

Historic Character

For thousands of years, the Mountlake Terrace site was part of Indian territory, a place where wildlife inhabited the forests and wetlands and where fish swam freely in the lake and streams. About 150 years ago, non-native settlers moved in. Some of the area was logged and became farmlands. Despite these changes, a rural atmosphere prevailed. After World War II, developers built clusters of small cinder-block houses for the G.I.s, their families, and others in the growing Northwest region. Shopping and other services formed the nucleus of a downtown. Public buildings and parks were added too. Within a few years time, the Mountlake Terrace site had become urban in character. Changes did not stop, of course. As shopping malls outside the city became popular, the small downtown went through a cycle of losing retail stores. New auto-oriented businesses, along with residential neighborhoods, filled in the city's edges.

Current Character

In some ways, Mountlake Terrace is similar in character to other suburban cities. However, it has special features and characteristics that, taken together, make this community unique. Some of these are listed below.

- Diversity of people
- Comfortable library
- Community-oriented recreation
- Community events
- Parks and open space
- Trees
- High point (Melody Hill area)
- Terrace geography
- I-5 corridor through center of town
- Quiet lake on edge of town
- Town center with commercial district and civic center
- Variety of building types (except few pre-dating 1950)
- Network of streets & sidewalks
- Natural environment (e.g., streams & habitat areas)
- Interurban Trail
- Neighborhoods
- Diversity of housing
- Cinder block cottages as city's historic core
- Proximity to Seattle and Everett
- Part of larger urban area
- Several high-traffic streets
- Easy access to transit
- Views of mountains, lake, and open space