



Statement of Significance

Located just outside the heart of Buffalo, NY, Central Park is an essential piece of Buffalo's history, and an excellent example of planning, design, and varied architecture. It is bounded on the east by Main Street, on the south by Amherst Street, on the west by Parkside Avenue, and on the north by Hertel Avenue. It is without question that this high-quality residential district of the city holds many historically significant houses and structures worth preserving.

Buffalo was quickly expanding during the Industrial Revolution, and a census done in 1900 recorded a population of 352,387, ranking eighth among cities within the United States. During this time, it competed against the world with its widespread commerce of wheat, flour, fish, coal, and lumber. Lewis J. Bennett, a visionary, saw this rapid growth and decided to take advantage of this ongoing expansion. He envisioned an extensive living area, Central Park, as a sophisticated and elegant residential neighborhood. He spent four years (1892-1896) planning this community down to the minute detail. He made it a point to ensure this region was not burdened with gates or walls, and argued it remain completely open and connected with the surrounding community.

Thanks to those years of planning, there are several features that make Central Park what it is today, and a prime example of what other cities strive to achieve. In Bennett's original plan, he lined two rows of elms (approximately 2100-2200) on both sides of every street, when the trees reached adulthood years later; the neighborhood was truly picturesque. Bennett also thought ahead about the ongoing sewage issues plaguing the city at that time, and ensured every sewer connection emptied to a single point. All pipe connections to a structure were made inside the curb line of the allocated property, so that the trees or sidewalks were never disturbed.

One of the more intriguing aspects of this area is the eclectic collection of properties and architecture found within the neighborhood. Scattered throughout the Park are fine examples of Tudor, Greek Revival, Georgian, Queen Anne, Federal and many other vital styles of historical architecture. If one were to venture through this area, you may first be taken aback by the wide streets, and the elaborate landscaping. The uniformity of the setbacks and property lines add to the impressive feel of the neighborhood. It establishes consistency and regularity in an area that contains an otherwise diverse collection of stylized construction.