

**United States Department of the Interior  
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## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

New Submission                       Amended Submission

### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San Jose, California, 1952 -1963

### B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Context: Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San Jose, 1952-1963

Theme: Postwar Housing Tract Development in San Jose, 1952-1963

Theme: Modern Residential Architecture in San Jose, 1952-1963

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Submitted October 26, 2018

### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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 Name of Multiple Property Listing

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 State

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Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Summary Statement**

This Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) covers the modern mass-produced housing built in greater San José, California by pioneering merchant builder Joseph Eichler and his company Eichler Homes. The housing tracts were developed from 1952 to 1963 during a period of rapid urban expansion in Santa Clara Valley as it began to evolve into what is now known as Silicon Valley. These distinctive residential subdivisions, now within the urban boundaries of San José in its Willow Glen and Western districts, consist of 484 single family homes located within seven separate tracts in four suburban neighborhoods.

Two themes are associated with the development of Eichler Homes in San José: Postwar Housing Tract Development in San José, 1952-1963; and Modern Residential Architecture in San José, 1952-1963.

Joseph Eichler built homes throughout California, with the majority located in the San Francisco Bay Area (east to Concord, north to San Rafael, and south to San José). The period during which Eichler built in San José encompasses his founding of Eichler Homes, a building company overseeing land acquisition and development, as well as home construction, financing, marketing, and sales directly to buyers.

The designs of Eichler's houses are associated with the architectural firms of Anshen & Allen, Jones & Emmons, and Claude Oakland & Associates. Eichler, having rented a Frank Lloyd Wright "Usonian" for his family during World War II, resolved to realize his own dream of building modern homes "for ordinary people." Eichler homes would come to incorporate the key elements that Wright used to make his Usonians affordable: flat roofs, covered parking spaces, and slabs on grade. These elements, along with the open planning that made family living efficient, combined kitchens and family rooms with integrated outdoor spaces to allow for effortless oversight. The flexible living and dining spaces often were used to separate children's wings from master bedroom suites to allow for privacy.

Jerry Ditto's 1995 *Eichler Homes: Design for Living*, and Paul Adamson's 2002 *Eichler / Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream* provide a comprehensive overview of the legacy of the work of Joseph Eichler and his Eichler Homes. Adamson summarizes this legacy in his statement that "In these ways, Wright's inventions and, in turn, the innovative variations of Eichler's architects set a modern standard for merchant builder homes." Today, Eichler-built homes are treasured and sought after by the general public who identify these buildings with modern California living.

**Context: Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San José, 1952-1963**

**Introduction**

*Joseph Eichler*

Born in New York City, Joseph Eichler (1900-1974) received a business degree from New York University and started his career on Wall Street. He married Lillian Moncharsh and began working as a financial officer for her family's butter-and-egg business, moving to California in 1925 where Joe served as the West Coast chief financial officer for the business. In 1943 they rented the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Bazett residence in the Town of Hillsborough on the San Francisco Peninsula. During this period, several officers and employees of the family business were indicted for deceptions related to produce sales to government agencies supplying food to the military. Although Eichler and his family

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were not involved in the case, the impact of the indictments resulted in his leaving the company in the summer of 1945.

Before World War II, speculators, rather than builders, typically were developers of housing tracts in the Greater Bay Area and San José. The business model involved hiring a Civil Engineer to survey and record the subdivision, and then selling house lots at a price that was high enough to cover purchase of the land and improvements while bringing in a profit. During the interwar period in San José, builders began to experiment with scaling up their turn-key developments but were limited by the pace of growth and available funding. Following the War, the merchant builder model arose: combining the subdivision of tracts with the construction of mass housing and utilizing techniques to speed the rate of development to respond to rapid growth in the region.

With a break in his career, and inspired by Wright's design of the Bazett residence, Eichler was intent on becoming a builder of contemporary homes in postwar San Francisco Bay Area. He founded the small-scale Sunnyvale Building Company in 1947, originally selling prefabricated houses to owners of individual lots, but soon graduated to the subdivision and construction of modest tracts of houses, including the first phase of the Sunnyvale Manor subdivision in Santa Clara County. By 1949, a drafting professional was hired to draw-up designs for two new subdivisions: University Gardens in the Barron Park neighborhood of Palo Alto, and Stanford Gardens in Menlo Park. He founded Eichler Homes in Palo Alto in 1950, quickly establishing himself as a merchant builder - overseeing land acquisition, development, construction, financing, marketing, and sales of the homes directly to buyers. Eichler commissioned architectural firms, and soon thereafter brought on a public relations partner in Jim San Jule. By 1954, having constructed more than 1,800 homes, the company had become a leading contemporary homebuilder in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (G.I. Bill) had established a Veterans Administration (VA) program that guaranteed low interest home mortgages with no down payment for veterans that would be returning from service after the war, and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage guarantee program made long-term, self-amortizing home mortgages with low down payments available. When the FHA began to restrict the amount of assistance made available for buyers of modern homes, Eichler and his marketing partner, Jim San Jule, successfully lobbied to remove the anti-modernist guidelines.

FHA and VA guaranteed mortgages were essentially unavailable to buyers who were ethnic minorities until 1962, when President Kennedy's executive order prohibited racial discrimination in all housing programs receiving federal funding. Eichler Homes however, was renowned for its commitment to open housing policies during the postwar period prior to Kennedy's executive order. By 1952 the Company had begun selling to Asian-American households in Palo Alto and the South Bay and had built a custom home for the family of Franklin H. Williams, director of the western region of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in Palo Alto. In 1954 the Company sold a home to an African-American scientist and his West-Indian wife in the Greenmeadow tract in Palo Alto. From 1954 forward, Eichler maintained a policy of non-discrimination: selling between 30 and 40 homes a year to racial minorities. He resigned from the National Association of Home Builders because the Association endorsed racial restrictions.

Between 1950 and the mid-1960s, Eichler Homes was responsible for the construction of more than

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11,000 homes, while continually raising the quality of design, efficiencies of production, and effectiveness of marketing of developer-built housing, in California. First publicly held in 1961, the company's financing difficulties increased during the recession of the early 1960s, with complex urban projects like San Francisco's Geneva Terrace Townhouses, begun in 1960, and the 18-story twin-tower Geneva Towers (now demolished) straining the stability of the company. While the recession of 1960-1961 was followed by a decade of sustained growth, Joseph Eichler and his company never recovered. He dispersed his shares in 1966, and the Eichler Homes ceased operation soon after.

**Theme: Postwar Housing Tract Development in San José, 1952-1963**

The City of San José, established in 1777 as the first civilian settlement under Spanish colonization of California, evolved as an agricultural center after California statehood in 1850. Although San José had quickly grown from a small pueblo to an important regional town following the discovery of gold in the Sierra foothills, the experimentation in horticulture and conversion of the valley from grazing to orchards, and the completion of the Central Pacific line to Niles connected San José passengers and industry with the transcontinental railroad defined the character of the region as the Valley of Heart's Delight for almost a century.

By 1900 the population of San José was 21,500, doubling it from the early post-Gold Rush days. The town doubled again in population during the first half of the twentieth century, and although by 1911 when the City's first annexation took place, urban expansion remained slow-paced, with new residential areas created that infilled the land between the neighborhood communities of Santa Clara, Burbank, and Willow Glen. Interurban electrified railway lines (later to be replaced with bus lines on paved streets) facilitated this connection, but the larger valley continued to evolve under horticultural use.

It was after World War II that the growth of the electronic and defense industries established during the war began to bring the Santa Clara Valley's horticultural period to a close. World War II, like the Gold Rush a century before, had a major effect on the changing complexion of Central California. The San Francisco Bay Area was the gateway to the Pacific Theater from 1941 to 1945. The large naval air station at Moffett Field was a center of war-time activity, and thousands of military personnel were brought to the area for training and processing. Many of them would return later to seek work and raise families.

Events at Stanford University were also setting the stage for significant developments in the post-war period. Frederick Terman became an engineering professor at Stanford in 1930. Under his guidance the university became a leader in the field of electronics. Many of the university's pre-war graduates played important roles in the post-war development of the local electronics industry.

William Hewlett and David Packard, two of Professor Terman's students at Stanford, developed electronic test equipment in a Palo Alto garage in 1939, and during World War II, this small company obtained government contracts and continued to grow during the post-war period. Other local companies had reconstituted themselves during the war; Food Machinery Company (now United Defense) became a tank and weapon builder, and Joshua Hendy Iron Works (later taken over by Westinghouse) built steam engines and other military equipment for the Liberty ships.

Soon after World War II, the Santa Clara County business community had launched an active campaign to attract new non-agricultural related industries to the area. Early industries that established plants in

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the county included the Chicago's International Mineral and Chemical Corporation's Accent plant in 1946, the General Electric plant in the early 1950s, and International Business Machines (IBM) in 1953 who built a sprawling campus in South San José. IBM had established a punch-card plant in San José in the 1930s, and in 1949 their new research center in Downtown San José began the development of the disk drive.

In 1954, the Stanford Industrial Park was established attracting the companies of Hewlett-Packard and the Varian brothers, also students of Terman, as well as Sylvania, Philco-Ford, General Electric, and Lockheed's research laboratory as well as the large Lockheed plant in Sunnyvale. These companies formed the nucleus of what became known as Silicon Valley.

The influx of GI's looking for work, and the rise of new defense industries resulted in a demand for new housing in the region. West of downtown San José and adjacent to the interwar Rose Garden neighborhood, the Kaiser Community Homes Orchard Park tract was constructed in 1947 and was one of the first new subdivisions to include not only the industry-standard modern traditional styles, but also ranch and contemporary-style homes. Further north, the Western Construction and Realty Company developed the small contemporary Rosemary Village housing tract, while east of Downtown San José, developer David Bohannon built Mayfair Heights, where contemporary models designed by Mogens Mogensen exhibited low-sloping roofs, and Tropicana Village included modern homes designed by architect Alec Branden, both developed in the early 1950s.

Eichler's San José housing tracts were first developed during this early transitional period of industrialization and suburbanization in the Santa Clara Valley. Residential developers designed these postwar housing tracts that were dependent upon the automobile to get to work, locating them on former orchard lands with access to industrial employment centers, rather than the city center. Most of the orchards that fell to residential development were around 10 acres or less in size, and a large number of relatively small subdivisions were created, most from 30 to 40 houses in size. Rural roads were widened into intercity transportation routes, and by the late 1950s expressways and freeways were being planned to crisscross the valley.

Between 1940 and 1950, as California's population increased by 53%, 850,000 veterans chose to return to live in the state after the war. The agricultural lands of Santa Clara Valley presented unique development opportunities for San José, which City Manager Dutch Hamann did not fail to recognize. Under the City's pro-growth leadership implemented by Hamann's aggressive annexation work, the City experienced phenomenal growth - from 95,000 in 1950 to over 500,000 in 1975, with the area of the City spreading at a quick pace, from 17 square miles in 1950 to 67 square miles in 1960. In 1958, building permits were issued for 5,722 single-family units, and the following year 150 subdivisions were under construction, as San José found itself ideally placed for manufacturing and relatively affordable housing development at the southern edge of the San Francisco Peninsula. Like the earliest Eichler Homes subdivisions in Sunnyvale, an article in *American Builder* noted that San José presented an opportunity to "get into a lower-priced field and still maintain our quality and supply most of the features."

Eichler's vision fit seamlessly into the evolving development patterns in San José and the South Bay Area. When asked about his land acquisition practices in another *American Builder* interview, Eichler

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explained, “We don’t go in for large acreage, we want to see the end of the road. We prefer to buy in established areas and build on.”

Eichler tract sizes and street patterns within these seven subdivisions varied but were consistent with state-of-the-art residential subdivision design of the period, and quite possibly with local standards for the rapidly expanding City as well. Consistent with FHA recommendations for hierarchical street plans, arterial streets defined the edges, collector streets allowed access into the tracts. To reduce traffic and enhance the safety of the residents, minor residential streets, loops, or cul de sacs wound through the tracts themselves. Block lengths varied from just a few to as many as 17 house lots between streets. Lots varied in size, from approximately six to ten thousand square feet. The site development amenities included streets and detached sidewalks; planted park strips, street trees, and front yards; streetlights; and utilities and sewers. Front yards were graded down to the sidewalks and planted consistently to complete the park like setting that belonged to the suburban public realm.

In 1951 the first of two tract maps were recorded for Eichler’s San José Morepark subdivision west of Downtown San José adjacent the community of Burbank, with the second map signed in 1953. Working with San Jose Abstract and Title Company, the first was a small 33-lot tract on both sides of what is now Richmond Avenue which went on market in 1952, and the second expanded the subdivision to the east with an additional 44 lots on Menker and Goodwin Avenues, which was built out by 1954.

In 1953, John Hancock Callender cited Morepark as an example “of the general excellence of the Eichler developments.” While critical of some of the unit designs due to poor orientation and internal circulation, Eichler later responded to Callender saying that “these particular plans were experimental houses and were attempts on our part to produce houses that would sell for a lower price...actually, these are very fine houses and are far superior to anything in this locality in that price range.”<sup>1</sup>

The passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act soon followed in 1956. In 1957, Eichler’s 30-unit Fairglen Tract to the south of Dry Creek Road to the southwest of San Jose’s Willow Glen district would follow as orchards continued to be sold and housing development continued southwest of San Jose’s urban limits. Located near Meridian Road, access to the new Sinclair Freeway (Interstate 280) was touted, the construction of which began in 1958. The new freeway would provide access to the center of San José and tie it into the larger system being expanded to connect to the San Francisco Bay Area. With the success of the Morepark and the additional success of working with Valley Title Company of Santa Clara County on Fairglen, between 1959 and 1960, the largest of the San José Eichler developments, Fairglen Additions No. 1, 2, and 3, totaling 218 units were built farther south of the original Fairglen across the newly constructed major arterial street of Curtner Avenue. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article later noted that “the award-winning homebuilding firm, Eichler Homes, Inc.” had announced that GI financing was available for “architecturally designed by Jones & Emmons of Los Angeles, and Claude Oakland of San Francisco” homes in four new developments, one of which was San Jose’s Fairglen Additions. In 1960, with the Fairglen Additions nearing close-out, Eichler Homes signed two other tract maps for a development to be built in the same general neighborhood, slightly to the west across Meridian Avenue from the Fairglen Additions. Finally, in 1962, the tract map for the last Eichler Homes

<sup>1</sup> A. Quincy Jones papers, 1942-1979, UCLA Library Special Collections, as cited by Karina Marshall in Dave Weinstein’s *The CA Modernist* article “Newcomer Rediscovered Neighborhood’s History.”

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development in San José, the 57-unit Fairhaven, was signed on the western edge of the growing City, which was built out over the next year.

By the late 1960s and 1970s, Silicon Valley had emerged with the development of integrated circuits and silicon chips for computers. Large-scale urban clearance activities began in the City's downtown, and freeway networks expanded access to less expensive land. As evidenced by the City's first decline in enrollment at the elementary school level, a second phase of suburban growth had begun in the Bay Area, resulting in the development of "edge cities," along freeway interchanges. The majority of growth was occurring to the east along the new Interstate-680 corridor in the Cities of Pleasanton, Concord, and Walnut Creek; or to the south in the Almaden Valley and the City of Morgan Hill; well beyond the sphere of earlier postwar suburban San José development patterns. While tract development continued in San José well into the 1990s and later, the City's creation of an urban service line and new policies focusing on infill development changed the process of residential development. The fast pace of subdivision development that catapulted San José at mid-century during the period that Joseph Eicher built homes in San José came to a close as the city reached its limits and began a transition to a dense urban center within the metropolitan area of the Greater Bay Area.

**Theme: Modern Residential Architecture in San José, 1952-1963**

**Introduction**

*Modern Residential Architecture*

Prior to World War II, Southern California architects Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra brought a European modernist aesthetic to the warm climates found in the southern part of the state. International style modern architecture, brought to the United States by European architects Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, and Marcel Breuer, utilized industrial materials that provided large spans allowing for open plans, rectilinear forms, and glass curtain walls to the United States. As Architectural Historian Vincent Scully, Jr. wrote in his 1961 *Modern Architecture*, modern architecture, like all architecture, "... attempted to create a special environment for human life and to image the thoughts and actions of human beings as they have wished to believe themselves to be." Between 1945 and 1962, editor John Entenza sponsored *Arts & Architecture* magazine's Case Study Program, featuring modern residential architecture for the California lifestyle. The Case Study Houses took advantage of California's weather and culture to further blur the distinction between indoor and outdoor, and formal and informal spaces. The primary living areas opened onto private gardens, which were clearly delineated and protected from the street. Case Study Houses presented environments in which the work of modern furniture and landscape designers was also featured."

In northern California, architect William Wurster, who later became Dean of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley, further incorporated natural materials, vernacular forms, and simply expressed construction principles, such as open tongue-and-groove ceilings on exposed post-and-beam construction carrying low-sloped roofs, to create what is now known as the "Second Bay Tradition" style.

In San José, during the period of expansion under City Manager A.P. Hamann, between 1950 and 1969, the sprawling City was flooded with modern architecture of every type, including residential. Just as a group of California architects arose in this period, groups of architects arose in different regions of the



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State. Architects who designed modern residences in the Santa Clara Valley during the period included but were not limited to: Alec Branden, Binder & Curtis, Feldhym, DeGrange, and Reid, Gross & Marburg, Higgins & Root Associates, George S. Kocher, Edward W. Kress, Mogens Mogensen, Wurdeman and Becket, and Goodwin Steinberg.<sup>2</sup> Architects and builders constructed countless examples of modern homes during this period, from modest Ranch homes in subdivisions with austere detailing, to sprawling Modernist and California Ranch style homes, to post-and-beam homes with low-sloped roofs.

Employment of post-and-beam construction, employed by Eichler's architects, was a departure from traditional California light-frame construction, where walls are built of vertical wood studs, with joists and roof rafters closely spaced and shielded from view. Like the industrial steel framing used in the International style, the use of post-and-beam framing made it easier to design open plans and a much higher proportion of glazing to solid walls as compared to wood stud construction. While the financial goal was to allow for faster framing, this method required a higher level of precision design and finish, partly because the structural components remained exposed as important features.

*Eichler Homes*

After originally working with a drafting professional, Eichler not only recognized the need to work with architects to obtain the level of design quality he aspired to provide, but he had the sensibility to respect their design skills and promote their products. He commissioned the firm of Anshen and Allen with the original design of prototypes for five subdivisions in Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, and Redwood City. S. Robert Anshen (1909-1964) and William Stephen Allen (1912-1992) graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1936 and moved west, forming their architecture firm in San Francisco by 1940. Robert and Eleanor Anshen had coauthored papers regarding the need to incorporate technology into mass-produced housing, and in partnership with Eichler Homes starting in 1950, the firm was able to realize these ideas in development of the AA-1 prototype for the second phase of the Sunnyvale Manor subdivision. This prototype was T-shaped in plan, with the living-dining wing, under a high low-sloped roof, opening on to a private patio through full-height glass doors, and a separate wing holding bedrooms and garage under a lower roof. The firm continued on to design four more Eichler Homes subdivisions: El Centro Gardens, Green Gables, and Greer Park in Palo Alto; and Atherwood in Redwood City.

In 1952, one year after Joseph Eichler received recognition for "Subdivision of the Year" from *Architectural Forum*, and A. Quincy Jones received the first Honor Award in residential architecture from the American Institute of Architects, Eichler brought the architectural firm of A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons & Associates on board. This partnership began the orchestration of a design team of architects that collaborated to refine a series of floor plans with their respective three-dimensional compositions. A *San Francisco Chronicle* article from 1963 references Jones and Emmons A.L.A. as one of the designers of the San José Fairhaven Eichler tract; and a set of Jones and Emmons site plans, featuring gently curving streets with carefully oriented homes for the San José Fairglen Additions, is included in the U.C. Berkeley Design Archives.<sup>3</sup> Jones and Emmons' careful composition of the site

<sup>2</sup> PAST Consultants, LLC. *San José Modernism Historic Context Statement*, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> The finding aide of *The Oakland & Imada Collection, 2002-03* at the University of California, Berkeley, College of

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plans, including street patterns and home orientations, made the siting of each home feel custom and improved the design quality of Eichler housing tracts. When the novel idea of a second bathroom was proposed as a marketing feature, collaboration led to the design of a private bathroom within a master suite, which was an even more unique design feature for mass-produced housing of the time. Entries began to evolve into outdoor forecourts and atriums around which living spaces were organized. Photographer Ernie Braun caught the eye of the Bay Area in his shots of elegant social scenes framed within these signature transitional spaces.

Claude Oakland FAIA (1919-1989), began working for Anshen & Allen in 1950, and worked on the design of Sunnyvale Manor Addition, the first architect-designed Eichler subdivision. Over his ten-year tenure with the firm, he became the principal architect for Eichler's projects. Following the design of Anshen and Allen's model E-111 in 1959, in 1960 Oakland left to start his own firm, Claude Oakland & Associates, taking the Eichler account with him during the construction of the San José Fairglen Additions. A set of architectural drawings of model SJ-4 for the San José Fairglen Additions from 1960 at the U.C. Berkeley Design Archives is signed by Claude Oakland. Oakland is credited with refining early Anshen and Allen designs by limiting the number of elements and orienting the beams in one direction. Paul Adamson noted that his ability to strengthen spatial ideas through clean organization is credited with "adding some dynamic flair to the architecture that helped make the Eichler homes distinctive." During the 1960s, Oakland was responsible for designing and continuing to refine Eichler gallery models, with indoor atriums under tall and/or pitched roofs. Other plans from this period were organized around partially enclosed courts that were adoptable to varying lot sizes and configurations.

The following description of the architecture of Eichler homes is included in the Greenmeadow National Register nomination, as adapted for San José locations. The Eichler homes are detached and one story, offering an open plan inspired by architect Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian designs. They feature exposed post-and-beam construction, open and rectangular in plan, on concrete slab foundations with radiant heating. Heights are low, and roofs are flat or of minimal 2:12 pitch, with deep overhangs to keep out the sun in the summer, while allowing warmth in in the winter.

The designs emphasize privacy for the residents. In keeping with the modern style, they present clean and simple elevations, with limited or no windows, to the street. Siding is custom vertical-grooved redwood plywood, originally stained in earth-tone colors, some models with shingle-siding or concrete block accents. Similar siding comprises front yard privacy fencing. In response to the increasing reliance on automobiles as primary transportation, one- or two-car front-facing garages also have doors of similar siding. Fixed clerestory windows are located above the garage doors.

A flat front entry door is usually placed well back from the street, beyond the trademark entrance atrium, or courtyard with organic patio forms. Adjacent to the front entry door, floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall plate glass walls also open onto the atrium or courtyard. Typically, the homes have narrow side setbacks on the sides, varying in size depending on the zoning, with walkways in some tracts extending to the rear of the building. Aluminum slider windows are individually set on side elevations. The rear of

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the homes feature floor-to-ceiling glass and a sliding-glass door that together, in most cases, span the width of the building (interrupted by brick fireplaces).

**Conclusion**

Joseph Eichler is one of the most original and innovative California merchant builders of the twentieth century. He believed in the ability of design to improve quality of life for the average person. During his sixteen-year tenure at the helm of Eichler Homes, his company produced some of the most distinctive, award-winning, architecturally designed, mass-produced homes for families of average means. Eichler strategically located well-planned subdivisions within rapidly growing suburban cities such as San José and throughout the postwar San Francisco Bay Area. He collaborated with highly talented and recognized architects, who provided the company with neighborhoods designed for community living, and sophisticated post-and-beam modern home designs with open floor plans and low-profile roof forms that blend into the mid-century suburban landscape.

The seven tracts in San José built by Eichler Homes are fully representative of Joseph Eichler's body of work in building single-family residential subdivisions, and span most of his career following the beginnings of work on the Morepark Tract by 1952. Morepark was a part of his early experimental period in which he worked with both the firms of Ashen and Allen and Jones and Emmons. Both firms continued to be involved with the San José tracts, and Jones and Emmons were designers on his last tract in San José, Fairhaven. By 1964, Eichler Homes had constructed more than 11,000 single-family homes. At the time of his death in 1974, Eichler was appreciated as a master builder who made important contributions to the built environment of San Jose's residential neighborhoods.

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**F. Associated Property Types**

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

**THEME: Postwar Housing Tract Development in San José, 1952-1963**

**PROPERTY TYPE DESCRIPTION: Eichler Housing Tract**

This property type identifies distinctive modern postwar housing tract construction in San José during the period of significance for this theme (1952-1963).

*Statement of Significance*

**Criterion: A**

Eichler housing tracts eligible as historic districts under this theme are significant under Criterion A as prototypical or distinctive examples of the postwar housing boom and suburban growth in San José during this period.

*Character-defining Features*

Character-defining planning features of modern postwar housing tracts during this period include:

- Street layouts
- Curbs, sidewalk (including storm drains), and planting strips with street trees
- Graded front yards, including divided-concrete driveways
- Streetlights

*Registration Requirements*

To be eligible, an individual housing tract must:

- display the character-defining features of Eichler housing tract planning from this period;
- date from the period of significance;
- exhibit quality of design; and
- retain the required aspects of integrity

**Required Aspects of Integrity:**

Location, setting, design, and feeling must be present.

**Extant Examples from this Period:**

- Morepark Eichler Homes Tract, 1952 – 1953
- Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract, 1957-1959

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- Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract Additions No. 1, 2, and 3, 1959-1961
- Hudson Eichler Homes Tract, 1960-1962
- Fairhaven Eichler Homes Tract 1962-1963

**THEME: Modern Residential Architecture in San José, 1952-1963**

**PROPERTY TYPE DESCRIPTION: Modern Housing tract**

This property type identifies modern Eichler tract homes constructed in San José during the period of significance for this theme (1952-1963).

*Statement of Significance*

**Criterion: C**

Eichler housing tracts eligible as historic districts under this theme are significant under Criterion C as examples of significant and distinguishable entities in the local context during this period.

*Character-defining Features*

The homes are detached, with low, one-story massing, characterized by flat or 2:12 pitched broad gable roof forms, open floor plans to emphasize privacy and presenting relatively minimal facades with integrated garages to the street, mixed post-and-beam framing with large expanses of glazing including clearstory windows, and concrete slab foundations with radiant heating.

Common character-defining features of Eichler housing during this period include:

- Roof: flat and/or broad gable roof forms; tongue-and-groove roof structure with deep overhanging eaves over exposed beams;
- Walls: mixed post-and-beam framing clad with custom vertical-grooved plywood siding, some with shingle or concrete block accents; and
- Fenestration: fixed floor-to-ceiling and clerestory plate-glass windows, sliding aluminum framed windows and glass doors, and flat slab entry doors.

*Registration Requirements*

To be eligible, an individual housing tract must:

- exemplify the tenets of the modern movement and the distinctive characteristics of the modern Eichler homes designed by Anshen and Allen, Jones and Emmons, and Claude Oakland, from this period;
- display the significant character-defining features of its style or type from this period;
- date from the period of significance;
- exhibit quality of design; and

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- retain the required aspects of integrity

**Required Aspects of Integrity:**

Location, setting, and design must be strongly present.

**Extant Examples from this Period:**

- Morepark Eichler Homes Tract, 1952 – 1953
- Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract, 1957-1959
- Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract Additions, Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3, 1959-1961
- Hudson Eichler Homes Tract, 1960-1962
- Fairhaven Eichler Homes Tract 1961-1963

**Section G. Geographical Data**

The State of California

County of Santa Clara

City of San José

Specific housing tracts developed in San José by Eichler Homes, including tracts, including tracts:

- Tract 656 and Tract 1136 Morepark
- Tract 1818 Fairglen
- Tract 2238 Fairglen Addition Unit No. 1
- Tract 2239 Fairglen Addition Unit No. 2
- Tract 2240 Fairglen Addition Unit No. 3
- Tract 2837 Hudson
- Tract 3009 Fairhaven

**Section H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

This MPDF focuses on the housing tracts of Joseph Eichler in San José, that were developed during the most productive and innovative period of the Eichler Homes company. Two topical themes outline postwar development patterns in San José to which these housing tracts contributed, and the designs of the architectural team of Anshen and Allen, Jones and Emmons, and Claude Oakland whose work contributed to the modern residential architecture of the city in a significant way.

The discussion of Eichler's work is based on existing scholarship on Eichler's career, and in particular, Paul Adamson and Marty Arbunich's 2002 book *Eichler/Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream*.

The Fairglen Neighborhood Preservation Committee, co-chaired by Peter Hurd and Sally Zarnowitz, initiated the registration process. Originally focused on the nomination of the Fairglen Additions, it was later expanded to include this MPDF to better address the historic context of Eicher Homes in San José. Architectural Historian and Architect Camille Shamble, PhD, conducted primary source research at the archives of the University of California at Berkeley, College of Environmental Design and University of

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California at Los Angeles. Architectural Historian Franklin Maggi assisted with finalizing the nomination forms.

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