



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

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

**1. Name of Property**

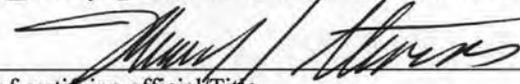
**historic name** Leonard-Leota Park  
**other names/site number** Leonard Park, Lake Leota, Leota Park, Upper Park, Lower Park

**2. Location**

**street & number** 20, 30, 40, 50, ca.60, 120, and 121 Antes Drive; 321, 340, 359, 360, 363, 365, and 395 Burr W. Jones Circle; 252, 256, and 259 Leonard Park Drive **N/A** **not for publication**  
**city or town** Evansville **N/A** **vicinity**  
**state** Wisconsin **code** WI **county** Rock **code** 105 **zip code** 53536

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

Signature of certifying official/Title  Date 6/29/12

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Leonard-Leota Park

Rock

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ other, (explain:)

*Edson H. Beall*

9.4.12

*[Signature]*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

### 5. Classification

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

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

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

building(s)  
 district  
 structure  
 site  
 object

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

contributing	noncontributing
8	8 buildings
1	0 sites
18	3 structures
2	0 objects
29	11 total

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

N/A

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

0

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/Park

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/Park

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: RUSTIC

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation CONCRETE

walls LIMESTONE

CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

### Narrative Description

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

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Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock County, Wisconsin

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**Description:**

Leonard-Leota Park consists of a well-landscaped, irregular-shaped approximately 60-acre parcel located on the northern edge of the city of Evansville. The eastern boundary of this parcel is formed by N. Madison St. (State Highway 59) and the still active double tracks of the former Chicago & Northwestern Railroad run in a northwest-southeast direction along the entire length of the park's northeast boundary.<sup>1</sup> As its name suggests, the Leonard-Leota Park of today actually consist of Leonard Park and Leota Park, which are two historically distinct parks that have since been combined into one, and these two parks are also informally known as the Upper Park (Leonard Park) and the Lower Park (Leota Park). Leonard Park is an 8-acre parcel that was developed in 1883 as Evansville's first municipal park and it occupies high ground overlooking the Lower Park, with which it was combined in 1923. The Lower Park can be roughly divided into two sections: the north portion, which comprises Lake Leota and the land located along the eastern shore of Lake Leota; and the south portion, which comprises the land to the southeast of Lake Leota that borders Allen's Creek. The portion of Lake Leota located in the park is a roughly 25-acre, crescent-shaped lake that was created in 1847 when the flow of Allen's Creek was dammed to facilitate milling activities in Evansville.<sup>2</sup> The south portion of the Lower Park consists of parkland that borders the course of Allen's Creek, which still flows in a southeasterly direction from the dam at the southeast end of Lake Leota all the way to the eastern boundary of the park and beyond.

The Upper and Lower parks are accessed by three interconnected roadways that each serve one of the three sections of the park. The section that is known as Leonard Park is served by Leonard Park Drive, which encircles this section. The south end of this drive connects with Grove Street and the city's grid plan street system, while its north end connects with Antes Drive in the Lower Park near the Henneberry Shelter House (Map No. 4). The Lower Park is served by Antes Drive and by Burr W. Jones Circle. Antes Drive enters the Lower Park from N. Madison St. and connects up with both Leonard Park Drive and with Burr W. Jones Circle, the latter connection point being located near the South Baseball Diamond Bathroom Building (Map No. 13). Burr W. Jones Circle serves the north portion of the Lower Park, which it encircles, and, as noted above, it also connects up with Antes Drive.

The north portion of the Lower Park is flat and most of its surface is covered in mown grass and is given over to athletic playing fields. The south portion of the Lower Park is part of the floodplain of the northwest-southeast running Allen's Creek and it is divided into unequal northeast and southwest sections by the creek. Most of the land within the larger northeast section of the south portion of the Lower Park is also flat, its surface is also covered with mown grass, and while much of this section is given over to

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<sup>1</sup> The city of Evansville had a population of 4039 in 2000. Evansville is located in Rock County, 22 miles south of the capital city of Madison. STH 59 is known as North and South Madison St. within the corporate limits of Evansville.

<sup>2</sup> Allen's Creek drains a large area located to the northwest of the city of Evansville and it ultimately empties into the Sugar River near Albany, Wisconsin, which is located approximately five miles southwest of Evansville.

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Leonard-Leota Park  
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athletic fields, mature trees can be found throughout the section and are especially prevalent on both sides of Allen's Creek. The surface of the land in the smaller southwest section of the south portion of the Lower Park that is located on the southwest side of Allen's Creek is mostly covered in mown lawn, but this land rises up steeply to the southwest all along the length of this portion of Antes Dr. and forms a hillside that is covered with mature trees and shrubs. Leonard Park is a continuation of this same hillside and it sits on higher ground than the other sections of the park. Leonard Park is roughly rectangular in shape; its east, west, and south sides are surrounded by platted lots that are occupied by single family residences, and its northern end slopes down to Lake Leota and connects with the Lower Park. The surface of this park is also covered with mown grass and mature shade trees are much more prevalent here than in any of the other portions of the combined park.

Located within these combined sections of parkland are 16 buildings, 21 structures, and two objects, for a total of 40 resources. Twenty-nine are considered to be contributing, and the remainder, non-contributing, due to the fact that they are of too recent a date of construction for NRHP eligibility. The construction of much of the Lower Park was made possible by the use of annual project funds that were provided by several federal government Depression-era work relief programs between 1933 and 1940, and most of the combined park's contributing resources are examples of the Rustic Style and are the products of these programs.

**INVENTORY**

The following inventory lists all the resources in the park, the resource's contributing ( C ) or non-contributing ( NC ) status, the type of the resource, the map number, and, when available, the name, the construction date, and the address of the resource.

C/NC	Original Name	Date	Type	Map No.
C	Leonard-Leota Park Site	1883-1940	Site	---
C	Leonard Park Bathroom Building (252 Leonard Park Dr.)	1912	Building	1
C	Lake Leota Dam and Bridges	1923/1935/1958	Structure	12
C	Bath House (321 Burr W. Jones Circle)	1924-1925	Building	22
C	Antes Drive Bridge over Allen's Creek	1925	Structure	10
C	South Baseball Diamond	1925/1933	Structure	14
C	North Baseball Diamond	1927/1931	Structure	29

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C/NC	Original Name	Date	Type	Map No.
C	Allen's Creek Straightening & Rip-Rap	1933-1937/1986	Structure	8
C	Stepped Falls Below Lake Leota Dam	1934-1935	Structure	11
C	Horseshoe Lagoon (West)	1935-1936	Structure	9
C	2 Bridges		2 Structures	9
C	Duck House		Building	9
C	Horseshoe Lagoon (East)	1935-1936	Structure	6
	2 Bridges		2 Structures	6
	Duck House		Building	6
	Fireplace		Object	6
C	Tennis Courts (2) and Shuffle Board Court	1937-1938	3 Structures	15
C	Outdoor Fireplace	1936-1940	Object	21
C	Antes Cabin (20 Antes Dr.)	ca.1922/1936	Building	16
C	Bandstand-Warming House (259 Leonard Park Dr.)	1937-1940	Building	3
C	Henneberry Shelter House (121 Antes Dr.)	1939	Building	4
C	Store Building (340 Burr W. Jones Circle)	1939	Building	23
C	Bell Tower (120 Antes Dr.)	1940	Structure	5
C	Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool (360 Burr W. Jones Circle)	1958	Structure	25
C	Leonard Park Shelter House (256 Leonard Park Dr.)	1959	Structure	2
NC	South Baseball Diamond Bathroom Building (ca.60 Antes Dr.)	1963	Building	13
NC	Horse Barn Shelter House (395 Burr W. Jones Circle)	1971	Building	30
NC	Oscar Dietz Shelter House (363 Burr W. Jones Circle)	ca.1971	Structure	27
NC	Department of Public Works Garage (50 Antes Dr.)	1984	Building	18
NC	Department of Public Works Storage Garage 2 (30 Antes Dr.)	ca.1965	Building	19
NC	Department of Public Works Storage Shed (40 Antes Dr.)	ca.1984	Building	17
NC	Gazebo	1984	Structure	20
NC	Family Aquatic Center (360 Burr W. Jones Circle)	ca.1974	Building	24
NC	North Baseball Diamond Bathroom Building (359 Burr W. Jones Circle)	ca.1988	Building	26

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C/NC	Original Name	Date	Type	Map No.
NC	North Baseball Diamond Announcer's Stand (365 Burr W. Jones Circle)	ca.1975	Building	28
NC	Allen's Creek Footbridge	ca.2002	Structure	7

The following capsule summaries describe most of the contributing resources in the park. Names given in the heading are historic names, when known. The resources are listed in rough chronological order.

Leonard-Leota Park Site 1883-1940 Contributing [No map No.]

The overall site of Leonard-Leota Park is irregular in plan, which is not surprising since it represents the merging of Leonard Park with Lake Leota and Leota Park. Leonard Park occupies the high ground above Lake Leota and Leota Park and it was created in 1883 when it and the surrounding area were platted as Leonard and Mygatt's Plat. The land that is now Leonard Park is actually delineated on the original plat map of this plat as "park grounds," but it did not become a park until after it was sold to the Village of Evansville by the plat owners in 1883. Subsequently, the Village seeded the surface of this rectilinear 8-acre parcel with grass, trees were planted, a public toilet building was built there in 1912, and a flag pole and other park equipment also were put in place. In addition, a system of pathways was built within the park and a roadway that encircled the park (Leonard Park Drive) was constructed. Leonard Park served Evansville's needs until 1923, when the adjacent Lake Leota and its floodplain were purchased by the City of Evansville to provide for the recreational needs of the growing city.<sup>3</sup> Once this purchase was completed, civic attention turned towards beautifying the new park lands instead and the construction of a new bathroom building (Map No. 1) in 1912, and while Leonard Park continued to be well maintained and well used in the years that followed, it was essentially left alone. Consequently, the Leonard Park that is visible today is still very similar to the Leonard Park of 1923. The most notable change that has taken place in this park since 1923 has been the construction of a new shelter house (Map No. 2) in 1959 which is located next to the 1912 bathroom building.

By the time that the Lower Park was purchased in 1923, what had once been Lake Leota was little more than a swamp bordering the course of Allen's Creek. Consequently, a new dam (Map No. 12) was built to replace the original one, which then made it possible to refill and restore Lake Leota. Once the lake had filled up, the portion located directly behind the dam was dredged to make a swimming area and a concrete block Bathhouse Building (Map No. 22) was built adjacent to the dam in 1924 to serve the swimmers. Despite these improvements, most of the newly acquired parkland that abutted the lake to the east and to the south below the dam along Allen's Creek was still in a more or less natural state at this time. While some tree planting and some site work had been done in the area below the dam prior to the

<sup>3</sup> Williams, B. Keith. *Evansville City Parks: 1883-1986*. Evansville: Star Printing Co., 1987, pp. 20-22.

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dam's reconstruction, this land was (and still is) the flood plain of Allen's Creek and it was bordered by low, marshy areas, and a portion of the land to the northeast of the creek had actually been used for a number of years as the city's trash dump.

During the ten years that followed the building of the new dam, the City filled in sections of both the north and south portions of the Lower Park, and baseball diamonds (Map Nos. 14 & 29) were built on both portions in these years. The funds that the City had available for park purposes were limited, and real change did not occur in the Lower Park until 1933, when the first federally funded work relief projects were put into place. These projects commenced in 1933 under the Civic Works Administration (CWA) and this work continued under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) until it was finally completed in 1940. In the process, both sections of the Lower Park were transformed into the handsome park that still exists today. Low-lying areas in the park were filled in, Allen's Creek was straightened and rip-rapped, the baseball diamonds were improved, tennis courts and a shuffle board court were built, as were new Rustic Style buildings, structures, and objects, trees and shrubs were planted, filled land was leveled and seeded with grass, and additional landscape work was done throughout the park. WPA workers also built five single and one double Rustic Style stone outdoor picnic fireplaces in the Lower Park between 1936 and 1940.<sup>4</sup> Only two of these are now extant; one is located on the island in the easternmost Horseshoe Lagoon (Map No. 6), while the second (Map No. 21) is located on Antes Drive opposite the South Baseball Diamond. It was built to serve the four tourist cabins that were once located next to it. Most of this work occurred in the south section of the Lower Park below the dam, which is divided into northeast and southwest portions by Allen's Creek. This division remained even after the creek was straightened within the park boundaries, but the unequal size of the portions and the fact that they are physically separated from one another by the creek favored separate usages for the two. The smaller southwestern portion became the quiet, more contemplative side and the larger northeastern portion became the active side.

By the end of 1940, the Lower Park had been transformed into what is still considered to be one of the beauty spots of Evansville and the south section in particular is a showcase for the many different kinds of work projects that were completed under the auspices of the various federally funded work relief programs that emerged during the Great Depression. In the years since the completion of these programs, a number of new buildings and structures have been built throughout the park as changing needs dictated. The most notable was the new swimming pool constructed in the north section in 1958. The Lower Park itself, however, is still very much as it was at the end of 1940 and it continues to be heavily used and well maintained.

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<sup>4</sup> "City Park Improvements Completed." *Evansville Review*, February 22, 1940, p. 8. Both of these fireplaces are still in good, original condition today.

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<u>Lake Leota Dam</u>	1923/1928/1935/1958	Contributing	Map No. 12
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Once the City had secured the land that would be covered by a restored Lake Leota, plans were made to replace the remnants of the original dam with a new reinforced concrete one that would impound the lake. Evansville's City Engineer, E. B. Parsons, designed the new dam in February 1923, and the contract was awarded to R. H. Peterson and Sons of Oregon, Wisconsin. Construction began in July of the same year and was completed by September at a cost of \$7630.00.<sup>5</sup> This dam is 500-feet-long and it is still highly intact. Most of it consists of a more or less linear earthen structure that forms the southeast end of Lake Leota. Placed toward the northeast end of this dam at the place, where the channel of Allen's Creek is located, are two U-shaped, poured concrete spillways that are positioned at either end of a smaller reinforced concrete portion of the overall dam. The upstream side of this concrete portion is exposed reinforced concrete that is protected by stone rip-rap, while its downstream side is covered with earth and with mown lawn. The water that flows over the two spillways is directed into two channels that encircle the earth-covered land below the concrete linear portion, thereby creating a small peninsula-like area whose surface has been grassed and planted with several trees. The downstream sides of these two spillways are protected by poured concrete wing walls and the lift gate for the dam is located on the right (east) side of the left-hand (west) spillway at the point where the Allen's Creek channel is located and it also discharges into the channel below the spillway.<sup>6</sup>

A pedestrian path runs along the top of the entire dam and two small steel pedestrian bridges that form part of this path span the width of the two spillways. Their ends are placed on the wing walls of each of the spillways. These bridges were built in 1928 by the Baker Manufacturing Co. of Evansville and are still in use.<sup>7</sup>

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<u>Bath House</u>	1924/1935	Contributing	Map No. 22
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This rectilinear plan, one-story-tall Astylistic Utilitarian form building was built in 1924 following the completion of the dam and the filling of the lake. The building has a concrete pad foundation and exterior walls of rock-faced concrete block. These walls are sheltered by the overhanging boxed eaves of the building's hip roof. The slopes of this roof are clad in asphalt shingles, the ridgeline of the roof runs northeast-southwest, and a thick brick chimney mass penetrates its northern slope. The building's original use was as a bath house for those swimming in the lake and it housed dressing cubicles and lockers for girls in its south end and dressing cubicles and lockers for boys in its north end. Situated between these dressing rooms was the park's store, where food could be bought and tents, cots, boats, and bathing suits could be rented. In 1935, two showers were installed in the interior by WPA workers and the building

<sup>5</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "History Behind Lake Leota in Evansville." *Evansville Review*, February 3, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> This gate was rebuilt and made smaller in 1935 by the F.E.R.A. in order to make it more efficient.

<sup>7</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 22.

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continued to be used for its original function until a new park store building (Map No. 23) was built nearby in 1940 and a new swimming pool (Map No. 25) was built in 1958.<sup>8</sup> Since then it has been used as the club house of the local boy scout troop and it is still highly intact and well maintained.

Antes Drive Bridge Over Allen's Creek                      1925                      Contributing                      Map No. 10

This short, straight, concrete bridge was built in the Lower Park in 1925 and it crosses Antes Drive just below the place where the two spillway channels combine and once again become Allen's Creek.<sup>9</sup> The bridge's concrete deck is supported on concrete beams and modern steel guardrails are placed on both sides of the deck.

South Baseball Diamond    1925/1933                      Contributing                      Map No. 14

The baseball diamond in the south portion of the Lower Park was built in June of 1925 using funds provided by public subscription and by the City of Evansville. The land it now occupies was then a marshy bog, but the water was pumped out, the bog was filled in, and the first game was played there on June 23, 1925. In 1935, WPA workers restored the diamond, which was used for kitten ball (softball), and it is still used for baseball today.<sup>10</sup>

North Baseball Diamond    1931                      Contributing                      Map No. 29

The baseball diamond in the north portion of the Lower Park was built in 1927 and the first game was played there on May 25, 1927. This diamond was used for baseball (hardball), and in 1931 it was improved using soil dredged up from the bottom of Lake Leota. The diamond is still used for baseball today.<sup>11</sup>

Allen's Creek Straightening & Rip-Rapping                      1933-1939/1986                      Contributing                      Map No. 8

Prior to 1933, that portion of Allen's Creek that is situated in the Lower Park and flows eastward from the Lake Leota Dam was still largely in its natural state and consisted of a meandering watercourse that was flanked by marshy bogs on either side that had been only partially filled in. When FERA funds became available in that year, crews were set to work straightening the course of the creek, protecting its banks from erosion, and beautifying it. This work extended from 1933 to 1939 and involved rip-rapping the banks of the creek from the dam all the way east to N. Madison St., a distance of some 320

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<sup>8</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 23

<sup>10</sup> "City Park Improvements Completed." *Evansville Review*, February 22, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., pp. 14, 42-43.

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feet, with dry-laid, locally quarried limestone.<sup>12</sup> In the process, portions of the creek were straightened and other natural features of the creek, such as a pair of oxbow bends, were transformed into sites of both visual and utilitarian interest. This work was all done by local labor, it was funded by the FERA, the CWA, and finally, the WPA, and it is an excellent example of the Rustic Style that is so closely associated with such federally funded Depression era work relief projects.

In 1986, many stretches of the creek's original stone rip-rap were tuck pointed and covered over with cement, and deteriorating stretches of both still line the entire length of the creek within the park's boundaries. Fortunately, nearly all of the original stone rip-rap is still extant and it is currently the subject of a restoration effort.

Stepped Falls Below Lake Leota Dam                      1934-1935                      Contributing                      Map No. 11

Part of the work of beautifying and straightening of Allen's Creek also involved managing the water that flowed over the dam's twin spillways. Prior to 1934, the flow over these spillways in times of high water could be forceful enough to cause erosion downstream. The solution was to direct the water from both spillways into channels that empty into a basin located at the foot of the west spillway. The force of the water was mediated by passing it over three small steps that were built across the width of the east channel. These steps were effective and they also created an attractive waterfall-like effect. Both these steps and the shores of both the channels and the basin were all rip-rapped by FERA-funded work crews with the same Rustic Style locally quarried dry-laid stone that was used to rip-rap the rest of the creek.<sup>13</sup> These stone steps and the rip-rapped banks of the channels are still extant and they are now the most intact part of the entire Depression era work that was done on the creek.

Horseshoe Lagoon (West)                                      1935-1936                                      Contributing                                      Map No. 9

As noted above, the natural course of Allen's Creek between the dam and N. Madison St. was straightened and rip-rapped as part of the FERA work activities in the Lower Park, the intent being both to beautify the creek and to help prevent the erosion of its banks. As part of this straightening process, two small natural oxbows were cut off, but instead of filling in the "C"-shaped remnants, the decision was made to enhance them and use them as part of the overall landscaping design. As a result, the banks of these oxbows were rip-rapped like the rest of the creek and the cut-off parcels of land that the oxbows encircled were treated as islands. These islands were filled in and landscaped, the flat surfaces were planted with grass and trees, their shores were rip-rapped, and small stone foot bridges were built across both ends of the channel that encircled each of the islands to provide access to and from the

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<sup>12</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., pp. 23, 36.

<sup>13</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "The Great Depression and Evansville's Fine Parks." *Evansville Review*, April 25, 2001, p. 3.

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mainland. In addition, a small gable-roofed stone duck house was built on a small new island in the channel. Each island was also provided with a single picnic table made of locally quarried stone and two stone chairs (not included in the resource count because of size and scale), all of which were built with FERA-funded labor. The westernmost of these two lagoons features two of these small bridges, a duck house, and a picnic table and two chairs; all are still intact and in good condition and are fine examples of the Rustic Style work that is typically associated with federally funded Depression era park projects.

Horseshoe Lagoon (East)                      1935-1936                      Contributing                      Map No. 6

The second horseshoe lagoon is located about 150-feet further east along the creek and it is more or less identical to the one to the west except that in addition to its two small bridges, duck house, and stone picnic table and chairs, a stone beehive-shaped fireplace was also built on this island by the FERA. These features are all still intact and in good condition.<sup>14</sup>

Tennis Courts & Shuffle Board Court                      1937-1938/1977                      Contributing                      Map No. 15

Between 1937 and 1938, WPA workers constructed two concrete tennis courts and an adjoining hard-surfaced shuffle board court in the south portion of the Lower Park. These tennis courts were the city's first public courts and the city's first ever tennis tournament was held on them in 1939.<sup>15</sup> In the years since then, the original surfaces of these courts have been renewed more than once, but the courts themselves are still extant, they occupy their original location, and they are still in active use.

Outdoor Fireplace                      1936-1940                      Contributing                      Map No. 21

Between 1936 and 1940, WPA workers built five single and one double Rustic Style stone outdoor picnic fireplaces in the Lower Park.<sup>16</sup> Only two of these are now extant, one is located on the island in the easternmost Horseshoe Lagoon (Map No. 6), and the second one is located on Antes Drive opposite the South Baseball Diamond and was built to serve the four tourist cabins that were once located next to it. Both fireplaces are still in good, original condition today.

Antes Cabin                      ca.1922/1936                      Contributing                      Map No. 16

In May of 1936, four wooden tourist cabins were moved from the rear of a service station on N. Madison

<sup>14</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. *Images of America: Evansville*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing Co., 2009, p. 118. This page contains an excellent historic photo of this lagoon.

<sup>15</sup> "Review to Sponsor City-Wide Tennis Tourney." *Evansville Review*, May 4, 1939, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> "City Park Improvements Completed." *Evansville Review*, February 22, 1940, p. 8.

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St. to the Lower Park and were set up in a row north of and opposite the South Baseball Diamond for the use of visiting tourists who were staying in the park overnight.<sup>17</sup> These very small, one-story-tall, rectilinear plan, clapboard-clad Front Gable Vernacular Form cabins were all identical, their main façades all faced south and had a single door flanked by a window opening, and windows were placed on the side elevations as well. Even though they lacked plumbing, these cabins were very popular with tourists during the Depression era and they continued to be used as such until the early 1950s, but by that time tourists were more demanding and motels had taken their place. As a result, the cabins were first converted into storage space for park equipment and were then offered to anyone who would move them from the park.<sup>18</sup> Today, only one of these four cabins is still located in the park, but it is in good, largely original condition and is now known as the Antes Cabin.<sup>19</sup>

Bandstand-Warming House

1937-1940

Contributing

Map No. 3

This building is located on the south shore of Lake Leota at the extreme northern end of Leonard Park. It was begun in 1937 by CWA workers and it originally consisted of an elevated, rectilinear plan, one-story-tall wooden structure that was used as a bandstand in the summer months. In 1939, the open lower level of this structure was reconstructed as a warming house for the use of ice skaters on Lake Leota. WPA workers completed the reconstruction and the result was a rectilinear plan, Rustic Style building having a wood floor laid over the concrete pad foundation, walls of locally quarried stone, and a flat roof encircled with wooden railings.<sup>20</sup>

Entrance door openings are placed on the building's east-facing side elevation and on its north-facing lakeside façade, two window openings flank the lakeside door opening as well, and the interior of the building has a concrete floor. The east-facing side entrance to the building is accessed via a long lakeside path that is flanked by a poured concrete retaining wall, while the roof, which continued to be used as a bandstand for some years thereafter, is accessed by stairs that are located further north on the same east-facing side elevation. The wooden railings that currently encircle the building's concrete roof also act as balustrades for the exterior stairs and they are modern replacements for the originals. Otherwise, the building is still in a highly intact state and it is well maintained.

<sup>17</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 39.

<sup>18</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "Tourism in Lake Leota Park Through the Years." *Evansville Review*, July 16, 1998, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. *Images of America: Evansville*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing Co., 2009, p. 80. This page contains an excellent historic photo of these four cabins.

<sup>20</sup> "Skaters' Room Now Completed At Park." *Evansville Review*, January 11, 1940, p. 1.

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<u>Henneberry Shelter House</u>	1939	Contributing	Map No. 4
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The Henneberry Shelter House is the finest Rustic Style building in the Lower Park and it was begun in August of 1938 and was completed in August 1939.<sup>21</sup> The building is one-story-tall, has a rectilinear plan, measures 50-feet-long by 24-feet-deep, and has a concrete pad foundation. The building's walls are of beautifully worked, locally quarried limestone and these walls are sheltered by the overhanging open eaves of the building's asphalt shingle-covered gable roof. The principal facades of the building face northeast and southwest, they are identical, and there are two large rectilinear openings on each side that are placed opposite each other. In addition, two small rectangular window openings are placed in each of the two end walls and they help provide light to the single room inside, which is open to the roof and is large enough to comfortably hold four large picnic tables.

Funding for the building came from a \$600.00 donation from Richard and Stacia Henneberry of Evansville and the building was built using WPA-funded labor. It is still very much in use today and is in excellent original condition.

<u>Store Building</u>	1939	Contributing	Map No. 23
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As federally funded work in the park progressed during the Depression era, the park became more and more popular, but the increasing numbers of park users put great pressure on the small park store that operated out of the Bathhouse Building (Map No. 22). As a result, a new store building was built near the bathhouse at the bottom of the north section of the Lower Park by WPA workers in 1939. It is an excellent example of the Rustic Style designs that were used by the WPA and its predecessors.<sup>22</sup>

This building is rectilinear in plan, one-story-tall, measures roughly 50-feet-long by 25-feet-deep, and it rests on a concrete pad foundation and has walls of beautifully worked, locally quarried limestone. These walls are sheltered by the overhanging open eaves of the building's asphalt shingle-covered hip roof. The principal facade of the building faces southwest across Burr W. Jones Circle towards the Bathhouse Building, which it resembles, and it is seven-bays-wide. The third bay from the left contains the entrance door to the building while the other six bays each contain a single rectangular window opening. The northwest and southeast-facing side elevations of the building are identical to each other and each is three-bays-wide and another entrance door is placed in each elevation's center bay and this door is flanked on either side by an additional window opening. More windows are placed on the building's rear northeast-facing elevation, as is a fine, stepped stone chimney mass, which is centered on it.

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<sup>21</sup> "New Shelter House To Be Erected Here." *Evansville Review*, July 14, 1938, pp. 1, 8. See also: "Park Shelter House Open To Public." *Evansville Review*, August 3, 1939, pp. 1, 8.

<sup>22</sup> "Leota Park Store Nearing Completion." *Evansville Review*, October 5, 1939, p. 1.

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This building now houses the park's concessions and its store and it is still very much in use and is in excellent original condition.

Bell Tower 1940 Contributing Map No. 5

The last of the WPA-funded building projects in the Lower Park was a 20-foot-tall bell tower located across Antes Drive from the Henneberry Shelter House.<sup>23</sup> This tapering limestone bell tower was specifically built to house a school bell that had originally hung in Evansville's 1874 grade school but which had been removed from that building and stored when the school was demolished in 1939. The tower is built of beautifully worked, locally quarried limestone and it has a square plan and measures 8 by 8-feet at the base and tapers gradually to six-feet-square at the base of the bell chamber. The stone bell chamber has a rectilinear opening on each of its four sides and it is sheltered by the asphalt shingle-clad pyramidal-shaped roof that crowns the tower. A heavy wooden door fills an opening placed in the base of the tower's southwest-facing main elevation; this door opens into a first story room that has a poured concrete floor.

Like the park's other Depression era buildings and structures, this one is also in excellent original condition and an undated bronze memorial plaque has been affixed to a stone in front of the tower by the City of Evansville and commemorates six persons who were instrumental in seeing the park to fruition.

Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool 1958 Contributing Map No. 25

By its very nature, Lake Leota needs periodic dredging to provide water quality that is safe for public use. By 1958, Lake Leota's heavy use by swimmers and other park users in the summer months was increasingly at variance with the deteriorating quality of the water in this very shallow lake. As a result, the City decided to build a new public swimming pool on a low hill in the north section of the Lower Park just behind and to the north of the park's 1940 store building. Construction on this \$75,000.00 combined swimming pool and wading pool began in the spring of 1957, with the contractor being Fred I. Rogers and Sons, Inc., of Hales Corners, Wisconsin.<sup>24</sup> By the summer of 1958, the new pool was ready for use and it was formally dedicated in July of that year, by which time over 600 persons were using the pool on Sundays and 200 children had signed up for swimming classes.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> "City Preserving Old School Bell." *Evansville Review*, February 15, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> "Pool Construction Starts Today." *Evansville Review*, May 2, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> "New Swim Pool Is Dedicated." *Evansville Review*, July 10, 1958, p. 1.

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This pool is of poured concrete, it is U-shaped, and its largest portion contains six adult swimming lanes, while adjoining it is a much smaller deep water area for diving and another larger area for wading. A broad concrete apron for seating and sunning surrounds the pool and the pool is still heavily used and is in excellent condition.<sup>26</sup>

Leonard Park Shelter House                      1959                      Contributing                      Map No. 2

The Leonard Park Shelter House consists of a nearly square plan structure that has a concrete pad floor and an asphalt shingle-clad gable roof that is supported by posts.<sup>27</sup> The structure has no walls and it is in excellent condition and is still in use today.

This structure was built in 1959 from materials donated by the Pruden Products Co. and the Laufenburg Lumber Co., both of Evansville, and the labor was donated by members of the local Lions Club.

**Summary**

It believed that the contributing resources in Leonard-Leota Park retain a sufficient degree of integrity to contribute to our understanding of the park's appearance during the period of significance, 1883-1961. Not surprisingly, changes have been made to some parts of the park over the years. New resources have been added, and additional resources such as chain link fences have been installed in response to changing views regarding public safety. Never-the-less, the park's original Rustic Style buildings and structures and the Rustic Style stonework that comprises the other Depression era features of the park are still largely intact, as are the dam and bathhouse building that date from the earlier period of the Lower Park's development. While many of the park's smaller decorative plantings have been replaced over time, the general plan of its green space has also been retained.

As the inventory shows, there are eleven non-contributing resources in Leonard-Leota Park, eight of which are buildings and three of which are structures. All of these resources are located in the Lower Park and all of them were built after 1961. In addition, while all of these non-contributing resources are still intact and in good condition, they are of undistinguished, essentially utilitarian design and do not meet the high standard set by the park's contributing resources.

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<sup>26</sup> A non-contributing Contemporary Style bathhouse (Map No. 24) was built next to the pool at a later date.

<sup>27</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 26.

Leonard-Leota Park  
Name of Property

Rock  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1883-1961

1923-1940

### Significant Dates

1883

1923

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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**Significance**

Leonard-Leota Park consists of a well-landscaped 60-acre parcel and 25 acre lake that is located on the far north side of the city of Evansville. The Evansville Intensive Survey of 2006 identified this multi-use municipal park as being a potentially eligible district having local significance under National Register (NR) Criteria A and C.<sup>28</sup> Research was undertaken to assess the potential for nominating the Park to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) utilizing the Rustic Style subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.<sup>29</sup> The results of this research are detailed below and confirm that the Leonard-Leota Park is locally significant under NR Criterion C because it is a fine, highly intact designed landscape that is largely the result of workers who were paid by the several nationwide work relief programs that were developed by the federal government during the Great Depression. In addition, the Park also includes an excellent representative collection of buildings, structures and objects that are individually and collectively very fine examples of the Rustic Style work that is a characteristic of many of the national, state, and local park projects undertaken by the federal government during the 1930s and particularly by designers who were associated with the National Park Service (NPS).

The Leonard-Leota Park is also believed to be of local historic significance (Criterion A) because of its associations with the efforts of the citizens of the city of Evansville who sought to improve their quality of life by improving the city's setting and also by creating public parks where public recreation could take place. Funding for the work in the park came from 1930s-era public work relief funds that were given to Evansville by the federal government, and these funds were utilized from 1933 until 1940. Additional privately and municipally funded work on the park both preceded and followed the Depression, and some of the park's finest features are the result of these locally funded efforts. The park that is visible today was essentially completed by 1940 and represents the realization of a long-held civic desire to turn this important but neglected area into a park setting that was worthy of the city.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Evansville Intensive Survey Report*. Evansville: City of Evansville, 2006, p. 67.

<sup>29</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2 (Architecture). The Rustic Style Subsection exists in draft form and can be seen at the office of the Wisconsin's Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation. The Community Planning study unit is in process.

<sup>30</sup> The period of significance for the park spans the dates from 1883 to 1961 for Criterion A and from 1923 to 1940 for Criterion C. 1883 is the year when the then Village of Evansville purchased the first portion of the land that is now included within the park boundaries, 1923 marks the date when the present Lake Leota dam was built in the park, this being now the park's earliest built resource, 1940 marks the end of the federally funded work in the park and the date when the last architecturally significant resource in the park was completed, and 1961 represents the current limits of the NRHP's 50-year rule. The end date encompasses additional work carried out in the park during the historic period.

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The damming of Allen's Creek in 1847 to provide water power for Evansville's first mills created an impoundment behind it that became known as Lake Leota. This lake became a favorite pleasure ground for Evansville citizens and remained so throughout the nineteenth century, but in 1900 the dam was removed and the lake behind disappeared. In 1923, citizen agitation succeeded in getting a new dam built and the lake restored. The City of Evansville bought adjacent parcels of land at this time for the development of additional parklands. Little was done to develop this land until the Great Depression, which brought federal aid to Evansville in the form of CWA, FERA, and WPA funding. These new funding sources resulted in the landscaping of the park, the construction of a number of Rustic Style buildings and other amenities, and the rip-rapping of the course of Allen's Creek throughout the park. The result is a still intact designed landscape that is believed to be eligible for NRHP listing as both a designed landscape and as a fine example of the numerous Rustic Style projects that were funded by the federal government during the Depression period.

**Community Planning and Development (Criterion A):**

Leonard-Leota Park is believed to be locally eligible for listing in the NRHP for its associations with the significance area of Community Planning and Development because the completion of the park marked the culmination of a several decades-long effort by Evansville's citizens to improve and beautify the northern entryway into the city and who also wanted to give Evansville the kind of improved recreational opportunities that a readily accessible municipal park could provide. The northwest-southeast-running Allen's Creek passes through the center of Evansville and Leonard-Leota Park is located on the far north side of the city at the point where this creek was dammed in 1847 for milling purposes. Until the mid-1930s, much of the park's site was an unattractive marsh and N. Madison St., which in 1930 was a part of State Highway 10 (now United States Highway 14), the most important highway that passes through Evansville, runs along the east side of the park site. As automobile traffic on this highway increased, Evansville's citizens became increasingly concerned that this underdeveloped area was providing visitors entering the city from the north with their first impression of the city. It was the desire to ensure that this impression would be a favorable one, coupled with Evansville's even more pressing need for more parkland that ultimately led to the creation of what is now Leonard-Leota Park.

A detailed history of the city of Evansville and its built resources is embodied in the *City of Evansville Intensive Survey Report*, printed in 2006. It should also be noted that a general history of Evansville and its development up until 1920 is included in local historian Ruth Ann Montgomery's 1989 book *Evansville: Glimpses of the Grove*. Even more detailed is Montgomery's series of local newspaper articles that cover the history of Lake Leota from its beginnings up until the present day. And finally, B. Keith Williams has written and published an extensive history of Evansville's parks entitled

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*Evansville City Parks: 1883-1986*, and much of what follows is taken directly from this publication. Consequently, the historic context that follows deals primarily with the history of Leonard-Leota Park itself.

What is now called Evansville was first settled as early as 1839, and by 1845 the settlement, which was originally called "The Grove" because of a large stand of timber that was then located just to the northwest of it, consisted of four or five log houses and a single frame house. In 1847 and 1848, Erastus Quivey built a saw mill and grist mill on Allen's Creek, this being a small river that runs diagonally through the community, and it was thanks to these mills that the city of Evansville developed where it did.

To power his mills, Quivey built a dam across Allen's Creek at the same location where the current dam in Leonard-Leota Park is located and the damming of the creek resulted in the establishment of an impoundment behind the dam that was subsequently named Lake Leota. Throughout the nineteenth century and the first twenty years of the twentieth, this very shallow lake and the land surrounding it was privately owned, but although the owners did nothing to develop the site's recreational potential, they allowed the public free access to it. As a result, the lake gradually evolved into an informal but much enjoyed public recreational area and it continued to be used as such, although its existence, dependent as it was on the strength of the dam and amount of water in the creek that fed it, was always somewhat precarious.

Lake Leota was not really a park, however, and as the Evansville community grew and matured into a village, so too did its desire that it should have a proper park. The catalyst appears to have been the rebuilding of the original Lake Leota dam in 1883 and the refilling of Lake Leota.<sup>31</sup>

Levi Leonard (1815-1906) came to this [Evansville] area as a farmer and first teacher of a log school in 1842. He later became the owner of a strip of land extending north from W. Main Street to the mill pond [Lake Leota]. There is evidence that some of this wooded area beyond the end of what is now Second street was used for picnics and as a playground prior to 1883. An item in the May 29, 1883 issue of the Enterprise states that there were eighteen men employed at work upon a mill dam. That dam was located where the present dam is.

The Village Board ... apparently considered the time auspicious to capitalize on the recreational benefits of the lake to be created. Thus it was on January 5 of that year that the Board was presented with a resolution that read: "Resolved, that the Village Board purchase of Levi Leonard

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<sup>31</sup> The original dam washed out in a flood on July 1, 1882.

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about 3½ acres of land for a street and public park, said and lying north of Levi Leonard's residence and north line resting on the Mill Pond." This was unanimously approved.

Action was swift for the deed was signed July 7 and shows that in consideration of \$625, Levi Leonard and his wife deeded to the Village of Evansville approximately 3½ acres. A metes and bounds description deciphers into the land between the end of North Second Street and Lake Leota except for a strip 8 rods wide and 59 rods long along the northwest edge of the current "upper" park.

To square up or round out the desired parcel of land deemed suitable for this park, the board wished to purchase this strip from Lansing W. Mygatt, but apparently were reluctant to spend additional funds without approval of the taxpayers. So a special election was held on July 20 at which by a vote of 63 to 5, the go ahead was given.<sup>32</sup>

As a result, the Village board entered into an agreement with Mygatt to purchase this strip of land for \$300, \$50 of which was payable at the signing of the deed with the balance to be payable in 1894. The final payment was included in the village's 1894 budget, along with an extra \$100 for improvements in the new park, and another \$100 was included in the 1895 budget as well.

These purchases created what is now known as Leonard Park, which is an essentially rectangular parcel of land whose downward-sloping north end ends at the shoreline of Lake Leota.<sup>33</sup> Leonard Park was Evansville's principal public park for the rest of the nineteenth century and for the first two decades of the twentieth century as well, but aside from planting grass and general maintenance, little appears to have been done to transform it into a proper park until 1912, when the City of Evansville appropriated \$604.95 for the construction of a toilet building in the park. Two years later, in 1914, a flag pole was also erected in the park, a cement walkway was laid from the north end of Second Street to the flagpole, three picnic tables were donated, and a cinder drive around the park was begun. A year later, a successful citizen's petition resulted in the creation of the Evansville Park Committee, whose three citizen members served in an advisory capacity to the City Council and managed the park.

Lake Leota was not faring so well during this period, however. Up until 1900, the lake continued to be used for recreation in the summer and was a source of ice for refrigeration purposes in the winter, but by that time the 1883 dam was in poor condition, the lake had shrunk, and its water quality had

<sup>32</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> Leonard Park is also known as the "Upper Park" in order to distinguish it from the adjacent Leota Park, which is also known as the "Lower Park."

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deteriorated. Then, in 1900, the Evansville grist mill and its mill pond and dam were purchased by William Stevens, a livestock buyer who was also the mayor of Evansville at that time.

William Stevens offered to sell the old millpond to the City for \$800, but there were other projects that needed attention and the City Council refused to fund the restoration of Lake Leota. Since Stevens had no interest in maintaining the mill pond, the dam was cut through and the land that had once been flooded reverted back to the land owners. Allen's Creek became an unobstructed stream and the former swimming pool became only a memory.<sup>34</sup>

This memory was a powerful one, though, and there would be regular efforts on the part of the townspeople to get the lake restored in the years that followed. One of these efforts was championed by the *Evansville Review* newspaper in 1911, which published an illustrated, somewhat romanticized article about the lake in its September 28th issue:

This illustration shows only a small portion of what was once a fine lake on the north side of town, its miniature waves lapping the grassy banks of the city's one and most delightful park. Boat houses were scattered here and there along its rippling shores, and pleasure crafts were oft to be seen on its placid surface.

Fish abounded in its waters and the not too extravagant sportsman had an ideal spot in which to gratify his piscatorial proclivities. It was just such a place as any city would take unbounded pride in, for together with the park, it added not only luster to the locality but gave a certain air of distinction to the city by its side.

And then it afforded excellent opportunities for the smaller citizens to exercise their aquatic propensities, thus extending the area of real sport and offering the boy with unlimited scope for his legitimate ambitions and growing needs.

But aside from all of these features it was a delight to the eye and a source of education in the art of training the mind to see and note the comparative beauties of landscape and lake. But now it is only a memory, and the lake which in its extent spread over between 40 and 50 acres, is a thing of the past, its bed now devoted to simple agriculture and all of its loveliness and sparkling beauty forever departed.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. Evansville, Wisconsin History. "History of Lake Leota." <http://www.evansvillehistory.net> (accessed July 29, 2010). The boathouses mentioned in this article are no longer extant.

<sup>35</sup> "Restore It To The City: Lake Leota." *Evansville Review*, September 28, 1911.

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Nothing came of this particular restoration appeal, but local efforts continued and gained strength during the next decade. One important thing that did happen at about this time was that ten acres of the land that would eventually become Leota Park was purchased for the city in 1910 by Burr W. Jones, who was a stepson of Levi Leonard and a Wisconsin Supreme Court justice. Jones (1846-1935) had grown up in Evansville and when he heard that a public vote had gone against the City's purchase of some of the former mill pond land that was then up for sale and was owned by Byron Campbell, he stepped in and purchased ten acres of it for \$1000.00 and deeded it to the city with the stipulation that it could only be used for park purposes. This land was located in the southwest part of what is now called Leota Park. When news of the gift was made public, the City Council purchased two additional acres from Campbell for \$191.00 to secure a right-of-way from the public road to the Jones property. This was "a three cornered piece of land with 12 rods on [N.] Madison Street and immediately adjoining the Jones tract to the south. This deed was dated August 1, 1910."<sup>36</sup> A year later, on May 23, 1911, the City Council voted to purchase 1.96 additional acres from William Wood for \$245 in order to connect Leonard Park with its new park lands. With this last purchase the City now owned a continuous piece of land that stretched from N. Madison St. all the way to and including Leonard Park.

By 1916, private initiatives had begun turning some of this still mostly undeveloped land into park lands.

The October 15, 1916 [Evansville] Review reports that "51 loads of dirt have been put in low places in The Grove by Alderman Richard Williams, who built the drive on the east side, donating his work to the park."<sup>37</sup>

The real work of building the park had to wait until after the end of World War I, but by then local agitation for the restoration of Lake Leota had become focused and would ultimately be victorious. Even before the Lake was restored, the land in what is now the Lower Park was used for park purposes by the citizens of Evansville themselves and by the new automobile tourists who, after World War I, were transforming tourism across the country.

In the 1920's, when people began traveling by automobile, the Evansville Commercial Club, a businessmen's association, decided to make accommodations for the travelers at Lake Leota Park. Evansville residents had long recognized the park as a place for family picnics and Fourth of July celebrations. Estimates in the early 1900s were that 25,000 people visited the

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<sup>36</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 21. "The Grove" was another, older name for the area that is located below the dam in the Lower Park.

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park annually. Fred Wilder was named the custodian of the tourist camp at the park when it opened in 1920. Many people from Illinois and other states used the roads through Evansville as a way to the north. The Commercial Club worked with highway commissioners and planners to get the roads through Evansville. Wilder gave a report to the City Council at the end of each park season. In October 1920, Wilder reported that although there was no lake or pool for swimming, because the dam had been taken out in 1900, the tourists enjoyed the camping site as a resting place on their way to the northern lakes.<sup>38</sup>

The popularity of the park with both residents and tourists was about to increase dramatically, because two years later the City finally turned its attention to the restoration of Lake Leota.

After many surveys and a referendum for a bond issue of \$20,000, the 1922 City Council was ready to act. The land and water rights for the lake property were privately owned from the earliest days of settlement until the City purchased the lake bed land to restore Lake Leota in 1922. At their August 1922 meeting, the Evansville City Council appropriated \$10,359.50 to purchase land. ... Once the land sale and the railroad protection agreements were finalized, the land was surveyed. Then the City Council advertised for bids to build a dam across Allen's Creek. In February 1923, the City Engineer, E. B. Parsons, presented the plans and blue prints for Lake Leota were presented to the City Council.<sup>39</sup>

Bids were then accepted and the winner, R. H. Peterson & Sons of Oregon, Wisconsin, promptly set about construction. The cement work of the new dam was finished by September of 1923 and this was followed by the filling up of Lake Leota.

Park custodian Fred Wilder suggested that Evansville have a celebration when the gates of the dam were closed. Wilder also suggested a contest with prizes given to the person guessing the correct number of hours and minutes it took for the water to run over the spillway of Lake Leota, once the gates were closed. ... The timekeepers determined that the actual time to fill the lake was 17 days, 7 hours and 10 minutes. Church bells rang and the fire whistle blew to tell citizens that the dream of a restored Lake Leota was a reality.<sup>40</sup>

Once the lake had been restored, the citizens of Evansville turned energetically to the task of creating a proper park beside it. For instance, in 1924, a combined bathhouse and store building was built next to

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<sup>38</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "Tourism in Lake Leota Park through the years." *Evansville Review*, July 16, 1998.

<sup>39</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "History Behind Lake Leota in Evansville." *Evansville Review*, February 3, 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Montgomery, Ruth Ann. "History Behind Lake Leota in Evansville." *Evansville Review*, February 3, 1999. The lake was filled on November 13, 1923 at 9:15 pm.

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the dam to serve both residents and tourists. Much more still needed to be done, because much of the land that was located east and south of Lake Leota was still low and wet at that time and would need to be filled in before park activities could take place there. Never-the-less, civic enthusiasm for the new park was high and Evansville's citizens soon demonstrated that there was a real community wide willingness to make the park into something special for the city.

It was suggested to the City Council in November 1923 that a covered band pavilion with boathouses underneath be built. In a statement to the Commercial Club in January 1924, Fred Wilder expressed a need in the lower park for city water, toilets, and a gravel road opening from N. Madison Street which was then State Highway 10. One of these requests was granted that year being the street entrance. Five lighted horseshoe courts were built (about where the limestone shelter house now stands) and there was talk of creating a ball diamond.

The City agreed the following June (1925) to put up \$50 for a ball diamond if that much would also be raised by public subscription. There was an immediate over subscription so the bogs were cut off and a pump moved 30 feet from where the present lower baseball diamond is now located.

May 7, 1925 was the date when 200 or more trees (elms, Norway maple, pines, and fruit trees) were planted by the Commercial Club and Lions Club, Isaak Walton League, and Boy Scouts. Some were placed along both sides of the entrance drive from Madison Street [today's Antes Drive]. The City Council put up \$50 to purchase them and an equal amount was raised by subscription.

The Lions Club and others contributed tables so that by 1927 there were 22 tables in the park. The Lions Club continued to contribute equipment, spending \$200 for a three chair swing and slide in 1927, a swing-bob in 1928, a merry-go-round in 1929, and a water slide in 1930.

A cinder path was laid north from the upper park flag pole to the lake in 1927 but the portion on the north sloping hill was replaced with concrete the following year. In 1928, more lights were hung, a new scoreboard for the upper ball diamond was donated by the Review, and arrangements were made to install steel foot bridges just below the spillways. These were ordered through the Baker Manufacturing Company and completed that fall.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., pp. 22-23. The still active Baker Manufacturing Co. was and is Evansville's most important industry.

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By 1930, both the upper and lower parks had taken on the semblance of real parks thanks to the untiring efforts of Evansville's own citizens, but they still fell short of the prevailing standard for municipal parks. Fortunately, outside help was about to arrive in the form of federal work relief programs that were designed alleviate the unemployment that was a product of the Great Depression.

The first of the new "make work" programs created by the Roosevelt administration was the Civil Works Administration (CWA), which began operation on 1933, and civic leaders in Evansville were quick to see that this new funding and employment source could help them achieve some of their longstanding civic improvement goals. Among the leaders seeking federal assistance was Robert J. Antes, who was the owner and editor of the *Evansville Review* newspaper and a long time advocate of the city's parks. Antes was appointed the local administrator of these work relief programs and he held this position until the projects were terminated after the nation's entrance into World War II put an end to unemployment.

Beginning in November, 1933 with the Depression in its depths and unemployment rampant, our federal government came through with funds to hire men for civic improvements. The first program was C. W. A. (Civil Works Administration) and Evansville's quota was originally set at 185 men, but this was reduced in January of 1934 to 71, then to 49 in February of 34.

Pay ranged from 50 cents to \$1.20 per hour. There was a painting crew assigned to work on public buildings and another to haul gravel from Brigham's pit north of town and Reese's pit east of the city to fill in the low ground where the lower ball diamond and tennis courts are now located that was once boggy marsh and city dump.

By February 1, 1934 there were 44 men working a 14 hour week with 12 trucks. The city furnished trucks and material. There were plans to build a baseball diamond, football field, and tennis courts.<sup>42</sup>

The straightening and rip-rapping of Allen's Creek within the Lower Park was also a part of the work during this period, but this and the other work projects ended for a short time in March of 1934 when the CWA itself came to an end, leaving these projects half-finished. And yet, despite its short history, the CWA-funded projects in Evansville were very much a success and were credited with reducing the Rock County relief rolls in half while it was in operation. When Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) funding became available in mid-1934, Evansville quickly seized the opportunity to utilize it to continue and complete the work that had already been done.

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<sup>42</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., p. 23.

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In June work resumed as the F. E. R. A. (Federal Emergency Relief Administration) top dressed the already filled areas and rip-rapped along the creek. The gate on the lake dam was also rebuilt and made smaller and more efficient. The F. E. R. A. continued until August 1, 1935 when it became the W. P. A. (Works Progress Administration).<sup>43</sup>

The Works Progress Administration had been established in July 1935 and was the newest and would ultimately be the largest of the various federal Depression-era relief agencies. Unlike the FERA, the WPA was a federal program of works projects, not the grants-in-aid to states that had provided direct funding or work relief under the FERA. The WPA provided money just for labor and materials and unlike the Public Works Administration (PWA), another federal program that paid union scale wages, the WPA paid much lower relief wages. This was because the goal of the WPA was employment; putting as many people to work as possible. Consequently, the kinds of projects it favored tended to be labor-intensive. Projects that were approved by the WPA originated with state and local agencies, which were known as "sponsors," and it was the sponsor's responsibility to do most of the planning that each project required. This included such things as a project's design and engineering, and it was also the sponsor's responsibility to handle the legal and financial aspects of a project as well. What the WPA provided was wages for the workers and funding for the materials to be used. Evansville's park project was an especially good fit for the WPA because converting the areas adjacent to Lake Leota and Allen's Creek into parklands took large amounts of hand labor.

Efforts [after July, 1935] were then directed primarily to the [Evansville] fairground but park plans were extended to include two tennis courts, two shuffle boards and two horseshoe courts; two showers in the bathhouse, and further work to restore the lower ball diamond.

W. P. A. continued working on the creek, straightening it but leaving the loops to the north as lagoons which created islands that were reached by rustic stone bridges. In May of 1937, it is recorded that the city bought 85 barrels of cement for W. P. A. use on their creek work and for construction of a scenic pool to be supplied by a pipe through the north dam. Flagstone walks were laid. All stone came from Milbrandt's quarry southwest of town using W. P. A. labor.

The City Council on January 4, 1938 accepted a gift of \$600 from Richard and Mary Ann Henneberry to be used for the erection of a shelter house to be known as the "Henneberry Memorial." These funds were used for material and W. P. A. supplied labor. It was begun about August 1<sup>st</sup> and completed a year later.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

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Projects approved for 1939, in addition to completion of the shelter house, were the stone store building and a skater's warming house under the frame bandstand that had been constructed on the south side of the lake. The warming house was ready for use in January, 1940 and the store soon after. A bell that was purchased for \$200 in 1874 and used in the former grade school building now hangs in a twenty foot stone tower also constructed at the same time.<sup>44</sup>

By February of 1940, the federally funded work in the park was complete and so too was the park itself, and this milestone event was, not surprisingly, lauded in the local newspaper.

Evansville's approximately \$50,000 park improvement program which was started nearly seven years ago under the CWA administration and continued through the FERA and WPA regimes providing the city with one of the most popular recreational centers in the state, was officially culminated late yesterday afternoon when the remaining WPA crew of ten men put the finishing touches on the most recent additions.

Heralded as the most extensive building, remodeling, and alteration project in the history of the city, the park is now acclaimed to be the outstanding playground of this locality, and with the rippling waters of Lake Leota attracts thousands of visitors to the city each year.

With the federal government providing all of the labor during the seven-year period of operations and much of the materials, the vast improvements cost Evansville taxpayers but a relatively small sum.<sup>45</sup>

While new buildings and other features would be added to Leonard-Leota Park in the years that followed, the park was essentially complete by the end of 1940, and almost all of the features that were associated with the park at that time are still extant and are in good condition, and the park continues to be heavily used today.

The most notable feature added to the park since 1940 was the swimming pool built in 1958. By its very nature, Lake Leota needs periodic dredging to provide safe water quality for public use. By 1958, water quality in this very shallow lake had deteriorated. As a result, the City decided to dredge the lake for the first time since 1931 and it also decided to build a new public swimming pool on a low hill in

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<sup>44</sup> Williams, B. Keith. Op. Cit., pp. 22-23.

<sup>45</sup> "City Park Improvements Completed." *Evansville Review*, February 22, 1940, pp. 1, 8. This article also contains a chronology of the various federal work projects that took place in the park.

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the north section of the Lower Park just behind and to the north of the park's 1940 store building. The pool provided swimmers a safer and more easily maintained place in which to swim. Construction on this \$75,000.00 combined swimming pool and wading pool began in 1957 and the new pool was ready for use by the summer of 1958. This structure is considered to be a contributing resource within the park because its creation represents the continuation of Evansville's outstanding history of park development and commitment to effective community planning.

Consequently, it is believed that Leonard-Leota Park is eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level of significance because it represents the culmination of a long-standing community planning effort on the part of the citizens of Evansville. Much of the work and much of the money that was expended in the creation of the park's resources came from the citizens themselves, but when other sources became available, they did not hesitate to avail themselves of them. When federal relief programs made money available for labor and materials in the depth of the Depression, Evansville was one of the early recipients and it continued to make use of these funds as long as they were available. Support from the WPA, in particular, was essential to the realization of this project.

**Architecture (Criterion C):**

Leonard-Leota Park also is believed to be locally eligible for listing in the NRHP under NR Criterion C (Architecture) because most of its historic contributing resources were built in the Rustic Style during the 1930s by workers who were funded by the several Depression-era federal work relief programs. Most of the Park's contributing resources are fine examples of the Rustic Style built with the local limestone that these workers also quarried. In addition, these same workers also landscaped the park. They planted trees and shrubs, filled in low-lying areas and marshy areas, and seeded the park's surfaces with grass. Many of the park's other Depression era resources are associated with erosion control work that attended the straightening of Allen's Creek within the park's boundaries. Straightening the creek was a large project in itself and took several years. The banks of the creek were also rip-rapped with local limestone, and two oxbow bends in the creek were transformed by the crews into park amenities as well. Fine as the major resources in the park are, it is the totality of the Rustic Style resources in the park that gives it its special character.

The Rustic Style subsection of the CRMP defines this style as follows:

The Rustic Style emerged from the resort architecture of the Adirondack region in northern New York state in the 1870s. It is characterized by the use of indigenous materials, broad shingled roofs with wide overhangs, open porches, and simply proportioned door and window openings. Building materials were often oversized in comparison to conventional construction

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and left in their natural condition. Round glacial boulders and large peeled logs were typical materials. Rubble stone or split boulders were sometimes laid in imitation of geologic strata. Walls are often battered or sloped in a manner typical of bungalow design. Buildings were sited and materials shaped in an attempt to make them appear as if they belonged in the surrounding landscape and often included designed landscape elements such as bridges, walls and benches. Designs attempted to convey a sense of the past through a feeling of having been hand-crafted by pioneer builders.<sup>46</sup>

The Rustic Style was widely disseminated in the early twentieth century through architectural journals and the popular press and quickly became accepted as the appropriate architectural imagery for backwoods vacation houses, roadhouses, resorts, and camps. Although isolated examples of these resource types can be found throughout Wisconsin, the highest concentration, not surprisingly, lies in the state's northern resort areas.

When the National Park Service was created in 1916, it quickly issued a policy statement calling for the harmonious design of roads, trails and buildings in the park landscape, which resulted ultimately in the adoption of the Rustic Style for its park facilities. With the Park Service's seal of approval, the style soon spread throughout the nation, exhibiting regional expressions as it developed. By the 1920s, the Rustic Style was being used for buildings and structures in state and county parks as well as in the National Parks and the entire movement received a tremendous spurt of growth during the Depression through the combined efforts of park construction sponsored by the CWA, FERA and WPA relief programs.

The rustic influence spread to the State Park system through the combined efforts of the CCC and WPA relief programs and is seen today in numerous rustic retaining walls, benches, signs, and shelter, concession, bathhouse and sanitary buildings. The style was also widely used in other WPA projects due to its low material costs and labor intensive construction.<sup>47</sup>

The goal, after all, was to get people back to work and then keep them working. While a small crew of carpenters, for instance, could put up a sizable frame construction building in a few days, putting up a hand-hewn stone building required a larger crew and kept them employed for a longer period of time. The buildings and other resources that these federally funded crews built in Leonard-Leota Park are excellent examples of how this process worked. These resources were built on-site by crews using

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<sup>46</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) Op. Cit., Vol. 2 (Architecture). The Rustic Style Subsection exists in draft form and can be seen at the office of the Wisconsin's Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation.

<sup>47</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) Op. Cit., Vol. 2 (Architecture).

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mostly hand tools, and the materials they worked with, limestone in this case, was provided by still other work relief program-funded workers who quarried the stone from Milbrandt's quarry, which was located just to the southwest of Evansville.

The sources of the designs of the park's Depression-era resources are not documented, but in all likelihood the principal resources were influenced by National Park Service (NPS) construction projects. The general NPS design process had been developed even before the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) came into being in 1933, but the process was given new life by this new funding source and it stayed in place, albeit in greatly expanded form, throughout the rest of Depression era. The process worked as follows:

In the 1930s, the National Park Service's programs for master planning, rustic design, and landscape naturalization extended to the development of state, county, and metropolitan parks. Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided the National Park Service with its first opportunity to give direct assistance to states in developing scenic and recreational areas. This assistance took the form of the supervision of conservation activities carried out by each CCC camp and the dissemination of information about park planning, the construction of park structures, and the design of recreational facilities. Supervision occurred through state park inspectors, who were employed by the National Park Service and who worked directly for the ECW district officer. These inspectors traveled to the parks to oversee and make recommendations on the master plans and the design and construction of park roads, trails, buildings, and other facilities. Technical specialists employed by the park service, including landscape architects, architects, and engineers, were assigned to each CCC camp and closely supervised the work of the CCC foremen and enrollees. The specialists developed plans and drawing under the direction of the state park inspectors. Each camp was headed by a superintendent and had several foreman who directly supervised the CCC enrollees carrying out the National Park Service plans. ...

In addition to staff assigned to CCC camps and a small regional or district staff, the CCC program relied upon inspectors who traveled from park to park and transmitted design ideas from the central office and communicated the essence of park work and provided critiques and constructive ideas for improving and perfecting the work in the state parks. The program also relied upon architects and landscape architects of the state or county park departments.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> McClelland, Linda Flint. *Presenting Nature: The Historical Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916 to 1942*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Interagency Resources Division, 1993, pp. 229-230.

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Although these NPS employees were principally involved in the construction of facilities in the national and state parks, this same process was also utilized, although in a somewhat less formal way, in the design of federally funded work in municipal parks such as Evansville's. It is highly probable, for instance, that Evansville's Henneberry Shelter House, Store Building, and Bell Tower, were designed by architects working for or influenced by the NPS with an unknown amount of input from R. T. Antes, the local Evansville administrator, and perhaps even from the workers themselves, many of whom were members of the skilled building trades, especially during the FERA period. These three major resources and all of the other Depression era resources in the park all exhibit the naturalistic, Rustic Style aesthetic that was a feature of the designs sponsored by the NPS and their architectural significance is collective as well as individual. This last point is of importance in evaluating the architectural significance of the park because, as the Context Consideration portion of the Rustic Style subsection of the CRMP states:

The evaluation of Rustic Style resources should include a careful review of associated landscape features related to the resources. Man-made landscape elements such as building siting and setting, fences, trails, walls and scenic views are important contextual features that should be analyzed when evaluating the integrity of a site or property.<sup>49</sup>

The design and placement of the contributing Rustic Style resources in Leonard-Leota Park all partake of the design philosophy adopted by the NPS, which placed great emphasis on naturalistic, environmentally appropriate design and sought to harmonize any new work with its natural surroundings. In the case of Evansville, both Lake Leota and Allen's Creek were already in existence by the time the first Depression era work relief programs began, but these natural features were both underdeveloped as far as their potential usefulness as recreational facilities was concerned. Consequently, all the federally funded work that was subsequently done in the park was intended to showcase these two natural features and make them accessible to area citizens wanting recreational opportunities. The persistent erosion problems that had plagued Allen's Creek, for instance, were resolved by straightening the course of the creek within the park and by rip-rapping its banks with naturalistic stonework. Previously existing oxbow bends in the creek's course were also turned to advantage by being transformed into island picnic spots that were accessed by Rustic Style stone bridges. New buildings such as the Rustic Style Bandstand-Warming House and the Rustic Style Henneberry Shelter House, which were constructed to meet important user needs, were also intentionally located where they could take advantage of views of the lake and of the creek. By the

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<sup>49</sup> Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) Op. Cit., Vol. 2 (Architecture). As noted earlier, the Rustic Style Subsection exists in draft form and can be seen at the office of the Wisconsin's Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation.

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time the federally funded projects in the park were completed, Leonard-Leota Park had been transformed into one of the beauty spots of the area and this work was mostly the product of Depression era work relief programs.

The federally funded work in Leonard-Leota Park ended in 1940, just a year before the nation would enter World War II. Ironically, the Rustic Style was already falling out of favor by then because the need for such labor-intensive work projects had vanished; the ramping up of the war effort was putting an end to unemployment and it would also put an end to non-war-related work projects for the duration of the war. Today, however, the handmade character of the Rustic Style is once again in favor, historic examples of the style are now appreciated and are being restored, and new buildings and other resources designed in this style are being built all across the country.

**Summary**

Leonard-Leota Park is therefore being nominated to the NRHP for its local significance under Criterion C because the resources it contains constitute a visually impressive, highly intact, and architecturally significant entity that meets the requirements set down for the registration of such entities in Appendix A of Linda Flint McClelland's *Presenting Nature: The Historical Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916 to 1942*. This appendix, which is entitled *Registering Historic Park Landscapes in the National Register of Historic Places*, deals primarily with the registration of historic park landscapes in national and state parks and it sets forth criteria that must be met if such a landscape is to qualify using this context. The appendix also states, however, that:

Local parks, including metropolitan and county parks, may also qualify for listing under this context if they possess naturalistic characteristics and natural components, and if they were partially or entirely developed under the direction of the National Park Service through the Emergency Conservation Work (later CCC) or WPA programs.<sup>50</sup>

In order to do so, a metropolitan park such as the Leonard-Leota Park must:

1. be associated with the 20<sup>th</sup> century movement to develop national parks for public enjoyment, to conserve natural features and scenic areas as public parks, to organize statewide systems of state or parks, or to develop natural areas, including sub-marginal lands, for public recreational use.

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<sup>50</sup> McClelland, Linda Flint. Op. Cit, p. 276.

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2. retain several or all the physical characteristics listed above that were developed for that area during or before the New Deal era (1933-1942).

3. reflect the following principles and practices of park landscape design developed and used by the National Park Service in national parks from 1916 to 1942 and in state and national parks through ECW, CCC, PWA, or WPA projects from 1933 to 1942.

Protection and preservation of natural scenery and features.

Presentation of scenic vistas through the location of park facilities and development of overlooks.

Avoidance of right angles and straight lines in the design of roads, trails, and structures.

Use of native materials for construction and planting.

Use of naturalistic techniques in planting, rockwork, and logwork to harmonize manmade development with natural surroundings.

4. possess historic integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and overall reflect the physical appearance and condition of the land during the period of significance. Changes and additions to the landscape since the period of significance, including new campgrounds, buildings, trails, roads, lakes, and recreational areas, diminish historic integrity and are considered non-contributing. Historic park landscapes containing such changes are eligible for listing despite these changes if the overall historic plan is intact and a substantial number of historic characteristics possessing integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are present.<sup>51</sup>

Leonard-Leota Park satisfies all of these criteria conditions. The park as it exists today retains almost all of the resources that were built during the Depression era, excepting only several small stone fireplaces, and the significance of these resources is further enhanced by their high degree of integrity and their well-maintained state of preservation. In addition, the park retains two important resources that predate the Depression era: the park's dam, which was built in 1923, and its original bath house, built next door in 1924. In a very real sense, the historic appearance of this park as it existed in 1940 has been maintained; its overall plan is still intact, and its contributing resources still possess integrity

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<sup>51</sup> McClelland, Linda Flint. Op. Cit, pp. 275-276.

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of design, location, materials, and workmanship and are fine examples of the Rustic Style that is so closely associated with Depression era NPS design.

**Archeological Potential**

The extent of any archeological remains in the park is conjectural at this time. It is possible that some archeological remains may still be extant despite the subsequent construction activity that took place when the park's resources were created. No information about possible prehistoric remains in this area was found in the course of this research. It is likely, however, that any remains of pre-European cultures located within the boundaries of the park would have been greatly disturbed by the construction activity associated with the subsequent development of the park.

**Preservation Activity**

Fortunately, Leonard-Leota Park's resources are municipally owned and they are still largely intact and well maintained. In addition, the Evansville Historic Preservation Commission has also acted as the sponsor of this nomination.

**Acknowledgment**

This project has been funded with the assistance of a grant-in-aid from the Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. Historic Preservation grants-in-aid are administered in Wisconsin in conjunction with the National Register of Historic Places program by the Division of Historic Preservation of the Wisconsin Historical Society. However, the contents and opinions contained in this nomination do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the National Park Service or the Wisconsin Historical Society.



Leonard-Leota Park  
Name of Property

Rock  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

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

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Eger Free Library, Evansville, WI

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 60 acres

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>311540</u>	<u>4739840</u>	3	<u>16</u>	<u>311938</u>	<u>4739090</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>16</u>	<u>311920</u>	<u>4739340</u>	4	<u>16</u>	<u>311500</u>	<u>4739100</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

<b>name/title</b>	Timothy F. Heggland/Consultant for: The City of Evansville Historic Preservation Commission		
<b>organization</b>		<b>date</b>	January 17, 2011
<b>street &amp; number</b>	6391 Hillsandwood Road	<b>telephone</b>	608-795-2650
<b>city or town</b>	Mazomanie	<b>state</b>	WI
		<b>zip code</b>	53560

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The Park's boundary line begins at a point on the west curblineline of N. Madison St. that corresponds to its point of intersection with the westerly edge of the right-of-way of the Union Pacific Railroad. The boundary line then turns 40 degrees and continues in a northwesterly direction along said westerly edge approx. 2150-feet to a point on the shoreline of Lake Leota that represent its point of intersection with the City of Evansville's corporate limits, which is defined as being governed by a contour line around the shore of Lake Leota that is two feet higher than the spillway of the Lake Leota dam. The line then turns and follows said shoreline of Lake Leota in a southwesterly direction around the shore of the lake until reaching the northeast corner of the lot that is associated with 244 Eager Court. The line then turns 90 degrees and continues south along the east edge of said lot and along the east edge of other lots located on the east side of Eager Court for a distance of 900 feet, then turns 90 degrees and continues east for a distance of 300 feet, then turns 90 degrees and continues north for a distance of 350 feet. The line then turns 90 degrees and continues east for a distance of 50 feet, then turns 90 degrees and continues north for a distance of 325 feet. The line then turns 50 degrees and runs southeast along the rear lot lines of several lots fronting on the north side of Grove Street to the NE corner of the lot associated with 48 Grove St. The line then turns 40 degrees and continues east for a distance of 400 feet along the rear lot lines of additional lots fronting on the north side of Grove Street, then turns 90 degrees and continues south for a distance of 190 feet to a point of intersection with the north curblineline of Grove Street. The line then turns 90 degrees and continues east along said curblineline for a distance of 120 feet, then turns 90 degrees and continues north a distance of approx. 60 feet, then turns 90 degrees and continues east to a point that is located on the west curblineline of N. Madison St. The line then turns 90 degrees and proceeds north along said curblineline a distance of 500 feet to the POB.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries of the park enclose all the land and that portion of Lake Leota that has historically been used for park purposes.

**Additional UTM reference:**

5 Zone 16 311306E 4739610N
----------------------------

Leonard-Leota Park  
Name of Property

Rock  
County and State

Wisconsin

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

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

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

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

**Property Owner**

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

name/title	date
organization	telephone
Street & number	zip code
city or town	state

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

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

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section Photos Page 1

Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock County, Wisconsin

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<b>Name of Property:</b>	<b>Leonard-Leota Park</b>
<b>City or vicinity:</b>	<b>Evansville</b>
<b>County:</b>	<b>Rock</b>
<b>State:</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
<b>Photographer:</b>	<b>Timothy F. Heggland</b>
<b>Location of original digital files:</b>	<b>6391 Hillsandwood Rd., Mazomanie, WI 53560</b>
<b>Number of photographs:</b>	<b>25</b>

Photo #1 of 25  
General View of Lake Leota, View looking WNW

Photo #13 of 25  
Store Building, View Looking ENE

Photo #2 of 25  
General View, View looking N from Bath House

Photo #14 of 25  
North Baseball Diamond Bathroom Building, View looking NW

Photo #3 of 25  
Bath House, View looking SW

Photo #15 of 25  
Dam and Stepped Falls, View looking NW

Photo #4 of 25  
General View, View looking ESE to Bell Tower

Photo #16 of 25  
Dam, South Spillway, View looking SE

Photo #5 of 25  
General View, View looking ESE

Photo #17 of 25  
Antes Drive Bridge, View looking ESE

Photo #6 of 25  
General View, View looking NE from Shelter House

Photo #18 of 25  
Allen's Creek, View looking SE towards West Lagoon

Photo #7 of 25  
Henneberry Shelter House, View looking N

Photo #19 of 25  
West Lagoon General View, View looking ENE

Photo #8 of 25  
Bell Tower, View looking NE

Photo #20 of 25  
West Lagoon Bridge and Duck House, View looking NE

Photo #9 of 25  
Dam, Shelter House and Store, View looking NE

Photo #21 of 25  
West Lagoon Picnic Table and Chairs, View looking NE

Photo #10 of 25  
Dam, North Spillway, View looking NW

Photo #22 of 25  
East Lagoon General View, View looking NE

Photo #11 of 25  
Bath House, View looking W

Photo #23 of 25  
East Lagoon Duck House, View looking W

Photo #12 of 25  
General View of Bath House & Store, looking NW

Photo #24 of 25  
East Lagoon Picnic Table and Chairs, View looking NE

(Rev. 8-86)

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

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

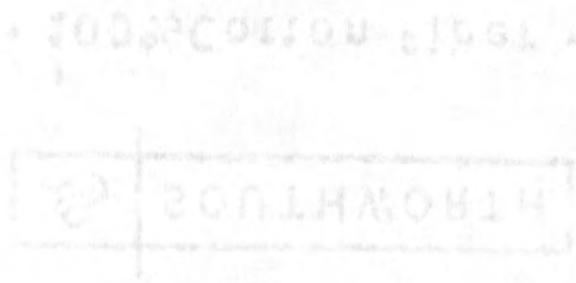
**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock County, Wisconsin

Section Photos Page 2

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Photo #25 of 25  
East Lagoon Fireplace, View facing SE



**MAP 1:  
LEONARD-LEOTA PARK  
EVANSVILLE, ROCK COUNTY,  
WISCONSIN**

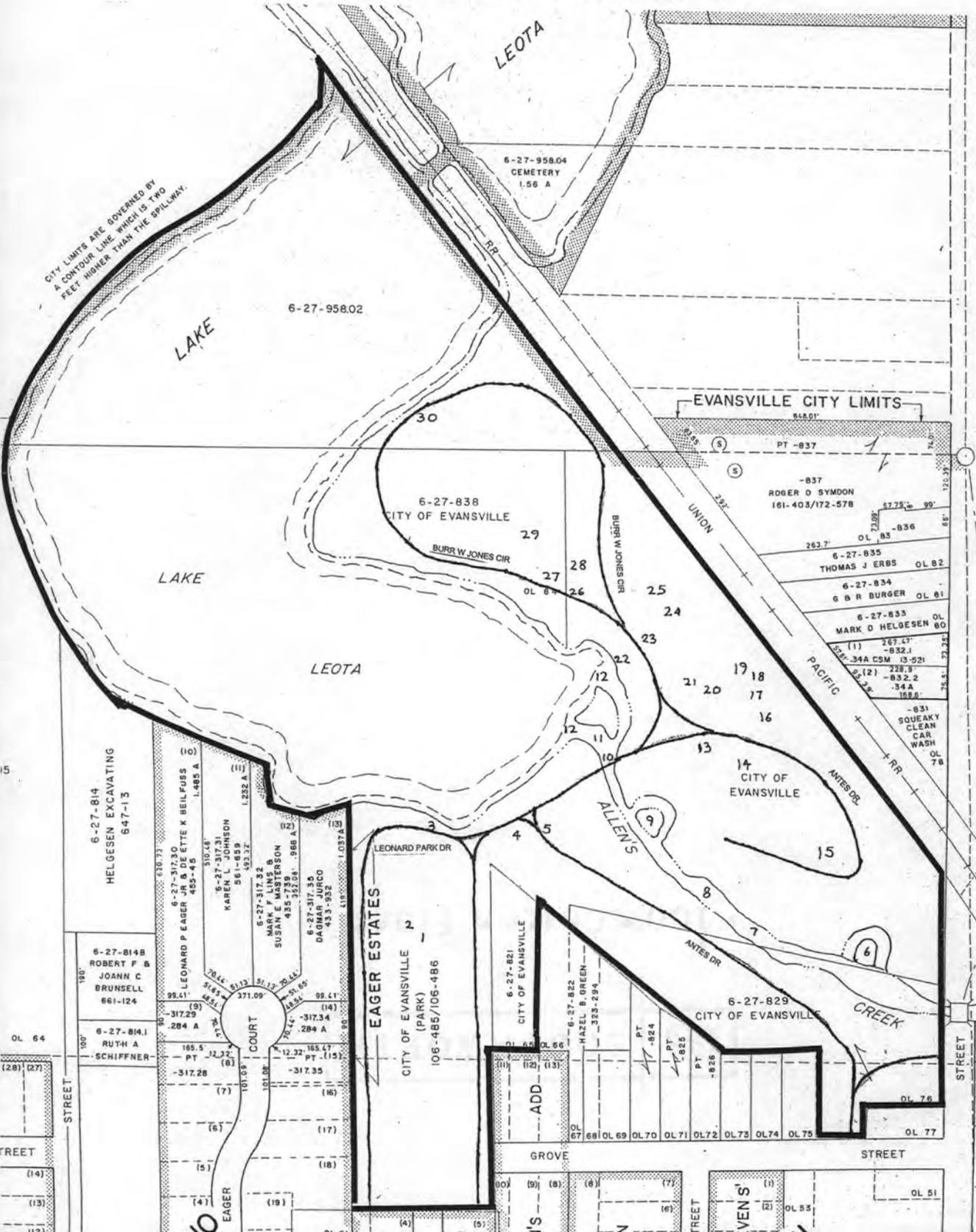


BOUNDARY LINE



1-INCH = 200-FEET

Non-Contributing Resources: Map Numbers 7, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Leonard--Leota Park

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Rock

DATE RECEIVED: 7/20/12      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/20/12  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/04/12      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/05/12  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000610

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    9.4.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Leonard-Leota Park  
E. Kansville, Reed Co, WI

10525

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (9)\_024

Fujifilm, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Roett Co, WI

2 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (24)\_016

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co., WI

3 ct 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (10)\_001

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Evansville, Knox Co, IN

4 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (23)\_015

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



. Leonard-Lecta Park

Evansville, Rock Co, IN

5 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Lecta Park\_025

Fuji: F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co, WI  
6 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (13)\_004

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co, W.I.

7-5-25

0209753.. Leonard-Leota Park (12)\_003

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



GO AHEAD

Leonard-Leota Park

Evansville, Ross Co, W. I.

8 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (11)\_002

700, F0000, 01 (6x11)



Leonard-Leota Park

Evansville, Rock Co, WI

9 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (25)\_017

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co, UT  
10 25 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (6)\_021

FWS, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Euersville, Rock Co, WI

11 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (4)\_019

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Euansville, Reett Co, W. Va

12 25 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (5)\_020

Full Form 0112-1



CONCESSION STAND

QUARTIC CENTER

Leonard-Leota Park  
Evanville, Rock Co, WI

13.05.25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (3)-018

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Evansville, Boone Co, WI

14 of 25

0209753. Leonard-Leota Park (2)\_011

Full: F0000 (0) (0)



Leonard-Leota Park  
Versailles, Rocco Co, 47  
15 of 27

3209753 Leonard-Leota Park (15) -006

3209753 (15) -006



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, West Co, WZ  
16 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (7)\_022

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park Historic District

Lucasville, Ross Co, WI

17 25 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (8)\_023

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evanville, Roost Co, WI  
18 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (16)\_007

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Levasville, Roett Co, WI

19 25 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (14)\_005

FWI, F0000, 01/10/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Evansville, Rees Co, WI

20 5 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (17)\_003

2011 0000, 01-18-11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co, IN  
21 05 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (18)\_009

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Elaissville, Rock Co, WI

22 45 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (19)\_010

Fwd. F0000, 01/18/11



Leonard-Leota Park

Levanville, Rock Co, WI

1 23 of 25

0209753. Leonard-Leota Park (22)\_014

FILED: F0000 01-10-11



Leonard-Leota Park  
Louisville, Rich Co, KY

24 25 26

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (211-013

211, 10000, 1116811



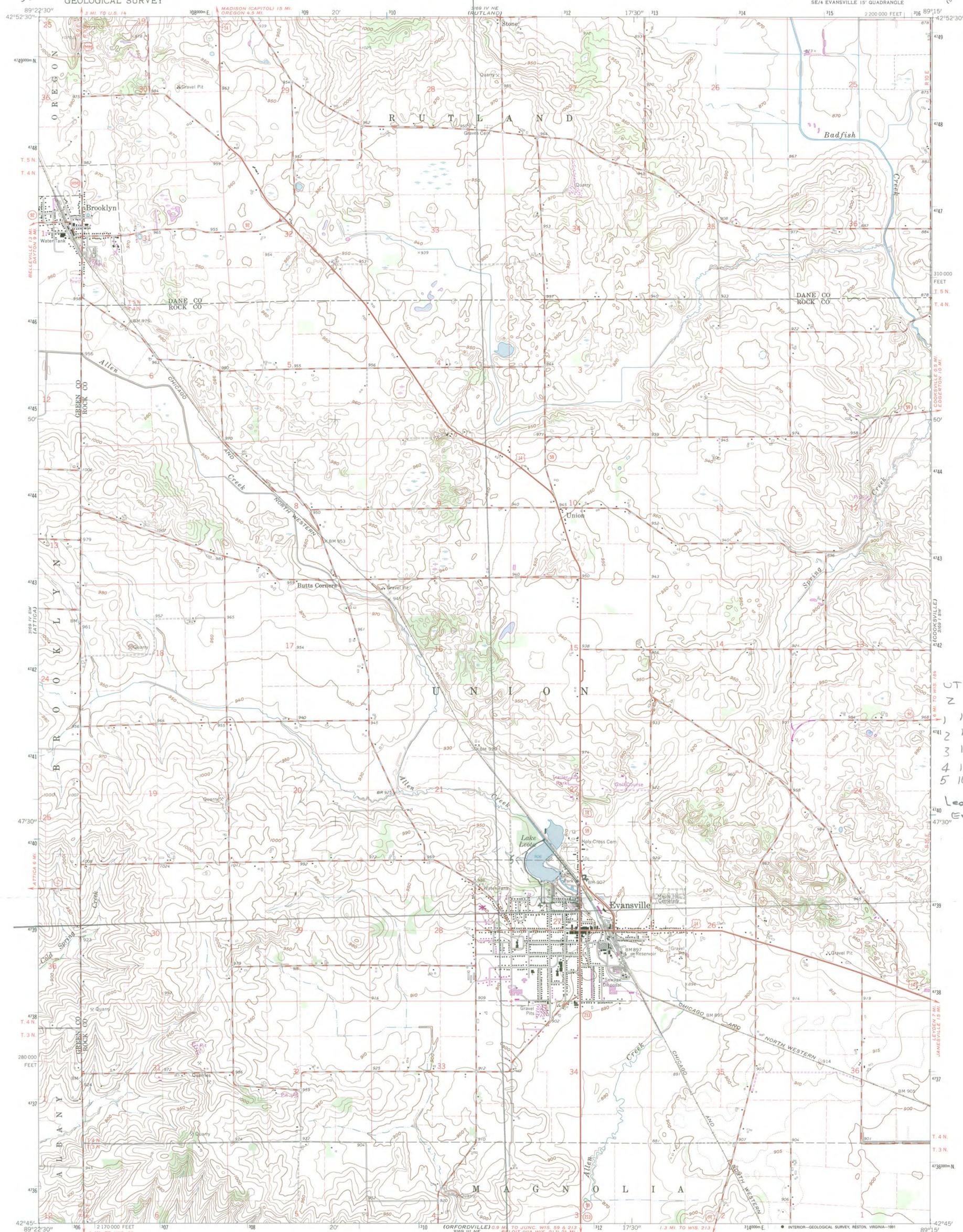
Leonard-Leota Park H.S.

Euansville, Reed Co, IN

25 of 25

0209753, Leonard-Leota Park (20)\_012

Fuji, F0000, 01/18/11



UTM Coordinates  
Z E N  
1 16 311540 4739840  
2 16 311920 4739340  
3 16 311938 4739090  
4 16 311500 4739100  
5 16 311306 4739610  
Leonard-Leota Park  
Evansville, Rock Co.  
WI

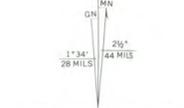
Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State of Wisconsin agencies  
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1960. Field checked 1961

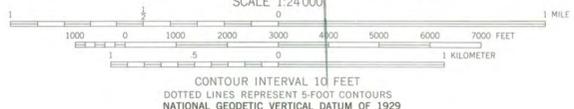
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is un-checked

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1971. This information not field checked

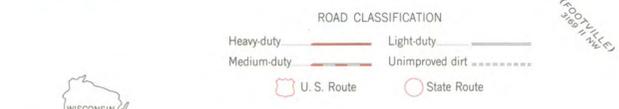


UTM GRID AND 1971 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET  
Map photoinspected 1981  
No major culture or drainage changes observed



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 5-FOOT CONTOURS  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

EVANSVILLE, WIS.  
SE/4 EVANSVILLE 15' QUADRANGLE  
42089-G3-TF-024  
PHOTOINSPECTED 1981  
1961  
PHOTOREVISED 1971  
DMA 3169 IV SE—SERIES V861

The difference between 1927 North American Datum and North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) for 7.5-minute intersections is given in USGS Bulletin 1875. The NAD 83 is shown by dashed corner ticks



# City of Evansville

[www.ci.evansville.wi.gov](http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov)

RECEIVED

JUL 21 2011

31 S Madison St  
PO Box 76  
Evansville, WI 53536  
(608) 882-2266

DIV HIST PRES

July 19, 2011

Ms. Daina Penkiunas  
National Register Coordinator  
Wisconsin Historical Society  
816 State Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Dear Daina,

I am extremely pleased to recommend the proposed nominations of Leonard-Leota Park and St. John's Lutheran Church for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Park and Church both are special to me.

I was confirmed at St. John's and as a youth I did not appreciate the building as wonderful Contemporary architecture. Evansville hosted the 2007 fall meeting of WAHPC and part of the conference was held at the Church. During the conference there was a program about Monticello, Wisconsin architect John Steinman and attendees toured the facility. Steinman's Wright-influenced Church design enriches the architectural resources of our community.

Leonard-Leota Park is the heart and soul of Evansville. The Rustic structures, dry stone creek walls, and landscaping are the results of the efforts of local citizens through the decades, with much of the work occurring as WPA and FERA projects during the Depression. Camping, fishing, boating, swimming, ice skating, bird-watching, picnicking, Scouting events, sports activities including football, baseball, tennis, and shuffleboard, concerts and festivals, and celebrations such as reunions, weddings, and birthdays—the Park is part of the fabric of the community.

The Park has received new life with the recent restoration of Lake Leota. The Dry Stone Conservancy held a training session in the Park in 2007 to provide local knowledge of appropriate restoration of the stone walls along Allen Creek. There are more than 3,000 linear feet of creek wall in the Park, making wall restoration a multi-year project.

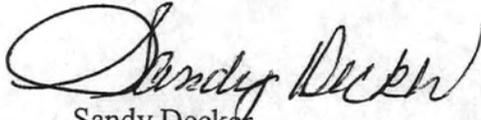
I am enclosing the June 16, 2011 meeting minutes from the Evansville Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission unanimously approved recommending St.

John's Lutheran Church and Leonard-Leota Park for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Neither the Preservation Commission nor I have received any objections to the proposed nominations.

no  
objections  
filed

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (608) 882-2266 or [sandy.decker@ci.evansville.wi.gov](mailto:sandy.decker@ci.evansville.wi.gov). John and I are planning to attend the Preservation Review Board meeting on August 19.

Sincerely,



Sandy Decker  
Mayor, City of Evansville

Enclosure

RECEIVED

JUL 21 2011

DIV HIST PRES

Evansville Historic Preservation Commission  
Minutes  
Wednesday, June 16, 2011 6:30 P.M.  
Evansville City Hall

**Present:** John Decker, Dennis Wessels, Steve Culbertson, Rick Schuch, Rich Modaff

**Absent:** Steve Christens, Betsy Ahner

**Also Present:** None

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair. Richard Modaff. *Motion by Wessels to waive the reading of the May 18, 2011 minutes and approve them as read. Second by Decker. Motion carried.*

**Applications – Appearances**

- a. 40 W. Liberty Street – *Motion by Culbertson to accept the application by Michael Batinich to remove the slate siding and replace the exterior with Vinyl Siding. Second by Wessels. Neither the owner nor representatives were present to explain the work being completed on this house. The commission members discourage vinyl exterior siding. Motion failed by a 0-5 vote.*
- b. 30 W. Church Street – *Motion by Decker to accept the application by Tony Ryerson to replace the current asphalt singing roof with a new asphalt shingle roof. Second by Schuch. The owner was not present to explain the work being completed on this house but received an emergency approve by Building Inspector David Wartenweiler due to a leaking roof. Motion passed on a voice count of 5-0.*
- c. 133 S. Fourth Street – *Motion by Wessels to accept the application by Greg Whitmore to construct a wrought iron fence in his front yard. Second by Culbertson. The owner was not present to explain the work being completed. The Commission members stated they could approve application as long as the fence meets the current setback stated within the City of Evansville Ordinances. Motion passed on a voice count of 3-2.*

**Old Business**

- a. Antes Cabin – The committee decided to move forward with physical moving of the cabin but we need to decide exactly where to place it and how high the elevation should be to avoid future flooding.
- b. National Register of Historic Places Nomination – *Motion by Wessels to recommend to the City of Evansville and the Wisconsin State Historical Preservation Review Board for the placement of St John's Lutheran Church and the Leonard-Leota Park in the National Register of Historic Places. Second by Culbertson. Motion carried by 5-0 voice count.*

There being no other business, *A motion to adjourn was made by Wessels. Second by Culbertson. Motion Carried by a 5-0 voice count.*

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 20, 2011.



# JON ERPENBACH

STATE SENATOR

RECEIVED

JUL 29 2011

DIV HIST PRES

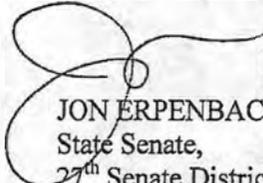
July 25, 2011

Mayor Sandy Decker  
143 W. Main St.  
Evansville, WI 53536

Dear Mayor Decker,

Congratulations to Evansville's Leonard-Leota Park on being considered for nomination to the Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places and the National Register of Historic Places! The park is an asset to the Evansville community, and it ought to be recognized for its importance and its history. I wish you the best of luck, and I hope that the nomination is approved by the Wisconsin Historic Preservation Review Board. Please feel free to contact my office if you ever need my assistance.

Sincerely,



JON ERPENBACH  
State Senate,  
27<sup>th</sup> Senate District

JE;dk



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



**TO: Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places**

**FROM: Daina Penkiunas**

**SUBJECT: National Register Nomination**

The following materials are submitted on this 13th day of July 2012,  
for nomination of the Leonard-Leota Park to the National Register of Historic  
Places:

- 1 Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- 25 Photograph(s)
- 1 CD(s) with electronic images
- 1 Original USGS map(s)
- 1 Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
- 2 Piece(s) of correspondence
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_  
constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_