

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

GOLDEN GATE VILLAGE (Marin County Public Housing)

HALS NO. CA-158

- Location:** 429 Drake Avenue, Sausalito, California.
37°52'8.54"N, 122°30'42.58"W (Northwest corner of the site, Google Earth, WGS84)
- Significance:** Golden Gate Village is significant as a post-World War II public housing project that was created with a goal of providing a racially integrated community based on progressive social and environmental ideals. It was created in response to a need for housing for a racially diverse population that was attracted to the area during World War II to work in the nearby Marinship shipyards. Because of racial covenants and social issues elsewhere in Marin County, Marin City, where Golden Gate Village is located, became the county's only majority African American community¹. The landscape design for the campus is unique among public housing projects for its park-like setting in a suburban context, its use of natural topography, and its relationship to the adjacent open space lands of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The landscape design of Golden Gate Village is also significant for its association with landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. The architecture is associated with important mid-century architects Aaron G. Green and John Carl Warnecke. Aaron Green was a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright and this is reflected in the Prairie Style influence evident in the design of the distinctive high-rise residential buildings. The period of significance is 1955 to 1961, representing the period including the planning, site acquisition, design and construction of the complex.
- Description:** Golden Gate Village is located in Marin City, an unincorporated area of Marin County in Northern California, four miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge. The public housing project was constructed on a 29.8-acre "u"-shaped site in a north-facing natural sloping bowl. It is adjacent to the open space Marin Headlands of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The eastern edge of the site is bounded by Highway 101. Golden Gate Village opened in 1960 and is operated by the Marin Housing Authority.
- The development consists of twenty-eight residential buildings, and one administrative building arranged in an innovative site plan that responds to the topography of the site. The outer edge of the site extends into the hillside and

¹ In 1980, the population of Marin City was 76% African American. Redevelopment and growth in Marin City in recent years has reduced the percentage of African Americans to 42% in 2013, but Marin City retains a strong African American identity and there is a strong sense of community.

eight five-story buildings are arrayed perpendicular to the slope, appearing to be set into the hillside. Twenty single and two-story residential buildings are arranged in the lower portions of the site that were graded into flat building pads. Associated pathways, terraces, courtyards, common spaces, and parking areas are distributed around the site. Much of the site's hardscape, paths, parking, walls and other constructed features survive in their original form. Some paths have been altered to provide accessible path of travel to select units.

Extensive planting, designed by Lawrence Halprin, was part of the original construction and included trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and turf. Additional planting and removals have occurred over the years resulting in significant changes from the original Halprin design. Mature trees, many likely from the original planting survive, but much of the shrub and ground cover layer has been lost over time due to age, maintenance, and clearing for security and visibility reasons.

Landscape Characteristics

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of Golden Gate Village is influenced by the "u"-shaped site created by the curving Drake Avenue and the bowl-shaped sloping terrain. The eight five-story buildings in the outer ring of the complex are arranged in a radial pattern that is perpendicular to the direction of the slope. This arrangement is unique and contrary to standard site planning method that usually work with (parallel to) terrain, rather than perpendicular to the slope. This contrarian design is characteristic of mid-century design where innovative, and sometimes experimental ideas are incorporated into the design. The unusual siting design had a functional benefit – the five-story buildings could be built without the use of elevators. Each of floors one through four have on-level parking and building entrances. The fifth floor is accessed via one flight of steps.

The twenty single and two-story residential buildings are arranged in clusters, some of which share an outdoor courtyard. The low-rise buildings are generally parallel with the slope on graded building pads. Twelve of the low-rise buildings are arranged in three clusters of four buildings that share a central courtyard. Eight of the low-rise buildings are fit on pads graded into the slopes.

The informality of the site planning was very much Halprin's response to the natural terrain and the informal suburban setting. This contrasted with many post-war public housing projects that were built with more formal organization in urbanized settings.

Circulation

Access to Golden Gate Village is from the curving Drake Avenue that forms the northern boundary of the site. Drake Avenue was created in the Marin City Redevelopment master plan that was drafted after World War II.² A secondary internal road, Cole Drive, provides further access to the interior of the site. Cole Drive was part of the Golden Gate Village campus plan. Parking lot access driveways are located on both Drake Avenue and Cole Drive providing parking near each of the residential buildings. The eight five-story buildings are grouped in pairs of two with each pair sharing parking areas that step up the hillside providing on grade access to each of the lower four floors. Informal curving concrete pedestrian paths provide additional access throughout the site. Concrete stairs with metal pipe rails are located at key points around the site. Concrete stairs also connect the entry plazas along the parking lot sides of the 5-story high-rise buildings.

Topography

The hillside topography is one of the most important character defining features of Golden Gate Village. The elevations of the site range from approximately 5' above sea level at the northeast corner of the site to 100' above sea level at the southwest corner.³ The five-story residential buildings are set perpendicular into the hillside with four outdoor entry plazas for each of the bottom four floors. Between the buildings, roads, and parking areas, turf areas studded with trees consist of smooth, rounded landforms that provides grade transitions on the slopes. Parking areas are terraced to provide on-grade access to the first four floors.

The low-rise buildings are set on level pads, some graded into the slopes, and some on the flatter land at the lower end of the site. Again, smooth, rounded landforms provide transitions between the buildings and roads.

Vegetation

Halprin's planting design for Golden Gate Village provided a variety of mostly naturalistic arrangement of large trees, accent trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and extensive areas of turf. The naturalistic design was prevalent around the high-rise buildings. While many of the original large trees remain, shrubs and groundcovers have been removed or died and not replaced, changing landscape to mostly large trees and turf. This was done partly to reduce maintenance, improve security conditions, and to create defensible space to reduce fire risk. While portions of the landscape areas are somewhat barren, the overall effect of a park-like landscape is still evident. Around the low-level buildings Halprin made extensive use of hedges to define outdoor spaces and emulate the orthogonal mass of the rectangular buildings. Some existing trees that pre-dated

² Boyce, Gretchen, Marin Housing Authority, Character-Defining Feature Study, Golden Gate Village, Marin City, CA, September 2019.

³ Google Earth Pro.

the construction were retained along the east edge of the property to screen the campus from the adjacent Highway 101. Trees were also planted along Drake Avenue and Cole Drive to buffer the residential buildings. Supplemental planting was done in 1974 and 1984.⁴

From Halprin's original plant list for Golden Gate Village:

Trees (5-gallon size)

Grevillea robusta, Silk Oak
Acacia latifolia, Everblooming Acacia
Acacia melanoxylon, Black Acacia
Eucalyptus ficifolia, Red Flowering Gum
Pinus radiata, Monterey Pine
Sequoia sempervirens, Redwood
Cupressus macrocarpa, Monterey Cypress
Albizia lophantha, Plume Albizzia
Populus nigra italica, Lombardy poplar
Ulmus parvifolia, Siberian Elm
Platanus acerifolia, Sycamore
Fraxinus velutina glabra, Modesto Ash
Liquidambar styraciflua, Liquidambar
Celtis australis, European Hackberry
Prunus pissardi, Purple-Leaf Plum
Prunus morabylan, Morabylan plum
Craetagus oxyacantha paulii, Pauls Double Scarlet Hawthorne
Pinus canariensis, Canary Island Palm
Eucalyptus viminalis, White Gum

Shrubs (1 and 5-gallon size)

Griselinia littoralis, Kupuka Tree
Escallonia organensis, Pink Escallonia
Coprosma baueri, Mirror Plant
Ligustrum lucidum, Glossy Privet
Cortaderia selloana, Pampas Grass
Kniphopia uvaria, Red Hot Poker
Genista racemosa, Broom
Cistus corbariensis, White Rockrose
Melaleuca decussata, Lilac Melaleuca
Escallonia montevidensis, Pink Escallonia
Pittosporum tobira, Mock Orange
Myoporum laetum, Myoporum
Raphiolepis indica rosea, Pink India Hawthorne
Spartium junceum, Broom

⁴ Boyce. 4-5.

Pyracantha rosedale, Rosedale Firethorn

Groundcovers

Vinca minor, Periwinkle

Gazania, Gazania

Rosmarinus officinalis prostrates, Prostrate Rosemary

Ceanothus griseus horizontalis, Ceanothus

Hypericum calycinum, Aarons Beard

Pyracantha “Santa Cruz”, Firethorn

Views and Vistas

Views within the campus often focus on the prominent ship’s prow form of the high-rise buildings against the natural hillsides behind them. The high-rise buildings are also prominent features in views from outside the campus. From the upper levels of the campus and the high-rise buildings, there are selective views to the hills north of the site and some views of Richardson Bay.

Buildings and Structures

There are eight high-rise buildings that are primarily of concrete construction capped with shallow angle hipped red tile roof with extended eaves. The low angle roof and horizontal lines of the high-rises are reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie Style that emphasized horizontal lines. Architect Aaron Green was a protégé of Wright’s and may have influenced the roof form and horizontal lines of the buildings. On the parking lot side of each building, exterior corridors provide access to the residential units. The walkways are lined with precast perforated concrete screens punctuated with replacement metal picket screens where the concrete screens deteriorated. On the other side, each unit has an outdoor balcony. Ground floor units have an outdoor terrace. Each of the first four floors is accessible from the parking area and a small entry plaza. The unique grading design allowed the five-story buildings to be constructed without an elevator. The most prominent feature of the buildings is the ship’s prow-shaped staircase enclosure on the five-story end facades, reminiscent of the ships built at Marinship. Four of the buildings have had exterior stairways added in 2002.⁵ The other four buildings retain their original enclosed staircases. The high-rise buildings are painted in two tones of tan with red accent on the exterior walkways.

Of the twenty low-rise buildings, thirteen are two-story buildings with concrete ground floors and wood frame second floors. Seven buildings are one-story. Each of the low-rise buildings have gable roofs with composite shingles. All of the low-rise units have outdoor spaces defined by wood fences or perforated concrete block walls. One additional building is the administration office and maintenance building at the northwest corner of the campus.

⁵ Boyce. 4-6.

Small Scale Features

There are many small scale features, too numerous to record in this document. These include wood fences and concrete screen walls providing some privacy for outdoor terraces, retaining walls and seat walls, signs, benches, light standards, playground equipment, gas meter enclosures, picnic tables and benches.

Other Landscape Features

There are several existing landscape features that were added after the period of significance and are not considered contributing features to the site's historic significance. These include:

- the Mattie & Clarence Boatman Community Garden (1981) on Cole Drive
- The recreation cluster at the north end of the project site. This was the location of a playground in the original plan, but it was demolished and redesigned in 1974 and 1992. A tennis court (now the site of a skate park), a basketball court and additional playground were added in 1974. The courts were altered in 1992 when Donahue Street was realigned.

Physical Condition and Historical Evolution

As of this writing, Golden Gate Village has served its original purpose for sixty years.⁶ All of the original buildings remain, and they have undergone only minor changes. Those changes include the aforementioned addition of exterior stairs on four of the high-rise buildings, and the loss of some of the concrete parapet walls along the exterior walkways. No additional buildings have been added and the only significant changes are to the recreation area at the northern extent of the property. There is some loss of shrubs and groundcovers, but the landscape retains a park-like character. Many features are due for rehabilitation, but overall, the campus retains a high degree of integrity.

History:

Marinship Shipyards and Marin City

Before World War II, the area that is now Marin City was a small pastoral valley with a dairy farm typical of Marin County rural areas. The war would transform the small valley. San Francisco Bay was the major ship building center on the West Coast, and with the United States entry in the War in December 1941, there was an immediate need to accelerate war production, particularly for cargo ships

⁶ A major rehabilitation of Golden Gate Village has been discussed for many years. The residential units need upgrading to current standards. The residents have been engaged in discussions with the Marin Housing Authority and several proposed plans have been a source of contention between the residents and the Housing Authority. The issue has galvanized the community and the residents' group was responsible for having Golden Gate Village listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The significance of Golden Gate Village has been a source of community pride.

and tankers. Existing shipyards in San Francisco and Richmond were already at capacity and additional sites were sought. The W.A. Bechtel Company was contacted by the U.S. Maritime Commission on March 2, 1942, to build a new shipyard. Within twenty-four hours a 210-acre site in Sausalito, owned by the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, was selected. The marshy site was level, largely undeveloped, had deep water access and good transportation by rail and highway.⁷ Within days, a contract was signed, and ground was broken for the shipyard on March 28, 1942. With the shipyard facilities still under construction, the first keels were laid on June 27, 1942.⁸ By the end of 1942, the shipyard launched five Liberty ships. When production was halted in September 1945 after the Japanese surrender, Marinship had contributed 93 ships (15 Liberty ships and 78 tankers) to the war effort.

To achieve this production, the shipyard employed almost 22,000 workers at its peak. To hire that many workers, a very active recruiting program was needed to achieve the employment goals. Workers came from all over the United States with large contingents from Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri. Many workers were older men not eligible for the draft, women, teens, and minorities. In particular, thousands of African Americans took the opportunity to escape the Jim Crow South.⁹ The scale of black migration to the San Francisco Bay Area resulted in an increase in African American population from 20,000 in 1940 to 60,000 in 1945, and 70% of black workers were employed in the Bay Area's shipyards.¹⁰ At Marinship's peak of employment, approximately ten percent, more than 2,000 workers, were African American.

With the multi-cultural workforce at Marinship, relations between the workers was generally cooperative, however African Americans still experienced racism. The predominant trade union at shipyards was the Boilermakers. Prior to the war, the Boilermakers was a strictly white union. Give the available workforce during the war there was much pressure on the union to change their membership rules. By contract, shipyard workers were required to be union members. The Boilermakers created an "auxiliary" membership category for minority workers who still paid dues but received reduced union protections and benefits. There were organized protest efforts to end the discriminatory membership practices and many black workers refused to pay dues. The union moved to remove workers' work authorization, essentially firing them. There were several court cases in San Francisco and Marin, mostly without resolution until February 1944 when the Marin Superior Court case *James v. Marinship* ruled in favor of the workers stating that "discriminating against and segregating

⁷ Knapp & VerPlanck Preservation Architects. *Marinship Historic Context Statement*. (June 2011) 15.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁰ Wollenberg, Charles. *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito*. (1990) 70-71.

Negroes into auxiliaries is contrary to public policy of the state of California.”¹¹ The union appealed but workers could continue to work without paying auxiliary membership dues. In January 1945 the California Supreme Court unanimously affirmed the lower court’s decision in a decisive defeat for the Boilermakers. The union responded by attempting to create “separate but equal” local union halls, but the Civil Rights Movement was making inevitable progress and the union halls were soon fully integrated.

With Marinship reaching full employment, available housing in Sausalito and nearby communities was quickly overwhelmed. Add to that the fact that local residents were not happy about the influx of outsiders and minorities with perceived different lifestyles. In June 1942 the National Housing Authority began planning a defense workers housing development called Marin City, in the small rural valley just north of Marinship. Construction of housing for 1,500 families and 1,000 single workers began in summer 1942 and the first residents moved in on August 18.¹² Also in 1942, the Marin Housing Authority was established to manage and operate the housing development.

Marin City was designed as a self-contained community with a post office, library, community hall, schools, and a retail/commercial district. Rental policies were completely non-discriminatory, a result of federal policies and the leadership of the Marin Housing Authority. It was chaired by Ernest White, president of the Marin Central Labor Council. The Authority’s chief of project services, Milen Dempster, was a community organizer who had been a Socialist candidate for California governor and manager of a federal migrant labor camp. The progressive ideals of the federal New Deal agencies and the Reform era were evident in the culture established for Marin City, a town designed from scratch and unique for the time in Northern California.

By the end of 1943, Marin City had 6,000 residents, making it Marin County’s second largest community.¹³ Buildings filled the valley with buildings in the central flat area arranged geometrically, and outer areas filled with buildings that followed the gentle curving contours.

At the end of the war, and with the shipyard closing, Marin City’s residents looked for employment elsewhere. Many of the non-minority residents moved to other areas of Marin County and elsewhere. The African American residents were not free to live where they pleased. Racial covenants, red-lining, and social practices prevented African Americans from buying or renting homes in many areas. Marin City was established as an integrated community and black and other minority residents felt at home. Post-war migration of African Americans

¹¹ Wollenberg. 81.

¹² Knapp & VerPlanck. 34.

¹³ Ibid., 34.

from the south and other areas continued, including family members of residents and Marin City became an African American majority community.

Golden Gate Village and Marin City Redevelopment

In the decade after World War II, the need for more permanent public housing became a priority for Marin County. The effort was spearheaded by Vera Schultz (1902-1995) who was elected to the Marin County Board of Supervisors in 1952. Schultz was a progressive leader and the first woman elected to the Board of Supervisors. Joining Schultz was Mary Summers, Marin County's first female Planning Director. Schultz traveled to Washington, D.C. to lobby the federal government to turn over land in Marin City for a public housing project. Summers led the physical planning effort including an overall master plan for Marin City, layout of roadways, zoning, and lot subdivision. A voter referendum, required for federal funding, was approved by a 2 to 1 margin in 1956.

Architects for the project were interviewed and in January 1957 architects John Carl Warnecke and Aaron G. Green were selected. The team included landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and city planner Lawrence Livingston, Jr.

Aaron G. Green (1917-2001) was the head of the San Francisco office of Frank Lloyd Wright. He studied architecture at Cooper Union in New York and in the early 1940s became an apprentice of Taliesin, Wright's estate and studio in Wisconsin. After serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Green moved to Los Angeles and later to San Francisco where he opened Aaron G. Green Associates in 1951. Through his office, Green maintained a working relationship with Wright, eventually working on forty projects together, including Wright's Marin County Civic Center. After Wright's death in 1959, Green oversaw the completion of the Marin Civic Center project. Green led the design team and developed the preliminary design plans.

John Carl Warnecke (1919-2010) was born in Oakland, the son of a prominent San Francisco architect Carl I. Warnecke. He studied architecture at Harvard under Bauhaus School founder Walter Gropius. Warnecke founded his own office in 1950 and he built a national practice built on modernism and contextual design. Warnecke's firm prepared the architectural construction documents.

Lawrence Halprin (1916-2009) was one of the most renowned landscape architects with projects around the world. He was born in Brooklyn and had a variety of educational experiences including at Cornell University, the University of Wisconsin, Wright's Taliesin, and Harvard's Graduate School of Design. He was influenced by associations with many architects and designers. He worked in the San Francisco office of landscape architect Thomas Church and started his own practice in 1949. Halprin was responsible for the campus

landscape design including the park-like atmosphere and visual connections to the adjacent open space.¹⁴

Lawrence Livingston Jr. (1918-2007) often collaborated on projects with Lawrence Halprin. Earlier in his career Livingston worked as a city planner on urban redevelopment projects, but he later focused on open space and land conservation issues.

Approvals and Construction of Golden Gate Village

Demolition of the wartime housing began in 1957 and the preliminary plans were submitted to the federal Public Housing Authority and the Marin County Board of Supervisors for approval. Federal approval of the preliminary plans was received in March of 1958 and the architects were authorized to proceed with the construction documents. The final plans were sent to Washington for final approval and the project was out for bidding in November of 1958. Five bids were received, and the contract was awarded to Williams and Burrows on January 15, 1959, and construction began on February 2.

On March 19, 1960, a dedication ceremony was held to announce the completion of the first six buildings. At the dedication County Supervisor Vera Schultz proclaimed that “the front door of Marin County has been preserved in beauty... by a respect for nature and working with her to preserve beauty...”¹⁵ She also called the project the “most beautiful low rent residential installations in the United States.” John Carl Warnecke stated that “this is the first link in transforming a rundown relic to one of the finest communities in the world.”

The first residents started moving in on April 15, 1960. For those that had lived in the Marin City wartime housing, the new residential units were great leap forward with features such as sidewalks, streetlights, outdoor yards and private terraces. Landscape courtyards had redwood and concrete benches and sandboxes for children. Marin City’s oldest resident Catherine Washington, age 99, was the first resident to move into the complex. When asked for her thoughts she stated “I never expected to live in anything like this. This is the best ever.”¹⁶

Legacy of Golden Gate Village

Golden Gate Village stands out as one of the best designed public housing projects of that era. The dedicated architects and designers were committed to providing the highest quality housing environment for residents regardless of income level and social status. There were federal regulations that resulted in significant constraints in funding and cost limits for public housing, yet the

¹⁴ Birnbaum, Charles A. *Shaping the American Landscape*. 124-127.

¹⁵ Ruark, Daniel. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Marin County Public Housing*. 8.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

designers were able to work within these constraints to provide such a high-quality project, proving that good design does not have to cost more.

The residents of Golden Gate Village, despite their economic hardships, have fostered a strong sense of community. The Marin Housing Authority has been exploring ideas for needed rehabilitating or redeveloping the housing units. The residents have been very organized in promoting their vision and successfully created a listing of Golden Gate Village on the National Register of Historic Places to prevent redevelopment that would drastically change the design.¹⁷ The sometimes-adversarial relationship between residents and the Housing Authority is often in the news, but it demonstrates the pride of community and the quality of the original design.

Chronology¹⁸

1941, December: The United States enters World War II.
1942, March: Marinship shipyards established.
1942, June: Marin City established to provide housing for shipyard workers.
1945, August: World War II ends.
1946, May: Marinship closes.
1955: Planning initiated for redevelopment of Marin City.
1957, January: The design team for Golden Gate Village is selected.
1957, November: Demolition begins to clear site for construction.
1958: Construction plans are completed.
1959, February: Construction begins.
1960, April 15: First residents move in.
1961, April: All units occupied.
1972: Golden Gate National Recreation Area established.
1974: Landscape rehabilitation undertaken.
1984: Additional landscape rehabilitation.
2017, September 18: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

¹⁷ Golden Gate Village was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 2017. It is listed under the name Marin City Public Housing, with Golden Gate Village listed as a secondary name. This report chose to use the Golden Gate Village name because it is more commonly known as such.

¹⁸ Adapted from Boyce. 4-4.

- Sources: Birnbaum, Charles A. and Foell, Stephanie S. *Shaping the American Landscape: New Profiles from the Pioneers of American Landscape Design Project*. University of Virginia Press. 2009.
- Boyce, Gretchen. ICF. *Character-Defining Feature Study, Golden Gate Village, Marin City, CA*. Prepared for Marin Housing Authority. September 2019.
- Crispell, Mitchell. *Marin City: Historic African-American Enclave at Risk*. Center for Community Innovation, University of California Berkeley. June 2015.
- Knapp & VerPlanck Preservation Architects. *Marinship Historic Context Statement*. Prepared for the Community Development Department, Sausalito, California. June 2011.
- Marin City Community Services District. *History of Marin City*. Available: <http://marincitycsd.com/history-of-marin-city/>. Accessed July 2021.
- Ruark, Daniel. *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Marin City Public Housing (Golden Gate Village)*, May 2017, Listed September 18, 2017.
- Wilson, Mark Anthony. *Marin City: The Rich History and Current Challenges of a Historic African-American Enclave*. Marin Magazine. December 2015. pp.52-57.
- Wollenberg, Charles. *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito*. Western Heritage Press. 1990.
- Wood, Jim. *History of a Highway: Marin's 101*. Marin Magazine. April 17, 2009.

Historian: Douglas Nelson, ASLA
RHAA Landscape Architects
225 Miller Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941
415-383-7900
doug@rhaa.com

July 2021



View of one of the eight high-rise buildings shows the dramatic siting with the buildings rising out of the hillside. The angled stairway enclosures look like a ship's prow, recalling the ships built at the nearby Marinship shipyard. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



Each of the first floor levels of the high-rise buildings had on-grade parking and entry plazas, eliminating the need for elevators. Residential units are accessed by exterior walkways on each level. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



View of the uphill end of a high-rise building (parking lot side) showing the tiled roof, exterior walkways and entry plaza with seatwall. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



Rear side of one of the high-rise buildings showing the balconies or terrace provided for each residential unit. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



This view shows the park-like character of the campus. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



One of the two-story low-rise residential buildings. Each unit was on two levels with exposed beam ceilings, and each unit had its own outdoor terrace. Buildings were set on level pads graded into sloping sites. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



Concrete paths, trees and extensive turf areas characterize much of the campus landscape.
(Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)



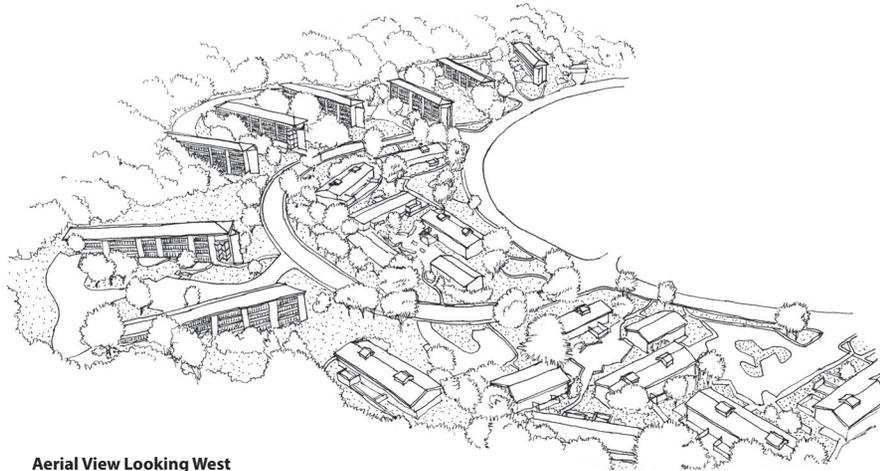
Three clusters of low-rise residential buildings share outdoor common courtyards such as this one. (Douglas Nelson photographer, July 23, 2021)

GOLDEN GATE VILLAGE

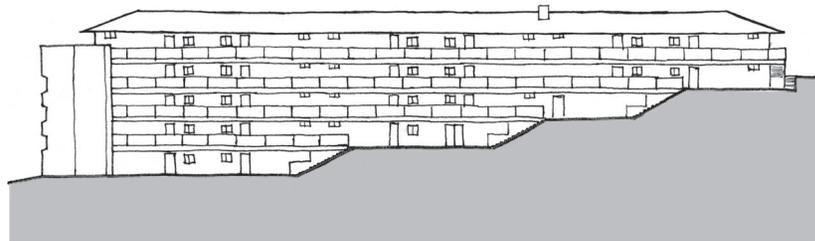
MARIN COUNTY PUBLIC HOUSING



MARIN CITY, CALIFORNIA



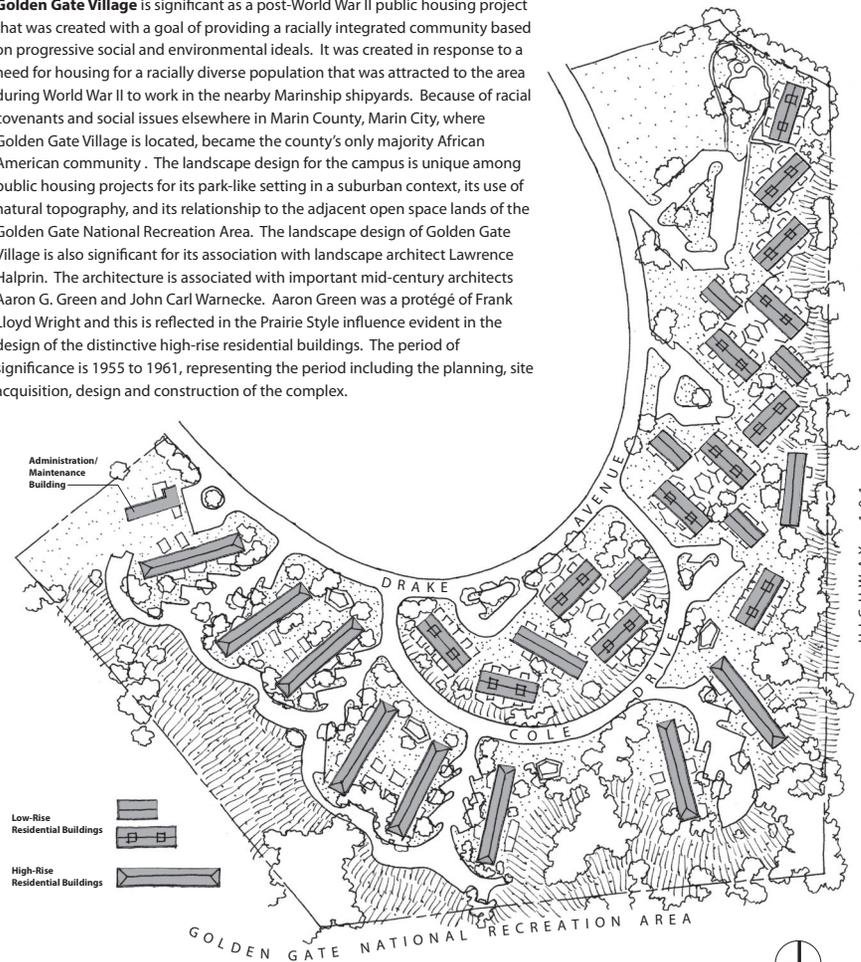
Aerial View Looking West



Section at High-Rise Buildings Showing Grading into Hillside



Golden Gate Village is significant as a post-World War II public housing project that was created with a goal of providing a racially integrated community based on progressive social and environmental ideals. It was created in response to a need for housing for a racially diverse population that was attracted to the area during World War II to work in the nearby Marinship shipyards. Because of racial covenants and social issues elsewhere in Marin County, Marin City, where Golden Gate Village is located, became the county's only majority African American community. The landscape design for the campus is unique among public housing projects for its park-like setting in a suburban context, its use of natural topography, and its relationship to the adjacent open space lands of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The landscape design of Golden Gate Village is also significant for its association with landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. The architecture is associated with important mid-century architects Aaron G. Green and John Carl Warnecke. Aaron Green was a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright and this is reflected in the Prairie Style influence evident in the design of the distinctive high-rise residential buildings. The period of significance is 1955 to 1961, representing the period including the planning, site acquisition, design and construction of the complex.



Administration/
Maintenance
Building

- Low-Rise Residential Buildings
- High-Rise Residential Buildings

Golden Gate Village Site Plan

