

Reverend Charles R. Williams Park Master Plan



2015 Rev Charles R Williams Park Master Plan

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Board of Parks and Recreation:

Elaine Dillahunt, Chair	
Dr. Jacqueline S. Greenwood	Anne Valentine
Joseph Wynns	Joshua Bowling

Department of Parks and Recreation:

Elaine Dillahunt, Director

Project Coordination:

Donald A. Colvin Jr., Deputy Director
Andre Denman, Principal Park Planner
Benjamin Jackson, Senior Park Planner

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INTRODUCTION and HISTORY



This park property was purchased by Indy Parks and Recreation in 2011. It is a 5.8 acre parcel located at 3252 Sutherland Avenue. When acquired by Indy Parks the property was covered by 2.25 acres of concrete and industrial storage buildings. Indy Parks demolished the buildings and pavement as a first step in cleaning up the site in 2012.

Prior to Park's purchase of the land, it was used for industrial and storage dating back to the mid 1950's. The residential neighborhood to the immediate east dates to the 1910's.

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In May 2013, the Indianapolis Parks Board approved the renaming of the park to Reverend Charles R. Williams Park in honor of the Reverend. The park was named after Reverend Williams in accordance with the Indy Parks property naming policy in honor of his years of contribution to the community.

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item #31, 2013

TO: Board of Parks and Recreation

FROM: Jen Pittman, Deputy Director of Indy Parks

DATE: May 23, 2013

RE: Approval by the Board of Parks and Recreation for the Official Naming of Indy Park's property located at 3252 Sutherland Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana to "Reverend Charles R. Williams Park".

The Indy Park's property, located at 3252 Sutherland Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana, was brought before the Parks Board at its May 23, 2013 Board meeting recommending the naming of this property, to "Reverend Charles R. Williams Park".

Pursuant to the Indy Parks Naming Policy adopted by the Board on September 22, 2010, staff did publish, in the Indianapolis Star, a notice regarding this naming recommendation. The notice did include information about Reverend Charles R. Williams and did contain an invitation to send comments regarding this naming recommendation to the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Please be advised that Director Williams received one (1) response from a local resident who wishes to have the park named in honor of a former pastor who lived in the area. Although today's Board meeting is not a public hearing, Director Williams has been asked by that resident to speak to the Board regarding this matter. Director Williams will allow this resident the opportunity to speak.

Staff is asking for the Board's approval to officially name this above-referenced property "Reverend Charles R. Williams Park".

Board of Parks and Recreation, *May 23*, 2013


Louvenia Holstein, Board Secretary

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LOCATION and SERVICE AREA



Rev Charles R. Williams park (CRW Park) is located in Center Township on the east bank of Fall Creek at 3252 Sutherland Avenue. It primarily serves residential neighborhoods to the east, north and south. The site is bordered to the west by Fall Creek and to the east by Sutherland Avenue. Fall Creek Parkway currently creates a significant physical obstruction to pedestrian traffic to the western neighborhoods. Pedestrian access is currently easiest for the neighborhoods to the east.

Both the Fall Creek Greenway and the Monon Trail converge just north of the park, providing an excellent opportunity to connect to both. CRW Park is located just south of the 7.5 acre Natural resource property know as "Lot K". This property is owned by Indy Parks as part of the Fall Creek corridor. This master plan proposes combining the Lot K property to CRW Park to create a single 13.3 acre neighborhood park. CRW Park provides a mix of open lawn and wooded acreage which can be enhanced to provide users with a broad range of park experiences. Connectivity wise, there is the opportunity to create an accessible walking route along Sutherland avenue connecting the Park to

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both the Monon and Fall Creek Greenways. Another more rugged route is possible following the east bank of Fall Creek. The site is the appropriate size to support a neighborhood level of park amenities. It is generally too small for a community center, but that role is easily filled by the nearby the Little Bethel Missionary Baptist Church Crosstown Community Center, where the master plan meetings were held, or the Douglass Park Family Center. This allows many opportunities for the park to act as a contributing cultural center for the community.

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REVEREND CHARLES R WILLIAMS BIOGRAPHY



Rev. Charles Williams became the President of Indiana Black Expo, Inc. (IBE) in 1980, serving in a volunteer capacity until 1983 when he was able to secure a grant from the Lilly Endowment to fund a full-time staff. In addition to a paid staff, Williams used the grant to restructure IBE, leading to the total reduction of its \$106,000 deficit, the doubling of the organization's gross revenues, the development of year-round programs across the State of Indiana that promoted harmony among people of all races and economic growth, and the creation and development of the Indiana Black Expo, Inc. brand resulting in IBE's Summer Celebration being named one of the "Top 100 Events in North America" by the American Business Association. Rev. Williams also founded the Circle City Classic, an annual Black collegiate football game with revenues exceeding \$800,000 going to scholarships for qualifying high school students across the state of Indiana since 1984.

From 1976 to 1983, Rev. Williams served as Special Assistant to the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis under Mayor Richard Lugar and Mayor Bill Hudnut. In this position, he coordinated the city's community relations efforts which included the creation and organization of the first city-wide Black History Month celebration. Additionally, he served as the chairman of PUSH for Excellence Month, where over 5,000 high school students pledged to push for excellence in their schoolwork, and was the catalyst in making Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a legal holiday in the city of Indianapolis and state of Indiana. Influential in the selection of the City of Indianapolis' first Black deputy mayor, Rev. Williams is responsible for organizing the first Indianapolis Jazz Festival in 1980; earmarking proceeds to benefit the Indianapolis Urban League and the Indianapolis Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC).

Charles Williams was ordained as a minister in 1979 after which he became affiliated with several organizations and clubs such as: the Indiana Sports Corporation Board and Executive Committee, the Indianapolis Downtown Promotion Council Board, the Indiana Convention and Visitor's Association, the Indiana Christian Leadership Conference, the Winona Hospital Board of Directors in Indianapolis, the Indianapolis White River State Park Development Commission and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee. Rev. Williams was the first chaplain for the Indiana Pacers Basketball Corporation, engaging a dozen or so clergy across the city, and was a charter board member of Pacers Foundation, Inc. While in that capacity, he played an instrumental role in the creation of the "Landmark For Peace" King-Kennedy monument located in Indianapolis' King Park at 17th & Broadway.

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As a man who was committed to serving his community, Rev. Williams received many awards, most notable being the Indiana Jefferson Award...Indianapolis Education Association's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award...Indianapolis City-County Special Resolution #104...The Sagamore of the Wabash, Indiana's most prestigious award...Outstanding Past and Future Leadership Award presented by Senator Dan Quayle...Outstanding Citizen Award presented by the NAACP's Life Membership Committee... Meritorious Service Award, Boys Club Association of Indianapolis, Wheeler Boys Club... Toastmaster International Award...NAACP ACT-SO Award, Education, Community Relations & Self-Improvement Award presented by 100 Black Men, Inc....Distinguished Service Award presented by the National Newspaper Publishers Association...Living Legends in Black Award... Presidential Citation presented by the National Business League... Boy Scouts of America Good Scout Award...Public Relations Advertising Marketing Excellence (PRAME) President's Award...Ernie Leaner Award presented by Jack "The Rapper"...Congressional Lifetime Achievement Award...Muncie, IN Key to the City...

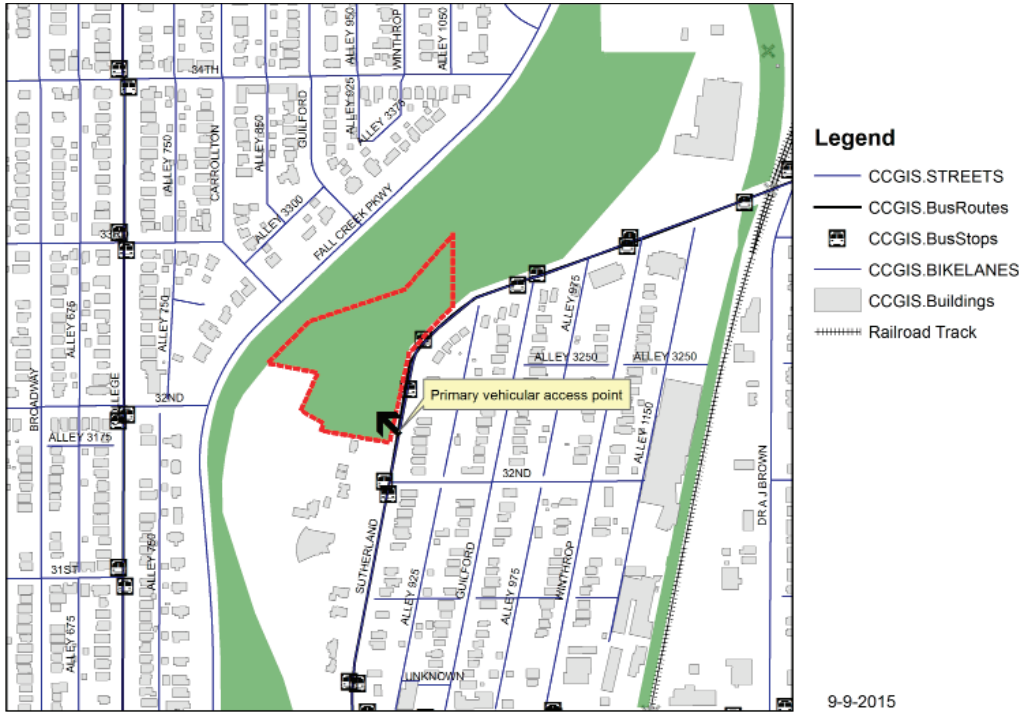


City of Anderson Appreciation Award...NAFEO Leadership Award...Central Indiana Cancer Centers Special Recognition Award...Operation PUSH Special Recognition Award...Honorary Doctorate of Community Service, Christian Theological Seminary...and Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letter by Martin University. The culmination came in 2001 when he received a Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies from Martin University. Nationally, Rev. Williams had been featured on Ebony Magazine, the Phil Donahue Show, Oprah, and JET Magazine.

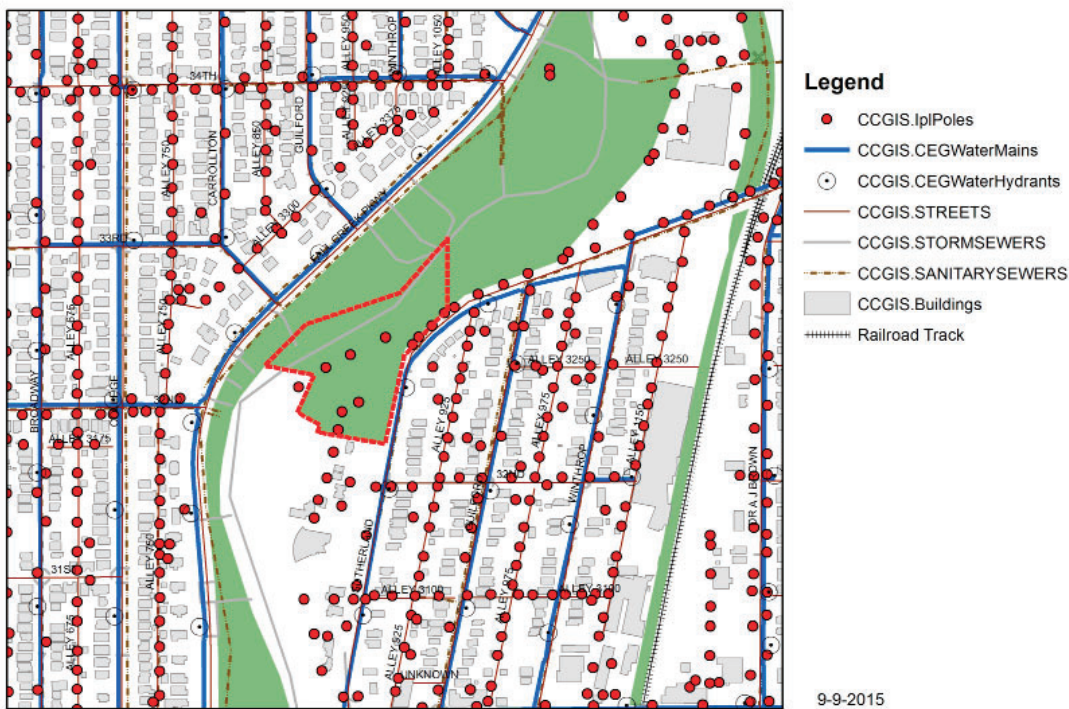
Rev. Charles Williams was a vital asset to the state of Indiana and African Americans nationwide. Until his death in July 2004, he served as an effective voice and leader in the fight for social and economic advancement of African Americans.

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

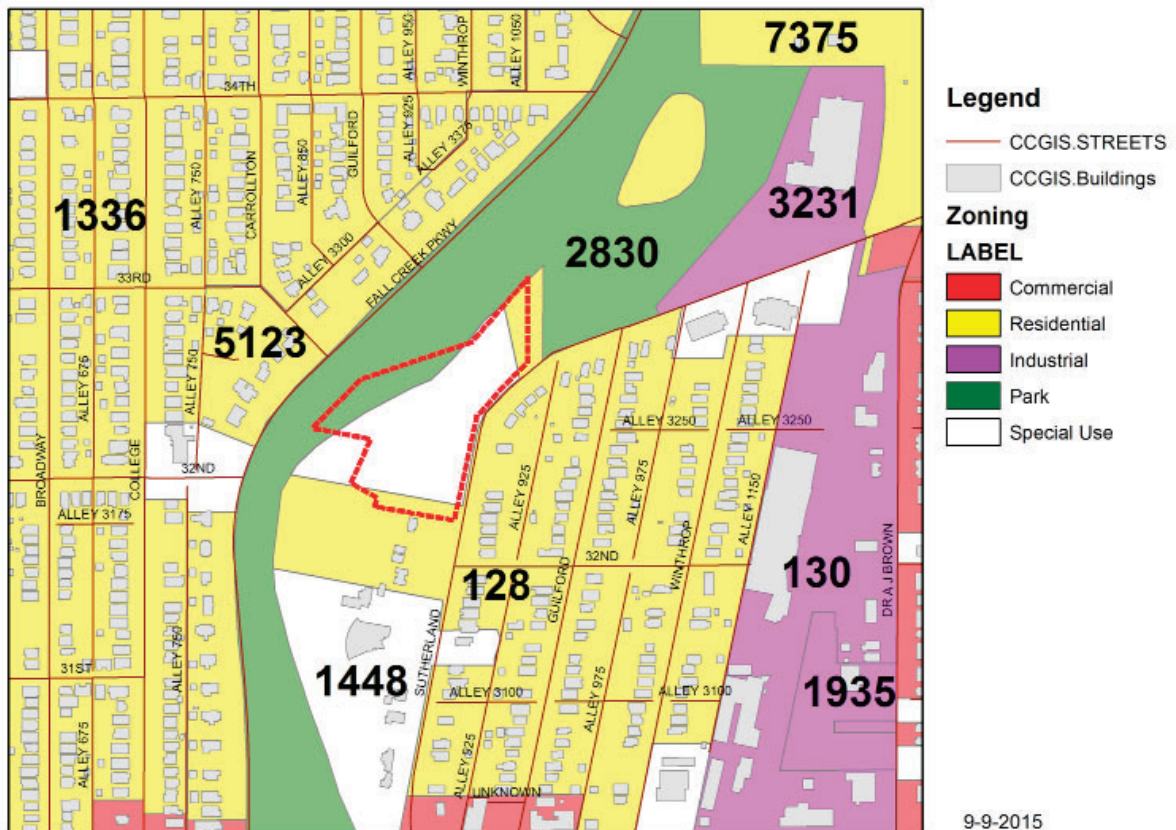


Rev. Charles R Williams Park Access



Rev. Charles R Williams Park Utilities

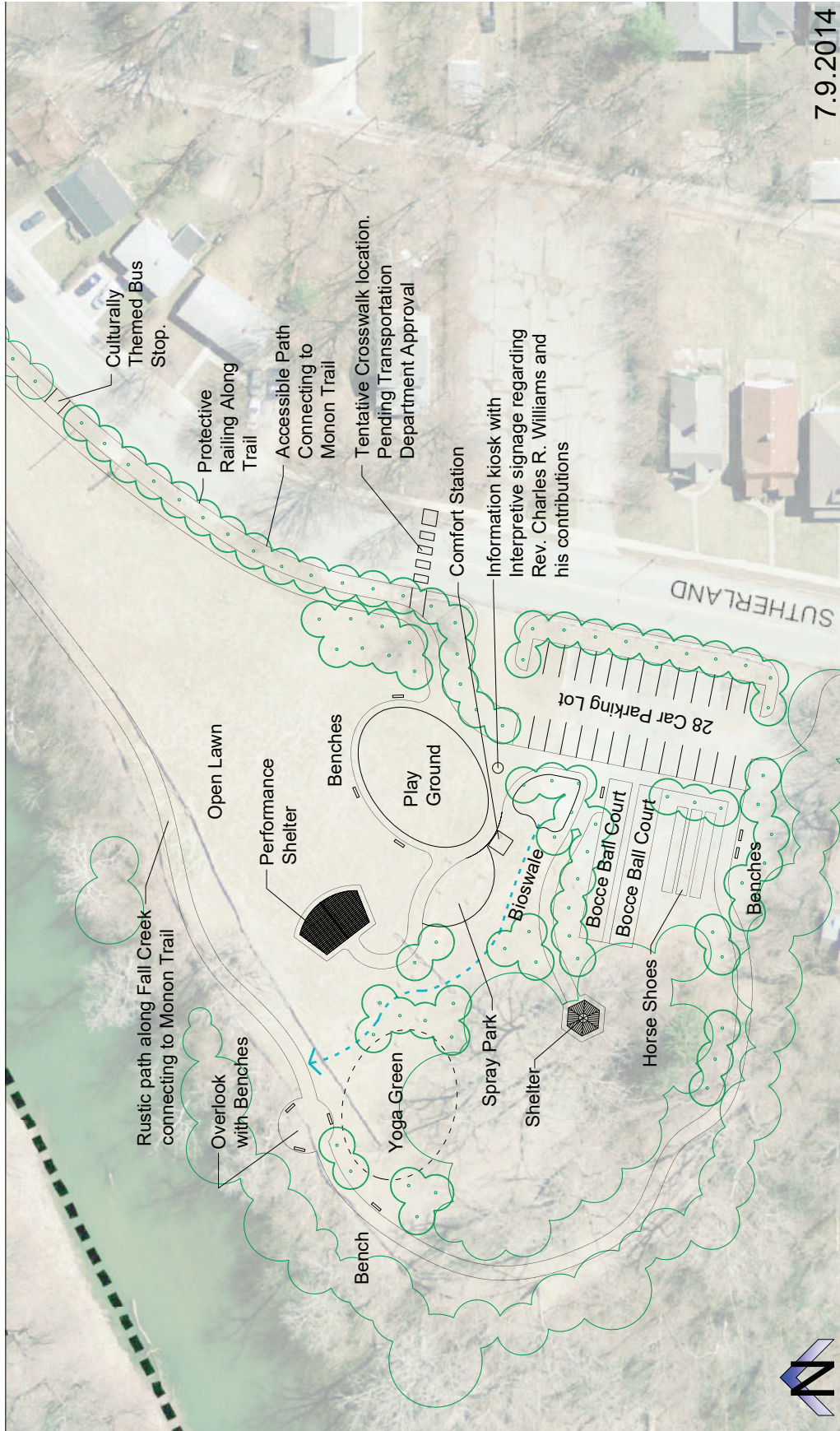
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Rev. Charles R Williams Zoning

Currently, the primary vehicular and pedestrian access to the park is Sutherland Avenue to the east. The curb is already cut to allow vehicular access to the current parking lot on the site. IPL power poles follow Sutherland Avenue along the east side of the park, allowing easy access to electricity. Potable water for the site is also accessible the mainline running under Sutherland Avenue, as well as sanitary and storm sewer lines. A bus route currently runs along Sutherland and a stop exists at the park. This provides the opportunity to upgrade this stop with a structure and benches. The site is currently zoned for a mix of special use and residential and will need to be rezoned to PK-1 for park use. The primary zoning and land use around CRW Park is residential and we believe this is where the majority of users will come from even though its name and proximity to Monon and Fall Creek Greenways could draw users from outside the normal service area for a neighborhood park.

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MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

This site is basically a blank slate, but still requires finish grading. It is covered mostly by weeds and should be seeded with an improved turf mix.

1. The focal point of this park's design is a new 4200 square foot play ground. The equipment in the playground should be composed of a central 5-12 age group tower structure surrounded by free standing support pieces, a climbing whirl, swings and musical pieces for 2-12 year old age groups.
2. A 1200 square foot spray ground area with traditional spray features and touch pad activated features.
3. A 28 car parking lot should be built over the existing paved area in the southeast corner of the park. A retention pool and bioswale would serve drainage from this parking area, and clean the drainage water before it enters Fall Creek.
4. An 800 square foot performance shelter would allow for programming outdoor concerts and other cultural events, but could also be rented by the public for gatherings.
5. An additional shelter tucked into the trees on the south side of the park would serve for group usage.
6. Bocce Ball courts, horseshoe pits, benches and a 1.1 mile trail connecting the park to the Monon trail add amenities attractive to adults and seniors. The trail connects the park along Sutherland Avenue with an accessible route along the Right of Way. The trail also connects through a more rugged route along Fall Creek providing an alternate route to the Monon Trail. An overlook is planned for the park trail which would overlook Fall Creek. This overlook could be compacted gravel or paved in concrete, with three benches.
7. A comfort station should be installed adjacent to the spray ground convenient to the parking lot and playground. This is proposed to be one of our standard precast concrete comfort stations with service for men and women.



Performance Shelter



Playground Structure



Spray Ground

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MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Interpretive signage and a culturally theme bus stop are proposed for this park to celebrate the life and contributions of Reverend Charles R. Williams.

9. A yoga green is proposed on a knoll on the west side of the park adjacent to the path near the overlook. This would be a clearing amidst the trees of improved turf. It should be maintained to a higher standard than traditional mowed lawn. It should be regularly reseeded and weeded to achieve a healthier stand of grass than normal.



Yoga Green



Hexagon Shelter



Comfort Station



Climbing Whirl

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The first public meeting for this master plan, held on January 30th, 2013 at 6:30pm in the Little Bethel Missionary Baptist Church Crosstown Community Center was very well attended. The total attendance count was 53, not including Indy Parks staff. Andre Denman introduced the attendees to the master planning process and it's purposes. Park staff and the attendees discussed potential new amenities to the park as well as the site's history and neighborhood concerns.

These elements were requested to be included in the park design by the attendees:

A playground with unique elements	A Water Spray ground
Shade structures and shelters	A shelter large enough for rental/ reservations
Seating (benches)	Fence/ railing along Greenway trail
Parking spaces	ADA accessible picnic tables
Comfort station	Horse shoes
Walking Trail	Shuffle board
Skateboarding elements	Natural Science interpretation opportunity
Connection to Monon	Improve signage
Clean out invasive plant species	Canoe/ Kayak launch
Create fishing opportunity	Provide access to Fall Creek
Table tennis	Bridge across Fall Creek Parkway
Bocce ball	Tai Chi opportunity (location & programming)
Putting green	
Pedestrian bridge over Fall Creek from Fall Creek Greenway to park	
Safe street crossing for children across Sutherland	
Connect "Lot K" to Sutherland & create one big park	
Sidewalk on Sutherland from 30th street to Monon	
No Sidewalk on Sutherland from 30th street to Monon	

The second public meeting was held on June 10th, 2014 also in the Little Bethel Missionary Baptist Church Crosstown Community Center. The attendance for this meeting was lower at 31 attendees, not including parks staff. At this meeting, Indy park planning staff presented the concept for the new park. Naming the park after Reverend Charles R Williams was also discussed. The overall consensus was positive, although the public asked for three more elements to be included in the plan, A culturally themed bus stop, an interpretive kiosk informing the public about Reverend Charles Williams and a Yoga Green.

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ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is written to serve as a guideline for improvements within the park. It is not meant as a strict schedule, but should help guide Indy Parks in developing its Capital Improvements Program. The time line portion of the Action Plan is meant to help prioritize actions.

For each element of this plan to be successful, it must first meet administrative approval within Indy Parks. It must also prove feasible in terms of site constraints and availability of funds. For this reason, the proposed time line and estimated cost of each action plan element is subject to change.

IMPROVEMENT	ESTIMATED COST	1st-4th Year	5th-10th Year
Repave Existing Parking areas	\$70,000		
Final site paving including 6 inches topsoil	\$250,000		
Drinking fountains	\$8,000		
Internal park trails	\$40,000		
1.1 Mile trail connection to Monon Trail	\$700,000		
Performance shelter	\$100,000		
Tree plantings	\$60,000		
Culturally themed bus stop	\$40,000		
Playground	\$160,000		
Sprayground	\$200,000		
Hexagon shelter	\$45,000		
Railing along Sutherland Avenue	\$15,000		
Bocce ball & horseshoes	\$8,000		
Bicycle racks, benches	\$30,000		
Information Kiosk	\$10,000		
Total estimate	\$1,736,000		

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CONCLUSION

As the Master Planning process is completed, the community begins to look ahead to implementing specific park improvements spelled out in the plan. Indy Parks and Recreation is committed to bringing these plans into reality, and fortunately there is local and national funding available for our parks and open spaces. The opportunities listed in the Appendix are just a few examples of resources available for park development. It is important to remember to coordinate all requests to the groups listed on the following pages with Indy Parks Planning, Partnership & Grant staff members. Any parks question should be addressed to 327-PARK.

The processes undertaken to develop this master plan involved a variety of people with diverse interests and concerns. Their involvement in the process has helped to insure that the recreational needs of the neighborhood are satisfied.

This master plan should be frequently reviewed and periodically updated, so that Indy Parks can continue to be responsive to the community surrounding Rev Charles R Williams Park.

APPENDIX

Funding Opportunities	Appendix I
Parks Board Resolution	Appendix IV
MDC Board Resolution	Appendix V

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MASTER PLAN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Park Advisory Councils - “Friends Of” groups

Park advisory councils represent one opportunity for participation by community members. These are volunteer citizens who come together to assist the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) with managing a park’s development. The Northwestway Park Advisory Council has assisted DPR in recent years with input about a disc golf course, a playground and trail improvements. Advisory Councils who wish to fund raise to advance park improvements can utilize the Indianapolis Parks Foundation to administer these funds.

Some Advisory Councils have taken the step of registering as 501(c)(3), non-profit organizations, whose mission is to benefit the park. These “Friends Of” groups have been instrumental in raising awareness, funds and the standards for their parks. The Friends of Holliday Park has recently raised \$3.8 million to construct the Holliday Park Nature Center. The Eagle Creek Park Foundation is in the midst of an ambitious \$10 million program to improve Eagle Creek Park. The Friends of Garfield Park have raised more than \$1 million to fund a maintenance endowment for the sunken gardens.

Granting Opportunities

Recent grants have funded the Summer Lunch Program and improvements to Talbott & 29th Street Park. DPR is happy to assist community members who wish to apply for a grant to benefit a park. There are a great number of grants available to make parks better places to recreate. If you have a project you wish to seek a grant for, or know of a grant that could benefit a particular park, call 327-7050 and ask for information about grants.

Indianapolis Parks Foundation

The Indianapolis Park Foundation is a charitable organization that was created in 1991 to increase recreational opportunities in Indianapolis through contributions from our community. The Parks Foundation has been a vocal advocate for DPR and has provided more than \$4 million in capital improvements, and nearly \$1 million for parks programs. The Parks Foundation’s vision is that parks in Indianapolis will be quality spaces for all citizens to enjoy and that adequate financial resources will be available to support park projects, programs, maintenance and capital needs. To fulfill this vision, the Indianapolis Parks Foundation is currently initiating an aggressive fund raising campaign to strengthen its support of DPR. More information can be found at www.indyparksfoundation.org.

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB) is a local non-profit organization that works to secure private donations for the benefit of local organizations, such as DPR. Founded in 1976 and renamed in 1997, KIB has been especially effective in establishing volunteer tree plantings in many Indianapolis Parks. KIB’s organizational abilities have helped both private companies and neighborhood organizations to hold successful volunteer planting events, building a sense of ownership and unity with in a community. More information can be found at www.kibi.org

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Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The LWCF was established by Congress in 1965 to promote quality outdoor recreation opportunities in the United States. In the 30 years since its creation, LWCF has been responsible for the acquisition of nearly seven million acres of parkland and open space and the development of more than 37,000 parks and recreation projects. This grant must be applied for by a governmental agency, such as DPR and it requires a 50% percent funding match. Specific grant award levels vary by year. For more information visit www.nrc.nps.gov/PROGRAMS/LWCF/index.html

UPARR Program

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program was established in November 1978 by to provide matching grants and technical assistance to economically distressed urban communities. The purpose of the program is to provide direct Federal assistance to urban localities for rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities. The law also encourages systematic local planning and commitment to continuing operation and maintenance of recreation programs, sites, and facilities. DPR has recently completed improvements at Willard Park, assisted in part by a \$500,000 UPARR grant, and is now implementing a grant for Martin Luther King Park pool renovations. More information can be found at www.nps.gov/pub_aff/uparr/grants/index.html.

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INDIANAPOLIS PARKS BOARD RESOLUTION

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item #31, 2013

TO: Board of Parks and Recreation

FROM: Jen Pittman, Deputy Director of Indy Parks

DATE: May 23, 2013

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Board of Parks and Recreation, *May 23*, 2013



Louvenia Holstein, Board Secretary

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METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BOARD RESOLUTION



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