

OLD SAN DIEGO

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Plans for Development

Report To The City Council

By The City Planning Commission

Prepared by

Glenn A. Rick, City Planning Director

Charles W. Eliot, Planning Consultant

January 1946

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OLD SAN DIEGO

For many years, the possibilities of Old San Diego have been the subject of debate. How can the values there be developed to the greatest advantage? In an effort to resolve debate into action, the City Council requested the City Planning Commission to prepare a report and plan.

Old Town lies at the geographical center of the City. As its name implies, it is the original site,—not only of San Diego, but also of the settlement of California. With the adjoining Presidio, Old Town and Washington Square embody the historical background of "Early California." The Tourist Guide lists twenty-six historic sites in the area "Where California Began." The real estate boom of 1868-70 which concentrated on "Horton's Addition" caused the removal of the court house from Old Town to "New Town" in 1871, and a disastrous fire swept the south side of the Plaza or square in 1872.

Old San Diego Slept in the Sun

Attempts to revive or restore Old Town have recurred through the years, and substantial success has been achieved through these efforts. The Casa de Estudillo was "restored" in 1912, and as "Ramona's Marriage Place" became a tourist attraction justifying an electric car line from the business center of San Diego. Now a bus line has replaced the cars. The Presidio Park preserved the remnants of Fort Stockton and the Presidio Ruins. Through architectural control and the enterprise of the owners of some of the properties about the Plaza, new buildings were erected in the "Early California" style with the typical low pitched roofs and white walls.

Today Old Town is awake. Change and Development are in the air.

OLD SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL
 BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
 PREPARED BY
 GLENN RICK, PLANNING DIRECTOR
 CHARLES W. ELIOT, PLANNING CONSULTANT

LEGEND

- 1 CASA DE ESTUDELLO
- 2 " " BANDINI
- 3 " " MACHADO
- 4 SITE OF MASONIC HALL
- 5 CASA DE STEWART
- 6 SITE-1st. AMERICAN SCHOOL
- 7 CASA DE ALTAMIRANO
- 8 " " PEDRORENA
- 9 " " CARRILLO
- 10 SITE OF CASA DE COTA
- 11 CASA DE LOPEZ
- 12 EMMETT HOUSE
- 13 PENDLETON "
- 14 WHALEY "
- 15 OLD ADOBE, CHAPEL
- 16 EL CAMPO SANTO
- 17 SEANA PALM
- 18 " CROSS
- 19 " MUSEUM
- 20 PRESIDIO RUINS
- 21 FORT STOCKTON

- A CHURCH
- B OLIVE FACTORY
- C STATE HIGHWAY BUILDINGS
- D CASA DE PICO
- E SHOPS
- F STORES
- G EL PICO

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY - JOHN G. FLEMING - ARCHITECT

DECEMBER 1945

SHEET 1

The Present Situation (Map No. 1)

In the area bounded by the Santa Fe tracks on the west; Camino del Rio on the north, Presidio Park and Sunset Boulevard on the east, and Ampudia Street, lies Old Town or Old San Diego.

This is a tract about one mile long and half mile wide, but about a third of it is steep hillside and the Presidio Park. As will be observed from the map, the settled area follows around the hill, along and north of Taylor Street and about the Plaza and along San Diego and La Jolla Avenues. Washington Square or the Plaza lies almost in the middle of Old Town.



Existing Conditions 1945,

Airphoto S. D. Police Dept.



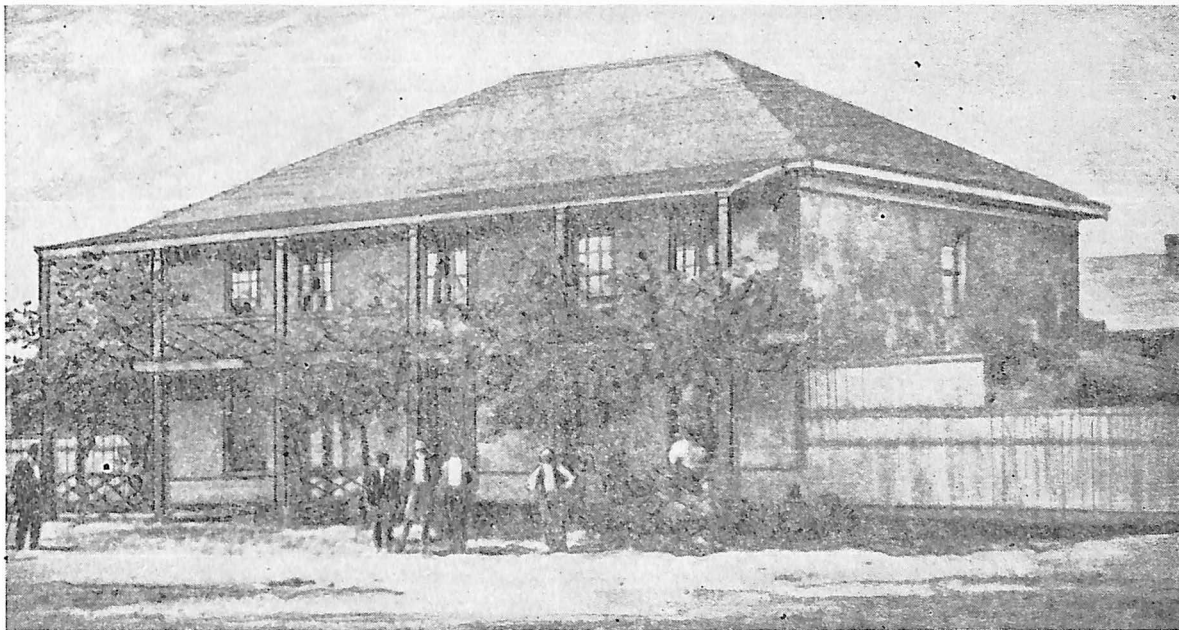
1901—Casa de Bandini and Casa de Estudillo (Ramona's Marriage Place)
from collection of Title Insurance & Trust Company.

HISTORIC SITES

Naturally, most of the older buildings cluster about the Plaza. (1) **The Casa de Estudillo**,—"Ramona's Marriage Place,"—occupies the whole of the southeast side of the square, and the (2) **Casa de Bandini** (now being repaired for hotel use) stands on the east corner. In the middle of the southwest side, jutting out beyond the street line of San Diego Avenue stands the (3) **Casa de Machado**. The Casa de Pico Motor Hotel occupies the site of the Pico Home across the street from the present El Pico Restaurant and (4) **Masonic Hall** on the northwest side of the square was a two-story structure where the San Diego Herald was published. In the same block with the Casa de Machado, the (5) **Casa de Stewart** is still occupied by the Stewarts, descendants of Richard H. Dana's shipmate on the Alert, but is much in need of care and repairs. Also in this block, a modern branch library and



Casa de Machado (Old San Diego Community Church)
Photo by Lloyds of Sayadra



Masonic Hall. From Collection of San Diego Historical Society.

community hall in the Early California style has been erected on the (6) site of the First American School House. Beyond the Casa de Estudillo on San Diego Avenue, two other historical spots are the first frame house in this area—(7) Casa de Altamirano and the adobe structure of the (8) Casa de Pedorena.

Further from the Plaza, other old buildings include the (9) Casa de Carrillo which serves as a club-house in the park, the (10) remains of the Casa de Cota at Twiggs and Congress Street, the (11) Casa de Lopez which has been left in a most deplorable condition after use by the United States Army, the (12) equally decrepit Emmett House, and the well preserved (13) Pendleton House and the historically important (14) Whaley House. The (15) Old Adobe Chapel has been restored on Conde Street.

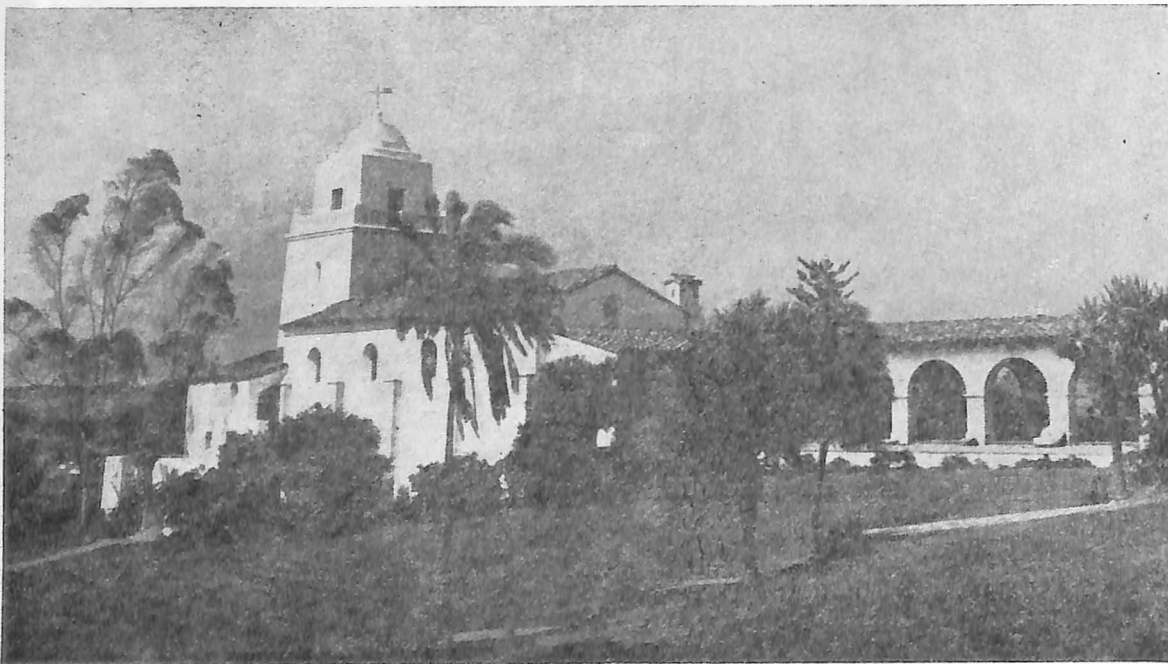


Whaley House. From Collection of San Diego Historical Society.

Other sites which are noted in the Tourist Guide are numbered on the accompanying map to show (16) El Campo Santo on La Jolla Avenue and several points in Presidio Park:— (17) Serra Palm, (18) Serra Cross, (19) Serra Museum, (20) Presidio Ruins and (21) Fort Stockton.*

All these historical buildings and sites provide the atmosphere or background for whatever plan may be prepared for the development of Old San Diego.

* Footnote: The difference between this figure 21 and the total of 26 listed in the "Guide" is accounted for by the Guide's numbering of the Plaza, the Church of Immaculate Conception, the Ruins of the Jail, the abandoned Cemetery and the Congress Hall Site.

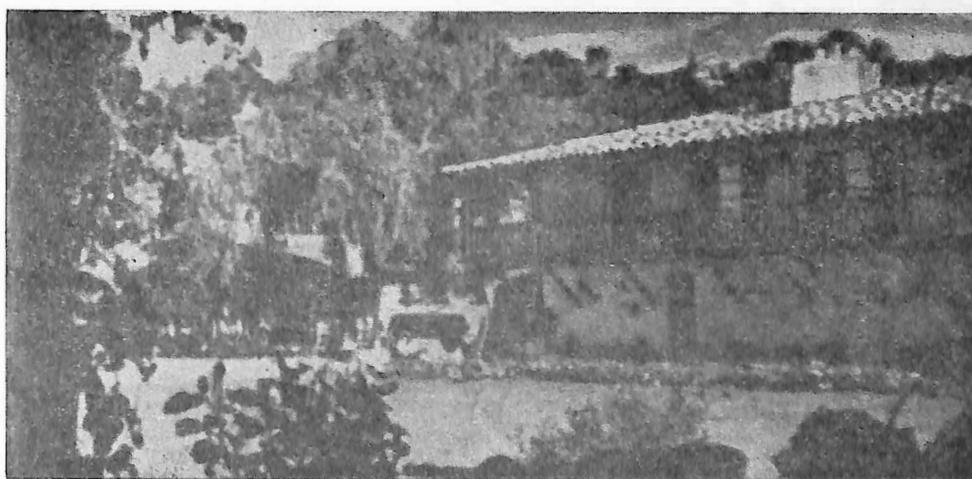


Serra Museum

Photo by Lloyds of Sayadra

Modern Buildings

Modern buildings which are certain to play an important part in the development of the area include the Church of the Immaculate Conception, the Olive Factory on Calhoun Street, the State Highway Buildings on Taylor Street, the Casa de Pico Auto Court previously mentioned, and other structures in the "Early California Style" like the stores next east of the Casa de Machado, the Sessions' Store, and the El Pico Restaurant.



Casa de Pico Auto Court

Photo by Lloya of Sayadra

Street Plan

The street plan of Old San Diego is a checkerboard of blocks 300 feet square with slight variations around the Plaza. Like most of the Old Spanish and Mexican layouts the streets do not run to the compass points, but to the northwest-southeast and northeast-southwest. Most of the streets are 50 feet in width between property lines, except San Diego 75 feet, and Taylor Street which is 100 feet wide. On the Major Street Plan of San Diego,—La Jolla, San Diego, Juan Streets, and Taylor Street are designated as Major Highways. These streets carry practically all of the through traffic which seems to move primarily over a route along Taylor Street and San Diego Avenue as an alternative to the Pacific Highway. A traffic count taken on February 11, 1943 by the City Traffic Engineer, shows 5364 cars and trucks entering the intersection of Rosecrans, Taylor and San Diego in five hours, of which over one-half turned the corner of Taylor and San Diego Avenues. Business is concentrated along that route, including a number of auto courts and service establishments. Many of the secondary streets in the area are not yet paved and some are not even distinguishable on the ground from the undeveloped blocks. It is high time that the Nolen Plan proposal for a highway along the Santa Fe tracks from Witherby Street to Taylor Street, which was adopted in 1926, should be carried out.

Parks and Public Property

The Park Department cares for Presidio Hill, the Campo Santo, and the Plaza or Washington Square. The official records indicate that the "Park" in Washington Square legally extends to the four sides without allowing for surrounding streets. The Golf Course between the Plaza and Presidio Park is leased out by the City Manager's Office on a concession basis. There is also over an acre of City Property at Mason and Jefferson Streets.

Zoning and Architectural Control

Zoning and Architectural Control are in effect covering the whole area of Old San Diego with a general commercial zone along La Jolla and San Diego Avenue, about the Plaza and along Taylor Street. Most of the blocks along the railroad are in the M-1 District as well as the olive factory at Juan and Taylor Streets. All of the remainder of the area, except Block 459 adjoining Presidio Park is in the multiple residence district.

Population, Housing and Employment

The last census (1940) show a population in the Old Town area of about 1375 persons**, almost exactly divided on either side of Taylor Street. A few of these people are descendants of "Early Californians" or come from a "Mexican" background. Most of the housing is distinctly sub-standard with over a quarter of the units lacking private bath or needing repair. During the war 400 units of temporary war housing have been constructed in the area. Occupants of these war housing facilities and the older residents of Old Town commute to all parts of San Diego for their work.

Organizations

Many groups and interests are concerned with the development of Old San Diego. In Old Town itself, for instance, there is the Old San Diego Chamber of Commerce and the Old San Diego Coordinating Council, Old Town American Legion, Old San Diego Community Church, and the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The Fremont School and the City Recreation Department are involved and the local newspaper "San Diego Citizen" is interested.

A special Committee on Old San Diego Restoration has been set up by the San Diego Chamber of Commerce under the chairmanship of Mr. George Scott. The San Diego Historical Society has, of course, a special interest in the area, and has collected great quantities of records and data about Old San Diego.

It has been from these groups that the demand has come for a plan and program to guide the development of the values and resources of the Old Town Community. Old San Diego is obviously more than a local problem and opportunity. It is a matter of City-wide concern,—or State concern,—that the very most should be made of the possibilities of this area. It is appropriate, therefore, that the City Planning Commission should develop and sponsor plans for the Old San Diego Project.

Footnote, ** Estimated from housing census data by blocks because boundaries do not accord with enumeration districts of the population census.

The Purpose of the Old San Diego Project

The "Old San Diego Project" is intended to

- Safeguard the historic sites of the Area as a living museum;
- Encourage the construction and operation in the area of buildings in the style of
"Early California;"
- Develop crafts and home industries of that period in order to create;
A colorful "atmosphere" of Restaurants, Theatre, Dance, Fiestas, etc., which
will attract tourists, and to recognize;
- The cultural contribution of the Early California-Spanish-Mexican background to
San Diego, California and the Nation.

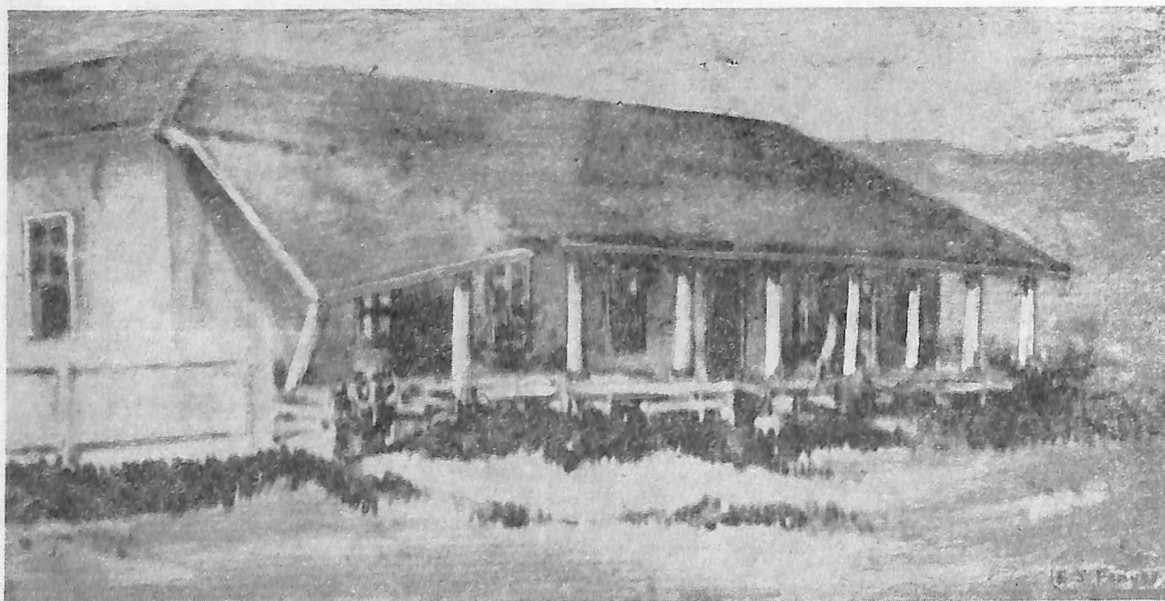


These purposes involve two steps or parts of a plan, . . .

- First: to preserve historic sites and values; and
- Second: to build upon the foundation of those values "a center of interest befitting
its importance as the birthplace of civilization in the west." (Letter of Old
San Diego Chamber of Commerce)

For the Preservation of Historic Sites

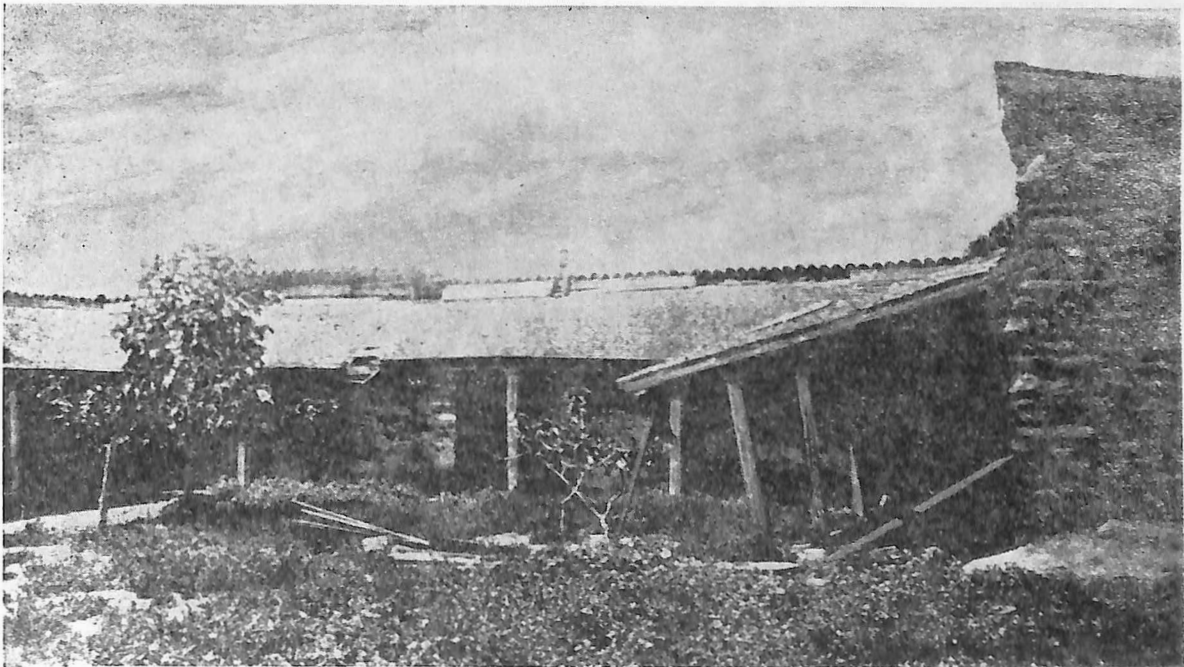
All past experience in this country shows that permanence can be assured to old buildings only if they are wholly or partially exempt from taxation and taken out of competition. That means the dedication of such structures to use as public buildings, museums, etc., or as facilities of private tax exempt institutions like churches or charities. There seems to be a conflict, therefore, between our desire to preserve the historic buildings of Old Town and our desire to have them as "living museums"—i.e.—lived in and returning an economic rent to their owners. We must decide how valuable permanence is in this case. Perhaps some,



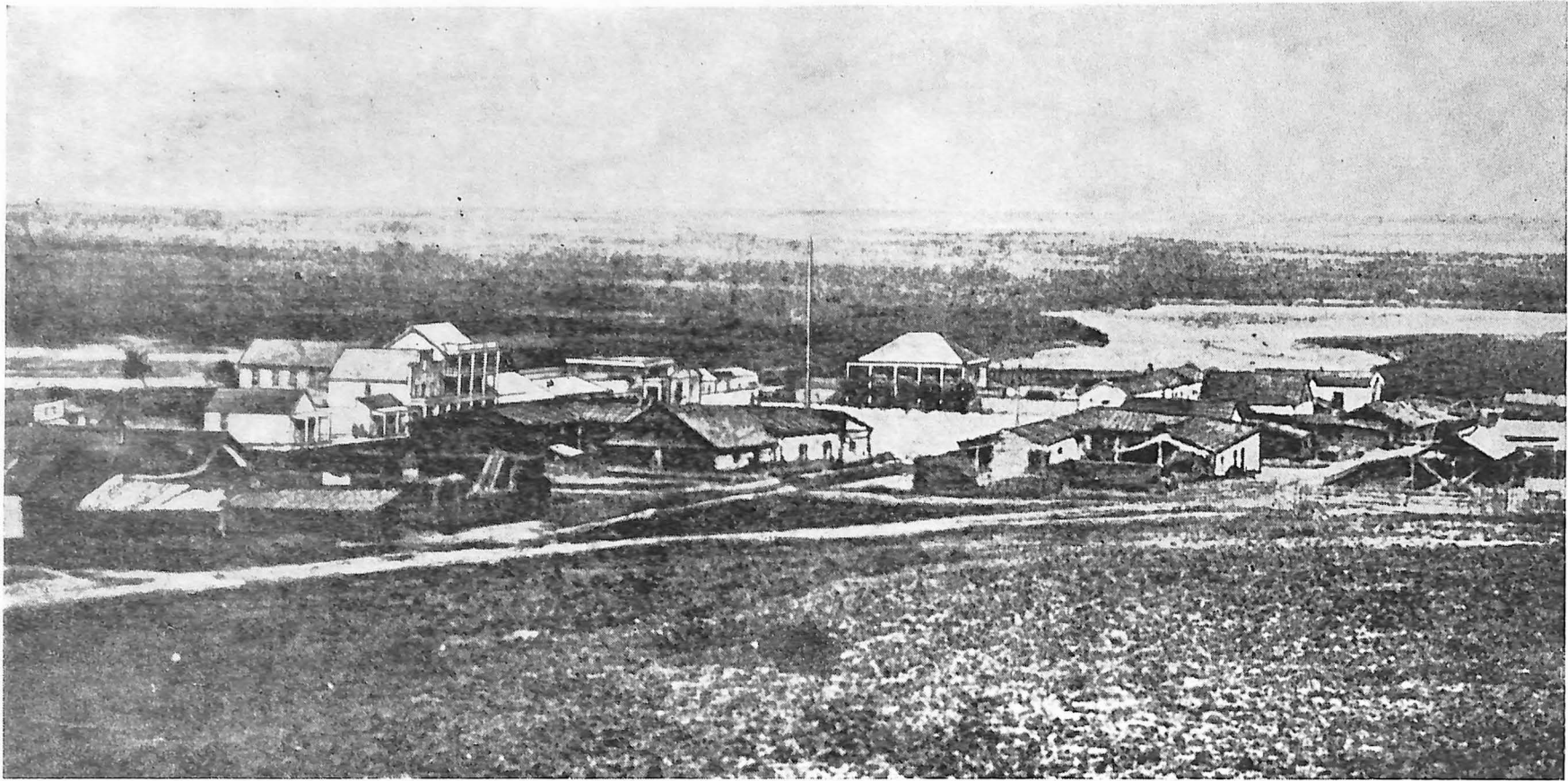
House of Don Antonio Aguirre
From water color sketch by E. S. Fenyes, 1913
In Collection of Southwest Museum, Los Angeles

rather than all our historic structures are worth the price.

The adobes of Old San Diego, like all adobes are perishable. Many have previously been "restored" to what they may or might have been at some previous date. Only "restoration" can preserve the others, but restoration is a tricky business which, with the most honest intentions, may easily result in a fake. Considering how little is known of the actual interior arrangements, furnishings, etc., of our old buildings, attempts at detailed restoration would almost certainly lead us into this difficulty. It would be wiser, therefore, to frankly and avowedly create "an atmosphere" rather than to attempt to put the clock back one hundred years.



Court of Casa de Estudillo before Restoration
Photo by Judd from Collection of
San Diego Historical Society



Old Town in 1869—Courtesy "Ramona's Marriage Place"

Photo by Rudolph Schiller

Two compromises are suggested:

- 1.—That only certain buildings be selected because of their historic importance or because they are the best examples of particular types of preservation through purchase and repair by the public or by private tax exempt institutions; and
- 2.—That owners of other historic buildings be asked to voluntarily restrict themselves and their heirs or assigns, or sell an easement or "right," against making any of certain kinds of changes in their structures which would hurt or destroy their historic or scenic value. In this second case, it might be possible to persuade the tax assessor that such a restriction or easement warranted a lower assessment on the property.

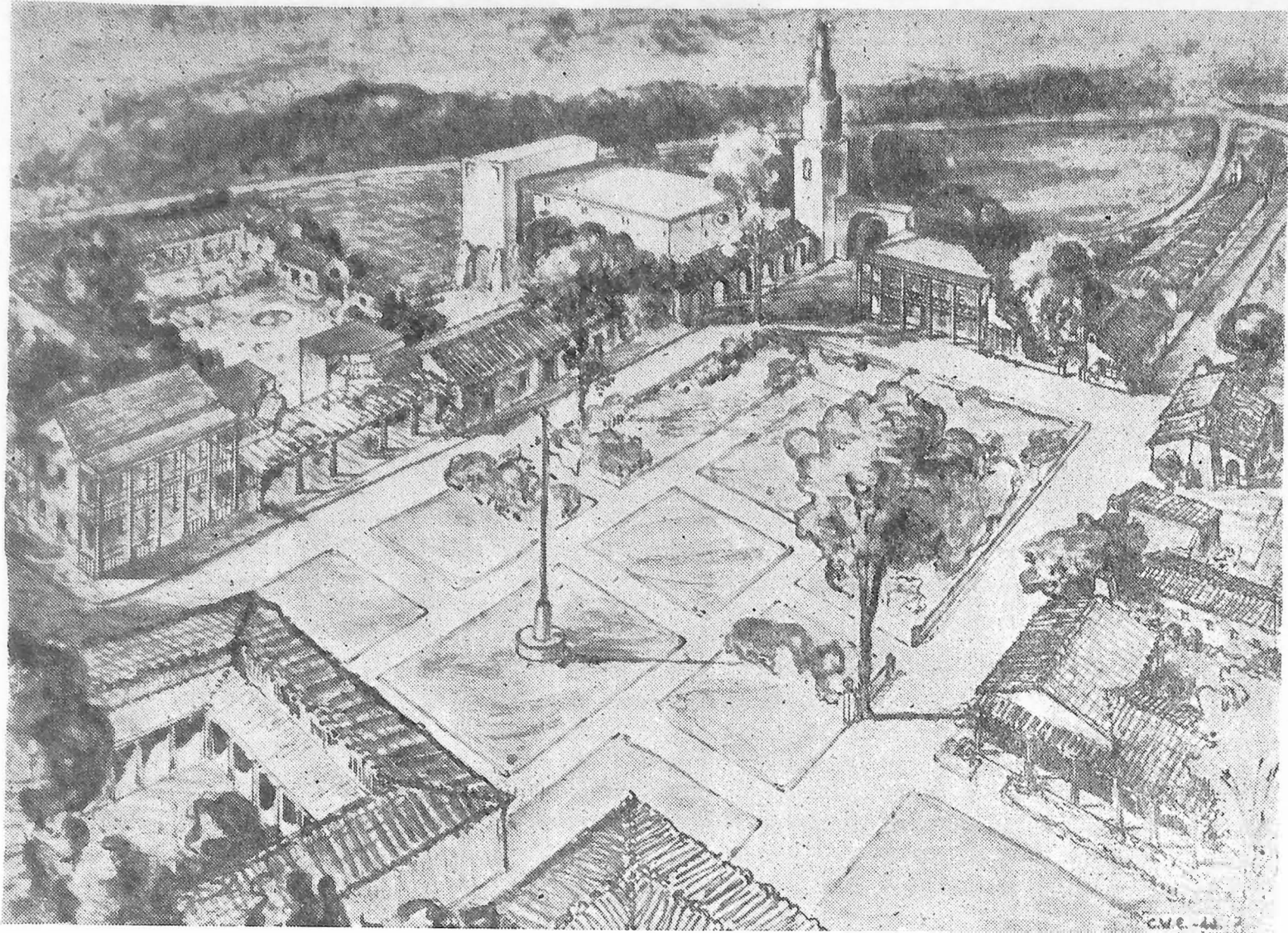
To determine which properties should be acquired by public or private tax exempt institutions, and what specific restrictions are necessary to preserve each historic monument left in private hands, the San Diego Historical Society has been asked to submit recommendations. (Appendix A)

As a result of their investigations and proposals, it is hoped that the

- (1) San Diego Historical Society may find it possible to acquire, repair and maintain the Casa de Lopez, Casa de Stewart and the Whaley House. The City might well assist the Society in this effort.
- (2) City will maintain the Casa de Carrillo, Washington Square and flagpole, the features of Presidio Park and the Campo Santo.
- (3) The Catholic Church will maintain the Adobe Chapel as custodian for the City of San Diego.
- (4) The Old San Diego Community Church will maintain the Casa de Machado.
- (5) For the maintenance of other monuments in private control,—

The San Diego Historical Society or some other corporate organization may be able to negotiate contracts, sale of rights or easements or arrange for voluntary restrictions on structural changes, as described in their memorandum in each case, with property owners controlling such historical monuments; and in such a manner as to justify the assessor in adjusting assessments on such property to recognize such restrictions.

In connection with any discussion of the historic sites of Old San Diego, it is important to stress the two park areas—Presidio Park and the Plaza or Washington Square—which are the key spots in the story. They have always been connected in the telling of that story and some of the old prints indicate that they were once physically connected by an open vista. Because of this close association, all of the plans or schemes presented with this report show a park connection between the two areas.



PLANS FOR OLD SAN DIEGO

The foundation for development of Old San Diego is the character and historic significance of the Plaza or Washington Square. Upon the basis of this central area and the fine beginning on surrounding buildings, it should be possible to create an "atmosphere" which will recall the cultural contribution of the Early Californian background of San Diego and present a colorful tourist attraction for visitors from all parts of the country.

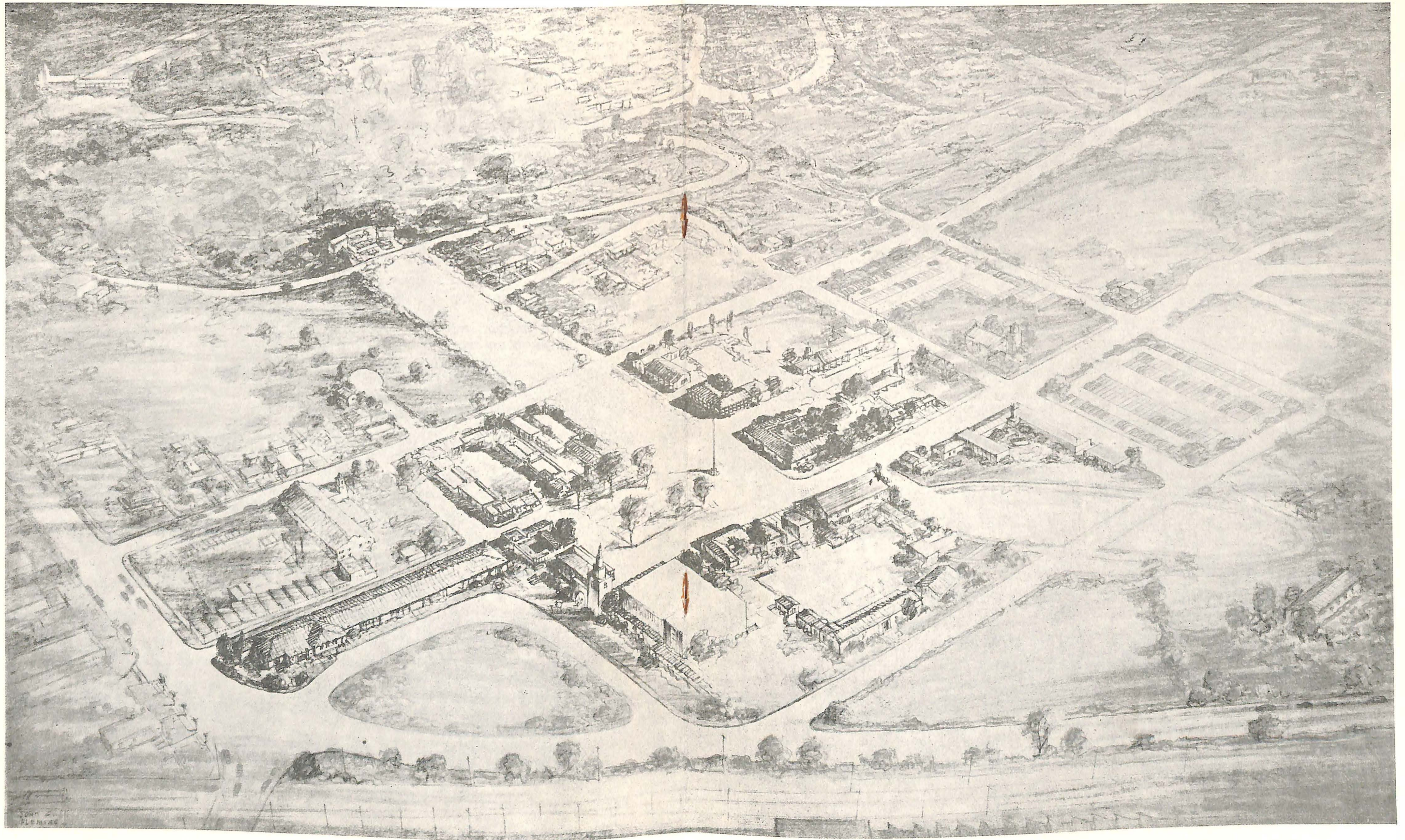
Architectural Character

Substantial investments already made or in immediate prospect for this kind of development should be protected against incongruous neighboring structures and inappropriate uses of property. It is generally agreed that all new construction in the area should be in the "Early California" style. While public action under zoning and architectural control can help in the execution of such a policy, private restrictions can go much further and with greater chance of permanence in results. Some of the provisions which might be incorporated in private contracts, covenants, etc., to constitute private restrictions on development in the Old Town Area would include provision for light colored stucco walls, tile roofs of moderate pitch, etc., drawn from previous experience with development of some of the properties in the area.

Since no set of rules is ever self-operating it is suggested that an Old Town Architectural Advisory Committee be set up by an operating group composed of the owners and tenants of the buildings and premises within say three hundred feet of the exterior lines of the Washington Square and that these architects be paid to assist owners in the preparation of building plans and in the interpretation and application of the architectural restrictions to their projects. It is suggested that these owners and renters form a non-profit corporation for their mutual protection and seek contributions to the organization for use in payment of architects' fees, to option or acquire properties in disrepair; and otherwise assist in the preservation and restoration of Old San Diego.

One activity of such a corporation might be the reconstruction of some of the more important buildings which formerly faced on the plaza,—as for example, the Masonic Hall and the three story building on the southwest side of the square near Mason Street.

As every architect knows, unity in a composition, like the Plaza of Old San Diego, is developed not only by similarity of style, materials, and color, but also by the sense of enclosure and the architectural "accents." Plans to provide any enclosure of Washington Square raise all kinds of questions concerning through traffic and the entrances to the Plaza. Most architects will probably agree that "leaking corners" are a common weakness in the design of civic plazas and squares. Sometimes this weakness can be avoided by narrowing the openings (permitting the encroachment of buildings on street space) or by filling the corner spaces with trees. Architectural accents also may help to tie the whole picture together through the distribution of two or three story buildings, towers, gateways, or arcades.



JOHN Z. FLEMING

Advertising signs out over the sidewalk or any other encroachment on public space is within the control of the City. By cooperation between the proposed Architectural Advisory Committee and the City Planning Commission, it should be possible to agree on plans and policies for any use of public space which may be desirable to create a strongly unified composition around Washington Square,—the Plaza of Old San Diego.

Not only the appearance of the buildings, but the arrangement of grounds and plantings should contribute to the "atmosphere." For instance, the proposed park connection between the historical associations around the Plaza and those centered on Presidio Hill should be treated as an open greensward enlarging the Plaza and providing an open vista to a monument built against the side of Presidio Hill. Another open space might be appropriate between the southwest corner of the Plaza and the Casa de Lopez and Emmett House—to tie those points of interest into the picture. Colorful flowering plants should be used in abundance. The choice of paving materials for walks and patios can add to the unity of the design of the whole neighborhood. A screen planting of eucalyptus, or other quick growing high trees, can hide the Consolidated-Vultee Factory Building and concentrate attention on the attractions of Old San Diego.

Use of Premises

To create the atmosphere desired about the Plaza, certain types of land use and activities should be encouraged and unappropriate uses discouraged. The past success of the business at "Ramona's Marriage Place," the Casa de Pico Auto Court, and El Pico Restaurant shows the possibilities. Observation of other Plazas in Mexico or Central America or Europe suggests additional activities, some of which have been or are being tried at Olivera Street in Los Angeles, at the Mission Playhouse in San Gabriel, or at El Paseo, and the enlarged facilities now under construction in Santa Barbara. Among the possibilities are a theatre for performances of the Mission Play from San Gabriel, plays from Padua Hill, or dance and dramatic materials indigenous to the San Diego Area. The Olive Factory might become a feature of the area in the same way that tourists visit and buy souvenir samples of rum, cigars or liquers in other famous resorts. It should be possible to develop here a group of specialty shops for the making and sales of leather, tin, wax, silver and other goods which artisans in the period of Early California and modern Mexico have created. If leadership and instruction in these arts and crafts could be provided to bring out the creative ability of the Mexican-American citizens of Southern California, Old San Diego or "San Diego Antiqua" might become a trademark for a distinctive contribution from the representatives of California's Spanish-Mexican background. There is a place, too, for something of the market place type, either on a part of the Plaza around a bandstand, or in nearby series of courts and patios.

The development of such projects and uses, as well as the extension of successful existing enterprises, is obviously the field of private enterprise which the City can foster

and protect. As Paul Hoffman of the Committee for Economic Development has said so often—"It is the duty of government to provide the climate in which Private Enterprise can flourish." The City can and should do a lot to develop the possibilities of the Old Town Area, both as an obligation to its past and as an investment in its future.

In this case of land use, the City should adjust and refine the zoning restrictions in the Old Town Area. Zoning changes are needed—for example, to provide adequate parking areas, to segregate out different permitted uses and to define the areas where each would be most appropriate. For example, differentiation among permitted types of multiple housing might help raise the housing standards of the area. Or in another case, further separation of some of the many uses allowed in commercial and industrial areas might assist a more orderly development of the craft shops and industries which have been suggested.

Access and Traffic

The City also has a part to play in providing access to the Old Town Area and in taking care of traffic through the area. The approaches to Old San Diego are now via La Jolla and Old San Diego Avenues from the south, over the Rosecrans grade crossing from the Pacific Highway and the west, by Taylor Street from the Camino del Rio and Linda Vista, and by Presidio Drive and Juan Streets from Mission Hills. It is proposed to supplement these routes with one or more additional approaches by:—

- (1) paving and extending Congress Street to Taylor.
- (2) extending Hancock Street or Moore Street from Witherby along the Santa Fe tracks to Congress and Taylor, as shown on the adopted Nolen Plan, and recently included among the "critically needed streets and highways" by action of the City Council (Resolution 82173, adopted December 4, 1945) and
- (3) possibly extending La Jolla Avenue to connect with Juan Street or all the way across along the foot of the hills to Taylor Street. If La Jolla Avenue terminates at its present junction with San Diego Avenue, it might be appropriate to treat that intersection as a circle or other feature which would also handle the complicated traffic of this multiple intersection. If San Diego Avenue is to remain a major thoroughfare for through traffic, either the Casa de Machado must be removed, or the highway must be swung on a long curve around the building and encroach on the park area of Washington Square.

As previously intimated, through traffic speeding across one side of the Plaza on San Diego Avenue, is not likely to help in creating the "atmosphere" desired or to improve business opportunities around the Plaza. For the benefit of both the through traffic and the local business interests, it is now the standard practice in State Highway design to route through traffic around an not through local business centers. It is for that purpose, that the immediate opening of Hancock Street or Moore Street along the Santa Fe tracks is urged, as shown on the Nolen Plan of 1926 and the substitution of that route on the "Major Street

Plan" for the present route along San Diego Avenue. Since the new highway would go around rather than through the community, change of the bus to that route is not recommended. It is desirable, however, that the terminus of the bus route should be shifted to the vicinity of Taylor and Camino del Rio to permit transfers to other lines, and if it is later decided to divert the bus line around instead of through the Plaza a route could easily be developed by Twiggs and either Congress or Juan Streets.

People wishing to transact business or stop in Old San Diego are not encouraged to do so when travelling a through highway. Rather, they want a convenient place to turn off the highway where they can park their cars within easy walking distance of their destination. It is appropriate, of course, that private business interests should provide their own off-street parking for their patrons and it is expected that many Old Town business men will supply such parking places. In California, however, it has recently been recognized by the State Legislature and Supreme Court that cities may provide parking lots in appropriate cases. If the City of San Diego is going to foster and assist the Old San Diego Project, one tangible contribution it could make would be public parking areas, close and convenient to the Plaza and accessible from each of the principal approach routes to the area.

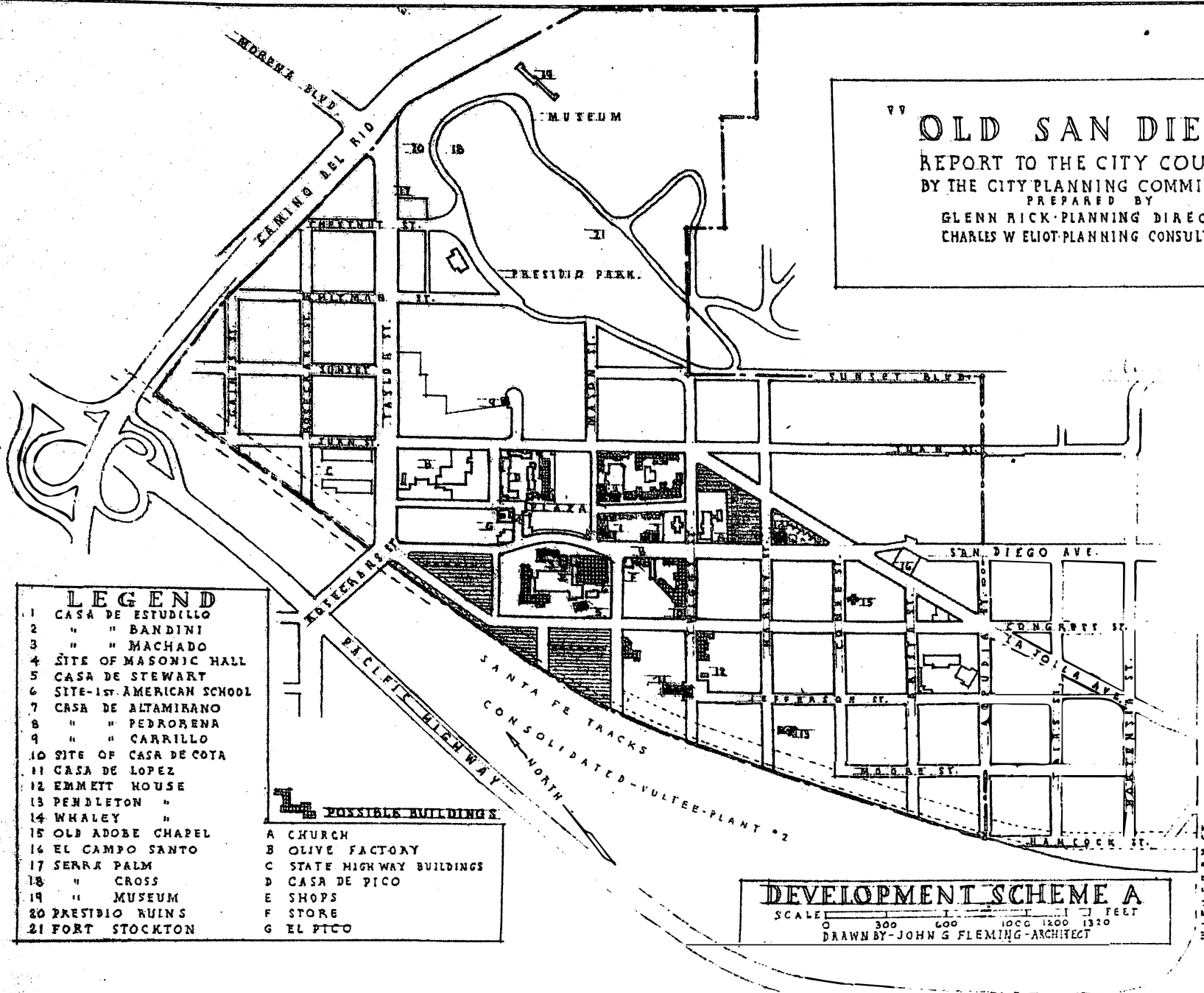
With through traffic diverted around the Plaza and adequate approaches and access from convenient parking areas, it might be possible to add another and unique attribute to the "atmosphere" we are trying to create in Old San Diego—serenity. By restricting the use of the streets around the square to vehicles serving adjoining properties, and making the whole area of the Plaza available and safe for pedestrian use, we could do more to "restore" the character of the Plaza to the "Early California Days" than through any other single action. It would make possible, for instance, the holding of fiestas and band concerts in the Plaza, and the added touches of "Hollywood" which everyone seems to agree are necessary to the business success of the "Old San Diego Restoration."

It has been argued that the restriction of San Diego Avenue to pedestrian use and to strictly local traffic for service to abutting properties might hurt the business of some property owners along the street or facing the Plaza. Of course the avenue should not be so restricted unless and until through traffic is provided with a better route and adequate parking facilities are available for those wishing to do business with the stores, shops and tourist attractions about the Plaza. Under those circumstances, it seems probable that the unique character of the development made possible by the restriction would more than offset in national advertising value, any chance glance which a passing motorist might give to a sign over "Joe's Place" or "Coca Cola on Sale Here." In an earlier section of this report it is intimated that there may be some question as to the legal rights of access for abutters to streets around the Plaza since the area is a park—right up to the abutting property lines. As in the case of a number of the other suggestions in this report, to take advantage of these opportunities, it is assumed that those who launch this project will follow through and keep the movement alive and vigorous.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

To illustrate the principles and suggestions outlined in the previous sections, a number of alternative development schemes have been suggested by the consultant and drawn up by John Fleming of the Planning Commission's Staff. These sketch plans include a variety of additional features or possibilities and are presented to show those possibilities and to demonstrate that there is no one best solution of the problems. There are many alternatives and one of the objectives of a good plan for Old San Diego should be to keep open a variety of opportunities which may be followed up by future generations.

VV
OLD SAN DIEGO
 REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL
 BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
 PREPARED BY
 GLENN RICK · PLANNING DIRECTOR ·
 CHARLES W ELIOT · PLANNING CONSULTANT ·
 VV



- LEGEND**
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 - 16 EL CAMPO SANTO
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 - 18 " " CROSS
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 - 21 FORT STOCKTON

- POSSIBLE BUILDINGS**
- A CHURCH
 - B OLIVE FACTORY
 - C STATE HIGHWAY BUILDINGS
 - D CASA DE PICO
 - E SHOPS
 - F STORE
 - G EL PICO

DEVELOPMENT SCHEME A
 SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY JOHN G FLEMING - ARCHITECT

DECEMBER 1945
 SHEET 2

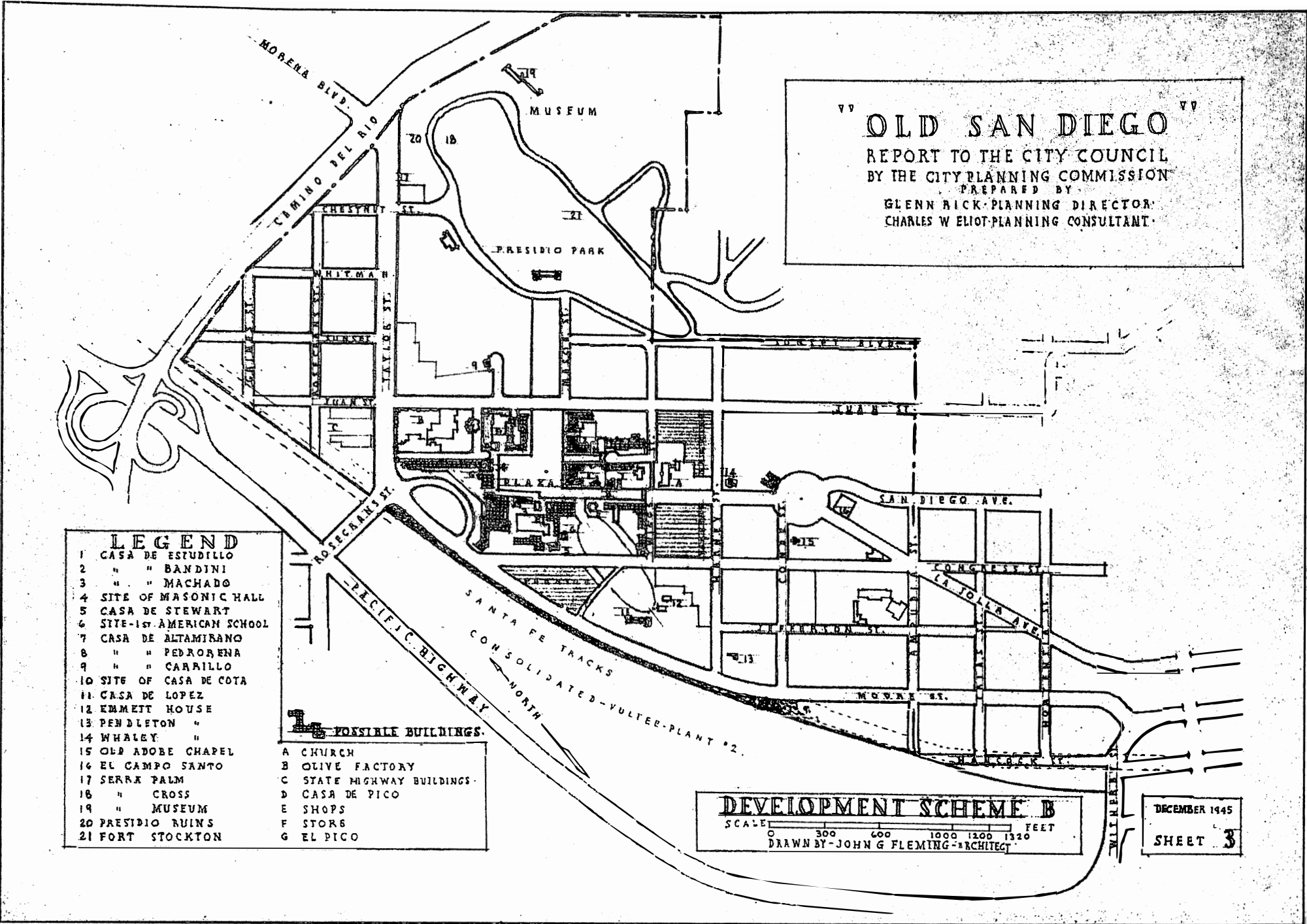
Scheme A

This is a sort of minimum project—something worth trying for, not too difficult to obtain, and yet providing a basis which is capable of later development into something more satisfactory and complete.

The distinctive feature of this scheme in contrast to the others presented here, is the retention of San Diego Avenue as a major street. That involves swinging the street around the Casa de Machado on a wide curve and cutting into the wall, greensward, and the trees along the south side of the park. If the Plaza is thus reduced, it becomes essential to acquire additional area to compensate and to open a park vista to the Presidio. In fact, the maintenance of San Diego Avenue as a thoroughfare will cut off the southwest side of the Plaza from the rest of the picture and emphasize the development on the east and south around Calhoun Street. The scheme shows a development of shops on both sides of that street as suggested by the principal owner, Mr. Cardwell, and a patio east of the Casa de Bandini. The basic weakness of this scheme is the lack of enclosure of the Plaza. It is an "open" design, badly cut up by too many streets.

To keep open the possibilities of further developments later, this scheme suggests the immediate pavement and extension of Congress Street to Taylor at Rosecrans, the extension of La Jolla Avenue to Juan Street, and the eventual opening of Hancock or Moore Street along the Santa Fe tracks.

Suggestive arrangements of buildings in some of the blocks around the Plaza are shown to indicate the character of the proposed developments rather than particular sizes and shapes of patios and buildings.



vv
OLD SAN DIEGO
 vv
 REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL
 BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
 PREPARED BY
 GLENN RICK-PLANNING DIRECTOR
 CHARLES W ELIOT-PLANNING CONSULTANT

- LEGEND**
- 1 CASA DE ESTUDILLO
 - 2 " " BANDINI
 - 3 " " MACHADO
 - 4 SITE OF MASONIC HALL
 - 5 CASA DE STEWART
 - 6 SITE-1ST. AMERICAN SCHOOL
 - 7 CASA DE ALTAMIRANO
 - 8 " " PEDROBENA
 - 9 " " CARRILLO
 - 10 SITE OF CASA DE COTA
 - 11 CASA DE LOPEZ
 - 12 EMMETT HOUSE
 - 13 PENDLETON "
 - 14 WHALEY "
 - 15 OLD ADOBE CHAPEL
 - 16 EL CAMPO SANTO
 - 17 SERRA PALM
 - 18 " CROSS
 - 19 " MUSEUM
 - 20 PRESIDIO RUINS
 - 21 FORT STOCKTON

- POSSIBLE BUILDINGS.**
- A CHURCH
 - B OLIVE FACTORY
 - C STATE HIGHWAY BUILDINGS
 - D CASA DE PICO
 - E SHOPS
 - F STORES
 - G EL PICO

DEVELOPMENT SCHEME B
 SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY- JOHN G FLEMING-ARCHITECT

DECEMBER 1945
 SHEET 3

Scheme B

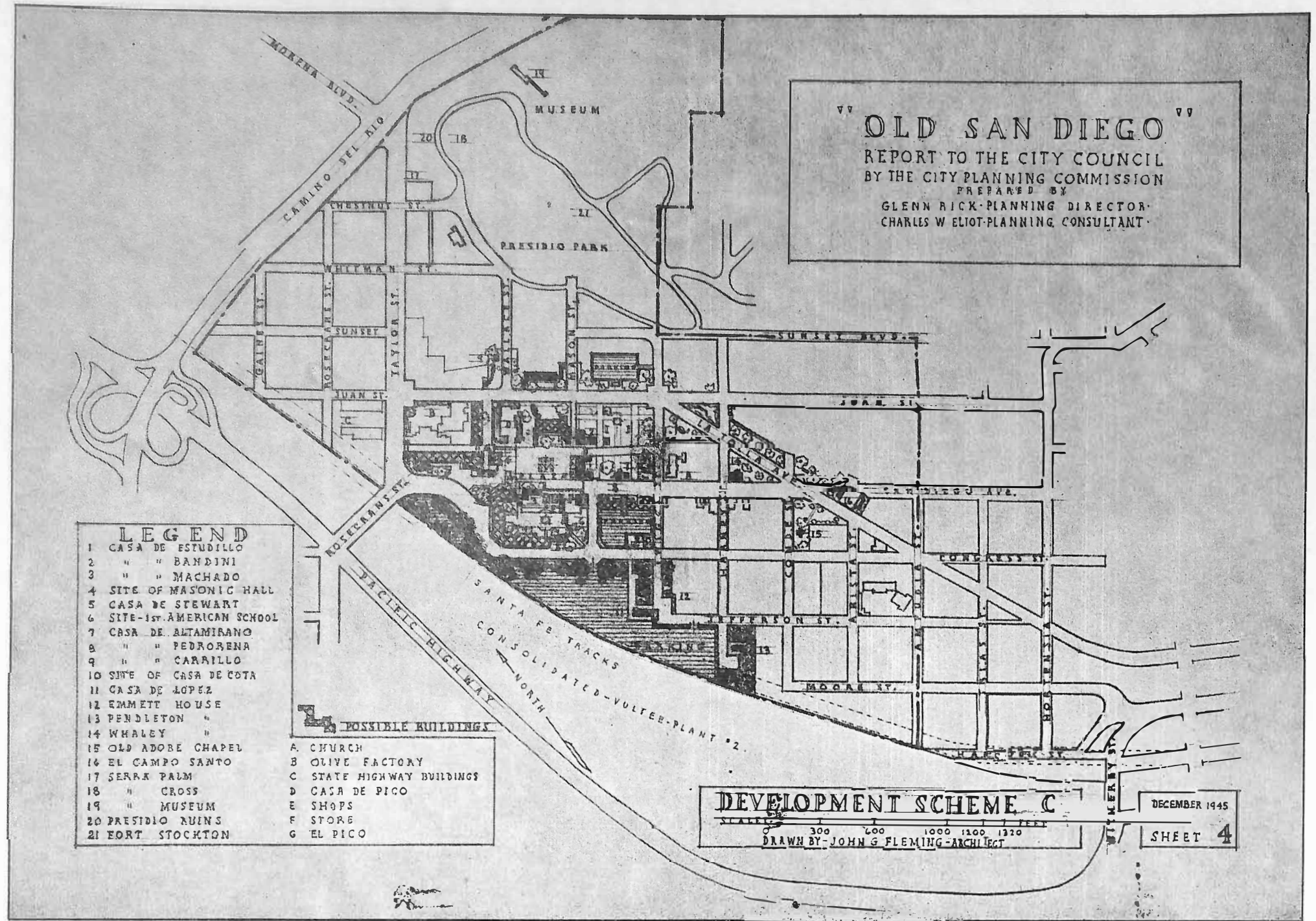
This, in the judgment of the consultant, is the most satisfactory of all the suggestions towards which the community might aim.

It is based on the theories outlined in the preceding major section of this report—"Plans for OLD San Diego" and provides for the diversion of through traffic around the Plaza via the extension of Hancock or Moore Streets parallel with the railroad tracks, as included by the City Council in the list of "critically needed streets." Scheme B would provide ample and convenient parking areas, and restrict the Plaza to pedestrians and traffic for service to abutting properties.

Other features of this scheme, as shown on the accompanying perspective sketch, are the treatments suggested for the southwest side and west corner of the Plaza. The photograph of the Plaza taken in 1869 (before the fire) shows (page 12) a three story structure about opposite the proposed vista to the Presidio and the two story Masonic Hall next to the present site of the Pico Restaurant. Under this scheme these buildings would be reconstructed and another higher building or theatre added at the west corner—all to help screen the views of the incongruous industrial buildings of Consolidated Plant No. 2. As previously suggested, a heavy planting of trees along the new highway parallel with the railroad would also contribute to this same end.

At the west corner, a principal entrance to the Plaza might be constructed by the City in the form of a Memorial Tower and Gateway. Such an entrance would include a principal park and parking area at the junction of Taylor, Rosecrans and Moore Streets, and the possibility of stores and workshops facing on this approach area. This approach would be the welcome to Old Town seen from the Santa Fe trains. The emphasis in this scheme on this southwest side of the Plaza would take advantage of the slope in the ground for the auditorium of the proposed theatre and to develop a lower level patio entered between the stores on the Marston property and tying in the Casa de Stewart. The way would be cleared for further expansion of the central group southerly toward the Casa de Lopez.

Other features of this scheme are similar to those shown on Scheme A, including the proposal for development of Calhoun Street and the Cardwell property, the vista to the Presidio with a monument against the hill, the paving of Congress Street, etc.



vv
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 vv

- LEGEND**
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 - 16 EL CAMPO SANTO
 - 17 SERRA PALM
 - 18 " CROSS
 - 19 " MUSEUM
 - 20 PRESIDIO RUINS
 - 21 EORT STOCKTON

- POSSIBLE BUILDINGS**
- A. CHURCH
 - B OLIVE FACTORY
 - C STATE HIGHWAY BUILDINGS
 - D CASA DE PICO
 - E SHOPS
 - F STORE
 - G EL PICO

DEVELOPMENT SCHEME C
 SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY- JOHN G FLEMING-ARCHITECT

DECEMBER 1945

SHEET 4

Scheme O

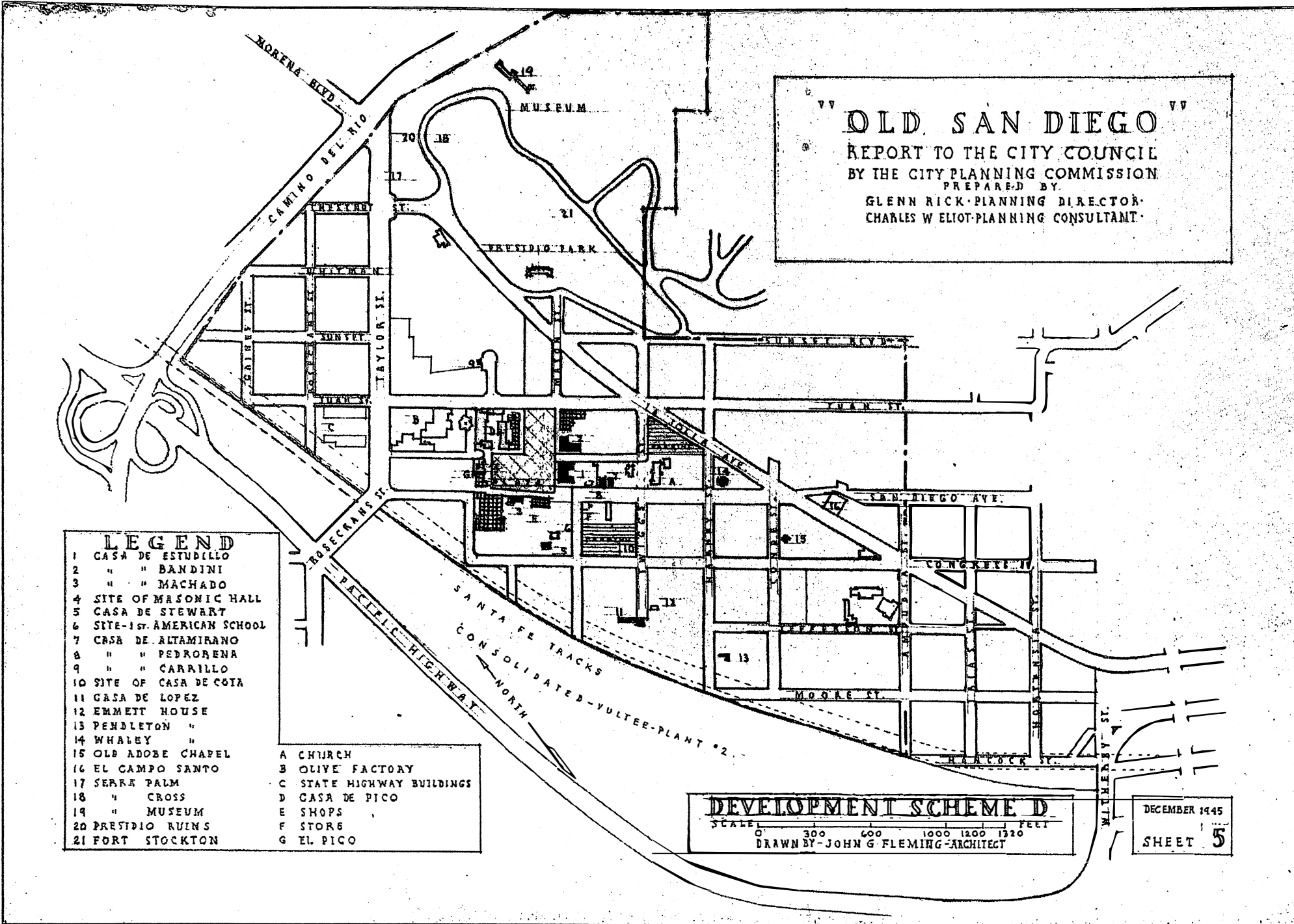
This has been developed on the theory that since Juan Street must remain open as a major street connection with Sunset Boulevard, it might be desirable to concentrate all of the through traffic on that route. By a diagonal connection close to the hills, extending La Jolla Avenue to Juan at Twiggs Street, the traffic through the Plaza on San Diego Avenue might be diverted to this more direct route, and thus permit the restriction of vehicular traffic in the Plaza. From that point on, the scheme is similar in its main outlines of buildings and open spaces to those shown on other sketches. A different detail of arrangements is indicated to stress the variety of possibilities for development in the Plaza area.

The difficulty with this scheme is that Juan Street cuts the larger area in two—dividing the Plaza from the Golf Course and Presidio Park, while Scheme B would divert most of this traffic around both areas.

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 - 18 " CROSS
 - 19 " MUSEUM
 - 20 PRESIDIO RUINS
 - 21 FORT STOCKTON

- A CHURCH
- B OLIVE FACTORY
- C STATE HIGHWAY BUILDINGS
- D CASA DE PICO
- E SHOPS
- F STORE
- G EL PICO



DEVELOPMENT SCHEME D
 SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY- JOHN G. FLEMING-ARCHITECT

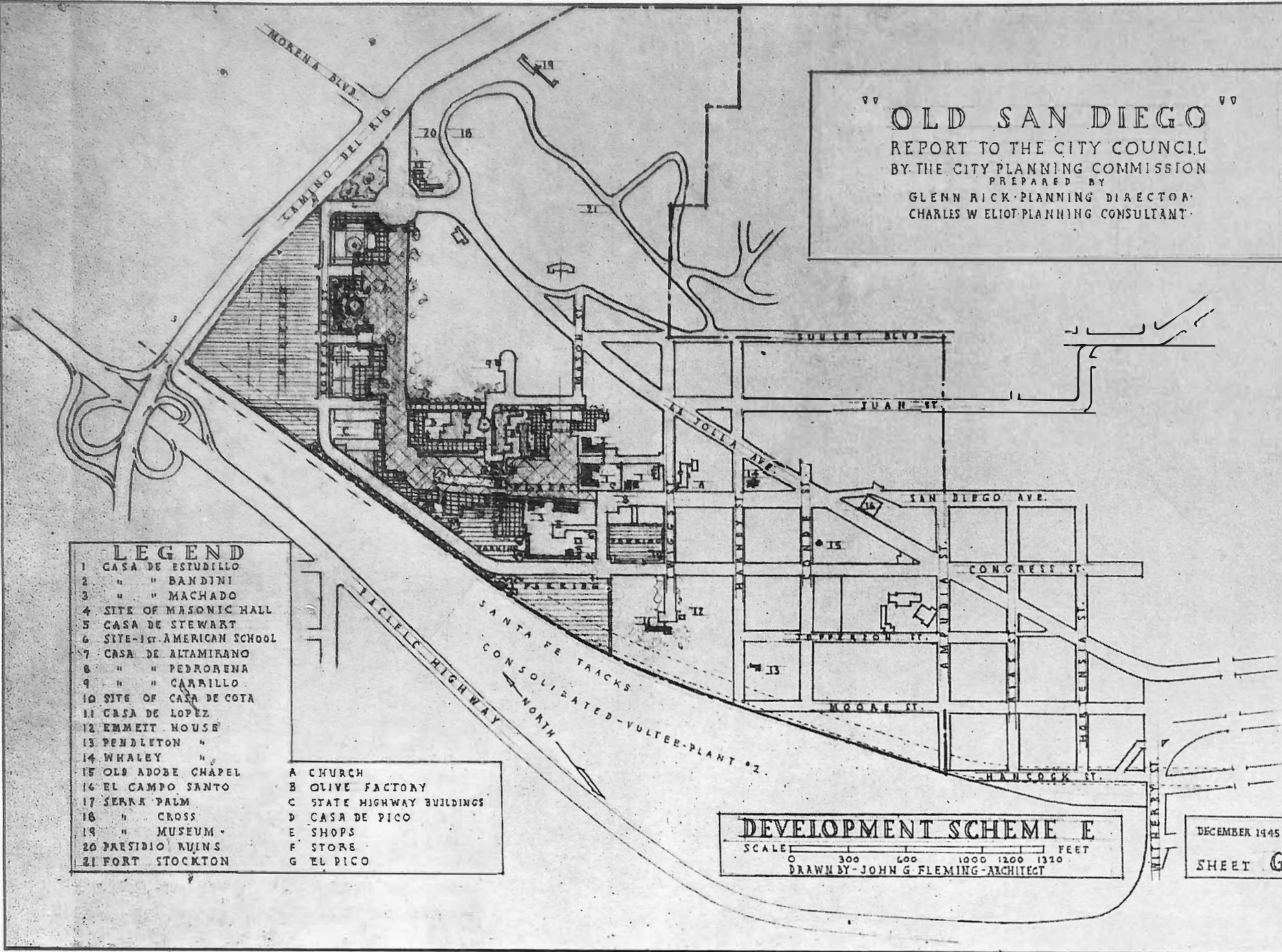
DECEMBER 1945
 SHEET 5



Scheme D

This is a natural extension of the idea developed in Scheme C. If La Jolla Avenue is to be extended to Juan Street why not continue it on the same diagonal all the way to Taylor Street? That would remove the through traffic further from the Plaza and reduce the flow on Taylor and Juan Streets. From that standpoint it is a better layout than Scheme C, but still throws the major line of through traffic between Old Town and the Presidio.

" " **OLD SAN DIEGO** " "
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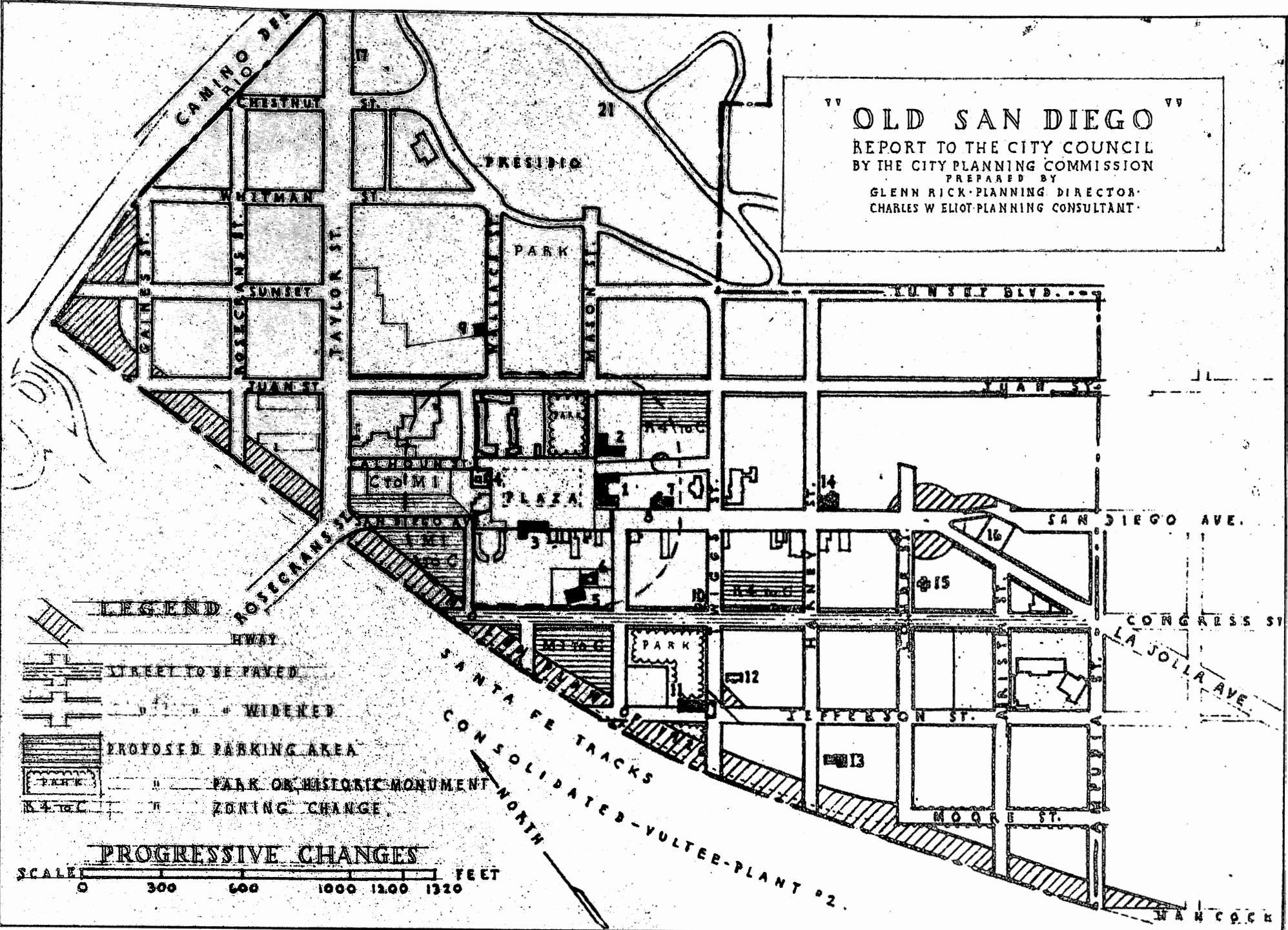
DEVELOPMENT SCHEME E
 SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1500 FEET
 DRAWN BY - JOHN G. FLEMING - ARCHITECT

DECEMBER 1945
 SHEET 6

Scheme E

This suggests a possible expansion of the major development area shown on the preceding sketches to take advantage of the diversion of traffic from Taylor Street to the new line of La Jolla Avenue. It goes far beyond the limits of any immediately practical operation, but emphasizes the argument for the La Jolla Avenue Extension because of the large future opportunities which it would make possible.

" " **OLD SAN DIEGO** " "
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LEGEND

- HWAY
- STREET TO BE PAVED
- WIDENED
- PROPOSED PARKING AREA
- PARK OR HISTORIC MONUMENT
- ZONING CHANGE

PROGRESSIVE CHANGES

SCALE 0 300 600 1000 1200 1320 FEET

PROPOSED ACTIONS

On the basis of the studies and theories outlined in the foregoing sections a program of action can be presented, with recommendations for consideration by different public and private agencies. It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1st—Attention be given the problem of preserving the historic sites of Old San Diego.
- 2nd—Steps to be taken to safeguard the harmony of the development of frontage on the Plaza.
- 3rd—A park connection be provided between the Presidio and the Plaza.
- 4th—Through traffic be diverted around the area and around the Plaza.
- 5th—Ample parking facilities be provided within easy walking distance of the Plaza.
- 6th—Zoning restrictions be adjusted to facilitate the proposed development.
- 7th—After all of these steps have been taken traffic in the Plaza be restricted to pedestrians and vehicles serving abutting properties.
- 8th—Private enterprise be encouraged to restore and develop buildings and activities about the Plaza.

Responsibilities for action to carry out such a program fall to many groups and agencies. It is recommended that:

- A.—The San Diego Historical Society, with the assistance of the City and private contributions, acquire title or "rights" to essential structural features by gift or purchase, to preserve the following historic sites in order of importance:
 1. Casa de Estudillo
 2. Casa de Bandini
 3. Casa de Machado
 11. Casa de Lopez
 5. Casa de Stewart
 8. Casa de Pedrorena
 14. Whaley House
 7. Casa de Altamirano
- B.—The "Trustees of Old San Diego"— a non-profit Corporation be organized among owners and operators of properties within 300 feet of the Plaza and interested friends, to
 1. Solicit funds and assistance for the "Restoration" of Old San Diego;
 2. Negotiate with owners for covenants and restrictions to assure harmonious development, and maintenance of properties;
 3. Employ an "Architectural Advisory Board" to assist developers of new projects in the area;
 4. Acquire property and "restore" such buildings as Masonic Hall or build a theatre or craft school, etc., and act as a holding company for the operation of such projects.
- C.—The City of San Diego take the following steps:
 1. For Historic Sites—Assist Historical Society if necessary to acquire sites or enter into contracts.
 2. For Park Use— (a) Acquire connection from Plaza to Presidio along Mason Street.
 - (b) Set aside present City Owned property at Mason and Jefferson for Park purposes and acquire additional land in same block No. 454 and remainder of Block No. 455.
 3. For Traffic — (a) Pave and extend Congress Street from La Jolla Avenue to Taylor Street.
 - (b) Construct Hancock or Moore Streets extension from Witherby Street to at least Taylor Street with no intersections between Conde and Congress Streets.
 - (c) Revise Major Street Plan to substitute Hancock or Moore Streets extension for La Jolla-San Diego Ave. Route.

- (d) Reroute "Ramona" bus via Congress Street (or Twiggs and Congress) to Taylor and transfer point at Camino del Rio.
- (e) Provide for eventual widening of Juan and Congress Streets by establishment of setback lines.
- 4. **For Parking** — Facilitate and assist (if necessary, acquire all or part) the establishment and maintenance of parking areas in order of priority at:
 - (a) Remainder of Block 407 at San Diego and Wallace.
 - (b) West half of Block 462 on Congress between Twiggs and Harney.
 - (c) East quarter of Block 451 on Juan at Twiggs and provide for later development for parking of
 - (d) Reminders of Blocks 428 and 435 west of Congress Street.
- 5. **For Development** —
 - (a) Adjust zoning for parking areas
 - (b) Restrict traffic in Plaza after opening of Congress and Hancock or Moore extension, and after parking areas a, b, and c, provided.
 - (c) Permit encroachment on Plaza for arbor or arcade to line of Casa de Machado (1) in front of Marston Buildings and (2) in front of future building at northwest corner of Plaza.
 - (d) Permit encroachment on Plaza and San Diego Avenue for reconstruction of "Masonic Hall" under suitable agreement with owner of abutting property.
 - (e) Construct memorial tower and gateway in present street space at north corner of Plaza.
- 6. **For miscellaneous purposes**—
 - (a) Cut off south corner of Twiggs and Jefferson to avoid disturbing Casa de Lopez.
 - (b) Provide circle and connections at intersection of La Jolla, San Diego Avenue and Conde Street for "entrance" to Old San Diego.
 - (c) Close and vacate: (1) Arista-Congress to Jefferson— for school use. (2) Twiggs—southwest of cut-off to Jefferson. (3) Jefferson—northwest of cut-off to Twiggs. (4) Whitman from alley east of Taylor to Jackson Street, and (5) Wallace Street from turn around at Casa de Carrillo to Jackson Street.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In presenting this statement and recommendations we wish to acknowledge the helpful cooperation of John and Winifred Davidson of the Historical Society, Mr. Clinton Abbott and members of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce Committee on Old San Diego, Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Gott, Mr. Kenneth Cardwell, Rev. Joseph S. Fox, Mr. Milton Sessions, Mrs. Marguerite E. Schwarzman, Mr. Harry R. Weiss, Mr. Frank Frye, Mr. Philip Annewalt, and many others who have supplied us with information, materials and advice and criticism.

Respectfully submitted,

GLENN A. RICK

CHARLES W. ELIOT, Consultant.

SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

San Diego, California
January 18, 1946

Mr. Glenn A. Rick, City Planning Director

Mr. Charles W. Eliot, Consultant

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your request to the San Diego Historical Society for suggestions concerning the relative importance of various structures and structural features of historic sites in Old San Diego, we have reviewed the data available to us and suggest the following items for your consideration.

We would advise that first attention should be given to the preservation of those older adobe buildings and other structures which are in immediate danger from lack of care and upkeep. From the historic point of view the relative value of the old buildings in Old Town is difficult to determine because each building is an example of one or more periods and their importance stems from their age, position and state of preservation, rather than from the ownership or events which took place in them.

Any list should start with the oldest privately occupied building in Old San Diego:

1. Casa de Carrillo

Then would follow the buildings around the Plaza;

2. Casa de Estudillo

3. Casa de Bandini

4. Casa de Machado

All three of these structures have been or are being put in condition by their owners to withstand the weather and are receiving care and maintenance.

5. Casa de Lopez

6. Casa de Stewart, and

7. Casa de Pedrorena; followed in order by

8. The Whaley House, which, of course, represents a later or "Early American" period in Old San Diego.

9. Casa de Altamirano

10. The Pendleton House is well cared for, and The Emmett House is too far gone to be worth saving.

11. The Old Adobe Chapel on Conde Street has been restored by the City of San Diego.

For the preservation of the Adobe buildings in this brief list, the essential features are the adobe walls and the roof structure—including overhang to protect the exterior side of the walls. The corresponding features of the other buildings are the exterior walls and external features, like porches, etc. If easements or restrictions are to be drawn to protect these buildings, they probably should prevent any change—except by specific approval of an advisory historical and architectural committee in each case—in any "bearing" wall, roof structure or fenestration.

We have been interested to cooperate with you in your study of Old San Diego and hope that these few suggestions may be helpful to the cause of preserving for later generations the historic landmarks of this area.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joshua L. Bailey, Jr., President.

John Davidson, Curator

Winifred Davidson, Historian

