

# Appendix D

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788 San Antonio Road Historic Resource Evaluation

788 SAN ANTONIO ROAD  
HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION

PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA  
[16252H]

PREPARED FOR:  
CITY OF PALO ALTO



**PAGE & TURNBULL**

imagining change in historic environments through design, research, and technology

JUNE 5, 2020

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) has been prepared at the request of the City of Palo Alto for the property at 788 San Antonio Road (APN 147-03-041). The property is owned by the California Chrysanthemum Growers' Association, and is located at the southeast extent of the City of Palo Alto near the northwestern border of Mountain View in an unnamed neighborhood zoned for "service commercial" (CS) use. The subject property is a roughly square 22,622-square foot parcel at the northeast corner of the intersection of San Antonio Road and Leghorn Street (**Figure 1**). The parcel includes the subject property at 788 San Antonio Road, a concrete masonry unit commercial building constructed in 1953, as well as a portion of the neighboring building to the northeast, 796 San Antonio Road.

788 San Antonio Road is not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) or the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). The subject property is also not currently listed on the City of Palo Alto Historic Inventory, and is not located within a registered historic district.<sup>1</sup>

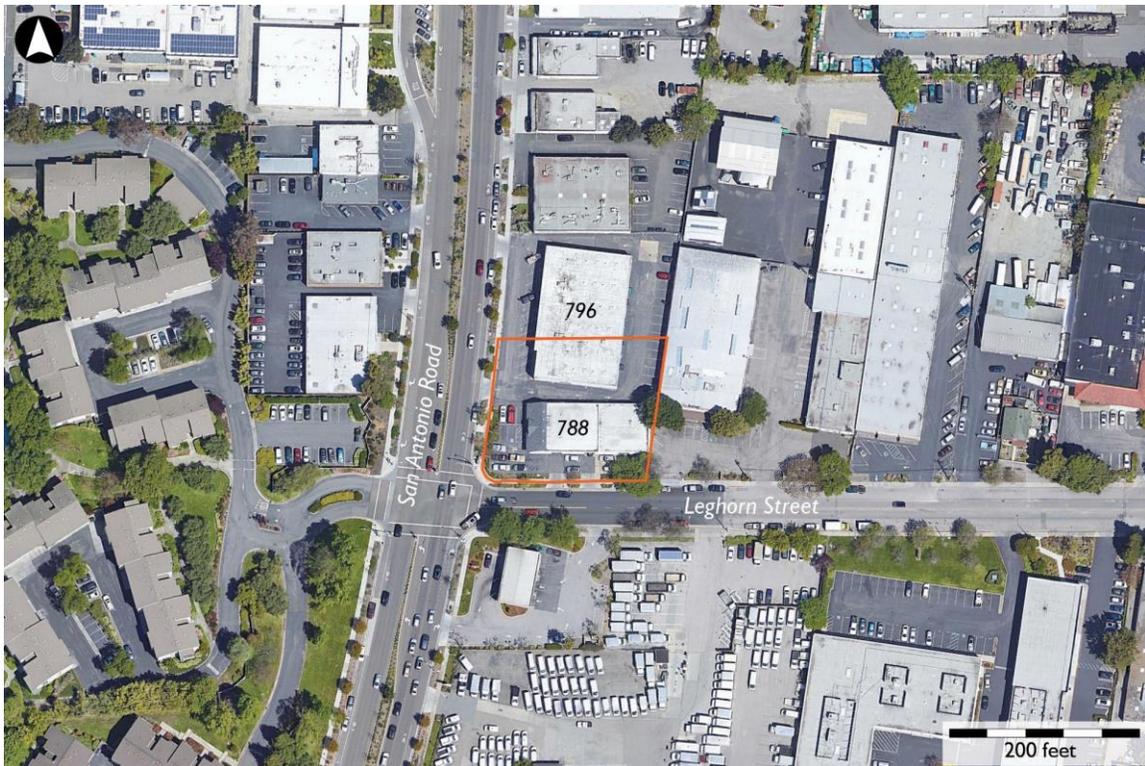


Figure 1. Location of 788 San Antonio Road. Parcel boundary outlined in orange.  
Source: Google Earth, edited by Page & Turnbull.

## METHODOLOGY

This report follows a standard outline used for Historic Resource Evaluation reports, and provides a summary of the current historic status, a building description, and historic context for the building at 788 San Antonio Road. The report includes an evaluation of the property's individual eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. The report does not include an evaluation of its eligibility for local designation or as a contributor to a historic district.

<sup>1</sup> City of Palo Alto, Master List of Structures on the Historic Inventory, July 24, 2012. Electronic document at <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civica/x/filebank/documents/3504>, accessed February 15, 2019.

Page & Turnbull prepared this report using research collected at local repositories, including the Palo Alto Development Service and Palo Alto Historical Association, as well as the San Francisco Public Library and various online sources including Ancestry.com, the California Digital Newspaper Collection, and the Online Archive of California. Key primary sources consulted and cited in this report include Palo Alto building permit applications, city and county directories, and historical newspapers. All photographs in this report were taken by Page & Turnbull during a site visit on January 31, 2019, unless otherwise noted.

## II. EXISTING HISTORIC STATUS

The following section examines the national, state, and local historical ratings currently assigned to 788 San Antonio Road.

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the nation's most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. Administered by the National Park Service, the National Register includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that possess historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level.

788 San Antonio Road is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually, or as a part of a registered historic district.

### CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

788 San Antonio Road is not listed in the California Register of Historical Resources individually, or as a part of a registered historic district.

### CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL RESOURCE STATUS CODE

Property listed or under review by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation are assigned a California Historical Resource Status Code (Status Code) of "1" to "7" to establish their historical significance in relation to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register or NR) or California Register of Historical Resources (California Register or CR).<sup>2</sup> Properties with a Status Code of "1" or "2" are either eligible for listing in the California Register or the National Register, or are already listed in one or both of the registers. Properties assigned Status Codes of "3" or "4" appear to be eligible for listing in either register, but normally require more research to support this rating. Properties assigned a Status Code of "5" have typically been determined to be locally significant or to have contextual importance. Properties with a Status Code of "6" are not eligible for listing in either register. Finally, a Status Code of "7" means that the resource has not been evaluated for the National Register or the California Register, or needs reevaluation.

788 San Antonio Road is not listed in the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) database with a status code. The most recent update to the CHRIS database for Santa Clara County that lists the Status Codes was produced in April 2012.

### PALO ALTO HISTORIC INVENTORY

The City of Palo Alto's Historic Inventory lists noteworthy examples of the work of important individual designers and architectural eras and traditions as well as structures whose background is

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<sup>2</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation. *Technical Assistant Bulletin No. 8: User's Guide to the California Historical Resource Status Codes & Historic Resources Inventory Directory* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, 2004), electronic document at <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1069/files/tab8.pdf>, accessed March 11, 2019.

associated with important events in the history of the city, state, or nation. The inventory is organized under the following four Categories:

- **Category 1:** An “Exceptional Building” of pre-eminent national or state importance. These buildings are meritorious works of the best architects, outstanding examples of a specific architectural style, or illustrate stylistic development of architecture in the United States. These buildings have had either no exterior modifications or such minor ones that the overall appearance of the building is in its original character.
- **Category 2:** A “Major Building” of regional importance. These buildings are meritorious works of the best architects, outstanding examples of an architectural style, or illustrate stylistic development of architecture in the state or region. A major building may have some exterior modifications, but the original character is retained.
- **Category 3 or 4:** A “Contributing Building” which is a good local example of an architectural style and relates to the character of a neighborhood grouping in scale, materials, proportion or other factors. A contributing building may have had extensive or permanent changes made to the original design, such as inappropriate additions, extensive removal of architectural details, or wooden façades resurfaced in asbestos or stucco.<sup>3</sup>

788 San Antonio Road is not listed in the Palo Alto Historic Inventory under any category.

#### DAMES & MOORE PALO ALTO HISTORICAL SURVEY UPDATE

Between 1997 and 2000, the consultant firm Dames & Moore, contracted by the City of Palo Alto, conducted a survey update which identified, recorded and evaluated properties for the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources. Office of Historic Preservation Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms were not prepared for all properties. The findings of the survey are summarized in Dames & Moore, *Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update*, submitted to City of Palo Alto (February 2001).

788 San Antonio Road was not included in the Dames & Moore survey.

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<sup>3</sup> City of Palo Alto, “Palo Alto Historic Inventory,” electronic resource at [https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/historic\\_preservation/historic\\_registers/local\\_inventory.asp](https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/historic_preservation/historic_registers/local_inventory.asp), accessed February 15, 2019.

### III. BUILDING AND PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

788 San Antonio Road is a simple, one-story, concrete masonry unit commercial building on a concrete foundation with a rectangular footprint 50 feet wide and 124 feet long, and its long axis aligned east-west. The majority of the building's roof is of a shallow domed shape or flat, but an asymmetrical side-gabled portion at the west side, with composition shingle roofing, an overhanging eave, and a cross-gabled ridge centered over the main entrance highlights the primary façade. Metal flashing folds a few inches over the roof edge of the flat-roofed portions of the building.

Rectangular, multi-lite fixed and casement steel-sash windows are typical on all façades, and appear to be original. The exterior, concrete masonry unit walls are set in running bond and painted white. The building is set back approximately 40 feet from Leghorn Street to the south, and 50 feet from San Antonio Road to the west. It is surrounded on all sides by paved areas, with a parking lot serving the property to the west, vehicle circulation and parking areas to the south, the parking lot of the adjoining property to the east, and a driveway accessing the rear of 796 San Antonio Road to the north.

#### Primary (West) Façade

The primary (west) façade of the subject building faces San Antonio Road and features an anodized metal swinging entrance door with tinted glass, a wide sidelight with a metal mail slot, and flat, painted wood trim centered below the peak of the cross-gabled roof (**Figure 2 and Figure 3**). The entry is flanked on either side by paired typical windows with two-by-four configuration of panes, framed by slightly curved concrete blocks at either side (**Figure 4**). A wood plank shelf is mounted below each pair of windows, each supported by four square wood beams. The roof gable features tongue-and-groove wood siding. The slightly overhanging eave has a metal eavestrough affixed to the simple wood fascia board running the width of the façade.

#### South Façade

The south façade of the subject property faces Leghorn Street and includes three roll-up utility doors accessed by corresponding curb-cuts in the adjacent sidewalk (**Figure 5**). Four typical windows, with a four-by-three configuration of panes and slightly curved concrete units framing the sides, are spaced evenly in alternation with the utility doors. One small, narrow rectangular three-lite window sits to the immediate west of the westernmost utility door. The central utility door has a single, metal pedestrian door opening in its right side. The roof is predominantly flat, with the asymmetrical gable of the western roof portion at the end closest to San Antonio Road.

#### Rear (East) Façade

The rear (east) façade of the subject property abuts the east parcel boundary, overlooking the parking lot of the neighboring property (**Figure 6**). It has no openings.

#### North Façade

The north façade of the subject property faces the neighboring building at 796 San Antonio Road, and overlooks a driveway accessing the rear of that building. The façade features seven fixed typical windows, with four-by-three configurations of panes, spaced evenly along its length. The roof is predominantly flat, with the asymmetrical gable of the western roof portion at the end closest to San Antonio Road (**Figure 7**).



Figure 2. Primary (west) façade of 788 San Antonio Road, view northeast.



Figure 3. Detail of primary façade entrance at 788 San Antonio Road, view northeast.



Figure 4. Detail of windows, south side of primary façade, 788 San Antonio Road, view east.



Figure 5. South façade of 788 San Antonio Road, view northeast.



Figure 6. Rear (east) façade of 788 San Antonio Road, view northwest.



Figure 7. North façade of 788 San Antonio Road, view southwest.

## SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighborhood immediately surrounding the subject property is generally characterized by mid-twentieth-century commercial buildings lining the busy corridor of San Antonio Road (**Figure 8 through Figure 13**). Appropriate to the “service commercial” zoning of the area, these businesses are primarily oriented toward customers traveling by automobile, and thus provide on-site parking accessed by driveways from the main thoroughfare. There is a mix of automotive service providers, private office complexes, and health- and activity-focused businesses within the immediate vicinity of the subject property. Several of the office spaces appeared to be vacant at the time of the site visit. A multi-unit residential complex is set back from San Antonio Road to the west opposite the intersection with Leghorn Street.



Figure 8. 796 San Antonio Road, view northeast.



Figure 9. 800 San Antonio Road, view northeast.



Figure 10. 795 and 796 San Antonio Road, view northwest.



Figure 11. Residential development at 777 San Antonio Road, set back from traffic.



**Figure 12.** 780 San Antonio Road, view southeast.



**Figure 13.** 2595 Leghorn Street, view northwest.

## IV. HISTORIC CONTEXT

### PALO ALTO HISTORY

The earliest documented settlement of the Palo Alto area was by the Ohlone people, who resided in the area at the time of Gaspar de Portola's 1769 expedition through the territory. Permanent European settlements were established beginning in 1777, with Junipero Serra's founding of the Mission Santa Clara de Asis within what is now the city of Santa Clara, with lands extending into the area which is now Palo Alto. During its years of operation, the mission relied on the labor of indigenous workers belonging to the region's Ohlone tribes and other groups.

Following secularization of the Spanish missions beginning in 1833, the Spanish, and later Mexican, government carved the area into large ranchos which contained portions of land that became Palo Alto. These included Rancho Corte Madera, Rancho Pastoria de las Borregas, Rancho Rincon de San Francisquito, and Rancho Riconada del Arroyo de San Francisquito.<sup>4</sup> These land grants were honored in the cession of California to the United States, but did not long remain intact as parcels were subdivided and sold throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. The subject property was within the lands of the Rancho Rincon de San Francisquito, and was later subdivided into a parcel south of Charleston Road, owned in 1876 by "P. Swallow" (Figure 14).<sup>5</sup>

The earliest township within the current boundaries of Palo Alto was called Mayfield. In 1882, railroad magnate and California politician, Leland Stanford, purchased 1,000 acres adjacent to Mayfield to add to his large estate in northwestern Santa Clara County.

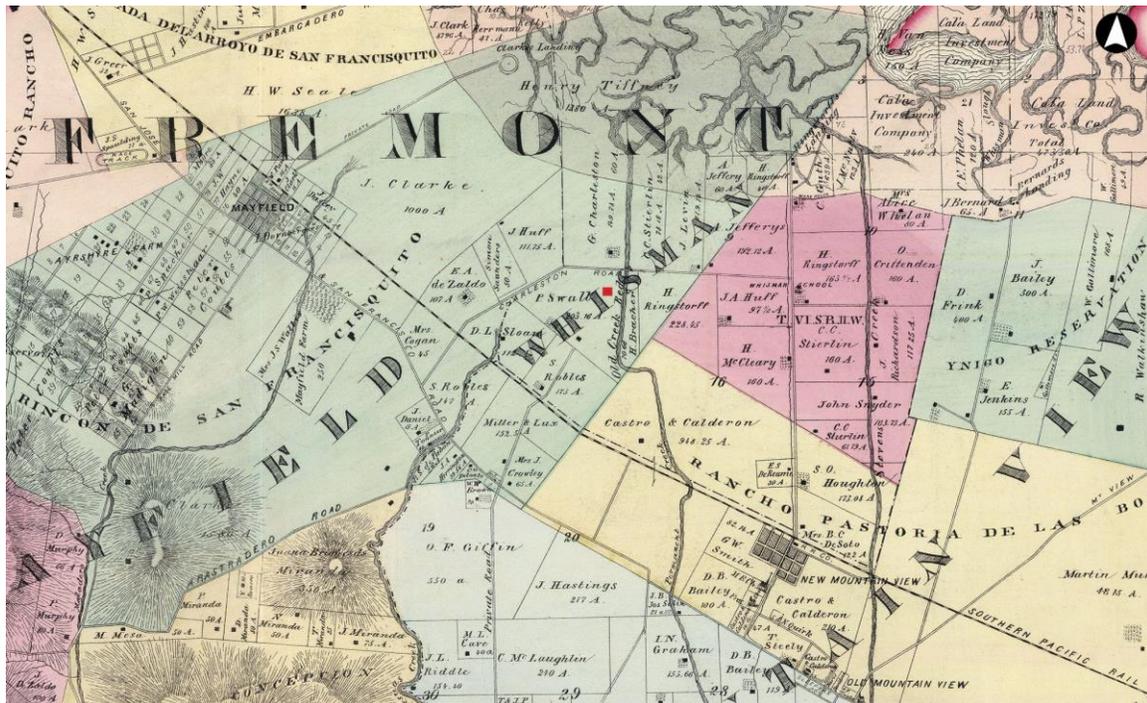


Figure 14: Detail view of "Santa Clara County Map Number One" by Thompson & West, 1876. Red square notes approximate location subject property. Source: David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, edited by Page & Turnbull.

<sup>4</sup> Ward Winslow and Palo Alto Historical Association, *Palo Alto: A Centennial History* (Palo Alto, CA: Palo Alto Historical Association, 1993), 12-17.

<sup>5</sup> Thompson & West, "Santa Clara County Map No. 1," *Historical Atlas Map of Santa Clara County, California*, (San Francisco: Thompson & West, 1876).

Stanford's vast holdings became known as the Palo Alto Stock Farm. On March 9, 1885, Leland Stanford Junior University was founded through an endowment act by the California Assembly and Senate. Using their Stock Farm land, the Stanfords began constructing the university, which ultimately opened in 1891.

Stanford decided in 1894 to found the town of Palo Alto with help from his friend Timothy Hopkins of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Hopkins purchased and subdivided 740 acres of the former *Rancho Rinconada del Arroyo de San Francisquito*.<sup>6</sup> Known as both the Hopkins Tract and University Park, the townsite was bounded by the San Francisquito Creek to the north, the railroad tracks and Stanford University campus to the southwest, and Embarcadero Road to the south

The development of a local streetcar in 1906 and the interurban railway to San Jose in 1910 facilitated access to jobs outside the city and to the university campus, encouraging more people to move to Palo Alto. In July 1925, Mayfield was officially annexed into the city of Palo Alto.

Palo Alto was one of the first California cities to establish a City Planning Commission (CPC). In 1917, this advisory commission considered zoning matters in order to control new development and design within the city. The CPC's purview included regulations on signage, public landscaping and lighting, and residential development. Palo Alto's regulations on development have resulted in its relatively low density and consistent aesthetic. However, zoning controls in the early part of the twentieth century contributed to racial segregation in the city and the exclusion of certain groups from residential areas. Several neighborhoods were created with race-based covenants, which persisted until this practice was ruled unconstitutional in 1948.<sup>7</sup>

The depression of the 1930s impacted the design, construction, and financing of buildings across the nation. While Palo Alto did suffer through the Great Depression, new development did not come to a halt. The United States government assisted in providing housing through several programs, and architectural journals and newspapers showed a substantial amount of construction between 1931 and 1944.<sup>8</sup>

The United States' involvement in World War II brought an influx of military personnel and their families to the San Francisco Peninsula. When the war ended, Palo Alto saw rapid growth. Many military families who had been stationed on the Peninsula, who those who worked in associated industries chose to stay. Palo Alto's population more than doubled from 16,774 in 1940 to 33,753 in 1953.<sup>9</sup> Stanford University was also a steady attraction for residents and development in the city. The city greatly expanded in the late 1940s and 1950s, as new parcels were annexed to house new offices and light industrial uses. As a result of this development, the city evolved somewhat beyond its "college town" reputation.<sup>10</sup>

Palo Alto's city center greatly expanded in the late 1940s and 1950s, gathering parcels that would house new offices and light industrial uses and lead the city away from its "college town" reputation. Small annexations continued into the 1970s, contributing to the discontinuous footprint of the city today. Palo Alto remains closely tied to Stanford University; it is the largest employer in the city. The technology industry dominates other sectors of business, as is the case with most cities within Silicon

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<sup>6</sup> City of Palo Alto. *Comprehensive Plan 2030*. Adopted by City Council, November 13, 2017. Electronic document at <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/62915>, accessed January 2, 2019, section L-3.

<sup>7</sup> Dames & Moore, "Final Survey Report – Palo Alto Historical Survey Update: August 1997-August 2000" prepared for the City of Palo Alto Planning Division, February 2001, 1-7.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-9.

<sup>9</sup> "Depression, War, and the Population Boom," Palo Alto Medical Foundation- Sutter Health, accessed March 24, 2016, <http://www.pamf.org/about/pamfhistory/depression.html>.

<sup>10</sup> City of Palo Alto, *Comprehensive Plan 2030*, section L-4.

Valley. Palo Alto consciously maintains its high proportion of open space to development and the suburban feeling and scale of its architecture.<sup>11</sup>

### PENINSULA GARDEN FARMS

Throughout Palo Alto's early decades of growth as a town, the lands surrounding the subject property remained a largely agricultural stretch between that city and the small settlement growing around the transportation stop at Mountain View to the southeast. Until the early 1950s, the area surrounding the location of the subject property was dominated by large agricultural tracts with low-density settlement. The building at 788 San Antonio Road was constructed within tract No. 219 of the "Peninsula Garden Farms," a subdivision that was marketed as early as the mid-1920s for buyers seeking one- to two-acre lots where they could raise market gardens, poultry, or rabbits.<sup>12</sup> By 1927, advertisers offered that, with the expansion of Palo Alto to the northwest and Mountain View to the southeast, buyers could soon subdivide and sell their acre lots for a profit. An April 16, 1927 advertisement suggested:

At the rate property is being developed on the San Francisco Peninsula, it will be only a short time before your acre here will become too valuable for ranching. Then you can subdivide your acre into city lots and sell each lot for more than the cost of an acre today.<sup>13</sup>

Despite this early marketing effort, aerial photographs of the area show that the pattern of development along San Antonio Road between Charleston and Middlefield roads consisted primarily of large, rural lots and open space rather than the city lots developers envisioned (**Figure 15**). The subject building was among the earliest commercial buildings constructed along this portion of San Antonio Road. In 1953, the year the subject building was completed, the city directory for Palo Alto listed only one address, a road construction company, on San Antonio Road. The road is described as running "south from Bay Shore hwy, 1 e of Diss rd."<sup>14</sup> The 1954 Polk's city directory lists addresses on San Antonio between 126 and 996, stretching from the Bayshore Highway to the block south of Leghorn Street, but does not include the subject property.<sup>15</sup> The earliest directory listing for the address was published in 1955.<sup>16</sup> By the mid-1950s, the area between Charleston Road to the north and Middlefield Road to the south had changed drastically, with residential subdivisions and commercial thoroughfares taking the place of the open fields of only a decade earlier (**Figure 16**).

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-20.

<sup>12</sup> Advertisement for Peninsula Garden Farms, *San Francisco Examiner*, September 10, 1926, 30

<sup>13</sup> Advertisement for Peninsula Garden Farms, *San Francisco Examiner*, April 16, 1927, 16.

<sup>14</sup> R.L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Palo Alto City Directory* (San Francisco: R.L. Polk & Co, 1953), 636.

<sup>15</sup> R.L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Palo Alto City Directory* (San Francisco: R.L. Polk & Co, 1954), 836-837.

<sup>16</sup> R.L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Palo Alto City Directory* (San Francisco: R.L. Polk & Co, 1955), 265.



Figure 15. 1941 Aerial photograph of the project vicinity. Subject parcel outlined in orange. Source: Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Flight C-660, Frame 381, collection of the UC Santa Barbara Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 16. 1956 Aerial photograph of the project vicinity. Subject parcel outlined in orange. Source: Aero Services Corporation, Flight CIV-1956, Frame 9r-33, collection of the UC Santa Barbara Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

## JAPANESE AMERICAN FLORICULTURE IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Among the earliest economic contributions of Japanese immigrants to California was their employment as farm laborers, with large numbers arriving between the turn of the twentieth century and the passage of the Immigration Act, also known as the Japanese Exclusion Act, of 1924. In 1900, just over half of the state's Japanese American population centered around the San Francisco Bay Area. Even while in following decades many families sought opportunities in other parts of the state, until World War II the Bay Area was home to nearly one-fifth of California's Japanese American population.<sup>17</sup>

Japanese immigrants to California began growing flowers in the San Francisco Bay Area in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and many of those who began work in California as laborers later established their own family farms specializing in cut flower production or produce. It was in the Bay Area that the state's Japanese American cut flower industry originated with growers such as the Domoto Brothers and Hiroshi Yoshiike. Yohnoshin and Kanetaro Domoto, from the Wakayama prefecture in Japan, began their nursery in Oakland around 1885. With brothers Motonoshin and Mitsunoshin, the Domotos bought two acres of land in Oakland in 1895 and soon employed a large workforce of Japanese-born laborers.<sup>18</sup> Hiroshi Yoshiike began producing chrysanthemums for sale in Oakland in 1886. By 1890, Yoshiike's business success allowed him to buy an acre of land in Oakland and build five glass houses.

Noritaka Yagasaki notes that early Japanese American growers were not formally trained in floriculture before starting their businesses in California. They learned, rather, from their own efforts and, in later years, by working for more experienced growers such as the Domoto brothers, whose business employed many laborers with roots in their home prefecture of Wakayama.<sup>19</sup> For example, after working for the Domotos, brothers Eikichi and Sadukusu Enomoto purchased five acres in Redwood City to begin greenhouse cultivation of carnations and roses. Within a short time, Sadukusu Enomoto began growing chrysanthemums, which he sold wholesale at the Domoto brothers' market on Lick Place, San Francisco.<sup>20</sup>

In the first decades of the industry's growth, the Bay Area's flower producers were located in two concentrations of activity: the East Bay, including Richmond, Berkeley, and Oakland; and the San Francisco Peninsula, with growers in the areas surrounding San Mateo, Belmont, Redwood City, and Mountain View. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the East Bay had nearly three dozen Japanese American-owned nurseries, most specializing in chrysanthemums, carnations, and roses.<sup>21</sup> Redwood City had become the early center of chrysanthemum growing in the region, with the city claiming itself in 1926 to be the Chrysanthemum Center of the World, boasting more than seven million dollars in annual income from the flowers' sale.<sup>22</sup>

It is important to note that many of the growers in both the East Bay and Peninsula areas purchased land before the passage of the California Alien Land Law of 1913, which prohibited purchase or long-term lease by immigrants ineligible for citizenship in the United States. Yagasaki writes:

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<sup>17</sup> Noritaka Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture: A Study of Japanese Floriculture and Truck Farming in California*. (Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Geography, University of California, Berkeley, 1982), 35-36.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 43-44.

<sup>20</sup> Gary Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers: The California Flower Market History*. (San Francisco: California Flower Market, 1993) 33.

<sup>21</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 46.

<sup>22</sup> Jagruti Patel, *Japanese Americans in Redwood City: A Local History* (Master of Arts Thesis, Department of History, San Jose State University, 2004), 5.

Partly because of this high rate of land ownership from the beginning of their involvement, the flower growers of the Bay Area were not seriously affected by the Alien Land Law. Some of them had incorporated their nurseries before the land law took effect. In any event, most of the growers had children born on American soil, who could acquire title to the land.<sup>23</sup>

The 1913 Alien Land Law was found unconstitutional in 1948, and was repealed in California in 1956.

Japanese American growers who established their operations in the San Francisco Bay Area had connections to geographic and cooperative organizations with roots in Japanese rural organization that maintained a fundamentally feudal system of land tenure.<sup>24</sup> Though late nineteenth-century rural cooperatives in Japan were different in role and structure from those instituted in the Americas, Japanese immigrants brought with them a spirit of rural cooperativism that took different forms from that maintained in Japan. First generation, or Issei, immigrants to the United States initially maintained connections to one another through prefectural associations, as well as fraternal and trade organizations. Agricultural cooperatives in California, referred to as *Sangyo kumiai*, supported collective approaches to credit, marketing, purchasing, and production of flowers or produce.<sup>25</sup> Among the most influential organizations, which spurred the growth of California's cut flower industry, were the California Flower Growers Association, founded in San Francisco in 1906 in the wake of the earthquake and fires, and the marketing cooperative, the California Flower Market, Inc., incorporated in 1912.<sup>26</sup> The membership of the former were exclusively Issei growers.<sup>27</sup> Later Japanese-operated flower growers' organizations included the Carnation Growers Association (c. 1914), the Redwood City Nurserymen's Association (1917), and the California Chrysanthemum Growers Association (1932).<sup>28</sup>

The early importance of the California Flower Market in the Japanese American floriculture industry cannot be overstated. It provided a central organization for selling growers' products as well as sharing resources and information. Alongside market organizations dominated by Italian American and Chinese American growers, the California Flower Market's 5th Street, and later Sixth and Brannan Street locations in San Francisco provided the main venues for Bay Area growers' wholesale and retail sales.<sup>29</sup>

In the next section, the context for Japanese American floriculture in the San Francisco Bay Area from the 1930s onward focuses on the operation of the California Chrysanthemum Growers' Association. Definitive histories of the California Flower Market, Inc. have been produced by Gary Kawaguchi, in his 1993 *Living With Flowers* and 1995 doctoral dissertation, *Race, Ethnicity, Resistance and Cooperation: An Historical Analysis of Cooperation in the California Flower Market*. An extensive discussion is also provided by Noritaka Yagasaki's 1982 dissertation, *Race, Ethnicity, Resistance and Cooperation: An Historical Analysis of Cooperation in the California Flower Market*. In addition, The history of Japanese American social and economic activity in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties is well documented by Gayle K. Yamada and Dianne Fukami's *Building a Community: the Story of Japanese Americans in San Mateo County*, published by the Asian American Curriculum Project in 2003; the San Mateo Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League's *1872-1942: A Community Story*, published in 1981;

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<sup>23</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 74.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5, 23-24, 29.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-36; Linda L. Ivey and Kevin W. Kaatz, *Citizen Internees: A Second Look at Race and Citizenship in Japanese American Internment Camps* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2017), 47.

<sup>27</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 49.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 50-51.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

Timothy J. Lukes and Gary Y. Okihiro's *Japanese Legacy: Farming and Community Life in California's Santa Clara Valley*, published in 1985 by the California History Center at De Anza College; and Dianne Fukami's 1994 documentary film, *Chrysanthemums and Salt*, produced by KCSM-TV and the San Mateo Community College District.

## THE CALIFORNIA CHRYSANTHEMUM GROWERS ASSOCIATION

As noted above, in the first decades of the twentieth century most of the Bay Area's chrysanthemum growers were Japanese American families centered around the Redwood City and Belmont areas, with 40 of the Peninsula-based members of the California Flower Market producing Chrysanthemums by the late 1920s.<sup>30</sup> After about 1904, the practice of shading Chrysanthemums under cheesecloth-covered frames led to a major shift in the Japanese American growers' production capacity. While the mild climate of the San Francisco Peninsula was already ideal for growing chrysanthemums, commercial growers found that the cheesecloth shading could improve the quality and yield of their flowers.<sup>31</sup> This innovation also created what became the familiar landscape of cheesecloth covered frames that dominated chrysanthemum nurseries until the 1930s.

In the depression years of the early 1930s, individual growers on the Peninsula experienced difficulty securing payment on their orders from shippers, who were expected to collect payment from the flowers' purchasers. Chrysanthemum growers faced the necessity of gaining better control of their shipping and credit to survive the financial hardship caused by reduced demand for and dropping price of their products.<sup>32</sup> In response to these pressures, the California Chrysanthemum Growers Association (CCGA) was founded in Redwood City and formally incorporated on April 6, 1932, under director Toru Yamane and manager Joseph Iwasuke Rikimaru. With its membership entirely consisting of Japanese American growers, the organization was one of many ethnic cooperatives in northern California's floriculture industry established in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>33</sup> Rikimaru was experienced with growers' cooperative organizations at the time he started with the CCGA, having previously worked with the Livingston Fruit Growers Association.<sup>34</sup> Rikimaru acted as a spokesperson for the CCGA's members, and as a go-to for press inquiries regarding projected chrysanthemum supplies beginning in 1932. His experience with the Livingston Fruit Growers' Association aided the CCGA's success in regulating production and collecting debts owed to the members.<sup>35</sup>

The first meeting of the CCGA was held on April 27, 1932 on the second floor of the Doxsee Building, located across Middlefield Road from the San Mateo County Courthouse in Redwood City.<sup>36</sup> Noritaka Yagasaki's 1982 dissertation provides the following thorough description of the CCGA's founding and operations:

It aimed at the adjustment of production acreage, improvement in marketing, control of market prices, and cooperative purchasing, when the industry was suffering difficulties. Consisting of Japanese chrysanthemum growers on the Peninsula, it had sections devoted to production, supply, collection and finance. By 1959 membership had reached 56. Plantings covered 90 acres and sales amounted to \$300,000 annually. The association used the "tag system" to handle the sales of members' chrysanthemums. Although buyers received flowers from each member grower, the purchase was made through the

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<sup>30</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 84-85.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 50-51.

<sup>33</sup> Brian Niuya, *Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present*. (New York, NY: The Japanese American National Museum, 1993).

<sup>34</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 51.

<sup>35</sup> "Early Cutting of Mums This Year," *San Mateo Times and Daily News Leader*, July 22, 1932, 8.

<sup>36</sup> California Chrysanthemum Growers Association, *Kiku Kumiai, Fifty Years*, edited by Hiroji Kariya (Palo Alto: 1981), 5.

association. Buyers received tags from growers to specify the volume and value of purchase, and the payment was made to the association. Members, in turn, received their sale proceeds from the association, and became free from bookkeeping obligations. This rationalization of the marketing process reduced conflict among growers and buyers. The association's success in protecting the individual growers was beyond dispute.<sup>37</sup>

Most members' flowers were initially sold at the California Flower Market in San Francisco, with many growers shipping via the Shima Transfer company of San Francisco.<sup>38</sup> The association's cooperative structure protected its grower members from price fluctuations and provided opportunities for marketing and distribution not available to individual growers. The organization took over collections on accounts, regulated production levels among members to control supply, and facilitated cooperative purchase of supplies to reduce growers' costs. Buying in bulk, the association could sell supplies such as cheesecloth, waxed paper, pipes, twine, insecticides, and tools at lower prices than if growers purchased individually.<sup>39</sup> With a cooperative approach to supply purchasing, members could adopt new growing techniques not as available to individual growers. CCGA members' adoption of the use of shade cloth over their plantings beginning in 1933 allowed the usually short fall harvest – and growers' months of productive income – to be lengthened. As covering their growing frames with cloth was a labor-intensive activity, each spring growers' families would gather to help each other with the task.<sup>40</sup>

The association placed a half-page advertisement in the October 7, 1936 issue of the *San Mateo Times and Daily News Leader*, introducing readers to the Japanese origin of the flower and announcing that “San Mateo County is the Large Chrysanthemum Center of the World.” (Figure 17)<sup>41</sup> The CCGA initially included just over 40 members, and the Board of Directors initially included representatives from three districts: San Mateo-Belmont, Redwood City-Menlo Park, and Mountain View-Sunnyvale.<sup>42</sup>

In 1938, five Japanese families who had previously been leasing the Horgan Ranch property near Redwood City bought the property in their American-born children's and cousins' names – an arrangement necessitated by legal restrictions on land ownership for Japanese-born growers.<sup>43</sup> The CCGA built an office and warehouse at the location in 1939.

In 1942, the forced relocation of Japanese Americans under the Executive Order 9066 directly impacted the lives of the CCGA's entire membership and created gaps in the supply of cut flowers to markets nationwide. Before the order was signed, Japanese Americans were arrested in raids in Peninsula counties aimed at detaining “Japanese, German, and Italian nationals and against axis nationals who had failed to turn in contraband radios, cameras, signaling devices, and weapons.”<sup>44</sup> CCGA president Kotoharu Inouye was arrested by the FBI on December 8, 1941. His brother was among seven flower growers and nurserymen arrested in Redwood City in February 1942.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 86-87.

<sup>38</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 5.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 13

<sup>41</sup> “Chrysanthemums,” *San Mateo Times and Daily News Leader*, October 7, 1936, 4.

<sup>42</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 4.

<sup>43</sup> “Japanese Buy Horgan Ranch,” *San Mateo Times and Daily News Leader*, December 31, 1938; CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 6; Patel, *Japanese Americans in Redwood City*, 17; Donna Graves, “Transforming a Hostile Environment: Japanese Immigrant Farmers in Metropolitan California,” in *Food and the City: Histories of Culture and Cultivation*. *Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture* XXXVI, 2015, 209.

<sup>44</sup> “14 Japs Held in Local Raids,” *San Mateo Times and Daily News Leader*, February 21, 1942, 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

# CHRYSANTHEMUMS



**T**HE Flower Industry knows no flowers as elegantly beautiful and proud in appearance as the Chrysanthemums. In Old Japan, the country of their origin, the Chrysanthemums are cherished; and because of the years of tradition behind them . . . are not commercialized. Every year in the month of October, all Japan participates in the "Kiku Matsuri," or Chrysanthemum Festival.

In 1884, the Chrysanthemums were first introduced to America through the tireless efforts of Kan Yoshiike, an ardent Japanese student of Floriculture, who, in his humble little greenhouse in Oakland, California, hopefully experimented and nursed along different varieties, unaware that many of them were destined to become revelations to the Flower Industry.

In 1904, cheesecloth cultivation of Chrysanthemums was originated and introduced by H. L. Goertzhain in Redwood City, California. This method was at once recognized as superior to that theretofore employed.

In 1907, an extensive cultivation of Chrysanthemums under cheesecloth was begun in Redwood City for the sole purpose of starting a shipping business. At that time, shipments of these flowers were confined to local points only. Lack of transportation facilities and the growers' sense of caution had kept the Chrysanthemum shipping business from developing, until 1913 when to the astonishment of the Flower World a successful shipment of carloads of Turner Mums was made to New Orleans for the historic All Saints' Day observance. The fact that this shipment was made without refrigeration makes the success more remarkable and stamps it as an unforgettably kind act of Providence. By 1915, regular markets for Chrysanthemums were found in the Middle West, and several years later the Eastern cities were proving themselves consistent consumers of these beautiful California flowers.

The amazing progress that the Chrysanthemums have made as commercial products has spurred on the Floriculture experts of this country to greater efforts, and consequently has raised the standard of American Chrysanthemums to an unsurpassable point.

—From "A Few Romantic Facts of the Chrysanthemum Industry,"  
By H. Hayashi.

**SAN MATEO COUNTY IS THE LARGE CHRYSANTHEMUM CENTER of the WORLD**

## California Chrysanthemum Growers' Association

(Incorporated April 6, 1932)

K. INOUE,  
President

J. J. RIKIMARU,  
General Manager

733 Middlefield Road

Redwood City

Figure 17. Advertisement for the CCGA, *San Mateo County Times and Daily News Leader*, October 7, 1936, 4.

In March 1942, facing evacuation and the inability to maintain their business activities, the CCGA Board granted power of attorney to act as agent and overseer of the organization's interests to J. Elmer Morrish, vice president of the First National Bank in Redwood City.<sup>46</sup> Morrish was an established banking professional in Redwood City at the time he helped the Japanese growers, and during their wartime internment assisted not only the CCGA organization, but also more than 20 Japanese American families with banking, taxes, and land management.<sup>47</sup> Individual San Francisco Peninsula growers faced different situations upon their return from internment following the end of the war. Some had leased their property to other growers who had maintained the nurseries, while others' vacant properties had been damaged by thieves and vandals.<sup>48</sup> Due to their agreement with Morrish, following the end of World War II, the CCGA resumed operations and continued to support its members' growing businesses.<sup>49</sup>

By 1947, Rikimaru was again advising event organizers and reporters regarding the availability of chrysanthemums for the following season.<sup>50</sup> The association continued to set an example for other growers' groups in the post-war years, and maintained a pattern of family-based nurseries when growing operations faced competition from larger corporate growers and imports.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Ivey and Katz, *Citizen Internees*, 48.

<sup>47</sup> Patel, *Japanese Americans in Redwood City*, 36.

<sup>48</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 8.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>50</sup> "Fiesta Gets 9 Days' Racing," *San Mateo Times*, November 19, 1947, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 64.

After the end of World War II, when many chrysanthemum growers returned to their San Mateo County farms, production of the flower resumed growth in the area. In the 1950s, Peninsula growers adopted the use of black cloth and artificial lighting to extend the blooming season of chrysanthemums, whose harvest had originally been limited to a short period in the fall.<sup>52</sup> The proportion of greenhouse-grown chrysanthemums produced by San Mateo County growers increased as growers adopted the use of polyethylene-covered greenhouses, with indoor-grown area surpassing the outdoor-grown chrysanthemum area in 1967.<sup>53</sup> Greenhouse growers could harvest three times each year, using steam sterilization and fungicides to prevent root diseases as they reused growing sites.<sup>54</sup> During the last half of the twentieth century, growers could provide year round chrysanthemum production in greenhouses with artificial heat and cooling systems.

The CCGA headquarters' 1953 move from the Horgan Ranch property in Redwood City to 788 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto was spurred by broader postwar urban and suburban development throughout Peninsula cities that pushed growers' territory southward. Prior to 1950, flower production in Santa Clara County had been far outweighed in importance by production in San Mateo and Alameda counties. By the 1960s, maintaining a nursery operation had become more expensive due to increased taxes and utility and labor costs. Redwood City growers struggled to compete with more economically produced imported South American cut flowers, and many nurseries shut down or left San Mateo County.<sup>55</sup>

Gary Kawaguchi writes:

Agriculture has always yielded to the requirements of urban pressures. To paraphrase Yoshimi Shibata, roses like the same land that shopping malls grow on. Long-time growers sometimes found land becoming too valuable and yielded to pressures to sell out and move on. Some were forced out of their land in urban zoning battles.<sup>56</sup>

The CCGA's 1981 history states that due to "urban encroachment spreading on the peninsula and the central point for members shifting south of Redwood City, growers began to consider relocating the Association office and warehouse to a lot on San Antonio Road in Palo Alto."<sup>57</sup>

Palo Alto had previously been home to a modest concentration of Japanese American families. In 1942, as Japanese Americans faced relocation and internment, Palo Alto was home to less than 200 Japanese Americans, whose community centered around the two blocks of Ramona Street between Forest and Channing avenues.<sup>58</sup> After the end of the war and their internment, the families who returned to Palo Alto rebuilt their businesses and religious communities away from their earlier Ramona Street enclave.<sup>59</sup> This relatively small population was part of a much larger Japanese American population in the Santa Clara Valley, which had been working in agriculture in the area since shortly before the turn of the twentieth century. In the years between the 1890 and 1940

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<sup>52</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 9.

<sup>53</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 366-367, 375.

<sup>54</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 72.

<sup>55</sup> Patel, *Japanese Americans in Redwood City*, 51.

<sup>56</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 73.

<sup>57</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 9.

<sup>58</sup> Palo Alto Historical Association, "Palo Alto's Japanese-American Community," Supplement 1 to *The Tall Tree*, March 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Sonia Dorfman, "The Japanese in Palo Alto," (May 1998) in Michael Corbett and Denise Bradley, *Final Survey Report: Palo Alto Historical Survey Update*, August 1997-August 2000 (San Francisco: Prepared by Dames & Moore for the City of Palo Alto Planning Division, 2001), 6-55.

censuses, the Japanese American population of the Santa Clara Valley increased from 27 individuals to 4,049.<sup>60</sup>

In 1953, the CCGA purchased the lot surrounding the subject property for \$3,100, and began construction of their new headquarters. The total cost of the building was \$19,842.77. By 1958, the association required additional space to serve its members' production needs and expanded the rear of the building at a cost of \$9333.21.<sup>61</sup> In the years between 1954 and 1958, the number of carnation and chrysanthemum growers in Santa Clara County more than doubled. By 1966 concentrations of nurseries had grown in around Palo Alto, Mountain View, and San Jose.<sup>62</sup> Growth in the county's cut flower production continued to increase, and as of 1980 the estimated \$28.8 million in flower production was dominated by \$20.8 million in chrysanthemums.<sup>63</sup> Many growers moved even further in the post-war years, establishing operations in Half Moon Bay, Pescadero, Gilroy, Watsonville, and Salinas.<sup>64</sup>

In 1957, 50 acres at the Horgan Ranch property was approved by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors for zoning designation as a "floricultural zone" with the goal to "recognize and maintain the important contribution that floriculture is making to the economic welfare of the county."<sup>65</sup> While the property was no longer the headquarters of the CCGA, this designation protected some members' production of chrysanthemums and carnations for a time. Development of the Horgan Ranch property in Redwood City as a residential suburb was approved in May 1983.

Shortly after purchasing the corner lot encompassing the subject building, the organization purchased the adjoining lot to the north for \$3400.00.<sup>66</sup> The CCGA built the commercial and warehouse building at 796 San Antonio Road, intended to be used partly for their own storage needs as well as rented to tenant businesses, in 1967.

Continuing to operate at its San Antonio Road Headquarters, the CCGA became a stock company in 1973 and amended its by-laws to extend membership to flower growers whose primary focus was not chrysanthemums.<sup>67</sup> In 1981, authors of the organization's history wrote of the building, which was a focal point for professional development and social cohesion among the Japanese American flower growers' community (**Figure 18**):

The Association office has become a gathering place where growers, stopping to pick up supplies or to bring in their sales tags for collection, meet with other growers. There they exchange information on various aspects of business to keep abreast of the newest developments and keep up with the latest fishing news and golf scores.<sup>68</sup>

In a 1982 dissertation focused on Japanese American cooperative growers in California, Noritaka Yagasaki observed a general shift in the post-war years toward individualism among San Francisco Bay Area growers – with the exception of the chrysanthemum growers. He writes:

Chrysanthemum growers on the Peninsula represent something of a special case, an exception to this trend [toward individualism]. The California Chrysanthemum Growers

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-51.

<sup>61</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai, Fifty Years*, 10.

<sup>62</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 372.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 369.

<sup>64</sup> Kawaguchi, *Living With Flowers*, 73.

<sup>65</sup> "Horgan Ranch Flower Zoning is a Landmark," *San Mateo Times*, October 18, 1957.

<sup>66</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai, Fifty Years*, 10.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

Association established in 1931 by Japanese producers has played a central role in the development of chrysanthemum production on the Peninsula. The fiftieth anniversary was celebrated in 1981 with the publication of the history of the association. Half a century after its establishment, it continues to function as a growers cooperative. As of 1981, its 51 members were all Japanese. The contemporary grower members are located in Redwood City, the Palo Alto-Mountain View-Sunnyvale area, and in San Jose. Cooperative marketing of chrysanthemums is still carried out, while it also serves a fraternal function. There is a smaller Chinese chrysanthemum Growers Association, but it plays a much less important role both in supply and marketing. Locational cohesiveness of the members and the fact that they grow mainly chrysanthemums are the key factors of this long-lived ethnic organization of Japanese chrysanthemum growers. It, however, is gradually losing grower-members.<sup>69</sup>

When the CCGA's historical narrative was produced in 1981, the Association maintained close ties with the California Flower Market in San Francisco, sent members to training courses on new techniques and to represent the Association at industry-related policy meetings, and communicated with the University of California Floriculture Research Station in San Jose regarding development of solutions to ongoing growing challenges.<sup>70</sup> The CCGA's primary office address was at 788 San Antonio Road until the at least the 1990s. The organization merged by 2002 with the California Flower Market, based at 640 Brannan Street, San Francisco.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Yagasaki, *Ethnic Cooperativism and Immigrant Agriculture*, 384-386.

<sup>70</sup> CCGA, *Kiku Kumiai*, 12.

<sup>71</sup> United States Securities and Exchange Commission Form D, notification regarding "Common stock of California Flower Market, Inc. pursuant to merger agreement with California Chrysanthemum Growers Association Inc.," February 20, 2002.



Figure 18. 1981 photograph of the CCGA “Anniversary Committee and History Project Committee” outside the headquarters at 788 San Antonio Road. Left to right: Jim Nakano, Ken Yamane, Richard Tsukushi, Shozo Mayeda, Hiroji Kariya, Sachi E. Adachi, Kio Yamane, George Nakano, and Richard Kaneko. Source: CCGA, *Kiku Kumaiai, Fifty Years*, 38.

## V. SITE HISTORY

### SITE DEVELOPMENT

788 San Antonio Road was constructed in 1953 for the CCGA by Mountain View-based building contractor, Don Gordon (**Figure 19**). At the time of construction, 788 San Antonio Road had two 10-foot by 10-foot overhead doors, six three-foot by six-foot steel sash windows, and four four-foot by four-foot steel sash windows. The 50-foot wide building was originally 72 feet deep, and a rear 52-foot addition, with a third utility door on the south façade, was built in 1958. A 1965 aerial photograph shows the building with its current configuration, including the original front gabled portion and the 1958 rear warehouse extension (**Figure 20**).



Figure 19. 1953 Photograph of the CCGA building at 788 San Antonio Road, shortly after completion. Source: Kariya, *Kiko Kumaiai, Fifty Years*, 10.



Figure 20. 1965 aerial photograph of the project vicinity, subject property outlined in orange. Source: Cartwright Aerial Surveys, Flight CAS-65-130, Frame 4-184, edited by Page & Turnbull.

**Construction Chronology**

The following table provides a timeline of construction activity at 788 San Antonio Road, based on building permit applications and assessment records on file with Palo Alto Development Services. The most visible changes recorded in this permit history include the 1974 replacement of the original front door with the current anodized aluminum-frame door and sidelight with tinted glazing, and the 2013 reroofing which replaced wood shakes with composition shingle roofing.

**Table 1. Building Permits on File for 788 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto**

Date	Application #	Owner/ Applicant	Architect / Contractor	Work
07/06/1953	10282	CCGA	Don Gordon	Construction of concrete block commercial building with cement floors, tar & gravel roof, sheet rock ceilings and interior partitions, and steel frame sash windows (\$17,000)
02/21/1958	17006	CCGA	Not listed	Addition at rear (\$5,000)
08/23/1967	0022753	Fred Hoshi	Allsberry Plumbing	Water heater installation
03/26/1974	A32995	CCGA	Durnos Schroder AIA (architect); Ira Ota (builder)	Interior alterations to form offices, completed 12/02/1974.
04/22/1974	C16627	CCGA	Biber Electric	Change of service, panel boards and switchboards.
04/16/1974	P2755	CCGA	Dale Plumbing	Gas outlet installation.
04/17/1974	H1499	CCGA	Marelich Mechanical Co.	Boiler installation
05/02/1974	Not listed	CCGA	West Coast Glass Co.	Installation of bronze anodized aluminum door with bronze plate glass and sidelight with mail slot.
04/23/2003	03-ARB-31	CCGA Acquisition Corp.	Design by Habitec Architecture and Planning	Sign review and approval for new occupant, Mechanica Automotive.
12/22/2003	03-2965	CCGA	Vance Brown, Inc.	Tenant improvements for "Mechanica Automotive," including installation of three car lifts within central repair portion of building (original 50-foot by 54-foot rear area). (\$9,500)
10/26/2005	05-2990	CCGA	Central Coating Co., Inc.	Roofing: Sweep gravel, install sprayed polyurethane foam. (\$22,438)
10/30/2013	13-2908	CCGA	Above All Roofing	Reroof: On front sloped portion of roof only, tear off existing shake, install new sheathing and comp shingles, approximately 14 squares. (\$4,500)

## OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPANT HISTORY

Through the majority of the years since its construction, the building at 788 San Antonio road was owned and used by the CCGA. In 2003, use of the building transferred to Mechanica Automotive Services, which operated at the location until 2018. The following table details the available ownership and occupancy history for 788 San Antonio Road is based upon city directory listings and building permit applications.<sup>72</sup>

**Table 2. Owner and Occupant Chronology for 788 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto**

<b>Year(s)</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>Owner</b>
1955-67	CCGA, Inc. Manager Joseph I. Rikimaru.	CCGA
1968-1980	CCGA, Inc., Manager Hero Tsukuski	CCGA
2003-present	Mechanica Auto Services	CCGA Acquisition Corp.

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<sup>72</sup> It should be noted that directories were not published in / are not available for all years.

## VI. EVALUATION

### CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-listed properties are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or citizens. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places.

In order for a property to be eligible for listing in the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria.

- *Criterion 1 (Events):* Resources that are associated with 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.
- *Criterion 2 (Persons):* Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- *Criterion 3 (Architecture):* Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.
- *Criterion 4 (Information Potential):* Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

The following section examines the eligibility of 788 San Antonio Road for individual listing in the California Register:

#### Criterion 1 (Events)

788 San Antonio Road appears to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 1 (Events) for its association with the California Chrysanthemum Growers Association, a long-term representative of the importance of Japanese American floriculture and industrial cooperatives in the San Francisco Bay Area. This cooperative floriculture group provided Japanese American growers on the San Francisco Peninsula with shared access to growing technologies, shipping options, and stabilized markets from its founding in 1932 to the end of the twentieth century. Though 788 San Antonio Road was not the first headquarters of the organization, it served as the longest center of operations for the CCGA and stands as a testament to the group's ability to rebuild their businesses following the disruption of Japanese American internment during World War II. While the economic and social damages caused by internment challenged Japanese American growers, by maintaining strong business relationships among themselves and with non-Japanese banker J. Elmer Morrish, CCGA members were able not only to rebuild their businesses in the post-war years, but to expand production in response to technological change and market forces.

The building at 788 San Antonio Road represents a different and significant segment of this resilient floriculture industry than that conveyed in previously evaluated floriculture sites in the San Francisco Bay Area. For example, the Sakai Nursery in Richmond, found eligible in 2004 for the National Register, represents a Japanese American family nursery which operated between 1906 and 2003,

specializing in the production of greenhouse-grown cut flowers.<sup>73</sup> In a 2018 Historic Resource Evaluation, Architectural Resources Group found the University Mound Nursery, located in San Francisco's Portola district and founded by the Italian American Garibaldi family, to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1 for its association with the agricultural settlement of the neighborhood and Italian American community, and Criterion 3 as a "rare vernacular cultural landscape" representing a family-owned commercial nursery. Its period of significance was recommended to be 1921-1990, the years of operation under the Garibaldi family.<sup>74</sup> Though not a Japanese American owned nursery, the University Mount Nursery is a significant reminder of the family-based Italian, Japanese, and Chinese nurseries that dominated San Francisco Bay Area floriculture, and one of a very few remaining Bay Area historic sites linked to the industry.

In contrast to the significant, family-owned nurseries represented by these examples, the CCGA building at 788 San Antonio Road represents a cooperative organization that successfully facilitated the operation of numerous family nurseries on the San Francisco Peninsula for seven decades, and linked those nurseries to the wholesale and retail markets that supported their operation. It is a reminder that the floriculture industry did not just grow at nurseries, but relied on networks of relationships and locations that worked in concert. The front office accommodated the work of the organization in assisting family growers with their business operations, the rear warehouse space provided a storage and distribution point for the supplies purchased in bulk for use by member nurseries, and its location near the border between Palo Alto and Mountain View was chosen in direct response to the shifting post-war locations of its member nurseries.

The organization's second office and warehouse, built in 1939 at Horgan Ranch in Redwood City and used by the organization between 1939 and 1952, was also important. This location was directly connected to the group's response to anti-Japanese land ownership laws and the effects of internment during World War II, while the extant, later building at 788 San Antonio Road represents the sustained relevance of the organization in the post-war years. Had the Horgan Ranch buildings been preserved, rather than demolished in the early 1980s to make way for suburban residential development, they may have been considered significant alongside the CCGA building on San Antonio Road as important markers of Japanese American growers' cooperatives. Unfortunately, nothing appears to remain of the CCGA members' work at Horgan Ranch.

The period of significance of 788 San Antonio Road under Criterion 1 is 1953-2002, beginning with construction of the building and ending with the merger of the CCGA with the California Flower Market.

### Criterion 2 (Persons)

788 San Antonio Road does not appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2 (Persons). While individuals associated with the CCGA during the group's use of the building between 1953 and 2003, such as the organization's first manager Joseph I. Rikimaru, were important in the local development of the floriculture businesses and professional organizations, the significance of the subject property is more appropriately connected to the work of the larger group rather than the contribution of individual members.

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<sup>73</sup> Donna Graves, Ward Hill, and Woodruff Minor; *Historic Architecture Evaluation, The Oishi, Sakai, and Maida-Endo Nurseries, Richmond, CA* (Prepared for Eden Housing, Inc., 2004); *Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms for the Sakai Nursery* (San Francisco, 2004); Historic American Landscapes Survey documentation for the Sakai Nursery, Greenhouses (HALS CA-6-B), <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ca3547/>.

<sup>74</sup> Architectural Resources Group, *Historic Resource Evaluation: 770 Woolsey Street, San Francisco (Draft)* (San Francisco: Prepared for 140 Partners LP, 2018).

### Criterion 3 (Architecture)

788 San Antonio Road does not appear to be individually eligible under Criterion 3 (Architecture), as a building that embodies the distinct characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction. Built in a vernacular utilitarian style, using functional materials selected to serve the needs of an organizational office and warehouse space, the appearance and configuration of the building is tied to its significance under Criterion 1. While the CCGA building exhibits a collection of features which generally convey mid-twentieth-century commercial use, it lacks the stylistic elements commonly associated with popular mid-century modern buildings. Its style is not representative of a significant type at the local, state, or national level, was not designed by a master architect or building professional, and lacks high artistic value. Research did not provide any evidence that building contractor Don Gordon was an important or influential building professional at the local, state, or national level.

### Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

788 San Antonio Road does not appear to be individually eligible under Criterion 4 as a building that has the potential to provide information important to the prehistory or history of the City of Palo Alto, state, or nation. It does not feature construction or material types, or embody engineering practices that would, with additional study, provide important information. Page & Turnbull's evaluation of this property was limited to age-eligible resources above ground and did not involve survey or evaluation of the subject property for the purposes of archaeological information.

## CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

For a property to be eligible for national or state designation under criteria related to type, period, or method of construction, the essential physical features (or character-defining features) that enable the property to convey its historic identity must be evident. These distinctive character-defining features are the physical traits that commonly recur in property types and/or architectural styles. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction, and these features must also retain a sufficient degree of integrity. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

The character-defining features of 788 San Antonio Road include the following features original to its 1953 construction:

- Rectangular, one-story massing, including original building and 1958 eastern extension;
- Side- and cross-gabled roof element at west building façade;
- Concrete masonry unit construction;
- Multi-light steel-frame windows on north, west, and south façades;
- Vehicle utility openings on south façade;
- Wood-plank shelves below windows on west façade.

## INTEGRITY

In order to qualify for listing in any local, state, or national historic register, a property or landscape must possess significance under at least one evaluative criterion as described above and retain integrity. Integrity is defined by the California Office of Historic Preservation as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity by the survival of certain characteristics that existing during

the resource’s period of significance,” or more simply defined as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”<sup>75</sup>

There are established integrity standards outlined by the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Seven variables, or aspects, that define integrity are used to evaluate a resource’s integrity—location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property must stand up under most or all of these aspects in order to retain overall integrity. If a property does not retain integrity, it can no longer convey its significance and is therefore not eligible for listing in local, state, or national registers.

The seven aspects that define integrity are defined as follows:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed.

Setting addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building(s).

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure, and style of the property.

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

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

Feeling is the property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

#### Location

788 San Antonio Road retains integrity of location. The subject building has remained situated at its location of original construction since 1953.

#### Setting

788 San Antonio Road substantially retains integrity of setting. The surrounding portion of San Antonio Road at the southeastern extent of Palo Alto was developed relatively quickly beginning in the early 1950s, and although the location was much less densely populated at the time the CCGA constructed the subject property, the overall setting, which consists of one-story service buildings accessed primarily by automobile with on-site parking areas, has remained much the same throughout the building’s use.

#### Design

788 San Antonio Road retains integrity of design. The subject property has undergone only minor exterior alterations since the 1958 rear warehouse extension, built for use by the CCGA only five years after the building’s initial construction. Its composition, consisting of a front office segment for the daily business operations of the CCGA and rear warehouse space originally used for storage and distribution of growing supplies and equipment, has been retained.

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<sup>75</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 7: How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento: California Office of State Publishing, September 4, 2001), 11.

### Materials

788 San Antonio Road substantially retains integrity of materials. The subject property has undergone minimal alterations since its original construction in 1953. The main entrance door was replaced in 1978 with a non-contributing tinted glass and anodized aluminum door. The wood-shake roofing was replaced with compatible composition shingles in 2013. The roll-up utility doors within the original openings on the south façade were replaced at an unknown time. These minor alterations do not detract from the overall character or design of the building, and all other character-defining features appear to retain their original materials.

### Workmanship

788 San Antonio Road retains integrity of workmanship. Many of the material choices and design elements are characteristic of mid-twentieth-century small-scale commercial buildings. For example, the concrete masonry unit construction, multi-light steel-frame windows, and flat or shallow-arched warehouse roof convey the goals of fairly utilitarian construction for the occupants' commercial needs. The gabled roof portion at the west façade, though re-clad with modern shingles, adds interest to the most publicly visible portion of the building.

### Feeling

788 San Antonio Road retains integrity of feeling. The property was originally designed for use by a commercial organization, and has continued to function until very recently in a commercial service capacity. The property's location, design, materials, and workmanship have been retained such that the building retains the overall feeling of a mid-twentieth-century suburban business.

### Association

788 San Antonio Road retains integrity of association. Due to the fact that the property retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, the property is clearly identifiable as the building constructed in 1953 by the CCGA. It retains sufficient integrity to convey its association with this organization and its contribution to Japanese American flower growers on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Therefore, 788 San Antonio Road retains integrity to the degree necessary to appear eligible for individual listing in the California Register under Criterion 1 (Events) with a period of significance of 1953-2002.

## VII. CONCLUSION

788 San Antonio Road does appear to qualify for individual listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. The subject property is associated with the long-term operation of the California Chrysanthemum Growers Association, a Japanese flower growers' cooperative that commissioned construction of the building in 1953. It therefore appears to be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1. The subject property does not appear to be directly associated with the lives of any persons known to be significant and, therefore, is not eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 2. The building, constructed in 1953 by builder Don Gordon is a simple example of mid-twentieth-century commercial design with few stylistic features. It lacks the architectural or artistic value necessary for California Register eligibility under Criterion 3, or use of building or engineering techniques with information potential under Criterion 4.

Therefore, 788 San Antonio Road does appear to qualify as a historic resource for the purposes of CEQA review.

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