MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SAN LUIS OBISPO

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ABSTRACT

Mid-Twentieth Century Residential Development in San Luis Obispo
Allison Dean Zike

San Luis Obispo’s mid-century spanned the years beginning in the Great Depression and ending during the post-World War II housing boom. During this time the City grew in population and in size, adding several acres of land and thousands of single-family residential parcels. This research presents a chronological representation of the City’s growth, as well as key events in the City’s history. Residential development in the mid-century brought several new styles of architecture to the City including Mid-century Modern and Prairie homes among others. These architectural styles are detailed and presented in order to identify and guide the preservation of historic resources.

Keywords: San Luis Obispo, mid-century, Great Depression, World War II, postwar tracts, Modern architecture, Ranch homes, Prairie homes
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ................................................................. vii
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................... viii

1. INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 1

2. LITERATURE REVIEW .......................................................... 3
   2.1. Introduction ............................................................ 3
   2.2. Mid-century San Luis Obispo ........................................ 4
      2.2.1. City Development 1935-1965 .................................. 4
      2.2.2. Gaps in Existing Literature .................................. 6
   2.3. Modern Architecture .................................................. 6
      2.3.1. Development of Modern Architecture: International origins and domestic applications .................................................. 6
      2.3.2. Residential Modern in California ................................ 13
      2.3.3. Sub-styles of Modern Architecture ........................... 16
      2.3.4. Gaps in Existing Literature .................................. 20
   2.4. Mid-Century Historic Context Statements ........................... 21
      2.4.1. Case Cities ..................................................... 21

3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS ................................ 23
   3.1 What was the pattern of development in San Luis Obispo from 1935 to 1965? ................................................. 23
   3.2 How were mid-century patterns of development influenced by the context of San Luis Obispo? ................................. 24
      3.2a. How did the population and economy of the period relate to patterns of development in the mid-century? ................................. 24
      3.2b. How did individual and groups of people of the period relate to mid-century development? ........................................... 25
   3.3 What architectural characteristics did development in San Luis Obispo display between 1935 and 1965? ........................ 25

4. DATA ANALYSIS ............................................................... 27

5. FINDINGS ................................................................. 30
   5.1 PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT ............................................. 30
      5.1.1 Mid-Century Annexations ....................................... 30
      5.1.2 Tract Maps and Subdivisions .................................. 38
   5.2 Mid-Century Development Context .................................... 68
      Prewar Years ............................................................. 69
      War Years .............................................................. 70
      Postwar Years .......................................................... 72
   5.3 MID-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE ......................................... 74
      5.3.1 Mid-century Modern ............................................. 75
      5.3.2 Prairie ............................................................ 81
5.3.3 Ranch.............................................................. 84
5.3.4 Post-war Minimalist........................................... 86
5.3.5 Rustic Ranch................................................... 88
5.3.6 Storybook....................................................... 91
5.3.7 Detailed Tract Areas and Dominant Architectural Styles... 94

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.................................. 102

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................. 104

APPENDIX A ........................................................... 107
APPENDIX B ........................................................... 109
APPENDIX C ........................................................... 111
APPENDIX D ........................................................... 119
APPENDIX E ........................................................... 127
APPENDIX F ........................................................... 136
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1- Mid-Century Annexations by date and area (square miles)..... 30
Table 2- Mid-century tracts by number, year, and parcels in tract.... 39
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1- 1894 City Limit ............................................ 31
Figure 2- Caudill-Imperial Addition (1940) ............................................ 31
Figure 3- Monterey Addition (1948) ............................................ 32
Figure 4- Goldtree Vineyard Annexation (1948) ............................................ 33
Figure 5- Olgati Addition (1952) ............................................ 34
Figure 6- Dalidio-Ferrini Annexation (1956) and Ferrini Annexation (1958) areas ............................................ 34
Figure 7- Garcia-Perriera Annexation (1958) and Elks Club Addition (1960) ............................................ 35
Figure 8- Johnson Annexation (1960) ............................................ 35
Figure 9- Johe Annexation (1961) ............................................ 36
Figure 10- Lakewood Addition (1962) ............................................ 36
Figure 11- Peterson Property Annexation (1963) ............................................ 36
Figure 12- Yoakum Annexation (1960) ............................................ 37
Figure 13- Industrial Annexation (1960) ............................................ 37
Figure 14- Ferrozi 2 Annexation (1963) ............................................ 38
Figure 15- Bullock No. 2 to the south and Lamoro Annexation to the north (1965) ............................................ 38
Figure 16- Nippon Tract (1931) ............................................ 41
Figure 17- California Park Tract (1938) ............................................ 42
Figure 18- Escuela Alta Tract (1939) ............................................ 43
Figure 19- Mira Monte Tract (1947) ............................................ 43
Figure 20- Hagen Subdivision (1949) ............................................ 43
Figure 21- McMillan Manor No. 9 Tract (1950) ............................................ 44
Figure 22- McMillan Manor No. 18 Tract (1952) ............................................ 44
Figure 23- Nielsen-Roberts Subdivision (1952) ............................................ 45
Figure 24- Parview Homes No. 1, sheet 1 (1952) ............................................ 45
Figure 25- Parview Homes No. 1, sheet 2 (1952) ............................................ 45
Figure 26- Ferrini's Addition Tract (1953) ............................................ 46
Figure 27- Alta Vista Tract (1951) ............................................ 46
Figure 28- Goldtree Homes Tract (1953) ............................................ 47
Figure 29- Richland Terrace Tract (1956) ............................................ 48
Figure 30- Richland Terrace #2 Tract (1957) ............................................ 48
Figure 31- Smith Tract (1960) ............................................ 49
Figure 32- College Highlands Tract (1956) ............................................ 50
Figure 33- Ferrini Heights #1 (1956) ............................................ 50
Figure 34- Ferrini Heights #2 (1957) ............................................ 51
Figure 35- Ferrini Heights #3 (1959) ............................................ 51
Figure 36- College Highlands #2 (1958) ............................................ 52
Figure 37- College Highlands #4 (1958) ............................................ 52
Figure 38- Parkview Homes #2, sheet 1 (1958) ............................................ 53
Figure 39- Parkview Homes #2, sheet 2 (1958) ............................................ 53
Figure 40- Parkview Homes #3, sheet 3 (1958) ............................................ 54
Figure 41- College Highlands #5 (1959) ............................................ 54
Figure 42- Ramona Terrace Tract (1959) ............................................ 55
Figure 43- Hillside Manor, sheet 1 (1959) ............................................ 55
Figure 44- Hillside Manor, sheet 2 (1959) ............................................ 56
Figure 45- Ferrini Ranch Estates (1959) ............................................ 56
Figure 46- Bowen Subdivision (1959) ............................................ 57
Figure 47- College Highlands #6 Tract (1961) ............................................ 57
Figure 48- Ferrini Heights #4 Tract (1962) ............................................ 58
Figure 49- Ferrini Heights #5 Tract (1962) ............................................ 58
Figure 50- McAllen Heights tract (1957) ............................................ 59
Figure 51- Johnson Highlands #1 (1959) ............................................ 59
Figure 108- Detailed Tract Area B by year recorded, with tract names. 95
Figure 109-Detailed Tract Area C by year recorded, with tract names.. 96
Figure 110-Detailed Tract Area D by year recorded, with tract names.. 97
Figure 111-Detailed Tract Area E by year recorded, with tract names.. 98
Figure 112- Detailed Tract Area F by year recorded, with tract names. 99
Figure 113- Detailed Tract Area G by year recorded, with tract names 100
Figure 114- Detailed Tract Area H by year recorded, with tract names 101
1. INTRODUCTION

The City of San Luis Obispo’s mid-century spanned the years between 1935 and 1965. This time period was one of population growth and expansion for the City, beginning during the Great Depression. Even during World War II, new residents flocked to the City, and postwar development worked to accommodate them. Historic surveys to date have documented the City’s development pattern up to the 1930’s. This research built upon previous surveys to identify the development patterns and development context of San Luis Obispo between 1935 and 1965. Popular architectural styles built during the mid-century were also researched and identified, with a focus on finding examples of Modern architecture in the City.

The literature review in Chapter 2 summarizes existing literature on the topics of Modern architecture and the City’s history. Modern architecture became widely recognized in Europe in the early twentieth century. In the U.S., residential applications became prominent in the 1920’s, with architect Frank Lloyd Wright leading the way with his Usonian and Modern Prairie Homes. The literature review also gives a brief introduction to the mid-century history of the City and identifies areas for further research.

Chapter 3 introduces the three research questions that this thesis asked and the methodology designed to answer the research questions. Methodology in this research was designed to answer three research questions: (1) what was the pattern of development in San Luis Obispo from 1935 to 1965? (2) How were these patterns influenced by the context of the general population and economy, and individual
residents? And, (3) what architectural characteristics did development in San Luis Obispo display between 1935 and 1965? Methodology used to collect data included archive research, content analysis, map annotation and field observations are detailed in this chapter. Strategies used to analyze collected data are discussed in Chapter 4.

Findings based on data analysis are given in Chapter 5. San Luis Obispo’s mid-century pattern of development was studied based on annexations and tract maps recorded between 1935 and 1965. Annexations added land to the City, and tract maps subdivided City land into parcels—most of which were designed for single-family homes during the time of interest. The growth that the City experienced was concentrated in the latter part of the mid-century, after World War II had ended. This chapter explains though, that the City’s population grew before the City expanded spatially. The last section of findings discusses the architectural styles that were predominant during the mid-century and gives specific features of each style.

The last chapter of the text gives recommendations for potential uses of this research and its practical applications for the City of San Luis Obispo’s historic preservation efforts. Recommendations are also given for future research in this field of study.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In his book, Modern Architecture Since 1900, William J.R. Curtis writes "Architecture oscillates between the unique and the typical. Even a concept of great originality may rely upon features that are common to its time, and upon lines of thought that run back from the recent to the more distant past" (Curtis, 1996, p. 657). Modern architects strove for originality in their works, particularly as the style found a type of incubator in the natural and social setting of California in the mid-twentieth century. This quest for the original though, had roots beginning in the early century in Europe and became recognized for shared characteristics within Modern structures, some apparent in the City of San Luis Obispo. This chapter presents a review of existing literature to understand the historic development in mid-century San Luis Obispo to place it within the broader context of mid-century development and architectural styles in California, focusing on Modern Architecture.

Section One reviews the history of San Luis Obispo as presented by city documents and individually written manuscripts. This section is focused on identifying key events that spurred development in the City between 1935 and 1965. Section Two examines existing literature on Modern Architecture’s development, the style’s influence on residential development in California, and sub-styles prevalent in the mid-century. This portion of the review identifies important qualifying characteristics of Modern architecture to develop a basis for field data collection. Texts focusing on mid-century architecture in California were sourced to identify those mid-century architectural
styles beyond Modernism that may be present in San Luis Obispo. The final section of this chapter reviews of mid-century historic context statements that have been written for California cities. These cities will serve as examples of previous practices in the research and writing of mid-century development and architectural styles.

2.2. Mid-century San Luis Obispo

2.2.1. City Development 1935-1965

The early twentieth century history of San Luis Obispo is invariably tied to the Southern Pacific Railroad and California Polytechnic State University as entities that brought considerable numbers of people to reside in the City. The early 1900’s ushered in the automobile to San Luis Obispo, allowing the City to expand as subdivisions were developed outside of the central area (City of San Luis Obispo, 1976).

The beginning of the mid-century time period in the City, however, had a somewhat slower start, as the population growth rate had dropped during the Depression years between 1930 and 1940 (City of San Luis Obispo, 1976). City documents suggest that the aesthetics of the City began to change at this time from ornate “revival styles to more natural forms characterized by simple handcrafted workmanship” (City of San Luis Obispo, 1976). The 1925 Santa Barbara earthquake also served as a deterrent for ornamentation, and much of this was removed from Downtown buildings during the 1930’s (City of San Luis Obispo, 1976).

The 1940’s were a decade of rapid growth for the City, spurred by the establishment of Camp Roberts in San Luis Obispo County, and significant enrollment increases at Cal Poly post World War II.
"Free college tuition not only gave World War II veterans a warm thank-you for their service, but also endowed colleges and universities with massive federal subsidies" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 227).

The City’s population grew from 8,881 in 1940 up to 14,180 in 1950 (City of San Luis Obispo, 1976). "Mass home ownership, a dream fulfilled by postwar America, was encouraged by federal tax incentives and affordable land along an expanding highway system" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 3).

Architectural styles popular in the early mid-century included: Spanish Revival (1920’s-1930’s); Craftsman (1920’s-1940’s); and Modern which has not been thoroughly documented to date (City of San Luis Obispo, 2010).

During the Roosevelt-Truman-Eisenhower years, Rifkind discusses the shift of power from local and state authorities to Washington, and the beginning of strict regulation. Essential to this is the involvement of federal government in building and art.

"...the New Deal moved the federal government into business regulation, social reform, agricultural subsidies, electrification, land reclamation, and massive public works projects, multiplying by many times the number of bridges, roads, waterworks, electric systems, town and city halls, post offices, schools and courthouses" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 105).

"This [Truman] era saw the beginning of determined efforts to reorganize the city for more and better government...A standard formula rapidly evolved: condemn slum areas, demolish old buildings, enlarge city blocks, widen streets, build underground garages, add access highways and traffic signals" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 105).
2.2.2. Gaps in Existing Literature
While the history of San Luis Obispo has been well documented prior to 1900, more recent history was not thoroughly recorded. Of the five currently designated historic districts in the City, none include any portion of the mid-century in their years of significance. There is abundant literature on national events that had affected city development, both in terms of massive infrastructure construction and home ownership incentives. Current literature on San Luis Obispo does not adequately describe how national programs, such as the New Deal, were directly implemented in the City.

2.3. Modern Architecture
2.3.1. Development of Modern Architecture: International origins and domestic applications
Before Modern Architecture in California is discussed, the movement’s history will be examined, beginning in early twentieth century Europe. Both of these movements, in the United States and abroad, were made possible by technological innovations during the Industrial Revolution of the 1700’s and a “second Industrial Revolution” in the second half of the nineteenth century (Benevolo, 1971, p. 375). The use of iron in construction first became prominent in the late 18th century with the construction of several cast-iron bridges spanning the Severn River in France. The 1790's saw iron become a more prominent material in warehouse construction: "structures employed case-iron columns, the pressing need to perfect a fireproof system for mill buildings led, in the space of four years, to the replacement of the timber beams...by T-section iron beams" (Frampton, 2007, p. 29). Construction trends quickly spread across Europe as exclusive patents on techniques expired
and prefabrication of materials was utilized to spread architectural styles. "By mid [nineteenth] century, cast-iron columns and wrought-iron rails, used in conjunction with modular glazing, had become the standard technique for the rapid prefabrication and erection of urban distribution centres...The prefabricated nature of the cast-iron systems guaranteed not only a certain speed of assembly by also the possibility of transporting building 'kits' over large distances: from mid-century on the industrialized countries began to export prefabricated cast-iron structures all over the world" (Frampton, 2007, p. 33).

Leonardo Benevolo makes reference to a "second industrial revolution" that influenced design and building techniques in the second half of the nineteenth century. "...technical innovations...influenced building techniques, together with the new materials that could be used for supporting structures- steel instead of cast iron, and reinforced concrete- and with the means of internal communication- the lift, telephone, pneumatic post- which made possible the functioning of new building organisms, like hotels and multi-storey office blocks" (Benevolo, 1971, p. 377). New metal materials allowed architects new possibilities in design, "The availability of cheap steel after 1870 afforded a material in which a wide-span solution might be readily achieved" (Frampton, 2007, p. 36). In addition to advancements in metal fabrication, builders began to experiment with different techniques for building with concrete. Reinforced concrete was first used by François Coignet in the 1860's when "he developed a technique for strengthening concrete with metal mesh" (Frampton, 2007, p. 37). As the Modern movement began to materialize, its pioneers took full advantage of the capabilities afforded to them by iron, steel and
reinforced concrete. Le Corbusier recognized the effects of technological innovation in his 1928 book, Toward an Architecture:

...in the last fifty years iron and cement have brought gains that are the index of a great power to build and the index of an architecture whose code is in upheaval. If we set ourselves against the past, we determine that the 'styles' no longer exist for us, that the style of an era has been elaborated; there has been a revolution (Le Corbusier, 1928, p. 89).

Lluis Dominech i Montaner, an early Modern architect from Barcelona explained the style's intention: "Let us apply openly the forms which recent experience and needs impose on us, enriching them and giving form through the inspiration of nature..." (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 24). The initial introduction of Modern Architecture in the U.S. was welcomed by Lewis Mumford in the late 1920's, who subscribed to Patrick Geddes' idea that "the present paleotechnic phase in civilization would give way to a neotechnic phase in which electricity would succeed coal as a source of power, and biological principles would replace mechanistic ones" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 232.) It was these ideologies that form should follow need and nature, along with a move against ornamentation that lay at the base of Modern Architecture in its first representations. "Aiming for total break with the past, Modernists vowed to strip architecture of every obsolete vestige of 'style,' totally reinventing and rationalizing it in terms of function" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 6).

Adolf Loos was a staunch proponent of the abolition of ornamentation, and wrote about broad societal effects that could be affected by the Modern movement. "Loos' writings shifted the debate on the reform of
the applied arts into a new register—one that was eventually to turn
him into the unwitting father figure of the 1920's Modern Movement. In
his essay 'Ornament and Crime' (1908), he claimed that the elimination
of ornament from useful objects was the result of a cultural evolution
leading to the abolition of waste and superfluity from human labour.
This process was not harmful but beneficial to culture, reducing the
time spent on manual labour and releasing energy for the life of the
mind" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 74). In this 1908 article, Loos wrote "A
true style for the times would be discovered when ornament was done
away with, and essential underlying qualities of form, proportion,
clarity and measure were allowed to emerge, unadorned" (Curtis, 1996,
p. 71).

While Loos’ design was an aggressively driven move against
ornamentation, others worked to simply establish the style as its own:
"Modern is the styles of newness, born of a desire to throw off the
past, to begin with a clean slate for a range of societal, political,
and aesthetic reasons" (Morgan, 2004, p. 340). By the 1920’s, as Frank
Lloyd Wright’s prominent Prairie Homes grew in popularity in the United
States, Le Corbusier had emerged as a Modern leader in Europe. Le
Corbusier wrote to a client: "we have got used to compositions which
are so complicated that they give the impression of men carrying their
intestines outside their bodies. We claim that these should remain
inside...and that the outside of the house should appear in all its
limpidity" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 146). To this end, both architects
began working with simple materials such as concrete and steel framing
to construct shell-like exteriors. Developing technology was at the
core of design as explained by Le Corbusier's conception of modern
technology and architecture. Colquhoun explains: "Technology,
continuously changing, makes the building functionally efficient, satisfying, and giving rise to needs. But like the machinery of a car, the technology of the house should be invisible. Both house and car are...complex sets of functions sheathed in Platonic membranes" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 146).

Wright and Le Corbusier both show applications of this “membrane” exterior in their works in the 1920’s and prior. Beginning in 1914, Le Corbusier developed his "Dom-ino" concrete housing system was based on a basic, six-point support skeleton and slabs made of concrete that could be built upon. "It separated out the structural and the screening functions of the wall by removing the fill from the frame...It could become effectively a sort of membrane to be punctured as functional necessities or compositional instincts required" (Curtis, 1996, p. 84-85). Wrights' works in the 1920’s were sometimes referred to as the 'concrete-block houses'. "The idea was to create buildings on the basis of a few geometrical modules and pre-cast concrete units... The architect was intrigued by the idea of interweaving plate glass and concrete, by the notion of the perforated wall..." (Curtis, 1996, p. 231). Kenneth Frampton describes work of Frank Lloyd Wright characterized by the use of concrete supports and cantilever systems draped with "crystalline membrane(s)" of glass (Frampton, 2007, p. 188). Wright's Moderne style also made use of curved, corner profiles or a "circular vocabulary" (Frampton, 2007, p. 188).

This decade saw the definitive establishment of the Modern style as it is known today. In 1923, Germany, the Bauhaus organized an exhibition themed "Art and Technology: a New Unity" with an agenda to present "international architecture from a completely predetermined point of
view, namely the development of modern architecture in the dynamic
functional direction, without ornament or mouldings" (Colquhoun, 2002,
p. 162). This functional, yet dynamic, direction was reaffirmed in
Wrights’ work as well as major trends in Le Corbusier’s design that
emphasized natural materials and primitive methods (Frampton, 2007).
In the late 1920’s, Le Corbusier published his book, Toward an
Architecture which gave way to Five Points for a New Architecture:
pilotis; the roof garden; the free plan; the horizontal window; and the
free façade. "Each point, inverting a specific element of the academic
tradition, is presented as a freedom achieved by means of modern

New York’s Museum of Modern Art formally introduced America to "...the
three leaders of the Modern avant-garde in Europe: Germans Walter
Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier of Switzerland"
(Morgan, 2004, p. 350) through the 1932 exhibition: The International
Style: Architecture Since 1922 (Johnson & Hitchcock, 1966).

Along with the accompanying book, The International Style, by Philip
Johnson and Henry Russel Hitchcock (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 231) the
exhibition was seen as the defining moment for the introduction of the
Modern Movement into America. International leaders "...had been
reshaping the spatial revolution started by Wright...the Europeans had
created new houses that went even further than Wright in breaking up
the box and dissolving traditional domestic boundaries" (Morgan, 2004,
p. 350). These international architects also pioneered revolutionary
uses of materials. For example, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe used glass as
"scarcely modulated" curtain walls in conjunction with articulated
column systems. Volume and massing of buildings were symmetrical and
asymmetrical, with columns and glass curtains creating "unobstructed clear-span single-storey, unitary volume" (Frampton, 2007, p. 235).

The 1930’s saw wide acceptance of Modern Architecture in the United States, as some elements of the style became the vernacular in application. "In the 1930's, concrete skeleton and steel frame, piloti and free-plan partition, grid and extending curve, became common property... [and] there were those ready to speculate on the 'condition of anonymity', and to consider the possibility that modern architecture might achieve the same sort of common usage and wide application that classicism had in the eighteenth century" (Curtis, 1996, p. 306). This included Modern residential structures, notably, Wright’s Usonian homes. "In the 1930's he devoted time to the design of cheap, single-family dwellings (e.g. the Usonian houses) and to a decentralized Utopia ('Broadacre City) - both intended to supply American society with a coherent social form in a period of crisis" (Curtis, 1996, p. 311). "Usonia[n] homes were designed by Wright to be "warm, open-planned, small houses designed for convenience, economy and comfort. The heart of the Usonian house was the 'time-and-motion' kitchen, an alcove work space freely planned off the living volume... " (Frampton, 2007, p. 191).

"During the 1940s and 1950s in the United States there were, of course, several vital strands of modern architecture each with its own momentum. Aside from Wright's extraordinarily far-ranging production and influence in this period at home and abroad, there were the later works of Schindler and Neutra on the West Coast, and various pockets of 'Regionalism' such as the Bay Region School around San Francisco (for example, the work of William Wurster). Schindler tended towards an
ever more complex manner... unusual building materials such as corrugated plastic sheeting, which he used in combination with exposed timber. In contrast to this 'shed aesthetic', Neutra became even more involved with an architecture of precise steel, plate glass, transparency and illumination" (Curtis, 1996, p. 399). The Modern aesthetic had become an integral part of America’s design fabric by the 1950’s, and its widespread use seen in public buildings, educational campuses, monuments, museums, and of course, homes.

2.3.2. Residential Modern in California

The 1940’s ushered in a zeal for Modern Architecture in home buildings, especially in post-World War II California. The amiable climate allowed both American and European architects to design structures that could interact with nature, a foundation of the style’s original intentions. "Many viewed the private house as a laboratory for innovative design, expecting that solutions for the design problems of the individual house would have positive repercussions for the well-being of society at large..." (Rifkind, 1998, p. 3). Influential Modern Architects had long viewed the style for its mass-production potential. "In fact, Wright came early on to the conclusion that mass production was necessary if good design was to be democratically enjoyed" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 53). Henry Van de Velde worked primarily in Art Noveau and was "a socialist and hoped that industrial mass production of his objects might make visual quality available to the broad masses" (Curtis, 1996, p. 58). Van de Velde was not necessarily considered Modern, but his idea that quality architecture be widely few seems to be a theme of the Modern movement.
In the two decades following World War II, "...most new housing took the form of large suburban settlements, made necessary by the accelerated migration of white middle-class families from the cities to the outer suburbs and carried out by private developers. At the same time there was a large market in one-off family houses, extending from the modest and pre-designed to the lavish and purpose designed" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 233). "...the postwar Modern period was one of experimentation, dynamism, excitement...Modern architects still thought in terms of a housing revolution, especially through kit houses and mass manufacturing" (Morgan, 2004, p. 362). Architects, though, were thoughtful about preserving quality with this mass production. Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Arthur Drexler, in an introduction to their 1952 collection, "Built in the U.S.A., compare pre- and post-war architecture: "Booms are not always conducive to good building, and memories of excessive production in the twenties should warn us to view with a wary eye such construction as is prepared and executed under conditions of maniac haste and rising costs" (Hitchcock and Drexler, 1952, p. 10).

In America, there were many deliberate attempts to influence the production of post-war housing, including those to lead the market in the direction of Modern Architecture. The Case Study House Program "began in 1945 as an attempt at formulating low-cost, steel-frame prototypes for houses responsive to immediate post-war social conditions and to the landscape of southern California" (Curtis, 1996, p. 405) . John Estenza, editor of Arts & Architecture magazine, issued a challenge for the participating architects, declaring principles upon which the post-war house should be based: "The house is an instrument of service. Degrees of service are real and can be
measured. They are not dependent on taste. The house should not assert itself by its architectural design. In fact, the better integrated the services of the house become, the less one is apt to be conscious of the physical way in which it has been done. The kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, utilities, and storage will profit most by an industrialized system of prefabrication. In the live-recreational areas variation becomes a valid personal preference. A designer must know what the house must supply to meet the physiological and psychological needs of the members of the family" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 234).

Well known Modern architects in the 1940's and 1950's developed houses featuring 'free plans' emphasizing flexible spaces and worked heavily with materials of steel and glass. Industrialized parts were utilized by many of these architects, such as Craig Ellwood, "who tried to popularize steel framing and industrial components as a new American domestic vernacular" (Rifkind, 1998, p. 7). Suburban houses in 1940's Southern California shared many similar Modern characteristics such as: one-storey construction with a flat roof; open and informal plans that were bi-nuclear, with living rooms and bedrooms remote from each other; large areas of glazing for means of opening up the inside to the outside; unrendered brick fireplaces; and, brickwork construction with wood framing. (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 235). Case Study houses changed Modern aesthetics around 1950 with new and evolved characteristics including: "new concentration on modular construction and prefabrication"; assembled systems; architecture of steel and glass; steel frames with the structure a method of assembly clearly visible; simpler plans that previous 1940's Case Study houses (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 235). "The minimal skeleton was used to 'frame' and intensify
suburban existence, and (in combination with trellis, screen and deck) to make delicate pavilions posed in the trees, with fine views of city and nature. Interiors were usually open, efficient and transparent, catering to a casual way of life, and to an independence allowed by the automobile. While the designers of the Case Study houses pretended to have no interest in style, their vocabulary of thin wall, slender pier and interlocking beam was a simplified, linear version of the interlocking volumes of Neutra, Schindler and Wright” (Curtis, 1996, p. 405). These designs gradually developed into widely accepted Modern residential style in California.

2.3.3. Sub-styles of Modern Architecture

Accepted sub-styles of modern architecture include the following as documented by existing literature:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-style</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| International (1922-1950's) | "Through the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright, international Modernism had at least one of its roots in the regional and democratic concerns of the American Mid-west and in the organicist theories of its architects" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 55). Of the International Style: "One could speak of the shared characteristics in terms of recurrent motifs like strip windows, flat roofs, grids of supports, cantilevered horizontal planes, metal railings and curved partitions; or, one could define the general qualities of the style by more abstract features such as the recurrent tendency to use simple rectangular volumes articulated by crisply cut openings, or to emphasize hovering planes and interpenetrating spaces" (Curtis,
"The spatial planning of Wright was translated into the language of the machine (Le Corbusier even called his paradigm house "A Machine for Living"): flat roofs, factory sash, pilotis, glass bricks, and ramps, as well as roof gardens; only a few splashes of primary color offset the purists' white walls. In contrast to the playful Deco, International Style reflected the serious ideological beliefs of its creators" (Morgan, 2004, p. 350).

Defining Characteristics (Morgan, 2004, p. 360)

General Proportions: Asymmetrical, horizontal massing composed of rectangular cubes: mostly right angles, with occasional semi-circular walls. Usually one or two stories

Roof Types and Features: flat roofs, sometimes used as sun decks (exterior stairways and pipe railings). Balconies have nautically inspired pipe railings.

Fenestration: ribbon or strip windows of factory sash, with single panes, invariably vertical. Windows are set rights against the façade. Sometimes round, porthole-like windows

Structural and Facework Materials: examples may have steel frames, but exterior surfaces are usually smooth stucco, although clapboards (vertical as well as horizontal), metal, and concrete are employed as well. Any decoration is eschewed.
Spatial Designation and Floor Plan: Cubic blocks are arranged in L-shapes. Intersecting blocks, with wings often cantilevered. Main living spaces are open, although a step, column, or railing may define areas.

Chimney Placement: chimneys are sometimes an important focal point of "radiating" plan and can be fairly massive (although never square). Chimneys can be quite industrial: undisguised metal stacks.

Entranceway: industrial-looking doors, never set on axis, and often placed unceremoniously to the side or rear.

Color: white, off-white, and the colors inherent in materials used for cladding.

New Monumentalism

[1941] Discussion of sub-styles such as New-Monumentalism, used widely in American New Deal buildings programs such as the Tennessee Valley Authority. This sub-style of Modern was captured in this project as described by architect George Howe: "The power plants and living centres of TVA are an effort to carve a new pattern of life out of earth, air and water...and make the land the likeness of the people to that the people can come to be a likeness of the land" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 213).

Elizabeth Mock, curator of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, wrote: "A democracy needs monuments, even though its requirements are not those of a dictatorship. There must be occasional buildings
which raise the everyday casualness of living to a higher and more ceremonial plane, buildings which give dignified and coherent form to that interdependence of the individual and the social group which is the very nature of democracy." (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 213)

[1943] Sigfried Giedion "focused on the need for civic centres symbolizing the idea of 'community' in which all the visual arts would collaborate, creating a new Gesamtkunstwerk" (Colquhoun, 2002, p. 213).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chicago suburban vernacular</th>
<th>Curtis, 1996, p. 114</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Deco (1925-1940's)</td>
<td>Morgan, 2004, p. 341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- General proportions: low, boxy, horizontal
- Roof types and features: flat roofs hidden behind low parapets
- Fenestration: windows that are combinations of large single panes, with rows of smaller panes to one side. Picture windows. Windows often placed at the corners. Symmetry is a rarity. Glass blocks admit light. If windows have frames, they are decorated with abstract motifs.
- Structural and Facework Materials: stucco walls predominate. Incised horizontal lines, as well as occasional balustrades (particularly on upper story balconies), emphasize the horizontality. Cornices and
window surrounds and doorways receive the bulk of the decorative treatment, which is generally comprised of abstract geometrical motifs. Glass bricks can be used as a wall surface, and, sometimes, decorative tiles. 

Spatial Designation and Floor Plan: rectangular, but generally asymmetrical. Flowing, open plan; living and dining and library spaces separated by a step or a low railing. 

Chimney Placement: pretty much invisible from the street. 

Entranceway: Doorways can be industrially plain or surrounded by abstract geometric patterns. Doorways often have small, flat roofs above. 

Color: White, white, white, and sometimes pastel pinks and blues.

1.1.1. 2.3.4. Gaps in Existing Literature

Existing literature on Modern Architecture extensively documents the style’s international roots and domestic applications in the United States. While the development of residential Modern in California is also thoroughly examined through the Case Study House Program and works of widely recognized architects, most of this focuses on Southern California and the Bay Area regions. The Central Coast of California does not have an adequate amount of information regarding influential Modern architectural works.
2.4. Mid-Century Historic Context Statements

2.4.1. Case Cities

Case cities used as examples of existing mid-century, or Modern, historic context statements were Fresno, Pasadena and San Diego, California. These documents were commonly authored by consultant teams including city planners, architects, architectural historians, and other contributing parties. The existing historic context statements are similar in content structure, as they closely follow the California Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for writing historic context statements. All examples include a brief discussion of history that pre-date the subject period. The mid-century is discussed at length in the examples, with each city utilizing a unique format to do so. While Pasadena constructed a basic timeline with explanatory sentences of the time period, Fresno and San Diego write their histories in a more narrative form divided into “eras of influence.” For example, the mid-century “eras” identified by San Diego were: Early Modernism; San Diego in Transition (1935-1939); The War Years (1939-1945); Post War (1945-1959); and Urban Renewal (1960-1970). They use each era to show the effects of national events and policies on local levels. Graphic representations are used to show development in the subject time period, such as maps showing a chronological representation of annexations.

Each historic context statement identifies prominent architectural styles in the time period, and the building types that exhibit those. Architectural styles found to be important to the mid-century in example cities included: Streamline Moderne; Minimal Traditional; International; Futurist-Googie; Tiki-Polynesian; Post and Beam; Tract Ranch; Custom Ranch; Contemporary; Brutalist; Organic; and New
Formalism. These architectural styles were documented by field research that yielded historic resources for each city. These structures are documented in the context statements, and used to illustrate characteristics of their respective architectural styles. Each document also included a list of prominent designers and architects in the city during the mid-century.
3. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Methodology in this research was designed to answer three research questions: (1) what was the pattern of development in San Luis Obispo from 1935 to 1965? (2) How were these patterns influenced by the context of the general population and economy, and individual residents? And, (3) what architectural characteristics did development in San Luis Obispo display between 1935 and 1965? Interpretive-historical research was the primary methodological approach to gather and analyze determinative and contextual evidence (Groat and Wang, 2002). This methodology was appropriate because the foundations of development in the mid-century are evident in several archival sources. Interpretive research “entails fact-finding, fact-evaluation, fact-organization, and fact-analysis” (Groat and Wang, 2002, p. 165). Research questions were answered using the methods and instruments detailed below.

3.1 What was the pattern of development in San Luis Obispo from 1935 to 1965?

The initial method to identify these patterns was studying maps to ascertain development patterns at multiple intervals within the mid-century. Patterns here refer to the geographical location of development in the City and include both growth in new areas and infill of areas already developed. One type of maps used were Sanborn maps—archived fire insurance maps dating back to the nineteenth century that show building footprints and parcel lines. Other maps used were archival maps created by the City and County. Instruments used to collect data from these maps were overlays developed to track development patterns. A map annotation (Zeisel, 2006) checklist was
also used to standardize the data collection from all maps used in this method. Annexation records and archived tract maps were instruments used to determine the chronology of City growth and to research where and when new land was brought into City limits. City documents such as annexation agreements and project conditions of approval were another instrument utilized in this research.

San Luis Obispo City and County records such as subdivision maps and building permits were sources of archival resources. These instruments contributed data to develop overlay maps. Methods for processing the data gathered from archival sources were arranged in a chronological timeline and a spatial organization that was informed by the visual information offered by maps.

3.2 How were mid-century patterns of development influenced by the context of San Luis Obispo?

3.2a. How did the population and economy of the period relate to patterns of development in the mid-century?

Still working in the interpretive-historical research methodology, this research point employed the method of collecting archive census data. According to Zeisel, archived numbers, or data and statistics gathered from past surveys, may be the only source of data available in certain areas of research or simply the more efficient than collecting new data (Zeisel, 2006). The U.S. Census Bureau was a limited research instrument for finding past population and economic data. Data collected reflected population trends in the mid-century, as well as economic statistics relevant to City development.
3.2b. How did individual and groups of people of the period relate to mid-century development?

Methodology on this research point was informed by environment-behavior research. Research instruments for this method are newspaper archives, minutes from public hearings, and reports generated during the subject time period. Several historic accounts from past residents were also used to determine significant events that effected, or were affected by, the mid-century development of the City.

3.3 What architectural characteristics did development in San Luis Obispo display between 1935 and 1965?

Field observations informed by the literature review on Modern Architecture were used to answer this research question. Literature on Modern architecture was studied to identify properties of Modern Architecture as those that are mentioned across multiple sources. The resulting instrument was a compendium reflecting characteristics of Modern architecture used to then identify structures as one of any sub-categories of the style. Parcels were identified for visual analysis based on location within tracts recorded during the period of study. Visual and photo analyses identified preliminary “model” Modern structures in the City through field observation and photo cataloguing. The resulting collection of structures were grouped by architectural style. As research progressed, additional architectural styles found to be characteristic of the time period were incorporated into data collection, analysis and findings.

The methods identified above collected data organized into four types of evidence: determinative, contextual, inferential and recollective (Groat and Wang, 2002). Archival sources provided determinative
evidence that identified and contextualized parcels and structures in time, as well as geographically. Field observations were sources of contextual evidence, as physical examples of development patterns and styles were observed. Historic accounts were recollective evidence that was analyzed to determine historic context of the mid-century. Much of the data gathered was inferential—helping to link together other data into logical spatial and chronological relationships. Data sources utilized included:

1. City/County archives
2. Newspaper archives
3. GIS data
4. Field Research
5. Property permit histories
6. Building permits
7. Sanborn Maps
8. Archive photographs
9. California Office of Historic Preservation
10. California mid-century historic context statements
11. Personal recorded accounts
12. Sampling of parcels recorded in mid-century

Item 12, sampling of parcels recorded in mid-century, is not an all-encompassing review of every structure built between 1935 and 1965. Rather, it is a review of parcels that were included in tract maps recorded between 1935 and 1965.
4. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was conducted on determinative and contextual evidence to describe patterns of historical development of San Luis Obispo represented by the physical development and character of the built environment. These types of evidence situate physical objects (i.e. buildings) chronologically and stylistically (Groat and Wang, 2002, p. 154). Annexations occurring during the mid-century were mapped by year to study the year-by-year direction of growth in the City. From this, the amount of land annexed by year was also recorded. Tract and subdivision maps showed the scale of each new property development in the mid-century. Each tract map recorded in the mid-century was analyzed in the context of its respective annexation area. For each tract, data analyzed included: year recorded, location, and number of parcels in the tract. This data showed patterns that were indicative of prominent development styles in that time.

Methods mentioned above collected and organize archive documents. These sources presented archival data in the form of words. Words require content analysis to determine their subjectivity and context, or a performance of a coding operation. Some of this analysis was completed by frequency coding of the manifest content (Babbie, 2004, p. 319) to reveal common themes in annexations and subdivisions during that time. Coding of latent content, or the underlying meaning of these documents (Babbie, 2004, p. 319), revealed opinions that were informed by the developer, city staff and the public. Combined coding results revealed common themes of growth during this period, and provided insight into opinions supporting or not supporting that development.
Population and economic data gathered required secondary analysis, which does not have to be the same analysis they were originally gathered for. Archival data, in the form of economic statistics for the time period, was helpful to determine what the economic drivers were in San Luis Obispo in the mid-century. This data showed what primary industries were in the area—what was bringing money, people and growth into the City. This type of data was important to collect because different industries show different types of growth and building style preferences in the City’s history. Economic status of residents or groups of residents from the time period was analyzed to draw possible correlations to building styles, and or location of building in the City (ie: locating near certain industry centers).

Archive sources of human experiences yielded qualitative data. Opinions were factor in explaining why certain architectural styles were used in particular areas, and to explain why those styles become dominant for the mid-century time period. Annexations, subdivision design, and other architectural design reviews conducted by the City were examined for public hearing comment, and subsequent support or dissent.

Data analysis to find prominent architectural styles during the mid-century utilized earlier analysis that showed parcels recorded during the mid-century. Each of these parcels was included in the visual survey to determine common architectural themes. The visual survey gathered a sampling of structures to use for analysis. Sample structures were chosen for having architectural characteristics common to the whole population of structures within mid-century tracts. The collection of sample structures were then divided into groups of
similar architectural characteristics that could be attributed to recognized architectural styles. This information was used to build the Mid-Century San Luis Obispo Residential Architectural Styles guide (Appendix F).
5. FINDINGS

5.1 PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

For research question 1 (What was the pattern of development in San Luis Obispo from 1935 to 1965?), findings will be presented as a series of maps that show a chronological representation of development patterns from 1935 to 1965. Maps will show new annexations of land into the City from the period, as well as locations of new subdivisions and building. Tables will be developed in conjunction with maps to reflect details of each annexation and subdivision.

5.1.1 Mid-Century Annexations

The mid-century, between 1935 and 1965 was a period of growth for the City of San Luis Obispo. During this 30-year span, 21 annexations added a total of 4.5 square miles to the City’s area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (yr.)</th>
<th>Date (mo.)</th>
<th>Annexation</th>
<th>Area (Sq. Mi.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td></td>
<td>Town Boundary</td>
<td>3.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caudill - Imperial Addition</td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phillips Addition</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949 Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Goldtree Vineyard</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951 Jul</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ferrini Addition</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952 Jun</td>
<td></td>
<td>Digliat Addition</td>
<td>0.0015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daidio - Ferrini Addition</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957 Aug</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bullock Annexation</td>
<td>0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Laguna Property Annexation</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959 Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ferrini Addition</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959 Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Garcia - Pereira Addition</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 Mar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elk's Club Addition</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 May</td>
<td></td>
<td>Industrial Annexation</td>
<td>0.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 May</td>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson Annexation</td>
<td>0.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td>Petrozzl Annexation</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 Aug</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yoakum Annexation</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td>Freeway Addition</td>
<td>0.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 Dec</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jho Addition</td>
<td>0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961 Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Portion of Tract 166 Annexation</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962 Jul</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lakewood Addition</td>
<td>0.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963 Nov</td>
<td></td>
<td>Petrozzl Annexation No. 2</td>
<td>0.025</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Calvary-Baptist Church Annexation</td>
<td>0.003</td>
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<td>1964 Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peterson Annexation</td>
<td>0.325</td>
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<tr>
<td>1965 Sep</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bullock Annexation No. 2</td>
<td>0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965 Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lamoro Company Annexation No. 1</td>
<td>0.178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1- Mid-Century Annexations by date and area (square miles)
Annexations made immediately following the mid-century, between 1965 and 1970 added an additional 3 square miles. The original 1894 city limits of San Luis Obispo encompassed 3.021 square miles.

The original parcels are situated in the center of the modern city with the northern boundary being the equivalent of Murray Street and the southern boundary at approximately Mitchell Street. The first annexation of land into the City was not until 1940, when the Caudill-Imperial Addition added 0.08 square miles to the then southern border of the City along Broad Street.
The Phillips and Monterey additions in 1948 added a considerable amount of land to the City; particularly the Monterey Addition which pushed the City limit north, nearly all the way to its present location which is directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the Cal Poly campus. This annexation brought the area known as Monterey Heights within City limits, as well as areas running to the north and south of Foothill Boulevard.

The 1940’s were rounded out with another relatively large annexation, Goldtree Vineyard, adding to the then southeast corner of the City.
The Goldtree Vineyard annexation was the City’s first eastward expansion; following the curve of present-day Johnson Avenue.

The 1950’s were a decade of growth in the City, particularly the second half of the decade from 1956 to 1960. There were several annexations into the City during the decade, adding 0.84 square miles to the total size. The first was the Olgiati Addition in 1952, which encompassed what remains the near western boundary of the City.
The Ferrini and Dalidio-Ferrini Additions were the largest of these annexations and rounded out the northwest corner of the City forming the neighborhoods along Highland Street and around the base of Bishop’s Peak.

The Bullock and Laguna Annexations in 1957 both incorporated land into the City for non-residential purposes. The Bullock Annexation was a small area of land at the intersection of the railroad and Orcutt Road. The Laguna Annexation incorporated Laguna Lake into the City and was a
precursor to later development around the lake. The last annexation of the 1950’s was the Garcia-Perriera; a small annexation between Madonna Road and Highway 101. The Elks Club Addition annexed a small piece of land that complemented the Garcia-Perriera Annexation.

The Johnson Annexation kickstarted a decade of rapid expansion in May of 1960, bringing the area directly adjacent to recently annexed Laguna Lake into the City.
The Johe annexation in 1961, the Lakewood Addition in 1962 and the Peterson Property annexation in 1963 further expanded the City’s area to the southwest and across Los Osos Valley Road.

The Freeway Addition in 1961 pushed the City out along South Higuera Street. The Yoakum Annexation and the relatively large .69 square mile
Industrial Annexation, both in 1960, extended the City south along Broad Street beyond Tank Farm Road.

In 1963, the Perrozzi 2 Annexation was added adjacent to the 1948 Goldtree Vineyard Annexation.
In 1965, the Bullock No. 2 and Lamora Annexations both incorporated more land along Los Osos Valley Road into the City.

In total, the 1960’s incorporated 2.95 additional square miles into the City and built the framework for the modern City boundaries.

5.1.2 Tract Maps and Subdivisions

Between 1930 and 1965, there were a total of 54 tract maps recorded in San Luis Obispo, with the majority of them recorded in the 1950’s. As shown by this concentration of recordings after World War II shows: “The true building block of the expanding postwar metropolis in
California [was] not the urban block, but the subdivision or tract” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 43). Tract maps recorded since 1930 were examined for their potential to have been built out in the mid-century, after 1935. The majority of tracts were recorded with an associated name and a tract number ranging from Tract No. 11 to Tract No. 317 for this specific time period. These tract maps recorded over 2,000 individual parcels in the mid-century.

![Table 2 - Mid-century tracts by number, year, and parcels in tract](image)

While the mid-century saw areas annexed into the City that extended far south along Broad and South Higuera Streets, the areas being subdivided
into tracts in the same time period remained comparatively close to the City center. These tracts were recorded within annexation areas incorporated both before and during the mid-century, as there were still large portions within the 1894 City Limits being built out. Within that original 1894 City boundary alone, there were nine tract maps recorded between 1931 and 1958.

Subdivisions, or recorded tracts, between 1935 and 1965 tended to be clustered together, and recorded adjacent to each other as larger residential neighborhoods developed within the City of San Luis Obispo. Residential areas that are still prominent in the present day formed during this time. For example, neighborhoods directly south of the Cal Poly campus were subdivided as early as the 1930’s. The neighborhoods bordering the northern and southern roads arterial to Foothill Boulevard were subdivided primarily in the 1950’s and early 1960’s. The entireties of residential parcels bordering Laguna Lake were subdivided in the early 1960’s. The majority of tracts recorded in the mid-century period consisted of more than 10 parcels, with the largest subdivision recording 196 parcels (table 2). The average number of parcels recorded per tract in the mid-century was 47, most of which were developed into single-family residential lots. Similar to many of “California’s smaller cities,” San Luis Obispo “…postwar tracts typically have fewer than 200 houses” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 45).

The first tract map recorded in the mid-century was the 32-parcel Nippon Tract off of South Street in 1931, which was within the 1894 City limit.
The California Park Tract recorded 59 parcels in 1938, directly south of the Cal Poly campus, and included Orange, Kentucky and Longview Streets.
Also within the 1894 City limit, a portion of the parcels along San Luis Drive were recorded as the Escuela Alta Tract in 1939. While there were no tracts recorded between 1940 and 1945, the remainder of the San Luis Drive area was recorded as the Mira Monte Tract in 1947 and the Escuela Alta No. 2 Tract in 1954. Combined, the Escuela Alta, Mira Monte and Escuela Alta No. 2 tracts added 178 parcels to the City.
The Hagen Tract was recorded in 1949, and started development in the southeast quadrant of the City adjacent to Terrace Hill. This tract recorded 38 parcels in the City.

The area of the City around Foothill and Highland began to develop in the late 1940’s, with a large portion of the area recorded in 1950 as the McMillan Manor Number 9 Tract. With 123 parcels, this was one of the largest tract maps recorded in the mid-century. Several tracts
were recorded in the early 1950's adjacent to McMillan Manor Number 9, including the McMillan Manor Number 18 (144 parcels) and the Nielson-Roberts (36 parcels) tracts in 1952. The large tract of 139 parcels, Parkview Homes No. 1, was recorded in 1952, and the small, 11-parcel Ferrini’s Addition in 1953.

Figure 21- McMillan Manor No. 9 Tract (1950)

Figure 22- McMillan Manor No. 18 Tract (1952)
Figure 23- Nielsen-Roberts Subdivision (1952)

Figure 24- Parview Homes No. 1, sheet 1 (1952)

Figure 25- Parkview Homes No. 1, sheet 2 (1952)
The area south of Cal Poly continued development in the early 1950’s when the Alta Vista Tract recorded 78 parcels in 1951 directly east of the California Park Tract. This map encompassed Chaplin and Albert streets.
The 1950’s also saw another tract of 55 parcels, Goldtree Homes, recorded in 1953 along Helena Street and extending west to Boulevard Del Campo. The mid-century developments in this area were rounded out by the recording of the Richland Terrace tract (21 parcels) in 1956, the Richland Terrace #2 tract (23 parcels) in 1957 and the Smith tract (8 parcels) in 1960.

Figure 28- Goldtree Homes Tract (1953)
Figure 29- Richland Terrace Tract (1956)

Figure 30- Richland Terrace #2 Tract (1957)
During the late 1950's and early 1960's, large areas of the City to the north and south of Foothill Boulevard were subdivided. Between 1955 and 1960 alone, there were 11 tracts recorded in the area. These included: the College Highlands #1 (49 parcels), College Highlands #2 (30 parcels), and College Highlands #4 (27 parcels) tracts; Ferrini Heights #1 (61 parcels), Ferrini Heights #2 (22 parcels), and Ferrini Heights #3 (42 parcels) tracts; Parkview Homes #2 (68 parcels); the Ramona Terrace tract (27 parcels); the Hillside Manor tract (18 parcels); the Ferrini Ranch Estates (18 parcels); and, the Bowen Subdivision (7 parcels).
Figure 32- College Highlands Tract (1956)

Figure 33- Ferrini Heights #1 (1956)
Figure 34- Ferrini Heights #2 (1957)

Figure 35- Ferrini Heights #3 (1959)
Figure 36- College Highlands #2 (1958)

Figure 37- College Highlands #4 (1958)
Figure 38- Parkview Homes #2, sheet 1 (1958)

Figure 39- Parkview Homes #2, sheet 2 (1958)
Figure 40- Parkview Homes #3, sheet 3 (1958)

Figure 41- College Highlands #5 (1959)
Figure 42- Ramona Terrace Tract (1959)

Figure 43- Hillside Manor, sheet 1 (1959)
Figure 44- Hillside Manor, sheet 2 (1959)

Figure 45- Ferrini Ranch Estates (1959)
Three additional, relatively small tracts were recorded in the Foothill area after 1960, the College Highlands #6 (7 parcels) tract in 1961, and the Ferrini Heights #4 (40 parcels) and #5 (13 parcels) tracts in 1962.
Figure 48- Ferrini Heights #4 Tract (1962)

Figure 49- Ferrini Heights #5 Tract (1962)

Tract maps creating subdivisions at the eastern edges of the City and following the topography of the hills northeast of Flora Street were recorded in the later part of the mid-century. The area began with the 53-parcel McAllen Heights Tract in 1957. The Johnson Highlands #1
Tract was recorded in 1959 and the Johnson Highlands #3 and Johnson Highlands #5 Tracts were recorded in 1963 for a total of 49 parcels.

Figure 50- McAllen Heights tract (1957)

Figure 51- Johnson Highlands #1 (1959)
Another large residential area in the City developed during the mid-century were those subdivisions south of Southwood Street. This expansive area was subdivided by only five tracts that each contained over 40 parcels. The first tract recorded was Southwood Subdivision #1 (83 parcels) in 1959 followed by Southwood Subdivision #2 (102 parcels) in 1961. The Ann Arbor Estate Tract (46 parcels) was recorded
in 1961 as well. The Ann Arbor Estates #2 (43 parcels) and Ann Arbor Estates #3 (71 parcels) tracts were recorded in 1962 and 1964, respectively.

Figure 54- Southwood Subdivision #1 (1959)

Figure 55- Southwood Subdivision #2 (1961)
The last large portion of the City subdivided in the mid-century was the expansive Laguna Lake area, which was wholly recorded between 1960 and 1964. The tract maps recorded in the area were large tracts; each consisting of many parcels. In total, nine tracts were recorded in these years. The Laguna Park Homes Tract in 1960, was southeast of Madonna Road, and was a large tract made up of 96 parcels. The Lakewood Tract recorded in 1960 subdivided the remainder of the residential area on the southeast side of Madonna Road in the Laguna area. This was the largest mid-century tract and recorded 196 parcels.
Figure 57 - Laguna Park Homes tract (1960)

Figure 58 - Lakewood tract, sheet 1 (1962)
The northwest portion of the Laguna area was composed of the Laguna, Laguna #3, Laguna #6, Laguna #7, Laguna #8, Laguna #9, and Laguna #10 Tracts, all recorded between 1961 and 1964. These tracts were comprised of 234 parcels collectively.
Figure 61- Laguna #3 tract (1962)

Figure 62- Laguna #6 tract (1962)
Figure 63- Laguna #7 tract (1962)

Figure 64- Laguna #8 tract (1963)
With very few tracts recorded in the City between 1935 and 1945, tracts recorded in San Luis Obispo from 1945 onward exemplify many characteristics common to other postwar subdivisions throughout the state of California. “The typical postwar subdivision is immediately distinguishable by its street layout from older city neighborhoods...In contrast to the rectilinear urban grid, the street pattern of the postwar subdivision typically includes sweeping curves, loop streets, and cul-de-sacs” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 46). This is true of nearly every tract recorded outside of the original 1894 City limits. Nearly all of the mid-century tracts recorded run along curved streets, opposed to the grid-street pattern from early tracts. The tracts, especially the larger tracts recorded in the second half of the mid-century, also tend to feature elongated blocks. These longer tracts have fewer intersections, “...in postwar tracts it is not uncommon to have more than twenty houses between intersecting streets” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 46).

5.2 Mid-Century Development Context
San Luis Obispo’s mid-century spanned from 1935 to 1965. Research of housing and building trends in San Luis Obispo clearly separate the mid-century itself into three distinct time periods: pre-World War II, the war years, and post-World War II. Development patterns and residential life in the City varied greatly during each of these periods. The prewar years were dominated by the Great Depression. During the war years, City life revolved around proximal military camps and residents worked to support the war efforts. Residential development in San Luis Obispo began in earnest during the postwar
years as the City began to grow by annexing additional land, and
developing large tracts of land.

Prewar Years
The mid-century began in the 1930’s, with the City dealing with many of
the repercussions of the Great Depression. “New construction and new
projects stopped; there were job layoffs and loan foreclosures”
(McKeen, 1988, p. 59). At this point in the City’s history, the
automobile had already been introduced to the general population. All
across California, development was no longer restrained by the
limitations of rail transit and public transportation. “The growth of
automobile ownership also had an influence on the design of suburban
residential property, with the garage becoming a necessary and standard
feature” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 3).

While there wasn’t much development occurring during this time,
residents of San Luis Obispo were using the land in resourceful ways.
“As the Depression deepened, men went more and more into the hills to
hunt. Vacant lots and back yards became vegetable gardens; rabbit
hutches and chicken coops appeared” (McKeen, 1988, p. 59). When people
did manage to build during the difficult economic times, building
trends were oriented towards more individually crafted homes. “…the
typical contractor built no more than four houses per year,”
(California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 4) which was
distinctly different than future years. However, during the Depression
years, housing production had diminished along with jobs in California.
Despite this, the population in the state was growing faster than any
other state during the 1930’s as many migrants came from Dust Bowl
states to parts of California, including the Central Coast (California
Department of Transportation, 2011). Research showed that the decade before the war, the 1930’s, was not one in which the City grew. There were no annexations in the 1930’s, and only two subdivisions were recorded. Infrastructure in the City did change slightly during the time when the city sold their old gas street lamps and replaced them with “overhead electric and telephone wiring” (McKeen, 1988, p. 61).

War Years
The City of San Luis Obispo was greatly integrated in the Country’s war efforts. Camp Merriam, along Highway 1, had already been built in 1927, but in 1940 it was being expanded to become Camp San Luis Obispo. “A number of good things came from the construction of the camp[]. The Great Depression had hit California both hard and late. Tens of thousands of men flocked to the Central Coast in search of jobs that paid a federally guaranteed 65 [cents] an hour” (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. xi). This migration came from both outside, and within the state: “Agricultural laborers, many of whom were earlier arrivals from the South-Central states, left the San Joaquin Valley and other farming areas in large numbers for manufacturing jobs in the state’s coastal cities” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 12).

Residents of the City during this time recount that the City was somewhat antiquated for the times. In 1940, many streets remained unpaved or without street signs; gas street lights still had to be lit by hand. The increased population though, did see the implementation of some improved City services at the time, such as its “...first modern bus system. The green buses of Jones Transportation Company began operating over regularly scheduled routes on June 20, 1941” (Harth,
Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. xi). This and other services were necessary to support the influx of people coming to work at Camp San Luis Obispo, and the dependents they often brought with them. “…the $17,000,000 project which turned Camp Merriam, a National Guard training post, into Camp San Luis Obispo between the fall of 1940 and the summer of 1941” (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. 37) did not just employ the men of San Luis Obispo. Many young boys from San Luis Obispo, like Harold Gill, worked as paperboys for the Camp. Several women were employed at the camp as well, working the telephone switchboards (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991).

Residents of San Luis Obispo during the War Years took pride in helping soldiers stationed at Camp San Luis Obispo, while finding ways to profit from the camp’s population. Owners of the Golden West restaurant on Higuera Street remember being “very busy because of the development of Camp San Luis Obispo” (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. 65). This may also be the time period that residents in the City began to rent out rooms, a trend that is still strong in the present day.

After Pearl Harbor, the men who were sent to Camp San Luis were aware that this was their last training period before going overseas. The loved ones of the soldiers converged on San Luis Obispo to spend precious moments with them. But there were not enough hotel rooms to accommodate them, so local residents with extra rooms rented them to these civilians. There was such a need that it was said they would rent a ‘chicken coop (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. 68).

Other rooming houses were established near the rail depot (McKeen, 1988, p. 89).
City government was working to support the troops and their loved ones even more by providing more entertainment venues in the City. To do this, “A property tax measure to provide additional funds for the City Parks and Recreation Department was approved by a 5 to 1 margin in April [1941]” (Harth, Krieger & Krieger, 1991, p. 70). These funds were proposed to help build a United Service Organization at Mill and Santa Rosa Streets. As more and more people came to San Luis Obispo as permanent residents, or some only temporarily, the City worked to accommodate the population growth. “With everything directed toward the war effort, there was no civilian construction, but expansion was taking place; facilities as well as citizens showed strain” (McKeen, 1988, p. 102).

Postwar Years

The postwar years ushered in a population boom across the Country, but especially in California with the number of marriages and births increasing greatly. The population in San Luis Obispo was bolstered by many families returning to the area to live permanently after being stationed at Camp San Luis Obispo during the war (McKeen, 1988). This, in turn, increased the need for housing. At the time, there were couple government programs that assisted homebuyers. One was the Federal Housing Administration’s mortgage guarantee program. The availability of long-term, self-amortizing mortgages with low down payments made buying a house as affordable as renting for many. The federal government’s involvement in the home mortgage market made it possible for builders to address the postwar housing crisis by constructing single family houses rather than
apartment buildings (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 17).

The increased ability to build single family homes relates directly to San Luis Obispo, as numerous tract maps for single-family residential lots were recorded beginning in the 1950’s. Another government aid for new homebuyers was the G.I. Bill that allowed veterans to purchase homes without a down payment (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 17).

With more homes being built in general, the City of San Luis Obispo saw large subdivisions, several over 100 parcels, being recorded in this part of the mid-century. It proved cheaper for builders to construct whole subdivisions rather than gradually adding houses, especially when accounting for extending utilities services to homes (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 43). However, while many homes in San Luis Obispo were built very similarly throughout neighborhoods, the mid-century did see some custom homes being built throughout the City. These custom homes seem to be concentrated farther away from the City center, often at higher elevations than common tract homes. This follows a trend amongst other cities in California where “…residential status correlates with elevation rather than lot size. Wealthier Californians tend to live on higher ground…” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 43). This trend can be observed in the Piedmont Estates (Tract Area D) and McAllen Heights (Tract Area E) tracts in San Luis Obispo, both recorded in the 1950’s. These tracts are on low hills lining the eastern part of the city, where more architectural variety can be witnessed.
5.3 MID-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

The final research question explores the dominant architectural characteristics in San Luis Obispo from 1935-1965 and will be presented as a visual guide to Modern Architecture in the City. This will contemporary photos of existing structures and exhibits showing specific properties of the Modern style. A guide of eligibility criteria will also be written to aid in the identification of Modern structures. Maps will also be used to present findings here, and will display neighborhoods showing concentrations of Modern Architecture as well as individually significant Modern structures.

To determine where significant areas of mid-century residential architecture were in the City, visual surveys were conducted in tracts recorded during the mid-century. The 65 mid-century tract maps were grouped into eight clusters, or tract areas, to assist in more detailed study (figure 65).
The visual survey involved gathering a sampling of residential structures in those tracts that were recorded in the mid-century. Photos shown in the visual analysis (Appendix __) represent a selection of structures representative of the whole structure inventory observed in the field in the course of research. For visual analysis structures were grouped together that shared common architectural characteristics. Those characteristics were then examined to determine what recognized, defined, architectural style they could be attributed to. This resulted in the identification of six predominant styles found to be built in San Luis Obispo during the mid-century: Mid-century Modern; Prairie; Ranch; Post-war Minimalist; Rustic Ranch; and, Storybook. After identifying these prominent architectural styles of mid-century development, the physical location of these were tracked by tract area (figure 65) to determine where concentrations of any given style may exist.

A select few structures used for the visual analysis were built slightly after the mid-century time period identified for this research (1935-1965) ended. However, these were included in the visual analysis to exemplify very specific architectural features that can be used for architectural style identification purposes.

5.3.1 Mid-century Modern

Residential examples of Mid-century Modern architecture were found in several tract areas throughout the City. Tract Areas D and E, which were subdivided in the latter part of the 1950’s, had the highest concentration of this style based on visual survey sampling. Tract Areas A, C, F, and G also contained some examples of Mid-century Modern
though more limited. Among sample structures, this style of architecture first came to San Luis Obispo post World War II, in the early 1950’s. Residences were built in this style well through the end of the mid-century and into the 1970’s.

The California Department of Transportation labels this style “Contemporary” in their context for tract housing in the state between 1945 and 1973 (California Department of Transportation, 2011). That contemporary style shares many architectural characteristics with the Mid-century Modern style in San Luis Obispo. The Mid-century Modern style is best recognized in the City’s residential structures for its separation of materials and elements. Materials have their own identity and volumes have distinct materials. Figure 61 gives an example of a structure exhibiting distinctly different building materials. In addition, they manner in which these materials are built together, they remain separate; each one is a unique feature. The bricks used are clearly underneath the wood platform of the deck above, which is clearly distinct from the deck rails that are projecting out from the platform.

![Figure 66- Mid-century Modern architectural feature #1](image)

This is related to another feature of the Mid-century Modern style— the articulation of parts and functions, and expression of structure where every element acts as a feature of its own. The exposed beams in figure 67 are an example of this, as they appear somewhat separate from
the structure, yet their visibility under the roof shows the expression of the structure.

Figure 67- Mid-century Modern architectural feature #2

Mid-century modern architecture structures show their internal functions, in which one can generally see clear separations of public and private spaces. From outside, separate rooms inside the structure can be distinguished. The façade appears in a manner that makes the floor plan apparent. Often, Mid-century Modern residences in San Luis Obispo have a garage set clearly apart from the rest of the residence (figure 68), or a public entertaining room pushed towards the front of the house.

Figure 68- Mid-century Modern architectural feature #3

Strip windows are a common feature of Mid-century structures, especially arranged in long, horizontally arranged, rows extending up to where the wall meets the roof (figure 69).
Another feature is a functional treatment of the roof. This can be exhibited in flat, or low-sloped roofs.

Cantilevered features are featured in many Mid-century Modern structures. These pieces generally extend away from the mass of the structure, and run parallel to the ground. Many Mid-century Modern residences in San Luis Obispo exhibit cantilevered decks (figure 71) on their front façade. These features also show the structure’s separation of materials and volumes, as the cantilevered piece becomes its own distinct feature. An appearance of cantilevered pieces may be achieved by “roof overhangs and canopies [that] are supported by slender wood or steel columns” (California Department of Transportation, 2011).
Structures also utilize corner-turning windows (figure 72), using large-paneled, strip windows.

Facade details can be used to give vertical rhythm to Mid-century Modern structures. San Luis Obispo examples showed vertical rhythm in panels on facades (figure 73), railings, or window placements.

Another feature of Mid-century Modern architecture is the use of roof angles for illumination, or clerestory windows. Windows often extend all the way up to meet the angles of gabled roofs (figure 74). Often, “the triangular gable area has glazing, but facades may otherwise have limited fenestration” (California Department of Transportation, 2011).
Clerestory windows are placed on the horizontal walls of structural features extending vertically up from the structure, and appear as a distinct volume.

Brie-soleils are used as sun-blockers when placed in front of windows. They are another feature of Mid-century Modern that appears as a distinct and separate piece of the structure.

Mid-century Modern structures can also utilize features to display horizontality. Roof lines or railings extending parallel to the ground form horizontal lines, as seen in figure 76 below. Also to display horizontality, “Gable roofs of very low-pitch are the most common. Other roof forms include flat, single-pitch, and butterfly” (California Department of Transportation, 2011).
The last Mid-century Modern architectural feature found in residential structures in San Luis Obispo was rectangular massing. Figure 77 shows an apartment complex that appears as several “boxes” stacked together. Distinct rectangles are found from the front and side views of the structure, and these also appear as three-dimensional cubes.

5.3.2 Prairie

Prairie style architecture was far less prominent in San Luis Obispo during the mid-century than Mid-century Modern architecture. Geographically, examples of this style were found concentrated in the same tracts where there were also concentrations of Modern architecture- Tract Areas A, C, and D. Build dates for a sampling of Prairie residences in the City ranged from 1954 through the end of the Mid-century and in to the early 1970’s.

Homes built in the Prairie architectural style in San Luis Obispo are most easily identified by their horizontality. They often seem to lay low to grade, with extended, flat lines (figure 78). Horizontality can
also be expressed in façade detailing, but is most often observed in the roof line and massing of the building.

Figure 78- Prairie architectural feature #1

Figure 79 shows a prominent chimney, which is an external representation of the central hearth of the home. This is a major component of Prairie architecture, and in San Luis Obispo examples, most commonly found featured in the center of the structure’s floor plan.

Figure 79- Prairie architectural feature #2

Windows set back from the façade are another common architectural characteristic of this style. In figure 80, the windows of the structure are set far back beneath the extending eaves.

Figure 80- Prairie architectural feature #3
The horizontality of Prairie architecture can be complimented by the rhythms set by squares (figure 81). These squares are expressed as details along eaves or on façade components.

Homes built in the Prairie style often have low-pitched roofs with eaves extending far beyond their walls. The low-pitch of the roofs contributes to the appearance of horizontality of the structure. In San Luis Obispo, extension of eaves was used to create porch areas in some of the visual study structures.

Commonly, structures in this style are finished with stucco. San Luis Obispo Prairie homes often utilize wood accents in the façade (figure 83), along with heavy, metal hardware.
5.3.3 Ranch

Field research showed that Ranch style houses were very popular in San Luis Obispo during the Mid-century. Concentrations of Ranch homes were found in nearly every Tract Area, but especially in Areas A and C. Samples from the visual survey were built between the years 1949 and 1961.

The most common architectural feature of Ranch style homes is an elongated floor plan, such as the L-shaped example in figure 84. Another common floor plan, still elongated, is T-shaped. However, the L-shaped floor plan was the more common one found in mid-century San Luis Obispo tracts, often with the projecting “L” being a single or double car garage.

Figure 84- Ranch architectural feature #1

Massing of Ranch houses is most often single story. In conjunction with their elongated floor plans, this results in an appearance of horizontality (figure 85). “Tract Ranch houses are low to the ground...Horizontality is emphasized by continuous eave lines and wainscots of a differing material below the level of the window sills” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 76).
Wide-slab chimneys, such as the one seen in figure 86, are another characteristic of Ranch homes.

Facade details of Ranch homes sometimes utilize small areas of masonry (figure 87). Brick walkways and stairs were common among the visual survey samples.

The majority of Ranch homes found in San Luis Obispo also featured wide porch areas at the front of the residence (figure 88), though these are rarely deep enough to substantial covered space.
5.3.4 Post-war Minimalist

Perhaps the most common among the Mid-century architectural styles, Post-war Minimalist structures were abundant in several of the Tract Areas. “The Postwar Minimal house, also sometimes called the G.I. House, is the predominant residence type built in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 67) in California. In San Luis Obispo, they were particularly concentrated in Tract Areas A, C, F, and G. Sampling of these structures in the City found that they were built between 1948 and 1962, though the large majority were built in the early 1950’s. These Post-war Minimalist structures are very simple in design, and are identified more by a lack of architectural features than specific details.

All Post-war Minimalist homes found in the visual survey share the characteristic of a small, compact floor plan. Floor plans are often rectangular, or slightly L-shaped, as seen in figure 89. “In California, [Postwar Minimalist] two-bedroom houses of the period often had fewer than 900 square feet of living area...” (California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 68).
One-car garages are a major defining feature of Post-war minimalist architecture. Garages are prominently placed at the front of the home (figure 90).

Often, details are limited to simple, wood trim on the façade. San Luis Obispo examples showed the garage door as a common place for wood trim, such as that seen in figure 91. Wood trim can also be found around windows or doors, sometimes in a color contrasting the primary color of the structure.
A last architectural characteristic of Post-war Minimalist architecture is the integration of large, multi-pane, picture windows. Figure 92 shows an example of such a window, placed on the façade of the home.

5.3.5 Rustic Ranch

Among architectural styles used in Mid-century residential construction, the Rustic Ranch style was a less common occurrence than others. Visual survey samples built with Rustic Ranch architecture were confined to Tract Area C, with a very limited building window of 1950 to 1954.

Structures built in this style often use board-and-batten siding, similar to that seen in figure 93.

The style uses wood shingles as a roofing material (figure 94).
A common architectural feature observed among visual survey samples was a roof of many, varied levels. Opposed to other dominant architectural styles of the time that favored simple, often horizontally-oriented, roof lines, Rustic Ranch roofs (figure 95) have numerous angles and inconsistent roof pitch.

Figure 96 shows an example of shaped roof brackets that are occasionally used to support the roof.
San Luis Obispo examples, like figure 97, often have one or more projecting window bays placed throughout expansive floor plans.

Ease overhangs (figure 98) are also common, sometimes with exposed rafters.

Along with projecting window bays, figure 99 shows that large, picture windows are featured in this style of architecture. In most cases, there is more than one placed on the façade of the home.
A last feature of Rustic Ranch architecture is common use of elaborate detailing. The birdhouse shown in figure 100 at the peak of the gable roof is one example. Other elaborate details may include decorative shutters, planter boxes, or intricately shaped railings.

Figure 100- Rustic Ranch architectural feature #8

5.3.6 Storybook
Concentrated solely in Tract Area G, the Storybook architectural style found in San Luis Obispo was favored for a limited time period towards the end of the mid-century in the early 1960’s. While there are numerous examples of Storybook houses in Tract Area G, a limited number were included in the visual survey due to the relatively low occurrence of this style compared to other Mid-century architecture.

Storybook homes, such as that pictured in figure 101, often used two or more siding materials, usually stucco and brick.

Figure 101- Storybook architectural feature #1
Secondary gable roofs, as seen in figure 102, are another characteristic.

![Figure 102- Storybook architectural feature #2](image)

A characteristic common to almost all Storybook style homes are ornamental barge boards. These range from those with very simple styling (figure 103) to elaborately detailed bargeboards located on gable roofs and under roof eaves.

![Figure 103- Storybook architectural feature #3](image)

Another form of detailing used in Storybook architecture is window trim details, such as the wood trim seen in figure 104.

![Figure 104- Storybook architectural feature #4](image)

Gable roofs used in this style of architecture often have shallow overhangs (figure 105).
Small, bay windows (figure 106) are used at the front of Storybook homes.
5.3.7 Detailed Tract Areas and Dominant Architectural Styles

Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area A included: Mid-Century Modern; Prairie; Ranch; and, Post-War Minimalist.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area B included Post-War Minimalist.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area C included: Mid-Century Modern; Prairie; Ranch; Post-War Minimalist; and, Rustic Ranch.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area D included: Mid-Century Modern; Prairie; and, Ranch.
Figure 111-Detailed Tract Area E by year recorded, with tract names

Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area E included: Mid-Century Modern; Prairie; and, Ranch.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area F included: Mid-Century Modern; and, Post-War Minimalist.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area G included: Mid-Century Modern; Ranch; Post-war Minimalist; and, Storybook.
Mid-century architectural styles found in Tract Area D included: Post-war Minimalist.
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research and thesis text have been developed to show the pattern of
development in San Luis Obispo between 1935 and 1965. This was first
done by tracking annexations by year to determine the chronological
pattern of land additions to the City (Appendix C). Tract maps were
also organized and shown chronologically in Appendix D to show location
as well as patterns in layout and size. The research has shown that
tracts recorded in the mid-century share common characteristics of
postwar tracts in California such as long, curved road with few
intersections.

Research has yielded qualifying characteristics of mid-century
architectural styles common to San Luis Obispo. These have been
documented in the Mid-century San Luis Obispo Residential Architectural
Styles guide (Appendix F). The styles found to be common were: Mid-
century Modern; Prairie; Ranch; Postwar Minimalist; Rustic Ranch; and,
Storybook. Appendix F also shows architectural features of each of
these styles which can be used for future identification of structures
built in any given style. The photo index included in the
Architectural Styles guide gives a location for most of the sample
structures used in the visual survey and is a preliminary mapping to
show were each style is located.

It is recommended that the City utilize the compiled information on
common mid-century architectural styles to identify those structures
that may be eligible for designation as historic resources. As many of
these structures have already reached, or are nearing, their 50-year
age mark, the architectural styles guide can be used as a criteria for
a portion of their evaluation. Maps in Appendix C and Appendix D were
built using GIS data compiled in the process of this thesis. This GIS data is currently located in multiple physical and electronic locations, across multiple departments. It is recommended that the data compiled here is integrated into the City’s land use data in one, common, location for accessibility purposes. Future information tied to structures, such as the build date for single-family parcels, should also be recorded as an accessible, GIS layer.

Future research would seek to greatly expand upon the historic context of the development patterns studied (research question 2). It is recommended that personal accounts are recorded to add to the available literature on the history of San Luis Obispo during the mid-century. Another area of enhanced research to pursue is the specific subdivision developments during the late mid-century, as it appears that tract housing made up the majority of the housing stock added to the City during the time period.


City of Pasadena. (October, 2007) Cultural Resources of the Recent Past Historic Context Statement.


## San Luis Obispo Annexations by Date and Tract Maps by Annex Area

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## San Luis Obispo Annexations by Date and Tract Maps by Annex Area

### APPENDIX A

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## San Luis Obispo

### Mid-century Tracts

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### Mid-century Tracts

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APPENDIX B
San Luis Obispo Parcels by Tract: 1945

Recording Year
- 1931
- 1938
- 1939
- 1894

[Map of San Luis Obispo showing parcel information by tract and recording year, with streets and areas marked.

1931 recordings are in yellow, 1938 in gold, 1939 in orange, and 1894 in light green.

1931: 122
1938: 122
1939: 122
1894: 122]
mid-century san luis obispo
residential architectural styles

mid-century modern
prairie
ranch
post-war minimalist
rustic ranch
storybook
1. separation of materials and elements; materials have their own identity; volumes have distinct materials

2. articulation of parts and functions; expression of structure; every element acts as a feature of its own; beam exposures

3. structure shows internal function; clear separation of public and private spaces

4. strip windows

5. functional/compartamentalized; functional treatments of roof

6. cantilevered pieces
7. corner-turning windows

8. vertical rhythm

9. use of roof angles for illumination; clerestory windows

10. brie-soleils; sun-blockers

11. horizontality

12. rectangular massing
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**san luis obispo | mid-century modern**
1. separation of materials; distinct elements
2. expression of structure
3. structure shows internal functions
4. strip windows

5. functional treatment of roof
6. cantilevered pieces
7. corner-turning windows
8. vertical rhythm

9. use of roof angles for illumination
10. brie-soleils
11. horizontality
12. rectangular massing
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**san luis obispo | mid-century modern**
1. separation of materials; distinct elements
2. expression of structure
3. structure shows internal functions
4. strip windows
5. functional treatment of roof
6. cantilevered pieces
7. corner-turning windows
8. vertical rhythm
9. use of roof angles for illumination
10. brie-soleils
11. horizontality
12. rectangular massing
1. separation of materials; distinct elements
2. expression of structure
3. structure shows internal functions
4. strip windows
5. functional treatment of roof
6. cantilevered pieces
7. corner-turning windows
8. vertical rhythm
9. use of roof angles for illumination
10. brie-soleils
11. horizontality
12. rectangular massing
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1. separation of materials; distinct elements
2. expression of structure
3. structure shows internal functions
4. strip windows
5. functional treatment of roof
6. cantilevered pieces
7. corner-turning windows
8. vertical rhythm
9. use of roof angles for illumination
10. brie-soleils
11. horizontality
12. rectangular massing

San Luis Obispo | Mid-Century Modern
1. horizontality
2. prominent hearth; chimney
3. setback windows
4. rhythms set by squares
5. low-pitched roof with eaves extending far beyond wall
6. stucco finish
1. horizontality  
2. prominent hearth  
3. setback windows  
4. rhythms set by squares  
5. low-pitched roof; far-reaching eaves  
6. stucco finish
1. horizontality
2. prominent hearth
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san luis obispo | prairie
1. horizontality
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San Luis Obispo | Prairie
1. elongated form with L- or T-shaped floor plan

2. horizontality; one-story

3. wide-slab chimney

4. small areas of masonry

5. wide porch areas
1. elongated form; L- or T-shape plan
2. horizontality; one-story
3. wide-slab chimney
4. small areas of masonry
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2. horizontality; one-story
3. wide-slab chimney
4. small areas of masonry
5. wide porch areas
1. small, compact floor plan

2. one-car garage

3. wood trim, especially around garage

4. large, multi-pane picture windows

architectural features | post-war minimalist
1. small, compact floor plan
2. one-car garage
3. wood trim, especially around garage
4. large, multi-pane picture windows
1. small, compact floor plan
2. one-car garage
3. wood trim, especially around garage
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san luis obispo | post-war minimalist
1. small, compact floor plan
2. one-car garage
3. wood trim, especially around garage
4. large, multi-pane picture windows
1. board-and-batten siding
2. wood shingle roof
3. varied roof levels
4. shaped brackets to support roof
5. projecting window bays

6. ease overhangs, sometimes with exposed rafters

7. picture windows with diamond-shaped panes

8. elaborate detailing; decorative shutters; planter boxes; birdhouses
1. board-and-batten siding
2. wood shingle roof
3. varied roof levels
4. shaped brackets to support roof
5. projecting window bays
6. ease overhangs; exposed rafters
7. picture windows; diamond shaped panes
8. elaborate detailing
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2. wood shingle roof
3. varied roof levels
4. shaped brackets to support roof
5. projecting window bays
6. ease overhangs; exposed rafters
7. picture windows; diamond shaped panes
8. elaborate detailing
1. two or more siding materials on facade
2. secondary gable roofs
3. ornamental barge boards
4. window trim details
5. shallow gable overhangs
6. bay windows
1. two or more siding materials
2. secondary gable roofs
3. ornamental barge boards
4. window trim details
5. shallow gable overhangs
6. bay windows

san luis obispo | storybook
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