



# Christian / Pleasant Run Park Master Plan



DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT/DIVISION OF PLANNING

For: Department of Parks and Recreation

**CHRISTIAN/PLEASANT RUN PARK  
MASTER PLAN**

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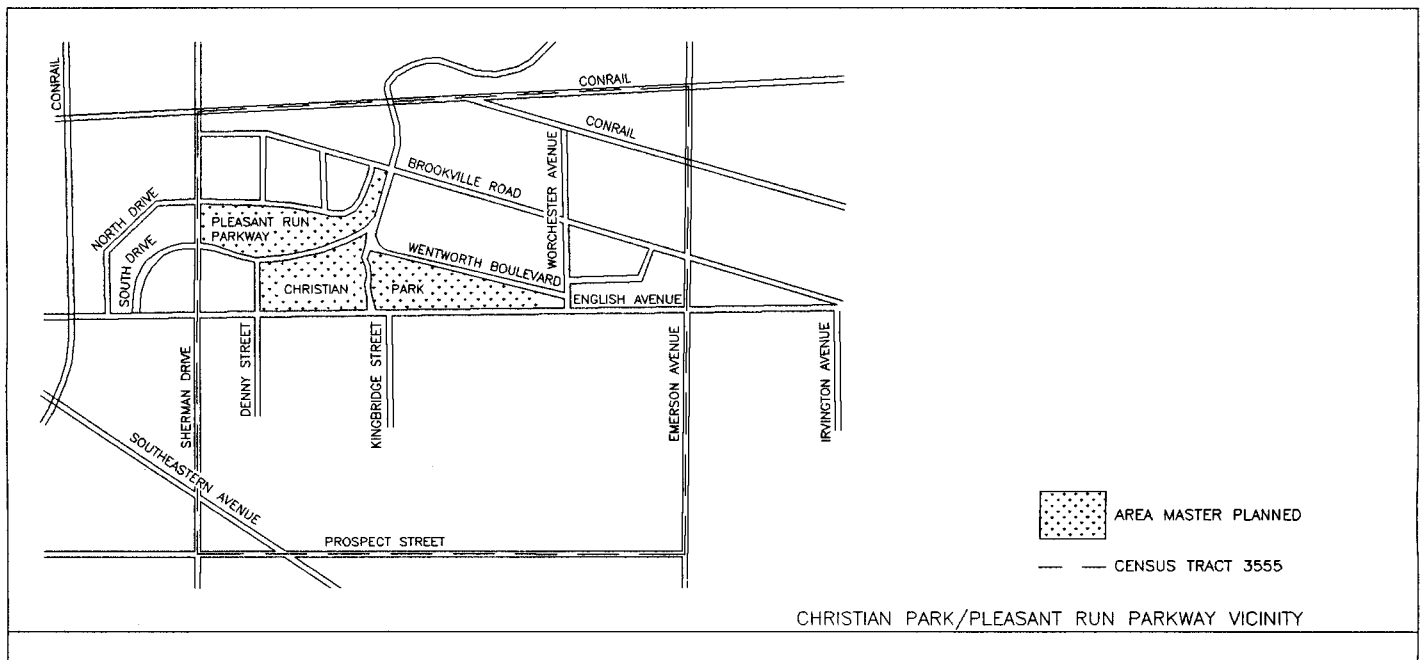
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## INTRODUCTION

Christian Park, located in the east section of Center Township along Pleasant Run, is one of the City's older and best utilized parks. A portion of the park, 40 acres, was donated to the City on April 30, 1921, by Wilmer F. Christian Jr. and Edna McGilliard Christian in honor of his mother, Margaret D. Christian. The deed of transfer stipulated that the property be used only for public park, playground or boulevard purposes. In the event that these terms are violated, property ownership shall revert to Wabash College. An additional 24 acres of park land was sold to the City by William F. Christian Sr. for a sum of \$12,000.

In keeping with the terms of the deed, the original development of the 64-acre park emphasized the provision of a playground for children who lived in the area. In the early 1930's, a recreation center was constructed in the park, expanding the range of available activities.

The initial public meeting to discuss the development of a master plan for Christian Park was attended by approximately 70 members of the public. A workshop format was used to identify issues that should be addressed during the planning process. Before the meeting's end, a request was made by City staff for volunteers to serve on a working planning committee. An attempt was made to ensure that all interest groups were represented on this committee. The planning committee met four times in the process of developing a master plan. The master plan proposals developed and endorsed by this committee were presented at a full public meeting and accepted by those in attendance.



## SERVICE AREA CHARACTERISTICS

At the time the 1980 Census data was gathered, 46% of the residents in Census tract 3555 were in the 35-74 years age group. This data would indicate an older population currently residing in this area. These older residents were well represented at the initial public meeting and voiced a need for better general maintenance and improved walking paths in the park.

With the exception of a few commercial uses to the south and a grade school immediately to the east of the park, the land use surrounding Christian Park is predominantly medium-high density (approximately 5 units per acre) residential. Most of the housing in the Christian Park area was developed in the 1920's, although some is older. Area homes seem to be well maintained.

## SITE ANALYSIS AND MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS

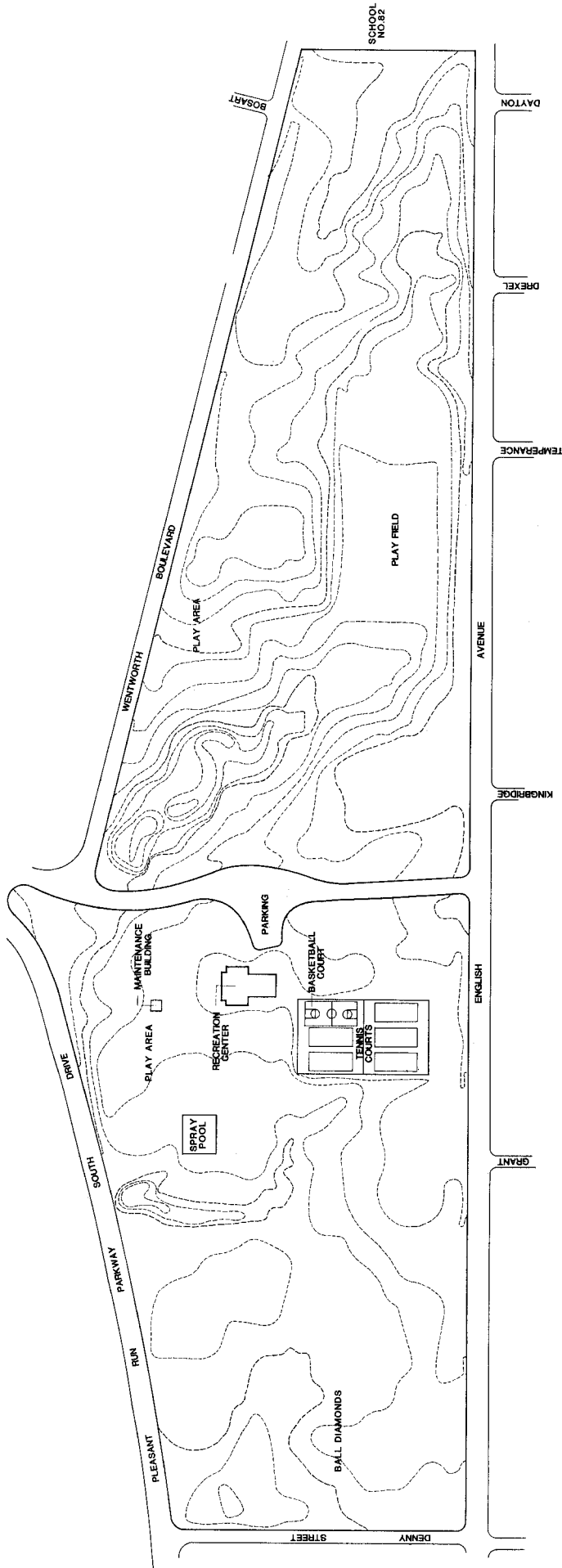
### Use Areas

The process of preparing a master plan for any park should include an analysis of the ratio of passive to active recreation areas. This should occur within the context of the identified user group and the "carrying capacity" of the land itself.

Christian Park (including Pleasant Run Parkway) has areas for both passive and active recreation. The most intensively developed areas include the section west of Kingbridge Street which contains the recreation center, the spray pool, play equipment, and the tennis and basketball courts. The area north of the intersection of Pleasant Run Parkway South and Denny Street is also an area of land with high use patterns. This is the location of the Little League ball diamonds and concession stand. The remaining section of Pleasant Run Parkway, however, is available for passive recreation. Likewise, most of the area east of Kingbridge Street is fairly undeveloped, although the football field is used extensively during the fall months.

When the development of active use areas becomes too dense in a park, ancillary uses, particularly parking, start to dominate the landscape. After comparing Christian Park with similar facilities, examining usage patterns and recognizing that natural areas for passive recreation are valued by the community, the decision was made to maintain and support the current ratio of developed to undeveloped park land.

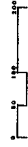
Specifically, this means that the area immediately east of Kingbridge Street should have uses that minimally impact the land and vegetation. Similarly, the area north of Pleasant Run should be maintained in its current use as open space. The most intense uses -- spray pool, ball diamonds, Recreation Center, basketball and tennis courts should remain west of Kingbridge Street.



# CHRISTIAN PARK

EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT  
 DIVISION OF PLANNING  
 INDIANAPOLIS - MARION COUNTY, INDIANA



## Vegetation

Overall, the quality and variety of vegetation at Christian Park is good. The mature Beech trees located just north of the recreation center are worthy of special note and should be protected against soil compaction. The following list, although not comprehensive, contains the types of trees that can be found in Christian Park.

Sweetgum	Sycamore
Silver Maple	Cottonwood
Sugar Maple	Pine
Red Oak (several varieties)	European Alder
White Oak (several varieties)	Tuliptree
Ash	Spruce

There are relatively few trees in the west section of the park, and since many of these are on the decline, additional shade trees should be planted in this section. Special attention should also be given to providing a mix of shade and sun in the play areas.

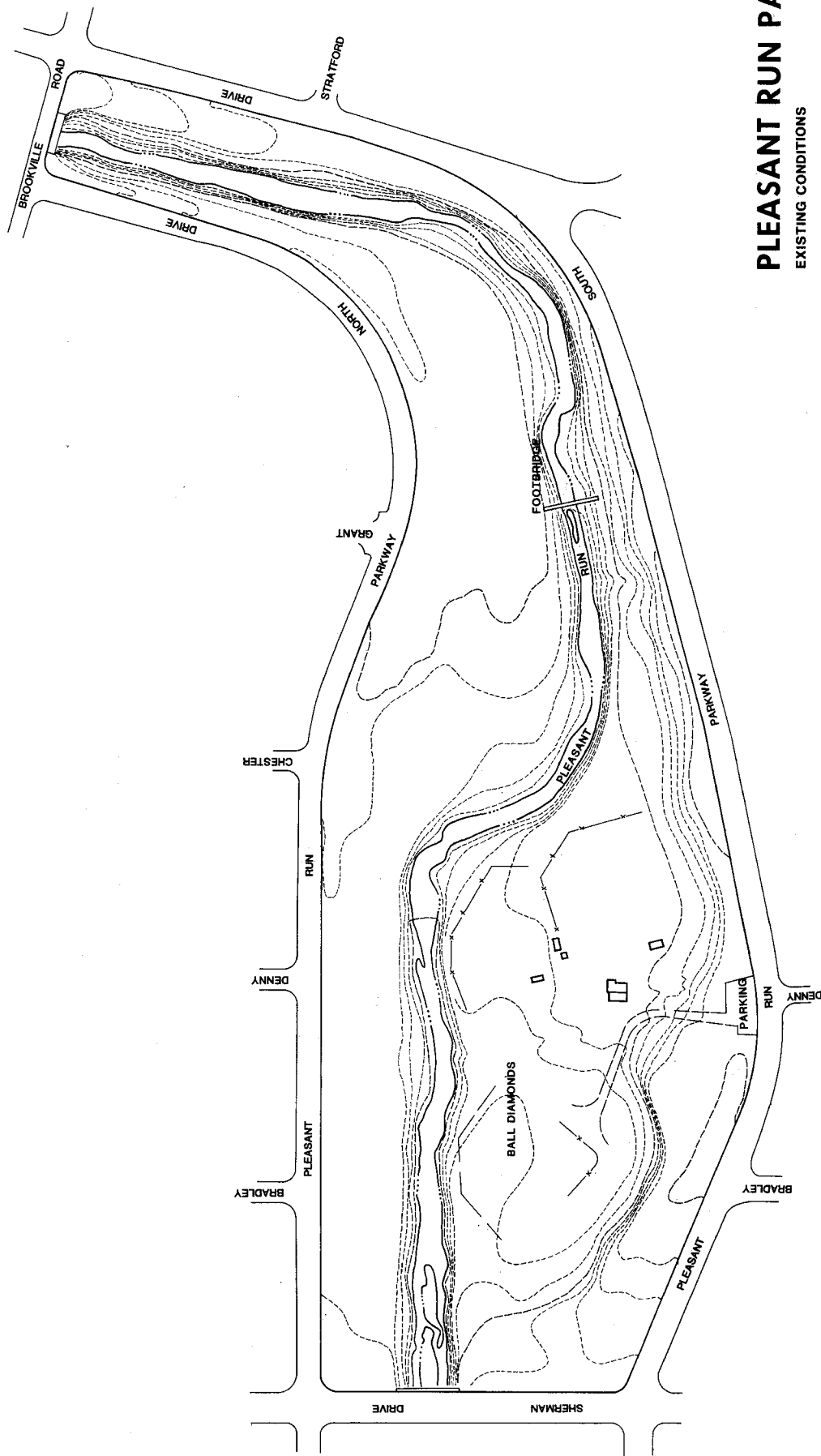
## Ball Diamonds

Based on the stated goal of maintaining the current ratio of developed to undeveloped land, the total number of ball diamonds was maintained through the master planning process. However, some changes in location and orientation are proposed in the Pee Wee area. Ball diamond number five is currently too close to Denny Street creating a dangerous situation if balls are hit or roll out into the street. Ball diamond number three is plagued by low areas that remain muddy for fairly long periods of time after rainfall. It was determined that by moving each of these diamonds a short distance within the general area, the problems could be rectified. Department of Parks and Recreation personnel addressed both of these ball diamond problems shortly after the master plan was presented to the community. Therefore, only the monitoring of these ball diamonds is currently necessary.

## Kingbridge Street

Christian Park is bisected by Kingbridge Street immediately east of the recreation center. According to older neighborhood residents, this section of the street was not part of the original development of Christian Park, but was added several years later. Furthermore, it is not included in the Indianapolis Thoroughfare Plan.

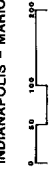
The presence of Kingbridge Street currently reduces the amount of land available for park uses. The street is hazardous for the pedestrian traffic as well.



# PLEASANT RUN PARKWAY

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT  
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 INDIANAPOLIS - MARION COUNTY, INDIANA



To gain an accurate measure of traffic direction and volume on Kingbridge Street, the Indianapolis Department of Transportation (at the request of the Division of Planning) gathered traffic information during the morning and evening rush hours on December 23, 1988. (Complete data from this study is located in the appendix of this document.) This data indicated that during the morning rush hour there were only 47 vehicles utilizing Kingbridge Street and only 78 during the evening rush hour. Virtually all of these vehicles were either turning on to or off of English Avenue.

The lack of north-south traffic indicates that motorists could choose to travel east-west on Pleasant Run Parkway or Wentworth Boulevard to reach their destinations. Because the Hawthorne Railroad Yard dominates the area a few blocks south of the park, motorists must use Sherman Drive or Emerson Avenue to travel south. Additionally, the shopping areas and schools are located east and west of the park.

There are two fire stations that service the Christian Park area:

- #15 - Located on Prospect Street between Earhart Street and Gale Street.
- #12 - Located on Sherman Drive between Robson Street and Vermont Street.

Because the locations of these fire stations are slightly northwest and southwest respectively, the closing of Kingbridge Street within Christian Park should not pose a problem for fire safety.

The intersection of Wentworth Boulevard, Pleasant Run Parkway, and Kingbridge Street is currently confusing and contains excessive amounts of pavement. The closing of Kingbridge Street will make the intersection at Pleasant Run Parkway and Wentworth Boulevard safer and more efficient. It will also allow park land to be reclaimed, and the safety of pedestrians can be increased without negatively impacting traffic patterns.

### Parking

The most pressing problem at Christian Park is insufficient parking for ball diamond and football field activities. Each of these sports has a high number of participants using the park at the same time and roughly in the same parts of the park (baseball and softball in the west section; football in the east). Currently, parents of the players parallel park along adjacent and nearby city streets. This should not continue because of the impact on neighboring residential areas and the traffic hazard it creates.





# CHRISTIAN PARK

## MASTER PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT  
 DIVISION OF PLANNING  
 INDIANAPOLIS - MARSH COUNTY REGION



During the spring and summer, the Pee Wee and Little Leagues generate a need for approximately 140-150 parking spaces in the west section of the park. In the fall, the Football League generates a demand for approximately 75 parking spaces in the central or east section of the park. At the same time, it is recognized that asphalt paving detracts from the aesthetic qualities of a park. Therefore, the objective to provide adequate parking is made more complex by the need to limit the amount of paved surfaces.

To accomplish the goal of alleviating parking problems created by organized sports activities, six parking areas are proposed for Christian Park. The first of these is an existing lot used by Little League on the north side of Pleasant Run Parkway South Drive. This lot is unpaved, lacks a landscape buffer and is laid out inefficiently. This lot will be redesigned to correct these problems and will accommodate many of the people using the ball diamonds.

The second parking area is an unvegetated area at the corner of Sherman Drive and Pleasant Run Parkway. This area can also serve those interested in using the ball diamond areas.

The third area proposed for parking is in the west section of Christian Park south of Pleasant Run Parkway South Drive. It would be a small, approximately eight car, parking area that would have a landscape buffer to soften its impact.

Because of the distribution of ball diamonds and parking, both north and south of Pleasant Run Parkway, pedestrians frequently cross the Parkway near Denny Street. To help ensure the safety of these pedestrians, a crosswalk and caution light should be created.

The fourth parking area is currently a graveled area along Wentworth Boulevard. This area is unsightly and is a source for neighborhood concern. It will be similar in design to the small parking area along Pleasant Run Parkway and would be ideal for those using the fitness trail.

Finally, two new parking areas are proposed in the central part of the park, in conjunction with the closing of Kingbridge Street. One of these areas would be accessed from English Avenue and primarily serve the football field, tennis courts, basketball court, and picnic shelter. The other parking area would be accessed from Wentworth Boulevard, near the point where it intersects Pleasant Run Parkway South Drive. This parking area would serve the recreation center, playground, picnic areas and football field. Both areas could also serve as overflow parking for the Pee Wee Diamonds.

To complement the development of parking lots, nine inch curbing should be installed along Pleasant Run Parkway and Wentworth Boulevard. This measure should help discourage motorists from parking or driving on park land. Also, "no parking" signs should be posted along Denny Street.



# PLEASANT RUN PARKWAY

## MASTER PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT  
 DIVISION OF PLANNING  
 INDIANAPOLIS - MARION COUNTY, INDIANA





### Play Areas

There are currently two play areas in Christian Park. The largest of these is located near the recreation center. The second play area is located north of the football field in the east section of the park. To create the best possible facility, the play area in the east section of the park should be consolidated into the larger play area near the recreation center and spray pool. These facilities all generate concentrated active use and are, therefore, compatible. The consolidation of play areas should allow for better equipment and surfacing because of the focus of resources.

### Recreation Center

The Colonial Revival style recreation center (built in the early 1930's) is a neighborhood landmark and should be retained. However, the current arrangement of interior space and the lack of air conditioning make this structure less than ideal for recreational use. Because of the specialized nature of architectural analysis, a separate study, focusing exclusively on the recreation center, should be conducted before implementation of the park master plan.

It is also recommended that the small wood storage building located north of the recreation center be removed. The equipment currently stored in this building can be transferred to the Garfield Park facility.

### Picnic Shelters

Results of the initial and subsequent public meetings indicated an interest in locating picnic shelters within Christian Park. Currently, no picnic shelters exist at Christian Park. Also, there are no picnic shelters at the nearest community facility, Ellenberger Park. This lack of existing shelters, community interest, and the relatively high population density of the service area led to the decision to include two picnic shelters in Christian Park.

One shelter is proposed to be located in the center of the park between the recreation center and the football field. This area has mature vegetation and pleasant topography and would therefore provide a pleasant picnic setting. Parking would be available in a lot proposed in this master plan. The second picnic shelter is proposed to be located in the west section of the park, near Pleasant Run Parkway. In conjunction with these proposals, it is recommended that the existing cooking grills be replaced and that the existing campfire pit be removed.

## PATH SYSTEM

To link facilities and encourage walking as a recreational pursuit, a path system has been proposed as part of the overall master plan. A fitness trail making a loop through the east section of the park will be integrated into this path system. This section of the path will have a permeable surface. The path connecting the footbridge over Pleasant Run to the Parkway will be paved due to erosion problems. To provide consistency, the path from the Parkway to the recreation center should also be paved. A crosswalk designation should be created at this location to protect pedestrians.

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Outdoor drinking fountains should be placed in appropriate locations around the park for the convenience of picnickers and sport leagues. Lights should be installed at the basketball and tennis courts to extend play into the evenings. The court should not be lit overnight.

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

DOCKET NO. 90-CPS-R-12

RESOLUTION 90-CPS-R-12, AMENDING A SEGMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, CHRISTIAN PARK MASTER PLAN.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, that, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4, the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, hereby amends the COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN FOR MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, by the adoption of the CHRISTIAN PARK MASTER PLAN, which is attached hereto, incorporated herein by same as an AMENDMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Metropolitan Development Commission certify copies of this RESOLUTION 90-CPS-R-12, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, CHRISTIAN PARK MASTER PLAN.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development is directed to mail or deliver certified copies of this RESOLUTION 90-CPS-R-12, upon final adoption, as an AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, to the legislative authorities of all incorporated cities and towns in Marion County, Indiana, the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, the City-Council Council of Indianapolis and Marion County, and the Board of Commissioners of Marion County, Indiana. The Director shall also file one (1) copy of the Resolution in the office of the Recorder of Marion County.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Office  
Metropolitan Development Commission

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary  
Metropolitan Development Commission

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM  
AND ADEQUACY THIS 7th  
DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1990

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James B. Burroughs  
Chief Counsel

GENERAL RESOLUTION NO. 114, 1990

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS THAT:

The agreement by and between the Department of Parks and Recreation of the City of Indianapolis and. . .

DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

in the amount of     N/A    

calling for     MASTER PLAN - CHRISTIAN PARK    

The form of which is to be approved by the Department Attorney, be and is hereby APPROVED.

FURTHER, RESOLVED, that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to execute such agreement for and in behalf of the Department.

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

By: *Franz Arthur Strong*  
Franz Arthur Strong, Chairman

*Charles Kendall*  
Charles Kendall

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    9/26/90      
Date



CHRISTIAN PARK MASTER PLAN

1990

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