

MISSION DOLORES HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT



Mission Dolores Neighborhood Association

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MISSION DOLORES NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Mission Dolores neighborhood lies within the larger Mission District of the City of San Francisco. It is generally bounded by Valencia Street on the east, on the west by Sanchez Street to 17th Street and Church Street to 20th, Market Street on the north and 20th Streets on the south. The western boundary on Church Street encompasses both the east and west sides of the street. The neighborhood also includes the triangle of blocks between Duboce and the Central Freeway that consists of Pink Alley, Pearl Street, and Elgin Park. It should be noted that the western boundary of the larger Mission District is not precisely determined and is variously defined in City planning and context documents.¹

The Mission Dolores neighborhood shares much in common with the larger Mission District in terms of geography, culture and pre-World War II demography. However, it is distinguished by its close association with Mission San Francisco de Asis, known as Mission Dolores. The area surrounding the Mission was one of the two original points of European settlement that established the City of San Francisco. In addition the Mission Dolores neighborhood extends over the approximate area of original Spanish and Mexican period settlement and is similar in extent to the “Mission Dolores” portion of the city that was well established by 1860.

Established in 1776, the Mission was the center of Spanish proselytizing efforts on the San Francisco Peninsula and consisted of a large number of buildings associated with the pacification and subjugation of the Native American population. Following the secularization of the Mission in 1835, the area around the Mission continued to be occupied by former neophytes and to be settled by both Hispanic and Anglo householders. To the south west and east of the Mission the Mexican government made large rancho grants, as well as smaller grants in the immediate vicinity of the Mission. While never as large as the community that grew up around Yerba Buena in the pre-gold rush era, Mission Dolores was a well established community with its own identity by the end of the Hispanic period. The American occupation of California and the feverish growth of the City resulting from the Gold Rush brought growth and change to the Mission Dolores valley. Although it continued to retain its pastoral aspect into the 1860s, by the 1870s, the Mission Dolores area began to take on a more discernable urban form with standard size lots and a noticeable increase in density. With the extension of streets and public transportation beginning in the 1860s, the neighborhood functioned as a suburb of the City with single family residences predominating. During this period Valencia Street took on a strong commercial identity, and with Mission and east side of 16th Street, it became the hub of an area that provided shops and services for the neighborhood.

The earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed much of the Mission Dolores suburban community, as well as the majority of the northern Mission District. The fire burned to the east edge of Dolores Street, sparing the Mission Church, the Tanforan Cottages, two of the oldest residences in the city, and the recently established Mission Dolores Park. Existing residences along the west side of Dolores, on Church Street and Landers also survived, as did buildings on the south side of 20th

¹ The boundary of the Department’s Mission Area Plan is Guerrero Street; the Department’s historic context work identifies Dolores Street (north of Twentieth Street) as a District-wide contextual boundary; the context statement for the Mission Dolores area identifies Church and Sanchez Streets as a neighborhood contextual boundary. This generally reflects areas 4A and 4B of the Planning Department’s *Inner Mission North Context Statement* and the current real estate map. In the immediate vicinity of the Mission, the boundary extends to Sanchez to include portions of the Mission related archeological district which extends west to Sanchez between 15th and 17th Streets.

Street. In the immediate aftermath of the devastation, the park quickly became a refugee camp for Mission residents.

Between 1907 and 1915 a large part of the neighborhood was rebuilt. It is this post-earthquake period that gives the Mission Dolores neighborhood its characteristic form and patterns of occupancy. A very large proportion of the housing stock in the area dates to this period, as do many community institutions and commercial structures.

The neighborhood contains some of the City's oldest buildings, including the Mission and the Tanforan Cottages, a number of outstanding ecclesiastical and school buildings, and one of the city's earliest and largest parks. Within the study area boundaries the main commercial streets are Valencia, 16th, and to a lesser extent, Guerrero Streets. They are closely linked with the larger Mission District commercial area along Mission Street and on 16th east of Mission. Many of the commercial buildings along Valencia and 16th Streets are characterized by street-level commercial enterprises with flats and apartments above. Much of the neighborhood contains low-rise Edwardian flats and apartments dating from the post-earthquake period. There are some surviving Victorian residences, as well as an admixture of 1920s and 30s buildings. The southern, northern and western ends of the neighborhood are marked by a number of small one and two block streets and alleys that break up the urban grid and give the neighborhood a varied and distinctive visual character.

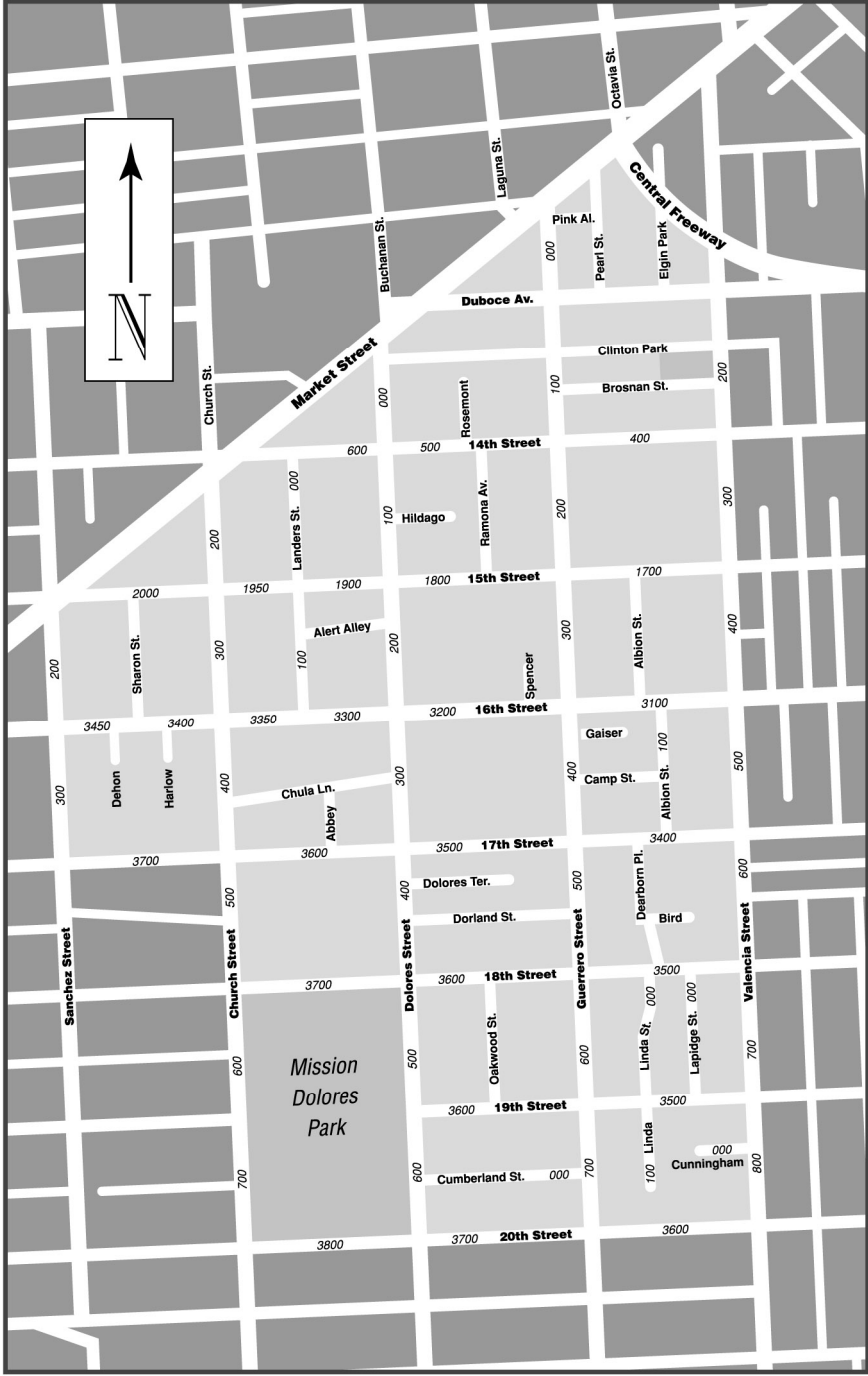


Figure 1. The Mission Dolores Context Statement study area.

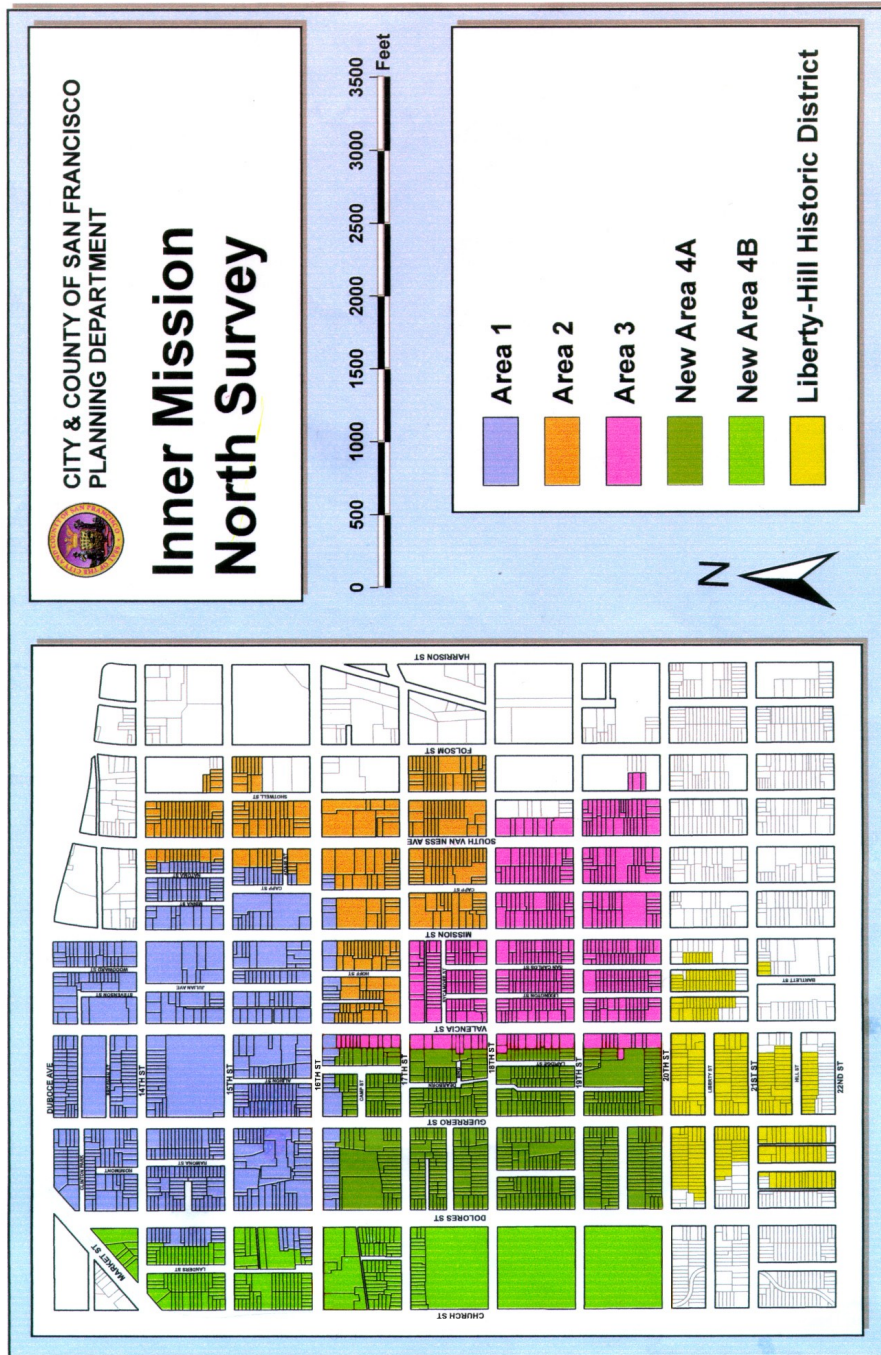


Figure 2. The City of San Francisco Planning Department Survey Map (2005) delineates survey areas within the Mission District. Areas 1, 2, 3, and 4A are examined in the *Inner Mission North Context Statement*. The Mission Dolores area (4B) is the approximate area addressed in the Mission Dolores Historic Context Statement. This area has not been previously comprehensively surveyed.

CONTEXT THEME

The National Park Service defines historic contexts as those patterns, themes, or trends in history by which an occurrence, property or site is understood and given meaning. Contexts can involve one or more aspects of an area's history - economic, social, cultural, political, architectural and/or demographic. The Park Service has defined some contexts, but acknowledges that many others may exist which provide linkage between a community's physical environment and its past development.

The contextual theme around which the Inner Mission North Context Statement and survey were developed by the City of San Francisco Planning Department is the NPS historic theme "Peopling Places." This theme examines human population movement and change through prehistoric and historic times. This theme encompasses family formation, concepts of gender, family, and sexual division of labor and the forms these have taken in the American past. This broad NPS theme also applies to the Mission Dolores neighborhood which is a sub-area of the larger Mission District of the City. Within this context there are a number of themes that lend themselves to an understanding of the neighborhood history and provide a framework for evaluating the significance of its resources.²

The Mission District and the Mission Dolores neighborhood have been shaped by migrations of individuals and groups that began many thousands of years ago and continue today. These migrations include macro population shifts that led to the original settlement of the San Francisco Peninsula as well as micro shifts of groups from one neighborhood to another within the City's confines. These movements were created by complex factors of environment, economy, natural disaster, political change and ethnic and religious identities.

As it applies to the Mission Dolores neighborhood, the theme "Peopling Places" covers the settlement of the area by successive Native American groups, the Spanish conquest and missionization of the indigenous population, the Rancho/Californio period, the immigration of Americans and other nationals from Europe, Asia, and Latin America into the southern area of San Francisco. These shifts over time are reflected in the patterns of neighborhood development, in the archeological and built environment and in the social and cultural institutions that mark the neighborhood.

The history of the Mission Dolores area spans a long pre-historic period, the Spanish-Mexican period beginning with the founding of the Mission in 1776 and technically ending with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, although the area retained a distinctively Hispanic character into the 1860s when it experienced an influx of American and European settlers that intensified in subsequent decades. The American period begins in 1848 and extends to the present time.

The following Context Statement traces this evolution of peoples and institutions through these several periods documenting the demographic, ethnic, and cultural evolution of the neighborhood and highlighting the major events that shaped and formed these patterns.

It should be noted that the City Planning Department is currently preparing a multi-phase Mission District Context Statement which will provide a broad framework for understanding this large area of the City and which will bring together context work that has previously been developed. This draft study suggests that other themes developed by the National Park Service, such as Creating Social Institution and Movements, Expressing Cultural Values, Developing the American

² National Park Service Thematic Framework", revised 1994, <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/hisnps/NPSThinking/revthem.htm#people>; National Park Service

Economy, and Transforming the Environment also may be applicable to the Mission District and its smaller sub-areas.³

POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The majority of the context study area has not been systematically surveyed for historical resources. The purpose of a Context Statement is to provide an understanding of an area's history, and its social, cultural, economic and demographic development that can inform the identification and evaluation of individual historic properties and historic districts. Contexts are particularly useful in identifying concentrations, linkages or continuities of sites, buildings, and cultural landscapes that lack recognizable architectural continuity and may not be immediately apparent. According to the National Park Service and the State Office of Historic Preservation, a Context Statement ideally precedes field survey and evaluation.

At the present time, a six block area of the Mission Dolores neighborhood overlaps with the context and survey area of the Inner Mission North.⁴ This survey, which was undertaken in 2003 and 2004, identified two Historic Districts, Ramona Street and Hidalgo Terrace, that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historic Resources respectively.

Without a survey of the remaining Mission Dolores neighborhood, it is not possible to identify all of the potential historic districts that may exist within the study area, although the context suggests some clear possibilities. The Dolores Street corridor includes a number of important institutional buildings that have played a significant role in the development of the neighborhood and the city. These include ecclesiastical buildings, schools, parks, and a scenic boulevard, that is also the route of the El Camino Real. This same area is characterized by concentrations of multi-unit Edwardian period buildings that are highly representative of the rebuilding that took place immediately following the earthquake and fire of 1906. A "fireline" district may exist west of Dolores Street and along the south side of 20th Street that exemplifies the neighborhood as it existed prior to the earthquake or contains a district of both pre-disaster survivors and reconstruction era buildings. Chula Lane and Abbey Street are small center block streets that survived the fire and merit investigation for their pattern of development and architectural coherency.

One of the defining characteristics of the neighborhood is the many small, one and two-block, streets which are laid out between the main east-west and north-south thoroughfares. As Randolph Delehanty points out in *The Ultimate Guide to San Francisco*, these side streets harbor architecturally coherent residential enclaves that derive a sense of visual definition as a result of their closed in vistas and narrow streets. These areas merit further research and field investigation as possible districts.

The Valencia and 16th Street commercial blocks that are within the study area also may contain groupings of buildings that appropriately extend the Mission Commercial Historic District identified in the Inner Mission North survey.

In addition, the Mission Dolores area includes a very important archeological district with the potential to provide data on both prehistoric and historic settlement in the area of the Mission. Although a district has not yet been designated, the City has generally outlined the potential boundaries of such a district. These are within the Mission Dolores study area. The State Office of Historic Preservation has been encouraging the idea that historic districts may have both a

³ Personal communication with Matt Weintraub, Historic Resources Survey Team, San Francisco Planning Department.

⁴ This overlap area is bounded by Dolores Street on the west, Duboce on the north, Valencia on the east and 16th Street on the south. The Inner Mission North survey encompassed both sides of 16th Street.

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⁵ This overlap area is bounded by Dolores Street on the west, Duboce on the north, Valencia on the east and 16th Street on the south. The Inner Mission North survey encompassed both sides of 16th Street.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Natural Environment

The San Francisco Bay region is a landscape of estuaries, plains, rolling hills and rugged ridges. The fifty mile long bay is made up of a series of salt water estuaries that open to the Pacific Ocean through the Golden Gate.

The City of San Francisco, which shares this varied topography, lies at the northern tip of the San Francisco Peninsula. The Mission Dolores neighborhood lies within a protected basin surrounded by hills including Diamond Heights and Twin Peaks on the southwest, and Bernal Heights and Potrero Hill to the south and southeast. Located within a Mediterranean climate zone, the protected valley has a micro climate that is sunnier and warmer than many other parts of the city. In the 18th and early 19th centuries part of the area was covered by a shallow lake, the Laguna de Dolores, that extended roughly between 15th and 20th Streets and Guerrero and Howard (South Van Ness).⁶ Fed by Dolores Creek which originated on Twin Peaks and flowed down what is now 18th Street, the lake's extent varied with seasonal rainfall.⁷ It was described by the Anza expedition and is shown on maps of San Francisco through the 1880s, although by that time, it had been largely filled.⁸ Marshy land surrounded the lake and extended to Mission Bay during the 1860s and 1870s.

Although Friar Font described the area as possessed of "grass, fennel and other good herbs," it consisted to a large extent of sand dunes and scrub grasslands, devoid of trees.⁹ Brackish water sloughs and marsh lands edged the bay with the dominant terrestrial vegetation consisting of open grassland. According to archeologist, Randall Milliken, the northern tip of the San Francisco peninsula had perhaps the poorest natural resource base of any of the prehistoric Bay Area Native-American districts.¹⁰

Although the relatively flat valley did not experience the cut and fill that characterized the early development of other parts of the city, its major topographical features, the Laguna de Dolores and the Dolores and Mission Creeks were completely obscured by the 1890s.¹¹ Following survey and lot division in the 1860s, the dunes which had not already been removed by agricultural activity were increasingly leveled for urban expansion.

Pre-Contact Settlement

Archeological evidence indicates that human settlement in the Bay Area dates back at least 6,000 years. Nomadic hunter gatherers, these inhabitants subsisted on large game, seeds and nuts.

⁶ Hendry, George W. and J.N. Bowman, "The Spanish and Mexican Adobe and other buildings in the Nine San Francisco Bay Counties 1776 to about 1850," Unpublished manuscript in the collection of the Bancroft Library, 1057. Descriptions of the lakes location vary with accounts and are probably influenced by the time of year in which the writer saw the lake.

⁷ Merrill, George A. *The Story of Lake Dolores and the Mission San Francisco de Asis*, (Redwood City: Hedge Printing Co, 1942), 3.

⁸The exact location and extent of the Laguna is a matter of scholarly debate. The boundaries cited in this report correspond to Englehardt's 1924 map. Hendy and Bowman (1940) placed the Laguna between 15th, 16th, Mission and Shotwell Streets. The Laguna also varied in size both seasonally and from year to year depending on rainfall.

⁹ Englehardt, Zephyrin, *San Francisco or Mission Dolores*, (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1924), 39; Milliken, Randall, "An Ethnohistory of the Indian People of the San Francisco Bay Area 1770-1810," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1991, 111.

¹⁰ Milliken, 110.

¹¹ Merrill reports that when his parents built their first house in the Mission District in 1873 the lake had been reduced to the southeastern half of the block bounded by Guerrero and Dolores and 18th and 19th Streets.

Circa 2000 B.C. these early inhabitants began to be supplanted by Miwok-Ohlonean speakers who migrated into the Bay Area from the Central Valley. Better adapted to the shoreline and wetlands natural resource base of the coast, these people established sedentary villages and relied on acorns, shellfish and small game as the basis of their subsistence. It is generally agreed that these groups had made their way to the northern end of the San Francisco peninsula by 500 B.C.¹²

Approximately fifty-five independent tribes, or “tribelets,” as Alfred Kroeber described them, occupied the San Francisco Bay area extending from Monterey in the south to San Rafael in the north and in the East Bay from San Pablo Bay to Hayward at the time of Spanish contact. Speaking at least three different languages, these groups nonetheless shared a similar material, political and religious culture. Randall Milliken describes the Bay Area Native American culture as “an association of families, two hundred to four hundred people who worked together to harvest wild animals and plant resources and to maintain a yearly round of ceremonies.”¹³ Depending on the diversity of their locale, some groups lived in permanent villages, while others migrated among several seasonal settlements.

The group that inhabited the northern San Francisco Peninsula in the late eighteenth century was known as the Yeluma. Ohlonean speakers, they lived in two or three intermarried semi-nomadic bands that moved among five identified village sites. Two of these villages, Sitlintac, a winter camp, and Chutchui, a summer/fall camp, were in the Mission Dolores area. Tubsinte, another village, was located at the mouth of Visitation Creek, Amuctac was in Visitation Valley, and Petlenuc was just east of the Golden Gate. Consisting of approximately 160 people, the Yeluma tribe was intermarried with the Huchiuns of the East Bay and also with the tribes residing near San Bruno and Pacifica. Although they lived within a limited natural environment, the Yeluma may have played an important role in regional trade, moving obsidian from north of the Bay to the groups in the south and east and supplying coastal shells to the East Bay¹⁴

The Yelamu were among the first Native Americans in the region to have contact with the founders of Mission Dolores. On June 27, 1776, Fathers Francisco Paulou and Pedro Cambon set up camp near the seasonal village of Chutchui, near the Laguna de Dolores. The Friars were accompanied by a party of seventy-five people that included soldiers, colonists and their families, and Christianized Natives-Americans, as well as mules and cattle. The camp was the first step in establishing a presidio and mission on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Only six weeks after the arrival of the Spaniards, the Ssalson tribe from the San Mateo area attacked the Yelamu, burning and destroying all their villages. The motives for this attack are not well understood. They may have been provoked by a local feud or the Ssalson may have been trying to position themselves more favorably in relation to the foreign new comers. In either case, the attacks led to the Yelamu’s abandonment of their territory. Many fled to the East Bay and only returned the following year when some younger Yelamu began to undergo conversion. The first catechized neophyte baptized at the Mission was a twenty-year old Yelamu from the village of Chutchui. A number of Yelamu baptisms followed, particularly in 1782, 1783, and 1794, bringing most of the Yelamu people into the mission.¹⁵

Although the Native American population of the Mission continued to rise through the 1780s, the Yelamu declined through a combination of epidemics, low birth rate, and high mortality that characterized the Missions. By 1810 only 18 Yelamu and Yelamu descendents were alive.

¹² Dean, Randall, “Draft Eastern Neighborhoods Rezoning and Community Plans Archeological Context,” Unpublished manuscript, City of San Francisco Planning Department, April, 2006, 3.

¹³ Milliken, 31.

¹⁴ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵ Milliken, Randall, *The Founding of the Mission Dolores and the End of Tribal Life on the Northern San Francisco Peninsula* (Santa Barbara: California Mission Studies Association, 1996), 15.

Mission Dolores

The Mission Church which stands today is actually the third church constructed by the Franciscan fathers. The first church is described as an “enramada,” a simple structure of brush and mud. The church was sited on the Laguna de Dolores, but its exact location is a matter of conjecture. The California State Landmark designation places it at the corner of Camp and Albion Streets, other sources locate it near Mission and 14th Streets. A second church of palazada, of mud and stick construction was built in September, 1776.¹⁶ This more permanent structure included a priest’s house and a cemetery and continued in use for at least eight years. The location of this church is thought to have been near Mission and 14th Streets. Construction of the third church, the adobe Mission Dolores Church that remains today, was begun in 1782 and progressed over several years. Using neophyte labor, it was finally completed in 1791.

While the church was the largest and most imposing building, the Mission consisted of an extensive complex of buildings and structures. In their 1940s study of Mission Dolores, Hendly and Bowman identified forty-seven buildings and structures, including barracks, grainaries, a soap factory, grain mills, numerous corrals and a neophyte rancharia. Their study also identifies a number of houses that were established in proximity to the Mission including the DeHaro, Bernal and Guerrero adobes.¹⁷ This complex extended at least from Guerrero Street to Church Street and from 15th to 18th Streets, and may have been larger. Because of the poor soils and sparse grasses in the Mission Dolores valley, asistencias, or Mission outposts were established in San Mateo and San Pablo which provided grain and cattle to the Mission.¹⁸

At its height the mission complex was occupied by 1200 Native American neophytes, as well as a population of soldiers, servants, and artisans of European origins. While the original neophyte population was drawn largely from the Yelamu and other peninsula tribes, by the 1800s the mission drew its neophytes from a much broader area including the Central Valley.¹⁹ Following a successful period of settlement and conversions, the Mission stagnated and then declined as a result of Native deaths, desertions, competition from the Mission San Rafael and the decline in external support that followed the Mexican Revolution of 1814.

Mission Dolores District from Secularization to 1880.

In 1835 the Mexican government secularized the missions, distributing large portions of their holdings in land grants to Californios and Anglo settlers, many of whom had married into Californio families.²⁰

By 1835 Mission lands began to be divided among Mexican settlers, former soldiers and Anglo merchants who had settled in California and become Mexican citizens. While the valley remained in common use, lands to the west, south and east were granted in the form of large ranchos. Jose Bernal received 4,446 acres, south of Precita Creek, the DeHaro twins were granted 1,000 acres east of the old wall of the Mission. In 1845, Jose Noe was granted 4,443 acres in the area of Twin Peaks. These large Mexican land grants played an important role in establishing later patterns of land ownership by surrounding the lower valley and confining development within the immediate vicinity of the Mission.

¹⁶ Hendly and Bowman, 1059; Office of Historic Preservation, *California Historical Landmarks* (Sacramento: California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1996), 218.

¹⁷ Hendly and Bowman, 1051-1052.

¹⁸ Dean, 3.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Californios were Mexican citizens who settled in California. Many came to California during the period of Spanish exploration or as soldiers attached to the Presidios and Missions.

According to *The San Francisco Common Council report on the Conditions of Real Estate with the Limits of the City of San Francisco and Property Beyond within the Bounds of the Old Mission Dolores* (1851) a number of smaller grants had been made in 1843 in the “establishment of Dolores.”²¹ These smaller grants precipitated the development a “village” pattern in the vicinity of the old church. Small ranchos to the northwest of the Mission account in part for the open acreage that can be observed in photographs of the Mission as late as the 1880s. The Mission and 8.5 acres surrounding it were granted to Bishop Allemany and formed the basis for the development of Catholic institutions at the core of the post-Mission neighborhood.

Randall Dean has provided one of the most comprehensive accounts of the post-Mission Dolores period of development:

Between 1835 and the discovery of gold in California in 1848, development...remained focused exclusively around the former mission complex which at this time was becoming a small hamlet. A number of new adobe and wood-frame houses were constructed in the Mission Dolores area, generally by Californio families. In the barter-and-trade based economy of Mexican California, there was no need for commercial establishments, but a few small commercial enterprises were established here in the 1840s. Many of the former Mission structures became adapted to new uses; part of the Mission quadrangle was converted to an inn and tavern (see Figure 4), one of the mills (Molino) was converted to a residence, the soldiers barracks was partially demolished and a house constructed on the remains, one of the former mission adobe tanneries was rebuilt as an adobe residence, and the former neophyte Indian rancharia was occupied by remaining neophyte Indians....A number of non-Hispanics also moved into the Mission Dolores community. Generally these were young English or American men who had married into local Mexican families. In addition, in 1846, several Mormon families settled in some of the former Mission buildings following a schism that occurred within the party of 236 Mormon emigrants who had arrived by ship at Yerba Buena that year....By the 1830s, the Presidio commandante had moved the military headquarters to the Mission since many retired soldiers' families had moved from the Presidio to the area around Mission Dolores....Although Yerba Buena and the Mission Dolores district were both growing communities during this period, they were increasingly following disparate demographic, cultural, and economic trajectories. The Mission Dolores area was becoming a community of refuge for Californio families who were increasingly economically, politically, and culturally marginalized by the events that transformed the region in the later 1840s...By the 1850s, there were more than 50 adobe buildings in the Mission Dolores district, a number greater than were present when the Mission was at its peak level of activity. There were also an unknown number of wood frame residences constructed by this time. By 1850, the Mission Dolores community extended from 14th Street to Mission Street and from 19th Street to Church Street.²²

²¹ San Francisco. Commission to Enquire into City Property. Report on the condition of the real estate within the limits of the city of San Francisco and the property beyond within the bounds of the old Mission Dolores. (San Francisco: Evening Picayune, 1851).

²² Ibid, 4-5.

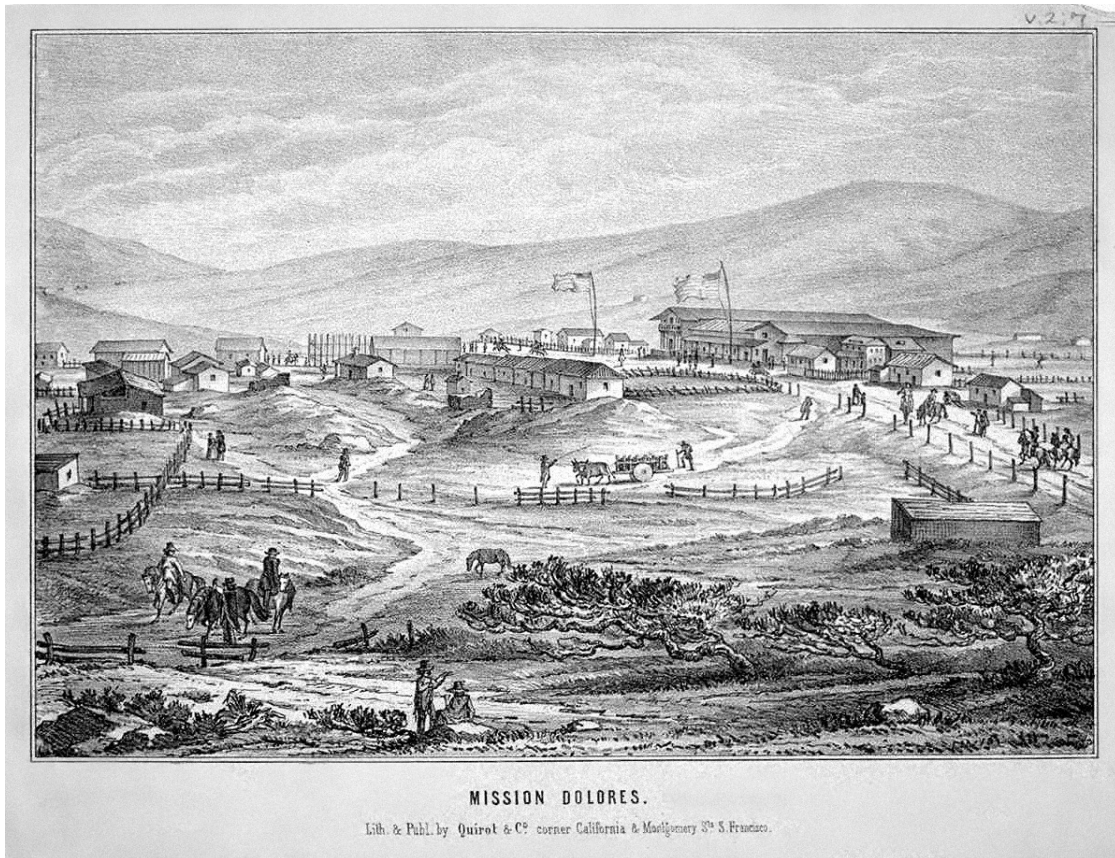


Figure 3. An idealized illustration of the Mission Dolores area circa 1840. View is southwest toward Twin Peaks. *Courtesy of the Bancroft Library through the OAC digital collection.*

However, the Dolores settlement area was by no means stagnant. It was platted into large city blocks in the 1850s, although this pattern of development did not become immediately obvious due to distances among buildings and the surrounding pastoral landscape. By the 1860s street grading had begun in the district and the San Francisco-San Jose railroad line had been installed on Valencia Street, with a station at 16th Street. The Mission Dolores settlement and the City and the San Francisco Peninsula were connected by several important transportation routes. The El Camino Real, also known as the Old San Jose Road and/or the old Mission Road, ran along the western side of the valley. This road, which is partly now covered by Dolores Street, connected the Southern Peninsula to the Mission and Presidio and formed the northeast boundary of Noe's Rancho San Miguel during the Mexican period and continued to be an important transportation route throughout the later 19th century. The primary connection with the northern portion of the City was provided by a plank road that extended from the end of Mission Street at 4th to the Mission Dolores and its adjacent settlement. A sparse scattering of buildings flanked parts of the road. This linkage helped to promote a transition from cattle-raising to agriculture centered on garden crops intended for sale in City. During the 1860s a number of large commercial garden plots existed and the area also was home to a number of commercial nurseries.²³

²³ Taylor, Judith, M.D., *Tangible Memories: Californians and Their Gardens 1800-1950*, (San Francisco: Privately Published, 2003).

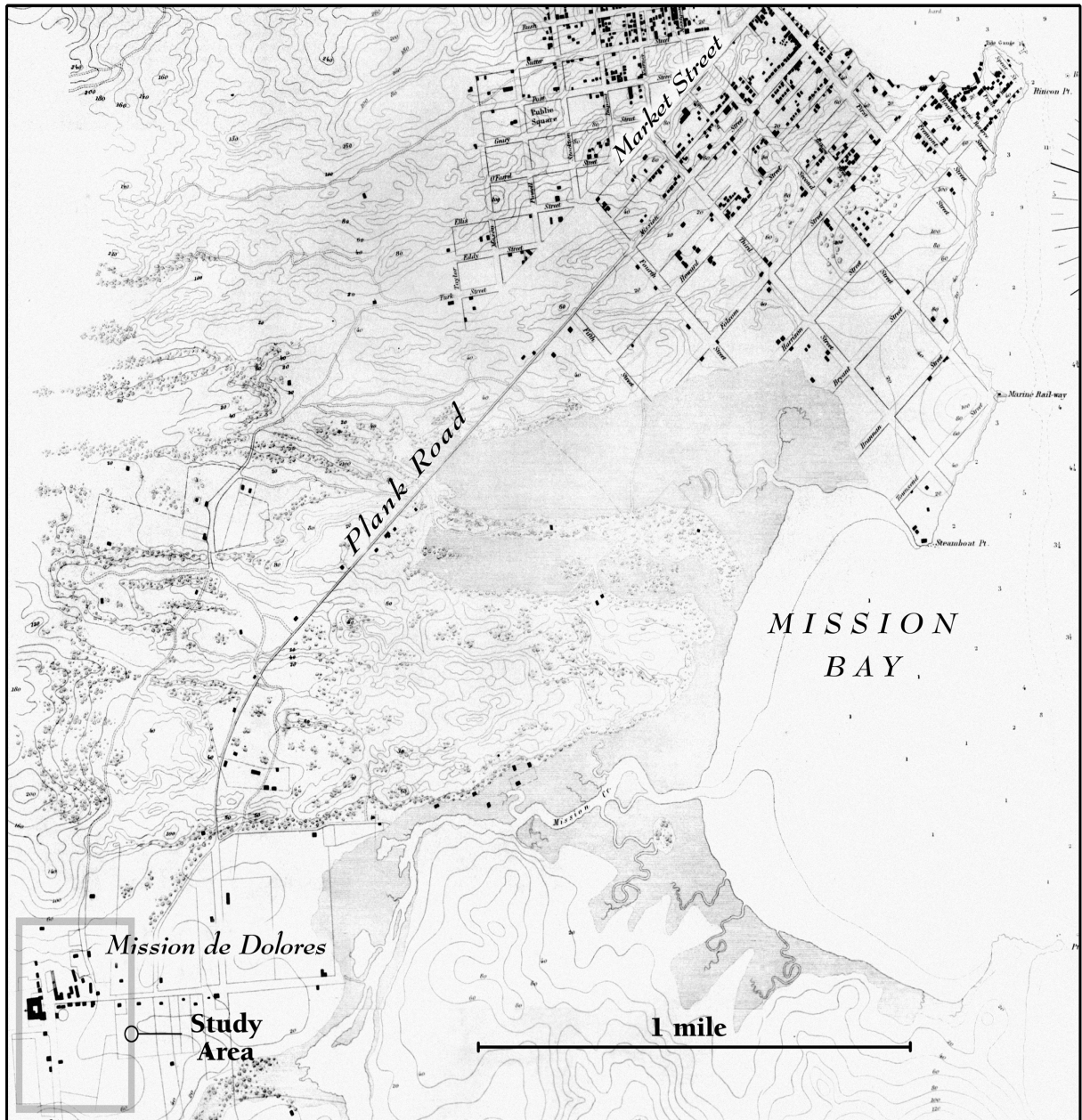


Figure 4. This 1853 map illustrates the relationship between the City and the Mission Dolores settlement. Market Street ends at 4th with the plank road connecting the two areas. *Courtesy of the California State Library.*

By the 1860s the Mission Dolores neighborhood had begun to take on a more urban form. During this decade the population of the 11th Ward, the political subdivision of the city that encompassed the Mission District, rose from 3000 in 1860 to 23,000.²⁴ This increase in population density and the accompanying housing development was no doubt aided by the extension of city streets into the Mission District and the construction of street car lines along both Mission and Valencia. By this time the area east of Mission Street was well populated with several houses present on every city block. In the Mission Dolores area marked development had taken place between Fifteenth and Eighteenth/ Dolores and Valencia and in several blocks between Dolores and Valencia near 20th Street.²⁵ However, west of Dolores blocks remained largely vacant.²⁶ Several 1880s photographs of the Mission Dolores area highlight the relatively open and undeveloped western landscape of the neighborhood which had been divided into small ranchos in the 1850s.



Figure 5. This 1868 photograph, taken from the Protestant Orphanage grounds in Hayes Valley, overlooks Market Street in the foreground and Valencia in the background. Although well settled this area is still interspersed with sand dunes and open blocks. View southeast. Gaar and Miller, *San Francisco: A Natural History*.

²⁴ Corrette, Moses et al., "Inner Mission North 1853-1943 Context Statement, 2005," Planning Department, City of San Francisco, 21. The 11th Ward was a political division within the city governing City/County elections and representation. It encompassed most of the Mission District.

²⁵ *Map of the City of San Francisco, 1874*. In contrast to the 1853 US Geologic Survey map, which shows no buildings in the area south of 16th Street, there are at least fifty-four buildings in the blocks between 17th and 18th/Guerrero and Valencia by the 1870s.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

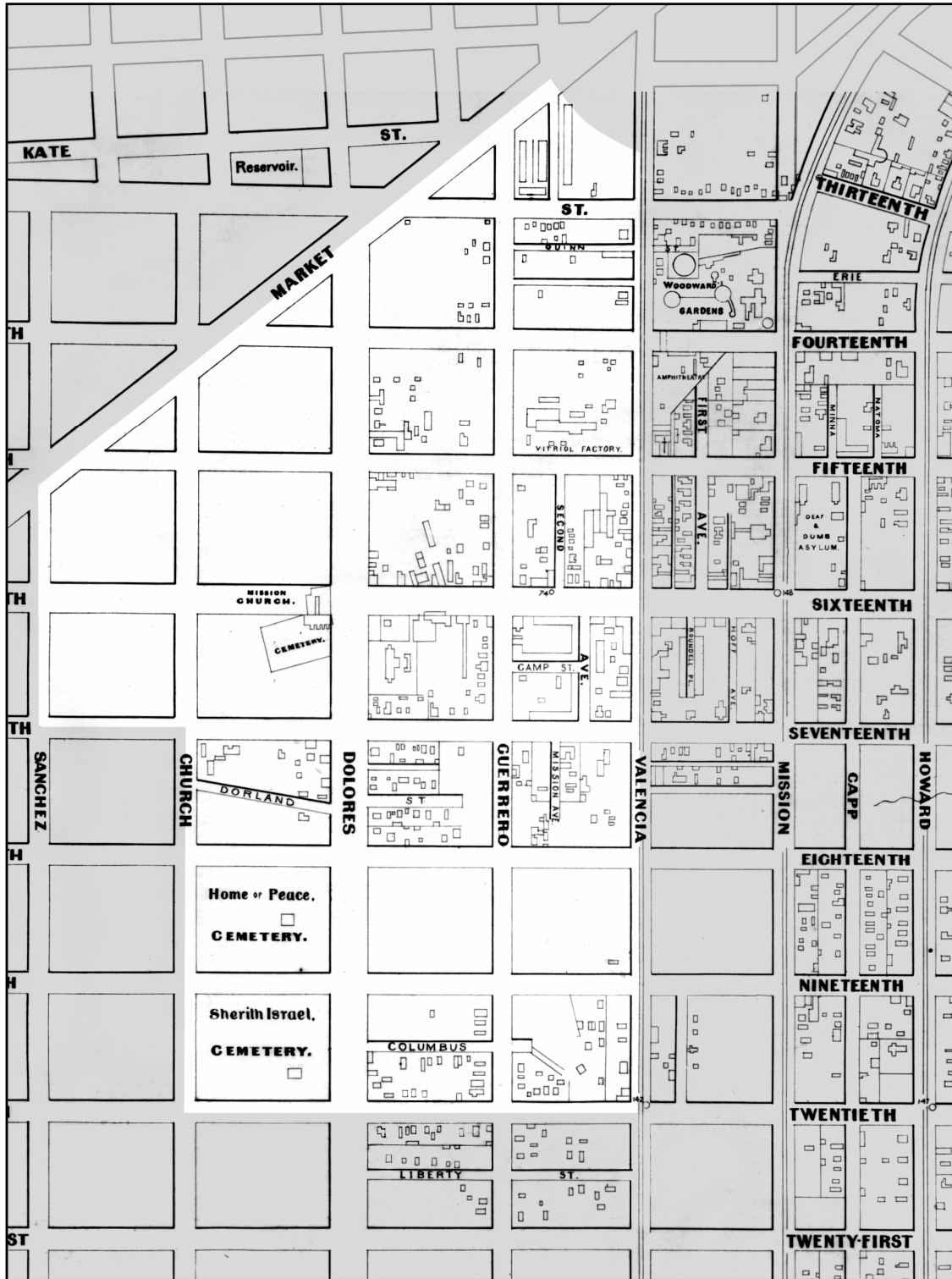


Figure 6. This map of Mission Dolores in 1874 highlights the denser development within the central core of the neighborhood. *Courtesy of the California State Library.*

The 1874 City Map shows several Mission buildings still in existence at 16th and Dolores.²⁷ The footprints of buildings in the vicinity of Camp Street suggest Mission associations because of their form, location, and orientation to the street.²⁸ In the 1870s the Catholic Church constructed a larger Church, Saint Francis, next to the Mission sanctuary. This Gothic revival brick building had a steeply pitched gable roof and a prominent central bell tower entry. The building was badly damaged in the 1906 earthquake and demolished.

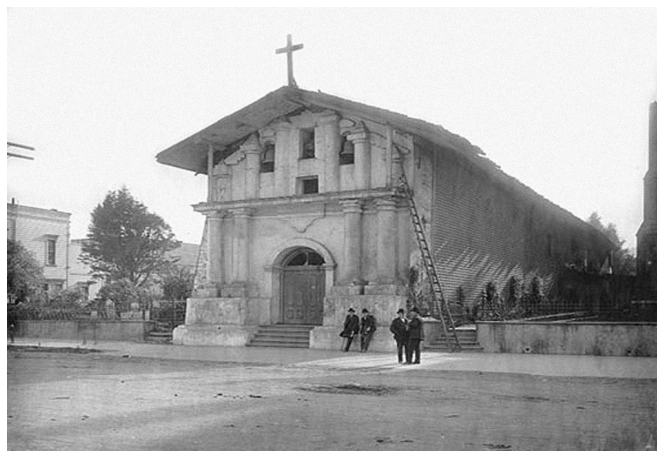


Figure 7 and 7a. Mission Dolores in 1865 (left) when a part of it was turned into a saloon and in 1906 (right) long after the land grant to the Mission and adjacent property had been confirmed to the Catholic Church. Views southwest and west respectively. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library.*

Two Jewish cemeteries, Home of Peace and Sherith Israel were established in the 1861. One provided an orthodox burial ground and the other a cemetery for Congregation Emanu-el, the first reform Jewish congregation west of the Mississippi. The lands for the cemeteries were held respectively by Sherith Israel Congregation and by Congregation Emanu-el and the Eureka

²⁷ *Ibid.*, These buildings are located in the block bounded by 15th and 16th Streets, Dolores and Guerrero. These same buildings appear on the 1853 Geodetic Survey map of San Francisco.

²⁸ There are several long narrow rectangular buildings in the blocks between Dolores and Guerrero and 14th and 15th Streets. While the 1874 Map does not identify them, they are not oriented toward the street and are present on land where the Mission had a number of outbuildings. As Randall Dean points out, some of these were taken over after secularization by later land owners.

Benevolent Society. The cemeteries were used until 1895 when they were closed and the burials were transferred to Colma. ²⁹



Figure 8. An 1876 photograph of the Jewish Cemeteries, now Dolores Park. The background of the photograph illustrates the still scattered development pattern of the neighborhood. View is unidentified. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library*

In their study of power, politics and urban development in San Francisco, historians Robert Cherny and William Issel, found that the distinctive patterns of city neighborhoods were well established by the mid-1880's and continued into the 20th century. They found this stability expressed in demographics, housing, and social institutions. Based on an analysis of manuscript census data, Cherny and Issel describe the larger Mission District as an area of family habitation with household heads employed primarily in blue collar jobs and small scale enterprise. A large portion of the population in the 19th and early 20th centuries was foreign born with Germans, Scandinavians and Irish ethnicities prevailing. Densities in the Mission District were lower than in other parts of the city, particularly the pre-earthquake South of Market, the other principal working class district of the city. ³⁰ While the authors acknowledge that the Mission District included many diverse neighborhoods, they maintain that these major characteristics of class, social organization, ethnicity, and settlement patterns pervaded the entire area.

A sample of several blocks in the Mission Dolores neighborhood in 1880 is highly consistent with Cherny and Issel's description. In 1874 the most heavily occupied blocks were those along Dolores and Guerrero Streets within a few blocks of the old Mission. ³¹ Households in the 400 block of Dolores and the 500 block of Guerrero between 17th and 18th Streets, were made up of many families headed by a foreign-born adult male engaged in a blue collar occupation. Occupants of the blocks included a blacksmith, a sailor, a factory worker, a steward, a molder, and a wood carver. Household size ranged between two and four. ³² Although working-class

²⁹ Guide to the Emanu-El Congregation, San Francisco Records, 1849-1995, Online Archive of California (OAC), www.oac.cdlib.org.

³⁰ Issel, William and Robert Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power and Urban Development*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 58. Cherny and Issel describe the Mission District as encompassing a large area along Mission Street beginning at about 12th Street and extending west from Mission to the base of Twin Peaks and east to the industrial areas along the Bay, 63.

³¹ Map, 1874.

³² U.S. Census, 1880.

occupations were the most common, Mission Dolores also included individuals in white collar occupations supplemented by an admixture of small merchants dealing in groceries, retail ore, and brick manufacture. At the southern edge of the neighborhood in the 700 and 800 blocks of Guerrero a scattering of professionals could be found, including two clergymen and a professor of music.³³ These latter blocks were a part of Horner's Addition, an early subdivision that bordered the Mission Dolores area. Near Guerrero and 20th Streets the Addition overlapped the study area.

Although Mission Dolores had a smattering of middle-class merchants and educated professionals, it did not attract members of the city's wealthier elite in the 1860s and 1870s as did some of the southeastern parts of the Mission District. Mission Dolores neighborhood contained no large mansions like those on South Van Ness Avenue (Howard Street) and in the southeast Mission District. The largest buildings in the area during the 1870s and 1880s were religious; the Mission Church and the Notre Dame College for Young Women/Convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. It was the first girl's school in San Francisco and was established in 1868 on land that was part of the Mexican land grant to the church. It superseded an important part of the Mission Rancheria which continues to exist as an archeological site.

Mission Dolores 1880 to the Earthquake of 1906

Between 1870 and 1900 the workforce of San Francisco almost doubled, increasing by forty-one per cent.³⁴ The population gain along with improved transportation and infrastructure pushed urban development to the south and west of the city. This was a period of rapid growth and urbanization for the previously sleepy Mission Dolores neighborhood.

The Sanborn Map of 1899 shows a substantial increase in density from the 1870s. Most large blocks were re-subdivided into standard narrow city lots. As historian Randolph Delehanty points out, one of the most popular devices for increasing the real estate potential of city blocks was to cut small streets and alleys, thus creating more street frontage and maximizing the amount of developable land. The Mission Dolores area saw a good deal of side street development after 1870. The neighborhood is crossed with narrow streets cutting through the center of blocks; what Delehanty calls an "inside" and "outside" block pattern.³⁵ Some of these are little more than alleyways. The most concentrated areas of this type of development were between Guerrero and Valencia/ 16th and 17th and near the Notre Dame School between Dolores and Guerrero. However, even at the turn-of-the-20th-century, the western edge of the neighborhood remained sparsely developed between Market and 16th /Church and Dolores, where only a few buildings had been constructed on Church Street and on Landers by the turn-of-the-20th-century.

Despite a general build-up, the neighborhood remained distinctly residential with a high concentration of single family residences. Dwellings outnumbered flats and other forms of multiple-unit housing three to one.³⁶ While built out lots were not uncommon, a large number of houses still had set backs that allowed for a front yard and separation from the neighboring building. Corner stores were frequent with nearly sixteen such establishments within a thirteen block radius. Most commerce, however, was confined to the Valencia/Mission/16th Street corridor which by 1899 was principally an assemblage of shops, commercial enterprises, small manufacturing plants, and restaurants.³⁷

The number of public buildings and schools remained small with the Mission Dolores area, with the Mission Church, St. Francis Church and Notre Dame School still predominating. The first

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Issel and Cherny, 53.

³⁵ Delehanty, Randolph, *In the Victorian Style* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991), 1.

³⁶ The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for 1899 delineates 297 dwellings as compared to 131 flats with no apartment buildings present.

³⁷ Sanborn 1899.

Mission High School was the most significant institutional addition to the neighborhood in the last two decades of the 19th century. It was the first public comprehensive high school in San Francisco, as well as west of the Rocky Mountains.

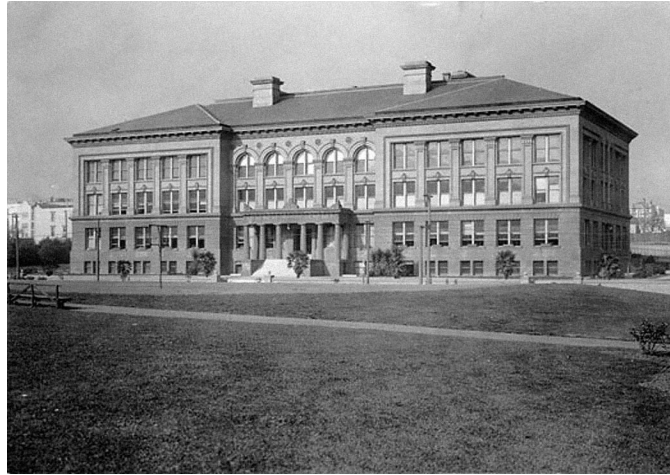


Figure 9. Old Mission High School, built 1897. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library.*

Although more densely developed than in previous decades, Mission Dolores in 1900 continued to be a family neighborhood. Census data for the period provides a clear picture of the economic, ethnic and social composition of the neighborhood. By 1900 the 600 block of Guerrero was fully built out. Of nine households appearing in that block in the manuscript census for that year, eight consisted of two parent families with children. In contrast to the same location in 1880, fewer heads of household were foreign-born and more were established in white collar occupations. Merchants and clerks were joined by professionals, including a mechanical engineer, a dentist and a lawyer.³⁸

In addition to having a much greater predominance of single family housing, Mission Dolores neighborhood was distinguished from other parts of the Mission District in the late 19th century by the general absence of two types of housing stock.³⁹ As noted in the previous sections the neighborhood failed to attract the City's wealthy and elite. This was manifested in the absence of residences that could legitimately be characterized as "mansions." The 1899 Sanborn Map shows only two properties, one at 3421 17th and one at 326 Guerrero, that are substantially larger than neighboring dwellings. More significant than the size of the dwellings is the fact that these homes were located on large lots with substantial "grounds."

At the other end of the social spectrum, Mission Dolores did not have many "Romeo Flats," a high density (4-6 units) form of rental housing generally for working class tenants. While an intensive survey may reveal more examples of this building type, Sanborn and other maps do not indicate their presence in any substantial numbers. Similarly, the neighborhood did not conform to the development pattern Delehanty describes in which the "inside" streets tend to be the resort of the lower income working class. The housing stock on small streets such as Albion, Cunningham, Dearborn and others is comparable to that found on the main streets of the neighborhood and, if anything, may have had a slightly higher ratio of individual family dwellings.

³⁸ U.S. Census, 1900.

³⁹ Issel and Cherny, 63.

Although by 1900 the Mission Dolores neighborhood had experienced substantial growth and left behind the agrarian character of earlier decades, it was still a distinctly suburban area characterized by houses, many with yards, a small number of churches and social organizations, a number of stables, indicating the dependence of many residents on horses and carriages, and a single concentrated commercial zone. Among the neighborhood institutions and churches were the College of Notre Dame, discussed earlier, Youth's Directory, Saint Francis Catholic School, Saint Francis Church and a Protestant church at 20th and Dolores.

Mission Dolores Park

As the City surveyed and auctioned off land, almost no provision was made for public open space or parks. In the official survey of 1849 only four parks, Portsmouth, Washington, Union, and Columbia Squares were provided, each a block or portion of a block within the city grid.⁴⁰ An 1860s plan by Fredrick Law Olmsted for a large municipal park was never realized. Since most re-subdivision within surveyed blocks was carried out by private developers who were intent on maximizing profits, parks were not a serious consideration.

San Francisco was not unusual in this regard. The urban park movement was in its infancy in the 1840s and 1850s and it was not until 1858 that planning began for Central Park, the first large urban park designed and built by a municipality for its citizens. During much of the 19th century cemeteries played a role which today we assign to parks and playgrounds. Often the only large landscaped space in a city, cemeteries were used for strolling, picnicking and contemplation. San Francisco is unusual in actually utilizing a former cemetery to create one of the city's largest parks in the Mission Dolores neighborhood.

In 1900, under Mayor Phelan, the city established a Parks Department. At that time the Mission District had only one park square at Treat and Harrison between 25th and 26th Streets. With a population of nearly 30,000 that included a high concentration of families, there was strong support for the development of a park in the District.⁴¹ In 1903 a bond act was passed that included funding for the purchase of the old Jewish Cemeteries for the creation of a park.⁴² The bond act received substantial support in working class wards, but was less well supported in more elite sections of the City. In 1905 the park was laid out with clusters of palms at the corners and a large expanse of lawn. A playground was added by the 1920s. In 1916 the development of the Church Street car line took a wide right-of-way at the western end of the park. Access to the park from the Church Street side involved bridging over the slightly recessed tracks. The street car right-of-way is now heavily landscaped with a path running parallel to the track.

During the 1930s the WPA constructed a clubhouse as a part of its public works program. In the 1960s a concrete "plaza" and a Mexican liberty bell were installed, a testament to the continued vitality and importance of the park in the life of the neighborhood.

The Dolores Street median was developed in the late 19th century, progressing incrementally as the street was paved.⁴³ It was originally omitted in several blocks to leave room for streetcar tracks. Eventually, it ran continuously from the beginning to the end of Dolores. It was part of a more comprehensive plan to link the City's parks into a connected system that included an addition to Dolores Street, the Presidio and Lincoln Parkways.⁴⁴ A proposed plan to use the median for the placement of statuary all along the route was never carried out. A lone Spanish-American War monument marks the beginning of the median at Market Street. The proposal for

⁴⁰ Delehanty, Randolph, "San Francisco parks and playgrounds, 1839-1990: the history of a public good in one North American City," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1992.

⁴¹ Ibid, 98. The population estimate for the larger Mission District is his.

⁴² Delehanty, "San Francisco parks and playgrounds," 98.

⁴³ Ibid, 365.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

statuary gave way to grass and evenly spaced plantings of palms that were installed as the median was constructed. While the median created a continuous landscape ribbon that beautifies a busy thoroughfare, it also helped prevent the 1906 fire from jumping the street and progressing westward.



Figure 10. Dolores Park played an important role in the family dominated Mission Dolores neighborhood. Children's playground, circa 1920. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library*



Figure 11. The Church Street trolley line took right-of-way at the rear of the park necessitating the construction of pedestrian bridges from the Church Street side. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library*



Figure 12. Dolores Street Median as it appeared circa 1920. *Courtesy of San Francisco Public Library*

The Earthquake of 1906 and Rebuilding

The earthquake of 1906 destroyed much of the Mission Dolores neighborhood. The fires that raged following the quake swept south and west burning everything in the Mission Dolores area from Valencia to the east side of Dolores and to 20th Street on the south.⁴⁵ At Dolores Street the width of the street created a firebreak and at 20th and Church one of the few fire hydrants that remained operative allowed firefighters to stop the flames from burning to the south and west.⁴⁶

This event dramatically changed the city and the Mission Dolores neighborhood. The only part of the Victorian neighborhood that survived lay between Dolores and Church from 16th to Market, and along the south side of 20th Street. Fortunately the Mission Dolores and the Tanforan Cottages from the 1850s were saved. Although it escaped the fire, the St. Francis Catholic Church adjacent to the Mission was badly damaged by the earthquake and was subsequently torn down.

The newly established Mission Park was immediately requisitioned as a tent camp for the temporary housing of those rendered homeless by the quake and fire. It returned to its role as a park as the neighborhood was rebuilt.

In their history of San Francisco, Cherny and Issel, emphasize the predominantly working class character of the Mission District and its diverse ethnic composition.⁴⁷ These characteristics were enhanced after the earthquake. The heavily working class and Irish South of Market District was completely destroyed in 1906. The residential building stock of the area was not replaced; instead South of Market was rebuilt as an industrial zone with only small pockets of housing. The result was a mass migration into the southern districts of the city.⁴⁸ The immediate impact on the Mission Dolores neighborhood and the broader Mission District was a substantially increased density. The Irish, who came from the South of Market provided a strong ethnic identity to the area. As Cherny and Issel point out: "For the next thirty years or so, until after World War II,

⁴⁵ McDonald, A.L., *Map of San Francisco, 1906*.

⁴⁶ This fire hydrant is known as the "Golden Fireplug" and is commemorated by a plaque at the site.

⁴⁷ Issel and Cherny, 62.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 66.

many Mission residents were consciously Irish, consciously working class and very conscious of being residents of the “Mish.”⁴⁹ All of these characteristics were reflected in the Mission Dolores neighborhood.

The rebuilding of San Francisco after 1906 is one of the most dramatic stories of disaster recovery and urban reconstruction in the history of the United States. By 1915, only nine years after a disaster that rendered half the population of San Francisco homeless, the city had risen like Phoenix from the ashes. At the heart of a major earthquake zone, the City had already incorporated this image of triumph over disaster into its City seal as a result of lesser 19th- century quakes. The Mission Dolores area was extensively rebuilt east of Dolores Street and between Duboce and 20th in the period immediately following the 1906 disaster. The renewed neighborhood had a revitalized commercial district, light industry, an enlarged network of associational and religious institutions, a larger number of educational institutions, and a dense concentration of multiple-unit housing. As the *Inner Mission North Context Statement* makes clear, most of this rebuilding activity was accomplished by the private sector without any overall recovery plan or urban blueprint.⁵⁰



Figure 13. View of the destruction caused by the 1906 fire. This shot is looking down Dolores Street from Market. View south.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Study Area in White

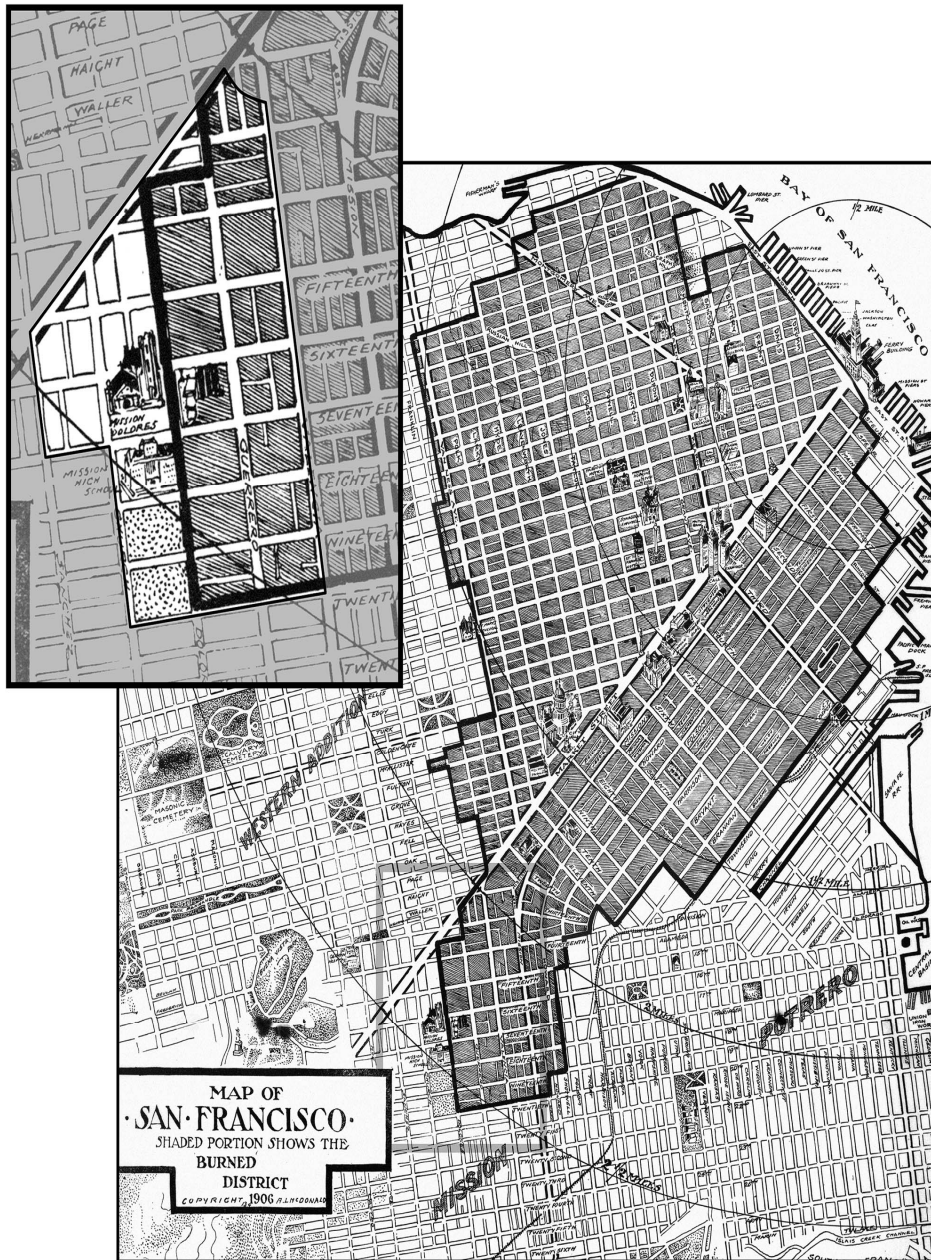


Figure 14. The area in dark gray represents the area destroyed by the fire that followed the earthquake in 1906. *Courtesy of the California State Library.*

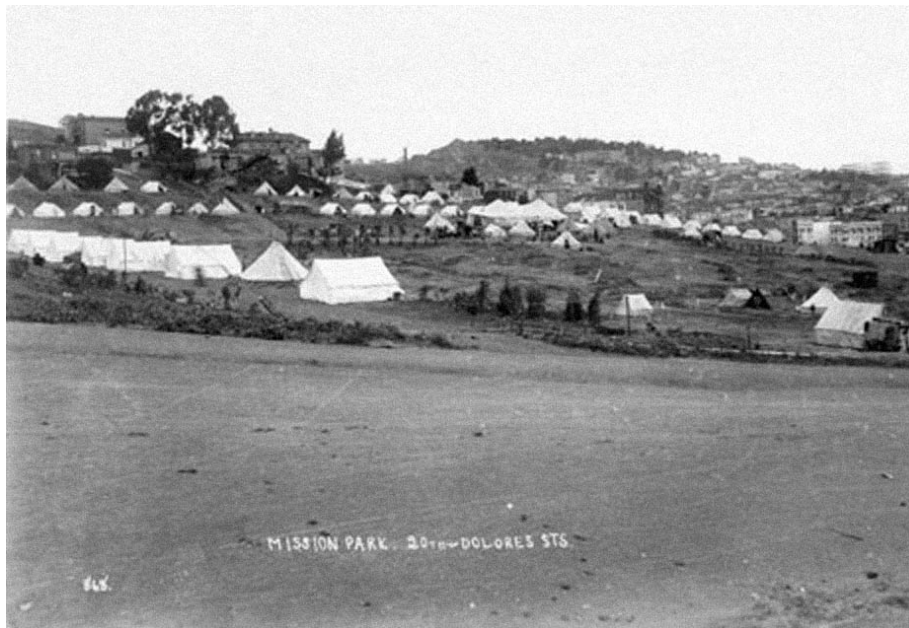


Figure 15. Refugee tent camp in Mission Dolores Park following the earthquake of 1906. Note the area behind the park which was unaffected by the fire. View southwest.

Mission Dolores from 1915 to 1950

The first post-earthquake Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for the Mission Dolores area was completed in 1915. It provides an excellent picture of the post-disaster neighborhood and can be compared very effectively with the 1899 Sanborn to chart changes that occurred in the rebuilding of the city. The neighborhood as it exists today was largely shaped in the immediate post-earthquake period. This is true in terms of the character and period of the housing stock, in the general patterns of neighborhood development and, up until WWII, in patterns of class and ethnicity.

Perhaps the most obvious post-earthquake change was the transition of the Mission Dolores neighborhood from a semi-suburban, single family dwelling area to a dense neighborhood fully integrated into the larger urban context. While flats had been a component of the neighborhood in the 19th century, single family homes had dominated the area. By 1915 that relationship had reversed with single family dwellings accounting for only one-third of the housing stock. Two to three-story flats had become the predominant form of housing. In addition, a new form of housing, the multi-unit apartment building, previously unknown in the neighborhood, had begun to occupy several lots. These two forms of housing clearly represented the future and their growth can be traced into the 1950s and later. In addition, vacant land, which had not been uncommon in the neighborhood in the late 19th century became a rarity. The Sanborn Map shows eight approximately 25 foot standard house lots still unbuilt in 1915. This contrasts markedly with 1899 when there were 109 lots, several of which were large unsubdivided portions of blocks or parcels. Corner stores, almost all of which were destroyed in the 1906 fire, were quickly replaced, attesting to the importance of this pattern of commerce in the city.⁵¹ Previously undeveloped areas, such as the blocks between 16th and Market west of Dolores, that were not destroyed in the fire were entirely infilled in this period, in large part due to the immediate need for housing in the City.

⁵¹ The Sanborn Map of 1899 shows 16 corner stores. The 1915 map indicates that there are 17 of this type of commercial establishment present.

By 1930 Mission Dolores had shifted from a predominantly blue collar, foreign born population to an almost equal mix of native/foreign born and skilled blue/ white collar residents. Of fourteen households in the 700 block of Guerrero in that year, half reported a foreign-born head of household. Of these, most had immigrated from northern Europe, maintaining the earlier neighborhood ethnic mix of German, Scandinavian and British born. Those in blue collar occupations were involved in skilled trades such as building, electrical and fire fighting. Those in white collar occupations were primarily engaged as retail clerks or in lower echelon administrative jobs. Among this mix there were a few small scale entrepreneurs including the owner of a nail manufacturing operation and the owner of a tire store.⁵² A new development was the presence of households headed by single women, often with grown children or boarders in residence. Ethel Erickson, aged 41, was divorced and shared a flat at 711C Guerrero with her son who worked in a garage and a roomer who worked as a clerk in a shipping company. Similarly, Jinnie Carey, a divorcee, shared her flat with a boarder, while Anne Towner, a single woman of 58, rented a room in her flat at 3600 20th Street to a male clerk at PG&E.⁵³

Valencia/Mission/16th Streets remained the main commercial corridor of the Mission Dolores area. Sixteenth Street from Valencia to Guerrero became more exclusively commercial in this period. Restaurants and entertainment venues were more numerous as well. A dance hall and movie theater were located on 16th Street, near Valencia, a clear spill over from the concentrated entertainment district on Mission Street, just outside the Mission Dolores neighborhood study area. It is interesting to note that Valencia Street became an area in which casket companies were concentrated in this period, no doubt as a result of the Market Street Railway Company service that ran funeral cars out Valencia with an extension to Colma.⁵⁴ Several mortuary and undertaking businesses were also established in the area.



Figure 16. By the 1920s Valencia Street had become a busy commercial corridor often with shops at street level and apartments above as in the photograph on the right. Left photo, view southwest. Right photo, view unknown. *Courtesy of San Francisco Public Library.*

In the 19th century San Francisco had no zoning regulations; something it shared in common with other American cities. Commercial, industrial and residential uses, however incompatible or undesirable, could co-exist next door to each other. While largely residential, the Mission Dolores neighborhood became home to some light industry in the post-earthquake period. Several planning mills and cabinet shops were located in the area, often with large yards that occupied the center of blocks. At least three dairy processing and delivery businesses existed in the neighborhood. These included the Dairy Delivery Company on 19th Street, the National Ice Cream Company warehouse on 17th and the United Milk Company on 16th and Guerrero.

⁵² U.S. Census, 1930.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Corrette, 19.

Although generally intended to segregate commercial, industrial and residential uses, when zoning was introduced in the 1920s, it tended to reflect already established patterns in the older neighborhoods in San Francisco, including the Mission Dolores neighborhood. The major north-south streets in the Mission Dolores neighborhood were all zoned commercial, reinforcing the established uses along Valencia and 16th and allowing for increased mixed use along Guerrero. Corner stores retained their strong foothold, joined in the 1940s and 1950s by a number of gas stations on key corner lots particularly along Valencia and Guerrero.⁵⁵ However, within a few decades many of the light industrial uses in residential blocks were redeveloped for multi-unit housing.

The rise in social and religious organizations is notable in the period following the earthquake. The Columbia Park Boys Club provided services to neighborhood youth, while the Mission Turn Verein Hall at 18th and Lapidge provided association for those of German origin and a home for the German Men's Chorus.⁵⁶

The Mission District, with its large blue collar population was long a center of labor organizing and union activity. Within the study area, the Union Labor Offices on Valencia between 15th and 16th Streets attest to the strong union presence. Harry Bridges, leader of the Longshoreman's Union in the 1930s, carried out planning for the famous San Francisco General Strike in a building on Camp Street.⁵⁷ Ethnic fraternal organizations also brought together individuals who shared not only their national origins, but their vocations and labor affiliations.⁵⁸

Mission Dolores neighborhood had been dominated by Catholic religious institution in the 19th and early 20th century. Many of these had been concentrated within the half-block that contained the Mission itself and in the school directly across Dolores Street and within the original Mexican land grant to Bishop Allemany. In the 1920s the Catholic Church finally replaced St. Francis Church with a new Basilica in an elaborate Spanish Revival style. The church also constructed a day home on the northeast corner of Dolores and 16th.

The post-earthquake period saw the rise of more diverse religious institutions that reflected the major immigrant groups living in the neighborhood. The 1915 Sanborn shows eight churches in addition to the Catholic facilities at the Mission property. These include the Swedish Lutheran Church at 15th and Dolores, St. Mathews Evangelical Lutheran on 16th, Emanuel Evangelical at 17th and Albion, the Swedish Baptist Church at 17th and Dearborn, the Norwegian Lutheran, the Swedish Tabernacle, and the Mission Congregational Church, all on Dolores, and the B'Nai David Synagogue between Valencia and Angelica on 19th Street.

Schools also came to play a more important role in the neighborhood after the earthquake. In the 19th century Catholic schools immediately adjacent to the Mission were the principal educational presence in the area. A new and larger Mission High School was constructed in 1926 on the site of the old High School. In addition a large middle school, Everett Junior High, was built in the same year. Both were designed by John Reid in an exuberant expression of the Spanish Revival Style. Marshall Elementary School was built on Cunningham and a private kindergarten operated at 18th and Oakwood.

⁵⁵ In 1950 there were 19 corner stores in contrast to 17 in 1915. This does not include gas stations. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1915, 1950.

⁵⁶ Issell and Cherny, 64.

⁵⁷ Personal communication, Robert Cherney.

⁵⁸ Ibid.



Figure 17. Mission High School, circa 1930. View north. *Courtesy of the San Francisco Public Library.*

In the 1920s the Spanish or Mediterranean Revival emerged as an important and widely used style of architecture in California. In art, architecture and literature the period was characterized by a romanticization of the rancho period of California's past. Many architects argued that it was the quintessential aesthetic that represented both California's history and its Mediterranean landscape. During the 1920s entire towns like Santa Barbara and Los Gatos were redeveloped on a Spanish architectural theme and new subdivisions, such as Rancho Santa Fe in San Diego and Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr.'s Palos Verdes embraced the style. While never as popular or widespread in the Bay Area as in Southern California, the Mediterranean Revival was utilized for a number of major public buildings. The Mission Dolores area, with its strong Hispanic heritage, was a natural place for this style to find expression. The Catholic Basilica, Mission High School, and Everett Jr. High School are among the finest examples of the style in the City. In addition, there a number of lesser examples scattered throughout the neighborhood.

The Mission Dolores 1950-present

The essential character of the Mission Dolores neighborhood did not dramatically change after WWII. The two most marked developments were a continuation of trends established in the post-quake years. There was a continued increase in density, with a substantial increase in multiple unit buildings, and a demographic shift from foreign-born to native-born residents. Single family homes continued to decline in the area. By 1950 only fifty-eight single family dwellings are found on the Sanborn Map, most of these concentrated in the smaller side streets of the neighborhood such as Chula Lane, Linda, and Lapidge. Multiple unit dwellings by contrast expanded exponentially, with an almost 80 per cent increase by 1950.⁵⁹ Consistent with the Inner Mission North area, this type of dwelling is most often found on compact, pedestrian-oriented streets and corner lots. The pattern of growth for this type of housing follows that of the Mission District in general. The trend toward multiple-unit housing was established during the immediate post-earthquake rebuilding, but experiencing its greatest increases in the period between 1914 and 1930.⁶⁰ In the period after 1950 a number of Mid-Century Modern multiple unit buildings replaced some older housing. This is particularly noticeable along Church Street and on a number of large corner lots between Guerrero and Valencia.

⁵⁹ San Francisco Sanborn Map, 1950.

⁶⁰ Corrette, 36.



Figure 18. Examples of Modernist buildings on Church Street constructed after 1950. View east, and view west respectively.

In his study of changing San Francisco neighborhoods in the 1970s and 1980s, Brian Godfrey concluded that after 1950 the Mission Dolores area became less ethnic and more middle class. With a housing cost 16% higher than the city median, Godfrey finds that the western portions of the Mission Dolores neighborhood attracted a population that tended to be white, native-born, and gay.⁶¹ This contrasts with the southern and eastern portion of the Mission which experienced a new influx of immigrants, this time from Mexico and South America. While reflecting the trends that Godfrey identifies, Mission Dolores neighborhood remains a diverse area that is ethnically and socio-economically mixed. In addition to including newer immigrant groups, it retains an ethnic population that traces its residency in the neighborhood for two or more generations. This includes Hispanic families who had established themselves in the neighborhood in earlier decades, as well as Scandinavians who were an important ethnic component of early 20th century neighborhood mix. The Mission Dolores also manifests some of the most recent urban demographic shifts, such as the return of young families to the city.

Beginning with World War II Central Americans became an increasingly prominent group within the Mission. By the 1980s the Mission had the greatest concentration of Hispanics from Central America of any major city in the U.S.⁶² However, the largest concentration of Latino population is found east of Mission Street. During the period from 1960-1980 the business district along Mission and east of Mission took on a distinctive ethnic character with many Hispanic owned businesses, galleries and social institutions.

Latino influence spilled over into the business district along Valencia and Guerrero and was reflected in the transformation of social and religious institutions which had served earlier waves of immigrants. The El Buen Pastor Church at 16th and Guerrero Streets became the first Spanish language congregation established in the Inner Mission in the 1940s.⁶³ The 1st Swedish Methodist Church became the Spanish Presbyterian Church and the Church of Christ Scientists on Dolores attracted a largely Hispanic congregation. The Turn Verein building, which had been occupied first by German, then by Norwegian immigrants through the 1950s, took on a Latino and feminist identity in the 1970s when it became known as the Women's Building/ Edificio de Mujeres.

At the same time other churches in the neighborhood which had originally been associated with earlier immigrant communities took on more general Protestant denominational identities. The Swedish Baptist Church at 17th and Dearborn became the Church of Christ and the Swedish Tabernacle became the Mission Covenant Church.

⁶¹ Godfrey, Brian. *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 152.

⁶² Corrette, 34.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 33.

However, the two major public schools, Mission High and Everett Junior High, and the Mission Dolores Park have remained central institutions in the neighborhood. While the demographics associated with the use of these institutions and public places has shifted, they continue to serve a broad and diverse population from throughout the Mission District.

PROPERTY TYPES

A context statement identifies property types that are associated with the principal themes in the history and development of a district or geographic area. The identification of property types and their linkage with events, patterns of development, important individuals or architectural values is intended to provide guidance in developing a methodology for the historic survey of a defined area. Property type identification helps to focus identification and evaluation of individual buildings, linkage or continuity of buildings, sites and landscapes that may be significant or contribute to the significance of an area. Property type identification is based on the information developed through research, analysis and preliminary or reconnaissance survey. It identifies general types of properties that exist within an area, but it is not definitive in assigning significance to those resources.

The Mission Dolores neighborhood is home to a wide diversity of property types and architectural styles. With the exception of heavy industry, there is a mix of uses and occupancy. However, the residential character of the area, first established in the 1870s and persisting through the post-earthquake rebuilding period, continues to dominate the neighborhood. All of the architectural styles popular from the 1880s through the 1950s are to be found here. The area largely derives its architectural and visual character from the extensive number of Edwardian, Mission and Period Revival, two to three story flats that abut one another along the tree-lined streets.

No formal and comprehensive historical and architectural survey has been conducted between 16th and 20th/Church, Market and Valencia. The Inner Mission North survey recently completed by the City of San Francisco covers the area north and east of Mission Dolores. The neighborhood overlaps with the Inner Mission North District between Market and 16th Streets and Dolores and Valencia. On the south the Mission Dolores neighborhood is bounded by the Liberty Hill Historic District, a notable collection of Victorian residences. Some similar property types are found along 20th Street within the district boundary. On the west the neighborhood overlaps with the Market-Octavia Planning area and the boundaries of the Market-Octavia historic survey.

The Mission Dolores neighborhood shares a number of property types in common with the Inner Mission North, but it also has some differences with the adjacent area. However, without a comprehensive survey, these qualities can only be generalized, and will require more study and verification.

The discussion of property types below is based on extensive research, windshield survey of the neighborhood, information developed in several walking guides to the neighborhood, notably those of Randolph Delehanty and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the typologies developed in the *Inner Mission North Context Statement*. The information provided is at a superficial level and may be subject to revision when further study and documentation is accomplished. However, the categories of property described here are broad and general enough to provide a reasonable expectation of property types that would be encountered in a survey and are sufficient to establish a foundation for survey planning.

Archeological Resources

The Mission Dolores area contains both prehistoric and historic archeological remains. According to City Archeologist, Randall Dean, the archeological record of the history of the Mission Dolores area is not only significant but, in general, possesses relatively good integrity. Most

archeologists agree that the remains associated with the Mission Dolores complex, which included many buildings and sites besides the Mission Church, must be viewed as one continuous interconnected resource.⁶⁴ The archeological resources of the area are considered to have a high level of significance because of the unique, historically early and pivotal place Mission Dolores holds in the history of the San Francisco peninsula.⁶⁵ The archeological district is potentially eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under all four criteria of eligibility. It is associated with the Spanish-Mexican period of settlement and the Franciscan missionization of Native Americans under Criterion A, with several important individuals under Criterion B, for architectural and technological history under Criterion C, and for its potential to yield information regarding a broad range of research topics under Criterion D. In addition the resources are atypically sensitive because of their proximity to the existing land surface.

The Mission Dolores neighborhood is an example of a multi-layered resource base that is composed of pre-contact, historic archeological, early historic buildings and sites (Mission and Mission cemetery) in close juxtaposition with 19th and 20th century architectural and historic resources.

The City has developed, but not formally adopted, a Mission Dolores Archeological District which is integral to any consideration of potential historic districts and significant resources within the area. The district is concentrated in the area from 14th to 17th Streets and from Sanchez to Guerrero. These potential boundaries overlap the Inner Mission North and the Mission Dolores areas. While this is the area of greatest concentration of archeological resources, the early settlement of the area extended beyond this and may contain other subsurface resources.

⁶⁴ Dean, 23.

⁶⁵ Ibid.



Figure 19. Potential Mission Dolores Archeological District overlaid with Study Area.

Mission and Gold Rush Period Resources

Mission Dolores retains a small number of historical and architectural resources associated with the earliest settlement of the San Francisco Peninsula. These include the Mission Church (which may also have other periods of significance associated with the rehabilitation efforts of Willis Polk), the Mission Cemetery which is both an existing historical cemetery and also has archeological components, and the Tanforan cottages which date from 1853. While these resources may also be considered under other categories of property types, they are linked together by their early origins and association with the beginnings of the City of San Francisco. Because of this they may be most significant as unique survivors that transcend other standard property type categories to which they may also belong.



Residential

Single Family Residences

Single family residences, once common, are now an exception within the Mission Dolores area. These are generally of two types, Victorian residences that survived the fire and are mainly found on the southern and western periphery of the neighborhood, and small cottages that occupy the rear of long lots and are sited behind flats that occupy the street front. Generally if a building was constructed as a single family unit, it is considered to remain an example of this property type, even in cases where interior sub-division may have occurred. Queen Anne and Italianate styles from the later 19th century are common, but single residences are found also in Period Revival and Art Deco architectural styles.

Without a comprehensive survey it is not possible to estimate the percentage of the neighborhood housing stock for which this type of property accounts.



Flats

Flats, two to three story buildings, generally with one unit per floor, each with a separate entrance, are one of the most common residential property types in the Mission Dolores area. Flats were widely present in the 1880s and became the predominant housing form in the period following the earthquake and fire of 1906. They continue to constitute a significant portion of the district housing stock. Most are constructed with a soft story or raised basement with an elevated entry. A variation or sub-type that appears to be common in the neighborhood is the double flat with two through units on a single floor. This type of flat shares a common central wall, but each unit has a separate entrance. Flats are found in all architectural styles from immediate post-earthquake Edwardian, period revival, exotic revival, and art deco, to streamline modern.

The large number of flats with their wooden construction and their projecting bay windows, (bowed, canted and/or squared), give many of the streets in Mission Dolores a distinctive architectural rhythm. With their adjoining side walls, this type of building is similar in concept to the brownstones and row houses of many large cities, but in building material and façade organization they are unique to San Francisco.



Romeo Flats

The Romeo flat was only built between the 1880s and 1920s. Romeo Flats are multi-unit, residential buildings with three building bays. An open or enclosed central winding stair hall in the central bay divides the façade vertically. When enclosed, windows are located at the landing between each floor of the central bay. With two narrow flats per floor, buildings usually incorporate four or six apartments.

There appear to be few examples of this building type in the Mission Dolores area, but this impression based on reconnaissance level survey needs to be tested through intensive survey.



Apartments

Apartments are characterized by multiple living units within a single building that share a common entrance and circulation space. Apartments first appeared in the Mission Dolores area in the 20th century, but did not become a significant component of the residential mix until after the earthquake. Sanborn maps indicate that by 1915 there were 11 apartment buildings in the Mission Dolores neighborhood. By 1950 this number had increased many times. Population pressures and rising land values combined to make multiple-unit housing on a single lot an increasingly appealing form of development from an economic standpoint.



Commercial Property Types

Corner Commercial

From early in its history the Mission Dolores neighborhood residential blocks were characterized by mixed commercial/residential structures on corner lots. This type of building frequently “bracketed” blocks of otherwise residential occupancy. Their importance to the neighborhood fabric was attested to in the post-1906 rebuilding effort where such buildings were almost universally replaced in kind.⁶⁶ These buildings are generally two-story with commercial at street level and residential above. They often have a unique architectural form with plate glass store front windows and a corner entry on the first level with a projecting corner bay at the second-story level.



First Story Commercial/Residential Above

Like the corner commercial, this type of property is characterized by commercial space on the first floor with plate glass display windows and transoms. Usually more than one shop is found in a single building. Housing is located on the upper stories which generally have banks of projecting bays similar to those of flats built in the same period. This type of property is particularly found along the major neighborhood commercial corridors.

Single Story Retail

Single story retail establishments are not common. Land values generally preclude this form of more suburban commercial development. However, some examples may occur particularly in the older commercial corridors on Valencia, 16th Street and the small streets and alleys adjacent to these commercial zones.

⁶⁶ Based on comparison of Sanborn Maps for 1899 and 1915.



Small Commercial and Industrial

Historically small manufacture, automotive repair and service, and woodworking establishments were located within the Mission Dolores. Although these types of activities are no longer common, buildings that originally fulfilled these types of functions continue to exist, often adapted to other uses. Generally these types of buildings are one and two-story with industrial style entries and flat roofs, although other forms exist.



Large Commercial and Industrial

With the exception of milling and dairy industries which are no longer present, the Mission Dolores area was not an industrial area and did not include large industrial buildings or complexes within its boundaries.

Large commercial buildings are geographically limited to the Valencia Street corridor which developed late in the 19th century as the principal commercial street in the district. These are generally retail and banking buildings and are relatively few in number. All are post-earthquake structures. The most important exception to this is Levi Strauss Factory at 250 Valencia Street.



Signage

Commercial and Industrial signage is common on all the building types identified above. Historic signs are often an integral part of the buildings design. In some cases these identify a continuity of use and function, in others, they identify former occupants. These are a part of historic landscape and character of the neighborhood and can be significant in themselves or as a part of the architecture and design of the buildings to which they are attached or integrated.



Institutional Property Types

The Mission Dolores area incorporates a number of buildings, sites and complexes that serve the social, recreational and religious needs of its residents. Due to their size, prominent siting and architectural qualities, these property types are among the most noticeable and prominent buildings within the community. They are generally associated with the history and development of the district and often have architectural merit. Most date from the post-earthquake period and represent a variety of architectural styles. Spanish and Churrigueresque Revivals are particularly notable, with some of the best examples of these architectural forms in the City located in the Mission Dolores neighborhood.

Schools

The Mission Dolores neighborhood has several historic private and public institutions that continue to function as schools, or which originated as school facilities and have now been adapted to other uses. These include Mission High School, Everett Junior High School, Notre

Dame School, and the elementary school attached to the Mission Dolores Basilica. A large number of these buildings are architecturally distinguished.



Associational Buildings

The Mission was a center of working class life in San Francisco from the later 19th century through the 1960s and later. The Mission Dolores neighborhood included a number of social, ethnic and labor union related institutions, some of which maintained buildings for meeting and facilities to support their members. While many of these organizations no longer exist, or are no longer active, their facilities remain and have been adapted to other uses.



Churches

In addition to the Mission Dolores and the Mission Dolores Basilica, there are a number of churches within the Mission Dolores neighborhood. Many of these originally served ethnic congregations that built the churches to maintain not only religious practices, but social connections forged by ties to the old country. Many have strong historic associations and were the site of annual celebrations and gatherings that are important in the history of the Mission

District. In addition many of these are architecturally distinguished and/or associated with local architects of reputation.



Parks and Public Spaces

Mission Dolores Park is one of the largest parks in the city and had its origins in early cemeteries that were plotted in the neighborhood. The park was first designed in 1905 and has had a number of design additions over time. It is an important public space that has met both active and passive public recreational needs for over one hundred years.

Similarly the Mission Dolores Parkway Median is an important example of city beautification and is part of the Camino Real the original mission road through California.

In addition to these formally designed and developed landscape features, the Mission Dolores area has a number of streets that are characterized by street planting along the curb which function to screen residential properties from the street and to separate pedestrian and vehicular pathways.



SURVEYED AND LISTED PROPERTIES

The Mission Dolores neighborhood has not been comprehensively surveyed for historic properties. Individual buildings and sites have been recognized over the years through various forms of designation: national, state and local. These listings have not been the result of an organized or systematic program to identify individual properties or historic districts. In 2003 the City of San Francisco undertook a context statement and survey for the Inner Mission North Area 1 (see Figure 1). The Mission Dolores neighborhood overlaps with this area in the eight square blocks from Market and 14th Street to 16th and Dolores to Valencia. These eight blocks, unlike the remainder of the neighborhood, have been systematically surveyed and a number of properties and historic districts have been identified and proposed for designation (see below).⁶⁷

Properties Listed or Formally Determined Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources:

Dolores Street	El Camino Real	1-24-63	Automatic Listing
220 Dolores Street	Tanforan Cottages	10-07-92	DOE
229 Dolores Street	Holy Family Day Home	3-20-92	DOE
320 Dolores Street	Mission Dolores	3-16-72	NPS
347 Dolores Street	Notre Dame School	9-29-94	DOE
827 Guerrero Street	John McMullen House	9-15-83	NPS
3543 18 th Street	Women's Building	7-30-96	DOE

California State Landmark

Camp Street	Site of Original Mission Dolores	3-11-94
Dolores Street	El Camino Real	1-24-63

San Francisco Landmarks

320 Dolores Street	Mission Dolores	4-11-68
3535 19 th Street	B'Nai David Synagogue	10-5-80
827 Guerrero Street	John McMullen House	1-4-81
845 Guerrero Street	Kershaw House	12-6-81
351 Dolores Street	Notre Dame School	12-6-81
3250 18 th Street St.	Charles School	12-6-81
3543 18 th Street	Mission Turn Hall	3-1-85

Surveyed Properties

Hidalgo Terrace Historic District	8-11-04	3S
Guerrero Street Fire Line	8-11-04	3S
Ramona Street Historic District	8-11-04	3S
Reconstruction Thematic District	8-11-04	5S2

14th Street 420, 422, 428, 434, 436, 440, 446, 454, 456, 460, 466, 470, 494;
506, 510, 530, 536, 537, 550, 552, 553, 556, 560, 565, 568, 569, 575, 577, 580

15th Street 1630, 1637, 12643, 1649, 1656, 1670, 1672;

⁶⁷ The list of designated and surveyed properties is derived from the State Historic Inventory maintained by the State Office of Historic Preservation. This list includes all properties that have been surveyed, evaluated and filed with the Information Centers. There may be more properties included in the Inner Mission North Survey that have not yet been incorporated into the State Inventory. Information regarding proposed historic districts in the Inner Mission North area is taken from the Inner Mission North Context Statement prepared by the city.

1802, 1810, 1813, 1818, 1822, 1834, 1840, 1856, 1876, 1881;
1906, 1912, 1918

16th Street 3105, 3117, 3118, 3122, 3129, 3140, 3147, 3153, 3159, 3160, 3162, 3165, 3178,
3180, 3186, 3190;
3208, 3220, 3221, 3222, 3228, 3233, 3234, 3235, 3241, 3251, 3252, 3261,
3271, 3275, 3281;
3310, 3314, 3322, 3330, 3336

17th Street 3147, 3178;
3200, 3214, 3218, 3222, 3235, 3239, 3246, 3248, 3250, 3258, 3264;

18th Street 3214

Dolores Street 101, 110, 114, 125, 126, 144, 154, 155, 158, 159, 161, 164, 170, 179, 180,
185, 189, 199;
201, 207, 219, 233, 254, 260, 263, 266, 267, 272, 279, 290;
651

Guerrero Street 306, 307, 310, 314, 315, 320, 326, 330, 336, 377, 381, 389, 390;
417
591
827, 842, 845, 851

Hidalgo Terrace 1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15, 20, 25, 26, 31, 32, 35

Ramona Street 6, 9, 12, 16, 19, 20, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 35, 38, 41, 46, 49, 50, 51, 55, 59, 60, 64,
65, 68, 69, 72, 76, 77, 80, 84, 85, 87, 88, 92

Spenser Street 74

Valencia Street 401, 412, 418, 443, 474, 498;
519, 529, 535, 541, 553, 567, 577, 593;
623
740
849.

Historic Districts Identified in the Inner Mission North Survey Area 1:

Guerrero Street Fire Line

This potential Historic District has been identified as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as frontline survivors of the 1906 earthquake and fire and under Criterion C as embodying the distinctive characteristics of balloon frame housing erected in San Francisco before 1906.

Ramona Street

This potential Historic District has been identified as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as a group of properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type and period; specifically as a middle class subdivision with a unified range of architectural styles and a pattern of development encompassing integrated garages at the ground floor (1911-1923).

Hidalgo Terrace

This potential Historic District has been identified as eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1 as associated with a pattern of development that set a precedent for the western neighborhoods in San Francisco. It also embodies the distinctive characteristics of a building type and period.

Mission Reconstruction District

This potentially locally eligible Historic District represents an area of buildings reconstructed in the period 1906-1913 and includes representative building types associated with the immediate post-earthquake period.

Inner Mission Commercial Corridor

This area has been evaluated as significant at a local level as San Francisco's largest collection of residential-over-commercial and small-scale commercial buildings. Several sub-areas have been defined within this overall district designation.

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APPENDIX A

SANBORN MAPS FOR MISSION DOLORES NEIGHBORHOOD 1899 AND 1915

These maps compare the unsurveyed area of Mission Dolores prior to and after the 1906 earthquake and fire within the boundaries of the Inner Mission North areas A & B. They provide an excellent picture of the neighborhood at the end of the 19th century and after the rebuilding effort was largely completed.