

# Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report Fort Wayne, Indiana



Prepared for

Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation

Prepared by

Heritage Landscapes

Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

Charlotte, Vermont & Norwalk, Connecticut

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



2007

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Cover Photograph: Heritage Landscapes  
Inside Cover Photograph: 1917 Annual Report, Parks Board  
Logo Image on each Chapter: 1925 Annual Report, Parks Board

Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report  
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# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *List of Figures*

### CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

- II.1 1898 map from Ogle Atlas of the area surrounding what will become Weisser Park at the corner of Hanna and Eckart Lane. The original boundaries of the future park have been outlined in red and the 1916 park expansion in blue by Heritage Landscapes. E. Weiser is shown as land owner of three rectangular lots labeled 4, 5, and 6 of Pughs Out Lots. The northern part of this area is labeled Eckart's Subdiv. (R-FWP-WEI-ACPL-Ogle-Atlas-1898.jpg) Courtesy Allen County Public Library, Genealogy Division.
- II.2 1908 *Polk's Map of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana* shows Robinson's recommended expansion to the City's parks and boulevards. Existing Parks and Drives are depicted in dark green, Proposed River Drives and Park Additions in light green horizontal hatching, and Proposed Boulevard Connections in light green vertical hatching. Weisser Park is shown as an existing park, with proposed boulevard connections shows along Rudisill Avenue and Hanna Street. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Robinson-1908.jpg)
- II.3 Close-up section of previous figure showing the area surrounding Weisser Park, showing the proposed boulevards of Rudisill Avenue, Hanna Street, and East Pontiac, which would have served to connect the proposed park additions along the St. Mary's River to Weisser Park and Reservoir Park, visible in the upper left corner. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Robinson-1908-crop.jpg)
- II.4 1912 *Map of the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana* from Kessler's master plan. Here Kessler depicted the City's existing parks and boulevards in green and proposed expansions in orange. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Kessler-1912.jpg)
- II.5 Close-up section of previous figure showing the area surrounding Weisser Park. Kessler recommended that Weisser Park be expanded to the north and east. Both Rudisill Boulevard and Hanna Street are shown as proposed boulevards. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Kessler-1912-crop.jpg)
- II.6 The trees of the Oak-Hickory Grove, seen here in the winter of 1915, defined the overall character of Weisser Park. The maturing grove created a prominent vertical element throughout the landscape, providing park visitors with a warm sense of enclosure. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Winter-1915.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.7 The rustic style, wood-frame two-story pavilion, shown here shortly after completion in 1917, was set among the oak and hickory trees, creating a large social gathering space within the park. (R-FWP-WEI-Brd-Ann-Rpt-Pavilion-1917.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF FIGURES*

- II.8 An extensive ornamental planting bed was planted at the northwest edge of the park in 1922, following the emerging trend of locating flower gardens at public parks. Here the Weisser Park flower bed, as it existed in the 1930s, spelled out the name of the park. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-PlantingBeds-1956-pg12-1930s.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.9 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, published first in 1919 and updated until 1947, shows Weisser Park within its residential neighborhood setting. The three buildings are the only park features shown on this map, and include the pavilion, restrooms, and band shell. (R-FWP-WEI-ACPL-Sanborn-v2-220-221-1919-1947.jpg) Courtesy Allen County Public Library, Genealogy Division.
- II.10 The Weisser Park playgrounds were popular among community children, shown here in 1925. The setting within the Oak-Hickory Grove created a quiet play area, serving as an escape from the busy city streets. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Playground-1925-14.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.11 Beginning in circa 1930, the City of Fort Wayne began a supervised playgrounds summer program. Here children play and participate in activities led by the Weisser Park playground supervisor visible at the end of the picnic table, during the summer of 1941. The program continued until 1999, which was the first year it was not offered. (R-FWP-WEI-Mun-Rev-07-08-Playground-1941-pg3.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.12 Several tennis courts were constructed at Weisser Park. The courts became extremely popular and in circa 1939 floodlights were installed, seen here down the centerline of the image. The installation of the lights allowed the courts to be used into the evening hours. (R-FWP-WEI-Mun-Rev-07-08-Tennis-1941-pg4.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.13 Weisser Park's baseball diamond met standard regulations and was considered to be one of the finest in the City, making it popular for league play. The field was widely used from its inception in 1915 through the entire historic period. As seen here, during a 1946 game, the surface of the field was loose earth. Amenities for the field, such as benches for players and spectators can be seen in the background, in front of the trees. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-BallDiamond-1946-pg13.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.14 1949 aerial image of Weisser Park, which shows the three distinct landscape areas. The formal, geometric pattern of the peony beds within the Garden area, located in the top right corner, is clearly visible. (R-FWP-WEI-1949-crop copy.jpg)
- II.15 1954 view of neighborhood children making use of the flat, open surface of the Weisser Park tennis courts. The fencing installed around the courts is visible in the background. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Tennis-1954-pg15.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.16 1958 view of the baseball outfield in the Playing Fields & Courts area, which was resurfaced with clay in 1953. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Tennis-1958-pg9.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.17 1956 view of a section of Landscape Area 2. The open lawn of the Playing Grounds & Fields landscape area was well-maintained after the end of the historic period. The mown lawn served as an informal multi-purpose field, allowing the area to be used for a range of recreational activities. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-BallDiamond-1956-pg20.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF FIGURES*

- II.18 1956 aerial of Weisser Park, which depicts the three landscape areas. The distinct peony beds located in the Garden area, in the top right corner of the image, remained in the park through the 1950s. (R-FWP-Weisser-1956-Air-crop-small.jpg)
- II.19 1950 view of the original Weisser Park pavilion. By the 1950s, the Parks Department was considering replacing the building, which was now considered outdated and unsafe. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Pavilion-1950-pg15.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.
- II.20 1973 aerial of Weisser Park, which depicts the Weisser Park School, constructed in 1962. With the addition of the school, the eastern portion of Eckert Street was closed from public access and altered to accommodate school bus parking. (R-FWP-WEI-Air-1973-crop-small.jpg)
- II.21 1962 site plan of Weisser Park depicting several park features and site furnishings. Note the removal of the geometric flower beds in the northeast corner at this time. (R-FWP-WEI-Plan-1962.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

**CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS**

- IV.1 The Oak-Hickory Grove within Weisser Park is a dominant character-defining feature, creating a striking verticality throughout the park. The tall tree canopy provides shade and allows views to and from the park and the surrounding residential neighborhood, visible in the background. The additional landscape features of Landscape Area 1 are set within clearings in the grove, such as the playground, visible at the right edge of the image. (R-FWP-WEI-01-19-07-0003.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.2 The northwest corner of the park has been cleared of trees and is used as an informal play area characterized by its open, mown turf ground plane. Adjacent landscape features are also visible, including the Playing Fields & Courts landscape area to the left of the image; the Weisser Park Youth Center and parking lot at the center of the image; and the character-defining Oak-Hickory Grove in the background. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (32).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.3 The callery pear at the south service entrance to the Weisser Park Youth Center is in decline, most likely a result from vehicle disturbance. It is clear that the entry drive does not adequately accommodate service vehicles and the adjacent turf has been damaged as a result. (R-FWP-WEI-CT-(24).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.4 An asphalt parking lot provides parking space for Weisser Park and amenities such as the youth center (visible at the left edge of the image) and pavilion. The Oak-Hickory Grove is visible beyond the parking area, along the entry drive. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (20).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.5 The Oak-Hickory Grove at Weisser Park creates verticality within the park and a sense of enclosure. Several park features are set beneath the canopy, such as the pavilion and playground, visible on the right side of the image. Lights illuminate the park for evening and night use and the lampposts are outfitted with seasonal banners or flags throughout the year. Current vehicular access through the park is limited and there is evidence of vehicles traveling across the mown turf understory, seen here through the center of the image. (R-FWP-WEI\_20061207\_0250.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF FIGURES*

- IV.6 A narrow concrete sidewalk leads visitors under the canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove, linking the Weisser Park pavilion with the surrounding neighborhood at intersection of Drexel Street and Hanna Street. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (30).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.7 Concrete walks line the perimeter of Weisser Park along its north, west, and south edges. This concrete walk is located along the west edge, creating a barrier between the traffic from Hanna Street and the Oak-Hickory Grove. (R-FWP-WEI-VT-0012.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.8 The Weisser Park Youth Center, completed in 1998, is the largest building in Weisser Park. Its main entrance, seen here, is located on its west façade, adjacent to the entry drive and circular turnaround. The tennis courts located in Landscape Area 2 are visible to the left of the youth center. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (18).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.9 The Weisser Park Youth Center building has large windows along its north, west, and south façades, allowing views into the park. The north façade, seen here, has an enclosed exterior courtyard with picnic tables and benches available for public use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (14).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.10 The Weisser Park pavilion, constructed in 1963 to replace the original 1917 pavilion, is free and available to the public on a first come, first serve basis. The pavilion and adjacent picnic tables and playground are set within the Oak-Hickory Grove, west of the entry drive and parking area. This shaded area provides a relaxing environment for groups of park users. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (25).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.11 The playground adjacent to the pavilion in the Oak-Hickory Grove contains brightly-colored play equipment over a woodchip mulch ground surface. The adjacent picnic tables and large canopy trees provide parents a shady place to relax while watching their children play. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (22).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.12 Concrete walks lead park visitors under the shaded canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove to several park features. Visible at the left edge of the image is the playground, enclosed by a low plastic curb. A short walk connects with the playground's woodchip mulch ground cover. The spatial relationship between many of the park's landscape features set within a clearing in the wooded grove is also apparent. The pavilion is visible at the right edge of the image, just off the side of a pedestrian path. In the background are the Weisser Park Youth Center and parking area. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (31).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.13 A metal "Weisser Park" sign marks the northwest edge of the park along Hanna Street. This area, which was once characterized by the dominant oak and hickory trees seen throughout the southern half of the park is now open lawn with only a few trees remaining. (R-FWP-WEI-VT-0010.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.14 The Playing Fields & Courts landscape area is relatively open with few trees or visual barriers. The Weisser Park Youth Center encloses the area to the south. Recreational facilities in this area include tennis courts, seen at the center of the image, and mown turf used as a multi-purpose field. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (35).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF FIGURES*

- IV.15 The Playing Fields & Courts landscape area is characterized by mown turf and hard surface recreation facilities. The tennis courts are visible at the left of the image, enclosed by the fence. A line of red pines separates the tennis courts from the paved play area, seen at the right of the image. Several shoebox-type light fixtures illuminate the courts and play area for evening use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT-(11).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.16 When the Weisser Park School was constructed in 1962, the east end of Eckart Street was closed from public vehicular access and developed as a bus parking area. Pipe steel gates prohibit vehicular access and through traffic when school is not in session. School building is seen at the right of the photograph. concrete curbing along the edge of the park prohibit vehicles from damaging the mown turf. Additional features can be seen in this view, including shoebox style light fixtures and a “Buses Only” sign, alerting the public to this area’s restricted access. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (2).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.17 Additional playground equipment is located in the Playing Fields & Courts area, adjacent to the Weisser Park School bus parking area. Because of its proximity to the school, it is unclear if the play equipment is available for public use or restricted to student use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (6).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.18 The Weisser Park Youth Center is used by children and residents of all ages, while the adjacent asphalt play area visible in the foreground is primarily used by the nearby Weisser Park School. Features of the play area include a low, metal rail, likely used for skateboarding. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (10).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.
- IV.19 A vehicular alley borders the park’s Garden landscape area to the east. The area, which was once a prolific peony display garden is now open turf, used by the Weisser Park School as a soccer practice field. Soccer nets have been set on the turf. A line of wooden bollards line the alley, prohibiting vehicles from parking on the turf, which is set at an even grade with the alley. The Oak-Hickory Grove borders the area to the south. Two white pines mark the edge of the area and its transition into the wooded grove. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (1).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF FIGURES*

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *List of Plans*

### CHAPTER III: WEISSER PARK 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

*PP-1950s*      *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan*

### CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

*AP-2005*      *Weisser Park 2005 Aerial Photograph*  
*EC-2007*      *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas*  
*TA-2007*      *Weisser Park 2007 Tree Condition Assessment Plan*

### CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

*OVP*      *Weisser Park 1950s-2007 Overlay Plan*  
*ANP*      *Weisser Park Analysis Plan*

### CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS

*PTP*      *Weisser Park Projects Treatment Plan*  
*CTP*      *Weisser Park Circulation Treatment Plan*  
*ITP*      *Weisser Park Illustrative Treatment Plan*

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*LIST OF PLANS*

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Table of Contents*

LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
LIST OF PLANS.....	xi
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE &amp; METHODOLOGY</b>	
A. Introduction, Context & Property Boundary.....	I.1
B. Scope of Work & Cultural Landscape Report Methodology.....	I.2
<b>CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY</b>	
A. Introduction to Landscape History.....	II.1
B. Background & Park Origins: Beginnings to 1908.....	II.2
C. Weisser Park Development: 1909 to 1950.....	II.3
D. Park Change: 1951 to 2007.....	II.12
E. Conclusion to Landscape History.....	II.14
<b>CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK</b>	
A. Introduction to Landscape Character.....	III.1
B. Weisser Park Landscape Areas.....	III.2
C. Landscape Character & Period Plan, 1950s.....	III.3
<b>CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS</b>	
A. Introduction to Park Landscape Existing Conditions.....	IV.1
B. Landscape Areas 1, 2, & 3.....	IV.3
C. 2007 Existing Conditions, Character & Plan.....	IV.4
D. 2007 Tree Assessment.....	IV.8
E. 2007 Existing Conditions Landscape Summary.....	IV.9
<b>CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY</b>	
A. Introduction to the Park Today.....	V.1
B. Weisser Park User Survey Results.....	V.1
C. Weisser Park Visual Observations.....	V.4
D. Park Maintenance Overview.....	V.5
E. Summary Issues, Weisser Park Today.....	V.5

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*TABLE OF CONTENTS*

**CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS**

A. Introduction to Landscape Analysis.....	VI.1
B. Weisser Park Landscape Continuity & Change.....	VI.1
C. Weisser Park Landscape Analysis.....	VI.5
D. Summary Landscape Analysis.....	VI.12

**CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION**

A. Introduction to Landscape Treatment Exploration .....	VII.1
B. Landscape Preservation Treatment Alternatives.....	VII.1
C. Weisser Park Rehabilitation Treatment .....	VII.4

**CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. Introduction to Renewal Recommendations.....	VIII.1
B. Weisser Park Circulation Rehabilitation.....	VIII.2
C. Recommended Weisser Park Projects.....	VIII.4
D. Weisser Park Renewal Priorities & Initial Phasing.....	VIII.10
E. Weisser Park Implementation Strategies.....	VIII.12
F. Private-Public Partnerships & Park Renewal.....	VIII.14
G. Weisser Park Renewal Summary.....	VIII.16

**APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY**

**APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS**

**APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS**

**APPENDIX D: LANDSCAPE RENEWAL GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

**APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL SOURCES**

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter I: Introduction, Work Scope & Methodology*

### A. INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT & PROPERTY BOUNDARY

#### **Introduction**

The *Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report* is one of five reports addressing selected historic parks and boulevard in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The others are Foster, McMillen, and Shoaff Parks and Rudisill Boulevard. Fort Wayne has a rich system of parks, many of which were donated by local philanthropists, which provide beauty, open space, and recreational opportunities for the citizens. Heritage Landscapes was selected in a competitive process to serve as project consultants to work with the Fort Wayne community to develop the cultural landscape reports. These reports are thorough planning documents that investigate and gather data on the history, evolution, existing conditions, use, maintenance, ecology of the landscapes, and context of the surrounding city and direct community input. Building on this broad basis, recommendations are brought forward, tested and refined utilizing preservation approaches that respect the heritage of parks and boulevards, accommodate current needs, and envision a vibrant future for the park.

#### **Fort Wayne & Park Context**

Fort Wayne, Indiana, located in Allen County in northeastern Indiana, boasts a diverse parks system includes 84 parks totaling 2,805 acres.<sup>1</sup> In the early developmental years of the park system, city officials' interest in improving Fort Wayne's park system flourished, and several professionals were hired to aid in planning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1910, city planner Charles Mulford Robinson developed *The Robinson Plan*, Fort Wayne's first comprehensive plan addressing parks and boulevards.<sup>2</sup> The following year, in 1911, city planner and landscape architect George E. Kessler was hired to create a master plan for Fort Wayne's park and boulevard system.<sup>3</sup> While each plan differed, both made recommendations for the expansion of the existing park system. Specifically, both plans referenced the importance of including playgrounds in the public parks. The inclusion of playgrounds illustrated an important shift in the perceived role of public parks that emerged in the early twentieth century. Parks were no longer meant to be used a pleasure grounds solely for passive recreation; now there was an emphasis not only on the importance of active recreation, but on the ability to incorporate recreation into ones daily life. This meant that several small parks were proposed for conservation and development throughout Fort Wayne. These were often located where natural resources were present, oak groves, river margins, and so forth and Weisser Park was one of these acreages, graced with a mature stand of oaks.

Today, Weisser Park is a 19-acre neighborhood park in the southeast quadrant of Fort Wayne surrounded by a residential neighborhood with a magnet arts school, Weisser Park School to its

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

northeast. The north boundary is formed by Eckart Street and the bus parking lot for the Weisser Park School. Hanna Street, a main thoroughfare, forms the western boundary of the park, and Drexel Street is the southern boundary. An alley that serves local residences, not through traffic, forms a less distinct eastern edge of the park. Weisser Park is located near several other parks and two boulevards in the area, about 0.6 miles southeast of Reservoir Park, 1.1 miles northwest of McMillen Park, and 1.9 miles northeast of Foster Park. The park is also about 0.4 miles north of Rudisill Boulevard and 0.6 miles west of Anthony Boulevard.

Weisser Park is on relatively high ground for the riverine city of Fort Wayne. The principal feature of the park is a remnant native oak and hickory grove for which the park was established. This remaining stand of grand trees was part of an upland forest that followed the high ground between McMillen Park to the east, Weisser Park to the north, and Foster Park to the west, running generally along the alignment of Rudisill Boulevard. Other park features include the Weisser Park Youth Center, tennis courts, playgrounds, a basketball court, pavilion, and baseball field.

## B. SCOPE OF WORK & CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT METHODOLOGY

### **Scope of Work & Methodology**

The Scope of Work for the *Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report* (CLR) specifies that the report will include historical research, field documentation and existing conditions mapping, use and maintenance investigation, public meetings, illustrated narrative text, and plans. Further, the scope specifies that the CLR will include analysis of the site's landscape integrity, and an exploration of potential treatment approaches and objectives for the park.

The process of creating the *Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report* is sequential and comprehensive. Archival research was undertaken to gain a full understanding of park origins and evolution. Heritage Landscapes consulted a number of repositories for primary sources including: ARCH, Allen County Public Library, The History Center at the Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation Files & Archives, Taylor University Alumni Records Archives, and Fort Wayne City Utilities Aerial Photograph Archive. A wide variety of materials including published and unpublished documents, photographs, aerial photographs, plans, maps, and atlas images provide evidence of physical conditions, property character, and land uses over time. The chronology, compiled from these historic documents, is included as Appendix A, and forms the basis of a narrative history. Study of these materials revealed the early character of Weisser Park and its evolution.

Heritage Landscapes performed detailed reconnaissance of the existing physical conditions at Weisser Park. Each free-standing tree and all built elements were located and assessed. From the fieldwork and recent aerial photographs an AutoCAD base map was developed to create an existing conditions plan. Utilizing the existing conditions plan, historic aerial photographs, images, and other documents, a period plan was created for the 1950s.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

Based on the existing conditions plan, Heritage Landscapes delineated a series of landscape areas within Weisser Park to communicate the character of the property through time. Boundaries of landscape areas may be loosely delineated by vegetation or slopes or clearly defined by physical features such as a wall, path or road. Some of these features remain constant while others change over time. The character of each landscape area is part of the character of Weisser Park as a whole. Identifying and defining these areas clarifies the spatial organization of the property and facilitates a clearer understanding of the historic evolution of the park.

Review of chronological mapping, aerial photographs and site investigation of Weisser Park yielded three definable landscape areas, or component landscapes, that were mapped in the landscape. The boundaries of the landscape area are defined during the period of time where Weisser Park is in its as-built condition, which is 1950. The defined boundaries of these component landscapes may or may not remain consistent through time, although aspects of the individual areas may change. The three landscape areas for Weisser Park are:

- *Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove*—The Oak-Hickory Grove is the largest of the three landscape areas in Weisser Park. It includes the grove of large oaks and hickories. Roads to the west, east, and south of the park define the landscape’s boundaries. The Playing Fields & Courts and Garden landscape areas define the north boundary. Historically, this area included a two-story pavilion, bandstand, restrooms, gazebo, and playgrounds.
- *Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts*—The Playing Fields & Courts, located along the central northern portion of the park, is the second largest of the three landscape areas. Eckart Street bounds the area to the north; the Oak-Hickory Grove to the west and south; and the garden to the east. Historically, this area served a range of active recreational uses, which included baseball, softball, and football fields, and several tennis courts.
- *Landscape Area 3: Garden*—The Garden is the smallest of the landscape areas, and is found in the northeast corner of the property. Eckart Street bounds the area to the north; an alley that runs the length of the park bounds this area to the east; the Playing Fields & Courts and Oak-Hickory Grove landscape areas are located to its west and south, respectively. Historically, the area contained extensive ornamental planting beds laid out in distinctive geometric forms. Many of the planting beds were used to display a variety of peonies, and became a popular place for park visitors to pass time.

In addition to landscape areas, cultural landscapes can be sub-divided into character-defining features. Federal guidance including the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* and *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* refer to and define the character-defining features of a landscape.<sup>4</sup> Character-defining features are identified and enumerated in the CLR as a series of interrelated, specific aspects of the cultural landscape. They include:

- *Spatial Organization, Land Patterns, Land Use & Visual Relationships* – The three-dimensional organization and patterns of spaces in the landscape, land uses, and visual relationships, shaped by both cultural and natural features; the uses of the land and the views and visual relationships that organize the landscape as defined by topography, vegetation,



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

circulation, built elements, and often a combination of these character-defining features to create the overall patterns of the landscape. At Weisser Park, the oak-hickory grove is the dominant feature while the playing fields and courts are distinctive recreation facilities.

- *Topography & Natural Systems* – Topography is the shape of the ground plane and its height or depth. Topography occurs in relation to natural systems and as a result of human manipulation. Natural systems include landforms, watershed systems, climate, water bodies, surface and underground flows, and their effects. The topography of Weisser Park is gently sloping, with about 8 feet of elevation change across the property, with low points to the west and north, and high points to the southeast. The shape of the land has been modified over time with construction of buildings, tennis and basketball courts, and playing fields.
- *Vegetation* – Vegetation can include groups of plants, individual plants, agricultural fields, planting beds, formal or informal tree groves, woodland, meadow, or turf. The Weisser Park landscape is dominated by a mature grove of mainly oaks and hickories with a mown turf ground plane. Few shrubs exist in the park, except for minor planting at the Weisser Park Youth Center. Open areas are mown turf and are used for organized or informal sports.
- *Circulation* – Circulation features may include roads, drives, trails, paths, and parking areas individually sited or linked to form a network or system. Alignment, width, surface and edge treatment, and materials contribute to the character of circulation features. Vehicular circulation at Weisser Park today originates from the south on Drexel Street. Nose-in parking is on either side of the entrance drive. There is one path originating at the southwest corner, and another that connects the Youth Center with the School. A sidewalk runs along the north, west, and south edges of the park. Historically, there were more paths in the park, including diagonal paths.
- *Hydrology & Water Features* – Features of water systems may be aesthetic as well as functional components of the landscape. Water features may include fountains, pools, cascades, irrigation systems, streams, ponds, lakes, and aqueducts. Weisser Park does not currently have any water features, nor did it historically.
- *Structures* – Landscape structures are non-habitable constructed features such as pavilions or features such as walls, bridges, arbors, gazebos, terraces, steps, and fences. Buildings at Weisser Park include the Youth Center, Pavilion, Snack Bar, and former Restroom. Fencing around the courts and baseball field are also considered landscape structures.
- *Site Furnishings & Objects* – Site furnishings such as picnic tables, signage, lamp poles, and play equipment are generally considered small-scale elements in the landscape while items such as garbage cans and benches are considered landscape objects.

The above landscape areas and landscape character-defining features are used throughout the report to focus on the definition and details of the Weisser Park cultural landscape as it has evolved through time to the present. The same vocabulary is used in developing the analysis narrative and is consulted in testing alternatives and selecting the treatment recommendations presented.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

## **Community Engagement**

Heritage Landscapes collaborated with Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, members of the Parks Legacy Committee, and interested park users through a user survey, public meetings, public website, and other interactions. This community engagement process focused on the long-term value of this CLR by relying on a collaborative process of communication and participation among those who steward, appreciate, and use Weisser Park.

In order to understand park users, current use, perceptions, and desires for the park, a user survey was developed. The survey was a tool to generate public input and assessment of the park landscape and facilities. Survey questions elicited citizen input on current types of park use, condition of the park landscape and facilities, perception of safety, desired improvements, and user demographics. Because of proximity, the survey for Weisser Park was combined with East Rudisill Boulevard and McMillen Park for more effective capture of park input. The user surveys were distributed at a series of three community meetings through the quadrants, community groups and on the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation website. Survey results are discussed in Chapter V and presented in Appendix C.

The CLR process was punctuated by four public meetings held in the parks to address project introduction, history and existing conditions, analysis and treatment recommendations, and phasing and implementation. The meetings consisted of an approximately 40 minute PowerPoint presentation by Heritage Landscapes, followed by approximately 40 to 80 minutes of audience discussion, questions, and comments. Public input was recorded and incorporated into the analysis and treatment recommendations.

Community engagement was sought through the City of Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation website. A “Cultural Landscape Reports” heading on the website provided information about the planning process and was updated on a regular basis. The user surveys and user survey results were made available through the website, along with rendered plans and brief narratives of park history, existing conditions, analysis, and treatment alternatives. The website also provided an opportunity for comments through an interactive feedback form.

## **Cultural Landscape Report Organization**

Heritage Landscapes approached the *Weisser Park Cultural Landscape Report* in accordance with federal guidance for cultural landscape preservation. This CLR conforms to Parts 1 and 2 of a CLR. Relevant professional guidance includes the following: the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, *National Park Service Cultural Resource Management Guideline 28*, *National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes* and *National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*, *NPS Preservation Brief 36 Protecting Cultural Landscapes*, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, and *National Park Service Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management*. This document is organized into eight chapters. Chapter I: Introduction, Work Scope & Methodology offers an introduction to Cultural Landscape Reports, the project scope, and methodology. Chapter II: Weisser Park Landscape History details the landscape history of the park from its purchase in 1912 through recent times. Weisser Park's landscape character from the 1950s when all elements of the original park

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

development remained intact is described in Chapter III: 1950s Landscape Character of Weisser Park. The existing conditions are detailed in Chapter IV: Weisser Park Landscape Existing Conditions that includes a detailed tree assessment. Chapter V: Weisser Park Today explores current use of the park incorporating the user survey results and park use and maintenance observations.

As Heritage Landscapes studied the four parks and boulevard, a framework for addressing the importance and the value for parks as city-wide resources and unique places of cultural and natural resources emerged. Working with the public, parks staff and the legacy committee this listing and explanation was developed to encompass the multiple values of parks to the quality of urban life. Together, seven categories were created and approved by the Fort Wayne Parks Legacy Committee.

The following categories address public parks in relation to the broader context of Fort Wayne and the overall park and boulevard system:

- *Linkages & City Integration.* This category places the parks in the context of the city, the three rivers, the topography and the scenic and aesthetic character of Fort Wayne; the city identity is shaped, in part by the parks and boulevards; the livability of the city is enhanced by presence of parks and boulevards and their green character and the linkages and connections being made to parks and along boulevards knit the city together.
- *Civic & Community Value.* This category includes community awareness and a heightened sense of the value of parks in everyday life as community resources. Further, it identifies the importance of parks not just as individual, isolated parcels, but as part of a larger system, linking and enhancing the City's communities.
- *Public-Private Partnerships.* This category addresses park advocacy and the partnership of the city and private groups and individuals needed for parks to thrive.

The remaining categories address qualities specific to each of Fort Wayne's parks:

- *Diverse Use & Quality of Experience.* This category recognizes that parks and boulevards are meant to be enjoyed for their intrinsic value, the quality of experience should be high with conflicts resolved and positive recreation readily at hand, diverse uses in each park should include opportunities for passive, active, social and educational pursuits.
- *Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation.* This category considers the legacy of parks we have inherited from previous generations and the special character and features of each park that make it unique, the need for historic preservation, and the need to be adaptable and innovative while honoring the unique character of each park. Also considered is the fact that parks are intended to be beautiful green places that are aesthetically pleasing.
- *Sustainability & Stewardship.* This category addresses resource conservation, ecological stewardship, habitat diversity and the application of green and sustainable practices and design of parks.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

- *Functionality, Maintenance & Safety.* This category includes basic functionalities, park maintenance, needed services, public safety, and security and perceived security.

Chapter VI: Weisser Park Landscape Change & Analysis compares findings from the site history and existing conditions to identify and analyze change over time and to highlight all the relevant issues. The analysis and integrity of Weisser Park was assessed by comparing the history, perception, and character of the property historically and as it is today. In addition, staff and user issues and positive and negative aspects of the park were identified. These sources of information contributed to the seven-part analysis list, which was addressed in the testing of options and approaches on preliminary sketch plans, draft and final recommendations plans. Utilizing the park analysis, treatment options were recommended for Weisser Park, and refined with public input. The future management and treatment alternatives for Weisser Park are set forth in Chapter VII: Weisser Park Landscape Treatment Exploration, while the selected rehabilitation and renewal recommendations are discussed in Chapter VIII: Weisser Park Renewal Recommendations. The Bibliography and Appendices provide reference materials for this CLR.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION, WORK SCOPE & METHODOLOGY*

CHAPTER I ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup>City of Fort Wayne, Indiana Parks & Recreation, “Fort Wayne Facts: How Much Do You Know About The Fort Wayne Parks And Recreation Department?” Copyright 2006:

[http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=66](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=66).

<sup>2</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,” [http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).

<sup>3</sup> “Report of George E. Kessler, Landscape Architect,” *Seventh Annual Report Board of Park Commissioners*, 1911: 41, original HC.

<sup>4</sup> Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998.

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter II: Weisser Park Landscape History*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE HISTORY

The development of the Weisser Park landscape is presented in this chapter. The discussion is organized by historical periods, which describe the development of the park's character-defining features, as described in the methodology section of Chapter I. The following narrative and the accompanying images provide a comprehensive history of the physical development of Weisser Park and an understanding of the park within the context of the establishment of the Fort Wayne Parks Department.

Weisser Park is comprised of three landscape areas, which are based on the landscape's character-defining features: spatial organization; land patterns; land use; views and visual relationships; topography and natural systems; vegetation; circulation; hydrology and water features; and structures and site furnishings. The three landscape areas for Weisser Park are:

- *Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove*
- *Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts*
- *Landscape Area 3: Garden*

While the features included in each of the three landscape areas changed throughout the park's history, overall the Fort Wayne Parks Department developed Weisser Park according to the changing ideals and perceptions of a public park in early twentieth century America. Fort Wayne formed its Parks Department in 1894 and within two years, a Park Superintendent was selected, August W. Goers. Under his tenure, the city established several public parks, including Weisser Park.<sup>1</sup> The park was developed as a small neighborhood park focusing on active recreation.

The establishment of Weisser Park is unique in that it was created in part to preserve one of Fort Wayne's impressive natural features—a nineteenth century oak-hickory grove. As urban subdivisions of Fort Wayne proliferated, the striking grove stood atop a natural ridge line, spanning what would later become Foster and McMillen Parks. While the original grove was much larger than what remained after extensive urban development, the remaining fifteen acre parcel was preserved and developed into one of Fort Wayne's most popular parks.

Initially the relatively dense oak-hickory grove encompassed the entire Weisser Park, creating dominant vertical elements and a shady understory that defined overall park landscape character. Over time, many park facilities were developed and constructed in clearings located in the west central section of the park. The height of the tree canopy allowed views throughout the park, from the park to the surrounding neighborhood, and from the adjacent neighborhood into the park. In 1916 Weisser Park expanded to the north to include a number of residences along Eckart Street. The

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

buildings were removed and the area was developed to accommodate a range of recreational uses. Many of the sports facilities that were constructed, such as the tennis courts, were laid out parallel to the adjacent street. Highly geometric gardens were also planted and interspersed in the open lawn areas in the northeast corner of the park.

The details of the landscape evolution of the park's origins to 2007 are outlined in this chapter. The first section provides some details of the establishment of the Fort Wayne Parks Department and the early planning projects that influenced the inception of Weisser Park. The second section describes the period during which the most significant historic development occurred at the park, from 1909-1950. This section provides a detailed narrative of the construction of the park's character-defining features and their impact on the overall character of Weisser Park. The third outlines the changes made to the park landscape from 1951-2007, providing an understanding of the continued evolution of the park landscape, which sets the foundation for understanding the park's existing conditions. The Fort Wayne Parks Department's motivation to provide accessible recreation facilities to all citizens forged the creation of a city-wide park system that continues to provide the City's residents with ample opportunity for active engagement in the urban landscape.

## B. BACKGROUND & PARK ORIGINS: BEGINNINGS TO 1908

While Fort Wayne established its first park, Old Fort Park, in 1863, the land that would eventually be developed as Weisser Park remained in private ownership into the 1900s. The area, approximately 15 acres in size, was a primarily undeveloped tract with a grove of oak and hickory trees dating from the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> As seen in an 1898 Ogle Atlas, the future parkland was originally divided into three long, rectangular lots owned by E. Weiser. (See Figure II.1.) E. Weiser is listed as land owner of three rectangular lots labeled 4, 5, and 6 of Pughs Out Lots. The northern addition of the future park is labeled Eckart's Subdiv. with lots numbered six, seven, eight, nine, and ten, although these did not become incorporated into the park until 1916. Hanna St. and Eckart Lane are shown, but Drexel Avenue, which currently defines the southern border to the park, had not been constructed at that time.

At the start of the twentieth century, the city of Fort Wayne began to vigorously pursue the development of its park system. When the state legislature approved the formation of a Board of Park Commissioners in 1905, board members began to seek out land in Fort Wayne suitable for the development of parklands. The board identified the Weiser tract as particularly fitting with its grand tree grove. However, Magdalene Weiser, the property owner, did not wish to sell the property to the city. In response to Weiser's refusal to sell, the board decided to condemn the property.<sup>3</sup> Documentation has not been discovered regarding any condemnation proceedings for the Weiser land though it seems likely that while the board may have intended to condemn the property, other projects were pursued first.

By 1906, the Fort Wayne Parks Department observed a growing demand for public parks, which was in part a result of a predicted growth in the city's population.<sup>4</sup> This demand served as the impetus for the establishment of several new parks in the city. While the condemnation of the Weiser property never proceeded, the City had not forgotten its inherent potential for the development of a park. In 1908, Mayor William J. Hosey reported that the City was making arrangements to acquire the

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Weiser tract with its grove of oak and hickory trees.<sup>5</sup> After a great deal of persuasion on the part of the Board of Park Commissioners, the City consented to buy the 15 acres of woodland for \$10,500.<sup>6</sup> This original 15 acres encompassed the majority of the area identified as Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove, with the exception of its northwest corner, which remained under private ownership until 1916.

Though the park contained a range of oaks and hickories, most commonly white oak (*Quercus alba*), and shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), little information is known about other landscape features in the park's early years. It is likely that prior to the park's establishment, the ground plane consisted of unmanaged herbaceous species, turf and some understory shrubs. The Parks Department most likely began to mow the ground plane when it purchased the land for use as a public park. Circulation systems were probably limited to pedestrian desire paths of compacted earth throughout the lawn areas. While the park itself did not accommodate vehicles, several city streets provided park access as seen on the 1908 *Polk's Map of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana*. Hanna Street bordered the newly established Weisser Park to the west, while Eckart Street was located north, separated from the park by lots six, seven, eight, nine, and ten of Eckart's Subdivision. (See Figures II.1, II.2 and II.3.) Smith Street was located east of the park, also separated from the park by a parcel of land. The southern edge of Weisser Park bordered what would become Drexel Avenue.

### C. WEISSER PARK DEVELOPMENT: 1909 TO 1950

At the start of this historic period in 1909, Weisser Park had not yet expanded to include the northern addition. The northern lands fell within several lots of Eckart's Subdivision, which the City developed for residential housing. (See Figure II.1.) Houses within these lots fronted Eckart Street and overlooked the park to the south, providing a clear visual boundary to the park. There may have been outbuildings associated with the residences, although the number of houses and outbuildings on these properties remains unknown.

In efforts to expand the parks system, the City sought expert advice on the direction and future planning for the system. In 1910, Charles Mulford Robinson presented his comprehensive plan for Fort Wayne's parks and boulevards. Robinson's 1910 plan included recommendations to expand several of Fort Wayne's parks. While Robinson did not recommend expanding Weisser Park at that time, he did address the park's connection with other city parks.<sup>7</sup> Robinson's plan depicted "Existing Parks and Drives" in dark green, "Proposed River Drives and Park Additions" in light green horizontal hatching, and "Proposed Boulevard Connections" in light green vertical hatching. (See Figure II.2.) On this plan, Weisser Park is shown as an existing park, with proposed boulevard connections along Rudisill Avenue and Hanna Street. Upon closer inspection, the areas surrounding Weisser Park included the proposed boulevards of Rudisill Avenue, Hanna Street, and East Pontiac, which would have connected the proposed park additions along the St. Mary's River to Weisser Park and Reservoir Park (See Figure II.3.)

During his planning process, Robinson described "the newly acquired Weiser Park [sic]" as "a beautiful grove of twenty-two acres, well located in respect to the homes, and admirably adapted for development as a neighborhood park. Here the family, as distinguished from the individual, from the crowd, or from the class, should be deemed the unit to be served."<sup>8</sup> He argued that the park



## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

should be extended north to Eckart Street because the back doors of houses were “not the right sort of a park boundary.”<sup>9</sup> Although the City did not expand Weisser Park as recommended, the Parks Department performed preliminary work to prepare for future development, which included a general clean-up of the park and tree trimming.<sup>10</sup>

The following year, in 1911, city officials hired George E. Kessler to aid in future city planning. In his master plan for Fort Wayne’s park and boulevard system, Kessler also recommended expanding the boundaries Weisser Park and several other city parks. Included in the Kessler plan was a map entitled *Map of the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana*, where existing and proposed parks and boulevards were depicted. (See Figure II.4.) A detail of the area surrounding Weisser Park shows an expanded addition of land to the north and east. Rudisill Boulevard and Hanna Street are shown as proposed boulevards.<sup>11</sup> (See Figure II.5.) As with Robinson’s plan, Kessler’s recommendation to expand Weisser Park was not followed. Thus, the oak-hickory grove and adjacent residences continued to define the boundaries of the park.

Aside from the grove itself, the most dominant landscape features in the park during its early developmental phase were the park structures and site furnishings. Numerous site furnishings were installed to accommodate some of the park’s passive recreational users. In May 1912, Park Superintendent August W. Goers reported that picnic tables and seats were to be installed.<sup>12</sup> Within a few weeks, twelve additional benches were also placed in the park.<sup>13</sup> The first drinking fountain was also installed in 1912, with additional fountains installed in 1914.<sup>14</sup> The use of these first facilities came to be extensively used by the community. In the period of a few years, picnicking grew in popularity and in 1917 plans were approved for the layout of two formal picnic grounds at Weisser Park.<sup>15</sup> While the exact location of these picnic grounds is unknown, they were likely located beneath the canopy of the oak-hickory grove, where picnickers could relax and socialize under the dappled sunlight. (See Figure II.6.) Additions to the park continued as plans for future development were approved, which included the construction of a comfort station and utility improvements.<sup>16</sup>

At this same time, access to the park and its facilities increased. In 1912, the City undertook an improvement project along Weisser Park Avenue, paving the street up to the park, providing further access to the park for residents.<sup>17</sup> Park topography changed as a result the project, as excess soil removed during paving was used to raise the elevation of the western edge of the park along Hanna Street.<sup>18</sup>

As a result of the work completed at the park in 1912, the *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners* stated that the value of Weisser Park had more than doubled between its purchase in 1908 and 1912.<sup>19</sup> The report went on to state that the Weisser Park property was considered one of the most beautifully wooded pieces of park property that the City owned. Because of the financial and social value of Weisser Park, the Board of Park Commissioners reportedly intended to double the size of the park by purchasing surrounding land.<sup>20</sup>

In 1913, park use increased throughout the City and further improvements were undertaken at Weisser Park. The continued increase in use illustrated how highly the surrounding community valued the public park. The Board of Park Commissioners further supported the continued use and improvement of city parks, stating that the “purpose of the park commission [is] to make the parks of Fort Wayne not simply pictures of beauty, but to make them active agencies of social service. As

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

public places they perform a service and have an effect, greater perhaps than we can measure, upon the tired nerves and brains of the thousands of people who visit them.”<sup>21</sup>

As park use continued to increase city-wide through the next several years, improvements to the facilities at Weisser Park and all city parks continued. Initially, improvements included the installation of play equipment, the first being a playground slide, procured through the donations of Berghoff Brewing Association in 1913.<sup>22</sup> The erection of the first play apparatus in Weisser Park was followed quickly by the construction of the first building at the park—the comfort station for which plans were approved in 1912.<sup>23</sup> The comfort station, located in the approximate center of the grove, was constructed of rough, dark red-faced brick with a red tile roof and exposed wood work painted dark green.<sup>24</sup> The erection of the comfort station included installation of sewer and water lines.<sup>25</sup> Other sports facilities constructed included the first tennis courts in 1913.<sup>26</sup> Within a year, tennis facilities were used at a tremendous rate city-wide, and the Parks Board reported that the demand for tennis courts far outweighed the City’s available facilities.<sup>27</sup>

Ball fields were also popular during the early years of the park. Informal ball fields at Weisser Park were established almost immediately upon the park’s opening in 1909 by the local community. The field was centrally located in the park, north of the oak-hickory grove, but south of the adjacent residential houses within Landscape Area 2. The Parks Department performed maintenance on the informal field, removing trees and stumps in 1912.<sup>28</sup> Neighborhood residents enjoyed the baseball field immensely and it became so widely used that in 1915, the informal baseball field was removed and the Parks Department constructed a regulation diamond in its place. The new field included a substantial backstop, constructed of fabric and metal fencing, located at the southwest corner of the field. A number of trees from the bordering grove were removed to accommodate the sports field.<sup>29</sup>

Due to the rapid increase in park use and facilities, efforts to expand the original boundaries of Weisser Park in accordance with Robinson’s and Kessler’s recommendations began in 1915; however, no action was taken. Serious plans to expand the park were not discussed again until the following year. In the 1916 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, the Park Board announced they could quadruple their profits by providing more facilities at the parks, including more recreational opportunities, such as tennis courts, as well as concessions. Specifically, the Board wanted to make improvements “as speedily as funds permit until our parks, the people’s playgrounds, have been equipped to the fullest extent possible. Recreation in all proper forms in our parks tends to endear them to the people.”<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, without additional land, there was not enough room to construct the new facilities.<sup>31</sup> But once the potential for monetary gain was clear, Weisser Park was finally expanded. The northern boundary of the park was extended to the centerline of Eckart Street, adding five acres to the park.

In the year following the Weisser Park expansion, seven houses located within the northern addition of the park were removed. It is likely that at least five of these residences were located within the Landscape Area 2, while one additional residence was located in Landscape Area 3. The area was then graded and seeded for turf and additional trees, shrubs, and flowers were planted.<sup>32</sup> It may have been at this time that the line of street trees was planted along the southern edge of Eckart Street. The lawn area was bordered by the oak-hickory grove to the west, south, and partially to the east. The majority of this area was managed as open lawn, which accommodated the area’s use as open ball fields.

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Following the 1916 park expansion and removal of the adjacent houses, additional tennis courts were built and amenities for the new baseball diamond were installed, including a simple wooden post and rope fence to keep on-lookers off the field; two wooden benches for the players; and canvas bases and a rubber home plate. With the improvements to the baseball field complete, Weisser Park became one of three local parks to host the Shop League Series baseball tournament.<sup>33</sup> As the park facilities increased in popularity and use, the baseball field was no exception. By 1917 the field became so widely used that a junior baseball diamond was planned to be constructed northeast of the regulation diamond.<sup>34</sup> This area was maintained as open lawn and came to be used as a football field, which overlapped the baseball diamond's outfield. Throughout the remainder of the historic period, use of the Weisser Park sports fields continued to grow. It was common for the fields to be used continually from morning to night, a fact which reinforced the reports of the Park Board that more facilities were needed throughout the city.<sup>35</sup>

In late 1916 into 1917, the Parks Department planned a series of other substantial improvements to the newly expanded park. The largest project included the construction of a two-story pavilion, set within the shady canopy of the oak-hickory grove. (See Figure II.7.) The lower story of the new pavilion was enclosed and furnished with enough tables and chairs to accommodate formal gatherings of up to 300 people. The upper story was a roofed, open-air gathering space accessible from a double set of exterior stairs.<sup>36</sup> In 1918, as part of a larger effort to increase the profits of city parks, the Board of Park Commissioners contracted Frank Harkenrider to sell concession items such as lunch, popcorn, candy, ice cream, cigars, pop, and other light refreshments in the pavilion. Operating from the upper story, the concessionaire was prohibited from "hauling ice cream etc. up to the pavilion with a team and wagon, or in any way damage the park grounds."<sup>37</sup> This caveat that the concessionaire must be careful not to damage the park grounds surrounding the pavilion illustrates the high value of the park held within the community. Throughout the remainder of the historic period, the pavilion was used widely by park visitors. It upheld its original rustic appearance, requiring only minimal improvements in 1923 and 1925, when the pavilion was painted and the windows and lights repaired.<sup>38</sup>

With the construction of the pavilion in 1917, other associated park improvements were carried out. A vehicular entry drive was constructed at this same time that originated from the southern edge of the oak-hickory grove, just west of the park's midline, connecting with Drexel Avenue. The gravel drive traveled northeast for a short distance before curving west, around the trunk of an existing tree. It then continued north through the grove of trees and looped around the pavilion. Ornamental plantings were also installed around the pavilion and at the newly established park entrance drive. Also in 1917, additional trees, shrubs, and flowers were planted in the park, although the species, location, and number of plants remain unclear.<sup>39</sup>

The following year in 1918, construction of pedestrian paths in Weisser Park began, most likely as part of a city-wide effort to establish formal paths in the public parks, which arose in response to 1917 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, which described the Board of Park Commissioners' displeasure with the emergence of "cow-paths" in the City's parks.<sup>40</sup> The Board requested that the issue be addressed the following year and in 1918, the Parks Department began the preliminary layout of the pedestrian paths spanning the interior at Weisser Park. Up until this time, visitors most likely followed informal compacted earth paths through the park. However, the

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

formalized paths were not completed for several years due to a lack of funds.<sup>41</sup> The paths remained unfinished until 1923, when the Parks Department gained the funds to grade and lay gravel on all the paths.<sup>42</sup>

Continued improvements to park facilities were undertaken throughout the 1920s. Improving tree health and horticultural displays were among projects carried out at this time. In 1920, the Parks Department removed 72 dead trees from the oak-hickory grove, which were killed by insect pests.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, ornamental flower gardens became popular features at public parks, such as the Sunken Garden and Rose Garden at Fort Wayne's Lakeside Park.<sup>44</sup> The rise in popularity of public flower gardens may have been the impetus for the extensive flower garden the Parks Department planted in the northwest corner of the park (Landscape Area 1) in 1922.<sup>45</sup> The following year, the Parks Department expanded the flower bed to include a total of 6,000 plants.<sup>46</sup> The primary feature of the new garden was a long, rectangular bed that ran parallel to Hanna Street. Little is known regarding the exact species and horticultural displays. One historic image shows an ornamental arrangement of bedding which includes the title, "Weisser Park," spelled out in annuals. Palms and other tropical plant materials are also visible. Mown turf was planted between the formal bedding. (See Figure II.8.)

Expansions to the horticultural displays at Weisser Park continued into 1925, when a peony garden was established in the northeast corner of the park (Landscape Area 3), an area that had previously been undeveloped for park use. In the *1925 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, it is stated that "the citizens of Fort Wayne seem to be deeply interested in this beautiful flower."<sup>47</sup> It is unclear whether the peony garden sparked the interest or if the community's growing interest in the flower served as the inspiration for the garden. The peony garden was displayed in formalized planting beds, clearly visible in historic images. The square and rectangular beds varied in size and were arranged in a geometric, orthogonal pattern. At the center of the garden area were two concentric rings that encircled a set of smaller planting beds.

Weisser Park in the early 1920s also witnessed a petition for a swimming pool in 1921, the development of outdoor kitchen facilities for picnickers in 1922, the construction of three tennis courts from 1921 to 1923, and the installation of light fixtures in 1924.<sup>48</sup> Exact locations of park lights have not been documented. However, it is known that in 1924 the Weisser Park Community Association, which had become a strong advocate for the park, requested that the Park Board install ornamental lighting throughout the park. According to a letter dated November 25, 1924, the installation of lights had been "included in the original plan of Weisser Park and had been promised the residents of this district since the establishing of Weisser Park."<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, the early 1920s oversaw an increase in demand throughout the city for public entertainment facilities. For several years, the Weisser Park pavilion provided the only indoor facilities for park visitors, aside from the comfort station. While the pavilion was used as a space for both formal and informal gatherings, additional sheltered facilities were needed. In 1923, a bandstand and a gazebo were constructed southeast of the pavilion. While no historic photographs have been discovered documenting the style of the new structures, they most likely matched the simple, rustic style of the wood-frame pavilion. Tucked within the curve of the entry drive, the bandstand and stage faced northwest, towards Hanna Street. (See Figure II.9.) Seating for onlookers radiated out from the bandstand, facing its stage. The gazebo was located across the entry drive from

#### II.7

#### Heritage Landscapes

#### Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*

the bandstand. The surrounding oak and hickory trees provided a shady, relaxed atmosphere for visitors to enjoy the public concerts that would be held there. An evergreen plantation was planted at the front of the building, further enclosing it within the oak-hickory canopy. As with the pavilion, the bandstand required little maintenance repairs. In 1925, the railing was repaired and the bandstand painted.<sup>50</sup> These were the only repairs made until 1948, when the stage was also painted.<sup>51</sup>

With both the pavilion and the bandstand available for park visitors, there was a great deal of space allotted for social gatherings and organized performances. However, the upper story of the pavilion, reserved for informal gatherings, was not enclosed and therefore, while used heavily during the warm months, was deserted during the cold winter months. By 1931, the citizens of Fort Wayne sought a place to socialize year round and the community surrounding Weisser Park submitted a petition requesting the establishment of a daily gathering space. As requested by the community, the space was meant to be used by the city's hard-working citizens. The Park Department responded by constructing a meeting room beneath the bandstand, which became immediately popular. The Park Board celebrated the meeting space's popularity, proclaiming that the community "appreciates more and more the efforts of the Park Board to give them what they want, namely, entertainment for those who cannot afford to go away from Fort Wayne."<sup>52</sup> The Park Board's and the City's dedication to the development of its park facilities according to the desires of the local community demonstrated the influence that the common, working class had over the continued improvement of their neighborhoods. Further, it illustrated the level of commitment held by the local government to provide a range of opportunities for active engagement in the city's landscape on a daily basis.

Initially the meeting room was constructed for use by the working class of Fort Wayne, however, by 1932, the popularity of the space had spread to other communities. In the winter of 1932, the meeting space was used daily by local unemployed citizens. They utilized the space for recreational games such as card-playing and checkers. Surprisingly, neither the City nor the Park Board objected to this particular citizen group's use of the meeting space, reporting that they kept the room in "perfect cleanliness" and that the Parks Department needed only to supply light and wood for heat.<sup>53</sup> The fact that all members of the community were welcome to enjoy any park facility of which they could make use reinforced the Parks Department's dedication to improving the quality of life for all of Fort Wayne's citizens, regardless of one's social or economic standing.

While the popularity of the lower meeting room continued to grow, the main bandstand proved to be widely used as well. Many local performers would take the stage, providing hours of entertainment for the community. However, the bandstand's audience grew to include many more than just the Weisser Park community; in 1940, the Honolulu Band performed 6 concerts at the bandstand, which were attended by over 30,000 people in total. This high volume of attendees was somewhat unexpected and prompted the president of the Weisser Park Community Association to declare the bandstand too small to accommodate bands larger than 25 members.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to the pavilion and bandstand facilities, numerous areas within the park were developed for active recreational uses. The Parks Department continued to install playground equipment through the remainder of the historic period. The playground, nestled among the trees, provided local children a peaceful opportunity to play, an experience which was distinctly different from other playgrounds that were not as clearly separated from the bustle of the City. (See Figure II.10.) For the most part, the equipment included swings and slides, which were repaired as necessary. Almost

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

immediately, the playground at Weisser Park proved to be the most widely used in the city. In 1926, 17,082 boys and 11,400 girls, for a total of 28,482 children, attended the park's public playgrounds.<sup>55</sup> By 1930, Fort Wayne's playgrounds had become so popular that the City commissioned a unit of Park Police to patrol the city's parks.<sup>56</sup> The need for the patrols arose from the fact that many of the city's playgrounds had become so popular that even adults were using the equipment. Unfortunately, the playgrounds were designed for use by children and the unexpected adult use resulted in damage to the equipment.<sup>57</sup> Many of Fort Wayne's playgrounds were supervised by individuals trained by the Parks Department. (See Figure II.11.) As the popularity of Weisser Park's playground continued to grow, the demand for more supervisors increased as well. In 1939, the president of the Weisser Park Community Association requested that playground supervisors be present into the evening hours in order to maintain proper order and conduct in the park.<sup>58</sup>

The incredible use of the Weisser Park playground continued and from 1947-1949, two substantial additions to the park were constructed. In 1947, the Parks Department erected a merry-go-round, located east of the pavilion.<sup>59</sup> In 1949, the Parks Department sought to accommodate a wider range of users when it constructed the City's first "tot lot" at the park, a playground developed specifically for pre-school age children. The new playground included low, safe playground equipment and was enclosed by a three-foot tall chain-link fence.<sup>60</sup> By 1950, the Weisser Park playgrounds, with the inclusion of the new "tot lot," had the highest number of registered users in Fort Wayne with 1,289 people registered and a recorded attendance of 60,211.<sup>61</sup>

The playgrounds provided the majority of the active recreation within Landscape Area 1 of the park. Additional recreational facilities in the area were limited to the five horseshoe courts, developed in early 1931.<sup>62</sup> Located at the east edge of the park, along the vehicular alley, the horseshoe courts were widely used. The Parks Department installed lights around the courts, allowing the Weisser Park Community to enjoy them into the evening hours.<sup>63</sup>

Other improvements to active recreational facilities within Weisser Park were noted throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Since their initial construction in 1914 and the early 1920s, the four Weisser Park tennis courts were quite well used and maintained.<sup>64</sup> While the existing four courts were used mostly for championship games, two additional courts were constructed in 1931 for use by neighborhood children. Historic reports describe the new courts as being located "in the wooded part of the park."<sup>65</sup> While no documentation has been found regarding the location of any tennis courts within the oak-hickory grove, it is likely that the two courts constructed in 1931 were located the farthest west, at the edge of the Landscape Area 2, bordered by the Oak-Hickory Grove.

The tennis courts continued to be widely used, although their use was limited to daytime hours. In circa 1939, floodlights were constructed along the center line of the courts, allowing play to be extended into the night, which greatly increased their use.<sup>66</sup> (See Figure II.12.) Through the 1940s, the Weisser Park tennis courts became widely used for both lessons and tournaments.<sup>67</sup> During the summer of 1948, the courts were used for a city-wide tournament, with 146 matches played.<sup>68</sup> Also in 1948, the Parks Department improved the existing courts by replacing the nets with updated, ratchet-style nets and the construction of backstops surrounding the courts.<sup>69</sup> While exact dates of the improvements have not been recorded, it is likely that these improvements occurred prior to the tournament that was held that summer. The final improvement to the tennis courts that occurred during this period was the construction of a small concrete retaining wall in 1949, located along the

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

north and south edges of the courts.<sup>70</sup> By the end of the historic period, there were four unpaved courts and one concrete court. The courts were aligned parallel to Eckart Street with the concrete court the farthest west. The four unpaved courts were enclosed with continuous fencing while the concrete court had its own enclosure.

Improvements to the ball fields also occurred during the 1930s and 1940s. By the late 1930s, baseball had developed into such a popular pastime that the Fort Wayne community began to request softball facilities be developed as well. In 1939, a proposal surfaced to transform the regulation baseball diamond into a softball field. The Weisser Park Community Association was vehemently against this idea, arguing that the baseball diamond was the finest in the city.<sup>71</sup> Instead, the junior baseball field was also used for softball. Small improvements continued to be made throughout the remainder of the historic period. In 1948, 450 square feet of fencing was erected as a backstop for a small softball field and 2,100 square feet of fencing was erected along Eckart Street to prevent balls from being batted into the street.<sup>72</sup> (See Figure II.13.)

Though active recreational facilities were expanded during the mid-developmental years, passive recreation persisted at Weisser Park, influencing the development and organization of the park. Throughout the 1930s, the Parks Department improved upon the ornamental horticultural displays of the park, particularly Landscape Area 3. By 1930, the garden contained over 250 varieties of peonies, making it the largest collection of peonies in any city park in the state of Indiana.<sup>73</sup> The following year, even more varieties were added and the display became the most complete in the Midwest.<sup>74</sup> By 1932, the garden displayed over 400 peony varieties and became one of Weisser Park's most valued features.<sup>75</sup> The popularity of the gardens likely spurred the 1938 request for the construction of a formal path parallel to the peony garden by the president of the Weisser Park Neighborhood Association. It is unclear if this path was constructed, though a concrete sidewalk ran along Eckart Street from its intersection at the west with Hanna Street to its intersection with the eastern alley, providing pedestrian access to the gardens.

Popularity of passive recreational facilities continued to grow over the following decades. The use of the Weisser Park picnic facilities remained strong and supporting amenities were installed. Throughout its history, the demand for picnic grounds in the City outweighed the available facilities. As early as 1927, Weisser Park was declared a favorite picnic spot for Fort Wayne residents. While only one to three picnics were held there weekly, the number of picnickers that arrived was such that the Weisser Park picnic grounds could not accommodate them.<sup>76</sup> The Parks Department did not immediately move to address this issue. However, in the following year, the steady demand for picnic space again overwhelmed the available facilities at Weisser Park. This year, the overcrowding reached such a point that the Superintendent of Parks felt that the City needed to "look for an extension or rather an addition to this park in the very near future."<sup>77</sup> However, an addition to Weisser Park was not sought and the overcrowded conditions increased.

Over the next several years the reputation of the quality of the picnic facilities had spread throughout the region. By 1931, the Weisser Park picnic grounds were attended by residents not just of Fort Wayne but of neighboring states as well, including Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois.<sup>78</sup> This time, the throngs of picnickers that could not be accommodated urged the Superintendent of Parks to report that Weisser Park was much too small. Further, he encouraged the local community to pressure the

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*

City to acquire a property that has been set aside in the southeastern section of the city, known as Brames Woods.<sup>79</sup>

While the overcrowding of the picnic grounds was a primary motivation to develop Brames Woods as additional picnic grounds, the Superintendent of Parks held an ulterior motive in developing the property. As early as 1921, citizens of Fort Wayne had been petitioning for the construction of a local swimming pool at Weisser Park.<sup>80</sup> While the Parks Board did not initially agree, it eventually consented to the request in 1931. However, just as the project was set to begin, the Weisser Park Community Association withdrew the petition, explaining that “there was quite a negro settlement in the ward and as citizens and taxpayers colored people would have the right to use it.” The Association feared that such use would be “distasteful to white people.” As a result, no swimming pool was constructed at Weisser Park—a move that likely saved Weisser Park because of the large size of the pool set within the small neighborhood park. The withdrawal of the petition also allowed the Superintendent to push for the construction of the pool at Brames Woods, which was a more appropriate location.<sup>81</sup>

As late as 1947, the picnic facilities continued to be improved upon when fireplaces were constructed of cut stone salvaged from old city sidewalks and curbs.<sup>82</sup> The fireplaces were located in the eastern half of the oak-hickory grove. At the same time that the picnic facilities were augmented, a number of site furnishings were installed to support park use. Additional drinking fountains were installed in 1947. As with the fireplaces, the drinking fountains constructed in 1947 were of the same cut stone obtained from old city sidewalks and curbs.<sup>83</sup> Documentation has not been discovered regarding the exact location and number of all drinking fountains that were installed in Weisser Park. However, as depicted on a 1962 site plan, there were at least three fountains constructed: one at the west edge of the grove, one just east of the entry drive, and one approximately halfway between the entry drive and the east edge of the park. (See Figure II.21.)

By 1950 the development and uses of Weisser Park conceived from the original 1908 inception were fully in place and the park was heavily used by the surrounding community. The physical layout of the park included the development of recreation facilities located in three distinct areas, which are clearly visible in a 1949 aerial photograph. (See Figure II.14.) The Oak-Hickory Grove dominated the southern half of the park, extending partially into the northwest corner. The maturing trees created a striking natural character for the park with park facilities constructed within clearings in the wooded grove. Concentrated on the western half of the grove, park facilities included the pavilion and playground. A curving entry drive led through the trees toward the pavilion. Off to the east of the drive was a bandstand, where local performers would entertain thousands of spectators during the warm summer months. Groupings of play equipment and picnic tables were set beneath the shady canopy, providing visitors a welcome respite from the surrounding city. The Oak-Hickory Grove also provided a dramatic backdrop to the northern portion of the park, comprising the Playing Fields & Courts and Garden landscape areas. Contrasting the strong sense of enclosure created by the grove, the two northern areas were largely open with expanses of lawn. The majority of Weisser Park’s active recreational facilities were constructed in the Playing Fields & Courts area, located in the central northern portion of the park. At the southern edge of this area, a baseball diamond that came to be considered one of the City’s finest, was constructed. To the west, the widely used tennis court further helped to establish the primarily open character of this area. The Garden landscape area, located in the northeast corner of Weisser Park was the most formally designed area within the



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*

park landscape. Flower beds set in distinct geometric patterns flaunted hundreds of varieties of peonies. Visually separated from the Oak-Hickory Grove by a line of evergreen trees, the Garden's formal, geometric space contrasted the informal play and tree-canopied gathering areas seen throughout the park.

#### D. PARK CHANGE: 1951 TO 2007

By 1950, Weisser Park had been developed with a variety of active and passive recreational facilities. Gardens flourished, displaying hundreds of varieties of peonies, drawing crowds of onlookers to the park, while tennis courts and ball fields provided outlets for active recreation. Though the foundation of the park was developed, changes and improvements to existing park facilities, particularly the sports fields were carried out. In 1951, a 30' tall tennis practice board was installed at the south end of the concrete court.<sup>84</sup> The following year, all six courts were resurfaced with clay.<sup>85</sup> The tennis courts remained a popular and commonly used feature of the park. Historic images document community children using the hard, flat surface of the tennis courts as an open play area. (See Figure II.15.) Shortly after, in 1953, the baseball diamond was resurfaced with clay, similar to the resurfacing the tennis courts underwent the previous year.<sup>86</sup> (See Figure II.16.) In 1957, the fabric of the baseball backstop was replaced, a fence was installed at the football field, and basketball hoops were added south of the tennis courts.<sup>87</sup> Additional open lawn was retained for informal play. (See Figure II.17.)

Other minimal improvements were made to the park. In 1960, new lights were installed around the horseshoe courts.<sup>88</sup> In 1952, the stone fireplaces were repaired.<sup>89</sup> New lights were also added. Additional lights were installed throughout the park in 1970.<sup>90</sup> While exact locations have not been documented, it is likely that some lights were installed near the entry drive and new pavilion.

On July 20, 1954, the "Great Storm" struck Fort Wayne and 4,500 street trees and 1,200 park trees were lost, many of which may have been part of the elegant oak-hickory grove.<sup>91</sup> While the grove still defined the overall character of the Weisser Park landscape, the loss in trees greatly impacted the canopy, altering the shady nature and strong sense of enclosure the grove afforded visitors to the park.

By 1956 considerable changes had occurred within the Weisser Park landscape. While many of the changes were improvements to the park's existing facilities, Weisser Park's most distinctive and unique feature had suffered incredible loss. As seen in a 1956 aerial photograph, the formally dense canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove was greatly diminished. (See Figure II.18.) This was due to primarily to the "Great Storm" of 1954, when several mature trees were lost. It is likely that some trees may have been in a state of decline. This event accelerated the natural process and resulted in a significant loss of tree canopy. The Playing Fields & Courts and Garden areas still retained their earlier character, with the baseball field, tennis courts, and peony beds intact. While the facilities within the Oak-Hickory Grove also remained largely intact and widely used, the extensive loss of canopy dramatically altered the visitor's experience. The decrease in canopy resulted in a lessened sense of enclosure. It was this sense of enclosure and separation from the busy city streets that helped define the overall character of Weisser Park.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Another substantial change occurred within the oak-hickory grove in 1963, when a new pavilion was constructed. With the new structure, the main circulation feature, the entry drive, was altered. In 1964, following the completion of the pavilion, the entry drive was widened and realigned with gravel parking areas along its sides, creating a smoother curve under the grove's canopy. The drive terminated in a circular turnaround, located on the spot of the original park pavilion. Narrow pedestrian paths led from the west side of the reconfigured entry drive towards the new pavilion. While the original gravel paths were not formally removed at this time, they were probably not continually maintained. Eventually, the gravel disappeared and the paths reverted back to compacted dirt.

The new entry drive provided access to the new, modern pavilion. While not constructed until 1963, the Parks Department had been considering replacing the original 1917 pavilion since 1956. The original, rustic wood-frame pavilion was now perceived as "old, antiquated..." and even unsafe. (See Figure II.19.) The Parks Department and the Park Board wanted a pavilion that reflected a more contemporary design style.<sup>92</sup> The original pavilion remained until 1963, when the Park Board contracted local architects Martindale & Dahlgren, who were instructed to design the new pavilion following the pavilion that had been constructed in Waynedale Memorial Park.<sup>93</sup> Taking less than one year to complete, the new pavilion was dedicated and open to the public on August 20, 1963.<sup>94</sup> The new pavilion was located south of the original, to the west of the entry drive. The small, one-story, L-shaped pavilion included restrooms and an open-air, partially covered gathering area with concrete flooring. In its early years, the new pavilion was used as a youth center with programmed activities.

During this same time, the adjacent Weisser Park School was completed which further altered the organization of Weisser Park and its amenities. Built in 1962, construction of the school included the removal of the eastern portion of Eckart Street as shown on a 1973 aerial. (See Figure II.20.) Access to that portion of road became limited as the area was primarily used for school bus parking, which was located along the north edge of the east half of the park partially extending onto park land. The geometric garden beds formerly located in the northeast corner of the park were removed by 1962 to accommodate the school. (See Figure II.21.) Although no documentation links the removal of the beds with the school construction in 1962, it is likely that the beds were removed during construction. Former garden area areas that did not become bus parking were reverted to open lawn.

After the construction of the adjacent school, recreation facilities and programs within Weisser Park changed with new users and new city-wide recreational interests. In 1962, improvements continued with the construction of a new softball diamond.<sup>95</sup> Three years later, the existing tennis courts were improved and twenty-eight lights were installed, replacing the previous lights.<sup>96</sup> It was also during this period that the football field became more widely used, perhaps a result of the installation of goal posts in 1969.<sup>97</sup> Demand for additional sports facilities emerged and in 1976, two additional, hard-surface tennis courts were constructed.

The only entirely new sport facility that was installed during this period was a series of six basketball courts, constructed in 1972.<sup>98</sup> The courts quickly became popular and in 1976, timed lights were installed. The lights went out at 11:00 pm every night, controlling the nighttime activity at the park.<sup>99</sup> The installation of the timers was a contemporary solution that the Parks Department had previously attempted to solve through the use of supervisors and Park Police.

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Changes were also made to the playground within the park. The original playground equipment was removed and replaced with contemporary, brightly-colored, plastic equipment, probably in association with the adjacent school. While the playgrounds were used extensively up through 1950, during this period, use gradually slowed despite use of the playground by school children of Weisser Park School. In 1953, there were 1,029 registered playground users.<sup>100</sup> By 1974, that number had dropped to 530.<sup>101</sup> Even with the decrease in registered users, the Parks Department maintained its summer supervised playground program until 1999, which was the first year it had not been offered since 1930.<sup>102</sup>

Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, changes to Weisser Park were minimal. In 1996, construction began on the Weisser Park Youth Center to house youth activities that previously took place in the park pavilion. Completed in 1998, the new center, located east of the entry drive's terminus, was the largest building constructed in Weisser Park. The one-story building has entrances at the west and north and a loading area to the south. The north, west, and south façades are lined with large windows, providing clear views into the park. A fenced exterior courtyard encloses tables and benches. A concrete pedestrian path was also added to this area to accommodate new pedestrian traffic for the youth center

Following the construction of the youth center, minimal park changes took place. In 2005, the former density of the grove's canopy was partially restored when numerous trees were planted as part of the Great Tree Canopy Comeback.<sup>103</sup> Today, the park retains recreational facilities and structures that manifest its past evolution. In addition to the adjacent school and youth center, dramatic changes had been made to the park sports facilities. Of the seven tennis courts, only two remain, as the westernmost tennis court has been transformed into a basketball court. An asphalt play area and a small playground, abutting the bus parking lot, have been constructed east of the tennis courts. The baseball diamond is one of only a few features that remain in its original location. Few small-scale elements have also been added such as the wood bollard lining the east alley and two metal soccer goals on the northeast lawn.

### E. CONCLUSION TO LANDSCAPE HISTORY

Fort Wayne's Parks Department has a long history of striving to provide its citizens with ample, accessible park grounds. In 1910, Charles Mulford Robinson developed a master plan for Fort Wayne's parks and boulevards. In his report, Robinson stated:

*Most persons will say that a park is designed to be beautiful. So it is, but its purpose is also actively to serve. Passive beauty alone must not be the end sought in the system as a whole, and in an industrial city particularly – much more, for example, than in a capital city – there is need that the park system furnish recreative facilities.*<sup>104</sup>

It was perhaps from Robinson's inspiration that the Fort Wayne Parks Department sought to establish not merely a chain of parks to be used as leisurely strolling grounds, but rather the Department, recognizing the importance of providing its citizens with an outlet for active

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*

engagement in the urban landscape, developed of a system of parks that the City's residents would be drawn to visit again and again.

What started out as an extant section of grand oak and hickory grove quickly developed into a thriving urban park surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Weisser Park proved to be immensely popular, unhindered by its relatively small size. The park accommodated visitors seeking both passive and active recreation, and its design created a series of well-defined spaces, separating the various uses. The park was a popular venue for its social gathering spaces, such as the pavilion, bandstand, and picnic areas, protected by the immense Oak-Hickory Grove with its active recreation areas extensively utilized as well. Although Weisser Park is one of the City's smaller parks, its active sports fields were considered among the best in the City. Despite the fact that the baseball diamond shared its outfield with the informal football field, city-wide leagues sought to hold their tournaments at the park. During the park's first 40 years, the Parks Department performed an incredible amount of work at Weisser Park. In fact, in 1923 more work was undertaken there than at any other park in Fort Wayne.<sup>105</sup> This fact illustrates the important role Weisser Park played within the City's park system. The popularity and importance of Weisser Park was accomplished perhaps through the City's continual efforts to expand the park's facilities, which in turn drew new users into the park. Between the active sports fields and playground areas, the intimate social gathering spaces, and the formal garden display, Weisser Park welcomed an expansive community to experience its serenity.

Weisser Park was created in part to preserve a majestic grove of oak and hickory trees. However, the inherent value of this landscape was ultimately much greater than either the Parks Department or the Fort Wayne community had anticipated. While the City's park system includes parklands considerably larger than the modest Weisser Park, the wooded grove provided the surrounding community with an inimitable experience. While the urban subdivisions continued to spread throughout the City, Weisser Park preserved a piece of solitude, where neighbors could gather to socialize and recreate under the shady canopy while being silently reminded of the grandeur of Fort Wayne's natural beauty. The improvements made to the landscape helped to transform the native tree grove into one of Fort Wayne's most popular parks.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

CHAPTER II ENDNOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> *1916 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1916:7.
- <sup>3</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 22 December 1905: 4-5.
- <sup>4</sup> "Department of Public Parks," *1906 Annual Report Fort Wayne City Government*, 1 Jan., 1907, original DPR.
- <sup>5</sup> William J. Hosey, "Mayor's Message," *Fourth Annual Message of Wm. J. Hosey Mayor of Fort Wayne, Indiana with Annual Reports of Heads of Departments of the City Government for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 1908*, 1909:24; original FWPR.
- <sup>6</sup> David N. Foster, Louis Fox, Louis Dorn, and E.F. Yarnelle, "Report of the Board of Park Commissioners," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92-104; original FWPR.
- <sup>7</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, "The Improvement of Fort Wayne Indiana," Press of Fort Wayne Printing Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1910.
- <sup>8</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, "The Improvement of Fort Wayne Indiana," Press of Fort Wayne Printing Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1910, 87.
- <sup>9</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, "The Improvement of Fort Wayne Indiana," Press of Fort Wayne Printing Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1910, 87-88.
- <sup>10</sup> August W. Goers, *Annual Report of Board of Public Parks of Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1910:12-13; original DPR.
- <sup>11</sup> George E. Kessler, *Map of the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne Indiana*, 1912; Image ARD-CMC-NRHP-Kessler-1912; All Parks Files.
- <sup>12</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 4 May 1912: 171-2.
- <sup>13</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 18 May 1912: 176.
- <sup>14</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 24 July 1911.
- <sup>15</sup> *1917 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1917:43.
- <sup>16</sup> William C. Baade, "Controller's Report," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government 1914*, 1915:174-177; original FWPR.
- <sup>17</sup> A. W. Goers, "Report of Superintendent for 1912," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:107-112; original FWPR.
- <sup>18</sup> A. W. Goers, "Report of Superintendent for 1912," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:107-112; original FWPR.
- <sup>19</sup> David N. Foster, Louis Fox, Louis Dorn, and E.F. Yarnelle, "Report of the Board of Park Commissioners," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92-104; original DPR.
- <sup>20</sup> "Weisser Park," *Eighth Annual Report of Board of Park Commissioners*, 1912: 63, original History Center.
- <sup>21</sup> "Report of the Secretary," *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913, original HC.
- <sup>22</sup> "Contributions," *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913:29, original HC.
- <sup>23</sup> "Contributions," *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913:29, original HC.
- <sup>24</sup> *1914 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1914:27-28.
- <sup>25</sup> William C. Baade, "Controller's Report," *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government 1914*, 1915:174-177; original DPR.
- <sup>26</sup> "Report of Superintendent," *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913:47, original HC.
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- <sup>28</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 11 May 1912: 173.
- <sup>29</sup> *1916 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1915:39.
- <sup>30</sup> *1916 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1916.
- <sup>31</sup> *1916 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1915:19-20.
- <sup>32</sup> *1917 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1917:17.
- <sup>33</sup> *1916 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1916:41.
- <sup>34</sup> *1917 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1917:43.
- <sup>35</sup> *1931 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.
- <sup>36</sup> 1917 Photograph of the Pavilion shortly after construction. (R-FWP-WEI-Brd-Ann-Rpt-Pavilion-1917.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation
- <sup>37</sup> Board of Park Commissioners, with Frank Harkenrider, *Contract Privilege*, 4 May 1918; DPR.
- <sup>38</sup> Herman H. Gerdorn, President, Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 3 August 1925; DPR; DPR, Miscellaneous Lists, n.d.; DPR.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

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- <sup>41</sup> 1918 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1918: 31.
- <sup>42</sup> 1923 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1923: 18.
- <sup>43</sup> 1920 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1920: 30.
- <sup>44</sup> 1923 *Annual Report of Board of Park Commissioners*, 1923:16-18; 1925 *Annual Report of Board of Park Commissioners*, 1925:19.
- <sup>45</sup> “Report of the Park Superintendent and City Forester,” *Annual Report of the City of Fort Wayne*, 1922:20.
- <sup>46</sup> 1923 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1923: 18.
- <sup>47</sup> 1925 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1925: 21.
- <sup>48</sup> “Report of the Park Superintendent and City Forester,” *Annual Report of the City of Fort Wayne*, 1922:20; “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Report of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1921:22; and “Report of the Park Superintendent and City Forester,” *Annual Report of the City of Fort Wayne*, 1921:28.
- <sup>49</sup> Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 25 November 1924; DPR.
- <sup>50</sup> Herman H. Gerdomb, President, Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 3 August 1925; DPR; DPR, Miscellaneous Lists, n.d.; DPR.
- <sup>51</sup> 1948 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction and Maintenance Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948.
- <sup>52</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 19.
- <sup>53</sup> 1932 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1932: 21.
- <sup>54</sup> Herman, H. Gerdomb, Pres. Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 3 March 1941; DPR.
- <sup>55</sup> 1926 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1926: 18.
- <sup>56</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,”  
[http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
- <sup>57</sup> 1933 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1933: 12.
- <sup>58</sup> Herman, H. Gerdomb, Pres. Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 26 April 1939; DPR.
- <sup>59</sup> 1957 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1947.
- <sup>60</sup> 1949 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1949: 8.
- <sup>61</sup> 1950 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Draft, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1950.
- <sup>62</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 13.
- <sup>63</sup> Herman, H. Gerdomb, Pres. Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 31 May 1939; DPR.
- <sup>64</sup> 1930 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1930: 21.
- <sup>65</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.
- <sup>66</sup> Herman, H. Gerdomb, Pres. Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 31 May 1939; DPR.
- <sup>67</sup> 1948 *Annual Report of the Recreation Department, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948: 21.
- <sup>68</sup> 1948 *Annual Report of the Recreation Department, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948: 21.
- <sup>69</sup> 1948 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948: 7; 1948 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction and Maintenance Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948.
- <sup>70</sup> 1949 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1949: 5.
- <sup>71</sup> Herman, H. Gerdomb, Pres. Weisser Park Community Association, letter to Board of Park Commissioners, 26 April 1939; DPR.
- <sup>72</sup> 1948 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction and Maintenance Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1948.
- <sup>73</sup> 1930 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1930: 21.
- <sup>74</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.
- <sup>75</sup> 1932 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1932: 21.
- <sup>76</sup> 1927 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1927: 23.
- <sup>77</sup> 1928 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1928: 19.
- <sup>78</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.
- <sup>79</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.
- <sup>80</sup> “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Report of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1921:22.
- <sup>81</sup> 1931 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1931: 21.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

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- <sup>82</sup> 1957 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1947.
- <sup>83</sup> 1957 *Annual Report of Miscellaneous Construction Work Accomplished, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1947.
- <sup>84</sup> 1951 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1951:13.
- <sup>85</sup> 1952 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1952:11.
- <sup>86</sup> 1953 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1953:14.
- <sup>87</sup> 1957 *Annual Report of the Park Department, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1957:21-23.
- <sup>88</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1960 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1960:12
- <sup>89</sup> 1952 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1952:12.
- <sup>90</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1970 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1970:41-42
- <sup>91</sup> John Ankenbruck, *Twentieth Century History of Fort Wayne*, Fort Wayne, IN: Twentieth Century Historical Fort Wayne, Inc., 1975 and 1954 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1954:5.
- <sup>92</sup> 1956 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1956:9.
- <sup>93</sup> Board of Park Commissioners, with Martindale & Dahlgren, Architects, *A Standard Form of Agreement between Owner and Architect*, AIA, 28 February 1963; DPR.
- <sup>94</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1963 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1963:7
- <sup>95</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1962 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1962:14 & 23
- <sup>96</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1965 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1965:56
- <sup>97</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1969 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1969:35
- <sup>98</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1972 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1972.
- <sup>99</sup> Robert C. Arnold, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, letter to Tony Moore, 16 November 1976; DPR.
- <sup>100</sup> 1953 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1953:36.
- <sup>101</sup> *Fort Wayne, Indiana 1974 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1974.
- <sup>102</sup> DPR, "Parks Department History,"  
[http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
- <sup>103</sup> DPR, "Parks Department History,"  
[http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
- <sup>104</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *The Improvement of Fort Wayne, Indiana* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1910): 68.
- <sup>105</sup> 1923 *Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1923: 18.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
 CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

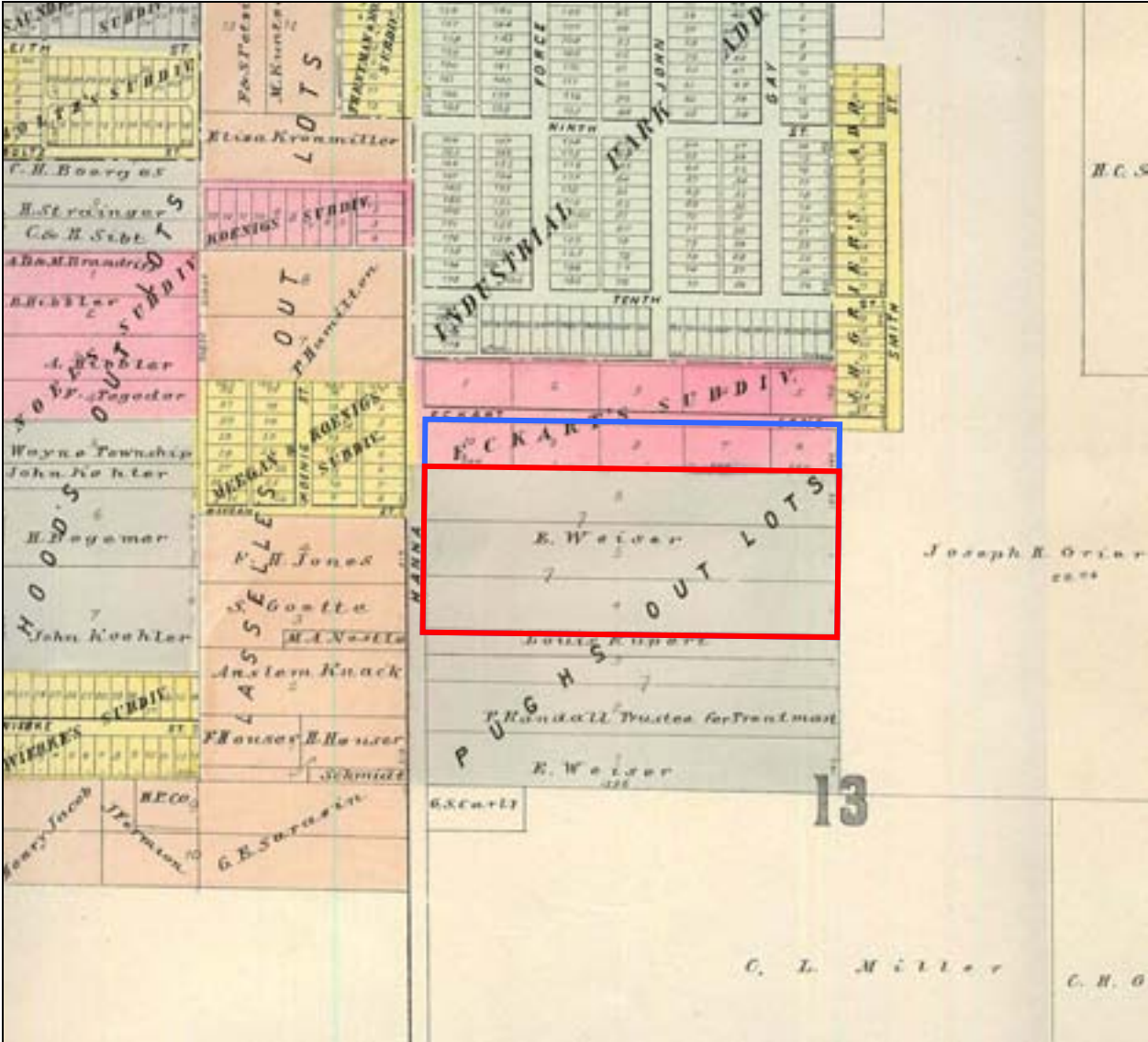


Figure II.1 1898 map from Ogle Atlas of the area surrounding what will become Weisser Park at the corner of Hanna and Eckart Lane. The original boundaries of the future park have been outlined in red and the 1916 park expansion in blue by Heritage Landscapes. E. Weiser is shown as land owner of three rectangular lots labeled 4, 5, and 6 of Pugh's Out Lots. The northern part of this area is labeled Eckart's Subdiv. (R-FWP-WEI-ACPL-Ogle-Atlas-1898.jpg) Courtesy Allen County Public Library, Genealogy Division.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY



Figure II.2 1908 *Polk's Map of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana* shows Robinson's recommended expansion to the City's parks and boulevards. Existing Parks and Drives are depicted in dark green, Proposed River Drives and Park Additions in light green horizontal hatching, and Proposed Boulevard Connections in light green vertical hatching. Weisser Park is shown as an existing park, with proposed boulevard connections shows along Rudisill Avenue and Hanna Street. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Robinson-1908.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

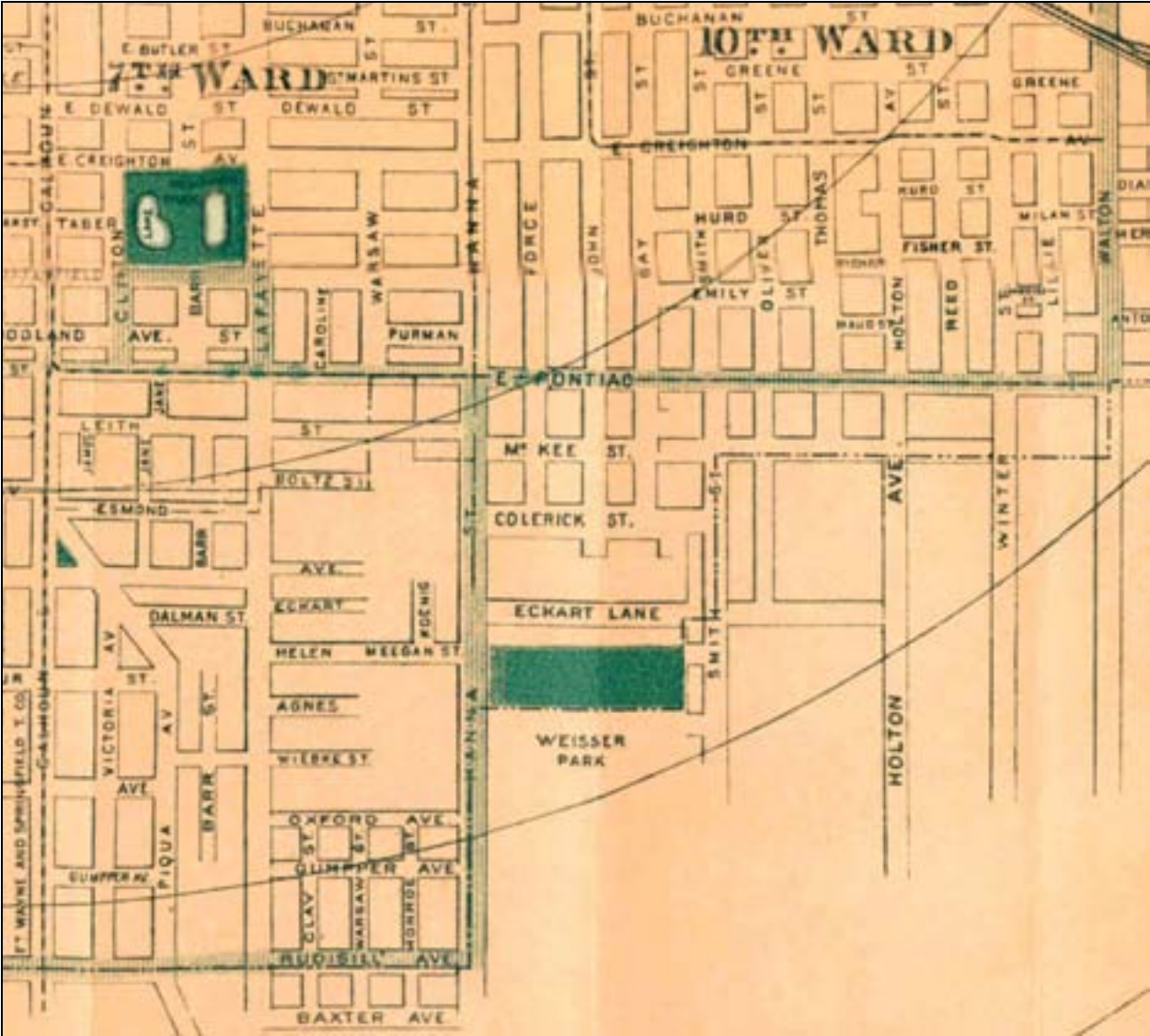


Figure II.3 Close-up section of previous figure showing the area surrounding Weisser Park, showing the proposed boulevards of Rudisill Avenue, Hanna Street, and East Pontiac, which would have served to connect the proposed park additions along the St. Mary's River to Weisser Park and Reservoir Park, visible in the upper left corner. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Robinson-1908-crop.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

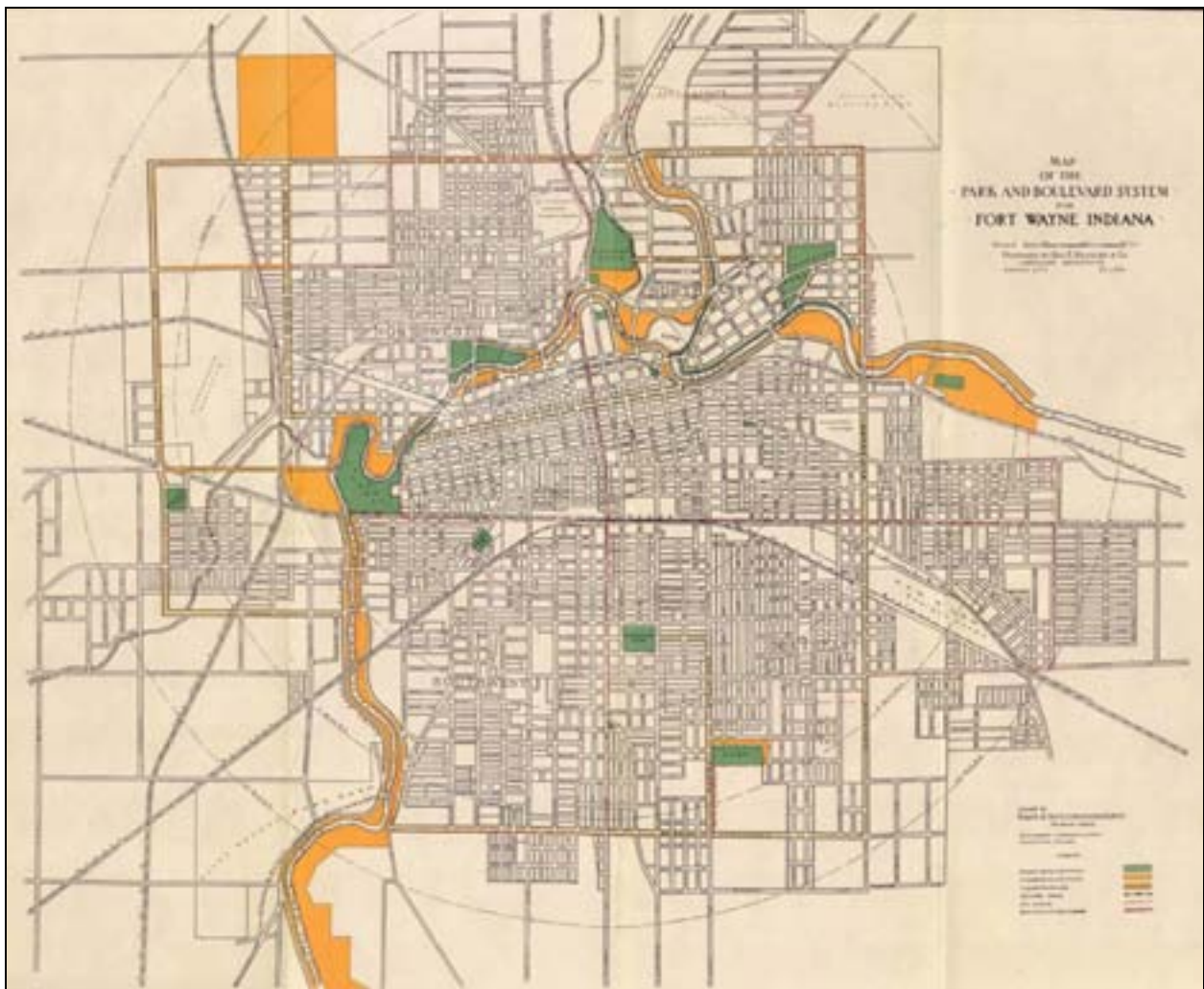


Figure II.4 1912 *Map of the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana* from Kessler's master plan. Here Kessler depicted the City's existing parks and boulevards in green and proposed expansions in orange. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Kessler-1912.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

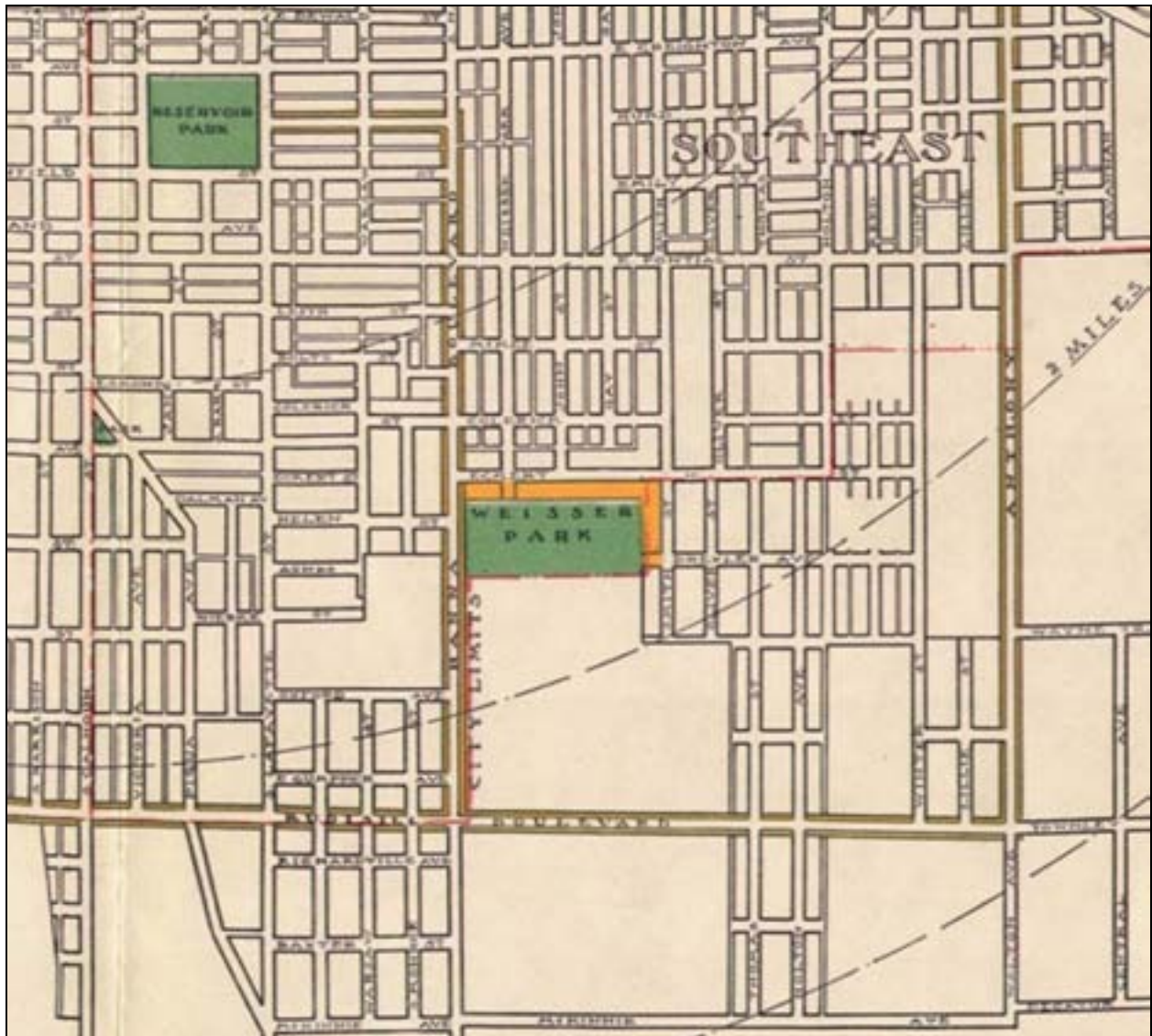


Figure II.5 Close-up section of previous figure showing the area surrounding Weisser Park. Kessler recommended that Weisser Park be expanded to the north and east. Both Rudisill Boulevard and Hanna Street are shown as proposed boulevards. (R-FWP-CMC-NRHP-Kessler-1912-crop.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.6 The trees of the Oak-Hickory Grove, seen here in the winter of 1915, defined the overall character of Weisser Park. The maturing grove created a prominent vertical element throughout the landscape, providing park visitors with a warm sense of enclosure. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Winter-1915.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.7 The rustic style, wood-frame two-story pavilion, shown here shortly after completion in 1917, was set among the oak and hickory trees, creating a large social gathering space within the park. (R-FWP-WEI-Brd-Ann-Rpt-Pavilion-1917.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*

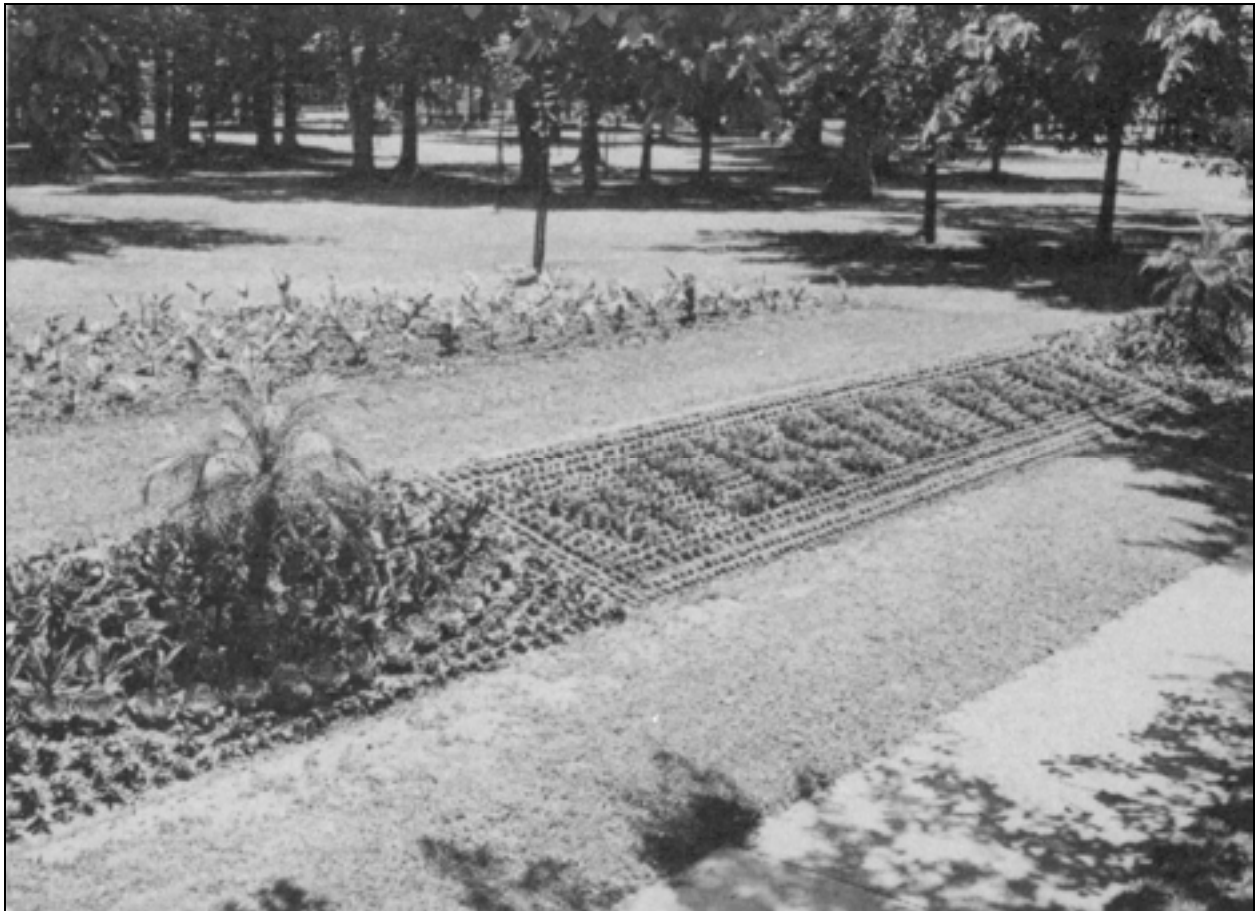


Figure II.8 An extensive ornamental planting bed was planted at the northwest edge of the park in 1922, following the emerging trend of locating flower gardens at public parks. Here the Weisser Park flower bed, as it existed in the 1930s, spelled out the name of the park. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-PlantingBeds-1956-pg12-1930s.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY



Figure II.9 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, published first in 1919 and updated until 1947, shows Weisser Park within its residential neighborhood setting. The three buildings are the only park features shown on this map, and include the pavilion, restrooms, and band shell. (R-FWP-WEI-ACPL-Sanborn-v2-220-221-1919-1947.jpg) Courtesy Allen County Public Library, Genealogy Division.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.10 The Weisser Park playgrounds were popular among community children, shown here in 1925. The setting within the Oak-Hickory Grove created a quiet play area, serving as an escape from the busy city streets. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Playground-1925-14.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.11 Beginning in circa 1930, the City of Fort Wayne began a supervised playgrounds summer program. Here children play and participate in activities led by the Weisser Park playground supervisor visible at the end of the picnic table, during the summer of 1941. The program continued until 1999, which was the first year it was not offered. (R-FWP-WEI-Mun-Rev-07-08-Playground-1941-pg3.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.12 Several tennis courts were constructed at Weisser Park. The courts became extremely popular and in circa 1939 floodlights were installed, seen here down the centerline of the image. The installation of the lights allowed the courts to be used into the evening hours. (R-FWP-WEI-Mun-Rev-07-08-Tennis-1941-pg4.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY



Figure II.13 Weisser Park's baseball diamond met standard regulations and was considered to be one of the finest in the City, making it popular for league play. The field was widely used from its inception in 1915 through the entire historic period. As seen here, during a 1946 game, the surface of the field was loose earth. Amenities for the field, such as benches for players and spectators can be seen in the background, in front of the trees. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-BallDiamond-1946-pg13.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.14 1949 aerial image of Weisser Park, which shows the three distinct landscape areas. The formal, geometric pattern of the peony beds within the Garden area, located in the top right corner, is clearly visible. (R-FWP-WEI-1949-crop copy.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.15 1954 view of neighborhood children making use of the flat, open surface of the Weisser Park tennis courts. The fencing installed around the courts is visible in the background. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Tennis-1954-pg15.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.16 1958 view of the baseball outfield in the Playing Fields & Courts area, which was resurfaced with clay in 1953. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Tennis-1958-pg9.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.17 1956 view of a section of Landscape Area 2. The open lawn of the Playing Grounds & Fields landscape area was well-maintained after the end of the historic period. The mown lawn served as an informal multi-purpose field, allowing the area to be used for a range of recreational activities. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-BallDiamond-1956-pg20.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY



Figure II.18 1956 aerial of Weisser Park, which depicts the three landscape areas. The distinct peony beds located in the Garden area, in the top right corner of the image, remained in the park through the 1950s. (R-FWP-Weisser-1956-Air-crop-small.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

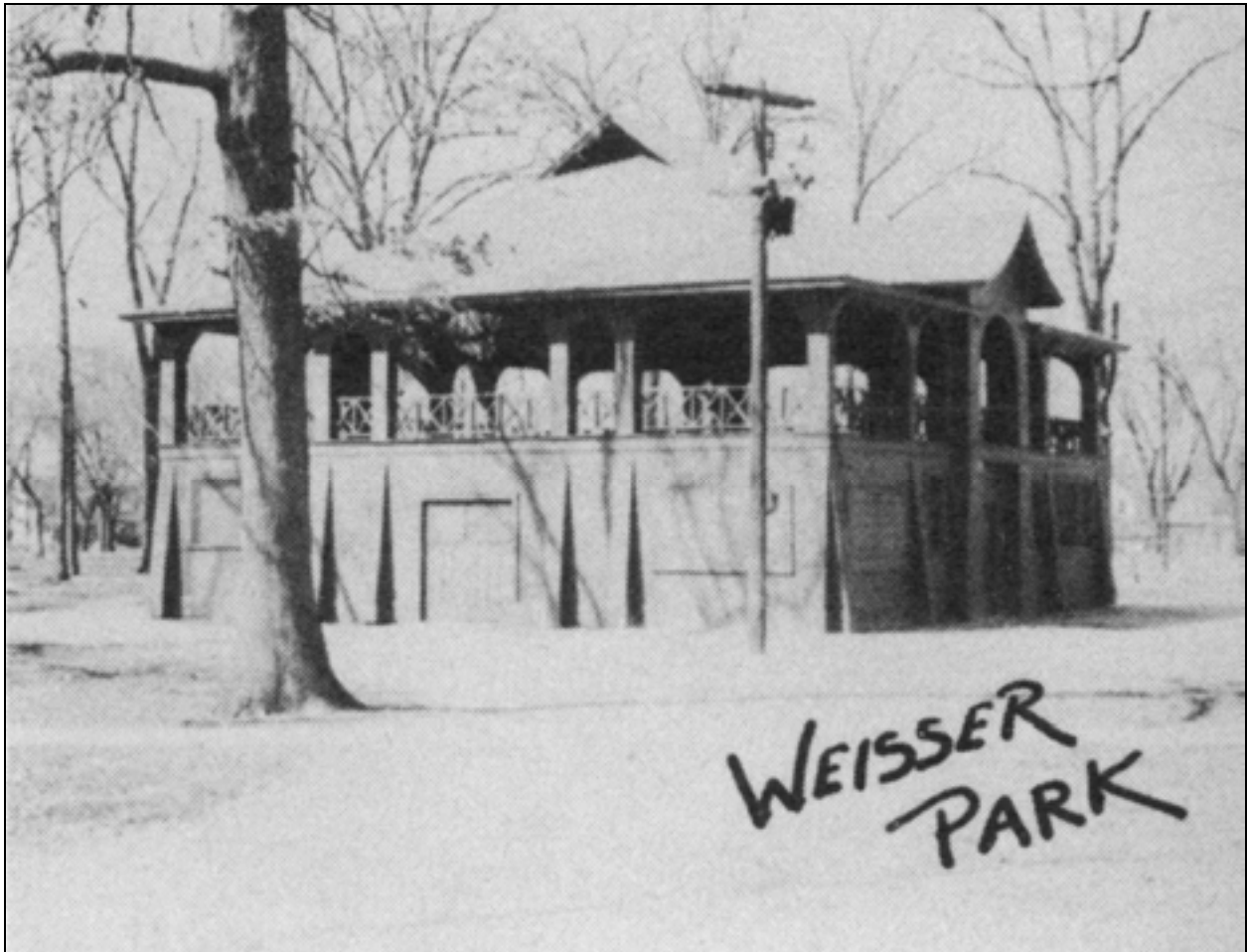


Figure II.19 1950 view of the original Weisser Park pavilion. By the 1950s, the Parks Department was considering replacing the building, which was now considered outdated and unsafe. (R-FWP-WEI-PD-Brd-Rpt-Pavilion-1950-pg15.jpg) Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



Figure II.20 1973 aerial of Weisser Park, which depicts the Weisser Park School, constructed in 1962. With the addition of the school, the eastern portion of Eckert Street was closed from public access and altered to accommodate school bus parking. (R-FWP-WEI-Air-1973-crop-small.jpg)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY

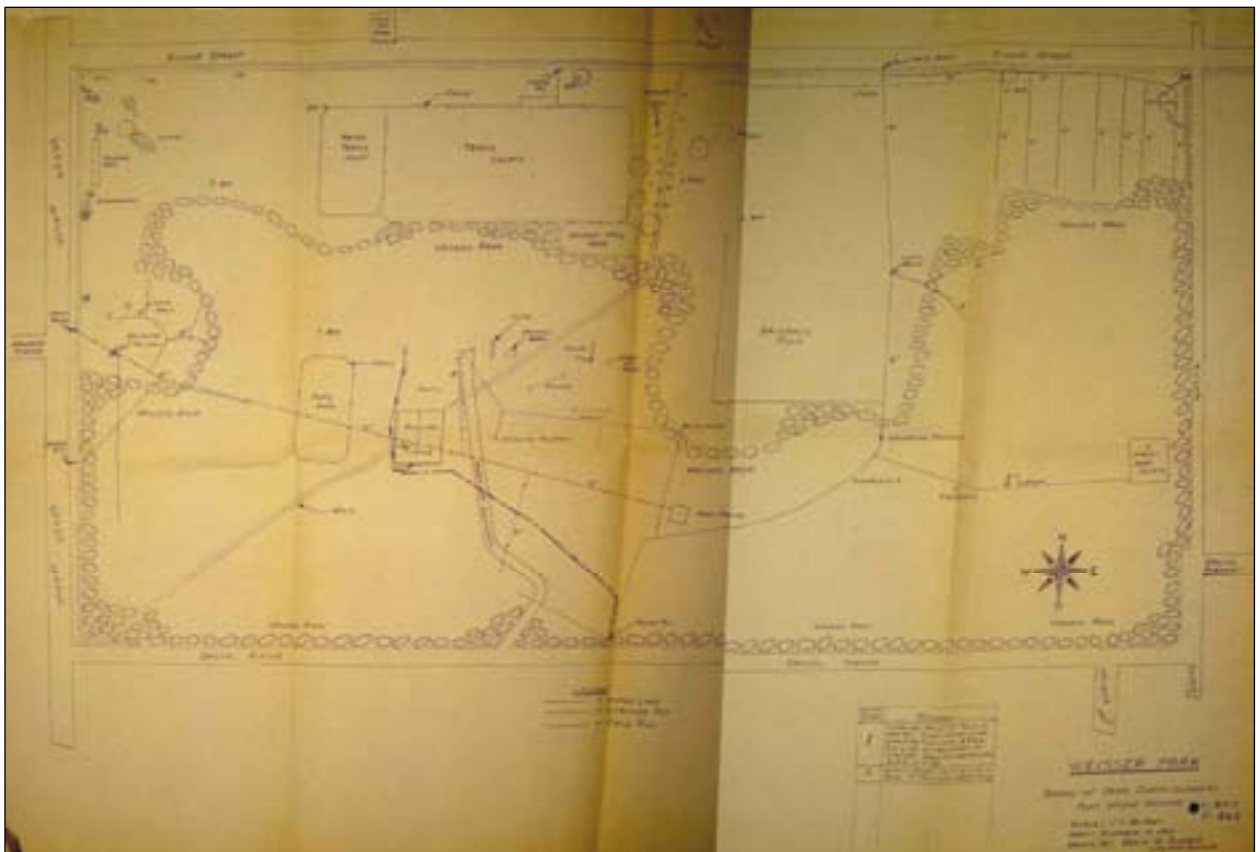


Figure II.21 1962 site plan of Weisser Park depicting several park features and site furnishings. Note the removal of the geometric flower beds in the northeast corner at this time. (R-FWP-WEI-Plan-1962.jpg)  
Courtesy Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER II: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE HISTORY*



# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
**Board of Park Commissioners**  
 City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
**Heritage Landscapes**  
 Preservation Landscapes Architects P  
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Drawing Title:

**Weisser Park**  
**1950s Period Plan**

Date:  
**2007**

Drawing Number:

**PP-1950S**



Sources:  
 1949 Aerial Photograph from Fort Wayne City Utilities.  
 Weisser Park Plan, Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne Indiana, 1-8f5, P-8G5, November 14, 1962.

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter III: 1950s Landscape Character of Weisser Park*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

This chapter provides a detailed description of the Weisser Park landscape circa 1950. The discussion is organized according to landscape areas and character defining features as described in the methodology. This narrative and accompanying plan serve to identify, delineate and describe the character and features of the Weisser Park landscape and place it in the urban context of its surrounds. The information presented in this chapter has been discussed as part of the park's overall landscape history in Chapter II. For this reason, citations have not been repeated here. The three landscape areas are first defined within the overall property, followed by a discussion of the character and park features in each of the landscape areas using the *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s* as a primary graphic reference. By way of introduction, the overall park context and natural systems are described herein. The character-defining features of the park help to organize the narrative in a related sequence in the following order:

- *Spatial Organization, Land Patterns, & Land Use*
- *Visual Relationships*
- *Topography & Natural Systems*
- *Vegetation*
- *Circulation*
- *Hydrology & Water Features*
- *Structures, Site Furnishings & Objects*

Weisser Park was created with the intention of preserving an impressive oak and hickory grove that populated the entire ridge between McMillen Park and Weisser Park. The property is set on high ground and was carved out of the quickly developing urban subdivisions in this part of the City. With ensuing residential development on surrounding parcels, Weisser Park became central to the neighborhood and takes on characteristic park functions and elements typical of other parks in similar urban environments during the early twentieth century. In addition to providing passive uses like walking and picnicking, active recreational elements have been constructed along with facilities such as the open-air pavilion and bandstand, supporting social activities and gatherings. Trees were planted at the bordering streets and walks were constructed linking the adjacent neighborhoods across the property. These improvements were achieved while preserving the mature stand of oak and hickory trees for which the park was initially created. By 1950 the development and uses of the park conceived from the original 1908 inception were fully in place and the park was heavily used by the surrounding populace.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

The period during the 1950s was selected to represent the historic character of the park after an in-depth study of the park's history. The period of significance is determined by the history, character and details of the park over time. An important aspect when considering the duration of the period of significance is the determination of the final set of changes to the property that contribute to its historic importance and the point at which changes to the property begin to alter original park features, character, and design intent. In Weisser Park, the first significant change occurred in 1962 with the development of a new junior high school on the 3.6-acre site adjacent to the park at the northeast, Weisser Park School. As seen in a 1973 aerial, Eckart Street has been removed and the new junior high school constructed at the north edge fronting Weisser Park. (See Figure II.19.) The presence of the school alters the physical character of the park and is the source of a new group of users. This significant change in the park's historic condition serves as the basis for identifying the period of significance for Weisser Park as circa 1950.

Heritage Landscapes has prepared a period plan to accompany the text in this chapter. *The Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s*, shows the park's principal organization, vegetation, structures, playing fields and drives and walks that are known to have existed up to and during the 1950s. Landscape units are also delineated on the plan, which is provided at the end of this chapter as an 11x17 fold-out at a scale of 1 inch equal to 100 feet. The period plan has been developed with the existing conditions base drawing created for documentation of the current conditions of the park as discussed in detail in Chapter IV of this report. This base map has been altered to illustrate the character defining features of the Weisser Park landscape for the period of significance by studying historic documentation including aerial images, historic photographs and written accounts. The topography shown is included for context and to give an overall sense of the park landscape. The one-foot contours were drawn from a current site plan and do not reflect the historic topography in areas where new structures, walks and drive have been constructed.

## B. WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE AREAS

Within park landscapes, there are often distinct areas of the park in which the landscape character and uses differ from other areas. These are areas within the natural, constructed, and legal boundaries of the property that have a particular character. It is useful to identify, organize and define the character landscape by delineating a logical series of these landscape areas, each with their associative and often distinct, identifiable characteristic elements. As outlined in Chapter I, these areas are based on spatial organization; land pattern and use; views and visual relationships; topography and natural systems; vegetation; circulation; and structures and site furnishings. Boundaries of landscape areas may be loosely delineated by vegetation or topographical features such as slopes, or clearly defined by physical features such as a wall, path or road. Some of these features remain constant while others change over time. Identifying and defining these areas clarifies the spatial organization of the property and facilitates a clearer understanding of the historic evolution of the property and aids in planning for ongoing and futures uses, and stewardship.

Each landscape area is represented by color unit lines and numbers on the *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s*. The landscape area boundaries may or may not remain consistent through time, and aspects of the individual areas may change. The boundaries shown on *PP-1950s* are the same as on



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

EC-2007, although where an area has changed, the landscape area line is shown as dashed rather than solid. The three 1950s landscape areas are:

- *Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove* – The Oak-Hickory Grove makes up the largest of the landscape areas in Weisser Park. It comprises the grove of large oaks and hickories many of which are believed as to pre-exist the purchase of the parkland. The grove, at over 14 acres, dominates the southern half of the parcel along Drexel Avenue and extends east to the service alley and west to Hanna Street with a small section along Eckart Street. The boundary to the north is defined as the edge of the tree grove where the landscape is primarily mown turf with recreational playing fields and courts. Activities in this area take advantage of the summer shade, these include a large open-air pavilion, bandstand with seating, a fenced-in play area with several loosely located play apparatus, and horseshoe pits. Picnic tables and fire pits are set throughout below the shady canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove.
- *Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts* – The Playing Fields & Courts area is characterized by the active recreational use of Weisser Park. This area at the central north edge of the park parallels Eckart Street and extends to the edge of the Oak-Hickory Grove. It is defined by the edge of the tennis courts to the west, and edge of the playing fields to the east. This area has few canopy trees and is managed as mown turf. There are several fenced-in tennis courts, all of which are illuminated for evening play. East of the courts is a baseball field oriented with the outfield to the northeast, which overlaps an informal football field.
- *Landscape Area 3: Garden* – The Garden is the smallest of the landscape areas, just under one acre, and is located at the northeast corner of the property fronting on Eckart Street at the north edge of the park. The east edge is defined by a vehicular alley. The west edge of the garden beds transition to the playing fields described in Landscape Area 2. The Garden area abuts the grove of oak-hickory trees along its south edge where a group of evergreens form a backdrop to the garden as seen from Eckart Street.

In each of the landscape area descriptions, the text for this chapter is organized by character-defining features, as outlined in the *Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, and defined in Chapter I of this document.

### C. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & PERIOD PLAN, 1950s

The land for Weisser Park was purchased by the City of Fort Wayne for its magnificent grove of mature, native oak and hickory trees in 1908. Over the following years the park was developed modestly as a neighborhood recreation space with one baseball field, tennis courts, restrooms, playgrounds and a delightful two-story pavilion. In the 1950s the Oak-Hickory Grove spread across the south and west areas of the park. The area to the north and east was improved for park use with a flower garden, open play field, baseball diamond, and tennis courts. The garden consisted of geometric shaped beds cut into the surrounding lawn in the northeast corner of the park. The original pavilion, gazebo, bandstand, horseshoe pits, and restrooms were park features inserted into the tree grove in a dispersed pattern, as shown on the *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s*. A

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

number of paths crossed the park diagonally and converged in the middle of the park near the baseball diamond. The boundary streets were lined with trees to the north, west, and south along Eckart and Hanna Streets and Drexel Avenue, creating a green frame for the grove and open fields. Along the east an alley access was also edged with mature trees. Capturing the time when this original park design and layout remained in place, the *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s* was created using the 1949 aerial photograph as the primary source. The “Weisser Park Plan” by the Board of Park Commissioners from November 14, 1962 served as another valuable source. An overlay of landscape areas on the period plan shows the organization of the park with the Oak-Hickory Grove in blue, the Playing Fields & Courts in magenta, and the Garden in orange.

**C1. Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove**

Landscape Area 1: The Oak-Hickory Grove is the largest of the three landscape areas. It encompasses the majority of trees which comprise the Oak-Hickory Grove and within this wooded area are several park facilities supporting both social and recreational park activities. It is among the trees that a pavilion, gazebo, restrooms, playground, bandstand with seating, horseshoe court, and picnic tables are situated.

Landscape Area 1 makes up more than half the park acreage, inclusive of the southern portion along Drexel Avenue, extending east to the alley and west to Hanna Street with a portion at the northwest corner along Eckart Street. The area has a full stand of oak and hickory trees, a significant number of which pre-existed the creation of the park in 1908. These trees are the most visually dominant element of the park and provide shade with dappled light. The tree grove extends throughout Landscape Area 1 with facilities and use areas situated between the mature trees. The south, west and north borders of the park are planted with trees, demarking the park edge.

The topography of the park is relatively flat with gentle slopes to northwest. Overall there is approximately nine feet of elevation change with low points to the northwest and higher ground to the southeast. Much of the topography remains unchanged from the original land purchase in 1908.

Mature oak and hickory trees make up the majority of trees in Landscape Area 1. In review of historic photographs and looking at contemporary sizes it is believed that the composition of trees historically is consistent with the existing trees. White oak (*Quercus alba*) and shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) dominate the overall grove with the addition of red oak (*Quercus rubra*), swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*), and pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*). Other tree species include bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), and pin oak (*Quercus palustris*). Most of the trees seen in the 1950s period plan, *PP-1950s*, remain from the original land purchase with the addition of like species over the subsequent 40 years. Trees planted along Eckart and Hanna Streets and Drexel Avenue appear to be of similar size and are assumed to have been planted at the same time to establish a tree border around the park. The grove of oak and hickory trees extends nearly to the east edge of the park. It is unclear from historic documentation if there were understory plantings either below the tree canopy or at selected locations in the park. The ground plane is planted in turf.

Vehicular access in Landscape Area 1 is limited to the two story pavilion located centrally in the park. Aerial photographs and plans show a single gravel drive entering the park from a near midpoint at Drexel Avenue, making a turn to the west around a single large tree and bandstand, and then continuing through the grove of trees to the wood pavilion. Although not completely clear in the

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

historic aerial, the drive appears to make an asymmetrical loop around the pavilion. No other drives enter the park at this time. At the east edge, a series of bollards are installed to prevent vehicular access from this edge. Diagonally crossing the park are several pedestrian paths of dirt and gravel and what appears to be a concrete path leading from the intersection of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue to the pavilion drive and to the intersection of John and Eckart Streets. Concrete walks are also constructed at the park borders along Drexel Avenue, and Hanna and Eckart Streets. The gravel or dirt paths provide access from the intersection of Hanna and Dalman Street and the intersection of Hanna and Eckart Street toward the pavilion and on to intersect with the concrete walk from the southwest park corner to John Street. To the east, gravel or dirt paths connect the pavilion drive at the bandstand to the rest room and baseball diamond and football field. There is some indication that there is a walk from the baseball field to the intersection of Drexel Avenue and Gaywood Drive.

In terms of structures, a two story pavilion dominates the central portion of Landscape Area 1. The wood structure is set within the existing Oak-Hickory Grove. The upper story is a roofed open-air gathering space that has a double sided set of wood steps. The lower floor is at grade with large windows and double doors for access. Constructed in 1917, the facility is used for gatherings of up to 300 persons. Other structures in this area include a bandstand with seating arranged to the northwest, a gazebo and a restroom facility. Southwest of the pavilion is a large fenced playground area. It is not clear what equipment is located within the fenced area however photographs taken during the 1930s show a slide and swing set place among the tree grove. (See Figures II.9 and II.10.) At the eastern edge, along the alley is an area designated for horseshoes, likely with sand pits.

Park furniture in this area of the park consists primarily of picnic tables set throughout the grove of trees. Written accounts describe maintenance needs of drinking fountains and light fixtures both at the park border and at the pavilion; however, no photo documentation is available of these items aside from a single utility source pole at the pavilion. (See Figure II.15.) Individual fire places are indicted in this area on mapping done in 1962 and are thought to have existed in the 1950s.

## **C2. Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts**

Landscape Area 2: Playing Field & Courts encompasses approximately 4.8 acres of the overall park and is located at the central north border along Eckart Street. Planted flower beds of Landscape Area 2 make up the east edge of this area, whereas the grove of oak-hickory trees of Landscape Area 1 comprises the border to the west and south. The designation of this area for active recreational activities appears to have been decided based on the limited removals of existing mature trees, as there is limited mention in historic documents of tree removals other than for construction of the baseball field. In addition to the baseball field, tennis courts and an overlapping football field are also extant within Landscape Area 2.

The spatial organization of Landscape Area 2 is open with two groups of tree separating active recreational uses. The baseball field is bordered by the edge of the oak-hickory grove to the east, south, and west with the outfield aligned toward Eckart Street. The tennis courts are organized parallel to Eckart Street and are bordered by the grove to the south and west. A nearly continuous line of deciduous trees is planted along Eckart Street with a second partial row along the north tennis court fence.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

The topography of this landscape area is nearly level with only a six-foot drop in elevation, sloping toward Eckart Street. Grades at the tennis courts are level, suitable for play and may contain low concrete retaining walls at the south edge to allow for differences in grades.

Landscape Area 2 vegetation is comprised of an open mown turf ground plane suitable for baseball and football activities with few scattered trees. Separating the tennis court from the ball field are two groups of deciduous trees, several planted directly at the east edge of the courts with a second grouping located to the northeast, closer to Eckart Street. Running the park's full length along Eckart Street is a line of deciduous trees just south of the sidewalk. A second partial line of trees is located north of the tennis court fence.

Circulation in Landscape Area 2 is limited to walks for pedestrian movement. A gravel or dirt path crosses the area at a diagonal to the northeast and is a continuation from the concrete walk that originates at the corner of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue. The concrete walk makes a nearly 90 degree turn and connects to Eckart Street opposite John Street, separating the tennis courts from the ball fields. Another concrete sidewalk runs the full length of the northern edge of the area along Eckart Street. A gravel or dirt path is also evident between the baseball diamond backstop and the far northeast corner of the park.

Structures and furnishings in Landscape Area 2 support the athletic activities of the park. Wood benches are located at the baseball infield sidelines for the teams with additional benches scattered about for spectator viewing. A metal and fabric backstop at the baseball infield prevents error hits from entering the wooded grove of trees behind. The infield itself is compacted soil without any turf infill. East of the baseball field is an informal softball and football field. The football field overlaps the outfield of the baseball diamond and part of the infield. There are six clay tennis courts and one paved court located west of the baseball field. The courts are aligned in a north-south orientation parallel to Eckart Street. The six clay courts are fenced in a single compound, surrounded on four sides with ten-foot tall chain link fencing. The fence posts are set in a concrete curbing at the south and north edges. This curbing may also be retaining the adjacent grade and provide a level play area. The paved court, unlike the adjacent six, has its own chain link fence enclosure. Light fixtures for evening play are located to the east of each court's net.

### **C3. Landscape Area 3: Garden**

Landscape Area 3: Garden is located at the northeast corner of Weisser Park. This area, just under one acre in size, is dedicated to ornamental peony plantings. Planted in 1925, these formalized planting beds are clearly visible in the 1956 aerial photograph. (See Figure II.19.)

Similar to the adjacent area, the topography at this corner of the park gently slopes from the south to the northwest. In spite of this four to five-foot drop, a 1962 site plan indicates that there are tile drains installed below the plantings.

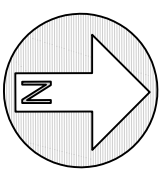
The formal ornamental planting beds are set in at this northeast corner of the park and are bounded by a line of deciduous trees along Eckart Street at the north with evergreen trees at the south edge where the garden space abuts Landscape Area 1. There are no backdrop plantings to the east or to the west of the ornamental beds. The planting beds range in varying shapes and sizes with rectangles and squares arranged in an orthogonal pattern set at a 45 degree angle to Eckart Street. In the center are

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*

two concentric rings inside of which are several smaller planting beds. The beds contained hundreds of varieties of peonies, making it the largest peony display in the Midwest. Mown turf is planted between the formal bedding.

A single dirt or gravel path traverses this corner of the park. Since the path does not follow the rigid geometry of the garden layout, it is likely that it is a desire line between the northeast corner and the baseball diamond. A concrete sidewalk runs continuously from the corner of Hanna Street along Eckart Street and stops at the alley. In terms of site furnishings, a line of bollards separates the park edge from the adjacent alley to the east.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER III: 1950s LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF WEISSER PARK*



Source:  
City of Fort Wayne, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, "Weissner  
Park Plan, Updated 6/2006," aerial photograph, Heritage  
Landscapes fieldwork.

0' 50' 100' 200'

# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### *Fort Wayne, Indiana*



Client:  
**Board of Park  
Commissioners**  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
**Heritage Landscapes**  
Preservation Landscape Architects &  
Planners  
501 Lake Road  
Charlotte, VT 05445  
802.425.4330  
34 Wall Street  
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Drawing Title:

**Weisser Park 2005  
Aerial Photograph**

Date:

2007

Drawing Number:

**AP-2005**



# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
Board of Park Commissioners  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

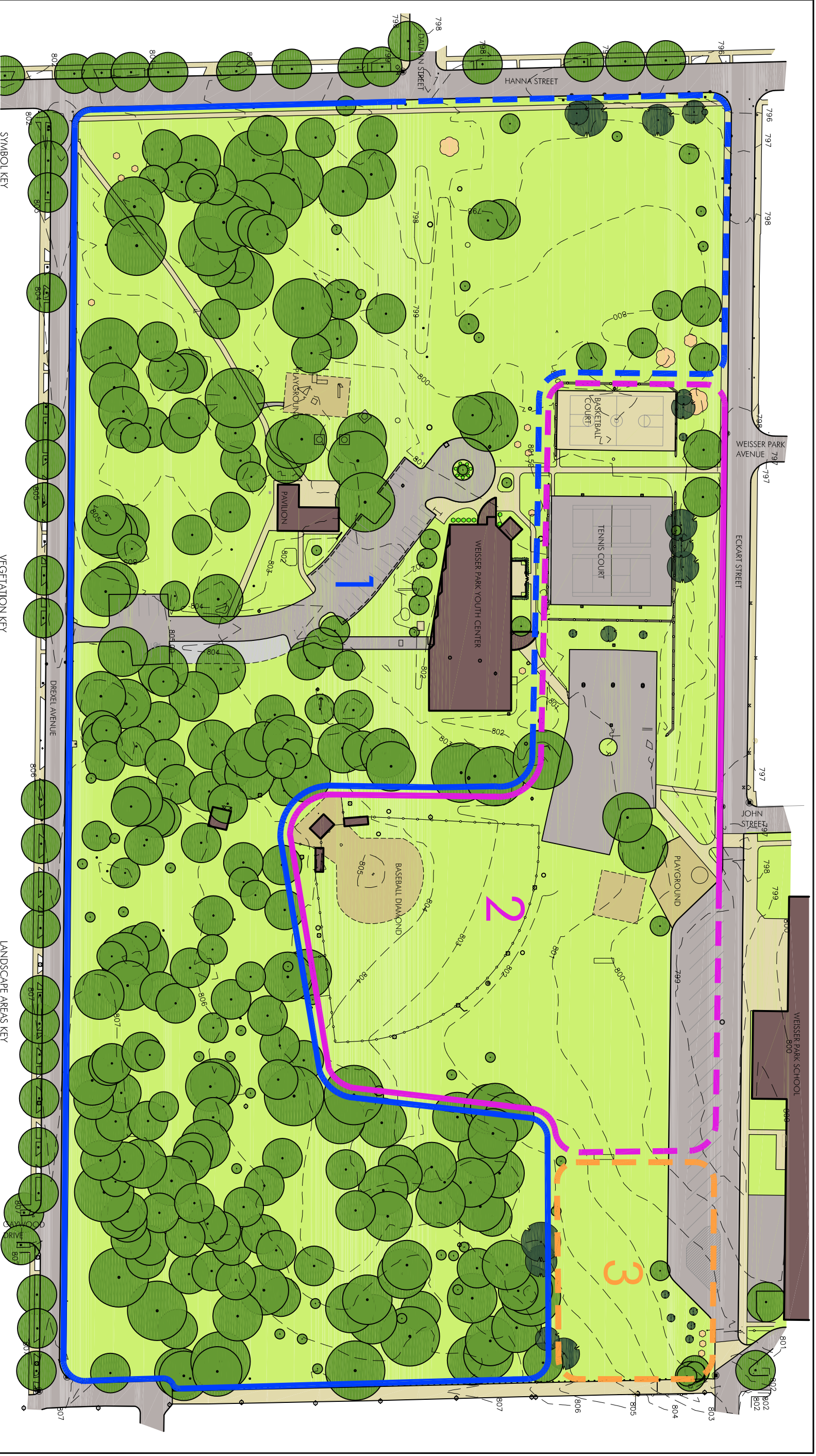
Landscape Architect:  
**Heritage Landscapes**  
Preservation Landscapes Architects & Planners  
501 Lake Road  
Charlottesville, VT 05445  
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203.832.9966

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Drawing Title:  
**Weisser Park**  
**2007 Existing**  
**Conditions Plan with**  
**Landscape Areas**

Date:  
2007

Drawing Number:  
**EC-2007**



#### SYMBOL KEY

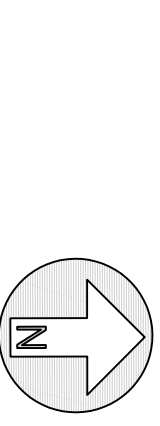
- Building/Structure
- Asphalt Pavement
- Grovel
- Concrete Pavement
- Playground or Ball Field
- Chain Link Fence
- Wood Bollard
- Mown Turf
- Play Equipment
- Light or Utility Pole
- Sign
- Drain or Water Utilities
- 802- 1" Contour
- Slump or Depression
- Brookleaf Deciduous Tree
- Deciduous Tree
- Coniferous Tree
- Ornamental Tree
- Coniferous Shrub
- Deciduous Shrub

#### VEGETATION KEY

- | Brookleaf Deciduous | Canopy Diameter | Deciduous Tree DBH | Canopy Diameter | Coniferous Tree DBH | Canopy Diameter | Ornamental Tree DBH |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
|                     | 10'             | Under 4"           | 8'              | Under 6"            | 6'              | Under 6"            |
|                     | 20'             | 4-8"               | 16'             | 6-9"                | 12'             | 6-12"               |
|                     | 30'             | 9-16"              | 24'             | 10-16"              | 18'             | 13-18"              |
|                     | 40'             | 17-24"             | 32'             | 17-24"              | 24'             | 18' and up          |
|                     | 50'             | 25-31"             | 40'             | 25' and up          |                 |                     |
|                     | 60'             | 32' and up         |                 |                     |                 |                     |

#### LANDSCAPE AREAS KEY

- Landscape Area 1: Oak-hickory Grove
- Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Cou
- Landscape Area 3: Garden
- Landscape Area 1: Oak-hickory Grove (boundary changed since 1950s)
- Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Cou (boundary changed since 1950s)
- Landscape Area 3: Garden (boundary changed since 1950s)
- Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Cou (boundary changed since 1950s)



Source:  
City of Fort Wayne, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, "Weisser Park Plan, Updated 6/2006," Heritage Landscapes fieldwork.





# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
Board of Park Commissioners  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
Heritage Landscapes Preservation Landscapes Architects P  
Planners  
501 Lake Road  
Charlottesville, VT 05445  
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Drawing Title:

**Weisser Park**  
**2007 Tree Condition**  
**Assessment Plan**

Date:  
2007

Drawing Number:

**TA-2007**



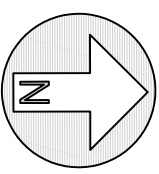
**SYMBOL KEY**

- Building/Structure
- Asphalt Pavement
- Gravel
- Concrete Pavement
- Playground or Ball Field
- Chain Link Fence
- Wood Belled
- Mown Turf
- Play Equipment
- Light or Utility Pole
- Sign
- Drain or Water Utilities
- Stump or Depression

- Broadleaf Deciduous Tree
- Coniferous Tree
- Ornamental Tree
- Confirous Shrub
- Deciduous Shrub

**TREE SPECIES CONDITION ASSESSMENT KEY**

- |               |   |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| Site In       | Roots   |   |   |
| Canopy        | ID Number   |   |   |
| Tree Name     | Trunks  |   |   |
| Genus/Species | Canopy  |   |   |
| <b>CANOPY</b> |   |   |   |
| A             | GOOD: Full Crown, Vigorous Growth, no Immediate Care Required                     | 1 | No Visible Damage   |
| B             | FAIR: Minor Problems, Maximum of 21 Deadwood, Minor Pruning                       | 2 | Damage Including Wounds, Mushrooms, Crotch, or Minor Decay Issues |
| C             | POOR: Major Problems, Deadwood of 3, 4 & Possible Removal                         | U | Unrestricted: Open  |
| D             | FALLING: Major Dieback in Crown, Near Dead or Standing Dead, Hazard to be Removed | R | Restricted: Enclosed within 8-10 Feet on One or More Sides        |
| E             | DEAD: Stump or Depression   |   |   |
- NOTE: Codes for individual trees are listed in Appendix A.



# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter IV: Weisser Park Landscape Existing Conditions*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing character and condition of Weisser Park are presented in this chapter. The discussion is organized according to landscape areas and character-defining features as described in the methodology section of Chapter I. This narrative and the accompanying plans and images serve to identify, delineate and describe the existing character and features of the Weisser Park landscape and place the park in the urban context of its surrounds. First, landscape areas are addressed. These are followed by a discussion of the conditions by areas using the *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas, EC-2007* as a primary graphic reference. Existing conditions digital photographs also illustrate the narrative. By way of introduction the overall park context and response to natural systems is described here. The landscape character-defining features of the park help to organize the narrative in a repeated sequence in the following order:

- *Spatial Organization, Land Patterns & Land Use*
- *Visual Relationships*
- *Topography & Natural Systems*
- *Vegetation*
- *Circulation*
- *Hydrology & Water Features*
- *Structures, Site Furnishings & Objects*

Weisser Park is set on high ground and preserves a native stand of oak and hickory trees. In terms of park context, an examination of the park within the urban neighborhood framework aids in understanding Weisser Park as a place and also within the City of Fort Wayne. The park is located within a primarily residential neighborhood. While historically, the park presented an impressive, clearly defined character, today the park has a considerably weakened identity. The park functions, to some degree, as a neighborhood open space with limited success. Perceptions of the park are varied, though it seems that most residents of Fort Wayne consider the park as a school playground, youth center site and baseball field for team play, not intended for public use or regular casual access. As a result, the face of the park, its edges and presentation to the neighborhood are not welcoming. The loss of tree canopy and street trees that historically lined the park landscape has resulted in an indistinctly defined park edge. Further confusing definition of the park boundaries is its eastern edge fronting on a vehicular alley. Often times, when parks front on private land or limited access roadways, they tend to have a weaker identity and the shared private-public frontage is perceived as semi-private. In contrast, parks with continuous street frontage have a stronger perception as public

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

resources, are more visually inviting and heavily used, making a stronger contribution to the quality of urban life. Since this is a small park, the eventual inclusion of the lots to the east within the park would improve both Weisser Park and the surrounding neighborhood and should be considered in the long term.

The park today does not strongly say “public park” to those passing by. The park is somewhat isolated without consistent street frontage sidewalks, designated bicycle paths or interior pedestrian paths. This lack of a complete park circulation system means that connections to the surrounding neighborhood and to the broader park system of the City are lacking. Although Weisser Park is only a few blocks from Rudisill Boulevard and Oxford Avenue, connections to these corridors are not obvious. Along both Rudisill Boulevard and Oxford Avenue, linkages east to McMillen Park and west to Foster Park are possible; however, no apparent planning for these important connections has occurred. While Weisser Park is a part of a broader city-wide system of parks and boulevards, it has not been effectively integrated into that system.

This narrative speaks to a variety of graphic materials, including plans, aerial photographs, and current photographs. References are made to the aerial photographs and plans for this chapter that include:

- *Weisser Park 2005 Aerial Photograph, AP-2005*
- *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas, EC-2007*
- *Weisser Park 2007 Tree Condition Assessment Plan, TA- 2007.*

All plans are provided at the end of this chapter as 11x17 fold-outs at a scale of 1 inch equal to 100 feet. Illustrative plan *EC-2007* records the existing Weisser Park landscape as studied and photographed during several field visits. The base drawing for the existing condition plan was a site plan entitled “Weisser Park Plan” obtained from Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, dated June 2006. Using the plan and a contemporary aerial photograph, Heritage Landscapes mapped, assessed, and recorded the overall conditions of the park landscape through a series of detailed field notes and digital photographs. These field visits were critical to creating a detailed base map of the park, as limited mapping for the park existed. Field notes combined with historic mapping, and aerial photographs all served as data for the creation of the AutoCAD mapping included in this chapter. The development of a base map to show the existing conditions is particularly important as this digital plan is used to develop all related park mapping for this planning report. Observations on park use were also made during the field work sessions.

Additionally, field work sessions focused on a detailed inventory and assessment of existing trees within the Weisser Park landscape. The emphasis on trees within this park is spurred from the original park intent and creation and from Heritage Landscapes previous park planning work in Fort Wayne that identified considerable loss in park tree canopy over the second half of the twentieth century. Weisser Park was set aside to preserve a remarkable oak-hickory grove that had historically populated the entire ridge between McMillen Park and Foster Park. While remnants of this native stand of trees remain in McMillen Park, Weisser Park has the best intact historic native tree grove of all the City’s parks. Understanding the composition and condition of the existing trees in Weisser Park serves as a baseline for tree preservation, care and renewal into the future. Trees were identified and coded according to genus, species, and conditional assessment as shown on the *Weisser Park 2007*

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

*Tree Condition Assessment Plan, TA-2007.* The results from the tree inventory are discussed in summary form at the end of the chapter. A detailed narrative accompanied by tree charts is presented in Appendix B. This Weisser Park Tree Assessment quantifies and tallies the conditions of all the existing trees within the park.

Current images are presented at the end of the chapter, to document the character of the park landscape as it exists today. These images are referenced as figures throughout the text to illustrate the character-defining features of each landscape area. The images are digital photographs captured during Heritage Landscapes' 2006 onsite field reconnaissance. Pertinent information about each figure is included in the caption, and the digital image file number is listed at the end of the caption.

## B. LANDSCAPE AREAS 1, 2 & 3

Within park landscapes, Heritage Landscapes finds it is useful to identify, organize and define the character landscape by delineating a logical series of landscape areas each with a distinct, identifiable character. Within the natural, constructed, and legal boundaries of the property, areas having particular character emerge. These areas are based on use; spatial organization, views and visual relationships; topography; vegetation; circulation; and structures and site furnishings. Boundaries of landscape areas may be loosely delineated by vegetation or slopes or clearly defined by physical features such as a wall, path or road. Some of these features remain constant while others change over time. The character of the landscape areas is part of the character of Weisser Park as a whole. Identifying and defining these areas clarifies the spatial organization of the property and facilitates a clearer understanding of the historic evolution of the property.

Review of chronological mapping, aerial photographs and site investigation of Weisser Park yielded three definable landscape areas, or component landscapes, that can be mapped in the overall landscape. The landscape area boundaries are defined during the period of time where the park is in its as-built condition, which is 1950 for Weisser Park. The defined boundaries of these component landscapes may or may not remain consistent through time, and aspects of the individual areas may change. The three landscape areas for Weisser Park are:

- *Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove* – The Oak-Hickory Grove makes up the largest of the landscape areas in Weisser Park. It includes the grove of large oaks and hickories, as well as the open lawn area in the northwest corner that was part of the historical oak-hickory grove. The Weisser Park Youth Center, playground, pavilion, and entrance drive set within the grove are also included in this area. It is defined on the west, east, and south sides by the boundary roads and to the north by the playing fields and courts.
- *Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts* – The Playing Fields & Courts area is characterized by the active recreational use of Weisser Park. Today, it includes a baseball diamond, children's soccer field, tennis courts, a basketball court, and a paved play area. This area is located in the northern part of the park, bound to the north by Eckart Street and the bus drive, to the south by the woodland edge and the Weisser Park Youth Center. The western edge is defined by the edge of the basketball court.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

- *Landscape Area 3: Garden* – The Garden is the smallest of the landscape areas, and is found in the northeast corner of the property. The historic garden no longer exists in this area today, and part of this landscape area has been paved for school bus parking, while the remainder is turf grass. This area is bound to the east by an alley, to the north by the bus parking area, to the south by a grouping of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) and the Oak-Hickory Grove. The western boundary is not clearly defined today.

Each of these areas is represented by color unit lines and numbers on the *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas, EC-2007*. Boundaries that remain over time are portrayed with a solid line, and boundaries that have changed are shown with a dashed line.

### C. 2007 EXISTING CONDITIONS, CHARACTER & PLAN

The current conditions of Weisser Park are illustrated on the *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas, EC-2007*. This plan also shows the three original landscape areas of the park in blue, magenta, and orange. Where the lines are dashed instead of solid, the landscape area boundary and character has changed over time. The reduced native Oak-Hickory Grove is concentrated in the southern half of the park. The new Weisser Park Youth Center building is located in the approximate center and a picnic pavilion and playground are located nearby. The north boundary has been altered with the construction of a parking lot for school buses for the adjacent Weisser Park School. The remaining open parkland to the northeast is a turf playing field with no remaining garden features or vegetation. The baseball diamond was recently upgraded with an improved infield and boundary fence and remains generally in its historical location. A basketball court, two tennis courts and a playground have been constructed in the location of the former tennis courts. An asphalt open play area adds pavement to this northern park area. The former grove to the northwest is much diminished and an open area of turf with a few trees is present today. The street frontages of the park are missing the historic street tree framing. The 1998 Weisser Park Youth Center construction includes a circular arrival turnaround and a parking lot. Park access and parking is from Drexel Avenue directly south of the youth center. This access area shows some degradation. Few paths into and through the park remain today. Two paths access the youth center from the parking lot and from the north and one path extends from the southwest corner to the contemporary picnic pavilion and playground.

#### Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove

The Oak-Hickory Grove is the largest of the landscape areas in Weisser Park at over fourteen acres. It encompasses the land that was historically oak-hickory woodland with park facilities tucked within the grove of trees. Today, the grove has decreased in size as the northwest area has been cleared to create an open field for informal play and recreation. The central portion of the grove has also been altered to construct the Weisser Park Youth Center, which is sited in the location of the former two story pavilion, demolished in 1963.

Landscape Area 1 is organized spatially along the southern half of the park, extending to the western and eastern edges. The stand of mature oak and hickory trees are strong vertical elements in the park landscape providing shade for much of the central portion of the area, and some of the park edges.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

The overall height and established canopy of the trees allow for open views across the park and to the adjacent neighborhood. A cluster of recreational facilities including the youth center, pavilion, entrance drive, and parking lot, are at the center of the grove in a relatively open space. (See Figure IV.1.) The northwestern corner, once part of the grove, is now an open field with a few trees along the edges.

The topography of Landscape Area 1 is relatively flat, and slopes down slightly to the northwest. About eight feet of elevation change is present in this area, with low points to the north and west, and high points to the southeast. A slight depression is located in the area just opposite the Dalman Avenue intersection which has potential for collecting storm water and puddling during heavy rains. The shape of the land has been modified over time with construction of buildings and recreational facilities.

The vegetation of Landscape Area 1 is dominated by the mature Oak-Hickory Grove. (See Figure IV.1.) The grove is predominantly a stand of 153 white oak (*Quercus alba*) and 26 shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), with a variety of additional oak specimens of bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*), as well as pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*). The ground plane of the grove is mown turf. Most of the trees in the grove are mature specimens and there is no woodland regeneration evident. Some small trees have been planted in the openings between the existing trees and at the margins of the grove. These young trees are not all of the varieties found within the grove today. Those in the interior are in competition with the canopy and root zone of the mature trees and may or may not adapt to the competition for light, water and nutrients.

The northwest corner of Landscape Area 1 is characterized by an open field of mown turf grass with ornamental, coniferous, and deciduous trees at the edges. (See Figure IV.2.) Plant species include eastern arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*), silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), and crabapple (*Malus pumila* varieties). Another distinct vegetated area within the Oak-Hickory Grove is around the Weisser Park Youth Center, which contains ornamental shrubs and trees. Groups of American cranberrybush viburnum (*Viburnum trilobum*) are located to the west; two yew hedges (*Taxus species*) to the north, surrounding an exterior courtyard; and a number of low spreading European fly honeysuckles (*Lonicera xylosteum*) are planted in the entry drive turnaround. Additionally, eight flowering callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana* variety unknown) grow to the south, west, and north of the building. Callery pear trees are beautiful in spring bloom and have good fall color; however, their branch structure is relatively poor causing major limb and trunk breakage as they age. These trees do show some poor branching patterns that may be partially addressed by aggressive pruning. In general, the use of this tree in a park setting is not recommended because of this growth pattern. While most of these decorative pear trees are in good health today, the pear adjacent to the loading area is in decline. (See Figure IV.3.) More information on the specific tree composition in the park is provided in the detailed charts included as Appendix B: Tree and Shrub Inventory Results.

Landscape Area 1 contains the main vehicular entrance to Weisser Park. Entering the park from the south along Drexel Avenue, this drive provides access to the Weisser Park Youth Center as well as the broader park landscape. Parking is provided along either side of the entrance drive, with an overflow gravel area to the east. (See Figure IV.4.) Parking stalls use simple wheel stops to demark spaces and

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

aid in preventing access to adjacent turf. However, there is evidence of frequent parking on turf areas and under trees in the grove.

The entrance drive terminates with a curbed circular turnaround at the entry to the youth center. An asphalt loading and service drive is located partway along the entrance drive to the east and terminates at the building loading area at the south building elevation. Service drive access is limited with no vehicles turning room provided as a result the area adjacent to the dumpsters is disturbed and unsightly. (See Figure IV.3.) Other evidence of vehicles traveling across the lawn is visible when looking along the entrance drive toward the baseball field and pavilion. (See Figure IV.5.) Driving across lawn areas and tree roots damages mature trees as soil is compacted and surface roots are damaged. This type of activity will lead to decline in tree health.

Limited pedestrian paths provide partial access to the park landscape. One concrete walk extends from the parking lot and along the entry drive towards the pavilion. Additional concrete walks and a large paved area surround the pavilion. A diagonal concrete walk extends from the pavilion to the southwest corner of the park at the intersection of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue. (See Figure IV.6.) A spur from this path leads directly to the playground area. Other interior walks within Landscape Area 1 include concrete walks that lead from the parking lot to the youth center; from the main entrance to the basketball and tennis courts; and from the main entrance and to the north entrance. This latter walk continues northwest to the Weisser Park School bisecting the paved play area and running alongside the playground west of the bus parking area. Concrete walks also exist along the perimeter of the park in Landscape Area 1 along Hanna and Eckart Streets and Drexel Avenue. (See Figure IV.7.)

Three structures are located in the Oak-Hickory Grove, including the Weisser Park Youth Center, a restroom, and pavilion. The largest is the Weisser Park Youth Center, constructed in 1998. It is a one-story building with two entrances to the west and north, fenced exterior courtyard, and large windows along the north, west and south elevations that provide views out to the park. (See Figures IV.8 and IV.9.) The east side of the structure is void of windows, and the south side provides a loading and service area where a garbage dumpster is located. Southeast of the Weisser Park Youth Center and directly south of the baseball field is the park's original restroom building that is no longer used. Southwest of the youth center and west of the entrance drive and parking lot is a comfort station and pavilion. The pavilion, constructed in 1963 to replace the park's original pavilion, consists of restrooms and an open-air, partially-covered gathering space with concrete flooring. (See Figure IV.10.)

Several site furnishings and objects are located in Landscape Area 1. Three picnic tables are located near the pavilion. The round tables each have four benches and are secured in place and set on a concrete pad. A playground is sited west of the pavilion and picnic tables in the Oak-Hickory Grove. The playground apparatus includes a swing set and a colorful plastic piece of play equipment with slides. The play surface is woodchip mulch with a low plastic curb around the perimeter. The approximately six-inch high curb is continuous, breaking only to allow for on-grade access of the adjacent walk. (See Figures IV.10, IV.11, and IV.12.) Other landscape objects in Landscape Area 1 include steel lampposts on concrete bases, a bike rack adjacent to the youth center, and a metal "Weisser Park" sign on a wooden post along Hanna Street. (See Figures IV.5 and IV.13.)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts

Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts is approximately 4.8 acres on the central northern side of the park, fronting Eckart Street and Weisser Park School. It consists of active recreational facilities in the park, including basketball courts, tennis courts, a baseball field, youth play area, and other types of play equipment.

The spatial organization of the Playing Fields & Courts is open with few trees or visual barriers. Land use in this area is largely active recreation, with fields and courts for all types of sports play, including basketball, tennis, baseball, soccer, and an asphalt play area and children's playground that hosts the Weisser Park School recess activities. The recreational fields and courts are located between the school and the youth center. (See Figures IV.14 and IV.15.) It is unclear as to which facilities are available to the public while classes are in session.

The topography of this area is relatively level. The elevation of this landscape area varies by about six feet, with the high point at the southern side of the baseball diamond, and the low point to the north side along Eckart Street.

Minimal vegetation exists in Landscape Area 2, consisting primarily of mown turf that covers the ground plane. A row of white pine (*Pinus strobus*) grows along the north side of the tennis and basketball courts and two thornless honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* v. *inermis*) are also in this area. The thornless honeylocust cultivar was introduced into nursery trades after 1950 and several popular varieties were added later, so these are relatively recent additions to the park landscape. Three red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) are located along the east side of the tennis courts. (See Figure IV.15.)

Vehicular circulation in Landscape Area 2 is limited with a portion of the Weisser Park School bus parking lot located in the northeastern corner of the area. (See Figure IV.16.) Pedestrian circulation is accommodated by extensions of two concrete walks from the youth center. One of the diagonal walks leads to the school, bisecting the asphalt play area and connecting to the bus parking area with a narrower section connecting the asphalt play area and Eckart Street. A second north-south oriented path leads from the youth center entrance, between the basketball and tennis courts toward Eckart Street. A continuous sidewalk runs along Eckart Street and connects the school parking area to the Eckert and Hanna Street intersection.

Structures in this area include a newly constructed snack bar and dugouts at the baseball diamond and the play equipment within the asphalt play area and playground. The play equipment includes slides and climbing equipment. (See Figure IV.17.) The asphalt play area contains a low rail, likely used for skateboarding. (See Figure IV.18.) Other site furnishings include features associated with the tennis and basketball courts, such as nets, hoops, and chain link fencing. Shoebox style lamp posts illuminate the playground area, tennis and basketball courts for evening use. (See Figures IV.14 and IV.15.)

### Landscape Area 3: Garden

Landscape Area 3 is located in the northeast corner of the park and is just under one acre in size. It delineates the space where a formal peony and iris garden was located historically. The garden does



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

not remain today and this space is used along with a portion of the space in Landscape Area 2 as a soccer field for Weisser Park School.

Spatially, this landscape area is open, with several mature white pines that may be remaining from the historic planting backdrop to the garden beds. The northern edge is open to the school bus parking area where the asphalt paving and lawn are separated by a concrete curb. (See Figure IV.16.) A line of wooden bollards separates the eastern edge from the vehicular alley. There is no curb, leaving the asphalt flush with the park landscape. (See Figure IV.19.) Land use in this corner is for active recreation as it is largely used by the school for soccer practice. Access to this corner is from the adjacent open lawn, bus parking lot and adjacent alley. No apparent desire lines or worn paths in this area are evident. It appears that this area of the park receives limited public use beyond scheduled recreational activities.

This area is slightly sloping, with about five feet of elevation change from the high point at its southeast corner to the low point at its northwest corner. As noted previously there is a concrete curb separating the area from the adjacent bus parking lot whereas the parkland is flush along the east edge, where it abuts the alley. (See Figures IV.16 and IV.19.)

The ground plane of Landscape Area 3 is mown turf. Four white pines line the southern border, visually separating it from Landscape Area 1. (See Figure IV.19.) A group of small trees at the northeast corner includes Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), an ash (*Fraxinus* species), and a recently planted crabapple. A group of black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), ash, and elm (*Ulmus* species) are located in the northeast corner and are likely self-sown, volunteer plants.

No walks or drives are extant in this area of the park. Vehicular circulation includes only the portion of the adjacent lot designated for bus drop off and standing. This bus parking area has encroached into the northwest portion of the landscape area. Further east is a vehicular gate, which remains closed when the school is not in session to prohibit through vehicular traffic. (See Figure IV.16.)

Structures, site furnishings, and objects include a metal soccer net used by the school for soccer practice and wood bollards at the east edge of the park. (See Figure IV.19.) These bollards line the alley to keep vehicles off the park lawn and are 8 inches square, approximately thirty-six inches high, and set six feet on center. Additional landscape objects include a metal sign reading “Buses Only” and the metal gate that prevents access to the bus parking area. (See Figure IV.16.)

## D. 2007 TREE ASSESSMENT

Trees in the Oak-Hickory Grove are an important part of the Weisser Park landscape as they were the original impetus for establishing the park. Assessing and mapping the trees within the park serves as a reliable baseline for understanding the composition and condition of vegetation within Weisser Park, which aids in the development of treatment recommendations for tree canopy renewal and overall park management. Heritage Landscapes identified the Weisser Park trees by genus and species from field observation and keyed to botanical sources as required. Free-standing trees were assessed and mapped using previous maps and a 2005 aerial photograph for field mapping work. Trees were assessed for canopy, trunk, and root condition with the tree condition codes noted on the *Weisser*

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS

*Park 2007 Tree Condition Assessment Plan, TA- 2007.* This AutoCAD mapping with a tree condition layer is a valuable secondary product of this report. It serves to document the existing trees within the park landscape, as no previous tree inventory existed. A complete list and discussion of tree and shrub species at Weisser Park is found in Appendix B.

In summary, the tree inventory results lead to some overall observations. A total of 361 trees, stumps, and former tree depressions were recorded, located, and assessed in Weisser Park, including a total of 18 different genera and 32 different species. Of these 32 species, 21 are non-cultivars that are native to the Fort Wayne area, 11 species are cultivars or non-native species that were planted in the park to increase species richness and visual appeal of the park. The native trees are remnants of the park's wooded legacy. The native species makeup, especially the largest trees, suggests the historic forest makeup of this part of Fort Wayne, and specifically Weisser Park. The park is dominated today by oaks, especially white oak, while hickory is the second most abundant species. The largest trees in the park are a 46-inch black oak (*Quercus velutina*) and a 46-inch white oak (*Quercus alba*). Other large species included bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) and red oak (*Quercus rubra*). This tree makeup suggests an oak-hickory dominated forest community at the time of Weisser Park's purchase in 1908, and, more specifically, a dry-mesic upland forest which was dominated by white, black, and red oaks, with shagbark hickory as a characteristic tree.<sup>1</sup>

Overall, the trees at Weisser Park are in fair to good condition. Nearly three-quarters of the park trees require a degree of canopy maintenance to ensure continued health. Of the existing trees, 43% were coded fair C, requiring significant tree canopy work and 31% were coded good B, needing minor pruning or tree work. The trunks of the trees are in better condition than the canopies at Weisser Park; 75% of the trees show no damage, or have healed minor trunk damage sustained in the past. Most of the trees (91%) grow unrestricted without obstacles within 8 feet of their trunks.

A few shrubs were noted during the Weisser Park tree assessment. Four types were recorded: European fly honeysuckle, mugo pine (*Pinus mugo*), yew, and American cranberrybush viburnum. The mugo pine is located near the northwest corner of the park as part of an evergreen planting. Seven viburnum shrubs and two yew hedges are located around the youth center building, and 14 honeysuckle shrubs grow in the center of the entry drive's circular terminus.

## E. 2007 EXISTING CONDITIONS LANDSCAPE SUMMARY

The overall condition of Weisser Park is fair to good. The playgrounds, paved courts and other exterior spaces are well-used and show signs of wear. The baseball field was recently upgraded with a perimeter fence, backstop, dugouts and concession stand. The entry to the park from Drexel Avenue is obscure and appears as a service entry. Parking areas along this entry drive are in varying condition, some with asphalt paving and others gravel. Adjacent areas show signs of parking on the lawn. The Heritage Landscapes field team noted degradation of the ground from the parking lot area and entry drive in several directions, particularly toward the baseball field. This ground plane damage is due to vehicle traffic over open park turf. Traffic over mature tree roots and damages both soil and trees. The overall condition of the path system of the park is relatively poor as few segments of path exist and are not interconnected. The mature trees are in relatively good condition, which is remarkable after nearly a century of park use. The service area at the south of the youth center is degraded and

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

unsightly simply because service access is not effectively accommodated. While the existing condition of Weisser Park's individual features and use areas is fair to good, the overall character of the park is not well defined. The formerly impressive oak and hickory grove has suffered from canopy loss and the modest, rustic style structures that once defined the designed naturalistic character of the park have been replaced. In spite of the altered landscape character, the overall quality and identity of Weisser Park can be greatly enhanced through an analysis of the level of change that has occurred and the careful planning for and implementation of future treatment of this historic park landscape.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

CHAPTER IV ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen Jacquart, Mike Homoya, and Lee Casebere, “Natural Communities of Indiana: 7/1/02 Working Draft” p. 5:  
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/invasivespecies/innatcom03.pdf>.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.1 The Oak-Hickory Grove within Weisser Park is a dominant character-defining feature, creating a striking verticality throughout the park. The tall tree canopy provides shade and allows views to and from the park and the surrounding residential neighborhood, visible in the background. The additional landscape features of Landscape Area 1 are set within clearings in the grove, such as the playground, visible at the right edge of the image. (R-FWP-WEI-01-19-07-0003.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.2 The northwest corner of the park has been cleared of trees and is used as an informal play area characterized by its open, mown turf ground plane. Adjacent landscape features are also visible, including the Playing Fields & Courts landscape area to the left of the image; the Weisser Park Youth Center and parking lot at the center of the image; and the character-defining Oak-Hickory Grove in the background. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (32).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.3 The callery pear at the south service entrance to the Weisser Park Youth Center is in decline, most likely a result from vehicle disturbance. It is clear that the entry drive does not adequately accommodate service vehicles and the adjacent turf has been damaged as a result. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (24).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.4 An asphalt parking lot provides parking space for Weisser Park and amenities such as the youth center (visible at the left edge of the image) and pavilion. The Oak-Hickory Grove is visible beyond the parking area, along the entry drive. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (20).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.5 The Oak-Hickory Grove at Weisser Park creates verticality within the park and a sense of enclosure. Several park features are set beneath the canopy, such as the pavilion and playground, visible on the right side of the image. Lights illuminate the park for evening and night use and the lampposts are outfitted with seasonal banners or flags throughout the year. Current vehicular access through the park is limited and there is evidence of vehicles traveling across the mown turf understory, seen here through the center of the image. (R-FWP-WEI\_20061207\_0250.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.6 A narrow concrete sidewalk leads visitors under the canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove, linking the Weisser Park pavilion with the surrounding neighborhood at intersection of Drexel Street and Hanna Street. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (30).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.7 Concrete walks line the perimeter of Weisser Park along its north, west, and south edges. This concrete walk is located along the west edge, creating a barrier between the traffic from Hanna Street and the Oak-Hickory Grove. (R-FWP-WEI-VT-0012.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.8 The Weisser Park Youth Center, completed in 1998, is the largest building in Weisser Park. Its main entrance, seen here, is located on its west façade, adjacent to the entry drive and circular turnaround. The tennis courts located in Landscape Area 2 are visible to the left of the youth center. (R-FWP-WEI-CT-(18).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.9 The Weisser Park Youth Center building has large windows along its north, west, and south façades, allowing views into the park. The north façade, seen here, has an enclosed exterior courtyard with picnic tables and benches available for public use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (14).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.10 The Weisser Park pavilion, constructed in 1963 to replace the original 1917 pavilion, is free and available to the public on a first come, first serve basis. The pavilion and adjacent picnic tables and playground are set within the Oak-Hickory Grove, west of the entry drive and parking area. This shaded area provides a relaxing environment for groups of park users. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (25).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.11 The playground adjacent to the pavilion in the Oak-Hickory Grove contains brightly-colored play equipment over a woodchip mulch ground surface. The adjacent picnic tables and large canopy trees provide parents a shady place to relax while watching their children play. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (22).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.12 Concrete walks lead park visitors under the shaded canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove to several park features. Visible at the left edge of the image is the playground, enclosed by a low plastic curb. A short walk connects with the playground's woodchip mulch ground cover. The spatial relationship between many of the park's landscape features set within a clearing in the wooded grove is also apparent. The pavilion is visible at the right edge of the image, just off the side of a pedestrian path. In the background are the Weisser Park Youth Center and parking area. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (31).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.13 A metal “Weisser Park” sign marks the northwest edge of the park along Hanna Street. This area, which was once characterized by the dominant oak and hickory trees seen throughout the southern half of the park is now open lawn with only a few trees remaining. (R-FWP-WEI-VT-0010.jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.14 The Playing Fields & Courts landscape area is relatively open with few trees or visual barriers. The Weisser Park Youth Center encloses the area to the south. Recreational facilities in this area include tennis courts, seen at the center of the image, and mown turf used as a multi-purpose field. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (35).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.15 The Playing Fields & Courts landscape area is characterized by mown turf and hard surface recreation facilities. The tennis courts are visible at the left of the image, enclosed by the fence. A line of red pines separates the tennis courts from the paved play area, seen at the right of the image. Several shoebox-type light fixtures illuminate the courts and play area for evening use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (11).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.16 When the Weisser Park School was constructed in 1962, the east end of Eckart Street was closed from public vehicular access and developed as a bus parking area. Pipe steel gates prohibit vehicular access and through traffic when school is not in session. School building is seen at the right of the photograph. Concrete curbing along the edge of the park prohibit vehicles from damaging the mown turf. Additional features can be seen in this view, including shoebox style light fixtures and a “Buses Only” sign, alerting the public to this area’s restricted access. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (2).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.17 Additional playground equipment is located in the Playing Fields & Courts area, adjacent to the Weisser Park School bus parking area. Because of its proximity to the school, it is unclear if the play equipment is available for public use or restricted to student use. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (6).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.18 The Weisser Park Youth Center is used by children and residents of all ages, while the adjacent asphalt play area visible in the foreground is primarily used by the nearby Weisser Park School. Features of the play area include a low, metal rail, likely used for skateboarding. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (10).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*



Figure IV.19 A vehicular alley borders the park's Garden landscape area to the east. The area, which was once a prolific peony display garden is now open turf, used by the Weisser Park School as a soccer practice field. Soccer nets have been set on the turf. A line of wooden bollards line the alley, prohibiting vehicles from parking on the turf, which is set at an even grade with the alley. The Oak-Hickory Grove borders the area to the south. Two white pines mark the edge of the area and its transition into the wooded grove. (R-FWP-WEI-CT- (1).jpg) Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER IV: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE EXISTING CONDITIONS*

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter V: Weisser Park Today*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO THE PARK TODAY

This chapter expands upon the existing conditions description of the park to examine the various aspects of Weisser Park today with regard to park use and the results of a user survey. In contrast from the previous chapter that focused on a field survey of existing conditions, this section focuses on data gathered through the park user survey, verbal and written feedback from park users during public meetings, and visual observations within the park. The chapter begins with a discussion and summary of the user survey results followed by a section detailing on-site observations.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a clear picture describing how Weisser Park fulfills the needs of its users, and where the park may be falling short. Through a presentation of the Weisser Park user survey results, visual observations of park use, and an overview of current maintenance practices, this discussion will serve as the basis for the subsequent analysis and recommendations chapters and will ultimately shape the development of landscape preservation treatment.

### B. WEISSER PARK USER SURVEY RESULTS

Heritage Landscapes developed user surveys, with input from the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Legacy Committee, to gain an understanding of the current use and the public perception of the needs of Weisser Park. The results were an important tool in learning about the park from the user's point of view. The Weisser Park user survey was made available between December 2006 and February 2007 at public meetings, Parks and Recreation offices, specific facilities in the parks, online at the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation website and at a variety of other locations throughout the City. The survey generated public input and assessment of the park landscape and facilities. Survey questions elicited citizen input on user demographics, current types of park use, condition of the park landscape and facilities, perception of safety, and desired improvements.

Each survey was divided into four parts. The first part gathered demographic data about the types of visitors using the park. The second portion of the survey identified information regarding the types and frequency of park use, while the third part harnessed user views and perspectives on the condition, safety, and appearance of the park. The final part of the survey was an open-ended questionnaire about user's favorite areas of the park and suggestions for improvement. From the survey results, four categories of recreation were identified: active, passive, social, and educational, which are used to organize the results in the following sections.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

The surveys were collected at the end of February 2007 and the results tabulated in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the current use of Weisser Park. A copy of the survey form and a tally of the findings is included as an appendix. Only twenty-two people returned the Weisser Park survey, which was coupled with the McMillen Park and East Rudisill Boulevard surveys. However, eleven of those respondents indicated that they have never used Weisser Park, leaving eleven users. This sample size is not statistically dependable so the findings are anecdotal, not prescriptive.

Of the eleven Weisser Park users responding, two people (9%) said they used the park more than once a week and two people (9%) used the park a few times a month. Use of the park is spread throughout the seasons, as noted by three people (14%). Of the eleven people who reported using the park, three users (14%) spend one to three hours, while a further three users (14%) stay in the park for less than an hour per visit. All users arrive by automobile as none live within easy walking distance of the park.

**B1. Active Recreation**

Active or exertive recreation is defined as aerobic exercise that increases heart rate, is a fitness activity and usually generates sweat. It can involve facilities or equipment like fields or courts for team or individual fitness pursuits like running an exercise circuit with fitness stations. Active recreation can also use the park environment of paths for exercise running, walking, biking, cross-country skiing in winter, etc. Active recreational facilities at Weisser Park include two tennis courts, a basketball court, playgrounds, a recently improved baseball diamond, and open lawn that can be as multi-purpose fields. The paths in the park do not lend themselves to active recreation, although running could take place along the perimeter sidewalks as part of a larger running course. Of the respondents, jogging/running, bicycling, playing tennis, and playing basketball were each noted by one park user for their active recreation. In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, the lack of certain active recreation areas, such as a track and pool, were listed as suggested improvements.

**B2. Passive Recreation**

Passive recreation is broadly defined as park enjoyment in informal ways. Passive recreation was cited as “recreative” by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. in the nineteenth century, and meant to recreate one’s self through experience of scenic landscapes.<sup>1</sup> It encompasses a range of casual and informal uses of parks and open spaces. It is often cited by users as simply spending time in a green, scenic environment. Passive activities include strolling, sitting, reading, hanging out, dog walking, picnicking, sunbathing, and enjoying being outdoors, and attending weddings or ceremonies, watching a sporting event and other related park uses. A variety of pedestrian paths, open lawn, shady groves, and a pavilion all enhance the passive recreational experience at Weisser Park. A combination of passive and social recreation was reported for the majority of time users spent in the park. The passive recreational activities checked included leisure walking, picnicking, enjoying nature, event, relaxation/socialization, and using the pavilion. The large oak and hickory grove was noted as the best feature of the park landscape, which users would like to see protected and enhanced.

**B3. Social Recreation**

Social recreation involves groups, friends, or families using the park for celebrations, picnics, reunions, performances, dances, fairs and festivals, sports spectating, etc. Known as gregarious, or friendly and polite contact with people of all classes in Olmsted’s lexicon, social recreation can take place within the broader landscape, be focused on facilities, like picnic tables and pavilions and can

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

accompany other types of recreation.<sup>2</sup> For example, playing basketball, participating in an educational program, or walking with a group of friends can be considered as inclusive to several forms of recreation. Both passive and social recreation were cross-listed on the Weisser Park user survey, as social recreational uses are also usually passive. As a result, some social forms of recreation are discussed here that were also listed in the previous passive recreation section. The pavilion at Weisser Park is suited for many types of social recreation. Additionally, the Weisser Park Youth Center sponsors social activities not just for children but for community members of all ages. Social recreation listed on the Weisser Park survey included attending weddings or other ceremonies (one user, 5%), relaxation/socialization (one user, 5%), watching a sporting event (one user, 5%), and using a pavilion (one user, 5%).

**B4. Educational Recreation**

Educational recreation and interpretation of the park is casual or structured place-based learning about park and local history, ecology, geology, horticulture, garden design, art, etc. Educational recreation in a park setting often occurs by using the park as an outdoor classroom and focusing on elements found within the park landscape. Educational recreation can be addressed in a park atmosphere through guided or self-guided tours, hikes or bike rides, informational signs, and park programs, lectures and exhibits. No tours, self-guided or otherwise, or informational signs exist at the park today. Users reported visiting Weisser Park Youth Center (two users, 9%), attending Weisser Park School (two users, 9%), and attending organized activities (one user, 5%). The close proximity of the Weisser Park School and Weisser Park Youth Center offers educational opportunities based in either or programs developed for the park and supported by staff or volunteers.

**B5. Perceived User Conditional Assessments**

As part of the survey, Weisser Park users were asked to rate the condition of the park using a scale ranging from poor to excellent. Several categories were assessed including general appearance, safety/security, access, cleanliness/litter pick-up, as well as the condition of park features, including the trees and other plants, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields, basketball courts, entry drive, parking area, pedestrian walks, pavilions, restrooms, and signage. Users rated the overall condition of Weisser Park as average. Those areas with the highest numbers of consistent rankings were park access (four users, average), general appearance (seven users, average), plants (four users, fair), and drives/parking (four users, average).

**B6. Facility Use & Reservations**

Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation maintains a variety of pavilions within the city parks that are available for public use. Two types of pavilions are available; some pavilions must be reserved and rented through the Parks Department and others are available on a first come, first serve basis. Weisser Park contains one open-air pavilion that is available on a first come, first serve basis, and does not need to be reserved. This pavilion is located southeast of the Weisser Park Youth Center, adjacent to the parking area.

**B7. Park Programming**

Programming for Weisser Park is offered through the Weisser Park Youth Center. The facility is open from Monday to Friday, 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm and on Saturday from 7:00 am to 2:00 am. The 14,000 square foot building was constructed in 1998 and offers a wide variety of programs for all ages including the SBA Academy Saturday School, MAAT Youth Group, WAWA ABA Kids Group,

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

DUAFF Etiquette Program, and SIMBA Youth Mentoring Program. Facilities include an arts and crafts room, computer center, library/resource/study center, teen club/meeting room, weight training room, kitchen, open lobby for unprogrammed recreation, to a multi-purpose and performing arts room equipped with a stage area and seating for over 300 people. In addition the Weisser Park Youth Center makes use of the outdoor recreational facilities including the tennis and basketball courts.<sup>3</sup>

### C. WEISSER PARK VISUAL OBSERVATIONS

Heritage Landscapes observed Weisser Park uses from October 2006 through May 2007 in conjunction with documentation of existing park conditions and developing proposals for treatment. Fall, winter, and spring uses and conditions were seen and recorded. Due to the project timeline, summer use and condition were not observed. Observations were made during fieldwork sessions and on the days of community meetings and noted uses and conditions of features were each time staff was at the park and notes on use and patterns were recorded on site.

Diverse uses were noted; however, use appears to be focused in specific areas and park facilities. In general, there are three users groups, each of which utilizes a separate area of the park. Students at the Weisser Park School make use of the asphalt free play area, the bus parking paved area when buses are not present, and the playground. Weisser Park Youth Center users concentrate use in the areas surrounding the center. The playing fields, which include the baseball diamond, soccer practice field, and basketball courts, are used by various city-wide groups and organizations. There was little observed use of the tennis courts.

During fieldwork sessions, there was little if any observed overlap of the users groups and their associated areas. This may be a result of the current circulation system at the park, which consists of only one interior path and the parking area. The lack of an internal circulation system results in vehicles traveling through the Oak-Hickory Grove understory, which damages the root system of the grove. Specific areas where this condition was observed include the lawn adjacent to the parking area off Drexel Avenue; along the south side of the youth center; and in the area east of the entry drive, leading to the baseball field. The limited circulation discourages pedestrian use of the park. While the perimeter of the park is lined with sidewalks, walkers appear to be moving around the park, not within it. This means that links between the various use areas are limited, which inhibits exploration of different areas of the park.

Also observed was the relationship between various park facilities. For example, it was noted that the northwest corner of the baseball field fence is in close proximity to the asphalt free play area. This creates an unclear separation between the two facilities and visual and physical conflict. Another notable condition regarding the baseball field is the presence of the fence enclosing the entire field. While the fence defines the field and provides a higher level of little league play, it defines a single-use facility, eliminating the overlap of the baseball outfield, and soccer/football fields, effectively decreasing the area available for multi-purpose fields. Prior to the erection of the fence, the outfield was contiguous with the adjacent open lawn area and was used as part of an informal football field. The clear separation of the baseball field has transitioned the open field into a single-use area. Overall, the facilities at Weisser Park are used by a range of community members. However, the

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

current circulation system and the spatial relationship between various use areas do not encourage optimal use of the park for diverse activities.

#### D. PARK MAINTENANCE OVERVIEW

In terms of overall appearance, the park appears well cared for and maintained. All parks within the Fort Wayne Parks System are maintained by skilled and talented employees of the maintenance division. Additionally, over the years the Fort Wayne Park system had expanded with increased responsibility and decreased staff resources, tools, and budgets. The annual maintenance commitment needs have increased as new parks and facilities are created. Mobile crews attend to mowing and litter removal in each of the City's parks. While the staff at the Weisser Park Youth Center serves that facility and provides a friendly presence in the park, they do not maintain the park landscape. No dedicated landscape maintenance personnel are stationed at Weisser Park. There is evidence of mature tree inspection and care and new tree planting. Weisser Park maintenance efforts are limited by the resources of the department.

#### E. SUMMARY ISSUES, WEISSER PARK TODAY

The Weisser Park user survey helped to identify how park visitors use and perceive the park. Observations and public comments added to an understanding of the issues that can be summarized in four general categories: opportunities for recreation; limited circulation; condition of the Oak-Hickory Grove; and maintenance.

Weisser Park currently accommodates a narrow range of recreational activities focused on the current character and facilities of the park. Park users noted and the planning team observed that there is room for improvement. Users responding to surveys often suggest substantial features and improvements, rather than more modest ones, although when asked they also support more basic improvements.

In terms of active recreation, some park users noted they would like additional facilities to include elements like a running track and a public swimming pool. While these large park features cannot be accommodated within the small acreage of Weisser Park, improvements in all types of uses, to include passive, social, active and educational recreation opportunities are both possible and desirable. Park users also noted that there is no system of walks or trails, only sections of walks, unconnected. This lack relates to both passive, walking and strolling and active, exercise walking, jogging and biking. Park users enjoy the natural scenery of the grove and visitor experience could be enhanced through the addition of paths for pedestrians and bicycles. Active use can relate to facilities but is also related to having paths to walk, run or bike on and spots to stretch and cool down from exercise. Social recreational facilities could be enhanced by incorporating more spaces for groups to socialize, such as additional picnic tables. The current range of recreational activities in the park is appropriate but limited particularly by the lack of a cohesive path system. Opportunities for enhanced recreation, especially walking, running and bicycling are needed.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

Educational uses could also be enhanced by interpreting park history, ecology and use through time as well as other themes. While educational programs are provided within the youth center these programs do not focus on the park as a resource. There is no interpretation in the park today. Park based educational opportunities have been shown to enhance the value of the park to the community. Interpretation can be organized with a simple brochure that provides a self-guided walking tour, informative signs placed in the park or guided tours on specific topics.

Vehicular circulation is an issue at Weisser Park. The current entry drive, located along Drexel Avenue is not clearly marked as the primary park entrance. Most vehicular traffic on the streets surrounding the park occurs on Hanna Street. However, the entrance to the park from this western street is obscure. Further, the fact that the entry drive leads directly to the Weisser Park Youth Center causes park users to perceive the drive and its associated parking area as being available only to members of the youth center. Drives and parking spaces for vehicles should be designed for clarity and functionality. Signs should indicate accepted use and driving through the park lawns and tree grove should be actively discouraged.

Some park users value the park trees. An important issue is the condition of the Oak-Hickory Grove. The park was created largely for the purpose of protecting one of Fort Wayne's oldest native groves. Several park users identified the grove as an important feature to the park. However, the grove has experienced a loss of canopy and several trees are in need of additional care and protection. Some of the damage to the existing grove is a result of the lack of a formal circulation system through the park interior. There is evidence of vehicles traveling over the mown turf understory of the grove to access park features, such as the baseball diamond. This practice damages turf, soil and tree roots.

Issues concerning Weisser Park maintenance also require consideration. The Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department employs talented and skilled maintenance workers. Staff counts have steadily declined over the years while new features and amenities continue to be added at parks throughout the City. This trend increases the burden on work crews and the type of work carried out in park landscapes is reduced. Turf mowing is a crew task, as is litter pick-up and playing field preparation and maintenance. Care of individual park trees is handled by a small forestry crew, while woodland or meadow vegetation management is not staffed or infrequent. Specific Fort Wayne Parks, notably Lakeside Park and Foster Park, have public gardens that are staffed by small horticulture crews.

There is no dedicated Weisser Park landscape staff. In order to cover the many acres of park land within Fort Wayne landscape staff functions in roving crews, carrying out limited tasks in each of the parks. While Weisser Park appears generally well cared for as an overview, upon inspection the limited maintenance staff time in the park is obvious. Additional work on the care of turf and historic and new trees could improve the park landscape. For example cyclic renewal of mulch circles around trees, supplemental watering for young trees during mid-summer and drought and tree pruning could all be undertaken. Wider mulch circles around all trees will aid in reducing mower damage to surface roots and trunks. More maintenance and modest improvements by park staff to the plantings and service yard of the Youth Center would aid in upgrading the park appearance and perception of care. User abuse of park turf and trees by parking on lawn and driving over tree roots is an issue not only for appearance but for historic tree health. More maintenance time that would repair such damage and added efforts to limit this type of behavior, through signs and direct contact would improve the situation. Additional time in the park for maintenance staff and assignment of

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

the same crews who would, over time, begin to recognize deterioration and develop staff initiatives to counteract it, is recommended to enhance the overall quality of Weisser Park. Opportunities for enhanced use and maintenance of Weisser Park can be envisioned. As each initiative is developed in detail the related ongoing care of the feature, system or facility needs to be considered in light of maintenance staff and budget limitations.

Today Weisser Park serves as a neighborhood and city public space for recreation. It is a living reminder of the historic oak hickory forest, a place for youth to gather at a staffed center, a landscape for team field sports, a picnic ground, a scenic landscape to enjoy and a place to learn. While the park serves the city today, its rich history, ecology and open green space and can provide improved functions, enriched character and more targeted maintenance needs with holistic planning and phased implementation.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER V: WEISSER PARK TODAY*

CHAPTER V ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns*, 1870, reprinted 1970.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Law Olmsted, *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns*, 1870, reprinted 1970.

<sup>3</sup> Weisser Center, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation. Copyright 2007. Accessed 1 May 2007.  
[http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=71&Itemid=73](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=71&Itemid=73)



# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
Board of Park Commissioners  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
Heritage Landscapes Preservation Landscapes Architects P  
Planners  
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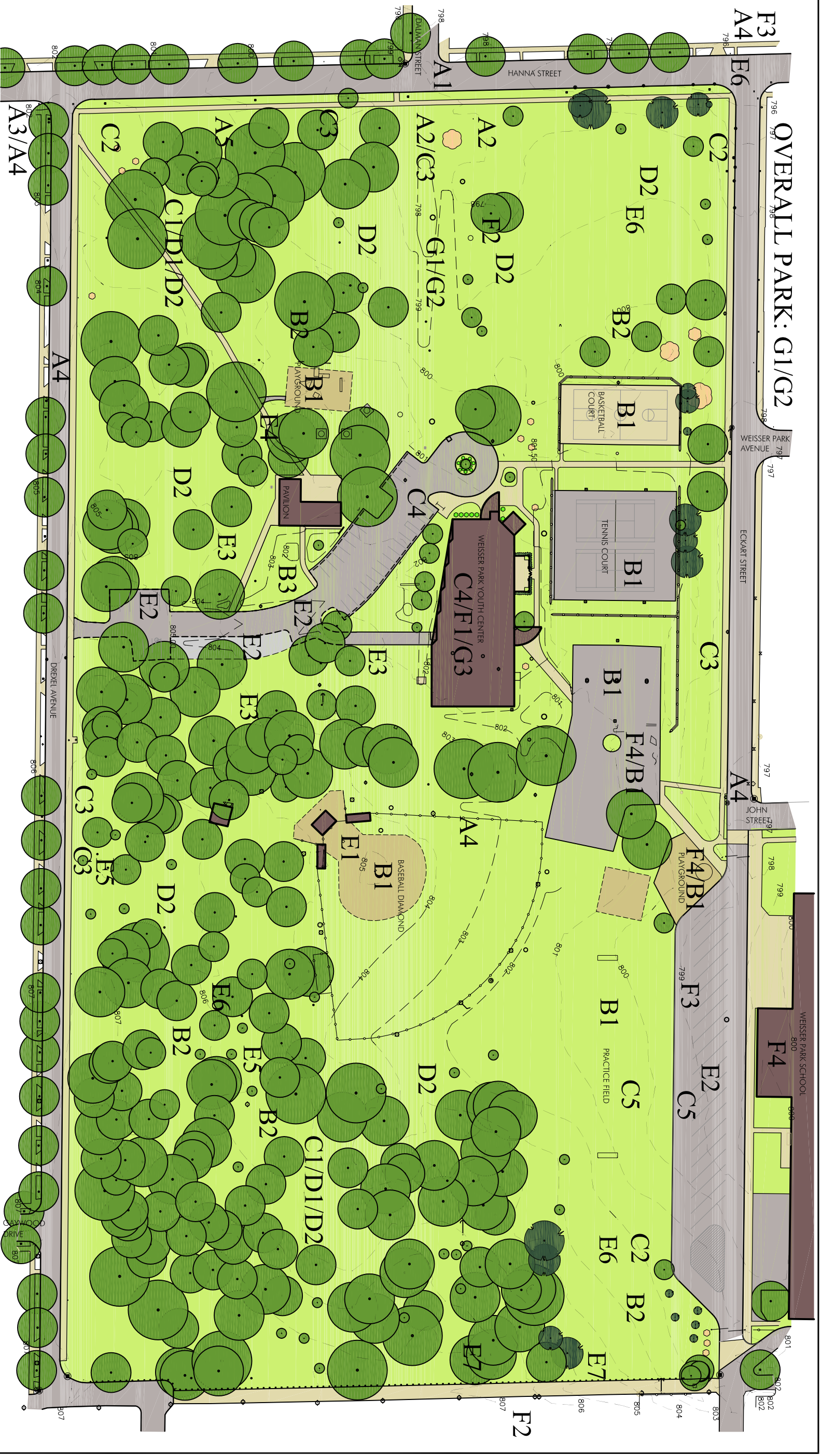
Drawing Title:

Weisser Park  
Analysis Plan

Date:  
2007

Drawing Number:

ANP



#### ANALYSIS KEY

##### A. LINKAGES & CITY INTEGRATION

- A1. Hanna Street is Main Thoroughfare along West
- A2. Hanna Street Park Access Unclear
- A3. Park Location Obscure from Rudisill Blvd.
- A4. Park Not Connected to Bikeways
- A5. Park Has Limited Frontage Image

##### C. UNIQUENESS, PRESERVATION & INNOVATION

- C1. Grove is Core Value of Park
- C2. Historic Flower Beds Lost
- C3. Green Edge of Park Missing
- C4. Youth Center is Positive Program Element
- C5. School Bus Parking Paves Green Space

##### E. FUNCTIONALITY, MAINTENANCE & SAFETY

- E1. Baseball Diamond Recently Upgraded
- E2. Some Parking Uncontained
- E3. Vehicles Damaging Park Turf & Grove
- E4. Interior Paths Limited
- E5. New Tree Conditions Variable
- E6. Historical Diagonal Path Movement Missing
- E7. East Side Definition Poor

##### F. CIVIC & COMMUNITY VALUE

- F1. Popular Programs/Events at Youth Center
- F2. Park Important Neighborhood Green Space
- F3. Farmers' Market Nearby but Unconnected
- F4. School Students Play in Park

##### G. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

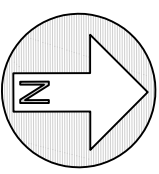
- G1. Park Not Used by Larger City Population
- G2. Park Perceived as School/Youth Center, Not Public
- G3. Youth Center is Park Advocate

##### D. SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

- D1. Oak-Hickory Grove Irreplaceable & Degraded
- D2. No Regeneration in Oak-Hickory Grove

##### B. DIVERSE USE & QUALITY EXPERIENCE

- B1. Sufficient Active Recreation Facilities
- B2. Limited Paths, Benches, Picnic Space
- B3. Balance of Recreation Needed



Source:  
City of Fort Wayne, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, "Weisser Park Plan, Updated 6/2006." Heritage Landscapes Fieldwork.



# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
**Board of Park Commissioners**  
 City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
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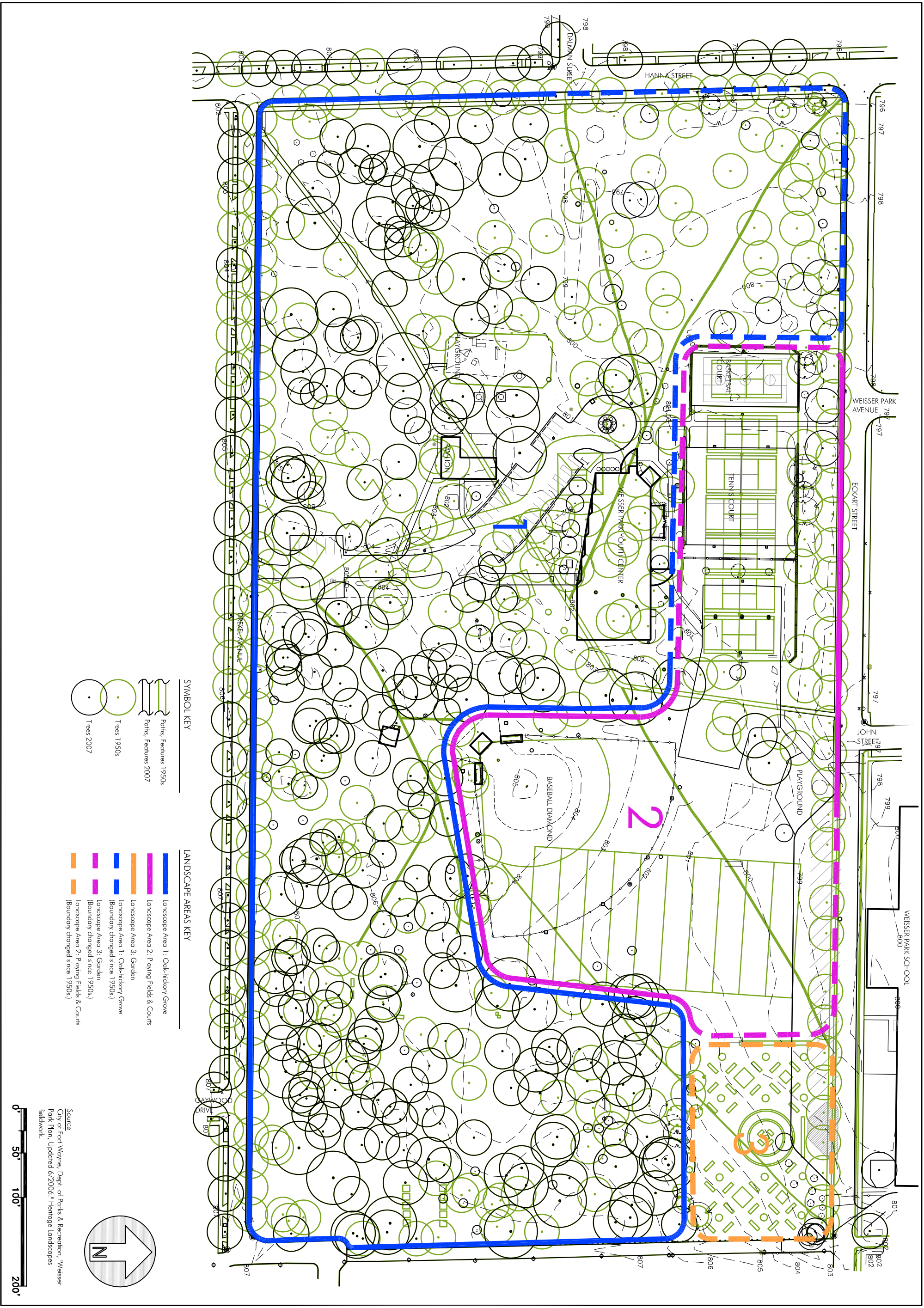
**Weisser Park**  
**1950s-2007 Overlay Plan**

Date:

2007

Drawing Number:

**OVP**

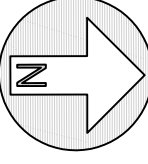


**SYMBOL KEY**

- Potholes, Features 1950s
- Potholes, Features 2007
- Trees 1950s
- Trees 2007

**LANDSCAPE AREAS KEY**

- Landscape Area 1: Oak-hickory Grove
- Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts
- Landscape Area 3: Garden
- Landscape Area 4: Oak-hickory Grove
- Boundary changed since 1950s
- Boundary changed since 1950s
- Boundary changed since 1950s
- Boundary changed since 1950s



Source:  
 City of Fort Wayne, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, "Weisser Park Plan, Updated 6/2006," Heritage Landscapes Fieldwork.

0' 50' 100' 200'

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter VI: Weisser Park Landscape Analysis*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

In this chapter change, continuity and contemporary issues are addressed in two parallel analysis processes. First an overlay line drawing placing the *Weisser Park 1950s Period Plan, PP-1950s* under the *Weisser Park 2007 Existing Conditions Plan with Landscape Areas, EC-2007* to create the *Weisser Park 1950s-2007 Overlay Plan, OVP*, highlights similarities and differences in the park and is used as a graphic reference for a discussion of continuity and change. Second an analysis of park issues is presented, addressing the array of roles this park plays in Fort Wayne and in its neighborhood. For this section of discussion, an important consideration in addressing this historic park is to understand the park landscape evolution. Both continuity and change over time have shaped Weisser Park through the decades since its purchase in 1908. The park has a moderate degree of integrity to the character shown on the historic period plan, particularly in the retention of a substantial portion of the oak and hickory tree grove for which the park was set aside and the continued presence of the baseball field. However, changes have occurred, some of which can and should be reversed based on the as-built (1950s) condition of the park. An analysis of the level of continuity and change reveals the degree to which the park today resembles and retains the character of the as-built park and the park landscape integrity. Using the *Weisser Park 1950s-2007 Overlay Plan, OVP* as a reference, this analysis is presented in section B.

In section C, the park is analyzed in relation to the full range of apparent issues that were revealed through this planning process. The issues are organized under relevant headings to include: linkages and city integration; diversity of use and quality of experience; park uniqueness, preservation and innovation; sustainability and stewardship; functionality, maintenance and safety; civic and community value; and partnerships between public and private entities. This narrative is referenced to the analysis plan, *Weisser Park Analysis Plan, ANP*.

### B. WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE CONTINUITY & CHANGE

Comparison of the historic period, as-built park and the existing park is shown on the *Weisser Park 1950s-2007 Overlay Plan, OVP*. This drawing shows a two-color line overlay of the previously presented plans (*PP-1950s* and *EC-2007*) with a black line color used for the existing condition and a green line color used for the 1950s as-built park landscape. This overlay visually highlights which of the park features remain intact, are missing, or have been added since the 1950s. The overlay findings are presented for each of the three landscape areas to describe the continuity of historic park features and changes carried out over the past five decades. Aspects of the existing park character remain intact and are altered from the 1950s character and features.

#### VI.1

#### Heritage Landscapes

#### Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

### **Park Boundary & Access Analysis**

Historically, Weisser Park had a well-defined edge with street trees lining the park landscape on three sides. The tree border that marked the Weisser Park edge was a characteristic feature. A nearly continuous line of street trees, 19 along Hanna Street, 42 along Drexel Avenue and 35 along Eckart Street have been lost over time. Only one street tree was mapped in the 2007 tree inventory representing 95 fewer park edge street trees and a distinct change in park frontage appearance.

The inclusion of playing fields, a formal garden area and modest structures of a rustic style also defined the designed park landscape character. Access into the park was from a small, mid-block driveway off south, or Drexel Avenue edge. This service entry drive reached the two-story pavilion. A more substantial entry was unnecessary as private cars did not typically gain access to the park interior with neighborhood park users arriving on foot. As private vehicle use increased park users parked along the adjacent streets, particularly Drexel Avenue. A high curb and sidewalk were recently constructed along this south frontage to counteract degrading park edge parking. Today private cars enter the park at Drexel Avenue and use the existing nose-in parking spaces and some park users drive into the park over turf and tree roots damaging the grove.

Formerly a park garden and tree lined street frontage, the northeast half of the Eckart Street frontage has been altered. A sizable area of the courts, playing field and garden landscape was changed with the construction of the Weisser Park School in 1962. As the 1973 aerial photographs (Figure II.20) documents, the north frontage and park acreage was altered in these years with tree removals, closing of Eckart Street along the school, and removal of the gardens with a change to an open turf area. Today a playing field and a school playground are located east of the courts. The recent baseball diamond upgrade added an outfield fence defining this field as a single purpose facility. The recent addition of a school bus parking area altered the northeast park frontage. While necessary for safety this paved area changed one-half acre (about 5%) of green park landscape into asphalt. Although this northeast corner is part of Weisser Park these adjacencies link it closely with the Weisser Park School. There is a common perception that it is a school play area and not available for public use.

Compounding this issue of perception and edge definition is the fact that the east edge of the park fronts on a narrow, private alley. Typically, public parks are most successful and contribute to the surrounding community character best when they have clearly defined edges that front on public streets. When parks front on private land or limited access roadways, they tend to have a weakened identity and create confusion about private and public space boundaries. The eastern edge of the park has both perception and use issues.

Park access was altered with the 1996 to 1998 Weisser Park Youth Center construction. The former service access has been enlarged and realigned to function as the primary entrance to the park with parking areas along the east and west sides. Park users driving to the park prefer parking in this lot. Parking is also available on the street frontage. At infrequent high use times, for example when the youth center hosts an event and the little league field is in play, all parking spaces in the park are in use and street parking is also along Drexel Avenue.

In summary, issues of change to park frontage character and park access for pedestrians and vehicles require consideration of further change perhaps guided by the historic character and features. The

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

objectives of further changes are to bolster historic character, promote better function, diverse use, improved park perception and enhanced sustainability.

### Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove Analysis

An impressive stand of original oak and hickory trees in an informal grove defined the striking character of the historic park and was the reason for its purchase and park use. Although diminished, the Oak-Hickory Grove remains the largest and most dominant landscape area in Weisser Park. Extending from Hanna Street to the service alley at the east border and includes full frontage on Drexel Avenue. Today, this area retains a degree of historic character and spatial arrangement, with loss of tree canopy and count and the addition of park facilities altering grove density and extent. In the Oak-Hickory Grove about 140 trees have been removed over the decades, marking a considerable loss of canopy particularly in the northwest corner. The loss of the mature oak and hickory trees is illustrated on drawing *OVP* with the missing trees shown in green. The remaining trees need various levels of care. Some 155 existing park trees, mostly within the grove, were assessed as in need of significant canopy care, representing half of the large trees in the park today. The section of the Oak-Hickory Grove that has been substantially altered is the northwest corner, which historically was part of the grove. It is now managed as open mown turf and used primarily for informal recreational activities. It remains visually separated from the adjacent area as defined by the west edge of the basketball court. The entire remaining grove needs to be protected from degrading activity.

Vehicular access into the park is through the grove from Drexel Avenue, leading to the Weisser Park Youth Center, the service area and the available parking. The drive is enlarged from the earlier one that led to the former two-story pavilion. The existing entry drive was constructed wider to accommodate two lanes and nose-in parking spaces have been provided along both the east and west sides of the drive with wheel stops for car control. A circular turnaround to the north terminus serves as a drop-off zone for the building.

Today only one pedestrian route into this area provides access from the park perimeter. It originates at the corner of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue. This walk is seen in the 1950s period plan and retains its original alignment, leading to the pavilion and parking area. The balance of the walks, that formed an irregular X pattern through the park landscape are gone. Sidewalks along Eckert and Hanna Streets remain and the Drexel Avenue one is rebuilt recently conjunct with the curb. The high curb along Drexel Avenue is a recent addition to aid in traffic management.

The areas that were used for the development of the playground and pavilion remain in those uses set beneath the canopy of the grove. Original park buildings and features have been removed and added. Structures and features no longer present include the bandstand and related seating, the gazebo, and the horseshoe pits. The two-story pavilion, constructed in 1917 that housed social events was removed in 1963, when the new one-story pavilion with a covered picnic area was constructed. The playground area present during the 1950s has been consolidated and reduced in overall size remains an active use feature. While the restroom facility east of the drive remains from the earlier park period, it is no longer used.

The picnic and restroom pavilion to the west of the entry drive is an addition in this area of the park and is contemporaneous with the adjacent playground area. The overall size and style of the pavilion

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

makes it a modest alteration within the grove. An important change in the use this area occurred with construction of the Weisser Park Youth Center. This center serves local youth effectively particularly focusing on African American youth programs. Located to the east of the historic two-story pavilion, this structure opens to park on the west and north sides toward courts and lawn. The 14,000 square foot structure location required removal of several mature grove trees. Possibly resulting from decline following construction operations, many of the mature trees that once surrounded it are now missing. New walks, an exterior courtyard, and the enlarged entry drive and parking area were constructed with the youth center. These changes reconfigured the area. Visually, the youth center reads as part of the adjacent Playing Fields & Courts, Landscape Area 2. Planting around the building was likely selected to complement the architecture rather than to blend with the park. Trees are flowering crabapples, flowering Bradford pears, while a range of ornamental shrubs is planted along the foundation of the building, in the circle and around the parking area. Lost grove trees to the south of the building have not been replanted.

This analysis of the Landscape Area 1: Oak-Hickory Grove indicates that current uses are appropriate and based in community needs. As the park has developed and changed the interior grove circulation system has diminished reducing pedestrian and bicycle access. The degradation of the grove and loss of the fondly remembered gardens are issues to address. Grove renewal and care are required. And improved control of access and parking for vehicles should be addressed. The development of a more functional park interior circulation system is needed.

#### **Landscape Area 2: Playing Fields & Courts Analysis**

Located along the central northern edge of the park these facilities continue to provide active recreation opportunities in Weisser Park. Spatially the facilities retain their approximate position parallel to Eckart Street. To the east a school playground was added. The eastern edge beyond this playground is open, no longer defined by and separate from the Garden landscape area. Now, the former garden space is open lawn that is visually unified with the Playing Fields & Courts area. Similarly, the west edge of Landscape Area 2 is open, not defined by the former transition to grove. The open turf virtually extends the playing fields and courts area westward.

Pedestrian circulation through this landscape area has been altered as former packed earth or gravel paths were removed. More recent concrete walk segments connect this area with Eckart Street and the Weisser Park School. Noticeably absent are the trees that once lined Eckart Street and several trees that were located between the tennis courts and the baseball diamond providing separation of the different uses and shade.

Active recreational facilities in Landscape Area 2 remain and have been altered since the 1950s. The former seven tennis courts have been reduced to two courts, with the further conversion of one more to a basketball court. It was noted in public meetings and staff discussion that tennis is not longer popular and the remaining court is little used. The baseball field was recently improved, adding dugouts, a concession stand, and a perimeter fence. While this is a better single purpose facility, the fence has eliminated the former overlap that provided a larger playing field to the northeast. The soccer/football field that overlapped the baseball outfield is reduced in size. This reduction was due in part to the loss of open lawn area that occurred with the construction of the adjacent school bus parking lot.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

In summary, the analysis of change within Landscape Unit 2, Courts & Playing Fields, indicates that a series of individual changes have taken place over time that reduce green space, add facilities and provide short segments of pedestrian circulation. Each of these individual projects provided useful, appropriate facilities and features to the park. However, they were conceived and constructed individually without integration. A comprehensive review of the courts and fields area is needed to meet current needs, provide access, enhance both integration and facility separation, and function more effectively as parts of the park rather than as elements in isolation.

### Landscape Area 3: Garden Analysis

Located in the northeast corner of the park the former gardens were less than one acre in size. Traditionally the garden area, today the area is managed as an open turf lawn and the formal garden peony display beds are no longer present. The only remaining vegetation from the historic plantings is two white pine trees, located at the southern edge. These two evergreen trees, one a seedling, are remnants of garden background planting, which served as a defined edge between the sunny garden area and the shady grove. The current mown turf is used as a soccer/football practice field primarily by the Weisser Park school children. For play two soccer nets are placed on the lawn, with the informal field oriented east to west. There has also been a reduction in the green space with the construction of the bus parking area, as noted and quantified elsewhere in this narrative. Interestingly there is no longer a desire path visible, which formerly crossed the area diagonally from the northeast corner towards the center of the park. The current uses vary from the historic uses, as the display gardens are now an active recreation field.

In summary these changes of use, to bus parking lot and field are both needed and appropriate. However, the open field and adjacent large lot flow together losing park edge definition. Improved spatial definition is needed both for park user safety at the lot edge and for public park perception. User desire gardens in the park. This area to the northeast is no longer the most appropriate location as it is along school and alley frontage. In addition, maintenance concerns arise as gardens are high care landscapes. Opportunities to have more modest gardens in the park should be explored.

## C. WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS OF ISSUES

As Heritage Landscapes studied Weisser Park, a framework emerged for investigating the importance and the value of public parks as city-wide resources and unique places of cultural and natural resources. Parks are important to the City of Fort Wayne as they are shared public resources. These spaces offer a wealth of recreational opportunities for a wide variety of users. To analyze these diverse spaces within Weisser Park, Heritage Landscapes found it useful to develop a larger context of park values. From these park values, seven distinct categories became apparent. Each of the seven categories were discussed in detail and approved by the Fort Wayne Parks Legacy Committee.

Lettered to match the *ANP* plan, these categories address public parks in relation to the broader context of Fort Wayne and the overall park and boulevard system:

- *Linkages & City Integration.* This category places the parks in the context of the city, the three rivers, the topography and the scenic and aesthetic character of Fort Wayne; the city identity



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

is shaped, in part by the parks and boulevards; the livability of the city is enhanced by presence of parks and boulevards and their green character and the linkages and connections being made to parks and along boulevards knit the city together. The proximity of Weisser Park in relation to city boulevards, such as Rudisill Boulevard, offers the opportunity to enhance the integration of the park into the overall park system and allows city residents greater access to the park.

- *Civic & Community Value.* This category includes community awareness and a heightened sense of the value of parks in everyday life as community resources. Further, it identifies the importance of parks not just as individual, isolated parcels, but as part of a larger system, linking and enhancing the community and the broader city connections. The Weisser Park Youth Center and the programs it offers provide a valuable resource for the neighboring community. Creating a unified system of community resources throughout the City could enhance the overall value and appreciation of public parklands. The park also increases the visual quality of the neighborhood, providing a welcome green space in the dense, residential area. The proximity of the Weisser Park School further adds to both the civic and community value of the park.
- *Public-Private Partnerships.* This category addresses park advocacy and the partnership of the city and private groups and individuals needed for parks to thrive. During park development, the Weisser Park Community Association was a strong advocate for the park. Although this group no longer operates, the Weisser Park Youth Center and the Weisser Park School provide opportunities to develop strong partnerships between the park, the community and the City.

These categories address qualities specific to the park:

- *Diverse Use & Quality of Experience.* This category recognizes that parks and boulevards are meant to be enjoyed for their intrinsic value; the quality of experience should be high with conflicts resolved and positive recreation readily at hand. Diverse uses in each park should include opportunities for passive, active, social and educational pursuits. Weisser Park accommodates a range of users and recreational activities. The picnic areas and pavilion offer space for passive and social recreation and the sports fields provide active recreational facilities. The Weisser Park Youth Center offers programs to educate visitors and interpret the park landscape.
- *Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation.* This category considers the legacy of parks we have inherited from previous generations and the special character and features of each park that make it unique, the need for historic preservation, and the need to be adaptable and innovative while honoring the unique character of each park. Also considered is the fact that parks are intended to be beautiful green places that are aesthetically pleasing. Weisser Park was created in part to preserve the remnant oak-hickory grove. Park users identify the scenic quality of the grove and recognize that it defines the unique character of the park.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

- *Sustainability & Stewardship.* This category addresses resource conservation, ecological stewardship, habitat diversity and the application of green and sustainable practices and design of parks. Opportunities exist at Weisser Park to implement such practices into the overall maintenance and future development of the park. Further, the Weisser Park Youth Center is a valuable asset in that it can educate the community about the importance of sustainability and offer community members insight towards appropriate stewardship of the park.
- *Functionality, Maintenance & Safety.* This category includes basic functionalities, park maintenance, needed services, public safety, and security and perceived security. Overall, Weisser Park functions successfully as a small neighborhood park. Current maintenance of Weisser Park is targeted and limited by the available resources. However, by educating users about practices and behaviors that could either damage or enhance park facilities, the overall quality and safety of the park.

The analysis is organized into the seven overall park categories presented above, incorporating insights gained from public meetings, Parks Department staff, the Legacy Committee and user comments and observations. The positive and negative issues that emerge are listed on *Weisser Park Analysis Plan, ANP* and are described in detail here. Each item on the Analysis Key has a letter-number label corresponding with the letters provided here, and the location of each is noted on the plan.

**A. Linkages & City Integration Analysis of Issues**

Weisser Park has a number of issues related to linkages and integration with the city streets and walks. Hanna Street, which runs north-south at the west edge of the park, is the primary thoroughfare for park access and yet the main vehicular drive is located on the south side of the park from Drexel Avenue. Vehicular entry into the park is not clear to visitors traveling on Hanna Street. Eckart Street, at the north, once ran the full park length but now ends at its intersection with John Street, where a vehicular gate prevents entry to the Weisser Park School bus parking lot. Vehicular movements along Drexel Avenue remain unchanged as well as along the alley at the east edge of the park. Concrete walks exist around the perimeter along Eckart and Hanna Streets and Drexel Avenue. The school bus parking area interrupts a designated pedestrian walk to the northeast corner. There are only two paved walks connecting Weisser Park with the surrounding pedestrian system: a diagonal walk that leads from the corner of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue through the park and ending across the street from the intersection of Eckart and John Streets; the second walk is located at the intersection of Weisser Park Avenue. Pedestrian access from Hanna Street is also limited. As no formal pedestrian pathways are provided, park users must walk across the mown turf or must circle the park until reaching one of the paths. Walks within the park are destination-oriented, illustrated by the fact that when following the path, users must be entering or leaving the park without any access to the eastern half of the park. Walks connect the youth center with the adjacent activity areas and the Weisser Park School, but there are no other internal pedestrian walks on park property for users to travel from one area to another or simply to walk through the park, under the canopy of the Oak-Hickory Grove.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

Weisser Park accommodates users from the neighborhood as well as from other areas in the city. However, its location from Rudisill Boulevard, which is a primary city connector, is obscure. The park suffers not only from this lack of connection but also from missing or obscure links with the Rivergreenway and every other intercity bikeway, which brings residents through this neighborhood. These connections as well as the pedestrian circulation within the park can be improved for better access, circulation and decreased degradation of the turf areas and understory of the Oak-Hickory Grove.

Aside from the physical connectivity concerns facing Weisser Park, the park has lost its characteristic tree plantings at its perimeter. Tree-lined edges of a park are a welcoming sign to park users, announcing arrival to the park from the otherwise hardscaped urban context of city streets and front yard landscapes. In terms of linkages and city integration, the following summary of issues is shown on the *ANP* plan to address connectivity concerns:

- A. Linkages & City Integration
  - A1. Hanna Street is Main Thoroughfare along West
  - A2. Hanna Street Park Access Unclear
  - A3. Park Location Obscure from Rudisill Blvd.
  - A4. Park Not Connected to Bikeways
  - A5. Park Has Limited Frontage Image

Vehicular access from Hanna Street is obscure and creates confusion. Historically the Kessler Plan proposed access from Hanna Street. Pedestrian walks from surrounding streets, including Hanna Street, are limited or nonexistent. The popular farmers' market, held one block from the park, has no clear connections to the park. Access into and along the east side of the park is needed to avert use of the private alley. Internal park walks need to be added for easy access to and use of the park

**B. Diverse Use & Quality of Experience Analysis of Issues**

Weisser Park has a great deal of active recreation facilities, particularly for a park of its size. Facilities include a basketball court, two tennis courts, a baseball diamond, two playgrounds, a soccer field, as well as an open field for pick-up sports and an asphalt play area for recess activities. However, passive recreational opportunities are limited because of lack of walking paths, benches, and picnic space throughout the park. The youth center, pavilion, and many of the sporting facilities offer space for social recreation. Educational and passive recreational opportunities could be greatly enhanced at Weisser Park.

The four historic and contemporary types of recreation that Weisser Park could include are: active or exertive, passive, social or gregarious, and educational or interpretive. Modes of recreation can overlap with each other; for example, an activity such as picnicking is both social and passive. For Weisser Park, the incomplete path system fails to support the simple pleasures of strolling through the park. While existing facilities can accommodate picnicking and other passive uses, few instances of such use were observed. Facility-based active use is a heavy draw to this park with the upgraded baseball field, the soccer/football field area and the paved courts. Social or gregarious recreation opportunities in Weisser Park include watching sporting events and picnicking. While programs in the youth center often have an educational purpose, educational and interpretive activities or

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

programs that use Weisser Park as the subject do not currently exist. In terms of current recreational diversity, the following list is shown on the *ANP* plan to address recreational pursuits:

- B. Diverse Use & Quality of Experience
  - B1. Sufficient Active Recreation Facilities
  - B2. Limited Paths, Benches, Picnic Space
  - B3. Balance of Recreation Needed

The Little League diamond is new and recently improved. The addition of the fence creates an exclusion issue and changes the open lawn area from multiple-use to single-use. Youth programs take place at the Weisser Park Youth Center. Children use the playground; more playground seating is needed for families. More picnic space may be desired. The interior path system is fragmented and incomplete better access from the park perimeter and through the park interior is needed to optimize use. The northwest corner would be good place for frisbee, pick-up games, etc.; however citizens remarked that it gets little use today. Tennis and basketball courts appear to be managed as part of the youth center because of their proximity to the building. It is unclear if the courts are open to the public or if members of the community at large use them. A magnet arts school is located north of the park. Children likely play in Weisser Park at recess or after school in addition to the children who attend the Weisser Park Youth Center.

**C. Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation Analysis of Issues**

At Weisser Park, the historic Oak-Hickory Grove represents a core value of the park. However, the quality of the grove has decreased over time. Additionally, street trees that once created a prolific green edge along the park are missing today. Historic peony beds in the northeast corner are no longer extant, having been replaced by an open playing field and the area partially covered by a bus parking lot for the adjacent school. The Weisser Park Youth Center is a positive element in the park that provides programs and activities for young people and the community as a whole.

Weisser Park is a unique neighborhood park in Fort Wayne. One of the most valuable features of this public landscape is the rare-surviving stand of oak and hickory trees, many of which are over 200 years old. This oak and hickory grove is a remnant of the much larger forest that once stretched across the entire ridge between McMillen and Foster Parks. As Fort Wayne was heavily developed, this small portion of woodland was preserved. The oak and hickory grove is irreplaceable and the trees need care on an individual level. Small oaks and hickories should be planted in clearings to continue the legacy of the majestic grove for future generations.

Although the large stand of mature trees could be considered the signature element of Weisser Park, park users ask for the detail of flowers, remembering perhaps the former gardens. Historically, formal, ornamental plantings in the northeast corner of the park (Landscape Area 3) included the largest display of peonies in the Midwest. Users asking for flower beds in the park suggested the northwest corner or possibly along Hanna Street as highly visible locations that are away from active team sport activities. Historically, a large flower bed was also located in the northwest corner. The Hanna Street frontage of Weisser Park is an area where park character and aesthetics could be improved. Often people look for massings of trees as a signal to where parks are located in the urban

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

landscape. Although Weisser Park has many large trees, they are missing along Hanna Street, the most highly traveled of the surrounding streets and also along Eckart Street and Drexel Avenue.

The Weisser Park Youth Center at the core of the park is an asset to both the neighborhood and the city as a whole. It has a variety of recreational and education programs that encourages people of all ages to engage themselves with the park landscape. While the physical activities generated by the facility have impacted the uses and organization of the historic landscape, the center has positive program elements drawing users into the park, particularly area youth, which fosters greater awareness of the park landscape. There are additional opportunities for the youth center to promote educational programs related to the natural systems and stewardship of the park and associated natural:

- C. Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation
  - C1. Grove is Core Value of Park
  - C2. Historic Flower Beds Lost
  - C3. Green Edge of Park Missing
  - C4. Youth Center is Positive Program Element
  - C5. School Bus Parking Paves Green Space

The inherent value of the existing stand of oak and hickory trees is incalculable. Remaining old trees need care and replacement trees should be planted for future generations to enjoy. Modest flower beds would help to beautify the park grounds. It may be possible to encourage neighborhood care of beds so that an additional maintenance burden is not created. Planting of trees along Hanna Street would make the edge more park-like and inviting. The Weisser Park School bus parking area has reduced the green space at the northeast corner of the park and has an effect on potential uses in this area of the park.

**D. Sustainability & Stewardship Analysis of Issues**

The Oak-Hickory Grove is irreplaceable in that it is a mature stand of trees, many of which are over 200 years old, and a remnant of the historical forest that once blanketed a southern portion of Fort Wayne. The woodland is somewhat degraded, and its future is unclear because of a lack regeneration of the existing trees. Natural regeneration by oak seedlings is prevented by mowing of the turf below the canopy and active use of the area. Additionally, the dense root massing and shade of the large trees can inhibit success of young, planted trees. Oak and other hardwood species are lost in Weisser Park due to changes and improvements to park facilities as well as natural decline. The wooded grove is highly valued and steps need to be taken towards the preservation of the existing trees:

- D. Sustainability & Stewardship
  - D1. Oak-Hickory Grove Irreplaceable & Degraded
  - D2. No Regeneration in Oak-Hickory Grove

The value and significance of the Oak-Hickory Grove need to be identified in a way that is understandable and accessible to the public. Regeneration of the grove as well as managed care of the existing trees needs to be fully addressed. More small oak and hickory trees should be planted for future generations to appreciate and enjoy the natural grandeur of the grove.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

**E.      Functionality, Maintenance & Safety Analysis of Issues**

Weisser Park has had recent upgrades including improvements to the baseball diamond with the construction of a new concession stand, dugouts, and perimeter fencing. During this construction, vehicles drove over the lawn, damaging the root systems of some of the large oaks, thereby compromising their overall health and life span. Vehicular movement to the baseball diamond through the mature Oak-Hickory Grove continues to be a recurring problem. This vehicular access is likely stemmed from the uncontained gravel parking area on the east side of the entry drive. In some instances vehicles were driving into the park from the bordering streets, prompting park advocates to request that higher street curbs be installed as a preventative measure. Evidence exists that vehicles are still entering the park from Drexel Avenue. Wooden bollards along the east boundary prevent vehicles from entering the grove. The service area at the south of the Weisser Park Youth Center is where the trash dumpster is located. However, this area has no paved turnaround and the turf has become extensively disturbed with tire ruts from service trucks. Additionally, the single callery pear tree in this area is in failing health most likely due to soil compaction from trash collection vehicles.

Pedestrian movement throughout the park is limited by a lack of interior paths. Current paved walk are organized to lead visitors either to or from the youth center and paved recreation courts, which includes the play area and playground. In total there are only three walks; one travels from the corner of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue and two from Eckart Street at Weisser Park Avenue and John Street. A forth paved access route into the park is the central entry drive, although there is no designated walkway through the center of the park. Missing from the current park circulation system are the continuous diagonal walk from the corner of Hanna Street and Drexel Avenue to the northeast corner at Eckart Street, diagonal access from the corner of Hanna and Eckart Streets to the park center, and the several walks seen throughout the park during the 1950s. This lack of paved walkways in the park prohibits the movement of visitors from the various features of the park and does not provide a simple walking loop for scenic enjoyment of the park landscape. In addition to use by park goers, walks also provide paved access for maintenance vehicles that would otherwise damage turf areas and compact soil in areas of mature tree growth.

It is unclear as to why many of the newly planted trees are in poor condition. If it is assumed that these trees were planted properly, issues that might be deterring their continued growth need to be looked into in more detail. Soil compaction as well as drought watering operations may be causes for the apparent decline. Additionally, many new trees have trunk damage caused possibly by weed-whacking and mowing equipment.

The Weisser Park Youth Center is an overall positive contribution to the park and neighborhood, providing a variety of programs and activities throughout the year. Unfortunately the operation of the park is often perceived as concurrent with the centers' operations. There is a "no one is at home" feeling in the park when the center is not staffed. Operational hours are Monday through Friday 12:00 – 8:00 pm and Saturday 7:00 - 2:00 pm, closed Sundays. The pavilion and restrooms remain accessible for daylight hours during spring, summer and fall.

Maintenance for the center and park facilities, including the grounds, is the responsibility of the City of Fort Wayne. Currently there is no dedicated staff for Weisser Park and the maintenance work

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

yard is located some distance from the park. The remote location limits the actual time that crews spend in the park, limiting the amount presence the City has on site during daylight hours. Over the years, the number of staff for parks maintenance has lessened overall while there is an increase in responsibility, maintenance workload and care needed on the property. The following list summarizes the issues relating to park functionality, maintenance, and safety:

- E. Functionality, Maintenance & Safety
  - E1. Baseball Diamond Recently Upgraded
  - E2. Some Parking Uncontained
  - E3. Vehicles Damaging Park Turf & Grove
  - E4. Interior Paths Limited
  - E5. New Tree Conditions Variable
  - E6. Historical Diagonal Path Movement Missing
  - E7. East Side Definition Poor

The baseball diamond was recently upgraded. Included were new dugout areas, outfield fence and a concession stand. Parking during game and heavy use events is uncontrolled and park vehicles can be found on turf area and underneath trees, damaging lawns areas and compacting of soil at tree root that will eventually lead to tree decline. Paved walk from one area of the park to another are limited to non-existing. Historic diagonal walks across the park are no longer present. The eastern park border is marked by a row of wooden bollards but is otherwise undefined by visual amenities. Limited operational hours of the Weisser Park Youth Center create a “no one is home” feeling in the park.

**F. Civic & Community Value Analysis of Issues**

Weisser Park contributes to the value of community life in Fort Wayne. The park is an important neighborhood green space that also provides recreational facilities for the immediate neighboring community as well as for various teams from the City. During the school year, the park is also used by students at Weisser Park School for their exterior recess and recreational sport programs. In addition to active use by the school programs, the Weisser Park Youth Center also provides a host of valuable programs and events at the park. With these two immediate facilities, one set within the core of the park and the other on the park edge, the park is perceived as functioning solely for school and youth center use. The civic and community value of the park could be improved by fostering connections to the nearby farmers’ market, for example, or to other parks with bike paths that connect the different neighborhoods of Fort Wayne.

The civic and community value of Weisser Park is high, largely because of its importance as a neighborhood park but also because of the community prominence of the Weisser Park Youth Center. The youth center provides youth programs throughout the year that extend through the summer and include early evening activities. In addition to regular programs, the center also sponsors community events, such as the annual Kwanzaa festival. It is felt that other activities could be hosted in the park that would aid in increasing the civic and community value and would complement use of the park by adding new uses that could attract members of the surrounding neighborhood and general public that do not typically use the park. One possibility includes

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

incorporating the farmers' market that is currently held one block away but has no associative uses or connection the park. The following list summarizes the issues relating to civic and community value:

- F. Civic & Community Value
  - F1. Popular Programs/Events at Youth Center
  - F2. Park Important Neighborhood Green Space
  - F3. Farmers' Market Nearby but Unconnected
  - F4. School Students Play in Park

**G. Public-Private Partnerships Analysis of Issues**

Weisser Park is largely a neighborhood park that is not used by the broader city populace on a regular basis. The Weisser Park Youth Center is an advocate for the park and has many programs that are open to all city residents. Its advocacy can be increased by both the center as development of a strong public-private partnership along with the aid of other community members. The potential partnership of an organized group with the City is important for successful programming and fulfillment of park uses. It is important to note that many people do not realize Weisser Park is a public park, but rather perceive it as belonging to the youth center and adjacent school. Strong advocacy as well as increased park awareness through upgraded circulation, including pedestrian paths, connection with city infrastructure, improved signage, and visual enhancement of the park borders will help to correct this perception. The following list summarizes the issues relating to public-private partnerships at Weisser Park:

- G. Public-Private Partnerships
  - G1. Park Not Used by Larger City Populace
  - G2. Park Perceived as School/Youth Center, Not Public
  - G3. Youth Center is Park Advocate

Weisser Park Youth Center provides valuable program within the park setting, but somewhat inhibits outside community members from using the park. Park promotion could be greatly enhanced through strong public-private partnerships. More advocates than the principal users from the youth center and school are needed. Improved perception of the park would enhancement park use beyond the adjacent neighborhood.

**D. SUMMARY LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS**

Overall, Weisser Park has experienced changes in character and loss of scenic quality and definition. Changes have occurred with reduction of the Oak-Hickory Grove. Adding to the shift in character are the removal of original and construction of new features. The existing entry drive, constructed with the Weisser Park Youth Center, has transitioned from a service drive to the primary park access route. While parking areas have been constructed along the east and west sides of the drive, curb controls are lacking. Some park users perceive themselves as having special privileges and bring their vehicles through the grove understory to access park facilities, a behavior which is damaging to the historic grove. At peak times, interior parking spaces are in full use and on-street parking is perceived



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VI: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS*

as being inconvenient. Further, the location of the entry along Drexel Avenue does not provide a clearly defined park entrance, creating a confusing entry experience for park users.

The individual use areas have also been altered. The recreation facilities in Landscape Area 2 have been improved with a series of single-use facilities. The historic character of Landscape Area 3 has been substantially modified through the removal of the geometric planting beds, the shift to an open turf ground plane, and the construction of the bus parking area. This corner of the park historically defined a separate space within the broader park context. Today, it reads partially as an extension of the Playing Fields & Courts area, but more readily is perceived as being a school play area. The northwest corner of the park, historically part of the Oak-Hickory Grove, has lost individual trees, large portions of the grove and related tree canopy is today defined largely by its open play field. This change in character creates visual continuity between this corner and the adjacent Playing Fields & Courts area, degrading its quality as part of the southern grove.

The specific use of the park by the target groups and adjacencies together communicate a perception of special rather than general park use. The proximity of the park to the Weisser Park School has also altered the park landscape character to suit school uses. There is no definition between the enlarged bus parking area, open playing field and school playground. The blending of elements creates confusion with park users perceiving the northern portion of the park as part of the school, making public accessibility and use of the area unclear. The Weisser Park Youth Center use and activity has a similar effect on the center of the park with the perception of the public park landscape as an extension of the Youth Center. In addition, when the Little League field is in play teams and spectators focus attention in the field area. The east edge of the park along the vehicular alley also detracts from a strong park identity and creates an inadequately defined park edge. These target user factors and adjacencies combine with the limited interior park path system all contribute to an ambiguous park identity. Park users tend to interpret the entire park as belonging to either Weisser Park School or Weisser Park Youth Center rather than open to the general public. Therefore, general recreational use of the park is limited.

The two-part structure of this analysis chapter, addressing change and continuity from the 1950s to 2007 and discussing the seven categories of park values is complementary. Together these narratives develop an understanding of the interrelationships of park landscape character, continuity, change and use over time as a basis for consideration of the future. They create a framework from which park stewardship, staff and volunteer initiatives and diverse recreational opportunities suitable for this small, valued park and open space can be preserved and enhanced to strengthen park identity, use and sustainability.

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter VII: Weisser Park Landscape Treatment Exploration*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION

Given the history, the existing conditions, and analysis of change and continuity of Weisser Park over time, an appropriate landscape treatment alternative needs to be selected to preserve remaining landscape character and also accommodate current and future recreational park uses. The following narrative explores four alternatives for cultural landscape preservation treatment, including Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction, and selects the most appropriate treatment for Weisser Park. Once selected, the formulated approach to treatment for the Weisser Park landscape is presented in detail in the following chapter.

The purposes of landscape preservation treatment are to steward the cultural landscape resources by retaining extant historic character and features, addressing deterioration, mitigating negative changes, and to the degree possible preventing negative alteration into the future. Treatment alternatives establish a comprehensive framework for a range of interventions to preserve and reinforce landscape character through stabilization and repair, restore selected elements, and rehabilitate the landscape to accommodate use and maintenance needs. These complex purposes are effectively addressed by selecting the intervention philosophy and specific treatment approach that is most appropriate to the landscape. The treatment of the Weisser Park landscape is addressed below in terms of alternatives and selected approach.

### B. LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES

In order to meet preservation objectives for the National Park Service and the Weisser Park landscape, any approach undertaken needs to be responsive to federal preservation standards and guidelines. Options set forth in federal guidance for preservation of a historic property include a range of interventions from preservation, which is a baseline in stewardship for any intervention, to more intensive restoration, reconstruction or rehabilitation. The proposed renewal of the historically significant Weisser Park landscape references federal cultural landscape preservation guidance found in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, *National Register Bulletin 18: How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes* and *National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*, *NPS Preservation Brief 36 Protecting Cultural Landscapes*, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, and *National Park Service Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management*.<sup>1</sup> This guidance aids in identifying and defining preservation treatments that can be applied to any historic property. This federal-level preservation guidance sets forth four approaches to the preservation treatment of cultural landscapes:

#### VII.1

#### Heritage Landscapes

#### Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION*

preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. These treatments propose different levels of intervention and activity within a landscape.

When approaching treatment alternatives, the baseline intent is to identify, protect, and enhance remaining historic character and features within the landscape. To address the preservation treatment of the Weisser Park landscape, the amount and detail of available documentation, the understanding of the property's evolution from the purchase and park development through 1956, and the understanding of the landscape's historic and current use and meaning to the surrounding community are each important aspects for consideration. An understanding of the overall character and details of the landscape has been achieved in the preceding chapters. The level of landscape change over the course of time is an important factor when exploring treatment options in terms of the landscape's ability to express historic character. Anticipated public access, safety, Americans with Disabilities Act consideration, financial resources and maintenance capabilities are also considered as directed by the project objectives. To serve as a reference, preservation treatment definitions are quoted from the *Guidelines* and discussed in terms of their potential for application to the Weisser Park landscape as follows.

### **Preservation**

*Preservation is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.*<sup>2</sup>

A preservation approach focuses on stabilization and repair and is the most modest intervention. Applying only preservation is appropriate for stewardship and sustainability when many elements of the landscape are intact, interpretive goals can be met within the existing conditions, and financial resources and/or staffing are limited. Preservation can also be viewed as a provisional treatment until the acquisition of additional documentation to allow for restoration or reconstruction, or until resources are garnered to commence a more ambitious intervention. Preservation treatment emphasizes the goals of conserving, retaining, and maintaining the historic fabric and underlies the other three, more intensive preservation treatments approaches. Preservation safeguards the historic landscape resources by applying an appropriate stewardship approach and can be applied as an initial and underlying approach that values the historic places and carries out stewardship actions on its behalf. Preservation of specific remaining historic features within the Weisser Park landscape is warranted and appropriate; however, the deterioration and loss of some features and the historic value of the resource directs a more intensive intervention than preservation alone.

### **Restoration**

*Restoration is defined as the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time, by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.*<sup>3</sup>

In contrast to preservation, a restoration approach relies on high levels of documentation for accuracy to the target date with limited speculation. Restoration, as any treatment, applies preservation to

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION*

stabilize and repair historic features, in the development of the treatment strategy. Safeguarding and respect for the tangible historic elements and features that remain is a primary objective. Secondly, a restoration treatment reinstates lost character by fully renewing degraded aspects and features of the cultural landscape. This treatment may also require the removal of features added after the time period designated for restoration.

Restoration can be focused. The recapture of overall landscape character, features and details can be the target of a restoration treatment or a specific selected landscape unit, detail, or group of elements may be proposed for this accurate recapture. In some cases restoration of every detail to an earlier time is not possible due to lack of specificity of documentation, projected staffing, and/or available financial resources. Therefore, if warranted, a return to specific overall aspects of landscape character, like spatial organization, land patterns and visual relationships, can be applied without restoration to precise details of all elements and features. While a restoration approach can be tightly targeted, it generally requires a substantial intervention. This intervention is focused on elements of the original landscape that remain but are in a deteriorated state, beyond a preservation repair approach. It targets the reinstatement in-kind of documented features, such as replacement of specific trees to match the original ones in the original locations.

The Weisser Park landscape today includes remaining historic elements in terms of undisturbed topography, original trees, and components of spatial organization, while a number of landscape elements are missing or altered. Due to continued use as a public park to meet contemporary needs, restoration to an earlier time and details is not appropriate. Evolution of the park landscape with respect for intact historic character and features is more suitable.

### **Rehabilitation**

*Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alteration, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.*<sup>4</sup>

The third treatment approach, rehabilitation, incorporates preservation values with contemporary uses and issues of maintainability and sustainability. Rehabilitation treatment emphasizes compatibility with historic resources and safeguarding remaining historic character and elements. The rehabilitation philosophy combines respect for the historic resources with integration of contemporary uses, maintenance, code compliance, security, and other relevant concerns. An overall rehabilitation approach for the Weisser Park landscape is highly appropriate as it directs toward current and future conditions with sensitivity to the historic character of the landscape and its interpretive and use potential for visitor engagement. Aspects of historic landscape character recapture, and accommodation of contemporary uses, maintainability, and sustainability can be achieved through a Rehabilitation treatment approach.

### **Reconstruction**

*Reconstruction is defined as the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.*<sup>5</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION*

Selecting a reconstruction treatment implies limited historic integrity to the period of significance. Reconstruction of a lost, altered or significantly degraded landscape in its original location is not often undertaken. A reconstruction treatment may be an appropriate approach in a museum setting when documentation is complete, adequate resources are available, and interpretive goals direct full recapture of the lost feature. In large landscapes, a missing element or detail, such as a particular feature like a fountain, a unique structure like a pavilion, or a lost walkway can be reconstructed. Reconstruction is an aggressive intervention and is therefore uncommon because detailed documentation is required to construct an exact replica with limited speculation. However, partial reconstruction can address a documented feature or character. In the case of Weisser Park, to recapture aspects of the overall historic spatial organization and the renewal of the northwest grove is proposed as a partial reconstruction.

Based on this discussion, Rehabilitation with an underlying respect for and Preservation of remaining historic features and character is the most appropriate approach for Weisser Park. All landscape preservation treatments strive to protect and enhance extant historic features. In applying Rehabilitation contemporary features, uses and accommodations for maintenance, access, service, and safety are addressed while the historic landscape is respected. The recommended Weisser Park treatment and management projects and initiatives are explored in the following text with one section organized according to the seven categories of park issues and another by the physical changes recommended with comments on priorities and phasing.

### C. WEISSER PARK REHABILITATION TREATMENT

The exploration of Preservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction treatments each address different levels of potential intervention for Weisser Park. All treatments respond to maintenance and service needs, safety, and access concerns while simultaneously considering and resolving preservation objectives and these valid current concerns.

For the Weisser Park landscape, diverse current and future use in a scenic well-maintained green space is the overall objective. A Rehabilitation treatment is the most appropriate preservation approach to achieve this goal and renew this valued neighborhood park. The selection of a Rehabilitation treatment for Weisser Park includes Preservation as an underlying treatment that respects remaining historic landscape features and character. Basic interventions under include management of remaining historic landscape features, such as the Oak-Hickory grove, while addressing current and future use demands placed upon the park. This proposed landscape rehabilitation provides flexibility to address contemporary uses by the public and continued transformation of the park into the future. It also acts as a preservation philosophy that guides decision-making about ongoing management and physical interventions to the park. While interventions proceed, stewardship responsibility is required to safeguard and conserve remaining historic character. At the same time, contemporary needs and resource limitations are to be accommodated for sustainable preservation treatments. A rehabilitation and landscape renewal approach for Weisser Park is explored in detail in the following chapter.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION*

CHAPTER VII: ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Birnbaum, with Christine Capella Peters, *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*, (Washington DC: 1996); National Park Service, *NPS-28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (Washington DC: 1998); *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, U.S. department of the Interior National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program (Washington DC: 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Birnbaum, with Peters, *Guidelines*, 18.

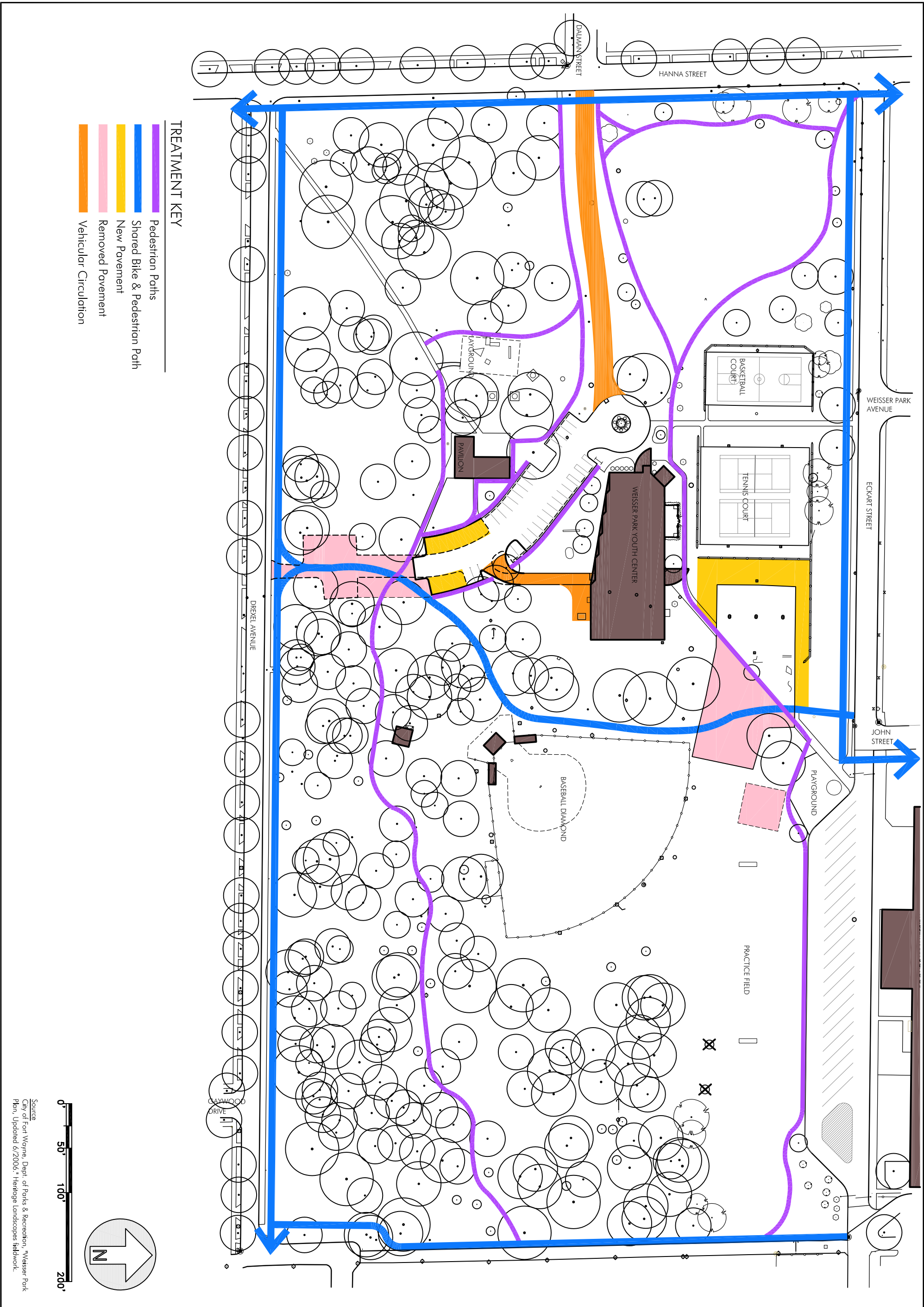
<sup>3</sup> Birnbaum, with Peters, *Guidelines*, 48.

<sup>4</sup> Birnbaum, with Peters, *Guidelines*, 90.

<sup>5</sup> Birnbaum, with Peters, *Guidelines*, 128.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VII: WEISSER PARK LANDSCAPE TREATMENT EXPLORATION*

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# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

**Client:**  
Board of Park Commissioners  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

**Landscape Architect:**  
Heritage Landscapes  
Preservation Landscapes Architects & Planners  
501 Lake Road  
Charlotte, VT 05445  
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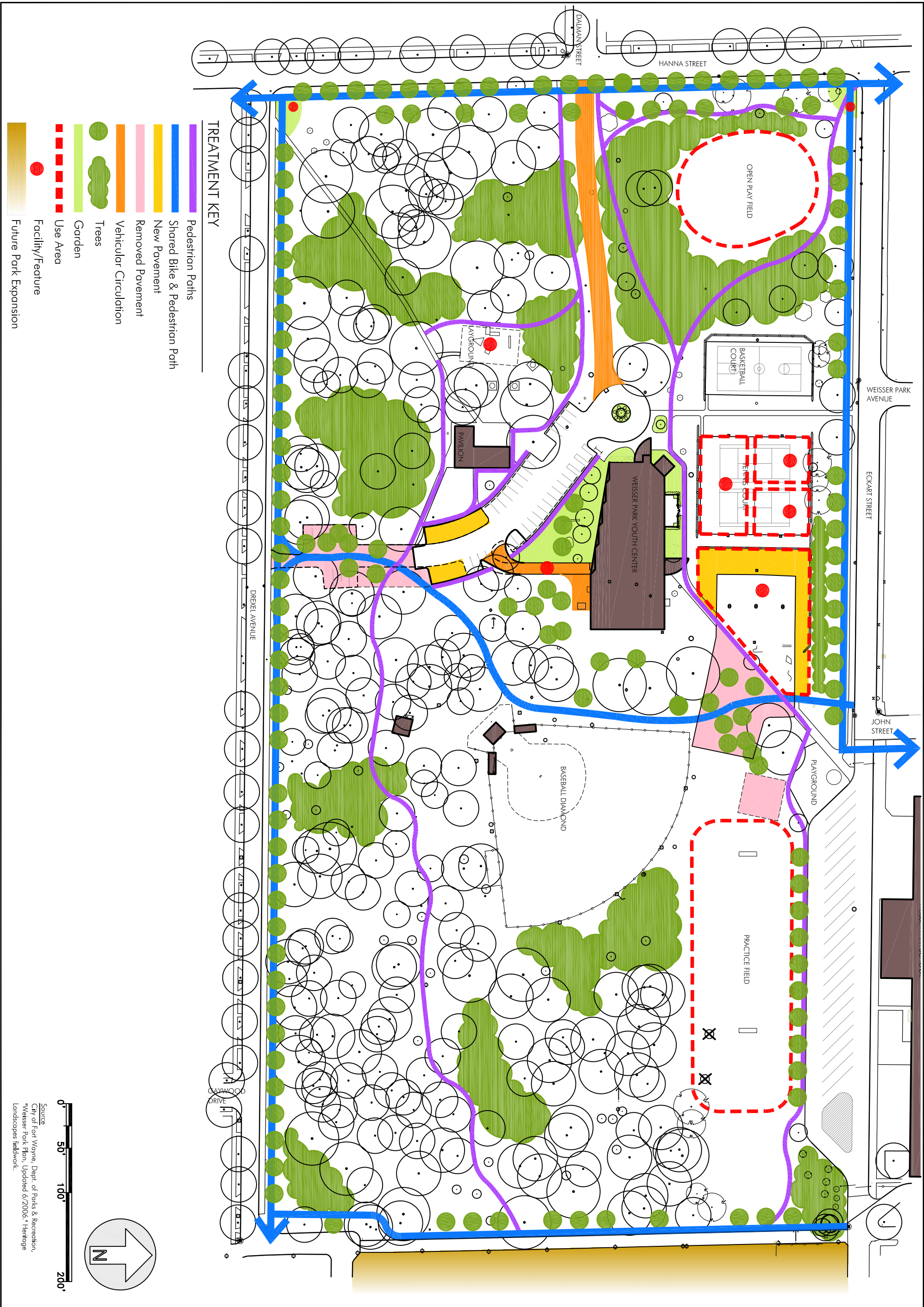
**Drawing Title:**  
Weisser Park  
Circulation  
Treatment Plan

**Date:**  
2007

**Drawing Number:**  
CTP

Source:  
City of Fort Wayne, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, "Weisser Park Plan," Updated 6/2006. \* Heritage Landscapes fieldwork.





# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

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Board of Park Commissioners  
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**Drawing Title:**  
Weisser Park  
Illustrative  
Treatment Plan

**Date:**  
2007

**Drawing Number:**  
ITP



# WEISSER PARK

## Cultural Landscape Report

### Fort Wayne, Indiana

Client:  
Board of Park Commissioners  
City of Fort Wayne, Indiana

Landscape Architect:  
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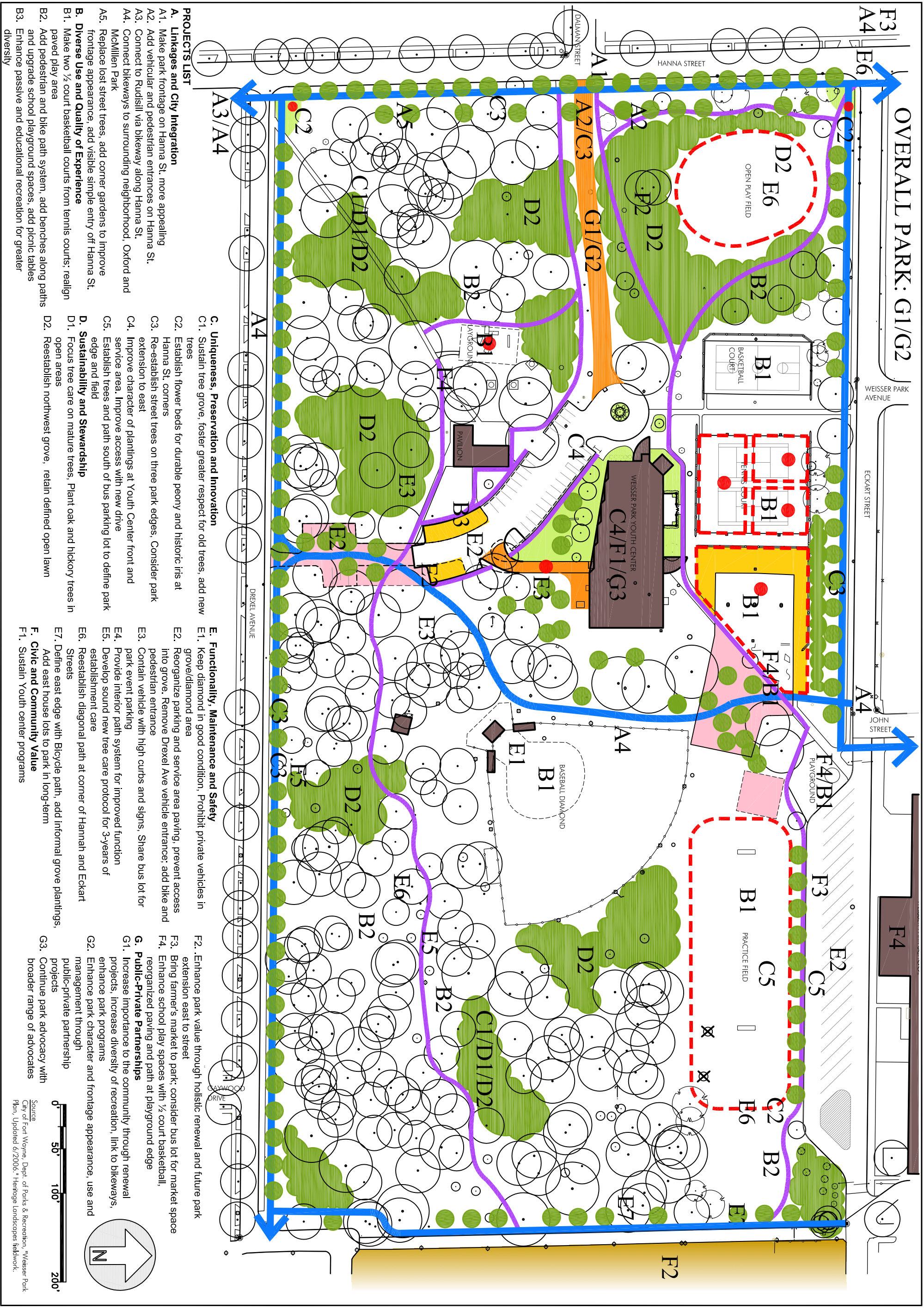
Drawing Title:

Weisser Park  
Projects Treatment  
Plan

Date:  
2007

Drawing Number:

PTP



**PROJECTS LIST**

**A. Linkages and City Integration**

- A1. Make park frontage on Hanna St. more appealing
- A2. Add vehicular and pedestrian entrances on Hanna St.
- A3. Connect to Ruidisill via bikeway along Hanna St.
- A4. Connect bikeways to surrounding neighborhood, Oxford and McMillan Park
- A5. Replace lost street trees, add corner gardens to improve frontage appearance, add visible simple entry off Hanna St.

**B. Diverse Use and Quality of Experience**

- B1. Make two 1/2 court basketball courts from tennis courts; realign paved play area
- B2. Add pedestrian and bike path system, add benches along paths and upgrade school playground spaces, add picnic tables
- B3. Enhance passive and educational recreation for greater diversity

**C. Uniqueness, Preservation and Innovation**

- C1. Sustain tree grove, foster greater respect for old trees, add new trees
- C2. Establish flower beds for durable peony and historic irises at Hanna St. corners
- C3. Re-establish street trees on three park edges, Consider park extension to east
- C4. Improve character of plantings at Youth Center front and service area. Improve access with new drive
- C5. Establish trees and path south of bus parking lot to define park edge and field

**D. Sustainability and Stewardship**

- D1. Focus tree care on mature trees, Plant oak and hickory trees in open areas
- D2. Reestablish northwest grove, retain defined open lawn

**E. Functionality, Maintenance and Safety**

- E1. Keep diamond in good condition, Prohibit private vehicles in grove/diamond area
- E2. Reorganize parking and service area paving, prevent access into grove. Remove Drexel Ave vehicle entrance; add bike and pedestrian entrance
- E3. Contain vehicle with high curbs and signs. Share bus lot for park event parking
- E4. Provide interior path system for improved function
- E5. Develop sound new tree care protocol for 3-years of establishment care
- E6. Reestablish diagonal path at corner of Hannah and Eckart Streets
- E7. Define east edge with Bicycle path, add informal grove plantings. Add east house lots to park in long-term

**F. Civic and Community Value**

- F1. Sustain Youth center programs

**G. Public-Private Partnerships**

- F2. Enhance park value through holistic renewal and future park extension east to street
- F3. Bring farmer's market to park; consider bus lot for market space
- F4. Enhance school play spaces with 1/2 court basketball, reorganized paving and path at playground edge

**G. Public-Private Partnerships**

- G1. Increase importance to the community through renewal projects, increase diversity of recreation, link to bikeways, enhance park programs
- G2. Enhance park character and frontage appearance, use and management through public-private partnership projects
- G3. Continue park advocacy with broader range of advocates

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Chapter VIII: Weisser Park Renewal Recommendations*

### A. INTRODUCTION TO RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Weisser Park is an important public space with a legacy of woodland and neighborhood park use and care. Over time the park frontage has changed in character with the loss of the nearly continuous street tree border and the loss of tree canopy throughout the park. The formerly strong identity of the park, with tree lined boundaries, grove and facilities has weakened over time. Sidewalks on three sides provide for park frontage pedestrian movement but are not wide enough for safe bicycle passing. The pedestrian path system within the park is limited. The park vehicular entry is difficult to locate and appears to be a service entry. Edge definition, entry and path system changes have made the park less welcoming and useful to the neighborhood. The park is perceived as an open space for separate uses, by the Weisser Park Youth Center, the adjacent Weisser Park School and sports teams, more than as a public park for all to enjoy. Opportunities for park use diversity are limited by functional challenges, such as limited interior circulation. While the current facilities suit specific groups, limited use diversity exists with particular lack of passive, individual use options. Changes over time have added community features and facilities but these additions could be more effectively organized within the park. Maintenance levels operate at a sound baseline but not high and an overall increase in sustainability would be welcomed.

In terms of neighborhood and city context, the park is not readily visible beyond the directly adjacent residential area. No current bicycle route links the park and surrounding neighborhood to nearby Rudisill Boulevard, and from there to McMillen and Foster Parks.

The renewal of Weisser Park should address all of these issues to achieve more optimal park appearance, connections, aesthetics, ecological health, use, maintenance and sustainability. The strong and distinctive historic character, features and spatial organization of the park is well understood and can serve as a guide to reinforce future park character, features and identity. Knowing what the issues are in terms of recreational diversity today, more diverse recreation can be planned for as the park is renewed. Passive and educational uses are the most limited and active and social uses can be appropriately enhanced.

The historic research has revealed the chronology of Weisser Park. It can be seen and understood as a continuum from the privately owned parcel with its dramatic and valuable original tree grove, to the early park development, the 1950s as-built character, the 1960s school construction and park changes, and to the current character and condition. This background and understanding provides a sound basis for approaching park renewal. In this approach multiple values are recognized and respect for the history of the park is incorporated while park renewal is planned. With the objectives of greater vibrancy and functionality on all levels, the recommended park renewal is characterized by

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

initiatives, at three levels: the park, the appearance and influence on the surrounding neighborhood, and the contribution and linkages to the city park and boulevard system.

The park landscape treatment key, shown on the accompanying plans, provides the graphic references for this discussion. These are the *Weisser Park Circulation Treatment Plan, CTP*, *Weisser Park Projects Treatment Plan, PTP*, and *Weisser Park Illustrative Treatment Plan, ITP*. The clearly diagrammed circulation plan *CTP* is discussed first. The project plan *PTP* uses the letter codes presented in the analysis discussion to communicate the park renewal initiatives that relate to these issues. These projects are noted with short descriptions on the *PTP* listing organized in the seven categories of park values. The same alpha-numeric codes are located on the *PTP* drawing. The narrative parallels the *PTP* by presenting the project recommendations discussion, highlighting a wide range of initiatives. The final *ITP* drawing is an illustrative image of the recommendations with a symbol key for the graphic elements. It serves as a useful companion to the other two plans. Together the plans and narrative convey a holistic renewal of the park landscape that will reinvigorate this neighborhood park and enrich the experience of park users. Using these three treatment plans as visual references, the following sections present a detailed discussion of the recommended park landscape renewal initiatives and targeted actions that will bring this park into full function and value.

## B. WEISSER PARK CIRCULATION REHABILITATION

Park users identified circulation, specifically the lack of an interior park circulation system, as a primary concern. During field observations it was noted that it is difficult to find a path into the park and equally difficult to move through and enjoy the green space. In terms of future planning, the historic park circulation included an irregular X pattern walk system that provided movements through the park and in current park use, people prefer a walking circuit. Both of these concepts have merit for Weisser Park. Improved park circulation systems propose to address pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle movement patterns. The *Weisser Park Circulation Treatment Plan, CTP* has been developed illustrating possible ways to increase user accessibility by reorganizing vehicular access and circulation and increasing multiple-use walks that connect with the city.

Due to limited circulation, park users indicated that it is hard to get into the park and difficult to enjoy the green space. Both pedestrian and bike pathways are needed to improve access and increase park use. The approach proposed for the pathways is two-fold; first, a perimeter path allows pedestrians and bicyclists to move along park edges and second, internal paths provide a center path and a walking loop. Wide (8 feet) shared bicycle and pedestrian paths are shown in blue and pedestrian paths (5 feet) are shown in purple on the *CTP*. Recommended perimeter paths frame the entire park while interior paths form segments of an X pattern and an interior loop for walkers, runners, and dog-walkers, as well as give better access to the facilities from the west, northwest and east portions of the park and adjacent neighborhoods. Throughout the park the new system allows pedestrian paths to intersect and connect to facilities. New pedestrian entrances to the park are shown at the west center along the proposed entry drive and to all park corners.

The shared bike/pedestrian path along Hanna Street is part of a recommended larger system of bikeways that will connect Weisser Park to Rudisill Boulevard and Oxford Street and from there to McMillen Park and Foster Park. Citizens have requested that the neighborhoods to the east, around

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

both Weisser and McMillen Park be connected to the Rivergreenway. The Rudisill Boulevard connection can effectively serve as a Rivergreenway link when fully developed. Wider shared use paths are also shown along Drexel Avenue, Eckart Street and the east park edge to complete an easy access network. A shared use center path, proposed at 10 feet in width, is shown running north-south through the park to provide ready access to the baseball field, open play field, school playground and school. This multi-use path enters the park at the current entry drive alignment providing mid-block access to bicyclists and pedestrians rather than to vehicles.

A new vehicular entry at Hanna Street, the main traffic corridor through the neighborhood is proposed. This recommended entry is shown on *CTP* as an orange line entering the park opposite Dalman Street. This shift from the Drexel Avenue with its service entry character, serves to address the youth center entry and the frontage appearance of the park simultaneously. It will lend the park a more welcoming character. By removing the Drexel Avenue entrance, the ongoing pressure on mature trees near the drive and adjacent parking spaces should be relieved. In addition, the service access to the center is better designed so that the area to the south is more functional and can be better maintained to reduce the negative backdoor appearance it conveys today. The new entry would provide a front door for the park, gaining visibility and improved park perception for users and passers-by.

With the changes to the main entry, adjacent parking is also addressed. Current parking spaces vary in condition, appearance and vehicle control. Concern for parking capacity was raised during the planning process. Degradation of the areas around the parking and within the tree grove was observed. This limited interior parking zone is shown with a crisp layout and improved service access on the *CTP*. Rather than increasing paved space within the park, it is recommended that in addition to more efficient organization of parking along the entry drive, the immediately adjacent Weisser Park School bus parking area be used for additional parking when more traffic converges on the park for specific events. A single-loaded row of nose-in parking spaces at the bus drop off curb would provide an additional 30 parking spaces. With traffic control an additional 60 cars could likely be accommodated. The event use of this lot would need to be discussed with the school and will likely require control and supervision. The gate could be opened at one end and closed at the other to avoid through traffic flows. Weisser Park should serve as a green, open space and an historic legacy of the tree grove and neighborhood park. Additional parking within this small park will degrade both park use and quality of the park experience. Into the future only a limited number of cars that can be accommodated within close proximity to the youth center and pavilion should be allowed.

Improved circulation to reach, move around and enjoy Weisser Park is a baseline enhancement to achieve optimal, diverse use. In terms of materials, if the soils in this ridgeline park percolate effectively, permeable paving could be used rather than impervious concrete or asphalt. It may be useful to place a small piece of test pavement within the park to observe performance. In developing the pavement design it may also be appropriate to place the paving cross section at or slightly above the current grades to limit excavation of tree roots through and adjacent to the grove. Enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access to and through Weisser Park should be given a high priority. These improvements will make the park not only more functional, but will affect every aspect of park use, maintenance and diversity of recreational opportunity.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### C. RECOMMENDED WEISSER PARK PROJECTS

The holistic approach to the park renewal, neighborhood context and city connections targets a number of park landscape initiatives in addition to the circulation recommendations. Using the seven categories of park values and building on the *Weisser Park Analysis Plan, ANP*, Heritage Landscapes presents recommendations for the park on the *Weisser Park Projects Treatment Plan, PTP* and shows the recommendations with a symbol key on the *Weisser Park Illustrative Treatment Plan, ITP*. *PTP* uses the same number and letter codes to provide short summary text of proposed initiatives to address the previously identified issues.

A pervasive issue is the level of overall tree loss that was captured on the *Weisser Park 1950s-2007 Overlay Plan, OVP*, where about 300 street trees along the park edge and interior park trees within the groves have been lost over approximately 50 years. This is nearly half of the tree populace of Weisser Park as some 361 trees were inventoried in the field work and about 52 of these are young, recently planted trees. As a result, a clear goal is to increase the park trees in the coming years, sustaining and renewing the oak-hickory grove and planting new street trees. In particular, the extension of the grove into the northwest corner is proposed. The *PTP* plan shows green multi-tree plantings representing groves and individual green circles depicting new single trees. Rows of new street trees are recommended along all sides of the park to replace lost street trees and create a well-defined edge.

Changes to existing recreational facilities are also recommended. Red dots represent upgraded or altered facilities or additions. A reorganization of the tennis court and asphalt play areas is recommended. Park users and the Parks Department indicated that basketball is more popular today than tennis, with half-courts as the preferred layout for pick-up games and younger players. The tennis courts would be reorganized into two half-size basketball courts and an open play area. Additionally, the asphalt recess area will be realigned to the northwest side of the path, retaining nearly its original size and the area southeast of the path will return to green space. Two fields are also defined by dashed red lines – the open play field in the northwest corner and the practice field in the northeast corner. Red dots signify the establishment of peony beds at the northwest and southeast entrances of the park. Additionally, the playground program will be updated, and the service entrance to Weisser Park Youth Center will be redesigned to be more functional and attractive.

Other recommendations include adding benches at intervals along the paths throughout the park; addressing the character of plantings at the youth center building; and increasing public accessibility with welcoming edges, more paths, and improved signage. Additional community activities can be brought into the park, such as a weekly farmer's market that could be sited in the school bus parking lot. All of these recommendations are important in enhancing the unique character of Weisser Park and making it a more vital part of the neighborhood and the Fort Wayne park and boulevard system. The following sections provide renewal recommendations presented within the framework of the seven categories of park values. They are lettered to correspond with the list of projects presented and the companion plans *CTP* and *ICP* depict the information using related graphic standards to aid in overall understanding of the recommendations.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

**A. Linkages & City Integration**

Weisser Park, like many neighborhood parks developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, served as a place for diverse passive, active, and social recreational activities. Historically the park was accessed primarily by walking from nearby residences with limited need to accommodate vehicular movements. As illustrated on *PP-1950s*, the 1950s plan for Weisser Park, a single entry drive was provided for access to the two-story wood pavilion. Today, although rooted strongly in the neighborhood, Weisser Park is used by park-goers from beyond the quarter mile neighborhood and therefore, the need for vehicular access and parking is greater than that of the 1950s park. While recommended changes and additions to circulation in Weisser Park are discussed in greater detail in section B of this chapter, it is important to note that park users today access these public landscapes in a variety of ways. In the case of Weisser Park, the highly visible park frontage along Hanna Street is the most appropriate location for vehicular entry. Equally important along this highly travelled street is the connection of the park to the citywide system of bikeways, including the Rivergreenway. While the circulation plan, *CTP*, illustrates the recommended circulation system of multiple-use bike and pedestrian walks, drives and parking areas for the park, these features are illustrated with their associative park elements on the *ITP*. Projects arising from the issues identified for park linkage and city-wide integration are:

- A1. Make park frontage on Hanna Street more appealing
- A2. Add vehicular and pedestrian entrances on Hanna Street
- A3. Connect to Rudisill Boulevard via bikeway along Hanna Street
- A4. Connect bikeways to surrounding neighborhood, Rudisill Boulevard, Oxford Street and McMillen Park
- A5. Replace lost street trees, add corner gardens to improve frontage appearance, Add visible simple entry off Hanna Street

The visual connectivity to the urban fabric is an important factor when considering a park landscape. Weisser Park is relatively free of tree canopy in the northern half of the property and is void of any formal tree plantings along its bordering streets. The park is perceived as a grove of trees and open play fields operating as an extension of the adjacent Weisser Park School. Reestablishment of tree plantings along the park perimeter will unify the park landscape and establish a strong edge that identifies this as a public park within the framework of the surrounding streets.

Another factor limiting the integration of Weisser Park with the surrounding neighborhood is its frontage along the east edge, which faces a vehicular alley, and is accessed by a limited number of residents. Typically, public parks are most successful and contribute to the surrounding community character best when they have clearly defined edges that front on public streets. When parks front on private land or limited access roadways, they tend to have a weakened identity and create confusion about private and public space boundaries. This situation is present at Weisser Park, with its east edge facing not only the vehicular alley, but also residential backyards. In order to improve this condition at Weisser Park, it is recommended that the Fort Wayne Department of Parks and Recreation acquire ownership of the land to the east and extend the park boundary to Smith Street. This eastern expansion was also recommended by George E. Kessler in 1911 as part of his master plan for the park and boulevard system of Fort Wayne. While the City did not follow the initial recommendation, today it will aid in establishing a park with a stronger identity and clearly defined edges, further integrating the public park into the surrounding community.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

**B. Diverse Use & Quality of Experience**

Weisser Park currently supports a number of active recreation facilities for a park of its relatively small size. A basketball court, two tennis courts, a baseball diamond, two playgrounds, a soccer field, an open field for pick-up sports and an asphalt play area for school recess activities are all utilized to varying degrees. Recommended projects to address diversity of use and upgrade the quality of the park user experience include:

- B1. Make two half-court basketball courts from tennis courts; realign paved play area
- B2. Add pedestrian and bicycle path system, add benches along paths and upgrade school playground spaces, add a few picnic tables
- B3. Enhance passive and educational recreation for greater diversity

To address the current demand for desired uses, a reorganization of the tennis court and asphalt play area is recommended. During the planning process it was noted that some of the areas were more in demand than others. For example, a high demand exists for more basketball courts while use of the tennis courts has decreased. As illustrated on the *PTP* and *ITP*, the tennis courts will be reorganized into two half-courts and an open play area. Additionally, the asphalt play area will be moved to the northwest side of the recommended path. Shifting of the asphalt play area allows for the area southeast of the path to be replanted as a green space, separating the play area from the active baseball field. The play area adjacent to the Weisser Park School will remain in its current location and have more trees planted directly south. The pick-up sports fields will remain in their current locations and are defined by red dashed lines on the *PTP* and *ITP*. The open field in the northwest corner can be used for informal play and the larger practice field in the northeast corner will retain its soccer goals. The surrounds at each of these fields have additional trees planted to visually strengthen the organization of the park and its active recreation areas. In each case, walks are proposed to interconnect these areas with the other park facilities.

Passive, social and gregarious activities that include walking, sports spectating and picnicking are somewhat limited in this park because of lack of overall walks and picnic space. Picnic activities in the park occur largely beneath the shady oak-hickory grove canopy. One possibility to enhance the picnic capacity of the park is to increase the number of trees in the grove and provide walks throughout the area, connecting it to other areas in the park, as illustrated on the *PTP* and *ITP*. The overall quality of the picnic grove is further enhanced by relocation of the vehicular drive to Hanna Street. Once seen as two distinct halves of the park, the grove is unified and the children's playground and pavilion are incorporated as part of the picnic and grove experience and character.

While programs in the Weisser Park Youth Center often serve an educational purpose, educational and interpretive activities or programs that use Weisser Park as the subject do not currently exist. Programs can be updated to address various natural systems with the park acting as an outdoor classroom. Playground programs may also be updated to expand the different levels of engagement by young children.

**C. Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation**



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

Weisser Park was created to preserve a portion of a native stand of oak and hickory trees at a time when the city was expanding rapidly. This makes Weisser Park unique from and the wooded grove is a feature that needs to be preserved for future generations. Grove trees losses have been substantial over the past five decades. Additional features of the park landscape date from the historic period and, while not necessarily unique, they contribute to the overall character and sense of place that defines Weisser Park. The historical peony beds at the northeast corner as well as the tree lined borders of the park contributed to the park identity and beauty, but have been removed since the end of the historic period. Recommended projects to address issues of uniqueness, preservation, and innovation at Weisser Park include:

- C1. Sustain tree grove, foster greater respect for old trees, add new trees
- C2. Establish flower beds for durable peony and historic iris at Hanna St. corners
- C3. Re-establish street trees on three park edges, Consider park extension to east
- C4. Improve character of plantings at Youth Center front and service area. Improve access with new drive
- C5. Establish trees and path south of bus parking lot to define park edge and field

The *PTP* and *ITP* illustrate many elements adapted from the *PP-1950s* to suit contemporary park uses and organization. For example, the reinstatement of formal floral beds could not be maintained at the present time, but simplified and easily managed peony beds can be established to evoke that earlier characteristic feature of the park. Replanting trees along Eckart and Hanna Streets and Drexel Avenue will largely help to create the sense of place that has been lost from the 1950s and will aid in strengthening the oak-hickory grove through managed care.

#### **D. Sustainability & Stewardship**

The oak-hickory grove is a unique asset of Weisser Park and is irreplaceable in that many of the mature trees are over 100 years old and a remnant of a historic forest that once blanketed parts of Fort Wayne in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is also clear from the information gathered for this report that the extent of canopy cover has been reduced since the 1950s as recreational facilities were expanded and new construction projects undertaken. This resource is currently in a state where it is not being renewed. A natural regeneration system would require a true forested environment that includes a forest floor where seedlings can take hold and repopulate the canopy cover. This natural ground plane has been replaced with mown turf and is traversed by many park users; both these actions prevent the ability for new oak and hickory seedlings to establish themselves. In addition to being unable to regenerate, trees are also being lost as a result of park construction activities and normal park uses as well as by the natural life cycles of the trees themselves. Two specific sustainability and stewardship initiatives arising out of the identified park issues are:

- D1 Focus tree care on mature trees, Plant oak and hickory trees in open areas
- D2. Reestablish northwest grove while retaining defined open lawn

To prevent further loss and foster renewed growth, a stewardship and maintenance plan needs to be put in place for maintaining the trees in good health and establishing a system of replacement over time for trees as their life cycle approaches a declining phase. In this report, Appendix B: Tree and Shrub Inventory Results provides identification numbers shown on the *Weisser Park 2007 Tree*

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

*Condition Assessment Plan, TA-2007*, and indicates the overall size in caliper inches, number of tree trunks, condition of the crown, trunk and roots. This tree inventory is the initial step in outlining a program for long-term stewardship of the oak-hickory grove. Using this information, a comprehensive maintenance and tree replacement schedule can be developed, ensuring a healthy oak-hickory grove for future generations to enjoy.

**E. Functionality, Maintenance & Safety**

Overall, the various activities in Weisser Park have remained consistent over time, changing moderately as the population changes and recreational activities move in and out of popularity. Changes in the park to satisfy those demands alter the physical landscape of the park in a range of ways. A series of issues addressing maintenance and safety were identified and the projects and initiatives that follow from those issues are:

- E1. Keep diamond in good condition, Prohibit private vehicles in grove/diamond area
- E2. Reorganize parking and service area paving, prevent access into grove. Remove Drexel Avenue vehicle entrance; add bike and pedestrian entrance
- E3. Contain vehicles with high curbs and signs, Share bus lot for park event parking
- E4. Provide interior path system for improved function
- E5. Develop sound new tree care protocol for 3-years of establishment care
- E6. Reestablish diagonal path at corner of Hannah and Eckart Streets
- E7. Define east edge with Bicycle path, add informal grove plantings, Add east house lots to park in long-term

In Weisser Park, the use of a single-width entry drive that led to the former two-story pavilion has distinctly shifted to a double-width drive with parking on both sides leading to the Weisser Park Youth Center. The increase in the number of vehicles and the need for parking has resulted in degradation of the landscape along the drive and parking areas. Visible in the landscape are the expansion of the parking area between trees with loosely laid gravel and disturbance to the mown turf from vehicles traveling through the grove to access adjacent recreational facilities. To address these concerns and improve the functioning of the entry drive and parking area, it is recommended that the drive be relocated from Drexel Avenue to Hanna Street and the parking area consolidated as shown on the *PTP* and *ITP*. To alleviate the overland vehicular access, the drive is proposed to have a high curb along its edges. Where grades are flush, bollards may be used to prevent vehicles from moving onto the turf. Bollards will also remain along the alley at the eastern park edge. In addition to the bollards placed along the alley, plantings are also recommended to establish a visual edge to the park. At certain times, particularly during the summer months, when multiple functions are underway at the park, additional parking is needed. To satisfy this demand the existing parking area at the Weisser Park School bus parking lot may be used with access provided via the gate at Eckart Street.

Like the proposed changes to the vehicle entry drive and parking area, the addition of walking paths and increased connectivity to city multimodal bike and pedestrian paths provides access to and within the park. The proposed new path segments as seen in purple on the *PTP* and *ITP* provide access to all the facilities and features within the park as well as allow users to loop around the park and enjoy the scenic oak-hickory grove. A more detailed discussion of the proposed circulation changes is expressed in section B of this chapter. Increased paved walks and control of vehicular access to turf

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

areas will have positive effects on both the historic oak-hickory grove and new tree plantings by reducing the compaction of the soil and thereby increasing the air and water ration in the root zone for healthy tree root growth.

Weisser Park is part of the greater Fort Wayne parks system and is maintained by city crews. In discussions with the Department of Parks and Recreation, it was noted that crews rotate between city properties and no dedicated personnel are assigned to one particular park, including Weisser Park. Heritage Landscapes has found that the rotating crews do not have the opportunity to learn the idiosyncrasies of each park and can only address the basic needs of mowing, trash removal and seasonal lawn care maintenance. Where facilities or infrastructure need repair, they are often implemented as a temporary solution and left to be addressed the following season or until a capitol project is funded.

Assignment of dedicated maintenance staff for parks in other cities has effected positive results in the parks. Crews gain a familiarity with the various needs of each park and can address them appropriately and in a positive way. Further, the crews can establish an efficient maintenance regime that reduces the effort and time needed for each task, allowing time for other maintenance operations. A secondary but equally important benefit is the familiarity the crews gain with park users, making users feel as though “someone is home” in the park as opposed to the current perception that the park staff has limited presence.

**F. Civic & Community Value**

Weisser Park is an important neighborhood green space that contributes to the value of community life in Fort Wayne. The park is home to the Weisser Park Youth Center and accommodates numerous recreational activities and programs associated with the center. Weisser Park School, located at the immediate north edge of the park, utilizes the park for its active recreation sports fields and play areas. Both the youth center and school have a dominant presence in the park. As a result, many people perceive the overall park landscape as operating as an extension of these facilities and believe the park is not accessible to the public. The civic presence of the park can be improved by increasing use of the park for neighborhood events and by making the overall landscape more park-like in appearance and slightly less schoolyard-like. Specific projects that can be undertaken to improve park civic and community value include:

- F1. Sustain Youth center programs
- F2. Enhance park value through holistic renewal and future park extension east to street
- F3. Bring farmer’s market to park; consider bus lot for market space
- F4. Enhance school play spaces with ½ court basketball, reorganized paving and path at playground edge

The increased use of Weisser Park can be initiated by neighborhood groups using the available facilities for community gatherings as well as by bringing already existing local activities to the park grounds, such as the nearby farmer’s market. Changes to the overall landscape that will make Weisser Park feel more park-like include the addition of circulation with connections to citywide bike and pedestrian trails; enhancement of the existing oak-hickory grove; and planting of trees along the bordering streets. The Weisser Park Youth Center provides a strong user base for the park and offers

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

a range of programs. These programs should be sustained and implementation of programs using Weisser Park as the subject should be pursued. The Weisser Park School is also an important asset to the overall park user base. Use areas that are popular with the school children can be functionally improved particularly the courts and play areas at the north edge of the park. Identifying the inherent value of Weisser Park and the existing elements and facilities that contribute to that value are essential to enhancing the park value and improving its overall use and perception.

**G. Public-Private Partnerships**

Weisser Park is a unique, scenic park in Fort Wayne but functions largely a neighborhood park that is not used by the broader city populace on a regular basis. Strong public-private partnerships are essential to the successful renewal of the Weisser Park landscape. In turn, the renewal of the park will draw the attention of additional potential partners for future park treatment. Park promotion could be greatly enhanced through strong public-private partnerships. More advocates than the principal users from the youth center and school are needed. Improved perception of the park would enhance park use beyond the adjacent neighborhood. Three public-private partnerships initiatives arising out of the identified park issues are:

- G1. Increase importance to the community through renewal projects, increase diversity of recreation, link to bikeways, enhance park programs
- G2. Enhance park character and frontage appearance, use and management through public-private partnership projects
- G3. Continue park advocacy with broader range of advocates

Although Weisser Park is largely a neighborhood park, two of its dominant user groups are generated from the presence of the Weisser Park Youth Center and the Weisser Park School. Both of these public organizations are strong advocates for the park and have many programs that are open to all city residents. Improvements to the park landscape including plantings and increased walks within the park and connectivity to existing city systems will greatly enhance use of the park and strengthen individual involvement with park activities, programs and management.

**D. WEISSER PARK RENEWAL PRIORITIES & INITIAL PHASING**

Two broad issues limit the success of Weisser Park today; first is the overall functionality of park access that inhibits diverse use and second is the perception that the park is an extension of the Weisser Park Youth Center, Weisser Park School and specific groups like the baseball teams. In order to address these issues specific projects should be undertaken in the near term. In general the hope is to make these improvements within five years and then consider the range of additional recommendations as phased initiatives into the future. From the framework of the seven categories of park values, a group of related projects is outlined as high priority. Individual projects provide direction for the broad initiatives of increasing the diversity of use at Weisser Park while improving neighborhood use and establishing connections to other valued city resources. Initial Weisser Park renewal efforts should be directed toward:

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

- New park entry, parking reorganization and service access to youth center with curbs at edges
- Perimeter and center multi-use bicycle/pedestrian paths
- Street tree planting along Hanna Street frontage
- Park edge tree plantings and sidewalk at playing field and bus parking lot
- Modest corner gardens on Hanna Street
- Initial grove tree replanting and tree care
- Refitting of tennis court for two half-court basketball

Local neighborhood use of Weisser Park has decreased in recent years. Compounding this issue is an obscure park entrance and a poor park circulation system. A high priority is given to the new entry and the shared path system at the perimeter and through the center. The park entrance at Drexel Avenue is to be removed and relocated along Hanna Street. This entry will be more visible to park users and passers-by and will provide a more clearly defined entry experience. With the relocation of the entry drive, the existing parking and service areas should be realigned to improve overall function. The entry drive and reorganized parking are to be lined with high curbs to deter private vehicle driving into the grove. The former Drexel Avenue entrance will be replaced with a smaller scale shared bike and pedestrian path. This shared path is located in the center of the park, to connect Eckart Street and the Weisser Park School to the north with Drexel Avenue to the south and provide direct access to the grove, baseball field and school playground. Additional shared paths will wrap the park perimeter along each street. Planning and construction for these related access projects can proceed as soon as practical.

An additional recommendation to improve park edge definition is the planting of street trees. The presence and character of Weisser Park within the neighborhood has been diminished over time through the loss of street trees. Rows of street trees planted along the park perimeter will not only replace lost street trees, but will enhance the edge definition and overall character of Weisser Park. Planting street trees along Hanna Street first will reinforce the new park entrance. An additional row of trees planted south of the school bus parking lot will define the park edge and create a clear separation between the park and the adjacent school. Tree plantings can be undertaken soon with a relatively small budget. These two tree plantings projects should conform to soil management and establishment tree care protocols for the best results.

A modest project to enhance existing recreation facilities at the north park edge is to shift the existing tennis courts to two half-court basketball courts. While historically the tennis courts were among the most popular park features, today, use has dropped as basketball has grown in popularity. Currently, one full-size basketball court is available to park users. A younger crowd of players can use half-size courts without competition from those who are playing a game with two teams. This project is really about repainting existing paving and setting up basket ball hoops. It will be easy to achieve at a low cost. By creating two half-size basketball courts and an open play area from the existing tennis court and adjacent pavement this issue can be resolved.

A community partnership initiative that can proceed as the path system is constructed is the establishment of garden beds, possibly with hardy peony and iris plantings, at the northwest and southwest corner of the park. Location of the flower beds at the Hanna Street corners of the park will make the beds highly visible park features and may aid in drawing new users into the park.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

Along with planting individual trees and flower beds along park edges, interior grove health and renewal needs to be addressed. Focused care for mature trees will ensure their continued health and optimize longevity. In order to recapture the character of the former grove, trees that match the species of the existing grove should be planted as possible without damage to existing trees and in openings so that new trees have sufficient light, moisture and nutrients. In particular, the northwest grove could receive plantings in the next two years. Oaks need to be planted in spring so a spring community planting campaign could be organized. These trees will frame and shape and open play area of turf. The new tree plantings will need to be protected from play related impacts with wide mulch circles, hardware cloth protection of the trunks and stakes. Reestablishment of the groves may be a community effort. One reason for this is that native hickory trees are not easily procured and fresh hickory nuts or very small trees may need to be planted and protected during their early growth. Community partners and volunteers could spearhead efforts to add young hickory trees to the park.

Involving the community in important park renewal projects will increase the civic and community value of Weisser Park. Another recommendation to improve the overall value is to hold the local farmer's market at the park. One possible location for the event is the school bus parking lot. Drawing frequent users to the park from the community increases park value.

Development of public-private partnerships to address project is an essential component of Weisser Park renewal. The establishment these important partnerships will aid in the overall enhancement of park character and frontage as well as use and management of park features. Implementation of the renewal projects will increase the importance of the park to the community and the diversity of recreational opportunities. Development of a broader range of park advocates as park renewal proceeds will enhance existing park programs and ensure ongoing advocacy for Weisser Park.

## E. NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING FOR THE PARK SYSTEM

As part of the CLR process, Heritage Landscapes met regularly with the Fort Wayne Parks Legacy Committee. Through the CLR work, these meetings, and the public meeting an interesting issue arose with the potential for listing the Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System on the National Register of Historic Places. Similar historic park systems in Buffalo, Rochester, Brooklyn, Denver, Louisville and elsewhere are listed in this honorary register of places valued in our nation's history. The National Register includes some 80,000 properties in the United States listed for their local, state or national significance in our history. A system nomination is envisioned for Fort Wayne but is yet to be fully defined. It is important to understand that a National Register nomination is first and foremost honorific and does not create outside controls on the park system. The city of Fort Wayne and the Parks Department would continue to function in the day-to-day care of the parks. When Federal monies are involved in a project adjacent in view of or directly impacting a listed property, a Section 106 Review could be triggered. This federal review seeks to determine if impacts to an historic property are or can be effectively mitigated. For the Fort Wayne Parks potential listing also has the benefit of local state and national recognition of historic value and access to funding sources for planning and implementation that are opened with such a listing. The matter of the defining the elements of the proposed systems requires study. Heritage Landscapes urges that the most comprehensive view of the historic system be taken and that National Register listing be pursued.

## F. PARKS POTENTIAL PARK RANGER STAFFING & PROGRAM

In several cities in recent years the concept of an Urban Park Ranger program has been pursued and tested. The key objective is for someone to be home in the parks, a friendly informative presence, and also to deter anti-social or illegal behaviors. It is only in recent years that park police are missing in Fort Wayne. From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through 1981, Fort Wayne Department of Parks & Recreation funded and maintained a park police division consisting of a chief and 4-6 commissioned officers. The park police primarily patrolled park areas and assisted city police when needed. They served as liaison between the public and the Park Board while enforcing park policies, city ordinances and laws in general. The park police were scheduled 365 days/24 hours per day. Park police were eliminated in 1981 due to Park budget cuts. The Fort Wayne Police Department provides park patrol presence on an as needed basis. Specific park security needs are addressed by Parks Department contracting with off duty police officers or security companies.

Current park utility staff consists of a non-commissioned two person staff. They are scheduled May through November, eight hours Monday through Friday, and 16 hours on Saturday and Sunday. They address customer service issues such as pavilion key problems, unlocking and locking facilities and gates for events, perform minor repairs, and answer park user questions. Utility staff responds to alarms, report vandalism, graffiti and break-ins, and call police or other emergency personnel as needed.

Greenway Rangers are citizen volunteers who provide a valuable service to the community by monitoring a section of the greenways and trails network on a weekly basis for problems and concerns. In 2005, Mayor Graham Richard proposed the idea to the Greenway Consortium and the Greenways Manager to start a volunteer program to help the City monitor the trails. Since the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for 83 parks and the 23-mile Rivergreenway, the Mayor envisioned a participatory program with citizen volunteers actively assisting the Parks Department and the Greenways Manager by closely watching the trails for safety and vandalism concerns. The program gives those in the community who support the parks and trails an opportunity to assist the Parks Department and have a stake in the future of the trails. Currently, 45 Rangers patrol the 23-mile Rivergreenway network. There has been very little turnover in the program since it began two years ago; thus, participants enjoy the opportunity to monitor the trails while helping the City protect and preserve a community resource. The Ranger program has been an absolute success with a great deal of media attention and community support.

The city, parks and greenway system have grown substantially in the past 25 years. Parks must be proactive in addressing the present and future customer service and security needs of park and greenway areas. Future needs of parks and recreation include expanding police presence, park utility staff, and the greenway ranger program. Also, a park volunteer watch program could be an effective and efficient way to address current and future needs.

As the City of Fort Wayne constructs over 100 more miles of trails in the next 10 to 15 years, the need for Greenway Rangers will increase. The City is currently compiling a list of volunteer Greenway Rangers who wish to monitor future trails throughout the community. A formalized "Park Watch" volunteer system should be initiated using the Greenway Ranger Program as a model. A park service call center phone and e-mail contact can be implemented. Volunteers could lock/

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

unlock restrooms, fill toilet paper/paper towels, and report park problems and security issues. Computer/technology options for locking/unlocking restroom and other facilities should be studied. A friendly point of contact through an expanded park utility staff, or other park program and maintenance staff, using creative scheduling should be investigated. The Parks Department should continue working closely with police department to patrol the parks and provide basic security. However, parks should continue, and expand as needed, the contracting of off- duty police to work hot spots, problem areas, and large special events. There are park budget implications in an increased police presence.

The objectives of a security presence and a friendly presence have overlap. The ranger concept should be pursued as one potential for the future. A job description should be developed that addresses a productive work day for a ranger in a park. Testing of an Urban Park Ranger program could be undertaken as a summer program in specific target parks for the peak use months. A well designed and controlled pilot program to look more closely at park ranger program benefits is urged.

## G. WEISSER PARK IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Traditionally park improvements are thought of as capital projects. There are options and some of these have been applied to park initiatives in Fort Wayne to date. An important effort in this regard is the Great Tree Canopy comeback initiative. Heritage Landscapes works with and recommends three basic approaches to park projects, not only the document and bid process. The three strategies that serve park communities well and can be effective and economical are:

- Traditional capital projects carried out under municipal or private partner lead contract process
- Staff initiatives with Recreation & Parks and other City Departments carried out generally in new areas of work such as training for and implementing a forest management plan
- Volunteer initiatives that address rewarding hands-on work in the parks, undertaking rehabilitation tasks that are difficult to achieve today, including such tasks as suppression of invasive species, vista management, erosion control, tree planting and similar efforts

These three approaches are each viable and make contributions to the overall park renewal effort. The application of these strategies varies in their ability to address project needs. Different approaches can be used in combination to achieve the desired results. A further benefit is that park staff can undertake new areas of park work, train and enhance skills. We have found in Pittsburgh that successful park renewal projects have improved morale and team spirit for both staff and volunteers.

In order to add new initiatives selected other tasks will need to be reduced. Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation has already demonstrated that efficiencies have been applied to staff efforts and all personnel are working at full capacity. What we have noted in other city park systems is that mowing and trash removal are considerable staffing efforts absorbing a high percentage of field staff time. An approach that was implemented in our work in Rochester, New York's historic parks was to institute a carry in/carry out trash policy for park areas and wherever possible by removing trash containers and posting friendly, informative signs for park users. While the level of litter remained, overall staff



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

time on trash collection and hauling was substantially reduced thereby allowing staff to engage in more productive activities. In Pittsburgh Bureau of Parks, Department of Public Works staff members are trained in horticultural skills at Phipps Conservatory and are working hands on in woodland trail and drainage rehabilitation with Heritage Landscapes staff providing expertise and hands-on training.

The use of volunteers to carry out implementation tasks has already been started, particularly in the Great Tree Canopy Comeback effort. Park tree plantings have been increased. The establishment and care of these trees needs to be followed up. The Buffalo, New York, Olmsted Parks Conservancy undertook a significant volunteer effort to plant trees, 1,000 trees on Arbor Day weekend, 2001. Using gel-coated bare-root trees as opposed to the conventional ball-and-burlap method of transplanting, crews of ten with one team leader planted three or four trees at a time after a start-up training session. Nina Bassuk, Ph.D. and her associates at Cornell University developed this technology and have implemented it in conjunction with Schichtel's Nursery in Springville, New York. The one-inch diameter trees weigh about twenty-five pounds, are easily shipped and carried, and can be planted in prepared soil quite readily. Heritage Landscapes planted 51 sugar maple trees, 1 ½ to 1 ¾ inch in caliper size gel-coated bareroot trees in the spring of 2007 with only one tree lost during the summer. These trees are substantial when planted and make an immediate difference in the park landscape.

Volunteer initiatives, such as seasonal park clean-up efforts, erosion control work, display garden preparation, planting and care, trail repair, plantings and plant and habitat inventories can all engage interested park users in rewarding, hands-on park work. Volunteers learn skills, gain knowledge about the parks, and develop greater pride in their shared public green spaces. In several cities a "Weed Team" has been organized to work on invasive species suppression. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy has organized a number of hands-on park sessions for education and park improvements to include planting efforts, erosion control and trail repair. In particular, cost-saving strategies such as using grant dollars or technological construction breakthroughs should be sought. City of Pittsburgh Partners in Parks and the local Student Conservation Association, as well as corporate and business work groups, collaborate with the PPC in these volunteer park efforts. Empowering citizen volunteers in successful park projects yields several benefits. It raises use levels in the park and it also decreases the likelihood of vandalism, enhancing the quality of the park environment.

## H. PRIVATE-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS & PARK RENEWAL

Fort Wayne has already started a number of partnerships processes. More can be accomplished in the future. Across the United States the success of park conservancy non-profit groups has been nothing short of remarkable. In the past twenty-five years, several cities have undertaken significant partnership efforts to bring additional resources and skills to city parks from the private sector. As parks and recreation budgets in municipalities throughout the United States have been reduced recognition of park value and the raising of citizen voices has tried to counteract these decreases. Parks and recreation departments are still seen as amenities rather than basic services. In this project Heritage Landscapes developed a framework to demonstrate the value of the parks to the whole of Fort Wayne using the seven aspects of value. This system wide and holistic city-wide thinking needs

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

to be recognized by city officials, elected representatives and private sector interests to gain greater support.

In recent years, a hue and cry for improved parks, both physical and programming, has been heard, but city and county resources are inadequate to meet the level of demand. Both the level of field staffing for operations and maintenance and the level of funding and oversight for capital improvements are well below need. An important issue for parks is the opportunity to raise capital dollars more readily than to fund maintenance and repairs to keep facilities in good working order. Deferred maintenance cycles into the need for thorough rebuilding but takes a toll in the decline of facilities. The other issue is that capital dollar availability often requires a visible, compelling project that focuses on facilities and features rather than the broader park landscape. This focus on objects within the landscape, rather than the larger whole, often leads to project-specific thinking and well-intended projects that are implemented in parks in unfortunate ways. It is important to remember that the majority of people use parks as green oases, places of nature, beauty and tranquility.

Comprehensive planning for each park and boulevard needs to be seen within the overall system in terms of upgrading throughout and balancing services in all the neighborhoods of the city. With the increasing gasoline prices and the growing recognition of climate change issues city support and continued action to link all neighborhoods to bicycle routes and shared paths is an important step in transportation enhancement and environmental quality. Parks leadership will need to collaborate with other city departments and elected officials to achieve greater multimodal connections to parks and along boulevards. These types of initiatives can aid in building strong public-private partnerships.

Sustainability is an increasingly recognized theme in partnerships joining with historic value, recreational opportunity and parks as a decision factor in choosing where to live. In several cities private non-profit partners have been formed to bring additional support to the parks and recreation arena. Private partners bring enthusiasm, skills, dedication, and often, substantial private dollars to add value beyond what America's cities can provide. In order to gain funding support for capital projects and endowments from private sources, it is important to begin with a comprehensive plan and to form appropriate agreements with responsibilities of the partners delineated. A well-respected private partner organization serves to assure potential donors that their contributions will be meaningful, durable and properly cared for in the long term. Partnership agreements take various forms. Areas of activity most often include aspects of operations, capital projects, programs, marketing and development and citizen advocacy. In each city Heritage Landscapes studied, the specific areas of interest and activity vary. In all examples there is a level of mutual respect, trust and cooperation that is brought to the efforts of each and every collaboration. In its most basic formula, the private partner is a partner and a conduit that brings management and community support for the funding of projects, initiatives, programs and endowments.

The Louisville, Kentucky, Olmsted Parks Conservancy, established in 1994 to address 2,000 acres of historic Olmsted landscapes has partnered effectively with Louisville and Jefferson County Parks. Beginning with community-based master planning, the LOPC has implemented \$10 million in capital projects and an array of programs for staff and volunteer efforts to put some shine on their tarnished park and parkway system. The LOPC is overseen by a Board of Directors and includes divisions in fund development, public programs and volunteers, landscape architecture, market and

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

community relations, administration and specialized contract maintenance. They have also begun to build an endowment fund for the future by using a portion of capital project funding for endowment as projects are undertaken.

Riverfront Recapture in Hartford, Connecticut, began with a focus on the Connecticut River that advocated planning and public access. Over a period of fifteen years they sequentially reinvented themselves to bring planning to implementation, ongoing maintenance and programming that succeeded in recapturing the river to an amazing degree. Between 1981 and 1999, they focused \$44.5 million of public and private funds on capital projects along the Hartford and East Hartford riverfronts.

In Pittsburgh, the ten-year -old Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is a 7,800 strong membership organization addressing the four historic parks of Pittsburgh that account for 1,700 acres of parkland. Building on the broad based community master planning effort, seven major capital projects have been completed in partnership with the Pittsburgh Public Works Department. They have raised substantial private funds to support capital project. Some 10,000 volunteer hours are being logged in productive park renewal and monitoring efforts annually. Programs for youth include the annual bio-blitz, and programs in landscape exploration, park tours, tyke hikes, and environmental education sessions. Other aspects of the PPC efforts are to bring national experts in for consultation and education with some 30 speeches presented, with three or more annually. Ongoing study of best park landscape management practices continues to refine renewal efforts. One project example is the privately funded rehabilitation of the Homewood Entry Landscape and Gatehouse at Frick Park. This project addressed the rebuilding of an historic stone wall, replicating the deteriorated bluestone paving, replanting a grove of hawthorn trees, pines and maples, the reroofing, cleaning and lighting of the gatehouse, the design and installation of a wayfinding park map as well as an illustrated welcome sign communicating park history and user rules. In conjunction with the project, a seventh grade class from a neighborhood school engaged in a four-session program to learn about landscape architecture, design, and team work that used the project as a resource. Both the entry renewal and the school educational component have been widely praised.

Parks are not simply amenities. They communicate the health of our cities and the values we place on shared resources. In recent research, Richard Florida, Ph.D., has determined that the creative class of young, bright people value ready access to healthy, scenic parks as a primary indicator of their choice to live in a city and neighborhood. In the current climate and foreseeable future, it is not enough to demand greater service from the municipality. The added value that a private, non-profit partner can bring to parks and recreation is not optional. It is required and critically needed to provide graceful, beautiful, enriching parks for modern life.

## I. WEISSER PARK RENEWAL SUMMARY

At Weisser Park, the renewal recommendations seek to communicate the rich history of the park while considering the needs of current park users. The recommended rehabilitation approach is a broad philosophy which guides decisions about the preservation, stewardship, and future development of the park landscape. Ultimately, a rehabilitation-based treatment protects and enhances the historic character and features of the Weisser Park landscape while incorporating the

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*CHAPTER VIII: WEISSER PARK RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS*

need for contemporary use and improvements. The selected rehabilitation approach at Weisser Park considers multiple values to frame a vision for a more vibrant, functional and satisfying future park. In concert with this approach, the development of specific recommendations was guided by the seven categories of park values:

- *Linkages & City Integration*
- *Diverse Use & Quality of Experience*
- *Uniqueness, Preservation & Innovation*
- *Sustainability & Stewardship*
- *Functionality, Maintenance & Safety*
- *Civic & Community Value*
- *Public-Private Partnerships*

By using these values as a foundation for the treatment and renewal of the Weisser Park landscape, a balance between the natural and cultural park history and the demand for accessible public parklands has been set forth. The recommended rehabilitation approach for the treatment of Weisser Park will honor the impressive natural history and physical development of the park while providing for compatible new uses. This balance between past and present creates a unique, engaging historic landscape for the enjoyment and education of visitors of all ages and interests for years to come.

Enhanced diversity of recreational use would focus on passive and educational uses that are limited today. Improved access and circulation for pedestrians, bicycles is a needed component and a high priority to support diverse uses. There is also an obvious need to upgrade and clarify vehicle access for service and parking and reduce negative vehicle impacts. Even though this is a small urban park some support for healthier more sustainable landscape ecology and a richer habitat can be promoted. Addressing landscape maintenance levels and tasks in terms of park landscape sustainability is needed. Targeted maintenance and increased citizen respect for the park can combine to resolve landscape deterioration and mitigating negative changes, abuse or misuse. This recommended plan envisions collaboration with community partners to enhance the value of the park within its neighborhood and the city of Fort Wayne. Overall these recommendations strive for a logical, phased park renewal with priority actions highlighted for early results.

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Appendix B: Tree & Shrub Inventory Results*

### A. TREE & SHRUB ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

Within the Weisser Park landscape, trees and shrubs were identified by genus and species from field observation and keyed to botanical sources as required. Heritage Landscapes assessed free-standing trees at Weisser Park, and mapped them using existing plans and the 2005 aerial photograph. Trees were assessed by canopy, trunk, and root condition, and given a corresponding code illustrated on the plan, *TA-2007*. A complete list and discussion of tree and shrub species at Weisser Park is found in this appendix. Genus and species were noted unless obvious characteristics were able to provide cultivar (cultivated varieties, or cv) information as well. Cultivars are somewhat difficult to determine in the field and planting records or previous tree surveys were not available and may not exist.

The trees were individually assessed for canopy health, trunk diameter and condition, and root growth according to the following code list. Trees with multiple trunks were also noted. Shrubs were identified by genus and species and located on the base map.

<b>Canopy</b>	A	Good: full crown, vigorous growth, no immediate care required
	B	Fair: minor problems, minimal deadwood with a diameter of less than 3 inches, minor pruning recommended
	C	Poor: major problems, deadwood of over 3 inches and up to six branches, major pruning recommended, monitor for hazard, possible removal
	D	Failing: major dieback in crown, near dead, standing dead, hazard to be removed
	E	Dead: stump, fallen tree, or depression (tree identified if possible)
<b>Trunks</b>	1	No visible damage
	2	Damage including wounds, fungus, cracks, or decay
<b>Roots</b>	U	Unrestricted: open
	R	Restricted: Enclosed within 8-10 feet on one sides by roads, sidewalks, buildings, fences, or other substantial objects.
<b>Multiple Trunks</b>	T	Twin: Two trunks that split at or below 4'-3" above ground level.
	M	Multiple: Three or more trunks that split at or below 4'-3" above ground level.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Tree canopies were rated in alphabetical order from A to E. An A-rating indicates good condition with full crowns, vigorous growth and no required maintenance. A B-rating signifies minor problems, such as minimal deadwood of less than three inches in diameter. Routine maintenance pruning will aid health and appearance of B-rated canopies. C-ratings are applied when no more than six branches exhibit major deadwood of three to four inch diameters. Pruning should be done for the health, longevity, and hazard control of C-rated trees. A D-rating identifies standing dead or canopies that have major dieback in the crown, that is, trees are in serious decline. An arborist should review D-rated trees for potential removal or significant repair. The E-rating is applied to stumps, fallen trees, or depressions where a tree had been removed, with stumps identified where possible.

Tree trunks were given 1-ratings or 2-ratings. Trunks in good condition with no visible problems or very minor ones that would be outgrown were rated 1. Trunks exhibiting cracks, wounds, or visible decay were rated 2.

Root zones were rated using U for unrestricted space for root growth and R for restricted space. Restriction is usually caused by adjacent sidewalks, roads or buildings, and in a few cases by crowding or fencing. The degree of restriction is relative to the mature size and root space requirements of a particular tree. For example, a mature oak will need far more root space than a flowering dogwood. Additional problems such as root girdling were noted when visible and problematic. Generally, a tree with obstacles within 8 to 10 feet received an R rating.

The size of trees was recorded by measuring the diameter at breast height (dbh), which is 1.3 meters, or 4 feet 3 inches above ground level. For trees with multiple stems, the diameter of individual trunks was recorded at dbh and added together to find the total diameter. Multiple-stemmed trees were noted in the code, while single-trunk trees received no notation. If there is an M or T as the digit following the root code, it means the tree has multiple stems. Trees with two trunks that split below dbh, were noted with a T, standing for Twin. Trees with three or more trunks splitting below dbh level were noted with an M, which stands for Multiple.

Each tree was given a three-digit ID number. This number is found at the end of the tree code. Trees were numbered beginning at the west entrance to the park, and generally extend clockwise around the park, from 001 to 387. Stumps or depressions with E codes were not given an ID number. The numbers do not run continuously; spaces were left incrementally to allow for additional future tree planting.

When fully inventoried, a tree may have a code of 9-12 characters. The first 2 or 3 letters designate the genus and species. The plant list provided in Appendix B keys the genus and species by code. The next 1 or 2 numbers refer to the dbh in inches. For trees with multiple stems, the diameter of individual trunks was recorded at dbh and added together to find the total diameter. The following letter (A-E) shows the condition of the canopy. The next number (1 or 2) refers to the condition of the trunk. The next letter (U or R) designates the condition of the roots. If there is a T following the root code, it means the tree has two stems, if there is an M, it means the tree has three or more stems. The three-digit number at the end of the code is its individual identification number. For the example of Ar17B1RT098, Ar is the species of the tree, red maple (*Acer rubrum*), and 17 is the diameter at breast height (DBH) in inches. B denotes a tree canopy in need of minimal pruning, 1

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

signifies a trunk in good condition, R indicates a restricted root zone, and T means the tree has two main trunks. The last three digits, 098, make up the tree's ID number.

## B. ASSESSMENT & INVENTORY RESULTS

A total of 361 trees, stumps, and former tree depressions were recorded, located, and assessed in Weisser Park, including a total of 18 different genera and 32 different species. Of these, 21 trees were assigned to the E category, meaning they were stumps or depressions that remain after a tree has been removed. The E category stumps and depressions were removed from the percentage calculations for trunk condition, root space, diameter and species makeup below, leaving a total of 340 standing trees. Of these, 153, or 45%, are white oak. Oak make up the majority of genera at Weisser Park, with 210 specimens, followed by hickory with 37 representatives, and maple with 19 trees.

In terms of park tree health, 11%, or 38 trees were assessed an A rating for canopy health, indicating no remedial work is needed, and little to no deadwood is present. 31% or 113 trees were rated B, indicating that minor pruning of up to 2" of deadwood is required for the tree to regain full vigor. Loss of canopy vigor and fullness was observed in 43%, or 156 trees which were given a C rating; these trees require significant tree work and maintenance. 22 trees, or 6% were rated D, meaning they are failing, or standing dead, and need to be checked by an arborist for possible removal. 21 stumps and depressions left where stumps were removed were observed in the park, and given an E rating. 11 trees, or 3% were not rated for canopy condition.

Trunk condition was evaluated with a rating of 1 for no damage and 2 for visible damage including wounds, cracks, and fungus. The majority of standing trees, 255, or 75%, received a rating of 1. 19%, or 65 trees had visible damage, and received a 2-rating. 20 trees, or 6%, were not assessed for trunk damage.

Root space was also assessed with a rating system, where U means the roots are unrestricted, and R means the tree's roots are restricted within 8 to 10 feet by substantial objects. Root space is unrestricted for 311 trees, or 91%. Throughout the park, 9%, or 29 trees, had roots restricted by buildings, roads, sidewalks, or other objects that limited the available growing space and soil for the trees' root zone.

Trees were sized by measuring the trunk's dbh. Of the 340 standing trees, 62, or 18% had diameters of 6 inches or less. There are 47 trees, or 14%, sized between 8 and 16 inches. Trees sized between 17 and 26 inches make up the 45% of the park's trees, with 153 trees. 62 trees (18%) are between the diameters of 27 and 36 inches. Only 8 specimens, or 2% are in the oldest and largest group measuring over 37 inches in diameter. The largest trees in the park are a 46-inch black oak and a 46-inch white oak. 8 trees were not measured for diameter. 21 stumps or depressions were recorded, and three of the stumps were measured at over 30 inches. Trees sized over 30 inches in diameter can be assumed to be over 100 years old, based on a general growth pattern of 3 inches per decade. These oldest, largest trees over 30 inches are listed in descending order of count:

- 25 white oak (*Quercus alba*)
- 8 black oak (*Quercus velutina*)

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

- 2 bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- 2 red oak (*Quercus rubra*)

A few shrubs were noted during the Weisser Park tree assessment. Four types were recorded: European fly honeysuckle, mugo pine (*Pinus mugo*), yew, and American cranberrybush viburnum. The mugo pine is located near the northwest corner of the park as part of an evergreen planting. Seven viburnum shrubs and two yew hedges are located around the youth center building, and 14 honeysuckle shrubs grow in the center of the entry drive's circular terminus.

### C. TREE ASSESSMENT OBSERVATIONS

The variety of tree types represented within the park includes 18 genera and 32 species. Of these 32 species, 21 are non-cultivars that are native to the Fort Wayne area. 11 species are cultivars or non-native species that were planted in the park to increase species richness and visual appeal of the park. The native trees are remnants of the park's wooded legacy. The native species makeup, especially the largest trees listed above, suggests the historic forest makeup of this part of Fort Wayne, and specifically Weisser Park. The park is dominated today by oaks, especially white oaks, and the largest trees are white oaks, black oaks, bur oaks, and red oaks. Hickories are the second most abundant species. This tree makeup suggests an oak-hickory dominated forest community at the time of Weisser Park's purchase in 1908, and more specifically a dry-mesic upland forest which is dominated by white oak, black oak, and red oak, with shagbark hickory as a characteristic tree.<sup>1</sup>

Overall, the trees at Weisser Park are in fair to good condition. Nearly 75% of the park trees require a degree of canopy maintenance to ensure continued health. Of the existing trees, 43% were coded fair C, requiring significant tree canopy work and 31% were coded good B, needing minor pruning or tree work. The trunks of the trees are in better condition than the canopies at Weisser Park; 75% of the trees show no damage, or have healed minor trunk damage sustained in the past. Most of the trees (91%) grow unrestricted without obstacles within 8 feet of their trunks.

The following pages provide a summary of the tree inventory results for the Weisser Park landscape. These charts provide the codes used in the Weisser Park existing conditions drawings for tree and shrub species. The list references each plant by code, scientific name (genus and species), and common name. Charts for the total number of species and trees sorted by size are listed on the following pages.



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Codes for Trees & Shrubs According to Species

Code	Botanical Name	Common Name	Plant Category
Aa	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree-of-Heaven	Deciduous Tree
Ac	<i>Acer campestre</i>	Hedge maple	Ornamental Tree
An	<i>Acer negundo</i>	Box elder	Deciduous Tree
Ap	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	Deciduous Tree
Ar	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red maple	Deciduous Tree
As	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Silver maple	Deciduous Tree
Asa	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar maple	Deciduous Tree
Cg	<i>Carya glabra</i>	Pignut hickory	Deciduous Tree
Co	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Common hackberry	Deciduous Tree
Cov	<i>Carya ovata</i>	Shagbark hickory	Deciduous Tree
Fg	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American beech	Deciduous Tree
Fp	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	Green ash	Deciduous Tree
Fsp	<i>Fraxinus</i> species	Ash species	Deciduous Tree
Gti	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>	Thornless honeylocust	Deciduous Tree
Lx	<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>	European fly honeysuckle	Deciduous Shrub
Mas	<i>Malus pumila</i> varieties	Crabapple varieties	Ornamental Tree
Mgs	<i>Magnolia</i> species	Magnolia species	Ornamental Tree
Pa	<i>Picea abies</i>	Norway spruce	Coniferous Tree
Pc	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	Callery pear	Deciduous Tree
Pm	<i>Pinus mugo</i>	Mugo pine	Coniferous Shrub
Pr	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	Red pine	Coniferous Tree
Psp	<i>Prunus subhirtella</i> 'Pendula'	Weeping Higan cherry	Ornamental Tree
Qa	<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak	Deciduous Tree
Qb	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp white oak	Deciduous Tree
Qi	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	Shingle oak	Deciduous Tree
Qm	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur oak	Deciduous Tree
Qp	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin oak	Deciduous Tree
Qr	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red oak	Deciduous Tree
Qsp	<i>Quercus</i> species	Oak species	Deciduous Tree
Qv	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black oak	Deciduous Tree
Rp	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	Deciduous Tree
Ta	<i>Tilia americana</i>	American linden	Deciduous Tree
To	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Eastern arborvitae	Coniferous Tree
Ts	<i>Taxus</i> species	Yew species	Coniferous Shrub
Usp	<i>Ulmus</i> species	Elm species	Deciduous Tree
Vt	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	American cranberrybush viburnum	Deciduous Shrub

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

All Trees Sorted by Size

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Qa46B1U041	<i>Quercus alba</i>	46	B	1	U	1	041	Deciduous Tree
Qv46C1R071	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	46	C	1	R	1	071	Deciduous Tree
45E		45	E					Stump
Qa44C1U077	<i>Quercus alba</i>	44	C	1	U	1	077	Deciduous Tree
Qa42C1R007	<i>Quercus alba</i>	42	C	1	R	1	007	Deciduous Tree
Qa42C1U047	<i>Quercus alba</i>	42	C	1	U	1	047	Deciduous Tree
Qv38D?U055	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	38	D	?	U	1	055	Deciduous Tree
Qa37B1U040	<i>Quercus alba</i>	37	B	1	U	1	040	Deciduous Tree
Qa37C1U382	<i>Quercus alba</i>	37	C	1	U	1	382	Deciduous Tree
Qa36C1U209	<i>Quercus alba</i>	36	C	1	U	1	209	Deciduous Tree
Qa36C2U290	<i>Quercus alba</i>	36	C	2	U	1	290	Deciduous Tree
Qm36C1R068	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	36	C	1	R	1	068	Deciduous Tree
Qa35B1R024	<i>Quercus alba</i>	35	B	1	R	1	024	Deciduous Tree
Qa35C1U358	<i>Quercus alba</i>	35	C	1	U	1	358	Deciduous Tree
Qa35C2U224	<i>Quercus alba</i>	35	C	2	U	1	224	Deciduous Tree
Qa34C1U210	<i>Quercus alba</i>	34	C	1	U	1	210	Deciduous Tree
Qsp34E	<i>Quercus species</i>	34	E					Stump
Qa33C1U056	<i>Quercus alba</i>	33	C	1	U	1	056	Deciduous Tree
Qa33C1U368	<i>Quercus alba</i>	33	C	1	U	1	368	Deciduous Tree
Qv33C1U252	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	33	C	1	U	1	252	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C1U029	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	1	U	1	029	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C1U046	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	1	U	1	046	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C1U096	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	1	U	1	096	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C1U256	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	1	U	1	256	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C1U384	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	1	U	1	384	Deciduous Tree
Qa32C2U157	<i>Quercus alba</i>	32	C	2	U	1	157	Deciduous Tree
Qm32C2U019	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	32	C	2	U	1	019	Deciduous Tree
Qv32C1U309	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	32	C	1	U	1	309	Deciduous Tree
Qv32C1U316	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	32	C	1	U	1	316	Deciduous Tree
Qa31B1U018	<i>Quercus alba</i>	31	B	1	U	1	018	Deciduous Tree
Qa31E	<i>Quercus alba</i>	31	E					Stump

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Qr31B1U027	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	31	B	1	U	1	027	Deciduous Tree
Qa30C1U184	<i>Quercus alba</i>	30	C	1	U	1	184	Deciduous Tree
Qa30C1U214	<i>Quercus alba</i>	30	C	1	U	1	214	Deciduous Tree
Qa30C1U253	<i>Quercus alba</i>	30	C	1	U	1	253	Deciduous Tree
Qa30C2U207	<i>Quercus alba</i>	30	C	2	U	1	207	Deciduous Tree
Qr30B1U020	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	30	B	1	U	1	020	Deciduous Tree
Qv30C1U295	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	30	C	1	U	1	295	Deciduous Tree
Qv30C1U317	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	30	C	1	U	1	317	Deciduous Tree
Qv30D2U159	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	30	D	2	U	1	159	Deciduous Tree
Fsp29C1R212	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	29	C	1	R	1	212	Deciduous Tree
Qa29A1U147	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	A	1	U	1	147	Deciduous Tree
Qa29C1U233	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	C	1	U	1	233	Deciduous Tree
Qa29C1U234	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	C	1	U	1	234	Deciduous Tree
Qa29C1U246	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	C	1	U	1	246	Deciduous Tree
Qa29C1U325	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	C	1	U	1	325	Deciduous Tree
Qa29C2U367	<i>Quercus alba</i>	29	C	2	U	1	367	Deciduous Tree
Qp26C1U059	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	29	C	1	U	1	059	Deciduous Tree
Qp29C1U058	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	29	C	1	U	1	058	Deciduous Tree
Qr29C2U011	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	29	C	2	U	1	011	Deciduous Tree
Qv29C1U155	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	29	C	1	U	1	155	Deciduous Tree
Qv29C1U300	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	29	C	1	U	1	300	Deciduous Tree
Qv29C1U318	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	29	C	1	U	1	318	Deciduous Tree
Ps28B1U268	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	28	B	1	U	1	268	Coniferous Tree
Qa28B1R001	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	B	1	R	1	001	Deciduous Tree
Qa28B1U227	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	B	1	U	1	227	Deciduous Tree
Qa28B1U306	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	B	1	U	1	306	Deciduous Tree
Qa28C1U021	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	C	1	U	1	021	Deciduous Tree
Qa28C1U206	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	C	1	U	1	206	Deciduous Tree
Qa28C1U313	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	C	1	U	1	313	Deciduous Tree
Qa28C1U323	<i>Quercus alba</i>	28	C	1	U	1	323	Deciduous Tree
Qm28C1U347	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	28	C	1	U	1	347	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Qv28B2U360	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	28	B	2	U	1	360	Deciduous Tree
Qv28D1U337	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	28	D	1	U	1	337	Deciduous Tree
Ap27C2U211	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	27	C	2	U	1	211	Deciduous Tree
Qa27B1U156	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	B	1	U	1	156	Deciduous Tree
Qa27B1U235	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	B	1	U	1	235	Deciduous Tree
Qa27B1U250	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	B	1	U	1	250	Deciduous Tree
Qa27C1U220	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	C	1	U	1	220	Deciduous Tree
Qa27C1U298	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	C	1	U	1	298	Deciduous Tree
Qa27C1U299	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	C	1	U	1	299	Deciduous Tree
Qa27C1U328	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	C	1	U	1	328	Deciduous Tree
Qa27C1U371	<i>Quercus alba</i>	27	C	1	U	1	371	Deciduous Tree
Qa26??U247	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	?	?	U	1	247	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U012	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	012	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U148	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	148	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U208	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	208	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U238	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	238	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U322	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	322	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B1U359	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	359	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B2R152	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	2	R	1	152	Deciduous Tree
Qa26B2U154	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	B	1	U	1	154	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U054	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	054	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U149	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	149	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U158	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	158	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U170	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	170	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U187	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	187	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U266	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	266	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U329	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	329	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U350	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	350	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C1U374	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	1	U	1	374	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C2R002	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	2	R	1	002	Deciduous Tree
Qa26C2U349	<i>Quercus alba</i>	26	C	2	U	1	349	Deciduous Tree
Qm26C1U320	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	26	C	1	U	1	320	Deciduous Tree
Qp23C1U045	<i>Quercus</i>	26	C	1	U	1	045	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
	<i>palustris</i>							
Qp26B1U075	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	26	B	1	U	1	075	Deciduous Tree
Qsp26D?U230	<i>Quercus</i> species	26	D	?	U	1	230	Deciduous Tree
Cov25C1U340	<i>Carya ovata</i>	25	C	1	U	1	340	Deciduous Tree
Qa25B1U026	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	B	1	U	1	026	Deciduous Tree
Qa25B1U162	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	B	1	U	1	162	Deciduous Tree
Qa25B1U199	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	B	1	U	1	199	Deciduous Tree
Qa25B2R017	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	B	2	R	1	017	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U165	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	165	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U171	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	171	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U215	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	215	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U231	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	231	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U232	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	232	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U239	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	239	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U276	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	276	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U294	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	294	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U315	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	315	Deciduous Tree
Qa25C1U386	<i>Quercus alba</i>	25	C	1	U	1	386	Deciduous Tree
To25B1UT103	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	25	B	1	U	2	103	Coniferous Tree
Cg24B1R039	<i>Carya glabra</i>	24	B	1	R	1	039	Deciduous Tree
Cg24C1U038	<i>Carya glabra</i>	24	C	1	U	1	038	Deciduous Tree
Fg24C1U014	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	24	C	1	U	1	014	Deciduous Tree
Fp24B1U022	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	24	B	1	U	1	022	Deciduous Tree
Qa24??U249	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	?	?	U	1	249	Deciduous Tree
Qa24B1U037	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	B	1	U	1	037	Deciduous Tree
Qa24B1U308	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	B	1	U	1	308	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U044	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	044	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U052	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	052	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U146	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	146	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U193	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	193	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U219	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	219	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U221	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	221	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U222	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	222	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U226	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	226	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Qa24C1U260	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	260	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U277	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	277	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U330	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	330	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U341	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	341	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U354	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	354	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U356	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	356	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U370	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	370	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C1U387	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	1	U	1	387	Deciduous Tree
Qa24C2U169	<i>Quercus alba</i>	24	C	2	U	1	169	Deciduous Tree
Qm24C1U348	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	24	C	1	U	1	348	Deciduous Tree
Cg23C1U366	<i>Carya glabra</i>	23	C	1	U	1	366	Deciduous Tree
Cov23A2U383	<i>Carya ovata</i>	23	A	2	U	1	383	Deciduous Tree
Cov23B1U331	<i>Carya ovata</i>	23	B	1	U	1	331	Deciduous Tree
Fsp23C2U008	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	23	C	2	U	1	008	Deciduous Tree
Gti23B1U126	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>	23	B	1	U	1	126	Deciduous Tree
Qa23B1U160	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	B	1	U	1	160	Deciduous Tree
Qa23B1U213	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	B	1	U	1	213	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U194	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	194	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U229	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	229	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U336	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	336	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U352	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	352	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U355	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	355	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C1U375	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	1	U	1	375	Deciduous Tree
Qa23C2U377	<i>Quercus alba</i>	23	C	2	U	1	377	Deciduous Tree
Qb23B1U081	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	23	B	1	U	1	081	Deciduous Tree
Qp23B1U342	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	23	B	1	U	1	342	Deciduous Tree
Qp23C1U042	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	23	C	1	U	1	042	Deciduous Tree
Co22B1U043	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	22	B	1	U	1	043	Deciduous Tree
Cov22B1U087	<i>Carya ovata</i>	22	B	1	U	1	087	Deciduous Tree
Fsp22B1U293	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	22	B	1	U	1	293	Deciduous Tree
Qa22??U051	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	?	?	U	1	051	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Qa22??U248	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	?	?	U	1	248	Deciduous Tree
Qa22B1U186	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	B	1	U	1	186	Deciduous Tree
Qa22B1U379	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	B	1	U	1	379	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U049	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	049	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U053	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	053	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U188	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	188	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U192	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	192	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U326	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	326	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U372	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	372	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U373	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	373	Deciduous Tree
Qa22C1U380	<i>Quercus alba</i>	22	C	1	U	1	380	Deciduous Tree
Qp22C1U036	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	22	C	1	U	1	036	Deciduous Tree
Qp22C1U080	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	22	C	1	U	1	080	Deciduous Tree
Qv22C2U201	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	22	C	2	U	1	201	Deciduous Tree
Cov21B1U013	<i>Carya ovata</i>	21	B	1	U	1	013	Deciduous Tree
Ps21B1U270	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	21	B	1	U	1	270	Coniferous Tree
Qa21B1U265	<i>Quercus alba</i>	21	B	1	U	1	265	Deciduous Tree
Qa21C1U172	<i>Quercus alba</i>	21	C	1	U	1	172	Deciduous Tree
Qa21C1U353	<i>Quercus alba</i>	21	C	1	U	1	353	Deciduous Tree
Qa21C2U197	<i>Quercus alba</i>	21	C	2	U	1	197	Deciduous Tree
Qm21B2R016	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	21	B	2	R	1	016	Deciduous Tree
Qp21C1U074	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	21	C	1	U	1	074	Deciduous Tree
Qr21C1U314	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	21	C	1	U	1	314	Deciduous Tree
Ta21B2U114	<i>Tilia americana</i>	21	B	2	U	1	114	Deciduous Tree
Usp21B2R288	<i>Ulmus species</i>	21	B	2	R	1	288	Deciduous Tree
Cg20B1U255	<i>Carya glabra</i>	20	B	1	U	1	255	Deciduous Tree
Cov20B1U025	<i>Carya ovata</i>	20	B	1	U	1	025	Deciduous Tree
Ps20B1U292	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	20	B	1	U	1	292	Coniferous Tree
Qa20B1U378	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	B	1	U	1	378	Deciduous Tree
Qa20B2U225	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	B	2	U	1	225	Deciduous Tree
Qa20C1U050	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	C	1	U	1	050	Deciduous Tree
Qa20C1U198	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	C	1	U	1	198	Deciduous Tree
Qa20C1U344	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	C	1	U	1	344	Deciduous Tree
Qa20C1U381	<i>Quercus alba</i>	20	C	1	U	1	381	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Cg19B1U030	<i>Carya glabra</i>	19	B	1	U	1	030	Deciduous Tree
Cg19B1U338	<i>Carya glabra</i>	19	B	1	U	1	338	Deciduous Tree
Cov19B1U004	<i>Carya ovata</i>	19	B	1	U	1	004	Deciduous Tree
Cov19B1U083	<i>Carya ovata</i>	19	B	1	U	1	083	Deciduous Tree
Mas19B2UT118	<i>Malus</i> species	19	B	2	U	2	118	Ornamental Tree
Qa18C1U376	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	376	Deciduous Tree
Qa19B1U175	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	B	1	U	1	175	Deciduous Tree
Qa19B1U264	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	B	1	U	1	264	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C1U089	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	089	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C1U161	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	161	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C1U176	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	176	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C1U178	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	178	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C1U189	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	1	U	1	189	Deciduous Tree
Qa19C2U153	<i>Quercus alba</i>	19	C	2	U	1	153	Deciduous Tree
Qp19B1U164	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	19	B	1	U	1	164	Deciduous Tree
Asa18D2U005	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	18	D	2	U	1	005	Deciduous Tree
Cov18B1U078	<i>Carya ovata</i>	18	B	1	U	1	078	Deciduous Tree
Cov18B1U257	<i>Carya ovata</i>	18	B	1	U	1	257	Deciduous Tree
Gti18B1U127	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>	18	B	1	U	1	127	Deciduous Tree
Ps18B1U131	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	18	B	1	U	1	131	Coniferous Tree
Qa18B1U095	<i>Quercus alba</i>	18	B	1	U	1	095	Deciduous Tree
Qa18B2U185	<i>Quercus alba</i>	18	B	2	U	1	185	Deciduous Tree
Qa18C1R145	<i>Quercus alba</i>	18	C	1	R	1	145	Deciduous Tree
Qa18C1U173	<i>Quercus alba</i>	18	C	1	U	1	173	Deciduous Tree
Qa18C1U296	<i>Quercus alba</i>	18	C	1	U	1	296	Deciduous Tree
Qp18B1U195	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	18	B	1	U	1	195	Deciduous Tree
Cg17C1U357	<i>Carya glabra</i>	17	C	1	U	1	357	Deciduous Tree
Cov17B1U023	<i>Carya ovata</i>	17	B	1	U	1	023	Deciduous Tree
Ps17A1U129	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	17	A	1	U	1	129	Coniferous Tree
Qa17B1U190	<i>Quercus alba</i>	17	B	1	U	1	190	Deciduous Tree
Qa17B1U191	<i>Quercus alba</i>	17	B	1	U	1	191	Deciduous Tree
Qv17C1U351	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	17	C	1	U	1	351	Deciduous Tree
To17B1UT108	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	17	B	1	U	2	108	Coniferous Tree



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Cov16B1U179	<i>Carya ovata</i>	16	B	1	U	1	179	Deciduous Tree
Cov16C1U066	<i>Carya ovata</i>	16	C	1	U	1	066	Deciduous Tree
Ps16C1RM119	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	16	C	1	R	Multiple	119	Coniferous Tree
Qa16B1U385	<i>Quercus alba</i>	16	B	1	U	1	385	Deciduous Tree
Qa16C1U177	<i>Quercus alba</i>	16	C	1	U	1	177	Deciduous Tree
Qa16C2U183	<i>Quercus alba</i>	16	C	2	U	1	183	Deciduous Tree
Qp16B1U167	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	16	B	1	U	1	167	Deciduous Tree
Qp16B1U339	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	16	B	1	U	1	339	Deciduous Tree
Asa15B1U116	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	15	B	1	U	1	116	Deciduous Tree
Cov15B1U003	<i>Carya ovata</i>	15	B	1	U	1	003	Deciduous Tree
Cov15B1U009	<i>Carya ovata</i>	15	B	1	U	1	009	Deciduous Tree
Cov15B1U010	<i>Carya ovata</i>	15	B	1	U	1	010	Deciduous Tree
Cov15B2R151	<i>Carya ovata</i>	15	B	2	R	1	151	Deciduous Tree
Cov15C1U073	<i>Carya ovata</i>	15	C	1	U	1	073	Deciduous Tree
Qa15B1U048	<i>Quercus alba</i>	15	B	1	U	1	048	Deciduous Tree
Qa15B1U143	<i>Quercus alba</i>	15	B	1	U	1	143	Deciduous Tree
Qa15C1U150	<i>Quercus alba</i>	15	C	1	U	1	150	Deciduous Tree
Qi15B1U104	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	15	B	1	U	1	104	Deciduous Tree
Qi15B1U200	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	15	B	1	U	1	200	Deciduous Tree
Qp15C1R144	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	15	C	1	R	1	144	Deciduous Tree
Qp15C2U166	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	15	C	2	U	1	166	Deciduous Tree
Cov14B1U015	<i>Carya ovata</i>	14	B	1	U	1	015	Deciduous Tree
Cov14B1U067	<i>Carya ovata</i>	14	B	1	U	1	067	Deciduous Tree
Cov14B1U261	<i>Carya ovata</i>	14	B	1	U	1	261	Deciduous Tree
Fsp14C1R287	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	14	C	1	R	1	287	Deciduous Tree
Mgs14B2UT084	<i>Magnolia species</i>	14	B	2	U	2	084	Ornamental Tree
Ps14B1U130	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	14	B	1	U	1	130	Coniferous Tree
Ps14B1U291	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	14	B	1	U	1	291	Coniferous Tree
Cov13B1U263	<i>Carya ovata</i>	13	B	1	U	1	263	Deciduous Tree
Cov13C1U168	<i>Carya ovata</i>	13	C	1	U	1	168	Deciduous Tree
Mas13B1U107	<i>Malus species</i>	13	B	1	U	1	107	Ornamental Tree
Cg12B1U205	<i>Carya glabra</i>	12	B	1	U	1	205	Deciduous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Cg12B1U223	<i>Carya glabra</i>	12	B	1	U	1	223	Deciduous Tree
Qi12B1U106	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	12	B	1	U	1	106	Deciduous Tree
Qp12B1U163	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	12	B	1	U	1	163	Deciduous Tree
To12B2R110	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	12	B	2	R	1	110	Coniferous Tree
To13A2R102	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	12	A	2	R	1	102	Coniferous Tree
Cg11C1U369	<i>Carya glabra</i>	11	C	1	U	1	369	Deciduous Tree
Cov11A1U076	<i>Carya ovata</i>	11	A	1	U	1	076	Deciduous Tree
Cov11B2U218	<i>Carya ovata</i>	11	B	2	U	1	218	Deciduous Tree
Asa10A2U109	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	10	A	2	U	1	109	Deciduous Tree
Cg10C1U258	<i>Carya glabra</i>	10	C	1	U	1	258	Deciduous Tree
Cov10B2U217	<i>Carya ovata</i>	10	B	2	U	1	217	Deciduous Tree
Ps10B1R117	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	10	B	1	R	1	117	Coniferous Tree
Mas9B2U115	<i>Malus species</i>	9	B	2	U	1	115	Ornamental Tree
Rp9D2U285	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	9	D	2	U	1	285	Deciduous Tree
Rp8D1R286	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	8	D	1	R	1	286	Deciduous Tree
Ar6C2R082	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	6	C	2	R	1	082	Deciduous Tree
Pc6A1U138	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	6	A	1	U	1	138	Deciduous Tree
Pc6A1U140	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	6	A	1	U	1	140	Deciduous Tree
Pc6A2U139	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	6	A	2	U	1	139	Deciduous Tree
Pr6B1U134	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	6	B	1	U	1	134	Coniferous Tree
Fsp5A1U278	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	5	A	1	U	1	278	Deciduous Tree
Fsp5C2U228	<i>Fraxinus species</i>	5	C	2	U	1	228	Deciduous Tree
Mas5B2U028	<i>Malus species</i>	5	B	2	U	1	028	Ornamental Tree
Pa5A1U280	<i>Picea abies</i>	5	A	1	U	1	280	Coniferous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Pc5A1U136	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	5	A	1	U	1	136	Deciduous Tree
Pc5A1U141	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	5	A	1	U	1	141	Deciduous Tree
Pr5B1U133	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	5	B	1	U	1	133	Coniferous Tree
Pr5C2U135	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>	5	C	2	U	1	135	Coniferous Tree
As4A1U086	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	4	A	1	U	1	086	Deciduous Tree
As4A1U111	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	4	A	2	U	1	111	Deciduous Tree
As4A2U088	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	4	A	2	U	1	088	Deciduous Tree
Pa4A1U279	<i>Picea abies</i>	4	A	1	U	1	279	Coniferous Tree
Pa4A1U281	<i>Picea abies</i>	4	A	1	U	1	281	Coniferous Tree
Rp4?1R289	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	4	?	1	R	1	289	Deciduous Tree
As3A1U112	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	3	A	1	U	1	112	Deciduous Tree
As3A2U085	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	3	A	2	U	1	085	Deciduous Tree
As3B1U105	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	3	B	1	U	1	105	Deciduous Tree
As3B1U113	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	3	B	1	U	1	113	Deciduous Tree
Asa2D2U060	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	2	D	2	U	1	060	Deciduous Tree
Fg2A2U203	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	2	A	2	U	1	203	Deciduous Tree
Pc2??R132	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	2	?	?	R	1	132	Deciduous Tree
Pc2A?R099	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	2	A	?	R	1	099	Deciduous Tree
Pc2B2R142	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> variety unknown	2	B	2	R	1	142	Deciduous Tree
Psp2B1U070	<i>Prunus</i>	2	B	1	U	1	070	Ornamental Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
	<i>subhirtella</i> 'Pendula'							
Qb2D2U204	<i>Quercus</i> <i>bicolor</i>	2	D	2	U	1	204	Deciduous Tree
Qi2A1U307	<i>Quercus</i> <i>imbricaria</i>	2	A	1	U	1	307	Deciduous Tree
Qm2C2U196	<i>Quercus</i> <i>macrocarpa</i>	2	C	2	U	1	196	Deciduous Tree
?1D?U259	?	1	D	?	U	?	259	?
Ac1D?R137	<i>Acer campestre</i>	1	D	?	R	?	137	Ornamental Tree
An1??R128	<i>Acer negundo</i>	1	?	?	R	?	128	Deciduous Tree
As1D?U267	<i>Acer</i> <i>saccharinum</i>	1	D	?	U	1	267	Deciduous Tree
As1D?U269	<i>Acer</i> <i>saccharinum</i>	1	D	?	U	1	269	Deciduous Tree
Asa1B2U090	<i>Acer</i> <i>saccharum</i>	1	B	2	U	1	090	Deciduous Tree
Asa1D2U057	<i>Acer</i> <i>saccharum</i>	1	D	2	U	1	057	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A1U262	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	262	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A1U311	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	311	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A1U321	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	321	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A1U346	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	346	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A2U174	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	174	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A2U180	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	180	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A2U202	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	202	Deciduous Tree
Fg1A2U345	<i>Fagus</i> <i>grandifolia</i>	1	A	1	U	1	345	Deciduous Tree
Fsp1A1U319	<i>Fraxinus</i> <i>species</i>	1	A	1	U	1	319	Deciduous Tree
Fsp1A1U324	<i>Fraxinus</i> <i>species</i>	1	A	1	U	1	324	Deciduous Tree
Fsp1A1U327	<i>Fraxinus</i> <i>species</i>	1	A	1	U	1	327	Deciduous Tree
Fsp1D?R343	<i>Fraxinus</i> <i>species</i>	1	D	?	R	1	343	Deciduous Tree
Ps1B2U120	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	1	B	2	U	1	120	Coniferous Tree

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Psp1B2U072	<i>Prunus subhirtella</i> 'Pendula'	1	B	2	U	1	072	Ornamental Tree
Psp1C2U069	<i>Prunus subhirtella</i> 'Pendula'	1	C	2	U	1	069	Ornamental Tree
Qb1D?U216	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	1	D	?	U	1	216	Deciduous Tree
Qb1D?U254	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	1	D	?	U	1	254	Deciduous Tree
Qb1E	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	1	E					Stump
Qb1E	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	1	E					Stump
Qi1A1U236	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	1	A	1	U	1	236	Deciduous Tree
Qi1A2U297	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	1	A	2	U	1	297	Deciduous Tree
Qi1A2U312	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	1	A	2	U	1	312	Deciduous Tree
Qi1D2U240	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	1	D	2	U	1	240	Deciduous Tree
Qi1D2U251	<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>	1	D	2	U	1	251	Deciduous Tree
Qm1A1U310	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	1	A	1	U	1	310	Deciduous Tree
Aa?C2U006	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	?	C	2	U	1	006	Deciduous Tree
Mas???U097	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	?	?	U	?	097	Ornamental Tree
Mas???U098	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	?	?	U	?	098	Ornamental Tree
Mas???U100	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	?	?	U	?	100	Ornamental Tree
Mas???U101	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	?	?	U	?	101	Ornamental Tree
Mas?D2U282	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	D	2	U	1	282	Ornamental Tree
Mas?D2U283	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	D	2	U	1	283	Ornamental Tree
Mas?D2U284	<i>Malus pumila</i> variety	?	D	2	U	1	284	Ornamental Tree
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS*

Code	Plant Name	DBH	Crown	Trunk	Roots	No. of stems	ID #	Plant Category
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
Dep			E					Depression
E			E					Stump
E			E					Stump
E			E					Stump
E			E					Stump
E			E					Stump

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS*

APPENDIX B ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen Jacquart, Mike Homoya, and Lee Casebere, “Natural Communities of Indiana: 7/1/02 Working Draft” p. 5:  
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/invasivespecies/innatcom03.pdf>.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX B: TREE & SHRUB INVENTORY RESULTS*

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# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Appendix C: User Survey Form & Results*

<b>Total Surveys Collected</b>	<b>22</b>
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<b>What is your age range?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. 10-16	3	13.6%
B. 17-24	1	4.5%
C. 25-35	1	4.5%
D. 36-45	2	9.1%
E. 46-64	6	27.3%
F. 65+	7	31.8%

<b>What is your gender?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. Male	13	59.1%
B. Female	6	27.3%

<b>Do you have children aged 18 or under?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. No	15	68.2%
B. Yes	4	18.2%
<b>If so, are they? What ages?</b>		
A. Male children, Ages: 10, 15	2	9.1%
B. Female children, Ages: 3, 6, 15, 10	4	18.2%

<b>What is your highest level of education completed?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. Primary/Middle School	1	4.5%
B. High School/GED	2	9.1%
C. Some College	8	36.4%
D. College Graduate	3	13.6%
E. Post College/Graduate School	6	27.3%

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS

<b>What is your ethnic background?</b>	Count	%
A. Black	2	9.1%
B. White	16	72.7%
C. Asian	0	0.0%
D. Latino	1	4.5%
E. Native American	1	4.5%
F. Other	0	0.0%

**I am a Weisser Park user in:**

	Count	%
A. Summer	2	9.1%
B. Fall	3	13.6%
C. Winter	3	13.6%
D. Spring	3	13.6%
E. Never	11	50.0%

**In the season of your heaviest use, do you come to Weisser Park:**

	Count	%
A. Daily	0	0.0%
B. More than once a week	2	9.1%
C. A few times a month	2	9.1%
D. A few times a year	1	4.5%
E. Never	1	4.5%

**How long do you usually stay in Weisser Park when visiting?**

	Count	%
A. 1 hour or less	3	13.6%
B. 1-3 hours	3	13.6%
C. More than 3 hours	0	0.0%

<b>How do you get to the park?</b>	Count	%
A. Car	4	18.2%
B. Public Transportation	0	0.0%
C. Walk	0	0.0%
D. Bike	0	0.0%
E. Other (work truck)	1	4.5%

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS

<b>How close do you live to Weisser Park?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. Right next to the park	0	0.0%
B. Less than a 5 minute walk	0	0.0%
C. 5-15 minute walk	0	0.0%
D. Not within easy walking distance	6	27.3%

**When you come to the park, do you come:**

	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
A. Alone	2	9.1%
B. With a friend	1	4.5%
C. With a family member	1	4.5%
D. With a team	0	0.0%
E. With a group (not a team)	2	9.1%

**What do you do when visiting the park?**

	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Type</b>
Visiting Weisser Park Youth Center	2	9.1%	1	S/E
Attending Weisser Park School	2	9.1%	1	S/E
Jogging/Running	1	4.5%	2	A
Leisure Walking	1	4.5%	2	P
Bicycling	1	4.5%	2	A
Picnicking	1	4.5%	2	P
Enjoying Nature	1	4.5%	2	P
Attending Organized Activities	1	4.5%	2	S/E
Attending Weddings or other Ceremonies	1	4.5%	2	P/S
Playing Tennis	1	4.5%	2	A
Relaxation/Socialization	1	4.5%	2	P/S
Playing Basketball	1	4.5%	2	A
Watching a Sporting Event	1	4.5%	2	P/S
Using a Pavilion	1	4.5%	2	P/S
Other: Work	1	4.5%	2	P
Dog Walking	0	0.0%	NA	P
Sunbathing	0	0.0%	NA	P
Cross Country Skiing	0	0.0%	NA	A
Playing Baseball/Softball	0	0.0%	NA	A
Using the Playground	0	0.0%	NA	A

Note: Recreation Type code is P= Passive, S/E= Social & Educational, S= Social, A=Active.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS

**Please rate the following area of Weisser Park:**

Survey Responses Count

**22**

	Excellent		Good		Average		Fair		Poor	
Safety/Security	0	0%	2	9%	2	9%	1	5%	1	5%
Park Access	0	0%	2	9%	4	18%	1	5%	0	0%
General Appearance	0	0%	1	5%	7	32%	0	0%	0	0%
Cleanliness/Litter Pick-up	0	0%	1	5%	3	14%	2	9%	1	5%
Condition of Trees	0	0%	1	5%	2	9%	3	14%	0	0%
Condition of Ball Diamonds	0	0%	1	5%	2	9%	1	5%	0	0%
Condition of Plants	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	4	18%	1	5%
Condition of Tennis Courts	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%	1	5%	1	5%
Condition of Soccer Fields	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%	0	0%	1	5%
Condition of Basketball Court	0	0%	0	0%	3	14%	1	5%	0	0%
Condition of Drives & Parking	0	0%	0	0%	4	18%	2	9%	0	0%
Condition of Park Walks	0	0%	0	0%	3	14%	0	0%	2	9%
Condition of Pavilions	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%	2	9%	1	5%
Condition of Restrooms	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	1	5%	2	9%
Adequacy of Park Signage	0	0%	0	0%	2	9%	4	18%	1	5%
	0		8		40		23		11	

	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Park Condition Range (highest & lowest %)	0%	0%	9%	0%	32%	5%	18%	0%	9%	0%
Park Condition Averages		0%		2%		11%		7%		3%

Notes: Percentages have been rounded in this chart.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS*

**Weisser Park User Comments**

**Are there additional activities you would like to see in Weisser Park?**

**Are there activities you would like to see eliminated from Weisser Park?**

- The school parking lot.

**What do you like best about Weisser Park?**

- Close to my home.
- It doesn't get in my way.
- Weisser Park Youth Center.
- Trees.
- Stand of trees running length of park.
- Neighborhood park with an activities center targeted at youth.
- So many things to do with so many friends who gathered there. My buddies and I actually rode our bikes over a mile to go to Weisser (past tense)
- Many activities.

**What do you like least about Weisser Park?**

- There is no track or swimming.
- I couldn't get there if I wanted to.
- Pavilion condition.
- Casual intrusion of certain facilities into very attractive trees referenced above.
- Seems like only African-Americans go there.
- Pavilion area outdated.

**What ideas would you suggest to improve Weisser Park?**

- To add some type of track, maybe a swimming pool.
- Tell me about it.
- I didn't realize this was a park—I thought it was a school playground. Perhaps they need more signs visible from the street (Hannah). Also make it more park-like with walking trails and such.
- More summer programs.
- Plantings to soften the look of Youth Center.
- Plan to protect and enhance the landscape of trees.
- New enlarged pavilion; more regular grounds maintenance.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX C: USER SURVEY FORM & RESULTS*



## *McMillen Park, Weisser Park & East Rudisill Boulevard User Survey*

Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports  
Foster, McMillen, Shoaff & Weisser Parks & Rudisill Boulevard

*By Heritage Landscapes Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners  
For Fort Wayne's Park & Boulevard Users & Citizens  
& City of Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation*

Greetings! This user survey will help us understand the current uses and opinions about McMillen Park, Weisser Park and East Rudisill Boulevard. We ask you to fill out the survey, checking the boxes and answering the questions. This survey is part of a park and boulevard planning project that includes local community and park user input. The history, existing conditions, needs and opinions about the parks and boulevard will be incorporated into the Cultural Landscape Reports that will guide these valued public landscapes into the future. Your time to respond is greatly appreciated. Please return the completed survey at the end of this public meeting, drop off at any City of Fort Wayne building, or mail to:

*Alec Johnson, City of Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation, Lawton Park Office, 1900 North Clinton, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46805*

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### **McMillen Park:**

*I am a McMillen Park user in (check all that apply):*

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall   | <input type="checkbox"/> Never  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter |                                 |

*In the season of your heaviest use, do you come to McMillen Park:*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Never              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month   |   |

*How long do you usually stay in McMillen Park when visiting?*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour or less | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 hours      |  |

*How do you get to the park? (check all that apply)*

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation/Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk                      |                                      |

*How close do you live to McMillen Park?*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Right next to the park    | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-15 minute walk                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a 5 minute walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Not within easy walking distance |

*When you come to the park, do you come (check all that apply):*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alone                | <input type="checkbox"/> With a group (not a team) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With a friend        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With a family member |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With a team          |  |

**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*What are you doing when visiting McMillen Park? (check all that apply):*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging/Running                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation/Socialization          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure Walking                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country Skiing              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Walking                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Basketball                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Baseball/Softball         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Skating or Playing Ice Hockey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying Nature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Soccer                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunbathing                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching a Sporting Event         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Organized Activities         | <input type="checkbox"/> Using the Playground              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Weddings or other Ceremonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Using a Pavilion                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golfing                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Lifetime Sports Academy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Tennis                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                       |

*Are there additional activities you would like to see in McMillen Park?*

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*Are there activities you would like to see eliminated from McMillen Park?*

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*Please rate the following areas of McMillen Park (please check one rating for each):*

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
General Appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness/Litter Pick-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety/Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Park Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Plants (Grass, Shrubs, Gardens)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Tennis Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Golf Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Soccer Fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Baseball/Softball Diamonds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Basketball Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Drives & Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Park Walks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Pavilions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Rest Rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequacy of Park Signage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*What do you like best about McMillen Park?*

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*What do you like least about McMillen Park?*

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*What ideas would you suggest to improve McMillen Park?*

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**Weisser Park:**

*I am a Weisser Park user in (check all that apply):*

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall   | <input type="checkbox"/> Never  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter |                                 |

*In the season of your heaviest use, do you come to Weisser Park:*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Never              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month   |   |

*How long do you usually stay in Weisser Park when visiting?*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour or less | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 hours      |  |

*How do you get to the park? (check all that apply)*

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation/Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk                      |                                      |

*How close do you live to Weisser Park?*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Right next to the park    | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-15 minute walk                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a 5 minute walk | <input type="checkbox"/> Not within easy walking distance |

*When you come to the park, do you come (check all that apply):*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alone                | <input type="checkbox"/> With a team               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With a friend        | <input type="checkbox"/> With a group (not a team) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> With a family member |  |

**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*What are you doing when visiting Weisser Park? (check all that apply):*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging/Running                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation/Socialization           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure Walking                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country Skiing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Walking                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Basketball                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Baseball/Softball          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Watching a Sporting Event          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying Nature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Using the Playground               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunbathing                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Using the Pavilion                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Organized Activities         | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting Weisser Park Youth Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Weddings or other Ceremonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending Weisser Park School      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Tennis                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                        |

*Are there additional activities you would like to see in Weisser Park?*

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*Are there activities you would like to see eliminated from Weisser Park?*

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*Please rate the following areas of Weisser Park (please check one rating for each):*

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
General Appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness/Litter Pick-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety/Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Park Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Plants (Grass, Shrubs, Gardens)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Tennis Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Soccer Fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Baseball/Softball Diamonds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Basketball Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Drives & Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Park Walks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Pavilions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Rest Rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequacy of Park Signage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*What do you like best about Weisser Park?*

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*What do you like least about Weisser Park?*

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*What ideas would you suggest to improve Weisser Park?*

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**East Rudisill Boulevard:**

*I use East Rudisill Boulevard in (check all that apply):*

- |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall   | <input type="checkbox"/> Never  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter |                                 |

*In the season of your heaviest use, do you use the boulevard:*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daily                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Never              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month   |   |

*How do you get to East Rudisill Boulevard? (check all that apply)*

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation/Bus | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk                      |                                      |

*How close do you live to the boulevard?*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On East Rudisill Boulevard | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-15 minute walk                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On West Rudisill Boulevard | <input type="checkbox"/> Not within easy walking distance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than a 5 minute walk  |   |

*What mode of transportation do you use on the boulevard? (check all that apply):*

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foot    | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Truck |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car     | <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____      |

**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*When you use East Rudisill Boulevard, do you (check all that apply):*

	Drive	Walk	Bike	Other
Go to Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to other Residences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to Businesses on Rudisill Blvd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to Church or Community Function	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use Rudisill Boulevard to Get Somewhere Else	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get to a Park: <i>Which Park?</i> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get to the River Greenway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the Boulevard for Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the Boulevard for Leisure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk a Dog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the Sidewalk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please rate the following areas of East Rudisill Boulevard (please check one rating for each):*

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
General Appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness/Litter Pick-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety/Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Sidewalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Trees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Plants (Grass, Shrubs, Gardens)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adequacy of Road Signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*What do you like best about East Rudisill Boulevard?*

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*What do you like least about East Rudisill Boulevard?*

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**Fort Wayne Cultural Landscape Reports**  
**McMillen & Weisser Parks & East Rudisill Boulevard**  
*User Survey*

*What ideas would you suggest to improve East Rudisill Boulevard?*

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*What other parks or boulevard from the list below do you use in Fort Wayne? Please fill in activities on the blank line.*

- Foster Park:                    *Activities:* \_\_\_\_\_
- Shoaff Park:                    *Activities:* \_\_\_\_\_
- West Rudisill Boulevard: *Activities:* \_\_\_\_\_

*In order to understand park and boulevard users, we request that you answer the following questions. (Answering these questions is optional but appreciated.)*

*What is your age range?*

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10-16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 36-45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+   |

*What is your gender?*

- Female
- Male

*Do you have children aged 18 or under?*

- Female:    How Many? \_\_\_\_\_ Ages \_\_\_\_\_
- Male:        How Many? \_\_\_\_\_ Ages \_\_\_\_\_

*What is the highest level of education you have completed (optional)?*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary/middle school | <input type="checkbox"/> College graduate             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school/ GED      | <input type="checkbox"/> Post college/graduate school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some college          |   |

*What is your ethnic background (optional)?*

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black  | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White  | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other           |

*Thank you for your time and participation!*

*If you have additional comments or questions about the Cultural Landscape Report project, please contact Alec Johnson at (260) 427-6425 [alec.johnson@ci.ft-wayne.in.us](mailto:alec.johnson@ci.ft-wayne.in.us) or Greg De Vries at (802) 425-4330 [info@heritagelandscapes.cc](mailto:info@heritagelandscapes.cc)*

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Appendix E: Principal Sources*

### **Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society**

Annual Reports, All years available  
Historic postcard & photograph collections

### **Allen County Public Library**

Annual Reports, All years available  
City of Fort Wayne Park Master Plans  
Historic maps, newspaper, postcard & photograph collections  
*Long Range Recreation Plan, City of Fort Wayne*, prepared by National Recreation Association, 1944

### **City of Fort Wayne, Department of Public Works, City/County Building**

Planimetric aerials: All years available  
Allen County survey from planimetric aerials

### **Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation, Lawton Park Office & State Boulevard Office**

Annual Reports, All years available  
Current AutoCAD files  
Historic newspaper clipping scrapbooks  
Digital files of historic plans

### **Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation, Leadership, Staff & Contributing Community Members**

Al Moll, Director of Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation  
Perry Ehresman, Superintendent of Leisure Services, Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation  
Jeff Baxter, Former Director of Maintenance, Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation  
Alec Johnson, Landscape Architect & CLR Project Manager, Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation  
Fort Wayne Parks & Boulevard Legacy Committee: Waymon and Synovia Brown, Julie Donnell, Janet Kelly, David Kohli, Jim Owen, Matt Wiedenhoef, Don Orban, Susan Mol, Jeanette Dillon, Angie Quinn  
Councilman Glynn Hines  
Councilman John Shoaff

### **Interested Fort Wayne Citizens Attending Public Work Sessions & Meetings**

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL SOURCES*

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines*

As cultural landscapes are renewed there are a number of factors to consider in terms of implementation approach. There is, for example, a concern for limitation of adjacent damage within the landscape as implementation work proceeds. While in many cases degraded aspects of the landscape are replaced in-kind with historic materials, there is also the opportunity to apply new technologies and consider green design and construction approaches. In response to the needs of cultural landscapes for thoughtful implementation through contractor, staff and volunteer project initiatives, Heritage Landscapes has developed useful protocols to address the construction of stabilized aggregate trails, soil management, exotic species suppression, meadow establishment and tree planting.

As preservation landscape architects our overall objective is to ensure a vibrant future for valued heritage landscapes. An increasingly important component of preserving and sustaining heritage places is the application of green principles and decreasing project carbon footprint. In principle as a baseline, preservation seeks to safeguard a valued place and limits site disturbance in any undertaking. In assessing sustainability, the effective transformation of an historic landscape into a more useful, safe, aesthetically pleasing place is a more sustainable and green practice than building anew. Conceptually, the reuse of a heritage place yields a smaller carbon footprint than shaping an entirely new landscape. As the practice of carbon footprinting progresses, Heritage Landscapes will be testing the application of this concept to historic landscape preservation and reporting on project impacts.

These Landscape Renewal Guidelines developed by our office are included here for reference. They are office protocols and are constantly updated as techniques are tested and results gathered.<sup>1</sup> All of them are relevant to the planned work in the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards.

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The walking trails in the Fort Wayne Parks are intended for strolling, walking, jogging and dog walking, use by pedestrians, and access on a hard packed surface for the handicapped and for child strollers. They are not intended for mountain biking or any motorized scooters or all terrain vehicles. Trails also provide service access to care for the landscape, preferably using lightweight golf carts with pneumatic tires. Recognizing these clear purposes, paths within the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards landscapes do not need to be very wide. In general park trails are proposed for a 54 to 60-inch width which is sufficient for single file passing. Path layout is an important task. In many areas of the parks gently curving, graceful alignments are seen in historic images, and other types of deeply curving or straight layouts are characteristic of specific parks. All paths, rebuilt historic ones



# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

## Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

and new segments, should be laid out with care to achieve alignments in character with the specific park.

A 54 to 60-inch path width is also a good for relatively low impact construction. Using small machinery and extreme care, former paths can be constructed along historic alignments with a few stockpiling locations for excavated soil and gravel fill materials. Construction with limited adjacent impact is desired. Layout is field staked using offset stakes that can remain in place and be outside of the construction zone but still highly visible. A small backhoe with a 48 inch bucket can excavate the path base into the soil about 8 inches in depth. This type of machinery can work essentially within the proposed path cutting, placing gravel fill and then driving on the base course to cut the next portion.

Heritage Landscapes prefers to use gravel and bound aggregate paths whenever appropriate. They are less costly to construct and are often more in keeping with the historic character of the property. The additional impetus to use a gravel and stabilized aggregate path construction is carbon footprint and fossil fuel use. Concrete has a high carbon footprint from the preparation of Portland cement at high temperatures using fossil fuels. Asphalt products are also fossil fuel intensive. Gravel and aggregate paths have a considerably lower carbon footprint and are therefore more sustainable.

After approval of the excavated path layout the base is cut and a 4 inch gravel base should be compacted in the excavated portion of the path alignment. On top of the gravel, a 4 inch layer of decomposed granite or crushed 3/8" or 1/4" aggregate with StaLok should comprise the path surface. StaLok is a patented, non-toxic, colorless and odorless organic binder that comes in concentrated powder form that binds stone dust and fines to form a durable low maintenance path. StaLok® Paving Material for aggregate path surfacing is obtained from Stabilizer Solutions, Inc. 33 South 28<sup>th</sup> St., Phoenix, AZ 85034; phone (602) 225-5900, (800) 336-2468; fax (602) 225-5902; website [www.stabilizersolutions.com](http://www.stabilizersolutions.com); email [info@stabilizersolutions.com](mailto:info@stabilizersolutions.com). Mixing of the patented binder with the gravel is a specified technique that can be carried out at the gravel supply location and brought to the site. Once at the site, the approved aggregate and StaLok mixture is placed on the compacted gravel subgrade, raked smooth, wet down, allowed to stand and compacted to provide the desired 4 to 5 inch depth. This gravel bound path hardens as it dries and resists erosion.

Where the path gradient exceeds 5 percent and where paths intersect, water bars should be placed at not more than 15 foot intervals to shunt surface water flows to the side of the path. Doing so redirects surface water flows and limits the amount of path erosion over time. Water bars are constructed of cobblestone, "V" or "U" shaped formed steel or other durable materials. They are placed at an angle with one end farther downhill creating a break in the path that catches moving water and shunts it to the side.

## SOIL MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

During any future undertaking in the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards, management of soils is imperative to controlling soil quality and limiting negative impacts from projects such as compaction from heavy machinery. If projects require special machinery, maximum sizes and weights should be specified to limit soil disturbance. Heritage Landscapes specifies pneumatic tires or wide track light

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

weight machinery on previous projects to limit soil compaction. Post-construction deep tilling and addition of appropriate soil amendments, such as sands, small gravels and compost, can also aid in increasing soil fertility after construction.

Native soil is a combination of sand and gravels, clay silt and organic matter. When excavation is required separation of topsoil and subsoil is specified. The principal difference between topsoil and subsoil is the % of organic matter although subsoils may contain different percentages of the mineral soil components: sand and gravel; clay; and silt. With the scarcity of native soils and the impacts on other landscapes of soil stripping for construction projects, Heritage Landscapes has developed specifications for testing excavated and on-site soil stockpiles and amending these soils for reuse at the construction site. This is a sustainable construction practice that again limits carbon footprint by reducing transportation costs and not requiring the degradation of another site to remove the topsoil. What is more readily available today is compost. While garden guidance touts the annual addition of compost to garden soils, recent studies indicate that composted material in excess of 20% by volume of soil reduces plant growth rates. It is thought that this is due to the decomposition process that is continuing to a degree to breakdown the humic material in the compost and that process robs nutrients from the plants. Excavated soils can be effectively reused on site with appropriate amendments. Often an increase in sand and small gravel can aid in soil percolation and enhance aerobic conditions. Compost is generally added to enhance plant nutrient availability. The key elements to successful reuse of onsite soil is careful construction practices, controlled stockpiling, thorough testing for all soil factors, addition of appropriate amendments, thorough mixing and proper placement of subgrade soil fills and finely graded surface topsoil.

Soil erosion is also a factor to consider and limit within the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards. Steeply sloping topography with limited ground plane vegetation covers makes soils susceptible to erosion during even light rainfall events. Slopes beyond the mowable limits of 1:3 or 33% should be stabilized with densely rooted meadow grasses or woodland understory plantings, not maintained in frequently mown turf. Improved stormwater management will also aid in soil stability. High velocity water scours the edges of the ravines, removing topsoil and exposing tree roots. Stormwater, soil management and erosion control should be considered together in landscape renewal implementation in the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards.

## EXOTIC INVASIVE SPECIES SUPPRESSION GUIDELINES

Colonization of invasive exotic species from both historic and contemporary sources is noted on the properties. Exotic invasive plants are aggressive, tending to increase in number while effectively competing against native plants while limiting native plant growth and reproduction and degrading the habitat value of the area. Exotic, fast growing species are considered bully plants, offering no positive benefits that limit growth of plants that do offer positive environmental benefits. In a designed landscape, historic exotic plants that are well-behaved, staying where planted, have a place in the overall composition. In contrast invasive non-native plants that migrate and proliferate throughout the landscape are not welcome as their growth tactics out-compete other plants and alter the landscape character. In recent years active suppression of invasive plants has been undertaken in many public landscapes and considerable technical literature addressing testing, tools, techniques, safety issues and effective control has been developed.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

Invasive species suppression will be an ongoing effort throughout the landscapes of the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards. With a planned suppression program, colonized areas of invasive plants can be removed although seed sources will remain in adjacent areas. Inspection and removals should be an annual effort that will suppress dense patches of undesirable plants within a few years of intensive effort. Planning the program of invasive species suppression is an initial step. One approach to the effort is targeting species suppression by applying tested protocols. An effective strategy for control of invasive plants is the Bradley Method, a perimeter approach that moves from landscape edges to center sequentially. Locations of infestations are identified and plants are eradicated at the perimeter and removal continues working toward the densely populated areas. The Bradley Method “has great promise on nature reserves with low budgets and with sensitive plant populations” as noted in a useful overview publication.<sup>ii</sup>

Exotic, invasive trees and shrubs, vines and groundcovers each have effective means of control. In order to completely suppress undesirable woody and herbaceous plants, manual removal, targeted burning, mowing, herbicide and biological controls may all be potentially effective control means. Manual removal is a tried and true method of suppression. Plants and roots are removed by hand without toxins. This technique is often used for vines and groundcovers and is more successful with some species than others. Some plants can be suppressed through mowing at target times, like early spring when top growth absorbs most of the plant nutrients. Repeating mowing is an effective control in areas where the ground plane is readily mown and woody plants are not in the way of mowing activity. Plants with brittle roots and vigorous re-growth, like garlic mustard, require a variety of techniques and a degree of persistence with hand pulling, herbicide treatments, and propane torch burning.

Young woody plants of ½ inch to 1 ½ inch caliper can be removed with Weed Wrench or Talon tools made for this purpose. These tools allow manual removal of plant and root mass while limiting disturbance to the root zones of the nearby plants. An effective protocol for invasive exotic tree and shrub suppression for plants larger than Weed Wrench size is a double cutting method, where the plant is cut with the second cut as close to grade as possible, followed by painting herbicide, typically Glyphosphate or Triclopyr, directly on the cut trunks. Stems wet from cutting absorb the herbicide as they dry out, effectively killing the plant. Without herbicide, trees will continue to resprout vigorously. Coordination between tree cutting crews and licensed pesticide/herbicide applicator should be scheduled for best results. Herbicide should be applied to the cut trunks within six hours. This cut and paint method limits herbicide migration into other areas of the landscape and is safer and more effective because it focuses only on undesirable plants, kills roots through absorption into plant tissue.

Selection of an invasive species removal technique is dependent on available personnel, funding, and proximity of non-target species. The control of specific target species needs to be carried out by researching best practices to obtain data on successful control, planning the effort and persisting with the suppression until the species is under control. Invasive species control should address target species and rely on best practices and field tests to refine the most suitable approach. Hand removal of target plants using teams of people on volunteer work days has been effective in public parks and preserves. The Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards could establish a “Weed Team” that works on

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

## Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

suppression efforts several times a year. Within five years, control of target species should be well along and ongoing efforts will require a lesser level of effort.

### MEADOW ESTABLISHMENT GUIDELINES

The mown turf and recreational turf areas in the Fort Wayne parks are all in herbaceous cover managed with a frequent mowing regime. Meadows are proposed for some areas of parks to decrease mowing, which is a carbon output intensive activity, and also to increase habitat value. These proposed meadow areas are placed at the edges of woodlands. Annual or bi-annual mowing will suppress woody and invasive species in the meadows while allowing overwintering and hatching of butterfly species on 2 year old stalks. The intersection of different turn management types also requires careful consideration. In terms of landscape management the establishment of mowing along woodland edges and the reinforcement of positive, sustainable woodland edge plantings beyond that mowing line is a process that will take time to initialize and will require conscious management over time.

Seeding or planting desired meadow areas can begin with planting plugs of preferred grasses and wildflowers. By choosing and establishing the right plants, meadow areas will contribute to habitat value drawing field and woodland edge birds and butterflies. Initial meadow inspection and care will involve suppressing undesirable weed species for a period of three years. Meadow care, once established will be light with inspection and species control as needed and mowing once every two years. Mowing is used to suppress woody species which sprout from seed annually. Recent research indicates that to support butterflies biannual mowing is preferred so that cocoons remain on standing stems overwintering and opening the following spring. The final meadow management inspection and care will be determined by the target species and habitat conditions desired. The proposed meadow grasses and wildflower species are recommended as a mixture.

Native Grass Seed: Fresh, clean, dry, new seed, mixed species potentially the following list:

- 50 percent *Schizachyrium scoparium* (Little Bluestem)
- 30 percent *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indiangrass)
- 20 percent *Panicum virgatum* (Switchgrass)
- Use 60 percent Native Grass Seed

A typical listing of native wildflowers of the mid-Atlantic region is noted here. This list, or one more fine-tuned to the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards soil and climatic conditions, can be developed. Obtaining seed from local and regional sources is desired. The objective is to mix native grasses and wildflowers for the meadows in the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards. All listed wildflowers are perennials, though often annuals are used in the initial seeding and over-seeded for the first few years to provide bloom and more importantly to fill gaps in bare soil that could be targets for undesirable species.

Wildflower Seed: clean, dry, new seed, mixed species potentially the following list:

- 20 percent *Asclepias tuberosa* (Butterfly weed)
- 15 percent *Aster laevis* (Smooth Blue Aster)
- 15 percent *Echinacea purpurea* (Purple coneflower)

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

- 15 percent *Eupatorium coelestinum* (Mist Flower)
- 15 percent *Monarda fistulosa* (Wild Bergamont)
- 10 percent *Rudbeckia hirta* (Black Eyed Susan)
- 10 percent *Solidago nemoralis* (Gray Goldenrod)
- Use 40 percent Wildflower Seed

As planting projects are scoped, scheduled seed availability needs to be arranged. A good source for seeds and plant plugs for meadow areas is Ernst Conservation Seeds, LLP, 9006 Mercer Pike, Meadville, PA 16335; phone 800-873-3321 or 814-336-2404; fax 814-336-5191, website <http://www.ernstseed.com>. If areas to be planted need a quick cover, it may be desirable to substitute seeds for some native grass plugs. Plugs have an advantage in quicker growth, but are more costly and require hand planting. There are several sources that could supply the needed seed or young plugs of preferred meadow plant materials. Plants can be contract grown in three to four months. If the use of plugs is chosen contract growing can be arranged with a conservation plant grower to ensure plant availability when the project goes forward.

## TREE PLANTING GUIDELINES

The Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards woodlands contain many mature trees with limited regeneration. Additionally, recent planting efforts have had variable success. This means that intensive tree planting will need to take place in the future to renew woodland and tree grove character. To ensure that the newly planted trees thrive and that the desired effect is achieved, it is essential that trees are chosen carefully. Trees should be selected according to woodland area, species type, and soil type. Trees should also be obtained in full health, planted appropriately and be provided care for the first three years. This tree planting guidance spells out the preferred protocols for tree planting. Observance of the recommended guidelines during selection, installation, and maintenance will aid in tree planting success.

Trees should be chosen for specific projects by contractors, staff, or volunteers to meet the project objectives. The species chosen for planting in each public landscape should conform to the list of existing trees inventoried and the soils and conditions where they are to be planted. Tree size for a park planting should be fairly substantial; 1 inch to 3 inches in caliper is a good range for public landscape use. Very small trees are more vulnerable to mowing, vandalism, weed growth, improper depth of planting and other potential failure causes. Although larger trees tend to cost more initially, they offer advantages in a public setting. While a smaller-sized tree may be desirable in home setting, a public setting calls for a tree with more presence. If a tree is staked and mulched appropriately, it is less likely to be stepped on or knocked down. Maintenance staff will have an easier time recognizing the trees while mowing, and they will be less likely to unintentionally damage the tree. Additionally, the slightly larger trees will more quickly become a noticeable and valued part of the improved landscape.

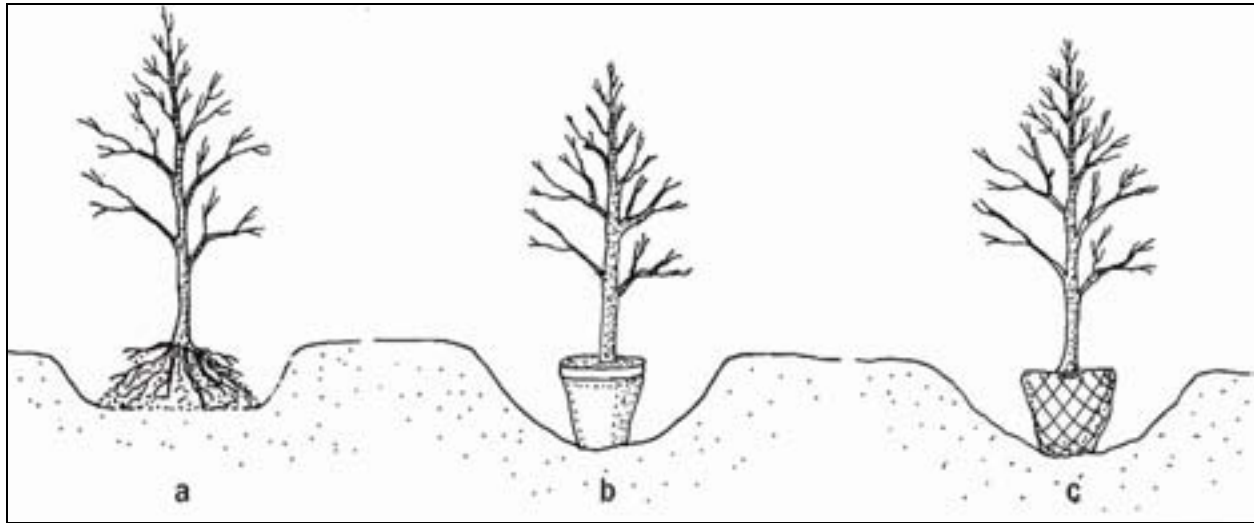
### Tree Types, Similarities & Differences

Trees can be purchased three different ways—bare root, container grown, or ball and burlap. Bare roots trees are shipped from the nursery with bare roots dipped in gel to retain root moisture during transport. As no earth ball encloses the roots, gel-dipping must be specified when ordering bare root

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

trees or significant tree loss will occur. Typically, bare root trees are less expensive to purchase and ship, but demand greater planting care. Container grown trees are trees that have been grown in fabric or plastic containers that enclose the root mass. These trees are typically transplanted from container to container as the tree grows. However, containers can cause circling and limiting root systems as trees are not often upgraded to larger containers when their root systems need more space to grow. Ball and burlap trees (also known as B&B) are typically grown in the ground. When the tree is ready for sale, the root ball is dug and wrapped in burlap. Typically, these trees are the heaviest with a substantial earth ball surrounding the roots that requires substantial effort to plant. Each also requires slightly different planting techniques.



*Trees can be purchased as (a) bare root, (b) container grown, and (c) ball and burlap for planting. All types require slightly different planting techniques, and each should be inspected for trunk and root damage upon planting. Courtesy The Cornell Guide for Planting and Maintaining Trees and Shrubs.*

Though container grown and ball and burlap trees are prevalent throughout the nursery industry, planting bare root trees is becoming more common, as bare root trees have several advantages. A 1 ½ inch bareroot tree is about 10 feet high and weighs about 30 pounds, which can be easily moved and carried by volunteers or staff for simple planting operations. Because of the reduced weight, reduced shipping charges and damages occurs, as damage to nursery growing stock nearly always happens during digging and transporting the trees. Once bare root trees arrive on site, trees are completely open to view and damage to trunks, branches and root masses can be readily seen. When planted, bare root trees adjust immediately to the planting soil rather than forming a root barrier at the edge of the container or ball and burlap soil. Additionally, trees have increasing availability at 1 inch to 1 ¾ inch caliper size for early spring planting before leaves break out.

#### **Tree Inspection**

Healthy trees should be obtained from reputable growers. Inspection of trees upon purchase should examine many factors including trunk form, branch patterns, root vigor and lack of damage. If the caliper of the tree is greater than 2", the trunk should taper some as it extends upward.<sup>iii</sup> The trunk should also flare as it reaches the soil indicating the presence of lateral roots. This area of the plant, referred to as the "root collar," will be mentioned again in the section outlining good planting

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

practices. It is imperative that soil not be piled on the trunk. Additionally, for grafted trees the notched section where the trees have been grafted together should not be included in the root section. This grafted area must remain above soil level. The visible union will disappear (or be significantly reduced) as the tree ages.

The branching patterns of the tree should have adequate spacing between the branch layers, allowing the limbs to grow without crowding. Generally, the tree should emerge from a single main trunk, although some trees have natural multiple trunk clump forms. For single trunk trees well spaced branching should develop high up the trunk. While young trees may branch at 3 to 4 feet above the root flares, most park trees should be trimmed up as they mature to allow people to walk underneath. Trunks that split into multiple trunks in a cluster near each other are more likely to be damaged by ice or high winds.<sup>iv</sup>



*Courtesy Planting Trees and Shrubs for Long-Term Health.*

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

Depending on the type of tree, the root system may appear either coarse with few thick roots or fibrous with a dense root mass. The texture varies but the roots should be directed outward and slightly downward. Circling roots indicate that a plant has either been container-bound for too long or that it was planted too deeply. If a plant has too much soil above its top layer of roots, it will tend to send new roots in an upward, circling direction seeking oxygen and water. This “dysfunctional” root system can create serious problems for the tree as it disrupts the tree’s ability to send nutrients and water through the trunk to the branches and leaves. Circling roots should generally be avoided, or at the very least removed. Trees with evidence of trunk damage, insect and disease infestation, or poor root form with girdling, or circling root forms should be rejected.

#### General Planting Guidelines

Ideally, the planting site should be prepared prior to delivery. Preparation will allow the delivery driver or staff to place the trees as close to the planting location as possible and minimize machinery for transport. Each time machinery is used for transport, the plant is subject to mechanical and handling damage. Planning for the delivery ahead of time can help minimize these risks. Prepare the planting hole and soil for tree planting following these steps:

- In the selected locations, cut a circle six-feet in diameter centered on the tree trunk position. Remove all sod and take to a compost location away from the planting site.
- Prepare a flat-bottomed hole for the trees about 3 to 3 ½-feet wide and 2 feet deep. Use a tarp for piling soil next to the hole for a cleaner planting operation.
- Use a soil probe to determine soil pH. Understand what pH levels the incoming trees prefer. This will vary according to species type. Adjust pH downward (increasing acidity) with aluminum or iron sulfate, or adjust it upward (decreasing acidity) with lime. Mix the chosen supplement into the soil that is waiting on the tarp next to the hole.
- If desired, use *Roots* fertilizer to ensure that the soil contains adequate trace minerals and microbial elements. An organic, slow-release granular fertilizer (i.e. 4-4-4 balanced formula) is also recommended. Quick-release fertilizer should be avoided, as it can burn the roots of the tree if it comes into direct contact with it. Add a pint of each fertilizer type to the soil (the same soil that is temporarily located on the tarp), and mix thoroughly into the pile. Be sure to break up any large clumps of soil so that fertilizer distribution is even. Nutrients may also be added once the plant is established. However, the process of being transplanted is highly stressful for trees and plants. Additional support is often beneficial, especially in areas with nutrient poor soils.

Once the planting holes are prepared, the trees may be delivered. While lightweight bare root and container grown trees can be hand carried with ease, ball and burlap trees of 1 ½ to 3 inch caliper trees are heavy. These heavy trees should be delivered on a small truck, unloaded on a ramp or lift and positioned near their planting locations. A ball cart can be used to move the trees without damaging root ball or trunk. Avoid carrying container grown and ball and burlap trees by the trunk as root breakage can occur and damage the trees.

Upon delivery, determine the root ball height and width. Locating the root flares, the location where the roots flare away from the trunk, help establish the correct planting depth. If using ball and burlap trees, the burlap should be peeled back to locate the root flares. From the top of the root flare, go down about 2” and use this point as the top reference point for depth measurement. The



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

tree will be planted 2 inches above the surrounding grade. Use this reference point to plant the tree at the correct depth. Do not plant the tree too deep with soil above root flares. The root flare will show above the soil when correctly planted. In contrast, a tree planted too high with too much of the root flares showing can survive although it may dry out. A tree planted too low will fail to thrive and may die.



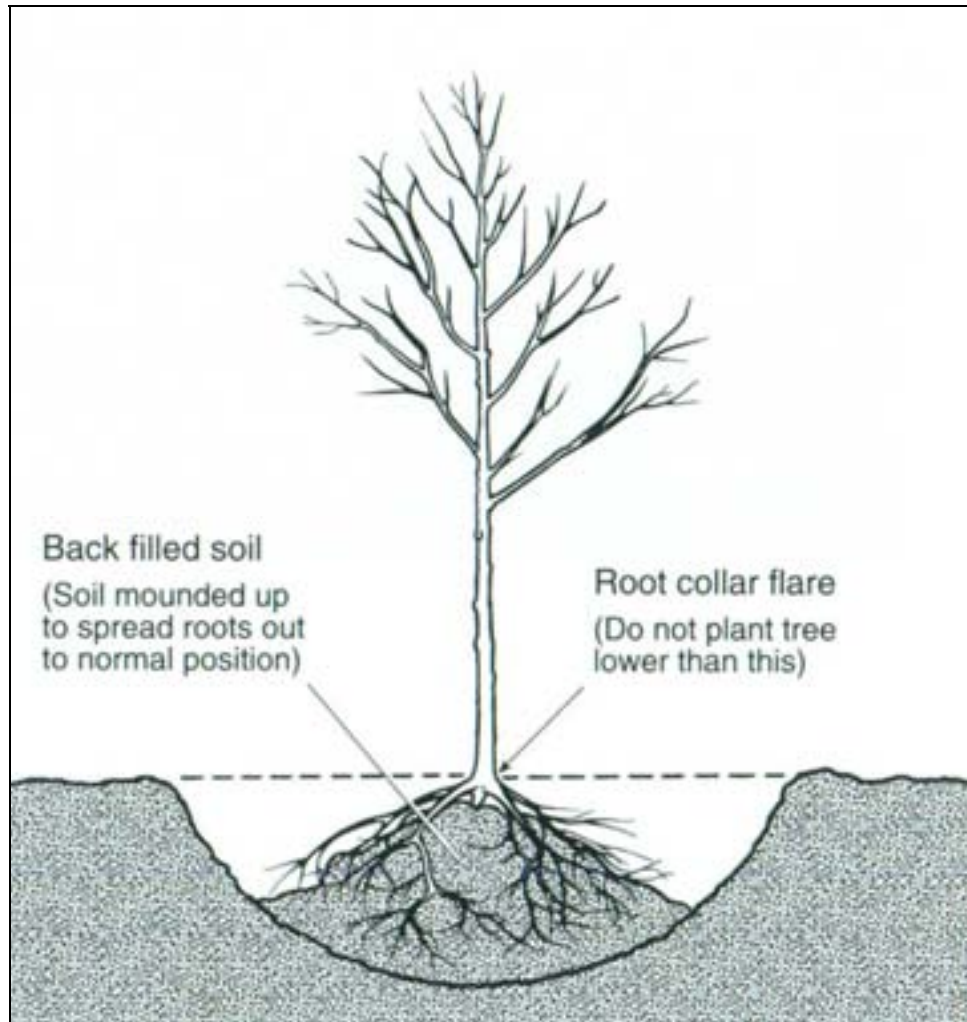
*Bare root trees weigh about 30 pounds per tree and are approximately 10-15 feet tall. Trees are lightweight, easy to handle, and can be moved by one person. Courtesy Heritage Landscapes.*

To insure correct soil depth:

- Dig hole to match root mass or soil ball size adjust width of hole to allow a minimum of 6-inches around the tree on all sides.
- Check hole depth against the roots or soil ball and the dug hole for accuracy before placing plants
- If hole is too deep, replace soil and firmly tamp into bottom of hole to compact at proper depth to avoid tree sinking after planting.
- Place the tree in its prepared hole.

Planting should be carried out in teams of two so that one person mounds and packs the soil while checking tree planting depth and the other holds the tree upright. The backfill soil is placed and tamped halfway full. Fill the hole with water and allow it to be absorbed, then continue to fill and tamp again to reach final soil depth. This will help guarantee good root to soil connection and eliminate air pockets.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines



*When planting bare root trees, the hole should be about 3 to 3 ½-feet wide and 2 feet deep, and the root collar should be located above the soil. Courtesy Planting Trees and Shrubs for Long-Term Health.*

When planting bare root trees, care should be taken to schedule planting promptly after tree delivery. Bare root trees cannot be held long but if necessary can be placed in a refrigerated space with the roots kept moist by packing into mulch material and wetting down with a fine mist. Upon arrival inspect and selectively prune damaged roots before planting. A portion of the root mass showing evidence of disease, damage, or girdling should be removed.

If you receive bare root trees for spring planting, observe the trees in bud condition. Buds should be swollen and ready to break into leaf but not be leafed out. In the case of oaks, birch, and hawthorn, these species may require sweating, a special watering and heating treatment that helps tree growth buds to swell and break dormancy. The grower may carry out this process which requires that the trees be placed on a layer of wood chips, burlap, or other material and doused with water. When ordering, check with the grower to see if this is the case. The wet saplings are then covered with moist burlap and a sheet of thick plastic to retain moisture. Placed in a warm location (45-70 degrees Fahrenheit) out of the direct sunlight, the tree buds will swell. When the buds swell but before the leaves open, carry out the planting.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

For bare root trees fill the hole with a mound in the center that will accommodate the specific root mass of the actual tree to be planted. Tamp the soil mound lightly by hand so that it functions as a support for the loose roots. Position the roots around the tree, and ensure that the tree remains upright. Fill in around the tree using the soil on the tarp. Ensure that the trunk at the point of the root flares is positioned 2 inches above the surrounding soil height beyond the planting hole.



*For container grown trees, carefully remove the tree from the container and loosen roots. If pot-bound slit all four sides and bottom of root ball. Courtesy Planting Trees and Shrubs for Long-Term Health.*

Planting container trees requires special attention to removing the container and opening the root ball. First, check if the trees arrive dry and water them before removing the containers. Trees may be removed from containers by gently pushing on the container and if needed pulling on the trunk. If there are roots coming out of the bottom loosen or trim these roots before attempting to remove the container. Once the root ball has been removed, inspect the root mass for encircling roots and tease them loose. If root circling is a problem, create 1” slits from top to bottom on each quarter of the container soil mass. These slits continued across the bottom of the soil and root mass, forming an X. This root and soil mass slitting will reopen the root mass so that it can grow more readily into the soil at the planting location. The tree may then be placed in a hole at the proper depth or adjusted to the root flare level on the trunk and then back-filled.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

To plant a large, heavy ball and burlap tree, use a wire-cutter to clip away wire baskets or rope. Remove the entire top half of the basket. Cut away as much of the burlap or protective wrap as possible without damaging the root ball. If the tree is heavy and the burlap and wire portion under the tree is not removable, it may be trimmed and tucked down into the soil. Remove as much of the burlap and wire as possible without harming the tree. Material and wires left wrapped around the root ball may inhibit root growth and hinder tree performance. Backfill roughly half of the soil and tamp all the way around the root ball. Finish filling to grade and check that the soil meets the root flare of the trunk and slopes gently away from the tree.



*For ball and burlap trees, move the tree using a tree cart, place in hold, and remove twine, burlap, and wire basket holding the root ball together. As much of the burlap and wire should be removed as possible... Courtesy Planting Trees and Shrubs for Long-Term Health.*

Once the bare root, container grown or ball and burlap tree is planted, form a five inch high watering saucer at the outside diameter of the prepared hole using extra soil. Compact this watering saucer by hand tamping so that it will not break when water is added. Water each tree twice allowing the filled saucer to percolate down once between watering. Adjust soil as needed to address watering related settlement. Double-check that the tree is at the proper elevation with the flared root collar visible at soil surface.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

Place wood chip mulch to depth of 2 to 3 inches within the water saucer and firm into place by hand so that no soil is showing. Taper the mulch down to ½ inch depth at the tree trunk. The purposes of mulch are to retain soil moisture and suppress weed growth. If desired, distribute Treflan, a weed seed sprouting inhibitor, on the surface of the mulch and watering saucer so that the newly planted tree has limited weed competition.

In order to establish young replanted trees, a watering system will need to be devised. Watering of newly planted trees should take place on two week intervals during the first year and in dry conditions in the subsequent two years. After three years, young trees should be watered in drought conditions. This can be carried out using a mobile watering system can be used with a water tank on a truck or a 55 gallon drum pulled behind a golf cart. This type of tank can be filled at a spigot and moved where needed. Initially, a hose connection to a street-front fire hydrant also may be used with permission of local authorities. Emergency watering may be necessary in times of drought. Volunteer labor can be effective for forming bucket brigades if the situation warrants this approach.

The issue of tree staking has been under some scrutiny in recent years. While stakes can hold a tree level for the first year after growth, allowing trees to resist the wind has been shown to aid root development. The objective is to allow trees not more than ten degrees of movement from vertical as they begin to grow. After planting, place two 5-foot high hardwood stakes opposing the prevailing winds to either side, or place three stakes in a triangle. Position stakes upright and firm by sledging into the soil, Place stakes just inside the watering saucer. To support trees at stakes use wire with wide hose or flat webbing fabric covering, never use bare wire that will damage tree trunks. The webbing or hose should be attached to the tree no higher than 1/3 of the way up the young tree trunk.

In high traffic areas wrap hardware cloth completely around the watering saucer and stakes to provide a movement barrier and an animal and mower guard. In areas where pedestrian traffic is not an issue, a hardware cloth trunk protector wrapped about 2 feet high by 8-10 inches in diameter. This galvanized wire mesh material is preferred for tree guards because it allows light and air on the tree trunk not holding moisture as tree wraps do, and it does not provide space for pests to nest that plastic tree guards do. Secure the hardware cloth slightly into the grade. This hardware cloth barrier will safeguard the tree trunk against mower or weed whacker damage, winter cold and animals.

#### **Tree Establishment Care**

Trees require an intensive level of establishment care for the first three years after plantings. A program of inspection, watering, corrective pruning, fertilization, weeding and mulch renewal should be planned and carried out. There are several steps that can be taken to ensure tree health and longevity.

- Supplemental watering is needed at two week intervals for the full growing season after planting and in dry conditions thereafter
- Surface broadcast of fertilizer should be carried out each spring as mulch is renewed and weeds are removed
- Weed tree mulch circle and renew mulch annually by removing old mulch, checking soil depth, exposed to bright sun for several hours to reduce mold and pathogens and replacing with fresh mulch. Too much or too little mulch is detrimental. With an

## WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

### Appendix D: Landscape Renewal Guidelines

- overall depth of 2 to 3 inches, ensure that the mulch is light at the trunk reducing depth to ½ inch
- Stakes should be used for the first year and can be used as support for trees in windy areas for two more years. When the new tree is stable, remove the stakes, wires and hose or webbing guards so that the tree will continue to develop strong anchoring roots.

For at least three years after planting, young trees should be inspected and evaluated twice each year, in early spring and mid-summer. If problems become apparent, corrective action should be taken. As additional guidance, a one page summary at the end of this document provides instructions for ball and burlap elm trees located at another historic property, Shelburne Farms.

Trees are one of the antidotes to global-warming. Planting trees is a visible effort to decrease carbon footprint that can be undertaken by staff and volunteers. Planting trees is a rewarding experience, and seeing planted trees thrive and mature is a joy. The meadows and woodlands in the Fort Wayne Parks and Boulevards deserve an ongoing and effective tree planting effort.

## APPENDIX D: ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> Heritage Landscapes retains authorship and all rights of these guidelines as developed by our office from research and direct project experience.

<sup>ii</sup> *Weed Control Methods Handbook Tools and Techniques for Use in Natural Areas*, by authors Mandy Tu, Callie Hurd, and John M. Randall, April 2001, available on the web at [tncweeds.ucdavis.edu](http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu).

<sup>iii</sup> *The Cornell Guide for Planting and Maintaining Trees and Shrubs*, by authors George L. Good and Richard Weir III, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, n.d.

<sup>iv</sup> *Planting Trees and Shrubs for Long-Term Health*, by authors Rebecca Hargrave, Gary Johnson, Michael Zins, University of Minnesota Extension Service, 2002.

### *Elm Planting & Protection Guidelines*

For establishing new elm trees, and other trees at Shelburne Farms, Heritage Landscapes suggests the following sequence and details:

1. In the selected locations, cut a circle six-feet in diameter centered on the tree trunk position. Remove all sod and take to a compost location, away from the planting site.
2. Use a soil probe to determine soil pH. Elms prefer a slightly acid soil say 6.5 pH, although they will tolerate both mildly acid and mildly alkaline pH levels of about 6.1 to 8.0. Adjust pH downward with aluminum or iron sulfate or upward with lime. Distribute on the planting soil surface and mix in.
3. Prepare a flat-bottomed hole for the elm trees about 3 to 3 1/2-feet wide and 2-feet deep. Use a tarp for piling soil next to the hole for a cleaner planting operation.
4. Have 2 to 2 1/2-inch caliper trees delivered and placed near their respective planting locations or use a ball cart to move them by hand without damage to the root ball.
5. Peel back burlap to see root flares for planting height. Check the ball depth and width with a tape measure and adjust holes. Tamp bottom of hole firm and adjust depth as needed to position root flares 2-inches above surrounding grades. Adjust width of hole as required to allow a minimum of 6-inches around the tree on all sides.
6. Get *Roots* fertilizer for trace minerals and microbial elements and an organic slow release granular fertilizer (i.e. 4-4-4 balanced formula). Use both mixed together at specified rates at the time of planting. Using about a pint of each fertilizer type, broadcast into soil pile and mix-in, breaking up soil to blend before filling planting hole.
7. Place each tree in its hole. With a wire cutter, clip away the wire basket and remove the entire top half of the basket and as much of balance as possible without breaking the root ball.
8. Peel back burlap on top of ball and cut away.
9. Position trunk upright with branching as desired.
10. Begin backfill of soil filling and tamp all the way around the ball. Fill to halfway, tamp and water in, filling hole with water. Allow water to seep in and complete filling to grade to meet root flare and slope gently away from tree.
11. Form 5-inch high watering saucer at about 36 to 42-inches in diameter. Use soil mix and tamp to firm up soil within saucer and around edge out to the six-foot diameter circle edge. Tamp edge of circle to be about 2-inches below grade at surrounding turf.
12. Place wood chip mulch to depth of 2 inches and tamp in place. Distribute weed seed inhibitor over mulch to discourage weed growth around new tree.
13. Water in again filling saucer and firming soil as needed to contain water.
14. Place four 5-foot high stakes around the tree 6-inches beyond the water saucer.
15. Wrap around all the stakes with chicken wire or hardware cloth about 2-feet high to provide a movement barrier in areas of heavy pedestrian traffic.
16. For winter protection from mice bark damage place a hardware cloth tube around the tree trunk with an overlapping joint bent together.

# WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



## *Appendix A: Landscape Chronology*

The Fort Wayne Park system has a fascinating history. From its inception, the Fort Wayne Parks Department strove to establish a unified chain of parks, linking its various communities throughout the City. Each park was developed as a response to a different set of needs, which often included the protection and enhancement of Fort Wayne's natural systems. In the case of Weisser Park, the development of the park arose from a desire to protect the majestic natural environment and subsequently to provide a destination for city residents to socialize and actively engage in the landscape.

The following landscape chronology provides an outline of the development of the Fort Wayne Park System as a whole and includes detailed information regarding the evolution of Weisser Park. Each of the five parks and boulevard for which Heritage Landscapes is producing a cultural landscape report (Weisser, Shoaff, McMillen, and Foster Parks, and Rudisill Boulevard) includes a landscape chronology, which has been developed and organized to incorporate a wide diversity of sources, such as annual reports of the Board of Park Commissioners and of the Fort Wayne City Government; master plans by Charles Mulford Robinson and George E. Kessler; personal correspondences from members of the Weisser Park Community Association; and historical photographs and plans.

Note: As the name of the Department of Parks and Recreation has changed throughout time, Heritage Landscapes has simplified the number of name changes by using two titles. The Parks Department (PD) is used to signify the department name prior to 1950. The title Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is used after 1950.

Original Board of Park Commissioners Members:

- August W. Goers (First Superintendent)
- Colonel David N. Foster
- Oscar W. Tresselt
- Joseph M. Singmaster
- Ferdinand Meier



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

A letter or a combination of letters precedes each date listed in the landscape chronology. This signifies to which park or parks the reference applies. The key should be interpreted as such:

A – All Fort Wayne Park and Boulevard System  
W – Weisser Park  
F – Foster Park  
M – McMillen Park  
S – Shoaff Park  
R – Rudisill Boulevard

\* Need better source or clarification

## See photograph

- Pre-1794 The Fort Wayne area is known as Ke-ki-on-ga, a Native American trading post and village of the Miami tribe.<sup>1</sup>
- A 1794 October 22. Local Native Americans are defeated in battle by the U.S. Army and Fort Wayne is established and named after General Anthony Wayne.<sup>2</sup>
- A1829 Fort Wayne is incorporated as a town with a population of less than 500 people.<sup>3</sup>
- A1840 Fort Wayne is incorporated as a city with a population of 2,050 people.<sup>4</sup>
- A 1863 Henry M. Williams purchases the site of Anthony Wayne’s first fort for \$800 and gives it to the city to create Old Fort Park, the first city park.<sup>5</sup>
- A 1866-1886 Several public parks are created in Fort Wayne including Northside, Swinney, Hayden, Reservoir, and McCulloch Park.<sup>6</sup> Lawton Park, then called North Side Park, is purchased for establishment of the Indiana State Fair Grounds in 1866.<sup>7</sup>
- A 1894 The Park Department (PD) forms under the aegis of the Board of Public Works.<sup>8</sup>
- A 1894 May 28. C. A. Doswell fills the newly created Superintendent of Parks position. The City of Fort Wayne begins “Annual Reports of Head of Directors.”<sup>9</sup>
- A 1895 Col. David Foster heads a committee to investigate the formation of a municipal park board. He believes that Fort Wayne should have a city park within a 10 minute walk of every home.<sup>10</sup>
- A 1896 August W. Goers serves as the first Park Superintendent under the jurisdiction of the Board of Public Works. During his tenure, the parks board is given, purchases, and develops Lawton, Swinney, Reservoir, McCulloch, Hayden, Weisser and Lakeside Parks at a low cost to taxpayers.<sup>11</sup>
- A 1905 March 6. The Board of Park Commissioners forms due to passage of Cities and Towns Law by the state legislature. The law creates a Board of Park Commissioners

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

independent of the Board of Public Works. August W. Goers is chosen as the first Superintendent serving both before and after the Park Board was established.<sup>12</sup> Park Commissioners are appointed to serve four year terms as a service to the community<sup>13</sup> without compensation for efforts.<sup>14</sup> Colonel David N. Foster, Oscar W. Tresselt, Joseph M. Singmaster, and Ferdinand Meier comprise the first board.<sup>15</sup>

- W 1905 The Park Board reports that land in Fort Wayne owned by Magdalene Weisser is “admirably located and well suited for Park purposes.” Because Weisser demonstrates that no agreement can be reached as to the price of the parcel, the Board resolves to condemn the property for park purposes.<sup>16</sup>
- A 1905 In 1905 the park system consists of 8 parks totaling 110 acres.<sup>17</sup>
- A 1906 The PD expresses a future need to provide more public parkland given foreseen population growth for 1910s.<sup>18</sup> The PD begins to secure land for a park in the Lakeside Park Addition.<sup>19</sup>
- A 1908 Superintendent Goers suggests to the mayor that, in addition to neighborhood parks, the city look to acquire a “larger and much more extensive pleasure park for driving, automobiling, golf, tennis, baseball, children’s play grounds and boating.”<sup>20</sup>
- W 1908 Mayor William J. Hosey reports that the city is making arrangements to acquire a tract of land known as the Weisser grove.<sup>21</sup> The tract is the site of a former tannery owned by Manual Weisser.<sup>22</sup>
- W 1908 After much persuasion on the part of the Board of Park Commissioners, the City consents to buy 15 acres of forest from Magdalena Weisser, constituting Weisser Park, for \$10,500.<sup>23</sup> At this time, Weisser Park Avenue bears the name of Force Street, but because of the confusion with the name Forth Street, the road’s name changes to Weisser Park Avenue.<sup>24</sup>
- W/R 1908 *Polk’s Map of the City of Fort Wayne* outlines existing and proposed parks and drives. Weisser Park is extant at that time, and Rudisill Avenue is a proposed boulevard connection.<sup>25</sup>
- A 1909 Annual appropriations for park purposes is \$26,500, out of which \$10,500 was paid for Weisser Park.<sup>26</sup>
- A 1909 The Superintendent’s of Parks Annual report states, that the Department of Public Parks’ nursery “started a few years ago has aptly repaid itself.”<sup>27</sup>
- A 1909 A campaign of civic improvement begins in Fort Wayne. Professor Charles Zueblin of the University of Chicago delivers a series of lecture on municipal improvement. Charles Mulford Robinson, a city planning expert from Rochester, New York, submits his comprehensive plans for the beautification of the city including parks and boulevards.<sup>28</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

- W 1909 Weisser Park is the 12<sup>th</sup> city park in Fort Wayne and encompasses 20 acres.<sup>29\*</sup>
- A 1910 Charles Robinson develops the first comprehensive plan, *The Robinson Plan*, for parks and boulevards in Fort Wayne.<sup>30\*</sup>
- A 1910 In a report for the Fort Wayne Civic Improvement Association, Charles Mulford Robinson notes, "Most persons will say that a park is designed to be beautiful. So it is, but its purpose is also actively to serve. Passive beauty alone must not be the end sought in the system as a whole, and in an industrial city particularly – much more, for example, than in a capital city – there is need that the park system furnish recreative facilities. So the 'improvement' of existing park lands ought not to deal simply with their landscape development."<sup>31</sup>
- A 1910 Over 100,000 plants including “valuable and rare species” raised in the Department of Public Parks greenhouses are planted throughout the city parks.<sup>32</sup>
- A 1910 Recommendations are made to secure equipped and supervised playgrounds in each of Fort Wayne's larger parks. An advisor notes that the city's parks were especially suitable playground sites, given their distribution and comparative nearness to homes; the compactness with which the city was built and difficulty of locating new sites for playgrounds; and the fact that the parks were already publicly owned.<sup>33</sup>
- A 1910 Charles Mulford Robinson submits recommendations to the City of Fort Wayne: 1. "Swinney, Lawton and Weiser [sic] Park need additions of area to correct their boundaries"; 2. "the further development of all the parks should be in accordance with carefully made plans"; 3. "playgrounds are much needed, but for the present there will be advantages in developing these in the parks, even if this has to be done by private initiative; 4. "the best ideals of landscape beauty and social service should obtain in park development". "By no other means," he concluded, "is the higher side of the public life touched so easily, so pleasantly, and in so many ways."<sup>34</sup>
- A 1910 Appropriations to the amount of \$18,791 are made for PD use during the year, including \$384.65 for a New Boulevard along St. Mary's River.<sup>35</sup>
- W 1910 Necessary preparations for future work in Weisser Park are made. “The trees therein were all trimmed and the park cleaned up as much as possible.”<sup>36</sup>
- W 1910 Weisser Park, a newly acquired undeveloped area on the south side of the city, is a beautiful twenty-two acre grove, well located in respect to the homes, and admirably adapted for development as a neighborhood park. Charles Robinson notes that development of the park for neighborhood service should involve, among other things, the provision of opportunities for making fires and simple outdoor cooking. "The safest, least expensive, and most delightful way to provide for this, he noted, "Is by means of little stone or concrete ovens." He also notes that a small playground should also be established on the site.<sup>37</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1911 A new park law gives the PD power to declare park districts and levy taxes on properties within that district for improvements within the taxed area. This is particularly relevant for funding boulevard improvements. The new law is copied from a successful park law in Indianapolis.<sup>38</sup>
- A 1911 March 24. A proposal by landscape architect George E. Kessler presents two options for the City of Fort Wayne: He could be employed in continuous service over several years, or work out a general scheme quickly during the summer of 1911. Kessler is confident that the rushed job could be done “very comfortably,” but he felt that the Board would find the extended option “by far the most satisfactory.”<sup>39</sup>
- A 1911 The Park Commission unanimously votes to recommend to the Board of Park Commissioners the employment of George E. Kessler of St. Louis as the city landscape architect at a salary of \$2,400 for the first year and \$2,000 for the succeeding years, with traveling expenses from Indianapolis and subsistence while in Fort Wayne. The Board votes to employ Kessler on the condition that his salary for the first year be paid from the special fund raised for the purpose of river and park improvement.<sup>40</sup>
- A 1911 George Kessler, city landscape architect and planner, creates a master plan for the park and boulevard system of Fort Wayne. The plan embraces the acquisition of park and parkway lands along the rivers of the city. Lands suggested for purchase are highlighted in orange, while existing parks are highlighted in green. The plan calls to provide the city with river front improvements for a park system of nine miles in length and within easy walking distance of the majority of the population.<sup>41</sup>
- A 1911 Annual appropriations for park purposes is \$27,700, out of which \$2,500 is used for the topographical survey and map of the city’s river banks and abutting property.<sup>42</sup>
- A 1911 An ordinance is introduced regulating the trimming, removal, planting and cutting of trees, shrubs, vines, hedges, and plants within the limits of public streets, alleys, thoroughfares, lawns, and parks. The ordinance confers “authority... upon the Board of Park Commissioners, providing for the issuance of licenses to tree trimmers and the assessment of fines for violation thereof.” The five sections of the ordinance detail the specific rules, specifications, and regulations surrounding these concepts.<sup>43</sup>
- W 1911 Weisser Park contains 14.6 acres.<sup>44</sup>
- W 1911 Kessler recommends adding to Weisser Park by purchasing a strip of land to the north, fronting Eckert Street and a strip of land to the east, fronting Smith Street to provide street frontage on all edges of the park.<sup>45</sup>
- W 1911 Kessler recommends creating a “a boulevard one hundred feet wide running on Hanna Street, shown as Hanna Boulevard” to connect Weisser Park with Reservoir Park and connect the park to the boulevard system.<sup>46</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

- W 1911 Summer. The installation of a water fountain for Weisser Park is discussed, but the purchase is postponed until Spring 1912.<sup>47</sup>
- A/F 1911 Kessler notes that the river bends along the St. Marys and St Joseph Rivers make it possible for the city to acquire large tracts of land for future city parks and playgrounds. He suggests that within these river frontage parks, boulevards should be constructed along both sides of the rivers within the park properties to take advantage of the scenery and divide private and public lands. Placing parks along the rivers will preserve the lands for the enjoyment of the people and allow for connections between existing and new parks.<sup>48</sup>
- F/W/R 1911/2 *Map of the Park and Boulevard System for Fort Wayne, Indiana*, prepared by German planner George E. Kessler, depicts present and proposed parks and parkways. The western edge of Foster Park is slated for a proposed parkway linking it to Swinney Park further north. Weisser Park is shown with an expanded addition of land to the north and east. Rudisill Boulevard is shown as a proposed boulevard.<sup>49</sup>
- A/R/F 1912 George Kessler, city landscape architect, lambastes the city government for relying solely on the generosity of two wealthy citizens without the city itself having the resolve to provide public recreation grounds for its citizens. He concedes in his annual report that communities are reluctant to take on debt burdens and the presence of many conditions that prevent the acquisition of lands required by his plans. He applauds the property owners of Rudisill Boulevard for urging the city to take action on improving Rudisill and Anthony Boulevards. He notes that the improvement of Rudisill will inspire other residential areas to request similar treatment. Regarding Foster Park, Kessler indicates that the city has at once an opportunity for a park supported by “a boating scheme as well as a border boulevard, which will immediately attract to itself a residential section... I do not know of any other one property which would deserve, so much as this, immediate attention and a very considerable improvement.” He proposes continuing a parkway along the St. Mary’s River between Foster and Swinney Parks. Kessler also stresses the importance of a comprehensive scheme of children’s playgrounds.<sup>50</sup>
- A 1912 The PD upper level staff includes George E. Kessler, Landscape Architect; Marriott Price, Engineer; August W. Goers, Superintendent; Lillian C. Busch, Chief Bureau of Assessment; Carl J. Getz, Forester; and Charles J. Steiss, Secretary.<sup>51</sup>
- A 1912 Carl J. Getz, the newly appointed first City Forester, reports that Fort Wayne is fortunate to have few tree diseases. Getz supervises two forces of foresters trained in “practical shade tree preservation” that service the city with two large, single horse wagons. Training consists of “eradication and controlling tree diseases by the employment of power sprays; the symmetrical trimming of street, shade and lawn trees, the pruning of fruit trees, planting and transplanting of shade trees; tree surgery, etc.”<sup>52</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1912 Spring. At the request of the Board of Park Commissioners, the City Council divides the city into four park districts roughly bounded by Calhoun Street North and South, and by the Pennsylvania and Wabash Railroads East and West.<sup>53</sup>
- A 1912 The Board of Park Commissioners desires parks with large forest areas for the provision of shade, “without which park areas are of little use.”<sup>54</sup>
- A 1912 March 9. A formal application to the Council asking for a \$200,000 bond issue is drafted by Park Board President Foster and approved and signed by Board members. The document reads, “The civic improvement committee and the special advisory committee appointed at a mass meeting of Fort Wayne citizens to assist in devising the best method to carry out the park and river improvements, recommended by Landscape Architect George E. Kessler, have united in a unanimous request... that it ask your honorable body to issue the sum of \$200,000 in bonds, the proceeds of which to be used in acquiring ownership of our river banks and, as a rule, inexpensive parks and park strips contiguous thereto and such other park properties as there may be left to acquire.” The Park Board examines the river banks and makes a cost estimate for acquiring parks, park strips, and river banks. The final estimate is accompanied by three maps, each some fifteen feet long, showing in detail the grounds proposed to purchase should the issue of bonds be made.<sup>55</sup>
- A 1912 Because only eight of the city’s ten wards are along the river banks, the Park Board proposes that a portion of money derived from the sale of bonds for park and river improvements should be used for the purchase of a large park of 90 to 100 acres, to be located in the southeast park district.<sup>56</sup>
- A 1912 July 12. Detailed rules governing the planting, trimming and removal of trees are adopted. The rules are established in great depth and comprised a variety of considerations including, for example, a prohibition on tying horses to city shade trees and a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of various tree types.<sup>57</sup>
- A 1912 Superintendent Goers reports that 2500 shrubs were set out in the fall, in the city’s various parks.<sup>58</sup> He also instructs to plant Mulberry trees in the parks.<sup>59</sup>
- A 1912 December. After two years of delayed laws and actions, the Board of Park Commissioners presents George E. Kessler’s suggestions and plans for the purchase of river front property and adjacent vacant lands to the public in 1913. Rising property rates create a sense of urgency for land acquisition.<sup>60</sup>
- F/W 1912 May 4. Superintendent Goers reports that men are clearing Foster Park, with work expected to be complete by mid-May. In addition, he orders swings to be erected in Foster and other parks, and several lunch tables and seats to be erected in Foster and Weisser Parks.<sup>61</sup>
- F/W 1912 May 18. New benches are placed in the Foster and Weisser Parks. Twenty-four benches are installed in Foster Park and twelve in Weisser Park.<sup>62</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- W 1912 Early Spring/May 11. Dept. of Public Parks removes a large tree from the baseball diamond at Weisser Park.<sup>63</sup> Trees are cut down and stumps removed in the Weisser Park baseball diamond.<sup>64</sup>
- W 1912 Improvements to Weisser Park by the Dept. of Public Parks include the construction of a tennis court and a number of benches and tables. Future plans for the park include the construction of a comfort station. Weisser Park Avenue is paved up to the park. Excess soil from the paving is used as fill to raise the elevation of the park along Hanna Street.<sup>65</sup>
- W 1912 The value of the original 15-acre Weisser Park, purchased in 1908 for \$10,500, more than doubles.<sup>66</sup>
- W 1912 The Weisser Park property is considered one of the most beautifully wooded pieces of park property that the city owns. The Park Commissioners intend to double the size of the park by purchasing surrounding land.<sup>67</sup>
- A 1913 March. Extensive flooding in Fort Wayne focuses public attention on flood protection and leads to the creation of the River Improvement Association.<sup>68</sup>
- A 1913 Park use in Fort Wayne increases as parks are continually used by residents. The Park Commissioner Secretary reports that “2619 tennis court permits were issued; 273 for baseball games; 41 for foot ball; of picnics, socials and family reunions there were an average of nearly two per day.”<sup>69</sup>
- A 1913 The Park Commissioners reports that the “purpose of the park commission [is] to make the parks of Fort Wayne not simply pictures of beauty, but to make them active agencies of social service. As public places they perform a service and have an effect, greater perhaps than we can measure, upon the tired nerves and brains of the thousands of people who visit them. The park area should be increased to a proportion of one acre to every hundred of population... [for an] acreage of seven hundred, while now we only have two hundred and twenty-seven.”<sup>70</sup>
- F/W 1913 American Coaster slides are placed in Foster Park and Weisser Park. Funds are donated by Mrs. Fred T. Tresselt for the slide in Foster Park and the Berghoff Brewing Association for the slide at Weisser Park.<sup>71</sup>
- F/W 1913 Tennis courts are constructed at Foster and Weisser Parks.<sup>72</sup>
- W 1913 Improvements at Weisser Park include the construction of a comfort station (\$1,100) and sewer and water main work (\$500). General park system improvements consist of repairs to tennis courts, baseball diamonds, drinking fountains, wading pools, and sandboxes.<sup>73</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1914 Forty band concerts are given in the parks, five in each of the eight larger parks, with a total attendance of 50,000 people. Park improvements include the addition of a sanitary public comfort station, sewer, water main, drinking fountain and additional lights at Weisser Park; extension of water mains, construction of a wading pool, a drinking fountain and grading and graveling of additional foot paths at Foster Park; and a large amount of filling on the west side of Broadway south of the Bluffton Road bridge, with the view of making a park strip approach to the entrance to Foster Park.<sup>74</sup>
- A 1914 The Parks Board decides to increase the number of tennis courts and baseball diamonds after “The demand for tennis courts and baseball diamonds exceeded the facilities provided....”<sup>75</sup>
- A 1914 Carl J. Getz assumes the role of Park Superintendent (1914-1917), replacing August W. Goers, who retires but remains the Assistant Superintendent. The Superintendent's job description and duties are combined with that of the City Forester.<sup>76</sup>
- A 1914 Sanitary drinking fountains are placed in all parks.<sup>77</sup>
- W 1914 Utility improvements are needed at Weisser Park. Erection of a sanitary public comfort station necessitates 750 feet of sanitary sewer line and a 793 feet of water line for a total cost of \$510.35. The comfort station is rough, dark red-faced brick with a red tile roof and exposed wood work painted a dark green.<sup>78</sup>
- W 1914 A plan is suggested to acquire five acres to the south of Weisser Park and five acres to the north. The plan recommends opening Gay Street and selling of a tier of lots at east end of the park to meet a part of this expense. The purchase of acres to the north would expand the park property to the center of Eckhart Street and remove barns, outhouses, and other nuisances along that side, leaving the residences on the north side of Eckhart Street fronting the park. The same would be accomplished to the south. The gain in ground would be a little over six acres, making the park a better shape and increasing acreage to over 21 acres instead of the 15 at present. Plan at a cost to the property holders of the southeast park district is of no more than \$5.00 per lot.<sup>79</sup>
- A 1915 The Fort Wayne Parks System is praised in a local magazine. “Few cities in this country of the size of Fort Wayne, can boast of so complete and so well distributed a park system as has already been secured for the city ... It is the aim of Fort Wayne’s Board of Park Commissioners to eventually secure for our city so complete and so well distributed a system of public parks that one will be located within ten minutes’ walk of every resident of the city.”<sup>80</sup>
- A 1915 Attendance in the parks increases tenfold over the past decade. Twenty tennis courts are maintained, six baseball diamonds, benches, picnic tables, pavilions, refectories, wading pools, basketball courts, swings, play apparatus, sanitary drinking fountains,



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

and sanitary public comfort stations are provided or soon will be in all the larger parks.<sup>81</sup>

A 1915 Fort Wayne's population of 74,352 exceeds the population of Evansville to become "Indiana's Second City."<sup>82</sup>

A 1915 Circa. American Chestnut Blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*) affects Indiana.<sup>83</sup>

A 1915 The Report of the Board of Park Commissioners realizes the importance of parks stating, "Considered from this point of view ornamental streets or boulevards and public gardens, well equipped with trees, shrubbery and flowers, are not luxuries but necessary elements in the great work of advancing the general happiness of the citizen. They tend to meet a human want by increasing for everybody the opportunities for enjoying that which is beautiful in nature."<sup>84</sup> "The paramount purpose of parks and park systems, therefore, is to offer to all the citizens, young and old, ample opportunities for innocent pleasures and for such healthful exercise as will strengthen and promote the physical well-being of the participants."<sup>85</sup>

A 1915 The Park Board states that sufficiently large and equipped parks should be near the homes of people: "Extensive park areas fit for occasional excursions, outings, and for driving may be located at some distance outside of the city limits; but the recreational parks, destined to be used often—daily if possible—by women and children and by the citizens of slender means, should be developed in the very heart of our residential districts."<sup>86</sup>

W 1915 Weisser Park receives a regulation base ball diamond with a substantially constructed back stop. Trees that interfere with the field are removed.<sup>87</sup>

W 1915 Efforts to enlarge Weisser Park begin. However, opposition grew and the office of the Park Board rescinded their resolution. As a result additional tennis courts could not be installed for lack of space.<sup>88</sup>

A 1916 October. A city planning exhibit is held under the auspices of the Woman's Club League. The exhibit is organized by John E. Lathrop, director of the city planning department of the American City Bureau. Following the exhibit, an automobile tour of the city is led by Lee J. Ninde, president of the Indian Real Estate Exchange.<sup>89</sup>

A 1916 Report of the Board of Parks Commissioners recommends: "We could quadruple with profit the facilities our parks now afford for skating, tennis, basket ball, base ball, croquet, etc., and we ought speedily to add boating, swimming, and much additional play apparatus, and greatly increase our facilities for securing light refreshments, and add supper conveniences, such as are demanded for family reunions and those of church and fraternal organizations. The band concerts we have provided throughout the summer season have been enjoyed by many thousands, and are to be continued in the coming year."<sup>90</sup> The report also states the necessity for

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

more base ball diamonds and tennis courts in the parks. Acquisition of sufficient open park area for a public golf links as soon as possible is important. More play apparatus should also be installed, including at least one sand box in each of the larger parks. "These improvements should be made as speedily as funds permit until our parks, the people's playgrounds, have been equipped to the fullest extent possible. Recreation in all proper forms in our parks tends to endear them to the people."<sup>91</sup>

- A 1916 Report of the Board of Parks Commissioners states "Exactly what our park and boulevard system represents as an asset to the city, is not generally understood. It may be a surprise to many of our citizens to learn that the value of the park and boulevard lands is approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars."<sup>92</sup>
- F/W 1916 The Park Board reports, "The base ball diamonds in Lawton, Weisser and Foster parks were placed in the pink of condition." Posts are installed along the side line through which a 5/8 inch rope was strung to keep crowds out of bounds. Two substantial player benches are made for each diamond, and regulation canvas bases and rubber home plates are purchased. These three diamonds are the scene of the Shop League Series. Additional tennis courts are planned and maintenance of those already constructed promised.<sup>93</sup>
- F/W 1916 While most of the early forests which covered Western Ohio and Eastern Indiana are gone, in Foster Park and Weisser Park, "a few of these century old trees have escaped the woodman's axe, and still remain to furnish us with a suggestion of 'God's first temples.'"<sup>94</sup>
- W 1916 Weisser Park is enlarged by five acres to the north, to the centerline of Eckart Street. A two-story pavilion is planned.<sup>95</sup>
- A 1917-1918 The U.S. is involved in World War I, which causes anti-German sentiment to progress throughout the nation and Fort Wayne.
- A/W 1917 City Forester and Park Superintendent Carl Getz heads up the Weisser Park improvements. On July 1, 1917, Getz resigns as Park Superintendent and begins work for Hilgemann and Schaff, a local suburban developer.<sup>96</sup>
- A 1917 The state legislature passes a park law that enables cities to bond up to a percentage of the park lands assessed value. This provides funding for city parks for the next several decades.<sup>97</sup>
- A 1917 Adolph Jaenicke ascends to the position of Superintendent of Parks and City Forester. As his career progresses, he is known as the "city beautifier" because of his achievements with Jaenicke Gardens, the Rose Garden in Lakeside Park and the Children's Flower Growing Association.<sup>98</sup>
- A 1917 An annual report inventory lists 14 tennis courts in the city.<sup>99</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1917 Report of the Board of Parks Commissioners states, “Until the close of the war with the central powers of Europe, in which our country is now engaged, it will not be the policy of this Board to undertake any considerable amount of new work requiring payment by special assignment. We do, however, contemplate the opening of a 100 foot boulevard from the Broadway pumping station one mile south to the St. Mary’s River, at which point the county commissioners are expecting to shortly erect a new bridge to connect with the highway on the south bank, thus giving a much needed shorter approach to the city from that direction ... This Boulevard will strike, at the St. Mary’s river, the far end of Foster Park and thus add to its accessibility. It is expected the Broadway street car line will eventually be extended along this Boulevard to the river.”<sup>100</sup>
- A 1917 Report of the Board of Parks Commissioners states “The writer has never seen anywhere such a disposition to the “Cow-Path Habit” as in our city. It is really disheartening to see the people walking upon the grass and making these ‘cow-paths’ in the immediate vicinity of a walk that is provided for them. The custodians of the different parks will be instructed to endeavor to break up this miss-use of our lawns the coming season.”<sup>101</sup>
- A 1917 Report of the Board of Parks Commissioners notes that Troy, NY lost 1500 large elm trees in one year. The report recommends “Only concerted action can save the trees in this city. The Council should pass an ordinance to have the city trees regularly cared for by creating a fund and turning the care of the trees over to the Park Board.” The report recommends that street trees should be planted, sprayed and pruned by the Forestry Department (a branch of the Park Department). The ordinance prohibiting the planting of trees other than those permitted by the present law should be strictly enforced. Another ordinance should be passed forbidding the planting of wild trees from the woods.<sup>102</sup>
- W 1917 Plans for upcoming improvements are set down: additional trees, shrubs, and flowers to be planted; a junior baseball diamond to be laid out; two picnic grounds provided; decorative plantings made around new two-story pavilion and the western entrance to the park; additional tennis grounds and play apparatus installed; parking arranged for automobiles and other vehicles.<sup>103</sup>
- W 1917 The cost of Weisser Park enlargement is \$32,607.25, paid for by special assessment on benefited property. A two-story refectory and shelter house is erected at a cost of \$3,300; the seven houses which stood on the recently acquired ground are sold and removed; the cellars under them filled; the grounds graded and seeded; new walks are constructed and additional shrubbery planted (for \$2,000).<sup>104</sup>
- A 1918 The first public swimming pool opens in Lawton Park.<sup>105</sup>
- A 1918 State-wide prohibition laws pass in Indiana.<sup>106</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1918 Fort Wayne has seventeen parks covering 325 acres, with one acre of park land to each 361 inhabitants. The cost is now \$190,000 and value is \$1,100,000. This is an increase from 1916, when Fort Wayne had seventeen parks covering 228 acres, with a population per acre of 363 people. The cost of grounds and buildings was \$80,978, and the value totaled \$700,000. Fort Wayne was third in acre average to population in the state of Indiana, following Indianapolis and South Bend.<sup>107</sup>
- A 1918 Adolph Jaenicke, Park Superintendent and City Forester, notes “our trees... need badly a thorough pruning and spraying. It is disgraceful to see so many trees with broken and dead limbs hanging down. I would urge the Park Board to try to pass a more stringent tree ordinance, so that all the trees of the City may be looked after systematically, at least once a year.”<sup>108</sup>
- W 1918 May 4. The Board of Park Commissioners contracts with Frank Harkenrider as a concessionaire to provide lunch, popcorn, candy, ice cream, cigars, pop, and other light refreshments in the pavilion in Weisser Park for the sum of \$5.00 per week. The concessionaire is prohibited from “hauling ice cream etc. up to the pavilion with a team and wagon, or in any way damage the park grounds.”<sup>109</sup>
- W 1918 Grass is planted on the new addition to Weisser Park, and trees, shrubs, and flowers were planted. New walks had been laid out but could not be finished due to deficiency of funds.<sup>110</sup>
- A 1919 Winter. Indiana Legislature enacts an increased levy for park purposes from five to nine cents to a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty cents.<sup>111</sup>
- A/F/W 1920 214 dead trees are removed from parks and along city streets, nearly all of which were killed by the scale. In Weisser Park, seventy-two dead trees were removed, and in Foster Park, forty-six, all of which were killed by insect pests. At least 300 more dead trees are still standing at the beginning of 1921. “We must enlighten our citizens as to the danger caused by insects to our trees, or else we shall have an epidemic of wholesale tree destruction such as they have had in some of our eastern cities.”<sup>112</sup>
- F/W 1920 The Board of Park Commissioners reports that more drinking fountains are needed, especially near baseball diamonds and tennis courts. In addition, the Board recommended the installation of more baseball and tennis facilities, including three new tennis courts each in Lawton Park, Weisser Park, Pontiac Place, and Foster Park.<sup>113</sup>
- F/W 1920 The Board of Park Commissioners recommends that trees should be planted in all the Fort Wayne parks, “especially Foster, West Swinney and Weisser Parks”. In addition, the Board notes that playgrounds should be established in Foster Park in 1921.<sup>114</sup>
- A 1921 Recommendation from the Board of Park Commissioners to add two tracts of land to the park system: 120 acres between the present line of Foster Park and Broadway

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

extended south of the St. Mary's River (to be specially adapted for a public golf course); and a 100 acre wooded tract in the southeast part of the city, near the International Harvester Company.<sup>115</sup>

- W 1921 Citizen petition for a swimming pool at Weisser Park.<sup>116</sup>
- W 1921 Two new tennis courts are constructed in the fall at Weisser Park and 250 trees are planted.<sup>117</sup>
- A 1921 The Forestry Department secures about 7,000 trees from the sale of a nursery near Indianapolis. Most of these trees are set out in the different parks with the balance put into the city's nursery. "A pitiful condition existed in Fort Wayne in regard to our trees between the curb and sidewalk." We have 55,000 trees along our streets and they are, without exception, affected by different kinds of scale."<sup>118</sup>
- F/W 1921 Football games are held in Foster and Weisser Parks.<sup>119</sup>
- A 1921 Recommendations are made to obtain additional playground apparatus for all the different parks and to approach the Council about buying suitable land for a golf course in Fort Wayne. The Foster Park neighborhood is suggested as suitable.<sup>120</sup>
- A 1922 The Board of Parks Commissioners notes the importance of parks with "Park acquisition and park beautification is as old as the history of the human race. Not many of us realize that God Almighty was the first great landscape architect ... He knew the value of river banks, and we may be sure He did not leave them in the unsightly condition of ours in Fort Wayne."<sup>121</sup>
- W 1922 Several improvements at Weisser Park are made. Two new tennis courts are finished and put into operation, an outdoor kitchen is built for picnics, and ground around the baseball diamond is re-graded with drain pipes laid. Additionally, extensive flower gardens are planted on the west side of the park, new play devices are installed; and the refectory is repaired.<sup>122</sup>
- A 1922 Fred B. Shoaff is appointed to the Board of Park Commissioners.<sup>123</sup>
- W 1923 More work is done at Weisser Park than at any other city park. Flower beds are enlarged with one large carpet bed containing 6,000 plants, for a total of 22,000 plants set out in the park. A new music stand is erected with an evergreen plantation in front, roads are graded and graveled, tennis courts are constructed, and the pavilion is painted. "Weisser Park is a very important link in our chain of parks throughout the city."<sup>124</sup>
- W 1924 Board of Park Commissioners report states that Weisser Park contains 20 acres obtained through purchase.<sup>125</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- W 1923-1925 Ornamental flower gardens become popular at public parks such as the Sunken Garden and Rose Garden at Lakeside Park.<sup>126</sup>
- W 1924 November 25. The Weisser Park Community Association calls on the Board of Park Commissioners to complete the “ornamental lighting” around the park. According to the letter, “This improvement is included in the original plan of Weisser Park and has been promised the residents of this district since the establishing of Weisser Park.”<sup>127</sup>
- W 1925 A peony garden is planted on the northeast end of Weisser Park. “The citizens of Fort Wayne seem to be deeply interested in this beautiful flower.”<sup>128</sup>
- W 1925 August 3. DP carries out requests by the Weisser Park Community Association for Weisser Park improvements including repairs to swings and ladder, the fountain pavilion windows and lights, bandstand railing, refreshment stand, fireplaces and benches. Gravel is added at the pavilion and along drive and walks. Stumps are removed near the pavilion, bandstand, and at the back part of the park. The bandstand and benches are painted, and an old fence is removed.<sup>129</sup>
- W 1926 17,082 boys and 11,400 girls, for a total of 28,482, attend the public playgrounds in Weisser Park.<sup>130</sup>
- A 1926 The boulevard system, a subject to which the Park Board has paid much attention in recent years, is extended, improved, and beautified.<sup>131</sup>
- W 1926 All of Weisser Park’s 20 acres had been acquired through purchase.<sup>132</sup>
- A 1927 Fort Wayne issues the first bonds to raise capital for park improvements.<sup>133</sup>
- W 1927 Weisser Park is a favorite picnic ground in Fort Wayne, with one to three picnics held weekly. Picnickers often arrive in such high numbers that the park cannot accommodate them. New features are being added to the park, including tennis courts and a junior baseball diamond. The playground in the park is the most popular in the city. In addition, 1927 is the second year of the peony gardens in Weisser Park.<sup>134</sup>
- W 1927 All of Weisser Park’s 20 acres had been acquired through purchase.<sup>135</sup>
- A 1928 Arthur Shurcliff, landscape architect, is hired by the city to survey the existing park system.<sup>136</sup>
- W 1928 The steady and growing demand for picnics and entertainments in Weisser Park causes overcrowding. Throngs of park-goers overwhelm the park’s facilities to such an extent that the Superintendent of Parks notes, “We must look for an extension or rather an addition to this park in the very near future.”<sup>137</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- W 1928 15,000 plants are planted in the spring and “yet there was a demand for more”. Weisser Park is the “park for our working people and nobody has an idea how much they appreciate it.”<sup>138</sup>
- A 1929 A 1911 amendment to the Indiana Cities and Towns Act of 1905 made it obligatory on the City Council to include on its annual levy a sum of not less than five cents nor more than nine cents on each \$100 of the city’s assessed valuation, the fund thus derived to be expended under the judgment of the Board for park purposes. As a result, a friendly rivalry springs up between cities striving to excel in park acquisition and improvement.<sup>139</sup>
- A 1929 The city has an option upon an 80 acre tract of land, half timbered and half cleared, in the southeast section of the city at \$750.00 per acre. Around 1910, this land was indicated by celebrated landscape engineer George E. Kessler as an optimal site for a city park. The Park Commissioners in 1929 feel that the city should purchase the land: the timbered forty for shade during the heated term and the cleared forty for tennis courts, baseball diamonds, a football field, and a running course.<sup>140</sup>
- A 1930 The Superintendent of Parks and City Forester comments, “There never was a more disastrous year in the growing of plants and trees than the year of 1930.” “However,” he adds, “as this cannot be changed, we will try to do our best to improve the existing conditions.” The very cold spring’s night frosts ruined the city’s tulip beds, and the spring show of plant bulb exhibits couldn’t be enjoyed.<sup>141</sup>
- W 1930 Weisser Park is “the best known and most beloved” in the Fort Wayne park system. It serves as a gathering place for the local neighborhood, as well as picnic grounds for all the city’s religious denominations. The playgrounds are very popular among children and the tennis courts are well-maintained and widely used. The baseball diamond is reserved every afternoon and evening. The greatest attraction is the peony garden, which comprises the largest collection of peonies in any city park in the state of Indiana with over 250 varieties.<sup>142</sup>
- A 1930 The Park Police are commissioned to patrol parks.<sup>143</sup>
- W 1931 On petition of taxpayers in the neighborhood of Weisser Park, a meeting room is built under the music stand for the daily gathering of the city’s working people. The room has become a popular gathering place, and “they appreciate more and more the efforts of the Park Board to give them what they want, namely, entertainment for those who cannot afford to go away from Fort Wayne.”<sup>144</sup>
- W 1931 The baseball diamonds and tennis courts are occupied from morning to night in Weisser Park, reinforcing the Park Board’s claim that more playgrounds, tennis courts, and base ball diamonds are needed. The diamonds are considered the best in the Fort Wayne area, and the two new junior base ball diamonds are always in use. Two tennis courts are constructed in the wooded part of the park and used primarily

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

by children, not “real tennis players”. The four main tennis courts are kept in top condition and used for championship games and interscholastic meets.<sup>145</sup>

- W 1931 The peony gardens are extended and new varieties added, thereby making the gardens the most complete in the Midwest.<sup>146</sup>
- W 1931 Weisser Park is overcrowded with picnickers and social gatherers from Fort Wayne and neighboring states, including Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois.<sup>147</sup>
- W/M 1931 The Superintendent of Parks reports that “Weisser Park is much too small” and expresses hope that the citizens of Fort Wayne will put pressure on the city to acquire property that has been set aside in the southeastern section of the city, known as Brames Woods, which would soon be developed as McMillen Park. In the past few years, some members of the community pushed for a swimming pool in the small park. The Park Board consented and, just before the project was set to begin, the Weisser Park Community Association announces that it, in fact, changed its mind and did not want the pool. They explain that “there was quite a negro settlement in the ward and as citizens and taxpayers colored people would have the right to use it. The Association fears that such use would be “distasteful to white people”. No swimming pool is constructed: a move that the Superintendent believes saved Weisser Park because the pool was too large for the small park. Brames Woods, he argues has “plenty of room for a good, substantial swimming pool”.<sup>148</sup>
- A 1931 The Forestry Department reports that the city has too many poplar and soft maple trees. Because it represents an expensive undertaking, the Federated Relief Agency offers assistance and over 1,500 poplar trees are cut down without any cost to the Park Board or property owners.<sup>149</sup>
- A 1931 The department of Tree Preservation asserts that it can not adequately serve the needs of the city’s street trees and requires additional money for pruning and spraying.<sup>150</sup>
- A 1931 The Superintendent of Parks reports that, despite decreased funding, the city is able (with the aid of the Federated Relief Agency) to do more than expected.<sup>151</sup>
- A 1931 The Park Commissioners report that 1931 was a record year for the city’s parks. Great economic distress and unemployment in the community meant that “at no time... have the recreational features of our parks been so generally enjoyed.” With the exception of golf, no fees are charged for the use of park grounds or amenities.<sup>152</sup>
- A 1931 Recreational facilities in the Fort Wayne parks include 56 tennis courts, 7 baseball diamonds, 2 swimming pools, 14 supervised playgrounds, 2 bridle paths, and 21 horseshoe courts.<sup>153</sup>
- A 1931 In early 1931, 21 horseshoe courts are established in 7 of the city’s larger parks: Foster, Franke, Lawton, Memorial, East Swinney, Lakeside, and Weisser.<sup>154</sup>



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1932 The work of constructing a river boulevard and parkway along the east and west sides of the St. Joseph River northward of the city began in 1931 and is resumed in early spring, 1932. In a short period of time, the project succeeds in blotting out approximately ten acres of “the most unsightly river bank land to be found anywhere in our city and out of it [make] a river driveway and park of surpassing beauty.” According to the Superintendent of Parks, the work opens the public’s eyes to the potential of the river bank as a community asset.<sup>155</sup>
- W 1932 A large room constructed under the music pavilion in Weisser Park, used in the winter by unemployed citizens for card playing, checkers, etc., proves extremely popular. The room is kept “in perfect cleanliness” by those who use it, and the Park Board needs only furnish light and wood for heat.<sup>156</sup>
- W 1932 The peony garden of four hundred varieties is a popular attraction among the thousands of visitors to Weisser Park.<sup>157</sup>
- W 1932 Weisser Park boasts an ideal supervised playground for the city’s children, despite limited acreage. A great number of people enjoy the small park every day in the summer months. The Board of Park Commissioners noted that “When times become better we hope there will be a nearby park about two miles away to give an outlet for larger picnics and then the southeast side of our city will be taken care of.”<sup>158</sup>
- A 1933 Annual Reports from the Board of Park Commissioners are discontinued through 1946 due to the need for public conservation on account of the Great Depression and, later, World War II.<sup>159</sup>
- A 1933 A debate emerges at the annual meeting of the Indiana Association of Park Departments over whether or not to sell “3.2 beer” in the parks. Colonel Foster comments, “Our Park Board in Fort Wayne has not thought it wise to give our golf professional the privilege of selling that new ‘soft drink’. We have been a little afraid that it was just not the thing to put before our boys and girls. Perhaps the time may come when me [sic] might regard it as a soft drink... At any rate we have not felt we have wanted to permit the sale of 3.2 in our parks and on our golf course.”<sup>160</sup> Mr. Byron Hattersley adds, “I do not believe that beer should be sold in our parks with the exception of our golf course. If we do not sell beer at our golf course, we are apt to lose patronage because the other golf courses serve it, I cannot see any objection for a family picnic to take beer with them.”<sup>161</sup>
- A 1933 The issue of children on tennis courts is discussed at the annual meeting of the Indiana Association of Park Departments. Fred Shoaff explains that Fort Wayne Board of Park Commissioners’ policy is to allow children under the age of twelve to play until noon every day with the exception of Sundays and holidays.<sup>162</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

- A 1933 Race is an issue in the parks. A delegate to the 1933 annual meeting of the Indiana Association of Park Departments asks if rules concerning children on tennis courts also apply to “colored people”. Mr. Jaenicke replies, “The colored people are naturally born lazy and do not like any strong exertion. We have very few colored people playing tennis and we have never had in all this time any complaint from them. We have Japanese people, and they play tennis very well.” He added that if “colored” people should come to the courts, the policy was to “make them feel at home... do not oppose them, but try to please them.”<sup>163</sup>
- A 1933 The Board of Park Commissioners receives from their Park levy only about half what they formerly received and lacks the funds to provide necessary watchmen for their parks. As a result, they are unable to control abuse of park property such as adults breaking playground apparatus for children and families swimming in lily ponds among delicate and valuable species.<sup>164</sup>
- A 1933 The Board of Park Commissioners laments the great burden that is put upon them when the City Council requests that the Board take over the care and protection of the city’s over 50,000 street trees. Until that time, little municipal attention was paid to their maintenance, and they became so badly infested with worms and scale that many were dying.<sup>165</sup>
- A 1933 Appropriations for the Park Department are cut so dramatically that “every possible economy had to be applied for the most necessary repair work”, including park upkeep, playgrounds, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, and the city Forestry Department.<sup>166</sup>
- W 1933 Weisser Park is the most widely used park in Fort Wayne. Many visitors enjoy picnics, baseball, tennis, and other playground recreation, as well as the very popular peony garden. The park is crowded and the Superintendent of Parks comments, “The time is coming... when we will have to get a new and larger park for the eastern part of the city.”<sup>167</sup>
- W 1933 The Community Association sponsors the *News-Sentinel* Boys’ Band concert in Weisser Park.<sup>168</sup>
- A 1934 Parks Commissioner Fred B. Shoaff is elected president.<sup>169</sup>
- W 1938 May 22. A letter by Herman H. Gerdom, President of the Weisser Park Neighborhood Association, to the Board of Park Commissioners requests that no softball games be permitted in the vicinity of Eckart Street as several persons have been hit by balls being batted over the backstop. A paved walk is also requested that parallels the peony garden and is in line with Gay Street. Gerdom also acknowledges work done by the Board in the park, “That we express our sincere thanks for your honorable body for the setting of a line of posts along the east line of the park, which prevents the misuse of that section of the park as a parking place for mil trucks. We also suggest that a row of high growing shrubs be planted along this line in order to

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

hide the garbage cans and ash piles, which we have requested the residents in this vicinity to clean up, so that it may conform with the beauty of the park in general. Also for the planting of many trees, which will in due time keep the park a popular wooded spot.”<sup>170</sup>

- W 1939 April 26. The Weisser Park Community Association argues that the baseball diamond in the park is the finest in the city and should not be transformed into a softball diamond. The president of the Association also requests that playground supervisors be divided such that “some responsible person be in the park during the evening hours, so that proper order be maintained.” Weisser Park Community Association letterhead states “Weisser Park Community Association: Organized for the Purpose of Promoting the General Interests of the Residents of the Southside and the Community At Large. Representing One-Fourth of Fort Wayne’s Population of 130,000 Persons.”<sup>171</sup>
- W 1939 May 31. The Weisser Park Community Association letter to the Board of Park Commissioners remarks that the lighted tennis courts are so busy for tournaments that children from the neighborhood have a difficult time finding space. The letter also notes that lighted horseshoe courts are also used into the night.<sup>172</sup>
- W 1940 It is estimated that more than 30,000 persons attended six concerts by the Honolulu Band at the Weisser Park bandstand. The original bandstand is now seen as too small for bands with more than 25 players.<sup>173</sup>
- A 1941 The PD hires the first full-time recreation director.<sup>174</sup>
- A 1941 The preservation of the city’s elm trees begins with PD Superintendent A. Jaenicke’s appeal to the city council for \$5,000 to battle the “elm tree beetle and canker worm”. Extensive efforts continued over the next 30 years, and are well documented in the Annual Reports.<sup>175</sup>
- A 1944 The National Recreation Association creates the *Fort Wayne Long Range Recreation Plan*, in which an extensive redesign of Fort Wayne Parks Systems is proposed. The plan divides the city into neighborhoods that include Foster, Weisser, and McMillen Parks. The three parks each have a playfield and playground, while Foster and McMillen have indoor recreational centers. A large parcel of land to the east of McMillen Park is highlighted as a proposed park acquisition.<sup>176</sup> The plan also includes a variety of findings and recommendations, including: “the city should be commended for its increasing recognition of the importance of public recreation as an essential municipal function” and “playfield facilities for youth and adults are deficient in many sections of the city”. Recommendations are very specific and address topics such as the acquisition of additional acreage, expansion of playfields, playgrounds, and other outdoor recreation facilities, and the need for a stronger budget.<sup>177</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

- A 1946 Twenty-one weekly dances are conducted at Weisser, Forest Park, Reservoir, McCormick and Memorial Playgrounds with an attendance of 1,098 teens.<sup>178</sup>
- A 1946 The Board of Park Commissioners recommends installing lighting at Weisser Playground and a lighted hardball diamond at McMillen Park.<sup>179</sup>
- A 1946 A 1944 *Long Range Recreation Plan* is the basis for developments in the Parks and for Recreation. A priority schedule of more than forty proposals was set up in this plan. Several of these proposals have been developed and others are in the process of development at the present."<sup>180</sup>
- W 1946 Incidental Service of the Parks Department includes reservation of tennis courts at Weisser Park.<sup>181</sup>
- A 1947 Summer. The State Target Meet is held at McMillen Park in July. It is a two-day championship archery competition. As part of the playground program, baseball instruction is offered at Weisser and McMillen Parks, among others. 150 boys ages 8-16 take part in two leagues, and 196 games are played in addition to a playoff. More than 15,000 persons used the facilities of the golf driving range in Foster Park, southeast of the Municipal Golf Course. Girl scouts use the public park facilities in the following manner: Foster Day Camp (210 participated); McMillen Park-training course (23 participated); Foster Park "Scouts Own" (200 participated); troop cookouts in all parks (500 participated).<sup>182</sup>
- W 1947 Summer. During June, July and August weekly dances are held at Weisser Park, among others. A total of 1,896 teenagers take part in the 44 dances.<sup>183</sup>
- A 1947 The year 1947 sees the greatest public demand for and use of all Park and Recreation facilities in the 42 year history of the Parks Department. The only park structure enclosed and heated is in Indian Village Park, and it is used by various groups 280 days during 1947. 50,000 tickets were issued to the municipal golf course during 1947.<sup>184</sup>
- A 1947 "During the past six or seven years there has been no increase in the park acreage but there has been a substantial growth in recreation facilities. However, we realize that both the area of park lands and recreation facilities must be further expanded. The need for this is of course, due in part to a growing population, but perhaps still more to the decrease in the working hours of the modern week with the resulting increase of leisure time for the larger part of our population."<sup>185</sup>
- F/W 1947 Drinking fountains of cut stone, salvaged from old city sidewalks and curbing are erected in Foster Park and Weisser Park. A total of 12,100 bricks are used in construction of catch basins and fountains and fountain pits at Packard, Lawton, Frank, Foster, Sieling, Weisser and Memorial Parks. Four cut stone fireplaces are built at Lawton, Weisser and Rockhill Parks for picnicking, baking and outdoor cooking groups.<sup>186</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- W/F/M 1947 Merry-go-rounds are installed in Weisser Park. Chain link fencing is installed at Foster Park Croquet Court (360 linear feet) and McMillen Park Airport (500 linear feet) and Weisser Park (75 linear feet).<sup>187</sup>
- A 1948 The Board of Park Commissioners reported at the end of 1948 that in the years to come, “there should be a substantial increase in the size of two of our present larger parks and an additional park area should be secured in the northeastern part of our city having a size of 100 or more acres.”<sup>188</sup>
- W 1948 The American Federation of Musicians cooperates in presenting a Hill Billy Show at Weisser Park Bandstand using local talent on July 29.<sup>189</sup>
- W 1948 On August 25, “Playgrounds on Parade” brings children together at Weisser Park who represent all playgrounds.<sup>190</sup>
- W 1948 Seven street dances are held during the summer in Fort Wayne, including two at Weisser Park.<sup>191</sup>
- W 1948 Tennis instruction is given to local children at a number of tennis courts, including Weisser Park.<sup>192</sup>
- W 1948 The annual city-wide tennis tournament is held at Weisser Park during the summer, with 146 matches taking place.<sup>193</sup>
- A 1948 A program of replacing old tennis net posts with modern ratchet type posts begins. Twenty-one courts are changed at Weisser, Swinney, Foster, and Packard Parks, and Lafayette Playground.<sup>194</sup>
- W 1948 The Recreation Department holds a training institute for the playground leaders prior to the opening of the playgrounds on June 21. Sessions are held using the facilities at Weisser Park, Jefferson Center, and Franke Park.<sup>195</sup>
- A 1948 A total of 14,880 square feet of chain link fence are erected as backstops for tennis courts, ball diamonds, and protective fences at a number of Fort Wayne locations, including: McMillen Park hard ball backstop, 720 sq. ft.; Weisser Park tennis courts, 1650 sq. ft.; Weisser Park soft ball backstop, 450 sq. ft.; Weisser Park along Eckhart Street, 2100 sq. ft.<sup>196</sup>
- W 1948 The stage at the Weisser Park Bandstand is painted.<sup>197</sup>
- A 1949 Summer. A polio epidemic closes all city summer swimming facilities.<sup>198</sup>
- A 1949 The PD focuses on programming for senior citizens.<sup>199</sup> This is part of a larger trend in the augmentation of PD staff focused on recreation and programs after the World War II.<sup>200</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- W 1949 The city's first "tot lot," a playground for the very young, is built in Weisser Park.<sup>201</sup>
- A 1949 Only one case of Elm Disease is found in Fort Wayne in 1949, and in an effort to prevent future infection, a new mist sprayer is purchased and some 11,000 trees are sprayed.<sup>202</sup> However, this only amounts to approximately one sixth of the city's trees. "If control spraying is to be completely effective the entire city must be sprayed."<sup>203</sup>
- A 1949 The Board of Park Commissioners notes in its Annual Report that "it is all important that only good varieties of trees are chosen and that they are properly spaced when planted" in order to ensure a healthy future for the city's trees.<sup>204</sup>
- A 1949 In providing the public with picnic facilities, thirty new tables are constructed and forty repaired. In addition, drinking fountains and fire places are erected at a number of parks, including Foster, Weisser, and McMillen Parks.<sup>205</sup>
- W 1949 A small retaining wall is necessary at Weisser tennis courts, among other locations around the city's other parks.<sup>206</sup>
- W 1949 A total of 8750 square feet of chain link fence is erected as backstops for tennis courts, ball diamonds, and protective fences at several locations, including 1050 sq. ft. at the Weisser Park Tot Lot fence.<sup>207</sup>
- W 1949 Various types of playground equipment such as slides, jungle gyms, and swings are installed at Weisser, Kettler, and Franke Parks.<sup>208</sup>
- W 1949 Playground apparatus is purchased and installed at Weisser and Kettler Parks. At Weisser Park, a preschool area is enclosed with a three-foot fence and a low and safe apparatus installed. This represents the first area as such in the Fort Wayne parks for preschool-age children.<sup>209</sup>
- A 1950 The planting of elm trees is discontinued, but a great deal of trimming and planting of new trees and shrubs of other varieties takes place in 1950.<sup>210</sup>
- A 1950 A total of 6,860 square feet of chain link fencing is erected as backstops for ball diamonds, square dancing areas, and protective fences at a number of locations, including: Foster Park softball back stop; Foster Park square dance area; and McMillen Park Tot Pool fence.<sup>211</sup>
- A 1950 The growth of Park and Recreational services increases the amount of painting necessary in Fort Wayne parks. The Weisser Park Comfort Station; McMillen Swimming Pool, Park Storage Garage, Park Bleachers; and Forest Park Comfort Stations are all painted or stained this year.<sup>212</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1950 The Superintendent of Parks and City Forester remarks, “It is our belief that ‘the family that plays together, stays together’.” Although intended for children, playgrounds are intended to be used by entire families together whenever possible.<sup>213</sup>
- W 1950 In 1950, the Director of Recreation completes a study that reveals that only five playgrounds (Harrison Hill, Weisser, Hamilton, Packard, and Kettler) of 22 are relatively unaffected by barriers such as rivers, streets with heavy traffic, railroads, industrial and commercial sites, and vacant land. The Director concludes that there is a great need for more playgrounds in Fort Wayne.<sup>214</sup>
- W 1950 Summer. 9,927 different persons register on 22 playgrounds. Weisser playground had the highest registration, at 1,289 persons. There is a participation of 355,542 for all playgrounds, and Weisser playground leads with 60,211.<sup>215</sup>
- W 1951 December. A “Tennis Practice Board” 30 ft. by 11 ft. is installed at the south end of the concrete court in Weisser Park. Materials are furnished by the Tennis Commission and Lumber and Supply Dealers Association.<sup>216</sup>
- W 1951 December. Playground registration and attendance of Weisser Park is 28,195.<sup>217</sup>
- W 1952 Fireplaces are repaired at Weisser Park.<sup>218</sup>
- W 1952 Neighborhood square dances are held at Weisser Park.<sup>219</sup>
- W 1952 Six tennis courts at Weisser Park are resurfaced with clay.<sup>220</sup> A 423’ section of five foot sidewalk along Hanna Street is replaced.<sup>221</sup>
- F/W 1953 400 yards of clay are used to resurface the Foster and Weisser Park baseball diamonds (200 yards each).<sup>222</sup>
- W 1953 A total of 1029 playground registrations were completed for Weisser Park, for total attendance of 35,595.<sup>223</sup>
- A 1954 The Great Storm of July 20, 1954 brings down and damages 4,500 street trees and 1,200 park trees throughout the city of Fort Wayne.<sup>224</sup>
- A 1954 Dutch Elm Disease becomes a major threat to elm trees in Fort Wayne. Twenty-three trees die from the disease.<sup>225</sup>
- A 1955 The Board of Park Commissioners adopts First Class City Park Law.<sup>226</sup>
- W 1954 Events held in Weisser Park include a checker and chess exhibition with international checker champion Tom Wiswell, Tournament of Champions, and a tennis clinic.<sup>227</sup>
- A 1955 Dutch Elm Disease increases throughout the city; 324 trees are infected and removed. City trees are sprayed with DDT to combat Dutch Elm Disease.<sup>228</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

- W 1955 Turf lawn areas at Weisser Park are reseeded and fertilized. A goal post is also changed and replaced.<sup>229</sup>
- A 1956 The Fort Wayne Park Department celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.<sup>230</sup>
- A 1956 Many American elms are lost to Dutch elm disease throughout Fort Wayne. The *Annual Board of Park Commissioners Report* notes “The Forestry Department was again compelled to spend a large part of its time attempting to control Dutch Elm disease and the results have given us some encouragement.” Crews treated 15,245 of the estimated 72,000 trees along city streets.<sup>231</sup>
- W 1956 The annual track and field meet is held at Weisser Park with 115 participants.<sup>232</sup> The annual Tournament of Champions is also held at the park, with 176 participants. Activities include boxhockey, washer toss, ping pong, checkers, horseshoes, and chess.<sup>233</sup>
- W 1956 The “old, antiquated park pavilion” at Weisser Park is considered for replacement for issues regarding safety of the wooden structure and modern design.<sup>234</sup>
- A 1957 DPR offices move from East Berry St. to Jefferson Center.<sup>235</sup>
- A 1957 May 26. The dedication of Shoaff Park coincides with the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DPR. In 1957 the system consists of 47 parks totaling 1,203 acres. Since 1905, 51 percent of parkland has been donated to the city. Full and part-time DPR staff total 225.<sup>236</sup> The 1957 Park Board consists of Fred B. Shoaff, Byron F. Novitsky, Helen W. Sweet, and A.W. Kettler Jr. DPR head staff includes Superintendent of Parks Howard Von Gunten and Superintendent of Recreation Marin M. Nading Jr.<sup>237</sup>
- A 1957 May 20-26. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Fort Wayne Park Department is a weeklong celebration. It includes the dedication of Shoaff Park, 169 acres donated by the Board President. The grandchildren of Mr. Shoaff participate in the ceremonies helping to plant an “Anniversary Tree” in the park. Other events are square dancing and a tree planting ceremony in Foster Park and a concert and family outing at McMillen Park.<sup>238</sup>
- W/F 1957 Miscellaneous flower beds are planted in Weisser Park and Foster Park. Shrubbery and flowering trees are used in planting a border to serve as a windbreak for the tulip garden in Foster Park. A gift of 600 iris rhizomes from Mrs. Paul Haller is received. These are used to replace one bed and to create an additional bed. Half the peonies in the Meades section are lifted, and divisions are taken and planted in a nursery to be used for replanting in the same garden. The widening of Broadway necessitates moving and replanting four large lilac bushes and four magnolias.<sup>239</sup>



WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- M/W 1957 Chain link fences are installed at the McMillen Ice Rink (transformer enclosure), the Weisser Tennis Court (280 feet of 10 feet fencing), the Weisser football field (204 feet of 10 feet fencing) and the Weisser backstop (75 feet of 11 feet fabric only). Sidewalks are constructed at the McMillen square dance (112 feet of 5 feet walks) and Weisser Park (105 feet of 5 feet walks).<sup>240</sup>
- W 1957 One basketball hoop is installed at Weisser Park.<sup>241</sup>
- A 1957 Normal routine care of 72,000 trees, involving trimming, removal of dead branches, fertilizing, and cutting of dead trees and replanting is undertaken.<sup>242</sup>
- F/S/W 1958 A completely new planting of 11,000 tulip bulbs consisting of over 40 varieties is planted. It is highly visited by the public. Over 700 irises in 57 different varieties are received as a gift from Mrs. Paul Haller. Arrangement of the plants in the Meads Garden section is almost completely changed. A specimen of nearly all varieties in the original collection is kept. Landscape planting is done at: Conklin Pavilion and River Lodge in Shoaff Park and the tennis courts at Weisser Park.<sup>243</sup>
- A 1958 The Park Board performs the final inspection of the Conklin Pavilion in Shoaff Park in May and is dedicated July 18. 196 groups use this facility for a total attendance of 16,263 during 1958. Two other new pavilions are the McMillen Skating Pavilion and the River Lodge in Shoaff Park. All 21 pavilions are used in 1958 by 130 more groups with an increase in attendance by 3,412 over 1957.<sup>244</sup>
- W 1958 The Recreation-School Senior Band holds a concert at Weisser Park. A boys modified track and field meet with: short dashes, standing broad jump, baseball throw for distance and accuracy, base running and medicine ball shot put was held at Weisser Park with 150 participants. A Tournament of Champions including boys and girls in the midget, junior, and senior divisions compete in checkers, chess, ping pong, boxhockey, washer toss and horseshoes at Weisser Park playground. It includes 141 participants.<sup>245</sup>
- A 1958 July 18. The Guy V. Conklin pavilion in Shoaff Park is formally dedicated as a facility of the Board of Park Commissioners. Baseball facilities in Foster and Weisser Parks are converted in the middle of October to football fields for use by local teams. A field for soccer is laid out in the north-eastern part of McMillen Park.<sup>246</sup>
- W 1959 Concrete retaining wall is constructed for the Weisser Park tennis court fence.<sup>247</sup>
- A 1959 Foster Park contains 251 acres, Shoaff Park 169 acres, McMillen 164 acres, and Weisser Park 20 acres.<sup>248</sup>
- W 1959 Weisser Park has 1101 registered playground users, 791 of which are elementary school children, ages 5 through 12.<sup>249</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1959 Use of park pavilions includes 22,789 people at McMillen Park, 20,118 people at Conklin Pavilion at Shoaff Park, 11,534 people at River Lodge Pavilion, 9,285 people at Foster #1, 4,768 people at Foster #3, 3,522 people at Foster #2, and 2,613 at Weisser Park.<sup>250</sup>
- W 1960 Lighting specifications are drafted for the horseshoe courts at Weisser Park.<sup>251</sup>
- A 1961 Park Commissioner president, Fred B. Shoaff, dies.<sup>252</sup>
- A 1961 The Board of Park Commissioners, Board of Public Works, the Urban Redevelopment Commission, the City Plan Commission, and Fort Wayne Community Schools collaborate to work in parks and playgrounds.<sup>253</sup>
- A 1961 Dutch Elm disease impacts the Fort Wayne Park system. Approximately one-third of trees within the parks are affected by the disease. Of 25,000 elms on city property, 8,500 have died and 3,852 are removed.<sup>254</sup>
- A 1961 The Kiwanis Club of Northwest Fort Wayne makes a donation of \$110 for tulips to be planted at the Shoaff Park entrance, fifteen memorial trees for Memorial Park by Post 47 and Auxiliary of American Legion, and 750 fingerling bluegill and bass fish for Shoaff Park Lagoon from the State Conservation Department. Members of the Chamber of Commerce who were friends with the late board President, Fred Shoaff, make a donation of \$100 for a memorial.<sup>255</sup>
- W 1962 New softball diamond and ladies restroom are constructed at Weisser Park.<sup>256</sup>
- W 1962 September. Facing only minor opposition, a 3.6-acre site adjacent to Weisser Park is selected for development of a new junior high school. Construction demands the removal of 24 homes and 1 grocery store in this area.<sup>257</sup>
- A 1963 DPR goals and objectives are revised.<sup>258</sup>
- W 1963 February 28. The Board of Park Commissioners signs a contract with Fort Wayne architecture firm Martindale & Dahlgren, Architects to construct a new pavilion in Weisser Park “similar to the pavilion in Waynedale Memorial Park.”<sup>259</sup>
- W 1963 A new pavilion in Weisser Park is constructed at the cost of \$20,000 and is dedicated on August 20<sup>th</sup>.<sup>260</sup>
- W 1964 Work at Weisser Park includes filling and seeding the site of the old pavilion, constructing a crushed stone parking lot south of the new pavilion, and removing, filling, and seeding the former service drive.<sup>261</sup>
- A 1964 Superintendent of Recreation & Parks requests from the Board of Public Works use of the St. Joe River Bank property across the river from Shoaff Park for an enlargement of the city's Day Camp program. The Camp serves 1100 youngsters

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

between the ages of nine and twelve at Franke Park, but because that park is becoming "more civilized" it is more appropriate to relocate camp activities. Teenagers over thirteen years of age use Shoaff Park's Psi Otes structure for overnight camping, as well as other "native activities".<sup>262</sup>

- W 1965 28 light fixtures are installed at the Weisser Park tennis courts.<sup>263</sup>
- A 1966 A total of 5865 elm tree remain in Fort Wayne; 1275 were lost due to Dutch Elm Disease.<sup>264</sup>
- A 1967 Total park land acreage for the City of Fort Wayne reaches 1,640 acres.<sup>265</sup>
- A 1967 Of the nearly 25,000 American elm trees that existed on city park property in 1958, approximately 2,000 remain.<sup>266</sup>
- A 1967 Camping is a year-round activity in Fort Wayne parks. The department's activities are conducted at Franke and Shoaff Parks as well as the Board of Works area adjacent to the old Robison Park. A significant innovation this year is the nurses-aide training held during the summer program. One of the highlights of the winter program is the election of the king and queen to reign over the annual Burning of the Greens ceremony.<sup>267</sup>
- A 1967 The cool weather leads to an overall drop off in swimming pool attendance. Although special events such as instruction, shows, and competition bring in patrons, the daily regular recreational swimming sessions at the four public pools in Lawton, McMillen, Memorial, and Swinney Parks are not used to full capacity.<sup>268</sup>
- W 1968 Weisser Park building (the pavilion) is used as a drop-in youth center with programmatic activities.<sup>269</sup>
- W 1969 Football goals are installed at Weisser Park.<sup>270</sup>
- A 1970 The DPR participates in the federally-funded Recreation Support Program for Inner-City Youth.<sup>271</sup>
- A 1970 Several exterior lighting fixtures are installed in Weisser, McMillen, Foster and Shoaff Parks.<sup>272</sup>
- A 1971 The Board of Park Commissioners Report states, "The Dutch Elm Disease epidemic is no longer an emergency in Fort Wayne. This year we removed 242 diseased elms."<sup>273</sup>
- A 1971 Park Commissioners realize an overall park master plan is needed for the city to get federal funding for park projects.<sup>274</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1971 Fort Wayne supplies between 9 and 10 acres per 1,000 people of the city population. Ten acres per 1000 people is the minimal requirement for city recreational areas, while 15 acres per 1000 people is optimal.<sup>275</sup>
- A 1971 The city park maintenance department notes increased maintenance associated with the par 3 golf courses, and discusses recommendations to cut back mowing and other issues. Increased special events in parks also increases maintenance and the city is “on the alert for larger and faster maintenance equipment, a more complete chemical program, efficient and practical maintenance procedures, and landscapes designed for faster and easier maintenance.”<sup>276</sup>
- A 1971 An average of over 250 trees are removed from parks per year and the city notes that with “the large open areas in the parks...a tree planting program with specific goals is almost mandatory.”<sup>277</sup>
- A 1971 Football fields are heavily used at Foster, McMillen, and Weisser Parks. Soccer fields are utilized at McMillen Park, and cross-country courses are used at Shoaff and Foster Parks.<sup>278</sup>
- A 1972 The Park Foundation is established to provide funding for capital improvements for the DPR.<sup>279</sup>
- A 1972 DPR offices move to the City-County Building.<sup>280</sup>
- W/M 1972 A total of ten lighted basketball courts are installed at Weisser and McMillen Parks: six at Weisser Park and four at McMillen Park.<sup>281</sup>
- W 1972 New park programs are introduced at the Weisser Park School and the Weisser Park pavilion. Basketball league tournaments are also moved to the Weisser Park School.<sup>282</sup>
- A 1973 Park maintenance methods and concepts are reorganized.<sup>283</sup>
- A 1973 A preliminary draft of the city-wide Park Master Plan is complete. The plan directs toward an “orderly acquisition and development program.”<sup>284</sup>
- A 1974 The DPR adopts an Affirmative Action Policy.<sup>285</sup>
- A 1974 A Park Master Plan is presented to City Council.<sup>286</sup>
- W 1974 Weisser Park has a total of 530 playground registrations, with a total attendance of 31,978.<sup>287</sup>
- A 1974 The Fort Wayne Park Foundation, whose purpose is to secure wide membership participation in the community and to assist the Board of Park Commissioners with

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

counsel and financial aid, is incorporated and made application for classification as a tax-exempt foundation.<sup>288</sup>

- A 1976 The DPR adopts changes in policy to emphasize fees and make services and programs more financially self-supporting.<sup>289</sup>
- W 1976 Weisser Park basketball court lights are controlled by an automatic timer set for 11:00 p.m., the curfew hour for all city parks.<sup>290</sup>
- W 1976 Two lighted tennis courts are built at Weisser Park.<sup>291</sup>
- A 1977 A study of cruising, drinking, and disorderly conduct in city parks drives the acceleration of plans to develop East Swinney to accommodate cruising and other youth activities.<sup>292</sup>
- A 1979 The 1979-1983 Park Master Plan is completed and approved by the State Department of Natural Resources, Outdoor Recreation Division.<sup>293</sup> A park user survey finds that the public is in favor of improving the present park system. Results also indicate a desire for more neighborhood parks and special activity areas such as a bicycle racing track.<sup>294</sup>
- A 1980 The primary office for the DPR relocates from the City-County Building to 705 E. State Blvd., former site of State Hospital and Training Center.<sup>295</sup>
- A 1980 Sports Foundation, Inc. presents the DPR with the coveted Gold Medal Award for Excellence in the Field of Park and Recreation Management.<sup>296</sup>
- A 1981 After 50 years of continuous service, the Park Police operation is disbanded due to budget cuts.<sup>297</sup>
- A 1982 March. A massive flood requires the DPR to focus efforts on salvage and clean up.<sup>298</sup>
- A/F 1982 Arsonists destroy 10 park structures at an estimated cost of \$269,486.<sup>299</sup> Additionally, throughout the summer, vandals cause thousands of dollars in damage to the Foster Park golf course by digging hundreds of holes in the golf greens. Park officials attempt to halt the notion that immigrants caused the damage by digging for worms, a false rumor spread by members of the police department.<sup>300</sup>
- A 1984 June. Rivergreenway is dedicated. Improvements and expansion of this trail system continue through the present.<sup>301</sup>
- A1987-1988 Dr. Louis Moncrief completes a DPR study characterizing the organization as "park driven." Moncrief recommends that the DPR take steps to become more "market driven." Departmental reorganization and marketing training is completed by 1988. A new marketing philosophy and mission statement are adopted.<sup>302</sup>

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

- A 1989 The DPR adopts a new logo.<sup>303</sup>
- A 1991 Adopt-a-Greenway program is created, whereby groups agree to clean up a two-mile section of the trail three times a year for two years.<sup>304</sup>
- A 1992 A new, system-wide park turf mowing operation is implemented.<sup>305</sup>
- A 1996 The DPR enters the information age with a new website on the World Wide Web.<sup>306</sup>
- A 1996 The DPR completes Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) survey of facilities and develops a basic transition plan to become more accessible.<sup>307</sup>
- W 1996 Construction begins on the Weisser Park Center, a \$1.3 million bond-funded project.<sup>308</sup>
- W 1998 Early Spring. Weisser Park Center is completed, dedicated, and officially opened to the public.<sup>309</sup>
- A 1999 Greg Purcell replaces Robert C. Arnold as DPR Director when Arnold retired after 45 years in the position..<sup>310</sup>
- A 1999 Friends of the Parks of Allen County, Inc. forms in response to a Franke Park parking expansion controversy. The mission of the not-for-profit organization is to promote the stewardship and celebration of the scenic, historic, and recreational resources of the parks and public spaces in Fort Wayne and Allen County.<sup>311</sup> Founding members include Julie Donnell, Angela Quinn, David Lupke, Darrell Jagers, Don Cunningham, and Rebecca Pfeiffer.<sup>312</sup>
- A 1999 The supervised summer playground program is not conducted for the first time since its inception circa 1930.<sup>313</sup>
- A 1999 The DPR focuses on city renewal as the Headwaters Park and the Old Fort are officially conveyed to the Park Board from the Board of Works and the Fort Wayne Redevelopment Commission.<sup>314</sup>
- A 2000 The DPR joins efforts and funding with Allen County Parks to develop a five-year master plan.<sup>315</sup>
- A 2001 January. Greg Purcell resigns as DPR Director. Phil Bennett acts as interim director until Mayor Graham Richard appoints Dianne Hoover in September 2001. Dennis Noak, Superintendent of Conservatory and Horticulture, retires after 33.5 years with the DPR.<sup>316</sup>
- A 2002 The Rivergreenway Consortium (a group formed in the late 1970s to promote the Rivergreenway development) changes its name to the Greenway Consortium and

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

expands its focus to trails beyond the rivers. The Consortium presents a Greenway extension plan to the Park Board.<sup>317</sup>

- A 2002 LANDSCAPES Landscape Architecture Planning Historic Preservation (now known as Heritage Landscapes), completes Lakeside, Memorial, and Swinney Parks Cultural Landscapes Reports addressing history, evolution, and future directions
- A 2002 Fall. First phase of the Great Tree Canopy Comeback implemented in Fort Wayne Parks.
- A 2003 Summer. An arborist reports that fewer than 20 large American elm (*Ulmus americana*) trees remain along Fort Wayne city streets.<sup>318</sup>
- A 2003 Fall. Second phase of the Great Tree Canopy Comeback implemented in the Fort Wayne Parks system.
- A 2004 April. Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is discovered in a Steuben County campground approximately 40 miles north of Fort Wayne. This destructive beetle was first discovered in June 2002 in southeast Michigan and Windsor, Ontario.<sup>319</sup>
- A 2004 The DPR completes a comprehensive strategic master plan, begun in 2002.<sup>320</sup>
- A 2004 Greenway/Community Trails Manager position is created to take responsibility for the Rivergreenway and coordinate with other area organizations in trail development.<sup>321</sup>
- A 2004 Fall. Third phase of the Great Tree Canopy Comeback implemented.
- A 2005 The 100th anniversary of the DPR is celebrated with special events and reduced \$1.00 admissions scheduled throughout the year.<sup>322</sup>
- A 2005 February. Director Dianne Hoover resigns. Dave Ridderheim (February-September) and Perry Ehresman (October) serve as interim directors until Al Moll officially takes the position in late October.<sup>323</sup>
- A 2005 As part of the 2005 Great Tree Canopy Comeback, 5,240 trees are planted in McMillen, Foster West, Weisser, Kreager and Tillman Parks.<sup>324</sup>
- A 2006 The DPR seeks proposals for and commissions Heritage Landscapes to produce Cultural Landscape Reports for Foster, Shoaff, McMillen and Weisser Parks and Rudisill Boulevard.

WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

APPENDIX A: ENDNOTES

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- <sup>2</sup> “Historical,” *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913, original HC.
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- <sup>5</sup> John Ankenbruck, *Twentieth Century History of Fort Wayne*, Fort Wayne: Twentieth Century Historical Fort Wayne, Inc., 1975:471-478.
- <sup>6</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,” [http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
- <sup>7</sup> John Ankenbruck, *Twentieth Century History of Fort Wayne*, Fort Wayne: Twentieth Century Historical Fort Wayne, Inc., 1975:471-478.
- <sup>8</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,” [http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
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- <sup>10</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,” [http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
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- <sup>13</sup> “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92; original DPR.
- <sup>14</sup> William J. Hosey, “Mayor’s Message,” *Fourth Annual Message of Wm. J. Hosey Mayor of Fort Wayne, Indiana with Annual Reports of Heads of Departments of the City Government for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 1908*, 1909:24; original DPR.
- <sup>15</sup> “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92; original DPR.
- <sup>16</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 22 December 1905: 4-5.
- <sup>17</sup> Charles A. Keefer, “City Park System Marks 50 Years of Operation,” *News-Sentinel*, 18 May 1957.
- <sup>18</sup> “Department of Public Parks,” *1906 Annual Report Fort Wayne City Government*, 1 Jan., 1907, original DPR.
- <sup>19</sup> *1906 Annual Report of the Board of Park Commissioners*, 1906:154-155, original DPR.
- <sup>20</sup> A. W. Goers, “Department of Public Parks,” *Fourth Annual Message of Wm. J. Hosey Mayor of Fort Wayne, Indiana with Annual Reports of Heads of Departments of the City Government for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 1908*, 1909; original DPR.
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- <sup>22</sup> *Streets of Fort Wayne*, Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County, 1953.
- <sup>23</sup> David N. Foster, Louis Fox, Louis Dorn, and E.F. Yarnelle, “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92-104; original DPR.
- <sup>24</sup> Angus C. McCoy, “The Streets of Fort Wayne,” *Old Fort News* 9.4, December 1945.
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- <sup>27</sup> A.W. Goers, “Superintendent of Parks Annual Report,” *1909 Annual Report Fort Wayne City Government*, 1909; original DPR.
- <sup>28</sup> Bert J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, Chicago: Robert O. Law Co., 1917:546-548.
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- <sup>30</sup> DPR, “Parks Department History,” [http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=67](http://www.fortwayneparks.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=67) (accessed 8 Jan. 2007).
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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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- <sup>35</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, 1910: 62.
- <sup>36</sup> August W. Goers, *Annual Report of Board of Public Parks of Fort Wayne, Indiana*, 1910:12-13; original DPR.
- <sup>37</sup> Charles Mulford Robinson, *The Improvement of Fort Wayne, Indiana* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1910): 87.
- <sup>38</sup> Bert J. Griswold, *Pictorial History of Fort Wayne*, Chicago: Robert O. Law Co., 1917:546-548.
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- <sup>41</sup> “Report of George E. Kessler, Landscape Architect,” *Seventh Annual Report Board of Park Commissioners*, 1911: 41, original HC.
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- <sup>44</sup> “Report of George E. Kessler, Landscape Architect,” *Seventh Annual Report Board of Park Commissioners*, 1911: 51, original HC.
- <sup>45</sup> “Report of George E. Kessler, Landscape Architect,” *Seventh Annual Report Board of Park Commissioners*, 1911: 52, original HC.
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- <sup>50</sup> George E. Kessler, “Report of the George Kessler, Landscape Architect,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:105-107; original DPR.
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- <sup>53</sup> David N. Foster, Louis Fox, Louis Dorn, and E.F. Yarnelle, “Report of the Board of Park Commissioners,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:92-104; original DPR.
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- <sup>55</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 9 March 1912: 145-6.
- <sup>56</sup> Fort Wayne, Indiana, Minutes of Meetings of Board of Park Commissioners, Meeting of 9 March 1912: 147.
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- <sup>63</sup> A. W. Goers, “Report of Superintendent for 1912,” *Annual Reports of the Fort Wayne City Government*, 1912:107-112; original DPR.
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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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- <sup>70</sup> “Report of the Secretary,” *Report of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Year 1913*, 1913, original HC.
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- <sup>79</sup> *1914 Report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Fort Wayne, Indiana*. 1914:15.
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- <sup>81</sup> “The Park System of Fort Wayne,” *The Wildwood Magazine*, Vol. II, Number 5, Christmas 1915:9.
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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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WEISSER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT  
APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY

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*APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHRONOLOGY*

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