

The Buffalo Bayou Parkway, stretching two and one-quarter miles along Buffalo Bayou from the Civic Center in downtown Houston westward to the residential subdivision of River Oaks, is a legacy of public planning and civic beautification efforts associated with broader political and social movements of the 1910s and 1920s. It is also a monument to the foresight and determination of a number of citizens instrumental in its realization: Horace Baldwin Rice, Edward Brewington Parker, George Edward Kessler, Oscar F. Holcombe, Sidney Herbert Hare and William Clifford Hogg.

The Buffalo Bayou Parkway, as it was realized between the 1920s and the 1950s, figured as one segment of a city-wide network of parks, parkways, and parkway boulevards. This was intended as a system of public greenways laid out along the courses of the bayous, streams which discharge into bays along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. As a unifying urban network, the parkway system was to serve a number of purposes. It would physically connect disparate parts of the city with continuous thoroughfare drives, it would transform eroding, trash-ridden stream valleys into useful, healthy grounds for public recreation, and it would ameliorate flooding conditions by insuring that stream beds and corridors alongside the channels were kept free of encroachment. The park and boulevard system combined beauty and utility. It introduced the semblance of nature, carefully cultivated, into an urban setting while simultaneously alleviating practical problems caused by urban density. In parkway plans for Brooklyn, New York (1868), Buffalo, New York (1868) and most significantly, Boston, Massachusetts (1887), Frederick Law Olmsted, inventor of the profession of landscape architecture, had formulated the procedure of reclaiming natural environmental features to serve as the basic structure for rationally planned urban engineering projects. In 1892 in Kansas City, Missouri, an Olmsted-like park and boulevard system encompassing the entire city began to be implemented under the direction of George E. Kessler, a landscape architect trained in Germany. Throughout the central United States, the example of Kansas City was to exert a tremendous influence in the early decades of the twentieth century; Houston was only one of many middle western and southern cities to be stimulated by Kessler's public planning in Kansas City.

Conditions along Buffalo Bayou rapidly altered between the 1820s, when Anglo-American colonists began to establish settlements along its banks, and the 1920s. On the flat, level, treeless coastal plain, the bayou constituted the most visible, non-conforming ecology. The depth of the stream bed resulted in topographical variations which were extended into adjacent territories by ravines and swales emanating from the stream bed. Dense stands of hardwood trees grew in these alluvial zones, although where soil conditions changed, pines and palmettos could also be found. Because early settlers depended upon bayous as the principal public thoroughfares, trees tended to be cleared back to permit easy access to the waterway, as well as to afford fuel and building materials. As settlements grew, residential areas retreated to higher ground, followed by public institutions and retail trades, leaving the bayou banks to wholesale warehouses and industrial enterprises. In Houston, founded in August 1836 and declared provisional capitol of the Republic of Texas three months later, this process had occurred

This tendency was somewhat redirected by the construction of railroad lines in the 1850s. The tracks of the Houston and Texas Central Railway were laid to the northwest, toward the vast interior of the state, in 1856. The freight and passenger depots of the Houston and Texas Central were located on the north bank of the bayou, on Washington Street, opposite the commercial district which was clustered around Market Square on the south bank. Between Washington Street and the north bank of the bayou came the first settlement to the west of the original townsite of Houston. Property in this area was subdivided into streets and blocks, running all the way down to the bayou, and sold as house sites. There the cottages of working people, many of them German Immigrants, began to be constructed. The Individual most responsible for this development was a real estate investor named William R. Baker who had come to Houston with members of the founding family in 1836. Between 1856 and 1858, Baker had the W. R. Baker Addition platted in the territory northwest of the original townsite, as a division of the First Ward. The tracks of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, of which Baker was a director, and Washington Street bisected this tract. (1)

Construction of the railroad and the location of the Houston and Texas Central's shopyard in the neighborhood accounted for increases in the population of the Baker Addition following the Civil War. The Augustus Koch bird's-eye view of Houston of 1873 illustrates the considerable number of small frame cottages which housed these residents, many of whom were German. However, the forest, or remnants of it, was still in evidence all along the north side of the bayou.

South of Buffalo Bayou, this settlement process was repeated in the Fourth Ward, southwest of the original townsite. Existing structures such as the two-story brick house built by Nathaniel Kellum in 1847, but occupied for most of the rest of the century by Mrs. Zerviah Metcalf Noble, were surrounded by new residential districts as the grid-plan of Houston was pushed southward across the prairie. The neighborhood around the Kellum-Noble house, which was located on a bluff above the bayou, developed as a genteel one. Along the San Felipe Road, which like Washington Street led to one of the pioneer settlements on the Brazos River, a concentration of German immigrants also occurred. However, after the Civil War this area just on the fringe of Houston was where emancipated slaves congregated. New and existing subdivisions such as the Seneshal Addition and the J. C. Castania Addition (both 1848), two G. S. Hardcastle Additions, and three other real estate developments undertaken by William R. Baker, accommodated this settlement. As late as the 1880s this district was referred to as Freedmantown. It lay on the south bank of Buffalo Bayou, across from the W. R. Baker Addition in the First Ward (or the Sixth Ward, as it became after redistricting in 1876). (2)

The development of Freedmantown encompassed two of Houston's oldest burial grounds. City Cemetery (now called Founders' Memorial Park) and the adjacent Beth Israel Cemetery were established in 1836 and 1844 respectively along San Felipe Road. Proximity to the bayou must have been a desirable feature in locating burial grounds. Near the Noble farm house Masonic and Episcopal cemeteries were laid out in a narrow

Houston's ruling grid pattern. However, inasmuch as deep ravines had been washed out by the bayou along one side of the cemeteries, the grid skirted, rather than attempted to bridge, this impediment.(3) The Koch bird's-eye view map indicates that the bayou banks along this stretch of the watercourse—still upstream from Houston—were heavily wooded and lightly settled in the early 1870s. (4)

Presumably it was this arcadian aspect which made the bayou's edge seem an appropriate situation for cemeteries. The arcadian theme was certainly exploited by the Houston Cemetery Company which commenced improvements to a large tract on the western edge of the W. R. Baker Addition in 1871. Dedicated the next year as Glenwood Cemetery, the tract extended from Washington Street south to the bayou. The superintendent of grounds, Alfred Whitaker, a commercial nurseryman who was also secretary of the Houston Cemetery Company, was apparently responsible for the layout of Glenwood Cemetery, as contemporary reports credited him with carrying out the landscaping of the cemetery during the early 1870s. A network of curvilinear drives was inserted into a rolling topography cut through by ravines. Ornamental planting was dense, enhancing the much remarked upon "romantic" character of the site.(5)

One indicator of the impact made by the Glenwood Park Cemetery (as it was called during the 1880s and 1890s) in Houston was the number of comparatively large cemeteries which were subsequently located along Buffalo Bayou. Magnolia Cemetery, on the south bank three-quarters of a mile west of City and Beth Israel Cemeteries, was established in 1882; Deutsche Gesellschaft Cemetery (now called Washington) west of Glenwood was established in 1887; and Hebrew Cemetery (now called Adath Yeshurun), one and three-eighths miles west of City and Beth Israel Cemeteries on the south bank of the bayou, was established in 1895.(6) None of these burial grounds ever attained the civic character of Glenwood however. From its inception, Glenwood Cemetery was considered a public amenity, for it was not only a cemetery but a landscaped park. Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it was the closest thing Houston had to a public park.

As Houston continued to grow after the Civil War, the need for public recreation space was met by private interests. The Houston Fairgrounds, lying on the southern edge of town, was an example; however, it was subdivided in 1889 to accommodate the city's continued expansion. On the eastern edge of the Second Ward were Merkel's Grove, operated by Joseph Merkel and used by the Houston Schuetzen-Verein, a German-American riflemen's club. Merkel's Grove lay on the south bank of Buffalo Bayou, at the head of Sampson Street. Next to it the Houston Volkfest Association acquired forty acres in 1887 and named it Houston Volkfest Park. Farther to the east of Houston, John T. Brady opened Magnolia Park, a public pleasure garden occupying part of his extensive property holdings in 1890. Because it was situated so far out in the country, Brady built the Houston Belt and Magnolia Park Railway to convey townspeople out to the park, as well as to open the intervening countryside for potential residential and industrial development. The establishment of semi-rural parks on the western edges of Houston occurred more slowly. But both Vick's Park and Highland

Bayou and Highland at the junction of White Oak and Little White Oak Bayous. Highland Park was a project of the Houston City Street Railway Company, the local streetcar company. Also established along Buffalo Bayou, but open only to members, were the golf links of the Houston Golf Club. Between 1904 and 1909 this organization, predecessor to the Houston Country Club, leased a forty-seven acre tract in the Fourth Ward lying between San Felipe and the bayou just northwest of Beth Israel Cemetery, for the town's first golf course.(7)

Nonetheless, despite the provision of recreational open space by individuals and social clubs, the lack of a publicly-maintained, easily accessible park was the cause of some popular concern during the late nineteenth century, as intermittent appeals for municipal parks in the Houston newspaper of the time reveal. In 1871, Timothy H. Scanlan, during his controversial tenure as mayor of Houston, made a tour of large American cities to examine recent public improvements. Reporting his observations to the City Council, Scanlan emphasized the role which public parks served in attracting citizens. Despite his admonition, the best that could be done was to have Alfred Whitaker landscape the Courthouse Square. Eleven years later the Houston Daily Sun carried a story announcing that Paul Bremond, a wealthy railroad and real estate-investor, was considering donating a square in the 1000 block of Main Street—the heart of a residential district—to the city if the City Council would make a commitment to improve the square and maintain it as a public park. Evidently the commitment was not forthcoming as Bremond did not part with the square. A satirical piece entitled "Typical Houston" was published in the Houston Daily Post in 1890. This purported to be an exchange between a Houstonian and an admiring visitor eager to view the city's parks. The Houstonian was shamefully forced to admit that Houston's people, lacking a public park, used Glenwood Cemetery for that purpose. (8)

It was not until 1899, during the administration of Mayor Sam Brashear, that the City of Houston acquired sixteen acres on either side of Buffalo Bayou for a municipal park. This consisted of three tracts: the old Samuel W. Young brickyard on the north bank; Mrs. Noble's house and grounds and the adjoining nursery of Mrs. Sarah Bvers on the south bank, just southwest of Episcopal Cemetery. John W. Maxcey, the City Engineer, prepared plans for improving both segments of the park. His prints, dated September 1899, show each segment cut by a series of curvilinear drives and a network of curvilinear paths. On the south segment, the Noble house—its approach shaded by a stand of live oaks—was retained as the park shelter. New improvements included a small lake with a conservatory nearby, a bandstand in the center of the park, a pavilion and an arbor. A wooden bridge connected the drive to a drive on the north bank which was an extension of Young Avenue. The L-shaped north tract was also to receive its complement of winding paths. Sam Houston Park was dedicated on 29 September 1899.(9) However, not all of Maxcey's improvements were carried out. The annual reports of the City of Houston through the early 1900s frequently made reference to the need to improve the north bank acreage, through which the drive was extended but apparently nothing else done.

both as a place for adult resort and for children's recreation. A zoological collection begun about 1900 was kept in and about the Noble house. Patriotic societies erected a number of monuments in the park. The bell of the Harriet Lane, a U.S. gunboat sunk during the Battle of Galveston in 1863, was presented by the local chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and hung in a brick bellcote in front of the Noble house in 1903. In 1906, the Daughters commissioned Louis Amateis, a noted Washington sculptor, to model "The Spirit of the Confederacy". This was a winged bronze figure standing on a stone pylon. The Spirit of the Confederacy was dedicated in January 1908 and was set near the bayou on the bank of a newly created pond, which like the "lake" (which had acquired a heart shape and consequently was designated Valentine Lake) had been made by damming a ravine and filling it with water. At the same time, the Civic Club of Houston placed the bronze Brownie fountain in Valentine Lake, which then became Brownie Fountain Glen. (10)

Because of the intensive use to which Sam Houston Park was subjected, maintenance seems to have been a problem. In the summer of 1906, J. B. Marmion, a member of the City Council and Chairman of the Streets, Bridges and Public Grounds Committee, commenced a major remodeling of the park in order to improve its facilities. The zoological collection was dispersed and more lagoon-like ponds were created, with a water-mill and rustic bridge included to enhance the picturesque effect.(11) The children's playground was also refurbished. This facility was one of the most important elements of the park, for it was considered that poor children would be attracted to a healthful open-air environment where their physical well-being might be improved, rather than menaced by the foul conditions prevailing in the neighborhoods of the poor. By the early 1900s, such neighborhoods had drawn more closely about the park as the town continued to grow. Despite the earlier presence of large houses surrounded by spacious gardens, the neighborhoods adjoining Buffalo Bayou, as it wound between the Fourth Ward on the east (and south) and the Sixth Ward on the west (and north), had been filled out with manufacturing establishments and working class residential districts. O. H. Noland, the park's superintendent, noted in his report for 1903 that "throughout the year multitudes of people pass through (Sam Houston Park) on their way to and from work." (12)

Among the enterprises located along the bayou were several brickyards, which benefitted from easy access to clay along the banks. The Young brickyard, absorbed into Sam Houston Park, was one, as was the eleven and one-half acre Houston Brick Company Yard just across Houston Avenue (between Moore Street and the north bank of the bayou) from the Young yard. This had opened in 1884 but was moved ten years later. The Michael Butler Brick Yard, established about 1894 by an Austin man between Wichmann and Buffalo Bayou in a part of the Sixth Ward called Chaneyville, one quarter mile west of Glenwood Cemetery and across the bayou from Magnolia Cemetery, grew to encompass nearly sixty acres on both sides of Buffalo Bayou. The Galveston, Houston and San Antonio Railway line ran alongside the Butler property and intersected the Houston and Texas Central Railway line just north of Washington Street. This rail connection stimulated the development of an industrial district at this point along the

(eventually the Standard Milling Company) acquired a tract on the north bank of the bayou across from the Butler Brick Yard. The Fidelity Cotton Oil and Fertilizer Company, following its incorporation in 1905, purchased as a plant site a long, narrow tract running from Washington south to the bayou and bordered on the east by Deutsche Gesellschaft Cemetery. Two years later the Dickson Car Wheel Company built a new wheel foundry south of Washington Street between the Butler Brick Yard, the Standard Compress Company and the Fidelity Cotton Oil and Fertilizer Company tracts. (13)

Another incentive for the establishment of industries along this stretch of the bayou was the development of large working class suburbs in the area. Connected to Houston by the street railroad system were the villages of Brunner, at the intersection of Brunner (now North Shepherd Drive) and Washington Street, and Houston Heights. Houston Heights was an ambitious real estate venture. It encompassed 1,765 acres and was developed by a syndicate of Nebraska capitalists beginning in 1891. (14) In 1896 the settlement was incorporated as an independent municipality. Houston Heights' southern boundary was White Oak Bayou, but its principal street, Heights Boulevard, continued southward across the bayou to join with Washington. Heights Boulevard was the first thoroughfare in Houston to be designated a boulevard. It consisted of a wide grassy esplanade flanked by double carriageways. The esplanade was planted with trees and shrubbery and contained the tracks of the street railroad system. Although the Heights was predominantly a working class community, Heights Boulevard provided middle class homeowners with a park promenade which in terms of its landscape amenity, was far grander than Main Street, where in the late nineteenth century most of the large, expensive new houses in Houston proper were built.

Despite the length of time which elapsed before the acquisition of Sam Houston Park in 1899, the City of Houston embarked on a concerted program of park acquisition and development following the election of Horace Baldwin Rice as mayor in 1905. Rice's aunt, Mrs. William Marsh Rice, had bequeathed a sum of money to the City for the purchase of a park, effected by Rice's predecessor Mayor Oran T. Holt in 1904. This was located in the South End. In 1906 Rice presided over the purchase of nearly forty-five acres along Buffalo Bayou, encompassing what had been Vick's Park, as well as an additional five and one-half acres for Sam Houston Park. Moreover it was understood that the City's purchase of the Houston Waterworks Company in 1906 and its two tracts of eight acres on either side of the bayou, four blocks downstream from Sam Houston Park, entailed the acquisition of property which might eventually be committed to park purposes. (15)

In his annual report for 1909, Mayor Rice urged that prompt action be taken to acquire more parks and playgrounds since increasing property values would render appropriate sites too expensive for the city to obtain. Rice demonstrated his commitment to the issue of public parks by appointing a Board of Park Commissioners in the spring of 1910. This was composed of three members: Edwin B. Parker, an attorney and amateur horticulturalist; George H. Hermann, a real estate investor and industrialist; and William H. Wilson, a real estate developer. The board was to advise the Mayor and

described in a newspaper interview published in January 1911 the commissioners' ultimate objective: this was the establishment of a "park circle" around Houston, to be accomplished by joining Houston's parks with landscaped parkway boulevards. The courses of Buffalo Bayou and White Oak Bayou would provide the site for this parkway, with a possible link to Heights Boulevard in Houston Heights.

Rice's comments were prompted by the City's purchase of Highland Park, the twenty-six acre pleasure garden operated by the Houston Electric Company, and an adjacent eighteen acres near the confluence of White Oak and Little White Oak Bayous. (16) Through this purchase, the City acquired more bayou frontage for park purposes. There was at this time noticeable public interest in bayou beautification. To demonstrate the degree to which even modest landscaping gestures could visually transform the banks of the bayou, the Houston Chamber of Commerce retained Gardiner Pottinger, a San Francisco landscape architect, in the spring of 1911 to design a small garden beneath the Franklin Avenue viaduct, spanning Buffalo Bayou in the downtown section. The Chamber of Commerce also publicly commended the efforts of private property owners, such as the Brazos Hotel on Washington Street across from Grand Central Station for landscaping the banks of the bayou rather than abandoning them to debris and erosion. The Houston Daily Post publicized a series of private efforts at improving the appearance of the bayou shoreline and even promoted the notion of a landscaped pedestrian promenade along Buffalo Bayou, employing the nearly continuous strip of municipally-owned property stretching from Preston Avenue southwest to Sam Houston Park as the right-of-way.(17) Despite these efforts, the standard condition of the shoreline within Houston was one of neglect.

In order to provide a substantive basis for redressing this situation, the Board of Park Commissioners in 1912 retained Arthur Coleman Comey, a landscape architect from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to compile a comprehensive park report. (18) The next year, Comey's report was published as Houston, Tentative Plans for Its Development. He revealed that, compared to Kansas City, with one hundred ten people per every acre of parkland, a figure he considered normative, Houston was clearly deficient with a mere acre for every six hundred eighty-five people. Comey suggested administrative, legal and financial methods for the city to increase its public park holdings. His recommendations for physical planning were grounded in the observation that although "squares and local parks will enhance the attractiveness of sections in which they occur,...the backbone of a park system for Houston will naturally be its bayou or creek valleys, which readily lend themselves to "parking" and cannot so advantageously be used for any other purpose. These valleys intersect the city in such a way as to "furnish opportunity for parks of unusual value within a comparatively short distance of most of the residential areas... All the bayous should be parked except where utilized for commerce." Comey concluded a recitation of the merits of this proposition by stating that where the bayou banks were privately owned, they were sordid and ill-kempt, and depressed property values. But as publicly-owned parkland they would enhance the economic value of surrounding neighborhoods. (19)

encompassing the city in its present condition and an "outer" system which, he estimated, would satisfy the needs of the city as it expanded during the next thirty-five years. For the western stretch of Buffalo Bayou, he emphasized the desirability of acquiring as soon as possible all property within the stream valley from Preston Avenue to Cleveland Park, as Vick's Park had been officially designated. For the future, Comey advised acquisition of bayou property from four to six miles beyond the existing corporate limits. He specifically recommended that along Buffalo Bayou, about one and one-half miles to the west of Cleveland Park, property be acquired in large acreage allotments to create a "forest reservation" as part of the outer system. Comey included in his report a typical cross-section for the bayou parkway which indicated that two lane thoroughfares along the crest of the slope were to flank the route of the bayou. (20)

Another segment of the report which related to Buffalo Bayou was the proposal that Houston establish a civic center in or near the central commercial district where public buildings might be constructed in a harmonious style to achieve monumental effect. One of Comey's suggested locations, although not his first choice, was a multi-block site at the west end of Capitol Avenue which could be integrated into the proposed Buffalo Bayou parkway.(21) This site still lay outside the central area and moreover was not really in the best part of town; its principal advantage appeared to be that the Harris County Criminal Courts Building, built in 1895-1896, was already located there.

Comey's recommendations had their effect. While his report was in preparation, Houston voters authorized a \$250,000 bond issue to finance parks acquisition in July 1912. This was a significant indication of public support and the Board of Park Commissioners was apparently influenced by Comey's suggestions, for they proceeded to acquire property on the north bank of White Oak Bayou from the Southern Pacific Hospital in the Fifth Ward all the way west to the Houston Heights city limit. Along Buffalo Bayou two extensive tracts of land were acquired. One tract bordered on the east by Cleveland Park and on the south by Buffalo Bayou, lay just across the water from Hebrew Cemetery and comprised about twenty acres. The other tract lay on the south bank of the bayou just west of Hebrew Cemetery and was bordered on the west by Shepherd's Dam Road and on the south by San Felipe Road. This consisted of about thirty-five acres. The City closed on this tract in April 1913. Mayor Rice, in his annual report for 1912, dated 28 February 1913, commended the board on these extensions to the park system. Rice urged that future administrations maintain a commitment to park planning and particularly endorsed the idea of acquiring a large park along Buffalo Bayou "that will for all time be of sufficient magnitude for our people. (22)

In April 1913, H. Baldwin Rice was defeated in the mayoral election by Ben Campbell. Whatever political differences may have existed between the two, Campbell fully shared Rice's enthusiasm for parks and civic planning. However, during the first year of his administration, little seems to have been accomplished, at least in terms of new acquisitions. In the annual reports from municipal department administrators to

1912, stated that the old Masonic Cemetery had been annexed to Sam Houston Park, adding nearly six more acres. But he also advised that it needed to be "reconditioned and modernized" and further cited the depredations caused by automobile traffic. Brock concluded that a landscape plan needed to be prepared and a system of connecting boulevards constructed between parks.(23) During 1914, important steps were taken toward realizing these suggestions.

One occurred in May 1914 when George H. Hermann gave the City of Houston a two hundred eighty-seven acre park site along Brays Bayou. At his death in October of that year, Hermann left, by bequest, additional land to the city for this park as well as a square block near Sam Houston Park, a "breathing space" to be called Hermann Square. Two weeks after Hermann's death, Houston voters approved another \$250,000 bond issue to finance parks acquisition and improvement.(24) A second important step, undertaken in 1914 but apparently not completed until early 1915, was the appointment of George E. Kessler as consulting landscape architect to the Board of Park Commissioners.

Kessler was then one of the best known landscape architects in the United States. He had been born in Germany, grew up in Dallas but went back to Germany to study engineering and landscape gardening. In the 1880's Kessler returned to the United States and eventually settled in Kansas City, Missouri, where he made his reputation as the planner of Kansas City's municipal park system. After he was asked to be consulting landscape architect for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Kessler moved to St Louis. From there his practice spread throughout the United States. In 1910 Kessler had prepared for the Dallas Board of Park Commissioners the first comprehensive city plan document to be made for a Texas city. It seems to have been at the instigation of Joseph Stephen Cullinan, a public spirited oil operator, that Kessler received the appointment from the Houston Board of Park Commissioners. (25)

To Kessler fell the task of implementing as many of Comey's recommendations as could be afforded by the City of Houston. (Kessler privately commented that \$250,000 was not very adequate to realize all the work which needed to be done.) The Board of Park Commissioners apparently gave priority to improving neighborhood parks and playgrounds; recently acquired park sites adjacent to new public schools in the Fifth Ward and the South End took form under Kessler's guidance. Following in priority were the landscaping of Main Boulevard, a "parked highway" type thoroughfare, and the design of the initial stages of improvements to Hermann Park. In 1915-1916, improvements were carried out in Elizabeth Baldwin, Woodland (as Highland Park and surrounding acreage had been renamed) and Settegast Parks.(26) Not until the latter part of 1916 did Kessler's attention seem to be directed toward the park properties along Buffalo Bayou. Two projects of quite different magnitude were developed by Kessler for this string of parks: a formal garden in Sam Houston Park set at the main entrance to the park, and a site layout for the South Texas Permanent Exposition.

The formal garden was carried out to coincide with the meeting of the Society

referred to as the Convention Garden. The South Texas Permanent Exposition project involved a considerable enlargement of scale. On 16 August 1916, the City Council approved the acquisition of seventy acres along Buffalo Bayou west of Sam Houston Park. This comprised a seven block, eighteen acre portion of the W. R. Baker Addition in the Sixth Ward, eighteen acres of Hardcastle Addition in the Fourth Ward and the golf links tract formerly used by the Houston Golf Club and owned by the William M. Rice Institute. Although purchased by the City and assiduously promoted by Mayor Campbell, the project was developed under the sponsorship of three service organizations—the Young Men's Business League, the Rotary Club and the Red Roosters—who negotiated the transfer of the land and were ostensibly in charge of planning its eventual use. Newspaper reports made clear that the exposition grounds were to be park-like in character, afford space for a number of public recreations and amusement, and constitute another link in the system of publicly owned open space along the bayou channel.(27) However, the Board of Park Commissioners does not seem to have figured in the project; for the time being this was not considered to be a park project.

Yet because the city was officially involved in the project, Kessler was called in to propose a general scheme of development. The Kessler plan, which dates from between November 1916 and February 1917, was elaborate in scope and encompassed even more property than the City actually owned. In the final proposal, the exposition site, containing three courts, was to be on the north bank between Moore Street and the bayou. The bayou was to be rechanneled as a straight stream, eliminating three ox-bow bends, and Lamar and Dallas Avenues were to be extended through Sam Houston Park, totally changing its character, to Shipman Street, which became a "scenic drive" along the south bank of the bayou. A one-half mile circuit track was projected for the golf links. This was to be bordered by livestock pavilions. Moore Street was to curve southward through the exposition ground and cross the bayou, intersecting with Shipman and the circuit track. The formal entrance to the principal exhibition court involved the transformation of the blocks between Henderson and White Streets in the W. R. Baker Addition into a landscaped mall. This would axially penetrate the central court, then proceed across Buffalo Bayou, intersecting Shipman Street and continuing south to San Felipe as Sherman Street, an existing street in Hardcastle Addition. An aerial perspective displayed the relationship of the exposition ground to downtown Houston. Kessler's suggestions for street rearrangements and new bridges to rationalize vehicular traffic circulation between the two included a continuous pedestrian promenade along the south bank. Curiously, any indication of Sam Houston Park was suppressed. Also, the working class neighborhoods surrounding the exposition ground were depicted as tree-shaded blocks as yet (apparently) undeveloped.

No part of the South Texas Permanent Exposition project was carried out. By November 1917, the 1915 bond issue had been expended and Kessler was temporarily off retainer. Clarence Brock noted in his report for 1915 that the parks budget for 1916 was so small that maintenance was being cut to a minimum.(28) Because the City Council failed to establish the means for permanently financing the park system,

Major projects had to be financed by special bond issues. This procedure obviously inhibited realizing staged plans for development, as the amount of annual appropriations could never be depended upon. The United States' entry into World War I must have contributed to the suspension of the exposition project. After the war, a movement for implementing it was briefly revived in 1922, but it seems to have generated so little public appeal that it was not carried through. (29)

Inasmuch as Ben Campbell declined to seek a third term in the municipal elections of 1917, the city lost a strong proponent of civic planning. Moreover, individuals such as E. B. Parker and J.S. Cullinan, who had been essential to the city's progress in planning were engaged with special wartime public service rather than local civic affairs. Not until the early 1920s did a park program and civic planning regain any degree of prominence in the public affairs of Houston. This second impetus was to be engaged largely in achieving the goals projected by the Board of Park Commissioners and Comey and Kessler in the 1910s. But many of the same kinds of setbacks were encountered, chiefly a lack of funds to sustain planning efforts to develop and maintain existing properties, as well as the ambiguous attitude of local politicians to the projects that they were ostensibly sponsoring. Oscar F. Holcombe, a lumberman, contractor and real estate investor, who was elected to the first of eleven terms he would serve as mayor of Houston in 1921; Will C. Hogg, a wealthy attorney who was the oldest son of former Governor James Stephen Hogg; and S. Herbert Hare, a landscape architect and city planner from Kansas City, Missouri, were to figure most prominently in this second episode.

The Chamber of Commerce, which had enthusiastically supported the park purchase and planning efforts of the 1910's, was active in promoting a renewed awareness of the city's deficiencies in this regard just after World War I. The Chamber's monthly news magazine Houston advocated the adoption of rational city planning methods and support for an active parks movement. Articles on planning goals, zoning and the need for a city planning commission were published in 1921, as were articles on the status of Houston's park program. Robert C. Kerr, a florist and Parker's successor as chairman of the Board of Park Commissioners, was quoted as saying in regard to current attitudes toward park improvements: "The civic pride of Houston is practically dead." Kerr warned that unless immediate action was taken to expand the system, property would soon be too expensive to acquire economically. In an interview in Houston shortly after his election, Oscar Holcombe responded positively to the need for both city planning and a park program, but was unclear about how these should be pursued.(30)

Near the end of his first term, in late 1922, Holcombe took the first step in this direction by appointing a City Planning Commission. It consisted of seven members. However, it had no money, no authority and no statutory existence. By the middle of 1923, the chairman had died and two other members had resigned. As no replacements were appointed, the remaining members decided to cease meeting. In March 1924, Mayor Holcombe filled the three vacancies and the council passed an ordinance authorizing the Commissioners to prepare a zoning plan, a civic center plan, a major

developed in concert with the Board of Park Commissioners. In fact, one of the three new appointees was Herbert A. Godwin, Kerr's successor as Chairman of the Board of Park Commissioners and a member since 1922. The council also voted an appropriation so that the commission could retain professional consultation and a small staff.(31)

The City Planning Commissioners retained Hare and Hare of Kansas City as consultants. This firm of landscape architects had been started by Sid J. Hare. Among Hare's commissions had been the layout of the suburban townsite of Bellaire in 1908 and the East End subdivision of Forest Hill, across Brays Bayou from the Houston Country Club, in 1909. Hare's son, S. Herbert Hare, became a principal in the firm in 1910. The younger Hare had studied at Harvard and like both Comey and Kessler, was an exponent of the landscape-planning tradition initiated by Frederick Law Olmsted. After George E. Kessler's sudden death in 1923, Hare and Hare inherited many of his public consulting jobs. They were to be very active in Houston and Texas, in both public and private capacities, through the 1950s. (32)

Within six weeks of the reactivation of the City Planning Commission, the first of a series of events occurred which was to refocus park planning along the Buffalo Bayou corridor. In April 1924, Will C. Hogg and his brother and sister, Mike and Ima Hogg, offered the City of Houston, at low cost, 1,503 acres of undeveloped land — largely a pine forest three and one-half miles west of Sam Houston Park. The property had nearly two miles frontage along the north bank of Buffalo Bayou. This had been the site of Camp Logan, a World War I training camp decommissioned in 1922. The Varner Realty Company, owned by the Hogg family and Henry W. Stude, purchased eight hundred seventy-five acres in 1923 and an additional six hundred thirty acres in 1924 after Will Hogg determined to convert this property into a public park. In order to allow the city to make initial payments on the tracts, the Hogg brothers donated \$50,000, nearly ten percent of the purchase price. The park, dedicated as Memorial Park in memory of Houstonians who had died in World War I, lay in the vicinity where both Comey and H.B. Rice had anticipated that a large-acreage park would one day be located. (33)

Simultaneously, Will Hogg had conceived the notion of developing a large residential community which would demonstrate to Houstonians the advantages of civic planning. In March 1923, Mike Hogg acquired one hundred eighteen acres on the south side of Buffalo Bayou, across from the future Memorial Park. To the east of this, a group of investors had purchased about three hundred seventy-five acres, also on the south bank of the bayou, which they subdivided for a country club and a residential subdivision called Country Club Estates. Between March and May 1924, the Hogg brothers bought all unsold lots in the as yet undeveloped Country Club Estates and acquired approximately eight hundred more acres, stretching from Shepherd's Dam Road on the east (bordering the tract acquired by Mayor Rice in 1913 as an extension to Cleveland Park) to the Galveston, Houston and San Antonio Railway line on the west; and from Buffalo Bayou on the north as far south as Westheimer Road. (34) Initially, Hare and Hare were retained by the Hoggs' development company, Country Club Estates, Inc., to produce a master plan for River Oaks, as the district was called. Although certain

for laying out River Oaks eventually fell to Herbert A. Kipp, a civil engineer who had devised the Country Club Estates plat. Kipp also had been the Board of Park Commissioners' resident engineer during Kessler's tenure as consulting landscape architect and had been engineer for a number of other notable residential developments in the neighborhoods around Hermann Park. In the spring of 1925, the Hoggs' associate, Hugh Potter, who was president of Country Club Estates, Inc., made Kipp vice president of the corporation.

As immense an undertaking as River Oaks was, it failed to absorb all of Will Hogg's civic enthusiasm. The acquisition of Memorial Park established a pattern for his subsequent operations. The Varner Realty Company would purchase property designated for park development and resell it (or trade it) to the city at cost or through condemnation, at such times as the municipal government could afford to pay for it. This method yielded not only a substantial addition to Hermann Park in 1924, following the Memorial Park purchase, but most of the remainder of the Buffalo Bayou Parkway and much of the Civic Center in downtown Houston.⁽³⁵⁾ At Hogg's instigation, a number of public interest groups were formed—the West End Improvement Association, the Buffalo Drive Beautification Association, and the longest-lived and most effective, the Forum of Civics—to support public planning goals. For one year the Forum of Civics published Civics for Houston, a monthly magazine designed to broadcast information about such policies and programs. In April 1927, Mayor Holcombe appointed Hogg to chair the City Planning Commission, a position which he retained until 1929.

Hogg's appointment occurred after the Commission had again been permitted to lapse. The Commission of 1924 fulfilled its mandate; but once its appropriation was exhausted, no more financial support had been forthcoming.⁽³⁶⁾ During the year of their activity— from 1924 until 1925— Hare and Hare had produced studies for the two major projects with a bearing on Buffalo Bayou, the Civic Center and a bayou parkway.

Hare and Hare proposed locating the Civic Center around Hermann Square, where the new Houston Public Library was under construction between 1924 and 1926. The Civic Center would adjoin Sam Houston Park, Episcopal and Masonic Cemeteries and the Waterworks site, all of which would form a continuous park stretching downstream to the four block site of a proposed new city market. The Hare and Hare scheme, documented by a site plan and an aerial perspective, called for Hermann Square to be extended westward for another block. These two blocks would form a mall within which a long reflecting basin was set. At the head of the mall was to be a city (or city-county) administration building. Flanking the mall, a series of public buildings were indicated. Architecturally, all were to employ the same Plateresque detail used in the design of the Public Library. Sam Houston Park was to be greatly remodeled. This seems to have been the one segment of the plan immediately carried out.

The pattern of drives which penetrated the park was simplified, primarily it would seem, to facilitate the flow of automobile traffic. Although the existing monuments and the Noble house were to be retained, the character of the park was modified. For it was no

just beginning to change from residential to non-residential uses. Instead, the Civic Center proposal drawings depict it as a heavily landscaped greenspace, providing a romantic and informal counterpoint to the formal landscape treatment accorded the central mall and the blocks which were to flank it.(37)

Sam Houston Park was also planned to mark the eastern-most point of the Buffalo Bayou parkway, which Hare and Hare projected as running all the way west to Memorial Park. On either side of the channel, curving drives would border the parkway, conveying traffic from the west to the business district. The southern drive actually entered River Oaks, west of Shepherd's Dam Road, then forked. One branch curved to cross the bayou and intersect the northern bayou drive as it proceeded into Memorial Park. The southern bayou drive, Buffalo Drive, was constructed in 1925-1926, linking downtown Houston directly to River Oaks and providing the first long distance parkway drive in the city. The connection to the north bank drive was not immediately made however, so that Buffalo Drive arced to the south to become Kirby Drive, which Will Hogg hoped might become a parkway boulevard extending southward all the way to Brays Bayou. (38)

North of the bayou, progress was slower. A plan was finally made for Cleveland Park in 1927. Through the park was routed a vehicular connection between Waugh Drive, south of the bayou, and Heights Boulevard, north of Washington. Apparently because of problems with acquiring a right-of-way through Glenwood and Deutsche Gesellschaft Cemeteries, the segment of the bayou drive east of Cleveland Park does not seem to have been planned in detail. However, also in 1927, Hare and Hare prepared schemes for the segment of bayou drive west of Cleveland Park in conjunction with their general plan for Memorial Park. This drive, to be called Memorial Drive, followed closely the course of the bayou all the way to Memorial Park and all the property between the drive and the channel was to be acquired as parkland. (39)

In late 1927 controversy developed over the alignment of Memorial Drive. The City Planning Commission hoped that it would follow the course of the bayou west of Shepherd Drive (as Shepherds Dam Road had been renamed), all the way to Memorial Park. Alternative opinion, however, favored routing it along the right-of-way of May Street, an existing thoroughfare west of Reinerman Street and several blocks north of the course favored by the City Planning Commission. The City had acquired bayou-side parkland only as far west as Reinerman and the City Engineer, J. C. McVea, reasoned that if Memorial Drive departed from the course of the bayou at that point, there would be little hope of acquiring all the property intervening between the bayou and May Street and that, moreover, May Street could hardly qualify as a parkway. (40)

These projects, along with the other studies and recommendations made by Hare and Hare and the City Planning Commissioner's engineer, L. B. Ryon, Jr., were compiled in a document called Report of the City Planning Commission. (41) This was published in December 1929 by Will Hogg through the Forum of Civics to provide a public record of the attempts of the City Planning Commission and the Board of Park

city. Reflecting the mandate which the City Council presented to the City Planning Commission in 1927, when it was reorganized and re-funded under Hogg's direction, the Report contained recommendation for a major street and thoroughfare plan, a zoning plan, a civic center plan and bayou beautification plans--all tenets of the 1924 City Planning Commission ordinance—and the review and approval of new subdivision plats.

In terms of bayou parkways, Hare and Hare expanded upon Comey's proposals of 1913 by suggesting the acquisition of channel-side corridor parks along all bayous (except the ship channel portion of Buffalo Bayou) in advance of the city's growth. Like Comey, they noted the deficiency of the present system despite recent major acquisitions. Hare and Hare dealt explicitly with another facet of bayou conservation and maintenance to which Comey had only alluded: the problem of flooding. In May 1929, River Oaks, the parkway and downtown Houston were inundated by the worst flood in Houston's history. Hare and Hare demonstrated that obstructions in the channel in the downtown area acted like a dam and aggravated flooding conditions upstream, whereas where the bayou banks were publicly controlled as along the parkway, flood precautions could more effectively be implemented. The inference to be drawn was that proper planning could spare the city a repetition of such occurrences, which the report warned would tend to increase as more and more property to the west was developed.(42)

By the time the Report was issued, Houston had accomplished important elements of the proposals. The Buffalo Bayou parkway was a reality, thanks to Will Hogg's method of property acquisition. In 1926, Mrs. Elizabeth Stevens MacGregor, on behalf of the estate of her husband, Henry F. MacGregor, purchased for the city a one hundred eight acre park on Brays Bayou east of Hermann Park, and financed the purchase of the MacGregor Parkway along Brays Bayou between the parks. The next year, due to Will Hogg's efforts, the City Council authorized a referendum to establish a civic center and vote bonds to purchase property. The bond issue passed and the city had the funds to realize this proposal. When the Federal Land Bank chose to build new headquarters, Hogg was involved in persuading the bank's authorities to locate the building on the southern boundary of the Civic Center. The new building was designed to harmonize with the architecture of the Houston Public Library. The County had, between 1926 and 1927, replaced the old Criminal Courts Buildings with a new structure at the head of Capitol Avenue, and between 1927 and 1929, a new City Market had been built on the four block site between Brazos, the bayou, Smith Street and Texas Avenue.(43) There were problematic issues, however. One was the seeming disinterest of the Mayor and the City Council in actively supporting planning and parks programs. The fact that the City Planning Commission had twice been permitted to lapse and that even in its second reorganization, that of 1927, it functioned only in an advisory capacity, was frustrating, since all responsibility for implementing recommendation fell back upon the Mayor and Council. (44)

Another source of dissension was the question of appropriate land use along the Buffalo Bayou parkway. In contrast to the MacGregor Parkway, which went through

middle-income residential neighborhoods, most of which were undertaken by a single developer, the Buffalo Bayou parkway threaded through nineteenth century neighborhoods. These were poor neighborhoods. Moreover, there was the existing industrial enclave along the Galveston, Houston and San Antonio Railway line (which retained a spur connection crossing the bayou even after the belt line track had been rerouted farther west, to what became the western "border of River Oaks). The cemeteries on both sides were not necessarily to be considered advantages, and even portions of city-owned property had been diverted to non-park use. Specifically, the thirty-five acre tract between the bayou, Shepherd's Dam Road (which Hogg succeeded in having redesignated as Shepherd Drive) and San Felipe (which was redesignated West Dallas Avenue) had been turned over to the Houston Tuberculosis Hospital in 1919.

Between 1927 and 1928, Hogg created a tremendous row by attempting to get the City and County, which jointly supported the hospital, to move it elsewhere. Critics charged that Hogg was acting from selfish motives in wanting to dispose of tubercular patients so as not to endanger River Oaks' property values, and the Tuberculosis Hospital remained in place. Although no opposition was voiced to the construction of light industrial facilities along Buffalo Drive, the Gulf Publishing Company, the Rein Company, and the Starr Engraving Company each went to extraordinary lengths to erect buildings designed to enhance the picturesque, suburban character of the parkway and to appear as non-industrial as possible.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Two developments, the subdivision of Temple Terrace on the old George Baker estate just west of the Fourth Ward, and Sears, Roebuck's new suburban store at Buffalo Drive and Lincoln, provoked Hogg's concern. Each raised the issue of the kind of traffic which was to be permitted on the drive. Hogg felt that commercial traffic of any kind would injure the scenic value of the parkway. When the City Council permitted the local bus service to operate along the drive, at first as far as Temple Terrace and then to Sears, Roebuck and Company, Hogg attempted to use his influence to have it re-routed, but was only partially successful. The Buffalo Drive Beautification Association did not seem to possess the internal cohesiveness (its membership consisted chiefly of property owners along the drive) necessary to guard the parkway from what Hogg clearly considered incompatible uses.
(46)

The Civic Center proved even more troublesome. During the 1928 mayoral election, it was revealed that Oscar Holcombe had personally profited from the acquisition of land for the Civic Center, having bought and sold to another party for a substantial increase a lot that was then sold to the Varner Realty Company. Will Hogg had become convinced that Holcombe was not seriously interested in civic planning, and he actively campaigned against Holcombe and for his opponent, Walter E. Monteith, a state district judge. Monteith won the election of 1923 and took office in the spring of 1929, only to find that the \$1,400,000 bond issue of 1927, which was to have covered the purchase of Civic Center properties, was inadequate as was the bond issue of \$1,000,000 voted to build a new city hall in the Civic Center, plans for which were prepared in 1928-1929. Monteith and Hogg publicly disagreed about the extent of

Southern Pacific Passenger Station at the north end of the Civic Center, with the new mayor favoring a less expensive alternative to that of the City Planning Commission. Hare and Hare's proposal that Bagby be extended northward to connect the Civic Center to the new terminal location on Washington Avenue (formerly Washington Street), on the north bank of the bayou, called for Washington to be realigned as a boulevard and for Bagby to be planted with double rows of trees. (47)

The Montieth administration, although characterized by probity in financial matters, lacked Holcombe's flair for (in Will Hogg's view) exploiting civic planning progress for political ends. Hogg resigned the chairmanship of the Commission in 1929, shortly before the publication of the Report. Following his resignation, the standing of the City Planning Commission and its proposals declined rapidly. In an effort to introduce a zoning plan for the city, the Mayor and the new chairman of the Commission planned a series of public hearings before the Council. They were unprepared for the concerted opposition which rapidly developed, and in the face of it simply capitulated. The Great Depression resulted in the abandonment of the City Hall project, the further acquisition of property in the Civic Center, and all but the most necessary rearrangement of streets for the Southern Pacific Passenger Station, which was not constructed until 1933-1934. May Street was re-designated Memorial Drive, but was neither extended to the west to connect with the park nor to the east to join Cleveland Park. During' Montieth's second term the City Council once again failed to appropriate operating funds for the City Planning Commission, thereby effecting its disbandment.

Will Hogg died unexpectedly on 12 September 1930. Thereafter, the foremost champion of public planning was Oscar Holcombe, who was re-elected Mayor in 1932, and served two more terms between 1933 and 1937, one more between 1939 and 1941, three more between 1947 and 1953 and a final special term during 1956 and 1957. Most of his effort was expended upon realizing elements of the 1929 plan. Public relief funds were used to carry out the improvements to Memorial Park between 1934 and 1937. They were also employed to construct the Civic Center. In 1935, a Public Works Administration grant was obtained to build a combined coliseum and music hall. This building, called the Sam Houston Coliseum and Music Hall, was completed in 1937, on the site of the temporary Democratic Convention Hall erected in 1928. This was located on Bagby between Rusk and Capitol Avenues on what had been the old Waterworks site. The Hare and Hare Civic Center proposal had called for this site to be open parkland.(49) In 1937 planning also began for a new City Hall.

In 1933, Houston voters had authorized construction of a new City Hall in Market Square but this was not carried out. When a Public Works Administration grant was received to construct the building in 1937, a dispute broke out over its siting. A new City Planning Commission had been constituted under the direction of Hugh Potter, principally to propose another zoning plan. In locating the new City Hall, the City Planning Commission recommended conformance to the 1925 Civic Center plan, which had designated a site on Bagby Street, between Walker and McKinney Avenues and hacking up to Masonic and Episcopal Cemeteries. But the City had not acquired this

authorized the block between this site and Hermann Square as the location of the City Hall, which was completed in 1939. In compensation, Hare and Hare were retained to re-plan Hermann Square as a reduced version of their earlier Civic Center mall scheme. This landscaping project was completed in 1940. A third building, the Fire Alarm Building, was constructed at the entrance to Sam Houston park between 1938 and 1940.(50) None of these structures responded to the architectural scheme proposed in the 1925 Civic Center plan.

Along the Buffalo Bayou parkway a series of public institutional building arose in the 1930s. Although these enhanced the civic character of the parkway, they occurred at the expense of parkland. Jefferson Davis Hospital, a public hospital supported by both city and county funds, was designed in 1930-1931, but then could not be built because of the economic crisis. Again, the assistance of the Public Works Administration was required to enable construction in 1936-1937. The site selected for the twelve-story hospital was a ten acre portion of the old golf links-exposition tract along Buffalo Drive. To the east, or what remained of the tract (and indeed what remained of Hardcastle Addition), the Houston Housing Authority constructed one thousand units of defense housing in 1940-1942. The eastern boundary of this thirty-eight acre project, called San Felipe Courts, was Heiner Street, along the west line of the Civic Center. At the other end of the parkway, near the intersection of Memorial Drive and North Shepherd Drive, the Varner Realty Company had sold large acreage tracts to the Congregation of St. Basil, a Roman Catholic religious order; the DePelchin Faith Home, an orphanage; and the Florence Crittenden Rescue Home, a maternity hostel, in the late 1920s. Public Works Administration grants were obtained to construct the Florence Crittenden Rescue Home (1935) and the DePelchin Faith Home's campus (1938). In 1940 the Congregation of St. Basil erected St. Thomas High School on their tract. Part of this land had come from the western annex to Cleveland Park, which the Varner Realty Company apparently took in trade for bankside parkland acreage.(51)

In February 1940 Mayor Holcombe established a fifth City Planning Commission, chaired briefly by James M. West, but after his resignation in 1941 by the attorney Jesse Andrews. Like its predecessors, this Commission retained Hare and Hare as consultants. The Mayor and Council also established on a permanent basis the Department of City Planning, and appointed Ralph Ellifrit, a landscape architect who had been sent to Houston the year before to represent Hare and Hare, as Planning Engineer. (52)

Although implementation of major public works was forestalled by the United States' entry into World War II at the end of 1941, the City Planning Department nonetheless went ahead with two important studies: a major streets and thoroughfares plan, presented in 1942, and a parks plan presented in 1943. Both were revisions of recommendations, presented in 1929. Already by the fall of 1940 the City Planning Department had proposed that Buffalo Drive be reconstructed as a limited access, multi-lane thoroughfare with provisions for local and through traffic. Memorial Drive

town street system, and a series of new bridges would be built between the two thoroughfares to facilitate the flow of north-south traffic. The development of new residential subdivisions north of River Oaks and west of Memorial Park in the late 1930s indicated that the city would continue to expand to the west. Consequently, the notion that the bayou parkway drives could be restricted only to pleasure driving was no longer tenable. However the City Planning Department was successful in preventing the State Highway Department from re-routing the Austin-Houston highway through Memorial Park to connect with the parkway corridor into downtown Houston. (53)

The major street and thoroughfare plan incorporated the recommendation of 1940 for Buffalo Drive and Memorial Drive. In the park plan, Hare reiterated earlier suggestions that the city acquire all the land along the banks of Buffalo Bayou between Sam Houston Park and Shepherd, and that Memorial Drive be extended eastward. He practically repeated Comey's advice about developing the bayou bottoms as playing fields and warned against devising flood control measures which were not worked out in accordance with a landscape plan. This advice implicitly referred to flood control plans developed since December 1935 when Buffalo Bayou had again flooded so severely that several three and four-story buildings in the downtown area partially collapsed. (54)

During the latter half of the 1940s decade, there was a marked renewal of public interest in the Buffalo Bayou parkway. The Houston Chamber of Commerce once again took an active stand for beautifying the parkway, which had, in fact, never been landscaped. C. C. Fleming, a Houston landscape architect who had briefly served as Director of the City Parks and Recreation Department in the early 1940s, was responsible for a series of articles in Houston between 1944 and 1949 decrying the neglected state of the parkway and unfavorably comparing it to San Antonio's urban River Walk and to Dallas' suburban Turtle Creek parkway. Under Hare and Hare's guidance, plans were made for the improvement of segments of the parkway, but fifteen years of effort were required to realize them and factors unanticipated in the 1920s were to complicate such plans. (55)

Chiefly these were the problems of constantly increasing traffic and of flood control. Between 1945 and 1951, Buffalo Drive was rebuilt to the standards proposed in 1940. Memorial Drive came next, between 1953 and 1956. Both of these thoroughfares were major throughways. The volume of traffic that they attracted meant that instead of bringing motorists into the park, cars prevented people from getting into it. The Shepherd Drive overpass, constructed during 1957 and 1958, spoiled the entrance to River Oaks and tended to strongly reinforce the perception that Shepherd Drive, rather than Memorial Park, was where the parkway ended. Much more devastating however was the new connection between Heights Boulevard, Memorial Drive and Waugh Drive, a gigantic clover-leaf which absorbed all but two corners of Cleveland Park. After its completion in 1955, one corner regained Cleveland Park and the other corner was designated Spotts Park. The last segment of Memorial Drive to be constructed, an overpass above Houston Avenue at the Capital Avenue Bridge opened in 1960. This entailed the demolition of

Further complicating the scene were the plans formulated for the disjoined from the parkway. The park itself was invaded by exit and access ramps. The concrete piers supporting the freeway structure were built for nearly five blocks either in or right alongside the course of the bayou.

Flood control measures also took their toll on the parkway. In 1957 Buffalo Bayou was rechanneled in several locations along the parkway, eliminating an oxbow east of Cleveland Park and considerably flattening the contour of one which cut into Glenwood Cemetery. The bayou bottoms were extended in width to increase the carrying capacity of the channel, and the entire parkway was stripped of its lush natural vegetation. Grass was used to stabilize the re-formed banks of the channel. Between 1958 and 1960 the City Parks Department at last initiated a landscape program for the Buffalo Bayou parkway. From time to time thereafter, this was enhanced by the donations of special ornamental plants as civic gestures.(58)

In 1966, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, acting as consultants to Harris County, proposed that the bayou be rectified and lined with concrete westward from Shepherd Drive through River Oaks and Memorial Park to West Belt, a distance of over seven miles. Because the entire extent of this course was heavily wooded, and greatly prized on that account a citizens' action group called, originally, the Buffalo Bayou Preservation Association was formed to combat the Corps' proposal which would have entailed extensive rechanneling work and the clearing of all vegetation within the channel right-of-way. With the support of the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty, Stewart Udall, then Secretary of the Interior, and U.S. Representative George Bush, the Bayou Preservation Association was successful in having the project stopped in 1969. In 1970 the Corps of Engineers again proposed this as the most desirable of several alternative methods of flood control along Buffalo Bayou. But the Bayou Preservation Association, led by its president, Terry Hershey, caused the Corps plan to be dropped from the project in 1971.(59)

During the 1950s the Civic Center also became the object of renewed civic concern. However its realization was attended with some of the same kinds of drawbacks that changed the character of the parkway. The City consistently failed to adhere to any overall plan for locating new buildings or providing open spaces or landscape treatment despite the efforts of the City Planning Department and its director Ralph Ellifrit. Consequently, as new buildings were built, little effort was made at coordination so that individual buildings were not related by any ordering elements, such as the system of landscaping and open space which Hare and Hare had proposed in the 1925 Civic Center plan.

Immediately after World War II, it was proposed that both the federal government, which planned to construct a new central post office, and the county government, which planned a new courthouse, relocate in the Civic Center. The County Commissioners chose to remain in proximity to Courthouse Square and planning for a new post office

property was purchased for a new police administration building, a site located adjacent to but not actually in the Civic Center was acquired. It does not seem to have been until 1953, during the administration of Mayor Roy Hofheinz, that a municipal administration re-invested the notion of a Civic Center with much importance. (60)

Hofheinz began once again to purchase property for the Civic Center. His successor, Oscar F. Holcombe, during his final term as Mayor of Houston, continued to assemble property. In 1957 the City Planning Commission released a Civic Center report prepared by Ellifrit and the City Planning Department. This was intended to address planning issues not anticipated in earlier reports. The Commission recommended acquisition of all property within the Civic Center, a task which had still not been accomplished. It also called for the boundaries to be enlarged from the nine block site designated in 1927 to twenty-one blocks, extending northeast between Smith Street and Buffalo Bayou to the Franklin Avenue viaduct in front of Grand Central Station. Recalling Hare and Hare's earlier suggestion, Bagby Street was to become an esplanaded boulevard within the Civic Center; Brazos Street was to be transformed into a landscaped mall, expanding the pedestrian plaza between City Hall and Hermann Square as a unifying device within the Civic Center. (61)

The Civic Center expansion plan of 1957 called for the consolidation of all rail passenger traffic at Grand Central Station, the creation of a central bus terminal for the city's public transit system, and even a municipal heliport, these facilities would insure that the Civic Center function as the gateway to downtown Houston. The plan also anticipated construction of the still projected central post office adjacent to Grand Central Station on the north bank of the bayou and the location of a new federal office building in the expanded Civic Center, as well as a proposed international trade center, a museum of the oil, gas and petrochemical industry, and an additional municipal office building. The bayou banks and Sam Houston Park were, in the City Planning Commission's site plan drawings, shown as a continuous landscaped green belt. But more than six blocks were designated as surface parking lots, an indication that the monumental aspect envisioned for the Civic Center in the 1920s was, thirty years later, considered less critical than providing adequate parking space for existing and proposed facilities.

The Chamber of Commerce reprinted in full the City Planning Commission's report in Houston magazine and strongly endorsed its recommendations. During the 1950s and early 1960s, Houston experienced tremendous growth and an unparalleled degree of physical expansion. But downtown Houston, following a brief real estate and building boom in the late 1940s, did not participate significantly in this growth. Retail trade, moreover, was moving swiftly to the suburbs, abandoning the traditional Main Street retail district. To many business people it appeared that downtown Houston was atrophying, losing business establishments to outlying districts and failing to attract replacements. The Chamber of Commerce's enthusiasm for the Civic Center expansion proposal was an indication of the impact which the municipal government was perceived to exert on the downtown area. Inasmuch as the City did not participate in the

Center represented a critical public commitment to the future of the central business district. Through the early 1960s, when the business district began to experience the beginning of a major program of office building construction, the Chamber of Commerce repeatedly cited the Civic Center project's potential for arresting blight, stabilizing downtown Houston and attracting new commercial development.(62)

During 1957 the General Services Administration purchased a square block on Smith Street within the Civic Center as the site for the new federal office building; the next year the U.S. Post Office purchased over ten and one-half acres from the Southern Pacific Lines--a tract which included Grand Central Station--on which to build the new central post office. Grand Central Station was demolished. The Federal Office Building and the Post Office were opened within a few days of each other in June 1962.(63)

In the middle 1960s, the Civic Center boundaries were again expanded to encompass a new downtown cultural center. Three blocks north of Hermann Square, Houston Endowment, a foundation established by the real estate entrepreneur Jesse H. Jones, purchased one-half of a block already occupied by the municipally-owned City Auditorium. The block was cleared for the construction of a symphony, opera and ballet theater called Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, which was completed in 1966. To one side of this, Houston Endowment also assisted the Alley Theatre, a local dramatic repertory company, in acquiring property for a new Alley Theatre which was opened in 1968. The City of Houston contributed to this new focal point in the Civic Center by constructing the Albert Thomas Convention and Exhibition Center, completed in 1967. On the block toward which all of these new buildings faced, an underground parking garage was set, above which an elevated, landscaped plaza was also constructed by the City. Although these facilities successfully accommodated the functions they contained, they were not especially responsive to the notion of the Civic Center. This was most apparent in the City's own contributions, the Convention Center and the open square. (64)

The Convention Center was three blocks long and occupied the site of the Criminal Courts Building which had been demolished to permit its construction. Although the Center spanned the Bagby Street boulevard extension, it disregarded the proposed pedestrian mall along the line of Brazos and consumed all the designated parkland along the bayou, being constructed (like the freeway behind it) right to the channel line. The great oak in front of the Criminal Courts Building was the only element in the existing landscape to be retained. The square towards which the Convention Center, Jones Hall and the Alley Theatre faced was raised above the sloping grade level. Consequently, it cut off, rather than visually unified, the three public buildings surrounding it. Unlike Hermann Square, it did not attract intensive public usage.

In 1970 the city government authorized construction of a City Hall Annex on the site where the Civic Center plan of 1925 had called for the City Hall to be built. At the same time, planning was also begun for a new central library and an underground parking garage covering three blocks between the Federal Office Building, the Coliseum and

1926 library building, which continued to be used by the public library. Its major contribution to the Civic Center was to continue southward along the line of Brazos Street the pedestrian mall, in front of City Hall, as a brick-paved plaza. Atop the new underground parking garage, to the north of City Hall, Tranquility Park was built.(65) This three-block landscaped open space area was completed in 1979 and it complemented the open space provisions of Hermann Square, although its design has not received the popular approbation accorded Hermann Square. Tranquility Park contained a northward extension of the Brazos Street mall, which terminates at the Convention Center, and it also provided diagonal access routes to the Coliseum and Music Hall and to the City Hall Annex from different parts of the Civic Center.

Although the City's acquisition of the houses in Hathaway Addition west of the City Hall eliminated the last barrier between the Civic Center and Sam Houston Park, the park actually began to recover an identity of its own rather than merging into the Civic Center. In 1954 after fire damaged the Noble House, the City decided to condemn and demolish the house. In response to this, a group of women led by Marie Lee Phelps, organized the Harris County Heritage and Conservation Society to raise funds for its preservation and restoration. Two years later the City Council designated Sam Houston Park as the site of an outdoor historic buildings museum, to be maintained and operated by the Harris County Heritage Society, as the organization came to be called. The Kellum-Noble House, opened to the public in 1958, was joined by the Nichols-Rice-Cherry House of c.1850 in 1959, and eventually the Pillot House of 1868, the Koppersberg-Meyer House (San Felipe Cottage) of 1868, the Williams Cabin of c.1825, and St. John's Evangelical Church of 1891. All of these structures were moved to the park from various parts of Houston and Harris County, restored, and furnished with appropriate nineteenth century appointments. (66) The Heritage Society also built Long Row, a hypothetical reconstruction of Houston's first business block, as a meeting and retail facility in 1968. Brownie Fountain Glen, the Bell of the Harriet Lane and the Spirit of the Confederacy remained in the park, but their surroundings were vastly altered, not only by the imposition of the freeway and its ramps, but by the loss of much of the foliage which in the early part of the century had been such a distinctive feature of Sam Houston Park. In 1976, the Harris County Heritage Society took over the Fire Alarm Building. It is the Society's plan in 1981 to demolish most of this structure and replace it with an historical museum.

The bayou parkway was the scene of considerable new construction in the post-World War II decades. The reconstruction of Buffalo Drive (which was re-designated Allen Parkway in 1961) rendered it much more accessible and consequently more attractive for development. Along the embankments to the south of the drive, a series of small office buildings, a television station and several motels were built between the late 1940s and the early 1960s. The magnitude of development increased considerably in 1962 when the American General Insurance Company acquired a twenty-five acre tract along the western border of Magnolia Cemetery and announced plans for the construction of a twenty-five story office building. This structure, completed in 1965, has been joined by two fifteen story towers—the Riviana Building (1974) and the

Building (1978) and a forty-two-story office building planned for 1983, constructed on an eleven acre extension to the original tract, at the corner of Allen Parkway and Waugh Drive. At Allen Parkway and Taft, the First General Realty Corporation built the fifteen-story Parkway Tower during 1972 and 1973, next to their existing three-story headquarters building of 1966.(67)

Further to the west, a large apartment complex, the Allen House, was constructed in 1964-1965. Just beyond this site, on the Tuberculosis Hospital acreage, a major program of reconstruction was begun in the 1960s. Between 1965 and 1967 the Center for the Retarded was built. This was followed by new, permanent facilities for the Lighthouse for the Blind (1968), the Center for Older Adults(1970), a shared facility for the Easter Seal Society Crippled Children's Center and the Houston School for Deaf Children (1974), and Cullen Residence Hall (1978), a high rise dormitory. All existing buildings on the site were demolished.

North of the bayou, along Memorial Drive, real estate development occurred more slowly, but the same kinds of patterns evident along Allen Parkway were repeated. At the east end of the parkway, the Corrine Fonde Recreation Center was completed in 1960 at Sabine and Memorial. Small office buildings were lined along Memorial Drive as it bypassed the W. R. Baker Addition. In this vicinity, but not so small, was the three hundred room, fourteen-story Holiday Inn-Civic Center which opened in early 1970. Blue Ribbon Rice Mills (which acquired the Standard Milling Company property and eventually the Dickson Car Wheel Company property) made extensive additions to its supply of storage elevators during the 1960s. Between St. Thomas High School and Waugh Drive, a large garden apartment development called Parkgate was built in two phases during the early 1970s. In 1973, several low-rise office buildings were erected along the Waugh Drive clover-leaf overlooking Cleveland Park. These were augmented in 1981 with the announcement of construction of Waugh on the Bayou, a twelve-story office building. On the border of the W. R. Baker Addition, adjacent to Glenwood Cemetery, The Sawyer, two ten-story office buildings were constructed between 1979 and 1981. Relating more gracefully to the notion of the parkway was the Downtown Y.W.C.A. (1981) at South Heights and Memorial Drive, a low-rise building which looks out across Spotts Park.

But new construction in both downtown Houston and along the parkway only contributed to an increase in automobile traffic. This resulted in more incursions to the parkway. Between 1967 and 1970, Montrose Boulevard was extended northward to the bayou along the line of Lincoln Street and Studemont was extended southward, also to the bayou. The two joined in a bridge-and-underpass. Ten years later, the Allen Parkway-Waugh Drive connection was reworked to effect a grade separation benefitting east-west traffic. Nonetheless, the parkway continued to be endowed with modest gestures of civic amenity. A system of hike and bike trails, installed by the Parks and Recreation Department, was opened in 1972. The Wortham Foundation built the Wortham Fountain across from the American General Center in 1978 as a memorial to the founder of the insurance company, and the Knox Foundation placed Bronze Spindle

From the middle 1960s there was another periodic renewal of concern for the bayou parkway; encouraged by fear of its possible rearrangement for flood control and by public indignation over the extremely polluted condition of the waterway. In 1967 the Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects produced "Blueprints for the Future," a series of suggestions for public, large-scale physical improvements to the city. One suggestion involved the creation of an entertainment and recreation complex at Allen Parkway and Montrose Boulevard, which would entail the creation of a lake at this point. At the same time, the director of the City's Parks and Recreation Department, W. G. Scheibe, proposed the construction of three lakes along the parkway.(68)

Neither of these projects was carried out. Only the construction of a landscaped, scenic overlook on Buffalo Bayou at the foot of Main Street was carried through to completion. Called Allen's Landing Park, this project dedicated in 1967, was financed entirely with funds raised by the Chamber of Commerce. In 1970, the Buffalo Bayou Improvement Committee of the Chamber of Commerce received the approval of the City Council for a proposal to beautify the parkway and enhance the quality of the water in the channel. A study was prepared by Charles Tapley and Associates in 1972 for this project. But the City Council had made their approval contingent on using only private funds to realize the project. These funds were not forthcoming, so no actual work was begun. In 1974 the project was revived by the Houston Chamber of Commerce and the next year it again received the City Council's approval as a Bicentennial project. Originally the Tapley plan was to cover only the portion of the bayou between Main Street and the Sabine Street bridge, most of which lay within the Civic Center. It proposed continuous pedestrian promenades along the course of the channel, a variety of recreational activities which could easily be accommodated along the borders of the bayou, landscaping, pollution control, and rehabilitation of notable existing features, such as older bridges across the channel. Water displays of various kinds were suggested as methods of dealing with storm sewer outflows, and previously constructed concrete-lined embankments.(70)

The local chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, which also adopted the Tapley plan as a Bicentennial project, recommended that it be expanded westward to Shepherd Drive. Once again, however, City funds were not involved in the project, which was estimated to cost \$6,000,000. Most of these privately-raised funds were used to construct Tranquility Park. In 1980 the project was again revived by Charles Tapley and Associates and the Houston Chamber of Commerce. Supported by a demonstration grant from the Wortham Foundation, an initial plan for the Sabine Reach—the portion of parkway between the Sabine bridge and Glenwood Cemetery was developed and presented to the City Council. In July 1980, the Council authorized a \$1,000,000 expenditure to begin work on the Sabine Reach. This was to be the first phase of a program of beautification and park development estimated to cost nearly \$33,000,000 which would eventually affect nearly ten miles of Buffalo Bayou from

Commerce, the Buffalo Bayou Transformation Corporation was organized in late 1930 to carry out this project, which would address issues of flood control and redevelopment as well as park development. (71) The corporation's potential effectiveness was greatly enhanced in 1981 by an amendment to the state constitution allowing tax increment financing for bonds issued by such entities.

Other developments were also begun which had the potential to enhance the parkway and were congruent with efforts to improve it. The W.R. Baker Addition became, in 1978, a National Historic District, known as the Old Sixth Ward. Later that year planning was begun for the Lyric Theatre, a new performance hall for the opera and the ballet, which will be built in the Civic Center just north of the convention center. However, no attempt was made to reclaim as parkland any of the tracts given over to other uses in the 1920s and 1930s, such as the Tuberculosis Hospital grounds or San Felipe Courts. Although it has been suggested that the Houston Housing Authority dispose of San Felipe Courts (or Allen Parkway Village as it came to be known), this has been with a view to commercially redeveloping the thirty-eight acre tract rather than permitting it to revert to the status of parkland. Despite the City's acquisition of all buildable tracts of land between the bayou and the flanking drives east of Shepherd, land on the north bank west of Reinerman was never acquired. After the late 1930s, this began to fill up with residential and commercial development. The Hogg Bird Sanctuary, opposite the Hogg family house in River Oaks, remained the only piece of public parkland between Reinerman and Memorial Park, and it does not extend as far north as Memorial Drive.(72)

Although the potential of Buffalo Bayou Parkway is only partially realized today, it nevertheless constitutes one of Houston's most significant recreational and scenic resources. Its potential for further development as a source of urban amenity was recognized in a national survey of seventeen metropolitan areas completed in 1978 by the Heritage, Conservation and Recreation Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior.(73) Yet, it remains unclear whether the full extent of the parkway, as envisioned by the successive plans of Comey, Kessler and Hare and Hare in the 1910s and 1920s, will be realized in the face of increasing pressures for development exerting themselves at the margins and, in some cases, directly in the path of the parkway corridor.