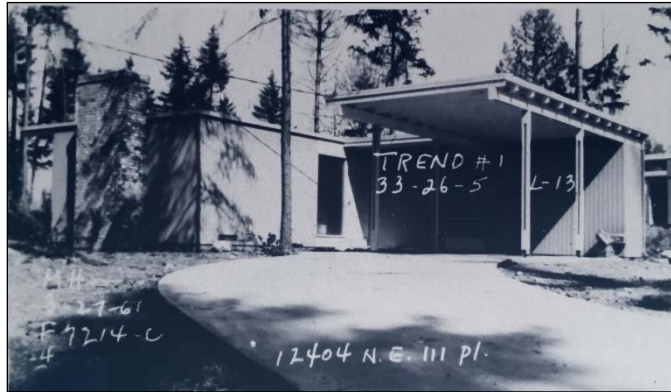


## Mid-Century King County: A Context Statement on Post-War Residential Development



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## **Mid-Century King County: A Context Statement on Post-War Residential Development**

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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 the King County Historic Preservation Program. 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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# Mid-Century King County: A Context Statement on Post-War Residential Development

August 31, 2017

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Cover (clockwise from upper left): 10300 61<sup>st</sup> Ave S, Seattle (BOLA); *Seattle Times*, 11.1.1953; Steinbrueck, *Cityscapes*, p. 44; 1114 E Shelby Street, Seattle (BOLA); 12404 NE 111<sup>th</sup> Pl, Kirkland (King Co. Tax Assessor's Office).

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# **Mid-Century King County: A Context Statement on Post-War Residential Development**

**BOLA Architecture + Planning**  
**August 31, 2017**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Background and Project Goals**

In early 2016, the King County Historic Preservation Program received a grant from the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) to develop a historic context statement on post-World War II development patterns and Modern-era residential design in the county. The County sought this grant to help it identify representative properties from communities throughout the metropolitan region from Shoreline to Des Moines, in Seattle's central and West Seattle neighborhoods to cities such as Bellevue, Kirkland, Burien, Lake Forest Park and Normandy Park, and in communities throughout the County.

The resulting context statement is organized by theme, which include national economic, social and cultural trends from the post-war era of 1946 to 1975, and specific determinants in the county's history. It focuses on mid-century suburban neighborhoods and properties in the metropolitan and suburban areas, developed by large-scale development companies and individual designers and builders. The project's scope included identification of twelve representative dwellings to provide a sample of the residential styles. These were selected for documentation in intensive-level State Historic Property Inventory (HPI) forms, which have been included in DAHP's historic inventory database.

The context statement is intended to inform historic preservation efforts by King County and to serve as the basis for future planning by individual property owners and designers. It is also intended to inform home owners, designers and developers about the significance of the region's Modern era heritage, and give rise to greater appreciation and preservation of the remarkable homes from this period. In a sense, the report is a celebration of the unique architecture that rose from the combination of talent, vision, and opportunity to meet the needs of American families.

The survey inventory forms that accompany this document are specific in documenting select, representative houses, while the report provides background information about the context. The Modern era was a transformational period in the region's history and King County shares many factors in its development and its residential buildings with other neighborhoods and communities throughout the Northwest. The report and the survey are intended to provide assistance to individual home owners and historic preservation advocates and agencies in recognizing this important part of our recent past.

### **The Study Process and Research**

The Seattle firm of BOLA Architecture + Planning was selected by King County Historic Preservation Program as the consultant for this project. Principal Susan Boyle began the field work and undertook research, with assistance from preservation planning interns Meagan Scott and Julia Grey. Research began in March and continued throughout 2016. The dozen representative houses to be documented in intensive-level Historic Property Inventory forms were selected from a "short-list" of 58 properties in mid-July 2016. Other houses were discovered during subsequent fieldwork. The report was drafted in several phases, and finalized in mid-2017 along with preparation of narrative inventory forms. Data from the narrative inventories was entered into the Washington State Historic Property Inventory by King County's project manager and preservation architect, Todd Scott, AIA, and he provided invaluable support during the entire project. The project was finalized with several public presentations in July and September 2017.

Research materials came from many sources:

- Historic plat maps and archival property record cards from the King County Assessor at the Puget Sound Regional Archives, Bellevue Community College.
- Historic *Polk Directories*, historic maps, and publications on the region's history, many of which are available from the King County Library System and/or Seattle Public Library.
- Publications on historic housing, Modern-style residences, and suburban development in America in the early and mid-20th century, including articles from professional journals, and periodicals and shelter magazines, such as *Sunset* and *House & Garden*.
- Advertisements for consumer products, appliances and furnishings, and construction products; and residential designs from plan books.
- A National Register Bulletin, "Historic Residential Suburbs," the National Highway Research Cooperative's "A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing," and other comparable historic district and survey reports on 20<sup>th</sup> century houses.
- A chapter on mid-century development by David Rash in Jeffrey Ochsner's *Shaping Seattle Architecture*.
- Archival articles from the *Seattle Times* database, available on the website of the Seattle Public Library, especially those by Marjorie Phillips ("Home of the Month") and Dorothy Neighbors ("Puget Sound Home"), and those about the Gold Medallion Home Program and the Houses of Merit Program.
- In-person and telephone interviews with homeowners, builders and planners and community representatives from local municipalities.

Site tours allowed for photo-documentation of representative mid-century enclaves, individual houses, and suburban neighborhoods, and the select residential buildings and their site and landscape features. Additional information from individual property owners was acquired through the outreach efforts by the survey team and by King County Historic Preservation Program.

## **Acknowledgements**

The report is the result of information provided by many individuals from research repositories, libraries and public agencies as well as from interested individuals and property owners who also contributed.

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Kim Gant, Certified Local Government  
Coordinator and Survey Program Manager

Puget Sound Regional Archives

Phil Stairs, Archivist

Seattle Public Library

Ann Ferguson and Jodee Fenton, Librarians

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## 2. 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN KING COUNTY

In the decades of the 1920s and early 1930s, American design began to focus on function and the efficient use of buildings. Throughout the nation people were seized by a new Modern sensibility, brought on by mass production, technical marvels such as the radio, and economic conditions that encouraged social and cultural mobility. New urban neighborhoods, made up largely of single-family dwellings, emerged in the early decades of the 20th century, following the routes of commuter railroads and streetcars to serve as middle-class residential enclaves outside of urban centers.

The layout of these early planned neighborhoods often follow the precepts of the Garden City design movement, which had its origins in the work of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and others in the late 19th and early 20th century who promoted the construction of self-contained residential areas surrounded by greenbelts and separated from industrial and commercial areas. Such Garden City neighborhoods were built in Boston, New York, and New Jersey, as well as in Los Angeles, where they were situated close to city centers with transit systems providing easy commutes. Later several “greenbelt” towns were designed and constructed also as part of federal emergency relief programs during the Depression.

In contrast to Garden City designs, the pattern of development in the Puget Sound area tended to follow a grid placed over the natural landscape. Beaux-Arts schemes that designed entire urban areas, such as the classical style Vogel proposal for Seattle civic center in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, were soundly rejected by voters. During this period, there was settlement throughout King County, but residential growth focused on Seattle, as noted by local geographer Calvin Schmid:

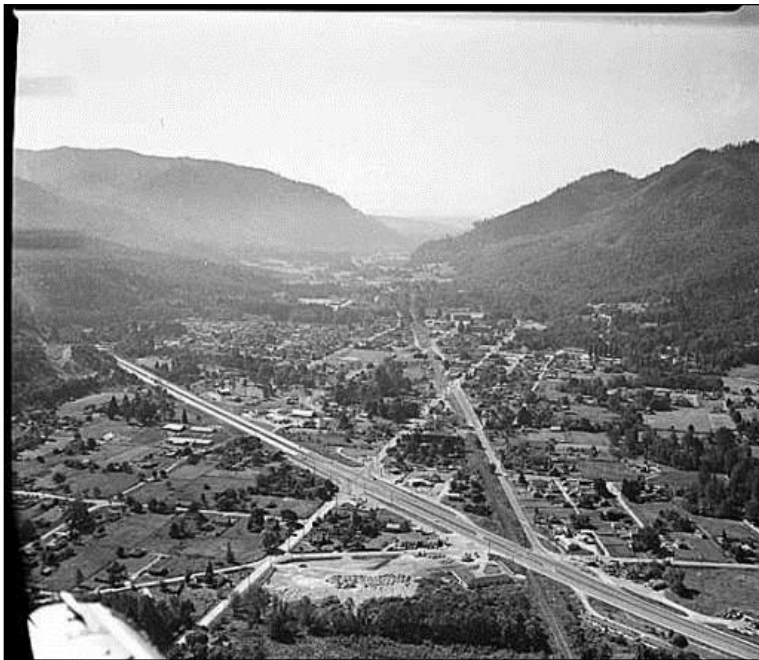
The period from 1910, or more accurately from the outbreak of the War to [1940], differs from the preceding thirty years chiefly in regard to the rearrangement of local population and reintegration of communal interests. The influence of the motor car, the Panama Canal, Pacific trade, and the changing technique of business organization, has been such as to effect a new cycle of regional development. Of the total regional increase in population for the decade, 1910-1920, 43 percent took place within the corporate limits of Seattle” (Schmid, p. 5).

In initiating public housing projects in the 1930s, local and the federal government agencies encouraged the use of Garden City concepts through open space planning, combined with simple, inexpensive building forms. The federal Public Works Administration (PWA) funded low-income housing projects consisting of blocks of modest housing, with requirements for open space, light, and air. These guidelines were adopted by organizations such as the local housing authorities, including those in King County that built public housing for needy families and defense workers during World War II. Thus, the housing trends of this period set the stage for the explosive growth that occurred at the war’s end, when the region’s economy turned to domestic production and the boom in housing ensured.

By the 1940s, however, another pattern emerged. Schmid noted that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, between 1910 and 1920, 43 percent of population increases took place within the corporate limits of Seattle (p. 5). In 1940, the population of the metropolitan district of Seattle (including surrounding cities from Des Moines to Bothell) stood at 452,639, an increase of 7.6 percent over the 1930 population of 420,663. In that single decade, the population of Seattle increased only 2,719 or 0.7 percent, whereas the districts outside the city gained 29,257 or 53.1 percent. The prior decade had seen the population in areas outside the city of Seattle increase by 91.5 percent. This “centrifugal movement of people to the suburbs” became the most characteristic and significant shift in the mid-century decades (Schmid, p. 75).

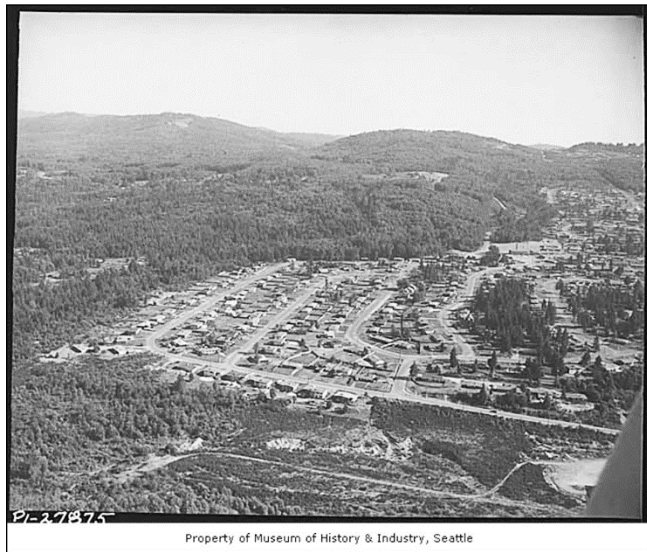


*Above, a light beacon to the future link between Seattle and the vast East Side emerges with the opening of the Lake Washington Floating Bridge, September 6, 1940 (Museum of History and Industry [MOHAI], Image 1983.1012298.3).*



*Above, an aerial view of Issaquah in 1956, showing the impact of post-war highway and road systems on the largely rural area (MOHAI), Image 1986.5.4494.1).*





*Left, an aerial view looking south at part of the Lake Hills in 1959. This vast development on over 1,200 acres created over 2,000 houses (MOHAI, Image PI27875). Much of the vacant land that became Lake Hills had been cleared by Japanese and Japanese-American farmers and truck-farmers who were interned during World War II.*



*Left, an aerial view of Upland Terrace development, Kenmore, in 1953 showing a similar approach to clearing (Upland Terrace Neighborhood Association website, December 27, 2011).*



*Left, an aerial view of the Hilltop Community in Bellevue. This collaborative effort led by a group of local architects, professors, engineers, landscape architects, and artists took a different approach to land development, siting 40 individual parcels around a central open space with the trees maintained for common enjoyment and use. The 60-acre subdivision was planned between 1947 and 1950 (Eastside Heritage Center, Photo No. 1995.12.04). A similar, smaller collaborative effort, led by architect Ralf Anderson, was undertaken along Hidden Lake Creek, north of the Highlands near the Innis Arden area. Both developments engaged the owners as designers and builders, creating well-crafted Modern dwellings.*

From the Collections of Eastside Heritage Center

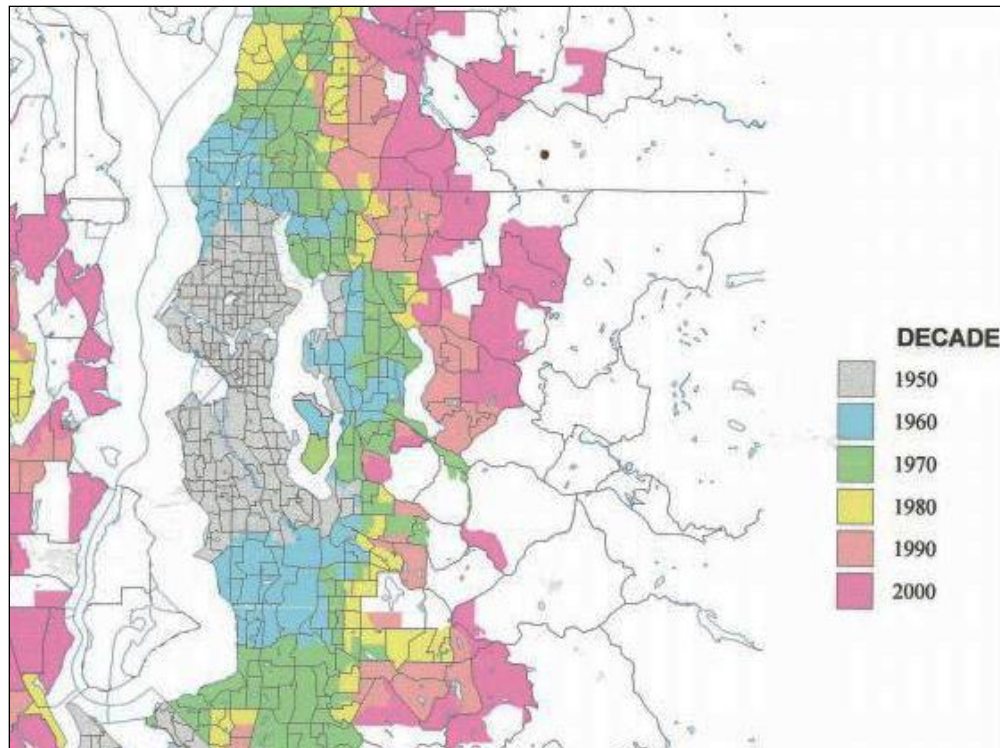




*Above, this typical nuclear family in Levittown, Nassau County, New York, represents many who were pursuing the American Dream of home ownership in the post-war era.*

*As the suburbs grew, so did the auto-oriented retail development that served the residents. Below, a view of NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE in downtown Bellevue in 1967 (MOHAI, Image 1986.5.1000.1).*





Above, a map by social geographer Richard Morrill, illustrating the pattern of residential growth by decade as people moved away from dense urban areas of King County (Morrill, April 25, 2011).

The following list cites code adoptions by municipalities in King County, as an indicator of residential growth. Those noted “KC” were regulated by King County, which adopted a zoning code in 1937 and building code in 1941. Those noted (\*) have not been verified.

| Municipality     | Incorporation Date | Adoption of Bldg Code | Adoption of Zoning Code |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Kent             | 1890               | 1929                  | 1947                    |
| Auburn           | 1891               | 1975                  | 1945                    |
| Issaquah (*)     | 1892               |                       | 1962                    |
| Redmond          | 1912               | 1967                  |                         |
| Kirkland (*)     | 1905               |                       |                         |
| Tukwila (*)      | 1908               |                       |                         |
| Bothell (*)      | 1909               |                       |                         |
| Bellevue (*)     | 1953               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Normandy Park    | 1953               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Medina           | 1955               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Des Moines       | 1959               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Lake Forest Park | 1961               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Mercer Island    | 1960               | KC                    | KC                      |
| SeaTac           | 1990               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Federal Way      | 1990               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Woodinville      | 1993               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Burien           | 1993               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Newcastle        | 1994               | KC                    | KC                      |
| Shoreline        | 1995               | 1995                  | 1995                    |
| Kenmore          | 1998               | 1998                  | 1998                    |
| Sammamish        | 1999               | KC                    | KC                      |

### **3. MID-CENTURY CONDITIONS**

#### **The Rise of American Suburbs**

America faced a great housing shortage at the end of World War II. Throughout the war, the nation had focused on meeting military needs, and severe constraints had been placed on domestic consumption and residential construction. Government efforts, primarily by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and later the Veterans Administration (VA), encouraged post-war homeownership through mortgage insurance. These federal programs made it possible for many working- and middle-class families to assume homeownership for the first time. Prior to this, in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the typical private mortgage required down payments of forty to fifty percent, and loan periods of just a decade, limiting capitalization to upper class and wealthy families. The new federal programs allowed, for the first time, mortgages to be amortized over a 20- to 30-year period, and for loans with low down payments or, in the case of veterans, no down payments. As a result, a quarter of all new housing starts between 1934 and 1970 involved a FHA mortgage (Pettis, p. 58).

Government programs not only stimulated a market of private mortgages but also provided incentives that reduced the risks for housing developers. With ready buyers, a housing contractor could purchase more land and build a greater quantity of houses, knowing the dwellings could be sold quickly. In the post-war era, individual builders were joined by corporate construction companies, or merchant builders. Between 1945 and 1954, more than 13 million houses were built in the United States (Pettis, p. 49). The nation's demand for housing was met largely through single-family residential development and buildings that met FHA standards, as well as accepted industry practices and local regulation. The dominant national trend in post-war construction was the "freestanding" single-family home:

[T]he small ranches and Cape Cod houses underwritten by the FHA were the descendants of two longstanding American traditions, one social and the other visual. Widespread individual ownership of land and homes had been seen by American social theorists since Thomas Jefferson as important to creating a stable and democratic society [...] It was the idea of ownership combined with a picturesque vision of the freestanding country house, popularized in the mid-1800s by Andrew Jackson Downing that inspired the new suburbs. (Hunter, pp. 256-59)

America's auto culture was clearly established by the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Private vehicle ownership rose quickly after war restrictions were lifted and auto production grew by over 400% between 1945 and 1955. Vehicle registrations for the entire state of Washington numbered around 460,000 in 1921, but rose quickly. (Data from the federal Department of Transportation indicates passenger vehicles in Washington State numbered over 2,599,500 in 2010.)

The post-war automobile age also impacted the pattern suburban development, with "rapid construction of freeways, availability of cheap gasoline, and relative affordability of cars" transforming land use during the period (Pettis, p. 50). Private automobile ownership had risen steeply in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but fell during the Depression. During WORLD WAR II, the war effort precluded virtually all civilian car manufacture, as auto companies focused on wartime production. At the war's end, private car ownership skyrocketed and was soon a typical middle class attribute. The prevalence of the family car directly affected the design of residential buildings as well as development of roadside businesses and shopping centers.

#### **Social, Economic and Cultural Influences**

Post-war prosperity, demographic trends, and a rise in consumerism also contributed to suburbanization. A primarily urban society up through the 1930s, the country experienced migration out of the cities and into lower-density areas, as a phenomenon that linked the diffusion of jobs, housing, and shopping to the suburban areas, all enabled by an increasing network of roads. At the time, beginning with employment



in defense industries during the war, there was a general population shift from the East Coast and Midwest to the South and West Coast with California, Arizona, Florida, Washington, and Texas experiencing the most growth (Pettis, p. 60).

Marriage and birth rates saw huge increases, beginning in the mid-1940s and skyrocketing with the return of millions of veterans and the formation of young families and the post-war baby boom of 1946-55. This demographic shift affected the housing market, with both public policies and popular culture promoting women's domesticity and a return to their role as housewife and mother. The typical houses of this period were designed to accommodate active, young families, while the neighborhood itself incorporated space for parks, schools, and cul-de-sacs and street arrangements that slowed traffic and created a family friendly environment. After the deprivations of the Depression and sacrifice World War II, many people sought tranquility and security through their homes as refuge from work, commerce, and the public realm. Critic Lewis Mumford noted this trend in 1938, when he identified suburbia as "a collective effort to lead a private life" (Mumford, 1938).

Accompanying the increase homeownership was a demand for related domestic products, which figured prominently in popular publications such as *Good Housekeeping*, *House Beautiful*, *Sunset*, and *Better Homes & Gardens*. Advertisements and articles in these and other shelter magazines and local newspapers, along with radio and television shows, featured ideal families deeply engaged in domestic lives. Taste-making was promoted by the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, which co-sponsored the *Seattle Times* "Home of the Month" open houses and newspaper articles. Available leisure time grew in the post-war period, and along with it TV ownership and viewing. In 1946 there were only 17,000 TVs in the entire country; by 1960 nearly 90 percent of all families owned at least one set. People no longer listening to the radio, but instead turned to family shows, such as "Ozzie and Harriett" and "Father Knows Best" that provided models for family life in the suburbs. Contemporary media advertisements drove the consumption of new cars and products, such as lawnmowers, appliances, and barbecue grills.

Page: 29 Location: Seattle, Washington

## Home of the Month

View, Comfort Emphasized In House

By MARGERY R. PHILLIPS  
We are very proud to present the first home of the month, designed by Mrs. J. J. Smith, architect, A. I. A., and constructed by J. J. Smith, Inc., 1000 1st Ave., Seattle. The house is a modern interpretation of the traditional, with a view of the city and the water. The house is a two-story, brick and stone, with a large front porch and a large rear porch. The house is a perfect example of the "Home of the Month" program.

**OPEN HOUSE:** The first home of the month, designed by Mrs. J. J. Smith, architect, A. I. A., and constructed by J. J. Smith, Inc., 1000 1st Ave., Seattle. The house is a modern interpretation of the traditional, with a view of the city and the water. The house is a two-story, brick and stone, with a large front porch and a large rear porch. The house is a perfect example of the "Home of the Month" program.

**VIEWING DIRECTIONS:** To reach this home, drive south on 1st Ave. to the intersection of 1st Ave. and 1st Ave. N. Turn left onto 1st Ave. N. and drive to the intersection of 1st Ave. N. and 1st Ave. N. The house is located on the corner of 1st Ave. N. and 1st Ave. N.

**Home of the Month** is a program of the American Institute of Architects, A. I. A., and the National Association of Home Builders, N. A. H. B. The program is designed to promote the construction industry and to provide a source of information for home buyers. The program is a national program and is held in all major cities.

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New I...  
**Clean and Wax my Floors Standing Up!**

**Back-Saving New Rescue Doozie! Makes Linoleum and Wood Floors Sparkle!**



Above an example of a "Home of the Month" article by Margery R. Phillips in the *Seattle Times*. Right, typical advertisements from 1950s shelter magazines.

## **Post-War Housing Discrimination**

It is commonly understood that post-war funding programs and lending by banks and builders led to the rise in home-ownership and building of middle class families. This was true for many, but not all. A review of information presents a different picture that underscores a history of continued racial and ethnic discrimination throughout the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

White residents used Federal Housing Administration-insured loans to buy their way out of the projects and to move into shiny new middle-class subdivisions. These subsidized home-buying boom led to one of the broadest expansions of the American middle class ever, almost exclusively to the benefit of white families. The F.H.A.'s explicitly racist underwriting standards, which rated black and integrated neighborhoods as uninsurable, made federally insured home loans largely unavailable to black home seekers. Ninety-eight percent of these loans made between 1934 and 1969 went to white Americans (Hanna-Jones, p. 52).

Discriminatory practices in this period were both official and unofficial. Individual sellers often established racial covenants to property deeds that limited their sales to Caucasians, and the real estate industry often limited access by members other racial and ethnic groups to rental properties. Red-lining was another discriminatory practice by banks and real estate companies to deny housing choices for African Americans. This practice was condoned during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. "The National Housing Act of 1934, for example, redlined entire Black neighborhoods, marking them as bad credit risks and effectively discouraging lending in these areas, even as Black home buyers continued to be excluded from white neighborhoods" (Traub).

Black homeownership in Seattle, for example, was noted in the U.S. census at 38.8 percent in 1930, but fell to 29 percent in 1940. While far lower than white ownership, the number was higher than most American northern cities (Taylor, p. 84-85). Regionally, there were post-war suburbs and inner city neighborhoods with covenants and deed that discriminated against African American, Asians, and Jews, restricting home ownership to white residents. A recent study has identified 416 communities, cities, and neighborhoods that enacted such restrictions with one calling exclusively for "Aryan" residents as late as 1946 (Silva, 2009). Even after a 1948 Supreme Court ruling that such restrictive covenants were outlawed, they often remained in place and enforced unofficially.

African Americans in King County often lived in Seattle's Central District, where much of the housing was sub-standard, but where the community was diverse. Additional residents resulting from the influx of black workers during the war changed the neighborhood. "By 1950 69 percent of Seattle blacks lived within ten of the city's 118 census tracts in the Central District. By 1960, 78 percent lived in the same tracts, even though the [city's] total black population had increased by 11,000 residents" (Silva, 2009). This situation resulted from "voluntary agreements" between realtors and homeowners, some of which were codified in the National Real Estate board's Code of Ethics. (Violations of this code were apparently enforced as a member of the Seattle Real Estate board was expelled in 1948 after selling a house in an all-white area to an interracial couple.)

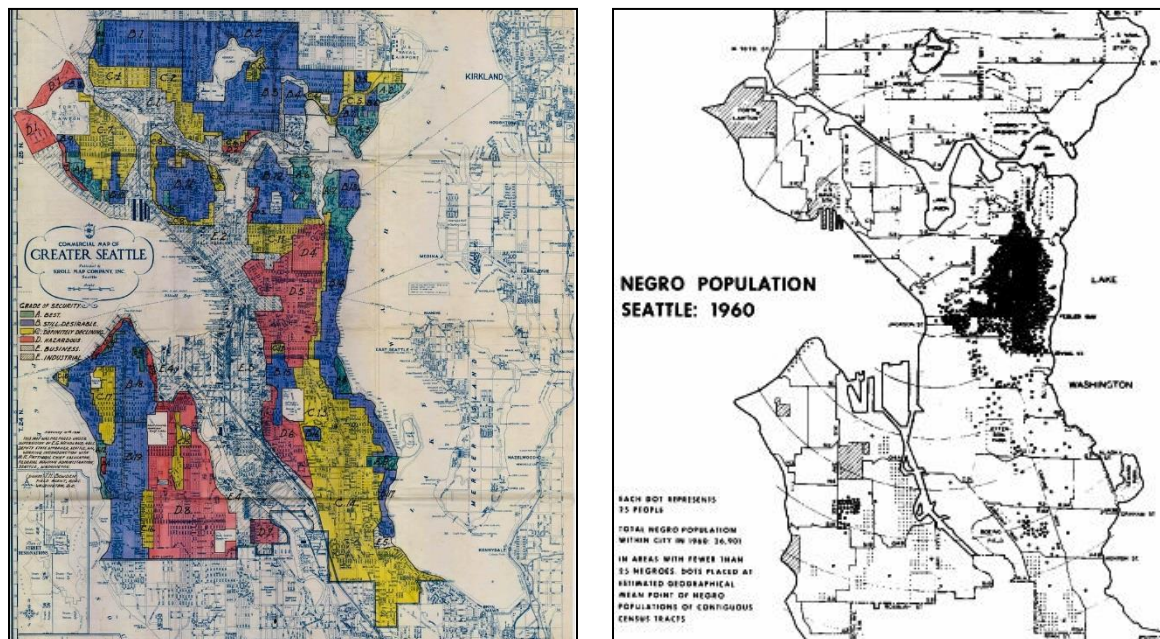
The Fair Housing Act of 1968 officially outlawed red-lining as well as restrictive covenants. Despite this legislation and FHA requirements that the loan process be non-discriminatory, there were cases of banks refusing loans to African Americans who wished to move outside of the Central Area and at least one FHA appraiser who changed a nearby home value after a black family purchased a house in the same neighborhood (Taylor, p. 178-180). As a result of these actions, many middle-class African Americans remained in Seattle's Central District, some of whom remained in older houses while others occupied more modern dwellings. Even though Seattle experienced little of the "white flight" that characterized many other American cities, the new outlying suburbs were occupied largely by white families up to the 1970s.

The Federal Fair Housing Act passed in 1968 after earlier efforts to regulate open housing at the local level were thwarted. In 1963, for example, the City of Seattle Council passed an open housing ordinance,



but referred it to voters. Advocacy and support of the ordinance followed, with a well organized and attended march in support of local law on March 7, 1964 at several churches, the Seattle Center, and Court House Park. Regardless, the voting public defeated the ordinance on a two-to-one basis in the referendum later that year. It was not until 1968 that the Council passed an open housing ordinance, in part of its response to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and recognition that civil rights required local affirmation (Seattle Municipal Archives, “The Fair Housing Campaign, 1959-1968”).

With assurance from the Federal Fair Housing Act, minority families could move to wherever they wished to live in the county. However, recent data analysis cites the enduring impact of earlier exclusionary mortgage practices on family wealth. Restrictive covenants and unfair sale and financing practices resulted in denied opportunities to grow the kind of wealth that home equity has provided to middle-class homeowners throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Studies indicate the disparity in homeownership rates remains throughout King County, with inequity contributing to a persistent racial wealth gap. “Today, the average Black family has only one-eighth the net worth or assets of the average white family. That difference ... is not explained by other factors, like education, earnings rates, and savings rates. It is really the legacy of racial inequality from generations past” (ITS, 2003).



Above left, a 1936 map, produced by appraisers for the Federal Housing Administration, noting grades of security associated with housing, ranging from D, hazardous (red); C, definitely declining (yellow); B, still desirable (blue); and A, best (green). Much of the red area in the Central District corresponded to red-lining (Seattle Civil Rights). Above right, mapped census data shows the concentration of African American residents in the same area cited as hazardous some four decades later (University of Washington, Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project, 2009).

Many conditions have changed in recent decades as enforcement of fair housing laws and regulations became more rigorous, and community values changed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century along with migration and immigration patterns. Bellevue, for example, which is the fifth largest city in the state with a 2014 population of 134,400, has become an increasingly diverse city with more than 40 percent of its residents as members of minority races or ethnicity according to the 2010 U.S. Census (City of Bellevue website, “Demographics”).

Recently, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded the increasing diversity of King County residents. The county’s population as of July 2015 was 2,117,125 people, which represents an increase of 9.6 percent

from 2010. The county's residents represent diverse races: 69.5 percent are White, 16.9 percent Asian, 9.5 percent Hispanic or Latino, 6.8 percent African-American or Black, 5 percent of two or more races, American Indians, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander together make up 2 percent, and 0.8 percent are Alaska American and/or Native Alaskan tribal members. The region is attractive to many, and foreign-born persons account for 21 percent of its total population.

In addition to greater racial and ethnic diversity, the types of households that live in the county have changed from those of the post-war period. Families made up approximately 60 percent of the County's total 819,651 households in 2016. In contrast to their sizes in the 1950s and 1960s, today's families are much smaller, with an average household size of 2.45. Owner-occupied houses make up about 57.4 percent of the total. Nearly all dwellings are located in towns and cities, with only 12.3 percent (253,280) of all residents residing in unincorporated county areas (U. S. Census Bureau, "Quick Facts," and King County, "Demographic Trends of King County").

#### **4. SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Regional Economic Growth**

The character of many small cities and communities in King County emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century as the economy was based on resource extraction, with a basis in logging, agriculture, and fishing. The regional economy boomed during World War I, faltered after the war and then stabilized in the 1920s until the Great Depression. The run-up to World War II brought new investment and employment opportunities. Other industries emerged soon after Pearl Harbor and the county's declaration of war, followed by military contracts to expand embarkation depots in Auburn, add increase shipbuilding. Boeing plants in South Seattle and Renton expanded, with the company emerging after the war as the primary employer in the county and the region.

The influx of defense workers during the war added to the county's residential population. These new workers and families were initially accommodated in federal housing projects in Seattle and surrounding cities while the Navy continued to operate a station at Sandpoint, and the Army remained a presence at Fort Lawton in Seattle. After the war, many of the new residents who had migrated from other parts of the county chose to stay.

Statistics underscore some mid-century national trends that were reflected throughout the Puget Sound area. These patterns illuminate the initial economic anxiety after the war, followed by the boom that resulted from the government's redirection of the economy away from the military effort to the domestic spending. The rise in the gross national product, from \$200 million in 1945 to \$500 million in 1960, reflected the country's overall economic growth. Locally, there were renewed federal contracts for shipbuilding industries and the expansion of the Boeing plants in Renton, South Seattle, and Everett. In the 1950s, the number of people employed nationally in service industries surpassed those working in production for the first time, and by 1966, there were more people employed in "white collar" industries than in blue collar work.

##### **Transportation Patterns in King County**

The development of transportation systems and early residential suburbs were closely linked throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the early part of the century, transport systems included travel on boats and ferries, and by interurban trolleys. The inter-urban line that connected Everett to Seattle and southward to Steilacoom was established in 1902, and was extended through the Green River Valley to Puyallup and beyond it to Tacoma (Crowley, 2000). By this time, major logging efforts were long finished, and transportation of goods by boat along the Sammamish River and Lake Washington had largely changed to trucking on enhanced road systems, resulting in increased regional connectivity. Parallel results were

seen in streetcar suburbs where roadbeds, laid out originally for horse-drawn streetcars, were turned over to electric streetcars.

Commercial developments followed new road systems as seen along Evergreen Way (original Highway 99). Residents could travel by public transportation; for example by streetcar from downtown Seattle that ran up Yesler Way to Lake Washington, and from there by ferry to the city of Kirkland. Up until 1950, a Kirkland resident would need only a half-hour to travel from downtown Seattle, with the ferry ride from Leschi taking only 20 minutes.

Public transit was reduced during World War II, and emerged in the late 1940s to face strong competition from private automobiles. The first Lake Washington floating bridge was constructed to Mercer Island, and opened in 1940, with a second bridge connected to the Eastgate area south of Bellevue. These bridges provided easy access from the East Side to the employment centers in Seattle and surrounding area. With the focus on the war effort in the 1940s, however, most drivers were limited to gas purchases of only three or four gallons until 1946, when rationing was lifted. By the 1960s, the remaining trolley and bus systems, such as Seattle's electric trolley system, traveled along well-established routes, leaving large areas of new development unnerved and inaccessible except by private car. Similarly, until the construction of the 520 bridge across Lake Washington in 1963, and that of Interstate 5 along the Puget Sound corridor, suburban neighborhoods and outlying areas of the County remained relatively inaccessible. With increased auto ownership and expansion of roads, residents could drive from their homes to shop or to work.

While many residents in urban centers lived in boarding or apartment houses in the decades leading up to the 1930s, conditions changed after World War II. Most returning veterans started families, and they wanted the freedom and middle-class identity brought about by home ownership. Congress passed the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act in 1944, which guaranteed mortgage loans to veterans. This act, along with other government finance programs, and the private financing offered by the new building industries, met the needs of young families with unprecedented construction of new suburban neighborhoods.

In the decade after the end of World War II building permits in King County reached a new high, and this pattern was reflected in Seattle as well where local building construction permits reached a new all-time peak in 1948, with further increases in the following year. Residential construction occurred largely in previously undeveloped areas, including neighborhoods in the north end of the city and in West Seattle. Across Lake Washington, land that had been cleared by Japanese immigrant and Japanese-American truck farmers laid fallow after they were interned during World War II. Vacant, it was primed for development, which came in the form of extensive suburban development.

Just as residential development spread outward from the city center, so did commerce with the arrival of shopping malls and auto-oriented strip malls, and drive-in everything. These new models of retailing, with ample parking on surface lots and "shops geared to more mobile and affluent consumers," quickly became commonplace as suburban shopping centers shifted retail commerce from the traditional downtown (O'Donnell, p. 64). With customers moving to the suburbs, there was accompanying growth of Northgate, Southcenter, and Bell (Bellevue) Square.

The interstate freeway linking Tacoma, Seattle, and Everett opened on February 1965, stimulating additional commercial development. By this date, the Boeing Company had become the largest employer in the region with many employees commuting to its facilities in South Seattle, Renton, and Kent. The "Boeing Boom" pushed property values up and encouraged growth in the north part of King County after the company announced its decision to locate a new plant for construction of the 747 jumbo jet at Paine Field, north of King County, in 1966. However, this was short-lived—while Puget Sound Boeing employment reached a high in 1968 of 101,000, it dropped to 80,400 in early 1970 and plummeted to just 32,500 by October 1971. In nearby Everett, employment dropped from 25,000 to fewer than 7,000, while in King County the impact was even greater (O'Donnell, pp. 81-83). By 1971, the local unemployment rate rose to 13.4 percent, eventually reaching 17 percent (*Seattle Times*, 1986-1996 Centennial).

### A Timeline of Some Mid-Century Historic Events, 1946 to 1975

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1945    | Jackie Robinson, the first African-American major leaguer, signs with the Dodgers Atomic bomb tested, followed by bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki  |
| 1947    | America's first drive-in, Red's Giant Hamburger, opens in Missouri on Route 66   |
| 1948    | Washington State Legislature passes Un-American Activities bill<br>First commercial TV broadcast in Seattle  |
| 1949    | Seattle-Tacoma Airport dedicated<br>7.0R earthquake  |
| 1950    | Seattle population: 467,591; King County, 732,992; Washington 2,378,963<br>Introduction of the first credit card<br>Northgate Shopping Mall opens for business; by 1960 there are 4,500 malls throughout the nation; by 1975, 16,400 malls<br>The ferry from Leschi, in Seattle, to Kirkland, is curtailed |
| 1951    | First UNIVAC mainframe computer delivered to the US Census Bureau  |
| 1950–53 | Korean War   |
| 1952    | A welder at the Weber Brothers Metal Works invents the Weber grill   |
| 1953    | DNA is discovered<br>Northwest School painters recognized in <i>Life</i> magazine  |
| 1954    | IBM 650 begins mass production; Texas Instruments introduces the silicon transistor<br>Swanson & Sons creates the first TV dinner  |
| 1954–75 | Vietnam War; US official involvement in 1964, withdrawal in 1973   |
| 1956    | Federal Aid Highway Act passes, funding 41,000 miles of roadways and highways<br>Elvis releases "Heartbreak Hotel," appears on Ed Sullivan Show with "Hound Dog"   |
| 1958–79 | Boeing produces the 707, introducing the commercial jet age  |
| 1960    | Seattle population: 557,087; King County 935, 014; Washington: 2,853,214<br>Close to 90% of all American households owns a TV<br>The FDA approves oral contraceptives  |
| 1961    | Peace Corps established<br>Bob Dylan releases rock album "Highway 61 Revisited"  |
| 1962    | Seattle Worlds Fair and the Monorail open<br>Opening of Interstate 5 Highway and Ship Canal Bridge   |
| 1963    | 520 Bridge opens between Bellevue  |
| 1965    | 6.6 R earthquake   |
| 1966    | Founding of the UW Black Student Union<br>The Beatles perform at the Seattle Center<br>Boeing builds 747 plant at Paine Field, Everett   |
| 1967    | Summer of Love in San Francisco; Jimi Hendricks releases "Purple Haze"   |
| 1968    | Passage of Forward Thrust funding<br>Federal minimum wage is raised to \$1.60/hour<br>Assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy   |
| 1969    | Woodstock music festival<br>Apollo 11 lands on the moon, Neil Armstrong notes: "One small step for man ..."  |
| 1970    | Seattle population, 530,831; King County, 1,159,369; Washington, 3,413,244<br>Passage of the National Environmental Protection Act<br>First Earth Day Celebration  |
| 1970–71 | Federal cancellation of supersonic transport SST results in "Boeing Bust" followed by regional layoffs of over 53,000  |

(Cited events are noted in Long, September 4, 2006; U.S. Census records; Martins, Summer 2017; UW website, "Timeline – The UW Celebrates 150 Years"; and Seattle Times 1896-1996).

## 5. MODERN-ERA RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

### Levittown and Standardized Design

Construction innovation is a feature of mid-century residential development. Many cite the work of Abraham Levitt and his two sons as having invented the American suburb, after they established the building company that built over 17,500 dwellings in Nassau County, New York. The Levitts were the first to transform the cottage industry of homebuilding into a manufactured process, beginning in 1946 with efforts to plan and construct the four planned communities that made up Levittown. The company used mass-produced methods honed during the war for construction materials, such as pre-cut lumber for framing, plywood for sheathing, and pre-mixed concrete for floor slabs, along with manufactured windows, doors, hardware, and fixtures.

The Levitts' standardized building designs and specified construction sequence of 27 steps, undertaken by trained workers, led to a production rate of 30 houses per day by 1948. Initially focused on rental housing, Levitt and Sons quickly moved into the sale of houses, offering a prospective homeowner a 30-year mortgage with no down payment through FHA-backed financing. In 1949, the company introduced a new design, a "ranch house," which it sold in five variations for \$7,990.

The following year, the ranch house design was expanded to provide a carport and built-in television. By 1951, the company had constructed nearly 17,500 homes. Perhaps of greater impact was the company's influence on other developers and homebuilders across the nation to systemize their approach to construction.



*Left, a view of the materials used by the Levitt Brothers Company in constructing a typical Levittown house (Levittown Historical Society).*

Throughout the Northwest, other standardized materials were used, including those produced by forest industries in the Northwest. For example, there was "Plyscord," a new type of plywood, which emerged in the post-war period for use in home building, along with glue-laminated beams. Other products that allowed for speedy construction included manufactured windows, typically aluminum-framed, such as those built by Fentron in its Seattle plant in Ballard. Local manufacturers began producing factory-built cabinets. Off-the-shelf hardware, such as "Quick-Set" locks, and items made by national manufacturers including plumbing fixtures and fittings, were sold by local lumber yards and early discount stores, such as Pay n' Pack and Ernst Hardware. These retailers began to operate on weekends to serve the growing market of do-it-yourself home owners in addition to builders.



## Residential House Styles

Between 1946 and 1975, single-family residences took different forms and styles, often within a vernacular style, whereby the houses were designed and constructed by builders following a tradition rather than self-conscious or inventive design.

- **Minimal Traditional** (ca. 1935 – 1955) residences typically have a simple gable roof with low to medium pitch, sometimes with a side gable, but with little or no overhang and minimal rake overhang; often with a rectangular or L-shaped floor plan, and a detached garage. Wood framed, it typically has single-hung windows of similar size or windows with horizontal muntin bars, used in single openings or grouped and set into openings in the middle of walls (“punched windows”), sometimes in minimal corner window assemblies. Wood siding, stucco, and asbestos shingles are all typical cladding, and it sometimes has a small covered porch and entry stoop.
- The **Ranch House** (ca. 1945 – 1985) typically has a more expansive footprint than the earlier Minimal Traditional and Transitional Ranch styles, and often features an L-shape footprint, with integral carport or garage, and/or breezeway. It connects to the nearby landscape with patios and integrated planters, and features large “picture windows,” assembled windows composed in horizontal strips or abutting at outer corners, and sometimes clerestories. Exteriors are often finished with brick or stone veneer, wood, or a combination of cladding, often with a large or grouped fireplace chimney. A raised Ranch house is placed on a berm above a basement level garage. (The Transitional Ranch form dwellings emerged throughout the nation in the 1940s. An economical form, it featured a horizontal massing with shallow roof pitches and overhanging eaves.)
- **Split Level** and **Split Entry** (ca. 1950 – 1990), these houses are two or three stories. The main entry is typically at the mid-level, sheltered by the roof overhang or entry porch, which are often detailed with a colonnade or decorative metal porch and roof supports. The roof form may be a front or side gable, hip, or combination. The front door is emphasized, often by side lights or clerestory glazing or by paired doors. A partially raised basement may often contain windows in foundation walls near grade. Windows are typically sliding aluminum frame types. These houses may feature side-by-side wings of different levels or a “flying wing” below the lower end of a continuous gable roof. Cladding is often wood, sometimes with vertical boards, or siding, sometimes in combination with cultured stone or brick veneer. In split-level houses the upper level contains more private rooms, such as bedrooms, and the lower level contains the living room, dining and kitchen; front doors enter at a landing set halfway between the floors; the door is often centrally located.
- The **International Style** (ca. 1940 – 1970s) originated in Europe, and spread initially to the East Coast and Southern California. These dwellings feature flat roofs, cubic massing, and smooth exterior surfaces, often finished with white-colored stucco. These designs embrace the concept of the house as a “machine for living.” The massing is compact and horizontal and feature flat roofs, sometimes with asymmetrical projections.
- Later Modern era **Shed** houses (ca. 1960 – 1985) are typically two story structures that feature steep shed roofs, often with different orientations, and boxy, asymmetric massing. Wall planes, typically clad in vertical wood siding or shingles, are provided along with large expanses of windows, sometimes in unusual shapes, such as triangles and parallelograms. Windows may be composed individually or placed in corner configurations. These houses, inspired by the Sea Ranch development in Northern California from the mid-1960s, often have exposed framing members and cut-out openings in the roofs.
- **Northwest Regional** (ca. 1950 – 1970s) houses were constructed with expressive post and beam structural systems that were often extended into a front or side yard to create a fenced enclosure, enclosed entry passage, or carport. These houses are most often clad with wood siding or sometimes with wood shingles. Wood post and beam, framing and cladding often indicate the

influence of Scandinavian and Japanese architecture, and express the “natural” qualities of local materials, while the structural bays add abstract rhythms.

A report on many other mid-century building styles, “Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Washington State” is available on the DAHP website (Houser, 2014). This report cites pre-war styles and examples dating from the 1930s, and a range of other post-war styles: World War II Era Cottage, Minimal Traditional, the Quonset Hut, A-frame and Geodesic Domes, Populuxe/Googie, Pavilion and Mansard styles, Neo-Expressionism, New Formalism, Wrightian, and Brutalism. Within the Ranch style it cites subsets – Storybook, Early American, Hacienda, and Asian-inspired Ranch.

In the West, the most popular design for single-family houses in the post-war era was the Ranch style house. A style that embodied democratic ideals for middle-class families, it introduced a new way of informal living, as well as new efficient and affordable construction techniques and materials. California architect Cliff May cited the characteristics of this style in a 1946 publication, *Western Ranch Houses*: “the garden is an outside room, and the house is built around a patio. It spread out to get a view, like a tree, and has simple, clean lines with glass and solid walls. There is no front or back, and the living space is the total combination of indoor-outdoor spaces” (May, in Gottfried, p. 207). These features, and the freedom that their spaciousness represented to returning war veterans and their families, were easily adapted by designers and builders.

### **Lot Sizes, Topography, Infrastructure and Landscaping**

Many suburban developments turned away from the rigid grid of the urban plat in favor of curvilinear streets and cul de sacs, which worked with the site topography. These street patterns gave residents a sense of security and privacy, and since many developments lacked sidewalks, they also provided pedestrians with greater safety by slowing motor vehicles. Some of the planning and landscape design concepts that served as a foundation for the layout of streetcar suburbs reach back to late 19<sup>th</sup> century ideals about middle-class suburbs put forward by Frederick Law Olmstead and others.

In contrast to early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential parcels in urban neighborhoods, which were typically based on plot widths of 30 to 50 feet and lots sized up to 5,000 square feet, suburban developments and settings allowed for large lots, often up to quarter or half-acre parcels. Alley systems that allowed for separated service vehicles and rear vehicle access to garages gave way to wider streets. The larger parcels seen in suburban neighborhoods and planned communities, often of a quarter-acre or larger, allow for direct driveways and the incorporation of multi-vehicle carports and integrated garages at grade with the house or in lower basements levels. They also provide deep yards with houses set back from the street, and expansive green lawns and landscape spaces that express collective values and shared community aesthetics.

The American front lawn is often an idyllic object of shared beauty. Front-facing picture windows in the facades of many houses in a neighborhood such as Fauntlee Hills and Lake Hills afford outward views, with plant beds extending from each facade to serve as a pictorial edge frame for the windows (Isenstadt, pp. 122- 132). Open views are a component of suburban design and neighborhood utilities as well when power poles are minimized by location or where electrical distribution is underground. Because of the cost of this type of infrastructure, underground power lines are often limited to high-end and waterfront areas, such as in parts of Innis Arden in Shoreline, Medina, Normandy Park, Mercer Island, and the Arroyo area of south West Seattle.

Throughout some suburban neighborhoods, grading provided for relatively level home sites with gently sloping front lawns. Topographic changes were accommodated by rockeries and retaining walls. Street edges define consistency, while landscape installations by individual owners emphasize picturesque gardens groups of shrubs and trees.

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a rising interest in gardening, as represented by the growing number of garden clubs and magazines such as *Country Life*, *House and Garden*, and *Sunset*. The influence of these shelter magazines and the rising post-war interest in English cottage and Japanese gardens, along with those that use native materials, are often reflected in the plant selections and arrangement in informally-shaped beds. The age and maturity of many shrubs and trees, combined with deep green yards, create homogeneous neighborhood settings.

In contrast to the consistency of front yard treatments, many back yards represent the individual dweller's needs and leisure interests, as suggested by the addition of decks and patio paving, edge plantings and gardens, and/or fences for children and pets. In the side and back yards, natural mature landscapes minimize views of neighboring properties.

### **Building for Efficiency and Low Cost**

Compared to current houses, mid-century residences often appear modest. In size those selected for the survey that accompanies this context statement range from 670 to about 2,000 square feet (with some additional space in basements and/or garages). Dwellings such as these were created for a small family, with provision of two or three bedrooms and one or one-and-a half baths. The houses often were constructed with on-grade concrete slabs, and post and beam framing that allowed open spaces to flow together and minimize interior partitions. Frugality and modesty were positive terms used to describe their designs.

The average square foot cost increased 70% between 1950 and 1970, from \$19.07 to \$11.20. In 1950, the average house cost approximately \$11,000. It had 983 square feet, and likely contained two bedrooms and a single bathroom. In comparison, by 1970, the average house size had grown to slightly more than 1,400 square feet, and 65% had three or more bedrooms. They had larger rooms and many amenities, including air conditioning and multiple bathrooms (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, cited in Dunlop, pp. 10-13).

Furthermore, the larger lots sizes allowed for wider driveways and garages, sized for one or two doors, which could be integrated into the house form, with their openings at grade or sub-grade basement levels, or situated as separate accessory buildings, as wood framed carports linked by covered walkways to the dwelling.

### **Pre-Fabricated Systems, Kits and Dwellings**

One solution to address the post-war housing crisis was the manufactured construction of components. Post-war builders economized by using standardized framing and trim materials and designs that allowed for use of consistent sized framing members. Manufactured and off-the-shelf items, such as windows and flush-type veneer-clad doors, and prefabricated components such as plywood for sheathing and exterior panels were common. Pre-fabricated elements, such as walls were manufactured by the Weyerhaeuser company in the later 1940s or West Coast Mills of Centralia, and stressed sky plywood and wood framed units for walls and applications were available in the 1950s (Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, p. 37 and 86).

Manufacturing also allowed for kit dwellings. These houses were promoted conceptually in professional journals and later made popular by magazines such as *Popular Mechanics*. The ramp-up and war-effort production had convinced many in varied industries that a systemized approach led to efficiency and profitability, including those in the building trades. In addition, some who had worked in the construction of military bases had learned first-hand about the speed of building and the labor savings that resulted from pre-fabrication.

Kit dwellings or prefabricated houses included prototypes such as the steel-framed structures with porcelain enamel coated steel panel cladding made by the Lustron Corporation. This company erected 2,500 houses nationwide, largely in the Midwest. Other kit types involved stressed-skin plywood construction methods utilized by Gunnison Homes and National Homes. However innovative these prototypical systems were, wood-framed house in the Puget Sound area were easily built on-site due to the ease of material distribution and simple conventional techniques they employed. Modular Structures of Tacoma built a number of houses in Tacoma beginning in the late 1940s that used wood stressed skin panels (*ibid*, p. 89-91). In Washington, two pre-fabricated house manufacturers – Pan-Abode, and Lindal Cedar Homes Company – emerged in the 1950s, producing simple timber and post and beam framed, cedar clad dwellings, initially as cabins and simple vacation shelters. In the 1960s, it was increasingly common for homebuyers to see these exhibit houses at fairs and expos.

The manufactured dwellings had some inherent efficiency that appealed to many home owners, especially those living in remote locations where skilled builders might be limited. The manufacturers selected raw materials for consistency and quality; structural pieces were engineered and cut to fit; and all components were designed and fabricated for efficiency and low-waste. The manufacturers typically offered a buyer the services of its in-house design staff along with options to customize the design, and detail instructions that allowed an owner to serve as the general contractor. In addition, these houses could be financed by FHA loans.

Pan-Abode, established in 1952 by a Danish cabinetmaker, became known for its Kit Homes and Cabin Building Systems, which included single-story Ranch houses with gable and cross-gable dwellings. Its factory built systems of Western red cedar post and beam timber frames and exterior walls in the “Classic Timber” series that utilized square-shaped solid logs, which were similar to “Lincoln” logs. In the 1970s, in response to market concerns about energy conservation, Lindal expanded its lines to include 4x6 and double wall construction to accommodate wall insulation. More recent Pan Abode houses include the “Phoenix Timber system” with corner posts that join wall components, and the “D-log” exterior walls of stacked logs made of wood laminations milled to give a rounded, half-log appearance.



Above, a manufactured house kit design, the “Westerner #1775 model (Pan Abode website).

Lindal Cedar Homes was a Canadian company founded by Sir Walter Lindal in 1945. He opened a U.S. factory in Tacoma as well as factories around the same time in Shropshire, England (as Cedarworth Homes Ltd.) and in Limerick, Ireland (as Cedarworth Homes of Ireland, Ltd.). In the 1970s, the company moved its headquarters to south Seattle, and its factory to Burlington, Washington. Presently, the company has manufactured over 50,000 houses, which have been shipped and assembled in the U.S., Canada, Japan, Russia, and other locales.

A Lindal dwelling is a post and beam structure (with steel plate-reinforced wood beams and later glue-lams) with floor platforms made with 16'-long beams on piers spaced at 8' centers, and solid 2x8 T&G floor boards, along with roof trusses, and perimeter walls and partitions made of studs and solid planks,

along with cedar trim, furring and insulation, neoprene gaskets, doors, and pre-assembled window. All of the wood elements were pre-cut, and notched for assembly. The systems were based on a consistent 5'-4" module that efficiently accommodated bathrooms, kitchens with unit cabinets, and standard sized living and dining rooms and bedrooms, along with range of door and window sizes. The houses were typically finished with cedar shingle roofs and assembled on poured-in-place concrete foundations and footings, along with site-built electrical, plumbing, and heating elements.

By the late 1960s Lindal Cedar Homes offered system components for a small "A" frame – a cabin-like structure with 60 degree pitched roof over a sleeping loft – a one and a-half chalet model with a 12:12 roof pitch, and a one story house with a 4:12 gable roof pitch, in addition to two-story motels and multiplex dwellings. The house designs allowed for customization through the selection of window and doors, and the addition of porches and decks, and tile, wallboard, and carpeting. Construction packages were shipped to the job site along with a parts list, plans, and details as well as a photo-illustrated instruction booklet. The parts list and instruction manual, titled "How to Build your new Lindal Cedar Home," were provided for construction by the novice homebuilder – often the homeowners – as well as contractor.

### **Features and Materials of the Mid-Century House**

The massing and facade compositions of suburban houses vary considerably, but they typically are asymmetrical as a reflection of internal functions. Exterior cladding materials included painted and stained wood siding (clapboard, vertical boards, and board and batten), often mixed with brick and stone masonry veneer. Shingles grew more popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly on Shed and Northwest Regional style dwellings. Frame construction uses dimension lumber in post and beam systems and stud walls, and masonry brick and/or stone veneers or panels for infill. Brick and concrete masonry units included highly textured and varied colored units, as well as narrow "Roman brick" popular in the 1940s and 1950s. Masonry is often used for large fireplace chimneys, which are frequently massive with horizontal proportions or set between rooms to act as screens. In many houses the large chimney rising from an end wall or central roof area is sometimes capped by a thin, inverted slab; constructed typically of brick, sometimes of or ashlar stone veneer.

The simple, economical rectangular massing of the early Modern era house gave way to L and U-shaped buildings with an entry court. In some, a projecting bay or garage mass created an L-shaped plan with a patio or court. Roof forms vary from hipped, gable, and shed types to flat roofs, sometimes with roof projections, deep and continuous overhangs, and/or flat soffits. Roofing typically consists of wood shakes. Wood and asphalt roofing shingles are used on sloped roofs (sometimes clay roof tiles), and "built-up" roofing and membrane roofing on flat roofs.

Wood and aluminum-framed windows are typical, set in a single opening in the wall plane, but more often assembled as repetitive units in wide openings. Floor plans provide framed views through "picture windows" rather than front porches. Large windows and sliding glass doors extend interior views outward and help to connect indoor and outdoor spaces. As manufacturers took on making package units, skylights became more common. Entries are set back within the planar front façade, or roofs extend with deep overhangs, providing protected access. Open interior layouts minimize corridors and vestibules while allowing free movement and extended sightlines.



## 6. PLANNED MID-CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS IN KING COUNTY

The mid-20th century was a unique time in development for planned residential communities. Between the end of World War II and the early 1960s, it was common for a builder to buy and develop large parcels of land for residential use. After this period, nearly all the large plots in the greater Seattle area had been taken, allowing for only small-scale development, rather than larger, cohesive communities. Most of the large suburban development occurred outside of Seattle, following the establishment of new transportation systems, such as the construction of the 520 bridge from northeast Seattle to the East Side, and Interstate 5 that runs north and south of the city to augment Highway 99.

These new highways, bridges and roads allowed homeowners to quickly access new residential areas, supported by suburban shopping malls, and employment centers in urban areas. The new developments typically provided large lots, with room for ample landscaping, and privacy. The areas took advantage of the region's varied topography to provide views, often of water, and access to new parks and other amenities. New suburban cities and bedroom communities (such as Bellevue, Federal Way, and Shoreline) emerged and some of the older cities began to transform into bedroom communities.

In response to the housing crisis following World War II, architects and developers took a systematic approach to increasing the nation's supply of residential buildings. Urged by the National Housing Agency in Washington, D.C., planners used various avenues, from prefabricated houses to planned communities. Neighborhoods, such as Wedgwood in Northeast Seattle, were built quickly, aided by their builder's use of standardized lumber sizes, slightly varied building plans, and on-site framing construction (*Progressive Architecture*, January 1951, p. 46). Along with economy, quality was also highly important to the mid-century residential consumer. Developers made use of marketing tools to assure their homebuyers that their new homes were of a high caliber, and builder reputation was a strong selling point in planned communities and prefabricated homes.

The pattern of planned communities evident in King County includes large suburban developments as well as incremental smaller-scale construction by a range of talented builder developers. Representative communities are cited in this report. They include Fauntlee Hills, in south part of West Seattle, Normandy Park, along the edge of Puget Sound west of Burien, and Lake Hills and Norwood Village. In the creation of each, there were individuals with skills to envision and realize the new developments, aided by available capital, supported by marketing programs in local media, while articles in shelter magazines helped raise consumer awareness.

### A.C. WEBB and FAUNTLEE HILLS

In the post-World War II period, Seattle was among many areas experiencing a dearth of residential buildings, and contractors scrambled to acquire large tracts of land on which to develop planned residential communities (Rash, 308). Fauntlee Hills in West Seattle was one such neighborhood.

The area around the Fauntleroy Cove, which encompasses several present-day West Seattle neighborhoods (including Fauntlee Hills and Fauntleroy), has shown evidence of historic use as a Native American burial ground and fishing site. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, American pioneers had reached the region, and by the late 1880s, Native Americans maintained only a minimal presence. The Klondike Gold Rush, along with the help of prominent entrepreneurs from Seattle, spurred development in the Fauntleroy area, which was used as a summer getaway for wealthy Seattleites in the early 1900s. However, the popularity of the idyllic area grew, and with the addition of streetcar access and the annexation of West Seattle in 1907, residential homes and community businesses continued to populate the cove (Log House Museum). Summer cabins were also built, along with facilities by the YMCA, Fauntleroy Church, and Kenny Presbyterian Retirement Home.



**Why Your Home Dollars  
Buy More in Fauntlee Hills**

*First, you buy from the builders. Second, Fauntlee Hills is one of the largest home building programs in the city. The substantial savings from large purchases and direct buying are passed on to you.*

*This is why we can offer spacious brick view homes with concrete streets, sidewalks, city water and sewers for as little as \$15,500.*

*Fauntlee Hills does give you more for your home dollar, plus the satisfaction of living in one of Seattle's finest residential communities.*

*OPEN HOUSE from 1 p. m. to 6 p. m. Sundays, 4 p. m. to 7 p. m. weekdays.*

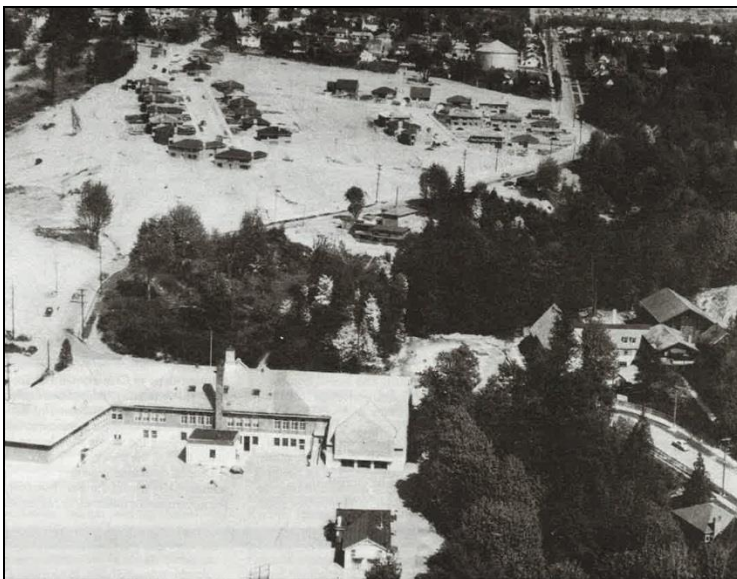
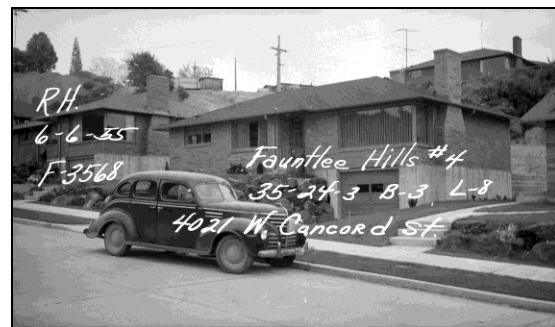
*DIRECTIONS: Drive South on 35th Ave. S. W., turn West on Barton Street. Watch for the lawn-stone entrance monuments.*

***Fauntlee Hills***  
"SEATTLE'S NEW QUALITY ADDRESS"

**A. C. Webb & Co., Inc., Developers & Builders**  
West Barton & 40th Ave. S. W. Phone HO. 1080 or AV. 5421

Left, advertisements for Fauntlee Hills, a development in West Seattle included this one from the November 1, 1953 Seattle Times, featured selling points such as economic value with a direct purchase from the builder. This ad cites a "spacious brick view home" for \$15,000. The ads also mentioned good schools, and proximity to the nearby Lincoln Park.

Below, a King County Tax Assessor's property record photos of one of the houses in the neighborhood, this one at 4021 West Concord Street, showing the typical residences in June 1966.



Left, an aerial view of Fauntlee Hills as it was initially developed in 1954 (West Seattle Herald, July 1, 1987, p. 154).

The 1907 annexation expanded the City of Seattle's southern limit to W Roxbury Street in West Seattle. The nearby Fauntleroy area became more developed, and additional road building and platting accompanied ferry service in the 1920s from the nearby dock, at the foot of S Brandon Street, to serve Vashon Island and Southworth on the Kitsap Peninsula. (Initially private, the ferry service was taken over by the Washington State Ferry System in 1951.) Nearby Lincoln Park was established just north of

the Fauntleroy Cove as a gift from Seattle pioneer Lawrence Coleman; the park's facilities were enhanced by the CCC in the 1930s.

The A.C. Webb & Company was responsible for the development of small, well-built single-family houses in the Fauntlee Hill community. The company was already an established builder/contractor during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century in the greater Seattle Area and a member of the Seattle Master Builder's Association. Regionally well known for houses in North Admiral district of West Seattle, and for its use of Roman brick, the Webb company name was associated with quality and reliability (*Seattle Times*, June 7, 1953).

Webb's prior projects had focused on more easily accessed, flatter parcels. In 1951, he and the A.C. Webb & Co. purchased a sizeable tract of land on the hillside between 35<sup>th</sup> and Fauntleroy Avenues SE, and then proceeded to plat it for single family residences. Webb built and sold the homes directly to homebuyers, which allowed the cost to be somewhat lower than the market rate since it eliminated the use of a realtor middle man.

Compared to other planned residential communities at the time, the architectural designs in Fauntlee Hills tended to feature more conservative Ranch style designs with somewhat more steeply pitched hipped and gable roofs, along with large picture windows and corner windows featured on primary facades (Rash, p. 309). Most are characterized by brick veneer facades and by a ground-floor garage entry.

Most of the houses during the beginning phases of the project were designed by local architect Douglas W. Vicary. While none were award-winning, his designs were praised in the local press for their ingenuity and simplicity, their affordable, family appeal, and modern comforts like below-ground pools and recreation rooms (*Seattle Times*, October 10, 1948 and May 24, 1953). (It appears, however, that few of the middle-class residences were actually built with swimming pools.)

The development borders the Fauntleroy neighborhood on the west, and is characterized by winding, curvilinear streets, which slope down towards Lincoln Park and the ferry dock that provides access to Southworth and Vashon Island. The design of the development included carefully designed, oriental-inspired landscaping by property owners, which remains present in many of the houses' gardens.

Today Fauntlee Hills maintains much of its initial tightly-knit neighborhood appeal, drawing young families as homebuyers while continuing to house long-term residents. The low-maintenance brick exteriors and easily accessed garages appear to have long appeal for many older residences that, as original owners from the 1950s, have aged in place, gracefully supported by their homes.

### **Designer and Builders of Fauntlee Hills**

Contributing designers and contractors included A. C. Webb and his company, which was responsible for constructing over 200 homes. Douglas Vicary and Charles Hedrick designed many of the homes, and structural engineer A. J. Mahoney assisted with situating the houses amidst the difficult sloping terrain. Vicary was later renowned for his design of the Town Motel, Seattle (*Seattle Times*, August 22, 2010).

## NORMANDY PARK

Present day Normandy Park is located along Puget Sound in the southwest part of King County, west of Burien and the Sea-Tac airport. Historically, the waterfront tidal area served as a location for Native Americans to collect clams and other sources of food. Early Euro-American settlers arrived most often by boat, often en route from settlements in Seattle and Tacoma. The area was populated by a few early homesteaders between 1853 and 1885, including William H. Brown and the Oulett and Gardner families. The Gatzert-Schwabacher Land Company purchased 1,700 acres in the late 1800s, ostensibly to capitalize on a growing railway industry and plans for new rail lines to nearby Des Moines. These plans came to naught, and the company leased the land to farmers (Kershner, n.p.).

In 1926, the Seattle-Tacoma Land Company bought the estate of over 1,000 acres from the Schwabacher's company, intending to create a planned enclave for wealthy residents, complete with beach rights, a yacht club, and a golf course. Under the design of landscape architect Butler S. Sturtevant and architects Bebb & Gould, several French Normandy-style homes were built between 1926 and 1934 (*Seattle Times*, April 8, 1928). However, the Seattle-Tacoma Land Company ceased its efforts with the Great Depression, which led to the company's collapse. Residential development came to a near standstill between the mid-1930s and late 1940s. During this time the tone of advertisements for Normandy Park changed from exclusivity to modest country living. Suddenly, it was "[n]ot necessary to be well-to-do" to benefit from the offerings of the Seattle suburb.

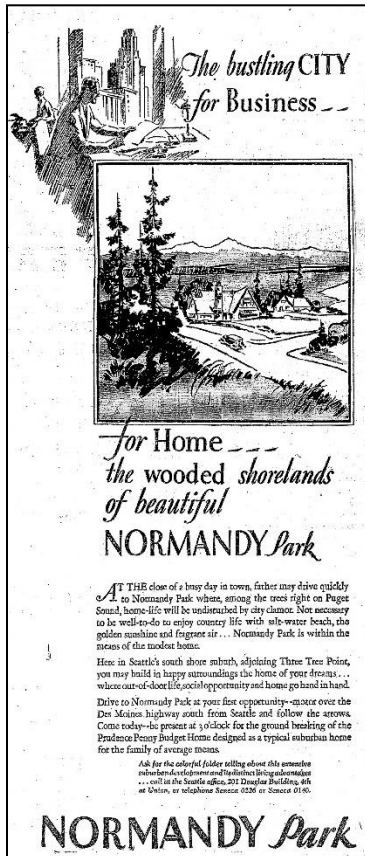
As with Fauntlee Hills to the north, Normandy Park experienced a spike in development in response to the "housing crisis" that followed World War II (*Progressive Architecture*, v. 42, p. 46). Post-war development, expansion of the nearby Boeing plants in South Seattle and Renton, and housing assistance in the form of the G.I. Bill and FHA loans, encouraged development in Normandy Park, continuing the trend of targeting a median income range of homebuyers.

### R. P. Walker and the Normandy Park Estates


Beginning in 1953, R. P. Walker, the developer of Normandy Park Estates, subdivided and offered lots for sale, emphasizing the family neighborhood environment and proximity to private beaches and creek frontage. New houses were designed by a number of local architects, including Jack N. Bryant, Ralph Miller, Jr., and firm Thomas, Grainger & Thomas. They promoted "ultra-modern" design and "modest" accommodations. The house designs varied, although the design elements often involved a single floor plan, with exterior materials that complemented a wooded setting (Margery Phillips, *Seattle Times*, January 31, 1954). A number of the individual houses were recognized in the *Seattle Times* Home of the Month program. Later, commissioned residences were developed for individual homeowners by well-known designers, including architects Robert Theriault, Al Bumgardner, Paul Kirk, and Bain and Overturf.

Select Normandy Park houses were the subject of the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibit of Architecture, sponsored by the Seattle Art Museum in 1963. The community's natural setting and the emphasis on landscape design was cited in the tour brochure for the exhibit: "Bordered by the undulating shores of Puget South the Park is further enhanced by steams, creeks, ravines, hills and gentle sloping areas – all profusely studded with trees and other native growth." The tour guide cited its "well organized planning and enforced restrictions" that protected residents "against invasion of busy highways, business establishments or subdivision developments." It noted that "in this unique residential area, owners have constructed homes inspired by the chosen site but reflecting their individual preferences and needs ... homes of sharply contrasting design that dramatize and heighten the quality of landscape and accentuate the supporting background" (Seattle Art Museum, May 2, 1963).

Below, right, a 1954 Seattle Times Normandy Park open house advertisement for an “ultra-modern house.” This contrasts with the announcement in the 1931 Seattle Times, below left, which envisioned the earlier development as a waterfront enclave for wealthy residents.



The bustling CITY  
for Business



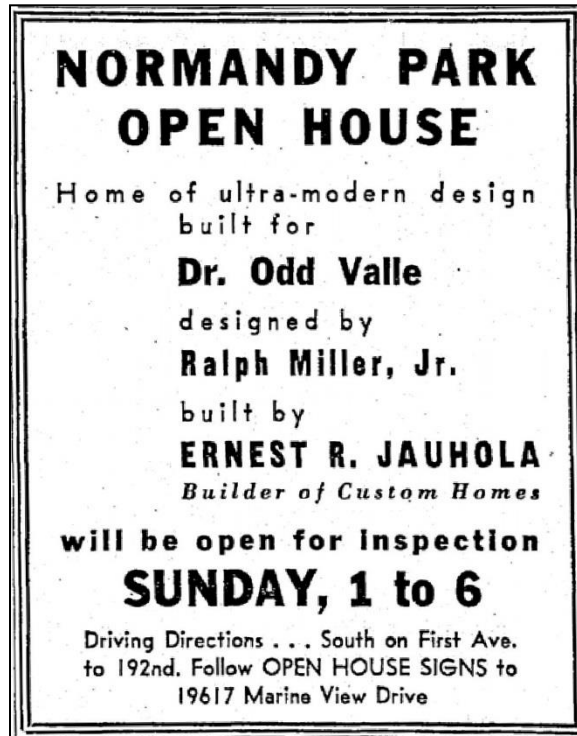
for Home  
the wooded shorelands  
of beautiful  
NORMANDY Park

AT THE close of a busy day in town, father may drive quickly to Normandy Park where, among the trees right on Puget Sound, home-life will be undisturbed by city clamor. Not necessary to be well-to-do to enjoy country life with safe-water beach, the golden sunshine and fragrant air... Normandy Park is within the means of the modest home.

Here in Seattle's south shore suburb, adjoining Three Tree Point, you may build in happy surroundings the home of your dreams... where care-of-the-life, safety, community and home go hand in hand. Drive to Normandy Park a your first opportunity—visit over the Des Moines highway south from Seattle and follow the arrows. Come today—be present at 3 o'clock for the ground breaking of the Braden-Penny Budget Home designed as a typical suburban home for the family of average means.

Ask for the colored folder telling about this wonderful suburban development and the latest living ideas... call at the Seattle office, 201 Douglas Building, 4th at Union, or telephone Seward 0286 or Seward 0140.

**NORMANDY Park**



**NORMANDY PARK  
OPEN HOUSE**

Home of ultra-modern design  
built for  
**Dr. Odd Valle**  
designed by  
**Ralph Miller, Jr.**  
built by  
**ERNEST R. JAUHOLA**  
*Builder of Custom Homes*

**will be open for inspection  
SUNDAY, 1 to 6**

Driving Directions . . . South on First Ave.  
to 192nd. Follow OPEN HOUSE SIGNS to  
19617 Marine View Drive

Present day Normandy Park contains a range of house types and sizes including waterfront dwellings for high income residents and others for more average middle-income families. A covenant accompanying many of the houses provides beach access and a private club building, the mid-century Cove Building, designed by architect Robert Theriault. The development retains its air of a protected and woody community with a current a population of approximately 6,500 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 data).

### Designers and Builders in Normandy Park

Architects and contractors involved in Normandy Park's mid-century development include:

- Ralph Anderson (architect)
- Jack N. Bryant (architect)
- O. O. Bumgardner (architect)
- Ralph Burkhard (architect)
- Kenneth Garrison (architect)
- R. A. Hawkins (builder)
- Ernest R. Jauhola (builder)
- Kinney Leonard (builder)
- Paul Kirk (architect)
- Ralph Miller, Jr. (architect)
- L. R. Owen (builder)
- E. Sheepen (builder)
- Paul Thiry (architect)
- Robert Theriault (architect)
- Thomas, Grainger & Thomas (architects)
- Ward-Parr Building Service (builder)



## NORWOOD VILLAGE

Norwood Village, in present-day Bellevue, developed as a planned community designed in 1949-1951 in response to the needed housing following the war. The community was conceived of and built by the Veteran's Mutual Building Association (VMBA), a housing cooperative led by its president, Mario Storlazzi. The VMBA was incorporated as a non-profit organization in April 1946 for the purpose of redeveloping neighborhoods (*Seattle Times*, April 25, 1946). It and similar associations were able to employ merchant builders under the Fair Housing Act Amendments of 1948 and reduce developers' costs (WSDOT, p. C-13). The intent of the Norwood Village development was to provide cost-effective, affordable housing veterans and their families.

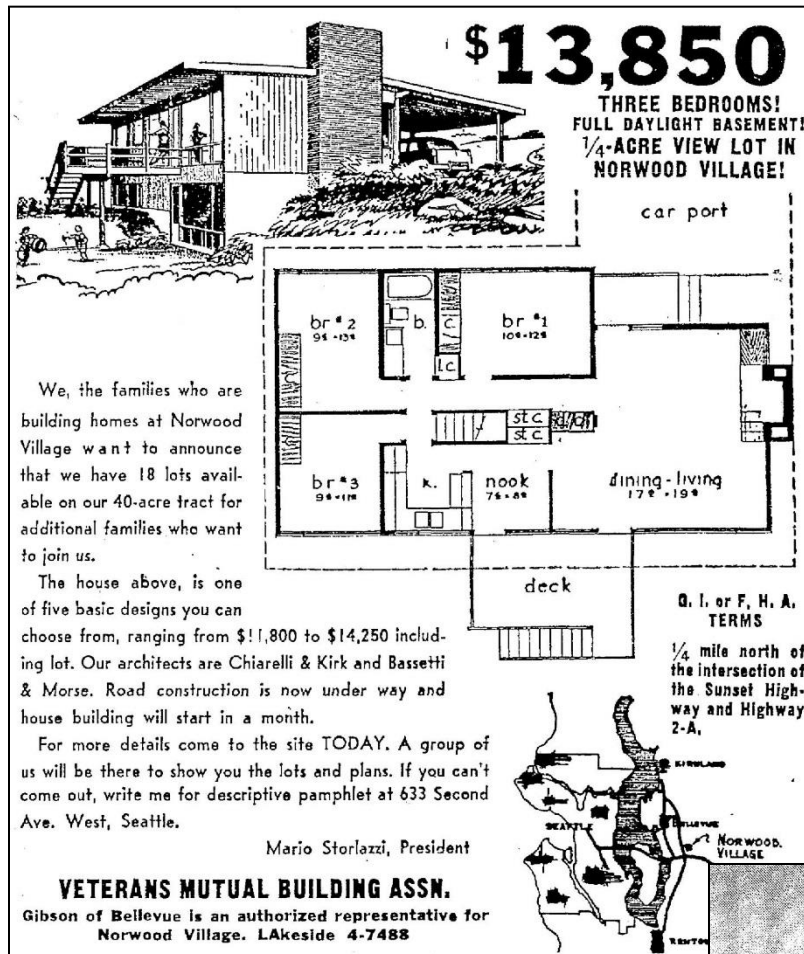
Establishing the neighborhood took a cooperative effort of community planning by the initial 28 members of the VMBA who gathered together in August 1948. They took measures to lower its costs: the tract for the development was purchased at a below-market value, and the lot designs were specifically engineered to avoid excessive regrading and excavation. Twenty acres of the original plot were given to the veterans' association, and because the entire plot was not fully developed, a part of the original purchase was returned to the original builder, G. Weldon Gwinn (Rash, p. 308-309; *Seattle Times*, August 19, 1948).

The VMBA's planning began in 1946 but ground was not broken until 1949. The delay resulted from the association's need for sufficient members and their commitments before proceeding with construction, with a goal of around 100 homes, which anticipated a substantial growth in the VMBA membership. Initially, the proposed dwellings were offered as plans for private purchase and ownership by members. After construction commenced, available lots were marketed to homebuyers outside of the association. New residents are automatically made members of the non-profit corporation, which retains ownership of common areas—including the community pool, four nearby greenbelts, and other open spaces. Norwood Village Park, a city of Bellevue-operated public facility, is situated within the community. Gardner & Hitching, site planners, worked with the builder to achieve a sloping, hilly feel to the development. Rather than a strict grid, their layout resulted in a neighborhood with meandering drives, cul-de-sacs and some dead-end streets. This scheme eliminated through-traffic and also afforded more privacy and views, and helped reduce vehicle speeds in the family neighborhood. Most of the houses were set on ample lots larger than a quarter acre, which allowed for patios, gardens, and enclosed play areas. The lots meet the street, without sidewalks.

For Norwood Village, the Veteran's Association hired two prominent Seattle architect firms to design a series of house plans, unique for their modern design in a suburban, residential setting: Chiarelli and Kirk, and Bassetti and Morse (Rash, 308). Five distinct plans for Norwood Village houses were available for buyers to choose from, ranging from ramblers to tri-level houses. They typically featured integrated carports and post and beam construction. The plans were advertised as "extremely modern," with coveted features such as large picture windows and roomy floor plans (*Seattle Times*, August 19, 1948).

The Norwood Village project was featured in a September 1952 issue of *Living for Young Homemaker*. The development has been the subject of architectural tours. It was studied in 2006 as part of a cultural resources survey, and has been determined eligible by DAHP for listing as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, both for the impressive collection of the work by local Modernist architects and its role in post-World War II suburban development (WSDOT, p. C-14).

Norwood Village is located on Woodridge Hill in the southeast part of the City of Bellevue where it is presently part of the Woodridge neighborhood. Its location is convenient to highways I-90 to the south, with Richards Road to the east and Highway 405 and the Mercer Slough Nature Park to the west. The area was annexed by the City of Bellevue in 1966.



**\$13,850**

**THREE BEDROOMS!  
FULL DAYLIGHT BASEMENT!  
1/4-ACRE VIEW LOT IN  
NORWOOD VILLAGE!**

car port

br #2  
9'6" x 13'6"

b.

br #1  
10'6" x 12'6"

br #3  
9'6" x 11'6"

k.

nook  
7'6" x 8'6"

dining-living  
17'6" x 19'6"

deck

Q. I. or F. H. A.  
TERMS

1/4 mile north of  
the intersection of  
the Sunset High-  
way and Highway  
2-A,

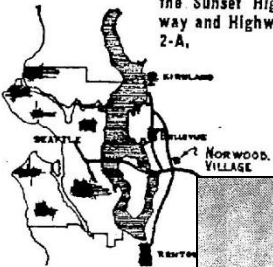
We, the families who are building homes at Norwood Village want to announce that we have 18 lots available on our 40-acre tract for additional families who want to join us.

The house above, is one of five basic designs you can choose from, ranging from \$11,800 to \$14,250 including lot. Our architects are Chiarelli & Kirk and Bassetti & Morse. Road construction is now under way and house building will start in a month.

For more details come to the site TODAY. A group of us will be there to show you the lots and plans. If you can't come out, write me for descriptive pamphlet at 633 Second Ave. West, Seattle.

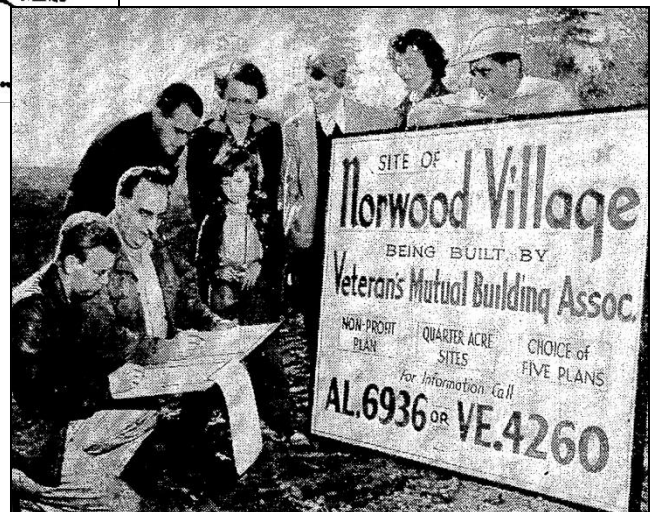
Mario Storlazzi, President

**VETERANS MUTUAL BUILDING ASSN.**  
Gibson of Bellevue is an authorized representative for Norwood Village. Lakeside 4-7488



Left, an advertisement from the *Seattle Times*, March 19, 1950.

Below, earlier members of the VMBA (*Seattle Times*, November 6, 1949).



### Norwood Village Designers

Paul Kirk and Joseph Chiarelli were instrumental in working to “epitomize the Pacific Northwest Regional style” (Houser, Docomomo\_WeWa, “Chiarelli”). The two men were both early practitioners of Modernism, and worked in partnership. As architects, they designed residences, churches and small-scale commercial projects, but they were also known for having developed at least one project, a multi-family apartment house in Seattle’s Eastlake neighborhood. Chiarelli served as president of the Washington chapter of the American Institute for Architects, and Kirk later received a Seattle medal from AIA (Houser; WSDOT, p. C-13). Architects Fred Bassetti and John Morse were both renowned and both received awards for much of their joint work as partners and later as individual designers (Houser). The engineer responsible for the site plan was the firm of Gardner and Hitchings. G. Welton Gwinn was the builder, with Bellevue Construction Company providing the infrastructure (*Seattle Times*, September 29, 1949).

## LAKE HILLS

Perhaps one of the most comprehensive designs in the northwest during the 1950s, Lake Hills was a large, planned community developed in the early 1950s in an area east of Bellevue. At its inception, Lake Hills received a great deal of recognition for its appeal to new homebuyers. For the 1955 grand opening, the *Seattle Times* ran a full-length, promotional section advertising Lake Hills as the “birth of a city.” The development was indeed on a city-sized scale, and was promoted as the largest planned community in the northwest. The featured advertisement described Lake Hills as “A model community of 4,000 homes resting on 1,200 acres of rolling hills and valleys—engineered with facilities to serve an eventual population of 17,000 persons.” Lake Hills was one of the east sides’ “destination suburbs,” along with Newport Hills, Surrey Downs, Somerset, Eastgate, Hilltop, and others.

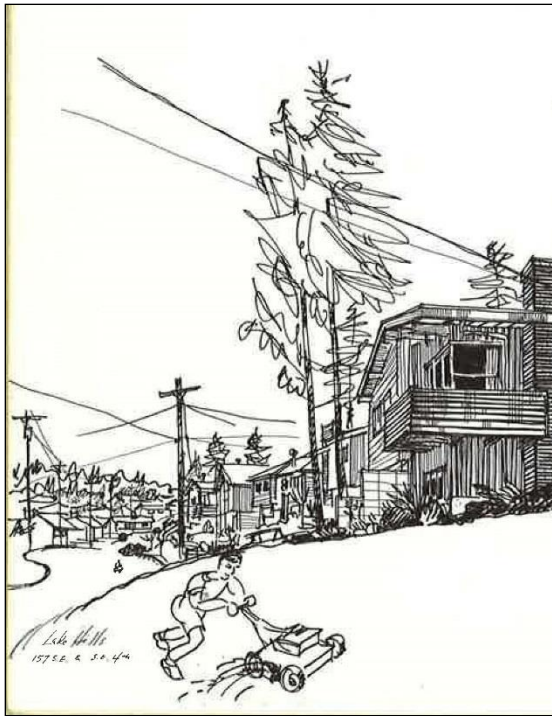
Originally a home to settlements of the Yakima Indians and later Japanese immigrant farmers, the area that makes up Lake Hills was developed as a result of an exploding demand for single family housing, which escalated due to the regional growth of the Boeing Company (Bellevuewa.gov: “West Lake Hills”). The development’s opening ceremony, officiated by then-governor Arthur Langlie, emphasized the high level of income and job opportunities, the growing population of the Pacific Northwest and the region’s positive outlook on the economy (*Seattle Times*, August 21, 1955).

R.H. Conner, a Seattle-based real estate developer and clothing manufacturer, worked with builders George Bell and Ted Valdez to create a self-sufficient community with modern amenities (We are Lake Hills website—“History”). Beginning with the platting of large residential parcels, the 1,200 acres were envisioned to eventually house commercial centers, churches, and green spaces. The idea was immensely popular, and Bell and Valdez were flooded with applications even before the first house was completed. The first houses were available for occupancy in August of 1955, and sales continued to increase at an exponential level. New homes were available with conventional financing, but also through FHA loans and the G.I. Bill. Later builders in Lake Hills included Kinney Leonard and J.W. Morrison & Associates.

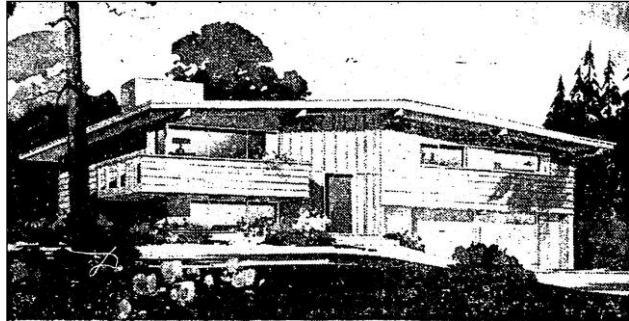
The planning of Lake Hills involved an emphasis on modern design, which soon came to be well known through local features in Margery Phillips’ design column in the *Seattle Times* and national design awards. Homes were characterized by their spacious layout and suburban amenities. Some of these houses were the subject of a recent study by University of Washington urban design and planning students who analyzed the development and its popular house models, note below:

- The Tri-View, a low, asymmetrical gable roofed split level house with a projecting carport and approximately 1,475 square feet, designed in part by structural engineer John Anderson and built by Bell & Valdez.
- The Trilander 2, a single story house with a low gable roof, and projecting carport forming an L-shaped mass, designed by Ronald R. Campell and built by Kinney Leonard.
- The Rivera, another split level home with a double garage integrated into the low-gabled mass at the ground level, designed by Robert Hobbie and built by Bell & Valdez.
- The Greenbrier, a two story gable roofed house with an integrated two-car garage inserted at grade, featuring a classical-inspired design with pillars supporting the front roof overhang and a masonry chimney at one end, built by Bell & Valdez (designer unknown).
- The Westwood 2, a single story house with a continuous gable roof over the main mass and the carport at one end, featuring 1,988 square feet, built by Bell & Valdez (designer unknown).
- The Young Modern, a single story, 1,944 square foot house with an asymmetrical plan characterized by a wide, low pitched, front-facing gable roof over its main mass, with open single or double carport, and centralized chimney mass, built by Bell & Valdez (designer unknown).

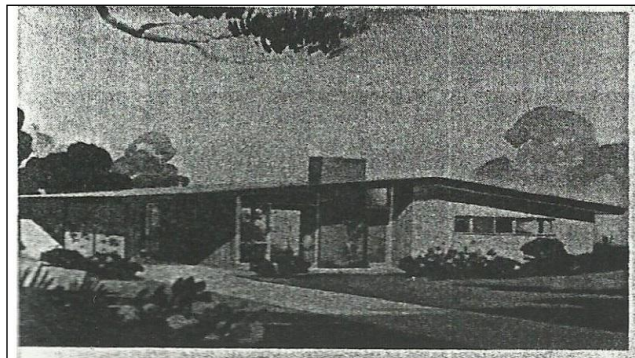
- The Colonial, a two-story house with an attached, single story double garage, with both side-facing gable roofs. The 1,944 square foot house is finished with brick and cedar siding and features four tall posts to support the upper roof overhang. It was designed by architect Lawrence & Hazen and built by J.W. Morrison & Associates.
- The Skylark, a single story house with a low-sloped gable roof planned for a sloping site with a daylight basement opening to the back yard and an attaché single vehicle carport with shed roof projecting from the main mass, built by Bell & Valdez (designer unknown).



Above, an illustration of Lake Hills by Victor Steinbrueck in his 1962 *Cityscape* (p. 44).



Above, an illustration of the Rivera model and below, the Skylark model (Fitting, p. 18 and 25).



Bell and Valdez formed a partnership in 1948 and continuing building residential plots into the 1960s (Fitting, et. al., p. 6). The infrastructure (sewer and storm systems, drainage design) for the development was designed by Harstad and Associates. Architect and engineer John Andersen did many of the initial designs. Builder Kinney Leonard, who was known for some residences in Normandy Park, was also a builder in Lake Hills. Other designers in Lake Hills included John Andersen, Robert Hobbel, Lawrence & Hazen Architects.

Lake Hills has also been cited for its community involvement, with establishment of the Lake Hills Community Club in April 1956. The development was initially its own entity within King County, but it was eventually annexed by the City of Bellevue in 1969. At that time it was the 47<sup>th</sup> area annexed by the city; through 2012 the city has annexed a total of 146. Given its origins, Lake Hills has retained special status within the permit and development processes of the city, with approval authority over some land use actions given to the East Bellevue Community Council, an elected body with five members. The neighborhood presently has an estimated 20,000 residents.



## 7. REPRESENTATIVE DWELLINGS

### Surveyed Properties

The purpose of this project was to develop a context statement for residential development in post-war King County, and the scope did not include a comprehensive survey of houses or an inventory of any single neighborhood. Instead, a selection was made of representative residences for an intensive-level documentation that resulted in the creation of State Historic Property Inventory (HPI) forms for each property. The houses were chosen to represent different ages in the post-war era from 1946 to 1974, different forms, and different styles. Several represent the work of a known builder or architect, and others resulted from a specific funding program, suburban development, or construction technique. Integrity was one important in selecting the property, and the dwelling's original features needed to be clearly visible and intact.

The HPI surveys that result from this study are available on the website of the State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), using its WISAARD database at <https://fortress.wa.gov/dahp/wisaard/>. Each individual HPI form provides additional information about the property, and contemporary photographs. Copies of these forms are included in a report appendix.

The following representative houses were included in several public presentations at the end of the project. Each of these illustrates the rich historical and architectural legacy of mid-century development in King County.

#### South Seattle

##### **10300 61<sup>st</sup> Avenue S, Seattle, 98178**

(Parcel 039300-0050), right, is an intact Modern style house on a cul de sac above Lake Washington in the Lakeridge area of south Seattle (1956). Housing developer Albert Balch, whose name is on the plat – Balch Lake Winds – was involved in the neighborhood's development. Architect Benjamin McAdoo, Jr., was the designer.



#### Lake Forest Park

**18707 45<sup>th</sup> Court NE, Lake Forest Park, 98155** (Parcel 402290-4919), below, by designer Anna Williams, is one of a number of houses by builder/developer John Burrows in areas northeast of Seattle. Constructed in 1970-1972, it is situated on a sloped, wooded parcel, typical of sites in this area. There are many John Burrows houses in Lake Forest Park. Another, at 18511 64<sup>th</sup> Place NE, in nearby Kenmore 98028 (1976), also features his typical post and beam framing, simple roof form, deep overhangs, and tall vertical windows that link interiors with the outdoors.





**18523 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, Lake Forest Park, 98155** (Parcel 402290-6313), right, is a dramatic two-story post and beam house dating from 1960 with a large covered upper deck and components distinguished by colors. The original designer, Glenn Matson, reportedly was responsible for other nearby residences, such as the 1963 house at 5215 NE 187<sup>th</sup> Street (Parcel 402290-6330).



### Arbor Heights in West Seattle

**4224 SW 104<sup>th</sup> Street, Seattle, 98146** (Parcel 289560-0590), below left, is an intact Ranch style house featuring a long hipped roof, fieldstone fireplace chimney, and wood and stone veneer cladding (1954). It sits on a corner site with a Western style split rail fence. Other representative brick veneer Ranch style houses in the Arbor Heights area include 10408 and 10414 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW and 3840 SW 104<sup>th</sup> Street (1951 and 1953), below center and below right.

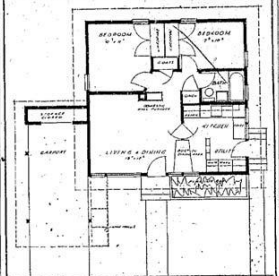



### Seattle's Central Area

**450 25th Avenue E, Seattle, 98112** (Parcel 501600-2102), right and below, from 1951, is one of an estimated 30 "Houses of Merit" built in the early 1950s in Seattle. This program created small, affordable single-family dwellings to address post-war housing needs. The project's sponsor was B. M. Bryant. Benjamin McAdoo, Jr., a noteworthy local architect, was the designer, and G. M. Gwinn the builder (*Seattle Times* articles of May 4, 1950 and April 8, 1951).



**Attractive Dwelling for Family of Moderate Income Open**



**OPEN HOUSE.** A house of merit for modest incomes is scheduled at 1810 28th Av. Seattle in plan, serviceable in construction, commendable in design are features of this house which utilizes to full advantage 620 square feet plus the carport. Benjamin McAdoo, architect; B. M. Bryant, Jr., sponsor; G. M. Gwinn, builder, and Mary Wightman, color co-ordinator, worked as a team in developing a house which combines economy and quality for moderate incomes. Five houses in this central location are open today for inspection from 1 to 5 p.m.

**By MARGHERY R. PHILLIPS**  
The House of Merit—planned for the family which values quality construction . . . can afford a modest price for contemporary living . . . appreciates efficient planning . . . needs only a limited square footage . . . has been designed by Benjamin McAdoo, architect, supervised by B. M. Bryant, Jr., constructed by G. M. Gwinn and decorated by Mary Wightman.

This team of capable designers has developed a group of homes looking to mind the great need for well-constructed, attractive dwellings for those with moderate incomes. B. M. Bryant, Jr.,

**State's 'Crying Need' Is Accommodations for Tourists**

A "crying need" in Washington against the proposed 30-foot State is for suitable accommodations for the tourist trade, the state's highway.

The streets would consist of a ten-foot gravel shoulder, a 12-foot service lane for entering and leaving the highway and two 12-foot through-lanes on each side, with a 15-foot safety strip in the center.

Parking would be allowed only on the shoulder. An additional ten feet would be allowed on the outside for direction, draw and use for entering and leaving the highway at any point and for access to the through lanes. It would be marked off with a red line to prevent through-traffic from using it.

Benjamin McAdoo

finished on the exterior with white, brown shakes and white trim. The sink, refrigerator and hot water tank are located along one wall. The range is below a window. Laundry facilities are on an opposite wall. Colors here are deep turquoise walls, light woodwork and cream linoleum on floors and counter tops.

Economical planning of the kitchen and bath back to back, built-in tub, recessed accessories, linen storage, and modern flooring are noteworthy. Colors are peach and mazon.

Two bedrooms, one in turquoise and one in peach, feature large storage areas with double doors and cross ventilation.

**Warm-Air Heating Unit.** The forced warm-air heating unit is situated in the wall with inconspicuous grilles opening into the living room and hall. Unusual storage tanks for oil are compactly designed.

Most commendable are these quality features: Aluminum shutters, lifetime aluminum siding, lifetime aluminum sliding doors, lifetime aluminum double doors, lifetime aluminum double doors, lifetime aluminum double doors.



Other mid-century houses in Seattle's Central Area were built for middle class families. Three similar 1956 residences, below, are found at 1726, 1720, and 1714 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. This area of the city was "red-lined" by realtors and government institutions. Such racially discriminatory practices limited housing choices of many until passage of fair housing legislation in the 1960s.



### **North Capitol Hill, Seattle**

**1108 E Shelby Street, Seattle, 98102**, below left and center, in the North Capitol Hill/Portage Bay area (Parcel 196220-0395), was designed by owner/architect Edward Cushman, and dates from 1953. The neighboring house at 1114 E Shelby Street, at the corner of Boyer Avenue E (below right), was designed and built by Audrey Van Horne of Van Horne & Van Horne, also in 1953. John and Audrey Van Horne acquired both lots and sold one to their friend and fellow architect Cushman, who reportedly had faced anti-Semitic discrimination in purchasing property in Seattle.

These two small, well built houses are representative of many modest sized dwellings that architects designed for their own families, frequently in collaboration with other designers. Examples of these small scale developments include the Hilltop Community in Bellevue and Hidden Lake in Shoreline.



### **Vashon Island**

**27433 Hake Road SW, Vashon Island, 98070** (Parcel 312203-9039), below left and center, is a distinctive Shed style dwelling built with heavy timber and pole construction. Dating from 1975-1981, it represents this distinct style and also incremental construction by a homeowner, which was a trend in the post-war period. Clad with wood shingles and planks, its front facade features a NW Native design.





Another example of an alternative method of mid-century construction is represented by another house on Vashon Island, left, at **11722 SW Cedarhurst Road** (Parcel 044900-0040). It was built in 1967-1970 by its original owner from a modular “kit” manufactured by Lindal Cedar Homes.

These two island residences represent a late 20<sup>th</sup> century trend where to owner serves as home-builder. This approach is primarily seen in rural areas.

### **Mercer Island**

**3443 72<sup>nd</sup> Place SE, Mercer Island, 98040** (Parcel 130030-1425), right, dates from 1959-1962. Designed by Gene Zema, a well-known northwest architect, this intact Shed style house features a dramatic roof form, and stained cedar siding.



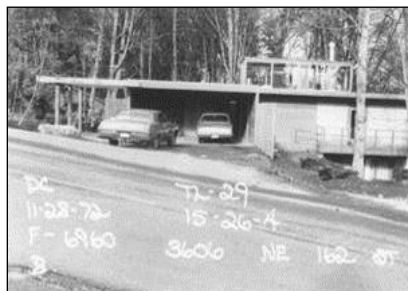
### **Seahurst Park, Burien**

**14448 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW, Burien, 98166** (Parcel 763740-0060) is in the Seahurst Park neighborhood and dates from 1954. Shown in original photos below, this is one of several houses in the neighborhood designed by noted architect Paul Hayden Kirk. The neighboring Kirk-designed house, at 14440 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW (Parcel 763740-0050) also from 1954, features a low-gable roof, while 14448 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SW has a flat roof and entry court. Kirk designed custom residences and suburban house models throughout the County and Puget Sound.



### **Sheridan Beach, Shoreline**

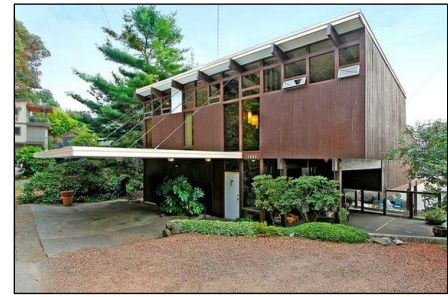
**3606 NE 162<sup>nd</sup>, Shoreline, 98155** (Parcel 152604-9029), right, from 1970, was designed by Bellevue architect Charles Schiff with a landscape by Dick Yamasaki, and built by Ivan Litch of Litch Construction.





### Seola Beach Area, Burien

**12663 Shorewood Lane SW, Burien, 98146**, (Parcel 122303-9072), left, dates from ca 1957-1959. This waterfront house was designed by architect Harold Nesland. A simpler, post and beam side-gable house (right) from 1954 sits above it at 12263 Shorewood Drive SW (Parcel 778440-0025).



### Lake Hills, Bellevue

Many intact examples remain in the largest planned suburban development in King County, Lake Hills. This development of an estimated 2,000 houses on over 1,200 acres contains residences cited by architect and critic Victor Steinbrueck in his 1962 *Cityscapes* as embodying good design. One of these, shown in his sketch below, is at **94 157<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Bellevue, 98008** (Parcel 403810-0120), below left, from 1958. This three bedroom split-level house was based on the “Riviera” design model by architectural engineer John Anderson, and builder Bell & Valdez, along with designer Robert Hobbie (*Seattle Times*, November 6, 1955). Also represented in Lake Hills are examples of the “Tri-lander” model by designer Ronald R. Campbell and builder Leonard, the “Young Modern model,” also by architect/engineer John Anderson and Bell & Valdez. Single story models were often adapted to sloped sites by incorporating an additional lower level. Below right, at 111 162<sup>nd</sup> Avenue SE, is another example of the “Riviera model”.



### Trend Suburb, Kirkland

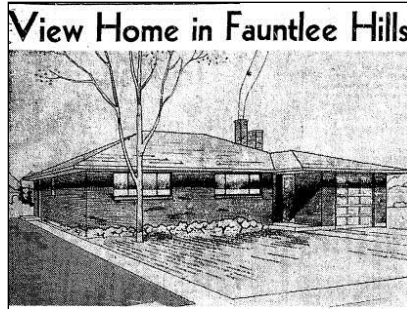
**12404 NE 111<sup>th</sup> Place, Kirkland, 98033** (Parcel 867940-0130), right, is a representative of the International style house in the 1960 Trend Suburb, a small development in Kirkland, designed by Richard Robinson and built by Robinson-Stewart Const. Co. Another example is at 12415 NE 110<sup>th</sup> Place (Parcel 867950-0040).





### Fauntlee Hills Suburb, Seattle

**4006 SW Donovan Street, West Seattle, 98136** (Parcel 248420-0130), below left, dates from 1953. It typifies the many Transitional Ranch style houses built in a new hillside suburban development in West Seattle by the Arthur C Webb Company. Representative features of the house include Roman brick cladding, hipped roofs, and compact massing with integrated garages, carefully positioned on sloped sites. Many of them currently feature mature Japanese-influenced gardens.



### Normandy Park

**18184 Normandy Terrace SW, Normandy Park, 98166** (Parcel 611750-0405), below, is a one and two story house built in 1959 in the largely mid-century waterfront community of Normandy Park. Similar to others, it is set back on the east side of a street that runs parallel with the shoreline and faces west toward Puget Sound. The house and attached carport are expressive of the post and beam structural design.



Normandy Park contains many other mid-century dwellings. **1102 Riviera Place SW** (Parcel 611750-0245), left, a low-pitched, front-facing gable house from 1955. Glazing extends to the roofline to accentuate the A-frame.

### Wallingford neighborhood, Seattle

**1511 N 39<sup>th</sup> Street, Seattle, 98103** (Parcel 803270-0055), right, is compact duplex and an unusual Frank Lloyd Wright Usonian-inspired structure built with cast-in-place concrete and dating from 1950.





## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

### Typical Modifications to Mid-Century Houses

Many homeowners contemplate and make changes to their mid-century houses. Typical changes can be made to improve these dwellings for continued use:

- Major changes to mid-century dwellings involve the upgrading of systems, such as electrical power, wiring, lighting and security/fire alarms; new and/or additional mechanical heating, ventilation and air conditioning; and structural upgrades for enhanced seismic and earthquake responsiveness.
- Because contemporary dwellers appreciate more privacy and seek relaxation in their houses, original bathrooms are often expanded or new ones added. Kitchens are remodeled with new appliances, finishes and cabinets, and outdoor kitchen components added.
- Energy conservation has led to the replacement of single-glazed windows with new windows and the addition of solar panels on sloped rooftops.
- With varied needs, many homeowners convert their garages and carports to storage and shop use.
- Additions of decks and patio spaces are desired, particularly when the site offers a view.
- Many of the mid-century houses were built as single-story structures and they lend themselves to residents aging-in-place with few changes to the structures and the addition of non-slip flooring, enhanced lighting and heating systems, and the addition of grab bars.
- To address affordability and increased occupants, some spaces are converted and bedrooms subdivided or new bedrooms added.

All of these types of changes allow a sound residence to be preserved and used for vital contemporary living. The critical issue is to recognize the integrity and character of the original design, and work with it rather than in opposition.

Preservation advocate organizations – such as the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, DocomomoWeWa, Historic Seattle, the Seattle Architectural Foundation, and professional groups such as the American Institute of Architects – offer classes, lectures and other programs and assistance to homeowners who are aware of the value of their mid-century dwellings. Public agencies, such as the King County Historic Preservation Program and DAHP can offer assistance and information about incentive programs available to property owners. Some grant funding and financial incentives also are available for those who preserve their houses as landmark properties.

### Recommendations

- A. Organize residents who are interested in formal recognition and protection of their houses. Encourage the County to undertake additional surveys and prepare nominations for local landmarks, National Register of Historic Places nominations, and a Multiple Property Document for county or city landmark designation.
- B. Encourage homeowners in dense mid-century neighborhoods, such as Fauntlee Hill, Norwood Village and Lake Hills to create historic districts. Support these efforts by assisting owners with report research and preparation through workshop training.

- C. Continue to document mid-century Modern era architecture in King County. Seek additional photographs and other materials from residents, and digitize these for future use. Work with interested residents, neighborhood groups and local historical societies, such as AKCHO, to sponsor additional research on individual houses, original builders, designers, and residents. Sponsor additional oral history programs.
- D. Provide information about the financial and non-financial benefits available to owners of landmark properties to encourage them to nominate their houses and seek designation as local landmarks and NRHP listing.
- E. Contact the University of Washington's Center for Preservation and Adaptive Reuse to undertake additional surveys. Engage students in local high schools; encourage them to undertake specific projects, and pursue opportunities for intergenerational learning in fulfilling extra curriculum requirements.
- F. Collaborate with the local real estate industry. Provide professional groups with digital files and other resources about the residential resources in King County. Encourage them to learn more about Modernism and preservation and how to market Modern era houses. Work with realtors to provide information on historic Modern neighborhoods and houses, and preservation.
- G. Assist local organizations in developing neighborhood tour guide brochures; co-sponsor tours with the Washington Trust, Historic Seattle, Docomomo\_WeWa, and local AIA and ASLA chapters
- H. Coordinate with librarians from the King County Library System and the Seattle Public Library Seattle Room to digitize information and make it available to the public. Provide a mechanism to digitize records, drawings, photographs, and graphic materials provided by residents and others. Add digital copies of historical maps, photographs, drawings, etc. to these collections.

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