

2. *Multi-Family Dwellings – Low Rise Apartments*

The expansion of Little Rock's suburban areas in the post-war era included the construction of dozens of low-rise apartment buildings to provide rental housing. Low-rise is defined as four-stories or less and these apartment buildings were often built along major streets or highways. The majority of these apartment buildings were designed in functional or utilitarian forms and few have been identified as having architectural significance. Many of those built in the 1950s and 1960s have been demolished or extensively altered through replacement of doors and windows and application of synthetic sidings.

In response to the housing shortage after the war, a number of low-rise housing projects were built in the city. In Little Rock these early apartments were segregated and those built for African Americans were located in the inner city and away from the suburban subdivisions. Public housing apartments for African Americans included the Joseph A. Booker Homes built in 1950 and Hollingsworth Grove built in 1955. These were built on the east side of the city in contrast to Sunset Terrace (1950) and Highland Park (1955) which were built for white residents on the west side. Sunset Terrace was designed as one-story duplexes as opposed to the low-rise apartments built for African Americans. With the exception of Sunset terrace, these early low-rise housing projects have been demolished.

One of the best-preserved apartment buildings from this period is the Prospect Terrace apartments at 3603 Kavanaugh Boulevard built in 1948 (Figure 56). Designed by the firm of Ginocchio and Cromwell, this two-story apartment building reflects the International style in its flat roof and steel casement windows. Another notable apartment building is the two-story frame apartment at 2423 Kavanaugh Boulevard built ca. 1964. This building was designed with carports on the first floor and balconies and full-height windows on the second floor (Figure 57). This apartment building was converted to condominiums in 2008.



Figure 56: Prospect Terrace Apartments at 3603 Kavanaugh Boulevard.



Figure 57: Apartments built ca. 1964 at 2423 Kavanaugh Boulevard.

3. *Multi-Family Dwellings – High Rise Apartments*

Developers responded to the demand for apartments downtown by building several high-rise towers after World War II. The oldest of these is Rivercliff Apartments (Figure 58) which were completed in 1949. Composed of four primary buildings, these six-story steel and brick apartments feature curved concrete canopies over the entrances. Built in cross shapes the buildings are sited on a ridge overlooking the Arkansas River at 2000 Magnolia Drive. The buildings are modest examples of the International styles.

At 3500 Cedar Hill Road is the Westriver Tower (Figure 59) which was designed by the firm of Wassell and Ferrell and completed in 1960. This nine-story building is distinguished by its large expanses of glass on the main facade facing the Arkansas River. Constructed of steel frame with a brick and concrete exterior, the main façade is divided into four major bays and each unit has a balcony on this elevation. This building is now composed of condominium units.

A notable high-rise apartment building is the Summit House Apartments at 400 N. University Avenue built in 1964 (Figure 60). This 14-story building contains 165 units and was one of the first high-rise apartment buildings constructed in the west side of the city. The International style building is distinguished by its fluted concrete panels which divide window bays. It was designed by the firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch and Blass. Another notable apartment building is Quapaw Tower located at 700 E. 9th Street constructed in 1965 (Figure 61). This thirteen-story building was one of the first apartment buildings built downtown. Constructed of steel with a brick exterior, it was designed with balconies for each unit with breeze block concrete railings.

The Parkview Towers at 1200 Commerce Street (Figure 62) was completed in 1965 as senior housing for retired school teachers. The building contains a variety of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments. The nine-story building has an exterior of textured concrete and concrete canopies are over each window bank. The building continues to be owned and operated by the Retired Teacher Housing organization.

Three of the city's high-rise apartment buildings were constructed in the early 1970s by Little Rock Housing Authority. The Fred W. Parris (Figure 62), Cumberland (Figure 63), and Jesse Powell (Figure 64) Towers were built to provide senior housing with funding in part from the Federal Housing Act of 1956. This act responded to the number of Americans who were living longer life spans and needed housing suited to the needs of the elderly.¹¹⁰ The Fred W. Parris Towers is a fourteen-story high rise constructed in 1972 at 1800 S. Broadway Street as senior citizen public housing and it contains 250 units. Just over half of the units are studio efficiencies with the remainder consisting of one- and two-bedroom units. Designed in the International Style by the firm of Wittenberg, Delony & Davidson, the tower was built of steel with a reinforced concrete and brick veneer exterior.

¹¹⁰ John M. Tess, *Fred W. Parris Towers*. National Register Nomination on file with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 2017, Section 8-Page 13.

The Cumberland and Jesse Powell Towers both have similar histories to the Fred W. Parris Towers and were constructed for senior housing by the Little Rock Housing Authority. Both towers were designed with influences of the International style and The Cumberland Towers is an eleven-story high-rise building completed in 1974 at 311 E. 8th Street. This steel frame building has a stuccoed brick exterior and was designed with influences of the International style by the architectural firm of Wittenberg, Delony & Davidson. The building contains 178 housing units of which 106 are studio apartments and the remainder are one-and-two bedroom units. The Jesse Powell Towers at 1010 Wolfe Street was built in 1975 and is a nine-story steel, brick and concrete building which is % shape in form. This tower has 169 units of which 100 are studio apartments and the remainder one- and two-bedroom units. This building was designed by architect Dan Stowers, Jr. All three of these senior housing projects were listed in the National Register in 2017 for their significance in politics/government.



Figure 58: Rivercliff Apartments built in 1949 at 2000 Magnolia Drive.



Figure 59: Westriver Tower built in 1960 at 3500 Cedar Hill Road.



Figure 60: Summit House Apartments, 400 N. University Avenue built in 1964.



Figure 61: Quapaw Tower constructed downtown in 1965.



Figure 62: The Parkview Towers was constructed to house retired teachers.



Figure 63: Fred W. Parris Towers built in 1972 at 1800 S. Broadway Street.



Figure 64: Cumberland Towers built in 1974.



Figure 65: Jesse Powell Towers completed in 1975.

4. Residential Subdivisions

Little Rock's suburban development after 1945 was constrained by its geography. Bordered by the Arkansas River on the north and east, development was also constrained on the southeast by the presence of Fourche Creek and its flood plain. Only the flat lands and hills west and northwest of the city limits provided the opportunities for land purchases and attractive building lots. The open space available in these areas soon attracted investors in the years after the war.

Real estate developers across the country adopted a whole new approach to subdivisions in the post-war years. Often employing landscape architects or similar designers, developers planned every aspect of their subdivisions from start to finish. Community development became an engineered process as subdivisions were built on large tracts not necessarily contiguous to existing neighborhoods or infrastructure. New schools, churches, and shopping centers usurped the traditional role of their historic counterparts as commercial and social centers near the urban core.

Some of the earliest subdivisions which were platted and developed in the 1940s included the Cherry and Cox subdivision which contained all or parts of fifty-six blocks west of S. Harrison Street. Platted in 1941, this development followed a traditional grid street pattern characteristic of Little Rock. The adjacent subdivision of Oak Forest platted the next year also followed this grid street pattern. However, most subdivisions platted after 1945 were designed to follow land contours or to create a distinctive identity through curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs.

The evolution of subdivision planning coincided with changing tastes for residential designs and federal housing policies. In the early 20th century, city planners addressed issues of congestion and how to create housing which was the most healthful and fulfilling for citizens. The rise of the automobile made street patterns and traffic flow an important factor in community planning. From the first technical circular produced by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1935, the agency advocated accommodating the natural environment of a proposed subdivision in order for a developer to receive guaranteed mortgage insurance. A monotonous street grid was rejected for a calming conformation to the land. Other patterns that promoted safety, saved money on paving, and provided a pleasing setting were cul-de-sacs, courts and lanes separated by grassy medians.¹¹¹ Such arrangements became typical of early mid-century neighborhoods in Little Rock.

Little Rock's subdivisions platted after 1945 moved away from grid street patterns also in response to the emergence of the Ranch house, Split-Level and other period house forms. These dwellings were typically one- to two-stories in height with an emphasis on horizontality requiring wider lots rather than the narrow and deep lots more traditional to

¹¹¹ Michael Southworth and Eran Ben-Joseph, "Street Standards and the Shaping of Suburbia," *APA Journal*, (Winter 1995), 71, 74; Federal Housing Administration, *Subdivision Development: Standards for the Insurance of Mortgages on Properties Located in Undeveloped Subdivisions*, Circular No. 5, (Federal Housing Administration: Washington, D.C.), January 10, 1935, 8.

the city. Lot orientation changed as the backyard became a focal point of the home and the desire for more privacy led to new planning methods.¹¹² For example, the lot size for homes in the 1907 Wat Worthen Addition of Little Rock was 45 feet wide by approximately 150 feet long. In 1950, the Little Rock City Planning Commission revised what it considered outmoded regulations initially established in 1939. The commission determined that lots in new subdivisions should be at least 60 feet wide and should not contain less than 6,000 square feet.¹¹³ In that year the Coolwood Addition was platted with lots between 60 and 70 feet in width. The irregular contours of this subdivision allowed lot depths of between 117 and 301 feet. After 1945, lot widths in subdivisions continued to expand, such as the Scenic Heights subdivision, platted in 1950, which featured some lot widths up to 142 feet. This increase in lot sizes made it easier to accommodate the wide Ranch and other house forms of the period.

Between 1945 and 1970, hundreds of subdivisions were platted in Little Rock's growing suburban areas. Much of this development occurred in the 1950s and the North Little Rock and Little Rock USGS quadrangle maps of 1961 and 1970 show this steady progression to the northwest, west and southwest (Figures 65-70). While some of the streets continue to show grid patterns, most of the subdivisions have angled or curvilinear streets to follow land forms and topography. The major subdivisions from the 1950s north of Markham Street were Success, Plaza Heights, Kingwood Place and Westover Hills. In the 1960s this area expanded further west with the subdivisions of Leawood Heights and Leawood Manor. The high hills south of the Arkansas River were also subdivided in the 1960s with houses sited to take advantage of the views to the north.

South of Markham Street and west of University Avenue are the Broadmoor, Point Oq Woods, College Terrace and Westwood subdivisions developed in the 1950s. Further west is the older community of Rosedale (John Barrow) which has numerous dwellings built prior to 1945. South of Fourche Creek are the major subdivisions of Meadowcliff, Cloverdale, Geyer Springs and Wakefield Village which were platted and developed in the 1950s. In addition to the westward expansion of the city, other subdivisions were platted in previously undeveloped areas near downtown. These include the subdivisions of Coolwood and Riverside Plot located just off Cantrell Road which display dozens of homes built in the 1950s.

¹¹² Miles Colean, *American Housing: Problems and Prospects, the Factual Findings*, (New York, NY: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1944), 19.

¹¹³ City Planning Commission, *Land Subdivision Regulations, Little Rock, Ark.*, (Little Rock, AR: City Planning Commission, 1950), 9.

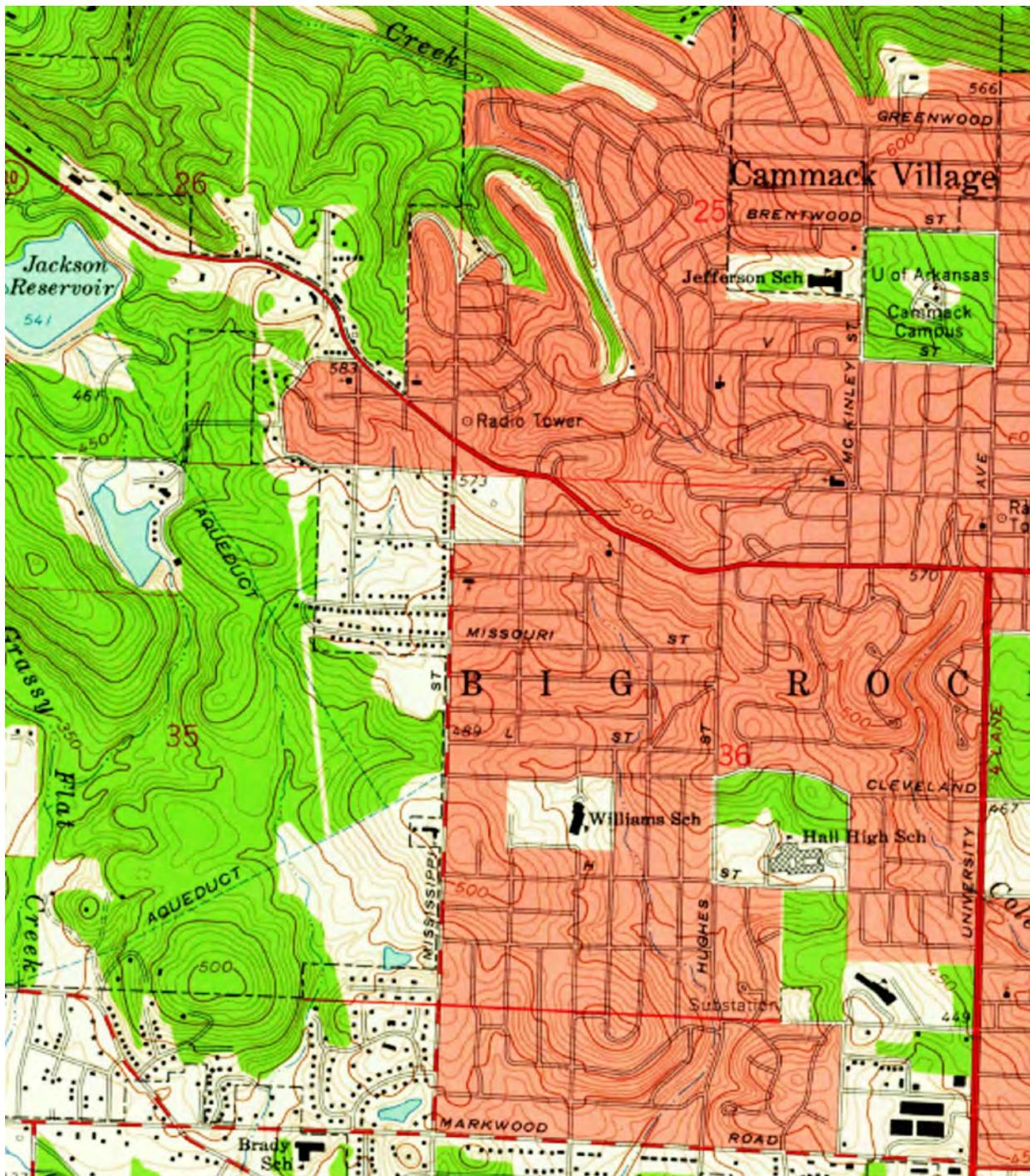


Figure 66: The North Little Rock USGS Quad map of 1961 shows the major northwest suburban expansion of the city. West of University Avenue the major subdivisions include Success, Plaza Heights, Pine Manor, Kingwood Place, Westover Hills, Wingate and Queen Manor.

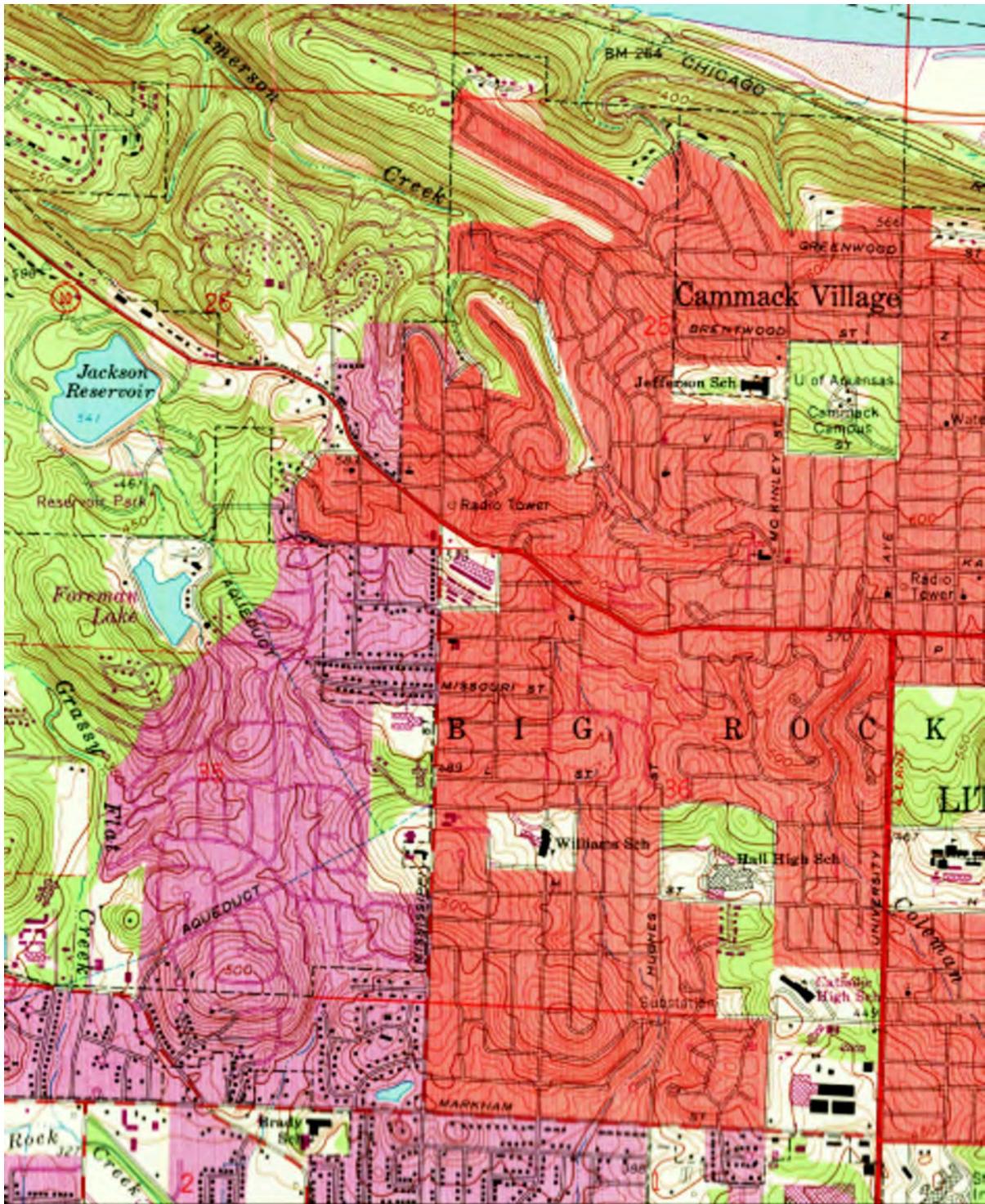


Figure 67: The 1970 North Little Rock USGS Quad map shows the areas which were developed in the 1960s shaded in purple. To the south of Markham Street are the northern streets of Briarwood and Plaza Terrace. North of Markham Street are the major subdivisions of Leawood Heights, Leawood Manor, Foxcroft and Robinwood.

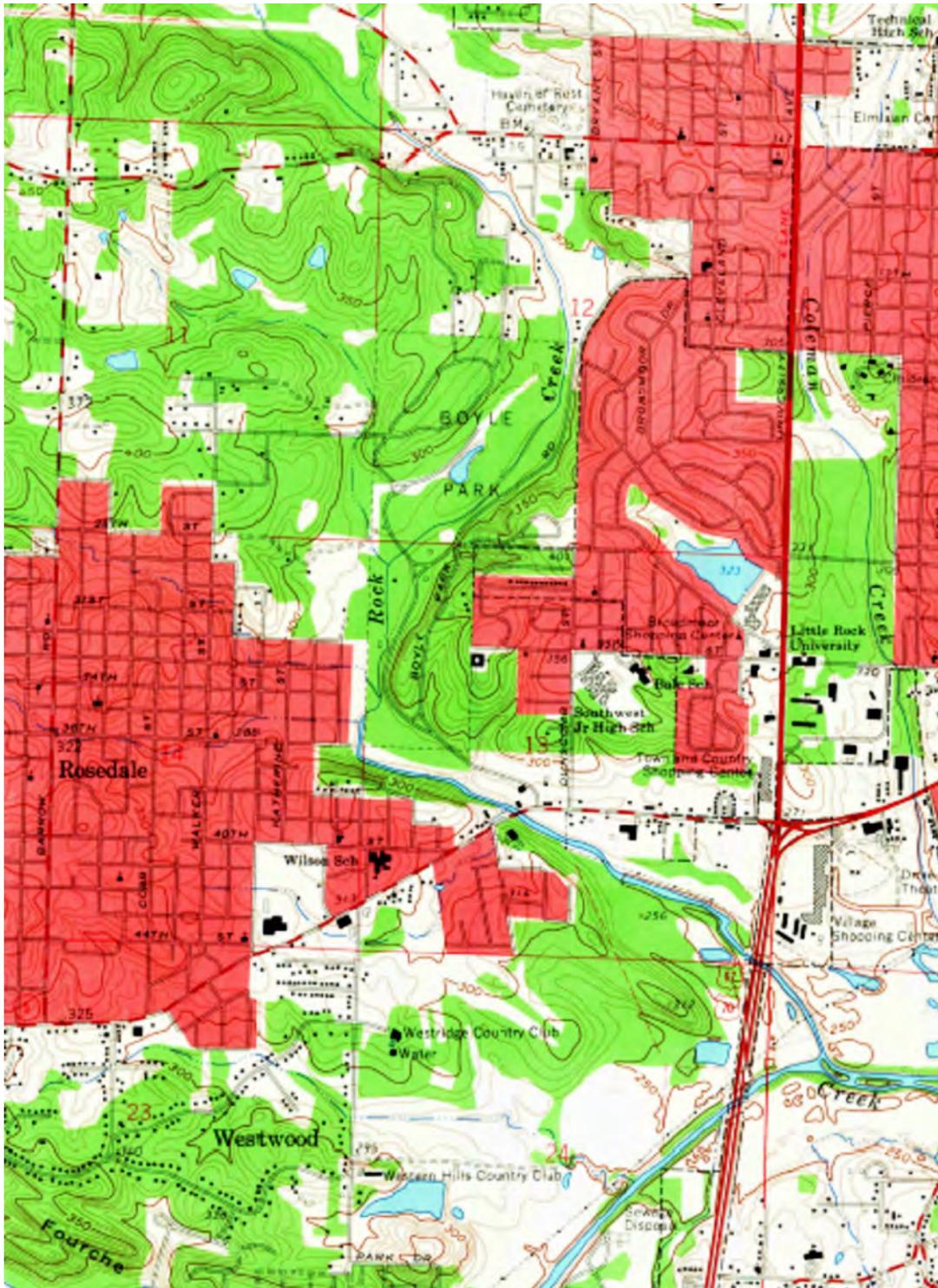


Figure 68: The Little Rock USGS Quad map of 1961 shows the major western suburbs of Broadmoor, Westwood and Rosedale (John Barrow) west of University Drive. Shown contiguous to Broadmoor are the subdivisions of College Terrace and Point O' Woods.

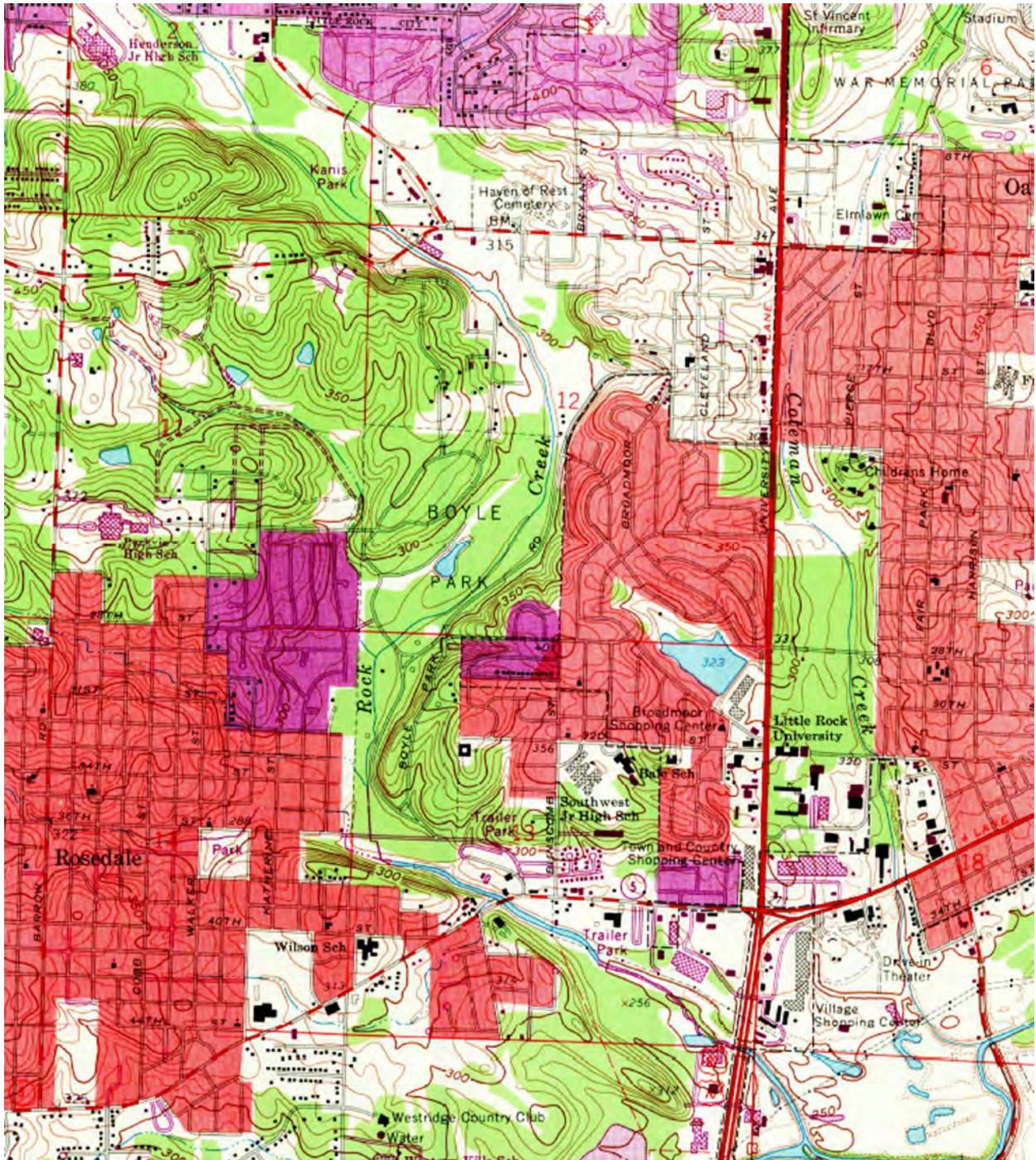


Figure 69: The Little Rock USGS Quad map of 1970 details the subdivisions that developed in the 1960s and are shaded in purple. At the top of the map are the Briarwood and Cardinal Heights subdivisions and the two larger purple shaded areas west of University Drive are Maryton Park, and Meadow Lark.

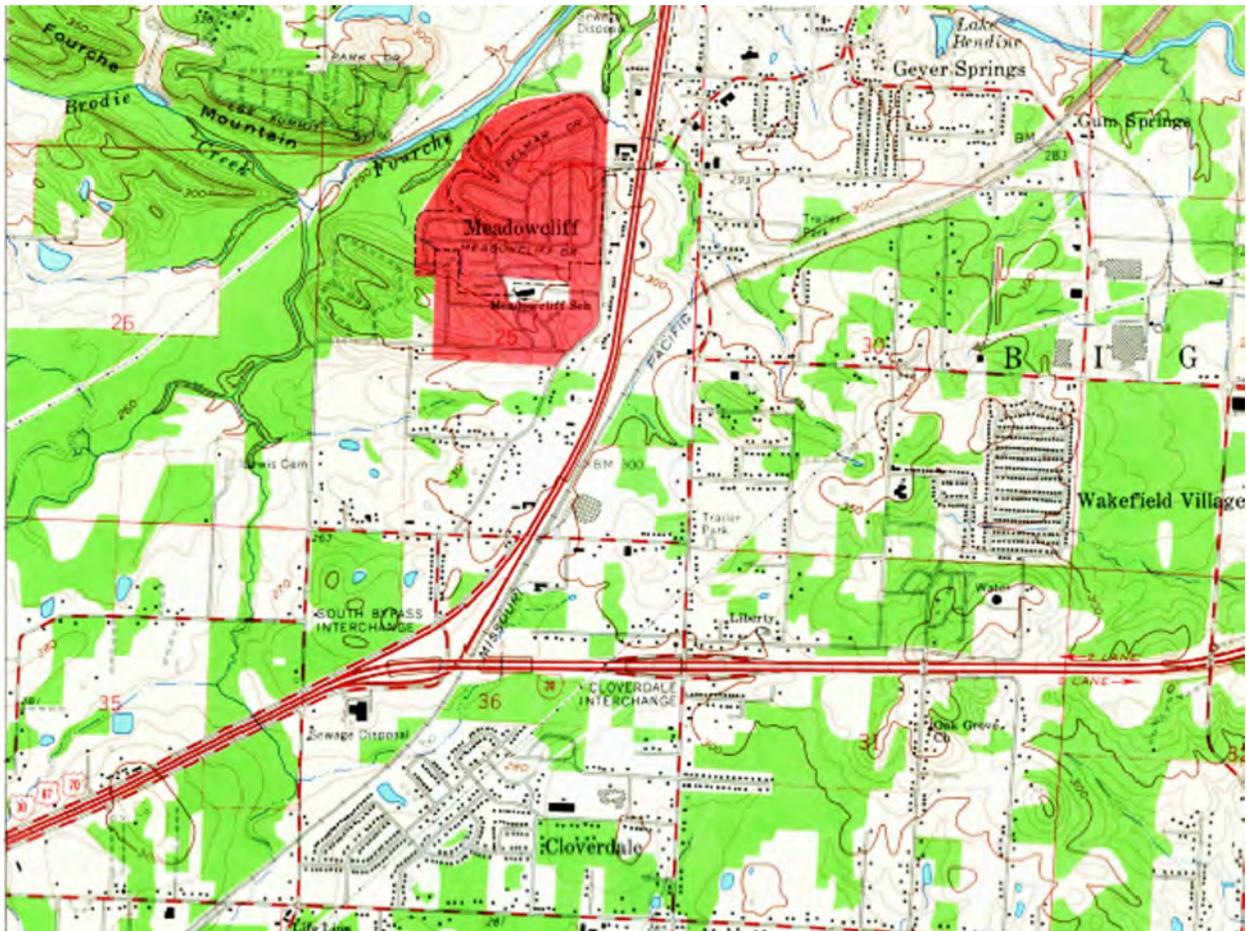


Figure 70: The Little Rock USGS Quad map of 1961 shows the major southwest suburbs of Meadowcliff, Wakefield Village, Geyer Springs and Cloverdale.

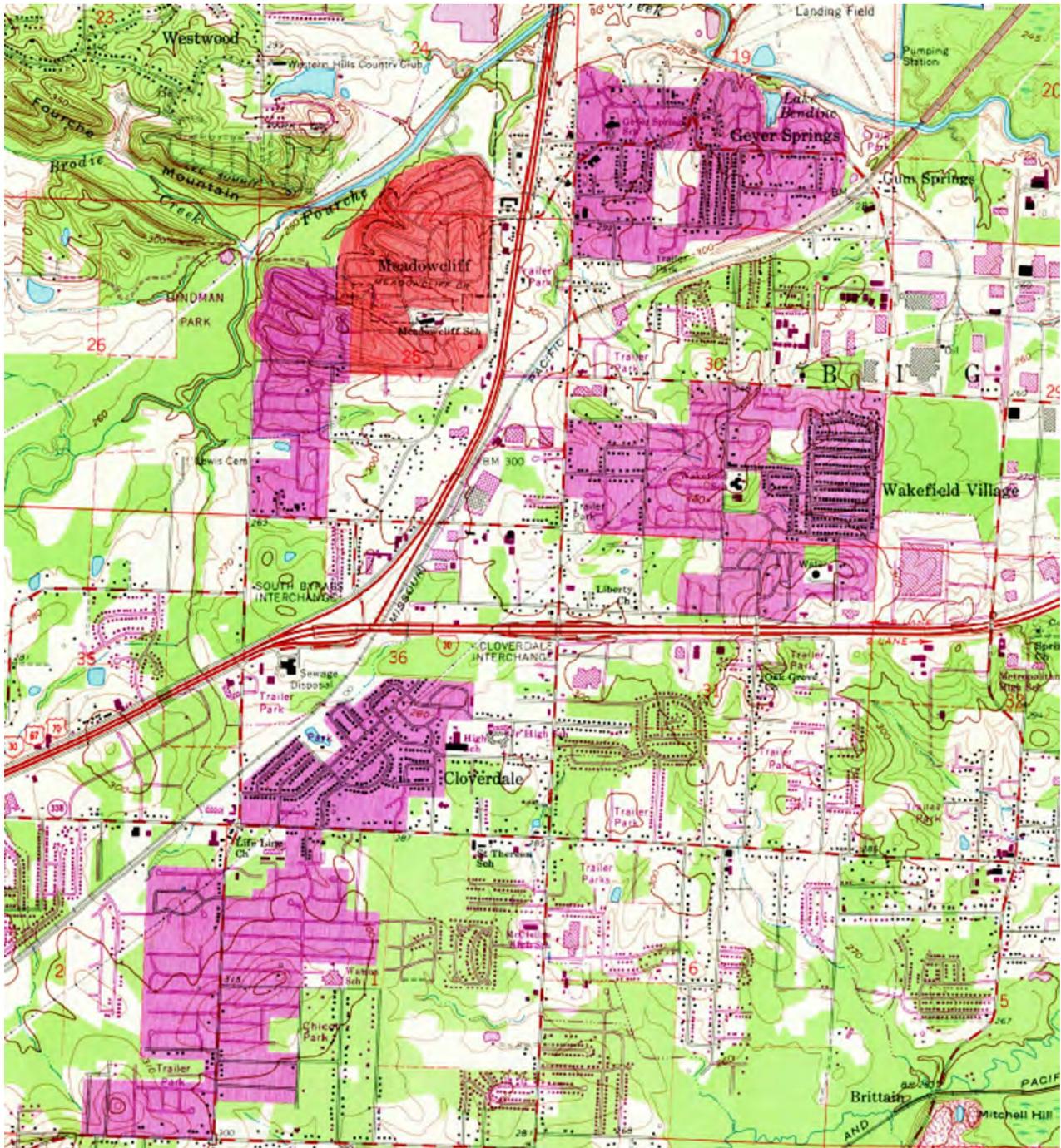


Figure 71: By 1970, the Little Rock USGS Quad map continues to show the major subdivisions of Meadowcliff, Geyer Springs, Wakefield Village and Cloverdale. West of Meadowcliff shown in purple is the Brookwood subdivision. Much of the area around Geyer Springs and Wakefield Village are composed of small subdivisions such as Windamere and Stonegate.

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tising blurbs, offensive commercial powers more vigorously.

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Figure 72: Brookfield is typical of the types of subdivision plans which were platted in the 1950s and 1960s in Little Rock. It features curved streets and cul-de-sacs in conformance with the area's hills. This ad for the subdivision was printed in the January 1, 1960 edition of the Arkansas Gazette.

Subdivisions which were developed in Little Rock from the late 1940s to the 1960s have a remarkable degree of similarities in their architectural designs (Figures 73-79). The Linear and Composite Ranch forms dominate most neighborhoods and are typically one-story in height, have hipped or gable roofs and exteriors of brick veneer or combinations of brick, wood and stone. Most were built with integral or attached carports and garages. Often developers would utilize standardized plans which were repeated on each street such as in Coolwood, Meadowbrook and Broadmoor. While some streetscapes feature Split-Level and Mid-Century Modern designs, the Linear and Composite Ranch style forms are found in most of the subdivisions developed in this 25-year period.



Figure 73: Streetscape of Linear Ranch houses on Pine Manor Drive in the Pine Manor neighborhood.



Figure 74: Streetscape of Belmont Drive in the Broadmoor subdivision.



Figure 75: View of Fairmount Drive in the College Terrace subdivision.



Figure 76: Streetscape of Linear Ranch homes on Southmont Drive in the Meadowcliff subdivision.



Figure 77: Streetscape of Cloverdale Drive in the Cloverdale subdivision.



Figure 78: Streetscape of Durham Drive in the Wakefield Village subdivision.



Figure 79: Streetscape of Split-Level dwellings on N. Mellon Street in the Hall Cove subdivision.

The marketing and selling of Little Rock's new homes after World War II was designed to appeal to new residents as well as attract existing residents from the older neighborhoods of the city. Extolling the virtues of clean air, large yards, functional and attractive houses and easy commuting to downtown, developers funded a wide variety of advertisements in newspapers and promotional brochures. Another event which developers and builders marketed were homes tours. The annual Parade of Homes, sponsored by the Arkansas Home Builders Association (Figure 80), began in Little Rock in 1952. Twelve houses were presented at the parade, which was attended by 30,000 people over the period of a week. Attendees could use the tour to help them make decisions on building products, technological advances and housing styles that would be most appropriate for their family. The decision on which houses to feature fell to an American Institute of Architects committee who reviewed plans presented by Pulaski County builders.¹¹⁴ The homes were mapped in the newspapers in their respective subdivisions, which became gradually more widespread.

Such a sales system was new in the mid-century period and the Parade of Homes was an expansion of the groundbreaking model home method. A landscaped, furnished house with the newest conveniences was advertised as an example of a new subdivision's offerings. The developers of the Kingwood Place subdivision used this sales practice as early as 1951 as soon as a complete home was built.¹¹⁵ Home building shows such as the Comparearama at the Barton Coliseum featured home building vendors.

¹¹⁴ Arkansas Home Builders Association, "Parade of Homes Plan Book í Presenting a Preview of 1953 Homes," promotional brochure, 1953, 4; "Parade of Homes Hit Since '52," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 11, 1955; "Home Purchase \$ Goes Long Way," *Arkansas Gazette*, September 21, 1958;

¹¹⁵ "New Sales Technique Adds To Demand for New Housing," *Arkansas Gazette*, December 11, 1949.

Another method to sell houses was to accentuate the virtues of an all-electric house or the financial savings of buying a pre-fabricated home. National programs such as Living Better Electrically and the Blue Flame House were promoted by energy companies to feature homes with modern appliances and heating and cooling systems. In May of 1960 a full-page ad in the *Arkansas Gazette* featured the Westinghouse Total Electric Home at 305 Gilbert Drive in the Ellis Acres subdivision. Described as One of 16 Homes in America Made to Order for Electric Living, this house featured an electric heat pump, air conditioning and an all-electric kitchen with the most recent appliances.¹¹⁶ At 6 Brookside Circle in the Brookside subdivision is a pre-fabricated dwelling built as a model home by the National Homes Corporation of Lafayette, Indiana. This Split-Level house (Figures 81-82) was built with an exterior of vertical aluminum panels on the main facade, aluminum windows and aluminum shutters. An example of a factory-built home, this dwelling was promoted for its quality and cost savings and advertised in the *Arkansas Gazette* in January of 1960.¹¹⁷

Subdivisions developed during this period and significant in community planning and architecture include Coolwood, Broadmoor, Meadowcliff and Cloverdale. These subdivisions were planned and promoted by astute businessmen who influenced other developers and builders in the city and worked with city officials expand utilities and improve streets and highways. These neighborhoods are also examples of the use of standardized plans and pre-fabrication for house construction.

A primary mover in the real estate world in post-war Arkansas was Elbert L. Fausett. Born on a farm near Sheridan in 1903, he pursued several other career paths prior to his entry into real-estate development, including car salesman, publicist, and legislator. In January of 1945 he founded Fausett & Co., which became nationally known, in part because Fausett pioneered the use of advertising, from newspaper ads to billboards to radio spots, to attract home buyers to his subdivisions. For some of his marketing campaigns Fausett partnered with relevant products and utilities, such as Sterling 12 Star Paints, and Arkansas Louisiana Gas Co. Many Fausett & Co. ads billed the company as Arkansas Largest Realtors, a claim that appears largely accurate. During the company's first decade it was responsible for 1,800 new homes in Pulaski, Faulkner, and Saline counties, as well as rental units and service stations. A count of building permits in 1954 by the Little Rock engineer's office showed that Fausett was issued over half of the permits in Little Rock, many of them for new housing within the 12 subdivisions attributable to Fausett by that year. In 1955, 46 percent of new homes in Little Rock were built by Fausett & Co.¹¹⁸

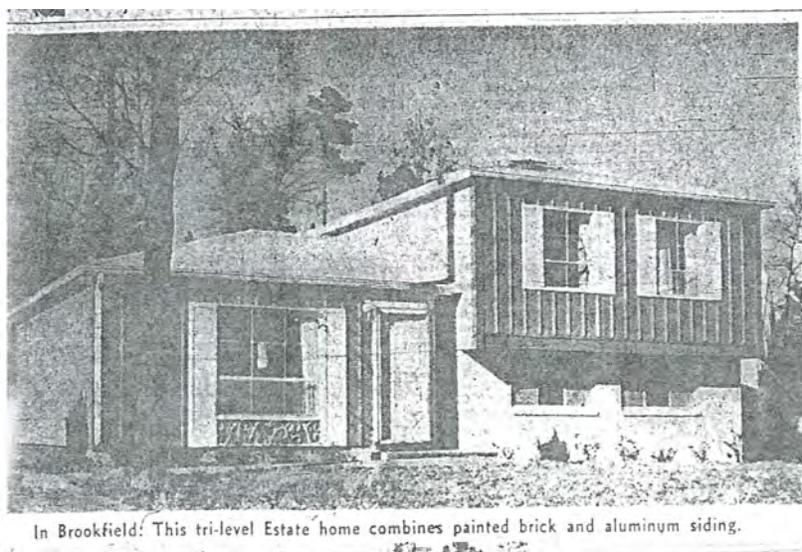
Two of Fausett's best known Little Rock subdivisions were Coolwood and Broadmoor, targeted specifically to middle-income customers, another innovation by Fausett since other Arkansas builders had previously focused on housing for low-income families. In 1951, ads for Coolwood, Little Rock's Newest Residential Development, touted it as a

¹¹⁶ *Arkansas Gazette*, May 8, 1960.

¹¹⁷ *Arkansas Gazette*, January 1, 1960

¹¹⁸ "Fausett Builds Half of City's New Homes," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 11, 1955; "Broadmoor Latest Step in Fabulous Career," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 19, 1954.

masterpiece in residential development and home planning and construction,+ offering custom designs. Convenience of location was used as another selling point. Close to Cantrell Road, the subdivision was described as %Only 5 Minutes from Main Street and on City Bus Lines.+ Coolwood was a small development of 47 houses, in the latest small-Ranch style, with two or three bedrooms; one, one and a half, or two bathrooms; oversized lots; and either a garage or carport.¹¹⁹ Unlike Fausett's later Broadmoor and College Terrace subdivisions, Coolwood did not include related resources like parks and schools.



In Brookfield: This tri-level Estate home combines painted brick and aluminum siding.

Figure 81: An ad in the Arkansas Gazette promoted the cost-savings of pre-fabrication for the home at 6 Brookside Circle.



Figure 82: The same house in 2017 – still retaining integrity of its original design.

¹¹⁹ Coolwood ads, *Arkansas Democrat*, January 21, 1951; *Arkansas Gazette*, May 27, 1951.

Coolwood homes were veneered in brick or stone, often in combination with horizontal or vertical siding (Figures 83-85). Some were all-brick with vertical siding in the carport. Only a few of the houses had enclosed garages. Fausett's advertisements stated that every home was unique, and planned so that it took advantage of the natural terrain of the site, retaining as much as possible of all trees and natural beauty. He also directed promotions to women consumers by stating "There are scores of features that women like, such as closets, built-ins, labor-saving kitchens, and interiors to suit individual tastes."¹²⁰ The random placement and size of windows was not used by Fausett in the Coolwood Addition. In that neighborhood he instead utilized two-over-two horizontal double-hung openings.¹²¹ Some of the houses were built with picture windows flanked by double-hung windows, or pairs of windows emulating the picture-window form. Front porches were small and wrought-iron supports for porch and carport roofs were common.

You Can REALLY LIVE in—

COOLWOOD

... Fausett's New Addition,
Now Under Development!

A TYPICAL COOLWOOD ADDITION HOME

**... Located Only 5 Minutes From Main Street
and on City Bus Line!**

In beautiful, scenic COOLWOOD, Fausett is building 47 new brick veneer and stone veneer homes... most of which will have three bedrooms with 1, 1½, or 2 baths. Streets will be concrete paved, with curbs and gutters and proper drainage. All lots are oversize. All utilities are in. There'll never be any need to pay special levies for improvements in the future.

In the planning and construction of COOLWOOD all trees and natural beauty have been retained wherever possible. Construction has now begun and the first homes should be ready for residence in three months or less. COOLWOOD homes will be sold while under construction from plans, specifications and tract locations. The general location of COOLWOOD ADDITION is south of Cantrell Road, southwest of the old water works plant. COOLWOOD homes will be priced at from \$13,000 to \$17,500... real values for those who want the very finest in a home.

**Call On Any of Fausett's More Than 30 Salesmen To
Show You Plans, Specifications and Tract Locations**

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Figure 83: Advertisement for the Coolwood subdivision in the Arkansas Gazette in May of 1951.

¹²⁰ Arkansas Gazette, May 27, 1951.

¹²¹ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 43.



Figure 84: Streetscape on Coolwood Drive in the Coolwood subdivision.



Figure 85: Standardized plan dwelling at 13 Coolwood Drive in the Coolwood subdivision.

Fausett's most ambitious residential development was Broadmoor, a 500-plus-home project on Hayes Street (now University Avenue) in Southwest Little Rock. Prior to development the property, which included a small lake and log lodge, was owned by Raymond Rebsamen who used it for hunting (Figure 86). Fausett purchased it in 1953. At completion, Broadmoor encompassed 190 acres and had seven miles of paved roads.¹²² Fausett also installed a swimming beach by the lake and a shopping center with a "buffer zone" to allow for later construction of a church. Conveniently located schools were also part of the complex, including a kindergarten dedicated in 1955, an elementary school built just south of Broadmoor, and a junior high school that opened in 1956.¹²³

Construction on Broadmoor began in 1953, and homes were listed starting at \$11,500 to \$21,625 (in 2017 dollars this would equal \$104,000 to \$196,000). Promotional literature touted these brick-veneer homes featuring aluminum windows, copper plumbing, washing-machine connections, fiberglass insulation, ceramic-tile baths, and central air conditioning. The Broadmoor subdivision is believed to be one of the first in the nation to offer the amenity of central air conditioning. These air conditioning units were placed on concrete pads at the rear of the houses and the cool air conveyed to the house via underground pipes. Many owners found these units to be unreliable after a few years and had to install new air conditioning systems.¹²⁴ Additional selling points for the development included paved streets, landscaping, and its location adjacent to a proposed twelve-acre shopping center. FHA or GI financing was available for home purchases.

Fausett originally offered eighteen standardized plans (Figure 87) which were later expanded to twenty-four to accommodate the terrain. All were built in variations of the Ranch style as well as some influences of more Mid-Century Modern designs (Figures 88-89).¹²⁵ At the construction site, builders assembled house parts and took the prefabricated parts to individual lots for installation. This process kept the pace of construction at one complete house per week to ten days.¹²⁶ Residents organized the Broadmoor Property Owners Association in 1954, as well as two garden clubs, a bowling league, bridge groups, Tupperware parties, annual Easter egg hunts and Christmas parties, and numerous children's playtime activities. Broadmoor epitomized American suburbs of the baby-boom period. By 1956, the subdivision contained 553 homes, and in 1957, the city government annexed the neighborhood.¹²⁷ Broadmoor was publicized as the largest subdivision in the state from 1953 to 1955.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ "New Views and Home Plans Set in Broadmoor," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 11, 1955;

¹²⁴ Jack Percival, Broadmoor Neighborhood Association. Personal Interview, 25 July, 2017.

¹²⁵ "Broadmoor Displays Air-conditioned Home Plan to Public," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 20, 1953; "This is Fausett's Broadmoor," Information provided by Lanita Reynolds, Little Rock, 7/25/2012; "Fausett Sees Completion of Broadmoor by 1956," *Arkansas Democrat*, September 19, 1954.

¹²⁶ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 44.

¹²⁷ Lanita Reynolds, "The Early Days of Broadmoor," Unpublished, 2004.



Figure 86: Aerial view of the Broadmoor subdivision ca. 1955.

 A promotional brochure for house plans in the Broadmoor subdivision. At the top, two photographs of houses are shown at an angle. Each photo is labeled "BROADMOOR HOME STYLE #3618-A". The house on the left is a single-story ranch-style home with a covered porch. The house on the right is a similar style but with a different exterior finish. Below the photos, the text reads:

*You May Choose From Many Styles
and Types of Homes in Fausett's*

BROADMOOR

18 DIFFERENT FLOOR PLANS

and a wide variety of exterior arrangements

Nowhere else can you have so much for so little for yourself and family as in Fausett's BROADMOOR. Check the many exclusive features and make your own comparison.

No look-alikes in BROADMOOR... the many styles and types of homes and varied exteriors give you the opportunity for individual styling, regardless of the location you choose.

Figure 87: Promotional brochure of house plans for the Broadmoor subdivision.



Figure 88: The dwelling at 18 Broadmoor Drive built in 1954 illustrates one of the standardized plan dwellings built in the subdivision.



Figure 89: Hipped roof Linear Ranch built in 1954 at 37 Belmont Drive in Broadmoor.

The subdivision of Meadowcliff, south of Asher Avenue and near the Broadmoor subdivision, was initiated by Bralei Corporation in 1952. Founded by Buford Bracy in North Little Rock in 1946, Bralei had previously contributed several homes to the Park Hill neighborhood, and by 1952, General Manager Jack Bracy had completed the Miramar subdivision in Pine Bluff. The company hoped to replicate the Miramar success in Little Rock with Meadowcliff, where Bracy planned for 450 homes.¹²⁸ Meadowcliff was built in separate phases and included small Ranch-style homes as well as Mid-Century Modern-influenced one-story plans with flat roofs (Figures 90-92). Development began in 1954 and 68 houses were sold before the model home had even been completed. The first family moved to the neighborhood in 1955. By 1959, the Meadowcliff Addition contained 515 finished homes and Bracy had plans for an additional 34.

Bracy touted the many styles available in Meadowcliff, claiming he could "satisfy virtually any architectural taste,+ from traditional to ranch to contemporary. Architect Yandell Johnson collaborated with Bracy in designing homes for both the Miramar and Meadowcliff subdivisions.¹²⁹ The houses Johnson designed in Meadowcliff were larger, and termed "Premiere+ and "DeLuxe.+ Bracy planned for completion of the project in 1957, and, like Fausett and Matthews, he provided residents with park facilities and a school. The firm later changed its name to Bracy Realty and by 1959 had constructed other Little Rock projects, including Kavanaugh Place, South Road Terrace, and Sheraton Park.¹³⁰



Figure 90: Standardized plan dwelling built in 1957 at 17 Sheraton Drive in Meadowcliff.

¹²⁸ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 45.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ "Meadowcliff Grows Fast," *Arkansas Democrat*, April 22, 1956; "Two Ultra Modern Model Homes to Be Unveiled This Afternoon at Open House in Meadowcliff," *Arkansas Democrat*, April 25, 1956; "Bracy Realty Plans 200 Homes in 4 Years at Sheraton Park," *Arkansas Gazette*, November 22, 1959.



Figure 91: One-story dwelling built in 1955 at 9 Belmar Drive in Meadowcliff.



Figure 92: This gable front plan dwelling was built in 1955 at 4 Ardmore Drive in Meadowcliff.

Another major subdivision of the 1950s was Cloverdale developed in the southwest section of the city. Brothers Leonard and Gus Ottenheimer incorporated with other investors as the O. B. G. Corporation in the purchase of 145 acres in 1954.¹³¹ Their development planned for the construction of 425 homes and Cloverdale was promoted for its ten-minute commute to downtown. Other amenities included the construction of new elementary and junior high schools, and a proposed shopping center. The homes of Cloverdale ranged in price from \$11,895 to \$16,995, and FHA and VA financing was available at two percent down.

Homes in Cloverdale were available in eighteen different floor plans with combination living-dining rooms and a family-room-kitchen that illustrated the interior design trends of the period (Figures 93-95). The Ottenheimer brothers built their houses with slab foundations, terrazzo interior floors, sliding-glass doors, outdoor patios, and concrete tile roofs. Other materials and features of Cloverdale dwellings were aluminum windows, air-conditioning, wall ovens, exhaust fans, and garbage disposals. Double carports evidenced the prosperity of the post-war years. Homes followed typical Ranch forms with hipped roofs, carports, and combinations of double-hung windows. An unusual feature of some of the homes are slanted concrete pylons which support the carports. Eighteen floor plans with forty home styles were available.¹³² Built for today's outdoor living, the Cloverdale concept included two six-acre community parks and a lake. The first installment of the subdivision was formally opened in 1956.

Several other features also made Cloverdale stand out. It had its own sewage treatment plant and the wiring for each home was certified by the Arkansas Adequate Wiring Bureau.¹³³ This certification meant Cloverdale homes could meet the demands of mid-century electrical technology, including air-conditioning.¹³⁴ Cloverdale continued to be at the forefront of on-going development in the southwest part of the city during the 1960s.

Broadmoor, Meadowbrook and Cloverdale are notable also for exemplifying home construction techniques developed in the mid-century. As early as 1944, the Prefabricated Homes Institute circulated a proposed commercial standard to the building industry. By 1945, the United States Department of Commerce published guidelines for developers, Commercial Standard for Pre-fabricated Homes. The guidelines addressed design load and heating, plumbing, and electrical requirements. These guidelines were voluntary but developers often used them in their promotional materials to show their compliance with federal standards. Most firms signing onto the guidelines were located in New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago. Only a handful of firms from the Mid-South, including Bralei Homes, Inc. of Little Rock, were included.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 46.

¹³² *Arkansas Democrat*, May 20, 1956; Carolyn Guay Lemaster, *The Ottenheimers of Arkansas* (Self Published, 1995), 43.

¹³³ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 46.

¹³⁴ "Planned-For-Future Cloverdale Offers Convenient Living," *Arkansas Gazette*, May 20, 1956; Percy Knighton, "The Ottenheimers Are Optimists," *Southwest Arc*, May 9, 1957, 4.

¹³⁵ United States Department of Commerce, *Prefabricated Homes, Commercial Standard CS125-47 (Second Edition)* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), ii, 6-14, 19, 20.



Figure 93: Hipped roof Linear Ranch built in 1958 at 7009 Dahlia Drive in Cloverdale.



Figure 94: Ranch style dwelling built in 1956 at 7219 Azalea Drive in Cloverdale.



Figure 95: Detail of the slanted concrete carport pylons at 7219 Azalea Drive.

In construction practices, companies like Colonial Lumber Company of Little Rock promoted pre-cut lumber and pre-assembled roof framing to help cut costs and labor. Other local contractors employed similar construction short-cuts, including the installation of flooring and overhead sheet rock before interior partitions, which eliminated labor to cut and fit. At Broadmoor, Fausett used assembly-line, prefabrication construction processes in on-site workshops set up in the subdivision.¹³⁶ Workmen with specialized skills operated a metal shop, as well as a cabinet shop where woodworking was completed for installation in sections. At a mill on Broadmoor Drive workmen pre-cut lumber before taking it to lots for construction. Broadmoor also had a yard for prepping roofing supplies and decking. The assembly-line process enabled crews to complete a house in one to two weeks, which not only lowered Fausett's construction expenditures but also allowed him to sell homes quickly, especially since the interior amenities he included in his homes made them more attractive to lenders. By 1955, over 350 homes in Broadmoor had already been completed, surpassing Fausett's expectations.¹³⁷ The initial projection for Broadmoor was 700 homes; when the last home was finished in 1957 the tally was 553.¹³⁸ For the Cloverdale development, the Ottenheimers followed Fausett's lead, preparing lumber and concrete roof tiles in an on-site fabrication mill.

¹³⁶ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 44.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Reynolds.

Two areas in Little Rock contain unique %Swiss Chalet+ or %German+ Ranch house plans. In 1959, Putnam-Mobley Realtors opened the first subdivision of this type in Arkansas, Storybook Village, on Cinderella Circle and Gingerbread Lane in southwest Little Rock.¹³⁹ It featured Ranch homes influenced by %provincial German sources+ in four styles, named %Thunderbird,+ %Snow White,+ %Hansel & Gretel,+ and %Cinderella+ (Figures 96 and 97). Other terms for these house designs are %Fairytale Ranches+ and %Storybook Houses+ and these types of designs were especially popular in the West. The Storybook house form dates to the 1920s but there was a resurgence of interest in these designs in the 1950s following the rise of the Walt Disney entertainment empire, especially after the opening of Disneyland in 1955.

The homes included belcast bays with what can only be described as faux birdhouses in the pediment of the gable, which was further embellished with scalloped bargeboards. The gable ends of the homes featured either a flamboyant jerkinhead with %birdhouse+ or upswept hip with the birdhouse. The veneer of the houses was a combination of brick with board and batten and wood shingles in the gable fields. Windows contained diamond-pane (called %criss-cross+ in advertising) muntins. Front porches were small, set beneath gabled ell, and porch supports were often oversized turned spindles set at a slant. Enclosed garages had an applied cross-bracing design.¹⁴⁰ Only about eleven Swiss Chalet-influenced homes are extant in Storybook Village today, all of them architecturally intact. Another collection of these homes can be found in the 7200-7500 blocks of Evergreen Road. These are similar to those built in Storybook Village but differ slightly in floor plans and detailing. Eleven of these design homes remain in these blocks along Evergreen Drive giving the street a distinct identity (Figures 98-99).

Several small clusters of Mid-Century Modern dwellings can also be found in various locations in the subdivisions. The dwellings designed by Noland Blass Jr. on River Oaks Circle are representative of this type of concentration as well as several houses adjacent to one another on Ranch Valley Road. Four houses on Coffee Pot Lane just off Cantrell Road is another grouping of Mid-Century houses which retain a high degree of integrity (Figures 100-101)

Overall, Little Rock's subdivisions built from 1945 to 1970 largely contain modest Ranch and Split-Level architectural designs reflective of trends nationwide. The acceptance of more contemporary Mid-Century Modern designs was restrained in the city compared with other sections of the country. While reflecting the architecture of the period, subdivisions such as Broadmoor, Meadowcliff, Coolwood, and Cloverdale are notable for their role in community planning and influencing later suburban plats and landscaping. With over 30,000 housing units built in these years, this era provides many opportunities for further research into subdivision development, their builders and their architects and planners.

¹³⁹ Hope, "Low, Light and Livable," 47.

¹⁴⁰ "Long-Bell is Introducing a New Trend in Home Construction," *Arkansas Gazette*, March 22, 1959; "Unusual Subdivision Will Be Previewed," *Arkansas Gazette*, October 26, 1958; "Storybook Village Medallion Homes," *Arkansas Gazette*, November 2, 1958.



Figure 96: The dwelling at 8 Cinderella Circle in Storybook Village was constructed in 1960 . its house plan is the Snow White.+



Figure 97: At 6912 Gingerbread Lane in Storybook Village, this dwelling was built in 1959 - its house is the Hansel & Gretel.+



Figure 98: Composite Ranch dwelling at 7004 Evergreen Drive built in 1954 in the Glenwood Heights subdivision with the influence of the Swiss Chalet design.



Figure 99: Another example of the Swiss Chalet Ranch is at 7304 Evergreen Drive completed in 1964.



Figure 100: Dwelling at 2 Coffee Pot Lane built in 1952.



Figure 101: Built in 1953, the dwelling at 4 Coffee Pot Lane is a notable Mid-Century Modern design.