

## Introductory Slide

[SLIDE 2]

In the summer of 2021, the Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission conducted a large-scale survey of midcentury housing throughout the City. The period of significance was defined as homes built between 1945 and 1970. Almost 4,000 single family homes were studied, and our survey revealed that a small development in the Riverside Park neighborhood had twenty-two homes all built in 1946. This data point stood out because it appeared to be consistent with a planned development whereas other early postwar homes were infill construction between downtown and the university campus and other earlier neighborhoods. Our survey recommended further exploration of this neighborhood, and as a result the Commission pursued a National Register nomination for the Baukol Historic District.

In this presentation, I'm going to provide some historic context for early postwar housing at a national level, and then look at how it applies to Grand Forks, and Baukol Addition. And we'll look at some of the homes in the Addition.

[SLIDE 3]

Baukol is comprised of a total of forty-one homes immediately adjacent to the Riverside Neighborhood Historic District which was listed to the National Register in 2007, and the Riverside Park. Its proximity to the river, mature trees, a public pool, tennis courts and trails continue to make this neighborhood a desirable place to live.

[SLIDE 4]

In June, 1946 a deed was issued to Brooks Baukol, which shows that he, together with several financial partners purchased the tract of land that would be named Baukol Subdivision. The plat map shows lots on the north side of Alpha Ave where four earlier homes stood until the 1997 flood, after which time they were removed for the flood wall. So, this nomination considers homes within the current plat boundaries between Park Ave and Alpha Ave, along N. Third and Fourth Streets.

[SLIDE 5]

To paint a picture of what was happening on the home front following the end of World War II, on a national level construction projects had lagged for almost two decades after the Great Depression. The U.S. suddenly found itself preparing for the return of millions of servicemen who would come home seeking jobs, a place to settle down and maybe start a family. It was soon evident that a massive residential building program was needed to propel the housing market forward. Some of you might be familiar with images of Levittown developments in PA and NY that illustrate the explosion of suburbia in huge planned-living communities. Grand Forks had a much more modest expansion, but nevertheless, this was the beginning of a new modern style development where homes were built for buyers rather than at their request.

[SLIDE 6]

Creative solutions such as converted trolley cars and other temporary housing was provided to help address the critical shortage immediately after the war. Communities were asked to open their own homes for veterans as they reestablished their civilian lives. Even here in Grand Forks, a local radio station campaigned to ask families to

provide a space in their house to a veteran. Quote: “The incentive for the offers were nylon stockings donated by the Junior Chamber of Commerce to be awarded at the rate of one pair for a single room accommodation and two pairs for an apartment.”

[SLIDE 7]

The Returning Servicemen’s Act of 1944 commonly referred to as the G.I. Bill was a stimulus program designed to help WWII veterans return to civilian life with education incentives, healthcare, job training and low-cost mortgages. The Federal Housing Administration both subsidized veteran mortgages as well as loans to developers for approved site and housing plans. This was a transition from a military economy to a consumer economy or as some might say, a Guns to Butter economy as wartime manufacturing reverted to peacetime production.

On May 13, 1946, Brooks Baukol purchased the first building permits to construct houses that would meet criteria as established by the federal government.

Let’s take a brief look at who Brooks Baukol was. He was a Central HS and UND graduate who had a small contracting business building homes in Grand Forks and Morehead prior to the war. He enlisted in the Navy and served as a radar operator on the USS South Dakota. When the ship was decommissioned in Philadelphia in 1945, he took a trip to Washington DC to meet with ND Senator, William Langer to lobby for military surplus equipment for his future contracting business when he returned to civilian life in Grand Forks. With this Addition, he became Grand Forks’ first multi-property developer and spearheaded the construction of the first postwar development with his younger brother, Kay. They later divided the business interests and Brooks

turned to commercial construction working on many projects in the expansion along S. Washington Street. As a veteran with a young family of his own, he belonged to the very group that the federal government was focused on supporting.

[SLIDE 8]

A few days after these permits were issued, the GFH published this article. Quote” The 1946 figures went over the top as a result of the issuance of permits for construction of 20 homes in the new Baukol subdivision at \$6,000 each, a total of \$120,000.” The first construction in this development was along N. Fourth St. between Park Avenue and Alpha Ave in 1946 and 1947.

[SLIDE 9]

Let’s look at some of these homes on N. Fourth St where we see a very discrete group of homes that typify early postwar houses built using a limited number of plans that adhere to the criteria for supported veteran housing. The original homes were one of two architectural styles classified as either Plain Residential or Hipped Roof Box. All of these homes share common setbacks from the street, have minimal ornamentation, narrow soffits and are all just shy of 800 sq ft. Common setbacks provided efficiencies for construction allowing for the specialization of building crews and easily mapped utilities. Initially, these homes were constructed without garages leaving homeowners to add them in the years following perhaps as means allowed and the increase in auto production made them more available. Occasionally owners added extra living space in the form of enclosed porches to the garage. Access was either from the street or from the rear alley. A feature of midcentury community planning was the eventual

abandonment of alleys but the early date of Baukol shows continuity with the Riverside Neighborhood Historic District in this aspect as well as the continuation of the street grid with NS/EW roads.

[SLIDE 10]

Plain Residential homes are either 1 story with a basement, or 1.5 stories with a basement. Of all the existing original homes, only two are 1.5 stories. They were typically two bedroom, one bathroom homes with basement spaces often converted as families grew. Exterior materials include asphalt shingles, hardboard, wood, stucco and metal. Damage from the 1997 flood contributed to replacement vinyl siding and windows.

[SLIDE 11]

Hipped Roof Box styles share the same minimalist styling with low elevation, narrow soffits, and little to no ornamentation. The focus was on speedy and affordable construction that took on an assembly line approach.

New homes for new families needed appliances, furniture, curtains and other conveniences and creature comforts leading to a new professional housing market supported by an increase in mass consumer culture.

[SLIDE 12]

Soon after construction was completed on N. Fourth St, attention moved to Park Ave and N. Third where there were a few other choices of architectural styles.

Following the initial housing shortage crisis, the federal government relaxed criteria and increased the cost of construction. In addition to Plain Residential and Hipped Roof Box, are the Ranch or Rambler style, and Colonial Revival. Here we see some overlap with Riverside Historic District with two homes on Park Ave previously recognized as contributing properties in that earlier district. Architectural Historian and author of the Riverside nomination, Steve Martens described the house on the left as “Modernist-influenced with high-style design” and noted that the house on the right is reminiscent of the architectural styles in the earlier prewar neighborhood. These two homes were constructed in 1948 and 1947 respectively, but they serve as a visual and temporal transition to the newer development. Houses are slightly larger and the styles and sometimes materials differ from the classic 1940s tract houses.

[SLIDE 13]

Baukol Addition shows some of the earliest examples in the City of Ranch-style homes with attached garages. By the late 1940s and through the 1950s, families were embracing a new style of living. Historian, Barbara Miller Lane noted that Ranch homes were not commonly found outside large cities as early as 1949 but they became a popular choice for new homeowners who embraced the idea of “a whole new kind of house, as it seemed right for a whole new time”. Low elevation, mostly parallel to the street with large picture windows, horizontal living arrangements and easily accessed backyards that provide space for recreation and entertainment. Attached garages now housed the increasingly important family automobile. This feature contributes to slightly larger square footage and construction costs.

[SLIDE 14] Again, here are examples of a Ranch with attached garage and a Hipped Roof Box on Park Ave.

[SLIDE 15]

An unusual feature in at least one of the Baukol homes reveals the ongoing concern with the Cold War. While America was largely embracing an optimistic and prosperous future, there was also a persistent fear. We know of several homes throughout Grand Forks that were built in the late 1940s and 1950s with fallout shelters in their basements. North Dakota was, in some ways, at the front of the Cold War at home. Grand Forks Air Force Base was established in 1957, and later the anti-ballistic missile Safeguard Complex at Nekoma. So, prior to that, some residents built reinforced rooms with steel beams and concrete blocks that would provide some protection in the event of an attack. It's likely there are more, but may go unrecognized by current homeowners.

[SLIDE 16]

Here is a visual summary of contributing and non-contributing homes. Contributing homes maintain enough architectural integrity original to the neighborhood. Non-contributing homes, while original to the neighborhood have received material or structural changes that don't reflect the original architecture.

[SLIDE 17]

The 1997 flood saw demolition of several homes that were either replaced with new construction or homes relocated from nearby lots that were at risk due to the construction of the flood wall. Plans for new construction were reviewed by the

Commission to ensure the homes were similar in scale and massing to compliment and blend in with the surrounding homes.

[SLIDE 18]

So, who lived in the neighborhood? 1950 Census data reveal that almost all the homeowners who were in residence at the time census were veterans, all were married and most had young children. It turns out that Baukol Historic District is Grand Forks first baby boom neighborhood. We can also see what their civilian occupations were including teachers, salesmen, engineers, farmers and truck drivers, plumbers and business owners. Occupations are listed for only two wives – Swedish massage therapist and a teacher at UND, though it appears many were caring for very young children.

[SLIDE 19]

In summary, the Baukol Addition is Grand Forks first postwar planned development designed to comply with federally-established criteria for veteran housing. The tract homes on N. Fourth St preserve a point in time where America was responding to not only a housing shortage, but a federal program to support WWII veterans as they returned to civilian life. Park Avenue and N. Third St preserve some of the City's earliest architecture showing the evolution from early tract housing to midcentury architectural styles offering a new modern American way of living. Postwar economic optimism against this Cold War backdrop amplified a new American lifestyle rooted in mass culture, consumerism and the promise of a better future with much of the focus on the home. [SLIDE 20] – Thank you.



# WIVES.

Look this ad over carefully. Circle the items you want for Christmas. Show it to your husband. If he does not go to the store immediately, cry a little. Not a lot. Just a little. He'll go, he'll go.

CIRCLE ALL THE QUALITY DORMEYER APPLIANCES YOU WANT!



**Husbands:**

Look this ad over carefully. Pick out what your wife wants. Go buy it. Before she starts to cry.

**Dormeyer**

2201 N. Walnut • Chicago, Illinois 60614

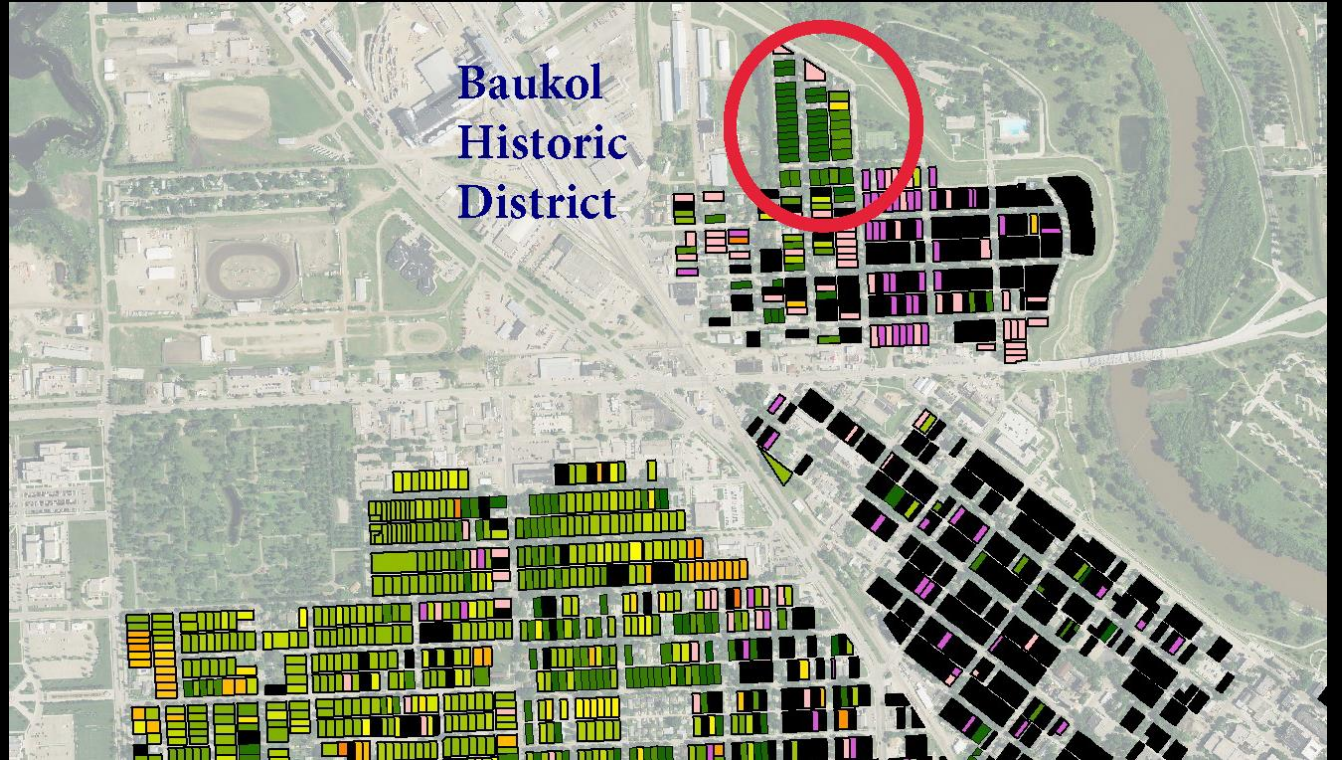
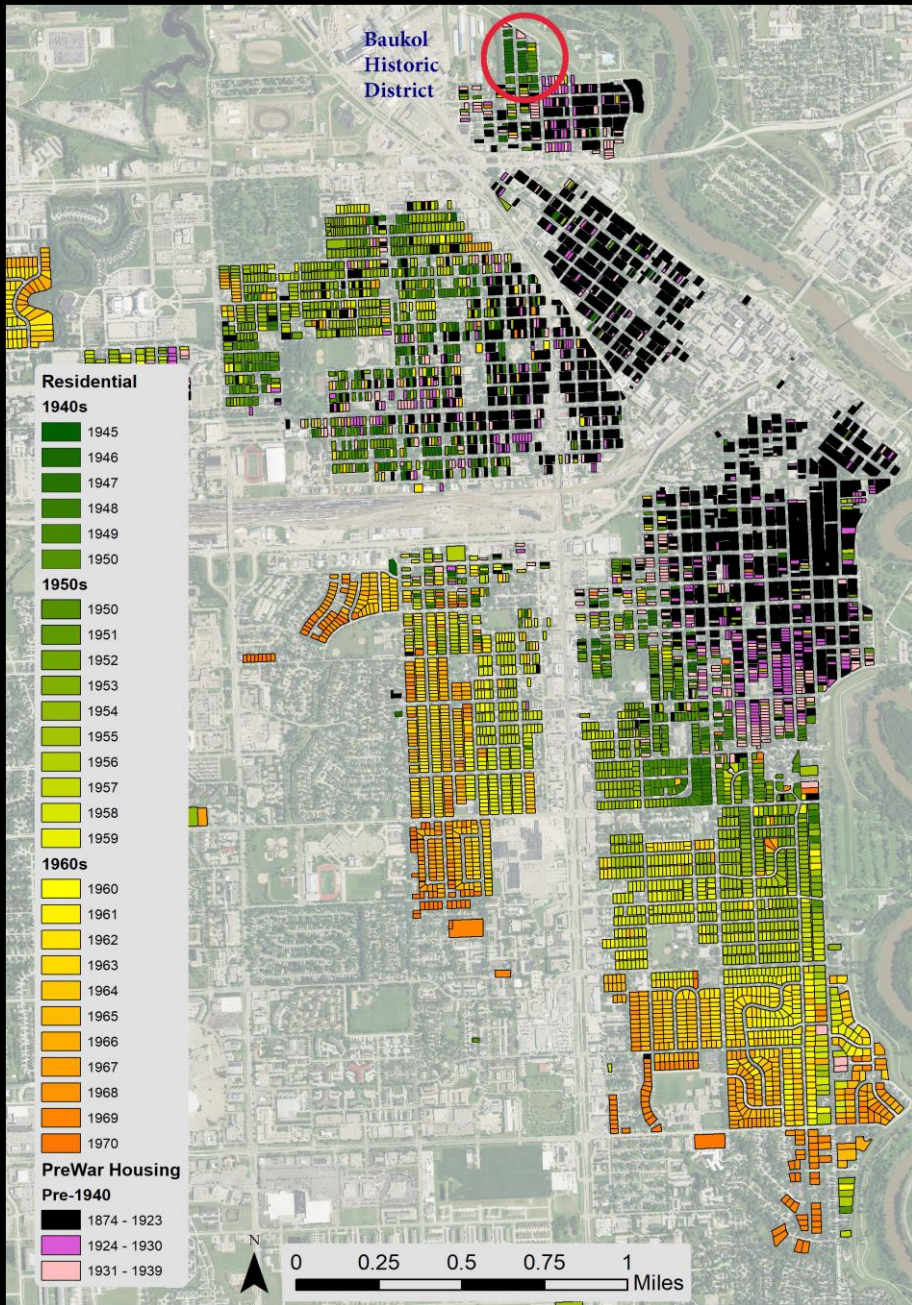
## Baukol Historic District

Grand Forks County,  
North Dakota

Prepared by Susan Caraher, for  
the Grand Forks Historic  
Preservation Commission

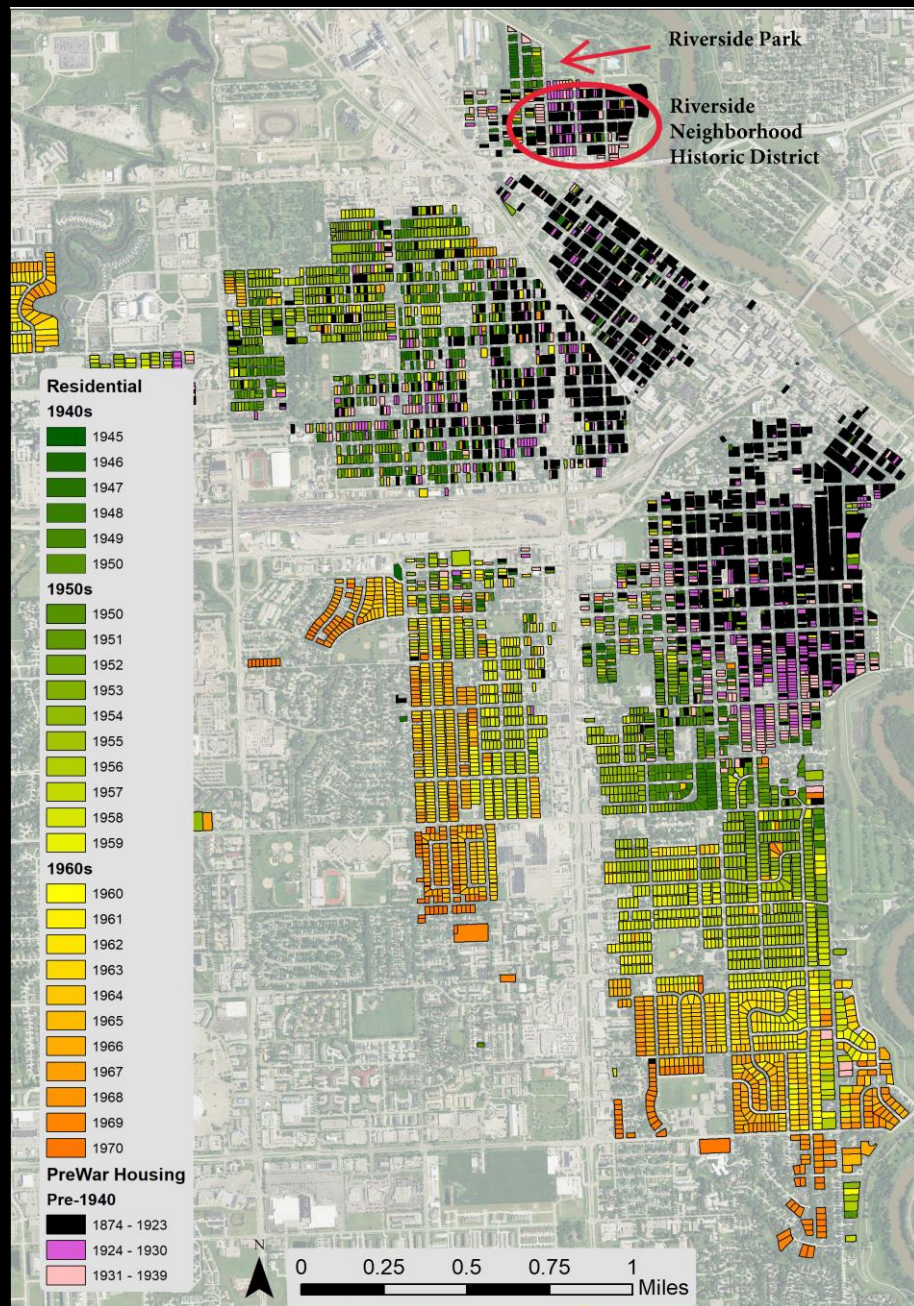
August, 2023

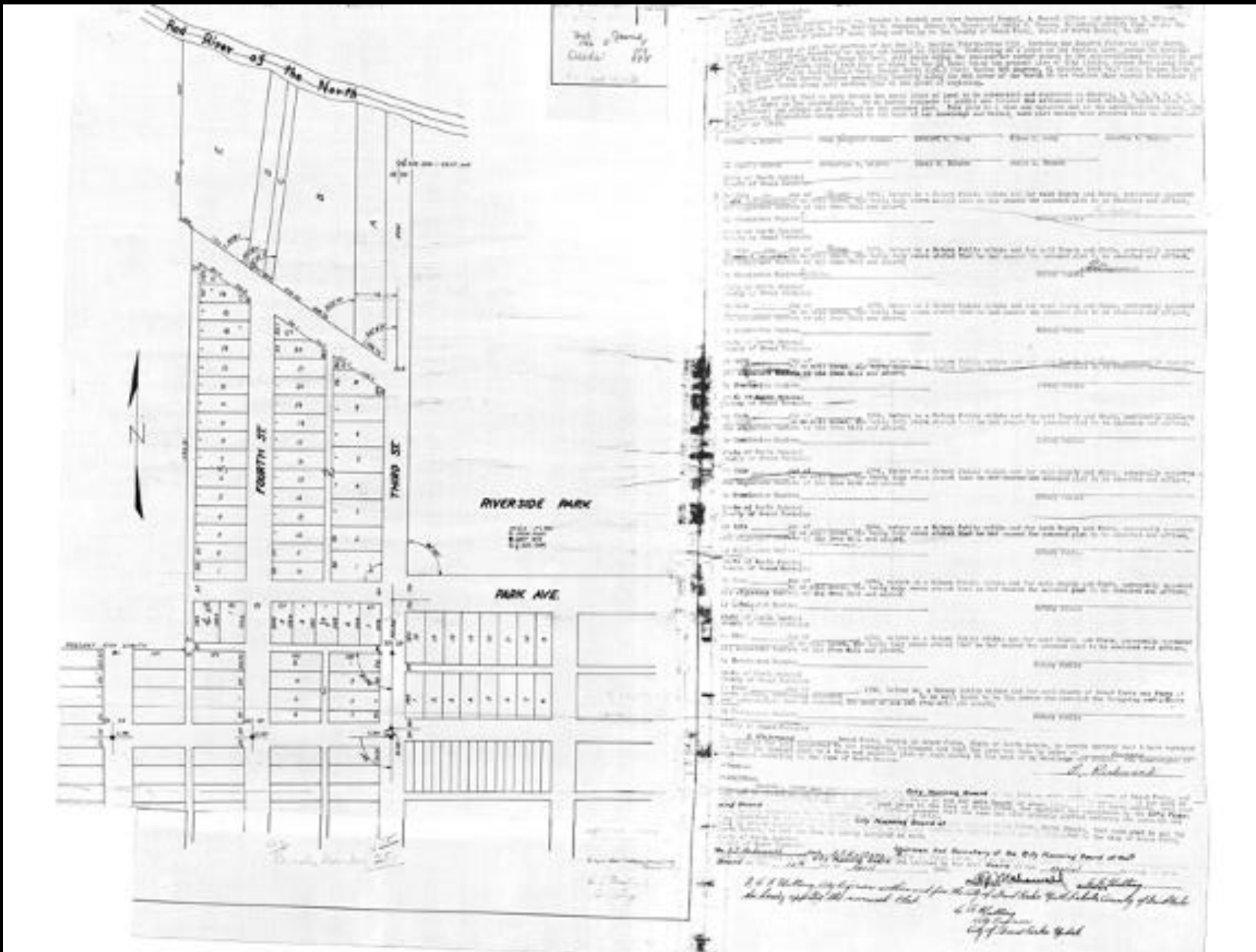




Dates of Residential Construction Pre-War through 1970







Original Deed, issued June 1946

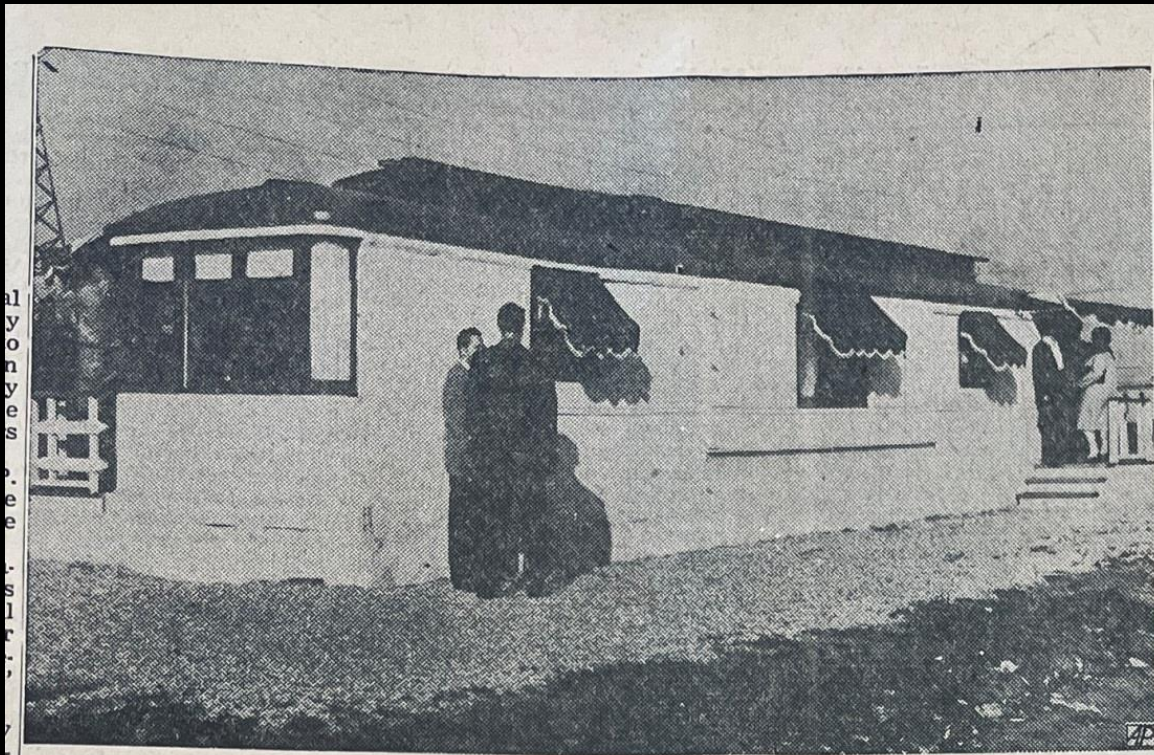




Newsday LLC/ Getty

Levittown, NY, established 1947





**TROLLEY COTTAGE**—Prospective purchasers view the trolley cottage, built by James P. Paul of Los Angeles to help ease the housing shortage which was put on display in Los Angeles. The converted streetcar is white-stucco faced with blue trim, has 16 windows and two glass doors. (AP Wirephoto).

Grand Forks Herald, April 1946

# Offer Housing To 239 Veterans

Two hundred and thirty-nine Grand Forks residents telephoned offers of housing accommodations for veterans during a two-hour Jaycee sponsored program Sunday night on station KILO here.

Though the majority of those who called had only single rooms

to offer, many home owners expressed interest in remodeling basement and attic sections for apartment use. Others had two room apartments while one offered accommodations for single persons at the fair grounds.

Incentive for the offers were nylon stockings donated by the Junior Chamber of Commerce to be awarded at the rate of one pair for a single room accommodation and two pairs for an apartment.

Records of the drive were transferred Monday to the office of the county service officer in the courthouse. All placements will be made through that office, where registration of housing accommodations will be accepted through noon Saturday.

Conducted from the stage of the Central High school auditorium, the program was attended by approximately 150 veterans seeking housing accommodations. The estimated need in Grand Forks is 375 dwelling units.

## STICK TO WORK

SEOUL — The U. S.-Soviet commission on Korea issued its

# Will Rush Food to China Famine Area

SHANGHAI — (AP) — Emergency distribution of food by air to China's starving people is being organized by UNRRA in an effort to combat a famine so severe that several millions are reported eating grass, roots, and bark of trees and even clay.

Maj. Gen. Claire I. Chennault, once head of the famed Flying Tigers and former commanding general of the 14th air force, disclosed he is forming an air transport unit to fly UNRRA relief to stricken areas.

UNRRA Field Representative

Grand Forks Herald, April 1946



476

## STILL RECORD OF

Date	No. Permit	Use	Estimated Cost	Fee Paid	Owner
1946					
May 11	10,140	Repairs to bed	150.00	2.00	Fredrick Harig
" 13	10,141	Residing Res.	150.00	2.00	Helen W. Thompson
" 13	10,142	Residence	6000.00	12.00	Brooks Baukol
" 13	10,143	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,144	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,145	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,146	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,147	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,148	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,149	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,150	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,151	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,152	Residence	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,153	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,154	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 13	10,155	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	156	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	157	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	158	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	159	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	160	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	161	"	6000.00	12.00	"
" 10,	162	Move Garage		3.00	John B. Kleven

## BUILDING PERMITS

476 3

Street Address	Lot	Block	Addition
1210 Linden Court	21-22	3	
708 - N. 5th St.	26	36	L.P. View
1802 - 4th Street N.	10	2	Alex. & Ince
1804 - 4th Street N.	11	2	Baukol's Subdivision
1806 - 4th Street N.	12	2	" "
1808 - 4th Street N.	13	2	" "
1810 - 4th Street N.	14	2	" "
1812 - 4th Street N.	15	2	" "
1814 - 4th Street N.	16	2	" "
1816 - 4th Street N.	17	2	" "
1818 - 4th Street N.	18	2	" "
1820 - 4th Street N.	19	2	" "
1801 - 4th Street N.	1	3	" "
1803 - 4th Street N.	2	3	" "
1805 - 4th Street N.	3	3	" "
1807 - 4th Street N.	4	3	" "
1809 - 4th Street N.	5	3	" "
1811 - 4th Street N.	6	3	" "
1813 - 4th Street N.	7	3	" "
1815 - 4th Street N.	8	3	" "
1817 - 4th Street N.	9	3	" "
1819 - 4th Street N.	10	3	" "
3 room 402 - 8.6th to 1615 - 9 Avenue N.			

20 building permits issued to Brooks Baukol on May 13, 1946

## Building Permits Pass 1945 Total

Building permits for construction in Grand Forks already have exceeded the total for the entire year of 1945, with a grand total of \$542,893 for 1946 to date, it was announced Wednesday by Colburn Hvidston Jr., city building inspector. The 1945 total was \$512,692.

The 1946 figures went over the top as a result of the issuance of permits for construction of 20 homes in the new Baukol subdivision at \$6,000 each, a total of \$120,000. The total for May this year was \$150,420.

Grand Forks Herald, May 1946



# 1946: N. Fourth St, Plain Residential





# 1946: N. Fourth St, Plain Residential





# 1946: N. Fourth St, Hipped Roof Box



## Park Ave homes also contributing to the Riverside Neighborhood Historic District





# N. Third Street – Ranch/Rambler



# Park Ave – Ranch & Hipped Roof Box



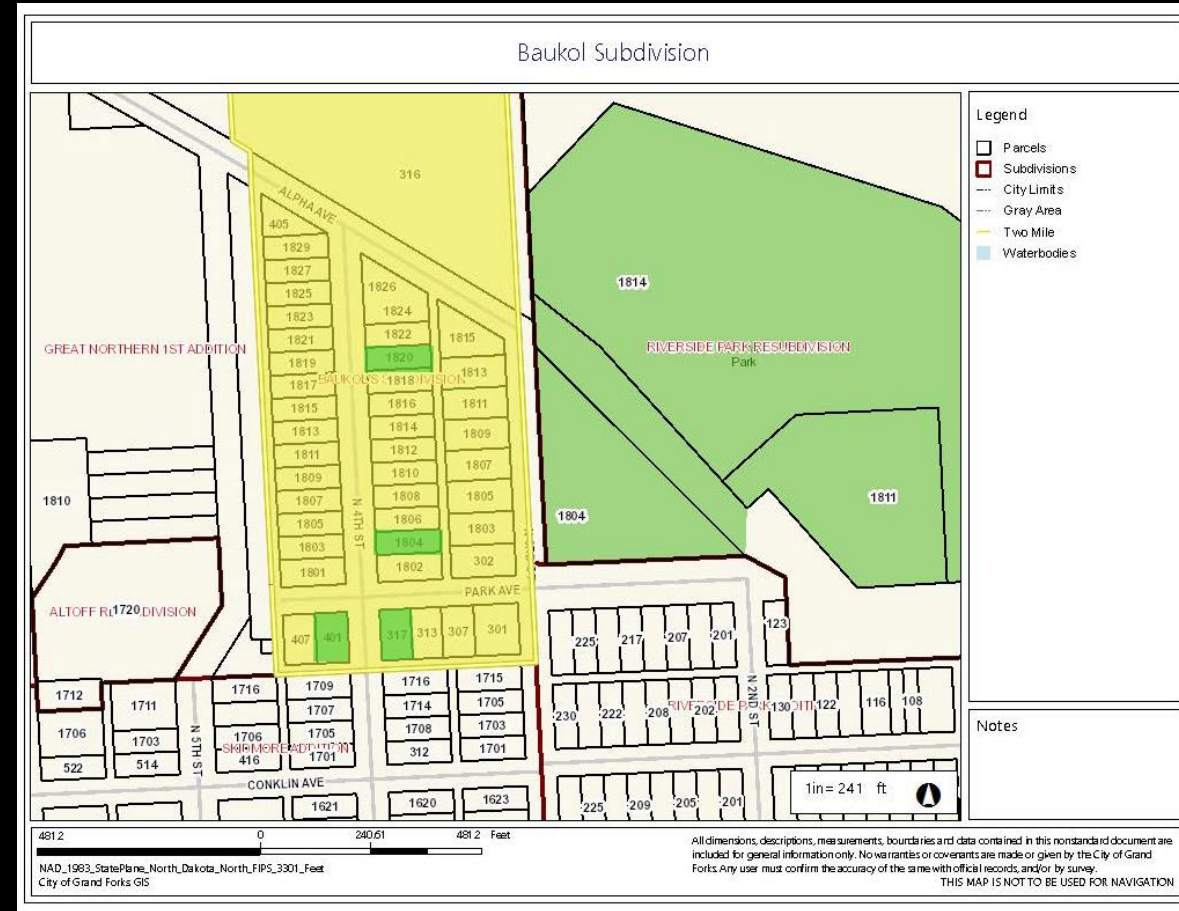


# Basement Fallout Shelter



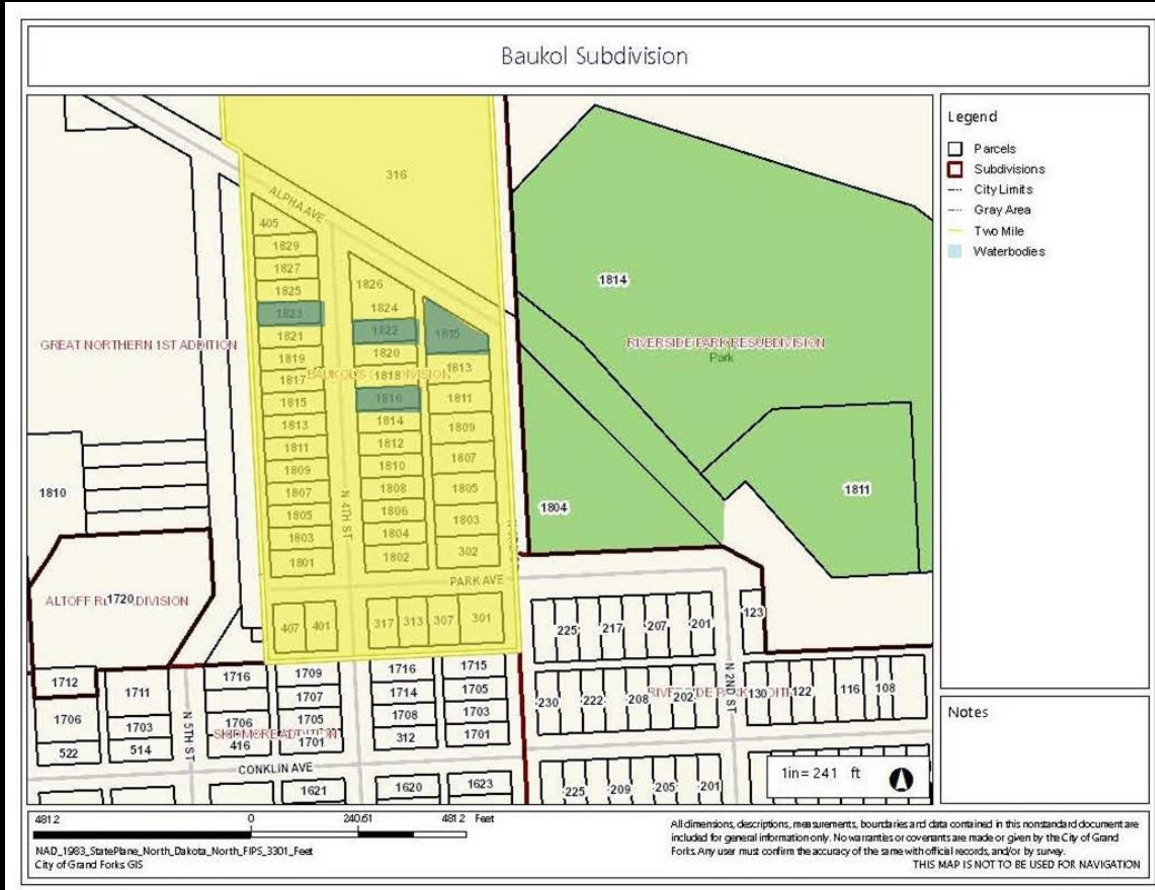


Contributing Homes

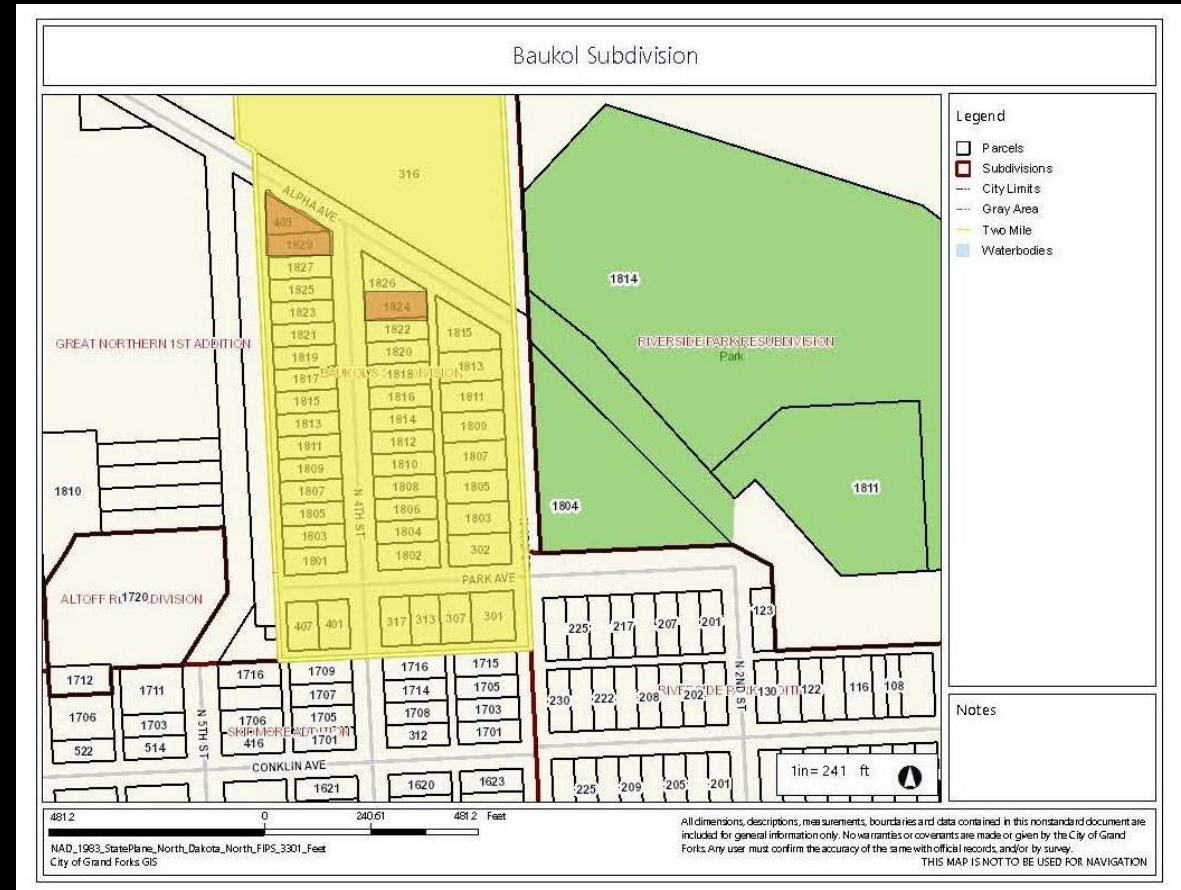


Non-Contributing Homes





Infill Homes



Relocated Homes

## Baukol Historic District 1950 Census Data &amp; Veteran Information – A Sample

Address	Year built	1950 Census Names	1950 Census occupations	Possible Military Service	Veteran occupied	Permit Date	Permit value
1807 N 3rd St	1949	Lloyd Richmond (head; W; 40), Billie (wife; W; 42), William (son; W; 12), Rodney (son; W; 10)	Lloyd Richmond - Consulting engineer, construction	Draft card: born 3-27-1910, died 26-3-2001, William Lloyd Richmond in Watertown, SD. Lived Grand Forks. Registered 10-16-1940. buried in Calvary Cemetery. English/Irish	y	5/27/1949	\$10,000
1809 N 3rd St	1949	Alden Braseth (head; W; 35), Dorothy (wife; W 31)	Alden Braseth - Plumber, Heating & Plumbing Co.	Draft card: born 2-6-1915, died 2-22-2006, Alden O'Donald Braseth, aged 25, owner of Alden Braseth Heating Co., born GF, registered 10-16-1940. buried in Memorial Park Cemetery. Norwegian	y	9/17/1949	Not noted
1801 N 4th St	1946	Kermit Quaintance (head; W; 32); Betty (wife; W; 31) Bonnie (daughter; W; 3) Ray (son, W; newborn)	Kermit Quaintance - grain buyer, State Mill	Draft card: born 17-6-1917, Crookston, MN. Died 10-29-1992, registered in Hennepin Col, MSP 10-16-1940	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1802 N 4th St	1946	F. C. Hamilton (head; W; 34), Valessa (wife; W; 31), Jeffrey (son; W; 5), Jane (daughter; W; 2)	F. C. Hamilton - Banker, Bank	Record for " Floyd C. Hamilton" born 8-10-1915 Havre Montana, died 11-15-2004 (California)	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1803 N 4th St	1946	"Halvar" Rynestad (head; W; 40), Blanche (wife; W 32); Benton (son; W; 9); Bonnie (daughter; W; 2), Bonita (daughter, W, 2)	Truck driver, City Dairy	Draft card: born 9-29-1909 Thief River Falls, died 9-29-1995, Registered Grand Forks 10-16-1940, buried Memorial Park Cemetery, Norwegian	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1804 N 4th St	1946	Bernt Wills (head; W; 40), Evelyn (wife; W; 32), James (son; W; 7), Karen (daughter; W; 5)	Bernt Wills - Geography teacher, UND	Born Drake ND 7-24-1909, died 7-26-1985, buried Riverside Cemetery, Registered 10-16-1940 Montana	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1805 N 4th St	1946	Stanley Perryman (head; W, 38); Bernadine (wife; W; 34), Bruce (son; W; 12) Brien (son; W; 3); Dennis (son; W; 2)	Stanley Perryman - Patrolman, Border Patrol	No military record found.	?	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1806 N 4th St	1946	Elmore Merry (head; W; 47), Effie (wife; W; 45), Ruby (daughter; W; 22); Raymond (son; W; 20)	Elmore Merry - Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's office; Ruby Merry - Teller, bank	Born 10-10-1902 MT Hope, WI. Registered Larimore, ND 2-16-1942, Died 11-16-1956, buried Bellevue Cemetery, Larimore.	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1807 N 4th St	1946	Donald Nicholson (head; W; 28), Lois (wife; W; 24), Donald (son, W, 3)	Donald Nicholson - Salesman; Drug Co.	Born 8-6-1922, Williston, ND. Registered 6-10-1940. Honorably discharged 12-10-1945. Resided St. Paul, MN. Died 5-16-2011, San Antonio TX	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1808 N 4th St	1946	Arthur Mrachek (head; W; 35), Elaine (wife; W; 34), Dennis (son; W; 7), Thomas (son, W; 2)	Arthur Mrachek - Manager, Retail clothing store	Born 9-18-1914, Geneseo ND, registered 10-16-1940 in GF, Died 1-12-1978 Billings, MT	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1809 N 4th St	1946	Walter Weaver (head; W; 40), Alma (wife; W; 41), Donald (son; W; 12), Lois (daughter; W; 6), Donna Lynn (daughter; W; 3)	Walter Weaver - Salesman, Life Insurance Co.	Born 6-12-1909 Lakota, ND. Registered Grand Forks 10-16-1940, died 8-25-1963, Fargo. Still lived at 1809N. 4th St	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1810 N 4th St	1946	Lester Gronseth (head; W; 28), Hope (wife; W; 26)	Lester Gronseth - Machinery, Farm Machinery; Hope Lunseth - Student	Born 8/4/1921 Coulee, ND. Served in the US Navy. Honorable discharge 2/4/46	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1811 N 4th St	1946	Oscar Muske (head; W; 33), June (wife; W; 32), Donald (son; W; 1)	Oscar Muske - Civil engineer	Born: 4-22-1917 Dickey, ND. Registered 10-16-1940. Died 5-26-2008, Valley City, ND	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1812 N 4th St	1946	Thomas Ryan (head; W; 25), Joan (wife; W; 24), Katherine (daughter; W; 2) Patricia (daughter; W; 1)	Thomas Ryan, Farmer	Born 8/21/1924 in Minneapolis, MN. Registered Minneapolis, MN.	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1813 N 4th St	1946	Herbert Paulson (head; W; 26); Ruth (wife; W; 26)	Herbert Paulson -Clerk, bank	Born: 6-17-1923, Bathgate, ND. Registered 6-27 1942. Died 11-10-2011, Grand Forks	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000
1814 N 4th St	1946	Alfred Olson (head; W; 36), M. Adeline (wife; W 33) Mark (son; W; 6)	Alfred Olson - salesman, Wholesale paper co.; M.Adeline Olson - business teacher, UND	Born 11-13-1912, Deerwood MN. Died 10-20-2008. Registered 10-16-1940 in Brainerd, MN.	y	5/13/1946	\$6,000

A sample of the 1950 Census data pertaining to residents of Baukol Addition





N. Fourth Streetscape



N. Third Streetscape

# Thank You

Residents of Baukol Addition  
Bard Baukol, son of Brooks Baukol  
William Caraher  
City of Grand Forks GIS staff  
City of Grand Forks Engineering Department  
Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, University of North Dakota  
Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission

The nomination which is the subject of this NRHP Registration Form has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, a division of the United States Department of the Interior, and administered by the State Historical Society of North Dakota. The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of the Interior or the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

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