

CITY OF NICHOLS HILLS  
Nichols Hills  
Oklahoma County  
Oklahoma

HALS OK-41  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

# HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

## CITY OF NICHOLS HILLS

HALS NO. OK-41

- Location:** City of Nichols Hills, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma 73116  
Lat: 35.53771 Long: -97.53040 (City of Nichols Hills Town Hall, 6407 Avondale Drive, Google Earth, Simple Cylindrical Projection, WGS84)
- Significance:** A product of developer G.A. Nichols, Nichols Hills is one of Oklahoma's most exclusive communities. It is an excellent example of community planning with consideration given to future use. The 2,780-acre development was constructed during the 1920s and 1930s and became an incorporated municipality in 1929. At the time, it was a very progressive residential district that differed from most developments in the area because instead of using a grid system to layout the property, it followed the natural terrain of the land. The landscape architecture firm Hare & Hare of Kansas City, Missouri was responsible for its design.
- Description:** Today, the town of Nichols Hills has a population of about 5,000. It is surrounded on three sides by Oklahoma City and to the north by The Village, so it has very little growth potential left. Mostly residential, the town has very little commercial properties. There are thirty-eight landscaped parks within the city that are maintained by the city and Nichols Hills Parks, Inc.
- History:** When land for Nichols Hills was purchased by G.A. Nichols in the 1920s it was rolling hills of mostly farmland and prairie. As the development of the community progressed over 40,000 trees were planted. The layout of the streets and plots were atypical for the era and locale. Instead of using the grid system that produced square blocks and parallel and perpendicular streets, Hare & Hare, along with Nichols, designed the streets to follow the natural contours of the land. They also made the curvy streets wider than necessary for improved circulation. Lots were large and the utilities like sewer and water services were designed to handle twice the demand. Incorporated into the design were two golf courses, tennis courts, horse riding paths, parks, and a polo field. One of the golf courses, the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club, was designed by renowned golf course architect, Perry Duke Maxwell.
- Sources:** Wilson, Linda D., "Gilbert Apple Nichols (1876-1950)," Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/N/NI003.html> (accessed on December 14, 2009).  
  
"History of Nichols Hills," City of Nichols Hills, Oklahoma," <http://www.nicholshills.net/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=63> (accessed on December 14, 2009).

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December 14, 2009



View of park within Nichols Hills (Dr. Charles Leider, 2009).



View of bridge to park (Dr. Charles Leider, 2009).