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ARCHITECTURAL
RESOURCES



Key features of historic resources should be preserved. This chapter presents a historic overview and identifies the key features of architectural styles found in San Jose:

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ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Individual building features are important to the character of San Jose. The mass and scale, form, materials and architectural details of the buildings are the elements that distinguish one architectural style from another, or even older neighborhoods from newer developments. This chapter presents an overview of those important elements of the built environment which make up San Jose. This includes a brief history of development, as well as a summary of the different types and styles of architecture found in its neighborhoods.

Brief History

The settlement of the Santa Clara Valley by Euro-Americans began in 1769 with an initial exploration of the valley by Spanish explorers. The Portola Expedition was encamped along the coast north of present-day Santa Cruz when a small contingent of men, led by Sergeant José Francisco Ortega, crossed the coastal range and unexpectedly came across the bay and valley. Within a few years, Franciscan missionaries and other Spanish expeditions arrived. Explorer Juan Bautista De Anza identified the valley as an ideal candidate for permanent settlement.

Following the founding of Mission Santa Clara de Asís, a site was selected for a civilian settlement by Governor Felipe de Neve, and on November 29, 1777, San Jose de Guadalupe was established on the east side of the Guadalupe River about two miles southeast of the first mission site. Lieutenant Moraga brought the first settlers, 66 people in 14 families, from Yerba Buena. These *pobladores* had originated from the northern region of España Nueva, in what is now the Sonora and Sinaloa regions of Mexico. El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe was the first civil settlement established by the Spanish Crown of Carlos II in Alta California.

Moraga laid out the town, allocating house lots (*solares*) and cultivation plots (*suertes*) to each settler. The common lands (*ejido*) surrounding the pueblo were used primarily for grazing the livestock of the settlers. The original location of the pueblo was in the vicinity of present-day North First and Hobson Streets in the

Vendome neighborhood, just to the northwest of the present-day Hensley Historic District. This original site was subjected to severe winter flooding during the first years of the settlement, and the site of the pueblo was moved approximately one mile south to higher ground during the 1790s, centered about present-day Market Street from Julian to San Carlos Streets in downtown San Jose.

Following Mexico's independence from Spain in the 1820s, a new American presence in San Jose rapidly changed the character of the pueblo to the bustle common to the typical nineteenth-century American town. The first overland migration arrived in California in 1841, and by 1845, American immigrants had increased the population of the pueblo to 900. Superimposition of the American way of life on the former Hispanic culture occurred quickly following the war with Mexico in 1846. In 1848, Mexico ceded California to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Closely following California's new status as an American territory, the discovery of gold in the Sierra foothills precipitated a sudden influx of new residents to California. This event accelerated California statehood, achieved in 1850, with San Jose serving as the first state capitol.

During this frontier period, many factors combined to form the San Jose we know today. Each town colonized by Americans in the West during the nineteenth century began with a preconceived plan expressed by the gridiron survey, which facilitated the transfer of property ownership and tax assessment. The first

American survey of the pueblo in 1847 embraced lands east of the Plaza to Eighth Street, north to Julian and south to Reed streets. Those with claims to land in the surveyed area were granted legal title, and the unclaimed lands were sold by the alcalde. William Campbell's original survey in 1847 established the familiar grid of streets in downtown San Jose. Chester Lyman completed a more detailed survey soon after Campbell's initial work. The Lyman survey includes many of the features still found in downtown San Jose's frame area. The blocks were laid out using the Spanish measurement system of *varas* (about 33 inches per *vara*).

The lands between Market Street and the Guadalupe River, as well as some areas north of Julian Street, were primarily under Hispanic ownership at the time of the survey, but by the early 1850s, the surveyed areas extended the city limits to Coyote Creek on the east, and just beyond the Guadalupe River on the west, Rosa Street (now Hedding) to the north, and Keyes Street to the south. The city was approximately three miles long, northwest by southeast, and about two miles wide. Although the gridiron continued to expand in the twentieth century into the outskirts of the original city, for the remainder of the nineteenth century the original survey was more than adequate to serve San Jose's needs for residential expansion.

Residential building methods evolved quickly during the early boom period of the Gold Rush. Residents unwilling to adapt to the earlier adobe brick construction techniques used in the pueblo purchased wood house kits from the East Coast. These kits, and other wood construction elements, were shipped to San Jose around the cape of South America. Early sawmills established by William Campbell and Zachariah Jones in the Santa Cruz Mountains were soon able to eliminate this reliance on outside sources for building materials, and coastal redwoods became the raw material for most residential building construction in San Jose for the next half century. During the early years of the twentieth century, concerns about preservation of the remaining old growth coastal redwoods redirected the timber industry to Douglas fir as the principal construction material in house building.

By 1852, the first pioneer nurserymen were importing and experimenting with various types of fruit trees, but the post-Gold Rush recession slowed the pace of development. By the 1860s however, the early agrarian cattle and wheat economy began to decline as large orchards were set out in East San Jose, Milpitas, and the north valley. Urban development in downtown San Jose began to move at a swift pace during the mid-sixties, as land titles were settled and the economy strengthened. San Jose began to draw more residents from the East Coast as well as immigrants from Europe and China. A railroad line between San Francisco and San Jose, completed in 1864, provided impetus to commercial development, and by 1869 the line had extended southward to Monterey County as well as northward to Niles and the transcontinental railroad beyond. San Jose became part of the national economy, opening new markets for the agricultural and manufacturing production of the valley.

Natural gas service was introduced in 1861, and the San Jose Water Company was incorporated in 1866, supplying piped water to a city that had relied on wells for potable water since the early 1850s. The first sewers were also installed in 1866. The public and private investment in infrastructure resulted in a construction boom in the central core area. The large number of residential buildings constructed in the late 1860s and 1870s remain as evidence of the implementation of San Jose's first organized development strategy. The railroad and other catalysts to economic development increased the population and ushered in a new era of growth.

Housing growth during this period was aided with an expansion of mills in the foothills and new production equipment that allowed for faster, larger, and less labor-intensive milling techniques. By the late 1860s, construction of small clapboard houses, of both stud-wall and board-wall framing systems, lost favor as larger lumber and wider boards allowed architects such as Theodore Lenzen, Victor Hoffman, and John T. Burkett to build tall Italianate balloon-framed residences. These elegant designs remained popular until the mid-1880s, and channel rustic siding was the preferred cladding of choice for residential construction from the mid-1860s to the late 1880s. While some vernacular residences continued to use board-wall

framing systems into the 1870s, balloon framing was prevalent throughout the 1880s until gradually replaced by the modern platform framing methods that began to appear as the Queen Anne style of the Victorian era became more robust locally in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Orchard products dominated the local economy by the end of the century and fruit production peaked in the 1920s, a period in which Santa Clara County became known as the Valley of Heart's Delight. The fruit canning and packing industry quickly developed to become the urban complement of the valley's orchards. Two population expansions supported this growing agricultural industry. The first came during the 1880s; the second came in the early 1900s with waves of immigrants from Japan, Italy, Portugal, and other Southern European countries. Most residential growth, however, remained within the original city limits, with only some smaller localized suburban development occurring along the horse-drawn and later electric inter-urban lines that connected San Jose to other towns in Santa Clara County.

Residential construction slowed briefly near the turn of the twentieth century, although during this period a number of large modern residences were built that began to introduce the Colonial Revival style to the area. The budding Arts and Crafts movement found proponents among vernacular house builders with the new Craftsman house, but on equal footing during this period was the evolution and development of the neo-classical cottage, a unique building type recognized by Tuscan porch columns and false-beveled teardrop siding. Commercial development during the early years of the twentieth century was also rapid, and much of the older housing stock in the inner core area was relocated to the downtown frame to make way for commercial and industrial development, filling gaps in the urban fabric to meet emerging housing needs.

The first automobiles appeared in the valley in the late 1890s, but it was not until after World War I that the automobile began to affect the nature and scale of residential neighborhood development. During the first post-war period, the automobile facilitated suburban development beyond the original city limits. These neighborhoods reflected a new worldliness brought home by veterans of the war: the average home buyer now accepted and desired revival architecture, a trend that continues today in an ever-evolving eclecticism in both custom and subdivision home construction. Following World War II, modern design dominated new residential development. The ranch house was promoted as a distinctly Western ideal for the American family, but more modern designs pioneered by builders such as Joseph Eichler soon paved the way for large-scale suburban development.

San Jose in 1950 bore a much greater resemblance to the San Jose of 1900 than to the city we live in today. New industrial jobs in the post-World War II economy attracted many new residents to San Jose: between 1950 and 1975, the population increased from 95,000 to over 500,000 and the area of the city grew from 17 square miles to over 120 square miles. During the 1960s and 1970s, San Jose was one of the fastest growing cities in the nation, with residential subdivisions and commercial and industrial centers replacing orchards. Residential development in the post-war period was typically of low density, single-family detached housing. The central portions of the city had developed over the previous 100 years, starting with California statehood in 1850. Between 1850 and 1950 most traces of the earlier Spanish-Mexican city had been obliterated; however, while the rest of San Jose expanded after 1950, the central city core remained largely intact, leaving a good record of the first century of American development patterns within the greater frame area of the downtown.

Throughout the guidelines, owners are encouraged to “preserve key character-defining features.” In order to determine which features are likely to be important, the styles summaries in this chapter should be consulted.

*For more information regarding architectural styles that may be found in San Jose also consult **A Field Guide to American Houses** by Virginia and Lee McAlester.*

Using Architectural Style Descriptions

The following summaries of key design features of building types and styles are important pieces of information that should be used when considering how the design guidelines will apply to an individual project. Throughout the guidelines, owners are encouraged to “preserve key character-defining features.” In order to determine which characteristics are likely to be important, the styles summaries in this chapter should be consulted.

The predominant building type which defines many of the city’s historic districts is the single-family house. Single-family homes built prior to the turn-of-the-century from the vernacular cottages to suburban homes of city businessmen were derived from popular Victorian era styles. They were wood frame structures, vertical in massing and typically had steep gable roofs, dormers and wide ornamented porches. Turrets, balconies and complex roof systems were present in the homes of the wealthy, while the decoration of one-story structures occupied by families of more modest means were less detailed.

The majority of the buildings after the turn-of-the-century represent the Arts and Crafts period or the many Period Revival styles. Craftsman style houses began to appear in San Jose after the turn-of-the century. Derived from the Arts and Crafts movement in California, architects and contractor-builders during the era before World War I produced bungalows and mid-size homes. Typically wood frame and sheathed in clapboard or shingles, these homes made extensive use of local stone for garden walls, foundations, chimneys and porch supports.

The third decade of the twentieth century saw the proliferation of single-family residential subdivisions designed in a variety of Period Revival styles. Most prominent were the Tudor Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival and Colonial Revival styles.

Folk Houses

circa 1860-1900

Vernacular or National

Sometimes referred to as “other,” “no style” or “folk houses,” the vernacular residential style focuses on being functional. The houses are constructed of simple designs, some of which remained common for decades. Many of these designs were indeed based on popular styles of the time, but the vernacular structures were much simpler in form, detail and function. Elements from other styles found in the neighborhoods will appear on the vernacular but in simple arrangements.

While the neighborhoods include “folk houses” of several types, the most prevalent is the Gable Front. The Gable Front Vernacular, usually one-story, has a front-facing gable roof with a full-width front porch.

Characteristics

- Gabled or hipped roof over the main block
- Porch, with steps
- Usually round columns
- Raised first floor
- Eaves encased and trimmed with moldings
- Small dormers



Some typical Vernacular houses in San Jose.

Romantic Era

circa 1860-1880

Nationally, the picturesque styles from the Romantic era—especially the Gothic Revival and the Italianate—began during the 1830s and moved westward with expanding settlement. Architectural styles in San Jose that represent the Romantic era include the Italianate, Gothic Revival (or Folk Victorian) and Greek Revival.



Some Italianate cottages in San Jose.



The Italianate style in San Jose.

Italianate and Italianate Cottage

The Italianate style, along with other styles of the Picturesque Movement such as Gothic Revival and the Victorian era, were a reaction to the formal classicism of the Greek Revival. The Italianate style was introduced by Andrew Jackson Downing in his 1850 publication, *The Architecture of Country Houses*.

Characteristics

- Low pitch hipped roof
- Double-hung, narrow windows, often with round arch heads
- Window panes are either one-over-one or two-over-two
- Protruding sills
- Wide, overhanging eaves
- Ornate treatment of the eaves, including the use of paired brackets, modillions and dentil courses
- Blocked, cube shape, with a side-passage plan, or cross-gable
- Bay windows, often rectangular shape
- Rusticated quoins at building corners
- Cresting on roofs
- Transom, often curved, above the front door
- Ornate porch treatment, with round columns or square posts, and bargeboard ornament



The Italianate style in San Jose.

Greek Revival

The end of the 18th century brought about great interest in classical building styles throughout the United States and Europe. The Greek Revival style became quite popular during the middle of the nineteenth century. Most domestic examples date from 1830 to 1860, and were spread through carpenter's guides and pattern books of the time.

Characteristics

- Gabled or hipped roof with a low pitch
- Cornice line of main roof and porch roofs emphasized with wide band of trim (representing the classical entablature)
- Entry porch or full-width porch supported by prominent square or rounded columns
- Examples without porches sometimes have pilasters at building corners and at an entry pediment
- Narrow line of transom and side lights around front door, usually incorporated into an elaborate door surround
- Windows typically six-over-six



The Greek Revival style in San Jose.

Carpenter Gothic or Folk Victorian

The Carpenter Gothic style was part of the Romantic movement that valued emotion over rational thought. As a rejection of classicism the most vocal proponent of this style, Andrew Jackson Downing, emphasized vertical lines, deep colors and applied ornament.

Characteristics

- Often used "classic cottage" building form, with steeply pitched gables and dormers
- Cross gable roof plan or side gable roof plan with central cross gable over the door
- Clapboard or plaster siding
- Highly emphasized decorative ornament
- Dormers and eave lines ornamented with decorative wooden bargeboards
- Pediments over windows
- Full-length windows and bay windows
- Lancet windows
- Elaborate turned posts, cut-out boards



The Folk Victorian style in San Jose.

Victorian Era

circa 1860-1900

Technically the word “Victorian” refers to the long reign of Queen Victoria, which lasted from 1833 to 1901, and encompassed the rich variety of architectural styles that were popular during the nineteenth century. Architecturally the word “Victorian” evokes the complexity and irregularity seen in the massing and materials of modest homes to large mansions.

Architectural styles in San Jose that represent the Victorian era include the Queen Anne, Stick and Shingle.

Queen Anne

Proponents of the Queen Anne style found their inspiration from the medieval art and architecture of its namesake’s reign (1702-1714), growing out of recognition of vernacular, modest, pre-industrial structures and a desire to bring about a close relationship of architecture to ornamentation. In the United States, it developed from a desire to identify a national style. Both the Centennial Exposition, held in Philadelphia in 1876, and the popularity of New England coastal towns exposed Americans to their colonial, vernacular architectural past. The style introduced a new kind of open planning and a new way of massing volumes of space; it was inherently eclectic and became available to homeowners of all income levels.

Characteristics

- Irregular, asymmetrical massing
- One to two stories
- Bay windows, towers, turrets, oriels, dormers, gables—anything that protrudes from the wall and the roof
- Windows with leaded or stained glass (usually at staircase)
- Tall brick chimneys (usually ornate)
- Multi-gable roof with predominate front gable
- Shingles used as embellishment, especially in gable ends and dormer walls.
- Ornamental woodwork, especially on gables and porches.
- Combinations of siding materials, e.g., horizontal siding on the first story and shingles on the second.
- Double-hung wood sash windows in tall narrow openings.



The Queen Anne style in San Jose.

Stick

The Stick style is generally considered a transitional design between the Gothic Revival and the Queen Anne periods. Where early Gothic Revival homes had highly ornate detailing applied to the doors, windows and cornices, the Stick style stressed the wall surface itself as the decorative element. This style is purely defined by its decorative detailing--the characteristic multi-textured wall surfaces and roof trusses whose "stickwork" somewhat mimics the exposed structural members of Medieval half-timbered houses. Varied patterns of wood siding and shingles are typically applied in the square and triangular spaces created by this "stickwork."

Characteristics

- Combinations of materials: For example, horizontal siding can be seen on the first story and shingles are used on the second
- Shingles are the most commonly used embellishment on gable ends and dormer walls
- Horizontal wood siding has a crispness that gives the building a repetition of light and shadow that is texturally rich
- Fancy scroll cut wood work, especially around gables and porches
- Cornerboard and bargeboard trim
- Squared bay windows



The Stick style in San Jose.

Shingle

With its lack of decorative detailing, the Shingle style house was a stark contrast to the Queen Anne houses that were most popular in the years preceding 1890. Architects and designers of the style used the complex forms of Queen Anne design, but were also influenced by Richardsonian Romanesque and American Colonial architecture. Shingle houses are typically “high fashion,” as exhibited in existing dwellings that are large and varied in design. Unlike Queen Anne, which was adapted to the small, vernacular cottage, Shingle influences rarely appear on small-scale dwellings and never became a style that was mass-produced.

Characteristics

- Almost entirely clad with shingles
- Secondary materials include sandstone foundations and wood for windows and trim
- Complex roof with multiple gables, combination hip/gable, dormers, eyebrow dormers, conical tower roof; also gambrel roof
- Curved surfaces and shapes (curved bays, arched porch openings, Palladian windows)
- Large, dominant front gable
- Asymmetrical massing, including the use of towers, dormers and eyebrow windows
- Prominent front porch, typically with the front elevation dominated by a curved bay
- Use of classical features, such as round columns on porches, one-over-one double-hung sash windows and Palladian windows



The Shingle style in San Jose.



The Shingle style in San Jose.

Colonial Revival Period circa 1890-1930

The popularity of classical influences persisted in San Jose, as elsewhere in the nation, from the 1890s through the 1920s. Two distinct phases are represented, however, in the forty-year time frame. Architecture from the earlier phase tended to use classical elements in a strict sense; whereas, the later phase interpreted them in a more modern, scaled-down vernacular form.

The Colonial Revival period tends to be a more symmetrical and formal style than others discussed in this chapter. It incorporates less applied decorative detailing than the Victorian era and displays traditional features that are restrained and classically inspired like fluted columns and pediments.

Architectural styles in San Jose that represent the Colonial Revival Period include the Neoclassical cottage, Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial Revival.

Neoclassical

Inspired by some of the smaller pavilions at the Columbian Exposition in 1893, the Neoclassical style was for those who did not appreciate the excessive monumentalism of the Beaux-Arts movement. Incorporating less decorative details, smooth, plain walls and simple moldings, this style was still grandly assertive.

Characteristics

- Classical columns and pediment over the entrance
- Low porch rails with turned balusters
- Hipped or gabled roofs
- Eaves with simple dentils, modillions, frieze
- Panelled doors surrounded by side lights, pilasters and a pediment
- Palladian window (usually on front elevation).
- Narrow, clapboard or stucco siding
- Double-hung windows, 1/1, multi-pane/1, multi-pane/multi-pane, leaded glass in upper sash or transom.



The Neoclassical style in San Jose.

The Neoclassical style in San Jose.

Colonial Revival

The Colonial Revival style encompasses many variants of residential architecture used from about the turn-of-the-century through the 1930s, and was especially popular during the teens. It can apply to a bungalow or post-war cottage in which elements of several of these styles were used. Massing forms vary but they often have classical details, such as dentil moldings, pediments over the doorways, round columns and lunette windows.

Characteristics

- Rectangular plan, often with “L” wing
- One or two stories
- Symmetrical, three bay facades, usually with a central, front gabled, portico-like entry and tripartite window openings in the side bays
- Gable or cross-gable roof
- Front porch, sometimes wrapped around corner, with wood post supports and classical detailing
- Horizontal wood siding, often painted white
- Paneled door with decorative glass light and overhead transom and/or sidelights
- Windows are double-hung, (usually 1/1)



The Colonial Revival style in San Jose.

Dutch Colonial Revival

The Dutch Colonial Revival style is named so because of the use of a gambrel roof. This style is closely allied with the Shingle and the Queen Anne styles. The details, such as the window pattern, porches and materials are very similar.

Characteristics

- Gambrel roof, both side- and front-facing variations can be found
- Shingled gable end
- Two story, with the second floor in the roof form
- Prominent front porch, with classically-detailed porch supports and plain balustrades
- Double-hung sash windows, with either single panes or multiple panes in the upper light
- Lunette windows in the upper gable
- Large, single pane windows with a fixed transom on the first story



The Dutch Colonial Revival style in San Jose is easily identified by its Gambrel roof.



The Colonial Revival style in San Jose.

Arts and Crafts Period

circa 1900-1925

In contrast to the vertical orientation and outspoken decoration characteristic of Victorian era homes, the many configurations of houses during the Arts and Crafts period had in common a new horizontality emphasized by broad gables, overhanging eaves and an informal plan which spreads out to hug the landscape. The use of brick and stone for foundations, porch walls, chimneys, retaining walls and horizontal siding or shingles stained dark brown or green tended to make the homes merge with the landscape.

The Arts and Crafts period dwelling is represented in three distinct forms: the Bungalow, the Craftsman and the flat-roof Prairie house. During the Arts and Crafts period, other influences in residential designs were introduced in San Jose neighborhoods. Architects and designers created moderate and large size homes that were inspired by the English Arts and Crafts movement and philosophical idealism of American Colonial life.

Architectural styles in San Jose that represent the Arts and Crafts Period include the Craftsman, Bungalow and Prairie.



A simple Craftsman style house in San Jose.

Craftsman

Craftsman homes were originally inspired by two California brothers—Charles Sumner Green and Henry Mather Green—who practiced in Pasadena from 1893 to 1914. Beginning as simple bungalows, the Craftsman style was known as the “ultimate bungalow.” Influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement and oriental wooden architecture, elements such as low-pitched, gabled roofs, wide eaves, exposed roof rafters and porches with tapered columns were common.

Characteristics

- Low-pitched gabled roof
- Decorative beams or braces under gables
- One-over-one, double-hung windows, or
- One-light, fixed window; with fixed transom
- Prominent lintels and sills
- Full or partial, open porch with square posts and tapered arched openings
- Gabled dormers
- Exposed rafters
- Wide eaves
- Outside siding: wood clapboard, stucco
- Concrete or brick foundation



Some simple Craftsman style houses in San Jose.

Bungalow

The word “bungalow” denotes a type of building rather than a style of architecture. It is believed that the word comes from a type of East Indian dwelling with broad verandas. Its immense popularity in the United States springs from a rejection of the constraints of the Victorian era and from the fact that it lent itself well to both modest and impressive house designs.

Although bungalows display a variety of materials and details, they are easily recognized by their wide, low-pitched roofs and broad front porches that create a deep, recessed space. Many bungalows fall readily into the Arts and Crafts categories, with exposed brackets and rafters, the use of “art” glass in windows and the combination of different textures, such as cobblestone and shingles. Others represent scaled-down Prairie style versions, with low-pitched roofs, broad eaves and simple geometric shapes that provide an overall horizontal appearance.



Some Bungalows in San Jose.

Characteristics

- Rectangular plan with one or two stories
- Different roof types: a steeply pitched roof with the ridge line parallel to the street that covers a porch extending the full width of the house and hip-roofs with a shallow pitch
- Exposed rafters, brackets—anything to evoke the structural composition of the building
- Brick, wood shingle or clapboard siding
- Broad eaves
- Thick, tapered porch posts
- Full-width front porch
- Tripartite (divided into thirds) windows
- Rectangular bay windows
- Casement windows
- Large, plate glass windows
- Doors are wooden with panels and windows in the upper third
- Wing walls from the porch
- Dormers that follow the line of the roof
- Use of cobblestone
- Concrete cap around porch wall
- Both sandstone and concrete foundations were historically used
- Concrete foundations generally extend one to two inches beyond the wall
- Arts and Crafts bungalows often had wooden shingles or shakes, cobblestone and brick
- Prairie-style bungalows are usually brick, and sometimes have a brick wainscoting with stucco



A Bungalow in San Jose.

Prairie

Shortly after he built his own Shingle style house in Oak Park, Illinois, Frank Lloyd Wright developed one of America's few indigenous styles known as the Prairie style. It featured open planning; shallow-pitched roofs with broad, sheltering overhangs; bands of casement windows, often with abstract patterns of stained glass; and a strong horizontal emphasis. This style quickly faded from fashion, however, after World War I.

Characteristics

- Horizontal patterns in wall materials
- Horizontal rows of windows, sometimes wrapping around corners
- Low-pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves
- Two-stories with one-story porches or wings
- Massive square porch supports
- Gabled roof edges are often flattened
- Contrasting wood trim
- Broad, flat chimneys
- Geometric patterns of small-pane window glazing
- Large, plate glass windows
- Tall casement windows
- Single or double-hung windows can also be used
- Long, wide concrete lintels and sills



The Prairie style in San Jose.

20th Century Revival Period Circa 1920-1940

After World War I, revival styles for houses grew in popularity. Changes in building technology, such as inexpensive methods to apply brick, stone veneer or stucco to the exterior of the traditional wood-framed house facilitated the popularity of Twentieth Century Revival styles. The period encompasses the reworked versions of the Spanish Colonial, Tudor, French Norman and classically-inspired architecture along with many other variants used throughout the country's colonial history. With the exception of the Neoclassical, which was generally reserved for mansions, period revival styles lent themselves well to designs for modest homes and offered an alternative to the bungalow.

Developers and builders found that evoking a cozy image of the past sold well, and that revival styles satisfied the need of home buyers to conform to tradition while making use of contemporary convenience and floor plans, such as the "L-shaped" living room.

Architectural styles in San Jose that represent the Twentieth Century Revival Period include the Tudor Revival, Mission Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival or Spanish Eclectic, Pueblo Revival, Mediterranean Revival and Italian Renaissance Revival.

Tudor Revival

As with many styles, the Tudor Revival does not adhere to the source of its inspiration—sixteenth-century English architecture—but instead is a mixture of elements from an American image of medieval forms that resulted in something “quaint.” The development of the Tudor Revival style was associated with the Arts and Crafts movement, in which medieval architecture and crafts were valued as a rejection of the industrialized age. Ironically, the popularity of the style was in large part owing to its exposure through mail-order catalogues such as Sears Roebuck, in which all of the parts of the house were pre-assembled and shipped by rail anywhere in the United States.

Characteristics

- Asymmetrical with irregular plan and massing
- Steeply pitched roof
- Gable or Cross-gabled roof
- Decorative half-timbering
- Decorative masonry on exterior walls or gables
- Recessed entry, usually under a front-facing gable or small gable-roof portico
- Groupings of tall, narrow casement windows, often with leaded, diamond panes
- Rolled edges on roofing to imitate thatch
- Combined use of stucco and brick



The Tudor Revival style in San Jose.

Mission Revival

Rather than copy the Eastern state’s revival architecture of its own colonial past, California turned to its Hispanic heritage for inspiration. Several Californian architects began to advocate the style in the 1880s and early 1890s. It was further popularized when railroad companies and hotels adopted the style for their centerpiece buildings. Most commonly, typical Hispanic design elements were adapted to the style (such as shaped parapets, arches and quatrefoil windows). The style, however, quickly faded from popular culture after World War I. Architects abandoned the free, simplified interpretations seen in the Mission style for more precise copies (as seen in the Spanish Eclectic style).

Characteristics

- Traditionally shaped mission dormer or roof parapet
- Red tile roof covering
- Widely overhanging eaves
- Porches supported by large, square piers
- Smooth stucco finish
- Quatrefoil windows
- Little decorative detailing



The Mission Revival style in San Jose.

Spanish Eclectic or Spanish Colonial Revival or Mediterranean Revival

The most influential of the revival styles in California during the 1920s and 1930s were those derived from the climatically similar Mediterranean. This style was popularized by the Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego in 1915. The exposition was widely publicized, and the use of architectural examples from the Spanish Colonies encouraged Americans to realize that their country had a rich Spanish heritage, as well as an Anglo-Saxon past. Architects were also influenced by the baroque architecture of Mexico and Spain.

Characteristics

- One or two story with rectangular, “U” or irregular plan and symmetrical or asymmetrical massing
- Low-pitched gable or cross-gable roof with Spanish tile (little or no eave extension) or flat roof with parapet (some with tile coping)
- Flat stucco walls with smooth or textured finish
- Decorative wall surfaces, using tile or low-relief terra-cotta sculpture
- Round-arched openings
- Porches supported by large, square piers or simple tile roof hood over door
- Recessed windows and doors
- Wood casement windows often in groups, especially on the front elevation (prominent window(s) on front may have wood or wrought iron grill or classical ornamentation)
- Front and/or interior patios, often surrounded by stucco wall
- Decorative details that might include wrought-iron for balcony and porch railings, quatrefoil window, buttressed corners



The Spanish Eclectic style in San Jose.



The Spanish Eclectic style in San Jose.

Italian Renaissance

The Italian Renaissance style is commonly found throughout California but is considerably less common than the Craftsman, Bungalow, Tudor Revival or Colonial Revival. The style more closely resembles classic Italian design than the earlier Italianate style because a great many of the practicing architects of the time had visited Italy and possessed a working knowledge of the architecture. Details on the Italian Renaissance were therefore borrowed directly from Italian originals. Some of the most character-defining features include the recessed entryways, full-length arched first floor windows and widely overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets. These features are helpful in distinguishing this style from the Spanish Eclectic or Mediterranean Revival styles which are very similar otherwise.

Characteristics

- Low-pitched hipped roof
- Roof typically covered with ceramic tiles
- Full-length, arched first floor openings
- Upper-story windows are smaller and less elaborate than first floor counterparts
- Facade is mostly symmetrical
- Widely overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets
- Recessed entryway usually accented by small classical columns or pilasters
- High-style examples are three to four stories in height and include a rusticated first floor, quoins, bracketed windows and different window treatments in each story



The Italian Renaissance style in San Jose.

Modern Styles

Circa 1930-1950

The modern styles derive their origin from a variety of sources, but overall the impetus to the “modern” styles was generated by a rejection of all historical references. Proponents of modernity did not differ from reformers of other eras in their desire to use design to address social issues, but they distinguished themselves by shunning the past as well as cultural or national contexts. Additionally, modern architects stressed the emphasis on volume and the inherent value and elegance of materials. Architects had new structural options, primarily the steel frame and reinforced concrete, so that flat roofs, greater window space and cantilevered elements could be used. They embraced new technology and “the machine age,” and their imprint has had a profound effect on American architecture and urbanism.

Art Deco

The Art Deco style is characterized by a sculptural use of abstract ornamentation and geometric forms. It was a break from traditional and classical styles and ornamentation. Vertical elements soaring to the full height of a facade often formed dynamic silhouettes.

Characteristics

- Smooth wall surface (usually stucco)
- Zigzags, chevrons and other stylized and geometric wall ornamentation
- Towers, piers and other vertical projections above the roof line
- Vertical emphasis
- Flat roof, usually with parapet



The Art Deco style in San Jose.

Art Moderne

Often closely related to the International Style in appearance, the Art Moderne was devised as a way of incorporating the machine aesthetic into architecture, in the sense that buildings could emulate motion and efficiency. It is also referred to as the **Streamlined Moderne**, and carried the aura of the futuristic. Whatever the term, this style followed industrial design, as "the slick look" was used for everything from irons to baby carriages.

Characteristics

- Asymmetrical facade, with a combination of rounded corners and angular shapes
- Smooth wall surfaces, often stucco
- Flat roofs with coping at the roof line
- Use of glass block
- Use of metal sash windows with small panes, often placed at corners
- Horizontal lines and grooves in the walls
- Horizontal balustrade
- Windows continuous around corners
- Small round windows



The Art Moderne style in San Jose.

International

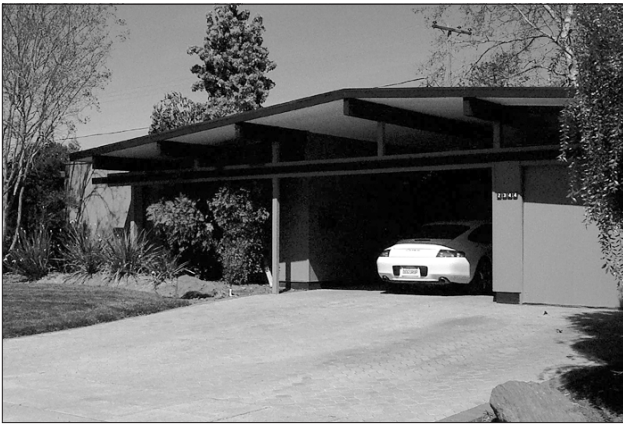
The use of the words "international style" refers to the title of the exhibit promoted by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1931 presenting the work of forty architects from fifteen countries. It has become synonymous with modern styles and post-World War II architecture.

Characteristics

- Flat roofs
- Emphasis on volume, rather than mass, most often expressed through an extensive use of glass and angular, horizontal shapes
- Asymmetrical facades
- Corner windows
- Metal casement windows, often with small panes
- Metal pipes used for balusters
- No surface ornamentation
- Attempt to create smooth wall surfaces



The International style in San Jose.



Mid-Century Modern

The mid-century modern style, with its roomy interior and “easy living” connotation, appealed to the post-World War II generation. Although built in great quantities, not many can be seen in the city’s historic districts because the style achieved popularity after their development. Instead, they were built as infill housing.

Characteristics

- Flat or slightly pitched roof
- Prominent, built-in garages
- One story
- Asymmetrical massing and forms
- Metal or wood window frames



The Mid-Century Modern style in San Jose.