

Taft:

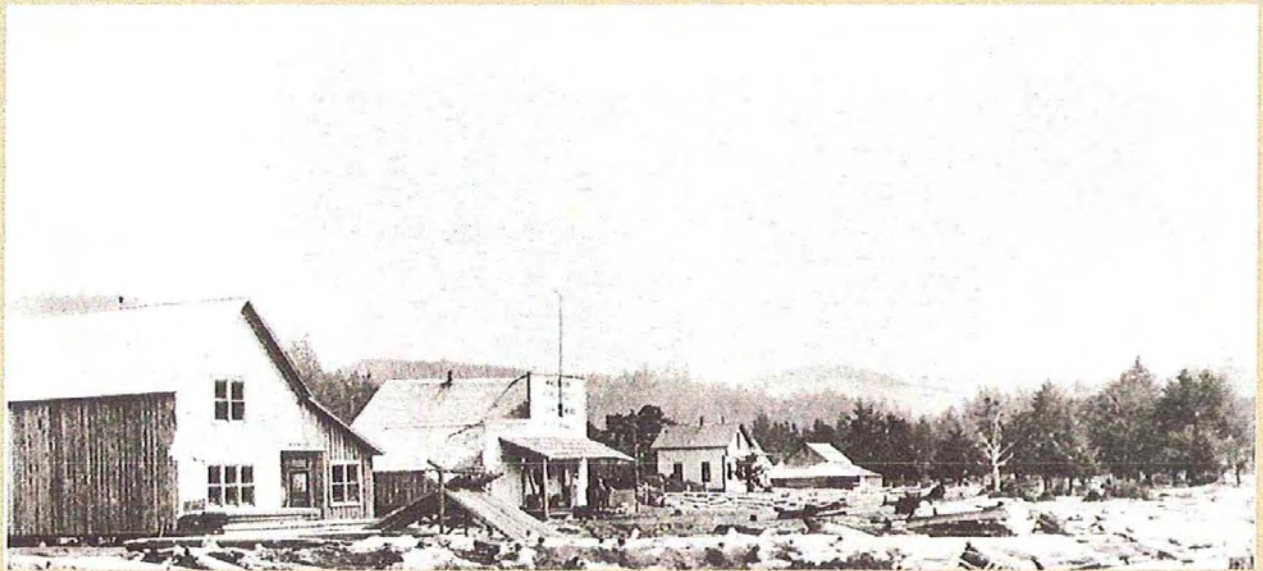
The Transformation of a Waterfront Community to a Resort Town

2001 Historic Context Statement & Cultural Resource Inventory
for the
Taft Section of Lincoln City, Oregon



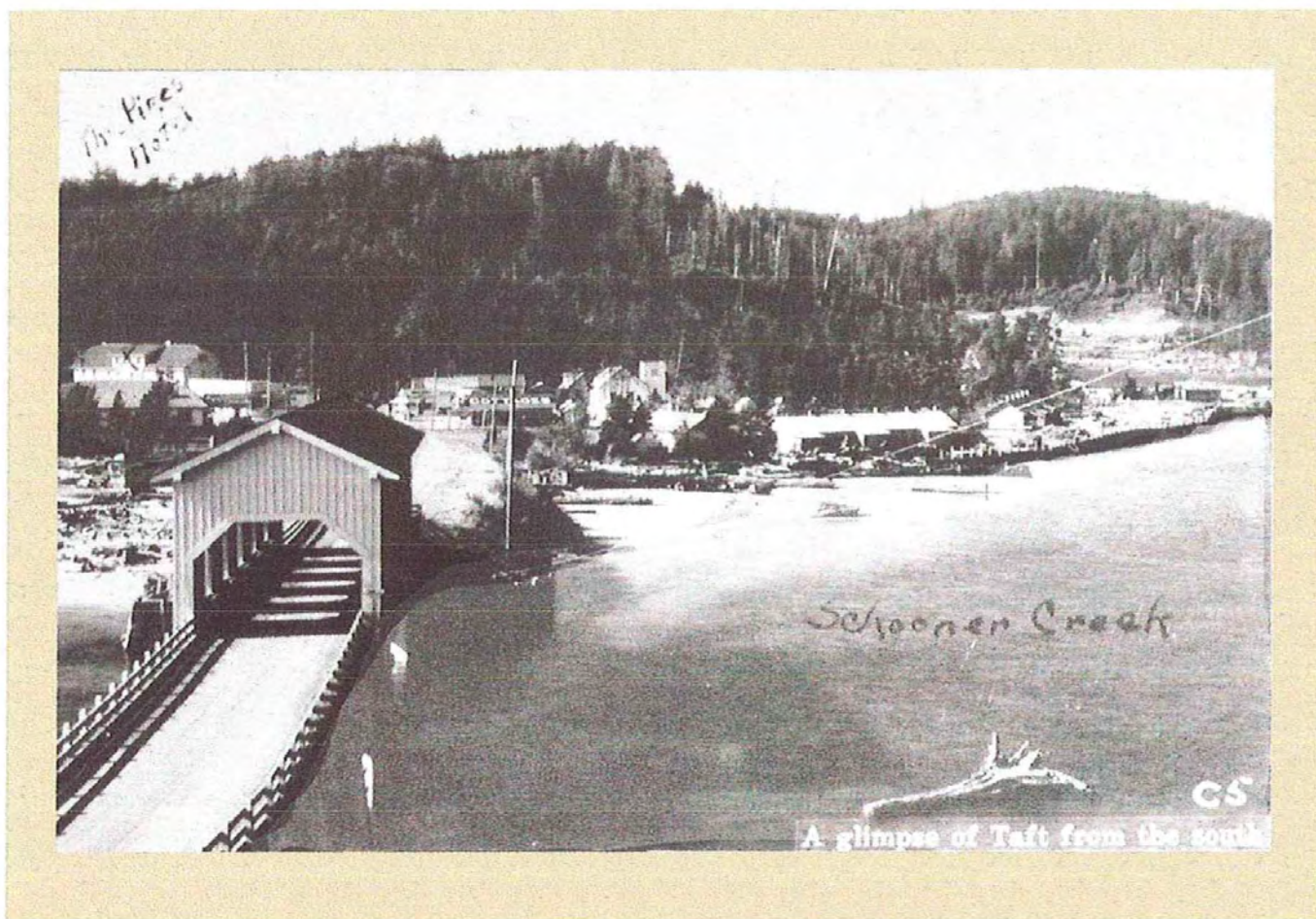
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Font Cover: Taft waterfront, early 1910s.
North Lincoln Pioneer & Historical Association image.

Inside Cover: Taft and Oregon Coast Highway, circa 1930.
Oregon Coast History Center, image #1203.

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Of the communities that make up Lincoln City -- DeLake, Taft, Cutler City, Nelscott and Oceanlake -- Taft is unique. It is the only community in North Lincoln County still in existence whose Euro-American settlement predates the automobile age. Prior to settlement, its location on flat terrain near the mouth of the Siletz Bay and Schooner Creek provided a gathering place for the local Salish Indians for centuries.

Taft became a Euro-American community in the early 1900s. Its waterfront emerged as a small trading and social center for homesteaders living nearby in relative isolation on the floodplains of Schooner and Drift creeks. With the construction of the Roosevelt Military Highway (present-day Highway 101) in the mid-1920s, North Lincoln County's isolation came to an end. The highway served as the main street of every town along the Oregon Coast in its path, including Taft. Like most coastal communities impacted by highway construction, Taft underwent a transformation. Seemingly overnight, its core business district (present-day 51st Street) moved from the Siletz Bay waterfront to the new highway.

Highway construction coincided with the advent of affordable automobiles. Motoring tourists suddenly were the driving force of the economy. When North Lincoln County became accessible by road, there was a rush to develop new resort communities that catered specifically to the motoring public. Camp Roosevelt, Cutler City, DeLake, Depoe Bay, Gleneden Beach, Neotsu, Lincoln Beach, Nelscott, Oceanlake, Roads End and Wecoma were all competing developments within a few miles of Taft that sprang up shortly after the completion of the highway.

SECTION I: CONTEXT DEFINITION

IA - THEME

No resource should be studied in isolation. By comparing similar resource types, integrity, relative scarcity and pattern of occurrence, reasoned determinations of significance within any given context can be quantified and defended. The chronological and thematic categories developed for Oregon's Statewide Inventory of Historic Places (SIHP) provides an organizational framework by which resources surveyed as part of this project are assessed. This system utilizes 10 broad themes and eight chronological periods.

These broad themes are:

1. Prehistory/Archaeology
2. Exploration and Fur Trade
3. Native American and Euro-American Relations
4. Settlement
5. Agriculture
6. Transportation and Communication
7. Commerce and Urban Development
8. Industry and Manufacturing
9. Government
10. Culture

Central Themes

Themes six and seven (Transportation and Communication, Commerce and Urban Development) are central to the development of Taft.

The history of Taft illustrates well a community's transformation from an isolated waterfront trade center to an automobile-based tourist town with high hopes for the future. Its modest beginnings as a community can be traced to July 1894 -- the date North Lincoln County opened up for Euro-American settlement. By the early 1900s, Taft was a central gathering place for isolated homesteaders who recently had settled on former Siletz Indian Reservation land.

Taft grew at a snail's pace until North Lincoln County's entry into the automobile age in the early 1920s. With the coming of the highway began Taft's transformation into what it is today: a resort community catering to the motoring

public. The vast majority of the historic sites and structures in Taft date from this transitional period.

Sub Themes

Prehistory / Archaeology

What little information from this period in existence is obtained from pioneer recollections.

Exploration and Fur Trade

There is no shortage of speculation as to the identity of the region's first maritime explorers. As best can be determined, the early maritime explorers of the Central Oregon Coast -- be they Spanish, English or Russian -- left no detailed descriptions of their observations.

For the purposes of this project, the exploration era begins in 1849 with the first known detailed written account of the area.

Native American & Euro-American Relations

There was virtually no interest in the Central Oregon Coast among the homesteaders that flocked to the Oregon Territory seeking free acreage made available by the enactment of the Oregon Donation Land Act of 1850. Early-day Oregon settlers were primarily drawn to areas known for their great agricultural potential, mineral wealth or harvestable timber reserves.

Given the inaccessibility of the Oregon Coast in the 19th century and the limited supply of the specific natural resources necessary to support homesteaders, it seems little wonder the Central Oregon Coast remained isolated until the creation of the Siletz Indian Reservation. In fact, its isolation was the principal reason it was selected as the site of the Siletz Reservation in 1855.

Settlement

The hilly and frequently muddy terrain of North Lincoln County made cross-country travel difficult at best. The region's first settlements were near bodies of water accessible by boat, namely the Siletz Bay and River.

The first North Lincoln County settlement was called Kernville and was based on the establishment of a salmon cannery on the Siletz River.

Taft emerged as the social and economic center of North Lincoln County. Taft

began on the land bordering the north end of the Siletz Bay, near present-day 51st Street. In addition to being the region's economic center, Taft's waterfront was a social center where local celebrations, dances and other gatherings were held.

Agriculture and Other Resource-Dependent Commerce

For the purposes of this project, the theme has been expanded to include other resource-dependent commerce, namely the wood products and fishing industries.

Most of the agriculture-, maritime- and wood products-related activity in North Lincoln County was outside of the boundaries of Taft proper. The central location of Taft and its accessibility by water led to its emergence as a central social and trade center. Most of the residents in North Lincoln County who settled on nearby Schooner Creek, Drift Creek and elsewhere were subsistence farmers. A dairy industry flourished briefly in North Lincoln County but disappeared with the emergence of corporate agriculture and tightening health regulations.

Industry and Manufacturing

Fishing, logging and a few other short-lived industries played secondary roles in the development of Taft. While logging and commercial fishing have at times been important industries in North Lincoln County, their activities primarily were located up the Siletz River from Taft. Since the automobile age, tourism and hospitality have been Taft's largest industries. The development of Taft has very much been shaped by the demands of motoring tourists.

Government

Taft was an incorporated area of Lincoln County until officially becoming a city on Aug. 16, 1949. J.W. Lundin served as its first mayor. This was less than a year after voters in Taft, DeLake, Nelscott, Oceanlake and Cutler City turned down a motion to consolidate into one town that was to be called (temporarily) Lincoln City. This nearly coincides with the logical temporal boundary selected for this project, the early 1950s. This is when the transformation to a automobile-oriented resort community was largely complete.

Culture

In Taft's beginnings, it was a social center of North Lincoln County. A substantial percentage of the residents at this time were of Finnish descent. Curiously, tangible reminders of this era are not to be found. Early on, Taft seems to have been heavily patronized by homesteaders picking up their mail and supplies and socializing, particularly during special events.

Perhaps the most memorable annual event held at Taft was the "Redhead Roundup." This Depression-era roundup grew from a one-day festival into a profitable multi-day event.

IB - PLACE

With a few exceptions, the scope of this project is confined to the oldest sections of Taft -- its waterfront district and the adjacent Highway 101 corridor. This district comprises 51st Street (formerly known as Pacific Avenue) and the immediate area. The waterfront district is along the north bank on the Siletz Bay, and east to the area near the mouth of Schooner Creek. The scope of this project is confined to above-ground resources (buildings, objects, structures, markers and other built resources) in the section of Lincoln City that was originally the town of Taft. Also included are natural features of identified cultural significance and viewsheds that contribute to the overall character of the Taft neighborhood.

IC - TIME

Temporal limits for this project begin at 1849, when Lieutenant Theodore Talbot penned the first written description of the area, and end with the early 1950s when Taft's transformation from a waterfront-based trade and social center to a highway-based tourist town could be considered complete.

SECTION II - CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

IIA.1 - HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Geographic Character

Historic Taft is sited on generally flat ground along the north end of Siletz Bay and along the beach just north of the bay. Before extensive filling and diking, this low-lying tidal flatland was the floodplain of Schooner Creek and susceptible to ocean flooding during storms and high tides. This bottomland is composed of silt, sand and gravel dating from the Pleistocene epoch to present.

Twenty-thousand years ago, during the last ice age, the ocean shoreline was approximately twenty to thirty miles west of its present position. A wide, flat plain separated the mountains from the ocean. During the ice age, rivers such as the Siletz flowed across this plain to the ocean, slowly eroding it to form a valley. As the glaciers began to melt, the sea rose proportionally to submerge the plain. Today it is under water and forms the continental shelf, the ocean having reached its present level about 2,000 years ago. The valley along the shoreline developed into the Siletz Bay estuary. Like other estuaries, the bay is slowly filling with sediment deposited by the ocean tides and the river. The rate of fill is difficult to track, as most scientists believe the sea is slowly rising as global warming causes the poles to melt.¹

Fault lines have been mapped on the land nearby. These are normal faults which are upthrown to the northwest. There are no indications of recent movement. However, there is abundant evidence documenting historic earthquakes in the Cascadia subduction zone along the coastline of the Pacific Northwest. Evidence suggests as many as thirteen major earthquakes have occurred in about the last 7,700 years. Earthquakes have occurrence intervals ranging from 250 to 650 years with a mean near 450 years. It is believed the last major quake was

¹ Komar, pgs. 24-36.

approximately 300 years ago. Shock waves from an earthquake have caused liquefaction of the soil. The ground in this area is susceptible to liquefaction because it is composed of shallow subsurface soils consisting of saturated, loose, fine- to medium-grain sand. Taft is also susceptible to tsunamis, massive waves generated by off-shore seismic activity.²

The ocean shoreline in this area is quite dynamic, changing dramatically with the seasons. High waves erode the sand in the winter months; in the summer, small waves deposit the sand back on shore.³ The cliffs just north of Siletz Bay erode very little: an estimated three to ten centimeters each year. The beach below is fairly flat and composed of fine-grain sand, which acts as an effective buffer between the ocean surf and the cliffs. The composition of the cliffs (Pleistocene terrace sands) also prevent them from being particularly susceptible to erosion. Cliffs of the type found at Taft beach generally fail in small-scale, vertical falls rather than in the more dramatic landslides that occur elsewhere along the Oregon Coast.⁴

The waterfront of historic Taft along Schooner Creek experienced a period of erosion that began in 1973 and ended in 1984. During this period, approximately 1.8 to 2.3 feet of shoreline eroded away annually. It is not certain whether this was caused by ocean wave action or migration of Schooner Creek. Since 1984, the erosion has totaled less than five feet.⁵

The most recent dramatic movement of the land in the form of erosion was on Siletz Spit, just across the mouth of the Siletz River from Taft. Up until the mid-1960s, this naturally formed sand spit appeared much as it had for hundreds of years. Except for a smattering of dune grass and wild strawberries, this was a barren barrier between the ocean and the Siletz Bay of low rolling sand. Erosion of Siletz Spit was

² H.G. Schilcker & Associates Inc.

³ Komar, pgs. 45-47.

⁴ Komar, pgs. 153 -154.

⁵ Schilcker, pg. 8.

detected shortly after sand mining began at Gleneden Beach, just south of the spit. From 1965 until 1971, 110,000 yards of sand were removed at Gleneden Beach. This operation was halted by state order after it became apparent that sand removal was contributing to the erosion of the ocean side of Siletz Spit.

Erosion of Siletz Spit on the bay side had been relatively slow until the 1960s. Erosion accelerated when the water flow pattern in the estuary was altered. This is believed to have started shortly after fill dirt was trucked in to build up a W-shaped land mass upon which a housing development known as Siletz Keys was constructed. As part of this project, a dike was constructed blocking Millport Slough.

Erosion on both the bay and ocean sides of the Siletz Spit has diminished its width from 535 feet in 1875 to 171 feet in 1973. Extensive riprapping since that time has slowed erosion of the spit.

First People

What little archaeological evidence exists on the history of the Central Oregon Coast indicates that Native Americans had resided there for thousands of years. Many of Taft's Euro-American pioneers recall a shell midden near the end of present-day 51st Street.⁶ Shell middens were essentially Indian garbage dumps that were sited at encampments. One early resident described the Taft shell midden as "enormous," which indicates this area was probably used as a camp site for centuries. Little, if anything, remains of this midden today. Typically, early coastal residents found the composition of the shell middens (mostly small pieces of shell) ideal for road-surfacing material or fill.

There is no shortage of speculation as to the identity of the region's first Euro-American maritime explorers. Whomever they were -- Spanish, English or Russian -- they left no detailed descriptions of their observations.

⁶ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 83.

First Firsthand Account

The first detailed account of the Central Oregon Coast was written in 1849 by Lieutenant Theodore Talbot. The Talbot journal offers some concise insights into the land and its people. His party of nine men left Oregon City for the Central Oregon Coast in search of coal deposits. After four days of travel, they reached Kings Valley. From there they headed west to the ocean. Talbot described the Coast Range as "mountains enveloped with such dense smoke, occasioned by some large fires to the south of us, that we could see but little of the surrounding country." Talbot noted, "These fires are frequent occurrence in the forests of Oregon, raging with violence for months, until quelled by the continual rains of the winter season." Talbot also encountered a party of Klickitat Indians from Eastern Oregon returning from a hunting excursion to the coast. According to Talbot, the Klickitat made such trips frequently and had cut two trails from the Willamette Valley to the coast. Talbot wrote they shared "a great deal of information with regard to the part of the country over which I wished to travel." The day following his encounter with the Klickitat Indians, Talbot traveled nine miles through steep terrain "obstructed by fallen trees and thick brush" and burned-over forest to reach the north fork of the Siletz River.

He then traveled downstream through "dense willow and cherry thickets" to the main arm of the Siletz River. After camping near what is now the town of Siletz, Talbot headed south, where he spent about a week and a half exploring the Yaquina and Alsea bays. Talbot then headed north, loosely following the route of present-day Highway 101 to the Siletz Bay. His descriptions of the Siletz Bay predate the beginnings of Taft by more than a half-century. The Native American presence was quite evident on the Siletz Bay. He observed it was the custom of the local

Indians to deposit their dead along with their personal belongings in canoes on platforms that were suspended in the air with poles. Talbot noted that thousands, if not millions, of acres near there recently had been burned over by a forest fire.

Some of the details recorded by Talbot could have been written yesterday. He observed the upper bay's "vast marsh, intersected with numerous small canals, which are filled at high water and left nearly dry as the tide recedes." Of present-day Siletz Spit, Talbot wrote, "On the west (Siletz Bay) side, it is separated from the ocean by a range of loose sand hills." After looking over the mouth of the Siletz Bay, he concluded it would be "impossible for any kind of vessel or boat to pass in safely."⁷

Talbot's crossing of Siletz Bay near its mouth was not without difficulty. He first sent his horses across. All made it safely except for one that was carried out into the ocean by a wave and drowned. His party constructed a raft out of the "thousands of drift logs" that were strewn about the beach. The raft proved unsatisfactory for the crossing, but the men found a canoe that was concealed in the brush. By the time his party had made the crossing, it was dark and camp was set up "a hundred yards from the shore." That night, an elderly Native American "who had come in a canoe from some distance up the bay" entered their camp. He told Talbot that he was a member of two remaining families on Siletz Bay. They were survivors of a once much larger population of Salish Indians residing there. Talbot attributed their decline to a smallpox epidemic in 1831.⁸

The Reservation Era

Six years after Talbot's visit, an executive order set in motion the repopulation of the Central Oregon Coast with Native Americans. On November 9, 1855, just a few weeks after a series of skirmishes between settlers and Native

⁷ Talbot, pg. 11.

⁸ Talbot, pg. 12.

Americans residing in Southern Oregon and Northern California, President Franklin Pierce signed the order establishing the Coast Reservation. Initially, it was 1.4 million acres. About the size of Delaware, it stretched north to Cape Lookout in Tillamook County and south almost to the Umpqua River in Douglas County. The Native Americans from Southern Oregon and Northern California were to be relocated to the Coast Reservation to avoid conflicts with white settlers and to receive training to become self-supporting farmers. The headquarters of the reservation was at the present-day town of Siletz.⁹

The first Native Americans arrived in 1856 at the mouth of the Salmon River. The first load of supplies was shipped via Yaquina Bay. The next supply ship wrecked while trying to enter Siletz Bay. The inaccessibility of the area prompted the relocation of Siletz Indians to Yaquina Bay. By July 1857, there were 2,049 Indians on the Coast Reservation. In a letter written at that time, Indian Agent Robert Metcalf described them as "wretchedly poor, and destitute of all the necessaries and comforts of life, except what is supplied them by the government."¹⁰ Disease combined with poor living conditions diminished their population rapidly.

On December 21, 1865, the acreage of the reservation began diminishing as well. President Andrew Johnson signed an order throwing the oyster-rich Yaquina Bay section of the reservation open for settlement. Shortly thereafter, Newport got its start as a resort town. In 1875, the reservation became yet smaller when an amendment passed Congress requiring the removal of Indians residing south of the Alsea River and north of the Salmon River. What is now North Lincoln County and the Grand Ronde Agency in Polk County became the sum total of the Coast Reservation.

During this period, most of the activity on the reservation appears to have

⁹Schwartz, pgs. 161 -164.

¹⁰ Schwartz, pg. 166.

been at the headquarters in Siletz and on the farmlands nearby. The Coast Reservation was closed to Euro-American settlement, but the salmon-rich Siletz River was a popular destination for Willamette Valley fishermen. Perhaps the only existing documentation of such a visit was written by Alfred Acklom. He wrote an account of his 1880 excursion in 1935. Acklom visited what later became Taft. En route to the coast from Corvallis, he stopped at the Grand Ronde Agency of the Coast Reservation, where he was warned the "alleged" road along the banks of the Salmon River was in poor condition and dangerous in areas where side hill tracks were not graded. Acklom's trip, which predated bridge construction, required him to cross the river no fewer than 12 times.

When Acklom arrived at the Siletz Bay, he called upon the isolated "small Indian village" he had visited a few years prior while on a canoe trip down the Siletz River. Its population consisted of "six or eight bucks" (men) and their families. At the mouth of Schooner Creek, there was a crudely fenced pasture where he put his horses. The village was adjacent to the pasture, but the Acklom account does not offer a pinpoint location. In his narrative he wrote, "On the site of the old Indian Rancherie, I believe, the little town of Taft now stands." He set up camp near the village and was treated hospitably by the Siletz Indians. He spent nearly a week touring the area and hunting. From there, Acklom went up the river to Siletz before returning to Corvallis.¹¹

The relative isolation enjoyed by Acklom on his visit to present-day Taft and North Lincoln County came to an end when the General Allotment Act of 1887 was applied to the Coast Reservation. This act gave the president the authority to impose land ownership on Indian communities. The reservations to which the allotment act was applied were typically divided into 160-acre parcels that the government was to hold in trust for the Indian owners for 25 years before giving them clear title.

¹¹ Salazar , Volume II, pg. 1.

Passage of the General Allotment Act came after the government abandoned its goal of integrating Indians into society through myriad educational programs. Land ownership, it believed, would erase the differences between whites and Indians.

In July 1894, after several false starts and 17 months of negotiations with the Siletz Tribe, an agreement to implement the General Allotment Act was reached. Tribal members received allotments in North Lincoln County of approximately 80 acres each. Most of the allotments were awarded to tribal members on July 26, 1894. The government allotted 44,459 acres to 551 tribal members. The tribe itself received \$142,600 from the government for more than 175,000 acres that were then offered to the public for \$1.50 an acre. On July 14, 1895, Congress approved the agreement with the Siletz Tribe, and the surplus land in North Lincoln County was opened to claimants.¹²

When North Lincoln County opened for settlement in 1895, there was virtually no chance of the railroad reaching the Siletz Bay. The railroad, which was completed to Yaquina Bay in the early 1880s, went through bankruptcy in the 1890s and the nation was in the midst of a depression. Economic growth was also deterred by the lack of a deep-water shipping port. Boats and ships small enough to cross the Siletz bar found it a treacherous undertaking.

Settlement Era

Jacob Johnson Jr. and his wife, Sissy, were the first officially recognized owners of what would become the site of Taft. They received their land under the General Allotment Act. Jacob (usually referred to as "Jakie" or "Jackey") received a strip of land along the north end of Siletz Bay that bordered the open ocean.¹³ In present-day terms, this is the location of all of southwest 49th and 51st streets. It appears the eastern boundary of his allotment was just a few lots west of today's

¹² Schwartz, pgs. 214-220.

¹³ Map, "Land Status as of 8-13-1956, Siletz Indian Reservation," copy in possession of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz.

Highway 101. Sissy (sometimes spelled with an "ie") was allotted two smaller parcels. One of her parcels bordered her husband's on the easternmost boundary. Both of her lots were on the north bank of Schooner Creek. They constructed a house near the bay on the Taft waterfront, where the Gates apartment building stood in the early 1950s. They also had a barn that was just east of the house.¹⁴ As late as 1904, the Johnson dwelling was the only house in all of Taft.¹⁵ When the Liswig family moved into the Johnson house in the early 1900s, they pastured cattle on the property north of Siletz Bay between present-day 51st and 49th streets. At this time, it was a "swampy area." The path to the waterfront from the Johnson place was an elevated walkway. In addition to farming, Johnson ran a rowboat ferry service, taking passengers across Siletz Bay.¹⁶

By all accounts, the Johnsons were well-known and liked. In 1895, the Johnson's waterfront land, later known as "Taft Flat," became a popular gathering and camping place among the locals, particularly on the Fourth of July.¹⁷ Five years later, Taft hosted the first annual North Lincoln Pioneer Picnic.¹⁸ The Johnsons were honored on March 11, 1899, when a post office was established on Drift Creek near present-day Cutler City (Lincoln City) by the Parmele family. They named it Johnson as a tribute to Jacob and Sissy.¹⁹ The Johnsons had 80 acres of property on Drift Creek (probably acquired from a relative, Rosa Johnson), which they later sold to Matt Kangas.²⁰ The Johnsons turned down many offers from settlers of the area who recognized the value of their Taft allotment land.²¹

¹⁴ Nelson, pg. 59.

¹⁵ Nelson, pg. 65.

¹⁶ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 31.

¹⁷ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 86.

¹⁸ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 19.

¹⁹ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 18.

²⁰ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 65.

²¹ Salazar Volume II, pg. 5.

The Town of Taft

Prior to the emergence of an enduring settlement pattern on Siletz Bay, there was also a small, largely forgotten, settlement that could have rivaled Taft. Established by Hiram Longcoy on the south side of Schooner Creek along present-day 54th Drive, it was variously known as Grand View, Longcoy's Grand View Park, or simply Longcoy. After about 10 years, it fell into decline, and it was apparent that Taft, sited on the north end of Siletz Bay on relatively level ground, would unquestionably emerge as the primary social and trade center on Siletz Bay.²²

Homesteaders came from miles around (usually by water) to patronize Taft's waterfront stores. The store that housed the post office was generally a cut above the rest, as it functioned as a social and retail center of North Lincoln County.

John W. Bones was the first to open such an establishment. When the Johnsons opted to return to Siletz in 1904, they rented their house to Bones, who established a temporary store in it. The Bones store was primarily patronized by homesteaders living along Schooner Creek.²³ Bones had moved from McMinnville that year and obtained a 150-acre homestead north of Taft and south of Nelscott.²⁴ His house was located near the intersection of present-day Coast Avenue and Highway 101.²⁵ The original claimant of this parcel had died. The Bones store was the first retail establishment in Taft. Cloverdale businessmen Charles P. Nelson (a prominent figure in the development of Nelscott) and Charles Ray had a new store built for Bones on the waterfront very near the west end of present-day 51st Street. Nelson and Ray supplied Bones with merchandise on consignment. Goods were shipped via their boat, *Della*, that called regularly on Taft and Kernville.²⁶

In 1906, Bones established a post office in a corner of his store. When the

²² Nelson, pgs. 61-62.

²³ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 29.

²⁴ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 28.

²⁵ Katy Zook, "Bay Area of Taft Boasts Roots, History, Legends," *News Guard*, 20 April 1988.

²⁶ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 43.

name "Siletz" was rejected by postal authorities, Bones chose "Taft" after President William Howard Taft. At that time in Taft's political career, he was President Theodore Roosevelt's secretary of war.²⁷ Two years after the Taft post office was established, North Lincoln County became somewhat more accessible when improvements were completed to the Old Elk Trail and it opened as a toll road.

The Bones store and the pioneer stores that followed also functioned as outlets where homesteaders could sell or trade commodities. The merchant, in turn, exported the local goods. There is documentation of merchants purchasing animal hides²⁸ and cascara bark.²⁹ Cascara was harvested by local homesteaders and ultimately used to manufacture laxatives.

During Taft's early years, North Lincoln County's demographics were in transition. Policies implemented by the U.S. government facilitated the transfer of Indian allotment lands to the private sector. The so-called "Dead Indian Act" of 1902 allowed reservation officials to sell the land when an allottee died. From 1904 to 1906, a fifth of the allotment land in North Lincoln County was sold off and one-tenth was leased. To a lesser degree, the Burke Act, passed by Congress in 1906, also contributed to the decline in the acreage held by Siletz tribal members. It granted U.S. citizenship to allotment holders when their properties were no longer held in trust by the government. It also threw out the fixed trust period of 25 years and authorized the secretary of the interior to issue land titles to allotment holders when they were deemed competent.

John Kentta, a native of Finland, tracked the availability of allotment land, which he acquired and resold. By at least one account, he negotiated with both reservation officials and the allottees for desirable tracts. He primarily sold the land to miners residing in Montana and Utah who usually purchased it sight unseen.

²⁷ Nelson, pg. 60.

²⁸ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 61.

²⁹ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 78.



Dodson's waterfront store, early 1910s.
North Lincoln Pioneer & Historical Association image.

Most were recent immigrants from Finland along with a small contingency of Estonians.³⁰ A substantial percentage of the Finns were closely related to each other.³¹ Typically, they settled on the land to become subsistence farmers. There are descendants of these pioneers still living in the area today, but many of the Finnish settlers sold out to logging companies in the 1920s after proving up on their land claim.

The Alingers were one such pioneering family of Finnish immigrants. Andre Alinger, along with his parents, brother and sister-in-law, moved to North Lincoln County around 1910. The elder members of the Alinger family lived on Schooner and Drift creeks. Andre worked at the Bones store on the Taft waterfront; the store by that time had been sold to William Dodson. In 1912, Alinger struck out on his own and built a store into the hillside near Dodson's establishment. Alinger's Taft Co-Operative Store was also known as the Spring Store, as it was constructed around a spring that was used to cool milk and other perishables. In 1912, Andre Alinger became postmaster when the post office was moved to his establishment.³² William Dodson was not about to be outdone by Alinger. He demolished his old store and hired John Butterfield, a homesteader, carpenter, and boat builder³³ to build a new two-story building complete with a 40-by-56-foot dance floor.³⁴ In 1918, Andre Alinger died and the post office was moved to Dodson's Store.³⁵

The Dodson Store later became Robison's Siletz Bay Trading Post. It went through several owners and ultimately sold to Lulu Lankford, who remodeled it into apartments. In 1944, it was sold to L.P. Gates, who converted it into the Gates Nursing Home. In 1967, it was purchased by the Hershey family, who ran it as a

³⁰ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 43.

³¹ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 85.

³² "Taft Begins in 1894 with Jakie and Sissie Johnson," *News-Times*, 10 February 1998.

³³ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 31.

³⁴ "Taft Begins in 1894."

³⁵ "Taft Begins in 1894."

nursing home until its closure in 1974. In the 1980s, the Hershey family converted it into a restaurant. It since has been demolished.³⁶

Alinger's store went through several owners and later became the Horner Hotel.³⁷ What was believed by many to be this building was later sawn in half and turned into two rental cottages. Then in 1966, they were purchased by Jerry Parks and moved to Otis Junction, where they were to be "restored" and added to a frontier town attraction at his Pixieland amusement park.³⁸

Further complicating any possibility of pinpointing the exact location of the early structures on the Taft waterfront is the fact the land itself has been built up and altered. Perhaps the first in this series of changes came in 1913 when several buildings were moved back away from the water after they were threatened by large driftwood logs carried into the bay by winter storms.³⁹

Other industries

It appears early-day Taft merchants were the small minority of people able to make a living in North Lincoln County. Industries providing income for area residents were limited, at best. Perhaps the primary reason was the isolation of the area. Roads had yet to be built, and accessibility by boat was somewhat treacherous. Large-scale farming was nearly impossible because of the hilly terrain and poor soil.

Shortly after north county opened for settlement, the area's first industry was established in Kernville. The Kern brothers built a cannery on the Siletz River upriver from Taft and from present-day Kernville in 1896. The Kern operation packed chinook salmon under the brand name "Golden Rod." Initially, 25 Chinese men worked there. "White labor" was used for management and the operation of

³⁶"Hershey Family Renovates Old Taft Structure," *News Guard*, undated 1980s clipping on file at North Lincoln Pioneer Museum.

³⁷ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 54.

³⁸ Untitled photo caption, *News Guard*, 11 August 1966.

³⁹ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 52.

the cannery's engines. According to one homesteader, "everyone on the river, homesteaders and Indians" fished with gill nets for the cannery.⁴⁰ Around 1907, this operation was purchased by Astoria cannery man Sam Elmore and moved further down the Siletz.

Taft had yet to become a tourist destination. In the early years, it had two small lodging establishments that may not have been open simultaneously. Its first was established when Bones began renting rooms in his house several blocks north of the waterfront.⁴¹ Three years after Bones left the area, Francis and Marie Mercier established lodging next to their Taft Heights residence overlooking Siletz Bay.

A small-scale dairy industry provided some land owners with income. Abraham Abrams, a native of Finland, figured prominently in the beginnings of Taft and the dairy industry. He filed for a homestead in 1904 one-half mile up Schooner Creek from Taft, where he operated a dairy farm.⁴² In 1910, Abrams acquired the tideland along Schooner Creek and south of the creek where the Lincoln City wastewater treatment plant is now located.⁴³ The Abrams family established a home on the Taft waterfront.⁴⁴ Charles F. Robertson established a dairy, complete with a modest cheese factory, on Schooner Creek. Robertson, who ran the Dodson store for a while, also planted a small apple orchard. Like Abrams, Robertson maintained a residence on the Taft waterfront.

In its infancy, the dairy industry showed promise. A local paper remarked in 1917, "The lowlands of Taft and Siletz furnish the best dairy lands. The fact is few people realize that Northern Lincoln County is fast becoming the second Tillamook of the state." At that time, there were four small cheese factories in the Taft vicinity:

⁴⁰ *Lincoln County Leader*, 07 October 1897.

⁴¹ Nelson, pg. 60.

⁴² Salazar, Volume II, pg. 79.

⁴³ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 79.

⁴⁴ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 79.



C.F. Robertson's cheese factory, Taft, 1910s.
Oregon Coast History Center image #1386

the Tompkins, Iler, Rusch and Boner factories.⁴⁵ The dairy industry flourished briefly in the area. By 1938, the Kangas Bros. Dairy near Cutler City ceased selling locally produced bottled milk. In the 1950s, the emergence of corporate agriculture and tightening health regulations led to the virtual disappearance of the dairy industry in Lincoln County.

While north county had an abundance of standing timber, logging was done on a very limited basis until after World War I. In 1905, a small sawmill was established by the Parmele family at the mouth of Drift Creek. The Parmele mill sold its products to the nearby settlers.⁴⁶ In 1917, *The Victory of Siletz*, a sixty-four-foot boat, was built at the Parmele sawmill on Siletz Bay from wood sawn there.⁴⁷ Two years later, this sawmill, which had been condemned, was destroyed in an explosion that killed three people and injured two.⁴⁸ About the time of the demise of the Parmele mill, a spruce sawmill (larger than the Parmele mill) was constructed across the river from Kernville at Millport Slough. Known as the Noon Mill, it cut primarily clear spruce to be used for airplane construction. Finished lumber was shipped to Astoria on small oceangoing steam schooners that also carried supplies for north county residents.

Infrastructure

Early on, Taft's population and economic base (fishing, logging and retail) were quite small. There was no need for an elaborate infrastructure; early civic improvements were carried out on a very limited basis.

Perhaps Taft's first municipal project was the construction of a boardwalk on Pacific Avenue in the early 1920s. Each property owner underwrote the construction

⁴⁵ "Siletz Launches First Vessel," *Yaquina Bay News*, 26 July 1917.

⁴⁶ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 17.

⁴⁷ "Siletz Launches First Vessel."

⁴⁸ *Lincoln County Leader*, 28 November 1919.

of the section in front of his or her property. The boardwalk was built of piano-leg stock purchased from Noon's Mill in Kernville.⁴⁹

While the boardwalk required the cooperation of many residents, the town cemetery started as the result of one man's generosity. Pioneer merchant John Bones set aside a portion of his land just above present-day Inn at Spanish Head for use as a cemetery. Bones' donation was spurred by the death of Neils Andersen, who drowned after his launch capsized while attempting to cross the Siletz Bar.⁵⁰

Perhaps one of the first government projects was the establishment of Taft's school in an abandoned store building across Schooner Creek in the defunct settlement of Longcoy. Initially, fifteen students attended classes there. Jess Stone, a resident of Longcoy, constructed a swinging bridge across Schooner Creek for the students.

The Automobile Age

The era of isolation and severely hobbled private and public development came to an end in the age of the automobile. On paper, it would seem the Oregon Coast entered the automobile age in 1912, when Gov. Oswald West wrote a concise sixty-word bill declaring Oregon's seashore a public highway. West later wrote that he proposed this bill knowing a real road would eventually replace the beach. West was confident that once the Highway Commission (which he created even though the state had no highways) had control of the beaches, it would never let the seashore back into the private sector. The bill was perceived by lawmakers as routine and it became law with practically no debate.⁵¹ The beach had served Lincoln County as a tide-dependent highway ever since the first horse-drawn wagon was introduced

⁴⁹ Salazar Volume III, pg. 104.

⁵⁰ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 20.

⁵¹ Harold Hughes, "Crafty Os West Hoodwinked Legislature To Get sandy Beaches For State," *Sunday Oregonian*, 14 May 1967.

to the area.

That same year, there was a well-publicized effort to generate awareness of the sad state of Lincoln County roads. A car (complete with a photographer to document the trip) was driven from Newport to Siletz Bay. All told, the trip took nearly 23 hours. The road improvement efforts of 1912 were somewhat premature; few people owned cars, and the roads from the Willamette Valley to the coast were little more than dirt trails.

The dawning of the automobile age appeared on the horizon in 1919, when Lincoln County's representative in the Oregon Legislature, Ben F. Jones, introduced a bill authorizing construction of the Roosevelt Coast Military Highway. It was to be routed along the coast from the Columbia River to the California line. The U.S. government was to pay for half of the construction costs; the other half would be funded by bonds issued by the state.⁵² That same year, Oregon became the first state in the nation to pass a gasoline tax.

With no opposition to Jones' bill in the Senate, a \$2.5 million bonding enactment for the highway proposal passed.⁵³ It then went before Oregon voters, who gave it their approval by a wide margin.⁵⁴ Someone once nicknamed it "Ben Jones' Wagon Road," but today we know it as Highway 101. While approval came quickly from Oregon lawmakers and voters, federal funding was a little slower in coming.

By 1923, construction of the highway was at last underway from Newport north and in southern Tillamook County. The following year, the highway from Astoria to Taft was considered complete. Road building southward from Taft continued with the construction of a covered bridge across Schooner Creek. It was

⁵² "Roosevelt Highway Proposed by B.F. Jones," *Yaquina Bay News*, 23 January 1919.

⁵³ "Roosevelt Military Highway Bill Passed," *Yaquina Bay News*, 27 February 1919.

⁵⁴ "Roosevelt Highway Carries," *Yaquina Bay News*, 5 June 1919.

built by the Rice Brothers as part of their highway construction contract.⁵⁵ For years, this landmark structure dramatically marked the entrance of northbound motorists into Taft.

A drawbridge (designed by noted bridge engineer Conde McCullough) was also completed over Siletz River in 1924 at Kernville. This was the last unbridged crossing between the Columbia River and the Yaquina Bay.

Perhaps North Lincoln County's full-fledged entry into the automobile age could be pinpointed to March 14, 1926. On this day, the oceangoing freighter *Roamer* called on Siletz Bay for the final time. The *Roamer* was the very last of many privately owned freighters that regularly called on small Oregon Coast ports to pick up and deliver freight and passengers. When it tied up to the Taft dock, it took on canned salmon from Gertula's Kernville cannery as well as Astoria-bound lumber.⁵⁶

The departure of *The Roamer* for the final time marks the beginning of the end of the waterfront (present-day 51st Street) as Taft's primary business district. With the completion of the highway, Taft's port of entry for both goods and people moved away from the waterfront to the highway. Transporting goods and people was far cheaper and faster by auto and truck than by boat. In the automobile age, Highway 101 became the main street for Taft and all the other Oregon Coast communities on its route.

Small freighters such as the *Roamer* could not compete in the era of road building and affordable trucks and automobiles. Henry Ford's assembly line production drove the price of the automobile down to the point that nearly everyone could afford a car. The price of the Model T dipped to a low of \$295.

Development Efforts

⁵⁵ Deirdre Reynolds, "Schooner Creek Bridge Improved Access to Area," *Coast Tidings*, September 1994.

⁵⁶ "No Scene at Taft Like this Since 1926," *Capitol Journal*, 27 May 1967.

Several developers were quick to recognize the impact of the automobile on the Oregon Coast. North Lincoln County was promoted as a tourist destination accessible by automobile as well as a desirable place to establish a vacation home. New resort communities were developed to cater to the motoring public. Camp Roosevelt, Cutler City, DeLake, Depoe Bay, Gleneden Beach, Neotsu, Lincoln Beach, Nelscott, Oceanlake, Roads End and Wecoma were all rival developments within a few miles of Taft that sprang up shortly after the completion of the highway.

Fred C. Robison, Taft's postmaster and store proprietor since 1920, was the principal developer of Taft at the dawn of the automobile age. Robison had purchased the Johnsons' Taft allotment land in 1922.⁵⁷ On August 4, 1926, he filed an official plat map for Taft with Lincoln County. According to a signed statement on this map, Robison and his wife, Effie, owned this land and dedicated "the use of the public forever the streets laid out on said plat."⁵⁸ On paper, Robison's Taft consisted of 141 lots. It was an L-shaped town bordered by the Siletz Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Taft consisted of one main street (Pacific Avenue) that intersected at the west end with the Roosevelt Highway. From the highway, it ran west along the bay to the ocean where it turned ninety degrees north. Two short streets, Pine and Lincoln (now Ebb Avenue and 48th streets respectively), intersected Pacific Avenue. Only one street, Sunset (now Coast Avenue), paralleled Pacific Avenue. It was on the north-south section and was two blocks long.

Today, the Siletz Bay section of Robison's Pacific Avenue dead-ends near the mouth of the Siletz Bay and is known as 51st Street. Landslides have since forced the closure of the section of Pacific Avenue that turned sharply northward. The old north-south section of Pacific Avenue along the ocean shoreline has since been renamed S.W. Beach Avenue. The same year Robison filed the plat map for Taft, he

⁵⁷ Nelson, pg. 59.

⁵⁸ "Taft" official plat map, 4 August 1926, on file with Lincoln City.

sold his store/post office building on Pacific Avenue and relocated to a new building on the Roosevelt Highway.⁵⁹

Fourteen months after filing Taft's plat map, Robison filed its first addition. This addition totaled seventy-eight lots, all on the east side of the Roosevelt Highway, near the location of the high school, grade school and grange. Seven lots faced the Roosevelt Highway just north of present-day 51st Street. Most of the lots were along Rhododendron Street (present-day Keel Avenue); shorter streets included Manzanita (present-day Jetty Avenue), Schooner Street (the easternmost section of present-day 50th Street), Spruce Street (present-day 47th Street), Laurel Street (present-day northern section of Keel Avenue), and Cedar Street, which apparently no longer exists or never did.⁶⁰

In October 1927, Robison filed a plat map for yet another addition to Taft. The fifty-three-lot "Sunset Addition" was on the west side of the Coast Highway. It was a northward extension of Sunset and Pacific avenues. These two streets paralleled each other due north and turned inland approximately forty-five degrees to intersect with the highway.⁶¹

It appears the construction of the Oregon Coast Highway sparked a small economic boom in Taft. Perhaps the competition among the multitude of nearby upstart communities prevented any single community from becoming disproportionately large.

A New Business District

The coming of the highway and Fred Robison's development efforts mark the beginning of the Taft section of Lincoln City as we know it today. Taft's core business

⁵⁹ Nelson, pg. 60.

⁶⁰ "First Addition to Taft," official plat map, 14 April 1927, on file with Lincoln City.

⁶¹ "Robison's First Sunset Addition to Taft, Ore.," official plat map, 06 October 1927, on file with Lincoln City.



Oregon Coast Highway, looking north from Schooner Creek Road, circa 1930. "The Shop" is on extreme left. Hutchens Drug Store on extreme right. Oregon Coast History Center image.



Similar view, 2001.
Photo by author.

district migrated from the waterfront section of Pacific Avenue to the Coast Highway to take advantage of the tourism business that would follow.

Robison led the way in this transition when he relocated his Siletz Bay Trading Post to front the new highway in 1925. Robison's store (the former Dodson's Store) also housed the post office.⁶² Robison constructed several other buildings on his highway property that were rented and/or sold. By 1940, there were twenty-seven retail businesses along Highway 101 in Taft. On the former main street -- Pacific Avenue -- there were none. Once the automobile age began, only houses and lodging establishments were sited on the waterfront, once the area's hub of commerce and social activity .⁶³

Taft Becomes a Tourist Destination

Perhaps as a direct result of the opening up of North Lincoln County to motoring tourists, Fred Watson came from Hebo in 1927 to build The Pines, a \$20,000, three-story, wood-frame hotel. Sited on the Coast Highway, The Pines was at the present-day site of The Pines Restaurant. Complete with a ballroom and a restaurant, Taft's first destination resort hotel was designed and built in the pre-automobile age tradition. It would seem there was little other development in the immediate vicinity of The Pines. A newspaper reporter remarked at its opening, The Pines had a "wonderfully fine view of the Siletz Bay, mountains, and natural forest scenes."⁶⁴ The view was not all that drew people to The Pines; with locals, at least, it was a popular place to play cards and gamble.

Developments such as The Pines were not really feasible prior to 1927. Up until that time, North Lincoln County lacked the infrastructure necessary for commercial growth. Electricity was not available on a regular basis until June of that

⁶² Nelson, pg. 60.

⁶³ C.R. VanderPool, agent of Northern Assurance Company, "Taft, Oregon, September 1, 1940," map on file with Lincoln City.

⁶⁴ "Taft Hotel Completed," *Yaquina Bay News*, 26 May 1927.

year. Mountain States Power Company established a small generating plant in DeLake that served 120 customers from Neotsu to Kernville. Two years later, improvements in the phone system followed. A phone line was installed connecting Newport with Taft. Prior to that time, phone calls from North Lincoln County were routed through Corvallis or Tillamook.⁶⁵

The opening of the highways to North Lincoln County came at a transitional time in the history of the hospitality industry. The business of tourism as we know it today was just beginning to take shape. Autocamping, a popular pastime with middle- and lower-class American motorists, was beginning to wane. This fad had been around (in localities with roads) since the mid-1910s. Commercial booster clubs in communities such as Ashland, Oregon, lured tourists and potential new residents to their communities by building and maintaining free auto camps. Similar camps were built all over the United States but were particularly prevalent in the West.

By the time of the construction of the Coast Highway, the days of the free auto camp were nearly over. Many communities had grown weary of hosting the "hoboes" and other undesirable people that were, like legitimate tourists, drawn to free accommodations.⁶⁶ By the mid-1920s, many communities had closed their camps or turned their operation over to entrepreneurs who implemented a fee schedule.

When the operation of auto camps went to the private sector, the modern motel began to emerge. Camp owners found that primitive shacks were popular with travelers who had tired of pitching a tent each night. Shacks also acted as a hedge against bad weather. Shrewd camp owners soon found that more elaborate, homelike accommodations, such as indoor plumbing, would attract more affluent

⁶⁵ "Phone Lines to Taft Being Built," *Newport Journal*, 13 March 1929.

⁶⁶ Belasco, pg. 120-121.

travelers. In the 1920s, the hospitality industry enjoyed a nationwide boom. Cabin camps, cottage camps, cottage courts and motor courts (all predecessors to the post-World War II motel) were constructed at an unprecedented rate.⁶⁷

Perhaps because of its isolation or the tremendous competition for the tourist dollar in North Lincoln County, Taft was a little slow to capitalize on this new industry. By the time of the construction of the first such lodging establishment in Taft, growth in the hospitality industry had slowed. The country was beginning to feel the effects of the economic depression that loomed on the horizon.

The Taft Auto Park (also known as the Fruiht Auto Park), built at about the same time as The Pines, was one of the area's first establishments built with the motorist in mind.⁶⁸ It was constructed on Schooner Creek on a low-lying floodplain that was built up with fill.⁶⁹ Eight years later, proprietor Frank Fruiht added several "deluxe cabins."⁷⁰

Fruiht probably added the cabins in an attempt to keep up with his competition. In 1930, the Jax duplex cottages were built nearby on Drift Creek. Guests at the Jax enjoyed free use of boats, fishing tackle and crab net as well a log lookout tower.⁷¹

Graham Auto Court was built in 1927⁷² on the Taft waterfront. Located where the city parking lot is now, it consisted of sixteen attached units with garages in a single row.⁷³ In 1930, its name was changed to Harmony Auto Court.⁷⁴ A month prior, Craddock's Cottages, a complex of eight duplex bungalows, was built next door by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craddock. The local paper stated with confidence that

⁶⁸ "Almona Gertula Explains Some Early Homes on Taft's 51st Street," typed paper on file at North Lincoln Pioneer Museum.

⁶⁹ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 136.

⁷⁰ "Fruiht Completes Deluxe Cottages," *Beach Resort News*, 09 August 1935.

⁷¹ Untitled, *Beach Resort News*, 30 May 1930.

⁷² Salazar, Volume III, pg. 107.

⁷³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1951, on file, Oregon Coast History Center.

⁷⁴ Untitled, *Beach Resort News*, 04 April 1930.



Craddock's Cottages on the Taft waterfront. As of 2001 they were in use as apartments. North Lincoln Pioneer & Historical Association image.

Craddock's cottages would "be a means assisting Taft very materially in entertaining visitors." Amenities included a shared garage and hot and cold running water, complete with a shower bath.⁷⁵ Subsequent additions boosted Craddock's Cottages to twenty-two units with a capacity of 102 guests.

Up until the late 1930s, these were the only lots considered developable on the south side of Pacific Avenue. The beach came right up to and sometimes onto Pacific Avenue. This low-lying land was subject to frequent flooding and the buildup of driftwood carried in by ocean storms. It was considered no-man's-land that proved a popular campground. This area was stabilized somewhat when a wooden bulkhead was constructed along the water's edge and the area was backfilled behind the bulkhead. It appears the Port of Newport began this process in 1929 when a 600-foot-long bulkhead was built after a new dock began to cause erosion.⁷⁶ This made for a substantial addition to Taft's waterfront acreage and Fred Robison's holdings. Robison had several small cottages moved there from elsewhere in Taft: Some were sold, others used as rentals. In the years that followed, the wood in the bulkhead rotted and gave way. It has since been replaced with rock.⁷⁷

Hard Times

Like the rest of the nation, the Great Depression slowed Taft's economy considerably. However, a road and a festival took some of the edge off the economic downturn. Completion of the Salmon River Cut-Off (present-day Highway 18, from Grand Ronde to north of present-day Lincoln City) made North Lincoln County more accessible to residents of Portland and Salem. In 1928, when it appeared the new road was to become a certainty, the local paper boasted, "Taft will soon be the center of a development rivaling any city along the coast and the whole state will

⁷⁵ "Craddock Cottage Nearing Completion," *Beach Resort News*, 14 March 1930.

⁷⁶ Minutes, Port of Newport, 08 February 1929, on file at Port of Newport.

⁷⁷ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 104.



Abrams store on the Coast Highway. This view is looking north. Currently, this building houses The Paint Store.
North Lincoln Pioneer & Historical Association image.

know it as the most wide awake and progressive city of the time. ... Taft should multiply ten-fold the coming summer."⁷⁸ North Lincoln County residents rejoiced at the official Salmon River Cut-Off dedication ceremony in 1930 and looked to the future with great optimism.

The anticipated prosperity proved elusive. Taft was unable to escape the firm grip of the economic depression of the 1930s. Taft was one of several Oregon communities to respond to the Great Depression with a festival. Taft's "Red Head Roundup" was perhaps one of the more unique Depression-era attempts to attract visitors. Fred Robison's brother, Manville, a redhead in his youth, is credited with the idea for Taft's annual celebration. At first, it was a one-day festival in which awards were given in various categories such as the most plump woman, most freckle-faced boy and cutest baby. Its location on the waterfront made contests such as boat races possible. By the late 1930s, Sam Slocum, a Portland promoter, had transformed the Redhead Round Up into a profitable venture.

A 1938 Lincoln County directory shows that tourists staying for the roundup could choose from seven lodging establishments. All were on or within a block of Taft's waterfront. The Redhead Roundup, like most of Oregon's Depression-era festivals, came to an end with the outbreak of World War II.⁷⁹ In fact, tourism came to a virtual halt as the nation turned its attention to the war effort.

Post-War Tourism Taft

When Taft incorporated as a city in 1949, its waterfront area was probably at its peak as a destination for tourists seeking lodging. At this time, Taft's population was 498. The previous year, voters in Nelscott, Taft, DeLake and Cutler City had soundly defeated a measure to consolidate into one city. Incorporation may also have been,

⁷⁸ "Taft Has Bright Prospects of Becoming Thriving Industrial and Agricultural Center," *Beach Resort News*, 10 February 1928.

⁷⁹ Ketrina Poole, "Remember Redheads," *News Guard*, 02 August 1992.

at least in part, an attempt to present a unified lobbying front in an effort to obtain federal funds to dredge Siletz Bay.⁸⁰ Despite the efforts of several of Taft's prominent businessmen and Senator Wayne Morse, this attempt to create a deep water shipping port was not endorsed by the Corps of Engineers (then called the Board of Engineers) and not funded.

Even with the lack of shipping activity, Taft may have been the most prosperous of the four cities contemplating consolidation. There were about eleven lodging establishments operating in historic Taft. All told, 91 tourist cabins, The Pines Hotel and two trailer courts were on or very near the Taft waterfront.

At this time, the cabins in historic Taft were beginning to fall from favor with tourists. The modern hotel was beginning to emerge. Hotels provided bedding and optional kitchens and usually lacked covered garages. In the prosperous years that followed the war, there was a tremendous boom in the tourism industry.

Convertible touring cars had long lost popularity in favor of the hardtop, and cottage owners concerned with profits were quick to discover that garages took up space that could instead be used more profitably for additional revenue-generating rooms. The demand for cottages with kitchenettes dropped in the prosperous post-war era. More travelers than ever before could afford to take a break from the chore of cooking and take their meals in restaurants.⁸¹

Taft changed right along with the hospitality industry. Modern motels began springing up north of historic Taft in an area that became known as Taft Heights. The single largest motel was the Ester Lee. It started as a four-unit, single-story building. Each unit originally included a triple bay window to maximize its ocean view and a garage. In 1943, it was purchased by partners Carrie McClanathan, Bena Englund and Ada Clark. When two of the partners moved on, McClanathan found

⁸⁰ "Morse Telegram Heartens Harbor Project Advocates," *North Lincoln County News*, 05 April 1949.

⁸¹ Belasco, pgs. 164 -166.

herself running the place on her own. Unlike Craddock's Cottages and other waterfront lodging establishments in this day, the Ester Lee provided guests with bedding and cooking utensils (including toasters), dinnerware and, perhaps most importantly, an unobstructed ocean view. Perhaps another advantage the lodging establishments had over the Taft waterfront cottages was visibility. The Ester Lee and several other lodging establishments were either on or easily seen from the Coast Highway.

McClanathan added a basement to house more units. Later she purchased two nearby lodging establishments, Carroll's Grand View and the Moore Apartments. In 1945, she built an addition to the Moore Apartments and had a third building constructed. The oceanfront garages were converted into apartments.

In the twenty-eight years McClanathan ran the Ester Lee, she built it up to thirty-two units. It remains in operation as the Ester Lee to this day.⁸² Other early Taft Heights lodging establishments include Crescent Cottages, Hill's Modern Apartments, Sea Lark Cottages, Taft Auto Court, Taft Height Hotel and Auto Court.

In the post-World War II years, innovations in recreational vehicles and the expansion of the state park system shook up the auto camping industry. Camp trailers and motorhomes (usually home-built) were a rare sight until the post-war era. In the recreation boom that followed the war, auto campers could select from a wide variety of factory-made recreational vehicles.⁸³ By this time, the state park system had expanded, particularly on the Oregon Coast. By 1940, there were 1.5 million acres of state park lands on the Oregon Coast. In the post-war years, this land was developed to accommodate the motoring campers.

The popularity of the state parks, combined with abandonment of the tourist cottages in favor of modern hotels, ultimately led to a decline in activity on the

⁸² Salazar, Volume III, pgs. 168-173.

⁸³ Roger B. White, "Home on the Road" (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), pg. 84.

waterfront. While tourism played an instrumental role in shaping historic Taft, other industries certainly had an impact on the area's development.

Other Auto-Age Industries

Commercial fishing, North Lincoln County's first industry, did not endure into the post-war years. As a commercial venture, fishing on the Siletz began to wane in the 1920s. In 1927, the Gertula Cannery, the predecessor of the Kern Brothers Cannery, closed.⁸⁴ The Oregon Fish and Game Commission brought an end to drift-net fishing on the Siletz River in the early 1930s.⁸⁵

In its heyday, the wood products industry was much larger than the fishing industry in Lincoln County. Its growth was made possible by the outbreak of World War I. In an attempt to secure spruce lumber for the construction of airplanes, the Army built railroad lines from Newport north to Otter Rock and south almost to Yachats. Construction began on a large mill in Toledo. In North Lincoln County, the Army's Spruce Division assumed control of Noon's sawmill at Kernville (Millport). Following the war, this mill apparently went back to its owners.

In 1920, two years after the end of the war, C.D. Johnson, head of the Pacific Spruce Corporation, purchased the majority of the government's timber holdings in the county as well as its railroad lines and the Toledo mill.⁸⁶ Around 1923, Johnson issued a million dollars in stock to acquire timberlands along the Siletz.⁸⁷ According to one of Johnson's logging foremen, the largest fir and spruce in the West were on the Siletz with "fir logs measuring commonly from seventy-two to eighty-two inches at the butt and Sitka Spruce even larger."⁸⁸ In the decades that followed,

⁸⁴ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 70.

⁸⁵ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 65.

⁸⁶ Johnson, pg. 16.

⁸⁷ Johnson, pg. 13.

⁸⁸ "C.D. Johnson Logging Outfit Shows Industry New Methods in Big Woods," *Lincoln County Leader*, 27 July 1939.

Johnson aggressively logged his Siletz timberlands. Johnson transported most of the logs from the Siletz River to Toledo by rail and later by log truck.

The Johnson operation made a pronounced impact on the economy and environment of the area. However, the operations of the much smaller Lincoln County Logging Company were much more visible to the residents of Taft. Lincoln County Logging started bringing logs out of the Siletz watershed in 1925. Unlike the Johnson operation, it relied exclusively on tug boats to move log rafts from the Siletz north to mills on the Columbia River and Washington and to the Johnson operation in Toledo. Active from 1925 to 1939, its two tugs, the *Dodeca* and *Chahuta*, towed 800 million board feet of logs over the Siletz Bar. One local who was around at this time recalled that it was practically a "holiday" in Taft when a tug went out with a raft in tow. Practically. "The whole town was up on the bluff there watching the operation until they got out in the ocean."⁸⁹ They were often moored at the Siletz Bay dock on the Taft waterfront.

The logging of the area's timberlands was a concern for a group of North Lincoln County business leaders. They organized to protect land along the lower Siletz River from "the ravages of the lumber interests." Their attempt to win national park status for 32,000 acres and create a tourist destination where motorists could "drive over its fine boulevards," or ride "in the Venetian gondolas that may glide gracefully over its limpid waters," was unsuccessful. In fact, C.D. Johnson's supply of old growth in Lincoln County lasted through the end of the 1940s. In 1948, about the time Johnson was beginning to run low on old-growth timber, a small sawmill providing employment for nine people was completed on Schooner Creek, just east of Taft.⁹⁰

In 1940, a much smaller forest-based industry established a Taft presence. The

⁸⁹ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 68.

⁹⁰ "Small Sawmill Starts Operations on Schooner Creek Site Monday," *North Lincoln County News*, 30 September 1948.

G.R. Kirk Company of Tacoma, Washington, built a two-story building on Highway 101 near the Schooner Creek Bridge. Aside from upstairs apartments, it housed cold storage lockers and a room for processing sword ferns that local pickers would harvest in the nearby forests.

The Kirk Company placed the ferns in cold storage until the product was shipped to wholesale florists. G.R. Kirk had a network of buying stations in the county and a second facility in Newport. They claimed to have paid out between \$75,000 and \$125,000 each year to local fern pickers. Exactly when the fern plant closed is not known. The old fern plant no longer exists. It was still in operation into the 1950s. The Newport operation closed in 1973.

Historic Preservation History

Information on the fern plant and other lesser-known aspects of the region's history may have been lost had it not been for the long-standing tradition of interest in North Lincoln County's past. In 1947, a group of residents formed the North Lincoln Pioneer Association. Their mission was to "promote closer relationships between them and the later settlers; and to record and preserve interesting historical accounts... ." In 1950, they published a fairly comprehensive history of the area. In 1986 and again in 2001, they published followup editions that primarily contain family histories and summaries of interviews conducted by Mildred Salazar.

In 1987, a group of seven or eight residents organized the North Lincoln County Pioneer Museum, dedicated to preserving and displaying artifacts and archival material pertaining to the region. Their first museum was in Taft; it then moved briefly to a storefront in the DeLake section of Lincoln City. The museum became a centerpiece of Taft in 1994 when it moved into the old Taft Nelscott DeLake Fire District/City Hall building.

These organizations both have been successful in documenting the families who pioneered the area and in generating awareness of the region's history. Only in very recent times has there been an interest in preserving the historic sites and buildings. The combination of the harsh coastal climate and times of less-than-favorable economic conditions continue to challenge members of the community interested in historic preservation.

IIA.2 - SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS

Abrams, Abraham Jr. & Melanie (-) (-). In 1915, Abrams was hired to work at what had been Dodson's Store on the waterfront. Later he worked at the Siletz Bay Mercantile when it was owned by Joe DeJardin Sr. on the Roosevelt Highway. Around 1932, he opened a store of his own across the street. Around 1936, he moved back across the street when he purchased the store at which he had previously worked. Abrams' store (which offered credit and delivery) proved popular with the locals. During World War II, he held back scarce treats such as Hershey bars and sold them to locals only. By the 1940s, his popularity and duration as a resident earned him the nickname "Mr. Taft." His wife, Melanie, kept the books at their store.

Abrams, Abraham Sr. (1860 -1948). Abraham was a native of Lohtaja, Finland. His original surname, Liswig, was changed to Abrams in a misunderstanding when his citizenship papers were processed. In 1890, he married **Anna Kaustinen** (-1935), also a native of Finland, in Astoria. They then moved to Portland, where Abraham worked as a card dealer at the famous Erickson's saloon. He then ran his own saloon and boarding house in northwest Portland before filing for a homestead one-half mile out of Taft on Schooner Creek in 1904. There the family operated a dairy farm. After proving up on their claim in 1908, the Abrams family established a home in Taft.⁹¹

Alinger, Andre (-1918). The son of Finnish immigrants Arvi and Amelia Alinger, Andre came to Taft when his family acquired homesteads on Schooner and Drift creeks around 1910. Andre worked at the Dodson store on the Taft waterfront. In

⁹¹ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 79.

1912, he built a store near Dodson's. Alinger's Taft Co-Operative Store was also known as the Spring Store, as it was constructed around a spring that was used to cool milk and other perishables. In 1912, he became postmaster when the post office was moved to his establishment.⁹²

Bones, John Wesley (1846- 1945). Born in Virginia, he married **Susannah Farmer** (1853-1918) in 1868. Together they had 10 children. They brought their family to Oregon in 1889 and settled in McMinnville. In 1904, he established Taft's first store and on January 22, 1906, became its first postmaster. He named the town for President William Howard Taft, who at that time was secretary of war. Bones sold out in 1910 and moved to Airlie, where he opened another store. In the late 1920s, his son **Charles** opened a store at what was then called Rocky Point (present-day Kernville). This Bones store was located on Highway 101 at the steel drawbridge across the Siletz River that has since been replaced.⁹³

Craddock, Mr. and Mrs. Robert - Robert Craddock, retired Portland detective, constructed Craddock's Cottages on Pacific Avenue in 1930.

DeJardin, Joe Sr. and Mary (-1954). The DeJardins came to Taft in 1927 from Gervais when they purchased Fred Robison's store, the Siletz Mercantile. They ran the store (which included the post office) until selling out in 1936. Upon selling the store, Joe DeJardin built a fifty-by-fifty-foot building on the east side of Highway 101 in Taft.⁹⁴

Getzelman, Alfred and Beatrice (1894 -1995), (-1979). Alfred, a native of Illinois, was the son of German immigrants. The Getzelmans moved to Taft in 1939 and ran Craddock's Cottages until selling out in 1951. Getzelman worked as director of the Taft's water board and fire board for many years.⁹⁵ Around 1945, he built what was then perhaps the largest retail building in Taft. Today it houses Kenny's IGA market.

Jacob Johnson Jr. & Sissy (1859 -1933), (1859-1931). Jacob (usually referred to as "Jakie"

⁹² "Taft Begins in 1894 with Jakie and Sissie Johnson," *News-Times*, 10 February 1998.

⁹³ "Rocky Point is Fast Becoming Import and Busy Place," *Beach Resort News*, 22 June 1928.

⁹⁴ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 110.

⁹⁵ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 128.

or "Jackey") and Sissy probably were both born on the Siletz Reservation. Jacob's mother, Rosa, was member of the Coquille Tribe. His father was from the Sixes band. Sissy's parents were from the Totoona and Shasta Costa bands, who resided in Southern Oregon and Northern California.⁹⁶

They are considered the first owners of what would later become the site of Taft. They received their land under the General Allotment Act. Jacob received a strip of land along the north end of Siletz Bay that bordered the open ocean.⁹⁷ Sissy (sometimes spelled with an "ie") was allotted two parcels on the north bank of Schooner Creek. One bordered her husband's on the easternmost boundary. The Johnsons built a large two-story house and a good-sized barn on the Taft waterfront, where they pastured cattle.⁹⁸ Jacob's mother lived next door in a traditional Native American dwelling. The Johnsons began selling off their Taft holdings when they moved to Siletz around 1904.

By all accounts, the Johnsons were well-known and liked. Both are buried in Siletz. According to notes in Evelyn Parry's *At Rest in Lincoln County*, Jacob was a Shaker Church minister.

Kentta, John. A native of Finland, Kentta came to the area on horseback from Butte, Montana, in the early 1900s. Kentta actively acquired and resold North Lincoln County Indian allotment lands. He later owned a store in Siletz that burned down. Eventually he left the area to find employment in the Portland shipyards.⁹⁹ Many of his descendants remain in Lincoln County.

McClanathan, Carrie (- 1974). In 1941, McClanathan came out from Chicago with her two sisters to purchase and assume operation of the Otis Cafe. After running the cafe for two years, they purchased Hill's Apartments and the Ester Lee Motel in Taft Heights. After her partners left, she ran the Ester Lee by herself. In the twenty-eight years McClanathan ran the Ester Lee, she built it up from four to thirty-two units. McClanathan served on the City Council and fought for a wastewater treatment

⁹⁶ Salazar, Volume III, introduction.

⁹⁷ Map, "Land Status as of 8-13-1956, Siletz Indian Reservation," copy in possession of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz.

⁹⁸ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 31.

⁹⁹ Susan Wehren, "George Kentta - Memories of Indian folklore," *News Times*, 14 November 1979.

plant.¹⁰⁰

Robison, Fred C. Sr. - (- 1955). Robison was born the son of Swedish immigrants in Hobsonville, a mill town near Garibaldi that no longer exists. Family legend has it that the name was originally spelled R-o-b-s-o-n. He served in the United States Life Saving Service and later ran a store and post office in Barview, Oregon. Robison came to Taft in 1920 and purchased Dodson's Store. In 1922, he purchased all the remaining properties owned by Jakie and Sissie Johnson. Robison then became Taft's most active developer until selling out sometime after 1944. He was elected county judge in 1928 and served until resigning in 1932.

Robison, Manville (1890-1976). Brother of Taft developer Fred Robison, Manville and his wife, **Gladys**, built an elaborate lighted miniature golf course complete with a food stand just north of The Pines Hotel in 1931. That same year, Manville was awarded a Carnegie Hero Fund Commission medal and a \$1,000 reward for saving the life of a woman drowning in the ocean at Taft. With the reward money, he and Ben Gertula built a restaurant at the golf course that was named The Green Anchor. The seafood sandwich as prepared by the Robisons earned this establishment regional notoriety . After eight years, the Robisons sold their restaurant. They went on to run several other businesses, including a hardware store, gift shop, fishing tackle store and a liquor store -- all in Taft. Manville, a redhead in his youth, is credited with coming up with the idea for Taft's annual redhead roundup celebration.

Mildred H. Salazar (-). Perhaps no single person has accomplished more in the recording of the history of North Lincoln County. At first she volunteered to assist Earl Nelson, editor of Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon, with a second volume. After Nelson's death in 1986, she became editor of Pioneer of North Lincoln County, Oregon, Volume II (1986) and most recently, Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon, Volume III. These collections of pioneer recollections and family histories are invaluable to anyone wanting to know more about the history of the area.

¹⁰⁰ Salazar, Volume III, pgs. 168-173.

Talbot, Major Theodore (---- 1862). Born in Kentucky, he was attached to the second expedition of John C. Fremont in 1843-44. The Fremont expedition traveled from Saint Louis to the lower Columbia River. He returned east by sea in 1849 to serve with the unit that took over Fort Vancouver from the Hudson's Bay Company. From there, he led a small party in an exploration of the Central Oregon Coast. His 1849 journal documents their search for coal deposits and provides the first known written descriptions of what is now Lincoln County. Talbot rose to the rank of major and assistant adjutant general in 1861.¹⁰¹

Winters, Helen (1893-1980). - Winters moved to the area in 1928 and opened The Shop, a variety store in the building on the northwest corner of 51st Street and Highway 101 that previously housed Taft's first bakery.¹⁰² She ran her store at this location for nearly forty years.¹⁰³ According to Winters, she and her husband, **Bill**, built the first home on Taft Heights in 1936. Her efforts at promoting the area won her the title of a "one-woman chamber of commerce." Winters was instrumental in the development of the Redhead Roundup, the Junior Women of North Lincoln County and the area's first Chamber of Commerce. She also taught drama at Taft High School. In 1961-62, she was designated Woman of the Year.¹⁰⁴

IIB - HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY

One of the goals of this project is to identify both man-made and natural resources that are often overlooked in defining and maintaining the historic integrity of a community. Below listed are the types of resources found in historic Taft.

IIB.1 RESOURCE TYPES

The most common types of the major built historic resources in Taft can be classified by the themes listed below. For a complete listing of themes as defined by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, refer to the *Handbook for Historic*

¹⁰¹ *Dictionary of Oregon History*, pg. 238.

¹⁰² Salazar, Volume III, pg. 74.

¹⁰³ "Helen Winters," obituary, *News Guard*, 15 May 1980.

¹⁰⁴ Edith Modlin, "Taft Woman Made Community Mark," *News Guard*, 13 May 1971.

Preservation Planning in Oregon.

Commerce and Urban Development

Most of Taft's surviving historic structures were constructed as the town began its transformation from small trade center to an automobile-oriented resort community.

Government/Community

Included are local and regional government structures and improvements such as municipal water systems, sidewalks, parks, street lights, and other like amenities. This also includes religious facilities such as churches, meeting halls, and fraternal lodges.

Cultural

This category features cultural structures that functioned as community gathering places, including meeting halls, fraternal buildings, lodges, churches or other structures used for recreation.

Landscape Features

Landscape features are manmade spaces or features such as parks, gardens, irrigation systems, historic trees or specific plantings of note. In general, landscape features fall within the traditional legal descriptions of real property, being either wholly contained within a single tax lot or transversing a number of adjacent lots such as the case of manmade waterways. There were no landscape features located during fieldwork for this project.

Monuments and Markers

Monuments include historic plaques and similar items. The Russ Bailey Plaque and the Talbot sign are the only historic markers in Taft.

Objects and Structures

Generally, objects and structures range from large moveable such as a locomotive or a boat. In the course of the fieldwork for this project, no such resources were located.

Sites

Sites of historic and cultural importance include the location of human events such as early transportation routes, trails, and historic and prehistoric locations of significant events that no longer have any built resources. The Taft waterfront is the site of prehistoric activity as well as the beginning of the town itself. There are numerous sites outlined in the inventory that could be considered historic

Transportation and Communication

This category includes structures relating to the construction of the Roosevelt Military Highway (present-day Highway 101), commercial buildings constructed along the highway and possibly other resources that represent the role the automobile played in the evolution of Taft.

Views

Perhaps because of the widely recognized value of an ocean view and the importance of tourism to the region's economy, Lincoln City has done an admirable job of maintaining Taft's scenic viewshed. Historic viewshed properties may contain property of little intrinsic historic merit but were included for their ability to relate the historic character of the Taft waterfront. Preserving this view is protecting the historic integrity of Taft and its ability to convey its historic significance. Perhaps the most popular is the vista of Siletz Bay. This is fitting, as much of the early development of Taft is a result of its location on Siletz Bay, near Schooner and Drift creeks and the mouth of the Siletz Bay; early on, it was largely a community based on water transportation. The view's historic significance is reinforced by the fact that Lincoln City has four public viewing areas with this vista in mind: one on each side of Schooner Creek, at the Siletz Bay dock, and at the turnaround area at the end of 51st Street. It is also reinforced by the numerous historic scenic photos of the bay.

IIB.2 DISTRIBUTION

Given the sharply focused scope of this project (historic Taft), the location of potentially historically significant properties was almost by definition confined to

the Siletz Bay waterfront area. However, no town exists in a vacuum. People, places and events outside historic Taft played a role in its development. All known factors that contributed substantially to the transition of Taft from a waterfront trade center to an automobile based tourist town were included in this project without consideration of geographic limitations.

IIB.3 QUANTITY

Unfortunately, many of the area's historic resources are gone. As noted previously in the historic context statement, tourist cottages, cabins and motor courts were once commonplace in Taft and elsewhere along the Oregon Coast Highway. In 1949, when the auto-oriented tourist industry appears to have peaked in historic Taft, there was nearly one tourist cabin or other type of lodging unit for every five people living there. The majority of these units were small tourist cabins.

The occurrence of the small Craftsman-style cottage declined when the modern motel began springing up in the 1940s north of historic Taft on the Coast Highway.

Over the years, the damp, windy coastal climate has taken its toll on historic Taft. High tides combined with stormy conditions have flooded the waterfront, depositing mass amounts of driftwood onto the street and damaging buildings on several occasions in the 1910s, in 1932, and in 1948. Since that time, riprap has been installed along the water's edge and to date has prevented a reoccurrence.

Less than favorable economic conditions have also taken their toll on the historic section of Taft at times.

IIB.4 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Built resources may be essentially grouped into two types: residential and commercial. The following discussion of architectural styles found in historic Taft is based on terminology used in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

Historic Residential Styles



Driftwood on the Taft waterfront deposited by a severe storm.
North Lincoln Pioneer & Historical Association image.

Folk (National) -- (also called vernacular style). Houses in this style were built in the post railroad era. Ease of transport enabled builders to use modern materials and building techniques, yet the style predates the railroad era. The basic form of a Folk house is rectangular with a gabled roof. Sometimes, two squares or rectangles intersect to form an "L" or a "T." Folk houses were typically built with little or no attention to changing tastes and fashion and generally lack adornment.

Craftsman -- This is the most prevalent form of architecture in historic Taft. This style was primarily inspired by the work of two California architects, brothers Charles and Sumner Greene. They practiced together in Pasadena from 1893 to 1914. Around 1903, they began to design simple Craftsman type bungalows. In contrast to earlier houses, where servants were employed, bungalows were a simple, inexpensive and functional house. Craftsman designs were given much publicity in architectural publications and popular magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* and *Ladies Home Journal*. As a result, Craftsman bungalow pattern books were widely sold. Some even offered completely cut packages of lumber and detailing that were to be assembled on site by local labor. Nationally, Craftsman design began to fall from favor in the mid-1920s. Few were built after the 1930s. Most of the examples of Craftsman architecture in historic Taft date from the mid to late 1920s.

Features of Craftsman design include a low-pitched gabled roof (occasionally hipped) with a wide, unenclosed eave overhang. Roof rafters are usually exposed and supplemented with decorative (false) beams or braces underneath the gables. Porch roofs are supported by tapered square columns or pedestals that frequently extend to the ground level. In historic Taft, none of the Craftsman homes have the typical large porch supported by columns. High winds and abundant rainfall probably made this design element impractical. A few of the Craftsman homes in historic Taft may originally have had a large porch that was later walled in and converted to living space or simply enclosed.

Spanish Eclectic -- (also sometimes called Spanish Colonial Revival). Only one example, the Robison House, exists in historic Taft. This style uses architectural elements borrowed from the entire history of Spanish design. These include

Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic and Renaissance details.

It is identified by a low-pitched roof, usually with little or no eave overhang and red tile covering. Usually, there is one or more prominent arches above a door or principal window. The wall surface is usually stucco.

This style became popular after the Panama California Exposition in 1915. The exposition's buildings were designed by Bertram G. Goodie, who had previously authored a study of Spanish Colonial architecture.

Spanish Eclectic style homes were more commonly built in California, Arizona, Texas, and Florida. This style reached its height of popularity in the 1920s and early 1930s and rapidly fell from favor during the 1940s. Several new Spanish Eclectic homes recently have been constructed in Lincoln City near the Inn at Spanish Head.

Modern -- Most of the modern structures in historic Taft are outside the temporal scope of this project. The few examples of modern architecture that are old enough to be considered historic are of the "Minimal Traditional" style. This was a compromise in style that came with the economic depression of the 1930s and became extremely popular after World War II. This style is very eclectic, borrowing architectural elements from a variety of styles but lacking decorative detailing. Modern styles will gain in significance as historic perspective on this period is reached.

Commercial Styles

Taft's historic commercial architecture can be grouped into two stylistic categories that reflect its development pattern.

Functional 20th-century Styles -- Except for the Craftsman-style rental cottages, there are few surviving commercial buildings built between 1900 and World War II. The building currently occupied by North Lincoln Pioneer Museum is one of the few examples of such a utilitarian building.

Strip Development/Highway Architecture -- With the construction of the Oregon Coast Highway followed by the completion of the Salmon River Cutoff, Taft

experienced a small boom in commercial development. The start of the automobile age marks the beginning of construction of development geared toward the automobile. There are several buildings of this style, such as Robison's Store and "The Shop," that survive and are still in use commercially.

IIB.5 INVENTORY

Survey

In communities with a tourist-based economy such as Lincoln City, historic integrity and character are becoming increasingly important in any endeavor to become a desirable destination for visitors. This historic context statement and survey marks Lincoln City's first systematic attempt to inventory and assess its historic resources. It also marks a step toward fulfillment of Goal 5 of Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Program.

Known Registrations

There are no known properties in the Taft district currently on the National Register of Historic Places.

IIB.5A PRIVATELY OWNED HISTORIC RESOURCES

Ballard Motor Car Company Building -- 4821 S.W. 101, brick, completed in 1946,¹⁰⁵ now known as **Tom Liften Motors**. As recently as 1995, it was known as **Lincoln Auto Supply**. One-story brick with a new small addition on the north side near 48th Place. The northern section of this building, currently housing two service bays, may soon be removed to make way for an extension of 48th Place to intersect with Highway 101.

History -- Ballard Motor Company opened in a different Taft location in 1936.¹⁰⁶ According to Ron Cook, a longtime friend and employee of Robert Ballard, the builder and architect of this building, construction began as World War II drew to a close. Because of the shortage of lumber, the building was constructed of shiplap (eight-by-one-inch notch-fitted planks) and brick. The 30,000 bricks needed for its construction were purchased in Willamina at four cents each. A friend of Ballard's,

¹⁰⁵ "Business Expansion Forecast for 1946," *Beach Resort News*, 03 January 1946.

¹⁰⁶ Earl M. Nelson, ed., "Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon," McMinville 1951, The Telephone Register Publishing Company, advertisement for Ballard Motors, pg. 97.

Orly Taylor, did most of the masonry work. In the course of this project, Ballard experienced some labor difficulties as he employed both union and non-union workers.¹⁰⁷ This building originally housed a Dodge/Plymouth dealership.¹⁰⁸

Christian Science Reading Room -- 5939 S.W. 50th Street, circa 1930 (currently houses the **Agape Foundation Church**). This unadorned, brick, one-story, rectangle building has a pyramidal hipped roof. It is a good example of a brick building on the coast. Its existence in historic times can be confirmed by its appearance on a 1940 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

Cottage -- 1251 51st Street. Two-story, rectangular, unadorned wood frame with equalateral-hipped (pyramidal) roof, circa 1910. Significantly altered and additions have been made on the back of it. The diamond-shaped window above the front door may not be original, but it does appear in a 1930s photograph of the house.

History -- Built by Jess Stone, this house was moved across Schooner Creek from Longcoy for merchant and dairy farmer Charles F. Robertson in 1924. Robertson used the house as a vacation home. Its original location can be pinpointed by the stone fireplace that was not moved with the house on 54th Drive. It can be seen in the brush just off the road on the righthand side before reaching the Lincoln City sewage treatment plant. It is one of only two houses still standing that were built at Longcoy. Later owned by DeJardin,¹⁰⁹ Fred Robison and others. In the 1930s, it was a rooming house.

Cottages -- (two) 854 & 844 S.W. 50th Street (south side). Sitting side by side, these two units are similar in size, design and construction. The two cottages appear to be examples of slightly modernized, minimalist, Craftsman design from the 1930s. Both have side-gabled roofs with a very small, centered, cross-gabled front porch. The 844 unit has a hipped roof; the 855 unit does not. The 855 unit has a cinder block foundation and the original vertical five- and six-pane wood-frame windows throughout. The 844 unit has similar windows, but the front pair have been replaced with aluminum-frame windows. Apparently in the course of this

¹⁰⁷ Doc Archer, "Tom Liften Motors Building Designated Taft Historic Site."

¹⁰⁸ "Business Expansion Forecast for 1946," *Beach Resort News*, 03 January 1946.

¹⁰⁹ Taft History Walking Tour, North Lincoln Pioneer Museum.

remodeling project, the original siding around the windows was replaced with non-compatible plywood siding. At the time of this survey, no information was available on their history.

Craddock Cottages -- 1123 51st Street (currently named Ocean Shore Apartments). According to ODOT Cultural Resources Specialist Rozalind Kinney, the best representative cottage is located at the 50th Street side and is a good example of an Oregon Coast auto-age motel unit. These side-gabled duplex units have a small, covered, cross-gabled porch. It appears that all of the centered garages dividing the duplexes have been walled in and converted to living space.

History -- Built by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Craddock, this complex originally consisted of eight "bungalow" cottages. It was planned to open on June 10, 1930. Each cottage was constructed as a duplex with a living room at each end of the building and a garage between. Each unit was equipped with a shower-bath with hot- and cold-running water.¹¹⁰ By 1939, they were owned by Mr. and Mrs. Louis Miller, who then sold them to his nephew Alfred Getzelman (1894-1995) and his wife, Beatrice, recent arrivals from Elgin, Illinois.¹¹¹ During World War II, the Coast Guard Beach Patrol used some of these cottages as housing until relocating to what was once Dodson's Store at the west end of 51st Street.¹¹² The Getzelmans, who managed Craddock Cottages for 20 years, added 10 units to this complex.¹¹³ When the Getzelmans had sold out to Mr. and Mrs. O.B. Fuller in 1951,¹¹⁴ this complex consisted of 22 units with a sleeping capacity of 102 people.¹¹⁵

Craftsman Cottages -- (two) 1134, 1142, 51st Street (south side). This matching pair are good examples of one-story Craftsman-style cottages on the Oregon Coast. Both have a low-pitch gabled, hipped roof with a front porch that reflects the main roof line.

History -- These were built by Fred Robison in the 1920s. They may have been

¹¹⁰ "Craddock Cottage Nearing Completion," *Beach Resort News*, 14 March 1930.

¹¹¹ "Craddock's Cottages Figure In Sale," *Beach Resort News*, 30 June 1939.

¹¹² Salazar, Volume III, pg. 143.

¹¹³ "Alfred H. Getzelman," (obituary) *News-Guard*, 05 April 1995.

¹¹⁴ Earl M. Nelson, ed., "Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon," McMinnville 1951, The Telephone Register Publishing Company, advertisement for Craddock Cottages, pg. 87.

¹¹⁵ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 126.

moved to this site, as they do not appear in a photograph from the 1920s.¹¹⁶

According to one early-day resident, Robison built four cabins in a campground (Taft Auto Camp?) to house schoolteachers. Later, these cabins were moved to 51st Street.¹¹⁷ A substantial addition has been made at the rear of unit 1142.

Craftsman Cottages -- (two) 1204, 1214 51st Street (south side). This matching pair of small, one-story, Craftsman-style cottages are sited next to each other. Both have a low-pitch gabled roof and decorative beams under the gables. They also have decorative stickwork above the front door.

History -- These were built by Fred Robison in the 1920s. Based on photographic evidence, it appears the most significant alteration of the exterior of these buildings is the walling of the front porches. The original chimney has been replaced with a larger one in a different location on the 1204 unit.¹¹⁸

Craftsman Cottage -- 1231 S.W. 51st Street. Good example of a circa 1928 one-story, wood-frame Craftsman style cottage. This wood frame side gabled house has a hipped roof with a wall dormer and decorative braces under the gables. According to ODOT Cultural Resources Specialist Rozalind Kinney, this cottage probably would not qualify as National Historic Register property unless it was part of a multiple listing.

Craftsman Cottage -- 1232 S.W. 51st Street. Currently known as Lee Gray's Glass Gallery and Gardens, this small, side-gabled cottage has a wide eave overhang with decorative braces under its cross-gabled front porch.

Based on a photograph on page 71 in Volume III of the *Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon*, this structure was last in a row of approximately seven identical or nearly identical cottages that lined Pacific Avenue. This row began just behind Robison's store on the Coast Highway.¹¹⁹ By 1949, only two of these units were still there.¹²⁰ Unless the others have been moved elsewhere, this is the last of these cottages that were in all probability owned by Fred Robison Sr.

¹¹⁶ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 71.

¹¹⁷ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 52.

¹¹⁸ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 71.

¹¹⁹ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 71.

¹²⁰ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1949, on file at the Oregon Coast History Center.

Craftsman Cottage -- 1205 S.W. 51st Street. Good example of a circa 1928 one-story, wood-frame Oregon Coast cottage. According to Kinney, this cottage probably would not qualify as a National Historic Register property unless it was part of a multiple listing.

History -- This was the home of Dr. and Mrs. Dittebrandt. Dr. Dittebrandt practiced medicine in Taft from 1926 until retiring from practice in September 1935.

Ester Lee Motel -- 3803 S.W. Highway 101. Originally a four-unit, single-story building, each unit originally included a triple bay window to maximize its ocean view and a garage. The Ester Lee has been significantly altered and expanded over the course of its sixty years of operation.

History -- In 1926, R.H. Byng built a house on what would become the site of the Ester Lee. Mrs. Byng carried the stones for the fireplace up from the beach. The Byng house has been built around on all sides and is contained within the present office of the Ester Lee. The fireplace remains in use.

The Ester Lee was built in 1941 by Ester and Lee Inman. In 1943, it was purchased by partners Carrie McClanathan, Bena Englund and Ada Clark. McClanathan soon found herself running the place on her own when Clark took over the management of an apartment building and Englund married. Unlike Craddock's Cottages and other nearby lodging establishments in the 1940s, McClanathan's Ester Lee provided guests with bedding and cooking utensils (including toasters) and dinnerware. For the enrichment of her guests, McClanathan maintained a small reading library in each unit.

Soon after she acquired the Ester Lee, McClanathan began expanding. First she had a basement added to house more units. Later, she purchased two nearby lodging establishments, Carroll's Grand View and the Moore Apartments. In 1945, she built an addition to the Moore Apartments and had a third building constructed. The oceanfront garages were converted into apartments.

In the twenty-eight years McClanathan ran the Ester Lee, she built it up from four to thirty-two units. She retired in 1971 and died in 1974. Subsequent owners added a new building in 1977, boosting the Ester Lee to fifty-four units. It remains in

operation as the Ester Lee to this day.¹²¹

Getzelman Building -- 4845 S.W. Hwy. 101.

History -- Completed in the 1940s.¹²² This building was constructed by Alfred Getzelman (1894-1995), owner of Craddock Cottages.¹²³ It was originally 8,000 square feet; additions since 1971 have made it a total of 18,000 square feet.¹²⁴ Currently, this structure houses **Kenny's IGA South**.

Over the years, this building has had several tenants. The upstairs houses a doctor's office and apartments that were later converted into office space.¹²⁵ Perhaps its first major ground-floor tenant was **Ocean Bay Furniture Company**. It had been a Safeway grocery store for some time when it closed in 1971. Kenny Morgan Sr. purchased the old Safeway and reopened as an IGA Foodliner grocery store. Getzelman sold this building in 1974.¹²⁶ In 1986, Kenny Morgan Jr. took over the family business. The Morgan family has been in the grocery business in what is now Lincoln City since 1937.¹²⁷

Hal's Half Acre -- 4655 S.E. 51st St. This one-and-a-half-story Craftsman cross-gabled-roof residence has been significantly altered. Over the years, a bathroom, utility, storage room and family room have been added. The interior was extensively remodeled and modernized in the 1980s. The front porch has been walled in and converted to living space.

History -- It was built in 1928-29 by Oregon Secretary of State Hal E. Hoss for use as a weekend and summer getaway. Reportedly, the house was built from lumber milled from trees logged at the site.

When Hoss died while in office in 1934, his family took up permanent residence there. The family no longer owns this house but still has in its possession the "Hal's Half Acre" iron sign that adorned the door, complete with an illustration of Hoss in his rocking chair. The front door is said to have been salvaged from the

¹²¹ Salazar, Volume III, pgs. 168-173.

¹²² Salazar, Volume III, pg. 126.

¹²³ "Alfred H. Getzelman," (obituary) *News-Guard*, 05 April 1995.

¹²⁴ "Gail Kimberling, "Kenny's IGA Still Home-Town Proud after 57 Years in Business in Lincoln County," *News Guard*, 05 April 1995.

¹²⁵ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 126.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Anna Remecki, "Kenny's IGA Celebrates 57 years," *News Guard*, 05 April 1995.

Marion County Court House after it burned in 1929. A tenant named Davis built the stone fireplace in the 1930s in lieu of rent.¹²⁸

Hutchen's Drug Store - 5070 S.E. Highway 101. Believed to have been built in 1927, this one-story, 2,500-square-foot building with flat roof and wood frame has housed three separate storefronts for most of its existence.

History - In 1932, this building housed Hutchens Drug Store, Stafford's Meat Market and Abrams' Cash Grocery. At that time, the building's foundation was replaced and the building raised a foot to bring it up to the same level as the roadway. According to a news clipping from the time, several other buildings in Taft were raised to "present a front more harmonious with the surroundings than formerly."¹²⁹ Presumably, the buildings were raised after the Highway 101 roadbed was built up. Hutchens Drug Store later became Mitchell's Drugs, which in turn became Wally's Apothecary in 1967.¹³⁰ During the 1950s, this building also housed Bernie's Sporting Goods, a fishing tackle store.

In 1998 the Taft Tea & Coffee House opened in the southernmost storefront location after completing an extensive remodel of the interior and exterior of the entire building. In the course of this project, decorative wood shingle siding was added to its exterior. Prior to the remodel, this building housed an antique store.¹³¹

Lincoln Coast Theater -- 4910 S.E. Highway 101. This front-gabled, wood-frame building has been significantly altered. It currently houses the southernmost section of Ace Hardware - South.

History -- At its grand opening on May 27, 1932, Lincoln Coast Theater ran the movie "This is the Night," starring Lily Damita, Charlie Ruggles, Roland Young and Cary Grant.¹³² By 1934, it apparently had been closed for some time. Newport theater

¹²⁸ "Hal's Half Acre," typed paper on file, North Lincoln Pioneer Museum.

¹²⁹ "Taft Buildings Being Raised," *Beach Resort News*, 04 August 1933.

¹³⁰ "Old and New," *News -Guard*, 07 September 1967.

¹³¹ "Taft Coffee Shop Recalls Past," *News Guard*, 03 June 1998.

¹³² "Grand Opening, Lincoln Coast Theater," *Coast Guard*, May 1932.

man William McKeivitt reopened the theater after negotiating a lease with the building's owner, E.K. Willer, and upgrading the sound system.¹³³ According to at least one resident who spent his childhood in Taft in the 1940s, the Lincoln was the social center for children during the long coastal winters.¹³⁴ Today this is the southernmost part of the True Value Hardware complex. It is a warehouse. The face of the building has been boarded over and the marquee is gone.

North Lincoln County Pioneer Museum -- 4907 S.W. Highway 101 . This utilitarian two-story, wood-frame building with a pyramidal roof is largely unadorned.

History -- Construction began on what was originally **Taft Nelscott DeLake Fire District** with a "building bee" held on July 19, 1940. Bob Ballard was fire chief at this time.¹³⁵ Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, this building was briefly occupied by about a dozen soldiers.¹³⁶ This building later became **Taft City Hall** and community hall. When Lincoln City began looking to move from this location in 1975, a reporter asked then City Manager Jack Greene how much longer it could operate in this building. He replied, "It should have been torn down yesterday."¹³⁷ In 1986, the North Lincoln County Pioneer and Historical Society announced its intention to open a museum, preferably in the Taft area of Lincoln City. The City Hall building was mentioned as a possibility.¹³⁸ Lincoln City offices closed on June 11, 1993, when they were moved from this building to their current location in Lincoln Square.¹³⁹ Later that same year, the city turned this building over to the North Lincoln County Historical Society for use as a museum. In 1994, the museum moved from a former retail space on Highway 101 into this building.¹⁴⁰ It has been altered significantly since its original construction. The historical society is currently raising funds to construct a major addition to this building.

Robison Building -- 5111 S.W. Highway 101. This one-story, wood-frame

¹³³ "Newport Man Takes Over Management," *North Lincoln Coast Guard*, January 1934.

¹³⁴ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 146.

¹³⁵ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 126.

¹³⁶ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 143.

¹³⁷ "City Hunts For New City Hall," *News Guard*, 06 March 1975.

¹³⁸ "Pioneers Want Their Own Historical Museum," *News Guard*, 15 January 1986.

¹³⁹ "City Hall to Begin Move," *News Guard*, 09 June 1993.

¹⁴⁰ "Museum Hopes to Complete Move by 1994," *News Guard*, 03 November 1993.

building currently houses **The Paint Store**. While the facade appears to retain a certain amount of its original appearance, it has been altered significantly and expanded.

History -- When the Coast Highway came through Taft, Fred Robison had this building constructed in 1925 to house his Siletz Mercantile, which he relocated from the waterfront.¹⁴¹ In 1927, Robison sold his store to Joe DeJardin Sr. The DeJardins ran the store (which included the post office) until selling out in 1936 to Abraham Abrams, Jr. who ran a store in this location for many years.

Robison House -- 4370 S.W. Dune Street. The exterior of this four-bedroom, two-story stucco Spanish Eclectic style home appears to have been altered very little since its completion in 1928 or 1929. Based on photographic evidence, it appears the openings of the original drive-through garage on the first floor were converted into windows and remodeled into living space. This house remains in use as a residence. Much of the original surrounding acreage has been subdivided. This is probably one of the very few Spanish Eclectic style homes on the Oregon Coast dating from the 1920s.

History -- According to Fred Robison Jr., the son of house's original owner, construction was not really possible until the completion of the Oregon Coast Highway. Robison recalled his father saying, "Just once in my lifetime, I'm going to build a house, and I'm going to build what I want." Constructed for \$25,000, it was, by far, the most elaborate home in North Lincoln County in its day. The stucco work was carried out by a contractor from Portland. When completed, every room in the house had an ocean view. The floors were of oak. The interior was trimmed with eucalyptus. The bathroom, along with the kitchen countertops, was tiled.

Robison landscaped the surrounding acreage with trees and shrubs he collected wherever he traveled. Many of the redwood trees, Port Orford cedar and apple trees planted by Robison are still standing.

The Robison family used this house as its primary residence until selling it in 1965 or 1966 to a man named Mr. Walden, who was an executive with the Lincoln Bank of Taft.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Earl M. Nelson, ed., "Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon," McMinnville 1951, The Telephone Register Publishing Company, advertisement for Abrams General Merchandise, pg. 46.

¹⁴² Salazar, Volume III, pgs. 75-76.

Schooner Creek Cottage -- 1570 Schooner Creek Road.

Located on a thin strip of land between Schooner Creek Road and Schooner Creek, this Craftsman-style home currently houses a residence/antique store combination. The basic structure of this two-story, wood-frame, gable-front and wing house is of traditional American Folk (vernacular) design. However, a few design elements place it in the Craftsman category of design. It has a wide eave overhang with decorative braces under its gables and some exposed roof rafters. The plain wood shingle siding appears to be original, or at least compatible. With the exception of a small lean-to carport, the walling in of the small front porch, and possibly the addition of a shed dormer, this house appears unaltered. It is also possible a large front porch was walled in. If so, it was done in a manner compatible with the design of the house. A non-compatible dwelling has been added in back, on the east end of the house, that is not attached. Some of the siding on the west end of the house has been replaced with modern plywood.

History -- At the time of this inventory, the history of this house was unknown. However, its construction and design would appear to date from 1920s or quite possibly earlier. It may be one of the oldest homes still standing in historic Taft. It seems likely it was the home of the Abraham Abrams Sr. family.

Schooner Creek Wayside -- Highway 101 at Schooner Creek. A gazebo with interpretive panels pertaining to the area's history are installed here. This wayside area offers a nice view of Siletz Bay and the rock formation known as the "Four Brothers" and the Taft waterfront.

The Shop -- 5021 S.W. Highway 101. This flat-roof, wood-frame building currently houses Bush's Antiques. It has been significantly altered and expanded.

History -- This building was built by Fred Robison, most likely constructed in 1928 when the highway came through Taft. It housed Taft's first bakery and cafe. Later it was a butcher shop. In 1930,¹⁴³ Helen Winters opened a store in this location. Known as The Shop, it was a popular variety store that sold gifts, souvenirs and clothing.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 109.

¹⁴⁴ Edith Modlin, "Taft Woman Made Community Mark," *News Guard*, 13 May 1971.

Site of Indian Burial Ground -- north side of 51st Street near the city park. When Lieutenant Theodore Talbot explored the Central Oregon Coast in August and September 1849 in search of coal deposits, his party scouted the "Celeetz" Bay. Talbot noted in his journal on September 6, "It is the custom of the Indians in this country to deposit their dead in canoes, and there are a great number of them along the borders of the bay. They rest on platforms, each one surrounded by poles, from which are suspended all the personal effects of the deceased."¹⁴⁵ Alfred Acklom, who visited this site in 1880 and wrote an account of his stay there in 1935, made no mention of these grounds.¹⁴⁶

Many pioneer residents of the area have confirmed the existence of burial remains at a sand dune that stood near the west end of 51st Street, near the location of present-day Mo's. When the dunes were bulldozed to make way for development, human remains and funerary objects such as beads, bracelets, stone bowls and other metal objects were found. Supposedly, the artifacts and the human remains were reburied on the north side of 51st Street. Many pioneer residents gained possession of these objects.

When a developer announced plans to build on the site of the then-abandoned Hershey's Place Restaurant, test holes were dug to check for possible archaeological remains. Nothing of significance was discovered.¹⁴⁷

Snug Harbor Tavern -- 5001 S.W. Highway 101. This two-story, craftsman wood-frame structure has a side-gabled roof. The wide eave overhang on the main structure and decorative braces under its gables hint that it could have been originally constructed as a residence. Additions have been built on its east and south sides. Most of the original multi-pane, wood-frame windows have been replaced with aluminum-framed windows.

History -- This establishment has been in operation in this location since the 1930s. In 1938, it is listed in a directory simply as "Snug Harbor," a restaurant specializing in lunch. Previous owners include Tom & Tess Morgan and Peter and Ivah "Spook" G. Ludwig.

¹⁴⁵ Talbot, pg. 11.

¹⁴⁶ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 1.

¹⁴⁷ "Planning Commission will Hear Motel Appeal," *News Guard*, 29 May 1996.

Talbot Wayside -- Highway 101 at Schooner Creek. A wooden sign commemorating Lieutenant Theodore Talbot's exploration of the Siletz Bay in 1849 was first placed by the Lincoln County Historical Society here in the 1960s. It has been replaced and updated periodically. It is part of a countywide historic marker sign program the society has administered since the 1950s. This parking area offers a nice view of the Taft waterfront, Siletz Bay, and the rock formation known as the "Four Brothers."

Taft Auto Park -- 4800 S.E. Inlet Avenue (east side of 51st Street, near bridge). Historically, it is also known as **Fruiht Auto Park**; currently it is a manufactured housing park known as **Taft Mobile Home Villa & Annex**.

A two-story, wood-frame house survives from its autocamp days. This home probably served as the proprietor's residence. An early picture postcard sold by the autocamp in the 1930s indicates the exterior of this house has changed very little. The home has a moderately steep cross-gabled roof. It appears to be a very early example of minimal traditional styling that became popular in the 1940s.

History -- Believed to have been built in 1927, it was one of the area's first auto camps.¹⁴⁸ In 1935, Frank Fruiht constructed several "deluxe cabins" at his Taft Auto Park. Each two-bedroom unit had a living room with a rock fireplace, dinette and kitchen. A couch and a folding bed boosted the sleeping capacity of each unit to accommodate eight people. The walls and ceiling were paneled in plywood and varnished to "bring out the natural grain in the board." The kitchens were equipped with electric stoves and a hot plate. Hot and cold water were available. Each unit also featured a small trap door to make transporting firewood to the inside of the cottage easier. A door for the kitchen opened into the garage.¹⁴⁹

Taft Pioneer Cemetery

History - The first official burial was Neil Andersen in 1906. Andersen drowned when his boat overturned in Siletz Bay.¹⁵⁰ The cemetery land was donated

¹⁴⁸ "Almona Gertula Explains Some Early Homes on Taft's 51st Street," typed paper on file at North Lincoln Pioneer Museum.

¹⁴⁹ "Fruiht Completes Deluxe Cottages," *Beach Resort News*, 09 August 1935.

¹⁵⁰ Katy Zook, "Bay Area of Taft Boasts Roots, History, Legends," *News Guard*, 20 April 1988.

this building was designed to accommodate 150 skaters at once. Organ music was provided by a phonograph. It remained in operation into the 1970s(?).

The rink was converted by Roger Mills into a True Value Hardware in 1973.¹⁵² Today it houses the northernmost section of Ace Hardware.

IIB.5B GOVERNMENT OWNED AND CONTROLLED HISTORIC RESOURCES -

Russ Bailey Plaque & Flag Pole -- plaque at the west end of 51st Street.

History -- On Memorial Day 2000, Russ Bailey, longtime owner-operator of the Taft Dock Moorage, was honored for the 28 rescues he performed near his dock at the mouth of the Siletz River. See **Siletz Bay Dock**.

Siletz Bay Dock (site) -- located just northeast of Mo's.

History -- A shipping dock was first built on the Taft waterfront (possibly on this site) sometime in the early 1920s. In 1928 or early 1929, the Port of Newport constructed a new dock at Taft. Apparently, the dock's presence altered the bay's current, causing a washout of Pacific Avenue. Citizens from Taft, led by then County Judge Fred Robison, successfully lobbied the port to construct a 600-foot-long wooden bulkhead to remedy the problem.¹⁵³

In the 1930s, the Taft dock was a hub of activity. Lincoln County Logging Company's tugboats *Chahunta* and *Dodeca* (used to tow log rafts out of the Siletz Bay) were often docked there. Also at this time, Bob and Al McMullen ran a boat rental operation at this dock.¹⁵⁴

A new dock was constructed by Russ Bailey at or very near this site of a previous dock in 1946. Originally, Bailey's dock had a small "fishing shack" that later expanded into a restaurant. A building was later added in which Bailey rented boats and crab pots and sold tackle and bait. Prior to the establishment of a Coast Guard station in Depoe Bay around 1958, Bailey claimed to have rescued twenty-nine people from the treacherous Siletz Bay bar.¹⁵⁵ On Memorial Day 2000, Russ Bailey, longtime owner-operator of the Taft Dock Moorage, was honored for the 28 rescues

¹⁵² "Gail Kimberling, "Mills means Hardware in Lincoln City," 28 October 1994.

¹⁵³ Minutes, Port of Newport, 08 February 1929, on file at Port of Newport.

¹⁵⁴ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 129.

¹⁵⁵ "Taft Dock Now a Landmark," *Capital Journal*, 15 April 1970.

he performed near his dock at the mouth of the Siletz River.

A pioneer resident who lived in Taft from 1918 to 1933 ranked its importance as a landmark in a 1994 interview. "If they took the Taft dock away, I don't think I would recognize the place no more," he said.¹⁵⁶

The nearby land (including the site of Mo's) was owned by the Port of Newport until it was deeded over to Lincoln City in the 1970s or 1980s.¹⁵⁷ Mo's has had a presence near the dock since the early 1960s. The present-day Mo's restaurant at the dock was constructed in 1984-85.

Site of Schooner Creek Shipwreck -- Siletz Bay, mouth of Schooner Creek.

History - For decades, the ribs of a wrecked ship could be seen here at low tides, but they are now seldom, if ever, seen. Over the years, there has been much debate over the origin of the shipwrecked remains.

They could be the remains of the *Blanco*, a large brig built in North Bend that wrecked at the mouth of the Siletz Bay in 1860 or 1864. Ben Simpson, Siletz Indian agent, noted seeing the wreck of the *Blanco* at the mouth of the Siletz River in a report he penned in 1864.

The second written account of the presence of the shipwreck was written by Alfred Acklom, who visited the site of Taft in 1880. In the account of the trip, written in 1935, he described it as a small "wrecked schooner which had drifted into the bay waterlogged and abandoned."¹⁵⁸

Others believed the remains were of a small unidentified schooner that wrecked on the nearby beach in 1890. In 1909, a Native American woman believed to be 100 years old stated through a translator that the remains were from a ship that sailed into the bay long before European settlement. The ship grounded and the crew was killed by the local Indians.

In 1951, Ben Gertula, a Kernville boat builder, surveyed the wreck and determined that the remains were of a vessel in excess of 100 feet long and 30 feet in beam. He speculated that the wreck could have been the *Blanco*, *Uncle John* (Uncle Sam?), *Sunbeam*, or the *Phoebe Fay*. The *Uncle John* and the *Phoebe Fay* were believed to have met their end near Cape Foulweather.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Salazar, Volume III, pg. 58.

¹⁵⁷ Letter to Steve Wyatt from Jean Celia, 12 February 2001.

¹⁵⁸ Salazar, Volume II, pg. 1.

¹⁵⁹ Earl M. Nelson, ed., "Pioneer History of North Lincoln County, Oregon," McMinnville 1951, The Telephone Register Publishing Company, pgs. 67-71.

Taft High School -- This simple wood frame structure with a steep side-gabled roof is fairly typical of school buildings constructed in the 1930s. For the most part, it has the clean, unadorned lines of a minimal traditional structure. However, the main entrance incorporates subtle Colonial design elements. The pediment at the main entrance projects forward slightly. The door is flanked with a pair of pilasters on each side. A small round fan light stands out above the door.

History -- In 1936, three similar school buildings were constructed by the Lincoln County School District, each for around \$35,000. These buildings were designed by Portland architect Francis M. Stokes (1883-1975). More than 100 school buildings in Oregon and Washington have been attributed to Stokes. In addition to being prolific, Stokes was very versatile, having used a wide variety of design styles. For at least the last two decades, incorrect information circulated that the buildings were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Known as Central Elementary, the Newport version of this building was dedicated in February 1936 and in use until 1975. It has been a multiple-use building known as the Naterlin Community Center since 1977.

The Toledo version of this building faced S.E. 10th Street. It was also completed in 1936. When it was destroyed by fire in 1979, it had been in use as the junior high school.

The Taft version of this building is the only one still in use for its intended purpose. It currently serves as **Taft Elementary School**.

Talbot Wayside -- Highway 101 at Schooner Creek. A wooden sign commemorating Lieutenant Theodore Talbot's exploration of the Siletz Bay in 1849 was first placed by the Lincoln County Historical Society here in the 1960s. It has been replaced and updated periodically. It is part of a countywide historic marker sign program the society has administered since the 1950s. This parking area offers a nice view of the Taft waterfront, Siletz Bay, and the rock formation known as the "Four Brothers."

IIB.5C Other -

Much of this area's land and streetscape features such as roadways, parking lots, sidewalks, street furniture, manhole covers, grates, signage and a variety of

other elements, while not included in this inventory, without doubt contribute to its character. As these features are changed, removed and or otherwise altered, the character of historic Taft will be affected.

These features include but may not be limited to:

1. Street signs, directional and informational
2. Roadways and street furniture
3. Surrounding landscapes -- Siletz Bay, Schooner Creek, the nearby undeveloped wooded hillsides under the jurisdiction of governmental agencies (such as the National Wildlife Refuge near the former site of Longcoy).
4. Viewsheds -- Perhaps the most popular is the vista of Siletz Bay. This is fitting, as much of the early development of Taft is a result of its location on Siletz Bay, near Schooner and Drift creeks and the mouth of the bay; early on, it was largely a community based on water transportation. The bay's importance is documented by the numerous historic scenic photos of it in existence. Preserving this view is protecting the historic integrity of Taft and its ability to convey its historic significance.

The view's historic significance is further reinforced by the fact that Lincoln City has four public viewing areas with this vista in mind: one on each side of Schooner Creek; the Siletz Bay dock (see inventory); and the turnaround area at the end of 51st Street.

IIB.6 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The resources and properties inventoried for this project were visited and visually assessed for their potential significance using the criteria outlined below. Most of the resources were also photographed. Separate archival research was conducted to document each resource as thoroughly as possible given the limited scope of this project.

Following the identification of potentially significant resources through fieldwork and archival research, each property should be further evaluated for its historic significance and architectural integrity. This involves weighing each

resource against the previously identified themes outlined in this historic context statement.

Significance

The base model for historic significance evaluation relies on the standards of integrity and significance set forth by the National Park Service and detailed in *Historic Preservation and the Oregon Land Use Planning Program*. Resources are evaluated as “excellent, good, fair, or poor” for their potential significance within the context of the following three broad categories:

Historic Association: Resources can be deemed significant that can be associated with a person, group, organization, or an event that has made a significant contribution to a community or is illustrative of a broad pattern of cultural, social, political, economic, or industrial history of a community, state, or nation.

Architecture: Examples of a particular architectural style, building type, convention, design or artistic quality that utilizes a particular material or construction method, or that has high integrity or rarity as one of the few remaining examples of a particular type, can be deemed significant.

Environmental: Important visual landmarks in setting, or an element in the continuity or character of the street, neighborhood or community can be assessed as significant.

Buildings that have been moved from their original location, religious properties, cemeteries and buildings less than 50 years old are generally not considered under the National Parks Service criteria. Exceptions have been made for resources that have gained significance within the last 50 years.

Integrity

Potentially significant resources were evaluated for their architectural

integrity, or their intactness or historic form and original construction materials. Three levels of integrity are used:

(1) *Intact/Virtually Intact*. This assessment is applicable to buildings retaining their original appearance and fabric, including massing, architectural detail, surface treatment, windows and doors.

(2) *Minimum Modification*. This rating is appropriate to structures that have undergone alterations that are reversible, or that they are in keeping with the construction technique and character with its period(s) of significance.

(3) *Major Modification*. The lowest rating of integrity is applied to buildings in which a high percentage of the original form and materials has been significantly altered with modern details to the point that its modifications detract from the original architectural continuity.

Condition

The state of repair of a historic property must be considered. The preservation or restoration of a property may be impractical despite its significance and integrity if it has been neglected or damaged to an advanced state of disrepair.

Ranking

Upon completion of an evaluation of integrity, significance and condition, properties are to be divided into rankings of relative contribution within the historic context. A standard three-tier system was used to rank the inventoried resources.

Primary -- resources of high associative or architectural significance and integrity that played a substantial role in the historic landscape of the project. Primary resources significantly contribute to the understanding of the broad development patterns of historic Taft and are also excellent examples of a specific period of architecture or are associated with notable figures who played an instrumental role in the region's development.

Secondary -- resources of some associative architectural significance that played a lesser but still important individual role in the historic landscape of the project area. Secondary resources are often virtually intact architecturally or display architectural modifications, but they represent less important aspects of development within the context.

Contributing -- resources that have little individual associative or architectural significance, yet provide a valuable contextual element within the historic landscape of the project area. Contributing resources usually have been modified architecturally, yet do not diminish from the historic continuity of the landscape.

All historic resources included in the above survey were found to be a minimum of "contributing."

SECTION III: GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Hypothetically, decisions impacting historic resources should be based solely on their historical significance. However, a wide variety of other considerations, such as public opinion, budgetary constraints, eminent threats to resources, can dramatically affect the prioritization and implementation of goals.

IIIA - IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Identified below are people and organizations that could affect a preservation effort in Taft.

Army Corps of Engineers -- Although it has a very limited presence on Siletz Bay, it should be consulted on any changes that could have an effect on any navigational aids or navigability.

Business Owners -- No preservation effort could be successful without their support.

Historical Societies -- Lincoln County has two historical societies that could function as both allies and informational resources in a historic preservation effort.

The North Lincoln Historical Society (whose museum is in historic Taft) and the Lincoln County Historical Society of Newport are both interested in historic preservation and maintain archives with material pertaining to historic Taft.

Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce and Lincoln City Visitors and Convention Bureau -- The economic benefits of a preservation effort could be realized more quickly if it is effectively marketed to tourists through these two groups. The chamber could potentially act as a liaison between the city, historic preservationists and business people.

Lincoln City Government (City Council, Public Works, Planning and Urban Renewal Board) -- Support of elected officials and paid staff is essential to any preservation effort. The Urban Renewal Board could be a funding source for preservation efforts.

Lincoln County Planning Department -- Some of Taft borders on unincorporated areas of Lincoln County. Decisions made by the county could impact the historic character of Taft.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) -- Highway 101 remains vitally important to Oregon Coast communities along its path. Changes and/or improvements to the highway and sidewalk could impact historic Taft. Directional signage locating the historic area could be an aid to local merchants.

Oregon State Historic Preservation -- This office could act as an informational resource and possible aid in obtaining funding.

Port of Newport -- The port may own property on the waterfront or have an interest in any improvements that affect the bay's navigability.

Property Owners -- As with business owners, no preservation effort could be successful without their support.

United States Coast Guard -- Although it has a very limited presence on Siletz Bay, it should be consulted on any changes that could potentially have an effect on navigational aids or navigability.

Potential Threats and Opportunities to a Preservation Effort

Absentee Property Ownership -- Contacting and gaining input and/or support for any planning effort in many Oregon coastal communities can be challenging because of a high percentage of property owners who live outside the area.

Economic Benefits -- The financial benefits of historic preservation can be a hard sell. The economic rewards of historic preservation are often times not realized for several years.

In communities in which a historic preservation program has been successfully implemented, however, the economic and aesthetic rewards are well known. A successful historic preservation effort could give Taft an edge over other Oregon Coast communities whose historic areas have since been redeveloped. Demographically, the general population is aging, and older tourists are drawn to areas of historical interest.

Economic Conditions -- Historic preservation efforts can be difficult to implement in depressed economic times. Taft, like much of the Oregon Coast, has an economy based largely on tourism. Countless factors completely out of the control of local business owners and marketers can radically affect tourist traffic. The general health of the nation's economy, gas prices, road conditions and world events are just some of the factors that can affect tourism both positively and

negatively.

Property Values -- Many of the properties inventoried are sitting on land that is potentially much more valuable than its structure(s). In many cases, development may be more economically feasible than a preservation effort.

Recent History -- To some older people, Taft's past is too recent to be considered history. On the other hand, Taft's auto age history is something that younger people can relate to and find interesting.

Redevelopment -- Recently, there have been a few modern motels and condominiums constructed in historic Taft. Depending on the design and scale of redevelopment, it can detract or enhance the historic character of the neighborhood. Controlled redevelopment could boost the local economy and spur interest in the area and its history.

IIIB- GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Taft's property and business owners should have a thorough understanding of the aesthetic and financial value of historic preservation.
2. Historic Taft should become a destination not just for its beach and ocean views, but also for its historic charm and character.
3. Taft's historic structures and sites should be saved.
4. Both new and redevelopment in Taft should be shaped to blend with the area's historic character.
5. Both visitors and residents should gain an appreciation and understanding of Taft's history.
6. Taft's waterfront district should be easily accessible to motorists traveling Highway 101.
7. Taft should become a pedestrian friendly place where visitors and residents alike choose to linger.
8. Ocean and bay viewing areas should be enhanced and increased.

IIIC - STRATEGIES

General Recommendations

These are in no particular order:

1. Obtain funding from ODOT, Lincoln City and/or a federal agency to construct a "walk of history," a walk/bikeway along 51st Street and as close to the bay as possible. It should have signage that interprets Taft's history (and natural history).

2. Work with the local historical societies to produce and install historic interpretation and create better parking at the wayside near Waters Edge Condo.

3. With help from the local historical societies, Lincoln City Chamber of Commerce and Visitors and Convention Bureau, produce a walking tour with accompanying brochures and site markers that could be administered by museum staff and/or volunteers. The residents and visitors with the greatest knowledge and appreciation for this neighborhood are those who have walked it. By installing the infrastructure necessary for an inviting, pleasurable walking experience, pride and appreciation among those who live and visit there will increase.

4. Acknowledge the waterfront area as a local historic district. Working with ODOT, sign it accordingly and install an entryway that is visible from Highway 101 that acknowledges visitors' entry to what could be designated "Oldtown Taft." An entryway on Highway 101 at the Schooner Creek Bridge could also be effective, but given it is state highway, it would have to be unobtrusive.

5. Encourage owners of historic buildings to place them on the National Historic Register.

6. Devise and institute a locally based program (administered by the city, historical society, or citizen-based Historic Architecture Committee) to acknowledge historic preservation efforts of individuals and businesses in the community.

7. Install interpretive signage near the site of the Schooner Creek shipwreck that gives the details of the various accounts of the wreck's origin.

8. Improve visibility of the North Lincoln Pioneer Museum from both Highway 101 and 51st Street.

9. Consider renaming 51st Street to reflect its historic character. For example: Waterfront Street, Oldtown Turnaround, or its old name, Pacific Avenue.

10. Install signage at the dock site interpreting its history as well as Taft's maritime heritage and its inseparable connection to Siletz Bay.

11. Assist the museum in acquiring and restoring an old cottage on the waterfront and placing it on the National Register of Historic Places. It could be opened for tours during the summer months. This could serve as an example of the

aesthetic and financial merits of historic preservation.

12. Construct a well-marked turning lane, exit or other traffic-control device on Highway 101 that makes both entering and exiting the Historic Taft area easier and safer for motorists and pedestrians.

13. Closely monitor development in landscapes surrounding Siletz Bay, Schooner Creek and any of the nearby undeveloped wooded hillsides under the jurisdiction of governmental agencies (such as the National Wildlife Refuge near the former site of Longcoy). Some developments could jeopardize the historic integrity of Taft.

14. Hold a series of public meetings in which presentations are given showing towns and neighborhoods that have created a local historic district, implemented a preservation program and controlled new growth to fit in with the historic ambiance. The area most like Taft that has accomplished this to any degree is Newport's Nye Beach neighborhood. Perhaps an alliance could be forged with Newport's Planning Department, as this department has carried out such meetings and have successfully implemented design guidelines.

Regulatory Recommendations

These are in no particular order:

1. Create a local historic district. Lincoln City should consider adopting a historic preservation ordinance (or ordinances) that includes a designation of the Taft waterfront area as a historic district. This should include a small section of Highway 101 near the intersection of 51st Street and a section of Schooner Creek Road that is several blocks long.

2. Implement design standards. With historic designation and much public input should come the adoption of a set of design standards. They should clarify acceptable practices for new construction and extensive remodels of existing structures (section 2.3 of this document identifies these styles). It should be emphasized that the overall aim of the guidelines is not to turn back the hands of time, stop growth, or require all the buildings to look alike. The goal of these guidelines should be to maintain the historic character and architectural styles of Taft. In other words, the goal should be to protect and enhance the historic integrity of this unique area.

The following should also be considered for inclusion in the proposed design standards:

Street signs, directional and informational -- A standard design for new and replacement installations should be adopted that requires adherence from the city's Public Works Department. Outside agencies such as Lincoln County Public Works and ODOT should be informed of the standard and encouraged to follow suit.

Roadways and street furniture -- Standards should be set for road materials, sidewalks, curbs, utility features, benches, drinking fountains, monuments and other items that may have an impact on the character of historic Taft.

The proposed design standards should also provide guidelines for the placement and design of incidentals and accessories such as fencing, utility connections and satellite dishes.

3. Create a citizen-based Historic Architecture Committee. This architectural and/or historic review committee should work with the city planner in an advisory role to the City Council. It should assume responsibility for the inclusion of this and any subsequent surveys into the city's planning process. It should also administer the adopted design guidelines by reviewing construction and remodeling plans submitted by homeowners and contractors for projects within the boundary of this or any other historic districts in Lincoln City.

The citizen's review committee and the Lincoln City Planning Department should make information on the historic designation and the design guidelines readily available to the public. Perhaps a pamphlet could be circulated to all citizens potentially affected by these actions. An informational notebook should be kept on file in the Planning Department and made readily accessible to citizens and contractors contemplating a construction or remodel project. This notebook should contain architectural information along with numerous historic and contemporary photos that illustrate both acceptable and non-acceptable practices.

4. Protect the viewshed. The suggestions for consideration listed below are based on the *Management Plan for the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area*, adopted October 15, 1991. They are for resources within Lincoln City and its urban growth boundary.

1. Limit building elevation, requiring more stringent control or site improvements on higher, more visible, properties.

2. Increase shading and landscape standards with the goal of screening new projects from view.

3. Place stringent limitations on permissible building materials, particularly roofing, to promote non-reflective surfaces that blend into the background.

4. Impose building footprint limitations, encouraging small massing or varied roof lines that can hide beneath existing foliage, or requiring the planting of compatible tree cover (most notably the Oregon Coast shore pine) that will screen new development from the city.

5. Prohibit development with corridor setbacks and impose stringent tree removal standards to avoid destruction of street canopies.

6. Down-zone to limit density on particularly sensitive parcels.

7. Purchase easements and open spaces to maintain viewshed protection.

8. Purchase property, either by the city or in conjunction with outside agencies, to retain the character of the viewshed.

IIID- PRIORITIES

Perhaps the number one priority in historic Taft should be the preservation of the remaining historic structures. The number two priority should be shaping the growth and redevelopment to fit in and enhance the historic character of the Taft neighborhood. This is impossible without the support of Taft's property and business owners.

Public support for a historic preservation program is not likely unless these groups have an understanding of the costs and benefits. Perhaps it is best to start at a grass-roots level. A series of public meetings should be held in which the topic of discussion is the possibility of the creation of a local historic district. At each meeting, a presentation should be given showing case studies of towns and neighborhoods that have created a local historic district, implemented a preservation program and controlled new growth to fit in with the historic ambiance.

Other, more subtle, ways of developing the appreciation of the Taft neighborhood among its residents include walking tours, pedestrian- and auto-friendly improvements, and acknowledgment of property owners who successfully carried out historic preservation efforts.

SECTION IV: INTEGRATION

IVA-B CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PLANS & CONTEXTS

This project is the first step in building an informational base upon which context-based planning can be carried out in this section of Lincoln City . In fact, this is the first context document produced in Lincoln County.

It is hoped that all cities in Lincoln County will produce such documents that could one day be integrated to form a countywide study that would serve as a planning resource for the treatment of historic and prehistoric cultural resources.

IVC FUTURE RELATED STUDIES

In order to produce the most useful base of knowledge possible for any planning efforts that include the treatment of historic and prehistoric cultural resources, the following should be considered.

-- Information pertaining to the first three of Oregon's "Broad Themes" (Prehistory / Archaeology, Exploration and Fur Trade, Native American and Euro-American Relations) is indeed scarce. An extensive search of archival material could be enlightening.

Research beyond the scope of this project is merited on the Native Americans who were awarded land allotments in North Lincoln County. The transfer of land owners from the allottees to Euro-Americans had a tremendous impact on the development of the region.

-- A detailed sociological study of North Lincoln County's first Euro-American (primarily Scandinavian) settlers is certainly merited. Apparently this close community dominated North Lincoln County at the turn of the last century, yet seemingly no research has been done on its socio-economic background.

-- This study was primarily confined to the historic district of Taft. A site-by-

site survey was completed and context statements prepared for each of the towns that now make up Lincoln City.

-- This context statement and survey mark the beginning of an ongoing process that should be revised and reassessed on a regular basis. Surveys by their very nature have limitations and should not be considered final.

Temporal restrictions prevented a review and assessment of the majority of the resources built in historic Taft since the early 1950s. While this survey was a sincere endeavor to fairly access all potentially significant resources, it is conceivable some may have been missed. Cultural and personal bias can unknowingly hinder one's ability to accurately assess historic and recent trends.

Change in development will further necessitate re-visiting and revising of this survey. The history of historic Taft is a history of change -- buildings, sites and the area's residents are unquestionably dynamic. Resources are, in all likelihood, prone to shift from one ranking to another, either gaining or losing significance.

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About the Author

Steve M. Wyatt's Oregon roots run deep. Grandparents and great grandparents from both sides of the family motored across the Oregon Trail in the 1920s and 1930s.

Wyatt grew up in Roseburg, Oregon, and he has many fond memories of summer days spent at his grandparents' homes on the Siletz River. Upon completing high school he found employment with the Roseburg Forest Products Company in several of their sawmills and plywood plants. After attending the local community college for many years on a part-time basis, Wyatt earned an Associates of Arts degree. He then earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Pacific Northwest History at the University of Oregon, followed by a Masters degree in Museum Studies at Oregon State University.

After completing an internship at Collier Logging Museum in Chiloquin, Oregon, he became Collections Manager at the Southern Oregon Historical Society in Medford/Jacksonville, Oregon. His extended stay on the Oregon coast began when he accepted a position as Curator at the Lincoln County Historical Society in Newport. After nearly eight years on the coast, Wyatt reverted to his Southern Oregon roots. In early 2001 he returned to the Southern Oregon Historical Society as Exhibits Manager.

In the course of his museum career, Wyatt has written articles for the Oregon Historical Quarterly, Oregon Coast magazine, Inkfish, and Bayfront magazine. He also wrote the Bayfront Book and for many years wrote a regular column in the News-Times newspaper titled the Coast Chronicle.