

1926 – 1930: NON – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The first wave of prosperity, 1919-1925, had prompted major commercial construction in the downtown area, and the same was true of this second phase of development. Generally, new construction was further removed from the city's core. Two major civic buildings completed in 1930 – the Santa Fe Depot and Plummer Auditorium – were the culmination of several years of community planning and construction.

The effect of the Depression, which did not become widespread until the second half of 1930, effectively ended this era of growth.

List of Properties

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213-215 West Commonwealth Ave. Building, 1926
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Street Light Standards, mid-1920s

This “L”-shaped brick building effectively dominates the surrounding streetscape. In a departure from the traditional format, the Cottage style was used for a multi-tenant commercial structure. The structure’s gable roof is primarily one story, except for the prominent corner section where second story casement windows are featured under a steep compound gable, giving the building a Midwestern flavor.

The part of the building that fronts Harbor Boulevard was constructed in the mid-1920s for E. B. Dreyfus, an out-of-town businessman. The back portion that fronts along Valencia Drive was added in 1930. The corner portion of the building was first used for an auto dealership, and the addition in the back was a garage to service cars. The back addition features a roof constructed with exposed wood trusses and wire glass skylights.

Over the years the front building has served a variety of commercial purposes, most recently as a furniture store. With these uses, exterior changes have taken place. The original transom windows are intact, but other portions of the building’s long storefront have been reworked many times, including the installation of the brick veneer to the bulkhead. The improvements made in the 1990s by the present owner partially restored the building to its original appearance.

Dreyfus Building 417 - 427 S. Harbor Boulevard Brick Commercial 1926



Historical Landmark

Building
213 - 215 W. Commonwealth Avenue
Brick Commercial
1926 - 1928



The usual imitation of a wooden storefront has not been attempted in this brick commercial building, and a second story has been included. While the structure appears to be one, the more easterly portion of the building was built in 1926, and the westerly portion two years later, in 1928. The lack of a parapet is unusual at this date, and the presence of a second floor for living quarters is noteworthy. More typical is the use of two tones of brick and the variation in the size of the pilasters separating the window openings across the façade to produce a decorative effect.

Improvements for earthquake safety, completed in 1994, are inconspicuous and minimally affect the appearance of

This one-story brick building is typical of the commercial buildings constructed during the 1920s, of which many were an imitation of the wood-framed structure that they replaced. The characteristic features are evident in this example: a compact rectangular shape, an unpretentious storefront design topped with transom windows, and a flat roof with decorative parapet.

The front façade of the building has not been altered except for the painting of its brick wall, and recent improvements for seismic safety requirements are inconspicuous. The location for many commercial businesses throughout its 70-year history, the building is presently used as a restaurant.



Building
Stubrik's Steakhouse
118 E. Commonwealth Avenue
Brick Commercial
1927

This imposing three-story brick structure was designed and built by Oliver S. Compton for the International Order of Odd Fellows, as evidenced by the 1927 cornerstone at the building's northwest corner. The upper level was the lodge; the ground floor was leased to various tenants, with one of the first being the Post Office. The original pressed tin ceiling, which graced the lobby of the Post Office, is still in place. A later use for the ground floor was a food locker, and since the 1950s, the Williams Company has occupied this space.

As a striking example of the brick commercial structures of the 1920s, the building's main decorative feature is the use of glazed brick across the street façade. A series of arched windows on the upper level of the west wall is also a key design feature. It is the interior space, however, that gives the building its architectural significance. The upper level spaces are divided so as to provide assembly areas for both large and small gatherings, each with adjacent dining and kitchen facilities. There is a two-story high, 3,400-square-foot auditorium with stage and built-in seating along the walls. There is also a smaller, 2000-square foot space, situated on a third level across the front of the building.

This building was extensively rehabilitated in 1994, and its front façade is now completely restored. The work included seismic retrofitting, where a steel framework was placed on the outside to brace the west wall. This alternative was chosen, because its placement was considered to have the least impact on the building's most important feature: its interior appearance.

Odd Fellows Lodge
Williams Building
112 East Commonwealth Avenue
Brick Commercial
1927



Historical Landmark

This brick commercial building was designed with an unusually complex façade that has produced a very rhythmic effect. There are really three separate sections, each with four narrow bays, within the 116-foot long façade. The repetitive treatment of the parapet and pilasters among these three sections unifies the building’s façade, even though there is variation in the design within the openings. The building’s “saw-tooth” roof with clerestory windows is another distinguishing feature.

The structure was originally used as a commercial laundry, owned by W. A. Cleaver, who also constructed the imposing residence at 519 W. Fern Drive. Beginning in the early 1920s, Mr. Cleaver operated the Sanitary Laundry at this location; this building replaced a previous structure in 1928. The Sanitary Laundry was in business until the late 1940s.

**Sanitary Laundry Building
221 - 225 W. Santa Fe Avenue
Brick Commercial
1928**



Historical Landmark

**Firestone Tire Service Building
500 N. Harbor Boulevard
Spanish Colonial Revival
1929**



This “L”-shaped building was designed by Morgan, Walls and Clements of Los Angeles, a productive firm responsible for a large quantity of the Spanish Colonial Revival commercial architecture in Southern California. In this example, there is a mix of the earlier Mission style, such as the “bell tower” and arches.

The building was built for C. C. Chapman for \$17,000, after the Alician Court Theatre (now Fox Fullerton) directly to the north was completed for him. The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company was a longtime tenant, starting in 1929; the building was used as a garage, gas station and other automobile related businesses until 1978. While obscuring to some extent the features of the original style, the building’s 1980s conversion to commercial shops is a good example of adaptive reuse.

This striking two-story commercial structure was originally one of the usual types of brick business buildings constructed in early Fullerton. When it was transformed from the Rialto Theatre to the First National Trust Bank in 1930, the façade was redesigned by the firm of Walker and Eisen and has remained unaltered since then.

The exterior treatment exemplifies the Zigzag Moderne style with the use of bold linear forms and recessed openings for relief. The current paint scheme enhances the building’s exterior detailing and the wrap-around awning provides an excellent complimentary feature.



**Rialto Theatre
219 N. Harbor Boulevard
Zigzag Moderne
1905; remodeled in 1930**

The front façade of this commercial building – actually, an addition to the structure behind it – has been given a Spanish look and is a different style from the original buildings on the property. The property was initially improved with two small buildings for doctors’ offices in the 1930s; later the buildings were tied together with additions or alterations, and in 1972, the building was converted to its present coffee house/restaurant use.

The architecture of this building is not significant; the property’s significance rests in its social history: a successful campaign in 1974, by local citizenry to convince Pacific Telephone not to buy the property and demolish the building for its expansion. This event helped demonstrate the need to protect property important to the community and sparked the interest to identify and preserve the city’s landmark properties. In short, this property is directly tied to the origins of the preservation movement in Fullerton.

In surviving its precarious beginning, the restaurant has become a local institution, and it continues to be a popular eating establishment after more than 25 years.

Rutabegorz Restaurant
211 N. Pomona Avenue
Brick Commercial
1930



Historical Landmark

This two-story commercial structure was built for Andre Loumagne as a store and residence. Loumagne and his family probably occupied the upper story, with its Palladian windows and wooden balustrade. The lower story retains its folding doors and matching windows. At one time the structure was a garage, with cars pulling up under the porte-cochere at the east side. The building exemplifies a particular architectural style and a way of life that was part of the community in the first part of the 20th century.

In 1983, the building was extensively rehabilitated for use as offices. The original wood stairs, balustrade, and window frames were replaced with similar wood construction. In addition to seismic retrofitting, the upgrade of the building included painting the concrete brick walls, the installation of decorative pavement and fencing and new landscaping in the frontage area along Commonwealth Avenue.

**Loumagne's Market and Residence
329 E. Commonwealth Avenue
Brick Commercial
1930**



Historical Landmark



Santa Fe Depot
Fullerton Station
120 E. Santa Fe Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1930

**NATIONAL
REGISTER
PROPERTY**



Historical Landmark

The present Santa Fe Depot replaced the original Victorian depot that was constructed in 1888, a year after the arrival of the railroad in Fullerton. Built slightly east of the old depot, this poured-in-place concrete structure is about 256 feet long (plus a 150-long covered platform), designed in a Spanish Colonial style. The building's long, low-profile shape appears as a composite of forms, each with distinct features, which are assembled in a linear fashion. Arches of varying profiles appear throughout the building, while the use of a staggered gable and shed roofs with Mission tile adds to the visual complexity of the whole. This style of architecture is fully developed, with a fanciful use of detailing, such as quatrefoil windows, wooden shutters, concrete grillwork and a Monterey style balcony.

By 1990, many minor alterations to the Depot had taken place. After the Fullerton Redevelopment Agency gained ownership of the property in 1991, the Depot was fully rehabilitated and major improvements to the station were undertaken. The restoration of the Depot included the removal of the exterior paint to reveal the original varicolored stucco finish for the walls, which have been repaired and preserved. Also, many of the original interior features of the main lobby, including the ticket counter, have been replicated or restored.

The Santa Fe Depot, along with the railroad, is directly linked to the city's historical development. The Amerige Brothers founded the city only after they were assured that the Santa Fe Railroad Company would build its new line through the land they wanted to buy. The first depot was constructed in 1888, as the town was being laid out, and the railroad tracts reached Fullerton the following year. The Amerige Brothers named their 490-acre platted townsite after George Fullerton, the manager of the

the real estate subsidiary of the railroad, the Santa Fe Land Company.

Much larger than the original Victorian station, the 1930-vintage depot was symbolic of the growth of Fullerton during the first 30 years of the 20th century. Upon its completion in July 1930, the Fullerton Daily New Tribune wrote, "Modern in keeping with the aspect of the city which it serves, the new depot marks another milestone in the progress of the fastest growing city in Orange County. Its construction marks the recognition of Santa Fe officials of the size to which Fullerton has attained...."

Since 1930, and particularly during the 1940s, the depot has been the first building people see when they arrive in Fullerton by train. The unique character of the building carries a lasting impression -- now a very favorable one for the city -- given its recent rehabilitation.

The Fullerton Station continues to function both as a freight and passenger depot, retaining a legacy of the city's historic beginnings as well as serving as a reminder that it was the basis for the city's growth in the early part of the twentieth century.





**Plummer Auditorium
201 E. Chapman Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1930**

**NATIONAL
REGISTER
PROPERTY**

Designed by architect Carlton M. Winslow and constructed for \$295,500 in 1930, the Plummer Auditorium is an outstanding example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture with Italian Renaissance design elements. The walls are poured-in-place concrete and the gable roof features red clay tiles. The imposing front façade is symmetrical in design and richly decorated with Neo-classical motifs. A wide variety of cast concrete emblems embellish the classically shaped parapet, windows, and rectangular portico. The four story high tower is crowned with an octagonal dome clad in mosaic tile in rich shades of blue, gold, and green.

Just as outstanding is the interior workmanship and detailing. The large auditorium, which seats over 1,300 people, features an elaborate ceiling of painted and decorated rough-hewn beams, the original wrought iron chandeliers, arched side isles with composite capitals, and other classical ornamentation. In 1995, the building was fully rehabilitated and improved to meet seismic safety requirements. Additionally, the grand Wurlitzer Organ, original to the building, was restored and is in use today.

A 75-foot long, 15-foot high mural entitled “Pastoral California”, painted by W.P.A. artist Charles Kassler in 1934, is found on the west side of the building under the arched arcade. A landmark in its own right, the mural is a true “fresco” – a medium rarely used for this type of artwork – that was totally restored through a community effort in 1997, after it had been covered by paint for 56 years.

The building is named for Louis E. Plummer, superintendent of Fullerton High School and Fullerton Junior College from 1919 to 1941. Mr. Plummer was highly involved in public educational activities, not only in

in Fullerton but with organizations at the state and national level as well.

Plummer Auditorium was built in 1930, after several years of planning by the city’s leading citizens. Since its construction the facility has been a center of entertainment for the community. Music organizations from both the high school and junior college have performed for social and civic groups. Not only do students gain their first experiences in drama, dance, and music there, the auditorium is used to stage important theatrical productions and community-oriented cultural programs. Throughout its 70-year history the auditorium has served the community well, giving Fullerton its fine reputation as a cultural and educational center for north Orange County.



There are at least three kinds of street lampposts that were first installed during the middle to late 1920s. The most common type is the concrete standard with a fluted post and an acorn-shaped light fixture. This standard was placed on major streets as well as within some



residential neighborhoods (the districts of Barranca, Brookdale Heights, Jacaranda/Malvern/Brookdale, Wicket Square and West Whiting.) A similar type standard is now being used for public street lighting on all non-arterial streets within the City's original townsite.

Two types of distinctive metal lampposts are found along several streets within the Skyline Park and Upper Golden Hill districts. Installed by the developers of these subdivisions in the 1920s, these light fixtures were an important part of the promotion of the district, which competed with other developing areas at the same type.



Street Light Standards Mid-1920s