

Medford Grows Greatly Since First 1883 Survey; Simplified Process of Annexation Now Being Used

Original Town Had 176 Acres; Total Now Is 1,938.8

Additions To City Completed; Others Due

By JACK JACKSON
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

In 1883, surveyors for the old Oregon and California railroad laid out a townsite in the center of the Rogue valley for what had been known as Middleford. The town, set up parallel to the O and C tracks, lay completely west of Bear creek and left out two large sections of property owned by private citizens.

Middleford, by that time changed to Medford by persons hailing from Massachusetts, lay within what now constitutes the business area of the city. The eastern boundary was Stage road, now Riverside avenue, and the city ended on the west at J street, now Oakdale avenue. Jackson street, "the road to Jacksonville" on the original survey, was the northern boundary, and 12th street, still known by that name, marked the southern city limits.

City 176 Acres
O and C Surveyor P. P. Prim's original Medford, incorporated as a "town" in 1885, totalled 176 acres in a tight cluster around the railroad depot in the center of town, and then, as now, all streets in the area roughly northwest by southeast and southwest by northeast.

Medford's railroad survey background was not an uncommon one for towns which started on the Pacific coast in the 1870's and 1880's. In California, Central Pacific railroad survey crews drew up townsites for what are now Bakersfield, Fresno, Visalia and other similar cities.

Growth of Medford from the original townsite was a rapid, but somewhat tedious process. Most of the first additions to the city were to the west and north. They came into the city by means of a vote of the property owners in the area and in the city, or by revision of the city charter.

Process Slow, Expensive
The process for bringing new property into the city was slow at best and involved considerable expense to property owners.

City officials estimate that an annexation election today would cost about \$500. Despite difficulties which arise, annexations came in rapidly during the early years and through the 1920's when new home construction was going at a comparatively rapid pace. Folders containing documents on these annexations and additions now fill considerable drawer space in the city hall. The depression years of the 1930's were slow, both for building and annexations.

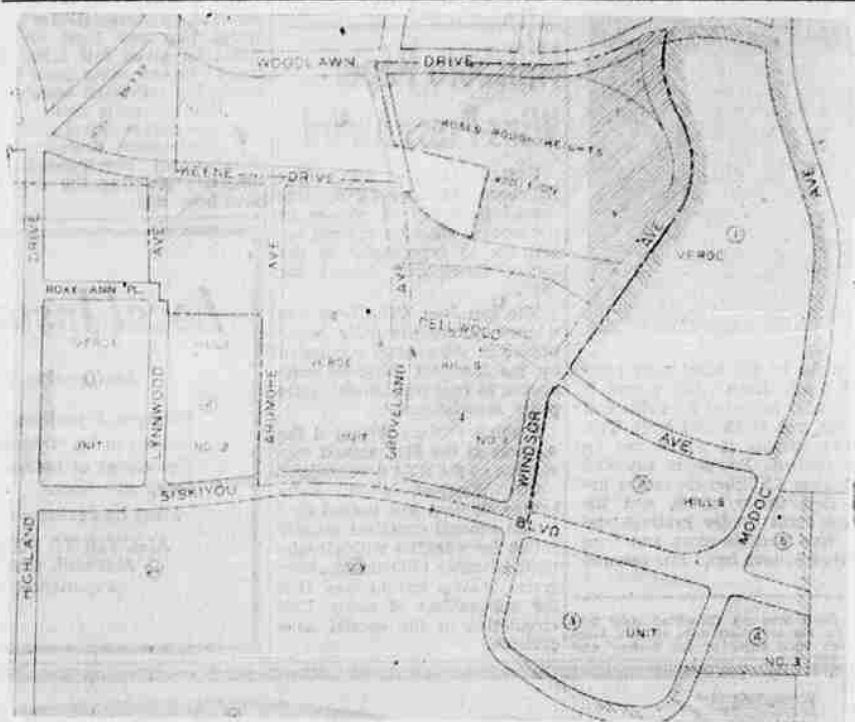
With the close of World War II in 1945, Medford again started to grow, in population, number of houses, and in area. This time the emphasis was on east Medford. Shortly after the end of the war three sections in the vicinity of the Rogue Valley Country club were brought into the city, still by the method of holding elections in the proposed annexation area and in the city.

New Method Enacted
The break in this time honored custom came last year, when the Oregon state legislature approved a new measure on city annexations. Under this action, property could be brought into the city without any elections, if 100 per cent of the property owners in the area agreed to the annexation and if it were approved by the city council.

Two large sections of property were brought in the city last fall under the 100 per cent provision, shortly after the new state law went into effect. Both were in east Medford. Eastwood subdivision lay on the northeast city limits and Verde Hill subdivision No. 1 lay on the southeast margin of the city.

The total acreage involved in these two subdivisions amounted to more than 44 per cent of that within the original townsite, as turned in to the county clerk on May 4, 1888. Eastwood contained 42 acres and Verde Hills No. 1 amounted to 36 acres for a total of 78, compared with approximately 176 in the original townsite. They brought the total acreage within the city limits to 1,938.8.

Four in Process
Now four more subdivisions are in the process of coming into the city under the 100 per cent provision. In addition, some action has been started in one other area to bring property into the city through elections, still necessary when 100 per cent approval cannot be obtained. Resi-



VERDE HILLS—Four tracts, one already brought into the city by annexation and three awaiting public hearings on annexation, are shown in the above map. The lined-in area is Verde Hills No. 1, which was brought into the city last fall. The area surrounded by small lines, to the left, is Verde Hills No. 2, and the larger area, also surrounded by small lines, to the right, is Verde Hills No. 3, both of which come up for public hearing July 1. The small square area above Verde Hills No. 2 is also slated to come up for public hearing at a date still to be determined by the city council.



EASTWOOD—Eastwood subdivision, incorporated into the city of Medford last fall by annexation, is shown in the lined in area of the above map. The tract is in the northeast margin of Medford. (All maps prepared for The Mail Tribune by George Brown of the city engineering department.)

dents or property owners in three other areas have indicated an interest in coming into the city, but no concrete action has been taken thus far. The subdivisions which are in the process of coming into the city under the 100 per cent provision are Verde Hills Nos. 2 and 3, West Side Heights, and the Washington school area, and a small tract east of Highland drive and north of Roxy Ann drive. City officials do not have an exact acreage for these four subdivisions, but they appear to be as large as, or larger than those which were brought into the city last fall.

July 1 has been set for a public hearing on annexation of the two Verde Hills subdivisions and August 5 for West Side Heights. No date has as yet been set for the fourth tract. If no opposition develops at these hearings, the tracts will be brought into the city by a simple vote of the city council.

May Need Election
The area in which a vote will probably be necessary for annexation is in east Medford, adjacent to the Verde Hills tracts. It is located between Verde Hills No. 1 on the south and the present city limits on the north.

In addition to the 100 per cent clause in state legislation, the city of Medford has certain requirements for property being annexed to the city.

According to a recent report on annexations by City Superintendent Robert A. Duff, all districts to be incorporated into the city should have all streets graded and surfaced according to city specifications. Also, all lateral water and sewer mains should be installed as a minimum requirement when possible.

A system of city checks has been started to insure that this work is done before a favorable vote is given by the city council.

Pose Many Problems
Duff's report points out that "the inclusion of new districts will propose many problems and eventually cost the general city taxpayer some expense before all facilities of the new areas are incorporated into the general service utilities of the city."

It adds, however, that "this future expense will be offset to some extent by the increased assessed valuation of the new districts sharing the tax load of the city." The annexation of Verde Hills No. 1 and Eastwood last fall brought no "unusual" problems

to city public service departments, according to Duff's report. A statement by Fire Chief Gordon Barker says "the annexation of Verde Hills additions should make very little difference in the time element in responding to alarms in this area, provided the East Side fire station is in operation by the time that home building has progressed to any extent in the addition." "Eastwood subdivision should likewise create no serious problem of fire protection," Chief Barker adds.

Regarding the two new tracts, Hawthorne Park's Summer Schedule To Begin Monday

The Hawthorne park summer program is under way, and supervised play will begin at 1 p.m. Monday, according to Playground Supervisor Lillian Kendall.

The Friday night special programs conducted last year will be changed to afternoons, preferably Fridays, to accommodate more children. The programs will consist of children's parades, contests or special music.

The special program for next Friday will be a doll parade. Each child is to bring a doll or stuffed toy. Judges will award ribbons for the largest, smallest, most unusual and prettiest dolls.

For the handicraft periods, 3 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, children are asked to bring a cork and a box of pipe cleaners.

Schedule Given
The park program for the summer, Monday through Saturday, is as follows:

- 12:30 p.m.—Inspection of playground equipment.
- 1 to 3 p.m.—Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays — Story hour.
- 3 to 4 p.m.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays — Handicraft.
- 4 to 5 p.m.—Wading pool supervised.
- 5 to 6 p.m.—Dinner hour.
- 6 to 7:30 p.m.—Pool open, free play on equipment, games.
- 7:30 p.m.—Lockup, repair work.

Police Chief Clatous McCredie states "It is the opinion that, under present conditions, this department will be able to furnish police service." He also points out that "it is felt that if more annexations are made it may later be necessary for the police department to add a constant east side patrol."

Both Barker and Duff, as city water superintendent, believe that no difficulty will be involved in maintaining an adequate water supply in the new subdivisions.

City officials point out that bringing new property into the city limits is becoming more necessary each year. They state that building sites for homes within the city limits have become almost non-existent during recent years.

Probably one of the biggest problems in taking in new annexations, and one which is certainly not unique to Medford, is that property owners developing tracts have their own preferences for street names. For example, Chief Barker pointed out last fall that Saling street, Oregon avenue and Capitol avenue actually constituted only one street. The same was true of Stevens street, South way and Harrison avenue.

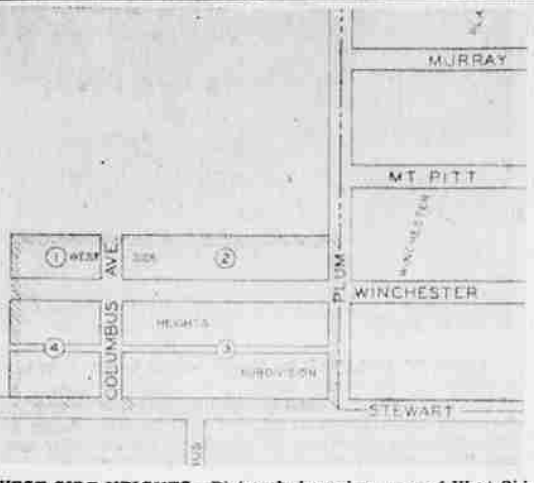
However, since Duff's report was issued, this problem has, in general, been corrected.

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WEST SIDE HEIGHTS—Pictured above is a map of West Side Heights subdivision, in the Washington school district of southwest Medford. A public hearing on annexation of the subdivision, being developed by D. A. Parker, will be conducted by the city council August 5.

County Economic Survey Shows Overall Increases

Jackson county's annual payroll has increased nearly seven times since 1940, according to the latest comparative economic survey compiled by the Jackson county chamber of commerce.

For the 11-year period covered by the survey, the Jackson county payroll increased from under \$6 million to \$40.5 million. In the same period, the county's employment (as shown by figures of the State Unemployment Compensation commission) increased from 4,695 to 11,940.

And citizens have been able to buy more with those payrolls, too. The effective buying income—actually the buying power—of the Jackson county family was raised to \$3,769, according to the latest figures. In 1946 it was \$2,919. The effective buying income for Medford families was increased from \$2,919 to \$3,769.

The population increase for the past decade has been 22,297 in the county. Over 6,000 of these newcomers were counted in Medford. Since 1939 the assessed valuation of Medford has nearly doubled—it has been raised from \$9,837,861.02 to \$18,036,815.04. Assessed valuation for the entire county increased from \$34 million to \$57 million.

The number of power and water connections in Medford have also nearly doubled since 1940. There are now three times as many telephone connections as there were then. The 630 building permits issued in Medford in 1951 were worth over \$2 million more than the 215 permits of 1940.

Bank deposits increased in almost direct ratio with the county payroll. A 5.7 million Medford deposit in 12 years increased to one of \$38.7 million.

Dead line Sunday Classifieds is at noon Saturdays.

Medford Woman Winner In National Contest

Mrs. L. S. Stenerson, 2216 Jacksonville highway, is a winner in a recent national contest. And she nearly had to wait for a call from The Mail Tribune to learn about it.

Saturday The Mail Tribune was informed that Mrs. Stenerson was a winner in the "42" Shampoo Friendship contest. When she was called and questioned about the size of the prize, her reply was: "What? Did I win? They haven't told me anything about it!"

Mrs. Stenerson's sponsor, the Assembly of God church, will receive a reward identical with that won by Mrs. Stenerson.

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