

National Park Service  
**Cultural Landscape Inventory, Level I**  
2004



Figure 1: Canyon Village 1958

Canyon Developed Area  
Cultural Landscape  
Yellowstone National Park

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the National Park Service's *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* (NPS 1997), a cultural landscape is

“...a reflection of human adaptation and use of natural resources and is often expressed in the way land is organized and divided, patterns of settlement, land use, systems of circulation, and the types of structures that are built. The character of a cultural landscape is defined both by physical materials, such as roads, buildings, walls, and vegetation, and by use reflecting cultural values and traditions.”

This Level I- Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI-I), or *Landscape Reconnaissance Survey* identifies existing and needed information for a specific landscape or component landscape in a park. Researching all readily available secondary source material, and documenting existing conditions yields an initial evaluation of the significance and character of the landscape or component.

## Recommendations for Potential Eligibility and Further Study

In order to determine eligibility of any component cultural landscapes within the study area, it will be necessary to further evaluate the Canyon Study Area through a more in-depth Level II Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI-II). A CLI-II, or *Landscape Analysis and Evaluation*, identifies and evaluates the integrity of landscape characteristics, and their associated features, of a specific landscape or component landscape. It includes a condition assessment of the landscape and costs associated with treatment and/or stabilization is recorded. A CLI-II involves preparing a list of physical features associated with these characteristics as contributing or non-contributing to the significance of the landscape. It becomes the vehicle for consultation with the park and the SHPO/TPO and consensus determination by the State Historic Preservation office (SHPO).

For the Canyon Study Area, it is recommended that a CLI-II be developed to determine the eligibility of the following component cultural landscapes:

### 1. Canyon Developed Area (included in this CLI-I):

The entire Canyon Developed Area is potentially eligible as a Mission '66 Historic District under Criterion A. Less than 50 years old, the entire developed area is associated with the Mission '66 program, which reflected a major shift in NPS design and construction philosophy, favoring contemporary architectural and landscape design. Most of the canyon developed area was constructed rapidly within a three-year period between 1956 and 1959 as the inaugural National Park Service Mission '66 development. This includes not only Canyon Village (48YE999, determined eligible 2000), but also the cabin area, the dormitories, campground and amphitheater, gas station, and portions of the government utility area. These characteristic land use zones exemplify the broad-based comprehensive planning of the Mission '66 era. Canyon Village, one component of the comprehensively planned canyon developed area, was to be the showcase of the Mission '66 Program.

Recent scholarly research by NPS historians establishes the significance of the Mission '66 program within the NPS. An on-going contextual study will attempt to put the Mission 66 program into a broader historical context, and will treat all types of development planned or built under the program, including overnight accommodations, roads, commercial areas, campgrounds, maintenance yards and residential areas. Once the current NPS Mission '66 Context Theme Study is published this summer, it is recommended that a Level II Cultural Landscape Inventory be developed to evaluate the eligibility of this entire developed area as a Mission '66 Historic District, with some non-contributing post-Mission '66 additions.

Historians have established that the Mission '66 program reflected a direct continuation of many earlier NPS policies and underscored that it was directed by long-time NPS officials with extensive experience in park development matters -- most of whom had played important roles in the highly regarded pre-WWII development era. The separate zones within the Canyon Developed Area first appeared on 1930s NPS master plans in early proposals to remove unsightly development from along the canyon rim and relocate it to where it would not impact sensitive canyon views and resources. Only carefully designed roads, trails and overlooks that blended in the landscape using rustic architectural principles were recommended for the canyon rim "sacred area." For the next 20 years, subsequent master plans continued to show the new developed area with separate land-use zones until the plan was finally fully realized between 1956-58 under the Mission '66 program, depicting NPS Modern architectural principles and a focus on convenience and accommodation of personal cars.

2. Canyon Rim Sacred Area (not included in this CLI-I):

Portions of the system of roads, overlooks and trails which surround the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone are potentially eligible under Criterion C as examples of rustic architectural principles and under Criterion A as reflecting the practices of park landscape design between 1916 and 1942. Today one can still see remnant traces of the buildings, roads and trails which belonged to the former visitor facilities along the rim which recalls an era where lodge and hotel guests had immediate access to the canyon rim. These facilities created unsightly development which impacted magnificent canyon views. In 1927, a "scared area" was designated 1/8 mile around the perimeter of the canyon rim and facilities were later removed in favor of simple overlooks, roads and trails that accommodated quiet contemplation of magnificent canyon views. Deemed "appropriate," these facilities blended into the surrounding landscape following NPS rustic architectural principles. Later, modern reconstruction changed portions of roads, parking, and some overlooks. Today, extant facilities depict two eras; one where rustic architectural principles prevailed and a later era where modern standards took precedence.

**INVENTORY UNIT SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:**

**Inventory Unit Name:** Canyon Developed Area  
**Property Level:** Component Landscape  
**Parent Landscape:** Canyon Area Cultural Landscapes

Approximately ½ mile north of the spectacular Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone is the Canyon Developed Area. A gently rolling landscape of lodgepole pine forest screens most (though not all) of this centralized development of both public and operational facilities around the east edge of the large Cascade Meadow. During the 1950s, the Canyon-to Norris Road was realigned to the north edge of this meadow to intersect with the new entry into the new Canyon developed area. The Canyon developed area is a sprawling car-oriented development depicting Mission '66 and NPS Modern architectural principles. It is zoned into day-use, overnight use and operational/service areas. The day use zone is called "Canyon Village" and is oriented around a very large horseshoe-shaped parking area which resembles a strip mall (Canyon Village Historic District, 48YE999, DOE). Buildings throughout the developed area are modest, unadorned and reflect a minimal level of workmanship, using modern materials. Overnight facilities consist of a campground and 3 cabin area loops where guests can park their cars next to their motel-type cabin. Construction of the new government service area was begun in the 1940s (Canyon Service Area Historic District 48YE999) and then fully implemented as part of the inaugural Mission '66 planned development. Most of these development zones were constructed between 1956 and 1959.

## Known Historic Resources:

<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Relevant Period(s)</b>	<b>Current National Register Status</b>	<b>Potential National Register Status</b>
<b>A. Canyon Sacred Area</b> (not evaluated in this inventory)	Rim Drives	Reconstructed in 1960s	Not Eligible	Level II CLI necessary to determine potentially eligibility as a system expressing NPS rustic architectural principles
	Trails	- 1930s-40s NPS Rustic - Post 1950s	Undetermined	
	Overlooks	- 1930s-40s NPS Rustic - Post 1950s	Undetermined	
<b>B. Canyon Developed Area</b> (evaluated in this inventory)	Canyon Village	Mission '66	Eligible; Canyon Village Historic District, 48YE999, DOE	Level II CLI necessary to determine potentially eligibility as the inaugural NPS Mission '66 planned development.
	Gas Station	Mission '66	Undetermined	
	Cabin Areas	Mission '66	Undetermined	
	Campground	Mission '66	Undetermined	
	Amphitheater	Mission '66	Undetermined	
	Government Service Area	- 1940-47 - Post 1950s	Section determined eligible; Canyon Service Area Historic District 48YE999	
<b>C. Grand Loop Road Historic District</b> (not included in this document)	Grand Loop Road	- 1872-1966	Listed NR-1995	No change
	Norris to Canyon Road	- 1872-1966	Listed NR -1995	No change

## Other Buildings and Structures:

<b>LCS Structures</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	<b>HS Number</b>	<b>LCS Number</b>	<b>Architectural Style</b>
Name				
Powerhouse	1941	HS-0322	#50948	N/A
Mess house and Quarters	1940	HS-0323	#50942	N/A
Bunkhouse	1947	HS-0351	#50943	N/A

## LOCATION MAP

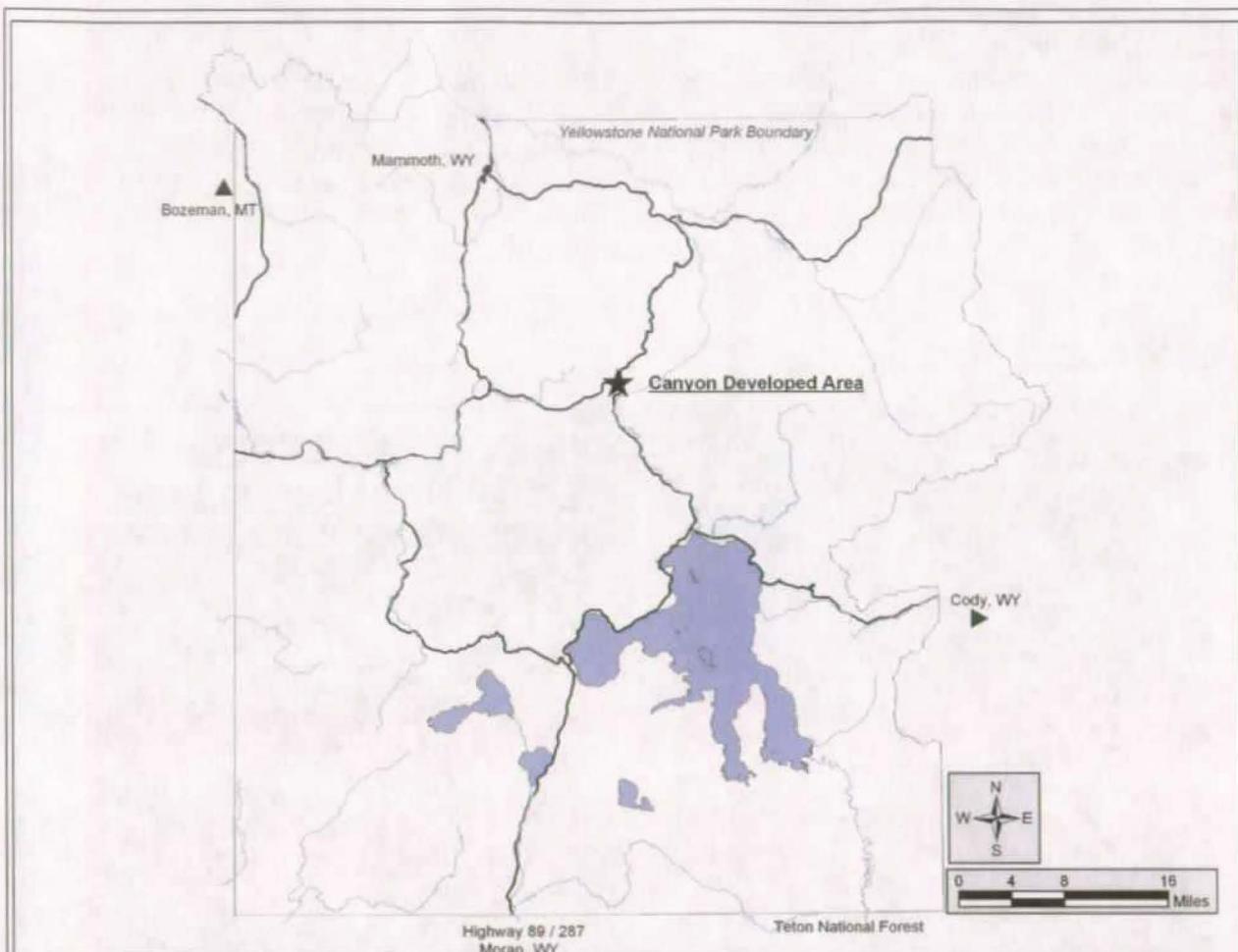


Figure 2: Location of Canyon Developed Area within Yellowstone National Park

### State and County:

Park County, Wyoming

## BOUNDARY

### Recommended Boundary Description

#### Canyon Development Area

The recommended cultural landscape boundary of the Canyon Developed Area encompasses the various development zones including the government service area, the gas station, the campground, amphitheater, Canyon village, the dormitories and the 3 cabin areas. This boundary includes a 100' vegetative buffer which provides screening. The campground extension, which was constructed later, is not currently included in this boundary.

#### Grand Loop Road and Norris-Canyon Road Cultural Landscape

100'-0 offset from centerline

### Boundary Map

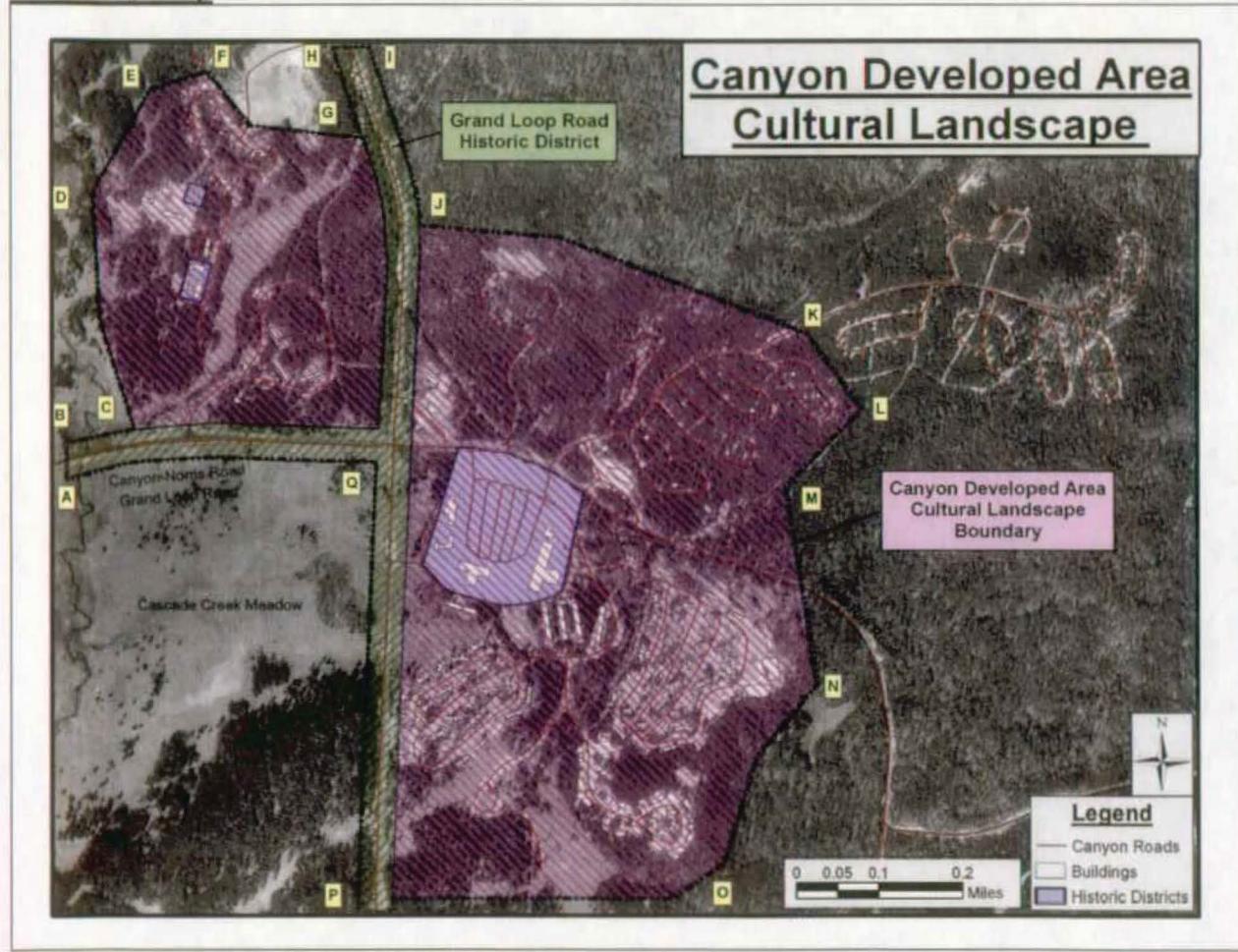


Figure 3: Cultural Landscape Boundary

**Boundary UTMS**

A:	539476.9	4953677.7
B:	539476.9	4953748.2
C:	539615.3	4953775.9
D:	539527.2	4954226.4
E:	539648.0	4954437.8
F:	539758.8	4954473.0
G:	540053.3	4954349.7
H:	540005.5	4954518.4
I:	540075.9	4954518.4
J:	540171.6	4954176.1
K:	540906.6	4953964.6
L:	541022.4	4953813.6
M:	540873.8	4953657.5
N:	540939.3	4953277.5
O:	540664.9	4952862.2
P:	540045.7	4952834.5
Q:	540083.5	4953707.9

**U.S.G.S. QUAD**

**Name:** Mount Holmes, Mammoth, Tower Junction, Madison Junction Norris Junction, Canyon Village  
**Date:** 1986  
**Scale:** 15 minute series, 1:24,000

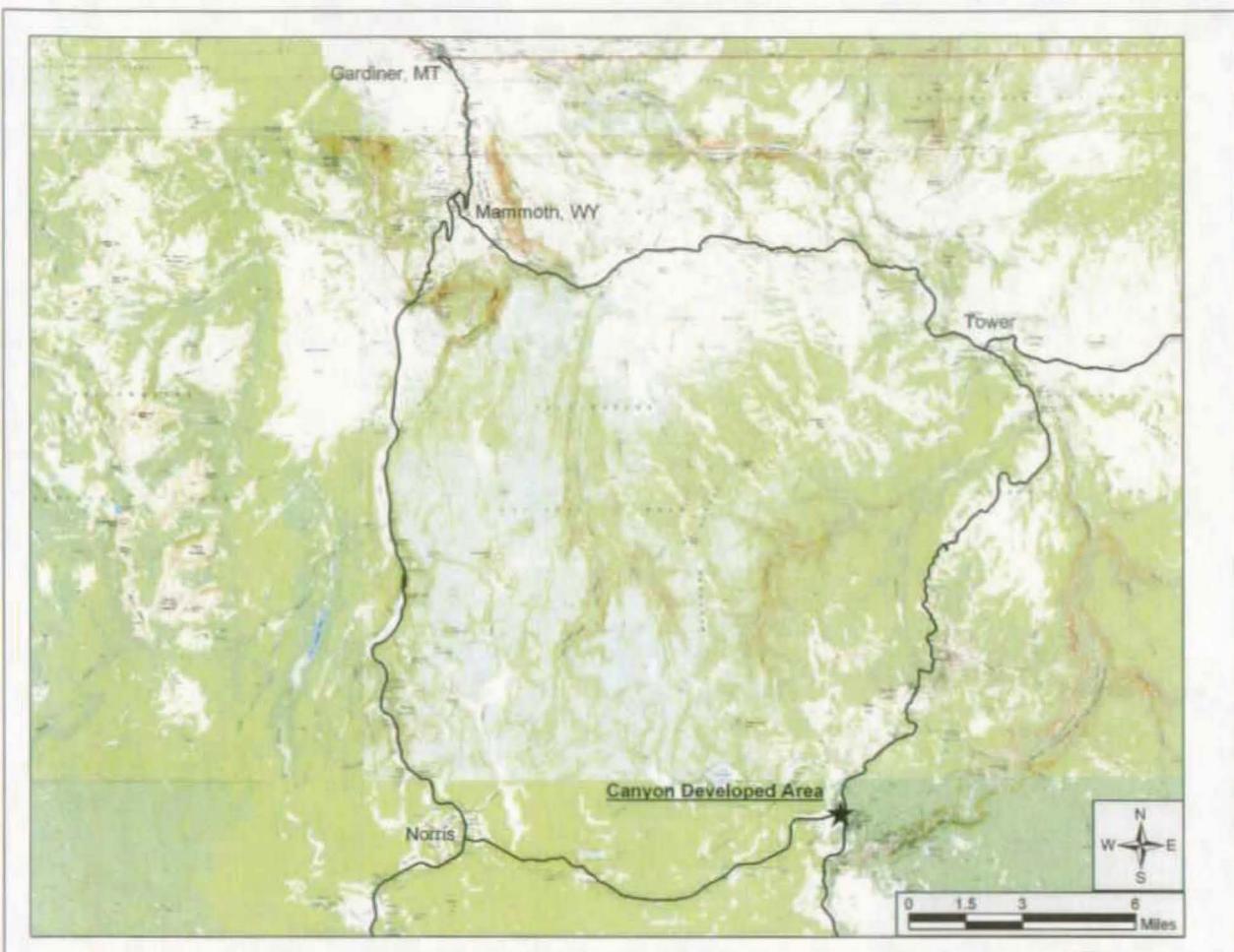


Figure 4: USGS Quad

## SITE PLAN

### Map

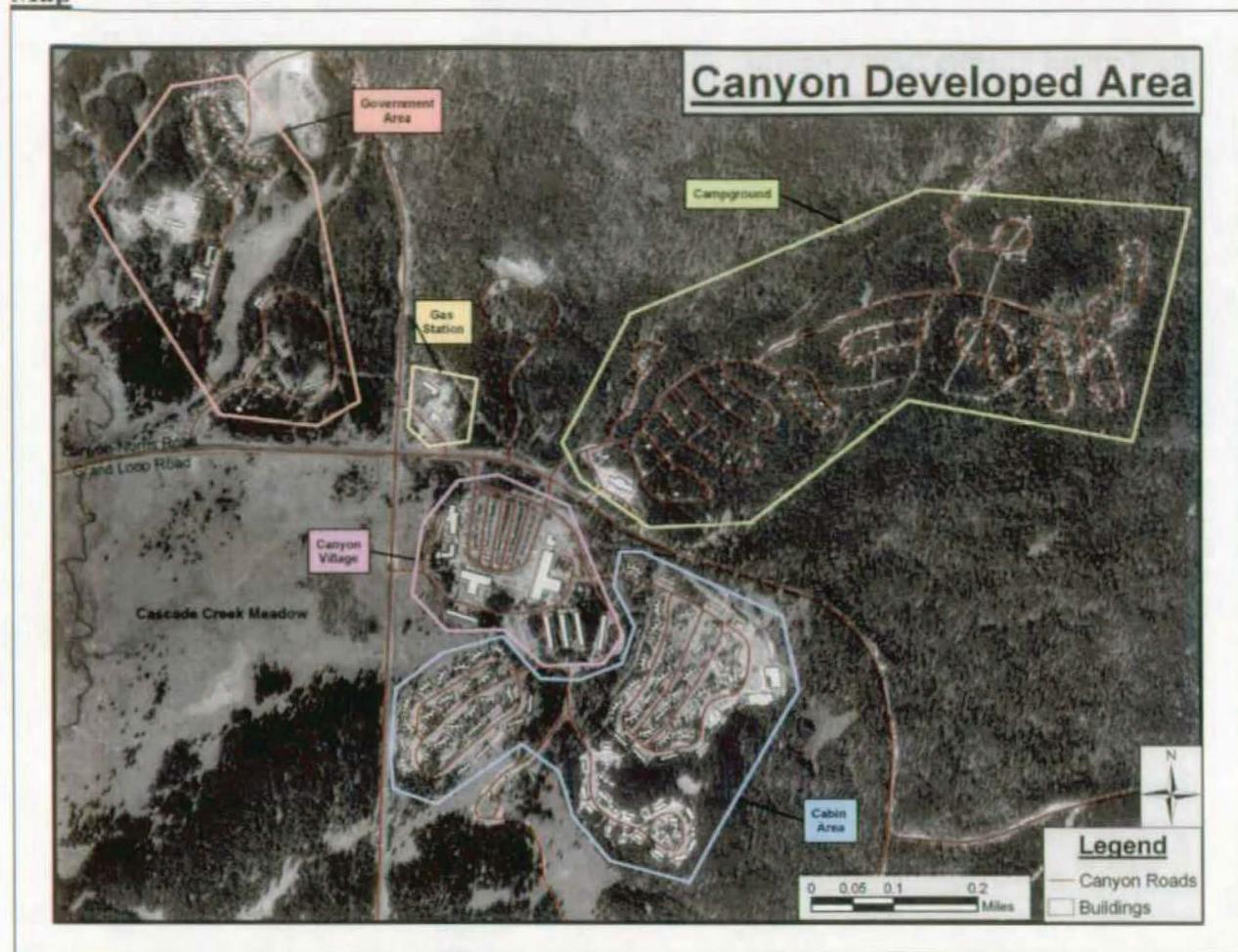


Figure 5: Canyon Developed Area Site Plan of Existing Conditions

### Existing Condition

Today, the Canyon Developed Area retains the zones, circulation systems and buildings originally developed during the Mission '66 period in 1956-59. Since this time, the campground was expanded and additional housing units were added to the government utility area. The cabin area has two new lodges which have replaced several cabins which were dilapidated, in concurrence with the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (June 13, 1991).

## PHYSICAL HISTORY

(Note: narrative includes direct excerpts from citations listed in Bibliography)

### Early Canyon Facility Development

In the early years of the development of Yellowstone National Park, the desire to develop vistas and make them accessible to the public was particularly strong. Access was provided wherever practical and concessionaires were allowed to develop accommodations at many of the most scenic locations. In 1883, the Yellowstone National Park Improvement Company established a hotel camp near the "Great Falls." Other buildings soon followed, and by the late-1920s, hundreds of buildings crowded the edge of the canyon.

Although the Canyon was a major draw for visitors, the steep canyon walls that bordered the river were obstacles to the early development of scenic roads in this area. Of the two canyon rims, the north rim was the most accessible and the first to be developed, since it did not involve crossing the Yellowstone River. Still, for the first 20 years of the park's existence, the north rim was only accessible by pedestrian and horse trails and even these were primitive.



Figure 6: Photo Image of 1933 Master Plan of Canyon Area shows development on rim. The idea of maintaining facilities along the canyon rim is reflected in this plan.

### Existing Conditions, 1933 Master Plan (Figure 5)

Most of this plan shows existing conditions as of 1933. Most facilities are located along the canyon rim. The Canyon-to-Norris Road is shown south of the Canyon Hotel adjacent to the auto camp.

### NPS Planning and Landscape Naturalization (1930s-1942)

Beginning in the late 1920s, the NPS had begun to focus on master planning that called for a long-term vision for park development and protection of the natural landscape. In the mid-1930s, early Yellowstone National Park master plans decried the concentration of development near the Upper and Lower Falls that was destroying the very scenery and natural conditions for which the park had been created. Following Yellowstone's 1929 "planning outline," a margin of approximately 1/8-mile from the edge of the Canyon was designated as a sacred area. Beginning in the mid-1930s, master plans called for the removal of all park facilities (except for the Canyon Hotel) from the edge of the canyon. These facilities were relocated in an organized and centralized developed area. Only trails, paths, and observation points were to be allowed in the sacred area.

Specifically, master plans from mid-1930s through 1940s called for a new centralized developed area separated from canyon views by  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of forested area. The new development would include zones for a village (visitor day-use), overnight lodging and camping areas as well as a new government/service area that would be placed out of view of the public. Existing roads and parking areas were to be realigned and improved accordingly. The village was oriented in a horseshoe configuration which oriented toward views across Cascade Meadow.

Despite the strong wording of the master plans, it was many years before all of the concessionaire's facilities were removed from the canyon rim and reestablished at Canyon Village (see Mission 66 program description below). By 1941, roads were realigned and connections to the site of the new developed area were constructed, however no facilities had yet relocated. A CCC Camp was developed near the proposed village site.

During this early era of master planning, the National Park Service Landscape Division was also becoming increasingly concerned about the visual compatibility of trails with their surroundings and significant natural features. Timber construction was considered outmoded and more naturalistic solutions were sought. NPS landscape architects made recommendations that the wooden stairways, ramps, and railings that had been installed at Canyon overlooks be replaced with earthen paths and masonry parapets of native stone. Such a system could be modeled and colored to blend into nature's surrounding rockwork.

Vegetation was preserved during construction and was used to frame canyon views and enclose the overlooks from cross-canyon views.



Figure 7: Photo Image of 1939 Master Plan of Canyon Area

Changes in Existing Conditions between 1933 and 1939 Master Plans (Figures 5 and 6)

During the 1930s the goal of relocating facilities away from the canyon rim sacred area had not yet begun.



Figure 8: Photo Image of 1941 Master Plan of the Canyon Area

Changes in Existing Conditions between 1939 and 1941 Master Plans (Figures 6 and 7)

Between the 1939 and 1941 Master Plans, several changes had taken place. The Grand Loop Road is shown as realigned away from the canyon near the Chittenden Bridge, running closer to the Canyon Hotel and then straight north toward the site of the new canyon developed area. The new section of the North Rim Drive has been constructed to connect the north rim to the site of the new canyon developed area. It appears that the road system and parking have been constructed in the new canyon village area, however buildings are still shown as proposed. A new CCC camp has been constructed near the proposed village site. The Canyon Hotel parking had been changed and expanded.

### NPS Mission 66 Era (1945-1973)

After World War II, the American economy boomed, nearly everyone had an automobile, and pleasure travel surged. At Yellowstone, facilities (roads, lodging, restrooms, and employee facilities) had long been neglected and could not meet the needs of these visitors.

The 1952 Yellowstone Master Plan began to reflect the new thinking of this modern era. The proposed developed area zones and their locations were similar to previous master plans; however the 1952 master plan now proposed a large village parking lot and a “visitor center.” The village was oriented around this large parking area, where in previous plans it was oriented toward a large meadow.

In February 1955, The NPS initiated a program to solve “the difficult problem of protecting the scenic and historic areas of the National Park System from overuse and, at the same time, providing optimum opportunity for public enjoyment of the parks.” The program was targeted for completion by 1966, the Golden Anniversary of the National Park Service, and, thus, was called Mission 66.

Yellowstone National Park’s prospectus for implementing the Mission ’66 program was to move developments away from important and (often) delicate resources. At the Canyon area, this had already been addressed in Master Plans as early as 1927 (see previous section) and the site for the new Canyon Developed Area had already been selected. A new Government Service Area was constructed during the 1940s and road realignments and connections were ready to accommodate the future new facilities which had not yet been built. The Canyon Rim remained crowded with these facilities.

Yellowstone’s new Canyon Village was to be the showcase for the Mission 66 program. Because of the importance of this program to the NPS, Director Wirth assigned the Chairman of the Mission 66 Steering Committee, Lon Garrison, to Yellowstone as its new Superintendent in 1956.

The Canyon Mission ’66 project closely followed the 1952 NPS Master Plan. This new development was well suited for the modern automobile-oriented tourist. The concessionaire’s facilities (lodging, stores, restaurants and lounge) were designed and constructed around a large parking plaza and new multi-unit motel-type cabins were built a short distance away. The visitor center and post office were subsequently constructed around this parking plaza. A new gas station and new campground were built across the access road (North Rim Drive). The government utility area expanded upon the existing 1940s service area, adding more maintenance and residential facilities. Almost all facilities in all of these zones were constructed between 1956 and 1959.

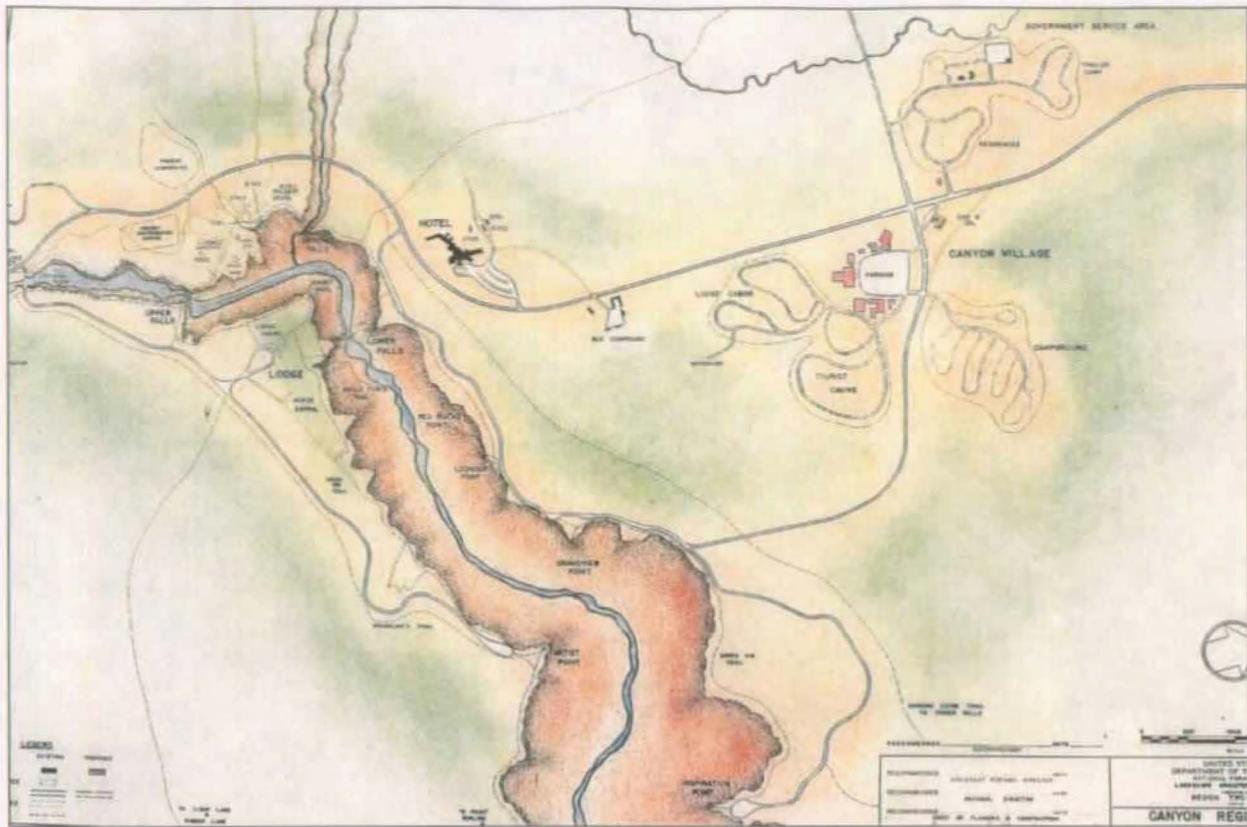
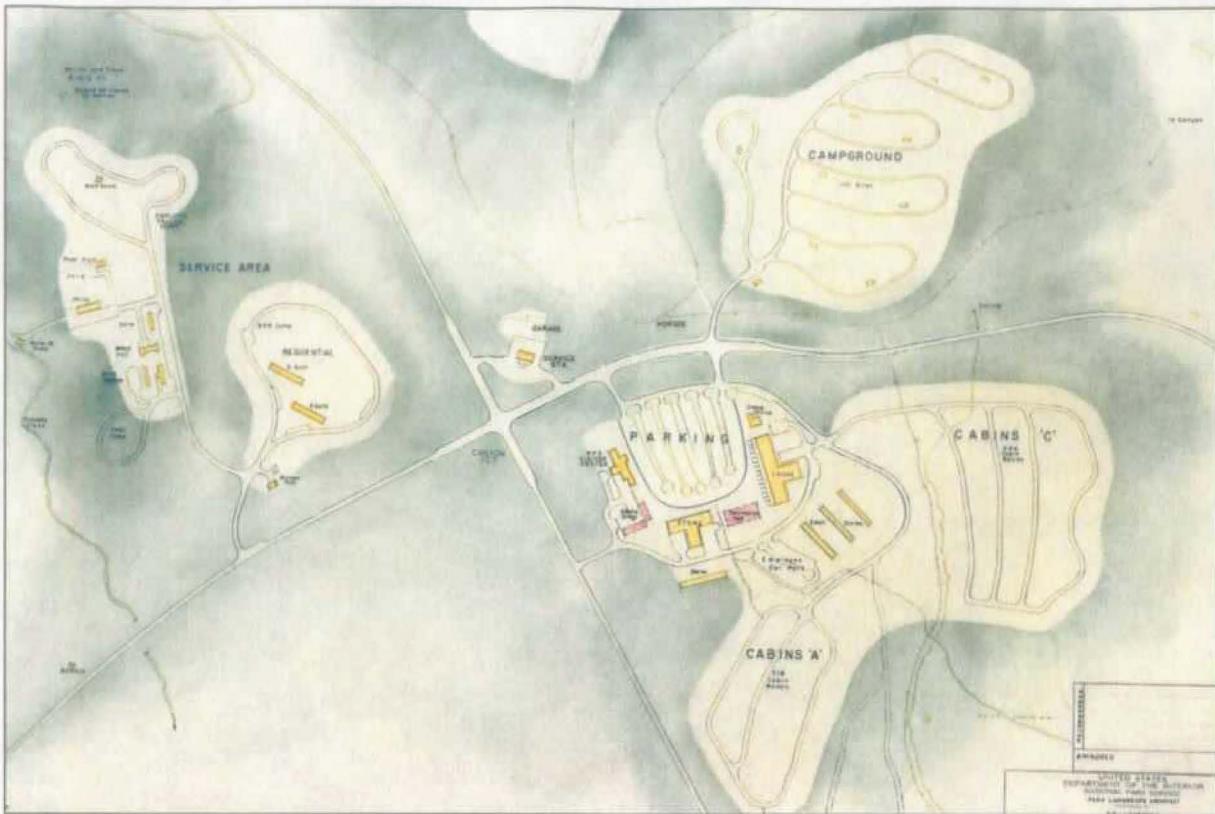


Figure 9: Photo Image of 1952 Master Plan

Changes in Existing Conditions between 1941 and 1952 Master Plans (Figures 7 and 8)

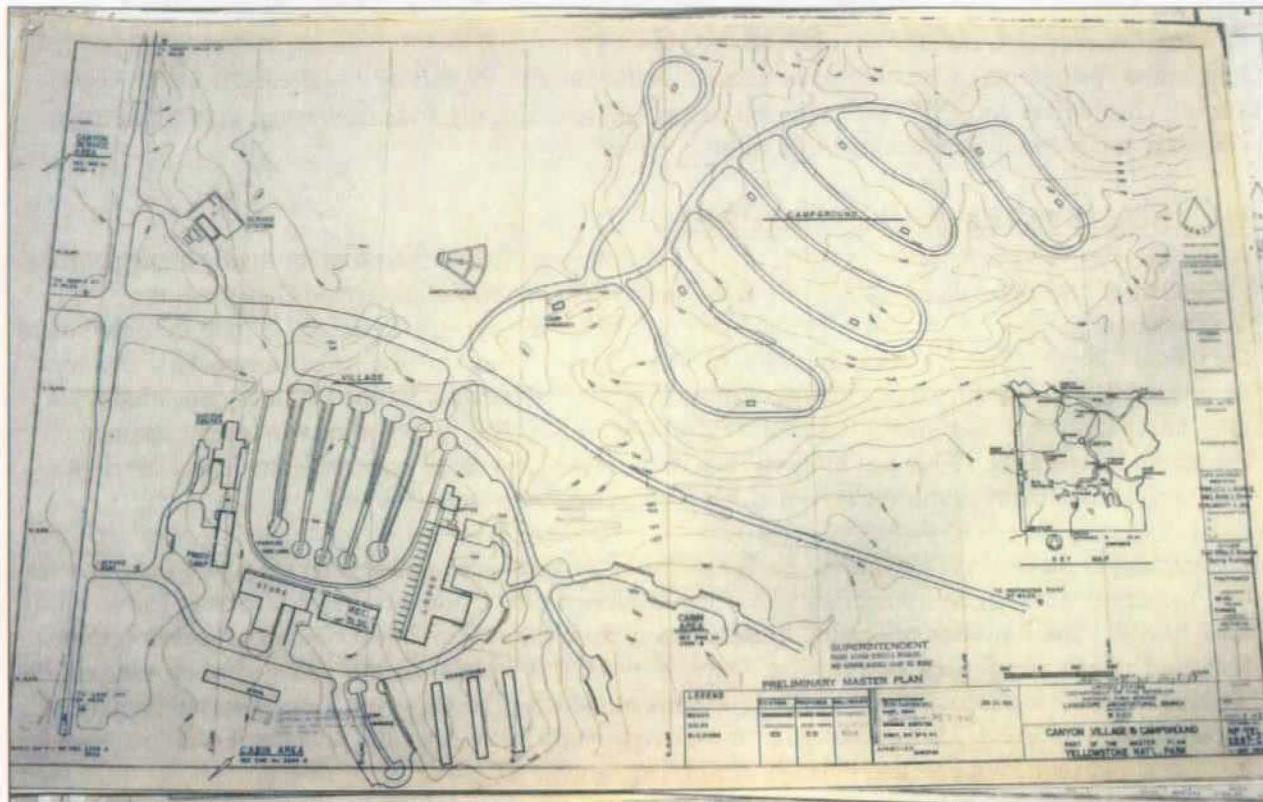
The Norris to Canyon Road is still shown as running south of Cascade Creek. A new portion of the government service area has been constructed



*Figure 10: Photo Image of "Interim Master Plan" dated 1956-57*

### Changes in Existing Conditions between 1952 and 1956 Master Plans (Figures 8 and 9)

By 1956, the new Norris to Canyon Road had been realigned to intersect with the new Canyon Village location. The large horseshoe parking area had been constructed as were some of the roads leading to and through the cabin areas.



*Figure 11; Photo Image of 1958 Canyon Area Master Plan*

### Changes in Existing Conditions between 1956 and 1958 Master Plans (Figures 9 and 10)

By 1958, the visitor center, lodge, store dormitories, some cabins, the campground, the amphitheater, the gas station, NPS residential and maintenance facilities had all been constructed.

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Landscape characteristics are defined as tangible and intangible aspects of a landscape from the historic period. They define and characterize the landscape and, individually and collectively, give a landscape character and aid in understanding of its cultural value.

## NATURAL SYSTEMS AND FEATURES

*Removing Development from the Canyon Rim:* The Canyon Mission '66 program finally implemented the 1929 goal of relocating facilities away from the spectacular scenery of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Since 1929, master planning had proposed to remove development 1/8 mile from the rim of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone; setting aside a "sacred" area around its perimeter. This area was to be protected as the precursor to wilderness areas. The general location for the facilities relocation was adequately separated from the sacred area by a forested ridge. This proposed new location remained consistent between the 1930s and Mission '66. Within the sacred area, only roads, trails and overlooks were acceptable, maintaining vegetation as a screen from cross-canyon views.

*Orientation to Natural vs. Man-Made Features:* Early canyon development used the canyon and waterfalls as a focal point. During this time, facilities were developed directly on this scenic resource. The 1930-40, NPS Master Plan, proposed relocating facilities away from the canyon into a centralized developed area that used a large meadow as a focal point. Later, in 1952, this orientation was changed when a large village parking lot became the focal point of the development, which is how Canyon Village was ultimately constructed in 1956-58. The orientation of the Government Utility Area around a small meadow remained consistent between both eras and through implementation.

*Using Meadows and Trees:* The Canyon Mission '66 program honored the early NPS design concept of developing facilities along the edges of meadows, capitalizing on meadow views yet screening buildings within the adjacent forested areas. Screening and the protection of scenic and wilderness character of the landscape was a high priority for the Canyon Developed Area since the 1930s. Early plans show most of the development (cabins, campground and government service area) in what is labeled as "dense forest." The 1952 Master Plan also shows the deliberate placement of the proposed development in the forested area. The village was proposed on the edge of a large meadow yet tucked into the adjacent lodgepole forest. The site of the new Canyon development was described in the press release about the 1956 ground-breaking ceremonies as,

"some distance back from the canyon rim and surrounded by woods, which will screen the development from those who come to gaze upon one of the park's great natural wonders" (the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone). The general landscape at the development site is gently rolling and covered with a lodgepole pine forest interspersed with small grassy meadows. It was believed that this area could be developed "without impairing the scenic quality or wilderness character of the park as a whole."

Typically, the forested edge of meadows provides a denser screen for development due to the advantages of additional sunlight and a fuller tree growth. This natural feature was used repeatedly by NPS landscape architects during the early years of NPS facilities development.



Figure 12: Existing Conditions (2004) photo image of the small meadow within the "Government Utility Area." Note the effective screening of development provided by the fullness of the forested meadow edge.



Figure 13: Existing Conditions (2004) photo image of small meadow south of the cabin cul-de-sac at the southern edge of the cultural landscape boundary. Note the effectiveness of the screening of the cabins from the meadow.

**Potentially Contributing Features:**

- The canyon sacred area containing only roads, trails and overlooks which blend into the landscape
- General location of new development separated from rim by a forested ridge
- Meadows as a design feature (development organized around meadows)
- Forested areas that provide screening
- Dense forested edge of meadows

**LAND USE****Canyon Developed Area**

- Visitor Services (lodging, campground, visitor center, etc.): park, educational, commercial
- Concession utility area (employee dormitories, etc.): residential, utility
- Government utility area (housing, maintenance facilities, etc.): residential, utility

**Canyon Sacred Area and Grand loop Road**

- Passive Recreation Use: Canyon viewing facilities (roads, trails and overlooks): park
- Transportation Use

**SPATIAL ORGANIZATION**

As early as 1925, the NPS had begun using the idea of centralized developed areas with standardized components (the zones mentioned above) so that visitors could anticipate the provision of certain services at given points within a national park. The Mission '66 program emphasized broader planning principles that also favored zones with visitor centers, overnight accommodation areas, sophisticated circulation systems, and government service area complexes. The Canyon developed area is spatially organized into such zones of land use.

(See Figure 9: Photo Image of 1956 Master Plan with zones separated by land use)

In hierarchical order, the Canyon developed area is organized into these zones:

**Canyon Developed Area**

Development relocated to this area. Clear zones are organized as described below.

- **Canary Village**  
*Visitor Use Zone:* the focus of the development with a large parking plaza surrounded on three sides by all the public facilities a visitor to the park would need—lodging registration, numerous restaurants, a lounge, various shops and stores, a post office, and a NPS visitor center.

*Service Area:* Behind the public facilities, where the service drives, loading docks and concessions employee dorms areas are located.

- **Gas Station**  
Located at road intersection
- **Cabin Areas**  
Divided into groups “a,” “b,” and “c,” then further subdivided into loops
- **Campground and Amphitheater**  
Campground is divided into loops
- **Government Utility Area**  
Contains zones for residential Area and maintenance area

**Potentially Contributing Features:**

- Clear separation of zones by use and in hierarchy described above.

## **CULTURAL TRADITIONS**

The following cultural traditions influenced the development at the canyon area.

### **Early Master Plans and Village Plans**

By the end of 1931, development outlines and general plans had been prepared for every national park. These plans were revised annually between 1932 and 1942. They plotted existing conditions and recommended changes. They also noted important vistas, areas of vegetation, and individual trees or rock formations that merited preservation. Major development areas addressed in the plans were proposed park villages, having many functions, and both concessionary and government facilities. In these centralized development areas, there was clear delineation of standardized NPS zones/components. One of the most important advantages of developing a master plan was that areas could be developed as a functional unit with carefully predetermined set of structures. The components of these developed areas was standardized so that visitors could anticipate the provision of certain services at given points within a national park.

### **Early Plans as a Tool for Landscape Preservation**

Under the 1929 planning outline and in subsequent plans, any area not identified as a developed area was considered a wilderness area. Plans identified "sacred" areas, which were to be protected from development or other forms of disturbance. Selected for their pristine condition, sacred areas were small zones or designated features, such as the on-eighth-mile radius around the Old Faithful Geyser at Yellowstone, a geologically important rock formation such as Yosemite's Sentinel Rock, a group of trees, a margin of land along the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, or an island in the river at Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite. Such areas were inviolate and to remain unimpaired.

### **Mission '66 Program**

Although it was typical for Mission '66 planners to develop visitor facilities in close proximity to park resources and features, Yellowstone's goal was to move developments away from park resources. Yellowstone's Mission '66 Program perpetuated and implemented the earlier idea of moving facilities away from sensitive and scenic resources centralized developed areas with standardized zones. However, there was now a greater emphasis on the automobile and other modern needs and conveniences. The Mission '66 program was a broad-based planning initiative that emphasized comprehensive site plans. These plans included zones of land use such as visitor-use areas and government service areas. Sophisticated circulation systems connected these zones.

The Canyon Village development was designed as a strip-mall for the modern auto tourist. The large parking plaza surrounded by various facilities allows visitors to quickly orient themselves and find the services they need. The "strip mall" design was, and remains, familiar to Americans. It is not only convenient for visitors, but lucrative for the business owners. All buildings are positioned equidistant from the sidewalk that rings the parking plaza, creating a "line up" of facilities for visitors to choose from. The development reflects the architectural thinking of the National Park Service and the American way of life during that time period. This thinking led to the concentration of facilities in one convenient location (malls).

Early in the Mission 66 era, it was recognized that visitors to national parks needed a centralized facility where they could go for information. The small, rustic museums built in many parks in the 1920s and 1930s could no longer meet the demands of the traveling public. As detailed by Sarah Allaback in her report on Mission 66 Visitor Centers, "the Park Service was struggling not only to combine museum services and administrative facilities but to develop a new building type that would supplement old-fashioned museum exhibits with modern methods of interpretation." The term "visitor center" was coined to describe this new type of facility. The center would concentrate visitor services (comfort stations, museum, information, and administration) into one central location in order to contact more visitors, which should result in higher visitor satisfaction with their park experience and better resource protection. At the

same time, visitor centers were designed to allow people to use the facility in any manner that they chose (i.e., those simply wanting to use the restrooms could do so without having to view exhibits).

A new type of overnight accommodation was also developed—the motel (“motorist + hotel”). The traveler of the day was independent and wanted convenience and reliability in the facilities that he found throughout the country. Thus, franchised “chain” motels and eateries sprang up. Yellowstone National Park planners used this profile of the modern visitor as they developed new facilities in the park. The thinking of the time (as explained in Yellowstone’s Mission 66 Prospectus) was that all the park’s famous hotels (from Mammoth to Lake to Old Faithful to Canyon) would “continue to operate during their remaining useful life, but will be replaced . . . by the new type of accommodations [simple, comfortable, convenient cabins] in the new overnight centers. Eventually . . . there will be no large hotels of the old type within the park. . . .”

#### NPS Modern Style Architecture

The architectural style of this Mission ’66 development has come to be called “National Park Service Modern.” This was a deviation from the typical rustic architecture that had preceded this style. The buildings are large, simple and unadorned. Large, boxy interiors of stores were constantly rearranged to reflect changing trends. There was a lack of detailing in construction and a common use of extended gluelam beams and slump block walls. This style of architecture is not necessarily a part of the park landscape (like rustic-style buildings) and, consequently, these buildings could be sited in areas that were more convenient for park visitors. At overlooks, concrete and steel were commonly used over the naturalistic stonework of the previous era.

#### **Potentially Contributing Features:**

- Canyon village
- Motel-type cabin area (rather than grand hotel)
- NPS Modern Style Architecture for the developed area facilities

### **VEGETATION**

#### **Canyon Developed Area**

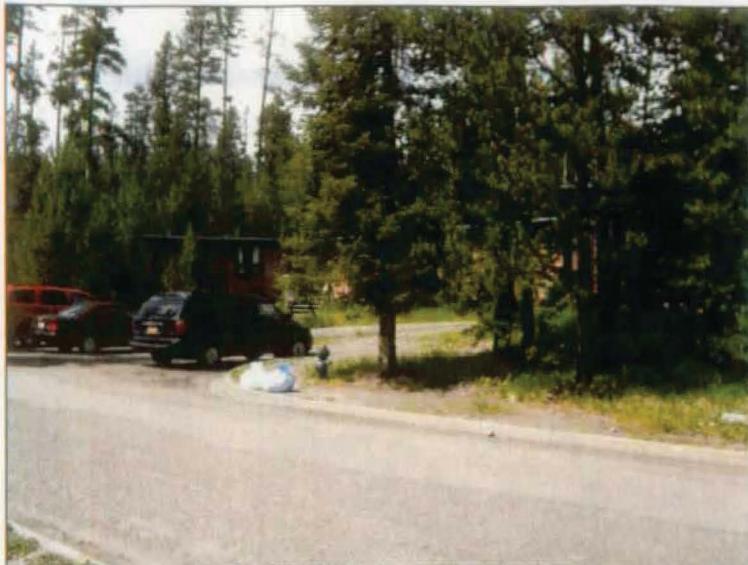
Screening and the protection of scenic and “wilderness character” of the landscape was a high priority for the design of the Canyon Developed Area (see “Natural Systems and Features”). The vegetation within the Canyon Developed Area landscape is characterized by combinations of open grassy meadows and densely forested areas. It is important to note that the development was sited within the screened forested areas, and not in open meadows, which is in concert with both the Mission ’66 Master Plan and the early NPS Master Plans (see discussion of “Natural Systems and Features”). A set of drawings show the “As Constructed” planting plan for the Canyon Developed Area dated 1957 (NP-YEL 3445-B). Trees, shrubs and grass seed were used to obliterate old road and construction scars, as well as for screening and ornamental values.



Figure 14: Photo Image of 1952 NPS Master Plan showing proposed cabin area. This drawing indicates the intent to use trees to envelope the cabins.

**Canyon Village:** Between the west edge of Canyon Village and the Grand Loop Road, the 1957 planting plan shows heavy planting of trees to screen the development from the road. Many trees were also planted between the horseshoe parking area and the North Rim Drive for screening purposes. In the horseshoe parking area itself, many trees were planted in the narrow islands to soften the expanse of pavement and also provide shade. The village buildings had ornamental plantings of grasses, shrubs and trees.

**Cabin Areas:** These multi-unit cabins are sited within a densely forested area where trees provided shade, screening and ornamental value. There is a clear buffer of trees between the groups of cabins (cabin areas a, b and c) and adjacent roads as well as between each cabin area a, b, and c. A drawing of the cabin area (YELL3448A, 1957), shows the as-constructed conditions of the cabin area. The tree line around the perimeter of the cabin area remained intact after construction. The interior of the cabin area islands suffered some tree loss due to construction of the multiplex cabins and associated utilities. It is not presently known if a subsequent planting project was the reason for the increase in vegetation between cabins since 1957. A Level II CLI investigation would most likely yield this information.



*Figure 15;  
Existing Conditions (2004) photo  
image of vegetation around cabins,*



*Figure 16;  
Existing Conditions (2004) photo  
image of vegetation around cabins,*



*Figure 17;  
Existing Conditions (2004) photo  
image of buffer between cabin area  
and commercial services at Canyon  
Village area,*

**Campground:** The campground was developed in a densely forested area where a 1952 master plan shows vegetation closely enveloping the roads and skirting around the comfort stations. The 1957 planting plan shows ornamental plantings of shrubs along the foundation of the comfort stations.



Figure 18; Canyon Service Area, from 1952 Canyon Master Plan. This drawing indicates the intent to use the meadow as a feature and forested area as screen.

**Government Utility Area:** During the 1940s this development was planned within a forested area on the northern edge of Cascade Creek Meadow. The various components of this area (residential, utility) are organized around a smaller interior meadow. Later, the 1950s Canyon-to-Norris road alignment closely followed the southern end of this area. The 1957 planting plan shows a moderate level of tree, shrub and grass planting, for screening between the new road realignment and the utility area as well as to revegetate obliterated road and facility scars.



Figure 19;  
Existing Conditions (2004) photo image of the small meadow within the government utility area. Note the effective screening of the government buildings provided by the dense forested edge of the meadow. The meadow provides an aesthetic feature within the employee area.



*Figure 20;  
Existing Conditions (2004) photo  
image of government utility area  
shows the character of vegetation  
between structures.*



*Figure 21;  
Existing Conditions (2004)  
photo image of government  
utility area, Vegetation  
around employee housing  
provides shade and privacy.*

#### **Vegetation along the Grand Loop Road Historic District, Norris to Canyon Road and North Rim Drive**

As consistent throughout the park, these historic districts require “protection of trees, shrubs, and other natural growths from destruction and damage – this provides undisturbed vegetation along the road, which offered a feeling of a natural setting.” The Mission ’66 master plans as well as the subsequent planting plans have helped to maintain the buffer between the roadways and canyon developed area. A “natural setting” along the primary and secondary roadways within the canyon developed area remains intact.



Figure 22: Existing Conditions (2004) photo image of the view of the Government Utility Area from the Norris-Canyon Road. Vegetation effectively screens the development from visitors traveling along this road.

#### Potentially contributing Features:

- Screening aspects of trees around components and zones of developed area
- Remnant landscape plantings from 1957.
- Forest-edge along meadows; denser/fuller screen
- Trees providing shade, privacy between clusters of buildings
- Vegetation screening canyon development from Grand Loop Road corridor.

#### **CIRCULATION**

In hierarchical order, the circulation system is as follows:

##### **Canyon Developed Area**

*Canyon Village:* The large horseshoe-shaped parking plaza, surrounded by various facilities, allows visitors to quickly orient themselves and find the services they need. There is a double entry to the parking lot from the road and multiple north-south linear islands that have been heavily planted with trees in 1957. These islands create a strong linear design element in the parking area. The service drives and associated parking lots skirt along behind the visitor facilities of the village. The character of the roads is generous, curvilinear and circuitous. There is not a clear, understandable road hierarchy, which is confusing to first time visitor.

*Cabin Areas:* The cabin area is only accessed by an entrance road that begins at the horseshoe parking area near the lodge. There is no direct access from the North Rim Drive. This access road leads to three different clusters of cabins (areas a, b, and c). Two cabin areas have a circulation system that is very similar to the horseshoe parking lot. A strong north-south system of "islands," which contain trees and cabins, are separated by a system of parking areas. The third cabin cluster is a cul-de-sac configuration. Pedestrians utilize the roads, however, the 1957 "as-constructed" drawings show a few trails. The roads are narrow and parking occurs at each cabin in small parking areas.

*By Osman and Regula, 2004*

*Campground:* There is a system of 9 loops and 2 cul-de-sacs that are connected by a main access road-spine. Pedestrians utilize the roads. The roads are paved, curvilinear and parking occurs at each campsite.

*Government Utility Area:* There are two entries into this area, one from the Norris to Canyon Road (from the south) and the other from the Grand Loop Road (from the east). The south access road terminates into a cul-de-sac residential area. A tertiary road branches off from here and access the Canyon Service Area Historic District and the trailer area. There is no separate pedestrian system. The roads are paved, narrow and curvilinear.

### **Grand Loop Road Historic District**

(From National Register Nomination) As the primary road, this system, along with the Norris to Canyon Road, lies gently on the landscape with a graceful alignment. Tree, shrubs and other natural growth are protected in order to provide undisturbed vegetation along the road, which offers a feeling of a natural setting.

#### **Potentially contributing Features:**

- Vegetation along primary and secondary road edges that screen development from road corridors
- Curvilinear alignment of roads
- Hierarchy of auto circulation
- Large village parking area
- Dispersed cabin and campground parking
- Pedestrian circulation (trails, sidewalks, etc.)

### **BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES**

\*\*See attached Historic Structure Surveys for village and government area.

The architectural style of the facilities has come to be called "National Park Service Modern." The buildings are simple and unadorned and often have high ceilings and few interior walls. There is a common use of extended glue-lam beams and slump block walls. This style of architecture is not necessarily a part of the park landscape (like rustic-style buildings) and, consequently, these buildings could be sited in areas that were more convenient for park visitors.

### **CLUSTER ARRANGEMENT**

*Village:* Buildings are clustered around the perimeter of the horseshoe parking lot.

*Cabins:* Cabins are arranged linearly along the loop roads and cul-de-sacs

*Government Utility Area:* Residences and utility structures are arranged linearly along access roads.

#### **Potentially Contributing Features:**

- Linear arrangement along access roads and around parking areas, in various configurations.

### **TOPOGRAPHY**

- Rolling topography of forested areas around relatively flat meadows.
- Low-lying wetlands with intermittent streams

### **VIEWS AND VISTAS**

Canyon Village views are oriented onto man-made features and not onto meadows (which seemed to be a very early (1930s) design concept). Screening of cabins, campground and government utility area is instead a design criteria.

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## APPENDICES

### INVENTORY SUMMARY

**Inventory Level:**

Level I

**Completion Status:**

Level I

Level I Data Collection by:

Eleanor Clark, Joe Regula and Zehra Osman

Recorder:

Eleanor Clark, Joe Regula and Zehra Osman

Level I Site Visit and Date:

Summer, 2004.

**Explanatory Narrative:**

The draft CLI- I was initiated in January, 2004 by the Branch of Landscape Architecture in Yellowstone National Park to inform the Wildland-Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Program at the park. This program would involve the removal of trees around facilities and structures in order to reduce fuel loads and protect these structures in the event of a catastrophic fire.

Meadows were utilized as features to organize development around. Views across meadows are unobstructed by man-made elements.

**Potentially contributing Features:**

- Screening with trees
- Expansive views across meadows that are unimpeded by development

**SMALL-SCALE FEATURES**

Undetermined; to be evaluated in further research requiring a Level- II Cultural Landscape Inventory.