

# Report On Suburbia: Beaverton Area Matches Growing Pains



BEAVERTON LIES in extensive transportation network, including four highways and two railroads. Old Oregon Electric line (above) crosses NE Broadway Street near downtown area, adding to traffic woes suffered by core-area.

## Southwest Suburb Provides Varied Municipal Services

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This is the fifth in a series of articles about Portland's suburbs. An article about Parkrose and east Multnomah County will appear Thursday.

Beaverton, a thriving city of almost 8,000 persons, continues to be one of the most progressive of Portland's suburbs. Its schools are rated excellent, its police and fire departments give efficient service, and it has embarked on a new form of government.

The city, the first of the suburbs to incorporate, took another decisive step in May when voters approved a new charter establishing the city manager form of government.

Although the charter went into effect July 1, a manager has not been appointed. Six finalists have been selected and an announcement of the selection will probably be made by Nov. 1.

Running the city is Robert Malsey, city manager pro tem, who has been helping the council with city matters

since 1951 when he was appointed city superintendent. Malsey has applied for the fulltime city manager's position and is one of the finalists.

Whoever gets the \$10,000-a-year job will find plenty to keep him busy in the bustling community.

Its general fund expenditures of \$185,508.20 for the present fiscal year provide for eight fulltime firemen and a roster of 20 volunteers, a police force of 11 persons including a chief and a matron and 19 other city employees.

### Services Offered

Operating in a \$250,000 city hall the government provides a wide range of services which match those offered in other suburbs. Displaying a willingness to meet problems as they arise within the city, the city council has kept abreast with the growing pangs of suburbia.

One group in Beaverton, however, has not kept pace with the changing face of the city, and its time of crisis is

close at hand. Core-area merchants, content with providing old-fashioned hometown merchandising, now face the prospect of competing with the second largest shopping center in Oregon.

Fred Meyer Inc. and Rhodes Western Department Stores will be the principal tenants in a \$7 million center being constructed in Beaverton near the junction of the Beaverton - Hillsdale Highway and SW Canyon Road. Opening date is scheduled for 1963.

Covering 37 acres with ample parking the center will threaten much of downtown Beaverton with oblivion. Between 40 and 50 tenants are expected to set up business in the center, slicing the share of business other stores in Beaverton receive.

Meanwhile, core-area merchants have shown little anxiety about the threat to their livelihoods. They have formed no retail trade association to combat the center.

Mayor Howard Chapman, who will not seek a second two-year term in the November elections, said, "The downtown future looks dim. The Fred Meyer center will be an advantage to the overall area but a severe detriment to the downtown area."

### Streets Planned

"Merchants seem to be as indifferent to it as the average voter is to what happens in city government."

Another leader said, "The downtown merchants are not aggressive. They have adjusted to the community and that is all. They think they are still living in horse-and-buggy days."

The city government is attempting to alleviate some of the distress in the downtown area. Plans by the State Highway Department for relieving congestion are being studied. Wider streets are being planned. Watson Street may be extended through to SW Canyon Road, and more parking is hoped for.

However, one obstacle is insurmountable, according to Chapman. That is the fact two railroad lines, the Southern Pacific and the old Oregon Electric, slice through the middle of the core area, disrupting traffic and taking away the appeal of the shopping district. Trains rumble through the city, backing up traffic at every intersection.

Beaverton's biggest growth has been brought by light industry which has been channeled into the city. The largest firm is Tektronix, employer of about 5,000 persons.

Tektronix started in a little appliance shop on SE Foster Road in Portland in 1945 when Jack Murdock and Howard Vollum decided a quality-made oscilloscope would sell. From that modest start Tektronix has become the world's foremost oscilloscope builder

and the prime force in the economy of the Beaverton area.

### Industry Starts

Tektronix is the type of light industry Beaverton is attempting to attract. And the city is having an amazing degree of success. Within the past eight months, 70 small industries have started operations in the city.

No heavy industries with smokestacks belching grit on the community are sought out by the Chamber of Commerce in its soft-sell campaign for industrial growth.

Land for industrial use is plentiful. Tektronix has its own industrial park in West Beaverton and it is open to other firms. Southern Pacific has 260 acres set aside on the east side of town on its main line.

Truck rates have been equalized and business leaders are seeking equalization of freight rates from the two railroads, which, despite their routes through the traffic in the core area, are playing a vital role in the industrial development of the area.

Another factor in attracting industry is the Beaverton School District, which serves 8,315 elementary pupils and 3,385 students at Beaverton and Sunset High Schools.

The school board was embroiled in a long dispute this past year which resulted in the resignation of Supt. D. Herbert Armstrong and the recall of two board members. But, nonetheless, the District is given an excellent rating by professional educators. The district's graduates win a long list of prizes and scholarships each year.

Beaverton residents show an active interest in the problems of the school district. At the last district election May 7 more than 6,400 voters went to the polls to recall the two board members and to approve the 1962-63 budget of \$7,231,000, the largest of any suburban school district in the state.

This same degree of interest is not manifest in municipal elections, however.

### Voting Light

When the present city budget was up for approval July 22, only 139 voters, or about 4 per cent of those registered, bothered to vote.

The largest turnout in history at a budget election was 518 in 1957, but that came at a second election after a turnout of 101 had rejected the budget the first time it was presented. The low mark for apathy was in 1954 when 49 hardy souls cared enough about their city government to go to the polls.

Steve Loy, a councilman who is running unopposed for mayor in November, explained the lack of enthusiasm:

"This is a bedroom area. Apartment dwellers haven't settled down yet. There is a

lack of communications. When things are going good, people don't get excited. People will put out a little more effort to vote 'no' than vote 'yes.'"

Malsey said, "The average guy works in Portland, comes home at night to his barbecue in the backyard, takes care of his garden, approves of what the city is doing but does nothing himself."

Chapman said people tire of voting. He favors combining the budget elections with other elections held in the area.

Unlike some other suburbs Beaverton is in no particular hurry for annexation of contiguous areas.

### No Hurry

A 1,200 acre section south-west of the city was annexed in July bringing another 1,200 residents into the city. But this annexation is likely to be the last for a while.

Loy said, "We don't actively seek annexation. For a time the civic affairs committee of the Chamber of Commerce was wooing Cedar Hills, but Cedar Hills showed no interest."

"We will have to assimilate this last big bite we took. I see no reason to go into areas with services we would find difficult taking over."

Chapman echoed Loy's opinion: "With the completion of this last annexation, the council should not look for any other annexation unless it would relieve a hardship for the area involved. We should work on integration of the new portion. Then in five years the city should look for a new area. We should be highly selective and take only those areas in which there is a crying need for annexation."

Annexation of areas north of Beaverton would be complicated anyway because of the numerous taxing districts established by the residents.

Beaverton buys its water from Portland's Bull Run system, but has auxiliary wells to handle the increased demand in the summer.

### Deal Offered

It has an adequate sewage system that is being expanded by a \$110,000 addition.

Beaverton officials talked long and hard with Multnomah County about usage of the Fanno Creek Sewage Plant, designed for tri-county use.

According to Loy, Beaverton had negotiated the \$300 hook up charge and \$1.75 monthly rate per user down to the point where they were seriously considering approving the deal. But then the county decided it could not negotiate the charges, and Beaverton went ahead with expansion of its own facilities.

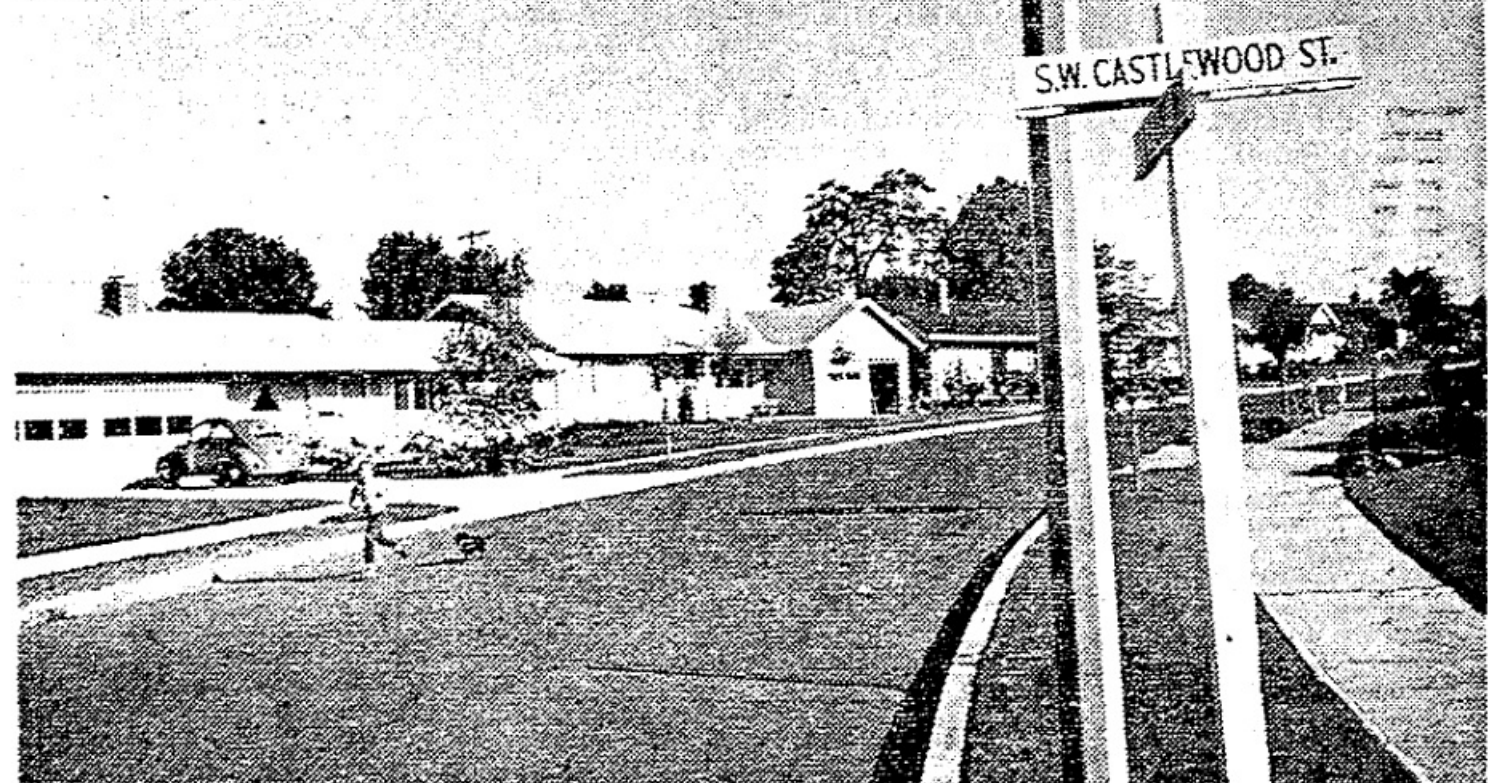
Its willingness to meet problems such as this as they arise is expected to keep Beaverton among the forefront of Portland's suburbs.



SHOPPING CENTER (1) under construction will cover 37 acres in Beaverton and will be second largest center in the state. Other marked features are (2) SW Canyon Road, (3) Beaverton Hillsdale Highway, (4) downtown shopping area, (5) Southern Pacific line, (6) high school.

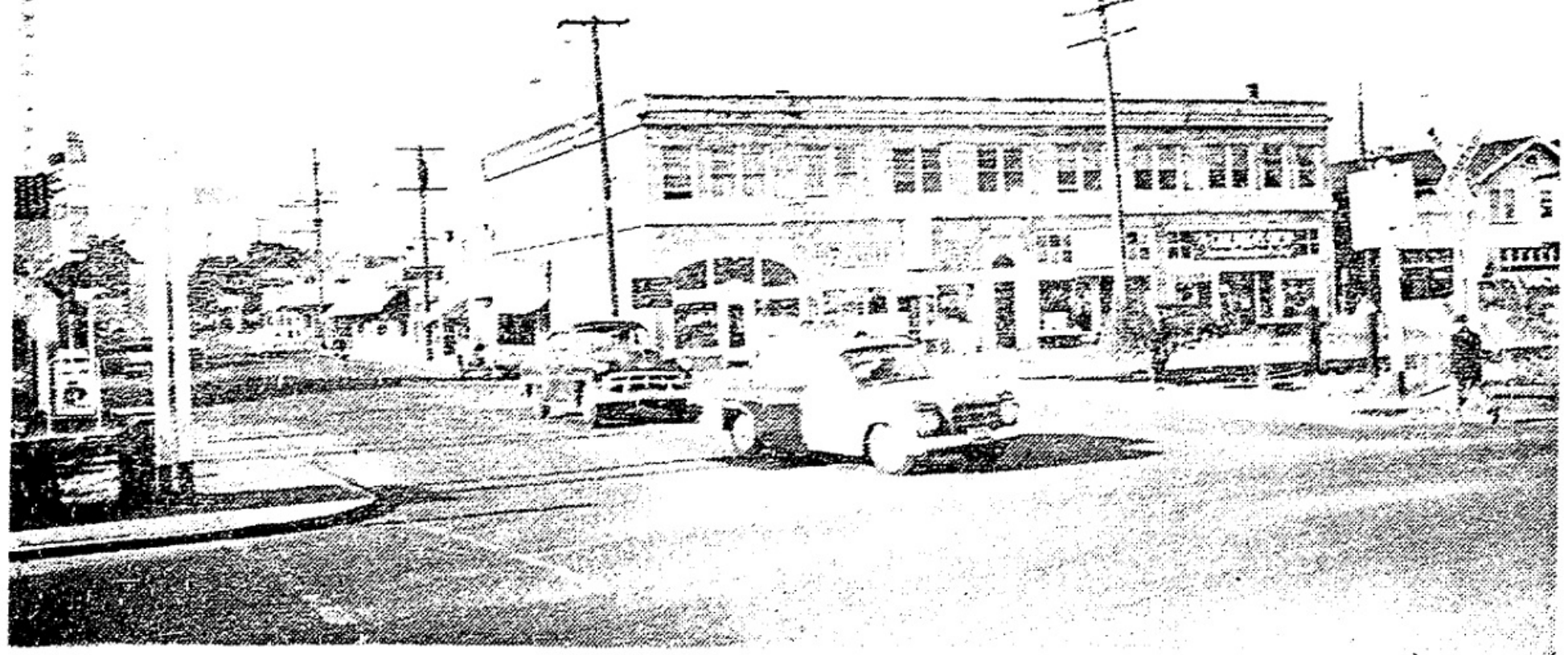


LEADING EMPLOYER in Beaverton area is Tektronix, manufacturer of oscilloscopes. This is the Sunset plant, first to be built by the firm in area. Largest operations are conducted in the Tektronix Industrial Park in West Beaverton.

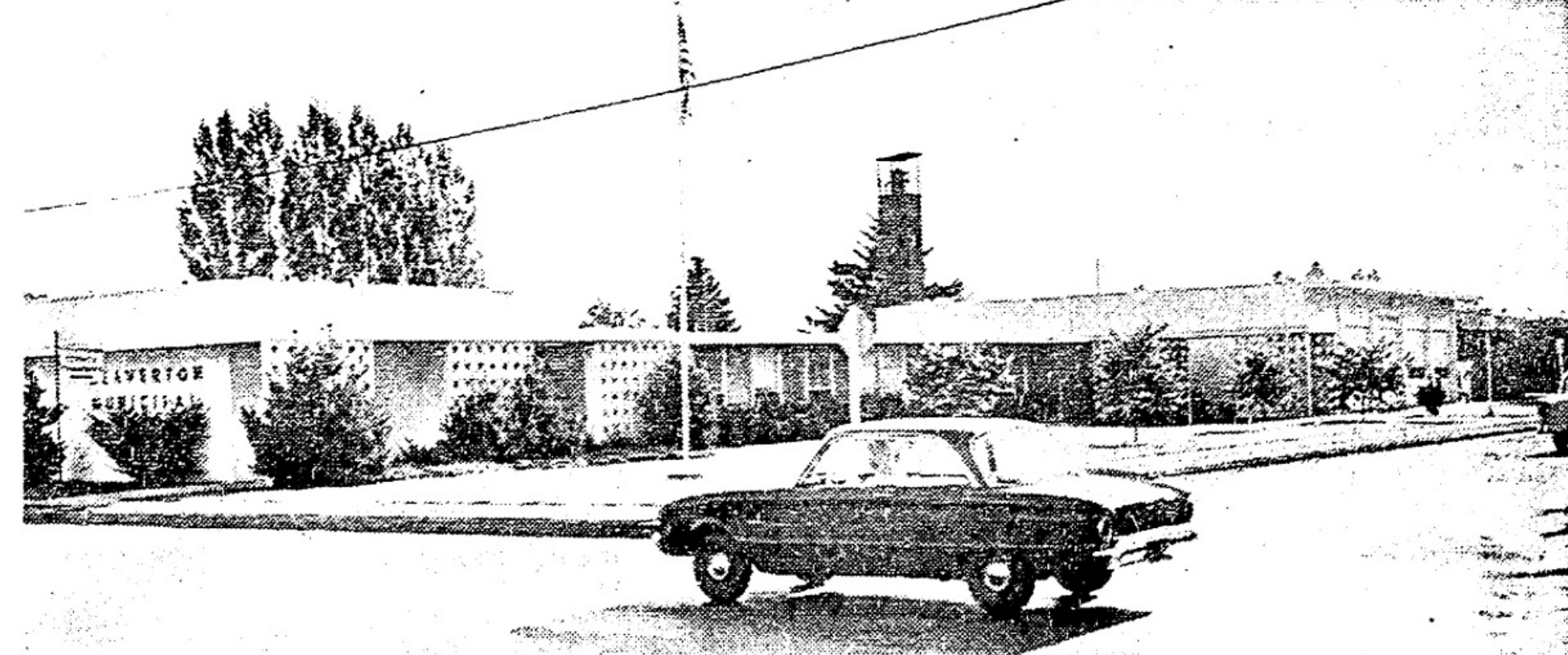


RESIDENTIAL AREAS spring up continuously in the Beaverton area, sending school enrollment figures spiraling. This is a new development on SW Elmhurst Avenue near Castlewood Street. (Staff Photos by David Falconer)

EMPTY stores such as this do not plague Beaverton but when new shopping center opens next year, core-area merchants may be hard-pressed to keep their share of business.



BUSIEST INTERSECTION in Beaverton is at Tualatin Valley Highway (foreground), Farmington Road (right) and Highway 217 (center). Southern Pacific track, parallel to Tualatin Valley Highway, adds to congestion.



BEAVERTON CITY Hall is modern \$250,000 structure housing police and fire departments, courts and city library. The city recently adopted city manager form of government but manager has not yet been appointed.