

# HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BUSH STREET-COTTAGE ROW

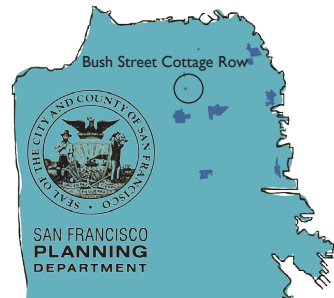
The Bush Street-Cottage Row Landmark District is a remarkably intact group of 22 architecturally significant Italianate and Stick residences constructed between 1870 and 1885. Constructed with these buildings is a small walkway and park. The district demonstrates the different modes of speculative housing constructed during the late nineteenth century. The Real Estate Associates (TREA) was San Francisco's largest builder of housing in the 1870s, having built nearly 1,000 houses based on designs by architect John Remer. Only about 200 remain today. TREA pioneered quality low-cost housing in what were then outlying areas. TREA built the houses on Bush Street and two residences on Sutter Street. The six houses on Cottage Row were built by small investors, John H. Smyth and Charles L. Taylor, as rental housing. Taylor himself chose the name "Cottage Row".

All of the residences are two-story wood-frame buildings designed in either an Italianate or early Stick architectural style. Buildings have channel rustic wood siding, double-hung windows, and paneled entry recesses. They are tall, narrow buildings with tall, narrow openings balanced by heavy, bracketed cornices on patently false fronts. The Bush Street residences are characterized by angled bay windows popularized by TREA. In the 1930s, the walkway was popularly called "Japan Street," because the district was primarily inhabited by Japanese-Americans until their forced internment during World War II. During this time, the residents grew vegetables in their tiny rear yards, which they offered for sale at an informal public market held every Saturday along the Row.

## 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.



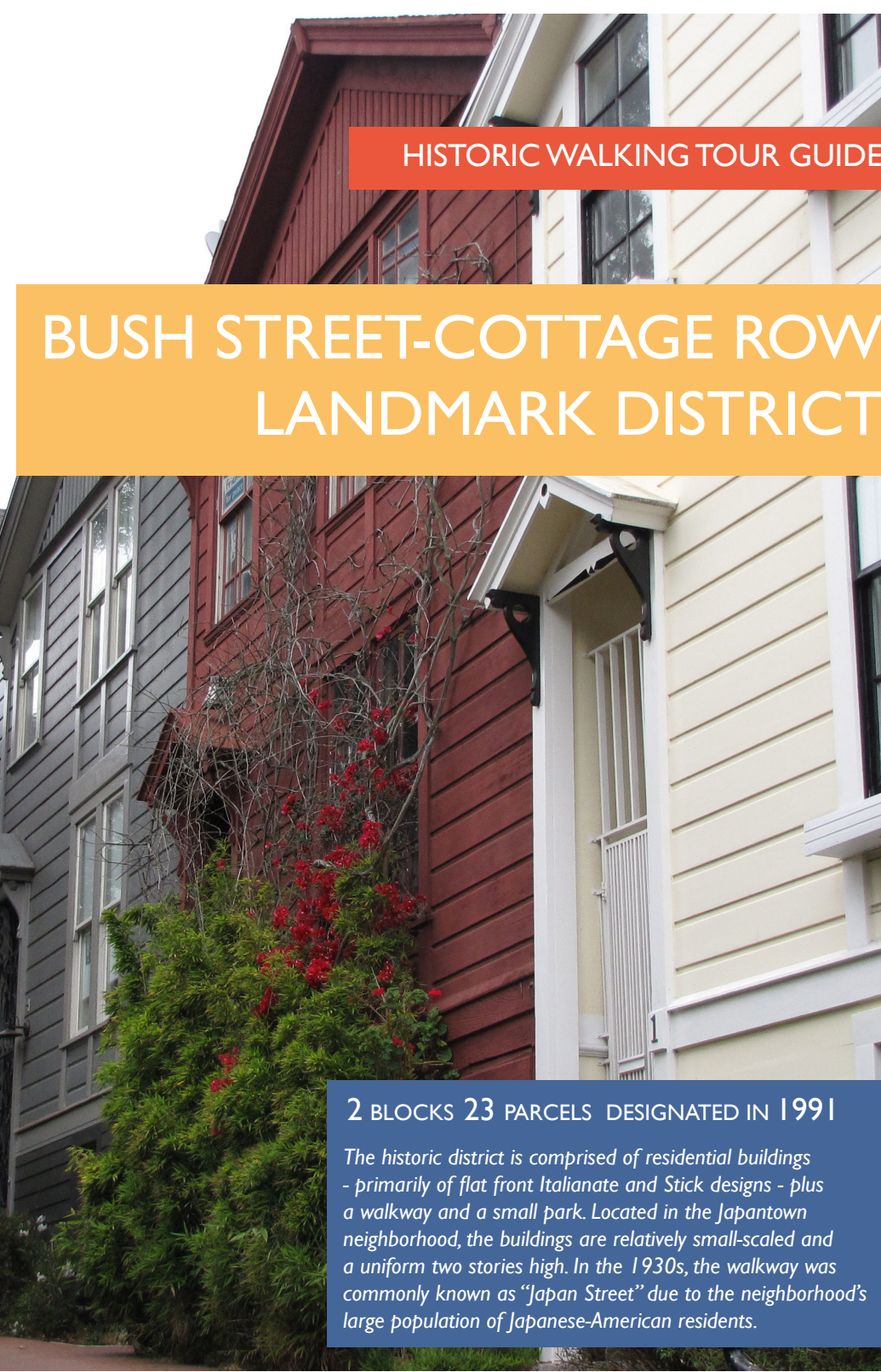
The locator map above shows the Landmark Districts found throughout the City of San Francisco.

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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](http://sfplanning.org).

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2 BLOCKS 23 PARCELS DESIGNATED IN 1991

The historic district is comprised of residential buildings - primarily of flat front Italianate and Stick designs - plus a walkway and a small park. Located in the Japantown neighborhood, the buildings are relatively small-scaled and a uniform two stories high. In the 1930s, the walkway was commonly known as "Japan Street" due to the neighborhood's large population of Japanese-American residents.





1

### 2115-2125 Bush Street

This row of six houses was constructed by TREA in 1875. All were designed by architect Silas Ford in the flat front Italianate style.



2

### 2109 Bush Street

Charles Taylor was a colonel in the militia, sold marine insurance and later became a contractor. As soon as Cottage Row was completed, Taylor commissioned this three-story simplified Stick style rental property to insulate the cottages and adjacent park from the street.



3

### 2105-2101 Bush Street

This row of three Italianate rowhouses, along with the corner grocery, was also developed by Charles Taylor in 1874. Taylor wanted the four buildings to complement each other. Note the similar materials, detailing, and cornices.



4

### 1785 Webster St.

In order to shelter the rowhouses next door, Taylor sited this grocery store with residence above at the property line. TREA similarly anchored the opposite end of the block with a pharmacy, that was removed during the area's redevelopment in the 1970s.



5

### 1717 Webster Street

This lot originally contained one of Taylor's Italianate rowhouses. In 1974, during the urban renewal of Western Addition, that house was demolished and this Stick style beauty was moved onto the lot. It was originally built in 1885 and located at 773 Turk Street by the Newsom Brothers for John J. Vollmer, a neighborhood grocer.



6

### 1717-1719 Webster Street

In 1869, attorney John Smyth purchased three lots mid-block, where he developed three identical duplexes - of which only this one remains. Built in a simple Italianate style, the "double house" features arched, framed windows, a bracketed cornice, and a bracketed balcony at the entry.



7

### 1942 Sutter Street

Within the District, TREA created three facades; one for each street face, in varying price ranges. This house and its neighbor are the only two remaining along Sutter Street. Both were built in 1875 and designed by Silas Ford. The glassed-in porch appears to be a plan upgrade offered by TREA. Otherwise, the two houses are twins.



8

### Cottage Row

In 1882, Taylor purchased this sliver of land extending mid-block from Bush to Sutter Streets. He commissioned local builder, Thomas Nahs, to create "six two-story frame tenements", with access via a walkway from each street. At the time, *tenement* referred to any property constructed for rental income.