

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 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

Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington

B. Associated Historic Contexts

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

Origins of American Park Development, Landscape Architecture, and City Planning
Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted Brothers
The City Beautiful Movement
Olmsted Brothers in Spokane, 1906–1908
Park Development in Spokane, 1891–present

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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 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

Washington State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

The Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington is a representation of the development of American parks, landscape architecture, and city planning – all of which were originating around the turn of the twentieth-century. Often called the father of landscape architecture, Frederick Law Olmsted was a key figure in the development of all of these things and an integral part of the national picture. His son, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and nephew turned stepson, John Charles Olmsted, later carried on his professional principles receiving wide applause during the era of progressivism and the City Beautiful movement. It was under direction of the Olmsted Brothers firm that northwest cities including Portland, Seattle, and Spokane received consultation, park plans, and recommendations, as well as specific designs prepared by the firm in the early part of the twentieth-century. Spokane, set up with a parks board to receive the report, was able to implement these recommendations successfully in the years immediately following, and continuing through the decades ahead adding a local character to an Olmsted-crafted plan, thus creating the renowned citywide park system in place today.

Origins of American Park Development, Landscape Architecture, and City Planning

America, in its earliest days, had no native tradition of land planning. The early colonists were exploring so feverishly, they rarely paused long enough to organize an orderly treatment of the land. It was not until the time of the Revolutionary War that Americans began more intentionally developing the outdoors, but real development of these spaces and the conscious organization of cities did not take hold in a modern sense until the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Grand contributions by individuals such as Andrew Jackson Downing, Calvert Vaux, Frederick Law Olmsted, his sons John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and others, along with progressives and City Beautiful proponents, led to the development of American parks, the professions and fields of study of both landscape architecture and city planning, and the development and organization of American cities and urban open spaces as they are today.¹

One of the most notable single events in the development of the American urban park was the passage of the First Park Act by the New York State Legislature in 1851 and the Amended Park Act in July of 1852, which granted the City of New York to take a considerable amount of land and reserve it for the development of a park for the people's enjoyment and recreation. Public open spaces were not a new innovation, they had existed for centuries in the form of the town square or common; parks were known to have existed in ancient times; and London featured its Royal Parks. Prior to the 1851 and 1852 acts that created the Central Park in New York City, parks were intended only for the wealthy to leisure through a proper garden; they were not for games or play, the mingling of the classes, and in many cases children were not even welcome. "The notion of acquiring land in the public interest, then developing it solely for recreation in a pastoral... way, was... quite without precedent."²

¹ Norman T. Newton. *Design on the Land – The Development of Landscape Architecture*. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 246–266.

² Newton, *Design on the Land*, 268.

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By the late 1850s, those who designed buildings and formal gardens were looking to the past for classical inspirations for their designs resulting in an almost over the top picturesque romanticism. Due to the fashions of the time, the manmade landscaped garden continued as the norm though some notable men, including Frederick Law Olmsted, had already “made notable advances in the more natural handling of outdoor space.”³ Landscape architects continued pushing forward, finding a slowly growing success in large scale projects such as citywide park systems and suburban residential developments, as well as smaller private estates and institutional campuses. A major boost for the profession came with the World’s Columbian Exposition in 1893, which greatly stimulated public interest in civic design and heightened public awareness to the contributions of public open spaces and designed and planned landscapes. Also inspired greatly by the exposition, the City Beautiful movement arose calling for the improvement of cities and citizens by emphasizing an improvement in the appearance of the city itself.⁴

By the turn of the twentieth-century, not only had American parks gained a foothold, but parkways, boulevards, and playgrounds were being developed as well – much the result of the work of Olmsted, his associates, and his sons. In 1870, Olmsted and Vaux had developed a boulevard in Brooklyn, beginning the trend for this formal treatment of roadways in America. Later, the parkway, distinguishing itself from the boulevard by its limited local access, would also become an important element in American park planning with the Olmsted and Vaux designed Buffalo, New York park system, developed during the 1870s as America’s “first comprehensively planned municipal park system... [with an]... interconnected arrangement of parks and parkways.”⁵ It was also during this time that municipal authorities were beginning to embrace their own responsibility for recreation, which had previously been achieved primarily through charities. The Reform Park Movement, an outgrowth of the City Beautiful movement, acknowledged the physical needs of children and encouraged family excursions and recreation. The first major advance in establishing playgrounds in this country was in 1903 when the Illinois Legislature approved a bond issue of several million dollars for the Chicago South Park Playgrounds, designed by the Olmsted brothers. By 1905, ten small pleasure grounds had been opened. Within a year, the Playground Association of America was established, receiving the endorsement of President Theodore Roosevelt.⁶ This shift in focus, from pleasure gardens to playgrounds, “marked the sharpest change in American park history.”⁷

Parks, parkways, boulevards, and playgrounds began to be established nationwide, finding great success in the west, where at that time, many cities were still young and eager to implement new ideas. The cities of the west also contained interesting topography and incomparable vistas, still largely untouched and unaltered, making them the perfect recipients for what landscape architects and early city planners, such as the Olmsted brothers, had to offer.

³ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 337.

⁴ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 413.

⁵ Thomas Herrera-Mishler, “Olmsted’s Buffalo Park System: A National Model for Landscape Conservation,” in *Forum Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Summer 2011): 18, 23.

⁶ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 597, 624–625; and Teyadora Janine Kuhle. The Olmstedian Influence on Cannon Hill Park and Liberty Park in Spokane. Master of Science in Landscape Architecture Thesis. Washington State University, 2002. Pullman: Washington State University. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, Washington), 17.

⁷ Kuhle, *The Olmstedian Influence*, 20.

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Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted Brothers Firm

Frederick Law Olmsted, born April 26, 1822 in Hartford, Connecticut, was kept from formal education due to illness and instead spent a great deal of time as a young man wandering and observing the hills, woods, and meadows of his native New England. During the 1840s he became a seaman and voyaged to places such as China and England where he observed poverty and extreme circumstances finding it shocking in contrast to the ease with which the well to do enjoyed life. These adventures and his inherent love of the natural world planted a seed for two absorbing interests he would express throughout his life and through his work; that of the landscape, and of elevating the character and condition of the people.⁸

In August 1857, Frederick Law Olmsted sat down for tea beside a commissioner of the new Central Park project in New York City who revealed they were seeking to elect a superintendent to be the director of labor and police under the engineer. At this time, no city in the country had a spacious public park, though New York City had discussed the development of an adequate park since the 1780s. Any city dweller in the mid-nineteenth century United States had to venture to the country or to a small town common, public square, or cemetery if he or she wanted to enjoy a piece of grass or a grove of trees. The fact that the newly popularized rural-type cemeteries, a uniquely American invention, were becoming a place of recreation for American city-dwellers suggested a great need and desire for public parks and gardens.⁹ In a landmark move, following the passage of the First and Amended Park Acts in 1851 and 1852 in New York, the Common Council, on May 19, 1856, named the commissioners of the Central Park granting them full authority to plan and develop it. Olmsted promptly set out to obtain the superintendent position, and despite some doubts that he was too literary to be practical, was successful in the appointment – though it would not be a simple task. Shortly thereafter his brother John Hull Olmsted passed away causing him to soak himself into his work. He quickly married his brother's widow Mary Perkins Olmsted in June 1859, thereby assuming responsibility for her two small children including his nephew turned stepson, John Charles Olmsted.¹⁰

During the summer of 1850 another notable figure in early landscape architecture, Andrew Jackson Downing, travelled to London to find an architectural assistant. Downing, son of a Massachusetts nurseryman, had married into the Hudson River gentry and established himself as a designer of the grand houses and grounds. He gained a national reputation writing books on rural architecture, landscape design, and horticulture, and spoke of the need in America for public parks, which he felt “could play an important social role in a democracy.”¹¹ In London, he found Calvert Vaux who returned with Downing in the fall then becoming his partner. Downing died shortly thereafter leaving the young Vaux to inherit his office where he continued to work until 1857 when he relocated to New York City. Also sharing a strong interest in the development of urban parks, Vaux invited Olmsted to work with him in designing a plan for the Central Park after Vaux himself had helped influence the commissioners to lay aside the original plan and hold a public design competition. The only rules stipulated that each plan should embrace both artistic

⁸ Laura Wood Roper. *FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted*. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 1, 7–9, 20, 66–71; and Charles E. Beveridge and Paul Rocheleau. *Frederick Law Olmsted, Designing the American Landscape*. (New York, NY: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1995), 10–11.

⁹ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 268.

¹⁰ Roper, *FLO*, 124–126; Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 25.

¹¹ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 20.

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and social ideals, form a work of landscape, and provide for “judicious use of the park, inducing the public, including the so-called dangerous classes, to treat a work of art, delicate and perishable in many of its features, with a thoughtfulness that would preserve it from harm and its visitors from any inconvenience.”¹² The team ended up taking first prize despite the fact that Olmsted saw himself more as an administrator and planner whose talents were best used realizing a design on the ground rather than on paper.¹³

During the 1860s and 1870s Olmsted and Vaux continued to work together quickly becoming the most prominent landscape architecture firm in America, and working to establish a method and procedure to set a standard for the new profession they were engaged in. The two generally rejected the flower-bedding of gardeners “because it went against the ‘spirit of place’” instead feeling that the “main criterion for tastefulness was that a design element should be ‘fitting’ and proper in its setting”¹⁴ – a belief the Olmsted Brothers later carried on and applied in cities such as Spokane. They also focused a great deal on cities as a whole, viewing America’s great cities as a new frontier and helping to develop many early theories of urban planning; for it was the practitioners of early landscape architecture, not industrialists or town leaders, who were the early voices of town and city planning.¹⁵

Inspired by their own idealism as well as European precedent, Olmsted and Vaux sought to influence American cities and establish an urban domesticity featuring a separation of residence from work, and combining urban and rural elements to bring space, sunshine, and fresh air into the city by establishing specific design elements including public parks, parkways, and planned residential communities. The two felt that cities should not only contain public parks but to the extent possible, these parks should be part of a park system providing continuous public pleasure grounds preventing industrial and commercial intrusions. Parkway and boulevards should be wide with lawns and scattered trees, and should separate wheeled traffic from foot traffic. They should also replace the grid street system, instead following the natural contours of the land preserving hills, valleys, streams, and rivers. Though some representatives of the working class argued against public parks seeing them as something reserved for the wealthy, Olmsted asserted that the large urban park was of special importance to the working class who did not possess the means to leave the city for a countryside vacation. He also felt that parks would give the upper class a reason to stay in the city rather than abandoning it for a more picturesque countryside; an important incentive as it was those citizens who were the community leaders and creators of wealth making it valuable culturally and financially for cities to retain them as active citizens and full-time residents.¹⁶

Over time a number of signature features, out of both function and effect, became recognizable in Olmsted’s park designs and were later carried on by the work of his sons. He arranged woods around meadows and repeated types of trees intentionally so as to avoid the distraction of too much variation. He defined meadows with grass so as to soften the appearance of the area as well as to welcome picnicking or resting, and he attempted to include water in his pastoral landscapes wherever possible. Styles of

¹² Roper, *FLO*, 136.

¹³ Roper, *FLO*, 133–137; Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 25.

¹⁴ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 35.

¹⁵ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 46–47; and Newton, *Design on the Land*, 464.

¹⁶ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 48–49.

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planting and settings carefully designed for different activities were also separated providing each space with “a single, coherent character.”¹⁷ Olmsted typically included pathways that curved so as to differentiate a walk in the park from a walk along the straight and rectangular paths in a city, and separated different kinds of traffic for safety and for enjoyment. Buildings were kept to a minimum as were the intentional or manicured planting of flowers, and manufactured products such as light fixtures, which were too similar to what one might see in an urban setting.¹⁸ He utilized many of these same features in his residential community designs where he safeguarded natural scenery, utilized curvilinear streets following the natural topography (and discouraging traffic), and providing for open spaces in which to both mingle and enjoy nature.¹⁹

Eventually, Vaux grew resentful that too much credit for Central Park was assigned to Olmsted and that he was being slighted. Though Olmsted tried to correct the situation, these frictions eventually led to the demise of the partnership, which was terminated October 18, 1872 for “reasons of mutual convenience.”²⁰ The dissolution letter was signed, “Olmsted and Vaux, Landscape Architects;” though the two men, and others doing similar work, had probably used the term amongst themselves prior to this, their letter marked the first officially recorded use of the title, landscape architect, establishing what has become the unofficial birth date of the profession.²¹

Just prior to this, on July 24, 1870, Frederick Law Olmsted and his wife Mary gave birth to a son, Henry Perkins – the only biological child Olmsted would have. He almost immediately began to dream that his son would continue his work, with the proper education and training that he lacked. The boy’s name was changed at the age of four to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. so that he could carry on his father’s name within the profession.²²

Over the next two decades, the elder Olmsted continued his work, recruiting his stepson John Charles Olmsted into the practice as an apprentice during the 1870s, after his graduation from Yale Sheffield Scientific School. John Charles Olmsted became administrator of the office, something he excelled at, in addition to traveling extensively and growing as a landscape architect in his own right. The two moved the office from New York City to Brookline, Massachusetts in the 1880s, and continued to gain both public and private contracts at a rapid pace.²³

In 1895 Olmsted began to withdraw from professional practice, officially retiring in 1897 when his health and mental state began to deteriorate while designing the Biltmore Estate in North Carolina. It was also around this same time that Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. graduated college and joined the practice under the strong leadership of his stepbrother, who was well trained by this point. Despite the blow Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.’s withdraw caused the profession, the first professional association, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) was established by eleven men, including both of the

¹⁷ Beveridge, Charles E. “The Olmsted Firm – An Introduction,” *National Association for Olmsted Parks*. National Association of Olmsted Parks, N.D. Web. 19 August 2011.

¹⁸ Kuhle, *The Olmstedian Influence*, 12–14.

¹⁹ Beveridge, *Frederick Law Olmsted*, 116.

²⁰ Roper, *FLO*, 318, 332, 343.

²¹ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 273.

²² Roper, *FLO*, 338.

²³ Joan Hockaday. *Greenscapes: Olmsted’s Pacific Northwest*. (Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 2009), n.p.

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Olmsted brothers, on January 4, 1899 with John Charles Olmsted chosen as its president. The first university curriculum and professional training in the field was also established in 1900 at Harvard University with Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. chosen to head it.²⁴

In 1897 following their father's retirement, the younger Frederick and John Charles Olmsted branched out on their own first as F.L. and J.C. Olmsted. Shortly thereafter, in 1899, their landscape architecture firm adopted the name of the Olmsted Brothers, which lasted through 1963 becoming "the largest office of landscape architecture in the world" during the early twentieth-century.²⁵ Though they continued carrying on their father's footsteps building large urban parks and citywide park systems connected with parkways and boulevards, utilizing the aesthetics, principles, and professional standards originated and established by their father, the Olmsted Brothers continued to modernize with the changing times and also started making playgrounds an integral part of their citywide recommendations. More so than their father, the younger Olmsteds began to collaborate increasingly with city planners, planning boards, and park departments, and "were more concerned with creating aesthetic experiences throughout the city"²⁶ while the elder Olmsted, more "concerned with the bigger picture... had concentrated on the design of the park within the city creating aesthetic experiences within the park."²⁷

The two brothers complemented one another well and found great success as partners with John Charles Olmsted's strengths primarily centered around park design, botany, and plantsmanship, which he continued to apply to the design of parks, parkways, and park systems. Like the elder Olmsted, he was committed to landscape art as a profession and in educating his clients and the communities in which he worked about the long-term benefits of careful, comprehensive planning.²⁸ John Charles Olmsted had worked both alongside and independently of his father on a number of important projects including numerous citywide park systems in all corners of the nation; a countywide park system developed in Essex County, New Jersey; a number of expositions including the 1893 Chicago World's Fair; and in developing comprehensive plans for residential development. He even did work in residential development surrounding industrial plants, feeling that his planning methods, with naturalistic spaces and gathering places, could provide the relief and relaxation so necessary in these types of industrial areas. John Charles Olmsted continued to practice until his death in 1920. At just sixty-seven years of age, he had accomplished an immense amount, including planning the park system of Spokane.²⁹ Apprentices and colleagues have praised his work, teaching, and advice having "admired his ability to resolve complex design problems with artistry and practicality while enhancing and protecting the natural features of a site."³⁰

²⁴ Roper, *FLO*, 425–426, 475; Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, n.p.

²⁵ Susan L. Klaus. "Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.," *National Association for Olmsted Parks*, National Association for Olmsted Parks. N. D. Web. 19 August 2011.

²⁶ Kuhle, *The Olmstedian Influence*, 18.

²⁷ Kuhle, *The Olmstedian Influence*, 18.

²⁸ Arleyn Levee. "John Charles Olmsted," *National Association for Olmsted Parks*. National Association for Olmsted Parks. N. D. Web. 19 August 2011.

²⁹ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, n.p.

³⁰ Levee, "John Charles Olmsted."

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Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. used his own personal strengths finding great success in the field of city planning.³¹ He was a powerful force on the McMillan Commission where he worked with a number of his father’s former colleagues transforming Washington DC “into a work of civic art.”³² The culminating report, promoting a combination of art and science with comprehensive planning in creating the City Beautiful, stirred civic improvement associations and other municipal societies nationwide.³³ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.’s planning-driven contributions to the firm’s suburban development projects and general professional principles of suburban development, include the concept of neighborhood-centered development, the integration of common open and recreation spaces, and the need for continued maintenance and oversight in preserving the quality and aesthetics of the community.³⁴ During his lifetime he proved himself dedicated to both public service and conservation of the nation’s wilderness areas, and was key in drafting the language for the 1916 bill that established the National Park Service. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. continued practicing until his death in 1957 at the age of 87, carrying on his father’s design theories, adapting them well with the changing times brought about by the automobile, other technologies, and suburban sprawl.³⁵

Table 1 – Evolution of the Olmsted Firms³⁶

1858–1863	<i>Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux</i>
1865–1872	<i>Olmsted, Vaux & Company</i>
	Frederick Law Olmsted and Vaux
1872–1884	<i>Frederick Law Olmsted</i>
	Frederick Law Olmsted, with John Charles Olmsted in partial partnership 1878–1884
1884–1889	<i>Frederick Law & John Charles Olmsted</i>
1889–1893	<i>F. L. Olmsted & Company</i>
	Frederick Law Olmsted, John Charles Olmsted, Henry Sargent Codman
1893–1897	<i>Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot</i>
	Frederick Law Olmsted (retired 1897), John Charles Olmsted, Charles Eliot
1897–1898	<i>F.L. and J. C. Olmsted</i>
	Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and John Charles Olmsted
1898–1961	<i>Olmsted Brothers Firm (Landscape Architects)</i>
	At varying times, this firm included: Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., John Charles Olmsted, James Frederick Dawson, Percival Gallagher, Edward Clark Whiting, Henry Vincent Hubbard, William Bell Marquis, Leon Henry Zazh, Carl Rust Parker, Charles Scott Riley, Artemas Partridge Richardson, Joseph George Hudak
	Following the death of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr in 1957, the surviving partners retained the Olmsted Brothers name until 1961; between 1962 and 1980 some of the surviving partners carried on under the name Olmsted Associates Landscape Architects

³¹ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, n.p.

³² Klaus, “Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.”

³³ Klaus, “Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.”

³⁴ Klaus, “Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.”

³⁵ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, n.p.

³⁶ Johnson, *Olmsted in the Pacific Northwest*, 65–67.

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The City Beautiful Movement

One of the leading movements in the creation of moral and civic virtue was conceived by proponents of progressivism who wrote and spoke of creating beautiful cities “which would in turn inspire its inhabitants to moral and civic virtue;”³⁷ an underlying theory similar to the one that guided Frederick Law Olmsted’s development of large urban parks as he believed citizens of all classes would mingle and enjoy the calming effects of the natural landscape respecting the space and each other as a result. Charles Mulford Robinson, a young journalist (and later city planning consultant) inspired by the planned landscapes and public spaces featured at the Olmsted-designed grounds of the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago began writing editorials about the planning and improvement of cities, with an overwhelming emphasis on their appearance, effectively creating the buzzword City Beautiful through his writings.³⁸ At the same time, members of the reform movement previously concerned primarily with political corruption and labor exploitation quickly embraced the concept of beauty as a social control device; thus began the City Beautiful movement.³⁹

During the four decades following the Civil War, the problems of the American city grew exponentially. The nation’s population had increased from 31.4 million to 91.9 million, with forty-six percent of Americans living in cities (of over 2,500 in population) by 1910.⁴⁰ With the ease of movement created by the automobile, many middle and upper class families had moved away from the city leaving it to decay in their absence.⁴¹ The country had a turbulent economic system; immigrants were pouring into cities not equipped to handle them; social unrest, corruption, and violence abounded; industrialization boomed; and the rural and agrarian American self-image was fading away.⁴² America’s leaders were beginning to realize “the critical importance of community planning, not only in sustaining urban growth but also for the continued health and safety of residents and visitors,”⁴³ and started looking toward progressivism, social reformers, and the theories and practices of landscape architects and early city planners for a solution. It was during this period when theories began to arise “to rectify the decay and demoralization of communities through the beautification of the city.”⁴⁴

The City Beautiful Movement offered tangible benefits and solutions to these problems by encouraging “the development of parks that separated commercial areas from residential districts... [and] advocated that parks be designed in order to make... vistas, and create traffic patterns that influenced and defined land use.”⁴⁵ Great focus was placed on park development, with the Reform Park Movement growing out of City Beautiful, as well as other areas of city planning such as zoning regulations, and modern infrastructure including paved streets, trash removal programs, sewer systems, and street lighting.⁴⁶ Many believed that a planned city would be safer, more beautiful, and more enjoyable, instilling civic pride,

³⁷ Rose, “The City Beautiful Movement.”

³⁸ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 414–416.

³⁹ Rose, “The City Beautiful Movement.”

⁴⁰ Julie K. Rose. “The City Beautiful Movement,” *City Beautiful: The 1901 Plan for Washington DC*.

⁴¹ Rose, “The City Beautiful Movement.”

⁴² Rose, “The City Beautiful Movement.”

⁴³ “City Beautiful Movement,” *Oklahoma Historical Society’s Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History & Culture*. N.D.

⁴⁴ “City Beautiful Movement,” *Oklahoma Historical Society*.

⁴⁵ Kuhle, *The Olmstedian Influence*, 7.

⁴⁶ “City Beautiful Movement,” *Oklahoma Historical Society*; and Rose, “The City Beautiful Movement.”

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aesthetic and moral standards, and a sense “of history and morality in all citizens, especially immigrants.”⁴⁷ Much of Spokane’s early park development was also very closely tied to the City Beautiful movement, as it was the City Beautiful Committee of the 150,000 Club, a local booster organization with aims to grow the city to a population of 150,000, that sponsored tree plantings and established a playground association, also functioning as an early vehicle for promotion of a citywide park system.

Though the City Beautiful Movement is often associated with formal geometry, grand spaces, and Beaux Arts architecture, this was only the first of two primary variants within it. The first variant focused on the belief “that by beautifying an urban area with wide, elegant avenues, carefully planned landscape designs... the price of the city would be restored, and inner cities would maintain their central position within the expanding community,”⁴⁸ while the second focused on the naturalistic and picturesque treatment of outdoor spaces. It was a combination of the two that “effectively supported planning movements in cities across the United States”⁴⁹ and primarily the latter variant, which served as a major impetus for American park development. As it related to parks and large-scale land conservation projects, the term naturalistic was somewhat deceiving as this approach still required as much planning and design work as more formal landscapes would. Though there could hardly be absolutely natural scenery in a park near or within a large city due to nearby development and the changes to the environment that come as a result, the naturalistic treatment of the place was meant to provide open meadows, grassy hillsides, rolling grounds, or cliffs or ledges of rock.⁵⁰ It was this type of work that was one of the hallmarks of both the elder Olmsted and the Olmsted Brothers who tended to divide the natural features into their distinct elements of earth or rock, water surface and foliage, ground cover or trees.⁵¹ John Charles Olmsted once noted, “the liberal provision of parks in a city is one of the surest manifestations of the...degree of civilization, and progressiveness of its citizens. As in the case of almost every complex work composed of varied units, economy, efficiency, symmetry and completeness are likely to be secured when the system as a whole is planned comprehensively and the purposes to be accomplished defined clearly in advance.”⁵²

Olmsted Brothers in Spokane, 1906–1908

Following the 1903 death of the elder Frederick Law Olmsted, the Olmsted brothers continued working in landscape architecture and city planning utilizing the knowledge and principles passed onto them by their father. While Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. focused more on city planning, John Charles Olmsted continued more directly in the footsteps of the elder Frederick Olmsted travelling around the nation preparing recommendations for both public and private clients, and even preparing some specific design drawings. The Olmsted Brothers firm, also employing a variety of additional landscape architects over the years, securing an almost endless amount of work for decades to come.

⁴⁷ Camille Avena. “City Beautiful Movement in the Progressive Age,” *The Hudson-Fulton Celebration Project*.

⁴⁸ “City Beautiful Movement,” Oklahoma Historical Society.

⁴⁹ Kuhle. *The Olmstedian Influence*, 7.

⁵⁰ John C. Olmsted. “The True Purpose of A Large Park,” in *Reprints*, Vol 12 No 1 (Winter 2010): 2.

⁵¹ Olmsted, “The True Purpose of A Large Park,” 2.

⁵² Levee. “John Charles Olmsted.”

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The firm found a great deal of success out west where sophisticated residents in the quickly growing cities were looking “to New York and other east coast cities for the latest ideas in style and city building.”⁵³ It was there that they found the Olmsted Brothers – the nation’s most prominent park and city designers. The Northwest was a place tailor-made for the type of work the Olmsteds were doing. There had also always been a unique tradition of parks and outdoor recreation in Northwestern cities where public squares, horse racing spots, and fields and meadows had always been utilized for gathering, mingling, and limited recreation.⁵⁴ The topography throughout the region was unique and featured unmatched variety and vistas. The Olmsted design elements recommended to various cities throughout the Northwest typically incorporated or attempted to take advantage specifically of: vistas, shorelines, trees and plants, and drives and walks. The views in the Northwest, with water, mountains, hills, and valleys, were praised by the Olmsteds. Shorelines also play an important part in Olmsted parks, which attempted to take advantage of natural streams, creeks, rivers, bogs, meadows, ponds, etc. They felt any type of shoreline provided something for visitors to follow along, furthering exploration within the site; and if ponds, streams, reservoirs, or other water works were added they were to be natural and curvilinear in their outlines.⁵⁵ Trees and plants were another important feature. Even during the early 1900s, many Northwestern cities had already lost much of their original plant cover due to development and logging. The Olmsteds were impressed by the surviving native woodlands they saw out west, and targeted those areas for park development. With the interesting topography in the Northwest, the Olmsteds saw great opportunity to implement one of their most trademark elements, curvilinear walks and drives. Without needing to alter the land, walks and drives in the Northwest could simply be placed in areas with natural contours.⁵⁶ Though these design elements are common throughout most Olmsted designed parks, each site is nonetheless unique, guided by the surroundings and the natural features of the site itself – a design principal carried on from the elder Olmsted who believed that the main criterion in any design was that it should be fitting and proper in its particular setting.

Three citywide park systems were developed by the Olmsted Brothers in the Northwest, including Seattle, Portland, and Spokane. The Seattle plan was prepared in 1903, and identified fifteen major parks scattered throughout the city. The Olmsted report recommended twenty-three miles of boulevards and parkways linking the sites. Park development in Seattle was neither fast nor cheap, but the city managed to implement many aspects of the Olmsted plan nonetheless. The Portland plan, also completed in 1903, recommended a variety of parks, parkways and boulevards, playgrounds, and five large scenic reservations. In addition, the Olmsteds also worked on a plan for a major city park in Walla Walla. Though that city’s Pioneer Park plan was revised by a local horticulturist, it is nonetheless a fine example of the Olmsted Brothers work in the region.⁵⁷

It was during some of Spokane’s most peak development years, at a time when the city and the population were growing at a rate never matched by any other northwestern city, that the Olmsted Brothers firm was hired. At the request of Aubrey L. White, President of Spokane’s newly formed Board of

⁵³ “The Olmsteds in the Pacific Northwest: The Art of Landscape Design,” *Pacific Northwest Garden History*. 2009.

⁵⁴ “The Olmsteds in the Pacific Northwest: The Art of Landscape Design,” *Pacific Northwest Garden History*. 2009.

⁵⁵ Olmsted, “The True Purpose of A Large Park,” 3.

⁵⁶ “The Olmsteds in the Pacific Northwest: The Art of Landscape Design,” *Pacific Northwest Garden History*. 2009.

⁵⁷ “The Olmsteds in the Pacific Northwest: The Art of Landscape Design,” *Pacific Northwest Garden History*. 2009.

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Park Commissioners, John Charles Olmsted, accompanied by his young associate Fred Dawson (Olmsted and Dawson), agreed to visit the city, and after several meetings was contracted to prepare a plan for a citywide park system for a fee of \$1,000 plus expenses (eventually receiving \$1,306 for his work).⁵⁸

The project officially began on December 15, 1906. Olmsted was returning back east from working in Walla Walla, Portland, and Seattle and was able to stop in Spokane and get a quick grasp of the city and the powerful Spokane River and falls. In a letter home he noted, "the scenery is very picturesque with hills and valleys."⁵⁹ The following fall he returned for two days, and was disappointed to see since his last visit that railroads had "taken the land [that I] wanted to reserve when I was here before."⁶⁰ He continued to make some general notes about vegetation, natural springs, the variances in north- and south-facing conditions, and other site recommendations.⁶¹

Olmsted and Dawson held a series of meetings with Spokane's park commissioners sharing their observations, general advice, and other specific recommendations off the record during more casual meetings and site tours, and on the record in the written recommendations they eventually submitted. Reportedly "White paid Olmsted an extra \$50 out of his own pocket to dispense as much verbal advice as he could give,"⁶² though the details of these conversations are unknown. During the firm's visits, Dawson found particular success in Spokane, helping Olmsted a great deal and eventually marrying a Spokane socialite, Hazel Belle Lease, who then moved back east with her new husband.⁶³

In 1908, two years after they began, the Olmsted Brothers' report was submitted to Spokane's Board of Park Commissioners. The board did not immediately release the report to the public, but instead quietly implemented many of its recommendations over the next few years in order to "gather funding and to quietly achieve its aims without realtors and land developers jacking up property prices or otherwise interfering."⁶⁴ Following a special meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners on April 24, 1913, the publication of the report was referred to the Press and Publication Committee for final release to the public.⁶⁵ The Board of Park Commissioners committee on Press and Publication recommended the distribution of the printed report as not to exceed 500 copies, "to be sent to all Donors of Park area to the City of Spokane; Park Commissions and Park Departments; Municipal Reference and General Libraries; Educational Institutions; State and County officers; and to such others as may be thought advisable. Local distribution, about 1,500 copies, [was] to be given out from the office of the Park Commission and

⁵⁸ John Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Vol. 72, No. 4 (October 1981): 173.

⁵⁹ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, 102.

⁶⁰ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, 102.

⁶¹ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, 105.

⁶² "Olmsted Parks in Spokane," *HistoryLink.org, The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*. (Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, N.D. Web. 20 April 2011).

⁶³ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, 102.

⁶⁴ Hockaday, *Greenscapes*, 105-106.

⁶⁵ Secretary to Commissioner W. J. Sullivan, Chairman, Press & Publication committee, city, April 26, 1913, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

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otherwise as the Board may direct.”⁶⁶ An additional 500 copies were to be printed and held in reserve to use as required.

The final report released to the public included the Olmsted Brothers firm’s recommendations, background information, the text for the City Charter creating a Parks Board, and reports from the Board of Park Commissioners President A. L. White, and the Superintendent of Parks J. W. Duncan, essentially providing a synopsis of public park development in the city between 1891 and 1913. In his preface to the report, White stated that land acquisition had been practically completed and the board was entering into a period of construction and development.⁶⁷

The Olmsted Brothers portion of the final report began with an introduction summarizing the need for public parks, noting “public baths and public gymnasias conduce greatly to the health, morality and well being of the people... [and that] whatever increases the general health of the public also tends to improve the morality of the public.”⁶⁸ They continued to note that city life has a depressing effect both on the breadwinners as well as the home-keeping members of families resulting from a “lack of invigorating exercise in the fresh air.”⁶⁹ The answer to these problems, was parks, which “constitute one of the best means of drawing people out-of-doors... mothers... with their little babies and children... school children... for active play... young men and young women... for tennis, baseball, sociable walking together, or even for solitary enjoyment of the beauties of nature... older men and women... to walk... or to watch others play, or to see other visitors and their clothes and horses, automobiles, and the like, or to study birds, flowers, or other attractive details of nature.”⁷⁰

The report continued on to recommend four primary elements within a citywide park system, including large parks, local parks, parkways and boulevards, and playgrounds (Table 2). Additionally, the Olmsted Brothers’ report included specific recommendations for the improvement of the city’s existing park properties as well as general city planning suggestions intended to be implemented on as part of a long-term urban plan.

The first of four primary elements, large parks were defined as those that could fill the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Very different from a centrally located field fulfilling active recreational opportunities, large parks could provide opportunities for “people to walk reasonable distances amid agreeable, nerve-resting surroundings,”⁷¹ even providing opportunities for the same visitor to view new things within the same park on every visit. In response to the growth of cities and reduction in open rural spaces, large parks would serve to “preserve or provide landscape for the enjoyment of the people... [being] in effect reservations of country scenery – easily resorted to as often as desired... for the people

⁶⁶ M. Sullivan, Com. on Press & Publication to Board of Park Commissioners, September 10, 1914, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

⁶⁷ “Landscape Experts Criticize City Government for Spokane’s Crooked Street Railway Routes,” *Spokesman-Review*, December 6, 1914, pp. 3.

⁶⁸ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Spokane, Washington, 1891–1913*. (Revised by Spokane Parks Foundation and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture. Spokane, WA: Marquette Books, 2007. Originally published in Spokane, WA: Inland Printing Co., 1913), 79.

⁶⁹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 79.

⁷⁰ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 79.

⁷¹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80.

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who live... in the city.”⁷² Olmsted and Dawson noted “the City of Spokane has remarkable opportunities for preserving big and strikingly picturesque landscape features for its parks. Four localities especially commend themselves... as being most desirable sites for large parks.”⁷³ In an earlier address to the city of Louisville’s Park and Outdoor Art Association Olmsted reiterated the philosophies of his father stating that,

“by large public park is not meant one covering more than a certain number of acres, but one large enough to contain a complete natural landscape... where city conditions will not be unduly apparent, where one may stroll over hill and dale, across meadows and through woods, always amid natural surroundings... where one may come again and again without becoming familiar with all its intersecting localities; where... visitors may be enjoying the scenery at the same time without crowding each other; where those who especially seek seclusion may find parts so remote from the boundaries that even if city houses are not completely hidden they are reduced in the distant perspective to inconspicuous proportions as compared with the foliage of trees and other natural objects; so remote that the roar of street traffic is less noticeable than the rustle of foliage stirred by the breeze or than the songs of birds or sounds of insects.”⁷⁴

The first of the large park sites proposed was Gorge Park, containing the great gorge and river falls, one of the most memorable natural elements in the city. Though some portions of it had already been commercially and residentially developed, they nevertheless felt it important enough to be reclaimed and further development prevented, “except what was necessary to utilize the power of the falls.”⁷⁵ They recommended vines and trees and sidewalks and narrow roadways in the areas nearer to the center of the city, and farther from the city where land was cheaper and more available they proposed wide park areas with lawns and playfields, a pleasure drive, walks, and landscaping. The second large park identified was Upriver Park, also along the river, except northeasterly from the city center. This area featured hills, picturesque rock outcroppings, and an unusually large area of flat land providing for recreational opportunities. The third large park was proposed as Downriver Park, along the river directly north-northwest of the proposed Gorge Park, and the existing Natatorium Park and the U.S. Military Reservation at Fort Wright. Downriver Park featured commercially useless bluffs with beautiful views, and areas on top of the bluffs that could be utilized for playfields. This area was well wooded, and could provide areas for picnicking, games, and bathing in the still areas of the river. Finally, the last large park proposed was Latah Park, lying south of the city in the Latah Creek valley. This area contained wooded bluffs, level areas for sports, and wooded areas for walking and picnicking. A drive could be situated along the bluff, and another could wind through the woods.⁷⁶

The local parks recommended by the Olmsted Brothers’ report included Rockwood, Queen Anne, Ravine, West Heights, and Eastside Parks. These were well distributed geographically throughout the city, and were all proposed to contain between approximately 70 and 190 acres making them medium-sized parks as classified by the report. Rockwood Park featured irregular topography with both cliff-ledges for views, and level areas for lawns and games. They felt it crucial to acquire this property order to ensure

⁷² *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80.

⁷³ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80.

⁷⁴ Olmsted, “The True Purpose of A Large Public Park,” 1–2.

⁷⁵ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 81.

⁷⁶ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80–83.

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the equitable distribution of parks in the city and to protect land in an area ripe for residential development. Queen Anne Park, with a grassy valley, steep wooded areas, and picturesque ravine unfit for residential development, was a prime opportunity for a small park with walks and natural plantings. Ravine Park, also including a ravine unfit for development, provided opportunity for a pleasure drive and smaller lawn games or children's recreational areas. West Heights Park, with its steep wooded heights and picturesque ledges, provided fine city views and areas for walks, drives, ball fields, and possibly golf. Finally, Eastside Park was proposed as a medium sized park for the easterly portion of the city, taking advantage of the river for boating and bathing as well as ball fields and other recreation on the level areas.⁷⁷

The Olmsted report stated, "to make large parks, and such of the smaller parks as have notable landscape advantages, accessible, and to connect one with another by roads specially fitted for pleasure driving and walking, parkways and boulevards are necessary."⁷⁸ As defined by the Olmsted brothers, having learned from their father who essentially began the trend of pleasure drives in America, boulevards are more formal in character with luxury in width and beauty in the plantings, while parkways are more informal and feature some landscape or naturalistic feature.⁷⁹ A parkway "was *not* itself a road, [rather] it *contained* a roadway... of significantly varying widths... [with] the distinctive provision that abutting owners had no right of light, air, or access over the parkway strip."⁸⁰ Simply put, boulevards are formal and pleasurable yet still distinctly residential roads, while parkways were naturalistic drives without residential or commercial development directly on them, only allowing breaks at certain intervals through which drivers could access the homes situated just off the parkway.

In the citywide park plan for Spokane, Rockwood, Highland, Moran, and Adams Boulevards, and East Latah, West Latah, and Upriver Parkway were proposed; and an extension was suggested for the existing Manito Boulevard. Rockwood Boulevard was intended primarily to connect Manito Park with the proposed Rockwood Park, with Highland Boulevard, featuring a central driveway, would extend from Rockwood Boulevard to the reservoir at 9th Avenue. The proposed extension for Manito Boulevard would serve to carry the existing roadway south out of Manito Park all the way to the proposed Latah Park, while Moran Boulevard would continue the pleasure-driving route of Rockwood Boulevard in a southerly direction out of Rockwood Park then connecting to the proposed Latah Park. Finally, Adams Boulevard would connect Manito Park with the proposed East Latah Parkway passing by the proposed Adams Park. Both West and East Latah Parkway were proposed to preserve land on either side of Latah Creek both serving to protect certain areas from development as well as reserving some of the less desirable areas, with steep slopes, for naturalistic vistas within the protected parkway areas. Upriver Parkway, situated northeasterly of the city center, was meant to follow the river protecting the land and vistas from undesirable intrusions.⁸¹

The final parkland property type proposed by the Olmsted Brothers report was the playground. Prior to the turn of the twentieth-century, children primarily played in vacant lots, in the streets, or, if available, in a

⁷⁷ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 83–85.

⁷⁸ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 85.

⁷⁹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 85.

⁸⁰ Newton, *Design on the Land*, 597.

⁸¹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 85–87.

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playfield donated by a charitable organization. However, with the growing recognition taking place at this time for the need of safe play areas for children. Playfields became an important element of the Olmsted Brothers citywide park plans. The brothers believed that playfields should be numerous, and distributed well around the city so that children in every neighborhood would have access to one. The report recommended they be of a size that would permit “a row of trees and a narrow belt of shrubbery around the playfield, so as to partially screen the necessarily bare playfield from the view of people in surrounding houses.”⁸² “In such a ground there could be a lawn, with walks, and shrubbery, at one end, then a little folks’ playground, then a women’s outdoor gymnasium, then a public shelter-house, with toilet and dressing rooms, then a men’s outdoor gymnasium, and at the other end a large, hard gravel playfield, with a border of trees and shrubbery.”⁸³ It was recommended that the boys’ gymnasium be slightly depressed so that in the winter it could be flooded with water to serve as an ice-skating rink. An additional desirable feature suggested was wading pools. The Olmsted recommendations proposed Hays, Lidgerwood (existing, with proposed addition), Longfellow, Logan, Sinto, West Riverside, Underhill, Jackson, and River Banks Playfields, and Courthouse and Spokane Falls local parks. Both Longfellow and Logan Playfields were to be situated adjacent to the existing schools of the same names in those locations.

For their final suggestion relating to the development of parks in the city of Spokane, the Olmsted Brothers’ firm recommended the improvement of the city’s existing parks, including Manito, Coeur d’ Alene, Liberty, Stradacona, Corbin, Hays, Audubon, Cliff, Adams, and Mission Avenue Park (an existing avenue with parkings) and the two Lidgerwood Parks (Lidgerwood Playfield and a second Lidgerwood Park). Though already established, these parks lacked intentional planning, organization, or design and exhibited great potential with further development. They had evolved primarily as donations to a city who at the time lacked the funds, infrastructure, or management tools to turn them into proper parks. During Olmsted and Dawson’s many tours of the city, they evaluated these existing parks eventually coming up with notable and specific suggestions for how to take advantage of the properties and the natural features existing therein. Eventually only three of Spokane’s existing parks received specific designs prepared by the Olmsted firm, Liberty, Corbin, and Adams (Cannon Hill) Parks.⁸⁴

**Table 2 - Spokane Park System as Proposed by the Olmsted Brothers Firm
(listed in the order included within the original report)**

Property Type	Name	Appx Size
Large Parks	Gorge Park	280 acres
Large Parks	Upriver Park	1952 acres
Large Parks	Downriver Park	393 acres
Large Parks	Latah Park	2286 acres
Local Parks	Rockwood Park	78 acres
Local Parks	Queen Anne Park	74 acres
Local Parks	Ravine Park	126 acres
Local Parks	West Heights Park	190 acres

⁸² Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 88.

⁸³ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 88.

⁸⁴ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 90–95.

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Local Parks	Eastside Park	158 acres
Parkways & Boulevards	Rockwood Boulevard	1 1/3 miles long; 150 feet wide
Parkways & Boulevards	Highland Boulevard	1 mile long; 150 feet wide
Parkways & Boulevards	Manito Boulevard Extension	1 1/4 miles long total (3/4 mile existing); 200 feet wide
Parkways & Boulevards	Moran Boulevard	2 1/4 miles long; between 200 and 320 feet wide
Parkways & Boulevards	Adams Boulevard	2/3 mile long; 150 feet wide
Parkways & Boulevards	East Latah Parkway	2 1/3 miles long; 164 acres total area
Parkways & Boulevards	West Latah Parkway	2.1 miles long; 125 acres total area
Parkways & Boulevards	Upriver Parkway	1 1/3 miles long; 24 acres total area
Playfields (Existing)	Hays Playfield	7.83 (existing); 16 (proposed); 24 acres total
Playfields (Existing)	Lidgerwood Playfield	3 (existing); 11.2 (proposed); 14.2 acres total
Playfields	Longfellow Playfield	6.7 acres
Playfields	Logan Playfield	12.7 acres
Playfields	Sinto Playfield	20.8 acres
Playfields	West Riverside Playfield	5.7 acres
Playfields	Underhill Playfield	17.9 acres
Playfields	Jackson Playfield	10.4 acres
Playfields	Courthouse Park	4.1 acres
Playfields	Spokane Falls Park	1.7 acres
Playfields	River Banks	not specified
Local Parks (Existing)	Manito Park	85.6 (existing); 31 (proposed); 116.6 acres total
Local Parks (Existing)	Coeur d' Alene Park	9.76 acres (no addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Liberty Park	24.5 acres (no addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Stradacona Park	1.5 acres (no addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Corbin Park	13 acres (no addition proposed)
Playfields (Existing)	Second Lidgerwood Park	not specified
Local Parks (Existing)	Audubon Park	31.2 acres (no addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Cliff Park	4.2 acres (no addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Adams Park	13.18 acres (small unspecified addition proposed)
Local Parks (Existing)	Mission Avenue Park	1.77 acres (no addition proposed)

The final element of the Olmsted recommendations for Spokane was “suggestions as to improvements in the city plan of streets and in regard to municipal esthetics generally.”⁸⁵ Though they included some more generalized suggestions, this portion of the report was prefaced with a disclaimer regarding the large and complicated nature of this topic. They recommended that the city assemble a commission of experts to further examine the city plan. Nonetheless, the Olmsted Brothers firm included the following recommendations: diagonal avenues to save time and wear in navigating the city, highlighting Northwest Boulevard as the only one in place at that time; crooked street railways, to aid in establishing easy-grade routes; rapid transit, to handle future growth; steam railroad adjustments, planned carefully so as not to harm business growth and eventually eliminate grade crossings; ornamental squares; size of lots, with variety in their size and depth as well as the width of streets; regulating the cost of land according to the

⁸⁵ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 96.

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front foot instead of the lot; extensive and systematic street tree planting; extra care of certain streets, especially for the parkways and boulevards; adjustments to the width of roadways in relation to parking strips and walkways as well as the accommodation of street railways; building limit line, defining set backs; limiting the height of buildings; regulating electric pole size and placement; an ordinance governing bill boards; street lighting; street signs; regulations on temporary decorations, such as holiday and special event decoration; and establishment of a municipal art commission, responsible for approving the designs of public buildings, bridges, street fixtures, monuments, etc.⁸⁶

All totaled, to secure enough parkland in proportion to the anticipated thirty year population growth the report recommended a full "2,500 acres of good, nearly level land... proposed to be acquired, together with such additional areas of very steep wild land as are required in connection with the proposed useful areas... [with] additional boulevards, neighborhood parks, playfield parks, playgrounds and squares... required."⁸⁷ Spokane, with its unmatched growth during the early twentieth-century, was recommended to secure more parkland than Seattle for which the Olmsteds had only recommended a total of 1,984 acres.⁸⁸ The Olmsted Brothers firm, through their experience, recommended that costs be met from special local assessments, an annual tax levy, and municipal loans; the latter having proved in other city park projects to be a necessity.⁸⁹ In addition, sizeable donations would be a necessary element of the full realization of this plan.

Park Development in Spokane, 1891–present

Park development began in Spokane in 1891 with the establishment of the first park, and continues still today. The presence of the Olmsted Brothers in Spokane is an important piece of the historical picture with an element of built-in significance, however, the overall significance of Spokane's park system features a number of important elements including: the pre-Olmsted era; the Olmsted's presence, report, and their fingerprint on the city; as well as the post-Olmsted era reflecting evolving ideas in park development, the influence of local individuals and conditions, and the evolving methods of implementing the original plan and the manipulation of that plan over time to fit the city. It was during the post-Olmsted era that Spokane put its own fingerprint on the Olmsted park system. For the purpose of this project, three periods of development in Spokane's park development, generally following national trends, have been established below. A primary period, between 1891 and 1919, includes the establishment of the first park properties in the city's earliest days, before the Olmsteds arrived; the period the Olmsteds were present; and the years directly following, during which time many of the Olmsted recommendations were initiated. A second period, between 1920 and 1949, saw the continuation of much of the work that was initiated earlier, and both a carrying-on of earlier concepts directly from the Olmsted plan and an evolution of concepts. A third period, between 1950 and the present, represents ongoing improvements and development, as well as some changes including the value of school playgrounds and notable advances

⁸⁶ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 96–102.

⁸⁷ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 103.

⁸⁸ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 174.

⁸⁹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 104.

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in local city planning. Parks developed and improved during the latter two periods are a product of their time, tied to earlier concepts.

I. Primary Period of Development, 1891–1919

Aubrey L. White, a man who would become the pioneer of park development in Spokane, arrived in the city from Maine at the age of 20 following his brother out west. He held a variety of labor, clerk, and management jobs, exploring the natural features of the city in his spare time. A lover of the outdoors, White devoted much of his personal time educating himself in the areas of horticulture and urban improvement, finding much inspiration in the City Beautiful movement and the revival of the Romantic Movement.⁹⁰ He quickly befriended important local businessmen including William H. Cowles, the publisher of the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper, and Jay P. Graves, a mining promoter who hired White to sell stock in his Granby Mining & Smelting Co. in cities such as Montreal, Philadelphia, and New York. While in New York, White witnessed a growing enthusiasm in eastern cities for the formation of parks, and was “appalled ‘by the price New York was paying for its lack of foresight’”⁹¹ handing out large sums of money for small bits of remaining available land at inflated prices, because they had failed to plan their parks in advance of or alongside massive urban growth. By 1905 Spokane had 173 piecemeal acres of parkland, mostly unimproved, all given by donation. The first park established in the city, Coeur d’Alene Park, was situated on land given by A.M. Cannon and J.J. Browne in 1891 when both of the early settlers donated to the city equal amounts of their property, covering four city blocks at the dividing line between their two claims, specifically for a park.⁹² Other early city parks included Liberty and Corbin Parks, donated in 1897 and 1901 respectively.

In 1906 when White returned to Spokane he was determined to establish parks in his own city, acquiring land before it was too expensive and protecting scenic sites and vistas before they were lost. He knew that the Romantic movement, which advocated that landscape design should follow the natural curves of the terrain even leaving much of it wild and undeveloped, appealed not only to his own personal aesthetics but “was perfect for Spokane, with its hills, basalt outcroppings, and the tumultuous river.”⁹³ He was, at least initially, met by an un-moved city council not yet convinced of the necessity for purchasing park lands despite the rapid growth of the city, which had nearly doubled in size by annexation since its incorporation a mere twenty-five years before to accommodate a population that had skyrocketed to nearly 75,000.⁹⁴ Finding little initial success with city council, White moved on to convince others of the city’s need for park development, including the 150,000 Club, a booster club dedicated to helping the city reach a population of 150,000 within the next ten years, through which he established a City Beautiful Committee.⁹⁵ Through both professional connections and social connections, many from his wife Ethelyn (daughter of prosperous attorney and pioneer John W. Binkley), White aligned with many of the most

⁹⁰ “White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948),” *HistoryLink.org, The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*. (Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, N.D. Web. 20 April 2011).

⁹¹ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 171.

⁹² Vennen, “The Epitome of an Entrepreneur,” n.p.

⁹³ “White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948),” *HistoryLink.org*.

⁹⁴ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 170–172; and “White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948),” *HistoryLink.org*.

⁹⁵ “White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948),” *HistoryLink.org*.

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prominent men in town. Through his efforts with the City Beautiful Committee he sponsored tree plantings and established the Spokane Playground Association. The association sponsored a small downtown playground hoping that this action would inspire further park development in an organized fashion. Unfortunately, the site had to be quickly abandoned due to the scandals caused by so-called hoodlums using it at night. Nevertheless, they continued moving forward with F. Lewis Clark, real estate investor and member of the 150,000 Club, calling for a park system free of city government and Cowles's *Spokesman-Review* publishing articles in support of the same idea.⁹⁶

Finally, in May 1907 an amendment was approved by voters establishing a nonpartisan Board of Park Commissioners based on the park system model in Hartford, Connecticut. The commission, made up of ten unpaid mayoral appointees, primarily real estate developers and businessmen, took control of the city's existing parks on June 1, 1907 with White as its elected president. When the new commission took over the city's parks from the Mayor, President of the City Council, and the City Engineer, it found itself \$20,000 in debt, and "immediately secured a \$12,000 loan from the city council to operate."⁹⁷ Before long, a park issue of \$100,000 was granted, allowing the commission to repay the original loan, retire an earlier \$10,000 bond issue, buy more land, maintain parks, and continue operations. The commissioners vowed to manage the park system free of politics, following the principles of business, and almost immediately decided "to enlist 'an eminent landscape artist' to lay out a citywide plan, turning predictably to the Brookline, Massachusetts, firm of Olmsted Brothers"⁹⁸ whom they soon hired for a fee of \$1,000 plus expenses.⁹⁹

The report of the Olmsted Brothers firm was submitted to the Board of Park Commissioners in 1908 along with a 1907 Polk map of the city upon which they hand colored in the locations and boundaries of the proposed parks, parkways, boulevards, and playgrounds identified in their report (see image attached). The commission kept the report from the public for several years, so they could carry out the recommendations within it without interference and most importantly without inflated real estate prices for the recommended plots of land. Correspondence indicates that, although work was progressing, certain activities such as maintenance work was being carried out "much the same as formerly so that the public could see no radical changes going on."¹⁰⁰ Despite this, the park board was quickly making a name for itself not only receiving praise from Olmsted who was quoted as saying that "Spokane's system of handling its public parks is ahead of any other system in the United States,"¹⁰¹ but also receiving requests from similar boards in other cities across the nation, including Seattle, as to how Spokane was handling park development.

The Olmsted report confirmed White's instincts and helped define the goals he had been hoping so greatly to implement in Spokane. In a letter from the Board of Park Commissioners to the Officers, Trustees, and members of the Chamber of Commerce in 1909, a plea for parks, reiterating Olmstedian

⁹⁶ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 172; and "White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948)," *HistoryLink.org*.

⁹⁷ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 173.

⁹⁸ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 172-173.

⁹⁹ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 172-173.

¹⁰⁰ John W. Duncan, Superintendent, to Aubrey L. White, President Park Commission, June 1, 1910, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

¹⁰¹ "Copy City's Park Plan," *Spokesman-Review*, May 3, 1908, 4.

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philosophies and some of the Olmsted recommendations, was made, stating “this is a matter most important to citizens... it affects the present and future health, wealth and contentment of our people... Spokane must acquire the lands necessary for public parks, boulevards, school and public play grounds... Spokane needs an aggregate of over two thousand acres of land... the recommendations made by Olmsted brothers cover the entire city and provide every district thereof with a park.”¹⁰² An optimists’ dinner held for 135 men representing Spokane’s business community was held January 16, 1909 to arouse interest in park development and seek support for a \$1-million bond the park board was seeking. Reports of the dinner recount the rousing enthusiasm and warm support the park board received. One speaker at the dinner commented, “this city will become a greater center if you make reasonable provision for the future. But the city that is to hold its own in the present race of municipal progress must have schools, libraries, art galleries, fountains, and parks.”¹⁰³ White, chairman of the meeting, spoke of how far behind other cities Spokane was in park development and was supported by others, in seeking support for the bond that spoke of the city’s haphazard growth much in need of a definite plan in order to make the city attractive despite “any opposition that may arise.”¹⁰⁴

In 1910 the commissioners hired Scottish-born John W. Duncan, formerly of the Boston Park Department where he had gained experience with Olmsted designs, to serve as Spokane’s first Superintendent of Parks – a position he held until 1942.¹⁰⁵ Among other things, he was solely responsible for the hiring and discharging of employees, a system that avoided political preference in hiring practices. Olmsted commented that Spokane was the only city he knew of with this system, then additionally endorsing Spokane’s method of requiring competitive bids for services and supplies costing over \$20.¹⁰⁶

Though the “systematic development of Spokane’s public park system was seriously hampered by lack of money,”¹⁰⁷ the commission had nonetheless expanded the existing park acreage of just 173 acres up to a total of about 826 acres by the end of 1910 having added the Up River Tract, Hangman Park, the Summit Boulevard area, the Sterling Heights tract, High Bridge Park, US Grant Playground, Down River Park, Audubon Playfield, Cliff Park, Hay’s Park, and Cannon Hill Park.¹⁰⁸ The city’s first official playground to be outfitted with play equipment, was the Liberty Park playground constructed in 1907. It was soon followed by supervised playgrounds located at A.M. Cannon Park, U.S. Grant Park, the Interstate Fairgrounds, and Manito Park in 1912. Playground equipment was added at Sinto Triangle (adjacent to Mission Avenue Park) in 1914, at Lincoln Park in 1917, Franklin Park in 1920, and also in that same year the equipment was transferred from the Interstate Fairgrounds to Underhill Playground.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² Secretary, Board of Park Commissioners, to the Officers, Trustees and Members of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Spokane, December 13, 1909, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

¹⁰³ “Shout for Parks; Also City Plan,” *Spokesman-Review*, January 17, 1909, pp 10.

¹⁰⁴ “Shout for Parks; Also City Plan,” *Spokesman-Review*, January 17, 1909, pp 10.

¹⁰⁵ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 174.

¹⁰⁶ “Copy City’s Park Plan,” *Spokesman-Review*, May 3, 1908, pp 4.

¹⁰⁷ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 6.

¹⁰⁸ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 6.

¹⁰⁹ Aubrey White. “Early City Fathers Had No Money to Spend for Children – Private Means Furnished First Grounds for Recreation – Fine System Now, but Needs Are Expanding,” *Spokesman-Review*, n.d., n.p. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane, WA).

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Following the guidance provided by the Olmsted firm, the commission set out on a publicity campaign with the ultimate goal of establishing “a park within 10 or 15 minutes’ walk of every home, to secure playgrounds near schools, and improve undeveloped parks. Newspaper articles prior to the election assured voters that the proposed park bond would provide “parks for all... [with] every neighborhood to be cared for and present parks to be bettered.”¹¹⁰ It was also noted that a number of recommendations from the Olmsted Brothers report would be implemented, “such as beautifying conspicuous eyesores and... to provide beautiful breathing and recreation spots.”¹¹¹ The campaign succeeded; Spokane voters approved a \$1-million park bond issue in May 1911.”¹¹² Unfortunately “adverse litigation reduced the amount and delayed the sale of this park bond issue for nearly a year, but in February 1912, \$875,000 face value of such park bonds... were sold for \$888,982.50... all of which then became available for the park fund.”¹¹³ With this funding, the “Board of Park Commissioners immediately proceeded to carry out the recommendations of Olmsted Bros., and by purchase and donation... increased the public park area of Spokane... to 1,934 acres”¹¹⁴ (Table 3). The acreage acquired put Spokane “in the front rank of cities of similar population... and well on its way to amassing the acreage the Olmsteds recommended.”¹¹⁵

Table 3 - Park Development Timeline & Olmsted Recommendations as Implemented* (activities through 1913 as reported in the <i>Report of the Board of Park Commissioners</i>)		
Year	Total Park Acreage (ac)	Land Purchases in \$ / Donations
1891	10.40	\$0 (all donated)
	Coeur d'Alene Park (10.4 ac)	donated by A. M. Cannon and J. J. Browne
1897	30.01	
	Liberty Park (19.6 ac)	donated by F. Lewis Clark
1901	41.51	
	Corbin Park (11.5 ac)	donated by D. C. Corbin
1906	John Charles Olmsted's first visit to Spokane	
1906-1907	173.10	\$0 (all donated)
	two-thirds of the acreage unimproved	
May 7, 1907	adoption of charter amendment placing admin and control of all public park affairs under independent, non-political Board of Park Commissioners of 10 members	
	upon taking control of the Park Department, took over total park area and debts and obligations totalling \$20,000	
	requested and obtained from City Council a temporary loan of \$12,000; later granted a park bond issue of \$100,000 (from which original loan was repaid and \$10,000 to retire previous park bond)	

¹¹⁰ “Parks for All,” *Spokesman-Review*, April 23, 1910, pp 1, 3.

¹¹¹ “Parks for All,” *Spokesman-Review*, April 23, 1910, pp 3.

¹¹² Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 173–154; and *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 6–7; and Secretary, Board of Park Commissioners, to the Officers, Trustees and Members of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Spokane, December 13, 1909, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

¹¹³ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 7.

¹¹⁴ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 7.

¹¹⁵ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 176.

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	Park Board Officially Hires Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts	
1908	Olmsted Brothers Firm plan presented to commission	
1907-1911	systematic development of Spokane's public park system	
	826.00	Up River Tract, Hangman Park, Summit Boulevard area, Sterling Heights tract, High Bridge Park, US Grant Playground, Down River Park, Audubon Playfield, Cliff Park, Hay's Park, Cannon Hill Park
Dec 28, 1910	Commission Form of Government adopted by Spokane voters; Board of Park Commissioners remaining as an independent body	
May 1911	passing vote for park bond issue of one million dollars	
	litigation delaying sale of park bond issue; released in February 1912 with a total of \$875,000 face value bearing 4.5% interest selling for \$888,982.50 all becoming available for the park fund	
Jun 1, 1907 - Dec 31, 1913	1,934.00	\$729,667.24
	Audubon Park (31.2 ac) and Audubon Playground (6.67 ac)	park donated by John A. Finch and F. P. Hogan; playfield purchased, \$7,542.05
	Byrne Park (3 ac)	donated by Dr P. S. Byrne and John H. Lidgerwood
	Cannon Hill Park (13.11 ac)	donated by The Adams Investment Co and the Cannon Hill Co
	Cliff Park (4.48 ac)	donated by the Cook-Clarke Co
	Coeur d'Alene Park (10.4 ac)	donated previously (see above)
	Corbin Park (11.5 ac)	donated previously (see above)
	Down River Park (164.49 ac)	purchased (128.79 ac), \$65,755.82 ; donated by O.-W. R & N. Co (35.7 ac)
	Garden Springs Park (35.11 ac) (proposed Queen Anne Park)	purchased, \$43,097.15
	U. S. Grant Playground (2.97 ac) (proposed Stradacona Park)	purchased, \$16,281.01
	Glass Park (3 ac)	donated by Dr P. S. Byrne and John H. Lidgerwood
	Hangman Park (294.4 ac) (proposed Latah Park)	purchased, \$30,435.37
	Hay's Park (7.83 ac)	donated by The Big Bend Land Co
	High Bridge Park (53.18 ac) (proposed Gorge Park)	donated by John A. Finch, F. J. Whaley, Wh. H. Cowles, C. M. Fassett, Patrick Welch, Albert Held, John M. Semple, Fred B. Grinnell, W. H. Merriam, W. C. Ufford, and the Washington State Realty Co; additional purchases of \$6,807.16
	High Drive Pkwy (112.4 ac) (proposed Latah Park)	purchased (18.7 ac), \$51,453.45 ; donated by Boulevard Co, Home Securities Co, Cowles Improvement Co, and J. W. Hays (93.7 ac)
	Indian Canyon Park (112.2) (proposed Ravine Park)	purchased (36 ac), \$14,000 (purchase price also included a portion of Palisades Park and Elliott Drive); donated by Col. I. N. Peyton Estate (76.2 ac)

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	Liberty Park (19.61 ac)	donated previously (see above); additional purchases of \$9,996.34
	Lincoln Park (31.6 ac) (proposed Rockwood Park)	purchased, \$63,208.00
	Logan Playground (.9 ac)	purchased, \$6,550.00
	Manito Park (90 ac)	donated by The Spokane Washington Improvement Co, Spokane & Montrose Motor Co, Washington Water Power Co, Hypotheekbank, and F.P. Hogan; additional purchases of \$2,676.76
	Mission Avenue Parking (1.77 ac) (Proposed Mission Avenue Park)	dedicated
	Palisades Park (50 ac) (proposed West Heights Park)	donated by John A. Finch
	School Section 16 Tract (8 ac) (proposed Sinto Playfield)	purchased, \$4,200
	Stadium Site (2.9 ac) (proposed West Riverside Playfield)	purchased, \$25,000.00
	Stadacona Circle (1.3 ac) (proposed Stradacona Park)	donated by the Citizens' National Bank and F. B. Grinnell
	Underhill Playfield (19.02 ac)	purchased, \$26,004.45
	Up River Park (464.6 ac)	purchased, \$121,069.32
<p>*Additional parks established during this time and included in Board of Park Commissioners report but were not contained within the Olmsted Brothers recommendations include: A. M. Cannon Playground (\$30,562.65), Cowley Playground (\$37,522.80), Elliott Drive, Fairgrounds, Franklin Park (\$33,708.55), Mission Park, Peaceful Valley, Riverside Park (\$1,840.89), Riverside and Cedar St Parking, Ruth Playground, School Section 16 Tract (\$10,189.65), Sinto Triangle, Sterling Heights Park, Summit Boulevard (\$85.71), Valley Park (\$32,780.00), Woodland Parkway, block 19 Webster Addition</p>		

White would peruse “tax rolls for delinquent property and on occasion bought the land with his... money to hold until the park commission could buy it. He badgered Spokane’s landowners and real estate developers to give land for parks, and he formed a small group of influential men – which he called his ‘powerhouse’ – to help him acquire parkland.”¹¹⁶ Oftentimes, however, acquiring the land desired was not particularly difficult as many of the men who “gave or sold land for parks served on the park commission, including White,”¹¹⁷ oftentimes with selfish benefits including the documented increase of property values for parcels adjacent to parks and parkways, most of which these same men retained eventually receiving a grand profit for the lots. Today this may “seem tainted by conflict of interest,”¹¹⁸ but there was only minimal public questioning of it at the time.

It was the primary goal of the commission, during its first years of existence, to simply acquire the most land at the cheapest price, well distributed throughout the city, with improvements then occurring

¹¹⁶ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 175–176.

¹¹⁷ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 176.

¹¹⁸ Fahey. “A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty,” 176.

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over time alongside continued land acquisition. The historical summary contained within the 1913 report provided a synopsis of the city's park system to that point stating, "improvement of our undeveloped park and playground areas will be carried forward... but must necessarily be extended over a period of years, as when acquiring land, the Park Commission had in mind the future needs of our city as well as present requirements... With our present park and playground acreage now under progressive and systematic development, Spokane will become in fact as in name, the City Beautiful."¹¹⁹ "By doing this in the early days of its administration, the board has been able to save that natural beauty of trees and rocks which might have been destroyed had streets been cut through and buildings erected before the area was set aside."¹²⁰

Following the public release of the report, the commission continued its work. In 1914, White's annual report noted "the Park Commission is now entering upon a period of construction and development... [boasting that] compared with Seattle, which is one of the most progressive cities in the West, Spokane has 1,934 acres acquired at a total cost of \$729,664, while Seattle acquired 1,803 acres... [for] \$2,485,628."¹²¹ Spokane was purchasing land during a fortunate time with the city's growth slowing leaving many parcels abandoned or available for next to nothing prices. In addition, many local citizens were "sympathetic and desirous of aiding in the development"¹²² that they gifted their property to the park board; this is demonstrated most vividly by the fact that the city "received over nine hundred acres of land in gift, and had to pay for only half a mile of the thirty-five miles of boulevard in Spokane."¹²³

It was also during the years following the public release of the report that many of the city's pre-existing parks, including Manito, Liberty, and Corbin Parks, were improved owing "much of their aesthetic appeal to Olmsted suggestions,"¹²⁴ and the first of Spokane's city-owned public golf courses was established on a large piece of land within Downriver Park in 1915. Many of the citywide planning recommendations made by the firm's report also began to be realized, furthered by the establishment of the city's planning commission in 1918. Because the park board was already so entrenched in the physical development of the city, the new planning commission functioned merely as an adjunct of the park board for its first six or seven years.¹²⁵

During the primary period of development, an original building theme utilizing native stone for the public restrooms, or sanitary buildings, required in each park property was developed by Duncan and implemented in the vast majority of the city's parks adding a significant architectural element to the properties. Original drawings for the sanitary building proposed for Cliff Park were drafted in 1912 by Chester A. Houghtaling under the direction of Duncan and the park department (see images attached).

¹¹⁹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 7.

¹²⁰ Aubrey White. "The Spokane Parks," *The Quarterly*, June 1932. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane, WA), n.p.

¹²¹ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 177.

¹²² White, "The Spokane Parks," n.p.

¹²³ White, "The Spokane Parks," n.p.

¹²⁴ "Olmsted Parks in Spokane," *HistoryLink.org*.

¹²⁵ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 177; and Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Park and Open Spaces. Goals, Policies, Standards and Analysis. A Part of the Comprehensive Plan*. (Report Number 14, City Plan Series 11), December 1979. Spokane, Washington. (Located in the Spokane, Parks and Playgrounds, Reports Vertical File of the Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Spokane, Washington).

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Buildings nearly identical to the one in the drawing can be found in many of Spokane's Olmsted Park System properties today, having originally contained a women's restroom at one end, a men's room at the other end, and a tool storage area in the center. Though the drawing is dated 1912, a correspondence from Duncan to White dated June 1, 1910, only approximately three months into Duncan's appointment as Superintendent, indicate these buildings were conceived during his earliest days in Spokane. The letter notes the dire need for a sanitary building specifically in Liberty Park, with Duncan continuing on to express his desire that the building feature a layout he proposed in a previous report integrating the tool storage area so as to be able to do away with separate, small, tool sheds.¹²⁶ Though further specifics are unknown, Houghtaling may have assisted Duncan in the development of the original design utilizing his professional experience.

Born October 27, 1882 in Cleveland, Ohio, Chester A. Houghtaling studied construction engineering at the Lewis Institute in Chicago. Upon graduation he went to work for the firm of Purdy & Henderson Engineers in Chicago and then took a job at the J.S. Metcalf Co. helping them to design grain elevators. For reasons unknown, in 1903 he moved to Saskatoon, Canada, working there for three years before moving to Spokane in 1906. Employed for two years with firm of Cutter & Malmgren, Houghtaling moved again, this time to Twin Falls, Idaho in 1908. In 1913 he finally settled in Portland, Oregon where he formed a partnership with Luther Lee Dougan. Houghtaling died in Portland on March 31, 1940.

II. Secondary Period of Development, 1920–1949

In 1920 White's father-in-law sold him his summer farm, Montvale, on the Little Spokane River north of the city. As he had been freed from many of his former business obligations by this point, and was now focusing primarily on gardening and horticulture, he went ahead and made the move to the farm relocating there with his family in 1921. Despite protests from the other commissioners and a number of citizens, the city engineer was appointed into White's position under the reasoning that moving outside the city limits to Montvale rendered White ineligible for park board membership.¹²⁷ Regardless, he continued his involvement with parks, gardens, and the outdoors in a number of capacities over the years, including through a position at the *Spokesman-Review* where he worked as the paper's garden and civic betterment editor, and through his personal work with the Spokane Parkways and Roadside Protection Association.¹²⁸

Cities, and the needs of their residents, were changing with the times and "with the menace of automobiles, the street corners [were] no longer the proper place to play. The vacant lot, in its usually rough state, with no lights, [had] little appeal."¹²⁹ In a newspaper article written by White in 1927, he advocated for neighborhood parks to also function as playgrounds for children's recreation, claiming that twenty of the city's then fifty-two park areas could successfully function in this capacity. He continued to

¹²⁶ John W. Duncan, Superintendent, to Aubrey L. White, President Park Commission, June 1, 1910, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, papers. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch, Eastern Washington University, Accession No. 999-0462.

¹²⁷ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 178.

¹²⁸ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 178–179.

¹²⁹ White, "Early City Fathers Had No Money to Spend for Children," n.p.

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say “rational exercise and amusement are provided to fill hours which might otherwise have been spent in wretched diversion,”¹³⁰ claiming that cities simply cannot afford not to provide playgrounds “preventing... the use of that play energy always present in youth in the wrong way.”¹³¹

In 1921 the San Francisco based journal, *The Architect & Engineer*, praised the Spokane Park Board and White for their well-realized implementation of the Olmsted plan, with “over 32 miles of boulevards which will link up that plan and give Spokane one of the finest boulevard and park systems in the country.”¹³² During the years that followed, thanks in large part to White’s dedication and hard work by Duncan, Spokane continued acquiring parkland, establishing additional parks and playgrounds, and following the recommendations within the Olmsted report. By 1932 the city had amassed a total of 3,670 parkland acres, far exceeding the Olmsted recommendation that Spokane acquire 2,500 acres of parkland. By the late 1920s the city was stated to rank first in the nation in terms of parkland to population ratio, coming in sixth in terms of area (prevented from ranking higher only because of the vast 41.37-mile width of the city).¹³³

The pace of Spokane’s playground development quickened after the Second World War when “a group of far-seeing educators and recreation experts saw the need for a correlation between facilities of the city park board and those of the public schools” forming the Joint Park-School Coordinating Committee in 1945.¹³⁴ Despite earlier moves toward the establishment of playgrounds, many citizens felt that that the city’s parks were still considered “more or less sacred property – lovely havens where elderly people might sit on benches in the summer,”¹³⁵ with nearby residents sometimes even protesting the installation of play equipment in their neighborhood park. With pressures of a growing population and the subsequent expansion of many schools, even some of the schoolyards had been reduced in size. One successful strategy had been to construct new schools adjacent to park board property, such as the Finch School and Audubon Park. The institution of organized recreational events during after school hours and on Saturdays brought additional success. Spokane’s strategies for addressing the recreational needs of school children was even recognized by the National Recreation Association in 1949 when an officer of that organization was quoted as stating “Spokane is definitely on the right track,”¹³⁶ noting that coordination of activities between the school district and the park board “means greater service at less expense.”¹³⁷

¹³⁰ Aubrey, White. “The Neighborhood Parks Also Serve As Playgrounds,” *Spokesman-Review*, August 28, 1927. n.p. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane, WA).

¹³¹ White. “Early City Fathers Had No Money to Spend for Children,” n.p.

¹³² “Discovering Olmsted Landscapes,” Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, exhibit placard templates located in the Historical Files of the City of Spokane Parks & Recreation Department Park Operations Offices.

¹³³ White, “The Spokane Parks,” n.p.; and “Beauty Spots Dot City of Spokane,” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, June 5, 1928, pp. 2.

¹³⁴ Dorothy Rochon Powers. “Recreational Program Based on Cooperation,” *Spokesman-Review*, January 23, 1949, pp. 3–4. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane, WA); and Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Parks and Open Spaces Plan, Spokane, Washington*. (Report Number 14, City Plan Series 1), July 1965. Spokane, Washington. (Located in the Parks and Playgrounds, Reports Vertical File of the Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Spokane, WA), 8.

¹³⁵ Powers, “Recreational Program Based on Cooperation,” pp. 3–4.

¹³⁶ Powers, “Recreational Program Based on Cooperation,” pp. 3–4.

¹³⁷ Powers, “Recreational Program Based on Cooperation,” pp. 3–4.

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During this same period, in 1942, Duncan retired from his position as Superintendent of Parks after thirty-two years of service. Following his retirement the formal gardens in Manito Park were re-named in his honor, becoming the Duncan Gardens.¹³⁸ Shortly thereafter, Aubrey L. White, Spokane's most vocal park advocate passed away on September 18, 1948. Also to be honored by the park board, a drive beginning at the edge of Downriver Park extending through Riverside State Park came to bear the name Aubrey L. White Parkway.¹³⁹ The memorial was appropriate, as it was White who instigated for the development of the 10,000-acre state park by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930s. White insisted it be developed with an emphasis on preservation of the natural landscape and without destroying its rugged beauty.¹⁴⁰

III. Continuing Park Development and Management, 1950–Present

Throughout the remainder of the twentieth-century, Spokane's park system continued to grow and evolve with the changing times. In 1950, over fifty city and county officials and civic leaders toured the city's parks, noting the contributions the park system has made toward residential development in Spokane and the community value of arranging schools near park or playground properties. Hamblen, park board president at that time noted, "years ago when much of this property was acquired for park and playground areas, people scoffed. They have changed their attitude."¹⁴¹ In 1959, "the City Plan Commission and the Park Board met in joint session and agreed to unite and intensify their efforts to further improve and up date the park system of the city."¹⁴² By 1963 Spokane had developed a national reputation being recognized "by park and recreation men to be entitled to assume the name 'City of Parks.' In land acreage and its ratio to population, in the extent of its recreational facilities, in the number of its parks and their distribution, the city is recognized as a leader in the effort to make life pleasant and healthful for its citizens."¹⁴³ By this time the City Loop Drive had also been established, carrying drivers past some of the best beauty spots in the city – many of the highlighted sites were park properties. The route for the drive, which remains in place today, passed by High Drive Parkway, Cannon Hill Park (proposed Adams Park), Manito Park, Coeur d' Alene Park, High bridge Park (part of the proposed East and West Latah Parkways), Indian Canyon, and Downriver Park.¹⁴⁴

In 1965 the city's first Comprehensive Parks and Open Spaces Plan was developed by the Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission defining goals and policies, including the development of a plan to manage the open areas adjacent to the river following alongside the original Olmsted vision for Gorge Park. This report marked the first "comprehensive study of present and future recreational facility needs since the Olmsted study."¹⁴⁵ At the time of its publication, in 1965, the city had fifty-seven parks and

¹³⁸ "Spokane Board of Park Commissioners begins its duties on June 1, 1907," *HistoryLink.org, The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*. (Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, N.D. Web. 20 April 2011).

¹³⁹ Fahey. "A. L. White, Champion of Urban Beauty," 179.

¹⁴⁰ "White, Aubrey Lee (1869-1948)," *HistoryLink.org*.

¹⁴¹ John J. Lemon, "Annual Park Tour Reveals Fine Facilities," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, September 7, 1950, pp. 14.

¹⁴² Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Parks and Open Spaces Plan*, 1965, 8.

¹⁴³ Frank C. Ferguson (Spokane Park Board). "City of Parks' Relies on Generous Citizens," *Spokesman-Review*, January 6, 1963, pp 4–5. (Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane, WA).

¹⁴⁴ "City Loop Drive Offers Top Views To Motorists," *Spokesman-Review*, May 12, 1960, pp. 9.

¹⁴⁵ Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Park and Open Spaces*, 1979, 4.

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playgrounds, with forty-two under the jurisdiction of the Park Board and fifteen under School Board jurisdiction.¹⁴⁶

Reflecting the city’s continued reliance on the Olmsted Brothers report as a primary planning document, the Park Board in 1979 again defined the goals of parks, open spaces and associated recreational programs as serving three basic functions in providing for human needs, for the protection of natural resources, and influencing development. They defined their resources within categories similar to those proposed by the Olmsteds. These included: major parks (similar to the Olmsteds’ large parks) defined as “a large expanse of open land designed to provide natural scenery and unique features... as well as a pleasant environment and open space,” including not only large parks but also conservation areas and greenbelts; community parks (similar to the Olmsteds’ local parks) “intended to serve the... neighborhoods within a community, providing facilities for young people and adults;” and neighborhood parks (similar to the Olmsteds’ playgrounds) intended as outdoor facilities providing “close-in recreation and open space needs for people living in the neighborhood... located near the center of a neighborhood to make them easily accessible without crossing busy streets or other barriers.”¹⁴⁷

Though not every recommendation was carried out exactly as specified, the Olmsted Brothers’ report has been well realized throughout the years and continues even today to be an important document for park development and maintenance, and urban planning in Spokane with properties today reflecting the city’s unique people and character while being closely reflective of those earlier Olmstedian concepts. The city quickly exceeded the report’s original acreage recommendations and has continued to grow over the past century, with the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department managing over 4,100 acres today and containing within it an operations, urban forestry, golf, planning and project management, budget and finance, recreation and entertainment services, food and beverage, recreation, and aquatics divisions.¹⁴⁸ The intentions of the city’s early park development pioneers, whose goal was to establish a park within a half mile or about a ten to fifteen minutes’ walk of every home,¹⁴⁹ has also been well realized; any current city map reveals a remarkably even distribution of parks east to west and north to south (see images attached).¹⁵⁰ Many of the city plan elements of the report, including the elimination of grade-level rail crossings, the extensive and systematic planting of trees, and the establishment of a municipal arts commission, were also developed and continue to serve valuable functions for the city and its residents. Far from being static entities the city’s parks will continue to evolve and grow, but will nevertheless continue on as a reflection of the vision of the Olmsted Brothers firm (Table 4).

Table 4 - Olmsted Recommendations as Existing Today		
Property Type	Proposed Name (Current Name/Names)	Acreage (& additions) as Proposed (Current Size/Sizes)

¹⁴⁶ Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Parks and Open Spaces Plan*, 1965, 8.

¹⁴⁷ Spokane Park Board and City Plan Commission. *Park and Open Spaces*, 4.

¹⁴⁸ Becky Johnston and Nancy Goodspeed, eds. *Roadmap to the Future, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation, Annual Report 2010*. (Spokane, WA: City of Spokane Reprographics, 2010), 4.

¹⁴⁹ White. “Neighborhood Parks Also Serve As Playgrounds.”

¹⁵⁰ “Olmsted Parks in Spokane,” *HistoryLink.org*.

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Large Parks	Gorge Park (High Bridge Park and Herbert M. Hamblen Conservation Land)	280 acres (263 acres; High Bridge 200, Hamblen 63)
Large Parks	Upriver Park (Felts Field, Upriver Park Conservation Land, Camp Sekani Park, Minnehana Rocks)	1952 acres (303.41 acres; Felts Fiels n/a-private, Upriver Park 8.99, Camp Sekani Conservation Area 56.48, Camp Sekani Park 237.94, Minnehana Rocks 14)
Large Parks	Downriver Park (Downriver Park Conservation Land, Downriver Golf Course)	393 acres (235 acres; Downriver Park 95.3, Downriver Golf Course appx 140)
Large Parks	Latah Park (Creek at Qualchan Golf Course, High Drive Parkway, High Drive Park, Hangman Park, Campion Park)	2286 acres (731.61 acres: High Drive Parkway appx 2.5 miles length; Creek at Qualchan appx 192, High Drive Park 177.5, Hangman 304.42, Campion 22.69, Latah Creek Conservation Area, 35)
Local Parks	Rockwood Park (Lincoln Park)	78 acres (51.3 acres)
Local Parks	Queen Anne Park (Finch Arboretum)	74 acres (56.65 acres)
Local Parks	Ravine Park (Indian Canyon Park, Indian Canyon Golf Course)	126 acres (363.96 acres; Indian Canyon Park 155.7, Indian Canyon Golf Course appx 208.26)
Local Parks	West Heights Park (Palisades Park)	190 acres (464.15 acres)
Local Parks	Eastside Park (never acquired; today contains portions of Spokane Community College, Centennial Trail)	158 acres (n/a, never acquired)
Parkways & Boulevards	Rockwood Boulevard (same)	1.3 miles long; 150 feet wide (appx 1.2 miles long, 120 feet wide)
Parkways & Boulevards	Highland Boulevard (same)	1 mile long; 150 feet wide (appx .3 miles long, 120 feet wide)
Parkways & Boulevards	Manito Boulevard w/Extension (same)	1.25 miles long total (.75 mile existing); 200 feet wide (appx 1.4 miles total length with extension; appx 17.2 ac)
Parkways & Boulevards	Moran Boulevard (never acquired; today most similar to South Regal Street or Southeast Boulevard)	2.25 miles long; between 200 and 320 feet wide (n/a, never acquired)
Parkways & Boulevards	Adams Boulevard (Twenty-First Boulevard)	.6 mile long; 150 feet wide (appx .90 miles long; appx 6.55 acres)
Parkways & Boulevards	East Latah Parkway (never acquired; today is unoccupied bluffs and residential areas and a small portion of High Bridge Park)	2.3 miles long; 164 acres total area (n/a, never acquired)
Parkways & Boulevards	West Latah Parkway (never acquired; today portions of it are within Wentel-Grant and Latah Creek Parks and a small portion of High Bridge Park)	2.1 miles long; 125 acres total area (n/a, never acquired)
Parkways & Boulevards	Upriver Parkway (Upriver Drive)	1.3 miles long; 24 acres total area (appx 8 miles long total, appx 3.5 miles of parkway with 189.52 acres of parkland)
Playfields (Existing)	Hays Playfield (Hays Park)	7.83 (existing); 16 (proposed); 24 acres total (7.83 acres)
Playfields (Existing)	Lidgerwood Playfield (Byrne Park)	3 (existing); 11.2 (proposed); 14.2 acres total (3 acres)

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Playfields	Longfellow Playfield (same)	6.7 acres (n/a, portion of current school property)
Playfields	Logan Playfield (same)	12.7 acres (n/a, portion of current school property)
Playfields	Sinto Playfield (Chief Garry Park)	20.8 acres (10.76 acres)
Playfields	West Riverside Playfield (Glover Field)	5.7 acres (2.29 acres)
Playfields	Underhill Playfield (Underhill Park)	17.9 acres (19.2 acres)
Playfields	Jackson Playfield (never acquired; proposed at Northwest Boulevard between Jackson and Mansfield, currently residential and commercial)	10.4 acres (n/a, never acquired)
Playfields	Courthouse Park (never acquired; to rear of courthouse, current site of jail and ancillary buildings)	4.1 acres (n/a, never acquired)
Playfields	Spokane Falls Park (never acquired; near current intersection of North Lincoln, West Bridge, and North Post Streets)	1.7 acres (n/a, never acquired)
Playfields	River Banks (never acquired; specific proposed site not identified)	not specified (n/a, never acquired)
Local Parks (Existing)	Manito Park (same)	85.6 (existing); 31 (proposed); 116.6 acres total (90 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Coeur d' Alene Park (same)	9.76 acres (no addition proposed) (9.92 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Liberty Park (same)	24.5 acres (no addition proposed) (n/a, park relocated)
Local Parks (Existing)	Stradacona Park (Grant Neighborhood Park)	1.5 acres (no addition proposed) (12.62 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Corbin Park (same)	13 acres (no addition proposed) (11.5 acres)
Playfields (Existing)	Second Lidgerwood Park (Glass Park)	not specified (3.47 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Audubon Park (same)	31.2 acres (no addition proposed) (26.57 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Cliff Park (same)	4.2 acres (no addition proposed) (4.89 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Adams Park (Cannon Hill Park)	13.18 acres (small unspecified addition proposed) (13.11 acres)
Local Parks (Existing)	Mission Avenue Park (Mission Avenue)	1.77 acres (no addition proposed) (3.33 acres)

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES & REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Name of Property Type: Olmsted Park System Properties in Spokane, Washington

Summary:

The sites nominated as part of the Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington Multiple Property Submission (MPS) are those identified specifically by the Olmsted Brothers' report and its accompanying map as submitted to the Spokane Board of Park Commissioners in 1908. Many of the properties recommended within the report, along with those pre-existing parks included in the report, began to be developed or improved per the Olmsted recommendations during the primary period of development, which extended through 1919. Over time, many properties evolved or were further improved during a secondary period, between 1920 and 1949, and continued to develop from 1950 through today in order to adapt to changing times and needs.

Each site, including pre-existing properties, was chosen by the Olmsted firm for inclusion in its citywide plan primarily for its location and/or its natural, visual and scenic features. Each property exhibits its own unique characteristics, which vary dramatically, reflecting the Olmstedian principle that design elements should be conscious of and proper to their own unique setting. Each site should be viewed as a whole, as it is the holistic integrity of the whole site that is the most significant element. Additional elements that contribute to integrity and significance of each individual park system property is the implementation and continued representation of the general Olmsted vision for that particular property along with a reflection of the unique fingerprint that Spokane has put on that property, provisions for active and/or passive recreation, and representation of the intended property subtype. Because significance is most strongly tied to the site as a whole, continued development, additional modern resources, and other such alterations taking place over time do not necessarily detract from the integrity of the overall property within the historic context defined within this MPS.

Table 5 provides a summary of those properties potentially eligible for individual listing within this MPS. Additionally, summaries of the properties already listed in the NRHP (all of which are included in districts) and sites for which individual nominations will not be pursued can be found at the end of this section.

Associated Property Types

I. Subtype: Large Parks

As defined by the Olmsted Brothers firm in their report to the city of Spokane, a large park is one that is likely to be located slightly farther from the city center and therefore not as convenient. Because of their less central location, large parks are intended to fulfill the passive recreational desires of those wishing to "walk reasonable distances amid agreeable, nerve-resting surroundings."¹⁵¹ Large parks contain more numerous and varied features and attractions than smaller parks, even allowing the same visitor to have

¹⁵¹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80.

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new experiences each time he or she visits the same park. "Also, a large park which is wide and varied in topography will offer several alternative routes to the more distant features, thus affording variety in the walks, and one route can be differentiated from another, not only in scenery, but in steepness, indirectness, and adaption to hot, sunny days... or to cool days."¹⁵² These properties were said to induce public health benefits, by offering open air and opportunities for exercise. Additionally, a primary feature of the Olmstedian large park was the preservation of the land; making that vast, rural, scenic landscape "conveniently accessible by the mass of the people."¹⁵³ Leisure drives were another element commonly suggested for inclusion within these properties.

Large parks were sited and designed to take advantage of natural topography and reserve large expanses of natural terrain or exhibit a specific natural feature such as a creek or river. The large park sites recommended by the Olmsted Brothers were undeveloped areas retaining large expanses of undisturbed natural areas, native vegetation, and scenic vistas, and often contained severe terrain unfit for residential or commercial development. Today, many of the properties originally proposed as large parks are classified either as major parks or conservation land areas, which both serve similar goals and purposes as those originally identified by the Olmsted Brothers.

Four large parks were recommended by the Olmsted report, including Gorge Park, Upriver Park, Downriver Park, and Latah Park.

II. Subtype: Local Parks

Local parks were the second property type identified within the Olmsted Brothers report. These were defined as medium-sized parks, which should be conveniently located and contain opportunities for both passive and active recreation. These parks were intended to have trails, walkways, wooded areas, water, and other natural features as well as level areas for games, and organized recreational opportunities such as baseball fields, tennis courts, public shelters, designated picnic areas, children's play apparatus, sand boxes, water access for bathing or boating, or even golf.

Nearly all of the parks that existed at the time the Olmsted Brothers firm was developing its recommendations for Spokane ended up being classified as local parks, being those medium-sized parks situated conveniently within developed or developing areas of the city. Though they often featured terrain not suited for development, they typically also featured some potential for the implementation of sports fields or other similar planned park features. These parks represented a compromise between a large naturalistic reserve with its scenery and a small playfield with its focus on play and recreation. Today these medium-sized parks are primarily classified as community parks and smaller conservation land areas. They continue to fulfill community functions nearly identical to what the Olmsted report originally proposed.

The local parks proposed by the Olmsted report were Rockwood, Queen Anne, Ravine, West Heights, and Eastside Parks. Previously existing properties of this type, proposed for improvement by the Olmsted

¹⁵² Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 80.

¹⁵³ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 80.

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report, included Manito, Coeur d' Alene, Liberty, Stradacona, Corbin, Audubon, Cliff, Adams, and Mission Avenue Parks (an existing avenue with center parkings).

III. Subtype: Parkways and Boulevards

“To make the large parks, and such of the smaller parks as have notable landscape advantages accessible, and to connect one with another by roads specially fitted for pleasure driving and walking, parkways and boulevards are necessary.”¹⁵⁴ As defined by the Olmsted Brothers firm, after having originally been developed by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., boulevards are formal primarily residential roadways, and parkways are less formal and more natural roadways with limited residential access. The Olmsted Brothers’ report included not only recommendations for the roadways themselves, suggesting they be a minimum width of 150 feet, but also included recommendations for properties adjacent to both types of roads suggesting residential setbacks of twenty-five feet minimum and the prohibition of advertising, tenements, and “the keeping of swine or poultry.”¹⁵⁵

Parkways and boulevards were intended not only to link together the city’s parklands, but to also provide an enjoyable, scenic, and leisurely route for travel, often constructing wide grass strips with trees and other plantings. These roadways separated wheeled traffic from foot traffic, and took advantage of topography, curves, and other natural features, following them rather than altering them. The parkways and boulevards of Spokane continue to function as such today.

Those recommended within the Olmsted report were Rockwood Boulevard, Highland Boulevard, Moran Boulevard, Adams Boulevard, East Latah Parkway, West Latah Parkway, Upriver Parkway, and an extension to the existing Manito Boulevard.

IV. Subtype: Playfields

The final property type suggested by the Olmsted Brothers' report for Spokane was playfields also referred to as small parks. These were intended to be “distributed as evenly as possible in the already occupied parts of the city”¹⁵⁶ on subdivided land large enough to accommodate organized recreational opportunities such as ball fields or play apparatus. The playfields were intended to feature a row of trees and a narrow belt of shrubbery around the edges of the property to assist in screening the views of neighboring residents. It was recommended that they contain elements such as an open lawn, walkways, children’s play areas, wading pools, public shelter houses with toilets and dressing rooms, and depressed playfields that could double as a skating surfaces during winter months.¹⁵⁷ It was acknowledged in the Olmsted report that these features would likely be developed over time as adequate funding would take time to acquire. It was also proposed that, while the playfields should contain sidewalks, they should be

¹⁵⁴ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 85.

¹⁵⁵ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 85.

¹⁵⁶ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 88.

¹⁵⁷ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 88.

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differentiated from city-street sidewalks by making them curvilinear rather than straight or by elevating them above small park walls.¹⁵⁸

The Olmsted proposed playfields were meant to provide opportunities for recreation, easily accessible to all citizens, by making sure those neighborhoods without local parks would at minimum contain a small park; several were even proposed to be sited near schools. Though some of the specifically recommended resources, including children's play apparatus, were not always added until the secondary or continued developmental phases, these properties were always intended to be shared and enjoyed by visitors of all ages. Today these small parks are classified primarily as neighborhood parks and community parks, with some belonging to the school district as school playgrounds. They continue to serve the purposes and contain the elements recommended by the Olmsted report.

The playfields proposed within the Olmsted report included Longfellow, Logan, Sinto, West Riverside, Underhill, and Jackson Playfields, and Courthouse, Spokane Falls, and River Banks Parks. Previously existing playfields addressed within the Olmsted report included Hays and Lidgerwood Playfields and a second Lidgerwood Park.

Property Type Significance

Under the Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington MPS properties can meet National Register Criterion A for their association with broad patterns of park development, landscape architecture, city planning, and all of these elements as they relate to twentieth-century Spokane; and Criterion C, embodying the distinctive characteristics of early-twentieth-century parkland development and possessing high artistic values representing Olmstedian and City Beautiful principles regarding treatment of the land and the planning of cities, open spaces, and the transportation links between the open spaces as a whole system.

The Olmsted park system properties in Spokane, Washington are a locally significant representation of the Olmstedian citywide park system and the physical development of the city, as well as an evolution in park development and Spokane's evolving methods of implementing and manipulating that original plan to fit the city. As a result, each park system property has a significance tied to Olmstedian principles, including most notably land and scenic vista conservation, community planning, recreation, landscape architecture, and the formal and/or naturalistic treatment of roadways, but are also unique products of their time reflective of those earlier concepts. Though not every property appears at first glance to be what one may think of as an Olmstedian park, they are nevertheless representative of what the Olmsted Brothers recommended as appropriate and fitting for each site, which is in itself a powerful element of an Olmsted property, and what Spokane saw as fitting for itself.

They are significant examples within a park system that began to be established during the earliest days of American park development, landscape architecture, and city planning and still function today as a tangible manifestation of these newly developing fields and their evolution in Spokane. During this

¹⁵⁸ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 88.

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period, people were becoming increasingly aware of the value of parks for the physical and mental health of individuals and organized recreational opportunities, especially for children, as well as the role of parks in conserving valuable natural areas within cities. As time continued the park properties grew and evolved in order to meet changing times and ideas and the changing needs of the city's inhabitants in ways largely consistent with the original Olmsted vision for the city and its parklands. Today these properties, in conjunction with additional public parklands developed throughout the years, make up the backbone of land conservation and publicly accessible recreation in Spokane's renowned citywide park system.

The primary measure of significance for each property is tied to retention of the site itself, with its locational, natural, scenic, and visual characteristics. Additional measures of significance are tied to each property's representation of the original Olmsted recommendations for that particular property (whether it was to be a simple roadway, a small playground, or a large scenic reserve) and the unique Spokane fingerprint placed on each property over time; the provision for active and/or passive recreation as recommended for that particular site; and continued representation of the proposed subtype. The period of significance for the park system as a whole extends between 1891, when parks in Spokane began to be formed, and 1963, the fifty-year mark at the time of this nomination, though a specific period of significance within that range will be identified for each individual property depending on its particular history and development.

Property Type Registration Requirements

In order to be considered a part of the Olmsted proposed citywide park system and be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a park system property must meet the following requirements:

- feature specific reference in the 1908 Olmsted Brothers' report for Spokane (whether a pre-existing property or proposed new property);
- development or improvement of the property was undertaken or at least initiated during the primary period of development in Spokane (1891–1919) according to the Olmsted recommendations specific for that property;
 - properties existing prior to the 1908 report may be eligible within this MPS if additional development and/or improvement was undertaken or initiated per the Olmsted recommendations for that property, during the primary period of development
- still reflects the intended uses and characteristics identified in the Olmsted report;
- a significant portion of the property was developed in the originally proposed area (though the exact boundaries may vary somewhat), containing and/or protecting the primary natural and/or visual characteristics identified in the Olmsted report;
- was developed as the sub-type originally proposed by the Olmsted report and continues today as an intact example of that sub-type (or its modern equivalent);
- still reflects the natural, visual and scenic characteristics for which it was originally chosen;
- remains today as public remaining as a publicly accessible park or playground (if parkland), or continuing to function as a public roadway (if a parkway or boulevard);
- historic built resources should be minimally altered and retain integrity of material, workmanship and design;

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- historic built resources are considered those dating to within the period of significance for each individual property, as defined in each individual nomination
- modern resources or alterations dating outside the period of significance for the system as a whole (post-1963) should not interfere with the historic design, feeling, or spatial qualities;
- retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

Integrity criteria for each subtype are as follows:

I. **Subtype: Large Parks**

- naturalistic principles and aesthetics should remain in the landscape design and design features including walkways, driveways, viewpoints, open lawns (as intended), recreational opportunities (primarily passive), native plantings, and designated natural areas;
 - golf courses are common features within large parks – though they are more highly designed, still exhibit natural plantings, reflect the natural topography, preserve large expanses of land, and allow a leisurely recreational experience, which ties them to the Olmstedian vision for this property subtype. Golf courses also represent evolving, Spokane-specific methods of implementing the original plan and are seen as acceptable elements of large parks within this MPS
- maintain boundaries in which large geographical areas are contained;
- retention of features identified for this subtype by the Olmsted firm including rural-type natural setting near the city and the opportunity for a variety of experienced within the same site.

II. **Subtype: Local Parks**

- combination of natural topography for passive recreation, and open expanses for active recreation, as proposed for the specific site in the Olmsted report;
- integrity of design features as intended for the particular site;
- retention of features identified for this subtype by the Olmsted firm including a convenient location within developed areas of the city featuring natural and severe topography unsuited for development as well as open, level areas.

III. **Subtype: Parkways and Boulevards**

- naturalistic and informal treatment should remain for parkways and formal treatment of the roadway should remain for boulevards;
- should remain similar in design, alignment, and route as originally intended continuing to provide a leisurely and visually pleasing transportation route and providing access to the vistas intended for the particular property;
- retain planting strips as intended for the particular property;

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- center planting strips with numerous breaks typically associated with boulevards, and planting strips with few breaks separating the roadway from residential areas typically associated with parkways
- preservation of informal natural areas and curvilinear paths with respect to natural topography for parkways, and formal areas for boulevards;
- retention of large overall widths;
- lack of advertising and other commercial or industrial intrusions;
- grass, trees, shrubs, and other native plantings should remain.

IV. **Subtype: Playfields**

- maintain square or rectangular boundaries as dictated by the city block(s) it is situated on, with its tree or shrub plantings around portions of outside borders;
- integrity of design features intended for the particular site;
- maintain elements associated with active recreation, as intended, balanced by open areas and walkways as recommended for the particular site.

The properties of the Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington continue to serve the public in all of the ways originally envisioned by the Olmsted Brothers and as a result have grown and evolved throughout the years. Minor modifications, additions, and modern park features have been added during subsequent periods of development. Though the majority of these resources are contemporary additions, they are reflective of both the original vision for these sites and are directly related to the activities intended to take place within them (including active and passive recreation), and of the inherently evolving nature of public parklands and therefore do not detract from the overall character of each property. Because the holistic integrity of the site as a whole is the most significant element, the addition of elements that would be expected within any park system property has very little relevance to each site's integrity and significance. Common alterations found within these properties that do not substantially impact the integrity or NRHP eligibility of each overall park property include:

- modern playground equipment and children's play apparatus;
- minor or temporary features including tables, benches, fire pits, pavilions, signage, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, bus shelters, hydrants, bike racks, barbecues, sculptures or memorials, etc;
- modern utilities including telephone poles, pipes, or minor utility access buildings;
- parking areas (paved, gravel, or other);
- elements supporting active recreation including ball fields, bleachers, tennis courts, volleyball courts, horseshoe pits, splash pads, basketball hoops, etc;
- golf elements such as tees, flags, sand traps, water hazards, cart paths, signage, ball cleaners, benches, and fencing;

An effort has been made throughout the years to honor and follow the Olmsted vision and the historical design of the city's parklands and as a result, whenever possible, additions, repairs, or alterations utilize similar or compatible styles and materials to what is already in place in order to maintain consistency and

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respect the original designs and spatial qualities. These types of modern resources do not significantly reduce each site’s ability to convey significance as an Olmsted Park System property.

The only building type common within the park system is the original comfort station building. In order to retain integrity of design, remaining examples of this building type should exhibit original features including its form and original design, use of native stone, and in some cases visible rafter tails and flared exterior walls. Minor alterations to the buildings, such as the placement of vents into original window openings or the use of modern roof sheathing, do not reduce the building’s ability to convey integrity.

Table 5 - NRHP Eligibility of Olmsted Park System of Spokane Properties within this Multiple Property Submission (the integrity of each property will be evaluated individually; some properties may not be eligible)				
Property Type	Proposed Name in Olmsted report	Current Name / Current Properties Associated with Originally Proposed Site	Potentially Eligible or Ineligible Within This MPS	NRHP Listed (see subsequent paragraphs for details)
Large Parks	Gorge Park	High Bridge Park and Herbert M. Hamblen Conservation Land	Ineligible	
Large Parks	Upriver Park	Felts Field, Upriver Park Conservation Land, Camp Sekani Park, Minnehaha Rocks	Ineligible	X
Large Parks	Downriver Park	Downriver Park Conservation Land, Downriver Golf Course	Eligible	
Large Parks	Latah Park	Creek at Qualchan Golf Course, High Drive Parkway, High Drive Park, Hangman Park, Campion Park	Eligible	
Local Parks	Rockwood Park	Lincoln Park	Eligible	
Local Parks	Queen Anne Park	Finch Arboretum	Ineligible	
Local Parks	Ravine Park	Indian Canyon Park, Indian Canyon Golf Course	Eligible	
Local Parks	West Heights Park	Palisades Park	Eligible	
Local Parks	Eastside Park	never acquired; today contains portions of Spokane Community College, Centennial Trail	Ineligible	
Parkways & Boulevards	Rockwood Boulevard	Rockwood Boulevard	Eligible	X
Parkways & Boulevards	Highland Boulevard	Highland Boulevard	Eligible	X
Parkways & Boulevards	Manito Boulevard Extension	Manito Boulevard	Eligible	

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Parkways & Boulevards	Moran Boulevard	never acquired; today most similar to South Regal Street or Southeast Boulevard	Ineligible	
Parkways & Boulevards	Adams Boulevard	Twenty-First Boulevard	Eligible	
Parkways & Boulevards	East Latah Parkway	never acquired; today is unoccupied bluffs and residential areas and a small portion of High Bridge Park	Ineligible	
Parkways & Boulevards	West Latah Parkway	never acquired; today portions of it are within Wentel-Grant and Latah Creek Parks and a small portion of High Bridge Park	Ineligible	
Parkways & Boulevards	Upriver Parkway	Upriver Drive	Eligible	
Playfields (Existing)	Hays Playfield	Hays Park	Eligible	
Playfields (Existing)	Lidgerwood Playfield	Byrne Park	Eligible	
Playfields	Longfellow Playfield	Longfellow Playfield (school playground)	Ineligible	
Playfields	Logan Playfield	Logan Playfield (school playground)	Ineligible	
Playfields	Sinto Playfield	Chief Garry Park	Eligible	
Playfields	West Riverside Playfield	Glover Field	Ineligible	X
Playfields	Underhill Playfield	Underhill Park	Eligible	
Playfields	Jackson Playfield	never acquired; proposed at Northwest Boulevard between Jackson and Mansfield, currently residential and commercial	Ineligible	
Playfields	Courthouse Park	never acquired; to rear of courthouse, current site of jail and ancillary buildings	Ineligible	
Playfields	Spokane Falls Park	never acquired; near current intersection of North Lincoln, West Bridge, and North Post Streets	Ineligible	
Playfields	River Banks	never acquired; specific proposed site not identified	Ineligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Manito Park	Manito Park	Eligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Coeur d' Alene Park	Coeur d' Alene Park	Eligible	X
Local Parks (Existing)	Liberty Park	Liberty Park	Ineligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Stradacona Park	Grant Neighborhood Park	Ineligible	

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Local Parks (Existing)	Corbin Park	Corbin Park	Eligible	X
Playfields (Existing)	Second Lidgerwood Park	Glass Park	Eligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Audubon Park	Audubon Park	Eligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Cliff Park	Cliff Park	Eligible	X
Local Parks (Existing)	Adams Park	Cannon Hill Park	Eligible	
Local Parks (Existing)	Mission Avenue Park	Mission Avenue	Ineligible	X

Previously Listed Properties

Eight of the Olmsted-proposed park system properties are situated within the boundaries of existing NRHP districts, with significance tied to historical associations separate from their Olmstedian links. Only three of these are identified as contributing elements with one of those being associated with a proposed property that was never developed. The summaries below note whether or not each Olmsted-proposed property is eligible for the NRHP as part of the MPS (also defined in Table 5). The previously listed properties are as follows:

Felts Field: this property makes up the majority of the area on the south side of the Spokane River originally proposed to be a part of Upriver Park. The vast majority of the park, as originally proposed, was situated north of the river. This land was chosen by the Olmsteds for its location along the river providing protection of the landscape as well as protection of the water supply, and recreational opportunities. The areas on the south side of the river were level, and intended to contain lawns, outdoor gymnasias, gardens, drives, and walks.¹⁵⁹ Though originally proposed at 1,952 acres, approximately 464.4 acres of land were purchased for park purposes with the hopes of developing the city’s first public golf course. Instead, the Felts Field airport was opened on the site in 1916. The Felts Field Historic District was listed in the NRHP in 1990 significant under Criterion A for its association with the growth of aviation in the Inland Northwest, and serving as the region’s first municipal airport. A small portion of the remaining lands originally proposed within Upriver Park are now protected within Camp Sekani Park, Minnehana Rocks, and Upriver Park Conservation Land; these areas are not listed in the NRHP and are not within the boundaries of the Felts Field Historic District. The Olmsted-proposed Upriver Park is ineligible within this MPS.

Rockwood and Highland Boulevards: both Rockwood and Highland Boulevards are located within the boundaries of the Rockwood Historic District, which was listed in the NRHP in 1996 under Criterion A, for its representation of suburban residential development, and Criterion C for its architecture. Though a basic introduction to the Olmsted contribution to this neighborhood is included within the nomination, the

¹⁵⁹ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 81–82.

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boulevards were not included as contributing resources nor were any of the entry markers or retaining walls. Rockwood and Highland Boulevards are eligible as part of the MPS.

West Riverside Playfield: known today as Glover Field and earlier in the twentieth-century as the Stadium Site, West Riverside Playfield is situated within the boundaries of the Peaceful Valley Historic District though it is not listed as a contributing resource within the district. The district was listed in the NRHP in 1983 for its significance as a remaining, intact example of a turn-of-the-twentieth-century, working-class neighborhood. This property is ineligible as part of the MPS.

Coeur d'Alene Park: Spokane's first public park, donated in 1891, is Coeur d'Alene Park. The park is located within the boundaries of the Browne's Addition Historic District, which was listed in the NRHP in 1976 for its architecture. Though the park is within the boundaries of the district, it was not included as a contributing resource. Coeur d'Alene Park is eligible as part of the MPS.

Corbin Park: the Corbin Park neighborhood was listed on both the Spokane Register of Historic Places and the NRHP in 1991 as a district significant for its association with Spokane's early founders and for its architecture. The park is included as a contributing resource within the district, listed as a single contributing site. This property is eligible as part of the MPS.

Cliff Park: Cliff Park is located within the boundaries of the Marycliff-Cliff Park Historic District that was listed to the NRHP in 1978 for its association with the patterns of development in Spokane and its architectural significance. Though the park is briefly mentioned, it is not defined as a contributing resource. Cliff Park is eligible as part of the MPS.

Mission Avenue Park: the city's first planned boulevard with center parkings, or planting strips, was Mission Avenue, identified as Mission Avenue Park in the Olmsted Brothers report. A six-block segment of the avenue's center plantings is included within the Mission Avenue Historic District. The district was listed in the NRHP in 1986 as a significant, early residential suburb in Spokane. The portion of the median strip that is located within the boundaries of the primarily residential district is identified as a contributing site, as a unifying element creating historical and visual character. This property is eligible as part of the MPS.

Properties That Appear Potentially Ineligible As Part of The Current MPS, As Written

Before beginning individual nominations within the contexts and registration requirements contained within this multiple property documentation form, it was determined that seventeen properties are not eligible as part of the MPS. This includes ten properties never acquired or established as proposed and two sites that have lost integrity. As the project continued, it was determined that five additional properties failed to meet the registration requirements defined herein. Brief summaries of all of the proposed properties that will not be nominated follow.

Ten properties proposed within the Olmsted recommendations for Spokane were never acquired or established in a way consistent with the original Olmsted proposals for those properties, and/or the previously defined registration requirements. These include Upriver Park, Eastside Park, Moran Boulevard, East and West Latah Parkways, West Riverside Playfield, Jackson Playfield, Courthouse and Spokane Falls Parks, and River Banks. Portions of the land recommended for Upriver Park have been

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preserved as city parkland on the north side of the Spokane River including Upriver Park Conservation Land (8.99 acres), Camp Sekani Conservation Area (56.48 acres), and Camp Sekani Park (237.94 acres). Minnehana Rocks Park (14 acres), though situated in the vicinity, is under the ownership of Spokane County Parks and Recreation. All or nearly all of the lands proposed for this park on the south side of the river were developed into the area's first municipal airport, Felts Field, in 1916. Though no connection was made to the property's association with the Olmsted recommendations for that land, Felts Field was listed in the NRHP in 1991. Upriver Park, as proposed by the Olmsted firm, was recommended to encompass 1,952 acres both north and south of the river in order to create a vast park in the east end of the city. Today, the three separate park properties located within those areas on the map preserve only 303.41 acres total. As small, disjointed, and geographically separate properties these parks do not fulfill the original Olmsted vision for the site. Additionally, it appears that the only lands acquired during the primary period of significance were 464.5 acres on the south side of the river, acquired in 1913, quickly being utilized for the airport rather than public parkland.

Eastside Park, proposed by the Olmsted recommendations as a local park supplementing Upriver Park in the easterly portion of the city, was also never developed as recommended. It was intended as 158.5 total acres, extending on both the north and south banks of the river between Upriver Park and Mission Avenue Park. A portion of Upriver Parkway would have passed through this property. Today, the area where Eastside Park was proposed to be located includes a portion of the Spokane Community College campus, Upriver Parkway (Upriver Drive), and the Centennial Trail. The majority of these lands are primarily industrial and commercial today. As this land was never even partially developed as a park, it is not eligible for inclusion as part of the MPS.

Moran Boulevard was also never developed as proposed. It was intended as a wide pleasure drive, running in a straight north-south line, serving as a continuation of Rockwood and Highland Boulevards connecting Rockwood Park to Latah Park passing along the Moran Prairie. The road that today exists along the most similar path and location the one proposed for Moran Boulevard is South Regal Street, though Southeast Boulevard more effectively serves as a continuation of Rockwood Boulevard toward the south. Neither alternate roadway was established to serve the purposes intended for Moran Boulevard.

East and West Latah Parkways were proposed as a transportation route between Gorge and Latah Parks, protecting those lands along both sides of Latah Creek. East Latah Parkway would have traveled along the east side of the creek, rising toward the bluff (along the west edge of Spokane's South Hill) either under or over the railroad tracks in that area. Only a small portion of the lands proposed on the map for this parkway are parkland today, with the northerly tip of the proposed East Latah Parkway being situated within High Bridge Park. West Latah Parkway was proposed along the west side of Latah Creek, following a parallel route extending to the northwest boundary of the proposed Latah Park. Today a portion of this land is contained within Latah Creek and Wentel Grant Parks. All of the lands proposed for the East and West Latah Parkways that remain public parkland today are contained within parks, never having been established as parkways.

The property proposed as West Riverside Playfield was established in 1908 as the Stadium Site later evolving into Glover Field Park. Though established along the south bank of the Spokane River in the Peaceful Valley neighborhood as proposed, the property acquired was directly east of the proposed site.

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The lands within the Peaceful Valley site do not contain any of those lands proposed by the Olmsted Brothers. Additionally, the property was originally used as an athletic stadium complete with bleachers and locker rooms, rather than a playfield as proposed. Though Glover Field Park today generally fulfills the Olmsted vision for the park property they proposed on the adjacent site, it fails to meet several of the previously defined registration requirements and is therefore ineligible for inclusion in the NRHP as an Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington property.

Jackson Playfield, Courthouse and Spokane Falls Parks, and River Banks were never established. Jackson Playfield was proposed east of Northwest Boulevard between Jackson and Mansfield Avenues. Today this property is primarily residential, with commercial development, including a large Safeway grocery store, being situated on those parcels bordering Northwest Boulevard. Courthouse Playfield was proposed for the area directly to the rear of the county courthouse. Today this property contains the county jail and other courthouse support facilities. Spokane Falls Playfield, proposed between Broadway Avenue and Post Street and between Lincoln Street and the river. Today this site is primarily occupied by Anthony's Restaurant and the old YWCA building. The property identified in the playfields portion of the Olmsted report simply as River Banks was not specifically identified on the map. The Olmsted recommendations simply stated that the city should attempt to "acquire control of the riverbed or of the banks... even a strip only wide enough for a walk from one street to the next would be sufficient to eventually warrant the expense."¹⁶⁰ No single property can be attributed directly to this recommendation, thus no property will be nominated to the NRHP as the River Banks property.

Two additional properties, Liberty and Stradacona Parks, which both existed prior to the Olmsted report, have lost integrity and no longer communicate as Olmsted park system properties. Liberty Park, originally established in 1897, impressed Olmsted and Dawson during their visits to Spokane, with its hills and valleys, projecting ledges, and marked topographical features. As a result of these features, it was fairly unsuited for development, but was the ideal location for a park. Liberty Park was one of only three park system properties for which the Olmsted firm prepared designs, drawings, and extensive planting plans. The park was developed per the Olmsted recommendations, and contained a number of basalt structures including an arbored terrace and promenade. Early in its history, the park and the structures within it began to deteriorate, and then by the late 1960s the park had been all but lost due to the construction of Interstate-90. At that time, the park's acreage was relocated to a site directly southeast of the original site – only 2 ½ of the original acres are contained within the current park boundaries. Some of the stone ruins, once situated in the far west portion of the original park, can still be seen near Third and Arthur. Though Liberty Park still exists in name, it is no longer sited in its original location nor does it contain the areas planned and developed per the Olmsted recommendations and plans.

Stradacona Park or Stadacona Circle was originally acquired in 1901 as a small 1.3 acre, oval-shaped park made "out of the four corners of blocks at what would have been the intersection of Laura Street with 11th Avenue."¹⁶¹ It was intended to be formally treated with high-backed benches and possibly even a "little summer house" in the center.¹⁶² A walkway should have circled the exterior boundary, while straight

¹⁶⁰ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 90.

¹⁶¹ Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 93.

¹⁶² Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, 93.

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pathways would cross the park both length- and width-wise. A 1918 R.L. Polk map of the city indicates that the park was developed as such, with straight pathways crossing the property north-south and east-west, intersecting in the center of the park where a diamond-shaped area was created by the convergence of the pathways. This property also lost its integrity as part of the urban-renewal taking place during the 1960s. As a result of the interstate development's affect on Liberty Park, it was decided that the Grant School Playground should be enlarged to provide additional park area within this part of the city. In 1968 the playground was expanded to a 13.6-acre neighborhood park, which involved demolishing a number of residences and enveloping the original Stradacona Park. The original oval now exists only as a rounded bump out from Grant Park. The oval shape, the pathways, and all of the original characteristics of the park, including its name, were lost as a result of the 1968 expansion at which time Stradacona Park effectively ceased to exist.

During the course of the project, it was also determined that several additional Olmsted proposed do not meet the registration requirements defined within this multiple property documentation form for the Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington. This includes Gorge and Queen Anne Parks, and Longfellow and Logan Playfields. Upon visiting Spokane, Olmsted and Dawson were overwhelmingly impressed by the river gorge running through the center of the city. The Olmsted Brothers report submitted to the Board of Park Commissioners in 1908 reflects this in the summary for the proposed Gorge Park, which states that "nothing is so firmly impressed on the mind of the visitor to Spokane, as regards its appearance, as the great gorge into which the river falls near the centre of the city. It is a tremendous feature of the landscape and one that is rare in a large city than river, lake, bay or mountain. Any city should prize and preserve its great landscape features, inasmuch as they give it individuality."¹⁶³

Gorge Park, as originally proposed was intended to protect both the bluffs north of the Spokane River, more open areas near the horseshoe bend in the river and along Latah Creek, and provide pathways along the south banks of the river. Little to no parkland development took place in these locations until the 1920s, at which point Riverside Park and High Bridge Park were established. Throughout the mid-twentieth-century, High Bridge Park was utilized primarily as a neighborhood park for the adjacent residential development, having been classified as a community park until the 1970s, therefore lacking the characteristics of an Olmstedian large park as Gorge Park was originally proposed. The only area of original parkland developed within the areas directly attributed to the proposed Gorge Park in the original Olmsted Brothers plan is the portion of Riverside Park situated on the north banks of the horseshoe bend in the river, however, this area is much smaller in overall area than originally proposed, though the 1993 addition of the Herbert M. Hamblen Conservation Area has helped further the original Olmsted vision for the site. Almost none of the land west of the river and north of the Latah Creek convergence has been preserved as city parkland, though a portion of this property is currently situated within the Riverside Memorial Park Cemetery. It does not appear that original portions of the proposed Gorge Park were developed within the primary period of significance nor were they developed as the sub-type intended. Additionally, only minimal portions of the land originally proposed for the large park, and remaining public parkland today, were developed prior to 1963 meeting the fifty-year requirement and the potential period of significance for this site. As a result, it has been determined that Gorge Park does not sufficiently meet

¹⁶³ *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 80.

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the registration requirements as outlined in the Olmsted Park System Properties of Spokane Multiple Property Documentation form, and is ineligible for individual listing in the NRHP as an Olmsted Park System of Spokane property.

Queen Anne Park, now known as Finch Arboretum, was developed when the land in this location formerly associated with a private estate became available for sale. Little improvement happened in the site's earliest years, though by the early part of the mid-twentieth century it was well established as an arboretum featuring a manicured lawn, plantings for display and educational purposes, pathways, and an educational center. Over the years, the site has undergone numerous alterations, developments, and drastic changes to its boundaries and no longer reflects the characteristics of an Olmsted park system property nor its originally intended features or uses as a local park with both active and passive recreation. It has been determined the site does not meet the registration requirements within this MPS.

Two of the proposed properties, Longfellow and Logan Playfields, appear to have lost integrity and no longer reflect their originally intended characteristics as Olmsted playfields. Both schools have been modernized, and were relocated within their parcels as a part of the construction projects, which has further reduced any integrity associated with the original playground for both locations. As a result, they are no longer a part of the park system as defined by the above registration requirements and are therefore ineligible for inclusion in the NRHP as part of this MPS.

Finally, Mission Avenue Park is not readily recognizable through its character or design features as an Olmsted park system property and does not appear to retain sufficient integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, or association. As a result, it has been determined that Mission Avenue Park does not sufficiently meet the registration requirements as outlined in the Olmsted Park System Properties of Spokane Multiple Property Documentation form, and is ineligible for individual listing in the NRHP as an Olmsted Park System of Spokane property.

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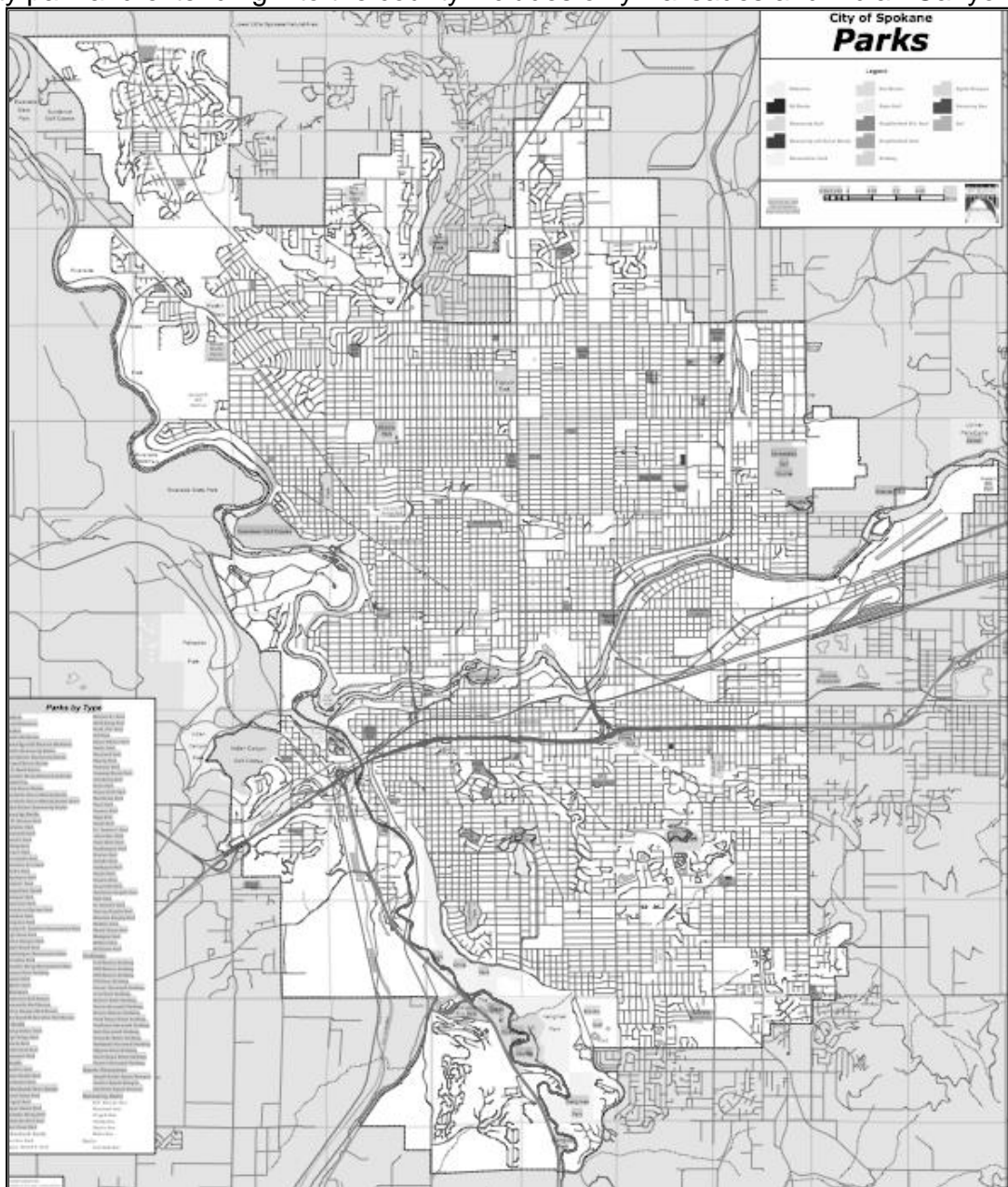
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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The municipal limits of the City of Spokane, Spokane County, Washington, and conservation land owned and by the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department that extends into Spokane County beyond city limits. City parkland extending into the county includes only Palisades and Indian Canyon Park.



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H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The MPS for the Olmsted Park System of Spokane, Washington was initiated by the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department under the current director Leroy Eadie. The submission is based primarily on the *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Spokane, Washington, 1891 – 1913* and was supported by materials held by the Parks and Recreation Department and the department's operations division, the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture. These materials included information used for the 2008 "Discovering Olmsted Landscapes" exhibit at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture and research previously compiled by local historian, Sally R. Reynolds. Additional materials from the Northwest Room at the Spokane Public Library and the Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch at Eastern Washington University in Cheney, WA were also referenced. The research conducted at these repositories resulted in the development of the multiple property documentation form drafted to provide a context for the park system properties as well as a guide for the determination of eligibility of the individual properties.

Of the thirty-eight properties contained within the Olmsted Brothers firm's recommendations for the City of Spokane and contained within the previously referenced report, it has been determined that ten were never acquired or established, two have lost integrity, and four do not meet the registration requirements of the MPS. Additionally four of the proposed properties have been grouped with other properties, to which they are intrinsically linked, for the purposes of individually listing in the NRHP. These include Highland Boulevard (to be included as a part of the Rockwood Boulevard individual nomination), Manito Boulevard and Extension as well as Adams Boulevard (part of the Manito Park nomination), and the second Lidgerwood Park, Glass Park, an existing playfield (a part of the Lidgerwood Parks nomination including Byrne and Glass Parks). As a result, seventeen individual NRHP nominations representing twenty-one Olmsted park system properties have been determined potentially eligible for listing as part of this MPS.

The field survey was initiated during the early stages of archival research, and continued during the initial drafting of the multiple property documentation form. Survey efforts have included the photographing of all resources contained within each of the existing park system properties as well as photographic documentation of the overall sites themselves in order to record their general character, landscape features, and remaining reflections of the Olmstedian principles, theories, and aesthetics.

The historic contexts were partially determined by information discovered during archival research and field survey as well as through conversations with SHPO and NPS staff. It was concluded that the historic contexts should set up what was happening nationwide in the areas of landscape architecture and park development at that time; introduce local history and how the park system came to be; and both how Spokane's park properties fit into the national picture and why they are significant locally. The historic contexts, representing these themes include: origins of American park development, landscape architecture, and city planning; Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted Brothers; the City Beautiful Movement; Olmsted Brothers in Spokane, 1906-1908; and Park Development in Spokane, 1891–present. The properties have been divided into four sub-types, corresponding with the property types as defined by the Olmsted Brothers report including: large parks; local parks; parkways and boulevards; and playfields.

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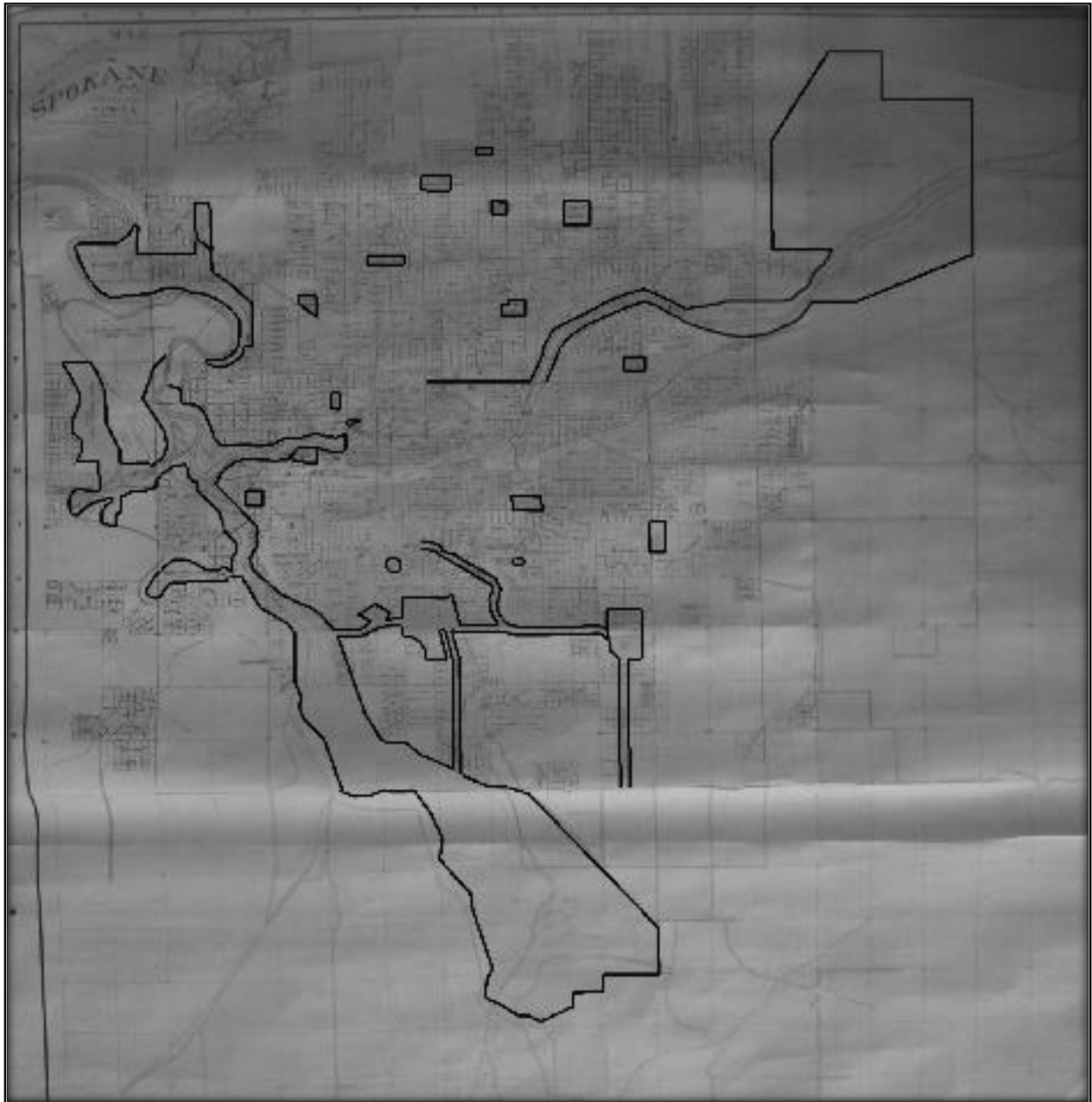
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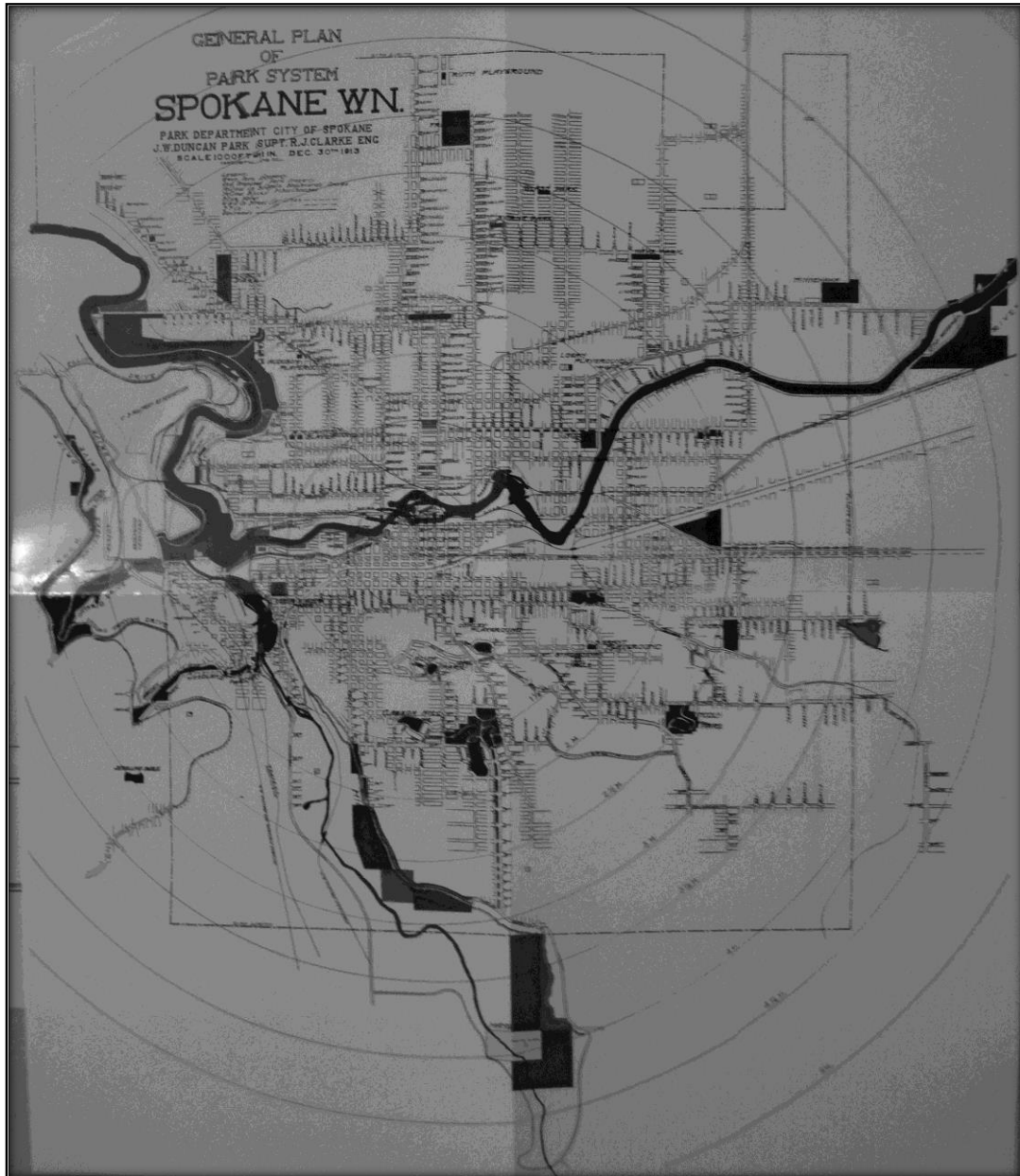
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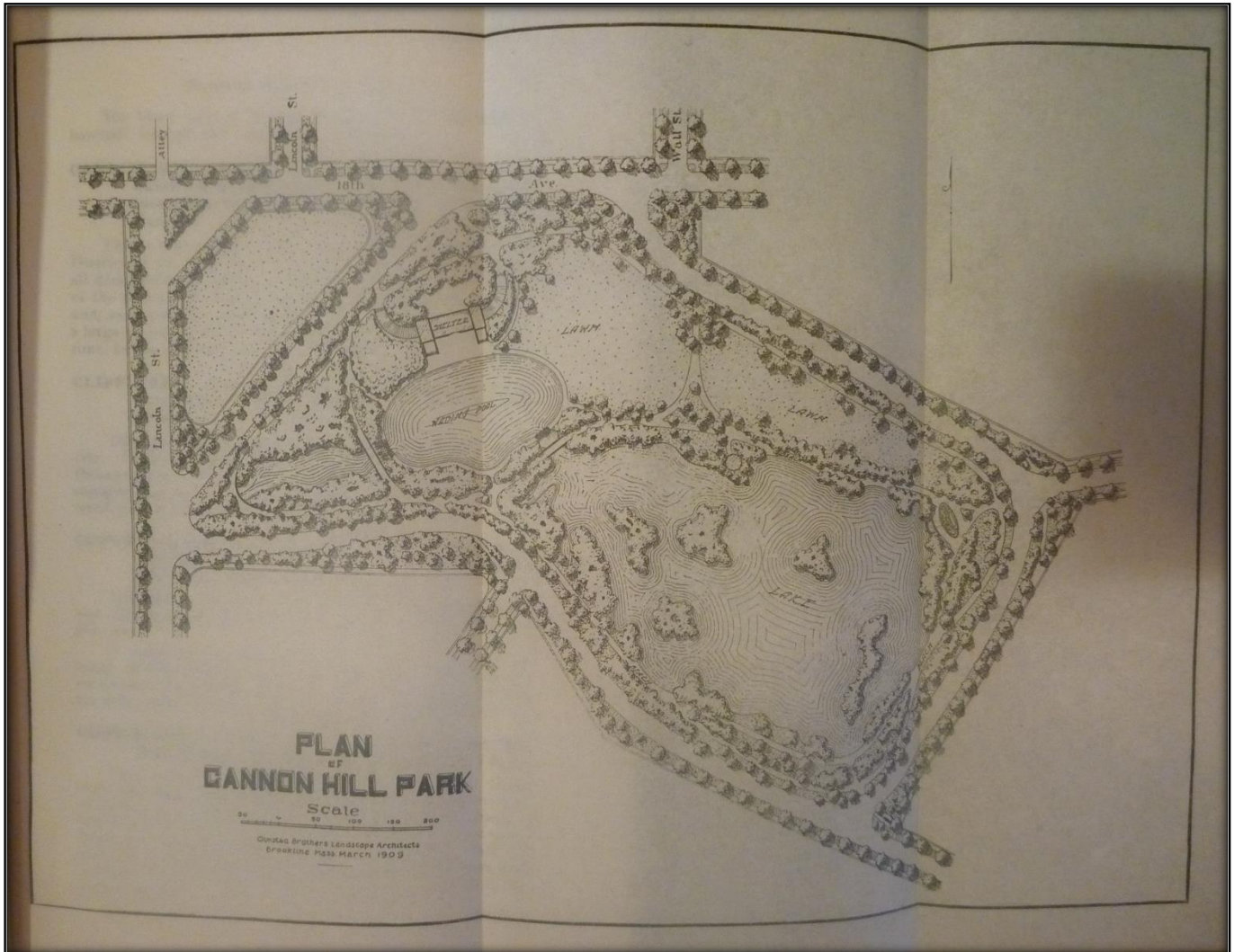
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“Plan of Cannon Hill Park, Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Brookline, Mass, 1909,” *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Spokane, Washington, 1891–1913*. (Revised by Spokane Parks Foundation and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture. Spokane, WA: Marquette Books, 2007. Originally published in Spokane, WA: Inland Printing Co., 1913), n.p.

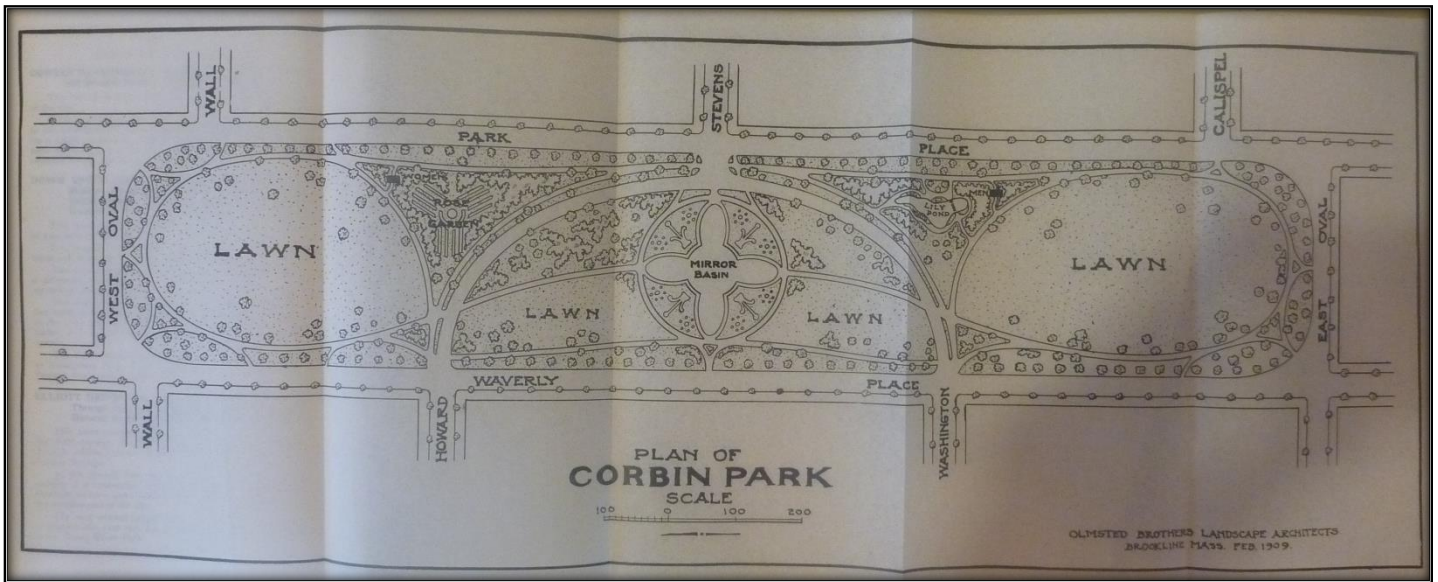
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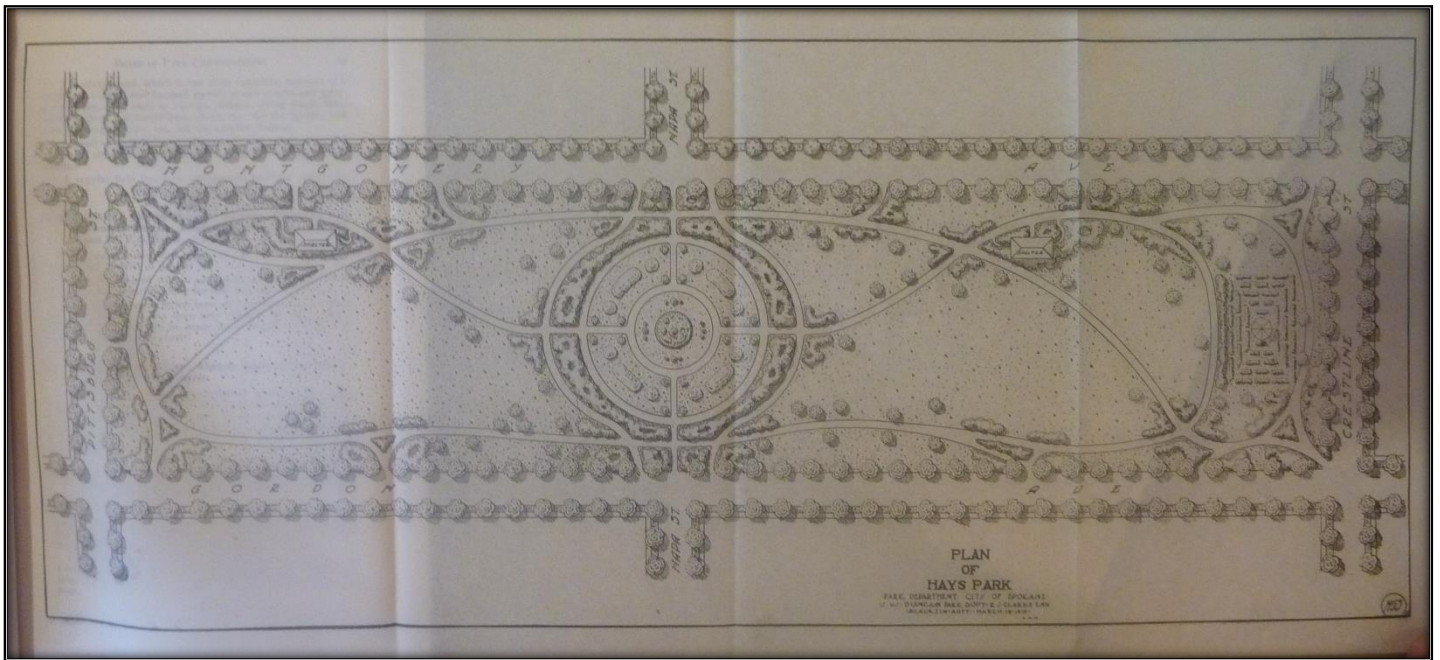
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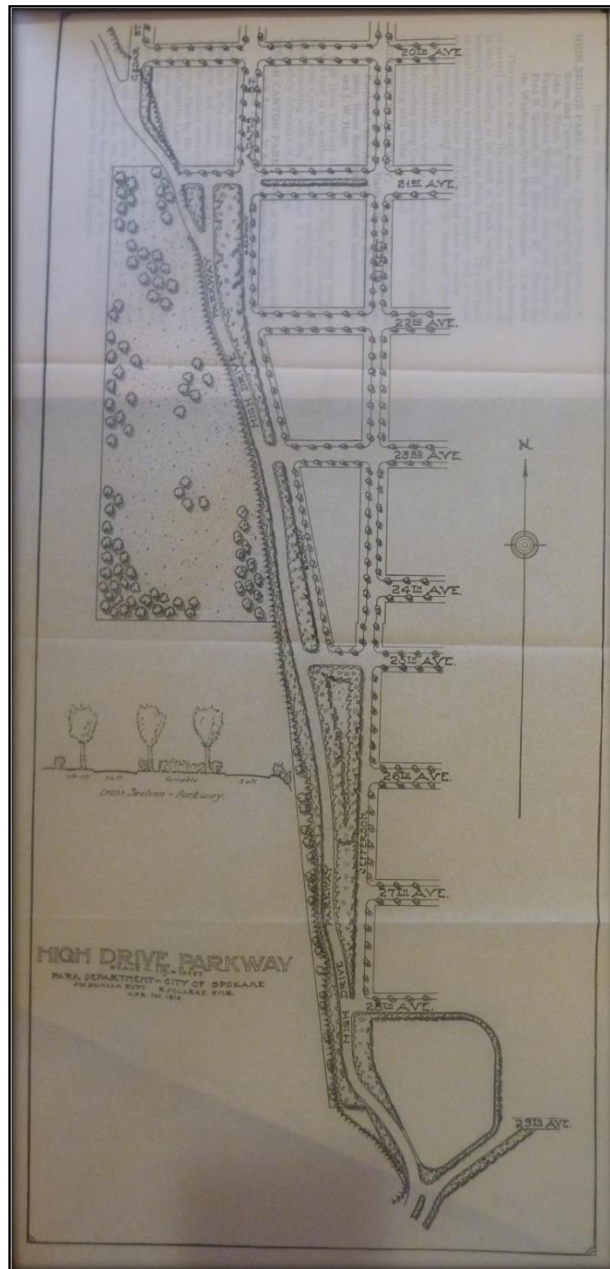
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“Plan of High Drive Parkway, Park Department, City of Spokane, J. W. Duncan Park Supt, R. J. Clarke Eng, 1913”
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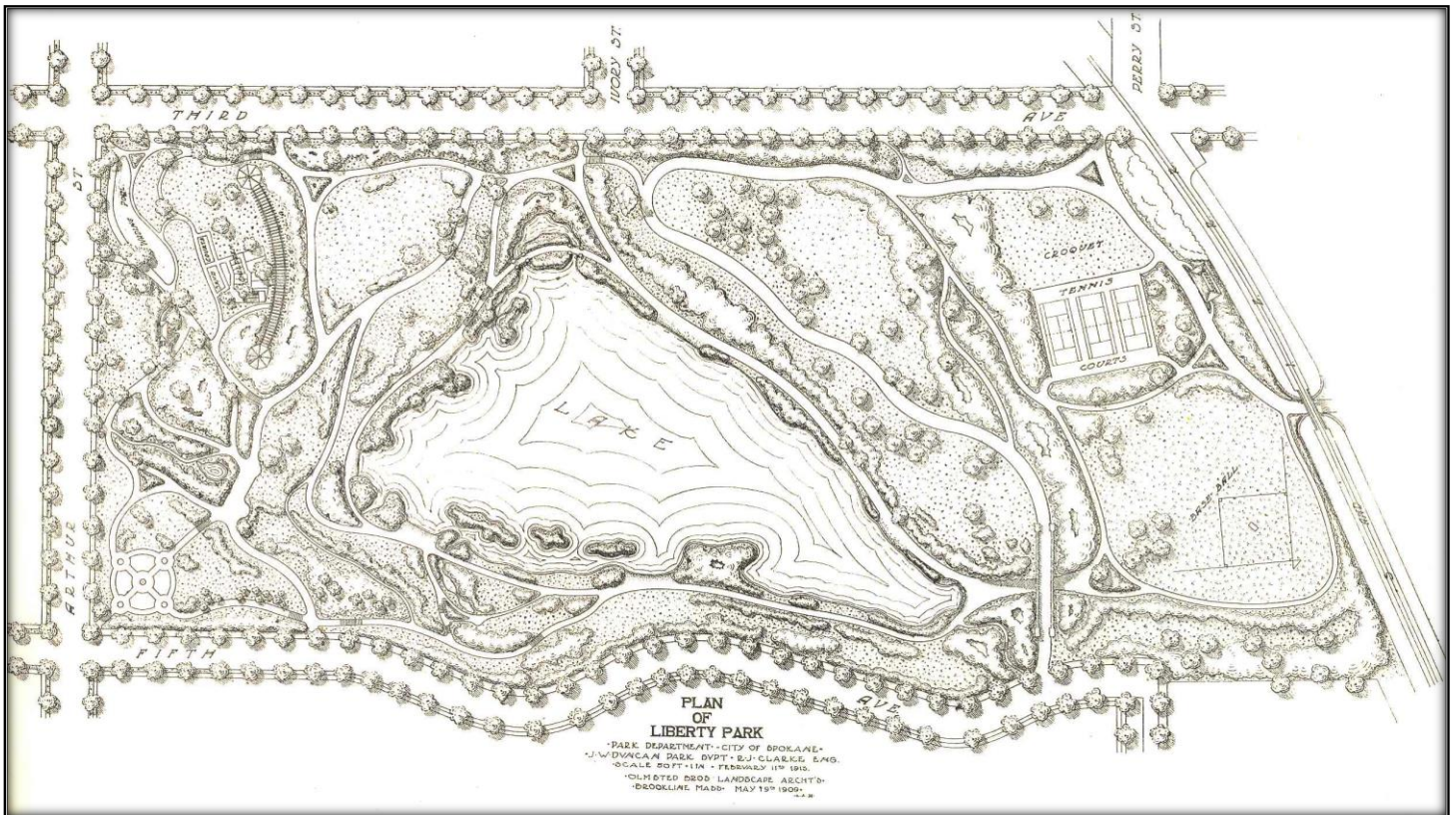
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“Plan of Liberty Park, Park Department, City of Spokane, J. W. Duncan Park Supt, R. J. Clarke Eng, 1913, Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, Brookline, Mass, 1909,” *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Spokane, Washington, 1891–1913*. (Revised by Spokane Parks Foundation and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture. Spokane, WA: Marquette Books, 2007. Originally published in Spokane, WA: Inland Printing Co., 1913), n.p.

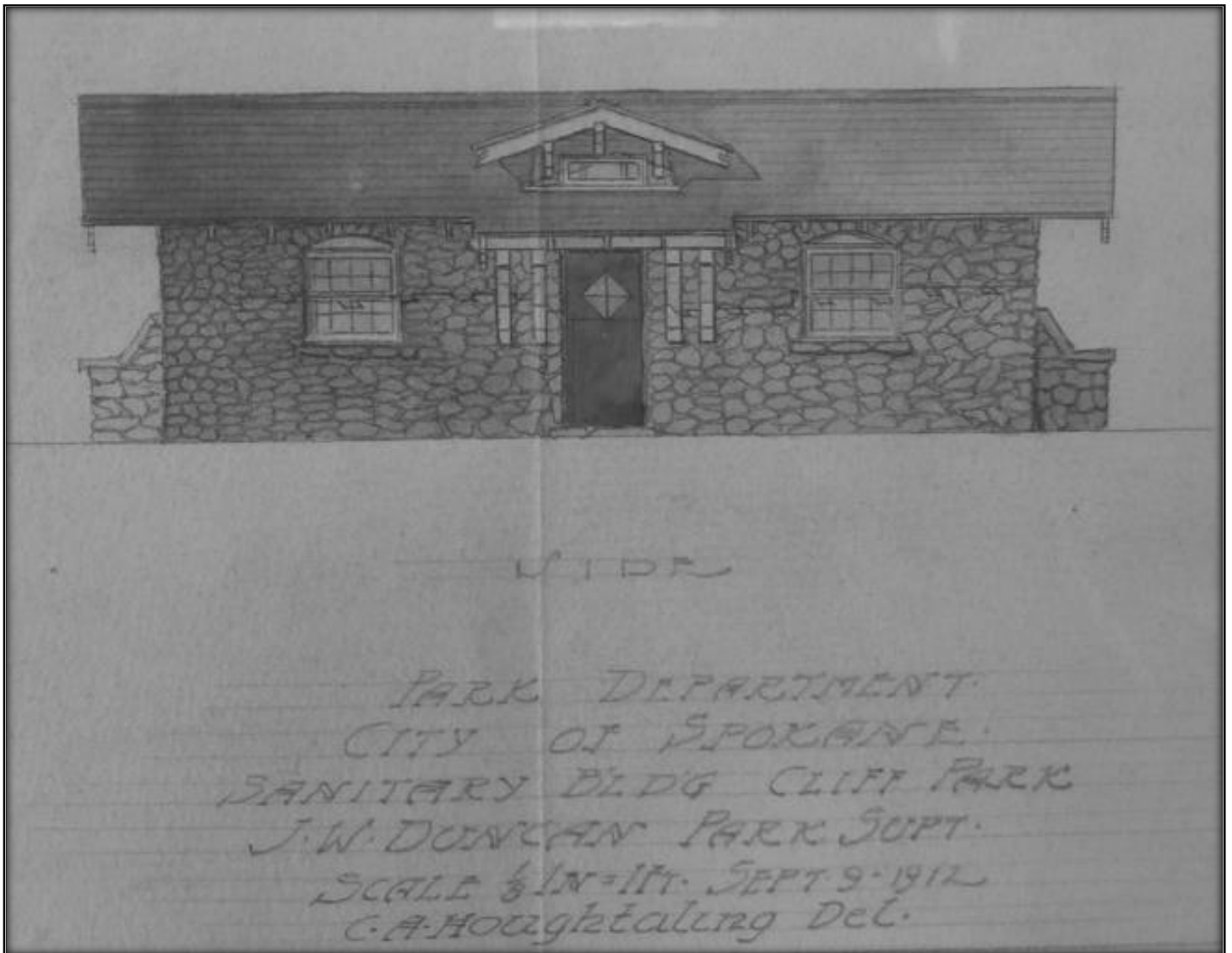
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“Sanitary Bldg Cliff Park, Side.” Photograph of original drawing produced under the direction of J. W. Duncan, Park Superintendent, September 9, 1912. Drawing represents original exterior and interior plan of sanitary buildings common throughout Spokane’s park system as originally developed circa 1912 by C. A. Houghtaling under the direction of J. W. Duncan. Located in the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department Operations Office.

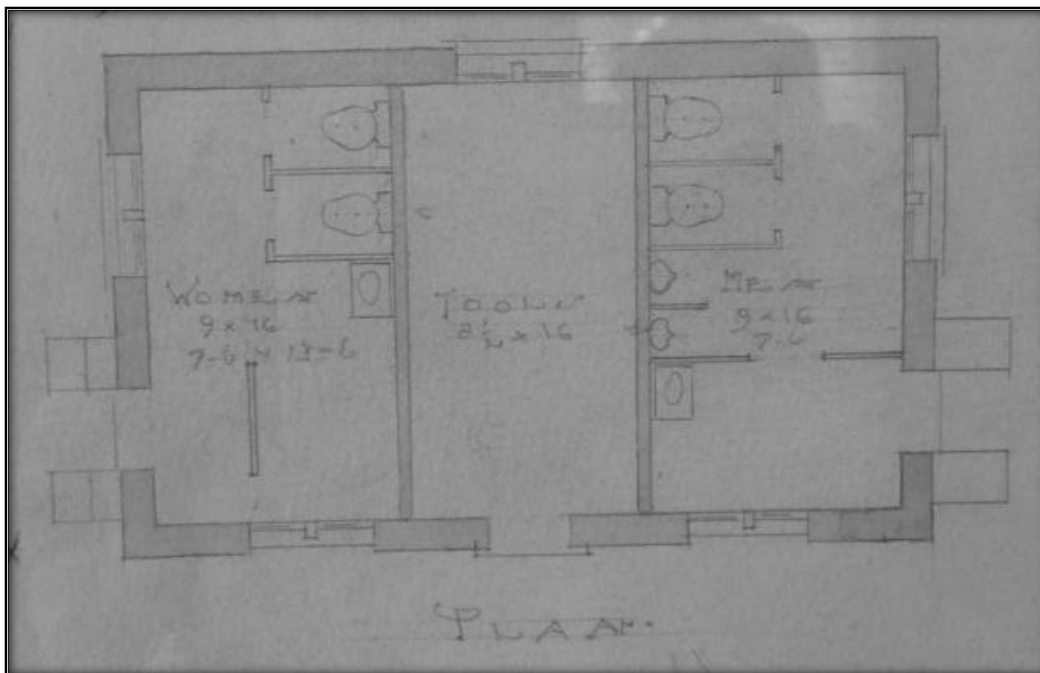
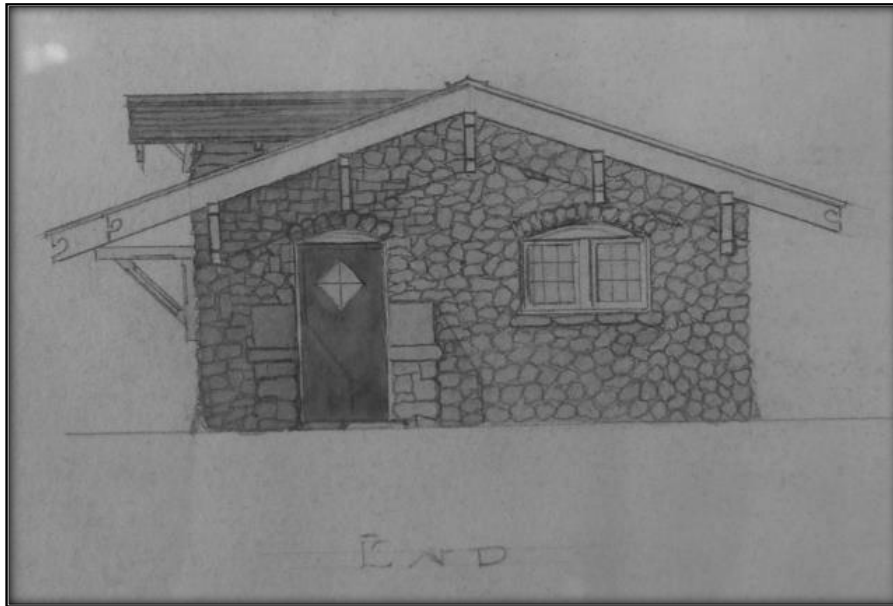
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“Sanitary Bldg Cliff Park, End” (above); and “Sanitary Bldg Cliff Park, Plan” (below). Photograph of original drawing produced under the direction of J. W. Duncan, Park Superintendent, September 9, 1912. Drawing represents original exterior and interior plan (women’s and men’s restrooms, with tool storage in the center) of sanitary buildings common throughout Spokane’s park system as originally developed circa 1912 by C. A. Houghtaling under the direction of J. W. Duncan. Located in the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department Operations Office.

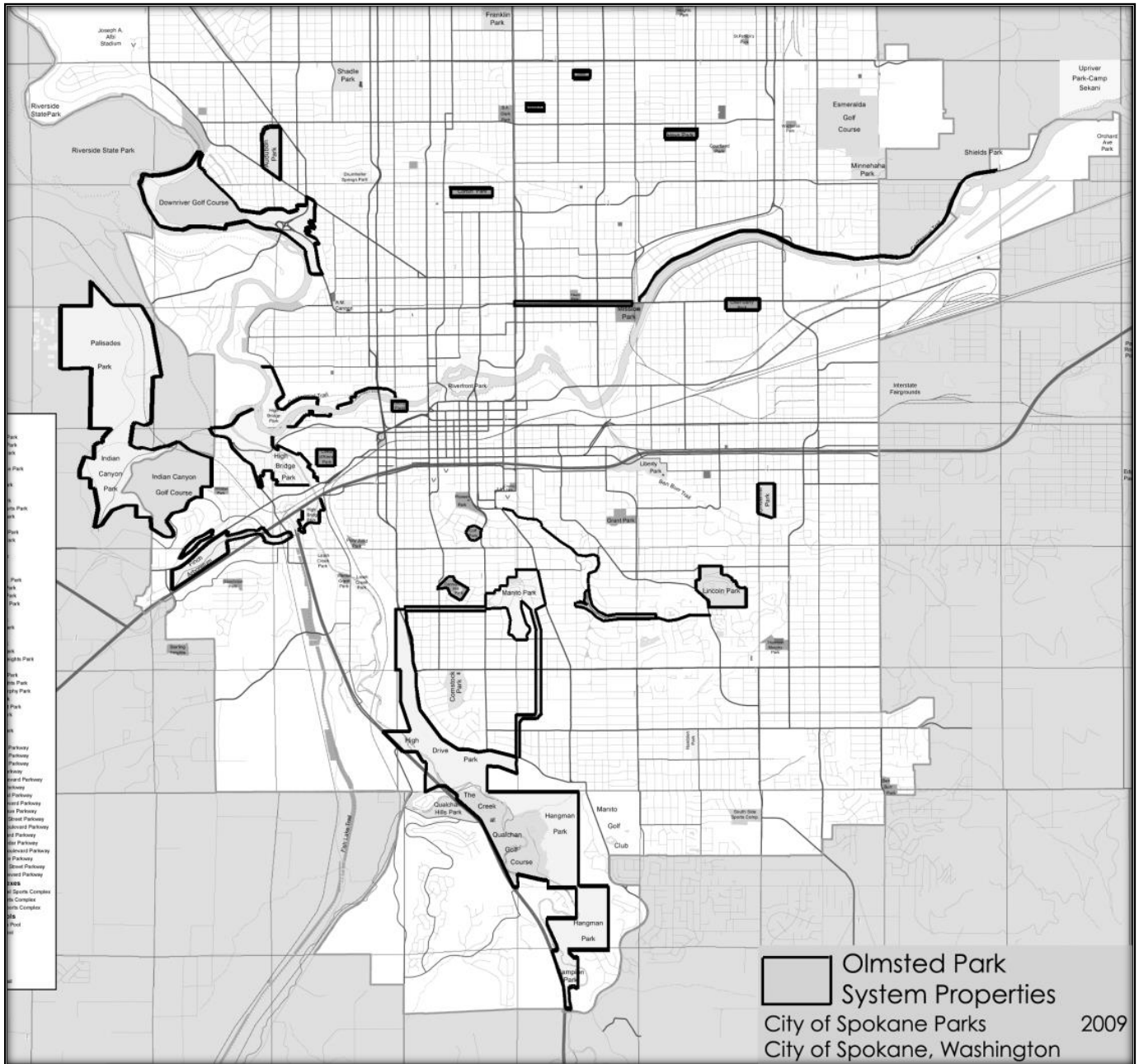
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2009. City of Spokane Parks. City of Spokane, Washington.

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“Olmsted’s 1908 Plan,” Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane WA. (LEFT)

and

“Spokane Parks, 2007,” Located in the Olmsted File of the Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane WA. (RIGHT)

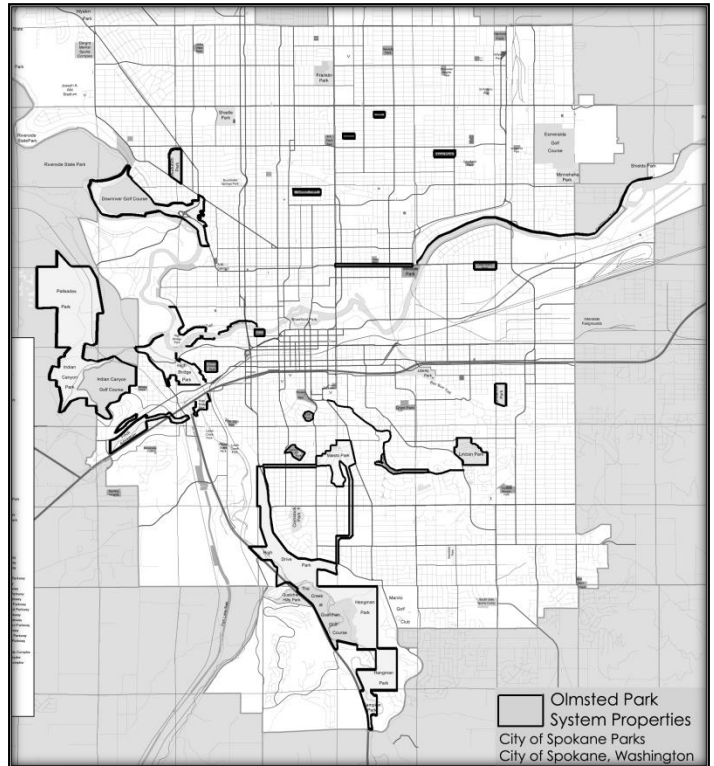
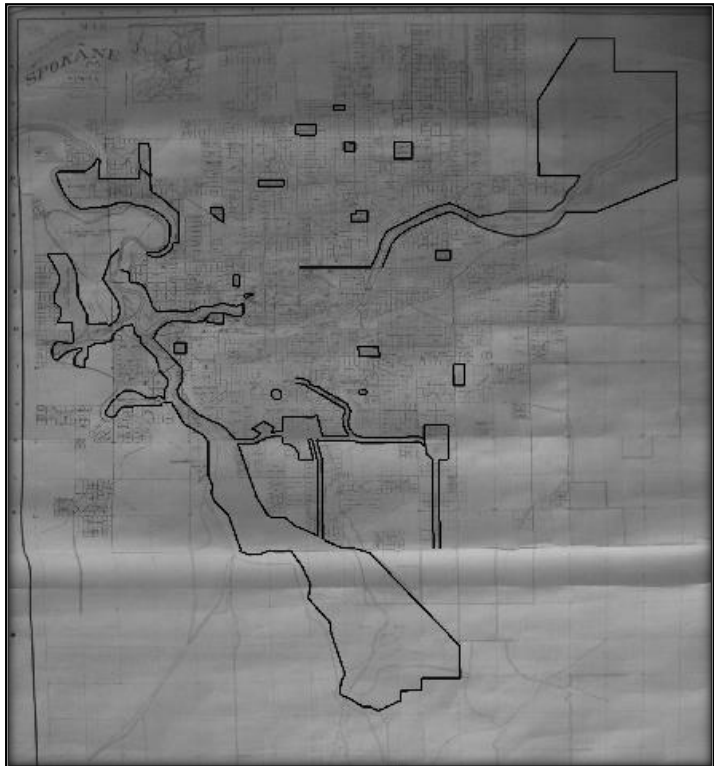
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and

2009. City of Spokane Parks. City of Spokane, Washington. (RIGHT)

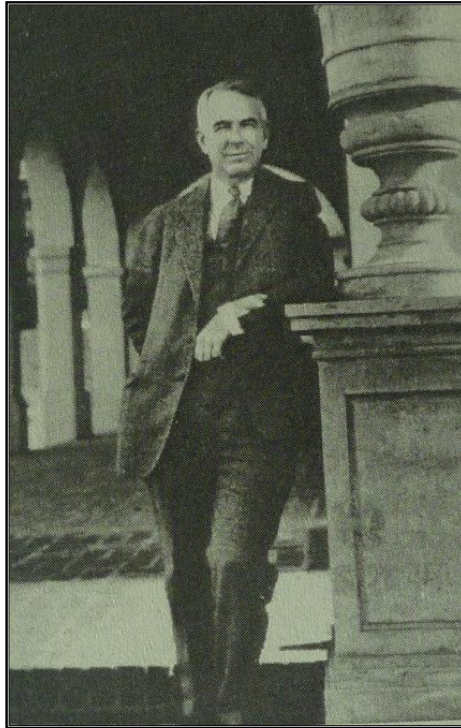
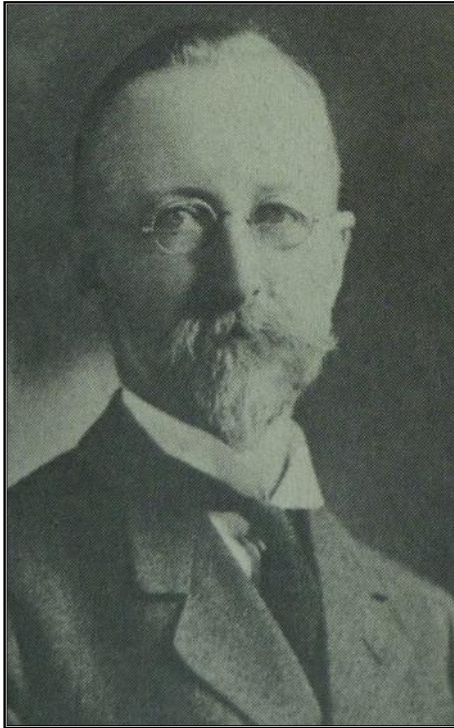
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**John Charles Olmsted (left); Frederick Dawson (center); Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. (right).
Catherine Joy Johnson. *Olmsted in the Pacific Northwest, Private Estates and Residential Communities, 1973–1959.* Seattle, WA: Catherine Joy Johnson, 1997.**

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**Aubrey L. White in His Later Years. "Aubrey White Taken by Death,"
Spokesman-Review, September 19, 1948, pp 1, 6.**

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Historic image of Manito Park, c. 1905

Located in the Spokane Photos binders in the Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Spokane WA.

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**Historic image of drive through Indian Canyon Park (proposed Ravine Park), c. 1915
Located in the Spokane – Parks – Indian Canyon, Vertical File, Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives,
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA.**

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**Historic image of icy pond in winter at Cannon Hill Park (proposed Adams Park), c. 1912
Located in the Spokane – Parks – Cannon Hill Park, Vertical File, Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives,
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA.**

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**Historic image of Palisades Park (proposed West Heights Park), c. 1915
Located in the Spokane – Parks – Palisades Park (Rimrock Drive), Vertical File, Joel E. Ferris Research Library
and Archives, Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA.**

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Image of picnickers at Lincoln Park (proposed Rockwood Park), 1923

**Located in the Spokane – Parks – Lincoln Park, Vertical File, Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives,
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA.**

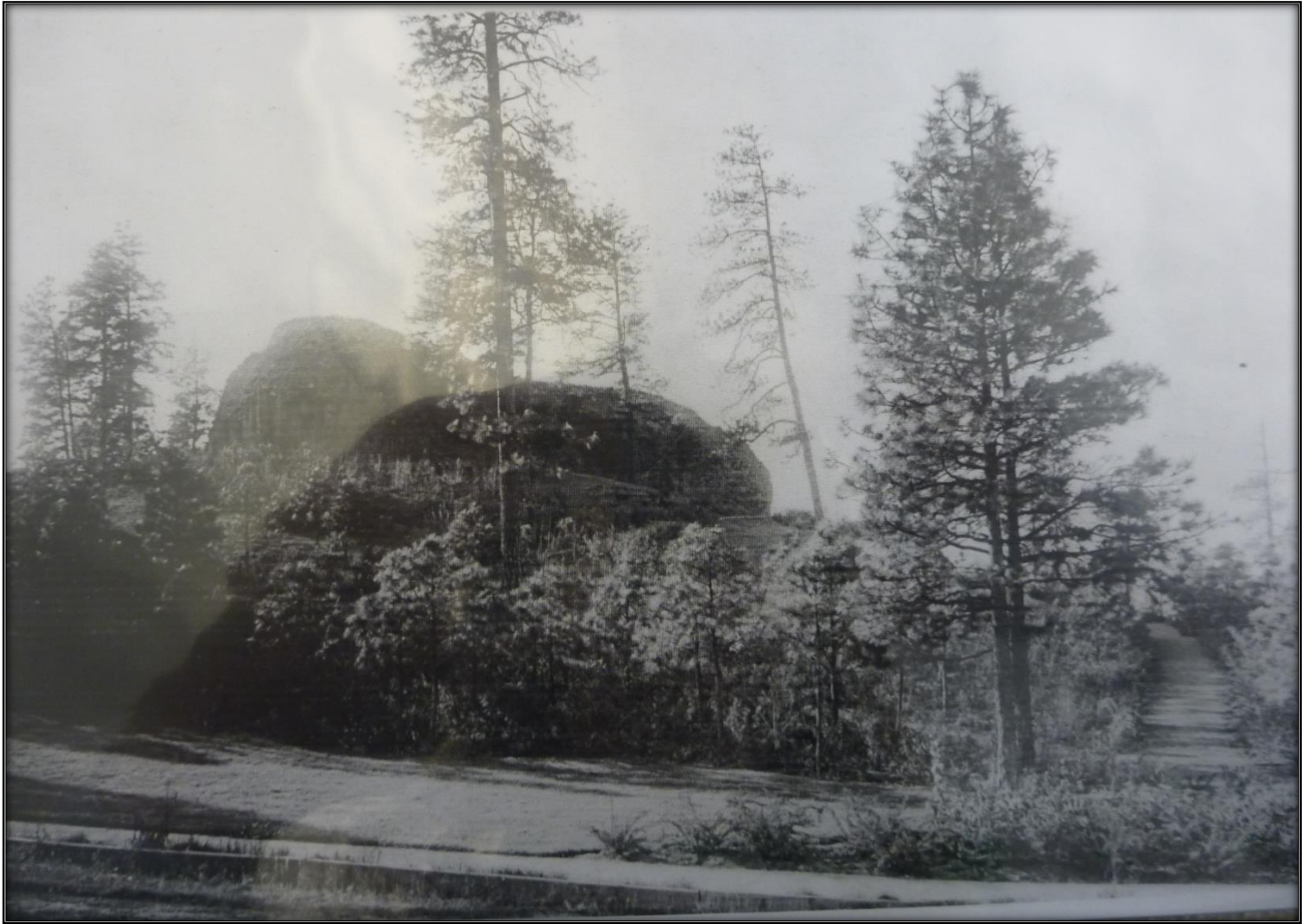
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Historic image of Cliff Park, c. 1920

**Located in the Spokane – Parks – Cliff Park, Vertical File, Joel E. Ferris Research Library and Archives,
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane, WA.**