

1931 – 1946: NON – RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Quality commercial architecture for this period was restricted to a few buildings, all in the Streamline Moderne style. The construction of the First Lutheran Church was important, both in its coherent design as well as a symbolic undertaking of the time. Several major public buildings and facilities were constructed in Fullerton, many with the benefit of the WPA. Again, a Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was the favored style for these buildings.

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The Hillcrest Park area has been an important resource in Fullerton, ever since the 35-acre parcel was purchased by the city for \$67,300 in 1920. Originally bare of trees, the land was used as an overnight auto park camping site during the 1920s. The park evolved through the 1930s into its present form. The first city water reservoir is still located within the parkland, and the original trails were created with horse and plow. The hundreds of pine and eucalyptus trees planted in the mid-1920s transformed the site dramatically, but the W.P.A. fountain and the stone work in various areas of the park created a truly unique environment.

Included within the park are three structures. The recreation building, designed with a Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, is the former American Legion Post #142, constructed in 1932; the Red Cross building is the former Children's Library, moved from its location on North Pomona Avenue; and the log cabin is the Isaac Walton league clubhouse, which was originally built in 1932, but reconstructed in 1996.

A master plan for Hillcrest Park was adopted in 1996, which will guide its redevelopment over the next 20 years. The master plan requires the restoration, retention and preservation of historic features and buildings, in particular the stone work that was completed in the 1930s under the auspices of the W.P.A.

Hillcrest Park 1300 N. Harbor Boulevard 1920; improved in 1930s



Historical Landmark

This brick building was initially constructed in 1924, and first occupied by J.P. Glenn Furniture Company. A local savings and loan business, the Mutual Building and Loan Association, bought the property and extensively remodeled the structure in 1933. It is the remodel, establishing the striking Zigzag Moderne front façade with its emphases on vertical pattern and line, which provides architectural significance to the property. Cast concrete, smooth stucco and ceramic tile are the primary building materials for this remodeled façade.

The building's historical significance is tied to the founders of the Mutual Building and Loan Association: the people who commissioned the structure's remodel in 1933, for their new offices. The most prominent of the principles of the Association was Henry L. Parry. Both Henry Parry and Fred Fuller, who succeeded him in 1945, were prominent Fullerton bankers and civic leaders. The Association provided an important service to the community throughout the Depression by giving loans to Fullerton citizens to build or purchase homes.

In 1990, the building was rehabilitated to emphasize the Moderne features of the ground level front facade and to construct a second level consisting of four rental units. The new residential construction complements the architectural features of the 1933 Zigzag Moderne design and is appropriately set back from the front façade in order not to compromise the significance of the first story architecture.

**Mutual Building and Loan Association
124 W. Wilshire Avenue
Zigzag Moderne
1924; remodeled in 1933**



Historical Landmark

The flagstone pilasters that now help define the large ball field at Amerige Park were constructed in 1934, as part of the development of Commonwealth Park, later named Amerige Park in 1937, in honor of the city's founders. The pilasters were originally situated about 120 feet south of Commonwealth Avenue. In a redesign of the ball field and its grandstand in the late 1980s, the pilasters were relocated to their present position, about 15 feet back from the street.

The pilasters were constructed with a concrete core and base and flagstone used as an exterior finish. When they were relocated, each was placed on its own foundation.

Stone Pilasters at Amerige Park 300 W. Commonwealth Avenue 1934



Historical Landmark

The Wilshire Junior High School site has been in continuous use for educational purposes since 1890, when the first red brick schoolhouse was built at the northeast corner of Lemon Street and Wilshire Avenue. Other school facilities were constructed on the site and remained there until the 1933 earthquake. Destruction from the earthquake resulted in the construction of a new Wilshire School under a WPA project in 1936, consisting of the existing auditorium and classroom buildings facing Wilshire Avenue. This complex became the Wilshire Junior High School in the mid-1950s. In the early 1980s, the Junior High School was closed and the North Orange County Community College District acquired the property. The District rehabilitated the buildings, and the auditorium is now available for community use and the classrooms are used for continuing educational instruction.

The existing buildings are representative of the less ornate W.P.A. projects, being poured concrete with more of a Moderne style that was popular at the time of their construction. The building's block-like profile and austere relief for decorating all openings are characteristic of W.P.A. architecture. The auditorium is the most significant of the buildings, primarily because of its interior detailing, but the complex is distinctive in its unified, uncluttered setting.

With the widening of Lemon Street in the 1970s, some of the window openings facing this street were filled because of traffic noise; this solution, unfortunately, has compromised the appearance of the building's original design.

Wilshire Junior High School
315 E. Wilshire Avenue
W.P.A. Moderne
1936



Historical Landmark

Fullerton College was established as part of the Fullerton school system in 1913, six years after passage of the enabling legislation for the junior college system. It is the oldest continuously operating community college in the United States.



Initially, the college was an integral part of the high school, constituting a two-year post-graduation program, until it became an independent entity in 1925. For several years the college continued to share the high school facilities until the first of two major construction programs was undertaken in the 1930s, when the college district acquired its current site and started constructing a new campus.

The first set of buildings was designed by Harry K. Vaughan and funded under the W.P.A. program. The remainder was the result of extensive additions made later in the 1950s.



**Fullerton College
321 E. Chapman Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1935**

**Fullerton Post Office
202 E. Commonwealth Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1938**



Harry K. Vaughan designed several attractive W.P.A. projects, including the Fullerton Post Office. Constructed by the U.S. government for \$56,000 and in less than seven months, the facility was dedicated on November 1, 1938. The building is still used as a post office, now operating as the Commonwealth Station, and presently, it is the only federally owned building in Fullerton.

Paul Julian painted the mural on the west interior wall of the lobby, another product of the W.P.A. programs.

This building is the best example in the application of the Streamline Moderne style to a commercial structure in Fullerton. The building's low-set profile featuring curvilinear forms, rounded corners and the use of glass block is characteristic of the style.

The use of this architectural format suggests an interest on the part of the Val Vita – Hunt Wesson Company to project an up-to-date image. No major exterior alterations have been made over its 60-year existence.



**Val Vita - Hunt Wesson Office
1747 W. Commonwealth Avenue
Streamline Moderne
1939**

Presently occupied by Fullerton Police Department, this graceful three-level building with Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was originally dedicated as the City Hall in July 1942. The concrete building is “L”-shaped, with a three-story tower and cupola placed at the central corner. A sunken courtyard featuring noteworthy tile work serves the basement. This building, complemented by fine detail work, is the most dramatic of the several W.P.A. projects of the 1930s in Fullerton.

The Police department has occupied the entire building since construction of the present City hall in 1963. In a remodel of the building in the 1960s, the mural in the former city council chambers was covered over. Post-surrealism artist Helen Lundberg painted this three-panel mural, entitled “The History of California”, in 1942, as an art project under the auspices of the W.P.A. In 1993, the mural was completely restored at a cost of \$80,000, and the room in which it is found is now used for community meetings.

The block-like two-story annex at the north side of the building was constructed in the early 1970s, and is not part of the original construction.

Fullerton City Hall
Fullerton Police Department
237 W. Commonwealth Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1939



Historical Landmark

The building now being used as the Fullerton Museum Center was originally constructed as the city's fourth library and served in that capacity until 1973. William Starbuck started the community's first library in 1888, in his Gem Pharmacy on the 100 block of East Commonwealth Avenue. The second library was placed in the Chadbourne Building at the northwest corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Harbor Boulevard in 1902. The third, a Carnegie Library obtained through the efforts of Mr. Starbuck, was constructed on this site in 1907. The present building replaced the Carnegie Library in 1941.

This concrete building consists of a main one-and-half story structure with two wings and two courtyards. It was a WPA project, designed by Harry Vaughan. Mr. Vaughan was a prominent architect in the area who also designed the original Fullerton College campus. The Spanish Colonial style is typical for him, and this particular building features such exceptional details as the fine moldings over the doorways, tile work and the stained glass windows. Detailing is subtle and becomes evident only if the building is given more than a passing glance; for example, the copper gutter and downspout system has been incorporated as a design feature.

The building has been used as a museum since 1974. In 1986, the building was renovated and upgraded to accommodate large exhibitions within its three galleries. This public facility also features a gift shop as well as a lecture room with stage. The Museum's premises are scheduled to be enlarged in 1999, as part of a master plan to provide a large plaza on its west side to stage community events.

Fullerton Library
Fullerton Museum Center
301 N. Pomona Avenue
Spanish Colonial Revival
1941



Historical Landmark

Mission Revival architecture with elements of Romanesque detailing is used for this “U”-shaped complex of church buildings facing East Wilshire Avenue. Besides the prominent, three-tiered bell tower, the buildings’ distinctive features include arched relief work that surround entrances, decorative plastered friezes under the front gable, and small tower elements at the ridge line. John Wallis designed the many stained glass windows.

The complex was designed as a whole, but the church sanctuary was built first in 1942 – one of the few non-public buildings constructed in the early 1940s – by the membership at a cost of \$11,500 for materials. The parish hall and the educational building at the rear of the property were constructed in 1955-57, and are true to the original design of the complex. The enclosed courtyard between the church sanctuary and the parish hall is an integral element, providing a counterpoint between building forms on a densely developed property.

The church’s development is a reflection of how the entire north Orange County region grew and prospered in the decades after World War II.

First Lutheran Church 215 N. Lemon Street Mission Revival 1942



Historical Landmark

**Adams' Barbershop Building
509 N. Harbor Boulevard
Streamline Moderne
1946**



This narrow commercial building was constructed in 1946, for Oran Adams and was initially used as a barbershop. Mr. Adams was a member of the Masonic Temple immediately to the south. The Masons allowed him to build on their property and sold him the land later.

The building's Moderne style is but one of a handful in Fullerton, but in this case, it is not a particularly strong statement. The curved corner where the entry door is located and the linear pattern from the grooved courses of the concrete construction are contributing features.