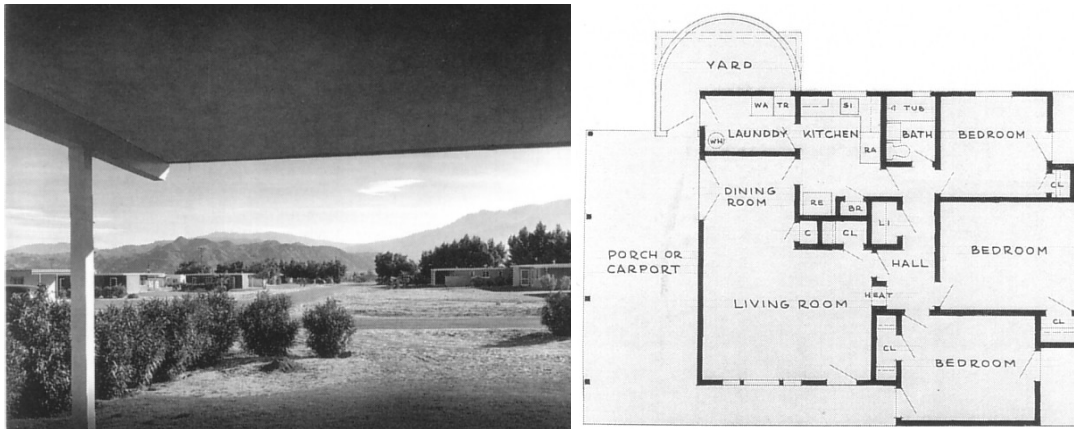


THEME: POST-WORLD WAR II MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969)**Overview**

This theme explores the design and construction of mid-20th century multi-family residences in Palm Springs, from the immediate postwar period through 1969. While the emphasis in residential construction in Palm Springs following the war was decidedly in favor of single-family homes, a number of apartment buildings were constructed in the immediate postwar period. Apartments were typically found on Palm Canyon Drive, Indian Canyon Drive, Arenas Road, and Tamarisk Road. Significant architects and designers associated with multi-family residential development from this period include Clark & Frey, A. Quincy Jones, Wexler & Harrison, William Krisel, Paul Thoryk, Hai Tan, H.W. Burns, and many others. Developers include Rossmoor Corporation, Phillip Short and Associates, William Bone, and Jack and Richard Weiss. As a result of increased demand for housing, post-World War II multi-family residential development in Palm Springs took a variety of forms including garden apartments, large low-rise multi-building communities (including early condominium projects), split-level attached townhomes, and attached and semi-attached residences in clusters as small as two and as many as eight. In virtually every configuration, the focus of the design was around the pool (or pools as the scale of the developments increased).

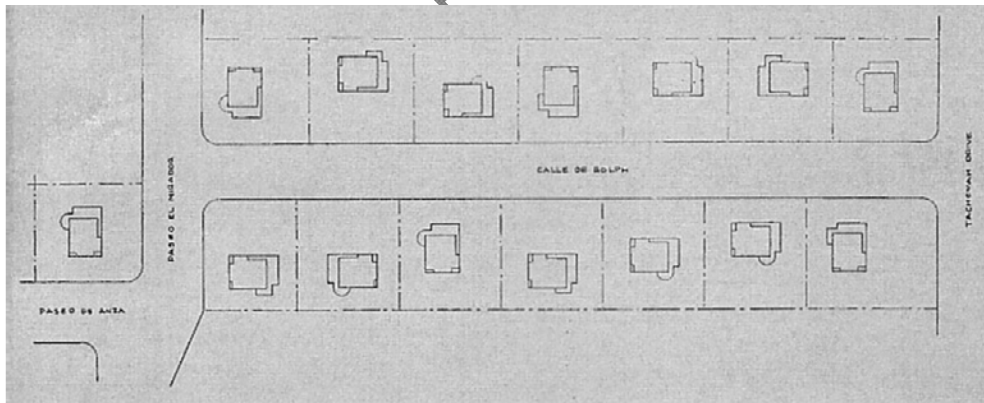
A rare example of wartime multi-family housing in Palm Springs is Bel Vista (1945-47, Clark & Frey). Throughout the country, wartime housing projects were invariably the only building projects not stalled by the onset of World War II. Bordered by E. Chia Road on the north, Sunrise Way on the east, Tachevah Drive on the south, and N. Paseo De Anza on the west, the tract was first subdivided into multi-family residential housing units in 1945 by Sallie Stevens Nichols and her husband Culver Nichols.⁶⁴⁴

⁶⁴⁴ Sallie Stevens Nichols was the daughter of early Palm Springs landholder and developer Prescott T. Stevens.



L: View of Bel Vista (1945-47, Clark & Frey). Photograph by Julius Shulman. Source: *Albert Frey: Architect*, 74. R: Plan for a unit at Bel Vista (1945-7, Clark & Frey) Source: *Albert Frey: Architect*, 74.

Bel Vista was designed as war workers' housing and its construction was subsidized by the government. As such, it had to meet specific design guidelines. Fifteen wood frame and stucco units all conformed to the same floor plan. To prevent the development from having a repetitive visual presence, the lead architect, Albert Frey, flipped the plan on each lot and varied the setbacks, creating an inviting architectural rhythm on the street. Each building also had a "distinct and individual color scheme."⁶⁴⁵ The commission was an ideal project for Frey who was interested in economical and pre-fabricated housing.⁶⁴⁶



The identical floor plan for each unit is rotated and setbacks are staggered to create a unique architectural cadence for the street. Note how groupings of units face one another to enhance the sense of community. Source: *Architect and Engineer*, April 1951, 11.

⁶⁴⁵ "Residential Bel Vista," *Architect and Engineer*, April 1951, 11.

⁶⁴⁶ Joseph Rosa, *Albert Frey: Architect* (New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1990), 75.

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Villa Hermosa (1945, Clark & Frey), located at 155 Hermosa Place, was designed not as wartime housing but as a collection of postwar apartment units with a pool and recreational facilities. For Villa Hermosa, Clark & Frey designed three separate unit types. According to author Joseph Rosa, the design is an “assembly of stacked and terraced apartments that forms a partial enclosure around a garden and a pool that is oriented to a mountain view... with access to all apartments through the garden.”⁶⁴⁷ Villa Hermosa was featured twice in *Architectural Record*.



L: Villa Hermosa (1945, Clark & Frey). R: Interior courtyard view of Villa Hermosa shows how the stacked and terraced apartments form a partial enclosure. Photographs: Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

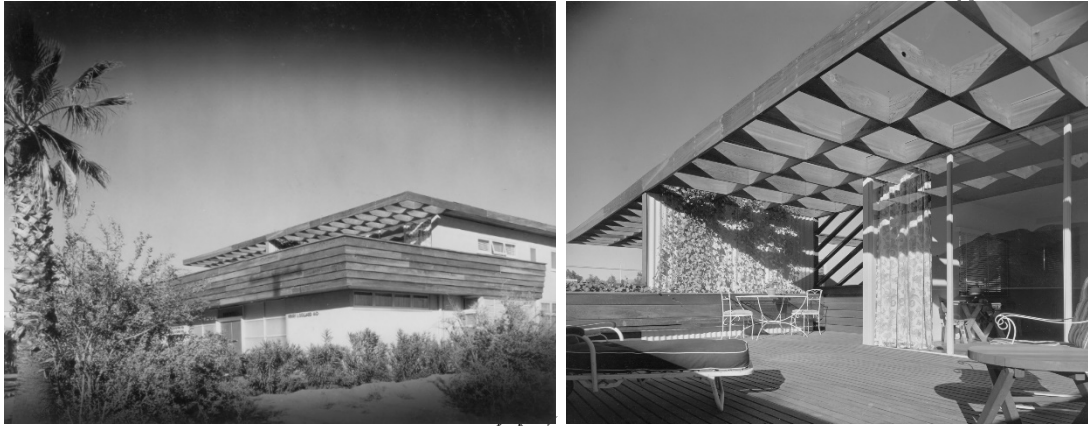
⁶⁴⁷ Joseph Rosa, *Albert Frey: Architect* (New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1990), 75.

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As before the war, combined retail and multi-family usages were common along Palm Canyon Drive. The upper story of the Potter Clinic (1947, Williams, Williams & Williams; HSPB-58) at 1020 N. Palm Canyon Drive housed an apartment unit in which the architect E. Stewart Williams lived during 1949. This urban design did not come at the expense of the Palm Springs indoor-outdoor lifestyle: the floor plan included an outdoor dining terrace accessible from the kitchen.⁶⁴⁸



L: Potter Clinic (1947, Williams, Williams & Williams; HSPB-58) located at 1020 N. Palm Canyon Drive. The combination retail and residential apartment building was, according to Julius Shulman, where architect E. Stewart Williams lived in 1949. R: The apartment featured a dining patio that was accessible from the kitchen. The redwood trellis protected the glassed in dining area from the late afternoon sun in the southwest. Photographs: Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

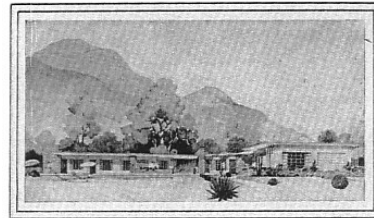
A character-defining feature of postwar apartment construction in Palm Spring is the placement of the swimming pool as a central, unifying element in the design. In addition to being a social gathering place, a pool firmly cemented the Palm Springs lifestyle as one of leisure and outdoor recreational activities. An early example of this is the Town & Desert Apartments (1948, Herbert W. Burns) at 360 W. Arenas Road. These apartments were featured in national trade publications including the May 1948 issue of *Architectural Record*. Another example of the purposeful orientation of the apartment complex around the swimming pool was the Premiere Apartments (1957-58, Frey and Chambers). The L-shaped plan of this building wrapped around the pool and each unit was recessed into the overall

⁶⁴⁸ Julius Shulman, "Palm Springs Penthouse," *Los Angeles Times*, April 10, 1949, G6.

volume creating exterior corridors on the outer façade and private balconies facing the pool and mountains. The elegant Mid-century Modern design also featured Frey's signature round windows, suspended stairways, and use of corrugated metal planes.



L: The one-story Town & Desert Apartments (c.1948, H.W. Burns) at 370 W. Arenas Road features an L-shaped Mid-century Modern design oriented toward the swimming pool. Photograph: Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection. R: Ad for Town & Desert Apartments indicates the designer and his wife were also managing owners of the project. The architecture and the location were the clear stars of this ad. Source: *Villager*, November 1952, 8.

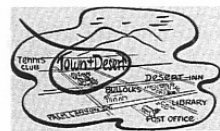


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Offers delightful, luxurious living with spacious grounds, offering every convenience and comfort for a discriminating clientele during the coming season.

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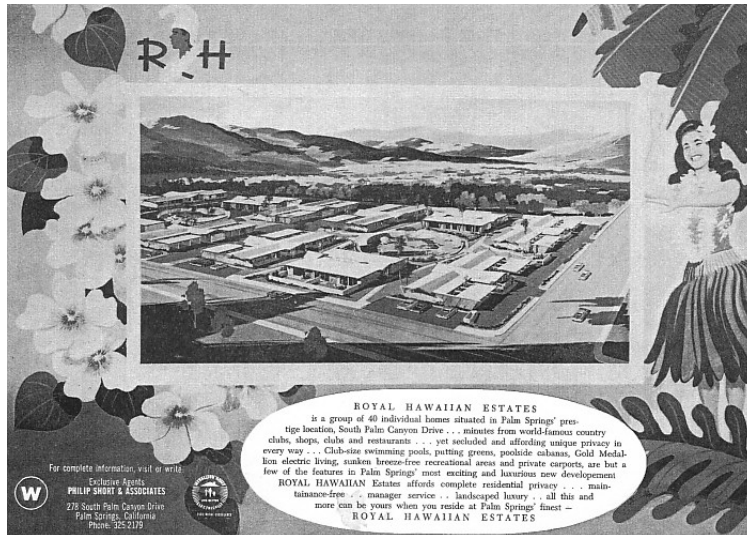
PRE-SEASON RATES PREVAIL UNTIL DECEMBER 14
\$18 TO \$17.50 DAILY (FD); PERSONS

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Advertisement for the Royal Hawaiian Estates (1960, Wexler & Harrison) shows site plan for clustering of units around recreational amenities and relegation of parking to the perimeter of the site to preserve the garden feeling of each unit. Source: *Palm Springs Life*, December 14, 1960.

The tropical destinations of Hawaii and Polynesia may seem incongruous as inspiration for a vacation home in the desert environment of Palm Springs; however, exotic tropical destinations, and their food, culture, and architecture were popular with Americans in the age of jet travel. Beginning in the 1930s with themed restaurants like Don the Beachcomber and Trader Vic's, the Tiki fad was fueled in the post-World War II years by returning GIs, explorer Thor Heyerdahl's voyage to Polynesia, and James Michener's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Tales of the South Pacific*. In 1959, the U.S. admitted Hawaii as the 50th state in union. As a result, Polynesian bar-restaurants like Don the Beachcomber and Tiki-inspired architecture were all the rage into the 1960s.⁶⁴⁹ To capitalize on this trend, local realtor Philip Short created Royal Hawaiian Estates (1960, Wexler & Harrison). It blended "the enchantment of the islands with the magic of sun drenched desert life."⁶⁵⁰ Just as Joe Dunas had leveraged the concept at Las Palmas Summit for the Alexander Construction Company, an island theme was applied here

⁶⁴⁹ Don the Beachcomber, 1950, 140 Via Lola. Opened by Ernest Raymond Beaumont Gantt. Some original Polynesian-themed elements remain, including the original tikis that were recently restored.

⁶⁵⁰ "Luxury Homes Selling Fast," *Los Angeles Times*, January 12, 1962.

to a multi-family residential development. The island theme in the desert proved popular; by February of 1962, the development was 60 percent sold.⁶⁵¹ In 2009, Royal Hawaiian Estates was designated a historic district by the City of Palm Springs.

Clearly targeted to seasonal residents, as described in the *Los Angeles Times*, “among the many advantages of the co-operative plan is the services of a resident manager who administers the property maintenance program to which the homeowners subscribe. In addition to relieving owners of maintenance problems, the program also provides several tax benefits.”⁶⁵²

Bordered by Twin Palms Drive on the north, an alley to the east, and S. Palm Canyon Drive to the west, Royal Hawaiian Estates positioned 40 attached single-family residences in a symmetrical complex plan on one parcel. A total of twelve buildings are clustered together in groups of three or four units, with three different two- and three-bedroom floor plans of 1,500 square feet. The combination of rectangular and L-shaped plans in these clusters created both a varied visual appearance for the buildings and privacy for the occupants. From a planning standpoint, parking was relegated to the perimeter of the development both in a nod to the importance of the automobile in postwar culture, but also to leave the interior gardens free for the recreational activities central to the Palm Springs lifestyle. The units overlooked “sunken recreational areas with pool and game courts.”⁶⁵³

Architects Wexler & Harrison used Tiki-style outriggers or “Flying sevens” (the angled beams that connect the patios and roofline), and Tiki-inspired “apexes” and clerestory windows to provide occupants with light and shade. These design elements create an expressive form of the Mid-century Modern style. Materials used by the architects included stained wood siding, concrete block, and natural rock walls in a palette of desert colors.⁶⁵⁴

In 1965, the City passed zoning changes that allowed for greater density. As a result, multi-family residential development for either rental or sale ran rampant in Palm Springs in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1969, 309 units were constructed. In 1970, 2,413 units were

⁶⁵¹ “Desert Development Employs Unique Plan,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 11, 1962, M23.

⁶⁵² “Desert Development Employs Unique Plan,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 11, 1962, M23.

⁶⁵³ “Photo Stand Alone,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1962.

⁶⁵⁴ Lauren Weiss Bricker and Sydney Williams, *Steel and Shade: The Architecture of Donald Wexler*, Palm Springs Art Museum, 2011, 81.

constructed and in 1972 another 2,000 units.⁶⁵⁵ As a result, the City imposed a 120-day moratorium on building permits in December of 1972.

Condominium Development

Multi-family residential development played an important role in transforming Palm Springs from a resort town to a residential community. That transformation occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, but its roots can be seen as early as 1955 when the Los Angeles Home Show featured a full-scale model unit exhibit for an “own-your-own’ cooperative apartment planned for the Palm Springs area.”⁶⁵⁶ Although the 100-unit garden apartment complex designed by John C. Lindsay was outside the city limits (between Tamarisk and Thunderbird Country Clubs), it set the stage for a new type of development that would become synonymous with Palm Springs in the coming decades. The apartments were presented as suitable for full time living or as vacation residences that could be leased when not in use. This clearly positioned Palm Springs as a second home/vacation home paradise. Between June and December of 1960 alone, six new co-op “apartment” or “home” ventures were developed in Palm Springs with another half dozen new projects just outside the city limits.⁶⁵⁷ The first co-operative in the area, Desert Braemar, was built in 1955 near Tamarisk Country Club.⁶⁵⁸

Fast-forward fourteen years and the vacation home trend was in full swing – especially for Angelenos. The 1969 *Los Angeles Times* article “How to Turn a Playing House into a Paying House,” emphasized strategies for defraying rent and upkeep through renting out a vacation home. According to the article, “the vacation-house-for-rent concept is one of the most important developments in our recreational habits since the American family took to the road.”⁶⁵⁹ Another key factor in increased demand for second homes/vacation homes in Palm Springs was the establishment of direct airline service to Palm Springs by transcontinental air carriers in December of 1967. This made the resort community more directly accessible to residents of the east coast and Midwest than ever before. And indeed, by 1967, Palm Springs

⁶⁵⁵ Kenneth Reich, “Palm Springs Voters Approve Plan to Contain City Growth,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 4, 1972, 3.

⁶⁵⁶ “A Desert Apartment,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 12, 1955, 118.

⁶⁵⁷ “Co-Op Living- The New Trend In the Desert,” *Palm Springs Life*, December 1960, 11-17.

⁶⁵⁸ “Co-Op Living- The New Trend In the Desert,” *Palm Springs Life*, December 1960, 16.

⁶⁵⁹ Dan MacMasters, “How to Turn a Playing House into a Paying House,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 20, 1969, T16.

was growing from a population of 20,000 in the off-season to 50,000 during the winter tourist season.⁶⁶⁰

The City of Palm Springs was the first in the state and one of the first resorts in the nation to legalize condominiums as a new form of vacation housing.⁶⁶¹ Condominiums diverged from co-op apartment arrangements in that residences were not technically owned collectively: each unit was owned individually but common areas were subject to collective ownership. Typically homeowners' associations were established and monthly ownership dues funded maintenance of the common areas.

The popularity of the condominium in Palm Springs hinged on an aging population of empty nesters and retirees who liberated themselves from single-family residences in the suburbs. They fled to vacation condos or full-time residency in condos where upkeep and maintenance were low and amenities were built-in. Amenities included tennis courts, pools, and/or country club membership. The rise in popularity of timeshare arrangements (where a property could be shared across a consortium of "owners" lowering costs even more) contributed to the growth of condominiums in Palm Springs. As described by author and historian Lawrence Culver, "the 'condo-ization' of Palm Springs was quickly followed by the popularity of condominiums at new ski resorts such as Vail and Aspen."⁶⁶²

A lack of financing for the new ownership concept, however, suppressed development until 1964. In 1961, the FHA was authorized to insure mortgages on condos for 85 percent of the appraised value. Yet, it wasn't until September 1963 that tax appraisal methods for condominiums were settled and developers began building condominiums in force.⁶⁶³

As noted by architectural historian David Gebhard, many of the condominium developments were built on the eastern side of town.⁶⁶⁴ Opening the floodgates to multi-family residential housing resulted in the construction of various new building typologies: multi-story/multi-unit

⁶⁶⁰ "Palm Springs Ponders Plan to Revitalize Desert Resort," *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 1967, E7.

⁶⁶¹ Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 193.

⁶⁶² Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 194.

⁶⁶³ Dan Mac Masters, "Condominiums—The Most Exciting Housing Development in 15 Years," *Los Angeles Times*, July 26, 1964, 44, <http://proquest.com> (accessed March 14, 2011).

⁶⁶⁴ David Gebhard and Robert Winter, *A Guide To Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California* (Salt Lake City, UT: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1982), 387.

low- and mid-rise developments, attached homes, semi-attached homes, split-level townhomes and even the conversion of existing apartment buildings to condominium ownership.

An early condominium project in Palm Springs was an apartment conversion at the hands of local developer Roy Fey: Fey's Palm Springs Desertaire Apartments also known as the Desert Skies Apartment Hotel (1956, Claude A. Powell). In 1963, Fey decided to convert the apartment building into co-operative apartments. When sales began in the summer of 1963, the price for one-bedroom units was \$14,495.⁶⁶⁵ In a 1980 interview, Roy Fey claimed he was "...the first person to introduce the concept of condominium building to the area by converting Desert Skies."⁶⁶⁶ This is a bit of an exaggeration as several other projects were built in 1960 specifically as condominiums, including the Royal Hawaiian Estates (1960, Wexler & Harrison; HSPB-73) at 1774 South Palm Canyon Drive.⁶⁶⁷

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Advertisement for the two-story Royal Air Apartments (1958, Wexler & Harrison; demolished) for real estate mogul Joseph Drown shows the simple, elegant lines of the design and the seamless integration with the outdoors via glass window walls .

Source: *Palm Springs Life*, December 14,

The Royal Air Condominiums⁶⁶⁸ (1958, Wexler & Harrison) at 389 W. Tahquitz Drive (demolished) for real estate mogul and later philanthropist, Joseph Drown was another early

⁶⁶⁵ "The History of Desert Skies," <http://desertsksies.com/history.htm> (accessed January 2015).

⁶⁶⁶ "Roy and Bob Fey: When It Began," *Palm Springs Life*, May 1980, 55.

⁶⁶⁷ Other earlier co-ops or condos include Villa de las Palmas Co-operative Apartments at 1201 N. Indian Canyon Drive, Desert Holly Co-operative Apartments (1957) at 2244 E. Tahquitz Way, The Desert Lanai (1962) at North Sunrise Way and East Tachevah Drive, and the Sandcliff Condominiums (1963) in the 1800 block of South Barona Road.

⁶⁶⁸ The authors of the monograph on Donald Wexler, Lauren Weiss Bricker and Sydney Williams, list the project as Royal Air Condominiums; however, ads in the *Villager* call it the "Royal Air Apartments."

example of the type. These elegant, two-story Mid-century Modern garden apartments featured steel-frame construction that resulted in thin wall and roof planes with walls of glass on the ground floor that opened to the outdoors. Innovative finishes included ceramic tile exterior wall panels.⁶⁶⁹ The building was to be part of a larger complex on the old Mashie Golf Course property that would include swimming pools, putting greens, tennis courts, badminton, and croquet courts.



Rendering of the Mid-century Modern-style Racquet Club Garden Villas West (1959-60, William F. Cody, FAIA). The attached and stand-alone units were developed by noted developer Paul W. Trousdale. Source: *The Architecture of William F. Cody: a Desert Retrospective*.

Paul W. Trousdale, one of Southern California's most prolific developers and an early postwar developer of Palm Springs, was not to be left behind during Palm Spring's apartment-hotel-condominium boom. In the late 1950s, Trousdale built the Racquet Club Cottages West (1959-60, William F. Cody; HSPB-88) as a series of attached and stand-alone units designed for "people who wish to visit Palm Springs regularly for the weekend or those who wish to make Palm Springs their permanent winter home."⁶⁷⁰ Originally, the Cottages were designed as the final expansion of the Racquet Club and provide annually-leased accommodations for either permanent or winter residents. Cody designed 57 Mid-century Modern units on an eight-foot module utilizing four plans: "The Bachelor," "The Bedroom Suite," "The Living Room Suite," and the "Full Cottage."⁶⁷¹ All offered maintenance-free living and the amenity of the Racquet Club privileges. In March 2014, the City of Palm Springs designated the development now known as "Racquet Club Garden Villas" as a historic district (HD-3).

⁶⁶⁹ Lauren Weiss Bricker and Sydney Williams, *Steel and Shade: The Architecture of Donald Wexler* (Palm Springs Art Museum, 2011), 79.

⁶⁷⁰ City of Palm Springs, "City Council Staff Report," November 20, 2013, 2.

⁶⁷¹ City of Palm Springs, "City Council Staff Report," November 20, 2013, 3.

In 1961 Chicago-based developer Henry F. Chaddick paid Pearl McManus \$1 million for her beloved Palm Springs Tennis Club, and Chaddick's own Carnegie Construction Company was assigned to finish projects started by McManus. Although the developer's initial vision for the property included a hotel, a modified version of that plan was not fully realized until the 1970s. However, in the early 1960s, Chaddick oversaw the addition of more bungalows, modifications to the clubhouse and the development of 39 condominium units (Tennis Club Estates (a.k.a., Tennis Club Condominiums; 1964-69, William F. Cody).⁶⁷² The latter project (built in several phases) was located south of Belardo Road and west of Patencio Road.⁶⁷³ These changes increased the club's capacity from twenty in McManus' day to 110 units.⁶⁷⁴ All units were designed in "Mediterranean Style" and featured three-bedroom units, two-bedroom units, and fireplaces.⁶⁷⁵

Another important condominium developer in Palm Springs was William Bone (b.1943). In 1963, the twenty-year old Bone founded Sunrise Company. Seven years later the *Los Angeles Times* called him "...a highly successful Century City Entrepreneur in real estate investments and development involving subdivisions,⁶⁷⁶ shopping centers and motels."⁶⁷⁷ Bone's first Palm Springs project was the \$10 million, 111-unit Deep Well Ranch Condominiums (1969-72, B. A. Berkus and Associates), located on the property of the former Deep Well Guest Ranch. A joint venture with Tennessee-based ALODEX Corporation, the development included five detached home plans and one- and two-story condominium units. All units opened onto a central park and recreation area. Berkus' designs for the project, including the Cabrillo and Riviera models, were contemporary Californian/Spanish ranch with slump-stone masonry, red clay tile roofs, open beam ceilings, and Spanish-inspired wooden details such as large articulated carved front doors and garage doors.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷² More information on this development pending further research.

⁶⁷³ "Tennis Club Building Agreement Reached," *Desert Sun*, April 28, 1964.

⁶⁷⁴ Harry F. Chaddick. *Chaddick: Success Against All Odds*, (Chicago, IL: Harry F. Chaddick Associates, 1990), 126.

⁶⁷⁵ "New Condominiums Planned at Resort," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1969, K13.

⁶⁷⁶ Bone was also the developer of Benedict Hills (1972), a 348-single family home development near Beverly Hills; Sunrise Villas, a condominium project in Scottsdale, AZ; and Sunrise Villas in Las Vegas.

⁶⁷⁷ "Retreat for Stars in New Role," *Los Angeles Times*, February 8, 1979, J1.

⁶⁷⁸ "Retreat for Stars in New Role," *Los Angeles Times*, February 8, 1979, J1.

POST-WORLD WAR II MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969): ELIGIBILITY

Property types: Multi-family residence, including apartment house, courtyard apartment, condominium, garden apartment; Historic District

Palm Springs has a large collection of multi-family residences and multi-family residential developments from the post-World War II era. Many of these properties are the work of significant architects.

Applicable Eligibility Criteria

A multi-family residential property from this period may be eligible for historic designation under one or more of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period) ⁶⁷⁹	As an excellent example of multi-family residential development reflecting the growth of Palm Springs during the post-World War II era; as an excellent, rare, or early example of new trends and patterns of multi-family residential development from the period. Multi-family residential properties eligible under Criterion A may also be eligible under Criterion C.
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	As an excellent or rare example of an architectural style from the period; as the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect; or as an excellent, rare, or threatened multi-family residential property type. Additional information about architectural styles from each period and their associated character-defining features are outlined in the Architectural Styles section.
A/1/6 (District)	A collection of multi-family residences from this period that are linked geographically may be eligible as a historic district. Multi-family residential developments that comprise multiple buildings on a single or multiple properties are also recorded as districts.

⁶⁷⁹ Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local. Note that National Register/California Register Criterion A/1 can be applied to a single event important in history, or to an overall trend or pattern of development. The City of Palm Springs local ordinance distinguishes these into separate criteria – Criterion 1 applies to properties that are associated with a singular event; Criterion 3 applies to properties that “reflect or exemplify a particular period” in history.

Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects is most important to a particular property type requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The rarity of the property type should also be considered when assessing its physical integrity. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, properties and districts must retain sufficient integrity to convey their historic significance under this theme.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period)	A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that made up its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historical pattern, or person(s). ⁶⁸⁰ A multi-family residential property from this period eligible under Criteria A/1/3 should retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to reflect the important association with the city's residential development during this period. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style. ⁶⁸¹
B/2/2 (Person)	A residential property significant under Criterion B/2/2 (Person) should retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to convey the historic association with a significant person.

⁶⁸⁰ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁶⁸¹ National Register Bulletin 15.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	<p>A property important for illustrating a particular property type, architectural style or construction technique; or that represents the work of a master must retain most of the physical features that constitute that type, style, or technique.⁶⁸² A residential property significant under Criterion C/3/4,5 (Architecture) should retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to be eligible for its architectural merit. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style.</p>
A/1/6 (District)	<p>In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. A contributing property must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. Some alterations to individual buildings, such as replacement roof materials, replacement garage doors, and replacement windows may be acceptable as long as the district as a whole continues to convey its significance. Major alterations such as substantial additions that are visible from the public right-of-way or alter the original roofline would not be acceptable.</p>

⁶⁸² *National Register Bulletin 15.*

Post-World War II Multi-Family Residential Development (1945-1969): Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this theme, a multi-family residential property must:

- date from the period of significance; and
- represent important patterns and trends in multi-family residential development from this period; or
- represent an excellent or rare example of an architectural style or method of construction; or be associated with a significant architect or designer; or
- represent an important or rare multi-family residential property type; and
- display most of the character-defining features of the property type or style; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

To be eligible under this theme, a historic district must:

- retain a majority of the contributors dating from the period of significance; and
- reflect planning and design principles from the period; and
- display most of the character-defining features of a residential subdivision, including the original layout, street plan, and other planning features; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

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THEME: TRAILER PARK/MOBILE HOME COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969)

The dire need for postwar housing in many communities changed the perceptions of trailer living after World War II. By the mid-1940s, the use of manufactured trailers for year-round living shifted from 10 percent of annual production to 90 percent.⁶⁸³ During World War II, trailers became a popular housing solution for wartime workers at industrial plants. The industry responded quickly to the need and designed the first true house trailer: a 22-foot long, eight-foot wide trailer with a canvas top that included a kitchen and a bathroom. The U.S. Government purchased 35,000 of these units and constructed 8,500 trailer parks to hold them. As the demand for postwar housing increased and people began to migrate to the west to live, demand for house trailers that could be towed by the family car and used for year-round living increased. Once the industry was freed from wartime materials restrictions, it responded with a number of new models using metal siding and larger bathrooms and kitchens. The development of the “Tenwide” by manufacturer Marshfield Homes was uniquely 10-feet in width and helped mark the transition from “travel trailer” to “mobile home.” As described by author Allan D. Wallis in his book “Wheel Estate,” “manufacturers no longer made trailers that could also serve as dwellings, but dwellings that happened to be mobile.”⁶⁸⁴

As described by author Lawrence Culver, “Though perhaps tainted by negative connotations elsewhere, in Palm Springs a trailer park was simply an extension of the resort’s vacation atmosphere.”⁶⁸⁵ For the 1946-47 season, the *Palm Springs City Directory* listed four options: Desert Trailer Haven at 601 E. Andreas Road, Desert Trailer Village at 432 E. Andreas Road, Orchard Trailer Villa at 1862 S. Palm Canyon Drive, and the Rancho Trailer Park at 1563 S. Palm Canyon Drive.

In 1950, Palm Springs became home to the Annual Trailer Rally, organized by the director of the Palm Springs Circus, Jimmy Cooper. By 1954, the event drew over 500 trailers and 1,000 “trailerites” from Arizona, Oregon, Nevada, Florida, and California.⁶⁸⁶ The weekend event included a parade of new-model trailers along Palm Canyon Drive, chuck wagon breakfasts, dinners, and other western-style parties.

⁶⁸³ Wallis, *Wheel Estate*, 87.

⁶⁸⁴ Wallis, *Wheel Estate*, 133.

⁶⁸⁵ Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 193.

⁶⁸⁶ “100 Trailer Fans Meet in Palm Springs,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 7, 1954, A20.



Another view of this month's cover "home." Trailer sits on concrete foundation which doubles as storage space

15
A unit at Bing Crosby's upscale Blue Skies Village as featured in *Popular Mechanics*, July 1960, 94.

One of the most upscale trailer parks in the Coachella Valley, the 1952 Blue Skies Village (1952, William F. Cody), was developed by Bing Crosby and contained streets named for film stars. Blue Skies offered "...a bit of Hollywood aura at a decidedly downscale price."⁶⁸⁷ It was also marketed as "America's most luxurious trailer park."⁶⁸⁸ Blue Skies adopted the Country Club approach to trailer transportation-based accommodations with exclusive resort amenities such as clubhouse facilities and swimming pools.⁶⁸⁹ Blue Skies even had maid service available.

Although Blue Skies was located in the nearby community of Cathedral City, it played a major role in the national awareness of luxury trailer parks generally and trailer living in the desert communities specifically. The travel trailer phenomenon was even immortalized on film by two seasonal Palm Springs residents, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz who were depicted as a honeymooning couple seeing America by trailer in 1954's *The Long, Long Trailer*. So popular was the idea, the *Los Angeles Times* had their own "Times Trailing" column and beat reporter, Jean Jacques. By 1950, the *Desert Sun* also had an ongoing column "What's Going On in the Trailer Parks" featuring events and the social comings and goings of visitors.

Realizing that the sales of travel trailers depended upon quality places to park, manufacturers formed a trade organization that provided developers with trailer park designs and issued an annual ratings guide for customers. These sites had sewer connections and utility hook-ups. Despite these regulations, some communities successfully lobbied for additional zoning

⁶⁸⁷ Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 193.

⁶⁸⁸ Peter Moruzzi, *Palm Springs Holiday* (Salt Lake City, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2009), 134.

⁶⁸⁹ Thomas E. Stinson, "Trailers Join the Country Club," *Popular Mechanics*, 94.

restrictions to eliminate trailer developments altogether, sometimes classifying trailers as buildings that inherently did not meet local building codes. Other cities declared trailer parks commercial businesses and relegated them to non-residential zones, industrial areas, and along highway corridors.⁶⁹⁰ In contrast, the Palm Springs area embraced the trailer; it sported a culture that celebrated outdoor living, its seasonal nature, and modern modes of transportation.

In opposition to the image of slum encampments projected by opponents of mobile home parks in other parts of the country, the *Villager* called Palm Springs “the jeweled showcase of mobile living.”⁶⁹¹ By 1947, the greater Palm Springs area was home to thirty-two trailer parks. Space rentals varied from a low of \$25 per month to \$100 per month. The larger parks had their own stores, cafes, barber shops, and beauty parlors. Shuffleboard courts were also popular amenities, as were horseshoe courts and even hot mineral water bathing. By the late 1940s, a seasonal population of 6,000 people was estimated to occupy the desert communities’ trailer parks.⁶⁹² By 1948 the largest and most merited local trailer parks by the Trailer Coach Manufacturers Association included McKinney’s (40 spaces), Orchard Trailer Park (140 spaces), Ramon Trailer Park (185 spaces), and Rancho Trailer Park (250 spaces).⁶⁹³

In 1952, the 182-unit⁶⁹⁴ Horizon Trailer Village opened at 3575 E. Palm Canyon Drive.⁶⁹⁵ It was featured as a model of upscale mobile home living in the *Los Angeles Times*. Horizon included a clubhouse, swimming pool, shuffleboard courts, and other amenities. The original owners were Al Olsen and Jack Colt. Significant personages known to have lived at Horizon Trailer Village included singer and actress Lillian Roth.⁶⁹⁶ In 1957, Horizon Trailer Village was awarded a “Gold Star” by the Mobile Home Manufacturing Association, based on superior appearance and facilities, making it one of the top-rated parks in the nation.⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹⁰ John Grissim, *The Complete Buyer’s Guide to Manufactured Homes and Land* (Sequim, Washington: Rainshadow Publications, 2003), 18.

⁶⁹¹ Vollie Tripp, “Jewelled Showcases,” *Palm Springs Villager*. No date or page.

⁶⁹² Vollie Tripp, “Jewelled Showcases,” *Palm Springs Villager*. No date or page.

⁶⁹³ “TCMA Approval,” *Desert Sun*, July 3, 1948.

⁶⁹⁴ The number of units represents current spaces, not historical spaces that may have been combined over the years to accommodate larger homes.

⁶⁹⁵ The Horizon Mobile Home Village website dates the founding of the park to 1958; however, *Los Angeles Times* articles reflect that it was already open by April 1954.

⁶⁹⁶ Howard Johns, *Palm Springs Confidential* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Books, Inc., 2008), 276.

⁶⁹⁷ “Horizon Trailer Village Given ‘Gold Star’ Rating,” *Desert Sun*, February 14, 1957.



Postcard for
Horizon Trailer
Village at 3575 E.
Palm Canyon Drive.

Another notable Palm Springs mobile home park from this period is the Sahara Trailer Park at 1955 Camino Real Drive. Opened in 1954, Sahara set a new standard for the upscale mobile home park in Palm Springs. The \$450,000 30-acre project was built by Duke Belzard and Roy E. Smith on a parcel purchased from Lee Arenas, marking the first time that Indian land in Section 26 was developed by non-Agua Caliente members.⁶⁹⁸ Amenities of the Sahara design included wide paved streets; a plaza with grocery store, television viewing room, shuffleboard courts, card room, dance hall, and beauty shop; and a large swimming pool. The architectural design of the common buildings was based on the architecture of the nearby Biltmore Hotel.⁶⁹⁹ Sahara's upscale status was in evidence when it was one of the venues, along with Deep Well Ranch, for the 1956 Square Dance Jamboree.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁸ "Large Trailer Park Planned for Village," *Desert Sun*, July 22, 1954.

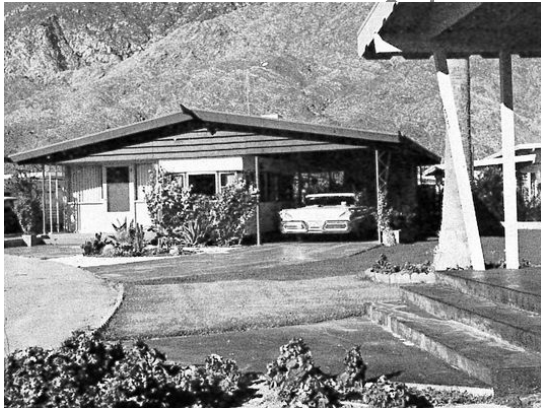
⁶⁹⁹ "Large Trailer Park Planned for Village," *Desert Sun*, July 22, 1954.

⁷⁰⁰ "Untitled," *Desert Sun*, April 24, 1956.



Image of a ramada in the Sahara Trailer Park. Source: *Popular Mechanics*, July, 1960, 99.

The Sahara Trailer Park was featured nationally in *Popular Mechanics* and *National Geographic* for distinctive new features such as cabanas and annexes. For many of the area's mobile homes, the ramada morphed over time into more permanent structure.⁷⁰¹ The ramada was "a kind of three-way roof, one over the patio, a higher roof over the trailer, and another to make a carport."⁷⁰² The Sahara Trailer Park also featured in the *Palm Springs Villager* as one of the showcase communities. As at the Ramon Trailer Park, diagonal (instead of rectilinear) spaces created a more attractive community, an efficient use of land, and a more pleasant visual cadence for the streetscape. Mobile home parks were also apparently good businesses. In 1963, Roy Smith sold his one-half interest in the Sahara Trailer Park, which by then was worth over \$500,000, to Jud and Lorna Sessions, owners of the 35-acre Rancho Trailer Park.⁷⁰³



The home of Harlie and Helen Kugler at Sahara Park. Source: Palm Springs Historical Society.

⁷⁰¹ An example of this is the Adobe House home at 215 Stone Terrace in Parkview Mobile Estates. Parkview Mobile Estates was established in 1954-55 and located at 393 Mesquite Avenue.

⁷⁰² "Trailer Fans Lead Blissful Relaxed Life," *Los Angeles Times*, April 16, 1954, B1.

⁷⁰³ "Sahara Park Interest Sold," *Los Angeles Times*, July 7, 1963, O22.

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A 1957 syndicated article in the *New York Herald Tribune* cemented Palm Springs' place in the pantheon of mobile home culture. "In the world's jazziest trailer park on the fringe of this upholstered oasis the one word you may not use," wrote the author Horace Sutton, "is 'trailer.' They are not trailers, they are 'mobile homes,' see?"⁷⁰⁴ The article goes on to discuss trailers with color coordinated cars, grass lawns, golf carts, and evening activities.

Palm Springs trailer parks of the mid-1950s numbered 19 and included Smoke Tree Trailer Park at 151 N. El Segundo (demolished); the Prairie Schooner Trailer Lodge (a.k.a. Desert Trailer Haven) at 601 E. Andreas Road (demolished); the Springs Trailer Court at 174 N. Indian Avenue; and Fairway Mobile Estates (a.k.a. Fairways Trailer Park) at 1900 San Rafael Drive, billed as "the only trailer park in the world surrounded by a golf course."⁷⁰⁵ Trailers and supplies were purveyed by "Al Rose the Trailer King" located at the Horizon Trailer Village, Murray's Trailer Sales at 68-100 Highway III, and the prewar standby, Pavy's Butane and Trailer Supply Store at 1001 S. Palm Canyon Drive.⁷⁰⁶

During the 1950s and 1960s, "mobile homes," as they had become known, were growing longer and wider. During the 1950s the length grew from 38 feet, to 40 feet, then 50 feet and finally upwards to 55 feet. Then Wisconsin manufacturer Elmer Frye broke the mold with the first ten-foot wide trailer that now required special transport permits; by 1960, the "ten wide" had over 90% market share.⁷⁰⁷ By 1963, the industry split into mobile homes and recreational travel trailers (later to be known as RVs).⁷⁰⁸ In a 1965 national study of mobile home parks for the Trailer Coach Association, two types of parks were identified: housing-oriented parks and service-oriented parks. In housing-oriented parks, residents chose to live in a mobile home primarily because of the cost of housing, whereas in service-oriented communities, residents are more concerned with ease of upkeep and amenities such as recreational facilities and clubhouses.⁷⁰⁹ Service-oriented parks, in general, appealed to more affluent retirees who could

⁷⁰⁴ Horace Sutton, "A Traveler's Diary," *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 1957, F12.

⁷⁰⁵ "Welcome Trailerites to the Palm Springs Desert Area Trailer Rally," *Desert Sun*, October 22, 1959.

⁷⁰⁶ *Palm Springs City Directory*, 1955, 97.

⁷⁰⁷ John Grissim, *The Complete Buyer's Guide to Manufactured Homes and Land* (Sequim, Washington: Rainshadow Publications, 2003), 18.

⁷⁰⁸ Grissim, *The Complete Buyer's Guide to Manufactured Homes and Land*, 19.

⁷⁰⁹ Wallis, *Wheel Estate*, 188.

afford a second home. In keeping with its resort status, Palm Springs boasted several service-oriented communities.

A number of mobile home parks were constructed on Section 14 land, in proximity to downtown. These included Prairie Schooner, located near the current site of the Convention Center, Plaza Trailer Park across from the Plaza, Mineral Trailer Park near the mineral springs and several others.⁷¹⁰ In 1956, under fire department supervision, structures associated with the Mineral Trailer Park were burned to rid the community of “substandard structures” and make way for new development.⁷¹¹

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, rising Palm Springs land values and their proximity to downtown made mobile home parks targets for redevelopment. The first of the mobile home parks to be razed for commercial development was Plaza Trailer Village. In 1987, Prairie Schooner was purchased by the city and razed for commercial development. By this time, many of the residents of the parks were service workers or elderly retirees on fixed incomes. Fewer than ten mobile home parks remain in the City of Palm Springs.

⁷¹⁰ Eventually these properties were acquired as part of city development efforts; those trailer owners who desired to be relocated were assisted in relocating to a new “park” (Sunrise Village) located on the north side of San Rafael Road. Most owners chose not to relocate and as a result several interesting post WWII trailers were demolished. Source: Marvin Roos, correspondence with project team, March 25, 2015.

⁷¹¹ “10 Buildings Destroyed on Reservation,” *Desert Sun*, December 5, 1965.

TRAILER PARK/MOBILE HOME COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969): ELIGIBILITY**Property type: Historic District**

A trailer park or mobile home park is a residential community where occupants rent a space on which to site a trailer or mobile home, oriented onto a system of interior roadways. Common features typically include a community or recreation building, playground, swimming pool, sales office/manager's residence, mature landscaping, perimeter wall or fencing, and community signage. As more people took up residency in trailers, they began to be associated more with housing than as vacation vehicles towed by cars.⁷¹² As a result, the design of trailers began to shift to reflect their use as permanent residences. By the mid-1950s, trailers had begun to resemble conventional homes and included features and spatial planning not previously found in earlier travel trailers. This demand gave rise to the development of "resort parks," which were often located near vacation destinations like Palm Springs and were frequently utilized by retirees as vacation homes. In Palm Springs, the trailer park/mobile home park continued to be embraced in the postwar era, continuing the tradition started in the early 20th century. Fewer than 10 parks remain in the city; of these, the Sahara Trailer Park (1955 S. Camino Real) appears potentially eligible for designation under this theme.

Applicable Eligibility Criteria

The Sahara Trailer Park appears eligible for historic designation as a historic district:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/6 (District) ⁷¹³	As an excellent example of a trailer park/mobile home community in Palm Springs. Eligible trailer parks must represent an excellent example of the type, display unique or innovative design or planning characteristics, and have distinctive and cohesive design details.

⁷¹² "Trailers: Yoked to the Car."

⁷¹³ Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local.

Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects is most important to a particular property type requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The rarity of the property type should also be considered when assessing its physical integrity. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, properties and districts must retain sufficient integrity to convey their historic significance under this theme.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
A/1/6 (District)	In order for a trailer park/mobile home community to be eligible for designation as a historic district, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. The trailer park must retain its original layout, street pattern, and planning characteristics. Original accessory buildings and amenities, including manager's office, pool, clubhouse, recreational, and other facilities should be present. An eligible trailer park/mobile home community will retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

Trailer Park/Mobile Home Community Development (1945-1969): Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this theme, a trailer park/mobile home community must:

- represent an excellent example of a trailer park/mobile home community in Palm Springs; and
- reflect unique or innovative design or planning characteristics; and
- display distinctive and cohesive design details; and
- display most of the character-defining features of the property type or style; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

THEME: POST-WORLD WAR II COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969)

Aerial view of Tahquitz at Palm Canyon/Indian Canyon, 1964. Source: Lost Palm Springs.

Peace returned to Palm Springs just in time for the winter season of 1945-46, and so did the Hollywood movie stars and Eastern industrialists. Along with them, in ever-increasing numbers, came ordinary tourists; the growing prosperity of the postwar years and the rise of the car culture created a leisured, mobile middle class that sought, in Palm Springs, a resort lifestyle that had previously been available primarily to the very rich. This surge of visitors and seasonal residents coincided with Modernism's rise in popularity. As a result, commercial architecture in Palm Springs from this period reflected this acceptance of Modernism and expressed a wide range of Modern interpretations as it increasingly served two purposes: the need for tourist-oriented buildings for seasonal residents and visitors, and the need for practical daily services, such as banks, shops, and gas stations, for the growing population of permanent residents. Commercial development during this period consisted of both infill development in the original commercial core, and the continued northward and southward expansion of the commercial district along Palm Canyon and Indian Canyon Drives. A number of motels and other commercial services were constructed to the south of the original downtown, with a cluster of postwar commercial development along S. Palm Canyon Drive.

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Sub-Theme: Hotel and Resort Development (1945-1969)

The post-war tourism boom prompted the development of a number of hotels, motels, apartment hotels, and inns to accommodate the growing demand. Most lodgings for visitors remained relatively small in scale; outdoor spaces to enjoy the sun, air, and scenery were key elements shaping these designs. Several of the local architects designed these for both short term and longer term occupancy. While the program for these were similar, the designs reflected the individuality and innovations of each architect.



The one-story Mid-century Modern Four Hundred apartments (1954, H.W. Burns) at 400 W. Arenas Road feature an L-shaped design oriented toward the swimming pool. Photo: Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Trust, Getty Research Institute. Digital photograph collection.

The Hotel Del Marcos (1946-47, 220 W. Baristo Road; HSPB-78) by William Cody was an early building that demonstrates Cody's exploration of form suited to the desert. While he was later known for his own personal interpretation of Modernism emphasizing the minimal structure allowed by materials such as steel, the Del Marcos drew from Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic" architecture by using natural stone as a major feature in walls whose angled profiles seemed to grow out of the ground. The stone was combined with wood structures.⁷¹⁴ Another local designer, Herbert Burns, was active building small vacation inns like the Town & Desert Apartments at 370 W. Arenas Road (1947; now the Hideaway), a Late Moderne vacation residence with small efficiency apartments, including kitchens, for stays of several weeks or months. The units were arranged in a rough "L" shape around a central swimming pool. Similar properties developed by Burns include the Four Hundred (1954, 400 W. Arenas

⁷¹⁴ Hess and Danish, *Palm Springs Weekend*, 92-94.

Road), the Desert Hills (1955, 601 W. Arenas Road), and the Village Manor (1957, 562 W. Arenas Road; now the Orbit In), all located on W. Arenas Road.⁷¹⁵ The units of the Four Hundred by Herbert Burns were also contained in a single L-shaped structure wrapped around a landscaped pool terrace, and reflected Burns' Late Moderne designs which emphasized the unity of the volume with a continuous eave canopy. Like Cody at L'Horizon, Hugh Kaptur at the Impala Lodge (1957, 555 E. San Lorenzo Road; now the Triangle Inn) used an unusual structural geometry. Steel I-beam doglegs created sloping walls with glass infill.



Advertisement for the Four Hundred apartments (1954, H.W. Burns) at 400 W. Arenas Road feature proximity to the Palm Springs Tennis Club. Source: *Palm Springs Life*, December 14, 1960, 19.

⁷¹⁵ Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, "Town & Desert Apartments, Nomination Application for City of Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site," March 2014, 12.

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Among the many small inns and lodges built in the 1950s, several stand out for their architectural designs. L'Horizon (1952, 1050 E. Palm Canyon Drive) was designed by William Cody for film and television producer Jack Wrather and his wife, actress/producer Bonita Granville.⁷¹⁶ It was organized as a collection of duplex and triplex one-story modern bungalows around a broad landscaped greenspace and swimming pool. The Bisonte Lodge at 260 W. Vista Chino (demolished) by E. Stewart Williams was a single structure with the units set back like a sawtooth to provide each with privacy and mountain views.



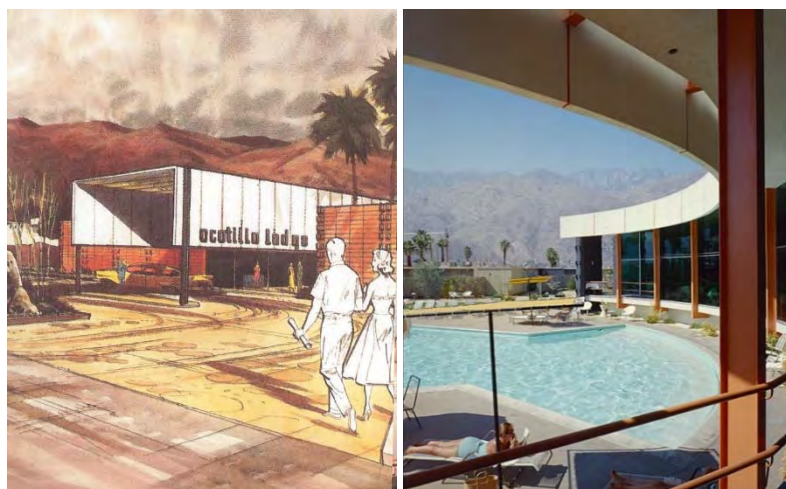
L and R: L'Horizon Hotel (1952, William Cody). Photographed by Julius Shulman, 1954. Source: The J. Paul Getty Trust, Getty Research Institute. Digital photograph collection.

⁷¹⁶ "History-The Horizon Hotel," *The Horizon Hotel*, <http://www.thehorizonhotel.com/default.aspx?pg=history> (accessed March 20, 2015).

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L: Rendering for the Ocotillo Lodge (1957-58, Palmer & Krisel). Source: *The Alexanders: A Desert Legacy*. R: Pool at the Ocotillo Lodge. Photograph by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

The late 1940s and 1950s also saw the construction of new large hotels in Palm Springs, reflecting the city's growing prominence as a vacation destination. San Francisco theater owner Samuel Levin built the glamorous 50-room Palm Springs Biltmore (1948, Fred Monhoff; demolished) in the south end of town.⁷¹⁷ The Ocotillo Lodge at 1111 E. Palm Canyon Drive (1957-58) was designed by Palmer & Krisel and was built by developers George and Robert Alexander as part of their prominent entry into the Palm Springs residential market. Sensing a demand for second homes, they planned the Twin Palms housing tract (also by Palmer & Krisel), and built Ocotillo next to it to provide convenient lodging for potential homebuyers, a marketing strategy used by Palm Springs developers at least since the El Mirador was constructed in the 1920s. Besides the lobby and restaurants, the lodge included two-story motel room wings, and one-story bungalow units for longer stays. The landscaping was by noted Los Angeles landscape architect Garrett Eckbo.⁷¹⁸ In 1959, Irwin Schuman (who also owned the popular Chi Chi nightclub) opened the huge Riviera Hotel (1600 N. Indian Canyon Drive) at the northwest corner of N. Indian Canyon Drive and E. Vista Chino. It was the largest hotel in Palm Springs at the time, with more than 400 guest rooms arranged in multiple wings in a radial pattern around a central swimming pool.⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁷ Hess and Danish, 141.

⁷¹⁸ Hess and Danish, 137-140.

⁷¹⁹ Moruzzi, 91-93, and Niemann, 242-243.

Continuing the trend to larger hotels, the Cahuilla Tribe decided to develop its small, rustic mineral hot springs near the center of Palm Springs into a large bath house and hotel development. The Spa Hotel and Bath House (1959-1963; demolished) was designed by William Cody, Donald Wexler, Richard Harrison, and Philip Koenig. It was an exceptional example of Modern design and planning; a long arcade of prefabricated concrete rose out of a blue ceramic tile decorative pool to connect the town center to the lobby of the bath house. Several larger motels were constructed in the 1960s, including the Tropics Motor Lodge (1964, 411 E. Palm Canyon Drive; now the Caliente Tropics), which used the popular Tiki style. A large A-frame entry reminiscent of South Pacific lodge houses served as the *porte cochère* to the two-story motel wings around a pool terrace landscaped with tropical planting and tiki statues.



Spa Bathhouse (1959; demolished), Photograph by Julius Shulman, 1960. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

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Some of the older hostleries invested in extensive improvements to keep up with the postwar demand. Charlie Farrell was elected mayor in 1948 and soon after hired Albert Frey to expand his Racquet Club with new Modern bungalows.⁷²⁰ The Hotel El Mirador returned to civilian operation after serving as a military hospital during the war, and in 1952 underwent a major retrofit designed by Paul R. Williams with the firm of Williams, Williams & Williams.⁷²¹ In 1952 Western Hotels, the owners of the Oasis Hotel, began an extensive expansion. The McCallum adobe was relocated, the original Wright-designed dining room and kitchen were dismantled,⁷²² and the Oasis Commercial Building (1953, 101-121 S. Palm Canyon; HSPB-55), designed by Williams, Williams & Williams, was constructed in their place. The hotel expanded to the west, across South Belardo Road, with a new restaurant, apartments, and bungalows, and later a multi-story guestroom building also designed by Williams, which now comprise the Palm Mountain Resort and Spa.⁷²³

Sub-Theme: Retail and Entertainment Development, 1945-1969



Bullock's Palm Springs (1947, Wurdeman & Becket; demolished). Source: Flickr.

Several significant retail buildings were constructed in the years immediately after the war. The city's wealthy leisure class had always attracted exclusive shops. In 1947, Bullock's, one of Los Angeles' fashionable department stores, moved out of its boutique at the Desert Inn and into a new building by Los Angeles architects Walter Wurdeman and Welton Becket (demolished). It reflected the Late Moderne style the pair used the same year at Bullock's Pasadena to attract a stylish, suburban clientele. In the late 1950s Becket designed the Saks Fifth Avenue branch at

⁷²⁰ Colacello, "Palm Springs Weekends," 206.

⁷²¹ Moruzzi, 60.

⁷²² Several interior features were relocated to the ACBCI Cultural museum and the Ice Cream shop at the Village Green Park.

⁷²³ Nicolette Wenzell, "Palm Springs History: The Garlicks built up Oasis Hotel," *The Desert Sun*, May 1, 2014, <http://mydesert.co/1fD69NB> (accessed March 12, 2015). See also 1962 Sanborn map.

490 S. Palm Canyon Drive (altered) with highly textured walls of stone and molded concrete block.

Two other notable Los Angeles architects, Paul R. Williams and A. Quincy Jones, were hired by Pearl McCallum McManus to update her Tennis Club and design a new restaurant for the facility. Williams and Jones also collaborated on The Center (1948, 146 N. Palm Canyon Drive), also known as the Town & Country center, a two-story, Late Moderne-style collection of shops, offices, and a fashionable restaurant in the center of the block off the main retail area on Palm Canyon Dr.⁷²⁴ The complex fronts onto both Palm Canyon and Indian Canyon Drives, and was configured around a central landscaped courtyard, accessed from the streets by pedestrian passages. It is a rare example of a modern adaptation of the courtyard type more typically associated with Spanish and Mediterranean Revival styles.⁷²⁵



Town & Country Center (1948, Paul R. Williams and A. Quincy Jones. Photographed in 1949 by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

⁷²⁴ Palm Springs Modern Committee, "Town & Country Center," *PS MODCOM*, <http://www.psmodcom.org/index.php/town-country-center-architecture/> (accessed October 29, 2012).

⁷²⁵ Susan Secoy Jensen, Architect, AIA, M.Arch., Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Town & Country Center," April 2015, Section 8, 14.

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Other commercial buildings serving tourists and local residents included shops along Palm Canyon and Indian Canyon Drives. While Spanish style buildings were sometimes still built in the immediate post-war years, Modern design was featured in numerous commercial buildings throughout the center of town; many of which were designed by prominent local and regional architects. These ranged from small single- and multi-tenant retail and office buildings, such as the commercial building by William Cody at 120 W. Arenas Road, to large, free-standing department stores and mixed-use commercial buildings. Examples include the Welmas Building (1960, Wexler & Harrison, 201-267 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way), and the Robinson's department store (1958, 333-343 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-84) by the Los Angeles firm of Pereira and Luckman. Robinson's is a pavilion structure, with a high roof made up of connected diamond-shaped trusses that appear to float above slender pipe columns strengthened by tapered stiffening fins. This structure allowed for a large column-less interior span, and a large expanse of floor to ceiling glass to reveal the store's interior to passing motorists.



Robinson's (1958, Pereira and Luckman). Photograph by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

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The Springs restaurant (1957, William Cody; demolished).
Source: Lost Palm Springs.

Numerous restaurants were added to the commercial corridors during this period as well. Mirroring the trend in suburban, car-oriented districts of Los Angeles, restaurants along Highway 111 entering and leaving the center of Palm Springs were designed in the Googie style, a Modern style using boldly expressed structural elements and signs reflecting the scale of the automobile and meant to be noticeable through the windshield of passing cars. The Springs restaurant (1957; demolished) by William Cody was one of the most sophisticated examples in the nation of this Modernist type.⁷²⁶ Another Googie example is the

Denny's coffee shop by Los Angeles architects Armét and Davis (1965, 701 E. Palm Canyon Drive), which used an extended version of the Denny's prototype design as part of a motel complex.

Another commercial type which furnished notable examples of Modern architecture in Palm Springs was the bank. Bank architecture across the nation adopted Modern design (including drive-through service) to attract customers in the economic expansion after 1945; Palm Springs boasts an extraordinary collection of custom designs by noted architects which were also, by their size, position, and design, *de facto* civic landmarks celebrating the town's wealth. Notable examples in the 1950s were the first Coachella Valley Savings & Loan (1956, 383 S. Palm Canyon Drive) and Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan (1960, 300 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-54), both by Williams, Williams & Williams; and City National Bank (1959, 588 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-52) by the Los Angeles firm Victor Gruen Associates.

⁷²⁶ Alan Hess, *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2004), 98-101.



L: Santa Fe Federal Savings and Loan (1960, Williams, Williams & Williams). R: Coachella Valley Savings and Loan #2 (1961, Williams, Williams & Williams). Photographed by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

The first Coachella Valley Savings & Loan reflected the influence of the International Style in using a two-story rectangular box for the main lobby, lifted above the ground to accommodate the entry and parking of cars. Santa Fe Federal demonstrated Stewart Williams' design evolution; where Coachella Valley emphasized its box-like volume, the Santa Fe design gives the appearance of an open pavilion. The inset walls are almost entirely glass, set between two strong planes of roof and floor. The roof extends far beyond the glass walls to provide shade, enhanced by movable aluminum screen walls on the west façade. The floor plate cantilevers beyond the foundation to make this pavilion structure appear to float. City National Bank (1959), designed by Gruen associate Rudi Baumfeld, was an exuberant expressionistic design inspired by the chapel of Notre Dame du Haut in Ronchamps, France (1954) by Le Corbusier. A large curving roof with upswept eaves was set on three solid ovoid shapes; Baumfeld adapted the Ronchamp model by opening the west side of the building with a wall of glass to provide mountain views. To his two earlier banks, E. Stewart Williams added another major and distinctive bank design for the second Coachella Valley Savings & Loan at 499 S. Palm Canyon Drive (1961; HSPB #53). It emphasizes its public role with dramatic inverted concrete arches, lifted above a reflecting pool. The iconic design recalls Oscar

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Niemeyer's 1956 Alvorada Palace in Brasilia and demonstrates Williams' move beyond traditional post-and-beam construction to explore the possibilities of structural concrete.⁷²⁷



L: City National Bank (1959, Victor Gruen Associates). Source: Bill Anderson/Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society via *Palm Springs Life* Archives. R: The Oasis Building (1952, Williams, Williams & Williams). Source: Palm Springs Historical Society as published in *Palm Springs Life*, "Modern, Naturally."

As Palm Springs grew, more office buildings were required. Once again, prominent local architects designed many of these (often for real estate, builder, or developer clients). Collectively, they demonstrate the wide use and acceptance of modern design in Palm Springs. The Oasis Building (1952, 101-121 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-55) by Williams, William and Williams incorporated a shaded, inset ground floor patio on Palm Canyon Drive as an entry to several small retail stores, including a Kreis Drugstore with interior by Paul R. Williams (since remodeled). The second story was a large rectangular block which seemed to float above the ground floor, and contained office space (including the Williams, Williams & Williams offices).

Other examples of Modern offices in the central commercial district include 577 Sunny Dunes by Howard Lapham; the Harold Hicks Real Estate office (1958, 1345 N. Palm Canyon) by Williams, Williams & Williams; and the Welmas Building (1959, 100 S. Indian Canyon Drive) by Wexler & Harrison. These designs often featured outdoor corridors or courtyards and open stairs in response to the climate, and decorative elements such as colorful ceramic tile. As with other building types, these Modern designs reflected a range of

⁷²⁷ Elizabeth Edwards Harris, Ph.D., "Dignity and Delight: Modern Banks," in Sidney Williams, ed., *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect* (Palm Springs, CA: Palm Springs Art Museum, 2014), 102.

interpretations, from the International Style influences in the Oasis Building to the brutalist influences seen in Robert Ricciardi's Gas Company building (1969, 211 N. Sunrise Way), with its tall, concrete walls finished in a rugged hammered texture.



Esso Station (Albert Frey, 1963-65; HSPB-33). Source: Palm Springs Visitors Center, via Flickr.

With the growing car culture in the postwar era, the construction of gas and service stations – particularly along major thoroughfares – became increasingly important. Palm Springs has a collection of postwar stations that were designed by prominent local architects: Albert Frey, William Cody, and Donald Wexler each designed a gas station in the city between 1963 and 1966. The box station type that had developed in the early 1930s, with its glossy glass and porcelain enamel exterior and carefully designed lighting, was meant to attract attention and reflected the increasing importance petroleum companies placed on standardization. In the postwar years owners and architects began to vary this basic form to distinguish their establishments, incorporating contemporary design trends such as canted display windows, raked or folded plate canopies, and boomerang-shaped supports that reflected the popular interest in aeronautics and space travel and attracted the eye of passing motorists.⁷²⁸ Frey's Esso station (1963-65, now the Palm Springs Visitors' Center, 2901 N. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-

⁷²⁸ Chad Randl, *Preservation Brief 46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2008), 3-4.

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33) at the north end of the city features canted concrete block walls supporting a hyperbolic paraboloid steel roof which created a wide canopy over the pump area. Situated at the corner of the main highway into town and the turnoff to the new Palm Springs Tramway, it served as a landmark to this new tourist attraction. Nearby, William Cody designed a Shell gas station (1964, 2796 N. Palm Canyon Drive) which created a high canopy of thin, tapered concrete slabs. Donald Wexler's gas station (1966, demolished) used post-and-beam concrete construction.

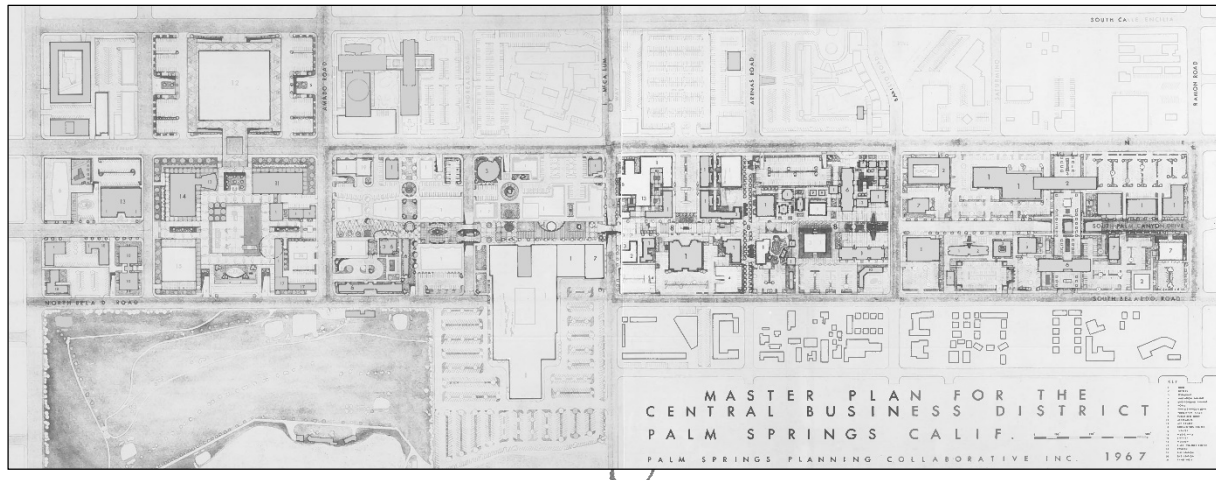
Tourism, Palm Springs' main industry, spawned the development of attractions, golf courses, and more motels in the 1960s. The premier attraction was the opening of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, a major engineering feat. Pylons were constructed on the side of rugged and steep Mt. San Jacinto to support cable cars transporting tourists 8,500 feet from the valley floor to the alpine mountain top. Frey & Chambers designed the tramway's lower Valley Station (1963, 1 Tramway Road; HSPB-33), and Williams, Clark & Williams designed the mountain station. Both included restaurants and viewing platforms. Frey and Chambers' design reflected their technological approach by incorporating a large triangulated truss to span a natural wash; the structure's triangular shapes were expressed on the exterior of the building. In the mountaintop environment, which has snow in winter, Williams, Clark, and Williams used heavy timber post-and-beam construction, allowing for tall windows to frame the panoramic views of the valley floor.⁷²⁹

In October 1967 the Palm Springs Planning Collaborative, an association of many local architects including John Porter Clark, William Cody, Albert Frey, Richard Harrison, and Roger Williams under the leadership of E. Stewart Williams, presented to the City Council a master plan for the Palm Springs central business district. The tourist-oriented plan included a two-block pedestrian promenade along Palm Canyon Drive, a convention center, a performing arts center, shops, offices, restaurants, hotels, plazas, and parking, covering the area from Ramon Road in the south to Alejo Road in the north. The plan's vast scope, long-range vision, and estimated \$65,000,000 cost proved overwhelming for the city council and the plan was quickly shelved.⁷³⁰ Although the ambitious project was abandoned, it is noteworthy for its

⁷²⁹ The mountain station is located outside the Palm Springs city limit.

⁷³⁰ Sidney Williams, "The Spirit of Collegiality, The Power of Eloquence," in *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, ed. Sidney Williams (Palm Springs, CA: Palm Springs Art Museum, 2014), 45-51.

collaborative design by an impressive number of prominent local architects, and as a reflection of the importance of tourism in Palm Springs.



Unrealized master plan for the central business district, 1967. Source: E. Stewart Williams Collection, Palm Springs Art Museum, as published in *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, p. 47-49.

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Sub-theme: Las Palmas Business Historic District (1945-1969)⁷³¹

In the post-World War II era, the area that is now the Las Palmas Business Historic District continued the northward expansion of the main commercial center that started in the 1930s; however, development during this period consisted primarily of infill construction on undeveloped lots. Some simplified Spanish Colonial Revival buildings were constructed during this period, but the predominant architectural style in the district in the postwar years, as throughout Palm Springs, was Modern. The city's post-war boom of tourists and seasonal residents coincided with the rise in popularity of Modernism across the United States. Architecture in Palm Springs from this period reflected this fortuitous convergence and expressed a wide range of Modern interpretations in the designs of residential, commercial, and institutional buildings, leaving the city with an unusually large and fine concentration of mid-20th century Modern design. In the Las Palmas Business Historic District, as throughout the city, buildings continued to be low in scale, predominantly one but occasionally two stories in height. Setbacks along N. Palm Canyon Drive are relatively consistent, with most buildings having only a minimal setback from the sidewalk. Setbacks are more varied along N. Indian Canyon Drive.

Clark & Frey designed a number of commercial buildings in the district in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These include their own office building (1947, 875-879 N. Palm Canyon Drive), a two-story mixed-use building with retail on the ground floor and the architects' offices above; the Late Moderne-style Dollard Building (1947, 687 N. Palm Canyon Drive); the Turonnet Building (1949, 707-749 N. Indian Canyon Drive); and the one-story, minimalist Nichols Building (1953, 891-895 N. Palm Canyon Drive).

⁷³¹ This sub-theme continues the discussion of the Las Palmas Business Historic District from the pre-World War II commercial development section. The Las Palmas Business Historic District was designated by the City in 1986. It is bounded by Alejo Road to the south, El Alameda to the north, and includes most properties fronting N. Palm Canyon and N. Indian Canyon Drives on both sides.



Clark & Frey Office Building (1947). Photographed by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

A noteworthy medical office building from this period is the Backstrom-Reid Building at 666 N. Palm Canyon Drive. Local developer and designer Howard Lapham constructed the two-story medical office building for Dr. Henry Reid and his business partner, Robert G. Backstrom.⁷³² The building is framed by its flat roof and end wall panels that form a continuous folded plane over the building and a *porte-cochère* that leads to the parking lot at the rear. The façade is articulated with stone veneer, decorative metal screens, and an exterior staircase leading to the second story.

The postwar tourism boom prompted the development of a number of hotels, motels, apartment hotels, and inns in and around the Las Palmas business district to accommodate the growing demand. Most lodgings for visitors remained relatively small in scale and were often oriented around a central landscaped area or pool; outdoor spaces to enjoy the sun, air, and scenery were key elements shaping these designs. Examples within the district include the Crawford Apartments, an early motor court at 855 N. Indian Canyon Drive (1945; now the Village Inn);⁷³³ and the Del Hai Mo Lodge at 641 N. Palm Canyon Drive (1952). Infill

⁷³² Historic Site Preservation Board, "Las Palmas Business Historic District Building Histories," (undated), 19. Although some sources attribute the design of this building to Haralamb Georgescu, with whom Lapham was associated, Georgescu's biographical information indicates that he did not begin working with Lapham until 1959, after the Backstrom-Reid building was constructed.

⁷³³ Historic Site Preservation Board, "Las Palmas Business Historic District Building Histories," (undated), 11.

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development continued in the district in the ensuing decades, continuing the pattern of sporadic development and varied architectural styles established in the 1930s.



Postcard of the Crawford Apartments.

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POST-WORLD WAR II COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969): ELIGIBILITY**Property Types: Commercial Building; Historic District**

Examples of commercial buildings from this period may include hotels, motels, retail stores, banks, restaurants, commercial storefront buildings, and automobile-related resources including auto dealerships and drive-ins. There was a great deal of commercial development in Palm Springs in the immediate postwar period, and continuing into the 1960s. Commercial properties in Palm Springs associated with this period include the Hotel Del Marcos (1946-47, HSPB-78), the Town and Desert Apartments (1947; now the Hideaway), the Town & Country Center (1948), the Oasis Commercial Building (1953, HSPB-55), and the Esso station (1963-65, HSPB-33; now the Visitors Center).

Applicable Eligibility Criteria

A commercial property from this period may be eligible for historic designation under one or more of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period) ⁷³⁴	As an excellent example of commercial development in Palm Springs, reflecting the City's growth in the postwar era, including the continued importance of tourism. Commercial buildings eligible under this criterion must represent a trend or pattern of development, they cannot simply have been constructed during the post-World War II era.
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	As an excellent or rare example of an architectural style, property type, or method of construction from the period. Additional information about architectural styles from each period and their associated character-defining features are outlined in the Architectural Styles chapter.

⁷³⁴ Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local. Note that National Register/California Register Criterion A/1 can be applied to a single event important in history, or to an overall trend or pattern of development. The City of Palm Springs local ordinance distinguishes these into separate criteria – Criterion 1 applies to properties that are associated with a singular event; Criterion 3 applies to properties that “reflect or exemplify a particular period” in history.

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/6 (District)	A collection of commercial buildings that are linked geographically may be eligible as a historic district. Potential commercial districts in Palm Springs will likely span several periods of development.

Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects is most important to a particular property type requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The rarity of the property type should also be considered when assessing its physical integrity. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, properties and districts must retain sufficient integrity to convey their historic significance under this theme.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period)	A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that made up its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historical pattern, or person(s). ⁷³⁵ A commercial property from this period eligible under Criteria A/1/3 should retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to reflect the important association with the city's commercial development during this period. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style. ⁷³⁶ Replacement of original storefronts is a common and acceptable alteration.

⁷³⁵ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁷³⁶ National Register Bulletin 15.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	A property important for illustrating a particular property type, architectural style or construction technique; or that represents the work of a master must retain most of the physical features that constitute that type, style, or technique. ⁷³⁷ A commercial property significant under Criterion C/3/4,5 (Architecture) should retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to be eligible for its architectural merit. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style. Replacement of original storefronts is a common and acceptable alteration.
A/1/6 (District)	In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. A contributing property must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. Some alteration to individual buildings, such as replacement of storefronts is acceptable. Eligible historic districts may span several periods of development.

⁷³⁷ National Register Bulletin 15.

Post-World War II Commercial Development (1945-1969): Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this theme, a property must:

- date from the period of significance; and
- represent important patterns and trends in commercial development from this period; or
- represent an excellent or rare example of an architectural style, property type, or method of construction; or be associated with a significant architect or designer; and
- display most of the character-defining features of the property type or style; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

To be eligible under this theme, a historic district must:

- retain a majority of the contributors dating from the period of significance; and
- display the original planning features of a commercial enclave or corridor; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

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THEME: POST-WORLD WAR II CIVIC AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969)

This theme explores the development of civic buildings, schools, churches, and other institutions in the decades after World War II. As Palm Springs' population grew, so did the need for civic buildings. Usually designed by local architects, they reflected the progressive symbolism of Modernism in schools, churches, fire stations, and especially in a new City Hall.

For the first few months after incorporation, the City Council met on the second floor of old Fire Station No. 1 (377 N. Palm Canyon Drive; demolished). From 1939 to 1944 Council meetings were held in the Guatiello Building (482 N. Palm Canyon Drive; demolished), and from 1944 to 1948 in the El Paseo Theater in the El Paseo Building (800 N. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-27). From 1938 to 1948 municipal offices were located in the Chamber of Commerce building (363 N. Palm Canyon Drive; demolished) a small bungalow built in 1919 by Dr. J.J. Kocher. In 1948 the administrative offices and City Council meetings were relocated to three buildings on the Palm Springs Air Base property that had recently been vacated by the Army Air Corps. In 1949 a 100-acre parcel of the property was deeded to the City.⁷³⁸ The City subleased the remainder of the air base property to the Palm Springs Airport Corporation and later, in 1952, to Aero-Palm Springs, Inc. under the leadership of "Great-Grandmother Pilot" Zaddie Bunker, and the property became the new municipal airport.⁷³⁹

In 1952 the firm of Clark, Frey & Chambers was selected to design a new City Hall building to accommodate the growing city's administrative needs (3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way; HSPB-33). Various sites were considered, including Tamarisk Park and Torney General Hospital (El Mirador), before the city selected a ten-acre site within the vacated Federal land, avoiding the costs of land acquisition. On December 15, 1953 the city transferred \$300,000 from the Capital Outlay Fund to a dedicated City Hall Construction Fund to begin the process. The entire cost of the building, which totaled \$408,318, was financed through sales tax revenues, without resorting to bond issues or increased property taxes. Final working drawings were submitted on January 18, 1956 and the bid was awarded to Kretz and Wilson of Indio on February 21. Construction began on March 6, and the new City Hall was dedicated on November 8, 1957. By that time the city's permanent population was 12,225, with a seasonal increase to 45,000.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁸ "Your City Hall."

⁷³⁹ Greer.

⁷⁴⁰ "Your City Hall."

For the design of City Hall, Clark, Frey & Chambers collaborated with Williams, Williams & Williams. The building used a Modern vocabulary to convey the symbolic role of a city hall; the main entrance to the administrative offices was defined by a large square canopy with a circular opening to the sky, while the city council chamber was given definition in a separate, attached wing marked by a freestanding *aedicula*. The windows of the office wing were shaded by deep eaves and a screen of deep tubular sections that allowed views out, but shut out direct sunlight. The City Council wing was constructed of concrete block integrally tinted a rose color; the blocks were slightly offset to create a distinctive geometric pattern on the flat walls, especially when raked by sunlight.

In the 1960s a civic center was developed around the City Hall with the addition of several other civic facilities. A special election in 1961 approved the city's purchase of and improvements to the airport property. The location at the west end of Tahquitz Canyon Way created a central axis with the airport as its terminus, while Modern architecture and uniform setbacks unified the area as a civic center. The anchor and largest addition to the civic center was Donald Wexler's Palm Springs Airport (1966, front façade HSPB-70) at the end of Tahquitz Canyon Way. A major project for a local architect, the modern airport evoked the swept lines of a jet plane. Outdoor waiting rooms for the gates celebrated the weather that awaited arriving passengers. Also included in the civic center was the Palm Springs Police Building (1962, 3111 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way) by John Porter Clark, and the Riverside County Courthouse (1962, 3255 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way) by Williams, Clark and Williams.

Other civic facilities constructed in the postwar era to accommodate the growing population and increased need for municipal services include several fire stations: Fire Station No. 1 (1957, 277 N. Indian Canyon Drive; HSPB-35) by Frey & Chambers, and Fire Station No. 3 (1964, 590 E. Racquet Club Road) by Hugh Kaptur. Additionally, a new post office (1970, 333 E. Amado Road) by Victor Gruen Associates was constructed as an alternative to the 1930s post office located in La Plaza.

Palm Springs also needed new school facilities in the postwar era. In the late 1950s, Palm Springs High School (2248 E. Ramon Road) added several new buildings to the campus, which was originally constructed in the Spanish style in the 1930s. These included a new auditorium (1956) and library (1958), both designed by Williams, Williams & Williams (extant). For a major expansion of the school commissioned in 1958, Wexler & Harrison, working with engineer Bernard Perlin, utilized a prefabricated steel construction system to reduce costs; the simple rectilinear shapes reinforced their Modern style. The system proved

successful, and Wexler & Harrison used it in many schools. Other school facilities built to accommodate Palm Springs' growing population during the postwar era include Raymond Cree Middle School (1966, 1011 E. Vista Chino) by Donald Wexler; 1953 and 1958 additions to the Cahuilla Elementary School (833 E. Mesquite Avenue; demolished) by Wexler & Harrison (originally constructed in 1941 and designed Clark & Frey); and the Palm Springs Unified School Administration Building (1963, 333 S. Farrell Drive) by E. Stewart Williams.

Several churches and other institutional buildings were constructed in the city during this period. Temple Isaiah (commissioned in 1949, 332 W. Alejo Road; altered) by Williams, Williams & Williams accommodated a growing congregation. Clark & Frey's American Legion Post #519 (1948, 400 N. Belardo Road; HSPB-36) was a small building, but was as carefully designed using simple Modern forms as any of their work. The Palm Springs First Church of Christ Scientist (1957, 605 S. Riverside Drive) by Frey & Chambers used a collection of simple rose-tinted concrete block forms topped with gentle shed roofs. This interpretation of Modernism used simplicity and modern technological materials composed not on a strict grid, but with oblique angles. For the desert climate, direct sunlight was moderated in the main auditorium with small garden courts to filter the light. The design of St. Theresa Catholic Church (1968, 2800 E. Ramon Road) by William Cody demonstrated an expressionistic facet of his design ability. Here, Cody used thick concrete walls with a curved section to create a protected precinct; in the middle of it sat the sanctuary enclosed with glass walls, and topped by a sweeping pyramid echoing the curved section of the surrounding walls. Though modern in form and structure, the design leads the eye upward in a symbolic gesture in the same manner as traditional Gothic churches.

Other important institutions established during this period include the Moorten Botanical Gardens, which was founded in 1957 at the former Stephen H. Willard estate on South Palm Canyon Drive. Chester "Cactus Slim" Moorten, one of the original "Keystone Kops" in the Max Sennett film series, had settled in Palm Springs after contracting tuberculosis. He established a landscape sales, design, and contracting business, specializing in desert plants, in 1938. Two years later Moorten married Patricia Haliday, who had studied botany and horticulture at USC and UCLA. Together they designed and installed desert gardens for some of Palm Springs' most famous residents including Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, and Walt Disney. Disney also hired the Moortens to install cactus gardens in the Frontierland area of his new Anaheim amusement park. In the mid-1950s the Moortens purchased the Willard estate and

in 1957 opened their botanical garden, with over 3,000 varieties of desert plants, a palm grove, and the world's first *Cactarium*.⁷⁴¹

In 1958 the Palm Springs Desert Museum moved into its first permanent home, a new 10,000-square-foot building designed by E. Stewart Williams, and for the first time included galleries dedicated to fine arts.⁷⁴² The new museum was located on Tahquitz Canyon Way, just east of the Welwood Murray Memorial Library, on a parcel donated by Cornelia White in 1947. The museum building in fact wrapped around White's "Little House" of railroad ties, which had been relocated to the southwest corner of Tahquitz Canyon Way and Indian Canyon Drive in 1944.⁷⁴³

⁷⁴¹ Niemann, 149-150; and "Patricia Moorten Obituary," *The Desert Sun*, July 16-21, 2010, www.obituaries.desertsun.com/obituaries/thedesertsun/obituary.aspx?n=patricia-moorten&pid=144092145 (accessed August 17, 2015).

⁷⁴² Palm Springs Art Museum, "About Us," <http://www.psmuseum.org/about-us/> (accessed August 2015). The museum, now the Palm Springs Art Museum, relocated to its current facility, also designed by Williams, in 1976. The old building was replaced with a commercial building.

⁷⁴³ Niemann, 80, and Sanborn fire insurance maps, 1962.

POST-WORLD WAR II CIVIC AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969): ELIGIBILITY

Property Types: Civic or institutional building

Civic property types include city halls or other offices for public agencies, post offices, fire and police stations, schools, and libraries. Non-governmental institutional property types include churches, meeting halls, and buildings associated with social organizations. Example civic and institutional buildings in Palm Springs associated with this period include City Hall (1957, HSPB-33), Palm Springs International Airport (1966; front façade HSPB-70), American Legion Post #519 (1948, HSPB-36), and St. Theresa Catholic Church (1968).

Applicable Eligibility Criteria

A civic or institutional property from this period may be eligible for historic designation under one or more of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period) ⁷⁴⁴	<p>As an excellent example of civic or institutional development from this period, representing the significant growth in Palm Springs following World War II.</p> <p><i>National Register Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties</i></p> <p>Note that a religious property is eligible for listing in the National Register if it derives its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.</p> <p>"A religious property requires justification on architectural, artistic, or historic grounds to avoid any appearance of judgment by government about the validity of any religion or belief. Historic significance for a religious property cannot be established on the merits of a religious doctrine, but rather, for architectural or artistic</p>

⁷⁴⁴ Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local. Note that National Register/California Register Criterion A/1 can be applied to a single event important in history, or to an overall trend or pattern of development. The City of Palm Springs local ordinance distinguishes these into separate criteria – Criterion 1 applies to properties that are associated with a singular event; Criterion 3 applies to properties that “reflect or exemplify a particular period” in history.

CRITERIA	REASON
	values or for important historic or cultural forces that the property represents. A religious property's significance under Criterion A, B, C, or D must be judged in purely secular terms. A religious group may, in some cases, be considered a cultural group whose activities are significant in areas broader than religious history. ⁷⁴⁵
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	As an excellent or rare example of an architectural style from the period, or as the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect. Additional information about architectural styles from each period and their associated character-defining features are outlined in the Architectural Styles section.

Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects is most important to a particular property type requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The rarity of the property type should also be considered when assessing its physical integrity. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under this theme.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period)	A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that made up its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historical pattern, or person(s). ⁷⁴⁶ A civic or institutional property from this period eligible under Criteria A/1/3 should retain integrity of location, design, materials, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to reflect the important association with the city's civic and institutional development during this period.

⁷⁴⁵ National Register Bulletin 15.

⁷⁴⁶ National Register Bulletin 15.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	A property important for illustrating a particular property type, architectural style or construction technique; or that represents the work of a master must retain most of the physical features that constitute that type, style, or technique. ⁷⁴⁷ A civic or institutional property significant under Criterion C/3/4,5 (Architecture) should retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to be eligible for its architectural merit. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style.

Post-World War II Civic & Institutional Development (1945-1969): Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this theme, a property must:

- date from the period of significance; and
- reflect important civic or institutional development from the period; or
- represent an excellent example of an architectural style or property type; and
- display most of the character-defining features of the property type or style; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

⁷⁴⁷ *National Register Bulletin 15.*

THEME: THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY (1945-1969)



Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, and Dean Martin outside the Canyon Country Club. Photograph, 1963. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, Herald-Examiner Collection.

Palm Springs' popularity as a favorite destination for the entertainment industry crowd continued after World War II and through the 1960s. A number of celebrities became intimately associated with the town and helped to promote its popularity and growth during this period. Among these the most prominent were Bob Hope, the town's first honorary mayor, and patron of the annual Bob Hope Golf Classic tournament (now the Humana Challenge) that has donated more than \$50 million for local nonprofits since its inception in 1960;⁷⁴⁸ Frank Sinatra, whose "Rat Pack" image personified the city's post-war swank; and Dinah Shore, patron of the Colgate Dinah Shore Championship (now known as the Kraft Nabisco Championship), the premier women's golf tournament and one of the Coachella Valley's biggest annual events.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁸ Humana Challenge, "Quick Facts," *Humana Challenge*, <http://www.humanachallenge.com/Quick-Facts> (accessed January 23, 2015).

⁷⁴⁹ Niemann, 166.

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The Doll House (1032 N. Palm Canyon Drive; demolished) was an industry favorite for dinner, drinks, and dancing. It was opened in 1945 by Ethel and George L. Strebe, the brother of local theater owner Earle C. Strebe. Among the regulars who enjoyed the restaurant's famous steaks, icebox cake, and entertainment by the Guadalajara Boys were Marlene Dietrich, Doris Day, Ava Gardner and Frank Sinatra, Dick Haynes, Ida Lupino, Howard Hughes, Rosalind Russell, Elizabeth Taylor and Eddie Fisher, Jack Warner, and Daryl Zanuck. Joan Crawford once traded places with a look-alike waitress at the Doll House, and singer Peggy Lee was allegedly "discovered" there.⁷⁵⁰ The Doll House closed in 1959. In 1966 it was converted to an Italian restaurant, Sorrentino's (a favorite of Frank Sinatra and Kirk Douglas) which closed in 2002.⁷⁵¹



The Doll House. Source: *Palm Springs Life*, "Explore Palm Springs: Nightclubs Spruce up for 1950-51 Season."

Several celebrities invested in Palm Springs businesses during this period. After purchasing his Old Las Palmas house in 1955 actor Alan Ladd opened a hardware store in partnership with local contractor Robert Higgins, a high school friend. The store was originally called HigginsLadd and was located at 533 South Palm Canyon Drive (demolished). Ladd himself frequently waited on customers there until his death in 1964. Ladd's family maintained the store, later known as Alan Ladd Hardware, and in 1968 moved it to a purpose-built two-story building, the Alan Ladd Building (Kaptur-Lapham & Associates), at 500 S. Palm Canyon

⁷⁵⁰ Niemann, 252. See also Peter Moruzzi, *Palm Springs Holiday* (Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2009), 106. There is a discrepancy in the accounts of Peggy Lee's "discovery;" sources claim this occurred about 1941, yet current research indicates that the Doll House was opened in 1945.

⁷⁵¹ Niemann, 253.

Drive.⁷⁵² The store closed in 2002 and the building, now called The 500, was remodeled in 2013.⁷⁵³

In 1961 Gene Autry, the “Singing Cowboy,” who had recently purchased the California Angels baseball team, bought the Holiday Inn at 4200 E. Palm Canyon Drive to house his players during spring training. Autry enlarged the hotel and changed its name first to Melody Ranch and then to the Gene Autry Hotel. Autry sold the hotel in 1992 and it was transformed into the Versailles-inspired Givenchy Spa Hotel. The Givenchy was purchased by talk show host Merv Griffin in 1998 and became the Merv Griffin Hotel and Givenchy Spa. Griffin sold the property in 2002 and in 2004 it reopened as the Parker Palm Springs.⁷⁵⁴



L and R: Palm Springs Tennis Club (1947, A. Quincy Jones and Paul R. Williams). Photographed by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

In the postwar era, both Pearl McManus and Charlie Farrell expanded their respective tennis clubs. In 1947, Pearl McManus hired Paul R. Williams and A. Quincy Jones to remodel the Tennis Club (originally opened in 1938 at 701 W. Baristo Road), and design a new clubhouse

⁷⁵² Morris Newman, “Modern Master: Architect Hugh Kaptur’s Designs Were Among The Most Creative And Innovative Of The Era,” *Palm Springs Life*, February 2014, <http://www.palmspringslife.com/Palm-Springs-Life/February-2014/Modern-Master/> (accessed January 27, 2015). The text does not mention the Alan Ladd building but it is included in accompanying photographs of Kaptur’s work. Sources disagree on whether the architect of the Ladd building was Kaptur or Lawrence Lapham.

⁷⁵³ “The 500 Comes to Downtown Palm Springs,” *CoachellaValleyNews.com*, <http://www.coachellavalleynews.com/news-desk/the-500-comes-to-downtown-palm-springs> (accessed January 26, 2015).

⁷⁵⁴ Niemann, 239-240.

and restaurant. The new buildings followed the irregular contours of the site, with angled glass walls looking over the rocky hillside and the swimming pool.⁷⁵⁵ The original stone terraces were considered such an integral part of the club that Jones and Williams employed stacked-stone walls to continue the look inside the club. In 1948, soon after he was elected mayor of Palm Springs, Farrell hired Alfred Frey to enlarge the Racquet Club with new bungalows.⁷⁵⁶ Farrell became known as “Mr. Palm Springs” for his decades of work as a local businessman, city promoter, councilman, and mayor.⁷⁵⁷



Racquet Club bungalows designed by Clark & Frey in 1948. Photographed by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

As in the years before the Second World War, a number of celebrities built or purchased seasonal homes in Palm Springs in the post-war decades. While the established centrally-located neighborhoods of the Movie Colony and Old Las Palmas remained popular with the entertainment industry, in the late 1950s Vista Las Palmas, a tract of Mid-century Modern houses developed by the Alexander Construction Company immediately west of Old Las Palmas (Las Palmas Estates), began to attract celebrity residents. Other Palm Springs neighborhoods with celebrity residents included Deep Well Ranch Estates, the secluded Mesa neighborhood, Little Tuscany, and Smoke Tree Ranch. Walt Disney owned two homes at Smoke Tree Ranch (1800 South Sunrise Way), purchasing the first in 1948 and building the second in 1957. The ranch’s dining room is named in his honor.⁷⁵⁸

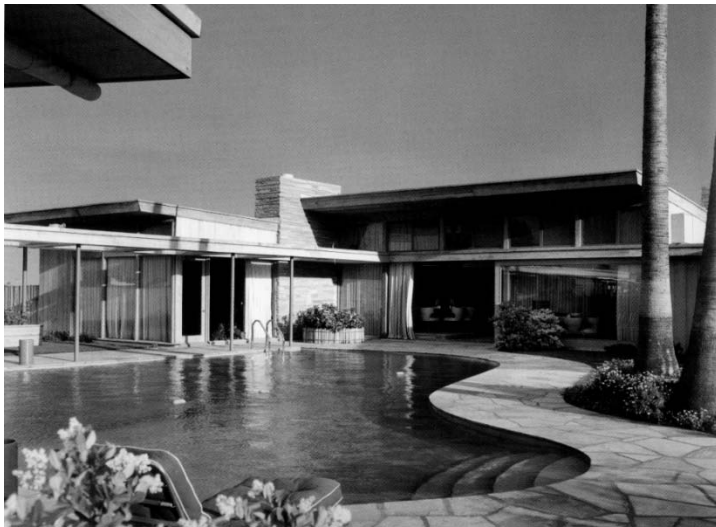
⁷⁵⁵ Hess and Danish, 116-118.

⁷⁵⁶ Colacello, 206.

⁷⁵⁷ Niemann, 135.

⁷⁵⁸ Johns, 250-251.

Among the most renowned celebrity homes in Palm Springs is Twin Palms (originally 1148 E. Alejo Road; now 1145 E. Via Colusa; HSPB-77), the estate of singer and actor Frank Sinatra. Sinatra famously walked into the offices of Williams, Williams & Williams in May 1947 and asked for a Georgian Revival-style house to be completed by Christmas on a lot the singer had just purchased east of the Movie Colony. E. Stewart Williams instead designed a low, sprawling Modern house with shed roofs, clerestory windows, and walls of stone, stucco, and redwood siding. A wall of sliding glass panels opens at the push of a button to a central patio with a piano-shaped swimming pool and cabana.⁷⁵⁹ A pergola with cutouts in its roof casts noontime shadows resembling piano keys along one edge of the pool – an unintentional effect, according to Williams.⁷⁶⁰ The landscape design is the work of Tommy Tomson.⁷⁶¹



Frank Sinatra's Twin Palms (1947, E. Stewart Williams). Photograph by Julius Shulman. Source: The J. Paul Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Digital Photo Collection.

⁷⁵⁹ Colacello, 205, and Adèle Cygelman, *Palm Springs Modern* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1999), 72-82.

⁷⁶⁰ Johns, 182.

⁷⁶¹ Steven Keylon, landscape historian, correspondence with project team, April 10, 2015.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY (1945-1969): ELIGIBILITY

Property Types: Single-family Residence, Multi-family Residence, Commercial Building, Film Location, Historic District

Starting in the early 20th century, Palm Springs was a get-away for members of the entertainment industry; this was a trend that continued after the war. Properties significant under this theme include residents and commercial establishments with specific associations with the entertainment community.

Applicable Eligibility Criteria

A property or district may be eligible for historic designation under one or more of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/1,3 (Pattern of Development/Event/Period) ⁷⁶²	Commercial properties may be eligible under this theme for representing a known association with the Hollywood social scene. Film locations may be eligible as the site of an iconic motion picture or television production (Criterion A/1/1).
B/2/2 (Person)	For its association with an important person(s) in the entertainment industry. Properties eligible under this criterion are typically those associated with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance. Properties associated with living persons are usually not eligible for landmark designation. Sufficient time must have elapsed to assess both the person's field of endeavor and his or her contribution to that field. Eligibility under Criterion B for listing in the National Register of Historic Places requires that:

⁷⁶² Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local. Note that National Register/California Register Criterion A/1 can be applied to a single event important in history, or to an overall trend or pattern of development. The City of Palm Springs local ordinance distinguishes these into separate criteria – Criterion 1 applies to properties that are associated with a singular event; Criterion 3 applies to properties that “reflect or exemplify a particular period” in history.

CRITERIA	REASON
	<p>“Each property associated with an important individual should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person’s historic contributions. The best representatives usually are properties associated with the person’s adult or productive life. Properties associated with an individual’s formative or later years may also qualify if it can be demonstrated that the person’s activities during this period were historically significant or if no properties from the person’s productive years survives. Length of association is an important factor when assessing several properties with similar associations. A community or State may contain several properties eligible for associations with the same important person, if each represents a different aspect of the person’s productive life.”⁷⁶³</p> <p>Note that many of these properties may not be visible from the public right-of-way. For survey purposes, these properties have been flagged and assigned a status code indicating that additional evaluation is needed due to lack of visibility.</p>
A/1/6 (District)	<p>A collection of residences associated with members of the entertainment industry that are linked geographically may be eligible as a historic district. Residences eligible under this theme will likely contribute to historic districts that are significant under other contexts and themes; an association with members of the entertainment industry represents one layer of an area’s history.</p>

⁷⁶³ *National Register Bulletin 15*, Section VI: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.”

Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. Determining which of the aspects is most important to a particular property type requires an understanding of the property's significance and its essential physical features. The rarity of the property type should also be considered when assessing its physical integrity. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under this theme.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF INTEGRITY
A/1/1,3 (Pattern of Development/Event/Period)	A property under this theme eligible under Criteria A/1/1,3 should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association.
B/2/2 (Person)	A residential property significant under Criterion B/2/2 (Person) should retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to convey the historic association with a significant person.
A/1/6 (District)	In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. A contributing property must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. Eligible historic districts may span several periods of development.

The Influence of the Entertainment Industry (1945-1969): Registration Requirements

To be eligible under this theme, a property must:

- date from the period of significance; and
- represent a known association with an important person or persons in the entertainment industry; for commercial properties, represent a known association with the Hollywood social scene in Palm Springs; a film location must represent an iconic location; and
- display most of the character-defining features of the property type or style; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

To be eligible under this theme, a historic district must:

- retain a majority of the contributors dating from the period of significance; and
- retain a majority of the contributors with a known association with members of the entertainment industry; and
- retain the essential aspects of integrity.

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