

Page 1 of 5 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Martha Gardens Historic Residential Neighborhood

D1. Historic Name: None **D2. Common Name:** Martha Gardens residential neighborhood in Spartan Keys

***D3. Detailed Description** (Discuss overall coherence of the district, its setting, visual characteristics, and minor features. List all elements of district.):
The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood developed as a single-family residential area between the mid-1870s and the late 1930s. Located within Reed's Addition of San Jose's Original City of 1850, it is now a portion of the larger Spartan Keys neighborhoods and within the Martha Gardens Planned Community. During the *Early American Period (1846-1869)*, the area was mostly undeveloped and a portion of Reed's Homestead, a portion of Reed's Addition reserved for the Reed family home. Reed's Addition was bisected in 1868-1870 with the construction of the San Jose Pajaro Railroad. During the expansion of San Jose's residential neighborhoods in the downtown frame occurred during the *Period of Horticultural Expansion (1870-1918)*, most of the single-family residential buildings in this neighborhood were constructed. By the end of the Interwar Period (1918-1945), single-family residential use had begun to decline, and infill projects had by that time begun to increase the residential densities in concert with conversions of existing dwellings to apartments and rooming houses.

The neighborhood shares its development pattern with other older neighborhoods in the downtown frame; however, this particular residential area is now distinct due to commercial development along South First Street and construction of Interstate 280 in the late 1960s. It retains an intact visual character of similarly massed houses with period detailing, and continues to represent an earlier sense of time and place reflective of residential development between 1875 and 1940 within the original city limits of San José.

***D4. Boundary Description** (Describe limits of district and attach map showing boundary and district elements.):

The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood is generally bounded on the north by Interstate Highway 280, on the east by the property lines of the abandoned Southern Pacific Railroad alignment (approximately a continuation of Fourth Street), on the west by the alley between First and Second Streets, and on the south by Martha Street. (see boundary map next page)

***D5. Boundary Justification:**

The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood is a visually distinct area within its greater vicinity. Consisting mostly of residential buildings constructed as single family residences within Reed's Addition, this neighborhood has been isolated from adjacent historic residential areas due to twentieth century development and the construction of Interstate 280. Most of the properties within the neighborhood were developed for residential use within a specified period, 1875-1940, and have form and detailing reflective of the period. It has strong neighborhood associations that contribute to the understanding of this historic place that is visually cohesive within the context of the downtown residential frame.

This historic residential neighborhood is located at the west end of the city's Spartan Keys Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) Planning Area. This planning area encompasses most of the residential neighborhoods south of Interstate 280 between South First Street and the Coyote Creek. Most of the properties within this planning area are small-lot residential parcels, with a mix of commercial and industrial uses found along the old railroad right-of-way and along South First and Keyes Streets. Most of the residential development occurred in the decades just before and after 1900; however, recent residential infill projects have facilitated the expansion of residential occupancy in the area.

*D10. Significance: Theme	Architecture and Shelter	Area	Portion of Spartan Keys SNI area
Period of Significance	1875-1940	Property Type	Residential
		Applicable Criteria	None

(Discuss district's importance in terms of its historical context as defined by theme, period of significance, and geographic scope.
Also address the integrity of the district as a whole.)

(See next page, Continuation Sheet)

***B12. References:**

Archives & Architecture, *Historic District Study, Martha Gardens Historic Residential Neighborhood*, San José, 2007.

***D8. Evaluator:** Franklin Maggi, Preservation Planner

***Date:** 2/22/2007

Affiliation and Address: Archives & Architecture, PO Box 1332, San José, CA 95109

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*Recorded by F. Maggi, C. Duval, L. Dill, and J. Kusz

*Date 2/22/2007 Continuation Update



MARTHA GARDENS CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY MAP (NOT TO SCALE)

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The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood derives its importance from being an intact representation of urban development with identifiable attributes embodied by its single-family residential architecture, pattern of development, and continued residential setting. The neighborhood is understandable within the historic periods of San Jose's Horticultural Expansion years and the intervening Interwar Years. During this time, the urban region grew due to the establishment and evolution of Santa Clara Valley as an agricultural region known worldwide for its orchard products. The period of significance begins about 1875, the year after the death of James Frazier Reed Sr., and extends to the beginnings of World War II, or about 1940. Historically, the neighborhood illustrates San Jose's early growth within the Original City prior to the period of rapid urban expansion that began in the late 1940s.

The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood consists of properties located southeast of San Jose's Original City in Reed's Addition. The original city limits of San José, established in 1850, were the result of a number of surveys that occurred in the late 1840s that created the greater downtown frame as we know it today. Reed's Addition was incorporated into the City of San José during the first years of San Jose's *Early American Period* (1846-1869), when the initial city limits were modified to include the surrounding lands of the Original Survey of 1847, south to about Keyes Street, north to about Hedding Street (then Rosa Street) and Berryessa Road, east to Coyote Creek, and west to a line along the west side of the Guadalupe River.

By 1849, James Frazier Reed Sr. had acquired from Peter Davidson much of the area south of what became Reed Street between First Street (Old Monterey Road) and the Coyote Creek, known as Farm Lot #10. In 1849, he hired civil engineer Norman Bestor to survey his lands. The east-west streets were named, with one exception, for Reed family members: Reed, Margaret (named for Reed's wife Margret), Virginia, Martha, Bestor, and Keyes. The exception, of course, was Bestor.

James Frazier Reed Sr. acquired extensive real estate holdings during his early years in San José, although within Reed's Addition, actual development of the land occurred slowly at first. Title to most of this land was held by Margret Reed, who died in 1861. In 1869, Reed's Addition was bisected by the railroad alignment of the Santa Clara & Pajaro Valley Railroad that ran down Fourth Street east of and adjacent to his adobe house, with construction starting in early 1868. This railroad line would later become a part of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

With the construction of the railroad line on Fourth Street in the late 1860s, and the death of James Frazier Reed, Sr. in 1874, the portion of Reed's Addition to the west of Fourth Street began a period of residential development that continued for sixty-five years. During the San Jose's expansion period related to its booming horticultural industries in the later part of the nineteenth century, the area in the southeast quadrant of the Original City became known as the Third Ward, a political subdivision related to district elections of Common Council members.

In Reed's Addition, residential development began to occur within the corridor framed by the Southern Pacific right-of-way and First Street as the estate properties of Margret Reed began to be sold off. A period of economic vitality in the late 1880s to early 1890s saw the development of new large houses along South Third Street in a small area that had remained a part of the Reed family holdings. Much of this was re-platted within the unrecorded "Enright Subdivision," and architect-designed houses, most of them two-stories in height, were constructed. This area remains today as one of the finest small concentrations of residential Queen Anne architecture in the city. This spurt of development was short-lived however, as the Wall Street Panic of 1893 had a deleterious effect on the local economy until the end of the nineteenth century, bringing new construction to a crawl.

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New residential development in the late-nineteenth century within the neighborhood was also accompanied by a large number of carriage houses constructed to the rear of residences between South Second and South Third Streets along an alleyway that once stretched from Reed to Martha Streets. Most of them are one-and-one-half story in height, and many have been demolished and replaced by modern garages. Although the setting in the alleyway itself shows extensive deterioration, the collection as a whole remains a distinctive feature in modern San José.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw renewed industrial development associated with the canning industry and a period of residential growth as World War I approached, although the 1906 Earthquake and another Wall Street crash in 1907 tempered the vitality of the local economy. With new immigrants flowing into the area to work in the orchards and canneries, most of the remaining undeveloped land within the Original City filled with working-class homes, and new tracts were being established in East San José, Burbank, Westside, and Willow Glen. Most of the infill development in the neighborhood during this period is associated with this worker-class housing; these houses are recognizable as small Craftsman or Neoclassical bungalows.

After World War I, San José entered a period of great prosperity, with population growth continuing through the twenties as the city expanded outward. A few remaining vacant parcels in the neighborhood were built out during this period, and some houses were relocated into the area on other vacant parcels. The neighborhood, now more working-class oriented with a large number of rentals, began to be more distinct as a place, as commercial development replaced older housing that had been built along South First Street during the nineteenth century.

In 1935, the railroad line for the Southern Pacific Coast Division was moved from Fourth Street to the west side of the downtown, a 4.5-mile line relocation. The relocation removed the many hazards associated with a railroad line through the middle of the downtown, transforming the old mainline into an industrial spur accessed from the south.

In 1929, zoning was introduced in San José, and although it had little effect during the Depression, it set the stage for later multifamily development, as the city planners targeted the older areas in the Original City for future high-density housing. The 1929 zoning had set a policy direction for the long-term transformation of the residential areas in the downtown frame. Suburban growth in the 1920s enabled by the automobile resulted in most new single-family housing construction taking place outside the original city limits. The aging housing stock in the downtown frame was not appealing to young families seeking a new house with modern amenities. The adoption of the zoning code and the City's first land use map clarified the City's intent to replace the old housing stock with high-density development in the old residential areas. By the end of the Depression, the neighborhood saw its first multifamily housing complex constructed: an Art Moderne 5-plex on South Second Street.

Soon after World War II, a new reformist City Council and aggressive business leaders launched a campaign to attract new non-agricultural related industries to San José. While the cannery-related businesses to the east of the neighborhood continued on for a number of decades after World War II, the Martha Gardens neighborhood, in concert with other older areas in the downtown frame began to experience higher transient residential uses and the construction on new multifamily apartment buildings on the remaining vacant lots or on properties where older nineteenth century houses were demolished. The first post-war apartment complex in the study area was an 8-unit two-story apartment complex on South Third Street, soon followed by a number of others. The largest and last of these was the 16-unit building on South Second Street. Many of the larger two-story nineteenth century homes, were converted to multifamily rentals during this period. This conversion process was also occurring in the areas around San José State College and in the Hensley neighborhood north of the downtown.

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The construction of Interstate 280 in the 1960s had the effect of separating the neighborhood from the residential areas to the north. Demolition occurred between 1966 and 1968, and freeway construction was completed by 1972. Introduction of one-way couplets, feeding the freeway entrances increased traffic and speed on these streets, decreasing the desirability of the area as a residential neighborhood.

The neighborhood, now known as the Martha Gardens historic residential area, remains today as a diverse mix of 19th century and early twentieth century single-family residences, residences converted to boarding houses and post-World War II multiple-unit residences. The boundaries of the neighborhood are now well defined within the greater downtown area, framed and isolated by the freeway, South First Street commercial development, and historic industrial buildings along the now abandoned Southern Pacific railroad line.

EVALUATION AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

By definition, under San Jose City Ordinance 27113, "conservation area" means a geographically definable area of urban or rural character with identifiable attributes embodied by: (1) architecture, urban design, development patterns, setting, or geography; and (2) history.

The properties within the Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood identified in this record constitute a conservation area that meets the criteria for such as designation as defined within City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, having the integrity and visual sense of a historic place. Although there are some properties within the proposed district area that do not contribute to the historic fabric of the neighborhood, the conservation area as a whole possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The proposed conservation area's streetscapes of primarily late nineteenth century Italianate and Victorian houses and early twentieth century Neoclassical and Craftsman bungalows, and the area's similarity of scale and setbacks that, along with mature landscaping, provide a cohesive setting for the houses, and the relatively consistent use of exterior finishes, convey a clear historical association with the development of the neighborhood.

The proposed Martha Gardens Conservation Area is recognizable in the present as an aesthetically pleasing concentration of historic residential architecture, physically surrounded by boundaries defined by changes in neighborhood development. This district has a sense of historical continuity within the public consciousness.

The neighborhood is distinguishable as a place within the larger context of downtown San José, and is easily recognized by its residential architecture built from 1875 to 1940.

It is important for:

- its representation of a comprehensive pattern of historic development within the south portions of the downtown frame area;
- its association with residential development during the period 1875-1940; and
- its embodiment, within the boundaries of the neighborhood, of architectural styles that represent the breadth of design of the period.

The Martha Gardens historic residential neighborhood as a place presents a unique and distinct experience of the visual aspects of neighborhood life in a community for most of the historic period during which it was developed. The neighborhood maintains a fairly high level of physical integrity to its evolution. Although there have been some changes to the intensity of residential use in the neighborhood, and property owners continue to renovate their buildings in the area, most of these changes have not had an intrusive impact on the historic fabric.