

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 an 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 Wells Historic District

other name/site number

2. Location

street name Roughly bounded by 700 East, State St., 1300 South, and 2100 South not for publication

city or town Salt Lake City vicinity

state Utah code UT county Salt Lake code 035 zip code 84105 and 84106

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other, (explain:)

Signature lines for the Keeper and Date of Action.

Wells Historic District  
Name of Property

Salt Lake County, Utah  
City, County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1923	905	buildings
1	0	sites
		structures
		objects
1924	905	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

3

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling, Hotel
- DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling
- DOMESTIC: Hotel
- RELIGION: Religious Facility
- EDUCATION: School
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Warehouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Monument/Marker

**Current Function**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
- DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling
- DOMESTIC: Hotel
- RELIGION: Religious Facility
- EDUCATION: College
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty store and restaurant
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Warehouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Monument/Marker

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- MID-19TH CENTURY: Greek Revival, Classical
- LATE VICTORIAN: Victorian Eclectic, Victorian, Shingle
- LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival
- LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Prairie School, Bungalow/Craftsman, Commercial Style
- MODERN MOVEMENT: Minimal Traditional, Ranch Style, Contemporary

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation CONCRETE, SANDSTONE
- walls BRICK, VENEER, WOOD, STUCCO, ASBESTOS, STONE, CONCRETE, ALUMINUM, OTHER
- roof ASPHALT SHINGLE, WOOD SHAKE, ALUMINUM
- other METAL (STRUCTURAL)

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Wells Historic District  
Name of Property

Salt Lake County, Utah  
City, County and State

### 8. Description

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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.
- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT \_\_\_\_\_

TRANSPORTATION \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Period of Significance

1871-1957 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Significant Dates

1847, 1859, 1890, 1891, 1905-1928, 1929, 1944, 1957 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A \_\_\_\_\_

#### Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American \_\_\_\_\_

#### Architect/Builder

VARIOUS INCLUDING: JOHN A. HAEDLUND, THOMAS CAMPBELL, HYRUM JENSEN, J.A. FRITSCH, PHILIP FINEGAN, F.A. VIRTUE, EDWARD HACKETT, WILLIAM HUBBARD, ARCHELAUS FILLINGAN \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency: Utah Dept. of Transportation
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Wells Historic District  
Name of Property

Salt Lake County, Utah  
City, County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 591 acre(s)

#### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

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

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

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

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No. – VARIOUS

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sheri Murray Ellis, NRHP/NHPA Sr. Project Manager/Historian  
organization SWCA Environmental Consultants date October 20, 2009  
street & number 257 E. 200 S., Ste. 200 telephone 801.322.4307  
city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84111

#### 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/title DISTRICT NOMINATION – MULTIPLE OWNERS  
street & number N/A telephone N/A  
city or town N/A state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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### Narrative Description

The Wells Historic District is a residential neighborhood, composed primarily of single-family homes, located immediately south of Liberty Park and south of downtown Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah. It is bordered on all sides by substantial transportation corridors: 700 East (on the east), 2100 South (on the south), State Street (on the west), and 1300 South (on the north). Although these boundary roadways have seen extensive modern development, the vast majority of the area between them retains its historic suburban quality due to its tree-lined streets, uniform setbacks, well-preserved architecture, and the similarity of scale in the housing stock. By far, most buildings were constructed during the first three decades of the twentieth century; thus the district is notable for its collection of Bungalow variations and Eclectic Victorian and Period Revival residences. Bungalows are the architectural strength of the neighborhood, comprising the single largest category of building forms and styles in the district. The most common alterations to buildings in the district are the application of stucco or aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos (also pressboard) siding and the replacement of original windows. Many of the contributing homes from the period have additions, frequently built during the historic period but also representing modern alterations.

The Wells Historic District encompasses approximately 61 acres spread over roughly 100 blocks containing individual lots of various sizes. This area is comprised of many small-scale subdivisions intermingled with individually built homes. Residential construction in the area began on a limited basis in the late 1880s, grew substantially between 1900 and the stock market crash of 1929, and by the late 1930s much of the area had been developed. Development increased slightly during World War II, and after the war construction occurred in only small pockets due to a lack of vacant land. Minimal construction continues into the present and consists of additions to existing structures as well as tear-down projects in which older structures are demolished to accommodate new construction. Many of the newer structures being constructed serve city and community purposes as well as provide low to moderate income multiple housing units.

The distribution of housing types and styles within the district echoes the broad time span over which construction occurred within the district but also clearly illustrates the periods of boom and bust in construction. All but approximately 1 percent of the properties in the district are residential properties, and among these, nearly 94 percent are single-family residential structures. The remaining 6 percent of the historic residences are multi-family properties, including an excellent array of double houses and duplexes representing a variety of time periods and architectural styles. A total of 23 historic commercial properties and 5 historic churches are also present, as are one historic school building and a commemorative park.

The Wells Historic District contains 2,829 documented primary buildings, of which the majority (2,639 or 93 percent) were constructed during the historical period (e.g., built during or before 1957). Of the 2,829 total buildings, 68 percent (1,924) contribute to the historical character of the district. Of the 905 buildings that do not contribute to the district, 715 are historical structures that have been substantively altered, and 190 are out-of-period structures, primarily built during the 1960s and 1970s. Three properties, all associated with the Wilford Woodruff Family, are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These are the Wilford Woodruff Farm House at 1604 South 500 East (listed July 14, 1982; NRIS No. 82004152); Woodruff Villa at 1622 South 500 East (listed July 14, 1982; NRIS No. 82004150); and the Asahel Hart Woodruff House at 1636 South 500 East (listed July 14, 1982; NRIS No. 82004151).

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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Twenty-four percent (475) of the contributing properties have not only primary structures but also outbuildings present on the property, for a total of 481 contributing outbuildings in the district. Most of the outbuildings are small, detached single-car garages, though small sheds and workshops are also present. Most retain their physical integrity, and they contribute to the visual unity of the district in a general way.

All of the streets within the district are paved with asphalt and most are lined with concrete curbs, gutters, and sidewalks [Photographs 1, 2, and 3]. Mid-block alleys are present within most of the blocks to provide access to the rear of the residential properties where the detached garages and outbuildings are most commonly located [Photograph 4]. The street layout within the district is mostly rectilinear (with some blocks running lengthwise north-south and some running east-west). This layout is different from the dominant square grid-like nature of downtown Salt Lake City that was established upon the first settlement of the valley. The Wells area was originally platted during the mid 1800s as part of the Big Field, a mainly agricultural area, with plats ranging from 5- to 80-acre parcels. In the 1880s sections of the Big Field began to be divided into smaller, residential-sized blocks that were soon platted as subdivisions by developers from outside of Utah, who brought alternative concepts of community development and design to the area. Thus, the lot and block layout of Wells and similarly platted areas is clearly distinct from areas platted earlier under the Plat of the City of Zion construct of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) who founded Salt Lake City.

With a few exceptions around the boundaries of the district, the Wells area is visually cohesive, with various styles of Late Victorian and Early 20th Century American style residences tying together the different areas of the neighborhood and providing aesthetic continuity within the district. This visual cohesion easily distinguishes the Wells Historic District from the surrounding neighborhoods to the south and west and to a certain degree from those to the north and east. Individual subdivisions within the district exhibit the different architectural focus of developers at the time each subdivision was developed, with some subdivisions dominated by Bungalows, others by Victorian Cross-wings, others by Period Cottages and Clipped Gable Cottages, and still others by World War II Era Cottages. Other subdivisions exhibit a more eclectic collection of architectural types and styles, reflecting the greater period of time over which the subdivision was developed. Despite the individuality of the various subdivisions, the housing stock within them represents a limited number of architectural types and styles that are present throughout the entire district and tie the entire area together.

Historic infill construction of single-family homes from the 1940s and 1950s is evident throughout the district but contributes, rather than detracts from the district, because the massing of the structures are consistent throughout the area, and these later structures represent a key period in the subdivision's history, when most of the lots had been developed and only a few remained available for new construction. More recent (1960s+) infill projects, on the other hand, have introduced large, multi-family apartments, commercial buildings, and other structures, the scale of which is not in keeping with the rest of the district. This is particularly evident along the boundary streets of the district and is less common in the interior. Residential landscape is present throughout most of the district and is characterized by mature trees, which line the parking strips of most streets in the neighborhood. Planned or designed public landscaping is generally absent in the area except for First Encampment Park, a small park commemorating the approximate location of the first campsite of Mormon pioneers upon entering the Salt Lake Valley.

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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Historic, and modern, commercial development is largely centered on the major through-streets within the district: State Street, 1300 South, 700 East, 1700 South, and 2100 South. Away from these corridors, commercial development consisted of individual specialty shops, such as small groceries, scattered among residential structures. Many of these small shops arose as additions to residential structures, with the store front abutting the sidewalk and the residential structure set back from it.

### Survey Methods and Eligibility Requirements

Buildings were classified as either contributing or non-contributing to the district based upon the results of a reconnaissance level survey of the Wells area in 2007.<sup>1</sup> Each building was evaluated for its contributory status using a set of integrity criteria (i.e., a rating system) established by the Utah State Historic Preservation Office.<sup>2</sup> This rating system is as follows:

- A – Eligible/significant: built within the historic period and retains integrity; excellent example of a style or type; unaltered or only minor alterations or additions; individually eligible for the National Register under criterion "C", architectural significance; also, buildings of known historical significance.
- B – Eligible: built within the historic period and retains integrity; good example of a style or type, but not as well-preserved as "A"-rated buildings, though overall integrity is retained; properties may have some alterations or minor additions.
- C – Ineligible: built during the historic period but has had major alterations or additions; no longer retains integrity.
- D – Out-of-Period: constructed outside the historical period<sup>3</sup>.

Evaluations of individual buildings were based primarily on the known or estimated age of the structure and its architectural integrity (e.g., evaluations were based on physical characteristics of the buildings observable from public property, where access to the private property was not granted by the landowner). The tax assessment records for the properties were also consulted to identify/confirm probable construction dates.

The assessment of historical integrity for individual buildings was carried out within the context of the collective architectural nature of the entire district. That is, over the course of the survey, it became apparent what array of material types, window types, in-period additions, and other historical characteristics were common to buildings of particular types and time periods. Buildings that deviated from these norms in terms of their modifications were given greater scrutiny relative to their historical integrity.

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, Sheri Murray. *A Reconnaissance Level Survey of Liberty Wells, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah*. Final Report, October 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Utah State Historic Preservation Office. *Reconnaissance Level Surveys, Standard Operating Procedures*. Salt Lake City: Utah State Historic Preservation Office, Rev. January 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Historical period defined as 1957 or earlier based upon 50 years from the date of the 2007 reconnaissance level survey, for the purpose of this nomination.

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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

When considering integrity and eligibility for individual architectural properties within the study area under the above rating system, several factors were taken into account, including frequency of occurrence of specific property types. For those building types and time periods that are well represented in the architectural record of the community in which the study corridor is located, stricter standards for defining historical integrity are appropriate. Conversely, for those building types and time periods that are not as well-represented, more lenient standards for defining historical integrity are appropriate.

Under stricter standards for defining integrity, fewer modifications of the primary historical building on a property are considered acceptable. Alterations such as enclosing or partially enclosing a porch, enclosing a carport, or converting an attached garage to additional living space, are considered unacceptable if the alteration causes the individual building to be visually distinctive from other buildings of its same type and style within the study area. Out-of-period additions are generally considered to be an adverse impact on the historical building's integrity.

Under the stricter criteria, modification of the fenestration (enclosing or changing the size and shape of door and window openings) is considered a significant impact to the structure's integrity. Finally, the use of aluminum or vinyl siding is considered an acceptable alteration only if the siding is of sufficient width to replicate historical clapboard, horizontal plank, or drop siding, and the application of the siding does not eliminate or reduce the aesthetic impact of architectural detailing around windows, doors, eaves, and other elements of the building. The application of other non-historical siding or exterior wall treatments is considered a significant impact unless the materials sufficiently replicate historical treatments in the overall appearance of buildings of the particular type and style to which they are applied.

Under more lenient standards of integrity, more substantial modifications are considered acceptable before integrity is lost. In order to be considered eligible under the more lenient standards, the primary historical building must retain sufficient integrity to represent the era in which it was constructed. The building's overall form and massing must be discernable despite additions and other modifications of the structure. Out-of-period additions may be considered acceptable if the original form of the building is still decipherable. Under the more lenient standards, window and door openings may be enclosed, but their original form and size must remain discernable. Modification of exterior wall treatments, such as the application of modern aluminum or vinyl siding, is considered acceptable if the new treatment replicates historically appropriate treatments for the given building type and style represented by the property.

### **Architectural Styles, Types, and Materials by Period**

#### Farms and Fields (1847 to 1870)

Prior to the platting of the Wells area beginning in the 1880s, the area, which was part of the Big Field, was only sparsely settled and primarily contained agricultural fields and communal livestock grazing areas. Extant buildings from this period in the district's history are exceptionally rare. Only one known permanent residence from this time period, built between 1859 and 1860, remains standing in the Wells area today. This building is known as the Woodruff Farm House (1604 South 500 East) [Photograph 5] and belonged to Wilford Woodruff, who later became president of the LDS Church. The farmhouse, which exhibits simple Classical styling, was constructed of logs and is of the double-pen plan with a rear extension that results in an overall saltbox profile.



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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

The building was later clad in stucco siding. Very few buildings were constructed in the Wells area during this time period, and all but the Woodruff Farm House were demolished to make room for later construction projects or have been so heavily modified over time that they are no longer recognizable as representatives of this period.

With rare exceptions, buildings constructed during this period were single cell or hall and parlor structures built from logs, adobe brick, and/or stone. During the earliest part of the period, semi-subterranean dugouts were common along foothills and terraces but less so in the flat lands of the Salt Lake Valley bottoms.

The Wells Historic District includes one contributing site, First Encampment Park [Photograph 6]. The park, developed in 1997, is located on the corner of 1700 South and 500 East and commemorates the approximate location of the first campsite used by Mormon pioneers when they first arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847 and determined to settle the area.

### Initial Settlement (1871 to 1899)

The development of the streetcar system in the Salt Lake Valley in the early 1870s and the platting of the Big Field ca. 1890 spurred speculation by land developers. These developers purchased large tracts of land, platted subdivisions, and began promoting the establishment of the first real suburbs in Salt Lake City. At least 31 subdivisions, the majority of subdivisions in the Wells District, were platted during the late 1880s and 1890s. Actual development of the subdivisions was slow at first, but as the streetcar system expanded and reliable service was established in the area, more residents eschewed urban living for the still semi-rural atmosphere of the Wells area. Housing and commercial development in Wells during this period was most intense along the northern periphery of the area, the nearest area to the services of downtown Salt Lake City, during the early part of the period and closest to new streetcar lines along the margins of the neighborhood during the latter part of the period.

During this time, simple Classical styling in architecture slowly gave way to more elaborate Victorian styles across the state.<sup>4</sup> Cross-wing structures in variants of "T-" and "L-cottages" and double cross-wings along with other typically Victorian forms such as rectangular blocks and central-blocks-with-projecting-bays became popular throughout Utah during these last decades of the nineteenth century and continued in their popularity through the early twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> While some of the early versions of these structures saw little in the way of exterior adornment, others were endowed with the comparatively fancy dressings of the Queen Anne, Eastlake, Romanesque Revival, Victorian Eclectic, or other late Victorian styles.

Sixty-three (63) contributing properties are associated with this time period in the history of the Wells Historic District. Examples of Classical architecture are understandably rare, as little development occurred in the area during the early part of the period when Classical styles were popular. Only three contributing buildings from this period exhibit elements of Classical style, and these are, at best, muted examples such as the cornice return and denticulated cornice molding of the central block with projecting bays residence at 1781 South 500 East [Photograph 7], which was constructed at the very end of the period in 1899.

<sup>4</sup> Carter, Thomas and Peter Goss. *Utah's Historic Architecture, 1847 -1940: A Guide*. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press. 1988.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

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Victorian architecture dominates the housing stock from this period. Of the 63 contributing properties from this period, approximately 42 (67 percent) are buildings representing Victorian forms and styles. Side-passage/side-entry residences and central-blocks-with-projecting-bays are equally common among the contributing properties of the period, with foursquare residences, various forms of cross-wings, and one Victorian double house/duplex also present. Most of these buildings reflect what can best be described as Eclectic Victorian style or vernacular expressions of Victorian styles. Shotgun residences were also constructed within Wells during this period, reflecting flexibility in the building "codes" and use of a variety of different designers and contractor/builders, though no contributing examples of such properties are present in the area today.

Three major examples of the Late Victorian architecture from this period are the Woodruff Villa (built ca. 1897), the Septimus W. Sears House (built ca. 1892), and the Dawes House (built ca. 1897). The Woodruff Villa, located at 1622 South 500 East [Photograph 8], is a 2-½ story central-block-with-projecting-bays residence exhibiting Eclectic Victorian elements with an emphasis on the Eastlake and Queen Anne styles. The Sears House, located at 1902 South 400 East [Photograph 9], is also a 2-½ story central-block-with-projecting-bays residence exhibiting Eclectic Victorian style, as is the Dawes House, located at 1590 South 500 East [Photograph 10].

The Woodruff, Sears, and Dawes houses were exceptionally large and ostentatious for the Big Field area and are atypical examples of the average homes of the period, which were largely comprised of simpler structures. More common housing stock is represented by the 1898 brick and shingle central-block-with-projecting-bays residence at 1463 South Edison Street [Photograph 11]; the 1893 brick and shingle side-passage residence at 1455 South Edison Street [Photograph 12]; the 1892 cross-wing residence at 131 East Downingtown Avenue [Photograph 13]; and the 1898 brick foursquare residence at 350 East Wilson Avenue [Photograph 14]. While many duplexes are present in the district, only one contributing example of a Victorian duplex was identified. This single-story brick building, built in 1887, is located at 1618 South Park Street [Photograph 15].

Regular brick and shingle siding were the predominant construction materials for houses built during this time period. Occasional wood frame examples are also present, and many buildings from this period have been clad in stucco during the modern era. Sandstone and concrete foundations are typical among the housing stock; with concrete foundations becoming far more common toward the end of the period.

### Streetcar Suburbs (1900 to 1929)

The streetcar system continued to be a key factor in shaping the pattern of development of Wells during the early decades of the 1900s and can rightfully be seen as *the* single greatest impetus for a boom in construction during this period. Beginning in the early 1900s, a series of developments in electrical power generation and a realization among competing transit operators that their companies would fare better if they joined forces rather than each carving out a small piece of the market, caused several operators to merge their transit system, which created more powerful companies that had the ability to expand streetcar routes throughout Salt Lake City.

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By 1919, streetcar lines extended along the east and west boundaries of the Wells area as well as into the heart of the neighborhood along 400 East. The presence of the lines through the area was a major selling point for land developers who painted a bucolic image of suburban living outside the polluted area downtown Salt Lake City and championed the convenience afforded by the streetcar in advertisements for their subdivisions. The promotions worked, and thousands of individuals and families flocked to the area, most with a particular desire to purchase houses along or near the streetcar lines. This meant that the greatest amount of development, both commercial and residential, occurred along the major streetcar corridors of State Street, 400 East, and 700 East, particularly in the early part of the period; later in the period, construction was well distributed throughout the district. Public facility development, including county infirmary (since demolished), also took advantage of the streetcar lines along State Street.

More than three-quarters (approximately 1,479) of all contributing buildings in the Wells Historic District were constructed during this period, primarily within subdivisions constructed adjacent to streetcar lines. All but four of these properties are residential structures. Four main architectural forms, adorned with a variety of different styles, dominate the built environment of the area. These include bungalows (the most common), foursquares, period cottages, and late versions of central-block-with-projecting-bays residences. Examples of this latter form as well as many foursquare residences took on decidedly more pronounced bungalow characteristics than the Victorian styles associated with them during the previous period in the district's history.

Truly early architectural forms, such as rectangular block and shotgun residences became less common in the area while forms such as the foursquare, which persisted in popularity in Utah until the 1910s, became more common. Toward the middle part of the period, the new, home-grown American architectural form, the bungalow, rose in popularity in Utah. These bungalows were ubiquitous in the streetcar suburbs of Salt Lake City, with the period from approximately 1915 to 1925 representing the height of their popularity in such locations. In general, the Wells bungalows from this period conformed to the generic, mass production version of the form, which exhibited very little in the way of exterior adornment and maintained only the basic characteristics of the prototypical bungalow.

Of the 1,479 contributing properties in the district from this period, nearly 32 percent (614) are bungalow variations. Myriad styles were applied to the bungalow form, though most commonly they were unadorned and simply exhibited the basic bungalow characteristics of a low-slung roof, heavy porch, and deep eaves as represented by the 1918 and 1924 residences at 628 East Wilson Avenue [Photograph 16] and 156 East 1700 South [Photograph 17]. Others received greater stylistic treatment with details from the Arts and Crafts style, as seen in the 1916 residence at 305 East 1700 South [Photograph 18] and the Prairie School style, as seen in the 1923 residence at 1883 South 300 East [Photograph 19].

Many bungalows built during the latter part of the period and overlapping into the early part of the next period incorporated Colonial Revival elements and clipped gables, resulting in a distinct form referred to locally as the Clipped Gable Cottage. The 1924 residence at 1948 South 300 East [Photograph 20] and the ca. 1925 residence at 535 East Browning Avenue [Photograph 21] are good examples of such architecture.

Toward the latter part of this period, a small number of period cottages were constructed within Wells (105 contributing properties). The vast majority were constructed after 1923. Such cottages were another very popular architectural form constructed by developers within the streetcar suburbs. Nearly all of the cottages

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were constructed of brick, mostly striated brick, and many exhibited designs that were conducive to "mass production" within subdivisions. These designs frequently incorporated only the very basic period revival elements such as multiple steeply pitched gables. Others incorporated elements of English Tudor and English Cottage design. Examples of such buildings include the 1928 residence at 562 East Browning Avenue [Photograph 22] and the 1929 residence at 428 East Cleveland Avenue [Photograph 23].

Variations on the period cottage plan also appeared in large numbers in Wells during this period, though more were constructed during the subsequent period. This variation blended the rectangular plan and heavy porches of bungalows with moderately steep gables and Period Revival decoration. The 1923 residence at 563 East Cleveland Avenue [Photograph 24] is typical of such structures. Buildings of this nature are most prevalent in the west-central portion of the district.

In addition to the many single-family dwellings that are associated with this period district's history are several double houses (duplexes). These double houses are somewhat unique within streetcar suburbs such as Wells, as they represent higher density housing that was typically found in more urban settings. However, several streetcar suburbs around downtown Salt Lake City are known to have included a surprising number of such multi-family residences, including Wells and nearby Forest Dale. Roughly two dozen contributing double houses representing this period are present in the district. Most, such as the ca. 1912 property at 661 East Downington Avenue [Photograph 25] and the 1928 property at 604 East Kensington Avenue [Photograph 26], exhibit elements of Period Revival style. Others, such as the 1924 residences at 665 East Downington Avenue [Photograph 27], incorporated the highly popular Bungalow style.

Construction of the most notable public building in the district, the former South High School building, began at the very end of the period, in 1929. The Period Revival-inspired building [Photograph 28] was constructed on the northeast corner of 1700 South and State Street between 1929 and 1931 and remains in use today as the main Salt Lake Community College campus.

Commercial development continued to be focused along the major roadways of State Street, 1300 South, 1700 South, 2100 South, and 700 East. Typical 1-Part Block commercial buildings, such as the 1926 O.P. Skaggs grocery building at 1435 South State Street [Photograph 29] were most common along these thoroughfares; however, small, neighborhood groceries and specialty stores were also built during this period, most frequently as commercial additions to residential structures. The ca. 1917 property at 405-407 East 1700 South [Photograph 30] is a good example of this phenomenon.

Brick was by far the most common building material used in structures from this period. Regular, fired brick continued in high frequencies, but striated brick clearly began to rise in popularity as a preferred material given its relatively extensive use on houses within the district as well as in other contemporary residential developments.

### The Era of Infilling (1930 to 1945)

Housing construction decreased dramatically during the Great Depression. Throughout the Salt Lake Valley, new house starts dwindled to record low numbers as financing became increasingly difficult to obtain. Fewer than 200 (10 percent) of the contributing buildings remaining in the Wells area today were constructed

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between 1930 and 1945. Construction during this period was distributed throughout the district and mostly consisted of small-scale subdivisions and individual buildings on the few remaining open lots in the area. The relative number of multi-family housing units to single-family houses increased during this period, as renting versus buying became the norm for cash-strapped residents. Of the nearly 200 contributing properties from this period, 12 (approximately 6 percent) are multi-family units. This is in comparison to a proportion of multi-family unit to single family units of just over 3 percent of all contributing buildings during the previous period in the district's history.

While Period Cottages continued in popularity during the early years of the period, they soon gave way to more modern forms, including World War II Era Cottages. The transition between the two forms is evident in residences such as the 1936 home at 339 East Sherman Avenue [Photograph 31], which possess a roof pitch between the steep pitch of a Period Cottage and the moderate to shallow pitch of a World War II Era Cottage and muted elements of Period Revival ornamentation on a World War II Era Cottage plan.

The World War II Era Cottage forms present in Wells are primarily small, simple residences with a basic rectangular plan oriented with the long axis parallel to the street. Most are only minimally adorned and have narrow to absent eaves. The 1945 residence at 471 East Wilson Avenue [Photograph 32] is a good example of the typical unadorned World War II Era Cottage in the district. Others have slight eaves and incorporate elements of Colonial Revival design; this combination of elements is often referred to as Minimal Traditional style. The ca. 1940 residence at 1413 South 400 East [Photograph 33] is typical of such buildings.

Other cottages of the period were constructed with square or square with projecting bays plans and low-slung hipped roofs more common to bungalows of earlier periods, though the deep Bungalow style eaves are absent. The 1942 residence at 162 East Wilson Avenue [Photograph 34] is representative of such buildings in Wells.

As noted, multi-family housing was more common as a ratio of all new housing construction in this period than in previous periods. Examples of such housing in Wells can be seen in the 1936 and 1945 double houses at 508 East Cleveland Avenue (1445 South 500 East) [Photograph 35] and 1331-1333 South 600 East [Photograph 36]. As can be seen from these two examples, multi-family housing constructed early in the period exhibited the more common Period Revival style while such properties constructed later in the period took on the elements of more modern styles, such as Minimal Traditional and Early Ranch – the latter of which did not appear in earnest in Wells until after World War II.

Public and commercial construction was relatively limited during this period. The Art Deco South High School campus, construction of which began in 1929, was completed early in this period, and a new form of commercial property, the motor lodge, appeared late in the period. The Zion's Motel was opened in 1939 at 1829 South State Street [Photograph 37] and was one of the earliest motels in the area to cater to the growing popularity of the automobile in American culture and the emergence of the "road trip" as a specific type of leisure activity. The motel exhibits Period Revival style.

Brick continued as a popular construction material, but frame construction and aluminum siding began to overtake it during the latter part of the period. Other cladding materials such as asbestos shingles also grew in use.

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### The Post War Era (1946 to 1957)

The Wells area continued to grow and change following the close of World War II; however, the entire area, for all intents and purposes, had been developed on some level prior to the 1960s. Redevelopment occurred on a limited basis during the 1960s and 1970s. Older single family homes were demolished and replaced with multi-family dwellings or small commercial ventures such as convenience stores or small walk-up stores. In some cases, former residential buildings were converted into commercial enterprises. The larger and more trafficked streets, such as State Street, 2100 South, and portions of 1300 South and 1700 South have seen the most redevelopment within the Wells area.

One hundred and forty-seven (147, or 8 percent) contributing buildings affiliated with this time period are present within the district. Most are single-family residential structures in variations of World War II Era Cottage and Ranch/Rambler forms. By the early 1950s, the small, World War II Era Cottage plan was extended, making it longer, and cross-gables and cross-gable bays were added to create early versions of the Ranch house form. As time progressed, the plan was extended even further and took on the trappings of the more typical tract house version of the Ranch/Rambler form established in California by Clifford May. A good example of post-war World War II Era Cottages in Wells can be seen in the 1950 residence at 519 East Emerson Avenue [Photograph 38], while a good example of the tract house version of the Ranch/Rambler form can be seen in the 1955 house at 1636 South 200 East [Photograph 39]. Similar characteristics are seen in duplexes of the period, such as the 1948 property at 223-225 East Westminster Avenue [Photograph 40].

Despite the redevelopment, the Wells community continues to retain a residential atmosphere and zoning ordinances allow very limited commercial development in the heart of the community. Historical buildings, such as the ca. 1930 South High School building, which now serves as the Salt Lake Community College campus, are being used rather than replaced. However, this has not always been the case; the apartment buildings at 1488 South 400 East [Photograph 41] and adjacent lots are typical examples of modern (non-historical) multi-family housing that has been constructed in small numbers within the district. With few exceptions, such buildings are scattered individually amongst single-family homes rather than in complexes or clusters. Not only is the massing of these properties out of proportion with the predominantly single-family housing of the rest of the neighborhood, but the focus on accommodating the modern automobile culture results in property configurations that are inconsistent with those of the majority of residential properties; that is, automobile parking is situated in front of or directly adjacent to the buildings whereas the majority of historic properties have garages at the rear of the parcels, accessed by mid-block alley ways. Additionally, because of the narrow but deep nature of the platted lots in Wells, construction of these large apartment complexes required that they be oriented with their long axis perpendicular to the frontage road, creating a situation in which the primary public façade is the side of the building, devoid of doorways, porches, and windows that typify the single-family homes in the rest of the neighborhood.

New commercial construction during this period is designed to accommodate the automobile culture rather than pedestrian traffic. Historical commercial properties such as the 1947 Alta Motel Lodge at 1899 South State Street [Photograph 42] and more recent businesses incorporate parking lots for drive-up traffic where little such need existed prior to World War II. Other, more modern development that has encroached upon the historic character of the district, though only in limited fashion, includes the Catholic elder care facility – St.

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Joseph Villa [Photograph 43] – at 451 East Bishop Federal Lane. Portions of this facility were constructed between 1957 and 1959, and it underwent substantial renovation in the mid 1980s.

Construction materials varied more widely during this period than in previous periods. New material technologies developed during World War II gave way to inexpensive aluminum and other metal siding and a variety of veneers in synthetic materials, including imitation stone veneers developed in the eastern U.S. prior to 1940 but only really becoming popular in Salt Lake City during and after the war. Oversized brick and concrete block are also common in historical buildings from this period. Stucco and stacked stone veneers became popular during the 1990s and have been used to renovate older buildings and clad new ones.

### Architects and Builders

By and large, houses within the streetcar suburbs were constructed by a variety of different contractors using readily available commercial designs or simply constructed buildings based on past experience and accepted practice. Construction contractors were not the only ones contributing to the architectural development of Wells; land merchants, carpenters, and architects also played a large role. Several prominent local land merchants were responsible for the promotion and development of subdivisions between 1900 and 1929. These merchants include **J.A. Fritsch**, developer of the East Capitol and Kensington Subdivisions; **Philip A. Finegan**, developer of the Grand Haven Subdivision; **F.A. Virtue**, developer of the Avondale Park Subdivision; **Edward Hackett**, developer of the Hackett's Addition Subdivisions and; **William Hubbard**, developer of the Thorndyke, North Waterloo, and Waterloo Subdivisions. **Archelaus (Archie) Fillingan**, a builder/contractor, was also active in the Wells area during the late 1910s and early 1920s, primarily in the construction of Bungalows and Clipped Gable Cottages in the eastern part of the district.

**Hyrum J. Jensen**, a prominent local construction contractor was responsible for several Bungalow subdivisions. The Kenwood Subdivisions located along between Milton Avenue and 1700 South, along 300 to 400 East; the Thorndyke Subdivisions located between Westminster Avenue and 2100 South, along 300 to 400 East (which Jensen helped to co-develop); and the collection located along the north side of Redondo Avenue, between 300 and 400 East. **Thomas Campbell** was a local carpenter who was responsible for many residences in the Wells area. Examples of Campbell's work are present along 1700 South and 408 East and 412 East and along Blaine Avenue at 425 East. Philip A. Finegan, a land broker, developed the Grand Haven Subdivision, which encompasses the area from Browning Avenue to Emerson Avenue, between 600 and 700 East.

One prominent local architect, **John A. Haedlund**, an immigrant from Sweden, designed many local, private and public residences in the Salt Lake Valley, including the Immanuel Baptist Church building (401 East 200 South). Haedlund also contributed to the architectural history of the Wells area. Haedlund designed the ca. 1904 foursquare residence at 1538 South 400 East [Photograph 44] with a gambrel roof and Colonial Revival stylistic elements. Educated in Sweden and the U.S. (Chicago), Haedlund ventured west to Kansas City and then to Colorado Springs in the late 1800s, ultimately settling in Salt Lake City around 1889.<sup>6</sup> The George M. Cannon House at 720 East Ashton Avenue in the Forest Dale Historic District southeast of Wells was among

<sup>6</sup> Sargent, Arthur T. *Utah – The Inland Empire*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Books, 1902.

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the first, if not the very first, house designed by Headlund upon his arrival in Salt Lake City.<sup>7</sup> During his time in Salt Lake City, Headlund designed more than 500 buildings in Utah, Idaho, Nebraska, and Wyoming.<sup>8</sup> So exceptional was Headlund's work, that three of his buildings in the Salt Lake Valley are individually listed on the National Register for their architectural merit. These buildings include the 1911 Immanuel Baptist Church at 401 East 200 South (NRIS No. 78002668), the 1906 Woodruff-Riter-Stewart House at 225 North State Street (NRIS No. 79002507), and the 1890 George M. Cannon House (NRIS No. 83004419).

### Summary

The Wells Historic District comprises one of the best and most comprehensive collections of Early 20th Century American residential architecture in Salt Lake City. The array of architectural types and styles present in the district reflects both the protracted period over which the buildings in the district were constructed and the periods of boom and bust in new housing starts; however, it is the extensive collection of bungalows that are the district's strength and which lend the area the unique feeling of a streetcar suburb. The continuous development of the subdivision throughout the historic period lends a visual cohesiveness to the neighborhood, as the transition from earlier to later architectural designs is visible in the district's housing stock, the majority of which is considered contributing to the district. Both historic and modern infill projects are present in the district. The historic examples represent the final phase of full build-out of the Wells area and contribute to the district's overall character. The modern infill projects, on the other hand, are not in keeping with the scale and stylistic continuity of the rest of the district. These structures are relatively rare and do not substantially detract from the integrity of the district. Finally, a variety of architects and builders are represented by the structures of the district and range from local carpenters like Hyrum J. Jensen and Thomas Campbell to nationally known and internationally trained architects such as John Headlund, whose influence and training is visible in the design of other prominent buildings in the Salt Lake Valley.

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<sup>7</sup> Temme, Deborah R. and Roger V. Roper. National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form for the George M. Cannon House, 720 East Ashton Avenue, Salt Lake City, Utah. Utah State Historical Society. 1983.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



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## Statistical Summary of the Wells Historic District Architecture

**Evaluation/Status**

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Non-Contributing</u>
Primary Resources (Total = 2,829)	68% (1,924)	32% (905; 715 altered and 190 out-of-period)
Outbuildings (Total = 1,386)	35% (481)	65% (905)

**Construction Dates**  
(contributing primary resources only; by Periods of significance)

<u>1847-1870</u> <1% (1)	<u>1871-1899</u> 4% (69)	<u>1900-1929</u> 76% (1,479)
<u>1930-1945</u> 12% (228)	<u>1946-1957</u> 8% (147)	

**Original Use**  
(contributing primary resources only)

<u>Single-Family Dwelling</u> 93% (1,784)	<u>Multi-Family Dwelling</u> 5% (100)	<u>Commercial (Gen.)</u> 1% (16)
<u>Unknown</u> <1% (4)	<u>Institutional Housing</u> <1% (3)	<u>Hotel/Motel</u> <1% (3)
<u>Religious Facility</u> <1% (3)	<u>Mixed Comm./Resid.</u> <1% (3)	<u>Religious (General)</u> <1% (2)
<u>Resid. Auxiliary</u> <1% (1)	<u>School</u> <1% (1)	<u>Service Station</u> 0% (1)
<u>Restaurant</u> 0% (1)	<u>Grocery</u> 0% (1)	<u>Business/Office</u> 0% (1)

**Architectural Style**  
(contributing primary resources only)

<u>Bungalow</u> 34%	<u>Victorian Eclectic</u> 12%	<u>Period Revival</u> 11%	<u>Clipped-Gable Cottage</u> 8%
<u>Minimal Traditional</u> 8%	<u>Prairie School</u> 7%	<u>Arts &amp; Crafts</u> 5%	<u>English Tudor</u> 3%
<u>All Other</u> 12%			

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## Statistical Summary of the Wells Historic District Architecture (continued)

<b>Construction Materials</b> (contributing primary resources only)	<u>Brick</u> 50%	<u>Veneer</u> 26%	<u>Wood</u> 20%	<u>Stone</u> 3%	<u>Concrete</u> 1%	<u>All Other</u> <1%
<b>Height</b> (contributing primary resources only)	<u>1-story</u> 73%	<u>1.5-story</u> 24%	<u>2-story</u> 3%			

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

The Wells Historic District is locally significant under Criteria A and C for two primary reasons: 1) its key association with streetcar development in Salt Lake City; and 2) its well-preserved collection of Early 20th Century American housing stock.

Under Criterion A, the district is significant for its association with suburban (streetcar) development in Salt Lake City. The Wells area itself is a major contributing resource in the overall history of streetcar subdivisions in the city. The incorporation of the interurban street car system as a necessary and integral component of the subdivision paved the way for future development of streetcar suburbs in the surrounding area (e.g., the many subdivisions of the West Sugar House area: Sixth East, Wilmington, Country Club Place, Adamson, Fairmont Springs Addition, Forest Dale, etc.), thereby establishing a distinctive pattern of community expansion for the southeastern portion of Salt Lake City.

The Wells Historic District contains an impressive collection of Early 20th Century American residences that render the district significant under Criterion C. Further, the building stock represents the work of numerous architects and designers, including both locally trained draftsmen and nationally practiced architects, such as John Haedlund. The residences of the neighborhood, the vast majority of which are considered contributing resources within the district, are among the most well-preserved collection of early 20th century residential architecture in the Salt Lake Valley, lending visual cohesiveness to the district and distinguishing it from the surrounding neighborhoods. The patterning of architectural types and styles on the landscape within the district clearly demonstrates how the Wells area was developed over time. A few residences in the district are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places for their architecture as well as their associations with the Woodruff Family, who played an important role in local history.

As representative of the Early 20th Century American movement in architecture, the Wells Historic District contains an impressive collection of well preserved bungalow, period cottage, and clipped gable cottage residences. Collectively, buildings of these types represent approximately 1,065 (56 percent) of the 1,916 contributing properties in the district. The housing stock in Wells exhibits several different variations of these architectural forms and the application of myriad styles to them, illustrating how they were adapted to evolving residential needs and concepts of acceptable space, functional utility, and aesthetic appeal.

The period of significance for the Wells Historic District extends from 1871 to 1957. This time frame, and its relevance to the district, is best understood when divided into contextual eras based upon significant events and trends within the area's history. Four specific periods of significance apply to the Wells Historic District, and they begin in 1871; however, the period prior to that, 1847 to 1870, is also discussed in this nomination in order to provide a context for the initial development of the area. Thus, for the purpose of this statement of significance, the following eras are discussed: Farms and Fields (1847 to 1870); Initial Settlement (1871 to 1899); Streetcar Suburbs (1900 to 1929); The Era of Infilling (1930 to 1945); and the Post War Period (1946 to 1957).

The four primary contextual eras—Initial Settlement, Streetcar Suburbs, The Era of Infilling, and the Post War Period—are marked by key milestones in the history of the district. The platting of the Big Field area encompassing Wells began in the 1880s during the Initial Settlement era but was initiated by the

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establishment of the streetcar system in Salt Lake City in the early 1870s. The Streetcar Suburbs era encompasses the expansion of multiple streetcar lines into the Wells area, while the Era of Infilling is highlighted by the Great Depression, the associated steep decline in development, and the wartime recovery. The Era of Infilling, the third period of significance, represents the first focus on developing previously undeveloped lots in subdivisions that had been platted during the earlier periods. The fourth period, the Post War Period, marks the final phase of historical development in the Wells area, when most of the platted lots had been developed and only occasional individual parcels or small sections of contiguous parcels were available for construction of the distinctive housing stock of the period.

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## History of the Wells Area

### Farms and Fields (1847 to 1870)

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS; or "Mormons") settled the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847, when the first contingent of settlers arrived under the guidance of church president Brigham Young. Within a few days of the pioneers' arrival in the valley, the basic layout of Salt Lake City was in place. The city was laid out in plats; the platting of the city took three years, and one plat was laid out in each of the first three years the settlers were in the valley.<sup>9</sup> The first three plats were designed in a grid of 10-acre blocks, each block containing eight lots, with dirt roads 132 feet wide and 20-foot wide sidewalks.<sup>10,11</sup> The layout of the city was based upon the "Plat of the City of Zion", a city plan with a configuration of lots and blocks and intended land uses put forth by Joseph Smith, founder of the LDS Church. The configuration of the City of Zion plat encouraged family-level subsistence, efficient land use, and social cohesion by avoiding individual, isolated residences outside of the city's core area.

The original three plats for the city included the present downtown area and extending as far south as 900 South. The area to the south, platted in much larger lots of between 5 and 80 acres, was commonly referred to as the Big Field. The Big Field, which encompasses the Wells Historic District, was designated as an area within which primarily agricultural activities would take place in support of the residents living in the developing heart of the Salt Lake City. The smallest lots in the area, those of 5 acres, were to be located in the northern portion of the area closest to the platted portion of the city (between 900 South and 2100 South) and were to be used by "mechanics and artisans".<sup>12</sup> The larger lots, which were platted in 10-, 20, 40-, and 80-acre parcels, were to be allocated to farmers, most of whom lived within the platted city but farmed outside the city limits.<sup>13</sup> The future Wells area was part of the Five-Acre Survey. Large portions of the Five-Acre Survey in

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<sup>9</sup> Sillitoe, Linda. *A History of Salt Lake County*. Utah Centennial County History Series. Salt Lake City, UT: Utah State Historical Society and Salt Lake County Commission, 1996.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander, Thomas G. *Utah, The Right Place, The Official Centennial History*. Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs-Smith Publishers, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Sillitoe, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> McCormick, John S. *The Gathering Place, An Illustrated History of Salt Lake City*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

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which Wells is located were allocated to Brigham Young, then-president of the LDS Church; Wilford Woodruff, then-future president of the LDS Church; and Daniel Wells, future Bishop of the LDS Wells Ward. Smaller sections of the area were allocated to other individuals.

Of great concern agriculturally during this period was the appropriation of a valuable and limited resource, water. The Mormon Church is the first known entity to legally regulate water for agricultural purposes. Each farmer was granted land and water rights by the Church, which, in the absence of federal homestead laws, had laid claim to all land within the Utah Territory. In less than two decades, this system of land granting experienced serious disruptions when the area's first federal land office opened following the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862.<sup>14</sup> It was in 1870, after the passage of the Homestead Act and the establishment of a federal land office in Salt Lake City that the lands encompassing the Wells area were formally patented to Young, Woodruff, and the others.

The mere granting of water rights to individuals by the Mormon Church did not solve the problem of accessing that water. To their credit, the Mormon pioneers were ingenious in their creation of irrigation systems to address the issue. The settlers in the Salt Lake Valley, within days of their arrival, set about digging irrigation ditches from the numerous streams flowing out of the Wasatch Mountains. By the 1870s, an extensive network of canals designed to control the flow and amount of water carried to the numerous the homesteads extended throughout the valley. Farmers received water rights by digging sections of canals on their lands. The canal system was geographically widespread and stretched across many pioneer communities.<sup>15</sup> Some of the irrigation ditches extended off of Parley's Creek into the Big Field/ Wells area to serve the farmlands platted there.

### Initial Settlement (1871 to 1899)

The expansion of the railroad into the West was one of the foremost events of the nineteenth century. In 1869, railroading entered the area with the completion of the first transcontinental line running through Promontory and Corinne, north of Salt Lake City. Recognizing the economic importance of being connected with the main national east-west transportation corridor, Brigham Young immediately initiated the construction of the Utah Central Railroad to link Salt Lake City with the northerly route.

In addition to the northern line from Salt Lake City to Ogden and points beyond, rail lines were constructed to the south as well, extending the reach of the national markets and social influence. Within a matter of years, Mormon-owned lines covered three-fourths of the Utah Territory.<sup>16</sup> The railroads, in addition to servicing passengers and freight into and out of the Salt Lake Valley, began running lines directly to the mining communities located around the perimeter of the valley. By 1898, the Utah Central Railroad extended south into the Salt Lake Valley, passing to the east of the Wells area.

Mining also significantly contributed to the growth of Salt Lake City, and "suburbs" of the city, such as Sandy, Bingham Canyon, and Alta prospered from the mines. Sandy became a hub with its proximity to Alta's silver

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

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mine and its service from the Utah Southern Railroad. Most of the mining operations were owned and operated by non-Mormons. The LDS Church did not support the mining industry because of what it considered to be inevitable social problems that accompanied it, problems such as prostitution, gambling, and alcohol consumption. However, over time the economic benefits of the mines began to wear away at this opposition. The Jordan Silver Mining Company was one of the few Mormon ventures into the industry. Mining was so prevalent along the Wasatch Front that one visitor to Salt Lake City in 1880 described the area along Main Street as, "one large mining camp".<sup>17</sup>

By 1880, the core of the Salt Lake City business district extended south along Main Street and one block on either side to about 200 South. By 1890 it stretched to 300 South, and by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to 400 South.<sup>18</sup> Yet, while downtown Salt Lake City was booming and construction was occurring at a rapid pace, the Wells area remained primarily agricultural in nature; expansion of the developed portion of Salt Lake City was occurring to the east and west but far less so to the south (e.g., north of 900 South), at least until the end of the period.

The California gold rush of the late 1800s and the arrival of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869 led to the transformation of Salt Lake City from an isolated, agrarian religious utopia to a crossroads for travelers heading west and a major center for the movement of goods and people throughout the region. The development of the western rail system spread from the major north-south and east-west freight lines of the large railroad companies to smaller, interurban railways focused on transporting passengers and small amounts of cargo within and between Utah's rapidly growing Wasatch Front communities. In 1872, the first interurban (street/trolley car) company, the Salt Lake City Railroad (SLCRR) was organized by two of Brigham Young's sons and several other businessmen from the area.<sup>19</sup> Standard gauge rail was laid over a few miles of the earthen streets in Salt Lake City, and mule- and horse-drawn cars transported passengers through the downtown area. Within a few years, several other short branches of the streetcar system had been constructed in the city. In 1889, SLCRR crews began erecting an overhead electrical catenary for what was to become the first electric trolley system in Salt Lake City.<sup>20,21</sup> The trolley was an immediate success. The cars provided not only a faster means of getting about town, but also provided some relief from the dusty, often garbage clogged city streets that became veritable mud bogs during the spring and winter months. Soon, the trolley cars became crowded, and astute businessmen in the city recognized the opportunity to cash in on the new transportation craze.

In the late 1880s, largely as a result of the success of the transit system, but also to accommodate the rapidly growing population of Salt Lake City, which doubled between 1880 and 1890, portions of the Big Field area south of 900 South began to be divided into smaller, residential-sized blocks. Unlike the blocks within the original city plat area, which were configured as squares, the ten-acre blocks in the Big Field area took the form of rectangles, marking a striking divergence away from the Plat of the City of Zion concept championed by the Mormon Church, which called for this portion of the Salt Lake City settlement to be allocated to

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> McCormick, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Carr, Stephen L. and Robert W. Edwards. *Utah Ghost Rails*. Salt Lake City, UT: Western Epics. 1988.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Electricity for the line was generated by a power plant located on 200 East between South Temple Street and 100 South (Ibid).

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agricultural purposes.<sup>22</sup> Within these new blocks, the residential lots were smaller than those downtown and streets were much narrower. This "new" configuration may have been at least partially the result of the many out-of-state, non-Mormon developers and investors who were involved in subdivision development in the area; this pattern was perhaps the most common subdivision grid in the nation at the time, largely because of its "simple layout, its efficient use of the land by eliminating 'wasted' property in the interior of blocks, and because it provided street frontage to every lot on the block."<sup>23</sup> The departure from the Plat of the City of Zion in the streetcar suburbs "brought about a dilution of the city's distinctive Mormon village appearance, setting it more in line with national patterns of development."<sup>24</sup>

Land merchants and speculators quickly identified the development potential of the open lands of the Big Field, and at the close of the 1880s, they began purchasing available tracts as quickly as possible. Dozens of individual subdivisions began to be platted within the newly surveyed portion of the Big Field. Between 1888 and the depression of 1893, approximately 300 residential subdivisions were recorded in Salt Lake County, representing 75 percent of the 400 subdivisions that would be platted in the area by 1900.<sup>25</sup> The frenetic pace at which land speculation occurred is evidenced by the fact that between 1887 and 1888 the number of real estate firms in Salt Lake City grew from 6 or 7 to 75.<sup>26</sup> Many, perhaps the majority, of these firms were run by non-Mormon developers from states such as Colorado and Iowa, men who stayed in Utah only for a few years, until the housing boom ended.<sup>27</sup> At least 31 subdivisions, the majority of subdivisions in the area, were platted within the Wells study area during the late 1880s and 1890s. The table below lists the relevant subdivisions from this period.

Subdivision Name	Platted
Park Boulevard Addition	1889
Park Place Addition	1889
Rice and Gelder's 1 <sup>st</sup> Addition	1889
Rosedale Addition	1889
Alta Place	1890
Avondale Park	1890
Capitol Ave. Addition	1890
Chelsea Addition	1890
Chicago Addition	1890
Kensington	1890
Midvale	1890

<sup>22</sup> McCormick, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> Roper, Roger V. The "Unrivaled Perkins' Addition": Portrait of a Streetcar Subdivision. *Utah Historical Quarterly*. Salt Lake City: Utah Historical Society, Volume 54, Number 1, Winter 1986.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Aegerter, John Fred. *Inglewood and Park View: A Look at Urban Expansion and Early Subdivision in Salt Lake City's Original Agricultural Plats*. Master's Thesis. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, 1988.

<sup>26</sup> Roper, 1986.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

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Subdivision Name	Platted
Watkins Addition	1890
Webb and Palmer Addition	1890
Villa Park	1890
Acadia	1891
Broadway Addition	1891
Dankowske Park	1891
East Side Addition	1891
Fisher & Snowden's Addition	1891
Nye's Addition	1891
Waterloo Addition	1891
East Waterloo	1892
Hackett's Addition	1892
North Waterloo	1892
Thorndyke	1892
Wellington Addition	1892
Kenwood Addition	1893
Sommerville	1894
Blythe's	1895
Marlon Park Addition	1890s
Ouray Place	1890s

Many developers commissioned the construction of numerous single-family homes as speculative ventures, having them built before a buyer was identified and renting them out until the property was sold to a permanent owner. However, generally speaking, construction of housing within most of the subdivisions platted during this period was quite limited due to five major factors. First, while the population of Salt Lake City was expanding rapidly, the spate of subdivision recordings far outpaced the number of people looking to purchase new homes. Second, city infrastructure, including transportation options, well-maintained roads, effective sanitation systems, etc., had not been extended to the area south of 900 South by this time. Third, the nature of land speculation is one of minimal capital investment and frequent reselling of land for profit, which does not encourage the construction of large numbers of houses on the hope a buyer will appear soon. Fourth, Mormons, who comprised the majority of the population in the Salt Lake Valley at this time, were apparently reluctant to purchase homes in outlying subdivisions, with at least one out-of-state real estate broker commenting that "Mormons are sellers, not purchasers ... in eighteen months our firm has been in business here, we have not made a single sale to a Mormon."<sup>28</sup> Finally, the financial panic of 1893, and the economic slowdown leading up to it, put a damper on the real estate market and led to the failure of many real

<sup>28</sup> Roper, 1986.



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estate deals.<sup>29</sup> In the broader context, it wasn't until roughly 1910 that subdivision development in Salt Lake City began to gather momentum again.<sup>30</sup>

In 1891, the Salt Lake Rapid Transit Street Car Company extended service south of the downtown area along 700 East. This line passed along the eastern boundary of the Wells Historic District. During roughly the same time period, the Salt Lake Rapid Transit Company constructed trolley lines along State Street and 400 East, both of which passed through the Wells area. The presence of these lines created opportunities for residential and commercial development in Wells and the surrounding area that had not existed before. Despite the increased availability of transit in the Wells area, settlement in the Wells areas was generally limited to the periphery of the neighborhood, either along major east-west routes such as 1300 South, 1700 South, and 2100 South, or along the streetcar lines at State Street, 400 East, and 700 East. Large numbers of new subdivisions were platted along the transit lines and in the surrounding area during this period, including those listed in the table above. These subdivisions varied in size from a few lots to several hundred and most, as mentioned earlier, were developed by non-Mormon speculators from out-of-state and largely housed Salt Lake City's growing non-Mormon citizenry.

These subdivisions would not have been nearly so popular with inventors and home buyers had the electric streetcar system not been established in Salt Lake City. "Without the fast and convenient service of the electric streetcar, there would have been little demand for building lots in the southeastern suburbs, and the land there would likely have remained farmland much longer."<sup>31</sup> The popularity of such subdivisions stemmed from the fact that they offered "the fresh air and uncrowded conditions of country living, yet, with their streetcar access, they were only a short ride from the city center."<sup>32</sup> As evidenced by settlement patterns within the Wells Historic District, development was heavily focused in the portions of the subdivision nearest the streetcar lines. The residences that were constructed in the Wells area during this period, 63 contributing examples of which remain standing at present, are dominated by late-Victorian types and styles. The examples comprise an impressive collection of such structures compared to other Salt Lake City streetcar subdivisions and represent the broad array of Victorian forms being constructed in the valley during this period, including central-block-with-projecting-bays, cross-wing, side-passage/side-entry, foursquare, shotgun, and rectangular block forms. (See Section 7 for specific examples of excellent representations of these various forms in Wells.)

Another major development marking the early-1890s in Salt Lake City and influencing the development of the Wells area was the establishment of electrical service, albeit unreliable at first, in March of 1891. Utility poles lined, and in some cases extended down the middle of, many downtown streets.<sup>33</sup> Electrical service was immediately extended through the Big Field/ Wells area, though primarily for use in public facilities such as the Calder Park amusement center located to the south of Wells.

Although not located in the Wells study area, Liberty Park has played an important role in the development of the community. Situated on the northwest corner of 1300 South and 700 East, the park began as informal,

<sup>29</sup> Carr and Edwards, 1988.

<sup>30</sup> Roper, 1986.

<sup>31</sup> Roper, 1986.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Sillitoe, 1996.

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privately owned open space held first by Isaac Chase, a prominent local businessman, and later by Brigham Young. In 1881, the Salt Lake City Municipal corporation purchased the 5-acre parcel from the then-deceased Young's estate. Approximately a year later, the City formally established Liberty Park on the site.

During the last decades of the 1800s, simple Classical styling in architecture slowly gave way to more elaborate Victorian styles across the state.<sup>34</sup> Within the Wells study area, examples of Classical and Victorian architecture from this period are present but rare, as little development occurred in the area during this time. Major examples of these architectural styles/forms are the Wilford Woodruff Villa (ca. 1891), the Septimus W. Sears House (ca. 1892), and the Dawes House (ca. 1897) (See the Architectural Styles, Types, and Materials by Period; Section 7).

### Streetcar Suburbs (1900 to 1929)

Beginning in the early-1900s, a series of developments in electrical power generation and an apparent recognition of the drawbacks of the head-to-head streetcar competition lead the SLCRR and the SLRT to merge into the Consolidated Railway & Power Company (Consolidated). In 1904, Consolidated merged with Utah Power & Light to form Utah Light & Railway.<sup>35</sup> Fourteen years later, in 1918, Utah Light & Railway merged with a rival company, Salt Lake Light & Traction to form Utah Light & Traction (Carr and Edwards 1989:64). By 1919, streetcar routes extended throughout the city, offering service to Holladay, Midvale, Sandy, the University of Utah, Fort Douglas, and other points in the valley. As mentioned previously, these lines extended along the east and west boundaries of the Wells neighborhood as well as into the heart of the neighborhood along 400 East. The lines offered stops for would-be residents who worked in downtown Salt Lake City but wanted to live outside its heavily urbanized core area.

The popularity of the suburb concept and the lure of easy transit was almost unprecedented, as many hundreds of new residents purchased lots and erected homes in Wells during this period. Nearly 77 percent of the contributing resources within the district were constructed between 1900 and 1929. This is the largest number of buildings in the history of the district. The overwhelming majority of construction was residential in nature, with single-family homes being far more common than multi-family structures. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps from 1911 show the beginnings of the existing street and parcel system in the Wells area, though many of the blocks remained undivided, and many of today's streets had yet to be constructed.

In Wells, several prominent local land merchants were responsible for the promotion and development of the subdivisions during this time (See the Architectural Styles, Types, and Materials by Period; Section 7). Many of these individuals commissioned the construction of numerous single-family homes as speculative ventures, having them built before a buyer was identified and renting them out until such time as the property was sold to a permanent owner. For example, the Grand Haven Subdivision, developed by Philip A. Finegan, encompassed the area from Browning Avenue to Emerson Avenue, between 600 and 700 East. The development was platted in 1909 and, like many subdivisions during that time, heavily promoted in the Salt Lake Tribune from 1909 through the 1910s as a streetcar subdivision with valuable investment potential. The

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<sup>34</sup> Carter and Goss, 1988.

<sup>35</sup> Carr and Edwards, 1988.

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plat for the subdivision included 53, long, narrow, rectangular building lots, most of which now host single-family bungalow homes.

The many subdivisions that were platted during the previous period had largely remained undeveloped until after 1905 and did not reach their full development until the 1920s. Around this time, a new LDS ward was established in the area and was named Waterloo Ward. The future Wells area thus became known as the Waterloo Area for a time. The influx of residents to the area was generally slow at first, but as evidenced by the known construction dates of buildings within the Wells neighborhood, by the mid 1910s, residential development was in full swing. This development appears to have continued unabated until the start of the Great Depression following the stock market crash of late 1929. Commercial development accompanied the residential development, though only on a limited basis. State Street, 1300 South, and 2100 South saw the greatest commercial development in the area, with most of the "inner" Wells area remaining residential or seeing only the occasional commercial establishment.

As residential development occurred, public facilities also had to be built to provide services to the growing population. By 1911, at least three public schools had been constructed in the area. These include the Uintah Public School, located on the northwest corner of 700 East and 1700 South, then referred to as Tempest Avenue, the Whittier Public School, located on 300 East between Kensington Avenue and 1700 South, and the Waterloo Public School, located immediately northeast of the Whittier school.<sup>36</sup> Also by this time, the County Infirmary and Hospital building had been constructed on the northeast corner of 2100 South and State Street.<sup>37</sup>

Wells' housing stock from this period illustrates the growing assimilation of national trends into Salt Lake City's architectural resources. The bungalow form usurped late-Victorian forms as the overwhelmingly most common residential type in the district. This change represents a pervasive trend sweeping through the city's suburban development at the time, when the bungalow form became the most popular residential form for streetcar suburbs—largely because of its simple design and conduciveness to "mass-production" by designer-builders rather than fully trained architects. The juxtaposition of these simple, low-slung, rectangular bungalows with the complex and typically vertically-oriented Victorian structures of the earlier periods visually evokes an understanding of how the older architectural forms of past generations were giving way to the "modern" forms of the new century. Period Cottages also appeared in Wells during this time, though not with the same frequency that they were constructed in other streetcar subdivisions in the area. (See Section 7 for specific, well-preserved examples of these bungalow and Period Cottage forms in Forest Dale.)

Similar suburban growth was occurring elsewhere in Salt Lake City during this period, particularly within its southeastern quadrant, where the platting of subdivisions continued at a rapid pace. Among the contemporary subdivisions in the general vicinity of the Wells neighborhood were the Homesite Addition (1913), the Sixth East subdivision (1914), the Stratford subdivision (1918), the Free subdivision (1922), the Wilmington subdivision (1924), the Adamson subdivision (1925), and the Bradford subdivision (1927). Further to the east, the expansive Highland Park subdivision with its 3,124 lots, the Yalecrest subdivisions (1911-1938), and the Gilmer Park subdivision (1919) (all National Register-listed historic districts), represented a new trend toward

<sup>36</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. Fire insurance maps for Salt Lake City, Utah, Volumes 1 and 2. New York, NY: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. 1911.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

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complexity and sophistication in subdivision design, incorporating curving streets, blocks of varying sizes and shapes, and neighborhood-wide landscaping. The subdivisions of Wells, on the other hand, are representative of a standard gridded layout.

Suburban development continued strongly into the early 1920s in Wells and the surrounding neighborhoods. On the whole, the state of Utah experienced an economic slowdown following the end of World War I, when demand for mining and agricultural products and rail transportation of materials for the war effort decreased. Salt Lake City was, however, somewhat insulated from the slowdown, as the city had transitioned away from a frontier town fully dependent on extractive industries and resource exploitation to a regional center more dependent on a service economy.

The increase in popularity of auto and bus travel in the late 1920s resulted in a massive scaling-back of the streetcar system. Beginning in 1926, trolley tracks throughout the valley were removed, although in some cases, it was easier and less expensive to simply pave over the tracks rather than remove them.<sup>38</sup> The greater reliance on automobiles slowly began to change the architectural landscape of Wells, as larger garages had to be built to accommodate cars and trucks, and situating garages for access from the frontage road rather than a mid-block alley became socially desirable. By mid 1944, all trolley service in the valley was eliminated.<sup>39</sup>

### The Era of Infilling (1930 to 1945)

The Great Depression hit the entire state of Utah hard; in 1932 the state had the fourth highest unemployment rate in the country, at 36 percent.<sup>40</sup> Statistics indicate that in 1935 one out of five, or 20 percent, of Salt Lake County families were receiving financial relief in one form or another.<sup>41</sup> Many more were living below the poverty line. Relatively speaking, very limited residential and commercial development occurred in the Wells neighborhood, or elsewhere in the state or nation, during the throes of the Great Depression. Few residents had the available funds to purchase homes, banks were unable to lend monies at acceptable interest rates, and the relative costs of building materials had skyrocketed. In fact, only 12 percent of the contributing resources within the Wells Historic District were constructed during this period, the second lowest number of properties since the Big Field was platted into residential blocks. Of these properties, all but a handful were constructed during the late 1930s and early 1940s, as the pre-war and war time economy precipitated an economic recovery.

Construction largely took the form of either infill projects on the very few remaining undeveloped lots within Wells or of teardown-and-rebuild projects where older homes were demolished and replaced with new, more modern homes. Other existing homes in the area were expanded through the construction of additions, mostly to the rear of the buildings because of the narrowness of the building lots. Greater dependence on personal automobiles, larger now than their predecessors, instigated construction of new, larger garages as well as garage/carport additions in some instances.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Sillitoe, 1996.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

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The new buildings constructed in Wells during this period represent national trends in housing development. Early versions of World War II Era Cottages—moderately sized, rectangular or boxy with minimal ornamentation structures—replaced bungalows and Period Cottages and modern concepts of necessary space and domestic technology (e.g., indoor refrigerators instead of ice chests, central air conditioning, and separate "utility rooms" to house washers, dryers, and the home's mechanical equipment such as furnaces, circuit breakers, etc.). Many extant homes in Wells illustrate the transition between Period Cottages and World War II Era Cottages and take the form of simple, rectangular structures with the long axis oriented parallel to the street and steeply pitched, gable roofs. After the transition to the World War II Era Cottage form was complete, roof forms changed to moderately steep to low-pitched gable roofs and low-slung hipped roofs.

### The Post War Era (1946 to 1957)

The Wells area continued to grow and change following the close of World War II, however, the entire area, for all intents and purposes, had been developed on some level prior to 1960s. Based on known construction dates for buildings in the area, redevelopment appears to have occurred on a limited basis during the 1960s and 1970s. Older single family homes were demolished and replaced with multi-family dwellings or small commercial ventures such as convenience stores or small walk-up stores. In some cases, former residential buildings were converted into commercial enterprises. State Street, 2100 South, and portions of 1300 South and 1700 South have seen the most redevelopment within the Wells area.

The historic building stock of the early part of the period is dominated by World War II Era Cottages (until the mid-1950s), Ranch Houses, and drive-up commercial structures. The California-based Ranch House form offered larger residences, separation of domestic activity areas, and incorporation of even more modern technology. It also lent itself well to mass- or pre-fabricated construction in the rapidly growing suburbs and represented a return of country (ranch style) living to urbanized communities. The Ranch House examples in Wells are typical of those in Salt Lake City's suburbs, but their presence reflects the culmination of historical architectural development in the subdivision and maintains the continuity of architectural trends within the district.

Commercial structures of the post-war period were adapted to the automobile culture that arose after the war. Instead of pedestrian-friendly buildings abutting sidewalks, commercial buildings were built to the rear of lots, leaving space for parking. Motor lodges, such as the Alta Motel Lodge on State Street, accommodated a new breed of tourist, the road tripper, and drive-up restaurants offered in-car dining.

As the final build-out of Salt Lake City's downtown and suburb areas occurred during the post-war period, the city's infrastructure, particularly its roads, had to be upgraded to accommodate the popularity of modern technology. Specifically, the community's road system had been designed for wagons and streetcars, not the post-war boom of personal automobiles, semi-trucks, and public buses. In 1957, the 700 East roadway was widened by the Utah Department of Transportation. The majority of the widening through the Wells area took place along the west side of the road, and nearly all of the houses along that side were demolished to make way for the expansion.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, State Street and 2100 South were subject to the beginnings of a

<sup>42</sup> Calkins, Nancy. *Selective Reconnaissance Level Survey, I-80: State Street to 1300 East, Salt Lake County, Utah*. Salt Lake City, UT: Nancy Calkins, Historic Preservation Consultant. 2007.

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substantial redevelopment program, primarily for commercial purposes. This redevelopment continued well into the modern era and took hold with particular energy in the 1970s and 1980s.

The replacement of historic houses with modern commercial structures along these roadways and the demolition of homes along 700 East to accommodate road widening largely erased the evidence of the earliest homes and businesses built along the former routes of the streetcar lines. Fortunately, though, the historic core area of Wells beyond these compromised roadways remains intact with only small pockets of incompatible development.

The building stock in Wells during this period reflects the westward migration of the Ranch House form and Ranch style from California to the rest of the country. The early forms of the Ranch residences present in the Wells Historic District are low-slung buildings with moderate to deep eaves, gabled or hipped roofs, and a rectangular plan with the long axis parallel to the street. Most of these buildings are only slightly longer than similarly shaped World War II Era Cottages from the previous period. This is primarily due to the narrow lot sizes in the Wells area. In other sections of the Salt Lake Valley, where wider residential lots did not pose such constraints, Ranch residences from the same period are often slightly longer. The buildings of this period, particularly the residential structures, are vernacular representations of the high-style Ranch House design. That is, they are simplified versions that lack the exterior ornamentation and detailing of the true Ranch style. Most are constructed of striated brick, though a few mix brick with other cladding materials.

Commercial structures built during this period exhibit a variety of modern styles; however, their unifying characteristic is that they reflect the growing reliance of Utahns on automobiles. During the post war period, Americans in general adopted automobile culture like they had not before. New advancements in mass production technology during the war years and the development of the National Defense Highway System led to more affordable vehicles and a greater level of connectivity between communities, states, and regions of the country. As more people came to depend on automobiles for both short and long distance travel, the commercial environment changed to accommodate them. This was reflected in the incorporation of parking lots and drive-through lanes in association with new commercial structures and in the establishment of drive-up motor lodges (motels) instead of walk-up hotels. Properties such as the historic Alta Motel Lodge and the Zion Motel, both motor lodges on State Street, represent this trend in the Wells Historic District.

### Summary

The Wells Historic District has a long history that is reflected in its well-preserved architecture. The majority of contributing resources within the district are tied directly to the key periods of significance within the neighborhood and illustrate the district's early platting and its development as a streetcar suburb and then as a post-war community. Because the bulk of the development occurred over a relatively short period of time, the architectural resources demonstrate a remarkable level of visual cohesiveness in both style and patterning on the landscape. The exceptional collection of early 20th century bungalows and clipped-gable-cottages is among the most intact examples in the area. The post-war historical building stock contributes to the overall continuity of Wells through time and adds to the spectrum of architectural history of the neighborhood. The Wells Historic District contributes significantly to the historic resources of Salt Lake City and stands as an excellent example of how this community developed over time and what factors played a role in that development.

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## Verbal Boundary Description

Bounded on the west by the east side of State Street from 1300 South to Westminster Avenue, then east to 200 East, then south to 2100 South, the east along 2100 South to 700 East, then north along the west side of 700 East to 1300 East, then west to the beginning.

## Boundary Justification

The district boundary described above encompasses the cohesive component of the Wells neighborhood. The heavily traveled, wide, and industrialized streets that border the west (State Street), south (2100 South), and east (700 East) edges of the district, and Liberty Park to the north of 1300 South, all form natural and distinct boundaries around the district. Within these boundaries, narrow residential roadways, lanes, and alley streets create a sense of community and connectedness.

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Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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### Common Label Information:

1. Wells Historic District
2. Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
3. Photographer: Sheri Murray Ellis and Sara Meess
4. Date: various May – July 2009
5. Digital color photographs on file at Utah SHPO.

### Photo No. 1:

6. Overview of streetscape. Coatsville Avenue. Camera facing east.

### Photo No. 2:

6. Overview of streetscape. 1700 South. Camera facing east.

### Photo No. 3:

6. Overview of streetscape. Wilson Avenue. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 4:

6. Overview of mid-block alley between Emerson Avenue and Kensington Avenue. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 5:

6. Woodruff Farm House, 1604 South 500 East. Camera facing northwest.

### Photo No. 6:

6. First Encampment Park, 1700 South 500 East. Camera facing southwest.

### Photo No. 7:

6. 1781 South 500 East. Camera facing east.

### Photo No. 8:

6. Woodruff Villa, 1622 South 500 East. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 9:

6. Septimus W. Sears House, 1902 South 400 East. Camera facing west.

### Photo No. 10:

6. Dawes House, 1590 South 500 East. Camera facing southwest.

### Photo No. 11:

6. 1463 South Edison Street. Camera facing east.

### Photo No. 12:

6. 1455 South Edison Street. Camera facing east.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 2

Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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**Photo No. 13:**

6. 131 East Downington Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 14:**

6. 350 East Wilson Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 15:**

6. 1618 South Park Street. Camera facing west.

**Photo No. 16:**

6. 628 East Wilson Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 17:**

6. 156 East 1700 South. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 18:**

6. 305 East 1700 South. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 19:**

6. 1883 South 300 East. Camera facing east.

**Photo No. 20:**

6. 1948 South 300 East. Camera facing west.

**Photo No. 21:**

6. 535 East Browning Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 22:**

6. 562 East Browning Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 23:**

6. 428 East Cleveland Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 24:**

6. 563 East Cleveland Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 25:**

6. 661 East Downington Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 26:**

6. 604 East Kensington Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 27:**

6. 665 East Downington Avenue. Camera facing north.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 3

Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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**Photo No. 28:**

6. South High School, 1700 South State Street. Camera facing northeast.

**Photo No. 29:**

6. O.P. Skaggs Building, 1435 South State Street. Camera facing northeast.

**Photo No. 30:**

6. 405-407 East 1700 South. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 31:**

6. 339 East Sherman Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 32:**

6. 471 East Wilson Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 33:**

6. 1413 South 400 East. Camera facing east.

**Photo No. 34:**

6. 162 East Wilson Avenue. Camera facing south.

**Photo No. 35:**

6. 508 East Cleveland Avenue/1445 South 500 East. Camera facing southeast.

**Supplemental Photographs included as digital images on CD-R**

**Photo No. 36:**

6. 1331-1333 South 600 East. Camera facing northeast.

**Photo No. 37:**

6. Zion's Motel, 1829 South State Street. Camera facing east.

**Photo No. 38:**

6. 519 East Emerson Avenue. Camera facing north.

**Photo No. 39:**

6. 1636 South 200 East. Camera facing west.

**Photo No. 40:**

6. 223-225 East Westminster Avenue. Camera facing north.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 4

Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

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**Photo No. 41:**

6. 1488 South 400 East. Camera facing southwest.

**Photo No. 42:**

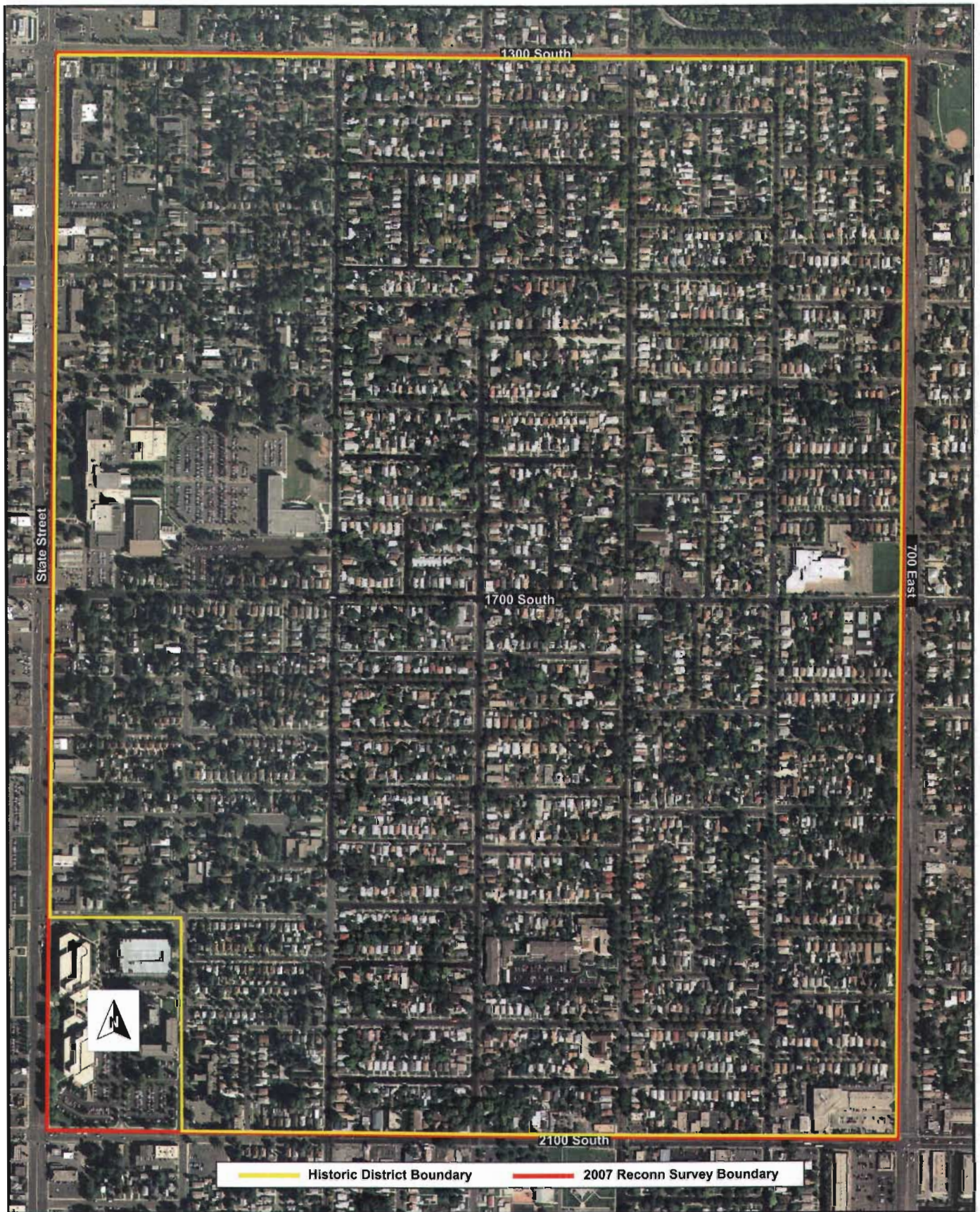
6. Alta Motel Lodge, 1899 South State Street. Camera facing east.

**Photo No. 43**

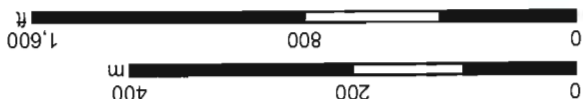
6. St. Joseph Villa, 451 East Bishop Federal Lane. Camera facing northwest.

**Photo No. 44:**

6. Haedlund-designed house, 1538 South 400 East. Camera facing west.



Wells Historic District, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah

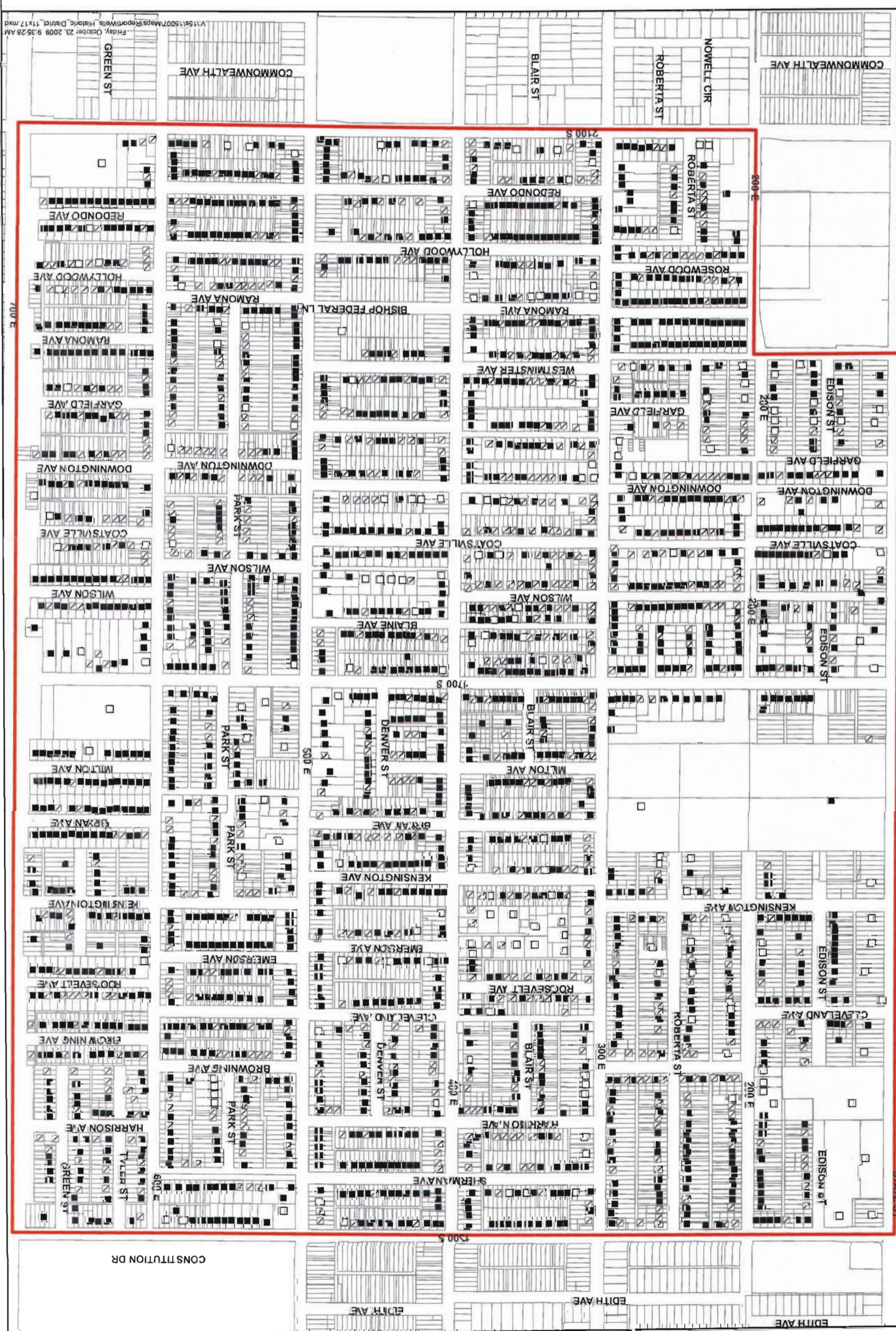


Contains Privileged Information: Do Not Release

### Wells Historic District Salt Lake County, Utah

Historic District Boundary

- Eligibility
- Contributing Resources
  - ▣ Historic but Non-Contributing Resources
  - Out-of-Period/Non-Contributing Resources



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