

## **National Register of Historic Places: A Fact Sheet**

**What Is the National Register of Historic Places:** The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

**What is a historic district:** A historic district is an area or neighborhood that has a concentration of buildings and associated landscape and streetscape features (50 years or older) that retains a high degree of historic character and integrity, and represents an important aspect of an area's history.

**How Are Properties/Districts Evaluated:** To be considered eligible, a property or district must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. This involves examining the properties or district's age, integrity, and significance.

- **Age and Integrity:** Is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?
- **Significance:** Is the property associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past? With the lives of people who were important in the past? With significant architectural history, landscape history, or engineering achievements? Does it have the potential to yield information through archeological investigation about our past?

**National Listing Process:** A nomination is submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) either from property owners, historical societies, preservation organizations, governmental agencies, or other individuals or groups. After a public comment period, the state office submits the nomination to the National Park Service, which makes the final determination.

**Why Oak Hills:** Because the residences in Oak Hills are less than the 50 year standard, our nomination had to demonstrate "exceptional importance" in the eyes of the National Park Service. This exceptional importance was reflected in both the neighborhood's design and because it served as the model of an early Planned Unit Development (PUD) that set a precedent for flexible land use codes and regulation in Washington County. With the support of the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, which concluded that our mid-century modern neighborhood had most of the qualifying characteristics for nomination, the next step was to submit our application. A nomination document is required to be prepared and ours was written by URS of Portland and funded by Washington County. This document included photographing and describing all buildings and related features in the district, recording their basic characteristics, and assessing whether or not they contribute to the historic character of the district. The nomination document was reviewed by State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation (SACHP), a nine member governor-appointed body of citizens with expertise in fields relating to historic preservation. That group met on February 14, 2013 at the Oak Hills Community Church and by a 7-2 vote recommended the nomination of our neighborhood as a historic district. The State Historic Preservation Office then solicited public comment during a 90 day period. If a majority of owners for a district nomination object during this period, the district could not be listed. In the case of Oak Hills,

there were only a few objections and the nomination was sent forward by the state to the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. The nomination was approved on July 10, 2013.

**Value and Purpose of Listing:** Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides formal recognition of a district's historical, architectural, or archeological significance based on national standards used by every state. One of the primary benefits of National Register designation is the fostering of community awareness and pride in one's heritage and the neighborhood. There are potential state property tax benefits to restore a listed property. It has been noted that historic districts have seen increased value in properties within the district.

**What the Listing Does Not do:** National Register listing places no obligations on private property owners. There are no restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of private property. National Register listing does not lead to public acquisition or require public access. Oak Hills homeowners will continue to be governed by our own Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Amended and Restated Restrictions and Policies. National Register listing does not automatically invoke local historic district zoning or local landmark designation. Washington County representatives have stated that there is no intent at the present time to add Oak Hills to the Washington County historic overlay. Moreover, there are no additional taxes, fees or permits as a result of our listing. It should also be noted that the National Register listing will not in itself, for example, prevent future widening of roads surrounding Oak Hills nor will it impact the Westside Trail. However, because of our historic designation, generally there is a requirement for local governments to enter into mitigation over projects that may negatively impact a historic district.

## Resources

- National Park Service/National Register of Historic Places: [www.nps/nr/](http://www.nps/nr/)
- Historic Preservation League of Oregon: [www.historicpreservationleague.org/](http://www.historicpreservationleague.org/) (note: this organization recently changed its name to Restore Oregon: [www.restoreoregon.org/](http://www.restoreoregon.org/))
- Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): [www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO](http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO)
- Washington County: Department of Land Use and Transportation;  
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