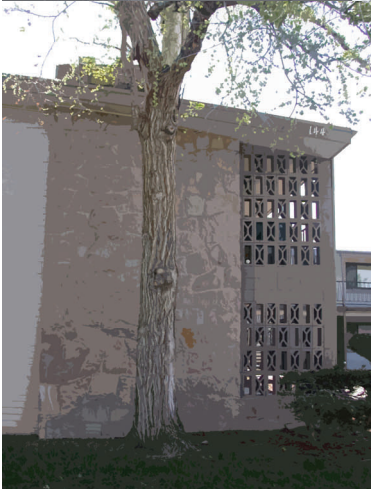





**HOFFMAN
HEIGHTS**

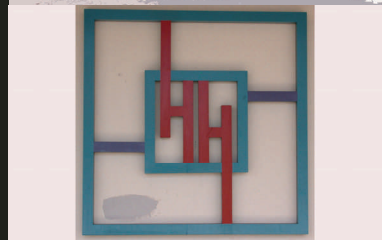
Aurora, Colorado



**HOFFMAN
HEIGHTS
INTENSIVE LEVEL
SURVEY**

CLG Project # CO-11-011

September 2012



HOFFMAN HEIGHTS - AURORA, COLORADO
INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY

Architectural & Historical Survey Report

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
CLG Project Number CO-11-011



Aurora History Museum

Prepared for:
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Historic Sites and Preservation Office
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September 2012

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FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Funding for this project was provided through a grant from the Certified Local Government Program administered by History Colorado’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

The activity that is the subject of this material has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Historic Preservation Act, administered by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior for the Colorado Historical Society. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of the Interior or History Colorado, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute an endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or History Colorado.

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I. INTRODUCTION



Hoehn Architects PC

Figure 1.

The building at 122-124 Del Mar Circle was constructed in 1960 and represents one of the resources intensively surveyed for this project.

This project represents the second phase of an historical and architectural survey of the Hoffman Heights subdivision, located in Aurora, Colorado. The City of Aurora is located east of Denver and is the third largest city in Colorado with an approximate population of 298,000 people and a total geographical area of 144 square miles.

The first phase consisted of a comprehensive reconnaissance survey of 1,696 houses located in the subdivision. A report that summarized the findings of the reconnaissance survey was completed in June 2010, which included the number of house models, the characteristics of each model, maps of the survey area, and information regarding the subdivision name and the builder-developer involved in its construction.

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Following the comprehensive reconnaissance survey and in this second phase, an intensive level survey of 22 post-World War II commercial and public properties within the Hoffman Heights subdivision was conducted. The primary purpose for collecting the survey information was to complete the documentation of this first postwar subdivision in Aurora, which influenced the overall suburban development of the City of Aurora during the 1950s. Other important objectives included informing local property owners, business owners, and the general public about the history of Hoffman Heights and to enhance preservation planning efforts within the City of Aurora. In addition, future preservation planning studies that provide for the management and protection of cultural resources may be based on the results of this intensive level survey.

Hoehn Architects, PC was responsible for carrying out this intensive level survey, in consultation with the technical staff at History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) as well as the Aurora Historic Sites and Preservation Office (AHSPO). Initial field survey work occurred in May of 2011 and was completed in June of 2012. Historical research was conducted by Hoehn Architects throughout the duration of the project, beginning in June of 2011. In order to provide consistent and comprehensive information for all subject resources, the most recent edition of the Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Manual, published by History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, was followed. Adherence to this manual ensured that the information gathered and presented met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Research of the post-World War II housing construction industry revealed Sam Hoffman was a community builder and received guidance for his developments from the National Association of Home Builders and the Community Builders Council. Both organizations published handbooks that described recommended and responsible practices for land development. In Aurora, Sam Hoffman created a self-contained community that not only offered affordable housing to the former servicemen of World War II but also provided public facilities including a school, fire station, and park. A shopping center was also constructed to serve the residents of Hoffman Town, which later became more commonly known as Hoffman Heights in 1952.

The information gathered during this intensive level survey, in combination with the previous comprehensive reconnaissance survey, provides the necessary information for the formation of a historic district that is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The name of the National Register District, with a local level of significance, may be "Hoffman Heights" or "Hoffman Town" with Community Planning & Development and Architecture as its areas of significance. Much of Hoffman Heights' distinctive character lies in the planning of the overall community, including the street layout, the location of the various model houses, and the construction of the public and commercial buildings as well as the churches and multi-family housing that serve the residential community. The historic character of the residential portion of Hoffman Heights is enhanced by the multi-family housing, commercial development, and public buildings that were primarily constructed in the southwest corner of Hoffman Heights. The buildings are united both historically and aesthetically by the planning and physical development of this Post-World War II

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neighborhood. Despite the fact that much of the housing stock as well as some of the commercial, public and multi-family resources in Hoffman Heights has been altered, their design and construction convey a postwar suburban neighborhood. The first subdivision filing for Hoffman Town occurred in 1950, marking the beginning of house construction, and the last buildings to serve the community were constructed in 1966 at 770-796 Peoria Street. Therefore, a period of significance of 1950 through 1966 is recommended for the National Register District. The boundaries of the historic district should encompass all of these important elements of the Hoffman Heights community.

The public and commercial buildings as well as the churches and multi-family housing are the subject of this report.

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II. PROJECT AREA

The project area encompasses historic architectural resources within the subdivision of Hoffman Heights in Aurora, Colorado. The boundaries include Peoria Street to the west and Potomac Street to the east. East Sixth Avenue is the subdivision’s southern boundary. The northern boundary includes the residential properties located along the north side of East 13th Avenue and the former library located adjacent to the northwest corner of the subdivision at 1298 Peoria Street. A total of 22 intensive level survey forms were completed; most of the surveyed buildings are located in the southwest corner of Hoffman Heights along Del Mar Circle. (Refer to the Resource Map on page 55 of this report.) The project area for Hoffman Heights, shown in the map below, encompasses approximately 460 acres, including roadways.

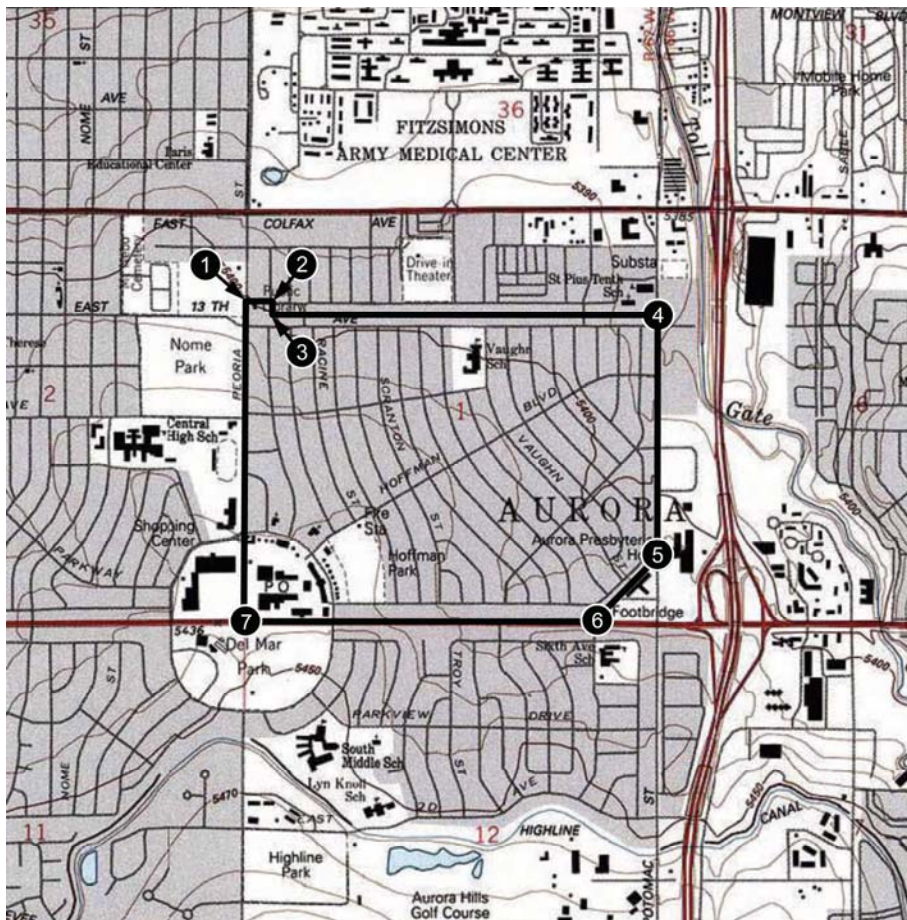


Figure 2.

The project area is located in the Sixth Principal Meridian, Township 4S, Range 67W, Section 1 (USGS Fitzsimons Quadrangle). The UTM's at the seven locations on the map are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Zone 13; 513113 mE / 4398584 mN | 5. Zone 13; 514702 mE / 4397569 mN |
| 2. Zone 13; 513193 mE / 4398584 mN | 6. Zone 13; 514477 mE / 4397345 mN |
| 3. Zone 13; 513193 mE / 4398569 mN | 7. Zone 13; 513110 mE / 4397347 mN |
| 4. Zone 13; 514702 mE / 4398529 mN | |

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS



Denver Public Library Digital Collections P1996.13411 (Circa 1967)

Figure 3.

An Automart store was constructed at 112 Del Mar Circle in 1958. A view of the interior of the Hoffman Heights store, which was renamed “Big Top” for the building’s circus tent appearance, can be seen in this image. The retail chain was the first to offer self-service gasoline at reduced prices.

Type of Survey and Survey Objectives

The objective of the second phase of this historical and architectural survey was to intensively survey the multi-family housing as well as the commercial and public buildings that contribute to the post-World War II community of Hoffman Heights. The first phase consisted of a comprehensive reconnaissance survey, which identified the general distribution, location, and nature of the various model houses within the subdivision. The work was accomplished by first defining the boundaries for the survey that contained 1,696 individual houses and then conducting the reconnaissance survey. The process

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resulted in a written and photographic record of the current condition of these historic architectural resources for use by the City of Aurora's Historic Sites and Preservation Office (AHSPPO) as well as History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP). Once the reconnaissance survey was completed, a second phase consisting of an intensive-level survey of 22 commercial and public properties as well as multi-family housing in the Hoffman Heights neighborhood was conducted in order to determine their eligibility for listing at the local level, on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties or on the National Register of Historic Places. (The Aurora Fire Department Station 2, located at 12600 Hoffman Boulevard, was recently constructed as a replacement for the original fire station so it is the only other resource of the type surveyed in Hoffman Heights that was not included with this project.) The AHSPPO is also interested in assessing the eligibility of Hoffman Heights as a local historic district or as a district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Primary research questions about the existing historic architectural resources were formulated.

1. Does the survey area provide information about the former residents regarding their lifestyle and economic, social, educational, spiritual, and civic activities?
2. How does the physicality of the survey area reflect the plans of the developer, influence of economic conditions, and local, state, and national movements?
3. What varieties of architectural styles and construction materials are represented? What is the range of design quality and craftsmanship represented by extant structures within the survey area?
4. How do the natural landscape and local building materials influence construction patterns and methods?

Scope of Work and Schedule

Initial steps in the survey process included determining whether any previous surveys had been conducted in the Hoffman Heights neighborhood; this was accomplished by performing a file search in the database of History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

The project was scheduled to begin in May 2011 and end in June 2012; the completion of the project was extended to September 2012. A sample of the most current architectural inventory form was downloaded from History Colorado's website to serve as a template for information to be collected during the intensive-level survey of the 22 historic architectural resources. Timothy Hoehn and Kristine Hoehn of Hoehn Architects PC performed all of the fieldwork, including the collection of survey data, photography, and field verification of building footprints for the sketch maps. They conducted historical research, prepared the intensive-level survey forms, and summarized their findings in a report with maps and graphics that were also prepared by the architects.

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Photography of the historic architectural resources for the intensive-level survey was accomplished by following the guidelines stated in the most recent edition of the Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Manual, published by History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. In accordance with History Colorado's requirements, photography of intensive-level resources was accomplished with a digital camera resulting in black and white images. Photographs measuring 4" high by 6" wide were printed on Fujicolor Crystal Archive glossy finish paper. Photographs were taken of as many building elevations as possible in order to document the existing condition of each resource. The back of each black and white photograph was labeled with the site and photograph number, street address, date the photograph was taken, and the CLG project number. The photographs were placed in archival-safe, acid-free clear plastic pages and attached to the completed survey forms.

Once the building footprints were field verified, they were recorded in MicroStation, a computer aided design (CAD) program, and used as a base for the generation of sketch map graphics required for the survey forms. Photograph references were shown on each sketch map, with a symbol indicating the image number and the direction of view for each image. Map graphics required for the Hoffman Heights project map were also produced with the aid of the same computer aided design program.

OAHP File Search

A file search at the OAHP on August 22, 2011 indicated that none of the 22 commercial and public properties, which were intensively surveyed with this project, had been previously recorded. Therefore, each property was assigned a new State identification number.

Background Research

Governmental agencies provided essential information about the Hoffman Heights subdivision and the individual properties. The survey team began their research by collecting parcel data from the Arapahoe County Assessor's Office in Littleton, Colorado. Legal descriptions and current ownership of all subject properties were collected initially to identify building addresses and building locations on lots and blocks. Subdivision filings of Hoffman Heights were available from the AHSPD and the Arapahoe County Assessor's Office, which were important for understanding the historic development of the subdivision. Plat books were also available for research at the Arapahoe County Clerk and Recorder's Office for obtaining information about the earliest recorded owner of each property as well as subsequent owners; this chain of title information was provided for each property on their respective architectural inventory form. The City of Aurora's Planning & Development Services proved to be a resource for site plans of some of the surveyed properties. Some of the building permit records were available through the City of Aurora's website, "Aurora Connect".

Both background and site-specific information was obtained from local and regional institutions. The Aurora History Museum served as a source for newspaper clippings

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related to the development and construction of the post-World War II subdivision, historic photographs, and telephone directories. The pamphlet titled “Historic Aurora House Tour of Hoffman Heights - A History and Guide to Aurora’s First Large Tract Home Project” provided historical information about the construction of the subdivision and some of its commercial and public buildings. Published histories of the City of Aurora provided background information about the development of the Hoffman Heights subdivision, as well as facts about significant individuals and events. These important references included Aurora: Gateway to the Rockies by Steven F. Mehls, Early Aurora by Carl Vincent McFadden, Images of Aurora: Architecture and Lifestyles by Barbara Miller, and Images of America – Aurora by Sherah J. Collins. The Denver Public Library’s Interlibrary Loan Department provided access to books published by the National Association of Home Builders and the Urban Land Institute during the 1950s, including the Home Builders Manual for Land Development and The Community Builders Handbook. The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) for *Historic Residential Subdivisions of Metropolitan Denver, 1940 – 1965*, completed in October 2010 by Front Range Research Associates, Inc. and Bunyak Research Associates, also served as an important resource that places the development of Hoffman Heights in a broader context at both the local and regional level.

Other resource-specific information was obtained by directly contacting people currently or previously associated with some of the properties. Staff at Aurora Public Schools’ Support Services and Design & Construction provided historical information about Vaughn Elementary School, including the original warranty deed, the sequence of the school’s construction, and a rendering of a prototypical Aurora elementary school prepared by Atchison & Kloverstrom Architects. The history of the Aurora Public Library, located at 1298 Peoria Street, was available from the City of Aurora’s Library, Recreation & Cultural Services; newspaper clippings about the construction of the library and the original architect’s contract and specifications were available for review at their office. An interview was conducted on May 22, 2012 with members of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, who provided important information about the church’s sequence of construction. The history of the Hoffman Heights Church of Christ, formerly located at 802 Quari Court, was obtained by contacting the current congregation located at 13605 East Alameda Avenue in Aurora, Colorado. A telephone interview with Sol Dichter, son-in-law of Sam Hoffman who played a pivotal role in the residential and commercial development of the Hoffman Heights subdivision, occurred on June 22, 2012.

Acknowledgements

The surveyors wish to thank Jeanne Ramsay, Historic Preservation Coordinator for Library and Cultural Services, Historic Sites and Preservation for the City of Aurora for her help in organizing the project and facilitating information-gathering efforts. Much appreciation is extended to the OAHP, which provided the funding for this Certified Local Government Grant; Leslie Giles, Historical and Architectural Survey Coordinator, provided valuable oversight and helpful advice on performing the survey and preparing the report while Dan Corson, Intergovernmental Services Director, acted as the project manager for the CLG grant.

IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

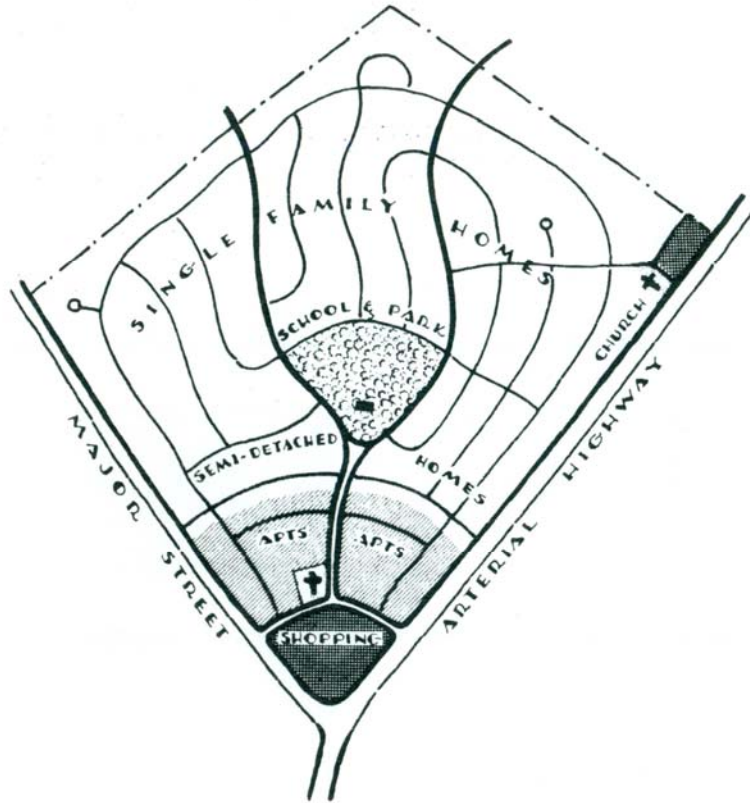


Figure 4.

The Community Builders Handbook (Third Revised Printing in 1954 and prepared by the Community Builders' Council of the Urban Land Institute) cited this plan as incorporating "generally accepted neighborhood unit principles". The Home Builders Manual for Land Development included this diagram because it illustrates recommended church and school locations in subdivision planning. Note the similarity between this conceptual plan and the Hoffman Town / Hoffman Heights development plan in Aurora, Colorado. The Community Builders Handbook was available to community builders beginning in 1947 and the first edition of the Home Builders Manual for Land Development was published soon afterwards in 1950.

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

The Post-World War II Housing Construction Industry

Following the Great Depression in 1938, the housing construction industry consisted of independent, small-scale builders who typically constructed a maximum of four single-family houses per year. The few homebuilders who were capable of building larger numbers of houses constructed approximately ten houses during a twelve-month time period. The low supply of new houses was a result of a low demand for them, due to the difficulty in financing a single-family house. Lending institutions typically financed 60 to 70

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percent of the purchase price and offered mortgages with five year terms or less, with a balloon payment required at the end of the term.

The National Housing Act of 1934 created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which laid the groundwork for changes in the housing industry. Formed when approximately two million construction workers were unemployed, FHA initiated a program that insured a lending institution against loss of principal in case a borrower failed to meet the terms and conditions of the mortgage. The borrower paid an insurance premium of one-half of one percent on declining mortgage balances for the lender's protection and, in return, received a lower interest rate on the mortgage. Although lending institutions welcomed this assistance from the federal government, the Depression greatly reduced the impact of the program. The enactment of the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, known as the "GI Bill", stimulated the economy with its provisions, including the opportunity to obtain low interest home loans with no required down payment. The return of millions of servicemen to civilian life at the end of World War II, coupled with government mechanisms for affordable financing in place, created an unprecedented demand for low-cost single-family housing beginning in the mid-1940s.

Automobile manufacturing plants that had been restructured for the production of military vehicles shifted back to automobile production following World War II. The desire by former servicemen and their spouses for affordable single-family houses was coupled with a desire to own an automobile. The car provided individuals with mobility and allowed an urban area to expand outward. Rural areas without any connection to public transportation were now accessible with the automobile. Builders began purchasing land in outlying urban areas for the construction of new houses. Much of the land was undeveloped. A national suburban culture emerged following World War II, which was the result of the growing popularity of the automobile.

The high demand for housing resulted in many builders exploring ways to speed up the construction process. These builders became large-scale housing developers after the war and standardized their product by industrializing the home construction process. Known as "operative builders" or "operators," these developers purchased large tracts of land; laid utilities and other infrastructure, including the streets; built the houses; and then sold them as part of a new community. The house construction process was organized similar to an assembly line where individual construction trades moved from one building site to another in an effort to construct houses at a rapid rate. As each work crew completed a task at one house, it would move to the next house to perform a similar task. Some of the builders, including William Levitt of Levittown, New York, purchased stands of timber in California and set up temporary sawmills on their construction sites for the fabrication of wall and roof framing members as well as other lumber. By 1949, operative builders dominated the housing construction industry with approximately 4 percent of all builders being responsible for 45 percent of new housing units.

Where the developments included commercial and public buildings, the builders were known as "community builders". Often the housing developments were located in unincorporated areas without zoning regulations or any other form of government planning.

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As a result, it was necessary for the community builders to develop standards for land use; they prepared plans that incorporated public buildings including schools, libraries, fire stations, churches, and parks as well as commercial buildings, such as shopping centers. The community builders also abandoned the traditional orthogonal street layout of urban areas, preferring curved and looping streets. Although this decision was partly based upon aesthetics, the community builders considered this street layout safer, especially for residents with children, by reducing the speed and volume of traffic through the development.

In response to changes in the housing construction industry, two organizations were founded. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) was organized in 1941 and the Community Builders Council (CBC), a subgroup of the Urban Land Institute, was formed one year later in 1942. The Urban Land Institute was established in 1936 to provide leadership for land use in order to encourage responsible development. The Community Builders Council first published the Community Builders Handbook in 1947, which provided guidelines and procedures for community development that allowed the builder to “graduate from the status of home builder to that of community developer”.

Local Housing Developments

Many veterans returned home, eager to start their new lives by finding good jobs, starting families, and purchasing a home. However, housing construction was slow to start because the country was recovering from its war years; materials and labor were in short supply as factories were shifting from wartime production to the manufacture of peacetime goods. A major focus of all levels of government was to insure an adequate supply of housing for veterans’ families. The returning servicemen influenced the design of new homes with their interest in offering the best environment for their new “baby boom” generation. The outlying suburb was seen as a better alternative to the city with its newly-constructed schools and public facilities.

The Denver metropolitan area experienced a critical housing shortage following World War II. In September of 1946, the metropolitan area was listed in second place for being the most critical housing area in the country. An article about Denver’s housing shortage appeared in *Collier’s Magazine* in December of 1946. The article, titled “No Home in the West”, criticized the city for being caught “with its foundations down”. A local committee was appointed in 1947 to study veterans’ housing needs and found that 15,000 to 20,000 additional dwelling units would be required over the next three years. The Rocky Mountain News reported on August 3, 1947 that 75 percent of Denver’s married veterans were dissatisfied with their living quarters and were looking for another place to live.

The Aurora City Council passed ordinances in 1942 to regulate the construction of new housing. In November of 1943, the City of Aurora developed and passed a set of unified zoning measures in response to growth pressures outside the city limits. Denver was also attempting to annex land in and around Aurora’s city limits. Following World War II, the Aurora City Council and the Chamber of Commerce responded to the returning servicemen’s need for housing by launching a promotional campaign to attract potential

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residents. The campaign highlighted the community's affordable land, its proximity to Denver and employment, the open space, as well as environmental and recreational opportunities available in Colorado. After annexing land east and southeast of the city limits, which failed to meet local ordinances related to street grading and lacked funding for water and sewer lines, the City of Aurora revised its zoning regulations in 1946: Builders were now required to provide adequate services to new subdivisions, including streets with curbs and gutters as well as water and sewer utilities. Simultaneously, the City Council established a commission to direct and manage future growth in Aurora.

Military installations in Aurora, including Fitzsimons Army Medical Hospital and Lowry Air Force Base, offered postwar military and civil service jobs that provided employment for residents of the adjacent suburban areas, including Hoffman Heights. The City of Aurora obtained State funds for road and highway construction during the 1950s, due to its military facilities; access to its suburbs was improved. Arapahoe County's population rose from 32,150 residents in 1940 to 93,451 during the 1950s, representing an increase of 177.6 percent; one of the reasons for this gain was the development of the Hoffman Heights subdivision.

Community Facilities

The Third Edition of the Community Builders Handbook, published in 1954, included a section titled "Planning the Development". Excerpts from Section B Planning the Site, Neighborhood Planning follow:

The creation of well balanced, self-contained communities should be the objective of all subdividers and operative builders. This can be accomplished more easily when a large tract is under one ownership, but the development of a complete neighborhood is not precluded even when there are several small subdivisions in separate ownership in the area. By careful, cooperative planning they can be integrated into a development which will eventually form a complete community of homes, schools, shops, recreation, and other facilities...

A complete and self-contained neighborhood unit of sufficient population should have its own local shopping center, elementary school and recreation facilities. It should be bounded by main traffic arteries but not cut by them. Local streets within the neighborhood should be designed to serve the local needs of the neighborhood and to discourage their use by through traffic. Normally, two or more dwelling types (single family, two-family, apartments, etc.) at varying densities should be provided in appropriate locations... (Refer to Figure 4 for an illustration of "generally accepted neighborhood unit principles".)

The National Association of Home Builders began publishing bulletins on neighborhood development in 1947; the bulletins were combined into a single volume in 1950, resulting in the publication of the Home Builders Manual for Land Development. A revised edition in 1953 served as a guide for solving a wide range of land planning issues and was

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recommended to "...the home builders of America as a valuable aid to sound community development".

Similar to the Community Builders Council, the National Association of Home Builders highlighted the importance of providing community facilities in their manual:

"...facilities which are essential if your project is to succeed are the proximity of schools, churches, a local shopping center and recreational facilities. These should be within walking distance, especially schools and stores. The availability of recreational facilities within walking distance is an asset to any site, but particularly so with relation to multi-family developments with higher densities..."

In 1945, an opinion survey was conducted in ten major cities; those polled included builders, brokers, mortgage bankers and members of city planning commissions. The survey results indicated that any site considered for the construction of low or medium cost homes should be checked against a published chart that recommended maximum distances from home to daily activities, including employment, local shopping centers, schools, churches, and recreational facilities. (Refer to Figure 5.) If the site failed to conform to these recommended distances, then its purchase (and subsequent development) should be avoided. However, a community builder could address the results of the survey by providing a development that incorporated necessary facilities for the homeowners. (Refer to Figure 6.)

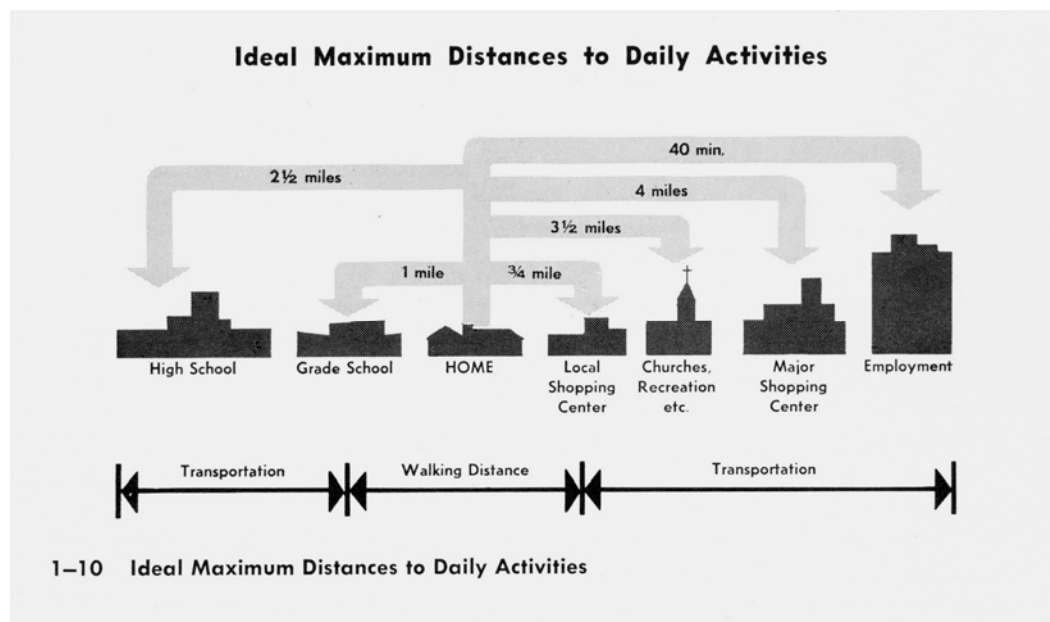


Figure 5.

This summary of recommended maximum distances to employment and other facilities from residential developments appeared in both The Community Builders Handbook and the Home Builders Manual for Land Development.

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In order to provide guidance to community builders, the NAHB and the CBC published their advice and recommendations for planning shopping centers, apartments, churches, and schools.

Shopping Centers

The widespread popularity of shopping center development resulted from the house building boom following World War II. Previous to this time, commercial development historically occurred in a linear pattern within downtown areas and along major highways. As road systems improved and the ownership of the automobile became more commonplace, the compact “one-stop park and shop” type of commercial center came into existence. A community builder could consider providing a neighborhood shopping center that met the needs of the homeowners in his development, consisting of a limited residential population within a relatively small surrounding tributary trading area. The NAHB advised that “neighborhood centers need a very minimum of 500 families within the immediate tributary area in order to have a fair chance of success. With this population, a minimum center of 8 to 12 shops can usually be supported under average conditions.” While the shopping center should be located on a major street and preferably at or near the intersections of main or secondary thoroughfares, it should also be easily accessible from any part of its tributary area, both by pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The NAHB suggested that “If possible, choose a site where the street system within the tributary shopping area feeds more or less directionally toward the shopping center area. If a new area is being developed, the street system can, of course, be designed with this element in mind.”

The NAHB recommended that the initial construction should include approximately ten stores in the following order of importance:

1. Drug Store with some limited eating facilities;
2. Cash and Carry Grocery Store;
3. Cleaner and Dyer Shop, which could be combined with a laundry agency;
4. Beauty Parlor;
5. Filling Station;
6. Bakery;
7. Shoe Repair;
8. Laundry Agency (possibly in rear of another store);
9. Variety Shop; and
10. Barber Shop.

A restaurant should be considered for inclusion in the shopping center if apartments are located nearby. The drug store and grocery store should function as anchors for the center, with the drug store preferably located near the intersection of two streets and the grocery store situated at the opposite end. If the smaller shops are located between the two anchors, they will benefit from the pedestrian traffic generated by the drug store and grocery store.

The NAHB warned that “...the more conservative operator should not go ahead until he is assured of the major ‘daily need’ trade of at least a thousand families, has carefully

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checked existing and potential competition, and has the assurance of a well-established independent or chain store that is interested in locating in his project. If a development of a small center can definitely tie up a good supermarket or drugstore, the smaller shops should fill in with but little effort.”

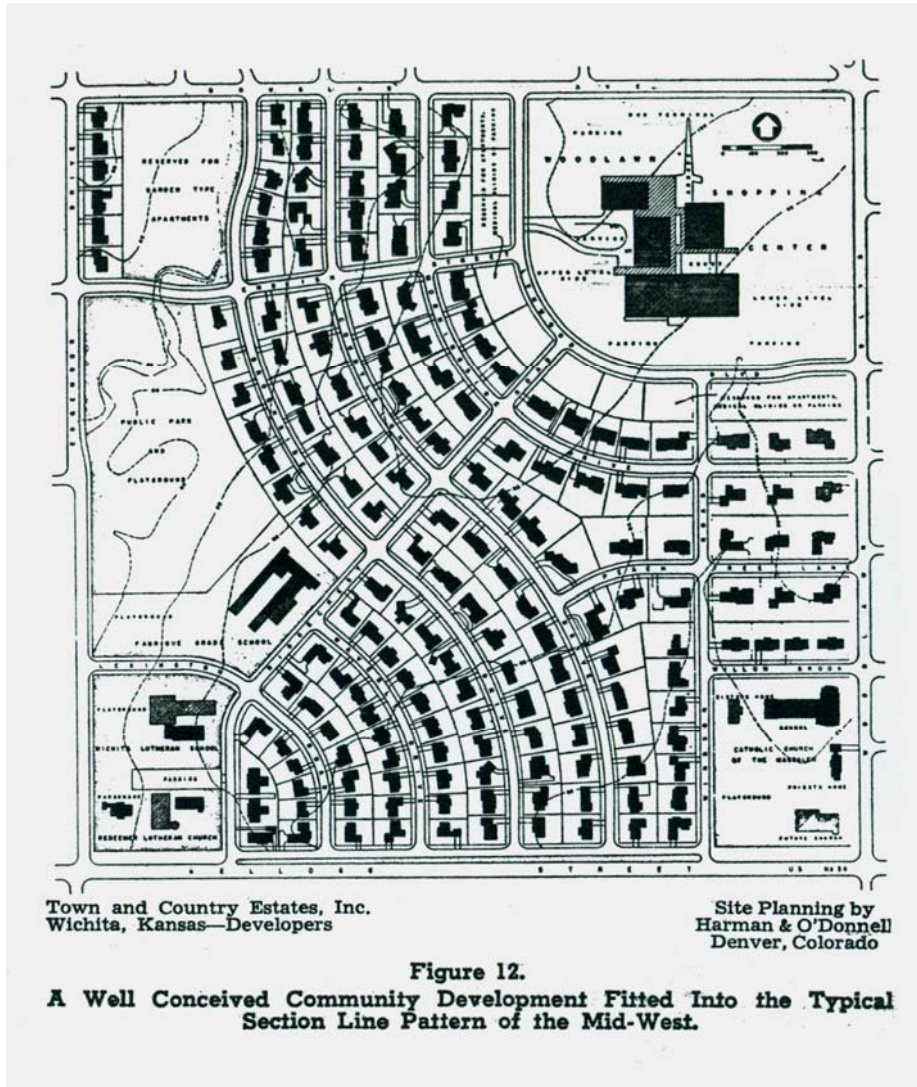


Figure 6.

The Community Builders Handbook included this plan for a community development, designed for a section of land similar in size to Hoffman Heights. A shopping center is shown in the northeast corner of the site, a school is located along the diagonal road that terminates at the shopping center, churches are shown at the southeast and southwest corners, and a tract of land in the northwest corner is reserved for garden type apartments. The Denver planning firm of Harman & O'Donnell prepared this site plan.

Shopping centers constructed in Hoffman Heights during the community's period of significance, which is 1950 through 1966, include the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272), which opened in December of 1953 at the site of the former prefabrication center and building materials storage yard for the adjacent Hoffman Heights residential development. Another shopping center, although much smaller, was later constructed in

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Hoffman Heights in 1966. The architect and owner of the shopping center, named "Center Circle" (5AH.3275) was Richard DeGette.

Character-defining features of shopping centers constructed during the period of significance include the center's location relative to the rest of the community and its circulation system, the arrangement of the individual buildings that comprise the shopping center, the composition of the tenants, and the individual buildings' physical features that reflect the period of significance. Minimum integrity requirements for resources that survive to the present day include the retention of historic qualities of spatial organization, such as massing, scale, and setbacks; the presence of historic plantings and circulation patterns; and the retention of distinctive design elements that reflect the architectural style or methods of construction from the period of significance.

Apartment Buildings

Multi-family dwellings were also considered an important component of a community development following World War II. It was recommended that apartment buildings be sited near primary or secondary arterials of both automobiles and public transportation due to the higher concentration of traffic generated by the apartment dwellers. If located adjacent to a shopping center, the apartments could function as an important buffer between the single family homes and the busy retail district, which also generates significant amounts of traffic. The multi-family dwellings could also benefit from their close proximity to the shopping center since services including drugstores, grocery stores, and restaurants would be conveniently located for the apartment residents' use. The Community Builders Handbook suggested that a buffer land use, such as a park, school or church be located between the apartment complex and single-family homes. It was important that multi-family dwellings be located near schools, libraries, and recreational facilities; nearby public playground facilities were considered a distinct asset.

Variations in apartment building design have developed over time to address changes in popular taste. In the early 1950's, the "garden" apartment was one of the preferred architectural models, with a typical height of two stories, low site coverage and ample open space. The Home Builders Manual for Land Development described some of the preferred architectural features of apartment building design in 1953:

"The use of the so-called vertical or up-and-down stairs with individual entrances has been gaining popularity in recent years and has much in its favor from the standpoint of flexibility of grouping. It also approaches more nearly the characteristics of the single family home with direct access to outdoor space, removes the necessity for common halls, and helps reduce project maintenance to a minimum. They are all stabilizing factors in a competitive rental market."

"Where the depth of the site permits, court grouping is usually desirable. This consolidates open space into usable areas, either to the front or back of the apartments, and permits a maximum number of units to be removed from close proximity to the street."

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“In many apartment developments the use of laundry drying yards has been abandoned in favor of automatic washers and dryers for use of which a small fee is charged. This is desirable as it removes a rather unsightly feature from the project. Many projects provide common laundry and dryer facilities for each building, or building group, in a basement room which can be reached from the common hall or basement corridor. Where basements are not provided, a separate building for this purpose can be located either in connection with one of the main buildings or at a central point on the site near the property line.”



Hoehn Architects PC

Figure 7.

The apartment complex at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3269) illustrates the design principles of garden type apartments, which were popular following World War II. An exterior stair is located between the two buildings and each apartment, with its own exterior entry, has direct access to the outdoors. Courtyards have been created by two groupings of three buildings arranged in a U-shaped configuration.

The Community Builders Handbook warned that rental housing should have lasting appeal and that the investor “must see beyond mediocrity”. Where possible, the open garden space should be free of parking with service features screened from view. Integration between the apartment interior and the outdoors is achieved by opening individual units

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with large windows onto patios and balconies. Many garden apartment complexes were enhanced with the addition of children's play areas, tennis courts and swimming pools. (Refer to Figure 7.)

Apartment buildings constructed in Hoffman Heights during the community's period of significance include the Hoffman Heights Apartments, now known as Del Mar Apartments, located at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle and constructed in 1962 (5AH.3269). Another apartment building was constructed circa 1963 at 152 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3270).

Character-defining features of apartment buildings constructed during the period of significance include their location relative to the rest of the community and its circulation system, the architectural model of the apartment complex, the location of parking and service functions, the relationship between the apartment interior and the shared outdoor space, and the building's physical features that reflect the period of significance. Minimum integrity requirements for resources that survive to the present day include the retention of historic qualities of spatial organization, such as massing, scale, and setbacks; the presence of historic plantings and circulation patterns; and the retention of distinctive design elements that reflect the architectural style or methods of construction from the period of significance.

Churches and Schools

The church was considered an important component of a planned community; it could add to a neighborhood's perceived value and could often serve as an attractive sales feature to prospective home buyers. However, churches can generate a considerable amount of vehicular traffic. The improper location of a church can negatively impact a residential neighborhood due to traffic circulation and inadequate parking facilities. The NAHB noted that access to parking areas should be as direct as possible from a major or secondary street. The developer should consider providing generously-sized tracts of land for churches in order to keep parked cars off the streets and, instead, in parking areas on the church property. The developer may research the religious backgrounds of prospective home buyers; in larger projects, a number of sites may be designated for multiple denominations.

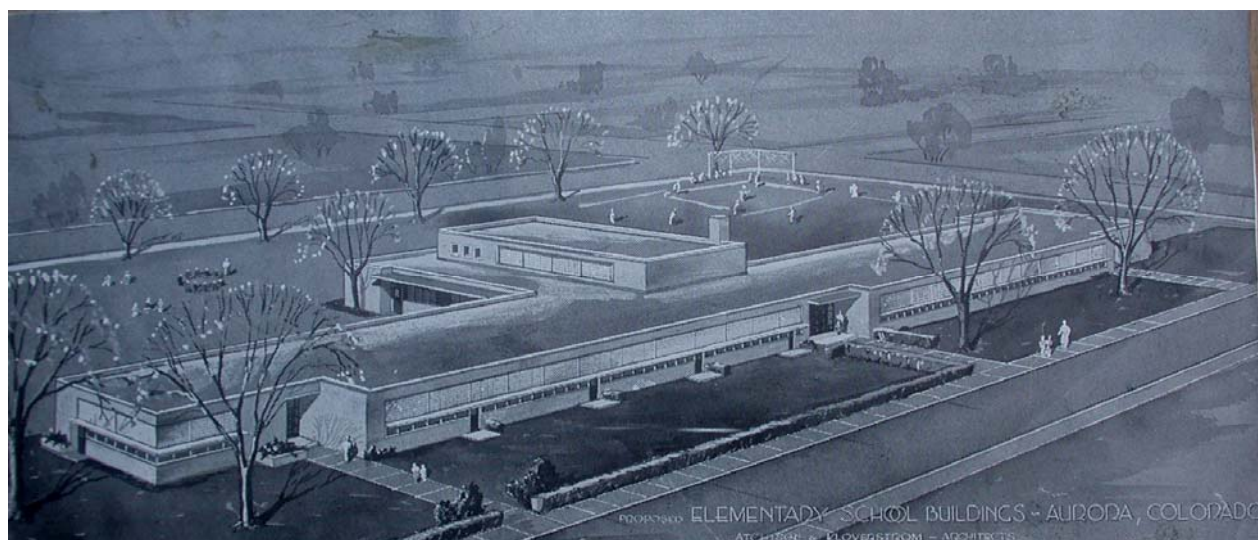
Similar to apartment buildings, churches should be located adjacent to shopping centers where they can function as buffers between commercial and residential development. This location has distinct advantages: If the tract fails to attract a denomination that wishes to construct a church, then it can be developed for residential use. In addition, overflow parking for popular Sunday services can be accommodated in the shopping center parking lot.

Churches constructed in Hoffman Heights during the community's period of significance include St. Mark's Lutheran Church, constructed in 1953 at 111 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3260); the First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights, located at 12400 Hoffman Boulevard and built in 1954 (5AH.3271); and the Hoffman Heights Church of Christ, constructed in 1957 at 802 Quari Street (5AH.3277).

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Character-defining features of churches constructed during the period of significance include their location relative to the rest of the community and its circulation system, the location of parking areas relative to the adjacent streets, and the individual building’s physical features that reflect the period of significance. Minimum integrity requirements for resources that survive to the present day are similar to those of shopping centers and apartment buildings.

Both the NAHB and the CBC reported in their handbooks that the presence of an elementary school in a new residential development can function as a magnet to families with young children who are looking to purchase a home. The results of the opinion survey indicated that a distance no greater than one mile from any house in a residential development to an elementary school should be considered by the community builder. The neighborhood school should be developed to become the heart of the community within walking distance of every home. However, it is undesirable to locate a school site immediately adjacent to residential development due to the noise and activity that schools generate both during and after school hours. The school property can function as a transitional use area, away from main arterials, which would expose the children to the hazards of heavy vehicular traffic and the school to traffic noises.



Rendering courtesy of Aurora Public Schools

Figure 8.

This rendering of a proposed elementary school building in Aurora, Colorado was prepared by Atchison & Kloverstrom Architects who designed Vaughn Elementary School located at 1155 Vaughn Street in Hoffman Heights. The original school in Hoffman Heights was very similar in design to this illustration.

Vaughn Grammar School, later renamed Vaughn Elementary School, was constructed in Hoffman Heights in 1951 at 1155 Vaughn Street (5AH.3278). The character-defining features of a school constructed during the period of significance includes its location relative to the overall community’s circulation system and the individual building’s physical features that convey the period of significance. Minimum integrity requirements for

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resources that survive to the present day are similar to those of shopping centers, apartment buildings, and churches, noted above.

Multiple Filing Subdivision

The “Multiple Filing Subdivision” is a subtype that was identified and defined in a recently-completed National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for “Historic Residential Subdivisions of Metropolitan Denver, 1940-1965”, prepared by Front Range Research Associates, Incorporated and Bunyak Research Associates:

“This type of subdivision occupied an intermediate position between large-scale planned communities and small-scale purely residential ones. The subdivision typically consisted of several filings by the same developer, had an overall development or master plan, and included some amenities, such as a shopping area and one or more schools, churches, and parks. Such subdivisions were typically contained within a larger municipal jurisdiction, and local residents often viewed them as constituting neighborhoods. Numerous examples of this type of subdivision exist, including: Harvey Park in southwest Denver, Hoffman Heights in Aurora, Applewood Knolls in Lakewood, Arvada West in Arvada, and University Hills in south central Denver. (Section F, page 189)

Character-defining features of a multiple filing subdivision include the design of the subdivision’s master plan and circulation network that reflect important trends in Post-World War II community planning; the subdivision’s spatial organization, including street design, setbacks, and density of buildings; and the individual buildings’ physical features that reflect the period of significance.

Sam Hoffman, Community Builder

Born in 1901, Sam Hoffman left his native country of Russia following the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Arriving in Canada, he worked in a tannery and learned to speak English. Hoffman then immigrated to the United States and became a U.S. citizen. He landed in Detroit, Michigan during the 1920s where he learned the plastering trade. The stock market crash in 1929 and the consequent collapse of the construction industry caused Hoffman to turn to the trucking business. With partners, Hoffman built up a large fleet of trucks known as “Erie Freightways”. After over-extending its operation, the trucking company fell into bankruptcy in 1943 and closed. Hoffman then moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where he purchased existing houses, made improvements to them, and then made small profits on the sale of each one. In 1947, he founded the F & S (Father and Son) Construction Company with his son, Jack Hoffman.

Over a six year period beginning in 1947, Hoffman developed communities in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona; Cleveland, Ohio; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Salt Lake City, Utah; Las Vegas, Nevada; Pueblo, Colorado; and Thornton, Colorado. Some of these communities were named “Hoffman Town,” including the one that is the subject of this report, now

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known as Hoffman Heights. (Refer to Figure 9.) Hoffman later created Hoffman Estates in Cook County, Illinois, in 1954.



Aurora History Museum Archives (Circa 1954)

Figure 9.

This brochure for Hoffman Homes lists all 16 of the “new completed communities”, including the largest one of 2,000 homes in Pueblo, Colorado (Beulah Heights). The potential homeowner was “offered not only a large home that excels all others in its price class but which at no additional expense is placed in a modern planned community...complete with schools, parks, recreation centers and the ultimate in modern shopping centers”.

Sam Hoffman’s familiarity with the automotive industry in Detroit and his assembly-line construction methods that reflected the economies of industrialized home construction caused him to refer to himself as the “Henry Ford of the home-building industry.” Like Ford’s Model T or Model A, Hoffman constructed houses that appealed to the mass middle-income market. Hoffman stated his philosophy about affordable housing in the July 25, 1953 issue of *Business Week* magazine: “Frank Lloyd Wright says he builds houses around the personalities of the people who live in the house. I build houses around the pocketbooks of the people.” He operated on the basis of a small profit (less than 5 percent) with a fast turnover. He said “I want fast nickels, not slow quarters.”

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Hoffman Town in Aurora, Colorado

Sam Hoffman developed a tract of land in unincorporated Arapahoe County, previously known as the Cottonwood Farm. Owned by the Union Pacific railroad as early as 1867 through 1888, the land eventually came under the ownership of the Platte Land Company, which had numerous holdings in the area. By 1911, Albert Montgomery owned Cottonwood Farm. Max K. Maul raised beets, alfalfa, potatoes, and grain for the Montgomery Land Company; a reservoir, located on the south side of the property and surrounded by large cottonwood trees, provided irrigation for the crops. The Maul family resided in a farmhouse near the present-day intersection of East 11th Avenue and Quari Street.

As Aurora grew in population following the end of World War II, development pressures resulted in the farm passing into the hands of Albert L. and Alice F. Johnson. After returning from a trip to Albuquerque, Robert Boggs, a friend of the Johnson family, told Albert about homes he had seen and admired there that were built by Sam Hoffman. Johnson had experience building several homes in Denver's Park Hill neighborhood and was interested in using his property for a housing development. As a result, Al and Alice Johnson, with Edward J. Dempsey as President and T.W. Anderson as Secretary, formed the Cottonwood Development Company and hired Sam Hoffman to build houses on the former Cottonwood Farm. The prolific builder agreed to move forward with the project as long as he had control over the design, construction, and price of the houses as well as the overall community plan. Hoffman hired the Denver firm of Harman and O'Donnell, established in 1946, to assist in the plan for Hoffman Town. The firm specialized in city planning, landscape architecture and subdivision design; it was actively involved in the Urban Land Institute and prepared the plan for Hoffman's Beulah Heights in Pueblo.

Following the guidelines of The Community Builders Handbook, which recommended the number of types of dwelling units be kept to a minimum where low-cost homes are to be built by one operator, Hoffman offered four different house models: the Deluxe Brick Model, the Economy Frame and Shingle Model, the Cosmopolitan Brick Model, and an economy version of the Cosmopolitan Brick Model. The Deluxe Brick Model was the first to be built at the west end of the development. Of all three models, the Deluxe Brick Model had the most amenities with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and an attached garage. The house reportedly sold for \$12,950. A Deluxe Brick model house, available for showings to prospective buyers, was built at 876 Peoria Street. The Economy Frame & Shingle Model cost \$9,250 and included three bedrooms and 1½ bathrooms within a footprint of 1,055 square feet; a model house was built at 850 Peoria Street. The third house model, the Cosmopolitan Brick Model, contained 1,055 square feet and sold for \$10,050. This model was built along East 7th Avenue and utilized the brick left after the construction of the Deluxe Brick Models; a model house was built at 800 Peoria Street. Both the Economy Frame & Shingle Model and the Cosmopolitan Brick Model were constructed without garages.

Hoffman constructed 1,696 homes, with a reported 100 houses simultaneously under construction and a target of twelve houses completed each day. (Refer to Figure 10.)

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Four hundred houses were sold prior to the start of construction. The increase in the population of Aurora, coupled with the site's proximity to Fitzsimons Army Medical Hospital and Lowry Air Force Base, made Hoffman Heights an attractive subdivision for potential homebuyers.



Denver Public Library Digital Collections P1990.333 (Circa 1955)

Figure 10.

Sam Hoffman watches a mason lay a brick wall at one of his houses in Hoffman Town, later renamed Hoffman Heights in Aurora, Colorado.

Beginning in 1948, the Cottonwood Development Company requested the annexation of Hoffman Town to the City of Aurora numerous times, but was denied. (Ed Dempsey noted in an interview that the request was made 51 times.) Aurora's local builders were unhappy with the competition from Sam Hoffman and persuaded several city council members to vote against the annexation. But water and sanitation services were needed for the development, so Sam Hoffman formed the Cottonwood Water District and the Cottonwood Sanitation District, with water and sewer services to be provided by the City of Denver. A lawsuit resulted when the Aurora City Council refused to allow access to Aurora's street right-of-ways for the installation of the underground utilities to Hoffman

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Town. Fortunately, the lawsuit was eventually settled when the court ruled Arapahoe County, not the City of Aurora, held the public right-of-way. Hoffman transferred ownership of the water district to the residents in 1952 with the sanitation district following in 1953 after directors were selected from the community.



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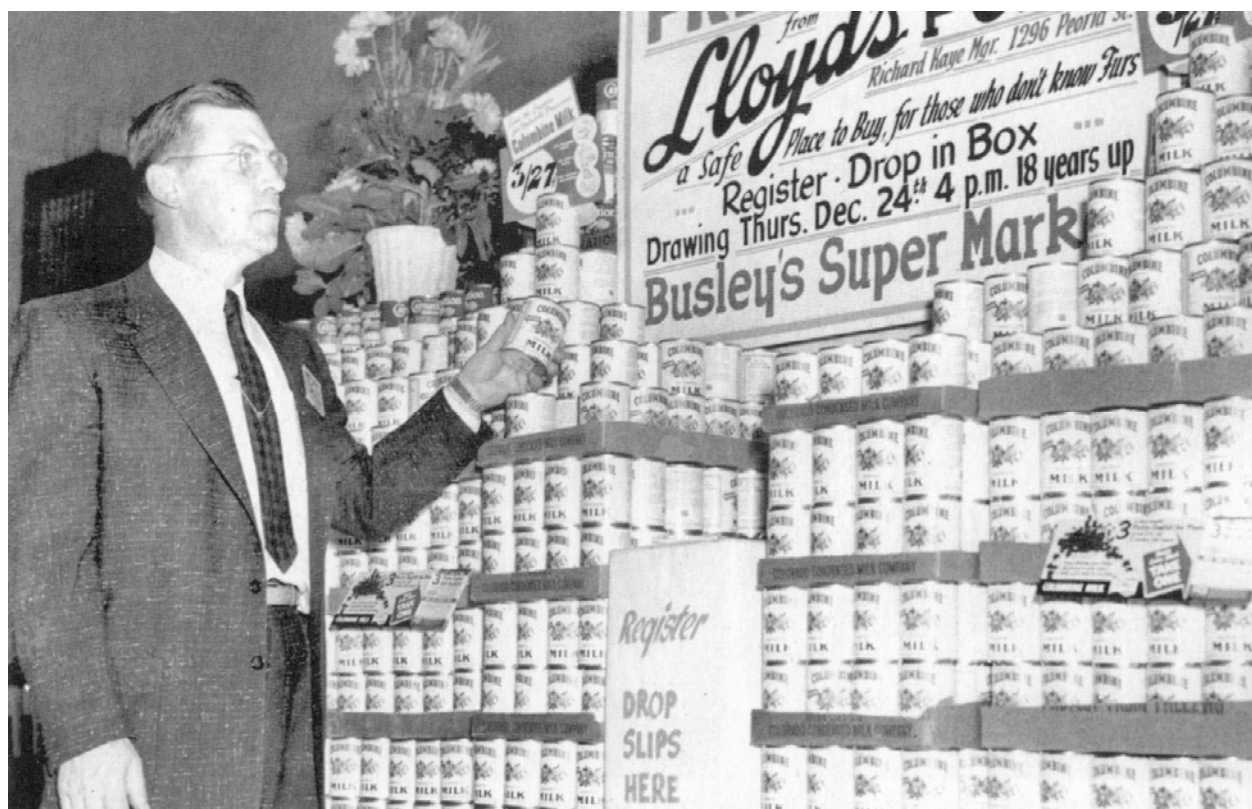
Figure 11.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church (5AH.3260) was the first church to be constructed in Hoffman Heights. Its large tract of land has accommodated numerous additions as the congregation has grown. The current sanctuary, seen on the right side of this image, was constructed in 1969.

Other services were needed for Hoffman Town, including police and fire protection, schools, churches, and recreational space. Hoffman donated land in 1951 for Vaughn Elementary School, located at 1155 Vaughn Street (5AH.3278). (Refer to Figure 8.) He also donated 11.6 acres for Hoffman Park, located at 12600 Hoffman Boulevard, with an additional donation of \$2,500 for playground equipment. The new homeowners agreed to provide landscaping for the park. In 1952, Hoffman formed the Hoffman Heights Fire Protection District; an all-volunteer fire department provided the necessary protection for the community and a \$75,000 bond residents approved in 1952 allowed for the purchase of firefighting equipment. The fire station is located at 12600 Hoffman Boulevard; the

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original building has been replaced. Three churches were also built between 1953 and 1957 to serve the community, including St. Mark’s Lutheran Church at 111 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3260), the First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights at 12400 Hoffman Boulevard (5AH.3271), and the Hoffman Heights Church of Christ at 802 Quari Court (5AH.3277). (Refer to Figure 11.)



Aurora History Museum Archives (Circa 1954)

Figure 12.

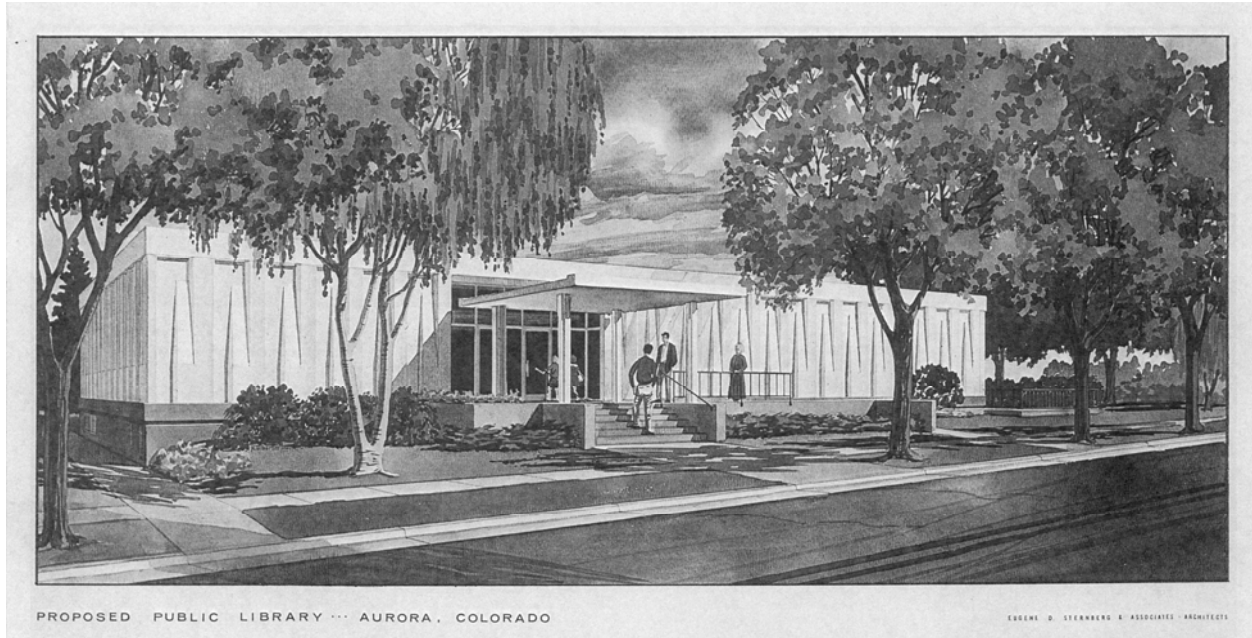
Busley’s Super Market opened in the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center in December of 1953. It was the chain’s largest store containing approximately 18,000 square feet and served as an anchor at the east end of the newly-constructed shopping center.

A quarter-circular site, located at the southwest corner of the subdivision and bounded by Del Mar Circle (originally named Larkspur Parkway) served as the prefabrication site and building materials storage yard for F&S Construction Company. Sam Hoffman’s son-in-law, Sol Dichter, developed the site into a shopping center once all of the houses in Hoffman Heights had been built. The Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272) opened in December 1953 and attracted a variety of merchants. Sol Dichter later updated and expanded the shopping center in 1964. (Refer to Figures 12 and 14.)

A public library was constructed at the northwest corner of Hoffman Heights. It was the second library to be built in Aurora. The first library was constructed in 1953 at the corner of 16th and Elmira Street. Due to the sudden growth in population from 11,000 in 1950 to nearly 50,000 residents ten years later, the City of Aurora chose the site of a small city

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park at 1298 Peoria Street (5AH.3276) for the construction of the new library. (Refer to Figure 13.)



Rendering courtesy of City of Aurora Library, Recreation & Cultural Services

Figure 13.

The Aurora Public Library, later known as the North Branch Library, was designed by Eugene D. Sternberg & Associates Architects. Constructed in 1964, the building provided an important service to the Hoffman Heights neighborhood.

Hoffman Town became more commonly known as “Hoffman Heights” when the local residents responded to a Civic Association poll conducted in 1952 to change the name. The community was annexed to the City of Aurora on October 19, 1954. Aurora’s town attorney reviewed earlier petitions for the community’s annexation and determined that Aurora’s petition against annexation was invalid. The self-contained community with all necessary services in place would be a benefit to the City of Aurora’s tax base. However, many of the Hoffman residents raised money to protest the annexation, due to their frustration with Aurora in the past, and filed suit in December 1954. The Colorado Supreme Court reviewed the case in 1955. In February of 1956, a decision was reached: evidence against annexation had been entered late and the Court refused to hear the case. The annexation of Hoffman Heights to the City of Aurora was now official and final.

When Hoffman announced his plans for Hoffman Town, many people doubted the development’s success, saying that “No one will want to live way out beyond Aurora.” Yet Hoffman knew commuters in Chicago drove an hour from their homes to their workplace. Hoffman replied that “This is only half an hour.” The subdivision ended up being a great success, attracting young professionals as well as federal and military employees.

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COMMERCE & TRADE

The widespread use of the automobile following World War II resulted in the development of new business models that were oriented towards this popular mode of transportation. The automobile allowed access to new suburban communities. As the population moved from the core of cities to the outlying suburbs, commerce and trade followed. The new suburbanite became dependent upon the car for work, shopping, obtaining services, and recreation. The drive-in restaurant and convenience store were born. Newly-constructed shopping centers and grocery stores were surrounded by large parking lots to accommodate shoppers arriving in their cars. Office buildings for medical professionals and small buildings for service-oriented businesses were constructed to serve the local residents of the suburban communities. Automobile-focused businesses, including gas stations and tire service centers, appeared on the suburban landscape.

The Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272) opened in December of 1953 at the northeast corner of East 6th Avenue and Peoria Street, the site of the former prefabrication center and building materials storage yard for the adjacent Hoffman Heights residential development. The shopping center was the first commercial enterprise to be constructed in Hoffman Heights following the seventh subdivision filing on November 10, 1953; this filing marked the final build-out of single family houses. The F&S Construction Company built the “ultra-modern” shopping center for the Ace Realty Company of Phoenix, Arizona for an approximate cost of \$1,000,000. Sam Hoffman was the President of both companies at this time. The largest tenant in the center was the Busley Super Market, which contained 18,000 square feet and was located in a building at the east end of the property. Two other buildings along the north and south sides of the shopping center contained individual storefronts for a restaurant and tavern, a hardware store, a radio and TV shop, a clothing shop for infants and children, a shoe store, a haberdashery, a knit shop, a bakery, a shoe repair shop, a jewelry store, a barber shop, a liquor store, a cleaning shop, a drugstore, a self-service laundry, a creamery, a beauty shop, a gift and household goods store, a variety store and a pizzeria. A gas station located at 754 Peoria Street was also constructed with the shopping center. It was known as the Hoffman Heights Texaco Service Station for forty years.

Once the shopping center was built, it triggered other commercial development in Hoffman Heights, including small office buildings, restaurants, convenience stores, service-oriented businesses, automobile service businesses, and apartment buildings.

- The first office building, which functioned as a medical clinic, was constructed at 105 Del Mar Circle in 1955 (5AH.3258). Another similar office building for medical professionals was constructed in 1956 at 132 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3266); Dr. Thomas C. Miller owned the property and set up his medical practice there.
- Once the land associated with the Eighth Filing of Hoffman Town was platted, additional buildings were constructed along Del Mar Circle. A drive-in restaurant known as the “Kwik Shake Inn”, located at 136 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3267), was constructed in 1957.

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- The building at 112 Del Mar Circle was constructed in 1958 to function as a drive-in supermarket, known as an Automart store (5AH.3261). It was part of a chain of Denver-based mini-markets, modeled after the 7-11 stores that were constructed in Dallas, Texas beginning in the 1930's. Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins owned the property; Eugene and Paul were owners of "Ambrose-Williams & Company", a real estate company that managed the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center when it opened in December 1953. Paul D. Ambrose was the director and a stockholder of Automart Stores, Incorporated. The Automart store at 112 Del Mar Circle was the third store to be constructed in the Denver metropolitan area. In May of 1959, the new chain of stores was renamed "Big Top" to avoid any misunderstanding the previous name may have created with consumers. The Denver architectural firm, Kellogg & Sayre Associated Architects, was responsible for the building's unique design. The mini-markets carried 3,000 different items, which consisted mostly of food items, and were open from 7 am until 11 pm everyday. Big Top was the first chain to offer self-service gasoline at reduced prices. By 1964, three of its thirteen stores had pumps.
- A dry cleaning business, known as a "One Hour Martinizing Plant", was constructed at 116 Del Mar Circle in 1959 (5AH.3262). Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins also owned this property, which is adjacent to 112 Del Mar Circle, and are responsible for the construction of the building. Kellogg & Sayre Associated Architects, known for their design of the Automart chain of stores, also designed the One Hour Martinizing Plant, which was constructed in a number of locations in the Denver metropolitan area.
- A gas station was constructed at 138 Del Mar Circle in 1959 (5AH.3268). Known as the Hoffman Heights Phillips 66 Gas Station until 1988, the property was owned by the Aurora Oil Company, which operated eight other gas stations in Aurora.
- A building designed to accommodate two tenants was constructed at 122-124 Del Mar Circle in 1960 (5AH.3264). Another multi-tenant office building was constructed in 1962 at 126 Del Mar Circle; it has accommodated a variety of tenants, including medical professionals.
- Another drive-in restaurant, "Mister Taco", was constructed at 106 Del Mar Circle in 1962 (5AH.3259). Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins owned and developed the property.
- Two-story apartment buildings, located at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle and known originally as Hoffman Heights Apartments, were constructed in 1962 (5AH.3269). The Ace Realty Corporation, with Sol Dichter as President, owned the property and built the garden apartment complex. Sol was Sam Hoffman's son-in-law and served as the Vice President and local manager of the F&S Construction Company, which built the houses and the shopping center in Hoffman Heights. The six apartment buildings were arranged in two U-shaped groupings to create two large courtyards facing Del Mar Circle.

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- Harold and Marjorie Warmath purchased 118 to 120 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3263) from Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins in April of 1963. “Harold’s Barber Shop” was located in the building beginning in 1963, which was designed to accommodate two tenants.
- The Ace Realty Corporation, with Sol Dichter as President, is responsible for the construction of the apartment building located at 152 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3270). Denver architect Bertram A. Bruton designed the building, which was constructed circa 1963.
- Sol Dichter built a small office building for his company, the Ace Realty Corporation, at 750 Peoria Street in 1963 (5AH.3279). Dichter was Sam Hoffman’s son-in-law and served as Vice President of the F&S Construction Company as well as its Denver area manager. He managed the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center from this location.
- In 1964, Sol Dichter carried out improvements to the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272). Termed “Operation Facelift”, Sol’s \$400,000 project included the remodeling and expansion of the shopping center to attract more retailers and to generate higher volumes of traffic. New construction included a bowling center at the southeast corner of the property, as well as Luby’s Cafeteria containing 10,500 square feet and Hested’s Department Store containing 35,000 square feet, attached to the west end of the north building. The center was considered the largest community type shopping center in Aurora at this time. (Refer to Figure 14.) The automobile service center located at 606 Peoria Street (5AH.3273) opened in December of 1964 as part of the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center’s “facelift”. This former U.S. Royal Automotive Center was the first automotive store to be built in Colorado by the U.S. Rubber Company.
- Three buildings comprise a small shopping center at the southeast corner of Peoria Street and Del Mar Circle. The small shopping center, located at 770-796 Peoria Street (5AH.3275) was constructed in 1966. A Baskin Robbins restaurant occupied 770 Peoria from 1966 until 1992.

Evaluation of Significance for Commerce & Trade

Resources within a historic residential suburb are classified as “contributing” if they were present during the period of significance and possess historic integrity for that period. Those buildings or resources that were substantially altered after the period of significance are classified as “noncontributing” unless they have individual significance that qualifies them for National Register listing. Additions and alterations following the period of significance affect whether an individual building contributes to a historic district’s significance. Those buildings with additions that alter the original building’s massing and scale, introduce major non-compatible design elements, and interrupt the spatial organization of the streetscape and neighborhood are classified as noncontributing to the district.

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For a building to be individually eligible for Commerce & Trade within Hoffman Heights, it must retain most of the physical features that convey its commercial significance. A resource that has lost some historic materials or details can be considered individually eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its commercial significance in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, and related site features. The resource is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost other important features that once characterized its commercial function; examples of this are resources where a former drive-up window at a restaurant has been abandoned or service bays at a gas station have been infilled.



Denver Public Library Digital Collections P1996.13391 (Circa 1967)

Figure 14.

Sol Dichter, the person on the left side of the image, speaks to Harry Luby of Luby's Cafeteria. The restaurant was added to the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center in 1964 as part of Dichter's \$400,000 remodeling project called "Operation Facelift". His office for the Ace Realty Corporation was located at 750 Peoria Street.

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ARCHITECTURE

Modern Movement Style

The majority of the resources in Hoffman Heights, constructed between 1950 and 1966, reflect the Modern Movement style of architecture. Although there are many variants of this broadly-defined style, it generally embodies form over function, omission of traditional detailing resulting in little or no building ornamentation, and the use of man-made and natural materials, including brick, stone, wood and concrete, combined with factory-made parts such as anodized aluminum storefront framing systems. The period following World War II was one of renewal and optimism; wartime research was applied to architecture and design, including the use of (then considered) state-of-the-art materials, such as plastic laminates and fiberglass. The architectural form from this period is influenced by regional design considerations, energy conservation considerations, and advances in building technology. In general, character-defining features of this style include low-pitched or flat roofs, wide eave overhangs with exposed roof beams and other structural members, heavy piers supporting gables or roof edges, contrasting wall materials and textures, geometric window shapes and unusual window placements, and the use of ribbon or clerestory windows.

The architectural style of the former Big Top store at 116 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3262) can be more specifically classified as “Googie” with its upswept roof, geometric massing, and extensive use of glass. The style originated in Southern California during the late 1940s; a West Hollywood coffee house designed by architect John Lautner was called “Googies”. It became the name of an architectural style when magazine editor Douglas Haskell of “House and Home” wrote an article in 1952 about the coffee house and other similarly styled buildings.

Builders who worked in Hoffman Heights between 1950 and 1966 include the F&S Construction Company, Labco Construction Company, Kunz Construction Company, W. W. Grafberger Construction Company, Hollister Construction Company, Anderson Building Company and builders Joe Martin and Platt Rogers. Developers working in Hoffman Heights during the neighborhood’s period of significance include Sam Hoffman, Sol Dichter, and Ambrose-Williams & Company. Architects and design professionals who were responsible for the design of some of the commercial, multi-family residential, and public buildings during the period of significance include Atchison & Kloverstrom Architects; Kellogg & Sayre Associated Architects; Bertram A. Bruton, Architect; Eugene D. Sternberg & Associates; Richard L. DeGette, Architect; Leon Brin, Architect; and F. W. Draney, Structural Engineer.

Site Design Considerations

Hoffman Heights was constructed on former farmland that is relatively level and treeless, with the exception of the cottonwoods that grew along the perimeter of the reservoir at the south end of the property. Some streets in the community exhibit noticeable grade changes, including East 7th Avenue. The Community Builders Handbook noted that

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moderately sloping sites with well drained land are preferable to steep or level sites. Steep properties require heavy grading, which may create settlement and erosion problems, while flat land can cause problems with sewer and storm drainage.

Due to the fairly level terrain in the survey area, the buildings were constructed in a conventional way, with grade remaining typically level around all sides. The interior floor elevation was set no more than one step or approximately six inches above exterior grade. Most of the commercial and public buildings have no basements, but were rather constructed with concrete slabs-on-grade; the exception is the Aurora Public Library located at 1298 Peoria Street (5AH.3276), which has a basement. The decision was based upon the knowledge of a high water table, evidenced by the presence of the former reservoir on the site.

The Community Builders Handbook advised that the residential unit development “should be bounded on all sides by arterial streets, sufficiently wide to facilitate traffic by-passing the neighborhood instead of passing through it”. Hoffman Heights was planned accordingly, with Potomac Street and Peoria Street serving as the east and west arterial streets that bypass the neighborhood and East 13th Avenue and East 6th Avenue located along the north and south boundaries of the self-contained community. Hoffman Boulevard is a collector street that runs diagonally from the northeast corner of Hoffman Heights to the commercial development at the southwest corner of the neighborhood; the street system within the Hoffman Heights neighborhood was laid out to feed more or less directionally toward the shopping center area. This street’s width is greater than the adjoining curved secondary residential streets because it accommodates more traffic. Del Mar Circle, which was originally named Larkspur Parkway, is another similar collector street that connects to Hoffman Boulevard and provides access to Peoria Street to the west and East 6th Avenue to the south. It separates the commercial and apartment buildings in Hoffman Heights from the churches and single-family detached houses.

The majority of the secondary residential streets have a right-of-way width of 50 feet; this allows for two lanes of parallel parking adjacent to raised concrete sidewalks, 3 feet in width, on both sides of the street and two opposing traffic lanes. The sidewalks are an amenity, allowing for safe pedestrian circulation through the neighborhood. Most of the secondary streets in Hoffman Heights are curved to avoid the monotony of a gridiron pattern and provide more visual variety along the streetscape as well as to discourage speeding vehicles and through traffic. Most of the houses are set back approximately 25 feet from the street and were built on lot depths of 115 feet. Landscaping in front yards was the responsibility of the homeowner; many front yards now contain mature trees and shrubs. The houses are generally 30 feet wide, which results in a backyard of approximately 60 feet in depth. Since the houses were constructed with concrete slabs-on-grade, the individual homeowners could expand their living space into their backyards. The integration of the building into the landscape by providing large windows and doors that open onto grade is a Modernist idea.

Hoffman Boulevard and Del Mar Circle both have right-of-way widths of 80 feet with wider traffic lanes to accommodate higher traffic flow and public transportation routes.

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Sidewalks were provided along these collector streets to serve residents and patrons of the businesses along Del Mar Circle. The setbacks of the commercial buildings along Del Mar Circle are not uniform but rather vary from approximately 25 feet to 75 feet. Parking spaces are provided in front of the buildings and, in some cases, along the sides of the buildings where they are located closer to the street. Most of the commercial properties lack any form of landscaping; their open space is dedicated to vehicle parking. Exceptions to this are the professional buildings along Del Mar Circle that incorporated additional sidewalks and landscape elements to make the entry to the building more inviting to the patrons.

The front yards of the multi-family housing along Del Mar Circle include lawns and landscape elements, including trees and shrubs. The six buildings that comprise the apartment complex at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3269) are arranged to create two large open spaces facing the collector street; this arrangement allowed a maximum number of units to be removed from close proximity to the noisy street. Secondary sidewalks were provided on the property to define circulation paths from the residential units to parking and service facilities along the backs of the buildings.

Off-street parking was provided at the churches in Hoffman Heights. The churches are located along Del Mar Circle, serving as a buffer between the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center and other commercial buildings and the single family residential development. Landscaping was generally provided around the perimeter of churches to promote outdoor social interaction prior to and following church services and accommodate play areas for Sunday School.

The community builder recognized the value of integrating recreational areas into the development. The emphasis following World War II was for the community builder to set aside land for parks and recreational facilities that were available to a larger number of families in the community. Where building sites were small and the houses relatively close to one another, the home buyer was looking for neighborhood amenities outside the confines of the house and lot; this also held true for residents of multi-family housing. Often the full development and maintenance of a recreational area was left to the community and their neighborhood organization. Hoffman Park, located at 12600 Hoffman Boulevard on land donated by Sam Hoffman, covers 11.6 acres. It is strategically located between the multi-family housing along Del Mar Circle and the residential development.

Auto-Oriented Signage

The widespread use of the automobile following World War II made an impact on outdoor advertising. The speed of the automobile on any given street affected the size of the signage. In general, signage on arterial streets was larger and more eye-catching than that on collector streets because the traffic moved more quickly. In Hoffman Heights, the signage for the shopping center located along Peoria Street was elevated above the road on a pole and utilized large bold letters with an arrow to direct drivers to the entrance. (Refer to Figure 15.) Each individual business in the shopping center had its own sign, mounted above the storefront; the sign had to be large enough to be read from across a

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large parking area. The signage on collector streets was important, too, for catching the attention of the auto passengers. The former Big Top store at 112 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3261) once had a large sign pedestal-mounted above the center of the roof; the sign was easily seen from the street by passing vehicles. (Refer to Figure 16.) Other buildings incorporated neon or fluorescent tube lighting along their roof eaves that was illuminated at night to draw consumers to the business. Neon and fluorescent lighting remains mounted on some of the buildings in Hoffman Heights, including the Center Circle Shopping Center at 770-796 Peoria Street (5AH.3276), the former Kwik Shake Inn at 136 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3267) and the gas station at 138 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3268).

Evaluation of Significance for Architecture

Buildings within a historic residential suburb are classified as “contributing” if they were present during the period of significance and possess historic integrity for that period. Those buildings or resources that were substantially altered after the period of significance are classified as “noncontributing” unless they have individual significance that qualifies them for National Register listing. Additions and alterations following the period of significance affect whether an individual building contributes to a historic district’s significance. Those buildings with additions that alter the original building’s massing and scale, introduce major non-compatible design elements, and interrupt the spatial organization of the streetscape and neighborhood are classified as noncontributing to the district.

For a building to be individually eligible for Architecture within Hoffman Heights, it must retain most of the physical features that illustrate a particular architectural style or construction technique. A resource that has lost some historic materials or details can be considered individually eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation (or lack thereof). The resource is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost other important features that once characterized its style; an example of this is a resource where windows have been replaced or stucco has been applied to former brick walls.

V. RESULTS



Denver Public Library Digital Collections P1996.13392 (Circa 1967)

Figure 15.

A sign marked the entry into the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272) from Peoria Street. Luby's Cafeteria and a sign for Winchell's Donut House can be seen beyond. The cafeteria was added to the shopping center in 1964. Large signs were necessary to catch the attention of automobile passengers along Peoria Street.

Types of Resources Surveyed & Dates of Construction

The Hoffman Heights Intensive Level Survey resulted in the completion of 22 Architectural Inventory Forms documenting commercial and public resources in the survey area. These historic resources include a public library at the northwest corner of Hoffman Heights, an

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elementary school, three churches, two medical clinics, two apartment complexes, a small shopping center, a neighborhood shopping center, an auto service center, two gas stations, two drive-in restaurants, a dry cleaners, two office buildings, a coin laundry, a barber shop, and a drive-in convenience mart. A description of each resource follows in the order of construction. Their locations can be found on the Resource Map on page 55.

1. The F&S Construction Company donated a large tract of land, located at the approximate midpoint of the north boundary of Hoffman Heights, to the Adams-Arapahoe School District No. 28-J in July of 1951 for the sole purpose of constructing a school in the neighborhood. Vaughn Grammar School, now known as Vaughn Elementary School, was constructed in 1952 at 1155 Vaughn Street (5AH.3278) to serve the residents of Hoffman Heights. A federal grant of \$350,000 was awarded for the construction of the school after Hoffman Heights was annexed to the Aurora School District and the needs of both areas were consolidated. Atchison & Kloverstrom Architects, a Denver firm that specialized in the design of educational facilities, was chosen to design the school. The architects designed numerous school buildings in Aurora, including Aurora High School.
2. The Hoffman Heights Shopping Center (5AH.3272) opened in December of 1953 at the northeast corner of East 6th Avenue and Peoria Street, the site of the former prefabrication center and building materials storage yard for the adjacent Hoffman Heights residential development. The F&S Construction Company built the “ultra-modern” shopping center for the Ace Realty Company of Phoenix, Arizona for an approximate cost of \$1,000,000. Sam Hoffman was the President of both companies at this time. In 1964, Sol Dichter, son-in-law of Sam Hoffman, owned and managed the shopping center. Termed “Operation Facelift”, Sol’s \$400,000 project included the remodeling and expansion of the shopping center to attract more retailers and to generate higher volumes of traffic. The center was considered the largest community type shopping center in Aurora at this time.
3. A gas station located at 754 Peoria Street (5AH.3274) was constructed in 1953 along with the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center. The Ace Realty Company and the F&S Construction Company owned and built the service station, known as the Hoffman Heights Texaco Service Station from circa 1957 through 1997.
4. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church, through the Board of Home Missions, began providing services in Hoffman Heights in 1952. The first worship service and the first session of Sunday School were held at a parsonage located at 1262 Quentin Street on February 8, 1953. The groundbreaking ceremony for St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, located at 111 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3261), occurred on May 24, 1953. A large tract of land in the 3rd Filing of Hoffman Town was provided for the first church constructed in Hoffman Heights. The original L-shaped building plan included a sanctuary along the northeast side of the property, with the church entry facing Del Mar Circle; the building’s other leg functioned as a Sunday School. The current sanctuary and adjacent main entryway were built in 1969.

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1. Vaughn Grammar School
5AH.3278 / 1155 Vaughn St. 1952



4. St. Mark's Lutheran Church
5AH.3260 / 111 Del Mar Circle 1953



2. Hoffman Heights Shopping Center
5AH.3272 / 616-746 Peoria St. 1953



5. First Baptist Church of HH
5AH.3271 / 12400 Hoffman Blvd. 1954



3. HH Texaco Service Station
5AH.3274 / 754 Peoria St. 1953



6. Hoffman Heights Medical Clinic
5AH.3258 / 105 Del Mar Circle 1955

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5. Services for the First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights (5AH.3271) were initially held in 1952 at Pastor Ed Nelson's home, located at 954 Quari Court. Following the purchase of land located at 12400 Hoffman Boulevard in 1952, a temporary building constructed of transite panels from Sam Hoffman's prefabrication center and building materials storage yard across the street was erected on the site. The education building was the first permanent building to be constructed on the site and was ready for occupancy in July of 1954. The construction of the sanctuary followed in 1965.
6. A medical clinic was the next commercial building to be constructed in 1955 in Hoffman Heights. Gordon B. Butler and his wife, Mary Elizabeth, purchased ½ interest in the property located at 105 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3258) from the F&S Construction Company in November 1953. Gordon Butler was a physician and had his medical clinic constructed on the site. Aloysius I. Rowan, Jr. was also a physician who saw patients at the clinic; he and his wife, Margaret, lived nearby at 1279 Quari Street. The clinic remained in business until 2002.
7. Another medical clinic was constructed at 132 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3266) in 1956, which is soon after the land was platted as the Eighth Filing of Hoffman Town. The street now known as Del Mar Circle was originally named Larkspur Parkway. Dr. Thomas C. Miller owned the property and set up his medical practice there. In 1962, the building was known as the Del Mar Medical Clinic.
8. Once the land associated with the Eighth Filing of Hoffman Town was platted, additional buildings were constructed along Del Mar Circle. A drive-in restaurant known as the "Kwik Shake Inn", located at 136 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3267), was constructed in 1957. Robert Boggs and his wife, Alyene Spradley Boggs, had the restaurant constructed on their property. Robert Boggs, a real estate broker and developer, is credited with making the owner of the Cottonwood Ranch aware of Sam Hoffman and his housing development in Albuquerque, New Mexico after Boggs returned from a trip there. In 1951, Boggs was elected the first president of the Hoffman Heights Neighborhood Association. The Boggs lived in the first filing of Hoffman Town at 1161 Racine Street in a Deluxe Brick home.
9. Members of the Boston Street Church of Christ in Aurora organized the Hoffman Heights Church of Christ in 1957. The church, located at 802 Quari Street (5AH.3277) on a generously sized lot in the Third Filing of Hoffman Town, was constructed in 1957 to serve the increasing population of Hoffman Heights and Aurora. Additions followed in 1961 and 1967 as more members joined the church. By 1976, the congregation had grown to a size that the existing church could no longer accommodate. A large building site was purchased on East Alameda Avenue that was adjacent to a park and offered good views of the Front Range. In 1989, the Hoffman Heights Church of Christ sold its property at 802 Quari Street to the Salvation Army. The Aurora branch of the Salvation Army is now headquartered there.

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7. Del Mar Medical Clinic
5AH.3266 / 132 Del Mar Circle 1956



10. Automart Store/Big Top Store
5AH.3261 / 112 Del Mar Circle 1958



8. Kwik Shake Inn
5AH.3267 / 136 Del Mar Circle 1957



11. One Hour Martinizing Cleaners/Plant
5AH.3262 / 116 Del Mar Circle 1959



9. Hoffman Heights Church of Christ
5AH.3277 / 802 Quari Court 1957



12. HH Phillips 66 Gas Station
5AH.3268 / 138 Del Mar Circle 1959

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10. The building at 112 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3261) was constructed in 1958 to function as a drive-in supermarket, known as an Automart store. It was part of a chain of Denver-based mini-markets, modeled after the 7-11 stores that were constructed in Dallas, Texas beginning in the 1930's. In May of 1959, the new chain of stores was renamed "Big Top" to avoid any misunderstanding the previous name may have created with consumers. The name "Big Top" was submitted in a naming contest by an Aurora resident; the stores' circus tent appearance provided inspiration for the new name.
11. A dry cleaning business, known as a "One Hour Martinizing Plant", was built at 116 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3262) in 1959. The building functioned as a dry cleaning business until 1988.
12. A gas station was constructed at 138 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3268) in 1959. Known as the Hoffman Heights Phillips 66 Gas Station until 1988, the property was owned by the Aurora Oil Company, which operated eight other gas stations in Aurora. In 1996, the property was sold and the former automobile service bays were abandoned so that the building could be remodeled to function as a convenience store.
13. Stan Swanson, a local realtor who lived at 1244 Quari Street in Hoffman Heights, purchased 122-124 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3264) from Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins in 1960 and developed the property shortly afterwards. Designed for two tenants, the building has accommodated a laundromat since it was first constructed. Today the laundromat occupies the entire building.
14. Another drive-in restaurant, "Mister Taco", was constructed at 106 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3259) in 1962. Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins owned and developed the property. Eugene and Paul were owners of "Ambrose-Williams & Company", a real estate company. In 1958, the business was located at 1740 Broadway in the Mile High Center in downtown Denver. Eugene served as President while Paul was Secretary/Treasurer of the company. Dorothy P. Stout was Vice President. The real estate business was involved in property management, including the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center, and advertised in the Yellow Pages as "subdividers". The building operated as a "Mister Taco" restaurant until 1989, although it still functions as a restaurant.
15. The building located at 126 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3265) was constructed in 1962. Stanley M. and Ella Jean Swanson owned the property and built a small multi-tenant office building on the site. Stan Swanson operated his business, Stan Swanson & Company Realtors, from this building and lived at 1244 Quari Street in a Deluxe Brick home in Hoffman Heights. The building accommodated a variety of tenants, including medical professionals, until 1995 when it became the Korean First Baptist Church.

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13. Swanson Retail Building
5AH.3264 / 122-124 Del Mar Cir. 1960



16. Hoffman Heights Apartments
5AH.3269 / 140-150 Del Mar Cir. 1962



14. Mister Taco Restaurant
5AH.3259 / 106 Del Mar Circle 1962



17. Warmath-Schindler Building
5AH.3263 / 118-120 Del Mar Cir. 1963



15. Swanson Professional Building
5AH.3265 / 126 Del Mar Circle 1962



18. Colony House Apartments
5AH.3270 / 152 Del Mar Circle 1963

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16. The two-story apartment buildings, located at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3269) and known originally as the Hoffman Heights Apartments, were constructed in 1962. The six apartment buildings were arranged in two U-shaped groupings to create two large courtyards facing Del Mar Circle. The individual exterior apartment entries provide direct access to a second floor balcony or to outdoor space. Each courtyard once incorporated a swimming pool, which has subsequently been abandoned. The parking spaces and the shared laundry facilities are located at the rear of the buildings, screened from view and bordering the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center. The apartment complex serves as a buffer between the center and the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood.
17. Harold and Marjorie Warmath purchased 118 to 120 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3263) from Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose and Jess Ogden Atkins in April of 1963. "Harold's Barber Shop" was located in this building beginning in 1963. Although not confirmed, Harold Warmath may have been the barber conducting business from this location. A barber shop continues to occupy one of the two tenant spaces.
18. The Ace Realty Corporation, with Sol Dichter as President, is responsible for the construction of the apartment building located at 152 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3270), which was constructed circa 1963. This property and the Hoffman Heights Apartments at 140 to 150 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3269) were originally located on the same property as the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center. In October of 1968, the property was sold to the Colonial Apartment Association.
19. Sol Dichter built a small office building for his company, the Ace Realty Corporation, at 750 Peoria Street (5AH.3279) in 1963. Dichter was Sam Hoffman's son-in-law and served as Vice President of the F&S Construction Company as well as its Denver area manager. He managed the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center from this location.
20. The classically styled Aurora Public Library was constructed in 1964 at 1298 Peoria Street (5AH.3276). It was the second library to be built in the City of Aurora, following the construction of architect Victor Hornbein's library at 1516 Dallas Street in 1953. By 1960, the library was overcrowded due to the sudden growth in population from 11,000 in 1950 to nearly 50,000 residents ten years later. The City decided to build a new library on the site of a small city park because it was near the center of the city's population. Eugene D. Sternberg & Associates of Littleton, Colorado was selected as the architect for the project. The new library incorporated 10,000 square feet on two floors and accommodated 50,000 volumes. It included a young reading area, an adult reading area, reference library section, children's area, and a meeting room.
21. The automobile service center located at 606 Peoria Street (5AH.3273) opened in December of 1964 as part of the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center's "facelift", which occurred approximately ten years after the center was completed in 1954. Architect Bertram A. Bruton designed the service center for Sol Dichter.

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19. Ace Realty Corporation
5AH.3279 / 750 Peoria 1963



22. Center Circle Shopping Center
5AH.3275 / 770-796 Peoria Street 1966



20. Aurora Public Library
5AH.3276 / 1298 Peoria Street 1964



21. U.S. Royal Automotive Center
5AH.3273 / 606 Peoria Street 1964

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22. Three buildings comprise a small shopping center at the southeast corner of Peoria Street and Del Mar Circle (5AH.3275). The architect and owner of the shopping center, named “Center Circle” was Richard DeGette. The property was purchased from Eugene W. Ambrose, Paul D. Ambrose, and Jess Ogden Atkins in April of 1965. The small shopping center was constructed in 1966. A Baskin Robbins restaurant occupied 770 Peoria from 1966 until 1992.

National Register Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria are described in the National Register of Historic Places publication, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places* and were used to evaluate the Hoffman Heights subdivision.

Criterion A

- The neighborhood reflects an important historic trend in the development and growth of a locality or metropolitan area.
- The suburb represents an important event or association, such as the expansion of housing associated with wartime industries during World War II, or the racial integration of suburban neighborhoods in the 1950s.
- The suburb introduced conventions of community planning important in the history of suburbanization, such as zoning, deed restrictions, or subdivision regulations.
- The neighborhood is associated with the heritage of social, economic, racial, or ethnic groups important in the history of a locality or metropolitan area.
- The suburb is associated with a group of individuals, including merchants, industrialists, educators, and community leaders, important in the history and development of a locality or metropolitan area.

Criterion B

- The neighborhood is directly associated with the life and career of an individual who made important contributions to the history of a locality or metropolitan area.

Criterion C

- The collection of residential architecture is an important example of distinctive period of construction, method of construction, or the work of one or more notable architects.
- The suburb reflects principles of design important in the history of community planning and landscape architecture, or is the work of a master landscape architect, site planner, or design firm.
- The subdivision embodies high artistic values through its overall plan or the design of entrance ways, streets, homes, and community spaces.

Criterion D

- The neighborhood is likely to yield important information about vernacular house types, yard design, gardening practices, and patterns of domestic life.

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For a property to qualify for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places, it must minimally meet one of the National Register Criteria for Evaluation by:

- Being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A); or
- Being associated with the lives of persons significant in our past (Criterion B); or
- Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (Criterion C); or
- Having yielded in the past, or likely to yield in the future, information important in prehistory or history (Criterion D).

Local Landmark Criteria

In order to qualify for designation as a historic site in the City of Aurora, the site must be determined to have historic significance due to one or more of the following factors:

- A. Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community; or
- B. Is identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state, or local history; or
- C. Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
- D. Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual ability has been recognized; or
- E. Meets specific archaeological criteria as designated by the commission, in accord with federal regulations and community standards; and
- F. Does not deny the owner a reasonable use of property.

Eligibility Assessments

The assessment of the twenty-two properties intensively surveyed for this project resulted in the following nine resources found to be potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places and as local landmarks in the City of Aurora. These resources retain most of their essential physical features to convey their significance.

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1.	5AH.3261	112 Del Mar Circle	Big Top Store
2.	5AH.3264	122 – 124 Del Mar Circle	Swanson Retail Building
3.	5AH.3265	126 Del Mar Circle	Swanson Professional Building
4.	5AH.3266	132 Del Mar Circle	Del Mar Medical Clinic
5.	5AH.3271	12400 Hoffman Blvd.	First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights
6.	5AH.3273	606 Peoria Street	U.S. Royal Automotive Center
7.	5AH.3277	802 Quari Court	Hoffman Heights Church of Christ
8.	5AH.3278	1155 Vaughn Street	Vaughn Elementary School
9.	5AH.3279	750 Peoria Street	Ace Realty Corporation

Resources within a historic residential suburb are classified as “contributing” if they were present during the period of significance and possess historic integrity for that period. The following resources were found to contribute to a potential historic district:

1.	5AH.3259	106 Del Mar Circle	Mister Taco Restaurant
2.	5AH.3260	111 Del Mar Circle	St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
3.	5AH.3261	112 Del Mar Circle	Big Top Store
4.	5AH.3262	116 Del Mar Circle	One-Hour Martinizing Cleaners/Plant
5.	5AH.3263	118-120 Del Mar Circle	Warmath-Schindler Building
6.	5AH.3264	122-124 Del Mar Circle	Swanson Retail Building
7.	5AH.3265	126 Del Mar Circle	Swanson Professional Building
8.	5AH.3266	132 Del Mar Circle	Del Mar Medical Clinic
9.	5AH.3267	136 Del Mar Circle	Kwik Shake Inn
10.	5AH.3268	138 Del Mar Circle	Hoffman Heights Phillips 66 Gas Station
11.	5AH.3269	140-150 Del Mar Circle	Hoffman Heights Apartments
12.	5AH.3271	12400 Hoffman Blvd.	First Baptist Church of Hoffman Heights
13.	5AH.3273	606 Peoria Street	U.S. Royal Automotive Center
14.	5AH.3275	770-796 Peoria Street	Center Circle Shopping Center
15.	5AH.3276	1298 Peoria Street	Aurora Public Library
16.	5AH.3277	802 Quari Court	Hoffman Heights Church of Christ
17.	5AH.3278	1155 Vaughn Street	Vaughn Elementary School
18.	5AH.3279	750 Peoria Street	Ace Realty Corporation

Four resources were found to not contribute to a potential historic district.

1. 5AH.3258 105 Del Mar Circle Hoffman Heights Medical Clinic
 The massing of the building at was significantly altered. The original building’s exterior walls were raised and its flat roof was converted to a cross-hipped roof circa 2001.

2. 5AH.3270 152 Del Mar Circle Colony House Apartments
 The apartment building was altered sometime after 1968 when the windows were replaced, a courtyard was infilled for additional apartments, and a pedimented porte cochere was added to the east side of the building, thereby changing the original massing of the building.

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- 3. 5AH.3272 616-746 Peoria Street Hoffman Heights Shopping Center
The shopping center embodies low aspects of integrity from its period of significance due to the recent addition of canopies with standing seam metal roofs, supported by rock-faced concrete block columns; the application of stucco to some exterior wall surfaces; and the alteration of individual storefronts.

- 4. 5AH.3274 754 Peoria Street Hoffman Heights Texaco Gas Station
The gas station was significantly altered circa 1997 when it was converted to a convenience mart with gasoline sales. Stucco was applied to the exterior walls, the storefront system was replaced, and the former service bays were abandoned.



Denver Public Library Digital Collections P1996.13398 (Circa 1967)

Figure 16.

The former Big Top store located at 112 Del Mar Circle (5AH.3261) is one of the most significant resources in Hoffman Heights. It is eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Draft Statement of Significance for Potential Historic District

The name of the potentially eligible National Register District is “Hoffman Heights” or “Hoffman Town”. The subdivision potentially meets Criterion A for reflecting an important historic trend in the development and growth of a locality or metropolitan area and Criterion C for reflecting principles of design important in the history of community planning. Areas of significance include Community Planning & Development and Architecture with a local level of significance. The historic character of the residential portion of Hoffman Heights is enhanced by the multi-family housing, commercial development, churches and public buildings that were primarily constructed in the southwest corner of Hoffman Heights. The buildings are united both historically and aesthetically by the planning and physical development of this Post-World War II neighborhood. Despite the fact that many of them have been altered, their design and construction convey a postwar suburban neighborhood with a period of significance of 1950 through 1966. The boundaries of this potential historic district include Peoria Street to the west and Potomac Street to the east; East 6th Avenue serves as the southern boundary. The northern boundary includes the residential properties located along the north side of East 13th Avenue and the former public library located at 1298 Peoria Street. These boundaries were selected because they encompass all of the subdivision filings historically associated with Hoffman Heights as well as the public library that was constructed nearby to serve the neighborhood.

Survey Log

The following survey log documents each resource and its potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and as a local landmark. It also indicates whether the resource contributes to the potential Hoffman Heights historic district.

Individual Eligibility

	State ID No.	Street Address	N.R. Criteria (1)	Local Landmark Criteria (2)	Year of Construction	Original Use	Historic District Contributing Status
1	5AH.3258	105 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1955	Medical Clinic	Non-Contributing
2	5AH.3259	106 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1962	Drive-In Restaurant	Contributing
3	5AH.3260	111 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1953	Church	Contributing
4	5AH.3261	112 Del Mar Circle	A,C	A,C	1958	Drive-In Convenience Mart	Contributing
5	5AH.3262	116 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1959	Dry Cleaners	Contributing

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6	5AH.3263	118-120 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1963	Barber Shop	Contributing
7	5AH.3264	122-124 Del Mar Circle	C	C	1960	Coin Laundry	Contributing
8	5AH.3265	126 Del Mar Circle	C	C	1962	Office Building	Contributing
9	5AH.3266	132 Del Mar Circle	C	C	1956	Medical Clinic	Contributing
10	5AH.3267	136 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1957	Drive-In Restaurant	Contributing
11	5AH.3268	138 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1959	Gas Station	Contributing
12	5AH.3269	140-150 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1962	Apts	Contributing
13	5AH.3270	152 Del Mar Circle	--	--	1963	Apts	Non- Contributing
14	5AH.3271	12400 Hoffman Boulevard	C	C	1954	Church	Contributing
15	5AH.3272	616-746 Peoria Street	--	--	1953	Neigh- bor- hood Shopping Center	Non- Contributing
16	5AH.3273	606 Peoria Street	A,C	A,C	1964	Auto Service Center	Contributing
17	5AH.3274	754 Peoria Street	--	--	1953	Gas Station	Non- Contributing
18	5AH.3275	770-796 Peoria	--	--	1966	Small Shopping Center	Contributing
19	5AH.3276	1298 Peoria Street	--	--	1964	Library	Contributing
20	5AH.3277	802 Quari Court	C	C	1957	Church	Contributing
21	5AH.3278	1155 Vaughn	A	A	1952	School	Contributing
22	5AH.3279	750 Peoria	A,C	A,C	1963	Office Building	Contributing

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- (1) National Register Criteria
 - A: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history
 - C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- (2) Local Landmark Criteria
 - A: Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, or social history of the nation, state, or community
 - C: Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship

Conclusion

Hoffman Heights represents a Post-World War II community that clearly reflects the planning standards set forth by the National Association of Home Builders and the Community Builders Council.

The historic character of the residential portion of Hoffman Heights is enhanced by the multi-family housing, commercial development, and public buildings constructed as part of Hoffman Town. The churches, the elementary school, the library, the apartment buildings, the Hoffman Heights Shopping Center, and the individual commercial buildings along Del Mar Circle were built both during the time that the houses were under construction and soon afterwards. Vaughn Elementary School was the first public building to be constructed because it was critical that an educational facility be provided for the neighborhood. Research revealed that Sam Hoffman and the F&S Construction Company were involved in the design and construction of some of the commercial buildings. Others developers, including Ambrose-Williams & Company, owned multiple parcels of land along Del Mar Circle, which they subdivided and developed or sold to individuals.

Although the individual houses and multi-family housing as well as the majority of the commercial and public buildings in Hoffman Heights are not high style examples of the Modern Movement style of architecture, together they form a significant collection worthy of recognition. Fortunately, at the present time, there have been no “scrape-offs” or demolition in the subdivision for the construction of larger homes or replacement commercial buildings. Possible reasons for this retention of architectural fabric include property values that cannot support the construction of larger houses or commercial buildings and their consequent larger price tags; the perception of Hoffman Heights as a neighborhood of affordable homes for young couples and “empty nesters”; and the current residents’ satisfaction with the size of their homes. There are no zoning restrictions or local ordinances that would prevent changes to the individual houses or commercial buildings in the neighborhood. Although some of the modified houses and buildings do not possess materials integrity because they do not retain key exterior materials dating from

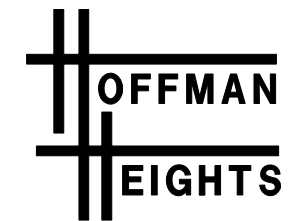
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the period of their historic significance, they still convey their significance through their location, design, setting, feeling, workmanship, and association.

Given all of these factors, there is potential for the creation of a historic district, both at the local level and for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. National Register Bulletin 15 provides the definition of a district, which "...possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties."

Much of Hoffman Heights' distinctive character lies in the planning of the overall community, including the street layout, the location of the various model houses, and the construction of the multi-family housing as well as the public and commercial buildings that serve the community. Despite the fact that many of them have been altered, their design and construction convey a postwar suburban neighborhood with a period of significance of 1950 through 1966. The boundaries of the potential historic district should encompass all of these important elements of the Hoffman Heights community.

Hoffman Heights is a reflection of post-World War II planning standards, Sam Hoffman's legacy as a community builder, and the City of Aurora's growth during the early 1950s.



Aurora, Colorado

Intensive Level
Survey

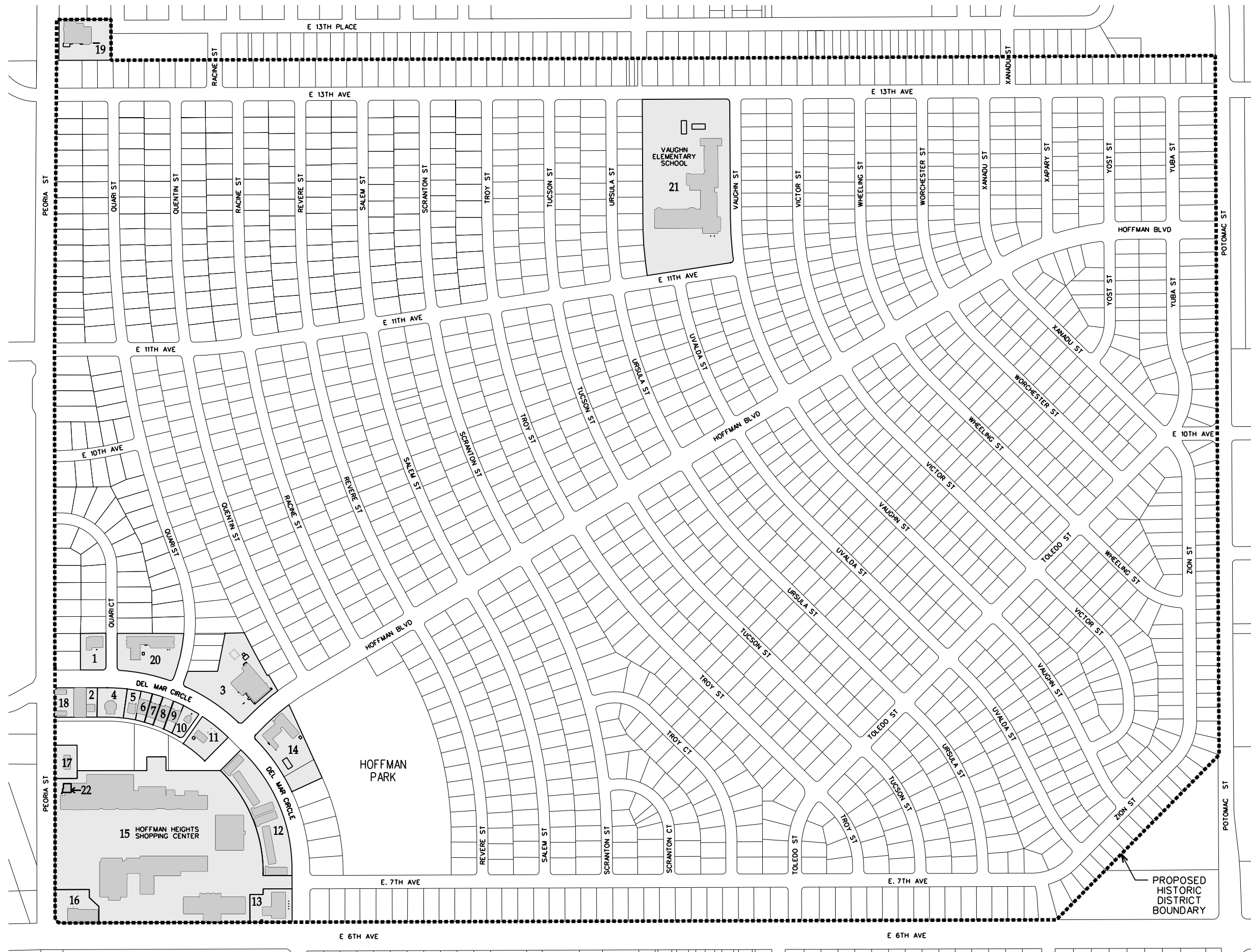
RESOURCE MAP

SCALE 1"=440'

HOEHN ARCHITECTS PC
PROJECT NO. 1104

HISTORY COLORADO
OAHPC CERTIFIED
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PROJECT NO. CO-11-011

- 1 105 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3258
- 2 106 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3259
- 3 111 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3260
- 4 112 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3261
- 5 116 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3262
- 6 118-120 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3263
- 7 122-124 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3264
- 8 126 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3265
- 9 132 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3266
- 10 136 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3267
- 11 138 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3268
- 12 140-150 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3269
- 13 152 DEL MAR CIRCLE
5AH.3270
- 14 12400 HOFFMAN BLVD.
5AH.3271
- 15 618-748 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3272
- 16 606 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3273
- 17 754 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3274
- 18 770-796 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3275
- 19 1298 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3276
- 20 802 QUARI COURT
5AH.3277
- 21 1155 VAUGHN STREET
5AH.3278
- 22 750 PEORIA STREET
5AH.3279



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VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The information collected in the previous comprehensive reconnaissance survey of 1,696 houses in combination with this intensive level survey of the multi-family housing, commercial development, churches and public buildings associated with Hoffman Heights provides the necessary information to move forward with a National Register historic district nomination. Hoffman Heights meets Criterion A: Event for its association with a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of the community. The subdivision also meets Criterion C: Design/Construction, since the subdivision represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. These criteria will be substantiated with the preparation of a historic district nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and consultation with the National Register staff at the OAHP. Nine resources were also found to be potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places and as local landmarks.

In order to enhance preservation planning efforts and heritage tourism, the City of Aurora, its Historic Preservation Review Commission (HPRC), and the building owners should consider moving forward with the following activities in response to this survey project:

- *Seek local landmark designations of the nine resources found to be potentially eligible for individual listing.*
This type of designation affords the greatest protection of the individual historic resource since exterior alterations will require review by the City's HPRC. The landmark designations could be prepared by AHSP staff or by an outside consultant.
- *Prepare National and State Register nominations.*
Funding for the preparation of National and State Register nominations for individual resources and/or the historic district may be available from Colorado's State Historical Fund. Benefits to listing in the National or State Register include eligibility for investment tax credits and the availability of grants from Colorado's State Historical Fund for approved rehabilitation projects. However, listing in the National or State Registers does not offer automatic protection of the resource. Private owners of these properties using private funds may alter or demolish these properties within existing local building regulations.
- *Provide interpretive plaques or signage at significant buildings and neighborhood entry points.*
Interpretive plaques could be installed immediately and would represent a minimal cost to the City of Aurora and/or individual property owners. A walking tour of the neighborhood could be developed that highlights the district's historic significance. The development of a walking tour along with the design and fabrication of associated plaques may be eligible for funding through Colorado's State Historical Fund.

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- *Educate and inform the residents of the historic significance of Hoffman Heights through public presentations.*
Presentations could begin immediately and could occur as part of the City’s “Brown Bag” series, held at the Aurora History Museum, and at meetings of the Hoffman Heights Neighborhood Association. The cost to carry out this recommendation would depend upon the speaker’s expenses.
- *Provide a link to the two Hoffman Heights survey projects on the City of Aurora’s website.*
This action could occur immediately. It would reach the greatest number of residents and convey the most information about the historic significance of Hoffman Heights. Communication with the local community should include the benefits of historic designation in order to boost private investment in the preservation of historic buildings within the Hoffman Heights neighborhood.
- *Use the survey results for local planning activities.*
The survey can be used to facilitate decision-making about the potential impact of future private and government-funded projects in the neighborhood. Future population growth and development pressures, especially at nearby Fitzsimons Army Medical Center and the Denver Medical Campus of the University of Colorado, could potentially threaten the architectural resources within Hoffman Heights. The AHSP0 should share the results of this survey with these government entities immediately and learn about their future expansion plans.

A presentation to the City of Aurora’s Historic Preservation Review Commission and the public occurred on August 7, 2012. A subsequent discussion among members of the commission and staff of the AHSP0 took place on September 4, 2012. The following immediate steps will be taken:

- Neighborhood services staff at the City of Aurora and the Hoffman Heights Neighborhood Association will be contacted to assess their interest in pursuing an historic district nomination.
- Precedents for design guidelines will be researched to provide guidance for the development of similar guidelines in Hoffman Heights.
- The City’s preservation ordinance requires majority homeowner consent for a district nomination. Therefore, the Commission will also explore alternative ways to recognize the historic significance of Hoffman Heights outside formal designation of a district.

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