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National Park Service  
Cultural Landscapes Inventory  
2011



Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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## **Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan**

### **Inventory Summary**

#### **The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:**

##### **CLI General Information:**

###### **Purpose and Goals of the CLI**

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

###### **Scope of the CLI**

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

**Inventory Unit Description:**

Hot Springs National Park is located in west central Arkansas at the southeastern edge of the Ouachita Mountains, approximately 50 miles southwest of the city of Little Rock. The park is intermingled with the city of Hot Springs, which had a population of 35,000 in 1985 and was at that time the fifth largest city in the state. That figure had grown to 37,961 by 1998 (source: Institute for Economic Advancement, University of Arkansas at Little Rock website). The entire park encompasses 5549.46 acres of mostly forested mountains. The cultural landscape of Bathhouse Row is located along the foot of Hot Springs Mountain. Referred to in the Cultural Landscape Report (2010) as the ‘Reservation Front’, it is an 18 acre site that encompasses several landscape character areas including Bathhouse Row and the surrounding natural and cultural landscape. These surrounding natural and cultural features contribute to the historic recreational and spa experience that have brought visitors to Hot Springs since the 1830s. The Bathhouse Row is the Architectural Park and it includes the eight historic bathhouses, the NPS Administration Building, two comfort stations, a water storage vault (currently unused), the Formal Entrance and associated Stevens Balustrade, various springs (both exposed and covered), and constructed fountains. The street level setting for Bathhouse Row is a generally level ¼ mile long strip of land; it is an elegant and formal landscape that consists of manicured lawns, specimen trees and shrubs, fountains, display springs, and walks. The recreational features of the surrounding landscape include trails and designed park experiences; most significant is the Grand Promenade which is on the hillside behind the bathhouses. The Grand Promenade is the spine which passes through the Reservation Front and unites the site. It extends beyond the length of the Row, into the hillside landscape, and forms a transition between the formal landscape of the Row and the wooded slopes of Hot Springs Mountain above it.

Directly across the street from Bathhouse Row is the Hot Springs Central Avenue Historic District, which lies at the foot of West Mountain. (Statement for Management 1988, 17; General Management Plan 1986, 55).

**Site Plan**





*Site Plan of the Reservation Front from the 2010 Cultural Landscape Report. Plan includes the landscape character areas of the cultural landscape at Bathhouse Row in Hot Springs National Park (CLR 2010).*

**Property Level and CLI Numbers**

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Inventory Unit Name:</b>       | Bathhouse Row |
| <b>Property Level:</b>            | Landscape     |
| <b>CLI Identification Number:</b> | 500341        |
| <b>Parent Landscape:</b>          | 500341        |

**Park Information**

|                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Park Name and Alpha Code:</b> | Hot Springs National Park -HOSP |
| <b>Park Organization Code:</b>   | 7300                            |
| <b>Park Administrative Unit:</b> | Hot Springs National Park       |

**CLI Hierarchy Description**

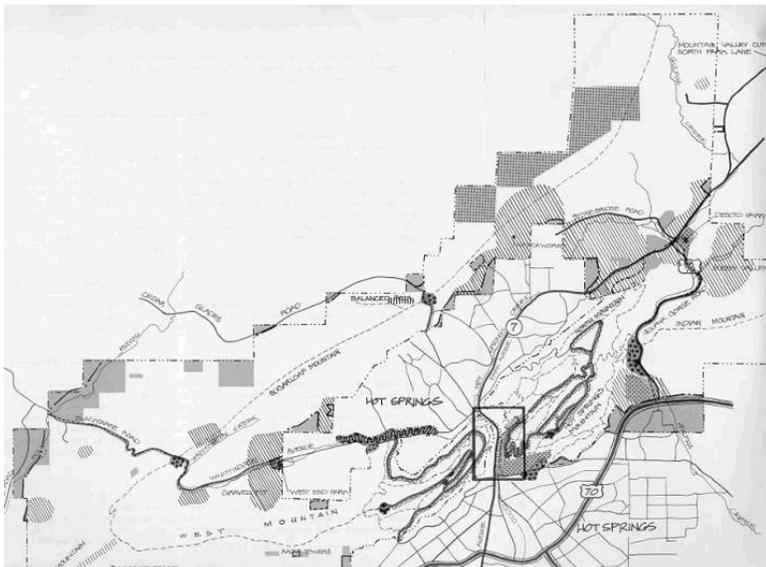
## Bathhouse Row Hot Springs National Park

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Hot Springs National Park is the parent landscape and Bathhouse Row has been identified as a component landscape. The Grand Promenade, Arlington Lawn, and the surrounding landscape is considered to be part of this component landscape.

There are many important component landscape features throughout Hot Springs National Park that are identified in the Cultural Landscape Report (2010). Component landscapes include Whittington Park, located to the west of Bathhouse Row, and the West Mountain Scenic Drive. Potential component landscapes include the structures and cultural landscape features located along Reserve St on the east side of the park and the Fordyce/Ricks Estate located in the northeast section of the park.

The boundaries of Bathhouse Row have changed subtly over time as the Row has developed and acquired the appearance seen today. The earliest boundaries of Bathhouse Row were established in the mid 1800s as private development had established its own north/south linear building pattern along Hot Springs Creek. These landscape boundaries were clarified when a Board of Commissioners surveyed the Reservation in 1877, took on greater definition in the early 1900s when the bathhouses currently present were built, and expanded somewhat when the Grand Promenade was completed in 1958. The boundaries of Bathhouse Row described here coincide with the description in the 2010 Cultural Landscape Report for the 'Reservation Front' (see the Boundary Description section).



*Bathhouse Row and surrounding landscape (boxed area) as a component landscape in relation to parent landscape of Hot Springs National Park. (General Management Plan 1986, 15).*

## Concurrence Status

**Inventory Status:** Complete

### Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

Initial research and field work was performed by Marla McEnaney and Sherda Williams in 1996. CLI data entry and field work was performed in 1998 by Geoffrey Burt and Roberta Young. Updates to the CLI for FY11 were completed by Historical Landscape Architect Gail Gladstone after a site visit in 11/2010.

### Concurrence Status:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Park Superintendent Concurrence:</b>         | Yes                                      |
| <b>Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:</b> | 03/24/2011                               |
| <b>National Register Concurrence:</b>           | Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination |
| <b>Date of Concurrence Determination:</b>       | 03/21/2000                               |

### National Register Concurrence Narrative:

Eligibility of the Bathhouse Row landscape is undetermined at this time. Although the 1988 National Register Amendment and the 1987 National Landmark Nomination Form provide substantial information regarding landscape features, the amendment was never approved by the SHPO. This CLI and the CLR will provide the additional information necessary for a determination of eligibility. A SHPO consensus determination of eligibility of the Bathhouse Row and surrounding landscape as a significant historic landscape will be sought at the completion of this CLI.

### Concurrence Graphic Information:

**DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

|   |  |                                 |  |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|
| PARK: HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK                     |  | INFORMATION RESTRICTED: Y__N__X |  |
| NAME: BATHHOUSE ROW/GRAND PROMENADE LANDSCAPE       |  |                                 |  |
| PROPERTY/ DISTRICT: HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK       |  |                                 |  |
| LOCATION: HOT SPRINGS, AR                           |  |                                 |  |
| COUNTY: GARLAND                                     |  |                                 |  |
| BUILT: VARIOUS DATES BETWEEN 1885 AND 1959          |  |                                 |  |
| CLI#: 500341  |  |                                 |  |
| LCS#: 00709-00715; 00717; 12089; 64730-64736; 64760 |  |                                 |  |

\*The CLI and LCS are internal NPS databases

| THIS DOE EVALUATES: | YES | NO | N/A |
|---------------------|-----|----|-----|
| STRUCTURE(S)        | X   |    |     |
| LANDSCAPE(S)        | X   |    |     |

| NATIONAL PARK SERVICE   | STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE   |        |               |   |       |
|---|--|--------|---------------|---|-------|
| Individually eligible _____<br>Contributes to:<br>NR Property _____<br>NR District _____ X<br>Cultural Landscape _____<br>Potential District _____<br>Potential Cultural Landscape _____<br>Not eligible _____<br>Insufficient documentation, treat as eligible _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Concur</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Do Not Concur</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">X</td> <td style="text-align: center;">_____</td> </tr> </table> Notes: _____ | Concur | Do Not Concur | X | _____ |
| Concur  | Do Not Concur  |        |               |   |       |
| X   | _____  |        |               |   |       |

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Superintendent Hot Springs National Park | 3/24/2000<br>Date |
| State Historic Preservation Officer      | 3/21/00<br>Date   |

Superintendent and SHPO DOE concurrence 3/24/00.



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Hot Springs National Park  
101 Reserve Street  
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901

IN REPLY REFER TO:

March 24, 2011

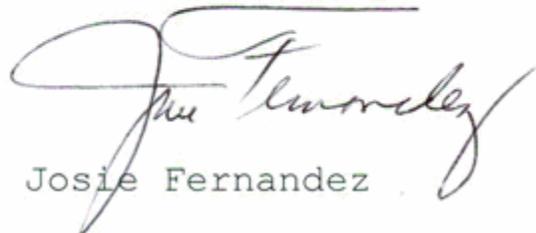
Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Midwest Region

From Superintendent, Hot Springs National Park

Subject: Concurrence of CLI for HOSP

Hot Springs National Park concurs with condition category assigned. Please take the lead and forward for consultation with the SHPO on the evaluation as a cultural landscape.



Josie Fernandez

*Superintendent concurrence for the updated CLI, 3/24/2011.*



The Department of  
**Arkansas**  
**Heritage**

April 5, 2011

Mike Beebe  
Governor

Cathie Matthews  
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage  
Commission

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars  
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic  
Preservation Program

1500 Tower Building  
323 Center Street

William S. Harlow  
Chief, Historic Structures and Landscapes  
National Park Service Midwest Region  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102-4226

RE: Bathhouse Row Cultural Landscapes Inventory  
Report – Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Harlow:

I concur that Bathhouse Row at Hot Springs National Park is a cultural landscape for Section 110 purposes of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended. The character-defining features associated with the cultural landscape as documented in the Bathhouse Row Cultural Landscape Inventory (2011) contribute to the body of knowledge and overall significance of the site which was listed in the National Register in 1987 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1987.

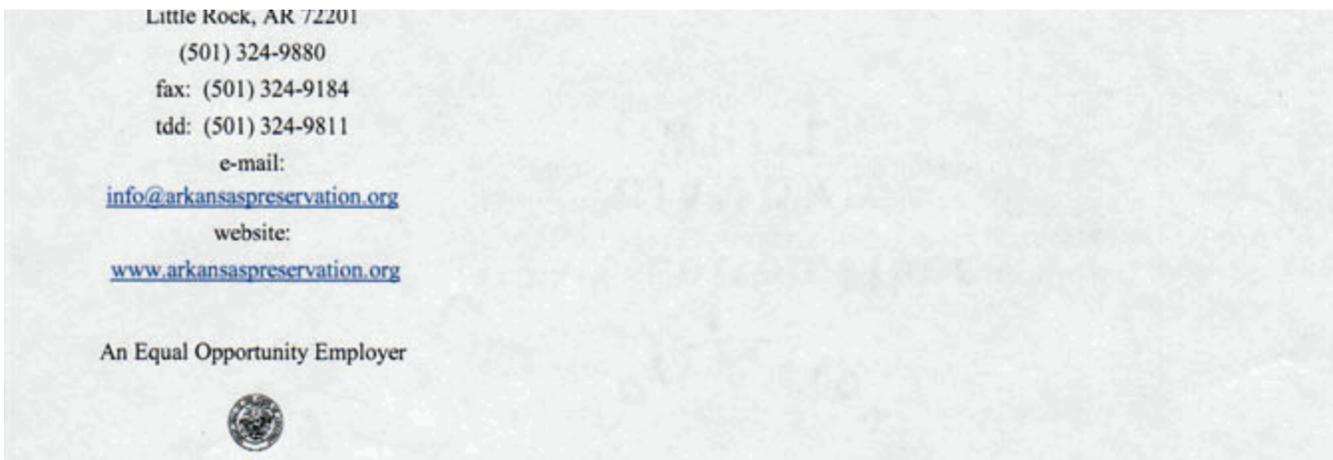
If you need further information or have any questions, please call Ralphe Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for allowing our staff to review this report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathie Matthews".

Cathie Matthews  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw



*SHPO concurrence on the updated CLI for BHR, 4/5/2011.*

**Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:** Addition/Deletion of Landscape Characteristic or Contributing Feature

**Revision Date:** 03/24/2011

**Revision Narrative:**

Update to the CLI includes additional contributing landscape features and an expanded boundary to reflect the findings of the CLR. The SHPO was also consulted for concurrence.

## Geographic Information & Location Map

### Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The Reservation Front includes six landscape character areas. Landscape character areas are sites that are defined by their physical qualities and types of cultural resources present. The landscape character areas in the Reservation Front are Bathhouse Row, the South Park, the Foreground Park, the Tufa Park, the Wooded Park, and Arlington Lawn. The South Park, Foreground Park, Tufa Park and Wooded Park all are part of the Mountain Sidegrounds, through which the Grand Promenade runs. The Foreground Park includes the Formal Entrance/Stevens Balustrade, the Display Spring, and the Maurice Spring.

The boundary of the entire Reservation Front begins at the northeast corner of Central Avenue and Reserve Street. It extends north along the curb to the intersection of Central Avenue and Fountain Street. It then turns right and follows the curb along Fountain Street to the entrance of Hot Springs Mountain Drive. Here the boundary follows the center line of Hot Springs Mountain Drive in a south southeast direction. The boundary leaves the Hot Springs Mountain Drive and follows the trace of the Old Carriage Road toward the gate of the Army and Navy Hospital. It then turns west and south to follow the fence of the Army and Navy Hospital to the city curb at Reserve Street. The boundary line then turns west along the curb to return to the starting point at Reserve Street and Central Avenue.

Definitions for each landscape character area from the Cultural Landscape Report (2010), Chapter I pages 8 and 9:

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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**Bathhouse Row:** The Bathhouse Row landscape character area serves as the front door for Hot Springs National Park and is the primary location of the park's architectural resources. Bathhouse Row was historically designed as an "architectural park" where buildings and landscape would unite into one cohesive space. The character area is located along Central Avenue in the downtown core of the City of Hot Springs. It is defined on the south by Reserve Street and on the west by Central Avenue. It extends north to the northern side of the Superior Bathhouse and is bounded on the east by stone retaining walls and steep slopes behind the bathhouses.

**South Park:** The South Park consists of the southern-most portion of the Mountain Sidegrounds, located south of the intersection of the service drive and the Grand Promenade. It lies to the east of the Ozark, Buckstaff, and Lamar Bathhouses, and the Park Administration building. It is bounded on the east by the retaining wall at the Rehabilitation Center, and on the south by Reserve Street. The most prominent feature of the South Park is the pavement of the Grand Promenade.

**Foreground Park:** The Foreground Park is the central portion of the Mountain Sidegrounds. It is the transitional space that connects the South Park with the Tufa Park, and the Formal Entrance with Bathhouse Row. It is bounded on the west by Central Avenue, on the east by the Old Carriage Road to the Army and Navy grounds, and on the north by the northern edge of the formal entrance. The bend in the Grand Promenade where the width narrows is the southern boundary. The most prominent feature of the Foreground Park is the Formal Entrance/Stevens Balustrade.

**Tufa Park:** The Tufa Park consists of the portion of the Mountain Sidegrounds that lies to the north of the Formal Entrance, east of the Superior and Hale Bathhouses and Arlington Lawn, south of the intersection of the Grand Promenade and entrance six, and west of the Hot Springs Mountain Road and the Old Carriage Road. Currently, the most prominent feature of the Tufa Park is the Grand Promenade.

**Wooded Park:** The Wooded Park consists of the portion of the Mountain Sidegrounds that lies to the north of the Tufa Park and Arlington Lawn, east of Fountain Street and south and west of Hot Springs Mountain Road. Currently the most prominent feature of the Wooded Park is the Grand Promenade.

**Arlington Lawn:** Arlington Lawn is defined on the south by the north side of the Superior Bathhouse, on the west by Central Avenue and Fountain Street, on the north by entrance six at the Wooded Park, and on the east by the base of the slope adjacent to the Tufa Park. The most prominent features of Arlington Lawn are the lawn, Magnolia Promenade, and the Hot Water Cascade.

#### **State and County:**

**State:** AR

**County:** Garland County

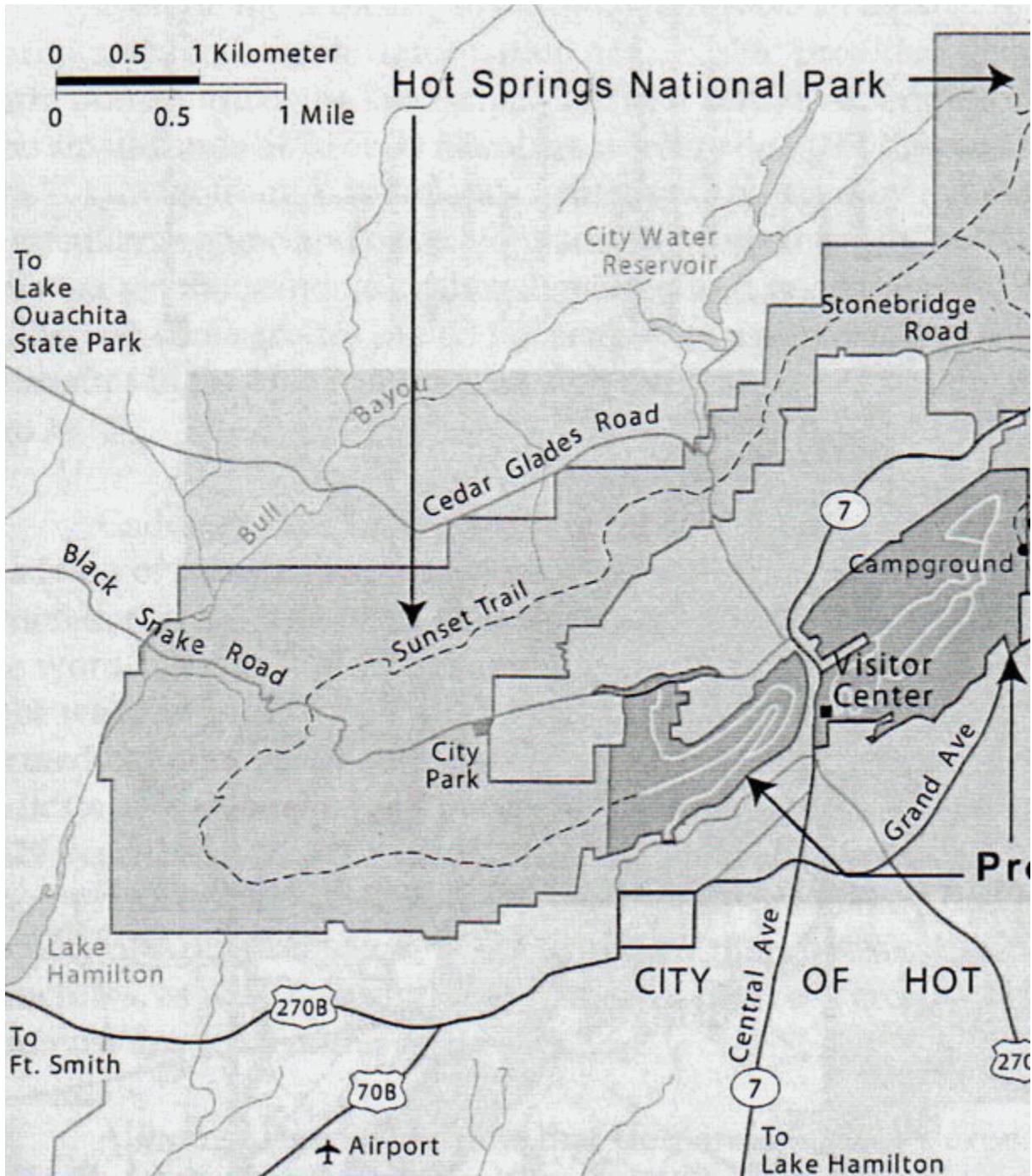
**Size (Acres):** 18.00

**Boundary UTMS:**

|                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point A |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,057              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,818,896            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point B |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,120              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,819,401            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point C |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,474              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,819,645            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point D |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,196              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,819,291            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point E |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |

|                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,155              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,819,098            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point F |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,142              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,819,096            |
| <b>Boundary Source Narrative:</b> | Google Earth point G |
| <b>Type of Point:</b>             | Point                |
| <b>Datum:</b>                     | NAD 83               |
| <b>UTM Zone:</b>                  | 15                   |
| <b>UTM Easting:</b>               | 495,127              |
| <b>UTM Northing:</b>              | 3,818,896            |

**Location Map:**



*Hot Springs National Park in context to the Bathhouse Row cultural landscape (CLR 2010).*



**Regional Context:**

**Type of Context:** Cultural

**Description:**

The hot springs and associated landscape have long attracted and supported human activity. At first European contact, one or more Caddo tribes inhabited this area, but no archeological evidence exists to indicate how or if they used the thermal springs. There appears to be some documentary evidence for Native American use of the springs in early historic times. Tribal names are almost never mentioned in these accounts. Groups with the most substantial presence here probably would have been (in chronological order) the Caddo, Quapaw, and Choctaw. The earliest recorded settlements in what is now the park is estimated to be about 1800. Explorers William Dunbar and George Hunter visited the area at the request of Thomas Jefferson in 1804 and discovered log cabins and huts that had been built and utilized by settlers. Soon other settlers and visitors came to the area. By 1832, Congress, fearing that the hot springs would be abused, set 2,529 acres aside, including the hot springs, as a Federal land reservation. Numerous squatter settlements and private claims continued to be made on the lands. The U.S. Supreme Court settled the controversy in 1877 in favor of the government, paving the way for government regulation of the bath house facilities. This landscape was used for therapeutic and recreational purposes from that point through the 1980s; by 1986, only one bathhouse, the Buckstaff, remained in operation on Bathhouse Row. Currently the human overlay on the physical form of Bathhouse Row is apparent in the existence of the eight historic bathhouses and the associated designed landscape. Adjacent to the Historic District is the historic commercial strip of the city of Hot Springs. The historic scene of the district is preserved through the ongoing renovation and maintenance of the designed formal landscape and the rehabilitation and maintenance of building exteriors. (adapted from 1986 GMP/DCP, 20, 63)

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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*Bathhouse Row (in gray box), surrounding mountains, and general human overlay on landscape. (Hot Springs National Park Brochure, NPS, 2008).*

**Type of Context:** Physiographic

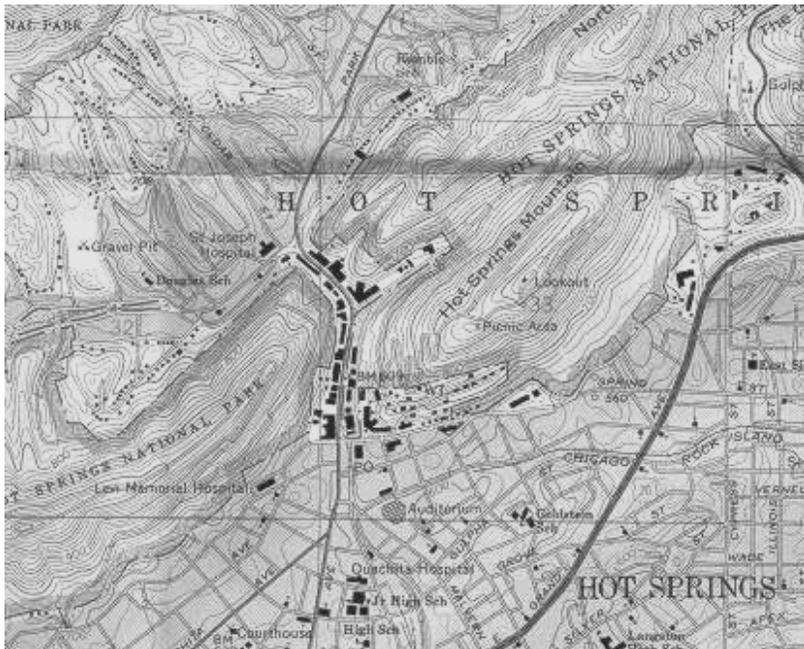
**Description:**

Hot Springs National Park in west central Arkansas is located in the Ouachita Mountains, south of the Ozark Plateau. The topography of the region is believed to have been formed in late Paleozoic times by geological forces that acted to uplift, fold, fracture, and harden inland seabed sediments. Erosion led to the formation of the present ridge and valley landscape seen today. The topography of the park consists of mountain ridges running from east to west, intermontane basins, and the piedmont plateau. Hot Springs lies at the southern edge of these ridges.

The geography of this area has obviously affected the development pattern of the Bathhouse Row landscape. All of the springs issue from the lower west slope of Hot Springs Mountain, and originally they drained into Hot Springs Creek. This creek runs north-south in the valley between Hot Springs Mountain and West Mountain. Due to the pattern of the springs and limits on the immediate vicinity posed by the geography, Bathhouse Row developed as a linear north/south strip along the immediate east side of Hot Springs Creek. The valley floodplain is relatively flat and in addition to being the focus of human development, it has also been used as a major thoroughfare since the early 19th century. (Paige and Harrison 1987, 19-20).

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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*Hot Springs North Quadrangle, Arkansas--Garland County, 1976. Scale=1:24,000*

**Type of Context:** Political

**Description:**

Located in Garland County, in the 4th Congressional District, the park is intermingled with the city of Hot Springs, which has a population of about 37,000 and is currently the seventh largest city in Arkansas. Both the city and the county have an unusually high population of senior citizens, about double the national average. Garland County and the Hot Springs region have historically relied on tourism as a major industry, and Bathhouse Row and Hot Springs National Park is the number one tourism destination in Arkansas. Bathhouse Row is situated along Central Avenue in the city of Hot Springs; this route is also known as Arkansas Highway 7, an Arkansas Scenic Byway. This road continues to the north to the Arkansas/Missouri border and south to the Arkansas/Louisiana line.

The Buckstaff and the Quapaw bathhouses are the only buildings along Bathhouse Row still used for traditional bathing activities; the other six bathhouses are no longer open to the public for bathing. The Fordyce was converted for use as the Park Visitor Center in 1989 and the Ozark was leased to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in 2008. The Lamar is used as a venue for offices, training, special events, luncheons, and receptions. The bathhouses have undergone various levels rehabilitation and are integral components of the historic landscape. The entire Bathhouse Row landscape is currently used as an historically appropriate interpretive area. As part of a comprehensive park zoning scheme, Bathhouse Row is included within the Historic Zone, which also includes sub-zones for preservation and preservation/adaptive reuse, and the Park Development Zone, which includes subzones for

administrative development, visitor use/recreation, access/circulation, and landscape management.

(adapted from 1986 GMP/DCP, 55 and 1988 Statement for Management, 5, 13-14).

**Management Unit:** HOSP-7300

**Tract Numbers:** 01-144

## Management Information

### General Management Information

**Management Category:** Must be Preserved and Maintained

**Management Category Date:** 10/30/1998

#### Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Bathhouse Row is nationally significant as defined by National Historic Landmark criteria. The focus of the NHL nomination form is on the eight bathhouses and the Administration Building. Various landscape features are discussed in the nomination form, but they are not the focus of the statement of significance. However, the form does make a point of stressing the importance of the landscape as a setting for the buildings and structures. Therefore, the Bathhouse Row inventory unit falls under Management Category A: Must Be Preserved and Maintained.

The boundaries of the National Historic Landmark District and the boundaries of the Bathhouse Row cultural landscape as defined in this inventory differ. Although landscape areas such as the Magnolia Promenade and the Grand Promenade are discussed in the nomination form, they are inexplicably left out of the site plan boundaries. (Only that portion of the Grand Promenade that lies directly behind the Row is included). As defined in this inventory, the landscape unit boundaries include the surrounding landscape of the Mountain Sidegrounds and include the Magnolia Promenade along Central Avenue and Fountain Street, the Grand Promenade, and the resources bounded by the Hot Springs Mountain Drive to the east.

## Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

### Management Agreement:

**Type of Agreement:** Memorandum Of Agreement

**Expiration Date:** 12/01/2014

#### Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Medical Director's Residence, structure # Q-RX  
5 year lease to the USDA Forest Service

**Type of Agreement:** Lease

**Expiration Date:** 12/31/2063

#### Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Ozark, structure # HB-103  
60 year lease to Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Hot Springs

**Type of Agreement:** Lease

**Expiration Date:** 7/16/2058

#### Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

Quapaw, structure # HB-104  
55 year lease to Quapaw Baths and Spa

### NPS Legal Interest:

**Type of Interest:** Fee Simple

#### Explanatory Narrative:

Since 1832, the Hot Springs (and the land that includes Bathhouse Row) have been owned by the U.S. Government. This form of ownership may date back to 1803, based on the Louisiana Purchase, but this has not been proven. Quapaw tribal claims for this area were extinguished in 1818.

### Public Access:

**Type of Access:** Other Restrictions

## Adjacent Lands Information

**Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?** Yes

### Adjacent Lands Description:

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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The Hot Springs Central Avenue Historic District, which lies immediately to the southwest and north of Bathhouse Row; Hot Springs Mountain, which rises to the east of the Row; and West Mountain, which is located to the west of the Row, all contribute to the significance of the inventory unit. These two areas provide a context to the Row on several levels: physically, historically, and socially. The buildings that compose the majority of the Historic District reflect an evolution of the architectural styles and commercial demands that grew in conjunction with the development of Bathhouse Row. A symbiotic relationship has always existed between the commercial district and the bathhouses. Hot Springs Mountain and West Mountain also contribute to the significance of Bathhouse Row. Bathhouse Row was built in the valley formed by the two mountains and more specifically along the lower slopes of Hot Springs Mountain that act as the discharge zone, where the thermal water emerges from openings in the earth. The Grand Promenade was constructed along the slopes just behind the bathhouses, and the upper reaches of the mountains became the setting for roads, trails, and scenic overlooks. In addition, the sideslopes and narrow ridges above 700 feet in elevation are part of a broad recharge zone for these springs.



*Hot Springs Central Avenue, 1920s.*

## National Register Information

### Existing National Register Status

#### National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Inadequately Documented

#### National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Bathhouse Row was originally listed on the National Register in 1974 as a Historic District. In 1987 the District was upgraded to a National Historic Landmark District. In 1989 an amendment was prepared for the Bathhouse Row Historic District listing to include features listed in the NHL nomination and additional features that contribute to the overall integrity but had not been listed previously. This amendment, however, was never approved by the SHPO.

Each bathhouse and the Administration Building is described in detail in both the National Register and National Historic Landmark nominations. Although landscape features of the district such as the springs and fountains, the Main Entrance and Stevens Balustrade, and the Grand Promenade are listed, they are not described in detail. There is little mention of the associated landscape characteristics, the design history, and function of the landscapes. Therefore the CLI has determined that the status of the National Register Documentation is to be Entered Inadequately Documented.

#### Existing NRIS Information:

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Name in National Register:</b>     | Bathhouse Row                            |
| <b>NRIS Number:</b>                   | 74000275                                 |
| <b>Primary Certification:</b>         | Listed In The National Register          |
| <b>Primary Certification Date:</b>    | 11/13/1974                               |
| <b>Other Certifications and Date:</b> | Designated National Landmark - 5/28/1987 |

### National Register Eligibility

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>National Register Concurrence:</b>    | Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination                                       |
| <b>Contributing/Individual:</b>          | Contributing   |
| <b>National Register Classification:</b> | District   |
| <b>Significance Level:</b>               | National   |
| <b>Significance Criteria:</b>            | A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history        |
| <b>Significance Criteria:</b>            | C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values |

**Period of Significance:**

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Recreation                                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | General Recreation                         |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Social and Humanitarian Movements          |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Emergency Aid And Health Care              |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expanding Science and Technology           |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Medicine                                   |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Affiliated Disciplines                     |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                 |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Architecture                               |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Period Revivals (1870-1940)                |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                 |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                     |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Late Victorian Eclectic Landscape      |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                 |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                     |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Revival Of Classicism                  |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None                                       |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                      |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Formation Of The Conservation Movement, 1870-1908 |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                      |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Origins Of The National Parks Movement            |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                      |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Origins Of Watershed And Water Conservation       |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1885 - 1897                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                      |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Scenic Preservation                               |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements        |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Recreation  |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | General Recreation                                |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923                                       |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements        |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Social and Humanitarian Movements                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Emergency Aid And Health Care                     |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expanding Science and Technology                    |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Medicine  |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Affiliated Disciplines                              |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                          |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Architecture  |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Period Revivals (1870-1940)                         |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                          |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                              |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Protection Of Natural And Cultural Resources        |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                          |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                              |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Revival Of Classicism                           |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                        |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                   |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Origin And Development Of The National Park Service |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923   |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                        |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources                   |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Origins Of Watershed And Water Conservation         |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1912 - 1923                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                 |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources            |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Conservation Movement Matures 1908-1941  |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements   |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Recreation                                   |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | General Recreation                           |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Creating Social Institutions and Movements   |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Social and Humanitarian Movements            |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Emergency Aid And Health Care                |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expanding Science and Technology             |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Medicine                                     |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Affiliated Disciplines                       |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                   |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Architecture                                 |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Period Revivals (1870-1940)                  |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                  |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                   |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                       |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Protection Of Natural And Cultural Resources |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None   |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                 |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Expressing Cultural Values                  |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Landscape Architecture                      |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The 1930's: Era Of Public Works             |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                 |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources           |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | Scenic Preservation                         |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                 |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources           |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Conservation Movement Matures 1908-1941 |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |
| <b>Time Period:</b>            | 1930 - 1959                                 |
| <b>Historic Context Theme:</b> | Transforming the Environment                |
| <b>Subtheme:</b>               | Conservation of Natural Resources           |
| <b>Facet:</b>                  | The Great Depression And Conservation       |
| <b>Other Facet:</b>            | None  |

**Area of Significance:**

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Social History             |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Health - Medicine          |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Conservation               |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Architecture               |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Entertainment - Recreation |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Area of Significance Category:</b>    | Landscape Architecture     |
| <b>Area of Significance Subcategory:</b> | None                       |

**Statement of Significance:**

Bathhouse Row is the largest collection of early twentieth century bathhouses remaining in the United States, and in fact is one of a few collections of historic bathhouses remaining in this country. It represents the high point of the spa movement when it reached its peak from the 1920s through the 1940s. As an entity, Bathhouse Row represents an area unique to the National Park System – a park where the primary natural resource for which the park was established has historically been harnessed and used rather than conserved in a natural state. At a national level, Bathhouse Row represents the history of the use of thermal waters as a therapeutic aid and of efforts to develop a national spa that would rival the great European spas. The spa movement influenced the nation’s attitudes about health, leisure, recreation, and conservation. As a component of Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Row

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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also is significant in that it represents an important stage in the development of the American conservation movement, specifically to preserve the watershed and hydrologic systems that feed the springs. At a local level of significance, the bathhouses also form the architectural core of downtown Hot Springs, Arkansas. The bathhouses represent a fine collection of varied period revival architectural styles popular during the 1910s and 1920s.

The hot springs and associated landscape have long attracted human activity. Close to the springs are novaculite quarries used prehistorically as a source for material for tools, weapons, and household goods. At first European contact, one or more Caddo tribes inhabited this area, but no archeological evidence exists to indicate how or if they used the thermal springs. There appears to be some documentary evidence for Native American use of the springs in early historic times. Tribal names are almost never mentioned in these accounts. Groups with the most substantial presence here probably would have been (in chronological order) the Caddo, Quapaw, and Choctaw. By 1807 the first permanent white settler was living in the area, and shortly thereafter a number of log cabins had been built in the vicinity. By the mid-nineteenth century the bathing industry in the United States, following elegant European precedents, was establishing more complex bathing rituals. The architecture of the Hot Springs bathhouses also began to reflect these more formal stylistic tastes, in a series of eclectic exteriors.

By the 1840s, a group of wooden bathhouses had been constructed along the row. Their composition tended to be prone to fires or deterioration, making them unsafe. Over time, it became clear that these bathhouses needed to be replaced and rebuilt with safer, more secure materials. Competition among the bathhouse owners brought about buildings that were better designed. Basic construction methods improved dramatically. Due to the Department of the Interior's insistence, architects employed materials that were less prone to fire and deterioration, and could be kept more sanitary. The bathhouses that exist today are products of this time, dating from about 1912 to 1923. The Hale has a longer history, originally built in 1892-1893 and ultimately completed in 1939 after several major renovations. All are based on European precedents, reflecting the preferred styles and tastes of a more formal and sophisticated nature. Some are representative of a classic revival or Edwardian Style which was first seen at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. Most are in the Spanish Revival style, made popular in California and Hollywood in the early days of this century. This style is characterized by exterior stucco, natural finish wood, and tile roofs. The changes to all of the bathhouses over time reflected changes in the bathing industry, changes in technology, and changes in social mores.

Although the area was set aside as the first federal reservation in 1832, actual government control over the lands did not take place until 1877. By that time private development had taken advantage of the cluster of seeping hot springs in the area and established its own north/south linear building pattern along the west side of Hot Springs Creek, which ran directly along the front of the collection of bathhouses. Prior to 1884, the only means of access to the bathhouses over the creek was via individual bridges. In 1884 a substantial stone arch (actually a large enclosed culvert) was constructed that covered the creek, thus eliminating the need for bridges and providing an extensive level surface for the introduction of lawns, planting areas, and a sidewalk. Known as the "Creek Arch," its construction also improved sanitation in the area.

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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From 1892 until 1897 the Department of the Interior undertook a massive beautification project to improve the character of the "National Health Resort." The main thrust of the program focused on the improvement of the landscape of Bathhouse Row. The goal was to provide formal landscapes in front of the bathhouses, and more "natural," tastefully landscaped areas behind. The range of landscaping thus would provide areas for restful walks with enough connection with nature and the outdoors to ensure a healthy atmosphere for recuperation. The landscape architectural firm of Frederick Law Olmsted was hired to produce plans for the area, but those plans were rejected or left unfinished for a variety of reasons. Instead, Lieutenant Robert Stevens, an Army engineer, managed the entire project, under the direction of Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble. Stevens designed the entrances to the reservation, including the historic main entrance. He also conceived the Magnolia Promenade in front of the bathhouses, the meandering upper terrace behind the bathhouses, and a series of pathways, carriage roads, and vest-pocket parks. By 1900 the Hot Springs Reservation landscape exhibited characteristics of informal Victorian landscape design in addition to the more formal post-1880s style. The most significant features of the Bathhouse Row landscape were constructed during this period.

A few other key points in the history of Bathhouse Row affected the natural and architectural landscape, resulting in what remains today. In 1918 Stephen Mather, director of the National Park Service, brought landscape architect Jens Jensen down from Chicago to provide some comments regarding Bathhouse Row. Under his direction lights were placed along the street promenade and various flower gardens were cultivated in front of the bathhouses. George Mann and Eugene John Stern of Little Rock were hired in 1917 to do a comprehensive plan of Bathhouse Row to guide its future development. In their view a Spanish/Mediterranean Revival architectural theme was appropriate for the "Great American Spa." The intervention of World War I stopped their grand plans, although their design of several bathhouses and review of other bathhouse plans had a strong influence on the overall character of Bathhouse Row. In the early 1930s the design of a new hot water system for the bathhouses resulted in changes to curbs, plantings, and gutters along the Magnolia Promenade. National Park Service landscape architect Charles Peterson designed the more formally aligned Grand Promenade at the rear of the bathhouses, enhancing the intent of Lt. Stevens to provide walkways, landings, and carriage drives in this area. The Grand Promenade, begun in the 1930s and completed in 1958, replaced the meandering Victorian path and changed the architectural character of the area.

All of the buildings on Bathhouse Row have certain architectural elements in common that contribute to the district's unity. They are all of similar height, scale, and proportions. All of the buildings are set back the same distance from the sidewalk, and have well-maintained lawns and vegetation. The Magnolia Promenade to the west and Grand Promenade to the east tie the buildings together, and the Grand Promenade provides a transition to the more natural mountain side beyond. The formal Main Entrance and Stevens Balustrade tie the landscape spaces together and complement the formal character of the buildings. What makes this unity successful rather than boring in an architectural sense is the diversity that exists within it. The eclectic combination of styles and materials provides texture and visual interest to both architectural and landscape elements. The free use of Greek, Roman, Spanish, and Italian architectural idioms emphasize the high style sought after by the planners and create a strong sense of place. In addition, the landscape improvements implemented over time made the exterior spaces

between the bathhouses as important as the bathhouses themselves.

What remains on Bathhouse Row are the architectural and landscape remnants of a bygone era when bathing was considered an elegant pastime for the rich and famous and a path to well being for those with various ailments. Today only the Buckstaff and Quapaw provide baths and related services on Bathhouse Row. Throughout the country, nineteenth century bathing rituals have been replaced by late twentieth century health spas that emphasize physical fitness and diet, and that sometimes provide bathing as part of the regimen. The bath is no longer the central feature of rejuvenation provided by spas in the United States. Advances in medicine and the high costs of medical care have diminished the importance of bathing in physical therapy. The need for bathhouses on the scale of Bathhouse Row no longer exists. The 150-year tradition of providing bathing services is greatly reduced from the earlier days, but in Hot Springs the decline has leveled off in the past ten years. Hopefully the future will hold the key for continued utilization, maintenance and preservation of the buildings and associated landscape.

(From National Register Nomination 1974; National Register Amendment 1988; National Landmark Nomination 1985; and General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan 1986)

## Chronology & Physical History

### Cultural Landscape Type and Use

**Cultural Landscape Type:** Designed  
Historic Site

**Current and Historic Use/Function:**

**Primary Historic Function:** Bathhouse

**Primary Current Use:** Administrative Office (HDQS)

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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| <b>Other Use/Function</b>        | <b>Other Type of Use or Function</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Concession                       | Historic                             |
| Fountain                         | Historic                             |
| Health Care-Other                | Historic                             |
| Historic Furnished Interior      | Current                              |
| Interpretation Facility          | Current                              |
| Interpretive Trail               | Current                              |
| Leisure-Passive (Park)           | Historic                             |
| Museum (Curatorial) Storage      | Current                              |
| Outdoor Recreation-Other         | Historic                             |
| Overlook                         | Historic                             |
| Pedestrian Circulation           | Historic                             |
| Recreation/Culture-Other         | Historic                             |
| Visitor Contact (Visitor Center) | Current                              |
| Vista                            | Historic                             |
| Wayside Exhibit                  | Current                              |

**Current and Historic Names:**

| <b>Name</b>              | <b>Type of Name</b>       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| "The Great American Spa" | Historic                  |
| "The White Way"          | Historic                  |
| Bathhouse Park           | Historic                  |
| Bathhouse Row            | Both Current And Historic |

**Ethnographic Study Conducted:** No Survey Conducted

**Associated Group:**

|                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Name of Group:</b>       | Caddo Nation of Oklahoma   |
| <b>Type of Association:</b> | Both Current And Historic  |
| <b>Name of Group:</b>       | Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma |
| <b>Type of Association:</b> | Historic                   |
| <b>Name of Group:</b>       | Osage Tribe of Oklahoma    |
| <b>Type of Association:</b> | Historic                   |
| <b>Name of Group:</b>       | Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma   |
| <b>Type of Association:</b> | Both Current And Historic  |

**Physical History:**

1804 and Earlier, EARLY USE OF THE HOT SPRINGS

Early human use of the area that now includes Hot Springs National Park is known to extend back in history nearly 10,000 years. The broad Ouachita River Valley provided wood, water, salt, shellfish, fish, fertile fields, and abundant game to satisfy the subsistence needs of Native Americans. Although early explorers, settlers, and visitors described signs of what they believed to be former Native American habitation on Hot Springs Mountain and in the valley, nineteenth century construction in the immediate area of the hot springs destroyed whatever evidence may have existed of prehistoric sites there. Native Americans mined novaculite in the nearby mountains and left ample proof of their activities in surrounding areas, but they had no lasting effect on the Hot Springs Creek Valley. The first European incursions into the hot springs area probably occurred in the eighteenth century but also had little impact, although Hunter and Dunbar did report seeing crude cabins around the springs in 1804.

1804-1870, EXPLORATION AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

William Dunbar and Dr. George Hunter, who explored the area in 1804, provided the first detailed description of the hot springs and the surrounding landscape. As described in their report, the hot springs lay in a narrow portion of the Hot Springs Creek Valley, at the western base of Hot Springs Mountain. The low surrounding mountains, part of the Zig Zag Range of the Ouachita Mountains, were covered by a variety of trees, flowering shrubs, and vines typical of a temperate climatic zone. Overhanging the creek were steep, rounded deposits of tufa rock, formed by the minerals precipitated from the hot water that cascaded down over the slope into the creek. The springs and tufa outcrops were concentrated along about 1,200 feet of the southwestern flank of Hot Springs Mountain. The surveys and scientific investigations of the Hunter-Dunbar expedition led to subsequent expeditions and gradual settlement.

Shortly after the beginning of the 19th century, emigrants from Louisiana began to settle around the hot springs, serving the adventuresome and the sick who came to bathe. Cabins provided public lodging in the 1820s when a double log cabin was put up to serve as a hotel. This hostelry was followed in the 1830s by a gristmill, larger hotels, and crude bathing houses built over and near the springs at the base of Hot Springs Mountain.

Following the highly publicized visits to the area by Dunbar and Hunter in 1804 and Major Stephen Long in 1820, the hot springs and surrounding land were legally reserved for public use by Congress in 1832. This action--the earliest Federal act to protect the natural environment for use of all citizens--is a significant milestone in U.S. conservation history, predating creation of national parks by almost half a century. Despite the Act of Congress to reserve the springs, the area developed quickly. By 1860 the tiny settlement had grown to a respectable village with a number of hotels and bathhouses built around and over springs to serve the many visitors who came into the valley by stagecoach. Although many of the city's buildings were burned by raiders during the Civil War, its former inhabitants returned after the war to rebuild the town whose population was swelled by the sick and wounded war veterans who had come to bathe at the springs.



*Women dipping feet in Corn Hole Spring, ca. 1867. This was a typical landscape scene prior to the construction of more permanent bathhouses. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*

#### 1870-1892, EMERGENCE OF THE SPA AND THE RESERVATION

By the 1870s the area was rapidly becoming a spa resort, with bathing houses, fashionable hotels, and a variety of entertainment. Built on Reservation land, these buildings stretched in a linear north-south pattern along Hot Springs Creek. Ownership of the various valley lots, especially those around the springs, had been under litigation for nearly three decades when a Supreme Court decision in 1876 finally affirmed government ownership and control over the hot springs. The principal litigants--the Belding heirs, Albert Gaines, Governor Henry Rector, and John Hale--later became some of the primary stock holders in bathhouse leases granted on the Reservation.

The Hot Springs Commission was appointed in 1877 to deal with the problems created by conflicting land claims and the various squatter developments. The Commissioners surveyed and formally laid out the town of Hot Springs, adjudicated claims, condemned buildings on the Reservation, sold unneeded lots, and outlined the basic shape of the landscape as we know it

today. An 1878 fire burned many of the buildings the Commissioners had slated for removal from the Reservation, leaving only the Arlington Hotel and a few bathhouses in the area adjacent to the springs.

In 1877 General B. F. Kelley had been appointed Superintendent by the Secretary of the Interior to take charge of the permanent Reservation. Kelley cleared out the transients who had squatted on the mountainside and around the springs; built a carriage road to the top of Hot Springs Mountain; began maintenance of the extensive Reservation grounds; actively administered the bathhouse leases; and regulated the bathing industry. Under Kelley's direction, the first Government free bathhouse was built in 1877 over the "mud-hole" springs using private funds collected from the visitors. This altruistic venture, sanctioned by an 1878 law and foreshadowed by the 1820 Memorial, began the policy of providing free baths for indigents in several generations of increasingly elaborate free bathhouses for over a century and contributed to the recognition of Hot Springs as America's great national health sanitarium.

Various Secretaries of the Interior took a great deal of interest in development of the Reservation. From the beginning they shared a vision of the area as a spa resort set in the beautiful mountain park with carriage drives, walking paths, summit overlooks, and seats for resting bathers. Part of the vision was the perceived need to repair the damage caused by earlier development and to impose order upon the wild mountainside by creating a "park." Downed trees and underbrush were burned to clear the mountainside, and hundreds of new trees planted to control soil erosion and to replace the stands of oak and pine decimated by the squatters. The lower portion of the mountainside along the creek, eventually to be known as Bathhouse Row, was also the subject of repeated development efforts over the years.

In 1884-1886 the Government walled over Hot Springs Creek with a rock masonry arch culvert (called "Creek Arch"), and Valley Street was covered; two years later a sewer line was built to service the city and the Reservation. These changes not only improved sanitation (the creek had been used as an open sewer) but also provided level topography for the construction of the now re-named Central Avenue and new bathhouses and for the development of a formal landscape along the front of the bathhouses.

By 1892, the area in front of the bathhouses had been planted with some 300 small trees and a grass and clover lawn. By 1894, southern magnolias had been interspersed among the Lombardy poplars lining the gravel path between the lawns and Central Avenue. A new generation of bathhouses had also been built to serve the ever-increasing number of visitors, drawn not only by the bathing facilities but also by the now-popular social circuit. The Arlington Hotel was the first of this generation of more spacious and luxurious bathhouses; constructed in 1875 around the Rockafellow Hotel and bathhouse already on site, its accommodations were more appropriate for a new class of clientele coming to Hot Springs from all over the world.

In the spate of construction that occurred following the great 1878 fire, several large Victorian style bathhouses joined the Arlington Hotel on Bathhouse Row. The Rector Bathhouse, completed in 1881, provided bathing facilities for Arlington Hotel guests and others. Next to

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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and south of it, the ironclad Big Iron bathhouse was built in 1883 to take advantage of the high-volume spring issuing from a tufa dome at the edge of the creek. Its closest southern neighbor was eventually the first Superior Bathhouse (a brick building) completed in 1888. South of the Superior, the old Hale Bathhouse was in place by 1882; locals believed that the blasting done to excavate for this bathhouse caused some of the higher springs to dry up. The next Hale Bathhouse replaced the older Hale in 1892. The Independent Bathhouse (later remodeled and renamed the Maurice bathhouse) eventually flanked the formal entrance to the north and was completed in 1880. The Palace Bathhouse, just south of the carriageway that would become the formal entrance, was completed in 1880. South of the Palace, the Horseshoe and Magnesia Bathhouses were completed in 1888.

A brick government free bathhouse was built between and behind the Palace and Horseshoe Bathhouses in 1891. The Ozark Bathhouse and the brick Rammelsburg Bathhouse were erected in 1880, and the Lamar was completed in 1888. The government erected a pump house (never used for that purpose) on the corner of Reserve and Central Avenues in 1891; it later served as administrative headquarters. Around the corner and facing Reserve Avenue, the Imperial Bathhouse was built in 1893 on the Rix and Barnes site. The imposing red brick Army and Navy Hospital went up on the hill above the south end of Bathhouse Row in 1887. And on the north end, the white frame Arlington Hotel that pioneered the building boom was demolished to make room for the well-appointed, sumptuous new red brick Arlington Hotel, completed in 1893.

Bathhouses continued using the antiquated system of individual cooling tanks and mazes of above-ground pipes and wooden troughs to their rear, strung across the base of the mountain. Though most of the springs had been covered over, their deteriorated masonry and decrepit wooden covers provided little protection against contamination.



*Bathhouse Row in 1888 (Cover image, unigrid brochure).*

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*Bathhouse Row, ca. 1891. (Historic Grounds and Structures Report 1985, 265.)*



*Sketch of Hot Springs ca. 1875, showing bridges that crossed Hot Springs Creek. ("Out of the Vapors" 1987, 225).*



*Actual photograph of Hot Springs in the late 1870s, exhibiting a more run-down appearance than the idealized sketch. ("Out of the Vapors" 1987, 219.)*



*Bathhouse Row from an elevated position, 1889. Hot Springs Creek has been filled in and the earliest form of the front promenade has taken shape. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*

#### 1892-1897, DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESERVATION

Between 1892 and 1897, a massive improvement and beautification program was undertaken for the Hot Springs Reservation. Secretary of the Interior John Noble selected a young Army engineer, Lieutenant Robert Stevens, to supervise the improvements. Secretary Noble had a number of ideas about the project. Foremost, improvements were to be made in a manner befitting this great "National Health Resort," and the natural mountainside scenery was to be heightened by a decorative park in the foreground (the current location of the Grand Promenade). Bathhouse Row was to be transformed into a formal landscape containing walks, rest areas, drinking fountains, shrubbery, etc. The old surface network of pipes was to be removed, and the old wooden cooling tanks replaced by more decorative ones. The area just above the bathhouses was to be made into a natural park with walkways, rest stops and summerhouses. Winding roads and walks of a gentle grade for use by invalids were to lead to the summit of the mountain.

Originally, Frederick Law Olmsted's landscape architecture firm was chosen to prepare a design for the development. Unfortunately, the project was repeatedly delayed, leaving crucial elements of the plan undone. The firm eventually proposed an ornate formal scheme including a Spanish-style stone arcade with an open timber roof, covering a broad, level public promenade along Bathhouse Row. The Olmsted plans were rejected by Secretary Noble who was afraid

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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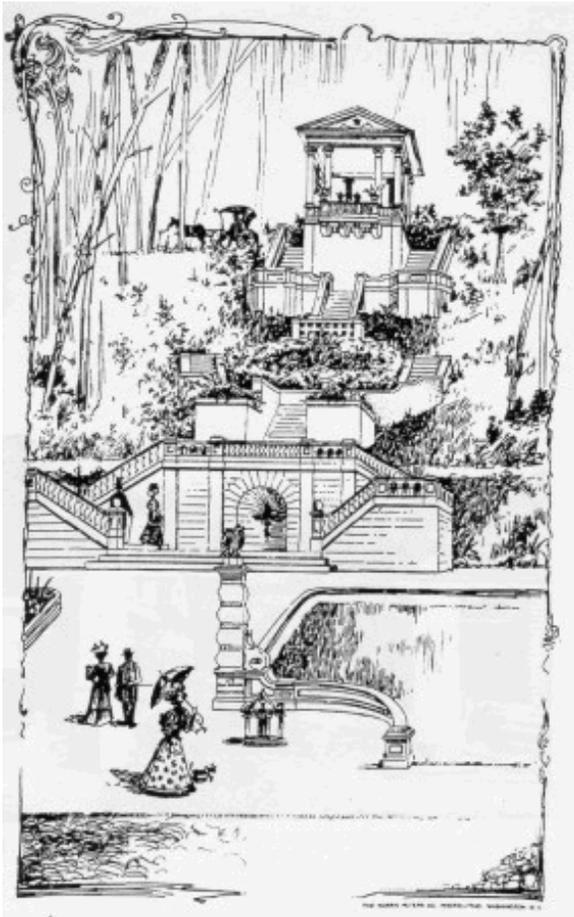
the arcade would create an artificial visual barrier between the Reservation and the city, would keep the sun off promenading bathers during the cooler months of the year, and would close off access to the bathhouses for supply purposes. Ultimately, virtually all of the design--except for some retaining walls, parapets and selected portions of the main entrance--was carried out by Stevens under the Secretary's general guidance. By 1893 Robert Stevens had completed topographic surveys and a formal landscape plan which was approved by the Secretary.

The entire frontage of Bathhouse Row along Fountain Street, Central Avenue and Reserve Avenue was redone during the project. Some 1,613 feet of sawed Alabama limestone curbing was put along Central Avenue and Reserve Avenue, while a sandstone curbing of extra grade was set along the reservation front from the Arlington Hotel east up to the entrance of the reservation drive onto Fountain Street, some 1,459 feet. Here the sidewalk limits of 12 feet were excavated to grade, involving considerable excavation of earth and rock. A stone arch 30 feet long by 6 feet wide by 5 feet deep was built over the drainage. A 14' wide concrete promenade ran along Central Avenue, leaving a lawn border 9 feet wide between its outer edge and the curbing. Elevated street-car landings, 12 feet wide, intersected the lawn border; Lombardy poplars were set along the front of the promenade in the border to present "a marked feature along the street. Further out in the same border a line of magnolia trees...(were) planted to replace the poplars, as shade, when these have served their term of usefulness." (Robert Stevens, "Report on Hot Springs Improvements to the Secretary of the Interior, 1894, in Rhodes, "Historic Grounds and Structures, 1985, 42).

Stevens supervised the implementation of the plan, much of which was constructed by 1897. Stevens' excellent sense of proportion, design, and balance are reflected in the conceptual landscape setting he helped to create for Hot Springs--a legacy that is still evident today.



*Main Entrance under construction, 1893. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*Sketch of Main Entrance, 1895. (Historic Grounds and Structures Report 1985, 305).*

#### 1897-1923, CREATION OF THE PREMIER AMERICAN SPA

Despite the extensive improvements of the 1880s and 1890s, the Hot Springs bathing facilities had become shabby, dirty, and inadequate by the turn of the century. Americans were gradually becoming more aware of the bacterial theory of illness and raised objections to the poor bathing conditions. Although the increasing numbers of visitors overcrowded the individual bathhouses, the owners provided little but cosmetic repairs to the old structures and equipment. Visitors increasingly expected the government to provide better facilities, updated equipment, trained attendants, proper sanitation, and good medical direction. All of these factors prompted the Department to make a number of policy changes and improvements over the next few years.

In 1910, following an inspection of the bathhouses which revealed filthy conditions and antiquated equipment, the Secretary outlined a new Departmental policy: there were to be no lease renewals for the individual bathhouses unless the applicants agreed to build new, sanitary, modern buildings which included all the essential, up-to-date equipment. No upper limit was put on bathhouse cost, but it was generally accepted that the new bathhouses would be large and

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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luxurious; the most modern heating, plumbing, and ventilation systems would be used; and the most technologically advanced equipment and modern furnishings would be installed. Since all of the bathhouse leases would expire between 1910 and 1920, this ruling affected all of Bathhouse Row.

To comply with Departmental policy, the bathhouses along the Row were systematically razed and most were replaced with new structures—starting with the Maurice and the Buckstaff in 1912. The Hale Bathhouse, one of the more recent and best built of the older Victorian bathhouses, was extensively remodeled, reopening to the public in 1915. The Palace was removed and the new Fordyce rose in its stead in 1915. The new Superior opened in 1916, the Ozark and the Quapaw in 1922, and the Lamar in 1923. These new bathhouses were large, expensive and exquisitely appointed. Drawing heavily on European examples, they incorporated expanses of stained glass, paneling, and marble. Several springs discovered during construction of the bathhouses were kept as display springs in the bathhouse basements.

In 1911, excess government lots were sold, netting nearly \$83,000 for additional Reservation improvements. In response to the push for sanitation and better facilities, additional reservoirs were built early in the century; the Government Free Bathhouse was remodeled; communal bathing pools were removed; and new cooling towers were installed. A dispensary and a clinic were established on the second floor of the Free Bathhouse to serve the needy, and a Reservation Medical Director was appointed. A home was designed and built for the Medical Director on Reserve Street, who moved in in 1913; the following year, the Reservation Superintendent moved in and this was used as the superintendent's residence until c. 1981. It later became the park curatorial storage facility and is now leased to the U.S. Forest Service.

The Reservation installed the Oertel Graduated Exercise Plan in 1914-15, encouraged by its success in Europe. This involved a self-guided booklet and marked trails and roads of graduated difficulty, providing walking and climbing exercise for all types of visitors. The mountainside walks, many built of tufa, were upgraded and landscaped, and new walkways were added to accommodate more numerous visitors.

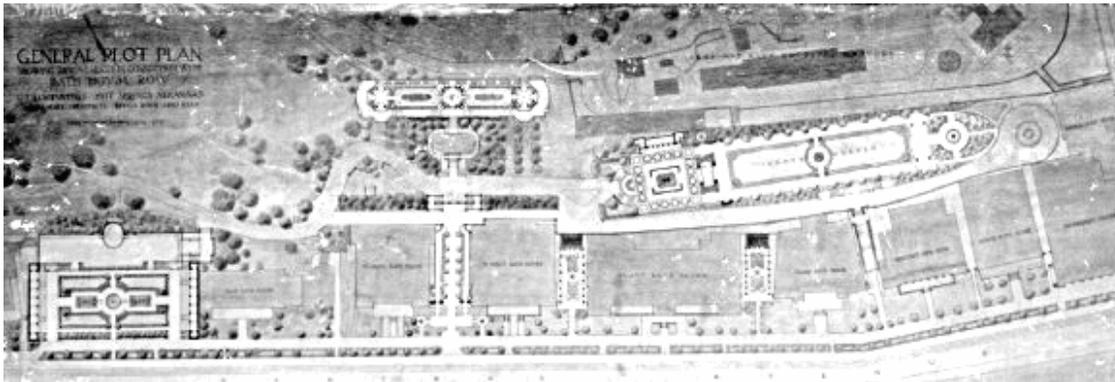
With the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, administration of the Hot Springs Reservation became the responsibility of the new agency. Director Stephen Mather took a strong personal interest in the Reservation, urging beautification on an elaborate scale. Mather, wanting to surpass the European resorts, invited noted landscape architect Jens Jensen from Chicago to help lay out some of the plantings on the Reservation--in particular colorful raised beds composed of thousands of spring-flowering bulbs.

Reservation superintendents and departmental officials had been advocating continued comprehensive development for Hot Springs since the early 1900s. Unfortunately, no updated general development plan had been written for the Reservation when the first of the new bathhouses was built. Although the Department of the Interior did have to approve the plans and in fact made changes to some of them, much of the bathhouse design was left to the individual lessees. The large new structures encroached upon the buffer space behind them and adjacent to the foreground area, closing in the space visually and overshadowing the 1890s

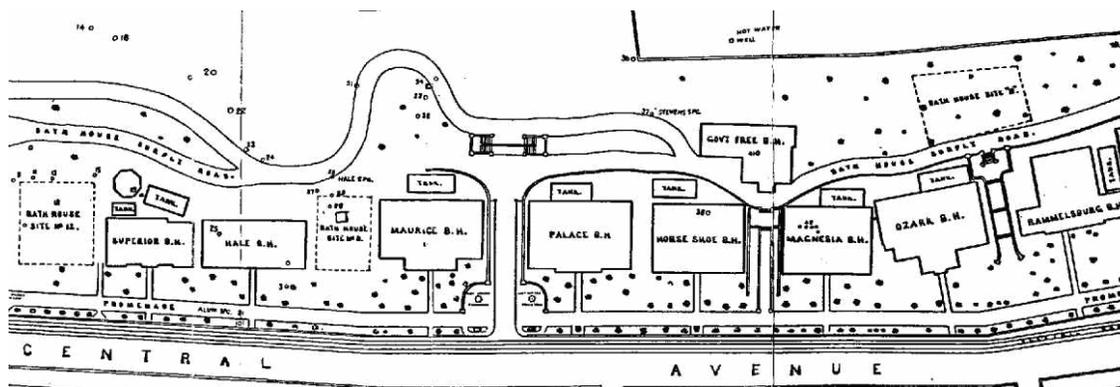
Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

entrances. Concerned that much of the work was being done without proper direction, the Department secured a \$10,000 appropriation and employed Little Rock architects George R. Mann and Eugene John Stern in 1917 to draft a comprehensive overall plan for the Reservation.

Mann and Stern visualized an entire row of bathhouses in the soon-to-be-popular Spanish Renaissance Revival style, set among formal lawns, massed shrubbery, vine-covered walls, and surrounding trees. A backdrop of concert gardens, secluded spaces and walkways were also part of the general plan. The elaborate Mann and Stern scheme for the "Great American Spa" would have cost \$2 million, but was postponed by World War I. Following the war, costs were boosted by inflation, materials were in short supply, and the proposal was shelved, never to be completed. However, Mann and Stern had a significant impact upon Bathhouse Row; they designed a number of the bathhouses and influenced features of others. Their comfort station design was implemented in the 1920s and the comprehensive plan, on file at the park, influenced subsequent planning on a subtle level.



*One of several proposed site plans for Bathhouse Row as developed by the firm of Mann and Stern. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Bathhouse Row Site Plan, 1902. (Historic Grounds and Structures Report 1985, 334).*

1921-1947, THE RESERVATION BECOMES A NATIONAL PARK

Congress formally designated the Hot Springs Reservation a national park in 1921. Over the next decade and a half, administrators slowly shifted their emphasis towards less formal landscaping, recreation, and conservation of natural resources.

Major landscape changes along Bathhouse Row were triggered when the Arlington Hotel burned in 1923. Various groups provided suggestions and site plans for the now vacant area, the majority of which focused on recreational use, noting its convenient location near the central business district. At the insistence of NPS Assistant Director Arno Cammerer, however, the area was kept as an open, grassy expanse. Additional magnolias were planted along the new sidewalk, aligned with the promenade in front of the bathhouses. White gravel walkways were laid out across the open lawn, and trees and flowering shrubs were planted along the inside of the walk. In 1931, a law was passed to preserve the area for park and landscaping purposes and to forbid its leasing for bathhouses or other structures. The lawn soon began to be used by various local groups for assemblies, pageants, holiday programs, and special ceremonies--a use that continues today.

Other changes to Bathhouse Row during this period were generally limited to the repair, replacement, or removal of various landscape features and structures. The electric lighting system and the sewer system were renovated. Spurred by criticism of the forced rebuilding of the bathhouses along the Row, the Service finally removed the old Government Free Bathhouse and built a new, modern public facility off Bathhouse Row in 1922.

To complete the renovations begun at the turn of the century, a new hot water collection system was finally constructed during the early 1930s. The centralized system included new reservoirs, piping, pumps, electrical equipment, meters, and manholes. This construction resulted in significant changes to the Bathhouse Row landscape. After being damaged by the heavy equipment, the Magnolia Promenade was redone and the adjacent curbs and gutters were replaced. A new lawn--complete with sprinkling system, shrubs, and trees--was installed on top of a reservoir constructed between the old pump house/office and the old Imperial Bathhouse. Oak, pine, cedar, gum, and hickory trees were also planted in a random pattern over the other new reservoirs on the mountainside, and shrubbery was set in strategic areas to conceal the exposed manholes.

Other changes that occurred at Hot Springs after 1921 were the result of broader influences and philosophies. As part of the early New Deal programs of the early 1930s, the National Park Service (NPS) had created a number of city, county, and state parks and recreation areas as public works projects. The NPS was also reorganized and a large number of disparate areas (battlefield sites, cemeteries, historic sites and monuments, etc.) were brought into the National Park System by executive order.

Based largely on experience with the large western parks, NPS officials had gradually developed a conceptual picture of the national park as an area to be preserved in its natural state, free from the inroads of modern civilization. Harold Ickes, appointed Secretary of the Interior in 1933, was concerned that parks had been over-developed in the past and supported the philosophy of keeping national parks in their natural state in the future.

By this time Hot Springs had been managed by the NPS for over a decade, but for the first time, a superintendent was chosen from NPS ranks. Visitation patterns had begun to change some time earlier, spurred by the new Little Rock highway and auto camping. These trends were intensified by the Great Depression which saw thousands of people flock to Hot Springs to take advantage of the free auto camp, bathhouse, and clinic.

All of these changes combined to create an identity crisis for Hot Springs National Park. Despite the long history of federal ownership and the formal "park" designation, the developments at Hot Springs began to be viewed as part of the "non-park" category. These new concepts of a national park guided design of 1930s developments at Hot Springs and also influenced planning for the park for the next half century.

Early in the 1930s, a comprehensive general development plan was done for the entire park. The plan proposed formal development of the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain, including a hot water cascade and a new promenade with large entrances on either end. The greenhouse, the old superintendent's house, and ancillary structures on the northern end of the row were to be removed. The private property across Central Avenue west of Bathhouse Row was to be purchased and returned to natural conditions more appropriate to a national park. Park boundaries would be expanded to include the balance of the upper slopes of North, West, and Sugarloaf Mountains to give Hot Springs the space, character, and atmosphere of a "real national park." Due to the Depression, however, there were no funds available for land acquisition, so this part of the plan was postponed indefinitely.

Planning for development of the lower portion of Hot Springs Mountain immediately behind the bathhouses was turned over to designer Charles Peterson, then a junior landscape architect in the NPS. Peterson's plan divided the area into two parts, each to be developed differently. The lower portion of Hot Springs Mountain, which extended from Reserve Avenue to Fountain Street, was to receive formal development in the construction of a "Grand Promenade," while the wooded slope above was to be helped back to its "natural" state as soon as possible. The rest of Bathhouse Row and the Magnolia Promenade were not substantially affected by the plan.

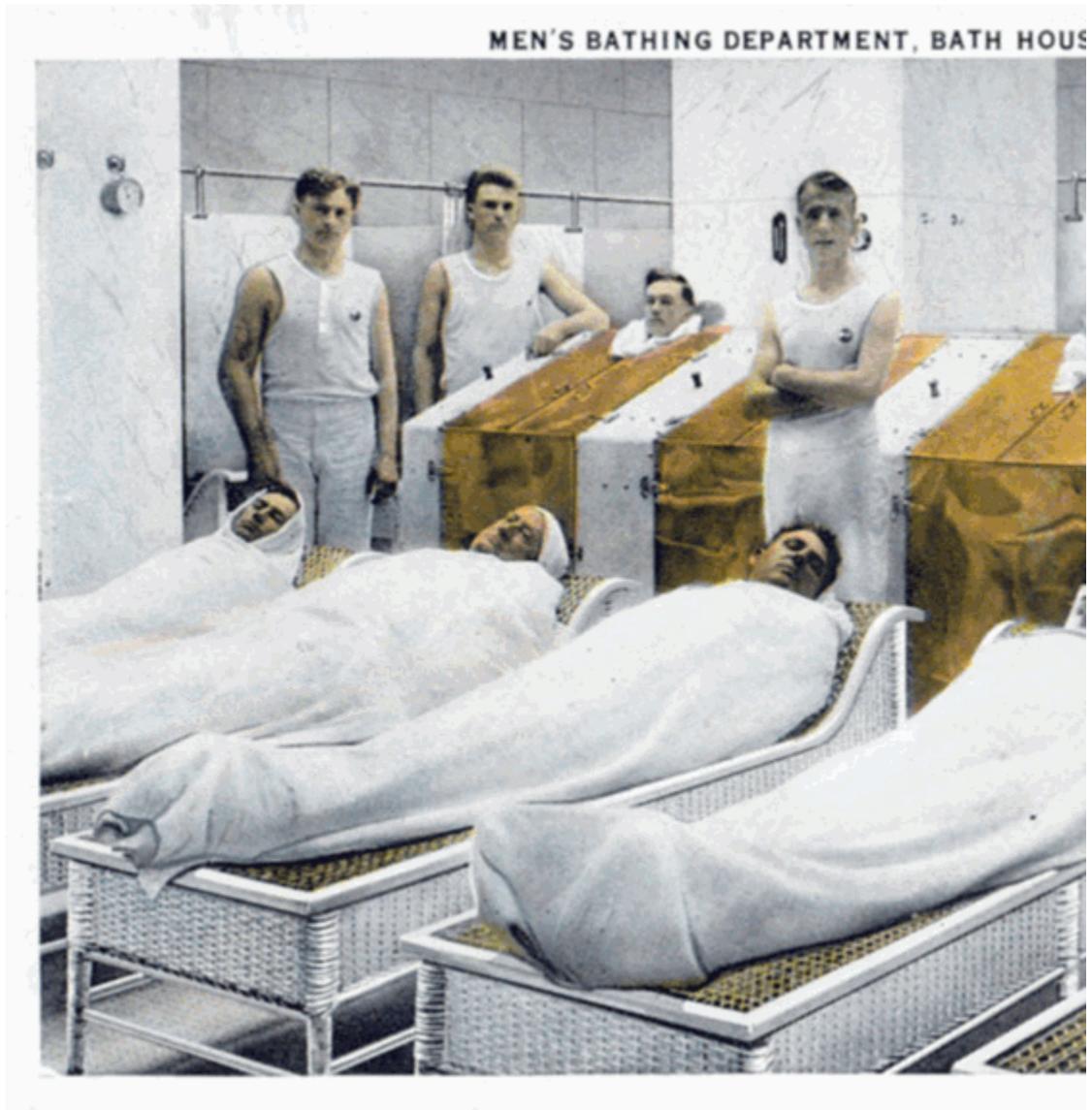
Construction of the Grand Promenade was begun in the early 1930s, but despite repeated requests from the superintendent, funding for the promenade was omitted from the 1935 and 1936 programs. Although the alignment grading was virtually completed, the project was stopped. The Grand Promenade project had been hindered throughout the 1930s by numerous design changes and delays occasioned by a variety of engineering problems. It is also likely that the reorganization of the National Park Service, the popular view of national parks as "natural" entities, and escalating costs heavily influenced the Director's decision to abort the project at this point.

About this same time, Department of Agriculture employee E. B. Meinecke wrote an outspoken report critical of past park development policies. While proposing his own ideas for yet another massive park development program, Meinecke urged that measures be taken to

divorce the park from the city and restore the natural forests and native flora. There are also numerous indications that NPS personnel were concerned over the integrity of the area as a national park, and it is probable that this report created a stir among NPS officials, helping to make the future of the Grand Promenade uncertain. Nevertheless, work continued, beginning with the removal of the New Imperial Bathhouse and the old pump house/administration building to make way for a new park administration and visitor center building in 1936. The landscape plan for the new structure was correlated with the nearby promenade entrance design, and the building itself was designed to be compatible with the rest of Bathhouse Row. The southern entry approach to the Grand Promenade was graded by 1938. Other promenade work during the latter part of the 1930s was confined to slope stabilization and planting, graveling of the walkway, and installation of temporary wooden steps and guard rails so the walkway could be used during this time.

A great deal of construction and maintenance work was done along Bathhouse Row during the 1930s. A new sewer system was installed by the city of Hot Springs. The underground cable for the Bathhouse Row lighting system was replaced in 1938 and the overhead streetcar lines on Central Avenue were removed about the same time. The trolley tracks were left in many places and are now buried by several inches of pavement along Central Avenue. The main entrance columns, the Pagoda pavilion, and other architectural elements were sandblasted in the mid-1930s. The main entrance exedra walls and the fountains were removed and replaced by a curved row of shrubbery.

Early in the period, it was proposed that a well, previously drilled in the area between the Fordyce and Quapaw Bathhouses, be used to supply water for an elaborate glass and iron fountain so visitors could see a “natural” spring in action. After several months of debate and many different proposals, the idea of a formal fountain was dropped and designs were completed for a display spring between the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouses. Two seeps were led together to run over small cascades of tufa masonry into a small pool and from there into the Hot Springs Creek arch. The temporary pool was to be removed when the promenade was completed, but became so popular with the public that new walks had to be installed to accommodate the crowds. It is still a Bathhouse Row attraction today.



*Buckstaff bathhouse in the early 1920s (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*Bathhouse Row ca. 1934. Elm trees lining sidewalk arched over to magnolias, and clipped Chinese Holly hedge was well established by this time. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*Coast Guard Band concert on Stevens Balustrade, 1944. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*

#### 1947 TO THE PRESENT, DECLINE AND RESURGENCE OF BATHHOUSE ROW

The peak year for bathing at Hot Springs was reached in 1947, largely due to the lifting of wartime travel restrictions and continued use by former military personnel who had experienced the thermal waters earlier in rest and rehabilitation programs. The number of baths given topped one million in that year, but bathing began to decline soon thereafter. The steady decline in bathing continued until the early 1980s, then stabilized at 140,000 to 150,000 baths per year. In addition, improved economic conditions, medical advances, and antibiotics helped cut sharply the number of visitors seeking help for venereal diseases at the Free Bathhouse. By 1957 the Free Bathhouse was converted to a physical medicine facility and indigent bathers were referred to the other bathhouses where their fees were paid by the government. In 1962, the Fordyce Bathhouse closed its doors, followed by the Maurice, the Hale, and the Ozark in the 1970s and the Superior, Quapaw, and the Lamar in the 1980s. Only the Buckstaff remains open today offering the traditional bathing experience. (Three hotels outside the park—the Arlington, Springs, and Austin—also have bathing facilities that use the hot spring water. In addition, the Levi Hospital uses the water in pool therapy).

After World War II, the trend towards increased recreational use of the area continued. Proposals for completion of the promenade were justified on the grounds that this would add to the recreational possibilities of the park. The classification problems of Hot Springs as a national park were still apparent and, to some extent, hindered development of the area. Instead

of concentrating on the spa theme, development proposals and park management strategies were often drawn from the large primitive-area parks and seemed to focus on the natural landscape and biotic preservation. As a result, landscape-related activities along Bathhouse Row focused on maintenance of existing facilities. For instance, in 1958 the main entrance was altered by removal of the concrete paving, the base of the old Main Entrance fountains. The concrete was replaced with low plantings and lawn or ground cover. The drive was reworked to change it to a tree-lined pedestrian walkway and to prevent use by vehicles. Between 1989 and 1991 this area was repaved and new fountains were installed.

After over 15 years of negotiations and discussion, the old power poles belonging to the Hot Springs Power Company were removed from Bathhouse Row during the late 1940s. A now centralized cooling system—consisting of a heat transfer system, a reservoir, pumps, pump house, and associated equipment—was finally completed in 1950. It was situated in the southern part of Arlington Lawn near the tufa cliffs and involved a great deal of ground disturbance. Following construction, the antiquated cooling towers belonging to the individual bathhouses—some dating to the early part of the century—were finally removed. Early in the 1960s, a new heat-exchanger building was erected, and screening plants and a fence were installed.

During the 1950s, the promenade proposals were revived, additional changes were made in the plans, and the project was finally completed in 1958. For the most part, a simplified version of the 1930s and 1940s alignment plans was used. The elaborate cascade was omitted, the walkway width was reduced, the terrace just north of the Fordyce was graded back, and the new promenade structures were integrated into the Stevens Balustrade and the old main entranceway. The old Superintendent's Residence on Fountain Street was razed and the area was graded prior to the final work on the north end of the promenade. A modest, naturalistic cascade of hot water was added near the north end of the promenade in 1983 and enhanced in 1991, long after completion of the promenade. Although various proposals were made to improve the rear view of the bathhouses as seen from the new Grand Promenade, these plans were never implemented. Instead, over the years the vegetation along the Promenade was allowed to grow, closing off the view in all but a few areas, mostly from the far northern portion.

The completion of the Grand Promenade came too late. Bathhouse Row's carefully planned landscape and architectural scheme had been completed, but society's needs had changed in the interim. Bathing reached a peak after WWII but then began a slow, downward slide from which the industry never recovered. The bathhouses became anachronisms—post-Victorian buildings that housed post-Victorian functions. The economics of this labor-intensive industry began to force the bathhouses to close down. The Fordyce closed in 1962, and the Maurice closed in 1974. Then in an 11-year time span—starting in 1974—the Superior, Hale, Ozark, Quapaw, and Lamar shut their doors.

The bathhouses have undergone extensive rehabilitation in recent years. The Buckstaff remains in operation as a traditional bathhouse while the Quawpaw was opened as a modern spa under a historic lease agreement in 2007. The Ozark now houses the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) since 2008. The Lamar has been used as a venue for park offices, training, special

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programs, and receptions since 2008. The Fordyce was restored and opened as the park's Visitor Center in 1989. The Maurice, the Hale, and the Superior remain vacant.

Throughout the 1980s, local citizens and the National Park Service began exploring ways to return the bathhouses and the Bathhouse Row landscape to the splendor, if not the function, of Hot Springs in its heyday. This has resulted in a drive to return the exteriors of the buildings and the exterior landscape features to their original grandeur in hopes of attracting private investment. An attempt is under way to lease out the buildings for adaptive uses, but currently three remain vacant. The current state of Bathhouse Row is an example of the merger of the needs of the future with the preservation of the past and is an essential element in the revitalization of Bathhouse Row and downtown Hot Springs.

## Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

### Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The National Register and National Landmark Registration Forms based the significance of Bathhouse Row primarily on the use, function and appearance of the bathhouses themselves. For this CLI, the traditional boundary of the cultural landscape has been expanded to match the analysis of the Cultural Landscape Report (2010). The analysis and evaluation considers a range of landscape characteristics defined as the "Reservation Front". This includes the bathhouses along with the surrounding landscape and presents the historical development of the Row and its subsequent significance in a more comprehensive context.

From the CLR 2010, Chap VIII, 8-9:

The Reservation Front includes the most intensive collection of historic designed landscape resources within the park. The term "Reservation Front" is used herein to indicate the portion of the park bounded by Reserve Street, Central Avenue, Fountain Street and the initial portion of Hot Springs Mountain Drive as well as the retaining wall at the western and northwestern property edges of the Rehabilitation Center. The idea of the "Reservation Front" was initially presented by Lieutenant Robert Stevens in his annual report of June 1893. He discussed the park improvements being undertaken, noting that the Reservation Front area was of primary importance due to its landscape features, mainly the springs. Throughout his subsequent reports he continued to refer to the Reservation Front as a whole entity that served as a defining component of the overall Reservation.

The Reservation Front includes six landscape character areas. Landscape character areas are sites that are defined by their physical qualities and types of cultural resources present. The landscape character areas in the Reservation Front are Bathhouse Row, the South Park, the Foreground Park, the Tufa Park, the Wooded Park, and Arlington Lawn. The South Park, Foreground Park, Tufa Park and Wooded Park all are parts of the Mountain Sidegrounds, through which the Grand Promenade runs. The Foreground Park includes the Formal Entrance/Stevens Balustrade, the Display Spring, and the Maurice Spring.

Although numerous changes have occurred within the Reservation Front, the landscape today exhibits an overall organization similar to that proposed by Stevens. A major change was the design and installation of a paved pathway that would become known as the Grand Promenade. The Grand Promenade substantially altered the character, spatial organization, circulation, material, workmanship, vegetation, and topography of the four mountainside ground parks. The area became a linear corridor rather than a series of separate distinct parks. It was designed and implemented in the early 1930s to early 1940s with the middle and northern sections built in the 1950s. Today many of the general characteristics are present, but the perception is one of a linear park rather than four areas with unique characteristics.

Overall, the landscape characteristics of Bathhouse Row have retained their essential historic character for the span of the period of significance. Certain aspects have been altered such as the

loss of the upper bandstand/pavilion which has diminished the overall appearance and the vistas into and out of the Main Entrance. There has also been the loss of and later addition of small scale features as well as changes in circulation; these changes have been relatively minor compared to the remaining landscape elements that define the historic character of Bathhouse Row and the surrounding landscape: the structural arrangement of the Main Entrance and Stevens Balustrade, Magnolia Promenade, the bathhouses and their positioning in the landscape, the size and scale of the front lawns, Arlington Lawn, the more informal Mountain Sidegrounds and the layout of the Grand Promenade. Visitors to the area still experience the same overall sense of time and place that was provided throughout the historic periods. The overall integrity of the landscape and its associated characteristics is intact.

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Aspects of Integrity:</b> | Location    |
|                              | Design      |
|                              | Setting     |
|                              | Materials   |
|                              | Workmanship |
|                              | Feeling     |
|                              | Association |

**Landscape Characteristic:**

**Buildings and Structures**

When the Dunbar-Hunter expedition arrived in this area in 1804, they recorded the existence of assorted shacks and cabins among the hot springs. These structures were apparently used only periodically, when people came to use the springs. The number of buildings and structures increased gradually until 1835. After that year, a radical change in local architecture occurred, due to the introduction of a nearby sawmill. This made cut lumber available for increased construction. Buildings then became more extensive in number, exhibited more sophisticated decorative details, and acquired additional functional uses.

Sandwiched between West Mountain to the west and Hot Springs Mountain to the east, a linear development of early wood bathhouses and hotels took place along the eastern edge of Hot Springs Creek. Several structures were actually built over the creek, straddling it. Along the west side of the creek, a diverse range of businesses sprang up, also in a linear manner. Buildings were periodically built and rebuilt over the next few decades due to fires, deterioration, and changes in ownership. By 1892, when Lieutenant Robert Stevens was directed to develop a landscape master plan for Bathhouse Row, the bathhouses were much larger and exhibited more eclectic styles than ever before. However, the ongoing decay of the wood used in construction finally resulted in the demolition of most of the bathhouses and wholesale reconstruction or refurbishing during the 1910s-1920s. The eight bathhouses that now exist were built during this time, except the Hale, which was originally built in 1892-1893 and underwent extensive remodeling during this period and again at a later date. By 1923, with

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the construction of the men's and women's comfort stations which flanked the Quapaw Bathhouse, the reconstruction of the Bathhouse Row bathhouses was complete. The construction of the NPS Administration building in 1935-1936 effectively completed the row and its resultant architectural character.

Bathhouse Row reached its peak in popularity shortly after WWII; thereafter interest in public bathing declined and the effects were soon felt on the bathhouses. As fewer baths were taken, the economics of this labor-intensive industry began to force the bathhouses to close down. By 1986, only the Buckstaff remained open for business, still offering the traditional bathing experience. Since that time, several attempts at leasing the remaining bathhouses out for alternative uses have occurred, but at this point they remain vacant, except the Fordyce, which was converted to the National Park Service Visitor Center in 1989. (Rhodes 1985, 1-7; Paige 1987, 34, 77-92).

(Note: The stone pavilion/bandstand that acted as the elevated focal point of the Main Entrance would be considered a structure here, but portions were razed in 1935 and the remaining traces were removed in 1958 and 1961-62.)

Superior Bathhouse – The Superior, completed in 1916 as the northernmost bathhouse on the row, was designed by Architect Harry C. Schwebke. Its modest design is an eclectic commercial style of classical revival origin. The building has two stories and a basement, is L-shaped in plan and is constructed of brick masonry and reinforced concrete. The Superior closed in 1983. (Note: The old brick reservoir behind the Superior is the oldest structure on Bathhouse Row, in place by 1888—although the reservoir may in fact date from the 1870s—the exact date of origin is unclear). The Superior has had a number of rehabilitation projects completed since 2008. The Superior Bathhouse is included in the current Request for Proposals for lease by a private enterprise through the Historic Lease Program. It is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Hale Bathhouse – The Hale was constructed between 1892-93; the designers were George and Fremont Orff of Minneapolis. It underwent major renovations in 1914 under the direction of George Mann and Eugene Stern of Little Rock and again in 1939-40, under the firm of Thompson, Sanders, and Ginocchio. The latter renovation changed the facade from its former style of neo-Classical revival to the Mission Revival style. The building is primarily a brick and concrete structure, reinforced with iron and steel. It is generally rectangular in plan, and is two and one half stories in height. The Hale ceased operation as a bathhouse in 1978 and was closed for several years. It was adaptively reused as a theater and concessionaire operation in 1981 that closed after only 9 months of operation. The building has been stabilized to maintain the historic character of the exterior and is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Maurice Bathhouse – Designed by George Gleim, Jr., of New York City, the Maurice was constructed between 1911 and 1912 and subsequently remodeled in 1915 following a design by

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George Mann and Eugene Stern. The building design is an eclectic combination of Italian Renaissance Revival and Mediterranean styles. The building, generally square in plan, is three stories in height and has brick and concrete load-bearing walls that are finished with stucco on the exterior. The Maurice closed in 1974 and has not been in operation since. The building has been stabilized to maintain the historic character of the exterior and is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Fordyce Bathhouse – The Fordyce was designed by George Mann and Eugene Stern and built between 1914 and 1915. The design is Renaissance Revival with Italian and Spanish elements. The building is three stories in height and constructed of brick, with cream colored brick facing and terra cotta details. The foundation and porch are constructed of Batesville limestone. The Fordyce closed its operation in 1962. Since 1989 the Fordyce has served as the Hot Springs National Park Visitor Center, interpretive facility, and library. The building has been extensively restored and renovated to accommodate this use. The historic character of the building is intact, with the exception of the entrance ramp that was converted to steps in 1996 and a wheelchair ramp added to the north end of the porch during the 1987-1988 restoration. Overall the building is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Quapaw Bathhouse – The Quapaw Bathhouse is a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival Style building that was built in 1922. It is constructed of masonry and reinforced concrete with a stucco finish. The firm of Mann and Stern also designed the Quapaw. Most of the building is a one-story structure, with the narrow second story running the length of the facade and topped with a large central dome covered with colored tiles and capped with a copper cupola. The first floor is u-shaped in plan, and the second floor is rectangular. The short curved ramps to the building were added in 1923. The last bathhouse contract ended in 1984. The front sun porch of this building was enclosed for many years, but has recently been restored to its original design. The Quapaw has been rehabilitated and currently leased as a modern spa on Bathhouse Row. It is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Ozark Bathhouse – Designed by Mann and Stern, this Spanish Colonial Revival style bathhouse was completed in 1922. The two-story building is constructed of brick and concrete masonry with a stucco finish. Trapezoidal in plan, the front elevation is symmetrical with twin towers that have a three-tier set-back from the main entrance they flank. The building ceased bathhouse operations in 1977. The front sun porch of this building was enclosed for many years, but has recently been restored to its original design. The Ozark has had a number of rehabilitation projects completed in recent years. The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) currently leases the building under a 60-year lease agreement. It is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Buckstaff Bathhouse – Completed in 1912, the Buckstaff is of Neo-Classical Revival design, with cream colored brick and white stucco finishes. Designed by Frank W. Gibb, the Buckstaff is three stories tall; engaged columns divide the entrance into seven bays, flanked by pavilions at the north and south ends. The Buckstaff retains its traditional use as a bathhouse, thus

## Bathhouse Row

### Hot Springs National Park

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retaining integrity of feeling and association, in addition to the other aspects. The overall historic character of the building is intact, and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Lamar Bathhouse – Harry Schwebke designed the Lamar, which was completed in 1923. It was designed in a transitional style often used in commercial buildings of the time that were still not completely devoid of elements from classical revival styles: symmetry, cornices, and vague pediments articulating the front entrance. The building is a two-story reinforced concrete structure finished with stucco. A one-story enclosed sun porch spans nearly the entire length of the front elevation. The two-story portion is rectangular in plan. The building ceased bathhouse operations in November of 1985. It has had a number of rehabilitation projects completed in recent years. The building has been used as a venue for park offices, training, receptions, and special programs since 2008. It is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Hot Springs National Park Administration Building – The Administration building was constructed in 1936 in a Spanish Colonial Revival Style designed by the National Park Service Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design. The two-story building has a simplified Spanish Baroque doorway framed by pilasters topped with frieze, cornice, and finials flanking the second story window. The hipped roof is covered with clay tile. The building served as the park headquarters and visitor center until 1989, when the visitor center operation was moved to the Fordyce Bathhouse. The overall historic character of the building is intact and is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Men’s and Women’s Comfort Stations – Designed by Mann and Stern, and constructed in 1923, the two small comfort stations on Bathhouse Row are situated on either side of the Quapaw, set back along the rear of the bathhouse. The white-stucco exterior finish and red-tiled roofs provide a strong architectural relation to the Spanish/Mediterranean bathhouses. The comfort stations are currently in use and are in good, nearly original condition. The historic character of the buildings is intact, and therefore they are considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Retaining walls behind Bathhouse Row - The retaining walls are an integral structural component to the Bathhouse Row landscape. After cutting into the base of the mountain to create space for the construction of the new bathhouses, workmen erected retaining walls to prevent future erosion and to protect the bathhouses from landslides. In Stevens’s early descriptions of the entrances and parks that surrounded the bathhouses, he mentions the presence of “finished range work walls” along the slopes and “a retaining and parapet wall of native range work.” Varying in composition and height, the walls were constructed and rehabilitated over time between 1890 and 1935. The stone masonry varies from even courses of large, regular blocks with pilasters to rougher, more irregular construction types. They are currently in fair condition and their historic character is intact; thus, they are considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

The buildings and structures along Bathhouse Row are the largest collection of early twentieth-century bathhouses remaining in the United States and are one of the few collections of historic bathhouses remaining in this country. It represents the high point of that industry when it reached its peak from the 1920s through the 1940s. These buildings also form the architectural core of downtown Hot Springs and are an impressive collection of varied eclectic architectural styles popular during the 1910s and 1920s. As a group (including the Administration Building and two comfort stations) these buildings define the essential historic character of the Bathhouse Row landscape. The buildings and structures retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

(Information adapted from 1987 NHL Nomination, sect. 7, 1-8; Rhodes 1985, 18, 51, 56; 1994 LCS. Note: extensive photo documentation can be found in the 1994 List of Classified Structures).

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Gazebo in Arlington Park

Feature Identification Number: 147857

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Maintenance buildings in Arlington Park

Feature Identification Number: 147859

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: Buckstaff Bathhouse

Feature Identification Number: 96900

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 00709

LCS Structure Name: Buckstaff Bathhouse

LCS Structure Number: HB-102

Feature: Fordyce Bathhouse

Feature Identification Number: 96901

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 00713

LCS Structure Name: Fordyce Bathhouse

LCS Structure Number: HB-105

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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Feature: Hale Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96902  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00711  
LCS Structure Name: Hale Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-107

Feature: Lamar Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96903  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00717  
LCS Structure Name: Lamar Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-101

Feature: Maurice Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96904  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00712  
LCS Structure Name: Maurice Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-106

Feature: Men's Comfort Station  
Feature Identification Number: 96905  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 64735  
LCS Structure Name: Men's Comfort Station  
LCS Structure Number: C-2

Feature: NPS Administration Building  
Feature Identification Number: 96906  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 12089  
LCS Structure Name: Administration Building  
LCS Structure Number: HB-1

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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Feature: Ozark Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96907  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00715  
LCS Structure Name: Ozark Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-103

Feature: Quapaw Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96908  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00714  
LCS Structure Name: Quapaw Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-104

Feature: Retaining walls behind Bathhouse Row  
Feature Identification Number: 96909  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 64760  
LCS Structure Name: Retaining Walls  
LCS Structure Number: 15

Feature: Superior Bathhouse  
Feature Identification Number: 96910  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 00710  
LCS Structure Name: Superior Bathhouse  
LCS Structure Number: HB-108

Feature: Women's Comfort Station  
Feature Identification Number: 96911  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing  
IDLCS Number: 64736  
LCS Structure Name: Women's Comfort Station

LCS Structure Number:

C-1

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Bathhouse Row, ca. 1891, prior to the construction of the current bathhouses. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*

**Circulation**

Prior to the construction of the Creek Arch, the business district of Hot Springs (along what was then Valley Street) was physically separated from the line of bathhouses. After the completion of the Arch project in 1886, the main street (now Central Avenue) was reconstructed, graded, and abutted the Bathhouse Row lawns and promenade. During the major landscape improvements under Lt. Stevens, a 9 foot lawn border and 14 foot wide concrete sidewalk was laid paralleling Central Avenue, which replaced a five-foot wide gravel footpath. This sidewalk had to be partially replaced by the early 1900s. Due to a disastrous flood in 1923, several sections of the sidewalk had to be replaced, and the entire sidewalk was resurveyed and redone with a rough surface following the 1931 hot water distribution project. (Rhodes 1985, 42,111,140).

The construction of the Main Entrance provided a connection between the public street and sidewalk and the more private walkways and drives to the rear of the bathhouses. The surfaces of the entry area, steps, and landings that ultimately led to the stone pavilion at the crest of the design were paved initially and have remained this way over time, although some materials and design features have been altered. A dirt carriage drive that crossed the second landing was

ultimately paved with brick during work on the Grand Promenade.

As part of a broad development plan initiated in 1932, a formal promenade was to be constructed in the area behind and above the line of bathhouses. Prior to this time, the Magnolia Promenade had functioned as the primary strolling area. This was a typical feature of the overall healthful/recreational experience of spas throughout Europe and the U.S. There was a network of gravel or dirt paths and drives in the area above the bathhouses for hiking and strolling, but prior to this time they remained as rustic, undeveloped elements when compared to the more formal, grandiose walks and the Main Entrance along Central Avenue. It was the intention of National Park Service landscape architect Charles Peterson to create a paved promenade, lined with formal plantings, that would functionally be used by convalescents and aesthetically represent a transitional zone between the formal bathhouses and the natural state of the mountain above. As a major circulation feature, it would connect Reservation Avenue, now called Reserve Street, the Grand Entrance, and Fountain Street throughout its course. For the most part, the new Grand Promenade alignment followed the old carriage drive and adjacent paths that had existed along this route. (Rhodes 50 52, 141 169).

The Grand Promenade is a pedestrian circulation corridor that provides connections between Reserve Street, Fountain Street, and a number of access points to Bathhouse Row, the Formal Entrance (Stevens Balustrade), and the trails on Hot Springs Mountain. Two of the Mountain Sideground parks, the Foreground Park and the Tufa Park, include pedestrian trails that encourage leisurely strolling, exploration, and light exercise. Six paved pedestrian paths are located in the Foreground Park between the Grand Promenade and the Old Carriage Road and Hot Springs Mountain Road.

The design for the Grand Promenade went through several revisions, and site work throughout the 1930s was sporadic and prone to stoppages. Consistent concerns about the escalating cost of the project and unexpected site problems led to repeated design revisions. Excavation through chunks of tufa rock had to be done by hand and jack hammer, so as not to disturb nearby springs. This slowed the process considerably. By 1942, the Grand Promenade was really nothing more than a graded, 22 foot wide gravel covered swath around the base of Hot Springs Mountain. A 370 foot section of red and buff brick and terrazzo paving had been installed in a decorative, “zig zag” pattern. This section led from the south entrance on Reserve Avenue, behind the Imperial bathhouse, to a point where the ramp from the Main Entrance entered the Grand Promenade.

A Development Outline for the 1950s pressed for the completion of the Grand Promenade. After several more rounds of design revisions and delays, work on the Grand Promenade resumed in 1956. A modification in width from the original 22 feet to eighteen feet was made at this time. Construction of the formal entrance at Reserve Street had been made possible by the razing of the New Imperial bathhouse in 1937. The completion of this entrance effectively connected the Grand Promenade with Reserve Street. In the Wooded Park, the demolition of the Assistant Superintendent’s residence in 1958 allowed for the completion and final

landscaping of the Grand Promenade as it exists today. The Grand Promenade has essentially remained the same over the years, except for being repaved in 1984 and 2001 (Rhodes 141 169, 234 242, 251, and compliance records on file, HOSP).

Another result of the broad development plan initiated in 1932 was the installation of a hot water distribution system that necessitated replacement of the Magnolia Promenade sidewalk and adjacent curbing. By 1939 the Magnolia Promenade was being described as a 12 foot wide concrete walkway lined with concrete curb and drainage gutters. (Rhodes 138 141, 172).

In 1958, a new concrete walk entrance was constructed that replaced the old driveway that led from Central Avenue through the stone columns and up to Stevens Balustrade. Also around this time, the sides of the walkway were filled with topsoil and planted with American holly trees (Rhodes 233, LMP 69).

The promenade also serves as a service road for park maintenance vehicles. The vehicles can access the promenade from the sloped concrete walk behind the Fordyce Bathhouse that connects the Formal Entrance to the Grand Promenade. Also, service vehicles can enter the Grand Promenade at the Fountain Street entrance. The Grand Promenade has integrity for the period of significance.

The Formal Entrance is the primary pedestrian connection to Hot Springs Mountain from Bathhouse Row. The lower portion begins at a vehicular drop-off area at Central Avenue that also provides service access. The pedestrian circulation along the Formal Entrance follows a distinct rhythm that alternates between a central and double access. At the entry/gateway on Central Avenue the pedestrian route is along a center walk, approximately thirteen feet wide, that follows the central axis of the Formal Entrance. At the Stevens Balustrade, the pedestrian circulation is along a series of steps. The route is split into two stairways (along a double set of steps), and returns to a central, singular route at the top of the Balustrade until it reaches the Grand Promenade where it becomes two routes again until it reaches the Pavilion site. The Formal Entrance has integrity for the period of significance.

The Pavilion site is the highest point along the Formal Entrance. Designed by S.P. Van Patten, the pavilion, also known as the Bandstand, was constructed in 1896 to complete the design as presented by Stevens. Before 1900 the Old Carriage Road was the principal road to the top of the mountain. Entrance was through the gate at the Army and Navy Hospital. The pavilion was removed in c. 1935 to c. 1962. The Old Carriage Road is currently a gravel route that extends from the iron gate at the Rehabilitation Center to the north and intersects with Hot Springs Mountain Road. Along the western edge of the road there are a total of eleven brick bench pads. A deteriorated concrete gutter runs parallel to the eastern side of the road. There is vegetation growing through the gravel in some portions of the road. The Old Carriage Road has integrity as a path of historic circulation in the Mountain Sidegrounds.

The Oertel Trail System was completed in 1914-1915 and was advertised as a 'terrain cure'

similar to those found in the popular European spas of the day. At Hot Springs, four courses were designed with concrete markers placed 300 feet apart. Each route was designated by a different color that indicated degree of difficulty. Use of the Oertel System was in decline by the 1930s. This may have been due to the increase of automobiles on Hot Springs Mountain. The majority of the trail system is extant though it is not identified as a formal program. Several concrete markers can be located though many may have migrated from their original locations. The Oertel Trail System has lost much of its integrity but it continues to contribute through interpretation to the circulation system at Hot Springs.

Beginning in 1924, pedestrian circulation at Arlington Lawn was accommodated by several concrete sidewalks. Primary access was provided via the sidewalk that extended between Central Avenue and Bathhouse Row; it continued along Fountain Street to the northeast. A secondary, parallel sidewalk ran along the base of the slope from the northeast corner of the Superior Bathhouse northward toward Fountain Street. Four crosswalks connected the secondary sidewalk with the Bathhouse Row sidewalk: one located at the northern end of the Superior Bathhouse; a second aligned with the northern end of the reservoir; a third at the intersection of Central Avenue and Fountain Street, and the fourth at Fountain Street aligned with one of the entrances to the Arlington Hotel. The sidewalks defined the Arlington Lawn landscape as a formal lawn/park. Before 1930 a trail from the intersection of the secondary sidewalk and crosswalk #3 to the Mountain Sidegrounds was installed roughly in the location of the current Lower Tufa Terrace Trail (CLR 2010, Chap II, 143).

Arlington Lawn landscape was redesigned and constructed from 1958-1974 to its present configuration. Pedestrian circulation at Arlington Lawn is provided by a series of sidewalks. A four foot wide sidewalk runs along Fountain Street and widens at Central Avenue to match the sidewalk and terrace along Bathhouse Row. Still extant from the 1924 design is the widened sidewalk that extends from the entrance at the intersection of Fountain Street and Central Avenue to the Gazebo. Secondary sidewalks extend from the main route connecting to the Grand Promenade, Gazebo area, pool/stage/Tufa Rock area, and Lower Tufa Terrace Trail. The Lower Tufa Terrace Trail extends from the Arlington Lawn to the Grand Promenade. The trail has a very steep grade and a 3'-6" width. Two lookouts provide a view of the Hot Water Cascade and Thermal Pool; the lower lookout was constructed in the past ten years. The lower trail appears to be consistent with a trail that was present during the 1940s but it has been modified since then and is considered non-contributing. Alterations made during the 1980s changed the alignment of the sidewalks and reduced the integrity of the original lawn design. The current configuration of sidewalks at Arlington Lawn is not historic but they continue to provide for the feeling of a formally designed urban park which it has been since 1924 (CLR 2010, Chap III, 29-30).

In general, the circulation features along Bathhouse Row and the surrounding landscape provide the same overall sensation that has been experienced since the historic periods. For the most part, the characteristic of circulation retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Character-defining Features:**

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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Feature: Old Carriage Road

Feature Identification Number: 147839

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

| <u>Feature UTM Source</u> | <u>Type of Point</u> | <u>Datum</u> | <u>UTM Zone</u> | <u>UTM Easting</u> | <u>UTM Northing</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| GPS-Uncorrected           | Point                | NAD 83       | 15              | 495,190            | 3,819,226           |

Feature: Lower Tufa Trail

Feature Identification Number: 147853

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

Feature: sidewalk from Fountain&Central to gazebo

Feature Identification Number: 147855

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Oertel Trail System

Feature Identification Number: 147869

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64763

LCS Structure Name: Oertel Trail System

LCS Structure Number: 45

Feature: Grand Promenade

Feature Identification Number: 96912

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64730

LCS Structure Name: Grand Promenade

LCS Structure Number: 10

Feature: Magnolia Promenade

Feature Identification Number: 96913

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Main Entrance/Stevens Balustrade

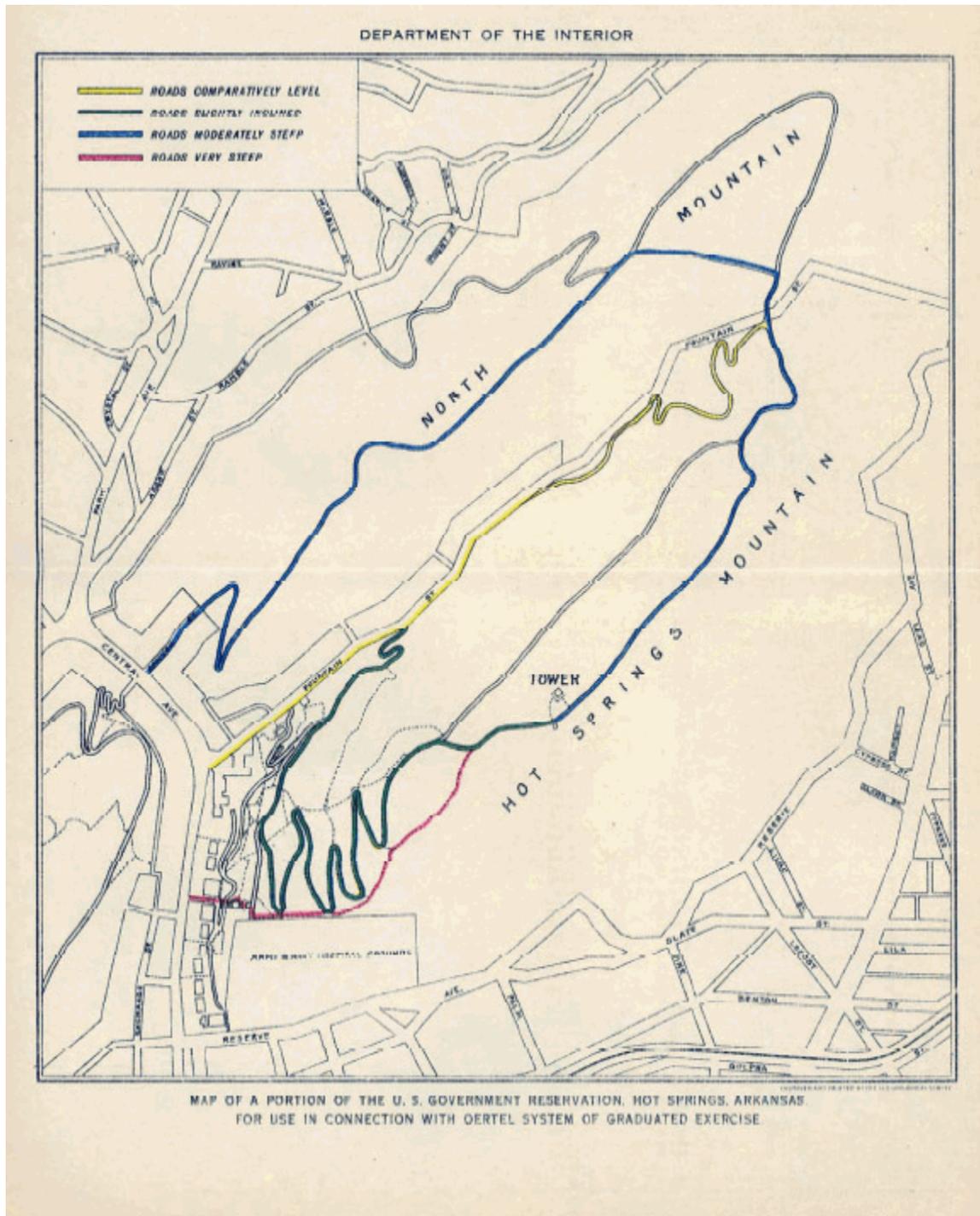
Feature Identification Number: 96914

|                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Type of Feature Contribution: | Contributing                          |
| IDLCS Number:                 | 64734                                 |
| LCS Structure Name:           | Main Entrance and Stevens Ballustrade |
| LCS Structure Number:         | 14                                    |

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Old Carriage Road looking north from pavilion site (NPS, 2010).*



*Historic map of the Oertel Trail System (HOSP archives).*



*Early construction of the Grand Promenade, 1930s. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*

Bathhouse Row  
Hot Springs National Park

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*Current view of the Magnolia Promenade, still a major pedestrian thoroughfare along Bathhouse Row. (NPS, 2010)*



*Establishing brick pattern on Grand Promenade, ca. 1940s. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*View of road before it was converted to the Grand Promenade. (Courtesy HSOP Library/Archives)*



*Construction of Grand Promenade, mid-1930s. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



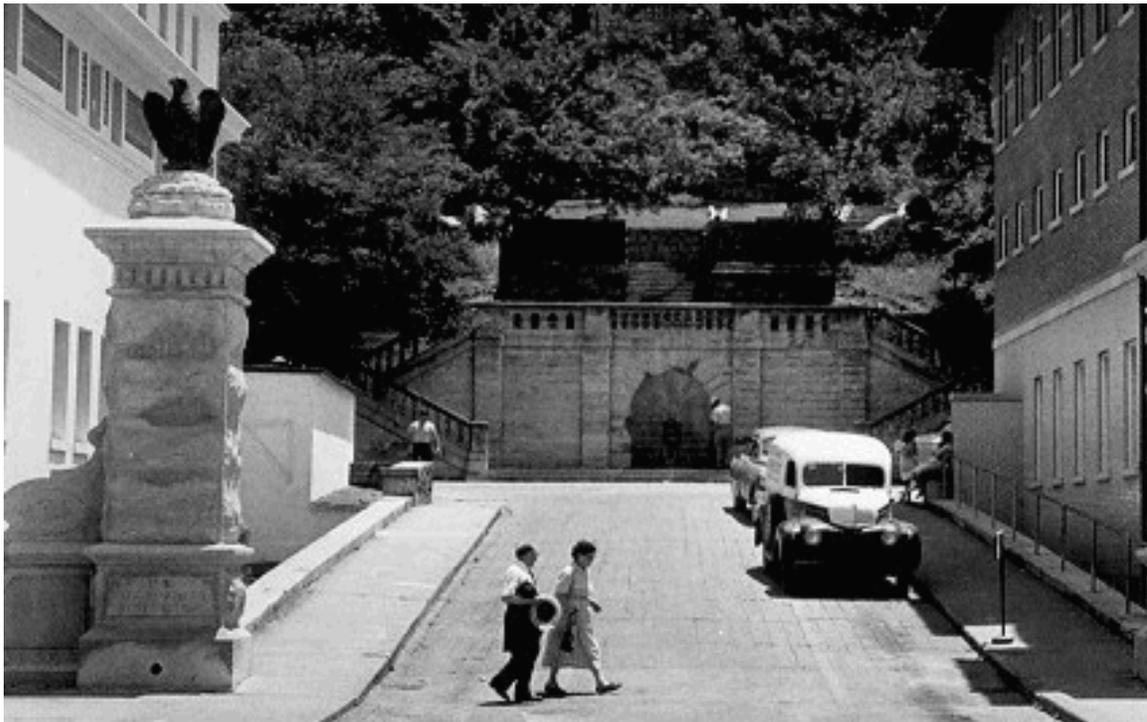
*Current view of Grand Promenade (NPS, 2010).*



*Current view of south entrance to the Grand Promenade. (NPS, 2010)*



*At the north entrance to the Grand Promenade. (NPS, 2010).*



*Main Entrance, 1952. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Main Entrance, ca. 1960s--American holly trees in place, and width of path is reduced. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*

### **Cluster Arrangement**

Although the eight bathhouses that now exist along Bathhouse Row were built independently under separate owners, with individual intentions as to their exterior and interior appearances, it is their collective effect that defines the historic character of the landscape. With the completion of the Administration Building in 1936, a strong southern terminus was established and the linear arrangement of the Row was finalized. The preservation of Magnolia Promenade to the west and the construction of the Grand Promenade to the east reinforced the overall linear effect of Bathhouse Row.

The current cluster arrangement of Bathhouse Row strongly provides the same sensation that has been experienced since the last historic period. Thus, this characteristic retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

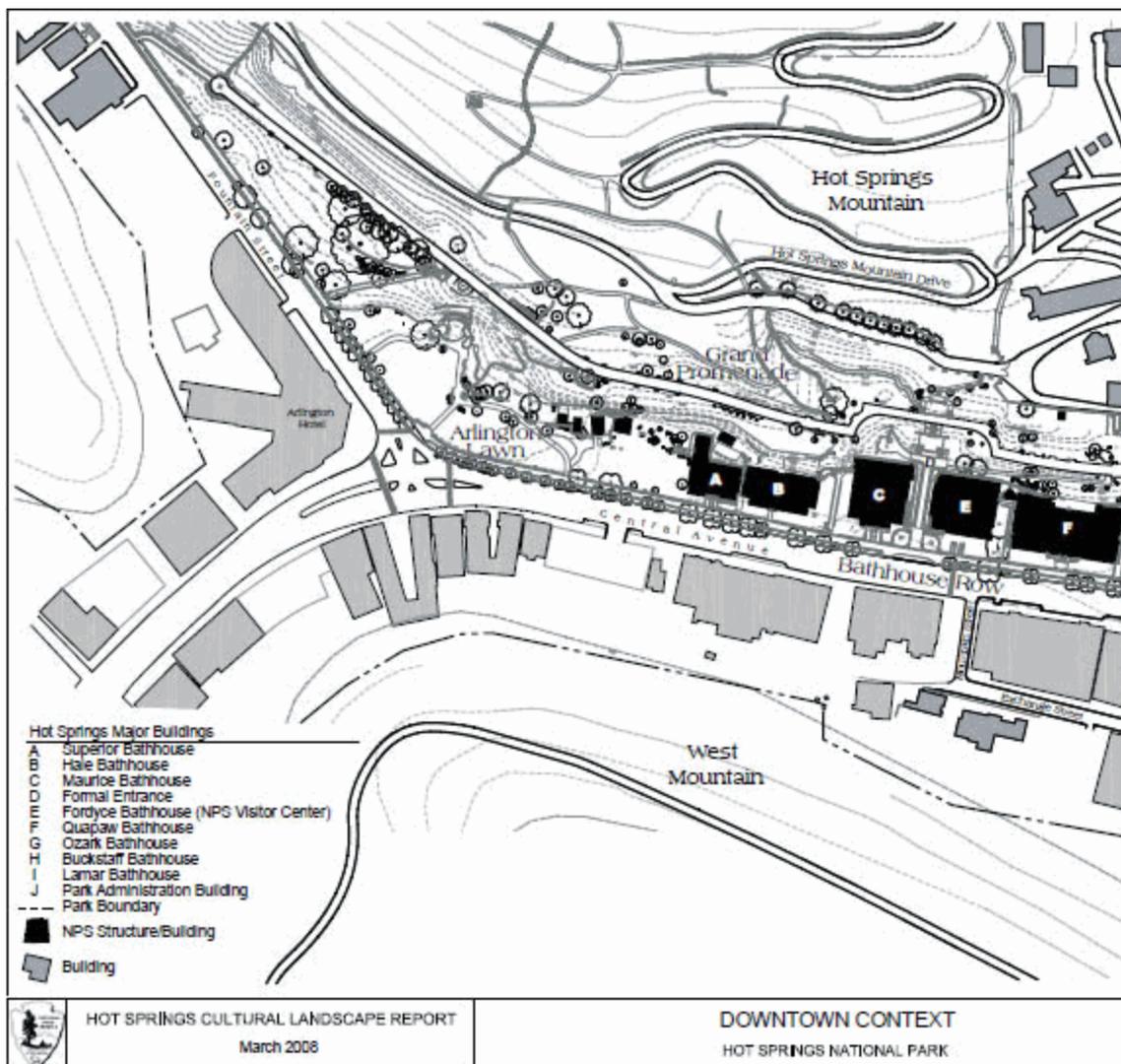
### **Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Linear cluster defined by the eight bathhouses and the Administration Building and the structures and spaces included therein

Feature Identification Number: 96915

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Site plan showing the cluster arrangement of bathhouses in context with downtown Hot Springs (CLR, 2010).*

**Constructed Water Features**

Fountains and springs for public use along Bathhouse Row have long been traditional landscape features. Visitors to the hot springs thought that drinking the waters, in addition to bathing in them, would provide various healthful benefits. At first the water was consumed directly from the natural springs and associated pools, either out of one's hands or by dipping a cup. As part of the 1890s landscape improvement project, more effort was put into providing amenities for the visitors. Five ornamental fountains were constructed during this time, some with water

spigots. Of these original fountains, only the Noble fountain and the Shell fountain, set in the foot of the wall at the base of the grand stairway, remain. The two “exedra” fountains originally in place at the Main Entrance have been replaced with two more modern fountains designed by the Denver Service Center. Other fountains were added over time, such as the cast-concrete fountain in front of the Administration Building and the nearby jug fountain. Several springs behind Bathhouse Row—Maurice, Dripping, and Display—have been altered around their exteriors so that visitors could gather and view, touch, or partake of the waters.

The collective effect of these features in the Bathhouse Row landscape reinforces the historic character. As a whole this characteristic retains integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. (Integrity of location has been compromised slightly due to Noble Fountain being moved twice).

Feature descriptions:

Cast-concrete fountain:

This one-piece cast-concrete fountain was built in 1936 on-site. The hot spring water flows out over a cast concrete bowl that is supported by a pedestal; an octagonal base serves as the fountain’s catch basin. The age of the fountain (62 years) is relevant to the period of significance for Bathhouse Row 1892-Present and therefore eligible as a contributing feature of the inventory unit. The historic character of the fountain is intact and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit. (1987 NHL Nomination, sect. 7 p. 8; NR Amendment 7-4; Rhodes 1985, 189-190).

Jug fountain:

The jug fountain along Reserve Street in front of the Administration Building was originally called the “curb tap,” and was built in 1932, not long before the construction of the Administration Building (1936). The fountain was rebuilt several times-- in 1948, 1956, and apparently again in 1966. This fountain was built with the express purpose of providing free hot spring water to the public, who continue to bring containers and jugs to fill daily. The historic character of the fountain is intact and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit. (1987 NHL Nomination, sect. 7 p. 8; NR Amendment 7-4; Rhodes 1985, 191, 233).

Noble Fountain:

Constructed in 1895 and erected in 1896, the John W. Noble fountain was also once known as the Octagon Fountain. Named after the Secretary of the Interior in office at the time, the fountain was based on an earlier (possibly Renaissance or Baroque) Venetian design. San Antonio Architect James Riely Gordon designed the construction details of the fountain, which was of carved marble. Sculptor Edward Kemeys designed the fountain’s bronze eagles, flags, standards, and shields. The original design had two cups chained to the fountain from which to drink. The chained cups were replaced sometime later with the two bubblers currently extant. Originally located on the Reservation’s far southwest corner (southwest of the present Administration Building), the fountain was moved closer to the Administration Building entrance

in 1945, and in 1957 was again moved, to its current location that marks the Reserve Avenue entrance of the Grand Promenade. The historic character of the fountain is intact, and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit. (NR Amendment, 7-4; Rhodes 1985, 48, 191, 233).

**Maurice Spring/Dripping Spring:**

This spring, located between the Maurice and the Hale Bathhouses, was originally separately called the Hale Spring and Dripping Spring. Sometime around 1892, an open masonry arch was built over the Dripping Spring to protect its waters, and the Hale Spring was improved by facing up the rough stone walls that surrounded it with white novaculite stone and coped with white limestone. The wood steps that led to these springs were replaced with white limestone. The base of the viewing platform was “neatly concreted.” Further improvements to these springs were completed in 1897, including a wrought-iron fence along the edge of the concrete platform. In 1903, the area was renamed the Maurice Spring (although the Dripping Spring retained its name as well). Surrounding retaining walls, of cut Alabama ashlar limestone, were constructed to help support the overhanging tufa bluff, tie into the previous rubble wall, and to protect the springs. The arch around the drinking spout at Dripping Spring was redone, and the elevated concrete platform was extended to allow for more people to gather here. An eight-foot wide sidewalk was laid to connect this area more efficiently to the main walk along the Row. Additional repair work on the spring was performed in 1919-1920. The drinking fountain of Dripping Spring was restored in 1981-82 and is functional; however, it now uses thermal water from a distribution line rather than water from the spring behind it. A jug fountain was also restored at this time. A version of a similar jug fountain is present in photos dating from c. 1903. By the 1940s the Maurice Historic Spring Area was abandoned as a public area, and it wasn’t restored until the 1980s project. An iron manhole cover hides the Maurice Spring. The open spring that is covered with an iron grating is the Tunnel Spring; the Maurice Spring is located under the concrete platform. The general historic character of the spring is intact and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit. (adapted from 1987 NHL Nomination, sect. 7 p. 9; NR Nomination 1988, 7-5; Rhodes 1985, 59-60, 82, 104)

**Display spring:**

In May, 1932, Superintendent Thomas J. Allen, Jr., forwarded a design for a display spring to the Director of the National Park Service. Two springs located behind the Maurice bathhouse, numbered 32 and 33, had “unsatisfactory structures over them, for display purposes.” Allen proposed to direct the waters from these springs over small cascades of tufa masonry and into a small pool, the water draining from there into a sewer. Ultimately the water from the two springs was “led together with landscaping assistance arranged in an attractive display pool showing the hot waters as they issue in their natural state.” The new display area proved to be so popular that the walkways had to be enlarged to accommodate all those who wanted to see it. The Superintendent planned to erect some small signs near the spring, giving information about the “hot water, its probable source, and radioactive qualities.”

Little was recorded in the way of changes or maintenance to the display area until 1984, when the black-top asphalt that had been previously installed around the display spring was removed and replaced by brick and concrete paving, which is still in place today. This change in the paving pattern has not diminished the historic character of the spring, and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit. (Rhodes 1985, 188-189, 253).

**Main Entrance fountains:**

As part of Stevens's design for the Grand Entrance, two small ornamental fountains were constructed and placed in the open areas in front of the matching stone columns and walls. These fountains, commonly referred to as "exedra" fountains, were smaller and less elaborate than the Noble fountain and the Hoke Smith fountain (which no longer exists). These fountains were composed of marble and executed in a Romanesque design, by architect James Riely Gordon of San Antonio, Texas. They were intended to be used as public drinking fountains. Stevens wrote that these fountains were small but "of elegant design and workmanship," contributing "much to the imposing appearance of this entrance." They were completed in 1895 and erected in 1896.

The Superintendent's report of 1927 reported that "the two marble fountains on Bath House Row" were taken down, repaired, replumbed, and reset.

These fountains were removed sometime after this date and prior to 1934, when a photograph of the entry area indicates the fountains are gone. The paved base of these fountains was removed in 1958 and replaced with low evergreens and groundcover, although photographs from 1984 indicate that what appears to be lawn was eventually planted.

The current concrete fountains that are situated in this location were installed and designed in 1990 (Roger Bucks, Denver Service Center, principal designer), after the Landscape Management Plan suggested that fountains be resituated in the historic location and that they should not replicate the original fountains, but that they should be historically compatible.

Although the current fountains are functionally important and are visually and historically compatible, they must be considered non-contributing because they do not retain sufficient integrity.

**Shell fountain:**

The Shell fountain was another original component of Lt. Stevens's master plan. Set in the central corbel at the foot of the grand stairway that led to the stone pavilion, the fountain was to be supplied with water from a newly discovered spring. Thomas Harding, a Little Rock architect, was employed in 1895 to draft the working details for the stone carvings on the fountain. The completed fountain served as the visual focal point for the lower portion of Steven's Balustrade. Currently, the Shell fountain does function. It is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit (Rhodes 1985, 49).

Creek Arch:

In 1884-1886 Hot Springs Creek, which ran along the front (western) edge of Bathhouse Row, was walled over with a rock masonry arch culvert and subsequently filled and leveled. The construction of this culvert ameliorated several situations. Hot Springs' main street and business district were situated across the creek from Bathhouse Row, and access was via individual bridges that led to each bathhouse. The filling of this area allowed more convenient access to the houses. In addition, erosion and unsanitary conditions were prevalent in the creek previous to the completion of the culvert; the culvert walls eliminated the erosion and the installation of a sewer line improved sanitation. The filling in of this long strip of land allowed for the development of a formal landscape along the front of the bathhouses.  
(adapted from 1987 NHL Nomination, sect. 8 p. 1)

Although the Creek Arch is situated underground and thus can not be observed, it is still a functionally important presence in the landscape. The historic character of the Creek Arch is intact and it is considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

In Arlington Lawn, the Thermal Water Cascade was constructed ca. 1982 and is not contributing. It is a man-made naturalistic tufa rock outcropping with thermal water cascade; it originates to the west of the Grand Promenade. The thermal water flows down to the geometric thermal pool.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Thermal Water Cascade

Feature Identification Number: 147843

Type of Feature Contribution: Non Contributing

| <u>Feature UTM Source</u> | <u>Type of Point</u> | <u>Datum</u> | <u>UTM Zone</u> | <u>UTM Easting</u> | <u>UTM Northing</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| GPS-Uncorrected           | Point                | NAD 83       | 15              | 495,168            | 3,819,379           |

Feature: Cast-concrete fountain

Feature Identification Number: 96916

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64731

LCS Structure Name: Fountain

LCS Structure Number: 11

Feature: Creek Arch

Feature Identification Number: 96917

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Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Display spring

Feature Identification Number: 96918

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Jug fountain

Feature Identification Number: 96919

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Main Entrance fountains

Feature Identification Number: 96920

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Maurice Spring Area

Feature Identification Number: 96921

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64733

LCS Structure Name: Maurice Spring Fountain

LCS Structure Number: 13

Feature: Noble Fountain

Feature Identification Number: 96922

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 64732

LCS Structure Name: Noble Fountain

LCS Structure Number: 12

Feature: Shell fountain

Feature Identification Number: 96923

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Noble Fountain in its original location, ca. 1920s. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Maurice Spring. Tunnel Spring is viewed from the platform into the hillside (NPS, 2010).*



*Cast concrete fountain located in front of Administration Building (NPS, 2010).*



*Tunnel and Dripping Springs, sometime after 1903. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*1889 view of the old Hale Bathhouse and Hale (later Maurice) Spring to the rear.  
(Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives).*



*Noble Fountain located by the south entrance to the Grand Promenade (NPS, 2010).*



*Current view of Dripping Spring (NPS, 2010).*

### **Land Use**

When the U.S. acquired this area in 1803, President Jefferson sent explorers to the area to record their impressions of the hot springs, which by that time had acquired a substantial reputation. As word of the springs spread, an increasing number of travelers and settlers arrived. Once the row of bathhouses was built along Hot Springs Creek, an overall land use pattern was established that endured for many years. Generally, land use was divided into two

areas: the intensive defined use of the bathhouses, and the passive recreational use around their exteriors. The number and placement of bathhouses and related structures fluctuated over time, and only recently has the use of these structures changed from traditional bathing practices to that of vacant structures used primarily for interpretation. The exceptions are the Buckstaff and the Quapaw, which are still being used as bathhouses; the Fordyce, which is currently used by the National Park Service as a visitor center and interpretive museum; the Ozark, which houses the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA); and the Lamar, which the park uses for offices, training, and other purposes. The Maurice, the Hale, and the Superior are not formally leased but have been rehabilitated and are available for historic lease opportunities. The southernmost building along Bathhouse Row, at the intersection of Reserve Street and Central Avenue, has served as the National Park Service Administration Building since it was constructed in 1936. The Administration Building was also the park Visitor Center/Museum until mid-1989, when the Fordyce Bathhouse reopened.

The Grand Promenade serves as an urban plaza and an area for passive recreation. In addition, it is a pedestrian circulation corridor that provides connections between Reserve Street, Fountain Street, and a number of access points to Bathhouse Row, the Formal Entrance/Stevens Balustrade, and the trails on Hot Springs Mountain. Visitor amenities along the Grand Promenade include a drinking fountain, benches, lights, and trash receptacles. The Grand Promenade is a designed historic landscape that is managed as a cultural resource.

The Formal Entrance was originally identified as the main entrance and was intended to provide both vehicular and pedestrian access. The Formal Entrance is located between the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouses and today serves as the primary pedestrian entry from Bathhouse Row to the Grand Promenade. The Formal Entrance (Stevens Balustrade) is a designed historic landscape that is managed as a cultural resource.

After the second Arlington Hotel burned down in 1923, the third Arlington Hotel was constructed in 1924 across Fountain Street on private land, and the former hotel site became available for a landscaped park. A design for the park at Arlington Lawn was developed by Landscape Engineer Hill. In the fall of 1924 landscape improvements were implemented, including the construction of a concrete walk, gravel walks, and planting of ornamental plants including a border of southern crepe myrtle installed along the concrete walk. These were the first landscape improvements associated with the establishment of Arlington Lawn as a park. It continues to serve as an urban park and plaza that is utilized for formal and informal individual and group activities. The area provides pedestrian circulation routes between Fountain Street, the Grand Promenade, and Central Avenue. The Hot Water Cascade provides opportunities for visitors to view the spring water in an outdoor environment. The platform adjacent to the hot water cascade is used for weddings, presentations, and other gatherings. Several signs provide information regarding the history of the property (CLR 2010, Chap III, 5-6).

In general, exterior land use has not changed dramatically over time. Although people now

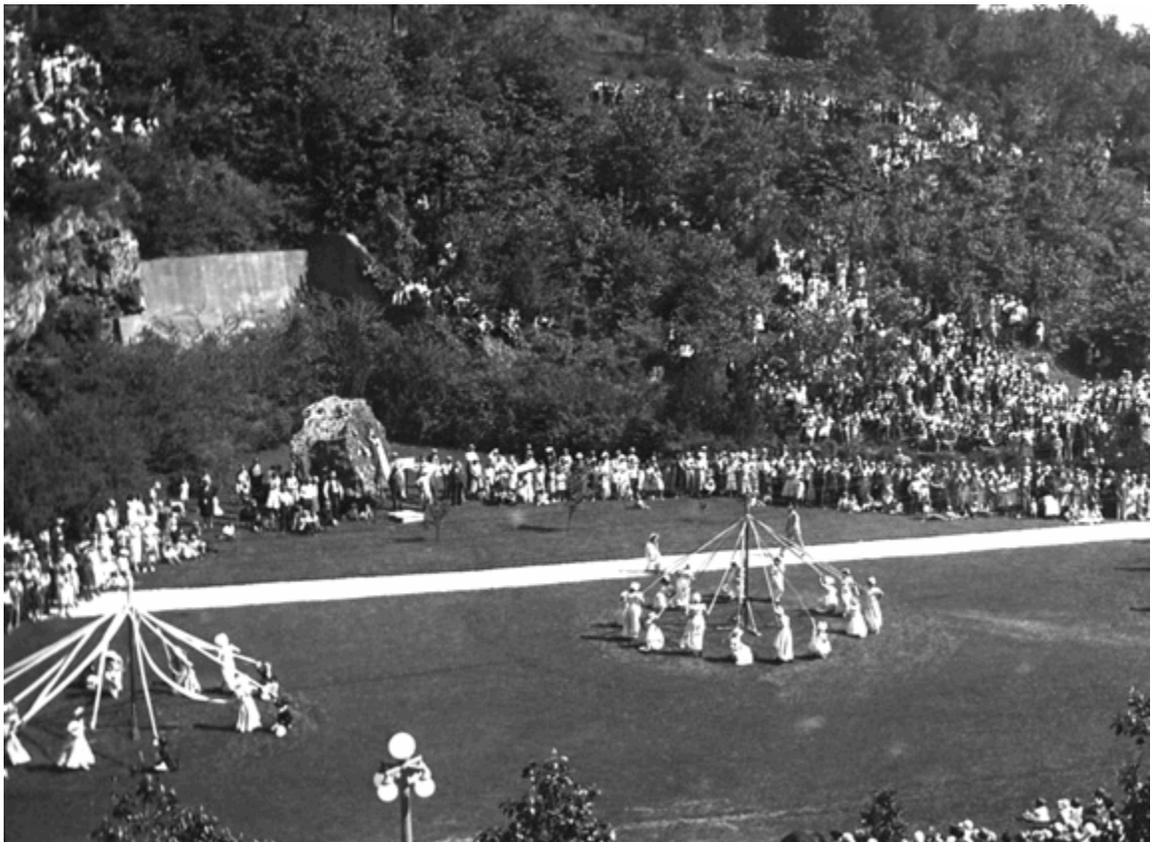
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visit Bathhouse Row to tour the site and be exposed to its interpretation, they still stroll along the walks and make use of the landscape in the same general manner as before, as a setting for passive recreation.

Overall, Bathhouse Row and the surrounding landscape is now used in terms of a historic district that is focused on interpretation and passive recreation. There are additional uses specifically related to National Park Service needs, such as maintenance and government office functions, but these do not detract from the historic scene. In general, the land use of Bathhouse Row retains integrity to the period of significance.

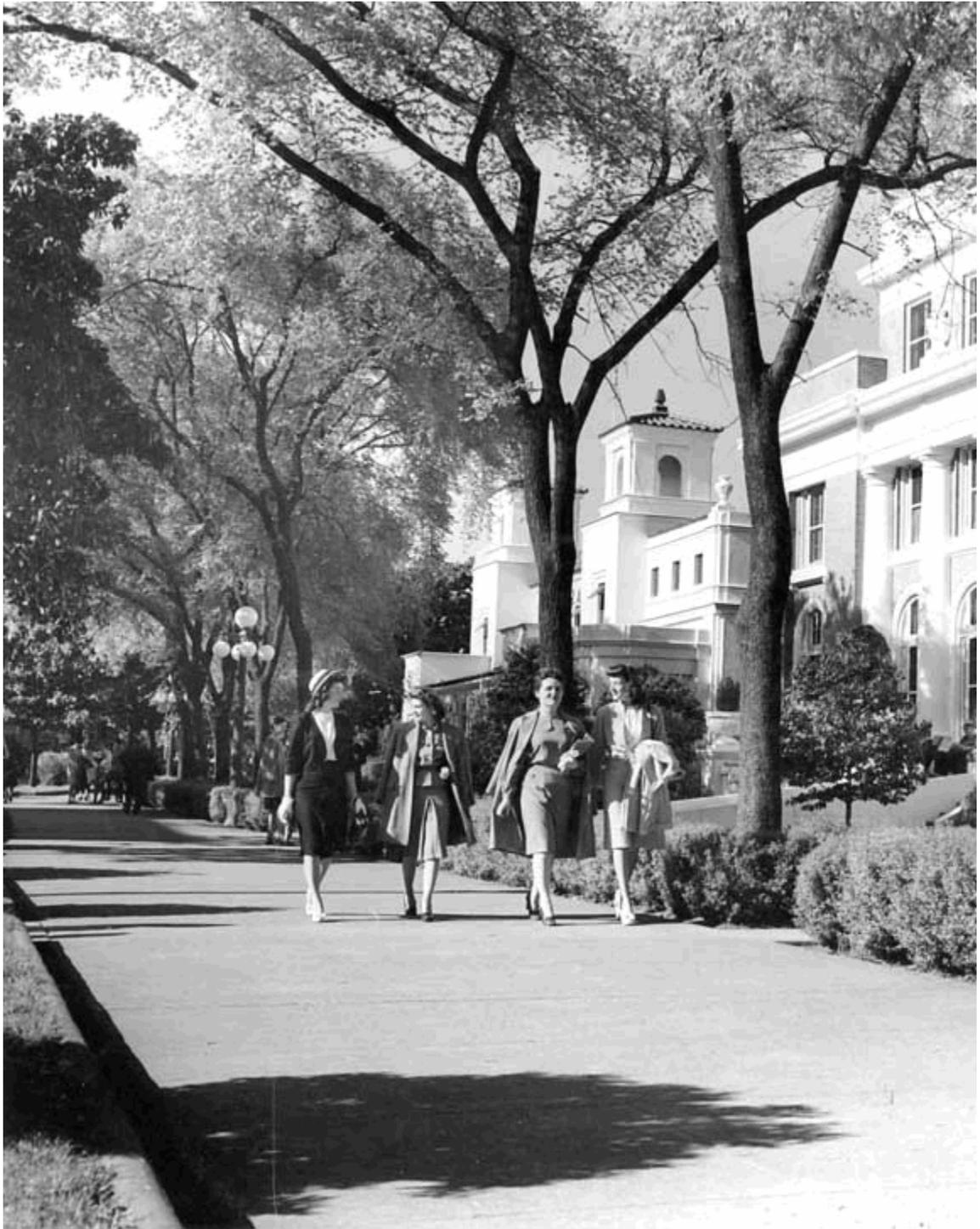
**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Gathering at Arlington Lawn, 1932 (HOSP archives).*



*Stereograph image circa 1870 of the Mud Hole (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*Magnolia Promenade in the late 1940s (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives).*



*Concert on Stevens Balustrade, 1944. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*A current popular use of Bathhouse Row is to stroll along the Magnolia Promenade (shown here) and the Grand Promenade (HOSP, 2007).*

### **Natural Systems and Features**

#### **Geomorphology/Geology/Hydrology-**

The Hot Springs of Bathhouse Row are the result of complex geomorphological and hydrological processes. The park is in the Ouachita Mountains of central Arkansas. The topography of the park consists of mountain ridges running from east to west, intermontane basins, and the piedmont plateau. Hot Springs lies at the southern edge of these ridges. These mountains are mainly of sedimentary composition, encompassing geological formations from the Ordovician period (440 million years ago) and, possibly, as early as the Cambrian period (470 million years ago). During most of the Paleozoic era (470 to 230 million years ago), what became the Ouachita Mountains lay submerged under an ancient shallow sea that extended from Louisiana to New Hampshire. Approximately 500 million years ago, geological stresses deep in the earth resulted in the exceedingly slow movement of the South American plate

northward to collide with the North American plate. This collision of tectonic plates slowly over geological time created the Ouachita Mountains. The enormous pressures of this geological activity caused the shale and sandstone layers to fracture and fissure. These huge rock layers moved up and down along the fault line, causing local relief to vary as much as 1,000 feet.

Over the centuries, rainfall in the area northwest to northeast of the park has percolated down through rock fractures and fissures, where the heat from the interior of the earth gradually warms the water. This causes it to rise to the surface by way of joints and faults in the Hot Springs Sandstone formation. When the water reaches the surface, the temperature is more than 140 degrees. This cycle of rainwater becoming hot spring water takes about 4,000 years. At the surface the water escapes from the ground in both liquid and gaseous forms. The dissolved minerals in the water precipitate to form the white to tan travertine or “tufa rock” seen near the openings of the hot springs. Slightly less than a million gallons of water a day are estimated to flow from the 47 springs in the park.

These geographical and hydrological systems have obviously affected the development pattern of the area. The limits on the immediate vicinity posed by the geography only allowed for a linear north-south development pattern, confined within the relatively narrow gorge between Hot Springs Mountain and West Mountain. In addition, because most of the springs issue from the base of the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain, Bathhouse Row was constructed there so that it could benefit from this linear pattern of spring water discharge. The floor of this gorge, where Hot Springs Creek lies, is relatively flat and has been used as a major thoroughfare since the early 19th century. The original road built there crossed and recrossed the creek, but with the construction of the Creek Arch and its subsequent infill in the latter part of the 1800s, the road was straightened (Paige and Harrison 1987, 19-20).

The products of these natural systems, the various hot springs and the tufa formations, are the features in the landscape that have influenced its development and physical form. The cultural adaptation of the springs resulted in the presence of the bathhouses and the long-term uses associated with them. This is the primary significance of this area. Without the springs, there would be no bathhouses and surrounding landscape. The tufa formations have been altered to gain access to the springs, to provide additional space for the construction of the larger bathhouses, and to clear a grade for the Grand Promenade. The human manipulation of these features is the basis for the current interpretation by the NPS. These features, the hot springs and the tufa formations, retain integrity of location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Tufa rock in Arlington Lawn (NPS, 2010)*

### **Small Scale Features**

Lieutenant Stevens employed a variety of small-scale features in his design for the improvement of Bathhouse Row. Two stone pillars topped with bronze eagles formed the main entrance to the Reservation between the Maurice and the Palace (later the Fordyce) Bathhouses. Eventually inscribed in the pillars were the names of the Secretaries of the Interior John Noble (1889-93), Hoke Smith (1893-96), David R. Francis (1896-1897), E.A. Hitchcock (1898-1907) and “U.S. Hot Springs Reservation.” Connected to the pillars on either side and curving out to the sidewalk were matching low stone walls. The spaces in front of the walls were paved. On axis with the center of these pillars, a paved road and flanking walks led to a massive fronted double stairway and accompanying balustrade and on up to a stone pavilion (or bandstand—actually a structure), which completed this impressive focal point of Bathhouse Row. The stairs, balustrade and pavilion were composed of limestone ashlar masonry and concrete. In addition to the creation of a formal entryway to the Reservation, the positioning of these features created an impressive connection between the public front of the street and the more naturalistic drives and paths up behind the bathhouses. These features

were completed between 1895 and 1896. The roof, supporting pillars, and railings of the pavilion were removed in 1935, and any remaining evidence of the pavilion itself was removed in 1958; the platform was removed in 1961-62. In 1936 the low stone walls were removed due to their deteriorated condition and replaced with a trimmed hedge that retained the size and pattern of the wall. (Rhodes 1985, 50-54;175; 234)

The features that compose the Main Entrance and the Stevens Balustrade are representative of the original period of significance and are the primary features of the Bathhouse Row landscape. These features retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Other features that are associated with the landscape's setting, such as curbing, benches, signs, street lights, and drainage features, have appeared at various points throughout the evolution of Bathhouse Row. Although the majority of these small-scale features are of recent origin and thus do not possess integrity, their collective presence does not seriously detract from the historic character of the landscape. A discussion of these features follows. (All following information was derived from various sections of the Rhodes 1985 study and/or the 1989 Landscape Management Plan.)

**Curbs:** Some 1613 feet of sawed Alabama limestone curbing were installed along Central and Reserve Avenues during the 1890s. Much of this was replaced in 1924 with 6" concrete curbing, due to a disastrous flood. Intermittent maintenance work and replacement of the curbing has been performed periodically over time. The curbing along the Magnolia Promenade and the east side of Central Avenue was installed in 1990. The curbing along Central Avenue, the Magnolia Promenade and the Administration Building is functionally important and does not detract from the landscape's historic character, but is considered non-contributing.

**NHL Monument:** This is a bronze plaque that is mounted onto a chunk of tufa rock. The monument relates the national significance of Bathhouse Row. It is situated in front of the Administration Building along Reserve Street. The monument is functionally important, but it is a recent addition (sometime after 1987) and is therefore considered to be non-contributing.

**Drinking Fountains:** There have always been ample opportunities to partake of the spring water at Hot Springs. As the Bathhouse Row area evolved, greater emphasis was placed on the creation of ornamental fountains and enhanced outlets where people could drink the spring water. Several of these are discussed under the "Constructed Water Features" section. The Shell fountain, a historic drinking fountain, is functional. Another fountain located at the Dripping Spring location still functions. In combination, these possess sufficient integrity and are considered contributing to the landscape. A modern type of accessible drinking fountain was built in front of the Maurice and Hale Bathhouses and uses cold city water. A drinking fountain at the north entrance to the Grand Promenade, also uses cooled thermal water and was placed on this location in 1958 when the Grand Promenade was finished. The modern additions are functionally important but are considered non-contributing.

**Street Lamps:** By 1897 four iron gas street lamps had been installed along the front of Bathhouse Row; two were placed by the stone pavilion at the head of the Main Entrance, and two at the Superintendent's office and residence. Two newer incandescent lights were placed next to the old Hoke Smith Fountain. Stevens proposed that electric lights be placed "along the drive and at main centers of improvement." Where these were specifically placed and when is uncertain. In 1914, fifteen ornamental electric light standards were installed along Bathhouse Row along the inside of the walk. Two of these lights, placed on the Reserve Avenue entrance, were intended to mark Bathhouse Row for visitors arriving by the night train. These standards replaced the previous light poles. By 1929, 20 streetlights along Bathhouse Row were of this five-cluster globe type. The lights retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, design, association, workmanship, and materials and their collective presence relates to the documented significance of the Row. Therefore, the streetlights along the Magnolia Promenade are considered contributing to the significance of the inventory unit.

Other more recent types of light standards, such as the "goose-necked" variety found along the Grand Promenade, inside Arlington Lawn (not the older poles surrounding the Lawn), and by Maurice Spring, are similar to those along Magnolia Promenade only in their functional importance and are considered non-contributing.

**Benches:** "Comfortable seats" were listed as necessary components of the Bathhouse Row landscape as early as 1896 in the Report of the Superintendent. Fifty rustic iron seats were placed along the Magnolia Promenade in that year. In 1918, fifty new steel benches were purchased for placement at desirable locations.

The modern slat oak wood and cast-iron benches located throughout Bathhouse Row and the concrete benches at the Main Entry are recent additions (1990) and are considered non-contributing and impacting to the integrity of the landscape. It is likely that the concrete benches and chess tables on the terraces at the Reserve Avenue entrance to the Promenade were constructed as part of the 1957 formal entrance project. They are therefore considered contributing.

**Trash Receptacles:** These are recent additions and are considered non-contributing. Their presence is considered impacting on the landscape's historic character.

**Sprinkler system:** The first system was originally installed on the lawns in 1928. There appear to be modern pop-up sprinklers along the lawns and Magnolia Row strip at the present time, but these are recent additions and are non-contributing.

**Drainage inlets (grates) along main sidewalk:** These features were most likely originally installed sometime during the 1920s-1930s, when the Magnolia Promenade sidewalk was twice replaced and new concrete curbs and adjacent gutters were installed due to flooding (the first time) and the new hot water distribution system (the second). The 1989 Landscape Management Plan stated that these drains were nonfunctional and that new drains needed to be

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installed along the main sidewalk to divert runoff down to the Creek Arch below. The present bronze drains were installed in 1990 during a major sidewalk reconstruction project. Although these are recent additions to the landscape, they retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the inventory unit.

Flood lights (uplighting): These recent additions currently seem to be only in front of the Buckstaff Bathhouse, the Fordyce, and the Administration Building. They are recent additions and are considered non-contributing and impacting to the landscape's historic character.

Utility manhole covers, outlets, etc.: These are mostly recent additions that are non-contributing. Although the presence of these features does detract from the overall historic character of the landscape, it is understood that features of this type have no doubt been present along Bathhouse Row since the historic periods (i.e., Creek Arch entry points, cooling towers, spring covers, piping, etc.).

Wrought-iron guardrail at Reserve entrance to Grand Promenade: This was installed as part of the 1957 formal entrance project. It is considered contributing.

Steel-frame rail structures over hedges along Bathhouse Row: Recent additions; non-contributing. They are functionally important in that they protect replanted areas in the historic hedgerow along Bathhouse Row as it is replanted and from subsequent damage. These are temporary features that are used to protect new growth from trampling and are removed after plants have matured.

Wrought-iron fence above Maurice Spring: This was originally installed in 1896 as part of several improvements to the spring area. The fence that currently exists is not the original fence, but is consistent with the original. It is considered non-contributing.

Signs: Up until the 1930s the role of signs along Bathhouse Row was to identify the bathhouses and advertise their facilities. All types of signage were minimal, and most were on the bathhouses themselves. During the 1930s an increase in automobile traffic, as well as National Park Service development, brought the need for more, diverse signage along Bathhouse Row, still true today. Of all the types of signage existing along the Row today—identification, interpretive, directional—only the signs directly associated with the bathhouses are historic. These include the bathhouse names painted on the buildings, on plaques, or painted on the windows. The more contemporary National Park Service signs located throughout the landscape are functionally important; however, they are considered non-contributing and impacting to the integrity of the landscape.

Concrete bollards: These are located along the drop-off zone in front of the Main Entrance, and were installed in 1990. They enclose a pull-off area for vehicles in front of the Main Entrance. The bollards prevent vehicles from driving between the entrance pylons towards Stevens Balustrade. Although they are functionally important, they are considered

non-contributing and impacting to the integrity of the landscape.

Automated flagstaff by Administration Building: This is a functionally important feature that was also installed in 1990 and is considered non-contributing.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Tufa Rock at Arlington Lawn

Feature Identification Number: 147861

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

| <u>Feature UTM Source</u> | <u>Type of Point</u> | <u>Datum</u> | <u>UTM Zone</u> | <u>UTM Easting</u> | <u>UTM Northing</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| GPS-Uncorrected           | Point                | NAD 83       | 15              | 495,171            | 3,819,382           |

Feature: Automated flagstaff by Administration Building

Feature Identification Number: 96924

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Bronze drainage inlets along sidewalk

Feature Identification Number: 96925

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Concrete bollards at drop-off area

Feature Identification Number: 96926

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Contemporary concrete benches at Main Entrance

Feature Identification Number: 96927

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Contemporary drinking fountain

Feature Identification Number: 96928

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Contemporary exterior lights

Feature Identification Number: 96929

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

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Feature: Contemporary NPS signage  
Feature Identification Number: 96930  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Contemporary wood benches  
Feature Identification Number: 96931  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Curbs along Central Avenue, Magnolia Promenade and Administration Building  
Feature Identification Number: 96932  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Flood lights on lawns  
Feature Identification Number: 96933  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: NHL monument  
Feature Identification Number: 96934  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Seating at Grand Promenade entrance off Reserve Avenue  
Feature Identification Number: 96935  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Signage on bathhouses  
Feature Identification Number: 96936  
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Sprinkler system  
Feature Identification Number: 96937  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Steel-frame hedge protectors  
Feature Identification Number: 97196  
Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Streetlights along Magnolia Promenade

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Feature Identification Number: 104406

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Trash receptacles

Feature Identification Number: 104407

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Utility features

Feature Identification Number: 104408

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Wrought-iron fence at Reserve Ave. entrance to the Grand Promenade

Feature Identification Number: 104409

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Wrought-iron fence by Maurice Spring

Feature Identification Number: 104410

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



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*Early signs were located on the bathhouses in some fashion (this is the Ozark in the 1930s).  
(Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Trench drain along Magnolia Promenade (CLR, 2010).*



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*Stone pillar with bronze eagle, low wall, and fountain at Main Entrance, ca. 1920.  
(Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Street lamps along Magnolia Promenade in the 1930s--currently extant. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Contemporary wooden bench (CLR, 2010).*



*Drinking Fountain (CLR, 2010).*



*Interpretive sign (CLR, 2010).*



*Light pole dating from the period of significance (ca. 1914) (CLR, 2010).*



*Metal interpretive sign by rock outcrop along Grand Promenade (CLR, 2010).*

### **Spatial Organization**

The spatial organization of both Bathhouse Row and the adjacent business district of Hot Springs were historically defined by the north/south linear valley at the bases of Hot Springs and West Mountains. The early siting and construction of the bathhouses, dependent upon the springs that were scattered along the base of Hot Springs Mountain, generated a row of buildings at the eastern edge of Hot Springs Creek. Bathhouses came and went, but the pattern of their layout that was established in the mid-1800s along Valley Street remained. With the construction of the extended stone arch over Hot Springs Creek in 1884-1886 and its resulting infill and grading, the eastern edge of Bathhouse Row was converted from the creek to the Magnolia Promenade that abutted what was now called Central Avenue. The lower slopes of Hot Springs Mountain had vaguely defined the western edge to the Row, but the development of the Grand Promenade terrace in the 1930s (completed in 1958) reinforced this edge and gave it a more distinctly linear composition. At one time the Arlington Hotel defined the northern edge of the Row, but that building burned down in 1923 and since that time the lawn that remained has acted as the terminus. With the construction of the Administration Building in 1936, which greatly reinforced the southern terminus, the spatial organization of Bathhouse Row as it now exists was established. (Rhodes 1985, 14-15).

The current spatial organization of Bathhouse Row provides the same overall sensation that has been experienced since the historic period. It is spatially contained by wooded, steep mountains on both the east and west sides. The spatial organization retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### **Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Aerial view of Bathhouse Row, ca. 1960s. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*

### **Topography**

Bathhouse Row lies in a narrow valley situated between Hot Springs Mountain to the east and West Mountain to the west. The generally level floor of the valley was the site of urban development throughout the 19th century. The hot springs were clustered along the base of Hot Springs Mountain and as bathhouses were built along this strip, the springs were capped and diverted so that the houses could make use of the water. The commercial structures of the town of Hot Springs were constructed along the base of West Mountain, resulting in varying degrees of cut into the slopes there. The main thoroughfare of Valley Street, which meandered back and forth over Hot Springs Creek, was straightened and re-graded with the completion of the Creek Arch. This covering of Hot Springs Creek also created a linear, level strip of land in

front of the bathhouses that soon became the setting for the landscaped front lawns.

The Formal Entrance steps upward along an east-west orientation responding to the natural topography of Hot Springs Mountain and rises to an elevation between thirty to forty feet above Central Avenue. The Formal Entrance begins with a relatively level entry/gateway at Bathhouse Row. Between the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouse, the Formal Entrance continues uphill along a sloping walk that rises approximately six feet to the Stevens Balustrade. The Stevens Balustrade is terraced into the hillside through the use of steps, walls and a mid-point landing/terrace. At the top of the Stevens Balustrade, the Formal Entrance meets the Grand Promenade which is relatively level. From this point, the Formal Entrance continues up the hillside along a series of steps to an original road that accessed the Army and Navy gate. This is the highest point along the Formal Entrance and the site where the Pavilion originally stood. The site of the Pavilion slopes to the west, overlooking the Formal Entrance (Stevens Balustrade) toward Central Avenue. The eastern edge of the Pavilion site meets the level area of the Old Carriage Road.

Arlington Lawn is relatively flat and lies at a similar level as Bathhouse Row. The eastern edge of the space is defined by a steep hill that is stabilized by retaining walls and fence mesh in several locations. The topography near the Hot Water Cascade and the Lower Tufa Terrace Trail is steep and exposed tufa outcrops help to create a unique, somewhat rustic character. The northern portion of this landscape, beyond the Fountain Street retaining wall consists of a slope that is steepest near Arlington Lawn and gradually becomes gentler near the Fountain Street entrance to the Grand Promenade. This portion of the landscape was historically the site of the first Superintendent's residence and maintenance facilities; today it functions as an extension of Arlington Lawn (CLR 2010, Chap III, 14-15).

The combination of building construction and spring manipulation resulted in a substantial amount of cut into the base of Hot Springs Mountain. As the larger, permanent bathhouses were built that are still extant, the cuts into the slopes deepened. Massive retaining walls were built to support the cut faces and to deter future erosion and landslides. Additional cuts were made in the slopes above the bathhouses to accommodate drives and paths. The drive that once led from the old Superintendent's residence, through the middle of the Stevens Balustrade, and culminated behind the Imperial Bathhouse was converted into the Grand Promenade. With the completion of the Promenade in 1958, the topography that defines Bathhouse Row was complete.

The topography of Bathhouse Row has changed very little since that time. Due to the huge network of piping that lies below the bathhouses, there have been frequent and necessary excavations to gain access to pipes that need maintenance or replacement. In general, these have been small, confined disturbances that have not substantially altered the overall topography of Bathhouse Row. On a lawn by lawn basis, there are occasional situations where surfaces currently drain towards the buildings; where possible, these surfaces should be re-graded to drain away from the buildings.

The current topography of Bathhouse Row provides the same overall sensation that has existed since the completion of the Grand Promenade in 1958 and exhibits appropriate historic character. The topography retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Cuts into base of Hot Springs Mountain behind bathhouses, and associated retaining walls

Feature Identification Number: 104411

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Grading and terracing behind Bathhouse Row (Grand Promenade)

Feature Identification Number: 104412

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Level groundplane along front of Bathhouse Row (infill over 1885 Creek Arch)

Feature Identification Number: 104413

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Terraced area and cut into lower mountainside at the Stevens Balustrade (NPS, 2010).*

### **Vegetation**

Before the construction of the Creek Arch, there were no front lawns along the facades of the bathhouses. The filling and grading of this area in 1885 created a substantial setting for Stevens to work with. By the time he began work on a master plan in 1892, the area had been planted with manicured lawns and a double row of trees on either side of a gravel path. Originally,

Lombardy poplar trees were used as a border along the front path, which was considered the original promenade. By 1894, magnolia trees were already starting to be planted alongside the poplars as replacement species, intended to eventually replace the poplars. Other trees were planted in a row along the opposite side of the promenade to form an arched canopy to shade the strollers. (The exact type of trees along this side was not documented and period photographs are inconclusive). In contrast to this formal row of trees that was planted in double and sometimes triple rows, Stevens indicated that individual specimen trees and groups of shrubs were to be planted along the front lawns of the bathhouses. A large list of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs and herbaceous plants was authorized by then Secretary of the Interior John Noble for use in the planting of the lawns of Bathhouse Row. In addition to this selection, which was composed of predominantly exotic vegetation, three native species were identified to be used: American holly, walnut, and black gum. Kentucky blue grass was specified to be used for the lawns (Rhodes 41 45).

Stevens's plans for the area behind the bathhouses, which he termed the "mountain side grounds," were to divide the area into three "parks." These three areas were interconnected by a network of drives and walks, and were interspersed with natural woodlands, native plantings, exotic plantings, lawn spaces, flower beds, and rows of shade trees. The general concept of creating linear parks and walkways along these terraces foreshadowed the creation of the Grand Promenade in the 1930s.

After the initial landscape work was performed in response to Stevens's plan in the 1890s, additional trees, shrubbery, bulbs, and plants were set out along Bathhouse Row each following year for quite some time. The frontage of Bathhouse Row quickly attained notoriety as a beautiful park like area, having "neatly clipped grass, rare shrubbery and flowers, . . . trees and comfortable seats." (Rhodes 45). Around the turn of the century, Victorian landscaping influences were apparent in the raised flowerbeds, use of exotic plants, and vine covered structures. Emphasis was still placed on the use of exotics in the landscape, but gradually Superintendent's reports indicated that more hardy natives were being used to replace those species that did not survive. The row of poplars set out after the construction of the Creek Arch was showing advanced signs of deterioration during the early 1900s, while the newer magnolias planted as infill were progressing well. (Rhodes 75 76).

By the 1920s, the trees along Bathhouse Row had matured, and the many flowerbeds provided a profusion of blooms during spring and summer. Elms, as well as maple and poplar, were planted along the eastern edge of the Bathhouse Row sidewalk to present an ordered, symmetrical overhead canopy. The magnolias that had been planted along the strip of land between the road and the main sidewalk were now the dominant species and had matured to the point that Director Mather referred to the area as the Magnolia Promenade in 1922.

In 1930 a local newspaper article commended the park on its profusion of flowers, trees, and shrubs. In particular, it pointed out the excellent line of magnolia trees along the street lawn strip and the line of elm trees along the opposite side of the sidewalk. Low, clipped hedges

(*Ligustrum sinense*, Chinese holly) outlined the edges of the lawns. However, much of the park vegetation by the late 1930s was overgrown and in poor condition. As part of the 1930s development plan, a comprehensive planting program was called for; ultimately, subsequent planting was carried out on a piecemeal basis. This is what led to the scattershot display of lawn and foundation planting schemes. (Rhodes 169, 171).

By the mid 1940s it was very obvious that many of the magnolias along the street were dying and needed to be replaced. Much of the damage to the trees was blamed on the city owned street light poles and interconnected overhead lines. The park repeatedly attempted to convince the city to remove these utilities and find an alternative means to route the power lines. Sometime after 1950 the poles and lines were removed and soon after the magnolias were replaced (Rhodes 214 220).

In 1958, the paved quadrant spaces that once supported the Main Entrance fountains were removed and replaced with low evergreen shrubs and Baltic Ivy groundcover (which eventually was replaced with lawn). The low wall behind these spaces had been removed in 1936 and replaced with a low hedge to mimic the wall's appearance and form. Also, the flanking spaces of the walkway that connects the Main Entrance pillars to Stevens Balustrade were planted with grass and matching rows of holly trees. This came at a period of extensive planting for the park. The plan called for a considerable amount of both deciduous and evergreen trees, indigenous shrubs, and a variety of ground cover. It is not clear exactly where the plants were placed (Rhodes 233 238).

The evolution of vegetation on Bathhouse Row has generally been haphazard, without the benefit of an overall master plan to guide selection and placement. There are few documented records of the vegetation as it has existed over time. Thus, other than the row of magnolias and the continuous hedge along the edges of the bathhouse lawns, there is currently no grouping or placement of vegetation that can be proven to be historically accurate. The 1987 Wright/O'Gwynn vegetation study assists with the interpretation of the type and placement of vegetation over time (1890s, 1930s, 1987).

Bathhouse Row continues to be defined by its linear row of regularly spaced Southern Magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) that follow Central Avenue. Known as Magnolia Row, the trees are the outermost component of Bathhouse Row's Magnolia Promenade that consists of a "lawn park" at the edge of Central Avenue, a broad walk, and a low hedge and lawn that create the front lawns of the bathhouse buildings. The Southern Magnolias are set in a linear arrangement in the turf lawn that is defined on both sides by a raised concrete curb. Low, formal hedges of manicured Chinese Holly (*Ilex cornuta*) define the eastern edge of the walk, and low-growing turf grass creates the lawn of each building. There is also a scattering of other specimen trees in and around the bathhouses, including American Holly (*Ilex opaca*). Low shrubs are planted at the foundations of some buildings.

As a result of a long history of human activity, the intentional planting of non-native plant

species, and of other disturbances to the area, undeveloped areas bordering Bathhouse Row have become overgrown with invasive exotics. This is particularly noticeable on portions of the Oak Trail along Bathhouse Row and behind the Levi Hospital. A dense impenetrable tangle of exotic vines and shrubs has displaced the original native flora. Non-native invasive plant species in this area include wisteria (*Wisteria floribunda*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), periwinkle (*Vinca major*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), nandina (*Nandina domestica*), common privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), and evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*). The park is developing a plan to conduct a prescribed burn in this area (email communication with M. Blaeuer, HOSP).

At the far southern end of the Grand Promenade, the area surrounding the Noble Fountain includes a simple hedge of holly, 3' wide by 4' high that follows the curved retaining wall. The hedge is in good condition. Another holly hedge at the western edge of the plaza above the Noble Fountain is discontinuous and in poor condition. The eastern side of the Grand Promenade in this area includes a dense groundcover of honeysuckle vine, periwinkle, and ivy in some places and turf, weeds, or bare dirt in others. The midstory and canopy contains nandina, a holly hedge, a hackberry, and a tulip tree. The hedge is in poor condition and the rest of the plants are in fair condition. The vines are climbing the hackberry trunk.

From this area extending to the north the vegetation on both sides of the Grand Promenade is sparsely spaced, including leggy trees (pin cherry, hackberry, elm, cedar, oak, magnolia, redbud), occasional shrubs (holly and nandina) near seating areas, and turf, weeds, or bare ground.

On the eastern side of the Grand Promenade the Foreground Park contains turf and clusters of shade trees, scattered evergreens and pruned shrubs. The vegetation, topography, trails and drainage structures combine to make a scenic spot that acts as a transition zone between the Grand Promenade and the trails above Hot Springs Mountain Drive.

Directly north of the Foreground Park, the Tufa Park is made up of sloped turf areas sprinkled with scattered spring boxes, benches, trees, and pruned shrubs. The irregular arrangement of the plants is oddly matched with the severely pruned shrubs. The woody plants in this area are in fair to poor condition. They appear neither naturalistic nor formally designed and their placement seems spotty and haphazard.

Toward the northern end of the promenade there are large dense patches of English ivy. Woody plants within the ivy patches are in fair to poor condition as the ivy is growing up their trunks and the trees (mainly red oak) appear to be declining. A cedar is in fair condition but may be declining due to too much shade. These areas also include tree stumps, weeds, seedlings and some suckering shrubs. A four foot by four foot holly hedge outlines the western side of brick plaza #5. The hollies are very leggy and sparse. The groundcover is thickly coated with English ivy that is also growing up and over many of the other plants. The woody plants include white oak, elm, tulip tree, cedar, sweet gum, maple, and holly. The ivy is

impacting all of the woody plants.

With the exception of the upper steps and the original Pavilion site, the Formal Entrance (Stevens Balustrade) is largely devoid of overstory plantings and has minimal areas of shrubs and flowers. Low formal planters of primarily small shrubs and flowering perennials line the sloping walk between the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouses. Terraced lawns extend outward from the Stevens Balustrade. The trees and understory shrubs of Hot Springs Mountain becomes the primary vegetation along the steps above the Grand Promenade. The steps above the Grand Promenade lead to a dense massing of Vinca (*Vinca major*) that covers the hillside, generally obscuring the area where the pavilion once stood. Beyond this point the forested vegetation of Hot Springs Mountain covers the slope.

The vegetation at Arlington Lawn includes a continuation of the row of Southern Magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) along Central Avenue. Also, the lawn park is extended and widened creating a broad lawn that extends from the sidewalk to the steep slope that separates the lawn from the Grand Promenade. The Arlington Lawn is edged by a formal manicured holly hedge that stands approximately 30" high. Other vegetation includes scattered trees and shrubs that appear to be randomly placed, as well as plants that are used to screen the service area.

Vegetation in the area of the pools, stage, and Tufa Rock include lush azaleas, ivy and kudzu on the steep slope and retaining walls, and a grouping of trees and shrubs behind the stage. The northern portion of Arlington Lawn, along Fountain Street, is made up of a large lawn area with canopy trees and scattered shrubs. Two large areas have English Ivy as a dense ground cover. This portion of the landscape was historically the site of the first Superintendent's residence and maintenance facilities. The eastern most ivy appears to delineate the footprint of the former residence. Today, this area functions as an extension of Arlington Lawn.

In general, the vegetation along Bathhouse Row and the surrounding landscape provide the same overall sensation that has been experienced since the historic periods. For the most part, the vegetation retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

**Character-defining Features:**

- Feature: Lawn at Arlington Lawn
- Feature Identification Number: 147863
- Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
  
- Feature: Lawns at Bathhouse Row
- Feature Identification Number: 147865
- Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
  
- Feature: Trees along Central Ave & Fountain St
- Feature Identification Number: 147867

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Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Chinese holly hedges

Feature Identification Number: 104416

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Magnolias along Magnolia Promenade

Feature Identification Number: 104417

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Overall vegetation pattern throughout Bathhouse Row

Feature Identification Number: 104418

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Bathhouse Row in 1889, showing young trees planted along graded fill over Creek Arch.  
(Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)*

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*Bathhouse Row in 1895, showing double row of trees along bathhouse side of lawn.  
(Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Bathhouse Row, ca. 1934. Clipped hedge and row of elms now defined the bathhouse side  
of the lawns. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Hedge with plantings at the Main Entrance (NPS, 2010).*



*Current view of Bathhouse Row, looking south. The lawns are bordered by hedge. Magnolia trees flank the street (NPS, 2010).*



*Lawn and ivy at Arlington Lawn (NPS, 2010).*

### **Views and Vistas**

Lieutenant Stevens indicated in his original design concept that one of the crowning achievements of the Bathhouse Row experience would be the view out from the old stone bandstand/pavilion over the city below. After construction of the entire Main Entrance/Stevens Balustrade feature, a vista was indeed provided from this vantage point, with the sides of the bathhouses as the defining edges. This controlled prospect was further reinforced with the construction of the larger Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses in the early 1900s. Conversely, people on the street were provided with a vista up between the two stone pillars and bathhouses to the stairs and bandstand above. Both vistas were served with the mountainsides as backdrops (Rhodes 52).

With the completed removal of the bandstand by 1962 (the columns and roof had been removed in 1930s and the lower half removed in 1958), the gradual increase of vegetation around the area, the vista from the old bandstand is seriously diminished. The vista does open up somewhat during the winter when the leaves of the trees have fallen, but with the removal of

the bandstand and the proliferation of vegetation in that area, much of the integrity has been lost.

There are various prospects off Grand Promenade to Arlington Lawn and the city below. These are intermittent views that simply take advantage of the elevation of the Grand Promenade and are framed by the vegetation that grows along the hillsides. There are two enclosed overlooks along the northern section of the Grand Promenade, but the vegetation growing here also has diminished the views from these aspects.

Due to the extensive alterations of the original views and vistas along Bathhouse Row, the historic character has been greatly diminished. Consequently, this characteristic currently lacks sufficient integrity. However, the two vistas are considered contributing because of their potential (if the vegetation was removed) to yield important information about the historic periods.

**Character-defining Features:**

Feature: Vista from Central Avenue up through the Main Entrance and Stevens Balustrade

Feature Identification Number: 104419

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Vista from upper area of Stevens Balustrade down through Main Entrance to Central Avenue

Feature Identification Number: 104420

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

**Landscape Characteristic Graphics:**



*Vista out from bandstand in 1944--unimpeded by vegetation. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*View to the rear of Bathhouse Row from the Grand Promenade (NPS, 2010).*



*Vista up to bandstand from Central Avenue ca. 1915--historic vista was defined by the buildings and features. (Courtesy HOSP Library/Archives)*



*Current vista into the Main Entrance (NPS, 2010).*

## Condition

### Condition Assessment and Impacts

**Condition Assessment:** Fair  
**Assessment Date:** 09/30/1999  
**Condition Assessment:** Fair  
**Assessment Date:** 06/22/2005

**Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:**

Condition verification 2005

**Condition Assessment:** Good  
**Assessment Date:** 11/17/2010

**Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:**

The cultural landscape at Bathhouse Row is a dynamic landscape that has evolved throughout its long period of significance. The majority of contributing features have integrity and the site demonstrates a continuum of use as a recreational spa landscape.

### Impacts

**Type of Impact:** Flooding  
**External or Internal:** External  
**Impact Description:** Because of its location at the base of two mountains, Bathhouse Row is periodically inundated after particularly intense rainstorms. Although these events are infrequent, there is the possibility of water damage to the foundations of the bathhouses. It is, of course, impossible to prevent such acts of nature, but as a mitigation measure it is advisable for as much of the surrounding groundplane of the buildings as possible to slope away from the buildings. Other low areas that are susceptible to ponding should be leveled if possible and/or have drainage features implemented (I.e., swales, channels, drainage tiles, etc).

**Type of Impact:** Neglect  
**External or Internal:** Both Internal and External  
**Impact Description:** Currently, three (the Maurice, Hale, and Superior) of the eight bathhouses are vacant. The buildings have been rehabilitated and the park is encouraging historic lease agreements in these buildings.

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Type of Impact:</b>       | Operations On Site  |
| <b>External or Internal:</b> | External  |
| <b>Impact Description:</b>   | Due to the vast network of aging subsurface piping throughout Bathhouse Row, it is inevitable that periodic repairs will be necessary. These operations result in construction excavations, uneven filling, and occasional loss of vegetation. These projects need to be closely monitored in order to minimize negative impacts on the landscape.                    |
| <b>Type of Impact:</b>       | Pollution   |
| <b>External or Internal:</b> | External  |
| <b>Impact Description:</b>   | The Bathhouse Row landscape is situated in an urban environment, along a very busy traffic corridor. The resultant air pollution may have a subtle yet irretrievably negative effect on the vegetation. Little can be done to mitigate this situation, other than consistent monitoring and making use of resistant plant material when planting replacement species. |
| <b>Type of Impact:</b>       | Structural Deterioration  |
| <b>External or Internal:</b> | External  |
| <b>Impact Description:</b>   | Certain landscape features are prone to deterioration as they age, such as the Stevens Balustrade and the Main Entrance. Appropriate maintenance and cleaning activities will help mitigate these problems.   |

## Treatment

### **Treatment**

**Approved Treatment:** Preservation  
**Approved Treatment Document:** General Management Plan  
**Document Date:** 04/29/1986

#### **Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:**

The 1986 General Management Plan/Development Concept Plan states that the Bathhouse Row landscape needs to be managed to maintain the historical appearance, and the vacant bathhouses need to be adaptively used or stabilized to prevent further deterioration of their historic fabric. These actions are representative of preservation as an approved treatment, as defined in the CLI Professional Procedures Guide (1998): (i.e., “The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of an inventory unit. Preservation work focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic material and features, rather than extensive replacement and new work.”).

**Approved Treatment Completed:** No

#### **Approved Treatment Costs**

**Cost Date:** 04/29/1986

### **Bibliography and Supplemental Information**

## Bibliography

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- Year of Publication:** 2010
- Citation Publisher:** National Park Service
- Source Name:** CRBIB
- Citation Type:** Both Graphic and Narrative
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**Source Name:** CRBIB  
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**Citation Location:** U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
- Citation Author:** Goodman, Bernard  
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**Year of Publication:** 1974  
**Source Name:** Other  
**Citation Type:** Both Graphic And Narrative  
**Citation Location:** CLI Files, MWSO
- Citation Author:** Harrison, Laura Soulliere  
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**Year of Publication:** 1988  
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**Year of Publication:** 1988  
**Source Name:** Other  
**Citation Type:** Both Graphic And Narrative  
**Citation Location:** Planning Library, MWSO

### Supplemental Information

**Title:** Hot Springs North Quadrangle: Arkansas--Garland County  
**Description:** USGS Topographic Map, 1976