



I. PARK VIEW: HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE





This 1892 bird's eye view of Portsmouth shows commercial and military waterfront operations as well as the railway lines that served the port. The growth fueled by these activities spurred new residential development at the outer edges of the city which can also be seen in this view.

A. Brief Overview of the City and the Historic Districts

1. General Portsmouth History

The City of Portsmouth is a deepwater port located on the Elizabeth River in the Tidewater region of Virginia. It is considered a part of the harbor and population center known as Hampton Roads, the nation's thirty-third largest metropolitan statistical area. Its roots as a transportation center, a constant throughout the city's history, began when Adam Thoroughgood established a ferry connection between Portsmouth and Norfolk in 1636.

The town of Portsmouth was not formally established and platted until 1752 when Colonel William Crawford gave approximately 65 acres of his plantation land. Over the next 250 years, the city grew to its present size of 26 square miles. The first shipyard, "Gosport," was established south of town in 1767 and began Portsmouth's long association with naval history.

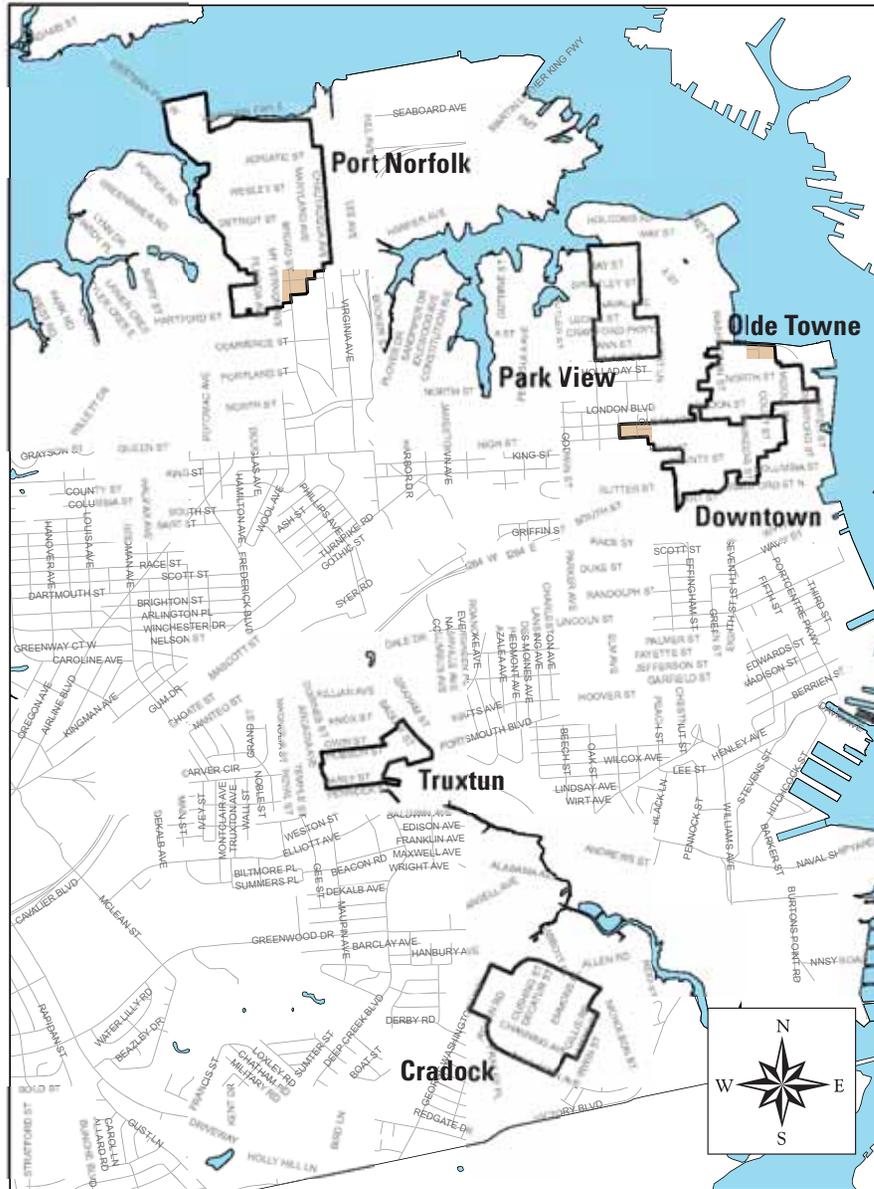
Named for the famed English port, Virginia's Portsmouth is home to many of the United States' maritime firsts. These include the first federal shipyard and drydock in the nation and construction of the first ironclad ship,

first battleship, and first aircraft carrier. At least one source cites Portsmouth as having one of the greatest concentrations of architecturally significant buildings between Alexandria and Charleston. Portsmouth's current historic districts are representative of its long association with transportation and shipbuilding. Each represents an era in the development of this old and important Virginia city.



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Portsmouth's historic districts are distributed throughout the city. Olde Towne, Downtown, Park View and Port Norfolk are located close to the water in this port city. Cradock and Truxtun, the city's two planned developments for shipyard workers, were located on the outskirts of the city in the early twentieth century.



A. Brief Overview of the City and the Historic Districts *continued*

2. Portsmouth's Historic Districts

Olde Towne was the first established historic district in the city. It represents the town's earliest surviving history and is the only example of an early townscape in the Hampton Roads area. Portsmouth's other residential historic districts have their own stories to tell as well.

Port Norfolk and Park View were both developed in the closing years of the nineteenth century as Portsmouth assumed the position of a regional transportation center. These streetcar suburbs, built on former farmland, provided a healthful and attractive living condition for the middle-class workers involved in the growing shipping and railroad industries taking Virginia products to far-distant ports.

Cradock and Truxtun are the only twentieth century districts presently listed in Portsmouth and date to approximately 1918. Both were built as projects of the U.S. Housing Corporation to house shipyard workers during World War I. They are significant as they are among the first government-funded and planned communities in the country. The design concept of these districts reflect what we today call "new urbanism," a wholly contained community where



This historic street view of Park View shows the shallow setback of the houses and mature street trees that still line the sidewalks.

residents could live, play, and shop within an easy commute of the workplace provided by public transportation.

The newest historic district in the city is the Downtown Portsmouth Historic District that encompasses the original town plat. Most of the buildings date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a period of rapid growth for the city. Unlike the other listed districts that are residential in nature, this district is mainly commercial and anchored by the city's main street, High Street.

The buildings in this district represent a variety of service-oriented uses and diversity of ethnicity and religion.

Individually listed properties also contribute to the overall understanding of the development and history of the city. Landmark religious and municipal institutions include Trinity Episcopal Church and the Old Portsmouth Courthouse. Those that represent Portsmouth's long marine and transportation history

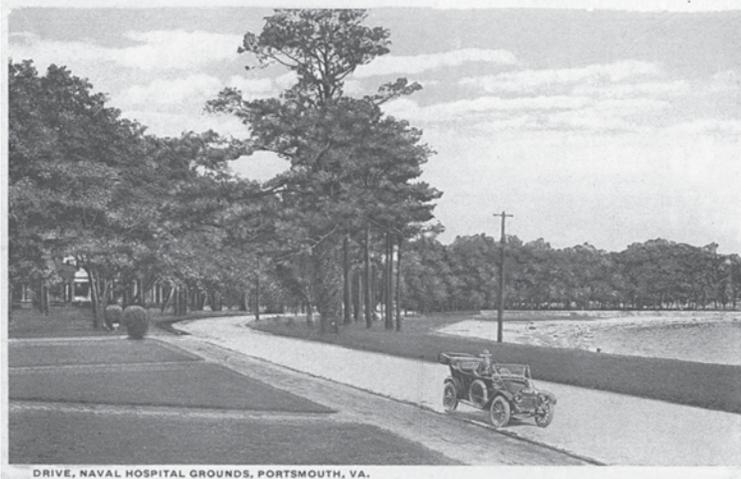


Park View today retains much of its original character and architecture.

include Drydock Number One, the Portsmouth Naval Hospital and the Seaboard Coastline Building. More modern entertainment culture of the twentieth century is represented by the Commodore Theatre. These individual properties help to complete the picture of Portsmouth's past.



I. PARK VIEW: HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE



This early-twentieth-century postcard shows the park-like grounds of the naval hospital park after which Park View is named.



Streetcars provided inexpensive transportation between downtown Portsmouth and its new suburbs such as Park View and Port Norfolk.

B. Park View Historic District Character

1. General Park View History

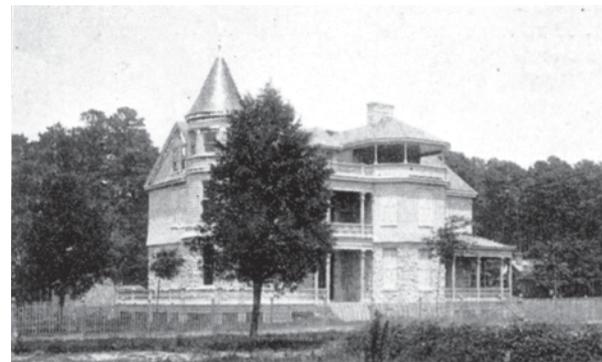
The Park View Historic District is located in the northeastern area of the City of Portsmouth. Annexed in 1894, it was the City's first residential suburb north of the downtown commercial area. Electric streetcars, mass-produced building materials, and building and loan associations all contributed to the availability of affordable housing within the neighborhood, which was located on the outskirts of the city.

The area developed in the last years of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century as the city of Portsmouth experienced tremendous commercial and industrial growth. Portsmouth's population grew from 12,000 in 1886 to 33,000 in 1910 as the city became one of Virginia's major shipping, industrial, and population

centers exporting products such as tobacco, coal and lumber. Many of the blue- and white-collar residents of Park View would have been employed by one of the seven steamship or nine railroad trunk lines whose base of operations were in Portsmouth or Norfolk or by the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

Park View's name is derived from the U.S. Naval Hospital park that is located east of the district and was the only publicly accessible park in the city at the time. The Park View Historic District is built upon former farm land, including *Alabama*, the former Hatton family farm. It is bounded by Scott's Creek to the west, the Elizabeth River to the north, London Boulevard to the south, and the U.S. Naval Hospital grounds to the east.

The Park View National Register Historic District was established in 1984 and local review began the same year.



Park View was built, in part, on former farmland including *Alabama*, owned by the Hatton family. Their residence is shown here.



2. Streetscape Character

The first tract in the Park View Historic District was laid out in 1888. Due to the success of this development, the remaining farm land was platted and developed by the Park View Company, Park Avenue Terrace Company and the Portsmouth Land, Improvement and Promotion Company. A majority of the land within the district was developed by 1892. Each section adheres to a typical grid pattern of rectangular blocks. The majority of structures face the north-south axes of Parkview, Hatton, Riverview, Linden, Webster, and Elm avenues.

Today the streetscape in the Park View Historic District is characterized by its 60-foot wide, tree-lined streets; concrete sidewalks with granite curbs and patterned driveway cuts; street parking on both sides; and overhead utilities.

3. Site Character

An original lot, platted by Portsmouth Land, Promotion and Improvement Company, that measured 29 by 105 feet sold for \$400. Dwellings in the Park View Historic District are usually sited near the front of their well-planted lots.

Minimal side-yards, some with concrete ribbon driveways, characterize individual sites. Concrete walkways lead from the front porch to the sidewalk or curb, connecting the private and public realms.



An original plan for one of four sections of Park View shows uniformly sized lots fronting onto north-south streets.



The Watson residence is an early and rare example of high-style Queen Anne architecture in Park View. Note the contrasting paint tones and the use of ornate porch and decorative roof elements.

B. Park View Historic District Character *continued*

4. Architectural Character

The historic district's 53 acres contain over 300 structures. This wealth of vernacular and high-style architecture reflects those styles that enjoyed national popularity during Park View's period of development, including Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, American Foursquare, and Bungalow styles.

The majority of the houses in the Park View Historic District date to between 1894 and 1915. When built, these suburban houses sold for \$1,000 to \$15,000 – including electric lights. Park View also contains Portsmouth's first occurrence of double houses (duplexes) with symmetrical facades.

Development began in the southern section with architecture predominantly in the Queen Anne style and ended on those streets to the north, nearest the river, constructed in the later American Foursquare style.



C. Park View Architectural Styles

1. Folk Victorian

Built before the turn of the century, these frame houses have few Victorian details. These simply designed houses are two to two-and-one-half stories tall, three bays wide, and usually have a one-story front porch that extends across most of the facade.

The two most popular designs in Park View are the front gable-roofed townhouse with its off-center entrance and full-width porch and the end-gable, or I-house, form with a centered decorative cross-gable. Both designs incorporate decorative features that can include patterned shingles in the gables and a front porch with sawn millwork.



Brackets at the eaves, a second-story bay and carved wood ornamentation are Queen Anne influences seen in this Folk Victorian dwelling.



Vernacular Victorian residences have a simpler massing than their high-style counterparts, and use a simplified vocabulary of wooden ornamentation.



The double house design repeated stylistic elements from the vernacular Victorian, in a two-family design.



I. PARK VIEW: HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE



High-style Queen Anne residences are often accented by a tower and wrap-around porch.



Colonial Revival elements such as these classical porch columns are frequently seen on later examples of the Queen Anne style.

C. Park View Architectural Styles *continued*

2. Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style is among the earliest and most frequent styles found in the historic district. Dating from the 1890s in Park View, this style is characterized by its frame construction, two-and-one-half story typical height, and asymmetrical appearance. Additional features include weatherboard cladding often mixed with wood shingle sections, complex roof forms, and asymmetrical appearance. Additional features include weatherboard cladding often mixed with wood shingle sections, complex roof forms, and asymmetrical appearance. Additional features include weatherboard cladding often mixed with wood shingle sections, complex roof forms, and asymmetrical appearance.

High-style examples are often characterized by complex roof lines, vertical proportions, wrap-around porches and roof turrets or towers. Detailed ornamentation may include a variety of brackets and other sawn millwork.

3. Queen Anne with Classical Details

By the turn of the century many Queen Anne houses were incorporating classical elements and a hybrid style developed. These two-story frame houses may be characterized by a more symmetrical massing with a cross-gable roof or asymmetrical massing capped by a hipped roof and front gables above second-story bay windows. Classical details include modillion or dentil cornices, Palladian attic windows, pedimented dormers, and porches with Tuscan columns and turned balustrades.



Large-paned windows and a shingled gable end are hallmarks of the Queen Anne style. The symmetrical massing and classical porch elements also tie this house to the Colonial Revival style.

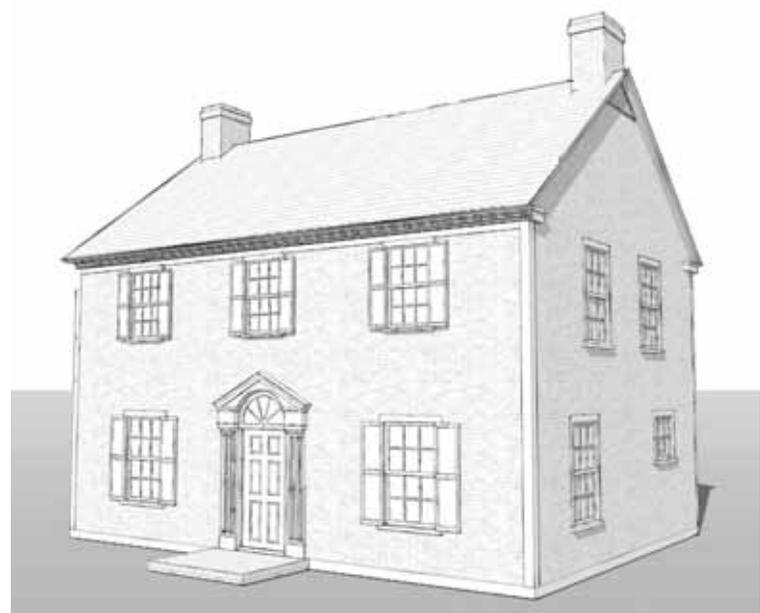


Perhaps the largest example of classical design in the district is this large temple front structure with its grand two-story portico.

4. Colonial Revival

From the early twentieth century through the 1930s, a number of Colonial Revival dwellings were constructed in Park View. The symmetrical appearance of these structures was a marked departure from the earlier Queen Anne style. This style was loosely based on earlier Georgian and Federal styles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Common elements of the Colonial Revival style include its two-story brick or frame construction; gable or gambrel roofs; multi-pane glazing in one or both sashes; pediments, fanlights and sidelights to accentuate doorways; and dentil or modillion cornices.



A symmetrical facade, restrained ornamentation and small-paned windows are elements of the Colonial Revival style.



The gambrel or Dutch roof was a popular Colonial Revival variant. Due to the narrow lot sizes in Park View, the gambrel end faces the street in these two examples.



The American Foursquare style borrowed elements from the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles. This unusual example uses the symmetrical massing and classical columns of the Colonial Revival and the horizontal banding, shingles and window designs of the Craftsman style. The partial front porch (as opposed to a full-width example) is a rare element in this style.

C. Park View Architectural Styles *continued*

5. American Foursquare

The American Foursquare enjoyed popularity across the country in the early twentieth century and Park View was no exception. These residences are usually two-and one-half story frame construction covered in weatherboard and/or shingles. They always have hipped roofs, often with a single dormer. The arrangement of openings on the facade is usually asymmetrical. Often there is a full-width porch with various types of columns on brick piers.



This Foursquare has a porch supported by rectangular columns on brick piers.



A brick Foursquare is capped by a clay tile roof. Composite, or grouped, nine-over-one windows and a fully glazed door with sidelights and a transom provide light to the interior.



6. Bungalow

The least represented early-twentieth-century style in the district is the Bungalow. Built between 1910 and 1930, these houses are characteristically one-and-one-half stories and are of frame, stone, or brick construction. They are defined by sweeping gable roofs with shed-roofed dormers sheltering full-width porches, and wide overhanging eaves with exposed rafter ends. Short columns on masonry piers usually support the trademark porch.



The most common variant of the Bungalow style features a low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves, a integral porch and a shed-roofed dormer. Frame and brick are more common wall materials than the stone cladding of this Park View example.



A half-timbered gable-end porch roof defines the Craftsman character of this two-and-one-half story bungalow.



Heavy brackets appear to support the overhanging eaves of the low sloping roof on this Bungalow in which the porch is not contained within the overall roof form.