

MADISON PARK/MADRONA/LESCHI GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The area inventoried in this report encompasses three separate communities, Madison Park, Madrona, and Leschi. Although each has its own special identity and unique qualities, all three share many important characteristics such as orientation towards Lake Washington, abundance of heavily wooded parklands, "picturesquely" landscaped streets, proximity to the Central Area and a predominantly residential character. Since they are not separated by distinct boundaries, the General Description and history sections of this report treat the area as a whole, while the Significant Buildings and Urban Design Elements are each broken down into two sections corresponding to the Madison Park map on one side and the Madrona/Leschi map on the other.

Madison Park is the northernmost of the three communities. It is bounded on the north by Union Bay, on the northwest by the Broadmoor Country Club, and overlooks Lake Washington to the East. The western boundary is marked by a pronounced ridge overlooking the Central Area, but the southern boundary is less defined, the general change in topography and residential character in the vicinity of E. Howell St. being the most discernable edge condition.

Madison Park is fortunate in possessing a pleasantly scaled neighborhood business center along E. Madison St. near the beach. The strip of shops provides a wide variety of retail services as well as providing an activity focus. Compiling the shops are the bathing beach, a small park with tennis courts, and the Pioneer Hall, a local landmark which now houses community social and organizational functions.

There are three principal residential areas in Madison Park, each with its own special character. The streets to the north of E. Madison Street are lined with modest builders' houses. At the extreme northern part of the community lies "Edgewater Park", a pleasantly sited and landscaped mediodensity apartment development. Also in this neighborhood is "Canterbury", a subdivision of large contemporary houses.

The residential area south of E. Madison Street and

north of the ravine surrounding Lake Washington Boulevard East, is known as Washington Park and contains a large number of exceptionally well-designed large houses. Since its early development the area's abundance of residential amenities and exclusive character has attracted many of Seattle's prominent families. Excellent views of Lake Washington are provided by the eastern slopes, and the streets in the central portions of Washington Park are heavily planted with mature street trees. The homes are generally exquisitely landscaped (many of the gardens are maintained professionally), and the area is an excellent place to observe the "Northwest Style" of residential landscaping, featuring extensive rock gardens, lawns and a wide selection of plant materials naturally composed. The Seattle Tennis Club is the only major institution in this otherwise exclusively residential neighborhood.

Following the contours of a steep and heavily wooded ravine Lake Washington Boulevard E. cuts diagonally across the southernmost portion of Madison Park. This area, known as Denny Blaine, was originally an exclusive land development and its curvilinear streets and picturesquely landscaped open spaces were designed by the Olmsted Brothers, then the nation's most important landscape architects. Elsworth Story, one of Seattle's most progressive architects, lived there and designed several buildings in the area during the early twentieth century. There are also many other notable houses designed by prominent local architects. Like Washington Park, Denny Blaine is exclusively residential except for the Bush School, located between Republican and Harrison Streets.

The Madrona District is bounded roughly by E. Howell Street on the north, by 30th Avenue E. on the west and E. Cherry on the south. Like Madison Park, Madrona has many large and prestigious houses along the view slopes overlooking Lake Washington. But the area also includes a large proportion of middle income level houses on the flatter areas between E. 30th Avenue E. and 37th Avenue E. There is a small, centrally located business node located at the intersection of 34th Ave. E. and E. Union Street, which, together with the nearby Public Library, Madrona Elementary School and

Playground, form a successful community activity focus.

The Lake Washington shorefront is more accessible to the public in Madrona than Madison Park, as Lake Washington Boulevard runs directly along the Lake and Madrona Park offers a public beach and landscaped open space.

Leschi is the southernmost of the three communities and is bordered on the south by the Mercer Island Floating Bridge and tunnel. At the north of the community, in the vicinity of E. Yesler Way, is the well-known "Leschi Basin", once the home of Chief Leschi and the Nisqually tribe. The Basin is a topographic bowl with steep, wooded slopes and winding streets. In contrast to the view slopes of Madison Park and Madrona, Leschi's view slopes are not dotted with large prestige homes, but rather have a low-key, semi-rural character. Many of the steep areas in Leschi are landslide zones, which discourage development; however, many contemporary houses have been built in the Basin during the past decade.

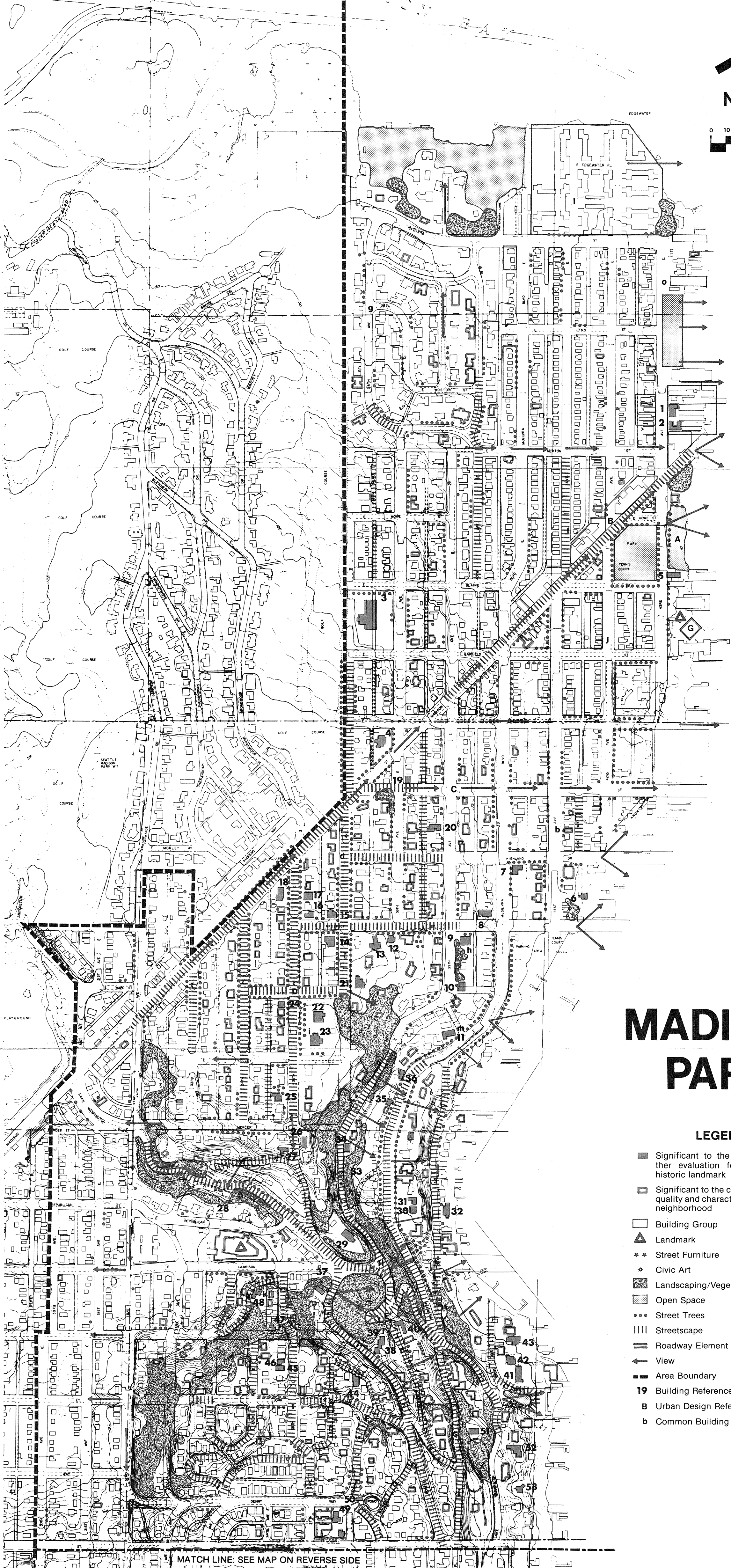
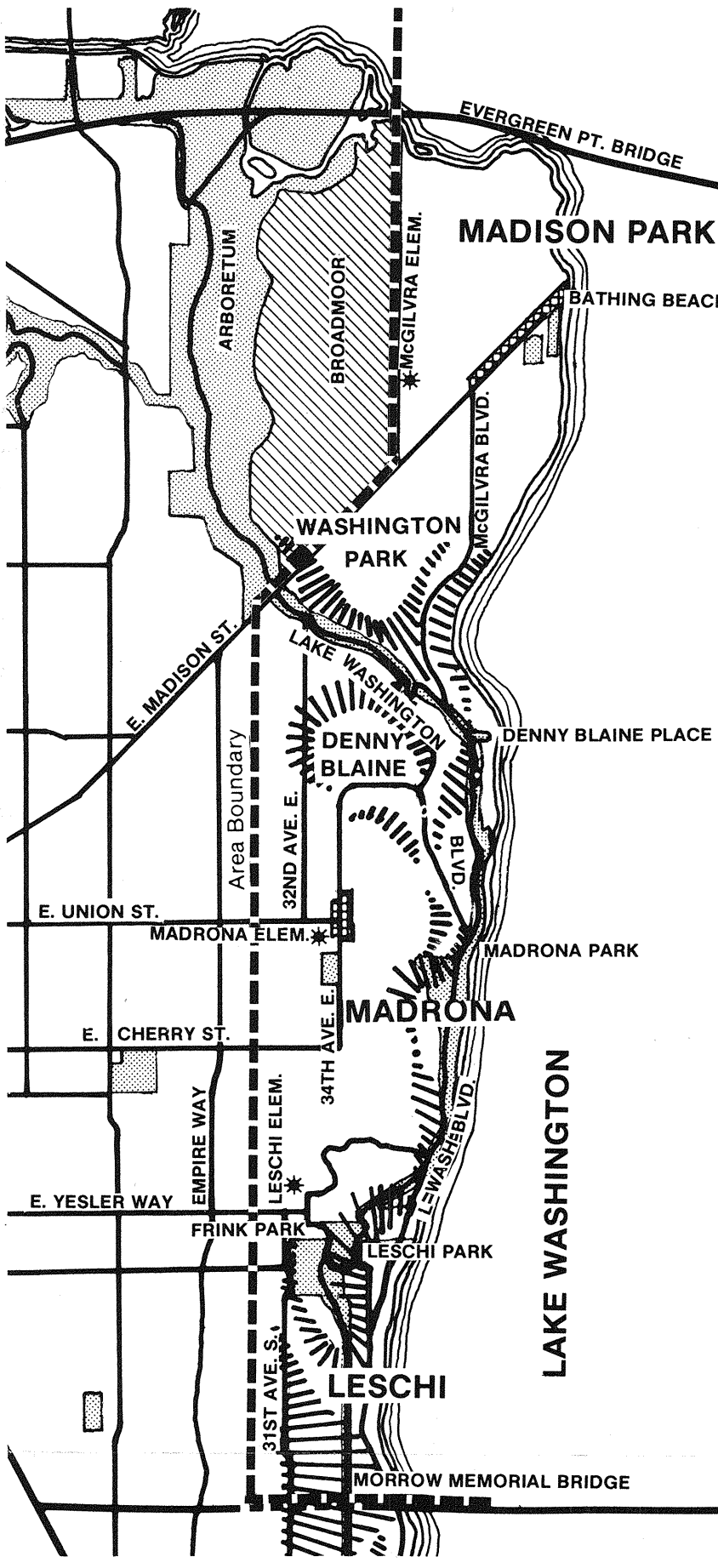
Located at the southern portion of the Basin are Leschi Park and Frink Park. Leschi Park overlooks the Marina and includes a picturesquely landscaped open space. Frink Park occupies the steep slopes to the west and is densely forested. Lake Washington Boulevard winds scenically through both parks and offers dramatic views of Lake Washington. The busy marinas at the shoreline are perhaps Leschi's most identifiable activity focus.

South of the Leschi Basin are pleasant streets of houses overlooking the water. The steepness of the terrain has made east-west streets difficult to build so that many are instead pedestrian stairways built on street rights of way.

When listing the City's environmental assets, the communities lining the western shore of Lake Washington surely stand out as being truly unique and enriching to Seattle. Moreover, they are typical of our city's finer residential qualities in that they result from a combination of thoughtful human design and an outstanding natural setting.

VISUAL STRUCTURE MAP

- LEGEND**
- STEEP SLOPES
 - COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES
 - PARKS/OPEN SPACE



MADISON PARK

LEGEND

- Significant to the city—warrant further evaluation for designation as historic landmark
- Significant to the community—special quality and character in relation to this neighborhood
- Building Group
- Landmark
- Street Furniture
- Civic Art
- Landscaping/Vegetation
- Open Space
- Street Trees
- Streetscape
- Roadway Element
- View
- Area Boundary
- Building Reference
- Urban Design Reference
- Common Building Type Reference

MADISON PARK/MADRONA/LESCHI HISTORY

The areas of Seattle bordering Lake Washington have always been considered ideal residential land ever since the Native American Indians of Puget Sound hunted and fished in the places where large dwellings as well as small bungalows now exist. The desirable lakeside location has shaped and dominated the history of the Madrona, Leschi, and Madison areas and continues to act as a major factor in the strong community efforts to preserve the quality of the district.

The earliest inhabitants of the lakeshore were the Nisqually Indians whose chief, Leschi, favored the sheltered, bowl-like ravine as a summer camp site. In alliance with Chief Sealth, with whom he shared a longhouse at Squamish, Leschi was one of the primary leaders of an alliance of Puget Sound tribes with whom the white settlers dealt after the war to the region in the 1850's. Initially, the interaction was mutually cooperative, but when Isaac Stevens, the first governor of Washington Territory, sought to confine the Indians to reservations in order to free their land for the increasing influx of settlers, severe conflicts ensued. The Medicine Creek Treaty of December 1854 between the territorial government and nine major tribes, stipulated the relegation of 1,204 acres of relatively useless high timber land to the tribes leaving the majority of the pasture and farming lands to white settlers, all for a payment of \$32,500. The English language used in the treaty was formal and incomprehensible to the Indian leaders who nevertheless applied their thumbprints in lieu of signatures, to the document. However, Leschi, one of the primary Indian negotiators, did not accept the terms which confiscated the Nisqually's traditional hunting, fishing and ancestral lands, and so began a widespread rebellion of Indian tribes in the region, relying upon ambushes and isolated incidents of violence.

Until January 1856 the Indians had been undefeated, but on the twenty-third of that month their inferior weaponry brought their downfall when 200 Indians, led by Leschi, attacked Seattle and were met with cannon fire. Leschi and four others were arrested, and held at Fort Steilacoom where, after months of chained detention, Leschi was taken to the chief stool trial on a count of murder during an earlier ambush. Though vigorously defended by Chief Sealth and H.O. Crosby (Bing Crosby's great-grandfather), Chief Leschi was hanged on February 19, 1858.

With the Indians' rights to the land negated by the Treaty, land developers soon bought large tracts throughout the Seattle area and sub-divided them into smaller plots. Those plots further away from the heart of the city required additional amenities in order to attract prospective buyers, the most important of which were transportation facilities. A cable car line was developed along Yesler Way from Pioneer Square to the beach where Leschi's tribe had once camped.

Further north, Judge McGilvra, who had come to Seattle from Chicago where he had practised law with Abraham Lincoln, established a large estate on the lake shore, on land he had purchased from the University of Washington for \$5 an acre. In 1884, a road was built from downtown along the present route of Madison Street to Madison Park, a 21-acre public park set aside by McGilvra which became a popular picnic and camping site. Although the wagon ride was relatively brief and cost only a

quarter, improved travel was made available when a trolley line was constructed along the route.

By the 1880's, the owners of the cable car lines in collaboration with land speculators had constructed amusement parks at Madison and Leschi. With bandstands, casinos, bathhouses, ferry docks; and at Leschi, Shields' Vaudeville and a small zoo, the parks soon became favorite sites for Sunday and summer outings. The ferries of the "Mosquito Fleet" serviced Kirkland and Mercer Island and later, Laurelhurst and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909.

The Randall family homesteaded the area that is now Madrona. The settlement grew into a small community by 1899 and stimulated a similar sequence of events involving land speculation and the completion of a cable car line down to the shore where a bathhouse, refreshment stand, and hotel were built. With the development of a narrow strip of beach, the neighborhood was well frequented by the district's residents and also by the rest of Seattle.

During the first decade of this century, the Seattle Parks Department acquired a number of areas scattered throughout the city. A plan was initiated in 1903 to link these parks and green belts with broad, arboreal boulevards. Successors of Frederick Law Olmsted, the successful planner of New York's Central Park, incorporated Madrona, Leschi and Madison Parks into their scheme which continued from Seward Park through the Arboretum, the University campus, Ravenna, Green Lake and Woodland Parks to Magnolia Bluff and Fort Lawton. The result was an unbroken, quiet and pleasant continuation of greenery tailored more for the leisurely classes who used the landscape for rambling recreational activity. This combination of parks and boulevards remains one of Seattle's most accessible, beautiful, and unique resources.

When the level of Lake Washington was lowered nine feet after the construction of the ship canal in 1917, Seattle residents demanded the creation of more swimming beaches and recreational facilities, such as refreshment stands and bath houses. One of these was built at Madrona in 1918, and remodeled in 1928 and again in 1970. Tennis courts and play apparatus increased popular usage of the public areas and bolstered the desirability of the areas as residential neighborhoods.

The relatively comfortable and secluded nature of the area was emphasized in 1927 with the opening of the Broadmoor "country club within the city." This private residential development, originally owned by the Puget Mill Co., was designed by Vernon Macan who sought to preserve the natural setting while developing a unique opportunity for Seattle's wealthy to congregate together in a confined quarter that was both secluded and yet had fine accessibility to downtown. "Broadmoor" was beautiful, Broadmoor the bountiful," as it was described by its promoters, came to act as a buffer between the city and Madison Park, reinforcing the latter's unity as a neighborhood.

Ever since the building of the Lacey V. Morrow Memorial toll bridge by the Federal Works Progress Administration in 1940 (which was then the largest floating concrete bridge in the world), there has

been consistent concern over the manner in which lakeshore neighborhoods have been developing. As early as 1968 organized citizen groups have reviewed problems of absentee ownership, building rehabilitation, public lands improvements, and the maintenance of the area's residential character. The Model Cities Program of the 1960's also ordered a loan fund to carry out the improvements in the Leschi and Madrona areas. By 1970, the Leschi Neighborhood Planning Program and the Leschi Improvement and Project Area Councils advised solutions to the district's concerns. The Central Area Motivation Program, which relied on heavy citizen input, undertook a scheme of neighborhood renewal in Madrona, including the Madrona Playground where concepts of "creative play" were infused into the design by landscape architect William Turner. Although most of the buildings constructed for the amusement parks had been burned down or dismantled, the Bathhouse remained and was converted, on the suggestion of Mildred Noble, Seattle Cultural Arts Director, into a Dance Studio in 1970. By 1983, improvements to the Madison Park and playground areas were made after considerable resident involvement. The Pioneer Association bequeathed to the neighborhood their meeting hall, which had been a gift of McGilvra and Sarah Denny to the city in 1910. The building, which is included in the National Register of Historic Places, now serves as a community center and museum.

The State of Washington Shoreline Management Act of 1971 recognized and supported the need to maintain the lake's natural characteristics while allowing popular access. This legislation was later reinforced by the Lake Washington Regional Shoreline Goals and Policy of October 1973, which served as a formal outline restating the private and residential nature of the areas and the need for the National Register of Historic Places, now serves as a recreational enjoyment of the lake shore areas.

Prepared by Mauri Tamarin

SOURCES

- "Broadmoor: The Country Club Within the City" Opening Golf Play (March 1, 1927)
- Lake Washington Regional Shoreline Goals and Policies (October 1, 1973)
- "Leschi Improvement" Council Petition and Proposals" (October 1963)
- "A Modern Marvel" — the World's Largest Floating Concrete Bridge, published by the Federal East Side Clubs, Mercer Island, WA
- Puget Sound Invention, Wade Vaughn
- Puget Sound Intelligencer: August 4, 1963
- Seattle Times: January 19, 1971
- February 5, 1966
- February 11, 1962
- June 10, 1966
- June 23, 1966
- July 2, 1970
- July 24, 1973
- October 7, 1973
- April 25, 1976

Sherwood, Don: "Parks Department History (Seattle Parks Dept 1975)

MADISON PARK URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

The majority of Madison Park's finest Urban Design characteristics are due to two factors: its spectacular natural setting on the western shore of Lake Washington, and thoughtful planning, design, and landscaping of some of the residential areas and public facilities.

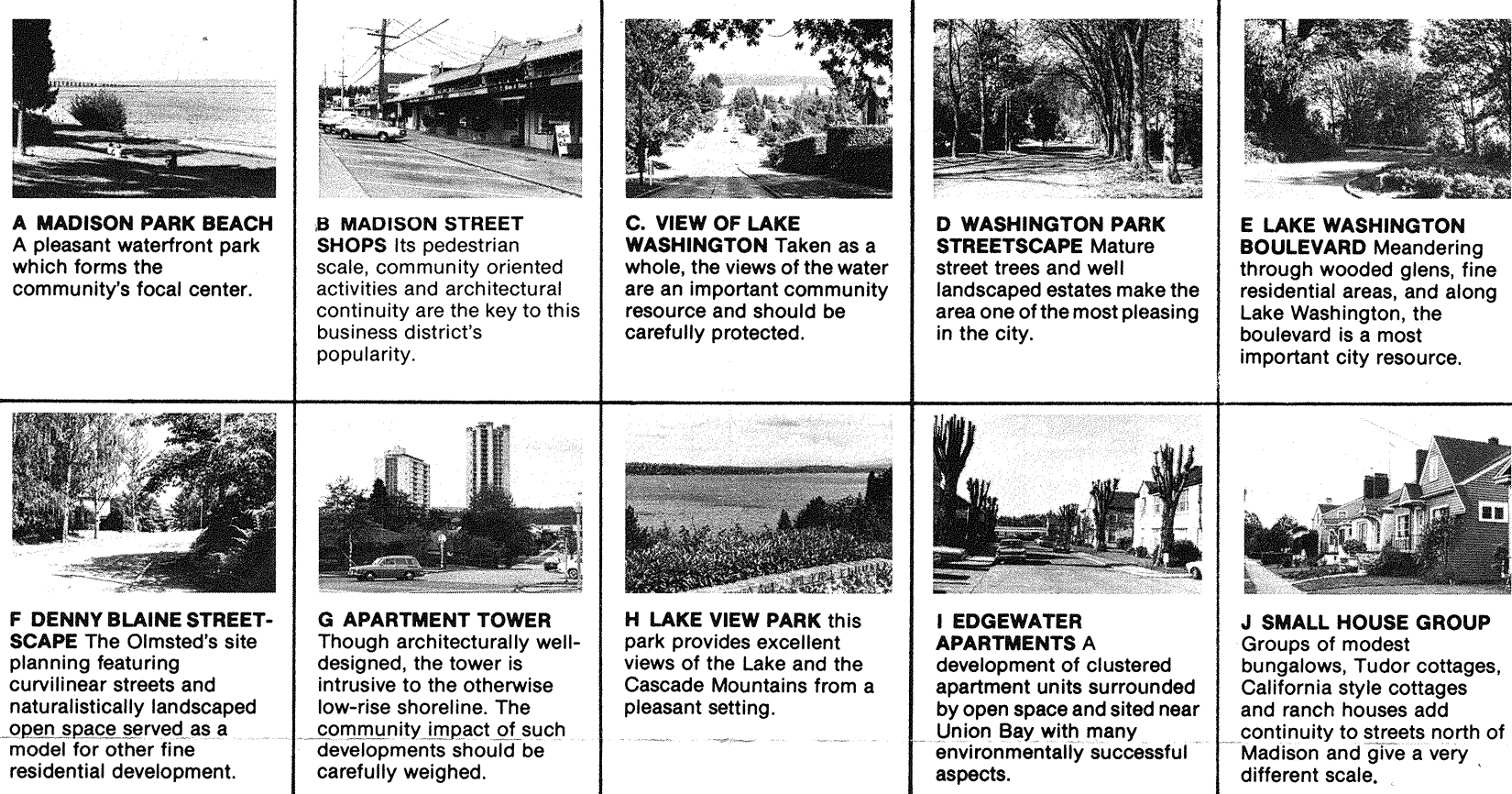
Included in the first category are the excellent views of Lake Washington and the Cascades which are offered by the eastern slopes. The public beach at the end of Madison Street is another important natural amenity, providing focus for the recreational, social and commercial activities which take place in Madison Park's core area. The park itself gives little indication of the former commercial

"amusement park" character that it had around the turn of the century. It was even excluded from the early Olmsted Parks Master Plan because it was not considered "Parklike" enough! The conversion from an amusement park to a local community facility was a long and difficult one, involving complicated interaction between the community, the Board of Public Works, Seattle Transit and the Parks Board.

The commercial area along E. Madison St. offers pleasant residential streetscape qualities. By providing sheltering overhangs, interesting window displays and a sense of continuity and spatial enclosure, the reassuring older commercial

buildings act successfully as a group to invite pedestrian activity along the street. New residential areas in this area should be carefully monitored to insure that existing streetscape qualities are not disrupted.

Madison Park's residential areas, especially Washington Park and Denny Blaine, exemplify the ideals of "picturesque" residential site planning during the early twentieth century. Curvilinear street layouts, house sites that take advantage of sweeping views, skillful use of topography, and a careful blending of naturalistically composed landscaping into a dramatic natural setting are the hallmarks of this school of landscape design.



MADISON PARK SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

1. Lake Court Apartment, c. 1925, 2020 43rd Ave. E. A fine apartment court in the eclectic Norman Style."
2. Apartment, c. 1925, 2010 43rd Ave. E. Another courtyard with a medieval character."
3. McGilvra Elementary School, 1913, 30th Ave. E. and Garfield. Architect: E. Blair. A successfully massed Renaissance Revival school building.
4. Samuel Hyde House, 1908, 3726 E. Madison St."
5. Washington Pioneer Hall, 1910, 43rd Ave. E. and E. Blaine St."
6. Balow House, c. 1910, 1116 41st Ave. E. Built by a Norwegian immigrant for his prospective bride from his homeland.
7. Blackford House, 1931, 4003 E. Highland Dr. An impressive eclectic residence.
8. Hauberg House, 1954, 1101 McGilvra Blvd. E. A contemporary interpretation of Northwest Regionalism by architect R. Terry."
9. Residence, 1925, 1030 39th Ave. E. A well-composed medieval style house combining stucco and brick.
10. Residence, 1924, 1000 39th Ave. E. Architect: Wm. Ivy. A very unique adaptation of the "Chateausque" style.
11. Preston House, 1948, 145 McGilvra Blvd. E. Architects: Terry, Tucker & Schields. An important example of a post-war Northwest Regionalism in its simple form, native materials, and careful siting.
12. Residence, c. 1910, 3727 E. Prospect St. Architect: A. Willatzen. A prairie style home in the tradition of Frank Lloyd Wright's early designs.
13. Bennett House, 1950, 3717 E. Prospect St. Architects: Terry, Tucker & Schields. A progressive post-war house by prominent architects.
14. Residence, c. 1912, 1029 37th Ave. E. In the Tudor Revival style with a decorative half-timbered facade.
15. Lea House, 1904, 3820 E. Prospect St. An authentically detailed Colonial Revival house by architects Bigger & Warner.
16. Residence, 1936, 3602 E. Prospect St. An International Style house exemplifying the horizontal emphasis and nautical imagery.
17. Residence, 1912, 1116 36th Ave. E. A subdued and harmonious Craftsman Style house.
18. Pantages House, 1909, 1117 36th Ave. E."
19. Residence, 1927, 402 36th Ave. E. An interesting combination of Georgian Revival and Art Deco modernism.
20. McDonald House, 1948, 1217 39th Ave. E. Simple in appearance and reflecting the understated and refined design typical of Paul Thiry.
21. Residence, 1928, 1002 37th Ave. E. A fine "Jacobethan" styled house designed by Wm. Bain.
22. Donahoe House, 1911, 824 36th Ave. E. An English Tudor styled house.
23. Ames House, 1907, 808 36th Ave. E. Built by Mr. and Mrs. William Walker for their daughter Mrs. Edwin Gardner Ames, who later willed the estate to the University of Washington. It is now the residence of the President of the University of Washington.
24. Campbell House, 1902, 833 36th Ave. E. A late Victorian house.
25. Holmes House, 1930, 615 36th Ave. E. Designed in the medieval idiom by prominent architect J. Lester Holmes for his family.
26. Youell House, 1929, 550 36th Ave. E. A prominent California style house by Lionel Pries.
27. Weyerhaeuser Experimental House, 1934, 545 36th Ave. E. Results of a project sponsored by Weyerhaeuser to utilize new wood products such as plywood. Similar to houses built on Capitol Hill and at the 1937 Chicago World's Fair."
28. Residence, 1976, 499 Lake Washington Blvd. E."
29. Heffernan House (Helen Bush School), 1915, 406 Lake Washington Blvd. E."
30. Residence, 1930, 428 McGilvra Blvd. E. A unique version of the Georgian Revival with modernistic elements.
31. Residence, 1918, 434 McGilvra Blvd. E. A brick Tudor Revival house.
32. Residence, 1932, 420 39th Ave. E. Architect: T. Haire. A unique and pioneering Modernistic house.
33. Hobbs House, 1975, 530 Hillside Drive E. Architects: Fukui & Hobbs. A striking example of contemporary formalistic expression.
34. Residence, 1928, 540 Hillside Drive E. Architect: Shrey. Finely composed house reminiscent of the English Cotswolds.
35. Two Houses, c. 1935, 626 and 630 Hillside Drive E. Two small, early Modernistic styled houses.
36. Residence, 1929, 705 McGilvra Blvd. E. A well-sited Tudor Gothic style house.
37. Residence, 1924, 29, 333 37th Ave. E. Presently owned by the Torrance family."
38. Storey House, 1903, 260 Dorffel Drive E. Designed by Ellsworth Storey for himself and his family."
39. Storey House, 1903, 270 Dorffel Drive E. Companion to No. 39. Designed by Storey for his parents.
40. Corbett House, c. 1925, 300 Maiden Lane E. Architect: Lovelace. A refined and elegant example of this architect's English styled work.
41. Redelschneier house, c. 1910, 40th Ave. E. Built by prominent haberdasher, Julius Redelschneier, who died shortly after its completion; later occupied by the Ostrander family.
42. Residence, c. 1925, 216 40th Ave. E. A many-gabled Tudor style house.
43. Residence, c. 1955, 230 40th Ave. E. An imaginative contemporary house by an important Seattle architect, Lionel Pries.
44. Residence, 1910, 3720 E. John St. A vaguely Chateau-like, craftsman style house in the manner of Ellsworth Storey's works.
45. Residence, 1938, 219 36th Ave. E. One of Ellsworth Storey's Craftsman Style houses.
46. Residence, 1908, 221 36th Ave. E. Another rustic Storey house.
47. Edwards House, 1936, 303 35th Ave. E. An International Style house designed by Paul Thiry.
48. Thiry House, 1936, 339 35th Ave. E. Architect Paul Thiry's own house which illustrates his direct, refined approach to the International Style.
49. Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Chapel & Rectory 1911, E. Denny Way and Madrona"
50. Denny Blaine Shelter, c. 1910, E. Denny Way and Madrona Pl. E. Architect Ellsworth Storey.
51. Blaine House, c. 1900, 171 Lake Washington Blvd. E. Built by one of the area's early developers, Elbert Blaine."
52. Residence, 1932, 154 Lake Washington Blvd. E."
53. Krauss House, 1928, 126 Lake Washington Blvd. E. A pleasant Neoclassical house designed by Carl Gould. Landscape layout by the Olmsted Brothers.
54. Residence, 1913, 1732 Lake Washington Blvd. E. An impressive Tudor style house.
55. Residence, 1913, 3852 Madrona Drive E. A refined and unusual adaptation of the Colonial Revival.

*See captioned Photographs

