

Historic Resource Evaluation
317 S. Humboldt Street
San Mateo, California



prepared for
City of
San Mateo, California

prepared by
Architectural Resources Group
San Francisco, California

.....
5 April 2011

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I. Executive Summary

This historical evaluation was prepared at the request of Julia Yeh, Associate Planner with the City of San Mateo Community Development Department, in order to determine whether the single-family residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street (APN 033-135-040) qualifies as a historic resource in accordance with Article 5, §15064.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street, which is in the Eastern Addition of San Mateo, was constructed in 1912. In March 2011 the property was researched and evaluated as a potential historical/cultural resource in accordance with the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) by Architectural Resources Group (ARG). It is ARG's professional opinion that the building does not appear to possess sufficient significance or retain adequate integrity to be individually eligible for the California Register. In addition, because of alterations to the setting and to individual properties, including 317 S. Humboldt Street, there does not appear to be a potential historic district in the immediate area.

II. Methodology

To assess historical significance, consideration need be given to several factors, including the property's history (both construction and use); the history of the surrounding community; the property's association with important persons or uses; the number of resources associated with the property; the potential for the resources to be the work of a master architect, builder, craftsman, landscape gardener, or artist; the historical, architectural or landscape influences that have shaped the design of the property and its pattern of use; the alterations that have taken place and how those changes have affected the historical integrity of the property; and the current condition of the property. These questions and related issues must be answered before a final determination of significance can be made.

In February 2011 ARG staff conducted a site visit to 317 S. Humboldt Street in order to photograph the residence and the surrounding setting (see the photos that follow for existing conditions of the property and immediate surroundings). During the site visit a brief architectural description of the residence was created for use in this document. Research conducted by planning staff at the San Mateo Community Development Department included a review of building permit information for the subject property.

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ARG conducted additional research at the San Mateo Public Library, including a review of *San Mateo City Directories* and the library catalogue for any additional historical background information related to the property. Research conducted at the San Mateo County Historical Association archives included a review of assorted clippings files, maps, and research collections for information about the property, associated persons, and general San Mateo history. The 317 S. Humboldt Street residence was not included in the 1989 *City of San Mateo Historic Building Survey*.¹ ARG also conducted online research using the Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. database, Ancestry.com records, and images from the website [www. Historicaerials.com](http://www.Historicaerials.com).

III. Historical Analysis

Residential Development in the Eastern Addition

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, San Mateo served as a crossroads connecting the north/south railroad line with the east/west stagecoach road to the coast.² San Mateo began as a small village, and its development was typical of the growth of small towns along San Francisco's Peninsula rail lines. Train service to San Mateo commenced in October of 1863, and as rail service expanded, it became clear that San Mateo would be a likely stop for travelers. San Mateo was ideally situated at the mid-point of the peninsula, where roads and rail lines between San Francisco and San Jose connected. Initially a popular summer community, San Mateo became a commuter town with families making their homes there year round, and businessmen commuting to San Francisco via train.

San Mateo was incorporated in 1894; the town's boundaries were Peninsula Avenue to the north, 9th Avenue to the south, 1000 feet west of the County Road (El Camino Real) to the west, and the San Francisco Bay to the east.³ The new town encompassed the Eastern Addition neighborhood including the subject lot at 317 S. Humboldt Street. By 1900 San Mateo had 1,832 residents. In 1903 the town was linked to San Francisco by an additional mode of transportation, trolleys. Trolley service, coupled with refugees from San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake, resulted in the construction of numerous residences. Small California bungalows were especially popular. From 1900 to 1910 the population doubled to 4,384, and by 1920 there were 5,979 residents of San Mateo.⁴

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the lands surrounding San Mateo changed dramatically; salt-harvesting operations dominated the baylands, nurseries spread across the hillsides, and a country club was established for the wealthy weekenders.⁵ Residential areas of

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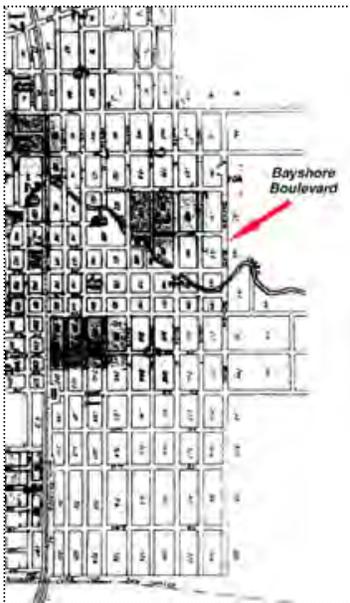
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the town were expanding with the creation of subdivisions such as the Western Addition and San Mateo Heights. The residences in the Eastern Addition were largely built during this period and are primarily small, pre-World War II structures in the Vernacular Craftsman Bungalow style. They were built in large part as individual structures for a particular owner as opposed to speculative buildings or developments. Many of these early residences display the same types of modifications such as new or replacement siding and window alterations. Modern residential and highway development has replaced some of these bungalows.

The Bayshore Freeway

The setting of the subject property has been affected by the construction of the Bayshore Freeway/Highway 101 two blocks to the east. The development of the roadway began in 1911 when a group of entrepreneurial auto enthusiasts established the Bayshore Boulevard Association in order to promote the development of an automobile route south along the San Francisco Bay. Comprised of representatives from San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz Counties, the group advocated construction of a new auto highway to span through those Bay Area communities and sought financing from an \$18,000,000 highway appropriation authorized by the Legislature under the Chandler Act.⁶



By the early 1920s portions of the Bayshore Highway had been constructed. Sections spanning between South San Francisco and San Mateo were initially completed in 1927 to 1928 and capped with asphalt in 1930 to 1931. The section from San Mateo to Redwood City was completed and opened on May 15, 1931.⁷ The 1920 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shown here depicts the path of Bayshore Boulevard in San Mateo as spanning between Monte Diablo Avenue and 16th Avenue, two blocks east of the subject property. The map also labeled the path as Bayview Boulevard.

Figure 1: 1920 Sanborn Fire
Insurance Map

As illustrated by the 1920 Sanborn map, development along the San Mateo section of Bayshore Boulevard was sparse, with only one section of the span surveyed for the 1920

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publication. In 1928 according to San Mateo historian Mitchell Postel, D.A. “Doc” Raybould began to develop commercial uses along the Bayshore and donated a 20-foot strip of land on each side of the Bayshore for future widening projects.⁸

By 1950 when an updated Sanborn map was produced for San Mateo, Bayshore Boulevard was renamed Bayshore Highway, and substantial development had occurred along the transportation corridor. By 1948 initial construction of the present-day Bayshore Freeway between San Francisco and Burlingame had been completed. Sometime between 1946 and 1956 the clover-leaf off ramps at 3rd and 4th Avenues were constructed. The eastern half of the subject property block was cleared to make way for the ramps: the western on and off loops are located at the rear of the block where the subject property is located.⁹ By July 1957 the second phase of the Bayshore Freeway, termed the Candlestick Causeway, had been constructed over the marshlands between San Francisco and San Mateo. In 1964, after a renumbering of the freeway and highway system, the Bayshore Freeway was officially designated as the U.S. 101.¹⁰ Throughout the peninsula much of the original Bayshore Boulevard/Highway was incorporated into the new freeway and from the Broadway-Burlingame exit south into San Mateo, the freeway follows the same alignment as the old highway.¹¹ In the mid-to-late 1980s, the California Department of Transportation began installing 14-foot high concrete walls along the Bayshore Freeway in order to ameliorate the sound of the freeway for nearby residents.

317 S. Humboldt Street

The single-family residence located at 317 S. Humboldt Street is located in San Mateo’s Eastern Addition, which was part of the original town incorporated in 1894. A review of the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates that by that year, the subject lot was still undeveloped, although residences had been built on many of the surrounding properties. Like most of the town, the blocks in the Eastern Addition were arranged in a grid, however, San Mateo Creek bisected some blocks, including the subject block. By 1920 more small residences had been constructed in the area, and Sanborn maps indicate that by 1950 the neighborhood was largely built out with houses. Most were modest residence of one or one-and-a-half stories, including the dwelling at 317 S. Humboldt Street. Many residences had detached auto garages in the backyard. Sometime between 1946 and 1956, the Bayshore Freeway’s clover-leaf off-ramps were constructed leading to and from 3rd and 4th Avenues.

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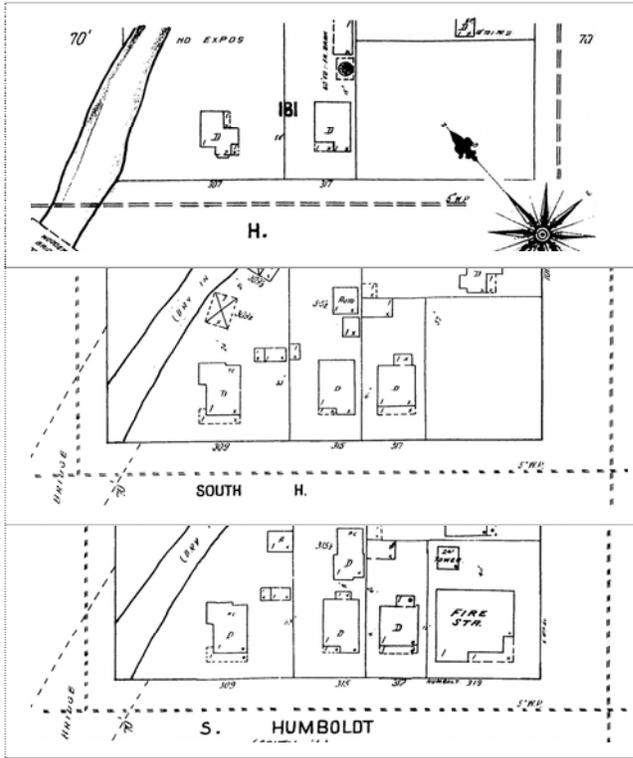


Figure 3: Details of the 1908 (top), 1920 (middle), and 1950 Sanborn Maps (bottom), showing 317 S. Humboldt Street.

The subject property was constructed in 1912 as a one-story, single-family dwelling. In 1941 a two-car garage was constructed at the rear of the property. The residence's original wall cladding (material unknown) was covered or replaced with stucco in 1949. The City of San Mateo permits listed below detail changes made to the property through the years. Although not included in the following table, in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, the building was cited multiple times by city agencies for health and safety violations.

Year	Owner	Action	Permit Number
1941	Pete Rossi	Erect double garage	6939
1949	L. Puccinelli	Stucco exterior of existing dwelling	16068
1977	Orlando Paz	Electrical work	application

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1991	Nuckels Barbara P. et al	Demolition of all illegal conversions and minor electrical, drywall and plumbing work	991536
1999	William Song	Unspecified alterations	application

In addition to the above changes, other alterations to the building are evident based on visual inspection. Most significantly, sometime after 1950, the front porch was enclosed.¹² The windows of the infilled porch are aluminum sliding and fixed sash windows (see Photo 1).

317 S. Humboldt Street Occupant Chronology

A listing for 317 'H' Street first appeared in the 1924 City Directory, at which time the house was occupied by Bella Giovanni. She remained until 1926, when Tom and Frances Fernandez occupied the house until 1927. In 1928 the name of 'H' Street was changed to Humboldt. A listing for 317 'H' Street indicated the residents were John J. and Jennie Bendinelli. He was employed as an operator for the PRT Company. The Bendinelli's resided in the house from 1928-1929. From 1930-1932 Antonio Antoniazza, a PG&E laborer, and his wife, Enice, occupied the residence. They were followed by Joseph Rossi, a cement worker, in 1933 and by Thomas G.H. Clayton, a wire drawer, and his wife, Eva, in 1934. The next year Julius Cesa, a laborer, arrived and occupied the house until 1940. Between 1940 and 1941 Louis Pisoni, a gardener at the Beresford Country Club, and his wife, Marina, occupied the residence. From 1941 to 1943 the house was occupied by Peter Rossi, a janitor, and his wife, Angelina. In 1944 the residents were John C. Daniels, a defense worker, and his wife, Grace. Leonard E. Lyman, a carpenter, and his wife, Minna, lived in the house for six years, from 1945 to 1951. Mrs. Alice E. Russo Kemmis, widow of G. Kemmis, lived in the house from 1952-1953. Between 1954 and 1955, Arnold A. Martini, a sheet metal man for United Airlines, lived in the house with his wife, Mary. Thomas and Doris Rice were residents in 1956. Rice was a mechanic for United Airlines. Wesley D. St. John, a painter, and his wife, Shirley, resided there in 1958. In 1959 Paul and Mabel Dupree lived at the house. He worked as an attendant at Earl's Shell Service. Lloyd E. Weaver, a carpenter, and his wife, Mildred, were residents from 1962 until 1970. Later city directories do not list the occupations of residents. The house was occupied by David Tanner in 1974, Nancy Davis in 1977 and Allen Cagle in 1980.

The occupant chronology makes several patterns clear. The house has served as a rental property from an early date and was never owner-occupied. The occupants of the house

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tended to be laborers, locally employed. Institutions such San Francisco Airport and local manufacturing operations were sources of employment.

Years	Occupant(s)	Occupation	Own/rent
1924-1926	Bella Giovanni	unknown	R
1927	Tom Fernandez	unknown	R
1928-1929	J.J. Bendinelli	train operator	R
1930-1932	Antonio Antoniazza	PG&E laborer	R
1933	Joe Rossi	cement worker	R
1934	Thomas Clayton	wire drawer	R
1935	Julius Cesa	laborer	R
1936-1940	Louis Pisoni	gardener	R
1941-1943	Pete Rossi	janitor	R
1944	J.C. Daniels	defense worker	R
1945-1951	L.E. Lyman	carpenter	R
1952-1953	Mrs. Alice E. Russo Kemmis	widow	R
1954-1955	Arnold A. Martini	sheet metal man for United Airlines	R
1956	Thomas Rice	United Airlines mechanic	R
1958	Wesley D. St. John	painter	R
1959	Paul Dupree	gas station attendant	R
1960-1972	Lloyd E. Weaver	carpenter	R
1973	Vacant	--	--
1974	David Tanner	N/A	N/A
1977	Nancy Davis	N/A	N/A
1980	Allen Cagle	N/A	N/A

IV. Architectural Analysis

317 S. Humboldt Street Description

The subject property house was constructed in 1912 on the east side of S. Humboldt Street between E. 3rd and E. 4th Avenues. The residence sits on a 45' by 100' lot, and the house has a simple, rectangular-shaped footprint. A front-facing gabled roof covered in composition shingles tops the building, and a brick chimney interrupts the northern slope. The walls of the wood-frame structure are clad in smooth stucco, which was added in 1949.

Original wood, double-hung windows (some multi-light) are visible at the rear of the north and the south elevations, but most windows are aluminum sliding sash. Although a full-width porch once spanned the primary (west) façade, the porch has been infilled, and its walls stuccoed. A recessed entrance portico is located in the center of the façade and is accessible through a rectangular opening with coved corners. To the north of the portico is a large, aluminum picture window, and to the right is a smaller aluminum window. Directly above the entrance portico, opening in the gable end, there is a small, wood casement window.

Visible alterations to the building include the stucco cladding, infill of the front porch, and replacement of windows. A front-facing gable-roof garage is located at the rear of the property. Its wood-framed walls are covered in stucco.

When constructed, the residence was a bungalow with a full-width front porch. However, likely as a result of the porch infill and the application of stucco, very little detail remains. The building no longer conveys its original style or bungalow building form.

V. Application of California Register Criteria

To be eligible for the California Register, historic resources must possess historic significance and retain historic integrity. The following is a discussion first of the integrity of 317 S. Humboldt Street, and second, an analysis of the four significance criteria of the California Register.

Evaluation of Integrity

In addition to having historical significance, resources must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Integrity is the authenticity of a historical resource's physical identity as evidenced by the survival of characteristics or historic fabric that existed during the resource's period of significance. There are seven elements of integrity recognized and employed by the California Register: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. As described below, the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street appears to retain a poor level of integrity.

Seven Elements of Integrity

Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street is in its original location and therefore possesses location integrity.

Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

The bungalow form—a small residence with full-width porch recessed under the main gabled roof—is no longer evident because of the infill of the front porch. Any stylistic elements on the building's façade were also lost when the porch was infilled. Covering or replacing the original wall material with stucco has also obscured the original design intent. The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street retains a poor level of design integrity.

Setting: The physical environment of a historic property.

A review of the 1920 and 1950 Sanborn maps for the property indicates that historically the area was primarily residential in character. Through at least 1950, the subject property sat on a double block extending from S. Humboldt Street east to the Bayshore Freeway. San Mateo Creek ran diagonally through the block, and the lot to the south of the subject property (now Fire Station #4) was vacant. All buildings on nearby streets were residential. However, the construction of the Bayshore Freeway's clover-leaf on and off ramps sometime between 1946 and 1956 obliterated the eastern three-quarters of the large block, dramatically changing the property and neighborhood's setting. Though still a predominantly residential neighborhood, the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street retains a fair level of setting integrity.

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Materials: The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

Many of the residence's materials of the residence have been replaced or lost. The original wall surfaces (material unknown) were covered with stucco in 1949. Additionally, all the materials of the façade's original full-width porch and fenestration pattern were lost when the porch was infilled sometime after 1950. As a result, the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street retains a poor level of materials integrity.

Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.

The building's ability to communicate its workmanship has been compromised by the loss of historic fabric. In particular, the infill of the façade's porch and the addition of a stucco wall cladding have obscured evidence of workmanship. The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street retains a poor level of workmanship integrity.

Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Historically, the house at 317 S. Humboldt Street was a small bungalow--a residence form typical of the 1910s--set in a residential neighborhood. However, because the building has been significantly altered, it no longer represents the bungalow form or the period in which it was built. Additionally, the construction of the Bayshore Freeway's clover-leaf off and on-ramps framing the subject property block isolate it from the surrounding area and negatively impact the setting. As a result, the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street retains a poor level of feeling integrity.

Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street has not been directly linked to important historic events or individuals considered significant at the local, state, regional or national level. Consequently, the building does not currently, nor has it ever, possessed an associative element for integrity purposes.

Historical Significance

To be eligible for the California Register, a historical resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level under at least one of the following criteria:

Criterion 1: Event or Patterns of Events

It is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

Historical research has determined that residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street does not appear to qualify under Register Criterion 1: Event/Patterns of Events. While the residence's association with the early 1900s development of San Mateo is important, this "event" does not reach the level of significance to be individually eligible for the California Register. Research failed to reveal any historically significant California event directly associated with the building at the local, state, regional, or national level.

Criterion 2: Important Person(s)

It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street does not appear to have been directly associated with any important persons in local, state, regional, or national history. No individuals of significance were found during historical research. While L.E. Lyman stayed in the house for six years and Lloyd E. Weaver for a twelve year period, the majority of the residents lived in the residence for only a year or two. Regardless of their length of tenancy, none of the individuals appear to be significant historical figures in San Mateo history. Consequently, the residence does not qualify under California Register Criterion 2: Important Person(s).

Criterion 3: Design/Construction

It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.

Because of significant alterations to the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street, particularly the addition of stucco and infill of the front porch, it no longer represents its historic appearance or embodies the characteristics of an early twentieth-century bungalow. The property does not rise to a level of architectural significance warranting individual eligibility for the California Register under Criterion 3.

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Criterion 4: Information Potential

It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Criterion 4 is generally applied to archeological resources and evaluation of the residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street for eligibility under this criterion was beyond the scope of this report.

VI. Application of CEQA

CEQA Public Resources Code §21084.1 provides that any project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. Public Resources Code §5020.1(q) establishes the threshold of “substantial adverse change” as demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration activities that would impair the significance of the historic resource. According to the CEQA and Historical Resources CEQA Technical Advice Series, “One example might be the removal of a historic structure from a historic district, thereby affecting the cohesiveness of the district. Remodeling a historic structure in such a way that its distinctive nature is altered would be another.”

According to Public Resources Code §5024.1, a historic resource is a resource that is listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources; included in a local register of historical resources; or is identified as significant in an historic resource survey if that survey meets specified criteria. Buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts can all be listed on the California Register and, if eligible, are historic resources per CEQA. According to CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(a)(3), a lead agency can find a resource has been determined to be significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California, provided that the determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record.

The 317 S. Humboldt Street property is not currently included in any local register of historic resources nor has the property been identified or documented in previous historic resource surveys in San Mateo. Additionally, the property is not included in the California State Office of Historic Preservation’s Historic Property Data File for San Mateo County. Based on the current historical evaluation completed, the property at 317 S. Humboldt Street does not appear to be individually eligible for the California Register. Additionally, because of compromises to integrity due to the construction of the Bayshore Freeway’s off and on-ramps, the development of new two-story multi-family housing on the west side of Humboldt

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Street, and the alteration of area residences, there does not appear to be a potential historic district in the immediate area, specifically the block on which the subject property is located.

VII. Conclusions & Recommendations

To be eligible for the California Register, a property must maintain sufficient integrity to communicate its historic material and meet one of the criteria for significance. The residence at 317 S. Humboldt Street has been substantially altered and, of the seven aspects of integrity, only possesses good integrity of location. The property has a fair degree of integrity of setting. The property has poor integrity of, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling and does not appear to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for the California Register. In addition, the building does not possess historic significance, is not a strong example of a style or type, and is not associated with important events or persons. It is ARG's opinion that the property is not eligible for the California Register and does not qualify as a historic resource under CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(a)(3).

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IX. Endnotes

- ¹ Linda Wickert, *City of San Mateo Historic Building Survey Final Report*, San Mateo County Historical Association, September 1989.
- ² Mitchell Postel, *San Mateo, A Centennial History* (San Francisco, CA: Scottwall Associates, 1994, 19 and 27.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 101.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 127 and 137.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.
- ⁶ McCoy, Dorothy L. *The Bayshore Freeway U.S. Highway 101*, 6.
- ⁷ Svanevik, Michael, “The Rough Road That Led to Today’s Bayshore,” *San Mateo Times*, September 29, 1989.
- ⁸ Postel, Mitchell. *San Mateo, A Centennial History*. Scottwall Associates Publishers (San Francisco, CA: 1994), 175.
- ⁹ “Historic Aerials,” www.historicaerials.com, accessed 4 March 2011.
- ¹⁰ California Highways.org. *Chronology of California Highways – Phase I: A Highway System is Established (1897-1914)*, <http://www.cahighways.org/097-104.html> (September 1, 2004).
- ¹¹ Reinka, Janet, “Charting the history of the Bayshore,” *San Mateo Times-Tribune*, date unknown.

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CURRENT CONDITIONS PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 1: View looking east toward front facade (west elevation) of 317 S. Humboldt Street.

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Figure 2: View looking northwest past the Firestation at 319 S. Humboldt Street to the south elevation of 317 S. Humboldt Street (blue house in the background).

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Figure 3: View looking east toward the west facade of 309 S. Humboldt Street (two houses north of 317 S. Humboldt Street).

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Figure 4: View looking southeast toward the north and west facades of 315 S. Humboldt Street (one house north of 317 S. Humboldt Street).

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Figure 5: View looking east toward west facade of the firestation at 319 S. Humboldt Street, (immediately south of 317 S. Humboldt Street).

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Figure 6: View looking north toward the south facade of 1011 E. 4th Avenue (east of firestation at 319 S. Humboldt Street).

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Figure 7: View looking south toward the modern multi-family housing on S. Humboldt Street opposite 317 S. Humboldt Street.