DREAM AND REALITY: THE SELECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KESSLER PLAN IN DALLAS

by

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Abstract

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This research examines George Kessler's 1911 *A City Plan for Dallas* to understand the gaps between the ideals of the City Beautiful era plan and impact on the realized physical design of the city. As inequality rises in our urban centers (insert citation), it is increasingly important for us to understand our social and political environments that shaped the landscapes that physically reinforce that inequity. As stated by Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar in their history of Central Park, "its meaning as a public institution also has two dimensions: its *political* character as property and its *cultural* character as an open space [emphasis added]."[1] This research takes a granular approach to understand the political and cultural character of the Kessler Plan and its impact on public space in Dallas in the early 20th century by studying the different treatments of two parkway plans recommended by the Kessler plan: Turtle Creek and Mill Creek. These creeks had similar recommendations in the Kessler plan, but only Turtle Creek Parkway was implemented.

Through case study comparison of these two design elements from the Kessler plan, the research analyzes primary and archival data to spatially map impacted areas and interpret correlating societal values that overlap with what was implemented and what was not. This research concludes that race and class, power of private citizens,

[1] Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People*: *A History of Central Park*. Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1992, 5.

and government disinclination to address issues of equity in the city played a significant role in how the plan was implemented and what still exists in the urban landscape today.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This research is focused on the selective implementation of the 1911 Kessler plan for Dallas, the first comprehensive plan for the city. It was an early 20th century City Beautiful plan that was never fully implemented. Today, the Kessler plan remains one of the most discussed and revered models for civic development in Dallas.[2] Its vision for a city of green automobile parkways, beautified creek trails, and neighborhood parks resonates with contemporary planners who have called for its full implementation nearly 100 years later. Social historian Harvey Graff notes, "A broad, diffuse sentiment in support of planning constitutes Kessler's legacy to the city. The Kessler plan has been regularly rediscovered and integrated into successive plans, facilitating the repetition of his vision over many years."[3] These discussions raise serious questions about the ideal city that the Kessler plan envisioned and why the plan for that ideal city was never fully implemented.

To explore these large questions, I will look closely at one of the most obvious gaps in enactment, the considerably different treatment of the two largest creeks running through the city: Turtle Creek and Mill Creek. The most fully implemented and iconic aspect of the plan, Turtle Creek Parkway, corresponded with one the richest parts of the city. Mill Creek, another parkway recommendation from the plan that affected a larger number of people with fewer overall resources, was never realized. This reflects a significant need to understand the underlying power issues that impacted development and what consequence these actions had on creating the footprint of the contemporary physical city.

The watershed impacting the City of Dallas is made up of a series of small creeks that eventually drain into the Trinity River.[4] Turtle Creek and Mill Creek are two of the largest of these creeks and they flowed roughly parallel, running north to south with less than a mile

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[2] Graff, *The Dallas Myth: The Making And Unmaking Of An American City,* University of Minnesota Press, 2008, 224. See also Richard Brettell, "Landscape Architect George Kessler's Impact is Still Felt Across Dallas," *The Dallas Morning News*, April 9, 2017.

[3] Harvey J. Graff, *The Dallas Myth,* 224

[4] "Army.Corps of Engineers.Fort Worth District. Final Regional Environmental Impact Statement, Trinity River & Tributaries," Fort Worth, Tx: Dept. of the Army, US Army Engineer District, Fort Worth ,1987.

between them in some places. Turtle Creek Parkway became one of George Kessler's most impressive city beautiful parkways and the only true parkway from his plan implemented in Dallas. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Mill Creek was channelized and paved over and virtually no trace of it remains. This different outcome was justified at the time by discussion of unsanitary conditions created by rapid population growth and unrestricted development practices in East and South Dallas. Where Turtle Creek connected Highland Park to the central business district, Mill Creek connected a diverse set of neighborhoods, which included the institutions of East Dallas such as Baylor University Hospital, the African American Jazz clubs of Deep Ellum, and one of Dallas's oldest and one of the most historically diverse neighborhoods, "the Cedars."

It is important to understand why this happened the way it did. Kessler's plan notes that it is a plan for all, but the execution of those features favored certain groups of people. Who advocated bringing George Kessler, a Kansas City based city beautiful planner, to Dallas? Why were some pieces of the plan implemented and others not? What power did the city and city plan commission have in executing development? Who controlled the city government? Who benefited and who suffered?

Some clues can be found in the voices of the civic elites who promoted and benefited from the plan. George Bannerman Dealey, newspaperman of the Dallas Morning News was the major proponent of bringing George Kessler to Dallas.[5] George B. Dealey was referred to as "the father of planning in the southwest" by influential planner John Nolen.[6] Historian Robert Fairbanks noted that Dealey "convinced the chamber of commerce to organize the Dallas City Plan and Improvement League and throw its support to city planning."[7] Fairbanks also notes that Dealey was "one of the most remarkable civic leaders in Dallas history."[8] Dealey

[5] *Handbook of Texas Online*, Joan Jenkins Perez, "Dealey, George Bannerman," accessed December 05, 2017,http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fde21.

[6] Robert Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole: Planning, Politics and the Public Interest in Dallas, Texas, 1900-1965* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 24.

[7] Ibid., 24.

[8] Ibid., 24.

importantly controlled the editorial page of the *Dallas Morning News* by 1902, brought attention to planning as a way to alleviate issues created by rapid growth and lacking infrastructure, spearheaded civic improvement and beautification leagues, and solicited help from outside individuals to solve the problems in Dallas.[9]

Ted Dealey, George's son and a major player in Dallas newspaper publishing in his own right, lived near Turtle Creek, one of the most successful features and benefitted directly from the creation of Turtle Creek Parkway.[10] In his memoir of growing up in Dallas he described his view of the city's geography, "From far east Dallas to north Dallas was quite a trek. In fear and trembling I made the journey time after time, walking not on the sidewalks, but right out in the middle of the street where I could get a good head start in case any highwayman showed up. Nothing ever happened, but in this day and time I would certainly never date a girl who lived way out in east Dallas. There are too many thugs hanging around."[11] Ted Dealey was the son of famed *Dallas Morning News* publisher and Dallas legend He played a central role in the execution of the Turtle Creek parkway, a road and civic beautifaction project that completely changed his personal commute. One of the Dealey's finest homes, before moving to Highland Park, was off Cedar Springs, almost adjacent to Turtle Creek Parkway.[12]

The mechanisms that led to different outcomes for Turtle Creek and Mill Creek are larger, however, than the influence of a single family. This thesis will investigate the larger institutions that impacted the development of the plan and to decipher societal consequences. Fairbanks, in his history of planning in Dallas, suggests an overarching narrative for the Kessler Plan. His analysis suggests that "piecemeal" implementation of the plan was foreshadowed by Kessler's lack of attention to practicalities. Hestates:

> The plan was 'comprehensive' in ways that earlier planning efforts were not in that it attempted to tie Dallas together in a while, but it did not imply that the problems were so interrelated that it would be impossible to treat them

[9] Ibid., 26.
[10] Perez, "Dealey, George Bannerman,"
[11] Ted Dealey, *Diaper Days of Dallas*. Southern Methodist Univ Pr, 1975, 156.
[12] Cheryl Caldwell Ferguson, *Highland Park and River Oaks: The Origins of Garden Suburban Community Planning in Texas*. University of Texas Press, 2014.

> separately… Nor did Kessler offer any way to carry out the plans through a coordinated program. He discussed financing for his plan in a single paragraph. Kessler warned against relying too much on bonds and called for special assessments and local improvement districts to fund most of his suggestions. As a result, even though the city now had a 'comprehensive' plan, officials attempted to carry it out in a piecemeal fashion.[13]

Fairbanks also notes that Mill Creek area had the greatest amount of slum housing in the city.[14] This thesis will provide additional context for this "piecemeal" implementation through its granular comparison of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek.

History is the "past considered as a whole."[15] It is imperative to understanding societal development and why things are the way they are. As William Cronon says, "if environmental history is successful in its project, the story of how different people have lived and used the natural world will become of the most basic fundamental narratives in all of history, without which no understanding of the past could be complete without it."[16] In terms of city planning and urban history, the streets and layouts of plans are some of the most permanent physical structures that survive when buildings are changed, economy vacillates, and demographics shift. "Places make memories cohere in complex ways. People's experiences of the urban landscape intertwine the sense of place and the politics of space. If people's attachments to place are material, social, and imaginative, then these are necessary dimensions of new projects to extend public history in the urban landscape, as well as new histories of American cultural landscape and the buildings within them."[17]

It is particularly relevant for Dallas, whose abundance of city plans reference Kessler plan to evoke a legacy of the city beautiful while it continues to be one of the most economically and racially segregated urban areas in the country. They relate the city's image to that of Turtle

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[13] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 28.
[14] Ibid., 157.
[15] "History" *Oxford Dictionaries.* Oxford University Press. Accessed October 1, 2017. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/history
[16] William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative." *The Journal of American History* 78, no. 4 (1992): 1347-1376.
[17] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT press (1997): 43.

Creek, the idyllic urban parkway in the "City Beautiful."[18] Dallas was one of the 16 metropolitan areas in the country ranked as hyper-segregated, scoring a segregation index of higher than 60.[19] A study by the Urban Institute has ranked Dallas as the city with the highest income inequality by neighborhood in the country.[20] These factors reinforce the need to examine the events and factors of Dallas's first comprehensive plan and its implementation and by understanding the different developments of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek, determine what the lasting effects of these actions were.

Landscape architects and planners cannot overlook the role of history in shaping the current physical environment of cities and cannot address the long-term problems created by these planning mechanisms without understanding the past. The physical environment is shaped by the design and practices enacted in cities over generations. George Lipsitz notes,

> Having a better understanding of differential space, of the roles played by exclusion, exchange value, and use value in determining the racial meanings of places, can help landscape architects and other professionals whose work shapes the built environment to ameliorate the racialization of space and the spatialization of race….The relationship of race to the Enlightenment—as its always disavowed yet universally produced product—makes it necessary to struggle in separate sites to unearth and identify the occluded and disavowed historical genealogies and ideologies of racialized space particular to specific locations.[21]

Early planning mechanisms spatialized the ideas and values of the eras in which they were enacted. In the era of Jim Crow in Dallas, the implementation of the first comprehensive plan gave physical space to the values of those who influenced the implementation, whose values are still spatialized in the city in places like Turtle Creek and Mill Creek.

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[18] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 304.

[19] Timmy Huynh and Lauren Kent, "In Greater Dallas Area, Segregation by Income and Race," *Fact Tank: News in the Numbers,* Pew Research Center,June 29, 2015, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/06/29/in-greater-dallas-area-segregation-by-income-and-race/.

[20] Rolf Pendall and Carl Hedman, "Worlds apart: Inequality between America's Most and Least Affluent Neighborhoods." *Urban Institute* (2015): https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/60956/2000288-Worlds-Apart-Inequality-between-Americas-Most-and-Least-Affluent-Neighborhoods.pdf.

[21] George Lipsitz, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race: Theorizing the Hidden Architecture of Landscape," *Landscape Journal* 26, n.1 (January 2007): 10-23.

Definitions

City Beautiful

"Urban planning movement directed toward achieving a cultural parity with the cities of Europe, led by architects, landscape architects and reformers."[22] A more in-depth review of the City Beautiful movement will be included in the literature review.

Environmental Justice

"Environmental justice refers to the disproportionate impact of environmental decisions, usually by race, class, income, or gender. It also incorporates ideas about fairness in access to environmental decision making. Environmental decisions become unjust when tainted by racism. Systems of nature on which future life depends can be irreparably damaged by environmentally unjust decision making."[23]

Institutional Racism

"Institutional racism is the process by which racial oppression is imposed on subordinate racial groups by dominant racial groups through institutional channels. While individuals carry out single acts of discrimination, societal institutions are the primary setting where patterns of racial discrimination are established and perpetuated toward subordinate peoples. Central to the operation of institutional racism is a racial hierarchy of power, and, despite differences in historical development and racial-ethnic group composition among the world's countries, institutional racism tends to be prevalent in countries that have both dominant and subordinate racial groups."[24]

Redlining

"Redlining is the name given to various practices involving the denial of services such as banking and insurances, or even housing, to residents of specific neighborhoods or urban

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[22] Gail Fenske, "City Beautiful Movement." In *The Grove Encyclopedia of American Ar,*: Oxford University Press, 2011.

[23] Robin Morris Collin and Robert William Collin, "Environmental Justice," *Encyclopedia of Sustainability*, ABC-CLIO (2009): 57.

[24] John H Moore, "Institutional Racism," *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*, Macmillan Reference USA (2008): 180.

areas on the basis of race, income, status, or class. Redlining can extend to other resources, such as the location of parks, community centers, workplaces, or supermarkets. The term redlining is attributed to Northwestern University sociologist and community advocate John McKnight in the 1960s. The practice makes it extremely difficult or even impossible for residents of poor inner-city neighborhoods to borrow money, be approved for mortgage, purchase insurance, or gain access to financial services. Rejection is not based on the individual's qualification and creditworthiness. It had played a part in the structuring and transformation of neighborhoods and contributed to urban decline and deurbanization and suburbanization."[25]

Segregation

"Segregation is an institutionalized form of social distance expressed in physical separation…It is found in many "preindustrial" cities in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East and in the Muslim cities of north Africa, where ethnic and religious particularism may be manifested in separate quarters of the city as well as in occupational specialization. And it is characteristic of the most industrialized metropolitan cities of North America, in which there is extensive segregation of Negroes in residence, worship, education, and social intercourse."[26]

Feel free to add this Texas-specific source:

https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pks01

Spatializtion

Broadly spatialization is defined as "the transformation of high-dimensional data into lower-dimensional geometric representations on the basis of computational methods and spatial metaphors. Its aim is to enable people to discover patterns and relationships within complex."[27] This research defines spatialization as more than metaphorical, it is "to make spatial; to think of

[25] Lawrence M Salinger, "Redlining," *Encyclopedia of White-Collar and Corporate Crime, (*Sage Publications, 2013): 783.

[26] David L Sills, "Segregation," *International Encyclopedia of the Social* Sciences, 1968, 144.

[27] Barney Warf, "Spatialization," *Encyclopedia of Human Geography,* Sage, 2006, 2653.

as spatial; to invest with spatial qualities or relations."[28] In this definition spatial refers to "having extension in space; occupying or taking up space; consisting of or characterized by space."[29]

Social Inequality

"Social inequality is used to describe the varying levels of group and individual access to resources and power in a given society. Social stratification is a closely related term, defined as the system of social inequality between various groups, within a fairly fixed hierarchical arrangement. Social inequality among groups is often based on a number of social group characteristics, such as social class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Each of these characteristics can be overlapping and simultaneous because the bases for social inequality intersect for any given person. The major social inequalities most often studied are within the realms of income and wealth, education, housing, health care, work, family, and politics. This entry examines inequalities related to race and class."[30]

Social Justice

"Justice at the level of a society or state as regards the possession of wealth, commodities, opportunities, and privilege."[31]

Urban Context

"Urban is defined by "relating to, situated or occurring in, or characteristic of, a town or city, esp. as opposed to the countryside."32

Urban Morphology

This thesis will use the definition of urban morphology from Vitor Oliveira's *Urban Morphology: An Introduction to the Study of the Physical Form of Cities*. Oliviera uses the general, broad definition that, "urban morphology means the study of urban forms, and the

[28] "Spatialization," *Oxford English Dictionary,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[29] "Spatial," *Oxford English Dictionary,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[30] Richard Schaefer, "Social Inequality," Richard T. *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*. Vol. 1. (Sage, 2008): 1251.
[31] "Social Justice," *Oxford English Dictionary,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
[32] "Urban," *Oxford English Dictionary,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

agents and processes responsible for their transformation, and that urban form refers to the main physical elements that structure and shape the city- urban tissues, streets (and squares), urban plots, buildings, to name the most important."[33] This book also notes that the term "morphology" originally was proposed as a branch of biology by Johann Wolfgag Von Goethe aimed as 'the science that deals with the essence of forms'.[34]

Urban Nature

The idea of urban nature is presented in the literature review as applicable to this thesis topic, but it inspired by Ann Whiston Spirn's idea that "the same processes that operate in the wilderness operate in the city. Nature is ubiquitous, functioning not merely in parks, streams, or wilds, but in every nook and canyon that make up a city."[35]

Research Questions

Why was Turtle Creek's parkway plan implemented and Mill Creek's not?

What factors played a role?

What do these factors say about the spatialization of racial and economic values in Dallas?

What was the design intent?

Who benefitted and who suffered?

[33] Vítor Oliveira, *Urban Morphology: An Introduction to the Study of the Physical Form of Cities*, (Springer, 2016): 2 .

[34] Ibid., 2.

[35] Ralph A. Sanders, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 75, no. 1 (1985): 146-48. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2563187; Sills, David L. "Segregation," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences,* 1968, 144.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The City Beautiful Movement

Inspiration + Origins

The central inspiration for the City Beautiful movement was the landscape architectural movement in public spaces of Frederick Law Olmsted, Carl Vaux, and Andrew Jackson Downy in the nineteenth century. The movement is most often cited as being driven by Olmsted whose parks and public spaces "created a natural, humane environment."[36] The City Beautiful attempted to integrate picturesque nature into city infrastructure, radiating through the city, as opposed to having a great central park. It also sought to solve problems of urban growth dealing with transportation efficiency, while aiming to inspire civic activism through design. Prominent City Beautiful Cities include Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Washington D.C., and Kansas City, although the concepts were rarely fully implemented. Where Frederick Law Olmsted has a heralded legacy in attempting to solve problems created by dense cities, the City Beautiful has been seen as "overblown formalism and fake grandeur" because of its ornate and expensive, neoclassical visual aesthetic.[37]

Ideology + Characteristics

The City Beautiful movement was a late nineteenth to early twentieth century movement created by civic elites to create unified plans to improve their cities. They aimed to increase the access to nature in urban places by incorporating greenspace and parklands into city infrastructure, especially through green boulevards and parkways. The movement addressed the problems created by the urbanization of this time by "transforming the city into a beautiful, rationalized entity."[38] The City Beautiful ideology also aimed to inspire more civic participation and create a governmental arm responsible for cleanliness and maintenance. This bureaucratic goal would also address issues of population growth, transportation, and public

[36] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement,* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989. , 9.
[37] Ibid., 9.
[38] Ibid., 78.

health.[39] Historian William Wilson, the seminal City Beautiful academic, lists the defining characteristics of the City Beautiful ideology that reflect these philosophical, sociological, and aesthetic aims.

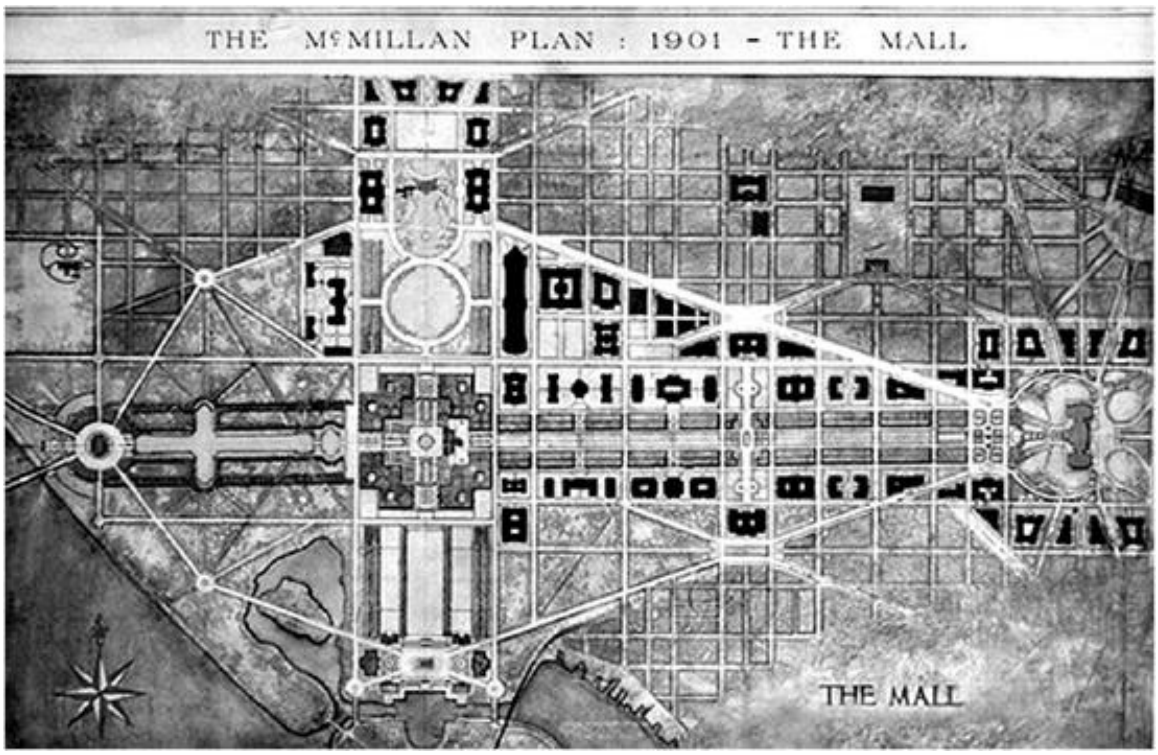

Figure 2-1 The McMillan Plan for Washington D.C. designed by Daniel Burnham in 1901
Courtesy of *The Urbanist* + San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Research Association

First, he discusses that the City Beautiful movement that aimed at transforming the city, sought to do so within the existing economic and political systems. Although the advocates of the City Beautiful aimed for an idealized urban organism, they were neither "radical nor revolutionary."[40]

Next, the City Beautiful would address a major area where cities were lacking, in function and aesthetics. It is important to remember that City Beautiful advocates did not just view visual improvement of cities as a superficial solution to problems of urbanization, but as a

[39] Ibid., 77.
[40] Ibid., 78.

reflection of increased efficiency and a way to inspire ideal societies. The majority of large, American cities were dirty, polluted, inefficient, and crowded so the City Beautiful "wished to supplant the pervading ugly and unkempt atmosphere of the American City."[41]

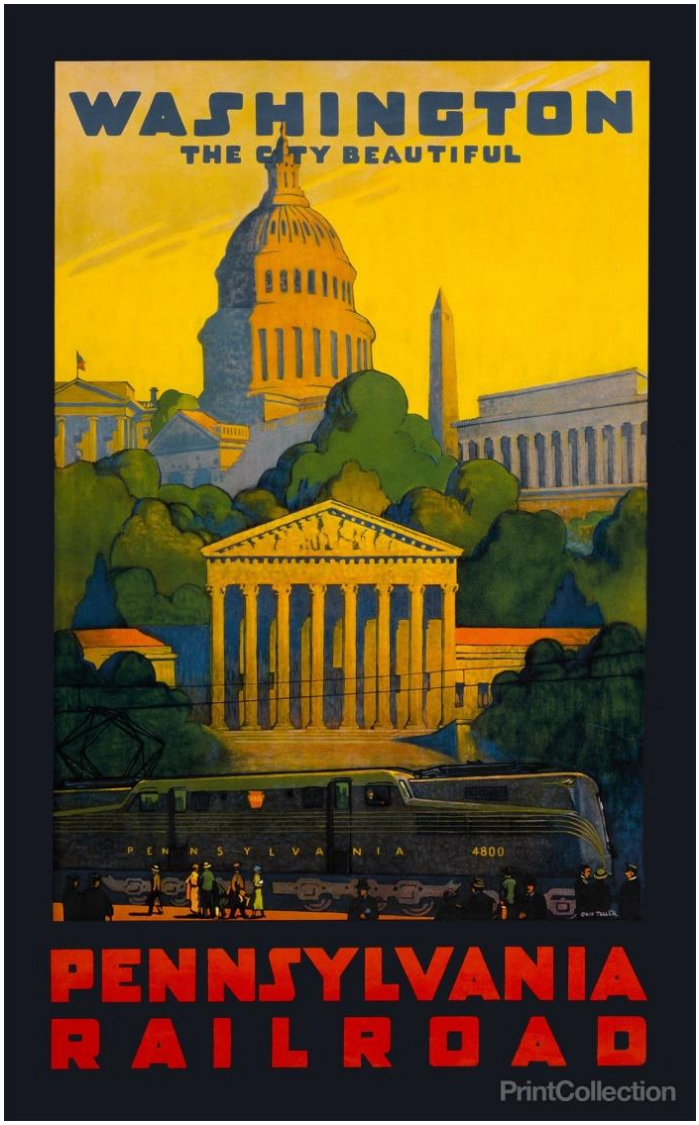

Figure 2-2 Advertisement for Pennsylvania Railroad in Washington D.C. Showing the transportation efficiency and civic spaces connected through naturalistic green spaces, 1935; Courtesy of Getty Images

[41] Idib., 78.

Wilson discusses that the proponents of the City Beautiful were environmental determinists and that they viewed nature as more than just superficial elements. They thought the power of beauty… [had] capacity to shape human thoughts and behaviors."[42] In other words, an improved civic environment would lead to an improved civic culture. This ties again to the idea that "beautification", often a criticism of the city-beautiful as a superficial movement, accounts for more than just the visual appearance. Beautification instead seeks to solve problems of sanitary conditions, vehicular and pedestrian inefficiencies, environmental health and happiness artfully, while also seeking to provide a more pleasant environment for those who dwell in the city. The City Beautiful also sought to combat the "artificiality of the city" and expressed Darwinist ideology that "man is…a being conditioned by his environment." Wilson says, "Therefore, the whole urban environment and the entire human experience within it were critical to the City Beautiful movement. City Beautiful advocates found secular salvation for humans in their belief in a flexible, organic, city," which caused an "insistence on a comprehensive plan, one that pervaded and unified the city and that addressed a significant number of its problems."[43] This is a departure from the idea that the City Beautiful is an artificial movement meant simply to cover infrastructure issues created by urbanization. The movement viewed nature as a social control in the sense that its proponents viewed it as a unifying force. "The goal of the City Beautiful system was what Edward A. Ross, in *Social Control* (1901), termed the inculcation of "social religion," the idealized, transcendental bond among members of a community and among members of nation or society."[44]

Whether the City Beautiful impacted social behavior of residents is a question outside of this research, but Wilson also states that, "It would be fairer to the ideal of the City Beautiful advocates to say that they sought cultural hegemony by asserting control over the definition of

[42] Ibid., 79.
[43] Ibid., 80.
[44] Ibid., 81.

beauty and manipulation of civic symbols."[45] The Oxford English Dictionary defines cultural hegemony as :cultural dominance or ascendancy" but also notes the definition from Marxist theory which states "the cultural domination of a society by a ruling class which imposes or inculcates its own ideas, values, etc., thereby ensuring acceptance of the status quo by other classes."[46] From either definition of the cultural hegemony, this statement points to an important aspect of the City Beautiful, that through its major proponents, the inherent biases towards "cultural ascendency" favored those proponents, which can be seen in how and where the City Beautiful ideology was implemented. Wilson suggests passionate language from the elite class that pushed the City Beautiful ideology did not match the fervor in practice. In many cases City Beautiful efforts were reduced to dealing with common government obstacles and procedures such as campaigning for the approval of council members, working with city staff to implement maintenance and clean-up programs, and dealing with local measures to acquire land for civic and park purposes. Wilson notes, "Perhaps the City Beautiful's very fervor was its attempt to bridge the gap between desire and actuality."[47]

The next ideological principle addressed is one important to the city beautiful movement, but also vital to studying the rates of success in implementation in places like Dallas and that is the integration of beauty and utility. Inspired by Olmsted, the City Beautiful advanced the argument for "the role of beauty in creating a contented workforce, attracting a superior population, and raising property values…the trick, then, was to combine the beautiful, which was beyond value, with the functional, which paid off in discernible ways."[48] So, advocates did not just rely on the aesthetic qualities of the City Beautiful, but also the increased efficiency of a more organized system, to justify their power together to create a more realized society. Efficiency was important to the City Beautiful advocates, who also advocated for clustering municipal buildings for a more efficient government business.

[45] Ibid., 81.
[46] "Cultural Hegemony," *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 2007.
[47] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement,* 81.
[48] Ibid., 83.

City Beautiful advocates did not believe they alone could tackle the problems they viewed in their cities. The sought to commission and work with experts like landscape architects, planners, and architects, to find the best solutions. This is one reason that many of the famous City Beautiful experts have left footprints in many cities. As previously mentioned, George Kessler completed City Beautiful plans for many cities in addition to Dallas, including Kansas City, Denver, Cincinnati, Cleveland, El Paso, and Syracuse.[49]

City Beautiful advocates also recognized class divisions. Although they recognized that there was "individual mobility and some class fluidity," advocates believed in two functional classes: the upper class leaders, and the urban bound working class, who needed respite from the city. Providing things like parks, recreation centers, and other public amenities especially to those "city bound" working class citizens, would benefit the city as a whole. In addition these supporters were hugely optimistic about what the movement could do for cities.[50]

The City Beautiful also references the picturesque beauty of European cities. Promoters viewed European cities as "clean, well-administered, attractive even beautiful entities whose growth and development were well controlled."[51] Advocates hoped to inspire such order in American cities, as well as what their perception of civic responsibility inspired, by such orderly beauty and improvement.

Finally, the City Beautiful movement openly and excitedly welcomed the concept of the city as a possibility for an ideal society. Wilson states, If the city became the locus of harmony, mutual responsibility and interdependence between classes, mediated by experts, then t would be a peaceful, productive place, not a stark contrast to rural scenery."[52] This statement once more reflects that the City Beautiful was more than just a superficial movement but one that openly dreamed of the creation of an ideal master planned city with egalitarian distribution of

[49] Lisa C. Maxwell, "Kessler, George E," *Handbook of Texas Online,* accessed December 05, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fke44.
[50] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 81.
[51] Ibid., 85.
[52] Ibid., 86.

infrastructure and civic beauty. Daniel Burnham's Plan for Chicago, for example, envisioned an orderly planned system.

Aesthetics

"City Beautiful aesthetics, considered separately from City Beautiful ideology, linked natural beauty, naturalistic constructivism, and classicism."[53] The City Beautiful was inspired by the picturesque park movement in America initiated by Frederick Law Olmsted's works. Where Central Park is an artificial form that expresses that naturalistic ideal, many City Beautiful cities sought to preserve their natural features before urbanization swallowed them as happened in New York City. Wilson notes, "The preservation and accentuation of natural beauty were major motives for the Boston metropolitan park system, Robinson's plan for Raleigh, North Carolina, Kessler's plan for Dallas, and many others."[54] As we know from the purpose of research, not all of these naturalistic features were preserved in City Beautiful era comprehensive plans, although that was a major aesthetic goal of the planners and landscape architects. When there was not a natural system to plan around, the City Beautiful movement sought to connect parks and civic facilities with landscaped boulevards and parkways. "City Beautiful planners typically treated naturalistic parks and parkways as precious assets, not as relics to be tolerated or disfigured by their imposition of their own designs."[55] Another aspect of City Beautiful aesthetics that has led to much criticism is the favoritism and promotion of neoclassical architecture. City Beautiful designers preferred this style because of its proportions and civic symbolism that implied order, participation, and virtue. Functionally, the proportion of building in neoclassical architecture provided a level of access that was desirable while still allowing for the monumental symbolism required for civic buildings.[56]

[53] Ibid., 86.
[54] Ibid., 87.
[55] Ibid., 87.
[56] Ibid., 88.

Criticisms

While the City Beautiful movement sought to be an inspiring and comprehensive movement, it was rarely implemented extensively anywhere. It was criticized for its expense, and viewed as a cosmetic fix to the problems cities were facing. Urban centers were growing so fast, it was difficult to keep up with addressing the problems that rapid population growth brought. It was also argued that the working class that the City Beautiful ideology referenced had barely anytime to enjoy what critics referred to as the cosmetic improvements such as parks, municipal centers, and playgrounds. The next movement, the City Efficient focused more strongly on ideas about alleviating congestion in cities, eschewing the idea of picturesque idealism for utilitarianism and practicality.[57]

The Kessler Plan for Dallas

Origins

Dallas, founded in 1841 and incorporated in 1856, was already facing booming population growth and uncontrolled expansion by the turn of the nineteenth century. The fabric of the city was described as haphazard and chaotic.

Wilson notes "Dusty streets… ran a crazy quilt over the city, with three independently oriented grids jamming together in and around the central business district."[58] Where the grids met, especially in downtown, streets had varying widths, jogged inconsistently, and sometimes just ended at awkward junctures (see figs. 2.4 and 2.5). These streets might be continued elsewhere with a different name or not.

It was not just the streets that were inefficient, but the pedestrian and rail systems. "The city's railroads flirted daily with chaos as they shunted freight and passengers this way and that over a mishmash of tracks… Freight delays were sometimes so severe that the Texas customers of Dallas shippers were more quickly served by suppliers as far away as Boston."[59]

[57] Ibid., 288.
[58] Ibid., 255.
[59] Ibid., 258.

While some Dallas neighborhoods did develop their own commuter streetcar systems, passenger rails did not connect well with one another in downtown, forcing passengers to connect on foot or by streetcar to their stations.[60] The rail traffic downtown rendered a dirty, polluted, and difficult environment for people.

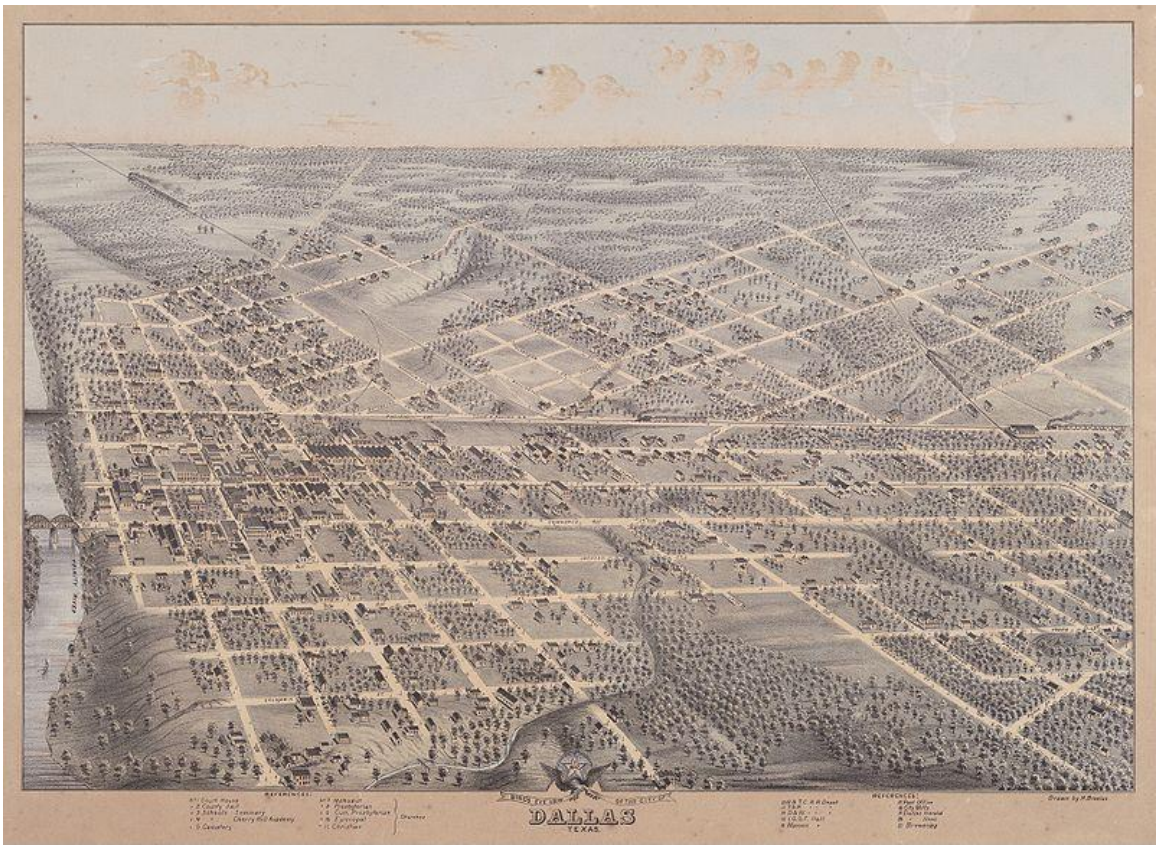

Figure 2-3 Bird's Eye View of the City of Dallas, 1872

Courtesy of Amon Carter Museum and Dallas Historical Society

[60] Virginia McAlester and Willis Winters, Prudence Mackintosh, and Steve Clicque. *Great American Suburbs: the Homes of the Park Cities, Dallas*, (Abbeville Press, 2008) 34.

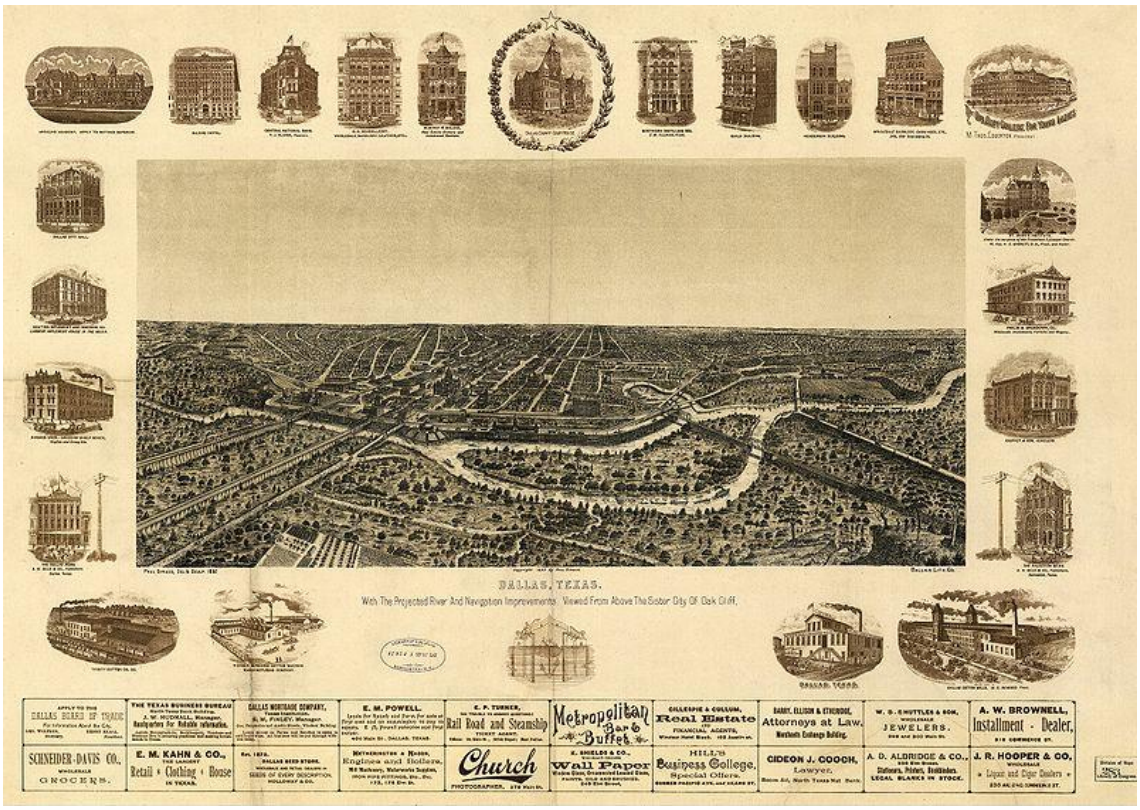

Figure 2-4 Dallas Birds Eye View with River and Improvements, 1892

Courtesy of Amon Carter Museum and Dallas Historical Society

Traffic and transportation issues were only exacerbated by the continued population growth the city saw in the early twentieth century. By 1910 the city had grown to 92,104 residents, a number that grew to 260,475 by 1930. This late population growth favored automobile-centric planning.[61]

Dallas could not keep up with its population growth in other amenities as well and had led to "fragmented and uncoordinated efforts at planning."[62] In the early twentieth century the city only devoted 150 acres of land to parks and playgrounds[63]. Wilson notes that 130 of those acres belonged to Fair Park, which was functionally and aesthetically more an exposition

[61] Ibid., 254.
[62] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 24.
[63] Dallas Park Board, *Report for the Years 1921-23*.

ground for the State Fair of Texas than a traditional park.[64] For a city with so little parkland, there were also no parkways and boulevards, and most neighborhoods were haphazardly designed with little long-term forethought. Fairbanks notes that "Dallas had far fewer paved streets than other cities" and that citizens found the Dallas government untrustworthy.[65]

One of the most significant events that brought attention to the need for better planning for Dallas was the Trinity River and its flood in 1908. The Trinity River appeared to be a submissive stream meandering just west and south of downtown. The river although has a 10,000 acre floodplain that swells during rain events, and "In May and June of 1908, a rampaging torrent drowned four people, drove four thousand residents from their homes, ripped out a high railroad trestle, and inundated the southern edge of downtown."[66] This event raised both citizen and government awareness to the need for better city plans when dealing with growth in the city.[67]

Figure 2-7 The Trinity River Flood of 1908

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Importantly, the drive to improve the city was not spearheaded by the city government itself, but the Dallas elites. These men formed several boards and committees aimed at city improvement, efficiency, and beautification. By 1910, George B. Dealey, the president of the Dallas Morning News and one of the founders of one of the Civic Improvement League, rallied the new Dallas Chamber of Commerce to be the leaders for the civic improvement efforts. The steering committee for the Chambers new effort recommended two things: to bring J. Horace

[64] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 256.
[65] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 50.
[66] Ibid., 254-255.
[67] "Dallas Chamber of Commerce," *Dallas* 7, (June 1928): 16-17.

MacFarland to Dallas to inspire planning activity and to form a non-government based organization to assist the campaign and advance the creation of a city plan.[68] Macfarland was the President of the American Civic Association, an influential voice for civic improvement, beautification, and environmental conservation, and the leader of the City Beautiful efforts in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which Dealey greatly admired.[69] Dealey and his colleagues formed the Dallas City Plan and Improvement League (CPIL), which "as adjunct of the chamber of commerce…was designed to work with city officials in securing 'expert advice' to develop a plan."[70] George Kessler, a friend of Dealey's, was brought to the city in 1910 by the CPIL, where both the commission and park board voted to retain him.[71]

The Plan

George Kessler already enjoyed a national reputation by 1910. He had already completed city plan designs for Kansas City, Denver, and Indianapolis. He had actually lived in Dallas for a time growing up and completed a design for Fair Park in 1906. A 1925 review and progress report of *City Plan for Dallas* stated that "His connection with Dallas was closer probably than with any other city save one- Kansas City- that he had planned for."[72]

Published in 1912, the Kessler plan for Dallas sought to improve the issues plaguing the city and increase livability through a park, parkway, and boulevard system that would connect civic focal points in the city.[73] Importantly, he proposed a planning framework that would be a template for dealing with the continued future expansion and rapid population growth the city was already experiencing in the early 20th century.[74] Fairbanks notes its significance:

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[68] G. B. Dealey, *Getting into Action for a City Plan*, 1912, I.
[69] Julian C. Chambliss, "Perfecting Space: J. Horace McFarland and the American Civic Association," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 77, no. 4, (2010): 486-497.
[70] Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 260.
[71] Ibid., 260.
[72] Louis P. Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas: A Review of the Plan and Progress on its Accomplishment," 1925,4. Dallas Municipal Archives.
[73] Ibid., 4.
[74] Ibid., 4-5.

For the first time in the city's history, a single document addressed what civic leaders viewed as the city's most important needs and problems. Indeed many of the projects were grouped together in one document developed by an outside city planning expert. The plan now defined these as city problems rather than neighborhood or downtown problems and suggested that if left untreated they would adversely affect the development of the entire city. [75]In his introduction to the plan, Kessler suggested that his recommendations for Dallas came at a crucial moment in the city's development and that his plan provided an opportunity to change local planning culture and to manage future growth of the entire city more effectively: "In exaggerated form, Dallas today presents the difficulties attendant upon the expansion into a great city of a village at a temporary railroad terminus, no apparent thought having been given in the interim to the needs of the increasing population."[76]

Kessler's plan for Dallas emphasized large-scale civic planning projects like flood control of the Trinity River, increasing parks and playgrounds, clustering municipal buildings, and creating more efficient traffic connections. Importantly, all of these elements would be tied together with a parkway and boulevard system that would create green veins that linked together the whole plan, and wherever possible, utilized naturally beautiful areas to maximize potential. This concept applied to both Turtle Creek and Mill Creek, natural streams running through the city, and places such as City Park and Fair Park.

[75] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 50.
[76] Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas," 4.

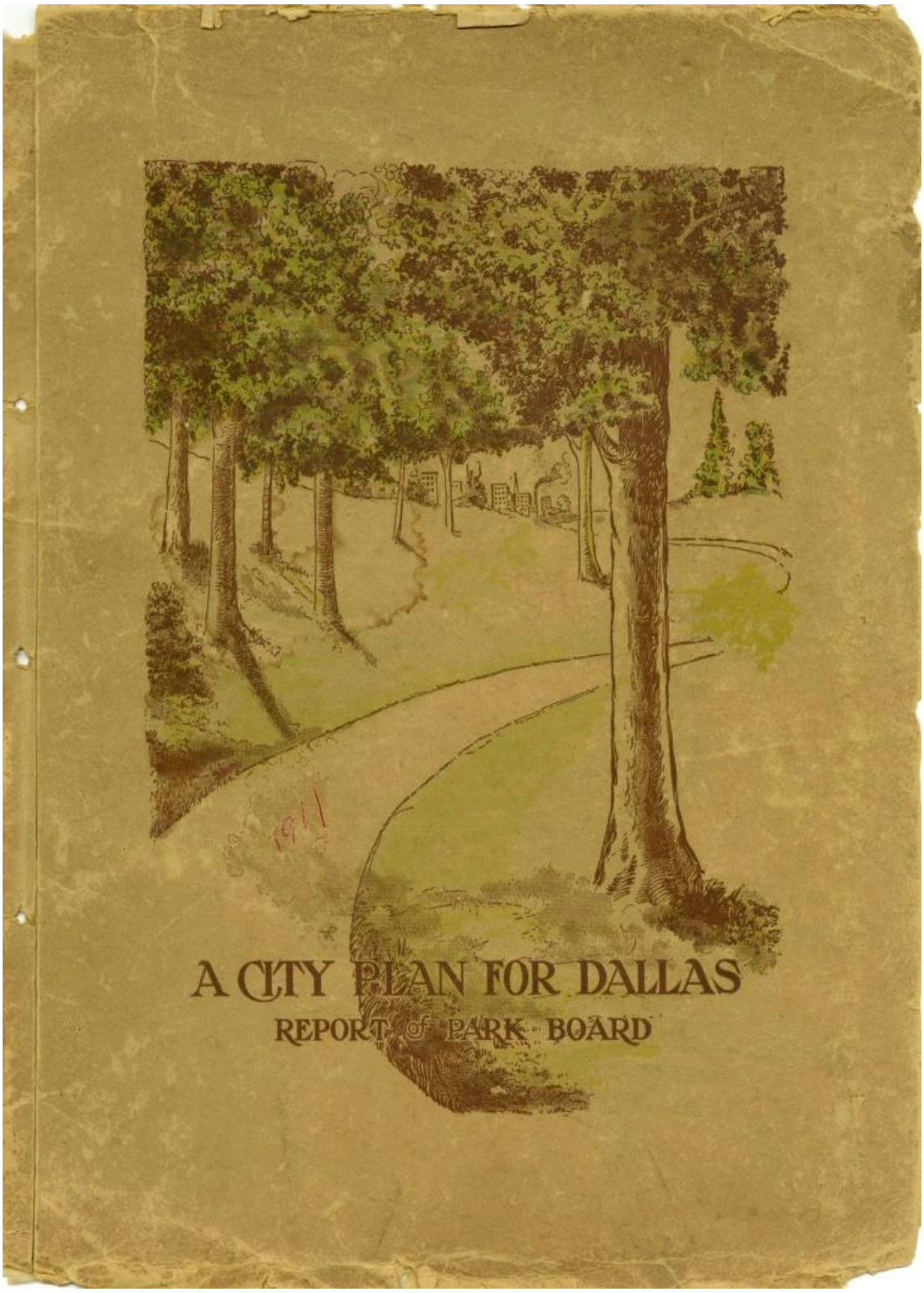

Figure 2-5 Cover from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives

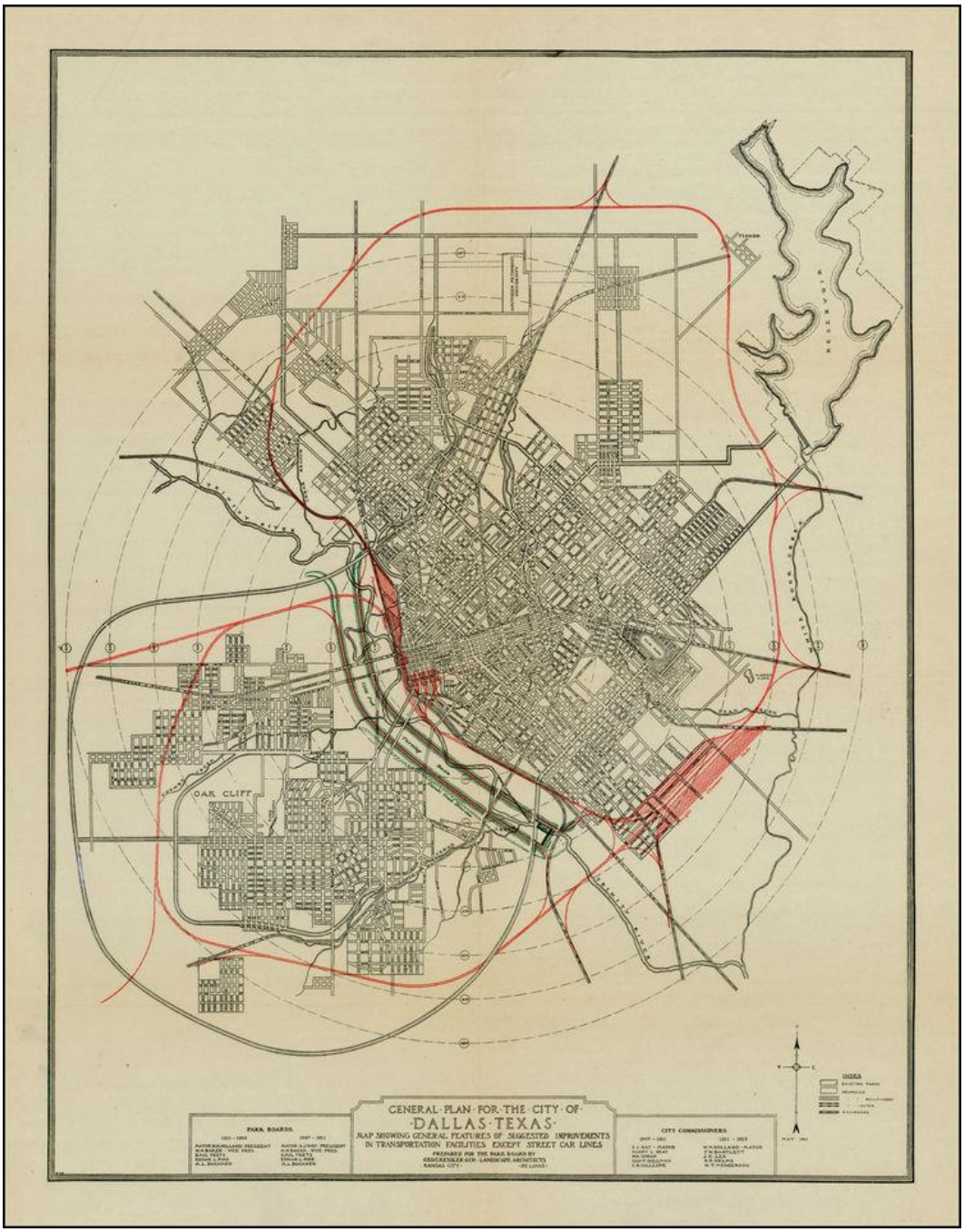

Figure 2-6 General Plan for the City of Dallas,

Texas prepared for the Park Board by George Kessler, *1911*

Courtesy of Dallas Public Library

Implementation

While the plan did have successes, it was never implemented in a meaningful way and failed to be the comprehensive tool Kessler intended it to be as the city continued to grow[77]. Fairbanks notes that the plan was both unbalanced and addressed issues separately, even though being packaged in a comprehensive city document.[78] The historian also notes there was no actual comprehensive mechanism to enact the plan on a large scale, leading to patchwork execution.[79] Further, many of the City-Beautiful ideals were seen simply as unnecessary beautification techniques and passed over in favor of ideas from the following planning trend, the City-Efficient.[80] The document claimed to be a plan for all however this research seeks to better understand the selective implementation by comparting where aspects of the plan were executed and what political or patronage mechanism facilitated the installation.

Social History, Urban Morphology, and the Landscape

The Importance of Historic Research and Social History

This research hypothesizes that the areas that suffer most from lacking the green amenities of parks, parkways, and boulevards often overlap with the most poor and racially divided parts of the city, increasing the aspects of inequality in the city. While this is not particularly surprising, a better understanding is needed regarding the mechanisms of power that worked to enact parts of the plan in ways that created spatial representation of values in Dallas.

[77] Wilson, William H. "Adapting to Growth: Dallas, Texas, and the Kessler Plan, 1908-1933." *Arizona and the West* 25, no. 3 (1983): 245-260.
[78] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole*, 27.
[79] Ibid., 28.
[80] Ibid., 28.

History provides a means to understand how and why societies have evolved. It contextualizes events to provide broader answers about why things have become the way they are. As William Cronon states, "Although most people usually take it for granted and devote little time to studying or thinking about it, in fact the past is responsible for everything we are. It is the core of our humanity. The past is the world out of which we have come, the multitude of events and experiences that have shaped our conscious selves and the social worlds we inhabit. To understand how and why we live as we do, we cannot avoid appealing to the past to explain how and why we got to be this way."[81]

Further, cities themselves can be and have been studied as ecosystems, where human influence and the built environment create a complex network of interactions that reveal societal values. In *Nature's Metropolis* Cronon reiterates the connection between the impact of people and the physical design of cities saying that "nothing in nature remains untouched by the web of *human* relationships that constitute our common history. And in that fact lies the measure of our moral responsibility for each other and for the world, whether urban or rural, human or natural."[82] Importantly, Cronon refers to landscape architect Anne Spirn who defines the city as a part of nature. Spirn pronounces, "The city is a granite garden, composed of many smaller gardens, set in a garden world… The city is a part of nature."[83]

The historical study of the City-Beautiful movement as a connection between the city, urban green spaces, and civic engagement therefore can be a historical study of the people, and physical environment, and the societal values that shaped that environment that still exists today. While certain architectural aspects of the city are fluid and change, there are

[81] Cronon, "Why the Past Matters," 4.

[82] William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2009): 19.

[83] Anne W. Spirn, *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design*, (New York: Basic Books, 1985): 4.

certain "permanences... [that] are a past that we are still experiencing."[84] This concept is presented in formal terms in Aldo Rossi's *The Architecture of the City* as he discusses the importance of the study of urban history and Marcel Poete's theory of permanence. Rossi also notes, "These persistences are revealed through monuments, the physical signs of the past, as well as through the persistence of a city's basic layout and plans…The most meaningful permanences are those provided by the street and the plan. The plan persists at different levels; it becomes differentiated in its attributes, often deformed, but in substance it is not displaced."[85]

According to these theories, the study of early city plans is one of the most important ways to understand what elements persist in a city and continue to affect its constituents, both in its formal terms and in its broader social and cultural evolution. This is particularly relevant for the Kessler plan, Dallas's first comprehensive plan, although altered via physical implementation, has substantive effect on the current city. As Rossi says, "from the point of view of urban structure, urban history seems more useful than any other form of research on the city."[86]

While urban and architectural history can reveal the permanences and fluidity in the form of cities, it also provides a narrative to understand broader societal contexts and environments. K. Michael Hays formulates, "The role of the historian is rather to be concerned with larger conditions on which architectural knowledge and action is made possible: with the multiple agencies of culture in their ideological and historical and worldly forms." [87]

[84] Aldo Rossi and Peter Eisenman. *The Architecture of the City*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982): 59.
[85] Ibid., 59.
[86] Ibid., 57.
[87] K. Michael Hays, "Notes on Narrative Method in Historical Interpretation." *Footprint* 1, no. 1 (2007): 23.

Hays signifies the value of narrative by saying, "A fundamental problem of writing history is to solve the dilemma: Any strictly empiricist account of history is impossible, and architecture can never be understood as simply a copy or reflection of historical conditions. Never-the-less, history is real and architecture is representational (even if not in a straightforward way). Narrative solves this dilemma, at once avoiding any reflection theories of art and problems of verisimilitude and, at the same time, constructing a material basis for architecture's representational function."[88] This research reconstructs a historical narrative to understand the physical outcomes of the Kessler Plan. A more in-depth exploration of the importance and features of historic narrative will be included in the methodology chapter.

Power and Spatialization

Landscape architects and planners cannot overlook the role of history in shaping the current physical environment of cities and cannot address the problems created by these planning mechanisms without understanding the past. The physical environment is shaped by the design and practices enacted in cities. George Lipsitz notes, "Having a better understanding of differential space, of the roles played by exclusion, exchange value, and use value in determining the racial meanings of places, can help landscape architects and other professionals whose work shapes the built environment to ameliorate the racialization of space and the spatialization of race….The relationship of race to the Enlightenment—as its always disavowed yet universally produced product—makes it necessary to struggle in separate sites to unearth and identify the occluded and disavowed historical genealogies and ideologies of racialized space particular to specific locations."[89] Redlining, deed restrictions,

[88] Ibid., 24.
[89] Lipsitz, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race," 10-23.

and zoning laws spatialized race, and in some cases class and there is a deeper cultural meaning these places in our cities that should be addressed. Richard Rothstein emphasizes this in his book *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*:

> If federal programs were not, even to this day, reinforcing racial isolation by disproportionately directing low-income African Americans who receive housing assistance into the segregated neighborhoods that government had previously established, we might see many more inclusive communities. Undoing the effects of de jure segregation will be incomparably difficult. To make a start, we will first have to contemplate what we have collectively done and, on behalf of our government, accept responsibility.[90]

As In many cases, these places ethnically and economically remain the similar today. There is a lack of mobility that affects those born into more economically segregated parts of cities. Studies show that poverty in neighborhoods is steady, persistent, and consistent.[91] These places are not self-creating or self-sustaining; they are the physical spatializaiton of values and policies.

The Importance of Social History for Dallas

When we examine George Kessler's 1912 comprehensive plan for Dallas and its implementation, it is important to note some of the key points that contributed to the city's social and political atmosphere. Graff notes:

> The sources of turmoil included real and perceived problems in the structure and conduct of local government; the prominence and popularity of the Ku Klux Klan, which enjoyed some elite support; growing community support for organized labor, social democrats, and socialists, along with progressive concerns about social welfare, social reform, and social justice; a visible urban popular culture with interracial contact and prominent African American contributions, particularly in music and entertainment; and anxieties about

[90] Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America*, New York: Liveright (2017): Epilogue.

[91] Robert J. Sampson, and S. Raudenbush. "Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN): Addendum (Primary Caregiver), Wave 3, 2000-2002. ICPSR13670-v1." *Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor]* (2007): 03-02; Narayan Sastry and Bonnie Ghosh-Dastidar, John Adams, and Anne R. Pebley. "The design of a multilevel survey of children, families, and communities: The Los Angeles Family and Neighborhood Survey." *Social Science Research* 35, no. 4 (2006): 1000-1024.

> proper orderly behavior suitable for a city striving for regional economic and cultural domination and seeking national recognition.[92]

As Dallas's population grew, the city was faced with tensions during its growing pains. One important thing to note in addition to Graff's reference to the structure of the government is race.

Race relations in Dallas were shaped by Jim Crow era segregationist policies that required so-called "separate but equal" public facilities for transit, entertainment, education, and recreation. By the late 1920s these segregationist policies were amplified further bythe prominent Ku Klux Klan chapter that formed and quickly grew to be known as the largest chapter in the world. The chapter was so large that "After discounting ineligible groups such as women, children and minorities, the membership presumably represented about one out of three eligible men in Dallas."[93] Law enforcement and several judges were seen as supportive of if not complicit with Klan activates and messaging.[94] The political power of a violent white supremacist organization in the city led to "unspoken" understanding of racial segregation policies.[95] This reflects the social and political climate in the city during the period that the Kessler Plan was implemented and supports the idea that the spatialization of race is a critical issue in the city.[96]

Another important thing to note is how the city dealt with this turmoil and why Dallas often purports itself as being above the fray of racial issues.[97] Historian Patricia Hill summarizes, "The elite that matured in the 1920s and consolidated its power with the formation of the Dallas Citizens Council in 1937 put an abrupt end to…internecine feuding,,, It relied on civic boosterism, control of the media, the mythology of frontier capitalism, prejudices and fears of the largely native, white population, and brutal repression to isolate and marginalize those

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[92] Graff, *The Dallas Myth*, 59.

[93] Darwin Payne, "The Dallas Morning News and The Ku Klux Klan," *Legacies: A History Journal for Dallas and North Central Texas*, 9, no.1 (Spring 1997), 16-29.

[94] Idib.

[95] Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas*, 1841-2001, University of Texas Press, 2010. 64.

[96] Christopher J. Dowdy's "Dallas Untold," a 2015 digital humanities research project addressing the 1910 lynching of Allen Brooks, provides further material for understanding the racial spatialization of Dallas: http://blog.smu.edu/untolddallas/

[97] Graff, *The Dallas Myth*, 59.

who challenged its hegemony."[98] This applies to dealing with the Ku Klux Klan, but also intersects with the time period this research is referencing in relation to the implementation of the Kessler plan, showing how race, class, and power are inseparable in studying the social history that affected the implementation of the physical plan.

The current literature on the history of planning and landscape architecture in Dallas as well as its urban history suggest that issues of race, power, and political influence are essential to understanding how City Beautiful planning ideals were implemented. While historians have drawn these larger thematic conclusions, there are gaps in the literature that address how this larger themes affected specific neighborhoods and projects. This thesis depends on their conclusions to ask questions about the long-term impacts of planning decisions made in this historic context. In other words, this thesis addresses how the mechanisms for of these larger dynamics in urban history affected the physical landscape in Dallas in the short- and long-term.

[98] Patricia Evridge Hill, *Dallas: The Making of a Modern City,* (University of Texas Press, 2010): xiv.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Two Kinds of Dallas: Turtle Creek, Mill Creek, and the Kessler Plan

The main method utilized in this research to explore the implementation of the Kessler Plan for Dallas and the impacts of those implementations is a case study comparing Turtle Creek Parkway and Mill Creek Parkway. The research will utilize the thick description[99], or microhistory[100], and utilize archival research, primary documents and records to reconstruct the societal context that affected the pointedly different treatments of the creek.

Research Design + Data Collection

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Turtle Creek and Mill Creek were ecologically very similar creeks running through the city of Dallas. In 1909, Kansas City based landscape architect George Kessler drew a master plan for Dallas that included elaborate designs for both creeks and their watersheds. However, only the design for Turtle Creek Parkway, a winding, picturesque automobile parkway connecting the elite Highland Park to the offices of downtown, was implemented. The design for Mill Creek, also a picturesque parkway system, was not implemented. Instead, Mill Creek, which was in fact deeper, wider and longer than Turtle Creek, was channelized and paved over. It remains buried in east Dallas, sometimes causing flooding issues to this day.[101]

The central questions this thesis asks focus on the civic mechanisms that created these two different outcomes. Tools offered by social history, which focus on questions about and civic power structures and city responsibility, allow insights into the ways that landscape architecture helped create a civic landscape that codifies that values of its decision makers. To understand this phenomenon of separation between city planning movements and the practice of the ideas of those movements is an important study of social history. Cultural landscapes are

[99] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward An Interpretive Theory of Culture." *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science* (1994): 213-231.

[100] Giovanni Levi, "On Microhistory," In Burke, Peter, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, (Cambridge: 1991): 93–94.

[101] Robert Wilonsky, "Construction of 5-Mile, $319 Million Drainage Tunnel to Begin in East Dallas This Spring," *Dallas Morning News*, February 2016, https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-hall/2016/02/17/construction-of-5-mile-319-million-drainage-tunnel-to-begin-in-east-dallas-this-spring

defined as “landscapes that have been affected, influenced, or shaped by human involvement. A cultural landscape can be associated with a person or event. It can be thousands of acres or a tiny homestead. It can be a grand estate, industrial site, park, garden, cemetery, campus, and more. Collectively, cultural landscapes are works of art, narratives of culture, and expressions of regional identity.”[102] This research is concerned with the designed landscape within cities, which also allies with the study of social history. Dolores Hayden argues this study of social history provides a more comprehensive study of the mechanisms in an urban environment saying, “Yet the earliest cultural landscape methods for studying places, and people’s shaping of them and attachments to them, were not adequate to convey their political dimensions. Unlike social history, which developed in the 1960s with an urban bias, cultural geography from the 1940s on leaned to the study of rural, preindustrial, landscapes, rather than the complicated urban variety, mapping ethnicity along with vernacular house types or patterns of cultivation, considering ecology but avoiding issues of political contestation.”[103] In other words, social history addresses political and societal values in urban history more completely than the study of cultural landscapes. Social history offers a more complete study of the contributing factors of landscapes in the complex urban system. Politics, governmental and personal, not only play a critical role in how a city functions, but in Dallas’s case, its physical layout. The political mechanisms that were at play the early twentieth century, at the time of Dallas’s first comprehensive plan and when the city was facing rapid population growth and expansion, laid the physical foundation of the city that persists today.

To address issues of social history, I will look specifically at primary sources that include the Kessler Plan itself, status reports of its implementation, city records, city ordinances, and contemporary accounts of the plan and public discussions about it in the local newspapers, and historic maps and directories. Archival research and comparative historic research provide

[102] “The Cultural Landscape Foundation, “About Cultural Landscapes,” Accessed October 20, 2017, https://tclf.org/places/about-cultural-landscapes.

[103] Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 17.

historical narrative to contextualize the facts of the past, GIS mapping visualizes the results of this study to show the above factors concerning the treatment of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek. This also shows the Kessler plan relative to contemporary city development and allows visual analyses of the different outcomes.

In addition to these primary sources, GIS is used to create a series of overlays that visualize the relationship of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek to their surrounding urban environments at the time that the varied decisions about implementation of the Kessler Plan were made. The visualizations provide context for characterizing the varied relationships that the creeks had to the civic elite and to the future growth of the city of Dallas. There are a number of precedent studies that use GIS mapping to reveal spatial relationships characterized by historical and societal topics such as the Racial Dot Map and "Richmond Virginia's Place in GIS and Racial Discrimination History" from University of Virginia, and Harvard GISD's "Map the Gap" project. This research will rely on archival data to determine the spatial relationships and compare social, political, and geographic factors affecting Turtle Creek and Mill Creek.

This direct comparison visualizes some of the mechanisms that effected physical implementation of City Beautiful than the different treatment or two creeks, at some places within a mile of one another. Planned, they served similar purposes, but where one was channelized and developed over and one was treated with reverence in design. By studying and comparing the physical aspects of the creeks, their purposes, what demographics and institutions they served, and the population and diversity impacted, the research elucidates who and what the city found valuable for implementation.

Limitations

One of the major limitations of this research is that neighborhoods occupied by minorities and lower income groups were not always included in mapping, historic documentation, and records. Sanborn maps, for example, one of the most valuable tools for reconstructing urban history, were often not created for neighborhoods with low property values.

In many cases, only certain aspects of society have been documented, which is a statement itself on the necessity of social historic study. For example, the African American neighborhood the Prairie is scarcely discussed in books and hardly referenced in maps, but was settled around the same time as North Dallas freedman's town at the turn of the 19th century.[104] The Prairie is one of the neighborhoods that in the 1930s would have been impacted by Mill Creek, and it was occupied by many prominent black citizens.[105] Just because a neighborhood was not documented does not mean there is nothing to say about it. Its exclusion itself is revelatory to the importance of those groups to society at the time. As A.C. Greene states concerning Dallas:

> We owe much to thousands of persons whom we shall never see, but whom we may get to know better than those we glimpse daily.
>
> Dallas' history is of people who came to look for a new life or escape from an old one-or because the grass looked greener on the other side of some barrier society had set up where they were.
>
> People are history. Emerson says there is no history, only biography. Perhaps that is what Dallas became, a collective biography of all those people who found some reason to come, and more to stay…
>
> How people have lived is the basis of how we see life- and when it's summed up, that's the most important history there is.[106]

Just because there are gaps in historic record does not mean we cannot use other sources to reconstruct the urban geography of Mill Creek. Further, archival data, especially newspaper articles contributes to the understanding of neighborhood and demographic spatialization by revealing the issues, meetings, and city relationship to these communities.

Another limitation is the availability of archival data, primary sources, and city documents. While in many cases the documents exist, they rely on human ability to find and access these documents, which can result in slower than optimal research. In addition, city processes, especially in Dallas, limit the ease in attaining documents. Another archival

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[104] Roy Appleton, "Growing Up on the Prairie- Where a Prominent Black Neighborhood Once Thrived; Man Strives to Preserve the History of an Early Dallas Settlement," *Dallas Morning News,* February 1, 2002, 25A.

[105] McKnight, Mamie, "African American Families and Settlements of Dallas: On the Inside Looking Out," *Exhibition, Family Memoirs, Personality Profiles and Community Essays* 2, (1990).

[106] A. C. Greene, *A Place Called Dallas*, (Dallas: County Heritage Society, 1975), .

limitation is the lack of access to certain Dallas Newspapers like the *Dallas Express* and format which many sources are available. In the scope of this research and the timeframe provided, it would be impossible to examine 30 years of non-digitized newspaper articles or construct neighborhood spatial maps through the study of city directory microfilms and deed restrictions, organized by individual properties. These remain sources for further research.

Significance + Conclusion

Our cities spatialize the values a society perpetuates, for better or worse. For example, segregation has left an ugly spatial scar on many cities in the south, including Dallas, where a "color line" was proposed that would separate residents by race north and south of the line, was publically discussed in the *Dallas Express* in 1920.[107] Historian Michael Phillips further noted that at the beginning of the twentieth century, "With the Dallas commercial elite firmly in charge of their city, neighborhoods increasingly segregated not just racially but also by economic class."[108] Landscape architecture and city planning are no different. These practices spatialize our public spaces- the places between buildings, the streets and pathways we traverse, the greenspaces we occupy to escape the confines of our homes or our offices. As a profession, the words and theories are meaningless if there is no advocacy to match and no mechanism to enact these values. If the inspiration for the City Beautiful was the Olmstedian movement, the movement to provide respite from the dirtiness, chaos, and tight quarters of the city for those who needed it most, to provide a place for all, why were certain areas improved and others not? And if the city planners and landscape architects of the city beautiful advocated for such measures, then why weren't they implemented? Where does the gap lie? Who benefitted and who suffered? Questioning this metric of implementation may seem repetitive, but it is intentional to emphasize how this seemingly cursory topic has helped to shape the cultural, social, and physical fabric of the urban centers to which we live.

[107] "South Dallas Residents Would Establish Color Line," *Dallas Express*, Saturday, March 13, 1920.
[108] Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis,* 64.

Chapter 4 Research: A Tale of Two Creeks

The research in this section details the different treatments of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek. The mechanics focus on careful documentation and analysis of the physical location, plan recommendations, surrounding neighborhood demographics, implementation, and goals of the improvement.

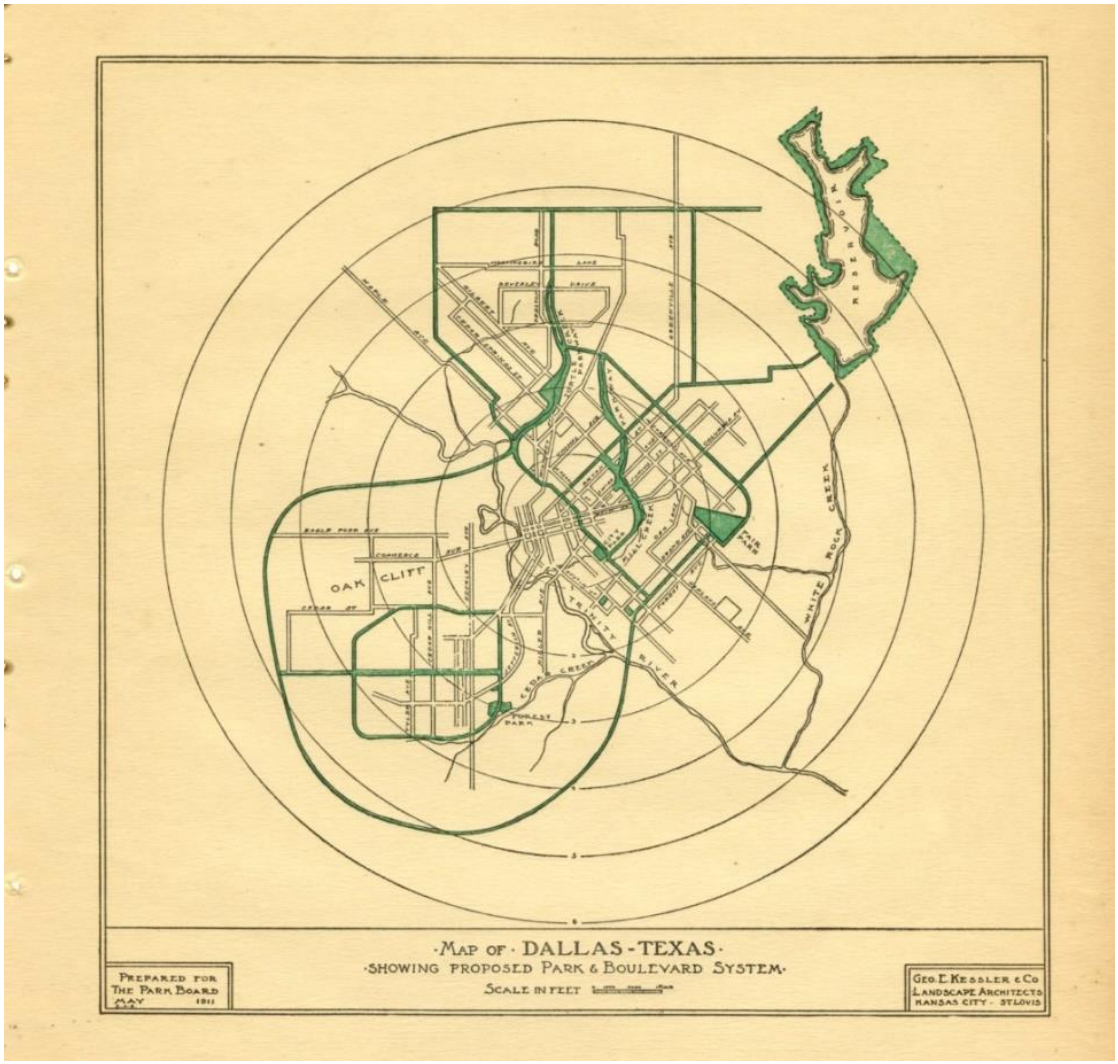

Figure 4-1 Park & Boulevard System from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives

Turtle Creek: A Legacy Landscape for Dallas

Turtle Creek is heralded as the most significant contribution of the Kessler plan for Dallas, with its idyllic rolling greens, picturesque vistas, limestone escarpments, and City Beautiful parkway. In its 2002 Renaissance Plan, the city of Dallas proposed Turtle Creek to become one of the city's five signature parks.[109] The plan states, "On the positive side, Dallas does have noteworthy strengths beyond the pure size of its park system. These include a wide variety of facilities throughout the city aimed to serve all age groups. Along with this are the *'signature'* destinations in Dallas as showcased by the Dallas Zoo, the Dallas Arboretum, Turtle Creek Greenbelt, White Rock Lake Park, and Fair Park." The plan goes on to say, "These are high profile components of the park system that give a distinct identity to the city and North Texas region."[110] George Kessler played a significant role in three of the five parks mentioned, Fair Park, White Rock Lake Park, and Turtle Creek Parkway, in addition to making recommendations for the Forest Park, which would later be the site of the Dallas Zoo.[111] Little is said in the rest of this parks master plan about Turtle Creek or the various "signature parks" besides that they are "strengths" of Dallas and have historic significance. Aesthetically, the inclusion of Turtle Creek as a legacy strength and source of identity makes sense for Dallas, but given its location and users, it also reflects the values of the city on a deeper level.

The following research will detail the physical creek and parkway, the users and those most impacted by the implementation, and the goals and outcomes that determined the societal values of Dallas at the turn of the nineteenth century. It will also explore who had power to enact physical change, and what the spatializtion of those values means today. Through studying the location, events, and people who both influenced and benefitted from its execution, the research reveals a set of societal values demonstrated by the implementation of Turtle Creek that are contrary to the legacy the original plan advertised.

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[109] Katherine Kosut, "Turtle Creek Corridor Master Plan," Turtle Creek Association, 2009.
[110] City of Dallas, "A Renaissance Plan," *Dallas Park and Recreation*, August 2002, http://tx-dallasparks.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/329
[111] Kessler, *A City Plan for Dallas*.

Turtle Creek before the Kessler Plan

Turtle Creek followed the same general course in the early 20th century as it does today. It ran approximately from Lovers Lane to the north, south through University, Highland Park, and Oak Lawn neighborhoods, until it terminated into the Trinity River. Turtle Creek Parkway referenced in the plan extended from Armstrong Avenue at the edge of Highland Park to about Lake Boulevard, about 2 miles south. It was characterized by a gentle meander and limestone escarpment just over two miles in length before it reached Armstrong Avenue of the City of Highland Park. To the east was the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, also known at the Katy, and to the east was the neighborhood of Oak Lawn was to the west.

Since the late nineteenth century, Turtle Creek has been a source of pride for the residents of the city who used it. The Dallas Morning News claimed in 1908, "The way leads to the Turtle Creek bottoms, one of the most picturesque sections and, with streets and habitations screened from view by foliage it is difficult to realize the spot is well within the limits of the largest and busiest city in the State."[112] A railroad advertisement from 1889 also noted, "One of the pleasantest trips in the city is on the North Dallas Circuit Railroad, where the beautiful groves of Turtle Creek skirt the line."[113]

[112] "Aroused Civic Pride Now Manifest Here," *Dallas Morning News,* October 1, 1907, 16.
[113] "Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway Advertisement: The City," *Dallas Morning News,* May 18, 1889, 8.

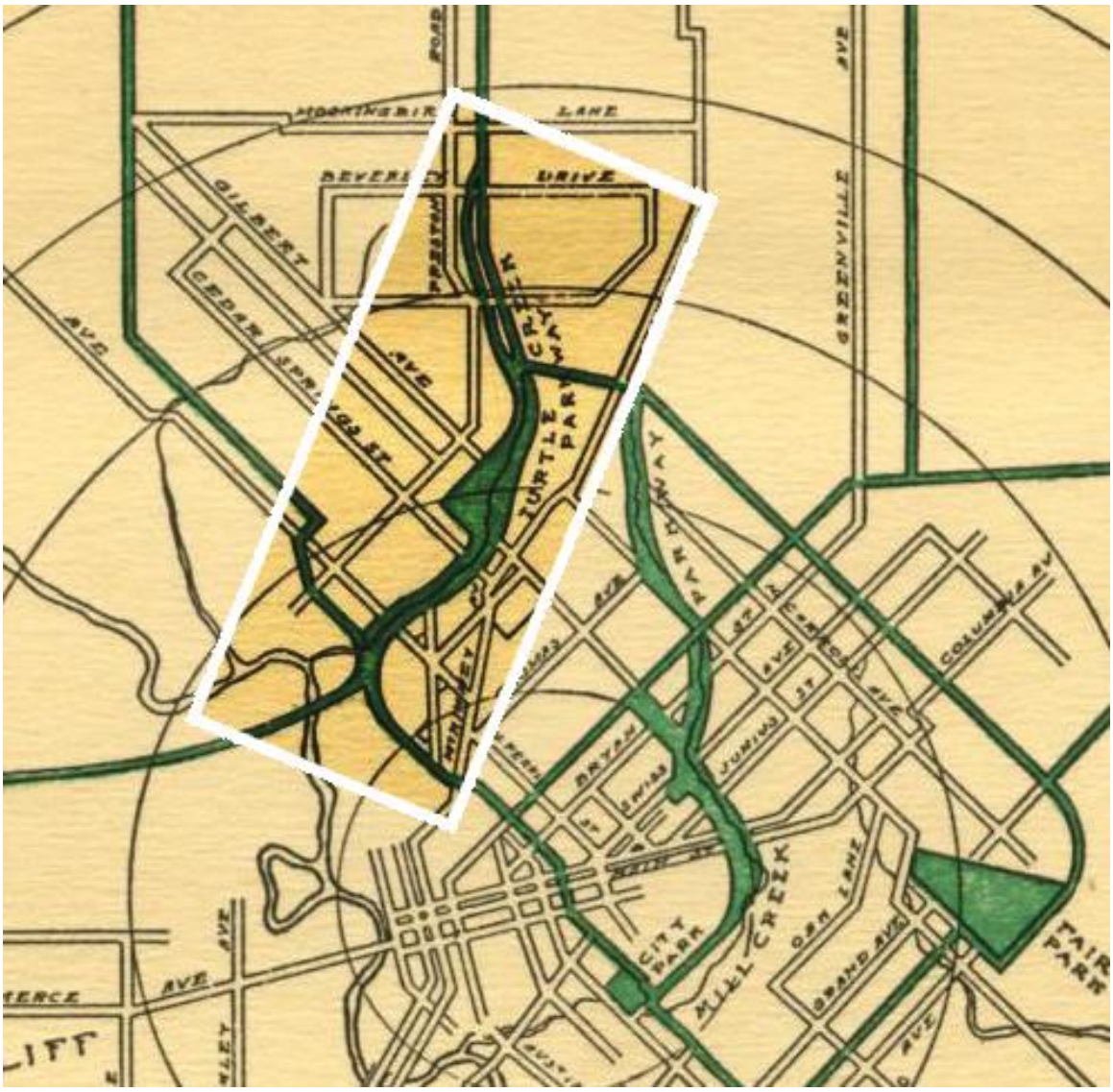


Figure 4-2 Turtle Creek Parkway on Park & Boulevard System from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives and amended by author

Figure 4-3 Wading in Turtle Creek

Courtesy of 1915-1916 SMU Rotunda Yearbook

As a result, by the early 20th century, the natural beauty of the creek and its proximity to the grander residential communities in Dallas had already made it a target for preservation and improvement, as news articles cited. In 1910, around the same time Kessler was visiting Dallas, The Dallas Morning News describes the plan to pair infrastructure development with improvements to the creek that would turn it into a park:

> As was the case with the City Park, it was of considerable natural beauty, but very little has been done to improve it. However it is now proposed to build a city hospital upon another site and to convert this ground and the site of the Turtle Creek pumping station of the city water department, which adjoins the same, into a park. These tracts are hilly, cut by Turtle Creek and ravines are well wooded and will lend themselves splendidly to landscape architecture. The City Commissioners have already done something in the way of improving the waterworks site with a view to consummation the park project. It is furthermore proposed to extend a boulevard from the waterworks site along Turtle Creek out to Highland Park, a distance of about two miles and a half making one of the most attractive park and boulevard systems in the South. The preliminaries of the plan are well underway.[114]

In other words, improving Turtle Creek was already a goal in Dallas because of its aesthetic qualities and, again, its ability to be an attractive vehicular connection to Highland Park. In order to fully capitalize on the asset of Turtle Creek, efforts were already proceeding to make significant infrastructure changes to accommodate the parkway. It is also noteworthy that these

[114] Dallas Morning News, "Nucleus of the City's Park System, Acquired About Thirty Years Ago," *Dallas Morning News,* October 1, 1910, 42.

improvements were initiated before George Kessler's plan was published showing considerable determination and foresight to enact a proposed improvement. While Turtle Creek was a central recommendation in the *City Plan for Dallas*, it was published in 1912,Kessler's improvements to the Park Board for Turtle Creek Parkway were published in 1911.

Figure 4-4 Park & Boulevard System from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

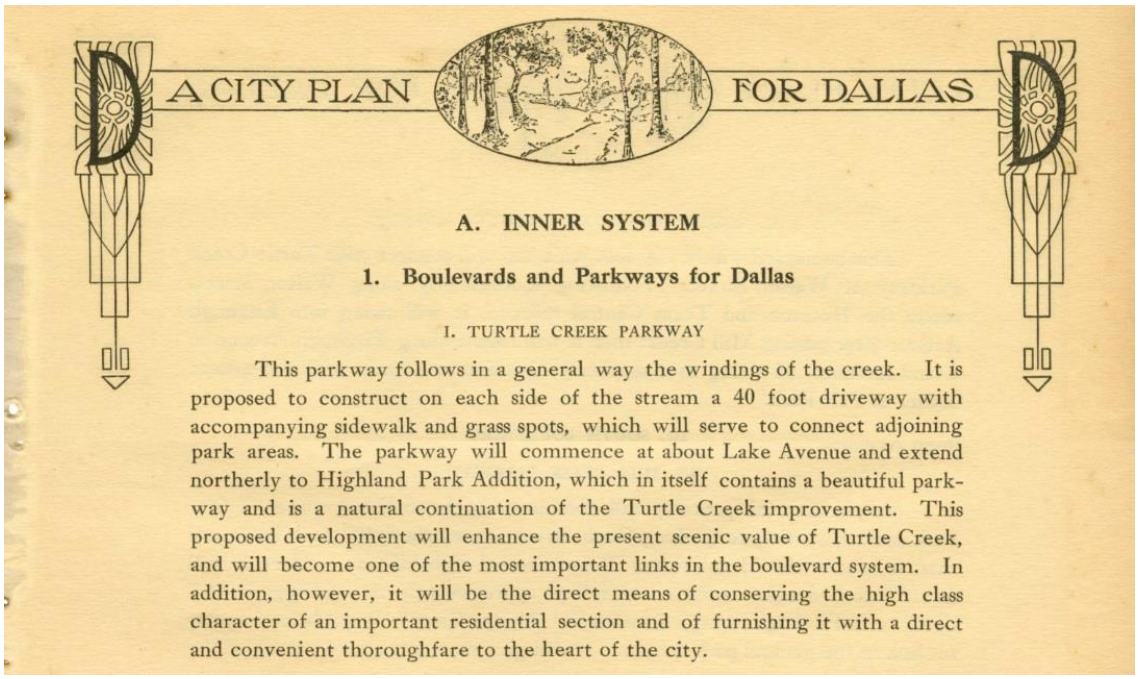
Courtesy of Dallas Public Library

Kessler Plan Recommendations

Considered "Kessler's most successful contribution to the character of Dallas,"[115] the plan recommended drives 40 feet in width on both sides of the stream with parks, green spots, and sidewalks connected throughout. The stream stretched north south along Turtle Creek Boulevard, bound by Blackburn St. to the north and Maple Avenue to the south, where the parkway terminated at Lake Avenue, around a dangerous slum and city hospital. Kessler's recommendation called for a parkway that "follows in a general way the windings of the creek… [and to] construct on each side of the stream a 40 foot driveway with accompanying sidewalk and grass spots, which will serve to connect adjoining park areas."[116] Importantly, the plan details how the proposed Turtle Creek Parkway will be an important extension from the existing Highland Park parkway system. Kessler stated, "The parkway will commence at about Lake Avenue and extend northerly to Highland Park Addition, which itself contains a beautiful

[115] Graff, *The Dallas Myth*, 165.
[116] Kessler, *A City Plan for Dallas,* 31.

parkway and is a natural continuation of the Turtle Creek improvement… [To] enhance the present scenic value of Turtle Creek and will become one of the most important links in the boulevard system."[117]



A CITY PLAN FOR DALLAS

A. INNER SYSTEM

1. Boulevards and Parkways for Dallas

I. TURTLE CREEK PARKWAY

This parkway follows in a general way the windings of the creek. It is proposed to construct on each side of the stream a 40 foot driveway with accompanying sidewalk and grass spots, which will serve to connect adjoining park areas. The parkway will commence at about Lake Avenue and extend northerly to Highland Park Addition, which in itself contains a beautiful parkway and is a natural continuation of the Turtle Creek improvement. This proposed development will enhance the present scenic value of Turtle Creek, and will become one of the most important links in the boulevard system. In addition, however, it will be the direct means of conserving the high class character of an important residential section and of furnishing it with a direct and convenient thoroughfare to the heart of the city.

Figure 4-5 Turtle Creek Recommendations from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives

Neighborhood Context

The adjacent neighborhoods played a significant role in the implementation of the parkway plan, including Highland Park, Oak Lawn, and State Thomas, which together constituted the wealthiest residential neighborhoods of Dallas. The National Registrar Landmark Designation notes that the State-Thomas District, an area within Oak Lawn and on the southeastern edge of Turtle Creek, was "Dallas' most affluent neighborhood at the time,

[117] Ibid., 31.

outside of Ross Avenue, was concentrated around the intersection of Cedar Springs Road and McKinney and along Thomas Avenue."[118]

Figure 4-6 1910 Postcard of Maple Avenue

Courtesy of Christian Spencer Anderson

The designation discusses how its location, near the central business district improved the desirability of the neighborhood, but also that the neighborhood housed wealthy enough residents to propose and build their own streetcar in the area. The neighborhood was often listed in the social section of the Dallas Morning News.

By 1890, the city of Dallas annexed Oak Lawn into the city limits because of its successes in development. The neighborhood even had its own improvement association. Importantly, Cochran Street divided the neighborhood from the "black housing area …located between Cochran and actual downtown. This area was home for many of the domestics of

[118] "State Thomas Tract 1 Landmark Designation Report," City of Dallas Urban Planning Department and Historic Preservation League, 1984.

Thomas – Colby as well as porters and laborers from the downtown business/shopping centers."[119]

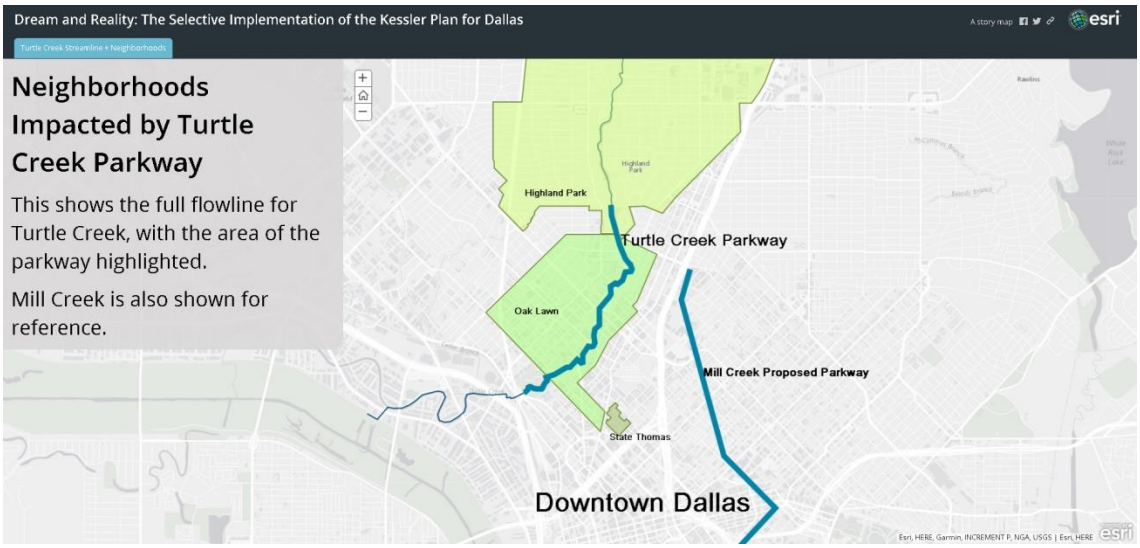


Figure 4-7 Map of Neighborhoods around Turtle Creek Parkway The 2017 neighborhood boundaries of Highland Park are in light green to the north, Oak Lawn is in darker green to the south, and State Thomas is southernmost in darkest green.

Courtesy of ESRI and amended by Molly Plummer

The north terminus of Turtle Creek Parkway, Highland Park, was not just the most affluent neighborhood in Dallas, but it was an independent city. It was an exclusive and separately incorporated enclave for the wealthy, completely surrounded by Dallas. Phillips notes about Highland Park:

> Landscape architect Wilbur David Cook developed Highland Park in 1907 as a refuge from an increasingly diverse city. Completely surrounded by Dallas, Highland Park became the residence of "the executives of big businesses, utility companies and bankers" who founded the mini-city as a congenial tax dodge. Residents protected "from the depredations of the minorities" avoided higher city taxes while Dallas provided them with water at a much lower cost even as rates climbed for city residents. The city limits of in-burbs like Highland Park and University Park, with their own school systems and police departments, became moats and the residents eagerly raised the drawbridges

[119] Ibid.

> to keep away frightening African Americans, Mexican Americans and white radicals.[120]

As noted, there is little diversity in Highland Park for a reason. People chose to settle there because of their ability to pay fewer taxes while enjoying city amenities, but also they could control whom they lived and worked around, as Phillips points out, increasingly isolating themselves from the actual city.

Figure 4-8 1907 Highland Park Advertisement

Courtesy of *The Dallas Morning News*, July 21, 1907

The *WPA Dallas Guide to History* describes Highland Park as "the finest residences, beautifully landscaped, many enhanced by picturesque Turtle Creek and its abutting parkways… [and] the more fashionable section of Dallas."[121] They vehemently fought annexation by the city showing how much power the people who lived there had and would eventually become a destination for wealthy residents of other neighborhoods as vehicular connectivity and interurban mobility increased in the early 1900s.[122]

[120] Phillips, *White Metropolis,* 64.

[121] United States Work Progress Administration, *The WPA Dallas Guide and History*, (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1992, orig. ed. 1940).

[122] "State Thomas Tract 1 Landmark Designation Report," 1984.

Implementation: Turtle Creek Parkway after Kessler

By November of 1910, almost all the land required for the implementation of Turtle Creek Parkway had been secured and the Park Board had begun getting the mechanisms to make the project a reality, even though Kessler's full recommendations for the city were not published until 1912. The Park Board commissioned Murrell L Buckner to "treat with the owners of these four pieces of property and endeavor to secure a dedication from them."[123] The Park Board also cautioned that the Turtle Creek improvement would only move forward if they could secure the dedication of all the pieces of property along the almost two mile stretch.

[123] "Nearly All Property Secured for Turtle Creek Parkway," *Dallas Morning News,* November 11, 1910, 4.

Nearly All Property Secured for Turtle Creek Parkway

Failure to secure dedication to four pieces of property is holding up the scheme for the improvement of Turtle Creek and the building of a parkway along that stream from Maple avenue to Highland Park. The Park Board has named Murrell L. Buckner as a committee of one to treat with the owners of these four pieces of property and endeavor to secure a dedication from them.

"All the other dedications have been effected," Mr. Buckner says. "The Park Board is willing to make this improvement in the event it can obtain deeds to all the property desired for the purpose. Unless such property is dedicated the improvement will be abandoned. If we can get dedication to the four pieces mentioned we will have necessary land for the making of a parkway and driveway fifty feet wide on either side of the stream from Maple avenue to Highland Park, a distance of one and one-half or two miles."

This paryway is the first of the suggestions submitted by Mr. Kessler to be undertaken by the Park Board. The effort will be made to close the matter up by Thursday, at which time it is expected Mr. Kessler will return to Dallas. Then the details of the improvement will be taken up with him.

The Park Board is determined to go ahead with the matter if it can secure the desired concessions from property owners whose holdings will be benefited. It is estimated that the total improvement will cost $250,000 ultimately. However, it is not intended to complete the work in a year or two years, but gradually, as the funds come in. Members of the board say they have a scheme for getting the money which they are not yet ready to make public.

The general idea is to have a driveway on either side of the branch, well paved, with wide sidewalks and attractive parkways along the street, with small parks at frequent intervals along the stream.

Figure 4-9 Article about Turtle Creek Land Acquisition, 1910

Courtesy of *Dallas Morning News*

It was also published that the board believed the cost of improvements would amount to $250,000. Furthermore, the board would not reveal the funding sources or mechanisms at the time of the article, and that the improvements were planned to be phased.[124] A year later, City Commissioners passed a resolution to condemn land for the parkway and then in 1913, and a

[124] Ibid., 4.

bond measure was informally discussed and approved in 1913.[125] The bond election was voted on and approved in April of 1913 with a sum of $500,000 allocated towards parks.[126] At this point, the exact allocation to Turtle Creek Parkway from the bond election was unclear, but it is worth noting that the costs of suggested improvements for the project constitute half of the entire budget of the bond for the city-wide park system.

Although the park was not recommended in the Kessler plan, Turtle Creek Parkway's present terminus is Reverchon Park, formerly known as Turtle Creek Park. Elites and advocates in addition to the Dallas Morning News utilized the terminology of the movement and Kessler's vision as a template to create an additional park along the proposed parkway. The area was occupied by an open-air slum that had a reputation for both dangerous and unclean. The land was purchased by the city in 1914 and the slum was cleared to make room for the "all this prodigality of nature [that] immensely appeals to the elemental moods of the human mind and heart."[127] The language used in the announcement published by the Dallas Morning News is distinctly City Beautiful saying, "To give to the people this lovely stretch of country, freeing it from all that now detracts from its beauty, is an act of loyal citizenship worthy of imitation by the youth of our city when they shall come to work for Greater Dallas."[128] This language referencing what the author viewed as improvement in the landscape, an act of citizenship, aiming to inspire more civic action through the physical build of the city has significant bearings on the meaning of the movement in Dallas. While the idea that building a park for all to use is noble, it raises the question of who decides what is best for the city and who do those things benefit. The people living in the slums did not benefit from being evicted and the idea of a "park for all" in highly segregated Dallas is a superficial outlook.

In 1915 the Park Board reported that Turtle Creek Boulevard would be the first major boulevard project to be taken on by the organization. The boulevard referred to the west

[125] "Condemn Land for Turtle Creek Drive," *Dallas Morning News,* November 21, 1911, 14.
[126] "Report of Mayor on City Affairs," *Dallas Morning News,* May 18, 1913, 5.
[127] "New Park an Acquisition," *Dallas Morning News*, August 17, 1911, 14.
[128] Ibid., 14.

driveway recommended from the Kessler Plan. The report notes the natural beauty of Turtle Creek that was attractive to park and parkway development mentioning the rock formations that caused clear water, the meander that connected the "center of the business district" to the University of Dallas, Dallas Country Club, and then Southern Methodist University, and "passes some of the costliest and most picturesque homes in Oak Lawn."[129] It also notes that the majority of the land for the park was donated by adjacent land owners demonstrating these residents' financial means and ability to use private capital donation for a supposedly public feature.

By 1921, despite these early actions, implementation was slow and the parkway had only been implemented on the west side of the stream. It was reported and complained about by the Dallas Morning News, which reported:

> In the residence sections of Dallas one of the most glaring failures of the city to drive definitely forward to actual accomplishment under the Kessler plan is to found in the Turtle Creek Boulevard. Only Highland Park, a separately incorporated suburb of Dallas, has the boulevarding of Turtle Creek been accomplished. That has been done as Mr. Kessler has pointed, in a manner which should be emulated by the city of Dallas throughout the reaches of Turtle Creek. The Parkway has been opened from Highland Park to Maple avenue on one side of the creek only, and even there nothing has been done toward widening it for several blocks past some of the city's finest residences and grounds. Nothing has been done toward paving most of the driveway, and it can only be said, as was the case six or eight years ago, that is "just the beginning to be a real accomplishment.[130]

While the article is critical of the city's lack of ability to fund and execute the comprehensive nature of the Kessler plan for Turtle Creek, it points a key factor at play in Dallas by shaming or attempting to shame the city by comparing it unfavorably to Highland Park. The reference to Highland Park's ability to carry out City Beautiful measures implies that of all the places Dallas has struggled to carry out plan measures, it should have been able to execute near "the finest residences and grounds." The criticism is aimed at the city's efficiency, but it suggests the city should be able to implement beautification measures in an already economically advantaged

[129] *Report for the Year 1914-15 of the Park Board of the City of Dallas,* Dallas, 1915, 63-64.
[130] "Dallas Losing by Delay in Plans," *Dallas Morning News,* November 20, 1921, 12.

part of Dallas. The article later states that even with its shortcomings in execution, Dallas now enjoys the reputation of a picturesque city and relays a statement from Kessler who said that this was "almost solely due to the efforts of individuals to beautify their own homes, and not due to the concerted work of community and officials to give the entire city a background of that beauty which can come from the best development of natural advantages offered in so many sections of Dallas."[131] The article ends by calling to action the people of Dallas to demand the Kessler plan be adopted and executed in its entirety. While complementary of some aspects of the City Beautiful effort in Dallas, the language in this the beautiful image of Dallas for the rest of the city. We need only to look back to the physical location, the surrounding locale, the demographics, and the purpose of Turtle Creek Parkway to see that there is no convincing argument that this parkway was meant for the "entire city." This notion is supported in the following events surrounding Mill Creek development in Dallas.

[131] Ibid., 12.

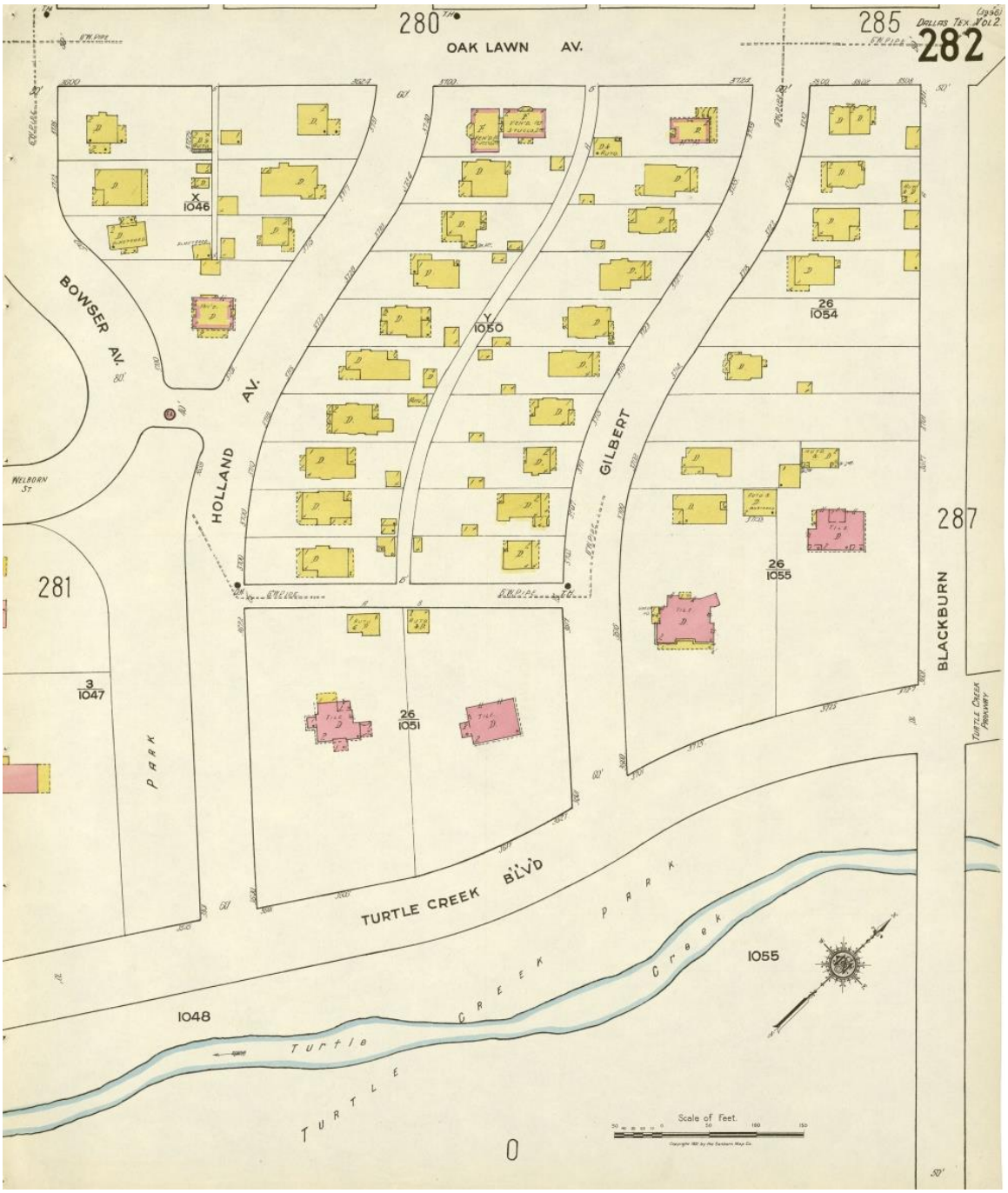


Figure 4-10 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Showing Mansions on Turtle Creek Boulevard, 1921

Courtesy of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas

By 1925 with the sale of Park Bonds, more headway would be made towards the implementation of Turtle Creek Parkway. While the road had been paved, funding from the bond promised to implement sidewalks, curbs, and gutters where necessary to the Turtle Creek plan to connect "Maple Avenue to the Highland Park city limits."[132] The *Dallas Morning News* was holding the Park Board accountable by putting the story on the first page and reporting, "Mr. Frets said the improvements would be made, with grading and the planting of trees where needed as soon as money was available from the park bond issue."[133] This was a public reminder of what the Park Board president had agreed to, in an area where some significant improvements had already begun. The article begins to show the muddied relationship between the media voice, private desire, and city action in Dallas. Another article in 1928 announced that the property owners along Turtle Creek initiated an improvement movement that would continue to develop the picturesque aspects of the parkway, clear underbrush, and remove dead trees. The City would be responsible after this effort was completed.[134]

The extent that Turtle Creek was implemented was completed by the early 1930's and the physical framework of the system remains today. The final parcels needed to complete the project were acquired in 1930. Their attainment was made possible by condemnation by the city. Nearby property owners and residents contributed $6,000 to the cause, while the city covered the remaining $46,000.[135]

Mill Creek, a Stream on the Wrong Side of the Tracks

From a hydrologic perspective, Mill Creek was very similar to Turtle Creek, but the language surround and treatment of the stream were very different, as was the demographic makeup surrounding the creek. The 1925 progress report of the Kessler plan devotes an entire article to the section to treatment of Mill Creek, which it viewed as the "one of the most

[132] "Turtle Creek Will Be Improved with First Sale of Park Bonds," *Dallas Morning News*, May 3, 1925, 1.
[133] Ibid., 1.
[134] "Beautifying Turtle Creek to be Started by Owners as Permanent," *Dallas Morning News*, March, 29, 1928, 13.
[135] "Widening Begun Along Boulevard on Turtle Creek," *Dallas Morning News*, February, 25, 1930, 13.

important of all the suggestions made."[136] At the time of the progress report, a small area around Ross Avenue had already been converted into a storm sewer, an action that the report called dangerous. Within five years of this report, discussion of fully channelizing Mill Creek became a reality and the process to bury the stream began in 1930.[137] Today, nothing remains on the surface of what was Mill Creek.

Physical Path: Location Mill Creek:

Before it was buried, Mill Creek meandered from Fitzhugh Avenue south through diverse neighborhoods before turning west just south of downtown. It passed by Baylor Hospital and from there it rambled through "The Cedars" neighborhood and through City Park, Dallas's first park, and then drained into the Trinity. Its original path was roughly five miles.

A Diverse Path: Neighborhood Context

Mill Creek passed through "the Cedars", the Prairie, Deep Ellum, parts of East Dallas, and part of the North Dallas neighborhood. These neighborhoods represented a wide range of economic and racial diversity in Dallas. The Creek then extended through the northeast most portion of North Dallas, the vibrant African American community. The most compelling observation about the neighborhoods where Mill Creek Parkway would be is that they were not generally low income areas, though there were slums and shack housing dispersed along the creek in some areas. The plan does not mention specifically mention Old East Dallas, Deep Ellum, the Cedars, or even Baylor Hospital while discussing Mill Creek as it references Oak Lawn and Highland Park in its recommendations for Turtle Creek.

[136] Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas," 31.
[137] "Mill Creek's Storm Sewer Provided For," *Dallas Morning News,* September 9, 1930.

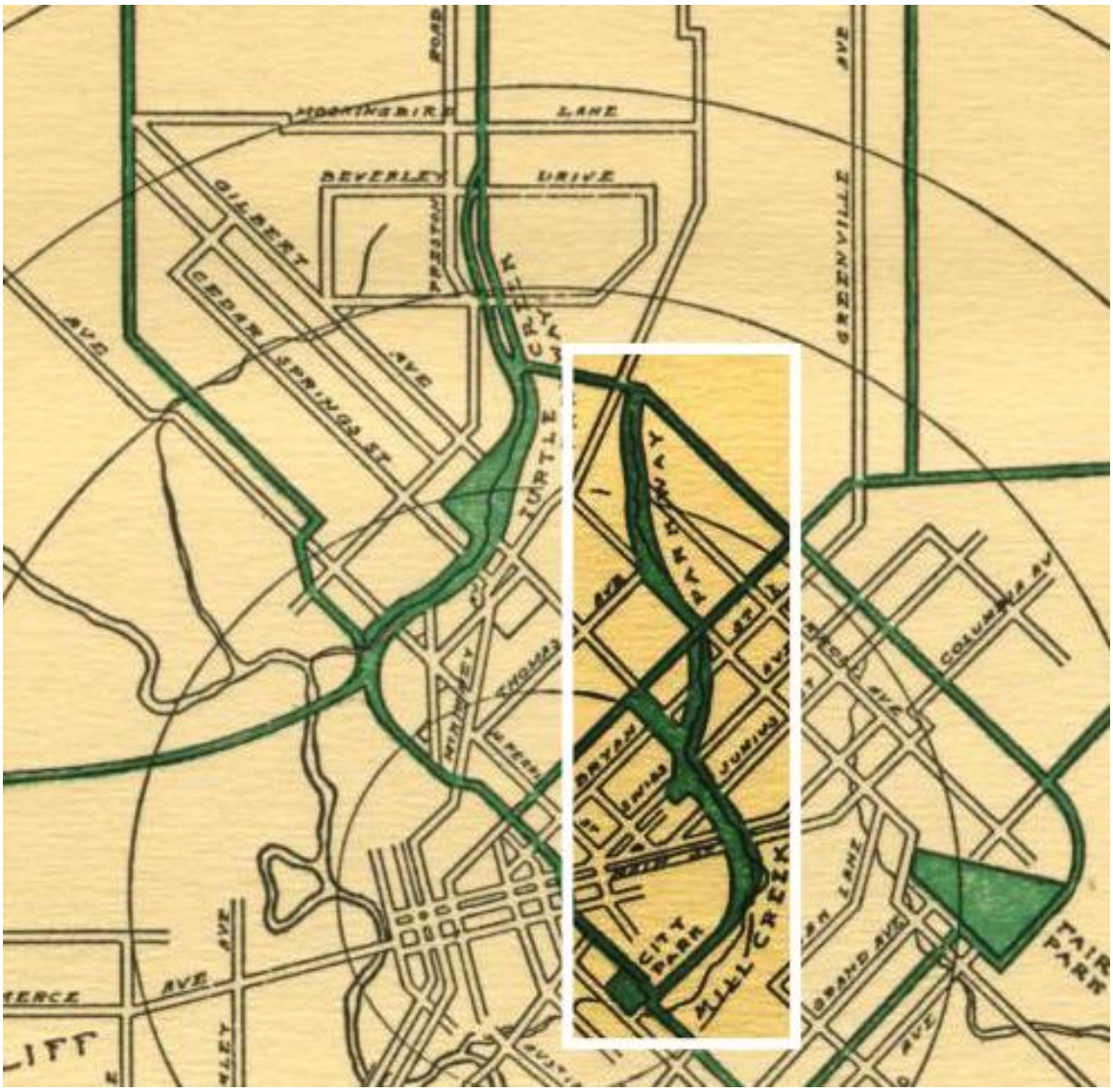


Figure 4-11 Mill Creek Parkway on Park & Boulevard System from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of The Dallas Municipal Archives and amended by author

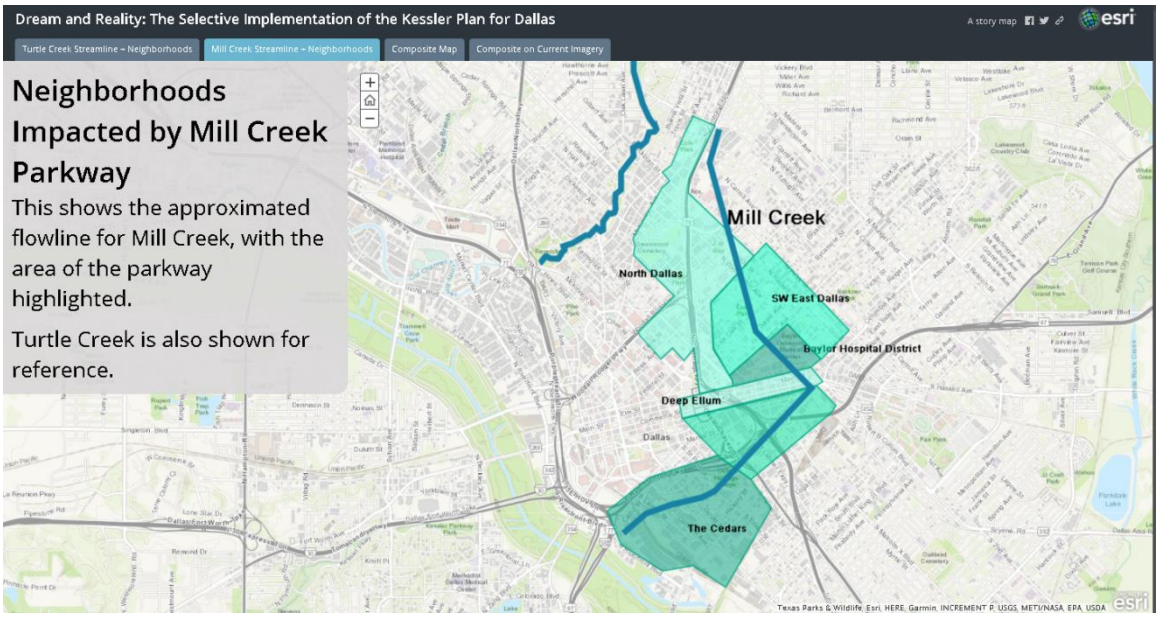


Figure 4-12 Map of Neighborhoods around Mill Creek Parkway

Courtesy of ESRI and amended by Molly Plummer

The Cedars was a residential development of fine homes that developed at the turn of the nineteenth century in downtown Dallas. The historic nomination for a landmark grocery store stated that in addition to the many fine homes just south of downtown, Dallas's first park was also part of the neighborhood. The nomination also states that "[after] World War II the area lost most of its fine homes and became a middle class residential neighborhood. During the 1920s many apartment buildings were constructed, and a number of other commercial establishments were built.[138] In 1929 the city of Dallas passed its first zoning ordinance and designated the neighborhood light commercial further reflecting how much the neighborhood changed from 1880. Phillip Sanger, of the famed department store Sanger-Harris and another proponent of the City Beautiful movement in Dallas, moved to the Cedars at the end of the nineteenth century and had a "pretentious residence."[139] Eventually wealthy residents moved north with the expansion of automobile mobility and after World War II the neighborhood

[138] "Columbus Langley Grocery and Feed Store Landmark Nomination," City of Dallas, 1988.
[139] "Mule Cars and Gas Street Lights Then," *Dallas Morning News,* October 1, 1975.

became an area of illicit behavior and illegal activities. It was a "haven for prostitutes and criminals" where "low income housing and inexpensive services also developed on the fringe of downtown."[140] The nomination also states that ownership in the neighborhood significantly declined, where the neighborhood was once high end and owner occupied, owner occupancy became rare after the Second World War.

The Prairie was an African American neighborhood situated between the Cedars and Deep Ellum. Its current footprint is occupied by the I-45 interchange southeast of Downtown. It was a residential community that had a reputation for being "inner city" but it also housed many prominent and fine houses with African American business owners. It had a prominent African American middle class. There has been little documentation about this neighborhood and nothing physical remains, although there has been some reporting and stories from residents.[141]

Deep Ellum was an entertainment industry of national prominence attracting musicians such as Blind Lemon Jefferson and Leadbelly. Historian Robert Prince stated that it was "the gathering place of black from all over the country, for Mexicans fleering oppression in Mexico, for Jews who established businesses, and power whites looking for 'action'."[142] Although the music and culture of Deep Ellum was vibrant and enjoyed a national reputation, there is evidence that some Dallas elites viewed these neighborhoods "as signs of cultural deterioration."[143] Although the neighborhood was a cultural hub, it was seen as seedy and a place of often illicit activities.

North of Deep Ellum, East Dallas was a diverse mix of mostly white neighborhoods of varying incomes. Phillips notes that a middle class neighborhood formed around Baylor Hospital, which would have been in Mill Creek's path. Wilson's block, a neighborhood within east Dallas, was developed by decedents of the La Reunion community. The historic marker for the community reads:

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[140] "Beautifying Turtle Creek to be Started by Owners as Permanent," *Dallas Morning News*, 13.
[141] Appleton, "Growing Up on the Prairie," 25A.
[142] Robert Prince, *History of Dallas: From a Different Perspective,* (Burnet, TX: Eakin Press, 1994): 30.
[143] Phillips, *White Metropolis*, 65.

> Swiss native Jacob Nussbaumer, a colonist in the pioneer La Reunion settlement of the Dallas area, purchased this land prior to the Civil War. In 1898 his wife Dorothea and children sold it to her niece Henrietta Frichot Wilson (1864- 1953), the daughter of La Reunion settlers. Henriett and her husband Frederick P. Wilson (1863 - 1923) built their residence at this site in 1899 and later constructed six additional homes as rental property. Together the houses were the center of a residential area known as the Wilson Block of Swiss Avenue. The neighborhood was the home of many early Dallas leaders, including Charles D. Hill, who became one of the area's prominent architects, and Dr. Theodore L. E. Arnold, an early Dallas ophthalmologist whose son Charles pioneered in microphotography.

Residents of the Wilson block developed their own central park for their community, called Central Square Park. It was the second park built for public use in Dallas.[144] The remaining areas Mill Creek passed through in East Dallas were working class white neighborhoods.[145]

Mill Creek finally would meet its terminus at Fitzhugh Avenue, briefly passing through the African American neighborhood of North Dallas. Phillips noted that "African Americans concentrated along the city's floodplains, particularly in a section of north Dallas near the Houston and Texas central railroad, bordered by Ross Avenue, Haskell Avenue, and Pearl Street."[146] As noted earlier, North Dallas was a prominent and diverse African American community that reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s. Present day North Central Expressway separates the area that Mill Creek would pass through from the heart of the neighborhood. This neighborhood, at the headwaters of Turtle Creek, was one of the lower income neighborhoods around the creek, with development happening chaotically.

Mill Creek passed through a series of economically and racially diverse neighborhoods in Dallas. Analyzing Sanborn maps for these neighborhoods also reveals a different neighborhood fabric in terms of structure and development coherence around Mill Creek than Turtle Creek. These maps show haphazard development and in many cases, structures built directly on top of the creek. Land-uses such as stables, metal shops, and slaughterhouses can be seen either directly over, or located on the same parcel as the creek.

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[144] "Wilson Block Historic District," *Preservation Dallas*, accessed October 23, 2017, http://www.preservationdallas.org/who-we-are/visit-us/wilson-block/

[145] Phillips, *White Metropolis*, 65.

[146] Ibid., 63.

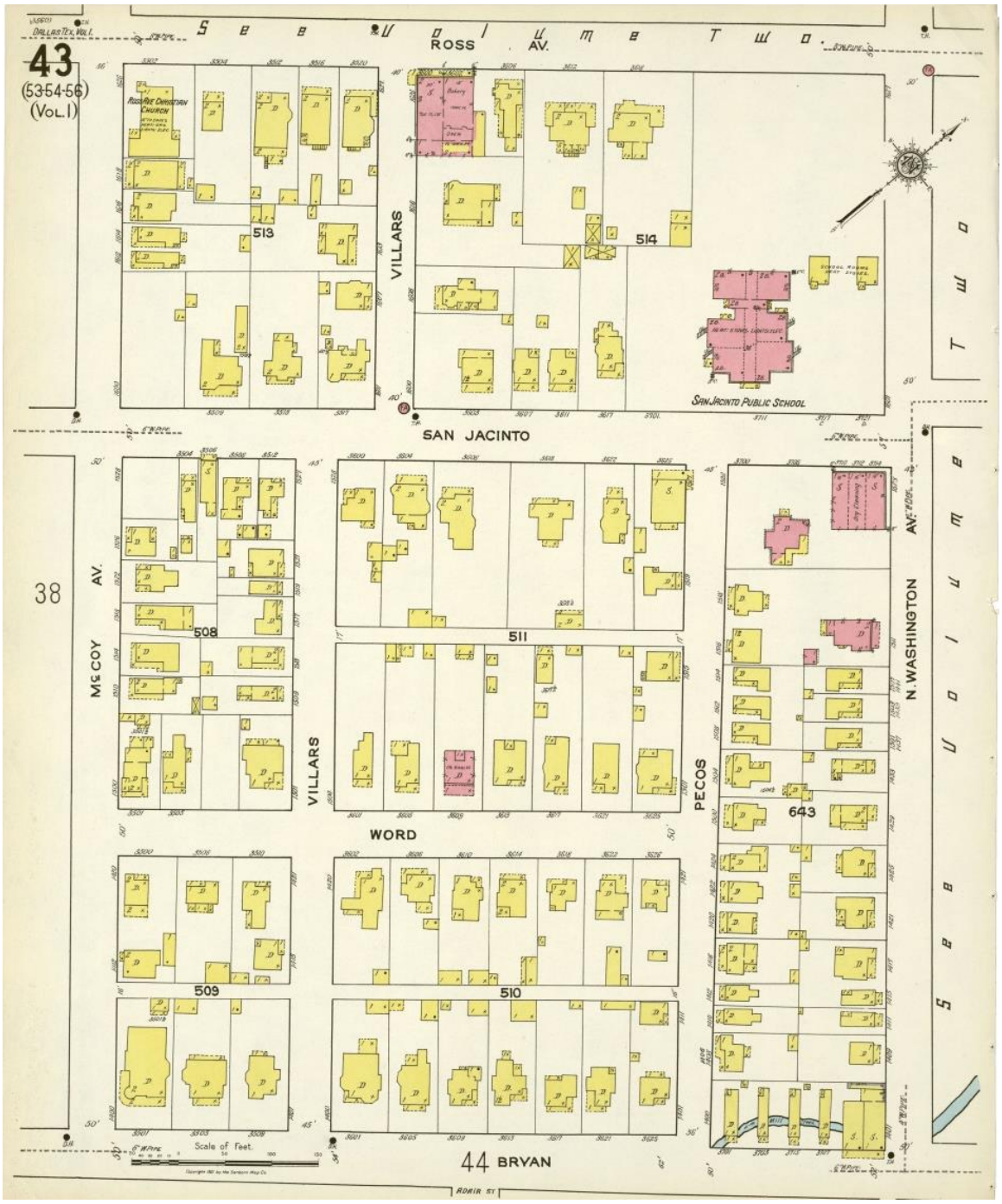
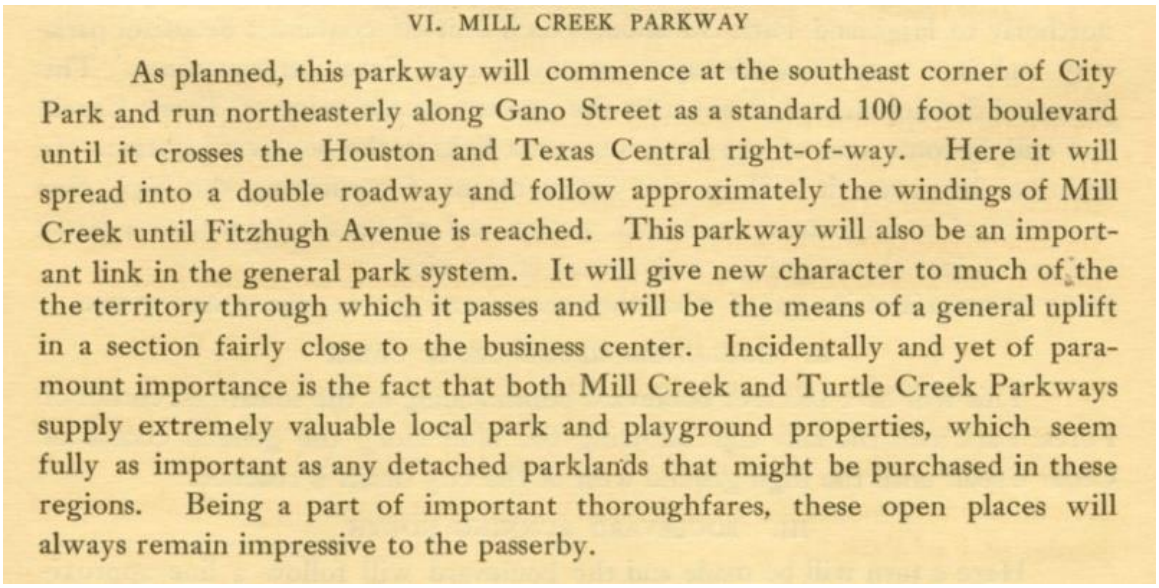


Figure 4-13 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Showing Shacks Built Over Mill Creek, 1921

Courtesy of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas



VI. MILL CREEK PARKWAY

As planned, this parkway will commence at the southeast corner of City Park and run northeasterly along Gano Street as a standard 100 foot boulevard until it crosses the Houston and Texas Central right-of-way. Here it will spread into a double roadway and follow approximately the windings of Mill Creek until Fitzhugh Avenue is reached. This parkway will also be an important link in the general park system. It will give new character to much of the the territory through which it passes and will be the means of a general uplift in a section fairly close to the business center. Incidentally and yet of paramount importance is the fact that both Mill Creek and Turtle Creek Parkways supply extremely valuable local park and playground properties, which seem fully as important as any detached parklands that might be purchased in these regions. Being a part of important thoroughfares, these open places will always remain impressive to the passerby.

Figure 4-14 Mill Creek Recommendations from A City Plan for Dallas, 1911

Courtesy of Dallas Municipal Archives

Kessler Plan Recommendations: Turtle Creek

The Kessler plan called for the parkway to "commence at the southeast corner of City Park and run northeasterly along Gano Street as a standard 100 foot boulevard until it crosses the Houston and Texas Central right-of-way… [then] spread into a double roadway and follow approximately the windings of Mill Creek until Fitzhugh avenue is reached."[147] Kessler importantly notes that this will give a unifying character to the area through which Mill Creek passes, elevate an area surrounding the downtown core, and provide much needed park space in a community that was lacking. Mill Creek is the representation of the City Beautiful, the ideal to bring the park to the people while also increasing efficiency, beautifying the city, and improving infrastructure. The plan also importantly called for a boulevard connection between Turtle Creek and Mill Creek along Fitzhugh Avenue and on Hall Street.

[147] Kessler, *A City Plan for* Dallas, 32.

Sanitation and Unsightliness: Existing Issues and Implementation

The 1925 progress report notes the Mill Creek Parkway would serve "over twenty times as many people as Turtle Creek Parkway… [and] fifty-three thousand people [would] be in walking distance."[148] Because of the amount of people and diversity of neighborhoods and land uses surrounding the creek, discussions of its cleanliness and sanitation had been discussed much earlier. In 1886, the Dallas Morning News discussed the how the water supply from Mill Creek was unsanitary because of the animal pens neighboring the stream and development atop the spring that it could pose a public health issue for the many people used the water:

> Browder Spring- The present city supply is from the springs which are on Mill creek, within the city limits. The springs issue from the gravel deposits upon which a portion of the south side of the city is built. The creek is the natural drainage channel for a large portion of the south and east side of the city, and along it are many stock pens. The water from this source, although in daily use by your citizens, comes, in our opinion from a source likely to be so seriously polluted as to make its use, for domestic purposes, positively dangerous, and we would earnestly recommend that these works be abandoned at the very earliest possible date.[149]

To complicate sanitation issues further, the city seemed unprepared to manage the sewer system at Mill Creek, to the impairment of those residents who used the water. In 1887 there were reports that the sewer system constructed by a railway had failed and was contaminating the creek:

> The main sewer at Mill Creek, owing, it is charged, to its deficient construction by the Missouri Pacific Railway Company, has given way and its evacuating its feted contents into Mill Creek, where they are exposed for a distance half a mile. Dr. Carter, *the city health officer*, on this subject expressed himself to a News reporter as follows yesterday: "I am greatly afraid that this exposure of sewage will prove detrimental to the health of the city, but the power to apply the remedy does not rest with me. If it were a private matter I could have it attended to, but being a public one I have no control over it.[150]

This is an important aspect of the Kessler plan, that even though Mill Creek was impacted environmentally and physically, it still had the opportunity to be an important and beautiful parkway that served many people, institutions, and created a more effective and improved city.

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[148] Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas," 33.
[149] "The Water Supply Muddle," *Dallas Morning News,* September 25, 1886,
[150] "A Serious Matter," *Dallas Morning New,.* August 17, 1887,

By the 1925 progress report of the Kessler plan, Mill Creek's future was already in danger. The city had allowed uncheck development that further negatively impacted both transportation efficacy and sanitation. Property owners had allowed small, low income buildings and houses to be built directly on the banks of the creek, developers built streets that did not serve the city efficiently, but instead provided the most lots and profits without thinking about long term effects or how development impacted others on the creek. Trees were removed to suit this type of development. The progress report notes that, "Unfortunately, the merit of the Kessler proposal was not understood as quickly as would have been desirable…[and] haphazard development, if such it can be called imposes additional handicaps in the way of the ultimate recreation of Mill Creek as made by the secretary of the Kessler Plan Association will serve to a parkway."[151]

As previously mentioned, by 1925 Mill Creek had already begun facing challenges to implementation. Head's progress report, which was a compilation of twenty-three articles from the Dallas Morning News about the Kessler Plan, urged the significance of Mill Creek based on City Beautiful ideals. The pamphlet attests to how many people would be served, the high density population it ran through, and how the creeks improvement would enhance development. Not without traffic improvement, the parkway would bring park and green spaces to 53,000 people. The neighborhoods flanking Mill Creek had already started to change and fluctuate by 1925, and there was no great united neighborhood to advocate for a cohesive vision. The progress report notes Mill Creek Parkway's expansive potential influence in that "Thirteen of the thirty-eight of the public schools or Dallas are in the valley, and a majority of their patrons would be affected by this development. The following semipublic institutions would be served: Baylor Hospital, Baylor Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Dentistry, Ursuline Academy, St. Joseph's Academy, St. Paul Sanitarium and St. Mary's College."[152] This report notes the improved floodway and water management from adopting the plan, the economic

[151] Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas," 33.
[152] Ibid., 33.

incentive of improving the areas around the creek, and the ability to Mill Creek to be a civic asset.

The City-Beautiful advocates, who rallied behind Turtle Creek Parkways cause, also came to the aid of Mill Creek, but not to the same extent. George B. Dealey's *Dallas Morning News* reported about the benefits of Mill Creek's potential implementation, but also the the considerable challenges, issues of race and class relations, and sanitary issues, including a hospital and veterinary clinics that polluted the creek.[153] Although a specific improvement league was formed, this research only found a handful of references to the Mill Creek Committee's existence or meetings in newspaper records.[154]

The tone of the reporting around Mill Creek is significantly different. In 1929, the *Dallas Morning News* reported:

> "Banks of the stream have been permitted to be built up with cheap and unsanitary shacks, tenanted for the most part by negroes. Its bed has become overgrown with weeds and filled with trash, street sweepings and sewage escaping from sanitary mains in the northeastern part of the city. At several points along its course houses have been built over the creek, their foundations further impeding the flow of storm water, and their waste adding to its pollution. Mill Creek has been the source of the invasion of negro residents into sections which otherwise would be populated exclusively by whites, and the negroes themselves have suffered from the unsightliness of the stream, its overflow waters frequently forcing them out of their homes, its filth a menace to their health.[155]

This quote shows that race played an important role in the implementation of Mill Creek referencing that the area would be entirely white if not for Mill Creek and its floodway, where many poor African American built homes. The article explicitly blames the African American communities around the creek for increasing the sanitation issue on Mill Creek.

[153] "Group Visits Mill Creek's Unsightliness," *Dallas Morning News*, August 3, 1929, 13.
[154] "League Sees Plan to Develop Park Along Mill Creek," *Dallas Morning News*, July 30, 1929, 9.
[155] "Benefits Many in Mill Creek Parkway Plan," *Dallas Morning News*, July 24, 1929, 1.

Harry Bennett Collection
PA84-17/105

Figure 4-15 Diversion Channel South of Mill Creek Pressure Sewer, 1934

Courtesy of Dallas Public Library

Another example of a different standard to the two creeks was the early advocacy of channeling Mill Creek in the Cedars. At the turn of the nineteenth century, most of the upper income families that once lived in "the Cedars" neighborhood at the southwest terminus of the creek had left in favor of moving to deed restricted neighborhoods like Highland Park and Munger Place. As industrial uses moved into the Cedars, more working-class families moved to the neighborhood. In addition to having housing and residential amenities such as grocery

stores and shops mixed with industrial uses, the neighborhood was said to be diverse in terms of races and religions.[156]

In a 1922 letter to the mayor and city plan commissioners, a local lawyer, W.C. Kimbrough urged the city to commit bond money to put Mill Creek in a concrete channel in the Cedars:

> In connection with the proposition of the City of Dallas asking in April, 1923, election for permission of the people in increase the city's bond limit for the city to be able to take care of the Denton Creek water proposition, would it not also be advisable at that time to have a bond limit sufficient to take care of the city's expense in putting Mill Creek, or at least the main channel from Cadiz street to Harwood street, in a cement culvert, so as to take care of the creek's overflow and avoid an epidemic, that may arise from the filth that is constantly being put into this stream by the numerous factories, livery stables and their drainage with is making this stream very filthy?
>
> On account of the additional water the city is constantly turning into this creek by its paving and drainage system at the headwaters of the same, and also on account of the additional and turning of filthy waters from factories and other sources into the stream, causing a constant and increasing burden to be carried and borne by property owners to bear the burden of putting this branch under proper culvert. It is clearly up to the city to do so or let this public menace to health and property remain.[157]

This quote reveals that advocacy for Mill Creek's channelization was being driven by business and property owners who were having to deal with the filth of the creek as it flowed south. The area referred to that needed to be addressed at a minimum was in the Cedars, mentioned above.

Eventually, the creek was seen as more of a public menace then a civic asset and many excuses have been made for why it was buried. City Beautiful historian notes that one reason Mill Creek Parkway failed because that the improvements were mostly seen as aesthetic as opposed to utilitarian. Dallas was already on the tail end of the City Beautiful era, and the city planning movement that followed was the City Efficient, a movement that railed against the grandeur and aesthetic focus of the beautiful without understanding the benefits of city

[156] Singer Family Oral History (Frank, Paul and Ervin Singer, Denise Singer Pollis) conducted by Steven Sielaff and Evelyn Montgomery, Dec. 10, 2012. Transcript, archives of Dallas Heritage Village.

[157] "Culvert for Mill Creek Advocated," *Dallas Morning News*, September 30, 1922, 11.

greening. When the City never took a stand or mobilized on the Mill Creek issue and few patrons came to the aid of the cause, citizens fed up with the unsightly and unsanitary nature of the stream, requested it be covered.

PA2000-3/323
C.O.C.

Figure 4-16 Mill Creek Storm Sewer Construction, 1950

Courtesy of Dallas Public Library

Conclusion

In conclusion, Turtle Creek and Mill Creek Parkways were treated very differently and had significantly different outcomes. Turtle Creek Parkway was almost completely implemented, through an elite, white, upper class part of Dallas. Its success overlaps with the

help of publicity from the *Dallas Morning News* and Park Board, advocacy by private citizens with property near the stretch, and capital donation by private citizens and public investment from the City. Mill Creek was proposed to be the sited parkway to Turtle Creek, but no aspect of Mill Creek from the Kessler plan was implemented. Its implementation was challenged by lack of cohesion between considerably different neighborhoods in demographics makeup surrounding the creek, sanitation and unsightliness issues, and a lack of a singular powerful voice or faction to control the creek's fate. Not even a scar of Mill Creek remains on the city's surface.

Implementation Table

City Plan for Dallas Recommendations	**Turtle Creek Parkway**	**Mill Creek Parkway**
Follows natural meander of the creek	5	0
40' driveway on both sides with sidewalks and grassy spots	3	0
Adjoining parkways	5	0
Enhance present scenic value of creek system	5	0

Figure 4-17 Implementation Table

Figure 4-18 Approximate Proposed Path of Mill Creek Parkway

Courtesy of Esri and amended by author

Chapter 5 Conclusions: A Fragmented Legacy

This research leads to the conclusion that the uneven treatment of Mill Creek and Turtle Creek contributed to the creation of an inequitable spatialization in the city that reinforced physical hierarchies and segregation based on income and race. The forces that created these outcomes came from white civic elites with a vested personal economic interest in promoting real estate values and beautification along Turtle Creek versus blight reduction along Mill Creek. That inequity has formed the footprint for a 21st century city in which early 20th century infrastructure decisions now solidly define spatial relationships between privilege and poverty, something counter to the values embedded in the Kessler Plan's original rhetoric. This presents challenges for contemporary landscape architects as they strive to create a city and landscape that, in effect, undoes the planning and landscape decisions that are a century old.

Inequitable Spatialization

The Kessler Plan was initially celebrated as a plan for the whole city of Dallas, but its partial implementation implies a different legacy. There is a gap between the ideas promoted by the plan and the actual physical spatialization created by its implementation. Louis P. Head notes in the 1925 plan review and progress report the plan's intentions as he understood them:

> Likewise [Kessler] made it clear that the plan as a city plan, i.e. for all of the city and not for any particular section or sections of it, for at the outset of his preliminary summing up he included every sort of property from Trinity River bottoms to the restricted residential areas on the higher lands surrounding the community. His grasp on the Dallas problem was coextensive with the city's interests and not confined to its existing corporate limits.
>
> Kessler foresaw that the plan must be democratic to meet the needs of a cosmopolitan population; that it must provide benefits for the rich and the poor and for the average strata of citizenship in between, and that every element of the proposal must be regarded in the light of its effect upon and correlation with other of the constituent factors in the vitally important whole. Thus while immediately providing for the amelioration of the ills of traffic congestion in the business district, his plan contemplated the effective handling of cross-town traffic around rather than through the congested areas, the improvement of property values by utilization of natural advantages, such as streams with a

> program of park and playgroup development linked together by boulevards made necessary to meet traffic conditions and designed to serve the population of every section of the city by diversity of location and ease of access to residential districts.[158]

If this was the goal of the Kessler plan, this study suggests an alternative set of values by questioning why only one of the parkways was implemented, who caused its implementation, and who benefited from it. Fairbanks notes that even though Dallas had a comprehensive plan, it lagged in a matching program to carry out the design.[159] Therefore the "city as a whole" mentality in planning that Fairbanks refers to in Dallas was no more than an idea that became lost in implementation.[160] It is no secret that Turtle Creek's picturesque parkway served the mostly white and prosperous residents of Highland Park and Oak Lawn, where many prominent Dallas families lived. The parkway system and its parks are positioned on the West side of the creek, reinforcing the creek's natural ecological barrier between white neighborhoods to the west and the African-American neighborhoods of North Dallas and Thomas Avenue to the east.

Mill Creek's disappearance was gradual. Across the 1920s and 1930s, segments were buried beneath land that would become apartment complexes and commercial developments. By the 1950s, the last segments of the creek disappeared and the former watershed was defined by concrete and hardscape, without the trees and parkland associated with Turtle Creek Parkway. Neighborhoods that had been a mix of residential and industrial in 1920 lost their residential character and gradually declined.

The Influence of Civic Elites

Generalizations about wealth and privilege provide some explanation for why the most economically flourishing parts of the city benefited the most from the Kessler Plan and the City Beautiful movement in Dallas, but a more granular approach helps practitioners understand the mechanisms of planning and implementation that create cities as we know them. We must understand the gaps between planning and physical implementation to understand the current

[158] Head, "The Kessler City Plan for Dallas," 4.
[159] Fairbanks, *For the City as a Whole,* 50.
[160] Ibid., 11.

successes and failures of planning and landscape architecture. When we evaluate urban morphology, historically, in this way, we are asked to evaluate these questions: who owns the city and to whom does the city belong?

Turtle Creek's implementation was made possible by civic advocacy of private citizens and then Park Board and city cooperation. The line becomes blurred for many of these advocates between the role of private citizen, public servant, and governmental agent as many of the supporters of the City Beautiful were also residents of the wealthiest parts of Dallas, corresponding with the locale of Turtle Creek Parkway. Even those who did not directly benefit from Turtle Creek still benefitted from traffic improvements and road alignments to downtown, near their businesses. George B. Dealey and his elite friends and counterparts were extremely involved in advocacy of many physical aspects of the Kessler plan, where the City's voice is noticeably absent. While the *Dallas Morning News* did in fact advocate for Mill Creek, it did so much less fervently than it did Turtle Creek.

There was a strong and swift cohesive mechanism of power in Dallas that moved to implement Turtle Creek that was missing for Mill Creek. One issue that should give major pause to the heralding of the image and character derived from its City Beautiful plan is the purpose of the two parkways. Turtle Creek's main purpose was to better utilize the natural stream for an automobile parkway, with occasional parks as "pulling off points." Mill Creek's two most important purposes were to control development to mitigate the existing sanitary problems on what could be an attractive stream and to bring a park and playground system to a much-needed area, an area that would have impacted twenty times more people and connected a variety of neighborhoods. The fact that the chosen implementation of the Kessler plan was the easier option, that impacted fewer people, served people with already more resources and fewer public health issues, and for the aesthetic benefit of automobile travel as opposed to the implementation of a parkway that would provide sanitation measures and park systems for

communities lacking these resources, provides a physical record of the social and urban history of Dallas that created a framework that still exists today.

Long-term Effects on Spatialization of Privilege

City planning and landscape architecture are inseparably tied to the governance that either allows or denies the enacting of design. The practice is also attached to the funding mechanisms that make implementation possible. This research hypothesizes that while the Kessler plan for Dallas may exclude certain groups, the city and the patrons actually account for the plan's wider legacy and the resulting landscape iconography of Dallas. As a result, the Kessler Plan should be viewed in two different ways: as a dream and in reality. The "dream" of the plan created the rich landscape heritage in Reverchon Park, Turtle Creek, and Highland Park. In this context, the Kessler plan is discussed as if it is the guiding light, correcting planning failures and creating a standard to which to look up to for planners and landscape architects in Dallas and the image of these green oases and parkways fuels that interpretation. The "reality" is that the uneven implantation of the plan benefited only neighborhoods of interest to white civic elites and that its partial implementation contributed to the spatialization of economic and racial privilege in the city.

Race and class are important metrics when assessing implementation of the plan. Of the Turtle Creek parkway, Kessler said it would be a "direct means of conserving the high class character of an important residential section [Highland Park] and of furnishing it with a direct and convenient thoroughfare [especially for automobile traffic] to the heart of the city."[161] This quote explicitly calls for a connection between "the heart of the city" and the most economically elite and powerful neighborhoods in the city. By referring to the neighborhood as high class and important, the plan is emphasizing its importance not on its merit to serve the best good, but its ability to capitalize on the character of an already wealthy and exclusive part of town and to further provide amenities for those people.

[161] Kessler, *A City Plan for Dallas*, 31.

Elite Dallas citizens increasingly moved north, protected their enclaves with segregation tactics, benefitted from redlining, and even, in Highland Park's case, fought annexation by the city to control how and with whom they lived. Turtle Creek Parkway's users intentionally isolated themselves from Mexicans, African-Americans, and poor white citizens. The correlation between the lack of income and racial diversity seen in the users of Turtle Creek Parkway and the demographic range of those who would have been impacted by Mill Creek is damning enough and where the city's silence echoes the loudest.

These are all aspects of planning that we as practitioners need to be able to discuss. Creating an icon for the city, like Turtle Creek Parkway, that impacted relatively few people did not serve the city as a whole. The gap between the City Beautiful rhetoric of the Kessler Plan and its reality points to the failure of the City to be the unifying, egalitarian voice to do what is best for its citizens. The city eschewed responsibility for execution and the commission of the plan, allowing private citizens to dominate the planning of the city.

The implementation of the Kessler plan thus correlates strongly to issues of race and class. Racist and classism permeate the language used in the plans, the progress reports, and reporting surrounding these two creeks. In the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan claimed one of their largest chapters in Dallas and racial violence against minorities continued a legacy of segregation and fear that rendered deed restrictions unnecessary in some cases.[162] This segregation was not just limited to the spatialization of race, but the spatialization of income. By the 1920's low class white working class settled in the south side of East Dallas and the middle class settled near Baylor Hospital. "By the 1925, 60 percent of elites lived in Highland Park or North Dallas and 25 percent along tony Swiss Avenue in East Dallas. Only 14 percent lived in South Dallas, with the remaining 1 percent holding out in the strongly blue-collar Oak Cliff community."[163] This is important to again note that a major piece of green infrastructure from Kessler's plan, meant to improve the city as a whole, was implemented to

[162] Phillips, *White Metopolis*, 64.
[163] Ibid., 64-65.

connect to an fortify the isolated, exclusionary, elite, and powerful part of the city. The suggestion of a park for all is almost implausible by those standards, even more so as a terminus to a picturesque automobile parkway that connected Highland Park to downtown Dallas. Bluntly put, Turtle Creek, the implemented aspect of the plan, was only used by the wealthiest, white elites in the City. Not only would Mill Creek's parks and parkway have impacted 20 times more people, it would have impacted low and middle income white people, low to high income African Americans, the working class Jewish population, and others.

Inequality in society is an issue that has been studied in detail and has known effects on the welfare of cities. Studies show that inequality is related to susceptibility to economic crisis, income inequality is positively correlated with negative labor market conditions, and income inequality has a negative impact on economic growth.[164] . Health and social problems are positively correlated with inequality in the United States.[165] Rates of child wellbeing are higher in more equivalent countries. Feelings of trust are lower in less equal US states. Mental illness and drug use rates are both higher in countries with greater inequality. Lower education scores, high school dropout rates, and teen pregnancy rate are all higher with the presence of higher inequality. Both homicide rates and rates of imprisonment are also higher in more unequal areas.[166]

Bootstrap City: Conflation of the Public Advocacy by Private Citizens and Public Works

> There is not a single thing in this city that you need that you cannot do it you make up your minds that you need it and will have it; you will never establish a city under the feeling that you cannot do things. A way will come and if your present laws stand in the way, secure the best lawyers and get them busy deciding laws that will meet the situation.

[164] J. D. Ostry, "Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth/Jonathan D. Ostry, Andrew Berg, Charalambos G. Tsangarides," *International Monetary Fund, Research Department.–April* (2014).

[165] Wilkinson, Richard G., and Kate Pickett. *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better,* Vol. 6. London: Allen Lane, 2009.

[166] "Notes on Statistical Sources and Methods," The Equity Trust, https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/notes-statistical-sources-and-methods

-George Kessler as quoted in *The Kessler City Plan for Dallas: A Review of the Plan and Progress on its Accomplishments*[167]

Dallas today is still a city that praises itself as being a city where can-do attitude and grit made it the city it is today.[168] In Dallas there was a significant overlap between these individuals and the early determination of promoted identity in Dallas as "the first histories of Dallas were written by prominent citizens, journalists, or local 'men of letters' who valued the telling of a good story but who were no less concerned with promoting their city."[169]

Their promotion extended beyond just city aggrandizing, the business elites and the media elite were in the same circles and promoted causes to which they believed within the city as well. As we have seen, these players played a central role in the City Beautiful movement in Dallas.

The impact of all the Dallas Elite on planning mechanisms that shaped the city today and their impact on funding certain elements implementation are grounds for further research, but for the sake of this thesis, this connection between private power and public amenity is compelling and indicative of the power imbalance in the City that has left a lasting impact.

Significance to the Practice of Landscape Architecture Today

Today, Dallas is considered a highly segregated city that ranks highly for inequality. The Racial Dot Map, created by researchers at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia using census data (shown below in figure 5-3) shows the clear physical divisions by race in Dallas. These mirror the reflection of the spatialization of values that the uneven implementation of the Kessler Plan helped to create. All of these factors — intention, lack of City government as a cohesive, unifying voice, race and class — contributed to a fragmented legacy of the Kessler plan for Dallas. Although the continued legacy of the plan is widely discussed and praised, there are some important aspects of the implementation of *A City*

[167] Head, "The Kessler City Plan For Dallas," 1.
[168] Graff, *The Dallas Myth*, 83
[169] Ibid., 50.

Plan for Dallas that should be addressed to inspire more cohesive physical design and address issues that are spatialized in our current city footprint.

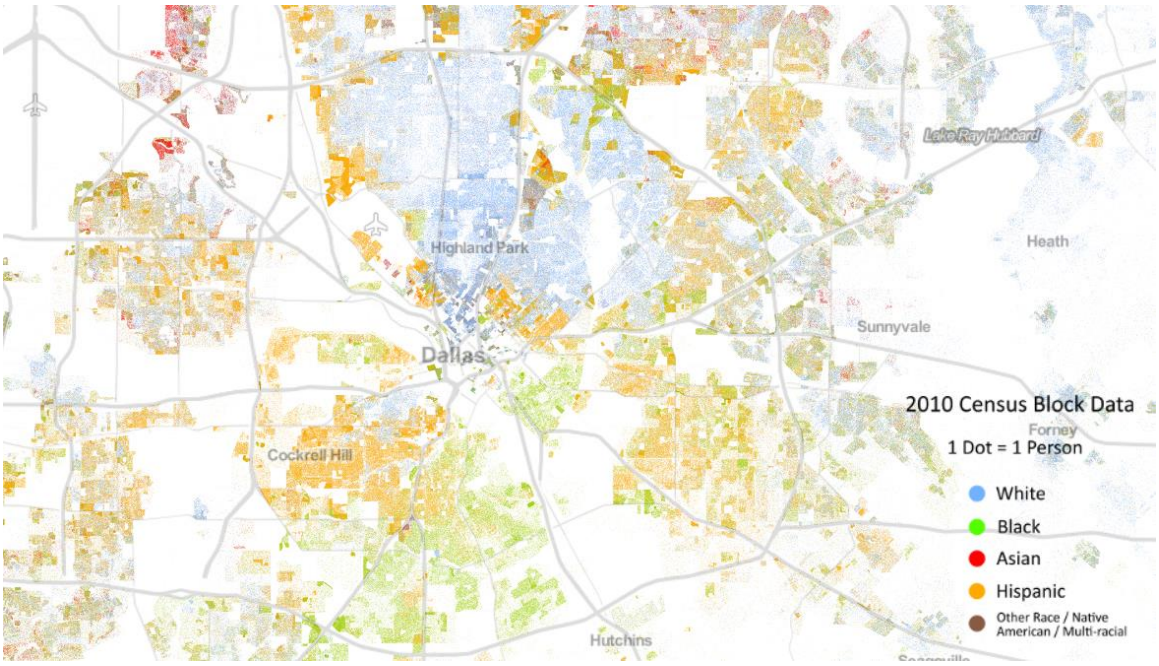

Figure 5-1 Racial Dot Map for Dallas

Courtesy of Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at University of Virginia[170]

When we think about the problems facing Dallas, it is important to understand how the legacy of planning culture and decisions helped contribute to long-standing patterns of inequality and segregation. As urban historian Thomas Sugrue has argued, "History is a process, ongoing that at once opens up possibilities and constrains our choices in the present… [and] to come to grips with the problems and promises of our cities, we must grapple with the past as a means to engage the present."[171] In his study of Detroit, Sugrue writes further that,

> No one Social program or policy, no single force, whether housing segregation, social welfare programs, or deindustrialization, could have driven Detroit and other cities like it from their positions of economic and political dominance;

[170] Image Copyright, 2013, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia (Dustin A. Cable, creator)

[171] Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014): xxvii.

> there is no simple explanation for the inequality and marginality that beset the urban poor. It is only through the complex and interwoven histories of race, residence, and work in the postwar era that the state of today's cities and their impoverished residents can be fully understood and confronted.[172]

Sugrue's prompt to look at "interwoven" histories is a prompt for landscape architects to look widely at the ways that race and class shape our cities and opportunities for practice. We cannot understand or work towards a more equitable city now without exploring the events of the past.

The practice of landscape architecture takes the form of many types of services at many types of scale, but at its heart, landscape architecture is driven by the people we design for. Historian Laura Wood Roper states that, "under the impact of Olmsted's thought and practice, landscape design shifted its sights from decorative to social aims."[173] The history of the Kessler Plan in Dallas suggests that those "social aims" of landscape architecture must continue to evolve as well to make us better advocates for what could be.

This case study is also a reflection of the fact that the implementation of Turtle Creek and ignoring the recommendation for Mill Creek is a physical spatialization of values that favored the white, upper class elites in Dallas. The different treatments of Turtle Creek and Mill Creek reflect all three formal considerations Randolph Hester says are directly related to a lack of fairness in the landscape.[174]

Walter Hood, a noted landscape architect and leading voice on the importance of urban public spaces "has insisted that landscape architecture be held accountable for the publicness of the spaces it creates."[175] Hood also contends that "The reality of making public work is that it's political, it's economic—and it's class biased." This is an opportunity for advocacy in landscape architecture now as we deal with the physical spatialization of a certain group of people's values from the early 20th century.

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[172] Ibid., 5.

[173] Laura Wood Roper, *FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973): xiii.

[174] Randolph T. Hester, "Fair Landscapes for All Americans," *The Field: ASLA Professional Practice Networks' Blog*, American Association of Landscape Architects, July 23, 2015.

[175] Andrew Blum, "The Peace Maker," *Metropolis Magazine*, August 1, 2015.

In Dallas, landscape architecture and practitioners have the ability to fight for cities to look at existing plans and implement critical aspects already recommended that still hold value today. The Kessler plan still has possible and positive opportunities for implementation. As the city calls for bids for the Mill Creek storm sewer upgrades, there is an opportunity to focus on aspects like roads from the Kessler plan, many of which still maintain the footprint recommended, and implement the parts of the Kessler plan that are missing. Once considered cosmetic beautification, this is what we consider today to be green infrastructure.[176]

It is also an opportunity to further study how underserved areas have been excluded in implementation, that lack the amenities of the areas that spatialized elitism, and advocate for a more uniform execution of the ideology and aesthetic of the Kessler plan. This would provide green infrastructure to areas in need, provide parks to the underserved, and initiate a more equitable city.

Further research

This research just opens the door to a better understanding of the Kessler plan for Dallas. By using historic maps and GIS to understand the different patterns of development and implementation, combined with archival and contemporary newspaper accounts, this granular analysis of two creeks shows how race, class, and public and private power affected the implementation of the Kessler plan and the long-term impacts of those planning decisions. This case study invites a number of research questions for further study:

- Where was the city's voice and what was the city's intention in the implementation process? How did planning measures change after the Kessler plan? City council minutes and park board minutes may assist in providing additional insight.

[176] Theodore S. Eisenman, "Frederick Law Olmsted, Green Infrastructure, and the Evolving City," *Journal of Planning History* 12, no. 4 (2013): 287-311.

- What patrons actually paid for certain aspects of the plan implementations, what percentage, and what city money matched? City budgets may contain some clues.
- How did Dallas neighborhoods change with either the execution or lack of certain features from the plan?
- How were African-Americans involved in the Kessler plan and planning of public spaces if they were included at all? Adding analysis of the *Dallas Express*, which is available only on microfilm, may provide insight.
- What effects could the implementation of the Mill Creek parkway have had on the surrounding landscape and neighborhoods?
- What would Dallas look like if the Kessler plan was fully implemented?
- How does Dallas's implementation compare to other cities?
- How did race and class affect the physical design of cities with more complete implementation of City Beautiful plans?
- Can we look to City Beautiful aesthetics as a model for green infrastructure in grey infrastructure remediation?

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