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Dallas Municipal Archives

Archives Collections Finding Guides and Inventories

Guide No. 51
(91-004)

Kessler Plan
1911-1930

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City of Dallas, Texas

The following finding guide or inventory for archives collection:

91-004 Kessler Plan, 1911-1930

has been created by the City Archivist and approved by:

Records Management Officer

Date

City Secretary

Date

Collection Range: 1911-1930
Three inches linear.

Printed material

Collection Scope and Content Note:

Printed materials documenting the Kessler Plan of George E. Kessler, city planner.

The Kessler Plan was the City of Dallas's managed growth plan from 1910 through the 1930s, authored by George E. Kessler, Dallas-raised city planner. In 1909 the Dallas Chamber of Commerce established the City Plan and Improvement League (later called the Kessler Plan Association) and hired Kessler to draft a design for a long-range plan of civic improvements. Kessler drew up his plan to solve many of the city's problems, including the uncontrollable flooding of the Trinity River, the dangerous railroad crossings, and narrow, crooked downtown streets. The plan was not implemented at the time because it was not believed to be practical, but it became increasingly clear that changes were needed. Kessler returned in 1918 to act as consulting engineer for the Dallas Property Owners' Association and in 1919 began working for the Metropolitan Development Association of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce. He remained in Dallas until January 3, 1922, when he returned to St. Louis. Although Kessler died in Indianapolis, Indiana, March 20, 1923, the Trinity River was improved and the levee system was completed in the 1930s. In addition to a plan for Dallas, Kessler drafted city plans for Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Cleveland, El Paso, Denver, and Syracuse.

The collection contains one series, printed materials documenting the Kessler Plan. Much of the materials are promotional publications from either the Kessler Plan Association or the Dallas Chamber of Commerce.

- Folder 1: "A City Plan for Dallas" published report, Dallas Park Board, 1911
- Folder 2: "A City Plan for Dallas" published report, Dallas Park Board, 1911 (three copies)
- Folder 3: "The Kessler City Plan for Dallas" published summary, 1925
- Folder 4: Printed promotional literature and form letters about the Kessler Plan (seven items), 1925-1926
- Folder 5: "Dallas Manufacturing Facilities and Opportunities" published report, 1928
- Folder 6: Dallas July, 1929 [Official publication of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce]
- Folder 7: "What Does 'Our City' Need?" published address by John E. Suratt Secretary, Kessler Plan Association, to Woman's Forum of Wichita Falls, Texas, 1930
- Folder 8: Proposed Zoning Ordinance for the City of Dallas, published preliminary copy, undated