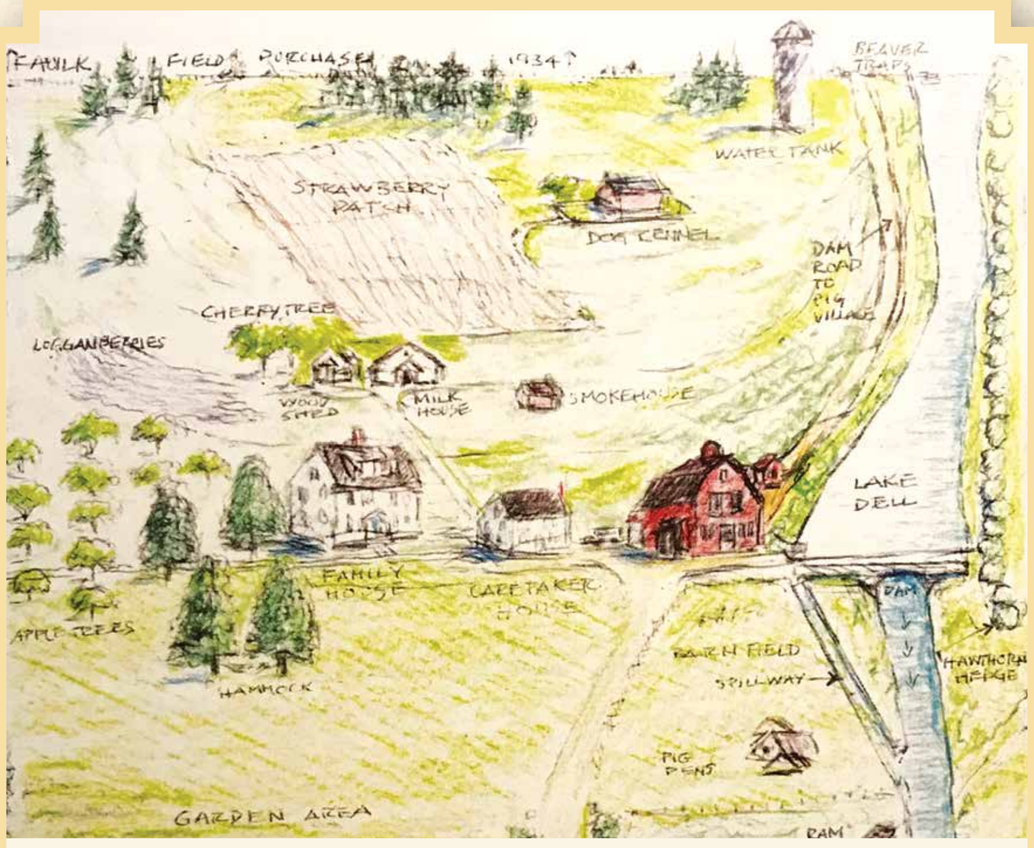
LIVING *off the* LAND

Indigenous tribes are the earliest known inhabitants of present-day Snohomish County and modern-day Mill Creek. In 1855, under the Treaty of Point Elliott, local tribes relocated to Tulalip Bay. There they formed the Tulalip Tribes.

During the late 19th century, early homesteaders settled in what is now Mill Creek and began farming.

1931 - 1967



LAKE DELL FARM

From 1931 to 1967, the Garhart family cultivated Lake Dell Farm and learned how to live off the land. Originally 14 acres, the farm raised livestock and grew a variety of fruit and vegetables. By the 1960s, Lake Dell Farm had grown to 900 acres. This land eventually became the heart of Mill Creek. A plaque on the northeast corner of 164th Street and Bothell-Everett Highway honors the patriarchs of the Garhart family.

WHAT USED TO BE HERE?

CABINS

There were cabins and farmhouses throughout the area, including one at what is now the 13th tee of the Mill Creek Country Club golf course.

DYNAMITE PLANT

Residents in the mid-1900s used dynamite to clear land. The dynamite was manufactured near the current site of the Mill Creek Library.

GENERAL STORE

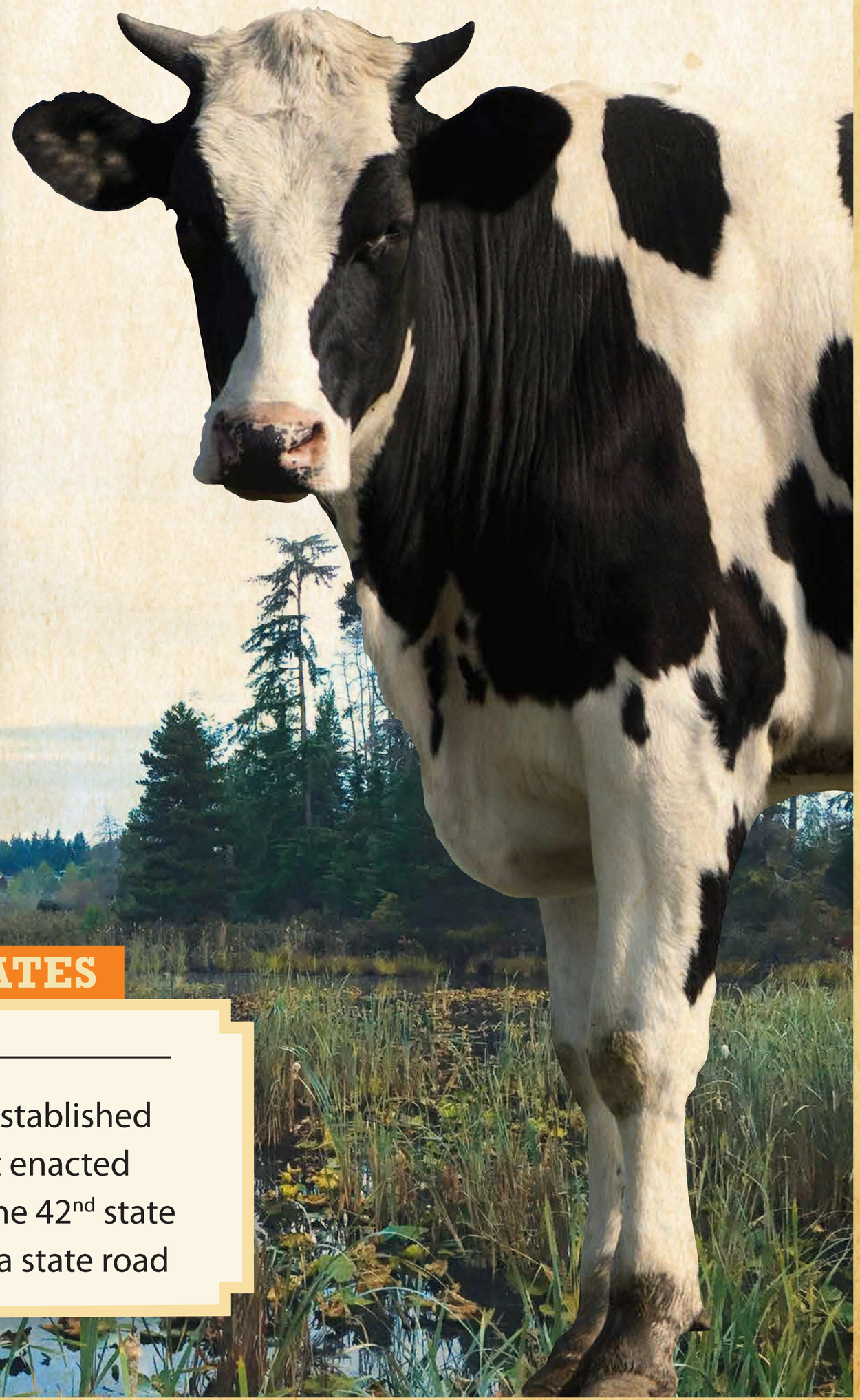
A general store sat at Wintermutes Corner, now the intersection of 164th Street and SR 527.

DAIRY FARM

Families in the 1930s purchased dairy products from the Vodder's Family Dairy Farm, close to where Central Market is now located.

WATERWAYS

Three main waterways in the City include Penny Creek, North Creek and (under this very bridge) Mill Creek.



IMPORTANT DATES

1861 - Snohomish County established
1862 - The Homestead Act enacted
1889 - Washington became the 42nd state
1937 - SR 527 established as a state road

From Farms to a PLANNED COMMUNITY

By the 1960s, the Garhart family was ready to sell Lake Dell Farm. Due to its significant size, developers showed interest in building a planned community. The land was sold to Seattle developer Elmer Kerns. Initial plans included a residential community with three golf courses. The project went through several names, including Olympus and Klahanie (a Chinook Jargon term meaning outside or outdoors).

In 1972, the Tokyu Land Development Corporation bought the land, and the Japanese United Development Corporation took over the planning. They gave the community the name Mill Creek. UDC developed 1,073 acres of thick forest into 4,600 residences, a golf course, and multiple parks and trails. In 1974, UDC formed the Mill Creek Community Association.

1975

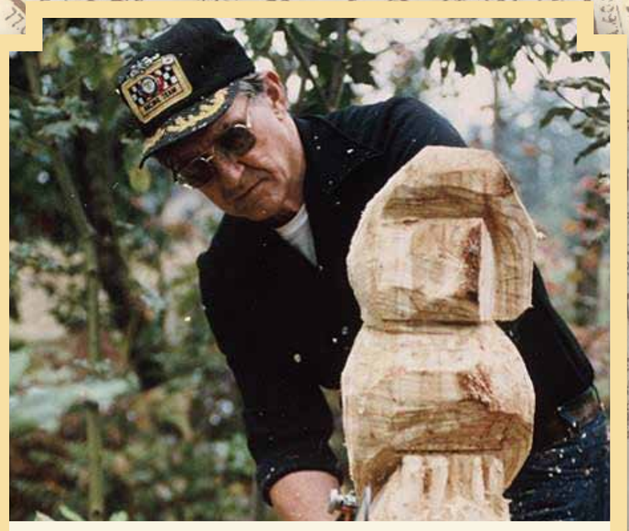
MILL CREEK COUNTRY CLUB

This exquisite club featured a lush golf course designed by renowned course architect Ted Robinson. It was originally promoted as, and still is, a place for socializing. The facilities continue to be popular for golf as well as weddings and events.

1976

FIRST RESIDENTS

MCCA attracted people to its upscale neighborhoods, large homes and pristine landscapes. It was known as a bedroom community for residents commuting to work—north to Everett or south to Seattle or Bellevue.



OWL MAN

During the 1970s and 1980s, Head of Grounds Maintenance for MCCA Donald Farber created chainsaw carvings of owls for those in the community to enjoy. Some owls can still be found throughout Mill Creek, including in front of the Mill Creek Library.

CELEBRATING NATURE

Mill Creek's robust ecosystem has attracted a variety of wildlife species to its grasslands and wetlands. These include beavers, black bears and bobcats. Numerous trails and parks were built as a community asset to highlight the region's natural beauty.

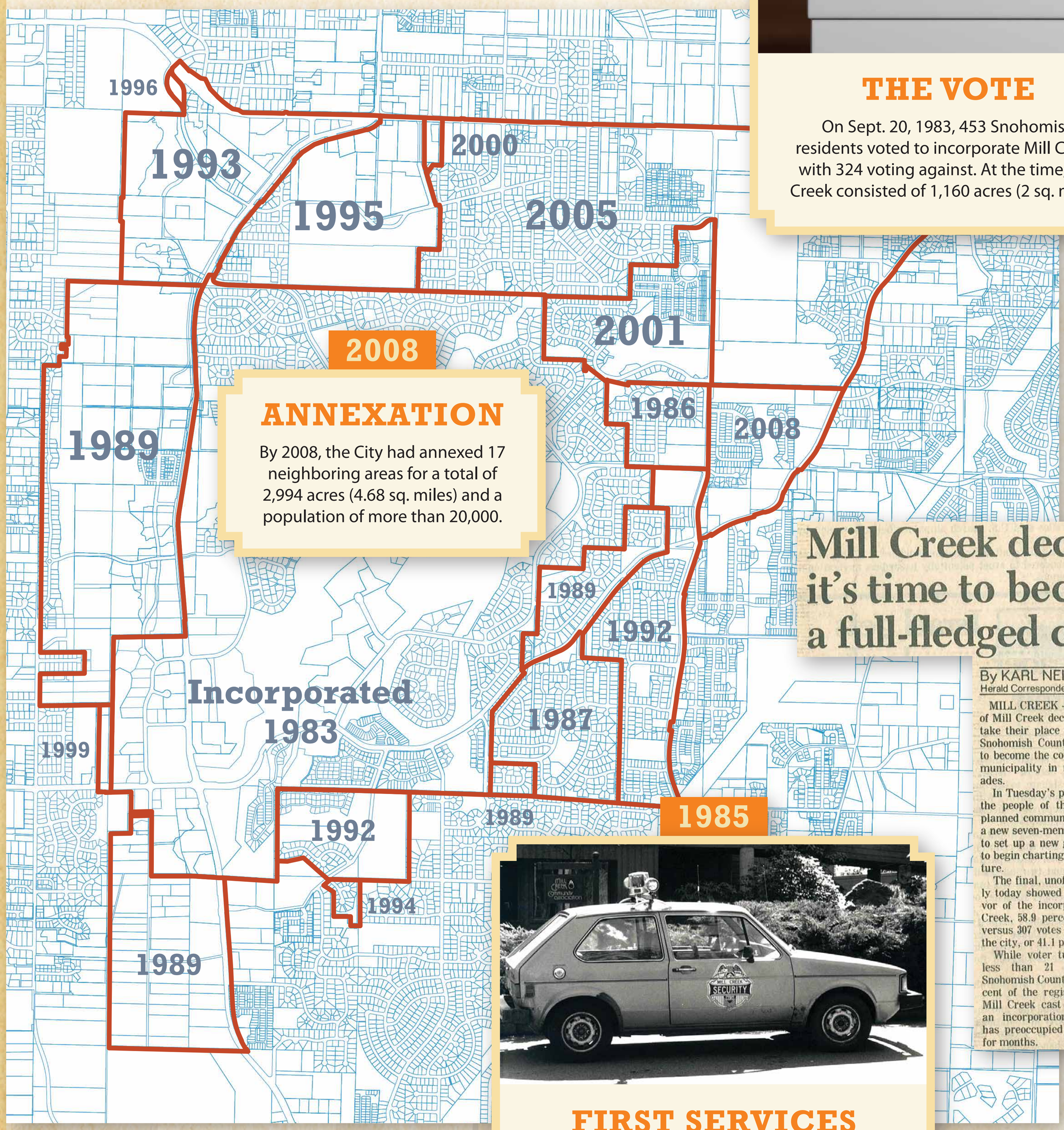
The Big DECISION

As Mill Creek Community Association continued to grow, residents saw a need for expanded services like public safety. They also sought a more equitable tax structure. Similar communities around Puget Sound had been annexed by neighboring cities. MCCA residents thought incorporating as a city would allow Mill Creek to retain its unique character.

1983

THE VOTE

On Sept. 20, 1983, 453 Snohomish residents voted to incorporate Mill Creek, with 324 voting against. At the time, Mill Creek consisted of 1,160 acres (2 sq. miles).



ANNEXATION

By 2008, the City had annexed 17 neighboring areas for a total of 2,994 acres (4.68 sq. miles) and a population of more than 20,000.

Mill Creek decides it's time to become a full-fledged city

By KARL NEICE
Herald Correspondent

MILL CREEK — The residents of Mill Creek decided Tuesday to take their place in the ranks of Snohomish County cities, voting to become the county's first new municipality in nearly two decades.

In Tuesday's primary election, the people of this fast-growing planned community of 3,500 told a new seven-member city council to set up a new government and to begin charting Mill Creek's future.

The final, unofficial count early today showed 440 votes in favor of the incorporation of Mill Creek, 58.9 percent of the total, versus 307 votes against forming the city, or 41.1 percent.

While voter turnout averaged less than 21 percent across Snohomish County, nearly 60 percent of the registered voters in Mill Creek cast their ballots on an incorporation question that has preoccupied the community for months.

1985

FIRST SERVICES

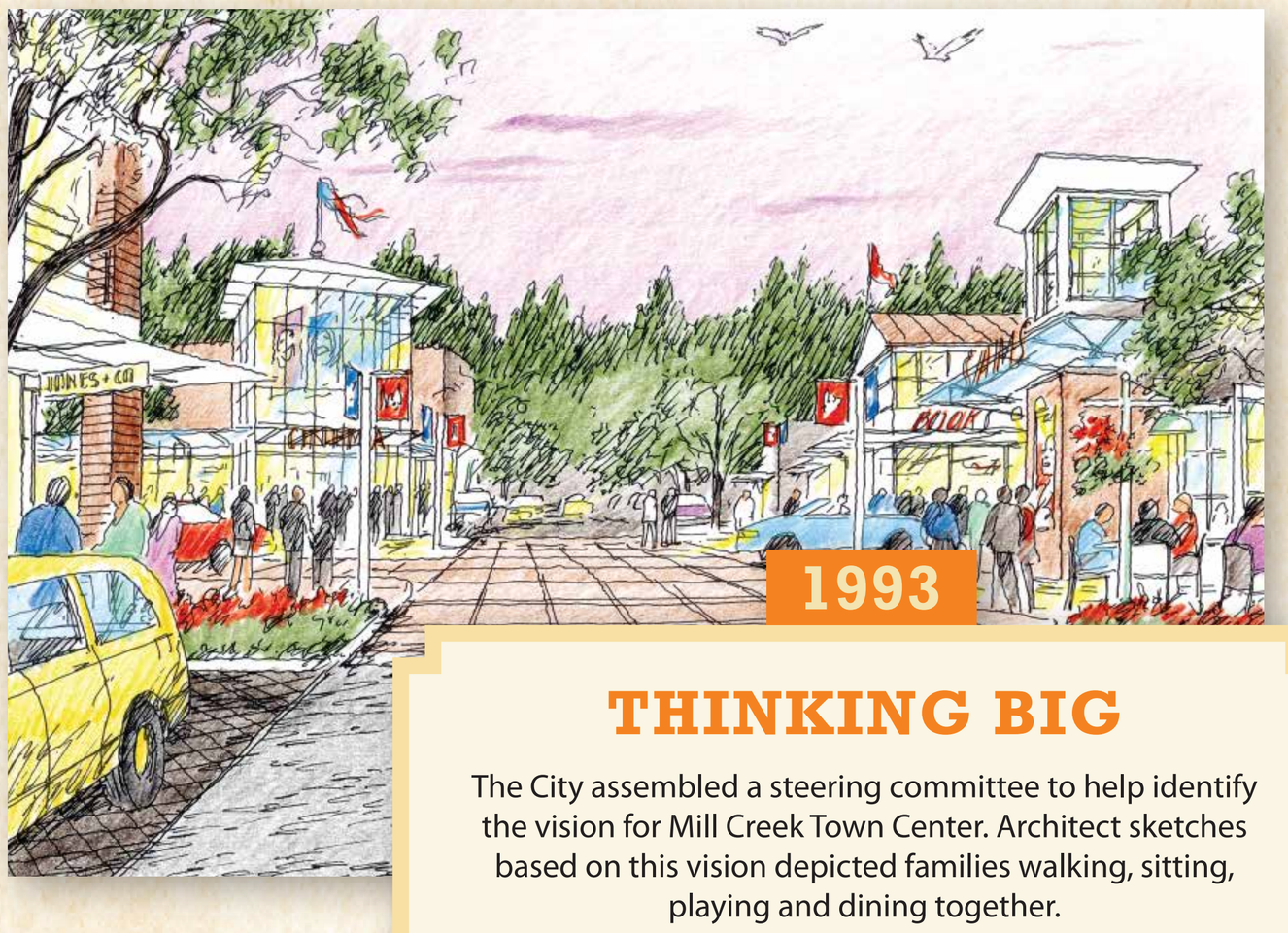
The Mill Creek Police Department was the first service the City provided, hiring its first officer December 1, 1985.

COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The City Council consists of seven council members elected at large to four-year terms. Every two years, the Council elects a mayor and a mayor pro tem from its members. The Council appoints a city manager to serve as the City's chief executive officer.

A Place Called HOME

Following incorporation, Mill Creek came of age as schools, shopping areas and a library were added to the community. In 1992, with input from the residents, the City of Mill Creek designated a new 18-acre, mixed-use center as the Mill Creek Town Center. The award-winning, pedestrian-friendly Town Center design was meant to encourage shopping and gathering. Development started in 2002. The first building, Park Place Center, opened in 2004, followed soon after by other restaurants and retailers.



1993

THINKING BIG

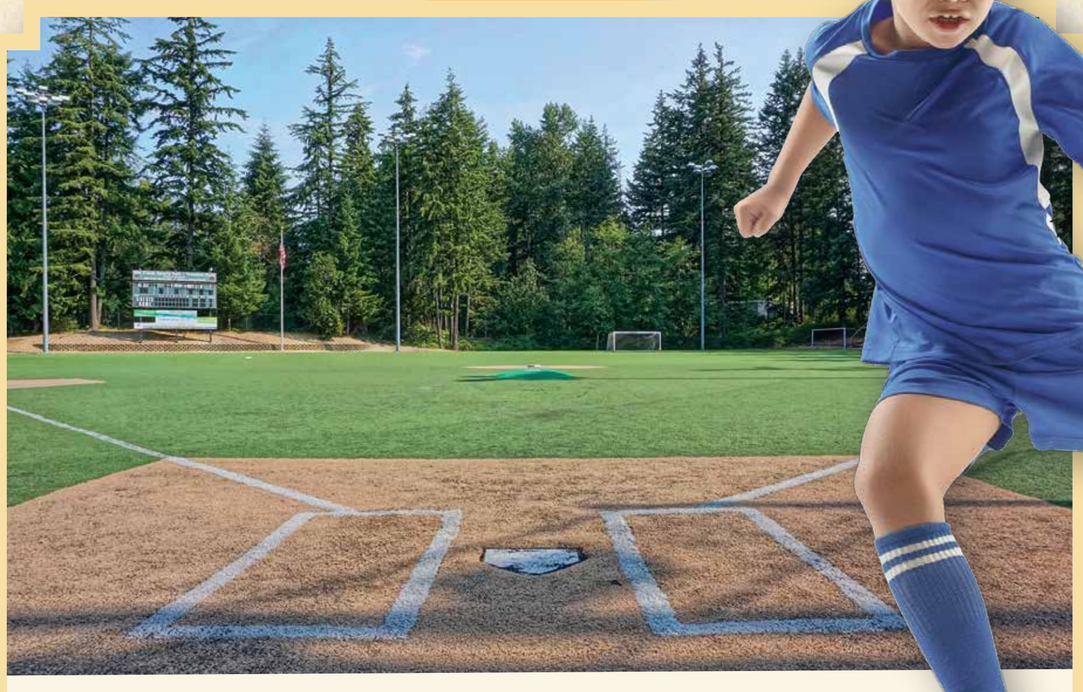
The City assembled a steering committee to help identify the vision for Mill Creek Town Center. Architect sketches based on this vision depicted families walking, sitting, playing and dining together.

1994

HENRY M. JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL

Named after Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, the late U.S. Senator from Everett, the high school is part of Everett School District. By 2018, the student body had surged to 2,200.

2004



A FIELD OF OUR OWN

The City's 1998 Comprehensive Plan designated a park along the SR 527 Corridor. The City purchased five acres for the park in February 2002. The Mill Creek Sports Park design includes a flexible field layout for Little League baseball, softball and youth soccer. The park was officially dedicated on March 6, 2004. In 2019, major renovations including new field turf, LED lights and an upgraded PA system were completed.

2002

MILL CREEK TOWN CENTER

The Mill Creek Town Center design is a sharp departure from conventional shopping centers. It features shop-lined streets, offices overlooking public plazas and a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. It has a unique, cosmopolitan character and more than 80 shops and restaurants, yet also has areas set aside for conservation. These areas, known as conservation easements, help protect the North Creek watershed.

COMMUNITY

Beyond Our Boundaries

Mill Creek's influence extends beyond City limits as the Seattle metro area rapidly expands. Mill Creek's diverse community includes residents and neighbors who come to shop, dine and enjoy activities in the City. These include holiday celebrations, summer art walks, parades, festivals, garden tours, summer concerts and recreational programs.

People also enjoy the City's numerous parks and trails. Mill Creek as an active, interactive and pet-friendly community enjoyed by locals and visitors alike.

1986

RUN OF THE MILL

Since 1986, the Run of the Mill 5K has become a community tradition. Hundreds of racers make the trek through the heart of Mill Creek and along the North Creek Trail.

2001

MILL CREEK FESTIVAL

The Mill Creek Festival has become a centerpiece community event. More than 20,000 people attend and enjoy entertainment, food, arts and crafts booths, and a children's activity area.

1998

HOOPS

Hundreds of children from kindergarten through eighth grade participate in the Youth Basketball League each year. The City program teaches the fundamentals of basketball while helping kids have fun and develop teamwork skills.

1997

A VIBRANT BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Mill Creek Business Association launched in 1997 to connect businesses in and around the City. In 2019, it became the Mill Creek Chamber of Commerce.

2010

SALUTING OUR VETERANS

Mill Creek honors U.S. veterans for their service. In 2010, the City built a Veterans Monument at Library Park. Commemorative ceremonies and community parades take place on Memorial Day and Veterans Day. American Veterans Post 2018, formed in Mill Creek in 2018, is the only post of this veterans service organization north of Tacoma in Western Washington.