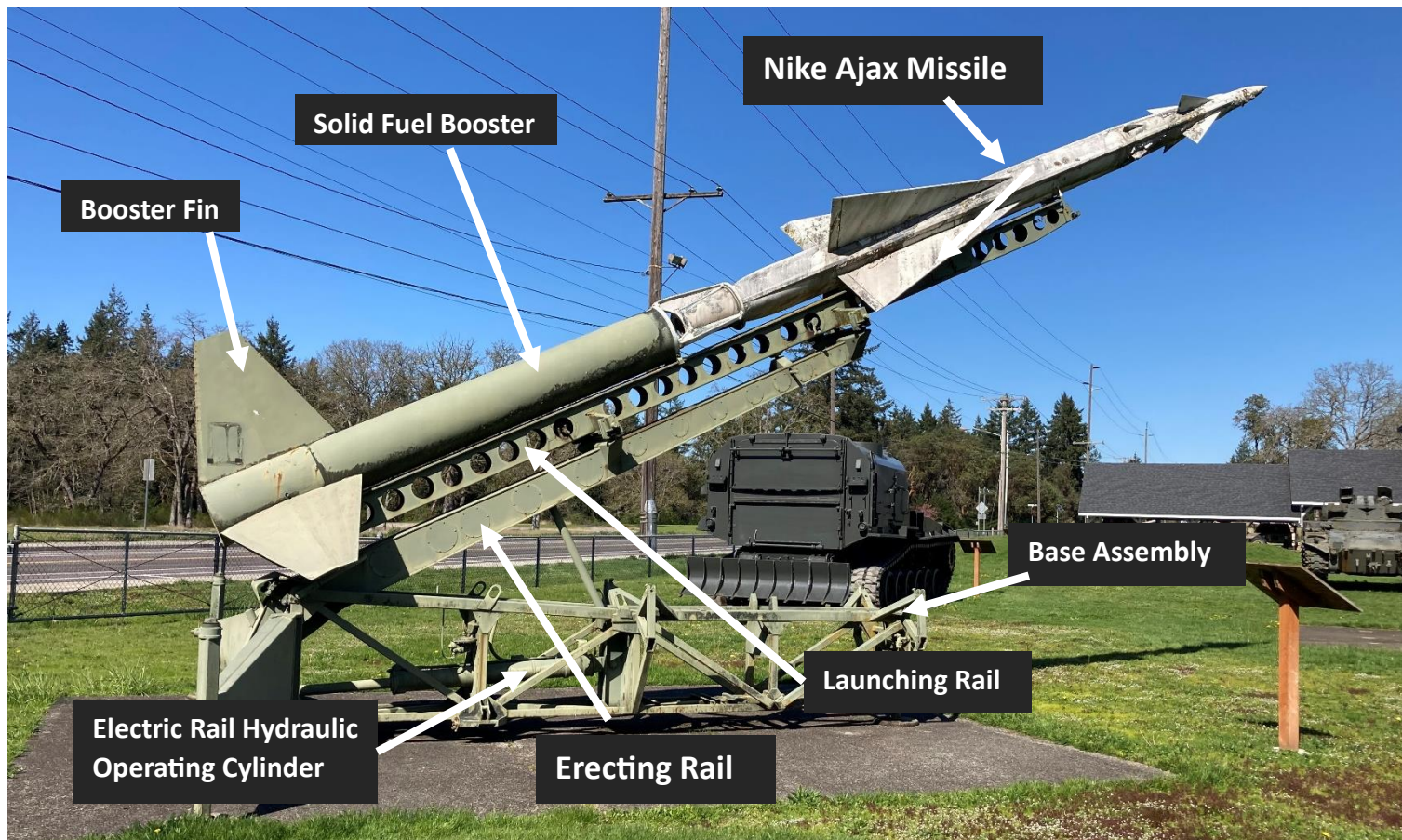


NIKE AJAX MISSILE MIM-3

U.S. Service: 1954 to 1963

The Nike Ajax missile was the United States first operational anti-aircraft missile. In the early cold war years, it defended American cities from the threat of enemy jet bombers. The operational altitude was 10-12 miles and could reach a speed of 1,500 mph.

The solid fuel booster and liquid fuel missile separated after 3.4 seconds on reaching super-sonic speed and with three warheads there was a higher chance of a hit on an enemy bomber. Multiple radars were used, the acquisition radar to search for the targets, the target tracking radar and the missile tracking radar to coordinate the strike. A limitation was the radar system had problems detecting individual aircraft in large bomber formations for the missile to hit.



Nike Ajax Missile without Booster

Nose Warhead 12 lbs.

Control Fins

Center Warhead 177 lbs.

Aft Warhead 122 lbs.

Liquid Fuel Sustainer Motor

Rudder & Elevator
Control Section

Antenna Horn

Fuel Tank

Main Fins

Ailerons

Thrust Fitting

