

RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY RESULTS

During the reconnaissance survey phase of this project, Carey & Co. visually examined all of the survey area's 468 parcels. A total of 685 buildings, or 1.5 buildings per parcel, were identified and recorded. Well over half of the surveyed parcels were observed as residential. The following is a list of the neighborhood's current building uses, including the number of parcels displays these uses and the corresponding percentage of total parcels surveyed:

▪ Residential	325 parcels	69%
▪ Commercial/retail	57 parcels	12%
▪ Office	37 parcels	8%
▪ Parking	11 parcels	2%
▪ Religious	9 parcels	2%
▪ Vacant	9 parcels	2%
▪ Mixed-use	7 parcels	2%
▪ Civic/community	5 parcels	1%
▪ Light industrial	2 parcels	less than 1%

Construction dates were known or clearly observable for the primary structure on 400 of the surveyed parcels. Just over half of Japantown's building stock dates to between 1890 and 1940, with the most significant increase in construction occurring in the first decade of the 20th century. The following is a chronological list of decades, with the number and corresponding percentage of the total parcels for which construction dates were known or observable:

▪ Pre-1889	6 parcels	2%
▪ 1890-1899	9 parcels	2%
▪ 1900-1909	131 parcels	33%
▪ 1910-1919	28 parcels	7%
▪ 1920-1929	36 parcels	9%
▪ 1930-1939	25 parcels	6%
▪ 1940-1949	52 parcels	13%
▪ 1950-1959	43 parcels	11%
▪ 1960-1969	37 parcels	9%
▪ 1970-1979	14 parcels	3%
▪ 1980-1989	6 parcels	2%
▪ 1990-1999	6 parcels	2%
▪ 2000-the present	5 parcels	1%

See Appendix C for parcel-specific data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our research for the historic context and observations during the reconnaissance survey, it is Carey & Co.'s professional opinion that San Jose's Japantown neighborhood contains some resources that may be historically significant for the role they played in the city's Japanese American past, for their connection to historically important people, and/or for their

architectural distinction. These resources, numbering 67 in all, are identified on the survey matrix (Appendix C) and are documented on DPR 523A inventory forms (Appendix G). As a group they may qualify for listing as a City of San Jose historic district, a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) historic district or Traditional Cultural Property historic district (Appendix F), and/or a National Historic Landmark (NHL) district. Additionally, the Buddhist temple, Kuwabara Hospital, and other special resources may be individually significant and eligible for official designation as San Jose landmarks and/or separate listing on the NRHP.

The following recommendations are intended to aid the community in making decisions about designation priorities and future tasks:

Recommendation One: Consider the designation options and make a preliminary conclusion about which strategy would most benefit the community's cultural preservation goals. As stated above, it is Carey & Co.'s opinion that some of the buildings located within the Japantown survey boundary are potentially eligible for official listing with the City of San Jose, the NRHP, and/or the NHL as historically significant resources. It is important that the Japantown community compare the pros and cons of these designation options because the type and quantity of historic background information to be gathered in the building-specific archival research phase will vary somewhat according to the designation goal.

With one exception, information on the City of San Jose's historic resource inventory, the NRHP's processes for historic districts and individual properties, and the NHL program can easily be found on the internet or by calling the City of San Jose's Historic Preservation Officer, the State Office of Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service (see Appendix E for websites and contact information). The only option available to the Japantown community for which there is little information available is the Traditional Cultural Property, a NRHP property type generally applied to Native American cultural resources. Traditional Cultural Property guidelines have never been used for an Asian American site, however Carey & Co. believes that San Jose's Japantown may qualify as a Traditional Cultural Property historic district because of the strong connection between the neighborhood and the continuity of traditional Japanese American cultural practices in San Jose. Because of the relative lack of information about Traditional Cultural Properties and the unique potential for San Jose's Japantown to qualify as one, Carey & Co. has included a detailed discussion of these issues and additional recommendations in Appendix F.

Recommendation Two: Conduct building-specific archival research. As part of this report Carey & Co. selected 67 potentially historically significant resources to be documented on DPR523A forms. Building-specific archival research should be conducted on each of these buildings to more fully understand their contribution to the area's Japanese American past. While the preparation of this task should be guided by the particular requirements of the preferred designation option, in general the goals of the building-specific research should be as follows:

- Confirm construction and alteration dates
- Establishing ownership and usage patterns
- Correct and/or augment the historic context statement as additional insights are discovered
- Conclusively determine if there are enough buildings connected to the neighborhood's Japanese American past to merit official designation of the area as a historic district
- Conclusively determine if any of the selected buildings are individually important enough to merit separate official designation

Recommendation Three: Incorporate insights gained through the SB 307 process into the designation effort. The JCCsj has actively participated in the development of the historic context statement and provided invaluable historical information. However, San Jose's Japanese American community was already engaged in preservation efforts concerning Japantown prior to this project. The JCCsj has been attempting to define cultural preservation as part of a grant program made possible by SB 307. The goal of this legislation is "to provide greater resources for the economic and community development of the three regions, including improved access to existing governmental resources and the coordination for the strategic planning and technical assistance required for a comprehensive, culturally-sensitive and collaborative approach to preserve and revitalize the three Japantowns."⁶⁹ Earlier in 2004, the JCCsj completed initial work on defining cultural preservation. This work should aid in the official designation of a historic district and/or individual properties.

Recommendation Four: Consider retaining a qualified historic preservation consultant to guide the decision-making process. While the Japantown community may be able to prepare and undertake some of the tasks discussed above, a qualified historic preservation may be needed to help illuminate the more complex aspects of the historic designation process. Ideally this consultant would have some knowledge of Japanese American history and culture.

⁶⁹ California Japanese American Community Leadership Council, *Preserving California's Japanese American Cultural & Historic Communities - Position Paper*, 2001.