

GalvinPreservationAssociates



**City of San Diego
Old San Diego Community Plan Area
Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey:
Historic Context & Survey Report**

Prepared for:
City of San Diego
City Planning & Community Investment Department
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Historic Context Statement

Introduction

The Old San Diego Community Plan Area encompasses approximately 285 acres of relatively flat land that is bounded on the north by Interstate 8 (I-8) and Mission Valley, the west by Interstate 5 (I-5), and on south and east by the Mission Hills/Uptown hillsides. Old San Diego consists of single and multi-family uses (approximately 711 residents), and an abundant variety of tourist-oriented commercial uses (restaurant and drinking establishments, boutiques and specialty shops, jewelry stores, art stores and galleries, crafts shops, and museums). A sizeable portion of Old San Diego consists of dedicated parkland; including Old Town [San Diego State Park](#), Presidio Park (City), Heritage Park (County), and numerous public parking facilities. There are approximately 26 designated historical sites in the Old San Diego Community Planning Area, including one historic district. Other existing public landholdings include the recently constructed Caltrans administrative and operational facility on Taylor Street. Old San Diego is also the location of a major rail transit station, primarily accommodating light rail service throughout the region.

As part of the Old San Diego Reconnaissance Survey, the following historic context statement was prepared. [Historic context statements are intended to provide an analytical framework for identifying and evaluating resources by focusing on and concisely explaining what aspects of geography, history, and culture significantly shaped the physical development of a community or region's land use patterns and built environment over time; what important property types were associated with those developments; why they are important; and what characteristics they need to have to be considered an important representation of their type and context. The significant themes and property types identified in the context will assist City staff in identifying significant extant resources within the built environment. The pre-contact and early contact periods and associated archaeological and cultural resources are addressed separately in the archaeology study prepared for the Community Plan Update.](#)

[The following context statement](#) is organized in the same fashion as the historic context statement in the General Plan in that it is divided into periods based upon the government in power. The Spanish and Mexican Periods are included only as background as the properties associated with these periods are already identified and listed. The potential historic resources in the plan area date from the American Period. The themes that influenced the development of the plan area during the American Period are discussed, as are the associated property types that represent those themes.

Spanish Period (1769-1821)⁷

In spite of Juan Cabrillo's earlier landfall on Point Loma in 1542, the Spanish colonization of Alta California did not begin until 1769. Concerns over Russian and English interests in

⁷ This section was largely extracted from "Appendix E, HP-1 San Diego History" in the *City of San Diego General Plan*. Adopted Mar. 10, 2008.



California motivated the Spanish government to send an expedition of soldiers, settlers, and missionaries to occupy and secure the northwestern borderlands of New Spain. This was to be accomplished through the establishment and cooperative inter-relationship of three institutions: the presidio, mission, and pueblo. In 1769 a land expedition led by Gaspar de Portola reached San Diego Bay, where they met those who had survived the trip by sea on the San Antonio and the San Carlos. Initially, camp was made on the shore of the bay in the area that is now downtown San Diego. However, lack of water at this location, led to moving the camp in May to a small hill closer to the San Diego River near the Kumeyaay village of Cosoy. Father Junípero Serra arrived in July to find the presidio serving mostly as a hospital. The Spanish built a primitive mission and presidio structure on the hill near the river. The first chapel was built of wooden stakes and had a roof made of tule reeds.

Bad feelings soon developed between the native Kumeyaay and the soldiers, resulting in construction of a stockade. By 1772, the stockade included barracks for the soldiers, a storehouse for supplies, a house for the missionaries, and a chapel. The original log and brush huts were gradually replaced with buildings made of adobe bricks. Pitched roofs with rounded roof tiles eventually replaced flat earthen roofs. Clay floors were eventually lined with fired brick.

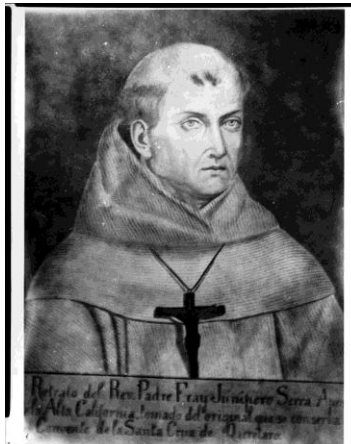


Figure 1: A portrait painted in 1785 of Father Junípero Serra, by Charles C. Pierce, 1785.

Source: <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/chs-m16750.html?x=1296166717646>

In August 1774, the Spanish missionaries moved the Mission San Diego de Alcalá to its present location six miles up the San Diego River Valley (modern Mission Valley) near the Kumeyaay village of Nipaguay. Begun as a thatched *jacal* chapel and compound built of willow poles, logs and tules, the new Mission was sacked and burned in the Kumeyaay uprising of November 5, 1775. The first adobe chapel was completed in October 1776, and the present church was begun the following year. A succession of building programs through 1813 resulted in the final rectilinear plan that included a church, bell tower, sacristy, courtyard, residential complex, workshops, corrals, gardens and cemetery.⁸ Orchards, reservoirs and other agricultural installations were built to the south on the lower San Diego River alluvial terrace and were irrigated by a dam and aqueduct system. The mission system had a significant effect on all Native American groups from the coast to the inland areas and was a dominant force in San Diego County.

Life for the new settlers at the San Diego presidio was isolated and difficult. The arid desert climate and aggressive Native American population made life hard for the Spanish settlers. They raised cattle and sheep, gathered fish and seafood, and did some subsistence farming in the San Diego River Valley to generate enough food to keep the

⁸ Norman Neuerberg. "The Changing Face of Mission San Diego," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 32, No. 1, (Winter 1986). <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/86winter/mission.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.



fledgling community of a few hundred Spaniards and hundreds of Native American neophytes alive. The situation was complicated by the Spanish government's insistence on making trade with foreign ships illegal. Although some smuggling of goods into San Diego was done, the amounts were likely small.⁹

Associated Property Types

The property types associated with the Spanish Period include historic sites and reconstructed buildings. They have all been listed and include: Casa de Carrillo (HRB Site #74), the San Diego Presidio Site (HRB Site #4), the Franciscan Garden Site Block 413 (HRB Site #44), and the Serra Palm Site (HRB Site #5). They are each described below.

Casa de Carrillo was one of the earliest and largest residences constructed during the Spanish Period. It was originally built in circa 1810 by Francisco Maria Ruiz and later became the home of Joaquin Carrillo and his family in the 1820s. Casa de Carrillo is but a remnant reconstruction of what it used to be. The original residence was constructed of adobe bricks with a smooth earthen plaster exterior. The residence is designated California Historical Landmark No. 74 and is located at the northwest corner of the Presidio Hills Golf Course, 4136 Wallace Street.¹⁰



Figure 2: The Junipero Serra Museum on dedication day in 1929.
Source: <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/69summer/images.htm>

The San Diego Presidio Site commemorates two important events: the founding of the first permanent European settlement on the Pacific Coast of the United States and the establishment of the first mission in California by Father Junipero Serra in 1769. From 1769 to 1776 the presidio served as the base of operations for the Spanish settlers and continued to function as the seat of military jurisdiction in Southern California through 1837 under Mexican rule. The presidio was originally constructed using wood for the exterior walls; however, in 1778 this material was replaced with

adobe.¹¹ The archeological remains were designated a National Historic Landmark in 1963 and were listed as California Historical Landmark No. 59. The Junipero Serra Museum, constructed in 1929 was designed in the spirit of the original San Diego Presidio and is not included in the San Diego Presidio Site designation. Today the San Diego Presidio Site is located in front of the

⁹ William E. Smythe. *History of San Diego 1542-1908*. (San Diego: The History Company, 1908), 81-99.

¹⁰ *California Historical Landmarks*, Office of Historic Preservation, California Department of Parks and Recreation, (Sacramento: State of California 1990), 188.

¹¹ Charles Snell. "San Diego Presidio." National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form (1963), 2.



Junipero Serra Museum within Presidio Park.¹²

The Franciscan Garden Site Block 413 was constructed in 1769 when the San Diego Presidio was built. This garden was used and cultivated by the Spanish settlers, although the garden has since been demolished a commemorative marker has been placed in its original location off of Taylor Street. This site was designated a Historic Landmark by the San Diego Historical Resources Board in 1970.

The Serra Palm Site is the location where the four divisions of the Portola Expedition met on July 1, 1769. It was at this site that Father Junipero Serra planted a palm tree when he first arrived and was the starting point where the "El Camino Real" trail began. Although, the original tree Father Serra planted no longer remains a commemorative marker is located in its place. The Serra Palm Site is designated California Historical Landmark No. 67 and is located within Presidio Park at the southeast corner of Taylor Street and Presidio Drive.¹³

Mexican Period (1821-1846)¹⁴

In 1822 the political situation changed. Mexico won its independence from Spain and San Diego became part of the Mexican Republic. The Mexican government opened California to foreign ships, and a healthy trade soon developed, exchanging the fine California cattle hides for the manufactured goods of Europe and the eastern United States. Several of these American trading companies erected rough sawn wood-plank sheds at La Playa on the bay side of Point Loma. The merchants used these "hide-houses" for storing the hides before transport to the East Coast.¹⁵ As the hide trade grew, so did the need for more grazing lands. Thus, the Mexican government began issuing private land grants in the early 1820s, creating the rancho system of large agricultural estates. Much of the land came from the Spanish missions, which the Mexican government secularized in 1833. The ranchos dominated California life until the American takeover in 1846.¹⁶ The Mexican Period brought about the



Figure 3: General view of Mission San Diego Alcalá, photograph by Charles C. Pierce ca. 1874.

Source: <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/chs-m14213.html?x=1296168604146>

¹² *California Historical Landmarks*, 186.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 187.

¹⁴ This section was largely extracted from "Appendix E, HP-1 San Diego History" in the *City of San Diego General Plan*. Adopted Mar. 10, 2008.

¹⁵ Smythe, 102.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 101-106; Lucy Lytle Killea. "A Political History of a Mexican Pueblo: San Diego from 1825 to 1845," Part I, *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 12, No. 3, (Fall 1966).

<http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/66october/political.htm>; accessed March 1, 2010.



continued displacement and acculturation of the native populations.

Another change in Mexican San Diego was the decline of the presidio and the rise of the civilian pueblo. The establishment of pueblos in California under the Spanish government met with only moderate success and none of the missions obtained their ultimate goal, which was to convert to a pueblo. Pueblos did, however, begin to form, somewhat spontaneously, near the California presidios. As early as 1791, presidio commandants in California were given the authority to grant small house lots and garden plots to soldiers and their families. Sometime after 1800, soldiers from the San Diego presidio began to move themselves and their families from the presidio buildings to the tableland down the hill near the San Diego River.

Historian William Smythe noted that Don Blas Aguilar, who was born in 1811, remembered at least 15 such grants below Presidio Hill by 1821.¹⁷ Of these 15 grants, only five within the boundaries of what would become Old Town had houses in 1821. By 1827, as many as 30 homes existed around the central plaza and in 1835, Mexico granted San Diego official pueblo status. At this time the town had a population of nearly 500 residents, later reaching a peak of roughly 600.¹⁸ However, by 1835 the presidio, once the center of life in Spanish San Diego, had been abandoned and lay in ruins. Mission San Diego de Alcalá fared little better. In 1842, 100 Indians lived under the care of the friars and only a few main buildings were habitable.¹⁹ The town and the ship landing area, La Playa, were now the centers of activity in Mexican San Diego.

The new Pueblo of San Diego did not prosper, as did some other California towns during the Mexican Period. In 1834, the Mexican government secularized the San Diego and San Luis Rey missions. Shortly after the secularization, an increase in Native American hostilities against the Californios occurred in the late 1830s. The attacks on outlying ranchos, along with unstable political and economic factors contributed to San Diego's population decline. In 1838, San Diego's official pueblo status was removed and it became a sub-prefecture of the Los Angeles Pueblo. By 1840, San Diego had an approximate population of 150 permanent residents.²⁰

Associated Property Types

The property types associated with the Mexican Period include historic sites and reconstructed buildings. They have all been listed and include: Fort Stockton (HRB Site #3), Casa de Estudillo (HRB Site #14-A), Casa de Bandini (HRB Site #14-C), Casa de Machado-Stewart (HRB Site #14-G), Casa de Cota Site (HRB Site #14-B), Casa de Lopez (HRB Site #21), and the Old Spanish Cemetery (HRB Site #26). They are each described below.

¹⁷ Ibid, 99.

¹⁸ Killea, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/66october/political.htm>; accessed March 1, 2010.

¹⁹ Richard R. Pourade. *The History of San Diego: The Silver Dons*. (San Diego: Union-Tribune Publishing Co., 1963), 11-12, 17-18.

²⁰ Killea, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/66october/political.htm>; accessed March 1, 2010; Charles. Hughes, "The Decline of the Californios: The Case of San Diego, 1846-1856," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 21, No. 3, (Summer 1975), 6-7.



Fort Stockton was originally constructed in 1838, in preparation for a military offensive from Los Angeles. The fortification was originally constructed of earth. In 1846 the U.S. Army rebuilt the fortification. It was here that the Mormon Battalion ended its march from Council Bluffs, Iowa on January 29, 1874. Fort Stockton is designated California Historical Landmark No. 54 and is located within Presidio Park.²¹

Casa de Estudillo is an adobe residence that was originally constructed in 1828 by Don Jose Maria Estudillo. This building housed three generations of the Estudillo family and is also referred to as Ramona's marriage or wedding place. The residence was reconstructed in 1910 and later restored by Hazel Waterman in 1969. It is listed on the National Register and is designated California Historical Landmark No. 53. Casa de Estudillo is located at the southeast corner of San Diego Avenue and Mason Street.²²



Figure 4: Casa de Estudillo, ca. 1890.

Source: <http://digitalibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/chs-m8926.html?x=1296171520486>

Casa de Bandini was a traditional Mexican style adobe residence constructed in 1829 by Jose and Juan Bandini. Following its completion the home quickly became the social center of Old Town. In 1846, the residence became the headquarters of Commodore Stockton and Bandini provided supplies to his troops. In the early 1850s, as a result of financial hardship Bandini was forced to sell his residence. In 1869, Alfred Seely purchased the property, added a second story and converted the residence to the Cosmopolitan Hotel. By 1900, Akerman & Tuffley had converted the building into an olive processing plant. The residence was designated a California Historical Landmark (No. 72) in 1970 and is located on Mason Street between San Diego Avenue and Calhoun Street.²³

Casa de Machado-Stewart is a restored adobe brick home constructed in 1830 by Jose Manuel Machado. In 1845 Jack Stewart married Machado's youngest daughter, Rosa and moved in with the Machado family. Until 1966 the residence remained in the Stewart family. In 1969 the residence was restored and in 1970 it was designated California Historical Landmark No. 73. The property is located at the northwest corner of Congress and Mason Streets.²⁴

Casa de Machado-Silvas is an adobe residence that was constructed in 1835 by Jose Nicasio Silvas. Silvas lived in this residence with his wife Maria Antonia Machado and their children.

²¹ *California Historical Landmarks*, 185.

²² *Ibid.*, 185.

²³ *Ibid.*, 188.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 188.



This residence is also known as Casa de la Bandera (House of the Flag), in honor of Maria who hid the Mexican flag in her house from American forces. Casa de Machado-Silvas stayed in the Silvas family for over 100 years, and has since been a boarding house, saloon, restaurant, art studio, souvenir shop, museum, and church. It was designated California Historical Landmark No. 71 and is currently the Old Town [San Diego State](#) Park visitor center.²⁵

Casa de Cota Site was the location of an adobe residence said to have been built circa 1835 by Juan or Ramona Cota. The residence has since been demolished and an identification marker has been placed at its original location. The site was designated a California Historical Landmark (No. 75) in 1970 and is located at the northwest corner of Twiggs and Congress Streets.²⁶

Casa de Lopez was an adobe residence constructed in 1835 by Juan Francisco Lopez. The residence was also referred to as the Casa Larga or Long House and was one of the first larger residences to be constructed in the Pueblo of San Diego. In 1956 the residence was restored by Arnholt Smith. However seven years after its restoration, the home was demolished and reconstructed at its present site. It was designated California Historical Landmark No. 60 in 1970 and is located at 3890 Twiggs Street.²⁷

The Catholic Parish of the Immaculate Conception laid out the Old Spanish Cemetery, also known as El Campo Santo, in 1840 and by 1880 the cemetery was discontinued. It was designated California Historical Landmark No. 68 in 1970 and is located at the northeast corner of San Diego and Old Town Avenues.²⁸

American Period (1846-1970)

When United States military forces occupied San Diego in July 1846, the town's residents split on their course of action. Many of the town's leaders sided with the Americans, while other prominent families opposed the United States invasion. A group of Californios under Andres Pico, the brother of the Governor Pio Pico, harassed the occupying forces in Los Angeles and San Diego during 1846. In December 1846, Pico's Californios engaged U.S. Army forces under General Stephen Kearney at the Battle of San Pasqual and inflicted many casualties. However, the Californio resistance was defeated in two small battles near Los Angeles and effectively ended by January 1847.²⁹

The Americans raised the United States flag in San Diego in



Figure 56. Portrait of General Andres Pico, date known.

Source:<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu>.

²⁵ Ibid., 188.

²⁶ Ibid., 188.

²⁷ Ibid., 186.

²⁸ Ibid., 187.

²⁹ Pourade, 1963.



1846, and assumed formal control with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848. The signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo marked the beginning of the American Period. The vast majority of known and potential historic resources in San Diego date from this period. These resources may be understood within defined eras and themes that shaped the development of San Diego in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The eras and themes that relate to the Old San Diego Community Plan Area include: the American Transition Period, Early American Development and Industrialization, the Automobile, Early Tourism, and Preservation Phase I-II, the Great Depression and World War II, and Post World War II. The remainder of the historic context statement explores these eras and themes in more detail and discusses the associated property types.

Theme: American Transition Period (1846-1872)

In the quarter of a century following 1848, San Diego was transformed from a Hispanic community into an Anglo-American one. On September 9, 1850, California officially became a U.S. state and on February 18th, of that year, the California State Legislature formally organized San Diego County. The county extended 75 miles northward at its longest point and 200 miles eastward at its widest point encompassing 14,969 square miles, with 6,000,000 acres of land subject to settlement or purchase.³⁰ The first county elections were held at San Diego and La Playa on April 1, 1850.

Old Town remained the largest development within San Diego, it occupied a total of 48,557 acres of former pueblo land and consisted of approximately 65 buildings, many of which were of adobe construction.³¹ As San Diego transitioned from a Mexican to an American government, the architecture of Old Town began to display eastern American influences. These influences



Figure 67: View of Old Town San Diego from Fort Stockton Hill, ca. 1868.
Source: <http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/chs-m16750.html?x=1296166717646>

were visible in the 1868 Union Newspaper Office, a wood-framed building shipped in pieces from the East Coast and assembled upon its arrival, and the 1857 Whaley House, San Diego's earliest red brick structure.

In March of 1870 the first plat map of Old San Diego was made under the direction of the board of city trustees.³² The map illustrated new, regularly spaced subdivision blocks that

³⁰ Richard R. Pourade. *The Glory Years 1865-1899*. (San Diego: Union-Tribune Publishing Co.), 1964.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Map 40, Old San Diego Plat Map March 1870.



radiated out in all directions from Washington Square, (currently known as Old Town Plaza). At that time, existing buildings from the Spanish and Mexican periods were concentrated around the square. The new blocks measured 300 feet square with 50 foot wide access streets. According to this 1870 map, Old Town originally spanned from Cedar Street to the north, Hancock Street to the south, Ampudia Street to the east and Riley Street to the west and included approximately 174, individually numbered, square blocks.

In the decade that followed San Diego grew slowly. San Diegans attempted to develop the town's interests by attracting a transcontinental railroad and the development of a new town closer to the bay in response to the California Gold Rush. Originally established as New San Diego, the town eventually became known as Graytown or Davis' Folly, after the town's principal promoters, Andrew B. Gray and William Heath Davis.³³ In 1851, John Judson Ames founded San Diego's first newspaper, *The Herald* that was located above the Hooper and Company Store at 4th and A Streets in New San Diego.³⁴ However, as the Gold Rush came to an end New San Diego became deserted with only a few sparse buildings remaining. In response to the town's failure, Ames moved *The Herald* to Old Town just below Presidio Hill at the northwest corner of Old Town Plaza. The failure of these plans, coupled with a severe drought, and the onset of the Civil War left San Diego as a remote frontier town. In 1859, *The Herald* ceased production and the town

was left without a newspaper until 1868 when *The Union* began production, in a wood-framed building in Old Town at what is now 2602 San Diego Avenue.³⁵ The troubles led to an actual drop in the town's population from 650 in 1850, to 539 in 1860.³⁶ Not until land speculator and developer Alonzo Horton arrived in 1867 did San Diego begin to develop fully into an active American town.³⁷

The real urbanization of the city as it is today began in 1869 when Alonzo Horton moved the center of commerce and government from Old Town (Old San Diego) to New Town (downtown). The new location was more accessible to the bay, which facilitated the development of commerce. The expansion of trade brought an increase in the availability of building materials. Wood buildings gradually replaced adobe structures. Also during this time the Casa de

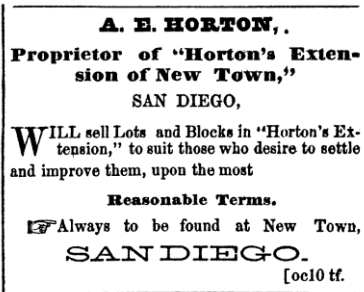


Figure 78: Advertisement of land for sale in Horton's Extension, San Diego Union, December 1868.

Source: <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/67april/visionimages.htm>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Thorpe, Teri. "Early Journalism in San Diego: The San Diego Herald and The San Diego Union," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 28, No. 3, (Summer 1982).

<http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/82summer/journalism.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.

³⁵ Mario T. Garcia, "Merchants and Dons: San Diego's Attempt at Modernization, 1850-1860," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 21, No. 1, (Winter 1975), 77.

³⁶ Elizabeth C. MacPhail. *The Story of New San Diego and of its Founder Alonzo E. Horton*. (San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1969).

³⁷ Carter, Nancy Carol. "San Diego Olives: Origins of a California Industry," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 54, No. 3, (Summer 2008), 150-151.



Bandini was converted into the Cosmopolitan Hotel. In 1871 the county seat was moved from Old Town to New Town and on April 20, 1872 a fire destroyed a significant portion of the business block within Old Town. As a result of these two events, coupled with the continued development of New Town, Old Town rapidly declined in development and government influence. Settlers increasingly chose to settle in New Town over Old Town, due to the availability of potable water and access to transportation and public facilities. In New Town ocean views, and public amenities increased land values and affected the character of neighborhoods developing.

Associated Property Types

The property types associated with this era include historic sites and buildings. The buildings were constructed for a variety of uses; some are reconstructions, while others are original, but restored. All of the properties have been listed and include: the Casa de Pedrorena (HRB Site #14-C), Whaley House (HRB Site #24), Derby-Pendleton House (HRB Site #32), Rudolph Schiller Gallery (HRB Site #352), Chapel of the Immaculate Conception (HRB Site #15), Mason Street School (HRB Site #14-H), Derby Dike Site (HRB Site #28), Congress Hall Site (HRB Site #14-F), Exchange Hotel Site (HRB Site #14-I), Emmit House Site (HRB Site #36), Casa de Aguire Site (HRB Site #42), Gila House Site (HRB Site #43), and Cobblestone Jail Site (HRB Site #46).

Casa de Pedrorena was an adobe residence constructed in 1869 by Miguel de Pedrorena, who originally arrived in Old Town in 1838. Pedrorena was a member of the Constitutional Convention at Monterey in 1849. This building was partially restored in 1968 and was designated a California Historical Landmark (No. 70) in 1970. It is located at 2616 San Diego Avenue.³⁸

The Whaley House was a single-family brick residence constructed by Thomas Whaley in the 1856. It was one of the first buildings within Old Town built with eastern American style influences. In 1869 the north room was remodeled and converted into the County Courthouse. The building was restored in 1956, designated California Historical Landmark No. 65, and included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.³⁹



Figure 89: The Whaley House, 2010. Photograph by GPA.

The Derby-Pendleton House was constructed in 1851 by Lieutenant George Horatio Derby, who came to San Diego to divert the San Diego River into False Bay. The building was moved from 3877 Harney Street to its current location in 1962. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board and is included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State

³⁸ *California Historical Landmarks*, 186.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 187.



Park designation of 1970.

The Rudolph Schiller Photographic Gallery was originally constructed in 1869 and later served as a residence. It was designated by the San Diego Historical Resources Board in 1998 and is located at 2541 San Diego Avenue.

The Chapel of the Immaculate Conception was an adobe chapel constructed by John Brown in 1850. Later the chapel was sold to Jose Antonio Aguirre who funded its reconstruction as a church. It was completely restored in 1936 - 1937, designated California Historical Landmark No. 49, and included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.⁴⁰

The Mason Street School also known as the “little green school house” was a single room wood-framed building constructed in 1865. It was California’s first public school building. The building was moved to its current location before 1870 and was restored by the State in 1962. It became a California Historical Landmark in 1970 and is located at 3966 Mason Street.⁴¹

The Derby Dike Site is the location where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a dike to divert the waters from the San Diego River into False Bay, now known as Mission Bay. However the river was not fully harnessed until the 1950s. The site of the Derby Dike’s is commemorated with a historical marker. It is a designated California Historical Landmark (No. 244) and is included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.⁴²

The Congress Hall Site is the location of a former saloon and Pony Express Station. The building was demolished in 1939 and a historical marker has been placed at its original location at Calhoun Street. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board and is included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.

The Exchange Hotel Site is the location of a brick and wood-framed building constructed circa 1915. It was destroyed in the Old Town Fire of 1872 and a historical marker has been placed at its original location at the south side of San Diego Avenue. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board and is included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.

The Emmet House Site is the location of San Diego’s first County Hospital. The building was demolished in 1949 but a historical marker has been placed at its original location at 3919 Twiggs Street. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board and is included within the Old Town [San Diego](#) State Park designation of 1970.

The Casa de Aguirre Site is the location of an early residence constructed in the 1850s. It has since been demolished and a historical marker has been placed at its original location at 2604 San Diego Avenue. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board in 1970.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 185.

⁴¹ Ibid. 192.

⁴² Ibid. 189.



The Gila House Site Block 483 is the location of an early residence constructed in the 1850s. It has since been demolished and a historical marker has been placed at its original location at 3940 Harney Street. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board in 1970.

The Cobblestone Jail Site is the location of Haraszthy Jail constructed in 1851. [Agoston Haraszthy, the namesake of the jail, was the first sheriff in San Diego County. The building also served as San Diego County's first hospital.](#) It has since been demolished and a historical marker has been placed at its original location at 2360 San Diego Avenue. It was designated as a Historic Resource by the San Diego Historical Resources Board in 1970.

Theme: Early American Development and Industrialization (1873-1929)

Since the 1830s, the citizens of San Diego had attempted to establish a direct rail link to the east. This was an integral component to the vision Alonzo Horton held of San Diego as a modern city and a major seaport. 1868 and 1869 were boom years, with steady growth over the next four years until the economic panic of 1873. The population dropped to 1,500 in 1875, but then rebounded. However, San Diego's civic leaders continued to focus on the development of the railroad. By 1876 both San Francisco and Los Angeles had direct rail links to the East Coast and for San Diego to establish itself as one of California's top destinations it needed one as well. Frank Kimball represented San Diego in its venture to establish a transcontinental rail link to the East and by the 1870s he had struck a deal with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad.⁴³ In July of 1881, the newly formed California Southern began building a line from San Diego to San Bernardino, via Oceanside and Fallbrook, which neared completion in September of 1882.⁴⁴ However, the Southern Pacific prevented San Diego's upstart line to cross their already established line at Colton. This interference allowed only local trains to run from San Diego to Colton, until, November 26, 1885, when the first transcontinental train arrived in San Diego.



Figure 940: San Diego's Santa Fe Depot, 1887.

Source: <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/85fall/railroadimages.htm>

⁴³ James N. Price. "The Railroad Stations of San Diego County: Then and Now," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 34, No. 2, (Spring 1988). <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/88spring/railroad.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.

⁴⁴ Ibid.



Once a transcontinental line had been established, trade increased and San Diego's population boomed to 40,000. This expansion in trade brought an increase in the availability of building materials. Wood buildings gradually began to replace adobe structures. Some of the earliest buildings to be erected in the American Period were "kit" buildings, built on the East Coast of the United States and shipped in sections around Cape Horn and reassembled in San Diego.⁴⁵ During this period of time, the area of Uptown located immediately northeast of Old Town began to develop. Development during this period prior to the expansion of the railroads was slow in Old Town. Residences were constructed in the vicinity of the plaza, but much of the construction that occurred during these years occurred in New Town. Few resources from the 1870s and 1880s remain; one example is the Gatewood House at 2515 San Diego Avenue. It is a wood-framed residence that was constructed by *The Union* newspaper founder in 1873. It is designated as HRB Site #34 and is included within the Old Town State Park designation of 1970.

Between 1885 and 1890 no fewer than five independent railroad lines were organized and constructed in response to the population boom. One of the first independent rail lines to be constructed was the San Diego & Old Town Railway, which began operation in 1887. However, as the line progressed toward its eventual terminus in La Jolla in 1894 its name changed to: the San Diego, Old Town & Pacific Beach in 1888, and the San Diego, Pacific Beach & La Jolla in 1894.⁴⁶ This line was also known as the "Abalone Limited".

Additional transportation advances at this time included the Santa Fe's construction of a new rail link from Oceanside to Orange County, called the "Surf Line". And on July 3, 1886, Elisha S. Babcock Jr. and Hampton L. Story launched the San Diego Streetcar Company, the city's first horse drawn trolley.⁴⁷ The following year, the Electric Rapid Transit Company debuted San Diego's first electric streetcar transit system. This line ran from Kettner Boulevard (then Arctic) to Old Town.⁴⁸ In conjunction streetcar transit franchises were handed out indiscriminately to keep up with the demand.⁴⁹ John D. Spreckels formed the San Diego Electric Railway Company in 1891. The line began in what is now downtown, eventually expanding into Balboa Park and Old Town after the turn of the century.

Despite the growing prosperity of the city, San Diego's boom quickly went bust in the 1890s as a general depression hit the U.S. In the decade that followed San Diego's population decreased by half and many of the smaller independent railroads were consolidated or literally washed away by heavy rains in 1892. However, as the turn of the century approached the city began to recover and new industries started to emerge. Although the majority of San Diego's industrial development was occurring outside of Old Town, there was limited industrial growth occurring within it. By 1900, Edward W. Akerman and Robert Alfred Tuffley brought the olive processing

Comment [E1]: Could not find an indication of where the ST & OT Railway went through Old Town, or where a station was.

⁴⁵ *San Diego Modernism Context Statement*, City of San Diego, Submitted to the State of California Office of Historic Preservation, (October 17, 2007), p. 18.

⁴⁶ Note: in 1906, the owners of the San Diego and Old Town line planned connecting service to the north and it became known as the Los Angeles & San Diego Beach Railroad, however it never went farther north than La Jolla.

⁴⁷ Gena Holle. "Transit in San Diego: ASCE Anniversary Project," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 48, No. 1, (Winter 2002). <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/2002-1/holle.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.



industry to Old Town, when they relocated their Old Mission Olive Works Company to the former Casa de Bandini. The two business partners remodeled the first floor to house offices and rooms for olive processing and packing. The second floor functioned as housing for family and close friends of Akerman and Tuffley.



Figure 10-1: Casa de Bandini as the Old Mission Olive Works processing plant, 1909.
Source: Copyright, The San Diego Historical Society No. 1136.



Figure 11-2: Workers labeling olive oil bottles at the Old Mission Olive Works, 1908.
Source: Copyright, San Diego Historical Society No. 5728

By 1910, San Diego had fully recovered from the 1890s depression and in 1911, Akerman and Tuffley announced plans to build a new modern olive processing plant. The plant was designed by a professional architect in the Mission Revival style and covered almost an entire square block at the base of Juan Street within Old Town block 409.⁵⁰ The building was completed in 1915.⁵¹ Akerman and Tuffley continued to run their business from their new plant until 1919 when the two retired and sold their company to a

corporation with local and New York investors.⁵² Five years following the sale, the company was rebranded as Old Mission

Products Company and expanded into the packaging of other agricultural products. In 1951, the original 1915 Akerman and Tuffley processing plant was demolished.

As industry continued to grow in the 1910s, rail service throughout San Diego County was

⁵⁰ Carter, 150-151.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.



further consolidated. Following the 1890s and multiple rail line purchases, by 1917, only two railroad lines operated within San Diego County, the Santa Fe and John Spreckels' San Diego & Arizona. The San Diego Electric Railway line began in what is now downtown, eventually expanding around Balboa Park by 1909 and into the park by 1912.⁵³ In 1910, the San Diego Electric Railway was expanded into Old Town on India Street at Winder Street, to California Street up La Jolla Avenue (now part of San Diego Avenue), crossing northeast to San Diego Avenue to Mason Street in the plaza.⁵⁴ The San Diego and Old Town Railroad discontinued its service in 1917. Two years later its tracks were taken up and eventually became part of John Spreckels' holdings when he constructed a San Diego Electric line to La Jolla in 1923, using much of the same rail bed.⁵⁵ Rail service flourished in the 1920s with 1924 being a peak year of trolley ridership. However, the invention and popularity of the automobile began to significantly impact rail line service.

Comment [E2]: Could not find an indication of where the SD and OT Railway went through Old Town or where the station was.

The Pacific Highway was one of the first paved roads through the area. At one time, it was part of Highway 101. While the southern terminus of Highway 101 is now Los Angeles, it used to travel all the way south through San Diego to the Mexican border in San Ysidro. However, this portion was decommissioned and replaced in the late 1960s by Interstate 5. Significant portions of Highway 101 were historically part of El Camino Real, the route that connected Alta California's missions, presidios, and pueblos. It served as the main north-south road in California until the 1920s. Highway 101 was one of the first highways designated by the Bureau of Public Roads in 1925. Existing sections of roadway were designated routes and marked by signs so that motorists could find their way from one town to the next. Long distance automobile runs became a popular form of amusement, and soon auto camps were developed to provide over night accommodations.

The expansion of rail lines to Old Town at the turn of the 20th century likely encouraged commercial and residential development in the area, though the pace of development was moderate, with single and multi-family residences constructed, largely along Harney and Congress streets. Light commercial development occurred, but it remained scattered along Congress Street and San Diego Avenue.

Associated Property Types

While the early transportation improvements during the late 19th and early 20th centuries influenced the later development of the plan area, there are no directly related property types remaining. Industrial development within Old Town during this period was limited to the Old Mission Olive Works, which relocated its olive processing plant to Casa de Bandini (HRB Site #14-C) in 1900. Casa de Bandini is already listed and more reflective of the Mexican Period. The larger plant building Akerman and Tuffley constructed in 1915 was demolished in 1951. Although, Old Town as a whole was subdivided in 1870, a small pocket subdivision known as

⁵³ Richard V. Dodge, *Rails of the Silver Gate: The Spreckels San Diego Empire* (San Marino, CA: Pacific Railway Journal, 1960), 19.

⁵⁴ Dodge, 43.

⁵⁵ Price, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/88spring/railroad.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.



the Hinton Subdivision was laid out between 1900-1920. This subdivision was located along Taylor Street, between Chestnut (currently Presidio Drive) and Whitman Streets. However, there are no buildings remaining from this subdivision's original development.⁵⁶ According to the reconnaissance survey, the other buildings remaining from this period are residential and commercial buildings just outside Old Town's original core. [This development outside Old Town's core likely occurred as a result of the construction of the San Diego and Old Town Railway and the expansion of the San Diego Electric Railway into the area. The construction of these building types was scattered and largely occurred on Harney and Congress streets and San Diego Avenue.](#)

Residential - Single-family Residences

New residents to Old Town constructed small houses just outside the already established core area in the early part of the 19th century. These residences are concentrated along the 2400-2500 blocks of Congress Street with smaller groupings constructed immediately to the southeast. These residences were primarily vernacular cottages, Craftsman bungalows, or Spanish Colonial Style residences. The vernacular cottages and Craftsman bungalows are typically one-story in height, sheathed in wood clapboard or shingles, and covered by gabled roofs. The Spanish Colonial Revival style residences are typically one-story in height, sheathed in smooth stucco, and covered by either gabled or flat roofs clad with terracotta tile.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria B & C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Single-family residences may be individually significant under Criterion B if they were homes of persons significant in local history. Single-family residences may also be eligible under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion B, location, setting, feeling, and association must be strongly present. Setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation under Criterion C. In both cases, the use of the building may have changed. It is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact.

Residential – Multi-family Residences

Similar in style to the small single-family residences constructed at this time, multi-family residences with two to four units were also built. These residences were located in close proximity to Casa de Bandini and the former location of the 1915 Old Mission Olive Works plant. [The occupants of these residences may have been employed at the Old Mission Olive Works Company.](#) Most of these residences can be described as vernacular turn of the century

⁵⁶ Subdivided Lands, City of San Diego Map 1900-1942. Historical Planning Maps, City of San Diego. <http://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk/inforecords/historicalmaps.shtml>; accessed January 15, 2011.

Comment [E3]: A direct connection between the developing industries and expanding rail service and the residential and commercial development during this period could not be substantiated with research; this is an educated assumption based on the evidence. The discussion of these resources may be deleted if the connection between the resources and the theme is not strong enough.

Comment [E4]: A direct connection between the industries developing and multi-family residences from this period could not be made. The discussion of this resource type may be deleted if the connection between the resources and the theme is not strong enough.



bungalow courts. They are typically one story in height, sheathed in wood clapboard or shingles, and covered by gabled roofs with separate exterior entrances for each unit. Examples of this type of resource can be found along Conde Street.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria B & C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Multi-family residences may be individually significant under Criterion B if they were homes of persons significant in local history. Multi-family residences may also be eligible under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion B, location, setting, feeling, and association must be strongly present. Setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation under Criterion C. In both cases, the use of the building may have changed. It is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact.

Commercial – Retail Stores

Although, few commercial buildings were constructed within Old Town during this period there are a couple remaining examples. These buildings are typically small, one-story, wood-framed buildings, sheathed in either clapboard siding or smooth stucco with Western False Front roofs. The majority of surviving examples are concentrated near Old Town's original core and are interspersed along San Diego Avenue and Harney [and Congress streets](#). They can be described as early 20th Century commercial buildings. An example of this type of property can be found at 2505 and 2515 San Diego Avenue.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Commercial buildings may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Considering the fact that few commercial buildings remain from the early American development and industrialization period, even representative examples of types and styles may qualify.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion C setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation. In both cases, the use of the building may have changed. It is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact. Signage may have changed unless it was an integral component to the architecture.

Comment [E5]: A direct connection between the industries developing or transportation improvements and this resource type could not be made. The discussion of this resource type may be deleted if the connection between the resources and the theme is not strong enough.



Theme: Automobile, Early Tourism and Preservation in Old Town

In Old Town there were two distinct periods of development directly influenced by tourism and preservation. The first phase occurred from 1904 to 1937 and revolved around the impact of the automobile. This phase was characterized by early motorists' interest in buildings remaining from the Spanish and Mexican Periods in Old Town. The second phase was characterized more by the restoration, reconstruction, relocation, and recordation of existing resources that became tourist attractions in the first phase. Since there is a significant break in time between these two periods, as a result of World War II, they will be discussed separately below.

Phase 1: The Automobile, Early Tourism and Preservation (1904-1937)

In the early 1900s, the popularity of the automobile had led to auto touring as a recreational activity. By 1904 Southern California had been described as a "paradise" for car enthusiasts. Travelers from all over the country flocked to California to experience the scenic countryside from behind the wheel. And the route from Los Angeles to San Diego was advertised as the most picturesque within the United States.⁵⁷ This route traveled along the coast and cut inland through

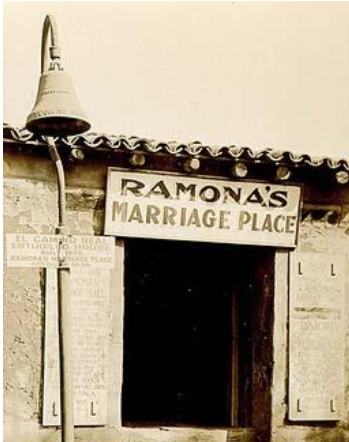


Figure 1213: Ramona's Marriage Place Postcard, date unknown.

Source: San Diego Historical Society Postcard Collection, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/communities/oldtown/oldtown.htm>

Escondido, Temecula, and Temescal Canyon. A secondary, more direct route to San Diego via the coastline was also available for motorists. However, the roads were treacherous and seen as near impossible to cross. However, in 1904 the first motorist to complete the coastal route arrived in San Diego.⁵⁸

Three years later San Diego's Chamber of Commerce, Boulevard Committee put together an expansive plan for 200 miles of new roadways to link downtown with further outlying areas of the county.⁵⁹ The Committee's plan improved the main arterial way from Los Angeles to San Diego and an additional route along the west shore of the San Diego River was drafted to link Old Town with the mission. Following the completion of the Committee's plan, San Diego became a primary automobile-touring destination. And new life was given to Old Town as a unique and ancient place for tourists to experience.

In 1905, John Spreckels took advantage of this renewed interest in Old Town's historic resources and purchased the Casa de Estudillo adobe. At the time the adobe was more commonly known as Ramona's Wedding or Marriage Place, after the popular 1884 novel, *Ramona*, by Helen Hunt Jackson. In Hunt's novel, a similar location was described, reviving new interest in the adobe. Spreckels

⁵⁷ "Auto Record Along Coast," *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1904, B3.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ "Roads for Two Hundred Miles," *Los Angeles Times*, September 1, 1907, VIII2.



decided to capitalize on this interest and restored the Casa de Estudillo simultaneously while he constructed the San Diego Electric route through Old Town. He hoped in doing so he would increase Old Town's desirability as a destination and increase ridership on his new route. The restoration project was conducted under the direction of architect, Hazel Waterman and by 1910 the restoration was complete and the railway was up and running.⁶⁰ Spreckels' new San Diego Electric route ran from M and State Streets in New Town to the center of Old Town.⁶¹

In 1915, Old Town became a featured sight seeing destination when San Diego hosted the Panama-California Exposition. The City romanticized its past, newly constructed buildings for the Exposition were inspired by San Diego's history under Spanish and Mexican rule. This renewed interest in the City's early heritage, combined with the success of Spreckels restoration of Casa de Estudillo sparked preservation efforts within Old Town. Its residents began to see preservation as an opportunity to increase tourism and commerce, as auto touring increased. [After the restoration of the Casa de Estudillo, an estimated 125,000 people visited the site in 1915.](#)⁶²

By 1919, the roads to San Diego had been greatly improved and during the 1920s auto touring reached new heights. *The San Diego Union* estimated that San Diego County had approximately 50,500 registered automobiles in a population of 202,000.⁶³ In order to accommodate increasing automobile traffic the streetscapes of San Diego began to change. The city purchased traffic lights and businesses catering specifically to motorists began to emerge. In Old Town, motels, auto-courts, gas stations, and garages all began to be constructed in increasing numbers. Tourist camps and auto-courts started to line San Diego Avenue, and Taylor, Chestnut and Congress Streets near some of Old Town's most popular attractions including: the Casa de Estudillo, the Whaley House, the Old Mission Packing Plant, the Spanish Cemetery, and the Plaza San Diego Viejo. The largest of these, Young's Auto-Court was located at the corner of San Diego Avenue and Taylor Street. It spanned an entire block and contained approximately 43 individual units, separate restroom facilities, an office and a gas station. The original Young's Auto-Court has since been demolished. However, a representative example of an early auto-court is present at 2360 San Diego Avenue and was constructed in 1929. [Another example was the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel, designed by Richard Requa in 1939. The rooms were arranged around a central patio rather than around a central parking lot, as was common for auto-courts built around the same time. The rooms had wide porches opening onto the large central patio, and all rooms had garages that automobiles entered from the rear. It was described by a 1940 article in the *Tourist Court Journal* as a "tourist court which faithfully follows the traditions of the hacienda for the early Spanish Dons."](#)⁶⁴ [It functioned as an auto-court into the 1960s. It was acquired as part of the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park in 1968. The Casa de Pico Motor Hotel is located](#)

⁶⁰ "Historic Adobe to Become a Museum," *San Diego Union*, April 8, 1910, 12.

⁶¹ "Old Town Service is in Effect Today," *San Diego Union*, April 1, 1910, 11.

⁶² Victor A. Walsh, "Una Casa del Pueblo: A Town House of Old San Diego," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 2004), http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/v50-1/una_casa.pdf, accessed August 9, 2011, 1.

⁶³ "An Easy On-Day Trip," *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1919, VI2.

⁶⁴ Sean K.T. Shiraishi, "The Casa de Pico Motor Hotel," www.parks.ca.gov/pages/663/files, accessed August 3, 2011.



[on Juan Street between Wallace and Mason streets, and is now the Fiesta de Reyes complex.](#)

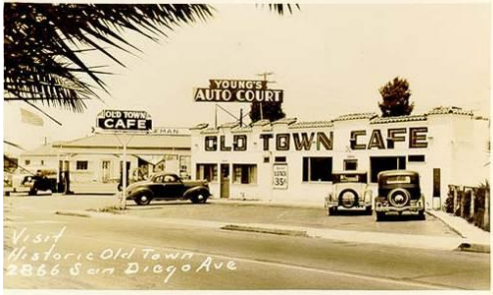


Figure 14: Postcard with Young's Auto Court and Cafe in the foreground.

Source: San Diego Historical Society Postcard Collection, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/communities/oldtown/oldtown.htm>

Once Marston had purchased the site in its entirety he hired landscape architect and city planner, John Nolen to begin designing a public park.⁶⁶ Nolen advised Marston that a building should be constructed at the top of the site to fully realize his plan. With this in mind, Marston hired well-known local architect, William Templeton Johnson to design a museum at the top of the site. The museum was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, to resemble the early missions that dominated the landscape of Southern California. The museum was completed in 1929 on Presidio Drive.



Figure 13+5: Exterior view of the Junipero Serra Museum, ca. 1930.

Source: <http://digitalibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/chs-m8712.html?x=1296174764101>

[The Presidio Hills Golf Course opened in 1932. It is located at 4136 Wallace Street along Juan Avenue adjacent to Presidio Park. The golf course was located close to the auto courts on Juan and San Diego Avenues, and guests were often free to use the golf course while staying at the auto courts, as was the case with the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel, and the driving range was popular with guests. The golf course was developed by Marston following the completion of Presidio Park.](#)⁶⁷

[As tourism increased in Old Town in this period, retail stores, especially souvenir stores, began to be constructed. For example, within the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, at 2725 San Diego Avenue, J.U. Kellar had a curios shop in 1936.](#)⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Gregg R. Hennessey, "Junipero Serra Museum Architecture, Cultural, and Urban Landmark," *Journal of San Diego History*. Vol. 25, No. 3 Summer 1979.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Shiraishi, www.parks.ca.gov/pages/663/files/podcast, accessed August 3, 2011.

⁶⁸ [San Diego City Directory, 1932.](#)

Comment [E6]: Could not find information about the Palms Auto Court (now Dodson's corner)



[Restaurants and cafes opened as well to serve the increasing numbers of tourists that came to Old Town San Diego. An example of this is the Spanish Colonial Revival style restaurant at 2836 Juan Street, built in 1938. It shows up on the Sanborn map from 1940; the map indicates that it was a restaurant as it is today.⁶⁹ Another example is 2495 San Diego Avenue. 2505 San Diego Avenue also housed a restaurant in 1932. Grocery stores also opened in increasing numbers to serve the tourists that traveled to Old Town. 2501 San Diego Avenue, which now houses a Five and Dime General Store, held a general merchandise store in 1932.](#)

[As increased tourism encouraged development](#), residents of Old Town began to consider other ways of maintaining the character of their community. Following the restoration of the Casa de Estudillo, a discussion advocating design restrictions for new buildings within a certain radius of the restored Casa de Estudillo began. This discussion was an early attempt at creating specific design guidelines for the community. It suggested that new buildings constructed near the Casa de Estudillo should be designed in the ‘Mexican Style.’⁷⁰

Old Town also began documenting its historic resources in the 1930s, shortly following the establishment of the Historic American Buildings Survey program in 1933. In 1937, the Casa de Bandini, Casa de Estudillo, and the Casa de Lopez were all recorded as part of this program.

Associated Property Types

Property types associated with this theme, in the plan area, were predominately a wide variety of commercial buildings. However, the Junipero Serra Museum is also associated with this theme. It was constructed in 1929 and is already listed as HRB [Site #237](#). The museum is located on Presidio Drive and was designed by architect William Templeton Johnson in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. Presidio Park which surrounds the Junipero Serra Museum was designed by John Nolen in 1925 and was donated to the City four years later. The park includes the San Diego Presidio Site, which was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960, and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.

The commercial buildings within the plan area associated with this theme include: motels, auto courts, gas stations, garages, small retail shops, and recreational and leisure properties.

Commercial – Motels, Auto Courts, Gas Stations and Garages

Automobile touring and early tourism within Old Town greatly influenced its development in the early 1910s and 1920s. Motels, auto courts, gas stations, and garages were constructed during this period to cater to the new recreational activity; [the Casa de Pico Motor Hotel is located on Juan Street between Wallace and Mason streets within the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. It was designed by Richard Requa in 1939 and is now the Fiesta de Reyes complex.](#)

⁶⁹ [Sanborn Map, 1920 cor. 1940.](#)

⁷⁰ “Old Town Plaza Advocates that Homes Built Within a Certain Radius of Ramona’s Marriage Place Should be in the ‘Mexican Style’,” *San Diego Union*, July 5, 1910. San Diego Historical Society, Periodical Clippings, Old Town 1900-1929, Binder 237.



[Another example is a motel constructed in 1929 and](#) located at 2360 San Diego Avenue. It consists of individual vernacular bungalows, with flat roofs, and stucco exterior walls organized around a semicircular paved parking area.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria [A & C](#)

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Motels, auto camps, gas stations and garages buildings may be individually significant under [Criterion A as a rare surviving example of a property type that played an important role in the history of early tourism. Examples of these property types may also be eligible under](#) Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Considering the fact that 2360 San Diego Avenue is [one of](#) only [two](#) remaining motels from this period and few automobile related property types from this time period remain, it may be eligible as a representative example of a motel from this time period.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation under Criterion C. The use of the building may have changed and it is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact. For auto courts and motels the general layout of the property including its parking area should remain intact. Signage may have changed unless it was an integral component to the architecture.

Commercial – Sports, Recreation, and Leisure Resources

Although there is only one prime example of a sports and leisure property associated with this theme in the plan area, it is representative of the early leisure culture associated with the tourism in Old Town. The Presidio Hills Golf Course was opened to the public in 1932 and is located just below Presidio Hill between Wallace and Mason Streets along Juan Avenue at 4136 Wallace Street. This golf course was conveniently located within walking distance of auto courts on Juan and San Diego Avenues and later incorporated the Casa de Carrillo into its grounds. [It was available for use by tourists staying at the nearby auto courts in Old Town San Diego, such as the Casa de Pico auto court.](#)

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Sports and recreational areas may be individually significant under Criterion C, if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. Good examples of sports and recreational areas will reflect their original use, and layout from the era in which they were constructed.

Considering the fact that the few, recreational and leisure properties remain within the plan area, even representative examples may qualify. In this case the landscaped grounds and the buildings associated with those grounds should be evaluated together as a single resource.



Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation under Criterion C. The use is significant to this property and should remain the same as it was historically. However it is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; although, the immediate setting should remain intact. In the case of the Presidio Hills Golf Course, and similar sports grounds, the property's designed landscape is a character-defining feature and must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity under Criterion C.

Commercial – Retail Stores, Restaurants, and Grocery Stores

Although, few commercial buildings were constructed within Old Town during this period there are a couple remaining examples. These buildings are typically small, one-story, wood-framed buildings, sheathed in either clapboard siding or smooth stucco with a Western False Front or flat roof, or with Mission Revival stylistic influences. The majority of the surviving examples of this type are concentrated near Old Town's original core and are interspersed along San Diego Avenue and Harney Street. They can be described as early 20th Century commercial buildings; they include restaurants and souvenir shops that opened in response to the increasing number of tourists visiting the area. Good examples of this type of resource can be found at 2505 San Diego Avenue and 2836 Juan Street, built in 1938 as a restaurant. An example of a grocery store that served tourists during this period is located at 2501 San Diego Avenue, which was a general merchandise store in 1932.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Commercial buildings may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Considering the fact that few commercial buildings remain from this period even representative examples types and styles may qualify.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion C, setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the evaluation. In both cases, the use of the building may have changed. It is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact. Signage may have changed unless it was an integral component to the architecture.

Phase 2: Preservation and Tourism in Old Town (1950-1970)

Interest in preserving Old Town's historic past was put on hold leading up to and during World War II. However, following the end of the War, a renewed interest in Old Town's historic sites re-emerged. From 1956 to 1969 restoration activities within Old Town boomed, five historic sites were restored including: the Whaley House in 1956, the Mason Street School in 1962, the Casa de Pedronena 1968, and the Casa de Estudillo and the Casa de Machado-Stewart in 1969.

Comment [E7]: Could not find information that the 1969 bicentennial was significant in Old Town



In addition to the restoration of buildings within Old Town previously demolished resources were reconstructed like the Casa de Lopez in 1963. Buildings were also relocated in order to avoid demolition such as the Derby-Pendleton House, constructed in 1851 which was moved to its current location in 1962. These preservation efforts preceded the creation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Between 1968 and 1970, 28 historic buildings and sites were designated as California Historical Landmarks. [The Old Town](#)



Figure 1546. Derby Pendleton House during its relocation, 1962.
Source: <http://sohosandiego.org/reflections/2005-3/derby.htm>

[San Diego State Historic Park, created in 1968,](#) was listed as a National

Register Historic District and a California State Park [in 1970](#). In order to preserve the character of the area, new in-fill construction was required to be constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Similar to the vision John Spreckles had in the early 1900s, residents of Old Town between 1950 and 1970 saw the economic opportunity in preserving its past in order to attract tourists. Commercial development during this period catered to daytime visitors with the construction of small-scale restaurants, shops, and souvenir stands to provide tourists with opportunity to purchase gifts from their travels. In addition to new construction, commercial development within Old Town also utilized adaptive reuse of earlier buildings to cater to the current needs of visitors.

[The creation of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park in 1968 and Heritage Park in 1969 served the dual purpose of preserving and interpreting San Diego's early history and taking advantage of the growing tourism industry in the area. Old Town San Diego State Historic Park was created to preserve and interpret San Diego's history between 1821 and 1872. Heritage Park, located adjacent to Old Town, was formed for the preservation and interpretation of late 19th century buildings that were being threatened with demolition in downtown San Diego. The park contains six Victorian era residences constructed in the 1880s and 1890s as well as Temple Beth Israel, which was built in 1889 and was San Diego's first synagogue. The structures were relocated there and restored.](#)

[Tourism and interpretation of San Diego's early history continues to this day. The ever-expanding scope of the history interpreted in Old Town can be seen in the creation of the Kumeyaay Ewaa site in Presidio Park. The site is an interpretive tool built in 2005 by a](#)



[Kumeyaay descendent.](#)⁷¹ The traditional house type was built in Presidio Park to highlight the presence, culture, and history of the Kumeyaay Native American group in the region, and to provide a tool for interpreting that history and culture. The structure is a recreation of a pre-contact Kumeyaay house described by Gaspar de Portola in the village of Kosa'aay in 1769. As a result of these sites and the commercial development that began in the 1950s, today tourism within Old Town remains the area's dominant industry.

Associated Property Types

The primary property types associated with this period include a variety of commercial buildings including: restaurants, retail shops, motels, and gas stations, which catered to tourists. Similar to those constructed during Phase I of this period, the majority of development continued to occur along Old Town's busiest commercial corridors including San Diego Avenue, Pacific Highway, Taylor and Congress Streets. [The development of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park was an important development during this period; the properties associated with the park have previously been designated as historic resources and therefore were not re-evaluated for the purposes of this survey.](#)

Commercial – Motels, Auto Courts and Gas Stations

The tourist industry in Old Town transitioned into full development in this period and more motels, hotels and auto courts began to line the commercial corridors of the area. The popularity of the automobile as the preferred mode of transportation during this period was reflected by the preference in the construction of motels and auto courts over hotels. Typical motels and auto courts consisted of either a set of connected suites or individual bungalows organized around an asphalt paved parking area. An excellent later example of this property type is the Padre Trail Inn located at 4200 Taylor Street at the corner of Sunset and Taylor Streets.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria [A & C](#)

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Motels, auto courts, and gas stations may be individually significant under [Criterion A as a rare surviving example of a property type that played an important role in the history of tourism. Examples of these property types may also be eligible under](#) Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement).

Considering the fact that there were once many and now there are few, even representative examples of motels, auto courts, and gas stations from the period may qualify.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, design, materials, and feeling must be retained in the

⁷¹ [Kumeyaay Information Village, "Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, Building Traditional California Indian House."](http://www.kumeyaay.info/culture/ewaa/pages/001.html) <http://www.kumeyaay.info/culture/ewaa/pages/001.html>, accessed August 9, 2011.



evaluation under Criterion C. The use of the building may have changed and it is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact. For auto courts and motels the general layout of the property including its parking area should remain intact. Signage may have changed unless it was an integral component to the architecture.

Commercial – Retail Stores

As the tourism industry boomed during this period small retail stores catering to daytime visitors to Old Town continued to be constructed along its commercial corridors. These buildings are typically small, one to two stories in height, and sheathed in either clapboard or smooth stucco often constructed in an architectural revival style; typically Spanish Colonial Revival or Western False Front styles. This was due to enforced design guidelines after Old Town was designated a historic district. However, some retail stores were constructed in popular architectural styles from the post war period. Most of the retail stores were constructed along San Diego Avenue, Pacific Highway, and Congress, Harney and Taylor Streets. Two examples of this property type can be found at 3941 Mason Street and 2222 San Diego Avenue.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Commercial buildings may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement).

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion C setting, design, materials, feeling and workmanship must be retained in the evaluation. The use of the building may have changed and it is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact. Signage may have changed unless it was an integral component to the architecture.

Commercial – Restaurants

As a result of the tourism industry there are numerous restaurants in the plan area. There are two typical types of restaurants within the Old Town plan area. They are either one-story freestanding buildings surrounded by surface parking lots or they are located within commercial strips that are one to two stories in height at pedestrian level. These buildings were typically constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style due to enforced design guidelines after Old Town was designated a historic district. However, some examples remain of other styles that were popular during the post-war period. A good example of this property type can be found at 4620 Pacific Highway.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C



Evaluation of Individual Resources: Restaurants may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (See Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement).

Essential Factors of Integrity: Under Criterion C setting, design, materials, feeling and workmanship must be retained in the evaluation. The use of the building may have changed and it is assumed that the general setting will have changed since the period of significance; however, the immediate setting should remain intact.

Theme: Great Depression and World War II (1930-1945)

Unlike most of the nation, San Diego did not immediately experience the effects of the 1929 stock market crash. The city experienced a much more gradual decline since its industrial base was still in its development stages. However in the years that immediately followed, real estate sales declined and development largely ceased. In order to generate economic development, state and federal government relief programs were created to fund a variety of infrastructure, civic, and residential construction projects in the 1930s.

During this period, focus shifted to the improvement of American domestic life, advocating home ownership and standardized construction practices. However, as housing construction continued to decline during the deepening depression, the ideal of the small house took on new urgency. The 1931 President's Conference for the design of residential neighborhoods resulted in recommendations from the nation's foremost experts on how to stimulate the construction industry while improving the quality of housing for the average American family.⁷² This goal was largely achieved by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) established in 1934. The FHA approved properties for mortgage insurance and published construction standards for housing.

In 1936 the FHA published its first guide to efficient comfortable living, titled *Planning Small Houses*. The publication featured five house types that would provide maximum accommodation within a minimum amount of space.⁷³ By 1940, the "FHA minimum house" originally presented in the 1936 guide, had been reworked to allow for expansion and the design could be influenced by individual style preferences with the addition of gables, porches, materials, roof types, windows, and shutters.



During the 1930s and 1940s the minimum house was being expressed in the Streamline Moderne and

Figure 1617: FHA Demonstration House in Mesa AZ, 1936.

Source: National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs p. 63.

⁷² "Hoover Stresses Need for Easier Home Buying," *Los Angeles Times*, December 3, 1931, 1.

⁷³ "Booklets to Guide Home Building Offered," *Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 1936, E4.



Minimal Traditional styles.

Within Old Town, the ideals of the 1930s FHA publications emerged in the development of a residential neighborhood constructed in the Minimal Traditional style, along Jackson, Sunset, and Juan Streets, located just below the Presidio site. This development spanned Block 450 and Lot 1 of Block 449 of the original Old San Diego plat map. The new subdivision map was filed on January 18, 1938 at the request of land owner, George W. Marston and Director Percy H. Broell.⁷⁴ Development within these two blocks began in 1938 and continued up through 1945.

However, this was not the only new subdivision George Marston was developing within Old Town during this period. In addition to his subdivision along Jackson, Sunset, and Juan Streets, he also began developing a new subdivision to the northwest eight years earlier. This subdivision included Block 423 of the Old San Diego plat map, and a portion of the Hinton subdivision. This section of Marston's land was re-mapped on June 12, 1930 to accommodate the continuation of Jackson Street. This subdivision was bounded by Taylor, Whitman, Chestnut (currently Presidio Drive) and Wallace Streets.⁷⁵

The latter half of the 1930s saw the continuation of the efforts in Old Town to preserve its early history. As a part of the Historic American Buildings Survey, the Casa de Bandini, Casa de Estudillo, and the Casa de Lopez were recorded in 1937. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) completed numerous projects in Old Town. WPA funds provided for the rebuilding of the Adobe Chapel of the Immaculate Conception near its original site in 1937.⁷⁶ WPA funding also allowed for the construction of a wall in Presidio Park, which was built to represent the eastern wall of the original presidio.⁷⁷ The agency also constructed an outlook structure at the head of the Franciscan garden and created trails and pathways within the park.⁷⁸

In the mid 1930s San Diego's economy began to recover and on October 20, 1935, the city received a huge industrial economic boost when Ruben H. Fleet relocated Consolidated Aircraft to the Midway area, just southwest of Old Town. Fleet came to San Diego with \$9 million in unfilled orders and 800 employees.⁷⁹ Shortly after the company's relocation, Consolidated Aircraft received one of its largest contracts from the Navy for 60 twin-engine PBV-1 patrol bombers.⁸⁰ As the depression came to a close Consolidated Aircraft had 9,000 employees and by

⁷⁴ Record of Survey No. 631, Block 450 and Lot 1 of Block 449 of Old San Diego, San Diego California, January 18, 1938.

⁷⁵ Licensed Surveyors Map No. 409. Licensed Survey of Lots G, H, I, & J, Hinton Subdivision & Portions of Block 423 Old San Diego, San Diego California June 12, 1930.

⁷⁶ California Office of Historic Preservation, "California Historical Landmarks: San Diego County," http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21478 (accessed August 9, 2011).

⁷⁷ James Mills, "A Spanish Wall," *The Journal of San Diego History* Vol. 2, No. 3 (July 1956), <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/56july/wall.htm> (accessed August 9, 2011).

⁷⁸ Thomas L. Scharf, ed. "Presidio Park: A Statement of George W. Marston in 1942," *The Journal of San Diego History* Vol. 32, No. 2 (Spring 1986), <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/86spring/presidio.htm> (accessed August 9, 2011).

⁷⁹ William Wagner. *Ryan, The Aviator: Being the Adventures and Ventures of Pioneer airman and Businessman, T. Claude Ryan*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 182-183.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 185.



1941 its workforce had jumped to 25,000 when the U.S. entered World War II.⁸¹

Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, military bases along the Pacific Coast became prime strategic locations for the Pacific fleets. Between the recruitment of military personnel and defense contract workers, the population of San Diego soared. From 1940 through the summer of 1943, San Diego's growth far surpassed its ability to provide housing and services for thousands of defense workers.⁸² This increase in population impacted everything from housing, to transportation and schools.

Within Old Town, during this period, circulation patterns were transformed to accommodate the construction of La Jolla Avenue (currently part of San Diego Avenue) and the Pacific Highway, expansion which resulted in the closure and remapping of a variety of Old Town's original streets and subdivision blocks.⁸³



Figure 1748. Old trolley cars at the foot of Presidio Hill serving as temporary housing.

Source: <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/93spring/suburbs.htm>

The City attempted to assist in the search for homes by developing a Defense Housing Commission, which listed available vacancies within the area.⁸⁴ The City also lifted ordinances against rooming houses in residential zones, but nothing could meet the continuous immigration of defense workers. Soon military and defense workers began to seek housing in Old Town due to its close proximity to the Midway area. Existing housing within the Old San Diego Community Plan Area had already become filled to capacity like most of San Diego. In an effort to provide temporary housing, old trolley cars were relocated to a vacant lot within Old Town, along

Juan and present-day Taylor Streets. Auto-camps previously used for traveling motorists within Old Town also began to be utilized as temporary housing and the U.S. Navy took possession of the former Mrs. Hubbel's Western Bakery buildings, to aid in housing military operations and personnel.⁸⁵

Finally, in 1940, the Federal government passed the Lanham Act, which appropriated \$150 million to the Federal Works Agency to provide massive amounts of housing in congested defense industry centers. The development of defense housing units within the city would be

⁸¹ Mike Davis, Kelly Mayhew and Jim Miller. *Under the Perfect Sun: The San Diego Tourists Never See*. (New York: The New Press, 2003).

⁸² Mary Taschner, "Boomerang Boom: San Diego 1941-1942," *Journal of San Diego History*. Volume 28, Number 1. (Winter, 1982), <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/82winter/boom.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.

⁸³ Record of Survey Map No. 752, July 31, 1939; Record of Survey Map No. 929, June 13, 1941; Record of Survey Map 1799, April 22, 1943; Old San Diego, San Diego California.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Sanborn 1940 cor. 1945.



located in undeveloped areas both east and north of the city's downtown.⁸⁶

Between 1940 and 1942 two smaller subdivisions were developed within Old Town. One was located just north of Taylor Street, along Juan and Gains Streets, and the other consisted of a section of government housing projects constructed along Calhoun and Juan Streets between Harney and Mason Streets. However, both areas have since been redeveloped with few buildings remaining from this period.⁸⁷

Associated Property Types

According to Sanborn maps, property types associated with this theme include the adaptive reuse of tourist motor courts, auto courts, and even old trolley cars as temporary housing for the influx in defense and military personnel. However no examples of this type of temporary housing remain. In addition to temporary residential accommodations permanent single-family residences were constructed. A concentrated pocket of single-family residences constructed during this time is still present just below the presidio. The only industrial development within Old Town during this period was the construction of Mrs. Hubbel's Bakeries located along Pacific Highway.

Residential - Single-family Residences

The single-family residences constructed during this period are concentrated below Presidio Park along Sunset, Mason, Twigg and Jefferson Streets. The majority of the homes were designed in the Minimal Traditional Style with a few constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. These residences tend to be one story to one and half stories in height depending on grading with moderate setbacks and landscaped front yards. Good examples of this property type can be found along the 2600 block of Sunset Street.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria B & C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Single-family residences may be individually significant under Criterion B if they were the homes of persons significant in local history. Single-family residences may also be eligible under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style it represents (see the Architectural Styles in Appendix I).

Evaluation of Historic Districts: A contiguous grouping of similar single-family residences from this period may be eligible for listing as a historic district under Criteria A-E. Once a district has been listed individual buildings may qualify as contributors under Criterion F. A contributing building should reflect the architectural style and form that it would have possessed at the time of construction. Historic districts must retain a substantial majority of buildings dating from the period of significance and collectively reflect a particular style or period.

⁸⁶ *San Diego Modernism Context Statement*, 33.

⁸⁷ Subdivided Lands, City of San Diego Map 1900-1942. Historical Planning Maps, City of San Diego. <http://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk/inforecords/historicalmaps.shtml>; accessed January 15, 2011.



Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, location, feeling, and association must be strongly present. A contributing building to a historic district should reflect the architectural style and form that it would have possessed at the time of construction.

Theme: Post World War II (1946-1970)

Following World War II, San Diego experienced a continued population increase as veterans and defense workers began to permanently settle in the area. By 1950, San Diego's population had increased from 203,341 in 1940 to 334,387, creating a massive demand for permanent housing.⁸⁸ In response, developers began constructing large suburban tract homes along the city's outskirts. At the end of the 1940s the role of the developer had been transformed with the Housing Act of 1949. This act made it profitable for developers to construct multiple houses from stock plans rather than having the homeowner construct their own residence. The residences tended to be affordable, and modest in scale with simple floor plans.

Within Old Town, there was a surge of new development. Pockets of residential tract homes began to be constructed within the area's already existing housing developments. These homes were similar to the outlying suburban developments, in their repetitive style however they were constructed on a smaller scale and varied between single and multi-family residential units. Examples of this type of post-war housing can be seen along the 2200 block of Congress Street and the 2600 block of Juan Street.

As the 1940s came to a close the popularity of the automobile had impacted public transit to such a degree that the original San Diego Electric Railroad Company discontinued its trolley service on April 24, 1949 and two years later the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railroad followed suit.⁸⁹ The 1950s ignited a production boom for automakers; this in conjunction with the development of a comprehensive highway system transformed the landscape of San Diego. The construction of the Camino Del Rio, Interstate 5, and Interstate 8 created rigid geographic boundaries between Old Town and the communities to the north and southeast.

Associated Property Types

The San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement was prepared in 2007. It should be used in the evaluation of property types from the post-war period. Property types associated with this theme consist of single and multi-family residences constructed to house returning veterans taking advantage of federal housing programs. Similar to previous periods, commercial and industrial development was almost stagnant within Old Town, as previously constructed buildings continued to be re-used for new uses. However, institutional buildings began to be constructed in the plan area. In 1951 Caltrans constructed its new District headquarters at the former Old Mission Olive Works plant site.

⁸⁸ Oscar Kaplan, "A Housing Report on the San Diego Metropolitan Area," prepared for the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, August 1952.

⁸⁹ Holle, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/2002-1/holle.htm>; accessed April 1, 2010.



Institutional – Government Buildings

One institutional building was constructed during this period, it was the District 11 headquarters for Caltrans. The building is two-stories in height and was designed in the Mid-Century Modern Style. The building is located at 2829 Juan Street, between Wallace and Taylor Streets, [and was determined eligible for the National and California Registers in March 2011](#). The Mid-Century Modern Style is discussed further in the San Diego Modernism Context Statement.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Institutional buildings may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (see the Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement). To be eligible, they should also be important examples of their type and clearly reflect the era in which they were constructed. The use of the building may have changed.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, design, materials, and workmanship must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity under Criterion C.

Residential - Single-family Residences

Single-family residences constructed during this period are mostly one-story in height and can be described as Minimal Traditional or Ranch Style. Examples of these house types are located along the 2200 block of Congress Street. Both of these house types are discussed further in the San Diego Modernism Context Statement.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criteria B & C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Single-family residences may be individually significant under Criterion B if they were the homes of persons significant in local history. Single-family residences may also be eligible under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style it represents (see the Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement).

Evaluation of Historic Districts: A contiguous grouping of similar single-family residences from this period may be eligible for listing as a historic district under Criteria A-E. Once a district has been listed, individual buildings may qualify as contributors under Criterion F. A contributing building should reflect the architectural style and form that it would have possessed at the time of construction. Historic districts must retain a substantial majority of buildings dating from the period of significance and collectively reflect a particular style or period.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, location, feeling, and association must be strongly



present. A contributing building to a historic district should reflect the architectural style and form that it would have possessed at the time of construction.

Residential – Multi-family Residences

The post-war period was marked by the construction of an increasing number of apartment buildings. This was largely in response to the overall housing shortage that created a need for higher density to accommodate the influx of new residents. Multi-family residences in the plan area do not represent a particular type. They generally range from two to eight units and one to two stories in height. A few exhibit the characteristics of the Minimal Traditional style. Examples are located along Juan Street between Mason, Twigg, and Sunset Streets. Multi-family housing from this period is discussed further in the *San Diego Modernism Context Statement*.

Criteria: San Diego Register Criterion C

Evaluation of Individual Resources: Multi-family properties may be individually significant under Criterion C if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction. These buildings will possess the character-defining features of the style they represent (see the Architectural Styles in Appendix I as well as the San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement). To be eligible, they should also be important examples of their type and clearly reflect the era in which they were constructed. Individual units located on a single parcel should be evaluated as a single resource.

Evaluation of Historic Districts: A contiguous grouping of similar single-family residences from this period may be eligible for listing as a historic district under Criteria A-E. Once a district has been listed, individual buildings may qualify as contributors under Criterion F. A contributing building should reflect the architectural style and form that it would have possessed at the time of construction. Historic districts must retain a substantial majority of buildings dating from the period of significance and collectively reflect a particular style.

Essential Factors of Integrity: Setting, design, materials, and workmanship must be strongly present in the evaluation of integrity under Criterion C.



Architectural Style Guide

The architectural character of the Old San Diego Community Plan Area reflects the fact that it was heavily influenced by design guidelines following the designation of the Old Town San Diego Historic District (the District) [and the establishment of the Old Town Planned District Ordinance](#). Commercial and residential development located within and immediately adjacent to the District tends to be constructed in the Spanish Colonial Revival or Early 20th Century Commercial styles, regardless of their date of construction. While development located outside of the District tends to reflect more of the architectural styles popular at the time of construction. The majority of the residences located outside of the District constructed between 1900-1930 can be described as Craftsman bungalows. Commercial buildings were designed in the styles common during the period including Spanish Colonial Revival. Although, the majority of development within the plan area was predominately stagnant during the Great Depression and up through World War II, a small development of single-family residences constructed in the Minimal Traditional style emerged just below Presidio Hill. This was the only contiguous development constructed during this period apart from limited infill within already developed sections of the plan area. While most of the buildings following World War II, can be described as Minimal Traditional, Custom Ranch, Tract Ranch, and Late Spanish Colonial Revival, a few examples of the International Style, Googie/Futurists, and Streamlined Moderne can also be found.

The styles discussed below are those currently represented among the potential historic resources identified in the plan area. These include those styles that are prevalent in this area, or are represented by prominent examples. This typology does not establish historic significance. Rather, it describes the existing population of buildings constructed prior to 1970 in this portion of the city.



Western False Front Commercial

Western False Front Commercial buildings are characterized by their simplistic design. This typology was popular from the late 19th century up through the early 20th century and emerged out of early business economics that desired to emphasize the primary façade of a commercial building while minimizing the overall cost of construction and design. This desire resulted in the Western False Front typology, consisting of a commercial building with a larger more ornate primary facade and minimally designed secondary facades.

The Western False Front Commercial typology first appeared in San Diego in the late 19th century. Typical examples from this period had simple rectangular plans, with front gable roofs and extending false front walls to maximize advertising space. The exterior of the buildings were typically sheathed in shiplap, clapboard, or channel dropped wood siding with some later examples constructed of brick. The primary façade was typically symmetrical in design and the entrance to the building was typically flanked by storefront windows. The secondary elevations of these buildings are either not visible from the public right of way or contain minimal ornamentation and design elements. This typology was typically only popular through the early part of the 20th Century; however, later examples of this style are present in the plan area as a result of business owners catering to the interests of tourists in the early history of Old Town.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- One or two stories in height
- Rectangular, boxy plans
- Gable roofs with extending false front walls at the primary façade
- One storefront with display windows
- Symmetrical façade design



2415 San Diego Avenue

Secondary

- Straight edge parapet wall.
- Minimal design elements on secondary elevations.
- Recessed entryway or full porch at primary facade



2515 San Diego Avenue



Mission Revival

Popular in Southern California from the late 1900s through the 1920s, the Mission Revival style emerged from a conscious effort by architects to emulate the architecture of the early Spanish Missions and break with Eastern colonial influences. The style received further impetus when the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railways adopted the style for stations and resort hotels throughout the west. The close proximity of Old San Diego to the San Diego Presidio site, in addition to its rich early Spanish roots, induced the construction of this style within the plan area. Similar to the Western False Front Commercial typology, later examples of this style are present within the plan area despite the styles decline in popularity in the rest of the Western United States after 1920.

The style was primarily applied to commercial, religious and public buildings with very few residential examples. There are two principle subtypes of the style; the symmetrical and asymmetrical types. Buildings constructed in this style typically have a mission-shaped dormer or roof parapet, red tile roof covering, wide overhanging open eaves, smooth stucco exterior wall cladding and a rectangular or square plan.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Flat, gabled, or hipped roofs with mission-shaped dormer or roof parapet
- Red clay tile cladding
- Smooth or textured stucco exteriors

Secondary

- Wood-framed casement or double-hung windows, typically with divided lites
- Quatrefoil windows
- Arched colonnades, window or door openings
- Decorative grilles of wood, wrought iron, or plaster
- Decorative terra cotta or tile work
- More elaborate versions may display balconies, patios, or towers



1050 San Diego Avenue



2424 Congress Street



Spanish Colonial Revival

Enormously popular in Southern California from the late 1910s through the late 1930s, the Spanish Colonial Revival style emerged from a conscious effort by architects to emulate older Spanish architectural traditions, and break with Eastern colonial influences. The style attained widespread popularity throughout Southern California following the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, designed by chief architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. At the peak of its popularity, design features of other regions of the Mediterranean were often creatively incorporated, including those of Italy, France, and North Africa. Although, the Spanish Colonial Revival Style was rarely seen after the late 1930s, the Old San Diego Community Plan Area is unique in that it contains many later examples of this architectural style. Later examples were constructed as a result of enforced architectural design guidelines that encouraged new construction to be designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, following the designation of the Old Town Historic District. Post-war examples of this style tend to be less ornate, and more simplistic in form, with smooth stucco cladding and clay tile cladding. The apartment complex at 2530 Juan Street is a good example of how the Spanish Colonial Revival style was executed during the post-war period.

The style was applied to a broad range of property types including commercial, residential, and institutional. Red clay tile roofs or flat roofs rimmed by parapets trimmed in red clay tile and stucco exterior cladding are the most common features. Because of the extensive vocabulary of the style, designs could be endlessly varied.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Horizontal massing and emphasis
- Flat, gabled, or hipped roofs with red clay tiles
- Smooth or textured stucco exteriors
- Asymmetrical facades



2836 Juan Street

Secondary

- Wood-framed casement or double-hung windows, typically with divided lites
- Arched colonnades, window or door openings
- Decorative grilles of wood, wrought iron, or plaster
- Decorative terra cotta or tile work
- More elaborate versions may display balconies, patios, or towers



2530 Juan Street



Craftsman

The Craftsman style of architecture grew out of the late 19th century English Arts and Crafts movement. It reflected a conscious search for the supposed simplicity of a pre-industrial time when objects revealed the skill and craftsmanship of the laborer; and further, a rejection of the highly ornamental Victorian era aesthetic. The Craftsman style was most commonly applied to domestic architecture and ranged from custom-designed two-story houses to modest bungalows that were mass-produced. Craftsman style houses are characterized by their glorification of natural materials and promotion of outdoor living with a typically generous front porch. Custom-designed houses in San Diego often featured workmanship and design of high quality and represent the Craftsman style at its peak of expression. Although the bungalow has been closely associated with the Arts and Crafts movement and the Craftsman style of architecture, it refers to a type of house rather than a style of architecture.

The Craftsman bungalow became the dominant residential style in Southern California during the first two decades of the 20th century. Craftsman bungalows generally have shingled exteriors and broad front porches supported by stone, clinker brick, or stuccoed piers. Other character-defining features include low-pitched gabled roofs with wide overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. Examples of the Craftsman Style in the Old San Diego Community Plan Area are limited to modest Craftsman bungalows with minimal ornamentation.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- One to two stories in height
- Building forms that respond to the site
- Low-pitched gabled roofs
- Shingled exteriors, occasionally clapboard or stucco
- Partial or full-width front porches

Secondary

- Overhanging eaves with exposed rafters, beams, or braces
- Stout porch piers, often of river rock or masonry
- Wood-framed windows, often grouped in multiples
- Widely proportioned front doors



3970 Harney Street



3893 Harney Street



Streamline Moderne

Influenced by the Cubism and Modern movements in Europe, Moderne structures were characteristically smooth walled and asymmetrical, with little unnecessary ornamentation and simple aerodynamic curves of concrete, plaster, and glass block. The popularization of this new modern style was reinforced by the government during the Depression as government funded New Deal projects such as the 1936-38 San Diego Civic Center (now the County Administration Center) adopted the style as the embodiment of government efficiency. This new Streamline style was a stark contrast to the lavishly ornamented Art Deco and Period Revival buildings of the pre-Depression years, which had come to represent government waste and excess. Examples of the Streamline Moderne style can be found on almost every building type including commercial, multi-family residential apartments, and some single-family residences.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Horizontal massing and emphasis
- Flat roofs with coping or flat parapets
- Smooth stucco or concrete exteriors
- Asymmetrical façades

Secondary

- Horizontal accents, or “speedlines”, and restrained detailing
- Curved building corners, railings, overhangs, and coping with horizontal projections above doorways and at cornice lines
- Steel sash windows
- Corner windows
- Glass block accents
- Round “porthole” windows and nautical theme



2360 San Diego Avenue



2266 San Diego Avenue



Minimal Traditional

Minimal Traditional style buildings reflect traditional architectural forms and eclectic styles, but generally display simpler and less extensive decorative architectural detailing of the previous Period Revival styles. Minimal Traditional houses are usually modest in scale with one level, although there are some two-story examples. Common decorative features include smaller, simple front porches, chimneys, and low pitch, shallow eave roofs. Pre-war examples reference Moderne and older styles, and usually have a detached garage. Post-war examples often integrate the garage and reflect the emerging Contemporary trends. Though sometimes employing brick or stone materials, this was the first style to typically delete these expensive treatments from the side and rear façades, reflecting the frugal times.

This style is most prevalent in residential construction, but is also common in small-scale commercial, retail, and office uses. Minimal Traditional style houses are usually clustered together, especially in 1940's residential neighborhoods, although they can also be found separately as later infill in previously developed neighborhoods of Craftsman bungalows and earlier styles. In the Old San Diego Community Plan Area there are a variety of multiple-family Minimal Traditional Style residences just below Presidio Hill.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Compact size, usually one story in height
- Simple floor plans with minimal corners
- Low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs with shallow overhanging eaves
- Traditional building materials (wood siding, stucco, brick, and stone) emphasizing the street façade



2621 Sunset Street

Secondary

- Small front porches
- Simplified details of limited extent, reflecting traditional or Moderne themes
- Modestly sized wood-framed windows, occasionally one large picture window
- Detached or attached front-facing garages, frequently set back from the house



2655 Sunset Street



International Style

The International Style was a major worldwide architectural trend during the 1920s and 30s and reflected the formative decades of Modernism prior to World War II. Although the International Style originated in Western Europe, it transcended any national or regional identity because International Style architecture made no reference to local vernaculars or traditional building forms. The style quickly migrated to the United States as architects fled from war torn Europe. In Los Angeles, immigrant architects Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra were instrumental in popularizing the style. The emergence of International Style architecture in San Diego came later with most examples built after 1935.

The International Style is characterized by a radical simplification of form and a complete rejection of ornament. Common features of the style include square and rectangular building footprints, simple cubic or extruded rectangular forms, horizontal bands of windows, and strong right angles. Predominant building materials include concrete, smooth stucco, brick, and, glass.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Single or groups of rectangular masses
- Flat roofs (cantilevered slabs or parapets)
- Exterior materials including concrete, brick, and stucco
- Lack of applied ornamentation
- Asymmetrical facades



2829 Juan Street

Secondary

- Horizontal bands of flush windows
- Steel sash windows, typically casement
- Windows meeting at corners



2829 Juan Street



Futurist – Googie

The Futurist style of Modern architecture began after World War II as Americans became entranced with technology and the Space Age. At that time, America was also being transformed by a car culture. As automobile use increased, roadside architecture evolved. It was intended to attract the consumer with bright colors, oversized lighted signage, and exaggerated forms. In short, the building was the billboard. The Futurist style was used overwhelmingly on coffee shops, gas stations, motels, restaurants, and retail buildings. The name “Googie” comes from the well-known coffee shop in Los Angeles called Googies, which was designed by renowned Modernist architect John Lautner in 1949. Futurist architecture is also referred to as “Coffee House Modern”, “Populuxe”, “Doo-Wop”, and “Space Age”. Futurist architecture was popular throughout the 1950s and fell out of favor by the mid-60s, as America became more sophisticated in its understanding and interpretation of space travel and futurist technology.

Futurist architectural design often incorporates sharp angles, boomerang or flying saucer shapes, large expanses of glass, exposed steel structural elements, and dramatic roof overhangs. The basic form and size of Futurist buildings varies significantly from building to building. An abstract arrangement of shapes and textures is typical.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Abstract, angular, or curved shapes
- Expressive roof forms such as upswept, butterfly, parabolic, boomerang, or folded-plate
- Assortment of exterior materials including stucco, concrete block, brick, stone, plastic, and wood siding
- Large and expansive plate glass windows



4620 Pacific Highway

Secondary

- Bright colors
- Screen block and shadow block accents
- Thematic ornamentation including Polynesian and Space Age motifs
- Prominent signage (neon or lighted)



4620 Pacific Highway



Tract Ranch

Tract Ranch houses proliferated in San Diego and other cities across the country as with the rapid growth of the suburbs. Suburban expansion meant larger lots and bigger houses with prominent attached garages and generous front and rear yards. Tract Ranch houses are characterized by rambling, single-story floor plans with low-pitched hipped or gabled roofs. The strong horizontality is accentuated by horizontal fenestration and deep roof overhangs. Exterior materials and detailing are typically traditional. Wall materials include horizontal wood siding, wood board and batten siding, stone, and brick. Roofs are generally finished with wood shingles or shakes. Tract Ranch style design variations include Storybook/Chalet Style, Colonial, Contemporary, Spanish Hacienda, and Western Ranch. In general, Tract Ranch houses are relatively conservative in design with Period Revival style features including paneled wood doors, divided lite windows, and wood shutters. Ranch style tract homes include a variety of forms from relatively modest to much larger floor plans.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Usually one story in height
- Horizontal massing and emphasis
- Low-pitched gabled roofs with wide overhanging eaves
- Traditional building materials (wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stucco, and stone)

Secondary

- Traditional details emphasizing street façade (wood shutters, wood windows, and wide brick or stone chimneys)
- Attached carports or garages



2371 Jefferson Street



Custom Ranch

Custom Ranch construction is differentiated from Tract Ranch because these homes were typically custom-designed with a specific client in mind. Designers of these custom homes include such noted San Diego designers as Cliff May, Richard Wheeler, CJ Paderewski, and Weir Brothers Construction. Cliff May was instrumental in popularizing the Ranch style in California with his book and articles published by *Sunset Magazine*. The Ranch style became the post-war era's most prevalent type of residential construction in San Diego. Custom Ranch houses are generally much more lavish than their tract counterparts; they frequently included a large landscaped property, with a deep street setback creating a generous front yard. These homes may also feature larger garages, motor courts, servant's quarters, expanded kitchens, and generous living spaces. Like Tract Ranch housing, materials and detailing are generally traditional. Typical exterior materials include wood siding, stone, concrete block, brick, and even adobe. Detailing may include paneled wood doors, divided lite windows, wood shutters, and prominent chimneys.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Usually one story in height
- Horizontal massing, wide to the street
- Prominent low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs with wide overhanging eaves
- Expensive building materials (wood shingle roofing, wood siding, brick, stone, and adobe), more generous in materials and craftsmanship than tract homes



2635 Sunset Street

Secondary

- Custom details (wood shutters, large wood windows, or large prominent brick or stone chimneys)
- Sprawling floor plan frequently "L" or "U" shaped around a central courtyard
- Large attached carports or garages



2451 Juan Street



Contemporary

Contemporary tract houses represented a growing sophistication of the residential homebuyer and an increasing public demand for housing that reflected the latest styles. They employed modern features such as interior courtyards, aluminum-framed windows, sliding-glass doors, and attached carports or garages; and flexible plans, allowing the homebuyer to customize their properties.

In addition to its use as a style for tract housing, the Contemporary style was ubiquitous in San Diego during the 1950s and 1960s for commercial buildings. These buildings display many of the same design features as Contemporary style homes, such as angular massing, varied materials, and unusual roof forms, especially on freestanding commercial buildings. Signage for street front commercial buildings in the Contemporary style was generally large, with bold freestanding letters attached to façades that were frequently lighted in order to attract passing motorists. For Contemporary buildings with private parking lots such as grocery stores, signage was frequently taller and rose above the building itself, serving as a beacon in large parking areas.

Character-Defining Features

Primary

- Horizontal, angular massing
- Strong roof forms including flat, gabled, shed, or butterfly, typically with wide overhanging eaves
- Non-traditional exterior finishes including vertical wood siding, concrete block, stucco, flagstone, and mullion-free glass



4145 Twiggs Street

Secondary

- Large windows, often steel or aluminum
- Sun shades, screens, or shadow block accents
- Distinctive triangular, parabolic, or arched forms
- “Eyebrow” overhangs on commercial buildings
- Integrated, stylized signage on commercial buildings



2445 Juan Street



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