

CITY OF GRESHAM
HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY REPORT

CITY OF GRESHAM
August, 1987

BY:
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

NORTHWEST HERITAGE PROPERTY ASSOCIATES
(Historic Preservation Consultants)
and
THE CITY OF GRESHAM

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PREFACE

In reflecting on Historic Preservation Week 1987, the Gresham Outlook observed:

"Communities such as East Multnomah County are rich in their own unique heritage. But they often lose sense of that past as they are overtaken by rapid growth and the promise of more to come."

It is hoped that the understanding of Gresham's history provided in this document, like the historic events the Outlook cited, offers the community:

"a greater appreciation of who we are, where we have been and how we got there in the first place."

This knowledge of the community history, the Outlook reminded us, "can bring individuals, neighborhoods, and communities together to achieve common goals and avoid past pitfalls." Gresham Outlook, April 29, 1987.

GRESHAM HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY

Adopted by the Gresham City Council

Ordinance CB ____-87

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Special Thanks go to the numerous community volunteers recruited by the Gresham Historical Society, who gave over 800 hours of their time and a wealth of knowledge to enrich the public understanding of Gresham's heritage.

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PART I: PROJECT SUMMARY

A. PROJECT SCOPE, OBJECTIVES, AND SURVEY AREA

The goal of the Gresham Historic Resource Inventory was to create a product which would serve as the primary historic resource management tool for future land-use decisions and establish a guide for future preservation policies, planning, and actions of the City. The Inventory will provide the City of Gresham with a data base for potential individual and historic district nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and City historic landmarks designations and a valuable resource for downtown revitalization.

The Inventory project was divided into two separate, but equally important phases; the Survey process and the Inventory process. The initial survey work, historical, and architectural research was first completed on potentially significant resources Citywide. This survey created a wide data base from which the final inventory resources were selected.

The second phase of the project involved the evaluation of resources' quality and significance according to set criteria. (See Inventory Criteria in Appendix.) The resources which met the criteria were included in the final document, the Gresham Historic Resource Inventory.

The consultant team of Northwest Heritage Property Associates worked closely with Gresham Community Planner, Richard Ross, AICP, on all phases of the project. The evaluation of resources was completed by the team of Northwest Heritage Property Associates, Gresham Community Development staff, and past President of the Gresham Historical Society.

Project Objectives

The City of Gresham, under a contract with the State Historic Preservation Office for a 70/30 matching grant, carried out this Historic Resource Inventory during the Winter-Spring of 1986-87. The city has lacked an adequate inventory of historic sites and structures to effectively guide the implementation of the City's historic preservation ordinance and to satisfy the requirements of statewide planning goals. The previous inventory, developed in 1980, was merely an interim list of potential historic sites (Vol. I, Findings, Appendix 54,) with no data on properties.

The project objectives, in order of importance, are:

- a. To provide the City, per State Historic Preservation Office Standards, a completed form on each property included in the local inventory for inclusion in the Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties.
- b. To develop inventory information which will comply with LCDC statewide planning Goal 5, pertaining to the

identification of historic areas, sites, structures, and objects.

- c. To implement the City of Gresham Historical and Cultural Resources Policy: "To identify and to promote the preservation and protection of historically and culturally significant structures, sites, objects and districts within Gresham."
- d. To identify significant properties to the community's history which should be protected under the city's landmark designation process.
- e. To identify properties which may be eligible for the National Register.
- f. To identify properties which may benefit from federal rehabilitation tax credits and/or State of Oregon tax benefits for historic preservation.

Objectives d, e, and f describe a future evaluation and implementation phase which will follow this project.

The area inventoried includes the current Gresham City limits and the Gresham Urban Services boundary (West City border to SE 162nd Avenue), about 25 square miles with a current population of 60,000 people. The number of sites actually inventoried is relatively small because Gresham, for much of its early history, was the center of a small farming community before the area's recent rapid growth. Three buildings in the inventory area are currently listed on the National Register. This inventory does not include prehistoric archaeological sites.

B: SURVEY GUIDELINES

These guidelines were used to determine which resources were surveyed:

- 1. The resource must be a building, structure, site, object or district, and
- 2. The resource must be at least 50 years old or be an outstanding example of an architectural style, and
- 3. Modifications made to the resources must not undermine its architectural integrity.
- 4. Resources must be categorized into one of the following theme areas:
 - a. Prehistory
 - b. Exploration
 - c. Fur Trade
 - d. Agriculture

- e. Commerce and Industry
- f. Government, Politics, and Military Activities
- g. Culture

This theme list is based on the State Historic Preservation Office official statewide historic theme list. A further breakdown of these theme categories is included in the Appendices.

C: METHODOLOGY OF INVENTORY

Methodology for the Gresham Historic Resource Inventory was based on current cultural resource survey and inventory guidelines contained in the following publications: "Six Basic Steps in Surveying and Inventorying Above-Ground Cultural Resources," Oregon State Historic Preservation Office; "Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning," U.S. Department of the Interior; and "Historic Preservation Planning," U.S. Department of the Interior; and "Historic Resources Survey Manual," New York Historic Preservation Office.

A series of meetings and workshops were conducted throughout the project to provide an opportunity for dissemination of information relating to the project and for gathering historical information from volunteers.

STEPS FOR THE INVENTORY PROCESS

1. VISUAL OVERVIEW: A visual analysis and mapping of potential resources within Gresham and its urban service boundary was conducted, in order to develop a clear understanding of the resource base within the study area.

2. LITERATURE SEARCH: The history of Gresham and its environs including specific resources were researched. All published and unpublished materials were reviewed including: County histories, City directories, County Historical Society reports, files and publications, special editions of the local newspaper, all previous surveys, the City of Gresham Comprehensive Plan, National Register Nominations for the three individual landmarks within the area, historic photographs and maps (General Land Survey, Sanborn, Metzger, USGS).

Volunteers were trained in a series of meetings to do historical research on individual buildings. Historic Resources materials were reviewed to determine building activity during periods of major development in Gresham. Information on significant community members and leaders was researched through historic documents and by interviews with long time residents in the area.

3. ASSEMBLE DOCUMENTARY RESOURCES: Current property information available from Multnomah County and the City of Gresham including tax assessor records and maps were assembled, along with legal descriptions, planning documents and maps, and aerial photographs. Inventory forms were adapted from the required SHPO

state-wide inventory forms to meet the needs of the City of Gresham.

4. SURVEY RESOURCES: Each historic resource within the City of Gresham and within the urban service boundary was surveyed and physically described on the inventory forms. All of the surveyed properties were photographed. The negatives were catalogued and are stored by the City in archival negative sheets. The negative roll and frame numbers were recorded on the field survey forms.

5. ORGANIZE SURVEY DATA: Architectural information and statements of historical significance were drafted for each resource and coordinated with current property information and photographs. An address list of those surveyed properties determined not significant enough to warrant inclusion in the completed Inventory was developed. The location of all inventoried resources was mapped for inclusion in the final report. The map system was developed by City staff showing the location of structures.

6. EVALUATE AND EDIT SURVEY DATA: Evaluation criteria were developed by the City staff and the consultants. All surveyed resources were then evaluated as to their significance for inclusion in the Gresham Inventory. The Statewide Inventory of Historical Property forms were then completed for each inventoried resource. A 3 x 5 photograph for each resource was attached to each form and a site plan was drawn. The Inventory was organized alphabetically by address.

A summary report was developed which includes a history of the City, a summary of findings on resource styles and the recommendations for future planning and potential historic districts.

All original data is considered property of the City of Gresham and is located at the Community Development Division.

DRAFT INVENTORY: The Inventory was refined and edited by Gresham City staff. A public meeting of the City's Historic and Cultural Preservation Advisory Committee will be held to review the draft inventory. The Advisory Committee will then assist the City in revision to the City's Preservation Program required by Goal 5 and Periodic Review.

PUBLIC HEARING: The Inventory will be presented to the Planning Commission for a public hearing and recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will then hold a public hearing on the inventory and adopt the Findings of the Inventory as part of the Gresham Community Development Plan, together with other changes to the Historic Resource section of the Plan needed to comply with Goal 5 requirements.

D. PRELIMINARY RANKING OF INVENTORY RESOURCES (July, 1987)

Once the initial survey of potential resources was completed, an evaluation of resource quality and significance was undertaken. Resources were ranked on a 100 point system:

- 50 - 100 points - Resource Included in Inventory
- 0 - 50 points - Resource Surveyed but not Included
in Inventory

Ranking evaluation criteria were developed based upon the adopted historic resources criteria of the Gresham Development Code, the Multnomah County Zoning Code, the National Register of Historic Places, and the LCDC Goal 5 Rule. (See Appendices for these).

Then the evaluation team reviewed each resource and ranked them using the evaluation criteria form (attached).

The Evaluation Team and its qualifications are as follows:

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Kimberly Lakin, Architectural Historian, Northwest Heritage
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B.A. in History, Middlebury College
MUP, Portland State University
Karl Hayes, Past President, Gresham Historical Society,
M.A., University of Oregon

The ranking of Inventory Resources is intended as a preliminary effort as of July, 1987. It will be used and refined in further planning work to satisfy Goal 5 requirements outlined in the next section. The actual rankings can be found in the Index to Properties, Part II-B of the Inventory.

E. RECOMMENDED FUTURE PLANNING

State of Oregon Land Use Goal 5 requires Gresham to inventory, evaluate and preserve its historic resources. Regardless of the City's statutory obligation for stewardship of its heritage, there are some very good reasons to plan for preservation. The inventory provides a basis for the first comprehensive understanding of Gresham's historic built environment, at a critical time in the City's growth.

The inventory can provide multiple benefits to the community:

1. A basis for historic publications and guides, one of which has already been published.
2. A guide to community history.
3. An incentive to developing tourism and visitor information and attractions in Gresham.
4. An incentive for future National Register nominations with the potential benefits of federal rehabilitation tax credits and

the state property tax freeze.

5. A basis for nominations of City of Gresham landmarks.

Before most of these things can happen, the City needs to pursue further planning work in 1987-88 to evaluate the City's historic preservation program and make needed changes to better utilize the wealth of new information the inventory provides.

The next steps which the City will take as a result of inventory are as follows:

1987

1. Identify conflicting uses affecting Inventory Resources.
2. Determine the economic, social, environmental, and energy consequences of allowing, prohibiting, or otherwise restricting those conflicting uses.
3. Re-evaluate City historic preservation program and develop amended Plan findings, policies, procedures, and standards as needed.
4. Meet with Historic and Cultural Preservation Advisory Committee to discuss tasks listed above.
5. Present recommendations to Planning Commission and City Council for adoption in the Community Development Plan.

1988

6. Develop a preliminary list of recommended City of Gresham Historic Landmarks in cooperation with the Historical and Cultural Preservation Advisory Committee.

PART II: INVENTORY FINDINGS

(Amendments to Gresham Community Development Plan, Volume I, Section 3.160).

- A. History of Gresham
- B. Index to Properties
- C. Inventory of Historic Resources
- D. Resources Surveyed but not Included in Historic Resource Inventory
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- F. Potential Historic Districts

A. HISTORY OF GRESHAM

The City of Gresham originated as the farming center of Multnomah County. It has grown especially rapidly in the last twenty years to become the eastern hub of the Portland region, a service oriented community for eastern Multnomah County and the Mt. Hood corridor, and a gateway to the Mt. Hood area and the Columbia Gorge. Gresham is Oregon's fourth largest city and is rapidly evolving into a cultural and employment center for the East Metro region.

Geography

Gresham is 8 miles east of downtown Portland in East Multnomah County. The City is bounded by the Columbia River on the north, the Clackamas County line on the south, from 162nd Avenue on the west, and 287th on the east. The city includes nearly twenty-two miles within the city limits (July 1987). Growth of the city through annexation and new construction in the last twenty years has been dramatic. In 1967, the area of the city was 4.5 square miles. By contrast when it acquired a post office in 1884, the town site included four buildings at the intersection of Main and Powell. In 1911, when the first Sanborn map was made of Gresham, the city limits included eleven unevenly sized city blocks.

The current estimated population of Gresham tops 55,000 (July 1987). The city population has grown rapidly in the last thirty years. The population was 3,944 in 1960,

10,030 in 1970 and 33,005 in 1980. Population growth before 1960 was far more gradual. In 1911, the population was estimated at 1,000. Thirty years later the population had not yet doubled, and in 1940 city residents numbered only 1,951. Rapid growth began after World War II and by 1950 the population increased to 3,049.

The land in north Gresham is mostly flat, broken by a series of terraces stepping up from the Columbia River as far south as Division Street. Geologically, this area is composed of unconsolidated gravel deposits. South of Division Street, the terrain is dominated by several volcanic hills, including Wallula Heights, Grant Butte, Walter's Hill and Gabbert Hill. The south hills are forested with second-growth trees and have been a refuge for wildlife. Small creeks run through the city northward to the Columbia and westward to the Willamette River; the largest drainage basin is Johnson Creek, draining approximately the south one-third of the City. These natural geographic features made Gresham a desirable habitat for Indians and for settlers who later farmed the area.

The Gresham Area borders the Columbia River with several nearby large islands. South of the river to Sandy Boulevard are lowlands, rich bottomlands forested with ash, willow and dogwood. Wapato, an Indian staple, originally grew in the ponds, such as Blue Lake, and the water's edge was lush with undergrowth. The uplands at the South edge of Gresham were forested with cedar and fir. East and South of

Gresham, foothills lead into Mt. Hood from which flow the Sandy River and the Lower Sandy River (Kongas, p. 16). The flat gravel terraces continue west to Portland. Gresham sits at the west end of the Columbia River Gorge, the major passageway through the Cascade Mountains. The Gorge creates dramatic northeast winter winds and ice storms in the Gresham area.

Prehistory

American Indian settlements in Multnomah County were primarily in the flood plain of the Columbia River. Evidences of man's occupation of the Columbia region dates back to 10,000 B.C. in The Dalles. Evidence of settlements in the Portland area date back to 3,000 B.C (Kongas, p. 11).

Occupation of most sites was seasonal. Permanent villages were built along the Columbia River. Fishing along the Columbia in the spring, gathering wapato in the ponds and picking berries in the bottomlands in the summer, and hunting in the uplands in fall provided the basis of the Indian seasonal migrations.

Lewis and Clark estimated 8,000 people lived between present-day Portland and the Cowlitz River during their visit in 1806. Decimation of the Indian population in the Pacific Northwest began prior to Lewis and Clark's visit and really dates from the first maritime explorations in the sixteenth century. Lewis and Clark reported a smallpox epidemic had occurred about 1780. Four major subsequent epidemics are known: 1829 measles on Sauvie Island, 1830

malaria in Fort Vancouver, 1847 measles at The Dalles, and 1853 smallpox epidemic. By 1830, between 75% and 90% of the Indian population in the lower Columbia River area had died.

The Indian village closest to present-day Gresham was at the western end of what is now Blue Lake Park, although signs of early habitation are found throughout the Columbia South Shore area. The name of this village was Necha-co-kee, according to Lewis and Clark. Clark used an Indian guide from this village. In his journal, he described in detail a long house in this village. The remains of five other houses stood behind the occupied long house. The father of Clark's guide told Clark that villagers who occupied the other houses had died in a smallpox epidemic thirty years earlier (Kongas, p. 21). About 100 people were left. These people were related to a tribe in The Dalles.

One Indian who remembered seeing Lewis and Clark lived in the Columbia Slough area north of Gresham. He was known locally as Indian John. Indian John died in 1893 at an age estimated to exceed 100. He claimed to have been given an iron skillet by Lewis and Clark which is reported to be in the Oregon Historical Society collection. (The Oregon Historical Society could not substantiate this.)

Some accounts say that Indian John's original home was along the Sandy River what is now called Broughton Bluff in Troutdale. It was destroyed by a landslide. He frequently visited The Dalles, traveling by foot over an Indian trail part of which became the Barlow Road which was

built in 1845. According to newspaper accounts, the Wilkes family, who homesteaded in the Columbia Slough area along present-day Sandy Road, leased the Patrick Hogan farm to Indian John in 1863. He lived on this farm with his sixth wife and his daughter. When his wife died, he wrapped her in a blanket and placed her in a raised platform in a traditional Indian burial. His daughter also died, and he cared for her in a similar manner.

To earn his living, Indian John tanned hides, hoed potatoes, hunted and fished. He lived his last years on Jacob Zimmerman's land west of NE 181st and Sandy Blvd. He lived in a small house with support poles resembling those on the long house described by Lewis and Clark. When Indian John could no longer care for himself, Mr. Zimmerman had him placed in the Multnomah County Poor Home in Portland where he died (Kongas, p. 36). At his death, Indian John was called the last of the Multnomahs. Long after he died, Indian John Avenue in Troutdale was named in his memory.

Farm Settlement

The earliest settlers to the Gresham area came in the 1840's. Peyton and Anna ^{DALLAS} Wilkes, who settled in the Sandy River area in 1845 (Mallett, p. 82 and Peters, p. 22), may have been the first white settlers in the Gresham area. Later newspaper accounts say Wilkes settled in Washington County where he opened a tannery in 1847, so he did not stay in the Gresham area.

Jackson Powell, who was born in Pike County, Kentucky, came to the Oregon Territory in 1848. He cut trees and floated logs down the river to Hudson's Bay post in Vancouver, Washington. The California gold rush of 1849 lured him away, but he later returned to Oregon (Mallett, p. 35; Gresham Outlook, July 23, 1959, p. 7).

The Federal Government passed the Donation Land Claim Act which was effective from 1850 to 1855. Under this law, farmers were granted one-half square mile if they were single and a full square mile if they were married. When he returned to Oregon in 1852, Jackson Powell set out from Portland. He followed an Indian trail which became Powell Valley Road and chose a land claim in the area which became Downtown Gresham. This claim extended north of Division Street and east of Cleveland Avenue. His brother James Powell and his wife Eliza also took a donation land claim that year, part of which lay north of Powell Valley Road east of Main Street. The area was called Powell Valley after these first two settlers.

Dr. John P. Powell, who was born in North Carolina in 1822 and was no relation to Jackson and James Powell, came west from Missouri with a wagon train in 1852. He kept cholera to a minimum on the wagon train by advocating that the party boil their water. He wintered with David Powell in the Columbia Slough area north of Portland where he taught school (Mallett, P. 35). In 1853 he moved to Gresham where he took a donation land claim north of Powell Valley Road

west of Main Street. Dr. Powell was the coroner of Multnomah County and the first doctor east of Portland. He helped organize two school districts in eastern Multnomah County.

Many settlers came to Oregon on wagon trains in 1852, and others soon settled in the Gresham area. The settlers were farmers who raised wheat, fruits, potatoes and other vegetables, and later hops and berries. The surplus was taken to market in Portland along early roads (Archer, p. 5).

Perhaps the first road into the north Gresham area was Sandy Road, known first as Columbia Slough Road (Archer, p. 17; also "Pioneers in Valley", Gresham Outlook, July 23, 1959, p.). Eugene Snyder's A History of Portland's Roads states that Sandy Road can be dated back at least to 1881. The Columbia Gorge leg of the Oregon Trail followed this road. Later it became the route of the old Columbia River Highway from Portland to Troutdale.

Powell Valley Road, which went from the Willamette River in southeast Portland to the Sandy River, was the first road into the central Gresham area. Land claims along this road date from 1852. Other early roads include Base Line Road, which later became Stark Street. It was laid out on the Base Line of the first territorial land survey in the 1850's. Division Street was laid out in the 1870's as Section Line Road. It was a line between surveyed sections. The name was changed to Division in 1882.

The house on the Zimmerman farm at 17111 NE Sandy

Boulevard remains as an outstanding example of larger houses built by early settlers in the Gresham area. The house was built in 1878 by Jacob Zimmerman, a German machinist who had come to Oregon in 1850 or 1851. He farmed property on Hayden Island and elsewhere along the Columbia before acquiring the site of the Zimmerman farm. The large Queen Anne style house, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986, stands today in the middle of a tree farm which was operated as a dairy until recently.

Gresham settlers started Methodist camp meetings in the early 1850's (Archer, p. 1). The first school in the area was held about 1859 in Alfred Cornutt's camp shed (Archer, p. 19). The shed was near Miller and Powell Streets on Samuel Brown's land claim. The first recorded use of the Methodist Camp Ground in the same area was in 1861 (Mallett, p. 110). The community in the Johnson Creek area was called Camp Ground. In fact, a post office called Camp Ground was established on May 19, 1884. The post office operated only until June 9, 1884, if it operated at all. It was near the intersection of Powell and Main Streets, close to the Gresham Post Office which was granted four days earlier. Edward F. Wright was the postmaster and probably was also manager of the camp meetings (McArthur, p. 110). Eleven years earlier, a post office called Powell Valley was established. This post office was east of Downtown Gresham and was closed in 1903 (McArthur, p. 603).

In the same year that the Camp Ground post office

was established, Benjamin Franklin Rollins, a one-armed school teacher from Kansas also requested a post office from the federal government. He had built a small store at Powell Valley Road and Main Street on part of the Powell Donation Land Claim after he came to Oregon in 1878. Rollins was a son of Samuel Metzger's wife by a former marriage. The Samuel Metzgers were preceded by John and Dan Metzger, who came to Oregon in 1874, and Henry Metzger who arrived earlier in 1878 (Mallett, pp. 57-60).

Rollins circulated a petition and sent it to the U.S. Postmaster, Walter Quinton Gresham. Rollins suggested that the town would like to be named Gresham if the postmaster would grant it a post office (McArthur, p. 335). The Gresham post office was granted on May 15, 1884 (McArthur, pp. 334-5). The rivalry between Camp Ground and Gresham was resolved in favor of Gresham within two months after the two post offices were granted.

Several nearby communities were organized about the same time as Gresham. The earliest of these was Fairview, which is west of Troutdale. Fairview was called Cleone for a short time. The name Fairview was adopted in 1855 as the name of a Methodist Sunday School, organized two years earlier. The Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company line was built in 1882, and the station was named Fairview. Confusion with a Fairview in Coos County resulted, so Milton Hosford suggested Cleone as a name for the post office established on March 29, 1883. Eventually, the Fairview in Coos County was

abandoned, and the name Fairview was again adopted (McArthur, p. 267).

Rockwood in North Gresham was the name for a community at SE Stark and Burnside. It was named for the natural features in the area. A post office was established there on March 14, 1882 with Cyrus C. Lewis as the first postmaster. The post office closed on Feb. 28, 1903 when rural delivery was started. A local resident had wanted the post office named Rockwood after his farm (McArthur, p. 267).

Orient is a rural community southeast of Gresham. Two stories exist about the origin of the name "Orient." Louise M. Nelson maintained that her father was a pioneer in the area who started a school. The school was named Orient because it was eastward in Multnomah and Clackamas counties. A more likely explanation for the name "Orient" is based on the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants who lived in the area. Andrew McKinnon brought Miyo Iwakoshi to Oregon, who may have been McKinnon's common law bride in 1880. Miyo, her younger brother and her young adopted daughter were the first Japanese known to be in the Gresham area. McKinnon and his friend, Captain Robert Smith established a sawmill and named it the Orient Mill. The Orient post office was started in March, 1896. James N. Campbell was the first postmaster. The post office was discontinued in 1908 when mail delivery was turned over to Gresham (McArthur, p. 564).

Town Development

The townsite of Gresham included few buildings in

1884: a grange hall, a building jointly operated as a school and church, a blacksmith shop and a store. James F. Roberts and Benjamin Franklin Rollins owned a store at Main and Powell which was called "Roberts and Rollins - General Merchandise". Roberts was the first postmaster, and Rollins became postmaster in 1885. The blacksmith's shop was owned by Dave Weaver (Archer, p. 24; George W. Metzger, "Early Gresham History," Gresham Outlook, July 29, 1959, p. 4. Metzger's history was written in 1941).

Bethel Baptist Church was formed by joining Missionary Baptists and German Baptists. Land for a Baptist Church at the corner of Powell and Walters Road was deeded in 1884 and the Church was completed in 1886. It is still standing and in 1980 was moved to Main City Park where it is intended for a community museum used by the Gresham Historical Society. The Baptist Church was Gresham's first building listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

The first actual school house was built along Powell Valley Road and called the Old White School House. It doubled as a community church and burned down in a forest fire in 1883. The second school building later became the Grange Hall and was moved to the city hall site at the intersection of Roberts and Powell Valley Roads. The third school building was near Powell and Main (Archer, p. 25; George W. Metzger, pp. 4-6).

Powell Valley Road, which had been in use for some

time was surveyed in 1891 (Archer, p. 17). In 1892 and 1893, SE Roberts Avenue was deeded to the city and pipes were laid along it and Kelly Street to form the first conduit for Bull Run water to be transported to Portland. Two blocks along SE Roberts Avenue were dedicated to public use, thus enlarging Gresham to include: C.C. Miller Blacksmith, Byron and May Emery's butcher shop, Gresham Hotel and barn which was owned by Dan W. Metzger, Will Johnson's store, Dave Weaver's blacksmith's shop, Bethel Baptist Church, the second grade school and Sam Metzger's store (Peters, pp. 4, 6-7).

Ione McCall became the first postmistress in town when the first mail route was established in 1900. Ed Thorpe and George Preston were the first mail carriers (Mallett, p. 140). The first telephone line was put in for use between Portland and the Bull Run headworks. Gresham residents could only use the lines in emergencies until, in 1902, the Pacific Telephone Co. extended their phone lines to Lewis Shattuck's store. A switchboard was later installed in the Gresham Drug Store at Powell and Main. The first subscribers were W.W. Cotton, Dr. J.M. Short, and the construction company which was then laying tracks for the Oregon Water Power and Railway Company from Lents Junction east to Gresham. (Nesbit, "Small village greeted 1900's," Gresham Outlook, March 1, 1986). Ione McCall then became the switchboard operator as well as the postmistress. She also donated an upstairs room for the first Gresham library space (Archer, p.39).

In an article she wrote in 1913, Lena St. Clair

remembered the town center as having the following buildings in 1902: a Methodist Church, a Baptist Church, wooden hotel, Shattuck Brothers store, Guiss & Son store, Ford's Saloon, Hart's blacksmith, W.E. Gordon's tin shop, the railroad company in Regner's building, and Emery's meat market and livery stable. St. Clair remembered that the only streets in the town were Powell Valley Road, Fairview Road (now 223rd) north of Powell, Damascus Road (now SE Roberts) south of Powell, NE Roberts Avenue, First, Second and Third streets (St. Clair, "Gresham Eleven Years Ago," Gresham Outlook, Dec. 16, 1913).

St. Clair described the major real estate additions to Gresham as they were in 1902: Regner's addition at NW 13th and Main was covered with trees; Clanahan's addition at NW 8th and Main had two houses to the north and south of Powell Mildred's, Davidson's, Whitehead's, Thompson's, Kirkland's, Ava addition and Wallula Heights in west Gresham were cultivated fields; Lawrence's addition at SE 4th and Roberts was an orchard; Mt. Hood addition at NE 4th and Main was the site of only one house but became the center of town by 1913; Zenith addition between NE Hood and Cleveland north of Powell was covered with second growth timber; and Honey Hill along Wallula Avenue was a pasture.

An article in the 1911 Gresham Outlook identified the construction of about 40 houses in Gresham during 1910-11. Dan Metzger and L.C. Metzger each built a house outside the city limits. Several houses were built in the

Tia Juana tract in SE Gresham. A number of houses along SE Roberts Avenue were built as part of the Lawrence addition. Houses were added to nearby Thompson's and Whitehead's additions. A cottage for the agent at the O.W.P. depot on south Main Street (now in Main City Park) was built. Several large houses along Main Street were also constructed that year. Two houses were added to Regner's addition and two to Mt. Hood's addition. Zenith addition was started in 1910. New houses were built in Kelly's, Cleveland's and Gedamke additions.

In 1903, the Oregon Water Power Company Railway, the first electric transit line to Gresham, was completed. It ran along Johnson Creek between Lents Junction through the south side of Gresham and southeast to Cazadero power plant on the Clackamas River (St. Clair, Dec. 16, 1913). A spur line was built in 1905 from Linneman Junction near SE 190th and Powell, northeast to Troutdale and first used in 1906 (Archer, p.45). The Linneman Junction station still stands the last intact interurban depot left in the Portland area. The Linnemans were German immigrants who came over the Oregon Trail in 1852 and took a donation land claim in the Cedarville area in southwest Gresham. In 1906, the railway was taken over by the Portland Railway, Light and Power, the forerunner of Portland General Electric. That same year the Mt. Hood Railway was completed from Montavilla to the Bull Run Power Plant on the north side of Gresham, on the same alignment used today by the MAX light rail line.

Efforts to incorporate the town of Gresham began in 1904. On February 11, 1905 the petition to incorporate was filed with the Oregon Secretary of State. Lewis Shattuck was elected the first mayor; H.L. St. Clair was the first recorder and J.D. Regner the first treasurer. The population of Gresham at this time was 365 (Archer, p.3; Mallett, p. 135). Gresham's first bank, First State Bank, opened at Main and Powell in 1905 (Peters, p.4; George W. Metzger, p. 3).

The first paper published in Gresham was the Gresham Vindicator which was started in 1904 by Mr. Watson. The paper's name was changed to Gresham Gazette and the paper was acquired by Fred Conley. Apparently it was a financial failure (Archer, pp. 29 and 52; Mallett, p. 135).

The next year, the East Multnomah Record was established. It was subsequently renamed the Multnomah Record. Timothy Brownhill, the town's first lawyer, purchased the paper and adopted the name Beaver State Herald. In 1908, the Beaver State Herald moved to Montavilla. The present paper, the Gresham Outlook was started in 1911 by H. L. St. Clair (Archer, pp. 29 and 52).

Gresham continued to develop municipal facilities. In 1906, local businessmen organized the Multnomah and Clackamas Mutual Telephone Co. which moved out of the drugstore to the Hewitt Building on Main Street at First Street (Archer, p. 24). The Gresham Grange started the first Multnomah County Fair, first called the Grange Fair, in 1906. The official name was changed to Multnomah County Fair in

1912. It was held near Johnson Creek and later moved to the site northwest of NW 5th and NW Miller that it occupied until 1969 (Archer, p. 28; Mallett, p. 118; Peters, p. 40). This site has been redeveloped in the 1980's for the new Gresham Town Fair shopping center.

Dr. Jim Short, who was then mayor, appointed a committee from the City Council to confer with Portland Electric Power Company in order to install electricity in 1908 (Archer, p. 25). In 1910, Gresham made an agreement with Portland to tap the Bull Run Water Works at East Powell and N.E. Roberts. This cost the City of Gresham \$35,000 (Archer, p.24).

By 1911, the population of Gresham had grown to 1,000. A site for City Hall and the jail were chosen, and sewer projects were started (Archer, p. 29). The first sewer system was not finished until 1937 (Nesbit, 1984). The first City Hall was constructed at E. Powell and N.E. Roberts by E.T. Jones and Co (Archer, p. 27). It was opened in 1912. A Carnegie grant was provided for the beautiful tudor-style Gresham Library on NE Fourth and Main Street which was completed in 1913 (Archer, p. 29; Peters, p. 30). A high school was built in 1915 on the east side of Main Avenue and Division Street. It opened with an enrollment of 118.

The worst fire in Gresham history occurred on December 22, 1914. It started when a coal heater collapsed in Bartlett's Mercantile Building, formerly Shattuck's Store at Powell and Main, which Lewis Shattuck had sold to Bartlett

just six months earlier. The fire destroyed seven business buildings, one residence and a barn. A fire truck arrived from Portland to help fight the blaze (Mallett, p. 130-1; Nesbit, 1976). This fire was preceded by three earlier fires. In 1901, when a fire started in town, a bucket brigade was formed which fought the fire with water from two windmills (Archer, p. 28). A summertime fire destroyed the Methodist parsonage in 1902 (Mallett, p. 135). In 1903, another fire destroyed the Gresham Hotel at Main and 1st Street. After this fire, the volunteer fire department was formed (Archer, p. 28). Following the 1914 fire, residents were relieved that the nearby and newly completed Regner Opera Hall was not destroyed.

Gresham Growth : Agriculture, Industry and Bedrooms.

As the City of Gresham was growing from the 1880's to 1920's, the surrounding land was utilized for farming following an initial period of logging. Sawmills were built on Johnson Creek and Butler Creek. In 1920 in an area that had been logged, M.W. Gorman discovered a unusual variation in cedar foliage among cedar trees in the neighborhood of Hogan Station on S.E. Hogan and the railroad at Johnson Creek. These trees were called Hogan Cedars. Between 1900 and 1925, summer homes for Portland families were built in the cedars area on S.E. Ambleside Drive at Johnson Creek. If the Mt. Hood Freeway had been built as planned in the 1970's, it would have destroyed Ambleside ("Hogan Cedars," Gresham Outlook, Sept. 17, 1920; "Hogan Cedars," Gresham Outlook,

Nov. 12, 1970).

Some farms, like the Zimmermans' on NE Sandy Boulevard and Binfords' in SW Gresham were dairies. Commercial berry farms and canneries were started in the early 1900's. W. W. Cotton, the attorney for the railroad planted fifty acres of berries, mostly Cuthbert raspberries, in 1912. These began to bear in 1914 and started the berry farm industry. Strawberries eventually became at least as important as raspberries. Strawberries were featured in the Gresham City Seal designed about 1905. The first cannery was the A. Rupert Company, established in 1918 (Archer, p. 115). A cooperative cannery was organized in 1919 which became the largest cannery in Oregon (Metzger, p. 4).

A potato starch and milling factory was opened along Roberts Avenue by Johnson Creek in 1920. The Oregon Pickle and Canning Co., also along Johnson Creek near Meadow and Main Street, was started in 1921, with Japanese participation. This latter company has been consolidated with other food processing operations.

Fur farms became a significant industry in the 1920's. The first fur farms raised foxes which were then very popular. The first fox farm in the Gresham area was started by Ed Walker and his son in 1924. The fox farms were gradually replaced by mink farms as mink became more fashionable. The Oldenberg brothers' mink farm started in 1928. As fox farms diminished in popularity, the fox farms went out of business until all were gone in 1942 (Archer, pp

50 ff).

Although other forms of agriculture declined in Gresham under urban growth pressures, horticultural farms were still prevalent and lucrative in the Gresham area through the 1980's. The Giese filbert farm on SW Pleasant View (aka SE 190th Avenue) became Oregon's earliest commercial filbert producer, a well known species farm in the early 1900's. The Giese farm was a donation land claim settled in 1853. Percy Giese, son of the original immigrants, started a filbert orchard sometime between 1906 and 1910. He developed an interest in horticulture and experimented with a wide variety of filberts. In recognition of his experimental work, Giese was honored by the Nut Growers Association ("Percy Giese Honored," Gresham Outlook, Jan. 15, 1932, p. 2). He retired from the property in 1935 (Flagg, pp. 33-7). Several of the original dwellings are still standing on the Wogsberg property which is on SW Pleasant View. Most of the farm is today's Filbert Hill subdivision.

Besides wholesale plant nurseries, holly farms were a profitable industry in Gresham. The largest of these is now the Hollybrook neighborhood in southwest Gresham. In 1958, nurserymen in Multnomah County, most of whom were in the Gresham area had \$8.5 million in business. Potato and truck farmers earned \$6.75 million. Strawberries, cane fruits, tree fruits and nuts brought \$1.3 million. Dairy farmers earned \$1.5 million. Livestock and poultry and

grain, forage and hay brought under \$1 million (Tom Humphrey, "Pioneers Stamp Heritage on Area," Oregon Journal, Aug. 7, 1958). Agriculture is still significant to the Gresham area economy although pressure for urban development is intense inside the Urban Growth Boundary.

Other early industries in Gresham included the Columbia Brick Works on S.E. Hogan along the railroad. It was started by a German immigrant, Franz Olbrich, in 1906 using a local supply of clay (Gresham Outlook, Oct. 27, 1922, p. 4) and is still in operation. The Reynolds Metals Company in Troutdale has been a major employer in the Gresham area for over thirty years. In 1974, Boeing purchased Radiation International which had been in the area since the mid-1960's. Boeing is the city's largest private employer. Transportation construction has always been a large employer: first the railroads, then the Banfield Expressway and most recently, MAX, the light rail transit system whose light rail maintenance facility is located in Gresham.

When Gresham's only bank closed in 1932, during the Depression, Gresham businessmen, among them Burton Walrad, took action and in 1934, First National Bank opened a Gresham office (Peters, p. 47; Nesbit, "After 60 Years in Business Burton Walrad Just Won't Stop," Gresham Outlook, July 1, 1980).

The Wildwood Nursing Home was started in 1934 at N.E. Fifth and Hood Streets. This home developed into Gresham General Hospital in 1959. The hospital was moved and

rebuilt in 1984. This full care facility is on SE Stark and is now called the Mt. Hood Medical Center. Mt. Hood Community College, founded in 1966, provides 20,000 students from the Gresham area higher education opportunities.

In the 1970's Gresham experienced phenomenal residential growth, adding 23,000 new residents, tripling its population in one decade, to enjoy the mixed blessing of being Oregon's fastest growing city. Most of this population growth was a result of migration of families into the City, indicating the considerable appeal of suburban amenities, small town friendliness, and easy accessibility to major recreation areas. In the 1970's thousands of new subdivision lots were platted and new homes sprouted everywhere where former orchards or berry fields had been. In the 1980's the construction of new housing slowed somewhat but rapid population growth has continued as a result of massive annexations to Gresham in the area between 162nd and 223rd Avenues. Most of these new Gresham residents are the result of a protracted debate in the 1980's over the future of urban services in East Multnomah County. The issue was whether the county government and special service districts would continue to provide general urban services to unincorporated urban areas in the County. Sewers, notably, had not been built to most of this area, leaving Mid County with the dubious distinction of being America's largest unsewered urban populace.

By mutual agreement of the County, Portland and

Gresham in 1983, the two cities embarked on an unprecedented annexation effort in the unincorporated mid county area between Gresham and Portland. For Gresham, annexation has resulted in an even more accelerated population growth in the 1980's than the 1970's, 22,000 new residents in just seven years. With the historic joining of Gresham and the Wilkes, Rockwood and Centennial communities, a greater Gresham has emerged in the 1980's, strengthened by the new assets of a growing industrial economy in the I-84 corridor, the established Rockwood business district and the diverse interests and energies of 25,000 new citizens.

Conclusion: Linking Gresham's Past and Future

For the first eight decades of the 20th Century, Gresham evolved from a farm service center to a quiet bedroom suburb. Gresham today is becoming an important force in the Portland region and in Oregon's future.

From the perspective of 1987, several recent events signal a bright, prosperous future for Gresham. Following the tracks of the old Mt. Hood Railway, MAX, Tri-Met's state of the art light rail transit line opened from Portland to Downtown Gresham in September, 1986. Gresham's second rail transit era has been greeted with the enthusiastic endorsements of Gresham residents and businesses. Major plans have been announced to build the Albertson's Pacific Northwest distribution center in the Wilkes area and an expanded County branch library in Downtown Gresham. The dormant site of the old County Fairgrounds adjacent to

Downtown Gresham has been reborn as a beautiful new shopping center, Gresham Town Fair, in the Spring of 1987. The annual Mt. Hood Festival of Jazz, founded in 1982, continues to enjoy phenomenal growth and prestige, putting Gresham on the music map of America. On July 1, 1987, Gresham welcomed 12,508 new residents of the Rockwood and Centennial communities, the largest annexation in the City's history.

In assessing Gresham's recent record of breathtaking changes, Oregon Magazine succinctly described the city's past and its potential: "During Gresham housing boom of the seventies, young families were attracted by affordable new subdivisions with All-American cul-de-sacs, nearby supermarkets, a solid school system and enough roadside fast food outlets to satiate any sudden hunger pangs..."

In another decade, Gresham could be a thriving mini-metropolis, contributing to the overall health of the state's economy or a loose collection of subdivisions and roadside shopping centers parked at the end of the light rail line" from "Life at the End of the Line: Or Is It the Beginning", Oregon Magazine, August, 1986.

The choice is Gresham's.

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