THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: July 5, 2017

TO: Historical Resources Board Policy Subcommittee

FROM: Kelley Stanco, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Planning

SUBJECT: Valle Vista Terrace Historic District: Review of Context, Statement of Significance, Period of Significance and Boundary Description and Justification

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In August 2009, The City of San Diego retained Historic Resources Group (HRG) to complete a historic resource reconnaissance survey as part of the North Community Plan Update. HRG conducted a detailed examination of the community plan area, focusing on properties constructed prior to 1970. Surveyors identified properties that appeared eligible for individual designation, as well as geographically-definable areas that appeared eligible for designation as historic districts. The Valle Vista Terrace Historic District was not among the districts identified by HRG. Members of the community objected, and requested that staff re-evaluate the Valle Vista Terrace subdivision at a reconnaissance level to determine if the district was potentially eligible. Staff did so, and found that the area appeared to retain sufficient integrity to identify it as a potential historic district. As a result, the final 2016 North Park Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey acknowledges the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District as a community-identified historic district (Attachment 1.)

In early 2017, staff issued a task order to as-needed planning consultant AECOM to prepare a historic context statement, statement of significance, period of significance and boundary description and justification for the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District (Attachment 2). The district context statement builds on the context prepared for the 2016 North Park Survey. The district context first presents an overview of the City-wide development history, and then provides a detailed discussion of the development of University Heights and the Valle Vista Terrace district. The statement of significance then evaluates the district within that context against the City's designation criteria, and concludes that the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is significance under HRB Criterion A as a resource that exemplifies and reflects special elements of University Heights' historical and architectural development; and under HRB Criterion C as a collection of architectural properties that are good examples of several styles dating from 1908-1942. The period of significance identified for the district begins with the subdivision of lots and construction of the first homes in 1908 and ends in 1942, the year that development in the district halted, marking the end of the original development of the district and the construction of contributing resources.

The district boundary includes all of the parcels in the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision as illustrated in San Diego County Recorder Map No. 1081, which includes irregularly shaped lots surrounding both sides of the curvilinear loop of Panorama Drive, along Cliff Street, and on the north side of Adams Avenue between its east and west intersections with Panorama Drive. It includes 89 parcels, including 86 houses, and the district boundary encompasses the subdivision that historically contained these houses.

At this time, staff is seeking the Policy Subcommittees review of the draft historic context statement, statement of significance, period of significance and boundary description and justification for the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District. Staff will review all comments and direction received and revise the nomination as appropriate as we proceed with the designation process. Please note that because the document is an early draft, it is in a general report format. As the district nomination is finalized, it will be formatted on the applicable Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms.

Kelley Stanco

Senior Planner

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Attachments: 1. Excerpt from 2016 North Park Reconnaissance Survey

2. Draft Valle Vista Historic District Historic Context, Statement of Significance, Period of Significance and Boundary Description and Justification.

5.3 POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTICTS

During the public outreach process, members of North Park community identified five (5) additional potential historic districts, including the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District, the Park Villas Historic District, the Altadena/Carmel Heights/Frary Heights Historic District, the Wabash Mesa Historic District and the St. Louis Heights/Lynhurst/O'Nealls Terrace/Wallace Heights Historic District.

While the survey work conducted by HRG did not identify these areas as potential historic districts, qualified City staff reviewed these potential historic districts and conducted a windshield survey on foot to evaluate whether or not these areas may contain a sufficient concentration of resources and the physical integrity required to be eligible for local listing. While each property was not individually revaluated and documented; staff was able to determine that these areas do appear to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing on the City's Register under HRB Criteria A and C.

In order to bring these districts forward for designation, additional, intensive-level research will be required to evaluate the district and define a precise boundary, period of significance, significance criteria, and contributing and non-contributing resources. The initial information below will provide a baseline of information for future survey work and analysis.

Valle Vista Terrace Historic District

Encompassing the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision, including Panorama Street, Cliff Street, and north side of Adams Avenue; the Valle Vista Terrace potential historic district consists of approximately 89 parcels. Developed between c.1907 and c.1940, this district is potentially eligible under HRB Criteria A and C related to the themes of *Development of North Park: 1907-1929* and *Influence of the Great Depression & World War II in North Park: 1930-1945.*

Figure 9. Valle Vista Terrace Historic District.

DRAFT

Historic Context and Statement of Significance for the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District in University Heights, San Diego, California

Prepared for:

City of San Diego Planning Department
Environment & Policy Analysis Division
Historic Preservation Planning Section
1010 Second Avenue MS 413
San Diego, CA 92101
Under City Agreement # H156344, Task Order 14

Prepared by:

Trina Meiser
Lauren Downs
AECOM
401 W. A Street, Suite 1200
San Diego, CA 92101

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Introduction

AECOM was retained by the City of San Diego (City) to prepare a historic context, statement of significance, and boundary description and justification in support of the City's nomination of the proposed Valle Vista Terrace Historic District for review by the Historical Resources Board. The City has conducted the survey and prepared the descriptions of the buildings as part of the nomination process. AECOM historical resources specialists reviewed existing survey documentation, conducted research, identified the historical themes related to the proposed district, and evaluated the district's significance based on the historic context.

Historic District Description – Overview

The Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is located in the University Heights neighborhood in San Diego. The district consists of XX contributing buildings, all built between 1908 and 1942, and XX non-contributing buildings (Table 1). The contributing buildings include a variety of one- and two-story residences that represent popular architectural styles in the early 20th century, including Craftsman, Missional Revival, Spanish Eclectic, Tudor Revival, and Minimal Traditional. Two eras of development are evident in the district, with earlier, larger houses dating from the 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s, and later, relatively modest cottages dating from the 1930s and 1940s. The diverse collection of early 20th century residences is set on asymmetrical lots radiating from and in between the curvilinear Panorama Drive. The district is further unified by a border of Queen Palm trees lining the streets and sidewalks of the subdivision. The district retains all seven aspects of integrity and has the ability to convey its significance at the local level.

Table 1. Properties within the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District

Assessor's Parcel Number	Address	Date	Style	Significance
4381500400	4704 Panorama Drive	1909	Mission Revival	
4381500500	4706 Panorama Drive	1913	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381500600	4712 Panorama Drive	1940	Minimal Traditional	
4381500700	4714 Panorama Drive	1911	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381500800	4716 Panorama Drive	1926	Tudor Revival	
4381500900	4718 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381501000	4720 Panorama Drive	1915	No Style	
4381501100	4724 Panorama Drive	1915	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381501200	4726 Panorama Drive	1966	Post and Beam	
4381501300	4730 Panorama Drive	1927	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381501400	4732 Panorama Drive	1949	Minimal Traditional	
4381501500	4734 Panorama Drive	1920	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381501600	4736 Panorama Drive	1920	No Style	
4381501700	4738 Panorama Drive	2013	Neo-Craftsman	
4381501800	4740 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	

Assessor's Parcel Number	Address	Date	Style	Significance
4381501900	4744 Panorama Drive	1908	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	
4381502000	4748 Panorama Drive	1953	No Style	
4381502100	4750 Panorama Drive	1950	Custom Ranch	
4381502200	4752 Panorama Drive	1948	Custom Ranch	
4381502300	4756 Panorama Drive	1942	Custom Ranch	
4381502400	4760 Panorama Drive	1934	Spanish Eclectic	
4381502500	4762 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381502600	4770 Panorama Drive	1940	Minimal Traditional	
4381502700	4774 Panorama Drive	1920	Dutch Colonial Revival	
4381502800	4776 Panorama Drive	1923	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381502900	4778 Panorama Drive	1914	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	
4381503000	4780 Panorama Drive	1914	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	
4381503100	4782 Panorama Drive	1922	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381503200	4784 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381503300	4788 Panorama Drive	1947	Tract Ranch	
4381503400	4792 Panorama Drive	1924	Mission Revival	
4381503700	2320 Adams Avenue	1912	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381503800	4798 Panorama Drive	1912	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	
4381504200	4794-96 Panorama Drive	1924	Mission Revival	
4381610100	2216 Cliff Street	1909	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)/Tudor Revival	
4381610200	2204 Cliff Street	1909	Craftsman Bungalow/Tudor Revival	
4381610300	4727 Panorama Drive	1926	Craftsman/Colonial Revival	
4381610400	4731 Panorama Drive	1925	Mission Revival	
4381610500	4733 Panorama Drive	1923	Spanish Eclectic	
4381610600	4735 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	
4381610700	4737 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381610800	4739 Panorama Drive	1926	Neo-Spanish Eclectic	
4381610900	4741 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381611000	4747 Panorama Drive	1926	Tudor Revival	
4381611100	4751 Panorama Drive	1935	Spanish Eclectic	
4381611200	4755 Panorama Drive	1926	Neo-Contemporary	
4381611300	4761 Panorama Drive	1948	Minimal Traditional	
4381611400	4767 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381611500	4769 Panorama Drive	1911	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	
4381611600	4771 Panorama Drive	2004	Neo-Spanish Eclectic	
4381611700	4773 Panorama Drive	1926	Spanish Colonial Revival	
4381611800	4775 Panorama Drive	1927	Mission Revival	
4381611900	4779 Panorama Drive	1921	Custom Ranch	
4381612000	2230 Cliff Street	1913	Craftsman (Arts & Crafts)	

Assessor's Parcel Number	Address	Date	Style	Significance
4381612100	4781 Panorama Drive	1921	Spanish Eclectic	
4381612200	2232 Cliff Street	1924	Mission Revival	
4381612300	2242 Cliff Street	1924	Mission Revival	
4381612400	2252 Cliff Street	1924	Mission Revival	
4381620100	4715 Panorama Drive	1924	Tudor Revival	
4381620200	4717 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	
4381620300	2203 Cliff Street	1913	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381620400	2209 Cliff Street	1922	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381620500	2219 Cliff Street	1921	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381620600	2225 Cliff Street	1921	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381620700	2229 Cliff Street	1923	Mission Revival	
4381620800	2235 Cliff Street	1923	Mission Revival	
4381620900	4785 Panorama Drive	1913	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621000	4789 Panorama Drive	1913	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621100	4791 Panorama Drive	1912	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621200	4793 Panorama Drive	1912	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621300	4795 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	
4381621400	2242 Adams Avenue	1914	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621500	2230 Adams Avenue	1914	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621600	4797 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	
4381621700	2224 Adams Avenue	1912	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621800	2220 Adams Avenue	1912	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381621900	2206 Adams Avenue	1926	Spanish Eclectic	
4381622000	2154 Adams Avenue	c.1956	No Style	
4381622100	2138 Adams Avenue	1980	No Style	
4381622200	4711 Panorama Drive	1926	Tudor Revival	
4381622300	2128 Adams Avenue	1916	Craftsman Bungalow	
4381622400	2120 Adams Avenue	1924	Mission Revival	
4381622500	4709 Panorama Drive	1927	Spanish Eclectic	
4381622600	4705 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	
4381622700	2112 Adams Avenue	1924	Mission Revival	
4381622800	4701 Panorama Drive	1923	Mission Revival	

Historic Context

As outlined in the *North Park Community Plan Area: Historic Context Statement* (Historic Resources Group 2011), the district is associated with the themes of the *Development of North Park: 1907-1929* and *Influence of the Great Depression & World War II in North Park: 1930-1945*. To further relate the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District to special elements of North Park, specifically University Heights, the following context provides a historical overview of San Diego, a description of early real estate ventures, transit systems, and the attractions that lured visitors to University Heights, and specific information related to the development of the Valle Vista Terrace neighborhood on Panorama Drive, Cliff Avenue, and Adams Avenue. This information illustrates the historical and architectural significance of the district as both a representative and a unique resource, and the historical themes it represents.

Overview of San Diego

The archaeological record indicates that humans were present in mainland Southern California in the early Holocene over 9,000 years ago (Erlandson et al. 2007). Humans appeared much earlier in California's Channel Islands (by around 13,000 years ago), but confirmed Pleistocene components are lacking on the Southern California mainland. At the time of Spanish contact, the present-day area of downtown San Diego and its environs were within the territory of Yuman-speaking groups that later became known as the Diegueño, named after Mission San Diego where many were baptized. Native groups living south of the San Diego River have also been referred to as the Ipai, and those to the north as the Tipai (Luomala 1978). However, the Yuman-speaking groups of the San Diego area are now most commonly referred to as the Kumeyaay. Settlement was seasonal, with one or more clans congregating at stable encampments during the winter and dispersing during the spring and summer to take advantage of ripening foods (Luomala 1978). The Kumeyaay village of Nipawai was located within present-day University Heights (Kroeber 1925).

Spanish explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo led the first Europeans to San Diego in 1542, followed by another Spanish expedition led by Sebestian Vizcaino six years later. Vizcaino bestowed the name San Diego. After Cabrillo's and Vizcaino's explorations in the mid-16th century, Spanish activity was sporadic for the next 150 years or so, until expanded exploration in the region by England and Russia prompted the Spanish to solidify their control through a program of colonization. The strategy for this effort included a dual settlement of the area by both the military and the church. Taking advantage of the navigable bay, the Spanish made San Diego their first settlement in Alta California. Initially, both a mission and a military presidio were located on Presidio Hill overlooking the San Diego River. Father Junipero Serra dedicated Mission San Diego de Alcalá on July 16, 1796. The mission was later relocated farther upstream along the San Diego River to an area more suited for agriculture. A small community also developed at the foot of Presidio Hill in present-day Old Town.

The Mexican war for independence from the Spanish began in 1810. Mexico ultimately succeeded 11 years later, placing California under Mexican rule. The Mexican government secularized the missions and distributed mission lands in large grants awarded primarily to the elite class of *rancheros*. The population of San Diego grew during this period, as more land became available for private ranching and farming. Large portions of land belonged to the pueblo and were communally held, including the mesa above Mission Valley to the east of the Presidio where present-day University Heights is located.

Tensions between the United States and Mexico related to the U.S. annexation of Texas in 1845 led the United States to declare war on Mexico in 1846, starting the Mexican-American War. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848 resolved the war, including the United States gaining ownership of California. California became a state in September 1850.

A significant shift in the development of San Diego was initiated at mid-century, when Lt. Andrew B. Gray, chief surveyor of the United States Boundary Commission, identified a potential location for a new wharf and settlement on the bay. In March 1850, William Heath Davis, a San Francisco merchant, and his partners purchased 160 acres on the bay approximately four miles to the south of Old Town and Gray plotted the streets for "New Town." Davis built a new wharf, warehouse, and house; the U.S. Army built barracks; and other settlers moved to New Town. However, by 1851, an economic depression and a lack of settlers and potable water, as well as animosity from the existing community at Old Town, hindered the development of New Town. In addition, Davis suffered financial losses due to a catastrophic fire in San Francisco, and he retreated from further developing New Town. New Town was largely abandoned.

In 1867, Alonzo E. Horton, a San Francisco furniture dealer and developer, arrived in San Diego and purchased approximately 800 acres adjacent to New Town. Like the previous developers, Horton focused his attention on the waterfront. Unlike the previous attempt, however, this venture was soon successful. The growth of the area was aided by the construction of the new wharf, a hotel, potential railroad connections, and Horton's tireless efforts to promote the area. In 1869, Horton acquired Davis's New Town tract. By 1871, the area of Horton's Addition had replaced Old Town as the center of San Diego (Schaefer and Newland 1994).

The Great Boom of the 1880s

Into the 1880s, the city made progress in the development of modern, necessary public utilities to build an urban center, including a potable water supply, sewerage, street lights, and means of transportation. In 1881, the city had a gasworks and gaslights; in 1882, a telephone exchange; and in 1886, electric lights (Smythe 1908:436). The 1885 arrival of the transcontinental railroad line to Southern California generated tremendous growth in San Diego, marking a period referred to as the Great Boom (1885-1888). During the Great Boom, land speculation was rampant, with a plethora of new subdivisions created for quick profits. The economic growth led to new infrastructure and amenities. San Diego's first horse-drawn streetcar system began operation in 1886, the first electric streetcars in 1887, and the first cable cars in 1890 (Smythe 1908:438, 441). At the peak of the boom, there were at least 17 streetcar and interurban companies operating from downtown San Diego (Holle 2002).

Unfortunately, the Great Boom was short-lived. By the spring of 1888, Southern California's real estate market was crashing and property values plummeted. Thousands of investors went from "paper millionaires" to nearly penniless (City of San Diego 2010). Despite the real estate crash, many of the most important public and private improvements in San Diego were completed in the years immediately following the crash, including completion of Hotel del Coronado; construction of the Spreckels coal bunkers and wharves; the court house; extensive street paving; the extension of the electric railway to University Heights; the completion of a water flume to supply water to the city; and construction of the San Diego, Cuyamaca & Eastern Railway to El Cajon (Smythe 1908). By 1889, economic stagnation truly began, marked by a series of bank failures (MacPhail 1979; Schaefer and Newland 1994). The California National Bank failed in 1891, creating further economic distress (Smythe 1908). Most of the

speculative real estate transactions of the Great Boom involved the sale of vacant parcels at inflated property values; thus, many subdivisions, including University Heights, remained undeveloped and rural (City of San Diego 2010). The promise of development faded through the economic depression of the 1890s.

San Diego in the 20th Century

At the turn of the 20th century, San Diego's economy began rebounding. The real estate market grew between 1901 and 1906 by "leaps and bounds, developing its resources, gaining population, attracting capital for investment, and enhancing its natural attractions by the most daring creations of the architect and the engineer" (Smythe 1908). The new real estate boom was due to both an increase in demand for actual homes and renewed speculation. Investment capital flowed in from sources outside of San Diego, particularly from Los Angeles investors (Smythe 1908). Los Angeles experienced a more significant economic boom than San Diego, primarily due to its railroad advantages, but benefited San Diego through this flow of investment: "it is now so clearly apparent that Los Angeles capital freely invests in San Diego real estate… Striking illustrations of the tendency are seen in the investment of great sums of Los Angeles capital in land, power, and townsite enterprises…" (Smythe 1908). Real estate speculators and promoters took action: "Never was more persistent, aggressive, and brilliant work done in the interest of an aspiring city than that performed by some of the larger real estate interests during this new era in San Diego" (Smythe 1908).

Development in San Diego took on all forms related to commercial trades, transportation, infrastructure, and industry. The expansion of streetcar lines during the early 20th century played a crucial role in the development of San Diego. The streetcar allowed for the development of suburbs, which were rapidly appearing on the outskirts of town (Schaefer and Newland 1994). In 1908, William E. Smythe noted that:

> The real prosperity of San Diego during the early years of the new century finds its best illustration not in new hotels and business blocks, not in street railway extensions nor in rising prices of real estate, but in the number and beauty of comfortable little homes which have been built throughout the length and breadth of the city. These have multiplied with surprising rapidity, covering the sunny slopes, extending out upon the mesas, and reaping well down toward the water front. They are the prophecy of the San Diego that is to be (Smythe 1908).

Later, automobiles reinforced this trend of suburbanization; commercial areas along automobile corridors, such as El Cajon Boulevard, were designed to accommodate motorists (Historic Resources Group 2011). A substantial number of single-family homes were constructed on previously vacant parcels, increasing the density of residential development in the streetcar suburbs, particularly near the transit hubs of the streetcar lines (City of San Diego 2010). The Craftsman and Prairie styles dominated residential construction in San Diego in the 1900s and 1910s.

Into the 1910s, San Diego continued to prosper and grow exponentially. Major events contributed to this prosperity, including the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 and San Diego's corresponding Panama-California Exposition of 1915–1916. The Exposition brought international attention to San Diego and, as a result of the Exposition, people flocked to San Diego. The city's population had roughly doubled each decade. The Exposition also created a trend in San Diego's architectural development in the mid-1910s

and 1920s with the Spanish Eclectic and Mission Revival styles becoming increasingly popular in all types of commercial, civic, religious, and residential architecture.

During World War I, San Diego's calm harbor and climate drew the U.S. Navy to establish aviation and submarine bases on the bay. The fishing industry and its associated canneries also helped to bolster the city's economy (Engstrand 2005). San Diego sustained its growth through the 1920s; by 1921, there were more developed than unimproved properties in the neighborhoods surrounding Balboa Park and the Exposition grounds (City of San Diego 2010). With the rise of automobiles, suburbia expanded further from downtown San Diego as the streetcar suburbs were built up. Commercial development along transportation corridors and residential development on available vacant lots and in new subdivisions continued at an intensive pace through the 1920s.

The Great Depression stunted the economy in San Diego, in great contrast to its remarkable growth in the 1910s and 1920s (City of San Diego 2010). During the 1930s, the economic downturn and rampant unemployment reduced the demand for real estate and development activities, particularly in many streetcar suburbs that were almost entirely developed by the mid-1930s (City of San Diego 2010).

World War II indelibly changed San Diego into a metropolitan center and a hub of wartime production to meet the needs of the burgeoning military-industrial complex. The population boomed. Government economic stimulus packages in the 1940s led to a number of infrastructure projects, including homebuilding initiatives (Historic Resources Group 2011). Due to an unprecedented housing shortage, much of the remaining undeveloped land in residential areas was developed with modest single-family residences and residential courts based on the Federal Housing Administration minimum house designs.

During the post-World War II era, San Diego changed considerably with the dominance of the automobile and suburbanization. In the late 1940s, San Diego decommissioned its electric trolley lines, and the central business district declined. By the 1950s, most new development in San Diego catered to the freeways, with new strip malls and parking lots. In addition, the demand for available land led to redevelopment activity, i.e., urban renewal (City of San Diego 2010). Mid-century development and urban renewal marked the beginning of a distinctly modern era for the city that continued through the end of the 20th century.

University Heights

During San Diego's Great Boom in the mid-1880s, several investment companies incorporated to purchase large land tracts in San Diego for subdivision and speculation, including the areas north of downtown San Diego and City Park (now Balboa Park)(Figure 1). Lot sales were initially successful on the mesa overlooking Mission Valley, which had an advantageous location and "the most delightful of all climates – the mesa climate, soft, dry, invigorating, and cool, without being damp." The area prior to development was characterized by "jackrabbits running through brush-covered territory" (Ledeboer 2006).

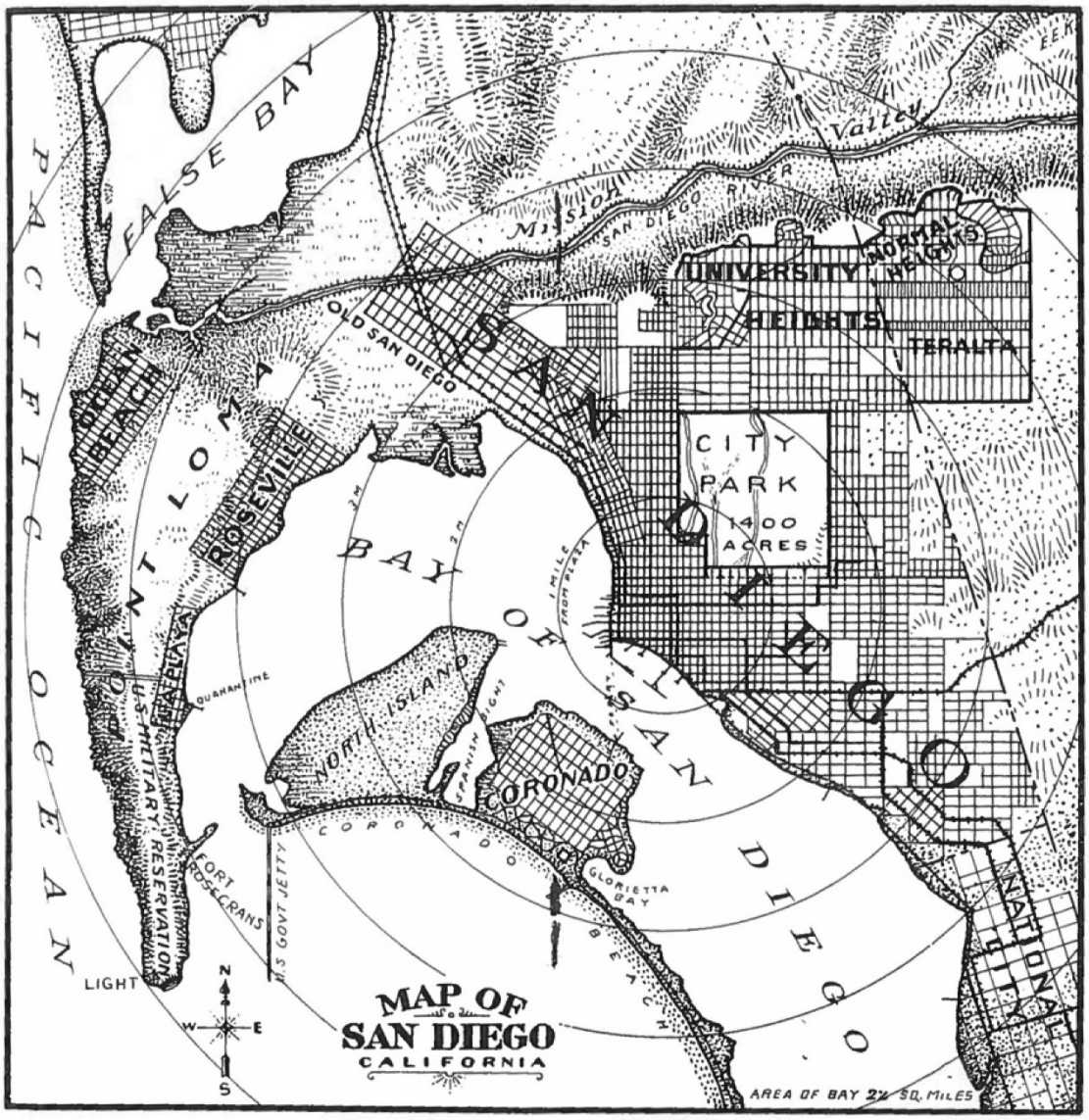

Figure 1. Map showing location of University Heights above City Park (Ralston Realty Co. 1906).

College Hill Land Association

One real estate investment company, the College Hill Land Association, was incorporated on July 17, 1886, with significant investments from its major shareholders led by Daniel Choate. Their initial investment capital of $865,500 and control of 1,600 acres north of City Park supported the Association's mission to "buy, sell, improve, mortgage, lease and otherwise generally deal in real estate in the County of San Diego, State of California" (Ledeboer 2006). The Association also had a stated intent to support the establishment of a college on the mesa. Championed by Reverend Edwin S. Chase of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the college was to be the San Diego College of Arts, a branch of the Methodist Episcopal University of Southern California (Engstrand 2005). The Association created a subdivision and donated every other lot of its subdivision to the church to raise $200,000 for construction of the college, and an estimated $2 million to fund its endowment. A 16-acre parcel for the location of the college was reserved towards the center of the subdivision (Van Dyke et al. 1888). The Association planned to "erect

upon a beautiful eminence of this property" the college building, "in the most impressive style of architecture" (*Golden Era* 1887). Therefore, they named the subdivision "University Heights."

By December 1887, the Association's agent, the real estate firm W.H. Holabird & Company, had already begun advertising lots in University Heights (*Golden Era* 1887) (Figure 2). Colonel William Hyman (W.H.) Holabird was a successful real estate agent who had colorfully promoted Coronado and several boomtowns along the California Southern Railroad in the mid-1880s, earning him the nickname the "Father of the Boom" (Van Dyke et al. 1888). According to an article in the magazine *Golden Era*, the first day of sales of University Heights property in December 1887 amounted to $105,000 and was "one of the greatest real-estate sales of Southern California" (*Golden Era* 1887). W.H. Holabird & Company advertised University Heights in *The San Diego Union* on January 1, 1888, describing its primary advantages, including its altitude, prevailing winds, the promise of "a magnificent college," and the rapid transit to the heart of the city that "greatly enhances its value" (*San Diego Union* 1888).

Figure 2. W.H. Holabird & Company advertisement on Broadway in downtown San Diego, 1887 (San Diego History Center)

The Association filed Subdivision Map #558 with the San Diego County Recorder for the University Heights subdivision on August 6, 1888 (Figure 3). The subdivision plan consisted of a rectilinear grid of streets, 210 urban blocks, reservations at the bluffs overlooking Mission Valley for parks and recreation, a manmade "Mystic Lake," and an area reserved for the college. The college campus was located at the intersection of major thoroughfares through the center of University Heights, where University Boulevard (present-day Washington and El Cajon Boulevards), Park Boulevard, and Mission Avenue met. The east-west streets of the subdivision were named after U.S. presidents, including Adams Avenue towards the northern boundary and Fillmore Avenue (present-day University Avenue) at the southern boundary. The

north-south streets were named after U.S. states and, from west to east, in a roughly clockwise geographical order starting in the northeast with Maine and ending in the Midwest with Missouri. Although there was some variation in the subdivision parcels, typical blocks were 600 by 300 feet, and typical lots were 25 by 140 feet. Boulevards were 150 feet wide, streets were 80 feet wide, and alleys, which were predominantly north-south through the center of each block, were 20 feet wide (Ralston Realty Co. 1906).

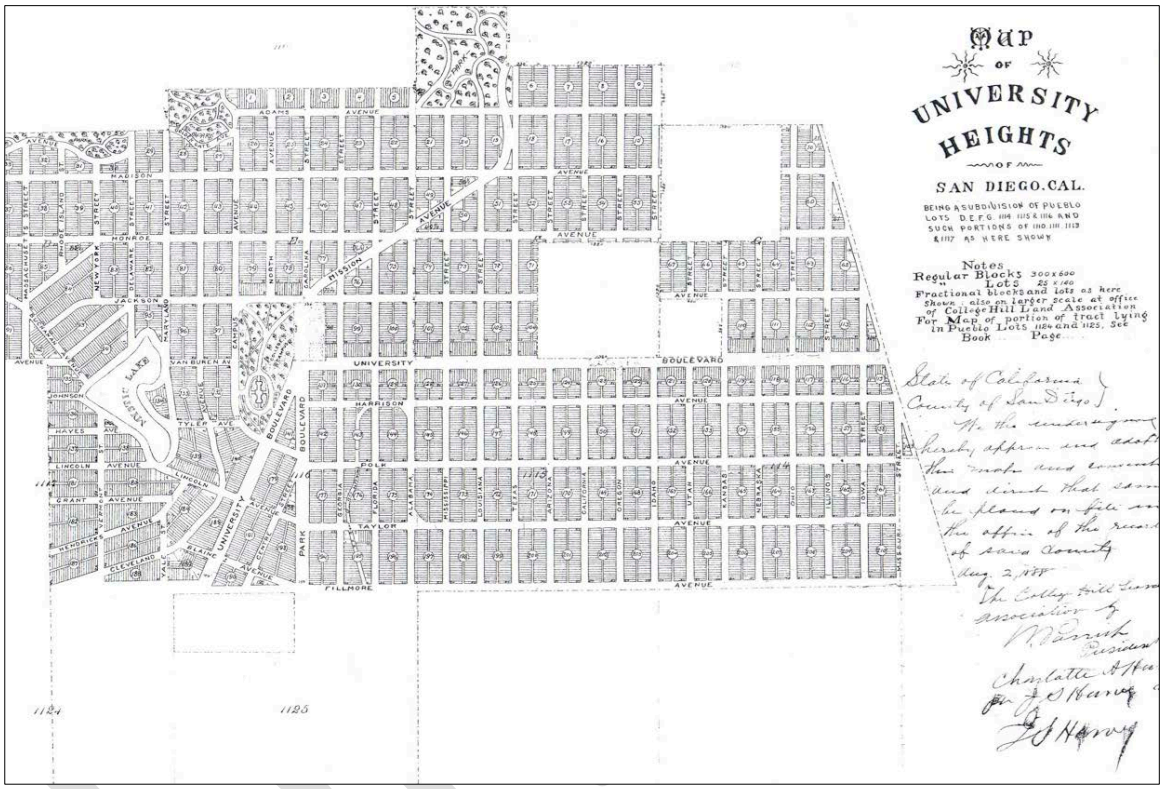

Figure 3. Subdivision Map #558 of University Heights, 1888.

Despite the implosion of the Great Boom in the spring of 1888, Choate spearheaded several improvements for the subdivision, including installing water main pipes down every street and a steam-powered streetcar line to the college (Van Dyke et al. 1888). According to another W.H. Holabird & Company ad in December 1888, "[h]undreds [o]f men are at work grading the boulevards on University Heights," which was "the choice residence property of the city," and the Electric Motor Rapid Transit Railroad was completed (*San Diego Sun* 1888). Trees along the boulevards and streets were planned, and new owners began transforming their lots, although the majority of University Heights remained undeveloped.

By November 1888, the firm of Norcross & Howard was the sole real estate agent of the Association, according to its advertisements (*Golden Era* 1888). The firm, led by H.F. Norcross, L.B. Howard, and Major E.A. Howard, claimed to "have sold more property during the last few months than any other real

estate firm in the city" (*Golden Era* 1888). Norcross & Howard touted the view from the bluffs and the convenience of half-hour trips on the Electric Motor Rapid Transit Railroad in its ads for University Heights. Perhaps in an attempt to resuscitate real estate sales, the description of the property's natural beauty became more flamboyant:

> The views of the mountains from University Heights should be emphasized. Every visitor to San Diego should have an opportunity to behold the grand sentinels of the bay from this point. The mountain peaks in the distance seem to yawn in their glory, and mantled with the ether's haze that enfolds the brown-baked hills, yet reveals the flaming nakedness of their nude glory. Looking east and north, you behold such a series of mountain peaks, such an array of valleys, such a jagged chain of hills, such a contrast of color, that one is bewildered by involuntary admiration (*Golden Era* 1888).

Despite the promises of its promoters, the sales of lots in University Heights suffered as the real estate market in San Diego collapsed in 1889. The plan for the College of Arts failed, and the college site and building were abandoned due to lack of funds. The Association held its shares in University Heights, but speculation in San Diego otherwise ceased.

Although the real estate market failed spectacularly in 1888, some important public and private improvements in University Heights continued to be developed (Smythe 1908). For example, the transit corridors between downtown San Diego and University Heights continued to evolve. The Electric Motor Rapid Transit Railroad completed an electric streetcar route up Fourth Avenue to the college site in University Heights in 1888, but quickly ended service in 1889 because it was not profitable. The San Diego Cable Railway Company redeveloped the same route with cable cars in 1890, and then extended the cable car system to the intersection of Adams Avenue and Park Boulevard in 1891. As part of its marketing scheme, the company developed "The Bluffs," a five-acre park with a pavilion at the Adams Avenue terminus as an attraction for daytrippers and to promote sales of the lots along the right-of-way owned by the company (Bevil 2012). Due to economic hardship related to the crash, the San Diego Cable Railway Company folded but was reorganized in 1895 as the Citizens' Traction Company. The company converted the cable cars into electric streetcars, and redesigned The Bluffs into Mission Cliff Park with additional entertainment and attractions (SOHO 2006). Eventually, the San Diego Electric Railway Company acquired the line in 1898, incorporated it into its existing system, and then widened the right-of-way through Hillcrest to Mission Cliff Park. John D. Spreckels, the owner of the company, had the park redesigned as Mission Cliff Gardens, turning the popular attraction into an elegant botanical garden (see the "Streetcar Suburbia" and "University Heights Attractions" sections below for more detailed information).

In addition to the development of transit lines and recreational attractions, educational institutions were developed. The University Heights School, the first elementary school in the neighborhood, opened in 1893. New plans for an institution of higher learning in University Heights also began in 1897. The original campus site was donated to the State of California for a teacher-training college, the Normal School. Local architects William S. Hebbard and Irving Gill designed a grand Classical Revival building for the site, which opened in 1899. Hebbard and Gill also designed east and west wings for the building that were completed in 1904. The Teachers Training Annex, a separate Italian Renaissance Revival-style building, was added to the campus in 1910. The Normal School finally fulfilled the vision of the

Association for a civic institution at the center of the University Heights community, although its eventual designation first as a State Teacher's College in 1921, and then as an exalted State College in 1925 eventually led to its relocation in 1931.

Development in the Early 20th Century

As the economy rebounded, real estate development in San Diego slowly regained momentum. On November 25, 1899, a new investment company, the South-Western Investment Company, led by "Colonel" David Charles (D.C.) Collier, Jr. and George M. Hawley, was incorporated and began focusing on the acquisition of land holdings in University Heights. Collier and Hawley were each involved in several real estate ventures in the early 20th century, but particularly focused on the University Heights, Normal Heights, and City Heights neighborhoods in San Diego. Collier and Hawley formed the University Heights Syndicate in 1902, incorporating their interests to the east of Mission Cliff Gardens. With Collier's and Hawley's investments, the South-Western Investment Company controlled nearly all of the College Hill Land Association's stock by March 1907 (Ledeboer 2006).

In February 1902, real estate agent C.A. Scott advertised several lots in 10 blocks in University Heights "at bargain counter prices to insure a quick sale." Agent representatives would meet prospective buyers arriving on the electric streetcar at Mission Cliff Gardens, "every car Thursday and Friday," to tour the properties. Lots were priced between $40 and $100 (*San Diego Union* 1902).

Collier's Ralston Realty Company began selling University Heights lots by 1904 (Ralston Realty Co. 1906). The company was instrumental in promoting University Heights and encouraging speculation on the sparsely developed subdivision. A promotional pamphlet produced circa 1906 described University Heights' progress and opportunities, and once again extolled its many virtues:

> Less than two years ago UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS was practically a waste of sage brush. The Normal School, an uncompleted building, stood 'alone in its glory.' No indications of future developments were apparent to the casual observer. It required men of foresight to see the great possibilities of that section, and it took vigorous action to awaken interest in the Heights, in the public mind, but it was accomplished. The Ralston Realty Company, handling its own property, as well as that of the College Hill Land Association, commenced an extensive advertising campaign, following it up by clearing brush and grading streets, laying water pipe, and exerting every effort and influence to popularize this most delightful section of the city.
>
> The work of the company soon produced results. A tremendous amount of property was sold during the summer months of 1904, and business and values have steadily increased, until at the present time property is worth two or three times more than it was when first put on the market in 1904. In many instances early purchasers have doubled their money or better within the year, and the improvement work and home building that has produced this increase in value is only just started. As it progresses values will continue to advance, and even greater profits will be realized at no very distant date.
>
> Today there are about 600 homes on UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS. The Normal School is finished, and improvement work provided for by State appropriation is under way on the seventeen-acre campus. The laying of sewer and water mains through the Heights is

> under way on the seventeen-acre campus. The laying of sewer and water mains through the Heights is giving employment to hundreds of workmen. The San Diego Electric Railway Company is busy double-tracking its line and will shortly be running a ten-minute service to supply the demand for a faster schedule to the Pavilion and Mission Cliff Park. Telephones, gas and electric lighting are being extended through UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS; in fact, all modern comforts and conveniences are being added to the wonderful natural advantages, and UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, "the ideal home spot" of San Diego, is rapidly becoming the choicest residence section. Home builders naturally consider educational advantages, as well as elevation, climate and beauty of surroundings, as desirable as location, and UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, with its beautiful Normal School building as the nucleus, consequently attracts people of education and refinement.
>
> No section of the city has shown such remarkable and substantial growth as UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, nor has any other portion produced such large returns for the investor and speculator. Many of the heaviest buyers on UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS are successful Los Angeles real estate investors, whose experience has enabled them to both see and seize the opportunities offered on UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, but outsiders are not the only people who have proved the money-making qualities of this section. Many residents of San Diego have been keen to the possibilities, and have availed themselves of low prices to buy, and in many instances have sold again at a profitable advance. The following list is taken at random. We could not print the names of all those who have realized handsomely on their investments, but those given are sufficient to show that money is being made on UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS, and property values must continue to advance, because the demand for this class of property is increasing, the supply is limited, and the area within the city cannot be extended. To the north Mission valley [sic] is the natural limit, and every foot of ground between Mission Cliff and the business center will double in value as homes are built and other improvements go in (Ralston Realty Co. 1906).

As mentioned in the promotional pamphlet, more improvements were rapidly available in University Heights in the 1900s, including water access. Substantial development of University Heights was not possible until a consistent water supply was available on the mesa. In 1907, Spreckels gained control over the Southern California Mountain and Water Supply Company, which then supplied the city (SOHO 2006). In 1907, the College Hill Land Association donated the 160,000-gallon water tank to the city "whereby this district was for the first time connected with the city water system. The tank, located on block 15, was long one of the most prominent and much admired landmarks in the eastern part of the city, visible for many miles around" (*San Diego Evening Tribune* 1907). The tank would supply an estimated 20 blocks east of the Mission Cliff Gardens pavilion, with a main pipeline along Idaho Street to downtown (*San Diego Evening Tribune* 1907). By 1910, a tank "mounted on the little knoll, having a capacity of 490,000 gallons" was installed to serve University Heights.

Also in 1907, the San Diego Electric Railway Company, in conjunction with Ralston Realty Company, completed an extension of the line down Adams Avenue to Normal Heights. With the supply of water

assured and the extension of the San Diego Electric Railway route along Adams Avenue, development in University Heights boomed.

In October 1907, Ralston Realty Company acquired Hawley's interests and oversaw the sales of lots in University Heights. By this time, the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision had been surveyed and filed with the City. Eventually, the companies' real estate interests in University Heights, including Valle Vista Terrace, and Normal Heights were consolidated under the Western Investment Company of San Diego, which was incorporated on November 30, 1907.

Streetcar Suburbia

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the location and density of commercial and residential development were largely determined by proximity to public transportation. Real estate along transit routes was extremely valuable. Early subdivisions closely followed established streetcar routes, and businesses and residences were built within short distances of the streetcar lines (Historic Resources Group 2011). Unlike areas that developed with a primary focus on automobile activity, areas surrounding streetcar lines developed at nodes. Commercial activity was centered at the intersection of streetcar routes, with commercial and residential development expanding outwards from the node. For University Heights, first the arrival of horsecars in 1886, then the electric streetcar in 1888, then the cable car in 1890, and again the electric streetcar in 1895 were especially important to the development of the neighborhood. The 1891 arrival of streetcars at the intersection of Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue defined the development and layout of northern University Heights.

Horsecars

San Diego's first mode of public transit was the horsecar, a horse-drawn streetcar on rails, operated by the San Diego Street Car Company from July 1886 to January 1892 (Niedrich 1993). The company was formed by developers Hampton L. Story and Elisha S. Babcock, Jr. The first streetcar started its run on July 3, 1886, with one open air car that seated 22 passengers and was drawn by a team of horses (*San Diego Union* 1961). In its first two years of operation, the San Diego Street Car Company purchased 30 horse cars of varying passenger capacity. Twelve of these cars were convertible cars from the Saint Louis Car Company, which featured removable window sashes and upper body panels for the warm summer months. The company developed five lines through downtown San Diego. The horsecar route from downtown to University Heights ran up Fifth Avenue, turning east and slightly north to University Avenue (Niedrich 1993). The San Diego Street Car Company remained in service until it was purchased by the Spreckels in 1892, creating the basic framework for the San Diego Electric Railway Company.

Electric Streetcars

In November 1887, the Electric Rapid Transit Company launched the first electric streetcar on the West Coast in San Diego (Holle 2002). The system used aboveground electric lines to power the streetcars. The company briefly offered service from downtown to Old Town over the San Diego and Old Town Railway's tracks. By December 1887, the company established a new route on Fourth Street from G Street to Fir Street that was eventually extended east along University Avenue and University Boulevard (present-day Normal Street) to the proposed site of the College of Arts in University Heights in 1888. Although the Electric Rapid Transit Company also supplied electricity along its line, the streetcar service portion of its operations ended in June 1889 due to declining profits (Holle 2002). The route was acquired for a unique form of transit – cable cars.

Cable Cars

Starting in June 1890, a cable car line operated between downtown San Diego and University Heights. In 1888, John C. Fisher, David D. Dare, and C.W. Collins organized the San Diego Cable Railway Company (also known as the San Diego Cable Car Company). Dare and Collins were officers at the California National Bank, which was born of San Diego's real estate boom. Construction for the cable car system began in August 1889, despite the economic downturn (Driese 1992). The first cable car ran through town on June 7, 1890, followed by a parade with the City Guard band (Schwartz 1982). The first paying customer was beloved horticulturalist Kate Sessions (MacMullen 1946). The cable car system had one route, which began at Sixth Avenue, turned west at C Street, then continued north on Fourth Avenue along the Electric Rapid Transit Company's original route to the college site in University Heights. The entire line was powered by two large coal-fired steam engines located within a powerhouse near the intersection of Fourth Street (present-day Fourth Avenue) and Spruce Street. The engines turned massive 12-foot-diameter wheels that pulled the cables (Driese 1992). In 1891, the line was extended north on Carolina Street (present-day Park Boulevard) and terminated at Adams Avenue, where the company created The Bluffs park and pavilion (Schwartz 1982). Turntables for the one-ender cars were built at the present-day intersections of Sixth Avenue and L Street, Fourth Avenue and Spruce Street, and Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue.

While the cable car line was popular, it was not profitable. The line was $4,000 in debt for coal and lost $1,100 each successive month it ran (Fry 1967; Schwartz 1982). In November 1891, the California National Bank failed due to "Wild Cat loans" and "reckless speculation" (Fry 1967). Dare, the president of the company, left for Europe with funds from the California National Bank and never returned. The bank failed to open the following day, and Collins committed suicide. In March 1892, the San Diego Cable Railway Company was declared insolvent. The last cable car ran on October 15, 1892, following a court order to shut down for lack of funds.

In 1895, George B. Kerper purchased and reorganized the company into the Citizens' Traction Company, and converted the cable cars into electric streetcars (SOHO 2006). The cable winding equipment in the powerhouse at Fourth Street and Spruce Street was replaced with two generators. Overhead electric lines were installed and eight of the old cable cars were outfitted with 25-horsepower electric motors (Fry 1967). New attractions were added at The Bluffs, which was renamed Mission Cliff Park, making it a popular end-of-the-line destination. However, the Citizens' Traction Company did not survive the depression of the 1890s, and fell into receivership by 1898.

The cable car only ran for a brief period of time, but it played a pivotal role in the development of northern University Heights. It was the first means of public transportation that reached the intersection of Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue, and it led to the creation of the immensely popular Mission Cliff Gardens. The cable car route eventually returned to electric streetcars, making the land surrounding the intersection of Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue increasingly valuable to real estate prospectors in the early 1900s.

The San Diego Electric Railway Company

John D. Spreckels, the sugar and shipping magnate, first began investing in San Diego development in 1887. Spreckels' significant wealth and influence shaped multiple aspects of San Diego's development. During the economic downturn of the late 1880s and the depression in the 1890s, Spreckels revived

several projects in San Diego that faced bankruptcy and closure, including a real estate development company, the Coronado Beach Company, and its crown jewel, the Hotel del Coronado. The Coronado Beach Company was owned by Story and Babcock, who were also major stakeholders in the San Diego Street Car Company. When Spreckels acquired the Coronado Beach Company's holdings in 1889, he also gained a stake in the San Diego Street Car Company.

Spreckels believed that "transportation determines the flow of population," and promoted electric streetcar lines to spur suburban development (Bevil 2012). As early as 1891, Spreckels began initiating the modernization and expansion of San Diego's interurban lines (Bevil 2012). In 1892, Spreckels bought the remaining shares of the San Diego Street Car Company and formed the San Diego Electric Railway Company (*San Diego Union* 1961). The new company quickly began converting horsecars to electric motor cars and, within four years, horsecars were no longer operating in San Diego.

In 1898, the San Diego Electric Railway Company acquired the defunct Citizen's Traction Company and its holdings, including the electric railways, Mission Cliff Park, and 327 lots in University Heights (SOHO 2006). The San Diego Electric Railway Company abandoned the Fourth Street route but connected the University Heights line to its Fifth Street route, and widened the right-of-way for the line leading up to Adams Avenue. Into the early 1900s, the company continued to improve and expand its lines. As mentioned in Ralston Realty Company's prospectus: "The San Diego Electric Railway Company is busy double-tracking its line and will shortly be running a ten-minute service to supply demand for a faster schedule to the Pavilion and Mission Cliff Park" (Ralston Realty Co. 1906).

In January 1906, the San Diego Electric Railway Company announced the new Adams Avenue line with the stated purpose "to open up a new residence district to be known as Normal Heights" (Covington 2007). Construction started on May 27, 1907, and reached the City limits by mid-July. On August 25, 1907, the first streetcar traversed the Adams Avenue line from east to west towards Mission Cliff Park. A formal celebration was held by the Ralston Realty Company that was attended by many guests such as board members of the College Hill Land Association, City and County officials, and other real estate representatives. The collaboration of Ralston Realty Company and the San Diego Electric Railway Company to open the route extension along Adams Avenue, combined with the streetcar's affordability and convenience, stimulated sales of cheap land and suburban growth in the streetcar suburbs of University Heights, Normal Heights, and eventually Kensington (Bevil 2012).

The San Diego Electric Railway Company continued to grow into the 1910s. In 1913, the San Diego Electric Railway Company constructed a large, brick and reinforced concrete building to store and service the streetcars, or trolley cars, on Adams Avenue opposite the block between Georgia and Florida Streets. Hundreds of streetcars came through University Heights to be serviced in the trolley barn (SOHO 2006). Streetcars continued to operate for the next 36 years in San Diego, until the last trolley was retired into the Adams Avenue trolley barn on the morning of April 24, 1949 (San Diego Metropolitan Transit System 2017).

University Heights Attractions

Promoters established attractions to bring visitors to University Heights. At the time the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision was created, Adams Avenue was also home to attractions including the Mission Cliff Gardens, Bentley Ostrich Farm, and the San Diego Silk Mill (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Aerial view of Mission Cliff Gardens and Bentley Ostrich Farm, view towards northwest, 1918 (San Diego History Center). The trolley tracks can be seen making the turn on Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue.

Mission Cliff Gardens

> *"Sincerely I hope that when I wake up in that 'Garden not made with hands,' I will find that God has let me remember (never to forget) beautiful Mission Cliff gardens and its kind and gentle superintendent, John Davidson."* – Margaret Olive Jordan, 1923, who resided on Adams Avenue across from the North Avenue entrance to Mission Cliff Gardens (Jordan 1923)

The first concept for a large recreational park in University Heights was illustrated on the College Hill Land Association's 1888 subdivision map along Adams Avenue above the intersections of Mississippi Street and Mission Avenue (see Figure 3). In 1890, the San Diego Cable Railway Company fulfilled the concept and built a five-acre park to the west of the originally proposed park site as it planned to extend its line to Adams Avenue. The main feature of the park was a grand pavilion overlooking Mission Valley, designed by prominent local architect William S. Hebbard, who also designed the company's powerhouse (City of San Diego 2010). The pavilion was used for band concerts and as a site for picnickers; note

banner on the cable car advertising "Music at the Pavilion"). The park was known as "The Bluffs" and had views of the Pacific Ocean and Mission Bay to the west, the valley of farms and ranches to the north, and the crumbling Mission San Diego and snow-clad mountain ranges to the east. Before the company closed its cable car lines due to insolvency in October 1892, the company installed swings, a shooting gallery, and merry-go-round in a last-ditch effort to entice customers (Fry 1967).

The Citizens' Traction Company took over The Bluffs in 1895, and the park was renamed "Mission Cliff Park." Dances, theatrical productions, and special entertainments were held at the pavilion. In the words of a local resident, "the park was *the* place to go on Sunday afternoons" (MacPhail 1983). Children enjoyed trying to grab rings while riding on the merry-go-round; turning the crank on the music box earned the volunteer a free ride (Beck 1957). A beer garden was opened following the acquisition of a liquor license in 1897 (Potter 1997; SOHO 2006). On the eastern edge of the park a small, wooden, octagonal observatory was built. It housed a Camera Obscura, allowing visitors to view distant scenes across Mission Valley. The system worked by using a system of telescopic lenses and mirrors to project a moving color image into the darkened room. Visitors were charged 10 cents for the spectacle.

In 1898, Spreckels acquired the park and envisioned Mission Cliff Park as a peaceful retreat for a quiet afternoon and soon removed the amusement park attractions from the park. He renamed the park "Mission Cliff Gardens" and made entry free to San Diego Electric Railway Company passengers (Figure 5). In 1902, Spreckels hired John Davidson, a Scottish gardener, to take care of the grounds. Davidson emigrated from Edinburgh with his wife Martha after she fell into ill health. At the time of his hire, Davidson was working for the Coronado Beach Company. He would come up two to three days a week to care for the trees and flowers (Jones n.d.). In 1904, Spreckels offered Davidson the job of director of development and head gardener at Mission Cliff Gardens, and Davidson and his family moved into the pavilion (MacPhail 1983).

Mission Cliff Gardens was transformed under the hands of Davidson. He and his workers moved the rocks out of the garden and built the stone wall and entrances along Adams Avenue. The rocks were also used to line the paths and create low lookout walls (see Figure 5). Pergolas and arbors were built along the rim of the canyon. Davidson brought in many species of trees and flowers, creating horticultural exhibits throughout the park. Davidson described his gardens: "We have not a special exhibit of any particular flower, but rather a fair showing several species, with thousands of plants which will soon be blossoming with the coming of a few showers" (*San Diego Union* 1919). Spreckels took personal interest in the park and often collaborated with Davidson on plans for the gardens (MacPhail 1983).

In 1912, a large wire-mesh aviary was built in Mission Cliff Gardens. Birds of many species were donated. King Gilette, the Safety Razor King, donated many of the more exotic birds. According the Elizabeth C. MacPhail, daughter of the secretary of the Ralston Realty Company and early resident of University Heights, both youngsters and oldsters "liked especially the parrot that shouted 'shut up' when anyone spoke to it" (MacPhail 1983). Mission Cliff Gardens was home to other animals such as deer, pheasants, and guinea fowl. Davidson also stocked the lily pond in front of the pavilion with goldfish.

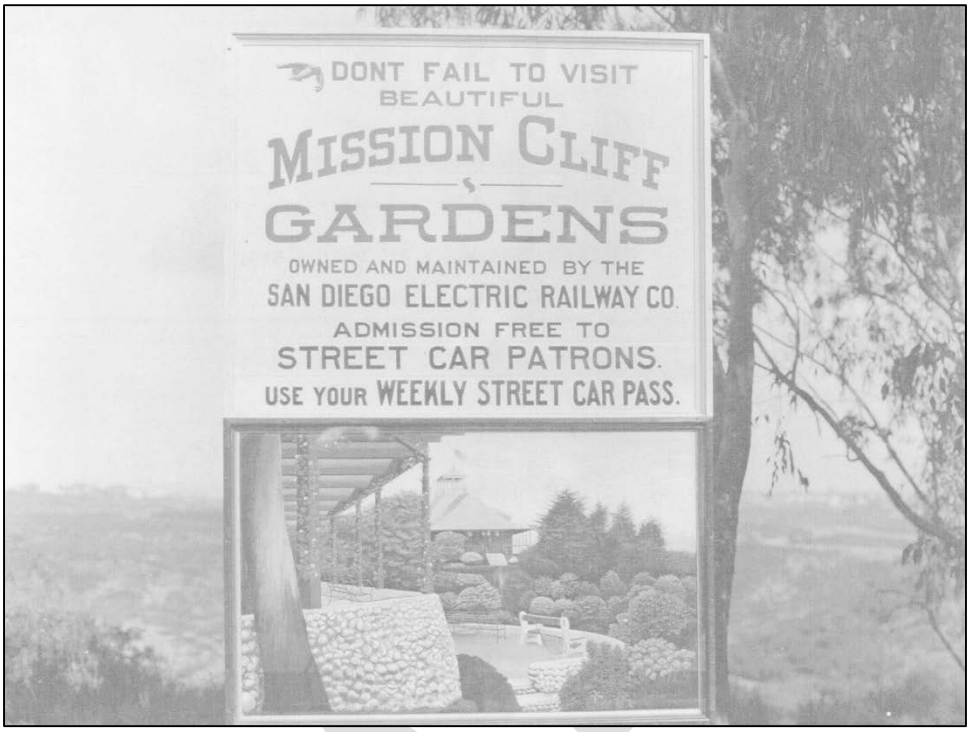

Figure 5. Advertisement for Mission Cliff Gardens at the east gate of Balboa Park, circa 1920s (San Diego History Center)

Especially beloved by visitors was the miniature Japanese garden. The garden was designed by G.T. Marsh, who also worked with Spreckels to create the Japanese tea garden at Coronado (*San Diego Union* 1923; Potter 1977). Most materials used to construct the garden, including the rocks, were imported from Japan. A 170-year-old Japanese vine, *Wisteria multijuga*, was planted on an arbor on the north side of the Japanese garden. MacPhail recalls the miniature garden as "a scene which typified a village of old Japan… Bonsai trees and plants were set out among the hills and valleys. Mirrors gave the effect of ponds and lakes. Miniature Japanese houses dotted the landscape and tiny Japanese figures of men, women and children could be seen around the buildings…" (MacPhail 1983).

Attendance at Mission Cliff Gardens declined after the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. Balboa Park drew crowds away from the gardens, and the increasing popularity of the automobile allowed San Diegans to take Sunday excursions farther out of town. Spreckels began promoting his other business ventures such as his developments along Mission Beach. The San Diego Electric Railway Company was losing money and began charging admission for Mission Cliff Gardens, further pushing crowds towards Balboa Park (Potter 1977). Spreckels died on June 7, 1926, and the gardens were closed to the public in 1929. In 1930, the Mission Cliff Gardens were declared a "Physical Non-Operating Property" (SOHO 2006). The San Diego Electric Railway Company allowed Davidson and his family to continue residing at the pavilion, but to cut down on water costs most of the flowers and small plants were left to die. A small group of elderly men (dubbed the "Pioneer's Club" by *The San Diego Union*) continued to use the croquet grounds to play cards and dominoes into the late 1930s—an arrangement that dated back to the days of Spreckels (Taunton 1938). In 1935, Davidson died of a sudden heart attack while tending to the gardens. The gardens were left to deteriorate. In 1942, Mission Cliff Gardens were subdivided for

residential housing (SOHO 2006). The rock wall along Adams Avenue remains today, as well as the lily pond (which has been filled with grass) and the low, rock viewing walls along the rim of the valley.

Bentley Ostrich Farm

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ostrich farming became especially popular in Southern California. In addition to being valuable as tourist attractions, ostrich farms profited from selling feathers and eggs. Ostrich feather muffs, hats, boas, and fans were wildly popular in female fashion at the turn of the century and were in high demand. Prior to 1883, ostrich feathers were an expensive luxury item that had to be shipped from Africa. Ostriches were first brought into Southern California in 1883 by English naturalist Charles Sketchley, and arrived in San Diego in January of 1884 (Masters 2012). They were brought from South Africa by E.J. Johnson, manager of the newly formed American Ostrich Company (Crawford 2010). The ostriches were housed in a horse corral on 8th Street and L Street before being relocated to an 80-acre parcel in present-day Bonsall. In 1887, the American Ostrich Company opened an ostrich corral on Coronado Island. Tourists came for a chance to feed the birds and watch them race one another. In the early 1900s, the American Ostrich Company was taken over by W.H. "Harvey" Bentley (Crawford 2010).

In 1904, Spreckels invited Bentley to relocate his Coronado ostrich farm to Mission Cliff Gardens (Figure 6) (SOHO 2006). The farm was immensely successful and became "one of the most valuable [farms] in the whole country, earning a net profit of 15 cents per annum on the outstanding shares, with increasing revenue each year" (*San Francisco Call* 1907). More than 700 people visited Bentley Ostrich Farm on Thanksgiving Day in 1906.

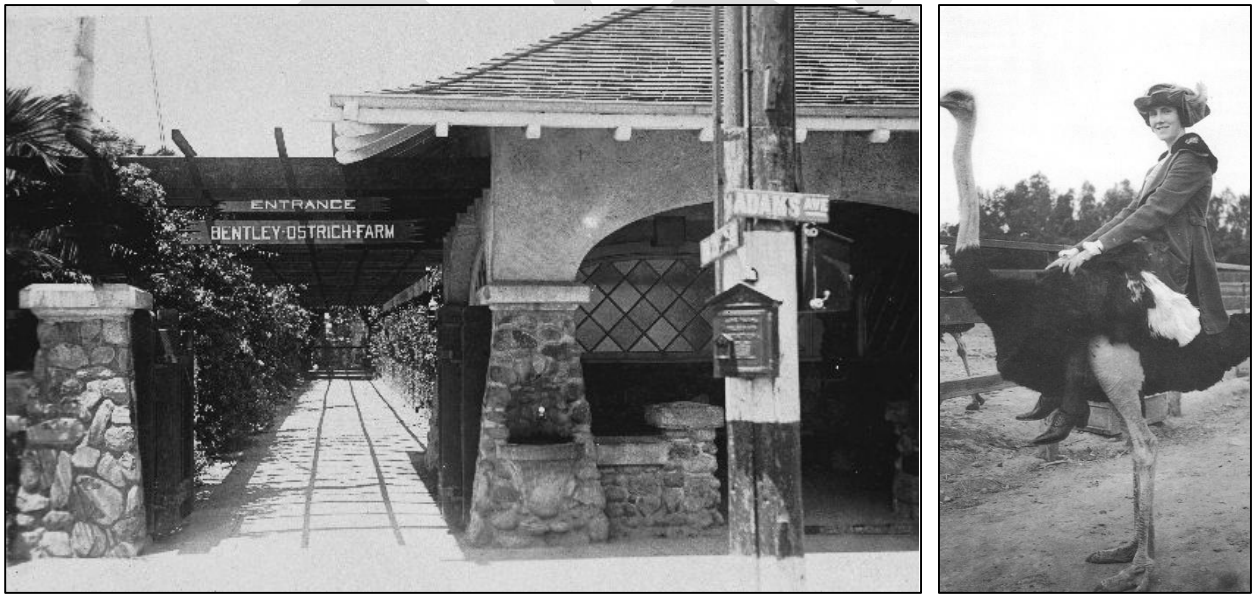

Figure 6. *Left:* Bentley Ostrich Farm entrance at Adams Avenue and Park Boulevard, circa 1910 (San Diego Historical Society); *Right:* Katherine Priebe riding an ostrich at Bentley Ostrich Farm, 1920 (O'Connor 2001)

Bentley leased the land for the ostrich farm, so a small admission fee was charged (MacPhail 1983). Elizabeth MacPhail recalled that the farm was enclosed by "a tall wooden fence with lots of knotholes

large enough for children and adults to peer through… without having to pay admission" (MacPhail 1983). Once entering the farm, visitors could watch the ostriches being raced around the yard. Adventurous visitors could ride the birds. Ostrich feathers and eggs were sold in a little store. Blown eggs were decorated for souvenirs. Fresh eggs were said to equal 24 chicken eggs, with the white of one egg being "enough to make two angel food cakes" (MacPhail 1983). Other buildings on the property included a work shop, an incubator room, a small green house, and a building for ostrich plume dying and mounting (Sanborn Map Company 1921).

Ostrich feathers from the Bentley Ostrich Farm were sold across the United States. The farm was advertised as "the original ostrich farm of America" (*Pacific Monthly* 1911). The plumes were sold for $1 and up. However, the ostrich plume craze was short-lived. With the increasing availability of automobiles, women began to favor more streamline, tight-fitting hats over those decorated with delicate ostrich plumes (SOHO 2006). The ostrich industry reached its peak in 1913 before entering a period of steady decline. In 1915, Bentley sold his interest in the ostrich farm to Henry James Pitts and Charles Mack (MacPhail 1983). Attendance began to dwindle as crowds were drawn away to other attractions, like Balboa Park. Following Spreckels' death in 1926, the ostrich farm and neighboring Mission Cliff Gardens were too expensive for the San Diego Electric Railway Company to maintain. The ostrich farm was closed in 1929, and many of the ostriches went to live at the San Diego Zoo.

San Diego Silk Mill

Much like the ostrich plume industry, the silk industry also did extremely well in Southern California. In the mid-19th century, the silk industry in Europe was hit by disease, and new locations for the industry were sought (McCracken 1963). Silk production was first advertised in *The San Diego Union* on October 10, 1868, as a promising enterprise, stating that the climate and soil in San Diego was satisfactory for growing mulberry trees and breeding silkworms. By 1870, 100,000 mulberry trees had been planted in the Sweetwater Valley (McCracken 1963). In the 1890s, women in San Diego were forming silk enthusiast clubs and starting "cocooneries" in their backyards (*The San Diego Union* 1891; SOHO 2006).

Beginning in 1908, the Southern California Silk Company operated at 4670 North Avenue. The company was run by Edward Strahlman (City of San Diego Directory 1908). It was a short-lived operation that doesn't appear to have lasted into the early 1910s. In 1918, William Hilton moved the San Diego Silk Mill operations from National Avenue to Adams Avenue, just across the street from the Mission Cliff Gardens (City of San Diego Directory 1917, 1918).

William Hilton was born in Cheshire, England, in 1849. He immigrated to the United States in 1881 and eventually settled in California (Black 1913). He entered the silk business in San Diego in 1910 and became the proprietor of the San Diego Silk Mill in 1911. In 1915, he operated a silk exhibit at the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park. In 1918, he moved the San Diego Silk Mill to 1737 Adams Avenue, where he and his wife, Amelia, lived in the attached dwelling (Figure 7). Visitors to the silk mill could watch silkworms at work in a viewing cabinet (MacPhail 1983). Schoolchildren were taken to the factory on field trips, and they often left with samples of silk (McCracken 1963). Handkerchiefs (Hilton's specialty), scarves, and neckties could be purchased. William Hilton operated the silk mill on Adams Avenue until his death on November 24, 1929 (California Death Index, 1905–1939). The silk mill was

relocated to 4665 Park Boulevard and continued to operate until 1931 (SOHO 2006). The Adams Avenue building is still standing at 1733-1737 Adams Avenue.

Figure 7. Trolley turning south down Park Boulevard, view towards west, circa 1920 (San Diego History Center). The San Diego Silk Mill can be seen peeking up over the sweet shop on the left side of the photo.

Valle Vista Terrace

In the late 19th century, University Heights developed as a streetcar suburb, reliant first on horsecars in 1886, then the electric streetcar in 1888, then the cable car in 1890, and again the electric streetcar in 1895 for the development of the community. The 1891 extension of the streetcar line to Adams Avenue defined the development and layout of northern University Heights. The collective efforts of the San Diego Cable Railway Company, Citizens' Traction Company, Spreckels' San Diego Electric Railway Company, and the Ralston Realty Company created a destination at the end of Park Boulevard with the popular attractions of Mission Cliff Gardens, Bentley Ostrich Farm, and San Diego Silk Mill at the turn of the 20th century. After the San Diego Electric Railway Company announced plans for the Adams Avenue streetcar line extension in January 1906, developers created and promoted new subdivisions along the route. By the time the Adams Avenue streetcar line opened in August 1907, Collier and Hawley controlled the College Hill Land Association's remaining holdings. The extension of the streetcar line and the introduction of a reliable water supply to the mesa served as the catalysts for a local development boom on the mesa.

By 1906, additional new streets and lots at Panorama Drive and Cliff Street extended from the middle of the northern edge of the original University Heights subdivision (Ralston Realty Co. 1906; Sanborn Map Company 1906) (Figures 8 and 9). The original 1888 University Heights Subdivision map did not include this land (see Figure 3). By early 1907, George M. Hawley had purchased this undeveloped tract of land

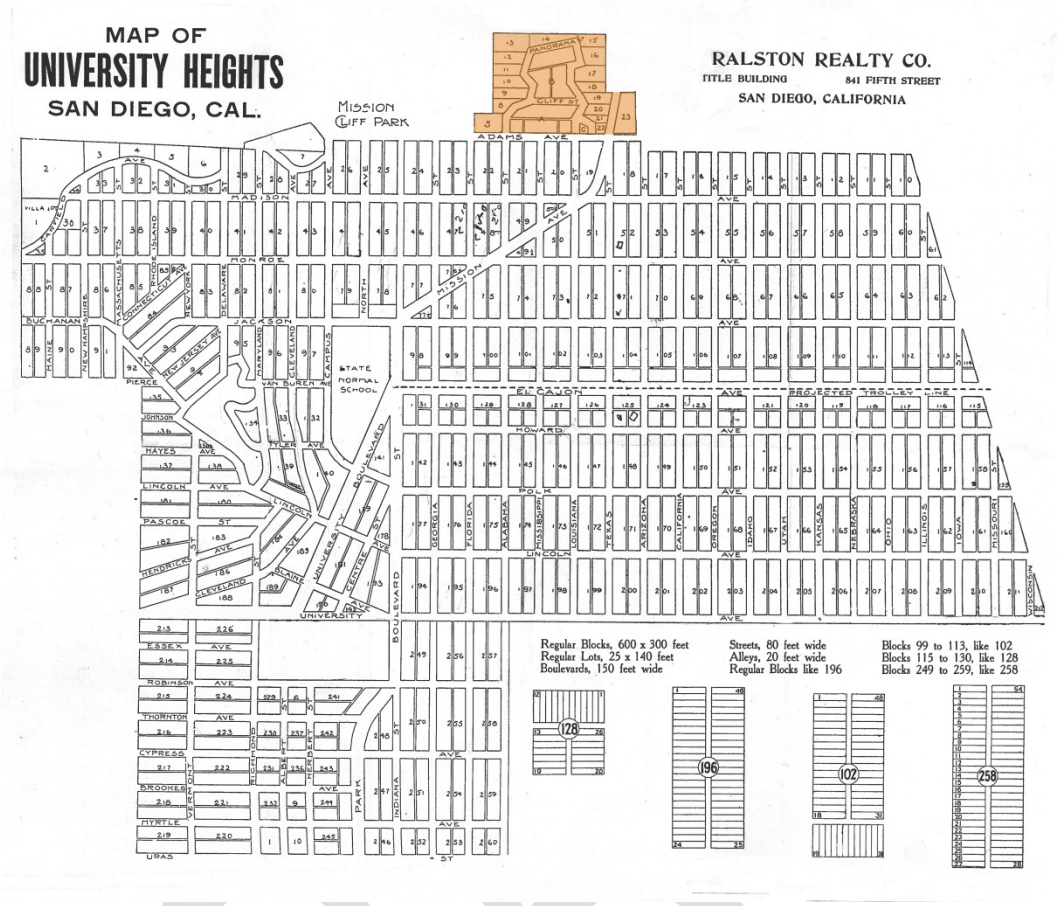

Figure 8. Ralston Realty Company map of University Heights (Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision highlighted) (Ralston Realty Co. 1906)

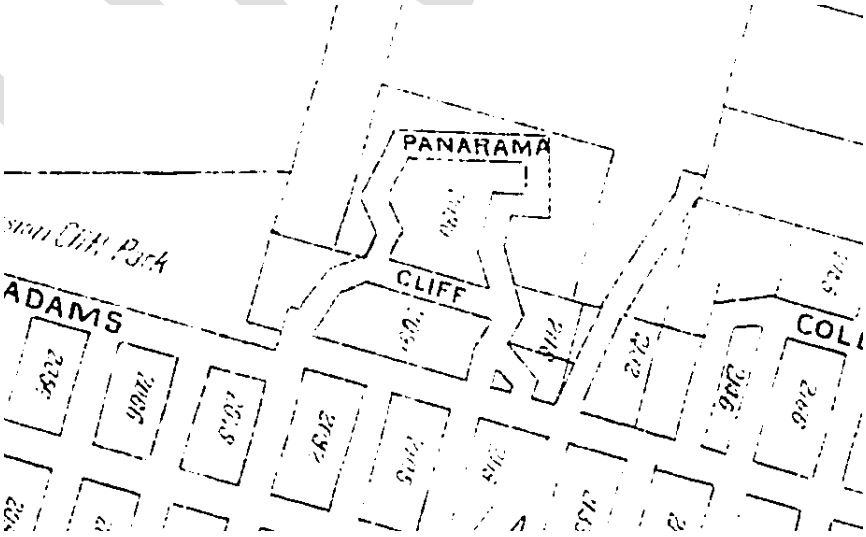

Figure 9. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Panarama [sic] and Cliff streets (Sanborn Map Company 1906)

that was part of the original Pueblo Lot 110 from the College Hill Land Association, and Valle Vista Terrace was advertised for sale by the Ralston Realty Company (*San Diego Union* 1907a). This addition would officially become the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision in 1907.

Born in 1862, Hawley came from San Francisco to San Diego in 1888 at the height of the Great Boom. He was the son of George T. Hawley, a successful hardware merchant, who owned the San Diego Hardware Company. Hawley took over the company and opened several other businesses in San Diego, including Pierce-Fields Hardware Co., Todd & Hawley, San Diego Vehicle and Implement Co., and Hawley, King & Co. in Los Angeles. He was deeply involved in real estate development until his death in 1935 (Ledeboer 2006).

A major selling point of the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision was its sweeping views of Mission Valley. The outer lots on the promontory were called villa lots, which were larger lots intended for upscale single-family homes. On March 8, 1907, the *San Diego Evening Tribune* reported:

> "it is expected the map of Valle Vista Terrace, on University Heights, will be submitted for adoption by the city. The map now is in the hands of the city engineer who is checking up the streets… Valle Vista terrace [sic] lies just east of the Pavilion on a little point of land that extends into Mission Valley for a short distance like a small headland extends into the ocean. A number of beautiful residences that will stand almost on the very edge of the cliff have been planned for this residence district among them being the new home of George M. Hawley" (San Diego Evening Tribune 1907).

The subdivision was officially filed with the San Diego County Recorder in Map No. 1081, dated August 28, 1907 (Figure 10). It contained large, irregular villa lots around the exterior of the Panorama Drive loop, and smaller lots along the interior streets.

By April 1907, work was ready to begin on Panorama Drive:

> "…Work on the grading of Panorama Street in Valle Vista Terrace, University Heights, will be started by the Southern Construction Company. The work of establishing the grades on this street was being done yesterday by city engineers, and it is expected that by Monday evening all will be in readiness for the actual work of construction" (*San Diego Union* 1907b, quoted in May and Wallace 2016).

By mid-June of 1907, the Southern Construction Company completed the rough grading of Panorama Drive and Cliff Street and began laying 5,000 feet of cement sidewalks, while four 7-foot-high and 4-foot-square cobblestone posts with ornamental lamps were placed as entrance markers at the entrances to Panorama Drive (*San Diego Union* 1907c). It may have been at this time that the street was lined with Queen Palm trees.

Hawley invested in Valle Vista Terrace and built his personal residence on the northwest villa lot of the subdivision overlooking Mission Valley with a view of the ocean to the west. The Hawley residence (4744 Panorama Drive) was the first residence in the new subdivision, completed in 1908. Architects Hebbard & Gill (William S. Hebbard and Irving J. Gill) designed the house in the Arts & Crafts style (IS Architecture 2013). It was described as a "fine residence" in a residential district that "will be one of the most exclusive in University Heights, or in the entire city, for that matter" (*San Diego Union* 1907b).

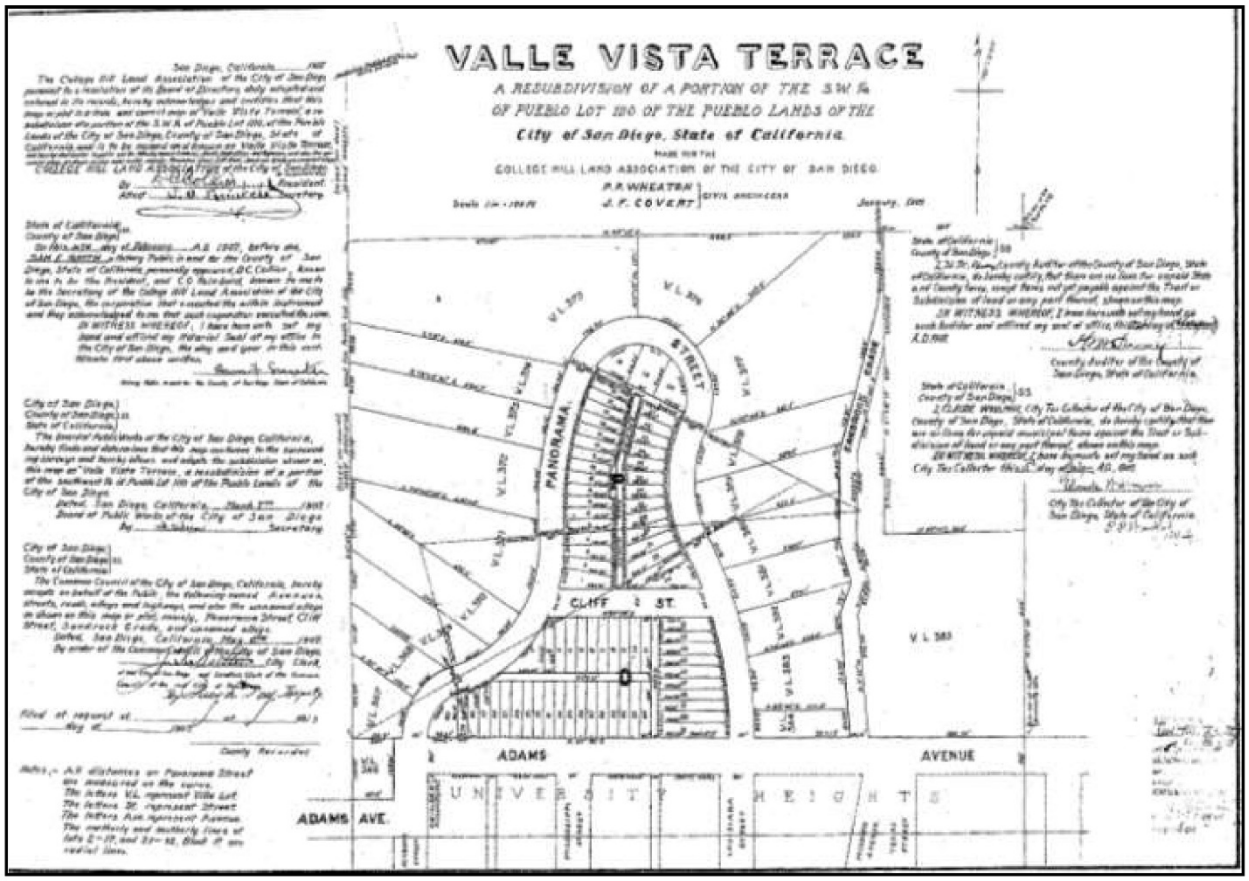

Figure 10. Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision Map No. 1081 (May and Wallace 2016)

In 1909, three more houses were completed in Valle Vista Terrace. A Mission Revival house was built on another villa lot, and two Craftsman/Tudor Revival houses were built on standard lots. Other early residences built in the subdivision were for a partner of Hawley's in the University Heights Syndicate, Carl O. Reinbold, and his brother, Emil. Reinbold was the Secretary of the University Heights Syndicate. Reinbold's large, two-story house (4769 Panorama Drive) was built later, circa 1911, in the Craftsman style (IS Architecture 2013). The subdivision grew slowly at first with upscale homes on the villa lots or on multiple lots at the interior of Panorama Drive. Through World War I, there was slow development in the subdivision, with 18 houses built between 1912 and 1916. By 1920, there were fewer than 30 houses built in the subdivision on approximately 90 lots (Sanborn Map Company 1921) (Figure 11).

Several houses of this era were designed and built by David O. Dryden (including 4780 Panorama Drive, 2203 Cliff Street, and 2230 and 2242 Adams Avenue). Dryden became a carpenter in Monrovia at the turn of the 20th century. He and his wife Isabel worked together on building projects, typically living in each completed house while working on the next. Dryden moved to San Diego in 1911, and built his first house in 1912. His early houses were primarily Craftsman/Arts & Crafts bungalows for working class families. In July 1913, he received six building permits for lots in Valle Vista Terrace, where he built a two-story Craftsman house and other bungalows. Dryden also built houses in North Park, Point Lorna, and Mission Hills. Eventually in 1925, Dryden moved to the San Francisco Bay area and continued to

build in San Leandro, Richmond, and Oakland. He is recognized as a Master Builder in San Diego (Historical Resources Board 2011).

As the economy and population grew rapidly in San Diego in the 1920s, and the automobile became a widespread form of transportation, Valle Vista Terrace grew more rapidly, shifting from an exclusive neighborhood of large houses to a denser, middle-class neighborhood. With the demand for affordable middle-class dwellings rising, the smaller lots in the subdivision began filling with cottages, which were frequently designed in the Mission Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Spanish Eclectic styles that were popularized by the Panama-California Exposition. The houses constructed on the smaller, interior lots of Panorama Drive and Cliff Street included detached garages on the alleys to accommodate automobiles (IS Architecture 2013). Other improvements to the subdivision occurred in the 1920s, including the paving of the streets and the upgrade of several services (Figure 12). Over 45 houses were built in Valle Vista Terrace during the 1920s, in an eclectic mix of one- and two-story houses. In addition to the Craftsman, Mission Revival, and Spanish Colonial Revival cottages that proliferated, examples of American Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Dutch Colonial Revival styles added to the architectural character of the subdivision.

Martin V. Melhorn built at least 15 houses in the subdivision in the 1920s, predominantly Mission Revival, with examples of Craftsman, Spanish Eclectic, and Dutch Colonial Revival. Melhorn moved to San Diego in 1911 with his wife Alberta and their son William. Melhorn, John J. Wahrenberger, and John C. Rice partnered as the Bay City Construction company from 1911 to 1916. In 1913, Melhorn and Alberta formed the Alberta Security Company to independently finance his construction business, and in 1916, Melhorn also began working under Martin V. Melhorn Investments. Although Melhorn's earlier houses were rooted in Craftsman and Arts & Crafts design, he became more experimental in designing custom houses that incorporated Prairie, Neoclassical, Colonial Revival, and Japanese inspired elements. Melhorn eventually partnered with his son William as M.V. Melhorn & Son in 1922. This partnership lasted until Martin Melhorn's unexpected death in 1926. He is recognized as a Master Builder in San Diego (Historical Resources Board 2011).

Although development slowed through the Great Depression in the 1930s, several houses in the Minimal Traditional and Custom Ranch styles were built in the early 1940s before development came to a halt during and immediately after World War II. By 1947, there were few remaining vacant lots in the subdivision (Figure 13). By 1950, every lot in the subdivision was developed (Sanborn Map Company 1950) (Figure 14). By 1956, the subdivision appeared largely as it does today (Figure 15). More recent changes to the district include cosmetic renovations and the construction of two new houses in the 21st century. Overall, the majority of houses within the district have changed very little since their original construction.

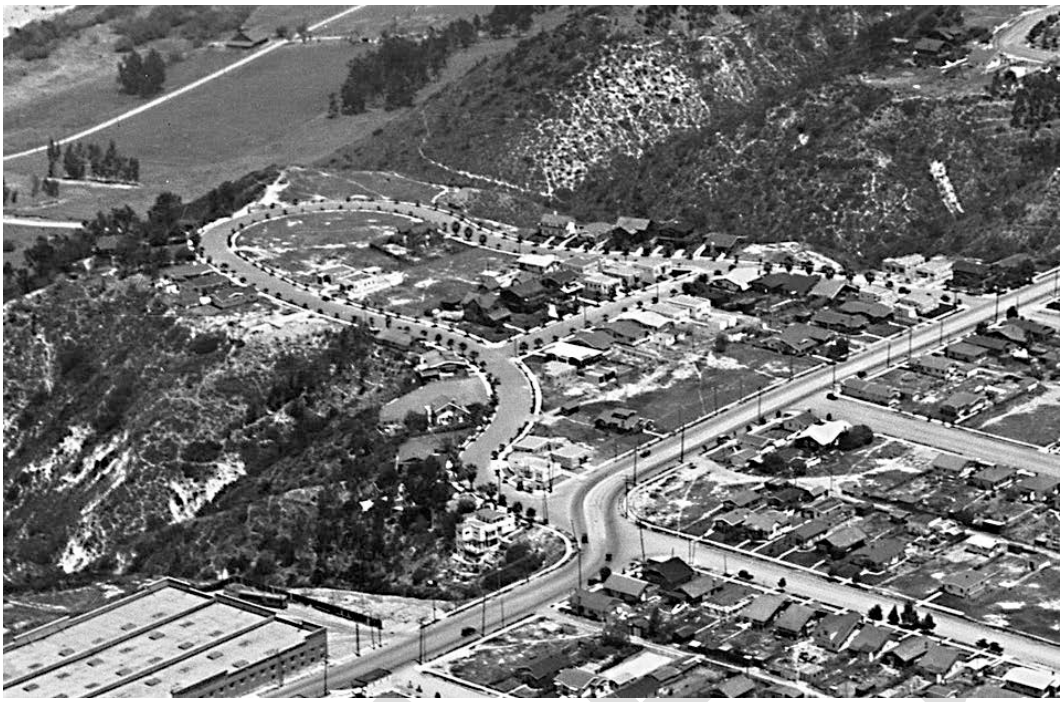

Figure 11. Aerial photograph of Valle Vista Terrace, circa 1926 (San Diego History Center). Note the Queen Palm trees and the open lots in the subdivision.

Figure 12. Electrical pole maintenance and replacement on Adams Avenue with Panorama Drive in the background, 1924 (San Diego History Center)

Figure 13. Aerial photograph of Valle Vista Terrace, 1947 (San Diego History Center)

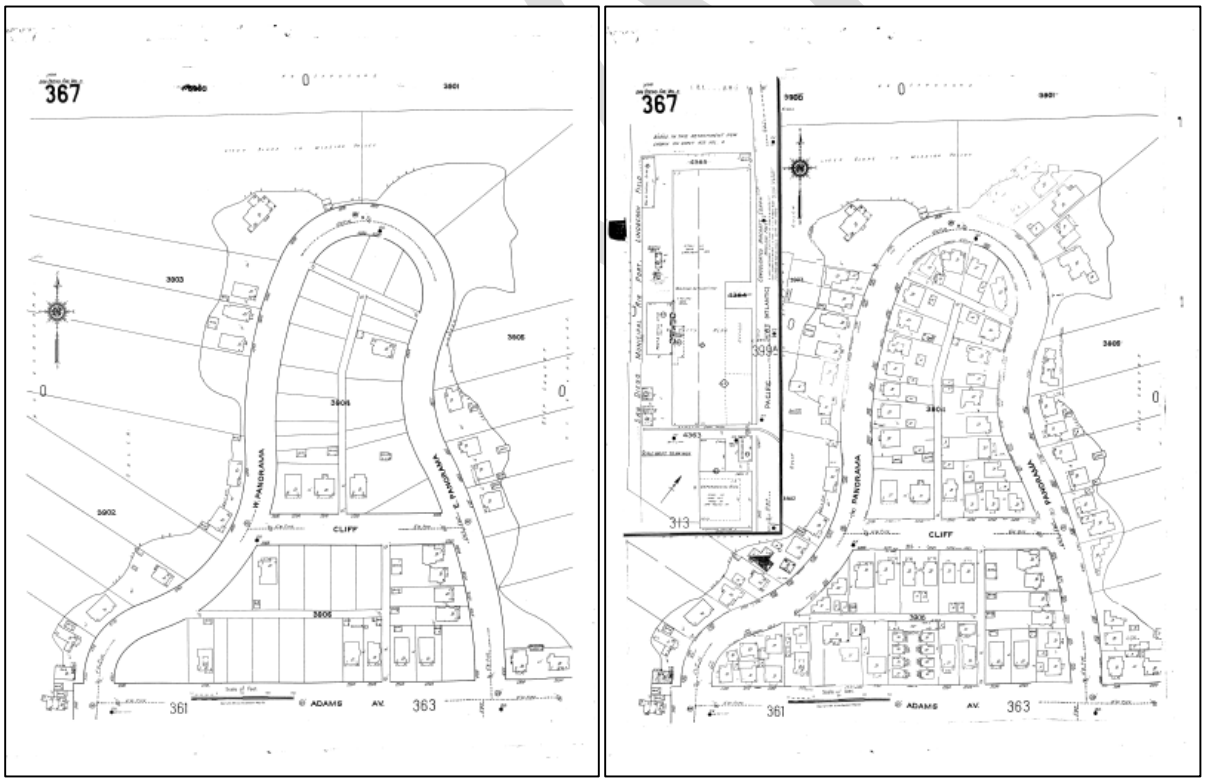

Figure 14. Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, *Left:* 1921, *Right:* 1950 (Sanborn Map Company 1921, 1950)

Figure 15. Aerial photograph of Valle Vista Terrace, 1956 (San Diego History Center)

Architectural Styles

Valle Vista Terrace's architectural character reflects two major periods of development with contemporaneous styles. The Craftsman/California Bungalow, Mission Revival, American Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Spanish Eclectic, Tudor Revival, and Dutch Colonial Revival styles are associated with early residential development in 1907–1929. Minimal Traditional and Custom Ranch styles are associated with residential development in 1930–1945. The subdivision features the Craftsman/California Bungalow style; Period Revival styles including Spanish Colonial Revival, Renaissance Revival, Tudor Revival, American Colonial Revival; and more minimalist Modern styles including Minimal Traditional and Modern styles. The styles that are represented in the district are described below as listed in the *North Park Community Plan Area Historic Context Statement* (Historic Resources Group 2011).

Craftsman/California Bungalow

Craftsman architecture in America grew out of the late-19th century English Arts and Crafts movement. It stressed simplicity of design, hand-craftsmanship, extensive use of natural materials, and the relationship to the climate and landscape. First developed in California, it became the dominant residential style in Southern California during the first two decades of the 20th century. Craftsman designs were widely

published in architectural journals and pattern books, popularizing the style throughout the country. The larger, two-story residences are typically referred to as "Craftsman" in style. However, it was the more modest one- to one and one-half story "California bungalow" that became the most prevalent middle-class residential building type through the 1920s. In North Park, Craftsman/California Bungalow residences were constructed into the 1930s. Extant examples of this style remain ubiquitous in North Park today.

Character-defining features include:

- Horizontal massing
- Low-pitched gabled roof
- Widely overhanging eaves with exposed rafters, beams, or braces
- Wood exterior wall cladding (shingle, shake, or clapboard)
- Projecting partial- or full-width front porch
- Heavy porch piers, often of river stone or masonry
- Wood-frame windows, often grouped in multiples
- Widely-proportioned front doors
- Wide window and door surrounds, often with extended lintels

American Colonial Revival

The American Colonial Revival style proliferated during the first half of the 20th century. This style incorporates traditions from the Georgian, Adam, and early Classical Revival styles that were prevalent during the English colonial period. Earlier examples were rarely accurate recreations but were instead free interpretations with details inspired by colonial precedents, while later examples shifted to more historically correct proportions and details. In North Park, this style is typically applied to modest, one-story residences.

Character-defining features include:

- Side-gable or hipped roofs
- Horizontal wood exterior wall cladding
- Accentuated front entry or portico, featuring decorative pediments supported by pilasters or slender columns
- Wood double-hung sash windows with multi-pane glazing
- Front doors flanked by sidelights with fanlights above
- Fixed wooden shutters

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. This style is prevalent among residential buildings in North Park.

Character-defining features include:

- Asymmetrical façade
- Red clay tile hip or side-gable roof, or flat roof with a tile-clad parapet
- Stucco exterior cladding, forming uninterrupted wall planes
- Wood-frame casement or double-hung windows, typically with divided lights
- 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

Tudor Revival

The Tudor Revival style is loosely based on a variety of Medieval English building traditions. In the United States, these traditions are combined freely, but retain the steeply-pitched front-facing gable, which is almost universally present as a dominant façade element. The style's popularity expanded dramatically in the 1920s and early 1930s, when masonry veneering techniques allowed even the most modest examples to mimic closely the brick and stone exteriors seen on English prototypes. North Park retains a number of good examples of this style.

Character-defining features include:

- Asymmetrical façade
- Steeply-pitched gabled roof with a prominent front-facing gable
- Stucco or brick exterior wall cladding, typically with half-timbering
- Tall, narrow divided-light windows, often arranged in multiples
- May display picture windows with leaded diamond panes
- Small gabled entry porch, often with arched openings
- Details may include stone or brick accents or faux quoining

Minimal Traditional

The Minimal Traditional style is defined by a single-story configuration, simple exterior forms, and a restrained use of traditional architectural detailing. The Minimal Traditional house was immensely popular in large suburban residential developments throughout the United States during the 1940s and early 1950s. The style had its origins in the principles of the Modern movement and the requirements of the Federal Housing Administration and other federal programs of the 1930s. In Southern California, the style is closely associated with large-scale residential developments of the World War II and postwar periods. Primarily associated with the detached single family house, Minimal Traditional detailing may also be applied to apartment buildings of the same period. In North Park, the style was a popular choice for both single-family residences and bungalow courts through the 1940s.

Character-defining features include:

- One-story configuration
- Simple rectangular plan
- Medium or low-pitched hip or side-gable roof with shallow eaves

- Smooth stucco wall cladding, often with wood lap or stone veneer accents
- Wood multi-light windows (picture, double-hung sash, casement)
- Projecting three-sided oriel
- Shallow entry porch with slender wood supports
- Fixed wooden shutters
- Minimal decorative exterior detailing

Ranch

The Ranch style enjoyed enormous popularity throughout the United States during the late 1950s and 1960s. This style emerged from the 1930s designs of Southern California architect Cliff May, combined with the mid-century ideal of indoor-outdoor living. The Ranch style is characterized by a low horizontal emphasis and sprawling interior plan. The style was also among the first to directly address the growing importance of the automobile, with attached garages or carports incorporated into the design. This style is not common in North Park.

Character-defining features include:

- One-story configuration
- Sprawling plan, often with radiating wings (L-shaped, U-shaped)
- Low horizontal massing with wide street facade
- Flat or low-pitched hip or gable roof with overhanging eaves
- Wood lap, board-and-batten, or stucco exterior cladding
- Large wood or metal-frame windows
- Recessed entry Attached two-stall garage

Statement of Significance

The Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is associated with early 20th century residential development, an important aspect of the historical and architectural development of North Park, specifically University Heights. It is directly associated with themes outlined in the *North Park Community Plan Area: Historic Context Statement* (Historic Resources Group 2011). The context statement identified two periods described as the *Development of North Park: 1907-1929* and *Influence of the Great Depression & World War II in North Park: 1930-1945*. Within these periods, the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is associated with historical themes of greater North Park, including "Early Residential Development" from 1907–1929 related to Streetcar Development, Subdivisions and Tract Development, and the Influence of the Panama-California Exposition; and "Residential Development in North Park" from 1930–1945 (Historic Resources Group 2011). The district relates to the early 1900s development of the streetcar suburb along Adams Avenue, and relates to the real estate speculation and the development of infrastructure that accelerated North Park's development at the turn of the 20th century.

The historical development of Valle Vista Terrace is representative of the development of a streetcar suburb along Adams Avenue after San Diego Electric Railway Company's extension of the streetcar line in 1907. When Valle Vista Terrace was first developed in 1907, University Heights was primed with access to transit, water supply, affordable lots, and recreational attractions, and undergoing a local boom in development. From University Height's origin as the College Hill Land Association's subdivision in

1886, it gradually developed through the Great Boom of the 1880s and the economic depression of the 1890s. Into the 1900s, the influence of the Ralston Realty Company, the San Diego Electric Railway Company, and the Southern California Mountain and Water Supply Company spurred tremendous growth of streetcar suburbs on the mesa. Valle Vista Terrace was created near Mission Cliff Gardens and the Adams Avenue streetcar line. Its advantageous location near the transportation and recreational hub of University Heights was an important aspect of its historical development. Additionally, the subdivision was distinctive for its irregular lots, with a mix of "villa" lots for upscale residences with views overlooking Mission Valley, and smaller lots for more compact development of more modest, middle-class residences.

The architectural development of Valle Vista Terrace reflects two important periods of residential development in greater North Park. The first period, 1907–1929, is associated with the majority of architectural styles represented in the district, including Craftsman and Revival styles. The second period, 1930–1945, is associated with modern styles, including Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles. In contrast to other streetcar suburbs in San Diego, Valle Vista Terrace's mixed lot sizes encouraged building of both grand and modest homes with varying degrees of architectural detail and character. Master architects and builders, including Hebbard & Gill, David O. Dryden, and Martin V. Melhorn, contributed to the mix of residences, while the majority were designed and built by nonarchitects. The eclectic mix of architectural styles and building forms reflects both high-style and vernacular architecture afforded by residents during the early 20th century boom in San Diego. The collection of houses reflects these important eras of development.

The architectural character of Valle Vista Terrace is varied with examples of several different styles that were popular in the early 20th century. The district is dominated by Craftsman/Arts & Crafts/Bungalow, Mission Revival, and Spanish Eclectic houses. Characteristics of Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, American Colonial Revival, and other eclectic styles are present in the district. The most recent additions to the district include Minimal Traditional and Custom Ranch houses. Several contributing buildings embody distinctive characteristics of these architectural styles. As a whole, the resources relate to each other in a geographically definable neighborhood. The district is centered on Panorama Drive, a distinctive curvilinear street lined with Queen Palm trees, which is the mooring for the contributing resources in the distinctive neighborhood. The subdivision has a unified character representing several architectural styles.

University Heights has few existing and potential historic districts. The three other districts that have been identified within the community include the Shirley Ann Place Historic District, Spalding Place Historic District, and Park Boulevard Apartment Historic District. These districts all vary in their historical development and architectural composition. Valle Vista Terrace is distinctive for the collective significance of its contributors as a residential development in University Heights, and a unique example of the architectural development of University Heights because of its location on a promontory with views of Mission Valley, the irregular shapes and sizes of its lots, its mix of grand and modest homes, its orientation surrounding Panorama Drive, its Queen Palm trees and entrance pillars, and the representative examples of popular early 20th century architectural styles. The degree of integrity exhibited by the district contributors, which together are a substantial concentration of properties with high integrity, also makes it exemplary of an early 20th century streetcar suburb.

The Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is significant for its associations as an early 20th century residential subdivision in University Heights and meets Historical Resources Board Criterion A in the areas of historical and architectural development for its local significance. The district is also significant as a collection of architectural properties that are good examples of several architectural styles dating from 1908–1942, and meets Historical Resources Board Criterion C. The period of significance begins with the subdivision of lots and construction of the first residence on Panorama Drive in 1908, and ends in 1942, the year that development in the district halted, marking the end of the original development of the district and the construction of contributing resources.

Boundary Description and Justification

The Valle Vista Terrace Historic District is located in University Heights on a promontory above Mission Valley. The district boundary includes all of the parcels in the Valle Vista Terrace Subdivision as illustrated in San Diego County Recorder Map No. 1081 (see Figure 10), which includes irregularly shaped lots surrounding both sides of the curvilinear loop of Panorama Drive, along Cliff Street, and on the north side of Adams Avenue between its east and west intersections with Panorama Drive. It includes 89 parcels, including 86 houses, and the district boundary encompasses the subdivision that historically contained these houses. Based on archival research, historic maps, and the architectural features of the properties, the boundary encompasses the 1907 subdivision and its buildings that are representative of early 20th century residential development and architecture in University Heights (Figure 16).

<<F IGURE PENDING>>

Figure 16. District Boundary for the Valle Vista Terrace Historic District (City of San Diego 2017)

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