

Save Our Heritage Organisation

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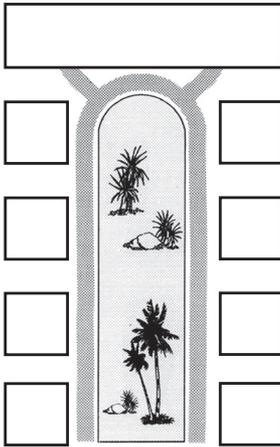
A Tour of Selected San Diego



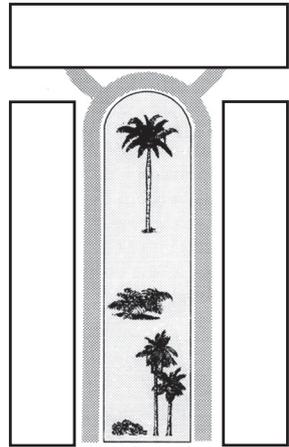
Bungalow Courts

The Bungalow Court in San Diego, California

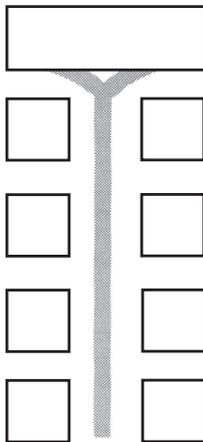
TYPES OF BUNGALOW COURTS



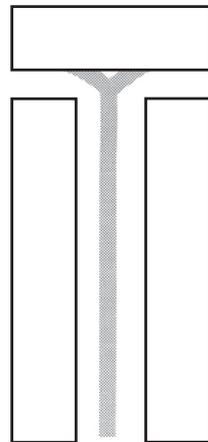
DETACHED WIDE COURT (155)



ATTACHED WIDE COURT (51)



DETACHED NARROW COURT (47)

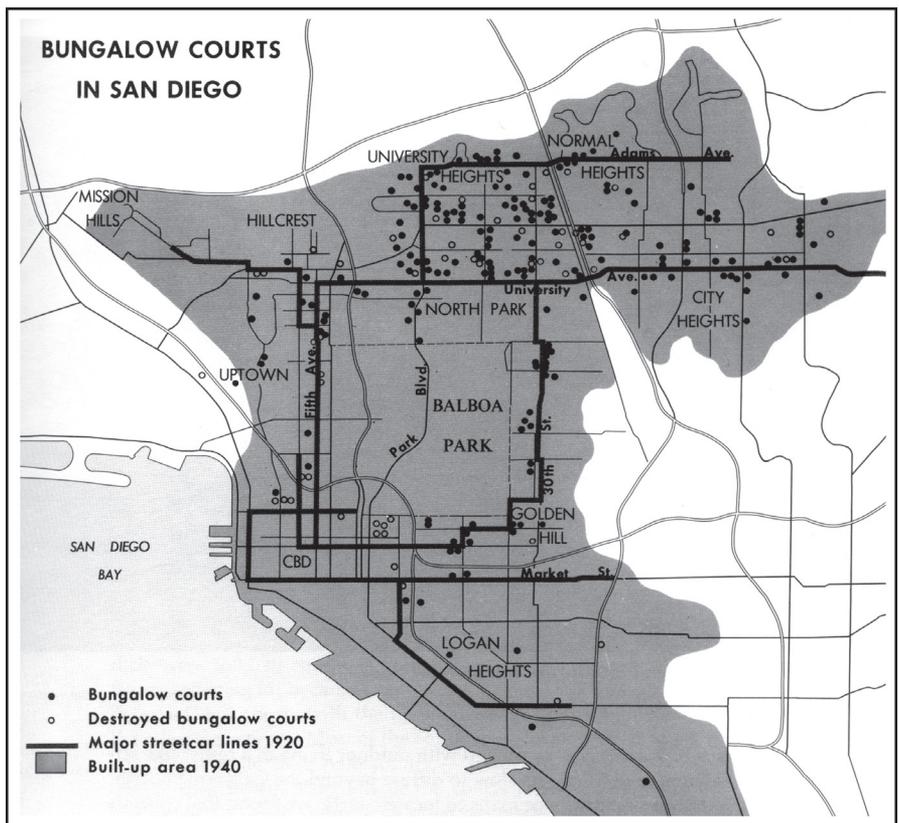


ATTACHED NARROW COURT (25)

The Bungalow Court in San Diego

In the early days of the last century, a new housing type found its place in the hearts of Americans, developing a particularly strong following in the newfound paradise of Southern California. This housing type was known as the Bungalow Court. Today we still cherish these miniature Arts & Crafts and Spanish cottages, each with their own small yard, central courtyard, and neighborly orientation.

The rise of inexpensive and widespread public transportation, in the form of streetcar or trolley lines, facilitated and promoted the development of courts, providing housing and transportation for employees in a rapidly changing workplace. In San Diego and throughout Southern California, the majority of bungalow courts were built along streetcar lines. These courts provided an independent lifestyle for people relocating or visiting from the



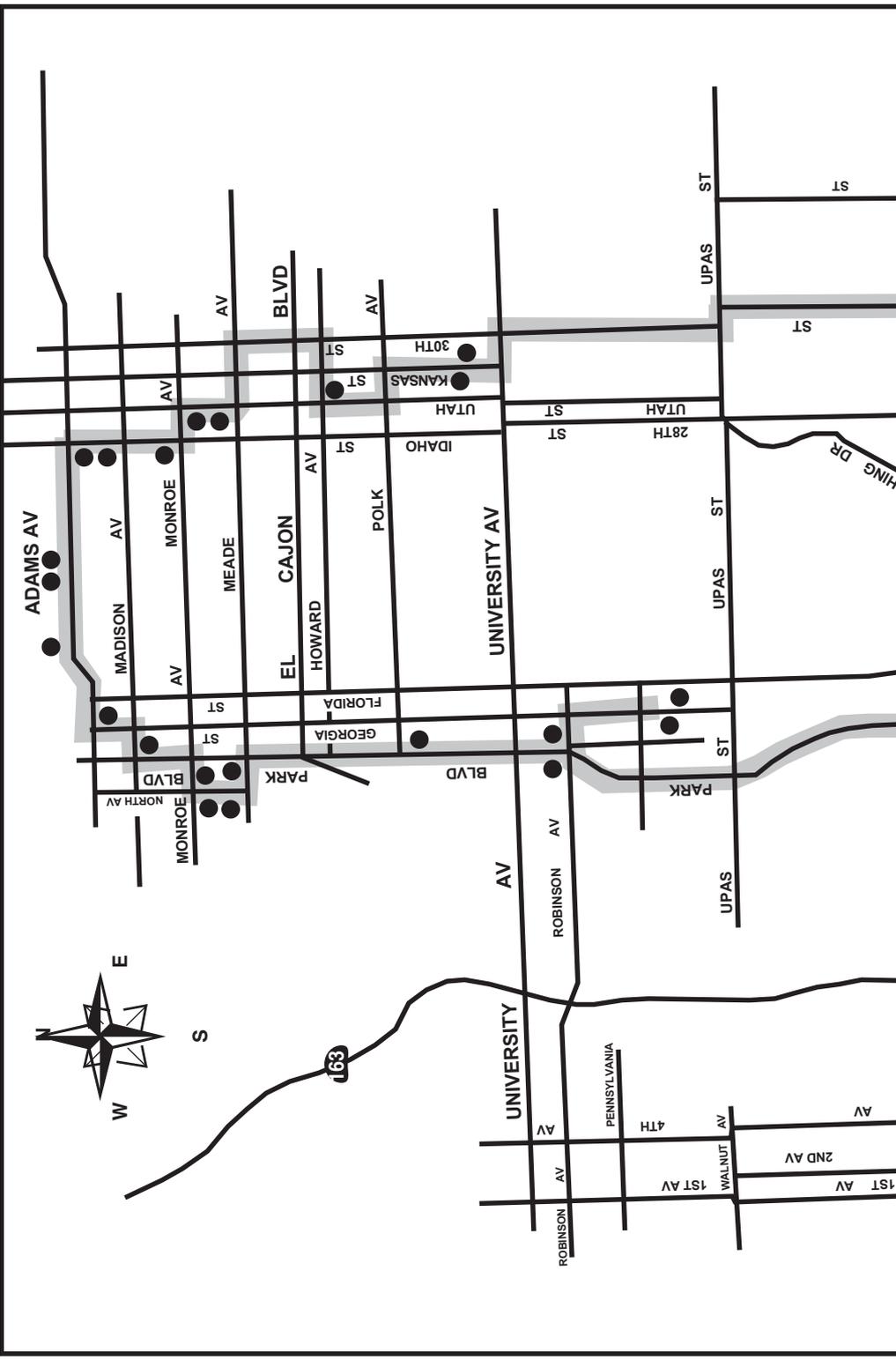
snowy Midwest and East Coast with the convenience of public transportation readily at hand. In San Diego, many of these new residents had come to see the Panama California Exposition in the newly named and transformed Balboa Park, which opened January 1, 1915. They arrived by train to a sunny, warm, and spacious Southern California, scented with orange blossoms and alight with flowering plants everywhere. It isn't hard to understand why many of these folks stayed and made San Diego their new home.

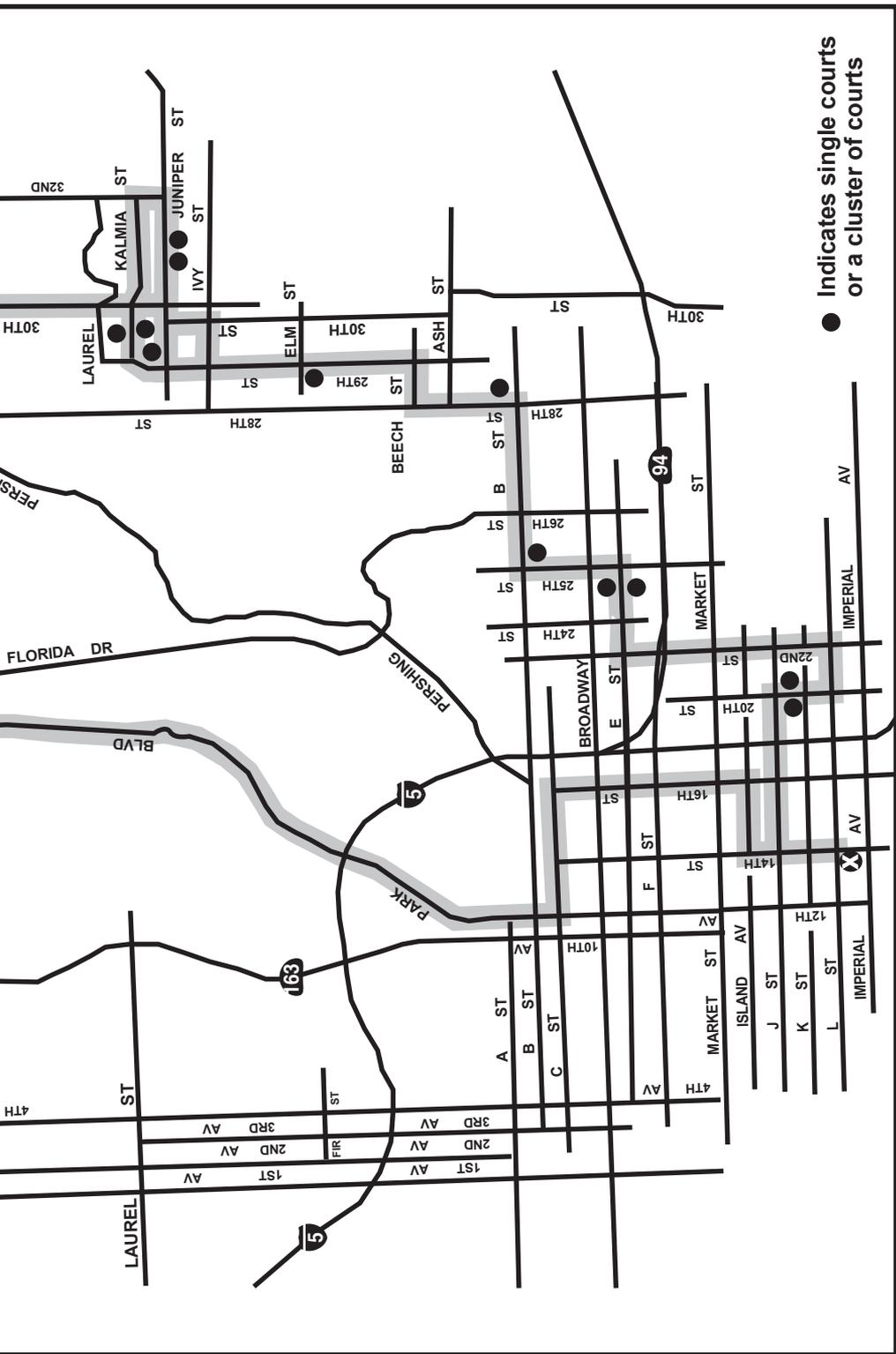
It is widely held that the first bungalow court appeared in 1909 in Pasadena, the brainchild of Sylvanus Marston. It was eleven full-sized bungalows in a court arrangement with pergola and native boulder entry gates. As the Bungalow movement gathered momentum, so did the construction of courts. The original courts tended to have relatively large units with spacious communal grounds, but as time went on they began to be built in many sizes and configurations.

Bungalow courts in Southern California come in many architectural styles. The most common is Spanish, but there are many Craftsman courts, as well. In San Diego, we have examples of Egyptian, Mission Revival, Pueblo, Moorish Revival, Deco/Moderne, and 1950s modern. Some of the courts are quite narrow with very tiny units. There are many half courts, which consist of just one row of bungalows, some with as few as two units. There were also duplex and triplex cottage units, with shared walls.

The fascination with Southern California was expressed in the trend for outdoor living, which also helped popularize the Bungalow Court. There was a sense that in this benign climate, one would spend much time out of doors.

There was a revolution going on in the world of horticulture during this period as well, with many heretofore unheard of plants arriving from Australia, South America, Hawaii, and Africa. These plants could not be grown in most of the country as they required a climate with little or no frost, and Southern California's climate was ideal for them. Thus the area became known as a lush paradise, and the courts were





● Indicates single courts
 ○ Indicates a cluster of courts

virtual mini-parks overflowing with every kind of colorful new plant. It was not uncommon for bungalow courts to be referred to as "garden cottages."



Bungalow courts offered the best attributes of single-family homes and apartments combined. They were reasonable in price to rent and had the added attraction of a reasonable level of privacy. Public spaces were shared but often the courts had individual side or rear yards for gardening or drying clothes. Thus there were ample opportunities to interact with the rest of the community, while maintaining a degree of autonomy and private space.

They were complete miniaturized bungalows, as self-contained as a boat. In 1917, *Sunset Magazine* described them as having "buffet, cooler, cabinet kitchen, linen closet, laundry tray on the screen porch, first-class plumbing, electric lights, gas for cooking or heating with most disappearing beds, open fireplaces, hardwood floors in the living rooms and ample closet space."

Researchers have found that there were nearly 300 full bungalow courts and over 150 half courts built in San Diego prior to World War II. They also found that nearly 80 percent

of them remain intact, a testament to the desire of people to have private space within a public setting.

During the 1940s and 1950s the bungalow court as we think of it was no longer being built. However, a closer look at the many multi-family complexes from the period reveals that they are in fact our old friend, the bungalow court. These are built in the stucco box type, with metal windows and frequently as attached units, but the configurations remain the same.

During the last 30 years of the 20th century, many older neighborhoods were devastated by upzoning, and the rise of the "Huffman six pack." Now that many of those same neighborhoods have experienced a renaissance, with the concomitant rise in property values and increased maintenance and pride of ownership, the courts among them have become highly desirable properties. Their survival is now, hopefully, assured, and they will continue to remind us of the romance of California living during the first half of the 20th century.



The Tour

2412 through 2432 1/2 E Street

2421 E Street (50's evolution)

2536 B Street, Rosemary Court

1217 28th Street, the California

Corner of 29th Street and Elm Street, Elm Court

Kalmia Street: 2949-57; 2924

Juniper Street: 3129; 3121; 3000 block; 2926; 2954-58

30th Street: 2222; 2309; 2311; 2334; 2814

3300 Block of 30th Street

Kansas Street: 3971; 3982

Utah Street: 4185; 4409

4430 - 4452 Utah Street

4460 - 4470 Utah Street

Idaho Street: 4510; 4646; 4670

Adams Avenue: 2454-74; 2448; 2206

4649-4663 Georgia Street, the Rosamond

Park Boulevard: 4577; 4438

North Avenue: 4481; 4454; 4439

Meade Avenue: 1714, the Windsor; 1726

4000 Block of Park on East side

4033-4019 Park Boulevard, 3 Spanish half courts in a row

Park Boulevard: 3777; 3772, the Egyptian

3640 Georgia Street, half court

3537 Georgia Street, (1928 Moorish Revival)



Written by Bonnie Poppe, edited by Julie Kolb

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by James R. Curtis and Larry Ford

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