

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission      ☐ Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Milwaukee County Parkway System

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Community Planning and Development in Milwaukee County, 1923-1960

Federal Work Relief Park Programs in Milwaukee County, 1933-1942

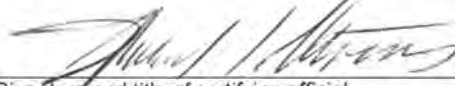
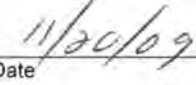
Landscape Architecture in the Milwaukee County Parkway System, 1923-1960

**C. Form Prepared by**

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**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register Criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

	
Signature and title of certifying official	Date
State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin	
State or Federal agency and bureau	

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

	
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

## Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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#### E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

This Multiple Property Documentation form covers the contexts for Milwaukee County's Parkway System, a chain of parkways and associated parks that encircle Milwaukee County. There are three main associated historic contexts for the system: **Community Planning and Development in Milwaukee County, 1923-1960**; **Federal Work Relief Park Programs in Milwaukee County, 1933-1942**; and **Landscape Architecture in the Milwaukee County Parkway System, 1923-1960**. Because these contexts are closely related and overlap in many places, the discussion below is broken into sections that chronicle the history of park design generally and the history of the Milwaukee County Parkway system in particular.

#### AMERICAN PARK MOVEMENT – 1870-1960

In the decades following the Civil War and in the infancy of an American park movement, landscape architects, including Frederick Law Olmsted, led a park movement that advocated naturalistic landscape design that blended manmade elements with their natural setting. During this period and building off of Andrew Jackson Downing's philosophies of scenery preservation and landscape development, Olmsted "developed six principles guiding landscape design of public parks: scenery, suitability, sanitation, subordination, separation and spaciousness. Scenery meant that designs that were to be compatible with the natural scenery and topography and consist of 'passages of scenery' and scenic areas of plantings. Sanitation called for designs that promoted physical and mental health and provided adequate drainage and facilities. Subordination required that all details, natural and artificial, were to be subordinated to character of the overall design. Separation called for the physical separation of areas having different uses and character, and for the development of separate byways for different kinds of traffic. Spaciousness called upon the designer to make an area appear larger by creating bays and headlands of plantings and irregular visual boundaries."<sup>1</sup>

Olmsted's six principles were actively applied to a subset of the American park movement, namely the urban park movement through which landscape architects, including Olmsted, extolled the benefits of building parks and parkways within urban areas. Proponents of this vision believed that the juxtaposition of urban and rural landscape environments and the dissolution of the city grid could improve the quality and health of urban life. Landscape architects pleaded for comprehensive planning measures that took into account the acquisition of land outside of the existing city, in anticipation of future metropolitan growth. Although public acceptance of large scale schemes was not immediate, such ideas by landscape architects Olmsted, H.W.S. Cleveland, and Charles Eliot permeated city planning efforts in New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Boston.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1870 and the 1890s, parkways and unified networks of landscaped thoroughfares and parks emerged as a prevalent design concept. The nation's first parkway, the Eastern (Jamaica) Parkway in Brooklyn, was designed by Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in 1870. The wide boulevard served as the main approach to the Plaza of Prospect Park.<sup>3</sup> Eastern Parkway featured a combination of carriageways, pedestrian walks, and

<sup>1</sup> Linda F. McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," (National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, August 1995), E: 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 596.

<sup>3</sup> Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture*, 596.

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large elm trees. After Eastern Parkway, Olmsted worked in Boston, where he envisioned a long continuous parkway encircling the city. Contemporaneously, Cleveland recommended a grand boulevard for Chicago and a parkway for Minneapolis. By the 1890s Eliot, working with Olmsted, was advocating the creation of parkways to connect units of the park system in Boston, including the Charles River Esplanade, which was implemented after Eliot's death in 1897.<sup>4</sup> Through his comprehensive plans for urban parks, Eliot pioneered the field of landscape forestry, in which he espoused that landscapes could be rehabilitated by following the ecology and natural systems of the region. Eliot's seminal work in landscape design elevated the protection of natural vegetation over the development of roads and trails. Moreover, he actively urged the development of series of parks connected by natural systems such as rivers and meadows.<sup>5</sup>

The World's Fair Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago further focused national park design by blending architectural and landscape principles. The result was the City Beautiful Movement, which promoted the improvement of cities and focused on aesthetics, including the incorporation of large public buildings, often Neo-Classical in design, and monuments into a park and boulevard landscape. Landscape architects who contributed to the City Beautiful Movement included Olmsted, Cleveland, Eliot, George Kessler, and John Nolen.

By 1910 the City Beautiful Movement, with its focus on aesthetics and cultural amenities, had weakened considerably as planners became more concerned with urban reform efforts. Concerns shifted to social considerations, such as those espoused by the Settlement House Movement, which sought to improve urban neighborhoods, housing, and sanitation. Social reform advocates, including Jacob Riis and Jane Addams, greatly influenced the aims of urban planners and park designers by emphasizing the provision of municipal services to an often impoverished urban population. Citizen advocates and reformists strove to improve the quality of life for everyone living in an urban center. Landscape aesthetics in the form of parks and parkways became a tool for meeting public planning needs. Parks and parkways emerged as salubrious public spaces that were accessible to everyone. Moreover, the addition of green space to an overcrowded and bleak urban center was thought to provide a moral and healthy outlet from the city's social ills.

### Naturalistic Park Design

During the early twentieth century, a unique American style of landscape design emerged. The style, which incorporated indigenous plants and naturalistic design principles, was acknowledged by leading landscape architects and writers. In keeping with Olmsted's six guiding principles and Eliot's landscape forestry, this American style was characterized by a preservation of natural character and harmonization of manmade improvements with the natural setting and topography via the preservation of existing vegetation and land forms, construction of rustic shelters of native stone and wood, and planting of indigenous species. Regional variations of this style developed, including a Midwestern style (or prairie style) of landscape architecture, epitomized by the work of Jens Jensen. Jensen pioneered highway beautification efforts and roadside planting of native vegetation through his work along one and one-third miles of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana. Moreover, he advanced the landscape design of public parks by stressing an appreciation of existing physical land forms and native vegetation. Through this, Jensen developed "a new type of rock gardening" whereby

<sup>4</sup> Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture*, 597.

<sup>5</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 13.



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local limestone could be used for stepping stones, ledges, springs, cascades, and other types of naturalistic rockwork, often planted with rock-loving plants.<sup>6</sup>

Wilhelm Miller, a horticultural writer and editor, promoted prairie style landscape design and credited Jens Jensen with taking the prairie as a "leading motive" in design in his 1915 publication *The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening*. Miller identified conservation (or preservation), restoration, and repetition as key principles of this design system. Conservation and restoration identify the landscape architect's use of locally occurring elements within the design, while repetition identified the imitation of nature through the use of stratified materials and forms, such as irregular courses of stone walls.<sup>7</sup>

Additional perpetuation of the principles of naturalistic landscape design in the twentieth century occurred through academics' writing of textbooks and other publications, including the work of Henry Hubbard, a professor in Harvard's school of landscape architecture. For instance, Hubbard encouraged the use of local stone, vegetation, and functional structures in harmonious design. Although discouraging of park structures, Hubbard admitted they were often necessary and suggested that small buildings should be concealed within the landscape, while large buildings should be enframed and made harmonious with the landscape. Following Olmsted's principle of subordination, Hubbard argued that buildings could be subordinated to their setting through harmonization of texture and color vis-à-vis the use of locally quarried stone to match natural outcroppings.<sup>8</sup> Rustic architecture evolved to achieve the landscape harmony that Hubbard and proponents of naturalistic design sought. Rustic architecture emerged from a tradition of domestic and resort architecture in rugged and scenic places such as the coast of Maine, the Adirondacks of New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Sierra Madre of California and was characterized by the use of natural, local materials and handcrafted finishes. As the idea of developing nature and wilderness for personal pleasure extended throughout America, an increasing number of public parks, at the local, state, and national levels, adopted the rustic style of architecture for numerous park structures.<sup>9</sup>

### Modern Parkway Design and Implementation

In his publications, Hubbard defined a parkway as "an elongated park that was a highway developed solely for passenger cars and recreational purposes, having restricted access, and bordered by adequate buffers where commercial and other kinds of development are restricted."<sup>10</sup> Parkway preserved scenes of beauty and interest along a selected route and were envisioned as motorways through landscapes having natural attributes, such as forests, lakes, and streams that were to be preserved or restored to their pristine state.<sup>11</sup> Although the resulting parkways are diverse in design and function, their design is often commonly motivated by traffic problems, inner city deterioration, polluted rivers, and waste land. In the twentieth century, curvilinear parkways with limited access, satellite parks, and natural and cultural features were planned in numerous cities

<sup>6</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 14-16.

<sup>7</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 15; Grese, Robert E., *Jens Jensen*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 45-47.

<sup>8</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 20-23.

<sup>9</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 27.

<sup>10</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 124.

<sup>11</sup> McClelland, "Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks," E: 124.

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to alleviate the problems mentioned above.<sup>12</sup> The Bronx River Parkway in New York, which was completed following World War I, epitomizes the modern parkway as it provided a means of preserving river waters from pollution and reserved parklands on either side of the river. A side effect of the Bronx River Parkway, and a motivation for the creation of other urban parkways, was an increase in property values adjacent to the parkway.<sup>13</sup>

Although the urban park movement began soon after the Civil War, park and parkway construction boomed later, during the Great Depression. As a result of New Deal programs introduced in 1933 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to promote economic recovery, significant amounts of funding became available for labor and materials for urban projects. In particular, the creation of the Civil Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933 by the Emergency Conservation Works legislation provided federal funding and labor to park systems across the country. In 1935 the Federal Emergency Relief Act appropriated nearly \$5 billion nationally for relief efforts to be administered by three agencies: existing government bureaus; emergency agencies, such as the Civil Works Administration (CWA) or Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA); and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The WPA, which was established in July 1935 and operated until 1943, became the largest of the three relief efforts and provided a considerable amount of money to park and parkway projects.

Following World War II, national park development shifted focus to the improvement of recreational and fitness facilities. In general, community recreation activities expanded during this period and there was greater popular awareness of recreational opportunities. In 1956 the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports was established, thus emphasizing the widespread national concern with physical fitness and recreation. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission in 1958 to identify America's outdoor recreation needs. The final report encouraged a national outdoor recreation policy, expansion of programs, organization of a Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, and a federal grant program. In 1962 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) was created and charged with coordinating outdoor recreation programs among federal agencies and assisting state and local governments with recreation planning. BOR recreation requirements resulted in municipal and state recreational development within parks and provided funding through the 1970s.<sup>14</sup>

## MILWAUKEE COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

Milwaukee County provides an example of how national ideas on planning were adapted to a specific locality. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the City of Milwaukee completed numerous public parks. Cleveland, Olmsted, Nolen, Alfred Clas, and Warren Manning provided plans for many of these early parks, which would later be encompassed by the county parkway system.

<sup>12</sup> William H. Tishler, "H.W.S. Cleveland," in *American Landscape Architecture: Designers and Places*, ed. William H. Tishler, *Building Watchers Series* (Washington D.C.: Preservation Press, 1989), 181-183.

<sup>13</sup> Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture*, 597-600.

<sup>14</sup> Julie Sturgeon and Janice Meer, *The First Fifty Years 1956-2006: The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Revisits Its Roots and Charts Its Future* (N.p.: 2006), n.p.; Omaha City Planning Department, "A History of Omaha's Parks and Recreation System," N.p., February 1982, 16-18.

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Recognizing the plight of Milwaukee's urban poor, local reformists, including Charles B. Whitnall, espoused the need for urban green space. Milwaukee's park advocates strongly believed that improvements to the physical environment would result in a positive force on people's character. Thus, like urban reformists across the nation, those in Milwaukee sought to improve the city and county's urban center by incorporating public parks linked by parkways. In the early 1920s in Milwaukee, Whitnall envisioned a county parkway system guided by waterways that would connect Milwaukee County's existing parks. This system would result in a "necklace of green" that would follow the Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic, and Root rivers, and their associated creeks, and would twice encircle the county.

Federal funding contributed to the development and enhancement of the county's parks and parkways. For instance, between 1935 and 1941, approximately \$17 million was provided for WPA projects in Milwaukee County parks.<sup>15</sup> The Milwaukee County Park Commission generally followed national trends after World War II, and recreational development became a significant goal of the Commission. In the 1950s annual park reports indicate that planning recreational facilities such as golf courses, ball fields, ball courts, and swimming pools was a focus. Additionally, the Commission's recreation division planned organized recreation for the park system's 12 million annual visitors. Activities included concerts and cultural events, winter sports such as ice skating, and supervised recreation such as baseball.

**Early Park Planning in Milwaukee**

The City of Milwaukee's earliest open spaces were public squares that were developed beginning in 1835. The squares were often from privately-donated land and served as both commercial and civic centers. While Milwaukee had few public parks during the second half of the nineteenth century, the city featured open green spaces consisting of commercial parks and gardens and Forest Home Cemetery.<sup>16</sup> The earliest public parks in the City of Milwaukee were ward parks and multiple-use municipal facilities. Seventh Ward Park (now Juneau Park), established in 1872, was developed according to 1870 plans by Cleveland. The city developed Kilbourn Reservoir Park, Waterworks Park, and Flushing Tunnel Park (now McKinley Park) between 1868 and 1887 in association with public sanitation improvements.<sup>17</sup>

In 1889 the state legislature approved the establishment of the Board of Park Commissioners of Milwaukee (Board).<sup>18</sup> By 1890 the Board had "selected six sites so located as to afford accommodation to the greatest possible number and still adhere to the general scheme of having a chain of parks around the city connected by handsome boulevards."<sup>19</sup> Thus, the Board considered the general concept of connecting the parks early in

<sup>15</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932* (Milwaukee: Court House, 1933), 293.

<sup>16</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City* ([Milwaukee]: City of Milwaukee, 1983), 111-113, 117.

<sup>17</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 118-120.

<sup>18</sup> The Board of Park Commissioners of Milwaukee had several name changes prior to its merger with the county park board in 1936. This report simply refers to it as the Board.

<sup>19</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 121.



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the establishment of the city park system. The Board acquired land and began development of Kosciuszko (originally the Coleman Tract), Humboldt (originally the Howell Avenue Park), Lake, Mitchell, Riverside (originally River), and Washington (originally West) parks for this scheme.<sup>20</sup>

Many landscape architects and designers contributed to the design of the county's parks. The Board embraced the City Beautiful Movement for the Milwaukee park system when they hired Fredrick Law Olmsted and Company to design Lake, West (Washington), and River (Riverside) parks in 1892. The Board was able to hire the firm at a reasonable rate as they were already doing work for the nearby Chicago World's Fair. John Charles Olmsted, brother of Frederick Law, implemented the parks' designs, while Warren H. Manning was responsible for the planting designs. The firm's plans included Newberry Boulevard, which connected Lake Park to River (Riverside) and West (Washington) parks. The firm also proposed a lakefront drive adjacent to Lake Park, which the city later developed in 1929 based on a plan by architect Alfred C. Clas.<sup>21</sup>

Near the end of 1894 the Milwaukee city park system continued to grow, but at a much slower pace due to a lack of funding. Limited funding continued to hamper park system development for the next two decades; however, the Board still completed major projects. The Board made significant improvements at Lake and River (Riverside) parks and constructed Newberry Boulevard, which connected Lake, River (Riverside), and West (Washington) parks. The Board also established parks throughout the city, including several neighborhood parks that did not become part of the parkway system.<sup>22</sup> Much of the early development of the city park system depended on the ability of the city to acquire property. While the city received land for park system development through donations, other acquisitions were limited because the Board had to rely on the state legislature for funding. Contemporaneously, the Board's 1905 Annual Report compared Milwaukee's park acreage with that of 11 other cities of comparable and smaller size. All 11 cities had greater total park system acreage than did Milwaukee.<sup>23</sup> Milwaukee's lack of park acreage concerned the Board, and they sought opportunities to increase park land holdings. In 1907 the opportunities for formation of additional public parks increased with the establishment of the Milwaukee County Park Commission (County Park Commission).<sup>24</sup> However, it was not until Whitnall provided a vision of a comprehensive county parkway system in 1923 that the County Park Commission performed its greatest work.

The County Park Commission's first purchase of land, which became Jacobus Park, was along three small tributaries of the Menomonee River. Milwaukee County continued to purchase land, including the properties that became Grant (originally County) Park along the Lake Michigan shoreline. From 1907 to 1910 Milwaukee County acquired South Shore Park and an additional 14 smaller tracks in Bay View. The county purchased

<sup>20</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 121.

<sup>21</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 121-122.

<sup>22</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 125-126.

<sup>23</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 125.

<sup>24</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 129; Charles B. Whitnall, "How a Lecture Course Saved the Shores of Milwaukee County," *The American City [Reprint]* (August 1941): n.p.; Charles B. Whitnall, "The Philosophy, Evolution, and Objective of the Milwaukee County Park Commission," N.p., [1942], n.p.



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several properties at relatively low cost because the natural features, such as ravines and steep topography, made them undesirable for residential development.<sup>25</sup>

The City Beautiful Movement was central not only to park design, but Milwaukee city planning as well. In 1911 the City Planning Commission prepared reports that discussed Milwaukee's need for boulevards and riverfront parks and parkways. The reports specifically made recommendations for creating parks along the Milwaukee, Menomonee, and Kinnickinnic rivers. One of the reports also touted the advantages of building parks and "driveways" along the Lake Michigan shoreline.<sup>26</sup> Clas developed a plan for a civic center for Milwaukee, which further carried out the City Beautiful Movement ideas. A report by Nolen and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., expanded the Clas civic center design. In 1916 German planner Werner Hegemann wrote a significant report on Milwaukee city planning. Hegemann suggested a solution to the conflict between different users of Milwaukee's lakefront such that advocates of both harbor and park uses could coexist. Hegemann also emphasized the importance of neighborhood parks, boulevards, and riverfront parks and parkways to Milwaukee's planning.<sup>27</sup>

The County Park Commission's greatest role in early parkway development came about with its ambitious parkway study by Whitnall in 1923. In his plans for a county-wide parkway system, Whitnall included several existing city and county parks, such as Estabrook, Grant, Lake, Pulaski, Riverside, and South Shore. Whitnall planned for these units to become part of the Milwaukee County Parkway System that would become known as the "Emerald Necklace" and encompass parkways that followed rivers and creeks throughout Milwaukee County, such as the Menomonee, Milwaukee, Kinnickinnic, and Root rivers and Honey, Underwood, and Lincoln creeks. See the attached map *Tentative Study For a County Park System*.

### Emergence of Charles Whitnall's Ideas and 1920s-1930s Progressivism

The person most responsible for the development of the Milwaukee County Parkway System was Charles Whitnall, often referred to as the "Father of the Milwaukee County Park System." His philosophies on park influences, design, and social reform guided Milwaukee County's parkway design. Whitnall, who was originally a florist and landscaper, drew interest in the natural landscape, which led him to study park development and become involved in both Milwaukee County's and the City of Milwaukee's efforts in park and parkway design. Whitnall was a major advocate of widespread green spaces because of their beneficial influences on the health and social conditions of the city and he was instrumental in securing the required legislation for establishing the County Park Commission in 1907. He served on the County Park Commission from 1908 to 1947 and on the Public Land Commission, also known as the city planning board, from 1911 to 1943.<sup>28</sup>

Whitnall's earliest report was issued in 1906 to outline his principles of park and parkway design in anticipation of the County Park Commission's organization. Like many social reformers of the time, Whitnall saw the

<sup>25</sup> Whitnall, "How a Lecture Course Saved the Shores of Milwaukee County," *The American City [Reprint]*, n.p.; Whitnall, "The Philosophy, Evolution, and Objective of the Milwaukee County Park Commission," n.p.

<sup>26</sup> William G. Bruce, ed., *History of Milwaukee, City and County* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1922), 495.

<sup>27</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 127-129.

<sup>28</sup> "Charles B. Whitnall Biographical Sketch," N.p., n.d., n.p.

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salvation of the industrial city in the integration of green space into the urban landscape. He believed urbanization, and the resulting congestion and pollution of the city, separated man from nature. In response, Whitnall proposed to "preserve or conserve the bounties of nature for the benefit of the people." Decrying the destruction and waste of natural resources as a "public tragedy if not a public crime," Whitnall offered a vision of Milwaukee penetrated and encircled by landscaped rivers and creeks.<sup>29</sup>

Throughout his life, Whitnall actively disseminated and promoted his planning ideas through numerous publications and speeches. Publications include titles such as *How the Kinnickinnic Should Look*, *How a Lecture Course Saved the Shores of Milwaukee County*, *What Progress Costs Milwaukee*, and *Valley Conservation*. Of paramount significance in his writings and speeches was the relationship of social behaviors and health to spatial forms, including densely populated urban centers, green spaces, and waterways. In 1923 Whitnall provided an initial vision for a county parkway system guided by waterways, which put his planning philosophies to practical use.

Whitnall's original 1923 vision of the parkway system addressed the parkways as avenues of movement that would connect the county's isolated park units. The individual parkways would follow the Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic, and Root rivers; Honey, Lincoln, Oak, and Underwood creeks; and the Lake Michigan shore line, thus resulting in two "necklaces of green" encircling the county (see attached map).<sup>30</sup> Each parkway would conform to the natural topography of their respective watershed feature. The initial parkway vision promoted abundant plantings of natural trees and shrubbery in various sizes. Parkway buildings, such as comfort stations, would only be erected if the parkway was deemed wide enough to warrant one. During the initial study of the parkway system, the planning department also considered implementing a continuous and winding driveway that followed the river in each parkway. The planning department asserted that the "parkways have a double purpose, one to furnish interesting scenery to visitors using their drives and walks, the other to give a wholesome environment to people living in their vicinities."<sup>31</sup>

In planning the 84-mile comprehensive system of county parkways, Whitnall relied on the conurbation theories of Patrick Geddes, a Scottish town planner who believed "the city would be superseded by a more geographically widespread form," or conurbation.<sup>32</sup> Acknowledging the growing desirability of suburban cities and villages in Milwaukee County, Whitnall asserted, "It seems quite possible that Milwaukee County will soon come within the category of the Conurbation or the Regional City."<sup>33</sup> By retaining and preserving natural watershed features, Whitnall's parkway system could encompass the region. The resulting "necklace of green"

<sup>29</sup> Charles B. Whitnall, "Report on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Park Commission," [Milwaukee], n.d., 8.

<sup>30</sup> See plans in Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1924), n.p.

<sup>31</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 22-23; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report*, 22-23.

<sup>32</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 129.

<sup>33</sup> Charles B. Whitnall, *Milwaukee's Effort in City and Regional Planning* (N.p.: 1929), 11.

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would follow the Milwaukee, Menomonee, Kinnickinnic, and Root rivers, as well as their associated creeks, and would twice encircle the city and county.

The decentralization of Milwaukee, which Whitnall promoted, would establish a type of urban-rural continuum, such that the typical city-country dichotomy would be minimized. Whitnall, like many urban and social reformers, believed the solution to the city's ills was decentralization.<sup>34</sup> Thus, while he appreciated the recreational benefits of established parks, he also believed isolated park units would not be sufficient to accommodate the future conurbation of Milwaukee. Moreover, Whitnall was convinced that the streams in and around Milwaukee needed to be conserved for the city to endure its growth. Therefore, Whitnall's integrated green-space system, whereby parkways connected individual park units, would relieve the "inner congested portion of the city."<sup>35</sup>

Whitnall's ideas, from his first publication in 1906 through the 1940s, shaped the agenda and reports of the County Park Commission considerably. Moreover, as a member of the County Park Commission, Whitnall continued to play an active role in the execution of the parkway system he first envisioned and mapped in 1923. The 1924 *First Annual Report of the County Planning Department (First Annual Report)* enumerated reasons for why the city park system "should be extended into the county," and included Whitnall's study for a metropolitan parkway system.<sup>36</sup> Reasons included the provision of parklands in anticipation of municipal decentralization, improved health and sanitation, recreational benefits, increased property values, and flood control. These reasons echo Whitnall's general planning and urban reform sentiments.

### Health and Sanitation Benefits

Whitnall's earliest and most forceful justification for the county parkway system drew heavily upon hygienic arguments. Like many park advocates, Whitnall argued that a system of open green spaces would serve a hygienic and purifying function.<sup>37</sup> In his numerous publications, Whitnall outlined his belief that the physical and mental ills of congested cities were related to the destruction of the natural landscape. According to Whitnall, overcrowding and the exclusion of natural influences were causes of poor health.<sup>38</sup> In the 1906 report that explained the underlying principles leading to the organization of the County Park Commission, Whitnall declared that "it is so devitalizing for many people to live close together where they inhale the air that has not been purified by foliage; and if the purifying does not take place close by, there should be an opportunity for the atmosphere to travel without creating those 'pneumonia drafts' so common in between buildings and so

<sup>34</sup> Eileen Eagan, "Park's Planners and the People" (M.A. Thesis, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 1970), 4.

<sup>35</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1924), 22-23.

<sup>36</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 15.

<sup>37</sup> Eagan, "Park's Planners and the People," 4.

<sup>38</sup> See for example, Charles B. Whitnall, "Milwaukee County Parkways," *Our Native Landscape* 1-2, no. 4-1 (April-July 1928): n.p.; Whitnall, "Report on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Park Commission," n.p.



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rare in the woods.<sup>39</sup> Thus, according to Whitnall, forested landscapes and natural drainage routes through existing watershed features were vital to public health.<sup>40</sup>

The annual reports of the Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department in the 1920s affirmed this justification and consistently argued that the mental and physical health of Milwaukee's urban residents required them to return to the "soil," an opportunity that the parkway system afforded. In true reformist spirit, the County Park Commission insisted that Milwaukee's urban residents "want to get away from the harshness and crude lines and noises of the town, from the street poles and signs, from the creaking of car wheels, from the crowding and from too great individualism of street buildings, expressed in ugliness, lack of imagination and jarring skylines."<sup>41</sup> The parkways and associated parks could provide Milwaukee's residents with an escape from the uninviting and unhealthy urban landscape.

Not everyone agreed with the hygienic and sanitation arguments of Milwaukee's parkway planners. For example, during the planning of the Kinnickinnic River Parkway, which would run through an already densely populated and urban segment of the city, Whitnall and the County Park Commission were faced with popular opposition from the Fourteenth Ward's alderman. Rather than supporting the restoration of the Kinnickinnic River to its "natural" state, the alderman requested \$217,000 from the city for the construction of a box sewer that would confine and cover the stream. Fourteenth Ward advocates of the sewer option argued for covering the Kinnickinnic River as a means of prohibiting residents' disposal of refuse and dead animals in the stream. Whitnall responded to this opposition by publishing a pamphlet entitled *How the Kinnickinnic Should Look*. Whitnall advocated conserving the Kinnickinnic River as a parkway, and he aggressively stated that "this fourteenth ward is in greater need of park influences than almost any other part of the city, and all the more so because many of the people there have been misled and do not understand the benefit to be derived from the parkway."<sup>42</sup>

### Recreation

A primary reason for a parkway system, according to both Whitnall and the County Park Commission, was to provide individuals with outdoor recreation facilities. In providing locations for active and passive recreation, such as athletics or picnicking, the parkway system could counteract the negative effects of urban congestion. Whitnall often argued in his publications that wooded parkways and "breathing spaces" promoted the health and welfare of Milwaukee County's large metropolitan community.<sup>43</sup> To promote recreation, the parkway system linked individual park units that contained or were contiguous with recreational facilities, such as baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and golf courses. From the 1920s through the 1950s, golf grew immensely

<sup>39</sup> Whitnall, "Report on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Park Commission," 2.

<sup>40</sup> William Clausen, *Early Planning for Land Use and Community Parks in the City of Milwaukee* ([Madison, Wis.]: University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1980), 24.

<sup>41</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 16.

<sup>42</sup> *How the Kinnickinnic Should Look* ([Milwaukee]: n.d.), n.p.

<sup>43</sup> For examples see Whitnall, "Milwaukee County Parkways," *Our Native Landscape*, 3; Whitnall, "Report on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Park Commission," 2.

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in popularity, and even the County Park Commission asserted, "golf is so wholesome a sport that it should be greatly encouraged."<sup>44</sup> Not only was golf a respectable sport to promote in relation to parkway system development, it was also a major generator of revenue for the county. For example, during its second year of operation in 1928, the James Currie Park Golf Course, contiguous with the Menomonee River Parkway, served over 52,000 golfers and generated considerable income for the county.<sup>45</sup>

**Increased Property Values**

In accordance with Whitnall's beliefs in the correlation of increased property values and proximity to green space, the 1924 and 1925 annual reports of the Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department thoroughly argued for the economic benefit of a parkway system, which "creates out of its vicinity the most valuable residential property a city possesses."<sup>46</sup> The department and County Park Commission argued that parks and parkways tended to draw populations towards them while simultaneously creating "a better type of living and development in their vicinities."<sup>47</sup> While the benefits on public health and recreation are incalculable and intangible, Whitnall and the County Park Commission frequently argued that parkways created measurable increases in property values. In the *Second Annual Report*, the County Park Commission provided numerous examples of the correlation between property values and proximity to green spaces. Using monetary figures from Kansas City, Missouri; Newark, New Jersey; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Milwaukee, the County Park Commission effectively argued that the parkway system would have a highly desirable effect upon land values. The report asserted that "the Park Commission and the County Board would be entirely justified in the construction of the parkway system solely because of its effects upon public health, recreation, and general welfare. With the added financial benefits derived from the county parks and parkways, the parkway system will become the dominant factor in the development of metropolitan Milwaukee."<sup>48</sup>

**Flood Control**

The *First Annual Report* identified flooding as a significant problem to Milwaukee County's rivers. Whitnall and the County Park Commission argued that the county parkway system could alleviate flood conditions by acquiring land adjacent to flood-prone rivers and streams. Because the flood-prone areas had little economic value as agricultural or residential land, developing them into parkways and recreational areas would make beneficial use of otherwise vacant land and increase the values of adjacent properties. Moreover, heavy tree plantings and grading projects could influence flood control, particularly for smaller streams. According to

<sup>44</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 15.

<sup>45</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1928), 17.

<sup>46</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 16. For Whitnall's beliefs, see, for example: Whitnall, "Milwaukee County Parkways," *Our Native Landscape*, 4; Whitnall, "The Philosophy, Evolution, and Objective of the Milwaukee County Park Commission," 3.

<sup>47</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 16.

<sup>48</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Second Annual Report* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1925), 24.

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parkway planners, not only could the parkways control flooding, but they could reclaim watershed property values.

During the 1930s and early 1940s, flood control work along parkway watersheds was further improved. The City of Milwaukee Bureau of Public Works oversaw the erection of masonry retaining walls along the Menomonee and Kinnickinnic Rivers, and Honey Creek. These flood mitigation efforts were completed with WPA-funded labor and in conjunction with parkway implementation.<sup>49</sup>

**Early Efforts to Create the Milwaukee County Parkway System**

The early efforts of the planning department focused upon the acquisition of land and the production of plans. Acquisition plans were prepared after consideration was given to the development of specific parkway unit plans. The County's policy on parkway acquisition was to obtain the required lands by dedication or condemnation, with an assessment of benefits and damages. In some cases, as with the first units of the Menomonee River Parkway Project, dedication of land was possible because landholdings were large and owners had remaining land upon which to derive benefits from the construction of the parkway. In other cases, such as the Oak Creek Parkway, more numerous and smaller land ownerships challenged property acquisition by dedication. However, the 1925 Parkway Law enabled the county, with consent of the local municipal government, to acquire lands for parkway purposes by means of condemnation and an assessment of benefits and damages.

Prior to the organization of the Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department in 1924, the county hired consulting engineers, planners, and landscape architects to handle technical work. After the Planning Department was created, however, all park engineering and landscape design was handled from within.<sup>50</sup> Alfred Boerner served as the Department's first landscape architect and engineer, and Phelps Wyman assisted with many of the Department's published parkway plans.

The initial plans published by the Planning Department highlighted the intended origin of the county parkway system at the crossing of the Grand Avenue Viaduct over the Menomonee River. Other early planned segments include portions of the Honey Creek, Milwaukee River, Mud Creek, Underwood Creek, and Menomonee River Parkways. Early planned segments included those portions of the system that incorporated existing parks, such as Lincoln, Sholes (now Jacobus), James Currie, Bay View, and Grant.

Although early implementation of the parkway system began in 1928 with the grading of one mile of road along the Menomonee River from North Avenue to Burleigh Street, most of the parkway work was completed during the Depression era. During this time, federal work relief programs emerged to help fund the county's parkway projects.

**Work Relief Influence on Milwaukee County Parkways (1931-1942)**

Depression era work relief projects were pivotal to the development of the Milwaukee County park system. Between 1931 and 1941, the combined federal and county work relief expenditures for the Milwaukee County

<sup>49</sup> City of Milwaukee and W.P.A., *Report of Work Accomplished and Money Expended* ([Milwaukee, Wis.]: 1935-1943), n.p.

<sup>50</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 11.



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park system totaled nearly \$21.7 million.<sup>51</sup> This funding provided jobs for thousands of people unemployed during the Depression. Work relief programs funded the influx of materials and labor in the county park system. By 1936 development of the Milwaukee County park system was 10 to 15 years ahead of its original schedule.<sup>52</sup> At the same time, the Milwaukee City and County Park Commissions consolidated and county administrators and planners assumed the duties of the City Board of Park Commissioners.<sup>53</sup>

Prior to the availability of federal financial assistance, Milwaukee County operated its own work relief system in 1931 and 1932 through the Department of Outdoor Relief (DOR).<sup>54</sup> Milwaukee County provided the first local appropriations on April 14, 1931, totaling \$100,000 for employment on park projects.<sup>55</sup> This action generated part-time employment for more than 20,000 people.<sup>56</sup> During the program's tenure, Milwaukee County provided over \$288,000 for relief projects within the park system.<sup>57</sup>

Beginning in 1933 the federal government provided financial support to the County park system through a number of programs. The federal programs implemented by President Roosevelt as part of the New Deal were often referred to as "alphabet soup" because of the prevalent use of acronyms. Roosevelt introduced these programs to promote economic recovery and provide significant amounts of funding for labor and materials through government work relief. Several of these programs provided funding and work for Milwaukee County park system projects.

One of the first programs established by FERA was the CWA, which was primarily involved with construction projects and lasted for only eight months during 1933 and 1934. The CCC, established in 1933 as a result of the Emergency Conservation Work Act, put men ages 18 to 25 to work on conservation projects, primarily in local, state, and national parks.<sup>58</sup> In 1935 the federal government established the WPA, which was the largest New Deal program. It was renamed the Works Projects Administration in 1939. The WPA operated until 1943 and spent a total of \$669 million in Wisconsin on a variety of projects during its tenure.<sup>59</sup> The National Youth

<sup>51</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive* (Milwaukee: Court House, 1951), 65-66.

<sup>52</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936* (Milwaukee: Court House, 1937), 16.

<sup>53</sup> Landscape Research, *Built in Milwaukee: An Architectural View of the City*, 129.

<sup>54</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 66.

<sup>55</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 9.

<sup>56</sup> Harry H. Anderson, "Recreation Entertainment, and Open Space: Park Traditions in Milwaukee County," in *Trading Post to Metropolis: Milwaukee County's First 150 Years*, ed. Ralph M. Aderman (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1987), 292.

<sup>57</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 65-66.

<sup>58</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 65-72.

<sup>59</sup> Jim Draeger, collected, "WPA/CCC Research File." Available at the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office.

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Administration (NYA) was established in 1935 and provided job training for school-age boys and girls.<sup>60</sup> The Milwaukee County park system benefited from the NYA program as it put young people to work primarily as part-time laborers. They conducted park maintenance, including mowing, raking, weeding, and watering lawns. They also worked in the nursery at Whitnall Park and provided assistance with planting in parks and along parkways.<sup>61</sup>

The Milwaukee County park system was in a good position to receive federal money for work relief projects as a result of the planning and preparations that occurred in the three decades preceding the availability of federal funding. During the 1920s the Park Commission had acquired many acres of undeveloped land based on the plans for park system development. Because of ample land acquisition and completed planning efforts, Milwaukee County was ready for construction when federal funding became available.<sup>62</sup>

The first federal funds available to park programs in Milwaukee County were appropriated in 1933, after the CCC was created.<sup>63</sup> By the end of the year, three CCC camps were located in Milwaukee in Sheridan and Whitnall Parks and along the Honey Creek Parkway. Eventually, a second CCC camp was established along the Honey Creek Parkway and additional camps were established at Estabrook and Kletzsch Parks. Although six CCC camps operated between 1933 and 1938, the camp at Whitnall Park was the only one operating throughout the entire period.<sup>64</sup> Much of the CCC labor was used for parkway development, river improvement, and erosion and flood prevention.

<sup>60</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 72.

<sup>61</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 72.

<sup>62</sup> Anderson, "Recreation Entertainment, and Open Space: Park Traditions in Milwaukee County," in *Trading Post to Metropolis: Milwaukee County's First 150 Years*, 281-292; Eugene A. Howard, "Recollections on Development of Milwaukee County Park System," N.p., 15.

<sup>63</sup> Anderson, "Recreation Entertainment, and Open Space: Park Traditions in Milwaukee County," in *Trading Post to Metropolis: Milwaukee County's First 150 Years*, 293.

<sup>64</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 69-71.

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CCC Camps in Milwaukee County<sup>65</sup>

Camp Location	Established	Discontinued
Honey Creek Parkway 1	1933	1936
Sheridan Park	1933	1936
Whitnall Park	1933	1938
Estabrook Park	1934	1937
Honey Creek Parkway 2	1934	1936
Kletzsch	1935	1935

These federal programs provided funding to hire architects to design permanent buildings, which were intended to fit in with the surrounding landscape. Most of the structures were built in the Rustic style, using natural, local materials, and handcrafted finishes. During the period, many engineering projects, such as bridges, retaining walls, and culverts, also were constructed with a similar rustic design aesthetic. Additionally, craftsmen were hired to construct furniture for use in and around park buildings, and a single artist was also hired to create paintings and murals depicting scenes from the parks and parkways, to be used in park buildings.

The majority of federal funding went to CCC and WPA laborers to construct roads, bridges, and buildings; develop erosion and flood control measures; and implement landscape needs for the park system.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, the WPA was largely involved with constructing and repairing buildings and developing recreational areas such as swimming pools throughout the park system. The WPA operated a limestone quarry at Currie Park and used the stone to make landscape features such as statues, benches, walkways, and steps that were used throughout the park system.<sup>67</sup> Planting and other landscape projects along the parkways were completed by the CCC, WPA, and NYA. By 1950 approximately one half of the proposed parkway system was developed and in use.<sup>68</sup> Specific relief agency projects are discussed below, within each parkway's property history.

<sup>65</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 20; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 69.

<sup>66</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 49; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 65-72.

<sup>67</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 69.

<sup>68</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 68-72.



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**Continued Development of Milwaukee County Parkways (1950-1960)**

Annual reports of the activities of the Milwaukee County Park Commission during the 1950s contain substantially less information than the annual reports of the 1920s and 1930s. Therefore, it is difficult to identify specific work that was completed during this period. Nonetheless, the annual reports from 1951-1953 indicate that during the 1950s, Milwaukee County continued to acquire and complete work on the county parkway system. The county continued park and parkway improvements and construction projects and also acquired land necessary for the future development of existing parks and extension of the parkway system. The majority of work completed during 1951 and 1953 included acquisition planning, resurfacing roads, and upgrading of ball fields and recreational facilities in existing parklands.

Additionally, the County Park Commission extended the county parkway system to encompass two new parkways: the Little Menomonee River Parkway and the Dale Creek Parkway. The Little Menomonee River Parkway extends north from its confluence with the Menomonee River Parkway. The Dale Creek Parkway follows a small creek off of the Root River in the Village of Greendale. Neither of these parkways was included in Whitnall's 1923 study of a Milwaukee County Parkway System.<sup>69</sup>

Today the Milwaukee County parkways and associated parks and golf courses continue to serve the recreational and pleasure needs of Milwaukee County's residents.

**Milwaukee County system designers**

In the implementation of Whitnall's ideas and the future development of the parks, two individuals are known to have played key roles: Alfred Boerner and George Hansen. Additional individuals within the Milwaukee County park system have contributed to the development of the park system, but they are not individually known.

**George Hansen**

In 1919 the Park Commission hired George Hansen, proprietor of a successful golf course in Racine, to design and supervise construction of the Grant Park Golf Course. Hansen was paid \$150 per month and given the privilege of teaching and selling golf equipment for additional compensation. Additionally, the county provided Hansen with a house on the Grant Park Golf Course site for \$10 per month. Grant Park Golf Course opened for play in the summer of 1920, and in 1921 the Park Commission hired Hansen for an additional five years.

In 1926 the Park Commission appointed Hansen Superintendent of Parks, thus recognizing his effective management of golf course properties. During his tenure, Hansen also designed golf courses at Greenfield Park (1923), Currie Park (1927), Brown Deer Park (1929), and Whitnall Park (1932). Hansen worked for the Milwaukee County Park System for 31 years, 25 of which were spent as Superintendent of Parks. In 1952 Hansen Golf Course was established along the Underwood Creek Parkway and named in honor of George Hansen.

<sup>69</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Annual Report of the Activities of Milwaukee County Park Commission for 1951* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Park Commission, [1952]), n.p.; Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Annual Report of the Activities of Milwaukee County Park Commission for 1953* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Park Commission, [1954]), n.p.

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**Alfred Boerner**

Alfred L. Boerner served as landscape architect in the Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department from 1926 to 1952. In 1952 he replaced George Hansen as Superintendent of Parks and served in that capacity until 1955. Though Boerner arrived in Milwaukee County shortly after the county parkway system had been conceived, it was many of his designs that made the parkway system a reality. Boerner's designs implemented the proposed plans by Whitnall and the Park Commission and were sensitive to existing topography and the natural features of the site. In most designs he used water as the primary focal point. Additionally, Boerner designed other non-parkway associated parks.

**Development of individual parkways and associated parks and golf courses**

The following section includes property histories of each of Milwaukee County's nine parkways and associated parks and golf courses that were designed and implemented from 1923 to 1960 and originated in Whitnall's 1923 study. The histories are organized alphabetically by parkway name. Please see the attached *Milwaukee County Parkway System* map for an overview of the parkway and park locations.

**Honey Creek Parkway**

Whitnall included Honey Creek Parkway in his initial study for the Milwaukee County Parkway System in 1923. By 1925 the Park Commission had accepted early plans for the parkway. The planned segments followed Honey Creek from its confluence with the Menomonee River, south through State Fair Park, and easterly to a branch of the Kinnickinnic River at Hawley Road. The preliminary plans feature a curvilinear road alternating along both sides of the creek with abundant plantings.<sup>70</sup>

Land for the parkway was not acquired until 1931 and 1935. Implementation of the parkway began in 1932 at the confluence of the Menomonee River and Honey Creek. The work required creek relocation and widening, road grading, and bridge construction. CCC and WPA labor completed the creek work and added retaining walls, dams, landscaping, and roads. Stream bank erosion control continued through 1941.<sup>71</sup>

In 1936 Honey Creek Parkway followed Honey Creek from South 84<sup>th</sup> Street and West Adler Street north to the confluence with the Menomonee River, where it joined the Menomonee River Parkway. The parkway encompassed 82 acres and was in the course of development. During this period the CCC built six masonry veneered reinforced concrete bridges, with stone coming from the Currie Park quarry. Four of these bridges were located on the parkway drive while the other two were located on streets that crossed the parkway. Pictures of these CCC bridges were included in the 1936 Quadrennial Report.<sup>72</sup> Additionally, two CCC camps were located along the Honey Creek Parkway.

<sup>70</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report*, 9-11.

<sup>71</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 40; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 64-66; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 113.

<sup>72</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 36, 64-65.

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Currently, the parkway drive roughly follows the original plans, from the confluence of Honey Creek and the Menomonee River south to State Fair Park. There is a break in the parkway between State Fair Park in the north and McCarty Park in the south. Additionally, Honey Creek Parkway does not link with the Kinnickinnic River Parkway as originally intended. Segments of the Honey Creek Parkway feature natural plantings, consistent with early development plans. Several of the CCC-built masonry veneered bridges are currently in the process of being replaced with modern spans. Additionally, the creek has been lined in concrete from Wisconsin Avenue, north of State Fair Park, to its southern terminus at 72<sup>nd</sup> Street.

*McCarty Park*

Honey Creek Parkway links the Menomonee River Parkway with McCarty Park in West Allis. McCarty Park, previously known as the Eckel Tract, was acquired in 1944 from the City of West Allis and initial development began in 1945. Between 1945 and 1950 McCarty Park was landscaped, a lagoon was excavated, ball fields were laid out, and walks were constructed.<sup>73</sup> The park retains these features.

**Kinnickinnic River Parkway**

Whitnall first illustrated the Kinnickinnic River Parkway in his 1923 plan for the Milwaukee County Parkway System. Whitnall envisioned connecting the Kinnickinnic River Parkway to the Honey Creek Parkway and Lake Michigan. A plan for a segment of the parkway between Hawley Road in the west and Jackson Park in the east was included in the *First Annual Report*. This plan incorporated the Kinnickinnic River and existing "beautiful woods." The City of Milwaukee was charged with continuing the parkway from Jackson Park east to Lake Michigan. By 1926 the Park Commission had acquired land following the Kinnickinnic River from Jackson Park to Layton Avenue. Although no plan was included in the 1926 annual report, this segment of the parkway was eventually completed. Additionally, the parkway was later extended eastward to South 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Although Milwaukee County acquired approximately 117 acres for the Kinnickinnic River Parkway between 1937 and 1950, the parkway was never fully extended to Lake Michigan.

Currently, the Kinnickinnic River Parkway drive reaches from its origin in the west at 76<sup>th</sup> Street through Jackson Park, and ends at 20<sup>th</sup> Street, on the western edge of the Kinnickinnic Sports Center. Additional discontinuous parcels of county-owned land follow the Kinnickinnic River to Baran Park in the east, located at 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Lincoln Avenue. However, there is no parkway drive to provide access to these county land holdings, nor are there foot paths, comfort stations, or picnic areas, as found in other sections of developed parkway segments. A concrete liner has been added to the Kinnickinnic River from Jackson Park in the west to the eastern terminus of the parkway. The parkway retains natural plantings along the river and scattered groupings of mature trees, consistent with early development plans.

Unlike other county parkways, the City of Milwaukee maintained almost the entire Kinnickinnic River Parkway until it was transferred to Milwaukee County in 1936. Therefore, the city park board oversaw most of the construction and planning, and the City of Milwaukee Bureau of Public Works administered all federal funding for parkway implementation during the Depression era. In 1935-1936 a drainage system was installed,

<sup>73</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 102, 113-115.



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landscaping was completed in Jackson Park, the city constructed sidewalks and roads along the parkway, the creek bottom was cleaned, and dams and cascades were repaired. In 1938-1939 City-administered WPA work included straightening and relocating the river between South 20<sup>th</sup> Street and South 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and the construction of masonry retaining walls along this portion of the parkway.<sup>74</sup> Additionally, between 1935 and 1941 WPA labor constructed service buildings, erected a stone arch bridge, and drained and cleaned the lagoons in Jackson Park.<sup>75</sup>

The Kinnickinnic River Parkway connects Jackson Park, the Kinnickinnic Sports Center, Pulaski Park, and Baran Park.

*Jackson Park*

Jackson Park was acquired by the City of Milwaukee in 1900 and developed by 1915. In 1937 Jackson Park was transferred by the City of Milwaukee to the County Park Commission. Although development plans for Jackson Park were never published, the park closely follows the descriptions given in the City of Milwaukee Board of Park Commissioner's annual reports between 1920 and 1935. A large lagoon, swimming pool with shelter, comfort station, numerous picnic areas, tennis courts and ball fields, and footpaths occupy the park.

*Kinnickinnic Sports Center*

Following the period of considerable federal funding, the County Park Commission added a new lighted ball field to the parkway, now known as the Kinnickinnic Sports Center. The sports center is located at the eastern edge of the parkway on South 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Work on the sports center continued from 1948 through 1950 with the addition of a parking lot, dugouts for the ball field, new bleachers, and complete ball field landscaping.<sup>76</sup>

*Pulaski Park*

Pulaski Park, established in 1920, includes an indoor swimming pool, a comfort station, several basketball and tennis courts, two ball fields, picnic areas, and a commemorative statue of Casimir Pulaski. Development plans are not extant.

*Baran Park*

Baran Park (1952) is located at the east edge of the parkway. Baran Park features a shelter, modern playground, and several baseball fields. Development plans for the park are not extant.

**Lake Michigan Parkway North**

Lake Michigan Parkway North is comprised of numerous adjacent parks along the Lake Michigan shoreline, some of which were developed prior to 1923. Although the parkway was included in Whitnall's initial vision of

<sup>74</sup> City of Milwaukee and W.P.A., *Report of Work Accomplished and Money Expended*, n.p.

<sup>75</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Reports Made at the 1940 Annual Fall Round-up Luncheon Meeting* ([Milwaukee]: 1940), 12; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 68-69.

<sup>76</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 114-115.

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the county parkway system, it was not included in the Park Commission's Annual Report text until 1927. At this time, the Park Commission concerned itself with Lake Michigan Parkway South, from South Shore and Bay View Parks to Grant Park. Comprehensive illustrated plans for the Lake Michigan Parkway North were not included in the Park Commissioners' Annual Reports.

Although several of the parks comprising Lake Michigan Parkway North were established prior to 1923, they were included in Whitnall's initial plan for the parkway system. Moreover, the parks are consistent with the county's park and parkway design and implementation scheme; each borders the water feature of Lake Michigan, retains a mixture of dense natural vegetation and groupings of mature trees, and provides passive and active recreational facilities. Lincoln Memorial Drive, completed in 1930, provides vehicular access to the parks encompassed by the parkway: Lake Park, Bradford Beach, McKinley Park, Veteran's Park, and Juneau Park.

*Lake Park*

Lake Park was designed and developed in 1892. The northernmost park of Lake Michigan Parkway North, Lake Park is a National Register-listed park designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.<sup>77</sup>

*Bradford Beach*

Bradford Beach includes a large public beach on the shore of Lake Michigan and a public bathhouse constructed c.1945.

*McKinley Park*

McKinley Park was acquired in 1887 as Flushing Tunnel Park. Its origin is tied to public sanitation improvement. Flushing Tunnel was built in the mid-1880s under McKinley Park to back flush the Milwaukee River.

*Veteran's Park*

Veteran's Park is located immediately adjacent to McKinley Park. The park includes a lagoon located along Lincoln Memorial Drive, pedestrian paths, and modern memorials.

*Juneau Park*

Juneau Park was initially acquired in 1872. However, plans for the park were developed in October 1870 by nationally-recognized landscape architect, H.W.S. Cleveland. Cleveland recommended walkways, spring-fed streams, drainage, plantings, and a shoreline retaining structure for this challenging location.

**Lake Michigan Parkway South**

Lake Michigan Parkway South is comprised of numerous adjacent parks along the Lake Michigan shoreline, some of which were developed prior to 1923. Although the parkway was included in Whitnall's initial vision of the county parkway system, it was not included in the Park Commission's Annual Report text until 1927. At this time, the Park Commission focused on the portion of the parkway between South Shore and Bay View Parks to Grant Park. Comprehensive illustrated plans for the Lake Michigan Parkway South were not included in the Park Commissioners' Annual Reports.

<sup>77</sup> Additional information for Lake Park is available in the National Register nomination.

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Although several of the parks comprising Lake Michigan Parkway North and South were established prior to 1923, they were included in Whitnall's initial plan for the parkway system. Moreover, the parks are consistent with the county's park and parkway design and implementation scheme; each borders the water feature of Lake Michigan, retains a mixture of dense natural vegetation and groupings of mature trees, and provides passive and active recreational facilities. Lake Drive provides vehicular access to the parks encompassed by the parkway: Cupertino Park, South Shore Park, Bay View Park, Sheridan Park, Warnimont Park, and Grant Park.

*Cupertino Park*

Cupertino Park, located in the northern portion of the Lake Michigan Parkway South, does not have extant development plans.

*South Shore Park*

The City of Milwaukee acquired South Shore Park from the Village of Bay View in 1909. However, initial development of the park did not begin until 1920. Development continued into the 1930s and a bathhouse was constructed in 1934. Development plans for South Shore Park are not extant.

*Bay View Park*

Bay View Park, located in the northern portion of the Lake Michigan Parkway South, does not have extant development plans.

*Sheridan Park*

Milwaukee County drafted a development plan for Sheridan Park in 1932, which included athletic facilities, a formal garden, and lagoon. By 1937 Sheridan Park included a bathhouse, pavilion, bandstand, and several service buildings. Moreover, the park accommodated baseball, football, horseshoes, softball, volleyball, tennis, swimming, picnicking, concerts, tobogganing, ice hockey, and skating. A CCC camp marker located in the park identifies the location of one of Milwaukee County's six CCC camps.<sup>78</sup> Currently, Sheridan Park closely follows its 1932 development plan. Tennis courts, a swimming pool, an athletic field, football field, and lagoon occupy the sites designated on the original plan. A formal garden, bandstand, and island in the lagoon are the only park elements that were either not implemented or are not extant. Additionally, the location of Sheridan Drive follows the roadway identified as "Lake Michigan Parkway" on the development plan.

*Warnimont Golf Course*

Warnimont Golf Course, located south of Sheridan Park, was developed in 1958.

*Grant Park*

Grant Park was acquired in 1910. The County Park Commission published a development plan for Grant Park in the 1925 *Second Annual Report*. By 1926 the park was the largest in the county system, encompassing approximately 400 acres. Grant Park included bathing beaches, baseball diamonds, a track, pavilion, picnic grounds, nursery, and tourist camp with access from Lake Drive (previously Highway 15). At this time, the

<sup>78</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 34, 59.



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intention of the county was to develop the park in its natural and wild state, while conserving its rural qualities. Work continued in Grant Park through the 1940s. By 1937 the park included a bathhouse, service buildings, five dwellings, a greenhouse, band stand, pavilion, and shelters. Moreover, Grant Park provided facilities for baseball, football, softball, tennis, hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, swimming, camping, and nature study.<sup>79</sup> Currently, Grant Park generally follows its 1925 development plan. Comfort stations and picnic shelters are intact and recreational facilities, such as ball fields and tennis courts, are extant. Camp Wil-O-Way has been added to Grant Park.

*Grant Park Golf Course*

Established in 1920, the Grant Park Golf Course was the first golf course developed by Milwaukee County. The 18-hole course was designed by George Hansen and includes a Queen Anne-style club house, which was a private residence prior to 1920.

***Lincoln Creek (previously Mud Creek) Parkway***

The first plans for the Lincoln Creek Parkway were included in the *First Annual Report* and illustrate the parkway connecting with the Milwaukee and Menomonee River Parkways. These preliminary plans followed Lincoln Creek from Green Bay Road southeast to 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and Hampton Road in North Milwaukee. Additional segments followed Lincoln Creek to Sherman Boulevard and then west to North Fond du Lac Road. The plans included curvilinear drives along the north side of the creek and abundant plantings.<sup>80</sup> The western extent of the Lincoln Creek Parkway, which would link with the Menomonee River Parkway, was not completed. Currently, the parkway drive is discontinuous. A segment of roadway follows the north side of Lincoln Creek from 60<sup>th</sup> Street east to 48<sup>th</sup> Street, and a short segment follows the south side of Lincoln Creek from 27<sup>th</sup> Street east to Lincoln Park. Tree plantings and vegetation are more dispersed than originally planned. Minor changes to the parkway include the addition of a concrete liner to Lincoln Creek and the addition of modern pedestrian bridges throughout the parkway segment.

Like most of the parkways, major implementation did not begin until the advent of federal funding in the 1930s. By 1942 city-administered WPA labor completed erosion control along Lincoln Creek by deepening and widening the channel and adding retaining walls and slabs at sewer outfalls and bridges. Work occurred along Lincoln Creek from West Congress Street to North 27<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>81</sup> In 1948 and 1949 the Park Commission completed additional street improvements to unspecified portions of the parkway.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Second Annual Report*, 44; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report for the year 1926* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1927), 9-10; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 32.

<sup>80</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report*, 15-18.

<sup>81</sup> City of Milwaukee and W.P.A., *Report of Work Accomplished and Money Expended*, n.p.

<sup>82</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 114.

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Lincoln Creek Parkway connects Meaux Park, Lincoln Park, and the Milwaukee River Parkway.

*Meaux Park*

Meaux Park, which is located just west of Lincoln Park, features an open clearing with vegetation along its southern border. Meaux Park was originally developed as part of Lincoln Park.

*Lincoln Park*

Lincoln Park is discussed below for its association with the Milwaukee River Parkway.

**Menomonee River Parkway**

Whitnall's original vision for a county parkway system illustrated the Menomonee River Parkway connecting with the Honey Creek, Underwood Creek, and Lincoln Creek Parkways. The *First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County* included several portions of the Menomonee River Parkway between the Grand Avenue Viaduct (Wisconsin Avenue) and 59<sup>th</sup> Street, and between Harmonie Avenue and Swan Boulevard. The initial segment between the Grand Avenue Viaduct and 59<sup>th</sup> Street was intended to be the starting point of the entire county parkway system. Preliminary plans included a curvilinear drive along the north and south sides of the river and abundant plantings.<sup>83</sup> Although it was intended to be the starting point of the entire "Emerald Necklace," this initial scheme was not executed.

The *Second Annual Report* of the Milwaukee County Planning Department included a plan for the connection of the Honey Creek and Menomonee River Parkways through Wauwatosa. This segment connected with the west end of the 1924 plan that followed the Menomonee River to 59<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>84</sup> Additional discontinuous segments of the Menomonee River Parkway, located north of the confluence of Honey Creek and Menomonee River, were planned from 1924 to 1930.

Land acquisition for the Menomonee River Parkway began in 1926, with additional property acquired through the 1930s.<sup>85</sup> Work began on the parkway in 1929 and 1930 in the area between North Avenue and Currie Park. Work included grading, seeding and planting, and incorporating existing shade trees into the design. Additional development included a lagoon, bridle path, pedestrian walks, and stonework. These were the earliest parkway projects completed in Milwaukee County.<sup>86</sup>

Additional land along the Menomonee River was acquired by Milwaukee County in 1930 and 1931 through condemnation. The Honey Creek connection with the Menomonee River Parkway in Wauwatosa was begun in late 1932 and taken over by CCC labor in July 1933. CCC labor completed work from the confluence of the

<sup>83</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report*, 5, 7.

<sup>84</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Second Annual Report*, 25.

<sup>85</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 35.

<sup>86</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Biennial Report: 1929-1930* (Milwaukee: Court House, 1930), 24, 28.

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Honey Creek and Menomonee River to Jacobus Park. Work included constructing stone-faced bridges and masonry retaining walls to prevent erosion, and both projects used quarried stone from Currie Park.<sup>87</sup>

In 1935 and 1936 the county acquired additional land for the parkway. The CCC began work on the section south of North Avenue in January 1936. The project included grading, relocating the river channel, stone and masonry work, and the construction of a reinforced concrete bridge at Swan Boulevard. A small stone service building/comfort station was also constructed.<sup>88</sup> Currently, the parkway is relatively intact and has had few alterations since work began in 1929. The parkway retains many original features, including lagoons and stone retaining walls. Modern additions, such as the recent bridges that span the river and parkway drive, ensure that the parkway system will continue to function into the twenty-first century.

The Menomonee River Parkway links Currie Park, Currie Golf Course, Hoyt Park, Jacobus Park, and Doyne Park. Doyne Park and its associated golf course were developed in the 1970s, outside the period of significance.

*Currie Park*

Milwaukee County acquired the land for Currie Park, associated with the Menomonee River Parkway, in 1918, prior to the development of parkway plans. The acquired farmland was initially used as Milwaukee County's first aviation field, but after the airport was moved to Cudahy, the Park Commission developed a golf course on the old aviation field. In 1926 Currie Park was incorporated into the parkway system and a golf course was established in 1927. By 1936 the park contained a dwelling, three miscellaneous buildings, two refectory stands, one pumphouse, and three mechanical shelters. Moreover, by this time the park also provided facilities for skiing, tobogganing, and playgrounds.<sup>89</sup> Currie Park retains its recreational areas, green space, and plantings of trees, shrubs, and perennials.

*Currie Golf Course*

Established in 1927, Currie Golf Course originally included a stone farmhouse that was remodeled into the clubhouse. Numerous evergreens, elms, and shrubs were planted throughout the park and 18-hole golf course by 1927.<sup>90</sup> The clubhouse suffered fire damage and was replaced with another structure between 1929 and 1930.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 64, 66.

<sup>88</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 35, 68.

<sup>89</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 31.

<sup>90</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report for the year 1927* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, 1928), 15.

<sup>91</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Biennial Report: 1929-1930*, 14.



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*Hoyt Park*

Hoyt Park was acquired between 1926 and 1936 because of its strategic position in relation to the parkway system. The park's primary attraction between 1926 and 1928 was its significant growth of shade trees.<sup>92</sup> The County Park Commission's early plans for Hoyt Park included a swimming pool, bathhouse, pedestrian bridge, and stone retaining walls (all extant) crossing the river. The CCC also constructed a stone suspension foot bridge leading from the parkway to Hoyt Park.<sup>93</sup> Hoyt Park retains its recreational areas, green space, and plantings of trees, shrubs, and perennials.

*Jacobus Park*

Milwaukee County acquired Jacobus Park, previously known as Sholes Park, between 1910 and 1934. It was eventually incorporated into the parkway system when the Honey Creek and Menomonee River Parkway connection was planned and implemented. Milwaukee County labor began work in Jacobus Park in 1932. Following the installation of CCC labor on the Honey Creek Parkway in 1933, CCC workers began improving the Menomonee River Parkway Drive through Jacobus Park. Work included grading, relocating, deepening, and widening the river channel; stone masonry work; and the construction of a footbridge to connect Jacobus Park to an athletic area on the north side of the Menomonee River. A picnic shelter was also added on the south bank of the park lagoon with funding by CWA and FERA.<sup>94</sup> Between 1935 and 1942 WPA-employed workers, under the supervision of Milwaukee's City Engineer, constructed masonry retaining walls along the Menomonee River as part of a flood mitigation project. Stone for the project was quarried from the Currie Park and Hawley Quarries. In 1940 work included the removal of existing concrete retaining walls between North 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and North 51<sup>st</sup> Street and the erection of masonry walls.<sup>95</sup> Jacobus Park retains its recreational areas, green space, and plantings of trees, shrubs, and perennials.

***Milwaukee River Parkway***

Whitnall's early vision for the Milwaukee County Parkway System included portions of the Milwaukee River Parkway, which would extend to the northern border of Milwaukee County. The first plan, which followed the Milwaukee River from Estabrook Park north through Lincoln Park to Green Bay Road, was published in the *First Annual Report*. The preliminary plan included curvilinear drives and three islands in the Milwaukee River. However, major implementation did not begin until 1933, when the county began acquiring land for the parkway.

The Milwaukee River Parkway links Estabrook Park, Lincoln Park, and Kletzsch Park, which is located near the northern terminus of the parkway. The parkway encompassed nearly 23.1 acres in 1936, while in the course of development.<sup>96</sup> In 1949 and 1950 the Park Commission began developing an additional segment of

<sup>92</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report*, 18.

<sup>93</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 68-70.

<sup>94</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 64, 66.

<sup>95</sup> City of Milwaukee and W.P.A., *Report of Work Accomplished and Money Expended*, n.p.

<sup>96</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 36.

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parkway from the Chicago and North Western Railroad near the southern border of Kletzsch Park south to Silver Spring Road. The county also completed street improvements during this period.

The parkway currently extends from Kletzsch Park through Estabrook Park. Although the parkway drive ends at Capitol Drive on the southern edge of Estabrook Park, additional discontinuous county-owned parcels of land follow the western side of the Milwaukee River between Kern Park (1915) and Gordon Park (1915). However, the County Park Commission did not issue development plans for a southern portion of the parkway in their early reports, nor were Kern Park or Gordon Park mentioned in association with the Milwaukee County Parkway. Plantings, an original parkway roadway, and associated parks are intact and still used for passive and active recreation. The northern extent of the original plan for the parkway was not implemented.

*Estabrook Park*

Estabrook Park was acquired between 1916 and 1931. The County Park Commission completed a topographic survey and preliminary layout survey of this existing park in 1924, and by 1926 the park included a tourist camp and ball field. A revised comprehensive plan that showed outlines of plantings and locations of walks and roads was completed in 1926 and illustrated in the County Park Commission's annual report. Improvements to the park, according to the 1926 plan, were begun in 1927 and included the removal of old buildings and the development of a baseball diamond, tennis courts, and foot paths.<sup>97</sup> Between 1929 and 1930 the park drive was constructed, numerous trees and shrubs were planted, and three picnic grounds were prepared and equipped with tables and benches. Additionally, a bridle path, pedestrian walks, ravine bridges, and a new mechanical building were in the process of being built.<sup>98</sup> During 1931 and 1932 a lagoon near the center of Estabrook Park was completed with relief labor and a bathing beach with a temporary bathhouse was developed along the Milwaukee River. Two timber foot bridges with limestone abutments were built over the lagoon and over the ravine.<sup>99</sup> Finally, work relief efforts helped to complete two concrete tennis courts, a stone and timber picnic shelter, and a combination comfort station and service building between 1933 and 1937.<sup>100</sup> In 1938 the WPA completed a special project that involved moving the oldest frame house in Milwaukee, the Kilbourn House, to Estabrook Park and restoring it for use as a museum.<sup>101</sup> Currently, Estabrook Park generally adheres to the preliminary plan executed in 1926. Additional provisions were made for comfort stations, recreational facilities, and picnic areas.

*Lincoln Park*

The City of Milwaukee acquired the land for Lincoln Park in 1915 and later transferred it to Milwaukee County. The County Park Commission included a preliminary plan for the park, in conjunction with a plan for the

<sup>97</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report for the year 1927*, 15.

<sup>98</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Biennial Report: 1929-1930*, 17-19.

<sup>99</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 15-21.

<sup>100</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 51-52.

<sup>101</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 69; "Milwaukee County, Registry Number 406981," in *Works Progress Administration Project Card File Record* (N.p.: 1938), n.p.

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Milwaukee River Parkway, in its *First Annual Report*. The plan outlined plantings, pedestrian walks, and buildings. Major work in the park and along the river was completed with work relief labor. During 1933 and 1934 CWA labor relocated the Milwaukee River in Lincoln Park by excavating a new channel for flood control. A large lagoon with four islands was constructed in the park. Masonry-veneered reinforced concrete bridges connected the largest island to the parkway drive towards Kletzsch Park. In 1937 a city-administered WPA project continued the rerouting of the Milwaukee River at Lincoln Park to eliminate horseshoe bends that frequently caused ice jams during the spring thaw. From 1933 to 1940 CWA, CCC, and WPA labor removed a six-foot rock bed from the Milwaukee River to better enable the flow of water. Excavated limestone was used to build a dam near Estabrook Park and for roads, trails, and tennis courts throughout the parkway system.<sup>102</sup> Lincoln Park generally follows the original plan, although the parkway drive was sited differently.

*Kletzsch Park*

Milwaukee County acquired Kletzsch Park between 1918 and 1934. However, details of the County Park Commission's development of the park are not included in annual reports until 1932. During 1931 and 1932 the County Park Commission constructed a temporary foot bridge carrying a foot path across the mill race and a frame bathhouse near the Milwaukee River swimming beach.<sup>103</sup> Between 1933 and 1936 a new park pavilion with Swiss architectural features was built atop the bluff and near the center of Kletzsch Park's picnic area. At this time, CCC labor landscaped Kletzsch Park and constructed a limestone-faced replacement dam.<sup>104</sup> By 1936 the park included a bathhouse, eleven comfort stations, a pavilion, dwelling, garage, refectory stand, and three miscellaneous buildings within its 103 acres. Moreover, Kletzsch Park offered provisions for football, baseball, skating, hockey, tobogganing, picnicking, horseshoes, softball, volleyball, boating, hiking, and swimming.<sup>105</sup>

*Oak Creek Parkway*

Whitnall included the Oak Creek Parkway in his 1923 vision for the Milwaukee County Parkway System. The parkway was to connect Grant Park, the southernmost park of Lake Michigan Parkway South, with the Root River Parkway. However, the first segment was not adopted by the county board until 1926. Land for this unit of parkway, which followed Oak Creek from Lake Michigan to the Chicago and NorthWestern Railroad bridge, just west of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, was acquired by means of condemnation and an assessment of benefits and damages in 1930. Landowners dedicated additional land in 1932, 1934, and 1936.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 51-52; "Milwaukee County, Registry Number 342449," in *Works Progress Administration Project Card File Record* (N.p.: 1937), n.p.; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadrennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 67, 71.; City of Milwaukee and W.P.A., *Report of Work Accomplished and Money Expended*, n.p.; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 51-51.

<sup>103</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 17, 19, 21.

<sup>104</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 55-56.

<sup>105</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 33.

<sup>106</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report for the year 1926*, 40; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Biennial Report: 1929-1930*, 39; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 36.



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In 1929 and 1930 the planning department prepared plans for the parkway unit, which included sketches for five limestone veneered bridges. The 1931-1932 *Biennial Report* included a plan for the junction of Grant Park and Oak Creek Parkway. This plan included a curvilinear drive that alternated along the north and south sides of the creek and abundant plantings. During 1931 and 1932 DOR workers laid more than a mile of macadam pavement from Grant Park to North Chicago Avenue. Additionally, workers constructed concrete curb and gutters, installed storm sewers, and laid black-top walks. This unit of parkway was completed in 1936 and included one shelter, lagoon, ravine, dam, 1 ¾ mile of drive, and a bridle path. By 1936 the parkway encompassed 99.3 acres of land.<sup>107</sup>

WPA-funded labor completed erosion control along Oak Creek with the addition of retaining walls and the widening and deepening of the creek channel in 1943. In 1948 a footbridge near the mouth of Oak Creek connecting Grant Park to South Milwaukee Yacht Club was constructed. After federal funding ceased, the Park Commission added a parkway segment along Oak Creek from Rawson Avenue to the railroad tracks west of Pennsylvania Ave. Work began in 1949 and the segment was completed in 1956.<sup>108</sup> After 1960 Milwaukee County continued to acquire discontinuous parcels of land along Oak Creek.

Currently, the initial segment of the parkway generally follows the development plan included in the 1931-1932 *Biennial Report*. It retains a pitch-and-putt golf area, lagoon, picnic areas, and mix of dense vegetation along the creek and open clearings for recreational space. A parkway drive follows Oak Creek, alternating on both sides of the creek, from Grant Park to Rawson Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Street. However, the parkway does not connect to the Root River Parkway.

**Root River Parkway**

Whitnall's original vision for the county parkway system included the Root River Parkway. However, the first plans for the parkway were not offered until 1928 and illustrated plans were not included in the Park Commission's annual reports. The preliminary plans followed the Root River from Greenfield Park to Oklahoma Avenue.<sup>109</sup> Although land acquisition began in 1929, implementation of the parkway plans did not occur until county relief funding was made available in 1931.

Early DOR work focused on grading and planting the river banks to minimize flood effects. DOR workers widened and deepened sections of the creek and added retaining walls in 1931 and 1932. The greatest amount of work on the parkway was completed with federal funding beginning in 1933, when a CCC camp opened in Whitnall Park, adjacent to the Root River Parkway. By 1936 the parkway followed the Root River

<sup>107</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Biennial Report: 1929-1930*, 43; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 41; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 36.

<sup>108</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 113-115.

<sup>109</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report*, 36; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 22.

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from West Lincoln Avenue southeast to West Oklahoma Avenue, and from West Layton Avenue southeast to South 84<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1936 it encompassed 143.9 acres and was in the course of development.<sup>110</sup>

In 1937 the U.S. government transferred 534 acres from the Village of Greendale to the county park system for the Root River Parkway. Work began immediately and included grading, construction of roads and vehicular bridges, and landscaping. By 1938 over four miles of parkway had opened to the public. Work on the parkway continued through the 1940s and primarily involved drainage and roadway work.<sup>111</sup> The Root River Parkway retains dense natural vegetation along the river, interspersed with clearings and groupings of mature trees. For the segment of the parkway between Greenfield Park in the north and Old Loomis Road (US 36) in the south, circulation patterns are intact, including the vehicular parkway drive and footpaths. South of the parkway drive's terminus at Old Loomis Road, discontinuous parcels of county-owned land follow the Root River. Although there is no vehicular access to the southern and southeastern portion of the parkway, a trail provides pedestrian access to the river and county-owned parkway land. Picnic areas along the parkway are extant.

The Root River Parkway connects Greenfield Park and Whitnall Park with the Oak Creek Parkway.

*Greenfield Park*

Greenfield Park was purchased by the county in 1921, and by 1936 the park encompassed 278 acres. Greenfield Park is mentioned in the Milwaukee Regional Planning Department's *First Annual Report*. During 1924 the County Park Commission drew a plan for tree plantings and by 1926 work had begun on the park. An 18-hole golf course with a clubhouse, designed by George Hansen in 1923, and lawn tennis courts were constructed at the northern extent of the park. The original clubhouse was a farm house that had been remodeled for its new public function. The southern extent of the park was well wooded in 1926 and was being equipped with picnic and recreational facilities. Between 1933 and 1934 the CWA completed a concrete pool. By 1936 Greenfield Park included a bathhouse, service buildings, a dwelling, six comfort stations, a lagoon, two warming basins, and two ponds. Moreover, the park had recreational facilities for baseball, horseshoes, boating, swimming, ice hockey, skating, golf, and picnicking.<sup>112</sup> The park retains many of its features, including the lagoon, swimming pool, ball fields, open play areas, and dense plantings of natural hardwoods. Modern improvements to the swimming pool and shelter ensure the continued use of the park.

*Whitnall Park*

Whitnall Park was acquired by the county between 1929 and 1933, and by 1936 it encompassed 612 acres. The park was first mentioned in the *1931-1932 Biennial Report*. Although a general development plan had not

<sup>110</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 22; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 36.

<sup>111</sup> Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 70, 113-115; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 63.

<sup>112</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *First Annual Report*, 32; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *Annual Report for the year 1926*, 12-13; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 32; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 67.

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been drafted at that time, implementation during 1931 and 1932 included the excavation of a lagoon, construction of a concrete arch bridge, and development of picnic groves with fireplaces. By 1936 Whitnall Park included an arboretum and botanical gardens with numerous buildings, three dwellings, five comfort stations, several mechanical shelters, and facilities for baseball, horseshoes, hiking, skating, skiing, golf, and picnicking. Many of these buildings are extant. Additionally, during this period a CCC camp was established in Whitnall Park to work on construction in the Root River Parkway and Whitnall Park. There is an extant CCC building located south of Boerner Botanical Garden.<sup>113</sup> A modern visitor's center for the botanical garden ensures the facility will continue to meet the needs of park visitors.

*Whitnall Golf Course*

George Hansen designed the 18-hole Whitnall Park Golf Course, which opened to the public in 1932. The course includes a fieldstone clubhouse, constructed c.1932.

***Underwood Creek Parkway***

Whitnall's original vision for the county parkway system illustrated Underwood Creek Parkway connecting the Menomonee River Parkway and Hansen Golf Course (1952) with Greenfield Park (1921). The first illustrated plans of Underwood Creek Parkway were published in the 1925 *Second Annual Report*. The preliminary plans followed the creek from its junction with the Menomonee River south to Greenfield Park. The initial plans included a ford over the creek just south of the junction with the Menomonee River and a curvilinear drive that followed the course of the creek. However, the adjacent railroad corridor and premature planting along the creek valley made initial development more difficult than other parkways.<sup>114</sup>

Like many of the Milwaukee County parkways, implementation of the parkway plans did not occur until federal relief funding was made available. Land for the parkway was not acquired until 1935 and 1936, when the Park Commission received the strip of land following Underwood Creek between Mayfair Road (STH 100) and Swan Boulevard. The area was given the name "Sholes Unit of the Underwood Creek Parkway." The CCC began improvements, which included grading, installing storm sewers, and constructing of masonry retaining walls in areas with irregular topography. The grading plan provided for a westward extension of the parkway beneath the Mayfair Road grade separation. A small stone building (extant), which included a service room and shelter, was also erected.<sup>115</sup>

In 1936 Underwood Creek Parkway included two sections: Swan Boulevard to Mayfair Road and North 119<sup>th</sup> Street to Bluemound Road. The parkway encompassed 110.5 acres and included one shelter. CCC work was

<sup>113</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Biennial Report: 1931-1932*, 13-18; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 19, 35; Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 35.

<sup>114</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department, *The First Plans for a Parkway System for Milwaukee County: Illustrations from First Annual Report*, 12, 18.

<sup>115</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 37, 70.



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ongoing at this time and resulted in at least one stone masonry and reinforced concrete bridge connecting the Menomonee River and Underwood Creek Parkways.<sup>116</sup>

During the 1960s Underwood Creek was altered with the installation of a concrete liner that greatly altered the natural path of the creek and created a linear corridor. In the portion west of 115<sup>th</sup> Street, the creek was also relocated south of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. The parkway currently extends from the Menomonee River to Rainbow Avenue, rather than Greenfield Park. A discontinuous parkway drive follows the east side of Underwood Creek, from its confluence with the Menomonee River south to Watertown Plank Road. Circulation patterns are intact and vegetation interspersed with clearings for recreation is extant in the parkway landscape. Modern additions to Underwood Creek Parkway, such as the introduction of modern overpass bridges and alterations to the creek course, ensure the parkway will continue to be used in the twenty-first century.

*Hansen Golf Course*

Hansen Golf Course, which is operated by Milwaukee County, was established along the Underwood Creek Parkway in 1952 and named after George Hansen. The 18-hole course is located on the north side of the parkway drive. A modern clubhouse building was added in 1979 and the course underwent further improvements at this time.

*Greenfield Park*

Greenfield Park is discussed above, in conjunction with the Root River Parkway.

**Conclusion**

The Milwaukee County Parkway System was first initiated in 1923 by Whitnall and local promoters in an effort to develop a park and parkway system throughout Milwaukee County. The County Park Commission advocated developing a vast parkway system for five reasons: to relieve urban congestion, provide hygienic landscapes to improve health, provide space for outdoor recreation by linking park units that contain facilities for passive and active recreation, increase adjacent property values, and control flood-prone watersheds. In this aspect the Parkways represent the area of Community Planning and Development. Although planning began as early as 1923, implementation of the parkways was largely completed with local and federal government work relief support from 1930 through 1942. Improvements to the parkway system continued through the 1950s, particularly with the provision of active recreational facilities such as ball fields. Development and improvements within the parkways, parks, and golf courses continue through the present day, including upgrade of recreational facilities, and the transportation infrastructure.

The parkways also represent the work of the federal work relief programs. Worker camps were located in the parks and many of the structures are the products of these programs. Furthermore, the parkways and their

<sup>116</sup> Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and Milwaukee County Park Commission, *Quadrennial Report: 1933-1936*, 37; Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Board, *Quadredecennial Report: 1937-1950 Inclusive*, 68-70.

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associated parks reflect trends in landscape architecture and design, especially the naturalistic approach to design promoted by Jens Jensen and other landscape designers of the Midwest and the rustic approach to design favored in federal work relief projects. The parks and parkways make use of natural materials for the construction of buildings and structures, and emphasize naturalistic planting methods both in the choice of planting materials and in their placement.

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## F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

### Description

Three major property types are addressed within this multiple property document: parkways, associated parks, and golf courses. These are interrelated features of the larger Milwaukee County Parkway System. Each of the property types serves a unique function and has distinct design qualities. The following descriptions outline the characteristics of each property type.

### Parkways

Milwaukee County parkways are designed landscapes that follow watershed features, contain a limited-access curvilinear vehicular roadway, and link parks as well as recreational and cultural components. Parkway are characterized by their dual functions as part of an urban transportation system for pedestrian and vehicular traffic and their planned aesthetic and recreational function. The Milwaukee County parkways were intended to twice encircle the county and connect parks within the region while following watershed features. Although the parkway system, as implemented, does not fully encircle the county, vehicular roadways and pedestrian trails provide a public circulation system throughout the county.

As designed landscapes, vegetation and other features, such as stone retaining walls, are used to enhance the roadway and the adjacent watershed features. Parkway vary in the breadth of land provided on either side of the roadway. Existing plants and trees have been incorporated into the design and additional plantings and groupings of trees have been added. In most cases, natural vegetation has been used along the watershed features to provide flood control. Wider spaces between parkway roads and watershed features often include picnic areas or open space with mowed grassy areas and scattered tree plantings.

The parkways also contain drainage and engineering structures, buildings, furnishings, lighting, and signs. Much of the parkway's infrastructure follows the vision of Whitnall and was constructed by federal relief labor, depicting the rustic design aesthetic of the Depression era. The use of native materials and handcrafted masonry finishes, including limestone, is characteristic of this approach to design and is prominent throughout the parkways, serving as a unifying feature of these designed landscapes. Culverts and retaining walls provide flood and erosion control as well as drainage solutions along county parkways. The retaining walls that line waterways are most often constructed in native limestone from the Currie Park Quarry and Hawley Quarry. The culverts also received an aesthetic treatment by the application of stone facing on the headwalls.

Vehicular and pedestrian bridges, many of which were constructed as Depression era work relief projects, provide critical links in the parkways' circulation system. The vehicular bridges are typically concrete structures faced with native limestone with rock faced finish laid in a random ashlar pattern. Many of these bridges have aesthetic treatments, including segmental arch headwalls and decorative parapets. Pedestrian bridges are typically timber or native stone, which blend into the natural setting. The rustic design aesthetic of the bridges, culverts, and retaining walls contribute to the overall parkway characteristics.

Buildings within the parkway system include comfort stations, picnic shelters, and maintenance buildings. Many of these structures were built with federal work relief labor and reflect the Depression era period of construction through the use of local materials, including limestone and timber, handcrafted workmanship, and



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rustic-style designs. As a result, the buildings complement other parkway features and contribute to the overall design aesthetic of the parkway.

Site furnishings, such as picnic tables and benches, serve as recreational provisions in the parkway landscape. Finally, parkways often include signage and lighting, which help to guide the parkway driver along the route and identify entrances to the roadway, picnic areas, shelters, and recreational facilities. Although the signage and lighting are modern, they are used consistently throughout the parkway network and do not detract from the original design.

Each of these characteristic features defines the parkway system: circulation systems, vegetation, watershed features, engineering structures, bridges, buildings, and furnishings. The overall design aesthetic, which includes rustic design, handcrafted stone finishes, and local, natural materials, also defines the parkway system. The presence of these characteristic features and unifying aesthetics allow an individual parkway within the system to represent this property type.

#### **Associated Parks**

Associated parks are open spaces planned and designed for recreational and leisure activities as part of the Milwaukee County Parkway System. Although some of the earliest county parks, such as Lake Park and Jackson Park, pre-date the parkway system, they were included in Whitnall's 1923 vision for a unified system of public green space. As parkway implementation began, these parks became associated with the county-wide parkway system. The majority of these parks are connected to the system by parkway roads and are located adjacent to a water feature, including rivers, creeks, or Lake Michigan. Generally, parkway-associated parks in Milwaukee County have a planned landscape design, including lagoons, plantings, foot paths, buildings, monuments, and recreational facilities.

Although Milwaukee County parks vary in size, common to most of these designed landscapes are curvilinear walks or foot paths with pedestrian bridges over water features, informal groupings of plantings and trees, and the use of naturally occurring and man-made settings, such as existing watershed features and man-made lagoons. Many of the park improvements and developments were completed by federal relief workers during the 1930s and early 1940s. The parks generally feature a unified rustic design aesthetic that is depicted in the use of native stone and timber, and handcrafted finishes in the construction of buildings, bridges, and retaining walls.

The parks were planned to serve a function within the overall urban context. Many include provisions for passive and active recreation or cultural offerings, such as picnic shelters and comfort stations, swimming pools, ball fields, and arboretums or monuments. Most of these features comprise a significant part of the designed landscape in county parks, such as Greenfield and Sheridan parks. Additionally, cultural offerings are provided in Whitnall Park, which contains an arboretum and botanical garden, and Pulaski Park, which includes a commemorative statue of Casimir Pulaski, among others. The buildings associated with these provisions, such as bathhouses, feature the rustic design and were constructed with local stone and timber and as well as handcrafted masonry finishes. These buildings contribute to the overall design aesthetic of the parks.

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The development of Milwaukee County parks was part of a county-wide effort to provide recreational and natural amenities to a growing region. Each of these characteristics defines the parks' association with the county parkway system: vegetation, water features, foot paths, bridges, buildings, furnishings, recreational facilities, monuments, and cultural offerings. The presence of these features allows an individual park within the county system to represent this property type.

**Golf Courses**

The Milwaukee County Parkway System provides vehicular access to county-owned golf courses via parkway roads. These are publicly accessible, designed recreational facilities. Although some of the earliest county golf courses, such as Grant Park Golf Course, pre-date the parkway system, they were included in Whitnall's original vision for a unified system of public green space. As parkway implementation began, these golf courses became associated with the county-wide parkway system. This property type contributes to the recreational function of the system.

The golf courses vary in layout and topography; however, they contain a set of definable components or characteristic features. Moreover, a golf course landscape evolves over time. It is primarily defined by the circulation pattern of the holes and manipulation of topography, natural elements, and artificial features to challenge the player. By the 1940s, regulation golf courses had 18 holes and a total length between 5,000 and 7,000 yards. Each of the 18 holes includes a teeing ground, fairway, and rough. Each hole also includes hazards, or obstacles, such as bunkers and water features, that make it more or less difficult. The golf course landscape may also include practice putting greens and driving ranges.

Additionally, the club house, which may have been a pre-existing residence, an architect-designed building, or a more modest structure, is a major component of golf courses. Club houses within the Milwaukee County Parkway System depict a range of architectural styles, including those that were popular during the early twentieth century, such as the Queen Anne style club house at the Grant Park Golf Course, and more modern structures added in the mid-twentieth century, such as the contemporary style club house at the Hansen Golf Course.

Secondary features on golf courses include water fountains, ball cleaning stands, benches, maintenance buildings, bridges, and fences. Finally, with the advent of the golf cart in the 1950s, networks of paved roads were built to facilitate movement through the 18-hole course.

Golf courses are frequently improved to provide new challenges for the golfer and as well as modern amenities. However, if the overall recreational function and layout of the course reflect the period of construction, the golf course would represent this property type.

**Significance**

The Milwaukee County Parkway System is related to the growth of an urban park and boulevard movement, which began in the 1870s and continued into the first half of the twentieth century. Milwaukee County responded to the need for a connected system of public green space after Whitnall promoted his vision for a unified county parkway system in 1923. The Park Commission advocated developing a vast parkway system for five reasons: to relieve urban congestion, provide hygienic landscapes to improve health, provide space for

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outdoor recreation by linking park units containing facilities for passive and active recreation, increase adjacent property values, and control flood-prone watersheds.

Parkways, parks, and golf courses under the jurisdiction of the Milwaukee County Park Commission are publicly owned and maintained, having been acquired by purchase, donation, or through other means. Some Milwaukee County parks and golf courses pre-date the establishment of the parkway system in 1923 but should be evaluated within this historic context if they were incorporated into the parkway system and achieved significance due to this association. The City of Milwaukee began to develop public park land in the 1870s and 1880s as a national parks movement began to take place. Many of these city parks, such as Juneau Park, Lake Park, and McKinley Park, were later included in the 1923 Milwaukee County Parkway design. Additionally, as early as the 1910s and 1920s, Milwaukee County responded to growing public interest in recreational facilities, particularly in golf. During this time, Milwaukee County hired George Hansen to design and supervise construction of the Grant Park Golf Course. During his 31-year tenure with the Park Commission, Hansen designed golf courses at Greenfield (1923), Currie (1927), and Whitnall (1932) Parks that became associated with the Milwaukee County park system.

During the Depression, Milwaukee County extensively used federal work relief programs to expand its parkway system. The CWA, CCC, and WPA programs funded and built numerous parkway improvements throughout the system, including additions to both parks and parkways. Moreover, work relief camps were established in Honey Creek Parkway, Sheridan Park, Whitnall Park, Estabrook Park, and Kletzsch Park to further relief efforts.

Milwaukee County parkways, parks, and golf courses that are eligible for listing under this multiple property context can be significant under *Criterion A* for their association with events that have made a significant contribution in the areas of community planning and development and government. The development of the parkway system was part of an overall effort by the City and County of Milwaukee to provide essential recreational and aesthetic amenities to a growing region. The parkways, parks, and golf courses played a significant role in the development of the county's public circulation system and in implementing Whitnall's vision to improve the county's health and sanitation, flood control of the waterways, recreational opportunities, and property values. Additionally, many of the parks, parkways, and golf courses were improved or developed through the federal work relief programs of the 1930s and 1940s and are a legacy of these social programs, which provided jobs and amenities during and after the Great Depression. The parkway system was the largest-scale work relief effort in Milwaukee County. Six CCC camps were located throughout the parkway system to house workers who participated in parkway development projects. Moreover, the WPA operated a limestone quarry in Currie Park and used the extracted stone throughout the parkway system.

Parkways, parks, and golf courses may be significant under *Criterion C* as good representative examples of their property types and periods of design and construction. Milwaukee County parkways, parks, and golf courses are unified through their design aesthetic, which includes the use of natural, local materials and handcrafted masonry finishes. The design aesthetic may be incorporated into the property's landscape features, engineering features (such as bridges, retaining walls, and culverts), and/or buildings (comfort stations, picnic shelters, and club houses). Locally designed parks, parkways, and golf courses also may be significant under *Criterion C* for their association with Alfred Boerner or George Hansen, as significant works by these prominent local landscape designers.



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#### Registration Requirements

Parkways, parks, and golf courses must be associated with the overall parkway system that was designed, developed, and managed by the Milwaukee County Park Commission during the period 1923 to 1960 to be eligible for the National Register in association with this context. Additionally, eligible properties are those that have a direct and illustrated association with Whitnall's original vision for the Milwaukee County Parkway System, as published in the *First Annual Report* of 1923. Any additions to the parkway system not envisioned by Whitnall would be considered not eligible under this context.

Each parkway, park, and golf course will need to be evaluated at the time of nomination to determine the association with the county parkway system envisioned by Whitnall. In some cases, parkways, parks, and golf courses may not be clearly differentiated properties and should be evaluated collectively as one designed landscape. In other cases, parkways, parks, and golf courses may be clearly defined individual properties that merit National Register consideration in their own right.

The evaluation of significance should be based on an understanding of the entire system. Parkway, associated parks, and golf courses included in the original plan for the parkway system may qualify for listing in the National Register under *Criterion A* for their association with community planning and development and government. A parkway, park, or golf course may also qualify for the National Register under *Criterion C* as a distinctive example of its designed landscape property type. Additionally, for qualification under *Criterion C*, a parkway, park, or golf course should feature highly skilled craftsmanship and/or the use of natural, local materials in the construction of landscape and design elements, such as walls, walks, and fountains; and evidence of significant design that results in elevated aesthetic quality, which makes the parkway, park, or golf course stand out when compared to similar resources in the county. Some designed landscapes, architecture, or engineering features within the parkway system may be individually significant for their rustic design aesthetic. Moreover, parkway-associated buildings may be individually eligible for the National Register under *Criterion C: Architecture*, outside of this MPD.

Parkways, parks, and golf courses should retain strong integrity of materials, association, setting, feeling, location, and design to be eligible in association with this context. Parkway-related landscapes, including parks and golf courses, are constantly evolving and changing to meet the needs of modern society. Although it is not necessary for an eligible parkway to look exactly like its original design, it should retain a significant amount of its characteristic features to make its historic character clearly recognizable. Therefore, the characteristic features of each property type are important to establishing the integrity and eligibility of these parkway-related designed landscapes. The parks, parkways, and golf courses should retain characteristics and features of their original rustic design aesthetic. The rustic style is displayed through the use of natural materials to construct features within the designed landscapes, such as stone and timber retaining walls, bridges, and buildings, and the application of handcrafted finishes, especially on stone features.

Where the original plans are available, parkways, parks, and golf courses should be evaluated based on the original plan. Otherwise, they should be evaluated based on stylistic similarities to related properties, early photographs, and other historical evidence. If the essential landscape plan is extant and characteristic features have not been seriously altered, the parkway, park, or golf course should be regarded as eligible. Alteration to an individual resource associated with a parkway, park, or golf course is not enough to diminish

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the overall integrity of the property. However, the alteration of a number of individual resources may contribute to a loss of the overall design intent. Where the integrity of the property is lost due to intrusions, deterioration, or change in function, it is not considered eligible.

Historic boundaries should reflect the area of Whitnall's original vision for the parkway system and incorporate areas developed within the historic period. Milwaukee County-owned property that was not part of the original vision or recently acquired property that does not reflect the overall design aesthetic should be excluded from the historic boundary.

The land located within the parkway system is known to contain archaeological deposits, including prehistoric sites. The current context does not cover archaeological remains or the potential significance of resources under *Criterion D: Information Potential*. More information on archaeological sites within the parkway system may be obtained from the State Archaeologist, Wisconsin Historical Society.

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**G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

All of the resources are located within Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.



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#### H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

This Multiple Property Document of historic and architectural resources associated with the Milwaukee County Parkway System, Wisconsin, is the result of an agreement between Milwaukee County, the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, to mitigate the replacement of five National Register-eligible bridges associated with three historic parkways. During mitigation efforts, consulting parties conducted a site visit to review Milwaukee County parkways. It was agreed that the overall parkway network met National Register Criteria and that a Multiple Property Document should be prepared.

Field review of extant parkway-related resources was conducted in May 2007 to determine character-defining features, level of integrity, relationships between parkway segments, and the extent that original plans for development of the county's parkway system were carried out. During field review, Mead & Hunt, Inc. used original published parkway and park plans, when available, and current maps of county-owned parcels to identify features and assess historic integrity.

To develop the historic context for parkway development in Milwaukee County, archival research was conducted at the Milwaukee County Park Commission, Wisconsin State Historical Society, and local archives. Research included annual reports of the Milwaukee County Park Commission and Milwaukee County Regional Planning Department and accompanying parkway plans and illustrations, WPA reports, and the writings of Whitnall. Other source material included newspaper research, as well as county and local histories.

The properties are grouped under three major themes that best define the Milwaukee County parkway project: (1) Community Planning and Development in Milwaukee County; (2) Federal Work Relief Programs in Milwaukee County Parks; and (3) Landscape Architecture in the Milwaukee County Parkway System. The period of significance for the Milwaukee County Parkway System is 1923 to 1960.

Research and field observations were used to develop eligibility and integrity requirements for the parkway system. Significant property types identified during this project include those that have a direct and illustrated association with Whitnall's vision for the Milwaukee County Parkway System, as published in the *First Annual Report* of 1923. Significant property types are those that continue to reflect the directives outlined in the Park Commission's annual reports and retain sufficient integrity to clearly convey their historic character.

Significant property types identified in this document include three distinct designed landscapes: parkways, associated parks, and golf courses. Property types must retain integrity, and an evaluation of integrity should involve consideration of the property type's characteristic features that allow it to be a significant example of its landscape type and period of design and construction. Any additions to the parkway system not envisioned by Whitnall would be considered not eligible. For example, an evaluation of a parkway should consider the parkway's circulation system, vegetation, spatial relationship to watershed features, drainage and engineering structures, bridges, buildings, furnishings, lighting, and signage.

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- *Milwaukee's Effort in City and Regional Planning.* N.p., 1929.
- "How a Lecture Course Saved the Shores of Milwaukee County." *The American City [Reprint]* (August 1941). Available at Milwaukee County Parks Office in "Whitnall, Charles B. (Writings)" Folder, Wauwatosa, Wis.



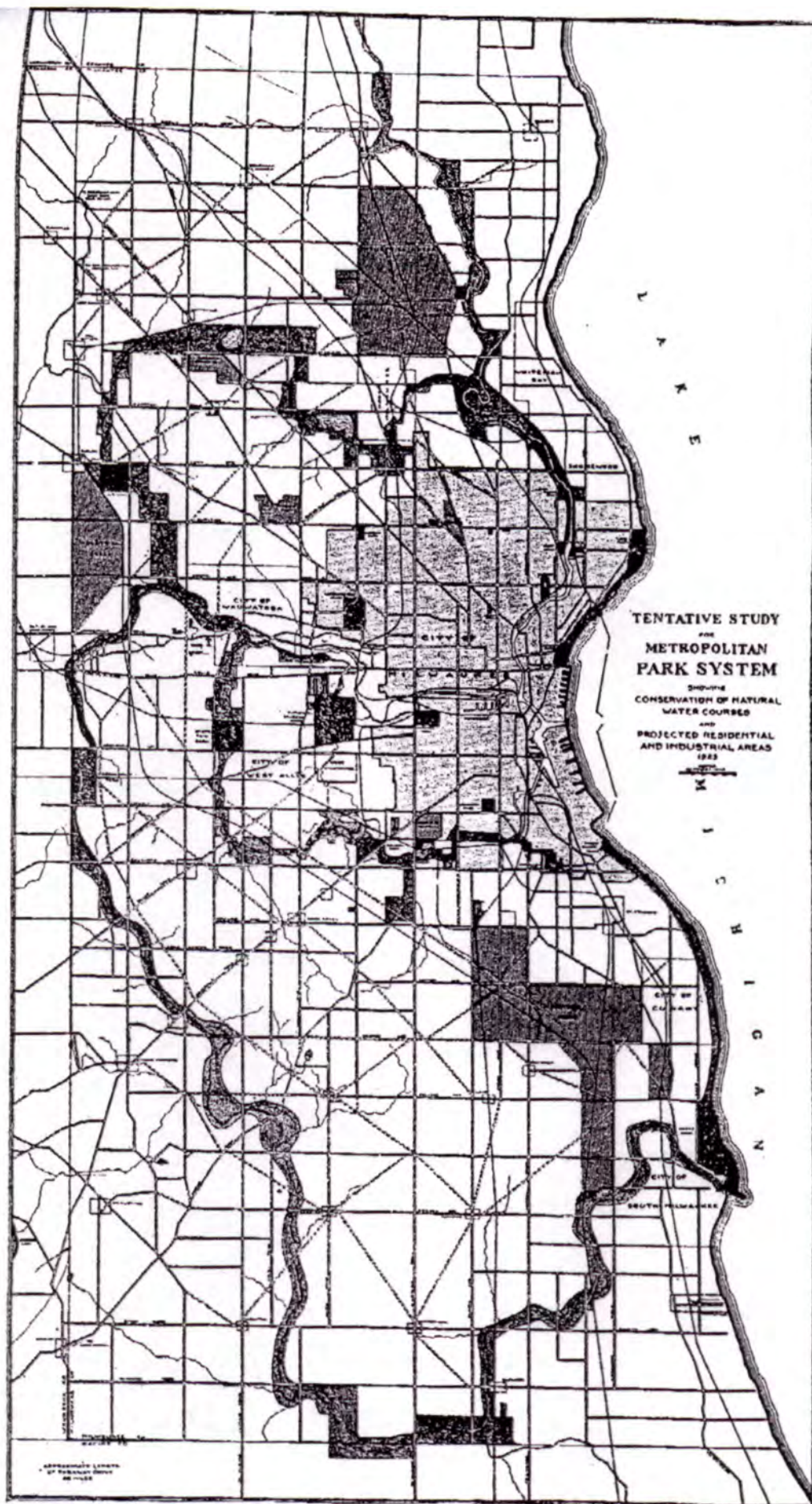
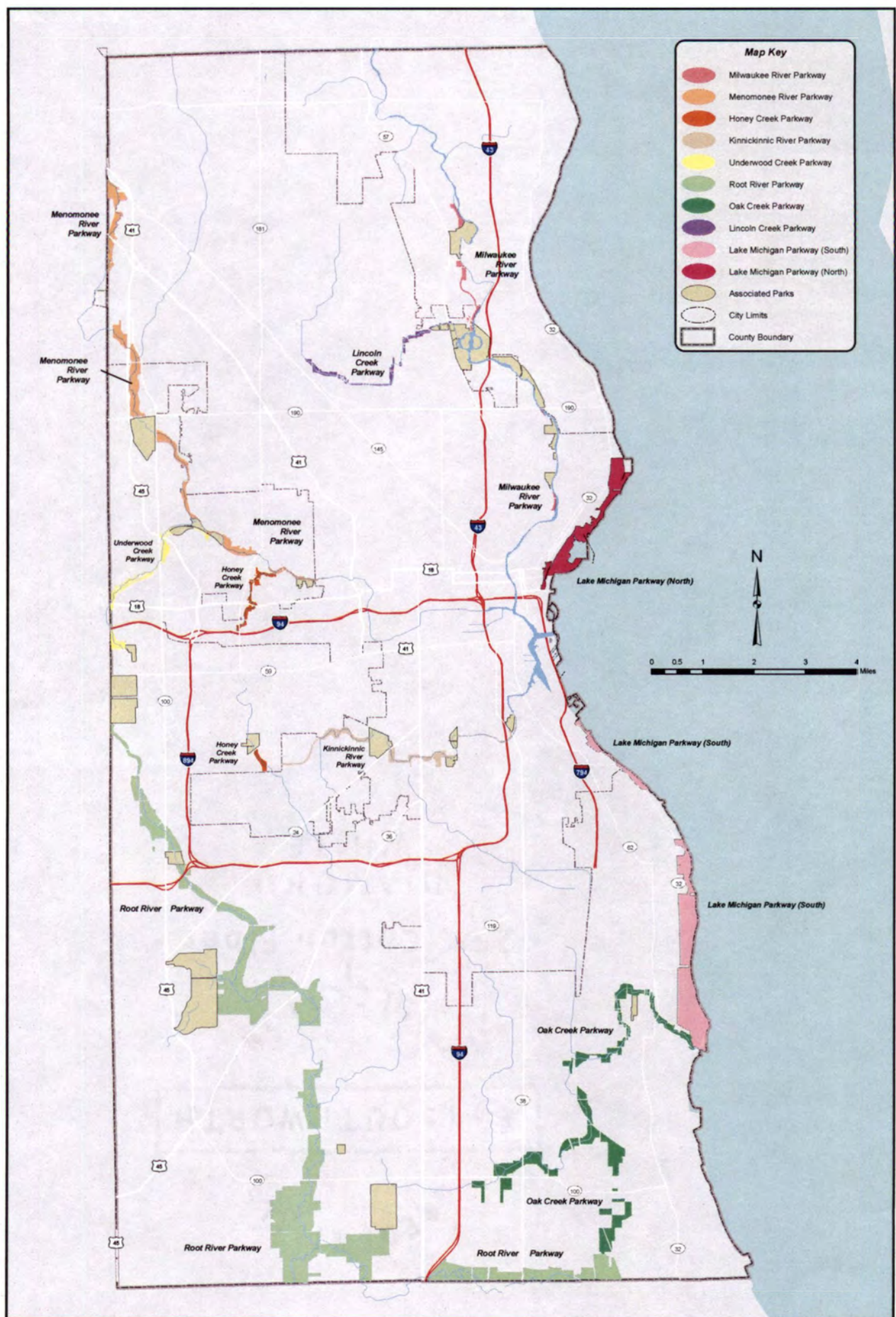


FIGURE 1  
TENTATIVE STUDY FOR A COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

Made in 1923 by C. B. Whitnall





Milwaukee County Parkway System

FIGURE 2

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE Milwaukee County Parkway System MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, MILWAUKEE COUNTY

DATE RECEIVED: 11/27/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 01/12/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501057

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 1-12-10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

This Multiple Property Documentation Form pertains to three historic contexts: *Community Planning and Development in Milwaukee County, 1923-1960*; *Federal Work Relief Park Programs in Milwaukee County, 1933-1942*; and *Landscape Architecture in the Milwaukee County Parkway System, 1923-1960*. The contexts are chronicled as a whole in Section E, although *Community Planning and Development* is less thoroughly developed than the other contexts, which relate exclusively to parks and parkways. In addition to parks and parkways, golf courses are addressed as a property type. The registration requirements are very general, but the SHPO believed that each component of the Milwaukee County Parkway System would need to be evaluated separately. This nomination is a good example of the use of the MPDF for landscape subjects.

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER Barbara Wygal DISCIPLINE Historian  
Phone 202-354-2252 Date 1-12-10

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

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



Recommendation: SLR\_Return Action: SLR\_Return None

Documentation Issues-Discussion Sheet

State Name: WI County Name Milwaukee Resource Name Milwaukee Co. Parking System

Reference No. 64501057 Multiple Name \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

PB Problem: - new cover doc. FYI

Resolution:

SLR: Yes No

Database Change:



NOV 27 2009

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

**FROM: Daina Penkiunas**

**SUBJECT: National Register Nomination**

The following materials are submitted on this 20th day of November 2009,  
for nomination of the Milwaukee County Parkway System to the National Register  
of Historic Places:

\_\_\_\_\_ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

1 \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple Property Documentation Form

\_\_\_\_\_ Photograph(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ CD with electronic images

\_\_\_\_\_ Original USGS map(s)

2 \_\_\_\_\_ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Piece(s) of correspondence

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

\_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_  
constitute a majority of property owners.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_