

## APPENDIX B

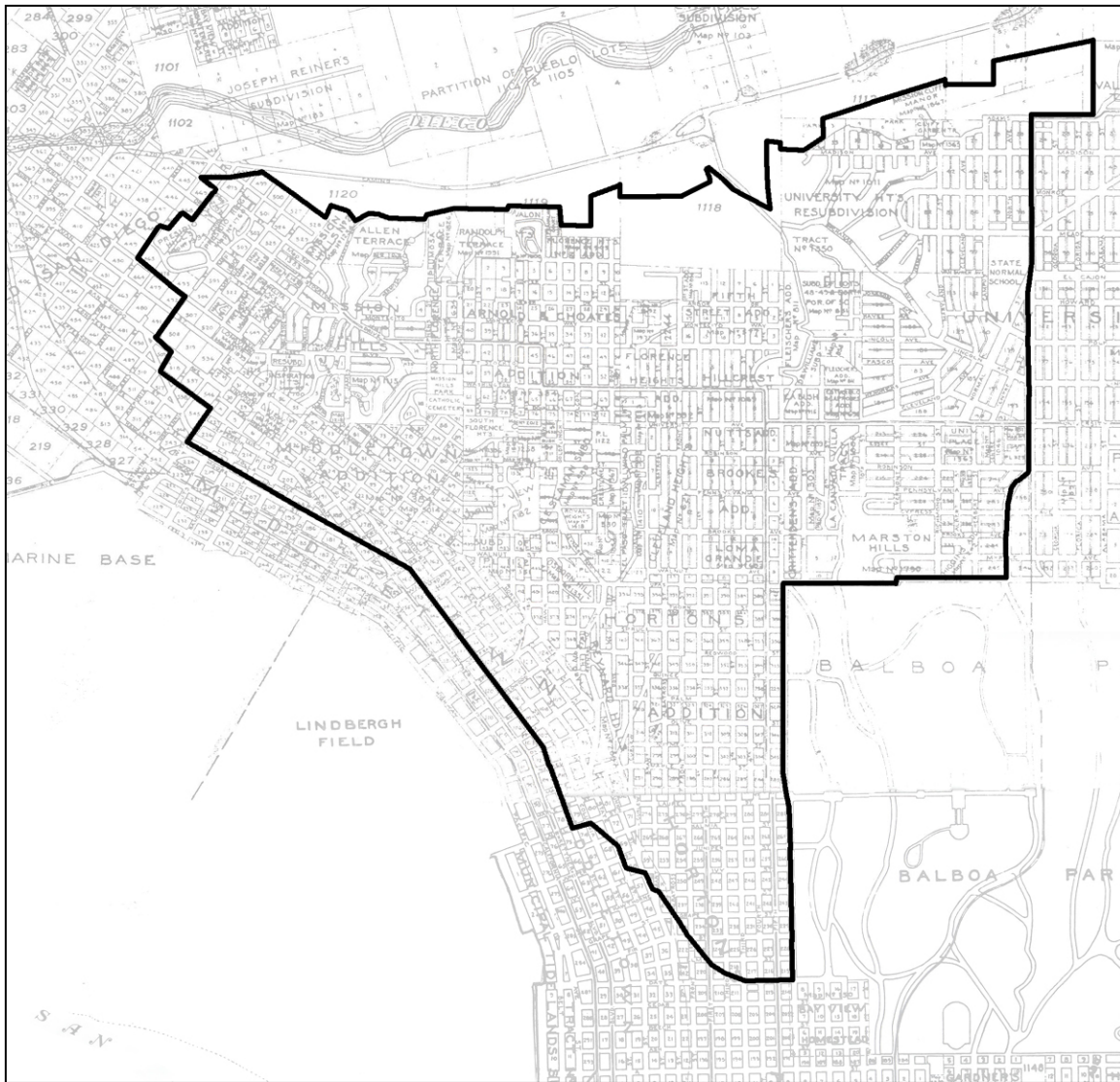
### UPTOWN HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT AND ORAL HISTORY REPORT

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# Uptown Historic Context and Oral History Report



November 24, 2003

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## I. Introduction

### A. Purpose of the Report

The Uptown Historic Context Report was commissioned by the City of San Diego and partially supported through a grant by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation. The purpose of the report was to develop an Historic Context for the culturally diverse Uptown community that discusses major trends and events that shaped the physical and cultural development of the community, and establishes a periods of significance context statements for social, geographical and architectural themes. Themes used in this context statement include transportation and development, George Marston and the Nolen Plan, business districts, public parks, World War II and post War development, the medical community, and civic, ethnic, religious, and minority groups.

### B. Definition of Historic Context

In the National Register *Bulletin 24, Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*, the Historic Context is defined as a “broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region, that may be represented by historic resources.” The bulletin goes on to explain that “historic contexts are developed on the basis of background data on the community’s history and the history and prehistory of the region in which it lies.” The development of an historic context allows city and state planners to better determine the significance of the built resources within the area of study.

### C. Discussion of the Study Area and Structure of the Report

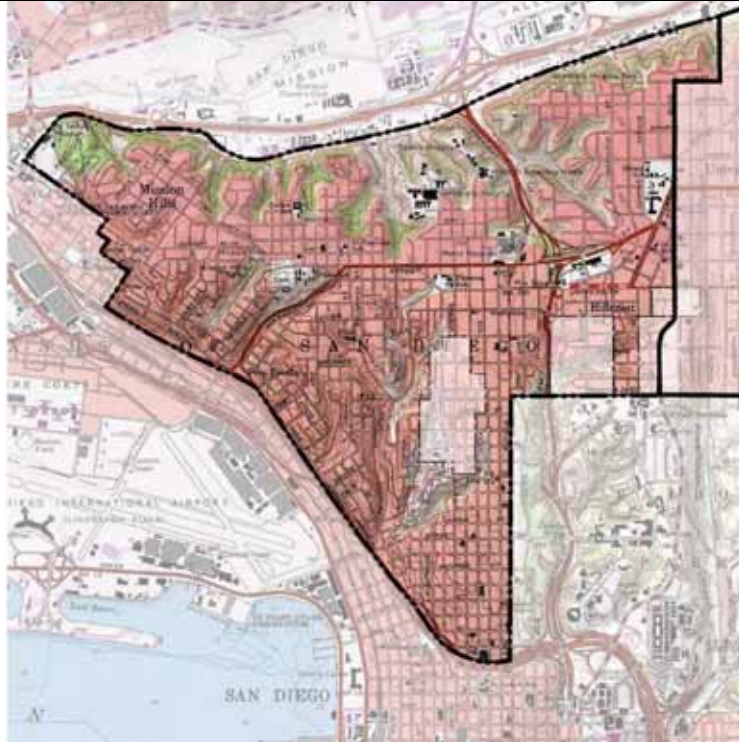


Figure 1: Map of Study Area

The Uptown community planning area is located just north of the Center City area on a level mesa that is broken up by heavily vegetated canyons and bordered by two major parks, Presidio and Balboa. This gives the area a sense of seclusion from the city center and other surrounding communities, and provides a sense of openness. It is bounded on the north by the steep hillsides of Mission Valley, on the east by Park Boulevard and Balboa Park, and on the west and south by Old Town San Diego and Interstate 5. The planning area comprises about 2,700 acres or approximately 4.2 square miles (Community Plan 1988).

Analysis of the historical development of the Uptown District has been difficult at times due to the arbitrary nature of portions of its boundaries. Along its eastern edge, the study area includes only the west side of Park Boulevard, though, historically, both sides of the street developed as a single business district. In addition, historical development of neighborhoods directly east of the study area such as the communities of North Park and Normal Heights were intimately linked with the growth of University Heights and Hillcrest, but they have been excluded. Another problem occurs along the southern and western boundaries of the Uptown District where Interstate 5 has been used as a boundary. The freeway is a modern structure and does not define historic neighborhood borders. It bisects several historic neighborhoods and cuts off a large area between the freeway and "A" Street to the south from the Uptown District even though these blocks developed along with the tracts currently north of Interstate 5. Use of the freeway boundary also divides the Middletown tract, leaving the residential portion cut off from the historical business districts along India and Kettner Streets. This problem arises from using a modern structure such as a freeway to define the boundary of historic neighborhoods that predates the transportation corridors construction by over 50 years.

Finally, the application of the name Uptown to this study area goes against historical precedent. Historically Uptown was that area north of A Street, West of Balboa Park, and south of Hillcrest. To apply the name of one historic area to the entire district confuses the identity of the original Uptown neighborhood. To avoid this confusion this study uses the term West Park Neighborhoods to refer to those blocks west of Balboa Park originally known as Uptown.

In light of the complex nature of the study area's boundaries, it is impossible to provide a concise history of the area without diminishing some of the area's influences. As noted above, the study area contains a variety of neighborhoods each with its unique development history. Furthermore, because of the artificial nature of the Uptown Planning District boundary, many factors affecting the historic development of the area have occurred outside of the district. For this reason, this report includes a Historic Overview of the City of San Diego as a general context to the neighborhoods within the study area. Within this chronological presentation the study area's development as well as that of individual neighborhoods is provided. The historic overview is then followed by a Statement of Current Conditions for each of the major neighborhoods within the study area. Finally, the Historic Context Statement defines historically significant themes in the study area and describes the property types associated with those themes.



## II. Historic Overview of the City of San Diego

### A. Introduction

The land use history of the Uptown Study Area provides an example of the trends and cycles of San Diego's urban development. The property has been part of every major developmental phase of San Diego prior to World War II and its history illustrates the city's development through its early boom and bust periods and its expansion into residential suburbs in the early Twentieth Century. Pressure from the Post World War II population increase brought a variety of pressures and changes to portions of the area during the last half of the Twentieth Century.

The Uptown community contains some of the oldest neighborhoods in San Diego exhibiting a variety of historic architectural types and abundant landscaping. The area also features a wide range of residential opportunities and a diverse mixture of people within a distinctly urban setting. Most of the street system and building lot development was well established prior to the need to consider the automobile as a part of subdivision planning (Community Plan 1988; Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).

This narrative history will trace the development of the Uptown Study Area along with that of urban San Diego. The historic development use of the neighborhoods correlates with the economic and social factors that influenced San Diego's growth. Many aspects of life in early San Diego will be examined. The economic booms and busts linked to railroads, other speculative ventures, and development of a military port, as well as community based developments, will be documented in relation to the people and institutions that lived in, and used the Uptown area. Subjects such as the history of San Diego's residential, business, economic, and social trends will be examined.

### B. The Urban Frontier (1846-1866)

#### 1. City Builders

The development of downtown San Diego during the last half of the Nineteenth Century and first two decades of the Twentieth Century is directly linked to the phenomena of the urban frontier in the American West. The establishment of cities and their subsequent development played a crucial role in western settlement. In many instances occupation of a region did not follow a process of gradual growth that progressed in stages from explorers and trappers to farmers and then urban centers as presented by historian Frederick Jackson Turner (Reps 1979; Turner 1894). More often than not, especially in the case of San Diego, towns and cities were the "spearheads" of the American frontier and established in advance of agricultural development. Formation of urban communities stimulated the opening of the west to farms. City builders led the way and their infant metropolises acted as advance bases to hold the land for approaching populations (Wade 1970:260; Pomeroy 1971:8-10; Reps 1979: X; Larsen 1978:4; Stelter 1973:187).

The urban frontier represented a unique aspect of the western experience and one that historians have still not yet fully explored. In spite of the emphasis by both government and the popular media on the Jeffersonian ideal of agricultural development, which proclaimed that the true destiny of American culture lay in the expansion of a society of independent farmers, during the Nineteenth Century many pioneers moved westward in search of promising urban opportunities rather than fertile soil (Pomeroy 1971:24-25; Stelter 1973:187; Wade 1970:261).

City builders were essential to urban frontier expansion. For many westerners the perceived road to riches lay by way of promoting a location with apparent, or imagined, urban potential (Bogue et al. 1970:255-256). In the far west, including San Diego, this phenomenon represented an extension of a process perfected earlier in the Midwest. During the 1830s speculators platted and promoted thousands of sites throughout Ohio, Illinois and neighboring states. Promoters purchased a tract of undeveloped wilderness, surveyed the property, produced a map of streets, parks, and future sites of universities and government buildings, and began to sell lots in their new metropolis. During the mid 1830s the "mania" became so frenzied that speculators ignored all common sense and platted thousands of sites, many of which were inaccessible. Most, of course, failed (Larson 1976:141-142; Glaab 1963:147-148; Bogue et al. 1970:255-256). This phenomenon repeated itself decades later in the growth of San Diego with the developmental attempts by W.H. Davis, Alonzo Horton, and the speculators of the 1880s. For those that succeeded the efforts of local promoters to attract business and transportation networks was vital (Bogue et al. 1970:255-256).

In order to succeed at any level city founders, promoters, and early settlers had to master the skills of urban entrepreneurship, which consisted of "organized civic entrepreneurship that enabled one community to triumph over another and win railroads, manufacturing, and other necessities of urban growth" (Larsen 1976:115). Many infant cities hoped to become the commercial center of their region (Stelter 1973:89). Although most felt this destiny had been predetermined by geographical benefits of their particular locality this was not the case. The key to urban success rested in the power of business leaders to attract capital and develop transportation systems, especially railroads (Larson 1976:141).

Competition between growing cities to attract railroads became a key factor in this process. By the 1850s the ability of a community to connect with rail lines was seen as essential to success in the public's mind (Bogue et al. 1970:254). It had been proven more than once that if cities intended to succeed as commercial enterprises railroads and real estate were fundamental to their development (Glaab and Brown 1976:114). A high correlation existed between new railroad construction, population growth, and general commercial activity. Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio had all experienced dramatic population, construction, and manufacturing increases following the completion of railroads. Atlanta, Chicago, and Saint Louis succeeded as regional economic centers following rail line connections (Fogel 1970:237-238).

These aspects of speculation, promotion, and railroad construction largely influenced the growth of downtown San Diego during the city's formative years. The city experienced three periods of heightened economic activity prior to 1920. In each, a different set of urban entrepreneurs, guided by men such as Alonzo Horton, Elisha Babcock, John D. Spreckles, and George Marston, attempted to promote the city as a major West Coast port, develop urban infrastructure, and establish direct links with transcontinental railroads. Finally, congressman William Kettner accomplished their goal through an urban alliance with the United States Navy. Promotion during each phase affected the nature of urban development, thereby directly impacting the nature of development within the Uptown Study Area.

## 2. New San Diego (1846-1866)

### a. New Town

The first attempt by urban pioneer speculators to establish a city on San Diego Bay occurred when a group of entrepreneurs platted the site of New San Diego in 1850. Although a failure, speculation stimulated by New San Diego's promotion led directly to subdivision of the Middletown Tract located along the western edge of present -day Uptown. Prior to this, European settlement had been gradual and relatively unremarkable in numbers. In 1769 Spanish missionaries and soldiers arrived at San Diego to

establish the first mission and presidio in Alta California. They chose a site on a hill overlooking the mouth of the San Diego River at the current location of Presidio Park at the north west corner of the study area. By 1774 the Spanish had moved the mission six miles inland along the San Diego River to better access water for their crops (Englehardt 1920; McGrew 1922). In the 1820s Mexico received its independence from Spain and San Diego became part of the Mexican Republic. Several retired soldiers and Mexican settlers had already begun to form a small community at the foot of the Presidio Hill. By 1830 a small town surrounding a central plaza had developed (today's Old Town). The civilian residents of the town pressed Mexico for the establishment of their own municipal government. In 1834 Mexico recognized San Diego's requests and granted pueblo status to the settlement. The enduring legacy of this act was the provision for granting nearly 48,000 acres of land to the community (Killea 1966:24-32; Crane 1991:105-108; Harlow 1987). Included within these Pueblo Lands was the current study area.

During the Mexican-American War (1846-48) United States forces occupied San Diego. The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, which ended the war, placed Alta California within the United States. The new international boundary line was set at one marine league south of San Diego Bay. In the summer of 1849 the U.S. Boundary Commission Survey team arrived in San Diego to establish a base camp for the survey of the new boundary. U.S. Boundary Commissioner John B. Weller assigned the chief surveyor, Andrew B. Gray, to survey the bay to help fix the point of origin for the survey (Scott 1976:21). Gray quickly realized the potential for a new "American" seaport. When the Commission's activities were delayed for nearly a year due to political and financial considerations, he switched his efforts toward establishing a "New Town" for San Diego (Rolle 1956:90-91; Scott 1976:24-26; Newland 1992:30-35). Like most urban pioneers Gray pinned his hopes on the railroad. He felt San Diego would be the site of a great commercial port at the terminus of a transcontinental line traversing the southern section of the country (Scott 1976:24). The Pacific Railroad Convention, held in Memphis in 1849, advocated a southern transcontinental route along the Gila River with San Diego as its western terminus.

Following methods established by city builders in the Midwest during the 1830s, Gray started work toward the founding of New San Diego in January 1850. During the first six weeks of the year he and Army Lt. Thomas Johns surveyed and mapped a 160 acre subdivision and port facility adjacent to Punta de los Muertos three miles south of Old Town. The tract was located 8 to 10 blocks south of the current Uptown Study Area and bounded by present day Broadway on the north, Market Street on the south, First Avenue on the east and Pacific Highway on the west (Pourade 1963:161; Gray and Johns 1850; Poole 1854). Gray then attracted successful San Francisco merchant William Heath Davis and several prominent San Diegans, José Antonio Aguirre, Miguel de Pedrona, and William C. Ferrell, to help finance the purchase and development of the subdivision (Rolle 1956:91-92; Scott 1976:28). On March 16, 1850 Davis, as major investor, signed a partnership agreement with Gray and the others. Four days later the investors purchased the 160 acres from the newly established City Trustees for \$2,304 (Miscellaneous Records 2:184-186). As part of the agreement Davis agreed to pay for the construction of a wharf. Davis spent over \$60,000 to complete the 600 foot long, L-shaped wharf which he located near the foot of present day Market Street. He also spent thousands more for several prefabricated wooden buildings shipped from the East Coast as well as ship loads of bricks and lumber (Rolle 1956:91-92).

At first the prospects for New San Diego seemed good. California had been admitted into the Union in September 1850 and San Diego, with its deep water harbor, held great promise for many speculators. Dreams of transcontinental railroad lines terminating at a fully developed American city on San Diego Bay motivated many to look to the sleepy town. Some felt it would be just a matter of time before San Diego's citizens moved from the older settlements at La Playa and Old Town to New Town. Gray and Davis, engaging in urban entrepreneurship, added to the potential promise of New Town when they convinced Lt. Thomas Johns to establish the new Army supply depot and barracks there instead of at its

originally planned location at La Playa. By May 1851 New Town boasted several hotels, saloons, the Army barracks and supply depot, San Diego's first newspaper, a dozen houses, and semi-regular steamer service to and from San Francisco. Soon, many of the local Army officers and Boundary Commission members established new homes in the settlement (Rolle 1956:93-95; Scott 1976:31-34, 39-40; MacPhail 1979:15-17).

New Town's rapid development in 1850 and 1851 was quickly reversed. A series of setbacks for the investors and residents quickly countered their earlier successes. The population that Gray and Davis expected to flock to San Diego did not materialize. First, New Town's mostly male population helped garner it a reputation as a gathering place for "rowdies, adventurers, and drifters." This was compounded in November 1851 when the Garra Indian Uprising in San Diego's backcountry attracted nationwide attention that discouraged settlement. Added to these negative events were several severe financial disasters that crippled William Heath Davis' businesses. An 1851 San Francisco fire destroyed Davis' warehouse and cost him a reported \$700,000. By early 1852 Davis could no longer afford to bankroll the struggling development (Rolle 1956:95-101; Scott 1976:47-51; MacPhail 1979:17).

Davis' financial troubles were only the beginning of the end for New Town. In January 1852 the State Legislature repealed bankrupt San Diego's City Charter and placed a Board of Trustees in charge. Without Davis's or the city's support the development had no financial backing. Although activity in the spring of 1852 was steady, when the Boundary Commission was dismissed in May, a large contingent of the population left. Davis had already closed his own hotel and saloon in April due to bad management and high debts. Soon other New Town residents and merchants were doing the same. Some left San Diego permanently while others moved their businesses and buildings to Old Town. By March 1853 both the *San Diego Herald* newspaper and the last remaining merchant, Ephraim W. Morse, had both made the move to Old Town (Rolle 1956:98; McGhee 1950:10). The main source of activity in New Town during the latter part of 1852 had been the Army depot. In early 1853 the activity there had also declined (Scott 1976:77-78). By mid-1853 only a few Army officers were left in the nearly vacant town. A final blow to the hopes of New Town occurred when one of the steamers that occasionally docked at the wharf smashed into it. Thirty feet of the dock was destroyed, making the wharf unusable. Davis never repaired the damage (San Diego Pioneer Letters 9-27-1853; MacPhail 1979:18).

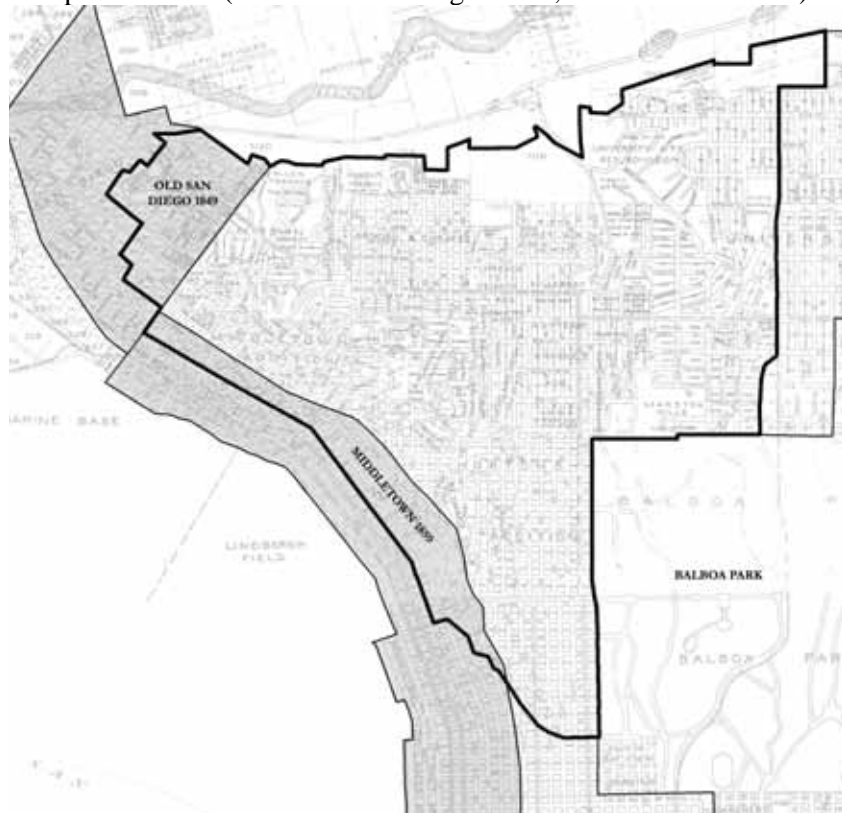
Despite setbacks New Town investors continued urban entrepreneurial efforts to secure San Diego's future as a transcontinental rail line terminus. In 1853 a group consisting of Colonel William Ferrell, Frank Ames, and John Bankhead Magruder established the San Diego Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company. The same year Andrew Gray traveled to Washington D.C. with two petitions signed by over 70 residents asking Congress to name San Diego a port of entry and establish a post office at New Town. In early 1854 he again traveled to the nation's capitol in order to interest officials of the Texas Western Railroad Company in surveying a route to San Diego. In November 1854 the State of California chartered the San Diego and Gila, Southern Pacific and Atlantic Railroad to build a line from San Diego to the Colorado River. San Diego voters passed a measure granting two leagues of city land to the company (Brandes et al. 1985:44-46). Sectional conflicts that ultimately resulted in the Civil War made any attempt at transcontinental railroad promotion hopeless and the New Town venture ultimately failed.

#### **b. Establishment of the Middletown Tract**

The first wave of speculative fever that motivated the new American residents of San Diego to develop New Town, inspired a second group of hopeful urban pioneers to develop another town site on the bay. This subdivision consisted of 687 acres of land located between Old Town and New Town. Its developers gave it the appropriate name of Middletown. Today most of this tract lies along the western edge of the Uptown district. American attorney Thomas Sutherland was one of the catalysts of this speculative

project. Sutherland, one of the first attorneys in San Diego, had become one of the community's most influential citizens by aligning himself with the wealthy Bandini and Estudillo families. After the State Legislature created San Diego County in the Act of February 18, 1850, *Alcalde* (mayor) Joshua Bean asked Sutherland to take over the position of acting *alcalde* during the transition period from Mexican to American law during the next few months. As such, Sutherland oversaw Davis' New Town purchase in March 1850. During the next two years he would also serve as District Attorney and City Attorney, in which role he wrote the city's first ordinances (Scott 1976:29; Smythe 1908:290, 582).

Sutherland quickly joined together with nine other prominent San Diegans to begin their own speculative venture shortly after Davis and Gray's purchase. On May 27, 1850 Sutherland and his partners purchased the 687 acres of Pueblo Lands for \$3,187 through *alcalde* Joshua Bean (Deed Book B: 75-76,110). The group of investors included Sutherland, Atkins S. Wright, San Diego merchant Charles P. Noell, Boundary Commission official and lawyer Oliver S. Witherby, prominent *Californios* José Maria Estudillo and Juan Bandini, Bandini's future son-in-law Lt. Cave J. Couets, Army Engineer Maj. William Emory, County Sheriff Agustin Haraszthy, and County Surveyor Henry Clayton (Brandes and Erzinger c.1980). In June 1850 the group had surveyor Clayton lay out the new development with streets and blocks. The road connecting Old Town and New Town bisected the new subdivision which featured five public squares, named after American heroes, and an open community space known as the Triangle (Harlow 1987:26,110; Reys 1979:239-241). Clayton did not, however, subdivide the entire tract. The tidelands area to the west edge of the tract and an open area south of the current Grape Street were left unplotted. The open areas south of Grape were designated as the Reservation (Clayton Map 1851). This reference was associated with a poorly documented Indian *rancheria* (small temporary village) that occupied the land (Brandes and Erzinger 1980; Carrico 1984:24-27).



**Figure 2: Middletown 1859**

Shortly after completion of the map, the partners opened their tract for sale. They made Sutherland their attorney in matters relating to the sale and conveyance of any lots or blocks in the tract. The agreement between the investors noted that they each were holders of a one tenth undivided interest in the venture. Any sales of lots or property would be divided up in accordance with their holdings and all unsold lots were to be divided in the same manner. Real estate activity in Middletown lots followed a similar pattern as that in New Town and Old Town during these early years of the 1850s. This activity

slumped after 1854 with only occasional sales during the next decade and a half. Still, Sutherland and the

other owners made numerous sales and conveyances of Middletown property during this period. Also, the investors offered an unspecified right-of-way through the tract for a future railroad. All this later led to numerous complications in title (Brandes and Erzinger c.1980). Sutherland's death in 1859 compounded the matter in later title contests (*San Diego World* 3-8-1873). In addition, four of six unnumbered plots north of, and associated with, Davis' New Town, all located on the north side of spring (Broadway) Street were sold to individuals as well as several other tracts of land to the west. These individual plots were deeded prior to the opening of Middletown and were known by their purchaser's names as the Bleecker and Gardiner, Summers and Tremain, Davidson, Barber, and Fitzgerald and Murray Tracts (Deed Book B; Tax Books 1873-1928; Pascoe Map 1869).

Unlike its southern neighbor New Town, Middletown did not see any development during this period. The venture, on the coat tails of Davis's New Town, also fell victim to the lack of capital and interest in frontier San Diego during the 1850s. It truly remained a "paper" town. No records, maps, or mention has ever been found to indicate any construction of houses or structures in Middletown during these early years.

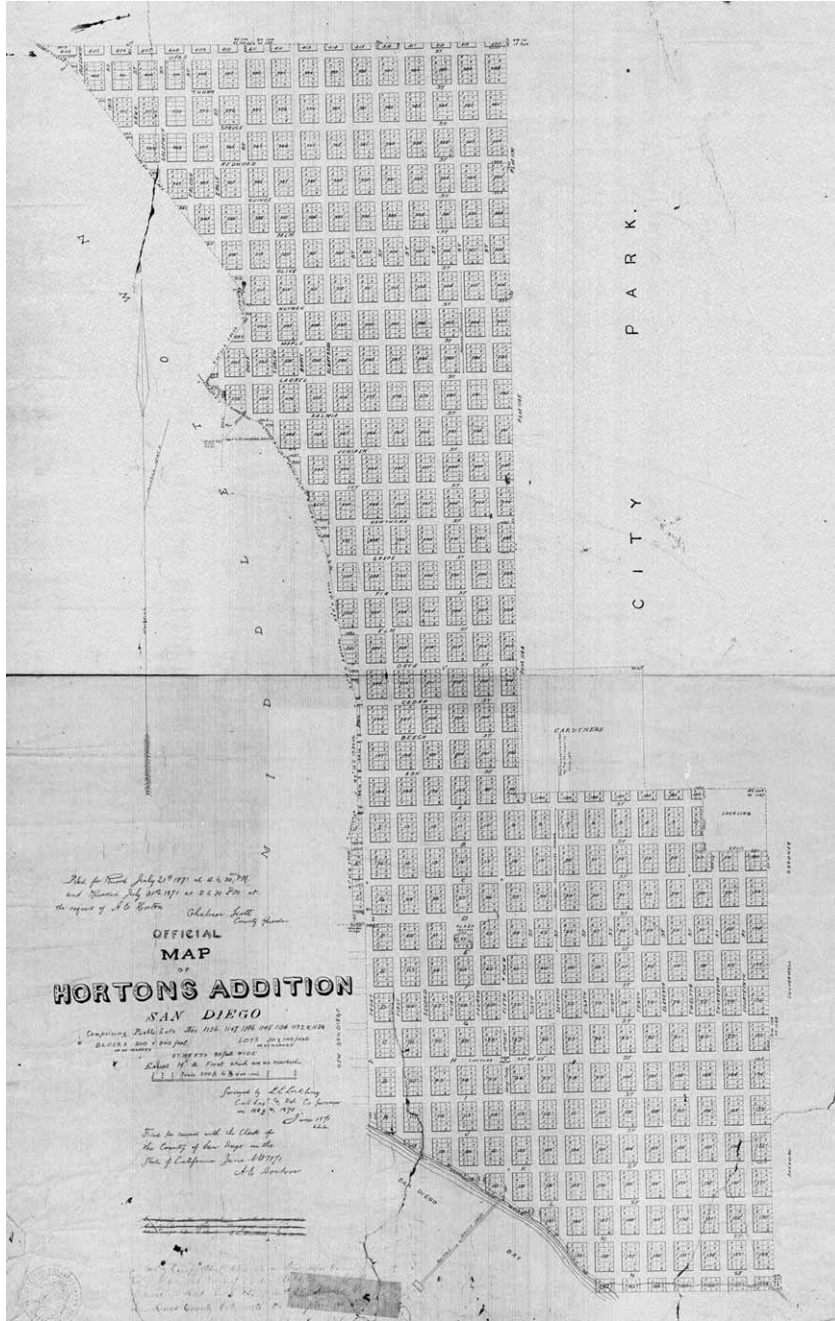
Only the Indian *rancheria* on the southern portion of the tract indicates occupation of the land. Mentions of the Indian *rancheria* are also scarce and do not occur until several decades later. In 1881 the *San Diego Union* notes the existence of a *rancheria* just west of St. Joseph's Catholic Church at Third and Beech near the eastern edge of the reservation area (*San Diego Union* 7-7-1881:4). In November of that year the newspaper noted that drunken Indians who had a *rancheria* in Middletown were causing problems for the area residents (*San Diego Union* 11-10-1881:3). The only mention of a specific location of the Middletown *rancheria* comes from the *San Diego Union* of February 1888 which reported ". . . that there used to be an Indian *rancheria* on India between Cedar and Date and the Street was named after the squaws. . . ." (*San Diego Union* 2-3-1888:3). Although there is no proof that Andrew Gray named India Street after the local Indians, Indian *rancherias* located on vacant lots and plots around the peripheries of Old Town and New Town are fairly well documented. All during the late Nineteenth Century the displaced local Native American population attempted to adapt and survive on the margins of the new American community (Carrico 1984:24-37; Carrico 1987:18-36). The undeveloped Middletown "Reservation" served during these early years as one of those marginal settlements. Urban development of the Middletown tract would not occur until the late 1860s and early 1870s when another urban pioneer entrepreneur, Alonzo Horton, successfully established a city on San Diego Bay.

### c. Horton's Boom (1867-1873)

After the Civil War ended in 1865 interest in San Diego renewed. During the following decade San Diego saw a rise in urban speculation and development of portions of the Middletown tract. The Southern Overland Trail into California was reopened and new settlers began to move west. Plans for transcontinental railroads that had been stymied by sectional struggles and the war were reexamined and prepared. The speculative hopes of San Diegans dating back to the 1850s for making their town a major commercial port at the terminus of a southern railroad line rekindled. San Diego residents had little money for such ventures. The city was still run by a Board of Trustees that did not hold elections to fill expired terms of the members after 1865. The lack of city business in quiet San Diego precluded the need. In fact, no one had purchased any of the city lands since 1863 (Scott 1976:152-153). That all changed in 1867.

On April 15th, of that year the steamer *Pacific* arrived in San Diego Bay and anchored off the former site of Davis' wharf. Among several passengers arriving was San Francisco merchant and land speculator Alonzo Horton. Horton came to San Diego to investigate the small town's potential for development. He was already a seasoned urban pioneer and land speculator, having previously dealt in real estate in

Wisconsin in the 1830s and established a town there bearing his name (Hortonville) following the war with Mexico. Horton had moved to San Francisco in 1862 and was operating a furniture business when he



heard a lecture on San Diego's speculative potential (MacPhail 1979:23). When he arrived in San Diego he liked the land he saw near Davis' New Town. He quickly inquired to local officials as to the availability of the city lands near Davis' subdivision. In doing so Horton made a valuable acquaintance with one of the community's leaders, Ephraim Morse. The former New Town resident was intrigued with Horton's ideas for a renewal of the earlier development project. Morse and County Clerk Eugene Pendleton then helped arrange for an election of new City trustees so that several of the City's "pueblo lots" could be set at auction. The financial situation of the city forced Horton to pay the costs of holding the April 27 election. Morse, Thomas Bush, and Joseph Mannasse were elected (Smythe 1908:325-337; Black 1913:90-100). At the auction on May 10, 1867 Horton purchased nearly 800 acres located east of the New and Middle Town tracts for \$265 (see Figure H1) (Deed Book 2:311; Heilbron 1987:64). Known officially as "Horton's Addition," the northern portion of his purchase lie within the present Uptown district lying north of present-day I-5, to Upas Street and east from Front Street to 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

Figure 3: Horton's Addition 1871

After County Surveyor James Pascoe drew a rough map of his land, Horton returned to San Francisco to settle his finances, open a land office, and promote his venture (Scott 1976:153; Harlow 1987:137). He immediately contacted General William S. Rosecrans who was involved in several transcontinental railroad schemes. After a survey into San Diego's backcountry Rosecrans told Horton his land would be

- ◆ City of San Diego, Planning Department, 202 C Street, San Diego, California 92101 ◆
- ◆ IS Architecture, Ione R. Stiegler, Architect, 5649 La Jolla Blvd, La Jolla, California 92037 ◆
- ◆ Walter Enterprises, Stephen Van Wormer, Historian and Susan Walter, Oral Historian, 238 2nd Avenue, Chula Vista, California 91910 ◆

worth a million dollars if a railroad was built (Smythe 1908:336-337). Horton returned again to San Francisco to start recruiting the needed population for developing the new town. He got twenty-five families to commit to move to San Diego and promised a free lot to anyone who would build a house worth \$500 on it. During the fall of 1867 Horton hired surveyors and well drillers to lay out the new subdivision (Morse Letters 5-28-1867; 10-14-1867; Scott 1976:154-55). In December he went to Sacramento to apply for a wharf franchise that was approved on January 27, 1868 (Morse Letters 1-28-1868).

During the last part of 1867 Horton's active promotion soon attracted other speculators and developers to San Diego. Stephen S. Culverwell obtained his own wharf franchise to be constructed near Davis' old wharf as well as his own tract east of Horton's. Matthew Carruthers arranged to open a lumberyard. Attorneys and speculators Charles Taggart, Salon Sanborn, and Charles Wetmore also arrived to practice law and deal in real estate (Scott 1976:156). During the next five years speculators laid out over fifteen new subdivisions around Horton's tract. These areas were located within the present neighborhoods of Hillcrest, Sherman Heights, Golden Hill, Logan Heights, North Park, Mission Hills, and University Heights, as well as 1,440 acres set aside for a city park (Harlow 1987:137-174; Smythe 1908:616-621; Montes 1977). Still, by August 1868 it was obvious that Horton's tract would be the center of the new town's development. The completion of Horton's wharf at the foot of Fifth Street in fall 1868 focused the business development of the new metropolis along Fifth and Sixth Streets south of Ash, to the south of the current Uptown Study Area

The years 1868 and 1869 were boom years for San Diego. Plans for a new railroad were helping to fuel the interest. In May 1868 General Thomas Sedgewick, surveyor and agent for John C. Fremont's Memphis, El Paso, and Pacific Railroad project published his report that named San Diego as the terminus for a planned transcontinental line (Lesley 1945:504;505; *San Diego Union* 6-14-1873). Soon both Old Town and New Town, or Horton's Addition as it was sometimes called, were booming. The prospect of the railroad brought hundreds of new settlers. By early 1870 New San Diego had a population of 2,301, with 915 residential, and sixty-nine business buildings (MacPhail 1979:41).

Although Old Town was seeing its height of activity, the focus of the community was beginning to swing toward New Town. Ephraim Morse became the first merchant to move to the development in the spring of 1869 (*San Diego Union* 6-30-1869). By late 1869 New Town residents were calling for the transfer of the county seat to their settlement (*San Diego Union* 7-21-1870; 9-1-1870). Opposition from Old Town residents delayed the transfer of the county records until April 1871 but the change was inevitable. By 1872 the county had completed a new courthouse located at D and Front Streets to serve as the center of local government (Smythe 1908:383-385).

The next three years were ones of steady growth. Although 1870 started with the failure of the Memphis and El Paso Railroad, prospects from several other railroad ventures and a small gold rush in the Cuyamaca Mountains continued to fuel development (*San Diego Union* 9-22-1870; McGhee 1950:69). Over two hundred seventy buildings were constructed in the new town in 1870 alone including the one hundred room Horton House Hotel (*San Diego Union* 12-29-1870; 10-6-1870). Other developments included the town's first telegraph connections, its first bank, several new schools, two newspapers, twelve large mercantile houses, various retail establishments, and numerous saloons (*San Diego Union* 3-24-1870; 12-29-1870). The Texas and Pacific Railroad Company's emergence as the leading prospect for the completion of San Diego's railroad connection in March 1871 cautiously inspired the citizenry of the town. The continuation of a severe drought and the previous failure of the Memphis and El Paso dropped real estate prices from their 1869 boom time levels. Still, 1871 saw the construction of fifty-one new



buildings, the establishment of a chamber of commerce, fire department, and the beginning of construction of the new courthouse (*San Diego Union* 1-2-1872).

San Diego's promise seemed assured when in May 1872 the U.S. Congress passed the railroad bill that approved funding for the Texas and Pacific's transcontinental line to San Diego. This ignited a feverish real estate boom (Smythe 1908:354-355; Lesley 1945:505-506). Ephraim Morse wrote to out-of-town business associates that lots along Fifth Street that had been priced at \$800 were suddenly selling for \$2,000 (Morse Letters II: 209-211). San Diego's population swelled to an estimated 4,000 and in the spring of 1873 construction of rail bed was begun. Unfortunately San Diego's boom was abruptly ended in the economic panic of September 1873. Tom Scott, the president of the Texas and Pacific, lost expected financing after the company's banking houses in New York failed and European banks refused to loan the funds. In December 1873 the Texas and Pacific Company became insolvent. By 1875 the population had dropped back to roughly 1,500. The failure signaled the end of the Horton era boom and initiated a quiet decade of slow development (Smythe 1908:359-375).

The remaining years of the 1870s are often referred to as "quiet" ones. Hopes remained tied to the railroad. During the late 1870s Texas and Pacific President Tom Scott continued to try and finance the transcontinental line to San Diego. His efforts were ended when the mighty Southern Pacific Railroad completed a line south from San Francisco through Los Angeles to Yuma by 1877. This effectively blocked the Texas and Pacific from constructing their road (Lesley 1945:506-509). Historian Elizabeth MacPhail referred to this period as "Living on Climate and Great Expectations" (MacPhail 1979). In reality the boom had brought ". . . a new wealth, new energy, and new type of settler to the region . . ." and the area continued to experience steady growth. The boom of the '70s had transformed Southern California from a sparsely populated land of small pueblos and large ranches to one of cities supporting a well developed agricultural hinterland (McWilliams 1946:117). During the period numerous farming communities became firmly established in the county (Van Wormer 1986a, 1986b). The first pioneer farmers came to San Diego in the 1870s as a result of Horton's real estate promotion. They moved into the county's coastal and foothill valleys that constituted the choice agricultural regions of the growing city's vast hinterland (Van Wormer 1986a).

### 3. The Study Area Pre-Development (1869-1879)

#### a. The Case of Middletown: Pueblo Lands and Squatters

It was during the period of Horton's Boom that legal title to the Middletown tract was resolved. The course of securing the title to bring the Middletown lands into developable condition was not easily traveled, however. Middletown and New Town, as well as Horton's Addition and many other subdivisions platted in the 1860s were all pieces of the original Mexican era Pueblo Land Grant of San Diego. The City's, and San Diego land owners', attempts to secure title to their Pueblo Lands Grant in the years after the U.S. occupation reflect the difficult legacy of the corrupt and unprincipled business and legal practices of Gilded Age California. The California Land Claim Act of 1851 presented those owning Mexican era grants a difficult bureaucratic process for securing title to their lands (Robinson 1948:100-109). San Diego based its claim on the 1845 Fitch Map which designated the Pueblo Lands as roughly eleven leagues of land (48,556 acres). In 1854 the city trustees petitioned the Board of Land Commissioners to approve the map. The Board did so, issuing a decree of confirmation on January 22, 1856. By that time the City had surveyor Charles Poole incorporate all of the various subdivisions including Middletown into the official city map of the Pueblo Lands. The Board requested an official government survey which U.S. Surveyor John C. Hays completed in 1858. In the survey Hays noted that San Diego should be issued a patent for the Pueblo Lands (Crane 1991:113; Harlow 1987:31-32, 43).

However, for reasons unknown, the Land Office never issued the patent. The city trustees did not see reason to concern themselves with what they saw as a technicality until the activity during Horton's Boom. By the end of 1868 the city trustees, in addition to Horton's purchases, had sold another 2,500 acres of Pueblo Lands to other speculators and settlers as well as set aside 1,440 acres for a city park. At this point the trustees requested their patent from the U.S. Surveyor General. Land Commissioner Joseph Wilson, however, replied that the survey had not been fully approved and would require republishing. In February and March 1869 Wilson advertised that the Pueblo Lands surveys would be held for ninety days to hear any objections. The republishing opened the door to a wave of unscrupulous speculators, bureaucrats, and entrepreneurs who looked to cash in on the delay (Crane 1991:118; Harlow 1987:34-40).

The most troublesome of the many fraudulent claims was that from the new Board of Trustees themselves. The board members quickly hired a new city attorney, Charles P. Taggart, to help them in their claims. Taggart and the trustees (former sheriff James McCoy, Matthew Sherman, and José Estudillo) claimed that the Hays survey had improperly left out the low tide line lands along the bay front, as well as the Coronado peninsula (Coronado). In support of their case, Taggart presented an altered copy of the Fitch Map. The unscrupulous attempt of the trustees angered many land holders in the city including those who had claims to bay front lands in Old Town, New Town, La Playa, Horton's Additions, and Middletown. In addition Ephraim Morse and Alonzo Horton and others counter filed against the trustees' claims (Crane 1991:118; Harlow 1987:34-40). The trustees' actions split the city between what Morse called the "Taggart Clique" and the pro-trustees *San Diego Union*, against Morse's "tide-landers" and his paper the *San Diego Bulletin* (Morse Letters II: 376-377; McGhee 1950:80-82).

It took the Land Office nearly two years to settle the claims against the Pueblo Lands. During this time all Pueblo Lands titles were opened to other challenges, including squatters. Ephraim Morse served as real estate agent for many speculators and out-of-town owners of the western edge of the city including some New Town and Middletown lots. His correspondence from this period regularly commented on the area's problem with "jumpers." These people would move onto a lot, fence it in and try to take ownership (Morse Letters II, IV). This often encouraged property owners to build small houses and developments to rent out instead of leaving property vacant. A "Pueblo League" was also formed by land owners to help evict squatters and pass a resolution making squatting a misdemeanor (Crane 1991:119).

In December 1869 Surveyor General Sherman Day made the first opinion on the matter when he denied the trustees, and all other claims against the Pueblo Lands. Still, the decision had to go through the Land Commissioner and the Secretary of the Interior. In July 1870 Taggart hired noted San Francisco land attorney General Volney Howard and made a "shady" deal that if they won the tidelands case for the trustees, they would receive 30 blocks of tidelands and half the Peninsula (Crane 1991:120-21; Harlow 1987:41). Morse wrote to his friends that Taggart's plan was to acquire all of the valuable tidelands, which would be worth millions if a railroad was built, and split them with the current trustees (James McCoy, A.B. McKean, and C.W. Lewis) (Morse Letters II:376-377). Taggart's unethical scheme did not come to fruition. In December 1870 Land Commissioner Joseph Wilson confirmed the Pueblo Lands and rejected the trustees' claims. Several other claimants continued to fight the ruling but a final survey was completed in 1874 which secured the City's title forever to the Pueblo Lands (Crane 1991:123).

### 1) Middletown: The Court Case

The fight over the Pueblo and tidelands was not the major factor in clearing the title to the Middletown lands. As noted earlier, there were certain ambiguities in the original Middletown plat that included the rights of all original Middletown investors to equal one tenth undivided interest in all the lots, the unplowed reservation, an unspecified railroad right-of-way, and other pre-Middletown plots on the south edge of the tract. These left the subdivision open to its own title challenges. In 1869, the surviving

original partners, their heirs, those who claimed to have purchased lots and blocks from Sutherland and other owners, and those looking to take advantage of the unclear title situation caused by the Pueblo Lands case and others, became embroiled in a lawsuit. The plaintiffs filed the suit in the 17th District Court in San Diego including a new city map by “Taggart Clique” County Surveyor James Pascoe. The number of litigants involved and the length of the testimony reflected the troubled title situation. Over one hundred plaintiffs and defendants were named and testimony lasted for nearly three years. The names listed in the case are a veritable “Who’s Who” of San Diego at the time. The plaintiffs filed under the name Joanna Baldwin, et al. Baldwin was the wife of Sutherland’s estate administrator Alexander Baldwin, and they called for the partition of the property in question. The defendants filed through Cave J. Coutts, William Emory, and et al. and represented all the surviving original owners, their heirs, and those who claimed purchase through them (*San Diego World* 3-8-1873; Brandes and Erzinger 1980). The real question was the legality of any purchases, tax deeds, or sales of the undivided lots such as the reservation lands and the aforementioned tidelands.

In March 1873 Judge S.B. McKee of San Francisco issued his decision as to the partition. McKee noted that the original survey was a private one and that the original agreement was the only binding and legal way to distribute the property. Most of the decision was a written justification for the legality of claimed ownership of individuals, both defendants and plaintiffs. The crux of the decision was that the original owners, their heirs, and those they transferred those rights to, owned the property in joint interest. He declared then that “The entire tract of land--Middletown, the Reservation and Tide lands--must therefore be the subject of partition without reference to what has been done in that direction by any of the owners” (*San Diego World* 3-8-1873). However, the judge noted that Sutherland himself, as well as most of the other original partners, had occasionally overstepped their authority in partitioning off reservation and tidelands property for sale. McKee stated that all those deeds were void as they had no agreement to do such partitioning. Judge McKee also detailed several cases of misrepresentation by unscrupulous lawyers and estate administrators in trying to obtain a portion of the tract interest. McKee listed over thirty individuals including Alexander and Joanna Baldwin, and county surveyors James Pascoe and M.G. Wheeler, as having no claim to the tract. The judge listed well over fifty “tenants in common” to the property entitled to interest in the partition as to their percentage of ownership. McKee concluded that the task of ascertaining the individual extent of ownership should be left to that of “an experienced accountant” (*San Diego World* 3-8-1873; Brandes and Erzinger 1980).

Referees for the partition of the Middletown property were then chosen and the partition began. The first order was for the making of a new map. The referees had previously dismissed Pascoe’s 1869 map as inaccurate in relation to the tidelands and his eastern boundary lines with Horton’s Addition. A new map was requested that would include the partition of the reservation and legal tideland property. Surveyor Jackson completed his map in 1873. He took into consideration the old “New Town” plots along spring (D) Street as well as the fact that the half block in the far southeastern corner of the tract (Union and D) was the site of the new county courthouse. In an effort to avoid confusion with Clayton’s original survey, Jackson started the numbering of the blocks on the southern end of the tract instead of the northern end. Tremain, Barber, Fitzgerald and Murray’s Tracts were assigned letters (A-C) and the half block for the courthouse as Block D. The block just west of the courthouse was designated Number 1. The rest of the reservation was split into 12 lot blocks except for the partial blocks on the eastern boundary, the tideland blocks, and the Bleecker and Gardiner Plots which the city had condemned as a depot site for the Texas and Pacific Railroad (these plots were given back to Bleecker and Gardiner after the T and P’s failure and numbered Blocks 299 and 300). With the completion of the map the various interests were assigned their lots and lots yet to be resold were divided among the ten original owners’ interests. Those blocks often were equally divided with each owner receiving a lot (Tax Books, Block 28 Middletown, 1875-1880). Although there would be several other legal challenges to the Middletown Case and Partition in the 1870s

and 1880s, Jackson's map was accepted as the official map of Middletown (Brandes and Erzinger c.1980).

The area within the current Uptown Study Area remained largely undeveloped prior to the 1880s. The boom of the early 1870s resulted in growth in the present downtown area south of Ash Street. The legal problems with title confirmation of the Middletown Tract retarded development in that area prior to 1873 in spite of the boom resulting from Horton's development. Judge McKee noted in his 1873 decision that "It does not appear by the evidence taken before me that any of the grantees have taken possession of their blocks or lots and improved any of them" (*San Diego World* 3-8-1873). Some construction did occur in the Middletown Subdivision in the mid 1870s. This was located in the current downtown south of Ash and west of Front Streets, outside the Uptown Study Area.

### C. The Boom Years and the End of the Nineteenth Century (1880 - 1900)

#### 1. The City of San Diego (1880-1900)

Following the failure of the Texas and Pacific, San Diego's urban entrepreneurs shifted their efforts to another railroad company. In 1879 they turned their hopes to the Santa Fe Railroad, which was building into California through the Needles crossing. An agreement with the Santa Fe line would be the catalyst to start the community on the road to recovery and growth in the 1880s. National City founder and developer Frank Kimball secured an agreement with the Santa Fe to terminate their new transcontinental line at National City. Part of the agreement called for the construction of the California Southern Railroad from National City and San Diego to San Bernardino where it would connect with the Santa Fe. Construction began in 1880 and the California Southern reached the Southern Pacific's junction at Colton in August 1882. The first trains arrived in San Diego during the fall of 1882. The coming of the railroad instituted a period of steadily increasing growth (Lesley 1945:510-512). From a population of roughly 2,600 in 1880, San Diego grew to an estimated 5,000 by 1885 (Pourade 1964:141).

Development of Southern California during the last half of the 1880s permanently altered the entire region. By the middle of the decade the area had been engulfed in an unprecedented land boom (Lothrop 1993:268; Dumke 1944:137). The Santa Fe initiated a rate war with its competitor the Southern Pacific. It offered to ship freight between Chicago and San Diego at 40 cents per 100 pounds as opposed to Southern Pacific's rate of 42 cents plus litherage fees from Wilmington near Los Angeles (Lothrop 1993:268). The resulting rate war drove fares to an unprecedented low, bringing thousands of passengers to Southern California. Suddenly the growth of San Diego accelerated. In 1886 the city's population jumped from 7,500 to 12,000 resulting in a general construction and real estate boom. During that year 913 buildings were completed (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1887). At the peak of the boom in 1887 train passenger arrivals averaged 5,000 per month and people were sleeping in tents for a dollar a night. During that year the number of newly constructed buildings numbered 1,760 (Dumke 1944:269; Pourade 1964; Van Wormer 1983a; *San Diego Union* 1-1-1888).

Land speculation, however, not construction, provided the real stimulus to the economic boom. In actuality the Southern California boom was a city platting craze resulting from railway competition similar to what had occurred in the Midwest before the Civil War (Dumke 1944:274). Land investment fever had seized Southern California by the spring of 1887. Speculation ran out of control as town sites were subdivided throughout the region (Guinn 1907:282). In a span of 36 miles between Los Angeles and San Bernardino 25 town sites were platted (Lothrop 1993:268). Of these paper towns one contemporary observer noted ". . . it mattered little where the town was located. A tasteful lithographed map with a health-giving sanitarium in one corner, tourist hotel in the other, palms lining the streets, and orange trees

in the distance . . . and the town was successfully founded . . ." (Guinn 1907:282). As the boom accelerated and real estate prices skyrocketed, land speculators began to subdivide and market tracts of land throughout San Diego County. Approximately 30 real estate tracts were subdivided in the county between 1886 and 1888 (Dumke 1944:147, 193; Pourade 1964:207).

The population of San Diego rose from the estimated 5,000 in 1885 to over 35,000 at the height of the boom in early 1888 (Smythe 1908:416; Pourade 1964:171-174). The massive and rapid growth of the city required the development of many new improvements. The boom triggered the first utilization of the watershed of the coastal mountains with the construction of the Cuyamaca Flume. It also brought street paving, electrical street lights and railways, a sewerage system, new schools, churches, business buildings, and hundreds of new residences. It was estimated that over \$10 million in new improvements were constructed during the period (Smythe 1908:413-434).

The boom ended suddenly when the bottom fell out of the real estate market in the spring of 1888, with disastrous consequences for many. Many landowners were left with huge debts and tax assessments they could not repay. Many of the investors and residents of the city and county were ruined by the speculative fever of the boom (Van Dyke 1888; Dumke 1944; Van Wormer 1983). One of the major factors in the bust of the boom in San Diego was linked again to the railroad. Because of repeated washing out of the California Southern lines in Temecula Canyon, the Santa Fe began construction of a coast line from Los Angeles to San Diego. When the line was completed in August 1888, the Santa Fe removed their yards from National City to Los Angeles. After the Temecula Canyon line washed out again in 1891 that route was abandoned, leaving San Diego at the end of a branch line that ran along the coast (Lesley 1945:514-515; McGhee 1950:224-225).

## 2. Uptown Study Area Development (1880–1900)

### a. West Park Neighborhoods

The area west of Balboa Park between Ash and Walnut Street on the north and south and Curtis and Dove Streets on the west was laid out in 1869 as the northern portion of Alonzo Horton's subdivision. During the boom of the 1880s the first residential districts in the southern portion of the Uptown area west of City (Balboa) Park were established. This included the area bounded by Ash to the south, Balboa Park to the east, Walnut to the north and present-day I-5 to the west. Prior to the boom of the late '80s, the only structure standing in this area was the Florence Hotel, located at the corner of Third and Fir. Built in 1883, the Florence was one of the earliest attempts to draw prospective buyers north of Ash Street. While first regarded as being located "in the sticks" when it opened in 1884, it became the showplace of San



Diego during the 1880s, attracting many residents to the neighborhood and stimulating real estate development in the surrounding area (Community Plan 1988; Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).

**Figure 4: Florence Hotel 1895**

The great influx of population saw the boundaries of urban development move north of Ash Street. In 1885 Third, Fourth,

Fifth, Date, Cedar, and Elm Streets were graded. Fifth Street was paved as far north as Ivy Street. To accommodate the Florence Hotel, the San Diego Streetcar Company operated horse or mule drawn street cars on tracks up Fifth to Fir. By 1887 The Fourth Streetcar line extended from the harbor north to its terminus at the proposed college site in University Heights (the present day intersection of Normal Street, Park Boulevard, and El Cajon Boulevard). This allowed low density, linear development to occur as far as two miles from downtown 1880s (Ford 1978). Upper Fifth Street, which was the choice residential section of San Diego, was building up rapidly. Promoters felt that "the time is not far distant that every man that builds a house, from San Diego to University Heights, will have a near neighbor" (*Golden Era*, Nov. 1888). The Fourth Streetcar Line, one of the first electrically-powered streetcar lines in San Diego, had plans which included the extension of the line along present-day El Cajon Boulevard to La Mesa, but the line folded after the real estate boom ended in 1889 (Ford 1978; Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).

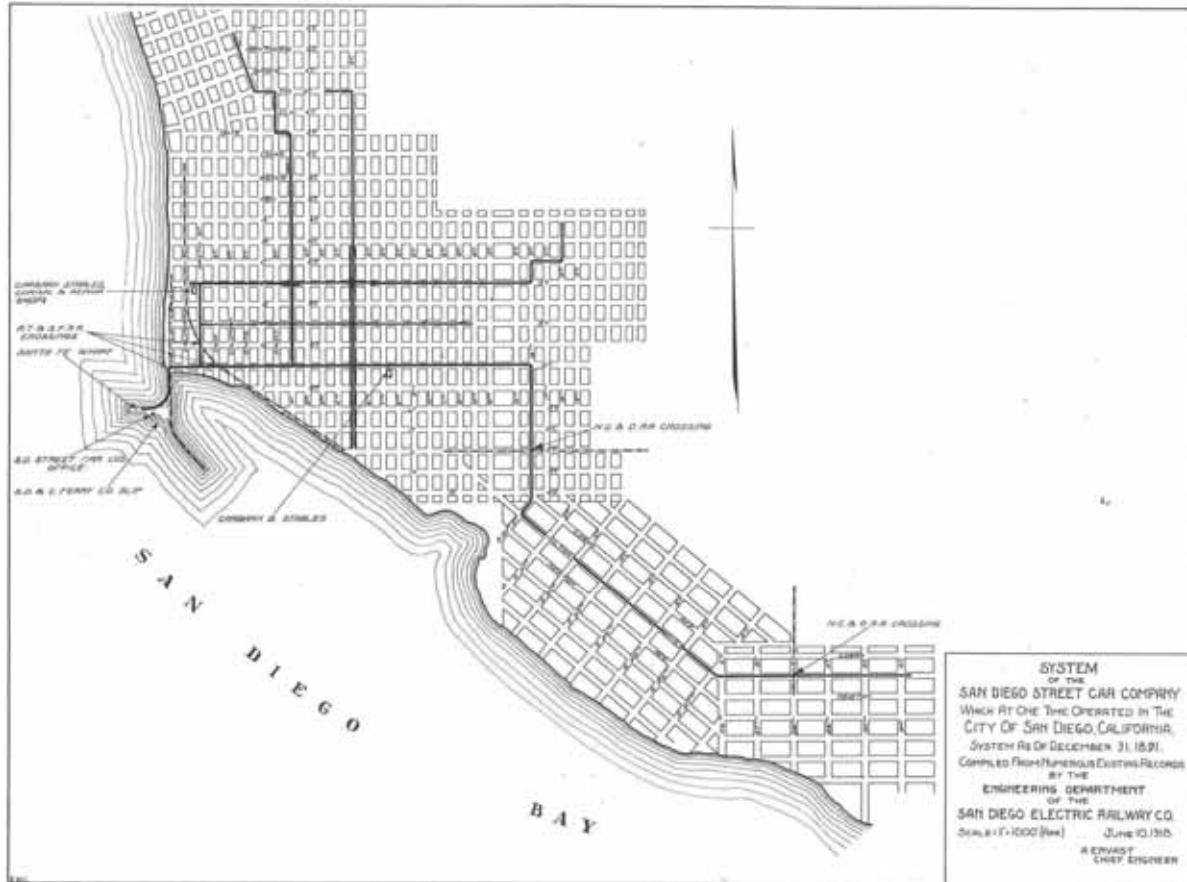


Figure 5: Street Car Map 1891

#### b. Hillcrest - University Heights

The area north of Walnut Street, which is now encompassed by present-day Hillcrest, was subdivided along trolley lines that were extended north and east of the city to University Heights in the late 1880s. Before 1907 these neighborhoods saw very little development. Major tracts platted during this period included Nutt's Addition (1890), Brook's Addition (1889), and Crittenden's Addition (1887) (Robbins 2003) as well as Fifth Street Addition (1889) (Subdivision Map 577), and Cleveland Heights (1890) (Subdivision Map 621). Construction was sporadic, consisting of a small number of buildings scattered near the trolley route.



**Figure 6: University Heights 1888**

The only other area of any significant development within the Uptown Study Area during the period was the subdivision of University Heights, which saw limited growth at this time. Established during the boom of the late '80s, University Heights came into prominence in 1887 as the site of a future college "to be called the San Diego College of Arts of the University of Southern California." The erection of this building was assured from the fact that the college owned every alternate lot on the tract, "and the money and revenues derived there from must be devoted to the erection and endowment of this building." The subdivision could be accessed by rapid transit. "It is a ride of but a few minutes from the post office, either by rapid transit electric road or by the steam motor" (*Golden Era* 1888). The "steam motor" had been built by Elisha Babcock and H.L. Story as a steam powered street car line named the University Heights Motor Road (or Park Belt Line). It traveled through the southeast section of San Diego, up Switzer Canyon through City (later Balboa) park, and onto the University Heights mesa. As already mentioned, the electric motor railway extended up Fourth Street to Normal Street, which it followed to the proposed college campus, at the present intersection of Normal Street, Park Avenue, and El Cajon Boulevard, and then across the new subdivision to the southern edge of Mission Valley (Davidson 1939; Montes 1977). An ad in the *San Diego Union* of November 23, 1888 proclaimed ". . . the electric Motor is now running half hour trips – Ride out and take a look into the Mission Valley from the bluff three blocks north of campus" (*San Diego Union* 11-23-1888).

In January 1888 the Joint Committee on Streets and Parks recommended the laying out a boulevard in City Park to connect with University Heights Boulevard. A drive "150 feet wide along the ridge where the road now extends" was proposed. This eventually became Park Boulevard (*Daily San Diegan* 1- 5 -1888). With the collapse of the boom the grandiose plans for University Heights suddenly ceased, as they did for

most other boom era subdivisions. The University of Southern California abandoned the campus and it became the site of the State Normal School in 1899. Development remained a liner concentration along the street car lines and near the intersections of Normal Street and Park Boulevard.

### c. Middletown

The portion of the Middletown tract within the Uptown Study Area saw little development during this period. Described as a wedge between downtown and Old Town, the portion of the Middletown tract included in this study is bounded by Laurel on the south, Washington on the north, Goldfinch, Reynard Way, Curlew, Dove, and Front Streets on the east and the I-5 freeway on the west. Continued litigation in the 1880s restricted development on some Middletown lots. In April 1887 realtors Howard and Lyons advertised 164 lots, "each 25 by 100 feet in Middletown Addition."

. . . some of the lots in the ravines sheltered from the winds, and warm enough to ripen bananas and pineapples placed at 60 and 75 dollars each. Others on the hillsides and summits whereby you can see bay and city, and the ocean from the Mexican hills to . . . Point Loma to False Bay and beyond . . . are placed at one hundred and twenty five and one hundred and fifty dollars each. It is not possible to make a mistake in purchasing one of these lots. The main pipe of the present water company runs through the tract, and the flume of the new water company must cross the hills above it. We are now cutting a wagon road from the Old Town Road. When the motor road now projected to Old Town is built these lots will be within ten minutes ride of the Horton House. These lots will then sell for thousands. . . . (quoted in Brandes and Erzinger 1980).

By 1887 the tracks of the San Diego & Old Town Railway reached from downtown San Diego, up through Middletown to the plaza at Old Town San Diego. In spite of construction of the street car to Old Town, development north of Laurel remained extremely limited in the Middletown Tract prior to the collapse of the boom in 1889. Some industrial use occurred in the area, as exemplified by the Rankin Brickyard, once located at what is now Reynard Way and State Street in 1888 (Bevel 1996).

## 3. Post Boom 1890s

By the 1890s the city's population had settled to around 17,000. The ending of the boom ushered in a period of slower but steady growth during the next decade for San Diego. Although many residents and speculators had been ruined in the bust period, the nucleus for the development of the modern city had been started. The growth in population also brought about some ethnic diversity in the establishment of small Asian and African-American communities within the city (Liu 1977; Carlton 1977; Lewis 1991). It also triggered the beginnings of suburban growth. Subdivisions such as Golden Hill, Sherman Heights, and Logan Heights, as well as the Banker's Hill area and the University Heights Subdivision within the Uptown Study Area, were all initiated during this period. They represented the start of the coming transformation of the city's residential areas away from the downtown area (Crane 1991; Norris 1983). During the 1890s, then, San Diego continued to take advantage of the climate in the development of the health and resort industry. Historian Raymond Starr best describes this period as one of "quiet consolidation" of the community's assets as they waited for the next boom that they believed would surely come (Starr 1986).





Figure 7: Timkin House (Courtesy of Ann Weaver)

## D. The City Emerges (1901 - 1940)

### 1. The City of San Diego (1901-1920)

The first decade of the Twentieth Century would see San Diego's third great population boom. In sheer numbers it was the largest permanent gain in the city's history up to that time. From 17,700 residents in 1900, city inhabitants increased to 39,578 by 1910, constituting an increase of 21,878 individuals or 123.6 percent (Census 1913). Unlike the accelerated growth periods of the 1870s and 80s, these flush times did not follow a boom and bust cycle. Beginning in mid-decade increased development continued through the teens and twenties, permanently transforming the city and study area.

Although growth during the 1890s had been extremely unremarkable, showing a net gain of only 1,541 new residents, urban entrepreneurs continued to pursue the dream of a great commercial port (Census 1913). Efforts, now spearheaded by Elisha Babcock in connection with J.D. Spreckles developed infrastructure that would lay the foundation to allow the growth that occurred during the next decade. John D. Spreckles, a wealthy sugar fortune heir, filled the economic vacuum left by the collapse of the 1880s boom and dominated urban entrepreneurship in San Diego during the early Twentieth Century. His effect on San Diego development between 1900 and 1920 was profound. Spreckles' efforts began in the 1890s with development of a water system. In 1895 he formed the Southern California Mountain Water Company with Elisha Babcock. Babcock, a railroad investor from Indiana, had been a major speculator during the 1880s boom, laying out the city of Coronado and building the world famous hotel that is still located there (Articles of Incorporation 1895; Basney 1975:51; Fowler 1953:48; *San Diego Union* 3-8-1895, 5:4; 9-29-1895, 5:2). The water company under Babcock and Spreckles' direction developed the mountain drainages of the Otay River and Cottonwood Creek with a series of storage reservoirs, aqueducts, and pipe lines, providing the city with its first dependable and adequate water supply (Adams

1911). Spreckles' interest in San Diego continued to expand. He remodeled the wharf, established a modern street car system, and purchased two of the city's major newspapers: the *San Diego Union* and *Evening Tribune* (Starr 1986:85).

Early years of the decade saw only modest growth. The *San Diego Union* proudly described details of the City's infrastructure on January 1, 1901 as including ". . . seven miles of paved streets, 45 miles of graded streets, 22 miles of motor railway, 25 well attended churches, 15 miles of electrical railway, 16 miles of cement sidewalk, 14 progressive public schools, a perfect sewer system 45 miles in length, a 1,400 acre public park, and a 100,000 dollar opera house (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1901).

Still insisting that the city's future lay in development of a commercial port and a direct railroad connection with the east, businessmen under the leadership of local merchant George White Marston organized the San Diego and Eastern Railway Company in 1900 to build a link eastward through the mountains to join with the Southern Pacific line at Yuma, Arizona (Hanft 1984:10). This combined with plans by President Theodore Roosevelt to build the Panama Canal. San Diegans saw the canal as the future catalyst for development of a commercial harbor. The bay would be the closest U.S. port to the canal. With a direct railroad link to the east, commercial development seemed assured. The *Union* commented on January 1, 1901 concerning the city's future: "Bright as the past has been the outlook for the future is even brighter. . . . that which now seems assured will also stimulate traffic, as San Diego is the first port in the United States north of that waterway. A competing railroad is also looked forward to by many San Diegans as likely to be built in the near future" (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1901).

San Diego did experience an increased level of growth during the next few years as a result of its development as a health and tourist resort and pleasant place to live for many who hoped to escape the rigorous weather of the east. In 1902 the city issued 127 building permits with a cumulative value of slightly over 4,000 dollars. Although the *Union* cited this as evidence of healthy growth it still ranked below figures for 1896 which had been over half a million dollars (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1903). Health seekers had a significant impact on increasing the area's population and stimulating economic growth. A health industry had developed in the county by 1900 and was manifested in numerous health spas and sanitariums for the treatment of disease (Miller 1982). The health resort business combined with and complimented the development of the area's tourist industry. Southern California's climate had been promoted for decades resulting in establishment of a regular tourist trade in the region by the beginning of the Twentieth Century. San Diego's attractions brought thousands of visitors annually and included the world famous Hotel Del Coronado and its adjacent Tent City, fishing, hunting, sailing, bathing, and excursions to nearby mountains and coastal communities and Tia Juana, Mexico (Poland 1907:6, 12).

This modest economic development was soon stimulated by local and world events. Serious work began on the Panama Canal in 1903 and 1904. Development of irrigated agricultural lands in present-day Imperial Valley and western Arizona also commenced at this time. In January 1905 the *San Diego Union* summarized the significance of these events for the city's future:

. . . the Canal will mean to San Diego the full development of all her natural resources, agricultural . . . and industrial. It will mean factories, and mills and plants . . . . It will mean improvements in that equipment as related to the military and naval development of this part of the Pacific. In short it will bring San Diego into prominence as a city possessing the solid advantages that belong to a great commercial port. The development of the Colorado River Valley in the eastern part of San Diego County . . . is bound to play an important part in the business of the port . . . (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1905).

Anticipation of commercial development from the building of the canal stimulated the already modest growth occurring as a result of the health and tourism industries, initiating a boom period that began around 1906. When J.D. Spreckles took over the San Diego and Eastern Railway, renaming it the San Diego and Arizona, growth accelerated. Ground breaking for construction of the new railroad occurred in September 1907 (Hanft 1984:45). In addition, the boom was more than a local phenomenon. The entire Southern California region grew dramatically. Los Angeles and Santa Barbara actually experienced greater percentages of population increase than San Diego during the period (Hennessey 1993)

Population statistics as well as data on annual numbers of building permits and the value of new construction and bank deposits effectively profile San Diego's increasing prosperity during the last half of the decade. By 1907 promoters estimated the city's population to be 35,000 (Poland 1907). Building permits and the value of new construction and bank deposits for the first ten years of the Twentieth Century are listed on Table 1. They indicate a slow but steady rate of growth until 1906 when the value of new construction increased from 6.8 percent of the decade's total in 1905 to 15.8 percent for that year. Data from 1907 reveal continued growth. Building permits for that year constitute 12 percent of the decade's total. Value of new construction made up 13.6 percent and bank deposits made up 11.9 percent for the period. The statistics for 1910 reveal the city was in the midst of a full fledged boom. Building permits made up 23.5 percent of the decade total, and value of new construction and bank deposits constituted 22.9 percent and 18.6 percent of the total for the period respectively (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1908; 1-1-1911).

Local promoters were ecstatic with the new rates of growth and felt the city's future assured. *The San Diego Union* enthusiastically reported in January 1911 "San Diego will keep on growing steadily and with completion of the San Diego and Arizona Railway now forcing its way into the heart of the rich Imperial Valley and Arizona, and with the opening of the Panama Canal, it will take an important position among the port cities on the Pacific Coast. It is predestined that the population of the city and its commercial and industrial development will climb" (*San Diego Union* 1-2-1911).

As the city grew the downtown's residential character began to change. This was a common trend in early Twentieth Century American cities. The addition of streetcars and the development of the automobile were allowing workers to move their families to suburban tracts outside of the downtown areas where most of them worked (Jackson 1985; Warner 1962). Downtown San Diego reflected this trend as many families began to move to new suburbs in areas such as Hillcrest, North Park, Mission Hills, Normal Heights, and older subdivisions from the boom days such as University Heights where they could purchase relatively inexpensive homes away from the stereotypical crime and vice of the city (Stevenson 1938:51-52; Wright 1981). Also, the city's growing population and industry required the expansion of the business and commercial districts of the city. This expansion engulfed parts of older residential neighborhoods such as downtown and Logan Heights (Norris 1983).

Convinced that completion of the Panama Canal and development of the Imperial Valley's agricultural potential would increase San Diego Bay's commercial importance, John D. Spreckles succeeded where others had failed when the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railroad completed a direct line eastward to the Southern Pacific track at Yuma, Arizona in 1919 (Hanft 1984; Wilson 1994). Spreckles was also a major supporter of the Panama Pacific Exposition, a world's fair planned to celebrate the opening of the canal and promote San Diego in 1915. His greatest impact on the appearance of the city resulted when he launched a major building campaign that reshaped downtown San Diego (Sorenson 1948). A new modern San Diego of poured concrete office and commercial buildings was quickly replacing the former Nineteenth Century town of wood framed and brick structures.

By the early teens large multistoried Beaux Art style office and commercial buildings constructed of reinforced concrete, known as commercial or business blocks, came to dominate downtown San Diego's skyline. The most prominent included the Granger Block, Timken Building, Botsford Block, Marine National Bank, Python Hall, Spreckles Theater, Union Building, U.S. Grant Hotel, American National Bank Building, Masonic Temple, Crane Hotel, Barnett Stein Company, Boldrick Brothers Hotel and Store, Marston Store, Army and Navy YMCA and the Hotel San Diego (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1905; 1-1-1-1910; 1-2-1911; 1-1-1912). These were only the largest of numerous new business buildings. In 1911 construction on a combined street frontage of two solid miles of business blocks ranging in size from one to eleven stories was underway (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1921). The *Union* noted "San Diego streets present a modern picture. There is an absence of old buildings that have existed for decades. The structures in the business districts are modern for the swift growth of the city has caused that. During the day the streets always present a busy appearance with an endless procession of automobiles lining the curb" (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1912).

**TABLE 1  
GROWTH STATISTICS FOR THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
1901-1910**

Year	Building Permits	Percent	Dollar Value of New Construction	Percent	Dollar Value of Bank Deposits	Percent
1901	252	3.00	123,285	0.70	1,830,928	3.10
1902	127	1.50	438,140	2.50	2,336,778	4.00
1903	267	3.14	710,123	4.06	3,992,772	6.76
1904	505	6.00	914,967	5.24	3,729,223	6.31
1905	716	8.44	1,193,710	6.83	5,388,518	9.12
1906	836	9.86	2,761,285	15.81	6,948,972	11.76
1907	1,051	12.30	2,297,915	13.16	7,028,322	11.90
1908	1,209	14.26	2,383,540	13.70	7,151,375	12.10
1909	1,520	18.00	2,632,100	15.07	9,638,000	16.30
1910	1,995	23.50	4,005,200	22.93	11,016,000	18.65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8478</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>17,460,265</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>59,060,888</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *The San Diego Union*, January 1, 1908 and January 1, 1911



**Figure 8: Mission Hills - Goldfinch Pharmacy**

Another civic leader important in the course of city development during this period was George White Marston. His influence would have a direct effect on the nature of several developments within the Uptown Study Area, including Presidio Park, Presidio Hills, portions of Mission Hills, and Marston Hills. He was an early advocate of Balboa Park and played an important role in its preservation (Hennessey 1986).

George Marston arrived in San Diego in 1870 at the age of 20. He took on many roles in his lifetime including local merchant and businessman, developer, and activist in the cultural, religious, and beautification activities of San Diego. He began his career as a clerk at the Horton House and then worked at a general store. In 1873 he bought the business with a friend, Charles Nash, and operated it for the next five years as Nash and Marston. The partnership split in 1878. Nash took the hardware and groceries and Marston took the dry goods part of the business. By the 1890s Marston had become a wealthy merchant and civic leader with a four story department store at Fifth and C Streets that had an electric elevator and a hundred employees (Hennessey 1986).

Marston had always taken an active role in city development. In 1871 he led a successful effort to keep 1400 acre City Park out of the hands of land speculators and developers. Both he and Nash had been involved in the Benevolent Association (a charity group), the Free Reading Room (the beginning of the city library), the volunteer fire department, and the Chamber of Commerce. They both served on the city council during the boom of 1887 to 1889 (Hennessey 1986).

During the first decade of the Twentieth Century George Marston became an advocate of the cultural development, moral uplifting, and beautification of San Diego. He was an outspoken Progressive who believed in the latest concepts of city planning. In 1902 he publicly offered to pay \$10,000 of his own money to hire a professional to develop a plan for the 1,400 acre City Park, which continued to be

threatened by development. The concept of Urban Parks had formally evolved during the late Nineteenth Century. Parks were seen as a means to bring nature back into the city and provide some relief from congested living conditions and industrial blight. They would give the urban working class a respite from the urban environment and offer morally uplifting surroundings. City planning was an extension of the urban parks movement. It attempted to provide a rational control over the urban environment and the problems of public sanitation, housing, transportation, congestion, and the "ugliness" inherent to many Nineteenth Century cities (Hennessey 1986).

Marston hired landscape architect Samuel Parson Jr. Completed by mid-1903, his development plan called for the relegation of buildings and formal gardens to the park's periphery. By 1908, ten miles of roads had been completed and over 1400 trees planted. The Parsons plan was superceded by the development of the 1915 to 16 Panama California Exposition (Hennessey 1986).

In 1907 Marston hired one of the founding leaders of modern city planning, John Nolen, to develop a plan for San Diego. His 1908 plan had five major elements: a public plaza and civic center, bay front development, small open spaces, a formal system of streets and boulevards, and a park system. Although never formally adopted by the city, many elements of Nolen's Plans were used by Marston and other developers in the subdivisions they designed during the following two decades (Hennessey 1986; Gehl 2003).

## 2. The Modern City and Military Port (1920-1940)

In the 1920s the dream of the San Diego Pioneer Urban Entrepreneurs was realized; San Diego began a period of growth that continues to the present day and has greatly accelerated since the 1940s. During the decade of the 1920s the city's population doubled from 74,683 to 147,897. New subdivisions developed to accommodate the growing population included Kensington, Talmadge Park, University Heights, East San Diego, Mission Hills, Sunset Cliffs, and Pacific Beach. In spite of economic slowdowns in the early 1930s due to the national depression, prosperity returned in the later years of the decade with development of the tuna and aircraft industries and tourism. By 1940 the city's population had reached 203,341. Ironically, this growth did not result from the development of a commercial port but as a military harbor.

### a. William Kettner and Development of a Military Harbor

In an attempt to enlighten the world to San Diego's commercial potential, San Diego leaders had moved to develop Balboa Park for an exposition to celebrate the planned opening of the Panama Canal in 1915. The Panama California Exposition lasted for two years and achieved the desired effect of promoting San Diego's potential harbor facilities: not to commercial shipping interests, however, but to military and political leaders (Hennessey 1993:130).

The political and civic leader who took most advantage of the military's interest in San Diego was William Kettner. Kettner, an insurance salesman and former director of the Chamber of Commerce, had been elected to Congress in 1912 with the support of Chamber Secretary Rufus Choate (DuVall 1979; Choate 1957:11). He practiced the art of urban entrepreneurship more skillfully and effectively than any of San Diego's previous promoters. Rather than focusing on railroad connections and commercial development as had previous urban entrepreneurs, the congressman concentrated on developing military connections. Kettner quickly established himself as a champion of San Diego's harbor development. The first-term congressman was able to obtain a seat on the House Rivers and Harbors Committee. In December 1912 Kettner and Choate, along with U.S. Senator John D. Works, were able to overcome opposition and obtain an appropriation of \$249,000 to improve San Diego's harbor entrance for



commercial shipping. The key element in Kettner's argument was a letter from Navy Admiral George Dewey illuminating the military importance of San Diego Bay. Kettner quickly learned to capitalize on the military focus in obtaining appropriations for San Diego. During his first term Kettner was also able to get San Diego another appropriation for the completion of the Coaling Station on Point Loma, a new larger radio station at Chollas Heights, and expanded harbor defenses (Hennessey 1993:131; Kettner 1923:12-15, 21, 25, 41; Pourade 1965:174).

Kettner used his superb lobbying skills to rally support from the military, local business, and civic leaders, to expand the Navy and Army's operations in San Diego. During the Exposition Kettner made alliances with Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Roosevelt and Marine Corps Colonel Joseph Pendleton. These alliances, along with support from San Diego business and civic leaders, guided city voters in 1916 to offer 500 acres of tidelands for a new Marine Corps Advance Base. Kettner introduced and guided the House bill that provided for the purchase funds. At the same time Kettner worked to obtain the transfer of the West Coast Naval Training Station from San Francisco to San Diego. With the U.S. entry into World War I, San Diego received additional support for improvement of its military facilities. The Navy had already leased the empty Exposition buildings in Balboa Park for wartime training and hospital facilities. In 1917 the Secretary of the Navy called for new submarine and aviation bases at San Diego and that \$500,000 be set aside for the development of the military air field on North Island. During 1917 Kettner helped obtain increased appropriations to purchase 524 acres of John Spreckel's land on North Island for \$6 million and to obtain an Army training base, Camp Kearny, for San Diego (Kettner 1923:60-61; Pourade 1965:222-227; DuVall 1979:64-67).

When the war ended, Kettner and the city's lobbying continued. Key to their efforts was the Navy's decision to create a Pacific Fleet. The Navy planned to assign 180 new fighting ships to the West Coast. The lack of significant facilities to support these ships provided opportunity for West Coast cities (Hennessey 1993:133). Luckily for San Diego, Congressman Kettner had already joined the House Naval Affairs Committee. The Chamber of Commerce along with Kettner were able to arrange for most of this influential Committee to visit San Diego for a tour of the harbor and its current facilities, including the potential site for a Naval Training Station (Choate 1957:13). The San Diego business community responded with \$250,000 to purchase 135 acres of private land adjacent to the Marine Base. The city added seventy-nine acres of submerged land to the offer. The Naval Appropriation Act of July 11, 1919 formally accepted the land for the new Naval Training Station. In addition, the city donated roughly 18 acres in Balboa Park for a new Naval Hospital (Chamber of Commerce 1955:8-9; Pourade 1965:232-233).

In August 1919 San Diego's military future was buoyed by several Naval visits. Rear Admiral John S. McKean, head of a navy commission studying the West Coast, announced that many new facilities would be needed and that San Diegans' support could help make it the "third naval base on the coast," after Bremerton and San Francisco (*San Diego Union* 8-4-1919:1; 8-7-1919:1). A few days later the new Pacific Fleet and the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, visited San Diego. The City decorated downtown and held festivities including a fleet banquet and ball. Secretary Daniels told an enthusiastic audience at Balboa Park's Organ Pavilion that he would not be satisfied until Congress appropriated enough money to make San Diego Bay one of the great harbors of the world (*San Diego Union* 8-7-1919:1; Pourade 1965:232).

The Navy's reports recommended an expenditure of over \$27 million for San Diego facilities during the next five years. The fleet's San Diego operations would require new facilities consisting of a large supply base, a repair base for all but capital ships, and enlargement of the fuel supply depot (Hennessey 1993:133). The report noted that San Diego was perfect for naval training and aviation. Although the

battleship fleet would be stationed at San Pedro, San Diego would be home to a destroyer squadron and other small craft totaling 160 ships (*San Diego Union* 8-9-1919:1; 8-10-1919:1; 1-1-1920:3; Biegal 1980:1-2). The *San Diego Union* noted the announcements of the Navy's development of the harbor as the sealing of the Navy-San Diego relationship. More gifts of land would be required from the city to support new Navy facilities which would bring millions of dollars in appropriations. A permanent naval base was certain to allow San Diego "to achieve its highest aspirations" (*San Diego Union* 8-10-1919:1; Hennessey 1993:135).

### 1) The Navy's Importance to San Diego

Kettner's efforts resulted in making the Navy a major factor in the city's development. On December 31, 1919 Naval Base San Diego was established, followed by creation of the 11<sup>th</sup> Naval District in January 1921. The growth of the Navy and its facilities developed concurrently with that of San Diego. San Diego's growth from a small coastal town to a metropolitan city in the 1920s and 1930s was supported in a major part by the Navy's economic boost. As historian Gregg Hennessey established, the U.S. military helped transform San Diego "politically, economically, and socially" during this period (Hennessey 1993:148). The Navy and San Diego created an interdependent and mutually beneficial relationship. This relationship provided San Diego the population and economy to allow the city to develop throughout the inter-war period. The Navy served as a major catalyst to the development of the harbor, including the city airport, as well as incentive for suburban and infrastructure growth (Hennessey 1993:138-142).

The economic importance to San Diego showed itself clearly. By January 1923 San Diego's annual military payroll had reached over \$15 million, and reached a peak with major construction in place on most local facilities at near \$21 million in 1925 (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1923:M2; 1-1-1925:M8). By 1930 Navy representatives estimated their annual payroll at roughly \$20 million with the Destroyer Base alone providing \$1.2 million (Tozer 1930:7-10). The estimated expenditure of funds relating to the Navy for the 1920s totals over \$330 million (Hennessey 1993:144). Although these numbers dropped during the 1930s due to the Great Depression and the completion of major construction at most facilities, the military payroll in 1934 still totaled \$20 million (Pourade 1967:154).

The important link of the Navy and the Destroyer Squadron to San Diego was illuminated in a 1927 article written by force commander Rear Admiral Luke McNamee. McNamee remarked on the positive effect of his 6,000 sailors on the local economy and the quiet business climate when the Fleet was out on maneuvers. The admiral noted that much of the improvement in the harbor and bay was connected to the Navy's presence and that "what helps the destroyers helps San Diego" Throughout the 1920s and 1930s local newspapers and magazines such as the Chamber of Commerce's *San Diego Business*, related the Navy's status as top "industry" for the city. The comings and goings of the Fleet often resulted in major fluctuations for local business (Pourade 1967:192).

The Navy also affected the city both politically and socially. During the 1920s the added economic input of the Navy helped focus the city government and its citizens toward providing the needed housing and infrastructure for the growing population of naval personnel. Local planners and transit companies learned to respond rapidly to Navy requests for expanded service to naval facilities such as the Destroyer Base (C.O. File NB12-A15:5-22-1922; 5-20-1928). The city and Navy's mutual growing needs helped unite local government into greater city planning and infrastructure development, such as the water and transportation systems. Socially, San Diego took on the identity of a "Navy Town" during this period. The *San Diego Union* and *Sun* newspapers reported daily on ship movements, events such as dances and socials, and all news relevant to naval activities. Chamber of Commerce business and promotional publications also provided continuous news on navy appropriations and public works. The City and Chamber of Commerce worked together on an entertainment program for enlisted personnel of Fleet ships



and sponsored dances and shows (*San Diego Business* 7-1-1932). Many retired and former Navy personnel found the climate pleasing and made San Diego their home after service (Hennessey 1993:146-148). The massive naval presence also made the annual October Navy Day celebrations one of the biggest events of the year (*San Diego Union* 10-26-1930:10; 10-25-1932:1; 10-11-1935:4). By the eve of World War II, not many San Diegans would deny the significance of the Navy to the city and its residents.

The influence of the Navy on San Diego's development cannot be overstated. Economically naval facilities provided a stable economy based on the port, which urban entrepreneurs and city fathers had sought since the early 1850s. Just as significant was the fact that as the decades passed the Navy and related military units, such as the Marines, brought hundreds of thousands of people to San Diego. Many of these eventually settled here. A small illustration of how much of an effect association with the Navy has had on settlement of the area can be seen in the fact that out of the 31 individuals interviewed for the oral history portion of this project 20 percent (6) lived in San Diego because they or a family member had been stationed here while serving in the Navy or Marines.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Study Area Development (1901-1940)

During the early Twentieth Century development of suburban neighborhoods in the study area were greatly influenced by the expansion of street car lines. The spread of the San Diego Electric Railway made it possible for the middle and working classes to own houses in single family residential neighborhoods that once would have been considered too far from downtown employment to be viable for anyone but the rich. It also made it possible to more than double San Diego's housing supply in a short period of time (Gehl 2003).

As historian Sharon Gehl has noted:

Developers knew that the Mission Hills area would sell well once the streetcar line was extended to it, because the streetcar was shaping the city's development at this time. An editorial in the *San Diego Union* on New Years day 1908 states that "Extension of the street car service is not merely keeping pace with the up building of the city, but is powerfully stimulating it. Localities that only recently were regarded as almost out in the country have been thickly built up during the past year, largely because rapid transit to the business district was afforded."

This new form of rapid transit was based upon the "modern" use of electricity. It led to a new type of neighborhood in San Diego dominated by Craftsman and Spanish Colonial style houses (Gehl 2003).

#### a. West Park Neighborhoods

As already noted, the area west of Balboa Park between Ash and Walnut Street on the north and south and Curtis and Dove Streets on the west was laid out in 1869 as the northern portion of the Horton's Addition subdivision. Land speculation during the 1880s had created an artificial real estate bubble which burst in 1889. The boom had ended long before all of Uptown could be developed. Sixth Avenue was not graded until the 1890s, but soon it became a prestigious location. While residential development had been fairly dense south of Laurel Street, it was sparse north of Walnut until 1894. By 1904, only 23 percent of the area west of Balboa Park was developed, mostly with single family houses (Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).

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<sup>1</sup> . These included Betty Baker, Bob Baker, Marvin Randall, Anne Prusa, Annella Smith, and Charles Beyer.

The neighborhoods west of Balboa Park were most affected during the early 1900s by the preparation for the 1915 Panama – California Exposition. City Park was renamed Balboa Park in 1910 and was landscaped by the well-known Kate Sessions. Many of the "capitalists" in the city built apartment buildings in the area as investment property to house the thousands of people expected to visit the worlds fair. Development was sporadic, but its density continued to increase (Cultural Resource Inventory 1993). During this period upper middle class and wealthy families, who had established a prestigious neighborhood south of Laurel Street known as Banker's Hill, began moving northward and reestablishing an upper scale neighborhood between Maple and Brant Streets. The term Banker's Hill moved northward with them and the area south of Laurel became known as Uptown. In the 1920s and 30s these same families moved to Mission Hills.

In 1914, the First Presbyterian Church was constructed on the block bounded by Date and Elm Street, and Third and Fourth Avenues. The church had a significant impact upon the area both physically with its sheer size, and socially with the many prominent citizens in its congregation. The church firmly established Uptown's existence and its prominence in the City (Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).



**Figure 9: First Presbyterian Church**

The economy was given a strong boost following the highly successful 1915 Exposition. Both the fair and wartime industry fueled a second building boom in the 1920s. Many structures were covered with stucco rather than wood as in previous years. Stucco was a more practical building material which was well suited for the dry San Diego climate. Fifth and First avenues became major thoroughfares which continued commercial establishments and large apartment buildings. First Avenue was added as a route for the streetcar which established it as a commercial thoroughfare (Cultural Resource Inventory 1993).

#### **b. Hillcrest**

The area now known as Hillcrest resembled little more than a rock strewn mesa prior to its development in the early 1900s. Real estate speculators identified the area for future urbanization and laid out subdivisions as early as the 1870s but it remained, for the most part, a jackrabbit hunting ground until the turn of the century. In 1906 the existing development amounted to only a few scattered houses and St. Joseph's Sanitarium at the corner of Sixth and University. Hillcrest eventually became one of San Diego's

largest residential communities. The neighborhood grew around a thriving business district centered at the corner of Fifth Street and University Avenue.

Development of the Hillcrest area began in 1906 when William Wesley Whitson filed a map for the Hillcrest Subdivision (Subdivision Map 1024, 1906). Whitson had come to San Diego from northern California in 1886. He served as the first San Diego County Coroner, a court reporter, and city councilman (*San Diego Union* 1-10-1958:A14). Following a tip from his sister-in-law, Whitson purchased 40 acres of undeveloped land bounded by First, Sixth, and Lewis Streets, and University Avenue in 1906 for \$115,000 (*San Diego Union* 10-25-1957:23). He considered the purchase a bargain since an adjoining tract of similar size had recently sold at auction for \$300,000 (Anonymous 1962). Lots sold quickly. The Hillcrest Company constructed many of the buildings in the tract and erected a sawmill that supplied lumber for 3000 homes. Hillcrest continued to develop and in 1957 celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary by honoring Wesley Whitson, who at 92 years of age, was still in business in Los Angeles (*San Diego Union* 10-24-1957:25; 10-23-1957:4).

The Hillcrest Company opened an office downtown in the Granger building and built a tract office at the corner of Fifth and University. They began advertising immediately and offered Hillcrest as a "restricted" tract. The restrictions entailed building set backs, fence regulations, minimum architectural requirements and land use limitations. The housing boom generated even more development and soon the community began to incorporate the surrounding older paper subdivisions. The area now recognized as Hillcrest is comprised of approximately twenty-five different subdivisions established between 1889 and 1926 (Dillinger 2000).



**Figure 10: Park Boulevard and Normal**

Some of the first homes built in Hillcrest included a house for Henry Fletcher on Fourth between Washington and University Avenue costing \$5000, and a bungalow costing \$4000, built for J. D. Raymond on Third between Washington and Lewis Streets. Other properties followed suit and the new community quickly began to take shape. Hillcrest contained housing aimed at families, but also developed a high percentage of single occupancy bungalow courts, cottages, and smaller unit family homes. This type of housing, located close to downtown, and made for single residents and young couples in the middle income range, was not to be found anywhere else in San Diego. The San Diego City School District built Florence Elementary at University and Second Avenues in 1908 to accommodate the influx of residents, while University Bank helped to initiate the business district with its construction in 1910. 1913 saw construction of the Hillcrest Theater (now the Guild), the paving of University Avenue and Washington Streets, and the opening of Hillcrest's first dime store "Nelson's Dry Goods" on Fifth Avenue. In 1928 the Post Office Department established a Hillcrest Branch (Dillinger 2000; *San Diego Union* 10-24-1957:25; 10-23-1957:4).

George Marston's influence in this part of the study area can be seen in the development of Marston Hills located on the northern edge of Balboa Park. In 1905, the new and elegant Marston family residence was completed on Seventh Street on the northern edge of the park's boundary. In the 1920s, Marston decided to acquire and develop all that land between the Marston residence and Richmond Street, and north of Balboa Park to Robinson Avenue. First he planted oaks and sycamores on the canyon floors, then, in 1924, he planned out his subdivision of 74 lots on the new streets of Cypress, Myrtle, Cypress Way, Myrtle Way, and Vermont. The subdivision was first called Park Terrace until his partners urged Marston to lend his own name. From the early 1920s through the mid 1930s, fifty elegant homes costing up to \$20,000 each were built in this exclusive neighborhood bordering Balboa Park. The Mediterranean style house became the predominant architecture of Marston Hills. This Spanish stucco house style was born in San Diego after the Panama - Pacific Exposition of 1915. Roofed in red tile and typically bright with stucco, they often have wrought iron railings and window grills, and always exhibit arches. Inside are more arches, heavy plaster walls, and coved ceilings or exposed wood beams. Tiles, oak floors, and inset adobe-type fireplace are also characteristic of the interiors. These houses had the latest in modern conveniences: automobile garages, built in niches or desks for the latest electric gadgets, and the telephone (Laughlin 1983).

By the 1930s Hillcrest was considered to be one of the largest residential communities of San Diego, centered on the vibrant business district at Fifth & University. Both of the City's largest medical facilities - Mercy and County Hospitals - were located in the neighborhood. In 1936 the Hillcrest Businessmen's Association spent over \$1000 to sponsor a community Christmas celebration complete with a 25 foot Christmas tree at Tenth and University, outdoor lights, and a parade. Santa Claus wore a "unique suit of red corduroy with real white fur trimmings and high black boots that attracted much attention" (*San Diego Union* 12-5-1936, 12-6-1936, 5-30-1937). In the late 1930s the Hillcrest Women's Club sponsored the placement of a large sign with the name of the district that hung over University Avenue and was a landmark for many years (*San Diego Union* 4-10-1940; *San Diego Union* 3-4-1934 II, 5:1; Hennessey 2000).

### 1) Hospitals

Mercy Hospital began in San Diego as St. Joseph's Dispensary, which opened on July 9, 1890 in the Grand Central Building on Sixth Avenue and H (now Market) Street downtown. The dispensary was established by two Sisters of Mercy from San Francisco, Mother Mary Michael and Sister Mary Alphonsa.

A year later it became apparent that the facility would need to further expand to care for the sick who took refuge in its shelter. In 1891 a site was purchased on north side of University Avenue at Fifth Street, and the first unit of St. Joseph's Hospital was built. In 1903 a training school for nurses was established and in 1904, an east wing was added and the main building completed.

In 1923, a "fire proof" facility was built and in 1924 the corporate title of the facility was changed to Mercy Hospital. On May 22, 1966 a new 350 bed Mercy Hospital was opened. Dedication of the \$15.5 million complex took place on October 30, 1966. The following year an additional 96 beds were added with the completion of the tenth and eleventh floors. The same year a 50 bed Mental Health Center was completed. On August 7, 1968, the corporate name was changed to Mercy Hospital and Medical Center, better describing the variety of services available. In November 1972 a new wing of the hospital was dedicated (Fosbinder 1989; *San Diego Union* 7-8-1990; *Evening Tribune* 7-2-1990). The facility is currently known as Scripps Mercy Hospital. It is a 520-bed acute care facility and the largest private teaching hospital in the San Diego area.

San Diego County General Hospital was constructed in 1904. The following history of County Hospital through the 1930s is taken from Donna Fosbinder's article that appeared in *The Journal of San Diego History* in 1989:

The first San Diego County Hospital was located in Emmett House on Twiggs Street near Casa de Lopez, Old Town. Emmett House was used as a hospital by Dr. Edward Burr, one of the members of the first Board of Health, who lived in Casa de Lopez and was County Physician from 1869-1871.

By June 30, 1889 the hospital had accommodated 1,237 patients and had been relocated three and one half miles from the city of San Diego at the foot of the grade leading to Mission Valley, about midway between Old Town San Diego and Mission San Diego. The grounds and farm covered an area of 140 acres. The hospital could accommodate about sixty patients and the farm had four acres of garden producing vegetables, enough to supply the patient demand.

A new three story County Hospital building located atop what became known as "Pill Hill" at the north end of Front Street costing approximately \$60,000 opened March 15, 1904. County hospital was a general care hospital staffed by volunteer physicians who provided care to the patients [and] taught and supervised the interns and residents as they cared for county patients in various specialties.

The Training School for Nurses opened in 1903 with ten women in the first class at the San Diego County General Hospital. Three years later, four of them graduated as trained nurses. A sixty percent attrition rate was not uncommon among nurses because of exposure to communicable and infectious disease, the servile nature of the work, and poor diet. An article written about nurses at County Hospital, describes these conditions in 1912.

A home for nurses next door to the hospital opened in 1913. Students were awakened at 5:30 a.m., and were expected to make their beds neatly, dust their room, and leave everything in good order and ready for inspection at any time. The Nurse's Home was closed at 10:00 p.m.; the lights were turned off, and each nurse had to be in her own room. In 1920, student progress in theory, practice and general efficiency was recorded in official documents. The twenty eight month program was enriched and included a variety of clinical nursing experience. Training at Vauclain Tuberculosis Sanitarium was optional; by 1946, it was a required educational experience. In 1920, four classes of students were enrolled yearly, and the probationary period was lengthened from three to four months. When the school was accredited in 1923 by the Bureau of the California State Board of Health, there were forty student nurses enrolled. The expectations for a student entering the Training School for Nurses at San Diego County General Hospital in 1925 are illustrated in a letter asking for a reference on the character, conduct, and physical and mental health of an applicant.

The training program was lengthened to three years in 1936. In addition, the curriculum was extended to include periods of visiting nurse service and at Mercy Hospital to care for private patients (Fosbinder 1989).

In 1956 an engineering study found the County Hospital building to be unsafe. It was replaced by a new \$12.5 million, eleven story building in 1963. In 1965, the county Board Of Supervisors transferred operation of the facility to the University of California Medical School. At that time it was renamed University Hospital and is now known as UCSD Medical Center (*San Diego Union* 10-5-1958; 5-26-1963; 4-5-1970; *Evening Tribune* 2-16-1965).

### c. Mission Hills

The Mission Hills community is a neighborhood west of Hillcrest built on and around the promontory that overlooks both San Diego Bay and Mission Valley. The area is bordered by Dove Street on the east, Old Town on the west, Washington Street on the south, and the south rim of Mission Valley on the north.

Like Hillcrest, the Mission Hills area was originally a virtual wasteland of weeds, scrub and chaparral, "a hopeless tangle of barren hills and ugly holes." One of the earliest property owners had been Captain Henry Johnston who purchased approximately 65 acres of public land from the city of San Diego in February 1869. Located near current Presidio Park, his holdings were centered on present day Sunset and Witherby Streets (Moomjian 1999; *Reader* 2-5-1998).

In 1872, Cyrus Arnold, an attorney and real estate developer, and Daniel Choate, a dry goods merchant, purchased and subdivided another future tract of Mission Hills property in an area bounded by University Avenue to the south, Randolph Street on the west, Curlew Street to the east, and Arbor Drive on the north. This was known as "Arnold and Choate's Addition." At this time no homes had been constructed in the area (Moomjian 1999; *Reader* 2-5-1998).

The first home in current Mission Hills was constructed in 1887. Sarah Johnston Cox (Miller), the daughter of Captain Johanson, inherited her father's property which extended from Sunset Boulevard to the north, Arguello Street to the east, Witherby Street in the west, plus a few odd shaped blocks on the south. Naming the area Johnston Heights, she constructed a sprawling Victorian home at the highest point of her land's southern slope. Called the Villa Orizaba, the residence stood alone until 1907. Until that year, the mesas that would become Mission Hills were composed of a citrus and olive groves, and two or three small dairies and chicken ranches (Moomjian 1999; *Reader* 2-5-1998).

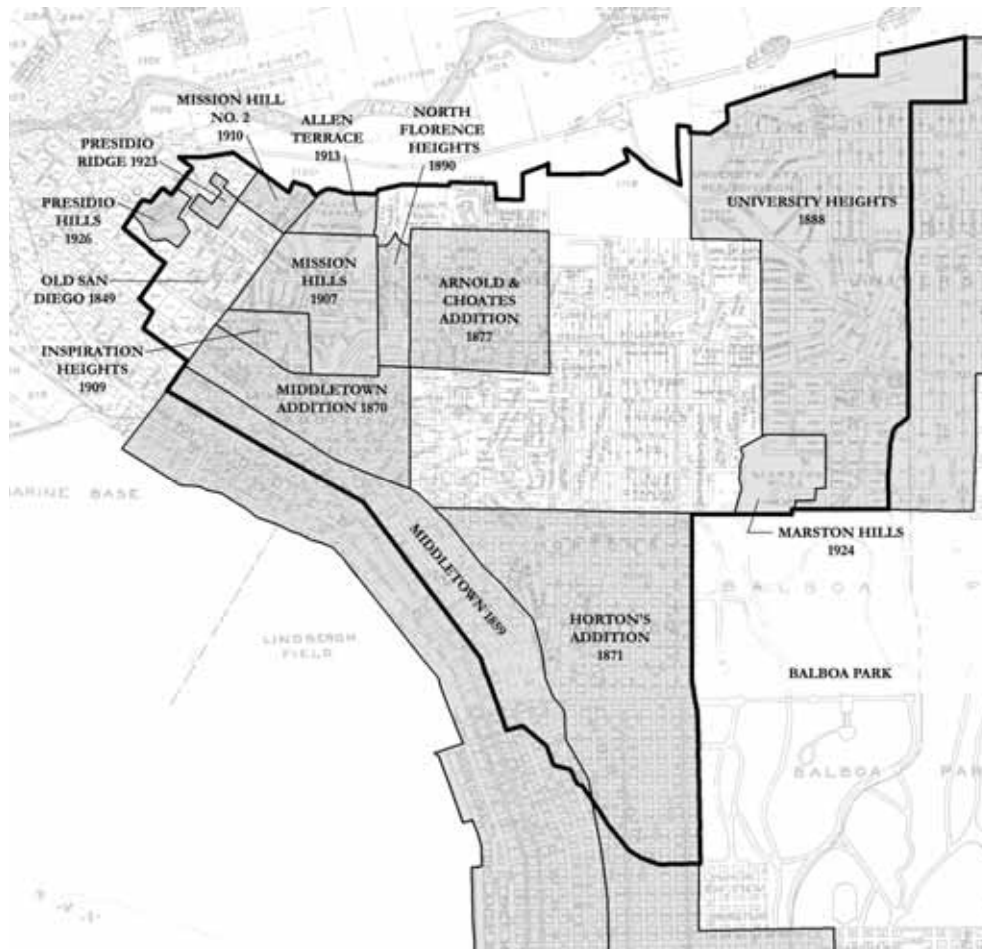
In 1903 noted horticulturalist Kate Sessions began buying up land in Mission Hills after losing her Balboa Park lease. Sessions acquired a tract of land north of Lewis and east of Stephens Streets for her nursery business. Eventually, she owned or leased most of the North Florence Heights section, platted in 1890, as well as several blocks in Arnold and Choate's subdivision. Sessions would remain at this location until 1928, when she moved a few blocks south to the corner of Fort Stockton Drive and Randolph Street. A nursery still operates at this location today (2003) (Moomjian 1999; *Reader* 2-5-1998).

With the financial boom of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century developers began to lay out new subdivisions. In 1904 a syndicate of four businessmen led by Charles Gordon, C.H. Swallows, N.M. Goodwin, and Percy Goodwin purchased 60 acres to the north of Sarah Johnston Cox's property for \$36,000 or \$600 an acre. This new tract, called "Inspiration Heights," extended roughly from Mission Valley on the north to Witherby and Stephen's Streets before terminating in the hills above Old Town (Moomjian 1999; *Reader* 2-5-1998).

The four intended to transform their new real estate purchase into one of San Diego's most prestigious and exclusive residential districts. Subdivision deed restrictions stipulated that only single family residences costing at least \$3,500 could be erected in the subdivision. The tract would be segregated as excluded

from residency would be "any person not belonging to the Caucasian race." Within weeks, acres were being sold for \$800 (Moomjian 1999; *Reader 2-5-1998*).

In 1907 another syndicate composed of George Marston, Tom and C.S. Hamilton, E.S. Babcock, John and James Forward, and John and Charles Kelly purchased 22 acres from Kate Sessions. The men hired New York architect George Cook to lay out their tract. Its design incorporated many of the ideas John Nolen promoted in his 1908 comprehensive plan for San Diego including a hierarchy of road widths, locally derived (Spanish) street names, and contour streets that followed the topography (Gehl 2003). "Mission Hills" was officially born on January 20, 1908 when the group filed Subdivision Map 1115. They did so with the belief that development in San Diego would follow the extension of the San Diego Electric Railway Company, owned by John D. Spreckles. Their belief was confirmed when roads in Mission Hills were widened later that year. One year later in 1909, trolley service was extended from downtown Market Street to Lewis and Stephens Streets. Four years later in 1913, the trolley track was extended from Lewis to the intersection of Fort Stockton and Trias Streets (Moomjian 1999; *Reader 2-5-1998*).



**Figure 11: Subdivisions**

The Mission Hills subdivisions are probably the best examples in San Diego of the new type of neighborhood made possible by the spread of inter-urban rail lines after the turn of the last century and



the influence of John Nolen's ideas of City Planning (Gehl 2003). Over the next two decades additional subdivisions were laid out in the area between Stephens Street on the east and the hills overlooking Old Town and Presidio Park on the west that incorporated the street patterns and other elements advocated by John Nolen and integrated into the original Mission Hills Subdivision. These included: Mission Hills No. 2, (Subdivision Map 1234, 1910), Resubdivision of Inspiration Heights (Subdivision Map 1700, 1917), Allen Terrace (Subdivision Map 1620, 1913), Presidio Ridge (Subdivision Map 1769, 1923), and Presidio Hills (Subdivision Map 1934, 1926). The distinctive curvilinear street patterns of these tracts made the portion of Mission Hills west of Stephens Street one of the most unique neighborhoods in San Diego. The portions of Mission Hills east of Stephens are based on earlier subdivision laid out in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century including Arnold & Choates Addition (Subdivision Map 384, 1877), and North Florence Heights (Subdivision Map 634, 1890). Streets here conform to the grid pattern that originated in the downtown area of Horton's Addition in the 1870s and was extended onto the hills north of the city.



Figure 12: Rectilinear compared to curvilinear land plans in North Mission Hills

Mission Hills became known as an area of wealth and affluence. Upper middle class and wealthy families, who had originally established prestigious neighborhoods south of Laurel Street during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and later began moving northward to form an upper scale neighborhood between Maple and Brant Streets, reestablished once again in Mission Hills during the 1920s. Majestic two story mansions in a variety of architectural styles ranging from Tudor, Italianate, and Spanish Colonial were constructed besides smaller, humbler California bungalows and Mediterranean style homes. Property values had risen greatly over this period. In 1907, a single 100 foot corner lot cost approximately \$600. By 1933, the same lot may have cost as much as \$50,000. Significant architects such as Irving Gill, Richard Requa, and William Templeton Johnston contributed to the architecture of Mission Hills during this period (Moomjian 1999; Reader 2-5-1998).



In the 1920s, Mission Hills was overcome by the Spanish Colonial Revival building craze. Builders and architects designed Spanish Colonial homes with whitewashed stucco, low pitched roofs, decorative ironwork, tiled floors and walls, and formal tropical gardens came to dominate many areas (Moomjian 1999; *Reader 2-5-1998*).

During the 1920s a thriving business districts grew along Goldfinch and Washington Streets, on West Lewis Street between Randolph and Stephens streets, where a Piggly Wiggly grocery store was located for many decades, and at the corner of Fort Stockton Drive and Allen Road. Like many areas of San Diego in the early 1930s, home construction slowed in the Mission Hills area during the Depression. Smaller homes that were constructed took their place beside their more statuesque neighbors adding to the neighborhoods eclectic character (Moomjian 1999; *Reader 2-5-1998*; Curtis 1996; Sanborn 1921, 1953; San Diego Directory 1928).

The Ace Drug Store, at the corner of Washington and Goldfinch became a one of the main focal points of the community. Originally the Goldfinch Pharmacy, it was purchased in 1925 by T. Donald Perkins, who changed the name to Ace. In addition to prescriptions and over the counter medicines the store had a soda fountain, cosmetics counter, a post office, and housed a local branch of the public library. The fountain, which served ice cream, soda, and home made chili, was the social drawing point of the establishment. The "Lucky Monday" soda had a cup with an ice cream sundae on top that sometimes contained a token for prize, which was another free sundae. Parents would meet at the fountain on weekday mornings for coffee, after dropping their children off at Grant Elementary School. This group became known as "the country club of Mission Hills" (Baker and Baker 2003).

The Mission Hills subdivisions are significant in the history of San Diego community development because they were strongly influenced by John Nolen's ideas as proposed in his 1908 development plan for San Diego. This is most notable in the hierarchy of road widths, as well as Spanish and other locally derived street names, and contour streets that conform to the topography rather than impose a preconceived grid pattern on the geographical features of the land. Nolen felt that the prevailing grid pattern ignored local topography, resulting in expansive cut-and-fill street construction and the destruction of canyons (Gehl 2003). He noted in his report ". . . until very recently no contour streets have been laid out" (Nolen 1908:9 quoted in Gehl 2003). In this sense the Mission Hills neighborhoods differ most dramatically from earlier tracts laid out before Nolen's plans, especially University Heights and Hillcrest where a slightly modified grid pattern based on Horton's Addition was simply extended to cover the rough topography of the mesas north of downtown. Considering George Marston was one of the major developers of this subdivision, Nolen's influence is not surprising (Gehl 2003).

### 1) Presidio Park & Presidio Hills

In 1907 Marston and four other members of the Chamber of Commerce, Streets, and Boulevards Committee purchased fourteen lots for \$6,000 to preserve the site of the first Spanish settlement and Mission in California on Presidio Hill. Over the next dozen years Marston bought out his other partners and acquired additional property surrounding the original purchase. He put this twenty acres in trust for the City to develop an historic park. In 1925 Marston hired John Nolen to provide landscaping and planning advice. The City donated more acres to the park and archaeological excavations began. Once the Presidio ruins were defined, the site was buried for preservation. Irrigation facilities were installed and landscaping was completed. Construction also began on a Spanish Colonial style museum designed by William Templeton Johnston. The museum was constructed at the top of the hill overlooking the original presidio site. George Marston had spent \$400,000 dollars of his own money to acquire the land, develop the park and build the museum by the time Presidio Park was dedicated in July 1928. The park defined

the northwestern boundary of Mission Hills. During the same time as its development, Marston and other real estate partners laid out the Presidio Hills Subdivision on seventy acres adjoining the park on the east. The tract was designed along Nolen's plans. This became the westernmost subdivision of Mission Hills (Hennessey 1986; *San Diego Union* 3-7-1926).

#### d. University Heights

Originally platted during the boom of the 1880s, University Heights also began to develop during the flush times of the early Twentieth Century. The abandoned University of Southern California Campus at Normal Street and Park Boulevard became the site of the State Normal School, a two year teacher training college, in 1899. The main school building was designed by William S. Hebbard and Irving J. Gill and patterned after the Fine Arts Palace at the 1893 Chicago Worlds Fair. The area was also popular as the location of a popular amusement park: Mission Cliffs Gardens (*San Diego Union* 9-25-1988).

By 1906, the community was experiencing a healthy growth rate when the *San Diego Union* reported:

A large crowd attended the performance of Domestic Economy which was given by the University Heights Dramatic Club at Mission Cliffs Pavilion on Friday Evening. All did themselves proud in their respective parts. The "Social Hour" met on Thursday with Mrs. C.P. Bisbe on Park Boulevard. The afternoon was most enjoyable spent in games and conversation. . . .

Mr. Swayne's residence on University Avenue, Mr. Earl S. Barr's residence on Essex, the fine residence of G.O. Guiack on Vermont are completed. Mrs. A.G. Bartol is planning to erect a fine residence on Park boulevard (*San Diego Union* 4-23-1906).

In 1907 the city accepted a 160,000 gallon water tank donated by the College Hill Land Association, which connected the district with the city water system. Another 490,000 gallon tank was built in 1910 (Davidson 1939).

By 1909 realtors were actively promoting the development. An advertisement in May showing a sketch of California bungalows stated:

We have Purchased a piece of property in the best part of University Heights one block from the electric car line . . . We will build one house on each fifty foot lot. Houses to be built to suit purchasers but no house to cost less than \$1200. All houses will be set proper distances from property lines and only attractive buildings will be erected. Water piped to every lot, streets are being graded and sidewalk trees will be planted. No lot will be sold without a building. On a \$600 lot we will build you a \$1200 house for \$100 down and \$25 a month. W.H. Cotton (*San Diego Union* 5-5-1909).

On January 1, 1910, D.C. Collier & Co. advertised "University Heights Building Lots \$225 each. \$5 down and \$5 per month, no interest, no taxes" (*San Diego Union* 1-1-1910).

Between 1910 and 1930 the tract was built up by several realtors and contractors. Most built bungalows or frame and stucco Spanish Colonial - Mediterranean style buildings. In some places along the rim of Mission Valley, larger more affluent residents were established. Several commercial nodes developed on Park Boulevard that included a Piggly Wiggly Market, that later became a Safeway and then a bakery. The Egyptian Theater, between University and Robinson, was a popular spot for children on Saturday afternoons (Prusa 2003; *San Diego Union* 1-12-1970). In 1927 a gas station was opened on the northwest

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corner of Texas Street and Madison Avenue (*San Diego Union* 1-12-1970. Other commercial developments occurred along El Cajon Boulevard (O'Connor-Ruth 1992).

An early resident, Mildred Adams, remembered living in the area between 1900 and 1930:

I was raised there and loved the area. This was a section of San Diego of moderately affluent land owners – all successful in business, some civic leaders and some associated with the teachers college, referred to as the State Normal School . . .

When my parents moved there in 1908 it was a country area of unimproved land. Here on California Street lived my young 20 year old parents with four babies. They had a cow, chickens, fruit trees, and a large vegetable garden. My father walked through brush on a path from Park Boulevard to get home from the Park Boulevard Street Car. Many more homes were built in University Heights after World War I. The waterworks were improved, a wonderful University Heights playground built, Garfield Elementary School had been built (1915) (*Evening Tribune* 5-9-1984).

University Heights was well known during this period as the location of Mission Cliffs Gardens, a popular amusement park. Mission Cliffs Gardens was located on the canyon rim overlooking Mission Valley, north of Adams. The main entrance was at the end of Park Boulevard. A rock fence, which still remains, extended from the entrance two blocks west to the end of Adams Avenue. East of the entrance was a tall wooden fence enclosing the popular Ostrich Farm. The fence adjoined the rear wall of the car barns at the end of the trolley line. Across the street on Adams Avenue, between Park Boulevard and North Avenue, was a silk factory at 1735 Adams Avenue (MacPhail 1983).



First known as The Bluffs, the park was developed as the terminus of the San Diego Cable Railway that operated from 1890 until it went bankrupt in 1892. In 1890 a Pavilion was built on the rim of the valley. It had a large meeting hall used for dances, club gatherings, and as a place where refreshments were served. A few trees and shrubs were planted, but further development waited until the Citizens' Traction Company took over the defunct cable railway, putting in an overhead trolley in 1896, which in turn was taken over by the Spreckels Brothers' Company, San Diego Electric Railway, in 1898. Under the Traction Company the name was changed to Mission Cliff Park and by the Spreckel's Company to Mission Cliff Gardens (MacPhail 1983). The park was a popular place for church and group picnics. Attractions included a merry-go-round, observatory, shooting gallery, and adjoining ostrich farm. Dancing parties and plays were held at the Pavilion where traveling theatrical and vaudeville companies found an eager audience during the warm summer evenings (MacPhail 1983).

The park closed in 1929. The west corner of Mission Cliff Gardens remained open for the neighborhood men who still congregated there to play cards or throw horseshoes. In 1942 the land was sold to developers who subdivided it for private housing. Today ten Canary Island date palms outline the former Park Boulevard entrance, and ten Cocos Plumosa palms stand at what was the North Avenue entrance. The lily pond, now filled with grass and shrubs, remains and identifies the location of the Pavilion. The rock wall marks the site of what was once Mission Cliffs Park (MacPhail 1983).

The depression of the 1930s brought an end to major growth in University Heights. As already noted Mission Cliffs Gardens and the Ostrich Farm closed in 1929. The Normal School moved to the present location of San Diego State University in 1931. The old campus became the City of San Diego's Horace Mann Junior High School until 1952. Three years later the main structure was demolished (*San Diego*

*Union 9-25-1988*). An auxiliary Beaux Arts building is all that remains of the original Normal School. It has been listed on the national Register of Historic Places. The site is now used by the City of San Diego's Education Center.

#### e. Middletown

Major development north of Laurel Street in the Middletown Subdivision did not begin in a large way until the 1920s. Lacking easy access by trolley lines, the advent of the family owned automobile in the 1920s seems to have been the key to its development. With the growth of Mission Hills and Hillcrest to the north and east, a number of different realtors subdivided and built on small tracts within this area between 1920 and 1930. The area west of Goldfinch Street and south of Washington became known as South Mission Hills. The rest of the area has remained largely lumped under the name of Middletown even though, as already stated, a variety of developers cut out numerous subdivisions over the years. By the late 1930s around 700 stuccoed houses covered the hills overlooking Lindbergh Field and the Consolidated Aircraft factory. A small commercial area called Five Points developed at the intersection of Washington and India Streets. Businesses included the Mission Brewery, Palomar Laundry, Palomar Market, Palomar Motel, and a Bank of America. There were fishing canneries to the south as well as residences of Italian fishermen and employees of the growing aircraft industry (Brandes and Erzinger 1980; Comer 2003).

### E. Military Harbor and Sunbelt City (1940 – 2000)

#### 1. The City of San Diego (1940-2000)

World War II increased the Navy's presence in San Diego and ushered in a period of accelerated growth that lasted until the end of the Cold War in 1990. The aerospace industry also became an important economic force in the city. Beginning with the establishment of Consolidated Aircraft's factory at Lindbergh Field in the late 1930s this industry complimented the military's presence in the region and infused even more federal dollars into the community (Starr 1986).

By 1940 the city's population had reached 203,341. This growth rate of the region would be dwarfed, however, by development following the Second World War. Ironically this growth did not result from the development of a commercial port but as a military harbor. The main stimulus of the prolonged boom was military defense spending which continued through the 1980s (Starr 1986).

The greatest change the Second World War brought to California was the onset of an immense population boom that continued through the end of the Twentieth Century and changed the nature of the entire region. The city's population went from 203,000 in 1940 to 334,000 in 1950; the population of the metropolitan area increased by an even larger percentage from 256,000 to 556,000. By 1970 the population of the metropolitan area had reached 1,357,854 (Starr 1986).

During the 1950s and '60s the retail district in downtown San Diego, especially south of Broadway, went into an economic decline. This was mostly the result of two major developments in San Diego after 1945, the freeway system and shopping centers. The first freeway opened in 1948, and within a generation there were over 250 miles of urban freeways in the San Diego region. They made possible a dispersal of population out of the old pre 1940 city area and into widely scattered low density suburbs. By the 1980s urban San Diego stretched from the Mexican border to Escondido, 30 miles north of the downtown area. The freeway and suburbs also made possible regional shopping centers, beginning in 1960 with College Grove, Mission Valley, and Grossmont. Large department stores and specialty shops moved out of downtown and into the new commercial centers (Starr 1986).

Freeway construction directly impacted the Uptown Study Area with the construction of Highway 163 through Hillcrest and Balboa Park in 1948, and Interstate Five in the early to mid-1960s. Confined mostly to canyons, 163 had only a negligible effect on Hillcrest. Interstate 5, however, permanently split many older neighborhoods in the Middletown Tract and caused the destruction of a large number of buildings. Whole neighborhoods were relocated.

Post war growth affected the Uptown Study Area in many ways. The older neighborhoods remained isolated from much of the growth occurring in the rest of the County and became somewhat isolated and, especially in the case of Mission Hills, exclusive. The older neighborhoods were seen in postwar San Diego as relics of an earlier period and reflective of "small town life". Many of these old neighborhoods took on a unique atmosphere that appealed to those seeking an alternate to the postwar world of suburbs and shopping malls.

## 2. Study Area Development (1940 – 2000)

### a. Hillcrest

Following World War II the neighborhoods just west of Balboa Park and Hillcrest came to be seen as a single community with its commercial center in the old Hillcrest business district at Fifth and University. The decline of the downtown business district during this period was probably responsible for this. The area north of Ash continued to be a viable neighborhood and did not suffer the economic decline of the downtown area. At least some of the reasons were the community's proximity to Balboa Park and County and University Hospitals. The neighborhoods around Balboa Park continued to be an area where people wanted to work and reside, while the two large hospitals attracted a large number of medical facilities and related businesses. New offices, apartment buildings, and retirement homes were constructed during the period, replacing many of the old Victorian houses in Banker's Hill and establishing a mixture of older and new architectural styles south of Robinson Street. The opening of the large Sears Store at Cleveland Street and Vermont in the 1950s symbolized the change in retail focus from downtown San Diego to Hillcrest.



**Figure 13: Aerial Photograph of Sears Department Store**

A strong feeling of community remained in the district. Small shops and restaurants continued to thrive and Hillcrest remained a pedestrian oriented neighborhood. In 1977 one resident described it as a place known for "the hometown atmosphere of shaded streets, tiny old houses, large old houses . . . the friendliness of the merchants of little shops." There were 14,393 people in an area approximately two miles long and one wide (Soloff 1977). Local artists also began to live and establish businesses in the neighborhood. For instance, the Hand of God Pottery produced reduction glazed pottery, and Green Tiger Press published classic illustrated children's books (Chandler 2003).

### 1) Hillcrest Business District

Fifth Avenue was seen as the main artery of the community. The Mayfair Market at Fifth and Robinson served as the local grocery store - supermarket. It, combined with a variety of small shops centered on Fifth and University, negated the need to leave the neighborhood for most necessities. Many, such as the Guild (formerly Hillcrest) Theater, Hammond's Variety Store, and the Ace Hardware, were now considered old established business (Soloff 1977; *San Diego Union* 8-14-1988).

Ace Hardware was a hardware and variety store. Sister Mary La Salette Trevillyan, the only Catholic nun at Mercy Hospital that still (2003) wears a full habit, recalled that at the Ace:

You could buy anything there. I mean if you were looking for the tiniest thing that was impossible to find, they would have it. But they did finally go out. I think they're down now on University, further down by Tenth. But it was the most marvelous place and it was just one of those places that everybody knew about and went to for anything. Like a dime store except it had all kinds of things. . . . (Trevillyan 2003).

Long term resident Will Chandler remembered the business district in the 1970s and '80s:

There was a hardware store. It seems to me that the hardware store was where the Crest Café came in or next door to it on Robinson. There was Hammond's Five and Dime which had been there since, I think, the 1920's, with the Hammond family. That would be next to, just south of the Hammond Building at the southwest corner of Fifth and University. The Hammond Building is a three-story building, which now houses The Gap. And that building and the one-story building immediately to the south were all sort of weirdly interconnected through passages in the back, because they'd all been owned by the same family for so long. It was a classic old family-run five and ten cent store. You could go in there and buy, in the 1970's and 80's, you could go in there and buy 1930's glassware. They had salt shakers. They had relish trays. They had everything that you don't find in a hardware store now. So there was that. There was a little family-run health food store run by an Eastern European family on the alley in the same building where Cathedral is now, the sort of Gothic perfume and decorator store. There was a liquor store on the corner [of University and Fourth] called Hillcrest Liquor which had been around forever where Column One is now. There was a shoe repair, there still is a shoe repair, but not the same one. There was a vacuum cleaner shop called Hub Vacuum that was in the Hammond Building. And there were a lot of things like that. There was a bookstore, it still is a bookstore, oh gosh, what's it called – [Bluestocking Books] – in the building immediately south of the Guild Theatre. There was a newsstand and there was a bookstore called Otento, which was one of the great old bookstores in San Diego. [Tom Stoup owned Blue Door Books, in the same building as Otento, and was very involved in the reawakening of the neighborhood in the '70's. He had poetry readings and book signings, and attracted new customers to the neighborhood.] . . . One of the things that I think that improved the economic and business life of the neighborhood was not just the opening of new businesses like the Crest and Quel Fromage, but it was 1974 that the Guild, I think, was purchased by Landmark Theatres. It, for probably ten years prior to that time, had been a soft core porn theater. And suddenly, it started showing revival and foreign run movies . . . and there was a reason for "educated, respectable people" to come into the neighborhood at night. Hillcrest was a neighborhood that closed up at night, it had no evening business to speak of because they were mom and pop community need businesses rather [than shops catering to leisure-time customers]. And the Guild went legit. The Guild Theatre had been there since 1912. It had been built back then as B house and what that means is that it did not get the first run premieres. It was the sort of prime neighborhood theatres that was running second tier material or would run movies six months later than the downtown theatres. And it was left over from when Hillcrest was a [middle class suburban] neighborhood. It changed by the time I was here (Chandler 2003).

In an era where street cars no longer ran and public transportation in most Southern California cities, including San Diego, was a low priority, the Hillcrest neighborhood enjoyed what some felt was "one of



the best transit systems in the nation. The routes – which run north and south along First, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets," and "east and west on University and Washington" were augmented with two special shuttles plus a Dial-A-Ride for the elderly and handicapped. These combined services could put passengers within a block of all the churches, hospitals, schools, supermarkets, theaters, banks, department stores, and shopping centers, within Hillcrest and the surrounding areas and Balboa Park. In post war San Diego, increasingly designed around the automobile, one did not need to own a car to live in Hillcrest (Soloff 1977).

Medical related facilities including doctor's offices, nursing and convalescent homes and retirement homes had become concentrated along Fourth from the area around Mercy Hospital near Washington south to Maple Street. The section was called Pill Row by local residents. The Avenue was also "generously sprinkled with other professional offices including attorneys, insurance agents, and architects, some in renovated old homes" (Soloff 1977).

The Hillcrest area became known for its variety of eating establishments from local mom and pop restaurants like the Chicken Pie Shop (established in 1928) to high class elegant eateries like Mr. A's or Cullpepper's (formerly the Fifth Amendment). At Sixth and University Pernicano's and Cesar's restaurant, later A Summer Place and the City Delicatessen, became local landmarks (Crowder 2003). By the 1970s a wide variety of additional culinary fare was offered by Consuelo's (Mexican), Mario's (Italian), Miki-San (Japanese), Antoine's Sheik (Lebanese) and Kung Food (Vegetarian) (Soloff 1977). Two well established restaurants had developed reputations that reached beyond San Diego. As downtown declined in the 1950s, the rich and famous who visited San Diego frequented Hillcrest establishments, especially Jimmy Wong's Golden Dragon, and Pernicano's.

Opened in 1955 by "Jimmy" Tung Ling Wong and his wife Annie Up Wong, Jimmy Wong's Golden Dragon became the premier Chinese restaurant in San Diego County. The establishment's large neon dragon sign, designed by Jimmy Wong, has been a landmark in the neighborhood for over 40 years. He also designed and painted the large golden dragon that runs the length of the ceiling inside the building. The Wongs immigrated to the United States in the late 1940s. Jimmy worked as a waiter at the Chinese Village, a prominent downtown restaurant. By 1955 the couple had saved up around \$3000 which they used to open their own restaurant in Hillcrest at Fourth and University. The Golden Dragon was open every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas. The success of the establishment was its regular customers. Owned and operated by the family for over 30 years, multiple generations of Hillcrest diners frequented Jimmy Wong's. The place became well known throughout San Diego and beyond. Many prominent local people frequented the restaurant as well as celebrities visiting from out of town. In the '50s such glamour patrons as Marilyn Monroe, Gary Cooper, Patricia Neal, Frank Sinatra, Jack Benny, and Mickey Rooney could be seen at Jimmy Wong's. Later in the '60s comedian Frank Gorshin, Sergio Mendes of Brazil 66, and song writer Burt Bacharach enjoyed meals at the restaurant. Sports celebrities, especially football players from the San Diego Chargers, also used to come in (Wong 2003; *San Diego Union* 9-29-1989). With the combination of regular customers and visiting celebrities the clientele at Jimmy Wong's became a wide cross mix of people.

One of the Wong's children, Gary, remembered:

I think the thing I am most proud of, and I think the restaurant is typical of this, is that...(it) exemplifies what my parents lives were. They were immigrants that came here and they came here to realize the American Dream and through their hard work and perseverance and a lot of luck too, they grasped the opportunity that materialized within

this restaurant and they realized the American Dream. It truly is . . . an immigrant story that is exactly how you want it to turn out (Wong 2003).

Pernicano's Pizzeria and Casa Di Baffi on Sixth and University were also landmark establishments in Hillcrest. In the 50s and 60s the line to get into George Pernicano's Pizza House stretched around the block. Known for its steaks, Casa Di Baffi was a hangout for locals as well as professional coaches and athletes. Celebrities such as Jackie Gleason, Dinah Shore, George Raft, Joe Namath, and Phil Donahue ate there when they were in town (*Evening Tribune* 10-30-1990).

Another well known establishment on the north side of Sixth and University was Zolezzi's, later Stefano's Italian Restaurant. Opened in 1965 by the 18 year old son of an Italian fisherman's family from South Mission Hills, Stephen Zolezzi, this eatery also became a neighborhood landmark known throughout greater San Diego. Local politicians such as Mayor Pete Wilson were regular customers as were well known Hollywood celebrities like Lili Tomlin, Jill St. John, and Robert Wagner (Zolezzi 2003).

The 1980s saw an increase in office and apartment construction in the neighborhood. In August 1988, for example, the *San Diego Union* reported that a building boom was "in full swing between downtown and Mission Valley, east of the bay and west of Balboa Park." The 18 projects listed included the San Diego Hospice Center, UCSD Ambulatory Outpatient Clinic, Mission Brewery, California First Bank Building, Village Hillcrest, University Gardens, Uptown District, Hillcrest Inn, Villa Pacifica, Sunroad Park Plaza, Balboa Park Tower, Silvergate Continuum Care, Laurel & Fifth Center, San Diego Trust Block, Fifth & Laurel Corporate Center, Ivy Park Center, Balboa Park Hotel, and Golden Bay Professional Building (*San Diego Union* 8-4-1988).

Yet a newspaper article that same year described the unique community that still existed. Hillcrest was seen as:

. . . a haven by the many older folks who live here, some who have called Hillcrest home for 50 years. They can be seen on the tree lined streets when they go for a forenoon stroll down University Avenue past the pawn shop and the Hillcrest Barber Shop with its red, white, and blue pole revolving outside.

Upscale folks go to Hillcrest to check out the restaurants that have made the area the critic's choice for dining in San Diego. There are more than two dozen restaurants in Hillcrest representing a wide variety of culinary and ethnic styles.

Among the most popular is the Chicken Pie Shop where a complete dinner consisting of chicken pie, whipped potatoes, vegetables, coleslaw, and a roll can be purchased for \$3.10. Calliope's is a popular Greek restaurant, San Fillipo's attracts crowds with its expensive and hearty Italian fare, Phong Nom is known for its Vietnamese cooking and Pernicano's/Casa Di Baffi, another Hillcrest landmark, is known for its steaks.

The artsy intellectual crowd goes to Hillcrest to browse through rare and used tomes in the community's several book stores, sip coffee and drink in the un-San Diego ambiance of Quel Fromage Cafe and view movies in the appropriately threadbare atmosphere of the Guild, one of the few theaters in San Diego that screens art films.

Many performance artists live in Hillcrest because of its proximity to stages in Balboa Park and downtown. So, too, do people in the health care business – because of the two

major Medical Centers (University and Mercy Hospitals) on the fringe of Hillcrest. The community is rife with medical offices offering everything from brain scans to blood tests.

Homophobes and homosexuals alike think of Hillcrest as San Diego's gay community. Everyone in the neighborhood knows the Brass Rail is a gay bar and the Crest Cafe is a gay restaurant. San Diego's Gay and Lesbian social services center is in Hillcrest as is the local AIDS project (*The Citizen* 2-24-1988).

Another reporter the same year reflected a similar sentiment, noting : "Hillcrest is a blend. The population is diverse and the different kinds of people who chose to live or visit here co-exist very well" (*San Diego Union* 8-14-1988)

With redevelopment in the 1990s, the area began to lose some of its character as old businesses closed and the population of homeless people grew. Retail rental rates increased dramatically, driving out older established business. An article in the *San Diego Union* of October 30, 1990 noted the passing of the Otento Book Store (in business 27 years), Chicken Pie Shop (now occupied by a Starbucks), Sid Arnolds Jewelry Store (in business 35 years), and Hammonds Variety Store (*San Diego Union* 10-30-1990). In spite of these changes Hillcrest still remains a pedestrian oriented neighborhood where a variety of diverse people interact on a daily basis. Long time residents still feel it is a unique place with a Greenwich Village atmosphere (Dunst 2003).

#### b. Mission Hills

Mission Hills is the neighborhood that has probably been the least affected by the post World War II changes that so drastically altered most of San Diego. In 1969 the neighborhood was described as one of ". . . low tiled roofed Spanish houses with close shaven lawns, of doctors and merchants and bankers who were proud of their houses and their cars and of being able to live in Mission Hills and bring their children up in such a nice residential area (*San Diego Union* 11-3-1969). It is the area that still retains many of the visions of George Marston and elements of the 1908 Nolen Plan.

Following World War II Mission Hills continued to be an upscale residential neighborhood of upper middle class professionals. Many doctors lived in the district that practiced at Mercy or County hospitals. With the "baby boom" of the 1950s large families became common. A block of mostly Catholic families on Arguello Street had over 72 children. The undeveloped areas in Mission Valley and around Presidio Park provided ample spaces to play (Comer 2003). Pat Comer, who grew up on Arguello Street during this time, and still lives in the area recalled:

When we grew up our parents would let us run wild. You can't do that today. We would go down to Mission Valley and ride horses, and hunt, and fish, we could go down there and get lost all day as well as we could at the end of Varista [Presidio Park]. . . . We didn't have day care, we didn't preschool we just had our friends and the ability to go down and live (a very unrestricted) life. . . . Now the element [around Presidio Park] has gone to a lot of transients, there's a lot of gay activity so that parents are very fearful (Comer 2003).

Another long term Mission Hills resident, Marvin Randall, has similar memories:

It was a real close neighborhood area. There were lots and lots of kids to play with. I attended St. Vincent's Elementary School and being a Catholic elementary school, there

were large families. It wasn't uncommon to have families that had six, seven, eight, ten kids. One family even had thirteen. So there were always kids to play with. We rode our bikes, skateboards, hung out, had water balloon fights, chased each other. . . . we used to play at the dead end of Ibis Street and Montecito all the time. We'd go down there, it was a dead end street and (to me at the time) it was quite large, being a little kid. Of course, now I look at it today and it's not very big at all. But we'd go down there and we'd play football. We'd play baseball and we used to play a neighborhood game in the summertime mainly, called "Frankenstein." And it was kind of like a hide-and-seek type of game and as you got caught, you had to become a helper, so eventually what started out as two people chasing you, ended up with everybody chasing you. So you really learned to find really good hiding places over there in Mission Hills in that neighborhood.

But the real good games of Frankenstein happened on Halloween night in the cemetery at Grant School [Calvary Cemetery, now Pioneer Park]. Those were really good games of Frankenstein. We'd have 30, 40 people over there playing in the cemetery on Halloween night, scaring the heck out of each other. And it was an old cemetery with real huge markers, lots of big granite markers you could hide behind and there were also pepper trees that you could climb up in. And when people would walk by, you could jump down out of those trees and just scare the heck out of people. And we would go over there and play. We started playing Frankenstein in that cemetery on Halloween night probably when we were about 11 or 12 and we played until we were about 15 or 16 (M. Randall 2003).

Post war change in the community development in Mission Hills has been small and for the most part unobtrusive. Canyon lots that were too steep to be built on before World War II became marketable during the 1950s and 60's as changing technologies including steel rebar, poured concrete, and concrete block allowed homes to be built on steeper hillsides. As a result, small sections of canyon rims have seen some infilling with more modern homes, although in most cases the scale and setting of these buildings has not been detrimental to the overall architectural character of the community.

The largest post war development, Rodefer Hills, was laid out in the 1950s on the west side of the community overlooking Old Town. The homes in Rodefer Hills reflect the architecture of the 1950s and '60s, California Ranch and International style low slung dwellings with heavy shake roofs. On the east end of Mission Hills, Green Manor, a 13 story residential facility for seniors, was opened by the Congregational Church in 1970 at Ibis Street and Fort Stockton. It became Mission Hills' first and only high rise. Its construction motivated residents to implement height restrictions so that the numerous tall office and apartments buildings that have become part of Hillcrest and the West Park Neighborhoods have not been built in Mission Hills (*San Diego Union* 11-9-1986).

A 1975 article claimed "Mission Hills is more than an old fashioned neighborly section of this city. It is a fifth generation way of life. There are many small houses built in the 20s and 30s – most tidy and neat . . . – then towards the rim larger homes with breathtaking views and the lush greenery of pines, eucalyptus, twisted junipers, acacias and star-jasmine ground cover slipping down the canyons. Much of the flora can be traced to the horticulturalist Kate Sessions" (*Los Angeles Times* 5-4-1975).

A newspaper article in 1986 reflected a similar sentiment. "There is a certain sense of permanence about Mission Hills, a sense of civic wholeness, a place where tradition and history seem to have finally come together to provide people with a place to live in settled contentment in an unsettled world." It remained one of the most popular and most expensive places to live in the city. The area ranked with La Jolla and

Point Loma in home costs. In 1986 the per foot asking price for homes in Mission Hills ranged from \$115 to \$119 a square foot, compared to about \$100 to \$110 a square foot in North Park. The average listing there in December 1977 was \$71,426. By July 1986 it was \$172,252 (*San Diego Union* 11-9-1986).

In 1975 a city planning department census found 8,943 persons living in Mission Hills. By 1986 there were 10,217. At that time the community was experiencing a demographic transition. As older residents passed on, "Many of the old families who have always lived there are finding they are living alone now and young families with children are moving in their place." The permanent population in Mission Hills in '86 was "94 percent white, 1 percent black, the rest other minorities including Latino." By the end of the century this demographic makeup remained largely unchanged (*San Diego Union* 11-9-1986).

The three business nodes at Washington and Goldfinch, on West Lewis Street, and at Fort Stockton Boulevard and Allen Road still serve the community. The grocery store at Fort Stockton and Allen Road became Keifer's Market in the 1950s and is remembered by many current Mission Hills residents as the neighborhood grocery store (Oriol & Oriol 2003; Crowder 2003; Carter 2003, Hillman 2003). In 1996 the old Piggly Wiggly at 1630 West Lewis was owned by Wayne Kanakaris, proprietor of Mission Hills Liquor, a food and beverage store. Additional businesses in the block included a book store, fancy garden shop, upscale hair salons; and other specialty stores featuring antiques, clothes, and furniture (Curtis 1996).

The heart of the Mission Hills business district is Washington and Goldfinch streets where, in a single block in 1969 were located the old Ace Drug Store, a hardware store, two antique shops, cafe and variety store. There were specialty clothing stores and a sausage maker (*San Diego Union* 11-3-1969). Ace Drugs still remained a community institution as it had before World War II. Residents who grew up in the area in the 1950s and '60s remember the store's soda fountain and penny candy (M. Randall 2003, Zolezzi 2003; Oriol & Oriol 2003). Dominic Martina, who worked at the Ace in the 1980s recalled:

At the time I started working at the Ace, the final owner had owned the store since 1979. The store had a small postal substation within it, and I was hired to be the postman. So that was a very visible little spot and consequently I came to know either by name or face most of the people who either had businesses or lived in the community because they all used the drugstore, and they all used the post office (Martina 2003).

Like Hillcrest, Mission Hills has seen the closing of several of its older business in the last few years, especially the Ace Drug Store, which, as previously stated, had been a community establishment since before World War II (Baker and Baker 2003). Yet new businesses continue to occupy the older buildings, keeping the business district alive.

### c. University Heights

With most of its area developed before 1930, University Heights did not experience extensive development after World War II. Some commercial buildings were replaced over the decades but the majority of residential change consisted of infilling by replacing older residential buildings with multi family apartment buildings. The first major change was the replacement of Mission Cliffs Gardens in 1941 by a development of single family homes (MacPhail 1983).

As with Mission Hills, the post war "baby boom" brought large numbers of children into the neighborhood. Residents who grew up there in the 1950s and '60s remember "a lot of kids playing."

School grounds, alleys, back yards, and canyons, many of which have now been filled in for development, were favorite places to play (T. Randall 2003).

As the decades continued, apartment buildings became more prominent in some blocks, especially around Park Boulevard, Washington and Normal Street. A 1967 article reported the construction of apartments "eight to ten unit squares with macaroni trim, adobe fronts, and New Orleans porches" (*San Diego Union* 1-12-1970). Some older residents have seen this trend as detrimental to the area. Tayde Randall commented:

What happened probably in the mid 80's that wasn't good was a lot of construction. They tore down some of the homes and put up condos, four and six units where there used to be one lot. And there used to be one house. And that hasn't helped, I don't think, the neighborhood. Because now we have kind of a mishmash of condos, but then some really nice houses. But people are now restoring and preserving. It's a lot more crowded (T Randall 2003).

By the 1990s the neighborhood suffered from an identify crises, prompting Park Boulevard business owners, in 1997, to erect a large neon sign proclaiming the name of the district on Park, just north of Madison Avenue. "Both whimsical and historical, the landmark features a red and green neon lit cable car with huge gold leaf ostriches on either side standing on support pillars of massive river rocks" (*San Diego Union* 4-3-1997). Another symbol of community revitalization was seen in the reopening of the Vermont Street pedestrian bridge in 1994:

The new bridge replaces the old wooden trestle structure – torn down for safety reasons in 1980 – which linked University Heights and Hillcrest Sears (now the uptown shopping center). Fourteen years later a steel and concrete span will re-establish the pedestrian corridor between the two communities. . . . The bridge reestablishes an important pedestrian corridor between the University Heights Community and the Uptown "District Shopping Center" (*University Heights News*, December 1994).

#### **d. Middletown**

The Middletown tract was not completely built up by 1940, resulting in the construction of small subdivisions of post World War II housing in the area. As already noted the construction of Interstate 5 had a major impact on the area, dividing it from the downtown district. Remnants of the commercial district at Five Points still exists are best known as the location of El Indio Taco Shop, an "artist colony" and other specialty shops and restaurants along India and Washington Street. It is estimated that some 700 homes exist within the Middletown area (Brandes and Erzinger 1980).

### **III. General Statement of Existing Architectural Character by Neighborhood**

Because the Uptown Planning District encompasses a large area with a number of diverse neighborhoods that have experienced different developmental histories, current conditions vary widely throughout the area.

#### **A. West Park Neighborhoods**

The area west of Balboa Park between Ash and Walnut Street on the south and north; and Curlew, Dove, Ibis and Hawk Streets on the west was laid out in 1869 as the northern portion of the Horton's Addition subdivision. The street layout is an extension of the grid Horton developed for downtown with blocks measuring around 250 by 300 feet, and lot sizes of 25 by 125 feet. The West Park Neighborhoods first developed during the financial boom of the 1880s. As a result, a number of single and two story Victorian period homes can still be found in the neighborhood. A number of these have been converted from single to multiple family homes. This may have been a result of the extreme housing shortage during World War II. Four to six story apartments along Fifth and Sixth Avenues date from the period of Balboa Park's development circa 1915. Upscale Spanish Revival homes in the area currently known as Bankers Hill, between Front, Curlew, Palm, and Walnut streets also date from this period. Post World War II construction in the form of large office buildings, medical complexes, apartments, and condominiums have inundated the area so that contiguous blocks of period architecture are uncommon.

#### **B. Hillcrest**

The Hillcrest area is ill defined and irregular in shape. The geographic boundaries of this area blur as they blend into the surrounding neighborhoods of University Heights, West Park, and portions of Mission Hills. Where as the boundaries of the area are amorphic the heart of the area as marked by the Hillcrest sign at Fifth and University, is undisputed. Generally the boundaries of the area are distinguished by Dove Street on the west and the 163 Freeway on the east. South of Washington Street, however, the area continues eastward beyond the 163 to Robinson Street. On the south Hillcrest is bordered by Walnut Street, although many residents see the neighborhood as continuing into the West Park area to Laurel Street. On the north the area extends to the south rim of Mission Valley. Numerous subdivisions were laid out along trolley lines to University Heights in this area during the late 1880s and early 1890s. They continued the grid originally established by Horton's Addition in 1869 but with larger block sizes that averaged 300 by 600 feet, and lots that varied from between 25 to 50 feet in width and 130 to 150 feet in length. Although very little actual development occurred in this area during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the grid system remained largely unaltered as construction occurred during later periods. Accelerated development began with the Hillcrest subdivision in 1906. An extensive business district developed along University Avenue and residential neighborhoods filled in the surrounding blocks. The area today contains modest single and two story Craftsman, Mission and Spanish Revival style houses. Some were designed by noted architects such as Louis Gill, Irving Gill and William S. Hebbard. A common multiple family dwelling type in this area includes the Bungalow Courtyard. An occasional Victorian period house, apartment, or business building occurs within a few blocks of the old trolley routes along University and Fourth and Fifth Avenues. Large areas of Hillcrest have been affected by post World War II construction, especially in the business district along University and Fifth and Sixth Avenues where high rise offices, apartments, and medical buildings have been constructed. Including such noted post World War II buildings as Lloyd Ruocco's Design Center on Fifth Avenue. The area north of Washington

between Dove Street and Sixth Avenue is heavily built up with medical facilities that surround Scripps-Mercy Hospital and UCSD Medical Center.

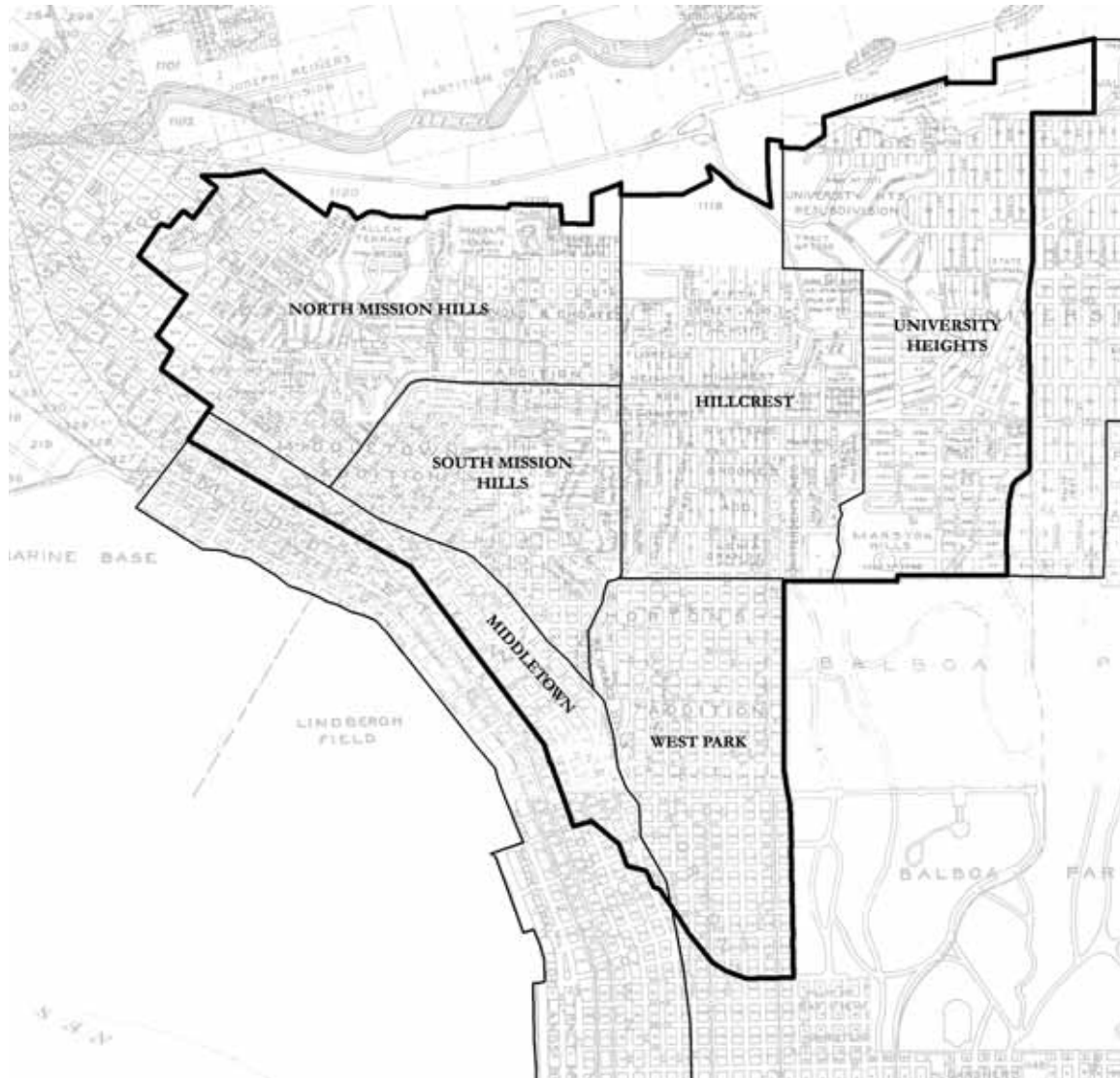


Figure 14: Neighborhood Boundaries

### C. Mission Hills

The Mission Hills community in its modern day configuration is geographically divided and referred to as North Mission Hills and South Mission Hills. North Mission Hills is a neighborhood west of Hillcrest built on and around the promontory that overlooks both San Diego Bay and Mission Valley. The area is bordered by Dove Street on the east, Old Town on the west, Washington Street on the south, and the south rim of Mission Valley on the north. South Mission Hills is an amalgam of portions of Middletown, Middletown Addition, South Florence Heights, Marine View, C.E Seaman, Osborn Hill as well as several smaller subdivisions. The area is bordered by Washington Street on the north, India Street on the west, Palm Street on the south, and Reynard Way and Dove Street on the east.



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The area saw serious development from around 1910 to 1930. The neighborhoods east of Stephens Street incorporated the street patterns and other elements advocated by John Nolen. Noted architects such as Cliff May, Louis Gill, Richard Requa, the Quayle Brothers, Emmor Brooke Weaver and William Templeton Johnson designed homes in these neighborhoods. These subdivisions are dominated by Spanish Colonial, Craftsman, Prairie and a small number of Tudor Revival style homes with curving tree lined streets laid out in an hierarchical ordering that conform to the topography, natural features such as knolls or depressions shaped into cul-de-sacs, and canyons left undeveloped. Blocks vary in shape and size and there are a minimum of intersections with sharp 90 degree corners. Lots tend to be smaller than in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century subdivision, averaging around 50 by 100 feet. However, with the irregularity of block formation in these neighborhoods, lot size and shape also varies greatly, also adding to the area's character. Sidewalks are set back from the curb. In the Presidio Hills area, street lights are located at corners and on small islands in the center of intersections.

The portions of Mission Hills, east of Stephens Street are based on earlier subdivisions laid out in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century including, Arnold & Choates Addition (Subdivision Map 384, 1877), and North Florence Heights (Subdivision Map 634, 1890). Streets here conform to the grid pattern that originated in the downtown area of Horton's Addition in the 1870s and was extended onto the hills north of the city. Spanish Colonial, Craftsman, and Prairie style homes also dominate this part of Mission Hills. Some exhibit "gull wing" porch dormers with stucco exterior finishes, a local architectural variant. Post World War II construction has occurred in the business district along Washington Street. In addition, as construction techniques improved through the 1960s previously unbuildable lots became buildable and some infill construction took place along the canyon rims.

#### D. University Heights

The portion of University Heights within the Uptown Study Area is bordered by the 163 Freeway and Richmond Street south of Washington Street on the west, Park Boulevard, and Lomitas Drive north of Adams Avenue on the east, Balboa Park on the south and the south rim of Mission Valley on the north. The University Heights Subdivision was filed with the San Diego County Recorder's Office in 1888. Blocks measured 300 by 600 feet with a 20 foot alley down the center. Lots measured 140 by 25 feet (Subdivision Map 558, 1888). The area has some scattered Victorian period buildings that were built during this early period. The majority of the homes in the neighborhood are one and two story Craftsman styles built between 1910 and 1920. Prairie and Romantic Revival styles can also be found in University Heights. . Two and three story apartment buildings are located along Park Boulevard south of Robinson Street. A cluster of nine vernacular houses built from lumber recycled from Camp Kearny after World War I are located along Herbert Street and Herbert Place (Sherfey 2003). Early business buildings dating prior to 1940 are scattered along Park Boulevard including one concentration of Egyptian and Moorish Revival business and apartment buildings between Robinson and University. World War II infill on single family lots occurs in University Heights in the areas around Park Boulevard and into Hillcrest. Many of the bungalow courtyards in these areas had large detached multi family units added in the rear. These additions are likely attributed to the depth of the lots in these areas and the housing shortage caused by the influx of personnel during World War II.

#### E. Middletown

Described as a wedge between downtown and Old Town the portion of the Middletown tract included in this study is bounded by Hawthorn Street on the south, Witherby on the north, and overlaps the area now known as South Mission Hills to Reynard Way, Horton Avenue, Curlew, Jefferson and Front Streets on

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the east. Interstate 5 freeway bounds the study area portion of Middletown on the west. The street pattern is based on the Middletown and Middletown Addition subdivisions of the middle and late 19<sup>th</sup> century which is similar to that of Horton's Addition. Blocks measure around 200 by 350 feet with long narrow lots of about 25 by 100 feet (Subdivision Maps 383, 1859; 584, 1870). This area experienced sporadic development. Lengthy court cases over title, lack of access by public transportation, and the hilly terrain, retarded large scale construction until access by automobile became feasible in the 1920s. Consequently, these neighborhoods have large numbers of stuccoed Spanish Colonial and other Romantic Revival styles popular during that period. These were laid out in small developments within the area. Some, such as Reynard Hills, platted in 1928, resurveyed the original grid to better adapt to the hilly terrain and adopted a pattern of winding streets and irregular shaped blocks and lots similar to those laid out in North Mission Hills west of Stephens Street (Subdivision Map 2097, 1928). This type of growth continued through the 1960s so that the section consists of a variety of small tracts representing residential structures from a variety of periods. Similar to Mission Hills, as construction techniques improved thru the 1960s previously unbuildable lots became buildable and some infill construction took place along the canyon rims.



Figure 15: Reynard Hills

## IV. Uptown Historic Context Statement Themes and Associated Property Types

### A. Introduction

The purpose of a historic context statement is to provide a framework for identifying significant historic property types. An historic context consists of information about historic trends grouped by important themes, place, and time. The historic context is linked with resources through the concept of a property type, which is a grouping of individual properties based on shared physical or associative characteristics (National Park Service 1991a: 4).

In order to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, or the California Register, a building, structure, or site must be significant within a historic context and also meet certain criteria. Both registers use the same basic criteria, and a building that is potentially eligible for the National Register would also qualify for the California Register. According to the National Park Service ". . . the significance of a historic property can be judged and explained only when it is evaluated within its historic context. Historic contexts are those patterns, themes, or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning made clear" (National Park Service 1991b:7). The National Park Service has defined three main categories of historic contexts: local, state and national. A local historic context ". . . represents an aspect of the history of a town, city, county, cultural area, or region, or any portion thereof" (National Park Service 1991b:9). A state historic context represents ". . . an aspect of history of the state as a whole" (National Park Service 1991b:9). Properties important within a national context represent ". . . an aspect of the history of the United States as a whole" (National Park Service 1991b:10). In order to be eligible for the National Register when evaluated within its historic context a property must be demonstrated to be significant under one or more of the following criteria (National Park Service 1991b:12-21):

- A: Is associated with an event, or series of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history.
- B: Has an unequivocal association with the lives of people significant in the past.
- C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- D: Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

An additional requirement for the National Register is the retention of integrity or ". . . the ability of a property to convey its significance." Assessment of integrity includes seven criteria which are: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (National Park Service 1991b:45).

Generally the National Register Criteria excludes properties that are less than fifty years of age unless it can be demonstrated that they are of "exceptional importance" which is defined as "the extraordinary importance of an event or . . . an entire category of resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual" (National Park Service 1991b:42).

For this historic context statement the development of the Uptown Study Area has been organized into six broad themes:

- Transportation and Development (1880-1940)
- George Marston and the Nolen Plan (1908–1930)
- Business Districts (1880-2000)
- Public Parks (1870-1970)
- World War II and Post War Development (1941-2000)
- Medical Community (1900-2000)
- Civic, Ethnic, Religious, and Minority Groups (1880-2000)

Transportation and Development has been broken into three sub-themes:

- Railroad and Horsecar Suburbs (1880-1890)
- Streetcar Suburbs (1890-1940)
- Auto Suburbs (1908 -1940)

The themes are intended to aid in assessing properties at the local level of significance. They are derived from associated events that helped shape the development of the Uptown Study Area. The starting and ending dates for thematic periods are usually determined by key historical events. Each theme spans a particular period. However, in all of the Uptown neighborhoods, events contributing to more than one theme occurred at any given point in time. Therefore, time periods for many of the historic context themes overlap.

## **B. Transportation and Development (1880 – 1940)**

Since the mid-nineteenth century American cities have grown outward by building suburban neighborhoods. Transportation to and from these suburbs evolved with improving technology, through the horse-drawn carriage, steam-driven train, horse-drawn omnibus, electric streetcar, and, finally, the mass-produced, gasoline-powered automobile and motorbus (Ames and Flint 2002). The evolution of the Uptown Study Area suburbs from 1880 to 1940 parallels the national trends described above and can be divided into three stages, each corresponding to a particular chronological period and named for the mode of transportation which predominated at the time and fostered the outward growth of the city and the development of residential neighborhoods:

1. Railroad and Horsecar Suburbs, 1880 to 1890
2. Streetcar Suburbs, 1890 to 1940
3. Early Automobile Suburbs, 1908 to 1940

Each of these transportation types produced a distinctive suburban landscape. On a national level they contributed to the growth of, and coincided with, the emergence of the metropolis - a major event in American history (Ames and Flint 2002). At a local level they should be seen as contributing to, and effecting the nature of, the growth of the city of San Diego prior to World War II.

## 1. Railroad and Horsecar Suburbs (1880 – 1890)

During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century railroad suburbs had become established around many Eastern and Midwestern cities. These outlying communities along established rail lines offered the upper and upper-middle classes an escape from the intense center city urban environment. The railroad simultaneously provided access to the city center while insulating communities from the urban lower classes who could not afford the high cost of commuting (Ames and Flint 2002).

During the same period, horse-drawn cars provided the first mass transit systems by offering regularly scheduled operations along a fixed route. Due to the introduction of the horse-drawn omnibus and later the more efficient horse-drawn streetcar that operated on rails, the perimeters of many cities began to expand. Horse-drawn cars increased the distance one could commute in one-half hour from two to three miles, thereby extending the distance between the center city and land desirable for residential development from 13 to almost 30 square miles. Transportation began to influence the geography of social and economic class as the cost of traveling between home and work determined where different groups settled. The middle and working classes settled in neighborhoods closer to the central city that was accessible by horse-drawn cars, while those with higher incomes settled in the railroad suburbs (Ames and Flint 2002).

The boom of the 1880s in San Diego saw residential development in the Uptown Study Area based on horse drawn rail cars and local railroad lines known as "motor roads" or "steam motors." Although electric trolley lines were introduced during the final years of the decade, they closed with the collapse of the boom and their effect was largely inconsequential until the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During the boom of the 1880s the first residential districts in the southern portion of the Uptown area west of City (Balboa) Park were established. This included the area bounded by Ash Street to the south, Balboa Park to the east, Walnut Street to the north and present-day Interstate 5 to the west. The only other area of any significant development within the Uptown Study Area during the period was the subdivision of University Heights, which saw limited growth at this time mostly within a few blocks of the steam motor and horsecar lines.

### a. Associated Property Types and Land Development Patterns

Single and Multifamily Family Residences – Residential buildings dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century are scattered throughout the neighborhoods west of Balboa Park, and in a linear development towards University Heights near the old trolley routes along 4th Street, University Avenue, and Park Boulevard. Many are large multistory Victorian style homes constructed by wealthy homeowners during the period, while others are smaller, more humble versions of the same types. Italianate, Stick or East Lake, Queen Anne and other more vernacular styles dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century can be found in the study area. Planing mill machinery developed after the Civil War made mass production of ornate door frames, moldings, sash window units, and porch ornamentations possible. Even the most modest dwellings could be embellished with gingerbread trim. These Victorian styles gave particular emphasis to the silhouette and surface texture of the exterior. Many houses were adorned with gables, dormers, towers, turrets, high chimneys, and tall steeply pitched roofs. Exterior walls were usually of wood, but occasionally of masonry. They were covered with rich patterned finishes, from sunburst-shaped clapboards to fish scale shingles. A large porch with lavish spindle work was often located on the first floor (Gleye et al. 1981).

In the earlier subdivisions, such as University Heights, Cleveland Heights, Fifth Street Addition, and University Heights street layouts were an extension of the grid pattern that originated in the downtown

area of Horton's Addition in the 1870s. Blocks measured around 300 by 600 feet. Lots were long and narrow. In the Fifth Street Addition, for example, they measured around 25 by 150 feet (Subdivision Map 577, 1889). University Heights lots measured 24 by 140 feet with an alley down the center of the block (Subdivision Map 558, 1888). Cleveland Heights had a similar block layout with 50 by 130 foot lots (Subdivision Map 621, 1890).

### **b. Significance**

Modern development has destroyed many of the pre-1900 homes in the Uptown Study Area especially in the West Park Neighborhoods and along the public transportation corridor to University Heights. Due to their relative scarcity, any properties associated with development in the area prior to 1900 should be considered a significant resource even if integrity is marginal. Only if the building has been altered to the point that its Victorian period origins could not be recognized, would it not be considered an important resource.

## **2. Streetcar Suburbs (1890-1940)**

In 1887 the introduction of the first electric-powered streetcar system in Richmond, Virginia, brought a new period of suburbanization. The electric streetcar, or trolley, allowed people to travel in 10 minutes as far they could walk in 30 minutes. It was quickly adopted in cities from Boston to Los Angeles. By 1902, 22,000 miles of streetcar tracks served American cities. From 5,783 miles of track in 1890 street car lines in US. cities had increased to 34,404 miles by 1907 (Ames and Flint 2002).

By 1890, streetcar lines began to foster a tremendous expansion of suburban growth in cities of all sizes. In older cities, electric streetcars quickly replaced horse-drawn cars, making it possible to extend transportation lines outward and greatly expanding the availability of land for residential development. Growth occurred first in outlying rural villages that were now interconnected by streetcar lines, and second, along the new residential corridors created along the streetcar routes (Ames and Flint 2002).

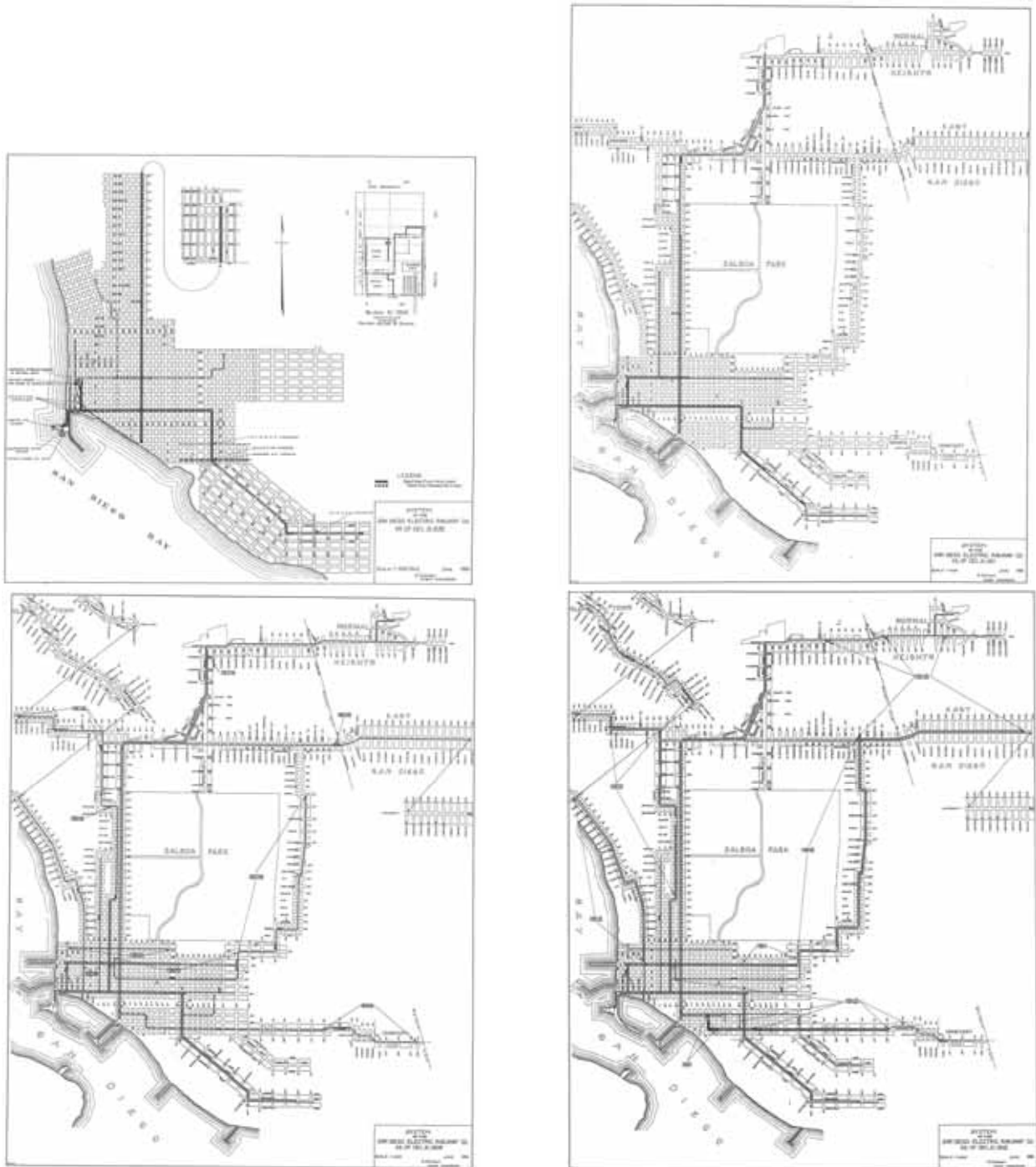
Socioeconomically, streetcar suburbs attracted a wide range of people from the working to upper-middle class, with the great majority being middle class. By keeping fares low in cost and offering a flat fare with free transfers, streetcar operators encouraged households to move to the suburban periphery, where the cost of land and a new home was cheaper. In many places, especially the Midwest and West, the streetcar became the primary means of transportation for all income groups (Ames and Flint 2002).

As streetcar systems evolved, cross-town lines made it possible to travel from one suburban center to another, and interurban lines connected outlying towns to the central city and to each other. Streetcar suburbs formed continuous corridors. Because the streetcar made numerous stops spaced at short intervals, developers platted rectilinear subdivisions where homes, generally on small lots, were built within a five- or 10-minute walk of the streetcar line. Often the streets were extensions of the grid street system that characterized the plan of the older city (Ames and Flint 2002).

Neighborhood oriented commercial facilities, such as grocery stores, bakeries, and drugstores, clustered at the intersections of streetcar lines or along the more heavily traveled routes. Multiple story apartment houses also appeared at these locations, designed either to front directly on the street or to form a u-shaped enclosure around a recessed entrance court and garden (Ames and Flint 2002).

Figure 16:

Streetcar line additions from 1892 to 1901 and 1909 to 1912



During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century development of suburban neighborhoods in the Uptown Study Area were greatly influenced by the expansion of streetcar lines. By 1913 trolley lines extended east from the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Washington Streets in Hillcrest to Goldfinch Street in Mission Hills and then along West Lewis Street and Fort Stockton Drive. The Fourth Avenue tracks were later realigned to run along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Dodge 1960). The spread of the San Diego Electric Railway made it possible for the middle and working classes to own houses in single family residential neighborhoods that once would have been considered too far from downtown employment to be viable for anyone but the rich. It also made it possible to more than double San Diego's housing supply in a short period of time (Gehl 2003). With renewed economic growth between 1900 and 1910 new subdivisions were laid out in the current Uptown Study Area as streetcar lines spread north of the city. These included Hillcrest and Mission Hills, and some portions of South Mission Hills. Although originally laid out during the boom of the 1880s, University Heights also saw major growth during this period based on its access to trolley lines.

The street car lines provided reliable public transportation for residents of the current Uptown Study Area and greater urban San Diego. There were no school buses within the city and children used the trolleys to get to school (Beyer 2003). Phil Klauber remembers riding the trolley with his sister Alice from their home at 5<sup>th</sup> and Maple, west of Balboa Park, to their elementary school at the State Normal Training School in University Heights (Klauber 2003). The street cars serving the West Park Neighborhoods, Hillcrest, Mission Hills, and University Heights connected with lines that continued eastward down University and Adams Avenues to Normal Heights, Kensington and East San Diego and State College. They also provided a direct link to downtown from where other cars traveled to Point Loma, Mission Beach, Pacific Beach and Bird Rock (Baker 2003; Comer 2003). The street car lines are remembered as "the life's blood of public transportation to this town" (Comer 2003).

Although daily trolley rides were "just routine," they also provided transportation for weekend or summer outings. Charles Beyer recalled:

I remember one year, I don't know what year it was, maybe 1938 or '37, not sure, but one of the mothers in our neighborhood got this idea. She said, "Why don't you guys tell everybody to get a 50-cent pass", a streetcar pass. It was good for one week and it was good for children. And you could go anywhere you'd want to, wherever these go for 50 cents. All week long. Of course, the mothers loved this. They'd pack us a lunch and all the kids would get on with this lunch. We didn't know where we were going, you know, but we'd get on those street cars and then towards the end of the...no it wasn't a month, it was a week. A week pass. Towards the end of the week, why then we thought, we would more or less start planning our trip. But we took a lot of streetcars. You see, most of the transportation in those days was streetcars and there used to be a streetcar that went all the way to La Jolla. And I just happened to think. When we go across the mud flats over toward Mission Beach, there were no side streets, no streets, just the street car was on the mud flats, was what we called it. And the conductor would open that thing up and it would go and he'd honk that whistle, blow that whistle. I think they got a kick out of it. And that thing would go and that thing would be rocking and rolling and I can remember we were all on that thing there, we were hollering and yelling and everything too, you know. We'd run across kids from other areas that were also out and about with this 50-cent pass. But that was quite an experience (Beyer 2003).

Following World War II, ridership on the street cars drastically declined. By 1948, ". . . only three areas were being served by electric street cars. They were out to Adams Avenue, up Broadway to Thirtieth Street, and out University Avenue to East San Diego. On March 27, 1949, a 'farewell to street cars'



excursion was conducted by railroad boosters. On April 23, the street cars made their last runs on the three lines, and were replaced with buses. Some cars were sold; most of them were scrapped. San Diego thus became the first major City in the Southwest to abandon street cars for buses" (Pourade 1977).

**a. Associated Property Types and Land Development Patterns**

Single Family Residences - Single family residences built between 1900 and 1930 display a variety of architectural styles including Craftsman style bungalows, Prairie, Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival, and other Eclectic styles.

Craftsman bungalows grew out of the Arts and Crafts movement, a reaction to the pretentiousness of the highly ornate Italianate, Queen Anne, and East Lake architectural styles popular during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many felt overwhelmed by the glut of decorative wooden gingerbread forms characteristic of Victorian structures (Gleye et al. 1981:62-65). The Craftsman movement found architectural expression in development of the Craftsman Bungalow: a low house, with a shallow pitched roof, broad overhanging eaves, and a deep covered front porch. Cobbles or klinker brick were often incorporated into the structure so that it appeared to grow out of the ground. The style exhibited exposed wood work. Structural members such as roof rafters and beams were exposed and emphasized to give a feel of hand craftsmanship in construction of the entire house. An oriental influence was often times incorporated into the finish trim (Glye et al. 1981:65).

Although Craftsman style houses continued to be built through the 1930s, after World War I their popularity was overshadowed by a variety of Period Revival styles. The 1915 Panama – California Exposition in Balboa Park introduced Spanish - Mediterranean inspired revival architecture to the San Diego region. This Eclectic movement in architecture stressed relatively pure copies of architectural traditions originally developed in European countries and their New World colonies. Neoclassical, Chateausque, French, Spanish, and Colonial Revival designs are individual styles within the Eclectic movement (McAlester and McAlester 1968:321 - 324). Although a variety of revival style houses can be found within the Uptown Study Area, neighborhoods developed between the end of the first World War and 1940 are dominated by those of Spanish and Mediterranean origin including late Mission Revival, Spanish Revival, Churrigueresque, and Pueblo Revival. Stucco covered walls, with either gabled or flat roofs covered in red tiles are the hallmarks of these buildings. Window and door openings are often recessed to mimic the appearance of adobe construction. Other design elements included the use of arches, patios, decorative tile, and wrought iron (Glye et al. 1981: 74-94; McAlester and McAlester 1986 396-434).

Multifamily Residences – Beginning in the late 1920s, a variety of multifamily residential structures were built including duplexes, fourplexes, two and three story apartment buildings and bungalow courts. A 1986 study revealed that: "Most of the courts were located along or very near the streetcar lines north of Balboa Park - suburban settings with excellent access to downtown. Very few of the courts were located more than three blocks from a streetcar line, a fact that has made for continuing good access even with today's bus service" (Curtis and Ford 1988). Most multifamily residences built prior to 1940 were constructed in the Craftsman or Mediterranean Revival styles described above, although other types also occur.

Street layout changed through time in the streetcar suburbs, largely as a result of innovations in urban planning adopted by some developers during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As mentioned earlier, the earlier subdivisions were an extension of the grid pattern that originated in the downtown area of Horton's Addition in the 1870s. Lots were designed long and narrow, to allow for high density and close proximity to the street car lines. During the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century an alternate street layout design was

adopted in the subdivisions of Mission Hills west of Stephens Street that incorporated many of John Nolen's ideals, including a hierarchy of road widths, locally derived (Spanish) street names, and contour streets that followed the topography (Gehl 2003). These include the Mission Hills Subdivision (Subdivision Map 115, 1907), Mission Hills No. 2, (Subdivision Map 1234, 1910), Resubdivision of Inspiration Heights (Subdivision Map 1700, 1917), Allen Terrace (Subdivision Map 1620, 1913), Presidio Ridge (Subdivision Map 1769, 1923), and Presidio Hills (Subdivision Map 1934, 1926). The street layout in these neighborhoods is quite unique. Blocks vary in shape and size and there are a minimum of intersections with sharp 90 degree corners. The main thoroughfares of Fort Stockton Drive and Sunset Street are 60 feet wide. These exhibit broad gentle curves with narrower 45 feet side streets winding off of at various angles. Lots tend to be smaller than in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century subdivisions, averaging around 50 by 100 feet. However, with the irregularity of block formation in these neighborhoods, lot size and shape also varies greatly, adding to the areas character. The distinctive curvilinear street patterns of these subdivision makes the portion of Mission Hills west of Stephens Street one of the most unique neighborhoods in San Diego.

### **b. Significance**

Properties associated with the Craftsman and Mediterranean styles are abundant throughout the Uptown Study Area. Individually significant examples should retain a high degree of integrity. In many areas however, large tracts of these homes exist that have fair to excellent integrity and encompass several contiguous blocks. These may qualify as historic residential suburbs. In these cases buildings with only marginal integrity may still qualify as contributing elements to a potential historic district. Additionally, the significance of landscape elements such as street layout, plantings, streetscapes, parks and open space areas should also be considered when this area is reviewed.

## **3. Automobile Suburbs (1908-1940)**

The introduction of the Model-T automobile by Henry Ford in 1908 spurred the third stage of suburbanization. The rapid adoption of the mass-produced automobile in the United States led to the creation of the automobile-oriented suburbs of single-family houses on spacious lots that have become the quintessential American landscape of the twentieth century (Ames and Flint 2002).

Between 1910, when Ford began producing the Model-T on a massive scale, and 1930, automobile registrations in the United States increased from 458,000 to nearly 22 million. Automobile sales grew astronomically: 2,274,000 cars in 1922, more than 3 million annually from 1923 to 1926, and nearly four and a half million in 1929. According to Federal Highway Administration statistics, 8,000 automobiles were in operation in 1900, one-half million in 1910, nine-and-a-quarter million in 1920, and nearly 27 million in 1930 (Ames and Flint 2002).

The rise of private automobile ownership stimulated an intense period of suburban expansion between 1918 and the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. As a result of the increased mobility offered by the automobile, suburban growth began to fill in between the linear areas of development created by the radial streetcar lines. By the end of the 1930s, the American automobile suburb of small, moderately priced homes along curving tree lined streets and cul-de-sacs had taken form (Ames and Flint 2002).

By the mid 1920s the automobile had come to dominate life in urban San Diego. Photographs from this period show the streets filled with cars (Starr 1986:154, 156, 163). In Hillcrest, Mission Hills, and University Heights the adoption of the automobile overlapped and augmented development already

underway in tracts originally laid out as street car suburbs. In the Middletown area, including South Mission Hills, the advent of the automobile brought development of land that had not been accessible by public transportation as developers laid out lots along paved streets on hills and in canyons that had previously been inaccessible.

#### **a. Associated Property Types and Land Development Patterns**

Residential Structures - As in the streetcar suburbs that saw development between 1910 and 1940, single and multifamily dwellings in the automobile suburbs of the Uptown Study Area display a variety of architectural types, including Craftsman style bungalows, Mission and Spanish Revival, and other Eclectic styles.

A major shift in street layout and lot size as a result of the adoption of the automobile could not be detected in studying subdivision maps of the project area. By the late teens and early 20s, when the car was becoming the dominant form of transportation in the United States, most of the project area had already been subdivided. The layout of areas removed from trolley lines such as Middletown and South Mission Hills, which was originally subdivided as the Middletown Addition, followed grid and lot patterns imposed by original subdivisions platted in the middle and late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Subdivision Maps 383, 1859; 584, 1870). Later developments of the 1920s such as Presidio Hills and Marston Hills, on the north side of Balboa Park, or Reynard Hills, on the east edge of Middletown, adopted the irregular block sizes, curvilinear street layouts, and varying lot sizes that had originated in the Mission Hills subdivisions around 1910 and were more the result of the influence of Nolen's planning concepts than the influence of the automobile. (Subdivision Maps 1934, 1926; 1790, 1924; 2097, 1928).

#### **b. Significance**

As already noted, properties associated with the Craftsman and Mediterranean styles are abundant throughout the Uptown Study Area. Individually significant examples should retain a high degree of integrity. In many areas however, large tracts of these homes exist that have fair to excellent integrity and encompass several contiguous blocks. These may qualify as historic residential suburbs. In these cases buildings with only marginal integrity may still qualify as contributing elements to the potential historic district. Additionally, the significance of landscape elements such as street layout, plantings, streetscapes, parks and open space areas should also be considered when this area is reviewed.

### **C. George Marston and the Nolen Plan (1908-1930)**

During the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century George Marston became an advocate of the cultural development, moral uplifting, and beautification of San Diego. He was an outspoken Progressive who believed in the latest concepts of city planning (Henessey 1986). In 1907 Marston hired one of the founding leaders of modern city planning, John Nolen, to develop a plan for San Diego. His 1908 plan had five major elements: a public plaza and civic center, bay front development, small open spaces, a formal system of streets and boulevards, and a park system. Although never formally adopted by the city, many elements of Nolen's Plan were used by Marston and other developers in the subdivisions they designed in the following two decades (Henessey 1986; Gehl 2003). Many of Nolen's concepts had their basis in the City Beautiful Movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with roads designed to follow the natural topography, and natural features such as knolls or depressions shaped into cul-de-sacs. Deep ravines were often left undisturbed for the purpose of recreation and scenic enjoyment (Ames and Flint 2002).

The Mission Hills neighborhoods west of Stephens Street are one of the areas that still retains many of the visions of George Marston and elements of the 1908 Nolen Plan. This is most notable in the hierarchy of road widths, as well as Spanish and other locally derived street names, open canyons, and contour

streets that conform with the topography rather than impose a preconceived grid pattern on the geographical features of the land. Nolen felt that the prevailing grid pattern ignored local topography, resulting in expansive cut-and-fill street construction and the destruction of canyons (Gehl 2003). He noted in his report ". . . until very recently no contour streets have been laid out" (Nolen 1908:9 quoted in Gehl 2003).



**Figure 17: Hermosa Way**

As already noted, the street layout in these neighborhoods is quite unique when compared to most other parts of San Diego. Blocks vary in shape and size and there are a minimum of intersections with sharp 90 degree corners. The main thoroughfares, Fort Stockton Drive and Sunset, are gently curving streets approximately 60 feet wide, with narrower side streets 45 feet in width, winding off of at various angles. Lots tend to be smaller than in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century subdivision, averaging around 50 by 100 feet. However, with the irregularity of block formation in these neighborhoods, lot size and shape also varies greatly, also adding to the area's character. The distinctive curvilinear street patterns of these subdivision makes the portion of Mission Hills west of Stephens Street one of the most unique neighborhoods in San Diego. In this sense the Mission Hills neighborhoods differ most dramatically from earlier tracts laid out before Nolen's plans, especially in University Heights and Hillcrest where the grid pattern of Horton's Addition was simply extended to cover the rough topography of the mesas north of downtown (Gehl 2003).

George Nolen's concepts were highly influential in two other subdivisions within the study area developed by Marston. One is Marston Hills located on the northern edge of Balboa Park. The other is Presidio Hills, which became the westernmost subdivision of Mission Hills (Henessey 1986; *San Diego Union* 3-7-1926).

### 1. Associated Land Development Patterns and Significance

The concepts of the Nolen Plan in Mission, Marston, and Presidio Hills is manifested in the layout of the neighborhoods and can be seen in curving tree lined streets laid out in an hierarchical ordering that conform to the topography, natural features such as knolls or depressions shaped into cul-de-sacs, and canyons left undeveloped. Blocks vary in shape and size and there are a minimum of intersections with sharp 90 degree corners. Lots tend to be smaller than in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century subdivision, averaging around 50 by 100 feet. However, with the irregularity of block formation lot size and shape also varies greatly. Side walks are set back from the curb. In the Presidio Hills area street lights are located at corners and on small islands in the center of intersections. In areas where these features combine with substantial tracts of historic homes of fair to excellent integrity the features of Nolen's designs would be contributing elements to potential historic residential neighborhood districts.

#### D. Business Districts (1880 - 2000)

Business districts were an essential part of residential suburbs before the advent of the shopping center after World War II. Neighborhood oriented commercial facilities, such as grocery stores, bakeries, and drugstores, clustered at the intersections of streetcar lines or along the more heavily traveled routes. Before the advent of the automobile these districts were often situated so passengers could get off the trolley, do their shopping and walk to their homes. Business nodes often developed where commercial buildings clustered at the intersection of major transportation hubs where trolley lines crossed each other or major pedestrian or auto thoroughfares (Ames and Flint 2002). In addition, commercial strips (often referred to as "taxpayer strips") also developed in long linear lines along some streetcar routes. With the advent of the automobile commercial strips became even more prevalent (Liebs 1995: 12-15). The Uptown Study Area contains several business districts which will be listed below under the subdivision name where they are located. In addition to these major businesses are many former corner grocery stores located throughout the neighborhoods which are reminiscent of the period before World War II when many housewives walked to the corner grocer to buy the items needed for that day, even if the family owned an automobile.

##### West Park Neighborhoods

The main business district in the West Park Neighborhoods is centered around Fifth and Laurel Streets and extends along Fifth from Ash Street on the south to University Avenue in Hillcrest. In 1921 the area had very little commercial activity and consisted largely of dwellings, flats, and apartments. By 1928 businesses were establishing around the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> and Laurel. These included drug stores, barber shops, printers, and clothing shops. The occasional corner grocery store could also be found along Fifth Street at this time. This pattern continued through the late 1920s, but gradually changed over time. By the early 1950s restaurants, stores, and medical offices dominated most intersections along Fifth Street (Sanborn 1921, 1953; San Diego Directory 1928)

##### Hillcrest

The main business district in Hillcrest is centered around Fifth and Sixth Streets and University Avenue. Commercial activity actually extends from First Street eastward along University to Park Boulevard in

University Heights and westward along Washington Street to Mission Hills. The University Avenue portion had developed as a commercial strip along the streetcar line by 1921 (Sanborn 1921). Major business development along Washington Street had not occurred by 1921. In 1928 this thoroughfare was still dominated by residential housing east of the Mission Hills business node between Falcon and Hawk Streets. With the increasing dependence of the automobile, this eventually changed and a commercial strip had become established connection Mission Hills and Hillcrest by the early 1950s (Sanborn 1921, 1953; San Diego Directory 1928).



**Figure 18: Hillcrest looking West on University Avenue 1928**

#### University Heights

The commercial district in University Heights originated as small business nodes along Park Boulevard. By 1921 a cluster of small stores, a drugstore, and a bakery had been established around the location of the State Normal School at the corner of Park and El Cajon Boulevards. These were located along the east side of Park in the 4200 block between Howard Street and El Cajon Boulevard, and on the west side of Park in the 4300 block, on the north side of the Normal School campus. Another node was located at the Intersection of Park Boulevard and Adams Avenue. A third node, in the 3700 block of Park between Robinson Street and University Avenue, developed during the Twenties. Consisting strictly of residential buildings in 1921, by 1928 a number of businesses centered around the Egyptian Theater were

located along both sides of the block including a pharmacy, grocer, meat market, frit stand, dry goods store, restaurant, barber shop, bakery, and doctors and dentist offices. By the early 1950s the entire length of Park Boulevard had developed into a mixed use strip of commercial and residential buildings (Sanborn 1921, 1953, San Diego Directory 1928). This commercial district extended eastward along both Adams Avenue, University Avenue, and El Cajon Boulevard beyond the study area. (Sanborn 1953).

#### Mission Hills

Three commercial nodes became established along the main trolley routes in Mission Hills. One was centered at the intersection of Washington and Goldfinch Streets where a variety of businesses served both Mission Hills and residents of South Mission Hills in the Middletown area. By 1928 the node had expanded to include both sides of the streets in an area bounded by Washington, Goldfinch, Jackdaw, and Ibis Streets. Some of the businesses included: G.H. Sherlock's real estate office, W.C. Paulson's bakery, D.A. Mobel's real estate office, Mrs. Dora McMullen's beauty parlor and Otis McMullen's barber shop, F.W. Walter's restaurant, A.L. St. Clair's grocery, Clavell's confectionary, the Ace Drug Store, Edward Goodall's butcher shop, Sachs Harley's gas station, Heller's Grocery, C.S. Hardy's butcher shop, Frank Krause's cleaners, Petterson and Mathew's Garage, Frank Plunder's shoe repair, Al Lee's restaurant, Paul Letvinoff's tailor shop, J.R. Chitwood's auto repair, and W.B. Melborn's real estate office (San Diego Directory 1928).

A second business area developed on the 3800 block of West Lewis Street between Palmetto and Stephens streets. This was the end of the trolley line from 1909 until 1913 when it was extended to the intersection of Fort Stockton Drive and Trias Street. Commercial buildings were established along the south side of this block by 1921. The north side developed during the 1920s and by 1928 the district contained the Mission Hills Pharmacy, bakeries, grocery stores, a fruit stand, a cleaners, a notions shop, a novelty shop, a hardware store, and a restaurant. This business node was centered around a Safeway grocery store at 1604 West Lewis and Heller's groceries at 1630, which later became a Piggly Wiggly Market (San Diego Directory 1928; Baker and Baker 2003). A third small business node developed in the 1900 block of Fort Stockton Drive, at the north west corner of Fort Stockton Drive and Allen Road. No commercial buildings existed here in 1921. By 1928 the corner was the location of O.B. Bailey's grocery store, the dress making shop of Mrs. Gertrude Barton, and Taner's Drug Store (San Diego Directory 1928).

#### Middletown

As a later automobile suburb the Middletown area did not see the development of as large a business district as those within Mission Hills, Hillcrest, or University Heights. The main commercial center for this area was on India Street outside the study area. A small commercial node called Five Points developed near the intersection of Washington (formerly Andrews and Pierce Streets) and India Streets during the 1920s. In 1921 this area had very little development with only a few scattered dwellings. By 1928 a small business center had formed that was concentrated two blocks south of India on California Street. It included a cleaners, grocers, two physicians, barber shop, and gas stations, including the Five Points Service Station. The Five Points Realty Company was also located there. The district gradually grew northward and by 1940 a grocer, meat market, and gas station were located along Andrews between India and California streets. In 1955 the Five Points Barber Shop, Cleaners, Delicatessen, Food Market, Tavern, Meat Market, and Motel were located on California Street. Long time Mission Hills Resident Pat Comer remembers the Mission Brewery, Palomar Laundry, Palomar Market, Palomar Motel, and a Bank of America in this neighborhood. The Five Points district was severely impacted by construction of Interstate Five in the 1960s. The center of the business node on California Street is outside the study area and was severely impacted by freeway construction. Small commercial structures in the study area near

Washington and India are remnants of the old Five Points commercial district (Sanborn 1921, 1953, San Diego Directory 1928, 1940).

## 1. Associated Property Types

Commercial Structures - The large number of commercial buildings associated with the business districts tend to be two story structures with office space above the ground floor. They housed restaurants, grocers, hardware and drug stores, neighborhood theaters, and other local businesses that supported the residential suburbs. Most of these buildings have minimal stylistic trim reflective of the architectural styles popular when they were built. Modest false front and Beaux Arts styles scattered throughout the West Park Neighborhoods and along the old trolley routes that followed 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> streets, University Avenue and Park Boulevard in University Heights, represent 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century business buildings. Those built after World War I continued the Beaux Arts and false front traditions as well as the variety of Eclectic styles popular during the 20s and 30s. Many have the stucco finishes and red tile roof trim of the Mediterranean Revival designs.

On Park Boulevard in University Heights is the concentration of Egyptian and Moorish Revival buildings centered around the former Egyptian Theater. One of the more exotic of the Eclectic styles that flourished during the 1920s, Egyptian Revival became popular after the discovery of Tutankhamen's (King Tut's) tomb in Egypt in 1922. These buildings attempted to mimic Egyptian Temples in appearance and decor. They had flat roofs and walls of incised stucco. The walls often angle out at the bottom and curve at the top. Often, centered just below this cornice is a base relief of an ancient Egyptian religious design consisting of a sun disk with flanking cobra heads and vulture wings outspread on both sides, symbolizing protection. Most Egyptian Revival buildings exhibit columns as either pilasters attached to a wall or free standing pillars, resembling bundles of papyrus stalks. They may also have exotic designs or hieroglyphics (Hobbs-Halmay 1992).

## 2. Significance

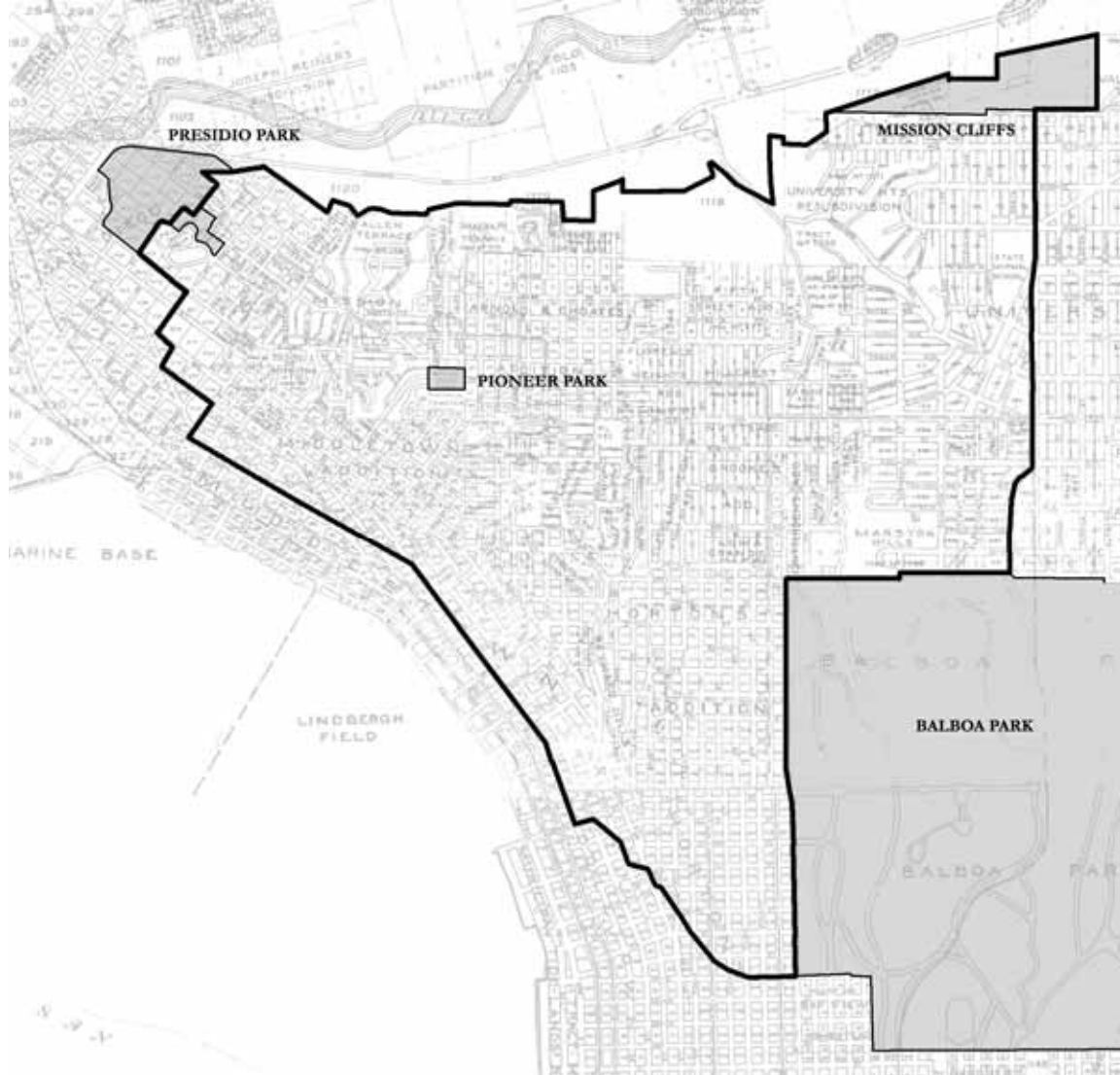
Properties associated with business districts are common in the Uptown Study Area. On an individual basis, significant examples should retain a high degree of integrity and a strong association with trolley lines, or with specific businesses or business types that were pivotal to the area's economic development, or played a significant role in the social and cultural life of the neighborhoods. In areas where a contiguous group of commercial buildings exist that have fair to excellent integrity, they may qualify as a potential historic district.

### E. Public Parks (1870- 1970)

The Uptown Study Area is bordered by Balboa Park, which is just outside its south and east boundaries, Presidio Park, at its northwest corner, and the Old Trolley Barn Park on its northeastern edge. Pioneer Park is located in Mission Hills. Originally known as City Park, Balboa Park received its current name in



1910 when it was landscaped by the well known horticulturalist Kate Sessions in preparation for the 1915



**Figure 19: Public Parks**

Panama-Pacific Expedition. During World War I the Navy established a hospital on a portion of the park which was added to by a modern structure in the 1970s. Another Worlds Fair in 1935 brought additional development. Within the Uptown Study Area, Balboa Park has had the greatest influence on development in the West Park and Hillcrest neighborhoods by providing a large area of open space that greatly adds to the desirability of these locations as places where people want to live.

Presidio Park was developed by Gorge Marston in the 1920s and dedicated in July 1928. The park was designed by John Nolen and the Spanish Colonial Style Museum by William Templeton Johnson. John Hoyt, another renowned landscape architect, designed the gardens, which, for the time, were a remarkable exotic plant collection. Since its development Presidio Park has defined the northwestern boundary of Mission Hills.

Pioneer Park was originally established as a cemetery. The following brief sketch is by Historian Laurie Bissell:

In 1870, the City of San Diego set aside ten acres of land, bought from Joseph Manasse, for a cemetery. Half of the cemetery would be for Protestant burials, the other half for the Catholics. The Protestants never used their plot. The Catholic section, said to have been laid out by Father Antonio Ubach, became known as "Calvary Cemetery." Many early San Diegans such as the Bandinis and Coutts, the Ames and Father Ubach were amongst the 1,650 buried at Calvary.

With the opening of "Holy Cross," a new Catholic cemetery in 1919, Calvary fell to disuse. Burials continued through 1960, but were rare. The Catholic Parish of the Immaculate Conception continued to maintain Calvary through 1939, when the City took on the responsibility to provide employment under the W.P.A. Just before the City took over, a fire in the caretaker's shack, located on Calvary grounds, destroyed all the burial records except one book which dated back to 1899.<sup>20</sup> Unmarked graves lost their identity.

The W.P.A. maintained Calvary and built a protective adobe wall around it. Nevertheless, through the years, vandals and time turned the cemetery into an eyesore. In 1970, to clean up and avoid further deterioration, the City transformed Calvary Cemetery into a Pioneer Park, a process which, among other things, involved removing the majority of grave markers, and "storing" them in a ravine at Mount Hope where they remain today (Bissell 1982).

The Old Trolley Barn Park is the site of the former brick trolley car barns that were located at the northern end of the San Diego Electric Railway Company's line. The buildings stood through the 1970s. The property was eventually acquired by the city of San Diego and the buildings were demolished so the property could be developed into a passive neighborhood park (Comer 2003).

### **1. Associated Property Types**

Pioneer and Presidio Parks have many landscape elements including walls, walk ways, statuary, plantings, grave headstones, rest rooms, and museum buildings. These range in scope from original grave markers at Pioneer Park to landscapes designed by John Nolen, exotic plant gardens laid out by Roland Hoyt, and buildings and structures built by William Templeton Johnson and the WPA.

### **2. Significance**

Both Presidio and Pioneer Park should be considered significant resources based on their associations with the Hispanic and early American period pioneers of San Diego County, George Marston and the Nolen Plan and projects of the Works Progress Administration, as well as the vital role they have played as open space areas in the Mission Hills community.

## **F. World War II and Post War Development (1941-2000)**

Following World War II the West Park Neighborhoods and Hillcrest came to be seen as a single community with its commercial center in the old Hillcrest business district at Fifth and University. The decline of the downtown business district during this period was probably responsible for this. The area

north of Ash continued to be a viable neighborhood and did not suffer the economic decline of the downtown area. At least some of the reasons were the community's proximity to Balboa Park and Scripps-Mercy and UCSD Medical Center Hospitals. New offices, apartment buildings, and retirement homes were constructed during the period, replacing many of the old Victorian houses in Banker's Hill and establishing a mixture of older and new architectural styles south of Robinson Street. The opening of the large Sears Store at Cleveland Street and Vermont in the 1950s symbolized the change in retail focus from downtown San Diego to Hillcrest.

With most of its area developed before 1930, University Heights did not experience extensive development after World War II. Some commercial buildings were replaced over the decades but the majority of residential change consisted of infilling by replacing older residential buildings with multifamily apartment buildings and condominiums. The first major change was the replacement of Mission Cliffs Gardens in 1941 by a development of single family homes (MacPhail 1983). As the decades continued, apartment buildings became more prominent in some blocks, especially around Park Boulevard, Washington and Normal Streets. A 1970 article reported the construction of apartments "eight to ten unit squares with macaroni trim, adobe fronts, and New Orleans porches" (*San Diego Union* 1-12-1970).

Mission Hills is the neighborhood that has probably been the least affected by the post World War II changes that so drastically altered most of San Diego. It is one of the areas that still retains many of the visions of George Marston and elements of the 1908 Nolen Plan. Post war change in the community has been small and for the most part unobtrusive. Canyon lots that were too steep to be built on before World War II became marketable during the 1950s and 60s as changing technologies including extensive cut and fill grading, structural steel stilts, concrete grade beams and piers allowed homes to be built on steeper hillsides. As a result, small sections of canyon rims have seen some infilling with more modern homes, although in most cases the scale and setting of these buildings has not been detrimental to the overall architectural character of the community. The largest post war development, Rodefer Hills, was laid out in the 1950s on the west side of the community overlooking Old Town. On the east end of Mission Hills, Green Manor, a 13 story residential facility for seniors was opened by the Congregational Church in 1970 at Ibis Street and Fort Stockton. It became Mission Hills' first and only high rise. The completion of this building along with the construction of similar high rises at Park Boulevard and University Avenue caused a negative backlash from Mission Hills residents. Accordingly, the city implemented underlying zoning restrictions and parking requirements that effectively ended such development. (*San Diego Union* 11-9-1986).

## 1. Associated Property Types

Single Family Residences – After World War II earlier popular architectural styles based on popularized historical forms were eclipsed in favor of new variations of modern styles. These included the Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Contemporary, Split Level, and Shed. Based on Tudor and Colonial Revival homes, the Minimal Traditional is a simplified form with a dominant front gable and chimney. The facade is simple and lacks traditional detailing. The Ranch style consists of one story houses with low pitched roofs and broad, rambling facades. The Split Level exhibits half story wings with sunken garages. The Contemporary Form is based on the International style. These houses generally have wide overhangs and flat or low pitched roofs with broad low facing front gables and exposed supporting beams. A more recent modern style, The Shed, is identified by one or more shed-roofed elements, which dominate the facade and give the effect of several geometric forms shoved together (McAlester and McAlester 1986:477). The homes in the Uptown Study Area built after World War II largely reflect the architecture

of the 1950s and '60s. California Ranch, Split Level, and Contemporary styles predominate. Many are low slung dwellings with heavy shake shingle roofs and the longest side of the dwelling facing the street.

Multiple Family Residences – Apartments and Condominiums have infilled many parts of the Uptown Study Area since 1950 and generally reflect the predominant styles described above. Many are simply basic single or multiple story boxes with minimal stylistic detailing.

Commercial Buildings – Modern commercial buildings have also been constructed in the older business districts since 1950. These range from small stores and shopping malls to large modern supermarkets. Many exhibit large plate glass storefronts and doors of the International style.

## 2. Significance

Although not as prominent in the Uptown Study Area, Post World War II architectural styles dominate the urban areas of San Diego far more than any other architectural type. Properties need to retain exceptional integrity and have strong associations with people or events important to the development of the area in order to be considered an important resource.

### G. Medical Community (1900-2000)

Medical related facilities are centered around the hospitals. Two major hospitals, Scripps – Mercy, and UCSD Medical Center (formerly County and University Hospital) are located within the study area. In addition, the Naval Hospital is located in Balboa Park just to the east of the southern portion of the Uptown District. This has resulted in the development of medical related business districts. Pill Row is centered along Fifth Avenue in Hillcrest, from the intersection of Fifth and Laurel Street northward to Scripps-Mercy. This corridor is formed by Laurel coming west from Balboa Park, which provides a route to the Naval Hospital, and Fifth north of Laurel, which runs to the location of Scripps-Mercy. The two streets form an "L" shaped corridor between the two major hospitals and medical related businesses have located along them. The second center of medical related businesses, known as "Pill Hill," is located around UCSD Medical Center. Although there is no doubt that the medical establishment has been important in keeping the area economically healthy, there have been some negative repercussions. The Hillcrest area has been re-zoned residential / professional / medical. In the words of long time resident Will Chandler:

You can rent a house in Hillcrest to live in or you can rent a house to be a doctor in. You cannot rent a house to be an [art and antiques] appraiser in the neighborhood, and this is iron clad. I could not rent a bungalow a block from my house that I wanted for my office because [it was zoned RP / medical] and I called the city about it and I couldn't. It just flat was not [possible] under the current [zoning]. And that is [today's Hillcrest]. There's nothing wrong with it being Pill Hill, but it does mean that other kinds of professionals will be [unable to rent] small offices [in the neighborhood] (Chandler 2003).

#### 1. Associated Property Types

The most prominent medical buildings in the Uptown Study Area are Scripps-Mercy Hospital and UCSD Medical Center. Although both can trace their origins to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century they are currently located

in modern high-rise structures built within the last 40 years. Three small buildings at Scripps-Mercy that still remain from earlier periods have been listed as important resources by the San Diego City Historic Sites Board. They are a chapel and two residential convent housing units. Medical related businesses centered around these institutions have located in a variety of buildings, from converted Victorian and Craftsman houses of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to modern post World War II multistory high rises.

## 2. Significance

Given the variety of structures occupied by the medical community significance would depend on the type of building. Significance statements for specific property types provided above should be consulted.

### H. Civic, Ethnic, Religious, and Minority Groups (1880-2000)

From its inception, the Uptown Study Area has consisted of neighborhoods of white upper middle class, middle class and working class families. In many areas the lines between these class distinctions are blurred. Ethnic and minority groups can be defined, therefore, only as they exist within the white middle class majority of American society that has occupied the area. These include civic and religious groups, the Italian community, and the Gay community of Hillcrest.

#### 1. Civic Groups

Civic groups have played an important role in the cultural and social life of San Diego and the Uptown Study Area. Many of these groups drew their memberships from throughout San Diego, not just within the Uptown District. A prominent Women's Group, the Wednesday Club, has had a building in the study area since 1911. By 1913, the Masons had a temple at Fifth and Ash and the Elks had a meeting hall on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Olive and Nutmeg Streets. Both fraternal organizations met in halls located in the traditional Uptown- Banker's Hill neighborhoods.

A history of the Wednesday Club, which, as noted, has had a club house within the study area since 1911 is provided below.

##### a. The Wednesday Club

In 1895 a group of prominent women, many who were long time San Diego residents, organized the Wednesday Club. Its object was stated to be for "artistic and literary culture." There were thirty-three charter members who chose Lydia Horton (wife of Alnozo Horton) as their first President. She was later named their first Honorary Member in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the city (MacPhail 1981; Way 1945).

Originally organized as a literary club, in 1913 "the study of problems of our times" was added as a purpose of the club in addition to the study of arts, literature, and culture. In 1899 the Wednesday Club succeeded in obtaining a grant of \$60,000 dollars for the first Carnegie Library to be erected west of the Mississippi. The club continued to play important fund raising roles, especially for the development of Balboa Park and the Museum of Art. Weekly programs presented by the membership have always been an important part of the clubs activities. These ranged in scope from literary, musical, and artistic, to dramatic. During World War II the club house was made available rent free on Mondays to war and defense activities and the members purchased \$3,000 worth of War Bonds (Way 1945; Barker 1986).

The Wednesday Club has remained one of the more prestigious of the women's clubs in San Diego, meeting in their club house at Sixth and Ivy Lane, built in 1911 (MacPhail 1981). This building was designed by club member Hazel Waterman, associate of Irving Gill. They worked together on a number of projects until 1906 when, under Gill's encouragement, she went into business on her own. Her design for the Wednesday Club building was advanced for its time and used plain wall surfaces, reinforced concrete, and geometric forms (Kamerling 1979).

## 2. Religious Groups

Many religious groups have places of worship within the Uptown Study Area. In 1914, the First Presbyterian Church was constructed on the block bounded by Date and Elm Streets, and Third and Fourth Avenues. The church had a significant impact upon the area both physically with its sheer size, and socially with the many prominent citizens in its congregation. The church firmly established Uptown's existence and its prominence in the city (Cultural Resource Inventory 1993). The synagogue built by Temple Beth Israel at the corner of Third and Laurel Streets has served San Diego's Jewish community for many decades. Many of these institutions, however, are not neighborhood churches, but serve religious communities that extend well beyond the study area. The history of two: Temple Beth Israel and the Swedenborgian Church, are summarized below.

### a. Temple Beth Israel

The Jewish community in the Uptown Study Area has its origins in the boom of the 1880s. A small population of Jewish people had resided in the county since 1850. Their numbers increased greatly during the 1880s along with the general population of the city and county. Jewish merchants during the boom founded a bank, opened book and stationary stores, ice cream parlors, and an opera house. Many in this new Jewish community joined Congregation Beth Israel, which had been incorporated in February 1887. The congregation soon had sixty male members and their families. They hired their first full-time rabbi, Samuel Freuder in 1888. In the fall of that year Rabbi Freuder officiated before nearly 300 worshippers in the Turnverein Hall on the High Holy Days of the Jewish New Year and the Day of Atonement (Schwartz 1981, 2003).

A synagogue costing approximately \$4000 was built on the northwest corner of Second and Beech Streets in 1889. Now located in Heritage Park near Old Town, where it was moved to in 1978, it is the second oldest synagogue structure in the American west. In 1926 a new temple was built at Third and Laurel Streets by architect William H. Wheeler. Beth Israel occupied this building until 2001 when they moved to their third location in La Jolla's University Town Center. The building, which has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is now used by Temple Ohr Shalom (Schwartz 1981, 2003).

Over the decades members of the Beth Israel congregation have included many of San Diego's civic leaders such as Marcus Schiller, Joseph Mannasee, Simon and Adolph Levi, Samuel I. Fox, Abraham Blockman, Louis Mendelson, and the Klauber Family. In the 1920s the congregation began to actively support the social structure of the Jewish community. A religious school was opened; women's, young peoples, and Bible study clubs were founded; and a community center constructed. All these brought a richer religious and social life to the congregation (Schwartz 1981, 2003).

One of the important facilities sponsored by Beth Israel while at the Third and Laurel location was the community center or social hall. It served not only that congregation but as a meeting place for a variety of Jewish organizations. This was the main gathering place for San Diego's Jewish community from 1929

until 1953, when a Jewish Community Center opened on 54<sup>th</sup> Street in East San Diego. As many as a dozen different groups would use the social hall in a single month (Schwartz 2003).



**Figure 20: The first Temple Beth Israel - now located in Heritage Park**

Another important aspect of the Temple was a day school or religious school. By the 1960s the school had become so large that a separate school building was constructed that still stands at the Third and Laurel location. Enrolment reached close to a thousand pupils. The day school is a primary grade institution. The secondary school, called the Jewish high school, is not a full time program. It teaches a Jewish culture curriculum and is attended in addition to regular public secondary school (Schwartz 2003).

Estelle Dunst, a current resident of Hillcrest, has been a member of the Temple Beth Israel her entire life. Although she attended public school, she went to religious school at the temple and her social life was centered around the congregation and its families. Parties, outings, and other social activities were held by the families for the temple's young people, creating a close knit social group that still exists. The members of the congregation, however, did not reside only within the current Uptown Study Area, but well beyond it. Estelle grew up in North Park, although her mother later moved to Hillcrest and ran a health food store in the Banker's Hill area for many years. Other families lived as far away as Chula Vista (Dunst 2003).

The Temple Beth Israel historian, Stanley Schwartz, commented that the Beth Israel synagogue at Third and Laurel Streets "has always been a magnet for the community because of all the events that have gone on in the center, the social center of the property" (Schwartz 2003).

#### **b. Swedenborgian Church**

The Swedenborgian Church is officially named the San Diego Society of the New Jerusalem. The church originated in England in the 1770s. The first chapter was founded in the United States around 1779.

Many branches were established on the east coast. Chapels were built in San Francisco, El Cerrito, and Los Angeles in 1849. The chapter in San Diego was incorporated in 1883. In 1907 a small wooden chapel was built at the location of the present church on the southeast corner of the intersection of Cleveland and Mead Streets in University Heights. At this time the congregation chose the name Swedenborgian over New Jerusalem to avoid being identified as a Jewish institution. The current church building was designed by Louis Gill and dedicated in 1927. In the 1920s the congregation numbered around 100 people. In recent decades its numbers have shrunk to about 30 with 12 to 15 in regular attendance for Sunday services. The current minister and his wife, Eldon and Annella Smith, live in a two room apartment at the church which was converted from former Sunday School rooms. Members have always lived throughout San Diego County so the congregation has always represented a wider geographical region than the Uptown Study Area. When Eldon Smith was a child his family would take the streetcar from East San Diego to the church. Other members lived as far east as El Cajon (15 miles). Currently members live as far east as Campo (60 miles), and as far north as Las Vegas, Nevada (Smith and Smith 2003).



**Figure 21: Swedenborgian Church**

In spite of the small size of the current congregation, the Swedenborgian Church is a very active institution. The Renewal or Rededication Service is celebrated the first Sunday in January. According to



Eldon Smith, a brazier with coals is placed on the chapel steps. Members place slips of paper with "something they want the Lord to help them with for the next year and they burn it in the brazier and then the smoke rises up to the Lord." Palm Sunday and Easter are important celebrations as well as the Sunday closest to June 19<sup>th</sup>, called the Holy City Sunday to celebrate the founding of the Christian Church. Worldwide Communion is celebrated the first Sunday in October (Smith and Smith 2003)

In addition, other organizations use the church building during the week. Because the building has a stage it is used by three different acting groups. An Alcoholic's Anonymous group also has weekly meetings in the building as well as the church's own Women's Alliance (Smith and Smith 2003).

### 3. Italian Community

The establishment of the Italian community in Middletown reflected a change in the demographic make up of U.S. immigration during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. After 1880 the majority of immigrant origins shifted from northern and western to southern and eastern Europe. By the early 1900s Italians made up a significant portion of this group. Poor economic conditions, unemployment, high birth rates, overpopulation, and cholera and malaria epidemics during these years convinced many to leave Italy for other lands. The majority came to the United States. From 32,159 in 1882, Italian immigration increased to 285,731 in 1907 (Dinnerstein and Reimers 1975:36). During the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the number of Italians entering California almost tripled from 22,707 in 1900 to 66,615 in 1910. It was during this period that a community of Italian immigrants began to form in San Diego. They settled along Arctic, Colombia, and India Streets in the Middletown area. By the 1920s the neighborhood had become known as Little Italy. Others resided in the South Mission Hills neighborhood south of Washington and west of Goldfinch streets. Although many Italians worked as fishermen, other occupations were also followed (Richardson 1980). Their family names are prominent in the historical records of Middletown and the commercial and business life of San Diego. Many became involved in San Diego's tuna fleet. The Italians in San Diego have operated some of the most sophisticated fishing vessels in the world (Brandes and Erzinger 1980). With the construction of Interstate Five through Middletown in the early 1960s, the old Italian quarter centered on India Street was cut in two. Many displaced families relocated to South Mission Hills and along Reynard Way and Dove Street in Middletown at this time, in some cases moving their houses to the new locations. They continued to shop and do businesses downtown and in the Italian quarter along India Street, and to worship at Our Lady of the Rosary Church on West Date between Colombia and State Streets, which is outside the study area.

### 4. Gay Community

In the early 1970s, Hillcrest became a refuge and focal point for the gays and lesbians of San Diego. The social and economic status of Hillcrest from the early 1960s through the 1970s allowed for affordable rental space. The investment of the gay community in itself has helped bring Hillcrest from isolated obscurity to its status as one of the premier commercial and social centers in San Diego. From the mid 1980s through the late 1990s, there has been no doubt that Hillcrest has become the center of gay life in San Diego (Dillenger 2000).

A major catalyst for the gay community had been the bar and club scene that thrived in Hillcrest during the 1960s and '70s. Another was the affordable single-occupancy apartments and bungalows in the neighborhood. Gay bars provided shelter and relative solace to homosexual men and women during periods of intolerance common in the mid twentieth century. Two Hillcrest businesses, the Brass Rail Bar and the Crest Restaurant, became Gay institutions in the early '70s and provided an alternative to the

more common run down and grimy gay oriented businesses of the period. The neighborhood's closeness to Balboa Park also added in its attraction to gay residents. The park provided a meeting place during this



**Figure 22: The Gay Center 1973**

period (Dillenger 2000). As retail businesses and customers began to disappear to Mission Valley shopping centers, Hillcrest entrepreneurs began to realize the potential of the Gay market. Clubs, coffee shops, restaurants, and bookstores started to advertise in Gay business directories (Dillenger 2000).

As Dillenger (2000) has summarized, by the 1980s:

These factors brought about a strong sense of community among the gays and lesbians of San Diego and gave them a tangible place to call home. This sense of community has become evident in many ways. Gay publications such as the *San Diego Son* were started to help the community learn about gay-oriented events and opportunities. The Imperial Court, Dignity of San Diego, the Metropolitan Community Church and The Gay Center were all established in the early 1970s to help foster this sense of community. Since then, the Gay Parade, San Diego Pride, the Gay Men's Choir, Lesbian and Gay History Month and the *Gay and Lesbian Times* have helped to establish the sense of community that has evolved since the 1970s.

In addition to these, the Lesbian and Gay Historical Society of San Diego has become the very essence of this community. This organization maintains an archive of journals,

books, ephemera and other gay-centered materials to document and preserve a sense of San Diego's gay history and develop its future. Founded in 1987, this archive is located only blocks from the center of Hillcrest. One of the co-founders of the Gay Center, Bernie Michels, stated that Hillcrest was the location that was originally considered for the establishment of the Gay Center, because it was "...the center of gay life in San Diego." A sense of community was born in this area of San Diego and has since become more than an idea. It has been transformed into the community that so many had desired and worked for throughout their lives.

Today, Hillcrest stands as a community to be shared by all people, old and young, any race, singles, families and couples, gay or straight. This is not based on population size or economic strength alone, but based on safety, diversity, pedestrian orientation and communal self-improvement. The gay community has revitalized this area in central San Diego and this vitality is now spreading to the surrounding areas such as University Heights, Mission Hills, Normal Heights, and North Park, all of whom are beginning to take community awareness to new levels. Forged from fire, the gay and lesbian community of San Diego has emerged ever-strong. Despite persecution by hate-mongers, local law enforcement, the epidemic of AIDS and religious opposition, the gay and lesbian community has rallied and united. To the betterment of all San Diego, a once down trodden and isolated group of people has found symbiosis with a once economically dormant and isolated neighborhood to develop a working relationship towards pride in the community and pride in oneself (Dillenger 2000).

The Gay Community in San Diego is probably as well organized as any in the nation. The Gay Pride Association Festivals have become an annual event. The community has organized a verity of social services. This development occurred during the early years of the HIV crises in the 1980s. The number and quality of social services available compares favorably to New York or San Francisco (Chandler 2003). Since 1987 Diversionsary Theater has provided a "cultural voice" for the Gay and Lesbian community (Zito 2003).

## 5. Associated Property Types

Resource types associated with civic, religious, ethnic, and minority groups in the Uptown Study Area include residential structures, businesses and religious buildings. Architecturally, residential and commercial structures do not have any specific attributes that tie them to ethnic or minority communities. Italians in South Mission Hills and Middletown and the Gays in Hillcrest occupied and used already existing buildings that reflect the styles popular when they were built. As already noted, there are many churches and other religious and civic buildings that reflect the diversity of community groups that have lived together and thrived in the Uptown Study Area.

## 6. Significance

Properties associated with ethnic, minority, or religious groups would be considered important based on the nature and degree of association with a specific group and the degree of integrity the building retains for the period during which that association occurred.

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