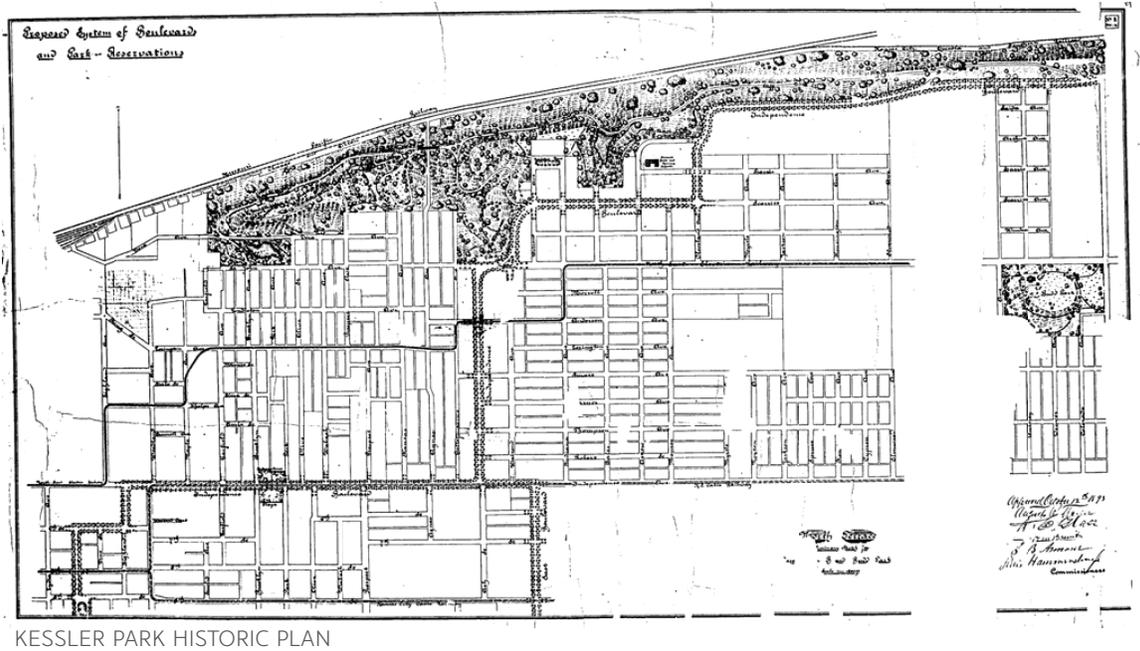


KESSLER PARK HISTORY

KESSLER PARK BACKGROUND

Kessler park is a 303 acre park located in Kansas City Missouri. Originally named North Terrace Park, it is a product of the parks and boulevard system laid out by George Kessler in his 1893 master plan for Kansas City. This master plan proposed multiple parks throughout the area, with Kessler Park being set aside to remain "wild and rugged, handsome, beautiful

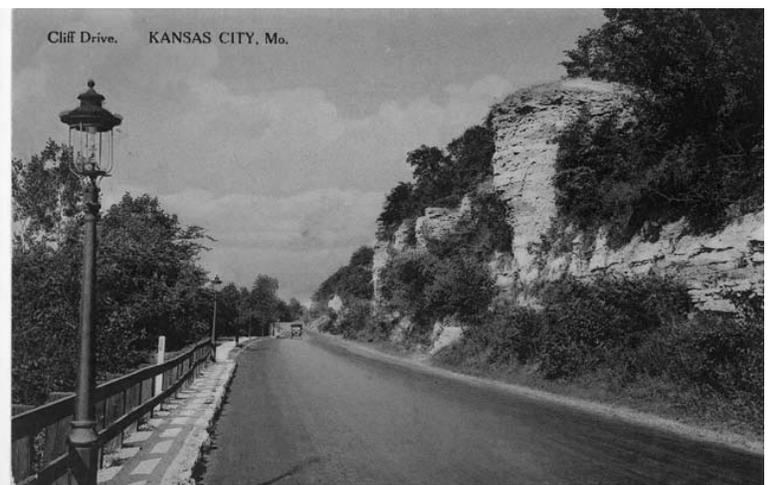


KESSLER PARK HISTORIC PLAN

and picturesque". The original intent of the park left it largely untouched by man aside from cliff drive which provided a wooded trail along the cliff side serving as a "recreational roadway". The land, which was originally homesteaded by Nathan Scarritt, was seen as "too rugged for a goat to climb" and as such was secured by the city through condemnation in 1899 when construction of North Terrace Park began. The most prominent feature in the park was to be Cliff Drive, which would create a car park for residents who visited to experience the views of the city below. Decades after its completion, Cliff Drive remained one of George Kessler's greatest achievements and served as a major attraction for the city.

CLIFF DRIVE

By the year 2000, Cliff Drive was overrun with dumping, deteriorating roads, and increasing crime. In an attempt to restore Cliff Drive to its previous state, the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department campaigned to make it a state scenic byway. After this, funds were provided to restore the street, remove trash, and reopen it in 2001. Today it is closed to vehicle access Thursday through Sunday each week to be used as solely pedestrian access and still serves as a popular rock climbing, biking, and running destination for residents. While Kessler's original intent to create a car-park through the integration of Cliff Drive into the larger park space is no longer a major defining element of the street, it still serves an integral role in the city.



Historic Kansas City Foundation Postcard Collection

PARKS AND BOULEVARD SYSTEM

As previously mentioned, George Kessler's plan for Kansas city created the Parks and Boulevard System that shaped the city as we know it today. The Parks and Boulevard system was designed in an attempt to start the "City Beautiful Movement" for Kansas City. Due to the growth in population and infrastructure in the 19th century, citizens began to worry that Kansas city was deteriorating. To avoid this, boulevards were implemented to create order and parks were developed on land that was otherwise untouched due to topographical complexities. This movement took off as residents began to see the benefits of the Parks and Boulevard system and drew the attention of large donors like William Rockwell Nelson and August Meyer.

