

Project Objectives

The purpose of this Selective Reconnaissance Level survey was to document all of the principal structures in the Sugar House¹ Business District (SHBD) in Salt Lake City, to update the information files in the statewide database of information on cultural resources in Utah² created and maintained by the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to provide recommendations for use by Salt Lake City in planning/preservation efforts within the surveyed area.

All properties surveyed were evaluated to determine their current eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, their current physical condition and their contributing or noncontributing status. This documentation provides a written and photographic record of the historic resources that may be demolished or altered in the future as well as to promote preservation of the buildings and resources documented. Information from the survey will be used to inform the planning process for future preservation and zoning efforts for the area.

Survey Boundaries

The boundaries of the Sugar House Business District area to be surveyed were determined by the Salt Lake City Planning Department and are shown on the map, Appendix A. The area surveyed covers the SHBD area as well as a number of properties that were omitted from previous surrounding reconnaissance level surveys. The buildings located within the current CSHBD -1 or 2 zoning are covered in this report. Structures outside of the boundaries of the CSHBD-1 or 2 zoning covered in this survey are noted in Appendix G. The City estimated that the area included 85 properties to be surveyed although the actual number of resources surveyed was 159.

Outline History of the Sugar House Business District

The following outline history of the Sugar House Business District is derived from sources included in the Bibliography and the Sugar House Business District, Multiple Property Submission, prepared in 2002. Additional information was taken from a Reconnaissance Level Survey of the West Sugar House Residential Neighborhoods conducted in 2004.

Early Settlement and Industry: 1848-1909

The development of the area now the Sugar House Business District began as an industrial and milling center along Parley's Creek four and a half miles southeast of the downtown area of Salt Lake City and located on land planned for agricultural use in the Big Field Survey. The Mormon³ pioneers entered the Salt Lake valley in 1847 and the following year the Big Field Survey divided the land around the initial Salt Lake City settlement into five and ten acre plots to be used for farming for the inhabitants of the city.⁴ The major streets in the survey area, 2100 South, 900 East, 1100 East and 1300 East, marked the boundaries of the blocks in the survey. The eponymous sugar mill was built in 1852 at what is now the southeast corner of 1100 East and 2100 South in

¹ The name of the area is also spelled Sugarhouse.

² The Utah Historic Sites Database.

³ LDS or Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

⁴ The area north of 2100 South was known as Five-Acre Plat A and the area south was the Ten-Acre Plat.

Salt Lake City. The mill produced molasses, not the granulated white sugar desired, and was soon changed over to other uses: variously a paper mill, a flooring mill, a nail factory, a bucket factory, a stable, a machine shop for the Utah Central Railroad, and offices for the Bamberger Coal Company.⁵

Transportation connections were an important element in the early commercial growth of the Sugar House business district. Streetcars, railways, a canal, and Parley's Creek passed through the area. By 1898 two sets of tracks connected Sugar House with Salt Lake City; one along 900 East continuing south, and another along 1100 East turning east on 2100 South towards the state prison at 1500 East and 2100 South. Residential development followed the streetcar tracks, particularly in the southeast section of the city in the 1890s and the first decades of the 20th century. Streetcar access made it possible to live in outlying areas like the bungalow neighborhoods of Sugar House or Highland Park to the south and get rapidly to and from work in downtown Salt Lake City. The Salt Lake and Eastern Railroad, built 1888-1890, connected Sugar House with Park City to the east via Parley's Canyon.

The Jordan and Salt Lake City Canal passes through Sugar House and crosses Parley's Creek at the western end of the Plaza at 1100 East and 2100 South. It was built in 1864 to transport granite blocks from Little Cottonwood Canyon to the Salt Lake Temple. Both water features, the creek and the canal, are below ground in conduit for most of their route in Sugar House today, although Parley's Creek is visible in Hidden Hollow⁶ and again in a section on the west side of 900 East. The route of the canal can still be seen in the path of McClelland Avenue.

The earliest known commercial business in Sugar House was a general merchandise store established in 1866, the Sugar House Co-operative store.⁷ A number of retail businesses grew in the SHBD area at the end of this era. The territorial prison was established in the 1880s to the east of the business district in what is now Sugar House Park at 1450 East and 2100 South. Streetcar lines connected the prison to downtown Salt Lake City.

A City Within A City, Urban Growth: 1910-1960

By the turn of the century the Sugar House area had changed from its initial industrial and agricultural use to an expanding residential section. The need for lumber, building supplies, services and furniture for the new houses in the southeastern section of Salt Lake City was met by retail businesses located nearby in Sugar House. At the urging of its organized merchants, Sugar House was annexed by Salt Lake City in 1910. Civic improvements and beautification followed. In 1913-4 the plaza was built at the west side of the intersection of 1100 East and 2100 South, sewer and gas lines were installed, 1100 East and 2100 South were paved, and "unsightly" buildings were torn down.⁸ In the 1920s, zoning ordinances confined the business district to a strip along the two major intersecting streets, 2100 South and 1100 East. There was one mile of sidewalk in the Sugar House business area by 1921.⁹ In 1928, plans were being made for a monument on the plaza, the old Sugar House mill was torn down and a new building for the Sprague Branch of the Salt Lake City Public Library was constructed on the western edge of what was then Sugar House Park (2131 S. Highland Drive).¹⁰ The Sugar House Monument was built in 1930 on the plaza.

⁵ *Deseret News*, April 21, 1964, 6A.

⁶ Hidden Hollow is a mid-block public park on the block bounded by 2100 South, 1300 East, 1100 East and Wilmington Avenue.

⁷ *Deseret News*, November 27, 1920, 4, IV.

⁸ *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 6, 1914.

⁹ *Sugar House Times*, April 2, 1921, 4.

¹⁰ After the prison was demolished in the early 1950s, the surrounding area became Sugar House Park.

Transportation connections, increasingly tied to the automobile, continued to influence the Sugar House commercial area. The Utah section of the nation-spanning Lincoln Highway was constructed in 1918-20. It entered Salt Lake from Kimball Junction through Parley's Canyon and went through the SHBD on 2100 South to State Street and then north to Salt Lake City. This opened 2100 South to interstate auto traffic and spurred the development of businesses that provided goods and services for auto-related travel such as gas stations, auto dealers, repair shops, restaurants, car dealers, and hotels. The highway, later known as interstate U.S. 40, was a major east-west road across the United States and routed traffic through the SHBD. The streetcar route contributed to business success along 1100 East.

Sugar House was a regional shopping area and its merchants pressed for continued improvements. Its major street, 2100 South, was widened in 1939 to accommodate automobile traffic. The Sugar House merchants agitated for removal of the streetcar and railroad tracks and they were gone in the 1940s. Following the end of World War II, another round of modernization took place. Streetlights were installed and the merchants began retail promotions like "Sugar Days" and the "Miss Sugar House" contest. The nearby state prison was moved to Bluffdale in 1951 and the land of the former prison site was given to Salt Lake City and county for development as Sugar House Park. Sugar House was the only business center competing with the downtown area and prided itself on the fact its business district had no parking meters.

In 1950 the business area provided the full spectrum of retail shops and services for the surrounding residential community. There were two movie theatres, restaurants, bars, cleaners and laundries, a roller rink, an ice-skating rink, and a variety of retail shops and services. Most were locally owned small businesses along 2100 South and 1100 East/Highland Drive. The lumber/hardware and furniture center continued with Granite Furniture, Hyland Lumber, Granite Planing Mill, Sugar House Lumber, and the Sugarhouse planing mill on 2032 10th East.

The first automobile-oriented shopping destination in the area was the Sugarhouse Center in 1954. It was located on Simpson Avenue to the south and east of the center of the existing business district between 1300 East and Highland Drive. The buildings of the new center were grouped together, surrounded by open space for parking.

Decline and Renewal, 1961-2007

Traffic patterns changed abruptly when, in 1961 and 1962, the Interstate 80 freeway was constructed to the south of the SHBD at approximately 2400 South. The major streets through the SHBD, 2100 South and 1100 East/Highland Drive, were no longer the main traffic thoroughfares and were replaced by I-80 and 1300 East, accessible from the I-80 exit. Automobile traffic now bypassed the historic commercial district which subsequently experienced an economic slump. A decline in the surrounding neighborhoods followed in the 1960s and 1970s.¹¹

The economic center of the SHBD shifted from the historic intersection of 2100 South and 1100 East/Highland Drive to the south and east, closer to the 1300 East exits on Interstate 80. Later the historic southeast corner that was the site of the original mill was developed into a shopping center for mostly national chain stores and restaurants, the Sugar House Commons in 1998. These developments reinvigorated the area which led to acute development pressures on the remaining historic resources that primarily housed local small retail businesses.

¹¹ Broschinsky, p. 6.

Fieldwork Methodology

The survey was conducted in accordance with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Standard Operating Procedures for Reconnaissance Level Surveys, as revised September 2005. Digital photography was used and photographs were taken using a digital 35mm camera. CDs containing digital images of the principal structures in files by street were provided to both the city and the SHPO. The numbered streets come first, each digit in numeric order, then the alphabetical street names. Both the city and the SHPO received printed copies of the images on the Digital Contact Sheets, (Appendix C) with up to twelve images to a sheet in landscape mode, in color on soft-gloss professional photo paper, and accompanying Architectural Survey Data sheets (Appendix D).

A Standard Reconnaissance Level Survey photographs, maps, and documents every principal building encountered in the survey area. Each site was photographed and recorded on the survey map. The survey map was prepared based on an aerial map of the Sugarhouse Business District with lot lines and addresses marked, as provided by the Salt Lake City Planning Department. Information on the estimated construction date, exterior building materials, height, architectural style and type, and use of the property was recorded on the survey forms. The number and eligibility of existing outbuildings (contributing or noncontributing) was also recorded when visible. Current names were included as appropriate for commercial and public buildings. Estimated building construction dates were based on dates noted in the tax records at the Salt Lake County website (www.slpropertyinfo.org) as well as on building permit records available at the Salt Lake City Planning offices (Alchemy).

All buildings surveyed were evaluated using criteria developed by the SHPO to indicate age and integrity and assigned a value of A, B, C, or D. A building receiving an "A" evaluation must be more than fifty years old, retain its historic integrity and also possibly be considered as either historically or architecturally significant. Buildings with a "B" designation retain most of their historic integrity but have some modifications that prevent an "A" evaluation. "B" buildings may be considered for the National Register of Historic Places as part of a multiple property submission or a historic district. They may not have significance on their own but are eligible within a district and can have a very high degree of integrity. Buildings with a "C" designation have lost their architectural integrity as a result of subsequent modifications. A "C" building may not be individually eligible for the National Register but may have important local historical value and be listed on a city register. A, B, and C buildings were constructed during the historic period. A and B buildings are eligible as contributing buildings in a historic district. The National Park Service criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (1966) state that a property must be at least fifty years old, with some exceptions, to be included. For purposes of the survey, buildings constructed in 1961 or earlier are considered within the historic period. Buildings constructed in 1962 or later are designated with a "D" evaluation on the survey forms and on the map as "Out of Period."

A copy of previously entered data for the Salt Lake City database in Microsoft Access data format was provided to the consultant by the SHPO at the beginning of the study. The majority of properties previously entered in the database were because of Historic Site Forms generated during the APS surveys in the early 1980s, other Intensive Level Survey (ILS) work, or because the properties were nominated to the National Register individually or as part of the Multiple Property Submission on the Sugar House Business District. Any existing records were updated and new entries input as each property was examined during the 2007 survey.

National Register Properties within the Survey Area

The following properties within the survey area were nominated to the National Register individually prior to this survey or as part of the Sugar House Business District Multiple Property Submission in 2002:¹²

Sugar House Postal Station, 2155 S. Highland Drive
Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company Garage, 1075 E. Hollywood Avenue
Irving Junior High School, 1179 East 2100 South
Utah State Liquor Agency #22, 1983 S. 1000 East
Crown Cleaning and Dyeing Company, 1987 S. 1100 East
Richardson- Bower Building, 1019 E. 2100 South
Sugar House Monument, 1100 E. 2100 South
Redman Van & Storage Building, 1240 E. 2100 South
Sprague Branch Salt Lake City Library, 2131 S. Highland Drive
Petty Motor Company Annex at 2030 S. 900 East (Not listed, non-historic alterations)
Granite LDS Stake Tabernacle and Lincoln Ward, 2006 S. 900 East (Not listed, owner objection)
Granite Lumber Company Building, 1080 E. 2100 South (Not listed, owner objection)

The Petty Motor Company Annex at 2030 S. 900 East was nominated but not listed because of non-historic alterations. The Granite LDS Stake Tabernacle and the Granite Lumber Company Building were not listed because of owner objections.

The Utah State Liquor Agency #22, the Irving Junior High School, and the Redman Van & Storage Building were determined in 2007 to no longer retain their historic integrity because of non-historic alterations and have received "C" evaluations in the survey. The Redman Van & Storage Building was removed (delisted) from the National Register in February of 2007.

Summary of Results

General Findings

The survey documented one hundred forty-one primary structures or resources during the Reconnaissance Level Survey. Of the primary resources, thirty (twenty-one percent) contribute to the historic character of the Sugar House Business District. Of this total, three (two percent) are eligible/significant and twenty-seven (nineteen percent) are eligible/contributing. The remaining thirty-eight (twenty-seven percent) historic-era resources are noncontributing. Out-of-period structures (built in 1961 or after) constitute fifty-two percent (or seventy-three). The statistical summary of the survey data for the contributing buildings only, the Historic Building Report/Counts from RLS Survey, appears as Appendix B.

The majority of the buildings surveyed are commercial but there are also other public buildings, indicative of Sugar House's early role as an urban center, as well as a business and shopping area for the surrounding neighborhood. It contains buildings with original uses ranging from a post

¹² The Sugar House Ward Chapel at 1950 S. 1200 East was also included in the MPS but is not within the boundaries of the 2007 SHBD study.

office,¹³ fire station, public library, church, school,¹⁴ a historic monument and several apartment buildings¹⁵ in addition to the stores, banks, restaurants, warehouses and offices. Several single family houses are included in the survey – all but one has been converted to commercial or multifamily use.

Three parks are located near the SHBD. Fairmont Park is located to the west of the survey area and Sugar House Park to the east. Hidden Hollow is within the survey area in the middle of the block bounded by 2100 South, 1300 East, Wilmington Avenue and Highland Drive along Parley's Creek.

Findings by Contextual Period

Early Settlement and Industry: 1854-1909

There are only three known buildings that remain from the earliest period of settlement. All three are commercial/retail. The Granite Lumber Company building at 1080 E. 2100 South dates from 1900 with subsequent modifications and additions (evaluation code "B", 2007). The building at 2102-42 E. Highland includes a number of separate historic buildings within the 1963 vinyl siding wrap (evaluation code "C", 2007). The structure at 2012 S. 1100 East has a building date of 1908 with subsequent alterations (evaluation code "C", 2007).

A City Within A City, Urban Growth: 1910-1960

There are twenty-nine buildings that contribute¹⁶ to the historic character of Sugar House that date from this period. Residential buildings include The Bradfield, a brick apartment building from 1919 at 1975 S. 1100 East (evaluation code "B", 2007), the 1959 apartment buildings at 2131 S. Lincoln (evaluation code "B", 2007), several single-family bungalows converted to commercial use like Nu-Crisp at 960 E. 2100 South (evaluation code "B", 2007) and the house at 2126 S. 1000 East (evaluation code "B", 2007). The Victorian Eclectic cottage at 2010 S. 1000 East (evaluation code "B", 2007) now houses a business. Both the bungalow at 2019 S. 1000 East (evaluation code "B", 2007) and the World War II cottage at 2128? S. 1000 East (evaluation code "B", 2007) appear to retain their original single family residential use.

The original uses of the other contributing buildings from the era are either commercial or public. Civic structures include the bungalow-style Fire House # 3¹⁷ at 1135 E. 2100 South (evaluation code "A", 2007), the Jacobethan Revival-style Sprague branch of the Salt Lake City Public Library at 2131 S. Highland Drive (NR, 2002)¹⁸, the 1940 Colonial Revival Sugar House Postal Station at 2155 S. Highland Drive (NR, 1994), the Jacobethan Revival-style Irving Junior High School main

¹³ At 2155 S. Highland Drive. The new one is located just to the north of the survey area at 1965 S. 1100 East.

¹⁴ No schools are currently located in the survey area.

¹⁵ There are also apartment living spaces on the second floor of the two-part block buildings.

¹⁶ Contributing resources are those that retain their historic integrity and contribute to the historic character of the area.

¹⁷ Note that a new Fire Station # 3 was built in 1974 at 1085 E. Simpson Avenue. It is still being used as a working fire station and is not included in the CSHBD zoning.

¹⁸ The Sprague branch library is excluded from the CSHBD zoning area and is noted in this report in Appendix G, Supplemental Sugar House Business District RLS 2007.

building at (NR, 1978)¹⁹ and the 1930 Art Deco Sugar House Monument on the plaza at 1100 East and 2100 South (NR, 2002).

Decline and Renewal, 1961-2007

There was little new construction in the early decades of this era although seventy-three buildings or fifty-two percent of the buildings surveyed date from this era. In the early 1960s the buildings on the north end of the Granite Block²⁰ were updated with new facades. Granite Furniture received its contemporary space age iconic sign and façade. The group of buildings on the southwest corner of 1100 East and 2100 South were wrapped in vinyl siding and given a faux mansard roof to cover the then unfashionable Victorian façade details. Two small-scale Neo-Expressionism wood-shingled office buildings were constructed on Ashton Avenue near Fairmont Park in the early 1970s.

In the 1980s a renewing interest in the Sugar House business district area was signaled by the demolition and subsequent construction of a new bank building by Wells Fargo in 1982 at the northwest corner of the major intersection of 1100 East/Highland Drive and 2100 South.

The 1990s saw the development of a large national franchise automobile-oriented shopping center along 1300 East. The remaining buildings from the earlier Sugarhouse Center development were re-surfaced as two big box national chain stores, Shopko and Toys R Us, were constructed nearby in 1991, replacing a neighborhood of small houses. The access ramps to Interstate 80 at 1300 East were enhanced in the same period. National franchise fast food restaurants and office buildings were built along 1300 East near the entrance/exits to the freeway.

Public redevelopment tax incentives were used to lure private investors to clear the southeast corner of 2100 South and Highland Drive that was rebuilt as Sugar House Commons²¹ in 1998. The community had input during the design process and as a result parking is on the interior of the block. Franchise restaurants and national chain stores such as Old Navy, Wild Oats, and Bed, Bath and Beyond are located on the exterior streets surrounding the parking areas. The former site of the sugar mill is now a Barnes and Noble book store and the area is a busy shopping destination.

The Hidden Hollow Nature Area along Parley's Creek between 1300 East and Highland Drive in the mid-block was Sugar House Park until the State Prison was relocated in the 1950s but was vacant and used as an unofficial dumping ground by the late 1980s. Beginning in 1990, a group of school children from several area elementary and middle schools participated in the Kids Organized to Protect Our Environment (K.O.P.E.) program, which first recognized the potential of green space at Hidden Hollow. Mostly completed by 1999, numerous volunteers continue to maintain the preserve to complement the surrounding commercial development of Sugarhouse Commons.

At the time of this report, August of 2007, a demolition order has been filed with Salt Lake City for a number of the historic commercial buildings along the south side of 2100 South and the west side of Highland Drive. These structures are included in the list of structures recommended for Intensive Level Surveys.

¹⁹ Now used as the entrance to an apartment complex.

²⁰ This term is used loosely to describe the structures in the block between 2100 South, Highland Drive, Sugarmont Avenue and McClelland Street.

²¹ Also known as The Commons.

Recommendations

Further Research

Recommendation 1: Conduct Intensive Level Surveys on any buildings constructed before 1961 that have not previously been studied and documented at the intensive survey level. This Reconnaissance Level Survey is the first of a three-part project the City has contracted with the consultants to complete; the second part is the completion of 45 intensive level surveys. The buildings to be researched at the intensive level are listed in Appendix F.

Background: The area surveyed is under intense development pressure and information on the history and architecture of the various buildings would inform preservation plans for the area. In addition, intensive level research may identify significant structures that cannot be recognized visually because of façade changes, common in commercial buildings. Altered structures with an evaluation of "C" are included in the ILS research as their facades may be again altered to regain aspects of their historic character.

Zoning/Land Use Issues

Recommendation 2: Establish a conservation district overlay zone which would share boundaries with the Proposed Sugar House Business District (2005).

Background: Based on National Register criteria, only 21% of the properties within the geographic boundaries of the survey area retain their integrity. National Register Bulletin 15 asserts, "For a district to retain integrity as a whole, the majority of the components that make up the district's historic character must possess integrity..."²² Because National Register Historic District and local historic district designations are unlikely, a conservation district is an appropriate option. The Sugar House Master Plan anticipated this approach and concluded, "A conservation rather than a historic district would be more appropriate for the business district, due to the lack of a concentration of contributing buildings."²³

Recommendation 3: Adopt design guidelines 1) to direct future development and 2) to govern the rehabilitation of historic structures in the Sugar House Business District.

As mentioned under Recommendation 1, this Reconnaissance Level Survey is the first of a three-part project the City has contracted with the consultants to complete; the third part is the completion of design guidelines for the Sugar House Business District. At the time of this report, the legal basis for the design guidelines has not been determined by the Planning Department and City Council. A clear legal basis for design guidelines will result in a more useful and meaningful document.

²² "How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property." National Register Bulletin 15. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service.

²³ Sugar House Master Plan. Salt Lake City Corporation. Adopted 11/13/2001, Revised 12/13/2005.

Background: The Sugar House Master Plan includes the appendix, "Business District Design Guidelines Handbook" the intent of which "is to give general design guidance with flexibility to the development of the area."²⁴ The "Handbook" is a positive beginning, but should 1) be developed in response to the findings of this survey regarding community character, and 2) should more closely adhere to existing design guideline policy documents such as the *Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts*.

²⁴ Ibid.

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