

North Broadway Park District
Santa Ana
Orange County
California

HABS No. CA-2167

HABS
CAL,
30-SANA,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service, Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94102

HABS
CAL
30-SANA

DESCRIPTION:

North Broadway Park is bounded on the north by Santiago Creek, on the south by Santa Clara Street, on the west by Flower Street, on the east by Broadway and on the northeast by the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. The area was originally land of Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. In 1882 it was subdivided into farm lots of about 22 acres each. The original urban subdivision, which gives the area its name, was plotted in 1923, three minor resubdivisions and additions were made in 1925 and the last addition was made in 1938. The total area of this combination is approximately 66 acres.

The 1923 subdivision design featured, and the subsequent additions sustained, a pleasing curvilinear street pattern. North Park Boulevard is the principal street of the tract. It is 80 feet wide with a generous median, and meanders in an "S" shaped path from the northwest to the southeast corner of the tract.

The curvilinear subdivision pattern appears to be the first of its kind in Santa Ana. One indication of the intention to create a pleasant residential environment is the reservation of strips 5' wide for utility easements along the rear of abutting lot lines.

There are about 250 lots in the subdivision. The majority of these are about 7,000 square feet in area. Some of the larger lots were in the subdivision plats, others were made by combining smaller parcels.

The dwellings are well set back from the streets. Street trees have been planted in the median of North Park Boulevard and in the parkways of most of the streets. Period street lighting is appropriate to the setting as are the poured-concrete-slab streets.

The predominant trees along Riverside Drive are eastern sycamores, Benton Way and Heliotrope Drive have palm trees; oaks and sycamores grow in the median and parkways along North Park Boulevard.

Architecture in North Broadway Park spans a spectrum from rather modest cottages to large well designed and executed examples of 1920's revival architecture. Tudor, Norman, Spanish and Colonial styles are represented.

Intrusions in North Broadway Park are minimal. Charlotte Street in the northeast quadrant was not included in the original subdivision plat. The curve and northerly part of Bonnie Brae is a later addition to the district. Paving on this portion of Bonnie Brae is asphalt-concrete rather than poured concrete slab. Houses along this portion of Bonnie Brae are later than 1920's styles. The sidewalks on this portion of Bonnie Brae are dated 1948.

The Petz House at 541 W. Santa Clara Avenue was built about 1913. Chris Petz, rancher, as he styled himself, was part owner of land in North Broadway Park and one of the original developers.

With the exception of the Petz House, construction in North Broadway Park began in 1923 and by 1931 was about 50% complete. In-filling, particularly in the southwest part has continued until today, only three vacant lots remain.

There are 29 key, 66 contributive, 136 background and 25 intrusive buildings in the North Broadway Park District.

While at first glance it seems that the number of key buildings is small, it is the combination of design elements, landscape architecture, street furniture and architecture that gives North Broadway Park its distinctive character.

North Broadway Park is distinct from surrounding areas. On the north Santiago Creek is a geographical barrier, the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks at the northeast and commercial developments on the east side of North Broadway are different land uses. On the south and west the boundaries are aesthetic in nature. The subdivisions which adjoin North Broadway Park on the south and west are entirely different in design concept. Furthermore, the buildings on the west are mostly post World War II construction.

North Broadway Park is bounded on the east by the east line of Lot 2 of the Potts, Eorden and Sidwell Tract (recorded in Book 4 page 624 of the Miscellaneous Records of Los Angeles County, California), on the south by centerline of Santa Clara Avenue, on the west by the centerline of North Flower Street, on the north by the irregular boundary of Santiago Creek and on the northeast by a line parallel to and fifty feet southwest of the SPRR right of way. It includes Tract 425 (M.M. 33,34) Tract 754 (M.M. 22-37), Tract 755 (M.M. 22-23), Tract 761 (M.M. 22-35) and Tract 1035 (M.M. 33-46).

Significance

North Broadway Park is significant in community design and architecture.

In the area of community design North Broadway Park is probably the first, and certainly is one of the few curvilinear subdivisions in Santa Ana. Mature street landscaping, well set back houses and a neatly maintained environment continue to support the concept of a carefully planned residential park. Indeed, the promotional literature for North Broadway Park declared this to be "one of the finest residential parks ever conceived".

In the area of architecture, there are many well designed and well executed examples of 1920's revival architecture in North Broadway Park.

North Broadway Park represents the diffusion of the City Beautiful ideal into Orange County.

North Broadway Park appears to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion 36 C.F.R. 60.6(c).

Bibliography

- Orange County Assessor
- Orange County Recorder
- Orange County Directories 1921-1931
- Gebhard & Winter, A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California
- Southwest Builder & Contractor, 1923-1929
- Streetfield, David C., The Evolution of the California Landscape, Landscape Architecture, May 1977
- Orange County Review Vol 2, #11, October 1923
- Jencks, Charles, Day Dream Houses of Los Angeles, Rizzoli International Publications Inc. NY, NY 1978

This report was prepared by Lois M. Webb District 07 Heritage Preservation Coordinator and John W. Snyder, Staff Architectural Historian of the California Department of Transportation.