

NORTH ENCANTO HISTORIC DISTRICT

Number of Properties: 456

Period of Significance: 1939-1956

Predominant Architectural Styles:

Transitional/Early Ranch, Pueblo Revival, Art Moderne

Register Listings:

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) 2007

Phoenix Historic Property Register (PHPR) 2002

North Encanto illustrates the residential development trends of the 1939 -1956 period. It also contains one of the largest concentrations of intact Transitional/Early Ranch-style homes in metropolitan Phoenix, perhaps even in all of Arizona. The neighborhood clearly shows the effects that the policies of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) had on tract development and street layout, as well as the interruptions and shortages of World War II, and the subsequent postwar housing boom.

The development of the neighborhood, beginning in 1939 at the corner of 15th Avenue and Thomas Road and progressing north and west, demonstrates the steady evolution of design from the earliest to the latest variations of Ranch-style architecture.

The pre-war houses were mostly two bedroom, one bath homes designed by Orville Bell, a prominent Phoenix architect at the time. Bell designed the 1939 addition to the Arizona State Capitol Building, the Arizona National Guard Building in Woodland Park and several estate houses in the North Central corridor. The homes were built by Broman

and Chapman Contractors. The houses built after World War II are examples of the early work of contractors and developers who went on to become influential in the overall city growth pattern, such as Andy Womack, J.R. Womack, Alfred Anderson and Buros Brothers Construction.

Even after 1944, when larger homes began to be built, they were still built in the Transitional/Early Ranch style. By about 1950, the style had evolved into what might be called the full Ranch or California Ranch style. Not everyone wanted a Ranch style home, however. There are also several Pueblo Revival and three Art Moderne-style houses in the district.

The circular street plan of North Encanto appears to be the result of FHA design principles set forth in the "Recommendations for Successful Housing Development" published by the FHA 1938. The principles suggest a "general return to the village idea" and reflect the FHA's contention that homes should be built on streets that are residential in character. The circular layout of the 1939 North Encanto Park subdivision was a significant departure from the grid layout typical of earlier

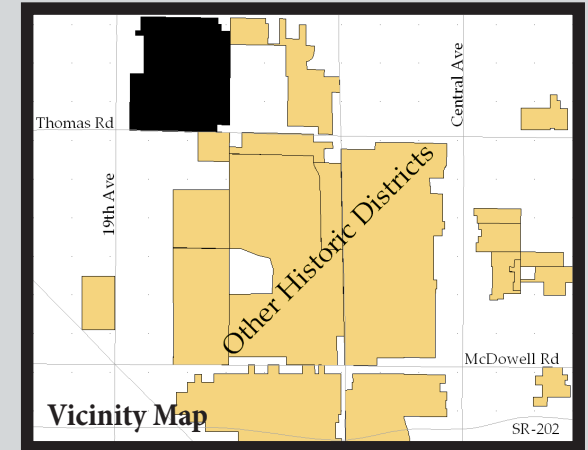
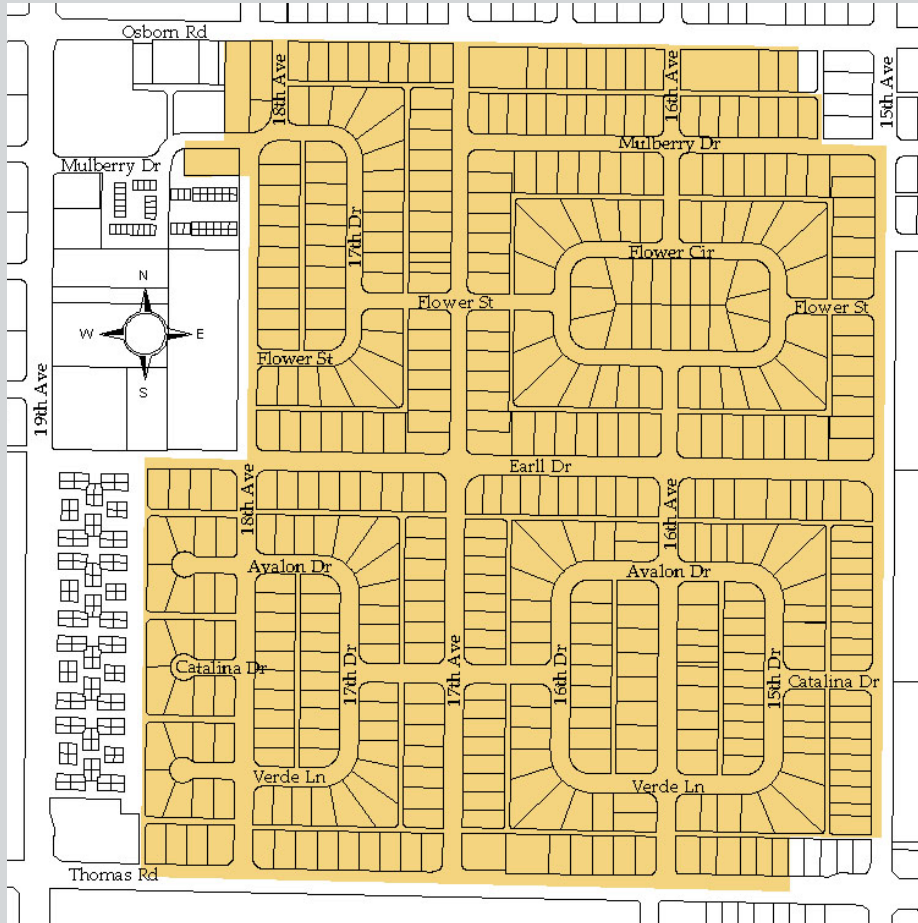
developments in Phoenix.

Homeowners in the North Encanto neighborhood represented a broad spectrum of the Phoenix population. There were lawyers, physicians, salesmen, teachers, a streetcar conductor, a forester, several policemen and farmers, and a wrestling promoter at the Madison Square Garden of Phoenix. Several early residents worked for the new large industries in Phoenix, such as Goodyear, AiResearch and Reynolds Metals.

Notable early district residents included W.H. Goettl, an early air-conditioning manufacturer; E.L. Varney, a prominent architect who designed many civic buildings during the 1950s and '60s; Levi S. Udall, Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court; C.B. Smith, president of Smith Iron & Steel; and G.D. Hoy, teacher at Phoenix College for whom Hoy Field is named. During the 1950s, Lincoln Ragsdale, a mortician and leader in the African-American community, and Bill Dickey, a prominent African-American sports figure and golfer, lived in the neighborhood.



North Encanto Historic District



Ownership within designated historic districts in the city of Phoenix carries with it both benefits and responsibilities. Exterior modifications and new development are subject to design review and approval through the Historic Preservation Office before permits can be issued. The Office also provides technical assistance to historic property owners and administers grants, when funds are available, for the preservation of historic properties.



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Phoenix, Arizona