



CLARK COUNTY MCM – HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

CLARK COUNTY: MID-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT (1950-1965)



Prepared for Clark County, Washington
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Executive Summary

Clark County enlisted Peter Meijer Architect, PC to utilize a grant funded by the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) to create a historic context statement for Clark County focusing on post-war development and architectural trends. Additionally, Peter Meijer Architect completed a Reconnaissance Level Survey of forty-three properties in Clark County constructed between 1950 and 1971. The surveyed buildings included a wide range of property types including residential, commercial, and institutional.

The intent of the historic context statement and survey is to raise public awareness about the significance of the county's mid-century heritage, particularly the mid-century modern style, and the need for preservation of buildings from this period.

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Introduction

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

This project was funded through a Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) grant received by the Clark County Community Planning Department. As proposed, the project's scope was to hire a consultant to research and write a detailed mid-20th-century historic context statement for Clark County focusing on post-war development and architectural trends, primarily in the City of Vancouver, but including prominent buildings in other parts of Clark County. The project team, in retaining the dates of Mid-Century Modern, limited this time from 1950 to 1965.

The first objective of the project is to produce a historic context statement for mid-20th century buildings in Clark County, covering commercial, institutional, and residential buildings. The historic context statement focuses on the economic, geographic, historical, and cultural elements that significantly shaped the physical development of the city's land use patterns in the mid-20th century. The historic context statement also discusses the built environment, building types, characteristics, materials, and architectural styles associated with the mid-century, post-war era. This historic context statement focuses on the Mid-Century Modern style, and also addresses other post-war architecture, with particular attention to how the boom brought to the community by the World War II ship-building led to a unique expression of post-war trends.

The second objective is to identify, photograph and conduct a cultural resource survey at the reconnaissance level for 43 of mid-century public and private buildings (commercial, institutional, and residential) in the county, which have not been included in any cultural resource inventories conducted in the county to date. Property owners can use these cultural resource surveys as the basis for learning more about their building and potentially nominating it to a historic register in the future. Information from the surveyed properties was added to DAHP's WISAARD database.

These two objectives are intended to raise public awareness about the significance of the county's mid-century heritage, particularly the mid-century modern style, and the need for preservation of buildings from this period. The historic context statement and cultural resource surveys will be posted on Clark County's website with periodic announcements to spotlight prominent buildings and architects. The county's Historic Preservation Commission will also work closely with the Clark County Historical Museum to profile mid-century buildings and architects in the county through the museum's monthly speaker series and walking tours.

DISCLAIMER

This context statement has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior administered by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and Clark County. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, DAHP, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or DAHP.

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PUBLIC OUTREACH

As part of the project, two public meetings were held before the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission on February 3, 2021 and September 1, 2021. The project team contacted several county stakeholders while compiling the list of properties in the survey. Stakeholders included representatives from the cities of Vancouver, Camas, La Center, Battle Ground, Washougal, Ridgefield, and Yacolt as well as the Clark County Historic Museum and former members of the Historic Preservation Commission. The meetings and projects were also advertised on Clark County's social media pages.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Clark County Mid-Century Modern Historic Context Statement and Reconnaissance Level Survey methods followed guidelines established in the "Washington State Standards for Cultural Resources Reporting" and the National Park Service's "Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning." Selected sites were visited, digitally photographed, and recorded; reconnaissance-level significance and physical descriptions developed; and WISAARD forms prepared for each building.

Properties selected for the survey were built-environment resources; within the boundaries of Clark County with an emphasis on Vancouver; and included resources dating from the post-World War II era. More specifically, properties were selected to address a wide range of resource types, from commercial to institutional to residential. Emphasis was placed on buildings that had not been included in the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's WISAARD (electronic historic property inventory) database.

Overview

DEMOGRAPHICS

Clark County is located in the southwest corner of Washington State. The county is bounded by the Columbia River at the west and south. The Lewis River separates Clark County from Cowlitz County to the north. The population of Clark County is most concentrated at the southern edge along the Columbia River in the cities of Vancouver, Camas, and Washougal. Other population centers within the county include Battle Ground, Ridgefield, La Center, and Yacolt.

In the lead up to World War II, the population of Clark County was relatively small, making up about 3% of Washington state's total population. By comparison, Seattle had nearly twenty-times the population of Vancouver in 1940.¹ With the influx of wartime workers into Vancouver, the estimated population surged from around 20,000 to about 95,000. The estimated Black population during World War II was 9,000.²

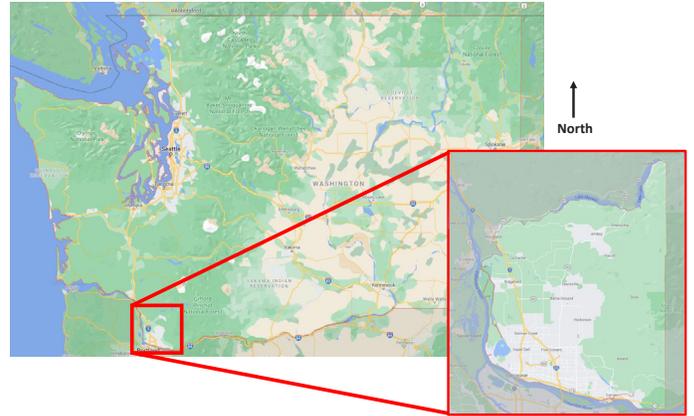
Census Data	1940	1950	1960	1970
Washington (total)	1,735,000	2,378,500	2,853,214	3,409,169
Clark County (total)	49,852	85,307	93,809	128,454
Clark Co. (white*)	---	84,251	93,046	126,965
Clark Co. (non-white*)	---	1,056	763	1,489
Vancouver (total)	18,788	41,664	32,464	42,493
Vancouver (white*)	---	40,683	31,970	41,732
Vancouver (non-white*)	---	981	496	761

* In this era, the U.S. Census Bureau divided the population into two races, White and Non-White.³

Vancouver lies along the North Bank of the Columbia River, near its confluence with Oregon's Willamette River. From its start, Vancouver was the main trading center in Clark County, drawing farmers from around the region. By 1867 the city boasted seven general merchandise stores. An abundance of trees in the area led to the development of companies that manufactured wood products, including staves and barrel kegs. Through the rest of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Vancouver steadily developed including the North Bank Railroad along the Washington side of the Columbia River and the completion of the Interstate Bridge in 1917.

During World War I, the Standifer Construction Company built two shipyards on the Columbia River, one for wooden ships and one for steel ships. The yard for wooden ships was just west of the Interstate Bridge, and the Kineo, its first ship, was launched on May 30, 1918. The yard for steel ships was about a mile to the west, just downstream from the railroad bridge.

1 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1960 Census of Population Advance Reports General Social and Economic Characteristics, Washington, February 26, 1962.
 2 Melissa Williams
 3 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1950 Census of Population Advance Reports: Population of Washington, by Counties. April 2, 1951
 4 Pat Jollota and the Historylink.org Staff, "Vancouver – Thumbnail History," <https://www.historylink.org/File/9101>
 5 National Park Service, "The Cultural Landscape of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site: U.S. Army and World War II, 1941-1947," https://www.nps.gov/articles/fovaclworldwarii.htm?utm_source=article&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=experience_more&utm_content=small



Washington State Map, Clark County; McLaughlin Heights WWII Aerial

This dramatic view looking west shows McLaughlin Heights with its 5,000 units of temporary housing. MacArthur Boulevard is at the left. Lewis Road is just over the airplane from which the picture was taken, and Mill Plain Road is at the far right. Today 1,200 private homes and apartments occupy the same area.

Both yards would build ships until 1921, when the property was sold to the City as a site for a municipal dock.⁴

World War II Era Clark County

Vancouver's and the Kaiser Shipyards' role in the war effort is well documented. The 400-acre shipyard opened in 1942, and the first ship was assembled and launched in 165 days.⁵ In terms of military and production achievements, by war's end it had launched ten Liberty ships, thirty landing crafts (LSTs), fifty escort aircraft carriers (baby flat tops), thirty-one attack transports, twelve C-4 troopships, eight C-4 cargo vessels, and two 14,000 ton drydocks. Other industries related to ship building brought additional jobs. Specifically, the Aluminum Company of American (Alcoa) plant which was founded in 1940 and was the first aluminum manufacturing plant in the western United States. The plant capitalized on hydroelectric power from recently constructed dams along the Columbia River.

The shipyards attracted people seeking work from all over the country. The population of Vancouver went from 18,788 in 1940 to 41,664 in 1950.⁶ Of all the activities in the area, Kaiser was to have perhaps the greatest effect on the community. Not only did the town's population triple with rising employment, but Kaiser's responses to workers' needs contributed to the transformation of Vancouver's housing, social services, and makeup.⁷

Due to the population boom, new services were required, and the City of Vancouver faced a major housing shortage. There were six housing projects developed around Vancouver by the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA). These projects were known as McLoughlin Heights, Burton Homes, Fourth Plain Village, Fruit Valley, Ogden Meadows, and Bagley Homes. These developments were constructed in 18 months and housed 18,000 people spread across 1,800 acres.⁸ The VHA was established in 1942 with the express purpose to provide housing to wartime workers and included additional facilities like community centers, schools, churches, and shopping centers. The largest shopping center was located in McLoughlin Heights and was designed by Pietro Belluschi.⁹

Post-War Clark County

In the decades following World War II, urban centers around the country began rapid planning and expansion. This was driven by governments at all levels: federal, state, and local, which had to contend with the post-war population surge and the need for capital investment in infrastructure and community facilities. The City of Vancouver had an advantage over other cities in the post-war housing boom having already established the VHA. The VHA had a board appointed by the Mayor and was designated as an agent of the Federal Public Housing Authority in 1942.¹⁰ Therefore when Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954 required local governments to adopt a long-range general plan to qualify for federal grants for urban renewal, housing, and other programs, VHA was able to apply for these funds.¹¹

Segregated housing during World War II led to the creation of a local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1945. That same year, the VHA conducted "A Survey of Negro Tenants." Of the 1,200 families surveyed, 57% of families said they would stay in Vancouver following the war while 24% said they would leave once employment ended.¹² By 1947, only



1950 Highway Map - Clark County

200 families remained in VHA housing. A driving factor for this was the lack of employment opportunities. The NAACP chapter and other groups, such as the Vancouver Civic Unity League, came together to address housing segregation and to ensure that Black people could find permanent housing in Vancouver after World War II ended. After a 1946 survey found 77% unemployment among Black family heads, the NAACP worked with others to address the problem. These efforts contributed to the passage of the 1949 Washington State Law Against Discrimination in Employment.¹³ In 1949, Mark A. Smith, an employee of the Vancouver Housing Authority, was named president of the Washington state chapter of the NAACP. In an article shortly before joining the NAACP, Smith said, "Democratic practices in housing are the essential needs in next steps in racial relations... the next steps in the implementation of a sound public housing program must include proper safeguards against racial bias."¹⁴

Following the War, the mobility of Clark County's inhabitants greatly shaped the development of communities, commercial districts, and more. Clark County had several arterial roadways providing automobile access to the area including the early versions of Interstate 5, the I-205 bypass, US Highway 99, and State Routes 14, 500, 501, 502, 503.

Interstate 5 (I-5) was formally established in March 1955. The Interstate bridge spanning the Columbia River to Portland was enlarged in 1958. The new bridge doubled the capacity of the highway river crossing.¹⁵ Interstate 205 (I-205), also known as the Portland-Vancouver bypass and War Veterans Memorial

6 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1960 Census of Population Advance Reports General Social and Economic Characteristics, Washington, February 26, 1962.

7 National Park Service, "Vancouver During World War II: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site," https://www.nps.gov/articles/vancouverbarrackswwii.htm?utm_source=article&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=experience_more&utm_content=large

8 Tony Bacon, "Vancouver Wartime History Story Told in Brochure, 'Tale of Six Cities,'" *The Sunday Oregonian*, November 8, 1959, pg. 30.

9 Federal Works Agency (FWA), Division of Defense Public Works (DDPW), McLoughlin Heights Shopping Center, Vancouver, WA (1941-1942), <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/10867/>

10 Vancouver Housing Authority, *50 Years of Progress*.

11 Edward J. Kaiser and David R. Godschalk, "Twentieth Century Land Use Planning: A Stalwart Family Tree," *American Planning Association, Journal of the American Planning Association*; Summer 1995, 61,3, pg. 365.

12 Jane Elder Wulff, *First Families of Vancouver's African American Community From World War Two to the Twenty-First Century*, NAACP Vancouver Branch #1139, Vancouver, WA, pg. 35

13 Melissa Williams, Vancouver African American History Project

14 "Education Seen as Weapon Against Racial Prejudice," *The Oregonian*, April 4, 1949, p. 4.

15 Paul Hauser, "Rites Open 2nd Bridge Over River," *The Oregonian*, July 2, 1958, pg. 2.

Freeway, was first conceived of in 1955.¹⁶ Planning for the Glenn L. Jackson Memorial Bridge, or I-205 bridge, began in 1964. The bridge did not open until 1982. US Highway 99 in Washington was a patchwork of roads dating to the early twentieth century.

US Highway 99, historically also known as State Route 1 through Vancouver, was decommissioned after the completion of I-5 in 1968 though the highway was already phasing out as early as 1964. While providing auto access to rural areas around the county, the highway construction had a negative impact on Vancouver's downtown because there was no exit from the highway to downtown. The combination of urban renewal, new housing developments, and changes in consumer shopping habits led to a declining downtown for the next few decades.

Types of Development

RESIDENTIAL

Following the war, VHA, with the help of a citizens advisory group and local public officials, convinced the federal government that the swath of wartime housing should be annexed by the City of Vancouver.¹⁷ Like the rest of the U.S., the demand for home ownership was exacerbated by the GI Bill and a promise to returning servicemen that they would be able to purchase a new home without any down payment. As a result, 5.1 million homes were built across the country between 1946 and 1949.¹⁸

In September 1952, VHA acquired the land from the federal government for \$417,266 payable over ten annual installments.¹⁹ In addition to the land, the VHA acquired 3,623 temporary dwellings, 11 administrative buildings, and associated maintenance buildings. Rather than taking the simplest course of action by selling off large parcels to private interests for redevelopment, the VHA took on the role of long-range planner for nearly 1,000 acres to the east of downtown Vancouver. Had the VHA immediately sold off the land, new developments would have flooded the market and due to the lack of quality materials available at the time, any new construction would have been mediocre quality. Shortly after acquisition, the VHA shared that they had no plan to change rents or evict families from the housing projects. The chairman of the VHA, D. Elwood Caples, stated, "We have acquired this project to bring about its orderly liquidation in the public interest. We do not believe it would be in the public interest to engage in wholesale evictions."

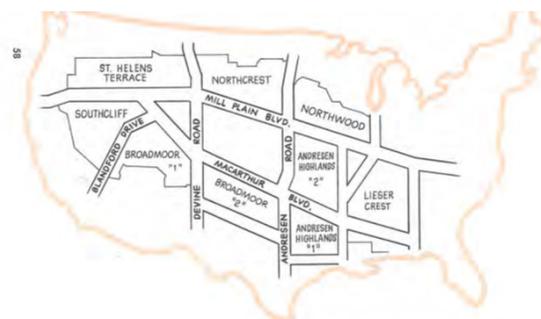


Heights District Model

As a matter of fact, such action was one of the things we wanted to avoid when we made application to acquire the project, because a few years ago the federal government was considering doing that very thing."²⁰

Such thoughtful planning led to a smooth transition from wartime to mid-century housing. By January 1955, only 6,800 residents remained in the temporary housing structures, down from the peak of 25,000 people that lived in the housing projects a decade earlier. As the homes became vacant, they were dismantled and sold. As fewer and fewer residents remained, they were shifted into compact areas leaving open land where the VHA could carry out its planning and subdivision development.²¹ These prefabricated dwellings were priced just above salvaged value and were picked up and moved to a variety of places around Clark County and beyond, such as farms for seasonal workers, vacation homes at the beach or mountains, college campuses for married couples, etc.²²

However, to prevent the "undesirable clustering" of prefab homes in Clark County, which many saw as a potential threat, an ordinance was passed to restrict the use of prefabs locally and to prohibit more than one unit per acre of land.²³



Subdivision Map with USA Outline

The map shows the principal thoroughfares in McLoughlin Heights and the subdivisions developed by the Housing Authority. New streets in the subdivisions were named after American states and cities, roughly in relation to their geographical location on a map of the United States.

16 General Location of National System of Interstate Highways. *Bureau of Public Roads*. 1955. p. 71.

17 VHA, *Housing in War and Peace* pg. 52

18 Joseph B. Mason, *History of Housing in the U.S., 1930-1980*, Houston, TX, Gulf Publishing, 1982. Pg. 49

19 Neal Jones, "Vancouver Housing Agency to Acquire Heights Tract," *The Oregonian*, September 26, 1952, pg. 1.

20 "VHA Takes Title to Heights, Says No Eviction Planned," *The Oregonian*, October 1, 1952, pg. 27.

21 Tony Bacon, "McLoughlin Heights Tract Survives Shift from War," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 30, 1955, p. 28

22 "Housing Units To Go on Sale," *The Sunday Oregonian*, August 21, 1949, p. 25; "Housing Sale Fails to Lure," *The Oregonian*, September 23, 1949, p. 24.

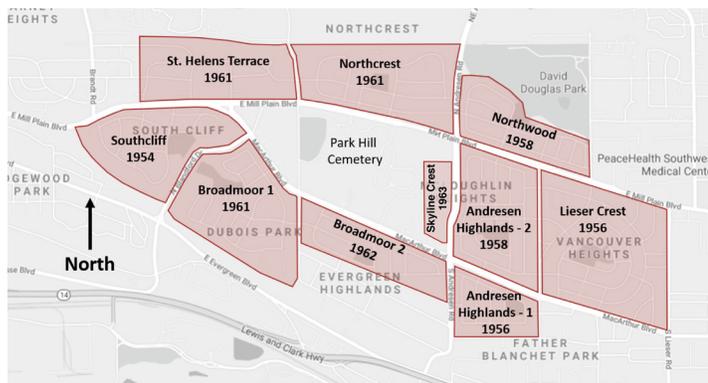
23 "House Cluster Ban Followed," *The Oregonian*, November 7, 1952, p. 50.

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

Residential lots for sale ranged from \$1,050 to \$6,300.²⁴ These lots included street development and all utilities installed by the VHA. Streets were planned to have main arterials separating the subdivisions with buffers to reduce noise. Neighborhood streets were laid out in a curvilinear pattern to reduce traffic speeds and take up less land than a traditional street grid.²⁵ Streets for the new subdivision followed a geographic formula. Specifically, north-south roads were named after cities while east-west roads were named for states. Each subdivision corresponds with a different region of the United States.²⁶

The Southcliff subdivision had the first lots available for purchase. The subdivision included 120 home sites, a tenth of which had views directly on the Columbia River. This new neighborhood was adjacent to the first parkway in the county, Mill Plain Road, which was designed to have a 20-foot buffer strip between highway and lots.²⁷ Homes in Southcliff typically cost \$75,000. In other planned developments, homes ranged from \$10,000 to \$50,000.²⁸ In addition, space was made available for multi-story apartment houses, duplexes, and court apartments. As the lots were sold off, most of the land was bought by developers who built homes on the land to sell for a profit or by private individuals willing to build within the planning and size restrictions.²⁹

Leiser Crest, another VHA subdivision, had certain building requirements for each buyer including a minimum of 800 square feet per dwelling and limited each lot to a single dwelling. The VHA also required 20-foot setbacks.³⁰ The building requirements were not the same in each subdivision. Where homes had to be a minimum of 800 square feet in Leiser Crest, while the homes in Southcliff had to be a minimum of 1,800 square feet.³¹



Subdivision Map With Year Platted



Above: Southcliff Rendering; Southcliff neighborhood residences 4501 Willamette Drive, 901 Umatilla Way, and Northwood residence 7423 Indiana Street

²⁴ Based on inflation, this would be a range of \$10,300 to \$63,200 in 2021.

²⁵ Tony Bacon, "McLoughlin Heights Tract Survives Shift from War," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 30, 1955, pg. 28

²⁶ "VHA Picks Site Name," *The Sunday Oregonian*, April 11, 1954, pg. 52.

²⁷ "VHA Picks Site Name," *The Sunday Oregonian*, April 11, 1954, pg. 52.

²⁸ Based on inflation, this would be \$98,000 on the low end and \$495,000 to \$741,000 on the high end in 2021.

²⁹ "Modernization Takes Long Strides in McLoughlin Heights During 1955," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 1, 1955, p. 6.

³⁰ "VHA Picks Site Name," *The Sunday Oregonian*, April 11, 1954, pg. 52.

³¹ Tony Bacon, "McLoughlin Heights in Process of Changing from Housing Project to Beautiful Homes," *The Sunday Oregonian*, June 3, 1956, pg. 36-37.

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

By the end of 1955, only 1,110 families remained in the temporary wartime units in McLoughlin Heights.³² In order for the VHA to continue to clear land, add infrastructure, and sell the land to future homeowners and developers, the Housing Authority had to continue to slowly relocate families out of the remaining wartime housing as development progressed. In October 1957, the VHA began planning a new development on Andreson Road between Mill Plain Road and MacArthur Boulevard. This development became known as Skyline Crest. At the time the land was occupied by sixty-one families living in temporary WWII housing. These families were notified to vacate within six months.³³ In 1958, the final family moved out of the remaining wartime housing.³⁴



Many of the boz houses on McLoughlin Heights during the second World War had nice views (above). Pictured



from about the same spot, this is how the area looks today along Oklahoma Drive.

Oklahoma Drive WWII vs 1950s

By November 1959, the VHA had sold 487 lots with an additional 425 lots ready with streets, sewers, and ornamental street lighting ready for sale. Another 738 lots were still waiting for sufficient infrastructure developments before being placed on the market.³⁵ The sale of subdivision lots occurred throughout the mid-century era. One of the final subdivisions was Broadmoor 1, today known as DuBois Park, included the sale of 101 lots ranging in cost from \$2,750 to \$7,000.³⁶

In 1961, the Vancouver Urban Conservation Board conducted a survey of housing available in the community that could be used by people displaced by urban renewal and changing city codes. The survey found that 176 households within the proposed urban renewal area would be in need of low-income housing of some kind. The board also found that there were 570 substandard structures in the city of which about half were beyond repair. As a result of the survey, the Board recommended that the VHA provide up to 150 low-income public housing units. Those eligible for these proposed units would be people on public assistance, married college students, and elderly people.³⁷ According to Vancouver's Urban Renewal Director, Floyd Ratchford, "the proposed low income housing would not be competitive with private housing [and] that additional private housing will be required to fulfill the need of the community."³⁸ Ratchford added that there was a need for at least 1,000 low income units in Vancouver, but that many persons will not take advantage of their availability if they were available and many others would be taken care of in other ways. This vague language suggests a discrepancy in housing.

Initially, the development that became Skyline Crest was originally planned to be located in the Esther Short neighborhood.³⁹ Before the City could proceed with its urban renewal plans, the Urban Renewal Department was required to provide adequate safe housing for those being displaced by the proposed project and for those displaced by government action, namely through the enforcement of new city codes, which were required by the federal government for urban renewal.⁴⁰ In the end, the site selected for the 150 low income units was located in McLoughlin Heights. The property along Andresen Road between Mill Plain Boulevard and MacArthur Boulevard was 20 acres and consisted of one-story, multi-family units.⁴¹ The \$1.5 million project was designed by Coburn



Above: Skyline Crest Location Map; Skyline Crest from Housing in VHA's (1972) *Housing in War and Peace* Publication; Skyline Crest from 2021 Survey

32 "Modernization Takes Long Strides in McLoughlin Heights During 1955," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 1, 1955, p. 6.

33 "61 VHA Tenants Ordered to Move," *The Oregonian*, October 4, 1957, p. 29.

34 Vancouver Housing Authority, *50 Years of Process*

35 Tony Bacon, "Vancouver Wartime Housing Story Told in Brochure, 'Tale of Six Cities,'" *The Sunday Oregonian*, November 8, 1959.

36 Adjusted for inflation, this range would be from \$23,500 to \$60,000 in 2021.

37 "Group Voices Home Needs," *The Sunday Oregonian*, May 21, 1961, pg. 34.

38 "Vancouver Council Ok's Resolution for 150 Low Income Housing Units," *The Oregonian*, May 25, 1961, p. 57.

39 "Vancouver Housing Authority Seeks Federal Aid," *The Sunday Oregonian*, June 11, 1961, p. 36.

40 "Vancouver Housing Authority Seeks Federal Aid," *The Sunday Oregonian*, June 11, 1961, p. 36.

41 "UR Housing Site Picked," *The Oregonian*, October 5, 1961, p. 25.

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

Ackley and consisted of 36 duplexes, 23 fourplexes and contained 48 one-bedroom units, 34 two-bedroom units, 54 three-bedroom units, and 14 four-bedroom units. Fifty of the units were reserved for elderly inhabitants.⁴² According to VHA, the Skyline Crest development was “contrary to the stereotypical images of public housing, [it] was a beautifully conceived community of broad, curved, tree-lined streets, professional landscaping, sidewalks, recreation areas with duplex and fourplex units designed to resemble single family dwellings. Centrally located to schools, churches, and shopping centers, it was as desirable a place to live as any community in Clark County.”⁴³

Vancouver, unlike Portland or Seattle, did not have a formal policy of red lining. However, that does not mean the housing market was devoid of discrimination. There were known instances of racist attitudes that suggest a greater trend of biased housing practices. For example, in 1957 a White woman protested her neighbor’s plan to rent one side of her duplex to a Black family . In 1958, a two-part series was published in the Oregon Journal recounting the efforts of a White woman to force out a newly arrived Black family by circulating a petition around the neighborhood.⁴⁴



Above: 3305 Main Street; 6300 NE Hwy 99



Above: 9333 NE Hwy 99, 6615 NE Hwy 99

COMMERCIAL

During the war years, rationing and changes in production priorities impacted commercial development and consumer culture. The construction of commercial architecture during

⁴² Public Housing Project Slated for Completion,” *The Oregonian*, September 6, 1962, p. 40.

⁴³ VHA, *50 Years of Progress*

⁴⁴ Melissa Williams; *First Families of Vancouver's African American Community*

the post-war period follows much of the same patterns as residential development. Both enticed continued development of certain areas by advertising proximity to desired services and retail outlets as well as suppling those residents who had already moved in. Commercial development during the post-war period took place in neighborhoods where cheap land was available for new construction and space to accommodate the preferred mode of post-war transportation: *the automobile*.

U.S. Highway 99 became the primary route along the west coast linking the major cities of Washington, Oregon, and California. Like its cross-country cousin Route 66 which found fame in popular music, movies and television, U.S. Highway 99 developed a roadside commercial culture of ten-room motels, drive-in carhop restaurants, a skating rink, bowling alley, mini-golf, new/used car lot sales, and full service gas stations.

Examples of roadside buildings from this era include 6615 NE Hwy 99 and 9333 NE Hwy 99 (pictured to the left). In the mid-1950’s, when President Dwight D. Eisenhower authorized the Interstate system, U.S. Highway 99, with its colorful array of local attractions and commerce, did not meet the new federal guidelines for an interstate. Between 1964 and 1972, the remaining road segments were either decommissioned as a U.S. Highway or converted into a state highway of the same number in all three states. Today, one of the largest continuous segments of Highway 99 in Clark County stretches approximately 4 miles from the Main Street and Interstate-5



Above: Drive-in at 6203 NE Hwy 99; Supermarket at 2109 St Johns Blvd

interchange in Hazel Dell north to the junction between Interstate-5 and -205 in Salmon Creek.⁴⁵

As a result of post-war prosperity, a shift was occurring in the public's expectations about how and where they shopped. People running multiple errands wanted parking spaces in front of their first stop and all other destinations within easy walking distance. Automobile production resumed after being put on hiatus in 1942. As noted in an August 1950 *Architectural Forum*, "When widespread automobile ownership liberated the customer from the fixed path of the mass transit lines... the shopper could be pulled almost anywhere... by what the downtown district so signally lacked – a place to park the car."⁴⁶ As highways and major thoroughfares were established, they became the ideal location for businesses serving the newly expanded residential communities. Businesses such as supermarkets, auto dealers, and a wide range of other retailers including hardware stores, dry cleaners, florist shops, restaurants, etc. all became intermixed with previously standing filling stations and motor courts. Unlike previous commercial developments located along Main Streets, these new buildings were sited to allow for ample and convenient parking such as Totem Shopping Center, Tower Mall, and the Garrison Park Shopping Center.

This shift almost instantaneously transformed stretches of highway that once served only as a means of getting from point A to point B into a bustling shopping corridor.

Aside from siting to allow for convenient parking, roadside commercial buildings offered consumers a visual experience wholly different from what could be found in a city center. The new commercial development balanced modern sensibilities while expressing the function of the space and trying to lure in customers passing by. One method to attract customers include exaggerated rooflines. Styles such as a butterfly roof, airplane roof, folded roof, and hyperbolic paraboloid roof dominated roadside architecture. This approach to commercial buildings was not limited to retail stores but permeated through all consumer pursuits including dining and grocery stores.

45 Clark County Washington, "Hwy 99 and Points East: Planning a New Direction: Hwy 99 Sub-Area Plan," Clark County, Washington, December 16, 2008

46 "Suburban Retail Districts," *Architectural Forum* 93 (August 1950): p 106

47 "Where the Drive-Ins Are," *Drive-In Restaurant* 28 (April 1964) p. 16

48 Dipman, Mueller, and Head, *Self-Service Food Stores*, p. 210

49 "Super Markets of the Sixties," (study conducted by the Raymond Loewry Corp.), Supermarket Institute, 1960, p. 21.

50 Tony Bacon, "McLoughlin Heights Tract Survives Shift from War," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 30, 1955, p. 28

51 Tony Bacon, "McLoughlin Heights Tract Survives Shift from War," *The Sunday Oregonian*, January 30, 1955, p. 28

Drive-in dining first appeared in the United States in the 1920s and it continued to evolve until its heyday in the 1960s when more than 35,000 eateries in the U.S. identified themselves as drive-ins.⁴⁷ The basic design of a drive-in was based on economizing how to accommodate as many cars as possible while also having a large enough kitchen to serve those in each vehicle. It became common in areas with more varied climates to have a covered parking area for cars with cantilevered or other stylized roof to protect the car and occupants from the elements. One such drive-in was located at 6203 NW Hwy 99 and was originally an A&W. Other examples include Dairy Queen, Spic N/ Span, Steakburger, and the Igloo restaurant.

Supermarkets came into being in the first quarter of the twentieth century. The design of these stores, both inside and out, were a work in progress until the 1950s when the design of supermarkets started to be standardized. During the 1940s and 50s, a visual front, a long horizontal window extending across the entire façade, became popular.⁴⁸ By the 1960s competition among supermarkets grew and in order to remain appealing to consumers, many stores constructed more flamboyant exteriors. From a report entitled, *Super Markets of the Sixties*, with an increase in discretionary income, more and more consumers viewed grocery shopping as a form of recreation rather than a utilitarian need.⁴⁹ The IGA grocery store located at 2109 Saint Johns Boulevard was completed in 1965 and exhibits the contemporary mid-century style.

INSTITUTIONAL

The early stages of planning for the reimagined McLoughlin Heights included plans for four public schools, a parochial school, and a high school. Additionally, a planned playground area for each school and other recreation areas including walkways, wooded areas, and parks sufficient to serve each of the nine smaller communities within the Heights. Early plans also called for two fire stations, two major shopping areas, two minor shopping areas, and an area for public uses such as library, post office or other public building.⁵⁰

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

While planning the Heights, church sites were selected on corners of intersections in order to prevent the inappropriate development of gas stations.⁵¹ By the late 1940s, most new church construction was taking place outside of the traditional urban core. This was due to both the lack of suitable land and the increasing concentration of worshippers living in the suburbs. Choosing the site was a significant first step in not just taking care of the congregation, but in evangelizing the neighbors. "The site will greatly determine the effectiveness of the only confrontation the church will have with some of the passers-by," noted Lutheran Reverend Oswald T. McRee, a

TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

reverend involved in mid-century church construction in the Midwest, so “in the selection of the site consideration will be given to the nature and habits of the community.” Grounds as well as building were important, because they could send a message of open friendliness, making it clear that the church was not designed for “a private group in seclusion” but open to the community.⁵²

In the 1950s, houses of worship were increasingly being designed by architects and taking on a more modern look. One reason for the shift to a modern aesthetic was that congregants were well versed in the mechanisms of postwar consumerism; members spoke frankly about the importance of the building as an advertisement in a world in which potential consumers had many options for how to spend their time and money.⁵³ In 1966, New York architect Edward Larrabee Barnes told his audience at the San Francisco meeting of the National Conference on Religious Architecture that the A-frame was partly to blame for the blasé suburban church, one of the chief culprits in “vacuous banal sprawl.”⁵⁴

The A-frame balanced the tensions suburbanites navigated—religious, economic, and cultural. It met the “looks like a church” criterion while signaling a contemporary spirit. The gable end of these buildings almost always fronted the street, a dominant facade that became a familiar sight along the main thoroughfares of suburban neighborhoods. One such A-frame church is Grace Lutheran Church located at 9900 SE Mill Plain Road in Vancouver.



Above: East Vancouver Methodist Rendering; Current photo of East Vancouver Methodist



Above: Grace Lutheran Church at 9900 SE Mill Plain Rd, Vancouver; Interiors of First Church of Christ Scientist at 204 E 4th Plain Blvd, Vancouver

EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS

The design approach to schools greatly changed following World War II. The reason for this was two-fold; the first was to accommodate new practices for teaching and learning, and the second was to offer enough classrooms for the rising population caused by the postwar baby boom. The resulting rise in school enrollments put incredible pressure on school districts. In 1949, first grade enrollment reached a new peak of 4 million as baby boomers arrived in the classroom. At this time school districts nationwide rushed to construct additions and new schools to account for the fast-rising population. Between 1949 and 1971, the total enrollment in elementary and secondary schools leapt from 25.1 million to

52 Gretchen Buggeln, *the Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar American*, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, p. 74

53 Gretchen Buggeln, *the Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar American*, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, p. 73.

54 Gretchen Buggeln, *the Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar American*, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, p. 85

46 million.⁵⁵ According to mid-century educators, successful school planning required balancing three primary concerns: environment, education, and economy. The district needed to provide the best possible environment for students and teachers to facilitate learning while working within the limitations of the budget.⁵⁶ New schools had to meet both physical needs – sanitary, safe, quiet, well-lit – and emotional needs – pleasant, secure, inspiring, friendly, restful. In the Northwest, most schools reflected regional style by incorporating an interior courtyard.⁵⁷ Fortunately for school district budgets, many communities wanted modern design schools rather than the neo-classical or art deco designs from previous decades, and these modern designs were less expensive to build. Mid-century schools and houses utilized new technologies, materials, and mass production methods to meet the demand for affordable and fast construction.⁵⁸

During this era many schools in the Vancouver and Evergreen School Districts were clad in brick.⁵⁹ Mid-century schools featured larger sites and a greater emphasis on landscaping and outdoor recreation. This resulted in more sprawling school designs. Instead of compactly containing all school facilities within a single rectangular block, facilities were clustered by function, such as separating quiet classrooms from noisy cafeterias. Plans were often irregular.

Architectural Trends

STYLE OVERVIEW

Architects, developers, and builders capitalized on the demand for larger homes and began constructing architect-designed tract housing and custom-built Ranch Modern and Contemporary style homes, both of which featured open floorplans, more square footage, and sprawling parcels in newly developed suburban neighborhoods. These homes reflected architectural details of Mid-Century Modernism, including flat or shallow-pitched gable roofs, wide overhanging eaves, and a variety of materials incorporated into the design. Many featured post-and-beam construction; structural systems with large timber posts and beams that were typically widely spaced and filled in with glass or non-structural wall panels. This type of construction required a high level of precision since the structural components were typically left exposed.



Above: Northwest Regional Style at 2403 E Evergreen Blvd and 1100 SE 99th, Vancouver; Contemporary Style at 3414 NE 97th; 6600 Buena Vista Drive, Vancouver

55 Amy F. Ogata, "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 67, No. 4 (December 2008), p. 562.

56 William W. Caudill, *Toward Better School Design*, New York: F. W. Dodge Corporation, 1954

57 Entrix, Inc., Portland Public Schools Historic Building Assessment, October 2009, p. 3-18

58 Otaga, "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools." p. 563.

59 Entrix, Inc., Portland Public Schools Historic Building Assessment, October 2009, p. 3-18

Northwest Regional Style

Architecture in the Pacific Northwest Style emerges from the International Style that is specific to the climate, materials, and associations of the region.⁶⁰ Many early examples of the Northwest Regional Style are residential, but this style was expressed in a variety of commercial and religious buildings later in the period. Examples include 2403 E Evergreen Blvd. and 1100 SE 99th in Vancouver, shown on the previous page. Several sources describe the peak of this style as being in the 1950s and dwindling over time. The Northwest Regional Style is characterized using wood in both exteriors and interiors. Wooden exteriors often incorporate cedar and fir, which are stained earth tones or left unfinished and unpainted. Northwest Regional Style buildings have wide overhanging and low-pitched roofs and buildings are clearly associated with the climate and terrain of the Pacific Northwest.

Buildings are oriented towards existing topography and views and landscapes use existing foliage and trees. Buildings are designed with an emphasis on simplicity and have open plans.⁶¹

Contemporary

The Contemporary style was used for residential and commercial buildings in the post-war era. This style buildings were characterized by minimal architectural detail and integration of the building into the surrounding landscape. Contemporary houses may have flat or low-pitched gabled roofs. Exposed structural members, such as beams or posts, support wide roof overhangs. Expanses of windows to integrate interior and exterior spaces along with basement-level garages or carports.

Many of these one-story dwellings employ a variety of exterior surfacing materials, such as in the style of wood, brick, and stone, which are often used in conjunction with each other. Contrasting wall textures and materials are often joined by windows of unusual shape and placement. As with most modern styles, no traditional detailing is used to frame windows or otherwise embellish the exterior.⁶²

New Formalism

New Formalism emerged in the 1960s as a rejection to the rigid form of Modernism. The style was used primarily for high-profile cultural, institutional and civic buildings. New Formalist buildings embraced many Classical precedents such as building proportion and scale, classical columns, highly stylized entablatures, and colonnades. However, they also



Above: New Formalism style at 3305 Main St; Ranch style homes at 901 Umatilla Way and 6317 Highland Drive in Vancouver

used the newly discovered plastic-like qualities of concrete to create new forms such as umbrella shells, waffle slabs and folded plates.

FORM OVERVIEW

Building form describes the shape or configuration of a building. Building style, as previously discussed, are the characteristics and features of the building and are often representative of the era during which the building was constructed.

⁶⁰ Thomas Vaughan, Editor. *Space, Style, and Structure: Building in Northwest America Volume II* (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, 1974)

⁶¹ Clark, Rosalind. *Oregon Style: Architecture from 1940 to 1950s*. Portland, OR: Profession Book Center, 1983. 209-12; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 469.

⁶² *Field Guide to American Houses*

Ranch

Large subdivisions of Ranch Style homes are artifacts of the huge population explosion and housing boom after World War II. With the rise of the car culture, it became possible to live further away from the centers of commerce and drive to work, schools, and stores. The classic Ranch house has one level that hugs the ground. Its roof has a low pitch and appears in both gabled and hipped forms. Wide roof overhangs occasionally act as porches and are supported by decorative iron or wood posts.

Ranch homes reflected Modernistic influences. The Ranch form is adaptable to be big or small and could be designed in a multitude of styles. Garages were often prominently integrated into the front or side of the house or sometimes connected to the house via a breezeway, further accentuating the sprawl of the house. Homes built in this form emphasize the backyard and patio rather than the front yard and front porch, a sign of the growing importance of family privacy and private leisure activities rather than public street life.

Split Level

The Split-level Form is essentially a modification of ranch houses but moves into multiple horizontal planes. Split Level homes are defined by a floor/circulation plan which is divided into three parts. The living and kitchen areas are typically on the entry level of the home. A set of divided stairs then lead to bedrooms on the second floor, and a family room and garage at a lower level. The resulting house has more square footage than the one-story Ranch, a response to increasing wealth, the growth of families, and a sloped lot.

A-Frame

The A-Frame design was used for a variety of building types, residential, commercial and ecclesiastical buildings. It is defined by a large gable roof that typically reaches to the foundation level. It omits exterior walls in favor of a continuous gable roof that reaches to the foundation. The roof is generally steep and supported by a rigid framework in the shape of an "A." It was mass-marketed as a solution for vacation homes. It is probably more popular in the Pacific Northwest as a permanent home, than in other areas of the United States.⁶³ The primary building material is wood. The interiors of A-frames are often designed as an open plan with a loft. As previously noted, the A-frame form was also found in mid-century church design.



Above: Split Level form at 3414 NE Royal Oaks Dr., Vancouver ; A-Frame form at 5700 SE Riverdale Way, Vancouver; Sawtooth Roof/Folded Plate form at 507 E Main St., Battle Ground; Hyperbolic Paraboloid form at 1220 NE 68th St., Vancouver

63 Jeffrey W. Howe. *American House: Domestic Architecture in the USA* (London: PRC Publishing Ltd., 2002), 382.

Sawtooth Roof/Folded Plate

The sawtooth roof is primarily associated with commercial development, although at least one residence was identified with a sawtooth feature. In this survey of Clark County, many homes and commercial buildings exhibited this roof form. Examples include 507 E Main Street in Battle Ground and 4616 Dubios Drive and 8919 NW Lakecrest in Vancouver. The sawtooth roof is a common building form related to several architectural styles, primarily the Googie Style. The book *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* refers to this building form as a “folded plate,” and the author points out that the form is not only used in roofs, but was also used as a design motif applied elsewhere, for instance as a decorative element above windows.⁶⁴ These features are commonly built of wood or concrete.

Hyperbolic Paraboloid

This is an uncommon form but a prime example exists within Clark County. The form of the First Congregational United Church of Christ is a hyperbolic paraboloid, an example of an experimental form developed at mid-century that is both expressive in form and economical. This asymmetrical hyperbolic paraboloid is in the shape of a saddle, which is defined as follows: “[O]ne which follows a convex curve about one axis and a concave curve about the other. The hyperbolic paraboloid form has been used for roofs at various times since it is easily constructed from straight sections of lumber, steel, or other conventional materials. The term is used because the form resembles the shape of a saddle.”⁶⁵

ARCHITECT OVERVIEW

The following is a partial list of architects who practiced (and/or had projects) in the Vancouver area during the mid-century era. Such architects had a wide educational background and commonly created their own firms after working for established architects in the community. Due to its location near the border of Oregon, architects from Portland and beyond, also had a hand in designing many buildings in the area during the post war period of rapid growth.

Corburn Ackley

Ackley began his career in 1963. His projects in Vancouver include the west wing addition at Hudson’s Bay High School. The addition was a 26,000 square foot wing including 16 classrooms, 3 large lecture rooms, new chemistry, physics, and biology labs. Ackley also designed the Dr. and Mrs. Franklin Butler Residence looking over Lake Vancouver and several

improvement projects for the United States Postal Service in Longview and Vancouver.

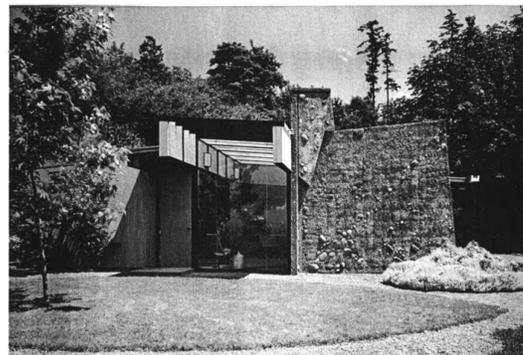
Luther McCoy

McCoy started his architectural practice in 1946 in Vancouver. He later became associated with architect Keith Bradbury and the partners designed more than \$11 million (adjusted from 1968) in school and college construction in Oregon and Washington as well as many churches, commercial, and industrial buildings in both states. Among the projects were several structures at Clark College and the Clark Public Utilities Building, both in Vancouver.⁶⁶

Keith Bradbury

After the war, Bradbury gained valuable experience by working as a draftsman for noted Vancouver, Washington architect Donald J. Stewart (1946-52). While there he rose to the level of associate and formally received his architectural License (No. TL-543) on June 19, 1950.

In 1952, Bradbury formed a partnership with fellow architect Luther McCoy. Practicing as McCoy & Bradbury until 1964, the firm’s designs include several notable structures in southwest Washington. These include numerous buildings at Clark



CONCRETE WALL at right is 5 1/2 inches thick, has interesting surface texture with rocks hand-placed when slab was formed. It was poured at the site—tilted upward to vertical position; surface inside house similar.



Above: Historic Image of the Ogle House; Ogle House, Vancouver

64 Alan Hess. *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 2004), 195.

65 John Fleming, et. al., *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture*. London: Penguin Group, 1991 (1966)

66 “Obituary: Luther E. McCoy,” *The Oregonian*, June 20, 1968, p. 36

College in Vancouver and several structures for the Clark Public Utilities. Other high profile projects include Sarah J. Anderson Elementary School (1955), and McLoughlin Jr. High (1957) in Vancouver; Holy Rosary Church in Edmonds (1955); St. Rita's Catholic Church (1957) and Schwary's Shopping Center in Portland; the Independent Bank of Vancouver (1960); Hoffman Medical-Dental Building (1960) in Hood River; and Columbia River High School (1962) in Vancouver.

In 1965 Bradbury left the firm and formed a new partnership with fellow Vancouver architect Henry Greybrook. Together Greybrook & Bradbury produced several projects at Clark College; the Westmoreland Manor (1965) in Portland; Ya Po Ah retirement Apartments (1966) in Eugene; and the Reynolds Metals Office Complex (1967) in Longview.

Their most prominent project is the cylindrical curtain-walled Smith Tower (1966) in Vancouver. The building used a lift-slab technique based around its central core, akin to Chicago's similarly-corn-cob-esque Marina City.

William Cassady

Cassady began his career working for Annand, Boone & Lei in Portland. He soon decided to open his own firm in 1959 in Vancouver. Notable designs include remodeling the Luepke Florist Shop (1959, Vancouver), the Vancouver Community Library (1963), the Skamania County Branch Library in Stevenson (1966); the Medco Clinic (1968, 3305 Main St., Vancouver); and Martin Luther King Elementary School (1971, demolished, Vancouver).⁶⁷

Theodore Bower

Theodore Bower received a bachelor's degree from Amherst College and was a Taliesin fellow. Bower arrived in Seattle in 1954 and joined Durham, Anderson, and Freed for a short while before working for Fred Bassetti. Bower designed the Harold and Margaret Ogle House in 1959. His other notable works includes the Charles Markham Residence (Seattle, 1962), Pearce Apartments (Seattle, 1963), and the Daniel and Cynthia Chirot Residence (Seattle 1978).

Milton Stricker

Milton Stricker received his architectural education at Carnegie Mellon University (formerly known as Carnegie Institute of Technology) 1947-1950. In his final semester he left to join the Frank Lloyd Wright Fellowship and apprenticed for one year in 1951-1952. He opened his own office in 1962, practicing in Seattle, the Northwest and Alaska. He designed the Kruus House at 951 South Oak Road in Ridgefield. Among his more

notable designs are the Clark Turner House (1965) on Vashon Island, Peace Lutheran Church (1966) in Bremerton, Seattle Fire Station No. 24 (1974), the Paul Johnston House (1981) in Seattle, and a home for the 1986 Street of Dreams in Portland.

Donald J. Stewart

Spokane-native Donald J. Stewart became a registered architect in 1931 in Washington. Beginning an architectural practice in 1931 Vancouver was an uphill battle due to the Great Depression, but his career developed to make him one of the city's two most prolific and prominent architects, along with Day Hilborn, of the twentieth century.⁶⁸

Day Hilborn

Hilborn's career span a 40-year period from the 1920s to the 1960s and focused primarily on cultural institutions of the city of Vancouver and the surrounding communities. His work during the mid-century era included the second home for the Columbian in 1955. They had long outgrown the space that Hilborn and Gough had designed for them in 1928 and needed a new "modern" facility. Other modern design included expansions to Shumway Jr. High School (Gym, Music Room, and Shop) in 1952. A proposal for a new high school (Hudson's Bay) in 1952, and the first real facilities for the upstart Clark College.⁶⁹

Henry Greybrook

He received his WA State architectural license (No.1000) on June 20, 1957 while working for Barnes. In 1961 Greybrook opened his own office in Portland, sharing space with architect Henry J. Vodeberg. Known projects include Hazel Dell Lanes Bowling Alley (1960) in Vancouver; and a Medical-Dental Building (1961) in Portland. In 1965 he formed a partnership with fellow architect Keith Bradbury in Vancouver. Together Greybrook & Bradbury produced several projects at Clark College; the Westmoreland Manor (1965) in Portland; Ya Po Ah retirement Apartments (1966) in Eugene; and the Reynolds Metals Office Complex (1967) in Longview. Their most notable project is the cylindrical curtain-walled Smith Tower (1966) in Vancouver. The building used a lift-slab technique based around its central core, akin to Bertrand Goldberg's Marina City in Chicago.⁷⁰

William La Londe

In 1947 La Londe took a job as an architectural designer with local Vancouver architect Donald Stewart, rising to the level of associate. After Stewart decided to form a partnership with Kenneth E. Richardson in 1952, La Londe and Craig Weaver

⁶⁷ McLarney, Ed, "New Stevenson Library Uses Native Materials," *The Sunday Oregonian*, September 24, 1967, p. 23

⁶⁸ Clark County Community Planning, "Luepke Florist," <https://clark.wa.gov/community-planning/luepke-florist>

⁶⁹ Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, "Day W. Hilborn," <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-day-w-hilborn>

⁷⁰ Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, "Henry G. Greybrook," <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-henry-g-greybrook>

(another of Stewart's draftsman) decided to leave the new firm and form their own partnership in 1955. Known as Weaver & La Londe, they designed numerous commercial and institutional projects in southwest Washington including George C. Marshall School (1960); Jason Lee Junior High (1967); MacArthur, Hazel Dell and Walnut Grove Elementary Schools (1968); the Columbia Presbyterian church (1966); the East Vancouver Methodist Church (1965); the Totem Pole Shopping Center; and several Burgerville restaurants.⁷¹

MATERIAL OVERVIEW

The styles discussed above, and the modern mindset of architects and consumers encouraged a wider range of materials to be used during this era. Throughout the modern period, great emphasis was placed on the use of reinforced concrete and steel for commercial and institutional buildings. While these technologies were developed prior to the context period, their uses were greatly promoted and expanded during the post-World War II era. Modern materials and building technologies revolutionized and dramatically expanded the possibilities for structures and forms. In residential architecture, common materials included brick, stone veneer, and Hardi-plank.

One of the major shifts in construction technology was the use of lightweight steel for the internal structure of a building, allowing for the exterior of the building to be "hung" from the structure rather than being load-bearing. Curtain wall construction was typically used on large buildings rather than on single-family residential buildings, but the single-family dwellings of the Post-WWII period share a commonality with large office towers in that the exterior walls were much lighter and typically have more glass than their counterparts from the prewar era.⁷² Instead of ornate architectural features, architects emphasized the materials that were the basis of these new styles, such as new ways of using concrete, glass, plastics, and steel. Ornamentation was perceived as cloaking the essential functions and nature of buildings. In some cases, the structure was even moved to the outside of the building and visually expressed, leaving the walls to provide the important building envelope work but having little structural contribution.

New materials became popular, old materials became newly popular, and new construction methods or practices created efficiencies that were perfected in the post-war years. Among the newer materials were light-weight concrete; engineered woods, including laminated trusses and plywood; hollow clay tile; aluminum; structural glass; plastics and other synthetics; and prefabrication as a construction practice.⁷³ As a result, modern buildings could let in more light with bands or entire walls built of large windows.



Above: Kurus House; Material Examples including roman brick in a stacked bond with glass blocks located at 337 NE 5th in Camas and Mt. Suksan stone at 704 E Main in Battle Ground

Aluminum also began to make an appearance after the industry expanded to meet the demands of World War II. There were also innovations in glass, window sealants, and plastics during this period.

⁷¹ Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, "William E. La Londe," <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-william-e-la-londe>

⁷² Peter Meijer Architect, PC, *Single-Family Residential Development in Olympia, Washington Up to 1975*, 2015

⁷³ Painter Preservation, *Spokane Mid-20th Century Architectural Survey Report*, pg. 34

Conclusion and Recommendations

Clark County, like much of the country, experienced a booming population, rise in auto-oriented culture, and suburban development. In Vancouver, the VHA's acquisition of 1,000 acres in McLoughlin Heights and subsequent comprehensive development plan were representative of mid-century values.

This report focused specifically on post-war development and architectural trends in Clark County from 1950 to 1965, but there were several items that fell outside the scope of the report that merit further research. Specially, the foundation of a NAACP Chapter in Clark County, Mark A. Smith's role in the organization, and any buildings related to Black history such as Smith's home at 1201 E 40th Avenue in Vancouver. Smith began his career with the VHA before joining the NAACP. He was an advocate for addressing racial discrimination through improved housing practices. Initial research has been done on this topic by local historian Melissa Williams and in Jane Elder Wulff's book, *First Families of Vancouver's African American Community From World War Two to the Twenty-First Century*.

Another area of research worth pursuing would be to track down if any of the prefabricated housing units from the World War II are still standing. These homes were auctioned off by the VHA for demolition and removal. In 1950 the VHA auctioned off over 150 houses. Many of these homes were relocated to outside of Clark County.

Aside from the ship building industry, research could be conducting on what supporting industries existed in Vancouver during the World War era. Some industries worth exploring include timber, metal fabrication, and utilities.

Property owners are encouraged to use this cultural resource survey as the basis for learning more about their building and potentially nominating it to a historic register in the future. Information from the surveyed properties was added to DAHP's WISAARD database. The historic context statement and cultural resource surveys will be posted on Clark County's website with periodic announcements to spotlight prominent buildings and architects. The County's Historic Preservation Commission will also work closely with the Clark County Heritage Museum to profile mid-century buildings and architects in the county through the museum's monthly speaker series and walking tours.



Home beautification was encouraged among war workers on McLoughlin Heights. This was a first prize winner in 1944. A victory garden contest was also held.



Above: WWII Housing for Sale by VHA; WWII Temporary Housing Example; WWII Housing Dismantled

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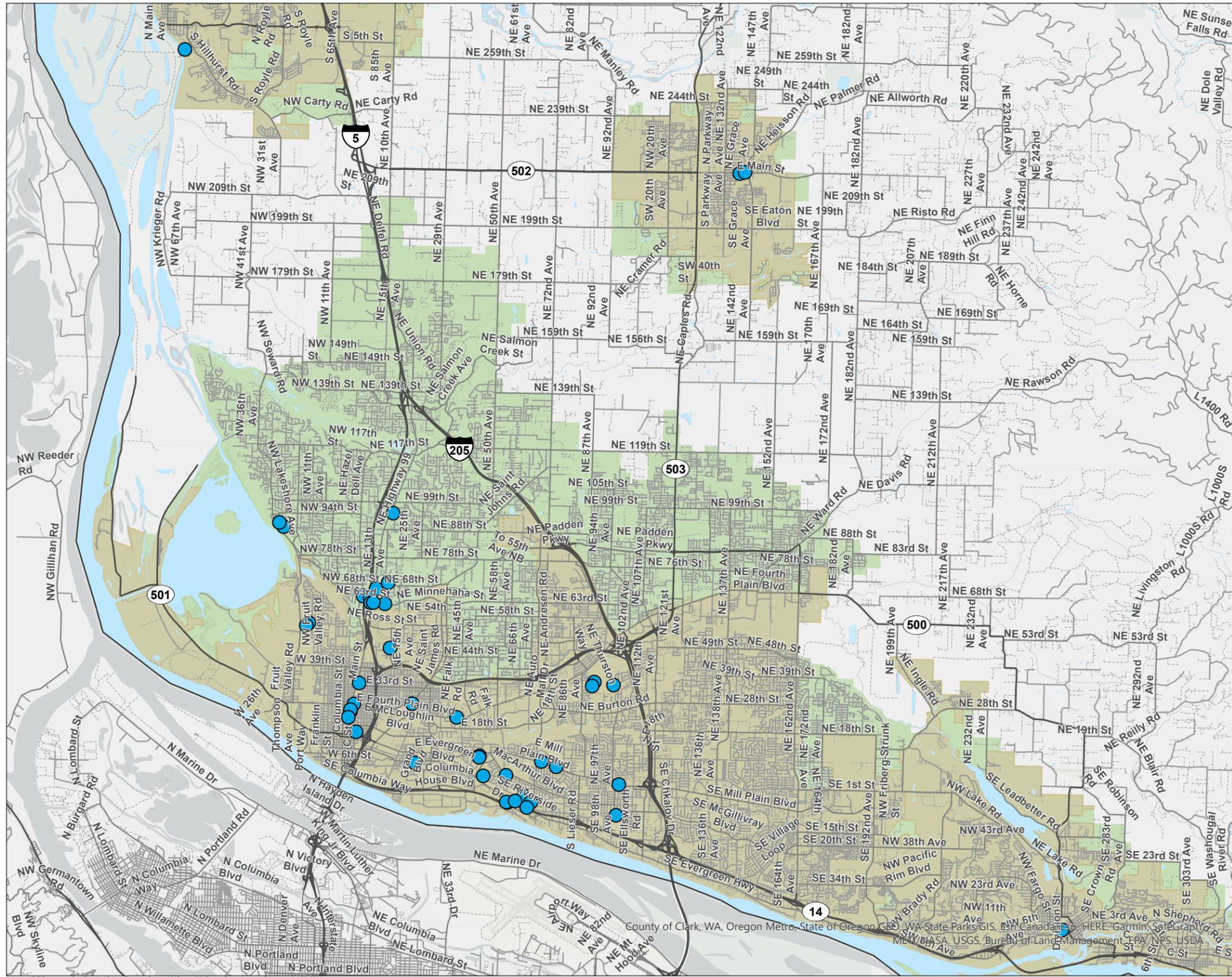
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Selected Properties

Property ID	Year Built	Street Address	City	Zip
45679000	1950	2311 MAIN ST	VANCOUVER	98660
147632000	1950	6615 NE HIGHWAY 99	VANCOUVER	98665
35770140	1953	5630 SE RIVERSIDE WAY	VANCOUVER	98661
37910487	1954	6600 BUENA VISTA DR	VANCOUVER	98661
147634000	1955	6160 NE HWY 99	VANCOUVER	98665
45694000	1956	2407 MAIN ST	VANCOUVER	98660
37910456	1956	6317 HIGHLAND DR	VANCOUVER	98661
100525000	1956	4608 NE 15TH AVE	VANCOUVER	98664
98138006	1957	8801 NW LAKECREST AVE	VANCOUVER	98665
30989000	1958	2403 E EVERGREEN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
108489002	1958	3505 NE ROYAL OAKS DR	VANCOUVER	98662
37916665	1959	6008 E EVERGREEN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
37916627	1960	6504 E EVERGREEN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
11120000	1960	204 E FOURTH PLAIN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98663
147598000	1960	6300 NE HWY 99	VANCOUVER	98665
109929013	1960	3414 NE ROYAL OAKS DR	VANCOUVER	98662
37912177	1961	7423 INDIANA ST	VANCOUVER	98664
37911321	1961	901 UMATILLA WAY	VANCOUVER	98661
53650000	1961	2010 MAIN ST	VANCOUVER	98660
37912119	1961	7003 INDIANA ST	VANCOUVER	98664
108490006	1961	3414 NE 97TH AVE	VANCOUVER	98662
99572010	1962	6314 NE 4TH AVE	VANCOUVER	98665
37911315	1962	4501 WILLAMETTE DR	VANCOUVER	98661
79090000	1962	337 NE 5TH AVE	CAMAS	98607
37919234	1962	5210 NW WALNUT ST	VANCOUVER	98663
148025000	1962	1220 NE 68TH ST	VANCOUVER	98665
35770138	1963	5700 SE RIVERSIDE WAY	VANCOUVER	98661
37919224	1963	5311 NW WALNUT ST	VANCOUVER	98663
91057026	1964	507 E MAIN ST	BATTLE GROUND	98604
37916923	1964	4616 DUBOIS DR	VANCOUVER	98661
40350000	1964	303 E 16TH ST	VANCOUVER	98663
145022000	1964	9333 NE HIGHWAY 99	VANCOUVER	98665
23500000	1965	2109 SAINT JOHNS BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
98138032	1965	8919 NW LAKECREST AVE	VANCOUVER	98665
37910268	1965	5701 MACARTHUR BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
165911000	1965	9900 SE MILL PLAIN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98664
96620266	1965	1208 NE MINNEHAHA ST	VANCOUVER	98665
114240010	1965	1100 SE 99TH AVE	VANCOUVER	98664
11309000	1968	3305 MAIN ST	VANCOUVER	98663
30524000	1968	3700 E FOURTH PLAIN BLVD	VANCOUVER	98661
67487000	1970	951 S OAK ROAD	RIDGEFIELD	98642
147721000	1971	6203 NE HIGHWAY 99	VANCOUVER	98665
9110169	1971	704 E MAIN ST	BATTLE GROUND	98604



Clark County Mid-Century Modern Selected Properties

- KEY**
- Selected Properties
 - Incorporated
 - Urban Growth Area



NOTE: Information shown on this map was collected from several sources. Clark County accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies that may be present.

