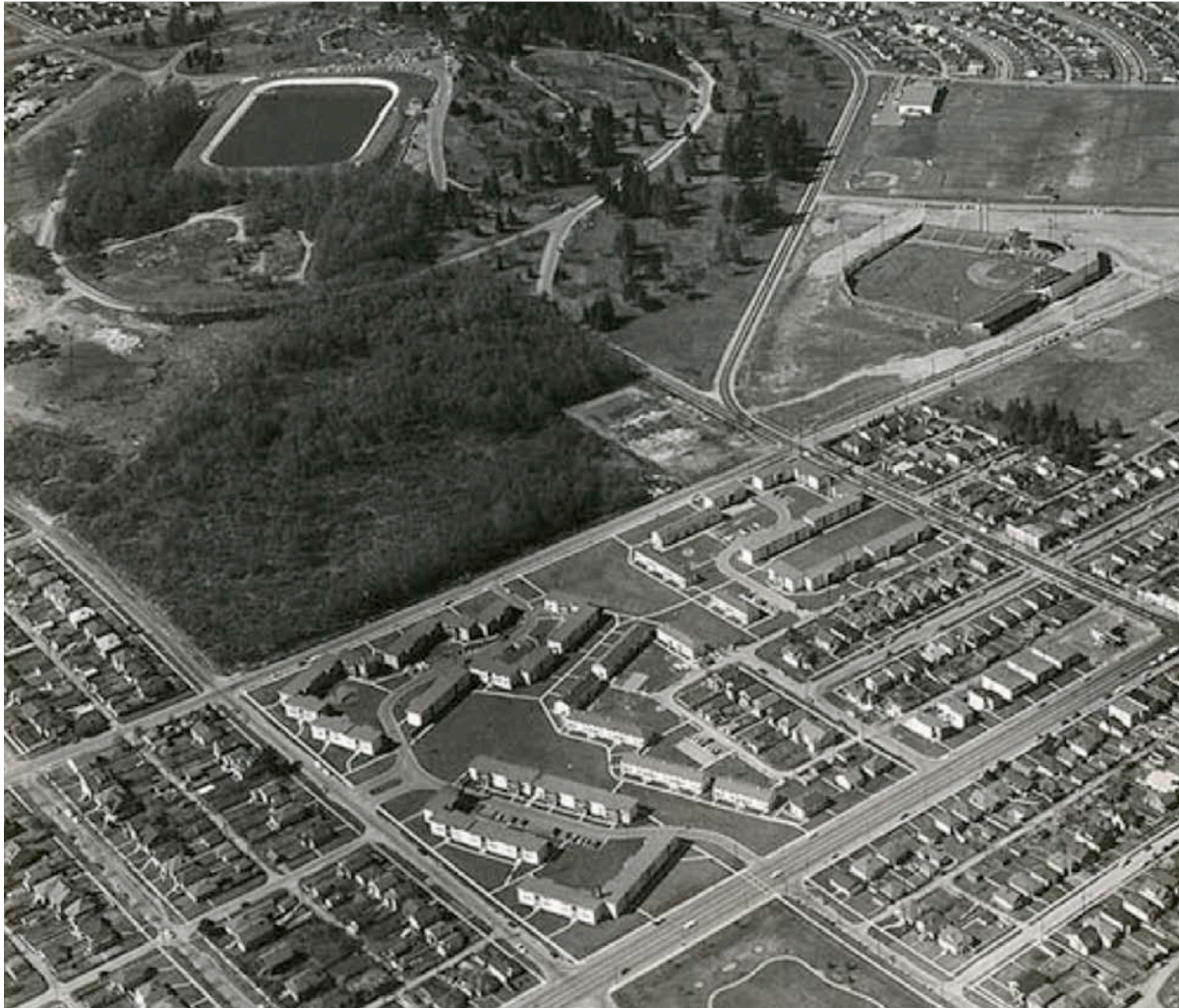


Little Mountain Housing Site— 37th and Main



Site Aerial, courtesy City of Vancouver

Name: Little Mountain Housing Site

Location: Bounded by Main Street, Ontario Street, 33rd Avenue and 37th Avenue, Vancouver

Architect: Sharp, Thompson, Berwick & Pratt, with Semmens Simpson

Date of Completion: 1954

Heritage Value

The Little Mountain Housing site, completed in 1954, was significant as the first large-scale modern social housing project in Vancouver.

Recognizing the acute housing shortage immediately following World War II, the second Hotel Vancouver was opened up to provide

emergency housing for 1,200 families. This temporary measure necessitated a permanent solution to the lack of affordable veteran housing in the city. In 1946, the Central (now Canada) Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC) had been created, and it rapidly evolved into a key player in the residential housing industry. The Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) first recommended the city-owned 15-acre Little Mountain site for low-income housing development in 1950. Budgetary restraints, brought about by the Korean War, briefly halted the development, and eventually the planned masonry structures were redesigned as frame-and-stucco buildings. Sustained protests by builders and property owners opposed to taxpayer-funded subsidized housing further threatened to derail the project. By the time construction was underway in the summer of 1953, the CMHC, as owner and lead developer, had increased the maximum allowable incomes and rents for residents of the development, in an effort to recover additional costs. The project, which had originally been focussed on the provision of low-income housing, opened as a mixed-income development. The site featured thirty-seven buildings, including clusters of three-level walk-up apartment buildings and row houses, containing a total of 224 housing units. The buildings remained under the ownership of the federal government for more than fifty years before the site was transferred to the Province in 2007. All but one of the buildings have been demolished as the site is prepared for redevelopment into a mix of market-rate and social housing units.