Reconnaissance Level Survey For:

Selected Mid-Century Modern Neighborhoods

Omaha Historic Building Survey 2010
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Selected Mid-Century Modern Neighborhoods

Omaha Historic Building Survey
2010

Prepared for:

Nebraska State Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
1500 R Street
Lincoln, NE 68501
402.471.4787
www.nebraskahistory.org

City of Omaha
Omaha City Planning Department
Omaha Certified Local Government
1819 Farnam Street 68183-1000
Omaha, NE
402.444.5150
www.cityofomaha.org/planning

Prepared by:

Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C.
1516 Cuming Street • Omaha, NE 68102 • 402.341.1544 • F.402.341.4735 • www.alleypoyner.com

Principle Investigators: Jennifer K. Honebrink and Christina A. Jansen
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Executive Summary

Project Background
The City of Omaha Certified Local Government (Omaha CLG), in cooperation with the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS), contracted with Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C. to conduct a reconnaissance level Omaha Historic Buildings Survey (HBS) of the following areas of Omaha:

- Mapleview
- Indian-Hills/Broadmoor
- North Keystone/Hargleroads
- Sunny Slope

The survey areas contain:

- A total of **1.87 square miles** of area
- A total of **2,388 properties**
- Resources in the survey area included:
  - Buildings
  - Structures
  - Objects
  - Sites
- Property types in the survey area were:
  - **primarily residential**
  - limited commercial, civic, industrial, recreational, educational and commercial
- 0 resources previously surveyed by the Omaha CLG
- 0 resources previously surveyed by NSHS
- 0 resources previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

Contents of this Report

- **Chapter 1** summarizes the history of these neighborhoods
- **Chapter 2** explains the methods and processes used to conduct the field investigation, create the database and analyze the information gathered during this survey
- **Chapter 3** presents recommendations for resources to be listed individually or as a group on the National Register of Historic Places and recommendations for future planning efforts
- **Chapter 4** explains the Omaha CLG and the NSHS, and their roles in local preservation efforts
- **Appendix A** includes a list of resources entered into the Omaha NeHBS database
- **Appendix B** provides additional sources for those interested in learning about other preservation efforts and activities
- **Appendix C** provides a glossary of terms used in this report

Summary of Results

- **1,003** resources inventoried
- 21 recommended as potentially eligible on an individual level
  - All are recommended to be listed at a local level
- **4** proposed historic districts
Selected Mid-Century Modern Neighborhoods

Summary of Recommendations

- Enhance existing preservation guidelines to better preserve listed resources
- Continue GIS integration and expand accessibility of information to the public
- Broaden survey for mid-century modern resources

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to many people for their assistance during this project. This report could not have been completed without the additional efforts of those members of the public such as Dennis Brown, Stan How, James Maenner, Sandy Nielsen, Dorothy Norton, Nan Schwers, and Bob Wear, and countless others who attended the public meeting and/or offered information during the survey. We were also assisted by Mike Leonard, Jim Krance, Gail Knapp and Mike Schonlau of the Omaha Planning Department, and Bob Puschendorf, Patrick Haynes and Jessie Nunn of the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, and Gary Rosenberg of the Douglas County Historical Society, as well as the staff of the Nebraska Historical Archieves and the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Love Library.

Administration and Funding

Nebraska Historic Building Survey (NeHBS) projects are administered by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO), a division of the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS). This study is funded in part with the assistance of a federal grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. However, the contents and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of the Interior. Regulations strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write to: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Chapter 1: Historic Overview of Selected Mid-Century Modern Neighborhoods of Omaha

Introduction
This chapter provides an historic overview of the history of Selected Mid-Century Modern Neighborhoods of Omaha and provides a context in which to consider the various types of resources examined in this survey.

Omaha’s Founding
Nebraska was officially open for settlement in 1854 with the signing of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. During that same year, the city of Omaha was founded by members of the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company. After incorporation in 1857, Omaha went through a number of transformations. Within the first decade and a half, the city expanded in area as well as population and developed into Nebraska’s largest city.\(^1\)

Omaha’s site on the western side of the Missouri River was chosen by the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company because of its natural terraces and narrow flood plain.\(^2\) Its favorable geography and location on the river made it a natural receiving and distribution center that helped the city become a “springboard for western expansion.”\(^3\) When the eastern terminus for the Union Pacific Railroad was established in Omaha in 1865, it brought increased traffic and new industries to the city. Union Pacific joined with the Central Pacific Railroad to build the nation’s first transcontinental rail line.

The railroad firmly established Omaha’s importance as a major distribution and retail center for Nebraska and states westward to the coast.\(^4\) It also provided Omaha with expanded business opportunities, including the development of the Union Pacific Shops in the late 1860s, smelting works in the 1870s, the stockyards in the 1890s, grain exchanges in the 1900s and 1910s, telecommunication expansion in the 1920s, and the growth of insurance giants in the 1930s.

Omaha’s Growth
The original town plat of Omaha encompassed 5.5 square miles and by 1870 extended to present-day 36th Street. The city continued to grow by annexing surrounding land and by 1880 totaled almost 10 square miles of land bounded on the west by 48th Street. By 1887 that number had grown to 25 square miles. During this time, Omaha’s population continued to escalate, doubling between 1870 and 1880 to 30,000 and reaching approximately 90,000 people by 1890.\(^5\)

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1 (Larsen 1982) p 31  
2 (Claybum 1925) p 71  
3 (Chudacoff 1972) p 12  
4 (Pilgrim 1996) Continuation Sheet, Section 8, Page 19  
5 There is some confusion regarding the population for Omaha in 1890. Some records indicate the population reached approximately 140,000 but the lower figure of 90,000 is accepted as accurate.
As with other cities throughout the nation, the economic slowdown in the 1890s delayed development in Omaha. The population continued to escalate, but not at the previous rate. By 1900 Omaha had reached a population of 102,000 people. After the turn of the century and throughout the following decades, Omaha would again move toward expansion, but it would be at a steadier rate.

With the Missouri River as its eastern boundary, Omaha’s growth has always displayed a strong tendency towards decentralization growing in the north, south and west directions. Many technological and social forces helped shaped the city, but the interrelationships between the city’s core and early suburban developments such as the Gold Coast, Hanscom Park and Field Club neighborhoods was most greatly impacted by improved transportation systems. Horse cars, cable cars and streetcars were the first to allow Omaha’s population to spread into lower density developments. By the 1920s, the popularity and availability of automobiles provided nearly unlimited mobility within the city.

By 1917, additional annexations increased Omaha’s total land area to 34.6 square miles with the inclusion of areas like South Omaha, Dundee, Benson and Florence. Expansion continued and with the post-World War I housing boom, considerable development took place in areas immediately to the west and southwest of the City. Approximately 830 acres were annexed by the city of Omaha between 1925 and 1926. With the decline in construction and development during the depression and war years, Omaha was ripe for further growth after World War II.

**Omaha after World War II**

After the Second World War a number of previously established or newly established industries grew and flourished in Omaha. These included Continental Can Company, C.A. Swanson and Sons, Western

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6 (City of Omaha Planning Department November, 1988) p 8
7 (City of Omaha Planning Department 197-) p 4
Electric, Omar Bread Company, and Mutual of Omaha. In addition, Omaha continued to serve as a transportation hub, an important warehouse and wholesaling center, livestock exchange and telecommunications center. Omaha’s economic fortunes were further advanced when Offutt Air Force Base, located south of Omaha in Bellevue, Nebraska, became the headquarters of the Strategic Air Command.

By the late 1950s Omaha had a diversified labor force working in manufacturing (21%), services (19%), retail (18%), transportation (13%), finance (9%), wholesale (9%), construction (6%), government (5%) and other trades. Omaha had become both a service and processing center for the surrounding agricultural region while still retaining a broad diversification of its economic base with its transportation, communication, services, wholesale trade, military and insurance facilities.  

Omaha’s post World War II suburban home construction boom was the result of many of the same factors impacting communities throughout the nation. It was created by a flourishing American economy, an increasing birth rate and a population shift as many people migrated from rural areas and smaller communities to larger cities. In addition, more home financing options became available, the results of liberalized mortgage insurance policies by the Federal Housing Administration and the Serviceman’s Readjustment Act (G.I. Bill).

Continually increasing rates of automobile ownership also made it possible for many of these homes to be constructed at a considerable distance from employment opportunities. Neighborhoods no longer needed to be densely populated and planned at a pedestrian-scale. Therefore residential lots increased dramatically in size. Better quality roadways, highways and a well-connected interstate highway system provided rapid access to the city's core.

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8 (Economic Survey of Omaha, Nebraska May 1958) p. 3
9 (Economic Survey of Omaha, Nebraska May 1958) p. 2
10 In addition to Omaha’s suburban fringe development, the city experienced new construction in the pockets of land east of 72nd Street. Further research would indicate if this growth is associated with urban renewal efforts.
These factors enabled families to achieve the dream of owning a single family home in a quiet, uncrowded neighborhood with the ability to get wherever they needed to go quickly. Suburban life also provided economic and racial homogeneity which added to the feeling of security. The suburb provided a good place to raise a family in “a nice, quiet area with congenial neighbors, and opportunities for recreation and relaxation.”\textsuperscript{11}

At the same time people began to locate their homes further and further away from Omaha’s Central Business District, commercial and industrial developments requiring extensive floor space also began developing in outlying districts.\textsuperscript{12} High land values in the city center and the growing importance of trucks for shipping goods also began to spur the migration of industry from the city’s core west past 72\textsuperscript{nd} Street.

The consequence was large and rapid suburban development and annexation. By 1950 the city covered 40.7 square miles, by 1960, 51.2 square miles, and by 1970, the total jumped to 76.6 square miles. As a result, the city nearly doubled in size within twenty years. The land encompassed in the four survey areas included in this study was annexed between 1956 and the 1980s.

\textsuperscript{11} (Mill Levy Cuts into Affluency 1970)
\textsuperscript{12} (Baltensperger n.d.) p 253
Chapter 1: Historic Overview

Indian Hills/Broadmoor

The first survey area to be annexed by the city of Omaha was the Indian Hills area. The survey area is bounded on the north by Dodge Street, the south by Pacific Street, the west by 90th Street and the east by 84th Street and is approximately 0.49 square miles in size. It contains an estimated 417 properties. Originally the location of an 18 hole golf course constructed in 1941, the Indian Hills area is composed of three major plats, Indian Hills Village, Broadmoor Heights and the Greenacres Addition.

Broadmoor Heights was the first to be platted and recorded in November of 1948. Primarily residential in nature, Broadmoor Heights features a park that was previously a portion of the golf course. The second to be platted and recorded was the Greenacres Addition in June of 1950. Located just north of Pacific Street, the area was dedicated by husband and wife, Laurance H. and Virgina L. Meyers, and the Catholic Arch Bishop, Gerald T. Bergan. Included in the original development was Christ the King Catholic Church, its associated school and Countryside Village, currently one of Omaha’s oldest shopping centers. The remaining lots were primarily dedicated to residential purposes.

Indian Hills Village was the last in this survey area to be platted; recorded in October of 1957. Owned by the Swanson brothers, Gilbert C. and W. Clarke (see inset), the land included in the plat was located directly south of Dodge Street. When the plans for development of the area were publicized prior to the official plat in 1953, the 135 acre development was advertised as an “ultra-modern area of business and apartment campuses and high-class residences.” The Leo A. Daly Company was given full

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Based on information from the City of Omaha and the Douglas County Assessor.

See section on “Significant Figures” at the conclusion of this report.

(11-Acre Site will be Park Use 1957)
Gilbert C. and W. Clarke Swanson

Figure 7: (left) Gilbert C. Swanson (1906-1968); (right) W. Clarke Swanson (1908-1961) (Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce)

Gilbert C. and W. Clarke Swanson were the sons of C.A. Swanson, a founder in the Jerpe Commission Company. The company became one of the largest suppliers of poultry and eggs to the military during World War II. After the war ended the company was renamed C.A. Swanson & Sons and in 1949 the brothers took over the company. Under their leadership the company flourished, introducing a frozen chicken pot pie and the innovative TV dinner. In 1955, the company was sold to Campbell Soup Company of which Gilbert served as vice-president and W. Clarke was a director. In October of 1958 the brothers purchased the well-known century-old Omaha firm, Paxton and Gallagher Company. The company produced food products under the Butter-Nut label.

The business campus is located on twenty-six acres along Dodge Street and on an 11 ½ acres site south of Indian Hills Drive. Office buildings constructed during the initial development that still remain include the Guarantee Mutual Life Company Building, the Leo A. Daly Company headquarters and the Swanson Professional Center. The Swanson building was designed to serve as a retaining wall for the thirty-four foot hill on the property.

Office buildings were not the only commercial structures to be located along West Dodge Road. A large Cinerama theater (no longer extant) and luxury hotel were also situated in the upscale development. The Indian Hills Inn was built by Barten H. Ford and his son Michael J. The 3.1 million dollar luxury motor hotel, operated by Schimmel Hotels, featured over 200 rooms, a dining room that seated 250, two cocktail lounges, a landscaped garden terrace, and swimming pool. Ford, owner of the Ford Grain Door company, a successful manufacturer of railroad boxcar grain liners and doors, hired architect Stanley J. How (see inset) and contractors Peter Kiewit Sons Company to oversee the design and construction of the building that later was honored by the Chamber of Commerce for adding “beauty to the city, on a major approach route.”

Figure 8: Indian Hills Inn (DO09:0769-002). Photograph courtesy of Stanley J. How.

16 (Omaha World Herald 1953)
17 (11-Acre Site will be Park Use 1957)
18 (It’s Long and Slim, but the Building’s Function is There... 1962)
19 Schimmel Hotels also operated the Omaha’s Blackstone Hotel.
20 (Motel Shown by Schimmel 1962)
21 (Awards Go to Six Firms 1962)
Chapter 1: Historic Overview

Residential buildings range in size but are typically single family in nature. They were developed on an individual basis and in 1957 values were placed between $30,000 and $100,000. A few duplexes, apartments and condominiums were constructed, with the most notable being Swanson Towers. The building, designed by Stanley J. How and Associates, was originally constructed as luxury apartments. The six-story building featured eight two-bedroom 2,288 square foot units and four one-bedroom 1,092 square foot units on each floor with an underground parking garage, main-floor lounge, free-form outdoor swimming pool, wading pool, and sun deck. Today the apartments have been converted to condominiums.

In addition to residential and commercial construction, the neighborhood development also included two churches and an elementary school. The Carl A. Swanson Elementary School was built in 1959 at a cost of $410,000. The 13-room brick structure was split into two separate buildings in response to the sloping terrain. Designed by Leo A. Daley Company, the one-story buildings feature laminated beams supporting sloped roofs. The building and associated playground and parking area was constructed on a portion of the Indian Hills Golf course.

Figure 10: Swanson Towers (DO09:0769-005). Rendering courtesy of Stanley J. How.

Figure 11: 205 South 89th Street (DO09:0767-010). Photograph courtesy of Stanley J. How.

22 (11-Acre Site will be Park Use 1957)
23 According to the Consumer Price Index what cost between $30,000 and $100,000 in 1957 would cost approximately $226,031 and $753,438 in 2009. Source http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi
24 Howard Lapham Associates of Palm Springs, California served as design consultants on the project and the general contractor was Pieter Kiewit Sons Company.
25 (Ground Broken for Apartments 1962)
26 (Sample Luxury Apartment Built 1962)
27 (New School is Dedicated 1959)
28 (86th Harney School Site 1958)
The second survey area to be annexed by the city of Omaha was the area around North Keystone and Hargleroads. The survey area is bound by Fort Street on the north, Boyd Street and Keystone Drive on the south, Little Papillion Creek on the west and Military Road on the east. Approximately 0.53 square miles in size, it contains an estimated 790 properties. The Hargleroads-Military Addition is the largest plat in the area, with Richland Acres to the southwest and Pinecrest to the northeast. Smaller plats were also recorded in the area including Keystone Heights, Keystone Park, Murays Kayden Valley, Grabos, Kesslers First Subdivision, Gills Addition, and the Cherrycroft Addition. The area is primarily residential in nature with some commercial, civic and industrial uses located along the major thoroughfares.

At one point early in its history most of the survey area was owned by William A. Paxton, Sr., an Omaha businessman prominent in the early development of the city. The land was later deeded to his son, William A. Paxton, Jnr., who in 1884 developed it into an estate, Keystone Stock Farms. It was here that he raised, bred, and raced horses. After approximately 15 years, he surveyed and replatted the estate, and in 1908 he began selling parcels of land.

Seven years later Richland Acres was platted from one of these parcels and recorded near Little Papillion Creek along Boyd Avenue and Ames Avenue. Original lot sizes in this area ranged from three to four acres with one lot as large as nine acres. Some homes were constructed. Beginning in 1956, the land was replatted and subdivided to create new neighborhood streets and smaller lots.

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29 Based on information from the City of Omaha and the Douglas County Assessor.
30 Paxton (1837-1907) is credited with founding the Union Stock Yards, Union Truck Company, Paxton-Gallagher wholesale grocers and Paxton-Vierling Iron Works. In addition to other political offices, he served in both houses of the Nebraska legislature.
Chapter 1: Historic Overview

The third section of land to be platted and recorded was Pinecrest, dedicated by husband and wife William and Beatrice Pamp in May of 1925. Their home and farm buildings were located in the area of Keystone Village at 78th and Military Avenue.\(^{31}\) Lots in this area are typically larger in size than those found elsewhere in the North Keystone and Hargleroads survey area and are located along Fort Street, Camden Avenue and Brown Street between North 84th Street and Military Avenue. Homes in this area were built as early as 1926 although most were constructed after 1940. Some lots have been subdivided, but most still retain their original boundaries.

The largest development in the area is the Hargleroads-Military Addition. The area extends from Military Avenue on the east to Little Papillion Creek on the west and from the northwest portion of Fort Street to Fowler Avenue and Meredith Avenue on the south. The addition was dedicated in six phases by William B. Hargleroad, Jr., (see inset) over a four-year time period beginning in 1956.\(^{32}\) The first plats recorded were located on the east side of the addition and proceeded west as time progressed. Lots are typically larger towards the east of the addition with lot frontages of 120 feet. Lots towards the west have lot frontages as narrow as 65 feet.

A number of builders purchased individual lots from Hargleroad including builder Ward Smith and Strauss Brothers Construction. In the late 1950s Smith started with construction of ten homes from 78th and Military to 81st Street and Templeton Drive.\(^{33}\) Strauss Brothers built a series of what was termed as “trend” homes in 1958.\(^{34}\) They were responsible for erecting 350 homes in the neighborhood.\(^{35}\) In 1960 a community pool was constructed at 84th Street and Templeton Drive. Construction of the pool was covered by the purchase of memberships. Hargleroad purchased the first 200 memberships and the community bought another 200.\(^{36}\) By 1971 homes were valued between $10,000 to $45,000.\(^{37}\)

The area is served by a number of community churches and one public school, Boyd Elementary. Democracy Park, located along Little Papillion Creek, was constructed after 1972.

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\(^{31}\) (Peters 2004) p 9
\(^{32}\) See sidebar on adjacent page.
\(^{33}\) (Peters 2004) p 9
\(^{34}\) (New Neighborhoods, Number 10: Keystone Involved 1971)
\(^{35}\) (House to House 1961)
\(^{36}\) (Peters 2004) p 9
\(^{37}\) According to the Consumer Price Index what cost between $10,000 and $45,000 in 1971 would cost approximately $52,387 and $235,740 in 2009. Source http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi
The area referred to as Mapleview was annexed by the city of Omaha in 1964 and includes an area of approximately 0.50 square miles and contains an estimated 690 properties.\(^{38}\) Bounded by Maple Street on the north, Blondo Street on the south, North 102nd Street on the west and North 90th Street on the south, the Mapleview area was not officially platted and recorded until the late 1950s. The area consists of the following plats: Mapleview, West Dale, Maple Hill, Meadowview, Camelot Village along with three smaller additions, Burlwood Estates, Saxton, and Brym-Joy Place.

The earliest of these plats is Maple Hill located on the southeast corner of the intersection at North 102nd and Maple Streets. The land was dedicated by husband and wife Lloyd M. and Laura E. Peterson in July of 1958. Peterson was a builder and president of Peterson Brothers Realty Company. He constructed a home at 2801 North 100th Avenue built from plans by architect John Hyde, Jr.\(^{39}\)

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\(^{38}\) Based on information from the City of Omaha and the Douglas County Assessor.

\(^{39}\) (Omaha World Herald 1962)
The largest plat in this survey area is the Mapleview plat bounded on the north by Maple Street, on the south by Ohio Street, on the west by North 97th Avenue and on the east by North 90th Street. Recorded in December of 1960 and March of 1961, the area was known as the Jo-Be Dairy Farm. In 1960, it was purchased from Joseph P. Muller by Hargleroad Maenner, Inc. for $200,000.40 W.B. Hargleroad, of the Hargleroad-Military addition and John (Jack) R. Maenner, son of prominent Omaha builder and developer T.H. Maenner (see inset), were the project developers. Lots along North 90th Street were commercial in nature while lots along North 93rd Street were multi-family. This arrangement provided a buffer for the single family residences to the east. Residential lots average seventy-foot frontages.

Contractors, Strauss Brothers were responsible for building a number of homes in the area based on designs by Lincoln architect, Sid Campbell.41 The three and four bedroom models that were constructed ranged upward from one-thousand square feet and featured attached single and double car garages.

Meadowview located between North 102nd and North 97th Streets and Cady and Blondo Streets was platted and recorded by John R. Maenner in August of 1962. These homes were similar in size and scale to the Mapleview addition to the north and other T.H. Maenner Company developments to the south.

Although there are a few multi-family homes constructed throughout the survey area, the largest concentration is located in the Camelot Village area. The Camelot Village plat was dedicated by Sheldon J. and Janice R. Harris in 1966. Harris was a successful Omaha attorney who also served as trustee for the eventual developers. In addition to a number of apartment buildings, the development included a club house with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, sauna and exercise rooms, tennis courts, locker rooms and showers, a kitchen area, meeting room, fireplace and outdoor deck. When the city was considering annexation of the area in late 1969, the facility was referred to by a City Council Board member as the area’s “country club.”42

John (Jack) R. Maenner

Although the career of T.H. Maenner has previously been documented, the career of his son John has yet to be discussed.41 A graduate from University of Omaha, John took the reins of Maenner-Bilt Construction Company in 1955. By 1960 he was also the president of T.H. Maenner Co.

The companies built “over a thousand homes in the 1950s in 20 subdivisions.”42 Eventually the focus moved from construction, to land purchase and subdivision development. Jack Maenner oversaw many Omaha developments including Regency, Maenner Meadows, Barrington Park and Linden Estates. He was involved in the National Association of Realtors and president of the Nebraska Realtors Association. In 1991 John’s sons David H. and James W. Maenner took over the family business. Jack passed away in January, 1997.

40 (Omaha World Herald 1960)
41 (House to House 1961)
42 (Council Will Consider Apartment Annexation 1969)
43 T.H. Maenner founded the T.H. Maenner Co., an architectural, engineering and construction firm, in 1919. The company was “an early mass producer of homes, offering a catalogue with plans for 42 models ranging from $3,500 to $10,000.” (Mead and Hunt 2009) p 8.
44 (Barnes 1986)
Sunny Slope

The last survey area to be annexed by Omaha, Sunny Slope did not become a part of the city until 1973. Covering approximately 0.35 square miles and containing an estimated 491 properties, the Sunny Slope survey area is bound by Fort Street on the north, Boyd Street on the south, North 108th Street on the east and Interstate 680 on the west. Sunny Slope’s First Addition was platted in August 1956, bounded by Fowler Avenue on the north, Boyd Street on the south, North 108th Street on the west and Crestline Drive on the east. Replats and more additions during the next ten years expanded Sunny Slope north to Fort Street and east to Interstate 680. Wear’s Sunny View addition in the northwest corner of the survey area is the only other addition in the survey area.

Sunny Slope and its additions and replats were dedicated by husband and wife, Howard C. and Maxine Jort Larsen. Larsen was a residential and commercial real estate developer. When he began developing Sunny Slope on a 179-acre farm, it was in a then-isolated section of northwest Omaha. Approval of the plat was placed on hold until the path of the proposed interstate highway could be coordinated with the new neighborhood. The Douglas County Board finally approved the plat however in July of 1959.

Larsen’s construction company, Howard Larsen Construction Company was responsible for construction of 170 houses priced at the time between $20,950 and $65,000. Newspaper articles of the time

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45 See adjacent sidebar.
46 Larsen also developed the Millard Heights and Sky Park additions near the Millard Airport. He served as president of the Omaha Homebuilders Association and chairman of the Nebraska Aeronautics Commission. He also founded Millard Warehouse Company, now Millard Refrigerated Services. Sunny Slope was his first development undertaking.
47 (Death Claims Howard C. Larsen, Suburban Real Estate Developer 1982)
48 (Planners Okay Sunny Slope Plat 1959)
49 According to the Consumer Price Index what cost between $20,950 and $65,000 in 1962 would cost approximately $146,972 and $455,999 in 2009. Source http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi
Howard C. Larsen did not begin his residential and commercial real estate career until later in life. A native of Kennard, Nebraska he was a farmer in Washington County for twenty years before a flood in 1941 ended his farming career. Shortly after, he relocated to Lincoln, Nebraska and acquired a job driving a bus for Trailways. During his spare time he began remodeling houses. After moving to Omaha in the late 1950s he undertook the development of Sunny Slope. He branched into apartment development, built the Millard Shopping Center and developed the Millard Heights and Sky Park additions near Millard Airport. In 1961 he started the Millard Warehouse Co., a frozen food warehousing business. Larson was a past president of the Omaha Homebuilders Association and a member of the Omaha-Douglas County Health Board. He was an avid aviator and served five years on the Nebraska Aeronautics Commission. Howard passed away in 1982.

Figure 19: Aerial view of Sunny Slope Development circa 1967-68. Photo courtesy of Dennis Brown, Sunny Slope-Sunny View Neighborhood Association.

promote that Sunny Slope’s curving streets do not have any “look-alike” houses. The development later included a swimming pool, tennis court, park and playground. Two homes built by Larsen were publicized in the Omaha World Herald shortly after their construction. The first was Larsen’s own home at 4312 Ridgeway Road and the second was directly adjacent to the north at 4404 Ridgeway Road.

Wear’s Sunny View Addition was platted in 1966 and dedicated by brothers Frank J. Wear and Robert E. The brothers founded Wear Construction Company in 1952. After purchased outlying Omaha farms, the company would have the land platted for a neighborhood development, sell half the lots and construct homes on the remaining half. In addition to Sunny Slope, the firm was responsible for Cornish Heights, Wear’s West Benson and Wear’s West Pacific developments.

50 (Howard C. Larsen, Driving Bus in 1950, Now is Major Builder of Homes and Apartments 1962)
51 (Sadler 1962)
52 (Salder 1959)
53 (Wear 2010) Prior to coming to Omaha, Frank J. operated a ranch near Burwell, NE. In 1955, Frank J. went on to found real estate company Wear Co., later known as Century 21 Wear Company. He also served on the Omaha Public Power District board. Robert E. served on the Omaha Home Builders Association. Their father John Wear was a long-practicing Omaha attorney.