

OVERVIEW

Victoria Park is a geographically distinct neighborhood located in northeast Fort Lauderdale. It is bounded by NE 10th Street to the north, the Karen Canal to the east, East Broward Boulevard to the south, and North Federal Highway to the west. The neighborhood is a mix of primarily residential with commercial buildings located along the periphery. Holiday Park, an

approximately 94 acre park, is located in the northwest portion of the neighborhood and was part of the original design of the area. Modern development in Victoria Park began during the boom years of the 1920s and continued through the 1950s. In recent years many of the original

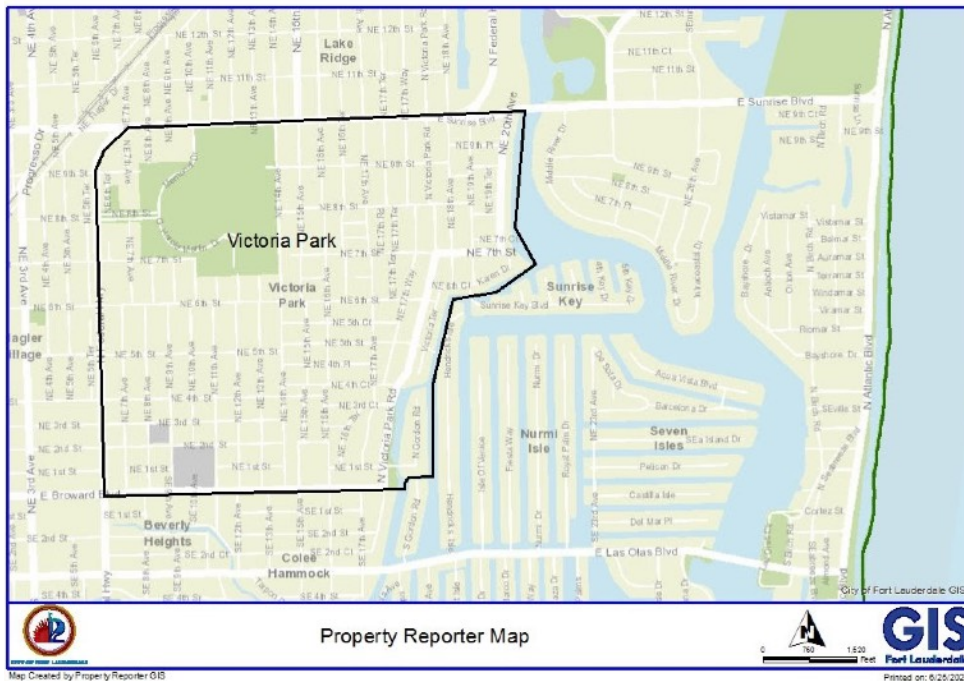


Figure 6C-1: map of Victoria Park

structures have been replaced with new, larger single-family houses.

VICTORIA PARK HISTORY

One of Fort Lauderdale’s earliest settlers, Frank and Ivy Stranahan, owned most of the land in the area surrounding what would become Victoria Park and operated a trading post out of their house.¹ In 1924, Alfred G. Kuhn purchased a large



Figure 6C-2: Victoria Park is a mix of older houses and newer, single family and multi-family buildings. Photo by Trisha Logan.

¹ “History,” *Historic Stranahan House Museum*, Accessed on May 18, 2020. <https://stranahanhouse.org/about/history>.

tract of land from Stranahan and hired engineer H.C. Davis to plat the new development and Pfunter & Priest as the developers.² Unlike other areas or subdivisions built during this same time period, Victoria Park was extensively planned, streets plotted, and the development highly publicized.³ Victoria Park, named for Kuhn's daughter, and its neighboring subdivisions were intended to be more upscale than previous developments.⁴ Lots went up for sale in the winter of 1925 and advertisements at that time highlight plans for a park with a lake, a canal, and waterfront homes with commanding views.⁵



Figure 6C-3: Advertisement of Victoria Park's 'Home Beautiful,' Fort Lauderdale News, January, 1925.

Construction in the new development began in the southern portion of the neighborhood, near Broward Boulevard, with lots purchased and developed by various builders, architects, and owners; the first of which was designed by A.C. Stewart in the Mission-Revival style.⁶ The neighborhood proved to be popular and lot prices steadily increased. To meet the demand, more subdivisions followed, typically between four and eight blocks at a time.⁷ These included Las Olas Park and Middle River Park, by Fred Maxwell in 1924; and Kuhn's Victoria Park

² Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 88 and "It's Here," *Fort Lauderdale News*, January 6, 1925, 5.

³ Historic Property Associates, Inc. *Historic Properties Survey of the Southwest and Northeast Quadrants of Fort Lauderdale, Florida*, St. Augustine: September 1989, 1.

⁴ Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 89 and "Alfred Kuhn, Real Estate Pioneer, Dies," *The Miami Herald*, December 16, 1951, 26.

⁵ "Victoria Park," *Fort Lauderdale News*, January 1, 1925, 2.

⁶ "It's Here," *Fort Lauderdale News*, January 6, 1925, 5 and Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale -- Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 89.

⁷ Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 89.

Addition, in August 1925.⁸ In 1926 the neighborhood was extended north to 8th Street by the Rivermont Realty Co., which platted Victoria Highlands and by Ralph A. Horton, who platted Victoria Courts.⁹

As described in the Fort Lauderdale history section of this report, the hurricane of 1926 and subsequent national economic depression ended the construction boom in the area. However, more modest development continued throughout the region, including in Victoria Park where more modest housing, like those built in the Victoria Courts section of the neighborhood, were built.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Within Victoria Park the majority of the buildings are residential and range from free-standing single family houses to three-story courtyard apartments. Most existing historic buildings were constructed between the early 1920s through the 1960s. The primary styles within Victoria Park are:



Figure 6C-4: The house at 1711 NE 7th Street, built in 1924, is an example of the Craftsman style. Photo by Trisha Logan.

Craftsman Bungalow: The Craftsman-style bungalow was popular beginning in the early 1900s through the 1930s. The style was the predominant style for smaller houses and spread throughout the country via pattern books and magazines.¹⁰ It typically features a low-pitched gable roof, exposed rafters or beams, and porches with square battered columns or piers. Within Victoria Park, the examples often include wood siding, gable vents, clipped gables, and interior chimneys. Typically some, if not all, of the windows have been replaced.

⁸ Scott, 88.

⁹ Scott, 88.

¹⁰ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses, 2nd Ed.* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017), 568.



Figure 6C-5: The house at 725 NE 17th Road, built in 1924, is an example of the Vernacular Craftsman style. Photo by Trisha Logan.

Vernacular Bungalow: The vernacular bungalow utilizes the same form as the Craftsman Bungalow but is more modest in ornamentation. Often constructed without the use of an architect, they typically have a simple plan and an unadorned porch.



Figure 6C-6: The house at 1415 NE 4th Place, built in 1924, is an example of the Spanish Revival style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Spanish Revival: The Spanish Revival style and the Italian Renaissance Revival style are often referred to collectively as the Mediterranean Revival style and were the most popular styles during the Florida land boom of the 1920s.¹¹ In Florida, the Spanish Revival style was introduced by Henry Flagler to help promote tourism and was adapted by Addison Mizner and Maurice Fatio to give it a more regional flair.¹² The Spanish Revival style is noted for having terra-cotta barrel-tile roofing, spiral columns, decorative door surrounds, arcading, decorative tiles, and ornate iron work.

¹¹ Merrilyn Rathburn and Patricia Garbe-Morillo, "Colee Hammock," *City of Fort Lauderdale -- Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 132.

¹² McAlester, 534.



Figure 6C-7: The house at 317 NE 16th Avenue is an example of the Mission style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Mission: The Mission style rose in popularity beginning in the 1890s and continued being used into the 1920s. The style, which was used less frequently in Florida than Spanish and Italian Renaissance-revival styles, began in California as a reflection of that area's colonial past. Although plan books often included examples of the Mission style, it was rarely used outside of the southwestern states. Within Victoria Park, typical features of the style include decorative roof parapet, prominent coping, bell-tower inspired chimney caps and roof scuppers.



Figure 6C-8: The house at 401-403 NE 14th Avenue is an example of the Art Moderne style. Photo by Trisha Logan.

Art Moderne: While Art Deco and Art Moderne were popular during the same time period of the 1920s through the 1940s, Art Moderne was more prevalent in domestic architecture and the style prevailed longer.¹³ The Art Moderne style often has a smooth stucco wall surface, flat roof, and the emphasis is on the horizontal, with grooves, lines, and simple decorative elements reinforcing the horizontal. The buildings designed with this style typically have simple, projecting horizontal door or window eyebrows, prominent copings, and simple horizontal patterns incised or projecting on the wall surface.

¹³ McAlester. 581.



Figure 6C-9: The duplex at 318 NE 8th Avenue is an example of the Minimal Traditional style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Minimal Traditional: The Minimal Traditional style exemplified the Depression-era and Post-World War II ‘instant communities.’¹⁴ During the 1930s and 1940s, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) limited the maximum sales price of houses they would insure. The houses, defined by simplicity, needed to maximize floor plans and minimize ornamentation, as both of these impacted costs. The style often featured a small house, typically one-story, with minimal architectural details, and often featured a gabled roof and was popularized by a flood of house plans and pattern books published between 1935 and 1950.¹⁵



Figure 6C-10: The house at 308 NE 14th Avenue is an example of the Transitional Ranch style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Transitional Ranch: The Transitional Ranch (sometimes “minimal Ranch”) style is represented by the later houses in the neighborhood built in the late 1930s and early 1940s. They bridge the gap between the small Minimal Traditional style of the 1930s and 1940s and the sprawling Ranch homes of the 1950s and 1960s. Their small scale is a vestige of the planning and financing guidelines developed by the FHA during the Great Depression and World War II, but incorporate modern design elements of the Ranch style. The Transitional Ranch is one-story high with a low-pitched or flat roof and

typically features moderate or wide eave overhangs, large picture windows, and sheltered entrances. The type does not typically have a garage, but is often accompanied by a carport which is frequently integrated into the roofline of the house.

¹⁴ McAlester, 588.

¹⁵ McAlester, 589.



Figure 6C-11: The house at 1616 NE 8th Street designed by Lester Avery is an example of the Ranch style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Ranch: The Ranch style first developed in the 1930s in California, and was embraced by builders and homeowners in the 1950s and 1960s. The type took hold as FHA financing was revised to allow for larger loans and large house sizes compared with depression- and wartime-era guidelines.¹⁶ The Ranch style is defined by its broad one-story shape, and low-pitched roof. It typically features moderate or wide eave overhangs, large picture windows, and off-centered sheltered entrance. It often incorporates an attached garage that is a visible component of the facade. Other features include masonry and brick veneer wall texture variation, and long primary facade.



Figure 6C-12: The house at 1642 NE 8th Street designed by John M. Crowell in 1947 is an example of the Contemporary style. Photo courtesy of Realtor.com.

Contemporary: The contemporary style was inspired by the modern movement and Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian house paradigm. The Contemporary style is defined by its widely overhanging eaves, roof beams, obscured or recessed entries, and windows located in gable ends or tucked under the eaves. The style has many variants in plan and roof forms, but typically include either a low-pitched, flat, and/or slanted roof. Window placement is generally dictated by intentional views or light access, rather than symmetry or traditional convention.

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¹⁶ McAlester, 597-603.

¹⁷ McAlester, 629-646.



Figure 6C-13: The apartment at 1180 NE 1st Street designed by Frank Rowland is an example of the Miami Modern, or MiMo, style. Photo by Vagabond Consulting Group.

Miami Modern (MiMo): The Miami Modern style, also referred to as MiMo, was popular between 1945 and the mid-1960s.¹⁸ The style originated in Miami and Miami Beach, but quickly spread to other beach communities in Florida. Based on similar principles of modernism, the MiMo style was designed to capture the subtropical climate of South Florida and add a playful twist to the otherwise often austere facades of other forms of modernist architecture.¹⁹ The most prominent design features of the style are symmetrical open staircases with decorative railings as the primary ornamentation. These were designed to

highlight the open air corridors, balconies, and staircases.²⁰ Railings were often made of metal mesh panels or cast concrete screen blocks in elaborate patterns. Additional design elements of the MiMo style frequently incorporated into low-scale apartment houses included brick or stone faced wall panels, built-in planters, and applied masonry sculptural elements denoting marine and nautical themes.²¹ MiMo apartment buildings were often arranged to create a common garden court, occasionally with a central shared pool.²²

VICTORIA PARK HISTORIC DISTRICTS
VICTORIA COURTS HISTORIC DISTRICT
Overview

The proposed Victoria Courts Expanded Historic District consists of lots along the east side of NE 17th Avenue and the west side of 17th Road



Figure 6C-14: Map of Victoria Courts Historic District. Map by Rollin Maycumber, City of Fort Lauderdale.

¹⁸ Joyce Meyers, Debbie Tackett, and William Cary, *Post-War Modern/MiMo Design Guidelines*, (Miami Beach: City of Miami Beach Planning Department), 2.

¹⁹ Meyers, 2.

²⁰ Meyers, 5.

²¹ Meyers, 5.

²² Meyers, 5.

between NE 7th Street and NE 8th Street. The area is laid out in a regular street grid, with Avenues running north/south and Streets running east/west. The original mid-block sidewalks and courtyards have been removed. Due to the removal of the original courtyards, the original front facades are no longer visible from a public right-of-way and the street-frontage occasionally features secondary structures that were intended to be rear-yard buildings. Street trees consist of a mix of palm, oak, and flowering trees. All of the properties within the potential expanded historic district are residential. They consist of free-standing single-family houses, some with detached garages. Most were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s as courtyard Craftsman-style bungalows. Additionally, there are four non-contributing resources that were built after the period of significance and reflect other design trends. One contributing resource was demolished during the course of the survey.

Statement of Significance

The proposed Victoria Courts Expanded Historic District appears eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of community development as an example of a bungalow court development and as an early suburban development in Fort Lauderdale and under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a rare surviving cohesive group of early twentieth century Craftsman-style bungalows. The district represents the latter years of the Florida land boom of the 1920s through the austere years of the 1930s and the modest affordable housing constructed during that time period. The structures retain a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. While the original mid-block sidewalk and shared courtyard spaces have been removed, the general layout, orientation, and design of the original bungalow court are all retained. The bungalow court cluster at Victoria Courts is unique in design for the area and is an early surviving example of Fort Lauderdale affordable housing. Many of these houses are rare survivors of the 1926 hurricane that destroyed a large number of Fort Lauderdale's early structures. The period of significance for the historic district is from 1924 through 1937.

Development and Architectural Context

For developer Ralph A. Horton, J.S. Rhine designed a single block of 66 small lots with sidewalks separating the cottages into three north-south courtyards.²³ The timing of the development of Victoria Courts was ill-fated, however, occurring in the same year as a devastating hurricane that plummeted South Florida into a recession ahead of the Great Depression. As the real estate bubble deflated, Alfred Kuhn took back properties within Victoria Park.²⁴ Newspaper notices show a variety of master sales, foreclosures, and legal actions against Ralph Horton involving several different houses within Victoria Courts.²⁵ Despite

²³ Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale -- Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 88.

²⁴ Patrick Scott and the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society, "Victoria Park," *City of Fort Lauderdale -- Architectural Resources Survey, 2018*, ed. Trisha Logan (Miami: Vagabond Group Consulting, 2018), 89.

²⁵ "Legal Notices," *Fort Lauderdale News*, July 6, 1932, 5; "Legal Notices," *Fort Lauderdale News*, June 21, 1932, 2

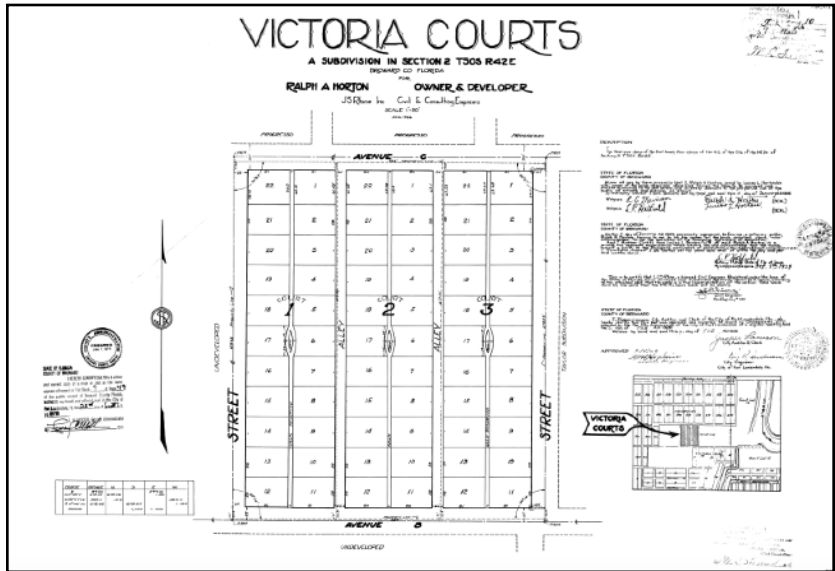


Figure 6C-15: 1926 plat map of Victoria Courts. Image courtesy of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

these challenges, the Victoria Courts subdivision was completed with small, wood clad houses arranged around a central courtyard.

The houses built within the proposed Victoria Courts Expanded Historic District are primarily wood-frame bungalows set along internal courtyards. This architectural style and layout originated in Pasadena, California in 1909 and provided an inexpensive way to construct multi-family housing by placing groupings of small one-story

individual houses or duplexes around a common landscaped courtyard.²⁶ California, like Florida, was experiencing a land boom in the first two decades of the twentieth century as the film industry and climate enticed visitors and recently relocated residents to seek a life of leisure.²⁷ The bungalow court design speaks to this ideal—the interior court or garden space frees the resident from the constraints of the interior spaces, expanding the modestly sized houses living space while the architectural style is historically inspired, yet exotic and whimsical.²⁸ The bungalow courts merged “individual bungalows with the pleasant design concepts of the Spanish courtyard,” both the prevailing design trends at the time in California and Florida.²⁹ At Victoria Courts, like at other bungalow courts throughout the country, the shared court took the place of a private rear yard and was an important community-enhancing element.³⁰

While Victoria Park was designed to be an upscale neighborhood, Victoria Courts provided a more affordable option, while still maintaining the scale and architectural appeal of the neighborhood. Due to the affordability, it’s likely the houses were advertised or purchased as

²⁶ Planning and Community Development, “Design and Historic Preservation: Bungalow Courts in Pasadena,” The City of Pasadena. Accessed on May 27, 2020. https://web.archive.org/web/20130310224509/http://www.cityofpasadena.net/Planning/Bungalow_Courts_in_Pasadena/

²⁷ Planning and Community Development

²⁸ Caroline Raferty, “The Bungalow Courts Of Hollywood, California: Hollywood Bungalow Court Survey, Preservation Analysis, And Recommendations” (Master thesis, Columbia University, 2016), 31.

²⁹ Raferty, 32.

³⁰ Optics Design, “Missing middle close-up: Bungalow Courts,” *Public Square*. November 29, 2017.

second or winter houses for northerners looking to escape cold winters. The houses were designed as Craftsman-style bungalows, which was the predominant style for modestly-sized houses across America between circa 1905 through the early 1920s.³¹ As such, the style reflected the most popular design trend at the time, constructed around a shared courtyard for affordability. Considering the Florida land boom would end just months after the initial plotting of Victoria Courts, the mix of style and affordability would perfectly position the development to face the changing economy. With their small size and often low price points, bungalow courts were great for first-time buyers looking to purchase, but who were unable to afford a single-family home.³²

³¹ McAlester, 568.

³² Optics Design.