NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018
(Rev. 10/90)

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name McChord Field Historic District

other names/site number McChord Air Force Base

2. Location

street & number McChord Air Force Base ____ not for publication

city or town Tacoma ____ vicinity

state Washington code WA county Pierce code 053 zip code 98438

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria.
I recommend that this property be considered significant __nationally X statewide ___locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official — Date 5 Dec 08

Michael F. McGhee, Air Force Federal Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and Bureau — Date

In my opinion, the property X meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official — Date 3/19/08

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and Bureau — Date

4. National Park Service

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register.
___ See continuation sheet
___ determined eligible for the National Register. ___ See continuation sheet
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
___ removed from the National Register.
___ other, (explain:)

Signature of Keeper — Date of Action 12/12/2008

NPS Form 10-900a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page ___

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 08001026 Date Listed: 12/12/2008

McChord Field Historic District | Pierce | WA
Property Name | County | State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 12/12/2008

Amended Items in Nomination:

Resource Count:
The resource count should read: *five (5) non-contributing buildings.*
[The Property Index and Description narrative correctly identify all 5 resources.]

These clarifications were confirmed with the AF FPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
___ private	___ building(s)	31	4 buildings
___ public-local	X district	___	___ sites
___ public-State	___ site	3	___ structures
X public-Federal	___ structure	___	___ objects
	___ object	34	4 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

N/A

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense/Air Facility
Defense/Military Facility
Domestic/Institutional Housing
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure
Health Care/Hospital
Industrial/Energy Facility, Industrial Storage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense/Air Facility
Defense/Military Facility
Domestic/Institutional Housing
Domestic/Multiple Dwelling
Domestic/Secondary Structure
Health Care/Hospital
Industrial/Energy Facility, Industrial Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURY REVIVALS:
Tudor
MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials
Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
Concrete (reinforced)
roof Asphalt
other Weatherboard

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

___ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

___ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

___ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

___ B removed from its original location.

___ C a birthplace or a grave.

___ D a cemetery.

___ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

___ F a commemorative property.

___ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
MILITARY	1938 - 1942	1938
ARCHITECTURE	1938 - 1952	1938
COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	1938 - 1952	1938

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Seattle District)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
___ preliminary determination of individual listing
(36 CFR 67) has been requested
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record #

Primary location of additional data:
___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
X Federal agency McChord Air Force Base
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property approximately 18 acres.

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	1/0	5/3/8/8/3/6	5/2/1/9/4/1/4	3	1/0	5/3/8/5/9/8	5/2/1/9/8/9/6
2	1/0	5/3/8/4/6/1	5/2/1/9/7/2/4	4	1/0	5/3/9/4/0/0	5/2/2/0/6/4/3

X See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See Section 10.1.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lauren McCroskey, on a draft by Kate Krafft; historical landscape contributions by Terri A. Taylor

organization Center of Expertise, Preservation of Historic Buildings and Structures, Seattle District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers date February 2008 street & number Box 3755 East Marginal Way South

telephone 206-764-3538 city or town Seattle state WA zip code 98124-3755

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets

Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

name U. S. Air Force street & number McChord Air Force Base telephone 253-982-6216

city or town Tacoma state WA zip code 98438

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The nominated district is located within McChord Air Force Base, a large installation situated on the Nisqually Prairie in a suburb south of the city of Tacoma, Washington and immediately adjacent to Interstate 5. The base abuts with Fort Lewis along its southern boundary and with State Highway 512 to the North. Altogether, the base today comprises 4,639 acres of both flat treeless lands, as well as densely forested areas and gentle hills, and pocket lakes. Typical of most military installations, McChord first took shape around runway buildings and infrastructure, with close-by housing provisions, expanding in later years with outlying infrastructure and housing located far away from core base activities.

Thirty-four contributing properties within the district are associated with the initial establishment and subsequent World War II era use of McChord Field between 1938 and 1942. The small number of noncontributing properties does not detract from the high-minded planning principles and strong aesthetic values of the "military park" that exhibits urban traits such as revival style architecture and a formal landscaped boulevard.

The district derives its primary significance under the areas of Military history, and Architecture. As the most important military airfield in the Pacific Northwest, McChord achieved renown as one of only two air bases authorized for construction during peacetime, and as the largest bomber training facility during World War II, before it emerged as a major West Coast defender during the following Cold War years. Throughout the district there is a strong architectural imprint in the collection of Tudor Revival officers' residences, as well as a high profile example of late Art Déco design expressed in the former Army Air Corps barracks (building 100). Architectural and engineering values are also found in the two large, double hangars that dominate the northeast end of the district. Finally, significant landscape values are found in the formal layout of the original field, with its distinctive divided boulevard, spatial organization, native trees, and plantings.

CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES

District properties are mostly contributing and possess historic, architectural and landscape values related to two combined periods of significance, between 1938 and 1952. In addition to contextual associations, contributing properties meet integrity

considerations in the following ways: they retain their original location, have a setting that is compatible with the historic era, and exhibit historic fabric that is sufficiently intact to evoke the stated period of significance.

Many contributing buildings and structures have sustained alterations that have not severely impacted their principle character-defining traits. For example, the replacement of windows or doors, or re-siding do not significantly detract form strong design values derived from remaining fabric and stylistic aspects such as rooflines, cornices, moldings, window and door openings, form and massing. Critical changes such as the introduction of new window and door openings, overwhelming additions causing a loss of key design features, or the encompassing application of modern materials have rendered a small number of district properties non contributing, and are so noted under the "Non Contributing" section.

The district possesses a strong cultural landscape that portrays two primary influences, one the accommodation of pre-existing native vegetation; the other the introduction and overlay of planting schemes and formal circulation systems. Although the landscape has been prone to vegetation growth, replacement of species, plant removal, progression and change, contributing landscape elements within the McChord Field Historic District still conform to original schemes and layouts. These elements have not diverted from original spatial relationships or circulation patterns. Where plant species have been removed, compatible species and types have been used to approximate original size, location, and aesthetic values.

Buildings:

 # 1-4
Hangars, 1938-40
The four multi-story hangars read as two sets of paired or adjoined hangars, each with a rectangular footprint and dominating segmental vault supported by a steel trussed and braced roof structure. Resting on a concrete foundation, each structure has a main section measuring 253'6" x 290' for a total of 73,515 square feet. Offset sections measure 32'3" x 312'3" with side wings measuring 23'3" x 249'2." Vault ends and walls are clad with corrugated metal. The first story is of tan brick, and features multi-lite windows throughout, all of which are replacement units with false muntins. Several deeply arched, arched metal hoods have been added to the personnel entrances. The apron side features sliding doors hung from a track that retreat to each side to accommodate aircraft.

Products of the PWA, the faintly Moderne style hangars have sustained no substantial changes with the exception of minor modifications to some of the hangar doors and openings. These paired hangars are virtually intact and have sufficient physical integrity for eligibility. A substantial addition was added to hangar 4, and though compromised, retains sufficient integrity to contribute within the district context.

 # 7
Fire and Guard House, 1938-40
One to two-story L-shaped building of English bond brick, with corbelled bands at the roofline. The flat roof has a concrete parapet. A quarter round bay at the southwest corner features narrow one-over-one, double-hung sash windows (aluminum replacement units). Designed to serve as a fire station and guard station, the plan was divided to house both functions. In recent years the original firehouse door openings were filled in with brick and original window sashes were replaced with aluminum units. However, the building overall retains sufficient integrity of plan, design, and materials to be contributing to the district.

 # 14
Paint and Dope Storage, 1939-40
This is a small, slightly rectangular one-story building with gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles. The construction is brick. There is a newer east side porch extension. This is a small but unmodified example of early air base industrial facility representative of early air base design and operational requirements.

 # 15
Paint and Dope Storage, 1939-40
This is a small, slightly rectangular one-story building with gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles. The construction is of structural tile. There are eight-part fixed lites on the sides, and a newer garage to the north. The roof has a ventilator. This is a small but unmodified example of early air base industrial facility representative of early air base design and operational requirements.

 # 21
Armament and Instrument Inspection and Adjustment, 1942
This is a two-story rectangular building is constructed of concrete block and has a hipped roof clad with standing seam metal. The south elevation has a loading area featuring a shed roof overhang. On the east side is a newer open shed consisting of steel I beams. Another product of the PWA, the faintly Moderne style building is generally intact.

 # 100
Air Corps Barracks (62nd Airlift Wing), 1938-40
One of the most commanding buildings within the district, the former barracks has three stories with a flat roof, on a raised basement laid out in a double H plan; each corner has elongated wings. The design is a late Art Deco composition. One-over-one sash windows on the large center bay on the south elevation are articulated by rounded concrete ribs. There are two pairs of double entry doors, symmetrically located. Flat-roofed hoods consistent with the Moderne style were added to these entries shortly after completion. End bays feature two-story concrete frames containing single and three-part windows. This, the original front entrance to the building, has become the rear elevation as of Spring 2005. The remaining elliptical entrance drive is now lined with non-original plantings: deciduous trees and a flowerbed. Knicknick has been planted close to the margin of the building where foundation plantings (evergreen shrubs) originally punctuated each rib (Figures 9.,10. & 11.). Plantings original to this elevation include the mature horse chestnut trees and Sitka spruce trees planted at outer corners.

The north elevation became the front entrance as of May 2005. This side features a raised basement and central one-story concrete projection. The second-story has prominent rounded arched window heads, original multi-lite sash and fan lights have been replaced; representative windows have been left intact at each end. Outer wings of this elevation feature flat arched "loggias" with simple iron fence railings that round at the ends of the building. There is no original landscaping on this side. Departing from the original Moderne theme are a new non-historic entrance shelter and free-standing shelter, both of brick and glass, with segmentally arched roofs that are inconsistent with the building's original flat roofed profile.

Designed to serve as an Air Corps Barracks, the first floor day rooms have served administrative purposes since the building was occupied. The entire interior space, including the original mess hall space, has been completely converted to administrative uses and substantial interior remodeling has occurred at various times. Interiors retain the original rough plaster textured finish, however, in the most current interior remodeling, May 2005, original tile mop "boards" were removed, and door units replaced.

 # 160, 161
Hospital and Ambulance Garage, 1938-40
The former hospital is a two-story composition with a central raised bay, capped with a hipped roof clad with standing seam metal. The center two-story section has a broad concrete frame similar to the barracks treatment, and features original, double metal and

multi-lite glass entry doors. A splayed entrance stairway has metal Deco style railings. Two large concrete medallions near the roofline edges are embossed with medical insignia. Side wings are slightly lower and feature metal tube railings along the roofline; metal fire escapes occur at either side of the building.

To the north rear of the building is an original three-stall ambulance garage building featuring a gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles. The lift doors have panels and a band of multi-lite windows.

This building was rehabilitated around 1991, at which time double-hung windows with false muntins were installed. There are no other exterior changes; this building has retained sufficient physical integrity to be eligible. The original elliptical vehicle drive remains intact. (See Figure 7.)

 # 400, 420, 600-603
6 Five-Family Rowhouses for Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, 1938-39
Six Tudor Revival style, five-family row houses were built in 1938-39 and constructed according to standard Quartermaster General plans. The Officers' Quarters row houses (400,420) are slightly differentiated with full gables; whereas the N.C.O. row houses feature clipped gables, originally painted dark. The floor plans and basic building form, which at McChord AFB were executed with modest Tudor Revival style details, are clearly based on a standard plan utilized for the construction of identical housing at other military installations (for example, at Fort Lewis: Officer's Family Housing, Buildings 2660, 2662, 2665, 2667, 2668 and 2669.)

The typical plan is I-shaped with two wings. The floor plan is divided laterally into five three-bedroom housing units (originally space for a maid's room in the basement was also provided.) The two-story row houses have concrete foundations and basements and a concrete structural frame clad with a brick veneer, laid in a common bond pattern. The simple gable roof forms are covered by tile shingles and penetrated by a single central brick chimney and three small flat-roofed dormers, on both sides of the main gable, clad with wood shingles. The building is adorned with a modest brick cornice.

Tudor Revival style with modest Tudor Revival details, the primary facades are distinguished by stone window sills, label moldings, and quoins at the more prominent gable end entrance doors, scuppers and down spouts. The doors have raised panels, and the entries display brick and concrete entrance porches with iron handrails. Concrete porches with iron handrails are located at the rear elevations. Surrounding the three central entry doors are brick header and stretcher courses, copper scuppers and down

spouts, raised wood panel doors, and brick and concrete entry porches with iron handrails. The rear entries display concrete porches with iron handrails. The only exterior alterations have been the removal of original steel casement windows and replacement with wood double-hung and fixed sash. These row houses were carefully sited and symmetrically arranged facing each other across Seventh Street on the east and west sides of Central Avenue. Central Avenue is directly on an axis with the Air Corps Barracks (Building 100) and Hangars 3 and 4.

 # 401, 421
Associated Garages for Officers and N.C.O.s, 1939-40
Two detached five-car garages appear to have been constructed according to standard Quartermaster General plans sometime after the completion of the adjacent Officers' Quarters. They are brick with asphalt clad gabled roofs, and feature original paneled lift doors. They are identical in historic building fabric and similar in plan to the Station Hospital and Ambulance Garage (Building 161). Plaques on each unit indicate the Work Progress Administration (WPA) constructed the garages, just after the Airfield Hospital expansion began in 1940. (See Figure 8. & 9.)

 # 732, 17
Sanitary Sewer Pumping Stations, 1938-39
Small square buildings of English bond brick feature hipped roofs clad with asphalt shingles. Roof edges are flush with the plane of the exterior walls and feature dentiled moldings/cornices. Steel bars painted white provide safety on 9-light metal hopper windows with concrete lug sills. A single leaf, panel and 4-light door occurs on each.

 # 733
Electrical Sub Station, 1939-40
This is a small rectangular building of English bond brick with a gabled roof clad with asphalt shingles. The roof is flush with the plane of the exterior walls and lacks a soffit. A thin dentiled, molding/cornice occurs on gabled ends. Steel bars painted white provide safety on 12-light metal hopper windows with concrete lug sills. There is one single leaf, panel and 4-light door.

 # 613, 620, 621, 622
Associated Garages for Non Commissioned Officers Quarters, 1952
These have brick construction, gabled roofs clad with asphalt shingles, and feature wood paneled lift doors. Although built in 1952, after the construction of the officers and NCO quarters, these four detached, five-car garages have assimilated into the district. Their

gabled roofs, brick composition, and lift door design is consistent with the earlier original garages (# 401,421).

 # 707
Quartermaster Maintenance, 1938-39
A slightly smaller version of the adjacent warehouses, this building has a rectangular plan, English bond brick walls, jack-arched window heads with concrete sills, raised concrete foundation, and replacement loading doors. An oculus opening occurs on each gable. Utilitarian in design, the building exhibits some alterations that have compromised its integrity, including window and door openings that have either been partially filled in. or completely filled in with dissimilar brick. Concrete lintels with tie bar plates have also been added. Exterior alterations include a new gabled entry porch, exterior doors and wall vents.

 # 708
Quartermaster Warehouse, 1938-39
One of a group of original warehouses, this long rectangular building features brick of English bond, jack-arched windows with concrete sills, raised concrete foundation, and replacement loading doors. An oculus opening occurs on each gable. This warehouse features a central firewall that projects midway as a roofline parapet with ear.

The utilitarian building has sustained some modifications, including the removal of original steel industrial window sashes and replacement with anodized aluminum window sashes. A large concrete steel-framed loading area has been constructed between Buildings 708 and 710 to connect them at the level of the common loading platform. Original entry doors with sidelights have been removed and replaced with smaller steel doors and in-filled walls on the southeast elevation.

 # 709
Air Corps Warehouse, 1938-39
One of a group of original warehouses, this long rectangular building features brick of English bond, jack-arched windows with concrete sills, raised concrete foundation, and replacement loading doors. Gables feature parapets with copings and ears. An oculus opening occurs on each gable.

This warehouse has received modifications to include the removal of original steel industrial window sashes and replacement with double-hung aluminum window sashes. Although individually, they lack integrity for nomination, the warehouses, as a group have sufficient physical integrity to be considered as contributing elements to the district.

 # 710
Air Corps Warehouse, 1938-39
One of a group of original warehouses, this long rectangular building features brick of English bond, jack-arched windows with concrete sills, raised concrete foundation, and replacement loading doors. Gables feature parapets with copings and ears. An oculus opening occurs on each gable.

Like # 709, this warehouse has received modifications to include the removal of original steel industrial window sashes and replacement with double-hung aluminum window sashes. In addition, a large concrete steel framed loading area has been constructed between Buildings 708 and 710 to connect them at the loading platform level.

 # 734
Heating Plant, 1938-40
This is a large utilitarian building with a formal presence. Approximately three stories in height, the irregular rectangle consists of brick walls laid up in English bond, with a rusticated first story created by corbelling. Shallow ribs ("buttresses") terminate with concrete caps, between which are broad steel multi-lite steel industrial windows with hoppers. At the first story are paired multi-lite and solid personnel doors. The roof features four metal, inverted conical exhaust units.

The faintly PWA Moderne style building has received no changes to the plan, windows or cladding. The facility was converted from coal to a natural gas system in the 1970s. The coalbunker and conveyer system located adjacent to the heating plant were demolished. The heating plant is generally intact and is an example of an early air base industrial facility and is representative of early air base design and operational requirements.

Structures:

 # 82062
Water Tank, 1938-40
This steel high rise structure is a commanding landmark visible throughout the historic district and posses physical integrity consistent with other contributing district structures. Though undistinguished architecturally, it is typical of early air base infrastructure and represents an essential component of the base's operations from the beginning.

 # KHK 3, KHK 4

"F" Street Bridge & McCarthy Street Bridge, 1938-1940

The "F" and McCarthy Street bridges are both reinforced concrete structures and span 18'-4". They are nearly identical in design, the only variation is in the widths of the roadway (F Street: 36'-0", G Street: 30'-0") and walkway (F Street: 6'-2", G Street: 5'-2".) The bridges have an exposed aggregate finish with steel reinforced concrete abutments and guard/handrails. The bridges display strong vertical elements in the guard walls and supporting piers. These bridges were built as part of the initial base construction in 1939-1940, as a result of the creation of a new channel and the realignment of Clover Creek.

Aside from some spalling, these two structures are intact and are contributing examples of an early air base design, and are directly associated with the engineering efforts and operational requirements of a modern air base/flying field and its industrial facilities.

Landscape Properties and Features:

Layout and Circulation Features

The original McChord Field shares some of the same planning and landscape principles found at Fort Lewis, specifically through the use of strong axial promenades and tree lined boulevards that lend a sense of ceremony, progression, and hierarchical formality. However, unlike Fort Lewis, McChord's central axis is not oriented toward the region's majestic landmark, Mount Rainier. Rather, McChord's plan responded to the practicality of favorable wind direction, and the existing municipal runway layout, which dictated the placement of the four large hangars and the original barracks building (# 100). As a result, there is no true vista that defines the base's original plan. However, there is the distinctive quality of an "aperature" midway of the district where the divided Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard widens broadly, becoming McCarthy Boulevard to create an open and commanding approach to building 100.

Everything in the district embraces Tuskegee Airmen (originally Central Avenue) and McCarthy boulevards, with perpendicular drives and side streets angling symmetrically away from this main corridor. Beyond building no. 100, McCarthy Boulevard extends into a semi-loop to form a campus-like area of service buildings and infrastructure in front of hangar nos. 1-4.

The main entrance into Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard is now via the non-landscaped Outer Drive, accessed from the southwest end of the district. A second main entrance into the

district previously occurred along Barnes Drives, the major artery that feeds all base traffic into outlying areas. Here, Washington Boulevard provided another axis into the former non-commissioned officers' housing area known as "Lanham" housing, a 1941 housing project of 51 double houses that occupied a "quarter round" platting of concentric roads.

The Lanham housing was platted along a "quarter round" arrangement of concentric streets, with centralized parking lots. Today, none of the Lanham housing remains. The dwellings were removed in 1996, and some alteration has since occurred to the original platting and to visual relationships. Washington Boulevard is now truncated, its Barnes Boulevard access terminated, and modern infill has taken place along "D" and "E" streets. In addition, immature conifers trees have been randomly introduced onto the landscape, evoking a park like quality that betrays the residential origins.

However, there is some integrity to be found in the spatial relationships and land use patterning in and around the Lanham area. At the north edge, along 5th Street and between Main and 6th streets, original recreational provisions remain and are in use. These include a set of tennis courts, as well as a large playfield at the north side, with original native and planted tree species (deciduous and conifers) surviving from the historic period.

Apart from the formal designed patterns within the District, there are remnants of practical circulation features. At the southwest corner of the district, a now-removed railroad spur provided the essential role of rail delivery of goods, and the coalescence of a small warehouse area within the district. Warehouse nos. 8, 9, and 10 were served by this rail feed, and feature signature track-side loading docks with sliding track doors and deeply bracketed overhangs for unloading materials. After the period of significance, other warehouse facilities were added, although these are excluded from the district because they belong to the Cold War era, and either lack distinction for that period, or are badly altered.

Vegetation and Plantings

McChord AFB is located in the Puget Sound Area vegetation zone. Historically, and prior to the installation, its vegetation consisted of extensive prairies, punctuated by small lakes and forested promontories. In addition to grasses and forbs, these prairies were sometimes invaded by Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and were associated with

groves of Oregon oak (*Quercus garryana*).[1] Where possible, native Douglas-fir and big leaf maples were incorporated into the designed landscape, as well as a ponderosa pine, and several notable clusters of garry oak *(Oregon oak)*. However, the majority of mature trees within the historic district are deciduous varieties. Overall, McChord Air Field reflects an accommodation of native species, blended harmoniously with introduced species overlain onto a formal planting scheme.

A common and nationally-influenced landscape treatment at McChord during this period was "foundation planting." This consisted of planting vegetation along building foundations which served to connect and blend the building with the grounds and surrounding vegetation; enhance the architecture and soften harsh architectural lines; and screen objectionable building features such as unattractive foundation walls, etc. Foundation planting emphasized the use of large or most conspicuous plants (colorful, distinct form, large texture) at accent points – entries and building corners. Smaller, finer-textured species were planted between accent points.

In the district residential areas, a common plant palette was used throughout the base that helped create a cohesive appearance in all land use areas. Pyramidal or columnar-shaped conifers were commonly used as accent plants at building corners and entries. Plants were not pruned into formal geometric shapes, and the beds that contained the foundation plants were not edged, which added to the overall informal character of the design. Just as the size, scale and ornamentation of buildings varied according to military rank, the level of planting varied for different housing areas. Foundation planting and the use of accent conifers such as Sitka spruce were used around the Officers' Row Houses and former barracks (building 100). Ongoing rehabilitation work on building 100 has resulted in the removal of most original foundation plants and other period plantings, and species such as the Sitka spruce are dying.

Trees and shrubs were used for both functional and aesthetic purposes. Vegetation was used as visual screens to hide and/or separate incompatible land use areas, control pedestrian circulation, frame views, and to create private spaces at housing areas. Trees and shrubs planted in informal arrangements between buildings helped integrate the buildings with their surroundings and break up the formal appearance of foundation

[1] "Forbs" refer to herbs other than grass. Jerry F. Franklin, and C. T. Dyrness, *Natural Vegetation of Oregon and Washington*, U.S.D.A. Forest Service Technical Report PNW-8, PNW Forest and Range Experiment Station, Portland, Oregon, 1973, pp. 88-89.

plantings. The extensive use of lawns in conjunction with trees and shrubs helped create a homogenous park-like appearance for the base.

Street Trees

Street trees were an important unifying feature of the designed landscape and were planted in many areas of the original base. American elm (*Ulmus Americana*) trees were the most frequently planted. Other species include hawthorns, gray poplars, mountain ash and blue spruce. Along former Central Avenue (now Tuskegee Airmen Blvd.) cherry trees were predominant, and have occasionally been replaced with like trees. The American elm trees were planted between the street and sidewalk and at regular intervals (40'-50') that provided an almost continuous tree canopy across the roads. Many of these remain along 5th Street, a major artery into the center of the district.

Prior to the 1930s, the American elm was a highly popular ornamental tree in America, becoming the unofficial natural symbol of patriotism.[2] Their symmetrical vase-like shape created a high, graceful, arching canopy. When Dutch Elm Disease from Asia arrived in North America about 1930, it quickly spread across the eastern and Midwestern portions of the U. S., devastating the American elm population and greatly changing the verdant, well-shaded character of many towns and cities. The disease spread more slowly to and along the west coast; the McChord AFB American elm population has been impacted somewhat by this disease, evidenced by the younger replacement trees found along 4th Street.

Small Scale Features

At McChord AFB, small-scale features consist mostly of the signature light standards that accent major streets and boulevards throughout the district. Cast in a pinkish concrete with a heavy aggregate, these features consist of beveled columns that splay at the ground. The columns terminate in a stylized Art Deco capital that carries a plain globe lantern. Throughout the years, some of these units have been duplicated for use around non-historic buildings, and occur in non-historic placements. They are notable by their grey pigmentation, and lack the pinkish tone of the original units. Originally, the standards were capped with metal and glass lanterns instead of the modern round globes used today (Figure 12.).

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[2] Arthur Lee Jacobson, *Trees of Seattle*, Sasquatch Books, Seattle, WA., 1989,pp. 91-92.

Vegetation Summary

The inclusion of comprehensive landscaping plans in the design of permanent military bases at a national level set their design process and visual character apart from the temporary installations of the era. Planting plans were intended "to enrich the design and the installation, itself" creating a livable and pleasant outdoor environment to correspond with the architects' "efforts to create well designed building interiors and exteriors."[3]

The design principles that define the comprehensive landscaping at McChord AFB successfully achieved these national goals. Foundation planting, street trees, vegetation screens, park-like plantings with trees, shrubs and lawns, and the incorporation of native trees are significant character-defining feature of the designed historic landscape. The existence of a mostly healthy population of American elm trees is significant from historic, aesthetic, and botanical points of view.

Some of the original plant material still survives today, illustrating the national standard planting philosophy. However, age and lack of regular maintenance have begun to take a toll on the health and appearance of the historic vegetation. Poor pruning practices such as topping and extreme "limbing up" of foundation trees, removal and non-replacement of trees and shrubs are beginning to affect the integrity of the historic plantings. In addition, the poor choice of species and location of some of the original plant material (too large and too close) as well as the natural life cycles of some vegetation has begun to affect the condition of some other historic features such as sidewalks and buildings.

NONCONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES

 # 12
Photographic Laboratory, 1939-40
Originally designed for use as a photographic laboratory and vault, the building had a flat roof accented by stone coping on the perimeter walls. The flat roof was replaced by a modified hip roof, with a partial gable at both ends. The present roof is colonial Spanish tile with overhanging eaves. These alterations have compromised the building's physical integrity to the degree that there is no longer sufficient physical integrity for nomination.

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[3] E. Mack Hallauer, "Landscaping the Army Post," *The Quartermaster Review*, No. 19, July-Aug. 1939, pp. 28-31.

 # 18
Hazardous Storage, 1997
This modern brick building features several bays for servicing vehicles.

 # 20
Fire Water Pumping Station, 1969
Rectangular one-story building with flat roof; brick construction; painted white.

 # 22
Refueling Vehicle Shop, 1985)
This is a rectangular, two-story poured concrete building faced with concrete masonry units. Nearly windowless, it features three bays on opposite elevation that contain steel roll up doors.

 # 730
Gasoline Station, 1939-40
Designed as a gas station, the use has been retained. Original interior tile finishes remain in place while the exterior has been modified. The roof originally extended to the island and was flat instead of standing seam metal (change made in 1990.) Also, the roof corners were rounded instead of being a square design. Original sashes and doors have also been replaced. These changes have eroded the building's material qualities the point that it no longer has sufficient physical integrity to be eligible.

Index of McChord Field Historic District Properties

Bldg.	Year Built	Current Name	Historic Name	NR Status
1	1938-39	Hangar No. 1	Hangar No. 1	Contributing
2	1938-39	Hangar No. 2	Hangar No. 2	Contributing
3	1938-39	Hangar No. 3	Hangar No. 3	Contributing
4	1938-39	Hangar No. 4	Hangar No. 4	Contributing
7	1938-39	Fire/Guard House	Fire/Guard House	Contributing
12	1939-40	Photo Lab Bldg.	Photo Lab Bldg.	Noncontrib.
14	1939-40	Paint/Dope Storage	Paint/Dope Storage	Contributing
15	1939-40	Paint/Dope Storage	Paint/Dope Storage	Contributing
17	1939-40	Sewage Pump Station	Sewage Pump Station	Contributing
18	1997	Hazardous Storage	Hazardouse Storage	Noncontrib.

20	1969	Water Pump. Station	Water Pump. Station	Noncontrib.
21	1942	Armament/Instrument	Armament/Instrument	Contributing
22	1985	Refueling Shop	Refueling Shop	Noncontrib.
100	1938-40	Air Corps Barracks	Administration	Contributing
160	1938-30	Station Hospital	Station Hospital	Contributing
161	1940	Ambulance Garage	Ambulance Garage	Contributing
400	1938-39	Officers' Quarters	Officers' Quarters	Contributing
401	ca. 1941	Officers' Qrtrs. Garage	Officers' Qtrs. Garage	Contributing
420	1938-39	Officers' Quarters	Officers' Quarters	Contributing
421	ca. 1941	Officers' Qrtrs. Garage	Officers' Qtrs. Garage	Contributing
600	1938-39	N.C.O. Quarters	N.C.O. Quarters	Contributing
601	1938-39	N.C.O. Quarters	N.C.O. Quarters	Contributing
602	1938-40	N.C.O. Quarters	N.C.O. Quarters	Contributing
603	1938-40	N.C.O. Quarters	N.C.O. Quarters	Contributing
613	1952	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	Contributing
620	1952	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	Contributing
621	1952	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	Contributing
622	1952	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	N.C.O. Qrtrs. Garage	Contributing
707	1938-39	Quartermaster Maint.	Quartermaster Maint.	Contributing
708	1938-39	Quartermaster Maint.	Quartermaster Maint.	Contributing
709	1938-39	Air Corps Warehouse	Air Corps Warehouse	Contributing
710	1938-39	Air Corps Warehouse	Air Corps Warehouse	Contributing
730	1939-40	QMC Gasoline Station	QMC Gasoline Station	Noncontrib.
732	1939-40	Sewage Pump Station	Sewage Pump Station	Contributing
733	1939-40	Elec. Sub Station	Elec. System Station	Contributing
734	1940	Heating Facility Bldg.	Heat Maintenance Plant	Contributing
82062	1939-40	Water Storage Tank	Water Storage Tank	Contributing
KHK3	1940	"F" Street Bridge	"F" Street Bridge	Contributing
KHK4	1940	McCarthy Blvd. Bridge	McCarthy Blvd.	Contributing

Summary Statement of Significance

The historic buildings and landscape values of this nominated district are located within the original boundaries of McChord Field and currently situated inside the expanded boundaries of McChord Air Force Base, now a 4,639 acre air base situated at the southern end of Puget Sound in Washington State. All of the identified historic resources are directly associated with the initial establishment and subsequent World War II era use of McChord Field between 1938 and 1942. The property types within the district nomination possess historical significance in relation to two primary historic contexts, and meet the intent of two National Register criteria.

Under criterion A for military associations, McChord Field is nationally distinguished as a strategically located air base established by the Army Air Corps in conjunction with a pivotal pre-WW II expansion program. The expansion and use of McChord Field during the war is indicative of its role as the country's largest bomber training base. Built between 1938 and 1940 as the first air base in the Pacific Northwest, McChord Field was also the first U.S. air base facility of its kind to be constructed for peacetime and defensive purposes in response to the Wilcox Act of 1935. The district is significantly associated with this piece of national legislation, an Act that compelled the majority of new construction and expansion of existing air base facilities after 1935, and continued to influence the nation throughout WWII.[1]

Meeting the terms of criterion C, McChord Field Historic District possesses important architectural and landscape values for the period 1938-1952. This time frame recognizes the period in which McChord planners made an effort to assimilate new construction with much of the design program established in the beginning, specifically, the officers' quarters housing. This collection of six row houses is designed in the same chaste, brick Tudor Revival style found at Fort Lewis. After 1952, this design allegiance falls off at McChord. The period of significance end date therefore embraces the later but compatible garages associated with the earlier Noncommissioned Officers' housing.

The built environment also includes several administrative and operational buildings, constructed as part of the initial establishment of the air base, that exhibit

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[1] For a complete and thorough analysis of the factors that influenced the selection, retention, abandonment and development of ground facilities for the U.S. Army Air Corps and its predecessor organizations refer to Brown, J.E., Where Eagles Land - Planning and Development of U.S. Army Airfields, 1910-1941.

definitive stylistic features derived from Art Moderne design and are noteworthy examples of PWA Moderne design.[2] These buildings are characteristic of broader design trends evident in federally-funded and designed Public Works Administration (PWA) projects constructed during the Depression era. Important functional property types are also found in the signature hangars that dominate McChord's vistas.

Finally, the formal landscape design of axial and curvilinear drives, trees and formal plantings, and spatial relationships are an expression of nationally important design movements within the field of landscape architecture. These features and plantings also reflect a significant accommodation of natural elements of the pre-existing landscape, to include native tree species that are vestiges of the original prairie.

Overview

Located within the Nisqually Plain, McChord Field grew upon flat land interspersed with small hills (Westcott Hills), pocket lakes, and mostly second-growth conifers, lands first occupied by ancient peoples. These inhabitants – the Nisqually, Puyallup, Squaxin Island, Steilacoom and other native groups – were the first to live on the prairie, which they often burned to remove trees for agricultural pursuits. Immediately to the South, the contact era between white and native peoples is manifest in some of the state's most important archaeological deposits near the community of DuPont. The installation embraced Nisqually Indian reservation lands, later adapted to European crops and livestock beginning in the 1840s.

As operations of the Hudson's Bay Company and its base at Fort Nisqually began expanding in the later 1840s, a dozen sub-farms or outposts sprouted on the Nisqually Prairie of what is now Pierce County and parts of present-day Fort Lewis, abutting to the South of McChord AFB. The corporate farms of the Hudson's Bay Company eventually gave way to American interests, as the U. S. border was established at the 49th parallel, eastern Americans and immigrants pushed on to the land, towns with desired amenities.[3] In 1860, the U. S. government began constructing wagon roads and other major arterials such as Military Road, attracting greater agricultural settlement and town building

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[2] An extremely useful discussion of the emergence of this design mode is included in Craig, Lois The Architecture, Politics and Symbols in United States Government Building, in which the concept and sources of "starved classicism" are explored. [See Woodbridge, Sally B., and Montgomery, Roger, A Guide to Architecture in Washington State , pg. 448 for a discussion of the PWA Moderne design mode.]

[3] Information taken from the pending National Register nomination, *Nisqually-Sequalitchew Historic District,"* on file at the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Olympia, WA.

throughout the mid to late nineteenth century. Military Road passed directly through McChord Field, and was partially eclipsed by the barracks (no. 100) that was sited directly in its path in 1939.

The area's first military presence emerged just south of McChord AFB, beginning in 1904 with an encampment of Buffalo Soldiers at what was the region's first exercises of Army and National Guard troops. These events coalesced in 1912 as the U.S. military sought a permanent installation, culminating in 1918 with the opening of Camp Lewis. Lewis grew into one of the West Coast's most important army posts, beginning with World War I and into the peacetime of the 1930s, when it would be joined by an air base facility on its northern border.

Establishment of the Northwest Air Base

McChord grew from a small existing municipal airfield that served the community around Tacoma. Its conversion to a military facility was undertaken in 1935 as the Northwest Air Base, occurring in conjunction with the overall reorganization of the U.S. Army Air Corps by the War Department in March of that year, and the establishment of the General Headquarters Air Force (GHQ AF). The GHQ AF became a new unit within the Army as the operational air arm, while the Air Corps was designated as the supply and training arm. In August of 1935, after the concerted efforts of civic activists, Air Corps officers, and congressional representatives, the amended Wilcox-Wilson Bill (Public Law 263) was passed. This legislation provided for "the location of additional permanent Air Corps stations and depots in strategic areas of the United States, Alaska and overseas possessions." and authorized the Secretary of War to determine locations and priorities for air base development. The Wilcox Act is considered to have been the most important piece of legislation affecting flying installations until the end of World War II.[4]

The bill stipulated that the new stations be situated to form an essential concentration of the GHQ Air Force in time of war and for peacetime training purposes as well. It specified seven areas for serious consideration.[5] The "Puget Sound area" had for some

[4] For a complete and thorough analysis of the factors that influenced the selection, retention, abandonment and development of ground facilities for the U.S. Army Air Corps and its predecessor organizations refer to Brown, J.E., Where Eagles Land - Planning and development of U.S. Army Airfields, 1910-1941.

[5] Ibid., pg. 97. Six of these seven areas were initially identified as "certain critical areas" by Lt. Colonel James E. Chaney, Chief of the Plans Division, Office of the Chief of the Air corps in an influential 1933 report. They were then identified as New England, Chesapeake Bay, Florida, Seattle, San Francisco and San Diego.

time been identified as a strategic location which lacked sufficient air defense to protect its industrial and population centers, and coastal shipping lanes between the Columbia River and the Canadian border. Although initial priority was given to the development of an installation in the Northeast, strategic preference was ultimately focused on the northwest region and the Pacific coast. After funding and political interests delayed development for a time, the first major installation established under the authority of the Wilcox Act was the West Coast Depot near Sacramento, California. A new air base in the Puget Sound area, the Northwest Air Base, was the second major Air Corps installation completed during this era.[6]

The expansion of the Air Corps necessitated the simultaneous procurement of aircraft and related materiel, and intensified the recruitment and training of personnel. It also required the acquisition or expansion of airfields and the construction of suitable new air installations.[7] Such installations were necessary for the training of pilots and crews, for the maintenance and supply of an ever-increasing number of planes, and for the housing of tactical units and equipment for defensive and peacetime purposes. Brigadier General Barton K. Yount, Assistant Chief of the Air Corps described an "air base" as follows;

> *An Air Force, like the Navy, with which the people of the State of Washington are familiar through years of association with the sea, is dependent on land bases. Ships of the air, like ships of the sea, whether navigating or fighting in their proper elements, the skies or the oceans, must return to the shelter of land bases for supplies and repairs. These bases in the case of the Air Force, must be stocked with food, fuel and munitions, equipped with machinery and tools to make all kinds of repairs, and with hospital and recreational facilities to care for the personnel. The bases must also have communications facilities, both radio and wire, and means for weather forecasting, all of which are necessary for the operation of aircraft. Ample water, power supply, highways and transportation facilities are essential to the operation and maintenance of these bases."*[8]

Surveys and investigations to determine the most appropriate location for an air base in the northwest region had been undertaken for a decade prior to the selection of the McChord Field site. The Army already operated two flying fields in Washington State -

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6 Ibid., pg. 102.

7 Ibid., pg. 94. Three factors directed the development of Air Corps ground installations from 1933 to 1939; broader strategic geographic objectives, technical advances (especially the Boeing B-17 bomber with its sophisticated navigational equipment and 3.000 mile range) and widespread economic dislocation that further enhanced the value of military installations as local industries.

8 Excerpted from the formal dedication speech delivered at McChord Field, July 3,1940.

Pearson Field at Vancouver Barracks and Gray Field at Fort Lewis, a well-established military reservation. The Tacoma area was a logical location for a new air base due to the existing concentration of troops, as well as the enthusiastic support of the local community.

A determining factor in the choice of this site for the Northwest Air Base was the presence of an established flying field, constructed in 1929-30 and alternately identified as Tacoma Field, Old Town Airport and the Pierce County Airport. This flying field included 912 acres, a large airplane hanger, a 1,500-foot, north-south runway and a 3,000-foot landing circle. As the largest initial land acquisition, Tacoma Field was transferred by warranty deed from Pierce County on February 28, 1938. An equally important factor was the immediate adjacency of undeveloped portions of the Fort Lewis reservation. Between August 1937 and April 1939, land acquisitions were made equaling an initial base nucleus of 1,232 acres including Tacoma Field, private holdings, and northern portions of the Fort Lewis reservation.

The site planning and initial construction of McChord Field[9] began in the spring and summer of 1938, although major construction actually occurred only after additional appropriations were made by Congress in January 1939. During this same period, the Air Corps undertook or completed a substantial amount of new construction, expansion, or modernization of other existing facilities with War Department and relief funds. Works Progress Administration funding earmarked for civil and military air fields was utilized to expand or begin construction of several other tactical air bases including; Langley, Hickam, Bolling and Albrook. WPA funds were also used to improve a substantial number of occupied fields, training fields, and depots.[10] This planning and physical development of Air Corps ground facilities, for both peacetime and war conditions, laid the groundwork for the subsequent rapid and successful expansion of Air Corps facilities during World War II.

Planning of McChord Field

The establishment of McChord Field brought the first widespread subsurface disturbance to the surrounding prairies, forests, and the sparsely developed cultural landscape. The geographic area of McChord Field had accommodated scattered British and American

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[9] By late 1937, the Northwest Air Base began to be identified as "McChord Field", in honor of Col. William C. McChord, Chief of the Army Air Corps Training and Operations Division, who died in an airplane accident in August 1937.

[10] See J. E. Brown, pg. 8. Few large air bases were built from the ground up as occurred at McChord Field.

sheep farming activity dating back to the 1840s, and military maneuvers and market agricultural activity since the 1890s. An analysis of historic maps and of the earliest aerial photographs taken of the base site indicates that there were as many as 38 farmstead sites dating from the 1840s to the 1930s, and four wagon roads, established between 1849 and 1900, present on the base by 1938.[11]

Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Frank W. Wright took possession of Tacoma Field on May 5, 1938. Along with the Constructing Quartermaster, Captain E.P. Antonovich, he established temporary headquarters in the existing airplane hangar building. By July 1938, survey work was completed and work was begun to clear and burn trees and shrubs and to remove boulders on all of the land situated north of the Old Military Road and east of the Lakeview-Roy Highway. This area would be extensively re-graded in preparation for the construction of a new flying field with four runways and an adjacent industrial area with six hangars.

This extensive earthwork was carried out by work crews with funding provided by Works Progress Administration (WPA). The utilization of WPA crews on clearing and grading projects was a fairly typical aspect of the construction of other Air Corps depots and bases (Figure 1.). During the initial period of McChord Field construction, several existing buildings associated with the earlier settlement periods were either removed entirely, or were relocated for temporary use by the Constructing Quartermaster Engineers, by WPA crews, and by private contractors involved with the construction project.[12]

A grid layout plan prepared by the Office of the Constructing Quartermaster and dated Oct. 13, 1938 indicates the organizing axis around which the construction of the base was planned. An axis point was established 1,250 feet east of the southwest corner of the base boundary, a point common to Fort Lewis. Off of this point a North 24 degree 13' 30" East construction axis was established. The base buildings were organized around this axis and concentrated in the southwest sector in order to provide for the four new runways.[13]

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[11] For a complete and thorough discussion of ethnohistory, prehistory and the historic Euro-American settlement of the general vicinity refer to Corny, Ronald C. (Interagency Archeological Services Branch, National Park Service Western Region), "Cultural Resource Assessment and Management Recommendations for McChord Air Force Base, Pierce County, Washington". Draft Report, March 1990.

[12] Per historic photographs of construction process on file at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

[13] See J.E. Brown, pg. 79. The original layout of McChord Field was somewhat similar to the "ideal type layout" developed by the Office of the Chief of Air Service c. 1923. Designed to make maximum use of the ground area and provide runways in all directions,

Under the authority of the Wilcox Act, McChord was distinguished as the first to employ the Air Corps' new standard WWII field layout, which situated buildings in a flattened triangle configuration. The flying field was laid out so that the principal runway lay northeast and southwest in the direction of the prevailing winds.[14] The original base layout included three sets of hangars with the organizing axis bisecting the central set of hangars directly oriented to the warming apron and adjacent to the runway system. The Air Corps Barracks were placed on axis directly to the southwest of the central set of hangars. Ironically, the barracks was sited in the direct path of the area's famed Military Road, one of the earliest Euro American roads that served the Puget Sound. The road's axis in fact bisected the massive square building (Figures 4. and 5.)

Beyond the Air Corps Barracks, Central Avenue (now Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard) was laid out to follow the axis to the southwest and served to divide the Officers' area (and the planned Parkway) to the southeast from the Non Commissioned Officers' housing (N.C.O.) and recreational areas to the northwest. The industrial area, the Quartermaster warehouses and shops were located adjacent to and near the hangars to the northwest.

A rail spur was extended from the Prairie Line of the Northern Pacific Railroad in order to initially deliver construction materials, and to later deliver coal for the heating plant and to provide service to the industrial area. The grid layout plan also indicated three swamp areas and the location of the Clover Creek channel. It would be necessary to fill the swamp areas and reroute Clover Creek in order to construct the new runway system.

McChord Field (1938-1941)

Architectural drawings for all of the buildings built at McChord Field during the initial period of construction were prepared by the Division of Construction, Office of the Quartermaster General within the War Department. While the Constructing Quartermaster located at McChord Field proper had a relatively large staff of office and field personnel that included architects, engineers, and draftsmen, their role appears to have been essentially supervisory. The construction plans, all of which include the prefix number 6888, were prepared in Washington D. C. and adapted for McChord Field between July 1938 and September 1939.

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the earlier layout plan also grouped buildings to one corner and established a standard figure "four" runway pattern in the remainder of the field.

[14] Ibid,, pg. 2. Certain basic technical requirements were taken into consideration in the selection and development of airfields (and air bases), including size of aircraft that would use the field, prevailing winds, visual obstructions, topography and weather patterns, transportation sources, availability of utilities, as well as political and social ramifications.

Construction contracts began to be awarded to local and regional contractors beginning in August 1938, when Sound Construction and Engineering was awarded the contract for the construction of Hangars 1, 2, 3 and 4. Shortly thereafter, contracts were let for the construction of the Officers' Quarters, warehouses, N.C.O. Quarters, and the water system. By December 1938, the Station Hospital, Air Corps Barracks, and Central Heating Plant were also under construction. In order to construct the Air Corps Barracks, it was necessary to destroy and abandon extant portions of the pre-1870 Old Military Road that passed through the building site.

During the first half of 1939, work was begun on the construction of the Water Tower and Quartermaster gasoline dispensing system, as well as the Radio Transmitter Building and Radio Beacon System. The Radio Transmitter Building and Radio Beacon buildings were situated at a high point in the Westcott Hills approximately two miles to the southwest and aligned with Runway 4 for navigational purposes. By July 1939, the construction of several buildings had been completed, including the warehouses, Officers Quarters, and the Station Hospital.

WPA crews were utilized to extensively re-grade the flying field area, and to lay out and level the flying field and the road system within the base. This re-grading and earthwork included filling the swampy peat bogs with gravel and dirt, and the challenging task of creating a new channel, approximately two miles long, for Clover Creek. Clover Creek originally ran east-west and was situated further north between the hangars and the flying field (Figure 6.). In order to pave the runways and taxiways, a mixing plant was set up to produce hot asphaltic concrete at a rate of 150 tons an hour.[15]

The construction of the mammoth structural steel hangars was completed in September 1939 and, by late January 1940 the Air Corps Barracks was nearing completion. Constructed at a cost of $884,335, the Air Corps Barracks was designed to house 1,285 men and included a state-of-the-art mess hall and kitchen (Figure 14.). During this period, the average number of men working to complete the base was reported at around two thousand workers a day.

In March 1940, the base became operational when Colonel Caryle H. Walsh assumed command and the McChord Field Headquarters Detachment was formed. Officers began to be assigned and transferred from other airfields and military reservations.

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[15] Ibid., pg. 8. Hard surfaced runways of this kind, constructed of concrete, asphalt, and macadam, were rarely built before the mid 1930s when the introduction of the Boeing B-17B (weighing twenty-five tons) necessitated substantially longer, smoother and more resilient surfaces for landing and taking-off purposes.

Headquarters for the air base were established in the Air Corps Barracks, using large dayrooms on the ground floor at the front of the building. The first meal was served in the new mess hall on April 2nd. The Air Corps News Letter reported that, "The months of May and June saw McChord Field assume more the appearance of a military post and less that of a labor camp." [16]

By early June 1940, a major portion of the initial base construction was near completion. The sanitary sewer system and pumping stations, the Fire & Guard House, and the Photography Laboratory buildings were among the last to be completed. On June 5, 1940, the first airmen began to arrive at the new air base. The Air Corps News Letter reported that, "After weeks and months of rumors, the 19th Air Base Squadron started riding the railroad wheels for their new home at McChord Field, Tacoma Wash., the train leaving from Hamilton Field, California, on the morning of June 4, 1940. The special troop train bound for the northwestern station carried 196 enlisted men of the lower grades, 5 Staff Sergeants, and one officer ... this was probably the first time that the Air Corps ever traveled in such elaborate style in such large numbers." [17]

By June 14th, the base was formally passed to the control of the 1st Wing of the GHQ Air Forces. On June 17th, the 17th Bombardment Group and the 89th Reconnaissance Squadron airplanes arrived from March Field. This was the first extensive use of the new runway system. The Air Corps New Letter reported that, "Although badly disappointed in not having the streets surfaced, McChord Field personnel are at least glad that all curbs are in and traffic lanes definitely set. But all of that doesn't reduce the daily diet of dust."[18] The occupation of McChord Field prior to the completion of fairly essential portions of the facility was typical of other Air Corps facilities developed during this era.[19]

McChord Field was formally dedicated on July 3, 1940, in conjunction with the opening of the original Tacoma Narrows Bridge. The public was invited to view the new air base, and extensive news coverage and public relations efforts took place. The press reported that thousands of people used this opportunity to visit the base. The Tacoma News Tribune described the base as "the largest military air base in the world." and noted that

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16 *13 Air Corps News Letter,* July 1, 1940, pg. 6

17 Ibid., June 15, 1940, pg. 6.

18 Ibid., July 1, 1940, pg. 6.

19 "See Craven, Wesley Frank & Cate, James Lea, ed., The Army Air Forces in World War *II, Volume I,* pg. 6.

of original plans called for the expenditure of $18,000,000 of which approximately $7,000,000 has already gone into the project."

At the time of the dedication the base included a force of 1,821 men and 203 officers, and a temporary airplane strength of approximately seventy planes described then as "medium twin-motored bombers," Douglas B-18 and B-23 bombers. Press coverage noted that plans called for the construction of an additional 200 to 400 buildings including barracks buildings, a theater, a chapel, a school, and administrative buildings and recreational facilities to ultimately accommodate 5,000 airmen and a force of 700 planes.

A new base entrance gate and road providing a more direct connection between the base and old National Highway 99 were under construction at the time of the dedication. Following the completion of the initial permanent buildings and structures, including bridges at "F" and "G" Streets crossing the new Clover Creek channel, work appears to have continued with the construction of additional industrial, administrative, and recreational facilities. This additional work primarily involved temporary wood-frame construction, built according to 700 and 800 Series standard plans. These plans were widely used throughout the U.S. military during this period of WWII mobilization.[20]

The original base plan called for the construction of a third set of hangars, a school at the southwest end of the Central Avenue mall, and additional officers' housing to the east of the mall, none of which were constructed as planned. The base plan also called for a theater/gym, a chapel, and administrative buildings to be located near the mall. These were constructed during the following year. By the beginning of 1941, it became necessary to set up three auxiliary hospital wards.[21] In mid-1941, several temporary wood-frame cantonments began to be constructed on newly acquired land to the west of the industrial area. Thus, the number of airmen stationed at McChord increased.

The largest housing project developed during this period was a group of fifty (50) double houses constructed for N.C.O. family housing purposes. The earliest site and utility installation plans and aerial photography of McChord Field, both indicate that the siting and grading for this N.C.O. housing was an integral part of the original design of the base. Today, much of the landscape around this area has been degraded by the removal

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[20] According to Brown, J.E., Air Corps leaders decided by mid-1940 to suspend construction of permanent housing in an effort to keep base expansion costs to a minimum. They instead began to construct temporary barracks and technical buildings, as well as other runway and lighting improvements at several A.C. facilities including McChord Field.

[21] By October 1942, the Station Hospital had become a complex of eighteen buildings.

of the housing, the infill with modern buildings, and new plantings. Built as part of the National Defense Housing Program, this housing project was funded and constructed for an entirely separate governmental authority - the Federal Works Agency with "Lanham Act" funds[22] - than that of the remainder of the base. With the new family housing capacity and increased barracks space, nearly 4,000 enlisted men, 250 officers, and a contingent of four nurses were stationed at the base by the close of 1941.

World War II Use and Expansion (1942-1946)

With the entry of the United States into WW II, the air base expanded to become the country's largest bomber training base. Examples of training missions include the 1941 stationing of British air crews for B-17 training. At least ten members of McChord's air crews later flew B-25s in the "Doolitle Toyko Raid" in response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Habor. Defense roles included the sinking of a Japanese submarine off the West Coast on 24 December 1941 by crews from the 17th Bomb Group, flying from secondary fields in either Portland or Pendleton, Oregon.[23]

After the U.S. entered WWII, many West Coast buildings and military facilities were disguised to shield from possible further Japanese attacks. In consistent fashion, McChord Field's training areas, including the field, hangar windows and doors, water tower, and "tent area" were camouflaged. The population of the base continued to increase and, by January 1942, the number of civilian personnel employed at McChord reached nearly 300. Between August 1940 and July of 1942, the geographic area of the base increased due to the inclusion of 1,371 acres of additional land transferred from the Fort Lewis Reservation.

In March 1942, construction began on the Ordnance Storage Facility situated approximately a mile west of the administrative core of the base. Substantial clearing and grading was required in order to construct the road system, the thirteen "igloo" type magazines, and related munitions storage facilities. This same month, Japanese-American soldiers were removed from McChord and transferred to inland locations. By July 1942, the number of civilian employees had increased to 650.

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[22] See "War Housing." *Architectural Forum,* 76 (May 1942), pp. 261-348. Lanham Act funds were used in order to provide housing for the families of enlisted men, military civilian employees and industrial defense workers. While scholarly research or documentation of the Defense Housing program has not yet been undertaken, it appears that such projects were most commonly undertaken by private companies or local public agencies and constructed at civilian sites rather than military reservations or air bases.

[23] McChord Museum "McChord AFB: A Historyd," (History of McChord AFB published by McChord AFB: US. Air Force. No date)

From late 1942 and through 1943, over 100 temporary buildings were reportedly added to the base, including the construction of the Toxic Gas Yard, a new post gymnasium, Womens' Army Air Corp (WAAC) housing, and the expansion of the Station Hospital and the N.C.O. Mess Hall. During this same period and through 1946, it was also common for temporary wood-frame buildings to be moved and used elsewhere throughout the base according to operational and personnel changes.[24] By 1946, over 350 temporary wood-frame buildings were situated throughout the base. These temporary buildings were typically concentrated into groups, including the four cantonment areas. Groups of temporary buildings were also concentrated within the Quartermaster Maintenance and Utility Shop yards, along Outer Drive near the Air Corps Barracks, the Station Hospital and the Administrative Headquarters. These temporary buildings were all generally constructed on land acquired after the initial planning and establishment of the base.

During WWII, McChord served as the country's largest bomber training base.[25] The primary aircraft assigned there was the B-25 Mitchell medium bomber. Other WWII - type aircraft that operated out of the base included the Curtiss P-40, the Bell P-39, the Lockheed P-38, the Douglas A-20 and A-26, the Consolidated B-24 and the Boeing B- 1 7, as well as observation, liaison and cargo types.

With the end of the war in 1945, McChord Field became a processing base for thousands of returning servicemen and women. In June 1947, McChord was established as an airlift facility. With the subsequent assignment of the 62nd Troop Carrier Group, it became known as McChord Air Force Base, an essential part of the newly restructured United States Air Force.

As the U.S. took stock of its arsenal at the close of WWII, McChord AFB rose as a critical player in the tactical and strategic defense of the West Coast. Aerial defense garnered the highest support as military analysts staked out the readiness of American forces in the post war climate. McChord grappled with changing mission requirements, coupled with complex advances in electronics and aviation technology. These changes

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[24] See Garner, John S. World War 11 Temporary Military Buildings, US Army Corps of Engineers, USACERL Technical Report CRC-93/0 1, March 1993. These buildings were typically constructed according to 700 and 800 Series plans for mobilization purposes. These one-story, wood-frame structures with post and pier foundations were designed for ease and speed of construction. The foundation system and relatively small standard building sizes made relocation generally feasible.

[25] This statement is based on facts presented in *McChord AFB.- A History*, McChord Air Museum, McChord AFB, WA. n.d., a document distributed by the McChord AFB Museum.

are reflected in substantial modifications to the overall design of the base, and to portions of the flying field, industrial, and administrative core.

A major pattern of World War II era temporary wood-frame buildings has mostly disappeared, removed under the auspices of a national programmatic agreement. During the 1970s, new navigational facilities, an air passenger terminal, a commissary, base exchange (demolished May 2005), bowling alley, dormitories, N.C.O. Club, Air Force Reserve facilities, and additional runway areas were all constructed. Because of these modern introductions onto the landscape, the nominated district remains the most evocative and representative of the installation's first era of service.

The Tuskegee Airmen

During the period of significance, McChord embraced a brief but consequential moment in the history of African American military service that directly impacted national policy to desegregate the armed forces. Although this context is represented outside of the nominated district the event of the "Tuskegee Airmen" warrants mention. To augment the nation's aerial offense during World War II, over nine hundred black airmen cadets were trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama between 1942 and 1946, receiving pilots wings and serving as single-engine pilots and later twin and multi-engine pilots. Flying numerous and distinguished missions against the Axis Powers, the airmen represented the first effort to train and educate black men for air force service.[26]

Enlisted members were trained to be aircraft and engine mechanics, armament specialists, radio repairmen, parachute riggers, control tower operators, policemen, administrative clerks and all of the other skills necessary to fully function as an Army Air Corp flying squadron or ground support unit. Black navigators, bombardiers and gunnery crews were trained at selected military bases in the United States, including McChord Air Force Base.

In September and October of 1942 two African American units arrived at McChord, and were initially housed in a portion of the "tent city" near the Quartermaster area. They were soon moved to new 800 series buildings within Cantonment Area A, identified on base plans as "colored area."[27] The appearance of African American troops at McChord

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26 A history of the Tuskegee Airmen was obtained from the following website: http://tuskegeeairmen.org/MainFrameset.htm

27 McChord Field, Tacoma, Washington Layout Plan" dated October 6, 1941 on file at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

occurred early in the Tuskegee Airmen program, and represents an important piece of the base's military and social history, one scarcely known at McChord AFB.

Though cited for their skill and service, the Tuskegee Airmen suffered humiliation and racism wherever they were stationed throughout the country. Having fought the German enemy overseas they returned to the United States unappreciated and derided as before. However, after the war, shortages of skilled airmen compelled a national reversal of bigoted policies in the military. After the Army Air Corps was reorganized in 1948 as the U.S. Air Force, President Harry Truman enacted law to require equal treatment and opportunity for all serving in the United States Armed Forces. This, in time, led to the end of racial segregation in the military forces.[28]

Now removed building – no. 1104 – recalled the momentary appearance of Tuskegee Airmen at McChord Field. Located northwest of the district, the building was part of a larger cantonment of temporary wood frame barracks erected on a wooded knoll along present-day Barnes Boulevard, Cantonment A included the subject mess hall constructed from standardized plan 800-849 (see Figures 15. & 16.).[29] The plan by the Quartermaster Corps, a revised version of the 700 series mess hall, was completed in 1941; the McChord building appeared in 1942. Building 1104 was the sole remaining building from this group, and represented the transitory nature of the base's early development, which included the stationing of Tuskegee Airmen in a segregated cantonment. McChord paid homage to the service of Tuskegee Airmen by renaming Central Avenue, Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard in the late 1990s.

Building 1104 was an ubiquitous type built from standardized plans for temporary buildings and lacks architectural significance. However, though physically and visually separated from the core historic district, the former mess hall was an individually eligible property with historical associations meeting the terms of criterion A for military history (Tuskegee Airmen). This profile of the airmen is provided here to complete the contextual backdrop for McChord Field's early development.

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28 Tuskegee Airmen are profiled in http://tuskegeeairmen.org/MainFrameset.htm

29 See HABS Documentation for Fort McCoy, Wisconsin – HABS NO. WI-308-C, "Mess Hall, T-635."

Community Planning and Landscape Architecture

Collectively, the extant historic buildings, structures, and designed landscape at McChord Field create a distinctive character through stylist features, historic building fabric, and introduced and native plantings. The majority of administrative and operational buildings were specifically designed and constructed at McChord Field according to architectural plans that followed the PWA modern design mode. These buildings give the field a unique architectural character that differs from many other air bases or Air Corps facilities built during the era.

Several properties within the district were built according to standardized plans utilized at other military facilities during the prior decade and at Air Corps facilities before or during WWII. These building and structures exhibit either popular revival styles, or traditional utilitarian designs commonly associated with military architecture. The use of highly variegated brick masonry cladding for the original air field buildings further unifies and strengthens the overall architectural character of the base.

Historical revivalism is expressed most strongly among the six officers' row houses. In these, the Tacoma firm of Heath, Gove and Bell adapted standardized plans using a Tudor program typical to Air Corps campuses of the period. The result is a group of buildings identical to the officers' housing provisions at Fort Lewis to the South. At McChord, this minimalist Tudor Revival treatment is also expressed by brick cladding, steeply pitched and clipped gables, and distinctive label moldings and quoins.

Thirty-four permanent buildings and structures directly associated with the initial period, 1938-1942, are included within the nominated district. Among this group are twelve administrative and operational buildings and two bridges that exhibit particularly distinctive design values. These properties show their origins in the Art Deco design movement and are typical of numerous federally funded Public Works Administration (PWA) projects constructed during the Depression era. This design mode has been categorized as PWA Moderne,[30] a movement that occurred mainly in the 1935-1940 period.

The style is essentially a minimalist variation of Beaux Arts-inspired classicism. The building design is confined to minimal ornamentation, following the influence of the

[30] A useful discussion of the emergence of this design mode is included in Craig, Lois The Federal Presence – Architecture, Politics and Symbols in United States Government Building, in which the concept and sources of "starved classicism" are explored. See also, Woodbridge, Sally B., and Montgomery, Roger, A Guide to Architecture in Washington State, pg. 448 for a discussion of PWA design history.

"modern" or International Style, but executed within a basic classical composition. Several qualities are observable: prominent symmetrical facades, smooth masonry wall and spandrel surfaces, flat roofs with plain narrow coping treatment, projecting pavilions, vertically molded stone ornament including piers without capitals, enframed entrances and window openings, low relief ornament using Art Deco motifs, modern aluminum doors, window sash and handrails.

Apart from conscience stylistic references, there are important property types with purely functional attributes and design values. Chief among these are the four immense hangars, with their lofty vaults – signature segmental roof profiles – and multi-lite industrial windows. All of these modern expressions reflect twentieth-century design trends, and the movement of the War Department away from the use of purely traditional period revivals. These resources are also indicative of a partially documented formal relationship between architects within the Construction Division of the Quartermaster General and architects involved with Public Works Administration architectural projects.[31]

Site Planning and Architectural Values

The McChord Field of today owes its physical character to national forces of civilian planning and design that debuted in the previous decades, and left their mark earlier on neighboring Fort Lewis. By World War II, the Office of the Quartermaster General had evolved, and so had mid-twentieth century military attitudes to create permanent housing facilities for officers and enlisted troops. These objectives were accompanied by new landscaping principles, and the influence of nationally acclaimed landscape practitioners, all well displayed in the McChord Field Historic District.

As in World War I, military planners during the years leading up to World War II directed their attention to the layout and aesthetic aspects of construction at individual posts. Landscape architects, like engineers and architects, served in the Construction Division of the Quartermaster Corps and the impact of their profession was felt in the overall design of major posts. Landscape architects took the opportunity offered by the

[31] Ibid. Paul Philippe Cret is credited with having a pivotal influence on federal architecture and public building design during this period. Monuments and public buildings he designed in the 1920s and 30s set both a trend and a standards for "starved classicism." Cret was an influential member of the Association of Federal Architects (AFA). The AFA was a group of architects that organized in 1927 and encouraged the active exchange of design ideas among architectural civil servants, and sponsored lectures and design competitions. Between 1930 and 1946, AFA published The Federal Architect, a quarterly magazine in which Cret's design philosophy was acknowledged.

creation of large Army posts – virtual cities – applied design features central to their profession and, later, to the profession of town and city planning. These features are reflected today in designed circulation patterns and road profiles, specifically defined uses for certain areas, the early association of automobiles with residential areas, and so on.

McChord Field projects the same ideals of a western "military park" found to the south at Fort Lewis. One objective stated, "the public should be permitted to visit the grounds in a quiet and decorous manner and without interference with its military use for the same reasons that they are permitted to visit other extensive military posts such as the Presidio at San Francisco."[32]

Drawing from earlier precedents in the platting and organization of cantonments, placement and organization of the circulation systems was intentionally used to establish the separation of rank and the separation of functions within the cantonment. The principal artery, Central Avenue (now Tuskegee Blvd.) is a broad avenue that separates the officers' quarters from the former Army Air Corps barracks (no. 100), since converted to administration.

The emphasis on curved, tree-lined primary streets and secondary roads or small romantic parks was utilized throughout the Field, regardless of social station. For example, recreational provisions at the north edge of the former Lanham housing offers tennis courts and play fields.

McChord Field's officers' row housing and former barracks are products of military policy changes for housing established in the previous decade. Major General B. Frank Cheatham, Quartermaster General (1926-30), presented a wide directive for improvement of the permanent military bases in his 1927 Annual Report to the War Department. Major General Cheatham's goal was to combine military tradition with the design concepts of city planning and landscape architecture. His primary concern was to maintain the unity of regimental commands through a quadrangle barracks formation, arranging the officers' quarters, barracks and other military facilities according to regimental units. This arrangement concentrated the barracks so that they could be easily controlled while giving the enlisted men as much privacy as possible.

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[32] John C. Olmsted, "Special Report on the Improvement of Fort Lawton Military Reservation," (Seattle, Washington: Seattle Board of Park Commissioners, 1910), p. 26.

Space was strictly allocated according to rank, an important part of military tradition. In the national site plan criteria, open spaces and roads were also used to separate rank. For example, the airmens' barracks (no. 100), was separated from the officers' residential areas by a broad double avenue and open spaces.

The Influence of City Planning

Central to the theme of military planning, and set within the subject areas, is an exploration of the development of town and city planning through its origins in landscape architecture. Significant parallel achievements in civilian town and city planning clearly influenced McChord Field and Fort Lewis to the south. The development of communities like Riverside, Illinois; Forest Hills, New York; and Radburn, New Jersey are noted and provide a useful guide by which McChord Field may be understood.

The years between WWI and WWII were quiet ones for civilian city planning. By the late 1920s the profession had given rise to an illustrious experiment, a complete city. Radburn, New Jersey, a bedroom satellite for New York City designed by Henry Wright and Clarence S. Stein in 1927 became "a milestone in the history of American town planning."[33] Although the site had not enough land for a surrounding greenbelt, and the development was started just five months prior to the Wall Street crash of 1929, part of Radburn was finished and occupied by 1930.

The Radburn idea came to mean separating pedestrians and motorcars by selectively developing large blocks of land. The sides of these irregular-shaped blocks were defined by roads while narrow, cul-de-sac service lanes led to garages and homes. The interiors of Radburn blocks were reserved for people, resulting in houses placed in U-shaped groups around lanes. Walking paths were interspaced with the vehicle lanes to large, open park spaces in the centers of the blocks. Radburn, therefore, was ideally suited to owners of cars and was safe for children. Integrating vehicles with neighborhoods meant that plans for each house had two entries, one from the service lane, and a second from a path leading to the central park. Facing the park, each home was also given a small yard. Once again there were separate areas for homes, schools, sports and recreation areas, and stores and offices. "Details of the Radburn plan have been improved upon in subsequent community developments; but none can minimize the historic importance and validity of the Radburn idea."[34]

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33 Normal T. Newton, *Design on the Land*, (Cambridge: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971) p. 482.

34 Newton, pp. 491-495.

Early leaders in what would become the separate profession of city planning landscape architects survived the Depression with the help of New Deal programs that required them to develop skills in planning, site development, construction implementation, and resource management. This was also a period when plans for entire communities were developed that "reached their zenith in the greenbelt towns of the 1930s."[35]

Built late in the 1930s, Greendale, near Milwaukee; Strong Greenhills, near Cincinatti; and Greenbelt, near Washington were public work creations of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. These communities also reflected the Radburn idea in their design and layout. They were ends in themselves as demonstrations by the federal government of town planning principles to establish viable communities for low-income families and, during construction, intended to provide jobs for thousands of workers.

The narrow service lanes seen at Radburn were replaced by groups of garages, forming courts, near the boundary roads. Included in the courts were central laundry and drying rooms. Framed by a hedge, each garage court was also surrounded by pedestrian paths. The nearby houses were placed far enough away from the courts so each had an enclosed, private yard. Another improvement on the Radburn idea were the spacious garden courts in front of the houses; these 100 feet wide courts evolved from Radburn's foot paths leading to a central green.

Common landscape architecture elements in these planned communities – clearly displayed at McChord – include curving primary and short secondary roads, all softened by street trees; an emphasis on open spaces; separation of residential, administrative, recreational and educational areas; concern with establishing and maintaining boundaries (Figure 18.). These pioneer suburbs were designed "with winding, tree-planted streets, multi-family housing and surrounding lawns. Natural features were emphasized, and public greens and small parks provided a romantic landscape setting for the villas."[36]

Landscaping Treatments

The Quartermaster Report of 1927 also addressed the issue of landscaping permanent bases and suggested planting trees and shrubs to harmonize with the general scheme for each installation. The Department of Agriculture furnished information to the War

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[35] William Tishler, Ed, *American Landscape Architecture Designers and Places*, (Washington, The Preservation Press: 1989), p. 146.

[36] Ibid. p. 15.

Department on plant materials while some post commanders established nurseries for growing plants, shrubbery, and trees.

By 1931, the Planning Branch's Landscape Unit within the Construction Division of the Quartermaster Corps had established national design criteria for landscaping military facilities that could be applied to individual sites. The Landscape Unit acted as a clearinghouse of information for bases that wished to improve their grounds and helped posts by providing lists of plants and information about landscape development and maintenance. Nurseries were encouraged at installations, where plants suitable for that region were grown.[37] At McChord, the nursery facility was located at the south edge of the district, accessed along Outer Drive. Besides making plant material available, the Planning Branch also advocated certain principles of design and planning such as screening objectionable views and taking advantage of others; using standard road widths, set backs, and walkways; and spacing buildings and roadways uniformly, (Figure 17.).

Existing vegetation was often retained; historic photographs reveal that in some instances, large native Douglas-fir trees were left standing, as were clusters of Oregon oak (garry oak). Paving and curbing were uniform throughout McChord Field, everything given a sense of continuity by Moderne style light standards (Figure 13.). Most all street and curb material and light fixtures remain; some fixtures have been duplicated for use at new buildings.

Additional influences by city planners can be seen in the development of the former Lanham housing area at McChord Field. Here, a platting of concentric "quarter round" trees provided a compact, yet pleasing layout of houses, nicely accented by street trees of both deciduous and evergreen varieties.

McChord's original plan allowed for a deliberate segregation of housing based on rank, and distinctive concentrations of land use activity. For example, play fields and tennis courts were and are maintained at the north edge of the former Lanham platting. Administrative and social activities were placed along the margins of the major boulevard axis (Central Avenue). In spite of the removal of the Lanham housing and some modern infill, there are margins immediately around the officers' housing that capture the original spatial qualities and vegetation treatment, both native and planted, that characterized the original McChord Field plat.

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37 E. Mack Hallauer, "Landscaping the Army Post," *The Quartermaster Review* 19 (July-August 1939), p. 30.

Landscaping the Officers' Housing and Army Air Corps Barracks

The planting style originally used around primary buildings at McChord Field was foundation planting, a landscape design concept popular in the 1920s in the United States. It consisted of planting trees and shrubs along building foundations which served to connect and blend the building with the grounds and other plantings; enhance the architecture and soften any harsh architectural lines and; screen objectionable views. Foundation plantings emphasized the largest or most conspicuous plants at accent points – entries and corners of buildings – with smaller, textured plants in between.

Around the officers' row houses, foundation planting included the use of large, columnar-shaped conifers planted at entrances and between windows (cypress, arborvitae, and, occasionally, cedars and holly), and shrubs, located at building entrances and walkway entrances (English laurel, boxwood, and, possibly, yews and arborvitae). Other planting schemes included: the use of informally arranged coniferous and deciduous trees located in the areas between the buildings and between the buildings and roads (cedar, big leaf maple, birch, laurel, fir, cypress, and spruce); the use of evergreen hedges lining entry walkways (boxwood and, possibly, arborvitae and privet); planting elms as street trees along 5th Street, and the use of cherry trees along Central Avenue (Tuskegee Airmen Blvd.).

The use of shrub material for foundation planting around building # 100 is documented in circa 1948 photographs (Figures 10. 11. & 12.) Evergreen shrubs of two varying heights punctuated the building's ribs at the foundation line, and pre-existing deciduous trees were left in place. Since 1996, evergreens conifers were planted informally in the spaces left vacant from the removal of the Lanham housing. Some original street trees – deciduous and evergreen – remain as a unifying element for the landscape as a whole.

Conclusion

The McChord Field Historic District strongly evokes the World War II era during which the major West Coast air base emerged on the prairie north of Fort Lewis. The formal layout employs strong architectural symbols and spatial relationships – both traditional and modern – to define hierarchical relationships among airmen and officers, and to segregate administrative and recreational activities. A high level of integrity among pivotal buildings and dramatic vistas effectively portrays McChord's World War II role in the region and community, and its climb to national status as a preeminent bomber training installation.

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Historic Maps

Misc. historic maps of the geographic area including some specific site plans [1847-1985] are on file at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

Architectural Drawings and Plans

An extensive collection of ink-on-linen drawings, blueprints and blueline copies of architectural plans and site plans for McChord Field buildings and structures are on file at McChord AFB Engineering Services and at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

Historic Aerial Photography

Misc. overhead and oblique aerial views of McChord Field, Mountain View Tuberculosis Sanitarium and McChord AFB [1937-1982] , On file at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

Historic Ground Photography

An extensive collection of misc. historic ground photography [1938-1963] is on file at 62 CES/CEVN McChord AFB, WA.

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Information about the history of the Tuskegee Airmen may be found at:
http://tuskegeeairmen.org/MainFrameset.htm

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the corner where Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard East and Outer Drive meet (1), then proceeding northwest to the corner where Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard West and Outer Drive meet, then proceeding northeast along Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard West to a point just behind garage # 620, then proceeding northwest parallel to garage # 621 to "D" Street, then proceeding northeast along "D" Street to a point opposite # 680, then proceeding east/southeast behind # 622 to Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard West, then proceeding along the west edge of Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard West to Barrack Street . (2), then angling west/northwest in front of # 735 to join Fourth Street, stopping at a point between buildings 717 and 709, then jogging northeast and northwest in an "L" around building 717 to Battery Road (3), then proceeding northeast along Battery Road to a point where it meets 3rd Street, then proceeding southeast along 3rd Street, turning an "L" northeast around # 707 then southeast midway of the building, then proceeding northeast behind Hangars # 1-2 to the point where D ramp angles southeast (4), then proceeding southeast to the corner of hangar # 4 (5), then proceeding southwest along the edge of hangar # 4 where McCarthy Boulevard and 1st Street meet, then following McCarthy Boulevard to the point where it meets Overlook Park Road, then proceeding southeast to a point parallel and behind garage # 161, then proceeding southwest behind garage # 161 to Col Joe Jackson Boulevard (formerly Main Street) (6), then proceeding northwest along Col Joe Jackson Boulevard where it meets Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard East, then proceeding southwest along Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard East to a point and northwest of building 421, then proceeding southwest to the corner property margin of building 420, then proceeding southwest to the corner property margin of building 401, then proceeding northwest back to Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard East, proceeding southwest along Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard back to point 1.

Boundary Justification

The district boundaries are defined by the points identified on the attached sketch map, which represents the most cohesive grouping of properties associated with the original McChord Field that have retained essential integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

Name of Property McChord Field Historic District
County and State Pierce County, Washington

UTM References for sketch map

1 - 10 / 5219346 / 538841
2 - 10 / 5220042 / 538984
3 - 10 / 5220306 / 538687
4 - 10 / 5220474 / 539145
5 - 10 / 5220377 / 539392
6 - 10 / 5219779 / 539168

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Supplemental Name of Property McChord Field Historic District
County and State Pierce County, WA

For all photographs:
McChord Field Historic District
Tacoma, Washington; Pierce County
Photographer: Lauren McCroskey
Date of Photographs: September 2006
Location of Negatives: Cultural and Natural Resources Office, McChord Air Force Base, Tacoma, Washington, Pierce County

Photo 1 View of landscape down Tuskegee Airmen Boulevard, looking southwest

Photo 2 Large Hangars, 1 & 2, looking north

Photo 3 Large Hangar 2, looking north

Photo 4 "F" Street Bridge, looking southwest

Photo 5 McCarthy Boulevard Bridge, looking northwest

Photo 6 Buildings 14 & 15, looking northeast

Photo 7 Building 17, Sewer Pumping Station

Photo 8 Building 7, Fire and Guard House, looking northeast

Photo 9 Building 7, Fire and Guard House, looking northeast

Photo 10 Building 160, Former Base Hospital, rear elevation, looking northwest

Photo 11 Building 100, Former Air Corps Barracks, looking northwest

Photo 12 Building 100, Former Air Corps Barracks, looking southeast

Photo 13 Building 100, Former Air Corps Barracks, looking southwest

Photo 14 Overview of Non-Commissioned Officers' Housing, looking northwest

Photo 15 Buildings 600-603, Non-Commissioned Officers' Housing, looking northeast

Photo 16 Buildings 600-603, Non-Commissioned Officers' Housing, looking southwest

Photo 17 Buildings 600-603, Non-Commissioned Officers' Housing, rear elevation, looking east

Photo 18 Buildings 400, 420, Officers' Housing, looking east

Photo 19 Buildings 400, 420, Officers' Housing, rear elevation, looking southeast

Photo 20 Building 709, Quartermaster Warehouse, looking east

Photo 21 Building 707, Quartermaster Maintenance, looking northwest

Photo 22 Building 734, Heating Plant, looking east

Photo 23 Building 734, Heating Plant, looking east

Figure 1.
Prior to construction, much of the land to be occupied by McChord Field was cleared of trees and vegetation, and re-engineered to its present configuration. Some clusters of native evergreen and deciduous trees were left standing and incorporated into the plat.

Figure 2.

Aerial view of McChord Field, ca. 1942. Note the regular placement of street trees along former Central Avenue (Tuskegee Airmen Avenue), throughout the officers' housing, and along Main Street (at left). This view also reveals the accommodation of existing native trees, notable as the larger mature trees randomly dispersed throughout the site. Also note the occurrence of large deciduous trees at the left side of the parade ground, in front of the former barracks (building 100).

Figure 3.
Aerial view of the newly constructed officers' housing, 1938. The two units at right are officers' housing; the four at left are non-commissioned officer's housing.

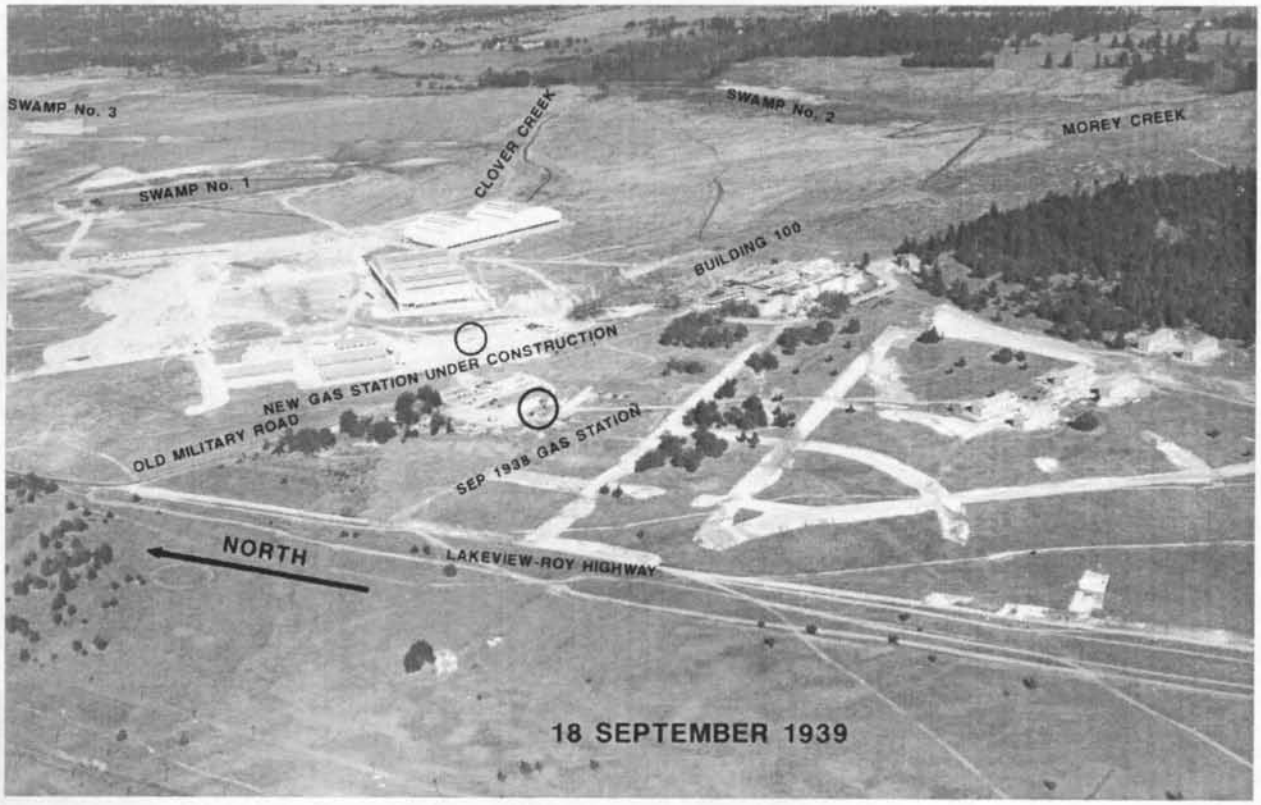


Figure 4.
Aerial view of McChord Field under construction, 1939. At this time Clover Creek and three swamps (upper photo) presented obstacles to the planned runways and warming aprons. Clover Creek was rerouted to the approximate location of the Military Road, and the swamps were filled in.

Figure 5.
Construction photo showing one of the area's oldest Euro American roads, Military Road that ran along the tree line (upper right), and was partially eclipsed with the construction of building 100.

Figure 6.
This 1939 aerial view depicts the massive land transformation undertaken to construct McChord Field. Note the re-channeling of Clover Creek (left) and the land profile cut away to build the quartermaster's warehouses.

Figure 7.
The former hospital (building 160) shown here in 1941 has changed little, in spite of its conversion to new service. The elipse and garages at left remain.

Figure 8.
Construction view of the Officers' Quarters located at the northeast end of 8th Street.
Note the full gables used here to distinguish these dwellings from the
Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters depicted in Figure 9.

Figure 9.
Construction view of the Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters, which differ slightly from the Officers' Quarters in their clipped shingled gables. Here the gables are shown painted a dark color for distinction.

Figure 10.
This photo, circa 1948, depicts the northeast elevation with the typical period use of evergreen foundation plantings placed close to the building perimeter. A young Sitka spruce is at right. Several spruce were planted as corner accents around the building, though as of this writing, many are stressed and deteriorating.

Figure 11.
Detail of the northeast elevation, ca. 1948, revealing the placement of evergreen plantings at the ribs between window spandrels. The plantings do not exist as of this writing.

Figure 12.
Circa 1950 view of the southwest elevation, which was originally the front elevation until 2005 renovations. This view also depicts an original deciduous tree (at left) that was accommodated from the natural landscape when the building was constructed in 1939. The flat-roofed entrance roofs, visible above, had been added by this time.

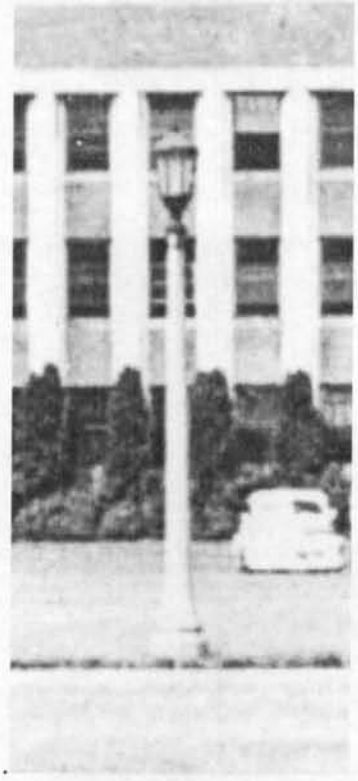
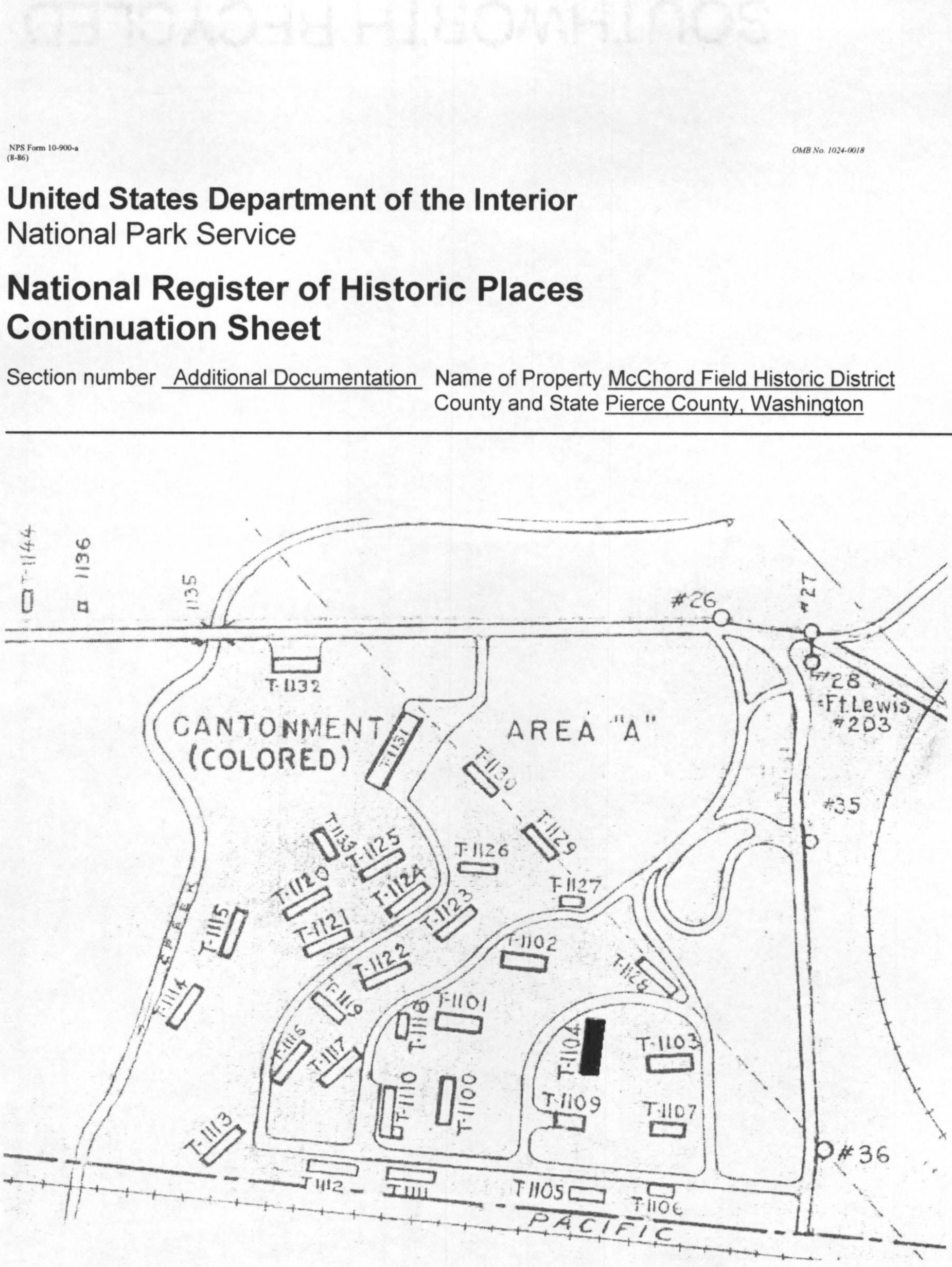


Figure 13.
Detail of Figure 3. revealing the original light standard with original metal and glass lanterns that have been replaced by plain globes through the district.

Figure 14.
This view of the inner courtyard of building no. 100, ca. 1950, shows the original landscape design behind the dining hall, which incorporated a flower edged pond with simulated rockwork paths leading to three wings.
None of these elements remain today.



< NORTH

Figure 15.
Cantonment A Labeled, "Colored." The darkened building, T-1104, was until recently, the sole remainder of the segregated cantonment.
(Source: Site Layout, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District, 1941.)

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Name of Property McChord Field Historic District
County and State Pierce County, Washington

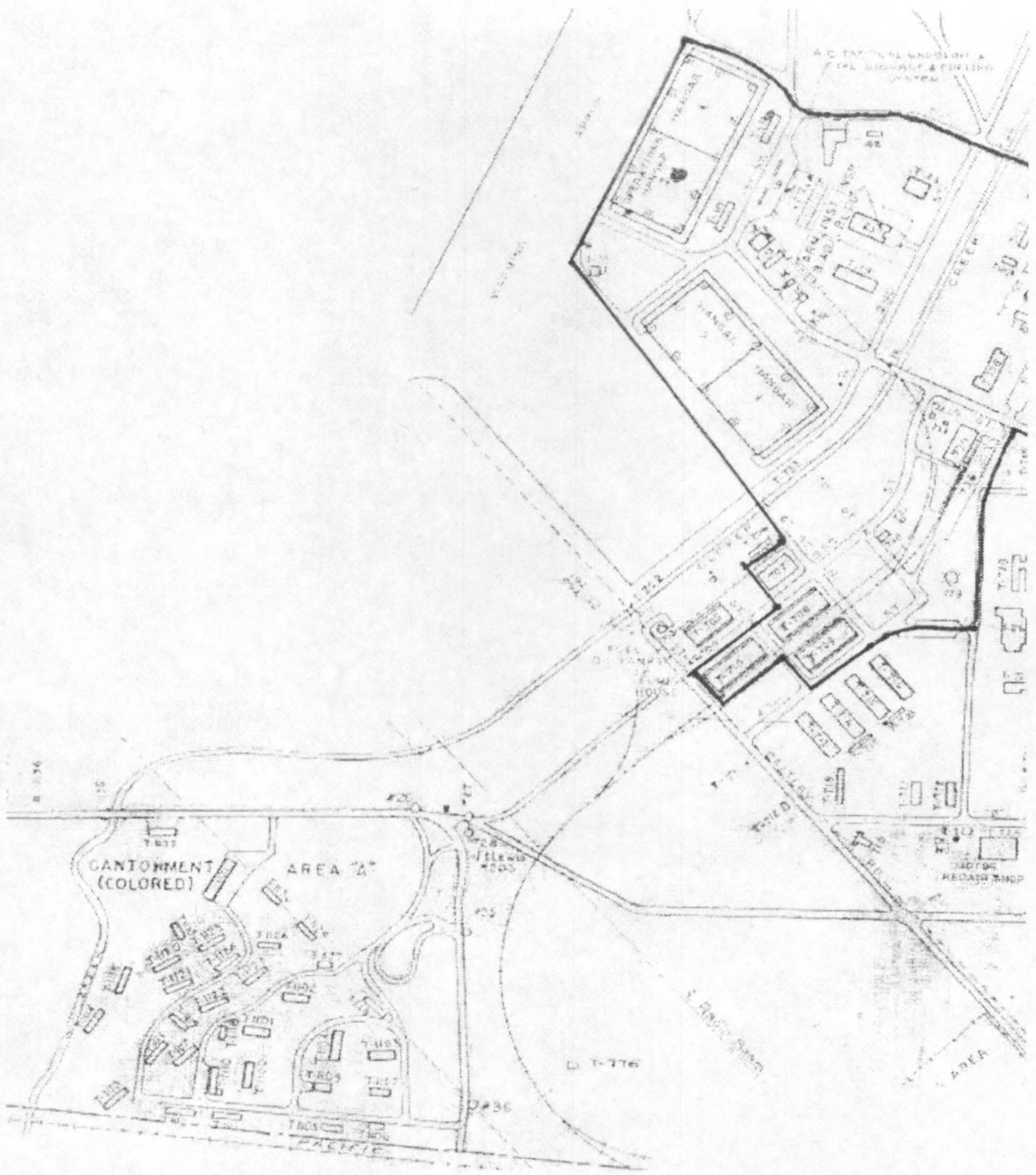


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Figure 16.
The proposed boundaries for the McChord Field Historic District are shown in relation to Area A where Tuskegee Airmen were housed in the "Colored Cantonment," lower left.

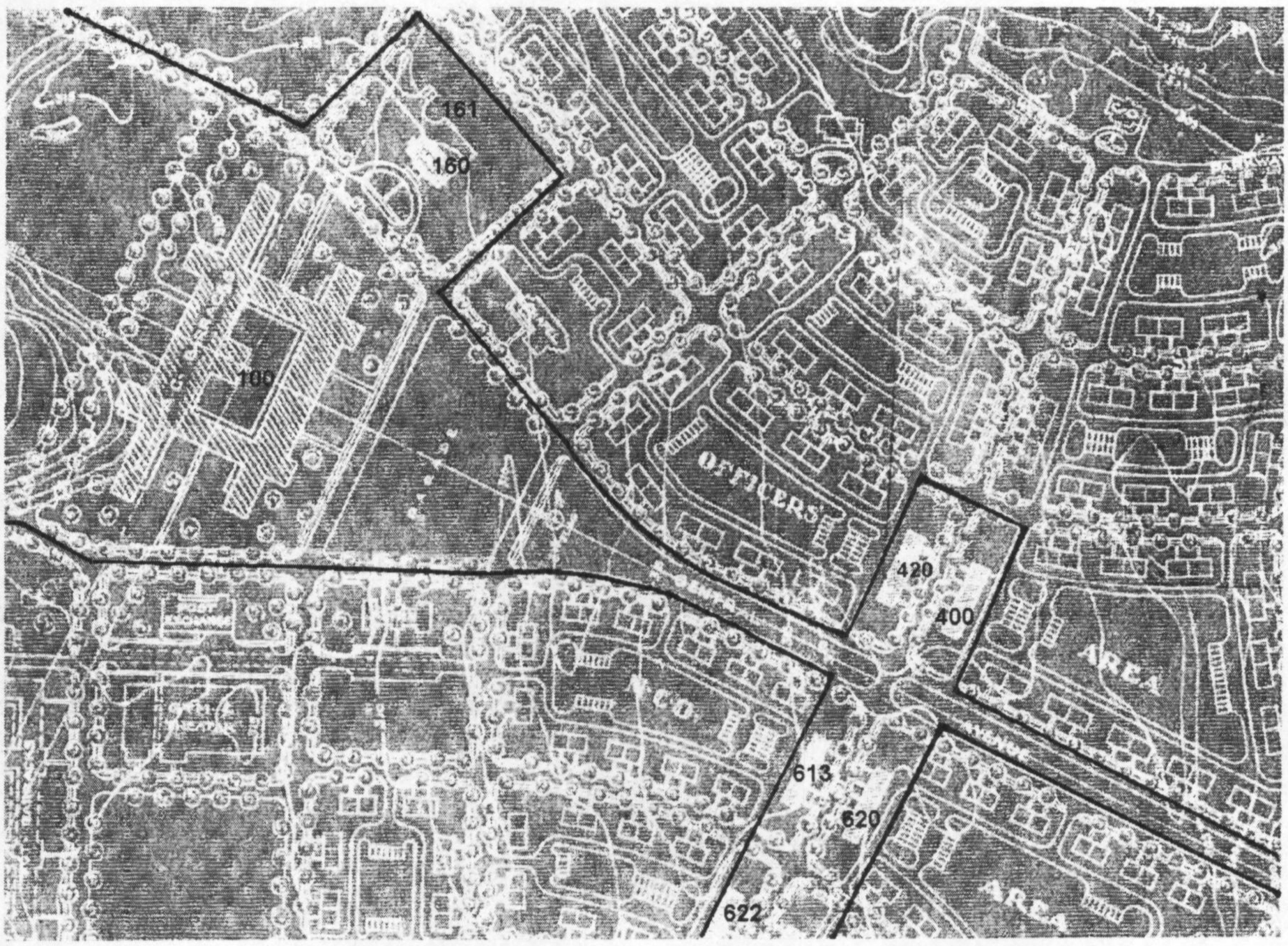

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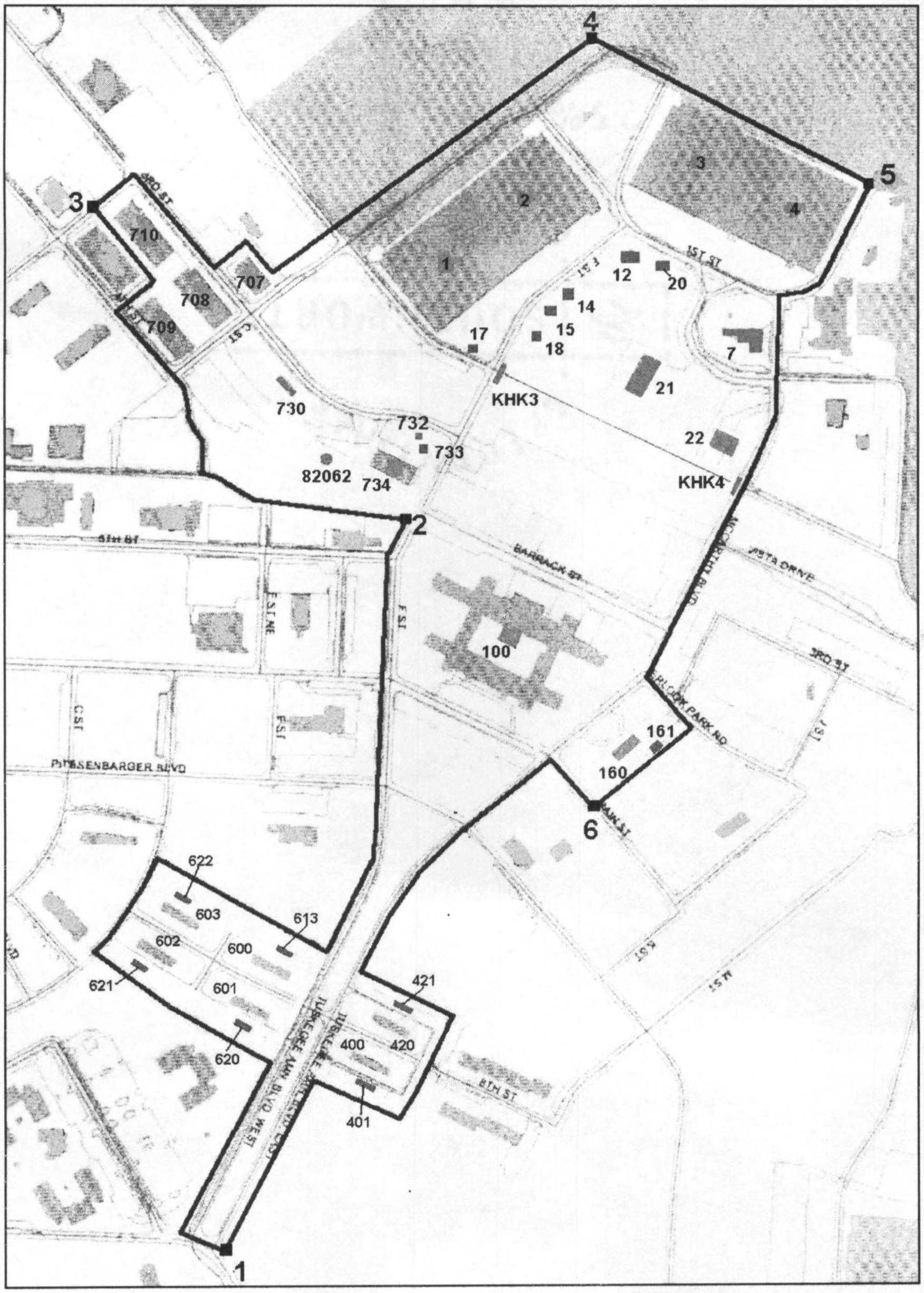
Figure 17.

The proposed district boundaries overlay a section of the Layout Plan, Quartermaster General showing a consistent theme of street trees along all street margins. Not all areas of this plan were developed (particularly the platted area southeast of the officers' area), though former Central Avenue and the margins around the former barracks (no. 100) reflect this scheme today. Note also the deliberate use of accent trees – horse chestnut and Sitka spruce trees – close in to building no. 100. These mature planting remains today, though some are stressed and in decline.

(Plan on file at McChord AFB Natural/Cultural Resources Office.)



^ **NORTH** **Scale: 1" = approx. 800 feet**

McChord Field Historic District Sketch Map

District properties are darkened and identified with building numbers.
Boundary points are numbered 1 -- 6.

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#1

1
2

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#2

2

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#3

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#4

4

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#5

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#6

1

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#7

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#8

926 SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#9

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#10

AIRLIFT WING

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#11

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#12

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#13

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#14

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#15

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
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Pierce Co. WA
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McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#21

McChord Field HD
Pierce Co. WA
#22

McChord Field HD

Pierce Co. WA

#23