



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: April 8, 2026 REPORT NO. HRB-26-018

HEARING DATE: April 23, 2026

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – MALCOLM ROGERS/ JOSEPH AND DOROTHY BRENNAN/ CARTER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY APARTMENTS**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Lonsdale Family Trust 08-18-21 represented by BFSA Environmental Services

LOCATION: 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Uptown Community, Council District 3  
APN 452-611-07

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Malcolm Rogers/Joseph and Dorothy Brennan/Carter Construction Company Apartments located at 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Malcolm Rogers/Joseph and Dorothy Brennan/Carter Construction Company Apartments located at 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1938-1945 under HRB Criterion B, and 1929 under Criteria C and D. The designation includes Batchelder fireplaces in each of the three residential units. The designation excludes the front garage rebuilt in 2016. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is associated with Malcom Rogers, a historically significant person and retains integrity for that association. Rogers was a leader in the archeological and anthropological fields and his work helped to expand the fields' understanding of archeology and human development. His cataloging of indigenous pottery in the San Diego area was influential in developing an archeological timeline for the region and his work on cultural mixing had an influence on the fields of anthropology and archeology. Specifically, the resource was Rogers's home from 1938 to 1945 archeological research, formulating his theories on the development of technology and cultures and while he served as the head of the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man).
2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character-defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture and retains integrity

from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features varied roof forms, tile roof with little eave overhang, arch motifs, balconies, decorative tilework, stucco chimney and wood fenestration consisting of casements and double hung windows. The interior Batchelder fireplaces included in the nomination are original to the 1929 date of construction, are consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the residence and contribute to the architectural significance of the resource.

3. The resource is representative of a notable work of established Master Builder Carter Construction Company, a prominent builder responsible for the construction of influential buildings in the San Diego area. Specifically, the resource is significant as an example of the company's work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style during the height of the revival craze in the 1920s after transitioning from their earlier work in the Swiss Chalet style.

## BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource.

The property was identified in the [2016 Uptown Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey](#) and given a Status Code of 5D3, "Appears to be a contributor to a district that appears to be eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation."

The historical name of the resource, the Malcolm Rogers/Joseph and Dorothy Brennan/Carter Construction Company Apartments, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the name of Malcom Rodgers, a historically significant individual, )Joseph and Dorothy Brennan who constructed the house as a speculation house and the name Thomas F. Carter House, a Master Builder for Carter Construction.

In order to be eligible for designation and listing on the City's Register, a resource must meet one or more of the City's designation criteria as specified in the Historical Resources Guidelines of the Land Development Manual and retain integrity as it relates to the significance of the resource. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance, which requires an understanding of the physical features and characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. The National, California, and City of San Diego Registers recognize location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as the seven aspects of historical integrity.

Although not all seven aspects of integrity need to be present for a property to be eligible for designation, the record must demonstrate that the property retains enough physical and design characteristics to reflect and convey the significance of the property. Each resource depends on certain aspects of integrity, more than others, to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects are most important to a particular property requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#) provide information regarding the City's designation criteria, as well as guidance on their application and how to evaluate the integrity of a resource.

## ANALYSIS

The property located at 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue is a four-story, Spanish Colonial Revival style, apartment building constructed in 1929 in the Uptown Community Planning Area. Other buildings and structures present on site include a detached garage and pergola. The property is located on the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, in a residentially zoned neighborhood. The property is in its original location.

Since its construction in 1929, the property has been modified as follows: In the 1970s a pergola was added to the rear of the property, and in 2016 the detached front garage was rebuilt in kind with the approval of Heritage Preservation staff . At unknown dates stucco on the south side of the building was patched, and a rear window was replaced with a fixed window.

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by BFS Environmental Services, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B, C, and D and staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the [Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria](#), as follows.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

The resource is associated with Malcom Rogers, an influential and prominent archeologist , who rented an apartment at the 3020 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue property with his wife Ethel from 1938-1945 while he conducted research in the area and was acting director of the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man). Rogers was born in Fulton, New York in 1890. Rogers attended Syracuse University from 1908-1914 and studied geology. In 1918 he joined the Marine Corps and mustered out, a year later moved to Escondido to do citrus farming where his father would join him in 1920. After this move Rogers began going on archeological expeditions. He would work for the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man) from 1919-1945.

During his time at the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man) Rogers collected extensive field notes and site inventories throughout the Southwest including locations in California, Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado. Information on his work was compiled into two collections "Ethnological, Anthropological and Archaeological Data of Malcom J. Rogers Gathered between 1919 and 1945" and "Miscellaneous Ethnographic and Archaeological Notes Compiled by Malcolm J. Rogers." And publishing over a dozen articles on archeology in the Southwestern United States and Mexico. These works were done prior to carbon dating and Rogers' experience with geology helped to establish timelines for the chronological dating of artifacts.

As a part of his work with developing chronologies Rogers encountered gaps in the archeological record which were not explained by predominant theories of extinction and replacement popular at the time. Through these gaps, Rogers theorized that intermixing and assimilation might lead to the sharing and furthering of culture and technology. These theories would grow to be influential in the fields of archeology and anthropology and shape the work in the field.

During WWII the museum building was used by the Navy Hospital for storage and many of the collections and papers were put in storage. After the war the difficulties of reestablishing the collections lead to Rogers retirement from his post as the Acting Director of the Museum of Man. Rogers personal life during this time was difficult and in 1946 his marriage ended, coinciding with

him retiring from the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man). He would go on to remarry Frances Rogers and have four children before dying in a car crash in 1960. Posthumously his books *Ancient Hunters of the Far West* and *The San Dieguito Complex* were published based on manuscripts in development at the time of his death.

Roger Malcom resided at 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Ave from 1938-1945, during which time he worked in the field and developed methods of dating of archeological specimens, theories on the cultural significance of assimilation and intermixing on technology, as well as documenting the existence of the prehistoric forebears to the Kumeyaay. These developments would profoundly shape the study of archeology in the Southwest and the field of archeological theory and anthropology. This also coincides with when Rogers lead the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man) and contributed to the work of the museum and preserved the collections during the war years. The only known properties within the City of San Diego associated with Rogers are the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man) and the apartment at 3020 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Due to the large institutional nature of the Museum and it is not appropriate that the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man) to be named after a singular individual. The challenges associated with recognizing one of the many people who contributed to the Museum's success and research legacy preclude designating the institution for a single person. Thus the residence where Malcom lived when he contributed his significant research, writings, and leadership at the Museum is the most appropriate place to designate.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, location, setting, feeling, and association are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion B for its association with Malcom Rogers and his developments within the fields of archeology and anthropology as well as his leadership at the Museum of Man. The residence, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, has not been significantly modified to the point where Rogers or a contemporary would not be able to recognize it and associate it with that time period. The rear pergola and replaced window, and reconstructed garage do not detract from the resource's ability to convey its historic significance and for its association with Malcom Rogers. Therefore, the residence does retain integrity to its 1938-1945 period of significance under HRB Criterion B.

Significance Statement: The resource is associated with Malcom Rogers, a historically significant person and retains integrity for that association. Rogers was a leader in the archeological and anthropological fields and his work helped to expand the fields' understanding of archeology and human development. His cataloging of indigenous pottery in the San Diego area was influential in developing an archeological timeline for the region and his work on cultural mixing had an influence on the fields of anthropology and archeology. Specifically, the resource was Rogers's home from 1938 to 1945 archeological research, formulating his theories on the development of technology and cultures and while he served as the head of the Museum of Us (nee Museum of Man). Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion B.

*CRITERION C - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of natural materials or craftsmanship.*

The resource is a four-story, apartment building constructed in 1929 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The house sits on a steep canyon and the lower stories step down the hillside to take advantage of the views. A detached stucco garage with a shed and parapet roofs, wing walls with

arched doorways on each side faces the street. The top story of the main building is located at street level and is accessed behind the street facing garage by the left doorway in the wing wall leading to a walled terrace. The main building has asymmetrical massing, stucco cladding with a novelty texture, and gabled roof with clay tiles and little eaves overhang. The front facing façade has a gable with clay vents and three upper pairs of elongated double hung windows and three garden level pairs of double hung windows. The apartments are accessed on the left side of the building from a series of staircases. The entrance of apartment 3020 is reached by a set of tiled steps and wrought iron hand rail leading up to a deeply recessed alcove with the front door and a tile shelf. To the left of the steps is a small balcony with decorative brackets. The terrace continues back beyond the first front door down a set of steps to apartment 3022. The front door for this apartment is set into a small gable projecting off of the main chimney and to the left is a set of windows. From this apartment, entrance steps lead down to a covered arcade with a series of arches and the door for apartment 3024 and then down to the ground level apartment. The rear of the building features a set of steps wrapping around from the right side terrace that connects to the balcony. Fenestration consists of fixed wood, casement, and double hung windows.

The property owner is also requesting the inclusion of select interior features which staff concurs with. They are proposing to include the Batchelder fireplaces in units 3020, 3022, and 3024. Staff recommends that the fireplaces in each of the three units be included in this designation because they are original to the date of construction and are designed consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Following the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition, the romantic ideal of Spanish and Latin American architecture was revived. What resulted was the Spanish Colonial Revival style which was the predominant style in Southern California between 1915 and 1940, significantly altering the architectural landscape until the Modernist movement took hold during and after WWII. The style uses decorative details borrowed from the entire history of Spanish architecture. These may be of Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, or Renaissance inspirations, and unusually rich and varied series of decorative precedents. The style employed a variety of floor plans, as well as gabled, cross-gabled, gabled and hipped, hipped, and flat roof forms with parapets. Other character defining features include Mission and Spanish clay tile; focal windows; arched windows and other openings, and accented entries.

Of the seven aspects of integrity, design, materials, and workmanship are the most critical to the property's ability to convey significance under HRB Criterion C as a resource that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The property, which has been modified as detailed in the beginning of the analysis section of this report, retains overall integrity of design, materials, and workmanship despite the modifications. The detached pergola does not impact significant character defining features. The stucco patching and altered rear window impact character defining features but not to a degree that impairs the property's overall integrity and eligibility under Criterion C. The 2016 garage was burned down and completely reconstructed, reconstruction was done in-kind and therefore does not alter the character defining features of the property but no original material remains and so is not included in the designation. Therefore, the property retains its integrity to its 1929 period of significance under HRB Criterion C.

Significance Statement: The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character-defining features of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture and retains

integrity from its 1929 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features varied roof forms, tile roof with little eave overhang, arch motifs, balconies, decorative tilework, stucco chimney and wood fenestration consisting of casements and double hung windows. The interior fireplaces included in the nomination are original to the 1929 date of construction, are consistent with the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the residence and contribute to the architectural significance of the resource. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

*CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.*

The Carter Construction Company was owned and operated by civil engineer Thomas F. Carter. Carter started the company around 1911 and it quickly became a successful and prolific developer.

In May 1912, the San Diego Union reported that: "An indication of the rapidly increasing building activity in San Diego is obtained from the experience of the Carter Construction Company, which during the last two weeks has signed contracts for new buildings on an average of one a day. The contracts are for homes, store buildings, and apartments ranging in cost from \$2,000 to \$18,000."

In 1911, the company began building a tract of Swiss Chalet-style houses in North Park. The company planned to build 26 of the houses in the tract, but the project was not completed. In the 1920s, the company shifted to more Spanish Eclectic style designs. In the late 1930s, Carter began refurbishing foreclosed houses for the Home Owners' Loan Corporation.

At least three of the Carter Construction Company's works have been designated as historical resources by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board. They include

- HRB #493- Carter Construction Co. Swiss Chalet (3503 Ray Street), 1912
- HRB #1094- Thomas and Katherine Carter/Lincoln Rogers House (4290 Randolph Street), 1927
- HRB 1276-074- South Park Historic District Contributor (1532 30th Street), 1912

The apartment building at 3020 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue represents the Carter Construction Company's work in the Spanish revival styles and a rare example of his work on multifamily properties. The craftsmanship is evident by the building's integrity and the use of details like arched arcades, plasterwork, and decorative stucco.

Significance Statement: The resource is representative of a notable work of established Master Builder Carter Construction Company, a prominent builder responsible for the construction of influential buildings in the San Diego area. Specifically, the resource is significant as an example of the company's work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style during the height of the revival craze in the 1920s after transitioning from their earlier work in the Swiss Chalet style. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion D.

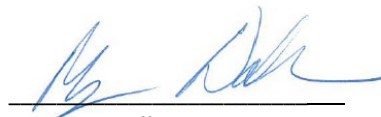
#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional

Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the Malcolm Rogers/Joseph and Dorothy Brennan/Carter Construction Company Apartments located at 3020-3026 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1938-1945 under HRB Criterion B, and 1929 under Criteria C and D. The designation includes Batchelder fireplaces in each of the three residential units. The designation excludes the front garage rebuilt in 2016.



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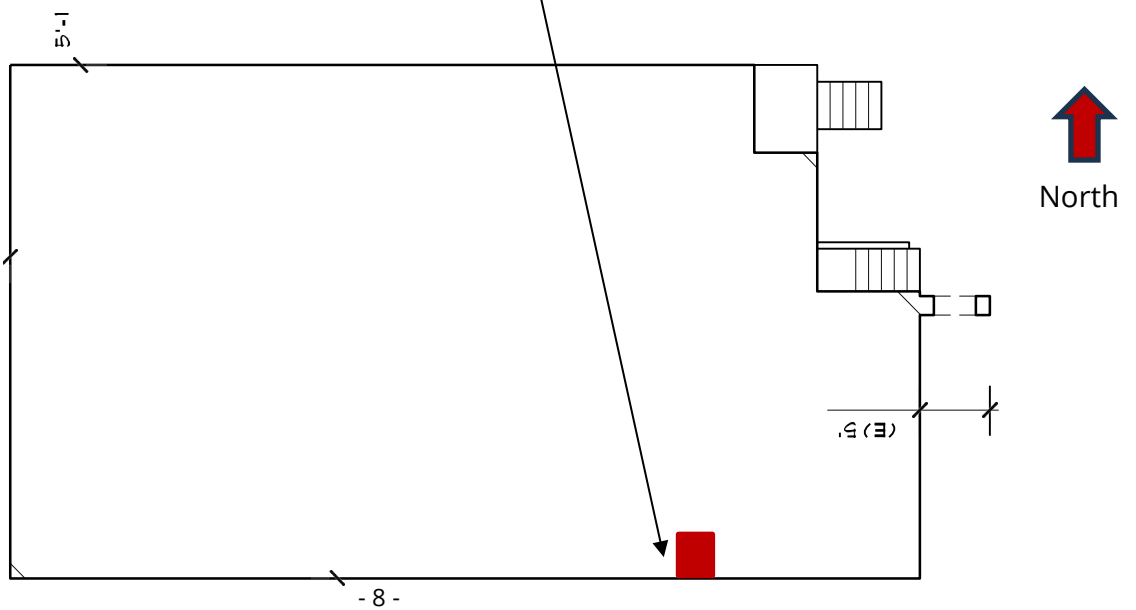
MW/SS

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Interiors proposed for designation
3. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

**Site Plan**  
*Interior Features Included In Proposed Designation*

3020 1<sup>st</sup> Ave





**Site Plan**  
*Interior Features Included In Proposed Designation*

3024 1<sup>st</sup> Ave

