



**THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: January 4, 2023

TO: Historical Resources Board

FROM: Kelley Stanco, Deputy Director, Planning Department

SUBJECT: Final San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement

The Planning Department is pleased to transmit to you a copy of the Final San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement dated September 2021 (Context Statement). The Context Statement eliminates the case-by-case determination for bungalow and apartment courts that was in place, providing needed certainty and efficiency for projects subject to historical review. The Context Statement does not make any changes to the definition of a historic resource; rather it is an important tool that is now in place and should be used to streamline the determination process.

In 2020, the City of San Diego was awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant from the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to prepare a historic context statement addressing bungalow courts and apartment courts in San Diego. The purpose of the context statement is to provide a historical overview of the development of bungalow courts and apartment courts in San Diego and to assist in the identification, evaluation and designation of significant examples by defining the property types and their variants and establishing eligibility thresholds and integrity considerations. In assisting in the identification of significant examples, the context statement also provides needed clarity as to what would not be considered a significant example of a bungalow court or apartment court.

With the assistance of architecture and historic preservation firm Page & Turnbull, the Historic Preservation Planning Section of the Planning Department spent 10 months researching, conducting targeted fieldwork, and developing the draft San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement. On August 26, 2021 the draft was presented to the Historical Resources Board (HRB) and the public as an informational workshop item in order to gather input prior to submittal of a final context statement to the OHP by the September 30, 2021 grant deadline. Following the August 26th workshop, staff met with members of the public to gather further input prior to revising the document to address comments by the OHP, HRB and members of the public. The final document was then submitted to OHP in compliance with the grant requirements.

In response to concerns that the definition of a bungalow court and apartment court were too broad and that properties that were not intended to fall into the category of either a bungalow court or an apartment court might be flagged as such based on the list of character defining features, several revisions to the context statement were made. First the role of original on-site parking placement in determining whether a property would be considered a bungalow court or apartment court per the context was emphasized. Due to the importance of the relationship between the buildings, court, and street, properties that originally separated the building from the street with at-grade parking are not considered bungalow courts or apartment courts (unless housed in a garage that formed a plinth for the building.) The context was also revised to include examples of multi-family property types that may feature some of the character defining features but would not be considered representative examples of a bungalow court or apartment court, with information as to why. The definition of what constitutes the court element of the property type was also clarified. These additions strengthen the context statement and provide greater guidance and clarity for future evaluations.

The “How to Use This Document” and “Project Overview and Methods” sections were also expanded to elaborate on the literature review, research, and virtual and field survey work conducted as part of the development of the context statement. The City undertook the preparation of the San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement due to a void in the existing literature regarding the history and development of bungalow courts and apartment courts in San Diego. Aside from a brief article in the Journal of San Diego History dating to the 1980s, little information regarding bungalow courts or apartment courts in San Diego existed, and none of the information available provided adequate guidance for their identification and evaluation as historic resources. The research, field work, and analysis conducted, and the resulting historic context statement provides the original research and guidance that was thus far lacking.

Other minor revisions include correcting some errors in the discussion of local, State and National Register criteria and eligibility; clarifying that bungalow courts and apartment courts are *most likely* to be eligible under HRB Criteria A, C and D, acknowledging that eligibility under Criterion B could be possible as well; including the historic name of bungalow courts in the study lists when known; adding the address of buildings shown in photos to the photo captions; adding some additional examples, including some courts in La Jolla; and including the preparation of a Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Multiple Property Listing (MPL) as a recommended future action.

The final revised San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement that was submitted to and accepted by the OHP is included with this memo and has been posted to the [Planning Department's website](#). Consistent with all prior historic context statements and historic preservation best practices, the San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement will be used to guide the public, consultants, staff, and the Board in identifying whether a property is or is

not a bungalow court or apartment court, and if so, whether it is in fact eligible for designation. The context statement is a framework that provides greater clarity and consistency, reduces the burden of original research for property owners and applicants, and ultimately streamlines the designation of significant examples and the redevelopment of properties that do not fall within the identified typologies and significance thresholds. Lastly, the San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement is a living document that will be updated and refined with public input as our understanding of bungalow court and apartment court development in San Diego grows.



Kelley Stanco
Deputy Director

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Attachment: 1. Final San Diego Bungalow Court and Apartment Court Historic Context Statement