United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items

x New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

I. Discovery and Development of Excelsior Springs' Mineral Waters Industry: 1880 - 1914

II. "Missouri's National Health Resort:" the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915 - 1963

C. Form Prepared by

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.
(_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles	Sept 17, 2012
Signature and title of certifying official Mark A. Miles/Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government	

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper		Date of Action

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Primary location of additional data:
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City of Excelsior Springs, MO; Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives;
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The multiple property listing *Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri* is organized around the historic resources that are associated with the development of the City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri. This multiple property submission provides a context for understanding the conditions linked with the physical development of the Excelsior Springs, as well as a basis for evaluating those resources resulting from these conditions. It covers extant resources dating from 1880 through 1963 that are located within the incorporated city limits of Excelsior Springs in 2012. The historic contexts prepared for this Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) cover two major historic themes of development in Excelsior Springs. *"Discovery and Development of Excelsior Springs' Mineral Waters Industry: 1880 – 1914"* covers the period from the discovery of the mineral waters by non-native settlers in 1880 through the development of the town as a health and resort destination up to 1914, the start of the European conflicts in the first World War. This period was noted for the extensive involvement of private entrepreneurs in the city's physical development. In contrast, *"Missouri's National Health Resort:" the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915 – 1963"* was an era of oversight and involvement by the local government in the operation of the city's mineral waters. It was also period of federal and state involvement in the form of federal loans and construction projects, as well as special state legislation enabling the city to consolidate the wells and springs. Two major government projects, the Hall of Waters built by the Public Works Administration, and the construction and subsequent enlargement of the Veterans Hospital, greatly boosted the local economy during the Great Depression, helping Excelsior Springs to avoid the economic decline suffered by many other towns. This context ends in 1963 with a national exposé in the *Saturday Evening Post* featuring one of Excelsior Springs' largest health clinics. The article debunked the cures and treatments for rheumatism at the Ball Clinic, and dealt a death blow to Excelsior Springs' health resort industry.

Background

Although the historic contexts in this multiple property documentation form focus on the development of the town of Excelsior Springs, there is evidence of prehistoric and historic peoples occupying the land in the area for almost 7,000 years prior to white settlement.[1] Pre-recorded historic periods saw archaic hunter-gatherers transition to cultures that relied both on domesticated plants and wild resources, before finally moving to an increased reliance on agriculture resulting in the settlement of small hamlets. The Nebo Hill communities, dating from the Archaic period (about 3,000 to 1,000 BC), are an important local example of permanent settlements.[2]

European exploration of the region began during the latter part of the Mississippian period, when Rene-Robert de LaSalle claimed all of the land drained by the Mississippi River for France in 1682. Settlements were founded along the Mississippi, and fur traders began travelling up the Missouri River

[1] "Introduction . . .," *The Archaeology of Missouri along the Fishing River,* accessed 19 February 2012 <http://www.fishingriver.com/introduction.html>.
[2] "The Archaic Period," *The Archaeology of Missouri along the Fishing River,* accessed 19 February 2012, <http://www.fishingriver.com/archaic.html>.

in the 1680s. France's claim over the area ended in 1803 when it sold the European rights to the territory to the United States. European and American settlers, primarily from Southern states, began pouring into the area from 1804 to 1821 due to the inexpensive, quality land made available by treaties extinguishing Indian land titles, as well as the easy access provided by the rivers. By 1810, European Americans dominated the population. When Louisiana became a state in 1812, the remaining area was renamed the Missouri Territory. In 1818, the Missouri territorial legislature adopted a request for statehood. What should have been a routine request became instead the center of a national controversy over the balance in the United States Congress between slave and free states; Missouri's request to be admitted as a slave state would upset that balance. Two years of negotiations in Congress resulted in the Missouri Compromise of 1820. Part of that agreement allowed Missouri to be admitted as a slave state along with Maine as a free state to preserve the balance.

At the time of its admission as a state, Missouri's original western boundary was a straight line from Arkansas to Iowa (following the western boundary of today's Clay County), with land to west deeded to the Iowa tribe and the combined Sac and Fox tribes. Following encroachments from white settlers, these tribes gave up their land in the 1836 Platte Purchase, and the state's northwestern boundary was extended west to the Missouri River. The area that would eventually become Clay County was first part of Howard County, organized in 1816. In 1820, a smaller area was set aside as Ray County. Due to the rapid influx of new settlers in the western part of that county, another county subdivision occurred on January 1, 1822, and Clay County was organized. The county's boundaries at that time extended north to the Iowa Territory and west to the edge of Indian Territory, and its population was approximately 1,200, consisting of "men of sterling worth."[3]

Immigration to Clay County began in earnest in the 1820s, with settlers along the Fishing River attracted by the timber and water. The introduction of steamboat traffic on the Missouri River greatly facilitated the movement of thousands of immigrants to western Missouri. As the land was generally considered too rocky, the area that would become Excelsior Springs remained undeveloped for almost two decades after the Civil War except for a few settlers that planted crops.

I. Discovery and Development of Excelsior Spring's Mineral Waters Industry: 1880 -1914

In the early twentieth century, in an effort to promote the city as well as his own clinic, a local physician fabricated a story of Wapoo, an Indian hunter who purportedly "discovered" the iron rich spring along the Fishing River.[4] Other stories associated with the discovery of the springs vary, and were likely embellished over the years. It is certain that the area was sparsely developed until 1880. It is generally agreed that an African American farmer, Travis Mellion, was working in the area when he heard of the rust-colored waters of the spring issuing from the banks of Fishing River. Some accounts state that Mellion's daughter Opal was suffering from scrofula, others report that Mellion himself was afflicted. Scrofula was a term used historically for any of a variety of skin diseases, but particularly for a form of tuberculosis affecting the lymph nodes of the neck. In any event, one of them took a chance on the

[3] W. H. Woodson, *History of Clay County, Missouri* (Topeka, KS: Historical Publishing Company, 1920) 78.
[4] Aretus S. McCleary, *The Legend of Peace Valley: Told by Wapoo, Keeper of the Springs* (Excelsior Springs, MO: the Author, 1939).

medicinal values of the waters by both bathing and drinking them in June 1880, and was soon cured. After hearing of these results, another nearby farmer named Frederick Kugler successfully treated his rheumatism as well as an old Civil War wound from the same spring.[5] When word of both of these recoveries spread, the area was soon visited by other seeking cures from the spring waters, which was located on land owned by Anthony W. Wyman.

Intrigued by the stories of the cures, Rev. John Van Buren Flack, a merchant-preacher from nearby Missouri City, came to the area to collect samples of the water and send them for analysis. Wright & Merrill, chemists in St. Louis, reported that the waters contained minerals that "justified expectations of curative results." Rev. Flack named Wyman's spring "Excelsior" after a popular poem by Henry Longfellow, and persuaded Wyman to plat his farm land into a town. On September 1, 1880, county surveyor Thomas B. Rogers surveyed Wyman's land holdings, and later that month the town was platted by Wyman and Flack. The new town comprised the entire northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 1, Township 52, Range 30, and covered forty acres. The town's plat contained an unusual agreement between the two men. Although the land was owned by Wyman, the agreement dated August 7, 1880 stated that:

> . . . on a part of said land is located the spring known as Excelsior, and to promote said enterprise the said Wyman agrees that any and all of his land as owned and as needed shall be used in said enterprise, except his residence, mill site, and one square acre of land.
>
> Said Flack agrees to carefully collect and collate all evidence as to the merits of said spring, and to write and publish a pamphlet setting forth the same in full detail, and to mail the same to his numerous friends and acquaintances.[6]

Flack was to improve the spring, and in return Wyman gave Flack town sites (not to exceed an acre) for a hotel, residence and business house near the spring for one dollar. Flack furthermore would receive twenty-five percent of the net proceeds for "all seen and unseen developments and all rentals," as well as the same percentage from the sales of town lots.[7]

Flack kept up his end of the bargain, and in short time promotional circulars containing wild boasts were distributed to nearby towns. In the August 31, 1880 issue of the *Kansas City Times* ran an article entitled "Excelsior Springs" noting that

> The excitement about . . . the springs continues to increase. Over 1,000 people visited the resort last Sunday. Persons have already been cured of dyspepsia, gravel, fever sores, sore eyes,

[5] "The Legend Lives On: A Brief History of Excelsior Springs Mineral Water," V1.200.100.75, in "Waters" folder, V1.200.100
[6] N.A., *The Waters of Excelsior Springs: Valley of Vitality* (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Spa Development, March 2003) 9.
[7] Ibid.

> scrofula, throat diseases, liver complaints, etc. People are coming from far and near and camping on the grounds.[8]

Although Flack would become involved with numerous other enterprises, including a dry goods store, three newspapers, a drug business, a real estate business, and served as pastor for three to five local churches, he continued to preach the merits of the town's waters. One acquaintance recalled how Flack's correspondence were in envelopes covered with advertisements about Excelsior Springs' waters.[9] In the meantime, people flocked to the springs to avail themselves of the curative powers of the water, camping in nearby groves and relying on the farmers of the area for their provisions.[10]

The Waters Industry

The discovery of the mineral waters coincided with the Progressive Era in the United States, which spanned the decades on either side of the turn of the twentieth century. This period ushered in a variety of political, social, economic, and spiritual reforms. Included in the Progressive Era were numerous health campaigns culminating in a Clean Living Movement. The Clean Living Movement encompassed a wide array of health topics and crusades, including broader societal reforms such as anti-prostitution, tobacco and liquor movements, as well as campaigns targeted at individual reform emphasizing hygiene, exercise, and diet. New healing arts also emerged during this period, often conflicting with orthodox medical treatments. Many of these health campaigns began around 1880, coinciding with the "discovery" of the Excelsior Spring, and lasted into the 1920s. By the end of the Progressive Era, there were pure food and drug laws, mandatory immunizations, a national board of health, and national prohibition. All of these efforts towards a healthier lifestyle ironically ran head long into the destruction of World War I and the influenza epidemic of 1918.[11]

Excelsior Springs was poised to take advantage of the nation's newfound interest in health and clean living. For the first few months after its discovery, word-of-mouth attracted visitors to the strong iron water spring. At first, the development at the springs was quite crude. There were no overnight accommodations for visitors, and the water was captured by a barrel sunk in the mud, with people bringing their own tin cups to drink.[12] In just a few short months, however, tents and campgrounds gave way to a small town named "Excelsior Springs." The name of the first spring was changed to "Siloam" in 1881.[13] The barrel was soon replaced by a small, wooden Oriental-style pagoda.[14] The city later installed a pump and stairs, and within a year of its discovery, over one hundred houses were built in the

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[8] "Excelsior Springs," *Kansas City Times* (31 August 1881).
[9] "Dr. John Van Buren Flack," *The Idle Hour,* accessed 15 December 2011 <http://theidlehour.com/familyfolder/flack.html>.
[10] Woodson, 174.
[11] Ruth C. Engs, *The Progressive Era's Health Reform Movement: a Historical Dictionary* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003) ix-x.
[12] *The Waters of Excelsior Springs: Valley of Vitality,* 3.
[13] Deon Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources Survey, Phase II: Hall of Waters District and Central Place District," (30 June 1993) 11.
[14] Harry Soltysiak, *Reflections of Excelsior Springs: A Pictorial History of Excelsior Springs, Missouri* (Heritage House Pub. Co., 1992) n.p.

growing community.[15] Entrepreneurs set up businesses to serve visitors looking for cures, and the village had year-round residents.

The water at Siloam Spring was free, but hopeful residents began exploring the area for other springs with curative values. In 1881, Captain J. L. Farris discovered a strong flowing spring a short distance down the Fishing River. He sent water samples for analysis, and like the Siloam Spring it also contained iron manganese water. Originally called the Empire Spring by Farris, it was later renamed the Regent Spring.[16] Lithia No. 1 Spring was discovered in 1883-84 by Thomas McMullin. These waters were first used as his family's private supply, but when its medicinal value was determined, a stone arched pavilion was built on the ground floor of the property with a second story building above. The Soterian, Excelsior Springs Lithia Spring and the Salt Sulphur Spring were all discovered in 1888. Water for the Excelsior Springs Lithia Spring was kept on tap in the lobby of the Planters Hotel on Broadway. The Salt Sulphur Spring water was piped to a pavilion on the Music Hall grounds, and to Harr's Pavilion on W. Broadway, and the Salt Sulphur Pavilion at the Elms Hotel.[17] The pagoda at the Superior Spring was built in 1901, and two more springs were discovered in 1906 – the Seltzer Salt Soda Spring on E. Foley Street and the Sulphur Salt Soda Spring located just north of the Relief Spring on Caldwell. Over the next two decades, more than thirty separate well or spring waters were discovered in the town. These could be separated into five distinct types of waters : ferro(iron)-manganese, calcium bicarbonate (lithia), sodium bicarbonate (soda), saline, and sulphur. The latter two water types, the sulphur and saline, were later considered a single category.

Although some of these waters came up through the ground as springs, many were discovered when digging for household wells. As the mineral content varied from each spring, in order to make claims about the health benefits the waters were tested for their content. Thus, the analyses obtained from chemists around the country were key to the promotion of each well. Specific curative properties were assigned to the various waters, and letters from the medical profession as well as testimonials from clients added strength to the scientific claims (See Appendix A for sample brochures with analyses and testimonials). In line with the Clean Living Movement, the purity of the waters was also a significant part of the advertising for the various wells. The Siloam Spring used the report of H. A. Buehler, state geologist from the Missouri Bureau of Geology and Mines, to show that its waters were "free from any mineral content of a contaminating nature and indicated that the spring is not subject to pollution from surface water."[18]

The fame of the city as a health resort was sealed with the recognition of the waters at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Charles W. Fish, general manager of the Excelsior Springs Bottling Company, exhibited the waters of the Regent and the Soterian Ginger Ale (made from the waters of the Soterian well). Both were awarded first prizes. The Ginger Ale won another medal at the St. Louis World's Fair

[15] "The Legend Lives On. . ."
[16] *Golden Jubilee: America's Haven of Health* ([Excelsior Springs, MO:] Excelsior Springs Chamber of Commerce, 1930) 6.
[17] *The Waters of Excelsior Spring,* 23, 28.
[18] *Golden Jubilee: America's Haven of Health,* 18.

in 1904. The company hoped not only to promote their bottled waters, which were shipped around the country, but also the town as a health resort destination. The Excelsior Springs Bottling Company began bottling water in 1889 in a building originally intended for tourist excursions. The four waters bottled -- Siloam, Regent, Sulpho-Saline and Soterian -- were all piped directly to the works. The building contained a fountain and two bottling tables, and boasted that no air ever contaminated the waters.[19] Production reached 10,000 bottles a week, and when operating at full capacity the company employed twenty-five workers. Carloads of bottled water were shipped from the rail spur that extended to the building located south of the Elms Hotel.[20]

The bottling works were but one part of the larger Excelsior Springs Company, which had dealings in almost every aspect of the development of the town's mineral waters in the 1880s and 1890s. It not only operated the bottling company, but built and operated the Elms Hotel, the Music Hall, and the Excelsior Springs Transfer Company. The company also platted various residential developments in Excelsior Springs, and operated real estate offices in town and in Kansas City. Along with Rev. Flack, the Excelsior Springs Company was responsible for much of the early advertising and promotional materials concerning the waters of Excelsior Springs.

The Mineral Waters

Due to the geological formations in the Fishing River valley, different water types were found at varying depths or strata. As previously noted, the waters were categorized in groups based either on their mineral content or their therapeutic value. *Ferro(iron)-manganese* waters were typically surface springs, although wells dug to capture these waters were between ten and thirty feet deep. This group included the two earliest discovered springs – the Siloam and Regent – as well as Superior No. 2 Spring, Steck's Iron Spring, Excelsior Spring, and Fowler's Magnaferro Spring. These waters were reputed to help build up the blood. Rapidly absorbed by the body, they claimed to add iron to the blood stream. In the 1930s, Excelsior Springs claimed to have two of the six known iron-manganese springs in the world, and the only two that were commercially available in the United States.[21]

Calcium Bicarbonate (Lithia) waters were noted for treating kidney and bladder disorders, and were found from thirty to sixty feet below the surface. There were fifteen calcium springs: Crystal Lithium Spring, Excelsior Lithia Spring, Imperial Lithia Spring, Keystone Lithia Spring, Lithia No. 1 Spring, Lithium Magnesium Spring, Montrose Spring, Peerless Spring, Old Smith Spring, Park Lithia Spring, Relief Spring, Saratoga Spring, Soterian Spring, and Willow Park Lithia Spring.

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[19] "Large Growing Industry Is The Excelsior Springs Bottling Works," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call,* Vol. XXIV, No. 303 (15 July 1905) 1.
[20] "Fire Destroys Large Frame Building Here," (10 March 1930), in "Excelsior Springs Bottling Company" folder, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.
[21] "The Mineral Waters," *Excelsior Springs Daily Standard* (1940) 11; in 80.139, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.

Sodium Bicarbonate (soda) waters were found around ninety to one hundred feet in depth, and were reportedly useful as a stabilizing agent for the stomach. Noted for their neutralizing effect, they were also used in anti-acid therapy. There were eleven Soda Bicarbonate springs that operated in Excelsior Springs at various periods: the Hiawatha Spring, Jones Soda Spring, Link Soda Spring, Muriated Soda Spring, Natrona Soda Spring, Pioneer Spring, Seltzer Salt Soda Spring, Soda Carbonic Spring, Soda Saline Spring, Sulphur Salt Soda Spring, and Vichey Iodide Spring.

The *Saline* and *Sulphur* waters were sometimes listed as a single category in historic promotional material – the *Sulpho-saline* waters. This group included a variety of mineral waters reputed to have effects on many conditions. They were mainly known for their laxative effects, though, and were taken either internally or externally in hydrotherapy. The strong saline waters were found between 425 and 550 feet in depth, and the *Salt Sulphur/Sulpho-Saline* waters from between 800 to 1,300 feet. This group included the Sulpho-Saline Spring, Excelsior Saline (Salt Sea) Spring, Salt Sulpur Spring, Salt Soda Spring, Salax Spring, Superior No. 1 Spring, Sulpho Salt Spring, and the White Sulphur Spring.

Although new wells were continually being discovered, existing wells were sometimes purchased by new owners and renamed. The frequent name changes and usage of *sulpho/sulphur, soda, lithia/lithium, salt*, and *Excelsior* in the well names make it difficult to ascertain the exact number of wells, although the various promotional brochures and pamphlets give a general idea of the number in operation at any one time. However, these pamphlets do not always give the complete picture since, depending on the publisher, some of the smaller private wells were not always listed. The Excelsior Springs Company, for example, always focused on its own mineral waters that were bottled and sold around the country. The 1908 *Excelsior Springs, MO., Blue Book* lists fourteen medical drinking waters: Sulpho-Saline Pavilion, Montezuma Pavilion, Crystal Lithium, Imperial Lithia Spring, Seltzer-Salt Soda, Saratoga Spring, Siloam Spring, Salt Sulphur Pavilion, Sulpho-Saline Pavilion, Lithia Spring, Relief Spring, Regent Spring, Superior Spring, and Sunnyside Spring. Other city directories prior to the Depression indicate that upwards of twenty different mineral waters were in operation at a time.

Although many of the claims for the health-giving benefits of mineral waters in the late nineteenth century focused on consumption of the waters, throughout history bathing in natural springs was also believed to cure or at least alleviate various ailments. Numerous forms of hydrotherapy have been recorded in Egyptian, Chinese, Japanese, and Greek and Roman civilizations. Although forgotten during the medieval period in Europe, bathing in mineral waters or springs was rediscovered there in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and soon spread to the United States. Beginning with support from two English publications on the medical uses of water in the 1700s, followed later by reports from the medical profession in other parts of Europe in the 1800s, hydrotherapy became an accepted medical practice in the nineteenth century. Spa towns sprang up in the United States in the mid- to late 1800s where mineral waters were both consumed and bathed in. The first hydrotherapy clinic in the United

States opened in New York in 1844.[22] Patrons came to spas not only to "take the waters" for their health, but to partake of cold or mineral water treatments and hot thermal baths. Complex bathing rituals to relieve pain and treat illnesses followed European precedents and were part of the bathing industry in the United States by the mid-nineteenth century.[23] Bath (Berkeley Springs), West Virginia; Saratoga Springs, New York; and Hot Springs, Arkansas were some of the more notable hot springs in the United States, with the latter acquired by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1879.

Although Excelsior Springs did not have any naturally occurring hot springs, the town did not rely on "taking of the waters" as the only promoted use of the mineral waters. Bath houses were also established, with the first purportedly built by Cap. Nickolson and operated by Robert Spence Ewing, an African American.[24] Other bath houses followed, with some installed in commercial buildings or hotels, while larger enterprises constructed their own buildings. The heyday of bath houses in Excelsior Springs extended from around 1905 to 1925.[25] Some of the more significant bath houses in this period included Keith's Sanitarium and Bath House, the Montezuma Bath House, Kihlberg's Karlsbad Bath House and Sanitarium, Siloam Bath House, and The Orient. The large elaborate Music Hall was later renovated for use as a bath house. Other bath houses in this period were Star Bath House (African American), Harris Bath House, Moorefield, Siloam Bath House, Doxey's (African American), Excelsior Springs Bath House, Kansas City Bath House, Petersen's Bath House (formerly Excelsior Saline Bath house), Powell Baths, and the Salt Sulphur Baths (See Appendix B, map of mineral water springs and bath houses in 1903).

Baths were "prescribed" by doctors as part of the treatment for a variety of ailments. There were Turkish baths, Sulpho-Saline baths, salt rubs and showers, mud baths, vapor baths and Betz hot air baths. Baths were only one part of the regime at a bath house, though. Most bath houses also offered massages, with Swedish massages the most frequently advertised. As a pamphlet from Kihlberg's Karlsbad noted,

> Nowadays it is a scientifically recognized fact that the ailments of mankind can be alleviated, not only by the old custom of giving large or small doses of drugs, but also without the aid of medicines. This latter system is called physical therapeutics and embraces several branches, among which massage, Swedish movements (medical gymnastics) and hydrotherapy, or water treatment are the three most important. All of

[22] J.C. Dalton, "Hydropathy," (1879), in George Ripley & Charles A. Dana, *The American Cyclopedia: A Popular Dictionary of General Knowledge,* Vol IX: Hortensius to Kinglake (2nd ed.) (New York: D. Appleton & Co.) 125-126. Accessed electronically 13 December 2011 <http://www.archive.org/stream/americancyclopae09ripluoft#page/125/mode/1up>.
[23] Laura Soulliere Harrison, "Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park," National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form (1985) Section 8, pg. 1.
[24] "First Bath Man," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (2 May 1904).
[25] M. A. Steineger, "Will the Baths Return to Excelsior?," *The Daily Standard* (11 March 1978) 1.

> these methods are founded upon . . . researches and are fully as scientific as the old school drug treatment, if not more so.[26]

Although several African Americans worked in various bath houses in Excelsior Springs, separation of the races was an established practice in Missouri and Clay County. Nonetheless, as illness was not segregated by race, African Americans were as desirous to seek the mineral waters cures offered in Excelsior Springs. Thus regardless that both the discoverer of the springs and the first operator of a bath house were African Americans, there was a perceived need for separate bathing facilities for blacks and whites, as well as for segregated housing, education, and worship. One source notes that there were five African American bath houses by 1892.[27] At least two of these bath houses also catered to white clients, however. Dr. D. A. Ellett, a black physician, came to Excelsior Springs in 1888 and first practiced medicine. While earning his medical degree from Howard University, he also trained as a masseur. Ellett left his medical practice to manage the Elms Hotel's bath facilities. In 1892, he opened his own bath house, and two years later built his own facility - the first Star Bath House. After experiencing personal setbacks he sold that operation, but returned and opened the second Star Bath House in 1907. This enterprise was in a prime location on E. Broadway, across from the Siloam Spring.[28] William A. Doxey and his wife owned and operated another successful bath house, and in the first decade of the twentieth century were also prominently situated on E. Broadway with offices opposite the Sulpho Saline Pavilion.[29]

By offering such a wide variety of mineral waters both for consumption and hydrotherapy, town boosters felt that Excelsior Springs was uniquely situated for health-seekers. Nonetheless, they were acutely aware of their competitors across the country. A 1903 Excelsior Springs' newspaper article did not mince words when comparing the town to other water health resorts. The *Excelsior Springs Standard* claimed that:

> She has more visitors today than Manitou, and as many as Hot Springs. She is curing more disease with her matchless waters than any six health resorts put together, in the United States. . . It is estimated that thirty thousand dollars are left in Excelsior Springs each week by our prosperous visitors . . . And all this, has for its cause or origin, the priceless virtues of Excelsior Springs waters. Take away a single spring and our property would suffer financially more than any money panic could cause . . . There is not such a group or variety of mineral springs on the globe, as exist here. We have the laxative, the ant-acid, the lithiated, and the ferruginous. . . Where in any locality . . . could you find the waters of any six well-known health resorts together that would make a combination equal to ours?

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[26] "Kilhberg's Karlsbad Baths," pamphlet in V1.200.745 folder "Kilhberg Karlsbad Baths," Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.,

[27] Glen E. Rice, "Mural Depicts Clay County's African-American History," *Kansas City Star* (18 June 2003).

[28] "Dr. D. A. Ellett," in V1.200.850 folder "Star Bath House," Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.

[29] Advertisement in V1.200.850 "Black History" folder, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.

> Take the waters of Manitou, Hot Springs, El Dorado Springs, Colfax and Saratoga New York, yet Excelsior Springs has practically a duplicate of each of them.[30]

With the town's economic survival clearly dependent on the waters, the city became more involved with the operation of the wells after the turn of the twentieth century. Beginning in 1905, the city employed a chemist to complete a monthly sanitary analysis of all of the private wells, as well as the city's own water supply. The city eventually passed ordinances giving it the power to license and control all the springs and wells – this coming at the insistence of the Chamber of Commerce. However, with only the Siloam and Regent springs owned by the city during this period, the city's attempts to oversee the remaining privately owned wells were met with limited success.[31]

The city's oversight over the wells, for example, did not prevent spurious claims from private owners of the wells, bath houses, or clinics. Prior to the ordinance, for example, the Bauserman Cancer Cure Sanitarium claimed in 1900 that it used "special applications of electricity in stomach diseases coupled with use of mineral waters" to assert that "We can cure Cancer and other tumors without the use of knife. By our methods Cancers are removed without leaving a scar and they never return."[32] These wild proclamations were only rarely countered. In 1906 a warning to Charles Fish, manager of the Excelsior Springs Bottling Company, was sent by the Chicago Clinic and Pure Water Journal in Springfield, Illinois. In its letter, the representative from the journal cautioned:

> that it is neither scientific nor attractive to medical men to advertise a water as "curative of stomach diseases; of kidney diseases; of blood diseases." There is not water on earth which can be broadly claimed as curative of "stomach diseases". . . if a water is advertised to cure "stomach diseases" it should cure all pathologic conditions of the stomach, including cancer of the stomach etc. Just what we are to understand by "blood diseases" I am by no means certain.[33]

This letter was quietly filed away, and town boosters continued to heavily promote the health benefits of the various water treatments. Protecting their investments and promoting the town's reputation was foremost. Sometimes this required investment in infrastructure. When frequent flooding endangered the original Siloam Spring, as well as other wells further down the river, the course of Fishing River was altered in 1901 to prevent further damage. In 1908, a deep well system was built, expanding the potential of the springs. After a long dry spell in 1910, the Excelsior Springs Water Company sank new wells near Miltondale, closer to the Missouri River, and in 1911 prepared new pipelines extending a mile and a half to that site to insure they retained a steady water supply.[34] The deep well system and the

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[30] "How About Excelsior Springs?" *Excelsior Springs Standard* (14 August 1903).
[31] *Golden Jubilee: America's Haven of Health,* 18.
[32] *Excelsior Springs, Missouri, and its Marvelous Waters: Reached via Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Ry., and Wabash Railroad* (Kansas City, MO: Hughes Publishing Co., [1900]).
[33] Letter to Mr. C. W. Fish, from Chicago Clinic & Pure Water Journal (7 January 1906). In "Chemists – early years" folder, Excelsior Springs Museum and Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.
[34] "Boring for More Water," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (5 January 1911) 1.

various wells were either individually or jointly owned at this time, although that would change by the 1930s when local government became more heavily involved.[35] The final major initiative by the city during the latter part of this period was to pass an ordinance in 1913 regulating hospitals, prohibiting treatment of malignant, contagious or infectious diseases. Wells and springs were required to have a water analysis, and shipped, bottled waters were required to have an official analysis on their label.[36] Otherwise, the period up to the first World War was a time when the private entrepreneur set the rules for town development.

[35] "The Legend Lives On . . . "
[36] *Revised Ordinances Excelsior Springs, Missouri, 1913.* (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Daily Journal Print).

Excelsior Springs: town building

The town's location in the narrow, Y-shaped valley of the Dry and East Fork Fishing Rivers may have been particularly suitable for wells and springs, but was not necessarily ideal for a building a new town. The river frequently flooded the low valley, and the hills surrounding the river bottom were steep and rocky. Furthermore, there were no nearby railroads – a necessity for a town in the late 1800s. Nevertheless, after the survey of his lands, Anthony Wyman attempted to introduce regularity on the rolling hills around Fishing River with streets laid on at least a partial grid system. Broadway served as the main east/west commercial thoroughfare, partly following the flow of the river at this point. Other streets followed the curves of the streams. Just four months after platting the new town, Wyman wrote his aunt in January 1881 that he had already sold close to a hundred lots.[37] The town was first incorporated as a village on February 7, 1881, and grew so rapidly that on July 12, 1881, it was incorporated again as a city of the fourth class. Rev. Flack built a home within the original plat and opened the first dry goods store, in addition to founding the first church and serving as its pastor.

The springs were so successful that nearly two hundred houses were built within the first year of platting. Accommodations for visitors were likely included in that building total. The "Cottage," home to William Riggs and located on the northwest corner of Main and Broadway, was the first rooming house constructed in Excelsior Springs.[38] The first hotel opened on March 1, 1881 on lots donated by Rev. Flack and Wyman and boasted twenty-five rooms. Known as the Excelsior Hotel, it was located on the south side of Broadway and east of Main – as close to the original spring as possible. On June 16, 1881, Henri Fish, general agent for the Santa Fe Railroad, and Kansas City businessman John Henrie bought the hotel. Like many others, Fish believed the city offered endless economic opportunities. With his connections, he was able to entice other businessmen to invest in his company and in turn, the new town of Excelsior Springs.

After the initial progress in its first two years, the period from 1882 to 1887 was one of slower growth, with construction limited primarily to small frame houses and businesses. An 1886 photograph reveals the extent of development that occurred in the town in just five years after platting, though. The tallest building was the Excelsior House, the first hotel, which rose to three stories in the rear. Broadway and Excelsior streets in the river valley contained several businesses and residences. Dwellings were also visible on the hillsides surrounding the downtown.[39] Although the town had the look of a community that had been around longer than five years, all of the visible buildings were still frame construction. Furthermore, the town still lacked a railroad. Clearly Excelsior Springs needed an additional boost in order to fulfill its hopes of becoming a premier health resort. Henri Fish was foremost among those who worked to turn those dreams into a reality.

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[37] Soltysiak, Chapter II - n.p
[38] *Golden Jubilee,* 9.
[39] Soltysiak, n.p.

First, the town needed better access. In 1887, Fish secured the right- of-way for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. With the backing of over half a million dollars in stock, Fish also organized the Excelsior Springs Company and served as its manager. The company acquired nearly 1,000 acres, including the Siloam, Regent and Relief springs. Fish's company was also responsible for the discovery of a new type of mineral water in Excelsior Springs. When drilling for artesian water in 1888, the company discovered saline water at depth of 1,460 feet. This new type of water was immediately popular, and was promoted as a replacement for salts and imported laxative waters. In the next few years, the Company was involved in many aspects of town-building. It built the largest and most elaborate resort hotel in town in 1888, the Elms, featuring two hundred rooms on large, landscaped grounds. That same year, the Company built the Music Hall close to the Elms Hotel, seating 1,320. Just a year later, it opened the Elms Annex closer to downtown with seventy-five rooms.[40] More importantly, the company began a nationwide program of advertising, spending thousands of dollars promoting Excelsior Springs.[41]

Fish's Excelsior Springs Company was also busy expanding the town's boundaries with new subdivisions. The Company platted the Central Park Addition in 1887, including a large area surrounded by an oval street known as the Concourse (today's present day alignment of the Concourse on the west and north) as well as land set aside for the Elms Hotel property. The Company also platted the Forest Park addition in 1887 and the Beacon Hill addition in 1888. Beacon Hill includes most of the area east of Old Orchard Avenue, while Forest Park includes an area east of Old Orchard/Kimball Avenue, and west of Dunbar Avenue.

Fish and his associates were not the only ones who saw potential in the new town. Expanding the original forty acre town site was Frederick Kugler, the German farmer who was cured of his ailments in 1880. Kugler platted an addition in June 1881 that extended the town east of Penn Street between Broadway and Bluff streets. J. C. Isley's addition in May 1887 added a large area on the eastern side of town from Saratoga to Frances streets, and south to Isley Boulevard. Joshua Craven plated a subdivision on the west, followed later by Captain Farris, J.H. Dunn and J. C. Isley joining forces to develop an addition embracing land south of Siloam Spring. A hill tract south of Fishing River was included in an addition opened by John and Irena McGlothlin.

Henri Fish continued to be involved with the development and expansion of Excelsior Springs through his son. Charles W. Fish arrived in 1886 after his father organized the Excelsior Springs Company, serving as general manager. Charles Fish developed the formula for the Soterian Ginger Ale that won first prize at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. When Henri Fish died in 1897, Charles continued to be involved in his father's company, and developed his own real estate ventures. In 1909, Fish became associated with Dr. W. A. Bell, a London capitalist. Fish left town briefly to manage some of Bell's property in New York before returning in 1910. Bell had previously purchased several hundred acres outside of the town's limits in 1903. With his son, Major W. A. J. Bell, who served as president, they

[40] *Golden Jubilee,* 10.
[41] "Health and Pleasure Resort Number," *Midwest Motorist* (June 1929).

formed the General Realty and Mineral Water Company. Working with the Bells, Fish began developing those acres, building the first nine holes of the Excelsior Springs Golf Course in 1912. Fish also is credited with hiring a Scottish golf professional, Alex Ross, as the course's first golf pro. In 1915, he hired Tom Bendelow, a well known Scottish American course designer from Chicago, to design the second nine holes.[42]

Additions to the city and recorded plats only tell a portion of the story of Excelsior Springs' physical development. Sometime these plats merely reflected the ambitions of the property owners; actual construction or town population growth did not always follow suit. In 1890, just a decade after its founding, the town's official census population was 2,034. The first Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map for the town, prepared in 1894, reveals where most of the construction was concentrated. At this time, virtually every lot in the downtown area contained a building except for the easternmost edge. The densest concentration of buildings was on Excelsior Street south to South Street, and from Thompson Avenue (Wyman) to Elizabeth. There were buildings on Hillside (now Bluff) Street, and Foley Street had only a few vacant lots scattered among the residences. Excelsior Street, one block north of Broadway, contained a variety of buildings, including the Saratoga Hotel, an ice house, and dwellings. In contrast to the mixed uses seen in an 1886 photograph, Broadway between Marietta and Elizabeth was nearly entirely commercial by 1894, featuring stores, doctors' offices, and hotels. Most of these buildings were still frame, though, and none were higher than two stories.[43]

The swiftly expanding town was not without its growing pains. A local newspaper editorial in 1892 printed a plea that the "beautiful banks along Fishing River should no longer be used as common sewers and . . . places for deposit of debris and filth."[44] Fires destroyed many of the earliest frame buildings, including the first Elms Hotel in 1898. Although the city still had several "cottage" hotels and boarding houses, the Elms was considered the only modern hotel in town at this time. Afraid of losing well-heeled clientele, local entrepreneurs quickly built Wholf's Tavern beginning in 1898 (later named the Royal Hotel) and the Arlington Hotel in 1899.

The 1900 Sanborn Fire Insurance map reveals significant changes not only in the extent of the town's boundaries, but in the types of structures that were constructed as well. In response to the actual or potential fires, several two-story brick commercial buildings replaced the earlier frame structures on Broadway. This main commercial thoroughfare, as well as the area south of Broadway between Thompson (then Wyman) and Main Streets, had only two vacant lots in 1900. The town now had ten hotels and nearly two hundred boarding houses. Although the larger hotels were viewed as an essential feature to attract out-of-town visitors, the numerous boarding houses were the "bread and butter" of the city's temporary housing sector. A promotional publication from around 1900 noted that the smaller boarding houses were critical to the local economy since the extremely high number of visitors could not

[42] Edna Swafford, "Charles W. Fish, A Mainspring in City's Development," *The Phunn* Vol. 15 (September 1992) 1.
[43] Wolfenbarger, "Hall of Waters District," 11.
[44] Editorial, *The Daily Phunn* (1 January 1892).

be handled by the hotels alone. Furthermore, the boarding houses filled a void for those visitors with smaller budgets.

> These are patronized by visitors who cannot afford to pay highest rates of the hotels, though obliged to visit this great resort to seek a cure for their ills through its water. We would advise this class of visitors to go to one of the hotels named in this book immediately upon arrival in the city, and remain long enough to find suitable quarters elsewhere, if the rates are found higher than they can afford.[45]

In addition to overnight accommodations, businesses developed to cater specifically to out-of-town visitors, and included a Kosher restaurant, a dozen small groceries and confectionaries, three bowling alleys, a mystic, and a bookstore carrying over 200,000 postcards.[46] While most of the businesses were situated in the low-lying valleys around the springs and Fishing River tributaries, the year-round residents built houses on the hills overlooking the river valley. The blocks of Excelsior Street and Broadway east of Linden (Third) Street contained several dwellings, as well as a private school. While some vacant lots were still found in 1900 on E. Excelsior Street, many of these lots were not buildable due to the steep topography. Working class residents lived in small cottages, while the numerous doctors and other business men lived in larger, high style homes representing the architectural styles popular in the late Victorian period.

Sanborn maps, especially in earlier years, typically did not cover African American residential neighborhoods; thus little is known of when these neighborhoods developed. However, the 1900 Sanborn map shows a "Colored Baptist Church" on the southeast corner of N. Main and E. North Streets. Lincoln School, the primary school built for African Americans in 1888, was located on the southeast corner of Kansas and Osage streets (not on the Sanborn map). The location of these key community institutions corresponds with information found in the earliest available city directories – that the earliest African American neighborhood was located in the hills to the north of the commercial center of town. In the *Kellogg-Baxter City Directory of Excelsior Springs* for 1908-1909, African Americans were recorded living primarily on Cannon Avenue and Osage Street, with a few scattered on Caldwell Avenue, Centralia Avenue, W. Excelsior, and Henrie.[47] The Albany Hotel, the only hotel that catered to African Americans, was located in the southwest section of the business district at 410-412 South Street. It was originally owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Stanford King, who also owned the K.C. Steam Cleaning business next door. The hotel was connected to a settlement known locally as the "Bottoms" by a swinging bridge over the Dry Fork of the Fishing River.[48]

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[45] *Excelsior Springs, Missouri, and Its Marvelous Waters.*
[46] Soltysiak, Chapter III, n.p.
[47] *City Directory Excelsior Springs, Mo. And Clay County Famers List: 1908-1909* (Kansas City, Mo.: Kellogg-Baxter, 1908-1909) 146-167.
[48] Janet R. Reed, *Excelsior Springs: Haunted Haven* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2011) 15.

Although segregated from much of Excelsior Spring's society, African Americans experienced some success in commercial ventures, as evidenced by the organization of a "Negro Business League" in 1906, reported to be the first in Missouri. A banquet held in Excelsior Springs was "attended by 200 of the leading Negroes of Excelsior Springs . . ." and was "composed of Negroes who are conducting creditable business enterprises, who hope by thus coming together to create a healthy sentiment in this vicinity for the race." Officers were B. F. Fry, president; W. A. Doxey, secretary; L.W. Johnson, treasurer; and Rev. Lee, chaplain.[49]

The bustle of construction and town additions from 1890 to 1900 transpired even though the city's year-round resident population dropped during this decade from 2,034 to 1,881. This indicates that the prosperity and economic base of the city was not dependent on local residents, but on outside visitors who came to partake of the waters. The disproportionately high number of boarding houses, hotels, and clinics, far exceeding the amount typically seen in other towns, was necessary to the town's economic base.

The city's dependence on outside visitors continued to increase after the turn of the twentieth century. Many buildings listed as dwellings in the 1900 Sanborn had been converted to boarding houses by 1905, with room and porch additions likely built to accommodate the conversion. New buildings, constructed specifically to serve as boarding houses, were also built in the period between 1900 and 1905. Many of these were located in the 300 block of E. Excelsior Street, east of the Saratoga Hotel – five out of the eight buildings on the Sanborn Map were either hotels or boarding houses. The 1905 Sanborn shows that the trend towards masonry construction continued in the downtown. The block bounded by Marietta, Broadway, Main and Spring streets was almost entirely brick structures except for the northeast corner. Except for the center portion of the north side of the 100 block of E. Broadway, the downtown commercial street was filled with buildings. Although several were commercial enterprises typical of a small Midwestern town, there were again a higher number of drugstores and doctors' offices, in addition to the high number of boarding houses and hotels, found on the outer edges of the commercial district. Hotel construction continued in the first decade of the twentieth century, with the Snapp Hotel opening in June 1907, followed by the second incarnation of the Elms opening on July 24, 1909. Excelsior Springs, clearly, was not a typical town.

By the time of the 1909 and 1913 Sanborn maps, most of the extant historic buildings in Excelsior Springs' downtown had been constructed.[50] The same was true of the numerous boarding houses, with the greatest period of construction for this property type occurring before 1905, and the next active building period between 1905 and 1909. The town needed more than hotels, boarding houses, and commercial buildings, though, as the population began to rise after the turn of the twentieth century. By 1910, the census recorded 3,900 permanent residents. The 1909 Sanborn map extended its coverage into the city's residential areas, showing single-family residences spreading along Isley Avenue (now Isley Boulevard) and Benton Avenue. On Benton Avenue south to Isley, the dwellings were primarily one-

[49] "A Negro Business League," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (1 January 1907) 1.
[50] Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources Survey, Phase II," 12.

story single-family, and were built in styles popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Residential additions also expanded the western boundaries of Excelsior Springs.

With the town's population more than doubling between 1900 and 1910, the commercial district was at full capacity with no room for growth. Its location, in the valley of the Fishing River basin, was bounded by rocky hills or the river itself – both unsuitable locations for commercial buildings. Development in the Elms Hotel area, southwest of downtown, resulted in increased traffic along Thompson (then called Wyman). The new residential construction around the turn of the twentieth century in the Elms district thus encouraged commercial growth to the southwest along Thompson, as it was the main road crossing the river. By 1913, the southeast side of Thompson had a continuous row of one-story brick commercial buildings, and the town's new city hall was located here as well.

There were other property types that accompanied the growth of Excelsior Springs. Churches were founded in the first few years of the town's existence, but the congregations met first in various buildings until they were able to afford construction. The African American church was founded in 1885; documents provide conflicting information about when the first building was constructed, however.[51] It wasn't until 1889 that the first documented church building was constructed for the Catholic Church. Several other church buildings were constructed through the 1930s, until Excelsior Springs once again boasted of a disproportionate number of churches when compared to its permanent population – another result of having a high transient population. Schools were another important component of town-building, although the first was not built until 1886. This four room building, named Wyman School, was built on land donated by the Excelsior Springs Company. In 1888, the Lincoln School was organized for African American students, with Adaline Taylor hired as the city's first black teacher. Isley School was built in 1890, and a private school, Haynes Academy, in 1895. Isley School burned in 1902, and a replacement was built. In 1904, replacement buildings were constructed for both Wyman and Lincoln Schools, the latter coming after a petition by African Americans expressing the need for a new school building. The new Wyman School was built of brick and cost $6,630.00, while the Lincoln School was constructed of concrete blocks and cost $1,250.00.[52] Continued growth of the town's permanent population in the first decades of the twentieth century resulted in the construction of the first high school in 1913, but the school district's expansion was halted with the onset of the first World War.[53]

As with many small towns, the earliest post offices were housed in buildings serving other purposes, typically commercial buildings. In 1914, the first post office building constructed in all of Clay County was built in Excelsior Springs for $60,000.[54] Possibly the town received this recognition over the other

[51] One document indicates that Lincoln School was founded in 1886, and met first at the "Colored Baptist Church." Other records show that the church, founded in 1885, held its earliest services at Lincoln School until the congregation was able to purchase the land on N. Main. Documents in V1.200.850 "Black History" folder, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.
[52] Herb Ellett, "Former Student Remembers Lincoln School," *Excelsior Springs Standard* (19 March 1999) Lifestyles section, pg. 1.
[53] *Golden Jubilee,* 14-15.
[54] *Golden Jubilee,* 15.

cities in the county due to the high volume of postcards and letters mailed by visitors. While the federal government recognized the unusual conditions generated by the city's status as a health resort, when it came time to build the public library, the town was not as successful in convincing the Carnegie Foundation of the community's special circumstances. A lot for the library was purchased by the city for $1,000, and was the former site of a spring and pavilion. Based on the city's permanent population in 1910 of 3,900, however, the town was only eligible for a $10,000 grant from the Carnegie Foundation. The city argued that the due to its large transient population, they should be eligible to receive $20,000. The city supported its argument with railroad tickets and hotel registers showing that 200,000 to 250,000 visited the city annually! The foundation held firm, though, and the library was completed in 1915 with the lower level of funding.[55]

With so many short-term visitors and so few year-round residents, the town often struggled to provide infrastructure and public utilities. City streets remained dirt until 1903, when Broadway was finally paved in asphalt. It wasn't until 1910 that other streets were paved with concrete or macadam, and electric lights replaced gas lanterns.[56] Most of these improvements were undertaken by the city, but other features necessary to the growth of the town were privately financed and operated. In 1914, all of the "public utilities" – water, electricity, gas and public steam heating systems – were owned by the Bell family. Dr. Bell became involved in 1903 when he built the first electric light plant. After the city's domestic water supply failed twice, Bell bought out the local water company which pumped water from the Fishing River. Since this source was not always reliable during droughts, Bell sank deep wells eight miles south of town and laid a ten inch line, bringing water into the city for the residents.[57]

In spite of it rapid growth during its first few years of existence, the city of Excelsior Springs remained relatively remote and without rail access. Even when the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroad opened up its line between Chicago and Kansas City via Excelsior Springs in 1887, the depot was still located over a mile from town. To reach the town via the Milwaukee Line, visitors had to ride in a "dummy" train from the main station to the Wabash depot on St. Joseph Street. The dummy line was rough, and the cars were small and dirty. According to an account in the July 10, 1909 *Kansas City Star* "You were jerked and jolted down the hillside, winding gradually lower in to the valley until you were dumped from the dummy into the pretty town with its unclean streets."[58] In spite of the unpleasant first impression, fifteen trains arrived daily at the Milwaukee station, bringing in nearly a quarter million visitors per year by the time the first World War broke out. Not only did the town attract individuals seeking out medical treatments, large organizations began hosting conventions in Excelsior Springs as well. In 1889, the American Dental Association, and other statewide organizations, such as the Missouri National Guard Encampment, hosted meetings in Excelsior Springs.[59]

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[55] "Carnegie Library," Excelsior Springs Historic Landmark nomination, City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri (1983).
[56] Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources Survey, Phase II" 24.
[57] Swafford, 2.
[58] In Soltysiak, n.p.
[59] *Golden Jubilee,* 11.

The last major amenity that established Excelsior Springs as a city with ambitions that exceeded its population was the development of a parks and boulevard system. As with other elements of the town's development, the parks system had its roots in the interests of entrepreneurs. Private real estate developers began consulting with landscape architect George E. Kessler in 1905, at first to work on private subdivision plans. I. J. Ringolksy first contracted with Kessler for sketches of a subdivision on the Elms site. In 1907, Kessler prepared a report for J. G. Brownson regarding seven acres north of the Fishing River, discussing their suitability for an amusement resort. Possibly in hopes of garnering additional work, or because of his national reputation as a park system planner, Kessler recommended that Brownson work with other private property owners to secure the river bank, preventing it from "becoming a repository for old tin cans and other rubbish." Kessler then suggested that a park along the river, along with a driveway and promenade, "will do much toward attracting a wealthier and consequently a more liberal class than is now encouraged to visit the Springs, and very greatly enhance property holdings in and near the town."[60]

George Kessler continued to be involved with the development of Excelsior Springs when Major William A. J. Bell formed the General Realty and Mineral Water Company in 1910 (see Appendix C for map prepared by Kessler for Bell's Company). Kessler was named vice-president of the company, whose primary purpose was development of the Bell family's property on Golf Hill. The Bells had admired Kessler's park work, especially after a visit to Memphis and viewing that city's park system. Thus when Kessler prepared a map as part of a prospectus for the company in 1910, he was encouraged to include recommendations for a city-wide system.[61] Establishing a city-wide park system was beyond the means of even businessmen like the Bell family, however. That would require the involvement of the local government, which would take on the task of building a city-wide park system after the first World War. The citizens of Excelsior Springs were already aware of the need for city beautification prior to the war, however. In fact, the city started the process in 1908 when it purchased the land around the Siloam Springs. The natural beauty of the town's setting was early recognized, and was invariably noted in any promotional brochure of the period.

> Here the air is pure and bracing, there is no malaria, there are no mosquitos, and cool, health-giving, life-saving springs are seen; here peace and quietness is found, health restored, the invalid becomes well again, and those who seek a quiet place to rest and build up, rejoice in finding such a beautiful resort.[62]

After millions of visitors and decades of unregulated development, however, the natural beauty of the town needed a little assistance.

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[60] Deon Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Park & Driveway System: Landscape Architectural Historic Survey," (15 February 1994) 10.
[61] Ibid., 11-12.
[62] *Excelsior Springs, Missouri, and Its Marvelous Waters*.

II. "Missouri's National Health Resort": the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915 – 1963

The start of the first World War marked a change in the development of Excelsior Springs, although the war was not related to most of the factors affecting this development. Many of the town's earliest boosters and entrepreneurs were no longer involved, and the next generation did not produce as many grandiose plans. Instead, the early to mid-twentieth century was a time of increasing involvement by federal, state and local government. Although conceived earlier by private entrepreneurs, it was the City of Excelsior Springs that initiated the city's parks and boulevards system. The local government also purchased and consolidated many of the privately owned wells and springs. The federal government financed the construction of the Veterans Administration Hospital, the elaborate Art Deco Hall of Waters, as well as many small parks projects and city street paving projects through work relief programs of the New Deal.

This era also saw an increasing emphasis on medical treatments utilizing the town's mineral waters, particularly with a growing dependence on hydrotherapy. Although many bath houses closed, those that remained grew larger. Several of these expanded into sanitariums or hospitals, and after World War II, these were the largest employers in town. Primarily because of the economic reliance on the health sanitariums in the 1950s and 1960s, a national exposé in 1963 debunking health clinics like those in Excelsior Springs marked a dramatic end to this period of development.

The period around the war began, however, with ambitious plans by the city to improve the conditions in Excelsior Spring's downtown. Many of the privately owned spring pavilions were showing their age, and the town had received unfavorable press regarding the trash left along the banks of the Fishing River. Furthermore, the frequent flooding of the river required action to protect the many wells and springs along its banks, as well as all of the commercial buildings. Ambitious city-wide projects such as stream widening, beautification, and a city-wide parks system could only logically be addressed by the efforts of local government. The projects were supported, and in some cases, suggested by the Commercial Club and the Chamber of Commerce. Upon learning of landscape architect George Kessler's involvement with the Bells, in 1913 the Commercial Club inquired of the cost for Kessler to prepare plans for the tract of land that the city had recently acquired. Kessler waited until 1914, when he was officially contacted by the City of Excelsior Springs, before he accepted a contract for designing a "park in the river valley" and offering suggestions for the new spring house. In February 1915, Kessler and his assistant visited the city to consult with the park board, primarily about plans for the new Siloam pagoda but also for park work in general. He was given approval to move ahead for the plans around Siloam by the city council in April 1915. By this time, the city was already working on widening the channel of Fishing River through Siloam Park.[63]

The business community was united in its support of the city's efforts for the Siloam Park and other infrastructure improves. In a 1915 publication by the Commercial Club, it was noted that

[63] Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Park & Driveway System,"13.

> The attractive environment has been from the start protected by the residents. As an instance, they acquired a tract of land for park purposes extending over a mile through the town along both banks of the stream. This was placed in the hands of George E. Kessler, the well-known landscape architect, for development and the construction of the spring pavilions and Siloam Gardens. $100,000 has already been expended on this civic beauty plan in addition to the sum already spent by the city for concrete arch bridges and paved drives which form a part of the extensive park and driveway system.[64]

Although Kessler designed an elaborate setting and gardens for the Siloam and Sulpho-Saline pavilions, the plans for the two classically-inspired spring houses were completed by architect Henry F. Hoit. In spite of the support of the business community, many of the local residents objected to Kessler's $1,000 salary, and formed the "Friends of Old Siloam" in protest. When Siloam Gardens opened in 1917, many aspects of Kessler's plans were not completed, and work had not even started on the pavilions. As a result, by the 1920s, the previous decades of private ownership and years of visitors had taken its toll on the old Siloam pavilion and grounds. The platform was unsafe, and the city was facing a pending damage suit. The citizens of Excelsior Springs realized that they all had a vested interest in the development of Siloam and other key sites around the city. The American Legion of Excelsior Springs adopted a resolution on November 11, 1922, noting the continued drop in attendance to Siloam Springs under the present conditions, and decrying the delay of several years of the plans for beautifying Siloam Gardens. The organization whole heartedly endorsed an upcoming bond issue for the construction of the gardens in the plans of Kessler and Henry F. Hoit.[65] The newspaper joined with their support, warning its readers not to be "alarmed by the warbling of scarecrows." The bond issues passed overwhelmingly in November 1922.

Although the two elaborate pavilions were completed in 1923, as well as other city-wide projects including a new Marietta Street bridge and an eight mile circuit of drives, the full scope of Kessler's plans for Siloam Gardens were never implemented. Still, the city insisted:

> We have no apologies to make for our park system, as we are far ahead of cities of like size in park development and it is doubtful if one can find another city in the United States, irrespective of size, that can boast of having a system of parks that cost $40.00 per capita.[66]

Indeed, this was no idle boast. Excelsior Springs in 1923 had a population of approximately 5,000 residents and 907 acres within its boundaries. Its park system at this time was 100 acres – one-tenth of the city.[67] It had accomplished this in less than a decade with steady acquisitions. In addition to purchasing the land for Siloam Park through condemnation in 1913, in 1919 the city purchased

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[64] *Excelsior Springs: Missouri's National Resort* ([Excelsior Springs, Mo.]: Excelsior Springs Commercial Club, 1915).
[65] Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Park & Driveway System," 13-14.
[66] "Semi-Annual Report, City of Excelsior Springs, Year Ended March 23, 1923," ([Excelsior Springs, Mo.]: n.p.) [1923.]
[67] Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Park & Driveway System," 14.

Sunnyside Park; in 1920, the city obtained acreage in the Farris, Dunn and Isley additions, including hill tract; and in 1925, five acres were acquired that included Regent Spring for $4,500.[68]

The city's new park system was part of the reason for the *Kansas City Star* comment on May 3, 1925, that "Excelsior Springs always has discouraged the development of manufacturing plants and industries. . ." and the town wanted "to be known as the most beautiful town in the United States."[69] Most of the recently acquired park land was not yet developed, however. Therefore, after the city "completed" the Siloam Park project, in 1924 it hired Edna [Eda] Sutermeister from the Kansas City landscape architectural firm of Hare & Hare to develop a general beautification plan. Sutermeister was likely selected due to her former association with George Kessler. In 1926, Hare & Hare presented their "Plan Showing Present and Proposed Park Properties." At this time, the city's park properties included: Regent Park (larger than today); Siloam Park – a large curvi-linear part south of downtown (today encompassing Fishing River Linear Park, Siloam Mountain Park, East Valley Park and Isley Woods); Sunnyside Park; and "City Park" south of intersection of South and Jefferson. Boulevards were listed as "proposed" in spite of the fact that they were already laid out, graded, and paved. This may have reflected the fact that these streets were not under jurisdiction of the parks department, or perhaps that Hare & Hare felt the boulevards deserved additional development. Certainly, with the increasing importance of the automobile, the park drive system became an increasingly more significant facet of the parks system. The drives were promoted.

> for the uninterrupted passage of pleasure traffic between the extreme eastern and western town limits without entering the business district. Few cities can boast of a similar system with more pleasing points of view. Dunbar and Kimball avenues wind around the rim of the valley and by easy grades descend the face of the western hills; the South Valley, which in Siloam Park runs along the stream – an ideal shaded mile of luxuriant foliage – merges into Golf Hill Drive, ascends through a forest glen and around the brow of the eastern hills, a new vista at every turn . . . True artistic feeling is evident throughout the completed work, there is no hint of the artificial, the drives flow along lines that display the region's native beauty and leave the charm unspoiled. These drives connect with the 202 miles of oiled macadam roads for the construction of which Clay County voted a bond issue of $1,500,000 in June, 1916. These roads radiate in every direction from the Springs, and its residents and visitors will have for their use one of the most extensive and attractive driveway systems to be found anywhere.[70]

Local government did not bear the full responsibility of developing the parks. Civic and private organizations embarked on an aggressive beautification program following the recommendation of Hare & Hare. The Chamber of Commerce and other groups maintained planting beds, while the Women's Civic Improvement Association maintained the playground in Siloam Gardens. The Women's Civic

[68] *Golden Jubilee,* 21.
[69] Soltysiak, n.p.
[70] In Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Park & Driveway System," 20.

Improvement Association also constructed the stone entrance to western edge of town designed by Edna Sutermeister. Also privately developed was the golf course, which by 1927 boasted of being the only thirty-six hole golf course between Chicago and the Rocky Mountain region. In addition to the city park system, now expanded to 180 acres, many hiking paths and horseback trails were built by the larger hotels, such as the Elms.[71]

As with many other public amenities of the period, though, African Americans were not welcomed in the city park system. Although the local black baseball team played their games in McCarthy Park in the 1910s, these were events that were enjoyed by the entire populace. In 1925, there was discussion at the President's Round Table Club about a public playground "for the little colored citizens of Excelsior Springs with a park for their parents and friends." It was noted that there was a property on N. Main Street, "already sodded to blue grass and advantageously located. . ." and that "the colored folks pay taxes toward the maintenance of the other parks of the city, but do not enjoy the benefits."[72] A year later, Hare & Hare's *City Plan* for Excelsior Springs recommended that

> It will be necessary to provide a play ground for negro children in the negro district of the city, and the selection of a plot of ground for this purpose should be determined in consultation with the negro leaders in the community. Full equipment should be provided in this playground as in all others.[73]

There is no evidence that such a park was ever purchased by the city. Consequently, there were special events held occasionally in the parks for Excelsior Springs' African American residents. In July 1934, an "All-Negro Program" was held in Siloam Gardens, and during 4th of July celebrations that same year, special water fight and boxing exhibitions events were held for the black male youth.[74]

New civic development was not restricted to the city government. One of the largest government projects in Excelsior Springs after World War I was the establishment of the Veteran's Administration Hospital. In May 1920, the federal Public Health Service approached Colonel E. L. Morse about leasing his mansion for a hospital. Morse, a businessman and early promoter of Excelsior Springs, was also president of the company that built the Elms Hotel. He later organized the Excelsior Springs Land and Investment Company, which took over the assets of the original town site and land company.

The federal Public Health Service was organized after at the end of World War I when the government realized that the returning wounded and disabled war veterans required hospital services. Since it was not allowed to purchase properties, the Public Health Service had to lease suitable buildings that could serve as hospitals. The agency considered the Morse residence to have an ideal location – situated in

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[71] Ibid., 18.
[72] "Park for Colored Folks," *Excelsior Springs Daily Standard,* Vol. 37, No. 132 (3 June 1925) 1.
[73] "City Plan: Excelsior Springs," Hare & Hare (12 March 1926) 25.
[74] "All-Negro Program in Park This Evening," [July 1934]; "Colored Boys may sign up for Fourth Events," [July 1934]; in V1.200.850 "Black History" folder, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.

one of the best known health resorts in the nation and close to Kansas City. Furthermore, the house was large enough to be adaptable for hospital use. Although Morse did not initially acquiesce, after being called to Washington, D.C. in 1921 for further negotiations, he eventually decided not only to lease his house, but to purchase additional lands and lease them to the government as well. The agreement also stipulated that Morse alter the residence and build an addition at his own expense, in accordance to plans approved by the Public Health Service.[75]

After returning to Excelsior Springs in 1921, Morse was greeted by a welcoming demonstration staged by the Commercial Club, who clearly felt that the federal government's presence in town was, as voiced by the Commercial Club's president, "in the interest of the up-building of Excelsior Springs." In a speech where he rebuffed the idea that he forced the idea upon the government, Morse stated that:

> No political influence was exerted. None was required. The fame of Excelsior Springs as a health resort was the attracting cause. The sightly and commanding position of my residence overlooking as it does this valley and city, attracted the attention of this inspection part which caused them to visit my home. I was somewhat reluctant to even entertain a proposition which would sever me from a home that has sheltered my children; . . . you can readily see that I was not prompted by greed or the expectation of great profit. I have always been obsessed with the idea that it would be a great thing for the Government to become interested in this health resort and to establish a hospital or an institution that would help us in our struggles to make this the greatest health resort on the American continent. It means much to every one and all of us. More than nine hundred thousand dollars will be spent among our people annually. It will bring people here from all parts of the United States for treatment and our mineral waters and baths will speed to recovery those who are afflicted. It is my firm conviction that more people will be cured here and in shorter time, than in any other institution of the like character in the United States -- and this will be done by the waters which will supplement and aid the work of those in charge of the hospital -- all of which will add fame and honor to our place as a health resort.[76]

To the local residents, locating a veterans' hospital in Excelsior Springs was a natural choice that would seal the community's reputation as a national health resort. Work began on the hospital in May 1921 under the supervision of Colonel Morse. Complications arose, however, when the responsibility for veterans' hospitalization was transferred to the newly formed Veterans Bureau. Even after the Bureau purchased the property in 1922, there were several newspaper reports of project waste and allegations from both sides. One of the sticking points was the site did not even have a kitchen and mess hall, proof to some that the government never really intended to use the property.[77] After construction began again in 1923, an investigation of the Veterans Bureau was called for by the Hearst newspapers. The

[75] Deon Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Job Corps Center: Historic/Architectural Survey," (3 June 1996) 4-7.
[76] *History of the VA Hospital* ([Excelsior Springs, Mo.]: n.p., 31 December 1950) 3.
[77] "Government Waste is Typified in Excelsior Springs Project," *Kansas City Times* (17 January 1923).

Excelsior Springs site became embroiled in a political controversy led by foes of Colonel Morse who charged that the price paid for the home and land was exorbitant; the property, situated on a barren rocky cliff, was too isolated and inaccessible for its purpose; and that the administration has used favoritism in selecting the site.[78]

The investigation eventually exonerated Colonel Morse, and the Veterans Administration Hospital was dedicated by Senator James Reed on Armistice Day, November 11, 1924. Almost as soon as it was opened, there were plans to expand the facility. A bill authorizing appropriation of funds to increase the bed capacity to 300 was passed in 1928. Plans showed that additional land was required; two acres were purchased in 1929, and another half-acre in 1930. The hospital closed for alterations and was evacuated in the fall of 1929. Construction began on the additions on December 29, 1929. The hospital re-opened on August 30, 1930 with an official bed capacity of 290 beds, but the first patient was not admitted until January 5, 1931.[79]

The Veterans Administration Hospital was not the only medical facility built or expanded during this period. Dr. Samuel Ball arrived in Excelsior Springs in 1918 with an interest in treating arthritis, rheumatism, and colon disorders. He opened the Ball Clinic in February 1919 in a twelve-room cottage. Ball soon purchased the Castle Rock Hotel, and built a five-story limestone wing in the early 1920s. The Ball Clinic eventually expanded to include seven buildings that could handle up to three hundred patients, and was the largest employer in the city by the time the facility closed in 1963.

The first city hospital was chartered in 1904 as the Excelsior Springs Hospital. It moved to a variety of locations in its first few decades before relocating to the former White Sanitarium at Superior and Park Streets. It remained in operation at that location until 1977. Other clinics and hospitals in Excelsior Springs were privately operated. Dr. A. S. McCleary founded the McCleary Clinic and Hospital in 1901, which specialized in rectal and chronic diseases. It remained in business through 1957 when it consolidated with the Thornton Minor Hospital, becoming the McCleary-Thornton-Minor Hospital. The Mitchell Clinic, adjacent to the Hall of Waters, specialized in rectal, colon, rheumatic and arthritic disorders.

By the start of the Great Depression, the city's population had grown to 4,519 in 1930. Outwardly, the city did not seem as concerned as other communities about the economic effects to Excelsior Springs. As the *Golden Jubilee* booklet published by the local Chamber of Commerce in 1930 noted:

> We are, first of all, a HEALTH RESORT. Just that. Not a commercial or manufacturing center, mining town, or national airport -- no, those things are purely secondary to an industry devoted to the mineral water cure.[80]

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[78] Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Job Corps Center," 8-9.
[79] Ibid., 9.
[80] *Excelsior Springs: America's Haven of Health* (Excelsior Springs, MO.: Excelsior Springs Chamber of Commerce, 1930) foreword.

In spite of city histories reporting that the city was not as hard hit as other communities due to its focus on health and medicine, unemployment was still a pressing concern during the Depression.[81] The election of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 brought two forms of relief to the city's economy – the repeal of prohibition and the initiation of various New Deal work relief programs. Although the primary liquids consumed in Excelsior Springs were purportedly its healthful mineral waters, the prohibition of liquor sales, combined with the effects of the Depression, had definitely hurt the city's hotel businesses. The day that Prohibition was repealed, three hundred cases and twelve half kegs of beer were delivered to Excelsior Springs before sunrise.[82] The return of beer to Excelsior Springs was consequently followed by an increase in hotel guests.[83]

Roosevelt's work relief programs, often referred to as the "alphabet soup" agencies, were designed to put the nation's unemployed back to work, while at the same time providing the manpower and funding to complete maintenance and construction of infrastructure that was neglected during the Depression. The CWA, WPA, and PWA were just some of the programs that were responsible for work relief projects during the 1930s. The Works Progress (Projects) Administration paved many of the streets in town that were still dirt at the start of the Depression, and completed several projects on parks properties. The litter and trash dumped in the Fishing River, noted before the turn of the century, was still evident in the 1930s. A series of articles by the *Daily Standard* in the spring of 1932 included a survey by industrial analyst Kenneth Evans noting that "Excelsior Springs has one of the finest natural beauties found in any resort, a stream flowing through the center of town. But is it well that is has been hidden. Its banks are piled high with rubbish, refuse is thrown into the stream. The city and the Chamber of Commerce are backing a move to correct this error and promise that within two years to make the stream a real beauty spot."[84] With its coffers depleted from the effects of the Depression, though, the city turned to the WPA to complete several park construction and maintenance projects. The largest and most significant project, however, was undertaken with grants and loans from the Public Works Administration (PWA).

At the very onset of the PWA program in 1933, the City of Excelsior Springs petitioned for a loan and grant to complete an ambitious mineral waters project that would consolidate all the springs and wells, and build a comprehensive city-owned hydrotherapy and mineral waters system. This type of authority, however, required approval from the state legislature. In 1933, Governor Guy Park signed a bill authorizing the city to operate a mineral water system with funds obtained from a Reconstruction Finance Corporation loan. This special act of the legislature and subsequent state supreme court decision was required in order to: establish the city's right to go into this type of business; to delegate its authority to a special committee; to issue bonds of nearly $100,000 to secure the federal grant; and to convert park property into a revenue-producing unit from the sale of water and charges for use of pool

[81] *Report City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri: "America's Haven of Health"* ([Excelsior Springs, MO]: n.p., year ending March 31, 1932.
[82] Soltysiak, n.p
[83] *America's Haven of Health*, 37.
[84] Soltysiak, n.p

and other facilities. The mineral water committee would have full control over development during the twenty year federal loan amortization period.

Plans were prepared in advance and submitted with the city's application to the federal government. The architectural firm of Keene & Simpson prepared the plans for the building; the engineering firm of Black & Veatch prepared economic studies as well as the plans for transporting the various mineral waters to the proposed Hall of Waters building; the structural engineer was Erwin Pfhul; and the mechanical engineer was W. Cassell. In 1938, the landscape architectural firm Hare & Hare prepared the site plans as well as a planting plan, completely eradicating the Kessler-designed gardens around Siloam.

When Missouri's PWA projects were finally approved in 1935, the Hall of Waters projects was second on the list. A portion of the money was used to purchase the mineral water rights to ten various approved springs and wells in the city on October 1, 1935. In order for the city to gain control of one or more of each of the different types of water, it was necessary to condemn four springs, in addition to the ones that the city already owned. After the 1935 purchases, the wells or springs that the city owned were: Siloam Spring in Siloam Park; Regent Spring in Regent Park; Calcium No. 1, East Broadway; Park Well (Calcium No. 2), near Highway 10 in Siloam Park; Natural Soda (Jones) on E. Excelsior; Natrona Soda on E. Excelsior; Excelsior Saline on Thompson Avenue; White Sulphur near the post office on Highway 10; and the Salt Sulphur and Sulpho Saline wells on the north end of Main. The city would eventually own fifteen wells in town, piping in ten of them to the Hall of Waters.

In 1935 ground was broken for the large Hall of Waters building, and work began on reconditioning the wells and laying four miles of specially designed pipes (different for each type of water). The pipes brought the water from all the city-owned springs to the Hall of Waters, as well as to approved bath houses around the city. After the instigation of the city's mineral water system, only those establishments that were authorized by the city could offer hydrotherapy. Under this special agreement, the sulpho-saline waters were piped to the licensed bath houses. The costs of the bath tickets were established by the city, and there were specific regulations covering all bath types: tourist baths (include vapor or electric cabinets, mineral water tubs, salt and soap glow, shower, cool and rest, and general massage), sitz baths, spinal douches, vaginal douches, vapor and electric cabinets, Nauheim baths and therapeutic pools (see Appendix D, "Rules & Regulations"). Some of the approved bath houses were in the largest hotels, including the Elms Hotel, Royal Hotel, and Oaks Hotel. Initially, the waters were to be piped to the Broadway and Battle Creek bath houses, as well as the Star and Carlsbad. In an official pamphlet published by the city in 1936, however, only the Star, Carlsbad, the Hall of Waters, and Moore's (for African Americans) were licensed strictly as bath houses.[85]

Inside the Hall of Waters building, the various waters were dispensed at the "world's longest water bar," bottled and shipped around the world, and were also be used for hydrotherapy treatments in the

[85] "Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Use of the Mineral Waters as Related to the Bathhouses," (Excelsior Springs, MO.: The Mineral Water System, City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, 1936) 1-5.

building.[86] As a unit of the City of Excelsior Springs, the "Mineral Water System" was similar to other city-owned utilities. A city ordinance established the details of the system's operation. The justification for the city's purchase was that

> Health-giving mineral waters are a natural resource that must be developed for the benefit of everyone. Private competition and exploitation have no proper place in these humanitarian services. It was the duty of the city, in inviting people to come here for health, to follow the practice of other important spas of the worlds by controlling the waters and guaranteeing their purity and sale under property conditions.[87]

The City Council appointed a Mineral Water Committee, charging it with administration of the system. In turn, the Committee appointed a project manager who was in charge of operations. All salaries, bonds, and loans were to be paid out of receipts from the operation of the system. The project received $591,000 in government loans, a $157,000 grant, and approximately $100,000 in local bonds, leading to the oft repeated boast that the Hall of Waters was a million dollar project.

With the building partially completed in 1937, the city opened the Hall of Springs (water bar) on October 7th. In November 1937, the Mineral Water Swimming Pool was opened, and the separate men's and women's bath departments were completed by April 1938.[88] The swimming pool conformed to A.A.U. regulations and was suitable for hosting championship events, sporting a balcony that seated 500 spectators. It was open all year, with large moveable doors that opened in the summer to let in fresh air. The hydrotherapy departments featured the most up-to-date equipment, with a solarium in both the men's and women's areas. There was also a therapeutic polio pool with wheelchair ramp.[89] The bottling department was located on the west side of the north wing, and was set up for both mineral waters and carbonated beverages. The operation of the building was estimated to provide employment for sixty people once fully established.

As impressive as the operations of the Hall of Waters building were, the design and construction of the building were equally remarkable. The large T-shaped building was four stories on south and east, two on the west, three on the north, and additionally featured a one-story basement completely below grade. Stone and concrete decoration featured Mayan Indian decorative panels set within an overall Art Deco framework. The concrete column supports featured curtain walls of varying materials – ashlar limestone, cast stone of black granite aggregate resembling smooth cut limestone, and exposed reinforced concrete. Exterior trim included glazed tile, cut stone, and various metals, including the elaborate bronze main entry doors with cast aluminum Art Deco grill work above and matching light

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[86] "The Legend Lives On."
[87] "What You Should Know about Your Mineral Water System," (5 November 1936); reprinted in "Special Hall of Waters Anniversary Edition, *The Daily Standard* (1 October 1987) 6-7.
[88] "A New Era Unfolds," *Excelsior Springs Daily Standard* (1940) 9; in 80.139, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.
[89] "What You Should Know about Your Mineral Water System."

bollards. The boiler stack, located at the T intersection of the wings, was hidden within a decorative tower of ashlar limestone and glass block with a copper and cast stone cap. The rounded south wing contained the world's longest water bar, set within a two-story space open to the roof. The bar was constructed of tile with decorations continuing the Mayan Indian theme, and featured an elaborate tile fountain at one end.

As a result of the special legislation approved by the state, there were new fees for the waters, including charges for Siloam, which previously had been free. In response to complaints, a special edition of *The Daily Standard* in 1936 explained that the charges were necessary to defray the cost of handling and serving the water in "highest possible sanitary standards." Furthermore, Section 10 of City Ordinance No. 3868, passed as a requirement of the Federal Government, obligated the city to charge reasonable rates for all water and services in order to produce sufficient revenue to pay the operating expenses. There would be no free service or water to anyone, except at the discretion of the committee for those that were sick and unable to pay.[90]

The focus of the Hall of Waters development on the use of hydrotherapy was no coincidence. Hydrotherapy had become a more significant aspect of the usage of the mineral waters in treating various ailments since the turn of the century, rivaling the earlier period for consumption of the waters in importance. The Saline-Sulphur waters were particularly promoted as conducive to medical treatments when applied externally. As noted in the 1930 *Golden Jubilee*,

> It has been fully recognized that bathing is one of the most valuable curative agents employed in the modern watering place. The action of the waters is exerted on all the emunctories of the body, external and internal. Here, the tub, vapor, showers, sprays, local hot packs, electric light (dry heat) and massage each plays its part in hastening elimination, allaying local inflammation and easing pain.[91]

The impetus for the Hall of Water's construction was to provide a modern mineral water system complex for the city, allowing it to compete with cities such as Hot Springs, Arkansas, where the federal government operated most of the springs. However, another benefit was the employment the construction project provided for out-of-work men. The plan originally called for thirty hours per week of labor for skilled workers. Based on the complexity of the project, the acting director requested this be raised to forty hours per man in order to complete the building on time.[92] As of November 1, 1936, the general contractor, MacDonald Construction Co. of St. Louis, employed about 150 men; other men were employed through the various sub-contractors.

Other federally funded construction projects helped sustain Excelsior Springs' economy during the Depression. The Veterans hospital complex constructed several buildings during the 1930s, including a

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[90] "What You Should Know About Your Mineral Water System.
[91] *Golden Jubilee, America's Haven of Health*, 18.
[92] "Special Hall of Waters Anniversary Edition," 6-7

Howe platform scale, Officer's duplex quarters, a sixteen-car garage, shops, incinerator and scale house.[93] In spite of this flurry of construction, the city hoped to expand the Veterans hospital site even further. In 1939, the city arranged a visit from the Director of the National Rehabilitation Committee of the American Legion with the intent to not only increase the bed capacity of the local Veterans facility, but to promote a research project that would study the use of the mineral waters for the veterans, more specifically for arthritis. This was partly in reaction to the Army and Navy Hospital that had been constructed in Hot Springs. The city boosters believed that a similar facility in Excelsior Springs would be a perfect fit with the town's new Hall of Waters.

A committee of local citizens organized special presentations for the representative from the American Legion, and offered a report prepared by the Chamber of Commerce and Valley of Vitality Club. Their presentations recommended that a research project studying mineral water therapy at the Veterans Hospital would actually aid in the development of further research studies relating to arthritis. The Veterans Hospital was considered an ideal place as patients in other institutions didn't stay long enough for clinical trials.[94] The representative for the city claimed that their motives for supporting these clinical trials were pure. Remarks by Dr. David Musgrave during the visit noted that "Although Excelsior Springs is a fit candidate for exploitation on an unethical basis, the Excelsior Springs Chamber of Commerce . . . has seen fit to follow the advice of the Medical profession in their advertising and has kept it on a reasonably ethical basis . . . in spite of the fact that they were aware that advertising by means of exaggerated claims and false reports would be a more profitable form of advertising." The Hall of Waters manager, Harry E. Kimble, further insisted

> We hardly believe that the federal government would have come in here and spent nearly a million dollars without first making an exhaustive survey of the many benefits to be gained by the use of these mineral waters. . . The saddest part of the fifty years of Excelsior Springs history has been . . . that . . . we have never had any clinic, hospital, or research bureau to gather these facts . . . to light the great values of these waters.[95]

In spite of the massive PWA project aimed at revitalizing Excelsior Spring's historic downtown and the federal government's investment in the Veterans Hospital, a number of disasters hampered the city's efforts to pull itself out of the effects of the Depression. At the end of the 1930s, a large fire destroyed the 200 block of East Broadway, and floods continued to plague the downtown area in the 1940s and 1950s.[96] In 1941, twenty inches of flood waters in the Hall of Waters basement damaged the new structure, and water rose to the thirty-two foot mark on sides of some downtown buildings. Another flood two years later completely filled the bottling works and boiler rooms at the Hall of Waters. The

[93] *History of the VA Hospital,* 5.
[94] Valley of Vitality Club/Chamber of Commerce, "Mineral Waters System," prepared for Watson B. Miller, Washington, D.C., [1939]; in folder V1.200.100.72, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.
[95] Ibid.
[96] *America's Haven of Health*, 38.

downtown was revisited by floods in 1947, and three more times in 1951 before the city finally received federal aid to help with the damage.[97]

Frequent flooding in the seventeen years since the completion of the Hall of Waters resulted in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation finally liquidating the federal government's loans in 1953. The floods ruined equipment and shut down plant operations, necessitating the relocation of bottling works to another building on higher ground. The heating coils for the swimming pool were ruined, forcing the pool to be closed in cold weather. By 1953, only about $50,000 of original $618,000 loan was repaid. Consequently, the RFC notified the city that loans were being foreclosed, forcing the city to seek refinancing.[98]

Excelsior Springs: city development

Much of the groundwork for the town's physical layout, particularly in the form of additions and plats, had occurred in the decades prior to World War I, although a few new plats were filed in the 1920s. A zoning system, in place by 1929, helped control development, but the Depression halted most non-federally funded construction in town. With the improving wartime economy during the 1940s, however, new subdivisions were once again added to the city. After the war, thirty-five new homes were started in 1945 in the Baird-Griffey subdivision west of N. Kimball. Voters approved the annexation of Golf Hill in 1948, and another 1.5 square miles west of the city limits in 1950.[99] New schools were built to handle the increase in student population. The original 1886 Wyman School was condemned in 1929 and demolished in 1930. A new building was built west of the high school in 1940. Another new elementary building, Lewis School, opened in 1951. Isley Elementary saw a twenty percent increase in students from 1950 to 1954; as a result, in 1955 voters approved a new school at the same site, as well as additions for the high school. School integration arrived that same year, one year after the landmark *Brown vs. the Board of Education* in Topeka. Before this period, the black students in Excelsior Springs attended the segregated Lincoln School.[100]

Prior to the start of the Depression, the city relied on rail service. There were hourly interurban electric line trains providing service to St. Joseph and Kansas City in the 1920s, and the Wabash Railroad began construction of a new station in 1927; this line connected Excelsior Springs to St. Louis, Buffalo, and New York City. The Rock Island Railroad inaugurated passenger service in 1931, but the Interurban line was abandoned during the Depression.[101] Eventually, rail service declined and was discontinued altogether. Automobiles and buses were increasingly relied upon to provide access to the city, primarily utilizing paved highways 69, 24, and 10.[102] The growing number of automobile travelers to the city led

[97] Ibid., 38, 40.
[98] "Famous Spa Has Water Woes But from Unexpected Source," *Kansas City Star* (13 December 1953).
[99] *America's Haven of Health*, 40.
[100] Ibid., 45.
[101] "Making Tracks in Excelsior Springs," (Excelsior Springs, MO.: Morgan Printing Co., n.d.)
[102] Valley of Vitality Club/Chamber of Commerce, "Mineral Waters System," prepared for Watson B. Miller, Washington, D.C., [1939]; in folder V1.200.100.72, Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, Excelsior Springs, MO.

to the construction of automobile tourist camps and motels, typically located along the highways at the edges of town. Phillips Tourist Tavern opened in 1933 on Highway 69 Highway, and included a gas station, restaurant, and motel. Post-World War II growth encouraged other commercial enterprises to establish themselves on the roads leading into town, especially industrial concerns. The first manufacturing facility in Excelsior Springs not directly related to the mineral waters was the Pepsi-Cola Bottling plant, built in 1947 just south of the Hall of Waters. Other plants, however, were built on the outer edges of town with easier access to the highways. AVSCO industry opened up a shop on Isley Boulevard in 1951, and by 1957 Excelsior Springs was home to three plastics companies.[103] In 1961, the local Industrial Development Corporation bought land north of Kearney Road, hoping to entice other industries to Excelsior Springs.

For most of the mid-twentieth century, the local hotels and boarding houses in the historic center of Excelsior Springs continued to operate, although their client base resulting from visitors coming for the mineral waters was declining. After the establishment of the city-owned and operated mineral water system, only those hotels that had an agreement with the city could offer baths. By 1953, only three hotels, one clinic, and three private bath houses received water piped from the city's system.[104] One of these hotels figured in one of the nation's significant political events. During his run for re-election in 1948, President Harry Truman stayed hidden away from reporters at the Elms Hotel on election night. After one of the most amazing political upsets in U.S. history, he purportedly calmed himself with a mineral bath.[105]

The privately operated clinics, sanitariums, and hospitals expanded their services in the first few years after World War II. Their treatments continued to include baths, massages and consumption of the mineral waters. However, the growth of modern medical practices and hospitals eventually reduced the number of patients at many of these clinics, and it was necessary for several in Excelsior Springs to consolidate their services in order to remain open. In 1957, the McCleary Clinic, founded in 1901, consolidated with Thornton Minor Hospital at 911 E. Linwood. A two-story addition was approved by voters, and the consolidated McCleary-Thornton Hospital reopened for business at St. Louis and Thompson Avenue in April 1960.[106] The Ball Clinic continued to expand, however, and became the largest employer in Excelsior Springs by the 1960s, drawing its work force from residents as well as from people living outside of town. Dr. Ball retired from active management in 1953, but the clinic continued under the direction of his son until the early 1960s.[107] By this time, only the three largest clinics were still in operation, the Ball Clinic, McCleary-Thortnon Hospital, and the Excelsior Clinic. In the 1950s, the Veterans Administration reassessed their hospitals nationwide, and in 1956 decided that the hospital in Excelsior Springs was obsolete. In September 1958, the Excelsior Springs branch was consolidated with the V.A. Hospital Center in Wadsworth, Kansas and was placed under one

[103] *America's Haven of Health*, 52.
[104] "Famous Spa Has Water Woes But from Unexpected Source."
[105] *America's Haven of Health*, 40.
[106] Ibid., 49.
[107] Ibid., 48.

management. New patients had a choice of which hospital they would go to, but most were steered towards Wadsworth. The Excelsior Springs V.A. Hospital was eventually closed on July 31, 1963.[108]

By the early 1960s, a more serious blow to Excelsior Spring's economic base occurred. There was growing suspicion nationwide about the effectiveness of treatments that were offered in the types of clinics found in Excelsior Springs. The Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation was skeptical of the value of hospitals such as the Ball Clinic. Legislation passed that prohibited clinics from advertising cures. The most damaging event was an article in the August 24, 1963 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post.* Journalist Ralph Lee Smith came to the Ball Clinic posing as a patient with lower back pain, and wrote about his findings in the article "The Hucksters of Pain." Smith was diagnosed as having "fibrositis, a forerunner of arthritis" and was given a list of recommended treatments which included radio waves, colonics, and chiropractic adjustments, all discredited by the Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation.[109] The clinic could not survive the negative publicity, and closed its doors at the end of the year.[110] Although the building was sold to the Midwest Arthritis & Rheumatism Clinic, which operated until the 1970s, the heyday of the health industry was over.

The loss of town's main economic base - the mineral water industry - left the boarding houses and hotels without tenants. Various federal programs geared towards low-income housing transformed many of the former boarding houses into apartment units, but as a result, several of the buildings were either altered or were not maintained over years; they currently are in deteriorated condition or have been demolished. In 1961, the management of the Elms Hotel filed for bankruptcy, and Sheraton-Midcontinent took over. It was remodeled and sold to Gotham Hotels of New York, who kept it open until 1970 when they closed due to lack of bookings.

The city's interest in preserving properties associated with the two historic contexts developed in this multiple property documentation form is evident through a number of efforts that started in the 1980s and continue through the present. Excelsior Springs passed a historic preservation ordinance, established a preservation commission, conducted several historic resource surveys, designated several properties as local historic landmarks, and recently completed a historic preservation plan and design guidelines for the historic downtown. For those areas of town that developed in the 1960s and later, however, it will be necessary to survey and evaluate the associated properties in order to determine their eligibility. Once that occurs, it is possible that another context covering the latter portion of the twentieth century will be warranted.

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[108] Wolfenbarger, "Excelsior Springs Job Corps Center," 11.
[109] Ralph Lee Smith, "The Hucksters of Pain," *Saturday Evening Post,* Vol. 236, Issue 29 (24 August 1963) 83-87.
[110] "New Era Recalls Ball Clinic Grandeur," *Daily Standard* Vol. 87, No. 116 (11 June 1975).

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

The property types related to the historic contexts covered in *Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri* include buildings, structures, objects, sites or districts associated with the development of Excelsior Springs from 1880 through 1963. The property types were based on previous historic resource surveys conducted in the 1990s, as well as a windshield survey of present conditions. Future surveys in Excelsior Springs may add to or alter what is known about the property types that follow, or may reveal information about new property types.

Examples of these property types may be individually eligible, or may be part of a collection of historic resources within a district. Sometimes, resources within a potential district may not possess individual significance or they may exhibit a lesser degree of integrity, yet they may still contribute to a larger concentration of resources that convey significant aspects of Excelsior Springs' development.

While representatives of each separate property type may vary widely in physical appearance from another property type, all of the share at least a few common attributes, particularly in the areas of registration requirements. In the interest of preventing repetition, the common attributes are discussed first.

Registration Requirements – General

To be eligible under Criterion A, resources possessing a strong association with the historic contexts developed in this MPDF may be eligible if they retain sufficient integrity, particularly in the areas of location, setting, feeling and association are most critical. Original location is important, especially with resources that are tied to the mineral waters or related industries. Setting is also critical, yet is one that is most likely to be altered in the historic downtown area due to demolition over the years. Some degree of integrity loss in this area is acceptable, as long as the feeling and association with the commercial core is present, and the period of significance can be ascertained. While integrity of feeling and association are intangible and difficult to measure, they are generally present when other areas of integrity are high. Design is also an important aspect of integrity, as the form of the resource nearly always indicates the historic function. On the other hand, workmanship may not necessarily be critical, at least for those resources eligible under Criterion A. For those eligible under Criterion C, however, workmanship would likely reveal important aspects of construction.

To be eligible under Criterion B, the resources must have a close association individuals who made significant contributions in the development of the town, the mineral waters system, or the variety of related industries such as bath houses, health clinics or sanitariums in Excelsior Springs. Properties significant in the area of ***Ethnic heritage/black*** should be associated with African Americans that were prominent in business, education, or were otherwise leaders in the community (such as ministers.)

Although there are a variety of property types in Excelsior Springs that differ greatly in outward appearance, all eligible resources must retain integrity of key character-defining features in order to convey integrity of design. Typical key design elements include: mass, form, plan, windows, porches, doors/entries, and wall cladding. Often, the architectural style of the building is revealed in these elements, and provides clues for construction date and historical influences. For buildings to be individually eligible, the following elements of the key character-defining features should be retained.

Mass and form

- Mass and form may be negatively affected by additions to a primary façade or a significant elevation visible from the public right-of-way, or by changes to the roof shape on primary elevations, such as adding another story ("popping the top") or large front dormers.
- Other additions are acceptable if they are not on the primary elevation, such as rear additions, or additions on a side that are set back and smaller in scale than the original historic building. Additions outside the period of significance should not overwhelm the historic resource's massing. This is generally interpreted as the additions being smaller in mass and height, set back from the primary façade, or situated in such a manner as not to be noticeable from the public right-of-way.
- Additions that are historic, and that date from the period of significance, are acceptable.

Plan

- A building or structure's floor plan is important for individually eligible buildings under criterion C, or where the form follows function under Criterion A (e.g boarding houses vs. commercial buildings). The plan of the building or structure must be able to convey its historic use. Well pads, for example, that were never covered historically but are enclosed within another building would not be individually eligible.

Windows

- The façade/primary elevation should retain the original pattern of windows, both in location/placement and number.
- Windows do not have to be original, but should be the same size, configuration, and type from the building's period of significance. I.e., tall, narrow, 2/2 double-hung windows should not be replaced with smaller, fixed sash windows.
- For buildings eligible under Criterion C, significant window elements that relate to the architectural style, such as hooded lintels or brackets beneath the sills, should be retained.

Porches

- Original porches, or porches that have achieved their own historic significance over time (and date from the building's period of significance) should be retained.
- Reconstructed porches, based on the original porch or similar to those of the same period of construction and architectural style, are acceptable.

Doors & entries

- Historic doors and entries on the primary elevation should be retained in size, type, and location; no new entries are acceptable on this elevation.
- Screen and storm doors are acceptable, but the primary door should either be original, or should be similar to those of the same period of construction and architectural style.

Wall cladding

- Cladding materials also reflect the historic design intent, although these may have changed during the period of significance. Vinyl siding would not be acceptable for individual National Register designation.
- Rare property types must retain sufficient physical features to convey their historic character, However integrity, specifically relating to materials such as cladding, should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, especially in relation to African-American resources and boarding houses. Historic resource surveys have shown that a substantial portion of the most significant extant examples of these two property types have been re-sided, and provide the basis for the registration requirements. Urban renewal and other factors have led to demolition of many of these property types, leading to their scarcity – another reason for considering these on an individual basis.
- Some of these non-original siding materials have become significant in their own right, and reflect a variety of historic factors. African Americans, for example, were unable to move to other residential sections of Excelsior Springs due to unwritten Jim Crow practices, "red-lining," and housing segregation that existed in the town. Their only housing options over the decades were to improve their existing homes. Boarding houses had to update their appearances in order to continue to attract tenants, and cement asbestos siding was considered an improvement.
- Non-original material that completely obscures the underlying design, such as "Permastone" over historic narrow wood clapboard, is not acceptable.
- Integrity of original cladding materials is important when the materials are key to interpreting the design or historic significance. For example, for buildings or structures built by New Deal work relief projects, the materials usually reflect the resources of the local sponsors to provide the required match for the federal program. The choice of materials also sometimes reflects which New Deal program was involved with funding the resource, as PWA projects were allowed to spend a higher proportion of the costs on materials than were WPA projects, where the funds were spent predominantly on labor. In New Deal projects where the purchase of construction materials was intended to "prime the pump" of the economy, these materials are more critical to retain.

Under Criterion D, the assessment of integrity (and therefore, the registration requirements) will depend upon the data that is required for the information sought. Thus a property eligible under D does not need visually represent the historic period, but must sufficiently contain the information in a manner that can yield the expected information. For example, a well may be filled in under Criterion D if it can still yield information on early engineering practices.

Although not listed as a separate property type, historic resources in Excelsior Springs may be grouped together, forming a historic district. Districts may contain buildings, structures, objects, as well as associated cultural landscape features including roads, driveways, parks, trees and fences. Although some loss of individual buildings or alterations to individual resources may have occurred within a district, the district must still be able to convey the area of significance as well as the historic period of significance. It is not necessary for contributing resources within the district to possess individual significance or retain enough integrity or significance to be individually eligible. Instead, the integrity evaluation of a potential district should focus on the overall characteristics of the neighborhood, not the individual contributing buildings. This would include boundaries of the district, circulation patterns of streets and sidewalks, and setback and massing as reflected in the size of the lots and houses.

Due to deterioration caused by deferred maintenance and upkeep after the 1963 exposé on health clinics in Excelsior Springs, some historic buildings or structures may have been demolished over the years, leaving behind vacant lots. However, enough other buildings and structures must be extant so that the district continues to convey its function – whether residential, commercial or a combination of multiple uses. The presence of non-historic resources will not make a district ineligible as long as the district as a whole retains its historic sense of time and place. The amount of demolition and infill that a district can withstand before losing integrity will depend on the scale and size of infill. Finally, the resources located within a district may have been built over a number of years. It is therefore critical to clearly define a period of significance so that contributing properties reflect the historic period. This is necessary not only to better understand the associations that make them significant, but to aid in evaluating integrity. Understanding that a neighborhood is a continuum through history and analyzing the changes is crucial. Change is inherent in residential and commercial districts, most often resulting from human activities. In spite of the dynamic quality of all historic districts, in order to retain historic significance, this change should be associated with the historic trends outlined in Section E of this MPDF. The following registration requirements for districts, and for contributing buildings within districts, provide guidance for this assessment.

Districts

- A significant concentration of contributing buildings must exist in their original locations within the district's boundaries.
- Some demolition (resulting in vacant lots) and/or some non-historic infill is allowed, provided the preceding requirement is met.
- Landscape and circulation features, such as roads, alleys, drives, sidewalks, fences, etc. should retain their historic patterns, although original materials is not necessary.

Contributing buildings within districts

- Integrity of location, feeling and association is required.

- Although windows, porches, siding, and/or storefronts are still key character-defining features, a lesser degree of integrity is allowed in two of these areas, providing the remaining elements have a high degree of integrity.
- Non-historic siding is allowed if the replacement replicates the original siding pattern. The siding should not cover other significant key character-defining features.
- Porch alterations are allowed if other primary elevation features are intact.
- Windows may be replaced, provided there are no new window openings on the façade. Total or partial enclosure of commercial windows is allowed provided the fenestration openings are still discernible.
- Storefronts may be altered if the distinction between the first and second stories is clearly evident on two-story buildings.
- Additions should not cover the façade, and their mass/scale should not overwhelm the historic building.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Mineral Water Resources***

Description

Although one of the most significant property types associated with the development of Excelsior Springs as a health resort, extant examples of *Mineral Water Resources* are also the rarest. This property type includes wells, springs, sales pavilions or pagodas, spring houses, and other structures associated with the pumping and dispensing of mineral waters in Excelsior Springs. The majority were located in the valley along the Fishing River, primarily in or near the historic downtown area of Excelsior Springs. Most were privately owned when first discovered, although some were located in city parks and others were later purchased by the city. The structures that were built to dispense the mineral waters were not necessarily located immediately above their water source, however. The water may have been piped to the site from the well, or carried there in large jugs.

Pagodas, sales pavilions, and some spring houses were small, one-story structures that were open, partly enclosed, or completely enclosed with an entry door. They were either rectangular or circular in shape, with corresponding roof forms. The sale of drinking waters occurred here; consequently, there was a feature for dispensing water, benches for customers, and often a counter for the proprietor. The earliest were frame construction, while later ones were masonry or stucco. Since they were too small to be converted to housing after their original use was discontinued, the vast majority were demolished. Still extant, however, is the largest dispensary of mineral waters in Excelsior Springs -- the Hall of Waters, already individually listed on the National Register. This elaborate stone and concrete Art Deco building housed hydrotherapy treatments, such as baths and exercise pools, as well as the world's longest water bar, where ten different varieties of mineral water were dispensed.

The actual wells and springs were often marked by pagodas or spring houses, but not always. There are only two extant pavilions that were also the site of an associated well: Superior No. 1 pagoda in Fishing River Linear Park, and the stone pagoda for the Link Soda Spring and Sulpho Salt Spring on E. Excelsior Street. In other instances, the wells may have been located behind a residential property, while the small structure (pagoda, spring house) for dispensing the water was in front along the street. If water was not sold immediately above the well or spring, the well structure was utilitarian; there is often little information about its original appearance.

In 1935, after the city purchased the remaining privately owned wells and incorporated them into the city's mineral water system, an elaborate underground piping system was installed. Most above-ground well houses were demolished at this time. However, several are still marked with concrete well pads and metal manholes, which accurately depict their appearance from 1935, thus achieving significance over time. Two of the most significant city-owned wells are located at the end of N. Main Street, and retain several concrete and metal well-related structures. Although in partial ruins, the extant features of the Salt Sulphur Spring and the Sulpho Saline Spring wells at 905 Salem Road still illustrate the various functions and processes that occurred in exploitation of the mineral waters.

Significance

Extant *Mineral Water Resources* featuring built above- and below-ground historic features may be significant under Criterion A in the areas of ***Commerce, Health/Medicine,*** or ***Entertainment/Recreation*** for the associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. The mineral waters were the sole basis of Excelsior Springs' economy for nearly a century; without the waters derived from the various springs and wells, it is likely the town would never have been laid out in the Fishing River valley. Nearly all promotional marketing was geared towards the health-giving benefits of both drinking the waters and their use in hydro-therapy. Although most of the medical benefits were debunked in the early 1960s, Excelsior Springs earned its moniker as "Missouri's National Health Resort" in the first half of the twentieth century. While the primary use of the mineral waters was medical, a side industry sprang up in Excelsior Springs in order to attract more visitors. Many of the wells were incorporated into parks or other recreational venues, and swimming pools were built not only for medical purposes, but to appeal to all visitors and residents.

This property types represents natural features that were exploited for their economic values, rather than preserving them in their natural state. Their location, nonetheless, was still dependent for the most part on where they occurred naturally. In other words, the town developed around the springs, rather than the mineral water resources around the town. In general, the town's location and topography was not well suited for city development, as most of the historic downtown and several of the residential plats were located in a low-lying flood plain. Since the wells and springs were all situated close to the Fishing River, the town was built around the mineral water resources. In only a few rare instances were wells located at any distance from the center of Excelsior Springs, and for two of these, the waters were subsequently piped into town.

The variety of buildings and structures built around the mineral water locations reflected the original use as well as the hydrotherapy practices of their construction period. Sales pavilions were seen by the public, and needed to be attractive in order to draw visitors. The earliest examples were frame, often with Victorian era or Classical embellishments. Later examples were usually stone, and either reflected styles of the period, such as Art Deco, or were rustic in appearance – typical of features constructed in park settings. Wells that were only used to pump water, however, were strictly utilitarian in appearance. Again, the earliest wells were lined with stone and had metal pumps, but later well features were concrete and metal. Their form was dictated by function alone. As a result, *Mineral Water Resources* may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***architecture*** or ***engineering***. They may be good examples of a type or method of construction that reflect the engineering practices of the period, or may be typical representatives of popular architectural styles. They may feature important innovations in engineering that fostered the city's exploitation of the waters, or represent the evolution from individual privately owned wells to the interconnected city-owned system that features underground pipes leading to the Hall of Waters.

Due to the periodic damage from flooding, as well as to demolition occurring either as a result of the economic decline after 1963 or to urban renewal projects, this property type is extremely rare. Consequently, many properties may be eligible under Criterion D where surface or subsurface remains have the potential to provide information about their functions or uses through archaeological remains.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for the gathering or serving of mineral waters to the thousands of yearly visitors to Excelsior Springs during the period of significance. These rare resources have a strong, direct relationship to the development of the Excelsior Springs. Original location is especially important, as these properties mark the sites where the mineral waters were collected, thus providing the entire economic basis for the community for nearly one hundred years. Depending on the original use (i.e., a well versus a water pavilion), these resources may have few above-ground features. For a well to be eligible, a concrete pad and metal cover above-ground is sufficient, providing the well is intact (not filled in) below grade. A pavilion that served mineral waters, however, must retain its original form and materials. Partial ruins, however, are eligible as there are so few extant examples of this property type, if the structure's original size and wall materials are evident. Reconstructions of historic pavilions are not eligible, although the wells beneath the new structures may qualify for listing.

For resources to be individually eligible under Criterion C, examples of the this property type should be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction characteristics that are associated with the history of Excelsior Springs mineral waters. Eligible examples should retain their distinguishing significant architectural elements or engineering features that were present during their period of significance. Whether individually eligible or contributing to a district, all examples should retain the design elements which distinguish the property's original use as a well or water pavilion. Partial ruins are acceptable if the functions of the various features are still distinguishable – such as well, pump, or filter house.

Under Criterion D, the assessment of integrity (and therefore, the registration requirements) will depend upon the data that is required for the information sought. As with all criteria, original location is critical.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: *Hotels*

Description

Historically, hotels in Excelsior Springs were classified as either "1st Class" or "2nd Class," with the primary distinction between the two being their size. Hotels of the 1st Class were large - over two stories in height with over one hundred guest rooms. They featured their own dining facilities, mineral water sources, and other amenities. The most elaborate, the Elms Hotel, is already individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, while the Snapps (Oaks) and the Royal Hotels were listed as contributing buildings to the "Excelsior Springs Hall of Waters Commercial West Historic District." All of these hotels were masonry construction.

Hotels of the 2nd Class were smaller, but in some instances just as elaborate as their larger counterparts. These hotels were generally two-stories tall, and also featured masonry construction. The number of rooms ranged from about fifteen to forty. Several had dining facilities, and some also had their own mineral water source. Most of the major hotels, either 1st or 2nd class, had their own bath departments. The architectural styles varied from residential to commercial in appearance, with some featuring first floor shops with recessed entries and large display windows. The vast majority of these hotels are located in the historic downtown area of Excelsior Springs, in close proximity to the Hall of Waters. Many are included as contributing buildings in the two National Register historic districts.

Significance

Examples of the *Hotels* property type may be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of ***Commerce, Entertainment/Recreation,*** and ***Health/Medicine*** for the associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. Many may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***Architecture.***

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should be associated with the development of Excelsior Springs as a health resort community and have provided needed accommodations for out-of-town visitors. As Excelsior Springs boasted of having over a quarter of a million visitors per year in the first decades of the twentieth century, the necessity of having sufficient accommodations for transient housing was key to the town's economic base. The number and variety of hotels rooms were prominent in the city's advertising. Furthermore, the wide range of services available at the hotels was another key promotional feature. Thus eligible hotels would also have provided either dining, recreational, health or personal services (such as a barber or beauty shop) on the premises. To be eligible under Criterion C, it should reflect architectural styles and materials popular during its period of significance, as well as the historic uses of the building.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for the overnight accommodation of visitors to Excelsior Springs, either short or long term. The property must be directly associated with the pattern of historical development of Excelsior Springs. Those resources with a strong association to these patterns may also be eligible as contributing to a historic district under

Criterion A if they retain sufficient integrity, particularly in the areas of location, setting, feeling and association. Original location is especially important, as it was essential for hotel to be within walking distance of the significant mineral water pavilions in town, although some boasted their own mineral water source. Integrity of location lends itself to integrity of association as well, as the resource should be located at its place of construction, and within proximity to the town's mineral water amenities.

For resources to be individually eligible under Criterion C, examples of the Hotel property type should be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction characteristics that are associated with the building's original use. The distinction between public spaces and private rooms should be retained. Clearly defined public entries, a main lobby, dining hall, and other public rooms should be evident, for example, with hallways leading to the private rooms. Hotels may possess high artistic values or may be good examples of typical types or styles of popular architecture of the period. Integrity of design is thus critical. Eligible examples should retain their distinguishing significant architectural elements and features that were present during their period of significance. Whether individually eligible or contributing to a district, all examples should retain the design elements which distinguish the property's original use as a hotel.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Boarding Houses & Apartments***

Description
Boarding houses and apartments were built in Excelsior Springs to accommodate the less affluent visitor, or for those clients that needed more affordable long-term rental housing for medical treatments lasting several weeks or months. Although the city's population ranged from approximately 2,000 in 1890 to around 4,500 in 1930, there were claims that nearly a quarter of a million visitors came to town annually. Thus town boosters were frequently clamoring for more rooms. As a result, nearly forty apartment buildings and thirty boarding houses were built in Excelsior Springs, far exceeding the number for towns of similar size. Both apartments and boarding houses varied a great deal in size, with some apartments having as few as two rooms; others were nearly as large as hotels, having upwards of over one hundred rooms. Boarding houses, on the other hand, were smaller. They advertised from between five to twenty rooms, although undoubtedly there were numerous instances of single-family residences that features a single room or two for let.

Due to the varying number of rooms, examples of this property type varied greatly in size and architectural treatment. Some of the apartments were masonry and had architectural treatments similar to commercial buildings, while other apartments, and in particular boarding houses, had a definite residential appearance. Boarding houses range in stylistic treatment from Late Victorian cottages to Early Twentieth Century Movement styles. A number of boarding houses were two-story with double-decker front porches. In fact, previous historic resource surveys revealed that a two-story porch occurred *only* on boarding houses, identifying this as a key character-defining feature of this property type. Many were situated on narrow lots, with most of the architectural detailing focused on the front elevation. If constructed as boarding houses (and not as a single-family residence where a room or two was rented out), examples of this property type tended to fill the entire lot.

Significance
Examples of the *Boarding Houses & Apartment* property type may be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of ***Commerce*** for the associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. If they also offered their own mineral water, they would also be eligible in the area of ***Health/Medicine***. Many may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***Architecture***.

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should either be associated with the development of Excelsior Springs as a health resort community, have provided needed accommodations for out-of-town visitors, and possibly have provided health services in the form of an on-site mineral water spring or well. To be eligible under Criterion C, examples of this property type should reflect architectural styles and materials popular during its period of significance, as well as the historic use of the building.

Registration Requirements

To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for the overnight accommodation of visitors to Excelsior Springs, either short or long term. The property must be directly associated with the pattern of historical development of Excelsior Springs. Many of these resources with a strong association to these patterns may be eligible as contributing to a historic district under Criterion A if they retain sufficient integrity, particularly in the areas of location, setting, feeling and association. Original location is especially important. Although most of these were not as close to the commercial center of town as the hotels, they were nonetheless within walking distance of the significant mineral water pavilions in town. Integrity of location lends itself to integrity of association, as the resource should be located at its place of construction, and within proximity to the town's mineral water amenities.

The advent of federally funded low-income housing projects in the 1960s and '70s affected the integrity of several of these boarding houses as they were converted from temporary to long-term rentals. However, if the original use is evident, these buildings may be eligible as contributing resources to a potential historic district. As previously noted under the general registration requirements, wall cladding should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Previous surveys have revealed that re-siding occurred on the vast majority of boarding houses; furthermore, a large number have been demolished over the years. Due to their rarity, history of siding replacement, original siding may not necessary to be eligible under Criterion A, particularly if a prominent two-story, double-decker porch dominates the façade.

For resources to be individually eligible under Criterion C, examples of the Boarding House & Apartment property type should be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction characteristic that are associated with the building's original use. The resources may possess high artistic values or may be good examples of typical types or styles of popular architecture of the period. Integrity of design is thus critical. Eligible examples should retain their distinguishing significant architectural elements and features that were present during their period of significance. Whether individually eligible or contributing to a district, all examples should retain the design elements which distinguish the property's original use as a boarding house or apartment. In many instances, the front façade and porches are especially critical, as the latter provided not only a peaceful location to rest, but also a place of public interaction with the other guests in the building. In fact, the porch may have been the only location in the building where the guests could mingle, as these buildings typically lacked the amenities found in the larger hotels, such as a large public lobby.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Health Clinics & Bath houses***

Description
Health clinics and bath houses are related primarily by their historic use, although the few extant examples also share some similar physical characteristics. Their primary function was the use of mineral waters in hydrotherapy. Prior to the establishment of the city's mineral water system in 1935, these were privately owned and operated. Health clinics (also called sanitariums) were larger facilities that offered more services than bath houses, and often featured treatment rooms, patient rooms and several doctors and attendants on staff with accompanying offices. Some of the clinics had their own kitchen and dining areas as well. Thus health clinics were housed in large buildings, usually masonry and most two-stories or greater in height. Many were designed with an institutional appearance. This distinguishes them from the hotels and boarding houses, which reflected residential or resort styles, and bath houses, which often had the appearance of a typical commercial building. As these properties sometimes covered several lots, some clinics found it less expensive to build in residential subdivisions or just outside of the historic center of town. A few, such as the former Veterans Administration Hospital complex, had multiple buildings on several acres. With the exception of the V.A. Hospital and the Excelsior Springs Sanitarium and Hospital, all focused on the use of hydrotherapy in their medical regime.

There were also smaller bath house establishments in Excelsior Springs. Most of these were designed as typical commercial structures, which blended in with their surroundings among blocks of commercial buildings in Excelsior Springs' downtown. Although they often had several rooms and offered treatments in addition to baths (such as massage), they were generally smaller than the health clinic buildings since the "patients" were not boarded overnight. They were usually one- or two-story, masonry, flat-roofed, and generally had the typical façade arrangement of a one- or two-part commercial block building.

Significance
Extant examples of the *Health Clinics & Bath houses* property type may be eligible under Criterion A or B in the areas of ***Health & Medicine, Social History, Military, Ethnic Heritage/Black,*** or ***Commerce*** for the associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. Some may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***Architecture***.

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should be associated with the development of Excelsior Springs as a health resort community, and have provided hydrotherapy and possibly other medical treatments. Although the initial focus after the discovery of the mineral water springs was the purported medical benefits derived by drinking, the use of mineral waters in baths, or hydrotherapy, quickly followed. Hydrotherapy was already an established practice in the United States, and the economy of Excelsior Springs could not merely rely on visitors walking around with tin cups, drinking water for free. A number of bath houses quickly sprang up after the town's establishment, with their heyday from

1905 to 1925.[111] Some were located in hotels, but there were several other businesses that operated solely as bath houses. Baths were "prescribed" by doctors as part of the regime for a variety of ailments, and were as important as the mineral water prescriptions in the advertised cures. After the instigation of the city's mineral water system, however, only those establishments that were authorized by the city could offer hydrotherapy. Only a handful of businesses continued to operate strictly as bath houses, although all of the large, first class hotels still had their own in-house hydrotherapy programs. Since many of the bath houses were designed as typical commercial buildings, some still remain as they could be easily converted to other uses. The larger health clinics did not fare as well. After the 1963 expose on the Ball Clinic and the increasing skepticism from the medical profession about the effectiveness of such clinics found in Excelsior Springs, some of these clinics were closed. If adaptive uses were not found, some were demolished, such as the Ball Clinic and a large portion of the McCleary Clinic.

To be eligible under Criterion B, the health clinic or bath house should be associated with a significant person associated with the development of the bath house or health clinic industry, such Dr. Ellett or Dr. McCleary. In addition to operating their own businesses, these entrepreneurs were heavily involved with promoting Excelsior Springs as much as their own clinic, and thus were important to the development of the town.

To be eligible under Criterion C, examples of *Health Clinics and Bath house* should reflect architectural styles and materials popular during its period of significance, as well as the historic use of the building. Clinic buildings will typically exhibit features common to large, institutional medical buildings, unless they utilized buildings that were already constructed. Bath houses, however, were similar in appearance to other commercial buildings in Excelsior Springs; see the eligibility and registration requirements for commercial buildings in following pages.

Registration Requirements
To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for the hydrotherapy or other medical treatment of visitors to Excelsior Springs, either short or long term. The property must be directly associated with the pattern of historical development of Excelsior Springs. The property should be located on its original lot[s] from its period of significance, and thus retain its association with the promotion and development of Excelsior Springs as "Missouri's National Health Resort." The resource must be able to convey a sense of time and place from its period of significance, and the distinguishing architectural features that identify the building's original use must be present.

For a bath house to be eligible under Criterion A or B in the area of ***Ethnic heritage: black***, the resource must have been used, built for, or operated by African Americans in Excelsior Springs during the period of significance. Extant examples of black-owned businesses in Excelsior Springs are rare, and represent a period of segregation that extended not only to public facilities, but to all aspects of the community, including education, religious worship, and housing. The bath house may also be the best physical

[111] Steineger.

representation of some of the most prominent African-American entrepreneurs, such as Dr. Ellett or William Doxey and wife.

To be eligible under Criterion C, *Health clinics and bath houses* should represent their appearance from the period of significance. For health clinics in particular, this extends through the period of operation up through 1963. Earlier historic buildings may have been greatly altered over the years as clinics updated both their interior and exterior. In the medical field, it was critical to appear modern and up-to-date not only in the area of patient care, but in exterior appearances as well. For bath houses that closed during the 1930s, however, the period of significance would extend up to 1935; the facades of these bath houses should therefore reflect this period. See additional registration requirements under "Commercial buildings."

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Commercial Buildings***

Description
Commercial buildings were built to house commercial enterprises not only necessary to the existence of a small town, but also for those businesses that catered to out-of-town visitors. Directly associated with Excelsior Springs' unique history as a health resort town, there was a disproportionately higher number of doctors' offices, restaurants, confectionaries, and newspaper stands. For the year-round residents, there were hardware, grocery and dry goods stores as well. These buildings were either one- or two-stories in height, flat-roofed, and most were masonry. The styles and/or forms were typical of those found in Midwestern communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Most of the extant examples are comparatively simple with few architectural embellishments. Those dating from the late Victorian era often have decorative treatments at their cornices, or second story windows with ornamental lintels.

Whether one- or two-story, the distinguishing feature is the storefront. The facades are two to three bays wide, and feature an entrance (often recessed) with large display windows, a bulkhead below and transom above the display windows, a storefront lintel, and enframing features at both sides. If a second story is present, the windows are usually tall, narrow and more residential in appearance, with the masonry walls taking a greater proportion of the upper story. In other words, the first story is geared towards commerce by inviting customers into the building, while the second story is more closed down – suitable for office or residential uses. Most of these buildings were located within the historic center of Excelsior Springs which extended along Broadway and adjacent streets. As the town grew in the early twentieth century, the commercial center expanded down Thompson Avenue towards the Concourse and St. Louis Avenues.

Significance
Extant examples of the *Commercial Buildings* property type may be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of ***Commerce*** or ***Health/medicine,*** or for associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. Some may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***Architecture***.

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should be associated with the history of Excelsior Springs either as a health resort community, or with the development during its two key "town building" periods as noted Section E. To be eligible under Criterion C, it should be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction characteristic. The resource may possess high artistic values or may be a good local example of typical types or styles of popular architecture of the period. It may also be a vernacular adaptation of a commercial property type.

Registration Requirements
To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for commercial purposes, either to serve the year-round residents of Excelsior Springs, or for the visitors

who came to town for the mineral waters. The property must be directly associated with the pattern of historical development of Excelsior Springs, and should be located on its original lot[s] from its period of significance. This location either in the historic center of town or extending along nearby streets is associated with the early focus on the town's mineral waters, which were all located along or near the Fishing River. The buildings should also retain their original design and composition which distinguish the resource's original use for commerce. If two-stories, there should be a distinction between the first and second stories, particular as relates to the pattern of wall-to-window openings. The second story should be primarily masonry, with original window openings clearly evident. The first story (in most instances) should feature a typical storefront, with entry flanked by large display windows with transom areas above. Replacement windows and doors are acceptable if the pattern of windows and doors is retained.

If individually eligible under Criterion C, examples of the Commercial Building property type should have a high degree of integrity of design, particularly their architectural details and materials on primary elevations (façade). Original window openings should be retained, and windows (although not necessarily original) should reflect the original type and configuration. Cornice or roof edge decorative details, if present during the period of significance, should be present. However, changes that have occurred over time and that relate to historic contexts may be allowed. As the town evolved from a Victorian Era spa and waters town to a medical center, business owners desiring an "up-to-date" look may have modernized storefronts. If these changes related to the development history of Excelsior Springs, they may have achieved their own significance over time. For example, a masonry building may have been covered with fired or glass tiles during the 1930s, when the downtown area was influenced by the new Art Deco Hall of Waters construction. However, other non-original cladding on masonry buildings, such as aluminum siding or metal covers, are not acceptable.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Single Family Residences***

Description
A majority of the single family residences in Excelsior Springs associated with the first two historic contexts were constructed around the turn of the twentieth century, during the town's first period of significant growth. As a result, there are several examples from the Late Victorian period. Some of these are simple buildings with elements from the Victorian era, but lacking in enough "high style" features to be classified as a particular style. However, the homes of more prominent residents do exhibit more "high style" features, and include examples of the Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie style buildings. Prairie style examples are more typically seen on Foursquare forms or other large, two-story rectangular floor plans. The Depression halted most residential construction in the city for over a decade. When it resumed again after World War II, most construction occurred in the newer platted areas of town. However, there are examples of mid-twentieth century housing scattered throughout several historic neighborhoods, built as infill on vacant lots. When historic surveys are completed for post-World War II residential buildings, this property type may be expanded to include styles typical of the latter half of the twentieth century.

Examples from the late Victorian period are generally found scattered on some of the downtown streets or on the hills surrounding Excelsior Springs' commercial core. Turn of the century homes, reflecting both Victorian and American movement influences, are found in the Beacon Hill addition, Elms Park, Isley Boulevard and adjoining streets. Dwellings on larger lots can be found on the residential developments further from downtown, particularly in developments such as Golf Hill. Residences situated on side streets or hilly areas throughout town often featured very small lots.

Significance
Extant examples of the *Single Family Residences* property type may be eligible under Criterion A or B in the areas of ***Exploration/settlement, Entertainment/recreation, Health/medicine*** or ***Ethnic heritage/black,*** for the associations noted with the historic contexts in Section E. Individually eligible *single family residences* are more likely eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***Architecture***.

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should possess a significant association with the physical development of Excelsior Springs either as a health resort community, or with the development during its town-building period as noted Section E. Although not officially advertised as a boarding house, some single-family residences may have included a single room for rent, thus associating the residence with the mineral waters industry of Excelsior Springs. Under Criterion B, the property should be associated with significant town founders or boosters, or leaders in the mineral water industry, such as Anthony Wyman, Rev. Flack, Charles Morse, Henry Ettenson, or the Bell or Fish families. To be eligible under Criterion C, it should reflect architectural styles and materials popular during its period of significance, or as a vernacular adaptation of a residential property type. Examples may be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction characteristics that are associated with popular residential

architectural styles of the period. The resources may possess high artistic values or may be good examples of typical types or styles of popular architecture of the period.

Registration Requirements
To be eligible under Criterion A, examples of this property type must have been built and used for housing Excelsior Springs' year-round residents, have a significant association with the pattern of historical development of Excelsior Springs, and should be located on its original lot[s] from its period of significance. This location either near the historic center of town or in one of the later platted subdivisions reflects the town's pattern of growth and development. The buildings should also retain their original design and composition which distinguish the building's use as a residence.

In evaluating integrity for individual buildings, particularly when the economic ability of property owners may be restricted as far as upkeep and maintenance is concerned, it is important to understand the difference between integrity and existing physical conditions. While integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity, existing conditions can be defined as the current physical state of its features. For example, the integrity of an abandoned building is based on its extant form, features, and materials – i.e., it retains its original floor plan, fenestration, and roof – but the existing conditions of the actual materials and features may be deteriorated due to neglect or deferred maintenance. A deteriorated building may therefore still retain integrity even if its present condition is poor. This is especially relevant when evaluating buildings significant in the area of ***Ethnic heritage: black,*** as the Jim Crow practices that were in place restricted African Americans to a small area of the town. As their choices for "moving up or moving out" were so limited, African Americans often made changes or built additions to their residences. These alterations may have achieved "significance over time" when they are evaluated in this context, as they not only represent phases of a property's history, but the cultural limitations of African Americans. In these instances, location is one of the most important aspects of integrity to consider.

As with all residences in Excelsior Springs significant under Criterion A, changes in wall material should be considered on a case-by-case basis, if the non-original material can be placed and evaluated in a historic context. If the changes occurred during the historic period of significance, then residences with non-original siding may be eligible as contributing resources to a historic district. Any other features that are considered character-defining or that indicate the building's historic function should be reasonably intact. For example, if a residence is an example of a Craftsman bungalow, it should retain its character-defining porch, porch supports, overhanging eaves and roof brackets – any stylistic elements which help define that particular architectural style.

For individually eligible examples of the *Single-family* property type significant under Criterion C, integrity of design is critical. All resources must retain integrity of key character-defining elements in order to convey integrity of design (see "general registration requirements" for more details on these key features.)

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Community Institutions***

Description

This property type includes churches, school, civic and government buildings, community buildings, and buildings housing fraternal, social or civic groups. This is a broad category or sub-type, but in general it represents those resources that provided a space for social, cultural, recreational, political or religious functions within Excelsior Springs. They may be buildings or sites that provided either public or private meeting places for a variety of reasons. They were generally larger and more substantial than residences, such as churches or schools.

Churches were one or two stories high, and many were built of brick or masonry. While churches were obviously constructed as places of worship, they also served as important civilizing organizations for new communities. Because of the high volume of visitors to Excelsior Springs, and possibly because of the tenuous hold on health that many of these visitors had, there were a disproportionately high number of churches in relation to the town's permanent population. Therefore, a number of congregations built churches that could handle the needs of the transient population as well as local residents.

The school building subtype may also include accessory buildings such as shops, bus garages, playgrounds, as well as the main school. The primary building featured a demarcated entry leading to a vestibule on the primary façade, and fenestration arrangements which reflected the architectural trends for education buildings at the time of its construction. There were obviously classrooms, lunch rooms, offices, and usually gymnasiums that may have combined a stage and auditoriums. Most of the earliest school buildings in Excelsior Springs have been demolished, and the extant historic examples were constructed after the earlier buildings were deemed inadequate, outdated or dilapidated.

Civic and government buildings were built for local, county, state or federal levels of government to house the operations necessary for their functions. This subtype includes city halls, libraries, museums, police and fire stations, and post offices. Those built specifically for government functions were planned to present an appearance of permanence and stability, and were therefore generally masonry or concrete.

Several examples of this property type were architect-designed, due to the attention usually afforded community buildings. Post office construction was often influenced more by federal legislation and funding bills, while Carnegie libraries also faced certain grant constraints. Churches were influenced by ecclesiastical trends in architecture, while school design generally followed accepted standards for education buildings.

Significance

Community institution buildings represent the supportive environment which formed a part of Excelsior Spring's development. They were the places where residents could associate with friends, celebrate milestones, worship, receive an education, or plan for civic engagement. They were critical to the

development of community character. Due to the wide variety of historic functions within this property type, examples may be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of ***Social History, politics/government, economics, education, entertainment/recreation, ethnic heritage/black*** and ***exploration/settlement*** for the associations noted in Section E. Under Criterion C, they may also be eligible in the area of ***Architecture.***

Registration requirements

For church buildings to be eligible, they need to first satisfy National Register Criteria Consideration A which states that religious properties must derive their primary significance from architectural distinction or historic importance. A religious property must also meet either Criterion A or C, or both. To meet Criterion A, religious properties should be associated with other secular activities, or have played a role in the social, cultural or political history of the Excelsior Springs.

For examples of civic or government buildings that are eligible under Criterion C, the key character-defining features that are distinctive to a building type, architectural style, or period of construction are critical. Ornamentation that represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values should also be intact. Examples of character-defining features include the form, mass, floor plan, organization of space, fenestration patterns, style, and materials. Integrity of workmanship is also critical for examples of New Deal work relief programs. For an educational building eligible under Criterion A, some alterations do not seriously lessen integrity, including replacement windows (so long as the original number of openings and fenestrations remain), and additions to the rear if the primary facade and plan of the original building is clearly distinguishable from the addition.

NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: ***Parks, boulevards, and park-related resources***

Description

Parks are natural or scenic areas developed by the City of Excelsior Springs for the enjoyment of the public as well as for recreation purposes. Even if a majority of the acreage has a natural character, *parks* are considered designed historic landscape, since they were created for the purpose of outdoor recreation and were developed according to landscape architecture and planning principles. Within the boundaries of parks in Excelsior Springs, there are spaces with both natural and designed features to provide recreational activities as well as an appreciation of nature. Parks contain (at a minimum) grassed lawn areas, plantings, and usually parking. *Park-related resources* are shelter buildings, picnic tables, outdoor grills, recreational facilities, restrooms, trails, bridges, landscaping, golf courses and athletic fields, including baseball diamonds and tennis courts. Parks may range in size from small parcels to several acres. Features constructed by the WPA may include rustic stone elements such as barbecue or fire pits, and curbs.

Boulevards are roads, their right-of-ways, and central medians (if present) which either served historically to move automobiles between the parks, or as major entrances to Excelsior Springs or to the commercial center of town. When George Kessler was hired by the General Realty & Mineral Water Company, his expertise with incorporating parkways into a city-wide system natural led to recommendations for this amenity for Excelsior Springs. Some of these roadways were originally developed by various real estate companies, but were later encompassed into a city-wide system as envisioned by Kessler. In the 1920s and 1930s, city government or civic organizations took on the responsibility for designing, improving, or constructing these boulevards. Although developed as a "system," today most are not under the jurisdiction of the parks department (except for East Valley Drive which is contained within a park). The other boulevards in Excelsior Springs are Elms Boulevard, Regent Boulevard, Dunbar Avenue, St. Louis Avenue, Kimball Avenue, Wildwood, and Golf Hill.

The timing of the acquisition of many of Excelsior Spring's park resources coincided with the onset of the Great Depression. As a result, the city did not have the financial ability to move forward with development plans for the parks and boulevards. However, work relief programs associated with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs, primarily the WPA, allowed the city to maintain and develop the parks. Roosevelt was a staunch believer in the health benefits provided by outdoor activities and recreation. Furthermore, many of park projects were simple to construct, and therefore well suited to the majority of workers on relief. "Eighty per cent of the distressed people whom WPA must employ are unskilled, yet suited to the building of recreational and sport facilities. That is why a large part of WPA's effort now goes to building and improving parks and playgrounds, swimming pools, gymnasiums and amphitheaters."[112]

[112] U.S. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976) 126-127, 135-136.

Significance
Parks, boulevards, and park-related resources may be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of ***Entertainment/recreation, Transportation, Social History,*** or ***Community planning and development.*** Relating both to the City Beautiful as well as the Clean Living Movements, parks were seen as important amenities for any community with aspirations. Excelsior Springs was in competition with other mineral water resorts across the nation, and could not afford to be without recreational opportunities for its thousands of yearly visitors. With the growing importance of automobiles in the early twentieth century, more and more visitors to Excelsior Springs were arriving in personal automobiles. Presenting a good first impression to travelers to the city became especially important. Roadways that served as entrances to Excelsior Springs, or led to the city center, important hotels, or the newly acquired parks were considered just as important to the overall development of the city as the parks themselves.

Parks, boulevards, and park-related resources may also be eligible under Criterion C in the area of ***architecture*** or ***landscape architecture.*** Under Criterion C, the larger parks may be significant for their use of landscape architecture principles. The system as a whole may be eligible as a representation of the work of landscape architects George Kessler and later the firm of Hare & Hare, or for its role in the physical development of Excelsior Springs. Individual resources within parks may be good local examples of a type, style, or method of construction, such as native building materials used in a "rustic" manner.

Registration Requirements
Since the parks and boulevards were originally conceived as part of a "system," the preferred method for designation would be to identify the largest unit possible that has historical associations, significance and integrity. This approach is supported by the fact that comprehensive planning resulted in a coordinated development for the parks system. The resulting historic district that may result may be physically disconnected, but nonetheless shares historic associations and significance. Consideration as an entire system means that each individual element can retain slightly less integrity than if the park resources were individually listed, as it is the system as a whole that has the greatest historic significance.

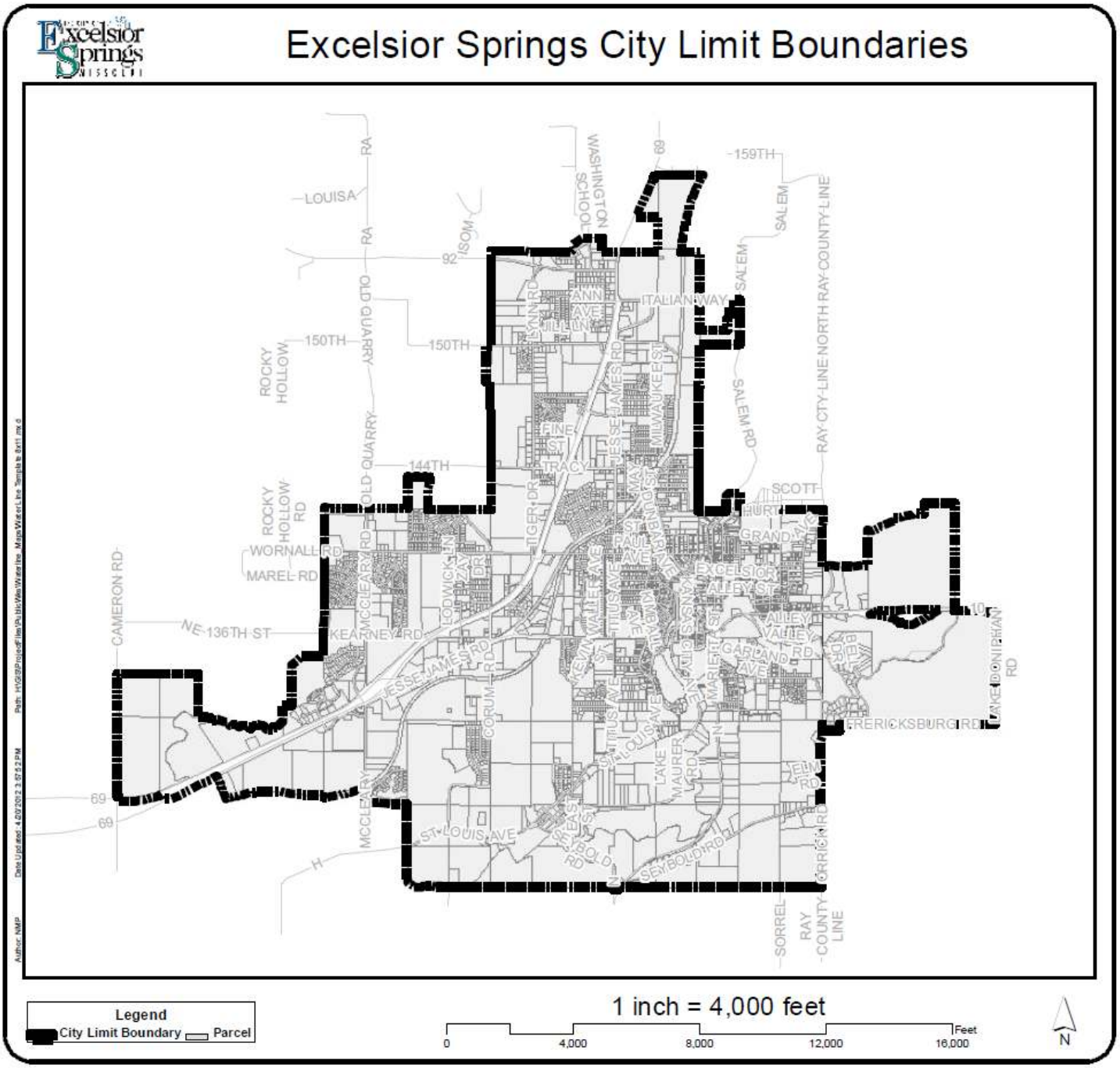
If a resource is a contributing element within a larger district, it must contribute to the significance of the entire parks system as it was developed during the period of significance. As such, it must retain its original function, and as well as integrity in setting, location, feeling, and association. Feeling and association are evident through retention of original uses, few changes in topography or grading, and retention of a majority of original acreage. Changes in boundaries are allowed for contributing resources, either by an addition or deletion to a park, provided a large majority of the original acreage remains.

If the entire park system is not feasible, individual *parks, boulevards, and park-related resources* may be considered for eligibility. An entire park or boulevard is eligible if the majority of its acreage dates to the period of significance and it retains other key character-defining features. If a larger park or boulevard is not eligible, individual resources within a park, such as buildings, structures, sites and object, may be individually eligible. For example, a bridge or outbuilding that was associated with a New Deal work relief program, such as the WPA, may be eligible. Resources individually eligible under Criterion A must retain their original use as well as design intent. Presence of non-historic features do not necessarily render a property ineligible as long as these features do not impact either the relationship of use areas (natural versus recreation), or the distinction between open ground and planted/natural vegetation areas.

Examples eligible under Criterion C should retain key character-defining features related to design, materials, and setting. For designed landscapes, the original arrangement of use areas, roads, and large planting areas should be intact. Patterns of spatial organization, circulation networks, boundaries, and vegetation related to land use patterns are also important. However, retaining specific plant materials dating from the period of significance is not realistic. Instead, large areas of native trees or naturalized vegetation versus mowed grass should remain true to the original design or period of construction. Planting areas used to beautify entrances or roadways, screen facilities, or enframe scenic views are more critical to integrity than the existence of individual “historic” plants. Parks may contain non-historic buildings or features, but their number and size should not overwhelm the original design or negatively impact historic use areas. Small city parks are the most likely to have alterations, as the construction of new facilities has a greater impact on the overall historic design and sense of feeling than it does in larger parks.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical area covered by this MPDF encompasses all of incorporated city of Excelsior Springs, located in Clay and Ray Counties, Missouri. See the accompanying map for the 2012 city boundaries.


Excelsior Springs City Limit Boundaries
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ITALIAN WAY
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SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The Multiple Property Documentation Form for *Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri* was developed to provide a broad context for evaluating the extant built resources associated with the development of Excelsior Springs, covering resources within the 2012 city limits. The project began by gathering background historical information about Excelsior Springs. This information, used to develop the historic contexts and property types, was based on a study of both primary and secondary sources. These sources include previous surveys and National Register of Historic Places nominations, Sanborn and plat maps, previous historic resource surveys, city and county histories, historic newspapers, city government records, private publications and resources, and historic photographs. These sources were found at local libraries, museums or historical societies, and local government. After preliminary background research, a windshield survey of the neighborhoods was undertaken, in conjunction with an intensive-level survey of mineral water resources. Past historic surveys provided information on several hundred properties, while local Excelsior Springs landmark nominations provided additional information on of few individual properties. Local residents, particularly Kevin Morgan, Sonya Morgan, and Betty Bissell, also provided materials and were available for interviews and site visits.

Based on the background information gathered through both archival and field research, the historic contexts developed herein represent the major temporal periods of the development of Excelsior Springs. This thematic-based approach for preparing historic contexts in the MPDF is predicated on the forces related to development activities that shaped the built environment in Excelsior Springs. To a small extent, the contexts are also geographically-based, in that the MPDF focuses on those properties located within the city limits, as well as partly chronologically-based, in that the contexts cover sequential periods of development in the city and are studied separately. Property types are based on categories of resources sharing similar original functions. As more examples of these property types are surveyed in the future, particularly for post-World War II resources, it is possible that additional information may be revealed, which in turn may warrant amendments to this document.

The MPDF was partially funded by Federal funds from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior and for the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office. Deon Wolfenbarger, historic preservation consultant for Three Gables Preservation, prepared the document. Kerry Davis assisted with research of the mineral water sites. Project coordinator for City of Excelsior Springs was Nick Pappas, Geographic Information Systems Coordinator (formerly Director of Planning & Zoning). Project coordinator for the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office was Tiffany Patterson, National Register Coordinator. All meet federal standards 36 CFR-61 for historic preservation consultants, with the areas of landscape architecture, history, planning and historic preservation represented.

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Appendix A
From "The Famous Waters of Excelsior Springs," Excelsior Springs Bottling Company
Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives
Springs, Misc. folder, V1.200.100.68

A Noted Group : : : : of Springs.

The remarkable features of the group of waters discovered at Excelsior Springs Mo. are not alone in their numbers, but the variety of them issuing from the ground in one locality. They range, as shown by their analyses, from the pure sparkling SOTERIAN (similar to the Waukesha, Eureka and Poland springs), to the *positive* SULPHO-SALINE and the "Ferro-Manganese" waters, REGENT and SILOAM.

The Rare "Ferro-Manganese" Waters.

The springs last mentioned belong to a class so rare that scarcely half a dozen have been discovered. REGENT and SILOAM are the only iron–manganese waters bottled in the United States. They were analyzed by Dr. W. P. Mason, Prof. Analyt. Chemistry, Rensselaer Institute, Troy, N. Y. He then wrote:

"I believe REGENT to be the strongest iron-manganese water in the world."

This opinion was confirmed in Chicago in 1893, when the **Highest Award,** of Medal and Diploma, was given to the bottled waters of REGENT spring by the World's Columbian Exposition.

If further evidence is desired that this water is entitled to head the list of the world's tonic waters, compare its analysis with the analyses of the most noted European springs of its class.

A Diuretic and Uric Acid Solvent. : :

In addition to its tonic properties, a clinical experience of twenty years has demonstrated that it is an unusually active Diuretic and a perfect Uric Acid Solvent. It is mildly alkaline in reaction, and therefore promptly neutralizes Acid Conditions of the Urine. The restoration of healthy action of the kidneys has been demonstrated time and again in cases of Bright's disease, when life depended on rousing them to perform their work; after all the usual diuretics had been administered with no result, the free use of REGENT, within a few hours, quickened them to almost normal action. Sluggish action of the kidneys and acid conditions of the urine can be relieved quickly, as a trial of the

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water will show. Uric Acid Calculi and Gravel-Stone are disintegrated and passed in the form of a fine sand when the water is used freely for two or three weeks. It is invaluable in the treatment of all forms of Kidney and Bladder troubles and resulting diseases, such as Bright's disease, Diabetes, Dropsy, Inflammatory and Catarrhal conditions of the Bladder; Muscular, Sciatic and Inflammatory Rheumatism and Rheumatic Gout.

The following reports, made by Dr. Mason, will be interesting to invalids:

Report on . . . . . Regent Spring.

Analysis of the REGENT "Ferro-Manganese" water of Excelsior Springs, Mo., by W. P. Mason, M.D., *Professor Analytical Chemistry, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Member of the Revision Commission of the U. S. Pharmacopœia, etc.*

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE,
DEPARTMENT OF ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY.

TROY, N. Y., April 14, 1890.

This is a "mangano-chalybeate" water of great value. The iron and manganese present exist as bicarbonate, a form most suitable for absorption, and one in which they very readily enter the blood.

The peculiarity of the water (a feature of rare occurrence) is the very large amount of manganese present.

Salts of manganese occur but seldom in mineral waters, and then usually in "traces" only.

"Chalybeate" waters are successfully employed in all those cases where general tonic effect is desired, as they restore the appetite and improve the condition of the blood by increasing the red corpuscles, thereby enlarging its capacity for carrying oxygen. All such cases as *Chlorosis* (particularly in young girls) and *Anæmia*, are benefited by "Chalybeates;" but the fact of the iron being here associated with manganese will render this water much more effective than the pure "Chalybeate." In short, whenever the use of a "Chalybeate" is indicated, the "mangano-chalybeate" will be found to give much more satisfactory results. Many persons do not easily bear the administration of iron preparations, but it is my experience that if manganese be associated with the iron, the remedy is not only well borne, but the good effect is more apparent then with the iron alone. "Regent" water resembles in no small degree the celebrated "*Schwalbach*" water, one of the most popular "Chalybeate" waters of Europe.

It will, like the "Schwalbach," be found very efficient in all depressed conditions of general system requiring tonic treatment, and for *disordered menstruation, anæmia, sterility,* and *sexual debility*, it may be properly termed "*a specific.*"

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Appendix A (cont.)

"Spa" water has been renowned since the beginning of the seventeenth century, and enjoys a deserved reputation for the cure of sterility and sexual debility, but, in my judgment, it stands inferior to the "Regent."

"Regent" water will be found of great advantage in the treatment of *Dyspepsia*, *Rheumatism*, *Erysipelas*, *Scrofula*, *Rickets* and certain forms of *Neuralgia* and *Chorea*, dependent on *anæmia*. As a "*diuretic*" it will benefit *Dropsy*. "*Albuminuria*," *associated with chronic kidney changes*, with *anæmic* symptoms will be much benefited.

Having performed a portion of the analytical work at the Springs, I had abundant opportunity of noting the excellent surroundings of the waters, and having from long experience great faith in the value of salts of iron associated with manganese for building up the worn and enfeebled system, for correcting functional disorders of the uterus and all those other ailments so common to an anæmic condition, I feel fully justified in giving this water my hearty and unqualified endorsement.

It is not contaminated with animal or vegetable impurities.

Finally, permit me to suggest that you introduce a large quantity of carbonic acid gas into this water when bottling it for the general market.

"Carbonating" will, if possible, still further increase the therapeutic value of the water, inasmuch as the carbonates will be better kept in solution and absorption will take place more readily.

W. P. MASON, M. D., *Professor Analytical Chemistry.*

Analysis of Regent Spring. ("FERRO-MANGANESE.")

	GRAINS PER U. S. GALLON.
Alumina	0.1224.
Silica	0.6998.
Potassium Sulphate	0.2834.
Potassium Chloride	0.1633.
Sodium Chloride	1 0264.
Sodium Bicarbonate	0.5452.
Iron Bicarbonate	4.1934.
Manganese Bicarbonate	0.8445.
Magnesium Bicarbonate	5.5445.
Calcium Bicarbonate	34.2406.
	47.6635.
Temperature of Spring	58.1° F.

The especial attention of physicians is called to the strength and the ideal proportions of the useful constituents and the entire absence of the useless, in the composition of the REGENT; the strength of the Bicarbonates of Iron and Manganese which increase the haemoglobin of the blood, to which the Bicarbonates of Calcium and Magnesium add their well-known efficiency to increase the diuretic, solvent and anti-acid action.

Siloam Spring. ("FERRO-MANGANESE.")

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE.
DEPARTMENT OF ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY.

TROY, N. Y., April 14, 1890.

This is a valuable "mangano-chalybeate" water, similar to the "Regent" in the nature of its contents, but not containing in solution so large a quantity of the salts of iron and manganese. It will be found serviceable for all those difficulties specified in my report on the "Regent" water. Permit me to refer you to that report, and to recommend the use of this water to that large class of patients whose worn-out systems need speedy and vigorous restoration. This water does not contain organic matter. Yours respectfully,

W. P. MASON, M. D., *Professor Analytical Chemistry.*

Analysis of Siloam Spring.

Silica	1.6777.
Potassium Sulphate	0.1929.
Calcium Sulphate	1.3028.
Calcium Bicarbonate	21.5233.
Magnesium Bicarbonate	2.4305.
Manganese Bicarbonate	0.2524.
Iron Bicarbonate	2.7688.
Sodium Chloride	0.9949.
Magnesium Chloride	0.7540.
Alumina	0.3890.
Temperature of Spring 54.5°F.	32.2863.

. . . Sulpho-Saline. . . .

Sulpho-Saline . . is an appetizing laxative water, and more; it is rich in the chloride of sodium and the sulphates of sodium and magnesium and its continued use stimulates to healthy action all of the secretory organs engaged in the processes of digestion, assimilation and excretion.

An Ideal Laxative. Used as a laxative it is taken before breakfast and the immediate effect is noticable in the increased appetite; the flow of gastric juice is stimulated, the peristalic motion of the bowels is gently quickened and without the slightest suggestion of griping or nausea, the intestinal canal is thoroughly cleared, leaving only a feeling of lightness and comfort indescribable.

Appendix A (cont.)

From "A Brief History of Their Discovery," Excelsior Springs Company

Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives

Springs, Misc. folder, V1.200.100.58

Testimonials.

ALCOHOLISM.

St. Louis, Mo.

To the best of my knowledge these are the only natural springs yet discovered for which there is authentic evidence of possessing such powers, or for which such claims are made. I feel confident that a careful quantitative analysis will indicate the presence of such constituents, and in such proportions, as will satisfactorily explain the exceptional curative value that has been demonstrated by experience in their use in the treatment of alcoholism.

(Signed) A. Merrill, M. D., Analytical Chemist.

Kansas City, Mo.

* * * Excelsior Springs water contains protocarbonate of iron in solution, a constituent of the blood and one that is absent in alcoholism. These waters supply this constituent with abundance and by its tonic effect upon the brain and nerve tissues of the body, the craving for stimulants is less pressing. (Signed) J. W. Ford, Ph. D., M. D.

BLADDER AND URINARY TROUBLES.

Excelsior Springs, Mar. 14, '90.

After a rigid and thorough treatment by four of the best physicians of St. Louis, each being given at least four months trial, covering a period of sixteen months, I came to Excelsior Springs as a last resort. I left St. Louis Feb. 15, was taken so severely sick on the train that I had to lie over two days in Kansas City, arriving at The Elms on the evening of the 17. My troubles had been diagnosed by my physicians as follows: rheumatic neuralgia of the bladder, paralysis of the prostate gland and bladder, inflammation, etc. I have for the last six months suffered the most excruciating spasms of the bladder; severe enough almost at times to cause me to faint on the street, necessitating the use of morphine and belladonna suppositories and nightly use of a French catheter, notwithstanding which, I was compelled to get up at nights from six to fifteen times. Since using the Regent (Empire) water, I consider my condition "A No. 1;" have no use for catheter or suppositories

in fact my whole system was in an impoverished condition. I commenced at once drinking water from the Regent Spring, particularly recommended for bladder and kidney troubles, and daily took hot Salt-Sulphur baths, and in a few days every ache and pain passed away. At the end of one week I found myself in excellent health and spirits.

Before visiting your admirable hotel, The Elms, I had often heard it expressed that a better hotel or better eating could not be found in the country, even in New York or Chicago. This seemed to me to be rather an overdrawn statement, but by personal experience I am as enthusiastic as others and don't believe a more hospitable, comfortable hotel exists. It is only a question of time when Excelsior Springs will have a world-wide reputation.

Yours truly

H. M. Fraser.

Minneapolis, Minn., July 17, 1890.

Enclosed find Chicago draft for $7.50 for which please send me another case of fifty bottles, quarts, of Siloam Springs water. The last case you sent me was carbonated. I do not know which is the best the still or carbonated, so you can use your own judgment. I began drinking the water a week ago Saturday and at that time I was suffering most intense pain and had to make my urine every ten or fifteen minutes. The first glass I drank gave me almost instantaneous relief and during the past week I have been able to hold my urine from three to four hours. I had visited Eureka Springs and Waukesha and drank almost every mineral water in the United States that claims to be beneficial to urinary disease without relief. I feel very much encouraged from the benefit I have received from drinking Excelsior waters and believe that in time, if the improvement continues, I shall be cured by it.

Yours, M. R. Drennen, No. 2 Collom Block.

BRIGHT'S DISEASE.

Alexandria, Dak., March 7, 1889.

The waters at Excelsior Springs, Mo., undoubtedly saved my life. For two years and a half I had an increasing ailment of the kidneys, which finally ended in an acute attack, June 9, 1888, when I was confined to my bed for a period of four weeks, and for nine days of that time I was not expected to live.

I had previously been treated by physicians of both schools of medicine, one after another. Three physician's pronounced my trouble "Bright's Disease" of the kidneys, and gave up the case. Just as soon as I was out of immediate danger, my attending physician advised me to try some mineral

spring, as medicine had done all that was possible, and nothing seemed to afford more than temporary relief. I went to Excelsior Springs as a forlorn hope, without faith in it as a remedy. I arrived at The Elms, August 25, 1888, weighing 119 pounds; was barely able to move about; had severe pains in my back, and was unable to sleep; flow of urine very scant. After the first twenty-four hours I slept well; began to relish my food, and flow of urine was more normal, and pains disappeared. During the first five days I gained six pounds in weight.

After ten day's stay I was called home by business, and, until the 9th of February last, received the water very irregularly. I returned to the springs February 9th, 1889, and since that time have gained, regularly, one-half pound per day, and believe a permanent cure will be effected. I now weigh 154 or 6 pounds more than I ever weighed in my life.

Only those who have passed through, or are suffering as I did, can understand the sense of gratitude I feel for relief from what doctors pronounced an incurable disease. My attendant physicians were Dr. Wm. E. Wardell, Canton, Ills., Dr. Geo. B. Parmelee, Mitchell, Dak., and Dr. Krane, Mitchell Dak.

(Signed) F. A. Durkee.

Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 21st, 1888.

Three of the best physicians in Kansas City said I had "Bright's Disease," and gave up my case, which had taken a dropsical turn. I was swollen until I weighed 196 pounds. I could neither retain food nor medicine on my stomach; medicines had to be administered by hypodermic injections, and for one week my only nourishment was egg punch. While in this condition I was advised by Dr. J. D. Griffith, of Kansas City, to try the waters of Regent Spring, at Excelsior Springs. The Regent water, unaided by any medicine, in a few days toned up my stomach so I could eat with a relish and digest my food, and reduced my weight 33½ pounds in thirty-one days. While this reduction of water was going on, I gained rapidly in good solid flesh. I am now in robust health and never felt better in my life. The water of Empire Spring saved my life. I will most cheerfully give particulars of my case in detail to any one interested or similarly afflicted.

(Signed) S. Shortall,

Manager of Country Order Department, Bullene, Moore & Emrey.

CONVALESCENTS.

Office Southern Trust Co.,
Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 30, 1889.

I gladly take the opportunity of commending "The Elms" and "The Springs" to any one seeking health or pleasure. My recent short visit there,

after a severe spell of sickness, resulted in a gain in weight of thirteen pounds in one week and a longing desire to return when business permitted.

(Signed) John J. Dunn, Sec'y.

CATARRH.

Kansas City, Mo., June 29, 1889.

This is to certify that about the middle of last month I had a severe attack of bronchial pneumonia which continued four weeks. When the fever abated, acute nasal catarrh and neuralgia took place. I had a cough that would not yield to the best medical treatment. Two weeks ago I went to Excelsior Springs and commenced the use of the medical waters. I treated my catarrh with the salt sulphur water and drank of the other waters freely. My cough and neuralgia are gone, my catarrh is cured, and I consider myself on the highroad to perfect health. Common justice to those who have improved and maintained the great health resort of Excelsior Springs, as well as a regard for others who might be benefitted by the waters, prompt me to make this statement. I take great pleasure in recommending the waters of Excelsior Springs to the afflicted. (Signed) Ewing Walters,

Ed. Scientific Dep't Kansas City Journal.

CYSTITIS, CHRONIC.

Platte City, Mo., April 16, 1888.

For several years I suffered from chronic cystitis and the irritation at times was so great that it would cause an attack of acute cystitis. As a result, the catheter would have to be used for a number of days. I visited Excelsior Springs several times during these attacks and invariably obtained speedy relief. I spent last summer at the Springs and believe myself permanently cured.

W. P. Childs,

Judge Probate Court, Platte Co., Mo.

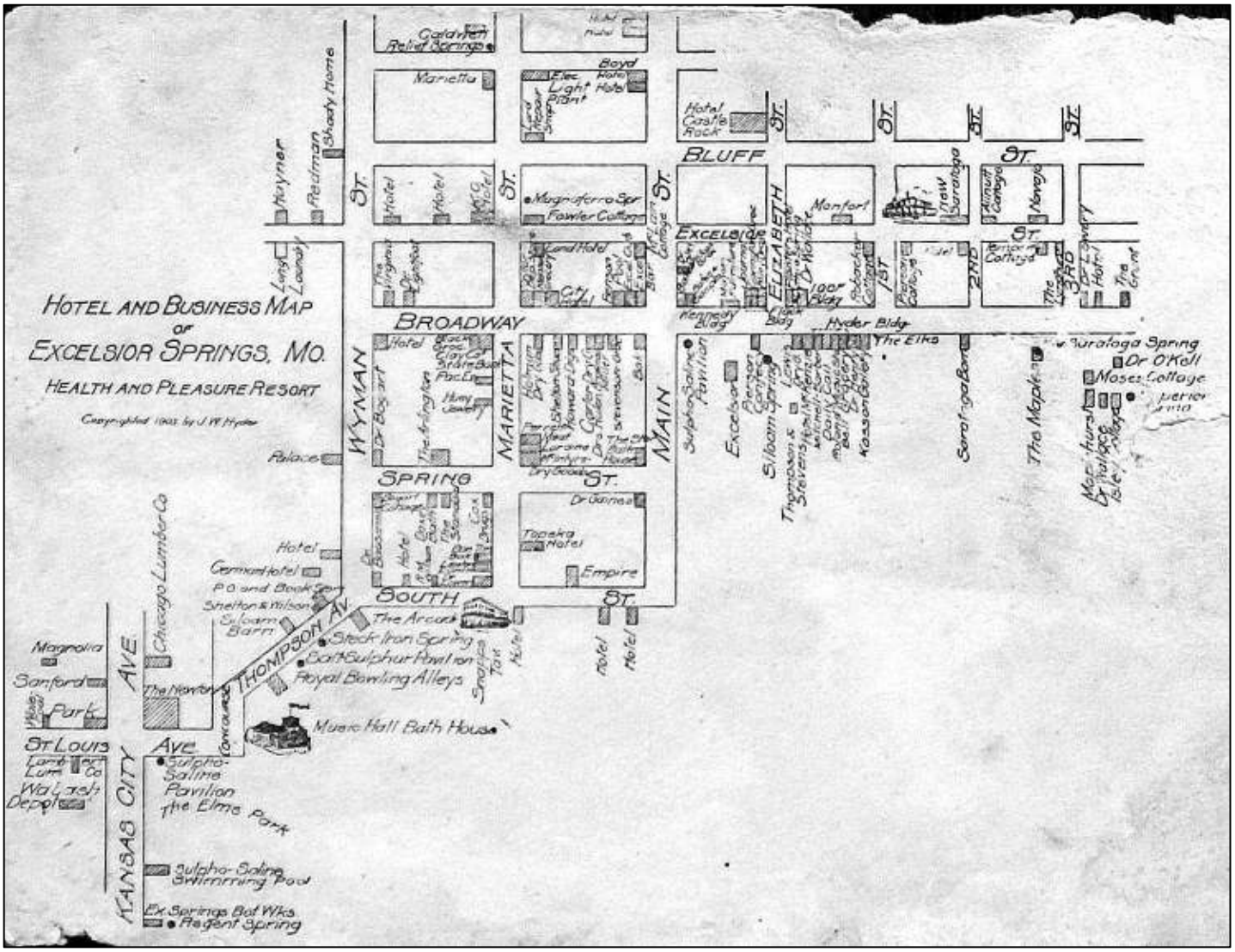
CYSTITIS, FEMALE.

Excelsior Springs, Mo., Dec. 8, 1888.

Seven years ago I was afflicted with cystitis and urethristis (inflammation of the bladder and urethra) with a chronic uterine ulceration. I suffered much pain in my head and back, I was treated by numerous physicians, and tried many domestic remedies, all to no avail. I finally consulted Dr. Richman, of Princeton, Kas., who carefully investigated my condition. He said, "Go to Excelsior Springs and it will cure you."

My suffering was so great that it became necessary to use instrumental means daily for relief. In this deplorable condition, with the ever present pain and suffering of body and mind for seven long years, I came to Excelsior Springs, Nov. 8th, 1888. I obtained, within twenty-four hours, such unac-

Appendix B
Hand-drawn map by J. W. Hyde, 1903
From Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives
Bathhouses folder, V1.200.600



Appendix C

Map by George Kessler, showing holdings (existing & proposed) of General Realty & Mineral Water Company & proposed parks in Excelsior Springs (ca. 1905-1910)

From City of Excelsior Springs, Community Planning Department

Appendix D
"Rules and Egulations Governing the Administration and Useof the Mineral Waters as Related to the Bathhouses"
From Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives
Bathhouses folder, V1.200.600

Rules and Regulations

Governing the Administration and Use

of the

Mineral Waters

as Related to the Bathhouses

THE MINERAL WATER SYSTEM
CITY OF EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MISSOURI

Appendix D (cont.)

Excelsior Springs, Mo.
March 18, 1936.

To Our Visitors and Friends:

The Mineral Water System has been formed by the City of Excelsior Springs in order that those who come here for rest, relaxation, and to partake of the health-giving waters which nature has so generously given us, might receive the maximum benefit. We are particularly anxious to see that all things are done for your comfort and pleasure.

This booklet, containing the Rules and Regulations now in force, has been printed so that there may be no misunderstandings, and in order that our guests may have full knowledge of the requirements placed upon the Bathhouses. It is for our mutual good that these requirements are closely adhered to, and we shall therefore appreciate your reporting to the General Office of the System any violations.

We shall be pleased to mail copies of this and any other information you may desire to any of your friends who you think would be interested. We trust that your stay with us will be very pleasant and beneficial.

Yours very truly,

A. C. Weion
Chairman

F. E. Donnellan
Secretary

O. E. Musgrave

The Mineral Water Committee
The City of Excelsior Springs, Mo.

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ADMINISTRATION AND USE OF THE WATERS OF THE MINERAL WATER SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MO.

The following rules and regulations for the government of all bathhouses receiving water from the Mineral Water System of the City of Excelsior Springs were approved on Jan. 20, 1936, to continue in force and effect until otherwise directed by the Mineral Water Committee of the City of Excelsior Springs, Mo.

A printed copy of the rules and regulations together with the prices of baths shall be always available at the office of each bathhouse.

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF BATHHOUSES

1. *Sale of Bath Tickets.*—The charge for baths at the different bathhouses shall be at the rates fixed by the Mineral Water Committee of the City of Excelsior Springs, and no bath ticket shall be sold for other than said rate, and then only to such persons as intend to actually use them for bathing. No bath ticket shall be sold except at the office of the bathhouse where the bath is to be given, and tickets must show the date when issued, the serial number, the number of baths for which issued, the full name of the purchaser and the amount paid thereby.

2. *Redemption of Unused Tickets.*—Bath tickets shall be redeemable according to the redemption scale fixed by the Mineral Water Committee of the City of Excelsior Springs. A copy of the redemption scale must be posted in each bathhouse. No bath ticket or part of a ticket shall be reissued after having been redeemed.

REDEMPTION SCALE

12 Bath Tickets

Unused Tickets	$14.00 Book	$17.00 Book	$18.00 Book	$21.00 Book
11	$12.65	$15.40	$17.25	$19.00
10	11.30	13.80	15.50	17.05
9	10.05	12.25	13.80	15.15
8	8.80	10.75	12.15	13.30
7	7.60	9.30	10.50	11.50
6	6.40	7.85	8.90	9.70
5	5.25	6.45	7.30	7.95
4	4.10	5.10	5.75	6.25
3	3.00	3.75	4.20	4.60
2	2.00	2.45	2.70	3.00
1	.90	1.15	1.25	1.45

6 Bath Tickets

	$7.00 Book	$9.00 Book	$10.00 Book	$11.00 Book
5	$6.15	$7.40	$8.25	$9.00
4	4.85	5.80	6.50	7.05
3	3.50	4.25	4.80	5.15
2	2.25	2.70	3.10	3.35
1	1.00	1.20	1.45	1.65

3. *Children's Tickets.*—No reduction shall be made in the regular rates in the prices of bath tickets sold to children.

4. *Complimentary Tickets.*—No bathhouse is permitted to issue complimentary bath tickets, except that the bathhouse may, on written permission

of the Superintendent of the Mineral Water System, issue complimentary bath tickets in such cases as the Mineral Water Committee decide should justify such action. Also complimentary tickets must bear a serial number and be entered on the daily reports of the bathhouses. Unless so desired they need not bear the same serials as paid bath tickets.

5. *Lost Tickets.*—When a bather loses his ticket, the System office is to be notified, giving the name of the bather, the number of the ticket, the permit number and the number of baths taken. The bathhouse is to keep a memorandum of the number of baths it gives the bather who is without the use of the lost coupon book or ticket. If the ticket should be found and brought back to the bathhouse, it should be cared for in the usual manner. No refunds shall be given to a bather whose ticket is lost, but the bather may be permitted to bathe out the remainder of the ticket even though it is not found at any time.

6. *Schedule of Rates.*—Scale of rates for baths at different bathhouses receiving water from the Mineral Water System of the City of Excelsior Springs, Mo.:

Bathhouse	Single Bath	6 Baths	12 Baths
Elms Hotel	$1.00	$11.00	$21.00
Snapp Hotel	1.75	10.00	19.00
Royal Bathhouse	1.60	9.00	17.00
Battle Creek	1.60	9.00	17.00
Carlsbad	1.60	9.00	17.00
Montezuma-Siloam	1.60	9.00	17.00
Petersen	1.60	9.00	17.00
Salt Sulphur	1.60	9.00	17.00
Star	1.35	7.50	14.00

7. *Concerning Baths to Be Given.—In General.*—Baths are to be given only when the applicant has either signed a bathing permit which entitles him only to a standard or tourist bath or when he has in his possession bathing instructions signed by a physician who is registered with the Mineral Water Registration Board.

Owners and managers of bathhouses will provide in their respective bathhouse the requisite number of head bath attendants, who, under the supervision and direction of the superintendent of the Mineral Water System, shall supervise the administration of baths, the treatment of patients, matters of hygiene and sanitation in the bathhouses, and the work of bath attendants generally.

8. *Bath Permits.*—All bath permits signed by bathers shall be numbered consecutively. Bathers purchasing single tickets on physicians' bathing directions may be considered renewals, and report must show the name of the physician. When a bather has discontinued bathing for a period of 7 days or more and resumes bathing he shall not be considered a renewal, but shall sign a new permit or present new bathing instructions. Bathers shall be considered renewals only when they purchase new tickets within 7 days after the expiration of the original tickets. Bathhouse managers or employees shall write plainly the name of the bather on the blank line of paragraph two of the regulation permit form.

9. *Tourist Baths.*—There shall be no restriction on a Tourist Bath except as are contained in subsequent paragraphs which state that Sitz Baths,

Pressure Nozzle douche, Nauheim Bath, Therapeutic Pool and any form of Electrical current shall not be given unless specifically directed by a registered physician of the System.

In addition the bather taking the Tourist Bath must sign a waiver relieving said bathhouse and the Mineral Water System of all liability in his case.

10. *Description of Tourist Bath.*
   (1) Not more than 15 minutes in vapor or electric cabinets.
   (2) Not more than 12 minutes in tub of mineral water which is to be between 95 and 102° F.
   (3) Salt and soap glow—rub all over the body with mitts.
   (4) Shower sufficient to get all salt and soap off the patient at a temperature of 95 to 102° F.
   (5) Cool and rest room for approximately 20 minutes.
   (6) A general massage for a duration of not less than 25 minutes.

11. *Sitz Baths.*—Only the plain exterior sitz bath with no irrigation or internal application may be given without physician's direction.

12. *Spinal Douches.*—Spinal douches shall not be given with high pressure nozzles unless the bather has a registered physician's bathing instruction.

13. *Vaginal Douches.*—Vaginal douches shall be given in empty tubs. The douche tip and the end of the rubber hose to which the tip is fastened must be effectively cleaned with soap and water and sterilized with 1:2000 sol. Bichloride of Mercury. When not in use the rubber douche hose shall not be permitted to fall on the floor or behind tubs, but must be placed in the douche can and must be kept in a thoroughly sanitary condition at all times. No vaginal douche may be given except when the bather has bathing instructions from a registered physician of the system.

14. *Vapor and Electric Cabinets.*—The seats of all cabinets shall be thoroughly scrubbed with a cleansing agent, or a clean paper or a cloth towel placed on the seat each time it is used.

15. *Nauheim Baths and Therapeutic Pool.*—Nauheim baths and Therapeutic pool shall not be used or recommended to a bather without specific direction from a registered physician of the System.

16. *Prohibition of the Use of Electrical Currents.*—No form of electric current shall be administered or recommended to the patient of any physician without such physician's direction.

17. *Care of Bathhouses.*—All bathhouses shall be kept in a neat, clean and sanitary condition, and all sewage and waste water properly conducted away, and all under drainage kept in perfect order. The water closets shall have sufficient and free connection with the public sewers and be kept in the best order and with the best plumbing furnishings and appliances.

18. *Cleansing of Tubs.*—Each tub is to be thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed after each bath is given. A perfunctory slight rinsing of the tub is not sufficient. Sitz baths are to be given the same careful attention. Lye or soap powder or other cleansing powder shall be used.

19. *Sheets.*—The bathhouse must furnish each bather with one freshly laundered sheet for each bath, furnishing more than one sheet for a bath is optional with the bathhouse.

20. *Blankets.*—In the use of blankets, blanket packs or any other kind of packs, the bather's body as well as the blanket or pack must be covered