

**State of California & The Resources Agency**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**DISTRICT RECORD**

Primary# \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_

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\*NRHP Status Code 3 – District appears eligible for NR through Survey Evaluation

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Duboce Park Historic District

**D1. Historic Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **D2. Common Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*D3. Detailed Description** (Discuss overall coherence of the district, its setting, visual characteristics, and minor features. List all elements of district.):

The Duboce Park Historic District is located near the geographic center of San Francisco, at the northern end of the Market & Octavia survey area. The District's namesake and most prominent feature is Duboce Park, a small civic park composed of open grassy areas, wandering paths, a playground and community center. Immediately south is the Duboce Triangle neighborhood, so named because of the triangular borders created by Castro Street on the west, Duboce Avenue on the north, and the diagonal line of Market Street to the south. Two blocks to the north is a commercial strip along Haight Street, which has recently garnered a distinct identity as the "Lower Haight" neighborhood. Thus, while Duboce Park is generally considered to be part of the Duboce Triangle neighborhood, it is probably more accurate to say that the Historic District's resources, which lie north of the park, are located in a transitional area between the Duboce Triangle and Lower Haight Neighborhoods. (continued, p. 2)

**\*D4. Boundary Description** (Describe limits of district and attach map showing boundary and district elements.):

The boundaries of the Duboce Park Historic District commence at the northeast corner of Scott Street and Duboce Avenue. The boundary then runs north along the east side of Scott Street to the southeast corner of Scott and Waller streets. From there, the line moves east along the south side of Waller Street, crossing Carmelita, Pierce, and Potomac streets, until reaching the southwest corner of Waller and Steiner streets. The boundary then runs south along the west side of Steiner Street to the northwest corner of Steiner Street and Duboce Avenue. The line then runs west along the north side of Duboce Avenue—which is also the southern edge of Duboce Park—to the point of beginning (see map on p. 5).

**\*D5. Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries of the Duboce Park Historic District are defined by the extent of the densest areas of significant and intact resources associated with the development of Duboce Park—as well as the park itself. Specifically, the creation of Duboce Park was associated with land litigation that resulted in the northern half of a city reservation being awarded to private parties who then sold that land for development. Thus, unlike the nearby Duboce Triangle neighborhood, which contains concentrations of resources spanning from ca. 1870 to the mid-1920s (and which is a proposed as a separate historic district), the resources within the Duboce Park Historic District are remarkably homogeneous, with the vast majority having been constructed over a period of less than 10 years—the period immediately following the resolution of land titles immediately north of the park. (continued, p. 6)

**D6. Significance: Theme** Neighborhood Development **Area** Duboce Park, San Francisco, CA  
**Period of Significance** 1896 – 1913 **Applicable Criteria** C (NR criteria adopted by local jurisdiction)

(Discuss district's importance in terms of its historical context as defined by theme, period of significance, and geographic scope. Also address the integrity of the district as a whole.)

**National Register Criteria:** C – a group of properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, and that possess high artistic values. Note: The San Francisco Planning Code allows the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board to establish policies to implement the Code. In 2000, the Landmarks Board adopted the National Register Criteria for evaluating properties. San Francisco has various levels of recognition: Landmarks, Landmark Districts, Structures of Merit, Conservation Districts, Residential Character Districts, and adopted surveys. Properties evaluated for local significance, like the Duboce Triangle Historic District, are considered eligible for at least one category of recognition. (continued, p. 6)

**\*D7. References** (Give full citations including the names and addresses of any informants, where possible.)  
 (See p. 10)

<b>*D8. Evaluator:</b>	Jonathan Lammers	<b>Date:</b>	January 2008
<b>Affiliation and Address</b>	Page & Turnbull, Inc.		
	724 Pine Street, San Francisco, CA. 94108		

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**D3. Detailed Description (continued)**

The area is situated a few blocks north of Market Street—the city’s most prominent thoroughfare. The terrain in the area is gently sloping from west to east, and vegetation consists primarily of street trees, private gardens, and the landscaping within Duboce Park. Streets within the District conform to the city grid, but it should be noted that Duboce Avenue marks the transition between two city grids: the Western Addition and Mission Dolores subdivisions, which meet each other at a shallow angle along their east-west axis. Two of the streets—Carmelita and Potomac—are also half blocks that dead end at the northern boundary of the park and do not extend beyond the District’s boundaries. Streets are paved and lined by sidewalks. The East Portal of the Sunset Tunnel, which is used by the MUNI Metro streetcars, is located immediately southwest of the District. Access to the tunnel is via railroad tracks running along Duboce Avenue.

Contributors to the Duboce Park Historic District are overwhelmingly residential, being composed primarily of single family dwellings and residential flats. A few multiple-family residences within the district (typically located on street corners) also include a commercial use at the street level. Buildings in the district are all one to four stories in height, with two and three stories predominating. Additionally, nearly all of the buildings are of wood frame construction and clad in wood or stucco siding. Late Victorian and Edwardian era architectural styles predominate, with the Queen Anne style most widely represented.

The Duboce Park Historic District contains a total of 89 properties. 80 of these properties have been identified as contributors, giving the District a remarkably high concentration of significant and intact buildings. There is only one notable intrusion: the Harvey Milk Center for Recreational Arts at the west end of the park, which was constructed well after the period of significance. Construction dates for the vast majority of contributing resources within the District range from ca. 1897 to approximately 1905.

The following list shows all contributing resources within the Duboce Park Historic District:

APN	From St. #	To St. #	Street Name	Type	CHRS Code
0863-009	49	49	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-011	50	52	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-008	53	53	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-007	57	57	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-013	58	58	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-014	60	62	Carmelita St.	Flats	3D
0863-006	61	61	Carmelita St.	Flats	3D
0863-005	65	65	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-015	66	66	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-004	69	69	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-016	70	70	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-003	73	73	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-002	77	77	Carmelita St.	Flats	3D
0864-018	78	78	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0876-001	500	698	Duboce Ave.	Civic Park	3D
0865-011	46	48	Pierce St.	Flats	3D
0864-010	47	47	Pierce St.	Flats	3D
0864-009	49	51	Pierce St.	Flats	3D
0865-012	52	52	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-008	55	55	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-013	56	56	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-007	59	59	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-014	60	60	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D

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APN	From St. #	To St. #	Street Name	Type	CHRS Code
0864-006	63	65	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-015	64	64	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-005	67	67	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-016	68	68	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-004	71	71	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-017	72	72	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-003	75	75	Pierce St.	Flats	3D
0865-018	76	76	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-002	79	79	Pierce St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0866-010	44	48	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0865-026, 027, 028	47	51	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-011	50	54	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0865-009	53	57	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-012	56	56	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-008	59	59	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-013	60	60	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-006	63	63	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0866-014	64	64	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-005	65	65	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0866-015	66	66	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-004	67	67	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0866-016	68	68	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-003	69	69	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0866-017	70	70	Potomac St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-029	71	75	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-018	72	76	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-019	82	86	Potomac St.	Flats	3D
0866-009	101	105	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-008	107	111	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-007	115	115	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-006	121	125	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-005	127	131	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-002	133	133	Steiner St.	Flats	3D
0866-001	501	505	Waller St.	Mixed use	3D
0866-024	511	511	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0866-023	515	517	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0866-022	521	525	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0866-021	527	531	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0866-020A	533	537	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0866-020	539	539	Waller St.	Mixed use	3D
0865-025	563	567	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0865-023	579	579	Waller St.	Flats	3D

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APN	From St. #	To St. #	Street Name	Type	CHRS Code
0865-022	581	581	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-021	587	587	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0865-020	591	595	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0864-026	601	601	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0864-025	607	609	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0864-024	611	617	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0864-023	621	621	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-022	627	627	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-021	633	633	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0864-020	639	639	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0864-019	643	643	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-013, 014, 015	661	663	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0863-012	667	667	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D
0863-011	673	675	Waller St.	Flats	3D
0863-016	679	681	Waller St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	3D

**Non-Contributing Properties**

The following properties are located within the district boundaries, but are considered non-contributing elements. The majority were constructed within the period of significance, but do not contribute due to subsequent alterations that have significantly altered their integrity (removal of architectural ornament and original windows, later additions, etc.) such that they can no longer readily convey their significance.

APN	From St. #	To St. #	Street Name	Type	CHRS Code
0864-012	54	54	Carmelita St.	Flats	6L
0864-017	74	74	Carmelita St.	Sing. Fam. Dwelling	6L
0876-001	50	50	Scott	Rec. Center	5S3
0865-019	80	80	Pierce St.	Flats	6L
0865-007	61	61	Potomac St.	Flats	6L
0866-003	137	137	Steiner St.	Res. over Com'l.	6L
0866-004	139	141	Steiner St.	Garage	6Z
0865-033	569	573	Waller St.	Flats	6L
0865-001	559	561	Waller St.	Res. over Com'l	6L

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Upper Left: City of San Francisco map with location of Duboce Triangle Historic District indicated by star.  
Lower: Map of Duboce Park Historic District shaded in red. (Source: Google Maps with color shading by Page & Turnbull.)

#### D5. Boundary Justification (continued)

Although several properties on the north side of Waller Street facing the District appear to be compatible in terms of age, construction methods and styles, they have been excluded from the District because that block face does not appear to have been part of the original city reservation that is the subject of the District. Rather, 1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps reveal that at least three properties were already extant on the north side of Waller between Steiner and Pierce, as well as several properties on the north side of Waller between Pierce and Scott streets.

#### D6. Significance (continued)

The historic context of the Duboce Park Historic District is directly related to litigation that resulted in the subdivision of the streets immediately north of Duboce park, as well as the creation of the park itself.

The first inclusion of the Duboce Park area within San Francisco's city limits occurred in 1851, when one of three Consolidation Acts passed by the San Francisco City Council extended the city limits south to Twenty-Second Street and west to Castro Street. At the time, expansion of the street grid to the west and south had been hampered by the existence of squatters on Pueblo Lands (territory of the City of San Francisco inherited from the Mexican government), and by the efforts of large private landholders such as the Noe, Bernal and De Haro families, to maintain their properties intact.

These conflicting claims were largely resolved by the Van Ness Ordinance of 1855. Named for then-councilman (and later mayor), James Van Ness, the Van Ness Ordinance clarified land titles in the outlying areas. The ordinance settled land claims largely in favor of squatters by granting titles to those in actual possession of land on or before January 1, 1855. The City's claims to the Pueblo Lands were formally recognized by the U.S. Land Commission in the 1860s.

Shortly after the expansion of the city limits, street grids began to be plotted in the area, though in reality streets remained ungraded, unpaved and lacked any infrastructure. A small subdivision, known as the "Mission Dolores" tract (now portions of the Mission, Eureka Valley and Duboce Triangle neighborhoods) was established by the platting of those streets. It was bounded by Castro Street to the west, Duboce Avenue to the north, Valencia Street to the east, and Eighteenth Street to the south. To the north lay the vast Western Addition neighborhood, comprising most of the city limits west of Larkin Street and north of Market Street.

Development was slow in coming, hampered by the lack of reliable transportation. The area presently known as Duboce Park did not become readily accessible until Market Street was graded west of Dolores Street during the 1870s. However, it was still considered difficult to reach due to its distance from downtown San Francisco. The construction of the first cable car by Andrew Hallidie in 1873, however, revolutionized mass transit in San Francisco. The 1880s witnessed a proliferation of cable car lines running to the Western Addition and Upper Market areas, such as the Market and Haight (Red Line) which opened in 1883; the Market and Castro Line in 1887; and the Market and Hayes (Green Line) opening in 1889.<sup>1</sup> These transit lines made commuting to jobs downtown and in the South of Market Area feasible, and residential construction began to proliferate in the Duboce Park area.

Duboce Park had been designated as a "public reservation" as early as 1856 in the Van Ness Ordinance. It was one of several block-square reservations set aside as public parkland in the Western Addition, such as Alamo Square, Jefferson Square, and Lafayette Square. Although these reservations were relatively small relative to the overall area of the Western Addition, the fact that any land was set aside for the public good was at the time an unprecedented event in San Francisco.

Unlike the other park reservations, Duboce Park had an odd wedge shape due to the awkward intersection between the Western Addition and Mission Dolores surveys. In fact, its creation was likely the result of trying to rectify the intersection between the differing street grids. In addition, the topography of the site was different from the other parks, which were usually centered on hilltops and—other than Jefferson Square—not as steeply sloped.<sup>2</sup>

For San Francisco's early park reservations, though, mere designation as open space was usually not enough. City authorities often had to confront squatters and other competing interests to preserve the open reservations. Duboce Park is a notable example

<sup>1</sup> Joe Thompson, *Market Street Cable Railway*, <http://www.cable-car-guy.com/html/ccsfmsr.html> (accessed January 17, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> The Victorian Alliance, 1.

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of this phenomenon. As early as 1861, a city map labeled the park as a “hospital site,” for a proposed city hospital. Why it was redesignated from parkland to a hospital site is unknown, but it remained as such on city maps throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the meantime, the open land was gradually filled with trash and building debris deposited by contractors and nearby residents. Likewise, the land was still the subject of squatter’s claims related to the earlier land title disputes. In May 1869, a portion of the northern half of the city reservation was awarded by the District Court of San Francisco to Mary Polack. Four years later, in January 1873, a group of court-appointed referees awarded another portion of the city reservation to Dan Rogers.<sup>3</sup> The City, however, continued to dispute their ownership.

In the 1880s, the site of Duboce Park was leased to the San Francisco Female Hospital at the rate of \$1.00 per year—although the hospital was never built. In 1896, the City finally relinquished its claims the northern half of the hospital reservation. By that time, the German Savings and Loan Association had assumed ownership of the land, and in July 1897, the Savings and Loan asked the City to accept the deeds for the extension of Pierce Street south of Waller Street, as well as the deeds for two new dead-end streets called Primrose and Daisy (now known as Carmelita and Potomac).<sup>4</sup> The Savings and Loan then sold the remaining land to private developers who began constructing houses. It is these properties north of the park that now make up the Duboce Park Historic District.

In 1900, the neighborhood elected Colonel Victor D. Duboce, a veteran of the recent Spanish-American War, to the Board of Supervisors. Duboce advocated converting the odd-shaped chunk left over from the old hospital reservation into a public park, as had originally been intended. Unfortunately, Duboce died before he could convince the Board of Supervisors to approve the provisionally named “New Park.” In a vote of sympathy for Duboce and his constituents, the Board passed a resolution extolling the “high character, loyalty, and amiable disposition” of their colleague, and renamed Ridley Street (also known as 13<sup>th</sup> Street for a time) to Duboce Avenue in his honor. The Board also voted to convert the undeveloped portion of the old hospital reservation into a park to be named Duboce Park. On September 9, 1900, the Duboce Park Improvement Club and Mayor James Phelan jointly announced the creation of Duboce Park as a “fitting tribute to the hero’s memory” with a cannon salute and an initial appropriation of \$5,000. Construction got underway in 1901, and within a year, the park was completed.<sup>5</sup>

Built during the term of Park Superintendent John McLaren, Duboce Park was designed as a large expanse of lawn, crossed by walking paths, with few trees and plantings. Constructed during the period when “pleasure gardens” were a popular aspect in urban planning (1850-1900), Duboce Park embraced the conventions of that school of park design. The concept of the pleasure garden referenced pastoral landscapes with few man-made elements. They presented a counterpoint to the city around them by providing a “wilderness” setting and circulation paths that broke the strict grid of the city streets. They were designed for adults and not as children’s playgrounds, representing an effort to provide relief to city workers at a time when the urban environment was reducing the availability of open land.

The 1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (Sanborn maps) show the park reservation as completely vacant. By 1899, however, the Sanborn maps indicate that Primrose, Pierce and Portola (formerly Daisy) streets had been extended into the northern portion of the reservation and some buildings were already constructed. These included clusters of single-family dwellings along the east sides of Carmelita and Pierce streets, as well as three single-family dwellings along the east side of Potomac. The lots facing Waller and Steiner streets were almost completely vacant, save for two single family dwellings on Waller Street between Carmelita and Pierce.

The 1906 Earthquake and Fire devastated much of San Francisco. Unlike eastern portions of the Western Addition, however, the Duboce Park area was relatively undamaged aside from cracked foundations and toppled chimneys. Immediately following the disaster, refugees from nearby areas streamed into Duboce Park to camp. By July 1906, Duboce Park was officially organized as Relief Camp No. 19 with 300 residents living in tents. Although the San Francisco Relief Corporation placed redwood “refugee shacks” in parks throughout the city, Camp No. 19 remained a tent camp until it was disbanded on February 8, 1907.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> City of San Francisco. *Real estate owned by the City and County of San Francisco and Historical Data Relating to Same, with citations from decisions of the Superior, Supreme and Federal Courts.* San Francisco: Board of Supervisors. 1910. p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid: 9.

<sup>5</sup> Neighborhood Parks Council, *Duboce Park and Harvey Milk Playground.* Website information accessed on Nov. 21, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> San Francisco Relief Corporation, *Department Reports of the San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds* (San Francisco: annual report of the San Francisco Relief Corporation, March 19, 1907), 18.

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As San Francisco rebuilt itself, Duboce Park was restored to its pre-quake appearance. The surrounding neighborhood continued to grow and residential development appears to have gotten much denser. Based on information from Sanborn maps, the Duboce Park Historic District had been completely built out by 1913, which is the end of the period of significance. The 1913 map also shows that Primrose Street had been renamed Carmelita by that time, although Portola Street had not yet been renamed as Potomac. Generally speaking, the buildings fronting Carmelita, Pierce and Portola were all single-family dwellings, while flats dominated the lots facing Waller and Steiner streets. A few mixed use properties are also shown, such as the three-story flats-over-store building on the southwest corner of Waller and Steiner (501 – 505 Waller Street).

In contrast with the adjoining Hayes Valley neighborhood, the Duboce Park and nearby Duboce Triangle and Lower Haight areas remained primarily residential with scattered light industrial, commercial and institutional uses. The 1950 Sanborn map shows few changes in the configuration of building footprints or new construction in the area. This stagnation in development coincides with the growing popularity of the private automobile and shifting residential patterns. The Duboce Park area appears to have reached its maximum density just prior to the time when automobiles, as well as mass transit, began to open more distant areas, such as the Sunset District, to development.

There have been only two major intrusions into the park since its development. In the late 1920s the city developed the southwest corner of the park as the entrance to the Municipal Railway's Sunset Tunnel, which opened to streetcar traffic in 1928. Three decades later, the northwest corner of the park was chosen for site of the Recreational Arts Building, now known as the Harvey Milk Center for Recreational Arts.

In relation to the historic themes identified, the period of historic significance for the Duboce Park Historic District is established as 1896 – 1913. The beginning of the period is marked by the resolution of land titles on the former city reservation. The end date is established by evidence from the 1913 Sanborn map, which indicates all of the buildings that contribute to the district were constructed by that time. However, it is worth noting that it appears nearly all of the District's contributing resources were constructed between ca. 1896 and 1905. Those dates are inferred based on the 1899 Sanborn map, as well as the fact that the San Francisco Assessor's Office does not have construction records for nearly all of the properties (as the records were destroyed during the 1906 Earthquake and Fire). Thus, while it can be assumed that most properties were constructed prior to 1906, the 1913 Sanborn map date is used because it is the most definitive.

Building Styles:

The significance of the Duboce Triangle Historic District is directly related to its high concentration of significant and intact architecture. Specifically, the District represents a noteworthy grouping of turn-of-the-century buildings exhibiting late-Victorian and Edwardian era styles characteristic of San Francisco. Common traits found throughout the district are bay windows, decorative cornices, ornamental shingles, and spindle work, as well as more Classically influenced detailing such as dentils, pediments, columns, and applied plaster ornament.

The San Francisco Planning Department's *San Francisco Preservation Bulletin No. 18 - Residential and Commercial Architectural Periods in San Francisco*, establishes the Victorian period as ranging from 1860 to 1900. Though "Victorian" was a term referencing the British monarchy, it was used widely in the United States, especially in relation to architectural styles. A number of related styles are grouped under the broad heading of Victorian, most of which were loosely influenced by Medieval architecture. They included such sub-styles as Italianate, Stick and Eastlake, Queen Anne, Second Empire, Shingle, and Folk Victorian. Though Victorian architecture displayed a remarkable variety of ornament, unifying features include asymmetrical and articulated facades, steep roof pitches, and the use of multiple textures, materials and colors on a single building. In large part these styles can be viewed as products of the Industrial Revolution, which allowed for the mass production of building materials such as windows, doors, shingles, and complex decorative elements.

The Edwardian period in San Francisco is generally accepted as spanning from 1901 to around 1910, directly succeeding the Victorian era. Again, the term Edwardian refers to a period of the British Monarchy, though it was often used architecturally to describe a more vernacular interpretation of the Classical Revival style. In San Francisco, this style was widely used in the design inexpensive flats. Like the Victorian category of architecture, a number of sub-styles contributed to the Edwardian/Classical Revival fashion, including Arts and Crafts, Beaux-Arts, Neo-Georgian, and some Revival styles.

Because of the narrow period of significance, the vast majority of unaltered buildings within the District were built in the Queen



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Anne and Classical Revival ("Edwardian") styles, with a minority of Shingle (or First Bay Region) buildings also present. The Queen Anne buildings present in the District may be subdivided into two basic arrangements: 1 ½ story-over-raised-basement single family cottages, and 2 ½ story-over-raised-basement single family dwellings or flats. The 1 ½ story buildings appear to have been constructed slightly earlier, but in both cases, the buildings tend to conform to a basic plan of a projecting bay on the first floor, flanked by an open porch and entry to the side—with the porch entry often surmounted by spindle work or decorative porch brackets. These buildings are likewise constructed almost exclusively with prominent front-facing gables, often clad in decorative shingles or decorated with applied ornament.

The Shingle (or First Bay Region) buildings, which make up a minority of buildings in the District, are distinguished by features such as shingle cladding, steeply pitched gable or gambrel roofs, flared eaves, and wavy wall surfaces—such as bulges in the gables with the shingles curving into a recessed window.

The Classical Revival or "Edwardian" buildings are typically multi-story residential flats, distinguished by flat roofs, prominent cornices, and rounded bay windows. Entrances are typically flanked by Classical columns or pilasters, and applied plaster ornament, such as garlands and floral friezes, is common. However, it should be noted that because the District's resources were constructed in such a narrow time frame, many of the Queen Anne buildings also have exuberant applied plaster ornament.

The exact construction dates for the District's contributing resources is not entirely clear, but comparisons of the 1899 and 1913 Sanborn maps indicate that the earliest buildings tended to be the Queen Anne cottages and Shingle style single-family dwellings. These appear to have been closely followed by the taller 2 ½ story-over-basement Queen Anne single family dwellings and flats, as well as the Classical Revival flats and dwellings.

#### Notable Builders

Given the remarkable cohesiveness of the contributing resources, it seems likely that several groupings of houses were constructed by individual builders. Water tap records for one of the houses within the District, 50 Carmelita Street, appear to indicate that it was built by Fernando Nelson, a prolific San Francisco builder active during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

According to a brochure produced by the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco, Nelson constructed more than 4,000 dwellings during a 50-year career, including the majority of the houses on Carmelita Street within the Duboce Park Historic District. These include 49 through 77 Carmelita Street, as well as 50, and 66 – 78 Carmelita. In addition, the Victorian Alliance also credits Nelson with constructing 563 Waller Street, and 601 – 643 Waller Street, all within the District.<sup>7</sup> In his work at Duboce Park, Nelson appears to have achieved mass production economies by making his floor plans identical.

Over the years, Nelson is known to have worked in various styles and areas, including Eureka Valley, Duboce Triangle and Inner Mission neighborhoods, as well as the Inner Richmond, Sunset, and West Portal Park developments.<sup>8</sup> Some of his signature elements include applied panels with rounded ends called "button boards," pendant-like applied ornaments called "drips," and bands of cut-out circles referred to as "donuts."<sup>9</sup> Of interest, 49 Carmelita Street appears to include a line of Nelson "donuts" above the entry porch.

#### Notes on the Integrity of Contributing Resources

While the overwhelming majority of contributing resources within the Duboce Park Historic District exhibit an exceptionally high level of integrity, there are a few properties that have been identified as contributors despite potentially significant alterations. In general, buildings with potentially significant alterations were left in as contributors if they retained their essential form, rooflines, original windows and/or a fair degree of character-defining ornamentation or detailing. Examples include 581 Waller Street and 60 - 62 Carmelita Street. It should also be noted that the addition of a garage at the basement level—absent any other alterations—was not considered significantly detrimental to integrity.

<sup>7</sup> The Victorian Alliance. "Duboce Park House Tour." Unpublished brochure on file at San Francisco Architectural Heritage. October 15, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication with Bill Buetner of San Francisco Architectural Heritage. January 7, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Duscherer, Paul and Douglas Keister. *Victorian Glory in San Francisco and the Bay Area*. New York: Penguin Group: 2001: 80-81.

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder)

Duboce Park Historic District

\*Recorded by: Jonathan Lammers, Page & Turnbull, Inc.

\*Date Jan. 2008

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Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the historic context and architectural descriptions described previously, the Duboce Park Historic District appears eligible for listing in the National Register. The relatively narrow period of construction, combined with the high integrity of the contributing resources, contributes to an overall impression of a near-pristine historic neighborhood. To recognize the architectural significance of the neighborhood, it is recommended that the City of San Francisco pursue local designation for the District. Additional property-specific research as also recommended to determine the chronology of building and building types within the district, as well as to identify the architects and builders working in the area.

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