GARFIELD PARK
A HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN

Jonathan Mooney

Ball State University
Department of Landscape Architecture
Undergraduate Comprehensive Project
Spring, 1994

Faculty Advisor:
Malcolm Cairns
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ABSTRACT

Garfield Park in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a significant and historically valuable example of early twentieth century landscape architecture. Designed in 1909 by George Edward Kessler, Garfield Park was intended to become the centerpiece of the Indianapolis Park System. This manuscript is the culmination of a four month effort to preserve and restore Garfield Park's historic identity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would at this point like to thank those who had a significant impact on this project. First and foremost, my support they have given me throughout my college career. Also,

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Eric Fuford: Landscape Architect
James O'Day: Landscape Architect
INTRODUCTION

The preservation of our nation's historic landmarks has long been among us. Monuments, buildings, bridges, and a host of other built entities have long been recognized as culturally valuable expressions of American society. Many of these sites throughout the nation are maintained as historic landmarks and draw thousands of visitors annually. What has come to light in the last two decades is that the accompanying landscape of a historic structure is an equally important piece of American history. In addition, historians and designers alike have realized that landscapes, on their own, are capable of achieving historic status.

Although historic landscapes are beginning to be recognized as important throughout the design professions, there is still a lack of overall acceptance of this idea. This failure, in part, is due to a lack of responsibility of the design professions. In addition, the number of higher education programs throughout the nation specializing in historic landscape preservation are few and far between. Also, the number of professional firms dedicating their resources to preservation are also scarce. The landscape architect in cooperation with architects, planners, and preservationists is responsible for the education of American society as to the value of the historically significant landscape.

The first organization devoting itself to the preservation movement in general was the National Trust for Historic Preservation which was begun in the 1950s. In its original form, it devoted its resources to the restoration of stately homes throughout the United States. Other Organizations include the Association for Preservation Technology (APT) which is dedicated solely to solving the technical problems associated with the preservation movement (Clay 50).

An organization which has stemmed from the APT is the Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation (Clay 50). This organization was formed in June of 1978 at a meeting of the APT in New Harmony, Indiana. It is the inception of this organization that is considered "one of the most promising activities to take place regarding historic landscape preservation..." (Bulletin of the APT).

The misunderstanding, however, that landscape preservation is synonymous with "garden preservation" has in turn influenced landscape architects and their roles in designing within a historic context. This hindrance stems from several problems associated with landscape preservation. First, landscape preservation lacks a definite history of its own including specific examples and a conceptual framework that is shared among design professionals. Second, the landscape architect is thrown into the arena of historic research which may include ancient
documents and obscure local histories (Kunst and O’Donnell 54). A lack of training in historical research may make this task overwhelming to most landscape architects.

A third problem associated with the narrow perception of landscape preservation is the myth that the landscape architect is responsible for the reinstatement of the former design (Kunst and O’Donnell 54). Although it is the intent of the design professional to interpret the original design intent of the original designer and to adhere to that intent, it may materialize in a form or design other than the original. The needs and problems associated with society are fluid and the needs and concerns of the present day user group must be considered. A prime example of this is the need for access to public sites for all people including the disabled. The term disabled encompasses not only the physically challenged, such as the wheelchair bound, but also the blind, the deaf, and the mentally challenged.

Another problem facing the landscape preservationist is the association of the preservation movement with the built environment. Most landscapes listed on the National Register of Historic Places are listed in association with a historically significant building or monument. Very few landscapes are listed on their own merit (Kunst and O’Donnell).

Throughout the history of the landscape preservation movement, many landscape architects and professionals have developed classification systems for historic landscapes. The most thorough classification system was developed by Lisa Kunst and Patricia O’Donnell and was published in Landscape Architecture magazine in 1981. They determined eighteen different types of historic landscapes and in accordance, five different types of treatments were defined.

The National Park Service’s National Register Bulletin No. 18 lists only seventeen categories of landscapes eligible to receive a historic nomination. This bulletin is designed to prepare state preservation offices, local governments, professionals, and others to nominate landscapes to the National Register of Historic Places. The bulletin defines a historic landscape as:

a landscape that has significance as a design or work of art; was consciously designed and laid out by a master gardener, landscape architect, architect, or horticulturist, to a design principle, or an owner or other amateur using a recognized design style or tradition; has a historical association with a significant person, trend, event, etc. in landscape gardening or landscape architecture; or a significant relationship to the theory or practice of landscape architecture (Keller and Keller 2).
This definition is limited to the built landscape (as opposed to the natural landscape) and deals only with issues associated with the nomination process. It is not a design oriented process nor is intended to be. It provides the landscape professional with useful information in assessing the value of a historic designed landscape.

Garfield Park, in Indianapolis, Indiana, is that city’s oldest municipal park. It was intended to become, and did, the showcase of the Indianapolis park system. Today, it is still a heavily used park and offers a wide-range of experiences. It incorporates the typical park facilities such as picnic shelters, play fields, and playgrounds, while also incorporating added amenities such as a conservatory, formal garden, and an outdoor amphitheater.

BACKGROUND

The interest for this project stemmed from several projects with which the author was previously involved. A major influence was a project for the Indiana School of the Blind in Indianapolis. It was at this time the author wrestled with the concept of using the “past as prologue” (Melnick XI) and how to appropriately incorporate that philosophy into modern landscape design. The campus was designed and originally planted as a grand display of architecture, formal garden, and strong site relationships. In the decades following World War II, this grandeur gave way to functionality and financial constraint. The project dealt most specifically with vehicular circulation on the site.

These patterns had been seriously altered since the campus was designed, and it was the design teams original intent to restore the original scheme. However, after careful research and consideration of all aspects, that plan became infeasible. The project was resolved by trying to bring the existing circulation pattern up to the standards set by the original design intent. Thus, using the past as prologue in a conceptual sense rather than a physical one.

In addition to the Indiana School for the Blind, the author has previously been involved with a preservation project that dealt with Riverside Park, also located in Indianapolis. Riverside is, like Garfield Park, a part of the George Kessler plan for a comprehensive park system in Indianapolis. In the decades since the park system was designed, the original design intent for Riverside had been lost. The design teams intent was to incorporate the needs of the present day users, while trying to restore some of the historic integrity that had been lost. As the project progressed, the scope widened to include a regional land use master plan for the neighborhoods immedi-
ately adjacent to Riverside Park.

These two projects fueled an interest in the landscape preservation movement for the author. The Garfield Park area, like Riverside, a link in the Kessler chain, seemed an appropriate challenge. In the autumn of 1993, the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation made a call for proposals to upgrade the amenities in Garfield Park. Although the request indicated the design should “preserve the historic integrity” of the park, the issue seemed to become secondary. The winning proposal gives little attention to the historic aspects of the park and the significance of George Kessler’s influence on that park.

**Problem Statement**

Garfield Park, in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a significant and historically valuable example of early twentieth century landscape architecture. The park was designed by George Kessler and was consciously laid out by him in a recognized style. Thus, Garfield Park is, by the definition listed above, a registerable historic landscape. It is the intent of this project to produce a comprehensive master plan which addresses the issues mandated by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, but maintains the preservation of Garfield Parks’ historic integrity as the main focus.

**Goals, Objectives, and Principles**

This project was designed to further the author’s understanding of the process of historic landscape preservation, while in turn trying to give something to the community. An anticipated outcome of this project was this comprehensive manuscript outlining, from start to finish, the progress of work in Garfield Park.

Another intent of the master plan was to provide a comprehensive set of drawings which address the issues mandated in the programmatic statement below. The design process was to look at the park as a whole concentrating on the park’s historic integrity, the spatial relationships of the park’s features, and the demands placed on the park by current users. Individual details of proposed and restored amenities were given as time allowed.

The understanding of the cultural landscape is imperative to the success of this project. Cultural landscapes are not static entities, but, rather, a continuum of land-use that spans many generations (Melnick 56). As human culture has evolved, the landscapes associated with this culture have, similarly, evolved. There is no one design
solution for each site, and the needs of the users throughout time have changed. It was not the authors intent to impose an inappropriate or antiquated design solution in the name of history. It was realized that adaptation and renewal are positive requirements in the preservation process.

**HISTORY OF GARFIELD PARK**

**The Early Years**

The first development on the land that is today known as Garfield Park occurred in 1871 when the Indianapolis Fair Association built a racetrack there called Southern Driving Park. In 1873 the group, due to financial pressures, was forced to sell the land. It was in this year that the city of Indianapolis acquired the 97 acres for the purpose of creating a city park (Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) 2).

Between the years of 1877 to 1885, the city made little improvement to the land and several proposals were heard to turn the land into a dairy farm, a cemetery, and a factory site. The site, at that time known as Southern Park, became Garfield Park in 1881 following the assassination of President James Garfield (IDPR 2).

It wasn’t until 1888 that the city started making improvements to the land. It was in that year that a bridge crossing Pleasant Run was built in the park, and in 1894, a dam was built to create a lagoon at the confluence of Pleasant Run and Bean Creek. In 1901, a bike path was constructed in the park and in 1903, the Pagoda was built from a plan of J. Clyde Power, the head of the Bureau of Park Commissioners. In 1905, small animal cages were built and tennis courts were installed (IDPR 3).

While improvements were being made during the first decade of the twentieth century, a growing pressure to attract new commercial interest and a more refined image for the city intensified the need for Indianapolis to develop a comprehensive park system (O'Day 80). Two previously commissioned comprehensive park plans, one in 1894 by Joseph Earnshaw of Cincinnati, Ohio, and another in 1895 by J.C. Olmsted of Brookline, Massachusetts, had never been realized. Since the time of those two plans, the city had been acquiring park lands without an overall vision. The city’s park acreage by 1908 had grown to approximately 1217 acres. It was during this period that the city set out to find a means of funding the debt for park improvements and to acquire the services of a “competent advisor who could execute a comprehensive park system” (O'Day 80).
The 14th Annual Report of the Board of the Park Commissioners was released at the year's end of 1908 and stated:

The appointment of Mr. George E. Kessler as the landscape architect of the department was made the board only after a careful survey of the entire field of park builders in this country. With the feeling that the Indianapolis public would support the Board in its plans to make a better park system that the city had ever known, the Board appointed Mr. Kessler as its landscape architect, and gave into his hands constructive work of the Department. . . . Mr. Kessler was appointed February 1, 1908. . . .

Kessler and the Indianapolis Park System

George Kessler served a total of eight years as consultant and designer for the city of Indianapolis. As a consultant, Kessler was responsible for the inception of a general park system for the city. As a designer, Kessler laid out plans for Riverside Park, University Square, and in the most detail, Garfield Park (O'Day 81).

Upon his arrival in Indianapolis, Kessler stressed the importance of systematic transportation routes and adequate park lands. Kessler felt his responsibilities extended beyond the park system and also involved the overall expansion of the growing city of Indianapolis (O'Day 82).

Kessler spent his first year in Indianapolis devoted to the study of the city's needs. He surveyed existing park land and land that would be suitable for additional green space. His design considerations included conservation and preservation of the land, flood protection, traffic flow, and sanitation (O'Day 83). Kessler was a man of preciseness- he contemplated his decisions carefully and had realistic goals for the completion of projects.

The Kessler Era and his comprehensive park plan of 1909 had a significant impact on Indianapolis. His original plan called for 175 miles of parkway and encompassed a total of 50,000 acres, including 12,000 acres of park land. Kessler's plans recognized the value of natural topography and site features. He believed a park system should bring open space and recreation within easy reach of the citizens, should provide an attractive means of communication for various communities, and should encourage the tying together of isolated districts. He stated this formula was "a decided necessity in the proper and healthful growth of any large community" (O'Day 89).
Kessler and Garfield Park

Although Garfield Park was an already existing and thriving park when George Kessler arrived in Indianapolis, it was greatly improved and enlarged during his tenure. In 1915, an addition of 35 acres was acquired through a grant of Alfred Burdsal to the park's southeast side. It was on this parcel of land that Kessler designed the Garfield Gardens. The gardens were formal in character and were designed, in cooperation with the whole of the park, to “emphasize the intimate character of the local park and playground” (Kessler 21?).

Kessler proposed the building of a conservatory at the east end of the gardens and to its west a broad viewing platform that allowed for views to the gardens below. Kessler described the gardens as,

a long parterre running parallel with the roadway above, and practically in the form of a cross, another garden along absolutely formal lines toward the west, and merging at the west end into the forest background of the park (O’Day 97).

A structure was to be built at the west end to complete the view and was to include a water basin for the display of aquatic plants. The summer plantings of the garden were to be completely formal and were to consist more of foliage plants than flowering plants. The adjacent areas to the north and south were to be for the informal display of flowering plants and hardy perennials. Trees, shrubs, and grass paths with sunken stepping stones would serve as a frame to the whole picture. His intention for the Conservatory was for the display of flowering summer plants during the winter, thus facilitating a lavish floral show for the duration of the entire year (O’Day 98).

Post-Kessler

Improvements to Garfield Park were continued after Kessler’s resignation in 1915. Comfortable with the progress and the direction the Indianapolis Parks System was taking, he felt comfortable to move on to other projects. In 1922, the community center was built. It was designed to have the feel of “a walled picnic shelter.” It was also in the mid-1920s that the amphitheater was built (IDPR 3).

The swimming pool was built in 1930, and by 1936, Garfield Park contained 20 acres of gardens including a rose garden and an alpine garden. The original conservatory was razed and a new one built in 1954. This conser-
vatory was the first all-aluminum rigid frame greenhouse in the country. The horseshoe pavilion was constructed in 1979 and the pool was renovated in that same year. The conservatory was refurbished in 1983 and included the addition of the new entrance and plant shop on the north end (Ratio 4).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GEORGE KESSLER

George Edward Kessler was considered a gifted and well-trained landscape architect and city planner in an era when few formal educational programs in the fields existed. Kessler was born in Germany in 1862, but emigrated to the United States with his family at the end of the Civil War. After his father’s untimely sixteen years later in 1878, Kessler returned to Germany with his mother. It was there he studied forestry, botany, and landscape design at the Grand Ducal Gardens at Weimar (O’Day 30).

Kessler returned to the United States in 1882 at the age of 20 and spent several months working for Frederick Law Olmstead as a laborer in Central Park. By the 1890s, Kessler had established himself as a landscape architect. His most well-known design of that period were Hyde Park (1887) and Roland Park (1891) both in Baltimore, Maryland. In 1883, Kessler became the Engineer to the Board of Park Commissioners of Kansas City, Missouri, and it was the work he did on the Kansas City Park System that became Kessler’s most famous work. Between 1907 and 1923, Kessler was in demand throughout the country. During this time, he designed park systems for Memphis, Tennessee, Toledo and Cincinnati, Ohio, Dallas and Houston, Texas, Salt Lake City, Utah, Denver, Colorado, Syracuse, New York, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (O’Day 31).

Kessler quickly became a pioneer in the area of city planning. Kessler proposals assimilated the American park movement of Olmstead and Downing with the City Beautiful and City Functional movements. President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Kessler as an original member of the Council of Fine Arts, and Kessler was also a founding member of The American Institute of Planners in 1917. Kessler also served as the vice-president of the American Society of Landscape Architects (O’Day 32).

At the height of his career, Kessler was interviewed by The American Magazine. In this passage, he summarizes the extent of his work,

...one of the most gratifying things about [municipal improvement] ...is that the people are still clamoring for more. Of course my first interest is in the artistic side of my work. But I realize that it must appeal to the public as a good investment if its full possibilities are attained. . . . City Beautification is in the air . . .
movements of this sort are in progress everywhere. St. Louis, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Denver, Memphis - these are all under my personal observation at present. The landscape architect always tries to take full advantage of the natural features of the city... (O'Day 34).

Although Kessler was a visionary, his work remained pragmatic. Kessler was not afraid to propose bold restructuring of a city, and referring to his work in Cincinnati, he stated, "...we readily assure you that the entire system does not comprise any project which should be found very difficult of achievement or in any way subject to criticism as an over-elaborate or idealistic preparation" (O'Day 35).

Although Kessler had other commitments during his tenure with Indianapolis, he kept in close association with Indianapolis. At the time of his death in 1923, he was commissioned by the Parks Board and by Butler University to work on two design projects. Kessler’s work for the city was well documented by the Indianapolis News, indicating he was popular among the citizens of Indianapolis (O'Day 36-37).

George Kessler has left an indelible mark on the landscape of Indianapolis as well as throughout the country. He created a bridge from 19th to 20th century design and his work should be sensitively added to and preserved to the best degree of ability.

ASSUMPTIONS

In travels throughout Europe, it became apparent to the author that history plays an important role in the lives of Europeans. A great respect is given to the past and it is held in reverence. The past, in general, serves as the guideline for the future. Design professionals should rely on the past uses, user groups, problems, plants, and other items associated with the site to direct the future of the site. The biggest assumption made in this project was that the American perception of the cultural value of history will continue to grow and expand. The landscape architect in collaboration with other design professionals, must be instrumental in the furthering of this idea.

Although this project was based on the call for proposals of the Indianapolis Parks Department, it was assumed for creative and educational reasons, the author does not have to work within the stated budgetary constraints. It was also assumed that the following solutions are both technologically feasible, and are in accordance with any zoning ordinances affecting the Garfield Park site.

Although a winning design solution has already been submitted and approved by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, it was assumed for the purpose of this project, that a proposal had not already been
accepted. It is assumed that it was not too late to save the historic integrity of Garfield Park, and that the residents of the area and the Parks Department truly do want that integrity preserved.

It was also assumed that the copy of the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation call for proposals received by the author was both accurate and complete. In addition, it was assumed that the sources referenced in the historical research phase were both accurate and quotable, with proper citation.

**PROGRAMMATIC STATEMENT**

The programmatic statement for this project was adopted from a document written by the Indianapolis Parks Department entitled “Request for Proposal - 1993 - No. 18.” This was a programmatic statement developed for a design competition “to develop a vision for [Garfield Park] that will exemplify quality park and recreation design while maintaining historic integrity.”

- **Recreation Center**
  Relationship to the site shown by either a plan, elevation, or perspective;
  Recommendations for the addition to the current facility.

- **Aquatic Center**
  Conceptual plan showing proposed amenities, parking, and relationship to the recreation center and the park as a whole.

- **Picnic, Play, and Outdoor Facilities**
  Conceptual site plan of the entire park including traffic flow, access, and barricades;
  Renovation of current playground, amphitheater, and park entrances shown by either a plan, elevation, or perspective.

- **Sunken Gardens**
  Conceptual site plan, including the conservatory, indicating the restoration and beautification of plant display areas;
  Plaza design on abandoned road between gardens and conservatory;
A list of recommended improvements to the various areas throughout the gardens was provided by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation. A list of prioritized work items is given below for each park facility.

Sunken Gardens

1. Fountain Restoration - to include multi-colored lighting;
2. Garden Lighting - restoration of the historic lamp posts and lamps or replacement with architecturally similar items;
3. Walkway Restoration - based on original design, however, deleting walkway gutters to facilitate easier maintenance of the walkways;
4. Decorative fence and gates to enclose garden for protection from vandalism;
5. In-ground irrigation timer on a timer;
6. Bench, drinking fountain, urn, and overlook restoration;
7. Convert abandoned roadway between conservatory and garden overlook to a plaza, decorative fence to enclose this area as well;
8. Improve permanent floral displays and exhibits;
9. Provide a gazebo for weddings.

Amphitheater

1. ADA considerations;
2. Restoration of original building details;
3. Improvement of various mechanical services including lighting, sound, and rest rooms;
4. Improved seating design.

Playground

1. Replace outdated and inadequate existing play equipment;
2. Develop a creative playground that incorporates both modern and traditional equipment;
3. Existing main play area is to be utilized, however, play area near recreation center may be abandoned;
4. Incorporate benches, landscaping, and shelter within and/or near the play area;
5. Parking for the play area is to be included.
Pagoda

1. Improvements to flooring and roofing;
2. Improved lighting
3. Investigate ways to screen pigeons from ceiling and high turret areas;
4. Investigate alternatives to discourage unwanted behavior in the two areas on the south side.

Miscellaneous Park Areas

1. Incorporate a recreational trail system throughout the park for the use of walkers, joggers, bicycles, and in-line skaters;
2. Provide both entrance and directional signage;
3. Replace guardrail dividers in an aesthetically pleasing manner where roadways will remain closed and remove closed roadways and replace with lawn in localized areas;
4. Install a new regulation basketball court near the recreation center (no lighting needed);
5. Renovate tennis courts while considering all aspects of the court, i.e. fence, surfacing, etc.;
6. Placement and condition of current horseshoe facility;
7. Consider vehicular circulation and parking improvements throughout the park;
8. Planting history and its contemporary use.

Although this proposal has been accepted by the author, it is the intent of the author, while trying to complete the list above, to determine if each individual item can be accomplished within the historic framework of Garfield Park. It is the authors main intent to preserve as much of the historic integrity of the park as possible.
Garfield Park was inventoried not only to see what exists today, but also to see what existed in Kessler’s original design. A thorough comparison through graphic overlays was completed to determine exactly what was left of Kessler’s design for Garfield Park. Although much of the Kessler system is gone, there is much of it that still exists. Basic analysis comments in this section are based on a combination of looking at current user needs and the historic fabric of Garfield Park.

The inventory and analysis section of this report is organized in a series of maps of Garfield Park and appropriate detail areas which depict inventory comments. Analytical comments considered important to the conceptual master planning phase are found in written form presented with the corresponding maps.
Vehicular Access - Inventory and Analysis Considerations

- Heavy traffic on the roads bordering the north, east, and south of Garfield Park make entering by foot hazardous and undesirable.
- The current road system was designed for use by horse and carriage and is awkward for the automobile. Wide “Y” intersections create hazards and the figure eight design created a mini-dragway used by local teenagers.
- Portions of roadways have been blocked off by metal guard rails to limit access and racing, but the pavement has not been removed. These blocked roads are unsightly and confusing to motorists.
- Cruising in Garfield Park promotes negative activity and prevents residents from feeling safe in the park at night. Although Garfield Park was designed to be “cruised” by horse and carriage, the automobile cruising is intrusive and disruptive to the park’s function.
- Insufficient lighting in certain areas and scrubby growth along the banks of Pleasant Run and Bean Creek have created areas that are associated with sexual activity and drug use. These activities promote a negative image of Garfield Park and prevent residents from feeling safe in the park at night.
- A lack of consistent directional signage in the park makes it difficult for users to orient themselves and to identify traffic patterns and key elements.
Fire Station Area - Site Inventory and Analysis Considerations

- East Street and Pleasant Run Parkway carry 5000 or more cars a day. This traffic separates the northwest portion of the park, including the Memorial Grove, from the rest of the park.
- The fire station serves as a community symbol and point of reference.
- The fire station as a structure fits into the rather eclectic collection of architectural styles existing within the park.
- The confluence of Pleasant Run and Bean Creek, historically dammed to form a lagoon, creates an opportunity for a pleasant water feature on the site.
- Scrubby brush along the banks of Pleasant Run and Bean Creek limits visual access to the water lessening the importance of these water features in the park’s landscape.
- Steep slopes along the waterway’s banks limit physical access preventing body contact with the water as recommended by the board of health.
- The rolling topography in the area creates distinctive areas and opens up viewsheds. The hill located in the northeast section of the park is recognized community wide as the “sledding hill.”
Recreation Center Area - Site Inventory and Analysis Comments

- The current recreation center is inadequate in meeting current user needs. The center portion of the structure is comprised of one large room and contains a court area used for basketball and volleyball, although it is not regulation for either sport. Side wings contain park offices.
- The recreation center's appearance is shabby and worn and it is need of structural and cosmetic renovations. The current state of the building is inapppropriate in relationship to Kessler's vision.
- The pagoda has become associated with negative activity and two of the four towers have been blocked from use. The current picnic tables located within are inappropriately styled and unkept.
- The large pigeon population which resides in the pagoda prevents the use of the upper-level viewing deck.
- The amphitheater provides a valuable cultural function within the park and is recognized county-wide.
- The amphitheater's current backstage and rest room facilities are not able to meet the current user needs.
- The seating in the amphitheater is too shallow and limits views to the stage area. In addition, the seating is uncomfortable and inappropriately styled.
- The amphitheater stage building is in need of overall renovations including structural repair and mechanical upgrades. The replacement of historic details and friezes is recommended by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation.
- The playground located to the south of the amphitheater is heavily used and the equipment is worn and dated.
- The horseshoe throwing structure is poorly placed. Noise from the game frequently disrupts the performances in the amphitheater.
- The pool area is fenced with chain link. This form of fencing is historically inappropriate and unattractive.
- The pool entrance is located on the west side of the recreation center and is remote from the pool parking area. This is confusing to first time users.
GARFIELD PARK: Site Inventory and Analysis Comments

Recreation Center Area
Sunken Garden Area - Site Inventory and Analysis Considerations

- Greenhouses 1, 2, and 6 are abandoned in a state of great disrepair. They are frequently vandalized and are in need of substantial renovations. Greenhouse 3 is used for production, and Greenhouses 4 and 5 are used as storage.
- The conservatory was the first all aluminum rigid frame greenhouse built in the United States. It is divided into several bays and is accesible through an added entrance and plant shop on the east side.
- The tennis courts, although separated from other recreational activities, are well kept and often used. There visibility from outside the park gives users a sense of security. The fencing material is chain link and is historically inappropriate.
- The “plaza” area located between the conservatory and the sunken garden is comprised of an abandoned roadway and three concrete planters. The space is awkward and is a poor connection between the conservatory and the gardens.
- The Sunken Gardens are surrounded by berms to the north and south, the conservatory on the east, and by a grove of evergreens on the west. The gardens are secluded in their feel and provide a space for strolling and contemplation. However, this seclusion also promotes vandalism.
- The garden overlook is a strong Kessler design element in the area and remains completely intact. It provides a middle level between the plaza and the gardens.
- The garden fountains were installed in 1917 and were at that time the largest set of display fountains in the country. They are currently unused and are in a state of disrepair due to poor maintenance and vandalism.
- The fountain control box sits directly behind the main fountain and is unsightly.
- The walks in the Sunken Garden are a tan brick laid in a herringbone pattern and lined by concrete gutters. The mortared joints between the bricks have deteriorated and some bricks are mising or loose creating tripping hazards.
- Garden planters and benches are commonly vandalized. They are made of concrete and inlaid with terracotta tiles depicting an acorn and oak leaf motif. The benches have been removed and many of the planters are in a deteriorated state.
- The lighting fixtures in the garden are either historic or reproductions. Many of them have been vandalized and are missing or broken.
- Beyond the grove of evergreens to the west of the gardens is Bean Creek (crossed by foot bridge).
The Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation in 1993 distributed a community survey to the residents in the neighborhood adjacent to Garfield Park. The 1993-1995 Capital Improvement Program in Indianapolis includes funding for projects in Garfield Park. Residents were asked to respond to various questions concerning their concerns for Garfield Park. The Parks Department reports that 307 surveys have been returned to date, and the results of those surveys follow:

**Priority for improvements the community would like to see to the park:**
(1 = highest priority through 16 = lowest priority)

1. Sunken Gardens  
2. Conservatory  
3. Recreation Center  
4. Landscaping  
5. Amphitheater and picnic shelters/Pagoda (tie)  
7. Swimming pool  
8. Playgrounds  
9. Park Drives, bridges, and parking lots  
10. Nature trials  
11. Bicycling/jogging trails  
12. Tennis courts  
13. Basketball courts  
14. Softball fields  
15. Horseshoe courts  
16. Volleyball courts

**How many times the respondents visited Garfield Park last year:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visits</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 9</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Which of the existing park facilities the respondents use most:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunken Gardens</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatory</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic areas</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming pool</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphitheater</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball fields</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the respondent most frequently uses the facilities and programs at the park:

- Weekday mornings: 50
- Weekday afternoons: 79
- Weekday evenings: 131
- Weekend days: 148
- Weekend evenings: 50

What the community likes MOST and LEAST about the park:

- Most liked: Sunken Gardens
- Least liked: maintenance

Does the community believe a new recreation center should be constructed to replace the existing facility:

- Yes: 141
- No: 82

If yes to the above, what the community would like to see included in the new recreation center (1 = highest priority through 11 = lowest priority):

1. Fitness and exercise area
2. Jogging and walking track
3. Community policing office
4. Basketball and volleyball courts
5. Senior citizen activity center
6. Community meeting rooms
7. Indoor aquatic center
8. Dance and aerobics studio
9. Arts and crafts rooms
10  Child care facility
11  Food and concession area

Priorities for improvements community would like to see to the swimming pool
(1 = highest priority):

1  Bathhouse and dressing rooms
2  Sun bathing and observation areas
3  Lap and competitive swimming
4  Falling and/or spraying water
5  Flume or tube slides
6  Zero depth edge (mimicking a natural beach)
7  Concession stand improvement
8  Diving boards
9  Sand play areas

Priorities for improvements community would like to see to the Sunken Gardens and conservatory (1 = highest priority):

1  Fountains
2  Garden beds
3  Walks
4  Greenhouses
5  Decorative fencing

Priorities for improvements community would like to see to the amphitheater
(1 = highest priority):

1  Sound system
2  Seating
3  Lighting
4  Security / fencing

Priorities for improvements the community would like to see to the park's vehicular circulation (1 = highest priority):

1  Resurface roads and parking lots
2. Add additional parking areas
3. Reduce cruising
4. Reopen all of park’s drives

Would the community be willing to pay more to use the park’s facilities if it meant a cleaner, safer, more exciting, fun time for the entire family?:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the community believe the following facilities should be lighted for nighttime use?:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation center</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming pool</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphitheater</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunken Gardens</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park drives and bridges</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic shelters/Pagoda</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseshoe courts</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis courts</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball fields</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the community feel it is important to maintain the historic integrity (character) of the park?:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very important</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only in certain areas</td>
<td>14 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All respondents referred to the Sunken Gardens, the Pagoda, the conservatory, and the Memorial Grove.

How the community rates the maintenance of the park:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How well the park and its programs fulfill the needs of the community:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not well</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the community’s satisfaction with the park:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat dissatisfied</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondant's ages:</th>
<th>Gender:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 39</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 64</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 or above</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent's children's ages (if any):</th>
<th>Length at current address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>Less than five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 15</td>
<td>5 - 9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 - 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 years or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GARFIELD PARK: Three Initial Design Approach Concepts

Taking into account the information presented previously, including current user needs and survey, historical information, and site inventory and analysis considerations, three initial master plan design approaches were reviewed. The three concepts reviewed were:

1. Minimal Impact

2. Near Restoration

3. Kessler Interpreted

The following section is devoted to notes and conceptual diagrams which explain the various approaches and site specific issues associated with each concept. These three approaches were reviewed as to which would be most appropriate to incorporate into the master plan, and the end result ended with a combination of all three.
Concept One: Minimal Impact

This concept involved the least amount of changes and the least dollar output of the three concepts. The historic fabric that remained in the park would be restored with as much accuracy as possible; however, no restoration of lost features or removal of historically inappropriate features would be implemented. Although parking would be redesigned for better efficiency, the existing vehicular circulation patterns would remain intact.

Concept One Guidelines

Basically, Concept One would adhere to the general requirements set forth by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation. These include:

- Renovation of indoor recreation facilities.
- Renovation of Sunken Gardens including lamps, planters, fountains, and walks.
- Fencing of Sunken Gardens with a decorative material to prevent vandalism.
- Converting the abandoned roadway separating the garden from the conservatory into a more appealing plaza space.
- A structure within the gardens would be provided for use as an outdoor wedding facility.
- General improvements to the amphitheater would be made including building renovation and improved seating design.
- Playground renovation.
- A recreation trail to accommodate bikes, walkers, and skaters would be incorporated into the park.
- A revised system of signage would be developed to facilitate easier orientation in Garfield Park.
- Renovation of tennis courts and horseshoe throwing pit.
GARFIELD PARK: Design Concept One

intersection

recreation center

gardens

intersection

intersection

intersection

intersection
Concept Two: Near Restoration

Although a true restoration of the park is not feasible, it is feasible to consider replacing as much of Kessler's design as possible within Garfield Park. Much of the Kessler design still remains today, and these elements could be drawn out to invoke a early twentieth century park environment. However, the societal changes between the Kessler era and today would indicate a complete restoration, again, is not possible. The advent of crime and vandalism within the park gave the master plan designer considerations that were not prevalent in Kessler's time. Although the fire station and the library located within the park are have no historical root in the park, these uses would be allowed to remain.

Concept Two Guidelines

Concept two would incorporate all the items shown in Concept One plus the following additions:

• A new park planting scheme would be developed that was in accordance with Kessler's open space versus canopy relationship shown in his 1909 plan.
• Replacement of historic roadways and pedestrian paths.
• Recreating the lagoon area in the north end of the park.
• Expansion of the Sunken Gardens to incorporate a wider array of plant types, including informal perennial plantings, woodland plantings, and water garden diaplay areas.
• Renovation of picnic facilities to a more historically appropriate style.
• The horseshoe facility would also be replaced by a more appropriate structure.
Concept Three: Kessler Interpreted

Concept Three would involve the most design creativity on the part of the master plan designer. In Kessler Interpreted, the basic existing Kessler elements in Garfield Park would be restored, and the Kessler elements which were never built or have disappeared would be brought back into the park through abstract or educational interpretation. As an example, this concept would involve evaluating the Kessler and current vehicular circulation systems, and then imposing a newly designed circulation system which may or may not incorporate pieces of these systems. However, the Kessler system would be interpreted perhaps by breaking the tree canopy in accordance with the location of those historic roadways. Parking would be redesigned and relocated if thought necessary.

Concept Three Guidelines

Concept three would still incorporate the guidelines set forth by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation plus the following:

- Redesigning the vehicular circulation on the site based on current conditions only, but interpreting the historic patterns in some manner.
- Removing or repositioning existing facilities to better suit user demands. This could include the addition of better equipped recreation facilities and moving the amphitheater to a better position.
- Implementing all other required elements found in the program based solely of current needs without regard to the historic context, but allowing for interpretation of the historic fabric through abstractions within the landscape, or educational materials (displays, brochures, etc.).
GARFIELD PARK: Master Plan and Master Plan Recommendations

As seen in the last section, there were three initial design concepts. The final master plan incorporated guidelines from all three. Some ideas that guided the master plan were as follows:

GOALS

• The park should once again become a "walk-in" neighborhood park.
• The park has a tremendous historic significance and the historic integrity of the park should be considered in all areas.
• The user needs survey must also be considered as integral in the master plan process.
• The guidelines set forth by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation should be strictly adhered to.
Master Plan Objectives

- Repair all existing historic structures in the park with as much accuracy as possible. This would include the recreation center, amphitheater, conservatory and greenhouses, pagoda, and gardens.
- Leave uses that have no historic basis such as the library and the fire station.
- Replace lost or never-built historic elements within the park only if they serve purpose to the current user group.
- Renovate and upgrade all recreation facilities both indoors and out to better meet current user demands.
- Incorporate a recreational trail system throughout the park for the use of walkers, joggers, bikers, and inline skaters.
- Provide a comprehensive and unified signage system throughout the park.
- Redesign vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns to better serve the park users.
- Renovate tennis courts.
- Move horseshoe pit away from amphitheater and to a more appropriate location.
- Replant the park to define active and passive recreation spaces.
GARFIELD PARK: Master Plan Final Concept
Master Plan Recommendations

The following recommendations are meant to enhance and expand upon the master plan objectives previously stated. Specific recommendations that affect the entire park are listed first and recommendations that follow are listed by small areas. These recommendations came from a response to the park’s historic integrity, the user needs, and the program set forth be the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation. These recommendations may, in the future, need to be altered by either adding or deleting certain items that are not incorporated here. These recommendations were based on the best possible design solution for meeting current demands and preserving the historic integrity of Garfield Park. Little regard was given to budgetary or engineering issues which may also impact the plan.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Access

- Vehicular access to the park would be limited to four points: East Street on the north, Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive on the north and west sides, and Pagoda Drive on the south. These roads would be wide enough to accommodate one lane of traffic in each direction and a shared turn lane. This would limit vehicles to a small portion of the site and reduce the heavy impact of current automobile traffic and cruising. This also removes the hazardous "Y" intersections. Roads should be curbed.
- East Street would be realigned so as to meet Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive at a point nearer the fire station. Currently, East Street meets Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive and becomes Pagoda Drive after crossing the Parkway. The proposed realignment would create a less desirable cut-through for non-park traffic.
- Pagoda Drive would be realigned to recreate the historic curve.
- The entrance on the south side of the park from Southern Avenue onto Pagoda drive would be realigned to create an access to the new parking facility adjacent to the recreation center. A four way stop should be placed at the intersection formed between the new entrance road and Pagoda Drive.
- Parking will be limited to three areas. One located adjacent to the recreation center and pagoda, and two on the east side of the aprk near hte gardens. The lot located north of the conservatory will be accessible from Shelby Street through the existing library lot. The lot south of the conservatory will be accessible from Pagoda Drive.
Pedestrian and Vehicular Access (continued)

• All abandoned parcels of road and major historic roadways not currently existing would become the major pedestrian circulation routes through the site. This facilitates better pedestrian access from all sides of the park and allows for an adaptive use of the Kessler carriageway system within the park.
• The central pedestrian loop will serve as 2 mile recreation trail for walkers, bikers, and in-line skaters.

Vegetation

• Vegetation will be used to create definition between active (open) and passive (area covered in tree canopy) spaces. Vegetation will consist mostly of park-like plantings which include large shade trees and some flowering trees under-planted with lawn.
• Areas enclosed with decorative and protective fence may include understory and woodland plantings. These types of planting must be confined to fenced areas for safety reasons.
• All plants should be labeled with basic information including scientific and common names, family names, nativity, and perhaps one or two brief lines of interpretive information. It is intended that the vegetation in Garfield Park serve as a small botanic collection for the City of Indianapolis and educational information should thus be provided to park users.

Fire Station Area

• The fire station itself will remain unchanged.
• Pleasant Run Parkway North Drive will remain unchanged except for the addition of curbs where none are currently located.
• Garfield Park Center Drive (which currently meets with the parkway across from the fire station) will become a pedestrian way. The existing high-arched vehicular bridge will be retained and adaptively reused for pedestrian access across Pleasant Run.
• The area to the south of Pleasant Run which was historically Pleasant Run Parkway South Drive will become the major east-west pedestrian route in the north side of the park. It will provide access from the neighborhood to the north of the park and, through a subway cut beneath the railroad tracks on the west.
• The lagoon which was historically located in this area (between Pleasant Run Parkway North and South Drives), will be replaced as a focal element in this area of the park. The pond area should be utilized as a passive area and is not intended for active recreation such as swimming or boating. It may be stocked with ornamental fish or water fowl.

Recreation Center Area

• A new indoor recreation center will be constructed to the south-east of the existing recreation center. The new facility will include regulation sized basketball and volleyball courts and will also incorporate new pool dressing areas. The building is designed to mimic the "front porch" feel of the existing recreation center, and like the existing structure, will be built into the hill side.
• The existing recreation center will be renovated to improve and increase existing office space within the building. The structure could serve as a secondary active recreation space, and, in addition, as a "community center." Activities to occur in the central room will be neighborhood association meetings, outside group meetings (i.e. scouts, garden club, 4-H), and classroom activities associated with the botanic collection in Garfield Park.
• The pool and deck surrounding the pool will be expanded. The pool fence will be drawn away from the south east edge of the deck area to allow a grassed area to be incorporated into the pool space. The southern edge of the pool will be a "zero gravity" edge.
• The pool area will no longer be accessible from the existing recreation center, but will be accessible lower level of the new recreation center.
• Tennis courts will be moved from their current location on the far east side of the park and will be located on the north and east side of the pool. The moving of the courts to this location will facilitate an active recreation core in the center of the park. Locating the tennis courts within such close proximity to the recreation center also creates an opportunity for the tennis players to use rest room and shower facilities. The tennis courts are accessible from the recreation center and at certain times, may be accessible from park areas.
• The pool area concession stand will be upgraded and renovated and will now serve both the pool and the tennis courts.
Recreation Center Area (continued)

- Pedestrian circulation to and from the recreation area was based on major pedestrian connections from the 1909 Kessler plan. The patio area surrounding the former recreation center was also based on the Kessler plan and should be restored.
- The horseshoe pit should be moved from its current location to a location just north of the former recreation center. This location would remove the threat of incompatibility between horseshoe games and amphitheater performances. The structure itself should be more intimately scaled and built of historically appropriate material (i.e. stone that mimicks the pagoda).
- The football field should remain in its current position and the baseball fields should be cut from four to two. This more accurately reflects current demands.
- All recreation facilities should be sensitively lit for night time use and enjoyment.

Amphitheater

- The seating area was regraded to form a more natural and steeper bowl shape.
- Seating benches should be constructed of wood rather than the existing metal to give a more historic feel.
- The amphitheater must meet the requirements set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and shall be accessible to persons with all disabilities.
- The area will remain fenced and access to the public will be from a new ticket/restroom/concession facility placed at the south end of the amphitheater seating area. This structure should mock the form and materials of the amphitheater.
- Shrubby vegetation was used within the fence to create a private atmosphere for performances.

Playgrounds

- The playground located to north of the former recreation center was removed.
- The playground located to the south of the amphitheater must remain, but should be redesigned with a more organized and historically appropriate set of play equipment. The area should involve children in interactive and imaginative play.
Garden Area

- Fountains, urns, planters, lights, benches, overlook, and walkways should be restored with as much accuracy as possible. If existing historic items are too damaged to be repaired or are missing, reproductions may be substituted.
- A decorative fence will enclose the garden area and will follow a line parallel to the major pedestrian circulation route surrounding the garden area.
- All garden areas should be equipped with in-ground watering systems, preferably of drip irrigation type, and should be controlled by a timer.
- Maintenance should be achieved through the hiring of a full-time horticulturist and through the initiation of a community volunteer program.
- The garden areas should become the focus of the Garfield Botanic Collection and should provide a wide range of plant material for the enjoyment and education of the citizens of Indianapolis.
- The Sunken Garden will remain intact and will be planted formally as indicated by the Kessler vision. Planting will consist of annual foliage plants planted in geometric patterns. Plantings in this area should be very formal and create a tapestry to be viewed from the garden overlook.
- A colonnade placed at the west end of the garden's east-west axis will serve as a place to hold outdoor weddings or other special events. This structure is a remnant of the Kessler plan. It should be of minimal impact to the garden and materials used in its construction should mimic those found in other areas of the garden (i.e., concrete, yellow brick). It should also mimic the prairie style in which the garden is designed.
- The perennial gardens would be located adjacent to the Sunken Garden on the north and south. These gardens are a restoration of the original land use intent of the Kessler plan. These areas are much less formal than the Sunken Garden and should be planted with perennial plant species.
- The Sunken Garden and perennial garden areas would be surrounded on the north, west, and south by woodland gardens. These areas become the most informal of the garden areas and are more like a natural forest system. Canopy, midstory, and understory plants should all be incorporated into this area. Shade trees, large and small flowering trees, shrubs, and ground covers can all be displayed.
- The woodland area also contains a series of three small lagoons to be used as a water garden display area. Plantings should include water plants as well as marginal and bog plants.
Conservatory/Library Area

- The conservatory was kept intact as is. The fence which surrounds the gardens also encloses the plaza space located between the conservatory and the gardens. This area, once a roadway, should be bricked with the brick color and pattern the found in the sunken garden. This plaza space was designed to house large tropical plants that could be brought out of the greenhouses in the summer. Also, moveable furniture could be utilized within this fenced area. This new "Conservatory Terrace" could be an ideal spot for wedding parties or other special events.
- The west side of the library was redesigned to bring the park into the library and vice versa. A reading garden was placed in the area for outdoor studying and other passive activity.
GARFIELD PARK: Master Plan
GARFIELD PARK: North to South Garden Section
GARFIELD PARK: East to West Garden Section
GARFIELD PARK: Amphitheater Sections - Before and After
GARFIELD PARK: Library Sections - Before and After
GARFIELD PARK: Recreation Trail Section
GARFIELD PARK: Recreation Area Axonometric

Community Center
pagoda
new recreation center
pool
pool & lawn
bean creek
ticket/concession
concession
GARFIELD PARK: Pedestrian Bridge near Fire Station
APPENDIX 1: George Kessler's 1909 Plan for Garfield Park
APPENDIX 2

The following pages are comprised of letters that George Edward Kessler wrote to the Indianapolis Parks Commissioners during his tenure. These letters provided the designer with insight into the philosophy of George Kessler and Kessler's intentions for Garfield Park.
January 31, 1911.

Gentlemen:

The work done by the Department during the past year has shown here, as it does in every community, that no great comprehensive development of a city's needed improvement can be accomplished at once; time as well as persistent energy, is needed to assure to the people in all the different sections of the city, parks and playgrounds, together with their connecting highways, that give opportunity for outdoor recreation. In its final results, the City, through its park department, makes these great investments in open grounds and their improvement for the purpose of giving its people of all ages and condition the opportunity for outdoor play in all its forms. No city can exist and retain its power of progressive growth that does not recognize that the serious struggles of life require also the relaxations of play time. No form of recreation has proven so essential to health and comfort of living as enjoyment of the open country. Since but few can reach and enjoy the country, it has become the duty of the cities to supply their people with as much open space in the form of parks and playgrounds as density of population requires. On this principle your Department outlined a number of years ago a comprehensive plan for park improvements.

When this general plan was outlined, years ago, the City possessed a number of excellent properties, widely scattered, entirely disconnected and purely local in their use and value.

The City is particularly fortunate in the fact that a number of clear water streams that naturally tie all these isolated properties together pass through its several sections and lead themselves to a restoration of their natural beauty. When finally completed these will place the City among the first in attractiveness. The money value of this form of municipal investment has long been recognized. The fine public response to and approval of your efforts to accomplish the work outlined originally is a decided encouragement to proceed systematically and persistently to a gradual completion of the work begun. Comparatively few citizens see and understand all the purchases and improvements of properties in the various parts of the City. They rarely see more than their own particular neighborhood, and not until a well connected system is completed will all the people see and enjoy the whole of a really beautiful city.

The work accomplished during the year just past has done very much toward showing what the final completion will be.

On the north, Riverside Park and the Fall Creek parkway are the dominant properties. Your purchases of the right of way for the connection in Burdalsal parkway from Riverside Park eastward along 24th Street and lying into the Fall Creek parkway just east of the aqueduct, and thence skirting Fall Creek on the north side throughout its entire length east and northward to the State fair grounds at Maple Road (38th Street) gives at least one complete section, with a small break at Pennsylvania Street. In part, of course, you also have properties on the south side of Fall Creek. Like the other streams' parkways, this property supplies throughout its entire length a splendid highway connecting the northern districts of the city, and with the completion of the Maple Road on 38th Street, will give the driving public one great circuit on the north. The real value, however, of this portion of your projected system lies in the open properties throughout its length along Fall Creek, supplying as it does the opportunity for local playgrounds practically through the entire district in which it lies, giving to a very large portion of the north part of the city extremely serviceable playgrounds, not
only for small children's use, but for all ages. The rate of progress with this work, reaching over a number of years, has apparently been slow. As a matter of fact, however, in this, as in all other sections of the city, the Department has progressed much more rapidly and at a very much less cost than that of most of the cities that are now seriously undertaking this class of improvements. The actual work done on these properties is already showing the character of the improvement planned, and in a very few years will give to your citizens reason for real pride of possession of a beautiful stretch of unusually fine parks. West of Capitol Avenue there will be quick response in the private improvements along the line of the parkway, when the connections into Riverside Park become obvious through the completion of the entire improvement.

To the east and north private development has already been very materially stimulated, and a fine class of homes has been and is being built, using the Fall Creek Parkway as a base. Another section of the City on the east is beginning to appreciate the continuity of this form of improvement. Along Pogue's Run, from Spades Park into Brookside Park, the grading and shaping of roadways and some of the park lines show the transformation along that portion of that stream. Upon the completion of the roadways, the people will have a very much more comfortable means of access to Brookside Park through a region heretofore practically unknown to the public, except perhaps to those living in that locality. In opening this section to general use as a part of a connected system of parkways, a portion of another circuit of pedestrian way, as well as drive-way, will tie together another great district of the city with the other sections, from which it is now almost completely isolated. Exactly this character of improvement has been made during the past year along Pleasant Run from Shelby Street toward Garfield Park, and is being made from Garfield Park west along Pleasant Run toward Meridian Street. This improvement will be extended to White River. The construction of a subway under the Pennsylvania Railroad's tracks along Pleasant Run in Garfield Park makes a comfortable, and in time a beautiful connection between the western portion of the southern part of the city, with Garfield Park and all of the residential region of the South Side. By means of the parkway along Pleasant Run, the region generally known as the "South Side" will secure a large number of local playground properties, giving the children in those localities ample open ground for recreation, within easy walking distance of a very large population, making also on the embankments along this stream a beautiful connecting highway with the other residential districts of the city. Your contemplated purchase of the several properties in the south and south-easterly portion of the city will gradually supply the needs of that section. The additional property purchased and added to the south-easterly border of Garfield Park will become an exceedingly valuable and necessary portion of that beautiful park. The park as it is today is not quite sufficient to supply all the recreational demands placed upon it, though it is evidently very popular with the South Side people. This added area will supply primarily the additional athletic fields and playgrounds space. A good portion, however, of the new property on the Shelby Street side is planned to become the Garfield Park gardens. These gardens will in a very short time become, because of their beauty and arrangement of summer bedding plants, together with the conservatory, the one especially attractive spot of this character in the entire system. While Garfield Park has always maintained the propagating houses for the growth of flowering plants for the entire park system, the old houses have become worthless, and you are using this opportunity for the establishment of ample propagating houses on the new area. In this, however, your plans make the propagating portion of this plant only a part of the entire greenhouse improvement. The conservatory already built and in use this winter gives an attractive point, and with the entire greenhouse group as a center, the gardens there when finally worked out will become one of the most attractive objectives in the entire city. Like the zoological collections when they become important, as it may be in Indianapolis at Riverside Park, you will have at both extremes of the city the particularly interesting features that will always attract to each large numbers of visitors from the different sections of the city. The Garfield Park gardens may in time lead to a botanical collection, further increasing the value, not only in the eye and to the sense of the beautiful, but attractive foundations for students' work in the study of plant life.
Of course, so long as the city grows there is never an end to the need of further acquisition, and even today the necessity of acquisition of properties for this purpose is considerably greater than the means available for this accomplishment. While you have, as a matter of fact, progressed much more rapidly than most cities in this respect, every additional improvement naturally brings about the demand for similar acquisition in sections not yet amply supplied. Your public must necessarily, in addition to having splendidly responded to your efforts heretofore, show patience with your limitations in funds, and aid you with their further support in the final accomplishment of the whole system. Upon the acquisition of the greater part of the properties needed for the entire system, it will be necessary to undertake these systematic improvements. The uses of these properties divide themselves naturally into the opportunity for recreation for people of all ages. Beginning with the small children, it is necessary to supply small, easily accessible playgrounds within easy walking distance. These can have no value, however, unless they are completely governed through directed, supervised play, and consequently become quite costly. The Board’s selection of lands for such playgrounds will amply supply the entire system, it will be necessary to undertake their systematic improvement. The uses of these properties divide of the city as a part of the educational work of that department. The larger grounds throughout the city readily supply the opportunity for outdoor sports of older children and adults. As an illustration of the combined uses in one property for all purposes, the improvements planned for Willard Park will serve perhaps as well as any to show what your Board has contemplated for all of them. In this development, when your means are sufficient, you will supply the play space for very small children, with ample opportunity for instruction and government. On the same ground is the open play field, the opportunity for all the outdoor athletics, for the wading pools for children, with their necessary dressing rooms, and the swimming pool and shower baths for all others. The grove on the west of the building group planned for that property, supplies the shade space for comfortable seating for the quiet restfulness to older people, and ample opportunity for outdoor play for women and children. The property lies in a region not yet amply provided for, and its early improvement, as you contemplate, will doubtless find immediate response in demand for similar improvements in every other section of the city.

Yours very respectfully,

GEORGE E. KESSLER,
Landscape Architect.
growth, and proper trees planted, this difficulty would be removed and our city streets, whose trees are fast disappearing, in a short time would present a much better appearance than at present.

During the coming year it is the intention of the Board to continue the improvement work started at Willard and Rhodesius Parks and to commence work on the final development of Garfield Gardens. The latter improvement will include the formal planting of soft wood shrub, perennials, shrubs and trees, and the construction of an outlook west of the greenhouse. The Shelby Street entrance will be completed as soon as possible in the Spring.

Flower beds will be placed at various points along Pleasant Run Parkway, between Beecher and Shelby Streets.

We are handing you herewith the reports of the Landscape Architect, the Executive Officer, and a detailed financial statement of receipts, disbursements and certain tabulations of general interest.

Respectfully submitted,

HENRY JAMESON,
JOHN J. APPEL,
JAMES W. FESLER,
HENRY SIEFFRED,
Board of Park Commissioners.

Report of Landscape Architect

To the Board of Park Commissioners,
Indianapolis, Indiana—Dear Sirs:

REVIEW of the Department's activities during the past and previous years shows consistent progress along all of the several lines of development essential in the Park System of Indianapolis. The recent completion of the Maple Road strikingly illustrates one element of this improvement—a broad, dignified, handsome highway: a street, in fact, only better than the average city street by reason of its greater width, symmetrical and consistently uniform improvement, which, of course, to obtain for itself the fullest value will entail the best of maintenance during every day in the year. The direct result of this particular improvement is already manifested in the betterment of private development along the line, which of course will become increasingly so, and establish a uniformly better residential improvement, in turn illustrating and creating the need for an extension of this particular element in the Park System.

A similar, yet very much more generally beneficial improvement of the park development, is rapidly going on along the stream banks.

On Fall Creek the fundamental work of flood protection
is practically complete on the north and west sides, and illustrates the very great value of the Department's planning far ahead and securing, through consistent effort, a complete whole along this stream. Naturally the droning work alone, while it insures against recurring floods, does not impress itself upon the public mind until the ground surface is well finished—lawns thoroughly established, the roadways along the entire borders properly built, the sidewalks shutting the private properties on each side in place and all the essential elements of highway construction serving these shutting private properties, completed. Those sections already finished give only a partial indication to the public of the really splendid character of improvement which this development will carry throughout the City along all its stream banks. The Department's report, showing in detail and pictorially the rapid development of this work, will illustrate to the public the development as it proceeds from year to year, and too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the suggestion that the people interest themselves in, and use these properties as rapidly as completed.

Very few cities have the opportunities of Indianapolis in the possession of the several important clear water streams passing through the city, enabling the public to enjoy along their banks practically all the essentials of outdoor recreation, including the playgrounds for all ages and conditions, and giving thoroughfare communication in several circuits throughout the City.

In the larger parks the gradual improvements being made develop the peculiar properties of each. In Riverside the great open fields of the golf links, the forests and the streams impress themselves upon the visitor as one of fine expanse, and with the restfulness and freedom of the country. The smaller properties, such as the Ellenger Woods, Brookside Park and Willard Park, contain within themselves practically all of the opportunities for the enjoyment of outdoor recreation. In each of these parks, facilities are rapidly being placed that will bring to their complete usefulness each of these properties and locally serve these within easy walking distance.

In Garfield Park, for the remodeling of which plans have more recently been completed, the municipality possesses a naturally very beautiful park. It contains a characteristically fine beech forest, with all its beauty, both Winter and Summer;
ample open lawns and open places for children's playgrounds, the play fields for adults as well, with beautiful setting for each of the several fields for outdoor play.

In one essential, however, Garfield Park, when the plans therefor are even partially carried out, will have a distinctive character in its conservatory and in the gardens about that conservatory. The thirty-five or more acres along Shelby Street, recently added to Garfield Park, have given the opportunity for floral display in connection with the Department's conservatory and propagating houses for summer plants. It becomes, because of this, an entirely appropriate scheme of improvement to emphasize the use of flowers in all their several forms and beauty, in concentrated mass, in and about the conservatory and gardens. While the glass houses are here placed essentially as propagating houses and intended to supply the necessary summer flowers for all parks and public properties of the City, these houses become the center about which a distinctive floral display may be produced which will give to Garfield Park its particular character and very great attractiveness. Once established, these gardens will undoubtedly bring it to at some time or other all of the citizens of Indianapolis. Its distinctiveness in this sense will be as great as Riverside Park with its possible zoological gardens, with its fish hatchery, its golf links and all the other characteristics of that great property. At the same time the whole of Garfield Park emphasizes the intimate character of the local park and playground. Its past and present uses by the public have proven that it is in character a local park. The establishment on permanent lines of the gardens will therefore give it the additional characteristic of an attraction that will draw to it from every portion of the City. The Garfield Gardens scheme below and around the conservatory, is intended to present a picture of living color seen largely from the slight elevation above the proposed gardens. The main buildings and conservatory face west. Past this, and slightly below it, is the main roadway passing through this portion of the park. Beyond and west of this roadway, and on the level of the road, there will be a broad platform with the opportunity for small assemblage, for seats, and particularly to give opportunity for the outlook upon the gardens to the west and below this level. With stairways reaching from this outlook to the gardens below, and as shown on plans; with ample pathways giving access to all of the separate flower beds, and opportunity for seating along all of these paths, will doubtless make this an attractive picture. The general plan for the garden is in the form of a long parterre running parallel with the roadway above, and practically in the form of a cross, another garden along absolutely formal lines toward the west, and merging at the west end into the forest background of the park. At the west end, at some time when funds are available, there should be a structure closing this picture and possibly having at that point a water basin, giving opportunity for aquatic garden as well, completing thereby the display of every kind of decorative flowers that can be used in this climate. Within the formal lines of the gardens the planting each Summer should be entirely formal in character, relying more upon foliage than upon flowers for the effectiveness of this display. Flanking both the north and south sides of the formal garden there will be considerable space for the informal display of summer flowers and the more permanent plants of the hardy perennials, those plants which with each succeeding year come out more strongly and more compactly without replanting, producing a wonderfully fine display of color. Throughout these informal gardens, grass paths, or paths having occasional stepping stones sunk in the grass surface, will give access to each separate section, and perhaps to each separate class of flowers displayed there. Flanking the perennial gardens, and framing the entire scheme of Garfield Gardens, will be the trees and shrubs on the east, south and north, serving as a frame, with this garden as the jewel in that setting. Through the Winter months, when the outside floral show is gone, the collection of many beautiful summer plants will be finely displayed under the glass in the conservatory, making this particular portion of Garfield Park a certain attraction throughout the entire year. Very naturally the existence of such a property and its essentially beautiful conditions will emphasize the need of fine highways for both the driving and the walking public, in connect with and lead to Garfield Park, as well as the other greater properties of the City. This is gradually being accomplished, both in the northeasterly and the westerly direction, by means of the parkway along Pleasant Run. This insures a continuous line of park and playground, as well as the necessary highway on both banks of Pleasant Run, throughout its entire course in the City.
The recent construction of a subway along Pleasant Run, under the Pennsylvania Railway's tracks on the western border of Garfield Park, has given a splendid connection in that portion of the residential population living west of Garfield Park. Heretofore that section was practically cut off from the enjoyment of the park. The subway there has produced a beautiful picture, and makes a most convenient connection between the extreme southern and western portions of the city, to the east and north.

Of course, the improvements on the public properties along this line will immediately encourage a better condition of dwelling house development along its entire line, and again emphasize the very great value to the community of these systematic and consistent park improvements.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE E. KESSLER,
Landscape Architect
### GARFIELD PARK

#### TREES

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<tr>
<th>Botanical</th>
<th>Common</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acer saccharum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fagus grandifoliae</td>
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<td>Alnus glutinosa</td>
<td>Black alder</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilia americana</td>
<td>European basswood</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula alleghani</td>
<td>White birch</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer Weixi</td>
<td>Weixi's maple</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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#### SHRUBS AND VINES

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Berberis Thunbergii</td>
<td>Thunberg's barberry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiraea Thunbergii</td>
<td>Thunberg's spiraea</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symphoricarpos vulgaris</td>
<td>Indian currant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiraea Anitomy Waterer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiraea callosa alba</td>
<td>White spiraea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosa rugosa</td>
<td>Japanese rose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philadelphus grandiflora</td>
<td>Common syringa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syringa alba</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syringa vulgaris</td>
<td>Common lilac</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Cercis Canadensis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viburnum olympicum</td>
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<td>Lonicera bella albula</td>
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<td>Spiraea opulifolia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornus Sibirica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lonicera rubra</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutzia Lemonii</td>
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<td>Symplocarpus racemosus</td>
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<td>Hydrangea paniculata grandiflora</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Cost of labor, $75.00. Value of nursery stock, $325.00.
This parkway lying into Maple Road on the north and the old parkway on the south at Thirty-sixth street, complete, except for a small section between Pennsylvania street and Talbot Avenue, the North Drive from Northwestern Avenue along the stream to Maple Road. This improvement has developed a residential section which will be rivaled by no other in the city.

Much work has already been done under two contracts in completing the section of Fall Creek Parkway and Birdsong Parkway, which extends west from Northwestern Avenue into Riverside Park. This parkway should be completed and opened into Riverside Park during the coming year.

The contract for the Parkway, Raymond street to Beecher, was let late in the fall and will not be completed until during the summer of 1916.

The Pleasant Run Parkway in the East district, extending from Washington street to Ritter Avenue, is nearly completed. This includes a roadway on both sides of the stream between Emerson Avenue and Michigan Street, a single roadway on the line of Michigan Street east to Ritter and also on the north side of the stream, Washington Street to Emerson Avenue. This improvement, besides furnishing a fine entrance to a most beautiful park property, Ellenberger Woods, has assisted materially in the development of large tracts of vacant land in that section. In connection with this work a fine paneled concrete retaining wall was constructed at Emerson Avenue and Pleasant Run Parkway. In this improvement in our total tracts of ground between the driveways and the streams which are destined to afford recreation centers for hundreds of children.

The board has found it possible to make several improvements during the year by using certain portions of the General Fund.

Chief among these are the outlook at Garfield Gardens and the dredging of the lagoon in Garfield Park. The outlook is a formal structure built of concrete with a bush-hammered finish: Bedford stone vases surmount the pylon. The structure complete cost about $8,000.00.

About twenty thousand dollars ($20,000.00) was expended in dredging the lagoon at Garfield Park. Over
thirty thousand cubic yards of material were removed from the lagoon, the excavation being used for a fill along the future parkway between Meridian street and Madison avenue on the South Drive, and much was also used for filling old drives which are to be discontinued.

The Lawton Monument, which formerly stood at the southwest corner of the courthouse yard, was moved to Garfield Park and placed on a new granite base. The monument, which is an exceptionally high-grade piece of art work, is much better appreciated in its new setting.

Comfort stations and drinking fountains were constructed at Highland Square and at Willard Park. These improvements satisfy a long felt need.

A contract was let during the late fall for two additional plant houses and one cross house as an extension to the Garfield Park greenhouses. This contract went to Lord and Burnham, of Chicago, for $9,150.00. The additional propagation space will be of unusual value to the department in its spring planting.

BORDER STREETS.

The border streets about public properties give the line of definition, or the frame to the picture within the parks, and also make the properties much more usable and accessible.

Two improvements, one completed, the other underway, are fine illustrations of the above. Parkway avenue, constructed by the Board of Works between Eighteenth street and Thirty-third street, now gives an excellent border drive along the east side of Riverside Park.

Nineteenth street, on the north border of Brookside Park, is another improvement which will bring about a great change and will add much to the beauty of the park property.

Raymond street and New street along the north border and the east border of Garfield Park should be permanently improved; and also Sixteenth street along the south border of Brookside.

Sutherland avenue, on the east side of Fall Creek and north of Thirty-third street, was improved by curb and gutter and oiled gravel roadway at a cost of two dollars and twenty-five cents ($2.25) per front foot.
NUMBER DAYS DIRECTING PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATION
TRIMMING
Total number days directing trimming by public service corporations

Total number days protecting trees due to removal of buildings along streets ........................................ 1981

INSPECTIONS ON APPLICATIONS FOR REMOVAL OF BUILDINGS
Total number of inspections to prevent injury to trees by removal of buildings ........................................ 67
Total number of days protecting trees from removal of buildings ............................................................ 3

SPECIAL CALLS
Total number of calls in response for advice and information on care of trees, treatment of insects, etc. ........... 233
Respectfully submitted,

ELBERT MOORE
Forestry Inspector.

It is gratifying to note that each succeeding report shows a gain in the issuing of permits and notices and
also the work of supervising and directing the trimming done by the public service corporations. I would suggest
that this Department publish a circular pamphlet treating on the care and preservation of trees in the city; this
would mean soil conditions, proper varieties, treatment at planting time, trimming, spraying, etc. These pam-
phlets could be sent out with notices.

Respectfully submitted,

H. HOUSTON TALL, Horticulturist.
employed all the time and the others at such times as the
work demanded.

At nearly all times, each inspector has been looking
after the work on two jobs. It so happened that this was
possible, on account of the close proximity of the work,
and it was very fortunate also, as the cost of inspection
was thus materially reduced. For example, at Garfield
Park, there were three separate contracts under way at
one time, namely, the construction of the "Lookout," the
construction of the Shelby street entrance, and the erec-
tion of the Lawton Monument, yet one inspector covered
all three.

From the following Tables 1 and 2, can be obtained at
a glance the extent of the work inspected.

In connection with Table 1 a word of description may
be of interest.

Removal of Lawton Monument.

A bronze statue of General Lawton was removed from
the Marion County Court House yard where it has stood
for a number of years, to a conspicuous point in Garfield
Park where it was mounted on a base of Barry granite.
(See frontpiece.)

Garfield Lookout.

The Garfield Park "Lookout" is a promenade and bal-
cony overlooking the gardens.

It is a concrete structure 196 feet in length, 45 feet in
width and 7 feet in height. It consists primarily of walks,
steps, parapet walls, two enclosed spaces for flowers, and
fourteen Bedford stone bowls surrounding the walls.
These latter will also serve as receptacles for flowers.

There are three elevations; the upper promenade on
sidewalk elevation being paved by a reinforced one-
course concrete walk 196 feet in length and 16½ feet in
width; the second lower elevation being the balcony proper;
and the third being the garden elevation.

Three separate sets of steps lead from the sidewalk
elevation to the balcony and two more pretentious sets of
steps, one on either side of the balcony, lead from the
sidewalk elevation to the gardens.

The balcony occupies the central portion of the struc-
ture and is 48 feet in length, by 18 feet in width.

Separating the three sets of steps which lead from the
sidewalk to the balcony are two elliptical basins, 25 feet
in length by 14½ feet in width, slightly elevated above
any other portion of the entire structure. In these will
be placed different floral designs.

All exposed surfaces of walls were finished by rub-
bring all sharp corners and edges and by bush-hammering,
with a 16 cut bush hammer, the remaining surface.

Burial Parkway.

That portion of Burial Parkw extending from the
Burl Railroad to East Riverside Drive, is approximately
4,000 feet in length and varies in its overall width from
175 feet to 230 feet; the latter width being between Schur-
man avenue and Parkway avenue, a distance of 1,050 feet.

Burial Parkway consists of a lawn (varying in width
from 52 feet to 128 feet, between the above named points)
through the center; a 35-foot drive on either side of this
lawn; and the outside of each drive is another 10-foot lawn
space followed by a 6-foot walk on each property line.

The work consisted of grading the entire parkway,
constructing roadway embankment at certain points,
from this improvement was utilized by the department in the park.

**Improvements—General.**

The Mill Creek Parkway and Burdsal Parkway, between Northwestern avenue and the East River Drive in Riverside Park, was completed. This improvement is important, as it practically completes the parkway improvement as planned on the north side of the stream. This drive will be opened in the spring of 1917.

The Pleasant Run Parkway improvement, South Drive, between Raymond and Beecher, was practically completed, with the construction of the Shirley under the Belt Railway. This Shirley street will tie directly into Garfield Park.

A contract was let for the Brookside Parkway improvement between Brookside Avenue and Jefferson Avenue, North Drive, and on the South Drive, between Jefferson Avenue and Sixteenth Street, to the S. M. Timberlake Company. This improvement, with the improvement of Sixteenth Street, ordered by the Board of Public Works, will furnish an excellent entrance to Brookside Park from the downtown district and will complete the border improvements of Brookside Park.

Contracts were let for the construction of about four miles of sidewalks along the various parkway improvements. The walks were practically all completed and are very much appreciated by the public.

One of the most important improvements of the year was that of the Garfield Gardens.

The architectural plans were prepared by the firm of Vonmarg and Polin and the work superintended by their representative.

The layout consists of a formal design of garden, including brick walks, three fountains and concrete vases at walk intersections for hay trees. The garden is lighted by an underground system of cables leading to concrete standards, mounted with bronze lanterns carrying 100 watt lamps.

The water displays were designed and installed by F. W. Darlington of Chicago. The fountains are equipped with apparatus for varying the displays and for lighting effects at night. The contract work on the gardens amounted to $34,700.30.

A new golf shelter house was constructed on the South Grove Golf Course at a cost of about $7,000.00, and will be ready for occupancy during the coming year.

The foundation and granite work for the Depey Memorial Fountain were placed during the late summer. The models for bronze work have been inspected and accepted by the commission and the architect and sculptor hope to complete the fountain during the coming year.

The range of greenhouse was completed during the year by the addition of three new propagating houses. This places this department in a position to work to excellent advantage in the propagation of the soft wood stock for the summer planting.

The board adopted building line resolutions for all parkways and boulevard frontages and feels that with this safeguard the general appearance of these improvements and the stability of values will be amply protected.

Many other improvements internal to the parks are discussed in other portions of the Board's Annual Report, to which we call your attention.

**Playgrounds.**

The playgrounds on the park properties were operated by the Department of Recreation and were enjoyed by thousands of children. It is hoped that other grounds may be opened where the communities have for some time needed them.

**Requests.**

The board desires in this, its annual report, to make special mention of a bequest made to the city by John H. Halliday, by which the city is to come into the possession of a beautiful piece of property of about eighty acres lying along White River and adjoining the Mill Creek...
building. The construction of this building could be of cement with dimensions as follows: Width, 100 feet; length, 50 feet; the floor to be two feet below surface of ground and height not to exceed ten feet above ground. Vines could be planted along the wall lines and in time this would add to the beauty of the other buildings.

GARFIELD GARDENS.

The fundamental rule of landscaping is to create a picture; this principle is being carried out in the construction of these gardens.

During the early spring, as soon as the contractors finished a section, men were employed to bring this to a finished grade and same was sodded and flower beds were traced; later on these were planted with highly colored foliage plants. These sections were kept in good condition during the summer and were much admired.

After the contract was finished for all symmetrical work, a force of men was employed to construct walks of crushed stone throughout the balance of the garden, bring all ground to a smooth surface and prepare beds for the informal planting of perennials in masses.

I would suggest that the creek to the west be straightened. This will not only protect the banks from the erosion of the stream, but will enable this department to have a fine site for a natural aquatic pond; by doing this it will then be able to offer a display of all kinds of flowers. The location selected for the aquatic pond is in the southwest section of the garden. This pool could always have fresh water from the small stream; it also has a natural setting of native trees. A small rustic bridge would add much beauty to this part of the gardens.

This picture, when complete, will have a frame of shrubs and trees, with an occasional vista to the center of attraction. Next to this will be great masses of perennial stock with irregular sod lines and all highly colored foliage plants will be used in the symmetrical bedding.

The rose garden will be located in the triangle to the north. There will be sixteen beds of different varieties of hybrid tea roses; the work of removing soil, supplying drainage and proper soil has just been completed.
Nursery.

The nursery was kept in its usual good condition during the season, all plants being cultivated and a great amount of trimming done on small trees.

The seed and cutting beds have become quite an asset, as we are able to produce practically all of our young stock, thereby saving the percent of loss due to the purchase of foreign stock that has been grown under different soil and climatic conditions.

The nursery force has not only performed all work necessary to keep the same in first class condition, but has cultivated all stock recently planted in Riverside, Barnsdal Parkway, Maple Road and Fall Creek.

This department planted and cared for 21 acres of corn which netted about 1,200 bushels; by so doing, all weeds were kept down and the ground brought fair returns.

I would suggest that the Horticultural Department be placed in charge of all ground north of the drive near the park barn and storage. We can then raise more than enough grain and hay for all stock belonging to the Park Department. This would mean approximately 17 acres additional to cultivate.

It will be necessary, in order to accomplish this, to purchase additional equipment, including two teams.

Garfield Park

Liberal plantings of trees and shrubs should be made along all borders where the same have not as yet been treated.

A frame of trees, evergreens and shrubs should be planted on both sides of the showhouse; this will not only create a frame for the showhouse, but will screen all objectionable views of the hodbed yards.

It will be necessary, in order to produce a natural effect along the small streams and lake, to plant a great amount of native plants; willows should be the predominating variety along the water's edge, with taller growing trees in the back for a sky line; mass planting of the different varieties of bog plants would be very interesting.

Riverside Park

During the fall a uniform system of tree planting was made along Parkway avenue from Eighteenth street to
Report of Engineer

To the Honorable Board of Park Commissioners, Indianapolis, Indiana:

Gentlemen:

We herewith beg to submit report of the Engineering Department for the year 1916.

Upon taking charge of the engineering work of your Board, we were instructed to prepare plans and necessary resolutions for building sidewalks on all boulevards and border streets of the parks at the earliest possible moment.

During the past year, fifteen (15) sidewalk improvement resolutions were adopted and contracts let, ten (10) of which have been completed, aggregating five and one-half (5½) miles in length; the remaining five (5) contracts are to be finished immediately after the season for construction opens this spring, aggregating two and one-half (2½) miles in length.

For the purpose of comparison we will give a brief summary of the work done by this department in each of the park districts.

North Park District.

The Engineering Department did all the necessary field work for the construction of the Garfield Park Gardens in Garfield Park, and inspected the work. This included the staking out of walks, curbing, grading, etc., also the staking out and inspection of the three (3) new sections of greenhouse in Garfield Park. The department made the plans, specifications, and prepared the resolutions for the improvement of all the boulevards in the South Park District and border streets on Garfield Park by grading the lawns and paving the sidewalks with cement. The contract for the grading and graveling of Pleasant Run Parkway, south drive, from Raymond Street to Beecher street, was under contract at the beginning of the year and is now practically completed. The subway under the Belt Railroad and the change of channel of Pleasant Run north of Raymond street remain to be done. This work will be brought to completion and the roadway opened for travel early this spring.

The formerly unsightly narrow unimproved lane known as New street, extending from Raymond street to East Garfield Drive, has been improved by your board under parkway resolutions, your board dedicating a strip of land on the east side of Garfield Park wide enough so that with the original New street, a standard seventy-five (75) foot boulevard could be made. The stock barns and old greenhouse have been dismantled and moved away from the neighborhood of this street, and the cellars and other excavations, etc., have been filled up, so that now this border street has removed a heretofore unsightly condition in this corner of the park.

The cost of improvements in the south district, made under the supervision of the Engineering Department, amounts to a little more than one hundred two thousand dollars ($102,000). In this district, 7,300 linear feet of new cement walks were built along the boulevard.

East Park District.

The construction work in the east district has cost about fourteen thousand five hundred dollars ($14,500), in which amount is included the cost of construction of 8,400 linear feet of cement walks along the existing boulevards.
heat. Steam can be taken from the reserve boiler, located in the basement, and carried to hot-beds by a line of pipe through the connecting house; all frames should have coils of three 1-inch pipes evenly distributed over the surface; a false bottom should be constructed. This will give a uniform heat over the entire planting surface.

Nursery

The nursery, during the planting period of the plants, was kept in excellent condition, all stock being cultivated and a great amount of pruning done in order to produce specimen trees.

The nursery force, at different times, cultivated all stock recently planted in Riverside, and other properties of the North district.

An improvement was made by placing all ground to be used for farming under the control of the Horticultural Department. In this way we are able to know from season to season what ground is best adapted to nursery and farm crops. We will be able in the near future to supply all farming produce for the entire department.

I would suggest that a site be purchased for a permanent nursery within a radius of five miles of the city. A study should be made of soil conditions, as it is necessary, in order to grow all varieties of nursery stock, to have what nurserymen call sugar-tree land. The soil at our present location is not conducive to the growth of all plant life as it is sandy and too light.

Garfield Garden

The cost of maintenance of the gardens the past season has been quite an item but this has been repaid by the appreciation of the public not only of this city but from visitors from other parts of the country.

The work during the summer consisted in the cutting and watering of grass, edging of walks and all flower beds and all work necessary to make a carpet of the whole.

During the early fall line changes were made in all symmetrical beds. This will necessitate a different color scheme for the coming season. Plants are being propagated now for this change. When all beds are planted and plants have been trimmed, the changes in the lines and color of the scheme will give the effect of properties along the entire lines of all walks.

The writer would suggest that all banks of the stream to the west of the gardens be improved and small dams be constructed south and north of the rustic bridge. This will give a sheet of water under the bridge and view of the water going over the dam to the south.

An ideal natural aquatic pond could be constructed at a very small cost to the southwest of the garden. This could be accomplished by the straightening of the creek bed and using present channel for the pond; this will not only protect the banks from the erosion of the stream but will give a natural effect to the proposed scheme. If this improvement is made we will have a display of all kinds of flowers, which includes the high-colored greenhouse stock, annuals, perennials, roses, aquatic varieties, shrubs and so on.

Garfield Park

The work of landscaping in this park during the last two seasons consisted in the planting of evergreens along the slopes and hill, also a few deciduous trees being used to create color and give a natural effect.

When the construction work of the Raymond street entrance was completed a force of men was engaged in the tracing and spading of shrub and perennial beds at this point, preparatory to early spring planting.

A planting plan has been made of this entrance, giving all varieties of annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees necessary to have a wealth of bloom during the summer period.

Riverside Park

The reforestation of this park was started as soon as stock could be obtained from our nurseries and each year a great amount of planting has been done. Sixty-two hundred evergreens were planted during the early fall along the hill to the west of the park. This practically completes this planting from Eighteenth street to the extreme north section of the park.

It is the intention in the near future to plant among these evergreens a few deciduous trees of high-colored foliage. This will produce a natural effect and lend color to that part of the park.

A much-needed improvement was made during the summer by the trimming of all elm trees along Riverside Drive. This has raised the heads of the trees to the desired height, thus allowing the full rays of the lights along this drive.


Garfield Park Master Plan. Department of Metropolitan Development: City of Indianapolis, 1989.


