

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

SLR

Goeres Park
Columbia County, Wisconsin

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000197

Date Listed: 4-9-09

Property Name: Goeres Park

County: Columbia County

State: Wisconsin

Multiple Name: N/A

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation, subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of Keeper

4-9-09
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination

Section 5, Classification: Category of Property and Number of Resources within Property
Section 5 is corrected to classify Goeres Park as a "district" rather than a "site," which is the appropriate designation for sizable designed landscapes with several components. As such, exceptional significance does not have to be claimed and Criterion Consideration G does not have to be addressed for either the district or the individual property (the 1961 memorial fountain), because the majority of resources are more than fifty-years-old.

The number of resources within the district remains the same.

Notification and Distribution

The Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

This notice was distributed to the following:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority, without nomination attachment



**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

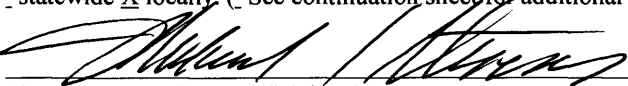
historic name Goeres Park
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Ca. 101 Fair Street N/A not for publication
city or town Lodi N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Columbia code 021 zip code 53555

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 2/19/09

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

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

Goeres Park
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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:)

Barbara Wyatt

4-9-09

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
private	building(s)		
X public-local	district	1	3 buildings
public-State	structure	1	0 sites
public-Federal	X site	3	3 structures
	object	3	0 objects
		8	6 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
is 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/Prairie Style/Prairie Spirit

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation N/A

walls Limestone

Sandstone

roof N/A

other N/A

Narrative Description

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

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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

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1937-1961

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Aust, Franz A.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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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:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7.90 acres

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

1 16 296930 4798950
 Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
 Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
 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

name/title	Timothy F. Hegglund/Consultant for the City of Lodi Historic Preservation Commission	date	March 27, 2008
organization		telephone	608-795-2650
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Rd.	zip code	53560
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI

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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	Mayor	date	March 27, 2008
organization	City of Lodi	telephone	608-592-3247
Street & number	130 S. Main St.	zip code	53555-1120
city or town	Lodi	state	WI

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

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

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Section 7 Page 1

Goeres Park
Lodi, Columbia County, Wisconsin

Description

Goeres Park consists of a well landscaped 7.9-acre polygonal-shaped parcel of land that is located at the north end of the city of Lodi.¹ The park is divided into unequal east and west parts by the north-south running Spring Creek and it is bounded on the west by N. Main St. (STH 113), and on the south and east by Fair St.² The park itself is flat and its surface is located some six-to-eight-feet below that of the roadways that partially encircle it. The park's setting necessitated the construction of stone retaining walls of irregular height and thickness around much of the perimeter of the park and these walls are among the park's most distinctive features. The park was designed in large part by noted landscape architect Franz A. Aust, who was the first professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and the construction of much of the park was made possible by the use of annual project funds that were provided by the federal government's Works Progress Administration (WPA) relief program between 1938 and 1942.

It was Spring Creek that was responsible for creating the setting of the park. Spring Creek drains a large marshy area located a half mile to the southwest of the city of Lodi known as the Lodi Marsh, and it ultimately empties into the Wisconsin River, which is located approximately three miles northwest of Lodi. In order to reach the Wisconsin River, Spring Creek had to wear its way through a tall ridge that once formed a part of the south bank of the much wider glacial period Wisconsin River, and as it did so it created a narrow valley that cut through this ridge. By the time the Creek reached the park site, however, it had left the valley and the land on both sides of it had become part of its floodplain.

Up until 1935, the year that the village bought the park site and the land that is located just to the north of it, most of the future site consisted of a cattail marsh and land that was used primarily as pasturage. Consequently, the first steps that were taken to improve the site once WPA funding became available in 1937 were intended to put it into shape for future landscaping. In order to make this happen, the marshy area in the park had to be filled and the whole site had to be graded and leveled, and while this was happening, the course of Spring Creek within the park boundaries was also straightened and deepened. In order to stabilize this site work, the shores of Spring Creek were rip-rapped with stone, stone retaining walls were built along the entire east and west sides of the park, and still more stone was used to build a perimeter wall across the south end of the park where the main entrances were to be. Much of the fill used was trucked in from the surrounding countryside but some of it was also obtained from the

¹ The city of Lodi had a population of 2925 in 2002.

² STH 113 has two separate names in Lodi. The southernmost part is called Corner Street, which connects to N. & S. Main Street, the northernmost part. Fair Street is so-named because the Lodi Fairgrounds are located on this street immediately to the east of Goeres Park.

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Goeres Park
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excavation of the park's lagoon/swimming pool and still more was produced by the grading of the site. Once the setting of the park was complete, the site was then dressed and seeded, trees and shrubs were planted, and construction on the park's various other amenities began.

Between 1937 and 1942, workers funded by the WPA constructed an athletic field and baseball diamond at the north end of the park that is serviced by stone bleachers, they built a very large swimming pool/wading pool in the middle of the park whose edges were originally rimmed with stone, and they also built a beautiful stone waterfall and reflecting pond on the west side of the park that was dedicated as a memorial to Robert Goeres in 1942. All of these resources and the overall design of the park itself were the work of Franz Aust and his students. Following the end of World War II, additional resources were added to the park as well. These resources included: the Joseph & Anna Krainik Memorial Change House and Toilet Building on the east side of the park near the pool; a memorial fountain on the west side of the park dedicated to Dr. and Verna Chval; and the George & Emma Gluth Memorial Picnic Shelter on the same side of the park. Taken altogether, these combined resources turned what was once an underutilized and unsightly part of Lodi into a highly attractive, heavily used main entrance to the city. Goeres Park still serves this function today and it now constitutes one of Lodi's two most historically significant examples of the blending of landscape architecture with community planning.³

INVENTORY

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

<u>C/NC</u>	<u>Original Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>
C	Goeres Park Site	1937-1942	Site
C	Spring Creek Walls	1937-1942	Structure
C	Stone Perimeter Walls and Staircases	1937-1940	Structure

³ The other example, the Franz Aust-designed Lodi School Hillside Improvement Site, shares a common development history with Goeres Park and it is the subject of a separate NRHP nomination that is being submitted for consideration in conjunction with this one.

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<u>C/NC</u>	<u>Original Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Type</u>
NC	Swimming/Wading Pool	1937-1941/1954/1960/1966	Structure
C	Spring/Fountain	1937-1941	Object
C	Robert M. Goeres Memorial	1942	Object
C	Stone Bleachers	1940-1942	Structure
C	Joe and Anna Krainik Memorial Change House and Toilet Building	1955	Building
C	Dr. and Verna Chval Memorial Fountain	1961	Object
NC	George & Emma Gluth Memorial Picnic Shelter	1967	Building
NC	Footbridge	1970	Structure
NC	Concessions Building	ca.1990	Building
NC	Concessions Building	ca.1990	Building
NC	Announcers Stand	ca.1990	Structure

The following capsule summaries describe most of the contributing resources in the park (and one non-contributing resource). Names given in the heading are historic names, when known. The resources are listed in rough chronological order.

Goeres Park Site

1937-1942

Contributing

The park's overall site is irregular in plan and constitutes the southern portion of the 20-acre property that the Village of Lodi purchased from Hannah Vanderpool in 1935.⁴ As noted earlier, this site is essentially flat and its elevation is about six-to-eight-feet lower than that of the surrounding streets. Consequently, it was necessary to build retaining walls along the east and west sides of the park, while the park's extreme southern end slopes gently up to street level. Historically, the site had also been divided into east and west portions by the meandering course of Spring Creek and this division remained when the creek was straightened within the park boundaries. The unequal size of these two portions, and the fact that they are physically separated from one another by the creek, favored separate usages for the two, so the smaller western portion became the quiet, contemplative side and the larger eastern portion became the active side. Trees were planted along both the west, south, and east edges of the site and along both sides of the creek, but more trees were planted on the west side than on the east, and the Robert Goeres Memorial's reflecting pond and waterfall are located on this side as well, as are several beds of flowers. The east side,

⁴ The northern portion of the purchase was to be the site of a new water treatment plant and the modern successor of this plant is still located there today.

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meanwhile, contains playground equipment, the swimming and wading pools, athletic fields, and a bathhouse. While additions have been made to the park's resources over time, the contemplative and active usages of its two sides has continued to be respected by those who have been in charge of the park and almost all of the park's original features are still intact and are in good condition today.

This dual-purpose Baseball/Football athletic field on the east side of the park was completed in 1939. It has been in continuous use ever since and has always been one of the park's best-used resources. The original rectangular configuration of the field, however, which had banks of elevated floodlights arrayed along both its east and west sides, has since been altered and it now consists of a baseball diamond of conventional shape and construction, and whose outfields are edged by a tall chain link fence.

Spring Creek Walls

1937-1942

Contributing

One of the first acts taken to improve the park site was to straighten the meandering natural course of Spring Creek within the park boundaries. This work commenced at the Fair Street bridge, which is located at the southern end of the park, and it then continued northwest in a straight line for a distance of about 775-feet before beginning a gradual curve to the north and assuming a more natural appearance. Once completed, the shores of the creek were stabilized by being rip-rapped with locally quarried, dry-laid limestone, the walls being laid up in a naturalistic, stratified way that exhibits a formal bonding pattern, regularly-bedded coursework, well executed vertical joints, and a good face batter. These battered walls extend below the creek surface as well and while portions of them have occasionally been undercut by the action of the water, they have been periodically rebuilt and are still in good condition today.

Stone Perimeter Walls and Staircases

1937-1940

Contributing

The fact that the surface of the park site lies some six-to-eight-feet below the elevation of the streets that surround it on its east, south, and west sides resulted in one of the park's most important landscape features. In order to stabilize the edges of the park, Aust decided to build stone retaining walls along its east and west sides, and the south ends of these walls then connect to a more conventional three-foot-tall stone wall that extends across the park's south end. The construction of walls rather than using grass-covered banks to stabilize the park's edges gave the park more usable space. In addition, building the walls out of locally quarried limestone contributed to the park's pleasing naturalistic effect and it also provided more of the kind of labor-intensive work that this WPA-funded project was intended to facilitate.

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Goeres Park
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Both the east and west side retaining walls are constructed out of locally quarried, dry-laid limestone, the walls being laid up in a naturalistic, stratified way that exhibits the same formal bonding pattern, regularly-bedded coursework, well executed vertical joints, and battered faces that are to be found in the very similar stone rip-rapping that was described earlier. The west retaining wall measures approximately 775-feet-long and two side entrances into the park are inlet into this wall and so are several semi-circular sunken cutouts that partially encircle trees planted within them. The east retaining wall is approximately 850-feet-long, and is similar in design. A single main entrance to the park is located about a third of the way up the length of this wall and it consists of a flight of stone steps that descends into the park and these steps are flanked on either side by tapered and battered stone posts that support a metal sign overhead that bears the words "Goeres Park."

As previously noted, the south ends of both of these retaining walls attach to a third limestone wall segment that rims the south end of the park. This segment is approximately 290-feet-long, it is designed as a regular wall that has both of its sides exposed to view, and it is constructed out of locally quarried limestone whose superbly wrought regularly coursed stone blocks are dry-laid for the most part. Other portions that are around the two main entrances are cemented into place with mortar. The center part of this wall segment originally contained the paneled concrete balustrade of a highway bridge that spanned Spring Creek at this point, but this 1920s-era bridge was replaced in 2007 with a new Fair Street bridge. This new bridge also has a concrete balustrade and it has also been incorporated into the park wall, but this balustrade has a more naturalistic appearance than the one it replaced. In addition, two of the park's main entrances open into the park on either side of the bridge, and these entrances both contain wrought iron entrance gates that are flanked by tapered and battered stone pedestals and which also support metal signs overhead that bear the words "Goeres Park."

A concrete curb and gutter and a concrete sidewalk edges W. Main St. along the entire west boundary of Goeres Park and one can enter the park from this side via either one of two side entrances. The northernmost of the park's two west entrances consists of a flight of stone flag steps (built 1937-1939) that descend from the street level down to the floor of the park. This staircase consists of a short flight that descends in an easterly direction before ending in a landing. The staircase then turns ninety degrees to the left (north) and descends to a second landing, then turns ninety degrees to the right (east) and descends six more steps to the floor of the park, where curved wing walls fan out to retain planting beds located on either side of the steps. Stepped stone walls flank both sides of the staircase as it descends and these walls exhibit the same regularly coursed, dry-laid limestone construction as that of the perimeter walls of the park that flank both sides of the staircase. Although this staircase system is massive in appearance, its design makes it appear to have grown naturally out of the surrounding perimeter walls.

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The southernmost of the park's two west entrances consists of another flight of stone flag steps that descend from the street level down to the floor of the park and its design is very similar to that of the north entrance. This staircase (built 1937-1939) also consists of a short flight that descends in an easterly direction before ending in a landing and it too then turns ninety degrees to the left (north) and descends to a second landing, then turns ninety degrees to the right (east) and descends two more steps to the floor of the park. Stepped stone walls also flank both sides of the staircase as well and these walls exhibit the same regularly coursed, dry-laid limestone construction as that of the perimeter walls of the park that flank both sides of the staircase, and it too appears to have grown naturally out of the surrounding perimeter walls.

While some portions of both the north and south stairways are now obscured from view by shrubs and trees that have been planted or that have grown up, the original elements that comprise both are still all extant and are mostly in good condition.

Swimming Pool/Wading Pool 1937-1941/1954/1960/1966/1969 Non-Contributing

Providing a site for a municipal swimming pool was one of the principal goals that the construction of this park was intended to fulfill, and the swimming pool that resulted, although now altered, is still heavily used to this day. This free-form pool has a stylized fish-like shape that consists of a large rounded body portion that contains the eight-foot-deep deep end of the pool, which is attached to a smaller rounded four-foot-deep tail portion. The two portions together have a total length of 180-feet, with the body being 66-feet across and the tail, 90-feet. As originally constructed, the edges of both portions were rimmed with regularly coursed limestone blocks that were very similar in appearance to the stones that edge Spring Creek. In addition, the bottom of the pool was originally gravel and sand and the pool was filled from a spring that is adjacent to it.

The pool was finally completed in 1941 and it retained its original appearance until 1960, when the stone walls and the upper part of both portions of the pool were sprayed with a concrete mix. This was followed in 1966 by the cementing of the bottom of the shallow portion of the pool, and in 1969, by the cementing of the bottom of the deeper portion. In addition, a concrete children's wading pool was built adjacent to the original pool in 1954, and both pools are now enclosed by a tall chain link fence.⁵

Even though the swimming pool still retains its original shape, it is believed that its original naturalistic appearance has now been so compromised that it can no longer be considered a contributing resource.

⁵ "A History of Goeres Park." *Lodi Enterprise*, October 2, 1975.

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Goeres Park
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Spring/Fountain 1937-1941 Contributing

As noted above, the swimming pool is filled from a spring, and its springhead is located immediately to the southeast of the pool. This springhead acts as a fountain and it is encircled by a low circular-shaped stonewall that is constructed of regular-coursed limestone blocks that are mortared together. These walls are topped with flat coping stones that provide seating.

This enclosure is still in original condition today, is still in use, and its design is now the only reminder of the original design of the adjacent swimming pool.

Robert M. Goeres Memorial 1942 Contributing

After descending the southernmost stone staircase described above, one turns to left (north) and faces the beautifully designed Robert M. Goeres Memorial. To reach the Memorial one descends either one of two short five-step stone-flagged staircases that are placed on either side of a large boulder that bears a bronze plate that reads: "In Memory of Robert M. Goeres, 1920-1941." Located at the base of these steps is a sunken rectilinear plan terrace that is surfaced in limestone flags, and centered on this terrace is a long, narrow, rectilinear reflecting pool whose surface is located two-feet below the level of the terrace. The sides of this sunken pool are also formed with courses of stone and the water that fills the pool arrives via a narrow winding channel that has been incised into the surface of the terrace. This channel connects to a second smaller reflecting pool that is located at the base of a waterfall that flows over the surface of what appears to be an outcropping of the limestone perimeter wall that is situated above it. It is this waterfall that is the source of the water that fills the two reflecting pools and the channel that connects them.

This Memorial is still in excellent condition today, water still flows from the waterfall into the pools, and this fountain is arguably the finest product of Aust's designs in the park.

Stone Bleachers 1940-1942 Contributing

Located at the north end of the east side of the park and set into the sloping bank that edges this portion of it are two side-by-side sections of bleachers that were designed as seating for those viewing sports on the athletic field below. These bleachers consist of nine stepped 55-foot-long by 1½-foot-tall rows of roughly dressed limestone blocks that form the seats while the ground in front and behind each row consists of a flat surface covered with mown grass turf that act as aisles between the rows.

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Access to these bleachers is gained either from the playing field itself or from above via a flight of stone steps that is positioned between the two sections and which descends from street level down to the level of the uppermost row of seats.

These bleachers are still very much in use today and they are well-maintained and in excellent condition.

Joe and Anna Krainik Memorial Change 1955 Contributing
House and Toilet Building

This small building was built on the east side of the park in 1955 to provide park patrons with toilet facilities and a changing house for the nearby swimming pool. The building is rectilinear in plan, it is one-story-tall, and it is the same height as the stone perimeter walls that flank it on both sides. The rear wall of the building is actually built into the perimeter wall and is not visible. The other three walls are all clad in the same roughly coursed limestone as the perimeter walls, although in this case the walls have mortared rather than dry-laid joints, and both the north and south-facing side elevations of the building each feature two separate door openings. The building has a flat poured concrete slab roof that is positioned at the same level as the top of the flanking perimeter walls, and because park patrons can walk out directly onto this roof, its north, south, and west edges are protected by delicate wrought iron balustrades.⁶

This building is still in use today and its essentially astylistic design and the complementary nature of the materials used in its construction make it an unobtrusive addition to the park and one that is also believed to be a contributing resource to it as well.

Dr. and Verna Chval Memorial Fountain 1961 Contributing

The newest contributing resource in the park is this memorial fountain, which is located at the base of the southern staircase on the west side of the park adjacent to the Robert M. Goeres Memorial. The fountain has a base whose plan is that of a modified Greek Cross having four equal length arms, this base is made of roughly dressed coursed limestone blocks that have mortared joints, and a bronze plaque placed on the western arm of the base reads "Dr. & Verna Chval Memorial Fountain 1961." Placed on top of this base is an octagonal plan concrete pool with raised sides, and centered in the pool is a tall tiered fountain head that has a roughly dressed limestone base and a carved limestone upper portion that depicts stylized ducks and tall grass.

⁶ The design and construction of these balustrades strongly suggests that they are much older than the building or even the park itself, but the history of these balustrades has not yet been discovered.

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Although less than fifty years old, it is believed that this fountain is a contributing resource because the materials that were used in its construction respect the design and materials that were used elsewhere in the park and because the artistic quality of its design is the equal of the high standard that was set by the park's earlier resources.

Summary

It believed that the resources in Goeres Park retain a sufficient degree of integrity to contribute to our understanding of its appearance during the period of significance, 1937-1961. Not surprisingly, changes have been made to some parts of the park over the years, new resources have been added as needed, and additional features, such as chain link fences, have been added in response to changing views regarding public safety. Never-the-less, the original stonework that comprises the retaining walls, the stairways, and other features of the park dating from the first period of its development are still largely intact, and while many of the park's smaller decorative plantings have been replaced, the general plan of its greenspace has been retained.

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Goeres Park
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Significance

Goeres Park consists of a well-landscaped 7.9-acre parcel of land that is located on either side of Spring Creek at the northern end of the city of Lodi. This multi-use municipal park was identified by the Lodi Intensive Survey in 1999 as being a potentially eligible site having local significance under National Register (NR) Criteria A and C.⁷ Research was undertaken to assess the potential for nominating the Park to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) utilizing the NR significance areas of Landscape Architecture and Community Planning, themes which are also identified in the State of Wisconsin's *Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP)*.⁸ The results of this research are detailed below and show that Goeres Park is locally significant under NR Criterion C as a fine, largely intact example of the landscape work of Franz A. Aust, who was both the first professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin and also an important Wisconsin advocate of naturalistic landscape design and the use of native plant materials.

Goeres Park is also believed to be of historic significance (Criterion A) because of its associations with the desire of the people of the city of Lodi to improve their quality of life by improving the city's setting and by the creation of public parks where public recreation could take place. Funding for the landscaping of the park site and for rip-rapping work on the banks of Spring Creek within the park boundaries came from 1930s-era public relief funds that were given to Lodi by the federal government, and these funds were used from 1937 until 1942, when the United State's entrance into World War II brought such federally funded construction projects to a halt. Additional privately and municipally funded work continued after the end of the War, and some of the park's finest features are the result of this later work. Never-the-less, the park that is visible today was essentially completed by 1942 and represents the realization of a long-held civic desire to turn this important but previously neglected area into a park setting that was worthy of the city.⁹

Community Planning and Development

Goeres Park is believed to eligible for listing in the NRHP for its associations with the significance area of Community Planning because the completion of the park marked the culmination of a several

⁷ Heggland, Timothy F. *City of Lodi Intensive Survey Report*. Lodi: 1999.

⁸ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.) *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1989.

⁹ The period of significance for the park spans the dates from 1937 to 1961. The village purchased the land in 1935 and the first contributing resource dates to 1937. 1961 marks the date of construction of the Chval Memorial Fountain, the park's newest contributing resource.

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decades-long effort on the part of citizens of Lodi who wanted to improve and beautify the northern entryway into the city and who also wanted to give Lodi the kind of improved recreational opportunities that a readily accessible municipal park could provide. The south-to-north-running Spring Creek flows through a narrow valley as it passes through the center of Lodi and Goeres Park is located at the north end of the city at a point where this valley broadens out into a floodplain. Until the mid-1930s, the park's site was an unattractive marsh and North Main Street (STH 113), which was then and still is one of the most important highways that passes through Lodi, runs along the west side of the park site. As automobile traffic on this highway increased, Lodi's citizens became increasingly concerned about the first impression that this marsh was providing visitors entering the city from the north. It was the desire to ensure that this impression would be a favorable one, coupled with Lodi's even more important need of a readily accessible place that could be used for public recreation, that ultimately led to the creation of Goeres Park.

In 1836, when eastern speculators known as the Western Land Co. made the first purchase of land in the Town of Lodi (which encircles today's city of Lodi), all the land within today's Columbia County was included within the boundaries of the larger and as yet undivided Portage County and was then without formal governmental organization. The first actual settlers in what is now the Town of Lodi were M. C. and G. M. Bartholomew, brothers who came to the Town from Illinois in 1844-1845. They were followed in 1845 by the Rev. Henry Maynard and his wife and family, by James McCloud, and by several others. In 1846, these first settlers were joined by the 37-year-old Isaac Palmer.

Isaac H. Palmer (1809-1889), a native of Binghamton, New York, had arrived in Milwaukee in 1837 with his wife, Anne, with the intent of making his family a home in the open country of Wisconsin. His first efforts in this direction took him first to the just created capital "city" of Madison as one of the crew recruited by A. A. Bird to build the first state capitol building. Once there, Palmer quickly built himself a log cabin near the capital square and then returned to Milwaukee to bring back his wife and their household goods. The Palmer's first child, also named Anne, was born soon thereafter, she being the second white child born in Madison, and the family's new home also served as the community's first school house in 1838. In 1839, Palmer was appointed the first probate judge of Dane County, thereafter being known as Judge Palmer, and he also served in the territorial legislature in 1842 and 1843. In 1845, a hunting trip brought Palmer to the headwaters of Spring Creek in nearby Columbia County and to the future site of the city of Lodi.

Impressed by the water power potential this site offered, Palmer acquired 40 acres of land bordering Spring Creek in Sec. 27 of the Town of Lodi in 1846 and soon thereafter built himself a log cabin (non-extant) nearby. Palmer, like so many other town founders of that time, settled along a river or stream

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because it provided both a reliable source of water and the only readily available means of generating power for industrial purposes.

By 1846, population in the region had grown to a point where it made sense to set Columbia County off from Portage County. Also in 1846, the first schoolhouse (non-extant) was built in the Town and in 1847 Palmer applied to the Federal government for permission to establish a post office in Lodi and to the Territorial Legislature for permission to establish a horse-powered ferry across the Wisconsin River just northwest of the community to be. Both were granted and, as a result, the new vestigial community was now a recognized place in the government's eyes and had made a place for itself on the shortest route between Madison and Baraboo. In 1848, Wisconsin became a state and Palmer took office as the community's first postmaster on April 17, 1848. On June 25, 1848, Palmer recorded the first plat of the new village, which he named Lodi and which included both sides of S. Main Street from the Spring Creek crossing south to its intersection with Columbus Street; both sides of Columbus Street east for two blocks from that point, and both sides of Spring Street north to the creek crossing. This first plat embraced part or all of six of today's blocks and Palmer soon thereafter built the village's first store on the street that he had named Main Street.¹⁰

The downtown core of Lodi developed where it did because of the adjacent Spring Creek, which passes through Lodi on its northwesterly course towards the nearby Wisconsin River. In the 1840s–1860s, Spring Creek was the only source of water power in the area surrounding Lodi and locations along its banks were thus the logical place to establish saw mills, flour mills and grist mills, all of which required water for power, and for the establishment of other industries that required water as part of their manufacturing processes. Indeed, it was for these reasons that Isaac Palmer purchased land bordering the Creek in this area in the first place and built the area's first saw mill in 1848. Building such a mill was often the first step in building up a community because the lumber that came out of it was usually the only building material that was available for newly arrived merchants and farmers wishing to build their first permanent structures in the days before the coming of the railroads. The same was true for Samuel Ring, who constructed the village's first grist mill (non-extant) on Spring Creek late in 1848. In 1850, Isaac Palmer took further advantage of the available water power when he built the village's first flouring mill on the Creek. It was the placement of these three mills (all now non-extant) in close proximity to one another on the banks of Spring Creek that first defined where the business core of the village would eventually develop.

¹⁰ Main Street is divided into north and south sections by the intersecting Lodi-Portage streets.

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The construction of these three mills and the concurrent establishment of a road from Madison, the state capital, through Lodi and on to Palmer's ferry on the Wisconsin River and beyond to the growing village of Baraboo on the other side of the river served to ensure Lodi's eventual success. With the completion of the mills and the road, Lodi area farmers could now bring their harvest to these new mills for processing and then either to the river, where water transport to distant markets was possible, or else overland to Baraboo or to Madison, both of which were growing markets for agricultural products. This combination of transportation access and the availability of water power meant that Palmer's new community of Lodi became the natural center of commercial activity in the area surrounding Lodi, and inevitably, more roads were soon established that connected Lodi with other nearby communities as well. In Lodi, these roads were (and still are) called Columbus Street, which extends in an easterly direction towards the city of Columbus; Lodi Street, which extends in a westerly direction towards the city of Sauk City; and Portage Street, which extends in a northeasterly direction towards the city of Portage.

These new roads brought commercial activity of every kind into the fledgling village and created a need for the construction of buildings within which to conduct business. At first, these buildings (as well as the first houses in the village) were grouped mostly around the two major points where the east-west roads intersected with Main Street: Main Street and Columbus Street; and Main Street and Lodi Street-Portage Street, both intersections of which were also adjacent to the village's three mills.¹¹ The place where Lodi's business core first evolved was also defined in part by the location of Spring Creek itself and by the extent of the two large mill ponds that were created when Palmer and Ring constructed dams (non-extant) across the Creek in order to provide power for their three mills. The earliest extant published map of Lodi, printed in 1861, shows that these water features, both natural and man-made, acted as barriers that effectively enclosed what was to become the business core of the village to the south, west, and north. And it was within this enclosed area that Palmer laid out the first plat of the village, with the lots being located along both sides of the newly created Main Street (today's South Main Street) and Spring Street between Columbus Street to the south and the place where Spring Creek crossed the path of Main Street to the north, which lies just south of Portage Street.

¹¹ The 1861 Ligowsky & Wasmund map of Columbia County contains separate maps of a number of county communities including Lodi. The Lodi map shows that Palmer's flour mill and grist mill (both non-extant) were located close to one another just to the west of the Main Street-Columbus Street-Corner Street intersection (where Spring Creek still runs) while Samuel Ring's grist mill (non-extant) was located approximately where the rear portion of the current J. I. McFarland building (105 S. Main Street) is now.

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Lodi experienced only very gradual growth in the 1870s and the 1880s and growth would remain modest throughout the rest of the nineteenth century.¹² This would seem to indicate that even though a railroad line had finally been built through Lodi as early as 1871, the village had essentially reached its natural place in the economic order of things as a small but prosperous rural trading center whose economy was and would remain dependent on the larger agricultural community that surrounded it. If this dependence placed limits on Lodi's growth and size, though, the village and its mercantile establishments would continue to benefit from the steadily increasing prosperity of the surrounding farms.

And yet, gradual though Lodi's growth may have been, it was still sufficient to create a desire for municipal parks to serve the villagers. Lodi's first municipal park was created on land that had been donated to the village for this purpose in 1896 by the Palmer sisters, who were the daughters of Lodi's founder, Isaac Palmer. This land consisted of a twelve-acre hilltop site located at the south end of Lodi overlooking Spring Creek and the southernmost of Lodi's two millponds. This new park was known as Columbia Park, it was accessed from Pleasant Street, and because its location was a highly visible one it was not long before the site acquired its local nickname: "Park Hill."¹³

While the creation of Columbia Park was an important step forward for the village, its location on a steep hilltop site meant that it was not readily accessible for many in the village. In addition, this site was also steadily encroached upon to serve the needs of the adjacent high school, needs that became more pressing when a new high school building was built in 1914-1915 adjacent to the one that had been built in 1898.

One of those Lodians who was most involved in the creation of the new high school was Dr. T. O. Goeres (1881-1971), a young dentist who had come to Lodi in 1910 and had, by 1914, been appointed president of the Lodi Board of Education. Besides his interest in the high school building itself, Goeres also had an equal interest in its site and in the area surrounding it. In a tribute to Dr. Goeres that was held in 1962, Prof. Franz A. Aust of the University of Wisconsin (UW) remembered that it was in November of 1915 that Dr. Goeres first approached him. Aust was then the brand new head of the Landscape Extension Service of the Department of Horticulture of the University, and Goeres had come to him seeking both counsel and also development plans for projects that he was interested in perfecting in Lodi. It is not certain if Goeres approached Aust as a private citizen or in his capacity as

¹² Lodi's population in 1881 was 771.

¹³ Reinhold, Karen and Margaret Van Ness. *Historical Album, 1848-1973*. Lodi: 1973, p. 151 (photo). The westernmost part of the Palmer sisters' hilltop gift was dedicated by them for use as the site of a new high school for the village and this part of the site was known locally as "School Hill."

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president of the school board, but the first project he discussed with Aust was the approach to and the landscaping of the new high school building, the construction of which would have been well underway by that time. What plans the two men made at this time are not known, but future events showed that the seeds that were planted in 1915 would later bear fruit.

For the next twenty years, Goeres' attention focused primarily on Lodi's high school and its surroundings, but his ongoing efforts to improve the school's site also appear to have stimulated his interest in the village's other needs as well, chief among which was the creation of a new municipal park. While an ornamental fountain had been built in Columbia Park some years before and the village had voted to spend \$100.00 per year on this park's maintenance, no money had ever actually been allocated. Indeed, by 1923, most of the small amount of improved land in the park was being used as a rough playing field by the high school's students, and non-school-related activities in the park were virtually non-existent. Nothing was done about creating a new village park for another decade, but in 1925, the village board finally approved funding for the landscaping and enhancement of the high school grounds located below the school at the west end of School Hill. Construction had to wait until the following year, however, and it may actually have been spurred on by the failure of the dam that impounded the millpond opposite the school, which resulted in the draining of the pond and its consequent transformation into an unsightly marsh.¹⁴ Interestingly, just one week after the dam went out, an editorial appeared in the local newspaper that sought to rally public opinion in favor of civic programs such as the transformation of the school grounds and the creation of a new municipal park.

A civic program, seriously undertaken and modestly carried out, is commendable in any community. Such a program instantly marks that community as progressive; it shows that the citizens work together in harmony for the common good of their home.

What should such a program include and what should it mean to the people adopting it? Civic improvements are assuredly the main part of the plan. To be a progressive, happy people, we must have an ideal for our town which we keep constantly in mind and work for consistently.

We believe that every municipality should have a definite goal in the way of improvements which are carried out as quickly as is reasonable. We believe that part of the money earned in a

¹⁴ "Part of Mill Dam Gives Way on Friday Night." *Lodi Enterprise*, May 6, 1926, p. 1.

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town should be put back into permanent improvements which will make the citizens feel that they are part of community life. ... For Lodi we have in mind a schedule which would include a

Great White Way
Municipal Park, accessible, equipped, and maintained
Recreational Center
School Grounds of which we may be proud
Tourists accommodations¹⁵

Two months later the Village Board accepted a bid for work to improve the school grounds and work finally commenced in August. The first phase of this work was concentrated on the north end of the school grounds, this being that portion that faces northwest toward Lodi's downtown and the intersection that Corner Street makes with Columbus and Main streets. But while the end result was a vast improvement over the previously unkempt and unlandscaped hillside, nothing was done to the much longer west-facing side of the hillside that overlooked the millpond. The onset of the Depression, however, meant that the village could do nothing more until additional funding could be found. Fortunately, the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 and the creation of the first of his New Deal programs in the same year would provide the means to continue and expand the work already begun and much else besides.

Even before the advent of federal funding for civic improvement projects had begun, a number of persons in Lodi who had long sought to implement just these kinds of projects had formed a civic organization called the Lodi Welfare Committee, which subsequently became the Lodi Civic Improvement Committee. The availability of federal funding energized the members of this organization, chief among whom was its chairman, Dr. T. O. Goeres, who by 1933 had become the president of the Lodi Canning Co., one of the village's largest seasonal employers.

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 village leaders in Lodi 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 Dr. T. O. Goeres. Addressing the Lodi P.T.A. late in 1933 and speaking as the president of the Lodi Welfare Committee, a citizen's action group, Goeres recommended, among other things, that the P.T.A. join with other civic organizations to plan for a recreational park for the village.

¹⁵ "A Civic Program." Ibid, May 6, 1926, p. 4.

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Dr. T. O. Goeres, chairman of the welfare committee, stressed the need for supervised playgrounds and pointed out that a hill for coasting should be set aside for the use of children this winter, and a skating rink should be provided. A motion was carried to carry on these projects and to devote P.T.A. funds towards them.

The welfare committee also recommended that the P.T.A. combine with other civic organizations to make plans for a recreational park for the village. "We can't build a park in a year or two, but we should make a start, and in 10 years we will have a park," Dr. Goeres said.¹⁶

The first Lodi project that CWA funds were used for was the lead subject in another column of the same issue of the newspaper.

Sixty of Lodi's unemployed men went to work this week on the first local civil works project.

The project started here this week includes the widening, straightening, and rip-rapping of Spring Creek within the village. This covers about 4,000 feet of creek, including two mill races.

Part of the money is also being devoted to the landscaping of the high school grounds, and the terracing of the front lawn will be continued as far around the hill as is possible.

Project number one, that of cleaning up the creek and landscaping the school grounds, was given an official O.K. on Saturday by telephone by Robert C. Johnson, civil works administrator for Wisconsin, after the county committee had agreed upon the plan. This project calls for the employment of 30 men until Feb. 15.¹⁷

The rip-rapping of Spring Creek involved much more than just that 400-foot-long portion of the creek that lies opposite School Hill. The course of Spring Creek actually divides the whole of Lodi into east and west sections and it flows directly behind and through the city's historic business district on its way northward through what would soon become Goeres Park and on to the city limits, and it was the goal of this project to address the whole of the length of the creek within the village. At the time that the CWA-funded project began, however, very little of the land on either side of Spring Creek was owned by the Village. Consequently, the village made a canvass of the owners of these lands before work began in order to secure the rights to improve the creek. Fortunately, this proved to be a popular cause.

¹⁶ "P.T.A. Votes To Back Move For Lodi Park." *Lodi Enterprise*, November 30, 1933, p. 1.

¹⁷ "60 Local Unemployed Receive Work Clearing Spring Creek, Landscaping School Grounds." *Ibid.*

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Sunday morning a canvass of owners of land along the creek was begun, and most property owners gladly gave the right to the village to improve their property. A few, however, desirous of maintaining a more natural growth along the banks, declined. In those cases only actual obstructions can be removed.¹⁸

By early December, the local newspaper was reporting that tree trimming and the rip-rapping of the creek and the work on the school grounds was progressing.

Lodi is getting its "back yard" cleaned up.

Spring Creek, which meanders through town, has been a sort of public "back yard" for years; its banks have received a huge share of the village refuse and its waters have carried off the sewage. To cover part of the ugliness, trees, brush, and weeds have been allowed to grow unhampered along the flats and meadows, until a veritable jungle was created.

Last week some 70 men went to work cutting out the jungle, removing the debris, opening up the creek bed, rip-rapping the banks, and doing everything that is necessary and possible to make Spring Creek a beauty spot instead of an eyesore.

All this work is part of the CWA—Civil Works Administration—and the money is appropriated by the federal government.¹⁹

A little further on in the same article, another paragraph showed that the village was also using the potential availability of federal funding to begin planning for the construction of other new recreational facilities as well.

As soon as a second project can be agreed upon and a site arranged for, another crew will be put to work, President E. H. Tucker states. This project will probably be a municipal swimming pool.²⁰

Although the location of this pool had not then been decided upon, the search for a potential site had already begun.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "CWA Project Provides Jobs For Lodi Men." *Lodi Enterprise*, December 7, 1933, p. 1.

²⁰ Ibid. E. H. Tucker was the president of the Village Board.

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County surveyors have been working this week, determining boundary lines in preparation for the purchase by the village of a suitable park site. When the land purchase is completed, application can be made to begin work on the park with CWA funds.²¹

Two weeks later, the local paper noted that the future park and the future swimming pool projects had been combined into one.

As soon as the village can obtain a clear title to the proper land steps will be taken to obtain another project for Lodi men. The beginning of a park and the creation of a swimming pool are under consideration but cannot be started until the village obtains the land as a park area.²²

One week later, however, the paper noted that these plans had been dropped for the moment.

Plans for building a swimming pool have been dropped, for the time being, due to the expense of maintaining the pool after placing it in operation. The village is still considering buying land for a permanent park, however.²³

In the meantime, work on the school hillside and on the rip-rapping of Spring Creek was continuing, but this phase of the work ended for a short time in March of 1934 when the CWA itself came to an end, leaving both projects half-finished. And yet, despite its short history, the CWA-funded projects in Lodi were very much a success and were credited with reducing the Columbia County relief rolls in half while it was in operation.²⁴ When Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) funding became available in mid-1934, Lodi quickly seized the opportunity to utilize it to continue and complete the work that had already been done and it also applied for funds to begin work on the proposed village recreational park as well. By July, workers had been put back to work straightening and rip-rapping Spring Creek and the village had also secured the services of Franz A. Aust of the UW's Horticulture Department, to design the new terracing on the village's School Hill site.

Through the efforts of Dr. T. O. Goeres, chairman of the Civic Improvement Committee, very splendid plans for landscaping our high school grounds have been secured through the cooperation of the University of Wisconsin. Mr. Holmes, of the university, came out, looked

²¹ "Lodi CWA Project Advances; Further Funds Are Asked." *Lodi Enterprise*, December 21, 1933, p. 1.

²² "Extend CWA Work In Lodi; Appraisal Project Is Started." *Lodi Enterprise*, January 4, 1934, p. 1.

²³ "Propose Winter Sports Building As CWA Project." *Lodi Enterprise*, January 11, 1934, p. 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

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over the situation, took John Weber, N. H. Brainard, and Elbert Oleson to Madison to show them similar grounds and each and every citizen of Lodi will be interested in watching the development of what promises to be one of the most beautiful high school sites in the state.²⁵

In October, L. W. Holmes returned to Lodi to present completed designs for the high school improvements to the Lodi Village Board. As the minutes of the Board note:

Be it resolved: that the plans & specifications for the improvements of the high school premises ..., shown on the blue prints prepared by L. W. Holmes of the State University of Wisconsin, at the request of the Lodi Civic Improvement Commission [sic], be & the same are accepted & approved, that a committee ... is hereby appointed to see that said plans & specifications are carried into effect.²⁶

With the new plans to guide them, the work continued under FERA sponsorship and by August of the following year, the local newspaper could report that the work was completed.

The work of terracing high school hill, which was in progress for several months as a FERA project, has been completed so far as the village is concerned. The school district is keeping some of the men on the job to put the land south of the school buildings in shape for suitable play ground. The terraced hill is now an attractive place.²⁷

Besides the rip-rapping of the creek banks, some grading and seeding, and the planting of a small grove of trees at the north end of the old mill pond property that had been acquired by the village late in 1933, nothing further would be done at this site for another ten years.²⁸ This was due to the fact that Lodi's park-building energies would be engaged elsewhere for the rest of the decade by the creation of the much larger municipal park that is now known as Goeres Park.

Creating a new recreational park for Lodi was made easier because this project was tied to a second, equally important one; the building of a new sewage treatment plant for the village, and by 1935, the

²⁵ "Civic Improvement Committee Considers Parks, Landscaping, To Banish Many 'Eye-sores.'" *Lodi Enterprise*, July 19, 1934, p. 1. "Mr. Holmes" was L. W. Holmes, who was an instructor in the UW Horticulture Department in 1934 and who appears to have been an associate of Prof. Franz Aust at the University of Wisconsin but about whom nothing else is known.

²⁶ Lodi Village Board Minutes. October 2, 1934.

²⁷ *Lodi Enterprise*, August 8, 1935, p. 1.

²⁸ Lodi Village Board Minutes. December 7, 1933. This land, lying between highways 113 and 60, was purchased by the village from Herbert Palmer and Jule Moyers, and it is now the site of the Veterans Memorial Park.

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village had finally decided on a site that could accommodate both projects. On October 31, 1935, the minutes of the village board noted that the Lodi Canning Co., which was headed by Dr. T. O. Goeres, who was also the chairman of the Lodi Civic Commission, had donated \$2,000 to the village to purchase "a certain part of the Vanderpool property to be used for a public park." The park project will then "be turned over to the [Lodi] Civic Commission."²⁹

The 20-acre Vanderpool property occupied all the land between N. Main St. and Fair St. just to the north of Lodi's downtown commercial district, and Spring Creek roughly bisects this property from north to south and the course of the Creek roughly parallels that of these two streets. This property is part of Spring Creek's floodplain and at the time, the village was contemplating its purchase, it consisted mostly of pastureland and marshland and was devoid of buildings. In June of 1936, the Lodi Village Board authorized payment of \$2000 to Hannah Vanderpool and L. G. Gesell for the "park and sewerage property," which reflected the decision of the Board that the northern part of this property should be developed as the site of a new municipal sewage treatment plant and the southern portion, as a municipal park.³⁰ The creation of the sewage treatment plant then became the responsibility of the Municipal Light & Water Commission, while the park project was given to the Civic Improvement Commission, which was to oversee its design and construction.

With a site for the new park secured, the Civic Improvement Commission then turned to Franz Aust for a design. The choice of Aust as the park's designer was a logical one since he had already supplied the village with the designs it had used for its recently completed School Hillside project. Aust was also a familiar figure in Lodi by this time, thanks to his previous work in the village and to two well-attended public talks he had delivered in Lodi in 1935, the first on "God in Nature" at the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the second on "Landscape Gardening" to the Lodi P.T.A.³¹

On October 13, 1936, the Commission presented the park project to the village board, which, in January of 1937, voted to "hand in the community park and playground project to the proper authorities."³² In this case, "the proper authorities" was the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which 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

²⁹ Ibid, October 31, 1935.

³⁰ Lodi Village Board Minutes. June 2, 1936.

³¹ *Lodi Enterprise*, March 14, 1935, p. 1; and October 24 and October 31, 1935, p. 1. Aust also offered a series of radio talks on the subject of beautifying home grounds over the UW's WHA radio station in 1935.

³² "Village Board Proceedings." *Lodi Enterprise*, January 28, 1937, p. 1.

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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.

The village of Lodi's new park project was a good fit for the WPA because converting the former Vanderpool property into a park was going to take large amounts of hand labor. Among other things, the proposed work included the grading and filling of the essentially flat but marshy park site, the straightening of Spring Creek within the park boundaries and the rip-rapping of its shoreline with stone, the edging of the park boundaries with stone walls, and the digging of a municipal swimming pool, the walls of which were also to be edged with stone. In addition, all of the stone that was to be used was to be quarried locally as well. After consultation with the Wisconsin WPA representative, the village board voted that "the Village President and Clerk be instructed to sign ... for the construction of the park project #7989."³³ Wisconsin's WPA records describe this project as follows:

Grade; landscape; construct foot bridges, shelter buildings, tennis courts, and soft ball diamond; plant trees; and make general improvements in the Village Park in the Village of Lodi, Columbia County. ... Village owned property.³⁴

The WPA approved the project on October 17, 1938, and the work would continue for the next four years, with most of the money coming from additional WPA-funded annual applications. Soon thereafter, village records list payments to Franz Aust for the park's design and payment for the first stone that was to be used for the park, which was quarried from land located just south of the village that was owned by Edith Brereton.

On March 6, 1939, the village applied to the WPA for a second year of funding and the new application also makes mention of some of the work that had been accomplished in the project's first year as well.

³³ Lodi Village Board Minutes. July 19, 1938.

³⁴ Federal Records. Works Project Administration. Wisconsin Division. W.P.A. Project Card File Records 1936-1942. Adams County - Dane County. Wisconsin Historical Society, Archives, Series 1688. Box 1.

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Proposes to complete park improvements on an area of about 9 acres (the upper 3/5 of the entire park area). Work is to consist of excavation & fill, grading, landscaping, construction of two timber foot bridges, completion of construction of an artificial lagoon. Rip rapping shores of lagoon and banks of stream, lay stone coping on walls previously constructed, lay stone bleachers for football & baseball field, build rustic log fence around parts of the park area. Quarry necessary stone and plant trees and shrubbery.³⁵

Spearheading the project was T. O. Goeres, who had been elected village president in 1938, and it was his vision and energy that were the key ingredients in seeing the park through to completion. Goeres' level of involvement in the project, given his other municipal and private commitments, was impressive, to say the least, as can be seen from the following newspaper item.

Dr. Goeres, village president, and in charge of the new park being constructed under a WPA project, says he would like to get some elm trees, two to three inches in diameter, for transplanting in the park. He asks anyone knowing where such trees may be secured, to please notify George Haberman.³⁶

By September of 1939, the lights for the park's newly completed athletic field were ready for use, and the work on this phase of the project was finally completed on July 25, 1940. In May of 1941, the village once again applied to the WPA for an additional year of funding, which was granted, and the new project description can also once again be used to gauge the amount of work that had already been completed. In addition, the description of the type of work to be done in the new application makes it clear that the project was moving towards completion.

Improve village park in the Village of Lodi, Columbia County, including constructing toilet, walls, entrances, fences, bleachers, steps, and walks; installing drains, storm sewers, and plumbing and electrical facilities; grading, sodding; seeding; planting trees and shrubs; enlarging and deepening pool; improving spring and pool; painting structures; and performing incidental and appurtenant work.³⁷

Work on the park continued throughout 1941, a year that would bring both sorrow and some measure of satisfaction to T. O. Goeres. In February, Goeres' son, Robert, died at the age of 20, and the death

³⁵ Federal Records. Op. Cit. Project 6D-11-1495.

³⁶ *Lodi Enterprise*. April 27, 1939, p. 5.

³⁷ Federal Records. Op. Cit. Project 5D-11-3169.

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of this popular young man was widely mourned in the community.³⁸ Soon thereafter, Lodi officially became a city, T. O. Goeres became Lodi's first mayor, and in November, the City Council voted to name the city's newly completed municipal park after him.

At a meeting of the city fathers recently the aldermen voted to name the new park Goeres Park, in honor of Mayor Goeres, who has worked so zealously to redeem the old "Foote flats" and make of them a beauty spot. His ultimate aim has not yet been fully attained, but he is the type of man who never gives up when he starts anything that he conceives to be of lasting benefit.³⁹

Work on Goeres Park would continue until April 1, 1942, when it was finally halted by the nation's entrance into World War II. Shortly before the end of the work, however, a memorial dedicated to the memory of Robert Goeres was built on the west side of the park. This beautiful memorial was designed by Franz Aust and his students and its completion marked the end of the first development phase of Goeres Park's history.

Soldiers returning home to Lodi after the war ended found that the old marshy area they had known had been transformed in the interim into the pride of the city. Goeres Park was now the favored site for much of the city's outdoor recreational activities and the park's new swimming pool was particularly popular in the summer months. News of it reached other area communities as well, including the state capitol, and one of Madison's newspapers printed the following story and a photo spread of it.

There must be contentment in the minds of the fathers and mothers of Lodi, the peaceful community on the outer fringe of the Baraboo range, in knowing that their children are swimming in the pool and enjoying other recreational facilities at Goeres park, instead of playing in the streets of the city where their lives are endangered by heavy tourist traffic.

Through the heart of Lodi runs Highway 113, one of two main arteries to Devils Lake, the Dells, and other northern Wisconsin vacation spots. At the north end of the city is Goeres park, a 10-acre section of reclaimed marshland with a swimming pool, baseball diamond, basketball court, and athletic field where Lodi boys and girls can pass an active healthy summer in the sun.

The Goeres area was bought by the Lodi water and light commission in 1936 in connection with the development of a sewage project. The marshy area at that time was filled in and, with

³⁸ "Robert Goeres Passed Away Wednesday After Long Illness." *Lodi Enterprise*, Feb. 20, 1941. See also "Tribute." *Lodi Enterprise*, Feb. 27, 1941, p. 1.

³⁹ "Lodi's New Park Named In Honor of Dr. Goeres." *Lodi Enterprise*, November 20, 1941, p. 1.

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the aid of federal funds, developed into the Goeres park of today.⁴⁰

Additional work and new features would be added to Goeres Park in the years that followed, but the park was essentially complete by the end of 1942, 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. Completed after this initial period of construction but within the period of significance were the Krainik Memorial Change House and Toilet Building, which provided facilities for the swimming pool, and the Chval Memorial Fountain. These features complemented both the active and the contemplative functions of the park.

Consequently, it is believed that Goeres 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 Lodi. 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, Lodi was one of the first recipients and it continued to make use of these funds as long as they were available, support from the WPA, in particular, having been essential to the realization of this project. In addition, Lodi also availed itself of expertise that was available close at hand at the University of Wisconsin, and the designs that came from the UW's Landscape Architecture Department and from Prof. Franz A. Aust in particular, did much to elevate these resources above the more usual work of the period.

Landscape Architecture

Goeres Park is also believed to be locally eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level of significance under NR Criterion C because of its associations with prominent Wisconsin landscape architect Franz A. Aust. Aust was the first professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin and his work was heavily influenced by the work and philosophy of internationally known landscape architect Jens Jensen and others who advocated naturalistic landscape designs and the use of native planting materials. In addition, Aust was also the founder of the Wisconsin chapter of the important early conservation organization, The Friends of Our Native Landscape, an organization that had been founded by Jensen. The name of Franz Aust is associated with much of the civic improvement work that was done in Lodi between 1915 and 1943 and his influence was largely responsible for their current appearance and the high quality of their design.

⁴⁰ Custer, Frank. "Lodi Keeps Children Out Of Danger By Park Programs." *The Capital Times*, July 7, 1946, p.12.

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Franz A. Aust was born on May 10, 1885, in Defiance, Ohio. After his father's death, Aust's mother moved the family to North Dakota to be with her relatives. Aust subsequently attended public schools in North Dakota, including the State School of Science in Wahpeton, North Dakota, then enrolled at the University of Minnesota, where he received a B.S. in physics in 1909. After receiving his M.S. in physics, from the University of Minnesota, Aust was diagnosed with asthma. Being advised by his doctors that working in a physics lab might lead to a premature death, Aust changed careers and instead pursued the study of landscape architecture at the University of Michigan, where he was the first graduate of Michigan's new five-year Masters in Landscape Architecture program.

Following graduation, Aust accepted an Extension position at the University of Illinois. Then, in June 1915, Aust accepted an offer from the University of Wisconsin at Madison to teach landscape architecture, to prepare plans for the University's campus, and also to promote landscape architecture through the University's Extension program.⁴¹ One of Aust's trademarks was his "hands on" teaching style. His students were involved directly in many of his projects and they also participated in field trips to visit noted landscape architect Jens Jensen at The Clearing, his Door County studio, and to hear Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin.⁴² Around Memorial Day, Aust would take his students on a three-day trip to Chicago to see both Jensen's and Wright's works first hand. Aust continued to teach at the University until his retirement in 1943.

Aust had a broad interest in landscape design that included urban and rural planning and conservation and his professional associations indicated these broad interests. He was a member of the American Civic Association and the Association of City Planners. He was chairman of the Committee on Slope Erosion Control and a member of the Roadside Development Committee of the National Research Council's Highway Research Board. He was the founder and longtime secretary of the Wisconsin chapter of the Friends of Our Native Landscape and was managed editor of the chapter's publication: *Our Native Landscape*.⁴³ Through his associations with the University of Wisconsin Extension program, Aust also traveled and spoke throughout the state. In addition to his teaching and University Extension duties, he was also active as a private landscape designer and consultant. Aust died in

⁴¹ Aust's appointment ultimately led to the founding of the University's degree program in Landscape Architecture in 1926.

⁴² Aust and Wright first met when Aust was teaching at the University of Illinois between 1913 and 1915, a meeting that may have been arranged by Jens Jensen, another friend. Aust and Wright subsequently became friends and would later collaborate on an unrealized sculptural project that was to be located in Nakoma, a Madison, Wisconsin suburb.

⁴³ For an excellent discussion of Jensen and Aust's role in the Friends of Our Native Landscape, see: Tishler, William H. and Erik M. Ghenoii. "Conservation Pioneers: Jens Jensen and the Friends of Our Native Landscape." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 86, Number 4, Summer 2003, pp. 2-15.

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Madison on October 21, 1963.⁴⁴

While a number of well-known historically significant landscape architects completed important projects in Wisconsin, Franz Aust was the first significant landscape architect to establish his residence and practice in Wisconsin and he was also the first person in the state to be hired to teach landscape architecture at the university level.

Aust's own landscape works are characterized by the use of native plants and construction materials. He was also strongly opposed to the pruning of trees and shrubs, preferring them in their natural state. In this approach to landscape design, Aust followed and shared the philosophies of Jens Jensen. Jens Jensen was a leading practitioner of the Prairie movement in landscape gardening. Wilhelm Miller codified the principals of this school of design as: conservation (or preservation), restoration, and repetition. Conservation and restoration referred to the landscape designer's use of naturally occurring elements in their landscape designs. Repetition was the use of stratified materials and forms in ways that imitated their natural occurrence, which can be seen in Aust's use of dry laid stone walls built up out of irregular courses of flat, naturally worked stone.⁴⁵ Aust's use of stonework and the designs of his stone retaining walls and council rings, in particular, closely mirrored elements that were also signature elements of Jensen's work, and his debt to Jensen's work is clearly visible in the stonework in Goeres Park that was executed between 1936 and 1942. Aust's emphasis on labor-intensive stonework was also, of course, ideally suited to the employment goals of the various federal funding agencies that financed the work.

Aust's involvement in the transformation of the former Vanderpool property into Goeres Park began shortly after the village brought the property and while no comprehensive plan for the park is known to exist today, there is no reason to doubt that the overall concept of the park, the choice of materials to be used, and the way in which they were to be used, was his. It is also clear from the documentary evidence that has survived, however, that Aust used the park as an ongoing class project for his UW students, and the conceptual designs that were produced for the park's various resources actually came from a number of different hands. This approach offered a number of benefits. It allowed Lodi to retain Aust at a cheaper rate than would have possible otherwise; and it brought more hands and minds into the design process than would otherwise have been possible, the only cost involved, as village records show, being for transportation costs for bringing the students to and from Madison. In addition, Aust's approach also gave the students themselves invaluable experience working with real

⁴⁴ Biography taken from the Franz Aust Papers. Wisconsin Historical Society, Archives.

⁴⁵ Grese, Robert E. *Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992, pp. 45-46.

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projects whose component parts included many of the kinds of projects that they would encounter after graduation.⁴⁶ One can get a sense of how Aust involved his students in the design process from the following article that appeared in the Lodi newspaper late in the life of the Goeres Park project.

Prof. Aust, with 16 of his students, spent Thursday afternoon in the Goeres Park. His various classes are making class subjects out of our various proposals, such as wading pool and play appropriations for the very little tots; the sunken spring; location and variety of trees, and the memorial, etc.

The following trees have been selected so far ... many more will be added: 5 river birch; 2 clusters of river birch; 6 black and white ash; 1 cluster of white ash; 2 green ash; 3 white birch and two yellow birch; 6 basswood; 6 red maple; 2 beechnut; 3 butternut; 6 large elm (already spotted); 1 cluster of aspens.

If anyone knows where such varieties may be located, let us know for we would like to spot them now and transplant them when the ground is frozen. The holes are being dug now.⁴⁷

Surviving designs for some of these projects show, not surprisingly, that they tend to share Aust's preference for naturalistic stonework and they also show, again not surprisingly, that a variety of approaches were considered for individual projects in the park such as the stone bleachers that overlook the playing field.

While Aust designed several estates and is credited with several large projects, including the design of portions of the UW campus, most of his known his work concentrated on the common landscape and on small public projects. Aust also devoted a great deal of time and energy addressing local garden and civic clubs on landscape issues. The Goeres Park project is an excellent and largely intact example of the kind of public improvement projects that Aust both supported and promoted.

Goeres Park is therefore being nominated to the NRHP for its local significance under Criterion C because the resources it contains constitute a visually impressive, architecturally significant and highly intact grouping designed by University of Wisconsin Professor of Landscape Architecture Franz Aust that is representative of both the naturalistic Prairie Style of landscape design that is closely associated with Aust himself and with his better known mentor and inspiration, Jens Jensen. Both the stonework

⁴⁶ A number of the original plans these students made for various projects within the park have survived, some of which were built and some not. These plans are part of the City of Lodi Parks Commission Records.

⁴⁷ "Trees Selected for Planting in Goeres Park." *Lodi Enterprise*, December 4, 1941, p. 1.

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and the plantings used in the design of the park are representative of this style of landscaping and the completed designs are, along with the Lodi School Hillside Improvement Site, which is being nominated separately, among Aust's finest known designs. Their significance is further enhanced by their high degree of integrity and their well-maintained state of preservation.

Criteria Consideration G

The period of significance of the park is extended to 1961 to include the Dr. and Verna Chval Memorial Fountain. The design of this fountain is in keeping with the overall design of the park in its use of materials and its artistic quality. The fountain is located in the contemplative portion of the park and reinforces that aspect of the park's design. In addition, the resource is close to the 50 year mark, arguing for its inclusion as a contributing resource within the park.

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 this area.

Preservation Activity

Fortunately, Goeres Park's resources are municipally owned and they are still largely intact and well maintained. In addition, the Lodi Historic Preservation Commission has recently had the park designated as a Lodi Landmark and they have 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.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property begins at a point that corresponds to the southwest corner formed by the intersection of the southeast-northwest running North Main St. (STH 113) and the northeast-southwest running Fair St. The boundary line then proceeds in a northeasterly direction along the N curblineline of Fair St. for a distance of 290 feet to a point that corresponds to the W corner formed by the intersection of Fair St. and Millston Ave. The line then turns 75° and proceeds in a northwesterly direction along the west curblineline of Fair St. for a distance of 850 feet, then turns 65° and continues due W a distance of 300-feet to a point on the W bank of Spring Creek. The line then turns and continues in a southerly direction along the meandering W bank of said Spring Creek (this portion of the W bank also comprises the rear lot lines of the lots associated with 542 N. Main St. and 540 N. Main St.) for a distance of 260 feet to a point that corresponds to the southeast corner of the lot associated with 540 N. Main St. The line then turns 50° and continues in a southwesterly direction along the south lot line of the lot associated with 540 N. Main St. a distance of 240 feet to a point on the E curblineline of N. Main St. that corresponds to the southwest corner of said lot. The line then turns 90° and continues in a southeasterly direction along the E curblineline of said N. Main St. a distance of 778 feet to the POB. Said boundaries contain 7.90 acres MOL. These boundaries contain land that is part of Outlots 131 and 153, City of Lodi.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to encompass the limits of those features that are historically associated with the Park. The Park's east, south, and west boundaries coincide with the limits of the 1930s era dry-laid stone walls that edge these sides of the Park. The Park's northern boundary was drawn so as to exclude the modern softball diamond and skating rink that lie to the north of this boundary while the northwest portion of this boundary runs along the east and south property lines of private properties that edge the northwest corner of the Park.

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Items a - d are the same for photos 1 - 11.

Photo 1

- a) Goeres Park
- b) Lodi, Columbia County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, November 2007
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) Main Fair St. Entrance, View looking N
- f) Photo 1 of 11

Photo 10

- e) Joel and Anna Krainik Memorial Change House, View looking NE
- f) Photo 10 of 11

Photo 11

- e) Krainik Change House and East Wall Section, View looking ENE
- f) Photo 11 of 11

Photo 2

- e) Main Fair St. Entrance Detail View looking N
- f) Photo 2 of 11

Photo 3

- e) Chval Memorial Fountain and Robert M. Goeres Memorial
- f) Photo 3 of 11

Photo 4

- e) Dr. & Verna Chval Memorial Fountain, View looking E
- f) Photo 4 of 11

Photo 5

- e) Robert M. Goeres Memorial Reflecting Pool, View looking NW
- f) Photo 5 of 11

Photo 6

- e) Spring Creek with Goeres and Chval Memorials, View looking NW
- f) Photo 6 of 11

Photo 7

- e) Spring Creek, North End, View looking SE
- f) Photo 7 of 11

Photo 8

- e) West Side Park Entrance (North), View looking SWf) Photo 8 of 11

Photo 9

- e) Stone Bleachers, View looking NE
- f) Photo 9 of 11

**FIGURE 1:
GOERES PARK
LODI, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

