



MODERNISTIC STYLES (1925-1965)

CONTEXT: ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

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San Francisco
Planning

49 South Van Ness Avenue, Suite 1400
San Francisco, CA 94103
628.652.7600
www.sfplanning.org

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Preface

Modernistic Styles in San Francisco is a theme identified within the Architectural Contexts, developed as part of the City's SF Survey Cultural Resources Survey. Historic Context Statements are planning documents that create a framework for interpreting history by grouping information around a common theme, such as a geographical area, time period, or cultural group. The Planning Department and Historic Preservation Commission use these documents to identify and evaluate significance of properties across the City in relation to associated historic contexts. These documents are not comprehensive histories or catalogues of each theme in the City but are rather intended as a reference guide for future field surveyors and evaluators of a property's cultural and historical significance.

Contributors

Elena Moore is an Assistant Preservation Planner with the Survey & Designation Team at the City and County of San Francisco's Planning Department. Her work was reviewed by Senior Preservation Planners Melanie Bishop, Shannon Ferguson, Pilar LaValley, and Frances McMillen.

Theme Introduction

This theme is concerned with extant resources in San Francisco designed in Modernistic architectural styles. The context theme begins in the mid-1920s, coinciding with the Roaring Twenties and subsequent Great Depression. The time frame of this historic context statement covers a swath of pivotal years in American history, finally concluding in the mid-1960s in the midst of the civil rights movement, the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Junior, and the Vietnam War and antiwar protests.

Modernistic style buildings take inspiration from a number of sources, including art movements such as Cubism, Fauvism, and German expressionism; Mayan, Chinese, Japanese, and Egyptian art and architecture; transportation modes; and industrialization. As covered in the *Draft New Deal Historic Context Statement*, the New Deal, a national program designed to counterbalance the widespread negative ramifications of the Great Depression, also played a crucial role in the widespread popularity of some of the Modernistic styles.

This historic context statement focuses on three primary architectural styles: Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and International Style. Buildings of these three styles are found citywide in a variety of typologies, including commercial, educational, institutional, recreational, and residential, among others. This historic context statement serves as an addendum to the *Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*. Its primary intent is to provide a narrative section and an evaluative framework for Art Deco architecture, as well as add newly discovered information about the Streamline Moderne style, following a recommendation from the *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950 Historic Context Statement* to further survey and research the styles. The *Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement* includes more in-depth historical information as well as narrative sections and evaluative frameworks for Streamline Moderne and International Style architecture.

Other Historic Context Statements and survey documents within the Citywide Survey relevant to Modernistic styles may include the following:

Draft New Deal Historic Context Statement
Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement
Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950 Historic Context Statement
Auto Suburbanization (1920-1950) Historic Context Statement

Historic Context

Roaring Twenties

On November 11, 1918, World War I ended. In the United States, the following decade, often referred to as the “Roaring Twenties,” saw widespread social, economic, and spatial change.

Postwar readjustment largely influenced the development of a new, more modern American sensibility. Urban centers like New York and Los Angeles experienced construction and population booms as wartime workers chose to stay and returning veterans opted for employment in cities over farms and factories in the countryside.¹ This flourishing economy allowed many Americans to purchase consumer goods such as cars, refrigerators, phones, and radios.²



Fig. 1. The 1920 census revealed that more than half of the population lived in cities.³

(Source: Kirn Vintage Stock/Corbis/Getty Images)

These new city dwellers participated in the burgeoning cultural scene of the time. This era was soon dubbed the Jazz Age,” after the popularity of the Black music form that originated in New Orleans. In New York City, a period known as the “Harlem Renaissance” occurred as Black artists, musicians, and authors such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston celebrated Black identity and culture.⁴ Nationally, authors such as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Gertrude Stein came to be known as the “Lost Generation,” as they cynically reflected on wartime atrocities and postwar disillusionment.⁵ During this time period, American culture, whether Broadway musicals, Jazz music, or literature, began to be exported on a global scale.⁶

¹ “Roaring Twenties,” *Ohio History Central*, accessed May 10, 2022, https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Roaring_Twenties.

² Barrett A. Silverstein, “1920s: A Decade of Change,” *Tar Heel Junior Historian Association, North Carolina Museum of History*, Spring 2004, <https://www.ncpedia.org/history/20th-Century/1920s>.

³ Dewitt, Ellen, *Stacker News*, “31 Historic Photos That Show Life in The Roaring Twenties,” June 2, 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/31-historic-photos-that-show-life-roaring-twenties-1596960>.

⁴ “Harlem Renaissance,” *National Gallery of Art*, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.nga.gov/learn/teachers/lessons-activities/uncovering-america/harlem-renaissance.html>.

⁵ “American Culture in the 1920s,” *Khan Academy*, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/1920s-america/a/jazz-and-the-lost-generation>.

⁶ Barrett A. Silverstein, “1920s: A Decade of Change.”



Fig. 2. Cootie Williams with Duke Ellington's band in a Harlem ballroom in the 1930s.

(Source: Bettmann Archive/Getty Images)

This decade was also a time of great social and racial recalibration; these changes permeated almost every aspect of American life. In 1919, Congress ratified the 18th Amendment, banning the production and sale of alcohol. While the Temperance movement had been growing since the 1780s and had a large support base, many Americans strongly opposed the amendment and ignored it, leading to the rise of bootlegging and speakeasies. Eventually, the amendment was repealed in 1933.⁷ Conservative ethics, religious orthodoxy, and a skepticism towards modern science also grew throughout the 1920s, resulting in cases like the Scopes Trial where a Tennessee public high-school biology teacher was tried for teaching modern evolution theory.

Soon after, in 1920, the generations-long battle for women's suffrage led to ratification of the 19th Amendment, which gave *some* women the right to vote. While White women gained voting eligibility, American Indian and Asian American immigrant women did not. Additionally, literacy tests, poll taxes, identification requirements, and violence kept some Latinx and Black women from voting.⁸ A few years later, the Snyder Act of 1924 granted all U.S.-born American Indians citizenship and in theory, voting rights, however, it took some states over forty years to fully comply.⁹ Meanwhile, Asian American immigrant women were not able to vote until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.¹⁰

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Not All Women Gained the Vote in 1920," *PBS*, July 6, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/vote-not-all-women-gained-right-to-vote-in-1920/>.

⁹ "Voting Rights for Native Americans," *Library of Congress*, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/elections/right-to-vote/voting-rights-for-native-americans/>.

¹⁰ "Not All Women Gained the Vote in 1920," *American Experience – PBS*, July 6, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/vote-not-all-women-gained-right-to-vote-in-1920/>.



Fig. 3. A photo of a polling booth following the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

(Source: Photo 12/Universal Images Group/Getty Images)

The first half of the twentieth century also saw a large-scale racial recalibration. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a racist, white supremacist organization that targeted Black Americans, Jewish Americans, and Catholics, was revived in the 1920s.¹¹ By 1925, the violent group had about four million members – white, native-born, and Protestant.¹² The KKK supported conservative measures like Prohibition and criticized labor unions and immigration.¹³

The Great Migration, the mass exodus of Black Americans from the South to the North, Midwest, and West also began around this time, spurred by labor shortages during World War I and the desire for freedom from oppressive Jim Crow laws. The Black population in cities like Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and New York City skyrocketed by nearly forty percent between 1910 and 1930.¹⁴ However, new arrivals in the North did not entirely escape racial discrimination; racism was still rampant and cities like Newark, Chicago, and East Saint Louis were the sites of brutal race riots in 1917 and 1919.¹⁵

Later, in 1924, inspired by American Indian enlistment during World War I, President Coolidge signed the Indian Citizenship Act, granting all American Indians citizenship; however, in certain states, American Indians were still barred from voting.¹⁶ Also in 1924, the Immigration Act of 1924 essentially prohibited immigration from most Asian countries and introduced national origins quotas for other countries.¹⁷

The Great Depression

In 1929, the prosperity and indulgence of the Roaring Twenties came to a halt. The stock market crash in 1929, along with a series of national and international banking and financial crises from 1930 to 1933, led to the worst economic recession in national history.¹⁸ At its highest, national unemployment rose to twenty five percent in

¹¹ Piestrusza, David, "The Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s," *Bill of Rights Institute*, accessed October 4, 2022, <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/essays/the-ku-klux-klan-in-the-1920s>.

¹² "Klansville U.S.A.," *PBS*, accessed October 5, 2022, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/klansville/>.

¹³ Piestrusza, David, "The Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s."

¹⁴ "Great Migration: The African-American Exodus North," *National Public Radio*, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.npr.org/2010/09/13/129827444/great-migration-the-african-american-exodus-north>.

¹⁵ "World War I and the Great Migration, 1915-1920," *New Jersey State Library*, accessed May 11, 2022, https://www.njstatelib.org/research_library/new_jersey_resources/highlights/african_american_history_curriculum/unit_9_world_war_i/.

¹⁶ "Timeline," *Native Voices*, *National Library of Medicine*, accessed August 30, 2022, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/431.html>.

¹⁷ "The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)," *U.S. Department of State Archive*, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/id/87718.htm>, accessed August 30, 2022.

¹⁸ Gary Richardson, "The Great Depression," *Federal Reserve History*, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/great-depression>.

1933.¹⁹ Many Americans lost their life savings and relied on soup kitchens and breadlines for sustenance. Falling agriculture prices and drought further burdened farmers in the Midwest and sharecroppers in the South.²⁰ After little federal involvement under President Herbert Hoover, a proponent of laissez-faire economics, his successor, President Franklin Roosevelt, proposed the New Deal, a series of federal initiatives designed to boost the American economy. The New Deal and its effects in San Francisco are further explored in the *Draft San Francisco New Deal Historic Context Statement*.

Modernistic Era in San Francisco

The Great Depression reverberated in California as well. However, due to the plethora of agricultural jobs available in the state, at the onset of the crisis, the state's unemployment rate was lower than the nationwide trend. In the coming years, this would encourage unemployed Americans from the Midwest and the South to migrate to California.

Urban San Franciscans were especially better positioned to fend off the economic effects of the crisis. San Francisco was not exclusively an "industrial city," instead relying on a variety of sectors. The city also had a relatively strong relief program. In the *Draft San Francisco New Deal Historic Context Statement*, Donna Graves and Chris VerPlanck write that, "San Francisco, in particular, reacted very effectively to the Depression, employing sound fiscal policies, generous relief budgets, and extensive public works programs."²¹

One of the most impactful effects of the Great Depression and the New Deal on San Francisco were the numerous engineering initiatives. Though work on Hetch Hetchy, San Francisco's municipal water delivery system, was nearly completed when the Great Depression began, Mayor Angelo Rossi expanded the project, adding projects such as the Puglas Water Temple (1934) and the expansion of the O'Shaughnessy Dam to create jobs for unemployed Bay Area residents.²² Public school construction funded by the federal Public Works Administration (PWA) was another relief effort in the Bay Area; George Washington High School, Marina Junior High School, and Lawton Elementary School were all constructed during this period and increased employment in the local construction industry.²³ The construction of the Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge (both commenced in 1933) also proved to be hugely impactful projects that generated jobs for many San Franciscans.

In fact, the completion of these two bridges and emergence from the economic cataclysm of the Great Depression were celebrated at the Golden Gate International Exposition (GGIE). The GGIE was hosted on Treasure Island, a flat artificial island in the San Francisco Bay, in 1939 and for a short period of time in 1940. Numerous pavilions and buildings at the Exposition were designed by emerging San Francisco Modern architects and landscape architects, such as William Wurster, Gardner Dailey, and Nagao Sakurai. Architect Timothy Pflueger was also on the GGIE design board and designed several Exposition buildings. Beyond introducing emerging architects and architectural styles, the GGIE exposed visitors to popular architectural materials of the time. In one instance, Libbey-Owens-Ford built a corporate pavilion highlighting Vitrolite (structural glass) and "Extrudalite" (metal trim) product lines.²⁴

¹⁹ "The Great Depression," *Khan Academy*, accessed May 11, 2022, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/rise-to-world-power/great-depression/a/the-great-depression>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Donna Graves and Chris VerPlanck, "Draft San Francisco New Deal Historic Context Statement," December 8, 2020, 13.

²² Ibid., 17.

²³ Ibid., 17.

²⁴ San Francisco Planning Department, "San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement," January 2011.

Beyond institutional architecture, residential development in San Francisco greatly shifted during the focus years of this historic context statement. Key factors include the near collapse of the construction industry during the Great Depression, the massive population boom related to World War II, and changes in the mortgage industry. Other factors include the development of government-sponsored public housing, the influence of developer-builders, the mass adoption of automobility, creation of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, and the shift from single-family to multi-family residential buildings.²⁵ Further information regarding residential development and home ownership in San Francisco during the modern era can be found in the *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*.

Commercial development experienced similar shifts during these years. Social, economic, and technological forces profoundly influenced the form, location, and styles of commercial buildings in San Francisco. The widespread adoption of automobiles vastly increased the speed and extent of mobility in San Francisco and impacted the organization and types of new commercial development. New forms of automobile-oriented commercial development included retail strips, shopping centers, and businesses such as motels and drive-ins. On commercial corridors, the appearance of retail storefronts was transformed from the 1930s to 1950s as storefront facades were designed or remodeled in sleek Modern styles. Widely implemented New Deal programs stimulated storefront modernization from 1935-1943, often in popular Modernistic styles such as Art Deco and Streamline Moderne.²⁶ Another related local program, "Start to Shine for '39," further promoted storefront modernization in advance of the aforementioned Golden Gate International Exposition (GGIE).²⁷

Following the end of World War II, an unprecedented surge in consumer spending led to increased retail competition, aggressive marketing campaigns, and further modernization of storefronts in attempts to lure shoppers. Most new commercial development outside the downtown core was sited on vacant land or in older neighborhoods that had been razed for redevelopment project areas. Vacant lands included the former sand dunes of the Sunset District and former cemetery land near Pacific Heights. Unlike residential development of this period, which exploited the undeveloped steeper slopes, commercial development was generally limited to undeveloped flat lands and areas slated for redevelopment. Primary locations of new large-scale commercial development during this period include Stonestown shopping center in the outer Sunset District; Diamond Heights shopping complex; former Sears shopping center on Geary Boulevard; adaptive re-use of the Ghirardelli Square complex near Fisherman's wharf; and mixed-use residential, office, and retail centers related to the Golden Gateway redevelopment project area. Development of the tourism industry spurred construction of motels along Lombard Street and large-scale hotels such as the Jack Tar on Van Ness Avenue. Smaller-scale commercial corridors associated with builder tract developments include Laurel Village on California Street, San Bruno Avenue in the Portola neighborhood, and new neighborhood-serving retail corridors along Taraval, Irving, and Judah streets in the Sunset District. Storefront modernization and in-fill retail construction was concentrated along the historic commercial corridors of Mission Street, Market Street, and Union Square.²⁸

Modernistic Era Architecture

With these large shifts in residential and commercial development came the proliferation of new architectural styles in San Francisco. This historic context statement covers three architectural styles: Art Deco, Streamline

²⁵ San Francisco Planning Department, "San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement," January 2011, 23.

²⁶ Ibid., 52.

²⁷ San Francisco Planning Department, "San Francisco Neighborhood Commercial Buildings 1865-1965 Historic Context Statement," November 2022.

²⁸ Ibid., 52.

Moderne, and International Style. A number of factors – international events, European art movements, and federal programs, among others – led to their rise.

The focus period for this historic context statement commences in 1925, in the midst of a worldwide rebirth following World War I. During this time, the modern sensibility and lifestyle became cemented and seeped into early modernistic styles such as Art Deco. Developed during the post-World War I “Jazz Age,” exuberant Art Deco design was a reaction to the death, misery, and deprivation of the previous decade. It represented an embrace of a “brave new world in which democracy, clinical efficiency, capitalism, and even luxury prevailed.”²⁹ Modernistic styles continued to ebb and flow in reaction to social, political, and economic events. The Great Depression – and subsequent recovery programs – proved to be a pivotal moment for these styles. New Deal government programs were a huge impetus in the spread of styles such as Art Deco and Streamline Moderne. After the 1929 stock market crash, the construction industry took an enormous hit. In the early 1930s, approximately 90% of the nation’s architects and engineers were out of work.³⁰ In an effort to revive the stagnating construction industry – an industry comprised of contractors, architects, carpenters, and related trades, as well as manufacturers of building materials – the federal government in 1934 passed the National Housing Act (NHA), which created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Title I of the NHA was designed to counteract the effects of the Depression by stimulating the building industry and consumer spending through the modernization of commercial storefronts.³¹ Manufacturers increasingly developed new products in order to stimulate a market for fashionable, modern storefront facades. These new products and technological innovations included the ability to bend structural glass, to extrude metal into flush moldings and settings, and expanded tinting options for structural glass. New, aggressively marketed products included the “complete storefronts” produced by the Kawneer Company and Pittsburg Plate Glass. The Berkeley-based Zouri Company advertised its “Complete Store Fronts” which included any combination of the following components: sash and bars, awning bars, moldings and shapes, sign letters, aluminite facing, and porcelain enamel facing.³² Carrara and Vitrolite, types of tinted structural glass, which had previously been used exclusively in building interiors, were promoted as modern, sleek, and inexpensive exterior facing material. These new technologies and building materials helped inform development of the Streamline Moderne style, discussed in further detail in this document.

Beyond federal programs, individual architects and builder-developers influenced the spread of Modernistic Styles in San Francisco. One such figure was Henry Doelger, a contractor-builder-salesman who dominated the home-building industry in San Francisco in the 1930s and 1940s. During his 30-year career, Doelger Homes constructed approximately 11,000 buildings in San Francisco, primarily in the Sunset District. From 1930 to 1940, he was the largest home builder in the United States, constructing an average of two houses a day and employing 500 people. His specialty was a one-story over garage, single-family house, though he did build a limited number of duplexes and apartments. Doelger was one of the few large-scale builders in San Francisco to incorporate modernistic styles into his portfolio. His early versions of the Streamline Moderne style, houses marketed as the “Styleocrat” and the “Rainbow House,” provided some of the first Modern design options to his largely traditional or revival façade designs.³³ Other builders and tract developers that used this style include the Golden Gate Investment Company, Jason Arnott, F. & T. Rossich, and L.L. and M.L. Wold. Architect C.O. Clausen partnered with several of these firms to design their Art Deco and Streamline Moderne offices and houses.

²⁹ Ibid., 90; Sarah Cunliffe and Jean Loussier. *Architecture Styles Spotter's Guide* (San Diego: Thunder Bay Press, 2006), 220.

³⁰ Gwendolyn Wright, *USA Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 113.

³¹ Gabrielle Esperdy, *Modernizing Main Street: Architecture and Consumer Culture in the New Deal* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

³² Advertisement, *Architect & Engineer*: October 1940: 5.

³³ “San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement,” 27-28.



Fig. 4-5. Left: 2083 29th Avenue, F. & T. Rossich, 1939; Right: 1487 31st Avenue, L.L. & M.L. Wold, 1937.

(Source: Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950 Historic Context Statement)

Modern architects based in Southern California were also tremendously influential in the evolution of Modern design, particularly the machine-like style later dubbed “International Style.” European immigrants, many from Germany and Austria, held influential roles in developing and popularizing a domestic form of this sleek, functional Modern architectural style. Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, Austrian émigrés whose work is concentrated in Southern California, particularly in Los Angeles, were both instrumental in the development of Modern residential architecture in the United States. Both were influenced by Prairie Style designs, and early in their careers both worked for Frank Lloyd Wright. Each also designed a Los Angeles area house for Dr. Philip Lovell; both houses are considered early International Style masterworks. Schindler’s Lovell Beach House (1925-1926) is credited as the first International Style house in the United States. Constructed of concrete, the building featured concrete piers, walls of glass, and horizontal cantilevered upper level. Neutra’s Lovell Health House (1927-29), set on a steeply sloped site, was a full and early expression of International Style. This concrete and steel house featured a metallic skeleton, transparent walls, ribbon windows, and balconies hung from the roof frame. Neutra went on to design five buildings in San Francisco from 1936-1939, four of which feature elements of the Lovell Health House. Erich Mendelsohn and Raphael Soriano, early collaborators with Neutra, later designed several buildings in San Francisco.³⁴

³⁴ Ibid., 80-81.



Fig. 6-7. Left: Lovell Health House (1927-1929) designed by Richard Neutra; Right: Lovell Beach House (1925-1926) designed by Rudolph Schindler.

(Source: www.greatbuildings.com in *Modern Architecture and Landscape Design, 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*)

Sub-Theme: Art Deco (1925-c. 1936)

The Art Deco style of architecture was most popular internationally between the early 1920s and late 1930s and locally from 1925 to the late 1930s, with most Art Deco buildings completed by 1936. The style was popularized by the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts) held in Paris. The exposition brought together Europe's leading Modern artists, designers, architects, furniture makers, and craftspeople. Thoroughly European in origin, the stylized motifs and forms of Art Deco were introduced to American audiences in the years immediately following the Exposition.³⁵ By the late 1920s, Art Deco skyscrapers and commercial buildings speckled the skylines of many American cities; notable examples include the Chrysler Building (1930) and the Empire State Building (1931) in New York City.³⁶

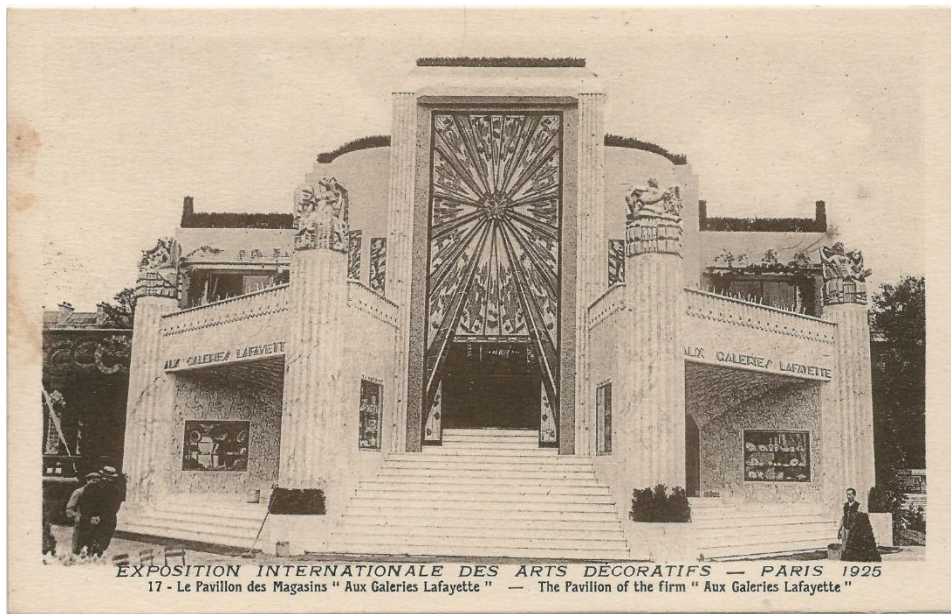


Fig. 8. Postcard of a pavilion from the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes.

(Source: Arch Daily)

Art Deco architecture is known for its wedding of modern design with detailed craftsmanship and opulent materials such as jade.³⁷ It developed from a renewed interest in non-Western design, an interest stimulated in part by the discovery of King Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922.³⁸ Influences on Art Deco architecture include Mayan, Chinese, Japanese, and Egyptian art and architecture.³⁹ The geometric forms of Cubism also influenced the style as did the use of zigzags, chevrons, and rays by earlier German Expressionists.⁴⁰ Trademarks of Art Deco architecture include ziggurat forms, bold geometric elements, beveled and fluted piers, stepped building facades, shaped parapets, speed lines, floral decoration, and transom windows. Art Deco buildings are often clad in smooth materials such as terra cotta or cast stone.⁴¹ Historicist detailing is rarely present in these buildings.

³⁵ Michael F. Crowe, *Deco By the Bay: Art Deco Architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area* (New York: Viking Studio Books, 1995).

³⁶ Los Angeles Planning Department, "Architecture and Engineering/L.A. Modernism, 1919-1980," date, https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/4f67bd39-631a-4f26-9a52-cd5809a66655/LA_Modernism_1919-1980.pdf, 43-44.

³⁷ Camilla Ghisleni, "What is Art Deco Architecture?" November 18, 2021, *ArchDaily*, <https://www.archdaily.com/972018/what-is-art-deco-architecture>.

³⁸ San Francisco Planning Department, "San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970," January 12, 2011, 90.

³⁹ Ghisleni, "What is Art Deco Architecture?"

⁴⁰ Michael F. Crowe, *Deco By the Bay: Art Deco Architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area* (New York: Viking Studio Books, 1995), 3.

⁴¹ Los Angeles Planning Department, "Architecture and Engineering/L.A. Modernism, 1919-1980," 52.

Prominent Bay Area practitioners of the style include Timothy Pflueger, Charles Clausen, H.C. Baumann, Albert Larsen, E. Cobby, R.R. Irvine, George Kelham, Will P. Day, L.O. Ebbetts, and William Crim. Paired back, residential tract examples of Art Deco architecture are also found across the city. Builders that employed the style include Henry Doelger, Marian Realty, Golden Gate Investment Company, Jason Arnott, F. & T. Rossich, L.L. and M.L. Wold, and Robert A. McAfee.⁴²



Fig. 9. Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building, 140 New Montgomery, 1924-1925, Timothy Pflueger.

(Source: Lane Hartwell)



Fig. 10. Interior of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building.

(Source: Evergreene Architectural Arts)

Another of San Francisco's most notable Art Deco structures is the Golden Gate Bridge (San Francisco Landmark No. 222), designed in 1936 by Morrow & Morrow. The bridge features Art Deco details such as chevrons, beveled shapes, staggered vertical forms, and a strong vertical emphasis.⁴³

⁴² Gary Kamiya, "Spirits of the Bay: 'Shimmery, Gleaming Monument to Talk,'" *Nob Hill Gazette*, January 6, 2022, <https://nobhillgazette.com/spirits-of-the-bay-shimmery-gleaming-monument-to-talk/>.

⁴³ "Art Deco on a Grand Scale," *Golden Gate Bridge Highway & Transportation District*, accessed April 5, 2022, <https://www.goldengate.org/exhibits/art-deco-on-a-grand-scale/>.



Fig. 11-13. Assorted photos of the Golden Gate Bridge, designed in 1936 by Morrow & Morrow. The structure is San Francisco Landmark No. 222.

(Source: Golden Gate Bridge
Highway & Transportation District)

In San Francisco, large-scale, institutional examples of Art Deco buildings are primarily found in downtown zones. However, residential, both single-family and multi-family, as well as neighborhood commercial examples also exist in the Mission, the Sunset, the Marina, Sea Cliff, the Richmond, and Nob Hill. Art Deco single-family houses are fairly rare in San Francisco; however, they do exist. The Sunset District and Sea Cliff contain scattered examples of tract houses that display Art Deco stylistic elements.



Fig. 14. 1487 31st Avenue, 1937, L.L. & M.L. Wold.

(Source: Google Street View, June 2021)

Examples of grand, luxurious Art Deco apartment buildings are scattered throughout the central areas of the city such as Nob Hill, Downtown/Civic Center, Russian Hill, and the Marina. Besides the concentration of downtown Art Deco buildings, the retail corridors along Chestnut Street in the Marina District and along Balboa Street in the Richmond District (between 33rd and 39th Avenues) also feature concentrations of Art Deco storefronts. Scattered one-story storefronts are also found in the outlying areas of San Francisco including the Sunset

District. Several schools in San Francisco were designed with Art Deco detailing, including Marina Middle School (3500 Fillmore Street, 1936), Francis Scott Key Elementary School (1530 43rd Avenue, 1938), and Visitacion Valley Elementary School (55 Schwerin Street, 1939).



Fig. 15. Art Deco commercial buildings along Chestnut Street in the Marina.

(Source: San Francisco Planning, *Neighborhood Commercial Buildings, 1865-1965, Historic Context Statement*)

Beyond new Art Deco construction, some early twentieth century buildings in San Francisco were remodeled in the fashionable Art Deco style. This is the case for some of the structures on the Chestnut Street retail corridor, some buildings near Washington Square in North Beach, as well as for many of the Art Deco commercial buildings along Market, Powell, Stockton, and Kearny streets, including the former Omar Khayyam's Restaurant at 200-16 Powell Street, which was remodeled in the Art Deco style in 1934.⁴⁴ In the case of North Beach, iconic features like bay windows often remained, but some mixed-use buildings were newly decorated with speed lines and stepped horizontals.⁴⁵ Some of these remodels were funded by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) programs such as the Modernization Credit Plan.⁴⁶

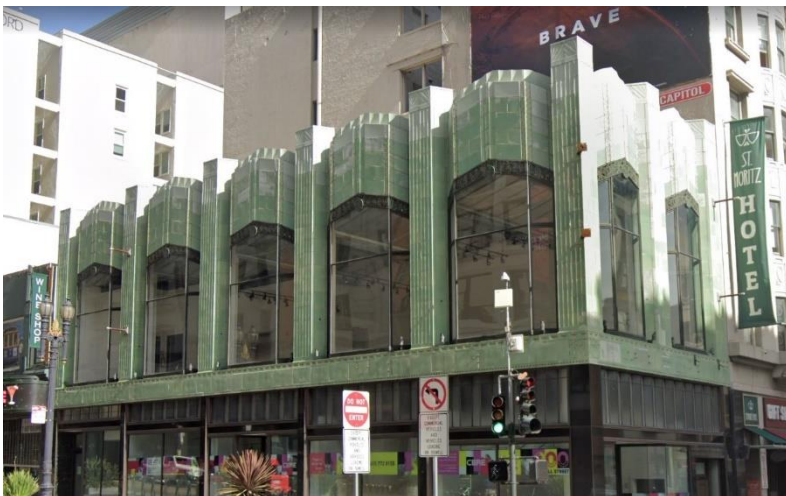


Fig. 16. 200-2016 Powell Street, remodeled in the Art Deco style in 1934.

(Source: Google Street View, November 2021)

⁴⁴ VerPlanck Historic Preservation Consulting, Donna Graves, "Draft San Francisco New Deal Historic Context Statement, Rebuilding the City: 1933 to 1943," December 8, 2020, 43; Michael R. Corbett, "North Beach, San Francisco Historic Context Statement," December 2022, https://sfplanning.s3.amazonaws.com/default/files/Preservation/hcs_north_beach.pdf.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

The onset of the Great Depression in 1930 and the resultant widespread decrease in building activity curtailed the construction of Art Deco buildings. As a result, relatively few buildings in San Francisco were designed in this style, which was largely replaced by the curvier and less extravagant Streamline Moderne in the late-1930s.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ San Francisco Planning Department, *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950*, 2013, 99.

Evaluation Criteria: Art Deco

Statement of Significance:	<p>Art Deco architecture is known for its wedding of modern design with detailed craftsmanship and opulent materials. The style was popularized by the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts) held in Paris. Art Deco architecture can be found in residential (single-family and multi-family), educational, commercial, and institutional structures. Resources considered within this theme are to be evaluated for significance under Criterion C/3 (Architecture) as an excellent example of Art Deco architecture.</p> <p>Significant examples of Art Deco architecture typically display a full expression of the style, drawing from the character-defining features outlined below. Significance is also impacted by unique or rare architectural massing, as well as exuberant displays of ornamentation. Art Deco resources are not exceedingly numerous in San Francisco. Art Deco single-family homes are especially rare. Thus, many Art Deco single-family residences that display a full or unique expression of character-defining features are likely to qualify as individually architecturally significant. Additionally, commercial and institutional Art Deco buildings that are opulent examples and retain integrity are likely to be individually architecturally significant. Groupings of multiple Art Deco buildings concentrated in one geographic area and retaining integrity, may constitute an architecturally significant district, especially if some contributors are more robust examples of the style.</p>
Period of Significance:	1925-c. 1936
Justification of Period of Significance:	The Period of Significance 1925-c. 1936 best reflects the development of the Art Deco style as it manifested in San Francisco. The style gained popularity after the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts) held in Paris. The onset of the Great Depression in 1930 and the resultant widespread decrease in building activity curtailed the construction of Art Deco buildings in the mid- to late-1930s.
Geographic Boundaries:	Citywide; Neighborhoods with higher concentrations include the Marina, Nob Hill, Downtown/Civic Center, the Sunset, and the Mission.
Related Themes of Significance:	Sunset Residential Tracts; Auto Suburbanization (1920-1950); Neighborhood Commercial Buildings (1865-1965); Public Education; Finance & Commerce; Merchants, Leaders, & Commercial Identity; Architecture, Planning, & Preservation Professionals Biographies; New Deal
Criteria for Eligibility:	NRHP: C; CR: 3
Associated Property Type(s):	Commercial Institutional Educational Residential: Single-Family Residential: Multi-Family
Property Type Description(s):	The main associated property types are commercial, institutional, educational, and residential (single-family and multi-family). Commercial and multi-family residential are likely the most popular typology, however, Art Deco is still a relatively rare architectural style in San Francisco.

Criterion C/3 Eligibility Standards:

The property *may* be considered eligible under Criterion C/3 if it meets the following:

- Must have been constructed during the Period of Significance (1925-c. 1936)
- Must retain character-defining features

- A high level of importance is placed on ziggurat forms, geometric elements, stepped elements, and cladding and accent materials
 - In commercial examples, retention of storefront and transom windows is important for individual eligibility
- Must have high levels of integrity, particularly integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, to be eligible as an individual resource
- Other considerations:
 - Examples constructed during the peak of the style (i.e., 1925-early 1930s) hold more significance than resources constructed after the style's peak.
 - Art Deco single-family residences are particularly rare; many Art Deco single-family residences that display a full or unique expression of character-defining features are likely to qualify as individually architecturally significant
 - Though district contributors need not be as exuberant as individually eligible buildings, a grouping of entirely restrained and/or noticeably altered Art Deco buildings would likely not qualify as a historic district eligible
 - Design or construction by an Architect or Builder of Merit, particularly if the resource is a rare or exceptional example of the architect's or builder's work in San Francisco, may add to the significance. Reference Evaluative Framework for *Architecture, Planning, & Preservation Professionals: A Collection of Biographies* for further information.

Character-Defining Features:

Character-defining features of Art Deco buildings significant under Criterion C/3 would be those elements that represent its significant design qualities relative to its date of construction. The following are anticipated character-defining features of a significant Art Deco building under Criterion C/3:

- Ziggurat forms
- Vertical emphasis
- Bold geometric elements
- Beveled and fluted piers
- Stepped building facades and/or stepped arches
- Low relief decorative panels
- Shaped arches
- Speed lines
- Floral decoration
- Transom windows

Integrity Considerations:

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are the most important elements to consider when determining architectural significance. These three aspects of integrity carry more weight for individually significant resources, whereas district contributors can account for some more minor losses of integrity of design, materials, or workmanship if they have a high level of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and/or association. Integrity of location is expected to be retained for most individual properties. Differences in setting may have occurred over time for both individual resources and districts, due to changing land uses, new construction, and differences in settlement patterns. Substantial alterations to an Art Deco building, such as an incompatible storefront renovation or removal of Art Deco ornamentation such as speed lines, stepped detailing, or other geometric elements, will render a property ineligible for individual significance and will greatly impact the property's ability

to contribute to a district. Replacement of original windows with incompatible windows, especially in restrained residential tract examples, will likely render a property ineligible for individual consideration. If a property with major alterations is one of only a few altered properties in a potential district, and demonstrably contributes to the district's sense of place, the property may be able to remain a contributor to the district. Similarly, a property (or properties) with more significant alterations may still contribute to a district if the property still reads as its original style and directly contributes to the feeling of the district through repeated form, roofline, similar façade ornamentation etc.



Fig. 17. 1487 31st Avenue, 1937, L.L. & M.L. Wold. This building was designed in the Art Deco style and displays character-defining features such as bold geometric elements and vertical emphasis. Due to the building's restrained nature, it would not be individually eligible under Criterion C/3. However, it could contribute to a district with other more detailed examples of the Art Deco style.
(Source: Google Street View, March 2022)



Fig. 18. 5401 Mission Street, 1936. This is a mixed-use Art Deco structure in the Crocker Amazon neighborhood. It is a highly sculptural building that features a stacked tower, vertical emphasis, and transom windows. This exuberant and unique example would likely be individually eligible under Criterion C/3.
(Source: Google Street View, January 2021)



Fig. 19. 125 Hyde Street, 1931, Andrew H. Knoll. This is a small-scale Art Deco building that was once part of a theater-supply district. It is a contributor to the National Register and California Register Uptown Tenderloin Historic District as well as an Article 11 Category 1 building. Though its storefront has been altered, it is an exuberant example of Art Deco architecture with a stepped façade, vertical emphasis, and floral decoration.

(Source: Google Street View, March 2022)

Sub-Theme: Streamline Moderne (1935-1950)

Nationwide, construction in the popular modernistic style of Streamline Moderne began in the 1930s and peaked around 1940. In San Francisco, the period of construction of Streamline Moderne buildings began in the mid-1930s and continued through to at least 1950, with some later examples constructed in the early 1950s. Described as a uniquely American style,⁴⁸ Streamline Moderne is considered the first “modern” style to gain widespread acceptance in mainstream America. Streamline Moderne, also referred to as Art Moderne, Moderne, Modernistic, or Depression Modern, was a conscious architectural expression of the speed and sleekness of the Machine Age.

The style referenced the aerodynamic forms of airplanes, ships, and automobiles of the period with sleek, streamline rounded corners and curves, and evoked a machine-made quality. It evolved from the Art Deco movement and incorporated design elements associated with the International Style.⁴⁹ Common architectural features of the style include rounded corners and curved surfaces, curved railings and overhangs, speed lines, curved glass windows, porthole windows, horizontal ribbon windows, flat roofs, smooth stucco or concrete wall surfaces, wraparound corner windows, metal balconettes and railings, and horizontal orientation. Historicist detailing is uncommon.⁵⁰ The style incorporated newly developed products such as Vitrolite glass and Carrara glass (tinted structural glass), decorative plastic laminates, porcelain enamel, extruded aluminum and stainless-steel fittings and fixtures, ceramic veneer, glass block, and advancements in building technologies such as the ability to bend structural glass.

Bay Area architects associated with the style include Henry Herbert Howard, H.C. Baumann, Masten & Hurd, Irvine Goldstine, N.W. Mohr, and William Mooser III. Builder-Developers associated with the style include Henry Doelger, Claude T. Lindsay, Hansen Homes (later known as Tru-Value), Heyman Brothers, Marvel Home Builders, ARCO Building Company, Galli Brothers, Standard Building Company, United Housing Corporation, and the Portola Building Company.⁵¹ Sunset District developers began to slowly integrate the style into their tracts; the style, however, is typically interspersed amongst a variety of revival styles. It was often one of several styles employed by builder-developers to add variety and consumer choice to tracts of new houses with identical or similar floor plans.⁵² Builder-Developer of Merit Henry Doelger’s early versions of the Streamline Moderne style, marketed as the “Styleocrat” and the “Rainbow House,” provided some of the first Modern design options to his largely traditional or revival façade designs. Features such as glass block walls, curved balconies, flat parapets, and porthole windows are hallmarks of Doelger’s early Modern designs.⁵³ Builder of Merit Claude T. Lindsay also designed distinctive Streamline Moderne residences in his residential projects in the Sunset. His fully expressed Streamline Moderne houses often featured a two-story curved glass block window, circular metal balconettes, and porthole windows.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Lester Walker, *American Shelter*, (Woodstock, New York: The Overlook Press, 1996), 220.

⁴⁹ San Francisco Planning Department, “San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970,” January 12, 2011, 164.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 164-165.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 166.

⁵³ San Francisco Planning Department, *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950*, 2013, 49.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 58.



Fig. 20. 2137 32nd Avenue, 1938, Golden Gate Investment Co.

(Source: *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950 Historic Context Statement*)



Fig. 21. 1547 37th Avenue, 1938, Claude Lindsay.

(Source: *Sunset District Residential Builders, 1925-1950 Historic Context Statement*)

This style is most closely associated with small-scale residential development; elements of the Streamline Moderne style were also incorporated in commercial, institutional, and recreational building types. It was not uncommon for older commercial storefronts to be remodeled to incorporate elements of this popular style. Streamline Moderne was the dominant style promoted by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in its storefront modernization campaigns begun in 1934.



Fig. 22. The rectangular plan commercial building at 2205 Mission Street (extant), was completely remodeled in 1937-38 drawing from the Streamline Moderne idiom. The building's corners were rounded, continuous corner windows installed, rustic wood cladding covered with smooth enamel iron panels, speed lines applied near the roofline, and the entrance renovated to include a recessed vestibule, terrazzo paving, and marquee/tower

(Source: Google Street View, July 2009)

Due to the Depression and war-related economic downturn, few large commercial or industrial buildings were constructed in this style. Notable extant examples include: the Lakeside Medical Center, 2501-2515 Ocean Avenue, Harold Stoner (1941); Ernest Ingold Chevrolet showroom, 999 Van Ness Avenue, John Elkin Dinwiddie

(1937); Ocean Park Motel, 2690 46th Avenue, Conrad Kett (1937); and the Grand Theater, 2665 Mission Street, G. Albert Lansburgh (1940).⁵⁵



Fig. 23. Lakeside Medical Center, 2501-2515 Ocean Avenue, 1941, Harold Stoner.

(Source: Google Street View, June 2021)

The Streamline Moderne style was infrequently used in the design of large institutional buildings. However, a boxier, less curvilinear Moderne interpretation of the style was incorporated in public schools, post-offices, and other institutional buildings. Buildings and structures constructed under Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA), two New Deal programs, frequently utilized a stripped-down version of the Moderne style, occasionally referred to as Classical Moderne or WPA Moderne.⁵⁶ The WPA also constructed public park facilities in the Streamline Modern style. The New Deal-sponsored Aquatic Park complex (part of the Aquatic Park Historic District, listed on the National Register and California Register) at the foot of Russian Hill designed by City Architect William A. Mooser III and his son William A. Mooser, Jr., also features a collection of exuberant small-scale Streamline Moderne structures. Other recreational buildings such as small-scale bathhouses and the San Francisco Zoo aviary feature the style as well. More information on the New Deal can be found in the *Draft New Deal Historic Context Statement*.

Individual, architect-designed Streamline Moderne style residential buildings are extremely rare. Notable exceptions include the Malloch Building, located at 1360 Montgomery Street on Telegraph Hill, designed in 1937 by Irvine Goldstine. Prolific Architect of Merit H.C. Baumann designed Art Moderne duplexes in Lone Mountain and Pacific Heights. 2248-2250 Pacific Avenue (1940) and 103 Beaumont Avenue (1941) are two such examples. Streamline Moderne is more commonly associated with residential tract builder-developers.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Ibid., 168.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 170.

⁵⁷ San Francisco Planning Department, "San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970," January 12, 2011, 166.



Fig. 24. Malloch Building, 1360 Montgomery Street, 1937, Irvine Goldstine, Contributor to the Article 10 Telegraph Hill Historic District.

(Source: NoeHill, 2014)

Examples of the style are primarily found in the Sunset District, Cayuga Terrace, Anza Vista, Glen Park, and Laurel Heights.

Evaluation Criteria: Streamline Moderne

Statement of Significance:	<p>Streamline Moderne is considered the first “modern” style to gain widespread acceptance in mainstream America. Streamline Moderne, also referred to as Art Moderne, Moderne, Modernistic, or Depression Modern, was a conscious architectural expression of the speed and sleekness of the Machine Age. Streamline Moderne architecture can be found in residential (single-family and multi-family), recreational, commercial, and institutional structures. Resources considered within this theme are to be evaluated for significance under Criterion C/3 (Architecture) as an excellent example of Streamline Moderne architecture.</p> <p>Significant examples of Streamline Moderne architecture typically display a full expression of the style, drawing from the character-defining features outlined below. Significance is also impacted by unique or rare architectural massing, as well as exuberant displays of ornamentation. Groupings of multiple Streamline Moderne buildings concentrated in one geographic area and retaining integrity, may constitute an architecturally significant district, especially if some contributors are more robust examples of the style.</p>
Period of Significance:	1935- 1950
Justification of Period of Significance:	The Period of Significance 1935-1950 best reflects the development of the Streamline Moderne style as it manifested in San Francisco. The onset of the Great Depression in 1930 curtailed the construction of Art Deco buildings and led to the rise of Streamline Moderne buildings, which tended to be less extravagant.
Geographic Boundaries:	Citywide; Neighborhoods with higher concentrations include the Sunset District, Cayuga Terrace, Anza Vista, Glen Park, and Laurel Heights.
Related Themes of Significance:	Sunset Residential Tracts; Auto Suburbanization (1920-1950); Neighborhood Commercial Buildings (1865-1965); Finance & Commerce; Merchants, Leaders, & Commercial Identity; Architecture, Planning, & Preservation Professionals Biographies; New Deal
Criteria for Eligibility:	NRHP: C; CR: 3
Associated Property Type(s):	<p>Commercial</p> <p>Recreational</p> <p>Residential: Single-Family</p> <p>Residential: Multi-Family</p>
Property Type Description(s):	The main associated property type is residential (single-family and multi-family). The Streamline Moderne style was used in some residential tract developments in San Francisco. Commercial and recreational property types in this style also exist across the city.

Criterion C/3 Eligibility Standards:

The property *may* be considered eligible under Criterion C/3 if it meets the following:

- Must have been constructed during the Period of Significance (1935-1950)
- Must retain character-defining features
 - In residential examples, a high level of importance is placed on retention of fenestration pattern, building form, cladding materials, and roofline features. Windows are generally the most prominent features of Streamline Moderne residences.
 - In commercial example, a high level of importance is placed on retention of curved plate- or structural-glass and bulkheads, aluminum or metal bands, oval or semi-oval window glazing, angled and recessed entry vestibules, and in some cases, materials like colored structural glass (Carrara or Vitrolite), Vitrolux accents, and porcelain enamel facing

- Must have high levels of integrity, particularly integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, to be eligible as an individual resource
- Though district contributors need not be as exuberant as individually eligible buildings, a grouping of entirely restrained and/or noticeably altered Streamline Moderne buildings would likely not qualify as an eligible historic district
- Other considerations:
 - Examples constructed during the peak of the style (i.e., late 1930s-early 1940s) hold more significance than resources constructed after the style's peak.
 - Prewar Streamline Moderne tract houses are typically more expressive, in terms of design and ornamentation, than postwar examples and therefore are more likely to qualify as individual resources
 - Buildings that clearly express transitional influences of the International Style (e.g. ribbon windows) are more likely to qualify as individual resources
 - Due to the rarity of the typology, commercial buildings with intact storefronts are more likely to qualify as individual resources
 - Design or construction by an Architect or Builder of Merit, particularly if the resource is a rare or exceptional example of the architect's or builder's work in San Francisco, should be considered. Reference Evaluative Framework for *Architecture, Planning, & Preservation Professionals: A Collection of Biographies* for further information.
 - Individual, architect-designed residential buildings designed in the Streamline Moderne style are extremely rare

Character-Defining Features:

Character-defining features of Streamline Moderne buildings significant under Criterion C/3 would be those elements that represent its significant design qualities relative to its date of construction. The following are anticipated character-defining features of a significant Streamline Moderne building under Criterion C/3:

- Rounded corners and curved surfaces
- Curved railings and overhangs
- Speed lines
- Curved glass windows or small porthole windows
- Horizontal ribbon windows
- Flat roof with coping at the roofline
- Smooth stucco or concrete wall surface, often painted white
- Wraparound windows at the corners
- Metal balconettes and railings, often curved
- General absence of historically derived ornamentation
- Horizontal orientation
- Asymmetrical façade
- *Secondary Features*
 - Glass block windows and walls
 - Aluminum, stainless steel, chrome, and or wood used for door and window trim
 - Towers and vertical projections, typically found on commercial or institutional buildings
 - Awning or double-leaf garage door
 - Curvilinear/geometric landscaping and/or hardscape, dyed concrete paving, typically found with residential buildings

- *Additional Storefront-Specific Features*
 - Curved plate- or structural-glass and bulkheads
 - Aluminum or metal bands
 - Oval or semi-oval window glazing
 - Angled and recessed entry vestibules
 - Curvilinear terrazzo paving, which may extend onto the sidewalk
 - Colored structural glass used as facing (Carrara and Vitrolite)
 - Vitrolux accents (color-infused tempered plate glass) used for nighttime illumination
 - Porcelain enamel facing, often in squared pattern (Enduro and Veribrite)
 - Extruded metal door and window settings, often anodized
 - Signs comprised of individual letters, often in a sans-serif, contemporary type face

Integrity Considerations:

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are the most important elements to consider when determining architectural significance. These three aspects of integrity carry more weight for individually significant resources, whereas district contributors can account for some more minor losses of integrity of design, materials, or workmanship if they have a high level of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and/or association. Integrity of location is expected to be retained for most individual properties. Differences in setting may have occurred over time for both individual resources and districts, due to changing land uses, new construction, and differences in settlement patterns.

Substantial alterations to a Streamline Moderne commercial building, such as an incompatible storefront renovation or removal of key Streamline Moderne ornamentation such as glass blocks, curved corners or windows, or porthole windows, may render a property ineligible individually and will greatly impact the property's ability to contribute to a district. Examples of storefront alterations that would not preclude eligibility include removal of metal bands at the transom, installation of flush or projecting box signs, removal of terrazzo paving, and door replacement.

In evaluating individual examples of Streamline Moderne institutional buildings, particular attention should be given to retention of the building's primary entrance, projecting overhangs, towers, building form, and fenestration pattern. Common alterations that might exclude a property from listing include unsympathetic additions and reconfiguration of the building's entryway.

In evaluating individual examples of Streamline Moderne recreational buildings, particular attention should be given to retention of the building's primary entrance, building form, fenestration, and Moderne detailing such as speed lines and curved overhangs. Common alterations that would exclude a property from listing include unsympathetic additions and reconfiguration of the building's entryway.

Additionally, replacement of original windows with incompatible windows, especially in restrained residential tract examples, or reconfiguration of window openings, will likely render a property ineligible for individual consideration. Finally, later buildings that display transitional elements of the International Style (such as ribbon windows) may qualify for lower integrity thresholds.

If a property with major alterations is one of only a few altered properties in a potential district, and demonstrably contributes to the district's sense of place, the property may be able to remain a contributor to the district. Similarly, a property (or properties) with more significant alterations may still contribute to a district if

the property still reads as its original style and directly contributes to the feeling of the district through repeated form, roofline, similar façade ornamentation etc.



Fig. 25. 2129 32nd Avenue, 1938, Golden Gate Investment Co. This heavily altered house is one of five adjacent, nearly identical Streamline Moderne buildings constructed by the Golden Gate Investment Company. With the exception of speedlines and chimney stack, the original design is no longer apparent. Alterations include a new window opening and window sash, new garage door, brick cladding at the ground story, and the removal of glass block accents. Of the five extant buildings, just one retains its physical integrity, which provides clues as to this building's historic, architecturally significant design. As originally constructed, this house would qualify as significant under Criteria C/3; however, its compromised integrity renders it ineligible for listing.

(Source: Google Street View, March 2022)



Fig. 26. 3600 25th Street, 1946. This is a Streamline Moderne multi-family residence located in the Mission, an area that does not have an extensive amount of Streamline Moderne residences. Though constructed postwar in 1946, the structure remains a good example of multi-family residential Streamline Moderne architecture that features character-defining features such as a flat roof with coping, stucco cladding, rounded corners and curved surfaces, curved railings, porthole windows, continuous windows at building corners, a vestibule entrance, and glass blocks. This building would be eligible under Criterion C/3 as a district contributor but would likely need a more exuberant display of the Streamline Moderne style to qualify for individual significance.
(Source: Google Street View, January 2021)



Fig. 27. Lakeside Medical Center, 2501-2515 Ocean Avenue, 1941, Harold Stoner. This futuristic Streamline Moderne building was designed by Harold Stoner in 1941. It features glass blocks, a vertically projecting tower, curved

surfaces, coping, stepped surfaces, and a sign composed of individual letters. This is a rare intact example of a highly unique Streamline Moderne style commercial building. This would be eligible for individual consideration under Criterion C/3.

(Source: Google Street View, June 2021)

Sub-Theme: International Style (1935-1965)

International Style is another pivotal modernistic style that is characterized by a rejection of historically derived ornament and an emphasis on new architectural vocabulary. There are two major branches of the International Style. The first is rooted in the pioneering designs of European Modernists in the 1910s and 1920s such as Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Peter Behrens, Erich Mendelsohn, and Jacob Oud and their eventual popularity in the United States. The second branch of the International Style is embodied by the taut, glass curtain wall skyscrapers developed in the 1950s by Mies van der Rohe, often described as “skin and bones architecture.” This branch of the International Style is linked stylistically to the Corporate Modern style. The International Style emerged in San Francisco around 1935 and persisted in popularity until 1965.

Notable International Style buildings in San Francisco include Richard Neutra’s Darling House (1936), Ford-Aquino duplex (1937), Schiff House (1938), and Kahn House (1939), among others. International Style domestic architecture is extremely rare in San Francisco and generally limited to custom-designed single-family houses built from 1935 to 1950. International Style residences in San Francisco were often designed by Architects of Merit.⁵⁸ Commercial and institutional buildings designed in the International Style take remarkably similar forms to the residential iterations.

This style, along with key practitioners and influential exhibitions, is further explored in the *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*. Its evaluative framework also lives in that document.



Fig. 28. Darling House, 90 Woodland Avenue, 1936, Richard Neutra.

(Source: Google Street View, March 2022)

⁵⁸ Ibid., 175.



Fig. 29. Kahn House, 66 Calhoun Terrace, 1939, Richard Neutra.

(Source: *San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement*)



Fig. 30. 2944 Jackson Street, 1939, Henry Howard.

(Source: Google Street View, December 2020)



Fig. 31. Designed by Mario Ciampi in 1949, this commercial building at 4680-4690 Mission Street features key characteristics of the International Style such as ribbon windows and a flat roof as well as nautical influences from the Streamline Moderne style.

(Source: Google Street View, April 2022)

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