The Oak Hills Historic District is a residential neighborhood, composed primarily of single-family, detached homes located in Beaverton, Oregon. It is roughly bounded to the north by NW West Union Road, to the east by NW 143rd Avenue, to the west by NW Cornell Road, and to the south by NW Bethany Boulevard. The section of the development that extends to NW Cornell Road is along NW 153rd Avenue, and the remainder of the development is bound roughly by NW Oak Hills Drive. The district encompasses approximately 240 acres and consists of a single, master-planned community surrounded by newer suburban subdivisions as well as a commercial nursery to the southeast. The community includes 627 single-family, detached homes, four townhouse clusters with a total of 24 units, an elementary school, a church, a former sewage plant building, a community recreation center, an entrance sign, and two parks. The district's cohesively designed setting is characterized by a curvilinear road network, single-family residential clusters, townhouse blocks, as well as a centrally located park that includes passive open space, recreational fields, and pedestrian walkways. The individual houses feature a diversified but intentionally limited set of design schemes. A majority of the houses were constructed between 1965 and 1974. A cluster of five lots were subdivided and developed in 1978 and an additional cluster of 27 lots were developed between 1994 and 1995. The majority of lot sizes for individual homes are between 0.18 and 0.23 acres with an average of 0.21 acres, while the townhouses occupy either 0.04 or 0.05 of an acre. The average square footage of residences is approximately 2,459 square feet. Architectural styles within the development include several modest allusions to historic architectural revivals including Neo-French, Monterey, Tudor, Cape Cod, and Colonial. These styles are used on house forms with a decidedly modern inspiration that encompasses approximately 2,459 square feet. Architectural styles within the development include several modest allusions to historic architectural revivals including Neo-French, Monterey, Tudor, Cape Cod, and Colonial. These styles are used on house forms with a decidedly modern inspiration that include Contemporary, Ranch, Split-Level, and Split-Entry types. The most common alterations to the buildings in the district are the application of vinyl siding, roof material changes, garage-door replacements, minor additions, and the replacement of original windows. Changes to the overall development include the replacement of some streetlights, removal of the original sewage treatment ponds (but not the main plant building), and improvements to the recreation center that included enclosing a formerly open picnic pavilion to transform the space into a gymnasium. The scale and scope of these modifications, however, do not affect the district’s overall condition or its ability to convey its significance as it retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

HISTORY

The Oak Hills Historic District, located in Beaverton, Washington County, Oregon is significant locally under National Register Criteria A and C as an excellent example of a 1960s master-planned community. Oak Hills is significant under Criterion A due to its ties to larger societal and design response to "ticky tacky" suburban development. With its "village" design concept that joined single and multi-family residences, as well as religious, educational, and recreational facilities into a cohesive whole, Oak Hills sought to address many of the negative environmental and social externalities of post-World War II housing developments. The Oak Hills community also reflects the impacts that homeowners associations (HOAs) and their implementation of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions (CC&Rs) had upon the long-term governance of developments across the United States. As an early example of a HOA governed development, Oak Hills set an important precedent that was replicated elsewhere in the Portland area after 1966. The development is also significant under Criterion C as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) that retains its character-defining circulation patterns, open space, landscape features, cluster development, aesthetic and recreational amenities, and its overall architectural composition and development pattern. The development represents one of the most complete, mixed-use, planned communities in the greater metropolitan Portland area that also successfully integrated owner-occupied townhouses with detached single-family residences. Furthermore, the development’s architectural eclecticism and its limited traffic access and hierarchically circulation pattern represented the intentions of developers as well as the aesthetic desires of suburbanites during the period. The period of significance begins in 1965 with the construction of the first houses and ends in 1974 when the construction of most residences was effectively completed. An early example of a Home Owners Association (HOA)-governed, master-planned community, Oak Hills is significant under National Register Criterion A. Originally designed and constructed beginning in 1965, the Oak Hills development was the second HOA-governed community in the state of Oregon. Differentiated from earlier efforts to restrict residential properties, the developers implemented Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions (CC&Rs) to effectively control the appearance of Oak Hills over the long term. Driven in large part by the efforts of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to secure residential property mortgages, HOA communities were developed as a way of reducing risk within sometimes volatile real estate markets. Following the first meeting of the Oak Hills HOA in 1966, the organization provided early leadership in self-governance by purchasing property within the development for open space, contesting a rezoning within the development for additional townhomes, and enforcing the CC&Rs through litigation. As one of only about 500 HOAs in the United States at the time, the Oak Hills HOA represents an early form of private community oversight that would grow to become one of the most significant trends in private residential governance. Created as a reaction to the banalities of...
post-World War II development, Oak Hills has endured with minimal change. The stability of the community is conveyed by the extended residency of large numbers of families. Between 1973 and 2003, for instance, at least 80 families maintained residency within the development. Oak Hills is also significant under National Register Criterion C as an excellent example of a master-planned community that set an important precedent for other communities in the Portland metropolitan in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The coherent and harmonious combination of clustering residential lots, open space integration, circulation patterns that balanced the needs of pedestrians and cars alike, and the architectural eclecticism are emblematic of mid-1960s land use planning and architectural design. The development also reveals the first integration of FHA-approved townhouses into a mixed-use development in the state of Oregon. Townhouses would subsequently become an important building type in the Portland area in the late 1960s and 1970s. Tightly controlled by the original development team, the available house types and styles for Oak Hills and their application on the loop roads and cul-de-sacs of development ensured how the concept for a planned unit subdivision could be implemented on a grand scale. The cohesive design of the recreation center and the amenities of the recreational center all illustrate how the Oak Hills developers actively pursued a public increasingly intolerant of sprawl and its associated negative social and environmental impacts. For these reasons, Oak Hills is significant under National Register Criterion C as a historic district and is significant at the local level.

**RESEARCH INFORMATION**

**Local Library:**
- **Historical Society:** Oregon Historical Society
- **University Library:**
- **Other Repository:** Multnomah County Library

**Bibliography:**