several Commercial Club members decided to take more direct roles in the parks movement. By December of 1907, all four members of the Park Board also belonged to the Commercial Club. Led by the new board president, respected physician Dr. Henry Jameson, these men set out to form a plan to finally develop the park system they had envisioned for two decades. They realized that in order to ensure the success of their park aspirations they needed to hire a professional park planner, someone equal to the challenges facing the realization of an Indianapolis park system.<sup>42</sup>

Their search led them to George E. Kessler, who by the early 1900s has established himself as one of the preeminent landscape architects in the nation. Known as a leading national figure of the City Beautiful Movement, Kessler actively engaged in several national organizations built around urban beautification.<sup>43</sup> Born in 1862 in Germany,

<sup>38</sup> O'Day 49-50, 56, 65, 74

<sup>39</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, July 7, 1906, November 3, 1907, November 20, 1906

<sup>40</sup> CCI Fourteenth Year RO 14-15

<sup>41</sup> CCI Fourteenth Year RO, 15 and CCI Fifteenth Year RO 16-17

<sup>42</sup> CCI, Eighteenth Year RO

<sup>43</sup> Wilson, 36

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Kessler first moved to the United States at the age of three. His family lived in Hoboken, New Jersey, briefly in St. Louis and Hannibal, Missouri, and Wisconsin, and then settled in Dallas, Texas. As a young man his mother decided that he needed to be educated to "develop his creative powers, but with a practical element." It was decided that he should study landscape architecture because it "combined the right degree of creativity and practicality to suit her son's temperament. Through botany he could cultivate his love of the beautiful, while the inflexible formulas of engineering forced discipline upon his mind." Kessler moved back to Germany, and had private instruction in botany, forestry, and landscape design. He took courses at Weimar, the Neue Garten in Potsdam and Charlottenburg and then ended his formal education with a course in civil engineering at the University of Jena. The last year of his schooling was spent traveling to major cities from Paris to Moscow to study civic design. He returned to the United States in 1882, at the age of 20, to begin his career.<sup>44</sup> This European education would influence his planning career in America, following the City Beautiful tradition of wedding European formalism with the American landscape. Specifically, Kessler appreciated the "flowing road system" he found connecting the park landscapes of Germany, and this concept of the parkway became a signature trait of Kessler's work.<sup>45</sup>

Kessler's first planning triumph was his ambitious work in Kansas City. The 1893 Kansas City Park and Boulevard Plan quickly caught the attention of the Midwest and the nation, and became a blueprint for Kessler's later work. In this seminal plan Kessler identified Kansas City's rivers as key corridors for the development of boulevards and parks. He conceived a three-tier system including parkways, smaller parks along these roads and larger parks at the city outskirts. The parkways served as the most important portion of the plan, connecting the pieces of the system and providing park access to citizens throughout the city.<sup>46</sup> The plan met with early success as city leaders seized his ideas and began to implement them. In Kansas City, Kessler also showed a willingness to sell the financial advantages of his park and boulevard scheme. He readily explained the "economic" benefits of his plans, and soon many other cities listened to his message.<sup>47</sup>

Eleven years later, Kessler met with another great success, this time in St. Louis, Missouri. In the Gateway City the now nationally recognized landscape architect took

<sup>44</sup> [www.georgekessler.org](http://www.georgekessler.org)

<sup>45</sup> Culbertson, 99-101

<sup>46</sup> Culbertson, 103

<sup>47</sup> Culbertson 103

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the assignment of landscape design for the 1904 World's Fair. Again, Kessler rose to the occasion, and the positive reception of his work at the World's Fair solidified his place in the field of planning. Kessler moved his office to St. Louis, Missouri, and thereafter the centrally located city served as the hub of his national planning efforts. In 1907, Kessler introduced a park and boulevard plan to his new home city. Although the St. Louis political climate provided many challenges to the plan's realization, it was, at least on paper, a success. Kessler attempted to guide the implementation of his parks and boulevard plan in this hostile environment. He also solidified his progressive belief in the civic benefit inherent to a planned urban landscape.

In his analysis of the City Beautiful in St. Louis, Edward Rafferty emphasized the progressive motivation of park and boulevard work. Kessler and other members of the City Beautiful "embodied their notions of social control." Planned landscape designers attempted to "bring order and harmony to city life" and the City Beautiful tried to correct "the undeveloped civic spirit and loyalty that created the problems of decay of twentieth century cities."<sup>48</sup> This correlation between the physical condition and the city's "civic spirit" remained a defining characteristic of Kessler's career. Later critics of City Beautiful used this admission of attempting to influence the people's civic pride as evidence of the movement's insidious social agenda. The fact that Kessler resided in an exclusive and restrictive St. Louis neighborhood further fueled the fire of claims that his designs attempted to maintain the urban status quo, in part by providing parkways usable by only the rich who could afford automobiles. However, during his life, few people questioned Kessler's motives and most celebrated his successes.

He received correspondence from many different local and national planning and civic development organizations asking for advice and guidance in their efforts on behalf of America's cities. He held memberships in the American Civic Association, the American Academy of Engineers and the Academy of Science of St. Louis amongst many other organizations. He did not, however, join the American Society of Landscape Architects until later in life. Historian Kurt Culbertson explains that the organization founded in 1899 did not invite the midwestern city planner into their ranks, because they considered the scope of his work beyond the realm suitable for landscape architects.<sup>49</sup> Certainly, Kessler's work encompassed many issues besides parks and boulevards. His firm designed bridges and gave authoritative advice on their construction. His correspondence includes many references to railroad issues, fountain design, flood

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<sup>48</sup> Rafferty, 44

<sup>49</sup> Tishler, 106

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control, sewer management and other engineering topics that ranged outside of the common subject matter of the landscape architect.<sup>50</sup> Thus ironically, his own professional organization spurned one of the most revered landscape architects of his time.

Apparently, the nation's city officials and businessmen did not mind Kessler's exclusion. In a September 16, 1910, letter to Richard Watrous, the secretary of the American Civic Association, Kessler could report a full planning schedule. Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas; Denver, Colorado; East St. Louis, Illinois; Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, Indiana; Memphis, Tennessee; Cincinnati and Hamilton, Ohio; and Syracuse, New York had all joined Kansas City and St. Louis in engaging Kessler's services.<sup>51</sup> Later clients included St. Joseph, Missouri; South Bend, Indiana; Miami University of Ohio; cities in China; work on World War I emergency town project design and several others.<sup>52</sup>

Throughout the nation and beyond its borders Kessler designed park systems, consulted on various matters of urban design and generally supported the local efforts of the business community and city park boards. Kessler's plans meant more than creating new roads and parks or altering the cosmetic make-up of American urban life. They outlined specific, planned changes to the form and function of these cities. Perhaps Italian scholar, Francesco Dal Co, best described the impact of Kessler's large volume of work:

Kessler furthermore described the proposed improvements as the foundation for a comprehensive project of urban renewal; as designed the parks explicitly contested the city's grid pattern structure and established the premises of a redistribution and restructuring plan that affected not only the monumental areas but also the degraded and obsolete sections of the city.<sup>53</sup>

Kessler intended to change and improve the urban experience for America, and City Beautiful participants in cities throughout the land supported his efforts.

Such extensive credentials and experience made Kessler the obvious choice in the Indianapolis Board of Park Commissioner's search for a park-planning consultant. First

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<sup>50</sup> Missouri Historical Society archives, document boxes 19-22

<sup>51</sup> Missouri Historical Society archives, document box 22

<sup>52</sup> Culbertson, 112-114

<sup>53</sup> Francesco Dal Co, 178

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hired on February 1, 1908, Kessler spent a year researching the existing conditions of the municipality. Although his central offices remained in St. Louis, he spent time in Indianapolis studying the city's current parks, waterways and transportation system.<sup>54</sup> During the planning process, the Board of Park Commissioners took a trip to Kansas City "...for an inspection of the park and boulevard plan of that city."<sup>55</sup> Finally as 1908 drew to a close the board reported: "While the work done was largely a work of preparation of larger things to come, the results have been encouraging in the highest degree."<sup>56</sup>

In 1909 the time of research paid off when Kessler submitted his Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan as part of the Board of Park Commissioner's Annual Report. Kessler's plan included a map showing his recommendations for park and parkway development along with accompanying text further explaining his ideas. It became the blueprint of Indianapolis park development for the next decade, and continues to serve as the basis of the city's park system to the present day. See Maps 8d – 8h.

In order to accurately understand Kessler's proposed park and boulevard system, one must first understand the city for which he planned. Indianapolis was a much smaller city in 1909 than it is today. The state capital building could be seen from all corners of the city as the tallest structure on the landscape.<sup>57</sup> The southern border was Southern Avenue and 38<sup>th</sup> Street defined the northern boundary of the city. Available and affordable transportation helped define the limits of urban expansion in the early twentieth century. The "interurban," an electric rail system between cities served as one method of travel. In 1918, at the system's peak, 128,145 interurban trips carried 7,519,634 passengers through the Indianapolis Traction Terminal, located on Market Street, east of the capital building.<sup>58</sup> Another method of travel that brought daily commuters to the central business and industrial district was the Indianapolis streetcar system. The city limits of Indianapolis were dictated by the available means of transportation, a national phenomenon well explained in Kenneth Jackson's exhaustive 1985 study of growth of American suburbs, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. The use of streetcars and interurbans combined to support a strong centralized downtown district that would lie at the center of Kessler's plan (see Map 8f).

<sup>54</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 18-25 and attached map

<sup>55</sup> Minutes of the Board of Park Commissioners, 12, 26

<sup>56</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 4

<sup>57</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, August 6, 1911

<sup>58</sup> Madison, 196

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The Park and Boulevard Plan included several key components, but showed its greatest ingenuity in its comprehensive nature. Kessler explained that although Indianapolis had built a good base of park land in the city prior to his arrival, there was "no definite or studied plan for the expansion of the park system to meet the needs of your growing city."<sup>59</sup> Prior to Kessler's plan, the capital had set aside park land in a haphazard fashion. An article in the *Indianapolis News* stated that at the time of Kessler's arrival boulevards ran "beginning nowhere and ending in the same place."<sup>60</sup> There existed no real intention to tie these disjointed pieces into a cohesive system to benefit all members of the community. Kessler utilized the model he had developed in Kansas City and in other subsequent projects to bring order to the Indianapolis park scheme. He again focused on a three-tiered plan. The first element of his plan was the large tracts of park land on the city's borders that featured both undeveloped natural areas and planned landscapes. These larger parks included Garfield Park on the city's south side, Riverside Park to the north and Brookside Park to the east. Smaller parks scattered throughout each neighborhood made up the second feature of Kessler's plan, "bring[ing] within every portion of a community the pleasant enjoyment of open spaces for rest and recreation."<sup>61</sup> The winding parkways connecting the system together provided the final tier to his design.<sup>62</sup>

In order to achieve his vision, Kessler identified the key natural features of the city and then built his plan around these features. Like Joseph Earnshaw in 1894, Kessler selected the White River and Fall Creek as the two key natural elements in the city. He also assigned Pogue's Run, Pleasant Run, Little and Big Eagle Creek, four additional streams, important roles in his plan.<sup>63</sup> By including six streams instead of two, Kessler's plan encompassed all areas of the city. He wrote, "The salient and most important portion of the present movement in re-creation of a beautiful Indianapolis is based on the existence of the streams flowing through the city."<sup>64</sup> He envisioned these streams as natural transportation corridors, and planned to build parkways along their banks. These winding roads functioned as more than modes of transportation. They served as recreation conduits connecting the park system together. Certainly, Kessler's concept of

<sup>59</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 18

<sup>60</sup> *Indianapolis News*, April 9, 1910

<sup>61</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 18

<sup>62</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 15-19

<sup>63</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 22

<sup>64</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 17

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building boulevards was not new to Indianapolis. Prior to his arrival, the Park Board had already begun short segments of boulevard work along Fall Creek. What made Kessler's plan unique was the overall scope of his proposed boulevards that would reach the farthest corners of the city and combine together to form a complete system.

Kessler wanted to reclaim the garbage-strewn banks and polluted waters of streams in order to provide a natural beauty to the boulevards, the established lynchpin in his many park plans. He had learned this method abroad, as he explained in 1908: "Only those familiar with the conditions in most European cities where river improvements have been of first importance will realize the vast difference between conditions in such cities and those presented on your water front."<sup>65</sup> The Indianapolis Park and Boulevard Plan sought to bring a type of urban beauty established in Europe to middle America. In this, Kessler demonstrated the City Beautiful's appreciation for European form applied to the condition of American cities.

Yet it would be overly simplistic to say that Kessler conceived of his boulevards only as parks, or even as an Americanized translation of European design. From the beginning, Kessler recognized that the parkways also served practical importance for the city, and he enthusiastically described the useful applications of his boulevard scheme. Although Kessler firmly supported recreation as the primary function of his roadways, he conceded their overall usefulness for transportation. These roads would provide pleasurable routes into the downtown business district, and Kessler carefully described the practical application of boulevards, including flood control and the connection to other roadways. He commonly referred to boulevards as "lines of communication" between the residential districts and business district of the city, knowing that a concrete fiscal benefit to the municipality would help ensure his plan's implementation.<sup>66</sup>

If boulevards made up the backbone of Kessler's plan, then the Fall Creek Boulevard gave it its heart. Prior to the landscape architect coming to Indianapolis, the city had attempted to build a boulevard along this stream corridor. Kessler affirmed their efforts and recommended their acceleration. In 1909, the *Indianapolis News* explained Kessler's urgency: "If Indianapolis is to save Fall Creek from becoming a treeless, charmless stream it must get busy. Houses are beginning to crowd down its shores. In other spots it's a dumping ground."<sup>67</sup> The Board of Park Commissioners heeded the

<sup>65</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 23

<sup>66</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 18

<sup>67</sup> *Indianapolis News*, January 9, 1909

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charge, making Fall Creek their top priority. During 1908 and 1909 the Board passed more than fifty resolutions concerning Fall Creek, far exceeding actions taken regarding any other individual park project.<sup>68</sup> Although financing continued to be a challenge, this time the board could demonstrate progress in the Fall Creek project. Each year their annual reports included before and after photos of work done along the stream, and they used these photos to drum up popular support for the overall park system plan.

A closer look at the development of the Fall Creek Boulevard can provide useful insight into Kessler's ability to blend form and function and to wed beautification with practical applications. He observed, "Fall Creek parkway is one capable of most picturesque treatment, but is also to a large scale a utilitarian feature."<sup>69</sup> In support of the picturesque aspects of the stream, Kessler's firm designed ornamental bridges as a part of the parkway. The 1911 bridge across Fall Creek on Capitol Avenue not only connected segments of the boulevard's expansion it also provided a beautiful landmark for the city.<sup>70</sup> In 1912 the *Indianapolis Star* pronounced the completed bridge "one of the most artistic structures in the city."<sup>71</sup> Despite this attention to aesthetics, Kessler also embraced the practical uses of the Fall Creek corridor. For instance, he supported the building of a dam on Fall Creek by the Indianapolis Light and Heat Company, and even made recommendations about the best location for the dam.<sup>72</sup> He also emphasized the possibility of dredging Fall Creek for use in boating and recreational bathing, and considered flood control in his planning efforts.<sup>73</sup> (See Map 7i, which demonstrate Kessler's appreciation of beauty in urban design).

This concession to the more utilitarian aspects of urban beautification and conservation signified an important compromise that would become essential to the development of city parks. Urban conservation did not preclude planned use of the protected features. The leaders of City Beautiful did not attempt just to protect pristine wilderness, but rather sought to bring the benefits of a natural landscape into the lives of city dwellers. For later conservation purists, this willingness to compromise would not prove tenable, and they questioned the environmental legitimacy of urban park development. This tension between the relative values of urban landscapes and areas of strict natural conservation,

<sup>68</sup> Minutes of the Board of Park Commissioners, 1908-1910, 6-151

<sup>69</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 23

<sup>70</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 7

<sup>71</sup> *Indianapolis News*, August 14, 1912

<sup>72</sup> Minutes of the Board of Park Commissioners, 1908-1910, 32

<sup>73</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 20

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such as the larger National Parks in the western United States, continues to be debated to this day.<sup>74</sup>

Kessler's Indianapolis plan addressed another parks and recreation debate: the proper place and function of playgrounds. Simultaneous with the City Beautiful, the United States underwent a separate movement for the construction of playgrounds. More closely associated with the Progressive Era's social reform efforts, the playground advocates emphasized supervised playgrounds as a method for social development of city youth. They also emphasized the reformative power of the playground experience to shape a new urban generation, and openly criticized park boards for valuing landscape design over actual park use. Since landscape architects and playground builders often vied for the same funds, the competition between the two branches of parks and recreation heightened.<sup>75</sup>

Playgrounds became part of the Indianapolis urban experience long before Kessler arrived in the city. After the Civil War, George Merritt built the first public playground at Military Park, and his wife supported his efforts as the playground supervisor.<sup>76</sup> However, Kessler only allowed a limited place for playgrounds in his park plan. Indeed, he relegated the playgrounds to the small pockets of park land that lined his boulevards, or he recommended building what he called "a bit of gymnastic apparatus" at the school yard where it could be properly monitored.<sup>77</sup> Kessler, ever willing to concede the practical application of his park system for flood control and transportation, did not extend the accessibility of most of his landscapes to playgrounds. The debate between programmed recreation and a more passive conservation of natural spaces continues to influence the professional practice of parks to this day.<sup>78</sup>

Kessler recognized that whether his plan emphasized the building of boulevards or the construction of playgrounds, his ideas would not get off the ground without a readily available flow of cash. The lack of funds had consistently thrown up the largest roadblocks to park development in Indianapolis. Kessler supported a solution for this perpetual problem in the form of a new park law. In 1909 the Indiana State Legislature passed his recommended law, a significant piece of legislation that dramatically

<sup>74</sup> Sellars

<sup>75</sup> Boyer, 242-244

<sup>76</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, August 25, 1912

<sup>77</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 14

<sup>78</sup> O'Day, 90

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improved the chances of implementation of Kessler's proposals. The law allowed cities of more than 100,000 people to establish park districts for the purpose of assessment. The law limited the total amount of assessment that could be collected in one year to \$200,000 and the total amount for ten years to \$1.25 million. It read: "A tax of not less than five cents nor more than nine cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable property . . . shall be leveled annually by the common council for park purposes." By this law, the legislature attempted to limit any city park board from levying excessive taxes for the purpose of park land purchase and development.<sup>79</sup> Kessler called his legislation "the keynote to . . . success" to the Indianapolis park initiative.<sup>80</sup>

With a new law in place to finance his plan, Kessler knew the Park Board had increased fiscal ability to bring his ideas into reality. He next set about ensuring that the reality of new parks and boulevards would be implemented in all areas of the city. In order to do this, Kessler divided Indianapolis into four districts "following in a general way, the lines of division suggested by the four avenues radiating from the center of the city [in the original Ralston Plan]---Massachusetts, Virginia, Kentucky and Indiana Avenues."<sup>81</sup> Each district included at least one of the six main city waterways: the White River and Big and Little Eagle Creek in the west district, Fall Creek and White River in the north district, Pogue's Run and portions of Pleasant Run in the east district and Pleasant Run and White River in the south district.<sup>82</sup> This plan was based on past successful models. Kessler had used a similar districting scheme in Kansas City, and Indiana had recently passed a law allowing the establishment of districts to pay for street repair work.<sup>83</sup> Kessler advocated using the 1909 park law to assess property owners for projects in their own districts. He believed people would feel more receptive to another tax if the park improvements occurred close to their homes. By fostering a sense of ownership for park projects, he hoped to rally support in each district.

Park districting met with mixed results in Indianapolis. The progress of improvements varied by locale. While the work forged ahead along Fall Creek, in 1909 Kessler reported: "Work is contemplated in all of the other districts in the city, but it proves doing this work is necessarily somewhat slow because of the tedious process of land acquisition, and the amount of work necessary in making up the levies of benefit

<sup>79</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 210-232

<sup>80</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 17

<sup>81</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 4

<sup>82</sup> O'Day, 90

<sup>83</sup> *Indianapolis News*, January 9, 1909

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assessment."<sup>84</sup> Kessler hoped the dramatic changes taking place along Fall Creek would encourage a demand for activity in other districts, but many people remained skeptical of a new tax assessment to build parks. In 1910, work in the east district stopped altogether when the citizens of this area filed a suit to test the legality of the 1909 park law tax. The south district was put "on hold" waiting the outcome of the east district litigation.<sup>85</sup> By the end of 1911 Kessler could report that the tax had withstood the test of the lawsuit, with a court decision in favor of the city Park Board.<sup>86</sup> However, the east and south district had only made incremental improvements during the two years of legal wrangling.

In order to promote his plan as a path to urban beautification and park development for all areas of the city, Kessler often exchanged his planning hat for a booster one. With the help of the members of the Park Board, Kessler made speeches throughout the city describing the benefits of parks and boulevards. In June of 1909 he spoke about park improvements at a Commercial Club "smoker" along with board president Jameson.<sup>87</sup> The two men would become regular guests at these gatherings of Indianapolis business leaders, getting a chance to report park successes and solicit support for future initiatives. While Kessler was away working on his park plans for other cities, Jameson continued the publicity efforts, and did not devote all of his attention to Indianapolis men. In 1912, he led 10 cars full of about 60 women on a tour of Garfield, Riverside and Military Parks, as well as the completed sections of the Fall Creek and Pleasant Run Parkways. The women had the chance to walk the grounds of the parks and received maps of the park system. At the end of the tour the women committed to collect flower seeds "to scatter on [the] borders" of park land to further beautify what they had seen.<sup>88</sup> The speeches and tours conducted by the Park Board and Kessler often received coverage by the city newspapers further spreading their message of park advocacy.

Indeed, the message resounded through the entire state of Indiana. Fort Wayne, Terre Haute and South Bend tracked the success of the 1909 park law in Indianapolis, wanting to imitate the capital's park development and beautification in their own cities.<sup>89</sup> In 1910 the *Indianapolis News* declared: "Every city in Indiana of considerable size has

<sup>84</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 6

<sup>85</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 9-10

<sup>86</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 10

<sup>87</sup> CCI Nineteenth Year RO, 22

<sup>88</sup> *Indianapolis News*, September 21, 1912

<sup>89</sup> *Indianapolis Star*, August 6, 1911

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ambitions in a park building way and most of them think well of the Indianapolis idea . . . [t]he state papers are filled with announcements of clean up days that have been ordered by mayors and city councils." Some of these Indianapolis cities not only wanted to imitate Kessler's Indianapolis plan, they hired the planner himself to design their park systems. Fort Wayne and South Bend secured Kessler's planning services, and he also exchanged correspondence and advice with Anderson, Evansville, Marion and Peru.<sup>90</sup> The City Beautiful park movement had spread across the state.

Yet, was City Beautiful actually a success back in the capital? Did the efforts of Kessler, the Commercial Club and the Park Board make a lasting impact on the urban landscape of Indianapolis? Certainly there were some failures in the realization of Kessler's design. By 1944, Indianapolis had built only 34 miles of parkway. Kessler's original plan had called for 175 miles. Most of the parkways that do exist today have been expanded to four and five lane roads, and now serve as major traffic arteries for the city. With the lane expansion of these roads, much of the park green space along the stream banks is now pavement, and no one would claim these streets any longer function primarily as part of a "park system." As James O'Day noted in a thesis on Kessler, "Ironically, the [Fall Creek] parkway was perhaps so well-placed within the city and was such an effective means of transport that it almost guaranteed its own destruction."<sup>91</sup> In addition, the southern portion of Indianapolis continues to have less parks and greenways trails than does the northern half, following the trend established during the time of early twentieth century park districting.<sup>92</sup>

There are multiple reasons for the failure of Indianapolis to entirely implement the 1909 Park and Boulevard Plan. National events diverted the attention of the city away from beautification efforts. Historians typically credit World War I for effectively ending the Progressive Era in the United States. Certainly, the war dulled the urgency of beautification efforts across the nation. Kessler even became involved in the war effort, planning "emergency towns" for industrial projects. Perhaps his German ancestry fueled his desire to prove his patriotism, but regardless of motive other planning projects took a back burner for Kessler during the conflict.<sup>93</sup> After the war, the economic depression of the 1930s also decreased local ability to finance new parks.<sup>94</sup> Although park work

<sup>90</sup> Missouri Historical Society archives, document box 19

<sup>91</sup> O'Day, 89,7

<sup>92</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, 109

<sup>93</sup> Culbertson, 113

<sup>94</sup> O'Day, 117

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continued through the efforts of the federal Work Project Administration, especially in completing Kessler's parkways, limited finances led the Park Board to focus on improving existing parks rather than acquiring new land to complete the 1909 plan.<sup>95</sup>

National events were not the only impediments for Kessler's plan. Another challenge to its implementation came from a continuous evolution in the way Indianapolis citizens thought about and valued parks and open space. As the twentieth century progressed, the national conservation movement manifested itself locally in the 1960s and 1970s efforts to secure large tracts of park land "near the county perimeters", such as Eagle Creek Park acquired in 1974. The definition of parks as roadways and urban landscapes changed to a focus on large habitat protection.<sup>96</sup>

As the movement for conservation grew, so too did a national growth in participation in sports and active recreation. Throughout the twentieth century the Indianapolis parks department began to prioritize providing such recreation opportunities. Kessler's lack of enthusiasm for programmed playgrounds meant that his philosophy did not fit well into a department that emphasized recreation. Although there had always been an element of such activity in Indianapolis parks, in 1919, the recreation division of the city's health department officially transferred to the parks department. In the years that followed, the Park Board "began constructing a system of playgrounds, pools and community centers in parks" and "soon provided a variety of year round athletic programming, classes, clubs and special events."<sup>97</sup> Neither the move towards conservation at the city's outskirts, nor the emphasis placed on programmed recreation in the urban core completely replaced Kessler's park plan. However, the meaning of parks became increasingly complicated throughout the decades following Kessler's work, making it difficult to assign a place for his design in the sometimes-conflicting values concerning modern Indianapolis parks.

**Realization of the Kessler Plan**

The changing size and infrastructure of the city itself also has complicated the realization of Kessler's plan. The physical city of Indianapolis as it existed for Kessler, simply does not exist any longer. After World War I Kessler returned to Indianapolis, and he recognized the implementation of his original plan was being outpaced by city growth. This was a problem he foresaw as early as 1908, when he wrote:

<sup>95</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, 86

<sup>96</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, 87

<sup>97</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, 85

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Nor is it the thought of myself or of your board that the lines which have been thus far studied and laid down are to be sufficient for all future time, but the growth of your city will determine the need of additional parks and parkways along lines and in localities which at this time cannot be foreseen.<sup>98</sup>

In response to city growth, he attempted to expand upon his original design, and called for the construction of another connecting road further north, which was eventually built and named Kessler Boulevard in his honor. Yet by the time of his death in 1923, Kessler could have little imagined the future expansion of the city limits. In 1928, Lawrence Sheridan, Kessler's successor as landscape architect in Indianapolis, introduced a parks plan that included all of Marion County. Yet there remains even more unfinished work towards the completion of this larger plan than remains to be done for Kessler's smaller design.<sup>99</sup>

Perhaps no single force of the twentieth century has challenged the Indianapolis 1909 Park and Boulevard Plan more than the automobile. Especially after World War II, widespread use of the car dramatically changed the urban landscape in cities across the nation. Strong centralized downtown business districts dispersed into the city's outskirts. No longer fettered by rail transportation, people could choose to live where they pleased, and many opted to move away from the center city into suburbs.<sup>100</sup>

In 1983 the national Landscape Architecture Foundation commissioned a study of the development of the Indianapolis landscapes over time. Their report explains how this national phenomenon of suburbanization effected Indiana's capital: "Shopping centers followed the suburban homebuyers to the outskirts of the city. Not only did the shoppers forsake downtown, but the wholesalers around Union Station left as well." The study further explains: "This shift of activity from downtown to the city fringe had a devastating impact on the heart of the city." The construction of I-465 changed Indianapolis as "commercial, residential and industrial development moved to the outer loop."<sup>101</sup> As new highways crisscrossed the Indianapolis landscape, they overshadowed and often

<sup>98</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 21-22

<sup>99</sup> Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, 92-95

<sup>100</sup> Jackson, 191

<sup>101</sup> Maloney and Remenschmeider, 53, 64

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competed for the spaces Kessler had designed. As the urban core declined economically, the structures and parks that he had built in these neighborhoods deteriorated from neglect. Although there has been an effort in recent decades to turn this tide of urban decay, some of the historical fabric of Kessler's vision has been irrevocably lost.

At the same time, the parts of the Kessler plan that were completed and maintained continue to bring beauty to the capital. Indianapolis citizens have enjoyed the Sunken Garden at Garfield Park, the winding Parkways along Fall Creek, Pleasant Run and the White River, several beautiful stone bridges and many other parks for nearly a century. The original Park and Boulevard plan of 1909 remains the foundational inspiration for park planning into the twenty-first century. Kessler's greatest legacy to Indianapolis did not lie in any of the individual landscapes that he designed, but rather in the totality of his interconnected park system. Prior to 1909 no unified plan gave structure to park development in the city. Kessler demonstrated that thoughtful park planning was not only possible in theory, but also achievable in practice. In 1999, the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation completed five-year comprehensive plan nearly 300 pages in length, entitled "Pathways to the Future." This plan might be significantly longer than the 1909 report, however its concepts can trace their roots to Kessler's theories.

In 1999, the Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects chose Kessler's Park and Boulevard Plan for one of ten Millennium awards in the state, honoring the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the professional society. The Indianapolis Business Journal's *Milestones 2000, a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Retrospective*, published in 2001, recognized Kessler's Park and Boulevard System as a milestone in Indianapolis' history. George E. Kessler, himself, was honored as one of Indianapolis' fifty most influential people of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>102</sup>

In the end, it is difficult to arrive at a final judgment regarding the success of the Kessler plan. The graceful beauty of the fountains at the Sunken Garden sing its success, while the trash strewn banks of the White River on the city's near south side evidence the work still undone. Perhaps this is one of the reasons historians find it difficult to assess the City Beautiful—many of the urban improvement efforts begun during this time period continue under different labels to this day. Yet the significance of Kessler's Indianapolis

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<sup>102</sup> Indianapolis Business Journal, 32B, 151B

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Park and Boulevard System, and the extensions to the plan following his death, are significant in their incompleteness and the vision that they held and still hold for future urban growth. The plan is neither the most developed park and boulevard system, such as his plan for Kansas City, nor the least. Its significance is in its vision, comprehensiveness, in the most "typical" of American cities, located at the crossroads of America. It is the physical manifestation of the American identity, blending classic style and new technology, to sustain the natural environment and maintain the democratic ideal.

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### Section 10 Geographical Data - Verbal Boundary Description

The enclosed 1"=400' and 1"=50' scale maps show the boundaries of this discontinuous district.

#### Boundary Justification

The district meets the criteria set forth in *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* for a discontinuous district: a collection of properties closely tied by historical theme, yet physically not in contact with each other. In fact, only seven properties do not contact each other: Brookside Parkway & Park, Noble Place, McCarty Triangle, Rhodius Park, Indianola Park, Highland and Willard Parks. The overwhelming majority of the land shares a common if circuitous boundary. The boundary includes as much of the parks developed as part of the Kessler and Sheridan systems as possible. For example, in Willard Park, the southwest corner has developed into a public safety complex with modern firehouse and communications equipment. This section of the park was cut from the boundary. State Street was slated to be a connector from Pleasant Run to Willard Park; however, it lacked integrity and was not included. In other cases, modern public buildings on a park did not outweigh the importance of a park's contribution to the system. This is especially true in labor-oriented neighborhoods, where parks played a crucial role (Noble Place, for example). Some vacant and occasionally occupied private lands were included where there was little choice, for example, to connect both sides of the White River, which was significant to Kessler's vision. However, the more recent buildings in these areas are non-contributing. In some instances, private firms wished to echo the beauty and interest in classicism of Kessler's ideals; the original Indianapolis Water Company pump house near the confluence of White River and Fall Creek is a prime example that contributes to the district. "Artistic bridges" were a stated part of the

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Kessler vision of Indianapolis' waterways. A number of stone, concrete and iron bridges, therefore, contribute to the nomination.

*In short, the boundary matches the Kessler and Sheridan plans, as implemented over decades of time, to the extent possible.*

### UTMs

Note: for this complex nomination, parks of 11 acres or more are enclosed by points. Linear elements like parkways, boulevards, or roads are described by connected line segments. Small parks are described by discrete UTM's.

#### **Fall Creek Parkway - Indianapolis East Quadrangle**

1) 16 581420 4413040      2) 16 576840 4410940      3) 16 575000 4409390

#### *Fall Creek Parkway continues on Indianapolis West Quadrangle:*

4) 16 571660 4405400      5) 16 570880 4405700      6) 16 570500 4403660  
7) 16 569680 4403940      8) 16 569510 4403420

#### **Pleasant Run / Golf Course / Ellenberger Park / Christian Park – Indianapolis East Quadrangle**

1) 16 581700 4405140      2) 16 581990 4405780      3) 16 578700 4403700  
4) 16 578800 4402940      5) 16 580990 4403000      6) 16 578230 4401340  
7) 16 576840 4401800      8) 16 577080 4401250

#### *Pleasant Run continues on Beech Grove Quadrangle:*

9) 16 575110 4400100

#### *Pleasant Run, with Garfield Park site, continues on Maywood Quadrangle:*

10) 16 574390 4400120      11) 16 573800 4398800      12) 16 572700 4398790  
13) 16 572980 4397840      14) 16 573790 4397840      15) 16 570650 4397640

#### **Kessler Boulevard – Indianapolis East Quadrangle**

1) 16 578380 4412000      2) 16 577250 4412660      3) 16 575000 4412640

#### *Kessler Boulevard continues on Indianapolis West Quadrangle:*

4) 16 571000 4412600      5) 16 567400 4411520      6) 16 567540 4404320

#### **Brookside Parkway and Park – Indianapolis East Quadrangle**

1) 16 577280 4405400      2) 16 576000 4405000      3) 16 576000 4404340  
4) 16 577300 4404440

#### *Brookside Parkway and Park continues on Indianapolis West Quadrangle:*

5) 16 574100 4403820

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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**38<sup>th</sup> Street** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 574600 4408500              2) 16 574600 4408400

**Highland Park** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 573800 4402450

**Willard Park** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 574760 4402000

**Noble Place** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 572460 4400390

**McCarty Triangle Place** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 570240 4400140

**Rhodius Park** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 569380 4400720              2) 16 568790 4400710              3) 16 568790 4400360  
4) 16 569400 4400400

**Indianola Park** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 569050 4401980

**Riverside / White River Parkway** – Indianapolis West Quadrangle

- 1) 16 569660 4408540              2) 16 568120 4408440              3) 16 568000 4404300  
4) 16 569400 4404250              5) 16 569800 4402720              6) 16 570820 4401780

*Riverside / White River Parkway continues on Maywood Quadrangle:*

- 7) 16 571240 4399060              8) 16 570650 4397640