Warm Springs Park is located within the Capitol Hill National Historic District in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. It fronts on Beck Street (300 West) and Wall Street at 840 North Beck Street.

The Warm Springs Park landscape is not considered historic in and of itself; however, it has historic significance because of the recognition of the area encompassing the historic warm springs; and its association with past building site(s) including the original 1922 Warm Springs Municipal Bathhouse located directly to the north.

Warm Springs Park was established as a neighborhood park in 1925. The nine-acre park is bordered by Beck Street to the west, Wall Street to the southwest, Victory Road to the east, the historic warm springs site and North Gateway Park to the north, and an electrical substation to the south. The park site is relatively flat, nestled into the lower slopes of West Capitol Hill. Victory Road is several stories higher than the park site, tracing the terrain of the hill. A mix of commercial and light industrial uses are located on the opposite side of Beck Street, with a mix of single-family and higher-density residential uses dominating the Wall Street environment and neighborhoods to the south. There are numerous historic residences in the vicinity of the park particularly to the south. The park is accessed from Beck Street (300 West) and Wall Street.

The park is divided into three character-defining sections: Northern Entrance & Tennis Courts, Open Park and Southern Entrance & Playground.

The area encompassing the historic warm springs was first discovered by fur trappers and traders as early as the spring of 1824 when James Bridger entered the valley, who made particular mention to a hot springs lake and warm springs site. When early LDS pioneers arrived in the valley in 1847, they also discovered the warm springs area. Plans to build a permanent structure in the warm springs area date back to 1849, and the first public facility was opened the following year. Salt Lake City assumed responsibility for the property in 1921, at which time a larger facility was designed and ultimately built. In 1925 the City identified and selected 840 North Beck Street as the location for the development of Warm Springs Park as a neighborhood park. Renovations and improvements were made to the park during the ensuing years, although the bath house ultimately fell into disrepair and has been closed for many years.
SALT LAKE CITY HISTORIC LANDSCAPES REPORT

Warms Springs Park

SLCHLR NO. 26

Location: Warm Springs Park is located within the Capitol Hill National Historic District in Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. It fronts on Beck Street (300 West) and Wall Street at 840 North Beck Street (see figs. 1-2).

Latitude: 40° 47’ 09.64” N, 111° 53’ 51.46” W (southwest corner of the park, Google Earth)

Significance: The Warm Springs Park landscape is not considered historic in and of itself; however, it has historic significance because of the recognition of the area encompassing the historic warm springs; and its association with past building site(s) including the original 1922 Warm Springs Municipal Bathhouse located directly to the north.

Description: Warm Springs Park was established as a neighborhood park in 1925 (MJSA). The nine-acre park is bordered by Beck Street to the west, Wall Street to the southwest, Victory Road to the east, the historic warm springs site and North Gateway Park to the north, and an electrical substation to the south. The park site is relatively flat, nestled into the lower slopes of West Capitol Hill. Victory Road is several stories higher than the park site, tracing the terrain of the hill. A mix of commercial and light industrial uses are located on the opposite side of Beck Street, with a mix of single-family and higher-density residential uses dominating the Wall Street environment and neighborhoods to the south. There are numerous historic residences in the vicinity of the park particularly to the south. The park is accessed from Beck Street (300 West) and Wall Street (see figs. 3-7).

As illustrated in the accompanying site map and described below, the park is divided into three character-defining sections (see fig. 8):

**Section A – Northern Entrance & Tennis Courts**
The northern entrance into the park is from Beck Street (300 West) into a shared parking lot that accommodates visitors to the park, the historic 1922 Warm Springs Municipal Bathhouse and North Gateway Park to the north. Two tennis courts are nestled in the northeastern corner of the park by a grass berm that wraps around its west and south sides. A bike rack is located west of the tennis courts near a connecting pathway into the park, south of the parking lot (see figs. 9-15).

**Section B – Open Park**
This is the largest character zone of the park, stretching along the west edge of the park along the Beck Street/Wall Street frontage and extending to the east edge beneath Victory Road. The area is dominated by large open grass fields to the east, with mature groupings of deciduous trees to the west. A north-south meandering pathway provides circulation through the wooded portion of this section, connecting parking lots on the north and south ends of the park. East of the pathway and south of the tennis courts in Section A is a large open green space suitable for playing soccer, football and similar sports. Mature trees buffer the eastern boundary of the park along the toe of the slope (see figs. 16-18).
West of the pathway and tennis courts are the remains of a stone monument that recounts the history of Warm Springs. The monument was provided by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, and has been defaced, with the plaque now removed (see figs. 19-21).

A second monument is located to the south, provided by the Daughters of the American Revolution. This monument recognizes fur trappers and traders as the first white men to arrive in the area. An interpretive plaque mounted on the monument on-site reads as follows (see fig. 22):

“Daughters of the American Revolution. Fur trappers and traders were the first white men in this locality. William H. Ashley and men arrived in the spring of 1829. The principal leaders were James Bridger-Etienne Provost [and] Jedidiah S. Smith. James Bridger, discoverer of the great Salt Lake in 1824, trapped the streams of this region in 1824 and many subsequent years. Jedidiah S. Smith with Harrison G. Rogers and fur party passed near here in August 1826 moving southwesterly to the pacific. Placed in tribute to the personnel of that gallant enterprise. Erected August 1926. Spirit of Liberty Chapter. Daughters of the American Revolution.” (Fur plaque)

Continuing south and west of the meandering pathway is a stone drinking fountain (see figs. 23-26).

South and east of the drinking fountain, the meandering pathway branches into a four-way intersection. The pathway to the southeast leads to a restroom facility. To the east and southeast, the pathways lead to the playground and southern entrance into the park (see figs. 27-31).

**Section C – Southern Entrance & Playground**
A concrete sign and stairway is located near the southern entrance into the park on Wall Street. The sign reads “Warms Springs Park” (see fig. 32).

Southeast of the sign and stairway is a parking lot with a round-about drop-off area to the playground and the large open green space typical for playing soccer or football (see fig. 33).

The playground is a post and platform structure including swings, slides, monkey bars, and a bridge. Green poured-in-place soft fall surfacing is located beneath the play equipment for safety purposes, with engineered wood chips provided along the edges (see figs. 34-36).

Two decorative green metal benches flank the east and west edge of the playground. A bike rack is located next to the east metal bench (see figs. 37-38).

**History:**
Located in the northern extents of the City on a sloping bench and toe of the Wasatch Mountains, the park is located in the Capitol Hill Neighborhood, which stretches from City Creek Canyon to the east where it encompasses the residences of Capitol Hill, continuing north through an industrial area along Beck Street. Unlike the original ten-acre, 660’ x 660’ (435,600 square foot) block grid pattern found elsewhere in the city where the “plat of the City of Zion” dominates, the Capitol Hill Neighborhood layout encompasses a range of grid patterns and irregularly aligned streets and lots that respond
to the steep terrain. The area contains some of the finest examples of historical homes in the Salt Lake valley (see figs. 39-40).

Warm Springs Park is fronted by Beck Street (300 West) to the west and Wall Street to the south. To the east is Victory Road, which is built into the slope of the Wasatch Mountains. Beck Street (300 West) was originally named 200 West, reflecting the grid-based street naming and numbering system developed with the Salt Lake Temple serving as the center of the system. With North Temple a zero-based street and South Temple and Main Street serving as the origination point for address, there was some confusion. In an attempt to simplify the system, North Temple was renumbered as 100 North and West Temple was renumbered 100 West in 1972, which resulted in 200 West becoming known as 300 West. Wall Street is the namesake and original location of a wall that was constructed by early pioneers and once existed around perimeter of the City. The wall was intended to provide protection, to control livestock and provide employment for incoming immigrants. The wall measured 12’ high and was 6’ wide, built of straw, hay, mud, gravel and other forms of vegetation (see fig. 41) (Bagley; Capitol 7; Haglund 3-4; Sanborn, 1898).

Warm Springs Park is not considered historic in and of itself; however, it has historic significance because of the recognition of the area encompassing the historic warm springs; and its association with past building site(s) and the original 1922 Warm Springs Municipal Bathhouse located directly to the north.

The area encompassing the historic warm springs was first discovered\(^1\) by fur trappers and traders as early as the spring of 1824 when James Bridger entered the valley (Fur). One early explorer named Edwin Bryant, co-leader with William Russell en-route to California in the summer 1846, made particular mention to a hot springs lake and warm springs site. His journal entry from July 30, 1846 described the present-day sand and gravel quarries area:

“…there is a basin of water some three or four miles in circumference, surrounded by a smooth sandy beach. Turning the point of the mountain, we came to seven warm springs, so strongly impregnated with sulphur as to have left a deposit of this mineral in some places several feet in depth. These springs gush out near the foot of a high precipice, composed of conglomerate rock and a bluish sandstone. The precipice seems to have been uplifted by some subterranean convulsion. The temperature of the water in the basins was about 90 degrees. The water of most of them was bitter and nauseous (McLane; Jones 213).”

When early LDS pioneers arrived in the valley in 1847 they, too, discovered the warm springs area. On July 22, 1847 Erastus Snow recorded the following:

“Our little exploring company took down the valley a few miles towards the Salt Lake, bearing a little west of north, and struck a salt marsh fed by numerous warm springs that came out of the base of the mountains on the east…A stone, in the center of the [Hot Spring’s] stream before the aperture in the rocks, seemed to

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\(^1\) To the Native Americans this was not a novelty. The Shoshone and Utes were known to use the warm springs for a variety of purposes long beforehand Europeans arrived (Jones 212; McLane).
say, this is the seat for the patient…but [I] had little desire to remain long upon it (Jones 214).”

Four days later on July 26, 1847, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, George A. Smith, Wilford Woodruff, Ezra T. Benson, Albert Carrington, and William Clayton explored the hot and warm springs area as well. Kimball, Benson and Richards each bathed in the warm springs, describing it as “very pleasant and refreshing”. The others declined the opportunity, with Clayton providing a dissenting opinion, noting that “the smell arising from [the water] is truly nauseating and sickly…” (Jones 215).

Thomas Bullock of the first company of pioneers to arrive in the valley in the summer of 1847 came later that same day based on recommendations of Willard Richards. He agreed that the waters “smelt very bad” but also credited that “every person who was sick that bathed in it recovered…” (Hedquist; Jones 215). The next day, he along with Jackson Shupe and Dimic Huntington were the first to make improvements to the site. Bullock described the following experience:

“My fingers rooted out the stones, and a couple of brethren afterwards assisted me with spades to dig out a place, about sixteen feet square, to bathe in…seven or eight persons often bathe at a time; those who once bathe there want to go again” (MJSA).

From his efforts he reports that “the brethren were pleased to name it after me, on account of my labor” (Jones 215); however, history reveals the name did not stay.

Plans to build a permanent structure in the warm springs area are dated February 17, 1849, when the High Council of Salt Lake City decided to erect a public bathhouse. James Hendricks was appointed to oversee and assist in the construction per his calling as Bishop of the Salt Lake 19th Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints whose boundaries included the warm springs area (see fig. 42). The location for the bathhouse was four-tenths of a mile south of the actual springs site (near the intersection of Reed Avenue and 300 West today). Pine-log pipes were used to channel the spring water into the bathhouse along with a ditch nearby for fresh water. The 15’ x 30’ adobe bathhouse opened on July 1, 1850 and was later dedicated on November 27, 1850 by leaders from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-days Saints. James Hendricks’ wife, Drusilla describes the building having a total of “twelve rooms, six on each side and a large room in front.” Other journal entries from visitors included provides further description of the bathhouse containing eight baths, a ballroom (the large room in front), two parlors, a dining room and double kitchen. The large room in front (ballroom) was used not only for hosting balls, but also socials and weddings. There was also an indoor pool for women and outdoor pool for men (Hedquist; Jones 218-220, 223; MJSA).

The 1850 bathhouse successfully operated for approximately two years at which point it later fell into disrepair after the Hendricks family moved. Colonel J. C. Little acquired the building and converted it into a hotel during the winter of 1852. In 1855 it had changed

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2 Note that this site was not the only bathhouse developed throughout the City. Beck’s Hot Springs, two miles further to the north, existed from 1880 to 1950; Wasatka Springs, west across the street from Warm Springs, had baths from 1920 to 1940; Salt Lake Sanitarium (Natatorium), on the west side of West Temple between Main and Second South, was built in 1889 and lasted shortly until 1893; and the Salt Lake Sanitarium Baths (The San), on the north side of Third South between Main and West Temple, existed from 1893 to 1919 (Jones 224).
ownership and operated as A. H. Raleigh and Golding Tannery, a use that was similarly short-lived. By 1858 the building was vacant (Jones 221-222).

In 1860 a group of men planted a grove of Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) trees north of the spring site for picnicking and as a retreat from the sun (MJSA).

Little was done with the bathhouse until 1865 when it was replaced with a larger structure located approximately two-tenths of a mile north of the 1850 bathhouse structure (approximately where the current drinking fountain is located in Warm Springs Park today) 3. Underground pipes were channeled to the pools inside the new building. A saloon, offices and a house for the manager were also constructed (see figs. 43-46) (Jones 224; MJSA).

In 1872 the City installed a mule-driven streetcar system 4 making it a convenient commute from downtown to the springs site (see figs. 47-48) (MJSA). In 1891 another bathhouse was constructed by Henry Barnes and Edward Byrne who were leasing the property. It was called the White Sulphur Baths (see figs. 49-51) (Jones 224).

In 1921 the City took full responsibility of the property again and hired Cannon and Fetzer to design a larger facility located further to the north to accommodate the community. The new resort building, known as Warm Springs Municipal Bath, was fashioned after the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Amenities included two large public spring-fed pools, private baths, a barbershop, café, and a masseur. The building opened in 1922 5 (see figs. 52-53) (MJSA).

Slowly, over time, public interest in the resort-type facility waned. In 1932 the Warm Springs Municipal Bath’s name was changed to Wasatch Springs Plunge to draw more attention during the summer months. By 1947 the spring-fed pools were converted to fresh, chlorinated water while the private mineral baths remained the same (see figs. 54-55) (Jones 224; MJSA).

By 1976 the facility eventually closed due to the annual operating deficit becoming too high to absorb. The site was used for storage by the Parks and Recreation Department until 1981 when it was converted and reopened as the Children’s Museum of Utah (see fig. 56) (MJSA).

In 2006 the museum relocated to the Gateway Mall and the building was vacated. It remains as to date. Extensive renovation and upgrades are required to bring the building back to active use. Decisions as to what to do with the building and site remain undetermined.

Sanborn maps from 1898, 1911 and 1950 document changes in development and use that have taken place near the site over time. No specific information was provided through the Salt Lake County Archives (see figs. 57-60).

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3 The original bathhouse was later converted into a residence from 1866 to 1876. In 1877 the property was subdivided and eventually the building was demolished and remaining land converted into Reed Avenue (Jones 224-225).

4 By 1905 an electric streetcar system was routed to Warm Springs (Utah 00428).

5 The 1891 White Sulphur Baths and accompanying buildings were demolished in preparation to build a park south of the new 1921/1922 Warm Springs Municipal Bath (MJSA).
In 1925 the City identified and selected 840 North Beck Street as the location for the development of the neighborhood park, Warm Springs Park (MJS). No maps have been located to confirm the original 1925 park layout; however, compiled notes and photographs illustrate a tennis court, a playground, a restroom facility and a little league ball diamond\(^6\) prior to 1986 improvements (see figs. 61-64) (Higham; Price).

In 1965 a monument was erected in the park by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers commemorating the discovery and development of Warm Springs by Brigham Young and company in 1847. An interpretive plaque mounted on the monument at one time read as follows\(^7\) (see fig. 65):

“Daughters of Utah Pioneers. No. 314. Erected 1965. Warm Springs. July 26, 1847, President Brigham Young and others descended Ensign Peak and located Sulphur springs. Thomas Bullock wrote, ‘About 1 ½ miles north of the temple block is a Sulphur spring which I dug out and made into a beautiful place.’ A bathhouse 15 x 30 feet was dedicated Nov. 27, 1850 and a grove of locust trees planted. Pioneers came to enjoy the park and bathe in the healing waters. In 1932 the name was changed to Wasatch Springs Plunge. It is operated by Salt Lake City as a public facility. Central Company.” (Hedquist; Parks)

In 1982 tennis court improvement plans were made to the park. Plans detailed the removal of the original 1925 tennis court location and the new location of two tennis courts in the northeast corner of the park with a grass berm around the north and west edges; a drinking fountain; and eighteen Austrian Pine (\textit{Pinus nigra}) and three London Planetrees (\textit{Platanus x acerifolia}) to be planted (see fig. 66) (Wasatch).

In 1983 Warm Springs Park was referred to as Wasatch Springs Park. Requests to change the park name back to its original name – Warm Springs Park – was granted. Further recommendations were made to investigate the idea to channel the warm springs into the park and create an interpretive learning space for visitors regarding the historic nature of the site (Gust).

In 1986 park improvement plans included a new walkway throughout the park; renovations to the restroom facility; the removal, relocation and expansion of the playground area; and at the southern entrance, the addition of a park sign, stairs and parking lot (see figs. 67-76) (Allred).

The most recent changes to Warm Springs Park occurred in 2002 when playground improvements were completed\(^8\) (see fig. 77) (Playground).

See figure 78 for the 2016 existing conditions map of Warm Springs Park.

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\(^6\) In a letter from the Board of City Commissioners, the little league baseball diamond was referred to as the “Capitol Boys’ Baseball League Diamond”. The letter further revealed the slope to the east (Victory Road) of the ball diamond was slipping and creating a potential hazard. Preventative action was requested (Higham).

\(^7\) The plaque no longer exists on-site. The Daughters of Utah Pioneers are currently working on a replacement as of January 2016.

\(^8\) An undated photographed located on the Salt Lake City Parks website reveals a dog statue existed at one time at the park. As of January 2016 this statue no longer exists (see fig. 75).
Sources:


International Society Daughters of Utah Pioneers, n.d. Photograph Collection, Parks.


“Playground Replacement at Warm Springs Park.” Salt Lake City, Utah: Salt Lake City Department of Public Services, Engineering Division, 13 Mar. 2002. Print.

Price, Herbert L. Letter to Mayor Conrad B. Harrison. 1 Aug. 1975. TS. Parks Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Salt Lake City Parks Department, n.d. Photograph Collection, Warm Springs Park.


Utah State Historical Society, Classified Photograph Collection, Photos No. 00428, 4438, 6358, 6361, 7935, 18573, 22152, 25111, and 27149.

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Fig 1. National Register Historic Districts Map. Note the star indicating the location of Warm Springs Park (Historic Preservation – National).
Fig. 2. Local Historic Districts Map. Note the star indicating the location of Warm Springs Park is not within any of the Local Historic Districts (Historic Preservation – Local).