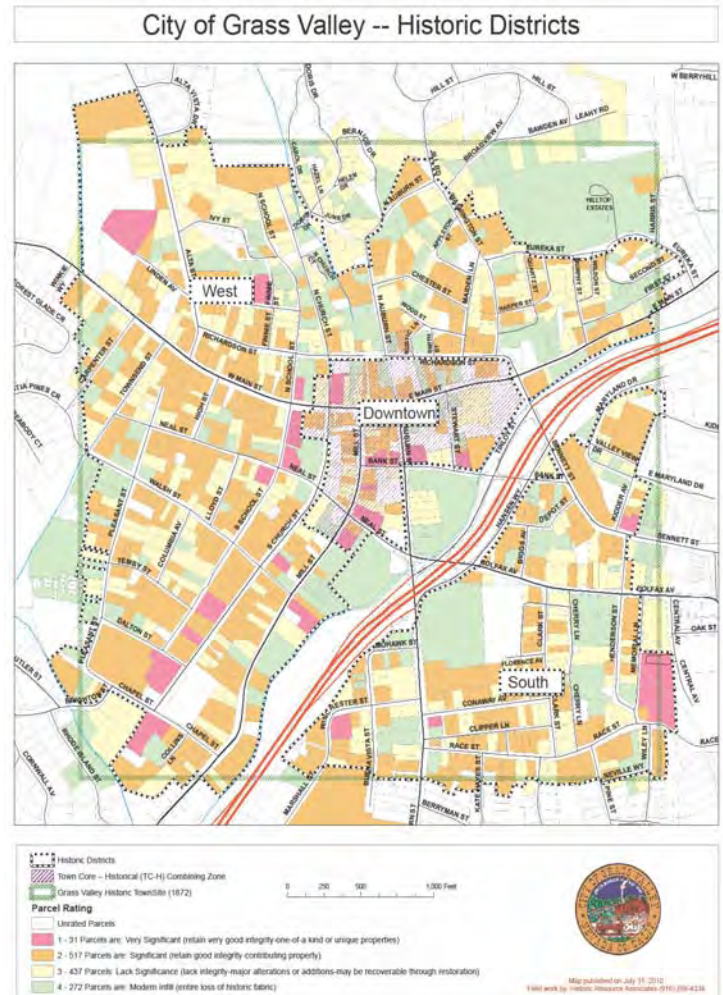


CHAPTER 5

SOUTH RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT CHARACTER AREA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The South Residential District Character Area of Grass Valley comprises an area that is roughly bounded on the north by Maryland Drive, on the east by Wiley and Memorial Lane, on the south by Race Street, and on the west by Marshall Street and Highway 49 or Hanson Way.



5.2 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The South Residential District Character Area includes residential homes that primarily date from the 1880s through the 1940s. While Conaway Street includes many homes that date from the late 1880s as depicted in the following photograph, Clark Street on the other hand was developed in the late 1920s and 1930s with modest Craftsman and Revival style homes. Prior to 1880 most of the level ground in this Character Area was cultivated and developed with orchard crops, particularly apples and later plums. The gold quartz mines lay to the north, east, and south, and the valley drained by Wolf Creek was an ideal location for the expansion of the city. Unlike the hilly topography of the West Character Area, the south's gentle topography made home construction much easier.



Vegetation on the south is sparser than in the west, perhaps due to the intensive agricultural use of the land through the late 19th century. Lots are somewhat more uniform and alley ways delineate the rear of some residences, such as along Conaway and Henderson Streets.



With the exception of commercial development adjacent to State Highway 49, South Auburn Street, Colfax Avenue, and portions of Race Street, the south area was confined to residential development. Another important feature in the south was the construction of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGR). An important part of the area's infrastructure and primary source of transporting goods and people, the NCNGR remained in operation from 1876 to 1942. Today, the only evidence of the railroad on the south side of Grass Valley is the site of the Kidder Mansion at the intersection of Bennett and Kidder Streets, and the coursed fieldstone wall that supported the cut bank where the NCNGR Depot once stood.



*N.C.N.G.R.R. Passenger Entrance
coursed, mortared, and faced stone
retaining wall facing Bennett Street*

Boy Scout Lodge



5.3 HISTORIC CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In addition to the minimal commercial use, schools, churches and social/lodge buildings were also constructed in the South Residential District Character Area, such as the Winchester School (now a residence) along Winchester Street and the Boy Scout Lodge next to Memorial Park.



Former Winchester School, now a residence.

Generally, one house was built per parcel, many of the early homes (pre-1900) having carriage houses which were either demolished in later years or converted to automobile garages, while other homes were constructed with single or even two-car garages.



While some houses have deep setbacks, such as those along Race Street, others were built with shallow setbacks from the sidewalks and curb of the street, as is the case along Conaway and Clark Streets. Street widths in general were designed to accommodate horse and buggy traffic, but were wide enough to accommodate two vehicles in later years. The overall pattern is a standard grid design with streets running east to west.



Typical Craftsman home with a shallow setback

Some key design characteristics of the South Residential District Character Area are:

- More uniform style of houses
- Gable, cross-gable, clipped-gable and hip roof forms
- Raised porch entrances
- Wide variety of siding types
- Buildings heights vary from one to two-stories, but the predominant height is one-story in a rectangular or L-shaped design.
- Attic conversions for sleeping quarters
- Modest variations in yard sizes and building setbacks

5.4 DESIGN GOALS & POLICIES

The South Residential District Character Area was fully developed by the late 1930s. Depression Era homes along Clark Street reflect more modest, but trendy, working class housing. New construction consists of infill on the few vacant lots that remain or structure replacement due to fires. The area should continue to develop in a unified manner so that an overall sense of visual continuity is achieved. Preservation of the historic integrity and sense of place of this Character Area is a primary goal.

A mix of styles is the prevalent theme, including Revival style cottages dating from the 1920s and 1930s. The most exuberant Victorian style homes were generally located along Race Street on large lots. Gabled or hip roof buildings from one to two-stories in height should be the predominant theme. At the same time, the walking experience should be enhanced for pedestrians by improving sidewalks, retaining walls, and landscaping in front of homes, and providing user friendly bike and pedestrian walkways underneath State Highway 49 along Bennett and South Auburn Streets.

The design goals for the South Residential District Character Area are:

- To emphasize the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and structures
- To preserve the full range of diverse properties in the Character Area
- To maintain the general historical alignment of buildings

- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and forms of properties
- To locate additions to the rear of the property
- To continue the use of traditional building materials
- To use cut slopes to conceal additional building mass
- To minimize the visual impacts of cut slopes by using natural landscaping, materials such as fieldstone, stepped retaining walls, stem walls, and similar construction methods
- To enhance the pedestrian experience
- To minimize the visual impacts of cars