

Preserving California's Japantowns

www.californiajapantowns.org

PCJ Windshield Survey

The purpose of the **Windshield Survey** is to provide an overview of selected 43 historic Japantowns and determine existing historic fabric (physical buildings), stores, businesses, and organizations from 1941 directory listings. "Windshield Survey" is the term for taking a visual inventory of a neighborhood or specific buildings. *Preserving California's Japantowns* will use the windshield surveys as our first indicator of which Japantowns still hold historic resources. We will follow up with additional research in published sources, archives and interviews. The **Windshield Survey** will assist in determining the particular strategy for further documentation and potential preservation efforts for each community. Thank you for helping us with this important stage of the project.

Windshield Survey Tool Kit:

1. Japantown Community Listing and Worksheet
2. A current street map
3. Guidelines for Building Description and Photography
4. Outreach materials for *Preserving California's Japantowns*

Japantown Community Listing and Worksheet

An excel spreadsheet with listings of site name, address, property type, sorted by address. We've organized the spreadsheet by street address so that it is easier to see where historic sites were concentrated, and to plan your route. The spreadsheet will have space to record whether the building is extant (structure exists) and its current use; a property description; and a photo number/description.

Map of City

A current street map is an essential tool in plotting the historic Japantowns. It may be helpful to have a copy of the particular Japantown area to mark on as you survey a community.

If available, a historic map of the area would be helpful. Some pre-World War II Japantowns have books or commemorative booklets with historic summaries, photographs, or oral histories describing community life. The Sanborn Map Co. produced Fire Insurance Maps of many California cities prior to WW2 and may have some Japantown buildings documented.

Guidelines for Building Description & Photography

Detailed suggestions of building description characteristics to note, and tips for photographing historic buildings are included on the next page. The documentation is essential to the assessment of physical fabric of historic Japantowns, and to determine its potential for preservation.

General Info & Outreach Materials

Preserving California's Japantowns is the first statewide effort to document historic resources from the numerous pre-World War II Japantowns.

The project is sponsored by the California Japanese American Community Leadership Council. Funding is provided by the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program. For more information, visit www.californiajapantowns.org or call Jill Shirak at (510) 277-2164.

Flyers with a map of community sites for survey are included for distribution. *Thank you for helping to document California's historic Japantowns!*

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Guidelines for Building Description and Photography

When describing a building that you believe may date to pre-WWII, please give us some basic information such as

1. Number of stories
2. General shape of building
 - a. Square
 - b. Rectangular
 - c. L-shaped
 - d. T-shaped
 - e. U-shaped
 - f. Irregular
3. Wall cladding color and materials, such as
 - a. Stucco
 - b. Wood
 - c. Corrugated metal
 - d. Stone
 - e. Brick
 - f. Concrete block
 - g. Vinyl
4. Roof color and material, such as
 - a. Asphalt shingles
 - b. Clay tile
 - c. Metal
 - d. Wood Shingles
 - e. Gravel
 - f. Aluminum
5. Identifying signage
6. Describe windows and entry
 - a. Windows: fixed, casement, double hung
 - b. Bay windows
 - c. Arched windows: pointed or rounded
 - d. Entry: Porch, exterior courtyard, number of entry doors, door with side windows
7. Other decorative features, such as
 - a. Balcony
 - b. Decorative tile
 - c. Stained glass
 - d. Columns
 - e. Wrought iron railings
8. Associated structures, such as a garage or shed.

Your photographs of each historic structure will be very important. Please keep the following tips in mind when shooting and identifying the photos:

Photo Record - Identify each frame on the 1941 Japantown Community Survey form by a number & name, such as "1-east elevation" or "2-porch detail." If you are sending digital images, they can be named to match the log. If you are sending prints, please put the number and name on the back of each print.

Photo Image - One or two images of most buildings should be sufficient. Choose the angle of the shot, either directly in front or at a $\frac{3}{4}$ view that also includes the side elevation, based on which is the most revealing. If there are associated structures, try to get an image that shows the relationship between the buildings, and a separate image for each structure.

Details - Special details, such as a vintage sign or unique elements, should be photographed.

Lighting - As much as possible, choose the time for photographing with the position of the sun in mind so that your photos aren't overly filled with shadows.

Framing & Composition -

Some buildings present problems in framing a good view. If fences or plantings obscure parts of the structure, try to take photos through breaks, and add one shot that shows the site as it appears from the street, with whatever fencing and foliage appear.

Compose your photos so that the structure itself fills most of the frame, without too much street or sky. Whenever possible, avoid including parked or moving cars, trashcans and other visual obstructions.

Private Property - Remember to respect private property and be ready to tell people about *Preserving California's Japantowns* if they ask.