



MEMORANDUM

ENGINEERING DIVISION
DEPARTMENT *of* PUBLIC SERVICES

To: Salt Lake City Historic Landmark Commission

From: Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect (Engineering)
Laura Bandara, Urban Designer (Planning)

Date: July 28, 2021

Re: Cultural Landscapes Collaboration/Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report

SUBJECT: Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report

ACTION: No action required.

RECOMMENDATION: Briefing only.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: The Parks Division (within the new created Public Lands Department) has a long history of collaboration with Planning on the stewardship of cultural landscapes and preserving historic public spaces. These places tell the stories of Salt Lake City's ever-evolving relationships between people and place.

As Salt Lake City's population has grown, so too has the numbers of visitors to parks and public lands, often resulting in more wear and tear on historic features and resident concern about impacts to treasured places. The City has also experienced increased public demands for new kinds of programming and facilities in parks and public lands as recreation trends change.

Salt Lake City Council, Public Lands, Engineering, and Planning all recognized the need for more robust guidance on preserving and managing these critical civic, social, and ecological spaces. In 2019, City Council issued a legislative intent to the Public Lands Division to develop guidelines for cultural landscapes.

To provide guidance based on The Secretary of the Interior's (SoI) Standards, Public Lands, Planning, and Engineering proposed a collaboration on the development of cultural landscape reports (CLRs) and Cultural Landscape Inventories (CLIs). This approach to landscape preservation was initially developed in the 1990s by the National Park Service to guide their stewardship and management of historically significant places. Other federal government agencies, municipalities, and institutions have since adopted CLR and CLIs as valuable tools for managing and preserving historic fabric.

As CLRs and CLIs are new tools for Salt Lake City, landmark sites were selected as the first places to use them. Planning and Public Lands shared the goal of using these documents as the basis for all long-range planning of Salt Lake City's historically significant places.

The Public Lands Department launched this collaborative effort by funding a CLR for Pioneer Park. The Parks Division selected Pioneer Park because of its significance both to Salt Lake City's founding and the diverse community members who have enjoyed the park since its creation.

This briefing will present in-progress findings of the Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report by sharing an overview of:

- Chapter 1: Report contents and approach
- Chapter 2: Site history (documents the physical development of a landscape)
 - Period plans (demonstrates change over time)
- *Draft* significance assessments and treatment overview

The next steps for the Pioneer Park CLR include:

- Chapter 3: Existing Conditions
- Chapter 4: Analysis and Evaluation. This chapter provides a comparative analysis of conditions during the Period of Significance with existing conditions to assess significance and historic character based on National Register of Historic Places criteria.
- Chapter 5: Treatment Recommendations. These recommendations guide both preservation and contemporary use consistent with the *SoI Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

In addition to the CLR, Public Lands received funding for improvements to Pioneer Park in 2020. The improvements are slated to include new active and passive recreation amenities as well as new trees and signage.

The treatment recommendations in Chapter 5 of the Pioneer Park CLR will guide consultant teams in developing compatible improvements, decision-makers in issuing findings, and future operations and maintenance in managing change.

ATTACHMENT A: Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report Overview Presentation

ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report:

- **Table of Contents**
- **Chapter 1: Introduction**
- **Chapter 2: Site Physical History**

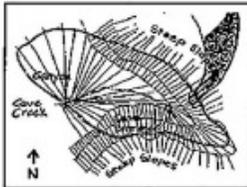
ATTACHMENT A: Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report Overview Presentation



PIONEER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

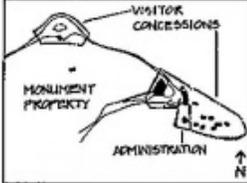


Cultural Landscapes: Characteristics



Natural Systems and Features

Natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.



Spatial Organization

Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.



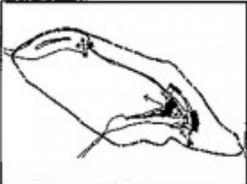
Land Use

Organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to land use.



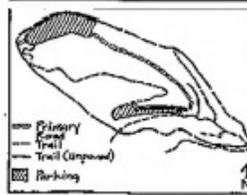
Cultural Traditions

Practices that influence land use, patterns of division, building forms, and the use of materials.



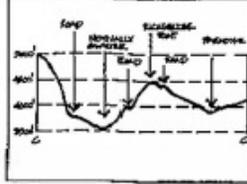
Cluster Arrangement

The location of buildings and structures in the landscape.



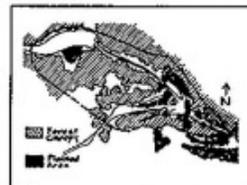
Circulation

Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.



Topography

Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.



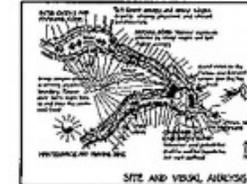
Vegetation

Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.



Buildings and Structures

Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.



Views and Vistas

Features that create or allow a range of vision which can be natural or designed and controlled.



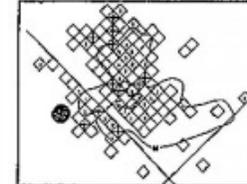
Constructed Water Features

The built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.



Small-Scale Features

Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.



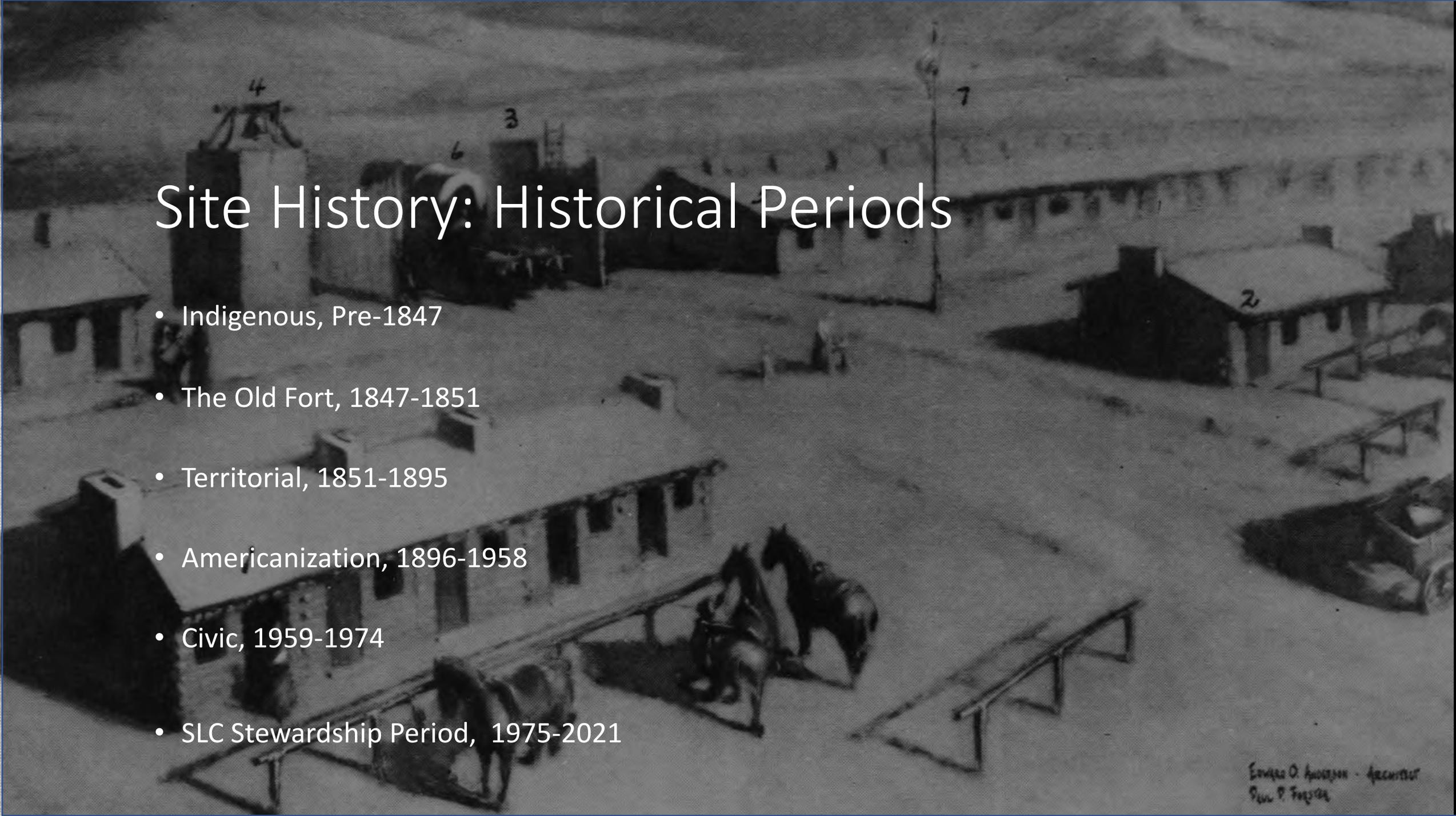
Archeological Sites

Sites containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.

- Introduction
- Part I
 - Site History
 - Existing Conditions
 - Analysis & Evaluation
- Part II
 - Treatment & Management

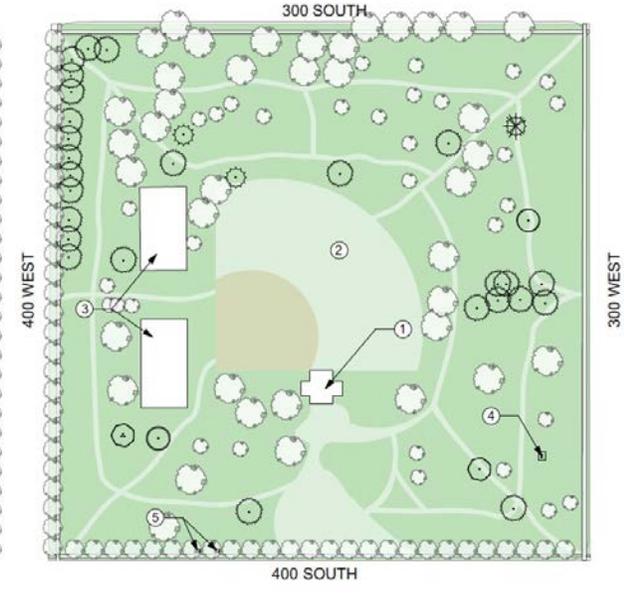
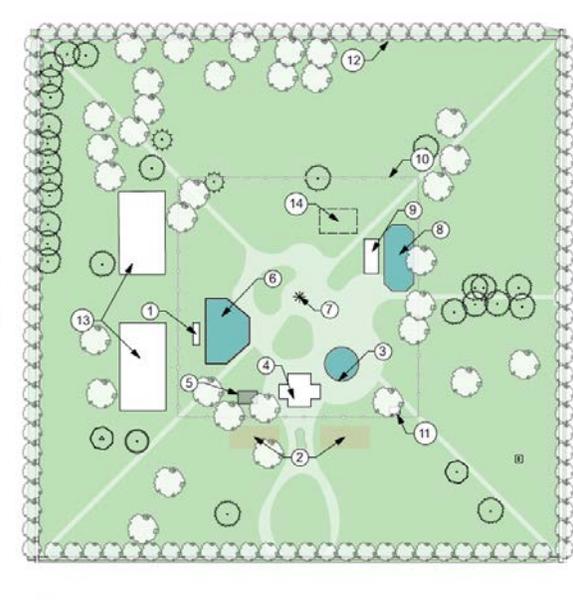
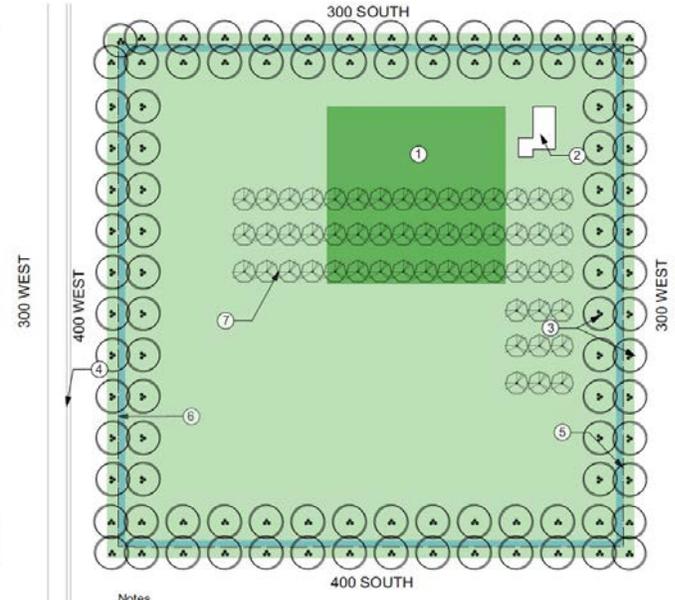
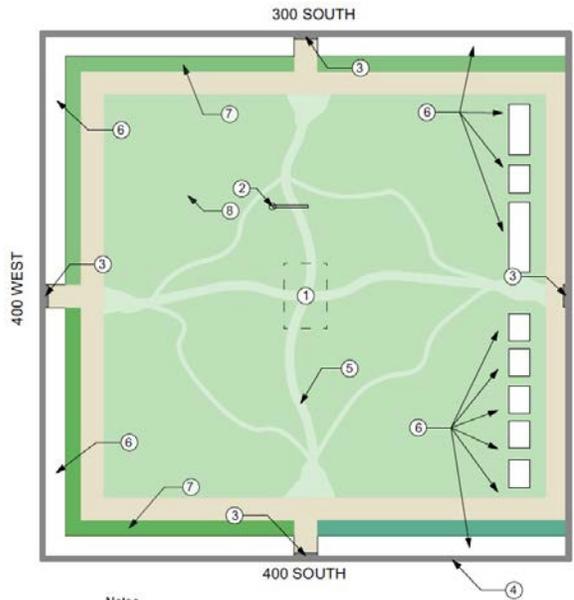
Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report



An aerial, black and white photograph of a historical site, likely a fort or settlement. The image shows several buildings, a large open area, and a fence. Numbered markers (2, 3, 4, 6, 7) are placed on the image to indicate specific locations. The buildings are simple, rectangular structures with gabled roofs. The ground is mostly dirt or sand. In the foreground, there are several horses and a wooden structure that looks like a corral or a fence. The overall scene is a historical reconstruction or a well-preserved site.

Site History: Historical Periods

- Indigenous, Pre-1847
- The Old Fort, 1847-1851
- Territorial, 1851-1895
- Americanization, 1896-1958
- Civic, 1959-1974
- SLC Stewardship Period, 1975-2021



Pioneer Period (1847-1851)

- Ten-acre block Plat of the City of Zion
- Perimeter spatial organization defined by buildings (wall planes)
- Mid-block circulation patterns
- Large central commons space
- Vegetation – predominantly native grasses
- Flagpole
- Bowery

Territorial Period (1852-1895)

- Perimeter spatial organization defined by double row of poplars (wall planes)
- Perimeter canals
- Predominantly agriculture

Americanization Period (1896-1958)

- Perimeter spatial organization defined by street trees (wall plane) and manicured lawn park strips (ground plane)
- Circulation patterns – perimeter sidewalks and diagonal mid-block pathways
- Tennis courts
- Playgrounds
- Vegetation - predominantly manicured turfgrass and large shade trees
- Pavilion

Civic Period (1959-1974)

- Perimeter spatial organization defined by street trees (wall plane) and manicured lawn park strips (ground plane)
- Circulation patterns – perimeter sidewalks and diagonal mid-block pathways
- Tennis courts
- Baseball field
- Vegetation - predominantly manicured turfgrass and large shade trees
- Pavilion



Americanization 1896-1958

Period from Utah statehood to the demolition of the pools, which were major water features in the park

Coincides with the rapid urbanization and the burgeoning of the City Beautiful and the Public Parks Movements in the U.S.

Pioneer Park is officially developed as a public park





DRAFT Significance Assessment

Indigenous Period (pre-1847): Significance for this period is defined under NPS Criteria D

The Old Fort Period (1847-1851): Significant for Criteria A & B

The Americanization Period (1896-1951): Significant under Criteria A

The Civic Period (1951-1973): Significant under Criteria A



Treatment: Rehabilitation

- Preserve specimen trees
- Preserve low vegetative groundcover (manicured turf-grass)
- Impervious surfaces should not exceed ___% of park
- Grade changes should not obstruct visibility, maintain visual openness through park
- Structures should have a sense of visual lightness on the landscape
- Mitigate impacts of 300 West and 400 South



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Kirk Huffaker
PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

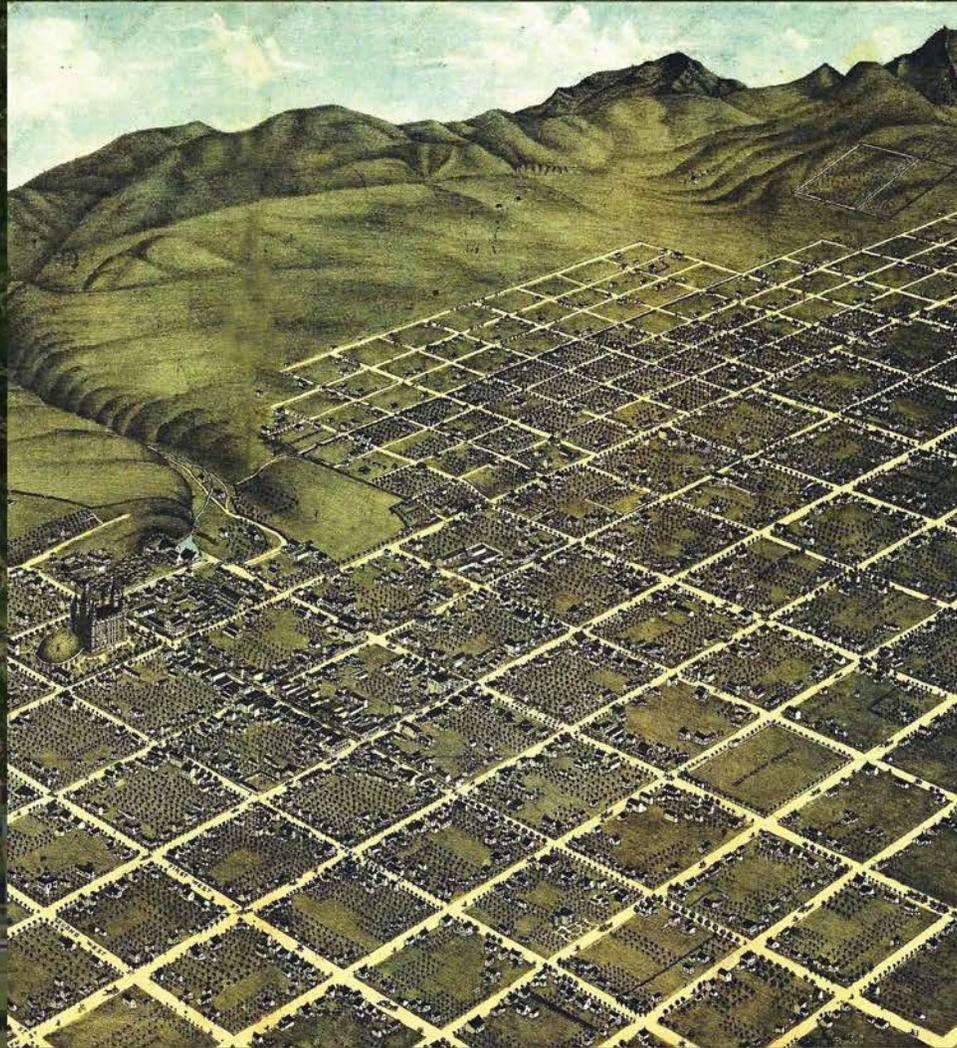
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ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT PIONEER PARK



JULY 14TH, 2021 | DRAFT

Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report (DRAFT)

Salt Lake City, Utah

July 13, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Project Overview & Study Area Boundaries

Pioneer Park is located on the west side of downtown Salt Lake City, Utah, between 300 North, 400 South, 300 West, and 400 West streets. The study area for The Pioneer Park Cultural Landscape Report is limited to the immediate block (300 North, 400 South, 300 East, 400 West) for the purposes of the inventory and existing conditions report.

Management Summary

This project was undertaken by Salt Lake City Corporation, managed by its Public Lands Division, and supported by the Planning and Engineering Divisions of the Department of Community and Neighborhoods in an effort to identify and document cultural landscape resources.

The management goals for Pioneer Park are as follows:

- Preserve the resources that contribute to the significance of Pioneer Park, as defined in the previous section of this report.
- Allow for continued use of the park as a public space
- Communicate the significance of individual resources, and establish treatment guidelines that:
 - Provide guidance for implementing a rehabilitation approach to contributing features for the ongoing redesign of Pioneer Park,
 - Ongoing maintenance of these resources in a way that may be easily communicated to Parks maintenance staff.

Summary of Findings

Throughout its history, the landscape of the Pioneer Park study area has been influenced by diverse groups of people from native Americans, to the Mormon pioneers, to subsequent waves of immigrants, to unhoused populations, business owners, and politicians. These various groups of people and cultures have all vied for use of this land. Dozens of proposals to sell or otherwise develop the park throughout its history have remained unsuccessful. The fact that this space has been largely contested throughout its history has actually resulted in its continuous use as public space, and has ensured its existence as a public park today.

Today Pioneer Park exists as a square block defined by the adjacent cross-streets, curbs, parks strips, sidewalks, and rows of perimeter trees. The interior of the park consists of a consistent manicured lawn groundcover, with a dense canopy of established trees, framing a central open lawn area. The park is organized by a formal circulation network connecting programmatic recreational areas along the west and east perimeters of the park. Pioneer Park contains a large quantity of small-scale features including site furnishings, lighting, and signage.

Summary of Significance & Treatment

Pioneer Park is one of Salt Lake City's oldest and most continuously used public spaces. The park maintains resources and characteristics from and is significant for its association with Indigenous, Old Fort, Territorial, Americanization, and Civic landscape periods. We believe that Pioneer Park is historically significant for its association with the five periods as described in the historical narrative portion of this document, under National Park Service (NPS) criteria A, B, C, and D. The park retains a high degree of integrity in terms of its spatial organization and cultural traditions relating to The Old Fort and Territorial periods, and a high degree of integrity in terms of spatial organization, land use, circulation, and vegetation from the Americanization Period. It is also likely that Pioneer Park retains a wealth of yet undiscovered archeological resources from the Indigenous Period under the surface of the landscape. Historical significance and integrity of landscape features are discussed at length in the Chapter 3, Analysis and Evaluation.

Based on the significance and integrity of the park. We believe that the most appropriate treatment approach for the park as a whole is rehabilitation. The rehabilitation approach would include preservation of the landscape resources which retain the most integrity, while allowing for the adaptive re-use of the landscape, and historically sensitive additions to the park. Treatment recommendations are discussed in detail in Part II, Chapter 4, Treatment Recommendations.

Scope of Work

The primary consultant on this project, Io LandArch was retained to complete this Cultural Landscape Report including the following scope of work:

- Landscape History - Document the history of Pioneer Park in terms of how historical patterns and cultural uses shaped the landscape, including but not limited to its association with Mormon settlers.
- Existing Conditions Documentation - Complete an inventory of existing conditions and landscape characteristics of Pioneer Park, and identify the contribution of individual resources to the historic landscape.
- Analysis and Evaluation - Determine the significance of the park as a historic landscape and evaluate the historical integrity of the park.
- Treatment - Make recommendations for the appropriate treatment of the park, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes including:
 - Inform future planning and zoning documents and codified design guidelines to evaluate future improvements/changes/proposals to modify the park by the HLC,
 - Identifying ongoing management strategies to ensure ongoing preservation of significant park features and elements.

Methodology

Background Research and Data Collection – The consultant was provided with a database of information relative to the park, including, landscape architectural drawings from contemporary park improvement projects, GIS data, as well as a number of previously collected historical resources. This information provided a foundation from which to build the subsequent fieldwork documentation and historical research required to complete this report.

This report references several key documents relating to the Pioneer Park site, these are included in our annotated bibliography, and include SWCA Environmental Consultants. A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory and Monitoring Plan for the Pioneer Park (Block 48) Improvements, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. July 2007.

Field Investigations and Existing Conditions Documentation - Inventory drawings were completed using as-built CAD drawings and GIS data provided by the city. Site visits to complete field work, including observing and recording existing features and conditions of the park, were initially completed in the Fall of 2020, with repeated visits through the winter and spring of 2020-2021 to verify information.

Historical Periods of Significance Research Methodology - Research for all historic periods began first with extensive research from and review of existing sources, including outreach to other historians and accessing private collections. This was followed by primary research to provide context and analysis with respect to gaps in information as specifically pertained to historic landscape characteristics. Sources were digitized, cataloged, and cited with footnotes and full bibliography.

Indigenous Period Sources:

- Interviews and conversations with other historians and experts took place, especially with Darren Parry, Chairman of Shoshone Nation, and Forrest Cuch, author and past historian in the Ute Nation.
- The SWCA Cultural Resource Inventory.
- Reviewed and utilized research by W. Randall Dixon from his personal archives and those that have been donated to the Utah State Historical Society.
- Primary and secondary research, including early maps, photographs, and personal accounts from native and pioneer accounts.

Old Fort and Territorial Period Sources:

- Reviewed extensive prior research provided by Jennifer Lund at the LDS Church History Department. Especially helpful was the Pioneer Park Chronology document. See note below.
- The SWCA Cultural Resource Inventory documents also informed this research.
- Reading personal histories from people who lived in the Old Fort (obtained from the Church's overland trail histories), former Mormon Battalion members, and others.
- Newspaper search through Newspapers.com.

- Internet research.
- W. Randall Dixon, a retired historian with the LDS Church History Department provided a treasure of research. This was his personal collection gathered over his career, as Pioneer Park was a subject of interest to him. It took an entire day for two people to digitize these files by taking photos with smartphones and light box on premises. Afterward, these images were uploaded into Dropbox, totaling over 1,200 pages. Then a review took place to cull those of particular interest. Relevant pages were then printed, numbered, and inserted into a three-ring binder. They were processed using OCR technology to enable searching. Note that the cover sheet related to Dixon's files contains many full quotes of interest, transcribed from the sources. In the final report, any sources that came from Dixon's files will indicate this in the citation, followed by a standard Chicago Style citation of the original source. Although it is unconventional to list dual sources, this was a judgement call to enable subsequent researchers to locate documents easily in the Dixon collection.
- Following primary research, an additional and thorough review of secondary sources (mostly books) was undertaken to inform additional analysis.
- Jenny Lund from the Church History Department, as well as knowledgeable Salt Lake City staff reviewed the draft report and provided extensive editorial feedback.

Americanization and Civic Period Sources:

- Reviewed and utilized research by W. Randall Dixon from his personal archives and those that have been donated to the Utah State Historical Society.
- Aerial photographs, maps, and historic photographs provide visual accounts of the site and surrounding areas throughout these periods.
- Newspaper search through Newspapers.com.
- Internet research.
- West Side Stories, a blog authored by senior state historian P. Bradford Westwood, provide context for the Pioneer Park neighborhood's development and were created based on research utilizing Dixon's personal archives.

Comparative Analysis

The documented conditions of the site were cross-referenced with the documented site history, to determine how the Pioneer Park study area has changed over time, and what landscape characteristics remain from each of the documented historical periods, and what resources are missing.

Evaluation of Significance

The evaluation of significance for the landscape of Pioneer Park is based on The Secretary of the Interior's National Register Criteria, and using National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (1995).

Treatment

Treatment recommendations are based on Salt Lake City's goals and objectives for Pioneer Park, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties based on our evaluation of the park's existing conditions, significance, and integrity.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized into three parts: This Introduction including an overview of the project, a description of our methodology, and summary of our findings; Part I includes a detailed site history, existing conditions documentation, and concludes with an analysis and evaluation of the historical significance of the Pioneer Park Landscape; Part II includes treatment and management recommendations for Pioneer Park.

DRAFT

PART I

Chapter 1: SITE HISTORY

The history of Pioneer Park can be broken down into five distinct periods of significance. These are based on a combination of broader social/historical movements, as well as site-specific improvements that were made to the park. These include:

Native American Period	Pre-1847
The Old Fort Period	1847-1851
Territorial Period	1851-1895
Americanization Period	1896-1958
Civic Period	1959-1974
SLC Stewardship Period	1975-2021

Native American¹ Period, Pre-1847

The land that is now referred to as Pioneer Park, as well as the land around it, has been a critical intersection of people for thousands of years. This is due to significant and overlapping geographical factors that has made the area attractive through several historical periods.

While the Pioneer Park area became a gathering place for Utah's American Indian tribes, including the Goshute, Shoshone, and Utes, it was not exclusively occupied or used by any one of Utah's tribes. The Pioneer Park area was within their overlapping nomadic lands. Given that all tribes in the area were nomadic, these lands were shared. Most hunter-gatherers are nomadic or semi-nomadic and lived in temporary settlements. Mobile communities typically constructed shelters using impermanent building materials such as large branches wrapped with animal hides, or natural rock shelters, where they were available adjacent to the mountains. Nomadic lands were frequently spread over hundreds of miles in order to provide a wide range of opportunities for subsistence.²

One reason the area was popular was due to two sources of clean water. The Ute Tribe referred to the waterway now commonly called City Creek as Napopah.³ There was also a nearby spring that provided year-round sources of culinary water adjacent to a large area of relatively level topography

¹ According to FAAM Standards, Native American often, but not always, refers to Indigenous people of what is now the United States. American Indian also refers to Indigenous peoples of the Americas and while some tribes in the United States use Indian in their official names for themselves, others consider it to be a painful reminder of past injustice. First Nations refers to the Indigenous peoples of Canada, but is not the preferred term in the U.S.

² Nomadic lands within Utah have been shown on many maps to intersect and overlap in various parts of the Salt Lake Valley. Further reference can be found in Forrest Cuch, ed., *A History of Utah's American Indians*, 2 (K-7-D), utahindians.org/Curriculum/maps.php (Google Earth), and native-land.ca (website).

³ Napopah is the Ute name for what is now known as City Creek. Map of the Great Salt Lake and Adjacent Country in the Territory of Utah, 1852. (K-1-R)

within the City Creek floodplain that was used for temporary residence. The soils of the valley were formed by alluvium – clay, silt, sand, gravel and other materials brought down from the mountains by running water – and by sediment from Lake Bonneville, though some have been modified slightly over time. Thus, the soils are mixed in type and in their natural condition can only support meager vegetation because they are either too dry or too salty. Where there is little salt present, sagebrush growth is plentiful. However, where salt is plentiful, perennials such as greasewood and “mutton sas” are numerous.⁴ In addition, the topography begins to level more significantly here that it is further north, east, and northeast, changing between ten- and fifteen-feet total from northeast corner to southeast corner of the block.



Natural vegetation of greasewood and saltbushes. Land is in its natural state that was considered to only be adaptable to the grazing of sheep. (K-3-CC)

Nearby lands within the Salt Lake Valley were also frequented for hunting, trade, and communication. While the Northwestern Shoshone were generally located north of 2100 South,⁵ the Utes utilized the valley’s highlands and the east bench for grazing horses because the grass was more plentiful and higher quality.⁶ As the valley was shared by numerous tribes, a network of trails crisscrossed the valley and canyons, giving further evidence that nomadic lifestyles permeated the area.⁷

⁴ Frank Gardner and John Stewart. A Soil Survey in Salt Lake Valley, Utah. USDA; 1899. (K-7-F)

⁵ Rhonda Lauritzen and Darren Parry. Phone interview with Darren Parry. Personal, August 31, 2020.

⁶ Kirk Huffaker and Forrest Cuch. Phone exchange with Forrest Cuch. Personal, December 23, 2020.

⁷ Brad Westwood, *West Side Stories 4: Pre-European Settlement, Crossroads, and the Idea of Home*. (K-7-C)

In a 2007 report, SWCA Environmental Consultants provided a summary history of the Late Prehistoric Period (800-175 CE).⁸

“Throughout the Great Basin, ca. 820 CE (A.D. 1200), brownware pottery called "Intermountain Brownware" or "Shoshonean Ware" appears. The appearance of these ceramics, along with other new material cultural items is thought to be evidence of an expansion of Numic-speaking peoples into the region from the Mojave Desert area. This perceived demographic shift is at the crux of an ongoing, intense debate as to the existence and nature of these population movements. The Numic expansion model is premised on the fact that Numic-speaking groups were present in the area at the time of Euro-American contact.” Linguistic evidence demonstrates that while the Utah tribes share a common language origin that begins to diverge approximately 1,000 years ago. Whether the changes noted in the material culture at the same time (e.g., the appearance of new projectile point types and pottery) represent replacement of local populations, absorption of former agriculturalists into Numic-speaking groups, or some complex combination of these processes remains an open question. All available evidence indicates that Late Prehistoric (800-175 CE) groups in the region were primarily mobile hunter-gatherers. During the Late Prehistoric, native tribes had a more limited range of occupations, more limited range opting for lower elevations, and an increased site size through continual reoccupation of the same location.⁹

Historical changes began when Spanish, Mexican, French, and Anglo trappers and traders began traversing the Rocky Mountains, Great Basin, and Intermountain West in the late eighteenth century aiming to grow a religious following, wealth, or both. The first documentation of Native American groups living within the future state of Utah were most notably provided by the expeditions of Juan Maria Antonio Rivera (1765) and Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Fray Silvestre Velez de Escalante (1776).¹⁰

Until 1821 when Mexico gained its independence from the Spanish Empire, Utah and the Salt Lake Valley remained the uncharted lands of New Spain.¹¹ The Northern Route of the Old Spanish Trail, which connected Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Los Angeles, California, passed through the areas of what today is Green River, Moab, Monticello, and the Sevier Valley before exiting the state south in the Cedar City region. This 1,100-mile trading route brought groups and desirable trade goods to Utah and to the Native Americans.¹²

As historian P. Bradford Westwood states, “After the Mexican-American War, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) resulted in the transfer of what is now the American Southwest to the

⁸ Given the purpose of this cultural landscape report, the Paleo-Indian (Approx. 12,000-10,000 B.P.), Archaic (10,000-2,000 B.P.), and Formative or Fremont (2,000/1,700-800 B.P.) periods will not be included in the historical context.

⁹ SWCA Environmental Consultants, “A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory and Monitoring Plan for the Pioneer Park (Block 48) Improvements, Phase I, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. (K-7-B)

¹⁰ Cuch, A History of Utah’s American Indians, 16. (K-7-D)

¹¹ Westwood, West Side Stories 4. (K-7-C)

¹² Cuch, A History of Utah’s American Indians, 17. (K-7-D)

United States. As a result of this treaty, the Utah Territory became part of the nation’s public domain. The settlement also stipulated that the United States was then considered responsible for resolving any Native American land rights and claims.”¹³

However, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo did not include any formal wording recognizing Native American ownership of Utah or the southwestern lands. The Federal Government refused to recognize Native American sovereignty in 1862 with the passage of the Homestead Act, offering western lands to prospective settlers. Further, western colonizers chose to deny or ignore American Indian sovereignty or land claims.



Map of the Mexico Cession which resulted from the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, granting land that would eventually become the Utah Territory. (K-1-V)

Settlers, who were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter also referred to as “Mormon Pioneers” or “Pioneers”) entered the valley in 1847, and were the first colonizers to stay permanently. In the face of many challenges, this permanent settlement was successful despite the valley being “very dry and treeless, except those small trees near creeks, with very little grass.”¹⁴ As Indigenous groups had identified, the land in the City Creek floodplain to the southwest was one of the best flat areas near a fresh spring with proximity to other necessary resources such as fishing and wildlife in City Creek Canyon. The proximity and quality of City Creek also later provided the Mormons a suitable site for baptism given its shallow depth, narrow width, and natural surroundings. The pioneers discovered and recognized other benefits of settlement

¹³ Westwood, West Side Stories 4. (K-7-C)

¹⁴ Vicki Lynn Baker Thurston, History of Frank Jefferson Thurston, Rhoda Weyerman, and Ancestors by Vicki Lynn Baker Thurston, 159: file 1-T-2019. (R-1-T)

at this location. As it was well documented, the Native tribes utilized the hot springs one mile north as a destination in their seasonal travels, and for medicinal and spiritual purposes.¹⁵ These were later used by the Mormon pioneers for similar health, hygiene, and for recreational purposes believing they had healing properties.¹⁶



Sketch depiction of the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. (K-3-A)

Archaeological discoveries within the City Creek floodplain show that the area was well-used. In 1986, remains of Indigenous persons were found buried in the block just east of Pioneer Park, along with the first pioneer graves. It was known that there were graves in the vicinity, but the knowledge of their exact location had been lost for more than one hundred years. Construction of an apartment complex was halted while a more careful examination could proceed. Ultimately, thirty-three graves were found in the area, including what was believed to be the remains of a single Fremont period (720-1320 CE) Native American and thirty-three pioneer settlers.

¹⁵ Rhonda Lauritzen and Darren Parry. Phone interview with Darren Parry. Personal, August 31, 2020.

¹⁶ David L. Bigler and Will Bagley. *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives*, 329-330. Logan (UT): Utah State University Press, 2000. (R-1-X) This was later developed as Wasatch Springs Bath House and known later as Wasatch Springs Plunge and is located at about 850 North 300 West.

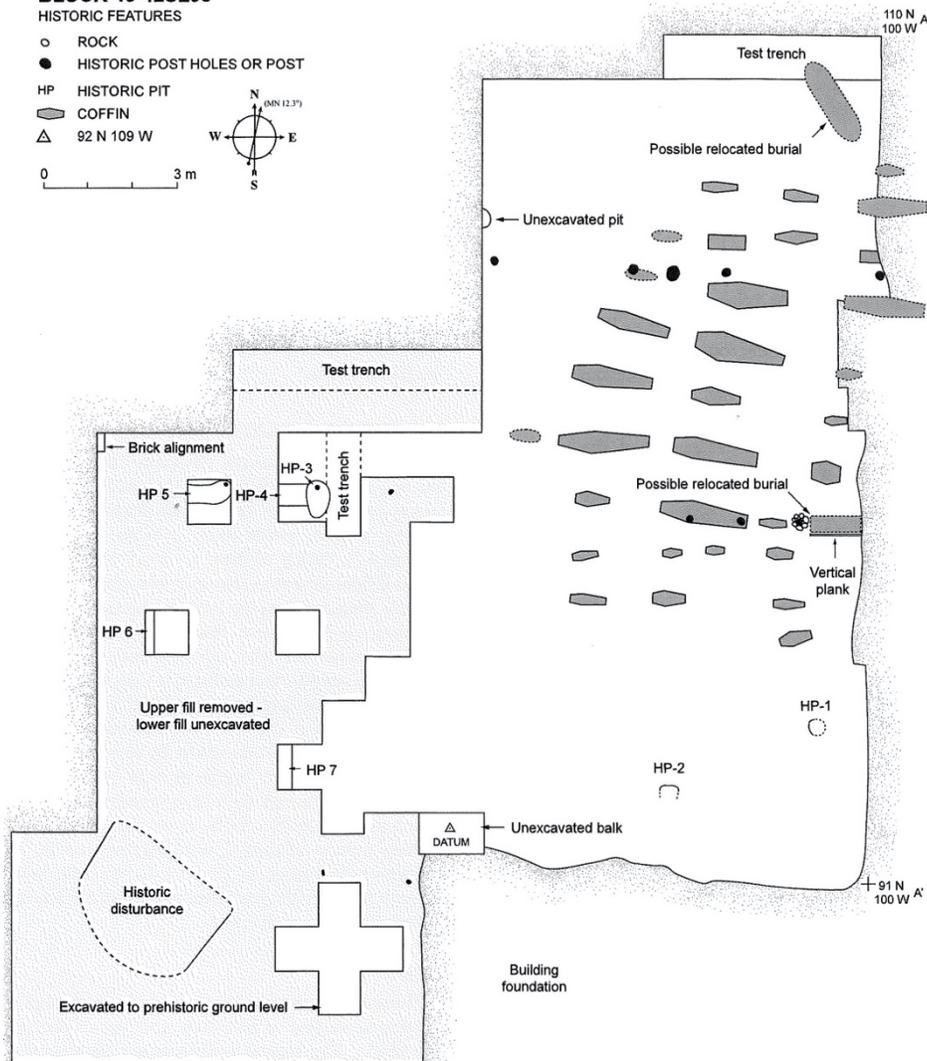
BLOCK 49 42SL98

HISTORIC FEATURES

- ROCK
- HISTORIC POST HOLES OR POST
- HP HISTORIC PIT
- ▭ COFFIN
- △ 92 N 109 W



0 3 m



Archaeologist's rendering of the burial layout on Block 49, one block east of the original pioneer fort, of pioneer graves. (K-1-Sb)

The remains of Native Americans were returned to the Paiute Tribal Council for a ceremonial reburial.¹⁷ During construction of the TRAX line along South Temple in 1999, another important discovery of human bone, pit houses, pottery, bone needles, arrow points and corn grinding tools provided additional information about the Fremont people that lived two blocks north of Pioneer Park.¹⁸

¹⁷ David F. Boone, "And Should We Die": Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University." (R-1-S)

¹⁸ Ronald Rood, "Archaeology Underfoot: Salt Lake's Downtown Fremont Village." (R-2-C)

To Utah’s native peoples, the settlement by Mormons resulted in displacement from the cultural lands that they had utilized for centuries “in favor of civilization.”¹⁹

The Old Fort Period, 1847-1851

When the first wagon train of emigrants—members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints²⁰—entered the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, many recorded their first impressions. Later referred to as the Vanguard Company, this train of seventy-two wagons had traveled 1,031 miles before reaching this destination. They were weary, and arriving brought a generally enthusiastic response. Church Clerk, Thomas Bullock, noted in his journal, “the sky is clear, the air is delightful and all together looks glorious.”²¹

As they entered the valley, church leader Brigham Young, along with his counselors Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards were leading them toward a new beginning with hopes for religious and political freedom. They had left the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, following the murder of Joseph Smith and increasingly violent religious persecution. They needed a place where they could be left alone, and after considering several possibilities, the Great Salt Lake Valley met their criteria.

Others noted the generally fertile soil as evidenced by lush grass in some places growing seven to eight feet high, and some varieties reportedly standing at twelve-to-thirteen feet. Bullock noted that the soil was “black,” looked “rich,” and was sandy enough to make it easy to work. These abundant grasses would provide feed for cattle and other livestock.²²

Not all were enthusiastic about what they saw, however. Lorenzo D. Young wrote in his journal of July 24, “This day we arrived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. My feelings were such as I cannot describe. Everything looked gloomy and I felt heart sick.”²³ His wife added that, weak as she was, she would rather continue on rather than stay in that “forsaken place.” Their daughter said she was

¹⁹ Cuch, *A History of Utah’s American Indians*, 21. (K-7-D)

²⁰ This is the proper and preferred name for the Church, but the Church’s style guide accepts historical use of “Mormon Pioneers” in contexts such as this, and abbreviation simply as “the Church.” For brevity in this document, both will be used, as well as simply “Pioneers,” (capitalized throughout as a proper noun), “Mormons,” and sometimes “members.” No disrespect is meant to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in abbreviating, to any subsequent church in Salt Lake City, nor to other groups of pioneers who settled here or in other regions. This is simply a convenience where the meaning is not likely to be confused here.

²¹ Eugene E. Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869*, 8. Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1988. (R-3-E)

²² Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

²³ Lorenzo Dow Young diaries, 1846-1852 and 1888-1891, in Lorenzo D. Young papers, 1846-1894. Source pulled online from: <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/overlandtravel/sources/76032508412281695100-eng/>. (R-3-X)

heartbroken because there were no trees.²⁴ Many others noted the lack of timber except in the mountains and along the streams. The valley was, however, hardly the wasteland that later stories promoted for dramatic effect.²⁵

Before the bulk of the group arrived, several men had ventured ahead to get a start on planting as early as July 21, 1847, and by the 24th of July, the entire company arrived.²⁶ The full company consisted of 142 men, three women, and two children. Orson Pratt was part of that advance party, he painted this early, optimistic picture on July 22:

We found the soil of a most excellent quality. Streams from the mountains and springs were very abundant, the water excellent, and generally with gravel bottoms. A great variety of green grass, and very luxuriant, covered the bottoms for miles where the soil was sufficiently damp, but in other places, although the soil was good, the grass had nearly dried up for want of moisture. We found the drier places swarming with very large crickets, about the size of a man's thumb. This valley is surrounded by mountains, except on the north; the tops of some of the highest being covered with snow. Every one or two miles streams were emptying into it from the mountains on the east, many of which were sufficiently large to carry mills and other machinery. As we proceeded towards the Salt Lake, the soil began to assume a more sterile appearance.²⁷

At first glance, the Salt Lake Valley appeared uninhabited as homelands of the Northern Ute tribes generally ran farther to the south, the Northwestern Shoshone mostly lived to the north, and the Goshute occupied lands to the west.²⁸ In 1847, there were fewer than 20,000 Indigenous peoples living in all of Utah. Already, large numbers had died since first contact with settlers, principally from disease.²⁹

The land before them was part of Mexico until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in February 1848, which action would make it part of United States territory. Later, Mormon leaders

²⁴ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

²⁵ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

²⁶ Press, The Church Historian's. Brigham Young Vanguard Company (1847) - Pioneer Overland Travels. Accessed January 4, 2021. <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/overlandtravel/companies/1/brigham-young-pioneer-company>.

²⁷ Orson Pratt, Journal History, July 22, Church History Library.

²⁸ Thomas Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, Minneapolis, MN: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2015, 33. (R-3-D)

²⁹ Thomas G. Alexander, *Utah, the Right Place: the Official Centennial History*. 108. Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith Publishers, 2003. (R-3-G)



*The first map of Salt Lake City map, by Henry G. Sherwood.
Now held by the Library of Congress.*

would petition the United States Government to officially purchase the land from Indigenous peoples in an effort to reduce conflict, but that never came to be.³⁰

Once the pioneers got their wagons down into the valley, they set up camp. Some of the 1847 group later tried to pinpoint the exact spot, and they believed the first campfire was kindled in an area near the corner of 300 South and 200 West.³¹ That is near the spring that would later provide water to the Fort. Others may have camped elsewhere.

Just one day after his arrival in the Great Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young gave what is now known as his “land law” speech, recorded by Wilford Woodruff, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Young reportedly said that, “No man who came here should buy any land; that he had none to sell; but every man should have his land measured out to him for city and farming purposes. He might till it as he pleased, but he must be industrious and take care of it.”³²

³⁰ Alexander, *Utah, the Right Place: the Official Centennial History*. 110. (R-3-G)

³¹ “*March of The Pioneers*,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 21, 1897. (R-2-G, Dixon p 155)

³² Wilford Woodruff, *Wilford Woodruff journals and papers, 1828-1898*;

<https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record?id=400c3266-ede2-43cf-9a24-50153adebb&view=summary>
(accessed: April 2, 2021).

Within the first few days, scouting parties explored surrounding areas to make sure they had selected the best location. They found Miles Goodyear's settlement at Fort Buenaventura in what later became Ogden; present day Utah County appeared to be actively inhabited by indigenous peoples; Tooele was too dry; and Cache Valley would be too cold. They took a vote and decided to stay where they were.³³

Then on July 28, with a wave of his hand and a few words, Brigham Young set forth a plan to map the city. He said, "Here is the forty acres for the temple lot."³⁴ He then requested that the city be surveyed and drawn according to a plan roughly in keeping with what had been envisioned by the Church's first President, Joseph Smith, in 1844, and known as the "Plat of the City of Zion."³⁵

The cities that Smith and Young planned would have a green feeling with wide streets, prescribed open spaces, and garden lot housing.³⁶ Their plan favored low population density with homes set back twenty feet from the street, having yards and flower gardens in front. This plan echoed philosophical ideas set forth by William Penn in Philadelphia.³⁷

Grids are, of course, ubiquitous worldwide, and Salt Lake City was to be laid out in alignment with cardinal points of the compass and divided into 135 blocks of ten acres each, with 1 ¼ acre lots allotted to each family.³⁸ People would also receive farmland outside the city. They set aside 1,133 acres as they called "Big Fields" south of present-day 900 South for major agricultural operations.³⁹

Even with precedents elsewhere, Salt Lake City is exceptionally unique in that no other major city can trace its beginnings to a single moment in time like this.⁴⁰

On the morning of August 2, Orson Pratt and Henry G. Sherwood followed Young's instructions and commenced surveying the city, beginning with the temple block. On August 3, clerk Thomas Bullock's account also recorded one of the first mentions of what would become Pioneer Park in the

³³ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

³⁴ Note also that on August 4, the Council decided to reduce the temple block from forty acres to ten.

³⁵ Bullock, Thomas 1816-1885. Thomas Bullock journals, 1843-1849, <https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record?id=f0ba97be-50a7-490b-9bfa-a0ad7b762af1&view=summary> (accessed: April 2, 2021).

³⁶ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 33. (R-3-D)

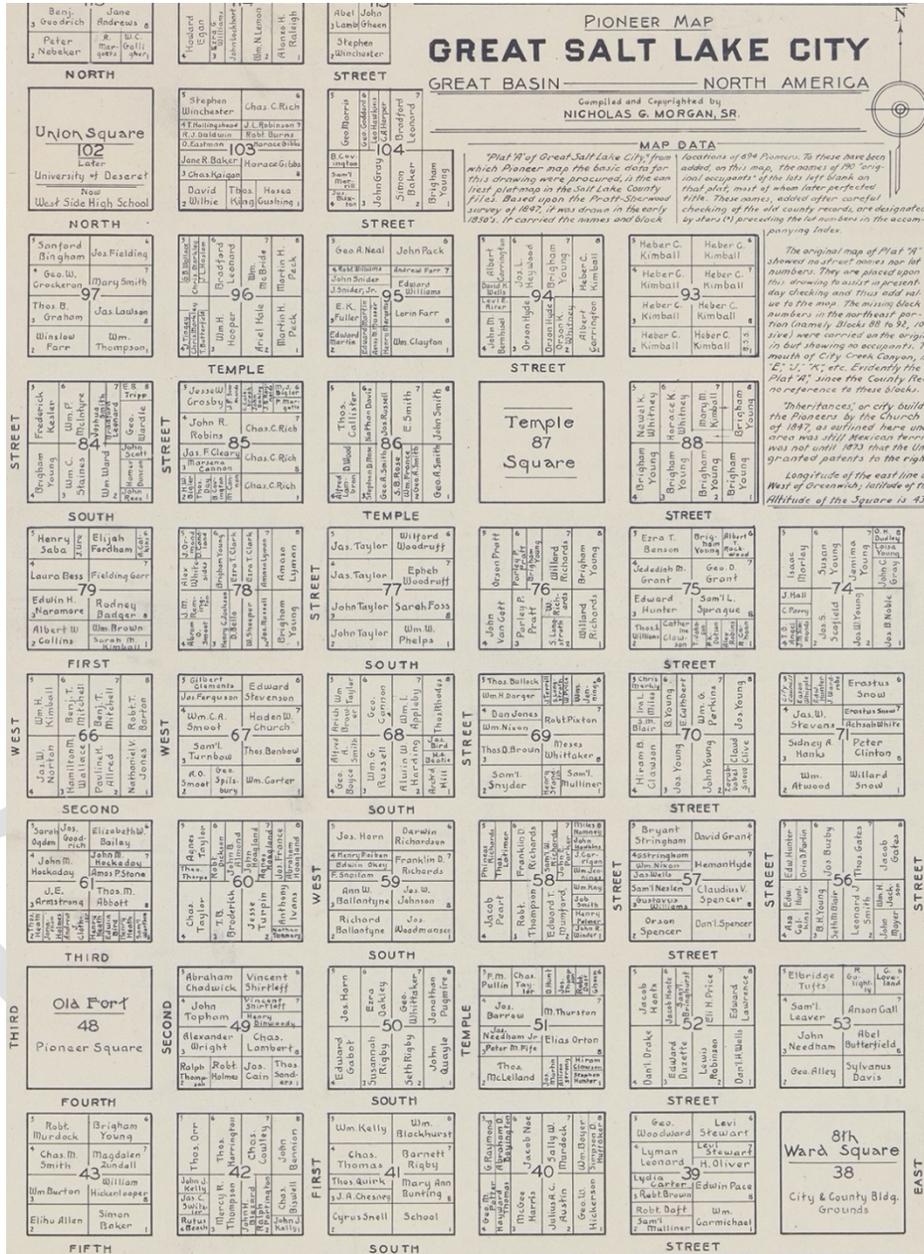
³⁷ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 30. (R-3-D)

³⁸ Alvin Charles Koritz, "The Development of Municipal Government in the Territory of Utah," 1973. <https://doi.org/https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsr edir=1&article=5855&context=etd>, 39-40. (R-2-O)

³⁹ Thomas G. Alexander, *Grace & Grandeur: A History of Salt Lake City*, 19. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp., 2001. (R-3-I)

⁴⁰ Rick Grunder and Paul Cohen. "Vol. 87, No. 3, Summer 2019 of Utah Historical Quarterly ..." Utah Historical Quarterly. Utah State History, 2019. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/utahhistquar.87.issue-3> (R-2-X)

historical record. Namely, that they ran a surveyor's chain, "to the Dobie Square which is 3 blocks south and 3 west from the Temple Square." ⁴¹ The "Dobie Square" referred to where adobe bricks were being made. The public adobe yard lay just west of what would become the Fort block (Block 48).



In the mid-20th century, Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr. created what is believed to be one of the most comprehensive maps of the pioneer era for downtown Salt Lake City, also showing the four original squares. (K-1-C)

⁴¹ Residents often referred to the adobe bricks "dobies" or "dobys."

Brigham Young added his own touches to Joseph Smith's plan, including four public squares along the lines of those found in Philadelphia. Among other amenities, these parks would offer "playgrounds and walks,"⁴² as well as "promenades, with fountains of the purest water, and each square, ornamented with everything delightful."⁴³ The four public squares would ultimately become Pioneer Square (Block 48), Temple Square (Block 87), Washington Square (Block 38), and Union Square (Block 102).⁴⁴

An urgent item of business entailed digging canals and ditches to divert water from City Creek for irrigation. Although they broke on plow early on, they did discover that it was possible to plow the soil without soaking it first; they began planting immediately, having brought an extensive variety of seed for vegetables, as well as shrubs, fruits, and flowers. Their efforts experienced early success, but then cattle and horses got loose, destroying many crops.⁴⁵

Another task was to erect a structure for protection from the elements when meeting as a group. Among the Mormons it was customary whenever the pioneers rested for a few days to make great arbors, or boweries as they called them as places of shelter for public gathering or worship. They were made of poles, and brush.⁴⁶ Hence, on July 30, Brigham Young assigned a group of newly returned Mormon Battalion veterans to build a bowery⁴⁷ on the newly settled temple site the following day, which they did.⁴⁸

According to Northwestern Shoshone oral history,⁴⁹ in early June 1847 some of their bands that extended into Wyoming had sent advance word that a group of white people were sighted traveling through the mountains from the east, and that the group appeared friendly. Within days of the

⁴² Alexander, *Grace & Grandeur: A History of Salt Lake City*, 19. (R-3-I)

⁴³ From Kirtland to Salt Lake City p. 130 (letter written by Bullock to F.D. Richards) (R-2-G, Dixon p. 163).

⁴⁴ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 33-34. (R-3-D)

⁴⁵ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

⁴⁶ Bigler and Bagley, *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives*, 329-330. (R-1-X)

⁴⁷ Thomas Bullock and Will Bagley. *The Pioneer Camp of the Saints: the 1846 and 1847 Mormon Trail Journals of Thomas Bullock*, 245. (Wash.): Arthur H. Clark Co., 2001. (R-3-W)

⁴⁸ The pioneers built a succession of boweries in Salt Lake City, which are often confused in historical write-ups because the first-person accounts generally just refer to "the bowery," without indicating which one. The first was on the temple block, built by members of the Mormon Battalion on July 30, 1847, and was the first structure built by the Pioneers in the Valley. It probably only lasted a short time. A second bowery was built in the Old Fort shortly thereafter. A third, larger bowery was built in the Old Fort to accommodate the harvest celebration held in August 1848. A fourth, large bowery was built on the temple block in time for the celebration on July 24, 1849. The temple block bowery was replaced and improved a number of times. All were temporary structures that required upkeep or replacement.

⁴⁹ Darren Parry, *The Bear River massacre: A Shoshone history*, Salt Lake City, UT: By Common Consent Press, 2019, 25-29. (R-1-W)

pioneer arrival in the valley, delegations from both the Ute and Shoshone tribes visited the camp to meet with Church leaders.⁵⁰

The Ute leaders arrived first, and a group of Shoshone leaders followed on July 31. Shoshone Chief Sagwitch's family accounts indicate that when the wagon train including Brigham Young and the first Mormon settlers came into the Salt Lake Valley, Sagwitch and other chiefs greeted and welcomed them. Although no early Church records list the names of who visited their campsite that first month, they do record that on July 31, a delegation of about twenty Shoshone men, along with several Shoshone women, came into camp to trade with the company. The known tribal histories do not provide names either.⁵¹

William Clayton wrote in his journal that Shoshone leaders said that the Ute—who had met with church leaders earlier—did not own the land there. Clayton added that the Shoshone appeared displeased that the Mormons had already traded with the Utes, and the Shoshone then asserted their claim to the Salt Lake Valley. They indicated that the Utes had “come over the line” to interfere with Shoshone rights.⁵² Ute histories today say that the Great Salt Lake was the very western edge of Ute territory,⁵³ so that line may have been somewhat blurry. Shoshone oral history today states that multiple groups used area at various times during the year, including the Ute, Shoshone, and Goshute tribes.⁵⁴

The following day, Heber C. Kimball, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, preached to a congregation of Pioneers. He discouraged the members from paying any tribes for the land, arguing that if they paid the Shoshone, the Ute and other tribes would also make claims on the same property. He then declared, “The land belongs to our father in heaven and we calculate to plow and plant it; and no man will have power to sell his inheritance, for he cannot remove it; it belongs to the Lord.”⁵⁵

A letter from the First Presidency⁵⁶ of the Church later in September, advised the people, “When the Lamanites⁵⁷ are about, you will keep your gates closed, and not admit them within the walls; so far as you come in contact with them, treat them kindly, but do not feed them or trade with them, or

⁵⁰ Scott R. Christensen, *Sagwitch: Shoshone Chieftain, Mormon Elder, 1822-1887*. 15. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1999. (R-2-E)

⁵¹ Christensen, *Sagwitch: Shoshone Chieftain, Mormon Elder, 1822-1887*, 1999. (R-2-E)

⁵² Christensen, *Sagwitch: Shoshone Chieftain, Mormon Elder, 1822-1887*, 1999. (R-2-E)

⁵³ Fred A. Conetah and Kathryn L. MacKay. *A History of the Northern Ute People*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Uintah-Ouray Ute Tribe, 1982. (R-3-O)

⁵⁴ Rhonda Lauritzen and Darren Parry. Phone interview. Personal, August 31, 2020. (R-1-R)

⁵⁵ Christensen, *Sagwitch: Shoshone Chieftain, Mormon Elder, 1822-1887*, 1999. (R-2-E)

⁵⁶ The term First Presidency refers to the President of the Church, and his counselors.

⁵⁷ The term Lamanites refers to a group of people described in the Book of Mormon. Mormon Pioneers believed that indigenous tribes were descended from these Book of Mormon people, and therefore referred to them as Lamanites.

hold familiar intercourse with them in the city; but if you wish to trade with them, go to their camp and deal with them honorably.”⁵⁸

Also on August 1, they took a vote to begin building houses from adobe bricks and to consolidate all the encampments together into a stockade for defense “against the Indians.” It would be built in the Spanish style, by making a frame of wood and filling it with mud, with some of it constructed from sun-dried adobe bricks.³⁹ That meeting thus solidified the decision to build a fort on the public square planned for Block 48 in the southwest part of the newly-platted city.

Why was this site chosen? First, it was “level,”⁵⁹ and had a good supply of water from the freshwater spring that bubbled just outside the block, to the northeast of the Fort’s perimeter.⁶⁰ The spring was near where the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is located today, at 279 South 300 West. There was also a nearby deposit of clay for adobe making, and the flat area was large enough for an entire Fort.

If it is believed that the first campsite was, indeed, on the corner of 200 West and 300 South, then maybe the site was simply an obvious choice. There is no mention of site preparation prior to beginning construction, given how much is written on other topics of the day. Perhaps people did not remark on the *absence* of obstacles or a *lack* of dramatic features.

Regarding site selection, it is also known that some Indigenous peoples had chosen to bury their dead in the same place that the Pioneers ultimately picked as their first cemetery (on adjacent Block 49). This seems to reinforce the idea that when scanning the Valley for a place to camp, more than one group found it to be an ideal spot. Then, when Brigham Young and his surveyors looked for where to place the public squares, Block 48 met the criteria without mention of debate.

These settlers chose to build their first permanent settlement as a high-walled fort for self-protection. The Mormons recognized that they were entering into a contested space and bringing more contention, consciously and externally expressing their feelings through construction of a walled fort.

One description gives some insights about the landscape at that time. In recalling her memories of living in and just outside the Fort, Hulda Thurston described the area as dry, with very little grass, and with only small sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*)

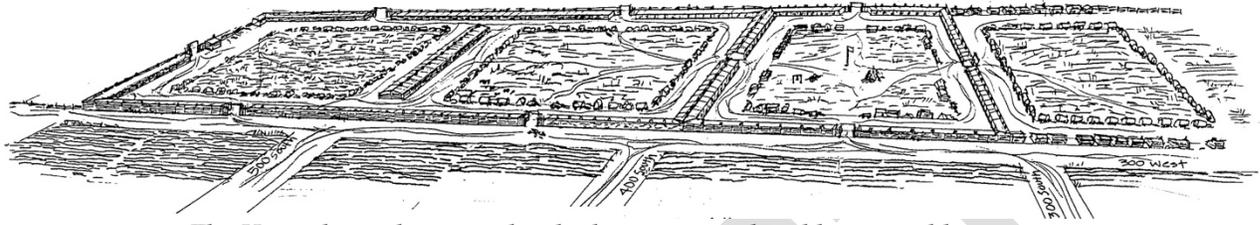
⁵⁸ An epistle of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, to the saints of the Great Salt Lake City, Great Basin, September 9, 1847. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 30)

³⁹ Vicki Lynn Baker Thurston, History of Frank Jefferson Thurston, Rhoda Weyerman, and Ancestors by Vicki Lynn Baker Thurston, 159: file 1-T-2019. (R-1-T)

⁵⁹ Journal history, September 28, 1848 to September 1849. (R-2-G, Dixon p.166)

⁶⁰ W. Randall Dixon, Ms. *The Old Fort and Pioneer Park: A Brief Historical Overview*. Salt Lake City, 1997. Church History Department, Salt Lake City. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 96-97)

growing. She drew a stark contrast between this and the Morgan area where her family moved next, which was green and had plentiful timber.⁶¹



The Henrichsen elevation sketch above is considered by several historians to be the most accurate depiction of the Salt Lake City Fort. (R-1-H)

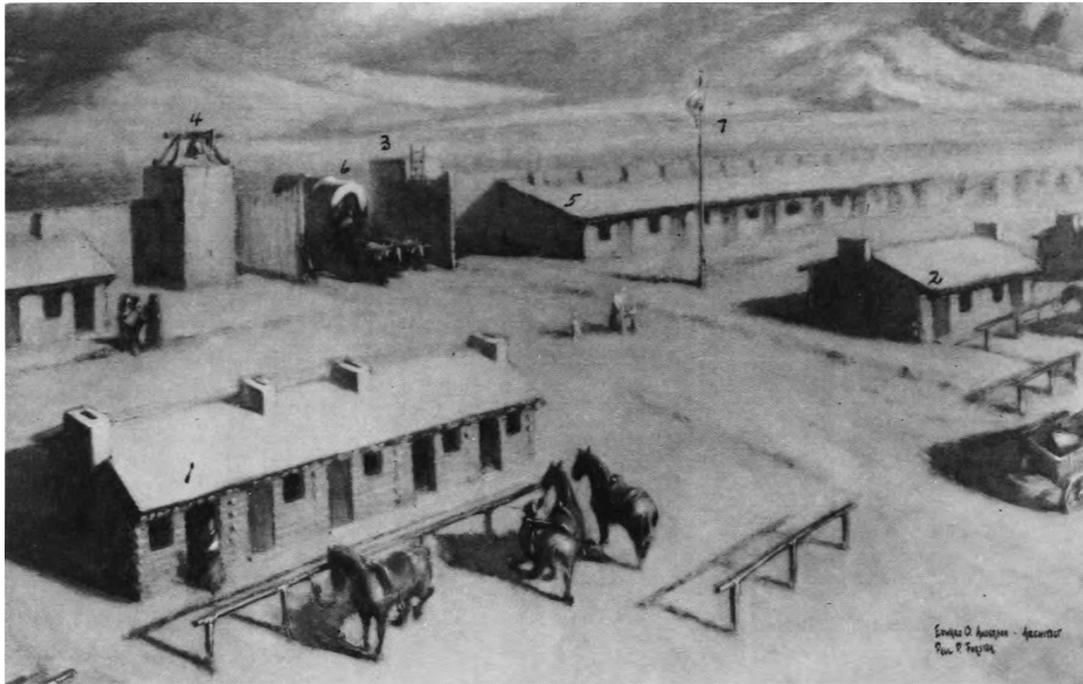
Work on the Fort began on August 11. Ultimately, the completed Fort had nine-foot adobe walls on three sides built with port holes. On the east, the walls of log cabins doubled as the fort's exterior wall. While they built the outer walls from wood, they decided that adobe bricks were less costly as inner walls of the homes. The roofs slanted inward and were covered with branches, then filled in with dirt. Locking gates pierced the walls in the center of each side, and at least one gate was large enough to drive a team through it.⁶²

Even before the Fort was completed, it became obvious that they needed to add on to accommodate the rest of the wagon trains that were entering the valley through that fall. Therefore, they enlarged the Fort to enclose two more blocks to the south and part of the block to the north. The completed Fort covered over forty acres. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1847, a total of 2,095 people in various wagon companies arrived.

⁶¹ Thurston, *History of Frank Jefferson Thurston*, Rhoda Weyerman, and Ancestors, 2019. (R-1-T)

⁶² W. Randall Dixon, *The Old Fort and Pioneer Park: A Brief Historical Overview*. Unpublished manuscript, Church History Department, Salt Lake City, 1997, 96-97. (R-2-G)

with benches and a stand, for public speaking, and on the outside were very [sic] extensive fields of grain and garden vegetables...”⁶³



Rendering of the inside of the Fort Great Salt Lake City, view southeast. (R-3-X)

In contrast to limited detail provided in journals about the landscape in and around the Fort, there are many colorful first-person accounts of homelife and cabin interiors. Fireplaces were made of clay pounded into shape.⁶⁴ In them, they burned the readily available sagebrush. Some people built doors hung with rawhide straps as hinges,⁶⁵ but others simply had to tack up a blanket or tarp as their sole barrier from the elements. Very few had window glass, so they removed wood blocks from windows during the day or let sunlight filter through oiled cotton cloth.⁶⁶

Chamber pots served toilet needs at night, with privies dug somewhere outside the homes.⁶⁷ It is unknown where or how many outhouses were located within the fort walls versus outside, but with thousands of residents living inside forts along with domestic animals, one can imagine the sanitation challenges. An excerpt from a March 6, 1848, council meeting highlights the issue of

⁶³ Journal history, September 28, 1848 to September 1849. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 166)

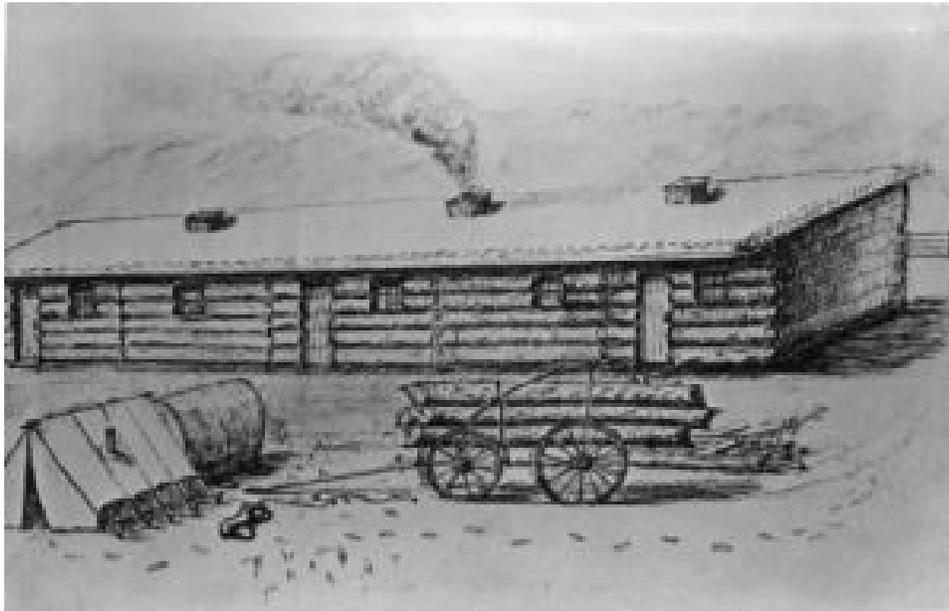
⁶⁴ Irene Hascall described her home in March 1848. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 117)

⁶⁵ “Pioneers of 1847 Recount Experiences of the Journey Across the Plains and Life in the Old Forts in the Valley, Elder Hiram T. Spencer,” *Deseret News*, Saturday August 14, 1920. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 131)

⁶⁶ Oliver B. Huntington, “Early Reminiscences,” *Deseret Evening News*, August 13, 1888, 3.

⁶⁷ “The Old Fort,” a write-up by Darrell Jones, Museum docent, 2000. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 116)

living with domestic animals, “It was decided that hogs be prohibited from running at large from and after Saturday night under penalty of a fine at the discretion of the judges.”⁶⁸



A typical log cabin on the land within Fort Great Salt Lake City. (R-3-Y)

The pioneers were also surrounded by wildlife. Mice tunneled and scurried beneath the rough-hewn planks of some homes, or the dirt floors of most. Various accounts describe catching a hundred or more mice in the evening before a family could sleep. A single family of house cats first occupied the Fort, and a few families found relief from the mice by purchasing a kitten. People had to regularly check for rattlesnakes.⁶⁹ They listened to howls of foxes, catamounts and ravens. An early organized hunt killed bears, wolverines, wildcats, wolves, foxes, mink, eagles, magpies, hawks, owls, and ravens.⁷⁰

With such a late arrival, the first harvest served largely as an experiment in what might grow the following season. Some kitchen garden plots seem to have existed within the Fort, but the main agricultural production happened on acreage outside the Fort, with families each receiving an allotment of farmland a few miles from town.

Much of life revolved around water, which sometimes presented dangers. On August 11, 1847, three-year-old Milton Howard Therlkill died in an accidental drowning when he fell into City Creek. Milton was buried in Block 49 adjacent to the Fort. As others died, they too were buried in that same block. The exact location of these graves became lost, but in 1986, a construction company

⁶⁸ Minutes recorded in “Our Pioneer Heritage, The Old Fort chapter,” p. 105. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 90)

⁶⁹ “Pioneers of 1847 Recount Experiences of the Journey Across the Plains and Life in the Old Forts in the Valley, Elder Hiram T. Spencer,” *Deseret News*, Saturday August 14, 1920. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 131)

⁷⁰ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

unearthed remains of several individuals. A thorough archaeological study found human burials related earlier Indigenous peoples and to pioneers during the years 1847-56.⁷¹

Accounts say that the late summer and fall of 1847 brought no rain, and many people expressed gratitude for a mild winter. But when snows did come, the people learned that their brush and mud roofs were worse than leaky—they dripped mud inside their homes. Several people recalled positioning umbrellas over their heads while cooking and sleeping, then waking up to soaked feet and bedcoverings. Long after a snowstorm stopped, mud still dripped inside. When sunshine appeared, everyone dragged their clothing and furnishings into the common areas outside to dry.

With no harvest surplus, the Pioneers of 1847 lived on measured rations and scrawny livestock that first winter and spring. One account described the food situation:

Desolation reigned Supreme. During the winter and spring food had to be so carefully husbanded that in the great majority of households it was weighed or measured each week with great exactness, so that it should not be consumed before the harvest time. There was not a vegetable of any kind in the entire settlement. The only articles that had the appearance of vegetables that could be obtained were thistle roots and segos; they were very scarce. The sole dependence for food was unbolted flour from wheat ground in brother Charles Crimson's little mill at the mouth of city Creek Canyon, and poor beef—so poor that one could not see a speck of grease on the water in which it was boiled, and it was slimy, as the flesh of poor, starved animals is, and very tasteless⁷²

Aside from their homes, the pioneers built a few additional features inside the Fort. These included a flagpole (generally referred to as a “liberty pole” during its time) from which they flew the stars and stripes. The exact location is not certain.⁷³ At least one flag was present among scarce initial belongings because several residents were U.S. Army Veterans of the Mormon Battalion, and they brought a flag with them from California.⁷⁴ Although the original liberty pole is long gone, the idea of a flagpole was meaningful to the pioneers, and they generally raised a flag at public events.⁷⁵ A flagpole has since existed through most of the park's history.

⁷¹ “The Old Fort,” a write-up by Darrell Jones, Museum docent, 2000. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 116)

⁷² *The Juvenile Instructor*, January 1, 1896 V. 31 (1896) p. 20. (R-2-G, Dixon p.71)

⁷³ W.D. Kartchner's firsthand account places the flagpole on the “east side of the middle of the fort,” but another former resident of the sketched it in the center. The Henrichsen elevation sketch shows the liberty pole at the center of the Fort.

⁷⁴ Ronald W. Walker, *A Banner is Unfurled*. *Dialogue* - https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V26N04_89.pdf. (R-2-P)

⁷⁵ Note: Brigham also flew his own flag, or a flag representing Deseret, so when histories mention “flag,” it is likely not a United States flag during the early years in the Valley. See: Walker, *A Banner is Unfurled*. *Dialogue* - https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V26N04_89.pdf. (R-2-P)

Another structure inside the Fort held the Nauvoo Bell, which previously hung from the temple and arrived with members of the Rich Company in September, 1847.⁷⁶ It summoned residents to church services and other public gatherings.

With such a mild winter, people felt confident planting early crops in the spring of 1847, and they came up well. By mid-April, crops included: corn, beans, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, squash, corn, flax, millet, rye, wheat, and grass six inches high. Then, a killing frost in late May destroyed much of that early progress. The pioneers replanted, only to have cricket swarms nearly decimate the harvest again. The crickets were such a scourge that some feared being forced to leave the Valley.

Brigham Young dismissed the concern by saying, “We have the finest climate, the purest water, and the purest air that can be found on earth, and there is no healthier climate anywhere. We will cultivate the soil.” Once the crickets subsided, they raised some ten thousand bushels of wheat that first season. The First Presidency declared that, “we can raise more and better wheat per acre in this Valley than any of us have ever seen.”⁷⁷

Another important amenity in the Fort was the large bowery built for the harvest celebration of 1848. One sketch⁷⁸ shows that the Fort block had two boweries. The large one accommodated the entire population and some indigenous guests for their first harvest feast, held August 10, 1848. This firsthand account by Isabella Horne describes the occasion:

Our brethren built a large Bowery, which was decorated with sheaves of wheat, oats and barley, bundles of corn and green branches. Tables were set to the full length of the Bowery. They were decorated with branches of all kinds of vegetables that had been raised, also a few flowers, and made a nice appearance... Our cattle had fattened up by that time so that we had good beef... vegetables, home-made molasses and preserves. I believe I was as proud of our tables and the food on that occasion as I have been at any subsequent time under more favorable surroundings.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Charles C. Rich, Diary, June 23, 1847, Church History Library; Sarah P. Rich, Reminiscences, Church History Library; Charles C. Rich to Brigham Young, August 18, 1847, General Correspondence, Incoming, 1840–1877, Brigham Young Office Files, 1832–1878, Church History Library. (R-3-J)

⁷⁷ Campbell, *Establishing Zion: the Mormon Church in the American West*. (R-3-E)

⁷⁸ An after-the-fact drawing by Harrison Sperry. Church History Library, MS 9164, high council, minutes October 24 and November 7, 1847 Harrison Sperry, drawing representing the Old Fort and its two additions in the Great Salt Lake Valley as it was in 1847. Church History Library: Note that this drawing has later annotations inserted by a church historian. Dixon advised caution in interpreting the additions as they were made after the fact. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 78)

⁷⁹ Isabella M. Horne, *Pioneer Reminiscences*, 292 – Complete section obtained from Google Books. <https://books.google.com/books?id=ZHA3h88aDh0C&lpg=PA292&ots=V7IbNniire&dq=pioneer+reminiscences+m.+isabella+horne&pg=PA293-v=onepage&q=pioneer+reminiscences+m.+isabella+horne&f=false> (partial section found R-2-G, Dixon, p. 62)

How long the large bowery remained intact is unclear. It may have only lasted for a season, or it may have received ongoing upkeep through 1849 when it was replaced at the temple block.



A later bowery built on the temple block shows the general style of what the fort bowery may have looked like. (R-3-Z)

In addition to celebrations and worship services, the Fort was a gathering place that hosted a litany of firsts in terms of civic functions: the first school,⁸⁰ the first General Conference of the Church, a meeting to organize the provincial State of Deseret,⁸¹ and the first general election. By October of 1848, people had already dubbed this block the Old Fort, even though it had only been up for a year.

In contrast to mild weather the year before, the winter of 1848-49 brought severe conditions. Even before spring, some adobe buildings within the Fort started crumbling due to the effects of freezing

⁸⁰ Huntington, "Early Reminiscences," 1888, 3.

⁸¹ *Journal history*, 36- 37. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 50)

and thawing.⁸² Brigham Young had already announced intent to move out that spring, clean it up, keep animals out, and clear away the other forts. He also took the opportunity to remind people that the land was a public square,⁸³ perhaps to preempt other ideas about the land, or perhaps in answer to questions regarding ownership where people had bought homes there.⁸⁴

Only a handful of families moved out of the Fort before February of 1849.⁸⁵ When Brigham Young's family relocated on March 1,⁸⁶ others followed suit. That spring, one account wrote, "The forts are rapidly breaking up, by the removal of the houses on to the city lots," and indicating that the city was already assuming the appearance of a more established community.⁸⁷ Families salvaged wood and other building materials from the Fort—in some cases moving full cabins.

One colorful incident happened when some rebellious former members of the Mormon Battalion rode horses through the Fort with women seated in the saddle in front of them instead of the customary position with women behind.⁸⁸ It created a ruckus, and highlights some from culture clash as these young men brought back new customers from the Mexican borderlands.⁸⁹ This incident highlights tensions that can occur when new cultural influences are introduced to a close-knit group.

On March 25, 1849, the first public meeting was held on the temple block, marking a permanent shift of venue. Although the original families had already moved from the Fort, the 24th of July celebration marked a symbolic—even perhaps formally planned—transition from the Fort to the temple. That day, a parade-style procession began at Block 48 and ended at Temple Square. In the evening, residents gathered beneath a new bowery. This new bowery at the temple block was large

⁸² Thomas Bullock, *Journal history*, Sunday February 25. Annotation - original image name appearing on document: 2020110_145736_HDR.jpg. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 180)

⁸³ Church history document – typed minutes dated October 29, 1848, p. 3. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 82)

⁸⁴ This is noteworthy in light of several proposals during the 20th Century to re-create the Fort. It is the position of this report that it would be historically inappropriate to build a permanent replica of a temporary structure that was already crumbling after only a year of use.

⁸⁵ *Journal History of the Church*, February 19, 1849, 1.

⁸⁶ From Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995), 227. (R-1-D)

⁸⁷ *Settling the Valley, Proclaiming the Gospel: The General Epistles of the Mormon First Presidency*, ed. Reid L. Neilson and Nathan N. Waite (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 69, 69n24.

⁸⁸ Bigler and Bagley. *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives*, 427. (R-1-X)

⁸⁹ Ongoing tensions with some returning members of the Mormon Battalion had been growing for a while over church use of the soldiers' pay and other grievances. Brigham Young accused them of becoming idol, lazy and indolent. Young added the charge "corrupting the morals of the young females." The situation boiled over when the rebellious young men rode through the Fort on horseback, with women seated in front of them in the saddle instead of the customary position with women in back. This unorthodox riding method was dubbed the "Spanish Rusty," apparently one of the habits brought back from the Mexican borderlands. As they rode, one among them was, "sawing on the violin." For this offense and others, the young men were fined \$25.00 each and cut off from the church. Most, if not all, were later reinstated. Reference: Bigler and Bagley's *Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives*, 427. (R-1-X)

enough to shelter an audience of more than 3,000, and was 100 feet long and sixty feet wide, with 100 posts supporting the roof.

One epistle from Church leadership 1849 to emigrating pioneers paints a picture of present and envisioned life in the Valley. In this letter, they set forth their aspirations for the city:

We wish all the green timber and shrubbery in and about the city to remain as it is, unless you find time to trim it so that it may grow tall and strait; and we also wish the green timber and young trees in the mountains to remain as they are, particularly the Sugar Maple...to yield you sap at the present time... It is very important that the water of the City Creek should be preserved pure as possible... Fall is the time for planting⁹⁰ many seeds particularly such as hickory nuts, peaches, plums, cherries, etc., all of which are very desirable, together with the apple, pear, quince, grape, nectarine, persimmon, mulberry, locust, etc., and every other kind of fruit used in their season which is within your reach, not forgetting the hop vine.⁹¹

Other accounts also show Church leadership encouraging residents to actively plant a tree canopy in the city. Even as early as 1850, newcomers to the city described it as “beautiful” in appearance by any standard, and not only because they were weary when they arrived.⁹²

The Church leadership’s vision for the city’s landscape arose partly from a belief that earthly blessings are evidence of adhering to proper moral conduct. The quickly developing Mormon landscape showed the priority they placed on prosperous towns, well-watered lots, large houses, and ornate temples. These were people who also maintained a steadfast belief in the public good, including values of industry, honesty, temperance, frugality, and the equality of opportunity.⁹³

Families came and went on the Fort block for a while. As newcomers arrived in the Valley, they rented or bought homes from the first residents in the Old Fort until they could build something better on their own land. For example, one former member of the Mormon Battalion, Reddick

⁹⁰ One portion of the above letter also requested seeds and plant varieties to bring, “There are an extensive variety of grain and seeds already in the Valley, but that should not prevent the Saints from bringing choice seeds from any part of the earth for every good thing that can grow here is wanted: and a large amount of Osage orange, Cherokee rose tree, and English hawthorn seeds are needed this year for hedges, and the potato, or hill onion, for eating; Also lobelia, mulberry, and black locust seed. Any amount of...Silesia, or French beet seed would be useful here this season. “

⁹¹ Epistle of the council of the twelve apostles, to the saints of the Great Salt Lake City, Great Basin, September 9, 1847 p. 29. Annotation on document: date Stamp 1 Oct 1849; In the margin it is typed M.S. 11: 366. About this time, this from the pen of Almon W. Babbitt was published in the St. Louis Union. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 14, 27-33).

⁹² *Salt Lake City, The Place Which God Prepared*, edited by Scott C. Esplin and Kenneth L. Alford. Chapter 11, “Arrival of Nineteenth-Century Mormon Emigrants in Salt Lake City, by Fred E. Woods, p. 205. Deseret Book. (R-3-F)

⁹³ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 279. (R-3-D)

Newton Allred, recorded that he “bought” a room in the Old Fort and lived there through the winter of 1849.⁹⁴ Another resident, Hosea Stout, mentions the purchase price of his home in the Fort for \$40, from E. Gardner.⁹⁵

Advertisements show how this land continued to house some families and businesses in 1850, including one for a physician’s professional services in the “west angle of the Old Fort,”⁹⁶ and another announced salt for sale at “Mrs. Millers’, in the Old Fort.”⁹⁷

As families moved from the Fort to establish their own farms, it marked a cultural shift from group to individual living, and from the ascetic toward the worldly.⁹⁸ The idea was generally to expand by building a large number of small towns, rather than a few large cities. Early life in the Valley and subsequent towns favored highly planned, communal living, but quickly branched out to individual ownership and less-planned settlements.⁹⁹

In establishing new communities, the early pioneers took lessons learned from this first fort in tandem with the Salt Lake City plat as an approximate template. These towns generally began with a fort built in the Spanish style roughly mirroring the Old Fort, with residents living there as long as necessary and moving out as soon as they could. Communities in the Sanpete Valley are good examples of this formula at work, with towns beginning as a fort, then laid out according to the revised City of Zion plan.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Reddick Newton Allred, Journal. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Overland Travel records. <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/overlandtravel/pioneers/43043/redick-newton-allred>. (R-1-U)

⁹⁵ Darrell Jones, *The Old Fort*, an unpublished article. 2000. (R-2-G, Dixon p. 116)

⁹⁶ From Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. *Deseret News*, September 28, 1850, 3. (R-1-D)

⁹⁷ From Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. *Deseret News*, November 16, 1850, 6. (R-1-D)

⁹⁸ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 277. (R-3-D)

⁹⁹ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 277. (R-3-D)

¹⁰⁰ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 39. (R-3-D)

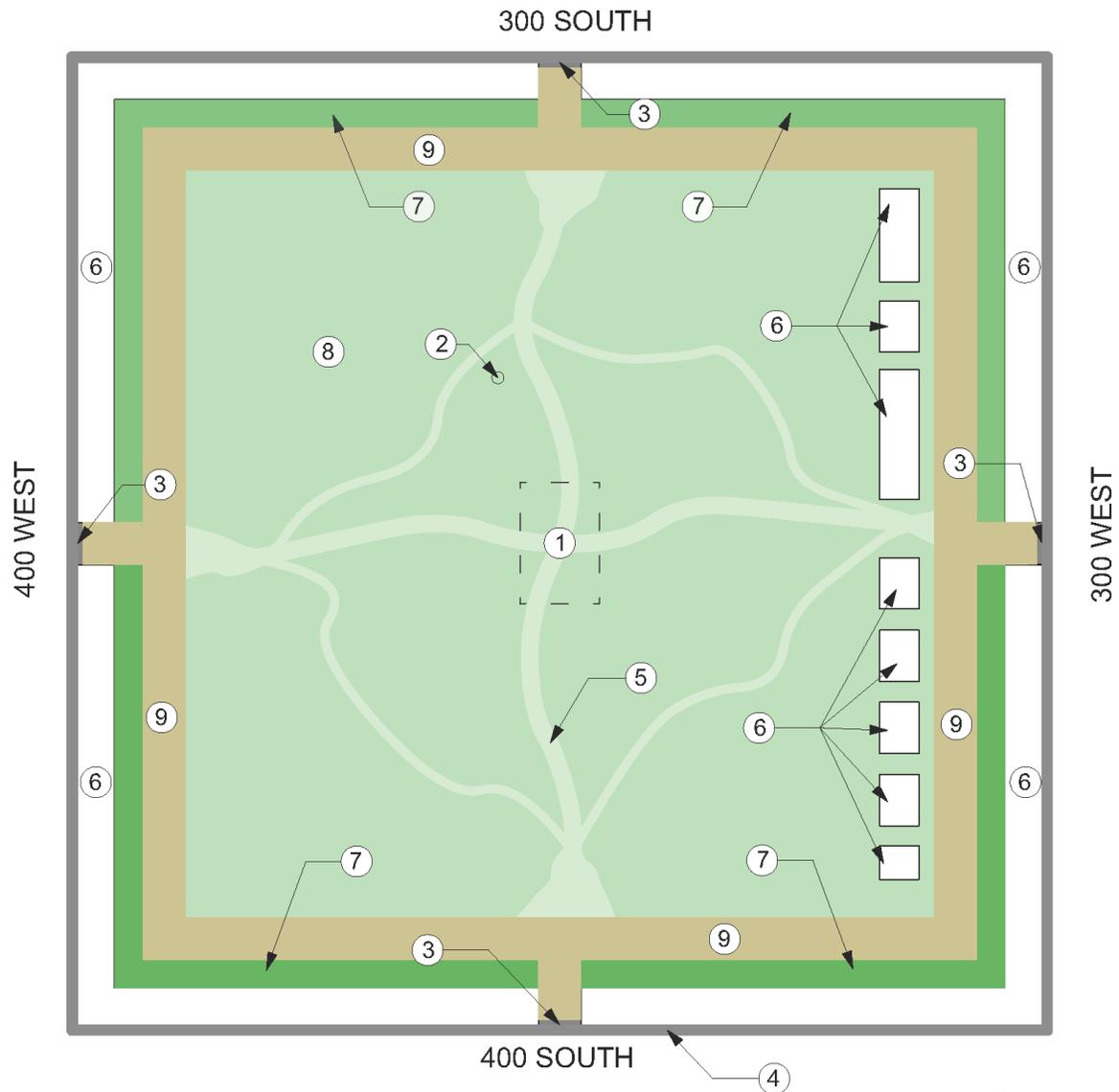


FIGURE 1: PERIOD PLAN - THE OLD FORT
 PIONEER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

- Notes**
1. Bowery (exact location undetermined)
 2. Flagpole (exact location undetermined)
 3. Gate
 4. Adobe Fort Walls
 5. Pathways (exact location undetermined)
 6. Cabins
 7. Kitchen Garden
 8. Commons
 9. Dirt Road

Territorial Period, 1851-1895

As the Old Fort was dismantled and land inside the city became quickly assigned, the fort lost its initial function, and the block's future was in flux during the Territorial Period. The land largely remained open and leased for agricultural purposes, without major improvements. Debate about its best use began. The opportunity to obtain an entire block of open space in the heart of the city sparked ideas. Plans gathered steam, then fizzled, which meant that the land remained available.

Government was organizing during this time, and Church leadership had created the provisional State of Deseret in 1849. They subsequently petitioned the U.S. government for admission as a state. On September 9, 1850, an Organic Act of Congress officially created the Utah Territory.

In January of 1851, minutes reflect some undesired activities in the Old Fort, including a report of one nighttime party in which a man struck another with a club, and the Sheriff shortly thereafter fetched away a "still & apparatus," from the grounds.¹⁰¹ Then, a first item of business after the city's incorporation in January of 1851 was to order demolition of any remaining buildings on Block 48, after the city council had declared it a nuisance two years earlier. In that same Salt Lake City Council meeting, they also considered an ordinance to require all residents of the city to plant trees on their lots within one year, suggesting the Balm of Gilead and Cottonwoods for their usefulness and beauty, but also favoring variety. That the council considered this motion and discussed it at length in such an early meeting shows the priority they placed on such beautification efforts.¹⁰²

For the next twenty years, this property would be rented out to various parties for agricultural purposes. During this period, it was also occasionally referred as the Sixth Ward Square.¹⁰³

Several trends and changes occurred that affected the Old Fort Block and the surrounding neighborhood during the Territorial Period.

In terms of the broader Mormon culture, the 1870s-1890s marked a shift from religious to secular landscapes. Prior to 1890 ideas of millennialism influenced many members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This belief prepared members for the second coming of Christ, preceded by an apocalypse. Some anticipated that this would happen in 1890, and when the world did not end on that date many people settled in for a protracted stay. By the end of the Territorial Period, Utah landscapes shifted into a period of Americanization, growth, and improvement.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ From Randall Dixon's files. Typewritten minutes, spiral bound, labeled p. 39, with annotation handwritten "January 1851, T.B. (HOJ)." (R-3-U)

¹⁰² *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 314-15. Pioneer City Ordinances, Removal of the Old Fort. Salt Lake City: Daughters of Utah Pioneers. (R-3-T)

¹⁰³ A document of unknown origins that appears to be a close-up of an aerial map with markings that say, "No. 1602. Brigham Young Sen. Public Square, 48, Whole Block, Jan 16 1872. Later typewritten label added in the margins, "Block 48, Old Fort, Pioneer or 6th Ward Square. Provide by Jennifer Lund, Church History Library. (R-1-G)

¹⁰⁴ Carter, *Building Zion: The Material World of Mormon Settlement*, 277. (R-3-D)

Change accelerated with the introduction of the transcontinental railroad starting in 1869. As one of the foremost events of the nineteenth century, and it greatly changed many facets of life in Salt Lake City. Given the Old Fort Block's close proximity to rail terminals that would be built, this development impacted this neighborhood even more than most. Within a matter of years one rail line would pass directly adjacent to the Old Fort Block, and other ideas were proposed for how to use the block in conjunction with further railroad development.

Of great general concern during this period was the appropriation of water. By the 1870s, an extensive network of canals carried flowed into "laterals" and ditches which delivered water to homesteads throughout the valley. Corrugates were dug next to each row to bring water to the crops and "waste ditches" carried water from one field to the one below it.¹⁰⁵ Hence, ditches flowed along two sides of the Old Fort Block, as they did along every block in the city.¹⁰⁶

Immigration to Utah also changed neighborhood dramatically. A total of 12,000-14,000 immigrants came to Utah between 1880-1910, which also changed the park neighborhood.¹⁰⁷ Mining was so prevalent along the Wasatch Front that one visitor to the city in 1880 described the area along Main Street as "one large mining camp." Mormon pioneers continued to come to the area, many of whom were non-English speaking as well. The enormous number of jobs offered by the mines and railroads brought immigrants from around the world. For these reasons, the neighborhood surrounding the Old Fort Block became quite diverse from an early time.¹⁰⁸

There were a number of proposals related to the block during this period, and title transferred several times. Here is a quick summary of major activities (see the Appendix for a detailed chronology):

- In 1865, plans were discussed to landscape the block with trees and public walks. Instead, the Salt Lake City Council decided to sell the block as building lots. Brigham Young intervened and purchased the property instead.
- In 1866, Young transferred ownership of the block to former Salt Lake City Mayor A.O. Smoot, who in 1871, sold the property back to Young.
- On May 1, 1871, A delegation led by Brigham Young broke ground for the Utah Southern Railroad on the northwest corner of the Old Fort Block.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Leonard James Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830-1900*, 54. U. of Nebraska Press, 1970.

¹⁰⁶ 2007-07 SWCA: A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory and Monitoring Plan for the Pioneer Park Improvements, Phase 1. (R-1-K)

¹⁰⁷ Brad Westwood, Pioneer Park Neighborhood: The Wellspring of Modern Salt Lake, Utah Department of Heritage & Arts <https://heritageandarts.utah.gov/pioneer-park-the-wellspring-of-modern-salt-lake-city> (K-8-K)

¹⁰⁸ 2007-07 SWCA: A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory and Monitoring Plan for the Pioneer Park Improvements, Phase 1. (R-1-K)

¹⁰⁹ Rhonda Lauritzen and Darren Parry. Phone interview with Darren Parry. Personal, August 31, 2020.

- In 1873 discussions begin with Utah Central and Utah Southern Railroads to obtain the property.¹¹⁰
- Brigham Young Senior passed away in 1877, and on December 7, 1878. His son, Brigham Morris Young, (who had inherited the land) offered to sell the property to the city for the sum of \$6,500. The committee on public grounds, made a counter-offer of \$5,000,¹¹¹ and the transaction was completed in 1879. In doing so, Brigham Morris Young requested that it remain open space for the enjoyment of all and honored his father’s original vision that the block be set aside as a public square.¹¹²
- On March 25, 1879, the mayor and city council decided that, "the Old Fort Block, recently purchased by the city, should hereafter be known as Pioneer Square."¹¹³
- The block was leased to John Reading for agricultural purposes during much of this period.¹¹⁴
- New railroad plans emerged in the foreground, and *The Salt Lake Herald* published an editorial calling for the city to dedicate the Old Fort Block to a Union Train Depot so all three rail lines in the city would use the same depot.¹¹⁵
- James H. Bacon proposed leasing the square as a terminal for the proposed Deep Creek Railway, to be built from Salt Lake City to Nevada.¹¹⁶ He ultimately proposed purchasing it for \$150,000 to be paid once 200 miles of track was laid. Bacon argued that, “It is well known and universally conceded that the Fort block, for which I ask, is not located in a section that renders it particularly valuable for public purposes and the inhabitants of the city have never yet received in any way any benefit from the block.
- The sale was called a “public outrage,”¹¹⁷ and the matter ended up in court. The City Attorney issued an opinion that that the City did not have the right to sell the land.¹¹⁸ The Third District court disagreed and said it could be sold.¹¹⁹ The sale ultimately failed and in February of 1895, the land was seemingly abandoned.

¹¹⁰ From Pioneer Park Chronology, provided by Jennifer Lund of the Church History Department. *Deseret Evening News*, May 3, 1871, 8. (R-1-D)

¹¹¹ From Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing *Deseret News*, January 1, 1879, 9. (R-1-D)

¹¹² W. Randall Dixon, W. (1997). *The Old Fort and Pioneer Park: A Brief Historical Overview*. Unpublished manuscript, Church History Department, Salt Lake City. (R-2-G, p. 96-97)

¹¹³ W. Randall Dixon, W. (1997). *The Old Fort and Pioneer Park*. (R-2-G, p. 96-97)

¹¹⁴ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing “City Council,” *Deseret Evening News*, January 28, 1885, 2. (R-1-D)

¹¹⁵ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing “Union Depot,” *Salt Lake Herald*, December 21, 1887, 4. (R-1-D)

¹¹⁶ The Deep Creek Railroad was never built in Salt Lake City, but they did construct a short-gauge line that served in western Utah mining operations for a short time beginning in 1917. Mining operations in that area were unstained, and the line was only profitable for four of its twenty-two years.

¹¹⁷ From Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing “City Council,” *Salt Lake Herald*, February 18, 1891, 8. (R-1-D)

¹¹⁸ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, *Deseret News*, March 3, 1891. (R-1-D)

¹¹⁹ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, *Deseret News*, March 6, 1891. (R-1-D)

The landscape *within* the block experienced only minor change during the period. Orchards appear on various maps and then are gone.¹²⁰ The configuration of the perimeter trees change. On April 4, 1880, the *Deseret News* announced that, “The Old Fort Block, now known as Pioneer Square, is being improved by the setting out of two rows of poplar trees around the whole block. One row is placed just inside the fence; the other is in the usual place, alongside the water ditch.”¹²¹

There is one lone building in the northeast corner with the rest of the block largely unoccupied or used for storage. The 1875 bird’s eye view of the Old Fort Block marks the first time the Utah Southern Railroad tracks run along the block’s western boundary.

During this time, Block 48 was variously known as the Old Fort Block, the Old Fort Square, and it was sometimes called the Sixth Ward Square. A year later, the city issued a public call for a landscaping plan, for which they paid William R. Jones \$11.¹²² The landscaping plan apparently must have fallen flat, while use as a kitchen garden continued, because three years later in 1884, neighborhood residents complained about the neglected lot and an unbearable stench of rotting cabbages. They called the situation a nuisance.¹²³ Whatever happened with the cabbages, the *Deseret News* praised the “splendid cauliflower specimens” grown the following season on the block.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ From Pioneer Park Chronology, provided by Jennifer Lund of the Church History Department. *Deseret Evening News*, April 3, 1868. (R-1-D)

¹²¹ W. Randall Dixon, (1997). *The Old Fort and Pioneer Park*. (R-2-G, p. 96-97)

¹²² Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, “*An Answer Filed*,” *Deseret Evening News*, March 12, 1891, 8. (R-1-D)

¹²³ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, *Deseret Evening News*, January 9, 1884, 3. (R-1-D)

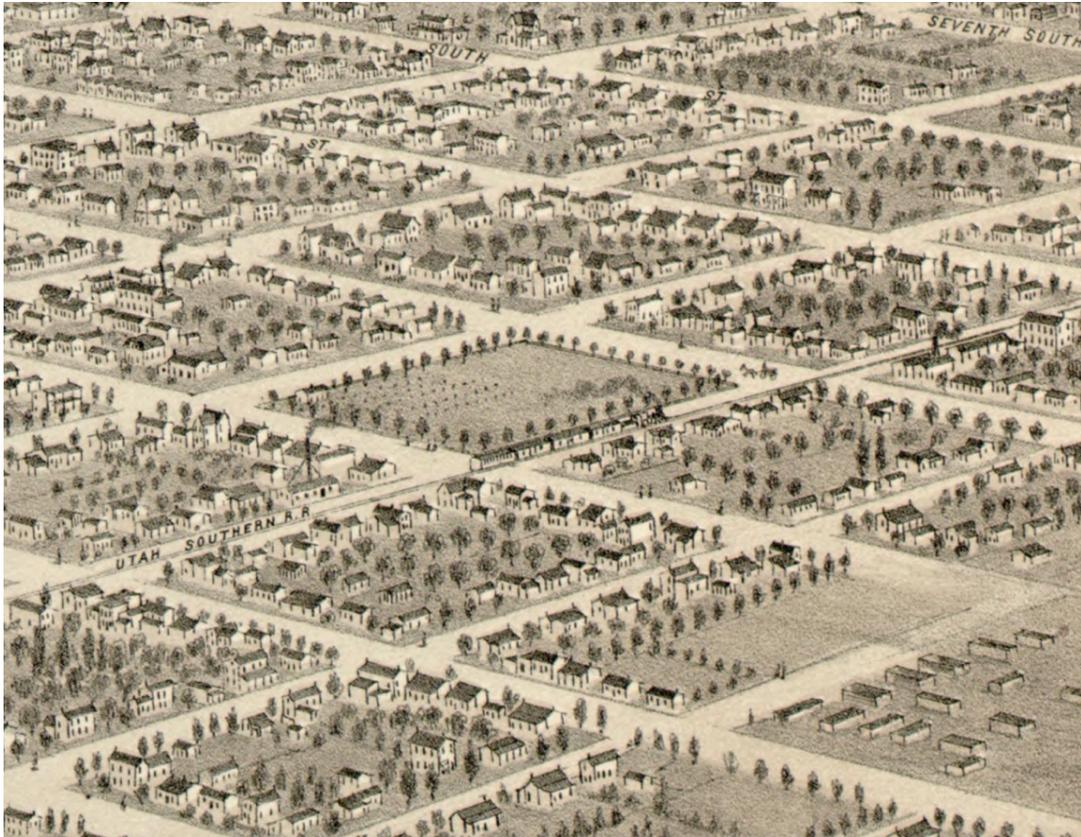
¹²⁴ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, *Deseret Evening News*, October 28, 1884, 3. (R-1-D)



Close-up view of the 1870 Bird's Eye View of Salt Lake City by Augustus Koch, held today by the Library of Congress. (R-2-L)

The *Salt Lake Herald* published an editorial on the city's public squares, praising development of Liberty Park and expressing frustration at the lack of attention to the three other squares. In a criticism apparently aimed at Pioneer Square they concluded that, "The city has no business to engage in the industry of raising corn, onions and carrots, and it is doubtful if it has the right to lease public squares for agricultural or any other purpose."¹²⁵

¹²⁵ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, "The Public Squares," *Salt Lake Herald*, October 28, 1887, 4. (R-1-D)



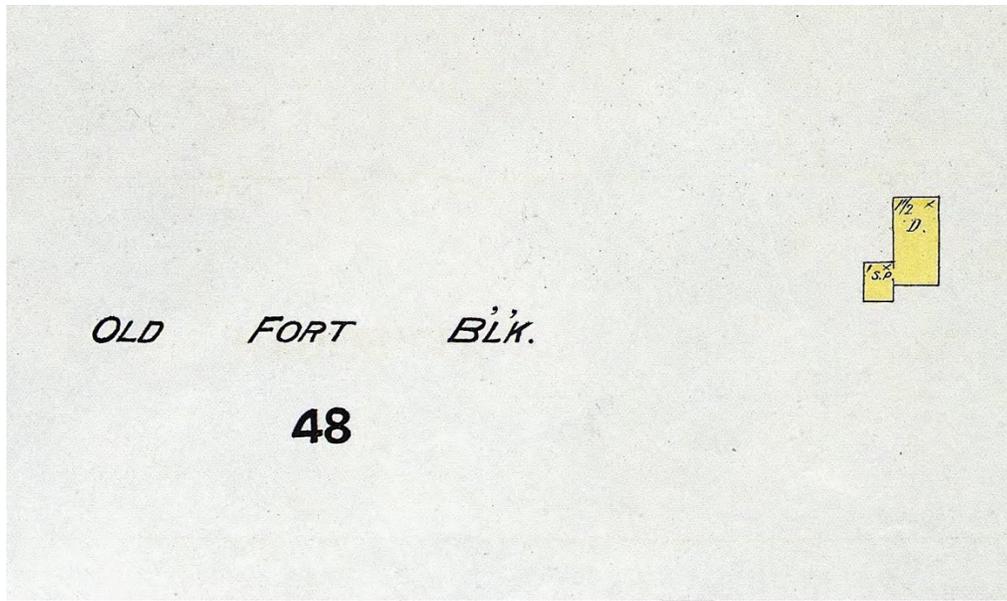
View southeast in the 1875 Bird's Eye View of Salt Lake City from the Library of Congress. (R-2-R)

By this time, community members began advocating for a proper park, and they started fundraising efforts to preserve the square for use by the people.¹²⁶

Still, in 1889 the only structure on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company's map of Block 48 was a one-and-a-half story wood building with screened porch in northeast quadrant. The city council then approved another lease, provided that the lessee made some improvements.¹²⁷

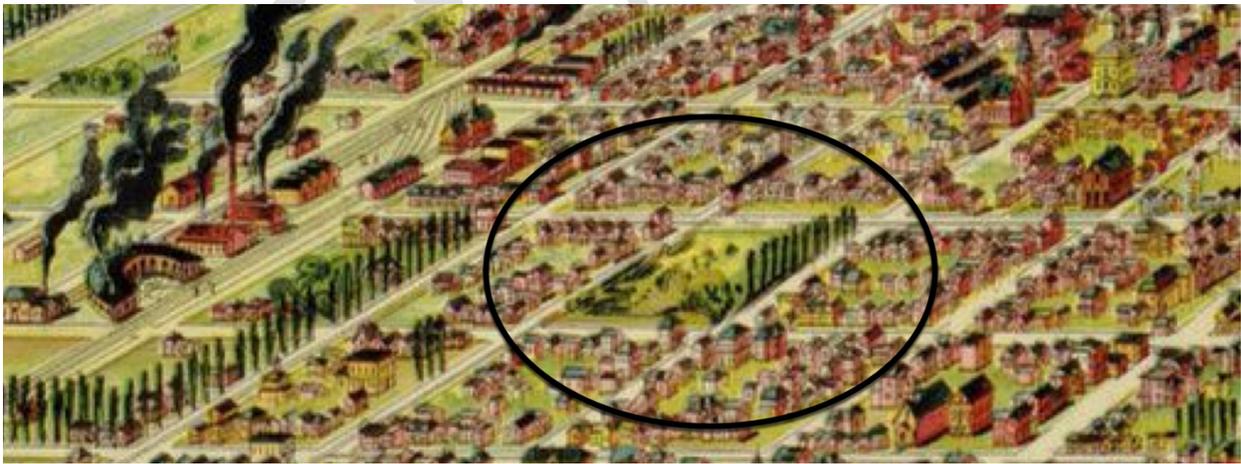
¹²⁶ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, "The Old Fort Fund," Salt Lake Herald, March 13, 1891, 8). (R-1-D)

¹²⁷ Pioneer Park Chronology provided by Jennifer Lund. Referencing, "An Answer Filed," Deseret Evening News, March 12, 1891, 8). (R-1-D)



Cropped view of the 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Sheet 46, showing single structure on the Old Fort Block – Block 48. (K-1-E)

During the years between 1891 and 1898 the land remained largely open space. In the 1891 Bird's Eye View, trees lined east side of block (presumably Lombardy Poplars); various other trees and shrubs were depicted on south and west sides while the north half largely looked to be lawn.¹²⁸



Pioneer Square called out on the 1892 Bird's Eye View of Salt Lake City held by the Library of Congress. (K-1-G)

¹²⁸ Henry Wellge, 1891 Bird's eye view of Salt Lake City, Library of Congress Control Number: 75696616. LCCN Permalink: <https://lccn.loc.gov/75696616>. (K-1-G)

In 1895, a new idea was proposed to make Pioneer Square the site of a much-needed high school, with the remainder of the area a city park.¹²⁹ This proposal—like others of this period—failed.

Then, another use emerged for this block—a use which the community would come to love. A large, flat, open plot of land was ideal for the circus. Starting in the early 1890s newspaper advertisements and announcements begin appearing for various traveling circuses that contracted with the city to use the space. For example, 1893: “Richard’s circus will exhibit at Pioneer Square three days, commencing Monday, July 17.”¹³⁰ With this development, the land once again became used for public gathering and recreation under the cover of temporary shelters, i.e., circus tents.

¹²⁹ From Pioneer Park Chronology, provided by Jennifer Lund of the Church History Department. Referencing, “*For the Chamber of Commerce*,” *Deseret Weekly*, February 9, 1895, 10. (R-1-D)

¹³⁰ From Pioneer Park Chronology, provided by Jennifer Lund of the Church History Department. Referencing, “*Advertisement*,” *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, July 15, 1893, 5. (R-1-D)

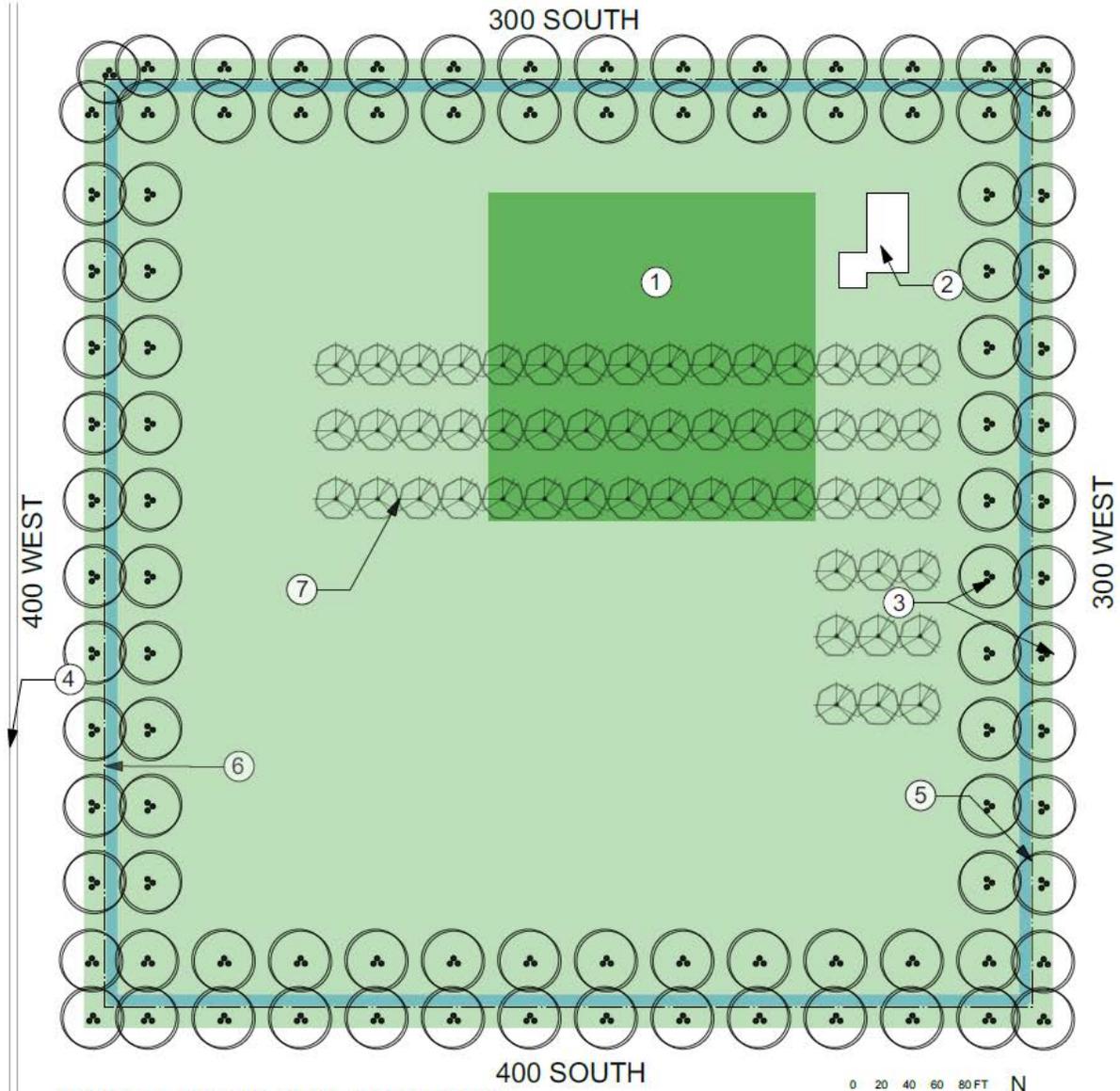
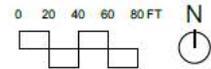


FIGURE 1: PERIOD PLAN - TERRITORIAL
 PIONEER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



Notes

- 1. Garden Plots
- 2. Farmhouse
- 3. Cottonwood/Poplar Trees
- 4. Utah Southern Railroad
- 5. Canal
- 6. Present Day ROW
- 7. Orchard

Americanization Period, 1896-1958

A major influence within the Americanization Period was the City Beautiful Movement. Inspired by the “White City” created at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the City Beautiful Movement influenced communities to create grand, formal city plans, care for public land, and bring amenities to the public for better health and more pleasing aesthetics. Flexible, non-programmed space is inherent in City Beautiful era parks, allowing for temporary planned uses for community benefit. Providing more generous open and green space within densely populated and industrializing cities, was also a goal of the City Beautiful Movement, providing an opportunity to picturesque qualities of beauty and monumental grandeur within the urban environment.



The World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago initiated the City Beautiful Movement in the United States, with the goals to provide clean, safe, orderly, and beautiful urban places. (K-3-BB)

In the 1890s, Liberty Park was considered the gem of Salt Lake City’s parks. It was large and at that time, far removed from downtown with an east side location in the former “Big Fields” agricultural area. Having received the bulk of attention and funding from the city, Liberty Park’s entrance was designed and constructed in 1883-1885. Though well ahead of the City Beautiful Movement, Liberty Park became locally significant and popular as a park destination.¹³¹ However, Salt Lake City

¹³¹ The city began constructing wide grass medians on 600 East between South Temple and Liberty Park in 1906 as a grand natural promenade to the park’s north entrance. Similar medians were later built on 800 East and 1200 East. Westwood, *West Side Stories 15: The Progressive Era, The Making of a Proper Park, and the “Stockades.”* (K-8-H)

progressives were also thinking about how to bring improvements to the impoverished west side dwellers and laborers.¹³²

The City Beautiful Movement arrived at just the right time as the Americanization Period was witness to significant population increases through each of its decades. In 1890, pre-statehood, the population of the city was 44,843. By 1900, post-statehood in 1896, the population had grown to 53,531, a 19% increase.¹³³ City residents utilized the park's flexible, unprogrammed space for all types of occasions, including regular touring circus troupes, such as the Wallace Brothers Circus in July 1897. During the 50th anniversary of the city's founding, also July 1897, the 'Old Fort Block' was declared as a public space and the city began first conversion of fallow fields into a formal park.¹³⁴

As noted in *West Side Stories 15: The Progressive Era, The Making of a Proper Park, and the "Stockades,"* Pioneer Park and the surrounding neighborhood were central to a rapidly growing city:

The development of Pioneer Park after 1898 represents another effort to incorporate Progressive Era reforms but this time in the oldest most industrial part of Salt Lake City. On July 25, 1898, member of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, George Q. Cannon, dedicated the old fort block as a municipal park. ... This decision to create a public park with the support of prominent religious and government leaders, at least for a time abated the prior calls from sundry business leaders to turn the open space into something else.¹³⁵

While the USDA does not provide current data as to the composition of the soil under Pioneer Park, categorizing it as Urban Land, late 1800s documentation of soils and irrigation stated that, "The transformation of this sterile waste, glistening with beds of salt, and soda, and deadly alkali, seemed impossible."¹³⁶

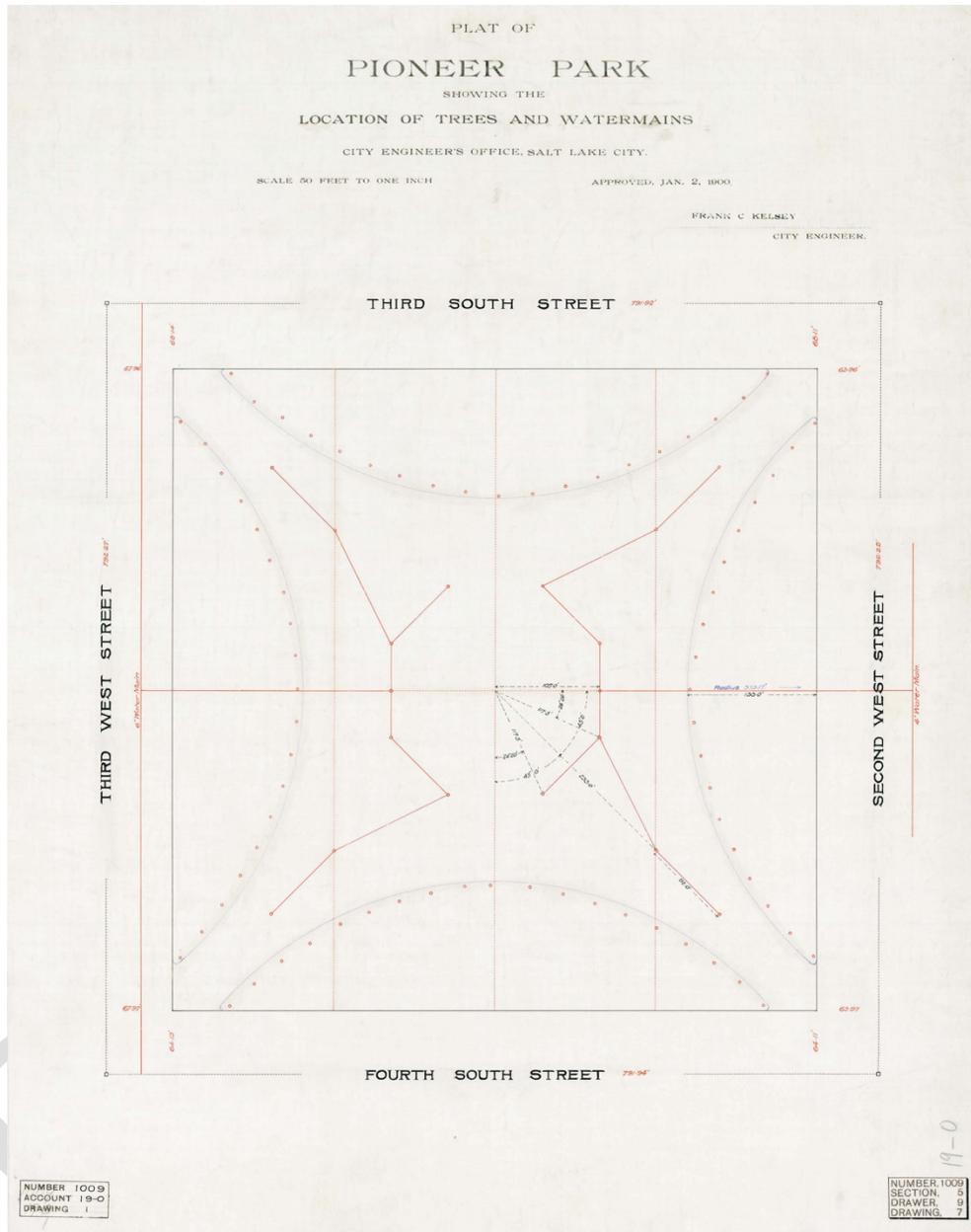
¹³² Westwood, *West Side Stories 15*. (K-8-H)

¹³³ Salt Lake City, Utah Population History, 1880-2019. (K-8-Q)

¹³⁴ Westwood, *West Side Stories 14: Salt Lake City Loses Its "Dirtiest City" Status, the West Side, Public Health, and the City's Only Surviving Pioneer Square*. (K-8-G)

¹³⁵ Westwood, *West Side Stories 15*. (K-8-H)

¹³⁶ Frank Gardner and John Stewart. A Soil Survey in Salt Lake Valley, Utah. USDA; 1899. (K-7-F)



Dated 1900, this city engineer's plat shows the location of trees and water mains, presumably for one of the earliest sprinkler systems in the city. (K-8-S)

Salt Lake City Mayor John Clark presided over the 1898 dedication in one of the important early Salt Lake City-LDS Church partnerships soon after they became distinctly separate. For the powerful railroads, this event marked a last opportunity for them to push the city to sell the property

to them and started an intensive last push over the next five years for them to obtain ownership for as much as \$250,000.¹³⁷

By most accounts, the physical appearance of the park was likened to a swamp in a vacant lot. In 1898, there were three structures on Pioneer Public Square. A wood residential structure, similar to that which appears in 1870 and 1885 bird's eye sketches, of one-and-a-half stories is present in the northeast quadrant of the block with the address of 313 West 300 South.¹³⁸ On the northern edge of the block, west of the house and located at the address of 327 West 300 South, is a wood structure labeled as City Sewerage Dept. Store House. The last structure is a minor, very small accessory wood building at the back (west) lot line of the residence and adjacent to property line of the store house.¹³⁹

Improvements to the neighborhood surrounding the park were slow, but the city did fund projects to improve the physical environment of the park and the reputation of the area. In 1901, a city council resolution introduced an annual appropriation \$500 toward the landscape maintenance of trees, shrubbery, and lawns.¹⁴⁰ In 1903, Pioneer Park was dedicated by unanimous vote of the city council, passing an ordinance “dedicating Block 48...commonly called Pioneer Square...as a Public Park, for the use of the inhabitants of Salt Lake City.”¹⁴¹ Despite the grounds being described positively as “similar to those of Liberty Park, and though many of the trees are young, the general effect of the landscape is good,”¹⁴² the public perception of the park was regarded more negatively as reflected by an east side resident:

It is now only good for a serenade ground by bullfrogs every night from March up to November.¹⁴³

Through the first decade of the 1900s, Pioneer Park continued to be a gathering place for both formal and informal gatherings. The park continued to be a contested space, garnering alternating positive and negative headlines and news stories. Negative public sentiment continued due to use of the park of what was viewed as inappropriate uses such as a camping site for recent emigrants and wayward children.¹⁴⁴ The meager annual allocation of \$500 was not going far in improvements. In 1906, it was reported that “The first, Pioneer square, cannot lay much claim to being a park. The ground is there and a few trees have been planted, but no pretense is made to keeping the place up.” Though that same year, the landscape and grounds were sufficiently maintained to host a baseball game that was captured by the sports page:

¹³⁷ “Pioneer Square Dedication,” The Salt Lake Tribune, July 22, 1898. (K-5-D)

¹³⁸ In the 1870 and 1885 bird's eye sketches, rows of orchards can be seen on the east side of the block, but the exact location is not consistently exhibited or referenced.

¹³⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps, 1898. (K-1-H and K-1-I)

¹⁴⁰ “City Council Reverses Itself,” Deseret Evening News, April 17, 1901. (K-5-BB)

¹⁴¹ Pioneer Square (“The Old Fort”), undated, no author. (K-8-U)

¹⁴² “Pioneer Park Open,” Salt Lake Telegram, July 24, 1903. (K-5-K)

¹⁴³ “Speedy Completion,” The Salt Lake Tribune, April 19, 1903. (K-5-G)

¹⁴⁴ The Salt Lake Tribune, July 17, 1905. (K-5-M)

The Lincoln school juniors defeated the Dubel Junior tailors' team on Pioneer Square at 10 o'clock this morning, by a score of 19 to 18. The battery for the young tailors was Dubel, pitcher, and Moses Thatcher, catcher, and for the Lincolns, Jack Hummel, pitcher, and Bill Snarr, catcher.¹⁴⁵

Fortunately, the legislature made a commitment to deliver an annual appropriation of \$2,000 to keep the square in a condition that was appropriate for park purposes. Again, it was negatively described:

At present, the place is locked and in the early morning has more the appearance of a lodging-house than a public property. In the early morning hours dozens of persons can be found sleeping in the grass in the park.¹⁴⁶

In early 1907, it was reported that "Pioneer square is in good condition also this year. Plans are being made to improve it by planting more grass, especially in the side plots.¹⁴⁷ But once summer rolled around, the same stories emerged. Police were said to have plenty of work doing a daily round up of vagrants at the park.¹⁴⁸ In November, the city decided to close the park for an unknown reason, however, it was found that teams of horses and wagons were crossing the park in a short cut during the winter months and damaged the wire entry fences at the corners.¹⁴⁹ Pioneer Square was valued at \$100,000 in January 1908, a considerable sum to the growing and cash-strapped municipal government.

In 1909, the historic square turned park was about to have a brighter future. Central to that future was the founding of the Parks & Recreation Association of Salt Lake City (PRASLC). The association's goals included the following:

- To encourage outdoor life and appreciation and maintenance of the natural beauty in and about Salt Lake City;
- To investigate City conditions with reference to Parks and Playground needs and to provide for their efficiency;
- To secure the establishment and maintenance of a complete system of Parks, Playgrounds and Recreation Centres [sic] at convenient distances throughout the City;
- To construct a model Recreation Center – adequately equipped for bathing, games, sports and social meetings, suitable for winter and summer use – and
- To conduct the same under competent supervision until such time as the Municipality shall undertake the work.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ Salt Lake Telegram, March 26, 1906. (K-5-P)

¹⁴⁶ Salt Lake Telegram, July 18, 1906. (K-5-Q)

¹⁴⁷ "Hundreds Seek Beauty Spots," Salt Lake Herald, April 16, 1907. (K-5-R)

¹⁴⁸ *With the Police*, Salt Lake Herald, July 30, 1907. (K-5-DD)

¹⁴⁹ "Park Closed to Public," Salt Lake Herald, November 17, 1907. (K-5-EE)

¹⁵⁰ The Parks and Playgrounds Association of Salt Lake City, 1909. (K-8-E)



Photographs of street paving on 300 South in 1909 also captured the northwest corner of Pioneer Park, where you can clearly see the hedge walls. The fenced entry at the corner was likely to restrict access larger than a bicycle from entering the site. (K-3-Y)

While none of these objectives directly mentioned Pioneer Park, it was sought by the progressive PRASLC to be the first for improvement due to its industrial neighborhood location, and thus ability to enhance the lives of the surrounding low socio-economic families and immigrants who lived and played on the west side.¹⁵¹

The PRASLC, working through the city's Children's Playground Committee, petitioned the city's park board to install the playground in April, but it took the entire year to secure enough political and public support for the idea of a playground to take hold and raise funds to purchase equipment.¹⁵² The playground movement had been sweeping the country at this exact time with 10% of cities over 5,000 population having a playground prior to 1908, rising to 20% in the summer of 1908, and expected to rise to 40% in 1909.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Westwood, *West Side Stories* 15. (K-8-H)

¹⁵² "League Women Plan Campaign," *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, April 20, 1909. (K-5-U)

¹⁵³ The Parks and Playgrounds Association of Salt Lake City, 1909. (K-8-E)

Early 1909 improvements reportedly included the planting of a large number of trees and shrubs.¹⁵⁴ And in June, the city council discussed allowing farmers to stand along the north side of the park to sell their produce.¹⁵⁵ In short time this would be allowed and later would be moved to the east side of the park along 300 West.

Pioneer Park was the suitable location to serve as the location for the annual national Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) encampment in 1909.¹⁵⁶ The GAR was a fraternal organization for Civil War veterans who served in the Union Army. It was founded in 1866, held an annual reunion where up some of its 410,000 members would hold a parade and camp for the weekend, and were organized nationally for advocacy such as supporting voting right for African-American veterans, making Memorial Day a national holiday, and as a voting bloc helped get several presidents elected.¹⁵⁷

In early 1910, the city made considerable preparations to the installation of the city's first playground. The Park Commission stated, "...we believe this park should be made a garden of beauty which would give a lasting impression to the thousands of visitors who would gain their first view of the city while passing Pioneer Square on their way from the station."¹⁵⁸ Work commenced on leveling the ground by filling in low spots with soil and gravel, raising the surface four feet in some places.¹⁵⁹ The newspaper reported that a drawing was made showing Pioneer Park with 2 ½ acres devoted to the playground, with the outer sides of the block set with trees, shrubbery, lawns, use of hedges as walls or barriers, and many fountains and entrances.¹⁶⁰ It was at this time that the first playground was installed at Pioneer Park, in the exact center, and it was an immediate success. The remainder of the park was described at the time as follows:

...northeast quarter, 130-foot racing grounds; northwest quarter, divided into a boys' field and a parents' corner; the entire south half is taken up with a girls field, 72x130 feet, a little boys' handball field 78x55 feet, a basketball field 50x55 feet, and the rest of the ground taken up with matrons' house, sand boxes, swings, merry-go-rounds, maypole, trapeze bars, shelter buildings and auditorium.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁴ "City Dads Give Their Attention to the People's Playground," Salt Lake Herald-Republican, April 16, 1909. (K-5-T)

¹⁵⁵ "City's Health Up to Council," Salt Lake Herald-Republican, June 14, 1909. (K-5-FF)

¹⁵⁶ The Salt Lake Tribune, May 26, 1909. (K-5-II)

¹⁵⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Army_of_the_Republic More information about the 1909 Annual National Encampment can be found at <https://rsc.byu.edu/civil-war-saints/splendid-outpouring-welcome-salt-lake-city-1909-national-encampment-grand-army>

¹⁵⁸ It appears from newspapers that despite the park having been dedicated more than a decade ago, many continued to call it Pioneer Square.

¹⁵⁹ Most accounts of the block to this point herald the site's character for its levelness. This is the first and only account by the newspaper or historically that discusses leveling low spots and thus could be exaggerated. "Plan to Beautify City is Discussed," The Salt Lake Tribune, February 23, 1910. (K-5-GG)

¹⁶⁰ This drawing has not been located.

¹⁶¹ "Children's Playground is Assuming Shape," The Salt Lake Tribune, March 27, 1910. (K-5-W)



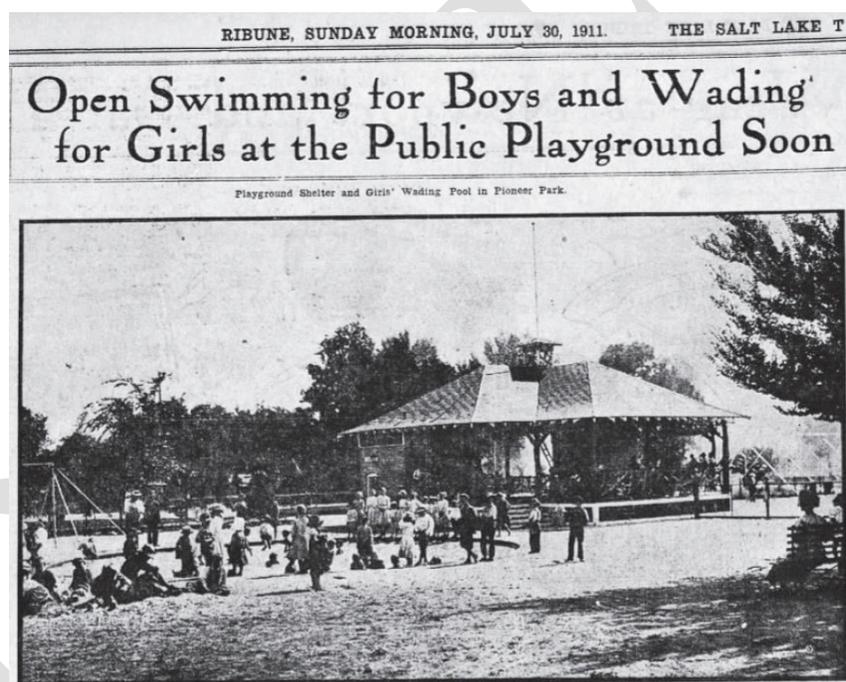
The Parks & Recreation Association of Salt Lake City advocated and raised private funds for installing the city's first playground in 1910. Consisting of swing sets and slides, it proved popular for children across the city. (K-4-G)

The year 1910 continued to be a highlight for focus on making Pioneer Park a central location of activities. The public market area for approved selling was moved to east side of park,¹⁶² and due to the popularity of the location, the mayor bolstered the effort to make Pioneer Park a central location of activities by promising to erect a big market for Utah farmers for the benefit of citizens and to erect an auditorium.¹⁶³ However, no further details were given at that time and a plan would not emerge for another two years. The first paving of 300 South between Main Street and the recently opened Denver & Rio Grande Depot was paved in early spring. This improvement as well as the attention paid to Pioneer Park certainly helped welcome new visitors with modern, beautiful and clean amenities.

¹⁶² "Council Throws Committee Down," Salt Lake Herald-Republican, May 10, 1910. (K-5-X)

¹⁶³ "Big Market for Utah Farmers," Deseret News, January 24, 1910 (K-5-V); The Salt Lake Tribune, March 27, 1910. (K-5-W)

The Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP) announced plans in 1911 to erect a monument in Pioneer Square.¹⁶⁴ Though the intention was likely to build it immediately to capitalize on the new popularity of the park, it took over two decades. The ‘shelter house’ opened on May 30, 1911, and was described as an “artistic shelter... which affords abundant shade.”¹⁶⁵ By this time the playground was surrounded by a ‘neat fence’ and the ‘park proper... has been sodded with winding paths cut through the green.” The big improvements, however, were the construction of two swimming pools to the north of the playgrounds. The boys swimming pool measured 75 x 30 and was 3½ feet deep and had dressing rooms immediately adjacent. The wading pool for girls and little children was circular and shallow enough to make it safe for all.¹⁶⁶ Photographic evidence shows a mix of grass and trees throughout the park, movable wood park benches, a high metal fence separating the dirt playground from the grass areas, and swing sets and two slides on the playground. The shelter house, or pavilion, as well as the boys dressing structure display a rustic Craftsman architectural style.



While the playgrounds installed in 1910 were resoundingly successful, the anticipation for the opening of public swimming pools at Pioneer Park made headlines. (K-5-Zb)

While water was previously a necessary component of implementing a successful picturesque park landscape through irrigated sprinkling, its significance became strengthened through the addition of the pools, restrooms in the pavilion, and a dual drinking fountain on the east side of the park.

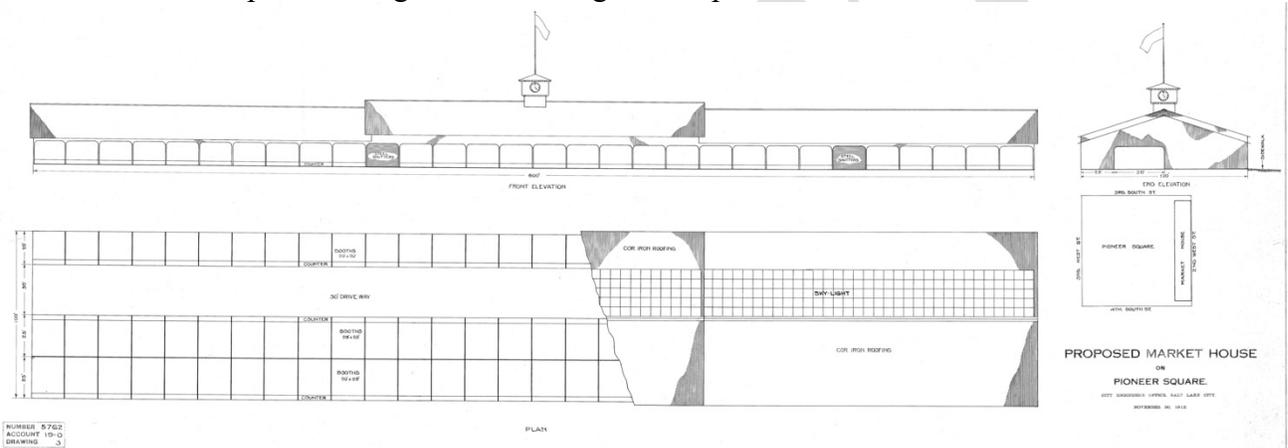
¹⁶⁴ “Will Erect Monument,” *Deseret News*, September 26, 1911. (K-5-AA)

¹⁶⁵ *The Salt Lake Tribune*, May 16, 1911. (K-5-Y)

¹⁶⁶ “First Model Playground in the City is Nearing Completion,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, July 30, 1911. (K-5-Za)

Census numbers reflect that by 1910 there were almost 1,200 African Americans living in Utah. The majority of businesses owned by African-Americans were in the Pioneer Park neighborhood on the near west side and between the city's two major railroad depots.¹⁶⁷ However, African-Americans in Utah were subjected to Jim Crow-era segregation restrictions including prohibition from using the wading pools at Pioneer Park.¹⁶⁸

While most of the major improvements had been completed by 1912, the idea to build an auditorium and market in the park was still being considered. In November, a vernacular barn-like market house was sketched to be placed along the eastern edge of the park.



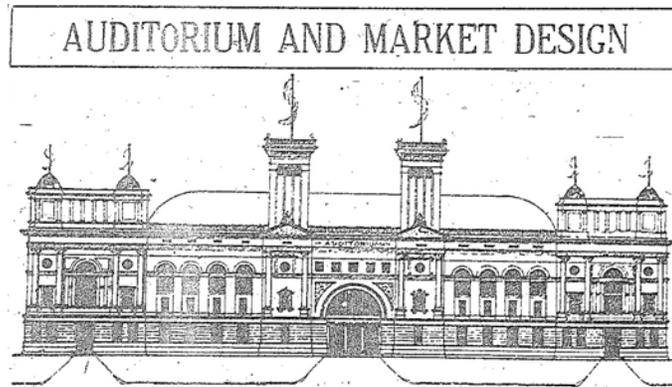
Proposed Market House at Pioneer Square, 1912. Drawing by City Engineer's Office. (K-8-R)

By December, the basic plan had been fully designed by the firm of Minor & Young in the Beaux Arts architectural style, which was favored in the City Beautiful Movement.¹⁶⁹ However, there were no signs that this proposal went further than the announcement and an initial presentation.

¹⁶⁷ Westwood and Clark, *West Side Stories 24: African Americans and Salt Lake's West Side: Part One*. (K-8-M)

¹⁶⁸ The exclusion of African-Americans from the pools in Pioneer Park lasted through their lifespan into the late 1950s, and in Salt Lake City's general economic life into the 1960s. (K-9-C)

¹⁶⁹ "Local Architects Submit to City Commission Plans for Great Structure," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, December 15, 1912. (K-5-HH)



At the request of the city in 1912, architects Minor & Young designed a Beaux Arts style auditorium and market building that conceptually would have extended the full length of the east side of the park. (K-3-N)

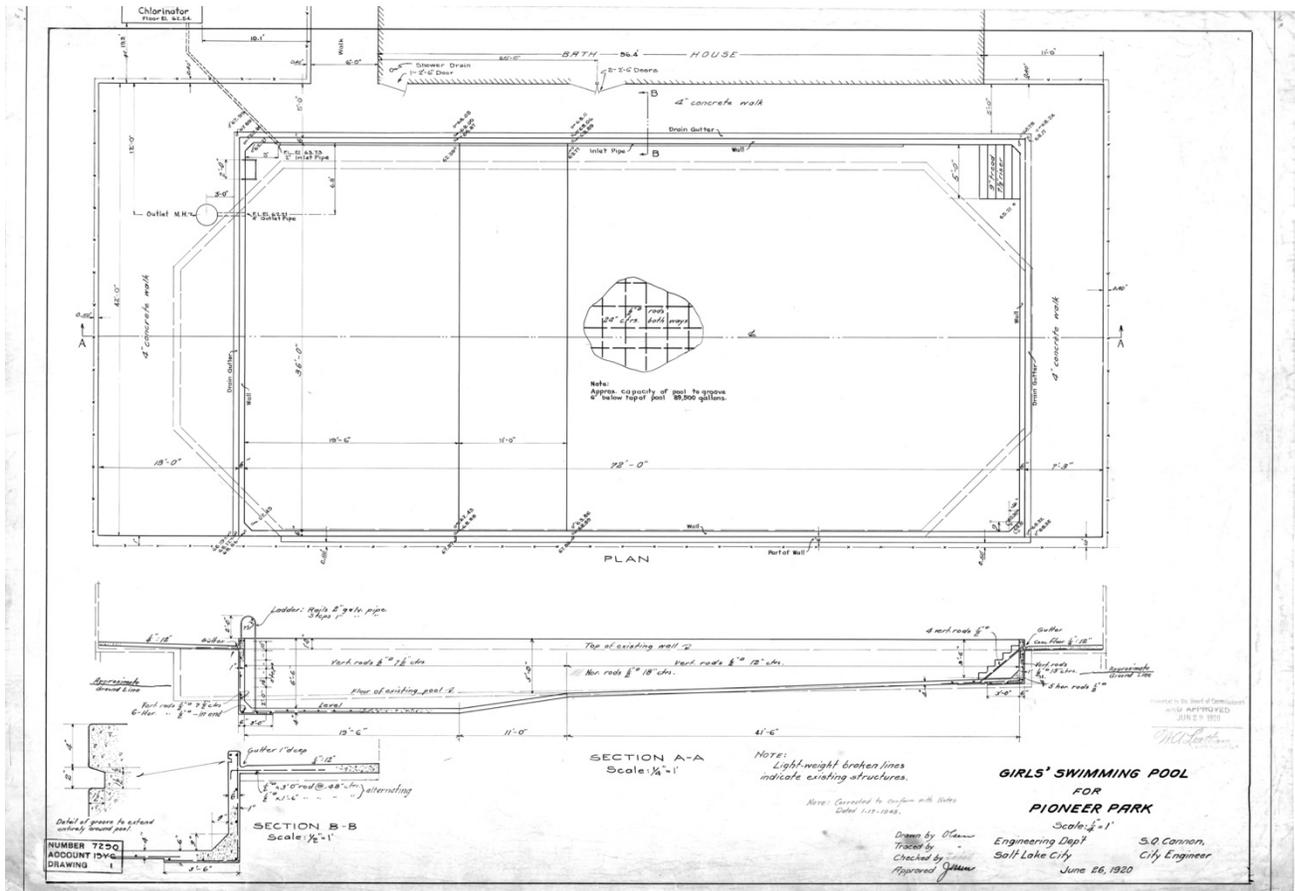
In 1913, the Salt Lake City Civic Planning and Art Commission was created to follow the City Beautiful Movement, proposing and implementing a twenty-year plan to beautify the city. The plan took several years to be developed and was adopted in 1920.¹⁷⁰ By 1921, it was reported that the Park Department was rapidly moving toward realization of Salt Lake City's ambition to become recognized nationally as *The City Beautiful*.



By 1920, a picturesque landscape of trees, flowers and bushes, gravel pathways, natural hedge wall, and a Victorian carpet of grass at Pioneer Park had matured. (K-4-O)

¹⁷⁰ Julie Osborne, *Beehive History 22: Pioneer Fort*. (K-8-D)

The girls' swimming pool was designed by the City Engineer's Office in 1920. With construction following the design, the pool's first season was 1921.

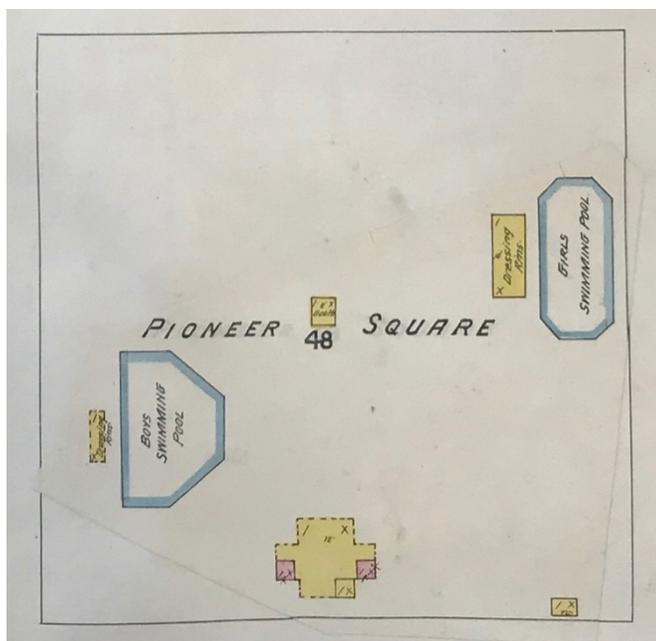


Drawing of the girls' swimming pool for Pioneer Park, June 26, 1920. (K-8-V)

Pioneer Park stayed the same physically for more than a decade. A few improvements are seen by 1927 in addition to those that have previously been mentioned, including:

- A one-story wood structure at the exact center labeled 'booth;'
- An octagonal-shaped girls swimming pool east of center;
- A rectangular wood structure west of the girls swimming pool labeled 'dressing rooms;'
- A small rectangular wood structure southeast of center with a terra cotta chimney.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map, 1927. (K-1-K)



This 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance map is the first that shows both swimming pools and swimming dressing structures, as well as the pavilion. (K-1-K)

The Great Depression had deep impact on Utah's economic and social conditions. Given those impacts, little change happened at Pioneer Park between 1930 and the late 1940s after World War II. The DUP erected and dedicated their stone monument with a bronze plaque in the center of the park in 1933. It was created funded by Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association and the Boy Scouts and Vanguards of Pioneer Stake.¹⁷² By 1937, a small informal baseball diamond is seen in the northwest quadrant of the park and two tennis courts have been constructed on the west half.¹⁷³ The trees and landscape continue to mature and informal pathways take root as the park continues its regular use without contention.

However, the relatively peaceful use of the historic square as a park, without controversy, was about to change. With the close of World War II and the return of life to routines of work, school, and play, Pioneer Park came into the crosshairs of those seeking economic gain and a change in the west side's perceptions. Between 1948 and 1955 four proposals to sell Pioneer Park for redevelopment were debated. The first came in 1948 when city officials began a seven-year process to explore other uses for the park, including selling it to fund a west side park and new golf course.¹⁷⁴ For many in Utah's majority cultural and ethnic background, Pioneer Park represented an opportunity for

¹⁷² Original plaque was stolen and replaced in 2020. Note that the stone monument was relocated c. 2018 to the east side of park.

¹⁷³ UGS aerial 1937. (K-2-A)

¹⁷⁴ Osborne, Beehive History 22. (K-8-D)

complete redevelopment given that they considered it a public space that consistently attracted poverty, nefarious activity, and ethnic and racial diversity in its regular use.¹⁷⁵

Despite the Salt Lake City population witnessing exponential growth between 1900 and 1950 (a 240% increase to 182,121), “the problem of Pioneer Park” was still one of the goals of elected officials as well as neighborhoods such as the West Side Community Council.¹⁷⁶

The grand Beaux Arts style park that emerged during the City Beautiful Movement had begun decline during the Great Depression and a post-war change in lifestyles was beginning to take hold. One of the park’s swimming pools, long in a state of deterioration, was covered and landscaped over by the mid-1950s.¹⁷⁷ But the park continued to boast two of the best tennis courts in the state, even hosting some of the state high school tournament, and had recently added horseshoe pits.¹⁷⁸

Again, Salt Lake City commissioners considered selling the park for capital improvements funds, stating that the recreational use of the park had dropped off because the surrounding area had become industrial. However, Mayor Earl Glade refused offers even up to \$400,000. Those opposed to the idea lined up at meetings and in the headlines. In response, the Deseret News (Sunday, May 23, 1948) conceded that “we may be willing to sacrifice our wives in order to play golf,” but went on to argue, “let’s not sacrifice our historical attractions or our children.”¹⁷⁹ The Sons of Utah Pioneers (SUP) stated that sale would be tragic, that they’d be willing to step up in performing maintenance, and adding, “we’ve been destroying so many of our old landmarks that we have few left.”¹⁸⁰ The Planning Commission and the American Pioneer Trails Association took public stances against selling public open space. Supporting the commissioners, the city engineer suggested building a coliseum or auditorium on the block and the Salt Lake Chamber came out in favor of selling the park.

When it came to public sentiment, many did not mince parse words:

My husband says he’s afraid that something one of the city commissioners said will gum up the deal. It was something about using part of the money to enlarge one of the municipal golf courses. It wouldn’t surprise him, he says, if the president of the Hoboes’ National Assn. got out an injunction. Imagine! – Bridge Club¹⁸¹

The park is badly run down.

¹⁷⁵ Westwood, *West Side Stories 7: The Legacy of Salt Lake City’s Pioneer Fort*. (K-8-F)

¹⁷⁶ Salt Lake City, *Utah Population History, 1880-2019* (K-8-Q); “*West Sides to Boost Betterment of Area*,” Salt Lake Telegram, January 12, 1950. (K-6-K)

¹⁷⁷ “*City Prepares Park Areas for Summer*,” The Salt Lake Tribune, April 30, 1950. (K-6-J)

¹⁷⁸ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map, 1950 (K-1-L); *Historicaerials.com* 1950 (K-2-G), 1958 (K-2-I); Marriott Library aerial, 1955 (K-2-H); UGS aerial, 1958. (K-2-J)

¹⁷⁹ A. Kent Powell, *Utah’s Preservation History*, 1978. (K-9-A)

¹⁸⁰ “*S.L. Commissioners Study Sale of Pioneer Park*,” The Salt Lake Tribune, July 27, 1950. (K-6-A)

¹⁸¹ “*Senator from Sandpit*,” Ham Park, The Salt Lake Tribune, August 2, 1950. (K-6-E)

Major use of the park seems to be a hangout or an out-of-doors sleeping place for bums and idlers.

We ought not leave it as an expensive, little-used, run-down park which has become littler better than a fancy Salt Lake City hobo “jungle.”¹⁸²

Fortunately, the commissioners were forced to abandon the park sale plan because of the country’s entrance into the Korean War and resulting shortage of building materials, making it impractical for a buyer to develop the tract.¹⁸³

Taking a more proactive approach, the Sons of Utah Pioneers announced a plan on June 25, 1955, that included reconstruction of the fort’s walls and cabins. They desired to restore ‘the most historic site in western America’ and operate it as a tourist attraction. The plans indicated that part of the block would be restored as nearly as accurately as possible to the original fort using modern, long-lasting materials, but in a reduced scale, size, and appearance. Included would be a replica of the old Salt Lake Theatre and a museum building with a colonnade or “Hall of Fame” to house statues of Pioneers.¹⁸⁴ The last threat of the period came in 1955 when Salt Lake realtors unsuccessfully argued for the sale of the park.¹⁸⁵

Aerial photography from 1955 shows that Pioneer Park’s physical composition was evolving. Trees around the outside of the block are missing while the park’s center is mostly dirt and appears that the boys swimming pool is extant but the girls swimming pool is not. There are a series of formal pathways in four tiers: 1) From corners and mid-blocks into center; 2) parallel to streets at sidewalk (straight); 3) parallel to streets but with undulating curves nearest to the center; and 4) parallel to streets with gentle curves between sidewalk and center paths.¹⁸⁶

By 1958, Pioneer Park looked very different than it did just ten years ago. The center development of the park – the girls and boys swimming pools and their associated dressing rooms – was removed and landscaped over.¹⁸⁷ Over the center of the park, a little league baseball diamond with dirt infield and grass outfield has been constructed. The tennis courts and pavilion remain extant. The large

¹⁸² “Pioneer Park has Long Been Neglected,” Salt Lake Telegram, August 5, 1950. (K-6-F)

¹⁸³ “City Abandons Park Sale Plan,” Deseret News, September 8, 1950. (K-6-L)

¹⁸⁴ “Pioneer Square (“Old Fort”).” Author unknown. Undated. (K-8-U)

¹⁸⁵ Powell, Utah’s Preservation History, 1978. (K-9-A)

¹⁸⁶ Marriott Library aerial, c. 1955. (K-2-H)

¹⁸⁷ While no evidence has been discovered through initial research, it is worth mentioning that the decision to close and fill in the pools at Pioneer Park came at the same time as a national movement to do this in order to prevent forced integration. The civil rights movement in the early 1950s had won several high-profile, precedent-setting legal cases that required public entities, including municipalities, to offer equal services to all people regardless of race. While the timing of many cities deciding to shutter recreational facilities and discontinue recreation programs rather than integrate, Salt Lake City’s decision to close the pools at Pioneer Park, in the center of one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the state, seems to be unfortunately timed but not purposeful.

mature trees on the east side of the park have been removed. Undeveloped paths are evident throughout the park on all sides, and a complete sidewalk rings the block.¹⁸⁸ The final removal of the swimming pools marks a tragic end to the Americanization Period, when the City Beautiful Movement was embraced, came to life, and gave so many people joy.



By 1958, a regulation little league baseball field had replaced all but one of the structures built during the Americanization Period. The baseball field existed through 1977 while the pavilion remains through at least 1981. (K-2-J)

In a submission to the *Deseret News*, John Florez summed up what it was like growing up during the 1950s going to Pioneer Park saying that it was the place to be. With summer concerts by a brass band at the pavilion by the postal service and the city, playing and picnicking was a family affair. It was a place where many ethnic communities came together. The pavilion was the main gathering place that also served as a dance floor and stage where plays were put on. Entertainment happened all week including an outdoor movie night, farmers market, baseball and tennis, and arts and crafts in a large wooden building.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ UGS aerial, 1958 (K-2-J and K-2-K); Historicaerials.com, 1958. (K-2-I)

¹⁸⁹ John Florez, *Deseret News*, 2010.

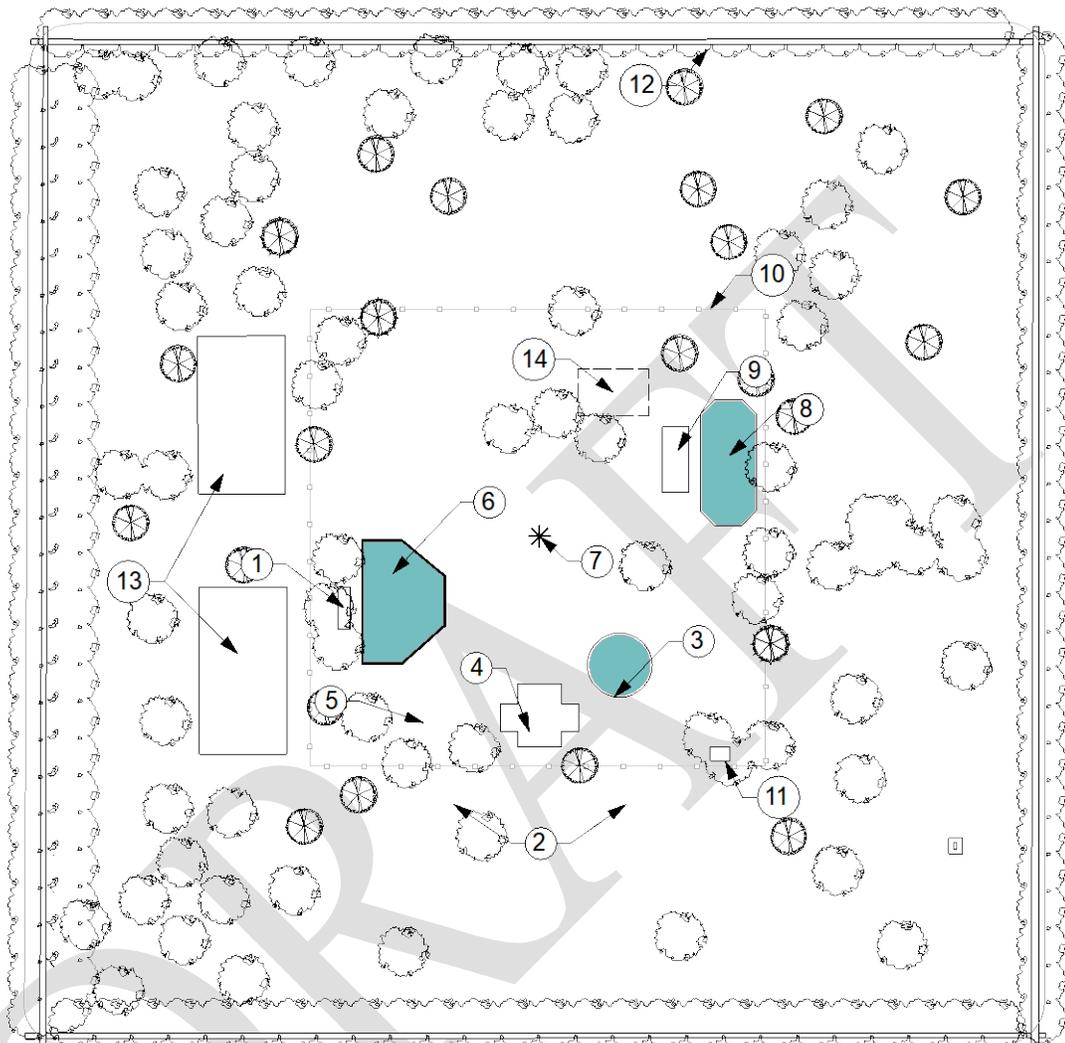


FIGURE 1: PERIOD PLAN - AMERICANIZATION
PIONEER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

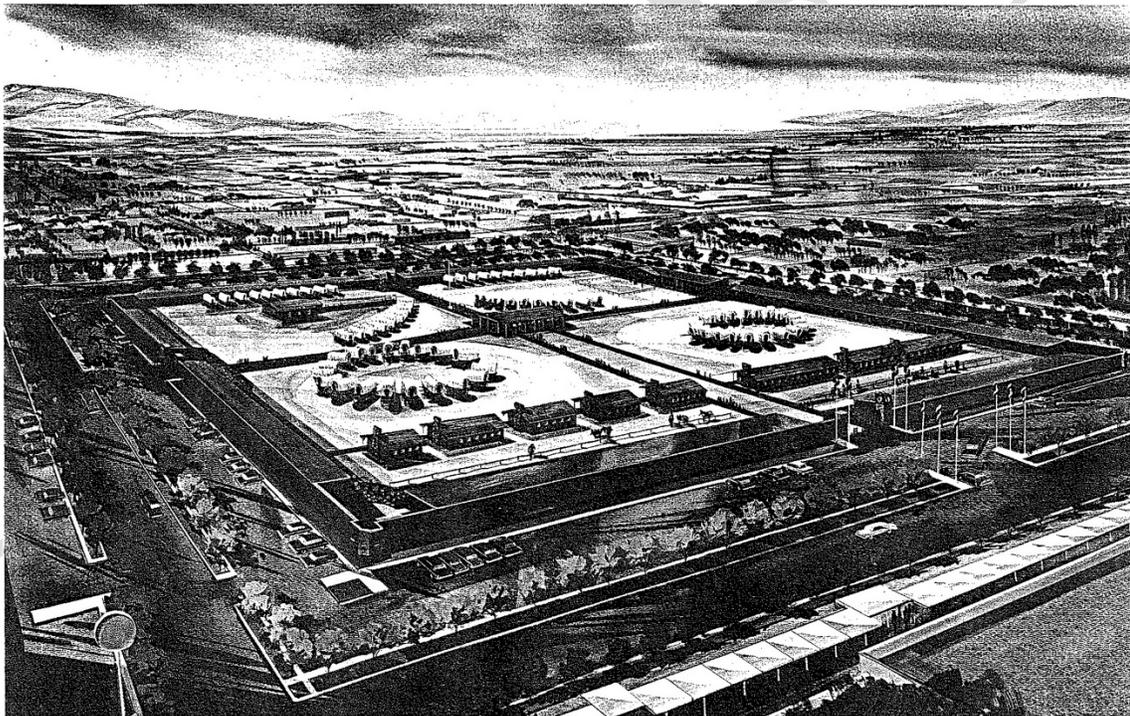
Notes

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Boy's Changing Room | 8. Girl's Swimming Pool |
| 2. Playground Areas | 9. Girl's Changing Room |
| 3. Swimming Pool | 10. Short 3' Fence |
| 4. Pavilion | 11. Outhouse/Guard House |
| 5. Arts Building | 12. Border Hedge |
| 6. Boys Swimming Pool | 13. Tennis Courts |
| 7. Segregated Drinking Fountains | 14. Walled Play Area |

Civic Period, 1959-1974

A challenge that emerged with the arrival of the railroad in 1869, and grew through the late 1800s into the early 1900s was the growth of people experiencing homeless. They found Pioneer Park and its neighborhood one of the few places where they could find acceptance among peers, a well-kept public place to gather, sleep, and use a restroom. The co-location of homeless services in the Pioneer Park neighborhood began in the Civic Period, including construction of the St. Vincent de Paul Dining Hall in 1967. Due to the policies of this era, unhoused people could only legally occupy public spaces. A resulting impact of that policy was for social service organizations to cluster within the Pioneer Park neighborhood to advance their mission to serve the homeless population.

Research from newspaper accounts shows that the homeless community's deep connection to the neighborhood is historical and not a recent development. The predecessors of today's homeless services were the religious, civic, and community groups who established church missions, after-school classes, recreation activities, daycare, and social services for new and poor immigrants



RESTORATION OF THE OLD PIONEER FORT
IN PIONEER PARK AT THIRD SOUTH & SECOND WEST
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
AS PROPOSED BY
NICHOLAS S. MORGAN SR.
EDWARD G. ANDERSON & RAY Z. SCHOFIELD
ARCHITECTS

*Compliments
N. S. Morgan Sr.*

As the Civic Period begins, the first of several attempts to recreate the old fort is put forward. No plan is historically accurate. In this first plan, there are adobe walls, a few reconstructed cabins, and a bowery at the center. (K-3-P)

for nearly 150 years. And the proximity of the park to the two railroad depots as well as to the railroad hotels made it a natural gathering place for anyone newly arrived in Salt Lake City.¹⁹⁰

Fluctuations in the city's overall population characterized the Civic Period. Between 1940 and 1960, the city's population grew by 26% with the biggest spike between 1940 to 1950—22% compared to the postwar period of 1950-1960, which only increased by 4%.¹⁹¹ By the following census in 1970, the city experienced its first official loss of population. The numbers, as well as other stories, document that people were leaving the city in favor of residing in the suburbs and this had begun far before 1960. The loss of population between 1960-1970 was 13,569, or a loss of 7%.¹⁹²

After the final removal of the pools and installation of the little league baseball field, no further significant physical changes were evident in the park through the early 1960s as the use remained consistent.¹⁹³ By 1966 though, the neighborhood would go through a significant physical change at the completion of Interstate 15. Most direct access to the new highway was determined to be through the Pioneer Park neighborhood via newly-constructed viaducts that connected surface streets from downtown. One of the viaducts, which were long bridge-like concrete structures, extended along the south side of the park, impacting not only its viewshed but creating a new concrete no-man's land.¹⁹⁴ Unintended consequences of the new ramps were that they provided dark places for nefarious activities, makeshift shelter for homeless, and additional traffic, noise, graffiti, and trash next to and in Pioneer Park.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ Westwood, *West Side Stories 33: Current Challenges and Developments in a Post-Industrial Neighborhood – Part One* (K-9-E).

¹⁹¹ The total population change between 1940-1960 was 149,934 to 189,434.

¹⁹² Salt Lake City, Utah, Population History, 1880-2019. (K-8-Q)

¹⁹³ [Historicaerials.com](#), 1962 (K-2-L); [Historicaerials.com](#), 1965. (K-2-M)

¹⁹⁴ Westwood, *West Side Stories 17: Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Pioneer Park Neighborhood Developments*. (K-8-J)

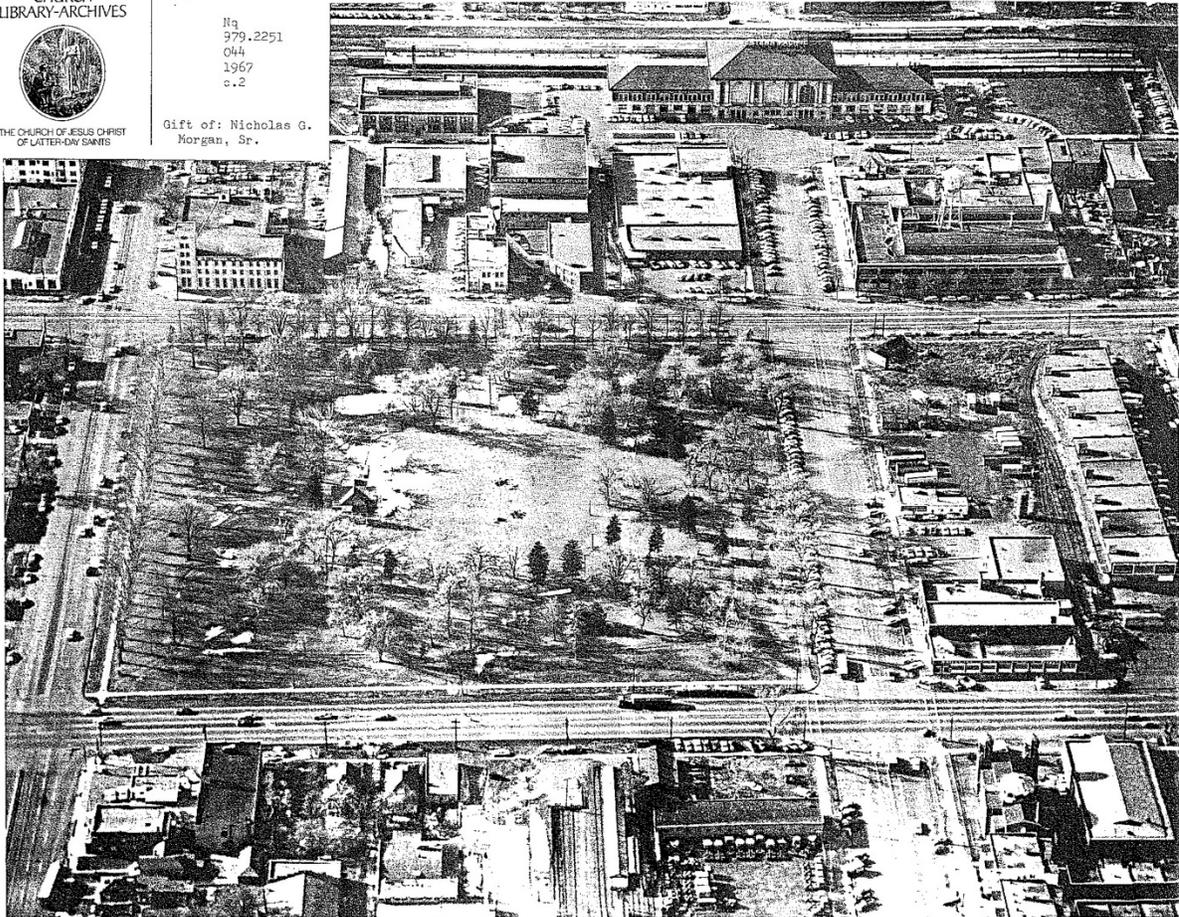
¹⁹⁵ The 400 South viaduct was razed in 2001 during I-15 reconstruction as envisioned by the Gateway Master Plan of 1999.



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Gift of: Nicholas G.
Morgan, Sr.



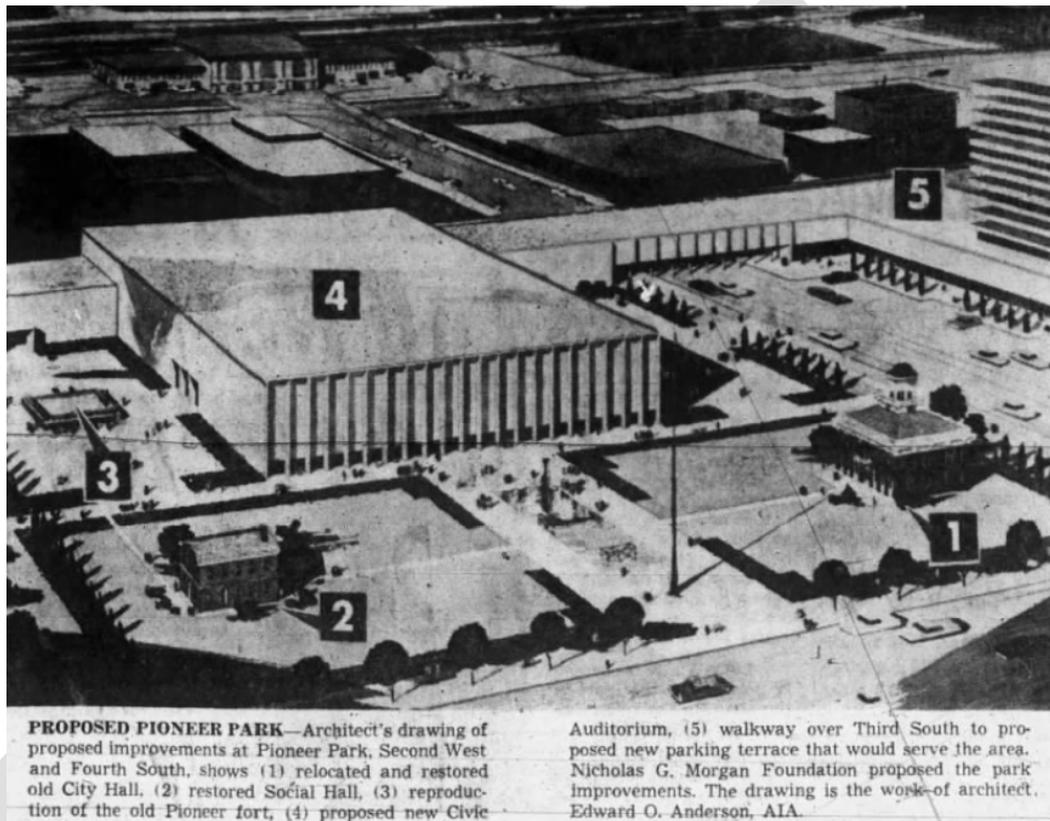
The view of the park in c. 1964, prior to the new I-15 highway ramp being constructed on the south side of the park, was one with a mature tree canopy, open center field, and lighting within the park but a lack of formal organization. (K-2-N)

Salt Lake City's political leaders expressed their concern about increasing blight in the neighborhood. Given the population changes in the city, the desire of city leaders was to reinvest in downtown in order to keep residents living in the city as well as attract visitors, while simultaneously solving social ills.¹⁹⁶ One of the first major proposals to be put forward came in early 1960 when philanthropist Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr. promoted the complete consumption of Pioneer Park for the Pioneer Civic Center. The center, designed in the Neo-Formalism architectural style by Edward O. Anderson, included a new civic auditorium at the center of the block, along with reconstruction of the Old City Hall, a reduced-scale reproduction of the Old Fort, and a connecting walkway to a new parking structure to the north across 300 South.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Westwood, *West Side Stories 31: Twentieth-century Changes to Salt Lake City's Original West Side*. (K-9-C)

¹⁹⁷ "City Approves Removal, Restoration of Old City Hall at Pioneer Park Site," *Deseret News*, May 10, 1960. (K-6-I)

A group of prominent architects, planners, and business leaders convened in 1960 to discuss the future of downtown, eventually producing the Second Century Plan in 1962. Major development projects were proposed in the plan including a convention center, art museum, visitor center, and a city-county government complex with library. However, a civic auditorium was not proposed in the Second Century Plan, and despite the city's approval to relocate and reconstruct Old City Hall at Pioneer Park, it never materialized.¹⁹⁸



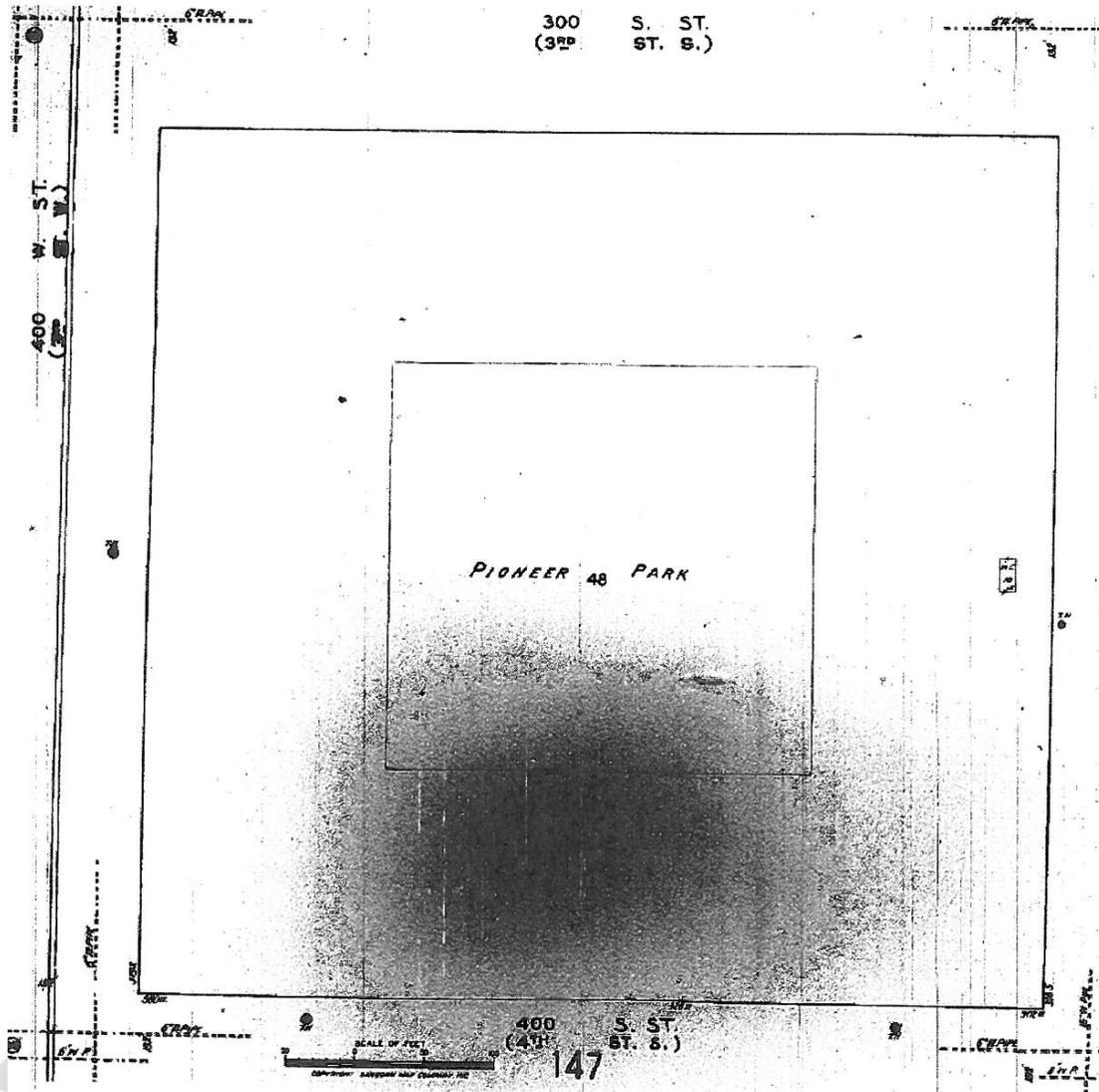
A second redevelopment plan for Pioneer Park was publicly announced in 1960. The cornerstone of the project was the reconstruction of Old City Hall on the northwest corner, while the old fort was relegated to a miniature scale version on the south side of the performing arts center. (K-3-Qb)

By the late 1960s, the park continued to look similar as it had after the last major physical change in the late 1950s. Many of the prominent features such as the central baseball field, tennis courts, historic pavilion, and pathways and sidewalks are present. Mature trees continue to grow in informal arrangement within the quad but around the baseball field, and in single rows along the east and south sides.¹⁹⁹ A small water closet (restroom) was located on the east side of the park by the end of the decade.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Downtown Salt Lake City Second Century Plan, 1962. (K-1-T)

¹⁹⁹ Nicholas G. Morgan, Sr. aerial, ca. 1964. (K-2-N)

²⁰⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. map, 1969. (K-1-U)



The single structure drawn into the 1969 Sanborn Fire Insurance map is the pioneer monument on the east side. The lack of detail on the map provides us with two possible perspectives: 1) Sanborn chose to not spend time and effort on accurately depicting structures in a park or that were owned by a municipality, and 2) there may have been a general lack of respect for the structures within the park and/or their condition that led to a choice to not represent them. (K-1-U)

As Westwood states in *West Side Stories*, “The city often urged that unused buildings be razed, leaving many dispersed brown fields across the west side. Private, corporate, and government entities during the 1970s and 1980s targeted the Pioneer Park neighborhood for long-term construction projects as well as land banking.”²⁰¹ As a result, property owners and developers tore down entire blocks of buildings, favoring parking lots and efficiently-built, characterless new buildings. Though some of this poor development was an outcome of the population changes, it

²⁰¹ Westwood, *West Sides Stories* 31. (K-9-C)

undoubtedly hastened further changes as many ethnic enclaves were severed or completely demolished save for a few landmarks. As a result, many of the unique ethnic enclaves of the west side have long since disappeared.²⁰²

Through the early 1970s, Pioneer Park continued to physically look like it had since the late 1950s. There are mature trees woven into the grass base, informal pathways through the park, and a sidewalk on all four sides of the block. Activity centers continued to include the pavilion, baseball field, and tennis courts.²⁰³

In 1971, civic booster Nicholas Morgan made his last attempt to have the fort rebuilt, proposing a new plan designed by architect Edward O. Anderson that occupied the entire block. Governor Calvin Rampton considered the idea worth studying and appointed a commission to look into rebuilding²⁰⁴ the fort replica.²⁰⁵ However, Morgan died in November 1971 and the commission was disbanded without conclusion. A different type of change occurred in 1972, when Union Pacific Railroad steam locomotive No. 833, built in 1930, was placed on ‘rails to nowhere’ in the northeast corner of the park.²⁰⁶ The locomotive was one of the last actively operating steam engines in the country, working its routes between Denver, Cheyenne, and Salt Lake City right up until its donation to the city to be placed in the park for posterity and admiration.²⁰⁷

²⁰² Today, no historic buildings remain on Blocks 49, 57, 65, 68, 77, 79, 85 and 86. One historic structure remains on Blocks 67, 78, 80, 83 and 84.

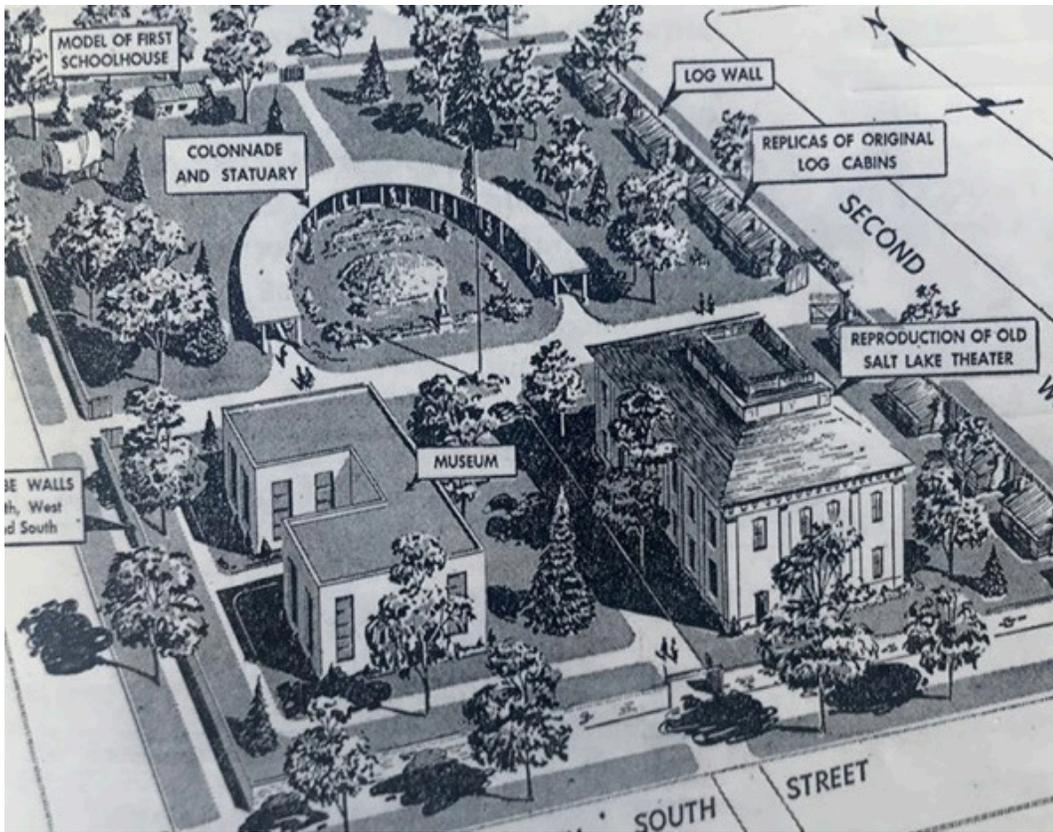
²⁰³ UGS aerial, 1970 (K-2-O and K-2-P); *Historicaerials.com*, 1971. (K-2-Q)

²⁰⁴ This is directly contrary to Brigham Young’s desire. Young reinforced in 1849 that it would be most appropriate to utilize the land as a public square and it should revert to this purpose once the Old Fort was dismantled. Thus, there is an inherent inappropriateness of rebuilding something that was never meant to be permanent.

²⁰⁵ Nelson Knight, SLC HLC staff report, December 2003. (K-9-G); *Pioneer Park: Prestigious Past, Perilous Present*, *Deseret News*, October 25, 2007. (K-6-G)

²⁰⁶ The locomotive was relocated to the Ogden Union Station Museum in 1999; Westwood, *West Side Stories 30: The West Side’s Pioneer Park Amenities*. (K-8-P).

²⁰⁷ Locomotive Wiki, *Union Pacific 833*. (K-9-D)



In a third plan to reconstruct portions of the old fort, the proposal created a formal organization within the park and redeveloped it with reconstructions of the log cabins, first schoolhouse, and Salt Lake Theatre while adding a museum and a Mormon pioneer hall of fame in statuery. (K-3-M)

The Civic Period comes to a close in early 1974 with the “Old Fort Block” being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.²⁰⁸ It was submitted for consideration in late 1972, approved by the Utah Board of State History in early 1973, and was one of the earliest National Register designations in Utah. Fittingly, this designation put an end to the post-war decades of public debate over greater civic purposes for open space, primarily in reconstructing the fort in some physical form, were regularly and publicly debated.

²⁰⁸ National Register of Historic Places, Old Pioneer Fort Site. (K-8-A)



The aerial view of the park in 1971 shows that it has changed very little since 1958 and the first appearance of the baseball field. Structures for programmed uses included the baseball field, pavilion, and two tennis courts, while a generous amount of grass and mature trees allowed for unprogrammed uses. (K-2-Q)

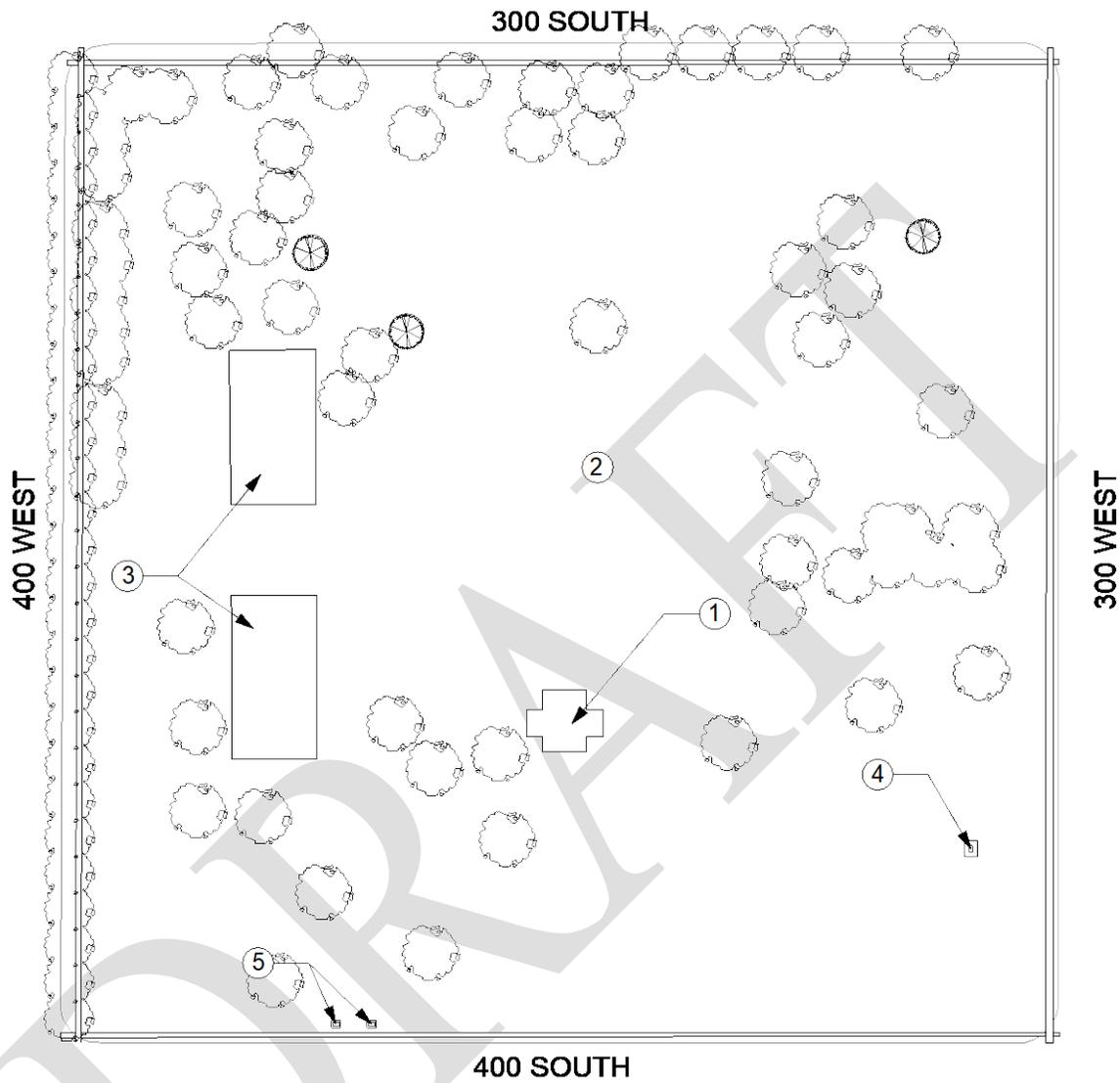
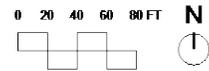


FIGURE 1: PERIOD PLAN - CIVIC
PIONEER PARK CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT



Notes

- 1. Pavilion**
- 2. Baseball Diamond**
- 3. Tennis Courts**
- 4. Old Fort Monument**
- 5. Stone Columns**

SLC Stewardship Period 1975-2021

-- TO BE WRITTEN --

DRAFT