

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



80

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Edgemere Park Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Between Robinson and Walker between NW 30 and NW 36— not for publication

city, town Oklahoma City _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 5

state Oklahoma code 40 county Oklahoma code 109

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership, public and private

street & number See attachments

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the County Clerk

street & number Oklahoma County Courthouse

city, town Oklahoma City _____ state Oklahoma

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date 1977 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Oklahoma Historical Society

city, town Oklahoma City _____ state Oklahoma

7. Description

Condition

excellent to _____ deteriorated
 good for most ruins
_____ fair part _____ unexposed

Check one

unaltered
_____ altered

Check one

original site
_____ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Edgemere Park's some 300 houses are scattered casually over slightly rolling land centered on a meandering Deep Fork tributary. There are trees, but the area is not heavily wooded. As noted in No. 8, the houses vary widely in size and style. Bulk of the houses on the numbered streets are brick bungalows, varied externally largely by brickwork patterns and altered floorplans. Inside they feature plaster or stucco walls, fine woodwork, grained oak flooring and (also typical of the period - late 1920's and the 1930's - in which they were built) tiled baths featuring intricate mosaic patterns and unusual designs. Many of the living rooms of these bungalows have vaulted, cove or cathedral ceilings that add an extra touch of light and spaciousness. Virtually all Edgemere houses are of pier and beam construction and most have basements.

The houses along North Harvey Parkway are larger, for the most part. They reflect a greater variety of architectural styles. And they offer the observer an impressive array of special features, in design and materials. These include Mexican tile work, carved timbering, and cast stone ornamentations; wrought iron in fences, gates, balcony railings, lamps, and grilles; bricks in walls, stairways, walks, window arches, and chimneys.

It is a tribute to the imagination of the architects and the workmanship of the builders - as well as to the pride of the homeowners over the years - that Edgemere Park was born as an attractive, "quality" neighborhood and has managed to preserve its essential integrity down to the present day.

The District was conceived as a whole, using the southern portion of the golf course of an early country club. The central landscape feature of the Deep Fork Creek tributary which runs north through the area. Drives enclose the central park area, which is named Guy James Park. The design of the houses constructed in the decades of the 1920's and early 1930's reflects the thought of the oil boom period in Oklahoma history. The district still retains its original integrity, with few structures constructed after 1940. These houses were built to conform to the patterns already existing in the District.

The area selected is entirely residential with no commercial intrusions. This is not the entire original plat, but is the area developed in the time frame of the National Register criteria, is best preserved, and self-contained.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1920's and 1930's **Builder/Architect** Many different ones

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the proposed Edgemere Park Historic District lies in two areas:
 1/ Edgemere reflected some of the earliest and finest aspects of community planning and
 2/ it has remained virtually unchanged since its original development.

The design pattern of Edgemere must surely contrast sharply with the community developments of today. Builders of this age are concerned primarily with constructing the greatest number of housing units (often of very similar design) on the smallest amount of space. This trend is in contrast with the thrust of community design in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Beginning with Frederick Law Olmstead, American designers came to view the ideal urban community as one which blended tastefully developed commercial and industrial districts with imaginative and esthetically pleasing residential areas. Olmstead in particular emphasized the need for housing developments centered around wide and spacious parks, the latter to serve as havens from the hustle and strain of urban life.

Olmstead exerted a great influence on American designers who followed him. In addition, the planned community was also gaining adherents in England and these ideas were in turn transported across the Atlantic. Sir Raymond Unwin, in his book Nothing Gained By Overcrowding, and Ebenezer Howard in his study Garden Cities of Tomorrow, both pursued the concepts of innovative planning. Their ideas produced a profound effect on American designers, in particular, Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright of New York. Based on the authority of the seminal book Toward New Towns for America, it should be noted, that the real ferment in America during the 1920's first occurred in New York with these two men. Leon Levy, the developer of Edgemere, was a product of this New York school of design. Central to these ideas was the concept of the garden city and Levy incorporated this plan into the Edgemere neighborhood. Twenty of the districts one hundred and three acres were set aside for open space and greenbelt. Naturally wooded Guy James Park stretches through the heart of the district (following a tributary of Deep Fork Creek) to give unity to the neighborhood and allow a full range of individual and group activities for all ages. Significantly, over eighty percent of the home sites are in visual contact with the park.

Another advanced design principle was the use of four heavy-traffic streets to define the boundaries of the district and serve as a kind of buffer. Within this irregular parallelogram of traffic arteries Harvey Parkway and the Streets wandered seemingly at will, yet were so laid out as to "flow" generally into the park.

There are almost 300 houses in the Edgemere Park District. Plat restrictions assure that all buildings in the neighborhood be of brick, stone, or stucco, and that there be no jarring clash of material. For the most part, they are single-family brick bungalows reflecting solid, unpretentious comfort.

Edgemere Park's population reflected (then and even today) a similar diversity. Over the years it has been the home of many of Oklahoma City's civic, business, professional and political leaders. A partial listing would include U. S. Senator J. W. Harrold (3233 N. Harvey Parkway; his last home and still in family hands); Dr. W. K. West (233 NW 33), one of the founders of what is now the Oklahoma University Health Sciences Center; Phil Isley

9. Major Bibliographical References

Cf. separate sheet

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property 115 acres

Quadrangle name Britton, Oklahoma

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

14	6	314	71210	319	310	11610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

B

14	6	314	71410	319	310	01610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

C

14	6	314	61510	319	219	31610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

D

14	6	314	21710	319	219	31610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

E

14	6	314	21710	319	219	51610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

F

14	6	314	11610	319	219	51610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

G

14	6	314	11610	319	310	11610
Zone	Easting			Northing		

H

Zone	Easting			Northing		

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kent Ruth

organization Oklahoma Historical Society

date July 1978

street & number Historic Building

telephone 405/884-5456

city or town Oklahoma City

state Oklahoma

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

R. Glenn Jordan

title SHPO

date 6/30/80

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Carol D. Skelton

date 11-12-80

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Beth Groves*

date 11/3/80

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Edgemere Park

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(208 NW 31), owner of a movie theater chain and father of Academy Award winning actress Jennifer Jones (who attended Edgemere School); the John A. Browns (244 NW 33), founders of the Brown Department Stores; Blanche Cavitt, a famed perfumist who created scents for at least three American First Ladies; publisher David D. Price (3600 N. Harvey Parkway); banker Frank Sewell (3116 N. Harvey Park) whose daughter Patience (Mrs. Trimble B.) Latting, Oklahoma City's present mayor, is also an Edgemere resident (3600 N. Harvey Parksay); Baseball Hall of Famer Lloyd "Little Poison" Waner (Edgemere Court); lawyer Lee B. Thompson, one-time president of the Oklahoma Bar Association, oilmen L. H. Prichard and Ace Gutowsky; and businessmen Truman Cutchall (clothing), Gus Rinehart (construction) Dan Eckroat (hardware) Charles Ramsey (builder), and many others. Edgemere Park itself is now Guy H. James Park, thereby honoring another district resident. Founder of the construction that bears his name, James was a former city councilman and vice mayor, a member of the state Board of Regents for Higher Education, and for 32 years , of the state Water Resources Board.

Leon Levy was the primary developer of Edgemere Park. Other well known architects active in the development included B. Gaylord Noftsgger and Thomas L Sorey. Among the many builders are such names as Marx Levy, Steve Pennington, C.B. Warr, E.B.Treadwell, Jack A. Radford, James E. Barbour, Raybourn H. Smiser, Sr, Elmer R. Hook and Irene Constance . It is interesting to note that Irene Constance was a capable - and innovative - builder, but local building and loan companies refused to issue loans on any of her houses, this of course occurring in pre ERA days. Not until 1936 and the advent of FHA could her home buyers obtain loans.

The significance of Edgemere can be further documented by the fact that it embodies and pre-dates many of the concepts called for in Oklahoma City's first city plan. The city plan was written in 1930 and called for a system of parks. Quoting the plan, it stated that "one of the important functions of a park system is to provide adequate recreational areas in the form of playgrounds for children, athletic fields for older children and adults, and places for all forms of active or passive out door recreation... With so much open space about our cities, we are apt to overlook the necessity of preserving a reasonable amount of it, until the opportunity is lost." What makes Edgemere Park significant for Oklahoma City is that its concepts of community planning pre-dated the first comprehensive city plan by five years. For this reason therefore, and the others already listed, Edgemere Park is deserving of inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Hatfield, Elwin, "Landmark Yields..." Oklahoma City Times,
February 3, 1954, p. 1

Nelson, Mary Jo, "Edgemere Studied ..." Oklahoma City Times,
December 16, 1976, p. 21

Reid, Jim, "City Neighborhoods ..." The Sunday Oklahoman,
February 13, 1977, Sec. B, P.1

Miscellaneous materials collected by Edgemere Park Preservation,
Inc.

Stewart, Roy P. Born Grown: An Oklahoma City History, (Fidelity
Bank National Association: Oklahoma City) 1974.

Hare & Hare, City Planning Consultants,
The City Plan for Oklahoma City, 1931.

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Continuation sheet

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Verbal Boundary Description:

At the northeast intersection of 36th and Robinson, the boundary line moves south from the west curbline Robinson to the intersection of Robinson and 30th, then west along the North curbline of 30th to the intersection of 30th and Hudson, the north along the east curbline of Hudson to the intersection of Hudson and 32nd, then west along the North curb of 32nd to the intersection of 32nd and Walker. Then North along the Gait Curbline of Walker to the intersection of Walker and NW 36th, then Gait along the South curbline of NW 36th to its intersection with Robinson.

east?