

**OREGON CITY, OREGON:  
HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT  
FOR THE PARK PLACE VICINITY**

**Prepared for the City of Oregon City**

**By**

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## PREFACE

This document represents a major step by the City of Oregon City toward completion of a comprehensive Cultural Resource Protection Plan. The document is modeled after the Resource Protection Planning Process (RP3) developed by the United States Department of the Interior and modified by the Oregon State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO). The purpose of the report is to provide a framework for consistent decisionmaking in the management of cultural resources.

The project is also a major step by the SHPO toward compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), which requires the State Historic Preservation Officer to survey and inventory cultural resources throughout the state; and, with state land use law, which requires local jurisdictions to identify and protect significant resources.

The project was conducted from May 1990 through August 1990 by Koler/Morrison Planning Consultants of Oregon City under contract with Oregon City. The study area encompasses the Park Place and Clackamas Heights neighborhoods which were recently annexed to the city.

The project consisted of four major phases: literature search and preparation of an overview of local history; update of existing inventory forms; evaluation of resources; and, preparation of final inventory forms and the final document.

There are four major sections in the following report. The Preface is followed by section one which provides an overview of Oregon City history with specific emphasis on the study area. This chapter focuses on the major events and periods of local history and provides a framework for analysis of resources. The chronological parameters are approximately 1811 to 1940, with some discussion of Native American pre-history. This section also includes a list of individuals who played a prominent role in local history, as well as a comprehensive bibliography of sources consulted.

The Identification section outlines the types of cultural resources in the study area and categorizes them into resource groups. Discussion of each group includes brief historical data summarizing the development of important themes represented by the group, and an outline of the physical characteristics of property types and styles within the group. It includes information on the distribution of resources; number of resources that currently exist and their physical condition; as well as data on past cultural resource surveys in the study area; research and data gaps; and, future survey/inventory priorities.

The third section outlines the evaluation methodology for determining significance. It also includes discussion of condition and integrity of inventoried resources by resource group, a list of currently designated properties, and properties recommended for designation.

Section four identifies strategies for protecting the City's significant cultural resources.

The Oregon City Context Statement is an evolving document. It will require regular updating and review. Resources that were not identified in this phase of the project may be included at a future date and others should be removed if they no longer meet eligibility requirements. All materials generated in the course of this project are the property of Oregon City.

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

1806 - 1940

### FORMAT

The Oregon City/Park Place Historical Overview is a geographically oriented study of the significant historical events and underlying patterns in Oregon City and Park Place history. It follows the guidelines set forth in the "Handbook to Historic Preservation Planning in Oregon" prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and is formatted to conform with the chronological periods defined in Section II of the handbook. Within each period the significant events and developments in Oregon City and Park Place history are discussed in summary form.

### TEMPORAL BOUNDARIES

The temporal boundaries of the Oregon City/Park Place Overview encompass the years 1806 through 1940. The year 1806 marks the first Euro-American exploration of the lower Willamette River Basin. This initial exploration was conducted by Captain William Clark on April 2 and 3, 1806. It is at this time that the Lewis and Clark journals effectively commence the recorded history of the Willamette River basin and the Oregon City/Park Place geographic area.

The year 1940 is the final year of the "Motor Age" period as defined in the SHPO handbook. It also corresponds with the 50-year criterion established by the National Park Service for determining eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

### SPATIAL BOUNDARIES

The Park Place study area is located entirely within Township 2 East, Range 2 South, Sections 20, 21, 28, and 29, of the Willamette Meridian Survey. The greater part of the area lies within the southeast quadrant of Section 20; the southwest quadrant of Section 21; the northwest quadrant of Section 28, and the western half of Section 29.

The surveyed area is irregular in shape. It can be roughly defined as lying south of the Clackamas River and north of Abernethy Creek; its extreme eastern boundary is a north-south line approximately one and three-quarter miles east of the Willamette River (Oak Tree Terrace); and its extreme western boundary approximately one-half mile east of the confluence of the Clackamas and the Willamette rivers.

Four donation land claims combine to cover the entire study area. George Abernethy's donation land claim (DLC) originally covered most of the eastern half of the study area, including the single largest addition, the 1888 plat of Clackamas Heights. (The original plat for Clackamas Heights was filed in late 1888; a subsequent plat was filed in early 1889.) James Winston's DLC took in a small area in the northeast corner of the survey, including the "Harding Walden Tracts" located between Clackamas Heights and Clackamas Highlands. Hiram Straight's DLC covered most of the eastern half of the survey, including the original Park Place plat, Victoria Heights and Apperson's Subdivision, and the Sisters of Mercy, St. Agnes Baby Home and adjoining farmland. Ezra Fisher's DLC covered two lots in the extreme southwest part of the study area immediately north of Abernethy Creek.

## HISTORIC PERIODS

While the community that grew up around Park Place remained outside the corporate boundaries of Oregon City throughout the historic period, its ties-- social, commercial and industrial-- were such that any discussion of one must include the other. The geographic boundaries of the overview are, therefore, inclusive of both the previously defined boundaries of the Park Place study area and the larger corporate boundaries of Oregon City.

### 1806 - 1811: Exploration

The recorded history of the Oregon City/Park Place environs commenced on the morning of April 2, 1806. That morning, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, while encamped opposite the mouth of the Sandy River on their return trip, were drawn a map by some visitors showing them the location of the Willamette River. They had twice missed discovering the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia, and Lewis's journal entry conveys the doubt they felt about the authenticity of their visitors' information:

About eight o'clock several canoes arrived with visitors, and among the rest were two young men who were pointed out as Cushooks. They said that their nation resided at the falls of a large river which emptied itself into the south side of the Columbia a few miles above us; and they drew a map of the country with a coal, on a mat. In order to satisfy himself as to the truth of this information, Captain Clarke persuaded one of the young Cushooks, by a present of a burning-glass, to accompany him to the river, in search of which he immediately set out with a canoe and seven of our men (Thwaite 1842:164).

The afternoon of April 2, 1806, Captain Clarke entered the river "which the Indians call Multnomah [Willamette], from a nation of the same name residing near it on Wappatoo [Sauvies] Island." He encamped that night near an Indian lodge "thirty feet long and forty deep, built of broad boards, and covered with the bark of white cedar," on the east bank of the Willamette approximately three miles above the Multnomah Channel (Thwaite 1842:168). The following morning, before returning to the main camp, Clarke reached a point believed to be in the general vicinity of Portland University.

From the maps and inquiries, Clark learned of the "great falls" and the "Clark-a-mus" River which emptied into the Willamette some distance below the cataract. Eleven villages of Clark-a-mus (Clackamas) Indians were placed on the map, along both sides of the Clackamas River from its upper reaches to the Gladstone village site, opposite Park Place, which remained inhabited through 1854. (Pioneers found remnants of seasonal villages at and near Park Place, but due to its location and susceptibility to high water, no permanent Native American village is thought to have occupied the site.)

Clark was also informed of two Native American nations residing at the Oregon City Falls site: the Clowwewalla and the Cashhooks (Barry 1927:57). Although all three nations were related culturally and classified in the Upper Chinookan Linguistic Group, the Clackamas maintained an identity quite distinct from the Clowewalla and Cashhooks.

The Clackamas, at the point of European contact, had an economic base of great antiquity in the Clackamas river area. In a sense, the Clackamas may be regarded as the survival of a stage in Northwest Coast Culture Area with regional differentiation and specialization. An adaptation between the pedestrian transhumance of generalized hunter-foragers before 4,000 B.C. and the refined coastal-river micro-environmental adaptation existing in 1800 A.D. (Woodward 1974:219).

From the information they obtained, Lewis numbered the Clackamas nation at between 800 and 1800 people. The smallpox, cholera and other epidemics that followed the Euro-American explorers and fur traders so decimated the tribe that by 1855 only 88 Clackamas Indians remained to become signatories of the peace treaty that removed their nation to the Grand Ronde Reservation (Ruby, Brown 1986:27). It is unclear exactly when the last Clackamas died, but none are believed to have survived beyond the historic period. The Clowewalla, also known as the Charcowah, and the Cashhooks were estimated at approximately 650 persons at the time of Lewis and Clark's expedition. Although the Clowewalla were included in the treaty of January 1855, their numbers were steadily declining, and only "a remnant" remained to be "removed west to the Grand Ronde Reservation. They shortly became extinct" (Ruby, Brown 1986:32).

One other Native American nation, the Molalla, lived in Clackamas County at the time of Euro-American contact and asserted a claim to the Oregon City site and Falls territory. The Molallas were members of the Waiilatpuan linguistic family. Their territory extended from the Falls to the open plains in the southwest quadrant of the county (Barry 1927:60). The Molallas were horsemen and a more aggressive group with regard to territory than were the Clackamas or other Chinookan tribes. The tribal and territorial relationships between these two linguistic groups, particularly the Clackama and Molala, is the basis for a number of Clackamas County geographic names, such as Molalla, Coalca's Pillar and Clackamas, as well as local folklore and myth.

The "Exploration" period ends with the establishment in 1811 of Fort Astor at the mouth of the Columbia by members of John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company. In December of 1811, Robert Stuart, Francis Pillet and Donald McGillis, travelling overland from the newly established Fort Astor, led the first party into the upper Willamette valley to explore and hunt game. The party had returned to Fort Astor by March 1812, and though the expedition serves to mark the beginning of the fur trade in the Willamette Valley, it is not known whether Stuart obtained any information concerning the Falls or Clackamas River sites. This would be left to the explorers and trappers who followed.

#### 1812 - 1846: Fur Trade and Mission to the Indians

Between 1812 and 1813 the Pacific Fur Company sent out as many as six parties to explore the Willamette Valley and surrounding environs. Donald McKenzie, one of Astor's partners in the enterprise, ascended the Willamette in April 1812, and is believed to be the first Euro-American to explore the area of the Willamette Falls. The existence of the fishery at Willamette Falls was evidently described to his fellow trapper Robert Stuart, who wrote on July 3, 1812, that "salmon and sturgeon ascend no further than the foot of the falls" (Stuart 1935:32). He may have been the first European to see the Clackamas River and its native villages, but no record survives (Woodward 1974:174).

Alexander Ross, a clerk in the employ of the Pacific Fur Company, ascended the Willamette to the Falls in 1813, becoming the second Euro-American to do so:

To this place, and no farther, the salmon ascend, and during the summer months they are caught in great quantities...At this place, therefore, all the Indians throughout the surrounding country assemble, gamble, and gormandize for months together (Ross 1823:253).



With the sale of Fort Astor to the North West Company in 1813, a number of the Pacific Fur Company employees remained to enter the employ of the North West Company. With the Willamette River as the primary transportation corridor leading to the upper Willamette Valley, the activity of the North West Company after 1813 brought its employees into frequent contact with the Native American population that lived on or near the Oregon City and Park Place sites. In 1816 ten men from Fort George (Fort Astor) were attacked at the Clackamas rapids after refusing to pay the Native Americans a fee for passing through the area. One trapper was wounded and a Native American killed. To assuage the anger of the natives, Alexander Ross, accompanied by Peter Skene Ogden and 45 armed men, returned to the area and established the first "treaty" with the Clackama and Falls people:

The men of the Northwest were willing to pay according to Indian law on condition that the Willamette River was to be open to the white men to ascend and descend at will, in safety. The Indians were to control their young men and if a white man stepped out of line he was to be reported to Fort George. The white men were not to take the law into their own hands or "take undue advantage" of the Indians (Lynch 1973:18).

In 1821 the North West Company was absorbed by the Hudson Bay Company. Three years later Dr. John McLoughlin, former North West Company partner in charge of Fort William on Lake Superior, was appointed chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, in the Columbia District (Carey 1922:236). Within a year of his appointment, the center of operations for the Columbia District was moved from Fort George to the newly established Fort Vancouver. For the next 20 years, McLoughlin was the dominant presence in the Columbia and Willamette River basins, and was responsible for the early development of the Willamette Falls/Oregon City site.

In 1829, in order to take advantage of this unlimited source of waterpower, McLoughlin laid out a two-square-mile claim at the Willamette Falls. During the winter of 1829-1830, he began the construction of three houses to shelter company employees working at the site. The natives, possibly feeling this was a violation of their 1816 treaty with Alexander Ross, burned the first buildings. McLoughlin had the structures rebuilt and a small fur trading center was established, along with a farm. This became the nucleus of the first permanent European settlement in the Willamette Valley (McLoughlin 1849). A millrace was also blasted out of the rock at this time, but it is unclear when the mill was completed and actually producing; it may have been as early as 1832 (Corning 1956:183) or as late as 1837. Soon, both a lumber and grist mill were producing finished goods at the site.

One possible reason for McLoughlin's development of the Falls site was the appearance of American traders in the Columbia for the first time since 1814:

In 1829-30 two ships owned by the veteran Northwest trader, Joseph Marshall, the Owyhee, under Captain Dominis, and the Convoy under Captain Thompson, boldly entered the Columbia and traded for thousands of furs (Clark 1927:219).

The Owyhee ascended the Willamette River in 1829, to within a mile of the Falls to trade with the Clackama (Corning 1947:180). Captain Dominis traded with the natives, and also put up barrels of salmon at his wintering grounds on the Columbia--the first salmon shipped from the Pacific coast (Carey 1922:410).

Among the Owyhee's crew were a number of sick and infected men. Whether Captain Dominis was thereby responsible for transmitting the disease into the river communities is unclear, but he "was blamed by the indians for an epidemic which during the winter of his stay [near Scappoose] seized the natives and exterminated whole villages" (Carey 1922:410).

The disease spread to the Falls tribes and depopulated entire villages. It has been estimated that 30,000 Native Americans died of the "cold sick" [influenza] on the Pacific coast between 1829 and 1832. Although the Clackama and Clowewalla people continued to maintain villages at the Clackamas and Falls sites, they had been so reduced in numbers that resistance to McLoughlin's rebuilding or future settlement was virtually eliminated.

While a number of freemen and retired Hudson's Bay employees were at first attracted to the Willamette Falls site, most moved on to the upper valley and were responsible for establishing the French Prairie farming settlement. As trade between the upper farming settlement and Fort Vancouver came through the Oregon City site, this settlement with its portage, stores and mill began to take on added importance as a key link in the Willamette Valley trade route. Although its real growth would not come for another decade, its establishment between 1829 and 1839 foreshadowed, in many ways, its later prominence as an industrial and manufacturing site, linking the natural resources and agricultural lands of the upper valley with the markets below.

In 1834 a Methodist Mission was established by Jason Lee above the French Prairie settlements, in what is now Marion County. Letters and reports from the Mission, coupled with those from early explorers, promoters and traders, such as Hall J. Kelly (1828-1835), Nathaniel J. Wyeth (1833-35) and Lt. William Slacum (1837-38), served to heighten interest in the Oregon territory. Many of these early reports romanticized and extolled the virtues of the country in greatly exaggerated form.

The growth of the Methodist Mission in 1836 and 1837, together with the settling of trappers and traders on French Prairie, increased the American and French-Canadian population in the Willamette Valley; however, this initial settlement did not boost the population of the Falls site. In 1839 the settlement at the Falls consisted of a small collection of one-story houses clustered around the millrace and portage site. The population was almost exclusively Hudson Bay Company employees and Native Americans. It was not until the immigration of 1839-40 that the Falls community began a slow growth that would burgeon over the next eight years.

In the winter of 1838-1839, Reverend Jason Lee gave a series of lectures in Peoria, Illinois, in an attempt to stimulate American settlement in the Oregon Territory and win reinforcements for the Methodist Mission. Following the lectures, 14 men led by Thomas J. Farnham organized the first overland American immigrant party. After considerable difficulty members of the Peoria Party arrived at Vancouver and the Falls site in late 1839 and early 1840 (Carey 1922:374).

Members of the Peoria Party cannot be accurately characterized as homesteaders or settlers, nor were they affiliated with the Methodist Mission. They might best be described as early-day entrepreneurs and professional pioneers. Several settled in the Falls community to work. One member, Major Robert Moore, established the first American claim below French Prairie, locating opposite the Falls, in what is now West Linn. The arrival of the Peoria Party marked the first American settlement in or near Oregon City.

Several other arrivals in 1840 added to the Willamette Falls community. A number of American fur trappers arrived in the valley after the breakup of the American Fur Company. Among those who played significant rolls in early Oregon history were Caleb Wilkins, William Craig, John Larrison, Dr. Robert Newell and Joseph L. Meek. Wilkins, Newell and Meek brought the first wagons over the Rocky Mountains to Fort Walla Walla in 1839, arriving at the Willamette Falls in the early winter of 1840 (Carey 1922:375).

Captain John Couch, commanding the brig Maryland, brought the first American ship to the Falls in 1840, and off-loaded a number of goods, establishing the first American "store" at the Falls site. Couch returned in 1842, commanding the vessel Chenamus. Unable to negotiate the Clackamas rapids and sandbars due to the height of the water, he unloaded his second "store" of goods and rafted them to Willamette Falls for sale.

The Lausanne, carrying the "Great Reinforcement" for the Methodist Mission, arrived at Fort Vancouver on June 1, 1840, having left New York on October 9, 1839. Among those passengers who played a significant roll in Oregon City/Park Place history were George Abernethy and Alvin F. Waller.

With this influx of settlers, many of whom were settling at the Falls site, Jason Lee sent William H. Willson--the Mission carpenter, minister and founder of Salem, Oregon--and the Rev. Alvin Waller to the Falls in 1840 to establish a Methodist Church--the first Mission in what would become Clackamas County.

The first three years the Wallers were at the Falls, he built his home and began constructing a church, the first Protestant church west of the Rocky Mountains. It was partly of material brought around the Horn, the remainder was lumber Dr. McLoughlin allowed him to use from the mill on the Island. Donated labor probably covered the cost of the parsonage in which Julia Waller, the first white child in Oregon City, was born in May, 1841 (Lynch 1973:130).

Although McLoughlin is credited with contributing lots in his Willamette Falls townsite for the church, as well as free lumber to help build the church and parsonage, his generosity was not reciprocated. Soon after McLoughlin's donations to the Mission, the Reverend Waller began proceedings in an effort to discredit McLoughlin's 1829 claim. Historian Charles Carey, writing of the Rev. Jason Lee's place in Oregon history, stated:

The one charge against this faithful minister that time had justified, in a degree, is his connivance in Rev. Alvin F. Waller's mean attempt to get the land claim of Doctor McLoughlin, a fact established by letters and documents. Waller was induced to drop the contest in consideration of the payment of the sum of \$500.00, and the conveyance to him of eight lots and three additional blocks in the townsite. But the claim of Waller and others to the island in the Willamette River, that was a part of the original McLoughlin location, was nor released (Carey 1922:298).

This attempt to discredit McLoughlin's Oregon City claim points to the importance and obvious advantages the Willamette Falls site was seen to have by early American immigrants. In 1850, the United States Congress passed legislation which stripped McLoughlin of his land claim. McLoughlin died in 1857 with his claim still in question; however, five years after his death the state legislative assembly passed an Act authorizing the governor to convey the unsold part of McLoughlin's claim to the legatees under McLoughlin's will--a remedial step in an attempt to mitigate the inequities McLoughlin and his family had suffered beginning with the designs of Alvin F. Waller.

George Abernethy, another member of the "Great Reinforcement," became one of the most significant individuals in early Oregon City history. He came to Oregon in order to assume financial management of the Methodist Mission. In the years between 1840 and 1849, Abernethy became the manager of the Mission store at the Falls, which he bought out when the Mission board dissolved its holdings. Abernethy all but monopolized Oregon City trade, as he supplied goods on credit against the "cash crops" of wheat and produce the farms produced. He in fact issued his own currency: known as "the Abernethy Rock," it consisted of pieces of flint flaked from the fashioning of arrow and spear points that had been left at sites near the town. On such rock pieces Abernethy incised his name and the face value of the piece in terms of the goods it represented.

Abernethy was twice elected Provisional Governor, the only person to hold the title prior to Territorial status. He was also one of those associated with the Methodist Mission who benefited most from the dispossession of McLoughlin's claim. The southern half of the study area, Park Place, lies within the boundaries of McLoughlin's original two-square-mile claim. It was after Waller's attempt to discredit McLoughlin and negate his rights to the land that subsequent litigation opened the way for Abernethy to file a DLC on part of McLoughlin's 1829 claim. Abernethy's DLC, in the Clackamas Heights/Park Place study area, is part of that original 1829 claim.

The DeSmet-Bartleson Party, numbering approximately 25 people bound for the Catholic Mission on French Prairie, arrived in 1841. Two years later Father DeSmet organized the first Catholic Church in Oregon City.

In 1842 Dr. Elijah White, a former associate of Jason Lee at the Mission, returned to the Oregon territory as the first United States government appointee to the region, in the position of sub-Indian Agent. His party of 112 people arrived at the Falls in September 1842 with news of the possible passage of Senator Linn's Oregon Land Bill, foreshadowing the passage of the Donation Land Law of 1850. Among the members of this party who made significant contributions to Oregon City were Asa L. Lovejoy--Mayor of Oregon City after incorporation--Medorem Crawford and Lansford W. Hastings (Carey 1922:421).

With the mounting population at the Falls, coupled with news of Linn's bill and White's arrival as sub-Indian agent for the federal government, all signs pointed to continued American settlement, and McLoughlin was led to establish the "claim corners" of the future Willamette Falls townsite. Jesse Applegate, former deputy surveyor of St. Louis, Missouri, surveyed Willamette Falls in early 1844. After "McLoughlin had platted the townsite, which he called Oregon City, the Methodists continued to call the place Willamette Falls, until by legislative action the name Oregon City was legally adopted" (Carey 1922:378).

Oregon City's growing dominance as the center of trade and key link in the Willamette transportation corridor was envied by many of the new American settlers, and competitive townsites were soon platted. Hugh Burns, who arrived in the Elijah White Party, claimed a section of land immediately north of Robert Moore's land, on the west bank of the river. Burns platted Multnomah City on October 9, 1842, the second town to be platted near the Falls site. Moore followed suit, platting his claim in 1843. Renamed in 1845 to honor Senator Linn of Missouri, Moore's Linn City remained one of Oregon City's primary rivals until the flood of 1861 washed away its mills and stores. Both plats point to the preeminence of the Falls site as the future industrial and commercial center of the valley.

Although the "City of Oregon" was being occupied by a growing number of Americans, it was still McLoughlin's claim, and until the question of territorial boundaries was settled in 1846, there was an undercurrent of enmity between the rival national interests.

The Methodist Mission established a store in Oregon City in direct competition with the Hudson's Bay trade store. Waller's completion of the Methodist Church in 1843 gave the American settlement the first Protestant Church west of the Rockies. In that same year Father Modeste Demers established St. John the Apostle Catholic Church to accommodate the large number of Roman Catholics among the Hudson's Bay employees and French-Canadians in the valley.

By 1843, the American settlement had formed a nucleus for both a commercial (Methodist Mission stores) and social growth, but remained essentially dependent on the offices of the Hudson Bay Company for its economic needs.

Many of the early pioneers who arrived in Oregon City were destitute, suffering from the privations of their overland journey and the treacherous final leg of that journey over the Columbia cascades. Dr. McLoughlin, in his capacity as chief factor, helped hundreds of new American settlers down the rapids with men and boats sent out from Fort Vancouver. He also supplied many of these same settlers with the credit to purchase needed supplies and seeds in order to get their first "cash crop" planted. As proprietor of the Oregon City townsite he employed many of the newcomers and supplied them with food and shelter:

Since the chief factor's personal economic interests centered on the development of a water power site at the falls of the Willamette River, his newly arrived employees could not scatter to isolated claims, but had to remain together near the mill. As a result, the 1842 migration contributed little to the frontier's existing rural population. Instead, it provided the nucleus of the frontier's first town, Oregon City. During the winter of 1824-1843 the village grew to almost thirty structures (Bowen 1978:12).

The "Great Migration" of 1843 brought over 800 settlers into the valley. It established the future agrarian settlement patterns, laying claim to the valley from north to south, until the "southern route" was opened in 1846; the immigrants first settled near the established farms on French Prairie, and in the Tualatin Plains, then moved south along the edges of forest and prairie lands in order to utilize both timber and agricultural lands and resources. This tendency to settle the valley from north to south was primarily due to the difficulty in travel and the destitution in which most overland travelers found themselves on their arrival: the luxury of means to shop for a claim was rare. Because transportation was primarily by water or trail, the land within easy access to these routes was usually the first to be claimed.

The expanding settlement of the upper valley with its thriving agricultural production and promising young lumber industry added significantly to the Oregon City site as a transportation, shipping and trading center.

Oregon City and the immediate vicinity continued to grow as commercial interests and speculators followed the settlers. Because ease of transportation--of both people and goods--was the most vital element to settlement of the valley, the Falls site was strategically located to take advantage of the growing number of settlers.

The primary transportation corridor of the valley was the Willamette River. During this period, Robert Newell, Medorum Crawford and Aaron Cooke formed a partnership to haul freight between the French Prairie settlements and the lower Willamette. Employing Native American labor from the Falls and Clackama villages, they rowed the "Mogul" and the "Ben Franklin," large modified bateaux, between Canemah and Champoeg semi-weekly. At Canemah, Medorum Crawford would unload the freight and transfer it to ox team and wagon for the portage over the bluffs and down to Oregon City, the trading and dispersal point.

It was during this time that the first ferries appeared on the river. Hugh Burns operated a ferry between Multnomah City and Oregon City in 1844. Robert Moore and John McLoughlin also ran a ferry between Linn City and Oregon City. In 1844, Fendel Cason, a member of the 1843 "Great Migration," established a claim on the north bank of the Clackamas that included the Clackama Village

and the area encompassed by the old Chautauqua Park in Gladstone. At a point very near the present site of the 82nd Street Bridge, Cason began ferry service to the south shore, at the Park Place site.

The land between the confluence of the Clackamas and Willamette Rivers and the hills to the east rising above the bottomlands was claimed by both McLoughlin and the Methodist Mission.

With increased population growth in the Oregon City vicinity, these bottomlands and bluffs became prime settlement sites. Soon after Cason's ferry was established across the Clackamas, two fellow immigrants of 1843, Hiram Straight and Charles E. Pickett, established claims in the area that further clouded the rights of either McLoughlin or the Methodist Mission, and helped to establish the community that grew up around Park Place.

In 1845 Pickett staked a one-square-mile claim to the land immediately south of the Clackamas River opposite Cason's claim. Pickett's claim included all of the present survey area with the exception of a small area east of Clackamas Heights and south of Victoria Heights. On the land adjoining the Clackamas River, in Township 2 east, Range 2 south, Section 20, Pickett platted the townsite of Clackamas City. In an effort to promote his townsite, he took advantage of the first issue of Oregon's first newspaper, the Oregon Spectator, February 5, 1846, to place the first real estate advertisement to appear on the Pacific Coast, offering lots for sale on land that was "dry, level, and at least ten feet above the highest water mark; and from it to the crossing of the Clackamas, where a bridge will be built the coming season, an almost level road can be spread."

From this town-building enterprise, the Methodist Church, feeling theirs a prior claim, attempted to discourage young Pickett. Instead, Pickett by his acts of pertinacity, broke the local monopoly. Land-hungry settlers poured in to build homes around the falls (Corning 1947:55).

The actual rate at which Clackamas grew is unclear, but by July 9, 1846, the principal of the Clackamas City School, Carlos W. Shane, announced that a "second session of the Clackamas City School will commence on Monday next, July 12th, and will continue twelve weeks" (Oregon Spectator August 12, 1846). At least one blacksmith business, Norriss and Cutting, is known to have been in place at the townsite at the end of the period. Clackamas City did not become a serious threat to the other townsites in the falls vicinity, but references in journals and diaries suggest that it was more than "a city on paper".



On July 5, 1843, Clackamas District was named one of the four legislative districts adopted by the Provisional Government. The district included what is now the northern half of the county along with two-thirds of the states of Washington and Idaho and parts of British Columbia and Montana. With subsequent political shifts in 1845, 1846, 1851 and 1854, the Clackamas District (County) was reduced to its present political boundaries.

Oregon City was incorporated in 1844, thereby becoming the first incorporated city west of the Rocky Mountains. The first school in Oregon City was begun by Sidney Moss in 1844. Moss, a member of the Peoria Party, personally financed this early school where classes were taught by John P. Brooks. A second school was conducted about the same time in the home of N.W. Randall. Prior to the completion of the State House, the Provisional Government rented rooms in the Randall home for its sessions (Lynch 1973:291).

With the Provisional Government operating in its Oregon City State House, the city became the capitol of the Oregon Country. The original state house was located on the corner of 6th and Main Streets. George Abernethy was elected first Governor on June 3, 1845. This same year the Oregon Printing Association was organized and on February 5, 1846, began publication of the Oregon Spectator, Oregon's first newspaper, with William G. T'Vault as editor. The Oregon Spectator of February 19, 1846, described Oregon City:

A population of no less than 500 souls...with about 80 houses and two churches. There were two taverns, two blacksmith shops, two cooper shops, one tannery, three shoe shops, two silversmiths and a number of other mechanics, four stores, two flouring mills and two sawmills, and a lath machine.

In 1846 the Provisional Government licensed Samuel K. Barlow and Philip Foster to construct a wagon road from The Dalles around Mt. Hood and into the lower Willamette Valley. In July 1846, a former fur-trapper, Reuben Gant, became the first person to drive a wagon over the new toll road into the Willamette Valley, thereby circumventing the Columbia cascades. The period ends with the Barlow Road leading incoming immigration directly to the Falls communities and the encampment and overwintering grounds (Kelly Field) on the bottomlands north of Oregon City and south of Park Place.

#### 1847 - 1865: Settlement, Statehood, and Steampower

The political events that culminated in the settlement of the United States boundary dispute with Britain had a direct effect on Oregon City. Joseph Lane was appointed Governor of the new territory and was sworn into office in Oregon

City on March 3, 1849. The territorial legislature met in Oregon City between July 1849 and June 1851.

The years between 1847 and 1851 were vital in the development of Oregon City. With the increase in overland immigration in 1847, the townsite grew rapidly, especially in its commercial and social areas. The Methodist Church, built in 1843, was followed in 1847 by the completion of the Baptist Church. Ezra Fisher and Hezekiah Johnson arrived in Oregon in 1845, the first two Baptist ministers to be sent out by the American Baptist Home Missionary Society. Fisher taught at the Baptist School when he returned from the gold fields in 1851. His DLC was taken out directly south of George Abernethy's claim, and a small section is included in the Park Place study area.

In 1850 the first Congregational Church was built, following Rev. George Henry Atkinson's arrival. Dr. Atkinson, a proponent of education for both sexes, founded the Clackamas Female Seminary at Oregon City; the seminary was originally located on 12th Street. He then organized the Oregon City public school system, becoming its first superintendent in 1848. Considered the father of Oregon's public school system, he organized the Territorial system in 1849, and was co-founder of Pacific University north of Hillsboro (Corning 1956:190).

The first Masonic Lodge in Oregon, Multnomah Lodge No. 1, was granted a charter in 1846, but it was not built in the Falls community until September 11, 1848 (Lockley 1928:654).

The first brick building was built in Oregon City for Abernethy, Clark & Co., the general merchandise store. Since there were no brickyards in or near Oregon City in 1851, it is believed that Abernethy had the brick shipped from one of the French Prairie brickyards (Lynch 1973:476).

A number of mills were established in and near Oregon City to accommodate the need for lumber that new settlement demanded. Markets opened by the California gold rush also strengthened the fledgling lumber industry. In addition, the bounty of agricultural products now being grown by settlers came through the city en route to California, stimulating the transportation and shipping trade.

Although the discovery of gold in California in 1848 initially depleted the territory's population, by the latter part of 1849 returning miners as well as new immigration once again began to enrich the economy. The Territorial mint was established in Oregon City. Wheat was no longer the "currency" of exchange as gold bullion was brought into the country from the southern fields.

The Territorial Census recorded 993 individuals living in Oregon City in 1849. Total population between the Falls and the Clackamas River was estimated at

1,200 at this time. Given the relative importance of the mills in Linn City, along with the plat of Multnomah and the portage road and transfer companies located at Canemah, it would be reasonable to infer that there was some development of the Park Place area.

In 1847, Fendel Cason had replaced his ferry service across the Clackamas with a bridge, the first one on the Clackamas River. Jacob and Peter Rinearson, who had been operating a competing ferry at the mouth of the Clackamas for approximately three years, continued operations for a short while before discontinuing service in 1848. By that year Philip Foster, who had taken over the toll road, had extended five separate cutoffs radiating to other localities in the valley.

The 1852 Willamette Meridian Survey shows one of these roads, serving the northern area of the Clackamas River, "Foster's to Oregon City," running through the general area of Damascus and Anderson, with branches extending out towards Powell Valley and south toward the Boring site. The primary road leads to the Cason Bridge, through Clackamas City, and into Oregon City. This generally follows the same route as 82nd Street. Also reaching the bridge from the north were the "Milwaukie Road" and a branch of the "Road From Milwaukie & Oregon City [to] Sandy Road," with a branch that approximated, in part, the current Oatfield Road. These combined to bring the northern routes over the Cason Bridge, and through the site of Clackamas City.

The Willamette Meridian Survey shows the Clackamas City plat as containing 21 blocks, with the Cason Road passing through the eastern end of the plat, intersecting the "Road to Mattoons Mills," and continuing to Oregon City on the general course of the current road. There are no records to indicate the exact population at this time, but Rev. George Atkinson's diary for Sunday, April 1, 1850, reads: "In the afternoon I commenced preaching again at Clackamas City. Had a full room." Six weeks later his entry reads, "P.M. at Clackamas had a smaller number than usual. Found a Sabbath school of 18, 3 teachers." On February 17, 1851, Atkinson's diary reads: "I have been employed as usual from Sabbath to Sabbath, having a cong'n of about 50 in the morning [Oregon City] & 50 to 80 in the eve. At Linn City about 20 or 25 attend, at Clackamas City, from 12 to 20 including children" (Corning 1947:58). This is the last known reference to Clackamas City.

The land containing the plat seems to have gone thereafter into farm and field land. The Willamette Meridian Survey shows Hunsacker's farm to the immediate south and its tilled land, close to a quarter section, encroaching on the townsite. Hiram Straight's DLC incorporated Pickett's original plat, and title records suggest that the land was used for farming and part-time farming until the following decade.

Samuel S. White, Barryman Jennings and Lot Whitcomb built the first steamboat on the Willamette River, the "Lot Whitcomb," christened on Christmas day, 1850, thus heralding the era of the steamboat on the Willamette. With increasing agricultural production in the upper valley, the falls began to experience its first physical changes to accommodate the growing shipping needs of the upper valley. Oregon City's "boardwalk" and new portage road were built in 1850 after Peter Hatch blasted out a water-level road at the foot of the bluffs on the east side. That same year the People's Transportation Company was formed to expedite the movement of freight around the falls. Monopolizing river traffic by either owning or controlling the boats and shippers, they were able to move freight faster with central management controlling and regulating transfer. A breakwater on the eastern side was built in 1853 to further enhance timeliness, as steamboats could now load at the docks of the mills, saving time transferring cargo.

The single most important piece of legislation affecting Oregon City during this era was the "Location Bill," which passed on February 1, 1851:

Under the terms of the "Location Bill" the seat of government was moved to Salem, the penitentiary located in Portland, the university at Marysville (Corvallis), to the specific exclusion of Oregon City (Lynch 1973:187).

After 1852 the population of Oregon City began to decline for a two-year period as settlers were attracted to other towns along the Willamette River. By the mid-1850s Portland's growth as a population and shipping center surpassed that of Oregon City, and Milwaukie became the nominal head of oceangoing transportation early in the decade of the 1850s as it vied with Portland for the honor of being the "head of navigation" on the Willamette. With the death in 1857 of Lot Whitcomb, the Milwaukie townsite promoter, Portland eclipsed its final rival.

Although Oregon City's position as the hub of the territory declined in the 1850s, its position as the county center for trade, politics and urban activity was secure. With increased commercial and industrial ventures locating at the falls site in the 1860s, Oregon City began a period of slow but steady growth, with a firm economic base.

With the location of several large manufacturing firms at the falls site, Oregon City had made a significant step toward switching from a service- and shipping-based economy to one of manufacturing by the end of the period. In 1863-1864, George LeRoque built the Imperial Flour Mills south of the boat basin. The Oregon Manufacturing Company was located directly north of the Imperial Mills

the following year. Original stockholders Isaac and Ralph Jacobs soon gained control of the company and built it into the largest woolen mill west of the Mississippi River, operating under the same ownership for 92 years.

### 1866 -1883: Railroads and Industrial Growth

Industrial growth marks the first years of this period in Oregon City and Park Place. In 1866 the Pioneer Paper Manufacturing Company, also known as the Oregon City Paper Mill (Langley 1867:278) as well as Oregon City Paper Manufacturing Company (Journal Dec. 30, 1945), the first paper mill in Oregon, was established in Oregon City. The mill began operation on January 10, 1867, and soon was running two shifts to supply the demands for its product. Reorganization and financial problems closed its doors in August 1867, and it was sold September 7, 1867, by the county sheriff. Although short-lived, it introduced an industry that would have the single most significant impact on both Oregon City and Park Place for the next 20 to 30 years.

The bottomlands between Oregon City and Park Place during the 1860s and 1870s had been used primarily for pasturage and hay cultivation, with several sites that indicate general farming near the bluffs to the southeast and east. In the 20 years since Pickett's plat of Clackamas City, the riparian deciduous forestland of cottonwood, vine maple and undergrowth had increased along the river, while logging operations had removed the original fir and hemlock stands on the surrounding bluffs. Several of the ancient Oregon white oak groves stood near the river and south on the fringe of the hills. Photographs of the general vicinity taken late in this period show second-growth Douglas fir becoming established in areas on the surrounding bluffs and slopes. W.W. Buck had established a lumber mill near the Cason Bridge in the early 1860s, and a small community had begun to develop to the southwest of the mill site. The mill became the site of the second paper mill in Oregon.

H.L. Pittock, publisher of the Portland Oregonian, formed a partnership with Buck and his son, under the name of H.L. Pittock and Company. Equipment was purchased and brought in from Worcester, Massachusetts, and installed "in the mill building erected at Park Place from lumber cut in Buck's sawmill" (Oregon Enterprise August 17, 1867). The mill began operation on September 12, 1868, and continued to operate through the period, running as many as two shifts of approximately eight to ten men. The rural community that had existed in the general area since Pickett's platting of Park Place, reasserted itself, and a small village began taking shape in the general vicinity of the 1889 Park Place Plat.

In 1868, the Oregon Central Railroad Company and the Oregon and California Railroad Company competed down opposite banks of the Willamette to determine which company would be awarded the 3,821,902-acre congressional land grant. Ben Holladay's Oregon & California Railroad Company was the first to complete the required section of track and so was awarded the grant. Having started out of East Portland, the O&CRR bridged the Clackamas in November of 1869, only to have the trestle washed out in high water. Replaced, the work pushed forward and Holladay won the competition by two days over the rival company. The rail line was completed only as far as Roseburg before it was stalled by Holladay's financial difficulties. This was the first rail transportation and shipping road established in the state, and opened the Willamette Valley to the shipping ports to the north.

It brought Oregon City in closer contact with the Portland shipping and financial interests. The construction route had forced Holladay to blast out more of the bluffs between Oregon City and Canemah, causing more physical deformation of the original Willamette Falls basin. At the same time Holladay was blasting out the bluffs to accommodate his rail line, the Willamette Falls Company was building the Willamette Locks. Opened on January 1, 1873, the immediate effect was a 50 per cent drop in freight rates. Boat building was stimulated because wheat from the upper valley could now be taken directly to Astoria for transfer to European ships. This in turn gave incentive for back-country development and indirectly stimulated the Oregon City and county economy. Competition with the railroads helped for a time to extend the life of steamboat transportation on the Willamette, but ultimately led to the demise of the river's steamboat traffic.

A station was established at the site of Park Place, and named Paper Mill. As the trestle over the Clackamas River was immediately north of the Cason Bridge, all overland traffic moved through the north-south corridor established by both the road and the rail line. Paper was shipped to Portland over the rail line beginning in the mid-1870s. Between 1860 and 1890 the German population in the county began to increase from overseas immigration. A number of the early immigrants settled in or around Oregon City. Early land claims and large farm tracts began to be sub-divided into smaller farming units as the original pioneering families retired from active farming, and the growing population increased pressure for land. The 1880 census listed 9,260 people, a 55 per cent increase county wide. In Oregon City and the area between the falls and Park Place the population was close to 1400 people.

## 1884 - 1913: Progressive Era

The beginning of the "Progressive Era" is marked by the construction of the first county courthouse in Oregon City. It was built in 1884 to accommodate the expanding population in both the urban and rural areas of the county. Prior to this, County business was conducted in rented homes, halls and offices around the city: however, rapid growth was putting ever increasing demands on City and County government.

Industry expanded at a rapid rate during this time. The timber and wood products industries made major advances, and by the close of the Progressive Era, they were the largest employers in both Oregon City/Park Place and the county. The Willamette Falls Pulp and Paper Company was established in Oregon City in 1889, followed in 1890 by the Crown Mill, and in 1908 by the Hawley Paper Company.

In 1885 the H.L. Pittock & Company Paper Mill at Park Place, now known as the Clackamas Paper Manufacturing Co., was moved to Camas, Washington. The area around Park Place no longer supported large riparian deciduous forests, as the Cottonwood was the first species of tree to be used for paper pulp. With advances in technology, the large quantities of wood wastes from burgeoning lumber and saw mills throughout the county could be used to make paper as well. This was one of the primary reasons for the growth of new paper plants in Oregon City.

With the closing of the Park Place mill, a group of men composed primarily of German and Swiss immigrants--Gustav Friedrich, Frank Busch, Joseph Witzig and William White--opened a furniture factory in the old paper mill. The flood of 1890 did considerable damage to the new factory, and the partnership dissolved, although business directories (Polk 1891-92) indicate a furniture store operated at Park Place within a year after the flood. The community had grown to approximately 100 individuals by this time, supporting two stores, a general merchandise store, and the furniture factory and lumber mill.

Oregon City and Park Place entered into a period of growth, with many new subdivisions and additions platted between 1888 and the beginning of World War I. Oregon City's additions included areas to the south and southeast of the city center; while the Park Place area to the east and northwest began to fill in as well. Clackamas Heights--two plat filings, one in 1888 and one in 1889 --and the Victoria Heights additions adjacent to Oregon City on the east were developed at this time, followed by Apperson's Addition, and the original Park Place plat in August of 1890. By this year all the land between Oregon City and Park Place,

exclusive of the bottomland directly north of Oregon City and west of Park Place, had been platted. Within two years, however, even the less desirable bottomland was platted (Straight's Addition to Park Place, January 1892).

A real estate map published in July 1889, just after the platting of Clackamas Heights, shows the old "Oregon & California Railroad station at Paper Mill" as the "Clackamas Park Station." The map shows the area later platted as Park Place, as the "Clackamas Plat." Confusion with the small community of Clackamas just to the north of what is now Park Place is believed to be the reason the "Clackamas Plat" name was dropped. The plat for Park Place was officially filed on August 10, 1889.

Originally written as two words...Postal authorities consolidated the name into one word. The name Park Place was chosen for the townsite because of the park in a nearby oak grove, and Paper Mill was no longer appropriate. The post office name was later changed from Parkplace to Park Place (McArthur 1981:568).

The growth of Oregon City and the Park Place vicinity can be traced to the growth of the lumber and paper industry coupled with advances in technology and the subsequent development of the interurban and electric railroads. In 1889 the Willamette Falls Electric Company in Oregon City made history by transmitting the first electricity over long distance power lines to illuminate the streets of Portland. One of the major results of this transmission was the subsequent construction of the nation's first interurban electric railroad.

James and George Steel of Portland constructed the East Side Railway between Portland and Oregon City. The first electric interurban in the country, it made its initial run in 1893. The immediate effect of the line was to open up previously remote sections of northern Clackamas County for development thus making the concept of "suburbs" and commuting realistic for the first time. In Clackamas County the interurban led to development of the "bedroom," "garden" and part-time farming communities (Throop 1948:327). The interurban crossed the Clackamas River approximately halfway between the Southern Pacific Trestle (Oregon & California), and the McLoughlin Boulevard Bridge. The Park Place Interurban station was located just west of the community.

From this point on the Park Place area developed largely as a part-time farming and garden community. Many of the residents were employed in Gladstone and Oregon City, while maintaining enough land to operate small garden or truck farms. Truck farming in the area had increased with the arrival of Italian immigrants who settled in the northern part of the county. Japanese and



Chinese immigrants also contributed to this growing industry. The truck farms tended to be close to urban centers for ease of transportation. By 1900 the area between Oregon City and Milwaukie had filled with many small farms.

The Park Place community was composed primarily of a mixture of German, Swiss, and Scandinavians who had arrived somewhat earlier than the newly arriving Italians and Asians. Most of the new immigrants settled to the north and south of the Park Place community.

Hops became a major cash crop between 1890 and the close of the Progressive Era in 1913. The bottomland adjacent to Park Place and north of Oregon City, on the Hiram Straight DLC, became a prime hop producing area. The Seavy hopyards at Park Place developed at this time (Metzger 1928), becoming one of the largest hop operations in the state.

The organization of the Patrons of Husbandry, was begun in Oregon at Marshfield (Clackamas), in March of 1873. In 1905 the Abernethy Grange No. 346, was chartered by the agricultural community in the Park Place vicinity. This Grange became one of the most active in the county, and maintained its charter throughout the historic period.

As development expanded so did the demand for better roads. Many of the roads in the county were still corduroy, and impassable in the rainy season. Oregon City streets remained dirt until the turn-of-the-century. The Good Roads Movement began in the mid-90s and became one of the strongest grassroots lobbying efforts for road improvements, along with the Patrons of Husbandry, in the state. The combined impact of these lobbying efforts was the creation of the State Highway Department in the next period.

Oregon City's growth was stimulated by other developments in the transportation sector. The West Linn and Oregon City suspension bridge was built across the Willamette River in 1888. The Willamette Valley Southern Railway Company, begun in 1913, opened up the Molalla River Valley in 1915 with passenger and freight service. By the end of the era these developments combined to create a transportation network that allowed greatly increased movement of both people and goods between Oregon City and the outlying areas. Development of suburbs and additions to the urban center were stimulated and Oregon City went through its first major period of growth since before the "Location Law" had combined with the development of other Willamette Valley communities to usurp Oregon City's position as "The City of Oregon."

During this era the pioneer family names so familiar to Oregon City residents were joined by the names of many newcomers. The intermingling of first and second generation Oregon City families, and new business and speculative

interests, combined to govern the community. The spectrum of civic involvement is illustrated by those who served as mayor of Oregon City: descendants of early settlers included Hiram Straight, 1894, 95-96; Edward Caufield, 1897-98, 06-07; and, C.D. Latourette, 1899-00; and, the more recently arrived Grant B. Dimick, 1901-04, 12; E.A. Sommer 1905; W.E. Carll, 1908-10; George C. Brownell, 1911; and Linn E. Jones 1913-1915.

Between 1884 and 1913 the city water system and fire department were expanded and improved. Electric lights, sidewalks and initial road grading and paving began. Numerous private sector improvements were made. Theatres and an opera house (Shively's) were built and became important centers of social activity. In 1913, the Carnegie Library was completed.

As an era of social consciousness, charitable institutions and the church community--numbering seventeen separate churches--combined to assist and support the relief agencies in the county. The St. Agnes Baby Home was constructed during this period and was a prominent visual landmark in the community between 1890 and 1954.

The St. Agnes Baby Home lies buried beneath thousands of tons of fill, over which the highway interchange is constructed at Park Place...From the Hiram Straight Donation Land Claim on the south side of the Clackamas River, the Archdiocese of Portland obtained some acreage around 1890. Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge had plans to erect a building to care for wayward girls. Shortly after the flood of 1890 the large brick structure on its massive stone foundation was raised (Lynch 1973:145).

The baby home was developed by two successive orders, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and the Oregon Sisters of Mercy. By the end of 1902 it had begun to take on its function as a baby home, as well as a girls home, with other charitable projects incorporated within its grounds. There was an orchard on the property, and a farming and dairy operation supplied food for the residents. The grounds of the institution incorporated a large portion of the original plat of Clackamas City. Unlike the primary building which dominated the landscape, the farmland and orchards blended into the general ambiance of the Park Place area.

Park Place grew with the rest of the county during this period. The 1900 census indicates a population of between 175 and 200 in the vicinity. This included two general stores operated by R.L. Russel and M. A. Holmes. In 1904 the Congregational Church was conducting services in the community. In 1913, there was both a grade school and high school in close proximity to Park Place. Frank

Lucas was postmaster during this time, and the Gladstone Lumber Company located in the community, which by the end of the era had grown from a community of approximately 75, to a community of several hundred people (Polk 1913).

### 1914 -1940: The Motor Age

Formation of the State Highway Commission in 1913, coupled with highway legislation and new funding measures between 1917-1920, radically changed the nature of the county's dirt and corduroy road system. Initial modern funding for roads began in 1907, when the first car license fees were imposed. These early fees went into the state general fund, but were not specifically earmarked for county road improvement. Inadequately funded, road improvement continued to flag, although both rural and urban lobbying groups continued to press for financing.

Legislation in 1917 created the State Highway Fund, from which license revenues were shared with the counties for highway improvement. A state bond issue specifically for road improvement was also passed in 1917.

With adequate funding the upgrading and construction of the modern state highway system began. Clackamas County experienced immediate benefit from several state road projects. That which most impacted the study area, however, was the construction of the "Super Highway"--Highway 99E (State Highway Division Report 1923:127) which diverted traffic from the historic right-of-way (82nd Street/Cason Bridge) which passed through Park Place. With construction of the 99E bridge and right-of-way over the mouth of the Clackamas River over a mile west of the Park Place community, overall growth in the study area slowed.

Despite the slow growth, the community did see the appearance of some auto-related buildings. In 1925 there were three gas stations and one auto garage in Park Place.

Along with the "Super Highway," came the Market Road Law in 1920 that allowed for the distribution to counties of revenues for the specific improvement of market roads. Between 1920 and 1940 every primary market road in the county was graded and graveled, and almost all were paved. Access to agricultural and timber lands was improved, and cost effective shipping helped to stimulate the manufacturing markets until the depression of the 30s.

Oregon City's roads were continually upgraded during this period, and by the end of the Motor Age, all of the primary and secondary roads within the city were paved.

With the construction of Highway 99E, and the improved system of market roads accessing the city, the county seat continued to grow; however, Portland also benefited from improvements in transportation, and overall growth concentrated in the Portland area. Development in the study area centered on improvements in the lumber products industry and the upbuilding of the pulp and paper mills.

The timber and wood products industry experienced its greatest expansion during this period. With the improved road systems, and new trucking technology, logging related enterprises were stimulated throughout the county.

The Willamette River, having seen the slow demise of steamboat travel between 1884 and 1913, regained some of its historical character as an artery of commerce with the large scale shipping and rafting of logs to the mills at Oregon City. The Willamette and Crown mills operated side by side until 1914 when a merger created The Crown Willamette Pulp and Paper Company. In 1937, Anthony Zellerbach gained control of many of the western mills, including the Crown Willamette, and created the Crown Zellerbach Corporation.

By the 1920s the wood products industry had become the major industry in the state; as it had been in Clackamas County since the mid 90s, and Oregon City since the late 1880s. With the onset of the Great Depression, however, the industry suffered a considerable slow down, with many mills and related operations shutting down throughout the area. By the late 1930s the industry was beginning to revive; however, it wasn't until the post-World War II housing boom that it was restored to its position as the leading state industry.

In the first part of this period Oregon City saw many new civic projects. Among these were construction of the Oregon City Elevator and Kelly Field (although originally privately funded it was taken over by government after financial difficulties.)

During the Depression, Oregon City's economy was stricken by the malaise in the wood products industry noted above; however, the Federal Works Progress Administration, along with City and County programs, kept many people employed. Among the projects rising directly or indirectly from the relief programs was the construction of the McLoughlin Bridge in 1933 which replaced the old suspension bridge over the Clackamas. The new County Courthouse was built in 1934 with federal financing, as was the jail. By the second half of the decade, well ahead of many counties and cities in the state, the area's economy had seen some improvement.

In 1937 the Clackamas County Court made the County Planning Board an official arm of County government--prior to this it had been in an advisory capacity only. This act was a direct result of the innovative programs the planning board had

developed and implemented in the previous four years. The Oregonian, not always the most complementary of rival city newspapers, published an editorial at the time in recognition of the Clackamas County Planning Department:

The recovery plan of the Clackamas county planning board became, largely, the general program of all concerned. They worked together as one organization. More than a million dollars' worth of work that will serve future generations as well as the present has been done (Oregonian August 2, 1937:10).

Throughout the depression Oregon City and County officials worked together to mitigate the economic and social effects it had on the population. By the second half of the decade, well ahead of many cities and counties, revenues began to improve, and both the lumber and agricultural industries showed signs of recovery.

The Park Place community continued as a small garden and part-time farming community through the depression. By 1940 the population of the community was estimated at approximately 650 people (Polk 1940). With the pressure exerted by commercial, industrial and urban growth of the post-War period, however, the community lost much of its historic character and identity. In 1954, the Oregon City Enterprise ran an editorial about the closing of the Park Place Post Office which offered "our condolences to the Park Place people...We were always proud of the tiny village which was nestled on the banks of the Clackamas between Gladstone and Oregon City" (Enterprise March 3, 1954:2-2).

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## IDENTIFICATION

The following narrative is focused on the identification of historic themes and resource types. The Oregon City Cultural Resource Survey (1983), Clackamas County Cultural Resource Survey (1984), and additional information compiled in the course of this project, served as the basis by which to identify resource types, and to define gaps in survey and research efforts.

## METHODOLOGY

The Park Place Historic Context Statement was prepared by Koler/Morrison Historic Preservation and Planning Consultants, Oregon City, Oregon, with the assistance of staff from the City of Oregon City Planning Department and numerous volunteers. Jane Morrison served as project manager. Trained as an urban planner with specialty in cultural resource management, she has been conducting survey and inventory work throughout the Northwest since 1981. Her primary responsibilities included review of existing properties, identification of additional resources, preparation of physical descriptions and site plans, and coordination of community involvement and property evaluation. Julie Koler was the project historian, responsible for coordination of research activities, editing of all written materials, evaluation of resources and preparation of the final report. Dana Koler was responsible for research and writing of the historic overview. Robin Gregory coordinated volunteer training. Lynn Cavagnaro assisted with field work, photographed properties, and assisted with compilation of final inventory forms. Victoria Williams assisted with individual property research.

The project began in May 1990 and was completed in August 1990. It consisted of four major phases: literature search and preparation of an overview of local history; update of the existing inventory; evaluation of resources; and, preparation of the inventory forms and the final document. Community involvement in developing this document was extensive. It consisted of a team of volunteers from the neighborhood who conducted extensive research and interviewed numerous residents regarding local history.

In phase one, all existing materials were reviewed, repositories of historical materials and knowledgeable individuals were identified, and historical research completed sufficient to develop an historic overview of Oregon City and Park Place history. Based on the overview an outline of anticipated property types and styles was developed.

Phase two consisted of updating existing inventory forms. Photographs were taken, site plans prepared, and a physical inspection and written description of each resource completed. Negatives were cataloged and roll and frame numbers

were recorded on the field forms. Basic research for each resource was also conducted during this period. Primary and secondary source materials were consulted including Ticor Title Co. records, Sanborn Insurance maps, business directories, newspapers and photographs. People knowledgeable about local history were interviewed as well as property owners.

During phase three the consultant made a preliminary evaluation of resources based on minimum thresholds of physical integrity. Inventory forms were then completed for those properties which met basic integrity criteria.

Phase four consisted of organization of survey data and preparation of the final forms and report. Architectural descriptions and statements of significance were completed for each resource and matched up with miscellaneous data such as legal descriptions, photographs and site plans.

### PREVIOUS SURVEYS

This project represents the first intensive survey and inventory of cultural resources in the Park Place vicinity. Previous survey work in the study area includes the Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings conducted by Stephen Dow Beckham in 1976 for the State Historic Preservation Office; a reconnaissance survey of cultural resources conducted by Oregon City in 1983; and, the Clackamas County Cultural Resource Survey conducted by the Clackamas County Department of Environmental Services in 1984.

None of the surveys were comprehensive in nature. The only property identified in the Beckham study was the Hiram Straight Cemetery. Approximately 32 properties were identified in the Oregon City survey. Documentation in this study consisted of photographing resources, compiling locational data, and completion of rough physical descriptions. Twelve of the 32 resources identified in the Oregon City survey were documented further in the 1984 Clackamas County study. At the time of the 1989 annexation the City extended interim protection to all of the 35 resources. The Hiram Straight House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is also designated as a County landmark. There are no locally designated landmarks in the study area.

Of the 32 resources identified in earlier studies seven were removed from the inventory in the course of this project due to extreme alterations which have destroyed the property's physical integrity, and two were removed because they were demolished.



## RESOURCE TYPES

The 23 properties included in the following analysis are categorized under the broad theme of Culture and the subtheme of Architecture. This theme was selected for in-depth analysis because it represents the bulk of the resources in the study area. Other themes represented in the inventory include Government (1), Religion (1), and Settlement (1).

Categorizing properties by thematic group provides a context for making consistent decisions in the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic resources. The themes used here are consistent with those defined by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.

The following is a discussion of the characteristics of the resource types documented in the course of this project.

### CULTURE: Architecture

Architectural resources, with 23 entries, represent 100 per cent of the inventoried resources in the study area.

The properties in this category include social and domestic buildings. The buildings, most of which were constructed between 1855 and 1940, include one church/school and 22 dwellings, eight with associated garages.

Very few "pure" architectural styles are represented here; most of the buildings are hybrids, incorporating features from several popular styles of the day. These range from the 19th century Romantic Styles--Rural Gothic Vernacular and Italianate--to 20th century historic period revival styles such as the Colonial Revival; and the Craftsman Bungalow. General definitions used here--such as "Romantic"--are taken from Virginia and Lee MacAlester's A Field Guide to American Housing, 1985. More specific divisions between stylistic types are taken from Rosalind Clark's Architecture Oregon Style, 1983.

### Domestic Buildings

Single family dwellings constitute the majority of inventoried properties in the study area. All of these buildings are included under the theme of Architecture and several of them are also included under the themes of Government and Settlement. All were constructed during the period 1858 to 1920. The majority were constructed for working class people.

With 17 inventory entries, the most common style in the study area is the Vernacular style which predominated around the turn-of-the-century. Widely adapted to mass housing, this building type was constructed as early as the 1850s and continued into the early decades of the 20th century. The style is characterized by wood frame buildings, one to two stories in height with gable roofs, long double-hung sash windows with architrave molding, and horizontal wood siding. Decorative features, when present, are usually confined to porch details: chamfered or turned posts and occasionally carved and jigsawed brackets or spindlework. Diamond-shaped windows and decorative beltcourses are also present. Usually these dwellings are a simple rectangular volume or two rectangular volumes set at right angles. The T or L-plan arrangement sometimes indicates a building that was constructed in phases; often one volume is only one story, while the main volume is two stories. The William H. Smith House at 15824 S. Harley is an excellent example of the style.

The oldest dwelling in the study area was designed in the Classic Revival style. This style was popular in the early decades of the 19th century throughout most of the United States. Overland pioneers to the Oregon Territory frequently constructed their first substantial dwelling on the new frontier in this style with which they were familiar from their former homes. In Oregon the style most often took a conservative form consisting of a formal facade arrangement, rectangular volume capped with a low pitched gable roof, thin horizontal lap siding and restrained use of ornament.

The Hiram Straight House, 16000 Clackamas River Drive, is a singular example of the Classic Revival style in the study area, and an excellent example of the style overall. It is a two-story wood-frame gabled building, clad with lap siding. The fenestration is regular, consisting of six-over-six double-hung sash windows. The main entrance consists of a paneled door surrounded by a multi-light transom and sidelights.

In the waning years of the 19th century, a variety of styles proliferated which incorporated mass-produced decorative elements made available through improvements in transportation. Among these was the Queen Anne style which was characterized by asymmetrical plan, variety of roof forms and wall surfacing materials, turned posts and jigsawed brackets, and other fanciful features. There are a number of dwellings in the study area which exhibit characteristics of the Queen Anne style. The best example is the Captain Knute Tollefson House at 15831 Harley Street. Here, a profusion of applied decorative elements, including patterned shingles, carved window surrounds, incised spandrels, and gable end fancywork, creates a rich and varied texture characteristic of the style.

Beginning in approximately 1910 dwellings began to appear which reflected a significant change in stylistic preferences. This change grew out of common philosophical roots established by Frank Lloyd Wright's work in the Midwest; the Greene brothers in California and the English Arts and Crafts movement. The foundation of the philosophy was a rejection of the linear forms of classically inspired design; and a new commitment to handcrafted building techniques; and appreciation for natural beauty of indigenous building materials.

On the west coast this philosophy took a unique form in the immensely popular Craftsman Bungalow. Characteristic elements of the Craftsman Bungalow include a one-and-one-half to two-story box-like volume, rectangular in plan, topped by a low-pitched hip or gable roof with wide overhanging eaves. Rooflines are often broken by dormers and eaves and are accentuated by exposed rafters, purlins and decorative brackets. Expansive porches are the rule. Perhaps the finest example of this style is the Ezra L. Pope House at 15721 Washington Street. Sited on a parcel overlooking the Clackamas River, the two-story house incorporates the expansive porch, deep eaves with exposed rafters, purlins and braces, and sleeping porch commonly associated with the style.

The emergence of historic period revival styles in America occurred between the close of the first World War and the nation's entrance into World War II. The period was characterized by renewed patriotic fervor, and a return to the romanticism of pre-industrial Europe. American architects began to design buildings in a variety of different styles ranging from the formal Colonial Revival to the more picturesque English Cottage; and from the white-washed Mediterranean styles to the rustic Tudor Revival.

The only example of a period revival style in the study area is the Colonial Revival Judge Thomas F. Ryan House at 14001 Taylor Lane. Constructed in 1920, the house is easily identifiable by its formal facade arrangement, gambrel roof, multi-light double-hung sash windows and use of classically inspired ornament.

**APPENDIX A:**

**INVENTORY FORMS**