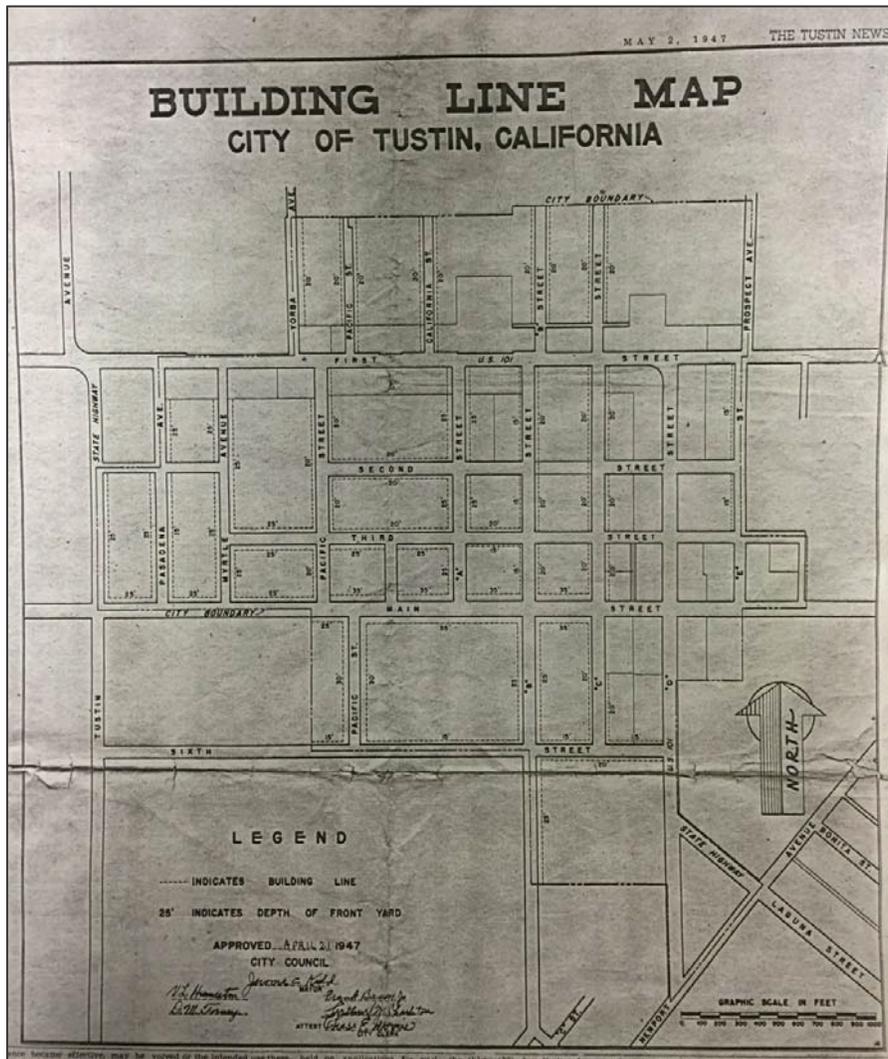


4.6 Context: Postwar Development in Tustin, 1946-1976

The end of World War II ushered in an unprecedented era of expansion and construction across the U.S., as the economy boomed, employment rates rose, and the housing market flourished with ample loans and high numbers of newly approved subdivisions. Like the rest of Southern California, Tustin saw an increase in population and building activity in the years following World War II. But unlike many other Southern California communities, it had room to spare for the sprawling residential subdivisions which would come to characterize postwar development in the region. The thousands of acres of agricultural land which had shaped the city for so long were not as profitable as they once were, due largely to the spread of quick-kill disease in the 1940s and 1950s. This virus spread by melon aphids rapidly killed trees, and newly planted replacements could take six or more years to mature. For the first time, as developers descended on the unbuilt areas of Orange County and new freeways connected the entire region, Tustin's growers saw benefit to cashing out. The result was an incredible transformation of the city's formerly rural character.



Tustin city boundary in 1947, before the annexations of the 1950s and '60s. *Tustin News* 2 May 1947.

New construction was slow to get started in Tustin due to the nationwide shortage of building materials, and the city's population grew by only about 200 people during the 1940s. In 1950, the population was only 1,143.¹⁷⁴ But Southern California as a whole was experiencing a massive population boom and postwar economic upturn, as throngs of people (including many returning veterans and their families) moved to the region. They were drawn by employment opportunities in defense and manufacturing industries, by educational opportunities provided by the G.I. Bill, and by the burgeoning residential subdivisions spreading outward from larger cities to create a new suburban landscape. In the case of men formerly stationed at Orange County's military bases, some also sought the pleasant climate of the region. Tustin's LTA base also remained an employer after the war's end; the Navy decommissioned it in 1949, but the Marines recommissioned it in 1951 to serve as a helicopter base during the Korean War and it remained operational until 1999.

New suburbs appeared across Orange County as construction ramped up in the early 1950s, and they followed the expanding freeway system which was creeping closer to Tustin. Funding from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Affairs Department (VA) made home ownership feasible for thousands, but the existing building stock was nowhere near sufficient. Tustin's growers and government leaders saw the development coming, while simultaneously witnessing spreading die-offs in their citrus orchards. As growers' incomes dropped, selling land off to developers became an increasingly attractive option. Starting around 1952, the Tustin area started seeing fewer and fewer citrus and walnut groves, as the land was developed into residential subdivisions. Land values rose along with Tustin's development during the postwar period – land costing \$5,000-\$6,000 per acre in 1955 was worth \$10,000-\$15,000 in 1960 and \$20,000-\$40,000 in 1965, with commercial and industrial uses valued even more highly than residential.¹⁷⁵

In 1955, the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) reached Tustin as it expanded south from Los Angeles. For the first time, commuting to work in distant points of Orange County, or even in Los Angeles County, was a feasible option, and patterns of residential development began to enlarge and spread. Instead of running through the center of town, the freeway ran to the west of it; this relieved increasing congestion on the old Highway 101 route, but also bypassed the businesses which depended on that route.

The bypassing of Tustin's historic commercial core greatly altered patterns of commercial development in the late 1950s and through the 1960s, as new businesses were established along the major feeder streets linking residential subdivisions to the freeway. Newport Avenue, Irvine Boulevard, 1st Street, and Red Hill Avenue joined, and soon eclipsed, the existing commercial corridors of Main Street and D Street (El Camino Real). They featured stand-alone businesses of all kinds catering to customers arriving by car, with large surface parking lots and tall, exuberant signage designed to catch the eye of the passing driver. Large shopping centers would come to dominate multiple intersections to provide one-stop shopping to local residents. Foreseeing the drop in traffic, Basil Brewster sold his Brewster Auto Camp before the freeway

¹⁷⁴ April Decennial Census of Population, cited in "Orange County Progress Report 1999," 133 (on file at City of Tustin Planning Division).

¹⁷⁵ "Tustin Scrapbook", 22.

was even completed. The new owner decided to turn the cottages into a business complex, which was later demolished.¹⁷⁶



Newport Avenue, ca. 1965. Orange County Archives.

New industries flourished during the postwar period as well. Major companies looking for space and lower property costs began moving into Orange County in anticipation of the freeway's completion, including aircraft industry heavyweights Lockheed, Douglas, and Hughes. The 1955 opening of Disneyland in nearby Anaheim created many new jobs in the tourist industry.¹⁷⁷ Smaller companies followed the big ones and Tustin, as well as the county as a whole, became the new home of much more diverse industries than the agriculture which had dominated the area for decades. For the first time, Tustin would be a fully autonomous city providing all the goods and services its new residents would need, as well as new jobs in burgeoning industries either in town or within a short drive.

The first residential subdivisions in Tustin proper were established in the early 1950s, joining the few late-1940s subdivisions constructed north of the city. Early examples included Lockwood Park Place, developed by the Santa Ana-based Hugh C. Marshall Co. around 1952. Lockwood Park Place and the company's 1954 Raleigh Place were built primarily for veterans and currently enlisted men. This pattern was typical of many 1950s subdivisions in Orange County and elsewhere, which focused on veterans eager to purchase homes using VA loans, often after having attended college thanks to the GI Bill. In Tustin's case, the continued operation of multiple Orange County military bases meant a high population of active enlisted men who could also achieve home ownership. Another active Santa Ana developer in the early 1950s was

¹⁷⁶ Juanita Lovret, "The 5 Freeway Initially Hurt Tustin Businesses," reprinted by the Tustin Area Historical Society courtesy of the *Tustin News*, accessed May 2020, <http://www.tustinhistory.com/articles/freeway.htm>.

¹⁷⁷ Nathan Masters, "How the 5 Freeway Made Orange County Suburban," KCET, accessed May 2020, <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/how-the-5-freeway-made-orange-county-suburban>.

Dream Homes, Inc., which built multiple subdivisions between 1952 and 1956. Many other subdivisions followed across Tustin in the 1950s and even more were constructed during the 1960s, by far the city's most intense period of development.



Dream Homes, Inc. display advertisement, *Tustin News* 8 May 1953.

The 1955 completion of the Santa Ana Freeway proved the tipping point in Tustin's post-war transformation from a sleepy agricultural community to a dense urban center. In March 1955, the *Tustin News*' front page headline heralded the coming change: "Permits Soar Over Quarter Million Mark in Local Building."¹⁷⁸ By July 1955, two new tracts totaled \$1,000,000 in permits.¹⁷⁹ Tustin was limited in space for new construction, and many of the new subdivisions were north of the city, where they featured larger lots marketed as "small estates."¹⁸⁰

Seeing the acceleration of residential development in unincorporated North Tustin, Tustin (like other cities in Orange County) looked to annexation of surrounding areas. Annexation, which required a vote for all areas with residents already present, was key to Tustin's control of its development through zoning. It also expanded opportunities for municipal funding through property and business taxes, in exchange for municipal services from sewers to policing. Eleven Orange County communities incorporated between 1952 and 1962 to protect themselves from annexation to existing cities including Tustin and Santa Ana. Santa Ana was particularly aggressive in its annexation attempts, leading many in Tustin to classify it as a "land grab" war.¹⁸¹

Annexation in Tustin proceeded piecemeal, with multiple annexations ranging widely in size and steadily increasing the size of the city; during the 1950s, most of the annexations were directly

¹⁷⁸ "Permits Soar Over Quarter Million Mark in Local Building," *The Tustin News* 11 March 1955.

¹⁷⁹ "Building Permits Totaling Over One Million Issued for Tustin," *The Tustin News* 21 July 1955.

¹⁸⁰ "New Small Estates Tract Due To Be Constructed in Tustin Area," *The Tustin News* 6 October 1955.

¹⁸¹ Jordan 2007, 93-94.

adjacent to the southeast, south, and northwest sides of the original townsite.¹⁸² They usually aimed directly at new or planned residential subdivisions where property owners petitioned for annexation, though their scope was not all-encompassing; a 1956 southern annexation near Mitchell Avenue and the I-5 frontage road was noted as “excluding the occupied Dream Home Tract, and including the 53 unit Dream Homes tract under construction.”¹⁸³ Neither Tustin nor Santa Ana was successful in annexing North Tustin, which remains its own unincorporated community today. Tustin’s acreage increased by 220 percent during the 1950s, while its population grew by 76 percent. By 1960, the city had increased from 1,143 residents to 2,006.¹⁸⁴

By early 1956, Tustin’s population was outpacing its available building stock, forcing many new residents to squeeze into its new and existing trailer parks – it had at least three by that time. Trailer park residency, both temporary and permanent, was a very common pattern in Southern California during the population boom of the postwar period as most communities struggled to house their exploding populations. Tustin instated a trailer park ordinance in 1956 to control the locations and characteristics of trailer parks, guiding the construction of multiple large properties during the boom years of the 1960s.

Infrastructure improvements struggled to keep pace with development during the 1950s and early 1960s. Water systems required improvement, leading to the organization of a new water district in 1951 and the incorporation of the Tustin Water Works in 1954.¹⁸⁵ The many new septic tanks and cesspools of expanding subdivisions threatened to contaminate the groundwater, forcing the city to at last construct a comprehensive sewer system. Roads needed improving and widening to accommodate greater volumes of traffic, and the four-way stops that characterized many parts of Tustin well into the 1960s were gradually replaced with traffic lights.

In 1961, the Cox Construction Co. established a new 20-acre subdivision along Ebell Drive, off of S. B Street near McFadden Street.¹⁸⁶ The development of this parcel left “only one or two remaining orange groves within the Tustin city limits.”¹⁸⁷ The *Tustin News* remarked, “All of the groves have succumbed to residential or commercial progress. The one-time agricultural heart of Orange County has been transformed to the mode of the second half of the Twentieth Century.”¹⁸⁸ And this was at the very beginning of Tustin’s true decade of transformation – the 1960s saw population growth and new construction exponentially greater than any other period in Tustin’s history, including the 1950s. The City annexed thousands of acres beyond its 1950s annexations, greatly increasing Tustin’s reach and ability to shape growth already threatening to get out of hand. By the end of the 1960s, Tustin’s land area had increased by over 400 percent,

¹⁸² Annexation Maps in Jordan 2007, 114-115.

¹⁸³ “Boundary Commission Approves Annexation,” *Tustin News* 1 March 1956.

¹⁸⁴ April Decennial Census of Population, cited in “Orange County Progress Report 1999,” 133 (on file at City of Tustin Planning Division).

¹⁸⁵ Jordan 2007, 100-101.

¹⁸⁶ Ebell is now a private drive along the back of the subdivision.

¹⁸⁷ “Ebell-Fricker Property Sold,” *The Tustin News* 31 August 1961.

¹⁸⁸ “Ebell-Fricker Property Sold.”

from 434 acres to 2,215.¹⁸⁹ And its population had increased by over a thousand percent since 1960, reaching 21,178 in 1970.¹⁹⁰

Tustin's 1950s and early 1960s residential subdivisions were quite consistent in terms of planning features (wide streets with cul de sacs), home types (one- and sometimes two-story single-family residences with attached garages), and architectural styles (predominantly Ranch, with a few Minimal Traditional and Mid-Century Modern examples). The area's developers, both in Tustin proper and in the surrounding areas within its sphere of influence, marketed their subdivisions as modern, affordable, safe, and convenient. Distance from schools and churches was highlighted in marketing materials like the promotional brochure for the 1962 Del Cerro subdivision, which emphasized its location's urban convenience paired with "the charm and seclusion of a rural atmosphere."¹⁹¹

Champagne Taste?

WOULD YOU APPRECIATE

1. A king size living room
2. Queen size bedrooms
3. 2 spacious baths
4. Modern Hardwood kitchen
5. Breakfast bar, dishwasher, range and oven, disposal
6. Separate dining area with sliding glass doors to private patio

WOULD YOU LIKE ALL THIS IN AN ALL ELECTRIC MEDALLION APARTMENT WITH CUSTOM CARPETS AND DRAPES?

THIS CAN ALL BE YOURS AT THE FABULOUS TUSTIN ACRES APARTMENTS. COMPLETE WITH POOLS, RECREATION ROOM AND BEAUTIFUL GROUNDS. TRULY ALL THE COMFORTS OF A LUXURY HOME WITHOUT THE PROBLEMS OF OWNERSHIP. SEE FOR YOURSELF.

Tustin Acres

650 WEST MAIN AT MYRTLE

Convenient to Santa Ana & Newport Freeways — to Douglas, Beckman, Autonetics, El Toro Base.

RATES: 2 BEDROOMS \$135 — STUDIOS \$140
3 BEDROOMS \$145

Ron and Terri Conn, Hosts — 838-0160

Display advertisement for Tustin Acres (650 W. Main Street), *Tustin News* 28 May 1964.

¹⁸⁹ Juanita Lovret, "Tustin's First City Council Focused on Safety," reprinted by the Tustin Area Historical Society courtesy of the *Tustin News*, accessed May 2020, <http://www.tustinhistory.com/articles/tustin-first-council.htm>.

¹⁹⁰ April Decennial Census of Population, cited in "Orange County Progress Report 1999," 133 (on file at City of Tustin Planning Division).

¹⁹¹ Del Cerro promotional brochure, 1962.

For the first time in its history, Tustin also saw the extensive development of multi-family residences to provide housing for an ever-expanding population. Apartment buildings of various sizes popped up throughout the city, with perhaps the largest being the 1963-1964 garden apartment complex of Tustin Acres (650 W. Main Street, extant). It was popular with officers stationed at the LTA base.¹⁹² Many other multi-family properties of notable size were constructed during the 1960s, representing a range of property types including duplexes, large apartment houses, multi-building courtyard apartments, and garden apartment complexes.

In 1963, Tustin issued over \$39 million in building permits, topped by 1964's astounding total of over \$80 million.¹⁹³ Development was spurred by the 1963 completion of the Newport Freeway (State Route 55, now known as the Costa Mesa Freeway), as well as the completion of a Newport Avenue off-ramp from the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) in the same year. With the completion of this second freeway through town, Tustin was fully linked into regional transportation systems. By the end of the 1970s, with both freeways complete and Tustin much enlarged through annexations, the city had 15 off-ramps.¹⁹⁴



Aerial photograph of Tustin showing freeways and declining agricultural acreage, 1965. Tustin Area Historical Society Collection, Orange County Public Library.

¹⁹² Preservation group meeting, 25 February 2020.

¹⁹³ Jordan 2007, 95.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

The majority of development during this time was residential, but commercial development also accelerated to a frantic pace in the 1960s. Large, automobile-oriented shopping centers with dedicated parking were a particular hallmark of this era. Notable examples in Tustin included Jamestown Village (1960-1962, 462-566 El Camino Real, extant), Larwin Square (1961, extant), Ralph's (1965, now Tustin's French Quarter, extant), Tustin Heights Center (1965, extant), and the Pantry Market center at Newport and Walnut Avenues (1965, extant).¹⁹⁵ Smaller commercial properties filled in along major thoroughfares like Newport Avenue, 1st Street, Irvine Boulevard, and 17th Street, and some older buildings (and still-vacant parcels) were replaced with new buildings in downtown's historic commercial core.

As local industries expanded and annexation proceeded through the 1960s and into the 1970s, the city established industrially zoned areas. These areas filled in with massive properties, including warehouses, distribution centers, manufacturing facilities, and office parks, during the 1970s and 1980s. The development continued through the 1990s and 2000s, and many of the 1970s properties were altered, expanded, or demolished for new construction in the early 21st century. Industrial properties pre-dating 1970 are rare in Tustin, and no historically significant properties were identified.

By 1965, the City had gotten a handle on the massive infrastructural improvements its postwar development demanded. It required developers to install underground utilities in all new subdivisions, and it drew on county funding to improve the storm drain system. This particular improvement saved both lives and property in 1969, when in a haunting echo of the 1938 floods, massive flooding killed dozens of people in Orange County and cost millions in property damage. In 1968, as part of Tustin's centennial celebration, the City renamed D Street as El Camino Real, 4th Street as Irvine Boulevard, and H Street as Centennial Way.¹⁹⁶

Tustin's residential development patterns began to shift in the late 1960s and early 1970s as some new subdivisions reflected the influence of the Irvine Master Plan. Adopted in 1960 and designed by architect William Pereira, the plan was the shaping document for the new City of Irvine (established by the area's longtime dominant landholder, the Irvine Company, on its land). It guided and shaped a new type of planned community centered on the new University of California, Irvine, incorporating business centers, abundant open space, and residential "villages," each with its own school, shopping center, and park. This new approach to planned development proved highly influential across Southern California, and new Irvine Company-developed subdivisions like Tustin Meadows (1968) and the massive Greenwood Village (1973, incorporating multiple developments like Laurelwood and Peppertree) changed the face of postwar residential neighborhoods in Tustin.¹⁹⁷ Centennial Park was developed as part of Tustin Meadows, serving as the central hub and design focus of the entire neighborhood.

Tustin's explosive residential growth necessitated more schools for the increasing student-age population. As a result, the postwar school became one of the most visible property types of the period, with at least 20 constructed between 1950 and 1970; as the school district reused architectural plans multiple times, some of Tustin's schools are nearly identical to each other.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 95.

¹⁹⁶ Jordan 2007, 106; Lovret 2011, 139-140.

¹⁹⁷ Once developed, the neighborhoods of Laurelwood and Peppertree became much better known than the overarching Greenwood Village development name, which quickly fell out of use.

¹⁹⁸ Jordan 2007, 97.

Tustin High School's 1922 main building was demolished in 1966, having been declared seismically unsafe, and was replaced with one story classroom "pods."¹⁹⁹ By then, Tustin boasted the new (1963) Foothill High school in North Tustin as well as numerous elementary and middle schools.

The city's other institutions kept pace with rapid development during the 1950s and 1960s. The library received its first dedicated building in 1958 and its second in 1976. The post office moved into a new building in 1962, the volunteer fire department became a paid department in 1963, and City Hall and other municipal departments received a new headquarters in 1974. The Tustin Area Woman's Club was founded during this period, as was the Tustin Area Museum and its parent organization, the Tustin Area Historical Society. Tustin also saw the construction of multiple religious facilities in the 1960s, including the First Baptist Church (1959, with an exuberant hyperbolic paraboloid roof), Saddleback Chapel (1963), a new church for St. Paul's Episcopal (1964), St. Cecilia (1964), and many more. These prominent edifices were typically in Mid-Century Modern styles on various scales and levels of articulation – going beyond the commercial buildings on major streets, these were designed to catch the eye as well as stir the soul.

As Tustin agriculture faded from prominence in the 1960s, the citrus association packing houses closed down one by one. Tustin's last surviving packing house, the Mutual Orange Distributors facility on Newport Avenue, was demolished in 1971.²⁰⁰ Other losses in the 1960s and 1970s included the 1888 Bank of Tustin and an unknown number of turn of the century residences deemed too decrepit for salvage. Tustin continued its historic practice of moving buildings, however, and a number of houses were shifted to new locations as downtown development proceeded from the 1960s onward.²⁰¹ The Utt Juice Company closed in 1973, though its building on Main Street was not demolished until the 2010s.

By 1970, Tustin's population exceeded 21,000 – it was still not a large city, but was many times bigger than it had been in 1960. Most important, the city was now first and foremost an urbanized community, with businesses, institutions, and industries providing economic and social support to its many residents. Thanks to its freeway connections and proximity to larger cities, Tustin was also a suburban community, with many of its inhabitants commuting to work elsewhere. Faint traces of the community's agricultural heritage remained, but these operations were no longer central to the city's character or economy.

Tustin saw major demographic shifts starting in the late 1960s and accelerating through the 1970s and 1980s, as a more ethnically diverse pool of residents put down permanent roots in town.²⁰² California as a whole diversified greatly during this time, due in part to the 1965 passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This abolished national origin quotas that favored European immigrants over those from other nations, and revised refugee policies, leading to a substantial increase in immigration from previously underrepresented countries. And the 1968 passage of the Fair Housing Act prohibited discrimination based on race or national origin (among other things), opening home ownership opportunities to a wider variety of people. Like many communities, Tustin saw an influx of first-generation Americans from a

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Jordan 2007, 97.

²⁰¹ See Appendix E, Survey Findings, and Appendix F, DPR 523 Forms, for more information on moved properties.

²⁰² Ibid., 106.

wide variety of nations working in a much broader array of employment sectors than seen during the time of agriculture dominance. The Latinx American population, now comprising many more ancestries than those of the Mexican and Mexican American farm laborers constituting most of Tustin's temporary and permanent non-white population, came to make up nearly half of the city's residents, and Asian Americans comprised a substantial percentage as well.

The city continued annexations, with several massive gains during the 1970s and 1980s that gave Tustin the oddly shaped boundaries it has today. In 1976, the 1,076-acre Marine Corps Air Station (formerly the Lighter-Than-Air, or LTA, base) was annexed, marking the last major boundary change of the postwar period. It remained in operation until 1999. This area has seen careful planning for years and in the 2020s will be developed as the Tustin Legacy mixed-use project.²⁰³ Some 2,257 acres of the former Irvine Ranch were annexed in 1986 and developed as Tustin Ranch, a planned community with commercial and recreational facilities as well as residential. Thanks largely to this development as well as additional subdivisions added in the 1980s and 1990s, Tustin's growth was exponential after 1976; it continues today, albeit in a differently planned way with goals other than the solely automobile-centric expansion that so shaped the community after World War II.

²⁰³ Ibid., 110 and 113.

Theme: Residential Development, 1946-1976

Tustin's residential development during the three decades following the end of World War II far eclipsed anything experienced before or since. It was fueled by the nationwide economic resurgence, the ready availability of federal loan assistance, and the construction of regional freeways. And it was made possible by local growers selling off of thousands of acres of formerly agricultural land to developers as quick-decline disease devastated groves. By the early 1950s, Tustin's once-rural landscape was quickly transforming into residential subdivisions established by development companies of all sizes. The vast majority of the housing built from the 1950s through the 1970s was designed, built, and marketed by large-scale developers as part of brand-new neighborhoods with consistent planning features; custom-designed homes were far less common in Tustin during this time. Thanks to federal programs like the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), during the postwar period the national home ownership rate jumped from under 50% to almost 70% of all households.²⁰⁴ The availability of Veterans Administration (VA) loans after the war helped returning veterans purchase homes as well. But as elsewhere in the country, home ownership was mostly restricted to whites, with FHA and HOLC standards resulting in less than 2% of new FHA-insured housing being sold to minorities by the late 1950s.²⁰⁵

While multiple subdivisions were established in what is now unincorporated North Tustin during the late 1940s, the earliest known examples within Tustin's modern city limits date to the early 1950s. The Santa Ana-based Hugh C. Marshall Co. built some of the first tracts of the 1950s, including Lockwood Park Place immediately northeast of the original Tustin townsite. This subdivision was built primarily for veterans and enlisted men, and was complete by 1952. In 1954, the Marshall Co. added Raleigh Place, comprising 34 three-bedroom homes at Newport Avenue and Mitchell Street, of which 24 were reserved for active GIs. Another Santa Ana developer, Dream Homes, Inc., was very active in Tustin during the early 1950s. It established multiple subdivisions between 1952 and 1956, starting with small tracts of only a few lots at Myrtle Street, Pasadena Street, and 3rd Street in the original townsite; it went on to establish larger subdivisions east and southeast of town which were soon part of the city through a series of annexations.

²⁰⁴ Living New Deal, "National Housing Act (1934)," accessed March 2019 at <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/national-housing-act-1934/>.

²⁰⁵ Robert Leighninger, Jr., *Long-Range Public Investment: The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2007), 134-135, cited in Living New Deal, "National Housing Act (1934)," accessed March 2019 at <https://livingnewdeal.org/glossary/national-housing-act-1934/>.



Curving street and consistent setbacks in Lockwood Park Place. ARG, 2021.

Starting with these early 1950s developments and continuing through the 1960s, the city's developers and builders were clearly following the neighborhood and building design guidelines established by the FHA and formalized in its 1936 publication *Planning Neighborhoods for Small Houses*. This guide encouraged things like curvilinear streets and modest homes built to maximize efficiency and ensure consistent neighborhood character.²⁰⁶ This kind of development made more sense for large-scale builders who could “arrange for the purchase of land, the design of the subdivision plat, and the design and construction of the houses.”²⁰⁷ The typical 1950s subdivision in Tustin featured uniform lot sizes, setbacks, planning features, and cul de sacs – another FHA-recommended feature and one prized by families with small children. Modest Minimal Traditional styles with attached garages appeared in the early years, but larger, low-slung, Ranch styles quickly came to dominate during the rest of the postwar period.

The 1955 completion of the Santa Ana Freeway fully connected Tustin to the expanding regional transportation network and drew developers on ever-larger scales. In March 1955, the *Tustin News* noted over a quarter of a million dollars in new building permits – and it was front page news. Nearly \$370,000 in permits represented 26 new houses (and a few remodels and garages) for that month, most of which were constructed in a single tract by Orano Homes at Sussex and Gramercy - outside the City limits, but characteristic of the scale and pace of changes happening in Tustin proper, as well as its immediately adjacent areas.²⁰⁸ By July 1955, residential construction was in full swing, with over \$1,000,000 in permits reported for construction in two new residential tracts.²⁰⁹ By March 1956, development companies from as far as Los Angeles

²⁰⁶ David L. Ames and Linda Flint McClelland, National Register Bulletin: *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2002), 49.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ “Permits Soar Over Quarter Million Mark in Local Building,” *The Tustin News* 11 March 1955.

²⁰⁹ “Building Permits Totaling Over One Million Issued for Tustin,” *The Tustin News* 21 July 1955.

and Beverly Hills were staking their own claims to Tustin and Tustin-adjacent land – including prominent residential developers like the Walter Leimert Company.²¹⁰

These 1955 and 1956 tracts were located in what is now unincorporated North Tustin, where larger parcels outside of the original Tustin townsite and uninterrupted by freeway construction allowed the development of not just larger subdivisions, but subdivisions with larger lots. Indeed, many, like St. Hubert’s Woods, were marketed as “small estates” protected by a county ordinance requiring minimum building sites of 10,000 square feet and minimum street frontages of 100 feet per lot (about twice the width of a standard city lot).²¹¹ Others, like Bigelow Park between Holt Avenue and Prospect Avenue in unincorporated North Tustin, featured smaller lots; this subdivision was funded partly through the VA and its homes were intended for veterans to buy with no down payment.²¹² Other 1950s-early 1960s tracts in North Tustin included Hillview Estates (1952), Prospect Park (1952), Country Home Estates (1952), Hewes Avenue (1953), Tropic Lane (1958), Gainsborough (1958), Tustin Ranchos (1958), Meredith Park (1959), and Broadmoor (1961). Dream Homes Inc. also constructed multiple North Tustin tracts, including a 45-home tract at Yorba and Fairhaven (1954) and a 34-home tract on Theodora Drive (1955). Although these developments were outside of Tustin proper, they were influential in the design of many of Tustin’s postwar subdivisions and reflected the approach of large-scale developers who worked in the City as well as the adjacent unincorporated areas. They also helped spur Tustin’s drive to annex additional areas, although North Tustin opted to remain its own unincorporated community.

In Tustin proper, other typical tracts developed during the 1950s and early 1960s included Elizabeth Way (1952) on Wass Street north of Irvine Boulevard; more Dream Homes tracts south and southeast of the townsite (1952-1956); Cliff May Ranch Homes (1954) at Red Hill Avenue south of Irvine Boulevard; and numerous other subdivisions. They were fairly homogenous in terms of property types and layout: single-family residences with attached garages, usually in Ranch styles, situated in auto-oriented developments with consistent setbacks, concrete sidewalks, curb cuts, wide paved streets, and cul de sacs. Many of their developers were based in Orange County, although Los Angeles-based developers were also very active. One notable example was architect/developer Cliff May, known as the father of the California Ranch style, who designed Contemporary Ranch developments across Southern California. Within the City of Tustin, he designed the George M. Holstein & Sons-developed, 38-house Cliff May Ranch Homes development at Red Hill Avenue south of Irvine Boulevard in 1954 and is also known to have designed a smaller tract at El Camino Real and Browning Avenue.²¹³ Due to numerous alterations to individual properties within these subdivisions, neither retains sufficient integrity to convey their historic character and therefore were not identified as potential historic districts.

²¹⁰ “Realtor Handles Sale of Six Ranch Properties to LA Firms,” *The Tustin News* 8 March 1956.

²¹¹ “New Small Estates Tract Due To Be Constructed in Tustin Area,” *The Tustin News* 6 October 1955.

²¹² “Development of Bigelow Park Now Underway,” *The Tustin News* 4 February 1955.

²¹³ “38 Home Subdivision Now Under Construction,” *Tustin News* 3 September 1954; Tustin Preservation Conservancy, “Tustin History,” accessed June 2020, <http://www.tustinconservancy.org/tustin-history/>.



Traditional Ranch-style home on Laurinda Way, in City of Tustin portion of the 1956 Santa Clara Estates subdivision. ARG, 2021.

By the mid-1950s, Tustin’s exploding population had exceeded the available building stock and new houses were in very high demand. Local builders responded by starting to ramp up the construction of multi-family residential properties, though these appear to have been relatively small in scale and few extant examples survive – the vast majority of Tustin’s postwar multi-family resources date to the 1960s and ‘70s. Some landowners expanded trailer park properties dating to the immediate postwar period and others established new ones. This was a very common pattern in Southern California during the population boom of the postwar period – trailer parks served the role that auto camps had in the 1930s and 1940s, providing expedient housing to both temporary and permanent residents. In addition to the small, ca. 1940 Hannaford’s Trailer Court (now Sutliff Trailer Park), by 1956 Tustin had at least two large properties of this type: Trail-a-Way Mobile Home Park (1782 Nisson Road, 1954) and Parque Santiago (215 S. Prospect Avenue, 1956). Concerned about the impact of this housing type on Tustin’s character, in 1956 the City Council passed a trailer park ordinance which, among other things, specified that occupation of trailer homes outside of “qualified trailer parks” was prohibited.²¹⁴ As the *Tustin News* put it, “The ever increasing ‘move to Tustin’ desire has made it necessary for the City Council and civic leaders to keep a watchful eye on developments which could be detrimental to the beauty and well being of the community.”²¹⁵ At least four large trailer parks were constructed under the ordinance during the 1960s: Tustin Village Mobile Home Park (15352 Williams Street, 1963), Montesilla Mobile Home Park (15601 S. B Street, 1966), Saddleback Mobilodge (15401 Williams Street, 1966), and Villa Valencia Mobile Home Park (14092 Browning Avenue, 1969).

²¹⁴ Tustin Trailer Park Ordinance (Ord. No. 94, 12/27/55), published in full in *The Tustin News* 5 June 1956.

²¹⁵ “Council Adopts Tustin Trailer Park Ordinance,” *The Tustin News* 5 June 1956.



Parque Santiago (215 S. Prospect Avenue, 1956). ARG, 2021.

As rapid as Tustin's 1950s residential development was, it was far outpaced in the 1960s as more and larger subdivisions were established and the city frantically annexed thousands of acres. The 1963 completion of the Newport Freeway (State Route 55, now known as the Costa Mesa Freeway) and a Newport Avenue off-ramp from the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) provided more options for commuters and opened up more areas ripe for residential development. The tracts of the 1960s were larger, often comprising hundreds of homes each, and often featured larger lots than the city's 1950s subdivisions. As Tustin's commercial corridors, shopping centers, school system, and churches grew, developers were able to boast their subdivisions were convenient as well as safe, affordable, and modern. The 1962 announcement of the grand opening of the Margate Homes subdivision at the southeast corner of Red Hill and Bryan Avenues checked all the boxes for Tustin's new residential developments: less than a mile from the Santa Ana Freeway, walking distance from schools and the Larwin Square shopping center, sewers "in and paid for," and Ranch-style homes with attached garages.²¹⁶ Margate Homes was developed by builder W.G. Gale and featured architectural designs by Stanley Bell.

The 250-home Del Cerro subdivision built by Orange County-based George M. Holstein & Sons at Red Hill Avenue and 1st Street between 1962 and 1965 boasted many of the same features: large Traditional, Contemporary, and Polynesian Ranch homes, some two stories in height, on streets with sewers, water, electricity, gas, and telephone lines.²¹⁷ Would-be owners could choose from six different home designs, each with a minimum of three bedrooms, and some expandable to contain up to six. Del Cerro summarized its appeal, and indeed the appeal of most of Tustin's 1960s subdivisions, in its promotional brochure:

Orange County's prestige landmark, Del Cerro combines the convenience of modern shopping centers, schools and churches with the charm and seclusion of a rural atmosphere. Although comfortably removed from urban traffic and congestion, Del Cerro is within easy reach of every metropolitan facility, and has been planned to

²¹⁶ "Margate Homes In Grand Opening," *The Tustin News* 2 August 1962.

²¹⁷ Del Cerro promotional brochure, 1962.

establish a new GOLD STANDARD of LIVING for you and your family in the happy years to come.²¹⁸

Multi-family residential development also accelerated in the 1960s, as there were still not enough single-family homes to meet the demand of the growing population. Apartment buildings and complexes of all sizes appeared across the city, and like the larger subdivisions, were sited to maximize convenience and modernity for residents. Most were located on or near major thoroughfares that acted as feeder streets to the highways, facilitating commutes all over Orange and Los Angeles Counties; the areas around Newport Avenue, McFadden Avenue, and Pasadena Avenue were developed almost exclusively with large multi-family residential complexes, popular with enlisted men at the LTA base. Some properties, like the exuberant Mid-Century Modern/Polynesian Ranch property The Trinidad (15501 Pasadena Avenue, 1963) and the Mid-Century Modern/Googie community buildings of Waterstone Gardens (14441 Red Hill Avenue, 1963) and Tustin Place (1722 Mitchell Avenue, 1965) boasted flamboyant architectural styles; others, like Broadmoor Park Homes (1205 E. 1st Street, 1963) emphasized shared outdoor green space and courtyards. One of the largest from this time was Tustin Acres (650 W. Main Street, extant), a massive garden apartment complex constructed in 1963-1964 in the heart of town.²¹⁹ This complex (now condominiums) featured low-scale, multi-unit residential blocks with common green space, walkways, and community amenities. Smaller, though still quite large, extant examples from the early to mid 1960s included Broadmoor Park Homes (1205 E. 1st Street, 1963), Palm Gardens (1132-1220 Bryant Avenue, 1963), The Bahamas (17121 McFadden Avenue/15712 Pasadena Avenue, 1964), and The Georgian (1152 E. 1st Street, 1965).

²¹⁸ Del Cerro promotional brochure, 1962.

²¹⁹ Display ad, *Tustin News* 9 April 1964; "Dignitaries To Inspect New \$2 Million Project," *Tustin News* 2 April 1964.

Southland Apartments Corporation Owner and Builder

Announces the Opening
of the **TRINIDAD** **APARTMENTS**

15501 PASADENA ST.
TUSTIN
Sat. and Sun.
April 20-21

You are cordially invited to inspect the most elegant, luxurious apartments in the Tustin area.

54 Deluxe Units
1 and 2 BEDROOM

Unique in their concept, the TRINIDAD APARTMENTS have so many unusual features that new heights of casual yet gracious living have been attained for apartment dwellers. For comfort and all around livability the latest in ultra-modern conveniences have been designed into a setting reminiscent of the beauty and serenity of the West Indies. Extensive landscaping and bonus features such as the complete recreation facility make the TRINIDAD one of the most desirable residential apartments in the State. You simply have to see it to appreciate the extent to which the builders have gone to provide the magic combination of luxury and economy living.

2 LARGE LAUNDRY ROOMS
Automatic washers
Automatic dryers

Every apartment features those luxurious appointments

- Large living and bedrooms
- Large built-in range and oven
- Built-in dishwashers
- Air-conditioning
- Garbage disposal
- Thermal and sound insulation
- Quality carpets and drapes
- Telephone jacks in all rooms
- Thermostatically controlled heat
- F M stereo music
- Formica counter tops
- Special decor lighting
- Closed garages
- Storage rooms

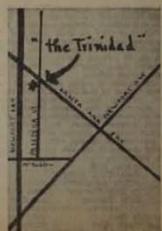
PLUS
YOUR OWN PRIVATE RECREATION AREA

- Heated pool completely fenced in
- Cabana
- F M music
- Shuffle board
- Ping Pong Tables
- Lounges and chairs
- Outside heat around pool
- Gas lights around pool
- Decorative tropical courtyard Setting
- Fire protection system

THE TRINIDAD
A COMMITMENT TO BALANCED HOUSING

Located in Pasadena St., in beautiful Tustin, Calif., easily reached at the focal point of San Diego, Riverside and Santa Ana freeways, affording an enviable access to both.



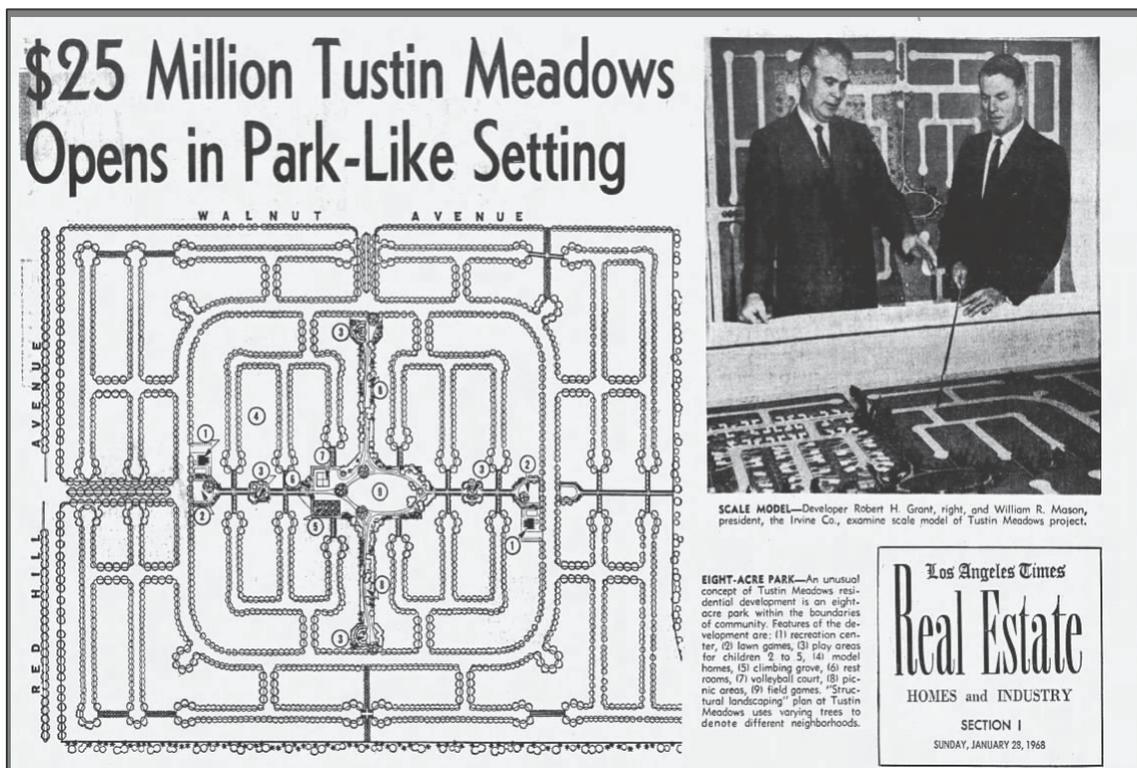


Display advertisement for The Trinidad Apartments (15501 Pasadena Ave). *Tustin News*, 18 April 1963.

Other large complexes began appearing in the late 1960s and continuing into the 1970s, as townhouses and condominiums joined existing apartment house property types to offer new options. One extant example from this time period is The Williamshire (15502 Williams Street, 1967), originally built as the Williamshire Apartments and converted to Williamshire Homes condominiums in 1974. This 14-building garden apartment complex included pools, a putting

green, and extensive shared outdoor space.²²⁰ These complexes shared many commonalities with new patterns of single-family development arising in the late 1960s and early 1970s under the strong influence of the Irvine Master Plan. The plan called for the development of residential “villages,” each with its own park, school, and shopping center but also linked with dedicated commercial areas and abundant open space. This new approach to planned development proved highly influential across Southern California, and the Irvine Company applied it to multiple developments outside of the University of California-focused Irvine proper. It opened at least two in Tustin; Tustin Meadows (1968) and Greenwood Village (1973).

With 900 one- and two-story houses, Tustin Meadows at Red Hill and Walnut Avenues was by far the largest Tustin subdivision to date, and the first real master-planned community. Its unusual City Beautiful-inspired design featured a central park (Centennial Park) for use by residents and the general public, accessible only on foot and encircled by a curvilinear feeder street providing access to residential streets that terminated in cul de sacs. Constructed by Robert H. Grant Developers Inc. of Anaheim, Tustin Meadows offered owners a choice of six floorplans and 15 exteriors designed by architect B.A. Berkus Associates, and even included allowances for front landscaping and sprinkler systems “to encourage immediate beautification efforts by new owners.”²²¹



Tustin Meadows opening announced in the *Los Angeles Times*, 28 January 1968.

Greenwood Village was developed in two pieces, Laurelwood and Peppertree, in 1973. Each piece was about 70 acres in size. Laurelwood, immediately north of Tustin Meadows, featured 278 townhomes as well as 246 standard “patio homes,” reflecting the need for more intensive

²²⁰ “Williamshire Homes Feature Recreation,” *Los Angeles Times* 9 November 1974.

²²¹ “\$25 Million Tustin Meadows Opens in Park-Like Setting,” *Los Angeles Times* 28 January 1968.

occupations during this time.²²² Peppertree, immediately east of Tustin Meadows, added 309 single-family houses; its builder Frank H. Ayres & Son offered four floorplans and 16 exteriors from which to choose.²²³ These 1960s-1970s subdivisions developed by the Irvine Company included large parks with recreational facilities, all of which were turned over to the City of Tustin for management.

After large annexations in 1976 and 1986, Tustin saw a great deal more residential development, but it reflected different patterns than that seen in the more immediate postwar period. Massive master-planned communities like Tustin Ranch characterized the city's residential growth from the late 1970s to the present, and mixed-use developments like Tustin Legacy (in progress as of this writing) look to reshape it in new and sustainable ways.

²²² "Information Center Open," *Los Angeles Times* 1 April 1973.

²²³ "10 Acre Park to Surround New Tustin Homes," *Los Angeles Times* 4 February 1973.

Evaluation Guidelines: Residential Development, 1946-1976

Buildings evaluated under this theme are significant for their association with Tustin's residential development between 1946 and 1976, encompassing the post-World War II population and development boom. Single-family and multi-family residences dating to this period are very abundant and there are multiple geographically unified groupings of them (potential historic districts). In Tustin, the strongest conveyance of historical significance for association with 1946-1976 residential development is through historic districts. Properties may also be significant for their association with individuals who played an important role in this period of Tustin's history. No residences from this time period are known to have been designated individually, and the City currently contains no designated historic districts dating to 1946-1976.

Resources from this period that may be significant as embodiments of an architectural style, type, period, or method of construction (under Criteria C/3/3,4)²²⁴ are evaluated using *Context 4.7, Architecture and Design, 1870-1976*; these include examples of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or examples of the notable work of a builder, designer, or architect.

Associated Property Types

- Single-Family Residences
- Multi-Family Residences
- Ancillary Buildings
- Subdivision Planning Features
- Designed Landscapes
- Historic Districts

Residential resources may include single-family residences; ancillary buildings and structures; features related directly to subdivision development, including entrance markers, street lamps, street trees, curbs, sidewalks, walls, pathways, and parks; designed landscapes; and geographically unified groupings of residential properties (historic districts).

Geographic Location(s)

Residential resources from this period are widely distributed across the entire city, excluding the newest annexations at the northeast and southeast edges of town.

Integrity Overview

²²⁴ The applicable criteria here and in the table below are ordered as national/state/local. See *Section 3* for a full discussion of National Register, California Register, and City of Tustin eligibility criteria.

A property that is significant must also retain certain aspects of integrity in order to express its historic significance. Determining which aspects are most important to a particular property type necessitates an understanding of its significance and essential physical characteristics. The rarity of a property type should also be considered when assessing integrity. As resources associated with this theme are abundant, the integrity of eligible properties should be quite high. A greater degree of alterations may not preclude a resource from being eligible, though a building must still retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance, using the guide below.

Criteria	Significance	Integrity Considerations	Registration Requirements
A/1/1	<p>An individual property eligible under this theme may be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of residential development in Tustin; and/or • As the site of a significant historic event from this period. 	<p>A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that comprised its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event or historical pattern.²²⁵ A residential property from this period should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey the important association with the city's development during this period. A property that has lost integrity of setting may still be eligible. A property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its original style and appearance in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, and fenestration pattern. A property is not eligible if it retains some basic features conveying form and massing, but has lost the majority of features that characterized its appearance during its historical period.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and • Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context.
A/1/1	<p>A historic district eligible under this theme may be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of residential development in Tustin. 	<p>In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components within the district boundary must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Integrity of design, setting, and feeling must be strongly present in the district overall, and it should convey a strong sense of time and place.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a historic district should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the majority of the contributors dating to the period of significance.

²²⁵ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criterion for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1990).

		A contributing building must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. In general, minor or reversible alterations or in-kind replacement of original features and finishes are acceptable within historic districts. Significant alterations that change the massing, form, roofline, or fenestration patterns of an individual building, alter the original design intent, or that are not reversible may result in non-contributing status for an individual building. In order for a historic district to retain integrity, the majority of its component parts should contribute to its historic significance.	
B/2/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For its association with a person (or persons) significant in the history of Tustin. 	A property that is significant for its association with a significant person should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey its historic association with a significant individual. A property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features dating to the period during which it was associated with a significant individual.	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context, and Be directly associated with the notable person's productive period – the time during which she or he attained significance.

Theme: Commercial Development, 1946-1980

Tustin's commercial development exploded along with residential development after World War II, as the building moratorium lifted and the burgeoning economy led to more opportunities for business. It was relatively slow to start, with some new businesses emerging both in the original townsite and along major roads in the late 1940s and early 1950s, but no massive alterations in existing development patterns. That changed after the 1955 completion of the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) and the completion of more on- and off-ramps through the 1950s and 1960s. Through-traffic that had once traveled through the center of Tustin on Highway 101 now bypassed it to the west on I-5. This had a major impact on the businesses which had depended on the old highway traffic, leaving them isolated from potential customers. Some relocated, joining new businesses along the major feeder streets that linked residential subdivisions to the freeway, including 1st Street, Irvine Boulevard, Newport Avenue, and Red Hill Avenue. Others stayed downtown and opted to update the appearance of their older buildings with new storefronts, cladding, and display windows. Brewster's Auto Camp, sold to a new owner before I-5 was even completed, was converted into a business complex. Some of the demolished buildings in the old townsite have not been replaced, leaving vacant lots.



Junction of Interstate 5 and 55 soon after completion. Tustin Area Historical Society.

Unlike the closely abutting, pedestrian-oriented buildings on Main Street and D Street (El Camino Real), the postwar commercial buildings on feeder streets were more akin to the auto-oriented businesses that once dominated Highway 101 in Tustin: larger, stand-alone buildings with prominent signage to attract the attention of passing drivers and large parking lots for convenient access. Drive-through and drive-up restaurants, food stands, and markets became common – examples like the Thrifty Dairy at 1062 Irvine Boulevard (1960, extant) allowed customers to pick up groceries without even having to park.



17th Street at Yorba Avenue, circa 1965. Orange County Archives.

Most of the new commercial buildings were built in a simple commercial vernacular idiom, with the traditional emphasis on storefronts as in older types though often with larger display windows, and sometimes with new entry types incorporating outdoor spaces like courtyards and patios. Many exhibited restrained Late Moderne or Mid-Century Modern elements, while some featured more exuberant Mid-Century Modern styles, including Googie; this style's expressive rooflines, use of dramatic structural elements as ornamentation, and whimsical signage was a hallmark of the postwar era that never failed to catch the eye. Some of the city's new commercial properties were even more ambitious in terms of their architecture, like the New Formalist, five-building Meredith Financial Center at 17852 17th Street (1974, extant) and the Mid-Century Modern office building at 17592 Irvine Boulevard (1972, extant).



Googie-style drive-thru dairy (1062 Irvine Boulevard, 1960). ARG, 2021.

Commercial construction accelerated to keep pace with booming residential construction in the 1960s. The land value of Tustin's once-agricultural parcels rose precipitously, and commercial uses were valued even more highly than residential.²²⁶ Many more buildings were added to the major commercial corridors, particularly along Newport Avenue, 1st Street, Irvine Boulevard, and 17th Street. They included office buildings, retail strips, service stations, restaurants, and other commercial property types on a wide variety of scales. One notable extant example which illustrates the centrality of automobile-oriented commerce is the Googie-style Alta Dena Dairy at 1062 Irvine Boulevard (1960) – the drive-thru market made it easy for commuters to stop in on their way home from work. Large, automobile-oriented shopping centers with dedicated integral parking lots emerged at nearly every major intersection. One of the first was Claude T. Gilbreath's Jamestown Village (462-566 El Camino Real, extant), constructed within Old Town Tustin itself in two stages starting in 1960 and ending in 1962. Gilbreath constructed this shopping center with a large central surface parking lot that retained a historic oak tree – he built the Little Tree Church around it (the oak died in 2000). Newspaper accounts suggest he was very active in the construction process, and likely designed the complex as well.²²⁷ Jamestown Village is notable for its eclectic architecture incorporating Storybook and Pueblo Revival elements.

²²⁶ "Tustin Scrapbook", 22.

²²⁷ E.g., Bill Moses, "Tustin Turn-Ups," *Tustin News* October 13, 1960.



Jamestown Village and the Little Tree Church (462-566 El Camino Real, 1962). ARG, 2021.

Larwin Square, opened in 1961 at the southwest corner of Newport Avenue and 1st Street, was the largest planned shopping center in the greater Tustin area. Its developers touted it as “a major contribution to the further development of the rapidly growing Tustin area” which “fills the community’s needs for a complete, one-stop shopping center.”²²⁸ In 1965 alone, at least three major shopping centers were completed: Ralph’s at 17th near Yorba (now Tustin’s French Quarter), Tustin Heights Center on Irvine Boulevard near Newport Avenue (to which the Ralph’s later relocated), and the complex at the southeast corner of Newport and Walnut Avenues, originally anchored by the Pantry Market. All of these shopping centers are extant, although all except Jamestown Village have experienced extensive alterations which have obscured their original architectural character.²²⁹

By the early 1970s, shopping centers were the dominant commercial property type in Tustin. Smaller “strip mall” properties with fewer storefronts began joining the large centers like Larwin Square, filling in smaller parcels along major thoroughfares and featuring front surface parking for drivers’ convenience. This property type typically reflected a simple commercial vernacular

²²⁸ “Tustin Civic Leaders Join Rites for Larwin Square Groundbreaking,” *Tustin News* 12 January 1961.

²²⁹ Jordan 2007, 95.

idiom punctuated by wall-mounted signage. Mirroring a pattern seen throughout Southern California, by the 1980s strip malls were ubiquitous in Tustin.

Evaluation Guidelines: Commercial Development, 1946-1976

Buildings evaluated under this theme are significant for their association with Tustin's commercial development between 1946 and 1976, encompassing the post-World War II population and development boom. They may also be significant for their association with individuals who played an important role in this period of Tustin's history. Commercial properties dating to this period are relatively abundant in Tustin, though many of those that remain have been altered over time and have lost some or all of their historic character. No commercial properties from this time period are known to have been designated individually, and the City currently contains no designated historic districts dating to 1946-1976.

Resources from this period that may be significant as embodiments of an architectural style, type, period, or method of construction (under Criteria C/3/3,4)²³⁰ are evaluated using *Context 4.7, Architecture and Design, 1870-1976*; these include examples of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or examples of the notable work of a builder, designer, or architect.

Associated Property Types

- Retail/Office Buildings
- Food Service Buildings (including drive-up/drive-thru/walk-up)
- Shopping Centers
- Mixed-Use Buildings
- Bank Buildings
- Auto-Related Buildings
- Signs
- Historic Districts

Commercial resources may include retail and/or office buildings; food service buildings including drive-up, drive-thru, and walk-up variants; shopping centers; two and three-story mixed-use buildings; bank buildings; auto-related buildings like repair shops, service stations, and garages; signs; and geographically unified groupings of commercial properties (historic districts).

Geographic Location(s)

²³⁰ The applicable criteria here and in the table below are ordered as national/state/local. See *Section 3* for a full discussion of National Register, California Register, and City of Tustin eligibility criteria.

Commercial resources from this period are widely distributed across the entire city but are largely concentrated on major thoroughfares, near freeway entrances and exits, and near and adjacent to the Cultural Resources District.

Integrity Overview

A property that is significant must also retain certain aspects of integrity in order to express its historic significance. Determining which aspects are most important to a particular property type necessitates an understanding of its significance and essential physical characteristics. The rarity of a property type should also be considered when assessing integrity. As resources associated with this theme are abundant, the integrity of eligible properties should be quite high. A greater degree of alterations may not preclude a resource from being eligible, though a building must still retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance, using the guide below.

Criteria	Significance	Integrity Considerations	Registration Requirements
A/1/1	<p>An individual property eligible under this theme may be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of commercial development in Tustin during this period; and/or • As the site of a significant historic event from this period. 	<p>A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that comprised its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event or historical pattern.²³¹ A commercial property from this period should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey the important association with the city’s development during this period. A property that has lost integrity of setting may still be eligible. A property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its original style and appearance in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, and fenestration pattern.</p> <p>Minor alterations – such as door replacement, re-roofing, or compatible re-stuccoing – should not, in</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and • Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context.

²³¹ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criterion for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1990).

		<p>and of themselves, render a resource ineligible. However, the cumulative impact of multiple minor alterations may compromise a resource’s overall integrity.</p> <p>More substantive alterations that are difficult to reverse – such as extensive storefront modifications that obscure the original form and program of the building, modification of original fenestration patterns, the removal of historic finishes or features – compromise a resource’s integrity and are likely to render it ineligible.</p>	
A/1/1	<p>A historic district eligible under this theme may be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of commercial development in Tustin. 	<p>In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components within the district boundary must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Integrity of design, setting, and feeling must be strongly present in the district overall, and it should convey a strong sense of time and place.</p> <p>A contributing building must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. In general, minor or reversible alterations or in-kind replacement of original features and finishes are acceptable within historic districts. Significant alterations that change the massing, form, roofline, or fenestration patterns of an individual building, alter the original design intent, or that are not reversible may result in non-contributing status for an individual building. In order for a historic district to retain integrity, the majority of its component parts should contribute to its historic significance.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a historic district should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the majority of the contributors dating to the period of significance.

<p>B/2/2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with a person (or persons) significant in the history of Tustin. 	<p>A property that is significant for its association with a significant person should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey its historic association with a significant individual. A property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features dating to the period during which it was associated with a significant individual.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and • Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context, and • Be directly associated with the notable person’s productive period – the time during which she or he attained significance.
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Theme: Institutional Development, 1946-1976

Tustin's institutional development kept pace with its residential and commercial development during the postwar period, as the economic boom ensured the county, the city, and local groups had funding for a number of different projects. Institutional growth was very closely tied to residential growth. The subdivisions of the 1950s and (especially) the 1960s featured city-approved features like wide paved streets, concrete sidewalks, and streetlamps. They incorporated public parks that were handed over to the city for management, and eventually provided connections to crucial services like water, sewer, electricity, gas, and telephone. Developers and the school district relied on each other to determine the locations of future schools, and church congregations erected new buildings in areas that held, or would soon hold, ample numbers of potential members. Property owners in new subdivisions outside the existing city petitioned for annexation, which Tustin approved as it was key to controlling the direction and character of the future city, and provided funding through property taxes. Tustin annexed thousands of acres of residential subdivisions during the 1950s and 1960s, and institutional properties and infrastructural improvements raced to keep up.

Much of the institutional work occurring during this time was focused on automobile transportation. The 1955 completion of the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) and the 1963 completion of the Newport Freeway (State Route 55, now known as the Costa Mesa Freeway) connected Tustin to larger regional systems, especially as more off-ramps were added. By the end of the 1970s, between off-ramp construction and city expansion through annexations, Tustin had 15 off-ramps.²³² The city widened some major streets in the 1950s and 1960s and made constant improvements to the local road system as traffic increased along with the population.

City and county officials worked to make infrastructure improvements during the fast-paced 1950s and early 1960s. As early as 1949, the area's water supply was being depleted faster than it was being replenished by the Orange County Water District, so another organization, the Orange County Municipal Water District, was formed in 1951 to purchase and import more water.²³³ The Tustin Water Works, in operation since 1887, incorporated in 1954 and expanded its pumping and piping capabilities so it could provide both irrigation and domestic drinking water.²³⁴ Most of the subdivisions established in and north of Tustin in the early 1950s did not have sewer service, as the city did not yet have a comprehensive sewer system. The placement of so many new septic tanks and cesspools finally proved the impetus for city and county government to consider constructing a full sewer system. This work was ostensibly guided by a 1953 county sewer ordinance requiring sewer lines in new tracts, though county supervisors made many exceptions for developers arguing sewer line installation was too difficult.²³⁵ Tustin-

²³² Jordan 2007, 96.

²³³ Ibid., 100-101.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ "Local Subdivision Gets 'Go Ahead' As Supervisors Amend Sewer Ordinance," *Tustin News* 6 August 1954.

area voters within Orange County Sanitation District No. 7 also voted down multiple bond issue for financing sewer lines during the 1950s and 1960s, so annexation became key – voters in some annexation areas were in favor of joining Tustin (or any other city) purely to receive municipal sewer services.

By 1965, the City had gotten a handle on the massive infrastructural improvements its postwar development demanded. It began requiring underground utilities in all new subdivisions, to be installed at the developer’s cost; this was in response to the increasingly dense system of aboveground electrical and telephone wires.²³⁶ Orange County followed suit in 1966. The City and county cooperatively financed other infrastructure projects throughout the 1960s, including expansion and improvement of the storm drain system to alleviate seasonal flooding.²³⁷ This proved a literal lifesaver in winter 1969, when the deadly floods of 1938 were echoed by massive flooding along Santiago Creek and other feeders of the Santa Ana River. It killed a number of people in Orange County – some gathered in a fire station in Silverado - and destroyed hundreds of homes.²³⁸ Tustin saw some property damage, but was protected from catastrophe by its flood control system.²³⁹

Growth of Tustin’s institutions during the 1950s and 1960s went far beyond these municipal and county infrastructure improvements. The growing population of school-age children necessitated new schools, and from 1950 to 1970, the school district constructed an average of one per year.²⁴⁰ In 1951, the district also constructed a new administration center and community auditorium in a distinctive PWA Moderne/Spanish Colonial Revival style (300 S. C Street, extant). As it had historically, the district covered an area far beyond Tustin proper, including unincorporated North Tustin and parts of Santa Ana and Irvine; these areas saw an explosion of residential development just as Tustin did. In 1955, the district adopted a master plan to guide siting and construction of new schools, seeking out 10-acre sites in the areas projected to soon gain subdivisions and increase in population density.²⁴¹ This forward-looking approach became a self-fulfilling prophecy, as developers of new subdivisions increasingly sited them where they knew a new school was planned. The school district conserved money and time by reusing architectural plans, resulting in a number of identical and nearly identical Tustin schools. In the early 1960s, many of the schools were redesigned under the new “open classroom” concept in which several classes of students would meet in a common open area between classrooms.²⁴² In 1963, Foothill High School joined Tustin High School and the numerous new elementary and middle schools, and in 1966, the 1922 Tustin High School building was demolished and replaced.

²³⁶ “Underground Utilities Must for Subdivisions,” *Tustin News* 18 February 1965; “Underground Utilities Ordinance Passed Against Strong Protest,” *Tustin News* 21 July 1966.

²³⁷ “Storm Drain Construction,” *The Tustin News* 26 June 1969.

²³⁸ *Los Angeles Times* articles, January-March 1969.

²³⁹ Jordan 2007, 109-110.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 97; 118-119.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 97.

²⁴² *Ibid.*



Tustin Unified School District Headquarters (300 S. C Street, 1951). ARG, 2021.

Many other institutions grew during this time. After decades of inhabiting space in other buildings, the Tustin Branch Library received its first dedicated building in 1958, on Newport Avenue at Andrews Street; enlarged in 1963, the building was abandoned in 1976 when the library moved to its present civic center location. The 1958 library is still in use by other businesses but has been altered beyond recognition, and the 1976 library building was completely demolished and rebuilt in 2009.²⁴³ The Tustin Civic Center itself was completed in 1974 but was almost completely demolished and rebuilt in 1993. This facility has housed City Hall and other municipal government functions since its construction and continues to serve as the heart of city government. Tustin also received a new post office in 1962, at 340 E. 1st Street (extant).²⁴⁴ In a true sign of the city's growth, the volunteer fire department became a paid fire department in 1963; in 1978, Tustin contracted its fire services to the Orange County Fire Authority.²⁴⁵ The Tustin Area Woman's Club was founded in 1957 and had 500 members by 1963. Though without a purpose-built headquarters, it has been a prominent service and philanthropic club ever since and had great influence on the character of Tustin during its postwar years. In 1975, Carol Jordan, Mary Etzold and Vivien Owned established the Tustin Area Museum to help document and preserve the city's heritage.²⁴⁶ The museum gained its parent organization, the Tustin Area Historical Society, in 1976.

Tustin gained dozens of religious institutions in the postwar period, many in expressive Mid-Century Modern styles that remain extant to mark the rapid institutional development of the period. They include Saddleback Chapel (1963, 220 E. Main Street), a new edifice for the St.

²⁴³ Lovret 2011, 43; Jordan 2007, 111.

²⁴⁴ Lovret 2011, 28.

²⁴⁵ Juanita Lovret, "Volunteers Manned the Fire Station Till 1963," reprinted by the Tustin Area Historical Society courtesy of the *Tustin News*, accessed June 2020, <http://www.tustinhistory.com/articles/fire-station.htm>.

²⁴⁶ Jordan 2007, 106-107.

Paul's Episcopal congregation established in 1881 (1964, 1221 Wass Street), and St. Cecilia (1964, 1301 Sycamore Avenue). Perhaps the most spectacular was the First Baptist Church (now Grace Harbor Church, 12881 Newport Avenue). Designed by architects Renfro & George of Dana Point, the church features a hyperbolic paraboloid roof claimed to be the first application of that Goochie-inspired type to any church anywhere.²⁴⁷



Scale model of the First Baptist Church (12881 Newport Avenue). *Tustin News* 27 September 1956.

Many of Tustin's existing municipal parks were established in the later postwar period. Some were built and managed by the city from the start, funded largely by a 1971 bond issue approved by voters – at least four municipal parks were developed at this time, including Peppertree Park in 1972 and Pine Tree Park in 1973.²⁴⁸ While Pine Tree Park was developed from existing orange groves, the site of Peppertree Park had been an open recreational area with a baseball field since at least the 1920s, associated with Tustin Grammar School to the south – before then, this northern portion of the “school block” had served as undeveloped play

²⁴⁷ “Church Agrees on Hyperbolic Paraboloid,” *The Tustin News* 7 September 1956; “Nearing Completion,” *Tustin News* 15 January 1959.

²⁴⁸ “City Park Bond Budget Bared by Rec Director,” *The Tustin News* 27 January 1972; “Park Dedication, Little League Opener Set for Tustin Saturday,” *The Tustin News* 27 April 1972; “Pine Tree Park Dedication Set,” *The Tustin News* 13 December 1973.

space for students for decades.²⁴⁹ Other parks were built as part of the large residential subdivisions developed in the 1960s. All of the subdivisions developed by the Irvine Company included large parks with recreational facilities, all of which were turned over to the City of Tustin for management.

Perhaps the most visible and influential institution of Tustin, the LTA base/MCAS, was briefly decommissioned by the Navy in 1949 but recommissioned by the Marines in 1951 for use during the Korean War. It remained an active base employing thousands of people for decades and was primarily used for helicopter operations support services and training. The base was annexed by the City of Tustin in 1976 and ended operations in 1999; it is currently being redeveloped as the Tustin Legacy mixed-use project.



Marine Corps Air Station, circa 1957. Orange County Archives.

²⁴⁹ Orange County historic aerial photographs 1931-1990, accessed March 2021, <https://www.ocgis.com/ocpw/historicalimagery/index.html>.

Evaluation Guidelines: Institutional Development, 1946-1976

Buildings evaluated under this theme are significant for their association with Tustin's institutional development between 1946 and 1976, encompassing the post-World War II population and development boom. They may also be significant for their association with individuals who played an important role in this period of Tustin's history. Institutional properties dating to this period are relatively abundant in Tustin, though some of those that remain have been altered over time and have lost some or all of their historic character. No institutional properties from this time period are known to have been designated individually, and the City currently contains no designated historic districts dating to 1946-1976.

Resources from this period that may be significant as embodiments of an architectural style, type, period, or method of construction (under Criteria C/3/3,4)²⁵⁰ are evaluated using *Context 4.7, Architecture and Design, 1870-1976*; these include examples of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or examples of the notable work of a builder, designer, or architect.

Associated Property Types

- School Buildings and Campuses
- Religious Buildings and Campuses
- Club/Organization Buildings
- Civic and Infrastructure Improvements
- Municipal and County Parks
- Designed Institutional Landscapes
- Historic Districts

Institutional resources may include school buildings and campuses; religious buildings and campuses; buildings seeing long-term use by fraternal, social, or interest-based organizations; buildings and features related to utilities (electricity, telephone, gas, municipal water, etc.); civic and infrastructure improvements of many types, including medians and streetscapes; municipal and county parks; designed landscapes related to institutions; and geographically unified groupings of institutional properties (historic districts).

Geographic Location(s)

Institutional resources from this period are widely distributed across the entire city.

²⁵⁰ The applicable criteria here and in the table below are ordered as national/state/local. See *Section 3* for a full discussion of National Register, California Register, and City of Tustin eligibility criteria.

Integrity Overview

A property that is significant must also retain certain aspects of integrity in order to express its historic significance. Determining which aspects are most important to a particular property type necessitates an understanding of its significance and essential physical characteristics. The rarity of a property type should also be considered when assessing integrity. As resources associated with this theme are relatively abundant, the integrity of eligible properties should be high. A greater degree of alterations may not preclude a resource from being eligible, though a building must still retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance, using the guide below.

Criteria	Significance	Integrity Considerations	Registration Requirements
A/1/1	<p>An individual property eligible under this theme may be significant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of institutional development in Tustin during this period; and/or • As the site of a significant historic event from this period. 	<p>A property that is significant for its historic association is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that comprised its character or appearance during the period of its association with the important event or historical pattern.²⁵¹ An institutional property from this period should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey the important association with the city's development during this period. A property that has lost integrity of setting may still be eligible. An institutional property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its original style and appearance in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, and fenestration pattern. A property is not eligible if it retains some basic features conveying form and massing, but has lost the majority of features that characterized its appearance during its historical period.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and • Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context.
A/1/1	<p>A historic district eligible under this theme may be significant:</p>	<p>In order for a historic district to be eligible for designation, the majority of the components within the district boundary must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Integrity of</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a historic district should, at a minimum:</p>

²⁵¹ National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criterion for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1990).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with patterns of institutional development in Tustin. 	<p>design, setting, and feeling must be strongly present in the district overall, and it should convey a strong sense of time and place.</p> <p>A contributing building must retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association to adequately convey the significance of the historic district. In general, minor or reversible alterations or in-kind replacement of original features and finishes are acceptable within historic districts. Significant alterations that change the massing, form, roofline, or fenestration patterns of an individual building, alter the original design intent, or that are not reversible may result in non-contributing status for an individual building. In order for a historic district to retain integrity, the majority of its component parts should contribute to its historic significance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the majority of the contributors dating to the period of significance.
B/2/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For its association with a person (or persons) significant in the history of Tustin. 	<p>A property that is significant for its association with a significant person should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey its historic association with a significant individual. A property that has lost some historic materials or details may still be eligible if it retains the majority of the features dating to the period during which it was associated with a significant individual.</p>	<p>To be eligible under this theme, a resource should, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to the period of significance (1946-1976), and • Retain the essential aspects of integrity, and • Retain enough of its essential physical features to sufficiently convey its association with the historic context, and • Be directly associated with the notable person's productive period – the time during which she or he attained significance.