

January 25, 2024

Historical Resources Board  
1222 First Avenue, MS 501  
San Diego, CA 92101.

**RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for  
Talmadge Park Estates Historic District**

As a resident of the proposed historic district with a contributing resource and as the co-author of the report for the designation in 2000 of the Talmadge Gates Historic District #422, I support the staff recommendation to the Historical Resources Board (HRB) that the HRB recommend to the California State Office of Historic Preservation the listing of the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District with a period of significance of 1926-1951 at a local level of significance under National Register Criteria A and C.

As the property owner (of over 30 years) of the one story single-family residence designed in the Minimal Traditional style, built in 1938 at 4558 Norma Drive, San Diego 92115, (APN 4654800200), and located within the boundaries of the district, the proposed nomination reflects and represents a significant period of history and character of pre and post WWII housing construction in San Diego. From the nomination:

*“The district retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. With the relatively high number of contributing buildings and low number of noncontributing buildings, the district retains a strong sense of time and place from its 1926 to 1951 period of significance and thus retains integrity of feeling and association. “*

The Talmadge Park Estates Historic District, with its defining mix of Spanish Colonial Revival, Hacienda and particularly the Minimal Traditional houses, can be said to be derived from the Federal Housing Administration publication of ‘Principles of Planning Small

Houses'. My home, listed as #521 in the nomination, is a contributing Minimal Traditional home to the district. I would like to share the following description of "The Historic Context Of Minimal Traditional-Style Houses In The Washington Grove Historic District" in Washington Grove, Maryland, which highlights the similarity to Talmadge Park Estates Historic District nomination.

*"Minimal Traditional-style houses are generally small, one- to one-and-a-half-story residences featuring spare, distilled forms and elements of older architectural styles. They are typically compact in footprint, with square or rectangular massing. Front doors feature a small stoop or entry porch. Cladding is commonly wood or asbestos shingle siding. Roofs tend to be either side- or cross- gabled, with close eaves and rake and a low-to-moderate pitch.*

*The Minimal Traditional style was developed largely out of necessity. During the Great Depression, banks collapsed, mortgages piled up, and many Americans lost their means to purchase new homes, bringing the housing construction industry to a virtual standstill. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was established in 1934 under the New Deal programs of President Franklin Roosevelt to set standards for construction and insure loans banks made for home building. The FHA also produced their own technical bulletins on house design that proved influential. In fact, a number of these house plans were published in journals and pattern books in the 1930s and 1940s, promoting an economical take on the traditional house.*

*The FHA's technical bulletin in 1940 was called Principles for Planning Small Houses, which laid out a number of recommendations for an economical, efficient home. Many of the basic forms and variations of what became the Minimal Traditional style were illustrated in the pamphlet. The FHA recommended*

*simple compositions with limited variation in form. Unnecessary gables, dormers, and breaks in the roofline were to be avoided. Instead of adding ornamentation, character and variation could be achieved through the spacing and grouping of windows, the use of materials, and the design of minor details. "Porches, bay windows, and platform steps," the bulletin states, "are useful as a means of making small houses more livable without adding greatly to their costs." Efficient floor plans that maximized available space were advised, as higher building costs increased the difficulty in qualifying for FHA loan insurance.*

*During World War II, relocating workers for proximity to defense-related factories created an immediate and pressing need for small houses that could be built quickly. Builder-developers constructed nearly 2.3 million homes, most in the Minimal Traditional style, for war and defense purposes between 1940 and 1945. Such small houses were also a response to the wartime reduction in the supply of building materials."*

I fully support and approve Talmadge Park Estates Historic District being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This district represents a significant period of San Diego pre and early post WWII history and character and urge the Historic Resources Board to recommend to the State Historical Resources Commission to take action on the nomination and move to determine that the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District is deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely yours,

*Charles S. Kaminski*

Charles Kaminski  
4558 Norma Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115  
858-956-9141

**From:** [Jeffrey Oliver](#)  
**To:** [Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov)  
**Subject:** RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District  
**Date:** Thursday, January 4, 2024 12:47:00 PM

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California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

**I support the nomination of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.** I have lived in the Talmadge neighborhood district of San Diego since 2004 after buying my home here, however I've lived in San Diego my whole adult life. I'm now 54 years old. One of the things that's always impressed me about this neighborhood district is its ability to keep and maintain its historic charm despite the changing times and encroachment of progress in surrounding areas of the city. This is one of the few remaining charming bedroom neighborhoods left in the urban part of this city and I feel it's in the historical best interest of the city and it's citizens to maintain the look and feel of this neighborhood for generations to come.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Douglas Oliver  
4526 Estrella Ave  
San Diego, CA 92115

January 22, 2023

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

**Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,**

My wife and I are writing to you to express our total, unqualified approval of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

I am writing to you to express my approval of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. I have three reasons for wanting this prestigious designation. First, I love the architecture of the 1920s-1940s, which is greatly reflected in Talmadge. Secondly, I appreciate that this community avoided the last infill building movement of the 1960s and 1970s, thus retaining much of its original historic character and feel. Thirdly, because our origins come from both middle- and working-class families, we were hardworking then, and we are hardworking now to preserve our wonderful community.

I see a growing movement that is particularly worrisome to me which seeks to erase any traces of our collective architectural heritage from our urban landscape. Much like the destruction of Penn Central Station in New York City, this movement puts no value on our architectural past, or even the concept of beauty. Thankfully, this commission exists which allows for the protection of unique, historic communities from unthinking redevelopment.

In summary, Talmadge is considered one of the best places to live in San Diego due to the ongoing connection with its heritage. To preserve what we have for this generation and the next, becoming Talmadge Park Estates Historic Districted listed on the National Register of Historic Places is what I strongly desire.

Please approve the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District.

Mark and Malaina Gusmann

Talmadge Resident  
4611 49<sup>th</sup> St.  
San Diego CA, 92115

# TALMADGE NEIGHBORS

01/22/2024

## **To whom it may concern:**

I have lived in Talmadge since August 2022, which makes me one of the newest neighbors, but it has quickly become my home. The neighborhood is unique not only because of the architecture of the homes, the history of the streets, and the stunning gardens surrounding those homes, but because of the community. It's a neighborhood where everyone not only knows their neighbors, but also looks out for them and lends a helping hand when needed. I've never lived in a place as safe, warm, and caring as Talmadge, but I feel fortunate to call it home and happy to call these people my neighbors. There aren't many neighborhoods like Talmadge left, especially in larger cities, and it deserves to be protected as a historical district.

Sincerely,

**Ashley Herrin**

Kelley Stanco, Deputy Director  
City of San Diego, Planning Department  
9485 Aero Drive, M.S. 413  
San Diego, CA 92123  
Email: [KStanco@sandiego.gov](mailto:KStanco@sandiego.gov)

Tim Hutter, Chair  
Historical Resources Board  
City of San Diego  
c/o Suzanne Segur, Senior Planner, HRB Liaison  
Email: [SSegur@sandiego.gov](mailto:SSegur@sandiego.gov)

**Re: Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register  
Nomination**

Dear Ms. Stanco, Mr. Hutter, and Members of the Historic Resource Board:

I am asking the Historic Resource Board (HRB) to respectfully deny the staff motion to recommend to the California State Office of Historic Preservation the listing of the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District.

I am also asking the HRB to **consider a countermotion stating that the board neither condones nor supports designation or further recognition of a Talmadge Park Estates Historic District** for two primary reasons:

- I. Talmadge Park Estates was founded on a basis of deliberately marketed racism – and their submission does not adequately reflect a complete historical perspective of the inequities and segregation that have persisted in the area for the last 100 years. Not only will historical designation condone the racial undertones woven into the community, but it will stifle any further attempt to affirmatively further fair housing in this area.
- II. The information regarding contributing resources is incomplete, unconfirmed, and inconsistent with the level of due diligence required by this board.

**Part I:**

**Racial Covenants:**

The only mention of racial covenants in the Talmadge Park Estates historical report is in Section 8, defending them as “not unique”<sup>1</sup> and “not illegal until 1948”. Yet, in San Diego, most communities<sup>2</sup> did not have racial covenants. And those that did, danced around racial exclusion with words like “*Planned and Protected for Particular People*”<sup>3</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> [Talmadge Park Estates Historic District NR Draft \(ca.gov\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Mapping Inequality \(richmond.edu\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [How discriminatory covenants shaped San Diego homeownership | KPBS Public Media](#)

but no community went further than Talmadge as explicitly calling out the privileges that only Caucasians were afforded:

*“That neither said premises nor any portion thereof shall at any time nor shall the interest therein ever be leased, sole, devised, conveyed to or inherited or be otherwise acquired by or become the property of any person other than of the Caucasian race.”*

It is not right to think that racial covenants were common or justified just because other communities had engaged in similar practices at the time. Racial covenants are widely recognized as discriminatory and unjust practices that perpetuated racial segregation and inequality, contributing to the systemic disparities and long-lasting negative effects on minority communities that persist today.

### **Racially Associated, Targeted Marketing:**

Talmadge Park Estates was then marketed to a certain type of homebuyer through association with the unscrupulous side of Hollywood. Financier Joe Shenick helped name the community after his wife Norma Talmadge, who was best known for her Yellow-Face portrayal of a Chinese Princess with “*clumsy pidgin English*” in “Forbidden City” that critics called “*gratuitous*”<sup>4</sup>. Critics also described her film “The Heart of Wetona” as “*White Man’s Burden fantasy where kindly Caucasians minister to violent people of color.*”<sup>5</sup> Talmadge Park Estates Financier, Joseph Schneck produced these films.

Norma’s sister, Constance Talmadge was best known for starring in “Intolerance”, which was D.W. Griffith’s follow-up and defensive response to “Birth of Nation” a year earlier, where he said his *critics* were the intolerant ones<sup>6</sup>. In the same way that most communities at that time did not have covenants, most films were not as insensitive as those Joseph Schneck produced or the roles the Talmadge sisters portrayed.

This association by real estate developers Roy and Guy Lichty was deliberate and effective to white homebuyers whose fear of minorities was reinforced by how Schneck and the Talmadge sisters portrayed them on screen. The developers successfully attracted those seeking spatial separation in a racially homogeneous neighborhood with restrictions that would protect property value and avoid what they perceived as undesirable demographic changes.

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<sup>4</sup> [Yellowface Film Review #6: The Forbidden City | fumanchucomplex \(wordpress.com\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [The Heart of Wetona : a review \(stanford.edu\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Intolerance \(film\) - Wikipedia](#)



## Unfair Lending Practices & Redlining:

The Talmadge Park Estates historical report makes **no mention of redlining or unfair lending practices**. Despite dedicating several pages to “FHA Era and Wartime Build Up During the Depression (1935-1944)”<sup>7</sup>, the report is neither complete or inclusive in consideration of how the community’s racial covenants directly influenced lending risk-ratings based on racial and ethnic characteristics.

In 1936, the Home Owner’s Loan Corporation described Talmadge as “No ratio of concentration; no threat of infiltration, restricted to the Caucasian race”<sup>8</sup> and designated Talmadge Park tracts I, II and III as one of San Diego’s few “A – First Grade” (lowest risk) rated areas with the most favorable lending terms. Meanwhile, communities just outside the Talmadge gates suffered from higher-risk ratings and redlining, which systematically denied loans and insurance to individuals based on the racial composition of the neighborhoods.

## Long Lasting Impacts:

The City of San Diego’s Assessment of Fair Housing in its 2021-2029 Housing Element notes Talmadge as one only of three “Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence”<sup>9</sup> in the city while “Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty” persist nearby just south of Monroe. The assessment conclusively draws connection from the redlining and covenants of the past to the inequities that have carried through to today including wealth disparities, property values, access to credit, educational disparities, health disparities, and community fragmentation.

Today, The Talmadge Gates provide not just a physical boundary, but a socioeconomic divide where Talmadge Park Estates separates a 60% concentration of Caucasian population vs. neighboring Census Tracts <sup>10</sup> with as little as 6%. The Talmadge census tract also boasts **4X Per Capita Income, 5X Median Household Income, and 1/4th of persons below the Poverty Line** as those neighboring communities.

2024 California CTCAC / HCD maps<sup>11</sup> identify “**High-Poverty & Segregated**” areas just a block away – meeting the standard for both high or “concentrated” poverty rates and racial segregation while Talmadge Park Estates is associated with positive economic, educational, and health outcomes for low-income families—particularly long-term outcomes for children.

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<sup>7</sup> [Talmadge Park Estates Historic District NR Draft \(ca.gov\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Mapping Inequality \(richmond.edu\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [he\\_appa\\_assessmentfairhousing\\_final.pdf \(sandiego.gov\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Census Tract 20.02, San Diego, CA - Profile data - Census Reporter](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Final 2024 CTCAC HCD Opportunity Map \(berkeley.edu\)](#)

## Countless Reasons to Deny Designation:

Historic designation will only perpetuate the impact of past discriminatory policies.

- The Talmadge Park Estates Historical Report neglects its complete history, focusing on only certain historical narratives while excluding others. It paints a skewed representation of the past that reinforces existing racial biases, stereotypes, and existing inequalities in the City of San Diego. By supporting designation, the HRB will create a perception that the district is meant to preserve the history of a specific demographic while ignoring or marginalizing others.
- While the unfortunate history cannot be reversed, these outcomes can be by Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH). This cannot be achieved once historically designated. Designation will block development of much-needed affordable housing projects such as development of ADUs, lot splits (e.g, SB9), and deployment of 'missing middle' housing, further exacerbating housing shortages, impacting marginalized groups disproportionately. This contradicts Fair Housing principles and the AFFH mandate that aims to promote inclusive communities.
- There is no civil rights event or victory to historically honor. For residents living in its proximity, the designation of Talmadge Park Estates would serve as a constant reminder of historical injustices, contributing to a continuing sense of inequality and marginalization.
- When property values rise<sup>12,13</sup> because of historic designation, access to affordable housing and other resources for marginalized groups becomes limited and creates barriers to upward mobility that contribute to a cycle of disadvantage.
- Historic designation imposes regulations on property use and modifications, limiting economic opportunities for property owners. This disproportionately affects individuals from marginalized backgrounds who may face barriers to participating in the preservation process.

The HRB can often be a forum of privilege where those who are most educated, charming, elegant with words, and flush with resources and time are able to further elevate their own prosperity and socioeconomic status.

Days away from Black History Month and a week after MLK day, this is 2024 – and we should not only stop celebrating, designating, and protecting our scarred history, but making every effort to be more inclusive with our historical reports, promoting diverse

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<sup>12</sup> [Your House Is In A Historic District: Does That Raise Or Lower Its Value? \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)

<sup>13</sup> [historicvalues.pdf \(sohosandiego.org\)](https://www.sohosandiego.org/historicvalues.pdf)

representation within this forum, and acting to no longer condone the mistakes of our past.

Without designation, the structures within Talmage will continue to persist along with its history. Statues and monuments, place names, historical figures and sites, and architectural structures with controversial pasts or racist histories have all been reassessed, de-emphasized, or reevaluated. Many of them have been re-presented in a way that affirmatively recognizes and repairs the past vs. perpetuating it.

Community engagement, inclusive representation, and a thoughtful approach to preserving history can help address some of these concerns. It involves considering diverse perspectives and implementing policies that mitigate the negative impacts of historical districts on marginalized groups.

## **Part II:**

Comprehensive analysis of the Talmage Park Estates Historical Report reveals its inadequacies, marked by incompleteness, absence of confirmation, and notable inconsistency that falls short of the requisite level of diligence required by this board. Criterion E, as stipulated by the National Register of Historic Places, demands minimal due diligence, eschewing the validation standards mandated by local Historical Resources Board (HRB) Criteria A, B, C, and D. The absence of a historical report for each resource, coupled with the non-availability of essential documentation such as Sanborn Maps, Assessor's Building Records, and photographic evidence, places the burden squarely on city resources to verify designations and descriptions. These are often succinct and encompass fewer than 100 words each. Regrettably, the city's confirmation of designations through a cursory review and spot-checking is inconclusive.

The approval of designations en masse through this regulatory gap holds the potential to compromise the integrity of the City of San Diego's overarching historical program. Previous submissions have manifested instances where non-contributing resources were erroneously classified as contributing, boundaries underwent creative gerrymandering without appropriate reconciliation, and material alterations were inexplicably omitted from descriptions. In light of these concerns, I earnestly implore the board to contemplate the exclusion of Criterion E for Historic Districts or any application encompassing more than one contributing resource, as a measure to fortify the reliability and rigor of the city's historical preservation framework.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Wesley Morgan

wesmorgan@gmail.com



Preserving Our Historic Neighborhood

January 11, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

(Via email, in care of Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov)

Dear Ms. Polanco,

On behalf of Historic Kensington San Diego, a community organization dedicated to the preservation of San Diego's historic resources and a participating member of the Neighborhood Historic Preservation Coalition, we are writing to formally express our support for the nomination of **Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD)** to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is important that the unique architecture in Talmadge from the Great Depression and beyond be preserved for this generation, and future generations. Historic wrought iron entry gates welcome one into this residential district, which reflects the development of an early automobile suburb in San Diego from the mid-1920s through the Great Depression – and continuing with early FHA principles through the post-WWII period into the 1950s. Talmadge's architectural styles include Spanish Colonial Revival, Minimal Traditional and early examples of the California Ranch style.

Respectfully submitted,

***Historic Kensington San Diego***

*David L. Roth*

David L. Roth  
President

*William N. Adair, Jr.*

William N. Adair, Jr.  
Secretary

cc: Eileen Magno, Principal Historian/Heritage Architecture and Planning  
Laura Henson, President/Talmadge Historical Society  
Bruce Coons, Executive Director - Save Our Heritage Organisation/NHCP

***Historic Kensington San Diego – 4142 Adams Avenue - Suite 103 #326 – San Diego, CA 92116-2594***

January 10, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

My husband and I emphatically support the nomination for Talmadge Park Estates historic District, (TPEHD) to the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons.

Establishing the TPEHD preserves the cultural history of our community. Talmadge records a vital part of San Diego's history, starting from immediately prior to the Great Depression, then continuing through the establishment of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's implementation of the FHA loan program to bolster the middle class and finally during United States' entry into WWII and resulting population boom experienced locally as a result. Preserving this neighborhood will afford future generations the ability to have a tangible connection to this pivotal moment in National History.

Furthermore, the TPEHD will help foster a sense of community by unifying residents through promoting a collective effort to merge the past with the present while preserving it for future generations. Here in our community of Talmadge, there is a genuine appreciation for our history and cherishing it! Establishing the Talmadge park estates historic district will very much continue this effort which this community has worked so hard to maintain!

In closing, I count myself blessed to have found a community steeped in history and rich with community pride. Preservation of this neighborhood through the establishment of the TPEHD will allow this very cherished community to remain here for generations to come. Thank you for your consideration.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cameron Lindsay-Hewett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the left.

Cameron Lindsay-Hewett

Talmadge resident and homeowner

[4758 Norma Drive San Diego CA, 92115]

January 11, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates for Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support of the Talmadge Park Estates being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. I have been a resident of Talmadge for nearly 20 years. The architecture of Talmadge reflects the 1920s-1940s. The neighborhood is a treasure to those who live here. Over 70% of the homes in our area maintain their original character, charm, and integrity despite the growing trend to erase this historic architecture in favor of multistoried apartment complexes.

The Talmadge community has been very involved in historic preservation including advocating for undergrounding the electrical wires and restoring street lamps and gates; all of which have been successfully completed. Our parkways are lined with trees and all streets have sidewalks which make it very walkable. Neighbors take pride in their houses and surrounding property and we wish to see the historic character of our neighborhood preserved for future generations.

The Talmadge community is worth preserving.

*Annalisa Berta*

Annalisa Berta  
Talmadge Resident  
4630 49<sup>th</sup> St.



YIMBY Democrats of  
San Diego County  
3401-A Adams Avenue #345  
San Diego, CA 92116  
yimbydemssd@gmail.com

#### BOARD

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January 25, 2024

Historical Resources Board  
City Planning Department  
202 C Street, M.S. 413  
San Diego, CA 92101

#### **RE: ITEM #4 – Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register Nomination**

Dear Chairman Tim Hutter, Members of the Historical Resource Board, and City Planning Department Staff:

On behalf of the YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County, please accept this letter regarding our concerns over Item #4: Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register Nomination. While we support preserving historically significant areas, we must also acknowledge the unintended consequences such designations can have on housing affordability and accessibility.

The YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County are dedicated to growing sustainable housing opportunities in the communities where we live. In addition to developing more affordable and market-rate housing to increase the supply of housing, we believe in prioritizing infill development near transit and employment centers with the goal of increasing our housing supply, leveraging our urban environments, protecting our natural resources and advancing economic inclusion and opportunity for all.

Item #4 proposes the bulk designation of 411 homes in Talmadge Park Estates. While we acknowledge the desire to preserve the district's history, we are concerned that blanket restrictions on new development within the district could create unintended barriers to future generations, particularly young families, first-time buyers, and low-income residents who already struggle to find affordable housing options.

Bulk designation of 411 homes has the potential to:

**Exacerbate the Existing Housing Shortage:** San Diego faces a severe housing shortage, and restricting new development in established neighborhoods like Talmadge Park Estates only intensifies the problem. Designation will block development of much-needed affordable housing projects such as ADUs, lot splits (e.g. SB 9), and deployment of 'missing middle' housing, further exacerbating housing shortages, impacting marginalized groups disproportionately. This pushes potential homeowners further away from jobs, amenities, and essential services, further straining our already-strained housing market.

**Raise Concerns for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH):** Founded on Racial Segregation, covenants within Talmadge Park Estates restricted ownership and occupation to "*no person other than the Caucasian Race*". Official Redlining Maps later noted the area as "*No ratio of concentration; no threat of infiltration, restricted to*

*the Caucasian race only*". This segregation persists today as the Assessment of Fair Housing in San Diego's most recent Housing Element notes Talmadge as one of San Diego's few "*Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence*". Today, the gates provide not just a physical boundary, but a socioeconomic divide where Talmadge Park Estates preserves a concentration of Caucasians (60%) up to 10X that neighboring Census Tracts (6%), 4X Per Capita Income, 5X Median Household Income, and 1/4th of persons below the Poverty Line. While the unfortunate history cannot be reversed, these outcomes can be, by denying actions such as historical designation. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing cannot be achieved once historically designated. Restricting housing options in already desirable neighborhoods will perpetuate patterns of segregation and limit access to opportunity for marginalized communities. This contradicts Fair Housing principles and the AFFH mandate that aims to promote inclusive communities.

Procedurally, we are also concerned about Designation Criterion E (National Register of Historic Places), which requires very little due-diligence and none of the validation required through local HRB Criterion A, B, C, and D. Absent a historical report, Sanborn Maps, Assessor's Building Records, current and historic photos, or an individual hearing for each resource at the HRB, the onus has been shifted to City Resources to confirm designations and descriptions (that often contain less than 100 words) in the bulk Criterion E submission. With dozens of potential historic districts queued to exploit the Criterion E loophole, the consequences can undermine the credibility of the City of San Diego's entire historical preservation program. In other submissions, we have seen non-contributing resources noted as contributing, boundaries altered without reconciliation, and material alterations omitted from descriptions. As the Board and the City begin a comprehensive update to the heritage preservation program, we urge the board to consider eliminating Criteria E for Historic Districts, especially those applications containing more than one contributing resource.

The Talmadge Park Estates nomination highlights a larger issue. We need to find a balance between honoring our past and building a future that includes affordable housing for all. As advocates for sustainable growth and new housing, the YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County stand ready to support and be a resource for housing policies that prioritize housing affordability and access for all San Diegans. We urge you to reconsider the bulk designation approach and explore alternative preservation strategies that do not inadvertently exacerbate the housing crisis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

YIMBY Democrats of San Diego County



# Kensington

**TPU2**

0.3 mi

**TPU1**

0.9 mi

0.4 mi

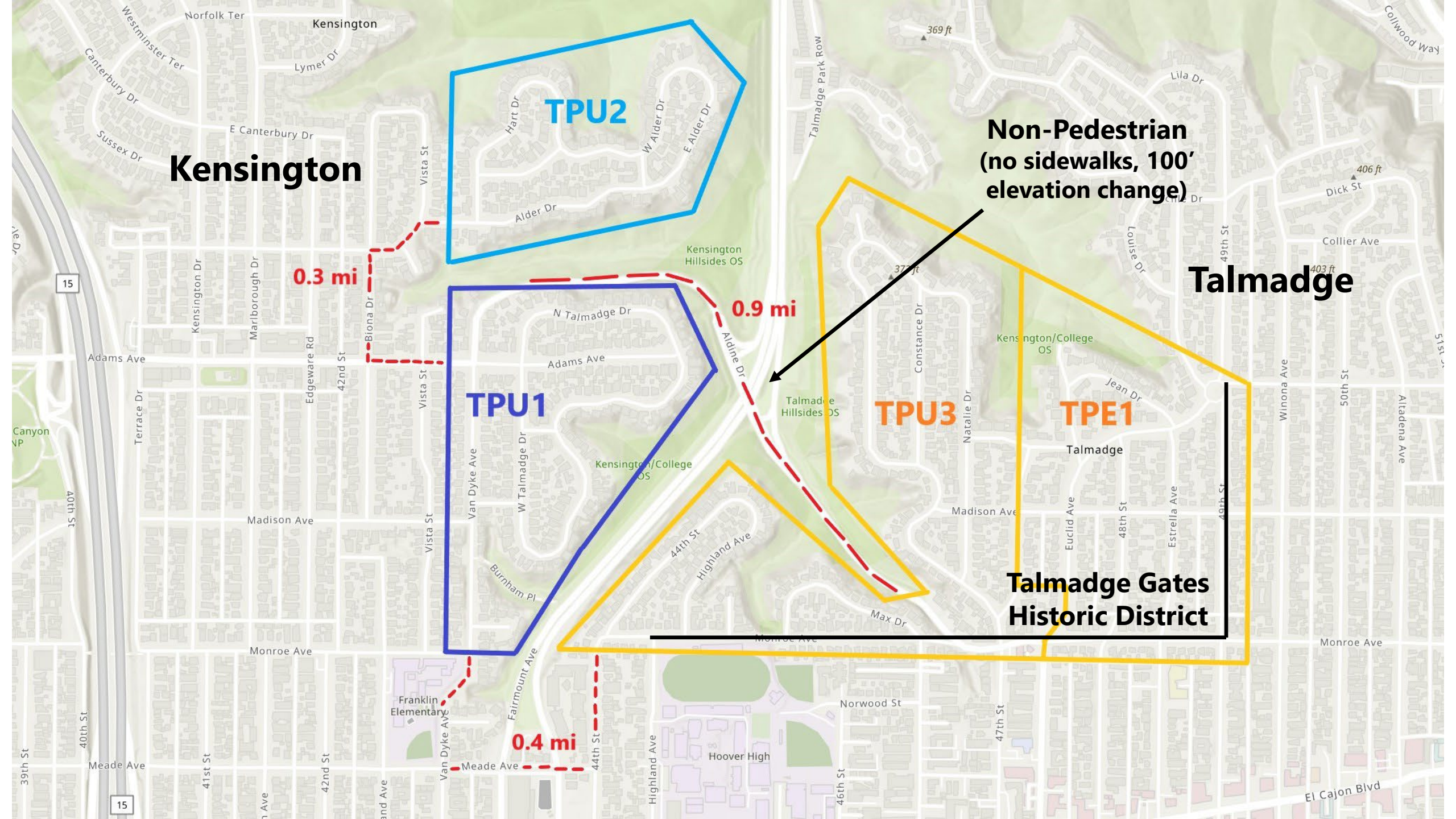
**Non-Pedestrian  
(no sidewalks, 100'  
elevation change)**

**TPU3**

**TPE1**

**Talmadge Gates  
Historic District**

# Talmadge



January 19, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

I strongly support the nomination of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Because it has not experienced significant redevelopment, the district provides an excellent example of residential planning and architecture during the period from its beginning in 1926 through 1951, when the district was effectively built out.

The district provides many examples of period architecture, including Minimal Traditional, Spanish Colonial Revival, early Ranch (Hacienda), Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and other styles.

Because other homebuilding opportunities were limited during the Great Depression, many of San Diego's Master Builder and Architects designed and constructed homes in the district. Although these homes were limited in size, they nonetheless reflect the skills of their masters, many of whom lived in the district. These homes have numerous architectural details, both internal and external, that provide valuable examples for modern cost-effective, architecturally interesting homebuilding. These details evolved through the period of significance to reflect wider popular trends, such as Streamline Moderne, Cape Cod, and Tudor references. These styles are reflected in window placements, porch overhangs, eaves, pediments, and other details.

The district also provides excellent examples of early ranch houses. These include a locally designated Cliff May designed house and similar Hacienda style homes built by The Dennstedt Company (a local Master Builder) and other developers. These homes were skillfully adapted to small and often odd-shaped lots and optimized construction materials by taking advantage of San Diego's mild climate to extend interior spaces into adjoining courtyards and breezeways through French doors and large picture windows.

Good sidewalks make good neighbors. The Talmadge Park Estates Historic District remains an excellent example of community planning for small house subdivisions. The unifying gates and lights, sidewalks, and parkways underpin a walkable community whose benefits are evident today. Small lot frontages meant that pedestrians walking up from the neighborhood grocery store and local bus lines could traverse the maximum number of homes per unit of distance. Decorative lights and well-laid sidewalks ensured that this walk was safe and pleasant.

Unlike much historic preservation, Talmadge Park Estates Historic District represents modest, working class housing, To this day, the modest size of homes makes the district relatively affordable and, as a result, is home to many young families.

The district is the culmination of decades of historic preservation work by Talmadge residents. The historic gates that frame the district, along with the existing original streetlights, were locally designated in 2000. The Talmadge community then created a maintenance assessment district (MAD) that paid for the bulk of the work to refurbish the gates and lights, including bringing the wiring up to modern standards. This effort was a public-private partnership, including the support of San Diego County Supervisor Ron Roberts and then San Diego Councilmember (now California Senate President pro tempore) Toni Atkins. National Register designation will ensure that these efforts will continue to be enjoyed by future generations of residents and visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Hueter', written in a cursive style.

Geoffrey Hueter, Ph.D.  
Talmadge Resident and Homeowner  
4602 Natalie Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115





## University Heights Historical Society

January 24, 2024

City of San Diego  
Historical Resources Board  
1222 First Avenue, MS501  
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: ITEM #4: Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register Nomination

Dear Chair Hutter and Members of the Historical Resources Board,

On behalf of the University Heights Historical Society, we enthusiastically support nomination of the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.

Talmadge Park Estates is significant for several reasons. It represents a variety of architectural styles from the 1920s to 1940s including Spanish Colonial Revival, Hacienda, and Minimal Traditional styles. Over 70% of the homes have been maintained in their original character.

The proposed district also symbolizes key historical periods in San Diego's development including the post-Great Depression economic rebirth and the pre-World War II growth of aeronautics.

Notably, a house built in Talmadge in 1935 by Master Builder, Louise Severin, became the first in San Diego to qualify for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) financing. FHA financing transformed the building industry. The building boom from 1935-1942, guided by FHA principles, resulted in the construction of homes that epitomize the Minimal Traditional style, with influences ranging from Streamline Moderne to Colonial Revival and Cape Cod.

This district is also a rare surviving example of a builder's subdivision in San Diego, featuring contributions from over 80 independent builders. The result is a unique blend of architectural designs and individuality, unlike the homogeneous architecture associated with later tract housing developments.

In conclusion, we strongly advocate for the inclusion of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristin Harms, President

Typical of subdivisions at this time, all the Talmadge subdivisions had deed restrictions. The *Talmadge Park Estates Homebuilders Guide* (Figure 3) stated, “Talmadge Park Estates is protected by sensible tract restrictions which will promote a neighborhood homogenous in character.”<sup>32</sup> In addition, the deed restriction read, “That neither said premises nor any portion thereof shall at any time nor shall the interest therein ever be leased, sold, devised, conveyed to or inherited or be otherwise acquired by or become the property of any person other than of the Caucasian race.”<sup>33</sup> These restrictions were systemic racism and sadly were not unique. It was not until the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948) made racial covenants illegal.

January 24, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners:

This letter is in support of the application for the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District. We are in favor of becoming listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

We moved to San Diego in 1998 and bought our Talmadge home in 1999. Talmadge was a surprise pocket of quiet homes located right off the busy freeway and adjacent to the busy traffic corridor of El Cajon Boulevard. We were immediately drawn to the community feel of the neighborhood and the diverse, interesting, and older homes that populate its streets. Our home is a classic Spanish style home which was built by Master Builder Dennstedt Company in 1937.

In addition to having containing homes with individual historic designations, our neighborhood is framed by historic gates and lighting structures, something homeowners voted to maintain through an assessment. These features of the neighborhood date back to its inception in about 1926. In the 25 years of living here and raising our children, we have come to love the style and craftsmanship of homes in Talmadge, and as a family we have worked hard to ensure that our own home retains its original character as it ages. For example, when our tile roof was damaged during termite tenting, we restored to roof using its original "mud set" style.

As stewards of this home, we would like our unique neighborhood to be preserved as a testament to the history of San Diego architecture. We hope that future owners of our home will reap the benefits of our efforts to retain the character of our special neighborhood.

The City of San Diego has already summarized our neighborhood nicely on its website:

"Talmadge is a historic neighborhood established in 1925. It is a diverse neighborhood with vibrant residents and beautiful homes. Talmadge is named after three Hollywood movie stars, Norma, Natalie and Constance Talmadge. Located near San Diego State University and isolated by canyons on the north and west, the community's entrances are set off by the Talmadge Gates. The recently renovated Talmadge traffic circle marks the heart of this terrific neighborhood."

Please vote to support our efforts to become listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Esther Leeflang  
Janet Mueller  
Talmadge Residents  
4729 Natalie Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115

December 18, 2023

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

I fully support the nomination and approve Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This district represents a significant period of history and character.

The district epitomizes two key factors in the history of San Diego:

- 1) the rebirth of economy following the Great Depression and
- 2) the growth of aeronautics just prior to WWII.

In fact, this district holds the San Diego record of the first approved financing loan following establishment of the 1934 Federal Housing Administration.

The district experienced a 'building boom' from 1935-1942 with over 86% construction. Most of the construction followed guidelines from the FHA publication of 'Principles of Planning Small Houses'. These FHA guidelines led to the architectural style that became known as Minimal Traditional (MT) and is largely reflective of the district. Many MT homes reflect additional architectural features of Streamline Moderne, Colonial Revival, or Cape Cod. The district also reflects many Spanish Colonial Revival, Spanish Hacienda, and Tudor style homes.

The district is one of the few remaining 'builder' subdivisions within San Diego. Over 80 independent builders constructed homes within the district which created a unique variety of architectural design and individuality - much different than the subsequent (and current) onset of tract housing which offers 3-4 floor plans. Several of the district homes were designed and/or built by Master Architects and Master Builders. Over 70% of the existing homes maintain their original character, integrity, and charm.

In summary, listing the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places ensures recognition, respect and appreciation of a significant period of bygone time and place. I would like to see its unique architecture preserved for this generation and beyond.

Debbie Sanders  
Talmadge Resident  
4646 49th St  
San Diego, CA 92115

## TERRENCE LEE HANCOCK

4518 Euclid Avenue, San Diego, CA 92115

Phone: 831-566-6835 E-mail: thancocksc@gmail.com

January 8, 2024

By mail and e-mail to: Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Re: Talmadge Park Estates Historic District  
National Register of Historic Places Nomination

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,


I am writing to you to express my strong approval of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are lots of good reasons why this effort should be approved and I will only provide a couple below.

First, I am a lifelong California resident who has watched with alarm as so many of our historical neighborhoods have been lost to the next generation. I don't want to see that happen in Talmadge. Our home was built in 1941 by a master builder. Like the other homes here, it is an original design, solidly built and crafted with many fine points. I want future residents to be able to enjoy this neighborhood as much as I do.

Second, listing Talmadge on the National Register will enable young residents to enjoy living in an historical community without paying excessive prices. Talmadge is not a neighborhood of excessively expensive homes. While prices have increased over the years like in every California community, it is still reasonably affordable enough to attract young families who can appreciate its historic qualities without having to pay a fortune. These homes were originally built for working class families. That emphasis on smaller, compact homes kept them reasonably affordable then and they are still reasonably affordable today.

Talmadge was named for the three Talmadge sisters from the silent screen era of Hollywood in the 1920s so this neighborhood already has an historical connection to an earlier era. I hope you will help us preserve this history by approving the application.

Thank you,



Terrence Lee Hancock  
Talmadge District Resident  
4518 Euclid Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92115



Tuesday, January 23, 2024

City of San Diego  
Historical Resources Board  
1222 First Avenue MS 501  
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: January 25, 2024 Agenda, Item 4  
Talmadge Park Estates Historic District, Letter of Support

Board members,

As a local San Diegan and an architectural historian with an in-depth knowledge of the architectural and cultural landscape of the city, I strongly support listing the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as written in the submitted nomination.

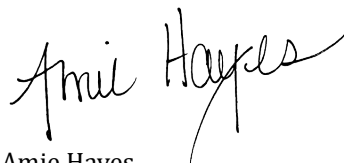
The Talmadge Park Estates Historic District is a highly intact collection of twentieth century residences within the Mid-City neighborhood of San Diego. Significant under Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Architecture, this district represents an important period of suburban housing development (1926 through 1951) through a specific variety of architectural styles that illustrate the period of significance. This district also represents an opportunity for local builders to put the early Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guidelines into practice and within their own neighborhood as there are several builders living within the district during the significant period.

The Talmadge Park Estates Historic District also contributes to the larger San Diego residential context and, through this intact collection of resources, the district illustrates a component of this evolution that is necessary to tell the full story of growth and progress related to San Diego housing. The architectural composition, community features and application of FHA guidelines that were practiced during this period speak to a period of local expansion as well as a transition in the ideals of suburban housing development. Additional features such as streetlights, iron entry gates, and scored sidewalks are quickly being lost within other San Diego neighborhoods making the retention of these original and intact features increasingly more rare, which contribute to the high level of integrity that is still present.

While nearby subdivisions may share some historical context, future research into these adjacent areas will determine eligibility and the appropriate path toward designation if or when it moves ahead. Supporting the nomination as written still enables future amendments to expand boundaries, if appropriate, upon additional research. Additionally, while it is unfortunate the City's analysis was not able to review all properties, it is important to note the detailed methodology used to evaluate contributing and noncontributing status, which is supported by staff, as well as the strong concurrence with the properties sampled.

I support listing the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District in the NRHP, as prepared in the current nomination, due to strong integrity and significance under Criteria A and C. This district is an excellent intact example of an early automobile and post Great Depression infill suburb within San Diego.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,



Amie Hayes  
District 8 Resident  
San Diego, CA  
[amiek.hayes@gmail.com](mailto:amiek.hayes@gmail.com)  
[linkedin.com/in/amiekhayes/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/amiekhayes/)

December 27, 2023

Julianne Polanco  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
California State Parks, Office of Historic Preservation  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

**Re: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for  
Talmadge Park Estates Historic District**

Dear Julianne,

My wife Angela and I were exceptionally pleased to receive your attached letter and strongly support historic nomination for our San Diego neighborhood of Talmadge. This landmark action will preserve our essential, long-standing community for future generations to come.

As a matter of formal record, we own the residential property at the following address:

**4569 Norma Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115  
APN: 465-550-11-00**

I am a licensed California architect and my wife possesses a fine arts degree. Our professional backgrounds help us appreciate the unique character of the built environment around us. Talmadge contains a diverse collection of architectural styles that range from Spanish Revival to California Ranch to Cape Cod, plus a wealth of WWII-era cottages. Our own house, which features a turret and mission-tile roof, is the first Hacienda-style residence to be built in this eclectic 1930s enclave.

Once approved, the proposed Talmadge historic district will sustain a rich part of San Diego origins. This nomination represents an investment in our region's cultural heritage. It will strengthen community identity and offer educational opportunities to all San Diegans, such as ongoing walking tours led by the Talmadge Historical Society. Further, it will help protect Talmadge from harmful legislation like SB 10, which we believe is shortsighted and fails to consider the irreversible damage that densification can inflict on long-established single-family housing tracts.

In closing, I again want to emphatically state that my wife and I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We appreciate your efforts to oversee this vital historic designation.

Sincerely yours,

  
Kurt Stolle and Angela De Felice

Encl: (1) Letter from Office of Historic Preservation (11/29/2023)

Cc: Amy Crain, State Historic Preservation Officer

**From:** "Crain, Amy@Parks" <[Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov)>

**Date:** December 28, 2023 at 8:29:16 AM PST

**To:** [dawn-ron@cox.net](mailto:dawn-ron@cox.net)

**Subject:** RE: Letter of Support for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District in San Diego, CA

Thank you for your letter. It has been added to the nomination file and will be shared with the commissioners in advance of the meeting.

Sincerely,

Amy H. Crain  
State Historian II  
Registration Unit  
California State Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816-7100  
PHONE (916) 445-7009  
[Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov)  
<http://ohp.parks.ca.gov>

**From:** [dawn-ron@cox.net](mailto:dawn-ron@cox.net) <[dawn-ron@cox.net](mailto:dawn-ron@cox.net)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 27, 2023 8:21 PM

**To:** Crain, Amy@Parks <[Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Amy.Crain@parks.ca.gov)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District in San Diego, CA

December 27, 2023

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

I want to say first off that my wife and I support the nomination of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. I would like to see its unique Great Depression era architecture preserved for this generation and the next.

Our home at 4583 Highland Ave was custom built in 1939 by general contractors Dege and Kasitz. Paul Dege was a first generation immigrant from Germany and built many quality homes in San Diego and Baja California. This particular home was custom built for Frank and Francis Munster who lived their entire lives there. My wife and I purchased the home in 1995 from their son William Munster and is our

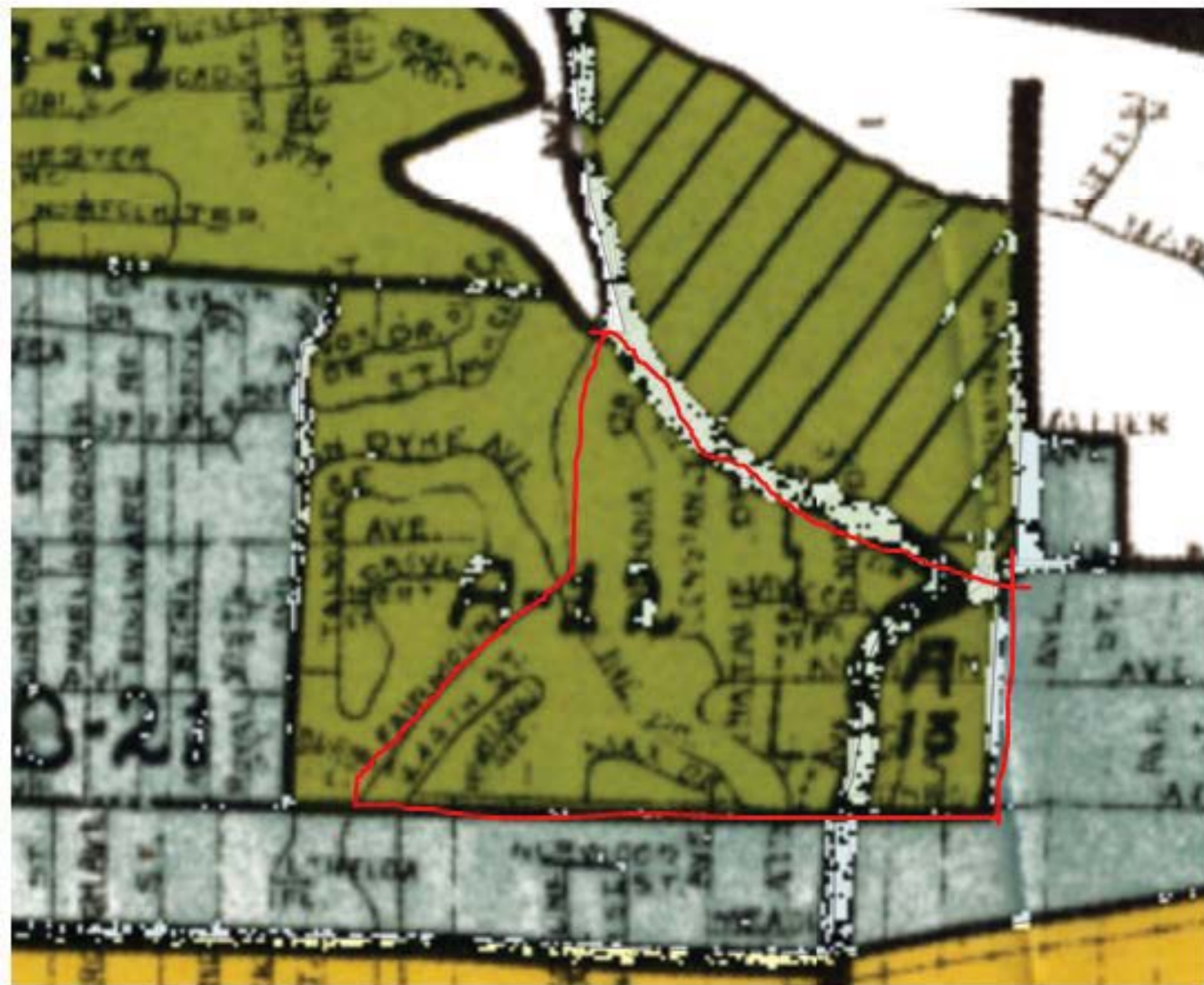
first and only home purchased together as a married couple. We love the neighborhood we moved into and were surprised to learn that several original home owners or their family descendants still lived in their homes which had never been resold. The majority of these homes, when viewed from the street, still structurally look the same as they did when they were first built providing passerby's a view into the past. The neighborhood is unique with mostly single story homes with many hugging the canyon rims that surround the neighborhood. These homes are well built and have stood the test of time and are worth saving by designating the TPEHD for future generations to enjoy.

We now have lived in this home for over 28 years and have made a point to preserve its original characteristics, both inside and out, for our enjoyment as well as others.

Sincerely,

Ron and Dawn Anderson  
Talmadge Residents  
4583 Highland Ave  
San Diego, CA. 92115





- A-11 in A-12. This area has recently been annexed to the City of San Diego.  
(Cont)
- A-12. Topography, gentle canyons and mesa lands, adapted to high class landscaping. Canyons considered very desirable for homesites. Residents white, with a few of the upper class Spanish families, consisting of Naval Officers, business and professional men and retired people. Income range \$3600 up. No ratio of concentration; no threat of infiltration, restricted to the Caucasian race. Type of construction - one and two story Spanish stuccos,



# Mission Hills Historic District Design Guidelines

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**In 2004** residents, using best practice models of guidelines from across the country, drafted these Guidelines. The City of San Diego staff reviewed them for compliance, and residents distributed them to homeowners in the boundary for comment and posted them online. Residents held public meetings to provide information and to provide a forum to allow refinements to be made. City staff and an HRB member were present to answer residents' questions.

In April 2007 the city informed the applicants that the Guidelines would not be reviewed with the Historic District nomination. The Guidelines, with materials submitted to the Historical Resources Board, were not included because City staff said they were too long and instead they provided Secretary of the Interior Standards, (only one page shorter). The City also said that these Guidelines interfered with zoning laws. Because zoning laws provide for larger driveways and no set backs, as well as other approvals that conflict with the historic ambiance within the boundaries of the district, this was part of the thoughtful reasoning by the applicants in forming a historic district. With Guidelines such as these put into practice it would address many of the problems facing older neighborhoods such as the lack of deference to the established rhythm and scale of the existing streetscape.

On July 5, 2007, city staff informed the applicants that because of staff cuts there would be no time to review them; however, they had already been reviewed by the city in 2004.

**Therefore, be advised that the Historic Resources Board has not adopted these Guidelines.**

City staff is available to help those wishing to pursue district designations and to help you design your individual historic district program.

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## **Introduction to Mission Hills Historic District Design Guidelines**

Mission Hills is a vibrant, culturally diverse community that contains an abundance of historic resources spanning a period of almost 100 years. In order to protect the precious and finite resources, which give the community its character the Mission Hills Historic District (the “District”) Design Guidelines were developed to provide information to homeowners and designers on preserving the historic fabric of one of San Diego’s older neighborhoods. The District Guidelines are intended to help maintain the high quality of Mission Hills historic neighborhood by providing guidance for the design of new houses, additions and /or changes to historic properties in the District. These Guidelines are intended to focus on the characteristics of neighborhood, compatibility, and to leave individual homeowners flexibility to build, expand or make alterations to meet their own needs and objectives.

All new house construction, additions and remodel projects should strive to conform to the Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines presented here are intended to go beyond the basic requirement of the Zoning Ordinance and address issues specifically related to neighborhood character and compatibility in greater detail with emphasis on the view from the public right away as the most pertinent and sensitive to maintain the community character. These Guidelines are particularly important for individual buildings with historic or architectural merit.

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### ***Goals of the Design Guidelines:***

- a) To preserve Mission Hills historic heritage and foster appreciation for its history.
- b) To ensure that alterations to historic buildings are compatible with the character of the structure and the neighborhoods.

### ***Applicability***

The Guidelines apply to all structures and properties located within the boundaries of the District.

### ***Application***

These Guidelines are provided for the use of homeowners, builders, contractors, architects, designers, City Staff and City decision makers. The guidelines are expected to be useful for making design decisions about new construction and additions at a number of levels:

- a) Homeowners, builders, architects and other designers are encouraged to consult the Guidelines, prior to designing new houses, additions or remodels.
- b) For minor additions, the Guidelines should be used as an information resource by homeowners, builders and/or designers to facilitate administrative review approvals.

c) To encourage the rehabilitation and reuse of historic structures.

d) To provide design criteria so that new construction is built to be compatible with the visual character of the District.

e) To serve as a tool that assists homeowners and designers in having their plans expeditiously approved by the City.

c) All projects that involve major additions, new construction or require a development permit within the District shall be reviewed and approved in accordance with the City of San Diego Historical Resources Regulations (Section 143.0201 et seq. of the San Diego Municipal Code) for consistency with these Guidelines and guidelines established by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

d) Neighborhood residents should consult these Guidelines to understand the compatibility concepts that apply to new construction. Development Services Department information Bulletins are available that explain the Preliminary Review process.

***Acknowledgements:***

Conservation District Design Guidelines used with permission and thanks to: The City of Santa Clara and to:

Gloria Sciara, AICP  
Historic Resources Coordinator  
City of Santa Clara  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Illustrations used with permission and thanks to:

David A. Huboi A.I.A.  
Huboi Architecture  
910 Monterey Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
[www.huboi.com](http://www.huboi.com) (831) 636-0949

Community support and contributions by Richard Jacobs, Janet O’Dea, Scott Sandel and Therese Hymer and the other dedicated community members who provided review and input including: Allen Hazard, Barry Hager, Bill Maginn, and Phil Halpren. Thanks also to City of San Diego Planning Department staff, Terri Delcamp and Diane Kane.

## **Purpose of the Design Guidelines**

Over the past several years, the City of San Diego and the community have taken a strong interest in protection of local historic resources by rejuvenating these artifacts of the past. While the City remains vibrant and continues to change in response to varying community needs, goals, and economic conditions, preservation of the heritage of our older communities and in particular of Mission Hills is a primary goal of the community.

### ***What are Design Guidelines?***

The Guidelines convey City and community policies about the design of alterations to existing historic structures, additions, and new construction in the District.

### ***Why are Design Guidelines needed?***

Maintaining and preserving a strong quality of life and retaining Mission Hills' neighborhood charm and character are important goals identified by its residents. Therefore, these Guidelines and the design review process help promote preservation of these historic, cultural and architectural resources that are fragile, finite and vulnerable to inappropriate alterations and demolition.

While the Design Guidelines are written for use by the non-professional, property owners are strongly encouraged to enlist the assistance of qualified design and planning professionals, including architects and preservation consultants.

### ***City Policies and Design Guidelines***

The City Land Development Code contains policies, which encourage historic preservation. The Historical Resources Board is the appointed body with authority over historical resources in the City of San Diego. All new construction projects within the District shall be reviewed and approved in accordance with the City of San Diego Historical Resources Regulations (Section 143.0201 et seq. of

the San Diego Municipal Code) for consistency with the guidelines established by the Secretary of Interior for preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties. The Guidelines that follow are intended to act in furtherance of City preservation policy and to serve as a framework for permit review for all projects within the District.

### ***Principles for Historic Preservation***

The Design Guidelines incorporate principles set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties—an accepted set of basic preservation design principles. The Design Guidelines are compatible with the Secretary of Interior's Standards, while expanding on how these basic preservation principles apply to Mission Hills

## ***Which Properties are Historically Significant?***

It is generally recognized that a certain amount of time must pass before the historical significance of a property can be evaluated. This generally is referred to as “historical perspective”. The National Register for example, suggests that a property be at least 50 years old or have extraordinary importance before it may be considered for listing.

San Diego policy specifies 45 years of age and one of the following areas of significance:

a) Exemplify or reflect special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.

b) Are identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

c) Embody distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.

d) Are representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

e) Are listed or has been determined eligible by the National Park Service for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or is listed or has been determined eligible by the State Historical Preservation Office for listing on the State Register of Historical Resources.

f) Are a finite group of resources related to one another in a clearly distinguishable way or is a geographically definable area or neighborhood containing improvements which have a special character, historical interest or aesthetic value or which represent one or more architectural periods or styles in the history and development of the City.

## ***The Basic Values of Preservation in San Diego***

Principles of preservation shape the foundation for the Guidelines and apply to historic districts in San Diego.

a) Protection and preservation of the basic characteristics and salient architectural details of structures insofar as these characteristics and details are compatible with the Historic District, as defined by the

Historic Resources Board (“HRB”) in the Statement of Significance adopted for each district.

b) Affording the widest possible scope for continuing vitality through private renewal and architectural creativity, within appropriate controls and standards. The HRB intends to foster a climate in which each historic district may continue to exist as a living, changing neighborhood and not a static museum.

c) Encouragement of the development of vacant property and redevelopment of incompatibly developed properties in accordance with the character of the area.

## **Incentives for Historic Properties or Historic Preservation**

### ***State Historic Building Code***

The State Historic Building Code has been mandated by the State Legislature to encourage ...“a cost effective approach to preservation.” Owners of identified historic buildings can utilize the State Historic Building Code (SHBC) in lieu of the Uniform Building Code for existing historic structures. This code could be utilized for seismic upgrades, foundation repair, and changes in occupancy. Use of the Historic Code allows some flexibility and usually results in a minimum of 10% cost savings. A copy of the SHBC is available at the Planning Division. Please call (619) 235-5224.

### ***Property Tax Reduction***

The City of San Diego offers a property tax reduction program called the Mills Act. The property owner of a qualified historic property may obtain tax reduction intended as an exchange for the rehabilitation or restoration work.

This program lowers property taxes and is an entitlement program that runs with the land. When the property is sold, the tax reduction stays with the property. This can be a positive marketing feature when selling your home.

### ***Federal Income Tax Credits***

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program is one of the country’s most successful and cost-effective community revitalization programs. The program fosters private sector rehabilitation of historic buildings and promotes economic revitalization. These tax incentives are available for buildings that are National Historic Landmarks, that are listed in the National Register, or that contribute to National Register Historic Districts. Properties must be income producing and must be rehabilitated according to standards set by the Secretary of the Interior.

### ***Flexible Standards***

Flexibility is available to assist in producing development consistent with Secretary of Interior’s Standards. Conditional Use Permits are often granted for adaptation and continued use of historic resources.

### ***Technical Assistance***

Both routine maintenance and more extensive restoration or rehabilitation must be done carefully to ensure that the architectural character and therefore the value of the building is not diminished. San Diego City Planning staff can assist you with District Design Standards to ensure that your property is appropriately rehabilitated to maximize the historic character and value of your property.

### ***Property Values***

Historic resource status carries with it a certain amount of prestige, which can lead to an increase in property value above normal appreciation. The interest in historic homes continues to increase as appreciation for local/national history and culture gains in popularity.

### ***Neighborhood Protection***

Historic conservation reduces the threat of demolition from highway construction, urban renewal, and other federally funded projects. In addition, designation generally controls the size and scale of new construction in the district and also provides for community involvement when demolition is proposed, thus protecting the character and quality of the area.

### ***Official Recognition***

Finally, a variety of classifications are available for eligible structures. Inclusion in the Historic District means that the city recognized your property or neighborhood as an important component of San Diego's architectural and historical heritage. Property owners of City landmarks and properties listed on the City of San Diego Architecturally or Historically Significant Properties inventory may receive an official historic marker plaque or optional bronze plaque, which recognizes their historic significance and conveys their history to the public. The designation does not include interior access by the public.

## **The Seven Parts of the Mission Hills Historic District Design Guidelines**

### **1. Land Use**

This section sets forth the land use policies and explains the land use issues such as setbacks, floor area ratio, and other zoning standards that are unique to the District.

### **2. Public Infrastructure**

This section sets forth the land use policies specifically pertaining to the character-defining streetscape of the District.

### **3. Treatment of Architectural Features**

This section gives specific information on the various features of a structure (e.g. roofs, walls etc.) and why those features are important. These Guidelines provide design principles for each feature and appropriate ways changes can be made while preserving the integrity and appearance of historic structures.

### **4. Demolition & Additions**

This section gives parameters for demolition and design information for additions to properties in the District. Primary concerns are retention of historic buildings and an addition's compatibility with the district's existing historic buildings. The guidelines provide guidance on how to conserve the historic character and features of buildings while adapting the building to today's needs.

### **5. New Construction**

This section deals with the relationship between new construction and adjacent existing single-family houses. Most of the guidelines in this section offer guidance for the homeowner or architect on minimizing the impact of new construction on neighboring houses.

### **6. Compatibility Criteria**

Since the major objective of these Guidelines is to ensure that new homes, additions and remodels are appropriately compatible with the existing structures and the surrounding neighborhood, compliance with the guidelines in the section is essential for the preservation of the neighborhood character. Consistency will be an important component of those projects, which qualify for approval.

### **7. Appendix:**

A glossary, website link list and catalog of architectural styles commonly found in Mission Hills are provided as resources for homeowners and builders who wish to understand terminology, the architectural origins and the representative elements of that style. The descriptions note the relevant characteristics of each style.



# 1. Land Use

This framework is vital for conserving and improving the character of the District. Individual properties and the district as a whole have historical, architectural, and cultural significance to the City of San Diego. The Design Guidelines help to appropriately preserve remaining historic structures and infrastructure.

## ***Relationship to Municipal Code, Uptown Community Plan***

Development and zoning standards stated in the City of San Diego Municipal Code and the Uptown Community Plan that are not specified in the section shall remain applicable.

All projects submitted and deemed complete prior to the date that the District design guidelines become effective shall be exempt from the standards of this document.

## ***Design Review for Historic Properties***

The Design Review Subcommittee of the HRB reviews development applications for compatibility with the District to ensure that proposed changes compliment existing structures. Projects subject to Design Review include rehabilitation,

alteration, new construction, remodeling, relocation, window replacement or demolition.

## ***Setbacks***

Other than the standards specified in this document, setbacks shall be maintained in accordance with the Municipal Code and/or Community Plan. District properties may apply for a zoning variance to the setback to reduce the setback so it is more compatible and lines up with other existing structures along the street.

Side yard setbacks for second story additions and new two-story homes shall be no less than one-half the height of the building wall adjacent to the property line.

The vertical dimension between the finish grade and the plate of the wall shall determine the height of the wall

## ***Height of Buildings***

By nature of their design and architecture, historic structures often are taller than their modern counterparts. Additional height can be attributed to raised first floor with steps leading up to the front door or front porch. To maintain consistency, the Design Guidelines allow additions to match the existing heights of the buildings. Administrative approvals may be granted for the continuation or enhancement of an historic property subject to the following:

- a) Increased height allowances for residential structures up to 30 feet for the purpose of creating a compatible addition to a qualified historic resource.
  
- b) Increased heights for accessory buildings (sheds, garages on alleys) up to 24 feet for the purpose of matching roof pitch to the main structure of a historic resource.

## ***Lot consolidation and subdivision***

Lots sizes should remain intact and will not be consolidated nor subdivided.

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## 2. Public Infrastructure

Public sidewalks, parkways, street markers and street trees are considered under the review of these Guidelines, as set forth below.

Key features of the district include the original site planning of the streets, alleys sidewalks – as well as the street fixtures used in the neighborhood.

### ***Parkways***

Parkways were designed for trees and palms and for low plantings or lawn. Paving in parkways is only allowed for one single width (eleven foot) driveway per lot and a small sidewalk extension that connects a residential front walkway to the curb. Trees and palms in the parkways are the property of the City; tree removals and permanent construction in parkway areas require an Encroachment Removal Agreement and/or no-fee Street Tree permit from the City.

#### *Guidelines:*

1. Where new concrete paving is installed within parkways or other public property, the concrete color and finish shall match existing or original materials. Existing concrete colors are different from new, uncolored concrete. Where matching existing concrete, new concrete shall be integrally colored. “Plain” gray vintage sidewalks shall be matched with an integral color equal to “Limestone” by LM Scofield Co., or

approved equivalent (mixed at half the manufacturer’s standard color strength). Where matching existing pink sidewalks, a matching half-strength integral color shall be used that matches the adjacent existing color. All new concrete in parkways shall match the existing finish – a “buff wash” or “acid etch” finish. Scoring for new parkway paving shall match the adjacent on-center scoring dimensions and the existing scoring depth.

2. All existing parkway paving shall be maintained as existing. However, where required to provide for safety, health and welfare, new sidewalks and pedestrian ramps may be required to be installed.

3. Existing date stamped sections of sidewalks shall be salvaged and re-installed as indicated in the applicable San Diego Regional Standard Drawing and per the requirements of these Guidelines.

## ***Street Trees***

1. Existing street trees shall be maintained in place. Wherever conflicts with roots arise, root pruning and the placement of root barriers shall be implemented. Professional review of site-specific conflicts by a licensed Landscape Architect or Certified Arborist is recommended. Requests for removal of existing street trees shall be addressed to the Historical Resources Board, in addition to other required City permits.

2. New street trees shall be chosen from approved street-specific street tree lists and match the treescape of the District, where applicable. New street tree plantings are encouraged. No-fee street tree permits are required in the City of San Diego.

## ***Street Lights***

Historic light fixtures send a visual signal that helps discern the landscape and architecture of the region.

1. New streetlights may be appropriate as utility “undergrounding” in the District occurs. Streetlights should be pedestrian oriented. “Acorn lights” or other designs consistent with the Presidio Hill area may be selected by the neighborhood at a later date. Coordination with and approval by the appropriate City departments will be necessary to establish a new streetlight specification for the public right of way.

2. Large overhead cobra lights or spotlights are not allowed, as they are the least compatible with the historic environment.

3. District light and luminaire replacements shall be of a design, material, lumen intensity, color spectrum and distribution that is consistent with the District period of significance.

### 3. Treatment of Architectural Features

A structure's physical composition, architectural features and details are defining elements of historic resources. The treatment and conservation of those physical features is an integral part of preserving the historical integrity and value of a resource. Once features are compromised, the historical value of a resource diminishes. With that in mind, it is understood that as needs change, so will buildings and properties. Therefore, the following guidelines address the appropriate ways to make changes, while preserving the integrity of historic buildings.



*“The roof shape and detail contribute to the character of the buildings.”*

#### **Roofs**

By their shape, features, materials, and details, roofs can contribute significantly to the historic character of buildings. The roof form is essential to the perceived overall form of a building. Through variations in line, pitch and overhang, the roof also can reveal the architectural style of buildings, as well as the changes and additions over time.

#### *Design Principles:*

1. Retain and preserve the original shape, line, pitch overhangs, and architectural features that are character defining elements of the roof, such as cupolas, chimneys and dormers.
2. New replacement roof material should be similar to the historic material in

composition, size, shape, color, pattern and texture.

3. New roof materials and shingle types should be consistent with the architectural style of the house.

4. Roofs on porches and accessory structures and additions should match the main or existing structure.

5. Locate roof ventilators, antennas, dishes, and solar collectors inconspicuously on rear slopes, where they will not be visible from the street. Avoid placement on front or street elevations.

6. Install low profile ridge vents, if they are desired, and insure that historic roof details are not damaged.

## ***Walls and Materials***

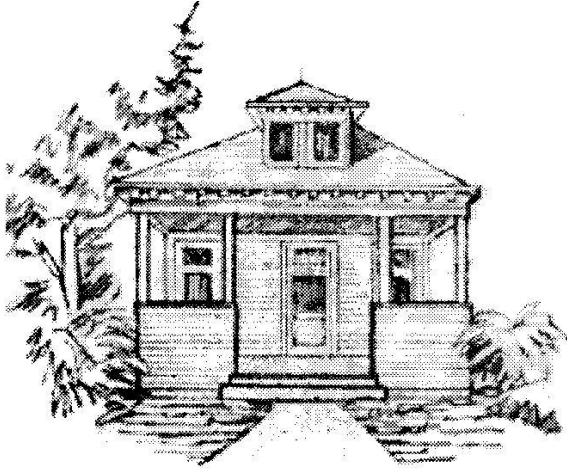
The form, the materials and the details including corner boards, brackets and quoins of exterior walls contribute to a building's historic quality, unique appearance and add to diversity of wall forms to the District. The pattern, texture, colors, details and dimension of lumber and masonry materials (stone and brick) for historic wall materials, provides distinctiveness and scale to buildings. Wood siding (such as ship lap or clapboard) and stucco are the most commonly found in the District. A variety of shingle designs evident, such as saw tooth and staggered butt add distinction to buildings.

### *Design Principles:*

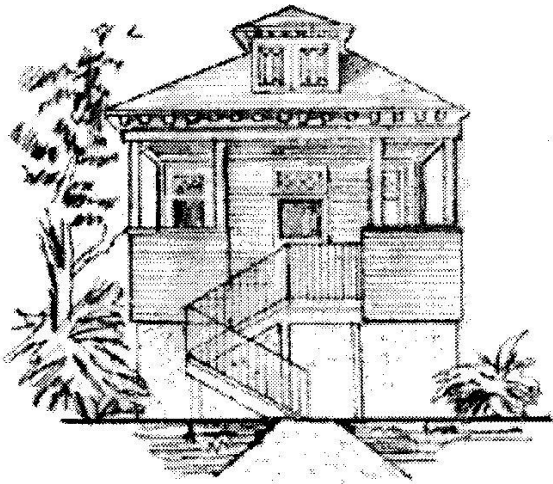
1. Retain and preserve the original shape, form, height, materials and details of historic walls and architectural features that are character defining elements of exterior walls, such as cornices, arches, quoins, corner boards and brackets.
2. If replacement of historic wall material is necessary, use new materials that match the historic materials in composition, size, shape, color, pattern and texture. Consider substitute materials ONLY if original materials are not technically feasible.
3. To allow for differentiation between the old and the new, walls on new additions should be visually differentiated.
4. Limit new vents, door or window openings visible from the street or along front elevations.
5. It is not appropriate to replace or cover wooden siding or trim with a substitute cladding material, such as stucco, aluminum siding, vinyl siding, stone or brick veneer.

6. Stucco repairs should be done with great care to the specific area that needs work and matched to the original in color and texture.

7. Re-stucco over an original stucco finish is not appropriate as it changes the thickness of the wall surface and the relationship around trim around windows and doors.



*“The original height of the building’s foundation contributes to the historic character and overall proportion of the building.”*



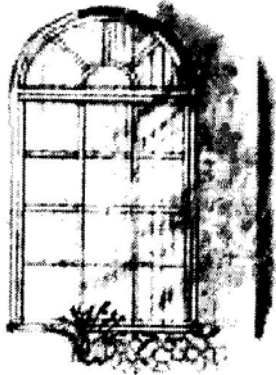
*“Elevating the structure distorts the proportion of the original building and adversely impacts the historical integrity of the building.”*

## ***Foundations***

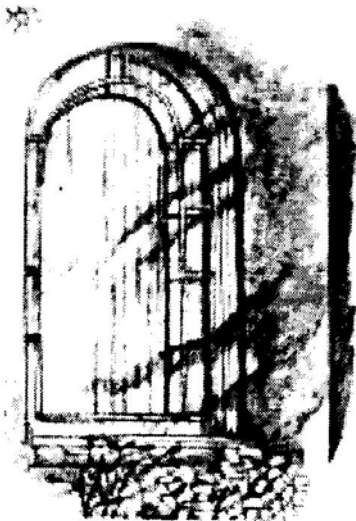
The foundation ties the historic building to its site, usually raising the body of the structure above ground level. The original height, proportions and the details of a building’s foundation contribute to its historic character and are part of the overall proportions of the building. An obvious change to the proportions of the building resulting from elevating a structure is generally an inappropriate change to a historic building.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Retain the existing relationship between the height of the foundation and the framing.
2. When replacement foundations are constructed, the overall height of the structure should not change more than six inches above the finished grade.
3. Elevation of the structure to allow for conversion of a basement area to a living area should not exceed 12-18 inches. Additional heights distort the proportions of the original building and adversely impact the historic integrity of the building. The appropriate height change depends upon the design and form of the building and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
4. Retain and preserve the original features, height, and exposure of historic foundations.
5. Locate new utility and mechanical connections through foundations on non-character defining foundation walls or place them inconspicuously on side or rear walls where they will not be visible from the street.



*“Modern replacement windows installed flush with the wall plane eliminate the historic appearance and changes the character of the building.”*



*“Older windows with pronounced inset have prominence and character.”*

## ***Windows and Doors***

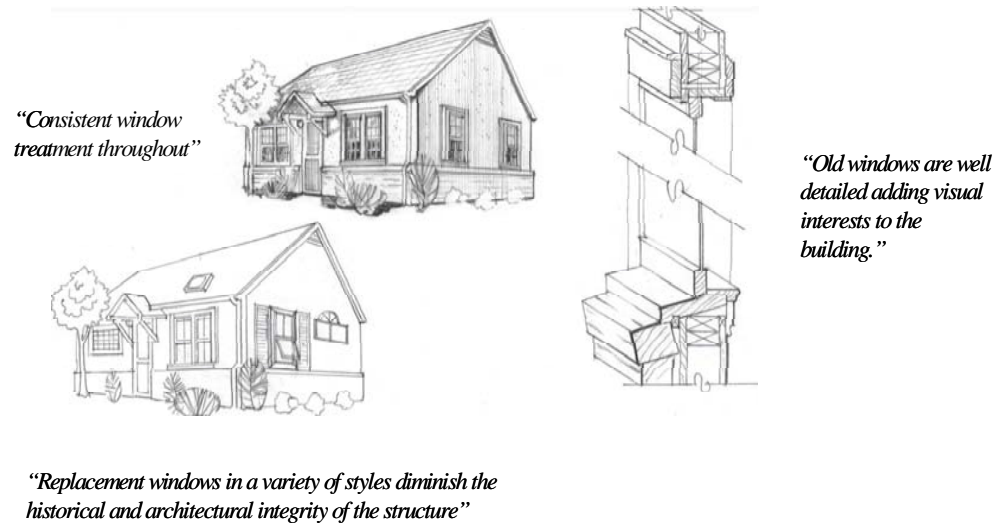
Windows and doors by their proportion, shape, location and pattern contribute significantly to a building's historic character and are particularly indicative of stylistic periods. Among a building's features original windows are considered the most significant element contributing to a building's character. Openings in a building's exterior also provide opportunities for natural light, ventilation, and visual connections to the interior. For this reason, retention of original windows and doors is critical for a building to retain its significance, along with retention of historical fabric (original elements).

### *Design Principles:*

1. Retain and preserve original windows, doors, openings and details of windows, such as trim, sash, glass, lintels, sills, thresholds, shutters and hardware.
2. Repair original windows, doors, and frames by patching, splicing, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing deteriorated sections.
3. If replacement of window or door elements is determined to be necessary, replace only the deteriorated element to match the original in size, scale, proportion, pane or panel division, material and detail with special attention to muntin/mullion pattern.



4. It is not appropriate to replace windows or doors with stock items that do not fill the original openings or duplicate the unit in size, material, and design when replacement occurs. Snap in and flat muntins are not appropriate replacement for true divided-light window panes.



5. Wood windows on historic buildings should not be replaced with vinyl clad or other substitute window materials.

6. When replacement windows are necessary, avoid tinted or reflective glazing.

7. New windows or doors, or filling in existing window or door openings, (often associated with a remodel) should not be done as it diminishes the original design of the building.

8. Keep new windows and doors compatible with existing units in proportion, shape, location, pattern, materials and details.

## ***Utilities and Energy Retrofit***

Many features of historic buildings are inherently energy efficient. For example, porches, operable transoms, and windows provide opportunities for conserving energy. Capitalizing on energy-efficient historic features and sensitively retrofitting historic buildings can maximize their energy-conserving potential.

Energy efficiency of older windows is compromised when the weather-stripping around the sash is not maintained and the glazing compound that seals the glass panes within the wooden sash deteriorates. In an attempt to make a house more energy efficient, historic fabric is often lost. A common mistake is replacing windows.

### *Design Principles:*

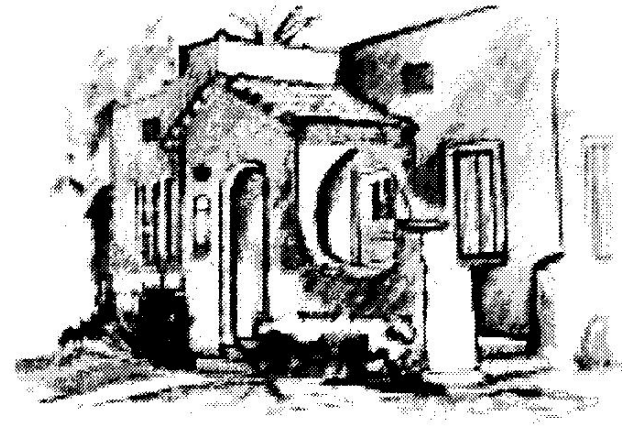
1. Retain and preserve the inherent energy-conservation features of historic buildings, such as porches, operable windows and transoms.
  2. Improve thermal efficiency by installing weather-stripping, wall and roof insulation, storm windows and caulk. (*Weather-stripping around doors will prevent air infiltration.*) Ceiling fans and fabric window coverings can minimize heat gain.
  3. Avoid replacing transparent glazing in windows and doors with tinted or mirrored glazing.
  4. Generally, it is not appropriate to replace operable windows or transoms with fixed glazing.
-

## ***Porches, Entrances, and Balconies***

Porches, entrances and balconies are often primary features of historic buildings and contribute significantly to their overall architectural character. The various functional components of porches and entrances, including steps, balustrades, columns, pilasters, doors and entablatures, all add stylistic embellishment to historic buildings while providing scale and detail. They also impart a feeling of neighborliness. Front porches are a dominant feature on most of the houses in the District.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Retain and preserve historic porches, entrances, balconies and all architectural features that are character defining elements of porches, entrances and balconies, including mass of structural elements, piers, columns, pilasters, balustrades, handrails, steps, brackets, soffits and trim.
2. When introducing reversible features to assist people with disabilities, take care that the original design of the porch is not diminished and historic materials or features are not damaged.
3. Do not remove a porch, as it is one of the main defining features of a house. A reversible partial enclosure of a porch may be acceptable.
4. Do not add a new porch or deck to the main façade of historically \ significant buildings where one never existed.
5. Do not replace wood porches and porch steps with brick, ironwork, concrete, or concrete blocks. Porch alterations of this nature generally compromise the architecture of a structure. Replace with in-kind materials



*“Porches and covered entrances improve the neighborhood streetscape by breaking down the mass of the home.”*

## ***Chimneys and Brickwork***

Chimneys and brick planters are strong, architectural elements on the exterior of many of our historic structures. They are of varying materials, often masonry, with a variety of cap treatments.

Historic chimneys constructed of old brick and the softer mortars used a century ago often need lining to prevent fire or smoke damage due to deteriorated mortar joints. This can now be done without changing the exterior of the chimney and such work is encouraged.

Work such as re-pointing mortar shall be done in accordance with guidelines set forth by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation which dictates the use of soft mortars composed of sand, hydrated lime, small amounts of white Portland cement, and clean water. (National Parks Service bulletins provide more information on specific treatment methods.)

*Design Principles:*

1. In no case should the strength of the mortar exceed the strength of the brick or stone.

2. Re-pointing shall be to a depth of 1/2" minimum and joints shall be tooled to match the original. When re-pointing brick or stonework, the mortar mix should match the original color and joint profile.

3. The application of a mortar or concrete parging (a covering used to give a smooth surface), which obscures the masonry surface and poses a threat to the hard outer shell of brick or stone masonry, is discouraged.

4. The painting of brick or other natural materials, is discouraged, as removing paint once applied to brickwork is difficult.

## ***Life Safety and Accessibility***

A new use or a substantial rehabilitation of a historic building can result in complying with requirements to meet contemporary standards for both life safety and accessibility to people with disabilities. The California Historic Building Code and the federal

Guidelines for adhering to the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 both provide some flexibility in compliance when dealing with historic buildings.

*Design Principles:*

1. Meet Health and Safety Code and accessibility requirements in ways that do not diminish or damage the historic character, features materials and details of the building.

2. Design new ramps or other structures that are simple unobtrusive and readily reversible.

3. Use materials that are compatible with the building and screen the structure with landscaping if located on the front of the property.

4. If possible, comply with accessibility requirements thorough portable or temporary, rather than permanent ramps.

5. Place access ramps to the side or rear of the building whenever possible. In lieu of ramps, mechanical lifts are good option

## ***Driveways and Vehicular Paving Areas***

Typical parking in the District is in an alley at the rear of the property or along the side of the building along a single width driveway. The relocation of parking from front yards to a less conspicuous portion of a residential lot is desirable for the maintenance of the residential character of the District.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Compatible materials and installation of driveways and parking pads with other properties in the block and in context with the historic nature of the neighborhood are encouraged. This includes “Hollywood” driveways – driveways with two paved tracks, separated with a narrow planted strip.
2. Gravel driveways are discouraged.
3. Where an existing garage has historically been accessed by alley, new garage doors shall not be placed to face the front of the lot.

## ***Fences and retaining walls***

The construction of fences separating back yards is common throughout the District. Fence heights are limited by zoning ordinance and, while older codes may authorize a fence lower than the maximum (e.g., for consistency with the fence on a

neighboring property), it cannot approve fencing higher than the Municipal Code allows.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Fences higher than 42 inches above adjacent grade in the front yard are discouraged.
2. The finished side of the fence should always face outward, away from the lot, area, or structure, that it surrounds.
3. Fencing is limited to wood, concrete block, stucco or wrought iron. The use of chain-link fencing is not allowed, as it is the least compatible with the historic environment.
4. The installation of a fence beside an existing fence is not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and is discouraged.
5. Retaining walls are to be maintained. Repair or replacement should incorporate the existing wall material and shall match the original color, texture and pattern.
6. New retaining walls that are adjacent to existing retaining walls near the parkway shall be of materials that match adjacent existing material(s).
7. Faux or simulated wall products are not appropriate.

## 4. Demolition & Additions

### ***Demolition***

Property owners are responsible for the preservation of their historic buildings and sites, with oversight by the HRB and other City Departments. Demolition of such buildings is generally undesirable and to be avoided whenever possible. Demolition or relocation of contributing sites may be approved with the necessary permits and environmental documentation.

#### *Guidelines:*

1. A city demolition permit shall not be issued by the Development Services Department until the HRB or its staff and/or other reviewing bodies/departments of the City of San Diego approve replacement plans. An exception to this may be made if conditions that eminently threaten health or safety exist in the structure in accordance with San Diego Municipal Code Section 126.0504 et seq.

2. Financial proof of the ability to complete the replacement structure, including but not limited to a performance bond, a letter of credit, a trust for completion of improvements or a letter of commitment from a financial institution must be submitted to the HRB at the time of the application for demolition.

3. The design of the new replacement structure shall conform to these Guidelines.

## ***Additions***

The introduction of additions compatible with historic buildings in the District is acceptable as long as the addition does not visually overpower the original building, compromise its historic character or destroy any significant features and materials. By placing additions on inconspicuous elevations and limiting their size and height, the integrity of the original buildings can be maintained. It is important to differentiate the addition from the original building so that the original form is not lost. Additions should be made without significant damage to the historic building or loss of historic materials. Also, as with any new construction project, the addition's impact on the site in terms of loss of important landscape features (trees) must be considered.

The compatibility of proposed additions with historic buildings will be reviewed in terms of the mass, the scale, the materials, the color, the roof form and the proportion and the spacing of windows and doors. Additions that echo the style of the original structure and additions that introduce compatible contemporary design are acceptable.

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*Guidelines:*

1. Construct additions so that there is the least possible loss of historic fabric. Also ensure that character-defining (original) features of the historic building are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.

2. Limit the size and the scale of additions, so that they do not visually overpower historic buildings.

3. Locate additions as inconspicuously as possible, on the rear or least character-defining elevation of historic buildings.

4. Design additions so that there is some differentiation from the historic building. It is inappropriate to duplicate the form, the material, the style, and the detail of historic building so closely that it appears to be part of the original building or the original building is compromised.

5. Design additions so that they are compatible with the historic building in mass, materials, proportion and spacing of windows, and doors. Either reference design motifs from the historic building or introduce a contemporary design that is compatible with the historic building.

6. For the predominant material of the addition, select a historic material, (such as wooden siding) which is compatible with the historic materials of the original building. Contemporary substitute materials (such as synthetic siding) are not acceptable.

7. Design the roof form to be compatible with the historic building or consistent with the predominant roof forms in the neighborhood.

8. Design the foundation height and the eave lines of additions generally to align with those of the historic building.

9. It is not appropriate to construct an addition that is substantially taller than the original building.



*“Poorly designed addition – The original house is not discernable”*



*“Desirable addition- The original building is largely intact and visible.”*



### *Design Principles*

1. Design the new addition so that it does not visually overpower the original building. A second story addition to a single story house should be compatible in scale with the existing dwelling and set back substantially from the front of the existing building.
  2. The new addition should not compromise the existing historic character or destroy any significant features and materials.
  3. Locate an addition as inconspicuously as possible, on the rear or least character-defining elevation of the building to preserve the integrity of the original.
  4. Differentiate the addition from the original building so that the original form is not lost. As a general guideline the original form of a historic structure should be easily apparent when an addition is made. A design for a new addition may echo the original structure. Compatible contemporary designs also are acceptable.
  5. Use historic materials that are compatible with the materials of the original building. Contemporary substitute materials such as vinyl siding Masonite, T1-11 and similar composite wood products generally are not acceptable. New high quality synthetic materials such as Hardiplank are acceptable.
-

## 5. New Construction

When siting new construction, compatibility with the District's character, existing setbacks, the spacing of buildings, and the orientation of buildings should be considered. Compatibility of proposed landscaping, lighting, paving and accessory buildings are also important.

The purpose of Guidelines for new construction is not to prevent change in the District, but to ensure that the District's architectural and material vocabulary are respected.

### **Goals:**

- a) To provide for continuity of design between existing and new development.
- b) To preserve the historic character of the District.

The height, proportion, roof shape, materials, texture, scale and details of the proposed building must be compatible with existing historic buildings in the District. However, compatible contemporary designs rather than historic duplications are encouraged.

Compatible additions that do not compromise the character of a historic building or destroy significant features and materials are acceptable in the District.

- c) To assist property owners and designers in having their plans expeditiously approved by the City.
  - d) To ensure that the impact of infill development on existing neighborhoods (loss of privacy, noise, increased traffic, inconsistent scale) is mitigated.
-

*Design Principles:*

**Site**

- 1, Keep the front setback of the proposed building consistent with the setback of adjacent district buildings or nearby district buildings fronting on the same street.
2. Make the spacing or distance between the proposed building (along the side yard setback) and adjacent District buildings compatible to the spacing of buildings fronting on the same street.
3. Keep the orientation of the proposed building's front elevation to the street consistent with the orientation of other existing buildings.
4. Make all proposed site features and secondary structures, including garages, outbuilding, fences, walls and landscaping masses, compatible with site features and secondary structures in the District.

5. Minimize disturbance of the terrain in the District to reduce the possibility of destroying unknown archeological materials and habitation levels.

**Building**

1. Design the height of the proposed building to be compatible with the height of historic buildings on the block or the street, not varying more than five percent from their average height. Keep the height of new construction similar to the surrounding houses.
2. Design the proportion (the ratio of the height to the width) of the proposed building's front elevation to be compatible with the proportion of contributing front elevations in the district.
3. Introduce new windows and doors that are compatible in proportion, shape, position, location, pattern, and size with windows and doors of contributing structures in the District.

4. Keep the roof pitch and shape of the proposed building consistent with the roofs in the district.
5. Keep the predominant material of the proposed building consistent with historic materials in the District (e.g. wooden siding, shingles or stucco).
6. Make the scale (the relationship of building's mass and details to the human figure) of the proposed building compatible with the scale of contributing structures in the District.
7. Ensure that the architectural details of the proposed building compliment the architectural details of contributing structures in the District.
8. Contemporary construction should not copy directly from historic buildings in the District, but it should be compatible with them in height, proportion, roof shape, material, texture, scale and detail.

## Architecture and Design

The height, the proportion, the roof shape, the materials, the texture, the scale, and the details of the proposed building shall be compatible with existing historic buildings in the District. Since architectural styles reflect the period in which they are built, replicating historic building styles is not desirable for new construction. A compatible contemporary design utilizing traditional architectural features is encouraged.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Design new construction so that the architectural character of the neighborhood is maintained. Specific architectural styles are not mandated. The use of traditional building and architectural features (e.g. eaves treatment, recessed windows, porch columns, etc.) is a way of making new construction blend in with the neighborhood.



*“New single family home adds to the character of the neighborhood.”*

2. Maintain materials, massing, scale and general design principles found throughout the neighborhood (e.g. porches, setbacks, garage placement, roof style and materials, wood siding, windows, etc.)

3. Generally, the height of new construction should be similar to the surrounding neighborhood.

4. The relation of one to two story elements should be similar to the existing homes in the neighborhood.

5. The width of a new dwelling facing the street should be consistent with the average width of homes on the

block on which the new structure is located.

6. Design the proportion (the ratio of the height to the width) of the proposed building’s front elevation to be compatible with the proportion of the front elevations in the immediate streetscape (e.g. one story front entryways, porches, and width of buildings).

7. Introduce new windows and doors that are compatible in proportion, shape, position, location, pattern, and size with windows and doors of structures in the neighborhood.



*“Inappropriate in-fill due to building proportions and garage placement.”*

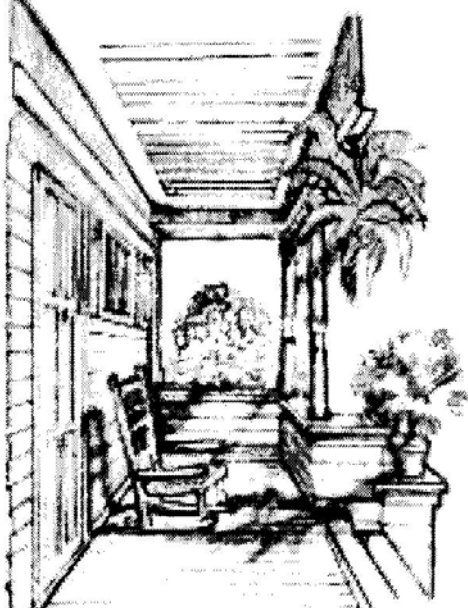
## ***Existing Building Materials For New Construction***

Using materials commonly found in the District helps maintain the historic character of the District. In areas where either historic or architecturally significant structures predominate, the use of similar exterior construction materials is appropriate. Architectural design and materials, such as cladding and roof shingle shape, should be appropriate for the architectural style of the proposed house.



### *Design Principles:*

1. Primary materials for homes should be horizontal wood siding, hand applied stucco or Hardiplank siding. Accent materials should include real or cultured masonry materials, horizontal siding and wood shingles. The predominant exterior materials found on the historic homes in the block or neighborhood should be considered when selecting exterior cladding for the new structure.
2. To protect the value and integrity of the historic neighborhood, use of plain panel siding (i.e. T1-11) vinyl or aluminum siding is not permitted.
3. Design all four sides of the structure. Long blank back or side walls are discouraged. Wrap the siding material from the front on all sides. The common practice of an upgraded material on the front of the structure, (such as horizontal siding) with panel siding on the sides and rear, is strongly discouraged.
4. Provide consistent window and door trim. Casing doors and windows are highly encouraged and create a more substantial appearance to the design.
5. Provide door and window moldings with sufficient profile on all sides of the home. Use of compound molding is preferable to flat  $\frac{1}{4}$  wood trim because it adds dimension and enhances the architecture of the structure.



*“Porches provide a transition zone from public space to the private space.”*

## **Entrances**

Porches and covered entries improve the neighborhood streetscape by breaking down the scale and mass of the home and are consistent with homes in the District. Porches also provide a transition zone from the public space to private space. The following elements are recommended:

### *Design Principles:*

1. Incorporate a front porch or covered entry.
2. The main entrance to a home should be part of a clear entry sequence extending from the public sidewalk to the front door. Front doors should face the street.
3. Orient the main entrance of single family or multiple family dwellings to the public street in order to promote an active street.
4. Entrances to new homes should not exceed one story.
5. A substantial portion of all two-story homes, particularly on the front elevations, should feature one-story elements (living area, not garages).
6. Attached garages visibly placed on the front elevation should be orientated to the back of the lot whenever possible so the door opening is not highly visible from the street.

## ***Accessory Buildings***

Some original garages, carriage houses and smaller outbuildings survive in the District. Some echo the material, details and the roof form of the main house on the site while others feature a simpler design (e.g. plank construction or board and batten exteriors). These buildings contribute to the architectural character of the District. Retention and conservation of these buildings is encouraged because of the limited numbers that survive and because they capture the transition from the era of the horse and buggy and streetcar to the ownership of personal private automobiles.

Through their siting and relationship to the houses, streets and the alleys, accessory buildings contribute to the historic character of the District by maintaining a unique “community design” form distinct from modern subdivisions which commonly feature prominent attached garages along the front elevation. Early garages typically were single-bay structures located in the rear yard by alley access or at the end of the driveway and are not highly visible from the street. Due to the narrow width of lots in the District, single car garages with uncovered tandem spaces are permitted (Land Development Code).

### *Design Principles.*

1. Whenever possible, locate a new garage carport or accessory building to the side or rear of the property. New driveways that are accessed from streets other than alleys shall not be wider than eleven feet. New garages shall be placed within the rear half of the lot, with a maximum of two garage doors visible from the street elevation.

2. Accessory building designs may feature details from the main structure. The details may be less elaborate than those found on the main structure as this was typical historically.

3. Design an accessory building to be in proper scale for the property.

4. Maintain an appropriate site relation to the main structure as well as to surrounding structures, consistent with the neighborhood pattern of accessory buildings to provide continuity of the community form of the District (i. e. new garages that are replacing vintage garages should face the alley if the vintage pre-existing garage faced the alley).

5. Accessory buildings visible from the street shall incorporate “carriage style” garage doors.

## ***Fences***

Fences and walls are important constructed features of the landscape that help define the context of the site for a historic building. Within a historic district, the repetition of fences or walls also provides a strong sense of continuity to the streetscape. Wood, cast iron and wrought iron all were traditional fence materials. The selection of material and design often related to the architectural style of the house.

### *Design Principles*

1. Design new fences to be compatible with the architectural style of the main building or neighborhood.
2. Fencing should not obscure the front elevation of the primary structure on the property.
3. Front yard fencing should remain open and low to preserve traditional streetscape patterns of the district.
4. Fences in the required front setback area may be up to 42 inches in height.
5. Appropriate fence materials consist of wood, wood picket or iron railings. Chain link is not considered appropriate fencing material for front yards

## ***Maintenance***

The City does not regulate design aspects of ordinary maintenance projects. To ensure that your project does not require unnecessary and continued design review, please contact Planning Staff to discuss the scope of your work.

Both City Planning staff and the Historical Resources Board can be a valuable resource to property owners undertaking routine maintenance projects. Preservation technical briefs on repairing older buildings are available free of charge on the National Parks Service website.

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhome.htm>

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## ***Substitute Siding and Trim for Historic Structures***

The original siding material is a character-defining element of a building. Durability of substitute materials has been proven to be limited. As technology evolves, better products will come on the market. A layer of paint film and caulking is a cost effective way to protect historic siding and always is the first course of action for preserving historic and new structures.

### *Design Principles:*

1. Substitute siding should not be considered an alternative to routine maintenance.
2. Maintenance and preservation of original siding and trim enhance the property's value by preserving the historic features of the building substantially more so than any replacement material.

For additional resources on architectural features and treatments please see the Appendix.



*“Heritage trees add to the visual character of the District.”*

## 6. Compatibility Criteria

Staff and the Historical Resources Board using the following "compatibility" criteria, will review changes to existing buildings and new construction. Projects should be designed with these principles in mind to expedite the design review process. The overall emphasis is for additions and/or alteration to structures in the District to be designed to conserve the

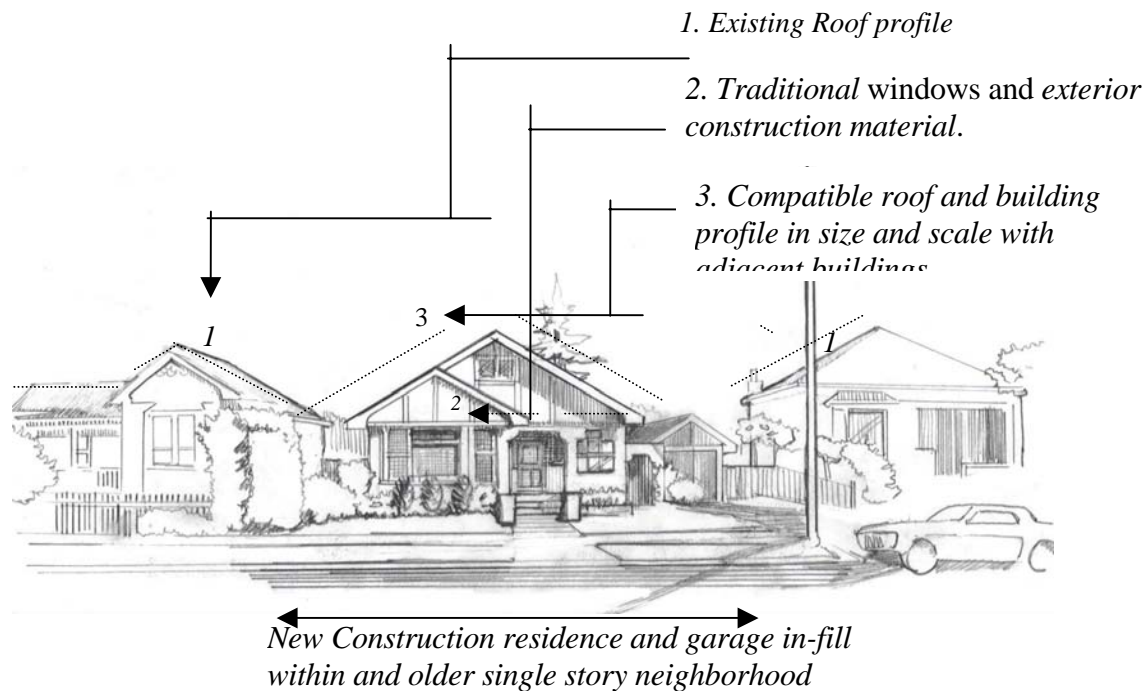
exterior integrity of the original structure. By designing exterior elements in historically compatible materials, colors textures, architectural detailing and shape, changes can be successfully integrated with the original structure while incorporating contemporary features and functions. Additions should be harmonious with the existing structure yet be distinguishable. The review of a proposed alterations and new construction will consider the following:

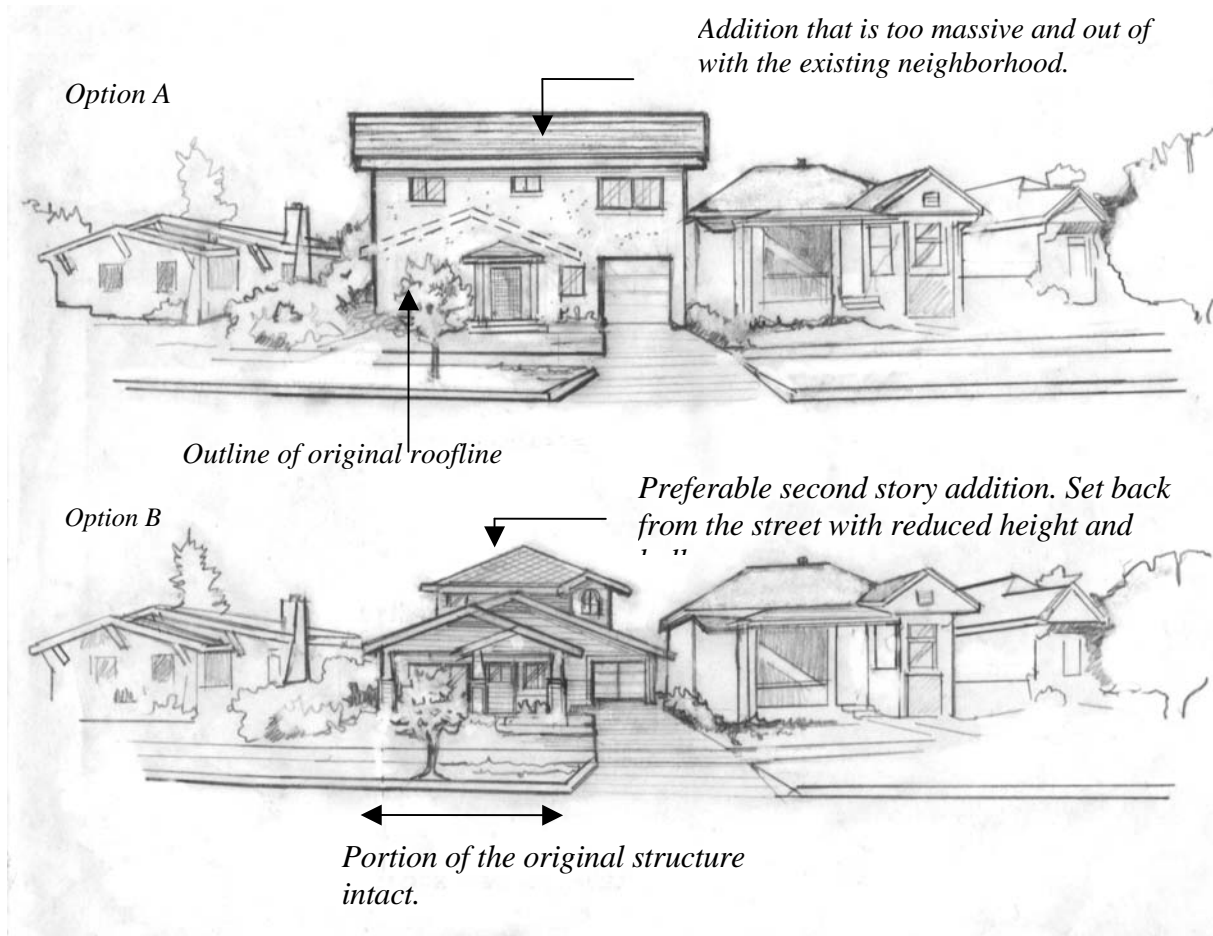
### **Size**

(The relationship of the project to its site.) Generally, projects that relate well in size to the building site and adjacent structures and secondarily to the immediate neighborhood are viewed positively.

### **Scale**

(The relationship of the building to those around it.) Building mass, height and proportion determine scale as it relates to circulation, open space and neighboring structures. New structures or renovations should communicate a scale consistent with the identity, use and characteristics of the District.





## **Height**

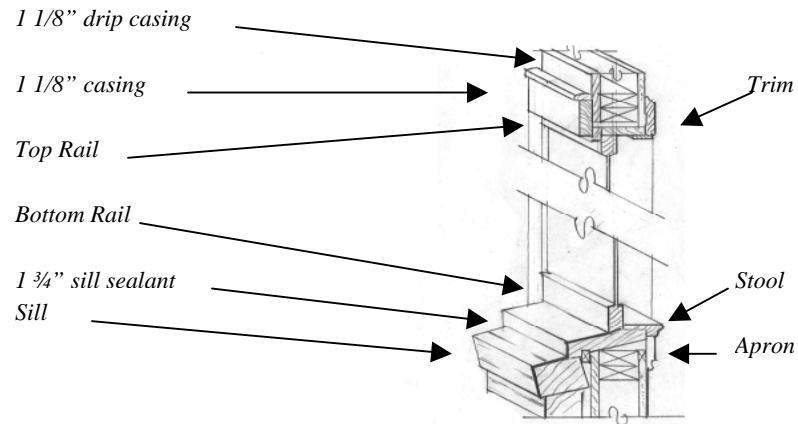
(Refers to the vertical dimension of a structure.) Height is an important consideration in designing new structures or additions to preserve neighborhood scale and fit in with existing development. With the exception of important community, institutional or unique buildings that act as visual landmarks, a new structure should always be designed so that its height is similar to its surrounding environment. While varied heights can offset each other in interesting ways, a building height out of scale with its surroundings can produce an inharmonious effect.

## **Massing**

(The relationship of the building's various parts to each other). The mass or bulk of a building is a key design challenge for in-fill development. A home should be designed to fit the lot and should not appear significantly larger than homes in the surrounding area. Reduced bulk can be achieved by incorporating sufficient surface articulation, recesses using well-designed windows and avoiding expansive or uninterrupted wall and roof planes.

## **Fenestration**

(The placement of windows and doors.) Traditional architecture generally features symmetrical placement of windows and doors. Original openings (size) and location are highly encouraged. New windows should strive to maintain the size, placement and arrangement of existing windows. The treatment of fenestration on new construction should be compatible with the neighborhood to create visual continuity among new and old structures.



*Traditional Double Hung Window*



*Consistent use of traditional windows and trim along with symmetrical placement maintains visual continuity*

*Mixing window types and trim is not desirable and impacts the integrity of this structure.*

## Rhythm

(The relationship of fenestration, recesses and projections.) Projects should avoid disproportional gaps or masses in the use of positive or negative space. Setbacks, location of entrances and building offsets, etc., provide a consistent visual rhythm. Obvious changes to the existing patterns of a street that visually disrupt the rhythm of any existing sequence of buildings is discouraged.

## Setback

(In relation to setback of immediate surroundings.) A major element of the character of historic districts is the relationship of the buildings in the district to the street and to each other. Alterations and new construction should harmonize with the existing development pattern and characteristics of the neighborhood.

## Materials



### Option A

1. *Inconsistent roof planes and materials tend to have a disjointed appearance.*
2. *Uninterrupted wall plane adds to visual perception of bulk.*
3. *Inconsistent window placement appears cluttered.*

### Option B

*Consistent roof, windows, and material treatment unify the building components.*

(Material compatibility with the historic district.) Materials help to maintain the historic character of the District. In areas where either historic or architecturally significant structures predominate, the use of similar exterior construction materials (shingles, clapboards, shiplap wood siding, or heavy stucco for instance) are appropriate. Wood sash windows should be used whenever wood was the original material or is predominant in the neighborhood. New construction should incorporate traditional building materials and features, particularly for elevations visible from the street. Historically inappropriate materials are discouraged in the District. Repair of original materials and features is preferable to replacement.

## **Context**

(The overall relationship of the project to its surroundings.)

Context refers to the environment or surroundings of a property. The significance of a historic resource is impacted by the context (surroundings) in which it exists. Properties that retain their historical surroundings contribute to their significance. Conversely, inappropriate in-fill development or additions can adversely impact the historic character of a single property, neighborhood or the District. This can occur by changing fence patterns, removing large heritage trees or blocking open spaces. In-fill development has the responsibility of compatibility to preserve the historic and visual character of the District



*1. Second Story Bulk is set back to rear.*

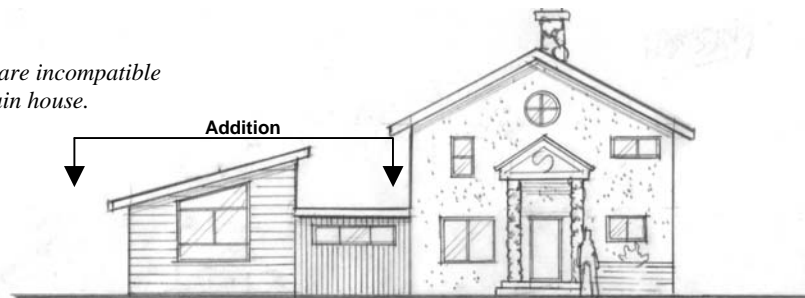
*2. Detached garage at rear consistent with the District.*

*3. Low profile roof in front with sufficient surface articulation reduces the mass of the structure.*

## **Consistency**

(The design of a project that does not destroy the integrity of the original building.) By matching elements in exterior materials, color, texture, architectural detailing, and roof shape, an addition can be successfully integrated with the original structure while incorporating contemporary features and functions.

*Avoid additions that are incompatible with design of the main house.*



*Preferred design-consistent architectural design on addition*





## **Landscaping/Streetscape**

(As a tool to soften and blend the project with the District.)  
Landscaping and streetscape are important features for maintaining and enhancing the District's appearance. Retaining walls, horse hitch posts and sidewalks should be preserved and protected. Greenery helps soften the effects of concrete driveways. Mature trees add visual and historical value to the District and should be retained whenever possible.



*“Landscaping helps soften and blend the project with the district.”*



*“Mature trees add to the visual and historic value of the district.”*

**Other Elements** (Elements of the project which might impact the overall historic character of the building or the District.) Some of these elements include building proportion as it relates to adjacent structures, parkways and walkways, design of doors and windows, relationship of building projections, architectural details, texture and color.

**Appendix A**  
**Architectural Styles and Influences**



## *Introduction*

Unlike many American communities, Mission Hills retains a large portion of its original residential building stock.

Representatives of almost every architectural style popular during the past 100 years can be found, some in abundance. The proliferation of specific styles (Spanish Revival, Craftsman, etc.) helps convey San Diego's rich architectural history.

Additionally, Mission Hills is a testament to early 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing development up through World War II. After World War II smaller, less ornate buildings proliferated --collectively known as *minimal traditional* which served the housing demand from returning GIs.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century waned, San Diego's early 20<sup>th</sup> Century neighborhoods experienced a renaissance, with older buildings being returned to their former glory. Whether you own a *Mission Hills Box* or a cozy cottage, each has distinctive architectural features that distinguish the District and helps to identify the architectural styles. Learning about the architectural styles in the neighborhood can lead to a greater appreciation for its heritage and will give you a better idea of how to preserve your own home.

## **VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE (1850-1930)**



F. L. Heatt brickwork is common to many foundations and planters along Lyndon Rd.

Vernacular Architecture is architecture without architects. The term vernacular is used interchangeably with the terms such as folk, common, native or non-academic architecture that is utilitarian in nature. Essentially, it is the contrast to stylized architecture of the same period. Because of its simple form and generally smaller size, homeowners or builders could construct these buildings without formal plans. Vernacular structures usually feature simple massing and little surface decoration, but may feature some embellishments such as mail-order scrollwork

on porches or eave moldings. Residential examples of vernacular architecture usually have simple gabled roofs; double hung wood sash windows, covered porches with plain posts and simple porch railings. Vernacular architecture is unique to its area incorporating the character, culture, materials, climate, and topography of where it is built. The result is the product of a place, of a people, by a people. A good example of this type of architecture is 1811 Lyndon Rd.

### **ITALIANATE (1865-1880)**

The Italianate style, so-called because it looked to the country villas of northern Italy for its inspiration, swept the United States in the mid- 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Its form proved a very adaptable style for both one- and two- story homes. The building style is characterized by a rectangular massing of the body of the house, low-pitched, often flat roofs; heavy supporting brackets under the eaves, often elaborately carved; overhanging eaves with decorative vertical brackets (“modillions”), and tall multi-paned windows or windows with heavy hoods or elaborate surrounds and corner quoins (false alternating “blocks” added to give the illusion of stonework detail). The style often features a square tower or bay, reminiscent of its Tuscan influence.

### **PRAIRIE SCHOOL (1901-1920)**

Readily identified with the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, the Prairie School was the first American-bred architectural style. Prairie houses come in two styles--boxy and symmetrical or low-slung and asymmetrical. Nathan Ridgion built so many of these homes in Mission Hills that Save Our Heritage Organisation referred to a Ridgion-built Prairie style house as a *Mission Hills Box* in a 1979 Home tour brochure.

With an emphasis on horizontality the hallmarks of the Prairie School style of architecture are low-pitched roofs, wide

overhanging eaves and large banks of casement windows. Stucco exterior and wood cornices are predominant building materials. Other details: one-story porches with massive square supports; and stylized floral and circular geometric ornamentation around doors and windows. Its low profile and use of natural materials were used to imitate the sprawling midwestern wheat fields, which blended in with the natural landscape where this style was developed. Prairie style had a short-lived life, beginning in 1901, but its distinctive look and innovative interior arrangement earned critical acclaim. A notable example is located at 1882 Sheridan Ave.



## CRAFTSMAN (1905-1930)



Throughout the early and mid-1800's the majority of American architecture had been derived from classic European forms. The writings of Charles Eastlake inspired a revolution in design, which became known as the Arts and Crafts Movement. Culturally, the Arts and Crafts Movement was a dramatic rebellion against the formality and the excesses of the Victorian period, socially it was a period of growth for the middle class, stylistically it marks the advent of modern industrial design. The Craftsman style acquired its name, and much of its introduction, from Gustave Stickley's "Craftsman" magazine (1905-1913). The Craftsman emphasis was on the handcrafted over the machine-made, stains and hand-rubbed finishes over paint, and the principle that "nothing is beautiful that is also not functional."

Craftsman architecture incorporates interior features such as open floor plans, beamed ceilings, an abundance of woodwork and windows, stained and leaded glass, built-in bookcases or cabinetry, and prominent fireplace. The overall effect is enveloping yet open. The dark wood and simple hearth conveyed coziness while the many windows flooded the rooms in natural light, bringing the outdoors into the home. The Craftsman style proved particularly popular in California, where the mild climate allowed more integration between indoors and outdoors in the form of porches, covered balconies, and pergolas. An excellent example of this style is at 1826 Sunset Blvd.

Variations to the Craftsman style include references and influences in the design type including Swiss Chalet, Japanese and English Arts and Crafts as well as the California Bungalow.



### *California Bungalow*

The California Bungalow is a type of Craftsman rather than a specific style. Bungalows that best exemplified the Arts and Crafts Movement's philosophy as they were well crafted, and used materials left as close as possible to their natural state. Cobblestones were used in foundations and broad chimneys while the rest of the home was constructed of wood or shingles in a natural shade of brown. The bungalow is usually a single story capped by a gabled roof and clad in stucco or wood siding. Another distinguished feature of the California Bungalow is the deep porch, with a gabled or shed roof supported by massive piers. An example of a California Craftsman bungalow home is at 1824 Sunset Blvd.



## **PERIOD REVIVALS (1905-1940)**

Constructed before and after World War I, period revival styles represent a desire to create the home as “escape” from the world and its crises. San Diego was influenced by the Spanish and Mediterranean designs that were prevalent at the 1915 Pan Pacific Exposition in Balboa Park. Drawing on different periods of history, these styles reflect not so much the style popular during that particular period, but a romanticized “look back” to a better time.

### ***Mission Revival (1890-1920)***

Mission Revival architecture was the first organized effort to express the Hispanic past that grew out of interest in California history. This interpreted Mission Revival style is a whimsical expression of the adobe architecture of the Mission era and developed from the desire to create an architecture based on the southwest's regional historic influences, primarily the Spanish Colonial mission history, rather than adopting imported design influences from the East Coast. It was first exhibited in the California Building at the Chicago Expo in 1893. The style was easily adapted to bungalow form and by the early 1900s, gained popularity in the country's west and southwest. Architectural elements include stucco cladding, sash hung or steel casement windows, rounded arched openings, enclosed courtyards sometimes incorporating a cactus garden, red clay barrel style roofs, small wooden balconies, and on more ornate versions, curved false front parapets to mimic old bell shaped towers. Mission Hills has a number of Mission Revival buildings including 1884 Sunset Blvd.



### ***Spanish Eclectic/Spanish Colonial Revival (1920-1930)***

Reflecting the romantic era when Spanish aristocracy populated California, Spanish Eclectic/Colonial architecture became popular during the 1920s and 1930s. The style is characterized by having complex, deeply sculptured surfaces and asymmetrical massing, wood sash or metal casement windows either with round arches or straight tops and red clay tile roofs. Stucco is the most common exterior building material used and is generally painted white or a light color. Other features include shaped gables, parapets, arched entries, porches, wrought iron detailing and heavy tile roofs. Spanish Eclectic is a more decorative style than either the Mission style and was utilized for everything from small, single-story bungalows to large two-story homes and commercial buildings. Two-story

houses may sport roofed balconies edged with carved railings. An excellent example of the style is at 1889 Sunset Blvd.

### ***Dutch Colonial (1910-1940)***

Another nostalgic look back is the interpretation of the “New Amsterdam” architecture of Dutch explorer Peter Stuyvesant, and the influence of Flemish culture in early American history. The Dutch Colonial home is distinguished for its broad gambrel roof with flaring eaves that extend over the porches, creating a barn-like effect. Other characteristic elements included wide overhangs, dormers, small oval windows in the gable ends, and a porch under the overhanging eaves of the gambrel roof, supported by columns. The gable ends face the side elevations. These homes often feature clapboard siding, a small entry porch and a gambrel roof for two story homes or Dutch gable roof for single story homes. 1815 Sunset Blvd. is an example of Dutch Colonial architecture in Mission Hills.



*T*

### ***u* Tudor Revival (1920-1940)**

Derived primarily from English Renaissance buildings of the 16th and early 17th centuries, this revival style borrowed ideas from late Medieval palaces and rustic cottages including those of Elizabethan (Elizabeth I, 1558-1603) and Jacobean (James I, 1603-25) periods. Often called “Stockbroker Tudor” for its popularity among Wall Street’s numerous paper millionaires of the 1920’s, the Tudor Revival includes steeply pitched roofs, overlapping gables, false half timbering applied to wall surfaces as decoration, and filled with rough plaster and bricks often arranged in a herringbone pattern. This architectural fashion of half timbering was used to imitate medieval building techniques. An excellent example of the Tudor Revival in Mission Hills is at 1853 Lyndon Rd.





### ***American Colonial Revival (1920-1960)***

Different from the turn of the century Colonial Revival style (with its Victorian origins), the American Colonial Revival reflected a nostalgic look back at the American Colonial Period and is a true image of American Dream home. This style is most identified with white clapboard walls, steeply pitched wood shingle roofs, multi-paned windows, and centrally placed entrance. Other "Jeffersonian" features include, such as classically inspired moldings, door surrounds and fluted pilasters, and classical columns. A wonderful cottage example of this style is visible at 1818 Sunset Blvd

### **International Style (Vernacular 1925- )**

Le Corbusier, the great Swiss Architect and city planner pioneered functionalist architecture with the use of reinforced concrete and the concept that a "building is a machine for living." The International style emerged from the artistic movements of the Deco period (e.g. Bauhaus movement of Germany) and made its American debut at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932. The International Style is modern architecture. International Style expresses the Machine Age in structure and appearance. Thus, it developed as a highly functional, stark, unadorned style. The unique International style features low, squared, geometric form with flat roofs and smooth stucco walls. Windows have geometric (rectangular or large square) divided lights and sometimes wrap the corners of the building. Buildings were thought of in terms of volume -- spaces enclosed by surfaces -- and not in terms of mass and solidity. Surfaces are designed accordingly, moldings are eliminated and doors and windows are flush with the surface. The International style went on to become the dominant style of the mid-20th century. In its ideal form, this style produces a house that reflects a cool, pristine and subtle elegance





### **MINIMAL TRADITIONAL (1935-1945)**

Following the Great Depression and immediately following WWII, the Minimal Traditional house was designed as a compromise style reflecting eclectic features of period revival architecture in a stripped down or simplified dwelling, hence its name. This type of architecture was commonly used for returning veterans after World War II and continued during the baby boom period of Post War America. With demand exceeding supply, architectural detail progressively diminished. The primary purpose of this housing was shelter rather than grander examples of homes of the same era that reflected the prosperity of the owner. These homes, modest in size and detail, convey a part of history that coincides with the baby boom period. An example is located at 1867 Sheridan Ave.

### **RANCH STYLE (1940-1960)**

The Ranch Style was the ultimate symbol of the postwar American dream: a safe, affordable home promising efficiency and casual living. The style is loosely based on early Spanish Colonial precedents of the American southwest, modified by influences borrowed from Craftsman and Prairie modernism of the early 20th century. The publishers of *Sunset Magazine* began promoting Western Ranch house designs following WWII. "The ability to move in and out of your house freely, without the hindrance of steps, is one of the things that makes living in it pleasant and informal." -- *Sunset* magazine's 1946 edition on Western Ranch Houses. The design was seen as a reflection of the informal character of Western culture. Usually a ranch style is a one story building, with low, silhouette, wide overhanging eaves and long, wide porch. Ranch design has a conscious attempt to emphasize the rambling horizontal form and an open floor plan. It represents the country's movement towards an automotive oriented society (i.e., drive-ins, roadside motels, fruit stands etc.).



## **MID-CENTURY MODERN (1945-1965)**

Modern design is experiencing a larger appreciation and local buildings are part of the international enthusiasm for the movement. These residential and commercial buildings are designed in the architectural style commonly known as modern, or American Modern, but are now referred to as Mid-century Modern. These buildings are the next generation of historic resources as they are unified in their design nationally, and gained popularity when the population exploded. These houses were primarily built as in-fill in Mission Hills along canyon rims or in the adjacent Rodeffer Hills subdivision.

In this postwar era, society was booming with innovation and optimism as people looked to the brighter future. The optimistic lifestyle of this time was materialized in the architecture and home furnishings from this era. Modernists created homes and furnishings that projected what they believed the 21st Century would be like. This style brought us unique ways to use materials like fiberglass, metals and plastics in the home. It was the time when technology really started becoming an important element in designs to help "simplify life". A national movement to save these buildings has been underway for over 20 years. National leaders of DOCOMOMO (international working party for documentation and conservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the modern movement) have been instrumental in bringing this awareness of the modern architecture and the need to preserve it to the forefront.



*A Typical Mid-Century style – Not of the area.*

## **APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY & INTERPRETATION OF TERMS**

Some definitions were adapted from the Penguin Dictionary of Architecture by John Fleming, Hugh Honour, and Nikolaus Pevsner, Fourth Edition, 1991.

**ARCH:** the spanning of an opening by means other than that of a lintel (horizontal beam). True arches are curved and constructed with wedge-shaped blocks (voussoirs) and a keystone at the top. A lancet arch is pointed. An ogee arch is pointed with S-shaped sides.

**ARCHITRAVE:** the lintel extending from one column or pier to another, the lowest part of the entablature.

**ATTIC STORY:** a story above the main entablature of a building.

**BRACKET** A supporting member for a projecting element or shelf, sometimes in the shape of an inverted L and sometimes as a solid piece or a triangular truss.

**CLAPBOARDS:** Narrow, horizontal, overlapping wooden boards, usually thicker along the bottom edge, that form the outer skin of the walls of many wood frame houses. The horizontal lines of the overlaps generally are from four to six inches apart in older houses.

**COLUMN:** a freestanding, upright member of a circular section, usually intended as a support.

**CORNICE:** the continuing projecting section of an entablature at the top of a wall or, any projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building, wall, or arch, finishing or crowning it. That along the sloping sides of a pediment is called raking cornice. The exterior trim of a building at the meeting of the roof and wall or projection at the top of a wall. A boxed cornice is a hollow cornice enclosing the eaves.

**DENTIL:** a small square shape often repeated in a horizontal line as an ornament in classical architecture.

**DORMER WINDOW:** a window placed vertically in a sloping roof and with a roof of its own. It usually serves as sleeping quarters, hence the name. A small structure projecting from a sloping roof, usually containing a window or vent for attic spaces.

**EAVES:** the under part of an overhanging cornice or sloping roof.

**ECLECTIC** Stylistic classification based on historical periods is a common way to describe buildings, but the boundaries between stylistic periods are not always clear. Many buildings display characteristics of more than one style, resulting in eclectic hybrids often adapted to particular climates and cultures. Nevertheless, such categories are often a good starting point for understanding the visual properties of a building.

**ENTABLATURE:** the upper part of an order, consisting of architrave, frieze, and cornice.

**ELEVATION:** A mechanically accurate, “head on” drawing of a face of a building or object, without any allowance for the effect of the laws of perspective. Any measurement on an elevation will be in a fixed proportion, or scale, to the corresponding measurement on the real building.

**FACADE:** the front or face of a building, emphasized architecturally.

**FENESTRATION:** The arrangement of openings (windows and doors) in a building.

**FINIAL:** a formal decorative ornament at the top of a canopy, gable or pinnacle.

**FLUTING:** shallow, concave grooves running vertically on the shaft of a column, pilaster or other surface.

**FRIEZE:** the middle division of an entablature, between the architrave and the cornice, usually decorated but may be plain.

**GABLE:** the triangular upper portion of a wall at the end of a pitched roof corresponding to a pediment in classical architecture. It can also be used non-functionally over a doorway for example. A very common style of roof, in which each side of the roof rises at an angle (“pitch”) to a single ridgeline. The angle of the roof may vary from the very shallow pitch of the Craftsman bungalow to the very steep roof of a Gothic Revival cottage.

**GABLET:** A small ornamental gable.

**GLAZING:** Fitting glass into windows and doors.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** A geographically definable area of urban or rural character, possessing a significant concentration or continuity of site, building, structure or objects unified by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

**IN-KIND REPLACEMENT:** To replace a feature of a building with materials of the same characteristics such as material, texture color. etc.

**INTEGRITY:** When a sufficient percentage of the structure dates from the period of significance. The majority of a building’s structural system and materials should date from the period of significance and its character defining features should remain intact. These may include architectural details such as, porches, ornamental brackets and moldings and materials as well as the overall mass and form of the building.

**JAMB:** the vertical face of an archway, doorway or window.

**KEYSTONE:** the central stone of a true arch or rib vault.

**LINTEL:** horizontal beam or stone bridging an opening.

**LOADBEARING CONSTRUCTION:** construction in which walls, posts, columns or arcades support the weight of the ceilings and upper floors.

**MASSING:** A term used to describe the overall shape of a building, and how parts of a building relate to one another.

**MUNTIN:** A bar member supporting and separating panes of glass in a window or door.

**PALLADIAN WINDOW:** a window with three openings, the central one and is wider than the others; a hallmark of buildings designed by Andrea Palladio; called a seralina.

**PANEL:** A sunken or raised portion of a door with a frame like border.

**PARAPET:** a low wall placed to protect any spot where there is a sudden drop, for example at the edge of a bridge, quay, or house-top.

**PEDIMENT:** in classical architecture, a low-pitched triangular gable a portico. A pediment can also be a similar feature above doors or windows. Originally used to refer to the triangular portion of a building wall under a gable roof, the term is used to refer to a decorative feature found over the doorways and

sometimes windows of Classical Revival buildings.

**PIER:** a solid masonry support, as distinct from a column; the solid mass between doors, windows, and other openings in buildings.

**PILASTER:** a shallow pier or rectangular column projecting only slightly from a wall and, in classical architecture, conforming to one of the orders. A decorative feature which simulates an attached (“engaged”) pillar on a building. Used throughout history, pilasters were particularly popular for Art Deco buildings.

**PORTAL:** a door or entrance.

**PORTICO:** a roofed space, open or partly enclosed, forming the entrance of the facade of a temple, house or church, often with detached or attached columns and a pediment.

**POSTS:** the main verticals of walls or doorways that support a lintel.

**PRESERVATION:** The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity and material of a building or structure and its site. This may include ongoing maintenance or stabilization work when necessary.

**QUOIN:** the stones at the corners of buildings, usually laid so that their faces are alternately large and small. From the French coin (corner).

**RECONSTRUCTION:** The art or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure or object or part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

**REHABILITATION:** The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient

contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical architecture and cultural values.

**RESTORATION** The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period and time by means of removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

**SPANDREL:** the triangular space between the side of an arch, the horizontal above its apex, and the vertical of its springing; the surface between two arches in an arcade.

**STABILIZATOIN:** The act or process of applying measures designed to reestablish weather –resistant enclosure and the structural stability of an unsafe or deteriorated property while maintaining the essential form as it exists at present

## APPENDIX C: RESOURCES

These Guidelines comply with the National Park Service Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings on Page 55.

Since Interior Secretary guidelines apply to the national scope of preservation the guidelines for Mission Hills were drafted to provide

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/standguide/index.htm>

Rehabilitation examples Rehab Yes/No (National Park Service)

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/rehabyes-no/>

Preservation Briefs - Technical preservation services for Historic Buildings (National Park Service)

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/index.htm>

Working on the Past – Historic District property owners (National Park Service)

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/workingonthepast/>

Historic Landscape Initiative (National Park Service)

<http://www2.cr.nps.gov/hli/introguid.htm>

National Trust *Forum*, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 588-6053,

[www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org).

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City of San Diego Planning Dept.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning>

Save Our Heritage Organisation – San Diego preservation

more specificity and relevance to the distinctiveness of our local area.

The Guidelines were inspired by existing guidelines governing many historic districts in California particularly those for the city of Santa Clara . Guidelines nationwide provided insight towards building and new development issues. The following references may be useful for the homeowner or anyone interested in information on the principles of historic conservation.

<http://www.sohosandiego.org/>

Pasadena, California Guidelines

[http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/deptorg/dhp/designguidelines/pasadena\\_DGs.pdf](http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/deptorg/dhp/designguidelines/pasadena_DGs.pdf)

City of Pasadena, Garfield Heights

Conservation Plan

<http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/pdf/GarfieldHeightsConPlan.pdf>

City of Laurel Maryland

<http://www.laurel.md.us/HDC%20Guidelines.htm>

Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne Orange, California

[http://www.cityoforange.org/Community\\_Development/oldtowne/OTDesStds.htm](http://www.cityoforange.org/Community_Development/oldtowne/OTDesStds.htm)

Galion Ohio Design Standards and full text of the Historic Properties Guidelines

<http://www.galionohio.com/mainst/designstandards.htm>

***City of Arroyo Grande Design Guidelines and Standards for Historic Districts***

[http://www.arroyogrande.org/comm\\_dev/dgshd.pdf](http://www.arroyogrande.org/comm_dev/dgshd.pdf)

Bungalow Heaven Landmark District Conservation Plan

<http://home.earthlink.net/~bhna/plan.html>

## **Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation**

**1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.**

**2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.**

**3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.**

**4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.**

**5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.**

**6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.**

**Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.**

**7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.**

**8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.**

**9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.**

**10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.**

JUNE 17, 2021

# Exclusionary Zoning: Its Effect on Racial Discrimination in the Housing Market

By Chair Cecilia Rouse, Jared Bernstein, Helen Knudsen,  
and Jeffery Zhang

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This Saturday, the nation recognizes Juneteenth, which marks the day a Major General of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation, and free the last enslaved Black people in Texas from bondage. The day has evolved into a celebration of emancipation more generally, and while the country acknowledges the progress that has been made, it is imperative to not lose sight of the fact that we still have much work to do to address the vestiges of slavery and historic discrimination. Indeed, policies and practices exist today that are seemingly non-discriminatory on their face but still negatively affect many families of color, especially

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Black families. Many of these policies and practices have long-term impacts—from education to employment to business ownership to housing—that must be addressed.

One area that is particularly important for economic well-being and wealth accumulation is housing. Families who can purchase their own home in the neighborhood of their choice at a fair price and see the value of their home grow over time do better economically in the long run. But numerous policies have systemically discriminated against Black families who wish to pursue that path. This blog focuses on one of these policies: exclusionary zoning laws, which have played a role in causing racial disparities in the housing market.

### *Background*

Exclusionary zoning laws place restrictions on the types of homes that can be built in a particular neighborhood. Common examples include minimum lot size requirements, minimum square footage requirements, prohibitions on multi-family homes, and limits on the height of buildings. The origins of such laws date back to the nineteenth century, as many cities were concerned about fire hazards as well as light-and-air regulations. In the subsequent decades, some zoning laws have been used to discriminate



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against people of color and to maintain property prices in suburban and, more recently, urban neighborhoods.

After the United States Supreme Court banned the use of explicit race-based zoning in *Buchanan v. Warley* (1917), city planners remained capable of segregating via indirect methods. For example, St. Louis's 1919 zoning laws were designed to preserve homes in areas that were unaffordable to most Black families, and the city's zoning commission would change an area's zoning designation from residential to industrial if too many Black families moved in. Similarly, research on Seattle's 1923 zoning laws shows that areas in which Black or Chinese-American families lived were disproportionately likely to receive commercial zoning.

### *Economic Theory and Evidence*

Exclusionary zoning laws enact barriers to entry that constrain housing supply, which, all else equal, translate into an equilibrium with more expensive housing and fewer homes being built. Consistent with theory, the empirical literature finds a relationship between restrictive land use regulations and higher housing prices. For example, a study in 2005 finds that prices of Manhattan condominiums are 50 percent higher than they would be without zoning restrictions.



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Exclusionary zoning laws have a profound impact on social welfare because *where* a family lives matters. Using data that cover virtually the entire U.S. population from 1989 to 2015, researchers have shown that neighborhoods can have significant causal effects on children’s long-term outcomes, including their earnings. Because exclusionary zoning rules drive up housing prices, poorer families are kept out of wealthier, high-opportunity neighborhoods. This, in turn, leads to worse outcomes for children, including lower standardized test scores, and greater social inequalities over time.

Research has connected exclusionary zoning to racial segregation, creating greater disparities in measurable outcomes. These disparities are present today in many forms. For instance, many lower-income, predominantly minority neighborhoods in cities have become “heat islands”—experiencing significantly higher temperatures than other neighborhoods in the same metropolitan area because of factors such as fewer trees and more concrete buildings and parking lots. Living on a heat island doesn’t just negatively impact health, it also impacts the ability to learn and develop human capital. Research shows that elevated temperatures negatively impact short-run cognitive performance, working memory, and stamina, such



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that an increase in the number of hot school days decreases the educational attainment of students.

Restrictions in housing supply also limit labor mobility, because workers cannot afford to move to higher productivity cities that have high housing prices. This leads workers to remain in lower productivity places. One study finds that this misallocation of labor has led to a significant decrease in the U.S. economic growth rate since the 1960s; another study finds that this misallocation could cost up to 2 percent of GDP.

Finally, exclusionary zoning contributes to the racial wealth gap. If Black families are excluded from higher priced neighborhoods or if neighborhoods where Black families live are zoned into being less valuable, the homes purchased by Black families will not be worth as much over time as those of white families. In the long run, this diminishes wealth not only for the generation purchasing the home, but for descendants who receive a lesser inheritance. Indeed, housing likely explains more than 30 percent of the Black-white racial wealth gap.



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*A New Path Forward*

The American Jobs Plan takes important steps to eliminate exclusionary zoning. Specifically, the Unlocking Possibilities Program within the American Jobs Plan is a \$5 billion competitive grant program that incentivizes reform of exclusionary zoning. The program awards flexible and attractive funding to jurisdictions that take concrete steps to eliminate needless barriers to produce affordable housing and expand housing choices for people with low or moderate incomes. It supports bottom-up community engagement that would help communities identify the most powerful levers to produce more affordable housing and incentivizes new land-use and zoning policies to remove those barriers.

The goal of this program is to address persistent inequities in the American housing market. The benefits could be substantial—increased access to affordable housing so that previously excluded Americans can move to areas with greater opportunity, and increased opportunities for Black families to build wealth via home ownership. This is but one proposed program of many from the Biden-Harris Administration, which is taking a whole-of-government approach to addressing our country’s long history of racial injustice.



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Opinion

# 'Community Character' Concerns Are a Veil – a Thin One

by [Al Abdallah](#)  
July 23, 2021

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Homes overlook the San Elijo Lagoon and the beach in Cardiff by the Sea. / Photo by Jamie Scott Lytle

The recent effort in San Diego to prevent property owners from being able to construct additional granny flats – one of the few successful steps we've taken to address the city's severe housing shortage – prompts a question that should get more honest attention. In the effort to protect "community character," why are we selectively protecting the character of only certain communities, and what specifically is the nature of the "character" we are choosing to preserve?

Much like cities throughout California, San Diego has not built enough housing. Every year, the city falls tragically short of approving the **12,000** housing permits needed to keep up with population growth. San Diegans who are renters need to make **2.8 times** the local minimum wage to afford the median rent, and more than **70 percent** of even our moderate-income households can't afford to buy a home. **Half** of the residential neighborhoods in San Diego allow only single-family homes to be built.

California's love affair with single-family zoning severely constrains housing, and it does so in a way that perpetuates historic racial inequity. Many San Diego neighborhoods as we know them are largely the products of intentional segregation.

There is a clear and direct line between the practice of redlining in the last century – the policies that denied mortgages to Black families and created covenants making it illegal to sell homes to people of color – and the preservation of single-family zoning today. When such obvious discrimination was invalidated in the courts, cities and counties across California, including San Diego, restricted the construction of multifamily housing to achieve the same end goal.

Single-family zoning maintains the legacy of racist housing policy by keeping most high-opportunity neighborhoods unavailable to many families. It directly prevents wealth-building through home ownership and upward mobility by ensuring housing in traditionally white neighborhoods stays both limited and expensive.

The neighborhood associations, HOAs, “slow-growth” groups and others behind the most recent efforts to ostensibly protect “community character” – like those in Kensington, Talmadge, and El Cerrito – have something obvious in common. These are the same communities that used redlining to shut out families of color decades ago. Hiding behind a concern for maintaining “community character” is a very thin veil.

Unless we start (literally) at the ground level with zoning reform efforts, attempts to increase housing production will continue to be blocked by those unwilling to allow any smaller and therefore less expensive housing in their neighborhoods. Ongoing suppression of housing production and continued segregation of San Diego communities will remain the status quo. San Diego needs to make it possible for more people to live in **higher opportunity** neighborhoods with more community benefits **like parks**, transit and good schools. Building more housing in these high-opportunity communities isn't *just* a solution to the housing shortage, it's a solution to an equity crisis too.



Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins has demonstrated leadership on this front by introducing SB 9. This bill will allow homeowners to split their lots or build duplexes, creating more naturally affordable housing and new opportunities for affordable homeownership. Allowing homeowners to choose to build another unit or allowing new homes to be built as duplexes could unlock capacity for nearly [800,000 new homes](#) statewide.

SB 9 will make housing less expensive while incorporating robust anti-displacement protections for renters. This includes preventing homeowners from splitting lots or disturbing homes that have been occupied by renters in the last three years and prohibiting the disruption of existing affordable housing, rent-controlled housing or housing recently leased to a tenant.

And to those who are genuinely concerned about architectural character, SB 9 preserves local control and neighborhood look and feel by ensuring adherence to local design standards, severely limiting alteration or demolition of existing structures, requiring that lot splits create two parcels of similar size that are at least 1,200 square feet, and allows local governments to limit additional accessory dwelling units on these parcels.

San Diego [lacks new, undeveloped land](#) for housing, ranking the lowest in the nation for available lot space. Vertical construction is essential, but not sufficient. The only way our city will ever be able to build enough housing to meet the needs of our diverse community, curb homelessness and increase homeownership, is if we add smaller, modestly priced homes to existing neighborhoods.

Passing SB 9 is necessary if we are serious about meeting the housing goals that our region and its residents need now.

*Al Abdallah is the COO of the Urban League of San Diego County.*

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# LISC SAN DIEGO

January 24, 2024

Kelley Stanco, Deputy Director  
City of San Diego, Planning Department  
9485 Aero Drive, M.S. 413  
San Diego, CA 92123  
Email: [KStanco@sandiego.gov](mailto:KStanco@sandiego.gov)

Tim Hutter, Chair  
Historical Resources Board  
City of San Diego  
c/o Suzanne Segur, Senior Planner, HRB Liaison  
Email: [SSegur@sandiego.gov](mailto:SSegur@sandiego.gov)

## **Re: Talmadge Park Estates Historic District National Register Nomination**

Dear Ms. Stanco, Mr. Hutter, and Members of the Historic Resource Board:

I am asking the Historic Resource Board (HRB) to respectfully deny the staff motion to recommend to the California State Office of Historic Preservation the listing of the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District.

The designation by the California State Office of Historic Preservation will make the neighborhood immune from any current or future housing reform laws – in effect locking in place the [economic](#) segregation that has and continues to keep the neighborhood almost [exclusively white](#).

For an increasingly racially diversified city that's embroiled in a housing crisis with a diminishing [budget](#), this proposal is both unrealistic and racially tone deaf.

And for a board that's charged with preserving the cultural heritage of San Diego, this shameful history should not be preserved.

Dating back to the 1920s, Talmadge was an exclusive neighborhood built for white families only.

Talmadge residents requesting the historic designation highlight this official citation from the '20s in their current application, as follows:

“That neither said premises nor any portion thereof shall at any time nor shall the interest therein ever be leased, sold, devised, conveyed to or inherited or be otherwise acquired by or become the property of any person other than of the Caucasian race.” [[page 195](#)]

What residents also could've included in their proposal was that Talmadge was one of a select number of single-family neighborhoods in San Diego that was designated more than century ago by the U.S. Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) as “First Grade – A highly desirable” because: “No ratio of concentration; no threat of inflation, restricted to the [Caucasian](#) race.”

Reflecting that description, the City of San Diego in its recent Housing Element report to the state described Talmadge as “racially concentrated area(s) of affluence.” [[page 50](#)]

Talmadge today remains decidedly [majority white](#) with above-median incomes of \$158,652 and an average home value of \$955,400. Providing an historic designation will, in fact, increase the value of the 411 properties by 16 percent, according to a study by [Save Our Heritage Organization](#).

Increasing the cost to buy a home in Talmadge will prevent young families, people of color and working-class individuals from buying a home in the neighborhood.

In addition, such a designation will move homeowners one step closer to qualifying for the Mills Act, which will allow them to pay lower property taxes on their [million-dollar](#) homes. For a city struggling to pay its [bills](#), allowing 411 million dollar homes to pay *lower* property taxes is fiscally irresponsible.

Through their nonprofit, [Neighborhoods for a Better San Diego](#), residents of Talmadge have been highly vocal in recent years, opposing any and all proposed housing reforms by the City Council.

The group's current request for historic designation is nothing more than an brazen attempt to skirt local and state housing reform laws.

It's no coincidence that several other wealthy white neighborhoods in California have attempted to [circumvent](#) new housing laws that would open up their neighborhoods to more diverse residents by designating their communities as being "historic."

Allowing neighborhoods like Talmadge the opportunity to legally lock down their racist neighborhood history is an insult to fair-minded San Diegans, especially to those who were intentionally segregated and continue to be economically segregated from living and buying in Talmadge.

The goal of historic preservation -- to "identify and protect the places that matter to our collective history" is worthy and important.

The question is what history are we preserving and who is benefiting. Historic preservation of residential homes continues to benefit wealthy white neighborhoods only by allowing these homeowners the opportunity to lower their property taxes at the expense of every other San Diego neighborhood.

Reviewing the [locations](#) of the historic properties in San Diego, it's clear is that the majority of these historic homes are located in neighborhoods listed by the U.S. Home Owners' Loan Corporation as "highly desirable" because they were segregated from Black, Brown, Asian and immigrant families.

I urge the City of San Diego's Historic Resource Board to reject the attempt by Talmadge activists to keep their neighborhood entrenched in the racism of the early 1900s.

It's way past time for such legalized residential racial segregation to end.

Sincerely,

Ricardo Flores  
Executive Director  
LISC San Diego

Cc: Shannan West, HCD  
David Zisser, HCD



January 3, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

I am writing to you to express my approval of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. I have three reasons for wanting this prestigious designation. First, I love the architecture of the 1920s-1940s, which is greatly reflected in Talmadge. Secondly, I appreciate that this community avoided the last infill building movement of the 1960s and 1970s, thus retaining much of its original historic character and feel. Thirdly, because our origins come from both middle- and working-class families, we were hardworking then, and we are hardworking now to preserve our wonderful community.

I love the architecture (Spanish, Hacienda and Minimal Traditional styled homes) of our district. Our homes possess wonderful design features and were built to last. Many of the original homebuilders lived in the neighborhood and were committed to building quality homes. These builders were true craftsmen and craftswomen. Their beautiful attention to detail and craftsmanship are still recognized today and appreciated by all who live here. Our neighborhood consists of primarily Spanish Colonial Revival, Hacienda and Minimal Traditional homes. Over 70% of our houses maintain their original character. I feel as if I am living in the architecture styles of the 1930s and 1940s, which is increasingly rare in San Diego.

Talmadge has always focused on community building as well as neighborhood preservation. I have never lived in such a tight-knit community that gets things done. For example, when our original historic gates were in jeopardy of being torn down, we preserved them, and when the City of San Diego offered to put our electrical wires underground, we advocated for rewiring and refurbishment of our original streetlights. All these projects required a great investment in time, money, and effort, yet we got it done.

In summary, Talmadge is considered one of the best places to live in San Diego due to the ongoing connection with its heritage. To preserve what we have for this generation and the next is why I strongly desire that Talmadge Park Estates Historic District be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,



Laura L Henson  
4602 Natalie Drive  
San Diego, CA 92115



[San Diego is segregated and that segregation is contributing heavily to our current housing crisis.](#)

[On Thursday, January 25th, 2024 the Historical Resources Board \(HRB\) of the City of San Diego](#) will consider an application for 411 homes in Talmadge Park Estates, averaging about one million dollars each, to become a “historic district” on the National Register of Historic Places. A favorable recommendation from the HRB will make the required approval from the State Historical Resources Commission easier to obtain. If granted this historical designation, the Talmadge Park Estates residents stand to gain a significant increase in their already high property values and cuts in their already low property taxes, relative to much of San Diego.

But perhaps most importantly, historic districts are immune from new housing and zoning policy changes. This is bad news for housing policies and the people who rely on them to deliver fair housing opportunities in San Diego.

This proposed immunity from change is a serious blow to the work I do with the youth-led nonprofit [OTTA United](#) as Housing Projects Director. Every day, I engage youth experiencing housing insecurity to fight for lived experience-informed solutions to the housing crisis. When a group of homeowners works this hard to keep San Diego in an unjust past, it has significant consequences for their neighbors just trying to make a home here today.

One of the main applicants and a homeowner in Talmadge, Geoffrey Heuter, is also the chair of Neighbors For A Better San Diego. Geoffrey’s group is made up of anti-housing advocates who have ruthlessly and indiscriminately resisted pro-housing policy implementation in San Diego over the past two years. This application was filed just last year as Neighbors For A “Better” San Diego doubled down on their efforts to keep San Diego low-density and exclusionary. This is another desperate attempt to [entrench wealth in a neighborhood that has already been identified as one of three “Racially Concentrated Areas of Affluence” by the City of San Diego.](#)

The Talmadge Historical Society, a private 501(c)(3) foundation, was formed in 2022 to obtain an historic designation for Talmadge Park Estates. As reported in IRS filings, the president of the foundation is Laura Henson, partner of Geoffrey Heuter, providing a nail-in-the-coffin link between the intertwined efforts of establishing a historic designation and fighting against housing development.

As to the validity of the application’s content: the applicants cited as justification for historical designation “wrought iron gates,” street lamps, and architecture including colonial *revival* and post-WWII style homes. These appear to be desperate attempts to distinguish this area from every other single-family neighborhood built in the same period in the City of San Diego.

One thing the neighborhood does *certainly* have a history of is racism. The Talmadge Park Estates began as a strictly “caucasian only” neighborhood through deed restrictions, and, by way of restrictive single-family zoning policies, has remained a white-majority neighborhood ever since.



Even the applicants themselves admit this history by including a particularly damning quote from Talmadge's racial covenant on [page 195](#) of their application: "That neither said premises nor any portion thereof shall at any time nor shall the interest therein ever be leased, sold, devised, conveyed to or inherited or be otherwise acquired by or become the property of any person other than of the Caucasian race." Despite including the quote, the applicants fail to acknowledge the fact that [their district is still majority white today](#) due to the consequences this covenant had, and the single-family zoning they are trying to preserve. The legacy of racism associated with this district doesn't stop there either.

The applicants honor the questionable legacy of the Talmadge's themselves — a legacy which includes films where Talmadge's wore [yellowface](#) and Constance Talmadge appeared in the film "[Intolerance](#)," the follow up to the notoriously racist "The Birth of a Nation."

Overall, the Talmadge Park Estates' application for historic designation is out of touch with reality and flies in the face of a future of inclusive, equitable, and fair housing. To grant historic designation and its benefits to this neighborhood would be to not only celebrate, but also to reward the long and severe history of racism, exclusion, and bigotry that gives this area any modicum of significance. Let us learn and move forward instead of preserving a disgraceful past. Please recommend to the California State Office of Historic Preservation that the National Register Nomination of Talmadge Park Estates be denied, and vote against enshrining segregation in San Diego.

Thank you,

Nicole Lillie  
Housing Projects Director  
Our Time To Act United

Date: January 11, 2024

California State Parks  
Attn: Office of Historic Preservation  
Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
P.O. Box 94296  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Talmadge Park Estates Historic District

Dear Julianne Polanco and the State Historical Resources Commissioners,

**We strongly oppose the nomination of Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD) to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.** As long-time Talmadge residents and homeowners, we believe this designation is being pushed by a minority of Talmadge neighbors invested in using the designation to get around new state and local residential zoning laws, pay lower taxes that will negatively affect our community's schools, first responders and infrastructure, and control neighbors' ability to remodel or expand their homes to fit their narrow, nostalgic vision of what Talmadge should look like.

We have lived in Talmadge for 15 years. **There is nothing historic about our house.** Multiple contractors that we have had out to address foundation and other issues have described it as a, paraphrased, 'standard war-time kit house built quickly to meet housing demand'. It is not an example of a unique to the neighborhood/San Diego architectural style, and was not designed by a noted architect. Nobody of historic note has lived in our house/block, nor has anything of historic value happened here. **The only thing "historic" about our home is that it was built in the past.** Add in that many homes on our block/neighborhood have been remodeled to the point of not matching original specifications (listed as "non-contributors" on the application), and the "neighborhood historic cohesion" that the Talmadge Historical Society is seeking to preserve becomes even more perplexing to us. The only thing that the homes on our block (4500 Euclid Avenue) have in common is that they are single-family homes with yards. Utterly unremarkable other than that they are old.

When this designation was first proposed by the Talmadge Historical Society, we reached out to one of its board members and asked if they would poll potentially affected residents to ask if they wanted this designation and they said yes. They have not done so, and we believe many of our neighbors do not know how a historic designation will significantly impact their ability to remodel their homes to their liking/needs, understand the impact lower tax revenue will have on our community's need for investment in schools and infrastructure, and perhaps even effect homeowners' ability to sell their homes for fair market value once buyers find out about the remodeling/building restrictions attached because of a historic designation. It is a push that is being rushed by the Talmadge Historic Society to beat a deadline they see as necessary because of impending local zoning law changes, not because it is the overwhelming will of the neighborhood.

And that is what we feel is the impetus behind this group's seeking of a historic designation. The Talmadge Historical Society has been open about their desire to have a Historic District designation to block and/or frustrate state and local zoning changes that would allow more apartment buildings, ADUs, duplexes, row houses, and other multi-family buildings from being built in our neighborhood. This, while some of the proponents have already remodeled the exteriors of their homes, added second stories, or converted garages to ADUs, moving their own homes look away from the original specifications. This effort to control who can live in

Talmadge, and who is allowed to transform their homes to meet their needs (additions, second stories/ADUs for elderly parents, etc) is being cloaked in “heritage” and “historic charm”. There was never a push for a multi-home historic designation until state and city lawmakers proposed changes to our neighborhood’s zoning to accommodate multi-family dwellings. The Talmadge Historic Society’s email communications to supporters have been transparent about this goal, and beyond a handful of residents who obviously have a genuine passion for Talmadge’s history, this seems to be a cynical move to try to block the city’s master plan to add housing near high-traffic corridors and get around new/future state laws regarding how many structures may be built on residential lots.

**We have no issue with any of our neighbors obtaining single-home historic designations for their own personal homes,** however, forcing it on entire blocks of uninformed homeowners to satisfy their vision of what Talmadge should be for others is misguided and over-reaching. Especially, when these residents’ cite wanting to preserve homes that “working class” families could buy in the 1940s that only millionaires or near-millionaires can buy today *because there is not enough housing in neighborhoods like Talmadge to satisfy demand,* and because current working families living in Talmadge do not have the time or energy to properly research or counter a small group of residents’ push for this designation *because they are working to afford and repair their aging homes.*

Our home is one of our single biggest financial investments and we should not be told what we can and can’t do with our property because some neighbors want it to look a certain way when they walk past it on the sidewalk. With the cost of elder home care skyrocketing, and the number of adult children living at home at historically high levels, no home owner in our community should be told they can’t make additions or changes to their property to satisfy their family’s needs because of a tenuous or flimsy historic connection. Our home in Talmadge is not Mount Vernon or the Marston House—it is a single-family single-story home that most Americans could have had built in 6-12 months during the early 1940s because the floor plans and building materials were so generic and affordable as to be mass-produced. Members of the Talmadge Historic Group frequently bemoan not wanting “cookie cutter” homes without acknowledging that that is what our blocks of Talmadge were in 1942! Cookie cutter homes that were meant to serve a housing purpose at that time, and that are meant to be updated and/or replaced by the needs of the community/home owners in present time. Talmadge is a HOUSING community that needs to provide HOUSING to people that fits their modern needs, not a uniquely historic place that needs to be preserved in amber forever.

An important note: We understand that there is an opt-out provision for this designation, however, our community has NOT been sufficiently educated about this point AND the process is inequitable (cost/access to a notary, all English communication, etc) and confusing; we would argue that any historic designation should be OPT-IN for interested parties only given the stakes to homeowners ability to remodel/sell homes with this designation. We feel the opt-out step is an additional burden on us as homeowners, as we never asked to be included in this designation, nor voted for the Talmadge Historic Society to move forward on our behalf. If we are not given enough notice or education about the opt-out feature, or it is somehow not applied to us despite our vehement opposition to being included in this designation after we submit the proper paperwork, we will seek legal action to protect our rights as homeowners.

We strongly urge the State Historical Resources Commission to look beyond the few neighbors impassioned letters urging a designation and 1) question how many affected homeowners in the affected area know and approve of the District designation, and 2) whether the homes truly are uniquely historic to the point that would deprive existing and future homeowners from adapting their property to fit modern/future housing needs. There are other ways to honor our neighborhood’s history without depriving the community of valuable resources (tax revenue,

increased housing opportunities) and forcing unsuspecting or unwilling neighbors to be a part of a small-group of homeowners' desire to enforce their view of what Talmadge should be on their neighbors.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amy Wood and Elizabeth Phillips  
Talmadge Residents and Homeowners  
4561 Euclid Avenue, San Diego, CA 92115

p.s. The description of our home in the application for designation was made by someone from the Talmadge Historic Society standing on the sidewalk looking at the front of the house and does not adequately reflect work done by previous homeowners to the exterior back of the home between 1980-2008, which may well make it a "non-contributor" when held up to National Register standards. We would not be surprised if this was common to other homes' descriptions in the report, given the superficial description of our own home.