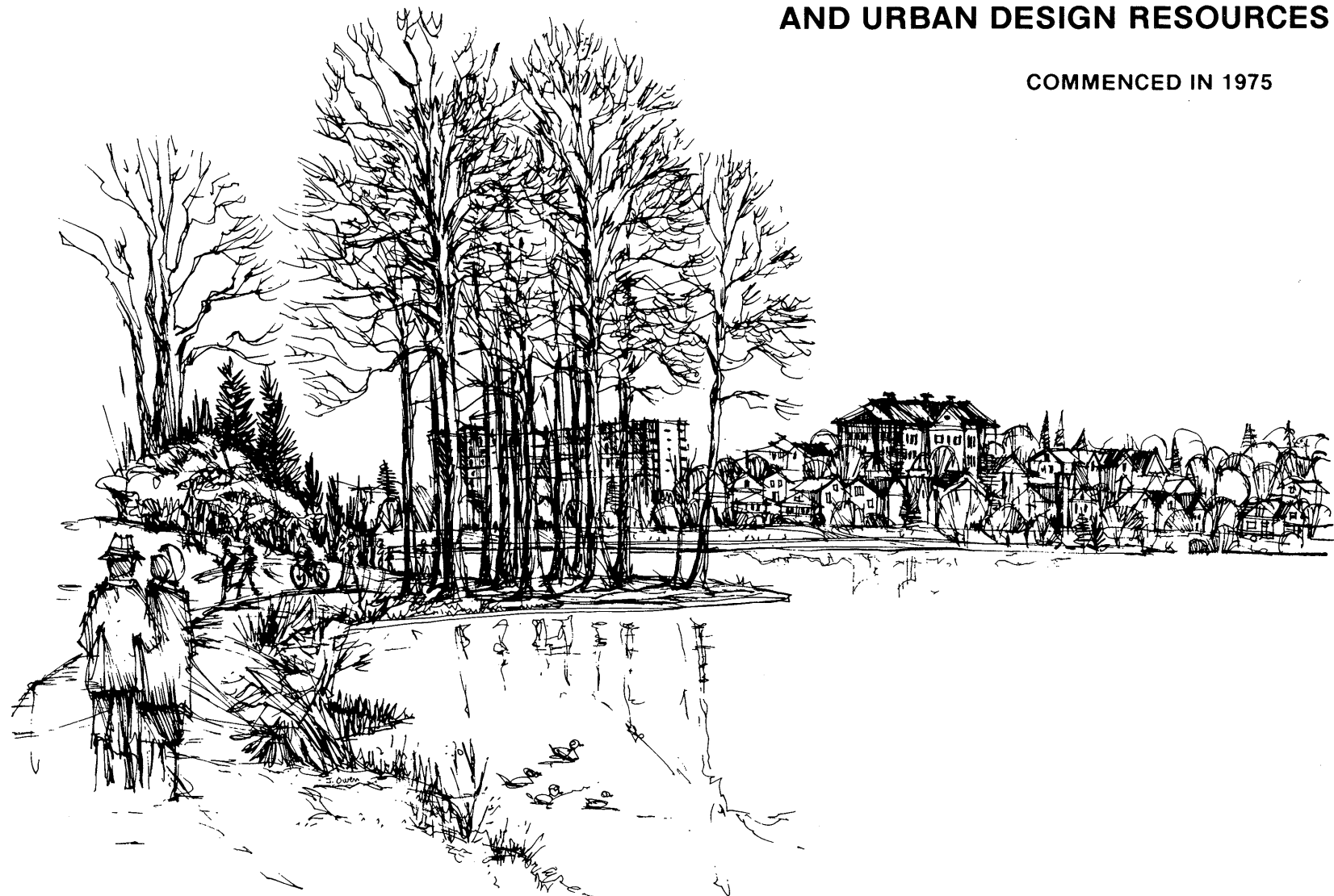


GREEN LAKE

AN INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS AND URBAN DESIGN RESOURCES

COMMENCED IN 1975



HISTORIC SEATTLE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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Most importantly, the project was dependent upon the work of volunteers from the community whose cooperation and efforts were crucial to its success.



Skaters on Green Lake in 1916

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Since the information included is preliminary, corrections and additional information is solicited to provide refinement of the documents. Please send information to Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority, 714 Smith Tower, Seattle 98104

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Green Lake Community derives much more from Green Lake than its name alone. The lake is the physical heart of the community, dominating all other features; and also serves as the community's social center where local residents meet while strolling, jogging or cycling around the pathway, or at the community organizational and social functions held at the recreation center.

Moreover, the lake's unique qualities are important factors in attracting a diverse residential population, including younger families for the variety of recreational opportunities available, and the elderly for visual amenities as well as the stable social setting.



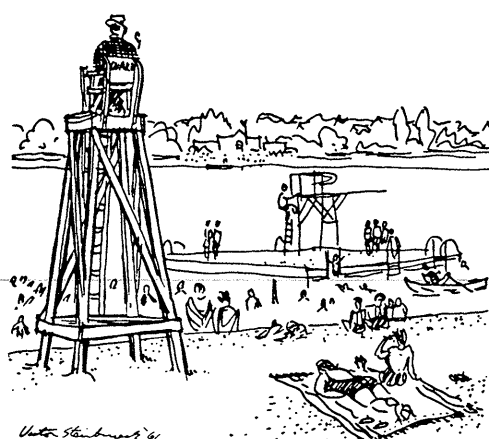
The area's bowl-like topography enhances the lake's unifying focal role by providing views of the water and by forming an imageable community-scaled topographic "room." The most identifiable physical boundaries are formed by Phinney Ridge on the west and the Central Freeway on the east. To the southwest, lower Woodland Park provides a pleasantly forested green belt as well as numerous athletic fields and a miniature golf course. The land to the north rises more gradually from the lake so that the topographic enclosure is less pronounced.

Although the Freeway and Aurora Avenue North are intrusive upon the residential neighborhoods, producing noise and air pollution and separating some areas from the lake, they provide the community with excellent bus and auto access to downtown and other locations. Green Lake is connected to the University District by the Ravenna Boulevard bike path, making the area attractive to college students. East-West arterials include North 80th and North 85th Streets to the north, and North 50th Street to the south.

The residential areas surrounding the lake are quite similar in their housing types and in their environmental qualities. The houses are generally modest in size but vary widely in age and stylistic treatment. The residential streets are often well landscaped and many offer views of Green Lake and the mountains beyond.

There are several small commercial districts of widely differing character. The Green Lake shopping district is the most central to the community. Its pleasantly curving streets, and proximity to the lake make it potentially one of the city's most physically attractive community shopping districts. Aurora Avenue to the North of 80th becomes northern Seattle's oldest and largest highway-scaled commercial strip. Phinney Avenue North and Greenwood Avenue North form a more modest neighborhood commercial strip serving the Phinney Ridge area with groceries, barbershops, drug stores, cafes, and other local services. In contrast with Aurora Avenue's busy, brightly lit commercial character, the Phinney Ridge strip has a lower-keyed, well-worn appearance.

Just as the lake itself is the key element in the area's identity and environmental amenities, so is it an important factor in many of the community's problems and concerns. Not only is the lake heavily used on a day-to-day basis, but many special events such as motorboat racing, Fourth of July fireworks and water sports events are scheduled during the summer, drawing large crowds of spectators. Proper clean-up and maintenance as well as thoughtful scheduling of events in the park lands is therefore a major issue if Green Lake's attractiveness is to be preserved. A further problem is that the heavy use of the lake often causes congestion of local streets and parking lanes.



Close proximity to recreational open space and good access to downtown and the University make the Green Lake area attractive for apartment development. Consequently there have been many new apartments built recently to the north and east of the lake. While portions of the community are suitable for new apartments, it is important to insure that new developments do not interfere with important view corridors to the lake, nor intrude into the residential setting either visually or by causing parking and traffic congestion. Obviously, careful management of land-uses and zoning issues is in order.

The maintenance and upgrading of existing housing stock is another problem which the local community has addressed. Because of the widely varying ages of houses in the area, many of them require work if the housing stock is to remain solid. The influx of young families suggests that many of the smaller cottages and houses will be enlarged, or altered in order to meet the new requirements of today's life style. In response to this interest in remodeling and restoration, the Green Lake community has recently sponsored a series of home repair workshops which have been widely attended by people from all over the city as well as by local residents.

Thus, new problems as well as potentials are emerging with the lake's increasing popularity and the renewed interest in the area's pleasant residential neighborhoods. Realization of these potentials will depend upon the coordinated efforts of community residents, businesses, and the Seattle Parks Department.

SUMMARY MAP SHOWING VISUAL STRUCTURE

LEGEND

- Predominantly Multi-Family Residential
- Community Businesses
- Parks/Open Space
- Other Commercial Uses

