

# Appendix 3

# **Cultural Resource Review**

# CULTURAL RESOURCE REVIEW AND ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY

# FOR THE

# AURORA STATE AIRPORT MASTER PLAN PROJECT,

MARION COUNTY, OREGON

Prepared For Century West Engineering Corporation Lake Oswego, Oregon

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REPORT NO. 4754

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# **PROJECT SUMMARY**

PROJECT:	Development of a Master Plan for the Aurora State Airport
SURVEY TYPE:	Cultural resource review, including background research and pedestrian archaeological survey
LOCATION:	Sections 2 and 11, Township 4 South, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian
USGS QUADS:	Sherwood, OR, 7.5-minute, 2017 Woodburn, OR, 7.5-minute, 2017
COUNTY:	Marion
STUDY AREA:	148.4 acres
AREA SURVEYED:	148.4 acres
RESULTS:	<ul> <li>The pedestrian archaeology survey identified no high-probability areas and no archaeological resources within the study area.</li> <li>Four historic resources have been previously identified within the study area: Runway 17-35, a drainage ditch, and two wind cones. The historic resources were recommended to be not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2019.</li> </ul>
RECOMMENDATION:	If individual projects are proposed in association with the Master Plan, compliance-level cultural resource investigations are recommended. This includes documenting historic resources within the study area on one or more Section 106 Documentation Forms and determining their eligibility for listing in the NRHP in consultation with the Federal Aviation Administration and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Consultation with SHPO regarding the potential for a historic district at Aurora State Airport should be resumed.
PREPARERS:	Kelley Prince Martinez, M.S., R.P.A., Tara Seaver, M.S., and Andrea Blaser, M.S.

The Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) is developing a Master Plan for the Aurora State Airport. The Master Plan will provide guidance in making necessary improvements to maintain a safe and efficient airport, ensuring airport operations are economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable. The Master Plan will also define short and long-term airport needs by evaluating current conditions that may impact future plans, development, and operation of the airport.

The project is being completed with funds provided by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and administered by ODA. As such, the project is subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800).

An Area of Potential Effects has not yet been defined. In consultation with ODA, a study area was delineated for cultural resources that is limited to 148.4 acres state-owned airport lands (Figure 1). The study area is in Sections 2 and 11 of Township 4 South, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian, north of the city of Aurora in Marion County, Oregon (Figure 1).

In support of the Aurora State Airport Master Plan project, Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc., (AINW), has completed a cultural resource review of the study area. The cultural resource review included background research and a pedestrian archaeological survey of the study area. One goal of the study was to identify archaeological resources and areas with a high probability to contain buried archaeological resources within the study area. A second goal of the study was to identify previously documented historic resources within the study area and to provide recommendations for further work that would be needed for historic resources to support implementation of the Master Plan. The cultural resource study was completed and supervised by AINW staff who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in the fields of Archaeology, Architectural History, and History.



Figure 1. The study area encompasses the entirety of state-owned land at Aurora State Airport.

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# LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The study area is in Sections 2 and 11 Township 4 South, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian (Figure 1). It is 1.4 kilometers (km) (0.9 mile [mi]) west of the Pudding River, 3.7 km (2.3 mi) south of the Willamette River, and 1.6 km (1 mi) north of the City of Aurora.

The study area is in the northeastern corner of Marion County and the northeastern portion of the Willamette Valley physiographic province. The Willamette Valley extends from Cottage Grove in the south to the Columbia River in the north and is characterized by broad alluvial flats (Franklin and Dyrness 1988). The physiographic province is bordered by the Oregon Coast Range to the west and the Cascade Range to the east (Baldwin 1964), and it is part of a continental shelf that is overlain with layers of alluvium on top of pre-Tertiary bedrock (Orr et al. 1992). During the Missoula floods, massive amounts of water and debris repeatedly inundated the valley, causing large amounts of silts, sand, clay, and boulders to be deposited throughout the valley (Orr and Orr 1996). The flood-derived deposits within the Willamette Valley are known as the Willamette formation and make up the top 100 meters (m) (330 feet [ft]) of sediments (McDowell 1991).

The Willamette Valley is bound on either side by the *Tsuga heterophylla* vegetation zone (Franklin and Dyrness 1988). The interior valley contains *Quercus* woodland zones and conifer forest areas. The *Quercus* woodland is known for its forest stands, groves, and savannas that contain deciduous oaks and evergreens. The conifer forests are known for their Douglas-firs, grand firs, and ponderosa pines (Franklin and Dyrness 1988:111-116). Within the general vicinity of the study area, native Douglas-fir, bigleaf maple, and western redcedar are present. The surrounding landscape is used for modern agricultural activity with cultivated crops and non-native invasive grass-species.

The soils in the study area are mapped as the Amity silt loam and Woodburn silt loam series. The Amity series consists of very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed in stratified silty glaciolacustrine deposits on broad terraces (United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources [USDA, NRCS] 2009a). The Woodburn series consists of very deep, moderately well drained soils formed in stratified silty glaciolacustrine deposits on broad valley terraces (USDA, NRCS 2009b).

## CULTURAL SETTING

#### NATIVE PEOPLES – CONTACT PERIOD

The northern portion of the Willamette Valley was divided into multiple small, independent groups who spoke a language shared with the Kalapuyan family (Aikens 1993). The study area lies within the area traditionally inhabited by the Ahantchuyuk, or Pudding River people (Zenk 1990:547), and it is bordered closely to the east by an area inhabited the Northern Molala people (Zenk and Rigsby 1998). The Ahantchuyuk were located between the Willamette River and the Pudding River, northeast of Salem, Oregon.

The Kalapuyans traditionally occupied permanent villages during the harsh winter months, and more transitory camps during the summer (Zenk 1990). Their permanent villages consisted of multi-family households in semi-subterranean rectangular plank houses. Their summer shelters were less permanent, consisting of tree groves and brush windbreaks.

A large portion of Kalapuyan subsistence consisted of vegetable resources. Camas was considered the most valuable resource and was abundant in the Willamette Valley. Camas was often roasted, dried, and pressed into cakes, which could then be used as a trade item (Zenk 1990:547). Other subsistence resources included wapato, tarweed seeds, hazelnuts, various berries, and occasionally, acorns. Animal resources varied throughout the valley, but included birds, small mammals, black-tailed and white-tailed deer, elk, and black bear (Zenk 1990:547, 548).

Differing views exist regarding Kalapuyan social organization. Aikens (1993:187) states that neither major chiefs nor any well-defined elite class is present in the Willamette Valley, whereas Zenk (1990:550) states that chiefs and their immediate families were on one end of the social spectrum, and slaves were on the other. Overall, the Kalapuyans did not place a strong emphasis on rank like the neighboring Chinookan people, and they did not differentiate between "commoners" (Zenk 1990:550). In addition, while uncommon, it was not unknown for a free person to marry a slave (Zenk 1990:550).

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

An 1852 General Land Office (GLO) map of Township 4 South, Range 1 West, indicates that the study area overlaps the former location of Jesse G. Hoffman's farm in the northwest quarter of Section 11 (GLO 1852). The Hoffman farm was on a Donation Land Claim that overlapped the study area in the southeast quarter of Section 2 and the northeast quarter of Section 11 of Township 4 South, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian (Bureau of Land Management 2022). The land is described as "land gently rolling with first rate clay loam," with fir, white oak, cedar, white ash, willow, and maple trees (GLO 1852). Two roads forked south of the Hoffman farm in Section 11, after which one road continued east to a sawmill on Mill Creek in Section 12 (GLO 1852). A ferry northwest of the sawmill provided service across the Pudding River (GLO 1852). Land within the study area that was north of the Hoffman farm, in Section 2, was undeveloped in the mid-nineteenth century (GLO 1852).

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In 1856, Dr. Wilhelm (William) Keil established the Aurora Colony, also referred to as Aurora Mills, just north of the Pudding River ferry (Kopp 2017). Keil was a Methodist preacher who eventually turned away from established churches and embraced utopian communities of like-minded Christians (Kopp 2017). The Aurora Colony was known throughout the Pacific Northwest for its hospitality, particularly the food and the Aurora Colony Band (Kopp 2017; Will 1955). The hospitality business was such an important economic driver for the colony that Keil advocated for and succeeded in bringing the Oregon & California Railroad through Aurora in 1870 (Kopp 2017). When Keil passed away in 1877, a board of trustees assembled to manage the colony's interest decided to dissolve the settlement and sell the land that Keil had purchased on behalf of the colony (Kopp 2017). An 1878 map shows the Aurora Colony as still owning the townsite of Aurora, which was platted in 1872 (Edgar Williams & Co. 1878).

Major twentieth century developments in and near the study area include the construction of the West Portland-Hubbard Highway (now OR 551) in 1937 and the establishment of an emergency airfield at Aurora in 1943 that would eventually become the Aurora State Airport (Oregon Department of Transportation 2017:51-1). The emergency airfield, which was originally referred to as the Aurora Flight Strip, was constructed by the State Highway Department during World War II for use by air carrier craft and as an airline alternate to the Portland International Airport (CH2M Hill 1976; Fortin et al. 2019). However, the airstrip was used so infrequently that drag races were often held there; the races were eventually permitted by state authorities, but the drivers were asked to pause and allow circling planes to land as needed (*The Oregonian* 1948, 1955).

During its early years of operation, this airstrip was administered by the Bureau of Public Roads. The Board of Aeronautics began to lease the airport from the Bureau of Public Roads in 1953, and in 1973 the State Highway Commission officially transferred the title for the airfield to the Board of Aeronautics (CH2M Hill 1976). Shortly after the Board of Aeronautics acquired the property, a master plan study was completed for the airport to improve the existing airport facilities. The 1976 master plan reported that there was no parallel taxiway to the runway, no public aircraft parking apron, and no traffic control tower at the airport (CH2M Hill 1976). Although several buildings and structures had been constructed by fixed-base operators (FBOs) on private lands east of the airport runway, the only facilities located on state land at that time were the airport runway and three taxiway exits, which had been privately constructed (CH2M Hill 1976).

Since the completion of this master plan in 1976, the Aurora State Airport has been extensively upgraded and modernized. Between 1977 and 1978, using a portion of a FAA grant, the runway was reconstructed, a parallel taxiway was constructed, drainage was improved, runway lighting and a rotating beacon were installed, and tiedown aprons were constructed (The Capital Journal 1978; WHPacific 2012:2-2). In 1979, a 22-acre parcel near the center of the airport was purchased and has since been developed by private FBOs through the construction of airplane hangars and other facilities (WHPacific 2012:2-2). The runway was extended in 1995 and reconstructed in 2004, and the parallel taxiway was relocated in 2009 (WHPacific 2012:2-2). In 2015, the Aurora Airport Air Tower was completed using funds from the ConnectOregon bond initiative, which finances transportation projects using revenue generated by the state lottery (Bartman 2015).

Prior to conducting fieldwork, AINW staff reviewed records online using the Oregon Archaeological Records Remote Access (OARRA) database and Oregon Historic Sites database, both of which are administered by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This records search was done to determine if cultural resources have been recorded or cultural resource surveys have been completed within or near the study area. In addition to this research, historical maps and other documents on file at AINW or available online were examined to determine the potential for encountering archaeological resources.

#### PREVIOUS STUDIES AT AURORA STATE AIRPORT

Three cultural resource studies overlap or partially overlap with the current study area (Connolly 2003; Fortin et al. 2019; O'Neill and Ruiz 2015). A cultural resource study that partially overlaps with the northernmost portion of the study area was done for the widening of Arndt Road. No cultural resources were identified within the study area during a pedestrian survey (Connolly 2003).

A cultural resource study conducted in 2015 for the proposed widening of OR 551 overlapped the western portion of the study area. Although no archaeological resources were identified within the study area, site 35MA355 was identified approximately 44 m (145 ft) to the west. Site 35MA355 is a historic-period refuse scatter consisting of a rotary saw blade, galvanized wires, various nails, brick fragments, a metal strap, and a porcelain light socket. The site, which is located on the east side of OR 551, likely represents remnants of a barn that was moved prior to the construction of OR 551 in 1937. Site 35MA355 was determined to be not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (O'Neill and Ruiz 2015).

In 2017 and 2019, AINW performed a cultural resource survey for proposed airport improvements (Fortin et al. 2019). Within the study area, pedestrian archaeological survey was limited to 4.7 acres east of the airport runway, where construction of a run-up apron was proposed. No archaeological resources or high probability areas were identified (Fortin et al. 2019). Four historic resources were identified: Runway 17/35, two wind cones, and a drainage ditch (Fortin et al. 2019). AINW recommended that the four historic resources are not eligible for listing in the NRHP, and that there is limited potential for a NRHP-eligible Aurora State Airport Historic District to be present that would encompass the historic resources (Fortin et al. 2019). In 2019, SHPO declined to concur with FAA's determination regarding the NRHP eligibility of the four historic resources and the potential Aurora State Airport Historic District, citing the need for documentation of buildings and structures that operate in association with the airport on privately-owned property outside of the study area (Fortin et al. 2019).

# PREVIOUS STUDIES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA VICINITY

Six other cultural resource studies have been conducted within 1.6 km (1 mi) of the study area. The studies were done for road widening and improvement projects, bridge replacement, residential development, fiber optic line installation, and solar panel construction projects.

Eleven archaeological resources have been identified within 3.2 km (2 mi) of the current study area. Most historic-period archaeological sites are southeast of the study area, corresponding with the location of the Aurora Colony. Pre-contact sites of the area are generally located to the east on terraces along the Pudding and Molalla Rivers.

As previously noted, the nearest recorded archaeological resource, site 35MA355, is located approximately 44 m (145 ft) west of the study area. The site is a historic-period artifact scatter that is likely associated with a barn that was moved prior to the construction of OR 551 in 1937 (O'Neill and Ruiz 2015).

Other nearby sites include site 35CL273, located approximately 2.3 km (1.4 mi) east of the current study area. The site is a pre-contact lithic scatter that may represent a permanent habitation site (Brown 2000). Pre-contact site 35CL200 contains multiple burials, lithic material, and fire-cracked rock, and is approximately 2.6 km (1.6 mi) east of the study area (Roulette and Reese 1995).

Historic-period sites in the area include historic-period refuse scatters at sites 35MA416, and 35MA417, located approximately (2.9 km) 1.8 mi southwest of the study area (Bialis et al. 2020). Three other historic-period resources are located approximately 1.3 km (0.8 mi) southeast of the current study area: site 35MA258, a historic-period refuse scatter (Mills et al. 1998); site 35MA226, which represents remnants of the Aurora Colony Hotel (Minor and Chappel 1997); and site 35MA227, which is a cabin site associated with Amable Arcouet (Brauner 1987).

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY OF THE STUDY AREA

#### SURVEY METHODS

A pedestrian survey of the study area was conducted on January 18 and 19, 2022, by AINW archaeologists Kelley Prince Martinez, M.S., R.P.A., and Tara Seaver, M.S. Don Richcreek, Operations Specialist for ODA, escorted Martinez and Seaver in portions of the study area near the runway and taxiways.

The study area was examined by walking transects spaced no more than 15 m (50 ft) apart. All exposed ground surfaces were carefully examined for evidence of artifacts. Mineral soil visibility was limited by vegetation cover and graveled and paved surfaces, and less than 10% of the mineral soil surface was visible throughout the study area (Figure 1; Photos 1, 2, and 3). The entire 148.4-acre study area was surveyed.

#### SURVEY RESULTS

No archaeological resources were identified as a result of the survey. In addition, no areas were identified as having a high probability to contain buried archaeological resources. Construction, operation, and improvement of the airport from the 1940s to present have led to extensive ground disturbance within the study area.

Much of the non-paved ground surface throughout the study area appeared to be filled and leveled. The runway and taxiway pass northeast-southwest through the study area (Photo 4). Drainage ditches were present east and west of the existing runway and several buried utilities were identified throughout the study area (Photo 5). A gravel access road passes through the northern portion of the study area. What appeared to be drain fields were identified in grass-covered areas in the north, south, and eastern portions of the study area. These areas featured visible ground disturbance with buried PVC pipes and gravel to facilitate water drainage in the area (Photo 6).

A large, paved area is located in the eastern portion of the study area that features a weather monitoring station, and a gravel pad with guide lighting is located within the southern portion of the study area (Photo 7). The easternmost portion of the study area featured large fill piles and areas that appeared to have been leveled and mechanically excavated (Photo 8).

Most native vegetation within the study area has been removed and replaced with non-native grasses and ornamental plants. Vegetation within the study area includes various grasses, juncus, horse tail, Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, and snowberry. Vegetation in adjacent parcels includes various cultivated crops, various non-native grasses, and Douglas-fir, bigleaf maple, and western redcedar trees.



Photo 1. Overview of the northern portion of the study area, which represents the ground visibility in the non-paved and gravel-covered portions of the study area. The view is towards the south.



Photo 2. Overview of a paved and gravel-covered area in the eastern portion of the study area. The view is towards the east.

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Photo 3. Overview of the grass-covered and paved area surrounding the control tower in the eastern portion of the study area. The view is towards the southwest.



Photo 4. Overview of the central portion of the study area. The runway is visible at right and the taxi lanes are visible at left. The view is towards the south.

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Photo 5. Example of buried utilities throughout the airport property. This light fixture is located in the northern portion of the study area. The view is towards the south.



Photo 6. Overview of drain field located in the northeastern portion of the study area. The view is towards the west.

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Photo 7. Overview of the light and signaling fixture located in the southern portion of the study area. The view is towards the west.



Photo 8. Overview of ground disturbance in the eastern portion of the study area. The control tower can be seen in the background. The view is towards the west-southwest.

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# **REVIEW OF HISTORIC RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA**

In 2017 and 2019, AINW completed a cultural resources survey within the study area and recorded four historic resources at Aurora State Airport property: Runway 17-35, a drainage ditch, and two wind cones (Figure 2; Photos 9 and 10) (Fortin et al. 2019). The runway was constructed in 1943 as the Aurora Flight Strip. The two wind cones and the drainage ditch appear to have been constructed in 1953 when the Board of Aeronautics began to lease the airport from the Bureau of Public records. The historic-period drainage ditch parallels Runway 17/35 on the west side of the study area. The two historic-period wind cones are located east of the ditch on the north and south ends of the runway. A second drainage ditch on the east side of the runway, several storage buildings or hangars, the Aurora Aviation building, a commercial business, and the Aurora Air Tower are within the study area but are less than 50 years old (Historic Aerials 2022; Google Earth 1994).

At the recommendation of AINW, the FAA determined that the four historic resources at Aurora State Airport are not individually eligible for listing in the NRHP, and that they are unlikely to contribute to a potential historic district at the airport. Runway 17/35 has been significantly modified since it was constructed in 1943 for emergency use, and changes to the Aurora State Airport property during the late twentieth century have diminished the runway's historical integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Similarly, the expansion of the Aurora State Airport property and FBO facilities and improvements made during the modern period detract from the historical appearance and integrity of the two wind cones and drainage ditch that were constructed circa 1953. AINW's summary report (Fortin et al. 2019) documented historic resources in a baseline table, which is no longer an acceptable form of historic resources documentation for most projects that are reviewed by the Oregon SHPO.

At least six other historic-period buildings that operate in association with the state airport but are located on private property were identified during the 2019 survey, including four T-hangers, an office building, and a shop. These historic resources were not included in AINW's survey as they were not within the project's Area of Potential Effects or the boundary of the state-owned airport property. Approximately 78 buildings and at least one structure constructed after 1981 are also located on private land outside of the state-owned airport; AINW cited the prevalence of modern-period buildings and structures as a justification for why there is unlikely to be a NRHP-eligible historic district at the Aurora State Airport (Fortin et al. 2019). In 2019, SHPO declined to concur with FAA's determination regarding the potential Aurora State Airport Historic District, citing the need for documentation of buildings and structures that operate in association with the airport on privately owned property.



Figure 2. Four historic resources have been documented at the airport (Fortin et al. 2019). The resources were recommended to be Not Eligible/Non-Contributing.

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Photo 9. Overview from the north end of Runway 17/35, which was constructed in 1943. The view is towards the south.



Photo 10. Circa 1953 wind cone and drainage ditch near the north end of Runway 17/35. The view is towards the east.

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# SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AINW has completed a cultural resource review for the Aurora State Airport Master Plan project. A background review and pedestrian survey of the entire 148.4-acre study area was conducted.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No archaeological resources were identified within the study area as a result of the background research and pedestrian survey. Due to airport upgrading and modernization over time, in addition to disturbance associated with buried utilities and drainage features, no high probability areas for buried archaeological resources were identified within the study area. AINW recommends that the pedestrian survey results be submitted to FAA and SHPO for review and concurrence in the event that individual projects involving ground disturbance are proposed in association with master planning efforts. No further archaeological investigation is recommended within the study area.

#### HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic resources at the Aurora State Airport were identified and documented for a prior cultural resource study (Fortin et al. 2019). However, SHPO declined to concur with the determination of FAA that the four historic resources of the study area are not eligible for listing in the NRHP, requesting that additional survey of adjacent private lands be done to support an evaluation of the airport's potential NRHP eligibility as a historic district.

If projects are proposed in association with the master plan that have potential to remove or modify identified historic resources, AINW recommends that consultation with the Oregon SHPO should be reinitiated to determine the NRHP eligibility of individual historic resources at the Aurora State Airport. Historic resources should be documented on one or more Section 106 Documentation Forms for the review and concurrence by FAA and the Oregon SHPO. If historic resources at the airport are found to be eligible for listing in the NRHP, either as individual properties or as contributing features of a historic district, assessment of project effects will be required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

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