



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 8, 2022 REPORT NO. HRB-22-034

HEARING DATE: September 22, 2022

SUBJECT: **ITEM #03 – El Cantorral Court**

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

APPLICANT: State Beach Properties; represented by Legacy 106, Inc.

LOCATION: 2454-2474 Adams Avenue, North Park Community, Council District 3
APN 438-240-12-00

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the El Cantorral Court located at 2454-2474 Adams Avenue as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the El Cantorral Court located at 2454-2474 Adams Avenue as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1928 under HRB Criterion A, C, and D. The designation excludes the 1954 laundry room constructed outside of the period of significance. This recommendation is based on the following findings:

1. The resource is a special element of historical, social, economic, aesthetic and architectural development of North Park and the City and retains integrity to its 1928 period of significance. Specifically, the resource embodies the character defining features of a recognized variety of bungalow courts and is one of a finite and limited number of bungalow courts remaining in the City. Bungalow courts were a new type of multi-family development constructed along transit lines to address the City's population boom in the early 20th century and are unique to southern California.
2. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of a Pueblo Revival style full bungalow court with a U-plan and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1928 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a U-shaped asymmetrical form, detached and attached units, a central common open space, a second-story rear building, primary entrances which open onto the court, and parking accommodations below the level plinth of the units. It also continues to convey the historic significance of the Pueblo Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including flat roofs with *espadana* parapets; stucco

over wood frame construction; round pipe vents/vigas; rusticated wooden doors and gates; battered stucco chimney; original divide-lite parabolic arched windows; and original casement windows.

3. The resource is representative of a notable work of proposed Master Builder Glen Funcheon and retains integrity as it relates to the original 1928 design. Specifically, the resource was designed during his most productive years as a builder and effectively demonstrated a matured taste in the Spanish Eclectic/Pueblo Revival details and expresses a quality of craftsmanship seen in his other known works.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with the owner's desire to have the site designated as a historical resource. The subject property is a U-shaped full bungalow court with garages designed in the Pueblo Revival Style.

The property was identified in the [2016 North Park Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey](#) as one of the "Potential Individual Resources" located in the community plan area.

The historic name of the resource, the El Cantorral Court, has been identified consistent with the Board's adopted naming policy and reflects the specific name placed on the building upon construction.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Legacy 106, Inc., which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria A, C, and D, and staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects 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.

San Diego's growth between 1917 and 1930 can be largely attributed to the combined effects of the 1915-1916 Panama California Exposition and the growing military presence in the City. The exposition attracted 3.7 million visitors to the City (many of whom became permanent residents) while the post-WWI military established permanent military bases. Between 1910 and 1920, San Diego's population nearly doubled, growing from 74,000 to more than 147,000. The bungalow court, which appeared in San Diego in the late 1910s, was seen as one way to address the housing shortage. Seeking to address the need for housing across Southern California, the 1920 convention of the California Association of Commercial Secretaries, held in Pasadena and attended by representatives from San Diego, recommended the bungalow court concept as a solution. The demand for housing to accommodate new residents and the falling cost of construction materials and labor contributed to a building boom in San Diego that began around 1923 and peaked in 1926. El Cantorral Court, constructed in 1928, trails this building boom.

The first bungalow court is believed to have emerged in Pasadena in 1909 as an alternative to the traditional apartment building that took advantage of the temperate southern California climate. As a new property type, the bungalow court was characterized by a series of one-story houses oriented to a common landscape and walkway area on a deep single or double residential lot. Sometimes a two-story building was located at the rear of the parcel.

Bungalow courts appealed to renters and small-scale developers alike. For renters, they offer greater privacy and independence than apartment buildings or boarding houses, which were seen as crowded and unhealthy. The relative proximity of neighbors and the typical placement of front entries facing a shared common space fostered a sense of security and community. Bungalow courts appeal to small-scale and novice developers because they offer a higher rate of return than single-family homes. They also had lower barriers to entry for investment in real estate than apartment buildings or flats, as they required no more construction knowledge than needed to build simple, wood-frame houses.

Bungalow Courts were constructed as a part of the City's growth in the early to the mid-20th century. They offered convenience and affordability, attracting people of various socioeconomic backgrounds. City directories from the 1920s and 1930s indicate that bungalow courts primarily house a mix of married couples and single professional men and single women. The outdoor court took advantage of San Diego's mild climate. Development of bungalow courts slowed down after the Great Depression, and courts built between the 1930s and 1950s were no longer closely tied to streetcar lines as automobiles gained importance. By the 1960s, bungalow courts were replaced by denser multi-family apartments as these apartments became more economically viable, thus concluding the bungalow court's period of significance.

According to the [2016 North Park Community Plan Area Historic Resources Survey](#), the bungalow court was the most common form of multi-family housing within the community plan area. Most bungalow courts were constructed between University Avenue and Adams Avenue. The subject property was constructed along the border of this area in 1928. It was built along a San Diego Electric Railway route, which ran on Adams Avenue in the 1920s. Besides its proximity to a streetcar line, which offered a connection into the urbanized area of the City, El Cantorral Court also features a row of integrated, street-facing garages below the level plinth of the bungalow court.

Significance Statement: El Cantorral Court is a special element of the historical, social, economic, aesthetic, and architectural development of North Park and the City and retains integrity to its 1928 period of significance. Specifically, the resource embodies the character defining features of a recognized variety of bungalow courts and is one of a finite and limited number of bungalow courts remaining in the City. Bungalow courts were a new type of multi-family development constructed along transit lines to address the City's population boom in the early 20th century and are unique to southern California. Its location near an existing San Diego Electric Railway line further exemplifies a focus of transit-oriented intent. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion A.

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

Research into the owners and tenants of the property at 2454-2474 Adams Avenue did not reveal any individuals who could be considered historically significant in local, state or national history.

Furthermore, no events of local, state or national significance are known to have occurred at the subject property. Therefore, the property is not eligible for designation under HRB Criterion B.

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

The subject property was constructed in 1928 in the Pueblo Revival style as a full bungalow court. The property is significant under Criterion C for both the architectural style and the property type. The court includes five standalone buildings arranged in a U-shaped plan. A five-unit flat is located to the rear, two duplexes in the middle, and two bungalows in the front. The court is mirrored along a north-south axis, and the center landscape includes mature fruit trees, planter boxes, and a small gravel-filled pool. Original 15"-wide walkways surround the central landscape. The court and residences are situated on a plane above the street grade. A centered staircase, built on the sidewalk's edge, leads upwards towards the court. Ten attached garages, five on each side, flank the stairs and face the street. Above the garage are thick stucco piers connected by painted metal pipes, serving as a balustrade. The residential units are clad in a hand-troweled, undulating texture with a sandy topcoat, imitating hand-finished adobe walls. They all feature flat roofs with low-pitched parapet arches, also known as "Mission Arch" or *espadana*.

The rear two-story building has a rectangular plan on the ground floor and a centered, partial-width massing on the second floor. This design created two rooftop patio spaces accessible to the second-floor unit. The second-floor unit was intended to be occupied by the building manager, who would have an unobstructed view of the courtyard. Battered chimneys are present along the exterior of the second-story unit. Fenestration on this building consists of various historic and contemporary windows; the rectangular windows facing toward the court have wooden lintels above their opening. A breezeway is located on the ground floor, and the south elevation features wooden front doors with protruding stucco surrounds and wooden lintels above. The building also exhibits rusticated, parabolic arched wood windows with divided lites. The east elevation features a laundry room, and the west elevation features a modern deck along the ground floor.

The two duplexes are designed in a similar vocabulary as the two-story building. They feature flat roofs with *espadana*. Parabolic arched wood windows with divided lites are located on the facades facing into the courtyard, as are the wooden front doors. The front doors are adorned with stucco surrounds and wooden lintels. Fenestration consists of louvered windows, casement windows, and some modern replacements. There are no visible exterior chimneys. Secondary doors are located on the north and south elevations. Some round clay tile attic vents are present.

The two bungalows located nearest the street are designed in a similar manner as other buildings on the site. They feature flat roofs with *espadana* parapets. Parabolic arched wood windows with divided lites are located on the elevations facing into the courtyard and facing the street. The front doors are adorned with stucco surrounds and wooden lintels. Fenestration consists of louvered windows, casement windows, and false "niche" windows. Exterior stucco-clad battered chimneys are located along the south façade. Some clay tile attic vents are present. At the easternmost portion and the westernmost portion of the bungalows are flying buttress/stucco wing walls pierced by rusticated wooden doors which provide access to the side walkways.

As a full bungalow court property type, El Cantorral Court features detached one-story buildings arranged around a central common open space. Primary entrances to individual units open directly onto the court. An original two-story building is located to the rear, which includes the property manager's dwelling on the second floor. The plan is U-shaped and symmetrical. The wide court features shared landscaping and multiple walkways. The integrated garage is located below the level plinth on which the bungalow court is constructed and faces the street.

Modifications to the property include the removal of a black metal balcony from the two-story building; removal of decorative metal grates over the false window/niches from the bungalows; removal of various round clay tile attic vents/vigas from multiple buildings; removal of window shutters from the two-story unit and the bungalows; window replacements 2456-2458 Adams Avenue duplex; the installation of a modern deck on the two-story building; and the filling of the courtyard pool with gravel; all at unknown dates. A laundry room was constructed in 1954 and is attached to the two-story building. Sometime after 2011, a metal security gate was installed at the base of the entry stairs. According to Google Street View imagery and historical photos, most garage doors appear to have been removed before the 1990s. Sectional garage doors were installed in c. 2014 and again in c. 2018. In 2019, Historical Resources staff approved a permit to modify windows on the south and north façade of the two-story building.

According to the 2021 Bungalow Court and Apartment Historic Context Statement, special integrity considerations shall be applied when evaluating a bungalow court. For example, El Cantorral Court's Pueblo Revival design is considered a rare stylistic expression, so more leeway in the integrity of materials, workmanship, and landscape elements is appropriate. Common alterations include the addition of security bars and replacement of windows or doors in original openings and the replacement of fences or gates at the street-front entrances into the court are not sufficient to affect the property's integrity on their own. Existing original site or landscape features are not required but may enhance a property's significance and integrity.

Given these considerations, minor loss of architectural or decorative details does not pose a significant impact on the property's integrity. The subject property retains the original organization, form, and many original architectural features. Overall, the aforementioned modifications do not significantly impair the integrity of design, materials, workmanship or feeling as it relates to HRB Criterion C.

Pueblo Revival design cues draw on local historical precedents and are intended to evoke the hand-finished construction of traditional Native American architecture found in the American Southwest. The style was employed primarily in southwestern states in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in New Mexico and Arizona. A number of Pueblo Revival style homes were constructed in the San Diego area in the 1920s, however many of them have either been demolished or significantly altered over time to reflect more Spanish Eclectic designs. Character defining features of the style typically include flat roofs with parapets, irregular stucco finishes, rounded wall surfaces, and rough-hewn vigas, window lintels and porch supports.

Significance Statement: The subject property continues to convey the historic significance of the full bungalow court property type by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the property type; including the U-shaped asymmetrical form, detached and attached units, a central common open space, a second story rear unit, primary entrances which open onto the court, and parking

accommodations below the level plinth of the units. El Cantorral court also continues to convey the historic significance of the Pueblo Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including flat roofs with *espadana* parapets; stucco over wood frame construction; round pipe vents/vigas; rusticated wooden doors and gates; battered stucco chimney; original divide-lite parabolic arched windows; and original casement windows. Therefore, staff recommends designation under HRB Criterion C.

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

Glen Funcheon moved to San Diego around 1920. In the following years, he worked at a bus line and an auto service station and established a potato chip company. His career as a builder began in 1925, and by 1926, Funcheon was hired by J. P. Mills of the Pantages, Mills, Shreve and Co. as a design associate. During this time, Glen Funcheon studied the plans for Eugene Hoffman's 1004 Devonshire Dr property and learned construction techniques with the company. He worked as a builder for the company for a few years, constructing large Spanish Eclectic styled residences on the Pantages, Mills, Shreve and Co. tract in Sunset Cliffs until the company defaulted during the Great Depression. He erected at least four houses for the Pantages, Mills, Shreve and Co. and designed and built houses for patrons who bought vacant lots in the subdivision. Meanwhile, he constructed various bungalow courts and apartment courts independently. His work includes the Aztec Court on Hamilton St and the Las Casitas Court on 3rd Avenue. In 1933, Funcheon worked as a building manager for Ruth S. Albright, the owner of the New Palace Hotel, whom he later married and co-invested with to start a travel trailer manufacturing and sales business. He later returned to the construction industry by winning FHA housing projects for defense plant workers in the Linda Vista Area. His last documented projects were in 1952-1953, where he remodeled older buildings on Washington Street and constructed a personal residence in La Mesa.

Funcheon's works included many residences and residential courts in San Diego and are primarily designed in the Spanish Eclectic style. His works demonstrate a commitment to high quality and attention to detail. According to a list of Funcheon's projects documented in the report, four of Funcheon's works in San Diego have been historically designated, including:

- HRB #533 – Glen Funcheon/Douglas T. Kelley House, 4423 Alhambra St, built in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style
- HRB #1073 – John Steven McGroarty Spec House #1, 1004 Devonshire Dr, built in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style
- HRB #1161 – Eva Hill and Pantages, Mills & Shreve Company Spec House #1, 1007 Cordova St, built in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style
- HRB #1352 – Genevieve Howard House, 1025 Devonshire Dr, built in 1927 in the Spanish Eclectic style

The subject resource was built in 1928 by Glen Funcheon during the most productive years (1925-1933) of his building career. The building shares a quality of design and craftsmanship seen in Funcheon's other known works that are historically designated, such as the prominent parabolic arched windows. Funcheon's design and detailing in the Pueblo Revival style are readily conveyed in the many small details and decorative features included in the El Cantorral Court.

Significance Statement: The subject building reflects the notable work of proposed Master Builder Glen Funcheon, a self-taught builder responsible for the construction of many quality works in the City, some of which have been historically designated. Specifically, the resource was designed during his most productive years as a builder and effectively demonstrated a matured taste in the Spanish Eclectic/Pueblo Revival details and expresses a quality of craftsmanship seen in his other known works. Therefore, staff recommends the establishment of Glen Funcheon as a Master Builder and designation of the subject property under HRB Criterion D.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that the El Cantorral Court located at 2454-2474 Adams Avenue be designated with a period of significance 1928 under HRB Criterion A as a special element of the development of North Park and the City, Criterion C as a good example of a Pueblo Revival style bungalow court, and Criterion D as a notable work of proposed Master Builder Glen Funcheon. The designation excludes the 1954 laundry room, constructed outside of the period of significance.



Alvin Lin
Assistant Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
Development Services Department

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Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A
ADOPTED ON 9/22/2022

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 9/22/2022, to consider the historical designation of the **El Cantorral Court** (owned by State Beach Properties LLC, 3500 Jewell Street, San Diego, CA 92109) located at **2454 - 2474 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116**, APN: **438-240-12-00**, further described as VL 26 DOC106758REC67 IN VL 24 in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. 0**, and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any additions or significant changes to the landscape/ site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of the El Cantorral Court on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of North Park's historical, social, economic, and architectural development and retains integrity. Specifically, the resource is associated with a new transit-oriented, multi-family property type that emerged in San Diego as a response to the City's population boom in the early 20th century. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(2) The property is historically significant under CRITERION C for its distinctive characteristics through the retention of character defining features of a full bungalow court with a U-plan and retains a good level of architectural integrity from its 1928 period of significance. Specifically, the resource features a U-shaped asymmetrical form, detached and attached units, a central common open space, a second-story rear unit, primary entrances which open onto the court, and parking accommodations below the level plinth of the units. It also continues to convey the historic significance of the Pueblo Revival style by embodying the historic characteristics associated with the style; including flat roofs with espadana parapets; stucco over wood frame construction; round pipe vents/vigas; rusticated wooden doors and gates; battered stucco chimney; original divide-lite parabolic arched windows; and original casement windows. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

(3) The property is historically significant under CRITERION D as a notable work of proposed Master Builder Glen Funcheon with a period of significance of 1928 and retains integrity as it relates to the original design. Specifically, the resource was designed during his most productive years as a builder and effectively demonstrated a matured taste in the Spanish Eclectic/Pueblo Revival details and expresses a quality of craftsmanship seen in his other known works. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote:

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair
Historical Resources Board

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney

DRAFT

RECORDING REQUESTED BY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
ATTN: HRB SECRETARY
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 501
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER **N/A**

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

2454 - 2474 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **438-240-12-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER **0**