

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALAMO SQUARE

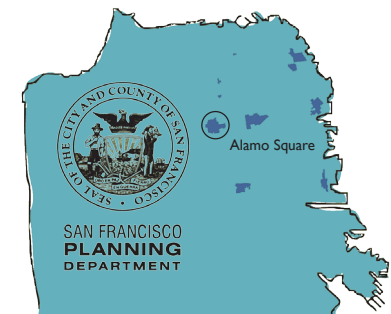
The Alamo Square Landmark District, where you find the iconic “Postcard Row” of Victorians, is an architecturally significant collection of historically middle and upper income residences. It also tells the story of the social transitions of a neighborhood over an 80 year span. Starting in the 1880s, a cable car (replaced by an electric streetcar in 1912) attracted the wealthy to the good views and weather offered by the park. Architects designed unique and extravagant single-family residences for clients that wanted to show off their good taste. The large houses offered ample space in raised basements for servants, extended family, or for rental units. From 1912 to 1934, the district attracted a growing number of renters. To house the increase in population, some older houses, especially those on prominent corners, were replaced by tall apartment buildings. During World War II, many residences were split into small apartments, though their original exterior was kept intact. In the 1950s and 1960s, historic portions of the neighborhood were demolished and redeveloped, which increased the area’s population. Today, the district is one of San Francisco’s main tourist attractions, due to its intact architecture, central location and strong visual quality.

One of this district’s most defining qualities is the use of the projecting bay window along residential street frontages. The shapes of these projecting bays reflect dominant architectural styles from the period of significance of the district. Italianate buildings of the 1870s and early 1880s are identified by their angled bays. The Eastlake or San Francisco Stick style of the 1880s switched to rectangular muscular bays, while the Queen Anne style of the 1890s is recognized by more ornate, asymmetrical curved bays. When Classical Revival styles became popular in the 1900s, projecting bays were designed in varying shapes and ornamented with classical detailing.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The preservation of significant historic and cultural properties is a vital component of planning and managing the built and natural environment in San Francisco. Landmarks and landmark districts are unique and irreplaceable assets to the City and its neighborhoods. Landmark districts are regulated by Article 10 of the Planning Code. Since 1967 San Francisco’s Historic Preservation Program has identified and protected a wide range of the City’s rich history as depicted in its buildings, districts, places, structures, or objects.

As staff to the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Department’s preservation planners work with property owners, city departments, and the general public to promote the preservation of these resources through incentives, long-range preservation planning efforts, public outreach, and technical assistance.



The locator map above shows the Landmark Districts found throughout the City of San Francisco.

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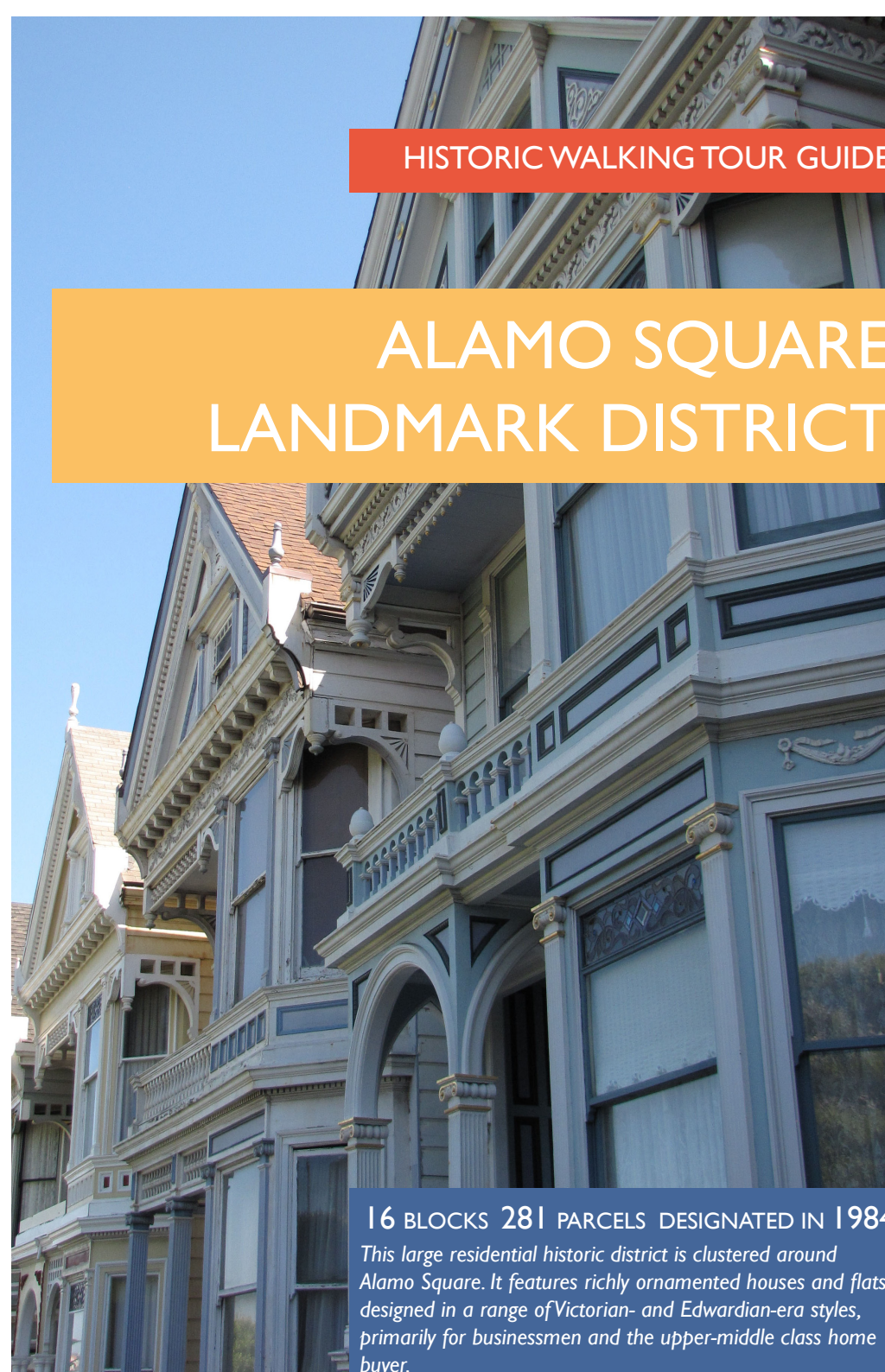
This guide highlights a small selection of the area’s historical buildings. To learn more about landmark districts and historical buildings, visit sfplanning.org.

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This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior; National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Department of the Interior.

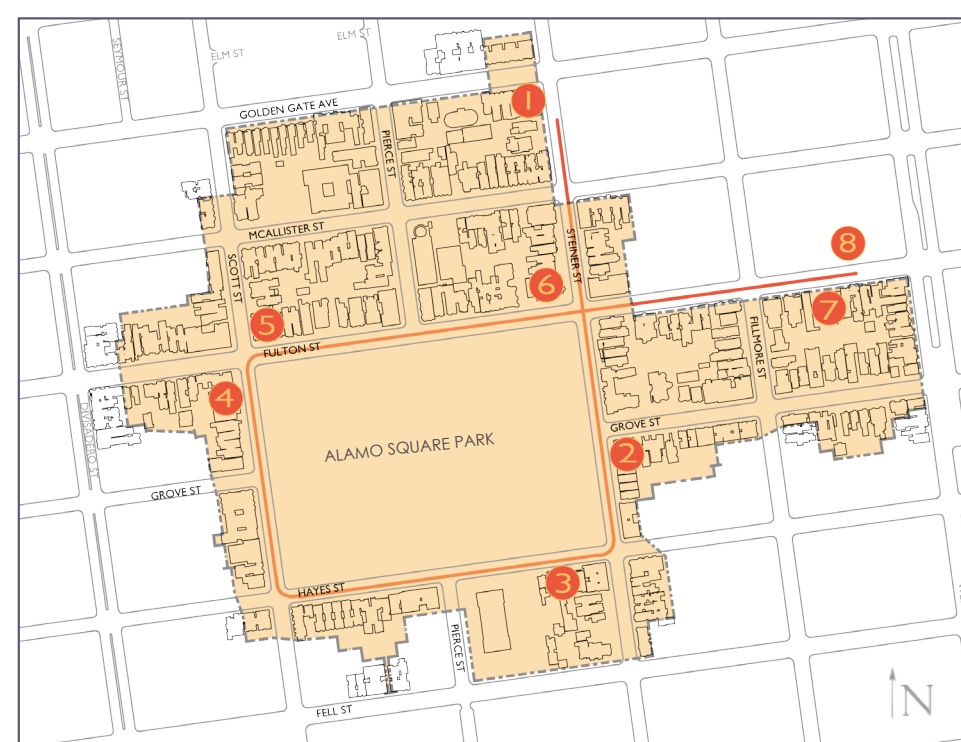
HISTORIC WALKING TOUR GUIDE

ALAMO SQUARE LANDMARK DISTRICT



16 BLOCKS 281 PARCELS DESIGNATED IN 1984

This large residential historic district is clustered around Alamo Square. It features richly ornamented houses and flats, designed in a range of Victorian- and Edwardian-era styles, primarily for businessmen and the upper-middle class home buyer.



1 CHATEAU TIVOLI
1057 Steiner Street

This large Victorian townhouse was designed in 1892 by architect William H. Armitage for shipping magnate Daniel Jackson. Reflecting the neighborhood's large Jewish population, from 1917 to 1961, the building housed a number of organizations, including the Emanu-El Sisterhood's home for single girls and the Yiddish Literary and Dramatic Society's Cultural Center. In 1975, the building was purchased by Jack Painter, Ph.D. and became a world renowned center for the New Age Psychology.



2 700 BLOCK OF STEINER STREET
710-722 Steiner Street

The 700 block of Steiner Street, also known as "The Painted Ladies", with its picturesque row of Queen Anne houses and spectacular city view in the background, is probably the most photographed view of Victorians in the world. These homes were built between 1892-1895 in the Queen Anne style.

3 MOHRDICK HOUSE
1021 Hayes St.

This house was built in 1891 and is an early example of the Queen Anne style, with characteristic features such as a tower with conical roof and fish scale shingle siding. In the 1920s, an addition was created on the eastern side that included a garage at street level with a dining room above at the main living level.



4 QUEEN ANNE HOUSE
719 Scott Street

This 5,500 square foot, 19 room mansion was constructed 1880 in the Queen Anne style. It features multiple roof lines, a prominent front facing gable and rounded corner bay window. Other characteristic features of the style include the classically designed entry portico, and the decorative wood shingle siding.



5 WESTERFELD HOUSE
1198 Fulton Street
SF Landmark #135

The Westerfeld House was built in 1889 for baker and confectioner William Westerfeld, a prosperous German immigrant. Designed by German-born architect Henry Geilfuss, the wooden palazzo is one of the most picturesque examples of the towered Stick Italian Villa style.

6 ARCHBISHOP'S MANSION
1000 Fulton Street
SF Landmark #151

Built in 1904, this Second French Empire building is sited at the northeast corner of Alamo Square. The mansion was built as a home for Archbishop Patrick Riordan of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Francisco. After the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, the mansion was given to the Sisters of Presentation for use as a convent. The stately building served as an important symbol of the Catholic Church's prominence in San Francisco's religious, social and cultural life. In recent years, the building has been converted into a bed and breakfast inn.



7 DOUBLE HOUSE
881-887 Fulton Street

These "twin" flats were built by developer John Hooker in 1877. A beautiful example of the Italianate style, the buildings feature typical stylistic details such as a heavy bracketed cornice, narrow, framed arched windows with elaborate hoods and a single-story front entry porch supported by slender colonettes.



8 OLD HOLY VIRGIN RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
858-864 Fulton Street
SF Landmark #28

Located just outside of the District, this landmarked building, was constructed in 1876 in the German Gothic style. Originally St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, it was purchased in 1927, by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, who made it a cathedral. It served the community as such until 1961, when a new more modern cathedral was constructed nearby.

