LOOMIS ADDITION

HISTORIC CONTEXT

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Cover photo: Looking west from the corner of Mountain Avenue and Loomis Street, 1928 (University Historic Photograph Collection, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections).

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Most people do not recognize the name "Loomis Addition" today – they tend to think of the fifteen blocks that are the subject of this study as "City Park Neighborhood," the "West Side Neighborhood" or more broadly yet, "Old Town." But when the Loomis Addition was platted in 1887, it was an important milestone in the growth of Fort Collins. As one of the earliest additions to the city's original plat of 1873, the Loomis Addition signaled that the small agricultural community that had built up around a short-lived military fort was growing in population, expanding in land area and was here to stay. The Loomis Addition, and especially Mountain Avenue which runs through its center, soon became an important new focus for residential development, served by the streetcar and leading the way to Grandview Cemetery and what would become City Park.

This historic context traces the history of the Loomis Addition – the events that led up to its platting, its years of frantic building followed by periods of bust, and its eventual build-out twenty years after World War II. The document includes chapters on the people and the architecture of the Loomis Addition, and advice for homeowners interested in researching the history of their own homes.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Figure 1-1: 600 block of Mountain Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The Loomis Addition comprises fifteen blocks roughly equidistant between downtown Fort Collins and City Park. Along with the West Side Addition directly to its north, the Loomis Addition was the first subdivision to be platted west of the Original Town plat. Bounded by Whitcomb Street and Washington Avenue on the east and west respectively, and by Laporte Avenue to the north and Mulberry Street to the south, the neighborhood is aligned on a grid of wide, paved streets lined with mature deciduous trees including cottonwood, apple, maple, locust, walnut, and chestnut. The centerpiece of the Loomis Addition is Mountain Avenue, with its wide, landscaped median, mature trees, trolley line and stylish homes.

The fifteen blocks of the Loomis Addition are not easily distinguished from the surrounding subdivisions. Adjacent blocks contain similar architectural styles and landscaping, allowing the subdivisions to blend rather seamlessly, especially to the east and the north. For example, Laporte Avenue features the same house forms on both the north and south sides of the street. The boundary of the Loomis Addition is most recognizable on Washington Street where Laporte jogs to the north and the streets fail to line up. The additions directly to the west were platted between 1903 and 1924, and many of the houses directly across Washington Street from the Loomis Addition reflect more recent architectural types and styles.

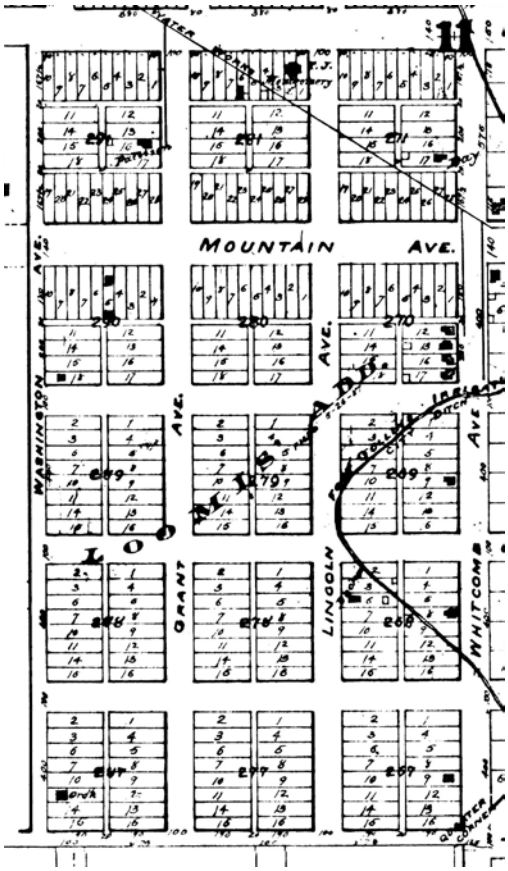

Figure 1-2: Loomis Addition, from "Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado," W.C. Willets, 1894 (City Engineer's Office).

The block layout of the Loomis Addition is distinct in that three of the blocks feature "H"-shaped alleyways, and another three have a "T" shape. The three "H"-shaped alley blocks are slightly larger than the other twelve blocks. Both the "T" and "H" shaped alleys allowed for narrow but deep lots. The narrowness of the lots gives the neighborhood a dense, urban feel, while their depth provides substantial space for gardens. Instead of or in addition to lawns, most yards are landscaped with a variety of evergreen trees, juniper bushes, lilac bushes, roses, ash trees, and fruit trees including apples, pears, and cherries. Gardening is an on-going tradition in this area which boasts many well kept flower and vegetable gardens.

Sidewalks are laid along all streets of the district except the south side of Magnolia Street between Loomis and Grant. While most sidewalks are concrete, some sections retain their historic sandstone slabs, obtained from the quarry at Stout, west of Fort Collins. The street width, vegetation, and sidewalks all contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood, as do the setbacks which are generally uniform. Although there are a few wood or metal fences, most front yards are not fenced, leaving them open to the sidewalk and contributing to the neighborhood feel. Wood privacy fences of varying heights are used to screen many of the back yards.

Another noticeable feature of the neighborhood is the absence of power and cable lines, most of which are well hidden in the alleyways, with poles largely concealed by trees.

Even though it is bordered by Mulberry Street and Laporte Avenue, two main east-west arteries for Fort Collins, the Loomis Addition is a quiet neighborhood. While traffic is dense along the north and south boundaries, the large trees help to buffer traffic noise, especially on Laporte Avenue. There is minimal traffic on the other streets. Although Mountain Avenue is fairly well traveled, one-lane traffic and four-way stops have a traffic-calming impact. Even with heavy traffic patterns, this area has remained almost entirely residential. There is only one commercial-style building (700 West Mountain, the former West Side Grocery), one bed & breakfast, and only a few businesses operating out of homes.

Figure 1-3: 600 block of Laporte Ave., showing sidewalks, tree strips and row of fairly uniform houses with front porches (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The home size in the neighborhood is modest on most streets, with larger homes scattered throughout the 15-block area. Houses range from one to two stories, and the vast majority are single family homes. With a few exceptions, the houses present a fairly uniform appearance, although no two houses are exactly alike. A significant number of houses have been added on to, with most additions to the rear of the original building. A distinctive feature of the neighborhood is the well used front porches, a marked contrast with later suburban neighborhoods whose defining façade feature is a prominent attached garage.

Many properties retain barns, sheds, and chicken coops, some of which match the house in overall design and materials. Houses on the north side of Mountain Avenue have especially stylized outbuildings. Many barns were built at the turn of the 20th century, some at the same time as the construction of the house and others as later additions to the property. Garages range from small buildings designed to accommodate a Model T or Model A car to more modern, two-car structures.

Figure 1-4: Garage behind 708 W. Mountain Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning defines a historic context as "an organizational format that groups information about related historic properties, based on a theme, geographic limits and chronological period."[1] Understanding the context of a community, neighborhood, or specific group of buildings allows one to evaluate the significance of the area as a whole, and of individual buildings and features within the area. Historic contexts can cover a specific building type, theme or geographic area. A local context, developed for an individual community or neighborhood, defines patterns of development in themes such as transportation, community planning, and architecture and relates these local patterns to both broad national trends and the specific events that influenced the growth of the local jurisdiction.

The City of Fort Collins Historic Preservation Program chose to develop a historic context for the Loomis Addition for several reasons. The Loomis Addition was one of the earliest additions to the original town plat of Fort Collins, and as noted above, one of two early subdivisions that opened the way for residential development to the west of Old Town. The fifteen blocks of the Loomis Addition have remained residential and contain a large percentage of original houses that represent the growth and development of Fort Collins during its first century. This particular subdivision has been under increased development pressure in recent years, prompting the city and neighborhood residents to want to learn more about its history, architecture and significance. In addition, much of the information developed for this specific context will be helpful in evaluating other "Old Town" neighborhoods.

For purposes of evaluating historic residential suburbs, the National Park Service has developed a national historic context which divides suburbs into four major periods according to transportation: 1) railroad and horse-car suburbs, 1830 to 1890; 2) streetcar suburbs, 1888 to 1928; 3) early automobile suburbs, 1908 to1945; and 4) post-World War II and early freeway suburbs, 1945 to 1960.[2] The Loomis Addition spans the latter three periods, with a period of significance ranging from 1887 when the subdivision was platted to 1964 when the last house was built. The Loomis Addition is significant as an early Fort Collins residential development which has endured and prospered for most of its 127 years, for the residents who lived there, and for its architecture, representing a dozen or more styles and building forms ranging from Italianate to Mid-century Ranch.

This context is intended to be used for several purposes: to provide background and history for residents of the Loomis Addition who want to learn more about their neighborhood and their individual homes; to assist in evaluating buildings and groups of buildings for their architectural and historical significance; and as a planning tool.

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[1] "Fort Collins History and Architecture," Fort Collins History Connection website, http://history.fcgov.com/archive/contexts/introduction.php, accessed July 1, 2014.
[2] David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland. *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Documentation and Evaluation for the National Register of Historic Places.* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002). http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs/index.htm, accessed August 12, 2014.

CHAPTER 2 - BEGINNINGS

EARLY SETTLERS

To understand how Fort Collins--and the Loomis Addition--came to be, one needs to go back to the mid-19th century and before. The area now known as Larimer County was used by American Indians and later fur trappers and gold prospectors long before it became a permanent settlement. Indigenous peoples lived in, hunted in and traveled through the eastern foothills of the mountains in the vicinity of the Cache la Poudre River as many as 10,000 years before Euro-American explorers set foot in this area. Evidence of their occupation is found throughout the county, including the famous Lindenmeier Archaeological Site north of Fort Collins.

Hunting, trapping, trading and gold seeking brought the first Euro-Americans to this area. The first settlement was along the Cache la Poudre River in what is now Laporte, where Antoine Janis staked a claim as early as 1844 and built a cabin in 1859, around the same time that a company of French Canadians founded a settlement here they named Colona.

These early explorers were soon joined by more permanent settlers. More than 100,000 people emigrated from the East and Midwest on the Oregon, Mormon and California Trails from the 1830s to the 1870s. Although the Oregon Trail was more than 100 miles to the north, along the North Platte River in central Wyoming, it brought people to the Rocky Mountains where some decided to end their journeys and stake their claims. The Homestead Acts of 1862 and later, which opened up 270 million acres of federal land for settlement, attracted farmers seeking new opportunities. The routing of the Overland stage route through Larimer County brought more prospective residents to the area, and by the 1860s about 100 settlers had established themselves here. Most settled on the most productive lands along the Cache la Poudre River, where they cut hay for horses, and later established crop farms and grazed livestock.

Other early settlers were initially drawn to Colorado after gold was discovered in the mountains west of Denver. The gold rush reportedly brought as many as 100,000 fortune seekers to Colorado, including to Larimer County. Heading south on their way to Denver from the Oregon Trail in Wyoming, or wandering back up north from Denver, both would-be and disappointed prospectors would have passed through the Cache la Poudre valley and noted the fertile lands and abundant wildlife that had attracted Indian tribes centuries before. Some of these early adventurers saw an opportunity to make money off of prospectors by supplying them with food and building materials.

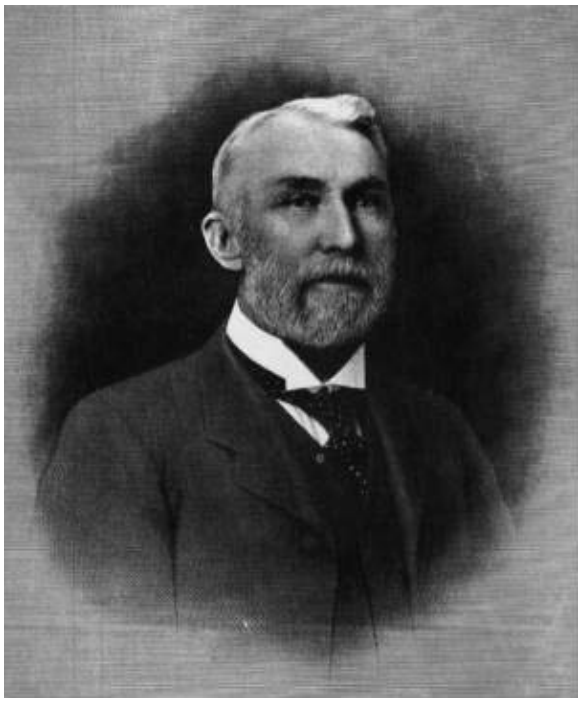

Figure 2-1: Abner Loomis, c. 1911 (Local History Archive Loomis_Abn).

An example of one of these early settlers was Abner Loomis. Born in Fredonia, New York, in 1829, Loomis moved as far west as Iowa with his parents. When he was in his early 20s he set out for California to seek his fortune in the gold mines. He was still following the gold trail ten years later when he arrived in the Rocky Mountains as a "Fifty-niner," and made his way north from Pike's Peak to the Laporte area. Like other disappointed prospectors, Loomis saw greater potential in the fertile lands along the Cache la Poudre River, and eventually was able to purchase land in the Pleasant Valley near Bellvue, raising potatoes, corn, vegetables and hay to sell to miners. He developed and ran what became a very successful cattle business, selling out in 1882 to focus on business interests in Fort Collins. Loomis was also credited with bringing apple trees to Larimer County in 1862.[3]

After Colorado became a Territory in 1861, the First Territorial Legislature established Larimer County, with the county seat at Laporte (formerly Colona), the oldest and most developed settlement in the county. Abner Loomis became involved in local government early on, becoming the first president of the Larimer County Board of Commissioners in 1864.

FROM A FORT TO A TOWN

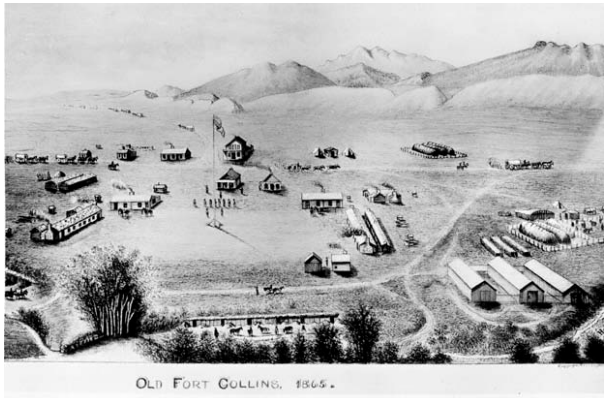

Figure 2-2: M.D. Houghton, original drawing of "Camp" Collins, 1865 (Local History Archive).

Fort Collins began as a military post in 1864, after an earlier camp established in Laporte to protect travelers on the Overland stage route was washed away in a flood. The new post was established in the vicinity of what is now Linden and Willow Streets and covered an area of 6,169 acres. Once the fort was commissioned and staffed, local settlers had an instant market for their agricultural goods and for products they could purchase elsewhere, ship to Fort Collins and sell to the soldiers and the army. Thus the town of Fort

[3] Charlene Tresner, *Streets of Fort Collins* (Fort Collins, CO: Patterson House Book Publishing, 2007); Kevin Murray, "Whitcomb Street Historic District," Fort Collins Landmark District Nomination, 2004; Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County* (Fort Collins: The Courier Printing & Publishing Company, 1911), page 143.

Collins came to be, with its first commercial venture the store established by the fort sutlers James Mason and Henry Chamberlin in 1864.

The fort was short-lived, being abandoned in 1867 just three years after it was established. The town, however, survived. Some soldiers opted to stay in Fort Collins, several of them taking advantage of the Homestead Act to stake their claims in this area. Enterprising settlers Jack Dow and Norman Meldrum soon platted the military lands, establishing the original townsite encompassing the area from the Cache la Poudre River south to what is now Mountain Avenue, and west to College Avenue, an area known as Old Town. Fort Collins soon overtook Laporte in terms of settlement, commerce and importance and in 1868 the citizens of Larimer County voted to move the county seat from Laporte to Fort Collins.

The development of Fort Collins was accelerated by the colony movement, through which persons interested in emigrating would establish a corporation, buying up large quantities of land so that they could live close to one another in a homogenous environment. Colonists from Greeley formed the Fort Collins Agricultural Colony, developed by Robert A. Cameron, superintendent of the Greeley colony, in partnership with other prominent Greeley and Fort Collins businessmen. The partners formed the Larimer County Land Improvement Company to purchase land for resale to settlers.

When the military lands were opened to settlement in May, 1872, the Improvement Company was ready, purchasing 3,000 acres adjacent to Old Town for resale to colony members. Robert Cameron commissioned surveyor Franklin C. Avery to plat the land. Avery, who had been trained as a civil engineer, was a member of the Union Colony in Greeley and had helped survey that city. He platted 932 acres as Fort Collins' "Original Town," laying out the streets in a gridiron pattern with major roads following U.S. Geological Survey section lines, and creating an awkward transition from Old Town, which was platted to follow the river. Avery can be thanked for the unusually wide streets in Fort Collins. His 1873 map specifies that avenues were to be 140' wide (except for Laporte Avenue which was 150' and

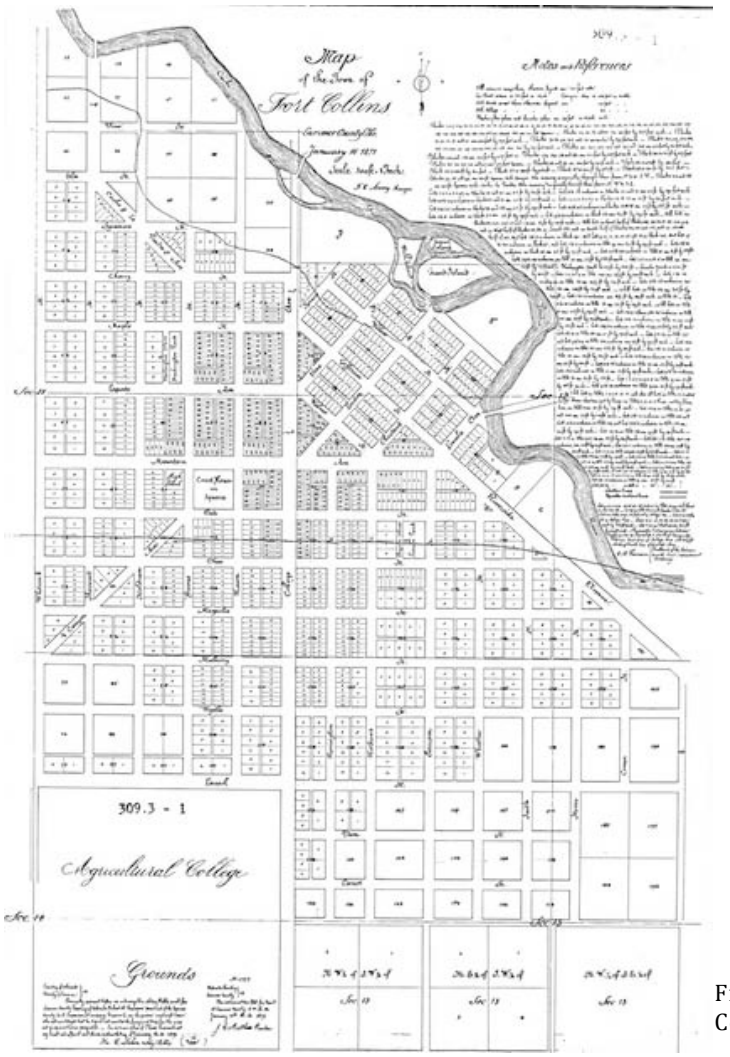

Figure 2-3: F.C. Avery, "Map of the Town of Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado, 1873."

Canyon Avenue which was 100'), streets were 100' wide and alleys were 20' wide.[4] "There is plenty of room out here, and I'm going to use it," he reportedly answered when questioned about the width of the streets.[5] The Improvement Company was thinking on a grand scale when it laid out Fort Collins. The town extended south as far as present-day Lake Street to encompass a site for an agricultural college, west as far as Whitcomb Street and east to Riverside Avenue. In addition to the college, the plat included lots set aside for homes, businesses, schools, churches, county buildings, parks, and a cemetery – but saloons were expressly left out. Ten- to forty-acre farm tracts were platted along the edges of the townsite. In addition to the wide streets, Avery can be thanked for the trees along Fort Collins' main avenues. In his capacity as county surveyor, he brought trees from the foothills and supervised their planting.[6]

By the mid- to late-1870s Fort Collins had a commercial business area - or actually two - Old Town with its center at Jefferson and Walnut Streets, and New Town centered at Mountain and College Avenues. False-front frame buildings were erected to house new businesses such as general stores, drug stores, banks, offices, hotels and blacksmith shops. Livery stables were an important part of the commercial activity of the town, which was totally reliant on horses for transportation. Churches, schools and government offices were also constructed during this period.

Enterprising individuals such as Elizabeth (Auntie) Stone and Henry C. Peterson started industries to serve the growing town, including a water-powered grist mill, sawmills and brick kilns. In 1884 The *Fort Collins Express* reported, "They have just finished building a kiln of 250,000 brick at the yards east of town and those contemplating the erection of brick houses can now secure the material here at home."[7] Once lumber and brick were readily available, the crudely and hastily constructed frontier buildings were replaced with more permanent structures. Stone hauled down from the hills west of town in wagons was put to good use for foundations, chimneys, trim and even entire buildings. Abner Loomis became an important founder of Fort Collins, constructing the Loomis Block (now known as the Linden Hotel) at the corner of Walnut and Linden Streets in 1882 and later serving as president of the Poudre Valley National Bank.

LAND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND FIRST HOMES

Fort Collins' earliest settlers used whatever materials were available locally to construct their homes. Many fashioned simple cabins from logs cut in the nearby mountains and hauled to the building site by wagon. But once sawmills and brick kilns were established, people began to build more substantial and sophisticated homes. Sawmills producing dimension lumber opened the way for construction of frame houses, faster and easier to construct than traditional log or timber-frame homes. By the 1870s, frame houses sheathed in clapboard siding as well as houses of brick or stone were being built in Fort Collins, most of them clustered in close to the commercial area.

Historian Ansel Watrous noted that in 1873 (the year that Fort Collins was organized as a town), "New homes and new business blocks went up almost like magic, and the demand for building material and mechanics far exceeded the supply."[8] Unfortunately 1873 was also the year of a

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[4] F.C. Avery, "Map of the Town of Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado, 1873."
[5] Tresner, *Streets of Fort Collins*, page 3.
[6] Evadene Burris Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays* (Fort Collins: Don-Art Printers, Inc. 1975), page 172.
[7] "Remember When," *Coloradoan*, August 11, 1964.
[8] Watrous, page 232.

nationwide financial disaster (known as the Panic of 1873), which resulted in bank failures throughout the country and impacted the fledgling town of Fort Collins as well, which lost its bank and the savings of many local residents. This, combined with a severe grasshopper infestation that damaged local crops, brought the growth of Fort Collins to a sudden halt. Optimism faded along with building activity, and those who were not entirely settled in Larimer County left for better prospects. The town did not fully recover until the railroad arrived in 1877.

CHAPTER 3 - RAILS, GROWTH AND THE LOOMIS ADDITION (1877 – 1900)

Figure 3-1: Colorado Central train on Mason St., c. 1913 (courtesy of Rheba Massey).

TRANSPORTATION: COMING OF THE RAILROAD

During the later part of the 1800s, railroads largely determined whether a town lived or died. The slump experienced by Fort Collins in the 1870s was partly because, unlike Cheyenne to the north and Denver to the south, Fort Collins had no rail connection. Railroads were the critical link to the outside world; they brought building materials, supplies, fashions, and people, giving residents access to the world outside their little community. They also provided the means for shipping agricultural products, timber, stone and other goods to outside markets, thus helping to create and enhance commercial activity. Fort Collins had only poor wagon roads connecting it with Cheyenne and Denver, the two major commercial and transportation centers in the region. It was expensive to ship products out, or supplies in, and therefore the town stagnated – especially compared with towns that had rail access.

So the big event for Fort Collins in the 1870s was the arrival of the Colorado Central Railroad. The line north from Denver was originally planned to go through Greeley, but after delays caused by the Panic of 1873, the company chose the most direct route to link up with the Union Pacific's Transcontinental Railroad in Wyoming, and that route led through Fort Collins. Fort Collins' city fathers sealed the deal by offering the railroad a right-of-way right through the center of town, on Mason Street. The rail line arrived in 1877 and provided the critical link to the outside world that Fort Collins needed to develop as an agricultural and commercial center. An 1881 report on products shipped by rail from Fort Collins noted large quantities of stone ("destined perhaps for Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, New York or Boston"), "lumber, posts, poles, flour, feed, wheat, corn,

barley, oats, potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables, hay, cattle, sheep, horses, hogs, hides, dressed meat, wool and a great variety of other truck from our farms, gardens and ranches."[9]

Railroad service also made it that much easier for emigrants to make their way to Fort Collins and settle here, and many did – especially famers from the Midwest. One of these was Edwin Chester "Chet" Giddings of Warren County, Illinois, who came to Colorado with his family in 1883 on an emigrant train, used by the railroads to induce people to settle along their rights-of-way. Each family rented a box car in which they carried all their worldly possessions, including livestock, farm machinery, and household goods. A member of the family was allowed to ride in the box car, while the rest of the family had to purchase tickets to ride in the passenger car. Chet was put into a barrel and shipped as "household goods." His father let him out while the train was moving, but Chet had to crawl back into the barrel at each stop. Chet was finally discovered in Greeley, and his father had to buy a ticket from Greeley to Fort Collins. Chet later moved to the Loomis Addition, where he lived at 704 West Mountain Avenue.[10]

The town responded to the influx of goods and residents with another building boom, and forty-one buildings were erected in 1879 alone. Building was still going strong in 1888 when the *Fort Collins Courier* reported, "One can hardly go in any direction without seeing new buildings in different stages of construction."[11]

The second rail line through Fort Collins also had a major influence on the future look and prosperity of the city. The Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railroad (GSLP), backed by the Union Pacific, was originally intended to go from Greeley through Fort Collins, up the Cache la Poudre canyon, across North Park and on to Salt Lake City where it would link up with the transcontinental railroad. When the line got as far as Bellvue, the Union Pacific decided to build a spur line to Stout (now under Horsetooth Reservoir) where it had purchased 160 acres for what was turning out to be a very successful sandstone quarry. In 1882 the GSLP began hauling sandstone from Stout, through Fort Collins and on to Greeley and other points on the Union Pacific line. Stout sandstone was used for buildings and sidewalks in Fort Collins, Greeley, Cheyenne and beyond through the early 1900s.

Stone quarrying was listed as a principal industry of Larimer County in Ansel Watrous' 1911 *History of Larimer County, Colorado*. According to Watrous, "at one time between 1882 and 1890 more than one thousand men were employed in [the stone quarries] getting out building stone, paving blocks, curbings and flaggings and many of the finest buildings in Denver, Omaha, and Kansas City, were constructed of white, gray and red sand stone taken from these quarries."[12]

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, AGRICULTURE, AND INDUSTRY

Also very significant for the growth of the town was the establishment of the Colorado State Agricultural College (now Colorado State University) in Fort Collins in 1879. The college was sited on eighty acres donated for this purpose by the Larimer County Land Improvement Company, as

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[9] "1880-1890" Decade Vertical file, Local History Archive, Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Fort Collins, CO.
[10] "Giddings, E.C. (Chet)," from Andrew J. Morris, ed., *History of Larimer County* (Fort Collins, CO: Curtis Media Corporation, 1985), page 232; Watrous, page 481.
[11] Watrous, page 241; *Fort Collins Courier*, March 22, 1888.
[12] Watrous, page 152.

illustrated in Franklin Avery's 1873 survey. Local business and civic leaders built a "claim" building to prove their serious intent to establish a college (and preclude the college going to Greeley).[13] A.H. Patterson planted rows of trees leading from Old Town to campus. With the construction of the first permanent college building, Old Main, Fort Collins proved that it was not only a center of agriculture but also of culture and learning. Although it started small, with only 10 students, the college proved to be a huge factor in the growth and development of the city.

Agriculture continued to be the main industry in Fort Collins and increasingly large quantities of agricultural products were shipped by rail to commercial centers such as Chicago. Helped by irrigation, which took some of the risk out of farming, Larimer County's fruit trees were beginning to produce. The grasshopper infestation that plagued farmers in the early 1870s had ended by 1877, and wheat and hay were once again flourishing crops. Farmers banded together to build grain elevators to store their grain and water-powered mills to process it into flour and bran. The winter of 1886-1887 was notoriously hard on the cattle industry throughout the West, and the steep losses in cattle persuaded many Fort Collins ranchers to turn to raising sheep, which fared better in severe climates. Sheep ranchers learned that Fort Collins itself was an ideal place to feed lambs over the winter months, and by the winter of 1901, 400,000 lambs were being fed in the Fort Collins area. Timber was also harvested in the mountains west of Fort Collins and milled for building lumber and railroad ties, which were floated down the Poudre each spring from logging camps at Chambers Lake. In Laporte, the ties were loaded onto railroad cars and shipped to Fort Collins for processing.[14]

Figure 3-2: Driving sheep down Mountain and Linden, c. 1907 (Local History Archive H05442).

[13] Swanson, page 42.
[14] Watrous, pages 145 and 136; Mary Humstone, "Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railroad – Stout Branch," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Denver: Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, 2004).

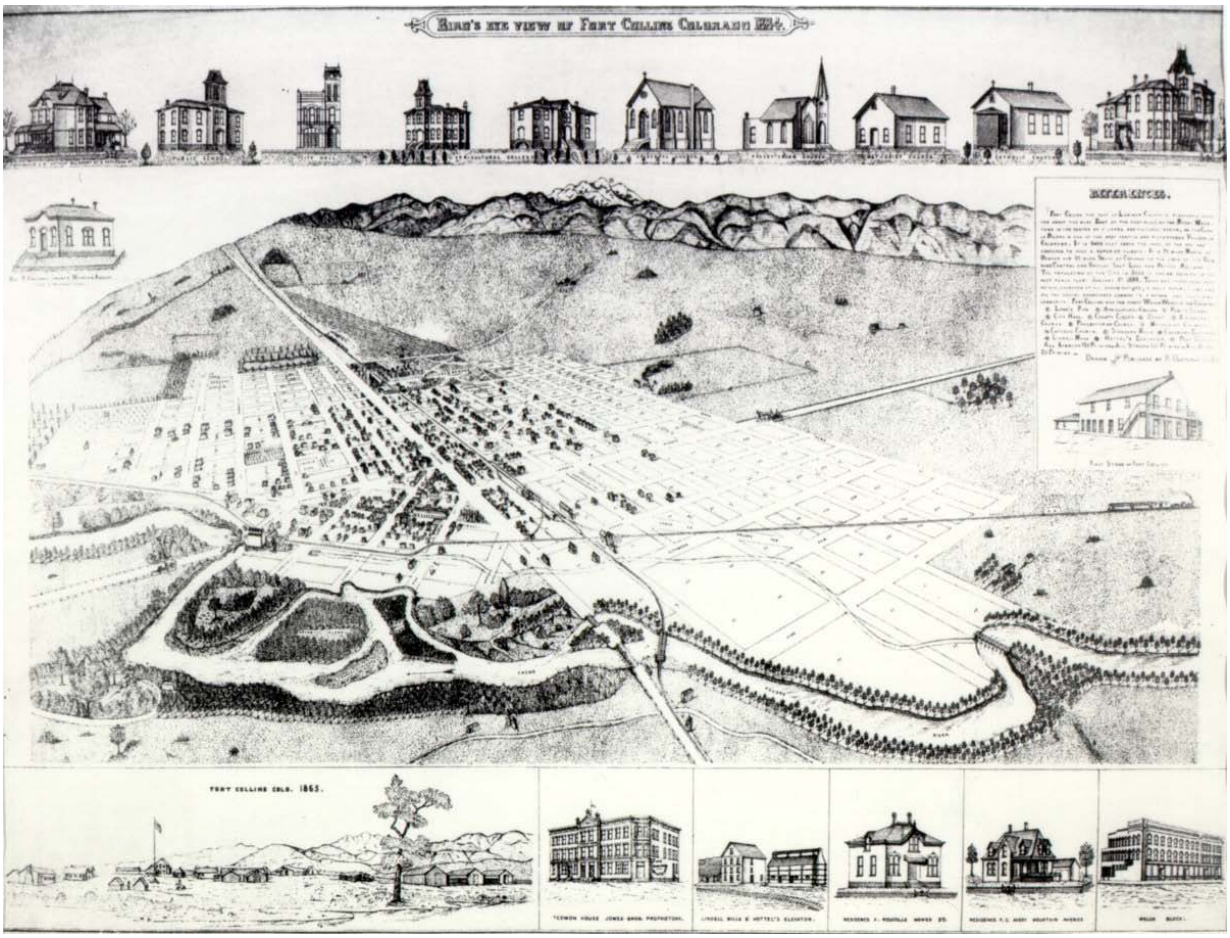

Figure 3-3: Pierre Dastarac, 1884 Bird's Eye View of Fort Collins, CO (Local History Archive HO6948).

With the coming of the railroad, the downtown area of Fort Collins began to grow once again. As shown in the "1884 Bird's Eye View of Fort Collins, Colorado" by sign painter Pierre Dastarac (figure 3-3), the Original Town plat drawn by Frank Avery in 1873 had begun to fill in a decade later. The drawing shows College Avenue as a wide north-south thoroughfare, intersected by the equally wide Laporte Avenue which connected to the foothills to the west. Development in the "Old Town" area was fairly dense, with businesses such as hotels, restaurants, saloons; grocery, dry goods, furniture and hardware stores; and laundries, print shops and carriage shops. Churches, schools and city and county offices also occupied lots on College Avenue and adjacent streets for a few blocks between Laporte Avenue and Olive Streets.

A county courthouse was built in 1877 on the "courthouse square" laid out in the 1873 plat. Two schools, Remington School on Remington and Olive (1879) and Franklin School (1887) on Mountain and Howes, were also built during the last quarter of the 19th century. The city built a public water supply, bringing water from the Cache la Poudre River through an open ditch to a pump house and from there through city mains by pumps driven by water wheels. Fort Collins was

electrified during this period as well, with a company formed in 1887 to bring street lights and residential electrical service to the city.[15] An April 1888 news article lauded the bright lights that lit up the town at night.

Figure 3-4: Bill Frye spraying city streets to keep down dust, c. 1927 (Local History Archive H14858).

In spite of some improvements, Fort Collins' wide streets were dusty when it was dry, and muddy when it rained, making the city a less than attractive place to live, work and do business. The fact that cattle and sheep were herded right through town did not make the situation any better. In 1890 the city passed an ordinance requiring sidewalks 12' wide in the downtown and 4'-5' wide in front of residences. Sandstone slabs from the quarry at Stout were used for early sidewalks, some of which still exist in the Loomis Addition. Streets were sprinkled with water during the dry summer months to keep the dust down. Eventually some of the main streets were graveled; Fort Collins did not begin paving its streets until 1915.

Residential areas of the original town plat south and west of Old Town began to fill in during this period. In 1880 there were 220 houses in Fort Collins.[16] The 1884 bird's eye view shows houses mainly in the first two to three blocks east and west of College, between Mountain and Mulberry.

Figure 3-5: B. F. Hottel Home, 200 Block of South College, built in 1883 (Local History Archive H08203).

The most desirable neighborhood was the area south of Old Town, what is now known as the Laurel School Neighborhood, where wealthy businessmen such as Jesse Harris, Jacob Welch, and A.W. Scott built homes in popular styles such as Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. In addition to the Remington School, neighborhood residents had use of a city park (Lincoln Park, now Library Park), as laid out in the original 1873 plat.

South College Avenue was also home to many prominent families who built large homes along the city's major north-south thoroughfare from the 1880s to the second decade of the 20th century. Benjamin Hottel, a prominent Fort Collins industrial pioneer, built an Italianate-style house at 215 South College in 1883. Designed by architect Richard Burke, this elegant house was one of the few in Fort Collins to be adorned with a square cupola on its bracketed, low pitched hipped roof. The house, along with many of its neighbors, was demolished in the 1960s. Corwin Welch, wealthy

[15] Watrous, page 249.
[16] "1880-1890" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.

merchant and mayor of Fort Collins in the 1880s, built a Classical Revival home and carriage house in 1898 at the northwest corner of College and Mulberry. The formal symmetrical design with its classically columned semi-circular front and side porticos exuded the prominence of its owner. While most of the home building was on or east of College Avenue, an end-of-year real estate report in 1878 mentions a few scattered houses being built as far west as Sherwood on Mountain Avenue and Oak Street – only one block from what would become the Loomis Addition.

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS 1881-1891

Like most developing cities of the time, Fort Collins attempted to separate commercial, industrial and residential areas. Although most workers still had to live within walking or bicycling distance of their place of employment, those that could afford it preferred to move away from industrial and commercial centers, which were becoming increasingly crowded, noisy and dirty. The ideal of the suburban house on a landscaped lot, popularized as early as 1850 by books such as Andrew Jackson Downing's *The Architecture of Country Houses*, was becoming a middle-class, as well as an upper class, aspiration. The development of the balloon-frame method of framing houses and the increasing availability of mass-produced materials made a home of one's own within the reach of more American families, and developers responded by platting subdivisions with small building lots at affordable prices.

Early developers acquired and surveyed land, laid out roads and building lots, and made general improvements such as grading roads, building curbs and sidewalks, installing utilities and sometimes planting trees. These early subdivisions were generally small, and expanded the city's gridiron system in increments. As land was purchased and subdivided, city streets were extended. Developers sold the land to individual homeowners, who would then hire a builder to build their home or in some cases build it themselves. Sometimes a builder would buy several parcels and build homes for resale, or a land speculator would buy a portion of a block for resale at a higher price in the future.[17]

As Fort Collins' population grew (from 1,356 in 1880 to more than 3,000 by 1900), business leaders and investors recognized the need for additional space for housing -- and the opportunity to make money -- and bought up large parcels to the west and south of the downtown area which they platted into subdivisions. Up until this time, most of the residential development had taken place east of College Avenue. Because of leakage of water from the town ditch, the blocks west of College along Laporte and Mountain avenues were plagued by water, and were described as a "swamp," thus stifling development of this part of town. "The ground on both sides of Laporte avenue was covered with standing water, so much so that people had to cross on raised plank walks to get to the Methodist church." Mountain Avenue between Mason and College "was also a swamp of standing water, breeding places for miasma and mosquitoes."[18] The situation was finally remedied by the construction of the Mountain Avenue sewer in 1886, thus reclaiming the property and paving the way for development.

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[17] David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland. "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Documentation and Evaluation for the National Register of Historic Places" (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002). http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs/index.htm, accessed August 12, 2014.
[18] Watrous, page 235.

Nine new residential subdivisions were platted in Fort Collins between 1881 and 1891, including the Loomis Addition in 1887.[19] These subdivisions were located to the south and west of the Old Town area. Following national trends, the "nicer" subdivisions were those farthest from the center of town. The Lake Park Addition (1881) was quite far from town, south of Elizabeth Street and east of the college, and did not see much development until it was re-subdivided in the 1890s by the Craft brothers, who offered loans for lots at low interest rates to entice buyers. One of the blocks was used as a farm by M. H. Akin, an indication of how the rural and suburban merged during this period. Harrison Addition (1881) was located just north of the college, while Doty and Rhodes (1883) and the West Side Addition (1887) were north of Laporte to the west of Old Town. The new subdivisions such as the Loomis Addition catered to middle and upper class residents, while industrial and railroad workers lived closer to their jobs, in less desirable industrial sections along the railroad tracks to the northwest and along the river near Jefferson Street.

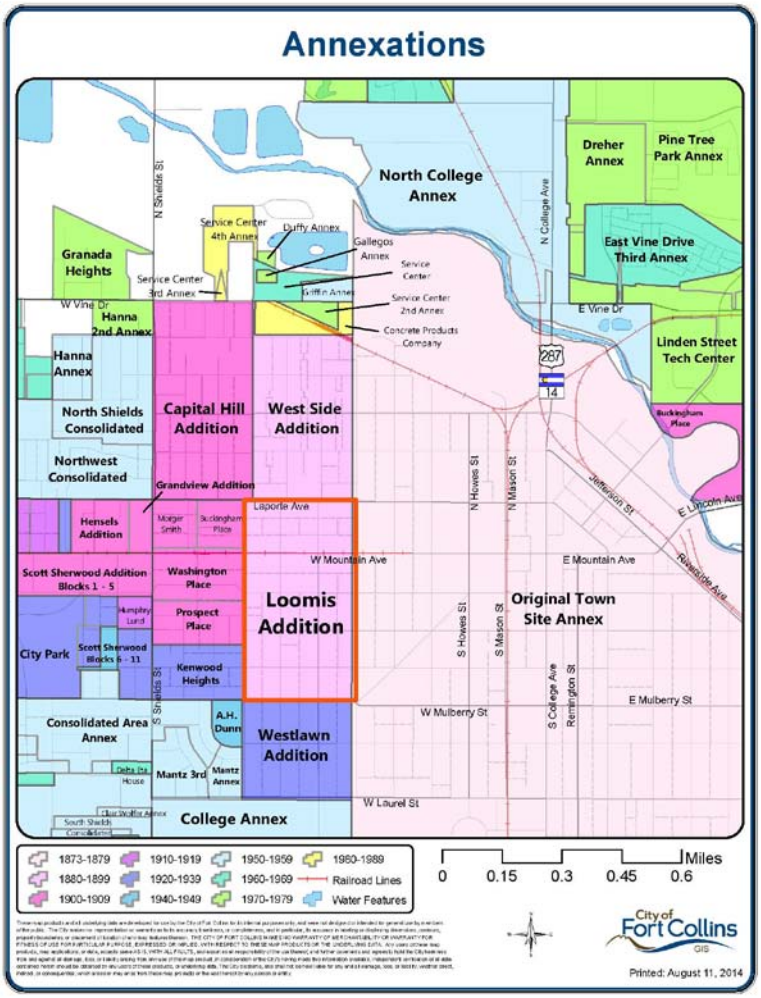

Figure 3-6: City of Fort Collins annexations surrounding the Loomis Addition, showing decade of annexation (City of Fort Collins, 2014).

[19] Harrison 1881, Lake Park 1881, Doty and Rhodes 1883, Emigh 1886, Loomis 1887, Westside 1887, F.J. Spencer 1888, Crafts' 1890, Crafts' Second 1891.

THE LOOMIS ADDITION

Abner Loomis, an early leader in the development of Fort Collins, platted the Loomis Addition in 1887 along with Malinda Maxwell, whom he later married. As noted above, Loomis had first come to the area in 1860, and like many early settlers he was engaged in a number of enterprises including freighting, farming and cattle ranching. The *Fort Collins Express* described him as an "energetic factor in building up the country and [one who] has always been identified with the growth and progress of Fort Collins." In addition to the Loomis Addition property, Loomis owned at least one building downtown and large parcels west of Washington Street.[20]

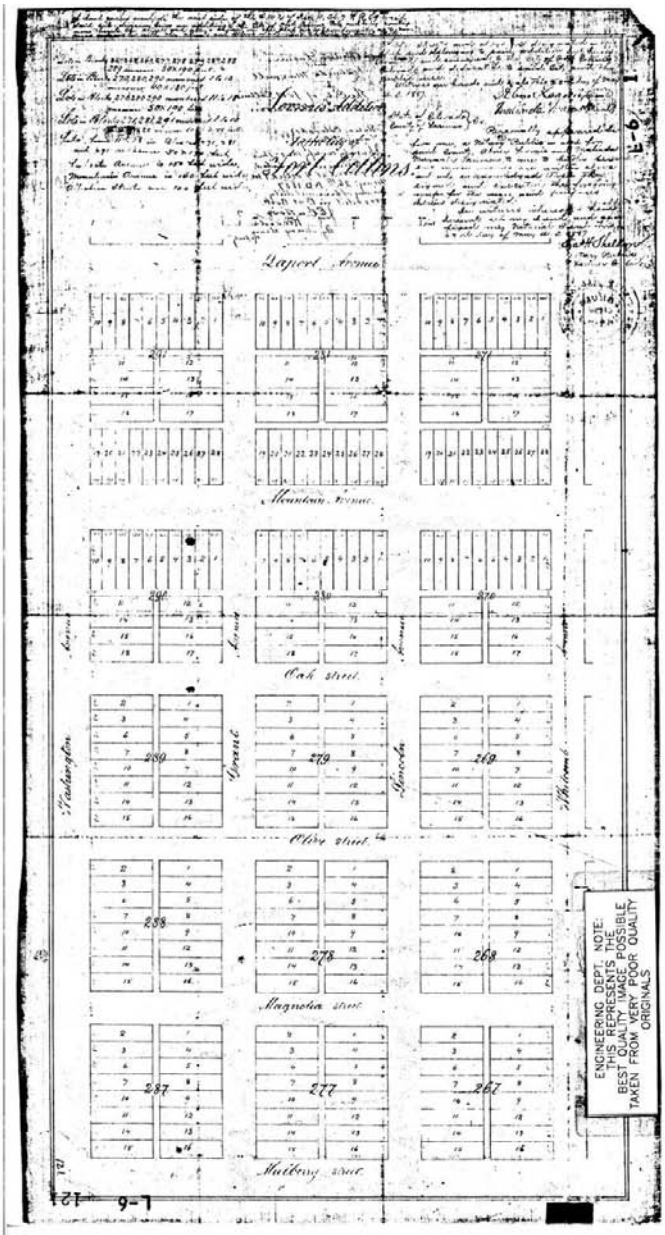

Figure 3-7: Original plat of the Loomis Addition, 1887 (City of Fort Collins Engineering Department).

The Loomis Addition consisted of fifteen blocks which encompassed the two main east-west avenues, Laporte and Mountain, which Franklin Avery had laid out to be 150' and 140' wide, respectively. The importance of these two avenues is apparent in the original plat map, which shows lots facing Laporte and Mountain, but not Oak, Olive, Magnolia or Mulberry. The southernmost nine blocks (between Oak and Mulberry) were laid out in a regular pattern with sixteen equally sized lots (about 50' wide) facing the north-south streets, and alleys running north-south at the center of the blocks. The blocks bordering Mountain Avenue to the south were laid out in a T-shaped pattern with lots lined up facing Mountain Avenue accessed by an east-west alley, and a second north-south alley dividing the south half of the blocks, which were divided into four lots facing the north-south streets. The blocks between Mountain and LaPorte Avenues were deeper than the rest, and were arranged in an "H" pattern with an additional set of lots facing Laporte. Blocks 268 and 269 were crossed by the Fort Collins Irrigation Canal otherwise known as the Town Ditch or the Arthur Ditch.

[20] W.C. Willets, "Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado" (map), May, 1894.

To sell his lots, Loomis hired George Darrow, a Denver real estate broker who opened an office in Fort Collins. Before its official June 1st opening, Darrow was advertising lots for sale in the Loomis Addition, "the Capitol Hill of Fort Collins." "Lots will be offered cheap, and very easy payments. Interest 10 per cent, or 5 per cent off where a cash purchase is made."[21] In this case, "cheap" meant $75 and up. On the day of the opening, Darrow had festooned the subdivision with red flags, as noted in this newspaper clip: "'Tell me why Mr. Darrow keeps red flags floating from the block corners of his new addition to Fort Collins,' said one citizen to another. 'To excite the real estate bulls, of course. Ask me something harder.'"[22]

Darrow came up with various schemes, including one in which he advertised an amazing attraction to get people to see the lots.

> At an enormous expense he has had that ancient and only original sea serpent brought from the salt waters of the Atlantic Ocean and deposited in a small fresh water pond in the Loomis Addition and has secured special excursion rates on all the railroads in the country to bring visitors to see the far-famed reptile. Of course when the crowd arrives there will be no difficulty in selling his lots.[23]

According to a July, 1887 *Fort Collins Courier* article, eighty lots in the Loomis Addition were sold in the first month that it opened, possibly due to Darrow's scheme of raffling off a house in order to sell lots (Figure 3-8). Abner Loomis hired contractor H.W. Schroeder to build a six-room, brick Eastlake-style house at 121 North Grant as a speculative house, and offered it in a raffle to anyone who purchased a lot in the addition. The raffle was to be held when 200 lots had been sold, which was accomplished within a year. In a drawing held at the opera house on May 11, 1888, Mr. J. M. Fillebrown of Geneva, Nebraska, was the lucky winner of the $3,000 house. Fillebrown sold the house a few months later to Arthur "Billy" and Alice Patterson for $1,200.

Figure 3-8: Advertisement for the Loomis Addition "Raffle House" (*Fort Collins Courier*, June 9, 1887).

[21] Although the name "Capitol Hill of Fort Collins" was used in an early advertisement for lots in the Loomis Addition, the name apparently did not stick. *Fort Collins Courier*, May 26, 1887.
[22] *Courier*, June 2, 1887.
[23] *Courier,* August 1, 1887.

Figure 3-9: 121 N. Grant today (Mary Humstone, 2014).

Darrow marketed the Loomis Addition lots both to families wishing to build their own homes, and to investors, who bought up whole or half blocks with the intent to sell off individual lots for a profit. Abner Loomis was not one of the residents of his addition. He built his own house in 1885 on the corner of Remington and Magnolia, in the original town. In 1889 E.H. Hall purchased 12 lots which he later re-platted, and in 1891 Thomas H. Robertson purchased 106 lots, which he replatted in 1902.[24] Others, such as Commercial Hotel owner D. M. Harris and Alderman Peterman, bought lots and had houses built to sell or rent to others. Other early residents included John Place, foreman of Fort Collins' first Hook and Ladder Company, who built a "brick dwelling" in 1888, A.C. Howard ("a handsome brick cottage"), and builder C. Goodrich, who built "a large brick residence for his own use." Empty lots were put to good use. An article in the *Fort Collins Courier* tells of a baseball game played in June, 1889, between the Capitols of Cheyenne and the Stars of Fort Collins, on the "ball grounds in the Loomis Addition."[25]

A map drawn by W.C. Willits in 1894 (Figure 1-2) shows that, seven years after its opening, fifteen buildings had been built in the Loomis Addition. Most were on the east edge of the addition along Whitcomb Street, including four side-by-side houses that are probably the four Queen Anne cottages standing today at 117, 121, 125 and 129 South Whitcomb. To those early residents, it must have seemed like living way out in the country, since they were surrounded by open lands to the west and the south, and only sparse development to the east and the north. In 1887, the city purchased 40 acres of land "far outside of town" (1.5 miles) for what would become Grandview Cemetery, and the 1894 map shows Mountain Avenue west of Washington as a proposed drive to the cemetery.

Thirty-five houses remaining today in the Loomis Addition date from before 1900. These early houses reflect popular styles of the late 1800s, some of which did not arrive in Colorado until long after they had gone out of favor in the East. The S.C. Case House at 145 North Loomis (Figure 3-10), built c. 1890, is a rare Fort Collins example of the Italianate style which was popular nationwide from about 1860 to 1880. Modeled after Italian villas, but adapted to the needs of American homeowners, the Italianate style featured square, two-story blocks topped with shallow hipped roofs, tall, narrow windows with heavy window hoods, and wide, overhanging eaves, often with brackets.

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[24] *Courier*, May 12, 1889; "Plat of Resubdivision of Block 290 (south half), Loomis Addition to Fort Collins, Colo," 1902 (City Engineer's Office).

[25] "Landlord Harris, of the Commercial, has begun the erection of a new house on his lots in the Loomis Addition. When completed it will be occupied by Mr. E. Stone and family." (Courier, April 12, 1894); Ex-Alderman Peterman will "engage in the real estate business and will erect several cottages on his property in the Loomis addition." (Courier, February 2, 1888); Courier, March 22, 1888; Courier, June 27, 1889; for more on residents of the Loomis Addition, see Chapter 7.

Figure 3-10: S.C. Case House, 145 N. Loomis, c. 1900 (Local History Archive H05378).

Houses such as the above-mentioned cottages on Whitcomb Street were plainer, smaller variations of the Queen Anne style, a style known for its exuberant floor plan with multiple projections such as bay windows, towers and porches made from the array of pre-cut architectural features available by mail order and delivered by the railroad. Queen Anne style houses usually mixed several different kinds of building materials, such as stone, brick, clapboard and a variety of patterned shingles. Other house styles from this period include Folk Victorian and Classic Cottage (Figure 3-11; see Chapter 8 for more on the architecture of the Loomis Addition).

Figure 3-11: 727 Laporte, Classic Cottage (Meg Dunn, 2013).

The platting of new subdivisions and much of the building in Fort Collins ended with the Panic of 1893, which hit Colorado and the West especially hard. The national financial panic was precipitated by the failure of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, which like all other U.S. railroads had overextended itself, building lines at a furious rate on borrowed money. Railroads had been the economic engine for the country for the previous 20 years, and the failure of the Reading caused investors to panic and rush to withdraw their money from banks, in turn causing numerous bank failures. Other railroads such as the Union Pacific and the Northern Pacific, as well as many other companies, also went bankrupt. On a national level, more than 15,000 companies and 500 banks failed and the unemployment rate rose as high as 19%. The huge spike in unemployment, combined with the loss of life savings kept in failed banks, meant that a once-secure middle-class could not meet their mortgage obligations. As a result, many walked away from recently built homes.

The situation was exacerbated in Colorado by the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which required the government to purchase a certain amount of silver every month. The price of silver plummeted, and thousands of miners lost their jobs. In July 1893 there was a panic in Denver, as depositors stormed banks hoping to get their money out before the banks closed. As many as 20 Denver banks closed, as did the Bank of Loveland.

The Panic of 1893 did not seem to be nearly as devastating for Fort Collins, perhaps because the city was not as heavily invested in railroads and mining as Denver and other western cities.[26] A July 20, 1893 article in the *Fort Collins Courier* stated that, "the demand for houses to rent has never been so brisk in Fort Collins as at the present time. . . .The town is rapidly filling up and the newcomers are all excellent people."[27] This appeared almost directly following a short article reporting that three savings banks, three national banks and three private banks in Denver had closed that week. There were no runs on Fort Collins' two banks (Poudre Valley and First National), and neither bank closed. P. Anderson Company, an agricultural products and implement firm, built a large ($4,000) warehouse right in the middle of the Panic, demonstrating confidence in the economic future of the city, and according to a January 1894 article in the *Fort Collins Courier*, Fort Collins citizens invested over $60,000 in new buildings in 1893 and "the structures erected are all of the better class of residences."[28] Although no houses were built in the Loomis Addition in 1893, one dates from 1894 and by 1898 another 26 houses had been built, indicating that by 1897, when the U.S. economy began to recover, Fort Collins was growing once again.

[26] "Fort Collins and the Panic of 1893," Charles Michael Carroll, MA thesis, CSU, 1971. Carroll studied sales records and advertising habits of businesses, as well as bank records, to support his claim that Fort Collins weathered the Panic relatively well.
[27] *Courier*, July 20, 1893.
[28] *Courier*, January 4, 1894.

CHAPTER 4 – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT: THE LOOMIS ADDITION (1900-1919)

Figure 4-1: Union Pacific Railroad comes to Fort Collins, 1911 (Local History Archive H01913).

The first two decades of the 20th century brought more growth and prosperity to Fort Collins, with another major rail line, expansion of Colorado Agricultural College, construction of a sugar beet factory and the introduction of streetcars. The growth of Fort Collins as an agricultural and transportation hub drew new residents, and the population almost tripled from a little over 3,000 in 1900 to 8,755 by 1920. The *Fort Collins Courier* reported, "There are very few vacant houses in Fort Collins at the present time, and of these not many are of a desirable character as places of residence. People are coming from various states to find homes here, and the result is that nearly every desirable house in the city contains a family."[29] The Loomis Addition began to fill in, especially the northern blocks along Mountain and Laporte avenues, and the blocks bordering Olive Street. Of the houses in the Loomis Addition today, 164 were built during this period, bringing the total number of houses constructed before 1920 to 199 or 64%. In addition to housing, developments in Fort Collins' businesses, transportation, and city services greatly impacted the Loomis Addition during this period.

[29] "50 Years Ago-1914," from James C. Miller, *Historical Sketches of Fort Collins and Larimer County*, page 625 (Local History Archive).

FORT COLLINS IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY: BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT, LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

BUSINESS

The introduction and eventual expansion of sugar beets into Colorado can be attributed at least in part to experiments performed at the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station, a program of Colorado Agricultural College established in 1888. Early prospects for a sugar beet factory in Fort Collins were promising, but the Panic of 1893 put plans on hold for awhile. Although Fort Collins did not have the first sugar beet factory in Larimer County (Loveland's opened in 1901), farmers began growing beets and shipped them by train to the Loveland factory until the Fort Collins factory opened in 1904. Local investors formed the Fort Collins Sugar Manufacturing Company, purchased the land and contracted for the construction of the factory, which was purchased by the Great Western Sugar Company the summer after it opened.[30]

Figure 4-2: Hauling sugar beets, c. 1901 (University Historic Photograph Collection, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections).

The sugar beet industry changed the face of Fort Collins, bringing in German-Russian and Hispanic immigrants to work in the fields and the factory. It provided clerical and managerial jobs, as well as a ready market in sugar beets for local farmers and a market for limestone which was quarried at Ingleside and other mines northwest of Fort Collins and shipped to the plant via the Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railroad.

Promotional pamphlets from the first decade of the 20th century are full of statistics about the productivity of farm land in the Fort Collins area, and the huge amounts of sugar beets produced and processed here. Another significant contributor to Fort Collins' robust economy during this period, and for the next forty or so years, was the feeding of lambs. Fort Collins celebrated its "Semi-Centennial" in 1914 with a three-day celebration including a Wild West Show, a pioneer reunion, a historical pageant and a free lamb barbeque![31]

TRANSPORTATION

Shipping activity greatly increased with the development of the sugar beet factory. The former Greeley, Salt Lake and Pacific Railroad had been reorganized as the Colorado and Southern (C&S) Railroad in 1899, and came under the financial control of the Chicago Burlington and Quincy

[30] Swanson, page 50; investors were Benjamin F. Hottel, James Arthur, Peter Anderson, Joseph McClelland, Jesse Harris, Jacob Welch, and C.R. Welch.
[31] "Semi-Centennial Souvenir Edition of the *Fort Collins Courier*," 1914.

Railroad, a major competitor to the Union Pacific.[32] The Colorado and Southern built a spur line to the sugar beet factory in 1903, and another spur line from Bellvue north to Ingleside to haul limestone, which was used to process beets into sugar. In addition to four freight trains per day, the C&S ran fourteen passenger trains, providing transportation to and from Denver and Cheyenne for residents of the Loomis Addition and other Fort Collins neighborhoods, and bringing visitors, shoppers and business people to Fort Collins.

Cut out of the Fort Collins market for several years, the Union Pacific was determined to build a line from Denver to Fort Collins, entering from the east. The city granted the Union Pacific a right-of-way along the north sides of Riverside and Jefferson streets, a move that resulted in a major reconstruction in Old Town and the demolition or moving of 75 of the oldest homes and commercial buildings in the city. In 1911, the Union Pacific constructed a brick passenger depot at Jefferson and Pine and a freight depot on Linden, as well as an eight-stall roundhouse (demolished in 1970) near Lemay and Riverside. This new rail line, which spurred off from the main Union Pacific line at Dent, Colorado (near Millikin), allowed farmers in towns between Fort Collins and Dent to take the train to Fort Collins for shopping, and thus was an economic boon for the city's merchants.[33]

CITY DEVELOPMENT

The sugar beet plant precipitated a population increase of 169% (from 3,053 in 1900 to 8,210 in 1910), an increase in business activity and an unprecedented building boom, with annual building outlays climbing from $400,000 in 1903 to more than $1 million in 1907.[34] Most of the new buildings were houses, although the city also built a Carnegie Library in Lincoln Park (1903) and added a 27-room hospital on East Magnolia (1906), a YMCA at Remington and Oak (1906), and a new high school at Meldrum and Mulberry (1906), just two blocks from the Loomis Addition.

The city's growing population soon outgrew its original water supply and sewer systems. The open ditches and inadequate sewers were blamed for many deaths from typhoid fever in the city's first decades, leading to calls for improvements. In 1904 the City constructed a new water works up the Poudre Canyon (now Gateway Park) to secure pure water and pipe it into town, thus avoiding contamination from open ditches and overflowing sewers. A filtering system was added in 1909 and a five million-gallon emergency concrete storage tank was constructed on Bingham Hill in 1910, thus assuring an adequate supply of filtered water in case of a flood or pipeline accident.[35]

The Poudre Valley Gas Company completed a gas plant in 1905, with six miles of mains providing consumers with a new source of light and heat. A 1914 article stated that the gas plant was now supplying 600 gas ranges, 200 water heaters and 150 gas furnaces, as well as gas streetlights. A Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1904 with the purpose of improving the economy of the city, especially by paving and lighting its streets, and providing support for farming and the agricultural college.

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[32] Although the Colorado and Southern Railway came under the financial control of the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad in the early 1900s, it continued to operate under its own name until 1963 when it became the Burlington Northern Railroad.
[33] "Semi-Centennial Souvenir Edition of the *Fort Collins Courier*," 1914.
[34] "1900-1910," Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.
[35] Watrous, page 254.

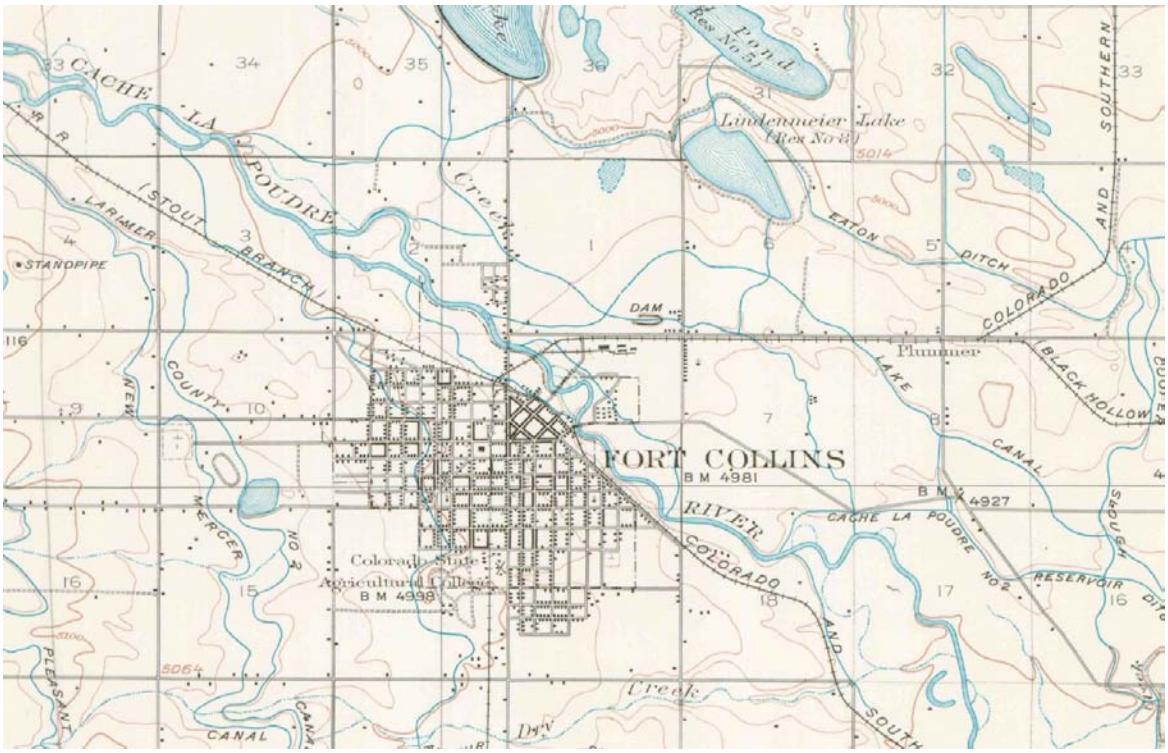

Figure 4-3: Fort Collins, 1906, U.S. Geological Survey map (http://historicalmaps.arcgis.com/usgs/).

During this period, Fort Collins continued to expand from its core in Old Town to the west and south. The Cache la Poudre River remained a fairly firm boundary to the north and east, except for the sugar factory and associated housing just across the river. The college formed another boundary to the south. As noted in Chapter 3, development to the west of College had been stymied by the flooding of the Town Ditch, but by the early 1900s this problem had been remedied by construction of the Mountain Avenue sewer. The city continued to create sewer districts and improve the drainage system in this part of town throughout the early 20th century. However, residents still had to contend with open ditches, some of which flooded at times. Frances Grable wrote in 1906, "In those days the little lateral ditches crossed on a level with the road and small bridges were built over them on average of a foot or two in height."[36] Especially bothersome was the Town Ditch which ran right through the west side of town (and along Whitcomb Street in the Loomis Addition). Repeated calls by residents and property owners in the first few decades of the 20th century eventually persuaded the city and the ditch company to bury the ditch in an underground conduit in the 1930s.

City-wide building statistics for the years 1902 to 1911 show steady growth through 1907, which was Fort Collins' biggest building year of the period. A newspaper report noted that the 100 houses built in Fort Collins that year ranged in cost from $850 to $4,000, with the average being a little

[36] Frances Grable Scrapbook, Page 9, Installment 6, Local History Archive.

more than $2,000.[37] "Builders of houses are crowding their architects to the limit to get out plans and specifications, and supervisors of construction work are urging their men to the upmost to get out of the way of the demands all along the line," reported the *Fort Collins Courier* on March 27, 1907. The city experienced a slump after the initial building boom caused by the opening of the sugar plant, and the economy remained somewhat depressed until after World War I. A retrospective news article in 1912 referred to crop failures and a generally poor business climate for the past several years.[38] Population statistics for the period confirm that growth from 1910 to 1920 slowed considerably as compared with the first decade of the century, from 169% to a mere 6.6%.

CITY PARKS

Important to the residents of the Loomis Addition was the city's decision to purchase land for a second city park just five blocks west of the Addition's western boundary. The original plat of Fort Collins had set aside land for two city parks, Lincoln Park (now Library Park) on the east side, and Washington Park on the west side. Washington Park, which comprised roughly the east half of the block bounded by Howes and Meldrum and Laporte and Maple (three blocks east of the Loomis Addition), was rented out for agricultural use and used to store city equipment until 1917, when it was finally platted as a park, landscaped with trees, grass and flowers, and opened to the public.

Figure 4-4: Sheldon Lake, City Park, c 1925) Local History Archive H08505).

With both the east and west sides filling in with residential development, and the city using existing parks for municipal buildings (such as the Carnegie Library built in Lincoln Park in 1903) and storage, the city began to recognize the need for a much larger park on the outskirts of town. The city purchased 60 acres of farmland just west of the city limits from John Sheldon in 1907. As Watrous extolled in his 1911 history, "It will command a grand view of the mountains on the west and the city on the east, while on the north and south stretching away for miles in each direction lie cultivated fields and handsome farm homes and orchards."[39] Residents had to wait a few years to enjoy their new parkland, however. Due to lack of funding, the land was initially leased to farmers who used it for raising sugar beets, hay, grain and other crops. Finally in 1912 the new park was laid out with curving drives, trees and areas of lawn, and officially named City Park. In 1913 the city expanded its park holdings by purchasing the adjacent Prospect Park to the west (also part of the former Sheldon Farm), which had been developed in 1904 as what turned out to be an unsuccessful horse racing track. The Fort Collins tradition of holding a fireworks display in the city

[37] *Fort Collins Courier*, January 1, 1908, page 9.
[38] *Fort Collins Courier*, January 5, 1912.
[39] Watrous, 255.

park started as early as 1904, when the first such display was held in what was then Prospect Park. By the end of the 1920s, City Park was called a "pleasure mecca" for the city.[40]

THE DENVER AND INTERURBAN RAILROAD

Of Fort Collins' early 20th century developments, most important for the Loomis Addition was the construction of the streetcar line. The Denver and Interurban Railroad, a subsidiary of the Colorado and Southern Railroad, first proposed a streetcar system for Fort Collins and was granted a franchise to operate the system in 1906. It opened the following year with two lines, a 1.8-mile line from College Ave to Grandview Cemetery via Mountain Avenue (right through the Loomis Addition, see Figure 4-5), and a 1.1-mile line down College Avenue from Mountain to Pitkin Street (thus serving the agricultural college). Other tracks looped through the Old Town area. Later additions included a Linden Street line (1908) to the Great Western Sugar Factory and on to Lindenmeier Park, a popular summertime "resort" on 360 acres 2.5 miles northeast of the downtown, with rowboats, a picnic area, a dance pavilion and a refreshment stand.

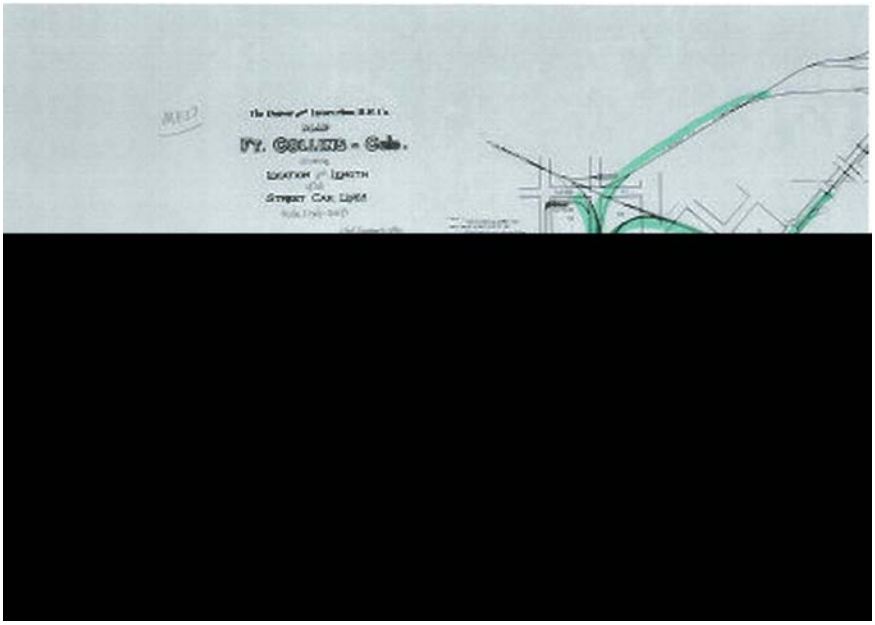

Figure 4-5: Denver and Interurban R.R. Co., Map -Fort Collins – Colo 1908 (Local History Archive, highlights added by author).

Throughout the United States, the introduction of streetcar lines allowed middle- and working-class households to share in the American dream of home ownership in a suburban neighborhood.[41] Between 1890 and 1920, streetcar lines allowed cities to expand outward to fulfill the demand for low-cost housing. Unlike rail lines, where nodes of development centered around stations, streetcar lines encouraged continuous development corridors, and acres of gridiron plats with small lots were laid out for houses that were within a 5 to 10 minute walk of the streetcar line.[42] It was also common practice in cities throughout the United States to run a streetcar line to an attraction such as a park, cemetery or amusement park. With its park-like setting of circular drives, shade trees and lawns, Grandview Cemetery, laid out in 1887, was a suitable terminus to the Mountain Avenue line, as was Lindenmeier Lake to the northeast.

Although the streetcar was popular, it was not profitable, and the original Denver and Interurban Railroad closed in 1918. It was purchased the following year by the city of Fort Collins and

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[40] Carol Tunner, *An Overview of the Fort Collins Park System Emphasizing City Park as it Relates to the Development of the Community*, Master's Thesis, Department of Natural Resources Recreation and Tourism, Colorado State University, 1996.
[41] The first electric streetcar system was built in Richmond, Virginia, in 1887.
[42] Ames and McClelland.

reorganized as the Fort Collins Municipal Railway, after a special election in which residents voted 940 to 32 in favor of retaining the line. New Birney Standard Safety cars were purchased to replace the larger cars used by the Denver and Interurban. Existing tracks were repaired, and the line to Lindenmeier Lake was dismantled, with the track, wire and poles used to build a spur from West Mountain Avenue to City Park, thus giving Loomis Addition residents easy access to the city's newest attraction. The College Avenue line was also extended from Olive to Pitkin. As the Commissioner of Works reported, "This system has more than proved its need to the public. It has held up the standards of our city above that of a country village and in addition it has offered continuous service to its patrons," including times when "other railways were snow-bound." The streetcar was operated to some extent as a public service with extra trains on weekends to take people to parks and resorts, and to church on Sundays.[43]

Figure 4-6: Streetcar in snow on Mountain Ave., 1913 (Local History Archive H01738).

Like the construction of roads today, the streetcar lines shaped development in Fort Collins through the 1920s. Streetcars allowed people to live in quiet residential enclaves away from the noise and dirt of the commercial and industrial areas, but still commute to jobs, schools, shopping and other urban activities. Those who were lucky enough to own land along a streetcar line, such as Loomis Addition property owners, stood to profit enormously from their investments. The *Fort Collins Courier* of January 1, 1908 made special mention of the fact that property to the west of Old Town, especially along Mountain and Laporte avenues, would benefit from the new streetcar line:

> Many fine homes have also been put up, notably along West Mountain avenue outside of the limits. This growth in the suburban districts will be greater during 1908, because of the completion of the Denver & Interurban to Prospect park, making both the extension of West Mountain and Laporte avenues highly desirable for suburban residences. Real estate men are expecting a boom in all outlying properties touched by the lines, as these districts have been brought into close communication with the business center. As the line is extended into the rural districts, its course will become more thickly settled with residences, many of which will be occupied by people having their business interests in town.[44]

Although today the Loomis Addition is considered a close-in, urban neighborhood, in the early 1900s it was truly a "suburban" district. To the west of Washington Street were open fields, and even as late as 1917, only the blocks between Mountain and Oak west of Washington had been developed.[45] Without the use of a streetcar or an automobile, the downtown commercial area was a 30-40 minute walk or 20-30 minute carriage ride away. In fact, an 1888 article on funeral processions makes clear the different perception of distance in the pre-automobile age. The article entreated residents to be considerate when planning funerals, including, speeding up to a "slow

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[43] "Fort Collins Commissioner of Public Works Report," 1923, page 38; Swanson, page 215.
[44] *Fort Collins Courier*, January 1, 1908.
[45] Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, 1917.

trot" once the procession passed the Loomis addition, on its way to Grandview Cemetery. This was requested because of the distance and the time consumed by walking, especially for ministers who were too busy to waste precious minutes walking the 10 blocks from Washington Street to Grandview Cemetery.[46]

In the first decades of the 20th century new subdivisions were created to the west of the Loomis Addition to take advantage of the streetcar, and later the new city park. Morger-Smith (1905), Washington Place (1906) and later Kenwood Heights (1925) were platted directly west of the Loomis Addition; Scott-Sherwood (1907) and City Park Heights (1907) wrapped around the new city park; and West Lawn Addition (1920) expanded development directly south of the Loomis Addition.[47] As soon as the city voted to purchase the land for the new city park, the Scott-Sherwood tract was sold for $52,000 to the Edwards-Kissock Agency for residential development, in what the newspapers called Larimer County's "biggest real estate transaction."

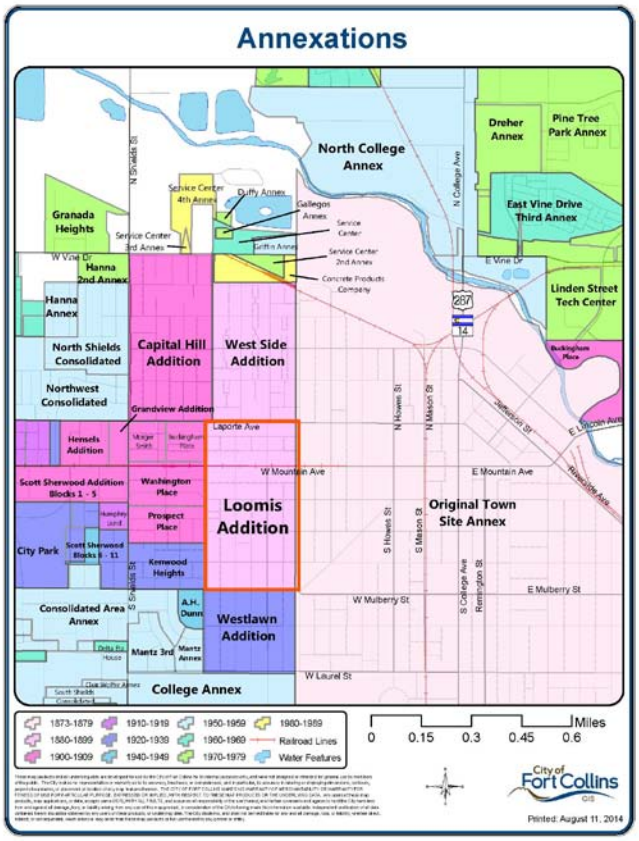

Figure 4-7: Annexations in the vicinity of the Loomis Addition (City of Fort Collins, 2014).

[46] *Fort Collins Courier*, March 8, 1899.
[47] Other west side additions included Grandview (1906), Prospect Place (1906), Capitol Hill (1907), Hensel's (1908), Van Slyke-Setzler (1909), and Swett's (1910).

CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION

By the early 1900s, Fort Collins had moved far beyond the frontier stage, and residents began to concern themselves not just with building a city, but with improving its looks. Nationwide, the first two decades of the 20th century are associated with the City Beautiful Movement, an attempt to make cities more beautiful and healthy, enhancing civic pride and improving public morals while boosting a city's image as a good place to live and do business. The City Beautiful Movement was a natural outcome of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, which with its comprehensive planning, up-to-date infrastructure and Classical architecture demonstrated the pleasures of a clean, well planned city enhanced by walks, boulevards, landscaping, fountains and beautiful buildings. The movement spread to cities throughout the United States, encouraged by popular texts such as Charles Mulford Robinson's *Improvement of Towns and Cities* (1902) which called for civic improvements such as roads, playgrounds and parks, street plantings, paving, lighting, and sanitation. The boulevard movement, espousing wide streets planted with trees, and often with a central planted median or parkway, was another aspect of the City Beautiful movement that was adopted in Fort Collins. In 1904, West Mountain Avenue was extended from the west border of the Loomis Addition to the cemetery. "This is destined to be one of the prettiest short drives in the city," noted the *Weekly Courier* on January 13 of that year. Indeed, West Mountain Avenue, the centerpiece of the neighborhoods (including the Loomis Addition) to the west of College Avenue, was the quintessential "city beautiful" street, with its planting strips between curb and sidewalk, its wide, landscaped median, and the trolley line terminating at the beautifully landscaped Grandview Cemetery.

While the City Beautiful movement focused on government investment in civic buildings and infrastructure, the older Civic Improvement movement focused more on volunteer efforts to enhance the community through cleaning up trash, improving sanitary conditions, and landscaping streets and yards. According to an 1889 article in *Garden and Forest* magazine, the role of so-called "village improvement societies" was to "improve the sanitary condition of towns and their general appearance, and in this way to improve the well-being of the inhabitants, and then to elevate their intelligence, stimulate their love of Nature and develop their artistic feelings."[48]

Civic improvement was generally considered to be the realm of women, who were encouraged to look after the beauty and cleanliness of their cities, just as they were urged to do the same for their own homes. The American League for Civic Improvement, founded in 1902, encouraged this movement, and civic improvement leagues proliferated throughout country in the early 1900s. The Fort Collins Civic Improvement League was founded in 1904 for the "improvement of the city in health, cleanliness and attractiveness." Committees were established to deal with streets, alleys and sidewalks; tree planting, tree culture and street parking (meaning converting of street right-of-ways to park land); public parks, lawns and floral culture; sanitation; finance; and railroads. All citizens were urged to get involved and work together to make Fort Collins the "City Beautiful."[49]

The Civic Improvement League tackled issues ranging from the large-scale problem of cottonwood trees to the smaller-scale problem of dandelions. Its techniques included contests, prizes and lobbying the city council. In 1904 the committee on lawns, parks and public grounds visited every section of the city to make awards to those who had landscaped their properties according to the

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[48] Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pages 56-57.
[49] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, April 13, 1904.

rules of the committee. The group encouraged children to get involved as well, with $10 cash and other prizes offered for the most dandelions pulled up by any child under 15 years of age. Mrs. F. P. Stover offered her own prize in concert with the league, and Carl Scheid of Howes Street collected $5.00 for the 264 pounds of dandelion roots he dug out on his street.[50] The new city water supply added in 1904 greatly enhanced the work of the league, since it finally provided enough water to allow for the sprinkling of lawns.

Figure 4-8: West Mountain Ave. in the Loomis Addition, with landscaped "parking" area, c. 1905 (Local History Archive H08309a).

Experts were brought in to advise the city and the league on ways to beautify the city. One such expert, a Boulder landscape architect named W.W. Parce, believed that the width of Fort Collins' streets detracted from the beauty of the city. He recommended two solutions for transforming what he called "waste room" into "ornamental parks," by making a park out of the center of the road, or by making parks on the sides. He noted that Fort Collins was not a beautiful city, but that with the addition of park lands and more landscaping, it could be transformed into one.[51] The Civic Improvement League adopted this idea, and the city eventually increased its overall park land by 5.5 acres by landscaping the medians of Mountain and College Avenues, thus greatly improving the beauty of the Loomis Addition.

After its initial burst of activity, the Civic Improvement League appears to have floundered, and by 1907 the *Courier* was calling on citizens to organize again.

> Fort Collins has reached that stage in her history when an organized effort should be made to increase its attractiveness to an extent that it will attract the attention of visiting strangers . . . There are many people in this city who have grown wealthy by appreciation of property, yet they have done nothing – or at least not much – towards beautifying the town or in giving proper care to the idle lots and lands they are withholding form the public for still greater gains.[52]

Throughout the 1910s there were various contests and campaigns to encourage residents to do their part to beautify Fort Collins. The railroad corridor (along Mason Street) was an area of particular concern, since it was the first place visitors saw when they came to the city.[53] Another

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[50] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, December 21, 1904, page 5.
[51] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, May 25, 1904.
[52] *Fort Collins Courier*, September 25, 1907.
[53] *Fort Collins Courier*, March 25, 1908.

concern was weed-strewn lots, and the *Courier* issued a challenge to citizens to enhance the city by planting oats, alfalfa or clover in vacant lots. "Many men have teams which they will contribute for a day or two and with a little fund to pay for plowing and planting [which the *Courier* offered to provide] many of the vacant lots in the city can be made to appear pleasing to the eye." The crops could be harvested as well, to help pay for the labor. Indeed, when Clarence and Mabel Gould built their new, up-to-date home at 704 West Mountain Avenue in the Loomis Addition, they noted that an alfalfa field occupied the corner lot next door.

LOOMIS ADDITION DEVELOPMENT

In 1900, in honor of Abner Loomis, the name of the street between Whitcomb Street and Grant Avenue, formerly known as Lincoln Avenue, was changed to Loomis Avenue by ordinance of the city of Fort Collins. City streets running east-west were generally named for trees or shrubs, while north-south streets were named for prominent residents such as Whedbee, Peterson, Matthews, Remington, Mason, Howes, Meldrum, Sherwood and Whitcomb. West of Whitcomb Street, the north-south streets were named for presidents: Lincoln, Grant and Washington. Since there was already a Lincoln Avenue on the east side of College, it made sense to change the name of that street in honor of one of Fort Collins' founding fathers and the developer of one of its early additions.

As noted above, the first two decades of the 20th century brought tremendous growth to the city of Fort Collins, whose population almost tripled from 1900 to 1919. It was also the period of greatest development for the Loomis Addition, with more than 160 houses built. Sixty-four percent of houses in the Loomis Addition today were constructed before 1920. By the end of the period, a majority of the lots on Laporte, Mountain, Oak and Olive had been developed, and every block in the addition contained at least a few houses, although development lagged in the southwest. Larger houses tended to be on the main boulevard, Mountain Avenue, while more modest homes were built on the quiet side streets. Proximity to the streetcar line was a selling point for the neighborhood, as evidenced by newspaper advertisements with notes such as "2 blocks from car line."

Newspaper reports of the period show that price of lots in the Loomis Addition skyrocketed during this period, from $110 - $300 in 1901 to $850 - $1,000 in 1907. Papers reported that many "neat" three-to-four-room brick and frame cottages were being built in the subdivision. A 3-room brick house was selling for $900 in 1902. By 1908, reported house prices were $1,800 for E.W. Morgan's home on Grant Avenue between Magnolia and Mulberry, and $6,000 for T.E. Giller's home on Mountain Avenue.

As noted in Chapter 3, lots in the Loomis Addition were sold both to individuals intending to settle down and build a home, and to speculators who bought large sections of a block for future resale. In the early 1900s, several of these large parcels were re-platted to take advantage of the east-west frontage. Whereas originally lots faced the north-south streets, with the exception of Mountain and Laporte Avenues, over the years many lots were changed to create more frontage on Oak, Olive and later Magnolia and Mulberry Streets. In 1902, Thomas H. Robertson, who owned the south half of block 290, re-platted the half-block so that lots would run north-south along Oak Street, matching up with the lots facing Mountain on the north half of the block. However Robertson's lots were

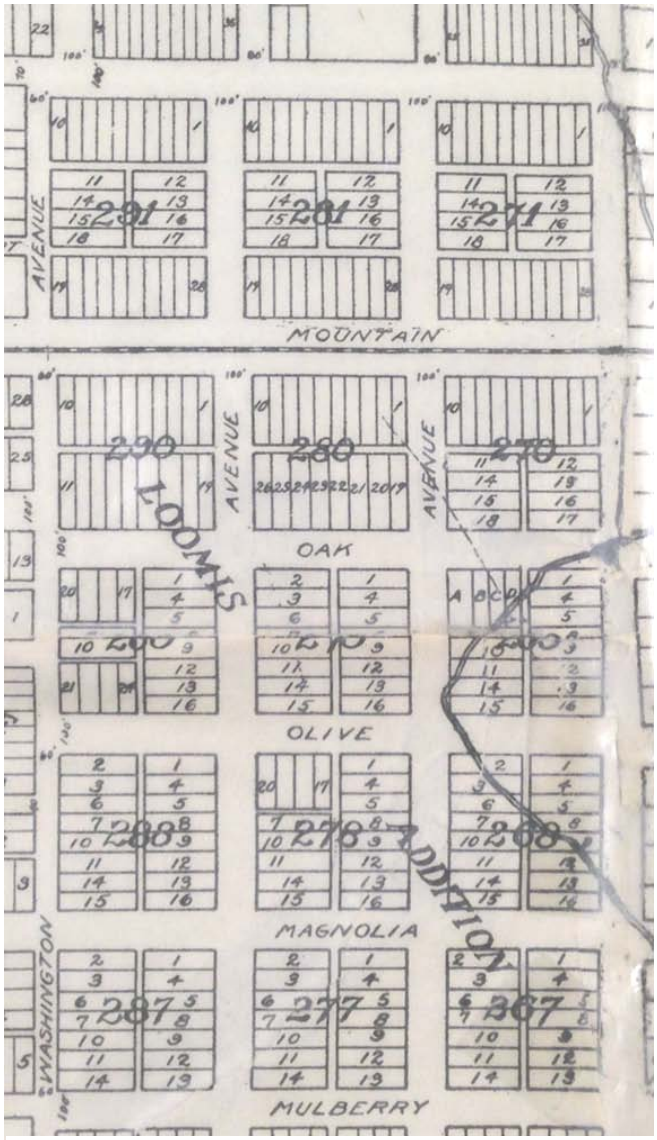

Figure 4-9: Close up of Loomis Addition, showing re-configuration of Blocks 290, 280, 281, 278 and 289 (Map of the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado, April 1925).

wider, there being only 8 lots and an alley as opposed to the 10 lots facing Mountain.[54] The north-south alley was later vacated. Likewise, F.A. Somerville, owner of the south half of Block 280 to the east, did the exact same re-subdivision in 1904,[55] and Edward H. Hall, owner of the south one-third of Block 281, re-subdivided in 1904 to create eight 50'-wide lots, replaced the originally platted ten 40'-wide lots.[56] In 1907, Jesse E. Wilson and Albert W. Thompson, owners of lots 2, 3 and 6 in Block 278, re-subdivided these east-west lots to form four north-south lots facing Olive Street and Andrew J. Hood made a similar change to Block 289, converting lots 11, 14 and 15 to four north-south lots facing Olive Street.[57]

The growth of the Loomis Addition coincided with a national movement to encourage home ownership, which continued for decades. Social and political leaders believed that the key to a happy, prosperous and stable citizenry was investing in a home of one's own, and articles promoting this concept were published in newspapers, pamphlets and books of the period. For example, a 1919 article in the *Fort Collins Courier* stated, "The satisfaction and comfort that come to the home owner are well worth the small sacrifices required to secure a home. And when that home is paid for the owner has an asset that cannot be measured in dollars. He is one of the good substantial members of his community – one of the men who has the interest of his home town at heart. It certainly pays to own a home."[58]

One-hundred sixty-three houses remaining today in the Loomis Addition date from the period 1900 to 1919, the largest proportion of extant houses in the district. Classic Cottages and Queen Anne Cottages continued to be built as late as 1912, as did the later variation of the Queen Anne, the Free Classic, which has a more contained footprint and incorporated Classical elements made popular by the Columbian Exposition of 1893.[59] By far

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[54] "Plat of Resubdivision of Block 290 (south half), Loomis Addition to Fort Collins, Colo," 1902 (City Engineer's Office).
[55] "Plat of Resubdivision of Block 280 (south half), Loomis Addition to Fort Collins, Colo," 1904 (City Engineer's Office).
[56] "Plat of Resubdivision of Block 281 (south one-third), Loomis Addition to Fort Collins, Colo," 1907 (City Engineer's Office).
[57] "Plat of Resubdivision of Block 289 (south half), Loomis Addition to Fort Collins, Colo," 1907 (City Engineer's Office).
[58] *Fort Collins Courier*, August 12, 1919, page 6.
[59] Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1984), page 264 ff. McAlester calls Free Classic a "decorative detailing subtype" of the Queen Anne style.

the most popular house style in the Loomis Addition and in neighborhoods nationwide during this period was the Craftsman style. Developed from the American Arts and Crafts movement, the style emphasized the beauty of natural materials and natural forms over architectural embellishments borrowed from history. These houses were simpler and more affordable than the more elaborate designs of earlier periods, and in spite of their name (Craftsman), relied more on standardized plans and ready-made materials, thus decreasing the overall cost of home ownership. Craftsman-style houses met the demand for affordable single-family homes for households without servants.

Houses in this style include one-story Craftsman Cottages, distinguished by their front-gable roofs, offset gabled entries and full or partial front porches, and larger Bungalows, generally with eave-front roofs, wide dormers and full-length front porches. Craftsman details include knee braces in the gable ends, exposed rafter tails, square or battered porch piers and windows with the upper sash divided into several vertical panes. More than 60 identifiable Craftsman-style houses built from 1904 until 1930 can be found in the Loomis Addition today.

Figure 4-10: West Mountain Avenue in 1924, showing Craftsman, Dutch Colonial and American Foursquare houses (University Historic Photograph Collection, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections).

Period Revivals were also popular nationwide during this period, although less so in the Loomis Addition. These nostalgic styles were designed to recall earlier times, from the American Colonial period or even Medieval England. Only eight period revival houses are found in the Loomis Addition: three Colonial Revivals, four Dutch Colonials and one Mediterranean Revival.

The American Foursquare was a popular house form first introduced around 1890. As its name implies, the house resembles a cube, with a square floor plan, two full stories, and often one or more dormers protruding from the roof. These houses were built with different stylistic features, including Colonial Revival, Craftsman, or the more exotic Spanish Mission or Mediterranean Revival. [60]

[60] For more detail on the architecture of the Loomis Addition, see Chapter 8.

As noted above, Fort Collins residents were encouraged to landscape their yards by the Civic Improvement League. Judging from historic photographs, as well as the appearance of the neighborhood today, residents of the Loomis Addition took landscaping and gardening seriously, planting trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers and adding structures such as patios, paths, pergolas and porches. They were aided by the literature of the day, including periodicals such as *The Craftsman, Ladies' Home Journal, House and Garden, Country Life in America, House Beautiful,* and *Woman's Home Companion,* which featured designs for landscaping yards along with advice on interior and exterior house design.

Loomis Addition residents and their neighbors also appear to have participated enthusiastically in contests and programs sponsored by civic organizations like the Civic Beautification League. In a 1910 Fort Collins property beautification contest, three out of the seven winners lived in the Loomis Addition.[61] A January 1911 newspaper advertisement relates how a group of property owners on West Oak Street bought a half block of the Scott-Sherwood Addition (west of the Loomis Addition) in order to keep people from moving in old houses that had been removed from Jefferson Street by the Union Pacific railroad line construction. The owners were re-selling the lots to qualified buyers at a good price. "This property faces what is regarded as the prettiest block of bungalows in Fort Collins, has an unobstructed view of the mountains, is within a block of the street car line and a block of the new city park, which is to be beautified this coming summer by a celebrated landscape architect."[62] There is no evidence that any of the Jefferson Street houses were moved to the Loomis Addition.

Figure 4-11: Franklin School, c. 1900 (Local History Archive HO2635).

Children who lived in the Loomis Addition in the early years would have attended the Franklin School, an eight-room schoolhouse on the corner of Mountain and Howes built in 1887. Franklin School added a four-year high school curriculum in 1889. In 1907, the Laporte Avenue School, a new elementary school designed by local architect Montezuma Fuller, opened at the northwest corner of Laporte and Loomis, providing a much more convenient school for local students. High school students would have continued to attend Franklin School until 1906, when a new high school, also designed by Fuller, opened at Meldrum and Mulberry. Later, in 1919, the Mission Revival-style Washington School was built in the Scott-Sherwood Addition in what was at that time the extreme western portion of the city on Shields and Olive.

THE AUTOMOBILE

By the end of this period, a new transportation era had begun: the automobile era. The Loomis Addition could be considered both a "Streetcar Suburb" and an "Early Automobile Suburb," as defined by the National Park Service (see page 4). The introduction of the first Model T car by Henry Ford in 1908 began a transportation revolution that changed the face of America and

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[61] "Prizes Awarded in Adams Contest," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, September 8, 1910, page 5.
[62] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, January 5, 1911, page 4.

eventually the world. Between 1910 when Ford began large-scale production of the Model-T and 1930, automobile registrations in the United States increased from 458,000 to almost 22 million. While the streetcar had made a home in the Loomis Addition reasonably close to the center of city life, the automobile did the same, with the added convenience of door-to-door service and an unrestricted timetable.

Figure 4-12: All the automobiles in Fort Collins, in 1908 (Local History Archive H01568).

By 1920, automobiles were beginning to change the look of Fort Collins. Inspired by the National Good Roads Convention held in Fort Collins, in which the development of good roads was called "the greatest industrial movement of the age," and "vital to the welfare of the community," the city's first automobile club was organized in 1905. An auto show held two years later featured a parade of all 40 automobiles in the city. However, the drivers gave up in disgust at the 10-inch-deep dust they had to drive through.[63] Fort Collins' wide city streets were notoriously poor – dusty during dry times and muddy when it rained. The city tried applying gravel to the streets, but since automobiles required a smoother surface a paving program was soon put in place. The first street paving began in downtown Fort Collins in 1916, with 6"-thick poured-concrete which was troweled by hand. Improvement districts were created by city ordinance, bonds issued to pay for them, and property owners assessed for their share.

Figure 4-13: Small garage behind 106 S. Loomis, accessed from street (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

In the four years between 1907 and 1911, automobile ownership in Fort Collins increased by 700%, echoing national trends. The increasing importance of the automobile can be seen in the changes in businesses in the downtown area. In 1909, horses and wagons still dominated, with several barns and livery stables in the downtown commercial area. By 1917, garages, repair shops and auto parts stores were located throughout downtown, including two at the intersection of Laporte and College.[64] It can also be seen in the construction of small, one-car garages in the Loomis Addition, generally located behind the house, accessed either by the alley or via a narrow driveway from the road.

[63] "1900-1910" Decade Vertical File, Fort Collins Local History Archive.
[64] Based on examination of Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps of Fort Collins, 1909 and 1917.

CLOSING YEARS: WORLD WAR 1

The latter few years of this period were dominated by the war in Europe, and eventually the entrance of the United States into World War I in 1917. Fort Collins marked the United States' entry into World War I with a patriotic rally at the Empress Theater on April 18, 1917, with the Drum Corps and city and college bands furnishing rousing music for the event. Civil war veterans, the Women's Relief Corps, and other organizations spoke to a frenzied audience of citizens, some of whom had emigrated from foreign nations. The call was for "the people to hang together on one equality and one ambition, fighting side by side, not for revenge but for the despised conditions which threaten liberty."[65]

Starting in July, 1917, local men began to receive orders to report to mobilization camps for intensive drilling and preparation for the service in Europe. Those men, women, and children who could not serve on the front line were urged by the National Emergency Food Garden Commission to plant hundreds of thousands of door-yard gardens. The Agriculture Department's slogan "Keep a pig" promoted backyard piggeries, and the *Fort Collins Courier* recommended keeping chickens since eggs had gone up in price and "any householder with a dozen hens in his poultry house would feel he had a little gold mine." With its long, narrow lots with spacious backyards, the Loomis Addition was ideally suited for raising both vegetables and chickens, and outbuildings proliferated during this period.[66]

Figure 4-14: Chicken coop behind house at 117 N. Whitcomb, one of many such outbuildings built in the Loomis Addition (Mary Humstone, 2015).

Colorado Agricultural College played an important role in the war, helping to improve food production in Colorado. Motivated by the principle, "Food will win the war," the college's Extension Service provided information on storing, drying, and canning produce and helped with community garden projects, in addition to providing advice to farmers statewide. As students and faculty left to serve in the war, others took their place training and being trained for the war effort.[67]

Most important to the development of the Loomis Addition, the war drastically curtailed construction. On October 4, 1917, the County Council of Defense issued a statement from the War Industries Board about building, addressed "to the public and especially to all manufacturers, jobbers, distributors, dealers and consumers of building materials," curtailing all building that was not essential to the winning of the war. Aside from approved construction involving railroads, public highway improvements, and mining, no construction was to take place without going through an extensive application process. An exception to this order was "repairs of or extensions to existing buildings involving in the

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[65] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, April 20, 1917, page 7.
[66] Based on examination of Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps of Fort Collins, 1917 and 1925.
[67] "The Story of Colorado State University." Colorado State University website, 2012. http://www.colostate.edu/features/history.aspx, accessed 9-12-14.

aggregate a cost not exceeding twenty-five hundred dollars ($2,500)."[68] Whereas between 1902 and 1911, 124 houses were built in the Loomis Addition, between 1911 and 1918, just 19 houses were built.

During the war, the local newspaper published letters written by men at the European front to their families. After the war ended November 11, 1918, Fort Collins men wrote home about the end of war celebrations in England, and in cities such as Paris, and Tours, France. Fort Collins celebrated amidst the influenza epidemic that hit in October 1918 and had killed many local citizens. The *Fort Collins Courier* received the official announcement from Washington early in the morning of November 11 and called the sugar factory whose employees blew their big whistle to spread the glad tidings. "By daylight the celebration was in full blast with automobiles parading and men and boys pounding every manner of noise-producing instrument. Fire arms were produced, bells, tin pans, steel discs discarded at the sugar factory and even the steel trolley poles being hammered gave people an opportunity to 'turn loose'."[69]

Building restrictions were lifted soon after the end of the war, and by the following spring, building in Fort Collins resumed. In a 1919 article published in the *Fort Collins Courier*, architect William Radford advised prospective homeowners to take advantage of the post-war government's eased restrictions on building, and build a new home while building material prices were stabilized and labor was plentiful. Radford highlighted a Dutch Colonial house as a good value for the money.[70] Hopes were high as the country headed into the 1920s.

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[68] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, October 4, 1917.
[69] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, November 15, 1918.
[70] *Fort Collins Courier*, November 29, 1918; August 12, 1919.

CHAPTER 5 – RECOVERY, DEPRESSION, WAR, 1920 – 1945

The next 25 years were like a roller coaster, with ups and downs, growth spurts and slowdowns, and several sharp curves to negotiate. The decades of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s were so different from one another that they are difficult to define as a single period. The first few years of the 1920s were a time of slow recovery from the economic impact of World War I. Unemployment was high, and wages were low. Many Fort Collins residents left during this time, seeking better opportunities in California, whose mild climate and relaxed lifestyle were beginning to attract emigrants from all over the country.[71] Only 41 new residences were constructed in the city in 1920, in part because the cost of building materials remained high, after skyrocketing during the war. Still, by June 1922 the newspaper reported that 100 houses were under construction in the city, evidence of a change in the economy.[72] In the decade from 1920 to 1930, Fort Collins' population grew by 31%, from 8,755 to 11,489. After 1930, growth leveled off, and in 1940 Fort Collins' population stood at 12,251. Most new development, in the Loomis Addition and throughout Fort Collins, took place in the 1920s, but the Depression and World War II vastly influenced residents' lives and livelihoods.

"FORT COLLINS DELIGHTFUL HOME CITY OF 12,000 SOULS"

Although full of the typical boosterism of the day, including an exaggeration of the city's population, the following description of Fort Collins from the May 20, 1923 *Fort Collin Express* provides an interesting snapshot of the city.

> Fort Collins is a beautiful city in its physical aspects and it is remarkably well improved. It has seven miles of municipal railway, the cars running the greater part of the distance down grassed parking in the center of beautiful, wide streets, with shrubbery and flowers in profusion. The main streets east and west and north and south are boulevards divided with parking in the center giving a one-way drive on each side. There are an abundance of trees thru-out the city and in the spring and summer they convert the city almost into a sylvan grove dotted with homes.
>
> There are 250,000 square yards of concrete paving in the business and residential sections, and 22.6 miles of sanitary sewer, 12 miles of storm sewer, and 43.9 miles of water mains. The water for the city is brought in mains from the heart of the mountains.
>
> Fort Collins is one of the most beautifully lighted cities in the west, its clusters of street lights along the wide paved streets adding greatly to the general impression of civic beauty that greets the visitor everywhere.
>
> Industrially Fort Collins is related to its agricultural setting. In addition to the Great Western Sugar Factory, the leading industry of the city, there are six concerns manufacturing flour or maintaining elevators or both. The Fort Collins Flour Mills, the Hoffman Mill, Toliver & Kinney, Moody-Warren, the Longmont Farmers' Milling and

[71] Based on 1910-1940 newspaper research by Rheba Massey.
[72] "1920-1930" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.

Elevator Company, and the Farmers' Elevator and Produce Company. The Riverside Ice and Storage Company and a related preserving plant may be mentioned in connection with industries related to the farms.

Other industries include the Giddings Manufacturing Company; a foundry; the Fort Collins Pressed Brick and Tile Company; the Fort Collins Steam Laundry and the Sanitary Laundry; the Fort Collins Express-Courier Publishing Company's plant; and the Mountain Manufacturing Company.

The businesses of Fort Collins are representative of many lines and are of a splendid standard, some of the finest stores in the state being located in Fort Collins. The financial status of the city and surrounding country is indicated by the fact that the four banks of the city, the First National, the Poudre Valley National, the Fort Collins National, and the Farmers' Bank and Trust Company have on deposit more than $5,000,000.[73]

Figure 5-1: Mountain Ave. in the Loomis Addition, looking west, 1928 (University Historic Photograph Collection, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections).

[73] *Fort Collins Express*, May 20, 1923, pages 9-10.

Farmers nationwide had geared up to meet the production demands from the war in Europe starting in 1914, but once European countries began producing their own food after the war, demand dropped precipitously. This post-war depression impacted farmers in Larimer County and the entire Fort Collins community. Farmers were overextended and commodity prices had dropped while harvesting and transportation costs were rising. The agricultural sector recovered somewhat in the 1920s, and as noted above, continued to be Fort Collins' most important industry through World War II. Sugar beets were the major cash crop, and Fort Collins' thriving sheep feeding industry earned it the moniker "the sheep feeding capital of the world."[74] Cherries, apples and other fruits were also important contributors to Larimer County's agricultural economy.

The farm sector barely had time to recover from the World War I recession when the Great Depression hit in 1929. Adding to the economic woes were environmental issues of drought, wind and grasshoppers. In 1933, only 8.87" inches of rain fell, far below the 18" needed to grow wheat and other dry-land crops, which had become an increasingly important sector of Colorado's agricultural economy. Grass and other vegetation dried up, and the dry soil was blown away in wind storms. By 1937 it was estimated that 6 million acres of Colorado had been turned into wasteland due to erosion.[75] The drought was followed by a severe grasshopper infestation in 1936, further adding to the woes of the state's farmers. Many of Colorado's small farmers lost everything during the Depression. Farm prices fell to record lows in 1933, and didn't really recover until World War II stimulated an increased demand for farm products.

Agricultural production suffered from labor shortages, both during the Depression and during World War II. A growing sentiment against foreigners meant the German-Russian and Hispanic workers brought in to harvest sugar beets and work in the sugar factory faced discrimination and in some cases removal. Colorado's Governor Edwin C. Johnson encouraged the removal of foreign workers in the 1930s, and in 1936 ordered the National Guard to keep them from entering the state from the south. Another reason for the labor shortages was the low wages paid by Great Western Sugar and other agricultural concerns, which prompted many to seek better paying jobs elsewhere.[76] Although demand for farm products was high during World War II, producers could no longer find laborers to pick the fruit and other crops, since most able-bodied men and women were working in other sectors of the war effort. According to resident Iola Pennock, many crops were just plowed under because farmers didn't have helpers to harvest them.[77]

The discovery of an oil field near Wellington north of Fort Collins in the early 1920s created a lot of excitement and stimulated the building economy – although the field turned out to be a disappointment. The Union Oil Company began development of the Wellington Oil Field in 1923 and eventually operated 34 wells at two locations, one northwest of Wellington and the second at

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[74] Ralph Giddings as quoted in *Talking about Fort Collins: selections from oral histories* (Fort Collins, CO: Fort Collins Friends of the Library, 1992).
[75] Stephen J. Leonard, *Trials and Triumphs: Colorado Portrait of the Great Depression with FSA Photographs* (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1993), page 113; James E. Hansen, II, *Democracy's College in the Centennial State: A History of Colorado State University* (Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University, 1977), page 295.
[76] Leonard, *Trials and Triumphs*, page 7.
[77] Iola Pennock as quoted in *Talking about Fort Collins*.

the current location of the Fort Collins Country Club.[78] In early 1929 Union Oil was purchased by Continental Oil Company which was reportedly pumping 2,700 barrels of oil a day from the Wellington field.[79] But by the end of the year, the company pulled out. Although the oil "boomlet" didn't last, it did stimulate population growth during the 1920s and spurred building, especially houses in newly created subdivisions. There was even a suggestion in 1924 that the Colorado Agricultural College change its team name to the Oilers, but this idea was met with protests and fortunately was not adopted. [80]

Figure 5-2: Municipal tourist camp at City Park, 1929 (Local History Archive H22557).

A relatively new business for Fort Collins in the 1920s was tourism, which was heavily promoted by the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce. The chamber even built a community house and a campground for motor tourists at City Park. For a short time (1913-1915), the nation's first transcontinental highway, the Lincoln Highway, had a Colorado Loop that ran from Julesberg to Denver, then back up through Fort Collins to Cheyenne where it joined the main highway along what is now Interstate 80 through Wyoming. The Lincoln Highway Association withdrew official recognition of the loop in 1915, although Colorado continued to promote it. The Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce placed billboards on the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska promoting the Colorado route, and published and distributed a guidebook extolling the visitor attractions and amenities in Fort Collins. One of the great attractions in the Fort Collins area was the Cache la Poudre canyon, which was quickly becoming a popular vacation home and tourist resort area, spurred by the completion of the Cameron Pass road in 1923. The chamber even promoted the canyon as a transcontinental motor route, claiming that the route had shorter mileage and easier grade than the Lincoln Highway crossing of the Continental Divide.[81]

Colorado also promoted the "Park-to-Park Highway" from Rocky Mountain National Park through northern Colorado and on up to Yellowstone, and the Union Pacific Railroad featured Fort Collins as the "Gateway to the Mountains." Newspapers reported that tourism was up 18% in 1929. The tourism promotion continued even through World War II. Referring to President Roosevelt's

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[78] Francis Gilbert Martinez as quoted in *Talking about Fort Collins*; Barbara Fleming and Malcolm McNeill, *Fort Collins, The Miller Photographs* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009).
[79] "1920-1930" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.
[80] Ruth J. Wattles, "Mile-High College: The History of Colorado A and M," 1945, Unpublished Manuscript, page 306, Poudre River Public Library, Fort Collins, CO.
[81] Lee and Jane Whiteley, *The Lincoln Highway in Colorado* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Printing, 2007); Writer's Program of the WPA in the State of Colorado, *Colorado: A Guide to the Highest State, of the American Guide Series* (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1941).

suggestion that people take a break during the summer of 1942, Fort Collins boosters promoted the city as the ideal vacation destination for mentally preparing for war times ahead.[82]

Tourism was also an incentive for improving roads in Fort Collins. By 1920 automobiles were a fact of life for a large portion of the population, and local newspapers were constantly reporting improvements to roads, including updates on paving and installation of traffic lights. There is evidence that driving around took some getting used to, as there were plenty of accidents including several tragedies involving train-car collisions.

COLORADO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

As enrollment at the agricultural college increased after World War I, new facilities were built to accommodate more students and expanded programs. New buildings constructed on campus in the 1920s included Ammons Hall (1922), a women's center with a swimming pool, gymnasium, auditorium, offices, and dining and conference rooms; the Administration Building (1923-1924); the Men's Gym and Fieldhouse (1924) and the Library (1927). With few jobs available for young people during the Depression, many students opted to remain in college instead of trying to enter the work force. This benefitted the college, whose enrollment climbed to 1,892 by 1939. The National Youth Administration helped college students remain in school during the Depression by providing federal funds for student employment. A student petition in 1935 led to a change in name for the college, and in 1935 it became the Colorado State College of Agricultural and Mechanic Arts, or Colorado A & M. The name was shortened to Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1944.

Colorado Agricultural College's Extension Service played an important role during the Depression, helping farmers deal with drought and grasshoppers, and distributing 200,000 trees for windbreaks and to grow timber for fuel and building needs. The Extension Service also organized community relief programs and carried out several of the New Deal programs relating to farming and rural life in the 1930s.[83]

CITY SERVICES AND GROWTH

As Fort Collins grew, the city government gradually began taking over responsibilities that had fallen to private enterprise or even volunteers in the early years. In 1930, citizens voted to build a municipal power plant which began providing electricity in 1936. The Fort Collins Municipal Railway, purchased by the city from the Denver and Interurban Railway in 1919, was improved with track repair and new lines. A new spur line from Mountain Avenue to City Park gave Loomis Addition residents direct access to the city's largest and best developed recreational facility. The College Avenue line was also extended from Olive Street to Pitkin, thus directly connecting the Loomis Addition with the new high school on Remington Street (see below) and the College. Other parts of the city did not fare as well. In 1922 the city discontinued the line to the Great Western Sugar Factory, which was said to be losing money because of declining ridership.[84] Although the

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[82] Thomas Lyons, editor, *1930 Employment 1980: Humanistic Perspectives on the Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado* (Boulder, CO: Colorado Humanities Program, 1980), page 61; *Fort Collins Courier,* June 11, 1942.
[83] Hansen, pages 295-296.
[84] "1920-1930" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.

streetcar was subject to increasing competition from buses and private automobiles, it remained popular with residents, who supported retention of the system in referendums in 1932, 1934, 1938, and 1950. A 1947 article in the *Saturday Evening Post* praised Fort Collins as the "smallest town in the United States to boast a trolley system."[85] The Fort Collins city council eventually closed down the streetcar operations in June 1951.

In 1921-1922, a Mountain Avenue Improvement District was created to pave Mountain Avenue. The plan called for a concrete bridge over the Arthur Ditch (completed in March, 1922), and what was called a "boulevard" layout with a central "parking zone," which roughly divided the 140'-wide avenue into three sections. Curbs and gutters were laid and the street was paved through the Loomis Addition and as far west as Bryan Avenue (near City Park) by November, 1922. At this time the city had about five miles of paved streets and 50 miles of dirt streets.[86] A Laporte Avenue Improvement District was also formed to pave a 60'-wide section of Laporte through the Loomis Addition from Howes Street to Washington Street, with the pavement narrowing to 42' between Washington and Shields.[87] Mountain and Laporte avenues were the only paved streets in the Loomis Addition at this time. Considerable grading took place in the southwest corner of the Loomis Addition, with cuts made to Mulberry Street and fill added to Magnolia between Grant and Washington.[88]

Figure 5-3: Covering the Town Ditch, 1933 (Local History Archive H20073).

The Town Ditch continued to plague property owners in the Loomis and other subdivisions. In 1929, 700 Fort Collins businesspeople and property owners signed a petition to the city council urging that the water running through the Town Ditch (otherwise known as the Arthur Ditch) be removed to another ditch that did not flow right through residential neighborhoods of the city. The petition called the open ditch "a constant menace to life and property." Residents complained about the ditch waters seeping into the city sewers and backing up into their cellars. The open ditch was also a hazard for small children playing near its banks. In 1933-1934 the city finally took care of the problem, using Works Progress Administration laborers to install wooden frames and piping in order to cover the open trench in residential areas.

Fort Collins adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1929. In 1916 New York had established the country's first city-wide, comprehensive zoning ordinance and by the end of the 1920s most large

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[85] Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, page 216.
[86] City of Fort Collins, "Report of the Commissioner of Works and the City Engineer," 1923.
[87] "40 Years Ago-1925" from "Historical Sketches of Fort Collins and Larimer County" by James R. Miller, Book 4, page 697, Local History Archive, Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Fort Collins, CO.
[88] City of Fort Collins, "Report of the Commissioner of Works and the City Engineer," 1926.

and small cities in the country had followed suit. Fort Collins' ordinance was allegedly prompted by complaints about Colorado A & M students building shacks near the campus, because of a lack of adequate campus housing. Fort Collins' ordinance was not enforced for the first 25 years, since the "Board of Adjustment" called for in the ordinance was not appointed until 1954. The ordinance created A, B and C residential districts, with A being the most restrictive. The Loomis Addition encompassed both A and B districts.[89] Building heights were limited to 35' for dwellings and all residential lots were required to have a front yard, back yard and side yards of varying depth and width depending on the district. Uses were limited to single family dwellings and fraternity and sorority houses in the A district, with two-family dwellings, boarding and rooming houses, private clubs and lodges, private greenhouses and basement apartments allowed in the B district. The ordinance prohibited retail businesses in residence districts, but professional offices and studios run by the resident were allowed.

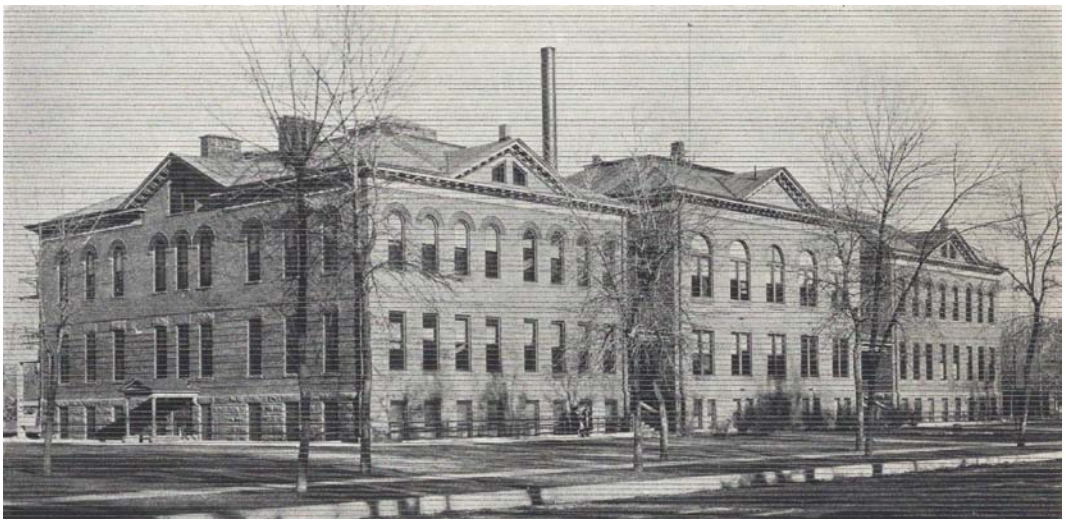

Figure 5-4: Old Fort Collins High School (1906) on Meldrum and Mulberry, which was replaced by the new high school at 1400 Remington in 1924 (Local History Archive H24236).

Equitable distribution of city services between the east and west sides of the city became a subject of discussion when a new high school was proposed for the east side in 1923. A June 1, 1923 *Fort Collins Courier* article listed the assets of each neighborhood. The east side had four schools (Remington, Laurel, Rockwood and Lincoln), the library and surrounding park, City Hall and a small tract of land that was formerly used as a cemetery. The west side had four schools (Franklin, Washington, Laporte and Fort Collins High School), and a tourist camp, community house, bathing beach and dance pavilion all located in the large tract that would later be incorporated into City Park.[90] The city eventually chose the tract on the east side of town, and in 1924, Fort Collins built a beautiful new three-story, Classical-revival-style high school, with a formal central portico and a tower. The new high school reflected the importance of education to the people of Fort Collins, and mirrored national trends in developing high schools that increasingly resembled college campuses. The Fort Collins High School stood on a 15-acre campus in the Lake Park Addition on Remington and Pitkin streets, close to the college but quite far removed from most of the residential

[89] The A zone included portions of the 700 and 800 blocks of West Mountain, the 200 and 300 blocks of South Grant, and the 300, 400 and part of the 200 block of South Washington; the remainder of the Loomis Addition was zoned "B" residential.
[90] "Equitable Distribution Urged in Selection of School Site," *Fort Collins Courier*, June 1, 1923.

neighborhoods at the time. Students who lived in the Loomis Addition had to travel about two miles to the new high school, but fortunately they were able to ride the trolley, which was routed south to Pitkin around this time in order to serve the high school. With the completion of the new high school, the old high school on the west side became the junior high.

Civic Beautification

As the economy picked up after World War I, citizens of Fort Collins renewed their interest in civic beautification. In 1922, a survey of city trees was undertaken. Every tree in the city was identified by species, condition and size, and a planting scheme was developed indicating what trees should be placed where. For example, elms were to be planted on College and Mountain avenues. Residents wishing to plant a tree had to have a permit which included approval of the planting spot by a city official so as to ensure uniform spacing. Cotton-bearing trees were to be removed at the owner's expense, but the city offered to provide free trees to replace them. At the beginning of 1923 it was reported that there were only about 100 of these nuisances left in Fort Collins, and that these would be removed over the coming year. An ordinance on trees and city beautification was passed in 1927.[91]

Figure 5-5: Mountain Avenue, 1924 (University Historic Photograph Collection, Colorado State University, Archives and Special Collections).

In 1923 the Chamber of Commerce launched another city beautiful campaign, encouraging private residents to improve their landscaping with the hope that Fort Collins would become known as the "City Beautiful" as well as the current moniker "City Courteous." Homeowners were admonished to "Clean up, paint up, straighten up, scrape and scour, plant flowers, hide old fences with vines, demolish the shacks, weed out the weeds." Other suggestions were to remove tumbleweed-catching barbed wire fences around yards, eliminate dirt paths created by cutting across lawns, pick up cigarette and cigar butts and use waste receptacles provided by the city. The children of the community were once again enlisted in the campaign. "We believe that the boys and girls of Fort Collins should be encouraged to raise more flowers and less Cain," said J.W. Rainey, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce.[92]

The chamber launched a City Beautiful contest in April, 1923, offering a top prize of $20 in gold and additional prizes sponsored by local businesses for the prettiest porch, the best lawn, the best looking shrubbery and other categories. Entry forms were included in the monthly statements sent by the power company, ensuring that every resident was aware of the effort. The contest ran from April 1 through August 21, 1923. Fifty-two entries city-wide were received, including five from the Loomis Addition.[93]

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91 Typed report on the City of Fort Collins dated 1947, page 35, "1940-1950" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive; Swanson, page 241. The size of some of the cottonwood trees in the Loomis Addition today suggests that not all of the original cottonwoods were removed in the 1920s.
92 *Fort Collins Courier*, April 2, 1923.
93 J.C. Davis, 615 W. Mountain; C.D. Learn, 427 S. Loomis; Mrs. W.A. Heidener, 612 W. Olive; Mrs. L.C. Maxwell, 701 Laporte; and Dr. T.C. Taylor, 629 W. Oak.

A May 1923 *Fort Collins Express* article noted the "great activity in the way of beautifying lawns, yards, and premises in general. Residences are being painted and otherwise improved and all this work is adding to the appearance of the homes in particular and the city in general." Civic improvement was closely tied to the economic interests of the city. As the paper noted, "Everything done in the way of improvement will make the city more attractive to those who live here as well as drawing the attention of those who many have occasion to visit here and who may be induced to select Fort Collins as a place to reside . . . Every dollar expended in civic improvement is money well invested." [94] The Colorado Agricultural College Extension Service contributed to the city beautiful effort by selecting and distributing appropriate varieties of trees for city streets and yards. Tree species still seen today in the Loomis Addition include cottonwood, apple, maple, locust, walnut, and chestnut.

FORT COLLINS NEIGHBORHOODS

Figure 5-6: Office of City Engineer, Fort Collins City Map, 1929 (Local History Archive FC00002).

After the slump of the 1910s, when no new subdivisions were platted, the 1920s brought a short period of residential development. In 1922, the city of Fort Collins annexed another 400 acres, mostly along the western boundary, including City Park which combined the old Prospect Park and Grandview Cemetery. New west side subdivisions were platted including Westlawn (1920), Mountain View (1922), Frey (1924), Kenwood Heights (1924), Juel Place (1924), Babbitt Addition

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94 *Fort Collins Express*, May 20, 1923.

(1925), and Sylvan Place (1925) (see Figures 4-7 and 5-6). With these new subdivisions the Loomis Addition was no longer the western frontier of Fort Collins. Westlawn extended south from the Loomis Addition, encompassing the blocks from Whitcomb to Washington and Mulberry to Laurel. The platting of Kenwood Heights from Washington to Shields between Mulberry Street and Woodford Avenue completed the surrounding of the Loomis Addition with buildable lots. Development also pushed south, prompting this comment in the *Morning Express*: "The south end of Fort Collins is building up so rapidly that it looks as though the city would be justified in extending the street car line south to Lake or Prospect, thence east to Whedbee and north to the Whedbee street line."[95] By 1940, Fort Collins encompassed an area of 1,851 acres (2.9 square miles), nearly double the area of the 1873 plat.

Just as the streetcar had been a boon to development of the Loomis Addition in the first two decades of the 20th century, automobiles now made the new subdivisions attractive alternatives to the older parts of town. Developers could buy raw land at low prices, and quickly turn it into lots offered at lower prices than those of more established, close-in subdivisions. Homes were in demand, due in part to a nationwide effort to encourage home ownership after World War I. A private organization, Better Homes in America, Inc., was formed in 1922 to educate homeowners about quality design and construction. Alliances among architects, builders, developers, bankers and social reformers encouraged home ownership, good building practices and community improvements. The first Better Homes Week was promoted in Fort Collins in October, 1922. The federal government also got involved, with a series of laws passed in the 1930s both to encourage home ownership by making loans easier to get, and to standardize building practices and house design, thus reducing the overall cost of housing.[96]

Housing in Fort Collins was also impacted by the State Agricultural College, which in 1893 had turned all of its on-campus housing into classroom space. The 2,000 students enrolled at the college at the end of the 1930s were housed in fraternities, sororities and boarding houses, or rented rooms from individual homeowners. Although exact numbers are not available, it is likely that many of these students were housed in the Loomis Addition, due to its proximity to campus and the fact that it was served by the trolley line. Although most building permits of this period do not specify "apartment," there were many permits granted to Loomis Addition homeowners for house additions, basement and other remodelings, and a few basement partitions between 1920 and 1949.[97]

LOOMIS ADDITION DEVELOPMENT

Judging from real estate transactions reported in the newspapers during the 1920s, lots in the Loomis Addition were still being sold singly and in groups. The trend of adjusting lots so that they faced the more desirable east-west streets continued, with A.T. and Belle Krouse petitioning the city for permission to reconfigure Lots 10, 11, 14 and 15 in block 269 to face Olive Street instead of

[95] "40 Years Ago-1925," Miller, Book 4, page 723.
[96] See Chapter 8 for more on federal home ownership programs.
[97] City of Fort Collins Building Permit Records, 1920 – 1949; the exception was a 1931 permit for adding apartments at 718 W. Mountain.

Loomis Street.[98] Several fortunate owners of large corner lots facing Mountain Avenue were able to carve out pieces of their deep lots to create new lots facing a north-south street.

The Loomis Addition continued to fill in with houses, especially from 1922 to 1925. Forty-two of the 68 homes built in the period from 1920 to 1945 were constructed between 1920 and 1925. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of 1925 shows only a few vacant lots in the northern six blocks of the addition (north of Oak Street), but sparse development in the blocks between Grant and Washington Streets south of Oak. The 1920s was also the peak time for garage construction. Thirty-eight garages were constructed (or created from barns) between 1920 and 1924, and another 26 were added between 1925 and 1929. With its alley access for every lot, the Loomis Addition was well suited to accommodate the automobile. Some existing barns were repurposed as garages while others were demolished to make room for a new structure. Garage construction continued through the 1940s.

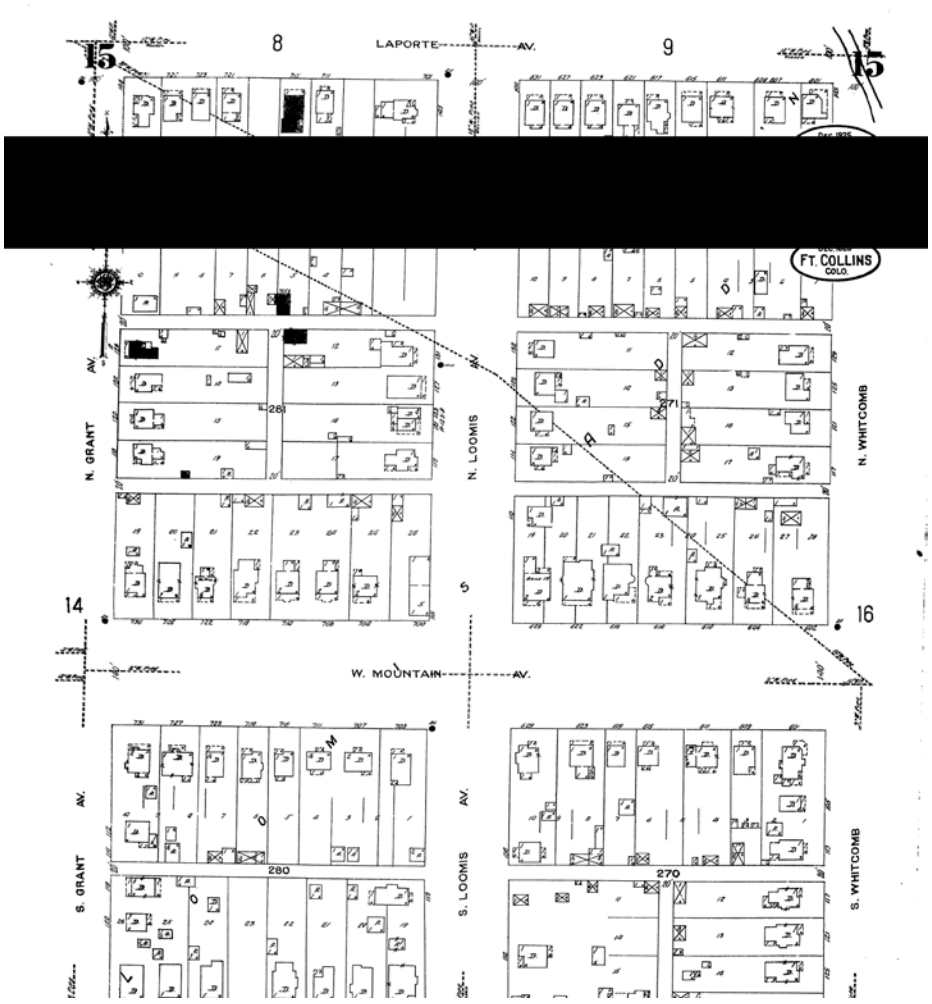

Figure 5-7: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of a portion of the Loomis Addition, 1925, showing numerous garages and other outbuildings behind the homes.

[98] *Fort Collins Courier*, October 18, 1921, page 1.

Although building slowed during the Depression years of the 1930s, when only 12 new houses were built, as noted above some homeowners remodeled or built additions to accommodate renters. Some barns and garages appear to have been repurposed as apartments as well. Homeowners were encouraged to continue to improve their homes during the Depression by programs such as the home modernization program of the Chamber of Commerce, which was said to inspire $75,000 in construction in March 1930.[99] Most of the building permits for the Loomis Addition in the 1930s were for garages or chicken houses, or for repair and remodeling projects such as re-shingling a roof or insulating walls. In existing houses, vacancies increased in the Depression period. In 1931, there were generally 1-3 vacancies on each block of each street, with little variation between Mountain Avenue and other streets in the district.[100]

The Craftsman style continued to dominate house design in the Loomis Addition through the mid-1930s. But by 1938, the influence of Depression-era housing programs began to be seen. Most of the houses built after 1938 in the Loomis Addition are classified as Minimal Traditional – modest homes with traditional designs and minimal stylistic details, many of them designed by the Small House Architects' Service Bureau and other design groups. The Minimal Traditional house fulfilled a need for low-cost housing and a national goal of providing well-designed, well-built, affordable single-family homes to an ever greater segment of the population.[101]

THE NEW DEAL

Although the impact of the Great Depression was delayed in Colorado due to a slower drop in commodity prices compared with other economic sectors, by 1933 the state's per capita income had plunged 30% from 1929 and banks were struggling to hold on. Twelve banks in Colorado failed as conditions worsened.[102] Poudre Valley Bank in Fort Collins stayed open only because B.F. Hottel threw his own fortune into the bank. First National Bank of Fort Collins closed, as did the bank in nearby Timnath. Construction activity, as reflected in the value of building permits issued, declined from the late 1920s through the 1930s as the Great Depression took hold in Colorado and nationwide.

In spite of the direct and obvious impacts of the Depression in Colorado, Governor Johnson was opposed to the New Deal and tried unsuccessfully to block its implementation in the state. Eventually, however, Colorado was one of the largest beneficiaries in the country, with $362.06 of non-repayable federal money allocated per state resident between 1933 and 1939 – the 2nd highest per capita allocation in the country. Monies went to projects carried out by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Public Roads, the Social Security Administration, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA- later WPA), the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Veterans Administration, and the Works Projects Administration.[103] In addition to numerous local projects, these agencies administered major infrastructure developments such as the 1937 Big

[99] *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, January 1, 1931.
[100] Based on analysis of city directories for as many years as were available during the 1920s and 1930s.
[101] See Chapter 8.
[102] Lyons, *1930 Employment 1980*, page 62.
[103] Leonard, *Trials and Triumphs*, page 108.

Thompson Project, one of the largest reclamation projects in the country which eventually filled Horsetooth Reservoir after generating power at various locations.[104]

The Public Works Administration (PWA) of the New Deal helped to keep construction projects going on the college campus and within the city. The PWA provided funding to construct a veterinary building, an agriculture building, and Rockwell Hall, a women's dormitory. Students even pulled together to build the Student Union, completed in 1936, with each student paying $2.50 to supplement PWA grant funds.[105] The PWA also funded improvement of the roads from Fort Collins to Denver and Cheyenne, as well as county farm-to-market roads.

Figure 5-8: "One of the beauty spots of the City" (Local History Archive H09084).

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided funds to hire skilled and unskilled workers to build projects for the city and other government entities. WPA workers built a 400' retaining wall along the south bank of the Poudre River as part of the construction of the new city power plant north of downtown on College Avenue, and landscaped the grounds around the building. In 1937, Mayor Ray Matthews reported that the grounds surrounding the plant had been beautified with the erection of a fountain, walks, curbing, lawns, rock gardens, and flower beds. Matthews noted that "the site has become one of the beauty spots of the city and creates a very attractive north entrance to 'The City Beautiful.'" The Loomis Addition benefitted from the WPA directly, since the city hired WPA workers to finally place the Town Ditch in conduit in 1933-1934, as noted above (see Figure 5-3).

Another WPA project was the construction of the Pioneer Museum which opened in 1941 in what is now Library Park, where the Antoine Janis Cabin had been moved from Laporte in 1939. The Pioneer Museum housed artifacts from Fort Collins' pioneer history. It was demolished and the museum moved to the old Carnegie Library building when the new library was built in 1976. Additions were built to the Lincoln and Washington schools, as well as the Carnegie Library, and the city golf course (1939) was constructed on agricultural land which had earlier been set aside for expansion of the cemetery. The writer's program of the WPA hired historians and writers to research and write *Colorado: A Guide to the Highest State*.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was another New Deal program that brought many jobs and federal monies into Fort Collins. CCC camps moved from Greeley to Fort Collins in 1935, bringing 190 new workers to the city. CCC workers developed Fort Collins Mountain Park (now Gateway Natural Area) at the city's 1903 water treatment facility in Poudre Canyon, and improved tourist

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[104] Leonard, *Trials and Triumphs*, page 102.
[105] Wattles, "Mile-High College," page 303.

facilities in the National Parks, monuments, and forests before the program was discontinued in 1943.[106] CCC workers were men between 18 and 25 years old, who were out of school, out of work, unmarried, but fit and able to work. To qualify they also needed to prove they had dependents on relief and that they could work for six months to two years. With an abundance of federal land and potential projects, Colorado had many CCC camps, including Camp Collins on the Poudre River.

In spite of the boost in employment generated by the federal programs, many people in Fort Collins and Larimer County remained on relief through much of the 1930s. In 1934 the *Fort Collins Express Courier* reported 1,469 Larimer County families on relief, comprising a total of about 8,000 persons, or approximately 25 per cent of the county's population.[107] A year later, the number had increased: "A new high relief load peak has been reached in Larimer County with approximately 11,500 persons, or about 34.5 per cent of the population of 33,500 in the county, being on federal or county aid."[108]

To help the needy residents of Fort Collins, the Social Service Bureau, Colorado community garden clubs, the Great Western Sugar Company, the Agricultural College and the Agricultural Extension Service were all asked to provide seed to the poor so that farming could continue. The county rented seven acres of farm land to be used by those on relief, to grow their own vegetables. The poor were also given jobs constructing and staffing a local soup kitchen. [109]

WORLD WAR 2 AND THE END OF THE PERIOD

Everything changed when war began once again in Europe. By 1941 there was an increasing awareness that America could no longer remain neutral, and the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on December 6, 1941 made the possibility of entering the war a certainty.

The onset of World War II brought dramatic changes to American society. While American forces were fighting overseas or training in U.S. military camps, those at home were also fully engaged in the war effort. With military men off fighting the war, labor shortages at home were acute, and women and even children joined the workforce.

Fort Collins had a few small defense-related industries, such as Northern Colorado Manufacturing Company established in October, 1942, which manufactured valves for the Navy, but many Fort Collins residents commuted by bus to Cheyenne to work in the higher paying war plants located there. Others moved to California and other states seeking higher paying jobs in the defense industries. Still, Fort Collins benefitted from the war economy. A January 1943 article noted that Fort Collins had benefitted to the tune of $227,000 a month in city income from an army clerical school, expanded air training, housing of United Airlines workers (from Cheyenne), defense funds received by School District #5, and the Big Thompson diversion project offices, in addition to Northern Colorado Manufacturing Company.[110] The Great Western sugar factory continued production during the war, as did the local cement plant, both of which were likely contributing to the war effort. At the age of 16, Fort Collins resident Robert Pike was working on a railroad section

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[106] Lyons, *1930 Employment 1980*, page 30.
[107] "30 Years Ago-1934," Miller, Book 3, page 578.
[108] "30 Years Ago-1935," Miller, Book 4, page 706.
[109] *The Coloradoan*, March 24, 1965.
[110] "War Brings Income of $227,000 to City, Forum Parley Told," *Fort Collins Courier-Express*, January 26, 1943.

gang between Fort Collins and Loveland, "repairing the rails, tamping ties. I was only sixteen, but it had to be because there was nobody here to work."[111]

Farm employment was a major problem. While the government was exhorting farmers to "produce for victory," farmers were struggling to find workers to help them achieve their goals. As the newspaper noted, "One of the most patriotic groups in the county, the farmers are working tirelessly to increase production of 'Food for Victory' in the face of growing shortages of labor and materials. They have been asked to increase production of dairy products 5 percent, of eggs 10 percent, and of various kinds of animals for slaughter between 5 and 30 percent."[112] Beet production was also an important part of the war effort, since sugar was scarce during the war and was a commodity that was highly concentrated and could be shipped easily. The lack of labor for beet production was "...one of the most critical conditions which has arisen locally since the start of WWII," noted the *Fort Collins Express-Courier* adding that volunteer laborers were needed or 4,500,000 pounds of sugar could be lost.[113] To ease the shortage, German prisoners of war were used for farm labor in the beet fields and food-related industries.

The campus of Colorado A &M was taken over by the military, and soldiers marched between campus and downtown, lending a military air to this farming town. By the 1943-1944 academic year, the college had instituted pilot and clerical training programs and instruction for army engineers and veterinarians. To accommodate as many as 1,500 men, they filled Johnson Hall and the men's gymnasium with rows of army cots, and leased the Northern and Armstrong hotels downtown.[114] Ace Gillette of the Northern Hotel catered the food for the soldiers training in Fort Collins. "They mustered every morning out on the sidewalk [of the Northern Hotel] and then they marched to the university down College Avenue," recalled Walter Winter. "I'm sure there had to be at least 100 people going to school and living at the Northern Hotel." As a 10-year-old boy at the time, Walter was fascinated with the troop trains and freight trains carrying Jeeps, tanks, half-tracks, etc. through town, and especially with the B-17s, P40s, P51s, P38s, and B24s flying overhead. "There was an awful lot of aircraft ferrying in squadrons and going probably to the coast where they would be shipped overseas. Occasionally, somebody from the hometown that was in the air force, maybe flying somewhere, he would get a close up view. They would buzz the town." [115]

Because most resources were allocated to arm and equip the millions of American and Allied soldiers, people at home had to endure scarcities and rationing. It was impossible to purchase a car or obtain a telephone, unless it was essential to one's role in the war effort. There were periodic shortages of goods ranging from milk to men's pajamas, and the quality of goods deteriorated as producers tried to evade price ceilings. The federal government encouraged Americans to conserve and recycle their tin cans, bottles, rubber items, paper, scrap metal, and even fats left over from cooking, so that factories could use them for wartime production. Fort Collins participated in this effort through salvage drives sponsored by the Boy Scouts, churches and schools. The junior high and high schools had contests to see who could collect the most scrap paper. There were exhortations in the news to not waste materials, and stations were established at nearly all of the

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111 Dr. Robert Pike, Interview by Sharon Lance, January 24, 1995, transcript, Oral History Collection, Local History Archive.
112 *The Coloradoan*, June 11, 1942.
113 *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, October 14, 1942.
114 Hansen, *Democracy's College*, page 348.
115 Walter Winter Interview by Jane Blandford, November 21, 1994, transcript, Oral History Collection, Local History Archive.

grocery stores in Fort Collins for the collection of tin cans for war salvage. Fort Collins residents saved the fat left over from cooking, and brought it to government stations set up downtown, where it was collected in big coffee cans and shipped to defense factories to be used in the manufacture of explosives.[116]

Along with recycling, a new fact of life for American families was food rationing, which was coordinated by the federal Office of Price Administration (OPA). With the military as top priority, American families were forced to use substitute foods such as powdered eggs and liquid paraffin for cooking oil. "Victory Gardens" were started as the government encouraged Americans to grow their own food. Statewide competitions were conducted and winning recipes published to optimize use of home-grown vegetables. At one point during the war, 50 percent of the nation's vegetables were grown in victory gardens. In Fort Collins, "There was hardly a plot of green grass on anybody's back or front yard that wasn't cultivated during the war. Everybody put in Victory Gardens. No matter how small or how large. If there was a vacant lot across the street or backyard or something, everybody grew onions and radishes and potatoes and strawberries. Everything they could raise. . . Those Victory Gardens kept us going. It gave us fresh fruit and fresh vegetables all through the war. . . You couldn't buy fresh fruits or vegetables during the war. Everything went to the war effort."[117]

Figure 5-9: War Food Program poster, 1944 (USDA National Agricultural Library (http://www.nal.usda.gov/exhibits/speccoll/items/show/244).

With most resources and manpower directed toward the war effort, the United States residential construction industry, which had barely survived the Great Depression with less than 100,000 new homes being constructed nationwide a year, effectively ground to a halt. Eighty-five percent of all architects and engineers were unemployed in the opening years of the Depression; after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, this same percentage was employed in the armed services or in military construction.[118] Public housing projects near war factories comprised the vast majority of war-time residential construction. The residents of the Loomis addition were clearly affected by restrictions on building. "There's no way you could order freshly cut timber and other building supplies in Fort Collins. That was just unavailable."[119] Even nails were hard to come by. There were no new residences built in the Loomis Addition from 1942 until the end of the war. According to the building permit records, the few permits issued were for re-shingling or reroofing houses, or in some cases remodeling porches or basements using "old materials." In keeping with the Victory Garden movement, several families in the neighborhood were given permits to build chicken houses.

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[116] "20 Years Ago – 1944," Miller, Book 3, page 537.
[117] Pike, oral interview, 1995.
[118] James Marston Fitch, *American Building: The Historical Forces that Shaped It, V.1* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), page 258.
[119] Pike, oral interview, 1995.

Another way that the war made itself known on the home front was the creation of Civil Defense Boards, set up to organize cities and town in case of an attack. Governor Ralph L. Carr and State Defense Coordinator W. H. Leonard instructed communities to create councils, with committees on fire-fighting services, police services, medical services, public works, including streets, buildings, water and sewage; utilities; maintenance of vital services; and public relations and education. The Civilian Defense Board prepared citizens by conducting blackouts and air raid drills during the war. The first city-wide blackout test was held in December, 1942, and according to reports almost a complete blackout of the city was achieved five minutes after the alarm was sounded.[120] Block wardens patrolled the streets during air raid drills, looking for lights, and making sure residents were complying with orders.

END OF THE WAR

The announcement of the end of the war sparked a celebration in Fort Collins that lasted for two days. Businesses and offices closed, and people thronged into the streets to celebrate. "It was the biggest celebration in the history of Fort Collins . . . There were people all over the street. We couldn't get down College. There were thousands of people. I don't think there was a person left in the residential area of Fort Collins . . . everybody was hollering and hugging everybody and it was just--it was one of the happiest days of my life."[121]

The end of the war meant a gradual return to normal, but it was a new "normal." Among other things, Fort Collins had to deal with a severe housing shortage, a population increase, and increased enrollment of G.I. s at Colorado A & M College. The war had given many people jobs, raising their income and expectations. During the war, Americans were earning much more than ever before but had little to spend their money on. Once the war ended, consumer products once again filled store shelves, and Americans buoyed by full employment, rising wages, growing prosperity, and renewed national confidence began to spend enthusiastically. Couples reunited after the war settled down to start families, creating the "baby boom." A 15-year pent-up demand for houses, schools and other buildings led to a building boom as well.

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[120] *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, December 10, 1942.
[121] Pike, oral interview, 1995.

CHAPTER 6 – FORT COLLINS MOVES SOUTH: THE CITY AFTER WORLD WAR II

Once the euphoria over the end of the war was over, Fort Collins residents and city officials began tackling the many problems left by years of Depression and war. A major challenge was the severe housing shortage. City residents struggled to provide housing for soldiers returning home and starting families, for students, especially veterans, enrolling at Colorado A & M College, and for the newcomers who were moving west to start a new life after the war.

The population shift to the West and the South began in the early 1900s and continued throughout the 20th century, with the West showing a greater increase in population than each of the other three regions of the country in every decade of the 20th century. In what has been termed the "most significant redistribution of population in the nation's history," more than 30 million people moved west between 1945 and 1970, and by 1964 California had surpassed New York as the most populous state.[122] The West was the place to make a new beginning, what many people wanted after enduring depression and war. People started looking west for style trends, including city planning and home design as well as lifestyle. The small agricultural city of Fort Collins, while not California, was an attractive destination, with its college and light industry in a beautiful setting at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.[123]

Although recovery started slowly, by the mid-1950s Fort Collins was booming. Colorado A & M, whose name was changed to Colorado State University in 1957 to reflect the growing size of the campus and diversity of its educational offerings, had become a major employer.[124] Local industries expanded and new industries, as well as regional offices of Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Farmers Home Administration, were attracted to the city because of the research capabilities of the college and the Agricultural Experiment Station. Retail business also expanded to meet the growing demand of consumers who had money to spend and wanted to spend it once the war was over. Fort Collins' population, which had barely budged during the 1930s, more than doubled between 1940 and 1960, from 12,251 to 25,027, with the most rapid growth occurring between 1951 and 1957.

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[122] Frank Hobbs and Nicole Stoops, *U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Reports, Series CENSR-4*, "Demographic Trends in the 20th Century" (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2002) http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4., accessed September 26, 2014; Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), page 520.
[123] The *Coloradoan* noted in January, 1957, that many people were moving to Fort Collins from the East. *Coloradoan,* January 16, 1957.
[124] "1940-1950" Decade Vertical file, Local History Archive.

Before the war actually ended, Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly called the G.I. Bill, to ease the transition of soldiers back into civilian life. Among the benefits offered to veterans of World War II were cash payments to cover tuition and living expenses for attending college, high school or vocational school. During 1947, the peak year of the program, veterans made up 49% of all college admissions nationwide. By the time the original program ended in 1956, 7.8 million veterans had received educational or vocational training through the program.[125] In Fort Collins, the *Coloradoan* reported that Fall 1946 registration topped 3,300, "far exceeding pre-term estimates of 2,600-2,800, and the previous pre-war record of 2,050." Fall enrollment the previous year had been just 1,050, with 1,650 students enrolled that spring.[126]

Apartments And Houses Are Needed For Returning Veterans!

Help Relieve Housing Shortage and Make Money By Remodeling Now!

Housing Units Needed!

There is a strong possibility that permission can be obtained to remodel and build new homes to furnish living quarters for returning service men, war workers, etc. We must—to obtain this permission—present a demand for, and a willingness to, remodel or build. With absolutely no obligation, we ask your co-operation in filling out and mailing the questionnaire below.

Are You Interested in Remodeling For Rental Purposes?.....

How Many New Units Would You Consider? 2-room ..... 3-room ..... 4-room .....

Are You Interested in Building New Units For Rental to Returning War Veterans?.....

(Name).....

(Address).....

This is Urgent! Mail Your Answer Now to Combined Housing Committee

(Colorado A & M; Real Estate Board; Chamber of Commerce)

162 North College Ave. Fort Collins

Figure 6-1: Advertisement in *Fort Collins Courier*, May 4, 1945.

The growth in enrollment created a severe housing crisis for students. The college had earlier converted its dormitories for classroom space (see Chapter 5), so it was able offer few beds to students. The housing supply in the community was inadequate for residents, let alone students, due to the building restrictions of the Depression and the war. While negotiating for funds and building materials to build more student housing, college officials asked Fort Collins residents to find room in their homes for students, and many eventually did. With its location just two blocks north of campus, the Loomis Addition was an attractive area for housing students. Meanwhile the college housing director was busy locating temporary housing in the form of war-surplus Quonset huts, the first 90 of which were installed in the spring of 1946 in a location known as Veterans' Village on the south side of Laurel Street, just east of Shields. The college's Field House was converted into a temporary men's dormitory, and students even established a trailer court next to Veterans' Village.[127] Eventually the college was able to attract low-interest federal loans to build up its infrastructure, including student housing, a student union, classroom buildings and a new library.

[125] "History and Timeline," Education and Training, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website, 2013, http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/history.asp, accessed September 27, 2014.

[126] *Coloradoan*, October 1, 1946. On April 29, 1945, the local newspaper changed its name from the *Fort Collins Express-Courier* to the *Fort Collins Coloradoan*.

[127] James E. Hansen, II, *Democracy's College in the Centennial State: A History of Colorado State University* (Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University, 1977), pages 353-355; Cindy Harris and Adam Thomas, "Fort Collins E-X-P-A-N-D-S: The City's Postwar Development1945-1969" (City of Fort Collins, CO: 2011), page 29.

Development projects put on hold during the war were slowly picked up once life returned to normal. Perhaps one of the most important of these was the Colorado – Big Thompson project, whose construction began in 1938 under the New Deal, but was suspended like all unnecessary projects because of the war. Work on the project resumed in 1946, and the promise of more water and electricity spurred planning for business and industry. With the completion of Horsetooth Reservoir in 1949, Northern Colorado increased its water-storage capacity by 147,000 acre-feet, although it would be several years before the reservoir reached capacity.[128] The project also promised about 250,000 horsepower of electricity for the region.

Figure 6-2: Dedication of Horsetooth Reservoir, 1951 (Local History Archive, S00331).

Another critical area of post-war development was transportation. Just as railroad service had been an essential part of Fort Collins' growth in the late 19th century, highways became the post-war link to the outside world. Upgrading the roads to Denver and Cheyenne was essential for commerce, both shipping goods to outside markets and making it easier for shoppers to access Fort Collins businesses. Interstate 25 was completed from Walsenburg to the Colorado-Wyoming border in 1965. The Poudre Canyon Road (Highway 14 to Walden) was also considered an important key to the city's growing tourism industry.

Airline service was also becoming a prerequisite for industrial development. In order to attract manufacturing companies such as Woodward Governor to Fort Collins, the city paid for improvements to Colorado A & M's Christman Field, which was rededicated in 1955. The new airport facility sealed the deal with Woodward Governor, and allowed local firms such as Forney Industries to expand.[129]

In his 1958 report on the history and general character of Fort Collins, community development consultant Harold Beier described the city's new "Industrial Period" as follows: "The Industrial Period, 1951 to 1957, is the beginning of a new era for Fort Collins and Larimer County. The past few years seem to indicate a period of rapid growth and development particularly in industrial development." Among the notable industrial developments were the completion of the Colorado - Big Thompson project and manufacturing plants producing plastics, electronics, and even light aircraft. In addition to Woodward Governor and Forney Industries, other businesses included the Seder Plastics Corporation and G.D. Richardson Manufacturing, as well as Aqua-Tec, maker of the Water-Pik dental device, and Kodak which opened a plant in Windsor. With its new source of water

[128] *Coloradoan*, July 5, 1949.
[129] Harris and Thomas, page 65.

and power, Fort Collins saw a future in light industry as a way to boost its economy while preserving "liveability."[130]

Fort Collins continued to function as an agricultural center as well. Larimer County emerged from the war with fewer farms, but those that survived were larger and more efficient at producing goods to meet the growing markets at home and abroad. Although Great Western closed its Fort Collins sugar factory in 1955, farmers in the area continued to produce beets for other nearby facilities.

The retail sector in Fort Collins expanded during the post-war period, with large retailers such as J.C. Penney and Montgomery Ward opening new, larger stores in the growing south part of town in the 1960s, and a proliferation of auto-related businesses such as auto dealerships, repair shops and gas stations.[131] With improved highways, Fort Collins was able to strengthen its position as a regional retail center, drawing customers from outlying rural towns and as far away as Cheyenne and Laramie, Wyoming. In 1955 the *Denver Post* reported that "the large potential of growth here brought on by the Colorado-Big Thompson project, the possibilities of the A&M College, and other factors, make Larimer County a county with a tremendous future."[132]

CITY HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

As noted above, housing was the major post-war challenge in Fort Collins and many other communities nationwide, as Americans married and had families at a record rate and house building got off to a slow start after the war. While Colorado A & M was struggling with where to put its students, the city of Fort Collins itself was experiencing challenges with housing its citizens and newcomers. A Newcomers' Club complained openly about the city's poorly planned and maintained houses. The group noted that the "few homes available are too old and high priced to be desirable." One complaint stated, "I believe a residential district should be more rigidly zoned against stores, service stations, etc. but not against intelligent remodeling into two or more family homes. The City needs a planning committee to advise and supervise remodeling projects. Competent architectural advice would eliminate poorly planned apartments and pro-rated bills for utilities and heat."[133]

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[130] Harold Beier, "Research and Survey Report Part 1: History and General Character of the City of Fort Collins, Colorado" (Fort Collins: Urban Planning, 1958), pages 1-27; "1950-1960" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.
[131] Harris and Thomas, pages 62 and 66.
[132] The *Denver Post*, September 9, 1955, as quoted in Harris and Thomas, page 22.
[133] *Coloradoan*, July 26, 1945, page 1.

Figure 6-3: 401 South Grant, one of the first houses to be built after World War II in the Loomis Addition (Local History Archive 401sgr48).

The city began addressing the housing problem immediately after the war, drawing on its previously unused zoning plan of 1929 to try to control the proliferation of makeshift housing. In 1945, the city council ordered a study of basement apartments in the city, with the intention of developing an ordinance regulating them, since many were believed to be poorly constructed and virtual firetraps.[134] The following article from the July 3, 1945 *Fort Collins Coloradoan* summarizes the problem:

> Even if you have the green light from WPB (War Production Board), plans drawn, and scarce materials rounded up too, you still have to clear your project with city hall. With so many people desiring to tack on a sleeping porch, fix up a basement apartment, or erect a dwelling as their part of relieving the city's ever tighter housing situation, city officials want it understood there are local laws against unsafe, fire-inviting construction.[135]

Unfortunately, there was not much the city could do to build new housing in the short-term. The War Production Board continued to control use of materials until late 1945, and the number of houses allowed to be built nationwide was limited. On July 27, 1945, the newspaper reported that local officials met with Federal Housing Authority (FHA) officials to determine whether Fort Collins would be eligible for building priority to alleviate its housing shortage. The article noted that "only 77,000 houses will be allowed this month nationwide and 73,000 next month." Even if housing permits were granted, it was not known whether the necessary building materials could be obtained. The city asked the FHA for permission to construct at least 30 new homes over the next six months, but did not hold out much hope due to shortage of labor and materials. By the end of the month only three permits, for a total of $15,897, had been granted.[136] The *New York Times* observed in December that "home, sweet home is a nightmare crisis instead of a song for America's war-shifted millions, and their housing problem is a top priority headache in every section of the nation."[137]

Once house building was freed up by the loosening of war-time restrictions on building materials in the fall of 1945, developers and home builders got to work taking care of the housing shortage. They were helped by the FHA, which backed mortgages for FHA-approved houses, allowing many more Americans to qualify for home loans. Preference was given to veterans, with the G.I. bill

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[134] "20 Years Ago – 1945," James Miller, Book 4, page 725.
[135] *Coloradoan*, July 3, 1945, page 5.
[136] *Coloradoan*, July 27, 1945, page 1; July 30, 1945, page 3.
[137] *The New York Times*, December 9, 1945.

providing 30-year loans for 85% of the cost of new home construction. The first purchase of a house in Fort Collins under the G.I. Bill was approved in early July, 1945.[138]

By the end of the year, the outlook was more promising. Three houses were built in the Loomis Addition in October and November, 1945.[139] In its January 1, 1946 projection for the coming year, the newspaper reported that a $1,000,000 building plan for the year was being developed, including Veterans' Village, new subdivisions, improvements to the city's water and sewage systems, and construction of part of the city-county civic center buildings on courthouse square.[140] Over the next 15 years, the city of Fort Collins grew in terms of both land and infrastructure. Between 1955 and 1960 the city added a county courthouse (1955-57) and a new city hall (1958), and greatly expanded and updated its hospital (1960). It added new boilers and generators to its power plant, and upgraded its water system once again to meet the demands of a growing population who were using more electricity and water than ever with their new post-war appliances.

Residential building permits in Fort Collins rose to about 450 by 1950 and more than 700 by 1960.[141] In 1953, Fort Collins was featured in a front page article in the *Denver Post* with the headline "Leisurely Fort Collins: Model Town of the West." The article called Fort Collins possibly the most beautiful – and also most conservative – community in the state. "Progress has laid a firm hand on this 'Lilac City of the West' since World War II," the article states, "but to Fort Collins, the good life, civic and personal, comes first." It quotes businessman Walter B. Cooper as saying "Fort Collins is a marvelous place to live, raise a family and enjoy life. It's not commercialized to the extent of some cities. Our streets are wide, our schools are good. We have used water liberally and we have a beautiful city to show for it."[142]

CITY PLANNING

The increase in population and demand for new housing brought to light the city's need for better planning, and with the help of a state grant the city hired community development consultant Harold Beier to assess the situation and make recommendations. Beier noted that from a planning perspective, the original town plat was very well laid out, with wide streets and good alignment that eased the transition from horse-drawn carriages and bicycles to automobiles. Later subdivisions did not comply well with this pattern, however, and there had not been a concerted effort to make sure they coordinated with one another. Streets often didn't line up, creating nuisance jogs in the roads, road widths did not continue the standard set by the 1873 plat, and there were no enforced standards for curbs and gutters or paving.[143] There was no overall street plan, for the city or the region. The 1929 zoning plan, which was an attempt to coordinate and integrate development, had never really been implemented and Beier declared its text "very out of date." He noted that "The development of land in the City and fringe areas has reached a ridiculously low state of planning in recent years."

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[138] *Coloradoan,* July 12, 1945, page 2.
[139] *Coloradoan*, July 27, 1945, page 1; July 29, 1945, page 10; July 30, 1945, page 3.
[140] *Coloradoan*, January 1, 1946.
[141] Harris and Thomas, page 49.
[142] "1950-1960" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.
[143] This is evident in the Loomis Addition especially on Laporte Avenue west of Whitcomb and Oak Street west of Grant.

Although Beier praised the layout of the city's older neighborhoods such as the Loomis Addition, he noted that they were not in keeping with modern trends, which favored wider lots with shorter backyards instead of the narrow, 190'-deep lots designed to accommodate gardens. He also noted that the grid street plan was "no longer generally practiced in subdividing residential areas."[144]

Figure 6-4: 85 Circle Drive, Fort Collins, 1954 (Local History Archive, 85cir54).

After World War II, new standards for neighborhood planning published by the FHA promoted the concept of curvilinear subdivision design. In cities across America, new suburbs with curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, and limited access were platted on the edges of towns, and soon filled up with houses supported by FHA-backed mortgages. The new subdivisions platted in Fort Collins after World War II, such as Circle Drive (Figure 6-4), follow this pattern. Newspapers featured photographs of these new neighborhoods, with ranch-style homes set on wide lots, with expanses of lawn and newly planted trees. The new subdivisions dispensed with the old-fashioned alley (as found in the Loomis Addition), and instead houses were built with garages facing the street.[145] As the new suburban residential neighborhoods and commercial areas expanded into what had been farm land, the center of the city moved south.

With new homes and subdivisions all the rage, what happened to the older neighborhoods? What did owners of older houses in the Loomis Addition think, when they read something like the following advertisement promoting the "House of Tomorrow," printed in the *Coloradoan* in 1955?

> We hear many comparisons between the older homes and the modern ones. Each has its good and bad points and both will undoubtedly hold an important part in our housing industry. But the trend toward the modern or contemporary house seems well established. This type of home is not as much a style as it is an expression of our modern standard of living. This is most noticeable in the modern kitchens, "open" planning of floor space, privacy for indoor and outdoor living, and storage space by means of storage walls. In the not too distant future, our homes may have movable walls so that room arrangements may be changed as we now rearrange furniture. Window panels may be moved around to vary with the season. Of this we can be sure, a great industry is constantly striving to bring you more livability for less money. This constant urge to better ourselves is America's great strength.[146]

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[144] Beier, "History and General Character of the City of Fort Collins, Colorado," pages 1-23.
[145] "1950-1960" Decade Vertical File, Local History Archive.
[146] *Coloradoan*, April 1, 1955, as quoted in Harris and Thomas, page 49.

THE LOOMIS ADDITION IN THE POST-WAR ERA

While much of the city's attention focused on the growing south part of town, efforts continued to beautify the city's older neighborhoods. After the war, Fort Collins adopted yet another new name, "The Lilac City." Starting in 1950, the mayor annually proclaimed a certain week "Lilac Week," when residents were encouraged to plant lilacs, an effort "which has added beauty, charm, color and romance to our civic personality, and Ft. Collins has truly become the Lilac City," according to a 1955 article. The city government also participated, planting "18 French hybrid lilacs in the center parking of the 300 block of West Mountain. The lilacs, donated by Fort Collins Nursery, were set as part of the city's enduring landscaping project."[147] There was even a song about Fort Collins, composed by local resident Walter Cooper, titled "Where the Purple Lilacs Grow."[148] Post-war residents of the Loomis Addition remember the Mountain Avenue median being filled with lilac bushes when they were growing up.[149] Although the lilacs have since been removed from the median, they are still very much in evidence in yards and gardens throughout the Loomis Addition today.

Figure 6-5: Mountain Avenue c. 1950 (Local History Archive H13283).

The city continued to expand its facilities at nearby City Park, which by 1958 had numerous recreational offerings for residents including a lake with boating, an outdoor pool, a wading pool, a bathhouse, a "kiddie railroad," a pavilion building, a meeting house, fields for baseball, softball, football, and other sports, three lighted tennis courts, picnic facilities with open shelters and fireplaces, open meadow areas, a playground and a golf course.[150]

Aside from landscaping and the eventual removal of the trolley from Mountain Avenue, the post-war era did not bring major change to the Loomis Addition. By the end of the war the Loomis Addition was already close to being built out. The Sanborn Insurance Company map of 1925, updated in 1943, shows only twelve lots without houses, although some houses occupy more than one lot. Because post-war home construction and purchase was mostly accomplished through the FHA, which generally worked with large builders constructing multiple units in FHA-approved subdivisions, it was easier for families to qualify for a loan for a new house in the suburbs than to build on a lot in town or buy an existing house. In comparison to the new subdivisions with brand-new, modern homes, older neighborhoods like the Loomis Addition with their two-story homes dating back several decades probably appeared stodgy and old-fashioned to the post-war family.

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[147] "10 Years Ago-1955," James Miller, Book 4, pages 752 and 743. This particular block of Mountain Avenue is just east of the Loomis Addition, but the planting of lilacs extended throughout the Loomis Addition as well.
[148] "10 Years Ago-1955," James Miller, Book 3, page 658; "1950-1960 Decade" Vertical File, Local History Archive, Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Fort Collins, CO.
[149] Interviews with long-time residents Chuck Hagemeister and Robert Holzfaster, conducted by Rheba Massey.
[150] Harold Beier, "Public Facilities and Buildings, Fort Collins, Colorado" (Fort Collins, CO, Urban Planning, 1958).

Over the next 15 years the Loomis Addition slowly filled in, with two to three houses added almost every year from 1945 until 1960.

Post-war houses were almost exclusively Minimal Traditional in style, following the FHA model (see Chapter 8). Sometimes referred to as "FHA Minimum" houses, these one-story homes ranged in size from 800 to 1,000 square feet with a compact design usually topped by a side-gable roof. Each house had a living room, kitchen and a minimum of two bedrooms; the larger models featured a third bedroom and sometimes a dining area.

Figure 6-6: Minimal Traditional house, 229 S. Loomis St. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The last house built to fill an existing lot in the addition was in 1960. In 1964, a ranch-style house was built on a newly created lot at the corner of Whitcomb and Olive Streets. This completed the build-out of the Loomis Addition. Fifteen years later, the replacement of houses began with the demolition of a house on West Mulberry and its replacement with a multi-family unit. Building in the addition since 1964 has consisted primarily of modification of existing homes, although roughly 10 new homes have been built since 2000. New homes tend to be Neo-traditional, mimicking the features of Victorian-era and Craftsman styles.[151]

It is virtually impossible to analyze late 20th century population trends in the Loomis Addition as distinct from surrounding neighborhoods, since data is not defined by original subdivision boundaries. However, a study of reports and plans from the 1950s through the 1980s gives a picture of what was happening in the area. For example, in his 1958 report on Fort Collins' public facilities and buildings, Harold Beier notes that "Neighborhood Planning Area 14" which includes the Loomis Addition (College to Shields, Laporte to Laurel) had a population of 6,300 in 1958, with 896 school-aged children. That population was not projected to grow much over the next 25 years, with the projected population in 1985 at 6,561, with 935 school-aged children. Although Area 14 was the largest planning area and had the largest population in the city in 1958, Beier projected that it soon would be surpassed in school-age population by neighborhoods to the south. Beier also reported on housing in his land use plan of the same year. His report confirms that the Loomis Addition and surrounding neighborhoods were composed primarily of houses built before 1918 and that most were in good condition.[152]

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[151] Based on city of Fort Collins building permit records and onsite survey.
[152] Harold Beier, "Research and Survey Report Part 5: Land Use, Fort Collins, Colorado," (Fort Collins: Urban Planning, 1958). This report divides the city into planning areas, with the Loomis Addition comprising parts of planning areas 17, 20 and 22.

True to Beier's projection, a 1989 report on the West Side Neighborhood (WSN),[153] an area encompassing 20 subdivisions developed over a period of 100 years, noted that the total population of the WSN had declined while the city's population had increased. The report attributed this decline to smaller household size due to an aging population, and "some building demolition." The median age in the WSN was one year older than that of Fort Collins in general, and 11% of residents were more than 65 years of age as opposed to a citywide average of 7%. The WSN was also more ethnically diverse than the rest of Fort Collins.[154]

It is likely that the trend of renting out an apartment or an entire house in the Loomis Addition and adjacent neighborhoods continued through the 1980s. The West Side Neighborhood plan noted that the area "changed from a predominantly owner-occupied neighborhood to renter-dominated one from 1970 to 1980," with more than one-half of the housing units (53.5%) renter occupied in 1980. The housing values in the WSN were also significantly (about 25%) lower than the Fort Collins average in 1980.

The West Side Neighborhood was described as "substantial one to two story houses on large, well kept lots which face wide streets. These streets are lined with large trees and parking strips which separate the sidewalks from the street. In short the WSN is a lovely older neighborhood that is a real asset in a rapidly growing city." The plan noted that the WSN had easy access to grocery and convenience stores, as well as downtown Fort Collins, which by 1987 was experiencing a comeback due to historic preservation and redevelopment of Old Town. Ironically, the same features that had made the Loomis Addition and other older neighborhoods less desirable in the early post-war years, made them attractive to a new group of homeowners who valued their location (close to parks, schools, and independent stores and restaurants), their human scale, the wide sidewalks, front porches and landscaping that created a pedestrian-friendly environment, the variety of housing styles, sizes and prices and the socio-economic diversity. These features added up to "an ambiance of appearance and a quality of life that can no longer be recreated."[155]

Figure 6-7: 800 block of West Mountain Avenue (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

By the 1990s, the Loomis Addition and other close-in neighborhoods were beginning to recover. Attracted by low housing prices and the amenities described above, both young families and adults without children began to invest in the neighborhood. Houses gradually have been restored to single-family, owner-occupied homes, and additions and other remodeling has taken place.[156] This interest in older neighborhoods coincided with a nationwide interest in historic

[153] Bramhall & Associates, "West Side Neighborhood Plan" (City of Fort Collins, 1989). The plan area extends as far north as the Poudre River and west to Taft Hill Road. The south boundary follows Mulberry and Laurel and the east boundary follows College and Meldrum.
[154] Bramhall, pages 2-3, 2-4 and 2-6.
[155] Bramhall, pages 4-4, 3-2, 1-2 and 1-4.
[156] The West Side Neighborhood Plan noted in 1989 that "historic buildings have been altered in ways that have often destroyed the original architectural integrity of the buildings." Bramhall, page 4-10.

preservation, prompted by the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 and the creation of state historic preservation offices in each state. Publications such as the *Old House Journal* and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's *Preservation* magazine featured stories about the revival of older neighborhoods and rehabilitation of older houses, and inspired thousands of Americans to take on their own rehab projects. In the 1980s, students of Colorado State University history professor Liston Leyendecker completed surveys of many blocks in the Loomis Addition and other older neighborhoods. Leyendecker proposed a "Westside Neighborhood Historic District" in 1980, and the 1987 Westside Neighborhood Plan echoed the need to provide some protection for Fort Collins' historic neighborhoods. There are now 24 locally landmarked properties in the Loomis Addition, including properties listed in the "Whitcomb Street Historic District."

Starting in the early 2000s, new construction resumed in the Loomis Addition, with roughly 10 new houses built between 2002 and 2014. This tear-down trend worries some neighborhood residents. In 2013, a city ordinance was passed which restricted the height and building-to-lot ratio of new construction in the east and west side neighborhoods. A local organization called Protect Our Old Town Homes (POOTH) formed in 2013, with the following mission: "We are a group of Old Town, Fort Collins residents who love the charm and community of our neighborhoods. We want to protect and maintain the things that make Old Town a great place to live."[157]

Figure 6-8: 721 Laporte Avenue (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

[157] "Protect Our Old Town Homes" website, http://www.pooth.org/, 2014, accessed October 6, 2014.

CHAPTER 7 – LOOMIS ADDITION RESIDENTS

Learning about who lived in the Loomis Addition during various periods in its past helps us to understand the history and flavor of the neighborhood. Following are short biographies of a small sample of Loomis Addition residents, from the earliest settlers to those who arrived in the 1980s and participated in the revival of the neighborhood.

Figure 7-1: Patterson House, 121 N. Grant (Mary Humstone, 2014).

EARLY RESIDENTS

Early residents of the Loomis Addition were pioneers in their own right, moving far away from downtown in order to own a home of their own. In its first decade or two, the Loomis Addition was surrounded by open lands, especially to the west and the south, with only sparse development to the east and the north. The first twenty or so houses were scattered across several blocks throughout the subdivision, so residents might have had to wait a few years to have neighbors. Meanwhile empty lots were used for farming or recreation.

As noted in Chapter 3, **Alice and Billy Patterson** were one of the first couples to settle in the Loomis Addition, after purchasing the "raffle house" (Figure 7-1) in 1888. Patterson was a leader in the development of Fort Collins who is perhaps best known for his friendship with Buffalo Bill Cody, who reportedly visited him quite often. Patterson owned and operated a livery stable and freighting business, and was actively involved in local government, serving as a county commissioner and town alderman. He helped bring the State Agricultural College to Fort Collins, donating 80 of the 240 acres that comprised the original campus, and planting trees down College Avenue linking the campus with the downtown. The "raffle house" changed hands many times after Billy Patterson's widow sold the house in 1900, but has remained in the McMillen/Hoskinson family since 1967.

Another early (and long-time) resident was **James Brunton**, who immigrated to the United States from Scotland in 1882 and arrived in Fort Collins in 1887. In 1892, he built a home at 117 North Whitcomb, where he lived with his wife and three children until his death in 1944. Brunton was trained as a millwright, a skilled craftsman who was able to build, set up and run the equipment used in flour or sawmills. Like many early 20th century millwrights, Brunton eventually became a civil engineer, starting as a millwright at the Lindell Mills, and moving on to become a millwright and engineer for the Colorado Milling and Elevator Company in 1937. He was elected alderman from the second ward and served several times as a delegate to the Democratic Party's state convention. After his death, his son George resided in the house until 1949.[158]

Figure 7-2: James Brunton house, 117 North Whitcomb (Larimer County Assessor's photo, 1948, Local History Archive 117Whi48).

Figure 7-3: Kitchel House, 601 West Mountain (Mary Humstone, 2015).

Aaron Kitchel was born in 1842 in Lake County, Indiana. He enlisted as a volunteer in the 23rd Iowa Infantry in 1862, fighting in the Civil War until his honorable discharge in 1865. Kitchel moved with his family to a homestead six miles east of Fort Collins (now the Kitchel Farms Subdivision) in 1879. He was a successful farmer who served as a Larimer County commissioner for three years, and was always one of its foremost and highly respected citizens. Kitchel built the Queen Anne cottage at 601 West Mountain Avenue in 1890, where he lived until his death in 1910.[159]

LOOMIS ADDITION IN THE EARLY 1900S

The Loomis Addition and other outlying neighborhoods south and west of downtown catered to the middle and upper class, with houses ranging from small, four-to-six-room cottages to large, two-story homes. As was true in communities throughout the country, the higher land, away from flooding rivers, swamps, industry, and railroad tracks, was the domain of the middle and upper classes, while the farm, factory, and railroad workers lived in neighborhoods on less desirable and flood-prone land.

[158] Watrous, page 490; "Death Takes Brunton, 84, City Pioneer," *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, October 16, 1944, page 1.
[159] "601 West Mountain," Fort Collins Local Landmark Designation Form, 2004.

A study of occupations of residents in the early 1900s reveals that the Loomis Addition was primarily a middle-class neighborhood with residents working a variety of jobs. While there were one accountant, one architect, a professor, a few attorneys and doctors, and several business proprietors living in the neighborhood, the majority of residents identified themselves as laborers and clerks. Also common were workers associated with transporting goods including draymen, teamsters, expressmen, and stockmen. Nine residents identified themselves as farmers. While there were barns, chicken coops and nearby farmland in the neighborhood in the early 1900s, it is unclear whether these families were farming on their Loomis Addition plats or if these were considered townhomes for farmers with land elsewhere around Fort Collins. Several women from the Loomis Addition worked as bookkeepers, nurses, teachers, dressmakers and seamstresses, and stenographers.

Figure 7-4: J.W. Miller House, 715 Laporte Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

Figure 7-5: House built by Roy Portner at 817 W. Mountain, 1905 (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The area was home to many carpenters and contractors as well as stone masons, brick layers, plasterers, and painters. Several of these men may have built the homes they resided in, such as **J.W. Miller**, a stonemason who lived in a Classic Cottage constructed of stone in 1892 at 715 Laporte Avenue.[160]

Roy Portner also built several homes in the Loomis Addition. Portner came to Colorado in 1902 at the age of seventeen and began building houses, including a 5-room frame cottage at 800 W. Mountain (1904) and 5-room brick cottages at 815 and 817 W. Mountain (1905) in the Loomis Addition. He later entered the real estate business and eventually became the owner of numerous residential, ranching, and business properties. He was also active in organizing irrigation companies and building reservoirs, and became a national expert on irrigation systems.[161]

Four siblings of the **Garbutt** family, from the town of Garbutt in Monroe County in upstate New York, moved to the Fort Collins area in the early 1900s. Horace Garbutt, who served in the Union army during the Civil War, came to Laporte in 1883 and moved to Fort Collins six years later. He and his son Newton were partners in Garbutt & Garbutt Attorneys at Law until late 1903, when Newton left the firm to become a district court stenographer. Horace then joined with Sam Clammer in 1904 to form the law firm of Garbutt and Clammer, which served as the county's firm. Newton later became

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[160] Above information on occupations compiled from city directories of 1902, 1904 and 1906, available online through Fort Collins History Connection, http://history.fcgov.com/.

[161] Barbara Allbrandt, "A Fort Collins Resident since '02," *Coloradoan*, March 3, 1974, page 11; "Roy A. Portner" Obituary, *The Denver Post*, December 19, 1976, page 36; "Roy A. Portner," in Thomas Stone Chamblin, *The Historical Encyclopedia of Colorado, Vol. 1*, (Denver, CO: Colorado Historical Association, revised 1964), p. 429.

a reporter for the Colorado State Supreme Court in Denver. Horace and his wife Lucy lived at 121 South Whitcomb in 1900, and Newton lived next door to his parents at 125 South Whitcomb (in the Loomis Addition). Horace's wife died in 1902, after which he and his daughter Lucy moved across the street to 122 South Whitcomb.

Newton invested in several lots in the Loomis addition.[162] In 1901 the newspaper reported that he had let a contract for a new five-room cottage on Mountain Avenue, one block west of Commissioner Kitchel's residence (601 W. Mountain), and the annual building report of January 2, 1902 stated, "N. C. Garbutt built in 1901 a six room frame cottage on W. Mountain Ave in the Loomis Addition for $1,100. The architect was Montezuma Fuller and the builder was James Mellinger."[163] By 1906, Horace Garbutt was living at 711 West Mountain, once again next door to his son.

Horace's brother, Arthur Garbutt, moved to Fort Collins in the early 1900s and taught drafting at the college. He designed many homes in Fort Collins before moving to Casper, Wyoming, where he established an architectural firm. While in Fort Collins, Arthur worked with architect Montezuma Fuller, and it is likely that he designed all four homes that the Garbutts lived in on South Loomis and West Mountain avenues. Other Garbutts in the area included Edward Garbutt, a storekeeper and postmaster at Laporte, and Nettie Garbutt, who married Rowland Herring, a prominent Laporte truck farmer.[164]

Figure 7-6: Horace Garbutt's home at 711 West Mountain Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

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[162] Lots 13 and 16 of Block 277 and Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Block 280 in the Loomis Addition are known to have been owned by Newton Garbutt.
[163] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, April 4, 1901, page 5; "Fort Collins Splendid Building Record," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, January 2, 1902, page 3. Newton's house was located at 703 West Mountain.
[164] Biographical information about the Garbutt family from Irving Garbutt, "Garbutt Family," in Arlene Briggs Ahlbrandt and Kathryn Stieben, eds., *Larimer County History, 1860s-1987, Vol. 2* (Fort Collins, CO: Larimer County Heritage Association), page 683; "Real Estate Transfers," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, September 12, 1906, page 3; "Death of Mrs. H.I. Garbutt," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, February 27, 1902, page 5.

Figure 7-8: Dr. E.L. Sadler House, 628 West Mountain Ave. (Meg Dunn, 2013).

Figure 7-7: Sarah Love House, 622 West Mountain Ave. (Meg Dunn, 2013).

The **Love** family also had many connections in the Loomis Addition. Ephraim Love was born in 1850 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and moved to Fort Collins in 1872 where he studied law under L.R. Rhodes. While a student, he supported himself by working as a carpenter. Love and his associates built a number of buildings during Fort Collins' early boom in the 1870s and 1880s. In 1874 Ephraim Love and Jonas Boorse were hired to build a "claim shanty" on the northeast corner of the land set aside for a college campus. They accomplished their task in nine days, thus establishing a claim for the college land and ensuring that Fort Collins would be the location for the Colorado Agricultural College, instead of Greeley or Boulder. After being admitted to the bar in 1879, Ephraim became a partner of his mentor Mr. Rhodes and later became a junior partner of Robinson and Love.

When Ephraim died in 1899, his former partner Judge Robinson stated, "He brought to the bar that which is most needful and best, a character founded upon principles of everlasting justice and truth, so formed that it stood four-square to every wind that blew with danger of shaking." Ephraim's widow Sarah built a house at 622 West Mountain Avenue in 1906, where she lived with their three daughters, Edna, Clara, and Helen. It is likely that her brother-in-law James Love, who was a building contractor in Fort Collins, constructed this home, although there is no builder listed in the record for 1906. The Love's Loomis Addition home remained in the family until 1975, when Helen Love died.[165]

The same year that Sarah built her house, her daughter Edna and her husband Dr. E.L. Sadler built a Craftsman-style home for $3,500 next door at 628 West Mountain. Dr. Sadler owned one of the first automobiles in Fort Collins, a single-cylinder Cadillac. A 1924 newspaper article reported on a road trip he took: "Dr. and Mrs. E.L. Sadler arrived from their eastern trip. They were gone six weeks.

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[165] Biographical information about the Love family from Edna J. Schaefer, "Colorado A & M College Now Colorado State University," in *Larimer County History, 1860s-1987*, page 218; *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, May 18, 1899, page 4, and November 30, 1899, page 2; *Fort Collins Express*, January 1, 1894, page 26. James Love was listed as a building contractor in 1903 building records; there is no contractor listed under the record for Sarah Love's 1906 house on Mountain Avenue.

They bought a new car in Detroit on their way east, traveling 3300 miles on concrete pavement. The roads coming west from the Missouri line are unpaved but in good condition."[166] He and Edna lived in their Mountain Avenue home until his death in 1928, when Edna moved to Denver and the house was occupied by their son Jackson and his wife Mary. Jackson was also a doctor with a private practice in internal medicine and pediatrics. Four generations of the Sadler family lived in the house from 1906 until 1992.[167]

One of the prominent young men who built houses in the Loomis Addition during this period was **Merlin Hall Aylesworth**, son of Barton Aylesworth who served as president of Colorado State Agricultural College from 1899 to 1909. Merlin attended local Fort Collins schools and Colorado Agricultural College before getting a doctorate in law from Columbia University. At the age of 22 he returned to Fort Collins and opened a law office, and a few years later he was appointed Larimer County attorney. Around this time he and his wife built a Free Classic-style house at 828 West Olive, which they occupied for just six years, before moving to Utah in 1917. Aylesworth went on to become the first President of the National Broadcasting Company, now known as NBC, and in 1932 he became President and Chairman of Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation now known as RKO.[168]

Figure 7-9: Merlin Aylesworth, c. 1911 (Local History Archive, AyleswoM).

The Aylesworth house was purchased by another attorney, **Fred Nelson Cummings**, a New Hampshire native who moved to Fort Collins with his wife and children in 1906 at the age of 42. Cummings came from a farming background, having farmed in New Hampshire, Iowa and Nebraska before moving to Colorado. He purchased several farms in Larimer and Weld counties on which he fed livestock and raised sugar beets. He served as a Fort Collins city council member from 1909 to 1913, and later was elected to Congress where he served four terms. He ably represented the economic interests of his constituents, leading the fight for the Colorado - Big Thompson project and advocating for federal payments for sugar beet growers, which resulted in the Sugar Act of 1936. He and his wife purchased the residence at 828 West Olive Street in 1918, and lived there until her death in 1944.[169]

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[166] "40 Years Ago-1924," James Miller, Book 3, page 590.
[167] "Building Outlook for Season of 1906," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, May 30, 1906, page 5; Stanley W. Henson, Jr., *Touching Lives: A History of Medicine in Fort Collins* (Fort Collins, CO: 2004), page 117; "City and Country," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, May 7, 1902, page 8; Attachment "B" in "Mountain Ave." Street Vertical File, Fort Collins Local History Archive; "Mrs. Edna Love Sadler died at 622 W. Mountain," *Fort Collins Express Courier*, July 3, 1945.
[168] Watrous, page 360; "Biographical sketch, by Owen R. Aylesworth" at http://www.aylesworth.net/Confidence_family_DWT_CSS/ff_merlin.htm.
[169] Biographical Dictionary of the U.S. Congress http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=C000985; "Cummings, Fred," Biographical Vertical File, Fort Collins Local History Archive.

Mountain Avenue in particular was home to doctors, lawyers and other professionals. In addition to Dr. Sadler and his son Jackson, **Dr. W. N. De Armond** built a brick American Foursquare house in 1907 at 708 West Mountain. The stone for the foundation was brought by wagon from the quarries west of Fort Collins, and pressed bricks for the walls of the house and the matching carriage house and garage to the rear came from local kilns. Dr. De Armond answered the heavy call upon him when the influenza epidemic struck the city, working until he himself succumbed to the disease on Oct. 24, 1918, at the age of 55. In accordance with quarantine regulations, his body lay in state at his home where his funeral service was conducted out of doors.[170]

The house was put up for sale in 1918, and purchased by **Ernest and Adda Oakes**, who had moved to Colorado to relieve Adda's asthma. They arrived in Fort Collins by train and took the street car to the property. Ernest was a banker and real estate investor, and he and Adda had five children, Dorothy (Cady), Donald, Delia, Lucille, and Dale. All graduated from college and the three daughters were teachers. As of 1995, four generations of Oakes had resided in this house for 77 years.[171]

Figure 7-10: Dr. De Armond House, 708 West Mountain Ave. (Meg Dunn, 2013).

Isaac ("Will") Bennett and his wife Laura built the house at 816 W. Mountain Ave. and lived there from 1907 to 1920. Will was a banker and farmer, an organizer of the First National Bank, where he served as a board member from 1884 to 1921. He was also active with the Larimer County Sheep Feeders' Association and was one of the promoters and later president of both the Larimer County Ditch Company and the Skyline Ditch Line.[172]

Figure 7-11: Isaac and Laura Bennett House, 816 W. Mountain Ave. (Mary Humstone, 2015).

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[170] "Dr. D'Armond is Victim of Epidemic Sweeping the City," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, October 24, 1918, page 1; "Funeral Services Held for Dr. De Armond, *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, November 1, 1918, page 3.
[171] Arlene Ahlbrandt, "This Old House," *Senior Voice*, August 1995, page 26.
[172] "Colorado Families: A Territorial Heritage," (Denver, CO: The Colorado Genealogical Society, Inc., 1981), page 58; "Isaac 'Will' Bennett House," Local Landmark Designation Form, 1993.

Figure 7-12: Thomas Reinholtz House, later the home of J.D. and Rachel Forney, 309 S. Grant Ave., c. 1920 (Local History Archive, H01438).

J.D. Forney and his wife Rachel lived at 400 South Grant before they purchased the Reinholtz house at 309 South Grant in 1943. J.D. was born in Enid, Oklahoma, and started out on his own at an early age; by the time he was 21, he had worked at 54 different jobs. He came to Colorado where he finished his last year of high school in Sterling. He attended Colorado A & M for three years, during which time he met his wife, Rachel, a school teacher. In 1932, J.D. and Rachel began making the "Forney Instant Heat Soldering Iron" in the basement of their home at 400 South Grant. His invention became a popular item during the Depression, and he and his sales crew traveled all over the United States selling it. He next invented the "Forney Farm Welder," which led to the creation of Forney Industries, a company that eventually manufactured generators, airplanes, vacuum cleaners, and battery chargers. Rachel was his "right hand woman" who ordered the raw materials, managed production, and shipped the final product. In addition to Forney Industries, the Forneys founded the Forney Transportation Museum in Denver. They lived in the house at 309 South Grant until J.D.'s death in 1986, after which Rachel sold the home to Ralph and Cheryl Olson.[173]

[173] Donna Forney Sundberg, "Forney, J.D. and Rae," in Andrew J. Morris, ed., *History of Larimer County* (Fort Collins, CO: Curtis Media Corporation, 1985), page 218.

Figure 7-13: 301 South Loomis St., home of the David Watrous family in the 1940s and 50s (Local History Archive TO2581).

Four generations of the **Watrous** family have lived in Fort Collins since 1871, and among them, members of the David Watrous family occupied two homes in the Loomis addition, 301 South Loomis and 723 West Olive. David (third generation) and his wife Dorothy were both born in Fort Collins and graduated from Colorado Agricultural College in 1922. David entered the newspaper business just like his famous cousin Ansel Watrous, who was the publisher of the early *Fort Collins Courier* and the 1911 *History of Larimer County*. David moved to California in the 1920s but moved back to Fort Collins to work for the *Fort Collins Express Courier* in 1941, at which time he lived at 301 South Loomis. His daughter Myrne remembers walking over to Mountain Avenue to get on the streetcar to go to the high school on Remington, where she graduated in 1952.

Like her father, Myrne moved to California after graduating from high school, but returned to Fort Collins in 1971. She purchased 723 West Olive (just around the corner from her childhood home) in 1999. Myrne's interest in history led her to serve on several local commissions and committees, including, the Poudre Landmarks Foundation, the Fort Collins Historical Society, and the Fort Collins Landmark Preservation Commission. Both Watrous homes in the Loomis Addition have been designated as local landmarks.[174]

Kenneth and Eva Walsh represent some of the last residents to build houses in the Loomis Addition. They contracted with the Deines Brothers to build their house at 108 South Whitcomb in 1940, on a lot carved from a Mountain Avenue lot. Before the war, Walsh was a butcher at the Palace Grocery and Market. He was drafted during World War II, and after the war became owner of the store, which he owned until 1964 when he went to work as a butcher at Steele's Market on Mountain Avenue. After the war, Eva worked at Gas Public Service of Colorado on Mountain Avenue. They lived in their house for more than 25 years, during which time they sometimes had tenants, including their parents and a widow named Grace Fortune who resided with them between 1952 and 1960.[175]

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN THE 1980S

Ralph and Cheryl Olson played a major role in the restoration of homes in the Loomis Addition. Ralph was a manager at Hewlett Packard and Cheryl's expertise was interior design. In 1983 they purchased the house at 231 South Grant Street, a home built in 1908 by H. W. Emerson, a Livermore rancher. They restored and landscaped this home and sold it in 1989 after purchasing the Forney

[174] "The Life of Myrne Watrous," An Oral History by Gillian Lasher and Mabry Keil, May 2014.
[175] "Whitcomb Street Historic District," Local Landmark Nomination Form; City Directories, 1940-1964.

home down the block at 309 South Grant (Figure 7-12) in 1988. After restoring, landscaping, and then selling this home, they moved to Atlanta for a period, but were back in Fort Collins in 2000, ready to start another project, the 1908 home of **Ada May Guard** at 730 West Olive. Ada May and her husband Harris both taught at Colorado State University, and lived first at 221 South Grant, and then moved to 730 West Olive in 1952, where they lived until Ada's death in 1999. The Olsons restored and landscaped this home before selling it in 2006 and going on to restore a historic 1950s-era home in the Sheely addition. All three of the Olsons' Loomis Addition homes are on the corners of South Grant and West Olive; the only house they did not restore on this intersection was the Albertson Home at 731 West Olive. [176]

Figure 7-14: Home restored by Ralph and Cheryl Olson at 730 West Olive (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

[176] "Five Historic Houses on Avery Benefit Tour," *Triangle Review*, September 18, 1985, page 20; *Talking About Fort Collins*, page 77; Larimer County Public Records, http://www.larimer.org/clerk/; James Hansen, *Democracy's College in the Centennial State*, page 390.

CHAPTER 8 - THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: HOUSES AND LANDSCAPE OF THE LOOMIS ADDITION

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Figure 8-1: American Foursquare house, 714 W. Mountain Ave. (Meg Dunn, 2013).

In architectural terms, style refers to specific elements of a building's plan, elevations, materials, roof type, window placement and details that conform to certain standards of taste at a particular period of time. Buildings can also be identified by form: building plan, orientation, and roof type. For example, an American foursquare (Figure 8-1) is an identifiable house form: square in plan, two stories (basically a cube), with a low hipped roof. This popular early 20th century house form can take on a number of different styles such as Craftsman, Colonial Revival or Spanish Mission Revival. Other houses are so plain as to be only identifiable by form, such as the pyramidal cottage (one-story cube with pyramidal hipped roof) or the gable-and wing (gable-front section with a perpendicular gabled wing).

Classifying buildings by architectural style and form is not an exact science. Architects and builders, as well as homeowners, have always added their own twist to popular architectural styles, and very few houses are "textbook" examples. Houses rarely stay the same; they are updated as tastes change, families grow, new technologies and lifestyles are adopted or new people move in. Still, by understanding the tastes, technologies and lifestyle choices of particular periods in history, we can "read" the history of a house, a neighborhood, or an entire city in its buildings. The built environment is the unselfconscious history that we create, and that we leave behind for others to interpret.

This context uses the "Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture & Engineering" (2008) published by the Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, and Virginia and Lee McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses* (1988) as basic style guides, relying also on the authors' combined sixty or so years of experience identifying and evaluating historic buildings.

For this historic context, a limited survey of each building in the Loomis Addition was conducted, using on-the-ground field work, neighborhood photographs compiled by Protect Our Old Town Homes (POOTH), Google "Street View" and the Larimer County Assessor's records held at the local history archive at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery. Construction dates were determined by comparing data from the Larimer County Assessor's Office with other sources including City Directories, building permits, and building record reports published in local newspapers. An in-depth survey was beyond the scope of this project. If and when an in-depth survey is conducted, certain statistics, including building dates, may vary from those reported in this context.

Historic contexts span a particular period of time, referred to as the "period of significance," the timeframe during which significant events and activities occurred. The period of significance for the Loomis Addition begins with the platting of the addition in 1877 and continues to 1964, the date of last house to be built for 15 years (the next dates from 1979).

SUMMARY OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES, HOUSE PLANS AND MATERIALS

The Loomis Addition was historically a middle-class neighborhood, with houses typical of those built for professionals and tradesmen in early 20th century Fort Collins. Early records often name a builder, as opposed to an architect, so architect-designed houses are difficult to identify. Most houses in the addition were likely built by an experienced builder from architects' pattern books and plans published by newspapers or available through magazines, building supply companies, and other outlets. Although most houses adhere to one of about a dozen general styles or forms, each house is distinctive due to its use of materials and stylistic details such as decorative brickwork and shingles, doors and windows, or porch posts and balustrades. Mountain Avenue, especially the north side of the street, has some of the largest homes in the addition, including 614 West Mountain designed by local architect Montezuma Fuller. Many houses are very similar in pattern and style, suggesting that a few builders were responsible for much of the building in this neighborhood, or that a variety of builders were using similar plans that were popular at the time.

Figure 8-2: 614 W. Mountain Ave., designed by Montezuma Fuller (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

Figure 8-3: Queen Anne Cottage at 209 S. Loomis St. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The growth of the Loomis Addition can be read in its architectural styles. The four most common house styles or forms are Classic Cottages and their variants, which are generally small, square in shape, with a hipped roof (78 examples); Queen Anne Cottages, a more informal version of the popular Victorian-era style (71 examples); Craftsman style, including Bungalows and Craftsman Cottages (61 examples); and Minimal Traditional, a small-sized house popular from the Depression through the Post War period (38). Almost half of the houses remaining in the Loomis Addition today were built before 1910, which explains the preponderance of late 19th and early 20th-century styles such as Classic Cottage and Queen Anne. The last area to develop was the

southwest, and this can be seen today in the number of Minimal Traditional houses on Washington Street (8 out of 16) and Mulberry (6 out of 8).

Figure 8-4: Location of architectural styles, Loomis Addition (City of Fort Collins, 2014).

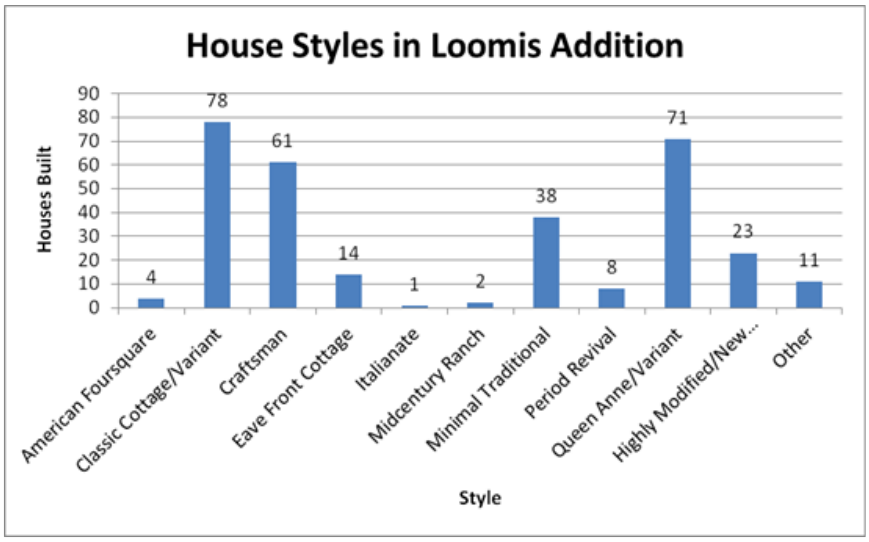

Figure 8-5: Distribution of house styles in the Loomis Addition.

As is to be expected given their age, most houses have been altered over the years. Modifications range from basic remodeling such as replacement of roof sheathing and/or siding (with stucco or asbestos, vinyl or aluminum siding), to window replacement (with aluminum or vinyl) to additions -- porch additions and enclosures, dormer additions, or large, multi-room and multi-story additions above and behind the original building. In addition to recent modifications, there is physical evidence, substantiated by newspapers and building records, that homes were being updated during the historic period (pre-1965). This trend was amplified by local movements for beautification put in place by the Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations.

Figure 8-6: This house at 627 Laporte Ave. was built in 1905 in the Free Classic style. The house was later updated with a Craftsman-style porch, and later still, with a large rear addition (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

After its peak growth ended around 1925, the Loomis Addition continued to grow slowly through the 1950s, with an average of 14 houses added each decade from the 1930s through the 1950s. Only two houses were constructed in the 1960s, the end of the period of historic significance for

this neighborhood. Of the 311 houses in the Loomis Addition, 294 of them were built during the neighborhood's period of significance.[177]

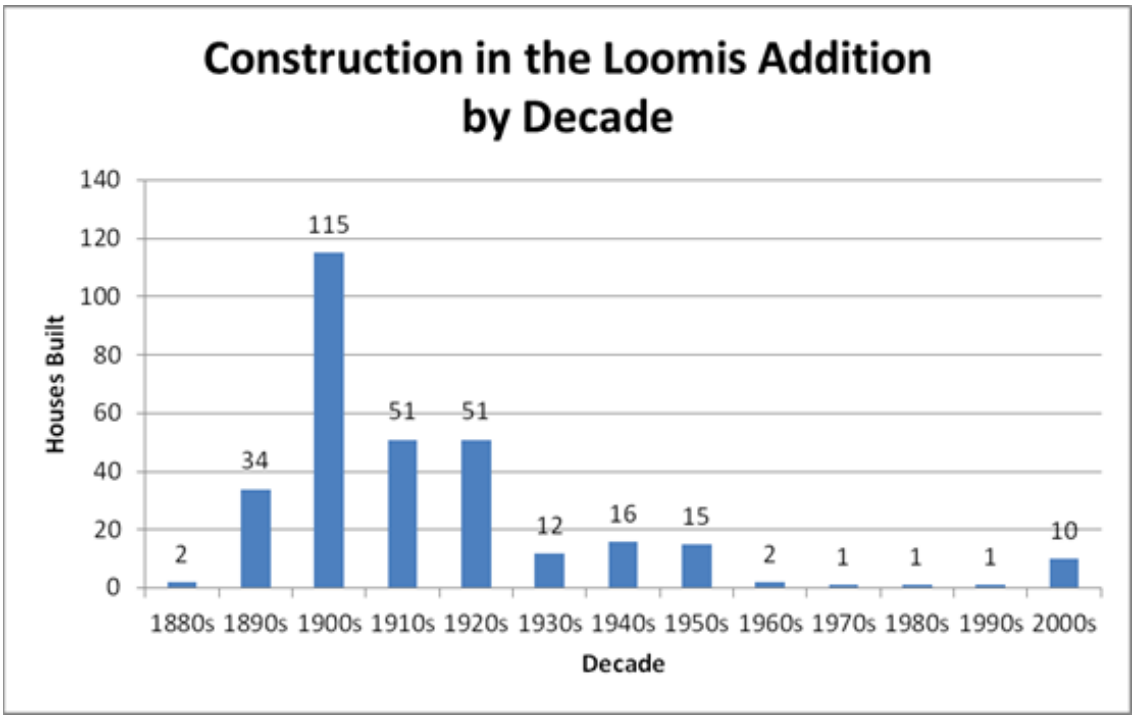

Figure 8-7: House construction by decade.

The 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s saw almost no new construction for the Loomis Addition, although some additions date from those decades. The most obvious additions and new construction have occurred from 2002 to 2010. Construction, demolition and remodeling are actively occurring in the neighborhood at the time of this writing.

The vast majority of houses in the district are wood-frame construction, with exterior sheathing ranging from clapboard siding, shingles or stucco to more contemporary materials such as asbestos shingles, vinyl or aluminum. About 10% of the houses are brick (see Figure 8-8). Most of the houses are one story in height (see Figure 8-9); 52% percent of the houses have gabled roofs, while 41% have hipped roofs.

In general, the historic character of the Loomis Addition has been preserved. Many of the buildings retain their original features, including basic form, original building materials, historic windows, and landscaping.

[177] One house, at 123 N. Loomis, was built in 1882; however, it has been significantly altered and does not contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood. Sixteen houses were built after 1964.

Figure 8-8: Building materials in the Loomis Addition (City of Fort Collins, 2014).

Figure 8-9: Building height (stories) in the Loomis Addition (City of Fort Collins, 2014).

ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS

Information on architects and builders of early Fort Collins is limited. There are no building permit record books prior to 1920, so newspaper accounts are the best source of information on who designed or constructed a building. These include articles on individual architects and builders, articles on construction of specific homes (generally for prominent residents) and end-of-year building reports (December or January, mainly limited to the period 1902 to1908). The building permit records from 1920-1949 are useful but incomplete, since they list only the person who applied for the permit which could be either the owner of the residence, the architect or the builder.

Through a study of newspaper articles and building permit records, approximately fifty different builders and architects have been identified as working in the Loomis addition prior to 1950. In most cases it is impossible to link these architects and builders with specific houses, since even prominent architects such as Montezuma Fuller were not always listed by name in the building permits or newspaper reports.[178] A further complication is that newspapers did not always distinguish between architects and builders. Some of those named as "Builder" might also have been architects. For example, Charles Button is listed as builder for many homes in the addition; however, a newspaper article also referred to him as an architect.[179]

The building boom in the Loomis addition took place from 1900 to1910 when 115 houses were constructed. The prominent architects in Fort Collins during that period were Montezuma Fuller, Arthur M. Garbutt, and E. Francis Williams. According to newspaper accounts, all of these architects were designing schools, public buildings, business blocks, residences, and industrial buildings in Fort Collins and other communities. They also formed partnerships with their sons, each other, and architects in other communities. For example, Clint Loveland, who came to Fort Collins in 1902, formed a partnership with Arthur Garbutt; Montezuma Fuller with his son Robert; and Arthur Garbutt with W. B. Patterson of Greeley. Several of the architects and builders such as Hiram Pierce, E. P. Boyd, and Arthur Garbutt were also instructors at the agricultural college in carpentry and architecture. Pierce's son, Ansel, who became a well-known architect in Denver, also designed buildings in Fort Collins.[180]

Some architects, such as Albert Bryan and Edson M. Cole, came to Fort Collins for the early 20th century building boom and left a few years later. Bryan designed the Carnegie Library and the grandstand at City Park, and may have designed homes in the Loomis addition. Cole, who is listed as the architect for 815 West Mountain, came for the boom and left for Oakland, California before 1910.[181]

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[178] For example, although Fuller was not listed in the building records, a newspaper article states, "Plans have been completed by Fuller for an 8-room cottage to be erected by George Dixon on his lot in the Loomis addition." *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, July 20, 1904, page 6.
[179] "Local and Personal," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, March 24, 1909, page 14.
[180] *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*: Today's News," March 21, 1906, page 19; "A. M. Garbutt Chosen Instructor," January 6, 1904, page11; "Death of Hiram Pierce," January 22, 1915, page 7.
[181] Bryan came to Fort Collins from Denver in 1902 and returned to Denver in 1905. "Capt. Bryan Going to Denver," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, November 8, 1905, page 10. "Dies of Heart Trouble," *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, January 13, 1910, page 5.

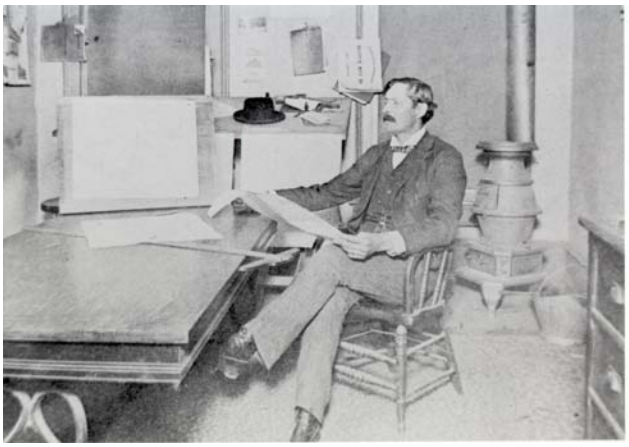

Figure 8-10: Montezuma Fuller, c. 1907 (Local history Archive H12483).

Fort Collins' most prominent architect of the period, and the city's first licensed architect, was Montezuma Fuller, who arrived in Fort Collins in 1880 and lived here until his death in 1925. He is known for his designs of schools, churches, commercial blocks and homes, including the first Fort Collins High School, the Laurel Street School and the Laporte Avenue School; the Avery Block; the Avery House; and his own Eastlake-style home at 226 West Magnolia. Several houses in the Loomis Addition have been documented as being designed by Fuller, including 703 West Mountain for Newton Garbutt in 1901, 606 West Mountain in 1902 and 614 West Mountain for C.V. Benson in 1906-07 (see figure 8-2).[182]

A study of building records and city directories reveals that several architects/builders were both building houses and residing in the Loomis Addition. Charles A. Button constructed 723 and 727 West Mountain in 1902, 731 and 719 West Mountain in 1904 (when he is listed as a resident of 719), and 814 West Mountain in 1905. It is likely that he also designed and built 715 West Mountain, since it has the same plan as 723, with a slight variation in the front porches. Button also built a house at 217 East Oak Street that is identical to 715 West Mountain. Button also traded in real estate; in 1905 he sold lots 8 and 9 of block 280 in the Loomis Addition to J.H. Bouton.

Builders James Morrison and Frank Madden were conducting similar business in the Loomis Addition in the early 1900s. Morrison built 718 West Mountain in 1904, and lived there at least until the 1930s. Madden lived down the street at 800 West Mountain in 1904 and moved to 808 West Mountain in 1906, presumably living there while he and Morrison finished the homes. The two had been working together since at least 1900 when they teamed up with the contracting company of Roys and Hampton to construct matching houses at 829, 805 and 809 West Mountain. Like Morrison and Madden, C.H. Roys lived in the Loomis Addition, at 631 Laporte Avenue.

Figure 8-11: House at 805 W. Mountain Ave., built by Morrison & Madden and Roys & Hampton (Meg Dunn, 2013).

[182] "Montezuma Fuller" Biographical File, Local History Archives; *Fort Collins Weekly Courier*, June, 4, 1902.

FIRST HOMES, 1887-1900

Early Fort Collins buildings were frontier houses and commercial blocks, constructed of log or sandstone. Once a brick kiln was started (the first one began producing bricks in 1870), brick buildings began to give the nascent town a more permanent appearance. By the mid-1880s brick had become a popular building material for houses as well as commercial blocks. Lumber produced in local mills also changed the look of early Fort Collins, adding frame houses sheathed in clapboard siding. But it was the coming of the railroad in 1877 that gave the city access to both the ready-made building materials and the styles and pattern books that allowed builders to mimic the popular architectural styles of the East. The development of steam power in the 1860s had fueled mass production of a variety of building elements, from basic structural members such as studs and rafters to decorative details such as patterned shingles and moldings, scroll-sawn brackets, and elaborate cornices and window hoods. Improvement in methods for making cast iron resulted in ready-made building parts such as storefronts and cornices that were shipped to towns like Fort Collins from foundries in the Midwest and East. Builders' catalogs offered an enticing array of architectural ornamentation which was put to good use by architects and builders in a range of Victorian-era styles, such as Italianate, Queen Anne and Eastlake. These styles also took advantage of improvements in the manufacture of glass, leading to large storefront windows for commercial buildings, and larger cottage or Queen-Anne style windows for residences. Many of these included a decorative leaded or stained glass transom.

Figure 8-13: 145 N. Loomis St., c. 1900 (Local History Archive H05398).

Figure 8-12: Abner Loomis House, 405 Remington St., c. 1886 (Local History Archive H02582).

In Fort Collins, elaborate Victorian-era houses were built in the earliest residential areas close to downtown, especially on South College Avenue and Remington Street. Abner Loomis built his Italianate-style house (Figure 8-13) on the corner of Remington and Magnolia in 1885, a decade after the style had lost favor in larger cities in the East. The house, demolished in 1980, had a hipped roof with a wide, bracketed cornice, and long, narrow windows topped by segmental-arched hood moldings. The offset, one-story porch featured square, shaped posts typical of the Italianate style. The Howard House at 145 North Loomis (Figure 8-12) is the only example of the Italianate style in the Loomis Addition. Although simpler than the Loomis House, the house featured a sandstone foundation, etched stone lintels and sills, a low-pitched hipped roof, a slightly projecting

two-story bay on the façade and tall, single and paired 1-over-1 windows – all common features of the Italianate style.

Queen Anne, Eastlake, Free Classic and Folk Victorian: Queen Anne was a popular style, rarely used by prominent architects but enthusiastically endorsed especially by upper middle class families who wanted impressive houses to go with their important positions in the community. As Leland Roth wrote in *American Architecture: A History*, "Even small farm towns of one or two thousand people had at least one grand Queen Anne house, the home of the principal businessman."[183] In Colorado, the popular emergence of the Queen Anne style coincided with the coming of the railroad and the exponential growth it brought to towns fortunate enough to have rail service. Founding fathers of these towns, who profited handsomely from the new markets provided by the railroad, also relied on the railroad to bring in ready-made building supplies to build their ornate, Queen Anne style homes. These homes were built in Colorado as late as 1910, long after most of the country had abandoned the excesses of Queen Anne for the more modern Craftsman, or more traditional period revivals.

The Queen Anne style is notable for its asymmetry and irregular floor plan, with numerous projections, indentations and often a tower or two, features which reflect both the style of living of the occupants and the freedom afforded by building with dimension lumber and machine-made trim. Most Queen Anne houses exhibit a variety of materials, such as stone for foundations and trim, brick laid in different patterns for some lower walls and chimneys, and wood sheathed in clapboards or a variety of patterned shingles. Decorative flourishes such as sunbursts and floral patterns adorn walls and door and window heads. Porches and balconies are ornate and include turned posts and balustrades and spindled valances. Windows appear singly or in pairs, with a variety of hood moldings and other decorative touches.

Figure 8-14: Queen Anne Cottage at 217 S. Grant St., identifiable mainly by its roofline (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

The Queen Anne houses in the Loomis Addition tend to be smaller, less elaborate homes, known as Queen Anne cottages. In almost all cases these one- or one-and-a half-story houses have a steeply-pitched hipped roof with one or more lower cross gables, at least one of which is front-facing, and no tower. The facades are asymmetrical with entrances offset to one side. The houses are built of brick or wood, with patterned

Figure 8-15: Queen Anne Cottage at 117 S. Whitcomb St. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

[183] Leland Roth, *American Architecture: A History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), page 242.

brickwork and decorative wood shingles especially in the gable ends, and multiple, often ornate, chimneys. These houses are also recognizable by their windows. The decorative Queen Anne window has an upper sash containing small panes of colored glass or unusual glazing patterns. The "cottage window" is similar to the Queen Anne, but wider, and is usually found in a front parlor or dining room. However, some of the houses classified as Queen Anne Cottages in the Loomis Addition are very plain in terms of ornamentation and are identifiable mainly by their rooflines.

The 1894 Willetts map of Fort Collins shows four side-by-side houses occupying the southeast quarter of block 270 in the Loomis Addition, facing Whitcomb street (117, 121, 125 and 129 South Whitcomb), some of the oldest homes in the addition. All four have asymmetrical floor plans and hipped roofs with several protruding gables and dormers. Only one of these houses (117) still reveals its original brick exterior and several have undergone extensive alterations that have hidden their original features. Some clues to their Queen Anne origins include complex rooflines, patterned shingles in the gable ends, decorative brick exterior chimneys, offset entrances and irregular window shapes and sizes.

Eastlake is a variation of the Queen Anne style in which the decorative elements are flattened out so as to appear more angular and machine made. The style was named after Charles Locke Eastlake, an English interior designer and author of *Hints on Household Taste* (1868), who rejected the heavy, bloated mid-19th century furniture in favor of lighter pieces with straight wood members, embellished with incised and scroll-sawn patterns. Architects took Eastlake's furniture designs and applied them to houses. Eastlake-style houses are recognizable by the flatness of the features (for example, a squared-off bay window instead of the usual canted or bow window) and the repetitive, machine-made decorations in bead and belt-like patterns, as well incised decorative elements especially in the gable ends. The houses also have delicate spindlework detailing on porch balustrades and/or valances. A feature of Eastlake houses is the cut-away corner window, in which the window itself sits at a 45 degree angle to the walls, and the wall area above is decorated with scroll-sawn wood. These designs were widely available in pattern books such as A.J. Bicknell's *Wood and Brick Buildings with Details* (1875) and *Palliser's Model Homes* (1878). These provided a less expensive but still ornamental house as compared to the Queen Anne.[184] The only Eastlake-style house in the Loomis Addition is the "Raffle House" (see figure 7-1).

A later variation of the Queen Anne style is the "**Free Classic**," which employed Classical elements such as columns, window cornices and dentils in place of the turned posts and spindlework detailing of the Victorian era. Free Classic houses usually feature a more contained floor plan with fewer projections and no tower.[185]

Figure 8-16: Free Classic home at 718 W. Mountain Ave. features cornice returns and a pedimented porch supported by columns instead of turned posts (Meg Dunn, 2013).

[184] In *A Field Guide to American Houses*, this is referred to as a decorative detailing subtype of Queen Anne called "Spindlework." However, Eastlake homes are different from the Queen Anne in form as well as detailing.
[185] The *Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture* refers to these buildings as Edwardian, in reference to the period of time (1901-1910) during which Edward VII was king of England.

Folk Victorian houses are vernacular or pattern-book houses, usually gable-and-wing form, that feature steeply pitched gable roofs, with Victorian-era decorative touches such as shingled gable ends, turned porch posts and spindlework. Folk Victorian refers to any house form that exhibits these decorative features, but does not exhibit characteristics of specific late 1800s styles.[186]

The most prevalent house form in the Loomis Addition is the **Classic Cottage,** a one-story house with a square or rectangular floor plan**,** hipped (often pyramidal) roof, a front dormer and often an inset or attached full-length front porch. As its name implies, the Classic Cottage exhibits classical details such as porch columns and pedimented dormers, but harks to the Victorian era with decorative shingles in the gable ends of the dormers and bay windows. Windows may be topped with round or segmental arches. The houses, built of brick or wood, were the mainstay of the middle class, the 4- or 5-room cottages referred to in numerous Fort Collins building reports of the early 20th century. Rows of similar Classic Cottages can be seen, especially along Laporte Avenue. Variations include hipped, gabled, shed, pedimented and wall dormers and flared (called bellcast) eaves on the main and dormer roofs. On the **Classic Cottage variant**, the dormer does not have a window. Another variant is the **Pyramidal Cottage**, a simple, one-story, square house with a pyramidal hipped roof and no dormers. Classic Cottages and their variants are some of the earliest houses in the Loomis Addition. This house form was popular in Fort Collins from about 1890 through 1910.

Figure 8-17: 600 Block of Laporte Ave., showing variations in Classic Cottages, especially the dormers (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

[186] See McAlester, page 309.

HOUSING BOOM, 1900-1919

The first two decades of the 20th century saw tremendous growth of suburbs nationwide. The houses built in most of these new residential neighborhoods, including the Loomis Addition, featured a variety of styles based on national trends that had little or no connection to local traditions or patterns of building. While Queen Anne, Free Classic, Folk Victorian and Classic Cottage homes continued to be built in Fort Collins through 1910, their popularity was soon eclipsed by a new trend that promised more comfortable living at less cost.

The **Craftsman style** grew out of the English and American Arts and Crafts movements, which aimed to bring the craftsman back into the art of creating houses and furnishings – a reaction to the industrialization of the building process. The movement was popularized in the United States primarily by Gustav Stickley, who strove to create simple but beautiful houses and furnishings for the middle class with the look and feel of a finely crafted work of art. He began publicizing his ideas and designs in a magazine called *The Craftsman* in 1901, offering examples of houses and furniture that looked like craft objects but were affordable for the middle-class family. Stickley also sold complete house plans through his magazine. He is credited with the popularization of house styles such as the Craftsman Bungalow and the Craftsman Cottage.[187]

Figure 8-18: Craftsman Bungalow at 319 S. Grant St. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

Craftsman houses stressed comfort and utility, with open floor plans, comfortable living rooms with fireplaces and inglenooks, and deep, often inset front porches offering indoor-outdoor living spaces. The houses featured bands of windows to take advantage of natural light, natural materials such as brick and polished wood and built-in cabinets and bookcases. They were advertised as being economical, and suitable for the middle class.

The houses are generally one-story (cottages) to one-and-a-half or two stories (bungalows) and feature eave-front or gable-front roofs, although hipped roof versions are also found. On the eave-front houses the front slope of the roof usually has a gable- or shed-roofed dormer, and the roofline often extends to create a full-length, inset porch (see figure 8-18). Gable-front houses generally

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[187] Other popular publications promoting the Bungalow included periodicals such as *Western Architect*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Craftsman*, and *Bungalow Magazine*; catalogs and books such as William A. Radford's *Artistic Bungalows* (1908), Henry L. Wilson's *Bungalow Book* (1910), Henry H. Saylor's *Bungalow Book* (1911), H. V. Von Holst's *Modern American Homes* (1913), Gustav Stickley's *Craftsman Homes* (1909) and *More Craftsman Homes* (1912), and Charles E. White's *Bungalow Book* (1923).

have an off-set, gable-roofed partial-width porch. Gable ends are decorated with knee braces (a reference to an older method of purlin roof framing), and the rafter tails creating the wide eaves are left exposed instead of boxed into cornices, another way of featuring the construction of the house instead of covering it up.

Exterior sheathing may be brick, clapboard, shingle or stone, and gable ends are often decorated with half-timbering or patterned shingles. Unlike the exuberant colors of the Victorian era, Craftsman homes usually feature earth tones that blend in with, rather than stand out from, the natural environment. Porch supports of brick or wood are wide, square piers, often battered (angling in at the top). Craftsman windows are usually double-hung, with the upper sash divided by vertical muntins, forming anywhere from 3 to 7 vertical panes. Art glass and beveled glass may be featured in select windows and doors. Bungalows and Craftsman Cottages were popular houses for small urban residential lots from the early 20th century until World War I. They could be built from plans provided by newspapers, magazines or building supply companies, or ordered as kits from retailers such as Sears, Roebuck & Company, Montgomery Ward, or Alladin Homes. These houses were built in Fort Collins throughout the first two decades of the 20th century. The Craftsman style was so popular that many earlier houses were updated with Craftsman-style details such as exposed rafter tails, shingled gable ends, and porches (see figure 8-6)

Figure 8-19: Hipped-roof Craftsman Cottage at 720 W. Oak St., featuring clipped gable front porch with battered piers (Meg Dunn, 2013).

The American Foursquare is a house form that could be adapted to many different styles, including Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Renaissance Revival, and Spanish Mission Revival, through variations in exterior wall sheathing, window treatments, porches, eaves and decorative details. With their tall, boxy shape, the houses provided the maximum amount of room for the cost. As their name implies, these houses feature a square floor plan with four evenly sized rooms on each floor, and at least two stories, with a raised basement and an attic story often lit by one or multiple dormers. They are topped with low hipped roofs with wide eaves, and almost always have a one-story, full-length front

Figure 8-20: American Foursquare house at 714 W. Mountain Ave. has simple detailing and slightly flared roof eaves (Meg Dunn, 2013).

porch with a hipped roof, supported by columns or square posts, depending on the stylistic theme of the house. These houses first appeared in American suburban neighborhoods in the 1890s.

Period revivals: While Craftsman was a "modern" style – that is, not referencing a particular historical period - also popular by the turn of the 20th century were revival styles that harked back to pre-industrial times, from America's own Colonial Revival to Tudor, English Cottage, Spanish Colonial, Dutch Colonial and other revival styles. These were not slavish reproductions of earlier homes but rather used certain stylistic devices to create an image tied to the past for a home that was thoroughly updated on the inside with running water, electricity, forced-air heat and other modern conveniences, and possibly even a garage on the alley. These houses often exaggerated the stylistic features of the prototypical style, with oversized pediments on Colonial Revival doorways, or extensive patterning of shingles on the gambrel ends of Dutch Colonials.

Figure 8-21: Colonial Revival portico and detailing on an American Foursquare house, 231 S. Grant St. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

Figure 8-22: A smaller version, the Cape Cod Colonial Revival, at 210 S. Grant St. (Meg Dunn, 2013).

Colonial Revival houses copied several different house styles and forms from the 17th through the early 18th century in the eastern United States, including Colonial, Federal, and Georgian styles, and the Georgian and Cape Cod form. Large-scale Colonial Revival homes with columned porticos were especially impressive homes for prominent citizens, and could be found on prestigious avenues such as South College. These houses had symmetrical facades with evenly spaced windows, low hipped or side-gable roofs, dormers and boxed cornices with Classical detailing. Smaller one or one-and-a-half-story Cape Cod houses were generally eave-front, often with two symmetrically placed front dormers and an elongated "saltbox" roof sloping to the rear. (see figure 8-22).

The **Dutch Colonial Revival** style mimicked the early Colonial homes of Dutch settlers in New York and Pennsylvania. The defining feature of these houses is the distinctive eave-front gambrel roof, with a wide dormer on the front-facing roof slope. The Dutch Colonial Revival house was usually less imposing, and considered less formal, than the Georgian Revival, more reminiscent of farm houses that town houses. There are four Dutch Colonial-style houses on Mountain Avenue in the Loomis Addition (see figure 8-24).

The English-influenced **Tudor Revival** and English Cottage Revival styles were also popular in the first few decades of the 20th century, ranging from stately homes in prominent suburbs to small, affordable cottages. Tudor Revival homes are distinguished by steeply pitched front-gable roofs, often with one slope of the roof overshot or extending longer than the other. These houses usually

have a massive exterior brick chimney, sometimes on the façade, gabled entryways with round arched openings, and small-paned casement windows echoing early English houses. Exteriors were often half-timbered to represent the timber and daubing of ancient houses. Smaller versions of Tudor Revival continued to be popular in Fort Collins into the 1940s, and Tudor-influenced Minimal Traditional houses from the 1940s and 1950s can be found in the Loomis Addition today.

PATTERN BOOK AND MAIL-ORDER HOUSES

Architectural firms responded to the growing demand for housing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by creating catalogs offering building plans and even pre-cut houses or complete house kits. The Loomis Addition "Raffle House" (figure 7-1) was designed from an architectural pattern book, the 1881 edition of William Comstock's *Victorian Domestic Architecture Plans and Details*.[188]

The Radford Architecture Company of Chicago, the Gordon-Van Tine Company of Davenport, Iowa, and the Alladin Company of Bay City, Michigan, were three of the earliest firms to offer mail-order houses, but their offerings were soon eclipsed by the merchandising power of Sears, Roebuck & Company, which began offering kit houses around 1907 and continuing until 1940. These "factory-cut" homes could be ordered by mail, shipped by railroad to the site, and assembled by the homeowner or a professional builder. The popularity of these homes encouraged more companies to get a piece of the action, and competition resulted in new styles being introduced yearly. Sears alone offered as many of 450 designs in a range of styles, types and sizes.[189]

In addition to house kits, homeowners or builders could purchase ready-made plans from these same firms and supply their own materials. Popular magazines such as the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *The House Beautiful* also featured house designs in the $1,000 to $6,000 range. Starting around 1908 and continuing through the 1920s, the *Fort Collins Courier* offered "pattern book houses" as a regular feature, with descriptions, plans and elevations for gambrel-roofed Dutch Colonials, Bungalows and Craftsman Cottages designed by architects such as W.W. Purdy and William Radford (of the Radford Architecture Company mentioned above). For example, in 1919, the *Fort Collins Courier* featured a Radford design for a Dutch Colonial style house. The architect noted that the symmetrical, rectangular house had "balanced elegance," "good value for the money," "a convenient layout" and "every modern convenience." "The sloping Dutch roof, that has a graceful sweep from ridge to second floor sill, and the jutting windows take away the plain appearance without adding the extra cost that is incurred to accomplish the same result with an odd-shaped building," he wrote.[190]

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[188] The house matches Plate 73 of Comstock's book, designed by the architectural firm of Gould and Angell, Providence, Rhode Island. Source: Susan Hoskinson, owner.
[189] David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Documentation and Evaluation for the National Register of Historic Places* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002), http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs/index.htm, accessed August 12, 2014.
[190] *Fort Collins Courier*, August 12, 1919, page 6.

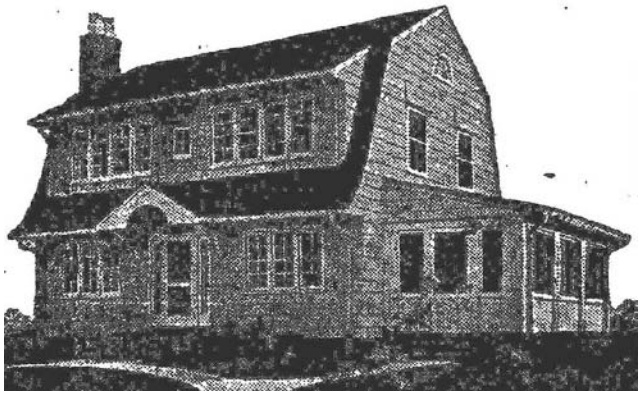

Figure 8-24: House featured in *Fort Collins Courier* article by William Radford, 1919.

Figure 8-25: 707 W. Mountain Ave., built in 1922, strongly resembles Radford's design (Meg Dunn, 2013).

LANDSCAPING

As early as 1850, Andrew Jackson Downing had espoused house design that integrated the home into the surrounding landscape, and early 20th century designers of the Arts and Crafts movement, including Gustav Stickley, built on this concept. *The Craftsman* presented house designs that included patios, pergolas and paths as well as porches and courtyards, thus facilitating indoor-outdoor living. Homeowners were encouraged to landscape their yards, using softening elements such as hanging vines, creeping ground covers and ponds and fountains.[191] Popular magazines such as *Ladies' Home Journal, House and Garden, House Beautiful,* and *Woman's Home Companion* showcased home gardens and offered advice. Homeowners in Fort Collins were encouraged to participate in landscaping their yards through the activities of the Civic Beautification League, founded in 1904, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Collins Garden Club. This included a campaign to make Fort Collins the "Lilac City" in the 1950s (see Chapter 6). The Loomis Addition today reflects this emphasis on landscaping, both in the public tree strips and medians and in private yards. Front porches and back patios abound, and are well used during much of the year.

Figure 8-26: Outbuilding and backyard of 116 N. Grant, showing profusion of greenery in the Loomis Addition (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014)

[191] Ames and McClelland.

BUILDING BETWEEN THE WARS, 1920 – 1945

The peak of home building during the era between World Wars I and II came in 1925 in the United States, and around the same time in the Loomis Addition. Forty-two of the 67 homes built in the period from 1920 to 1945 were constructed between 1920 and 1925. Craftsman-style houses continued to dominate house building during the 1920s, along with a handful of period revivals. The later part of this period is marked by increased standardization of home designs, in part due to the struggling economy after 1929, and the efforts of the federal government to encourage home ownership through federal housing loan programs, starting with the Federal Home Loan Bank Act in 1932. The 1934 National Housing Act created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to establish national standards for the home building industry and guidelines for securing federally insured mortgages, and post-World War II programs such as the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 and later housing acts ensured a large federal role in the housing industry.

Figure 8-27: 716 W. Oak St., Craftsman Cottage built in 1932 (Meg Dunn, 2013).

Nationwide, after World War I, there was a push to encourage home ownership as a way to create better citizens. A private organization, Better Homes in America, Inc., was formed in 1922 to educate homeowners about quality design and construction. Alliances among architects, builders, developers, bankers and social reformers encouraged home ownership, good building practices, and community improvements. The first *Better Homes Week* was promoted in Fort Collins in October, 1922. A furniture store advertisement in the *Courier* declaimed, "America is a nation of homes!" and called on every citizen to give thoughtful consideration to the home and all it stands for.[192] The campaign gained steam in 1923, and a nationally syndicated article printed in the *Courier* declared, "There is nothing better we can do than make a thorough workmanlike study of the things that make for a better home, with architects, builders, interior decorators, students, musicians, educators, and spiritual advisors joining in a definition of home." As part of the national effort, the Federation of Woman's Clubs sponsored the construction of a replica of the home of John Howard Payne which had inspired him to write the song "Home Sweet Home." "The house will follow every line of the original but it will be built of the best standard modern materials."[193] In Fort Collins the Chamber of Commerce sponsored a series of lectures for the 1923 *Better Homes Week*, featuring topics such as "How to Own Your Own Home," "Interior Decorating," and simply, "The Home."[194]

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[192] *Courier*, October 2, 1922.
[193] *Courier*, May 22, 1923.
[194] *Courier*, June 5, 1923

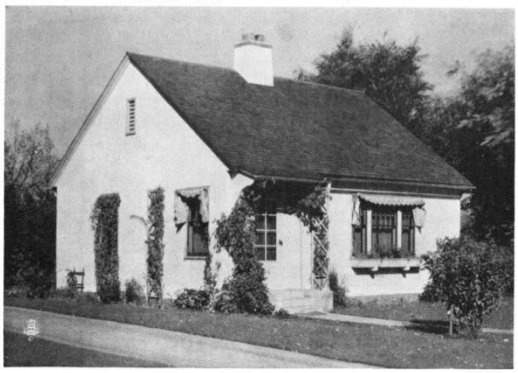

Figure 8-28: A 3-room house, from *Small Homes of Architectural Distinction*, page 3.

Also contributing to the standardization and quality control of housing was the Small House Architects' Service Bureau established by the American Institute of Architects in 1921 to provide builders with architect-designed plans and technical specifications for a variety of popular forms and styles of small houses (defined as having no more than six rooms). The service was designed to meet the growing demand of Americans to own their own homes. The nonprofit organization published a periodical called *The Small House*, as well as plan catalogs such as *Small Homes of Architectural Distinction* (1929). Most of the houses featured in the catalog are stripped down, miniature versions of the larger homes built for more prosperous clients in the 1910s and early 1920s. The 3- to 5-room cottages have efficient floor plans and simplified exterior details hinting at a particular style – with English Tudor, Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial, and Dutch Colonial being the most popular.[195] In May, 1922, the *Courier* featured a one-story, L-shaped "colonial" house designed by The Architects' Small House Service Bureau, and in 1925 the *Fort Collins Express* "Build Your Own Home" section showed a design for a "practical little home" in the Colonial style with wide clapboard siding painted white and a full-width porch supported by classical columns.[196]

By 1930, two-thirds of the houses found in the Loomis Addition today had already been built. Most of the houses built in the period 1930-1945 are classified as **Minimal Traditional,** the name given to modest homes built in large numbers immediately preceding and following World War II, such as those designed by the Small House Architects' Service Bureau.[197] The developers of Levittown and other large post-war subdivisions adopted the Minimal Traditional pattern, especially the one-story, eave-front homes often called Cape Cods, for the blocks of look-alike homes they built to accommodate GIs and their

Figure 8-29: 630 W. Oak St., a Minimal Traditional house in the Tudor Revival style built in 1939 (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014)

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[195] Robert T. Jones, ed., *Authentic Small Houses of the Twenties* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987). Originally published as *Small Homes of Architectural Distinction: A Book of Suggested Plans Designed by The Architects' Small House Service Bureau, Inc.*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York, 1929.
[196] *Courier*, May 17, 1922; *Fort Collins Express*, April 1925.
[197] Other names for this house include, the "FHA Minimum House," "American Small House," "Depression-era Cottage," "War Years House," and "FHA House." Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, "The American Small House." (undated, http://georgiashpo.org/sites/uploads/hpd/pdf/American_Small_House.pdf, accessed August 26, 2014.

growing families during the post-war period. Other Minimal Traditional houses mimicked the Tudor revival style with only a steeply pitched gable-roofed porch to add visual interest to the façade (see figure 8-29). These houses represent a transition from the Craftsman and period cottage to early ranch-style homes.

Minimal Traditional houses are very compact one-story houses, generally square in plan with gable roofs. They contain a minimum of three major rooms (living room, kitchen, and bedroom, and with a bathroom and utility closet) and a maximum of five (with the addition of a dining room and a second bedroom). The plan is generally two rooms wide, with minimal use of hallways. Later versions feature picture windows in the living room.

By 1920 garages had started appearing in plans and in neighborhoods. Several of William Radford's designs featured houses with matching garages that "will appeal immediately to the automobile owner." In fact, William Radford is credited with popularizing the term "garage" and introducing the first catalog devoted to the type in 1910.[198] According to building permit records, the 1920s was the peak time for garage construction in the Loomis Addition, with some barns being repurposed as garages or demolished to make room for a new structure. Garage construction continued through the 1940s, with garages getting larger as cars grew in size. With its alley access for every lot, the Loomis Addition was well suited to accommodate the automobile. The 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows that almost every lot with a dwelling on it also had a garage or other outbuilding on the alley. Some of the barns and garages appear to have later been repurposed as apartments.

Figure 8-30: Early one-car garage, 727 Laporte Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

Figure 8-31: Barn converted to two-car garage, 829 Laporte Ave. (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

[198] *Fort Collins Courier*, August 13, 1919, page 6; Ames and McClelland.

THE RECENT PAST, 1945 – PRESENT

Figure 8-32: Ranch-style home at 231 S. Whitcomb St., built in 1964 – the last house built in the Loomis Addition during the historic period (Carly-Ann Anderson, 2014).

By the early 1950s, the Minimal Traditional house was largely replaced in Colorado by the Ranch, which dominated American residential architecture through the 1960s. The ubiquitous one-story, ranch house is marked by its low profile, horizontal orientation, asymmetrical floor plan and lack of exterior ornamentation. Developed in California, this house form was associated with the informal, outdoor lifestyle of the West Coast and appealed to Americans who were increasingly attracted to this part of the country. The ranch was decidedly an automobile-friendly house, and most included a prominent attached garage, or at the very least, a carport. Picture windows, decorative iron porch supports and non-operable shutters are other features of the typical ranch house. The entrance is minimized, and eventually the front door became a vestige of earlier days, when people actually walked up to their houses instead of driving into them. The focus turned from the street to the backyard, which often had a patio accessed by sliding glass doors. The ranch-style house was designed to fit into the new, curvilinear subdivisions, rather than older, traditional neighborhoods such as the Loomis Addition with their wide sidewalks and alley access. Only two ranch houses are found in the Loomis Addition.

No new homes were built in the Loomis Addition between 1964 and 1979. Shortly thereafter began a slow trend to rehabilitate, remodel, add on to and in some cases replace houses in the neighborhood. The passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, and subsequent appointment of State Historic Preservation Officers in each state, raised the awareness nationwide of the value of older buildings. Fort Collins was one of the first cities in Colorado to adopt a local preservation ordinance. In 1968, in response to the demolition of several important historic buildings, the city passed an ordinance providing a process for designating and protecting local landmarks, and appointed a Landmarks Preservation Commission to oversee the ordinance. The first five local landmarks were designated in 1969. Twenty-four properties in the Loomis Addition are Fort Collins landmarks, including seven homes in the block-long Whitcomb Street Historic District.

Most of the thirteen houses built in the Loomis Addition since 2000 can be classified as "Neo-traditional," mimicking the styles of previous periods, especially Craftsman.

CHAPTER 9 - RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOME

Owners of historic houses often want to learn about the history of their homes. Who built the home and why? Who lived there over the years, and what were their lives like? Who designed and built the building, and what architectural styles or trends influenced the design and layout? How has the house changed over the years? As a homeowner, you may be interested in this information just out of curiosity, or to help you decide how to rehabilitate your house. A property history can also be used to designate a qualifying building as a local landmark, to list it (alone or as part of a district) in the state or national register of historic places, or to qualify for financial incentives for restoration or rehabilitation. This chapter has been compiled to help you uncover the history of your house.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

There are four local institutions which provide information on Fort Collins/Larimer County buildings:

The Fort Collins Historic Preservation Office (281 N. College, 80524, 970-224-6078) is responsible for the survey and historic designation of historic properties. The staff provides information on the designation process, restoration of historic properties, and on local, state, and federal financial incentives for historic preservation. *http://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation/*

The Local History Archive at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery (408 Mason Court, 80524, 970-221-6688) collects and preserves local history documents, photographs, maps, and books for public in-house use. They also have an ongoing project of scanning and entering historic data from their collections for the online Fort Collins History Connection. *http://history.fcgov.com*

The Poudre River Public Library District (201 Peterson, 80524, 970-221-6740) provides local history sources in the Reference, Non-Fiction, and Microfilm sections. Some of these sources may be checked out. *http://www.poudrelibraries.org/*

The Larimer County Clerk and Tax Assessor Offices (200 W. Oak, 80521, 970-498-7860 and 970-498-7050) provide information on tax assessments (the Assessor's office) and deeds, mortgages, and sales (the Clerk's office) that pertain to properties from the 1860s through the present. *http://www.co.larimer.co.us/databases/*

WHAT INFORMATION TO SEARCH

Historic Building Surveys and Contexts: These documents provide historical and architectural data on residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural buildings in Fort Collins. Surveys often include title information (sequence of owners), and sometimes biographical information on the owners. These surveys are available in the Historic Preservation Office, the Local History Archive, and online at the History Connection. Some copies are available in the Reference section of the Library (call number 978.868). Most of the local historic contexts are available online through the Fort Collins History Connection.

City Directories list all of the people living in a particular city or town in a particular year. Most directories are indexed alphabetically by name, business, and street address. Start with the section that is listed by street and find your address. It will tell you who lived there that year, occupations of the residents, names of children, and the business owner (if a business). There are a few directories (1904, 1906, 1907, and 1934) that only have listings by name, and not by address. The directories are available in the Local History Archive for most years from 1902-present and often include all of Larimer County. They are also available on microfilm in the Library for most years from 1902-1976. Digitized directories for 1902-2005 may be viewed online at the History Connection.

Local History Books: There are five major reference books that provide information on Fort Collins people and buildings: *Fort Collins Yesterdays, Ranch Histories of Livermore and Vicinity* (Non-Fiction and Reference 978.868) and the three Larimer County history books, *History of Larimer County 1911, 1985, and 1987,* found at 978.8 on the Non-Fiction, Oversize, and Reference Shelves. These books are available in both the Library and the Archive. Separate indexes for *Fort Collins Yesterdays* and *History of Larimer County 1911* are filed with the books.

Historic Newspapers: The Library has the 1874 and 1878-present Fort Collins newspapers, and the *Wellington Sun* and *Triangle Review* newspapers on microfilm. The *Coloradoan* newspaper card and microfiche index from 1979-1987 is in the Reference area of the Library. The Archive's card indexes provide a subject and biographical index for Fort Collins newspapers dating from 1874 to 1909 and 1975 to1979. See book indexes to the *Wellington Sun* by A. Gonzales. Another useful source is the Colorado Newspaper Digitization Project [www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/], an online collection of early Fort Collins and other Colorado newspapers from 1874 to1923.

Cemetery Records: Fort Collins' Grandview and Roselawn Cemetery Records list name, age, and date of burial, on-line and in book form (978.868 Cemeteries). Once you have found the burial date, you can usually find an obituary in the newspaper dated 3 to4 days before the burial date. These obituaries can provide significant historical information about the residents/owners of your building. See Larimer County Genealogical Society for online cemetery indexes at http://www.lcgsco.org/genealogy-resources/burial-records/.

Obituary File: This file is available at the Archive and the Library and contains a copy of every obituary published in *The Coloradoan* from 1977 to the present. Obituaries dated before 1977 must be searched for in the microfilmed newspapers in the Main Library Reference Area. Some obituary information has been included in the biographical summaries at the online History Connection. Also the *Coloradoan* newspaper database has obituaries without the photographs dating from 1999 to the present.

Biographical and Subject Vertical Files: These files in the Archive contain newspaper clippings, reports, and other documents pertaining to the history of local properties and individuals that owned or built the property. Especially useful files for building research are the "Neighborhoods," "Streets," and "Building" vertical files. "Decade" files contain news clippings and other miscellaneous documents filed by decade.

Vertical File on Architects and Builders: The Archive's vertical file on architects and builders contains a small collection of miscellaneous information on some local builders and architects. It is

often difficult to find the specific builder or architect for a property and usually the Building Permits or Building Records are the best source for that information.

Oral History Transcripts: The Library has approximately 300 verbatim transcripts of interviews available for check-out. Topics include historical events, experiences of early pioneers and current residents, and Larimer County community histories. The Archive has additional interviews that are not available for checkout but may be viewed in the Archive. If you're lucky you'll find an oral history of one of the occupants of your house, but even a neighbor's or contemporary's oral history can provide valuable information about a particular historical period.

Historic Photograph Collections: The Archive's photographs date from the 1860s to the present and include Larimer County and Fort Collins businesses, residences, events, street scenes, and individuals. These can be searched through the Fort Collins History Connection.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: These maps are very useful for building research, since they show building footprints, building materials and use. The maps primarily depict the Old Town and early residential areas of Fort Collins for the years 1886, 1891, 1901, 1906, 1909, 1925, and 1940. The Library has these maps on microfilm. The Archive has the paper copies and they are also available online at the History Connection.

Historical Maps: These maps may provide information on land ownership, boundaries, road and railroad routes, population statistics, agriculture, storm drainage, subdivision plats, etc. There are maps from 1914, 1915, 1940, 1956, 1959, 1968, and 1975 that detail property ownership of Larimer County farm land, and Fort Collins residential property ownership maps from 1894 and 1929. Maps are available in paper copy at the Archives, and many are also online at the History Connection.

Building Permit Records: Building permit records from January 1920 to December 1949 are available at the Archive. Entries are by construction date only, so you may need to look through all the entries to find the information you're looking for. There are files for these records in the Archive and the History Connection provides a database for these years.

Building Records: A summary of the year's building usually appeared in the newspapers at the end of each year. These newspaper records, which span from 1878 to 1956, give the location of new construction and often the name of the owner or the builder. They are not available for every year; the History Connection has an incomplete database online.

Tax Assessor Records: The Archive has a partial collection of Larimer County tax record cards dating from the 1940s to the 1970s with information on construction dates, property improvements, sketches of size of property and dimensions of rooms, whether property has been moved, and original photographs of the property. A large increase in the property taxes assessed may indicate that some major improvement took place. Many photographs from the 1948 and 1968 records are available in the online History Connection. Tax assessor records cannot be relied on for an accurate date of original construction, since some of the earlier dates were estimated. If possible, double-check your date with another one of the sources listed here.

County Clerk Records: Patrons usually need legal location (township, range, and quarter section) to access these records. These will reveal who owned the property and for how long, how much the

property cost. Deeds are indexed by the names of the seller (grantor) and the buyer (grantee), so start with the most recent owner and transaction and work back through the years.

When trying to determine the year a building was erected, there are a number of clues to look for. For example, a sizable increase in price from one transaction to the next suggests that there was some capital improvement on the land. Additionally, wills, probate records, and court litigation that may involve the property are filed with the District Court which is on the second floor of the Courthouse, 201 Laporte. It is possible to have a title company do this research for you (for a fee), by providing you with the abstract for the property. This is basically the legal history of the property including the warranty deeds and deeds of trust that are available at the county clerk's office. Check the yellow pages under "Title Companies."

Architectural Style Guides: There are many guides to architectural styles, both online and in book form. A good place to start is *A Guide to Colorado's Architecture and Engineering* (online at http://www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/architecture-engineering-guides). Another good source for house styles is Virginia and Lee McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1984). [199] A good selection of architectural style reference books can be found in the 720 to 728 Reference section of the Archive and the Library.

[199] This book was updated and reprinted in 2013: McAlester, Virginia, A. Lee McAlester, Lauren Jarrett, and Juan Rodriguez-Arnaiz, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013).

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