



Newton Booth

Historic District Plan

Physical Description & Boundaries

The Newton Booth Historic District is located in the southeast corner of Sacramento's original 1848 street grid, immediately northwest of the major interchange of the U.S. Route 50 and the Capital City Freeway. The district is roughly bounded by 23rd Street to the west, S Street to the north, 28th Street to the east, and W Street and U.S. Route 50 to the south.

The district consists of a predominately residential neighborhood with houses in a range of architectural styles, dating from the late nineteenth century to the period just after World War II. The former Newton Booth Assembly School, now a private school, is a key focal point of the neighborhood.



Figure 201. Craftsman bungalows, such as these on 24th Street, are common in the district.



Figure 202. A variety of architectural styles are present in the Newton Booth Historic District.



Figure 203. Many residences in the district were built in the Tudor style, including these courtyard apartments on T Street.



Figure 204. The former Newton Booth Assembly School building is a focal point within the district.

Brief Historic District Context

The Newton Booth Historic District preserves a primarily residential neighborhood that emerged on the southeast border of Sacramento's original street grid around the turn of the century. Development in the area was initially limited, because of the area's low-lying position that was prone to flooding. Stagnant pools of water acted as breeding grounds for mosquitoes and created a perception that the area was unhealthy.¹

The neighborhood began to be subdivided in the 1890s, around the same time that Poverty Ridge and Oak Park were being built up to the immediate west and east.² Electric streetcars began running along 28th Street the same year, helping to attract early buyers to the area. In spite of these developments, earlier perceptions about the area's unhealthy conditions persisted, and the neighborhood remained sparsely populated until the early 1900s.³

Development increased after the start of the twentieth century. In 1903, the R Street levee, which had prevented water from draining from parts of the city, was removed, improving conditions in the neighborhood. Shortly after, in 1909, the "T" Line of the city's streetcar system was completed with a stop at 28th and T streets. The conveniently located stop allowed residents living in the outlying neighborhoods, such as Newton Booth, to easily travel downtown for work.⁴ As in many cities across the country, the streetcar lines brought additional

1 Michael Ryan Hibma, "Historic District Nomination for the Newton Booth Neighborhood, City of Sacramento, Sacramento County, California," (master's thesis, California State University, Sacramento, 2007), 25.

2 Kara Brunzell, "Newton Booth Neighborhood Historic Context Statement & District Nomination," 2014, 15.

3 Hibma, 25.

4 Ibid., 25-26.



Figure 205. Wide parking strips and narrow sidewalks are characteristic of some streets in the district, including 24th Street.



Figure 206. Street trees, often sycamores and palm trees, line the streets. The U.S. Route 50 highway (background) forms the southern boundary of the district.



Figure 207. Sacramento streetcar running to 28th and T streets (1929). Source: California History Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.

residential development to the neighborhood.⁵

Newton Booth's attractive combination of affordable and plentiful land away from the bustling city center and easy access to public transportation made it a desirable area in which to settle. New houses sprang up as new residents flocked into the area. The neighborhood quickly attracted a mix of low-income and middle-class workers who were employed in the railyards, waterfront industries, state government offices, and canneries that were located downtown and to the east of the city. Blue-collar workers – such as machinists, mechanics, and cannery workers – often lived in one house with their extended families to save housing costs, while middle- to upper-level management employees – including shop foremen, accountants, bank officers, civil servants, and other professionals – lived in single-family homes on the same block.⁶

The new buildings that were constructed throughout the neighborhood reflected its rapid growth in the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1921, the Newton Booth Assembly School was constructed at the intersection of 26th and V. The school was named after the eleventh governor of California and was the inspiration for the neighborhood's name, which until then had only been known by its street intersections. Meanwhile, the neighborhood's population continued to grow. While new residences were built in a variety of architectural styles, the Craftsman bungalow became the most prevalent style during the neighborhood's most intense period

of development. The modest, functional houses appealed to Newton Booth's middle-class residents, while their full-length porches and open, airy plans suited the indoor-outdoor lifestyle that was necessary during Sacramento's stifling summers.⁷

The building boom lasted until 1949, just after the end of World War II. Increasingly, residents were migrating to newer suburbs that were developing on former agricultural land outside the city. Between 1950 and 1970, Newton Booth and the Poverty Ridge neighborhood directly to the west lost one third of their populations.⁸ Meanwhile, as the city expanded outward and dependency on automobiles increased, leading to the end of streetcar service in Sacramento in 1947. In spite of the declining population of the central city, hundreds of small apartment buildings were constructed in older neighborhoods. In Newton Booth, a significant number of older houses were demolished to make way for these apartments. In 1949, 76 apartments were constructed on the 2500 block of S Street alone. This apartment construction included the large, extant Art Moderne apartment building at 2513-2519 S Street.

In the 1960s, construction of the Elvas Freeway between 29th and 30th streets and U.S. Route 50 between W and X streets led to the demolition of additional houses that had been part of Newton Booth and cut the neighborhood off from affluent neighborhoods to the east and south.⁹ Over the following decades, much of the employment base of Newton Booth's working-class population began

to unravel. The railyards and canneries that had employed so many residents in the area declined in the 1980s, and Sacramento's three military installations left between 1991 and 2001.¹⁰ Since the early 2000s, however, the increasing popularity of urban neighborhoods has brought middle class residents and a new period of development to Newton Booth.

5 Linda Flint McClelland, "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1960," (National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Park Service, 2002).
6 Ibid., 28-29.

7 Ibid., 26-28.
8 Brunzell, 38.
9 Ibid., 38.

10 Brunzell, 38.

Significance

The Newton Booth Historic District was designated for listing on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources by the City Preservation Commission in 2015 in Ordinance #2015-0012. At that time, it was determined to meet all of the requirements and factors for listing as defined by Sacramento City Code.

The following table provides a current evaluation of significance under the requirements and considers the factors based on the above historic district context and the 2018 historic district survey. Additionally, this historic district relates to the Railroad Context Statement of the city's General Plan Technical Background Report.

(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(1) Requirements	
(a)	The Newton Booth Historic District meets requirement (a) for listing on the Sacramento Register, because it is a geographically definable area.
(b)(i)	<p>The Newton Booth Historic District meets requirement (b)(i) for listing on the Sacramento Register as an area that possesses “a significant concentration or continuity of buildings unified by: (A) past events or (B) aesthetically by plan or physical development.”</p> <p>The variety and distribution of architectural styles represented in the district reflect the building boom that took place during the first several decades of the twentieth century as new residents flowed into the area. Victorian buildings make up less than ten percent of properties in the district, reflecting the limited amount of development that occurred in the area before the twentieth century. The majority of buildings in the district date to the early decades of the twentieth century, at the peak of the neighborhood’s development. During this period, a little more than a quarter of the extant properties were built in the Tudor Revival, Spanish Eclectic, and Colonial Revival styles, many with a Classic Box form, but by far the most popular style of the time was the Craftsman bungalow, which characterizes over half of the district’s existing properties.¹¹</p> <p>The concentration of Craftsman bungalows in Newton Booth is one of the district’s most notable features. The simple, functional style appealed to the modest means and lifestyles of the blue collar and middle-class residents who called the neighborhood home. With their full-length porches and open, airy layouts, Craftsman bungalows were also particularly suited to Sacramento’s hot summer climate. The popularity of the Craftsman style peaked in the first two decades of the twentieth century, coinciding with the most intense period of development in Newton Booth.¹² Art Modern, Prairie, and Traditional buildings from the Depression and World War II periods make up the rest of the district’s properties.¹³</p>

¹¹ “Newton Booth Historic District,” (Ordinance #2015-0012, Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources, 2015), 2.

¹² Hibma, 26-28.

¹³ “Newton Booth Historic District,” 2.

Period of Significance: 1890-1949

The period of significance for the Newton Booth Historic District begins when the first unimproved lots in the neighborhood were sold in 1890 and concludes in 1949, the year the Art Moderne apartment building at 2513-2519 S Street was constructed. Its construction signified a shift in the period immediately after World War II from building single-family houses and bungalow courts to constructing larger multi-family apartments, as residents were increasingly migrating out of the neighborhood to newer automobile suburbs outside the city limits. At the same time, many older houses in the neighborhood were demolished and replaced with newer apartment buildings.

Property Types from the Period of Significance

- Residential

Architectural Styles from the Period of Significance

- Queen Anne
- Folk Victorian
- Colonial Revival
- Classic Box
- Tudor
- Spanish Eclectic
- Prairie
- Craftsman
- Art Moderne
- Minimal Traditional

(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(1) Requirements	
(b)(ii)	<p>The Newton Booth Historic District meets requirement (b)(ii) for listing on the Sacramento Register as an area “associated with an event, person, or period significant or important to city history.”</p> <p>The district is associated with the development of streetcar suburbs on previously rural, agricultural land of outlying areas within Sacramento’s original street grid. The development is primarily a result of the expansion of the streetcar system in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Until this period, development in Sacramento had been primarily concentrated in the central business district downtown, where the commercial waterfront, railyards, industries, and state government offices were located. The availability of employment opportunities attracted large numbers of people to the downtown area who not only worked in the businesses downtown but often lived in the immediate area. Newton Booth became an attractive neighborhood for residents seeking to live away from the noise and dirt of the city center. The streetcar enabled workers who were employed by businesses downtown to live further from the city center, resulting in the establishment of Sacramento’s first residential subdivisions and the beginning of an exodus of residents from the downtown area that accelerated after World War II.</p>
(c)	<p>The Newton Booth Historic District meets requirement (c) for listing on the Sacramento Register as it aligns with the goals and purposes of historic preservation in Sacramento, as well as the city’s other goals and policies. Per the Sacramento City Code, the preservation of the district enhances the “city’s economic, cultural and aesthetic standing, its identity and its livability, marketability, and urban character.”</p>
(B) Listing on the Sacramento Register – Historic districts	
(2) Factors to be considered	
(a)	<p>Factor (2)(a) states that “a historic district should have integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship and association.” The Newton Booth Historic District retains sufficient integrity to meet this factor for consideration as a historic district.</p>
(b)	<p>Factor (2)(b) states that “the collective historic value of the buildings and structures in a historic district taken together may be greater than the historic value of each individual building or structure.” The Newton Booth Historic District meets this factor because its buildings and structures represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose collective historic value is greater when taken as a whole.</p>

Character-Defining Features

The following table is based on the list of character-defining features in Ordinance #2015-0012 and revised based on the 2018 historic district survey.

Element	Character of Historic District
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily residential, dominated by single-family residences, some converted into multi-family units or commercial businesses, interspersed with a few apartment and commercial buildings that were built during the period of significance • Neighborhood situated around one historic school building • Parking and auxiliary uses located along alleys
Mass & Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominately one- to two-story houses interspersed with a smaller number of two- to three-unit flats, courtyard apartments, and one three-story apartment building • Cohesive scale with 40-foot frontages • First stories are typically built flush with the ground level; although some houses with Delta-style high basements are also present
Cladding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominately wood siding, typically two or three lap siding or shingles; brick, occasionally laid in varying colors and decorative patterns; stucco; or a combination of the three
Roofs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front- and side-facing gabled or hipped roofs, often with a centrally placed dormer • Brick or clinker brick chimneys
Entries & Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paneled wood doors, often with integrated glazing • Predominately concrete or terrazzo stairs and some wood stairs
Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood-frame double-hung windows • Paired or ribbon windows
Porches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent full or half-width porches • Brick or clinker brick porch and column bases

Element	Character of Historic District
Ornamentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italianate and Queen Anne details, including incised brackets; slender, turned porch posts and balusters; and transoms over primary entrance • Classical or Colonial Revival details, including fluted pilasters, modified Ionic columns, porticos, and dentils along cornice • Tudor details, including brick or stucco cladding, Tudor arches, and half timbering on gabled ends • Spanish Revival details, including stucco cladding, rounded arches, and red tile clay roofs • Craftsman details, including exposed rafter and purlin tails, wood braces, tapered square columns, and low shed dormers • Prairie details, including wide overhanging eaves and horizontal massing
Property Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generous building setback leaves space for lawns or gardens in front of houses
Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rows of deciduous street trees of varying types and sizes planted in a parking strip, but generally not large enough to create a canopy over the street • Generous, approximately 15-foot-wide, parking strips, particularly on blocks toward the west of the district; narrower, approximately seven-foot-wide parking strips on blocks to the north and east • East-west streets wide enough for one full lane of traffic in each direction; north-south streets are generally narrower in width • Generally uniform setback of approximately 20 feet from the sidewalk to primary, street-facing house facades with narrow, approximately six-foot-wide sidewalks • Sidewalk widths vary to accommodate street trees • Narrow driveways next to many houses

Boundaries & Location

The following map shows the boundaries and location of the Newton Booth Historic District.

To view the statuses of individual properties as contributing or non-contributing resources to the historic district, refer to the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources.

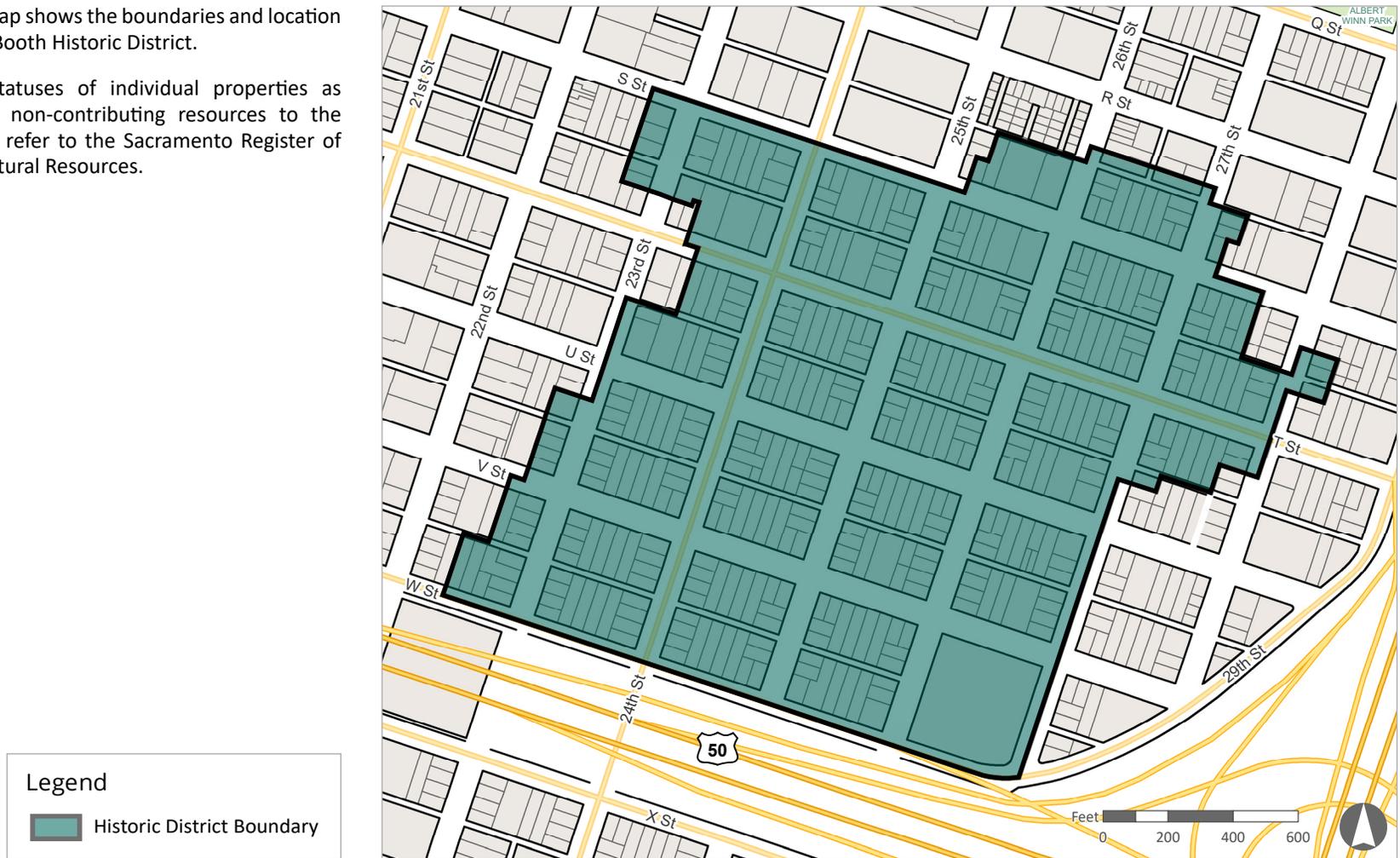


Figure 208. Map of the Newton Booth Historic District. Source: City of Sacramento and Page & Turnbull, 2019.

District-Specific Standards & Criteria

Design Principle

Projects in the Newton Booth Historic District must preserve the character of the historic district by respecting and drawing inspiration from the characteristic small building scale and massing, uniform setbacks, historic materials, and landscaping of the historic district's contributing resources.

Rationale

The Newton Booth Historic District is characterized by its collection of small single-family houses centered around the landmark Newton Booth School building. The historic district's contributing buildings exhibit a wide range of architectural styles, but their consistent small scale (individual buildings are rarely more than two stories tall), typical 40-foot frontages, and uniform setbacks from the street give the historic district a sense of overall visual coherence.

In addition to the Standards & Criteria Common to Sacramento's Historic Districts in Section 1, the following district-specific standards and criteria apply when planning a project in the Newton Booth Historic District.

1. Rehabilitation of Contributing Resources

- 1.1 Preserve, maintain, and continue to encourage compatible use of the historic Newton Booth School building.
- 1.2 Maintain, preserve, and, where necessary, repair and restore historic elements associated with the Delta style of residential architecture, especially historic staircases, porches, bay windows, and doors.



Figure 209. Historic materials and decorative exterior features should be carefully preserved and maintained.



Figure 210. Rooftop additions that are set back from the primary façade visually preserve the small scale and low heights of the historic district's contributing buildings.

2. Additions & Accessory Structures for Contributing Resources

- 2.1 Design additions with proportions that do not visually dominate the modest scale and massing that is typical of contributing buildings in the district.
- Place additions on secondary rear and side elevations, to the extent feasible.
 - Where additional height is considered, the height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.
 - Consider using step backs to maintain the existing street façade height of adjacent contributing buildings.

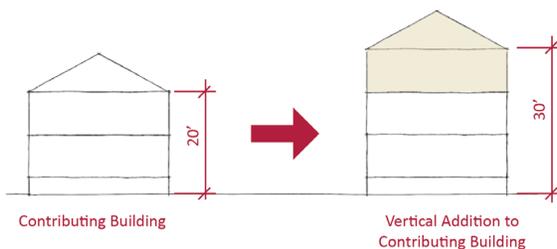


Figure 211. Additions should not cause a building's height to exceed 150% of its historic height.

3. New (Infill) Construction & Alterations to Non-Contributing Resources

- 3.1 Design the proportions of new buildings to be compatible with the modest scale and typical 40-foot frontages of contributing buildings in the historic district.
- 3.2 Design the scale, massing, and proportions of new construction to be compatible with those of contributing buildings on the same block.
- Where additional height is considered, the height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.



Figure 212. Newton Booth is primarily characterized by small, one- to two-story houses with 40-foot frontages facing the street.

- Consider using step backs for taller buildings to maintain the existing street façade height of adjacent contributing buildings.
- 3.3 Maintain the visibility of varying building shapes, heights, rooflines, and forms in the historic district.
- Avoid designs that result in rows of identical new buildings.
- 3.4 Draw inspiration for the design of multi-family residential properties from contributing multi-family residential properties in the district.
- Courtyard apartments with street-facing entries are appropriate historic precedents.

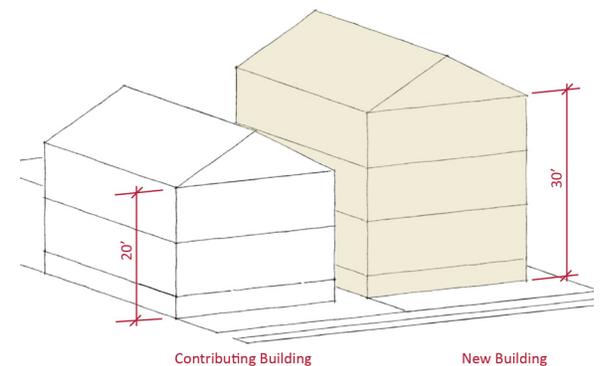


Figure 213. The height of new buildings should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.

- 3.5 Site new buildings to generally align with the setback of adjacent contributing buildings to maintain the district’s deep, uniform setbacks (approximately 20 feet) and wide front lawns.
- 3.6 Preserve the historic pattern and articulation of long, narrow 40’ x 160’ parcels, wherever possible.
 - Consider breaking down the massing of large infill developments into smaller masses that reflect the historic lot pattern.

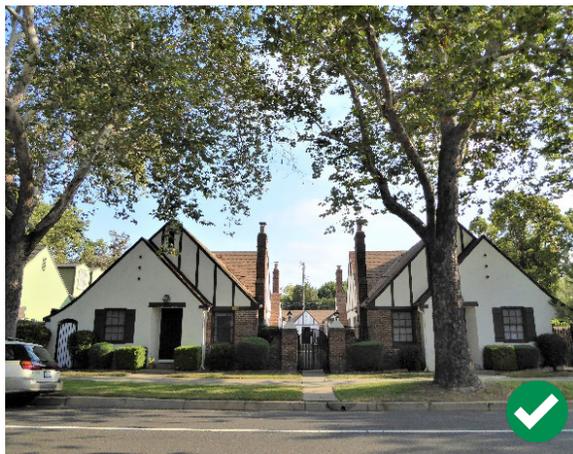


Figure 214. Courtyard apartments provide a historic example for integrating higher density residential housing into the historic district.

4. Site Features, Streetscape, & Landscaping

- 4.1 Preserve and maintain the historic open, planted character, size, and grade of front lawns.
 - Avoid paving front lawns to create parking pads.
- 4.2 Preserve and maintain the narrow width of historic driveways and curb cuts.
- 4.3 Preserve and maintain the historic width and planted character of wide park strips.
- 4.4 Preserve and maintain the historic pattern of wide east-west streets and narrower north-south streets.

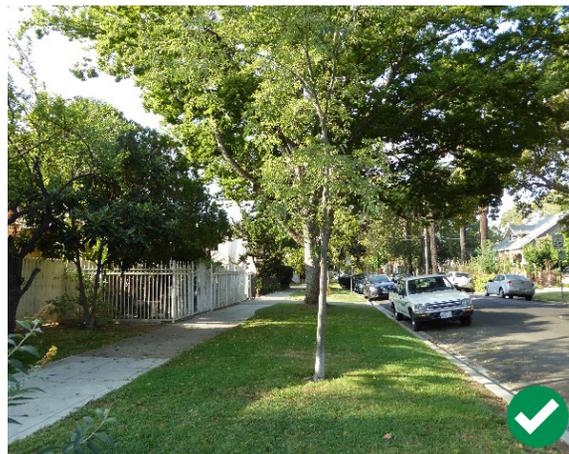


Figure 215. Wide, planted park strips characterize many streets in the district.

5. Alley Infill

- 5.1 On a typical unsplit parcel, set back alley infill buildings a minimum of 30 feet from the primary building on the parcel. If a parcel is split, set back alley infill buildings a minimum of 15 feet from the lot split.
- 5.2 The height of alley infill should be no more than 150% of the height of surrounding contributing buildings.

