NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1114

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Villa Catalina

Other names / site number:

2. Location

Street & number: 3000-3034 E. 6th Street & 521-525 N. Country Club Road ☐ not for publication

City or town: Tucson ☐ vicinity

State: Arizona Code: AZ County: Pima Code: 019 Zip code: 85716

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ☐ **national** ☐ **statewide** ☒ **local.**

James W. Garrison — 9 November 2009

Signature of certifying official — Date

State Historic Preservation Officer — Arizona State Parks

Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper — Date of action

☒ entered in the National Register. for Edson V. Beall — 12-22-09

☐ determined eligible for the National Register.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other (explain):

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources Within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
24		buildings
		sites
6	1	structures
		objects
30	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick
roof asphalt
other wood, steel, aluminum

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary

Villa Catalina is a late-1950s cooperative garden apartment complex located at the southwest corner of 6th Street and Country Club Road in Tucson. Its twenty apartment buildings, which hold seventy-nine apartments, are arranged in a square around a courtyard with two swimming pools, built-in barbecues, and shuffleboard courts. Parking for residents is provided by four garage buildings located at the rear of the property along a paved drive. Designed in the Modern style, the apartment buildings at Villa Catalina are distinguished by their projecting eaves, long balconies with metal railings, and wide banks of sliding glass doors.

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheets, Section 7.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ A. owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B. removed from its original location.
- ☐ C. a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D. a cemetery.
- ☐ E. a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F. a commemorative property.
- ☐ G. less than 50 years of age or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1957-1961

Significant Dates
1957-1961

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Lionel V. Mayell (developer)
Kermit S. Oestreich (developer/contractor)
Bert M. Thorud (architect)

Period of Significance (justification)

The buildings in Villa Catalina were constructed between 1957 and 1961. By 1959, fifty-six of the seventy-nine apartments (fourteen of the twenty buildings) were either built or under construction.

Criteria Considerations (explanation if necessary)

entry

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes the level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Summary

Villa Catalina is nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C. It is significant for three reasons. First, it is associated with Lionel Mayell, a prominent California-based developer of cooperative apartment buildings in southern California, Arizona, and Texas. Second, it is an example of Modern design as applied to low-rise apartment buildings. And third, it is an example of the postwar garden apartment, whose appeal rested on its embrace of indoor-outdoor living.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

See Continuation Sheets, Section 8.

Developmental History / Additional Historic Context Information (if appropriate)

Villa Catalina was conceived and designed by Lionel Mayell Tucson Enterprises, an Arizona subsidiary of the California-based Lionel Mayell Enterprises. After beginning construction in 1957, Mayell sold his interest in the project in 1958 to Villa Catalina Cooperatives, a group of local contractors and investors. Villa Catalina was built in two phases. Construction of Unit I, which comprised more than half of the complex, began in 1957 and was completed in 1959. Construction of Unit II began in 1959 and work on the last building began in 1961. For more information on the development of Villa Catalina, see Section 8 in the Continuation Sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.5
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	12	506788	356652	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The Villa Catalina apartment complex is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of 6th Street and Country Club Road in Tucson. The complex's north boundary is defined by 6th Street and its east boundary by Country Club Road. The south boundary is defined by the rear wall of the south garage building. The west boundary corresponds to the middle of the service drive located on the western perimeter of the complex.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries enclose the Villa Catalina apartment complex as it was built in 1961.

11. Form Prepared By

Name / Title Mark E. Pry
Organization History Plus Date 3 November 2009
Street & number 315 E. Balboa Drive Telephone (480) 968-2339
City or town Tempe State Arizona Zip code 85282-3750
Email address markpry@history-plus.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map

Continuation Sheets

Additional Items (check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600 x 1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property	Villa Catalina
City or Vicinity	Tucson
County and State	Pima County, Arizona
Photographer	Paul Hart
Date Photographed	May 1, 2009, and June 12, 2009

Number and Description of Photograph(s):

1 of 17 Facade of Building 525 from the east. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_01.tif]

2 of 17 Facade of Building 3010 from the north. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_02.tif]

3 of 17 East elevation of Building 3034 from the northeast. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_03.tif]

4 of 17 Facade and west elevation of Building 3000 from the northwest. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_04.tif]

5 of 17 West elevation of Building 3022 from the southwest. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_05.tif]

6 of 17 Rear of Building 3022 from the southwest. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_06.tif]

7 of 17 Facade of Building 3028 from the northwest. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_07.tif]

8 of 17 East elevation and facade of Building 3028 from the east. Building 3024 is in the background. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_08.tif]

9 of 17 East elevation and part of the facade of Building 3032 from the north. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_09.tif]

10 of 17 View between Building 3016 (left) and Building 3012 (right), looking south. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_10.tif]

11 of 17 View between Building 3020 (left) and Building 3016 (right), looking south. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_11.tif]

12 of 17 View of rear drive and garages from the west, looking toward Country Club Road. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_12.tif]

13 of 17 View of north side of apartment complex looking west down 6th Street from the parking lot. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_13.tif]

14 of 17 View of courtyard and east shuffleboard court, from the south. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_14.tif]

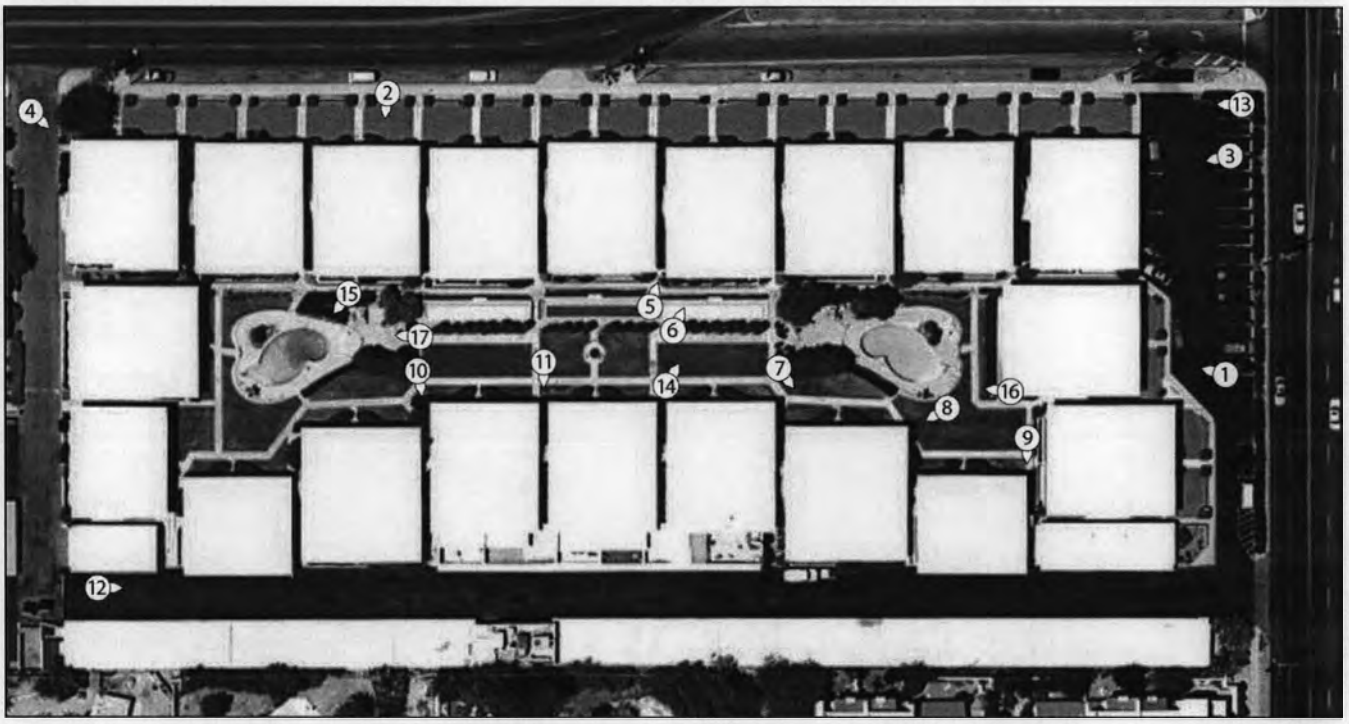
15 of 17 View of west swimming pool from the northeast. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_15.tif]

Number and Description of Photograph(s), continued

16 of 17 View of courtyard from the east. Building 525 is at the immediate right. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_16.tif]

17 of 17 View of west swimming pool and barbecue, from the east. [AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_17.tif]

Photograph Vantage Points



Narrative Description

Setting

Villa Catalina is located at the southwest corner of 6th Street and Country Club Road in Tucson, just under three miles directly west of downtown Tucson.

Both 6th Street and Country Club Road are major four-lane arterial streets with substantial traffic. Only the western half of Villa Catalina actually abuts 6th Street; the eastern half abuts a frontage road, as 6th Street curves northeast away from Villa Catalina.

Villa Catalina is one of several large apartment complexes that form an island of multifamily buildings in the midst of single-family houses. There are two large complexes across 6th Street and one immediately to the west. The latter complex, El Encanto Apartments, is listed on the National Register.

To the south of Villa Catalina, behind the south garage building, are single-family houses (part of the Sam Hughes Residential Historic District on the National Register) and a townhouse complex.

Across Country Club is the El Encanto Estates neighborhood of large single-family houses, which is listed on the National Register. Although Country Club Road in this area is basically a residential street, there are a few businesses on the east side of Country Club north of 6th Street.

As is typical for Tucson, the predominant style of landscaping in the area, at least for the streetscapes and front yards, is xeriscape with desert and low-water plants.

Plan and Grounds

Villa Catalina comprises twenty apartment buildings arranged in a square around a long, narrow courtyard, plus four garage buildings at the rear (south) of the property along a paved drive.

The nine buildings on the north side of the complex all face 6th Street. Two buildings on the east side face Country Club Road, and the remainder of the buildings face inward toward the courtyard.

The courtyard, which is symmetrical in shape, has two swimming pools with large decks, two brick built-in barbecues, a putting green, and two shuffleboard courts. The courtyard landscape consists of a grass lawn ornamented with small trees and shrubs in planting beds edged with concrete block.

The asphalt drive at the rear of the complex extends the width of the property. The south garage, which is the largest of the four garage buildings, also extends the width of the property. Located on the south side of the drive, the south garage's rear wall defines the rear (south) boundary of the property.

The remaining three garages are situated on the north side of the drive, between the drive and the apartment buildings. The roof of the north garage also serves as an outdoor deck for the second-floor apartments of the adjacent buildings.

Additional parking is provided by an asphalt parking lot on the east end of the complex next to Country Club Road.

Both the rear drive and parking lot are accessed via a single entry off Country Club Road, at the southeast corner of the property. The rear drive can also be accessed from the west using a service drive that defines the property's western boundary. However, the gate between the two drives is normally locked and therefore only used for deliveries and service vehicles.

On the north side of the complex, the apartment buildings are set back from 6th Street enough to give them modest front yards; the same is true for the two buildings that face Country Club. These yards were originally grass but are now xeriscaped with gravel.

The yards on 6th Street are buffered from the street by shrubs and a low steel fence punctuated at regular intervals by walkways that lead to the buildings and to the interior of the complex. There is a slight slope on 6th Street at this point, so some of the walkways are accessed from the street by low concrete stairways.

Pedestrians can also access the interior of Villa Catalina via walkways from the parking lot facing Country Club and the rear drive.

Contributing vs. Noncontributing Resources

All of the twenty-four buildings (twenty apartment buildings and four garages) are contributing resources.

Of the seven structures at Villa Catalina, six (the two swimming pools, two barbecues, and two shuffleboard courts) are contributing resources.

The putting green, which was not part of Villa Catalina's original plan (it was once a shuffleboard court), is a noncontributing resource.

Design Features

The most striking features of the Villa Catalina apartment buildings are the projecting eaves, the long balconies with metal railings, and the wide banks of sliding glass doors. Together they impart a strong horizontal thrust to the building facades.

This horizontality, which is characteristic of Modern buildings, is complemented by finishes and materials that are also typically Modern: unornamented brick walls, mill-finish aluminum sliding glass doors, steel casement windows with no trim other than a plain sill, open metal balcony railings, slab entry doors, and steel-and-concrete exterior stairways.

Other features are less characteristically Modern. Wood molding runs around each building at the top of the exterior walls, and the front entries are sheltered by steel covers with convex curved tops. Also, the apartment building roofs are hipped—a roof form not typically associated with large Modern buildings.

The interiors of the apartments are open and spacious. In keeping with Modern design principles, the combined living/dining area is a single open space. Located at the front of the apartment, the living area looks out on the front terrace/balcony through a large bank of sliding glass doors. This not only provides light and views but also allows the terrace/balcony to function as an extension of the interior living space.

Apartment Buildings

The apartment buildings, which all have rectangular plans with projecting front entry enclosures, are in three sizes. The smallest buildings (3004, 3008, and 3032) hold four one-bedroom, one-bath apartments. The largest buildings (3012 and 3028) have four apartments with three bedrooms and two baths. The remainder of the buildings have two-bedroom apartments, most of which have two baths.

The original plan for Villa Catalina called for the construction of eighty apartments, four in each building. However, purchasers were given the option to customize their apartments, and three did so. One purchaser combined two apartments into one (on the second floor of Building 3024), while two others each purchased two apartments and had them reconfigured into a three-bedroom apartment and a one-bedroom apartment (on the second floors of Buildings 3000 and 3018). Currently there are seventy-nine apartments in the complex.

All of the apartment buildings have cast-in-place concrete slab foundations; there are no basements. All building walls are buff-colored brick with no ornamentation.

The roofs are low-pitched and covered with light gray roll asphalt. The ridgelines are very short, making the roofs appear pyramidal. The projecting eaves are deep and clad on the underside with plywood. The roof fascia is clad with steel. Just below the inside edge of the eaves, along the top of the walls, there is a wood molding that wraps around the building.

The front balconies are cantilevered concrete slabs that extend the full width of the building. The exposed edges of the balcony slabs are clad in steel (like the roof fascia). The balconies are enclosed by open steel railings with a distinctive design—a circle enclosed in a square—that is repeated across the length of the balconies. All front balconies are accessible only from inside the apartments, via the sliding glass doors.

All of the front terraces are unenclosed concrete slabs, though they are partially screened from public view by low shrubs planted in beds edged with concrete block. All of the rear terraces are enclosed by low walls built of the same brick as the building walls.

On most of the apartment buildings (fifteen out of twenty), the rear balconies and terraces extend the full width of the rear elevations of the buildings. The balconies are accessible only from inside the apartments; the terraces are accessible both from the apartments and from the exterior (through wooden gates).

On two buildings (3008 and 3032), both of which back up to the rear drive, the rear balconies and terraces are located on the side elevations near the rear corners of the buildings. These rear balconies are accessible both from exterior stairways and the inside of the apartments.

And on the three remaining buildings (3016, 3020, and 3024), all of which back up to the north garage, the rear terraces are located on the side elevations near the rear corners of the buildings. For the second-floor apartments, the roof of the north garage serves as a deck that replaces the rear balconies.

On the facade of each apartment building, the one-story projecting entry enclosure is centered between the two front terraces. The enclosure is clad in brick and sheltered in the front by a steel hood with a convex curved top and vertical sides.

Each entry enclosure has three doors, one in front and one on each side. The side doors, which face the terraces, open directly into the ground-floor apartments. The front door, which is flanked by two fixed windows glazed with obscure glass, opens onto an interior stairway that leads to a landing shared by the two second-floor apartments. The doors are unornamented, painted wood slab doors.

On all but the two largest buildings, the facade is dominated by the sliding glass doors, which wrap around the outside corners of the building. Each door assembly has four panels on the facade (two of which are operable) and a fifth panel (which is fixed) on the side elevation.

On the two largest buildings (3012 and 3028), the front sliding glass doors have only two panels, one of which is operable. These doors are flanked on the outside by steel-framed bay windows.

The sliding glass doors that open onto the rear balconies and terraces are either three panels or two panels, with the latter found wherever the balconies and terraces are located on the side elevation of the building.

Each apartment building has four side entries, one for each floor. The doors at these entries are painted wood slab doors with 1/1 aluminum-framed windows.

The second-floor side entries are reached by exterior stairways. Between Buildings 3012, 3016, 3020, and 3024, the second-floor entry landings of adjacent buildings share a single stairway. On the remainder of the buildings, each second-floor entry has its own stairway.

The stairs and landings are steel with concrete decks and stair treads. The stair and landing railings are different from those on the balconies; instead of the distinctive circle-in-a-square design, the stair railings have plain vertical bars.

All of the apartment building windows are steel-framed casements. Most have a fixed center light and two outside operable lights (XOX), but there are some two-light windows (XO). Almost all of the casement windows are horizontal in shape; the only vertical windows in the complex are the front bay windows on Buildings 3012 and 3028 and those windows adjacent to the side entries.

Garages

Villa Catalina has four garage buildings, which are referred to here as the northwest, north, northeast, and south garages, reflecting their position relative to the rear drive.

Three of these garages (the northwest, northeast, and south) are similar in design. They are one-story structures built of concrete block, with shed roofs covered with roll asphalt and open eaves with exposed rafter tails. The facades are clad with plywood ornamented with narrow vertical battens. On the east elevations of the south and northeast garages, both of which face Country Club Road, the walls are brick.

The south garage, which is much larger than the other garage buildings, also holds the apartment complex's heating and cooling plant. Located near the center of the south garage building, the mechanical room has a flat roof with no eaves. A cooling tower sits atop the roof and is screened from view on three sides by a high concrete-block parapet.

The fourth garage building, the north garage, is also a one-story concrete-block structure. However, it has a flat roof with no eaves that serves as an outdoor deck for the second-floor apartments in the three adjacent

apartment buildings. In addition, a laundry room and restroom are located at each end of the building.

Most of the garage spaces are for two cars; a few hold just one car. Entry to each space is through steel sectional doors.

Courtyard Structures

The arrangement of the structures in the courtyard is symmetrical. The two swimming pools and their concrete decks, which are identical in shape, are located at the west and east ends of the courtyard, with the other courtyard structures lined up between them.

Each pool, which is kidney-shaped, is surrounded by a concrete deck of more or less oval shape that is enclosed by a steel fence. The deck extends beyond the fence; this irregularly shaped extension is where the brick barbecues are located, along with some patio furniture. Both of these unfenced deck areas are partially shaded by trees.

Between the deck extensions, in a single line running east-west along the north edge of the courtyard, are the two concrete shuffleboard courts and the artificial-turf putting green (which originally was a shuffleboard court). Each of these three structures is enclosed on three sides by a low wall of decorative concrete block.

Condition and Integrity

The condition of Villa Catalina is very good, and the apartment complex is evidently carefully maintained.

The integrity of Villa Catalina is also very good. No additions or subtractions have been made to any of the buildings, and the plan of the complex remains unchanged. None of the windows, sliding glass doors, or entry doors have been replaced.

Some screen doors and security screen doors have been installed, but not in locations that are easily seen by the public. There are no screen doors on any of the front entry doors facing either the street or the courtyard. Of the remaining entry and side doors, fewer than half have some kind of added screen door.

The courtyard remains intact except for two minor changes. First, two pool fences were erected in 1985—a response to increasingly strict regulation of publicly accessible swimming pools. Second, the middle shuffleboard court was replaced with a putting green, a change that appears to be reversible, as the green's artificial turf surface was installed on top of the original concrete court.

Only one change of any consequence has been made to the landscaping: the grass lawns along 6th Street and Country Club Road were replaced with crushed rock. Such an alteration is typical for Tucson residential buildings of this vintage, as the city has significantly increased its water rates since the 1950s.

The ground-floor apartment on the south side of Building 521, facing Country Club Road, has been divided into a one-bedroom apartment and an office space. The latter, which is located at the rear of the building, now serves as the office of the Villa Catalina Homeowners Association.

None of these changes has substantially affected the historical integrity of Villa Catalina, which stands as a remarkably well-preserved example of a 1950s garden apartment complex.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Lionel Mayell and Mayell Enterprises

Lionel Mayell was born in London, Ontario, on 4 February 1897. When he was twelve years old, his family relocated to Los Angeles, where his father enjoyed a successful career in manufacturing and the wholesale grocery business.

In 1916 Mayell entered Occidental College. After graduation he attended law school at the University of Southern California and Stanford University; whether he completed his law degree or practiced law is not known.

It was during his law studies, it appears, that Mayell began his career as an apartment building developer. According to Helen Kooiman Hosier, who wrote the only known published account of Mayell's career, Mayell built his first apartment building by 1920, at which time he was just twenty-three years old.[1]

Hosier did not identify this building, but it probably was the Artaban, an eight-story cooperative apartment building erected in Long Beach, California, in 1922. Mayell's exact role in the Artaban's development is not clear; a brochure for one of his later projects described him as the person who "organized and built" the Artaban, yet a brochure for an earlier Mayell project identified him simply as the "promoter" of the Artaban.[2]

What does seem clear is that Mayell played an important role in the decision to make the Artaban a cooperative development. During this phase of his career, as Mayell worked on other projects in Long Beach, he was always identified with the cooperative ownership concept. And during his postwar career, Mayell would often promote himself as the "pioneer builder-developer of cooperatively owned apartment homes west of Chicago."[3]

Mayell was involved in the development of at least two other apartment buildings in Long Beach. He served as secretary for a syndicate that built the Cooper Arms, a twelve-story cooperative apartment building completed in 1924. And he was the developer for Villa Riviera, a fifteen-story cooperative building completed in 1929. Both buildings are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[4]

The Great Depression, which began just as Villa Riviera was being completed and offered for sale, seriously undermined the residential construction sector, and Mayell did no more development work during that decade.

Mayell's career at this point becomes difficult to follow, as Hosier had little of substance to say about his business activities during the 1930s and 1940s. He traveled for some time in Spain promoting cooperative apartments, and he produced a musical variety show that traveled up and down the Mississippi River, performing mostly in the South. Bad weather forced him to liquidate the show—apparently it was performed outdoors—and he was left, in his own words, bankrupt.

Mayell reentered the apartment business in California just as the Second World War was ending. After visiting a Los Angeles–area banker who was familiar with his development work in Long Beach, and arguing that returning war veterans would reinvigorate California's housing market, Mayell obtained a $1,000 loan to capitalize a new development company. He donated half the loan to a Christian evangelical group

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[1] Hosier's portrait of Mayell, "Little Is Much with God: Campus Crusade's Lionel Mayell," is the source for most of the biographical information related here. It is one chapter in a book of biographies of noted religious figures and appears to be based primarily on interviews with Mayell. Hosier's focus was on Mayell's spiritual development and evangelical work, and she had relatively little to say about his development career.

[2] The first claim is from a 1928 promotional brochure for Villa Riviera, while the latter is from a 1922 brochure for the Cooper Arms. Copies of these brochures can be viewed on the websites of their respective buildings.

[3] This self-description is from a Villa del Coronado sales brochure.

[4] Mayell may have been involved in the construction of a fourth Long Beach building, the Glenn-Donald Apartments, which was mentioned in a Mayell Enterprises sales brochure from the 1950s. However, no further information about these apartment has been found.

and used the remaining $500 to found Lionel Mayell Enterprises.

Over the next twenty years, Mayell's company built or designed at least eighteen cooperative apartment projects in Southern California (Pasadena, San Diego, and Santa Barbara), Arizona (Phoenix and Tucson), Texas (Houston), and Florida (St. Petersburg, Winter Park, and Palm Beach Shores).

Mayell is known to have built six apartment complexes in Pasadena. These include Orange Grove Manor, at 164-180 S. Orange Grove Boulevard, built in 1949; an apartment complex at 707 S. Orange Grove, built in 1950; the Capri Aire, at 660 S. Orange Grove Boulevard, built in 1951; Plaza del Arroyo, at 101 N. Grand Ave., built in 1955; Villa San Pasqual, at 1000 San Pasqual, built in 1953-54; and Whispering Waters, at 1000 Cordova Street, built between 1959 and 1961.[5]

Villa San Pasqual was designated a Pasadena city historical landmark in 2005 and 2006. Whispering Waters was proposed for landmark status, but the designation was refused by the city council in response to opposition from residents of the complex.

Two projects in San Diego have been identified as Mayell projects: the Capri Aire, at 5353-77 La Jolla Boulevard, completed in 1958; and Villa del Lido, on Torrey Pines Road in the La Jolla Shores area, built in 1958-59.[6]

In Santa Barbara, three projects have been attributed to Mayell: Villa Capri Aire, at 3944 State Street, which was built starting in 1955; Villa Constance, at 2625 State Street, which was completed in 1958; and Villa Miradero, on Miradero Drive, which was completed in 1963 and won honorable mention that year in an apartment design competition sponsored by *House and Home* Magazine.[7]

Mayell undertook three projects in Arizona: Villa del Coronado and Palm Lane Gardens, in Phoenix, and Villa Catalina in Tucson. Only one of them, Villa del Coronado, was seen through to completion by Mayell's firm.

Villa del Coronado, which is located at the northwest corner of Coronado and Alvarado roads in central Phoenix, was built between 1955 and 1957. Villa Catalina was begun in 1957, but after completing the design and starting construction, Mayell sold the property to a group of Arizona builders and investors who completed the project by 1961.

Palm Lane Gardens, which is located on Palm Lane immediately north of Villa del Coronado, was begun in 1958 and completed in 1959. The plans were commissioned by Mayell but he sold his interest in the project to a group of local builders and investors just as construction was beginning.

The lone Texas project by Mayell, the Ambassador, was built in the prestigious Post Oak neighborhood in Houston starting in 1962. It was originally planned as a large complex with several three-story buildings and a high-rise building, but only one of the three-story buildings was actually constructed.

Mayell is known to have built apartment complexes in three Florida cities—St. Petersburg, Winter Park, and Palm Beach Shores—all of which were named Whispering Waters. The eight-building St. Petersburg complex was completed in 1961, by which time Mayell's firm may no longer have been involved; a newspaper account from the time implied that the project had been taken over by Mayell's local associates.[8] No information was found on the Palm Beach Shores project, and all that is currently known of the Winter Park complex is that Mayell's firm began work on it sometime in 1959 and that it was completed.[9]

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[5] Another Pasadena complex, at 1691 San Pasqual Street, has also been attributed to Mayell, but no documentation on this property has been found.

[6] The Capri Aire is also referred to as the Villa Capri Aire, La Jolla Capri Aire, and La Jolla Capri.

[7] "Today's Best in Apartment Design," *House and Home* 24 (August 1963), 100.

[8] "Whispering Waters Co-Op Completed," *St. Petersburg Times*.

[9] The Palm Beach Shores project is identified in Matthew Gordon Lasner, "Own-your-owns, Co-ops, Town Houses: Hybrid Housing Types and the New Urban Form in Postwar Southern California." *Journal of the Society of Architectural*

The unifying theme in Mayell's career as an apartment developer was his advocacy of cooperative apartments, which he often referred to in his sales literature as "own-your-own" apartments.[10]

With one exception (the Ambassador in Houston), all of his apartment projects, including those in Long Beach, were planned and offered to buyers as cooperative or own-your-own apartments. In his publicity literature, Mayell described himself as the "the west's pioneer builder-organizer of cooperatively-owned apartments homes and the originator of the 'ownership-by-deed' plan whereby each owner receives a clear title to his own home."[11]

Some Mayell apartment buildings have since been converted to condominiums, but many—including Villa Catalina, Villa del Coronado, and Palm Lane Gardens—still operate as cooperatives. The Ambassador in Houston, which was built just as the condominium concept was gaining legal acceptance around the country, was from the beginning a condominium apartment complex.

In terms of design, Mayell buildings reflected the architectural fashions current when they were built, as well as the architectural norms of the communities in which they were located.

Mayell's earliest projects, those from the 1920s in Long Beach, were designed in revival styles. The Artaban has been described as Mediterranean revival and the Villa Riviera as "Chateauesque style with Gothic and Renaissance Period elements."

His postwar projects by and large followed mid-century Modern design principles, and Villa Catalina is representative of them in this respect.

However, at least two of his later projects were not Modern in design, evidence of Mayell's design flexibility and willingness to accommodate local tastes. Villa Miradero, in Santa Barbara, was designed as a "Spanish-style" complex with tile roofs, slump block walls, and heavy wood timbers. And the Ambassador in Houston drew its inspiration from the southern plantation house, featuring Ionic columns, an elaborate cornice, and a circular drive leading to a large porte-cochere and high-ceilinged main lobby.

At its peak, Lionel Mayell Enterprises was a "$100 million business," according to Hosier. In the mid-1960s, though, the company failed owing to "mismanagement by business partners." Once again Mayell found himself in bankruptcy.[12]

Shortly thereafter, in 1966, Mayell left the construction business behind and joined the Campus Crusade for Christ as a staff member. He and his wife Dorothy moved to San Bernadino, where the organization was located and which remained Mayell's home for the rest of his life. He died in San Bernadino on 31 August 1978.

Garden Apartments

The term "garden apartments" appears to first have been used in the late 1910s to describe urban mid-rise apartment buildings that, contrary to the customary practice at the time, did not entirely fill the available lot, but were built with some amount of open space, typically a central courtyard. Urban garden apartment complexes were a big-city phenomenon, and most appear to have been built in New York City, where they were associated with tenement reform.[13]

Historians 68, no. 3 (September 2009), 401 (note 32); the Winter Park project was mentioned in passing in a 1959 newspaper article announcing Mayell's Whispering Waters complex in St. Petersburg ("Whispering Waters … New, Luxurious," *St. Petersburg Independent*).

[10] Lasner has argued that Mayell's developments were not strictly speaking cooperatives because purchasers owned a fractional share of the building rather than shares in a cooperative corporation that owned the building. Instead he describes Mayell's buildings as "own-your-own" complexes (see "Own-your-owns, Co-ops, Town Houses," 382).

[11] From an advertisement for Villa Catalina in Tucson.

[12] This very brief account of the demise of Mayell's firm can be found on page 133 of Hosier, "Little Is Much with God."

[13] The term "urban garden apartments" is used here to distinguish these mid-rise buildings from other variations of

As one architectural historian has noted, the garden apartment category "comprised many possible approaches and contexts."[14] And so, even as some architects were labeling mid-rise urban apartment buildings as "garden apartments," other architects were using the same term to describe apartment complexes of a very different sort: one- and two-story buildings sharing extensive landscaped grounds and located in the "suburbs."[15]

Over the next two decades, from the late 1920s to the late 1940s, this lower-density version would eclipse its urban predecessor as the most common type of garden apartments. Most importantly, the increasing popularity of low-density garden apartments would bring apartments to mid-size cities and suburban communities where few if any apartment buildings had been built before.[16]

The development and popularization of the low-density garden apartment complex, which here is called the "prewar garden apartment," came during a national boom in apartment construction during the 1920s. The boom was most pronounced in those cities that grew rapidly during this decade, such as Seattle, Minneapolis–St. Paul, and Los Angeles. It was fueled by large numbers of young singles (especially women entering the work force for the first time) and young married couples moving into the cities.

The 1920s apartment boom brought more diversity to the design and construction of apartment buildings. This could be seen in the size of buildings, which ranged from triplexes to mid-rise structures; in the size of apartments, which ranged from compact efficiencies to suites; and in the architectural styles of apartment buildings. The boom also led to the diversification of apartment dwellers, as increasing numbers of apartments were built for working-class and middle-class tenants.

The chief distinguishing characteristics of prewar garden apartments, when compared with earlier types of apartment buildings, were their low lot coverage and low building densities. Writing in 1948, one prominent developer of garden apartments, Gustave Ring, argued that a garden apartment complex should have no more than 20 to 25 percent of its total site occupied by buildings and have a maximum density of ten to fifteen units per acre. Other experts recommended higher densities, such as 30 percent site coverage and twenty-five to thirty units per acre, but the principle remained the same.[17]

The typical prewar garden apartment complex comprised one- and two-story buildings containing a variety of apartment layouts, from one-room efficiencies to two-floor duplexes. The buildings were situated in park-like grounds that not only provided outdoor recreational space but also offered each apartment an attractive view.

Many prewar garden apartment complexes of this period also provided off-street walkways for pedestrians, as well as on- or off-street parking spaces for automobiles. Shallow building plans and staggered elevations allowed more windows and therefore better cross-ventilation and lighting. Entries were designed so that each apartment either had a private doorway or shared a stairwell or balcony with only a handful of other apartments; this eliminated central lobbies or interior corridors, which long had been fixtures of the typical urban apartment building. By keeping building heights at or below three stories (four-story garden

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the garden apartment, which are referred to here as "prewar garden apartments" and "postwar garden apartments."

[14] Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 122.

[15] In the literature on garden apartments, the term "suburban" is often used to refer to any low-density development on the outer edges of a city's built-up area, without regard for whether that development was located in the city, an adjacent municipality, or an unincorporated area.

[16] The garden apartments of the late 1940s were much closer in style and features to those of the 1920s and 1930s than they were to those of the 1950s. Consequently, the term "prewar" here is stretched to include all of the 1940s.

[17] "Modern Trends in Garden Apartments," *Urban Land* 7, no. 5 (May 1948), 1; Joseph H. Abel and Fred N. Severud, *Apartment Houses* (New York: Reinhold, 1947), 43.

apartments were atypical), elevators were no longer required and could be replaced by stairways.[18]

Consistent with their years of popularity—the late 1920s to the late 1940s—most prewar garden apartment complexes were, in terms of style, traditional in their detailing and stylistic references; variations on Colonial Revival were especially popular. They typically used well-established materials and elements such as brick cladding, shutters, columns and pediments adorning entries, wood double-hung windows, and panel-and-frame doors.

This was a reflection of the prewar garden apartment's architectural origins, for historians consider garden apartments to be inspired by the English garden city movement, a turn-of-the-century effort to develop self-sufficient planned communities that combined the conveniences of urban living with the aesthetic and health benefits of country living.[19]

Largely for business reasons—that is, the need to attract tenants who might have other options for housing—prewar garden apartment developers often aimed for a "home-like" atmosphere that would appeal to middle-class tenants, especially those with families. Gustave Ring advocated four principles of garden apartment design: "1. Plenty of open space. 2. Privacy and quiet for the individual family. 3. Adequate and convenient open air parking for automobiles. 4. Convenient community shopping and recreational facilities." He also argued that every apartment should have good views, preferably through a "wide picture window," and that the common landscaped areas should be substantial. "We are convinced," Ring wrote, "that the long-time trend is toward a decline in density throughout our urban areas and that, in increasing numbers, families will insist on living in uncrowded conditions."[20]

A major factor in the rising popularity of prewar garden apartments was the Federal Housing Administration's mortgage insurance program, which was opened to rental housing projects in 1934. The first FHA-insured apartment complex was Colonial Village in Arlington, Virginia, which comprised 245 buildings on 55 acres and was built between 1935 and 1940. Its size was typical of prewar garden apartment complexes, which often were large; some developments contained more than a thousand apartments.

By 1940 the FHA had insured mortgages on 240 rental apartment projects (of which 200 were garden apartments) containing 29,000 dwelling units. Starting in the early 1940s, after the United States entered the Second World War, garden apartments were built to house war workers. Then, after the war, they were built to provide much-needed housing for returning veterans and their families.

When *Architectural Forum* surveyed prewar garden apartments in 1940, it concluded that "the garden apartment has come of age" and pointed to developments across the country—in New York City, Seattle, Los Angeles, Winston-Salem (North Carolina), and suburban New York—as evidence of their broad popularity. The magazine in particular praised duplex apartments (those with two floors), noting that the duplex was the "nearest thing to 'home' that can be found in apartment buildings—private entrances, front yards, few overhead neighbors and, occasionally, full private basements."

Although the prewar garden apartment would seem to have had little in common with its predecessor, the mid-rise urban garden apartment, in fact they shared one important goal: both were attempts to develop a type of apartment house that offered affordable, decent housing to working-class and middle-class families. As such, they marked a departure from earlier types of apartment buildings.

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[18] For general descriptions of prewar garden apartments, see Abel and Severud, *Apartment Houses*, and Gail Baker, "Garden Apartments: Three Preservation Case Studies in Virginia," *CRM* 22, no. 7 (1999), 23-25.

[19] Baker, "Garden Apartments," 23, and Carl F. Horowitz, *The New Garden Apartment: Current Market Realities of an American Housing Form* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Center for Urban Policy Research, 1983), 17. Baker also considers the German "superblock" an inspiration for the garden apartment.

[20] "Modern Trends in Garden Apartments," 3.

Until garden apartments appeared in the 1920s, the term "apartment" typically meant either a suite of rooms in a luxury building that catered to the upper middle class or wealthy, or a room or two in a tenement built for the poor. A middle ground between these two extremes—rental housing for families who were not poor but who could not afford a house—was notably lacking in most American cities.

Apartments had long occupied an ambiguous position in the American housing market. From the beginning of our nation's history, American cities were prone to rapid and sprawling expansion that favored the construction of detached houses, which remained the most common form of housing even in the largest and mostly densely populated cities.

As cities grew more crowded, the need for more housing (especially affordable housing) was met by subdividing existing houses or converting other types of buildings (such as warehouses) to residential occupancy. As a result, in American cities both large and small, most multifamily dwelling units were found in subdivided houses rather than purpose-built apartment buildings.

The first purpose-built apartment building in the United States was built in Boston in 1855. However, it remained an isolated example of a building type that most Americans associated with Europe. Indeed, New York City's first apartment building, Stuyvesant Flats (1869), was often referred to as the "French Flats."

The Stuyvesant's construction set off the nation's first apartment boom, and over the next two decades hundreds of apartment buildings were erected in the nation's largest cities, especially New York, Boston, and Chicago. Many were built as "apartment hotels," which were so called because they offered centralized services such as housekeeping and meal preparation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, apartment buildings were common in some of the nation's larger cities (New York, Boston, San Francisco, and Chicago) but not in others (Baltimore and Philadelphia). Despite the fact that apartments filled an obvious housing need—before 1900 most city residents lived in multifamily dwellings—Americans continued to be suspicious of apartments and their occupants. Indeed, the apartment's association with cities and with the urban poor lay at the root of its image problem. Many Americans regarded cities as dangerous, immoral, and unhealthy, and they transferred these associations to apartment buildings.

The rise of purpose-built apartment buildings catering to the well-to-do would seem to have provided an antidote to this prejudice against multifamily dwellings. However, as luxury apartments and apartment hotels grew in popularity, so did criticism of apartments. Many American viewed them as cramped and lacking in space, light, and ventilation, which were considered necessities for raising children.

Some critics saw the apartment's lack of privacy in much darker terms. Because apartments placed men and women in close proximity, and therefore provided opportunities for casual mixing of the sexes, they were seen by some as a breeding ground for immoral and even illicit behavior. And because apartments required less housework than did detached houses, they also were seen as undermining the woman's traditional role as the keeper of her family's home.

Despite such criticisms, apartment buildings continued to spread across the country, especially after 1920, when the American housing industry embarked on its second apartment construction boom.

Not coincidentally, the 1920s was also the decade during which the practice of separating building types according to their uses—zoning—became popular. It was in zoning ordinances that the American prejudice against apartments became institutionalized. In 1924 the United States Department of Commerce issued a model zoning statute that, among other provisions, called for the segregation of multifamily and single-family housing. By the mid-1920s, nineteen states had adopted the statute—Arizona did so in 1925—and by 1926 more than four hundred cities had enacted zoning ordinances.

That same year, 1926, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of zoning. Although the central issue in the case did not involve the zoning treatment of apartment buildings, the Court nevertheless considered whether it was appropriate to restrict the location of apartments. "'The development of detached

house sections is greatly retarded by the coming of apartment houses, which has sometimes resulted in destroying the entire section for house purposes,'" the justices wrote. Multistory apartment buildings cut off sunlight, stifled air circulation, and brought increased noise and traffic, "'depriving children of quiet and open spaces for play, enjoyed by those in more favored localities.'"[21]

Today these opinions may seem somewhat prejudiced, but they were probably shared by a majority of Americans and even today are reflected in current zoning regulations. As many historians have argued, the apartment has long been regarded by Americans as a residence of last resort and the apartment dweller as a somewhat marginal figure in American society. In large part this reflects the fact that many apartment dwellers are indeed in a "transient social state," that is, their residence in an apartment represents a temporary state of affairs; many apartment dwellers are either young persons waiting to buy their first house or elderly persons who once owned homes.[22]

It is important to understand this context when interpreting the significance of postwar garden apartments, for the American prejudice against apartments remained a force to be reckoned with in the postwar housing market.

Of more immediate concern to apartment builders, though, were the huge numbers of single-family homes constructed after the Second World War. With houses being built in record numbers, and with the GI Bill and federal mortgage insurance making home ownership more affordable than ever, apartment developers needed a concept that would get some traction in the rapidly evolving housing market. The postwar garden apartment was their answer.

The postwar garden apartment took the basic principles of its predecessors—light, ventilation, views, and access to the outdoors—and carried them to their logical conclusion. It offered the privacy and "home-like" qualities that Americans had come to expect in their living quarters, and it was designed to satisfy middle-class tastes. Most importantly, it was designed to compete with the wildly popular ranch house, which was reshaping the interior landscape of the American home.

In many respects, postwar garden apartments were similar to the prewar garden apartments of the 1930s and 1940s. They were low-rise and low-density, and landscaping continued to play a major role, with most garden apartment complexes incorporating courtyards, gardens, or lawns. Most were laid out on plans that were independent of, rather than extensions of, the street grid. Forgoing the traditional practice of placing buildings in an orderly row facing the street, garden apartment developers arranged their buildings around courtyards or other common spaces, or they artfully dispersed them across a large landscaped space.

Postwar garden apartment complexes retained other features of their prewar predecessors. The views from inside each apartment were toward the interior of the complex and its landscaping or recreational features, rather than toward the street. The intimacy this arrangement created was amplified by the use of separate entries for apartments, which rendered a central lobby and long common hallways superfluous. If each apartment was not able to have a private entrance connecting it directly with the outdoors, it shared a stairwell or balcony with no more than a handful of other apartments.

What differentiated the postwar garden apartment from its predecessors was the emphasis placed on private outdoor spaces (balconies and terraces), its association with a single architectural style (Modernism in one guise or another), and the extent to which it incorporated, and therefore helped to popularize, amenities previously found only in single-family homes.

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[21] The case was *Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Co.* (more commonly known as *Euclid v. Ambler*); the quotations are from Kenneth Baar, "The National Movement to Halt the Spread of Multifamily Housing, 1890-1926," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 58, no. 1 (1992).

[22] John Hancock, "The Apartment House in Urban America," in *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 152, 157.

The distinguishing feature of the postwar garden apartment—one might even say its defining feature—was the private balcony or terrace. In prewar garden apartment complexes, practically all of the open space was shared by tenants and accessible to the public; few prewar garden apartments had private balconies or terraces. Starting in the early 1950s, an increasing proportion of garden apartment developers began providing all of their units with terraces (for ground-floor units) or balconies (for upper-floor units). These typically were next to the apartment's main living area, to which they were connected by sliding glass doors and "window walls." This not only provided access to the outdoor space but also allowed it to function as an extension of the interior space.

When *House and Home* magazine in 1961 profiled eleven award-winning apartment buildings, every honoree was a garden apartment complex and every one featured private balconies or terraces accessed by sliding glass doors. The same was true in 1963, when *House and Home* featured another lineup of award-winning apartment building designs. Four years later, in 1967, the author of a textbook on apartment building design would write, "Private terraces and balconies for each apartment are becoming standard requirements in the garden apartment."[23]

The garden apartment's embrace of the private balcony and terrace was not exactly innovative. Indeed, it probably can be attributed to the influence of the ranch house, which not only established a new ideal for the American family home but also exerted considerable competitive pressure on the developers of apartment buildings that sought to attract a middle-class clientele.

As large numbers of Americans moved for the first time into homes that had private yards and terraces, the back yard replaced the front porch as the preferred location for outdoor socializing. Apartment buildings could never match the privacy of the detached single-family house, but they could approximate it by giving each unit its own terrace. Anyone sitting on an apartment's terrace or balcony could still converse with neighbors, of course, but walls and railings (which almost all apartment terraces had) helped defined these outdoor spaces as private rather than public.

One important consequence of giving each apartment its own outdoor space was that the common outdoor spaces—the courtyards, gardens, and lawns—became somewhat less important at postwar garden apartment complexes. Of course, many garden apartments continued to feature substantial open spaces, but a survey of architecture and builders' magazines from the 1950s makes it clear that an increasing proportion were built with rather little space devoted to common areas or landscaping. Most of these denser complexes were infill projects in previously developed urban areas, but even complexes built in locations where land was readily available show a clear trend toward more intimate courtyards and less setback between the buildings and the street. Looking at the apartment developments honored in 1961 by *House and Home*, it is striking how little open space some of them had and how intimate the views were from inside the apartments.

In terms of their design and features, postwar garden apartments projected a modern, up-to-date image. Gone were the Colonial and other traditional styles often found on their prewar predecessors. Most postwar garden apartments were Modern in style or at least incorporated design elements associated with Modernism: flat roofs, planar surfaces, and finishes such as mill-finish aluminum and concrete or concrete block.

Large windows and sliding glass doors brought light into the interiors, created a sense of spaciousness, and allowed terraces and balconies to function as auxiliary rooms. Open floor plans, in which the distinctions among kitchen, dining room, and living room were often blurred, served similar purposes. Light colors, blond wood finishes, minimally textured walls, and scaled-down door and window trims completed the look on the interior.

Postwar garden apartments also strove to be modern by offering the latest appliances—dishwashers, garbage disposals, built-in stovetops and ovens, and large refrigerators—and incorporating other amenities that

[23] Samuel Paul, *Apartments: Their Design and Development* (New York: Reinhold, 1967), 45.

postwar Americans had come to desire in their residences, such as individually controlled heating and air conditioning, wall-to-wall carpeting, large closets, built-in storage, and fireplaces.

This marked a sharp break with past practices in apartment design. In earlier years, such appliances and amenities had been available only in luxury apartment buildings or single-family houses. Now technological innovation and lower manufacturing costs combined with rising incomes and expectations to redefine the appropriate standard of living for middle-class families.

There also was a market imperative, as the developers of postwar garden apartments were forced to compete with the single-family ranch house. Hence one finds, in architecture and building publications, a repeated emphasis on the home-like qualities of the postwar garden apartment. A 1952 California garden apartment was praised as "a luxurious modern house ... within an apartment" and six years later, in 1958, an architect observed that the goal of good apartment design was "privacy, a view, a degree of personal living"—just the qualities Americans expected in their houses. A decade later an apartment design textbook suggested that in the design of garden apartment buildings, "All details relate in scale to the single-family residence."[24]

The competitive pressures exerted by the popularity of the ranch house are clearly evident in a 1958 survey of garden apartment design trends published in *House and Home*, a builder's magazine. "Use the outdoors as you do with a house," the editors advised. This meant incorporating larger windows, sliding glass doors, floor-to-ceiling windows, and balconies and terraces. Privacy was important as well. In addition to giving each apartment its own entrance, builders were advised to place windows in a way that prevented residents from looking into adjacent apartments. And they were encouraged to offer recreational features (swimming pools, "play yards," and exercise facilities) and "bring the indoors up to date" with improved wiring, individual heating and cooling controls, modern kitchen appliances, and amenities such as fireplaces and carpeting.[25]

If these features now seem commonplace in apartments, it is in large part because the garden apartment of the 1950s and 1960s played a central role in popularizing and institutionalizing what had formerly been considered luxuries.

As in the 1920s, the term "garden apartment" was applied in the 1950s to a wide variety of apartment buildings, some of which bore little resemblance to each other. Some were direct descendants of the prewar garden apartment developments of the 1930s and 1940s, differing only in their embrace of Modern design.[26] Others were nondescript buildings that were garden apartments in name only. A 1951 article in *Architectural Forum*, for example, described an eight-unit apartment building in Atlanta as a garden apartment, yet its only claim to the label seems to be that it lacked interior corridors and provided each unit with its own exterior door, as in a motel.[27]

To some extent "garden apartment" was a marketing term as much as it was an architectural one. Often it was shorthand for a "modern" apartment building with features that could not be found on a typical urban apartment house.

By the 1950s, according to one researcher, the garden apartment "had clearly superseded the apartment house as the leading form of rental housing construction" in the United States.[28] By the early 1960s, this dominance was even stronger; in *House and Home*'s annual home design contest for 1961, all the winning

[24] "Oasis for Good Living," *House and Home* 1 (March 1952), 92; "Garden Apartments: Look How They've Changed," *House and Home* 13 (April 1958), 108; and Paul, *Apartments*, 109.

[25] "Garden Apartments: Look How They've Changed," 108-19.

[26] See, for example, an apartment complex in Golden Valley, Minnesota, described in "Valley Village," *House and Home* 2 (July 1952), 98-101. Its six buildings, which were two stories in height, were set amidst lawns with mature trees but did not have balconies or terraces.

[27] "Garden Apartments," *Architectural Forum* 95 (June 1951), 144-45.

[28] Horowitz, *The New Garden Apartment*, 18.

apartment designs were garden apartments. A year later, in the next edition of the magazine's design contest, one-third of all the entries (including single-family houses) were garden apartment or townhouse plans, a clear reflection not only of their rising popularity but also the fact that apartments represented the "fastest growing area in housing."

By the early 1960s, the nation's third apartment construction boom was well underway, having begun around the time that Villa Catalina was built. More apartments were built in the "suburbs" after 1962 than were built in cities, so that by 1980 the majority of the nation's multifamily dwelling units were located in suburban rather than urban locations—a complete reversal of the situation that prevailed on the eve of the Second World War.[29]

This trend was most pronounced in the Sunbelt, leading one scholar to describe that region as one of "gigantic apartment complexes."[30] It was fueled by rising employment opportunities in the cities and suburbs, mass-production construction methods that made it feasible to build large complexes efficiently, and road construction that opened up new land for development at relatively low prices.

The 1960s apartment boom, and the spread of garden apartments that accompanied it, also reflected demographic changes. Thanks to the baby boom, the population of young singles was rising, and many of these young adults were leaving their family homes to establish independent households. There also were growing numbers of older singles (thanks to rising divorce rates), married couples without children, and single parent households. And there was a relatively new category of household: the "empty nester" household of elderly couples or singles whose rising living standards allowed them to live on their own rather than with relatives.

The legalization of a new type of apartment ownership—the condominium—also helped propel the apartment boom. First appearing in Puerto Rico in 1958, the condominium principle received a major boost in 1962, when the Federal Housing Administration published a model state statute for condominium regulation. By 1970 most states had adopted the legislation. Unlike cooperatives, which were never built in significant numbers outside a handful of large cities, condominiums could be mortgaged. Their growing popularity (especially in cities with high real estate prices) helped weaken the stigma that had long been attached to apartments by undercutting the argument that apartment dwellers were temporary residents with no commitment to their neighborhood or community.

In the end, though, it was the garden apartment's popularity that drove the 1960s apartment boom. Between 1960 and 1978, nearly half (48.8%) of all rental units built in the United States were garden apartments.[31] By improving the appeal and therefore the image of apartments, garden apartments helped soften opposition to apartments on the part of city planners and politicians, paving the way for zoning changes in suburban areas that allowed apartment buildings to be built in increasing numbers. "The image of multiunit dwellings is increasingly positive, and large apartment complexes are an important element in many American cities," one researcher observed in 1986. "Residence there can be part of the 'good life,' not a way station, as technological and social amenities make multiunit complexes attractive places to live."[32]

Eventually the term "garden apartment" fell out of popular use and its meaning became diluted. Writing in 1983, one researcher defined the garden apartment complex as any apartment development whose buildings

[29] These data are from Larry R. Ford, "Multiunit Housing in the American City," *Geographical Review* 76, no. 4 (October 1986), 401-02, 407. Such data inevitably vary from study to study and source to source, owing to the use of different thresholds (the number of units in a building) for defining apartment buildings and multifamily buildings.

[30] Horowitz, *The New Garden Apartment*, 34-37.

[31] Horowitz, *The New Garden Apartment*, xv-xvi. This estimate was based on a generous definition of garden apartments that did not require them to have private balconies or terraces.

[32] Ford, "Multiunit Housing in the American City," 407.

were three stories or less in height, had common landscaped space in its plan, and provided a private or semi-private entry for each apartment. While many garden apartments had private balconies and terraces, he noted, such features were not required.[33]

That description could be applied to almost any apartment building or complex built in the last few decades—testimony to the garden apartment's impact on multifamily housing design in the United States. Without the postwar garden apartment, the modern low-rise apartment building as we know it today would not exist.

Architectural Significance of Villa Catalina

As described in Section 7, "Narrative Description," Villa Catalina was built with all of the features typically found on postwar garden apartments.

When it opened, Villa Catalina featured an attractively landscaped courtyard with recreational amenities that included two swimming pools, shuffleboard courts, and built-in barbecues. Garages provided parking for residents, and a parking lot did the same for visitors and service personnel. Every apartment had two terraces or balconies—front and rear.

The apartment interiors were open and spacious, and the combined living/dining area was a single space. Located at the front of the apartment, the living area looked out on the front terrace/balcony through a large bank of sliding glass doors. The kitchens were originally equipped with a full complement of modern appliances, including dishwashers and garbage disposals, and most apartments (all but the one-bedrooms and a few of the smaller two-bedrooms) had two bathrooms. All of the stairways up from the front entries were equipped with electric chair lifts.

Today Villa Catalina retains all of these distinguishing features of the postwar garden apartment. It also is a good example of Modern design as applied to low-rise apartment buildings. The deep eaves, long balconies with metal railings, and wide banks of sliding glass doors impart a strong horizontal thrust to the building facades.

This horizontality, which is characteristic of Modern buildings, is complemented by finishes and materials that are also typically Modern: unornamented brick walls, mill-finish aluminum sliding glass doors, steel casement windows with no trim other than a plain sill, open metal balcony railings, slab entry doors, and steel-and-concrete exterior stairways.

The hipped roofs are not a typical feature of Modern buildings, but their very low pitch greatly reduces their visual impact. Indeed, they are identifiable as hipped roofs only from a distance; from the Villa Catalina grounds, they appear to be flat roofs.

Development of Villa Catalina

Villa Catalina was conceived and designed by Lionel Mayell Tucson Enterprises, an Arizona subsidiary of the California-based Lionel Mayell Enterprises. Construction began in 1957 and for the first year of the project was carried out under the supervision of Mayell's company. Then, in the summer of 1958, Mayell sold his interest in the project to Villa Catalina Cooperatives, which completed the construction and handled most of the apartment sales.

The construction of Villa Catalina occurred in two phases that became known as Unit I and Unit II.

The land for Unit I was purchased by Mayell's company in March, July, and August 1957 from Ralph Eaton and Clarence A. Wheeler, who were partners with Mayell in the Villa del Coronado apartment complex in Phoenix that Mayell's company was just completing.

Construction of Unit I began in 1957 and was completed in 1959. It comprised the western half of the Villa Catalina complex: eleven apartment buildings (Buildings 3000 through 3020), the west swimming pool, two shuffleboard courts, the northwest garage, the west half of the south garage, and the heating and cooling plant. It also included one public restroom and one laundry room, both of which are now part of the

[33] Horowitz, *The New Garden Apartment*, 16-17.

north garage, suggesting that the north garage was also part of Unit I.[34]

A year into the project, in the summer of 1958, Mayell sold his interest in the project to Eaton, Wheeler, and two other Arizona businessmen, Kermit S. Oestreich and Bill Retts. The four men set up three corporate entities to handle the project: Villa Catalina Building Enterprises, of which Oestreich was president and which presumably was in charge of construction; Villa Catalina Property Enterprises, of which Wheeler was president and Eaton was secretary-treasurer (and which presumably was in charge of sales); and Villa Catalina Cooperatives, of which Retts was president and which was responsible for managing the completed complex.

By then Mayell had already purchased some of the land for Unit II; in March 1959 the Oestreich group purchased the remaining land. Construction work began that year, with a temporary masonry wall erected on the eastern perimeter of Unit I to control noise and dust. Work on the last apartment building (525) began in 1961.[35]

Unit II comprised the remaining nine apartment buildings in the Villa Catalina complex (3022 through 3024, 521, and 525), the east pool and east shuffleboard court, the northeast garage, the parking lot, and the east half of the south garage.

In the design of its apartment buildings, Villa Catalina was virtually a copy of Villa del Coronado, Mayell's other Arizona cooperative development which was completed in 1957. Villa del Coronado, in turn, was in many respects a copy of a Mayell project in Pasadena, California: Villa San Pasqual, which was completed in 1955.

Exactly who was responsible for the design used for these three complexes is not clear. According to a history of Villa Catalina written by one of its residents, the architect who signed the plans for Villa Catalina, Bert M. Thorud of Phoenix, conceived the design for all three complexes. However, a Phoenix newspaper in 1955 identified Gene Cline, of Los Angeles, as the author of the design, which was first used at Villa San Pasqual and then at Villa del Coronado.[36]

All three of these Mayell apartment complexes feature nearly identical two-story building plans, and they share the same distinguishing features: long balconies with identical railing designs, low-pitch hipped roofs, sliding glass doors, and windows. The facades of Villa Catalina's two-story buildings are identical to those at Villa del Coronado and nearly identical to those at Villa San Pasqual. (On the latter, the front stairways and second-floor front entries are exterior rather than interior.)

As noted earlier, Villa Catalina was conceived and marketed as a luxury apartment complex. All apartments came with air conditioning and heat provided by a central plant (located in the south garage), and they featured "new sound-conditioning construction" such as heavier floors and walls.

All but the smallest apartments (those with one bedroom and a few of the two-bedrooms) had two bathrooms with ceramic tile, glass-enclosed showers, and vanities. All kitchens were equipped with dishwashers, built-in ranges and ovens, and garbage disposals. Every front stairway was equipped with an electric chair lift.

Purchasers at Villa Catalina were given some choices for the finishes and features of their apartments,

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[34] In a history of Villa Catalina compiled by one of its residents in 1998, the completion dates of the individual garage buildings were not noted.

[35] Whether Building 525 was completed in 1961 or 1962 is not clear. The history of Villa Catalina reports that construction of Unit II was completed in 1962; records at the Pima County Assessor give 1961 as the "effective construction date" of the last building in Unit II to be erected, which could refer either to the start date or to the end date of construction.

[36] "City To Get $2½ Million Apartment," *Arizona Republic*, 9 October 1955, page 1. This is the only source linking Cline with any of these Mayell projects; research in California has failed to identify the architect of Villa San Pasqual, which is now a Pasadena city landmark. Cline was not licensed to practice in Arizona, so he could not have signed the plans for Villa del Coronado; the building permit applications for Villa del Coronado were signed by Mayell employees.

and they were allowed to alter the floor plans as well. One purchaser combined two apartments into one, and two others reconfigured pairs of two-bedroom apartments into a three-bedroom apartment and a one-bedroom apartment.

In promoting Villa Catalina to buyers, all of the early sales brochures emphasized the complex's modern features and amenities—Mayell described the apartments as "modern as tomorrow morning"—and the views and recreational opportunities afforded by the attractive courtyard.

As described in the sales literatures, the rooms were spacious and well illuminated by natural light flowing through the sliding glass doors. There was ample closet space and built-in storage, the "romance" of private balconies and terraces, and the amenities offered in the courtyard. The living-dining area had "simplicity of line" and was "free-flowing," while "every palatial plate glass door and window frames a serene and delightful vista."

In addition, the early sales materials prepared by Mayell's company promoted cooperative apartment ownership. Purchasers would "enjoy the luxury and convenience of apartment living plus the comfort and security of home ownership," Mayell proclaimed. A cooperative apartment was more secure than a single-family detached house, Mayell argued—it was "a home you can leave at a moment's notice for a day, a month, a year in the knowledge that your home will be secure, warm and inviting upon your return."

At the same time, Mayell's literature reassuringly pointed out that cooperative apartments still came with many of the benefits of home ownership. Villa Catalina was "in the center of Tucson's most fashionable residential neighborhood [El Encanto Estates]" and "there is always a ready and profitable resale should circumstances require you to move to another city."

Most importantly, cooperative ownership offered substantial savings—what Mayell called "luxury with economy." By pooling the buying power of all the owners, Villa Catalina residents would enjoy substantial savings on insurance, utilities, and building and landscape maintenance costs. The monthly maintenance charges at Villa Catalina, which included all utilities, offered "savings that will amaze compared with the same costs in a detached home in an inferior location."

Sales of apartments began even before Unit I was completed, and they continued through the remainder of the construction period. Oestreich and his three partners were turned down for loans by Tucson banks, which were leery of the cooperative ownership arrangement (Villa Catalina was Tucson's first cooperative apartment complex). Lacking financing for their project, they were forced to rely on the income from cash sales to pay for construction.

Prices for Unit I started at $19,900 (for one-bedroom apartments) and went as high as $33,900 (for three-bedroom apartments.) They were raised when Unit II went on sale in 1959. By then the price range was from $22,900 for one-bedroom apartments to $35,900 for three-bedroom apartments. At these prices, Villa Catalina apartments were substantially more expensive than most single-family houses in the city; in 1960, according to the Census Bureau, the median value of an owner-occupied home in Tucson was just $11,600.

While the complex was being built, it was managed directly by Villa Catalina Cooperatives. In the summer of 1962, administrative control was turned over to a Board of Governors elected by the apartment owners. The board's first annual budget was $88,042, and the initial monthly maintenance fees charged for each apartment ranged from $49.75 to $77.25.

Like most owner-occupied apartment complexes at the time, Villa Catalina enforced some restrictions on the occupancy and purchase of apartments. It was conceived as a seniors-only complex and sold as such (even though sales brochures did not mention the restriction). And apartment owners were allowed to rent their units only with the approval of the board. In 1963 a "Screening Committee" was established to vet new purchasers, who had to be approved by the board.[37]

[37] Villa Catalina remains a seniors-only complex today, but the practice of screening potential purchasers has been abandoned. Rentals continue to be permitted under certain conditions.

The fact that the apartments at Villa Catalina were offered for sale rather than rental made the complex an unusual one in Tucson. In 1950 only 52 of the city's 1,381 apartments in buildings with five or more units were owner-occupied. By 1960 that number had barely risen, to 173 out of a total of 1,573 apartments. A good portion of that increase was accounted for by Villa Catalina.

Just after Villa Catalina was completed, in 1962, the Arizona Legislature legalized condominiums, which unlike cooperative apartments can be individually mortgaged. Until then, the mortgage restrictions on cooperatives (which could not be purchased with individual conventional mortgages) greatly undercut their market appeal. As noted in a 1964 study of housing in Phoenix, the appeal of "sales apartments" was "with almost no exception" limited to single adults and older couples—a characterization that certainly applied to Villa Catalina.

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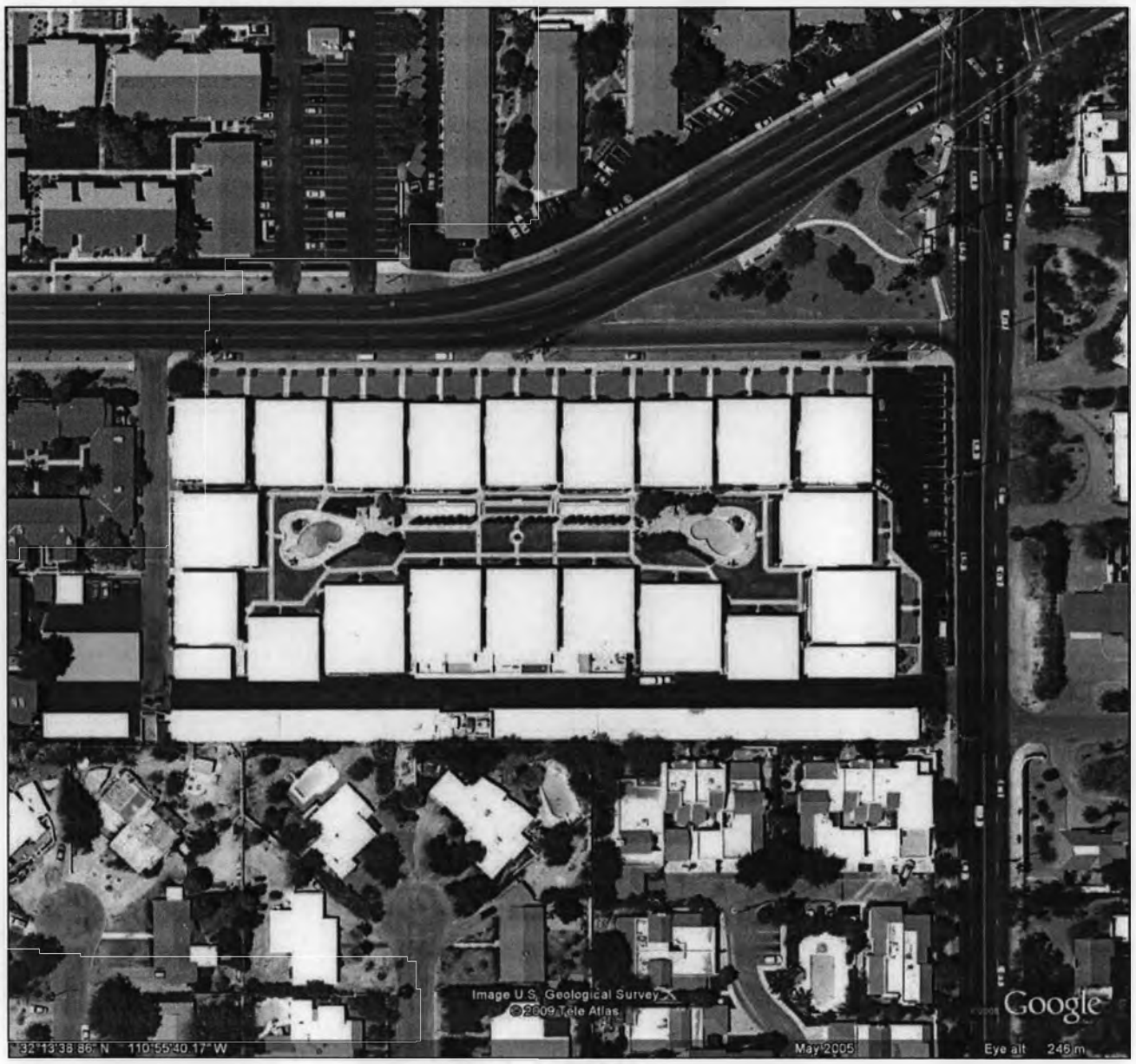
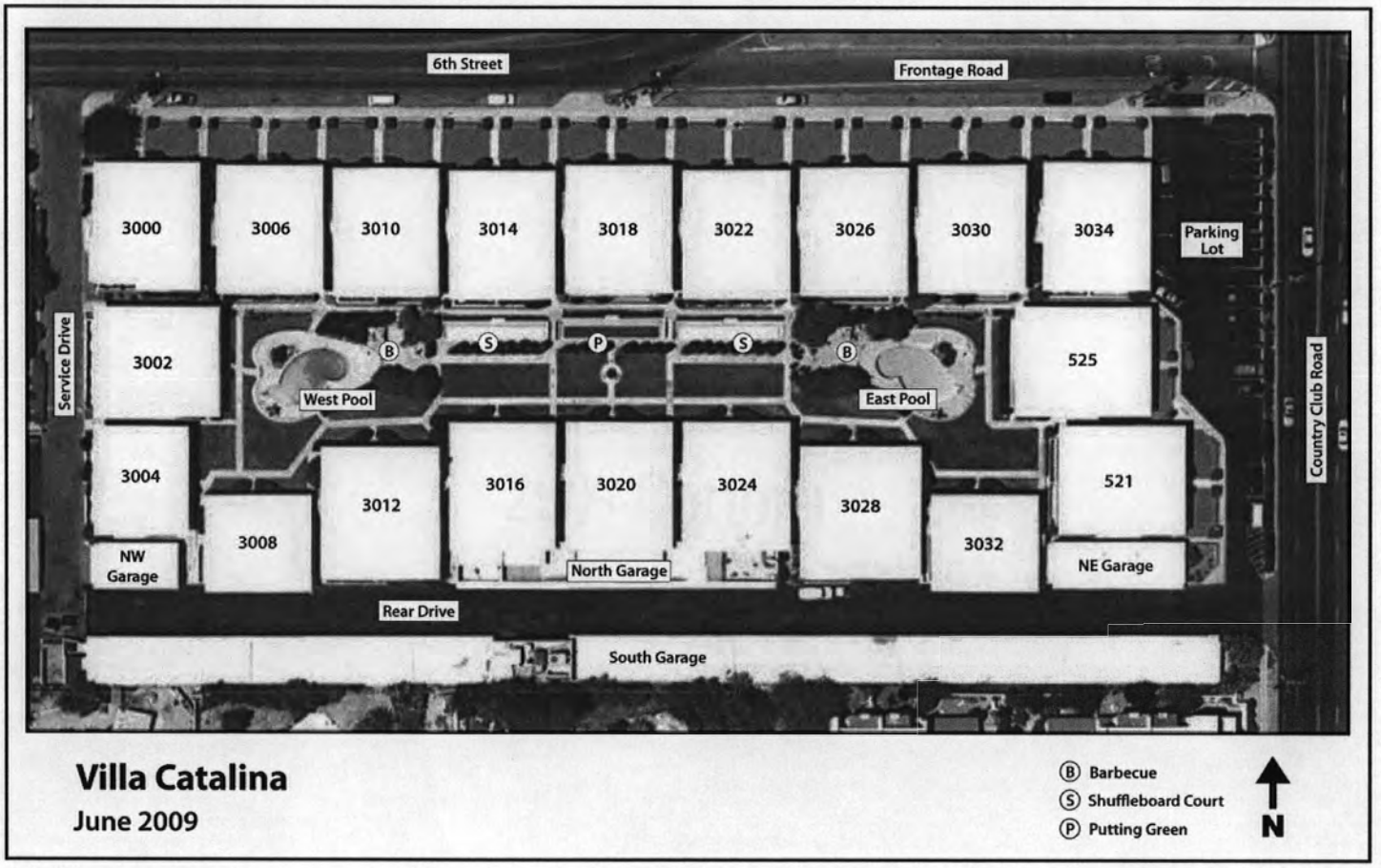
Aerial Photograph

Photograph taken in May 2005 and downloaded from Google Earth in June 2009. The top of the image is North.

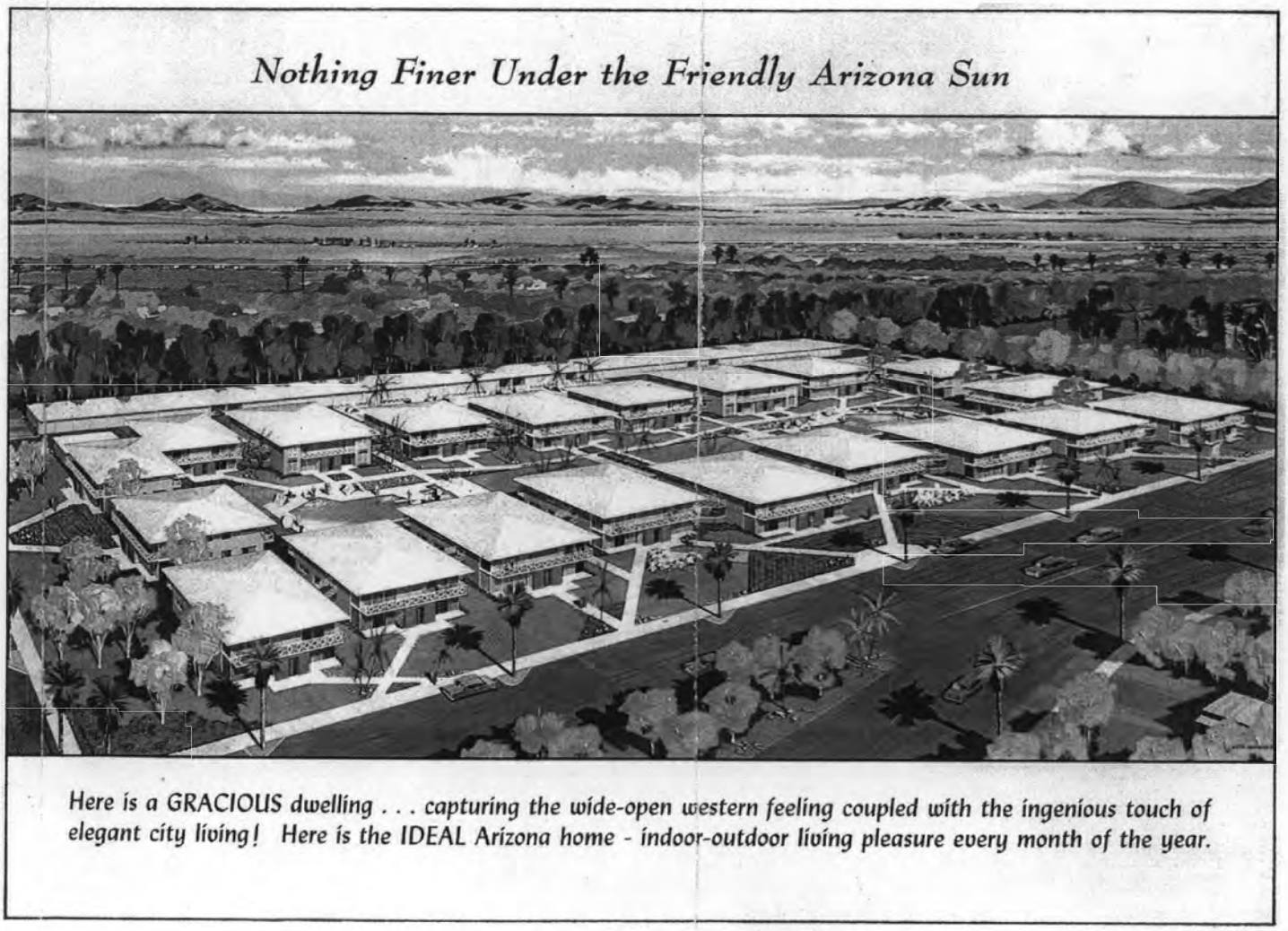


Site Plan

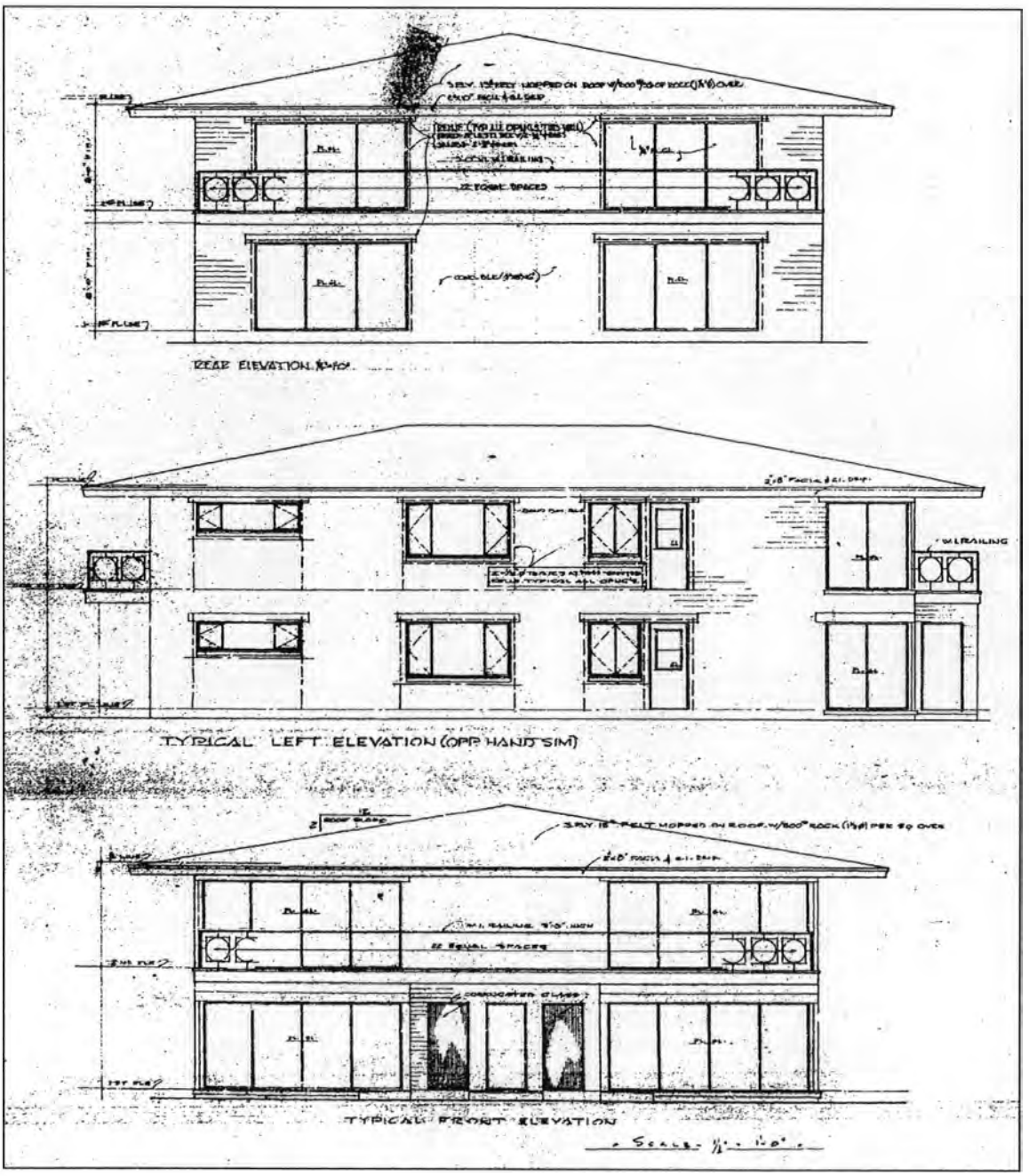

6th Street
Frontage Road
3000
3006
3010
3014
3018
3022
3026
3030
3034
Parking Lot
Service Drive
3002
B
S
P
S
B
525
West Pool
East Pool
Country Club Road
3004
3012
3016
3020
3024
3028
521
3008
3032
NW Garage
North Garage
NE Garage
Rear Drive
South Garage
Villa Catalina
June 2009
B Barbecue
S Shuffleboard Court
P Putting Green
N

Historical Images

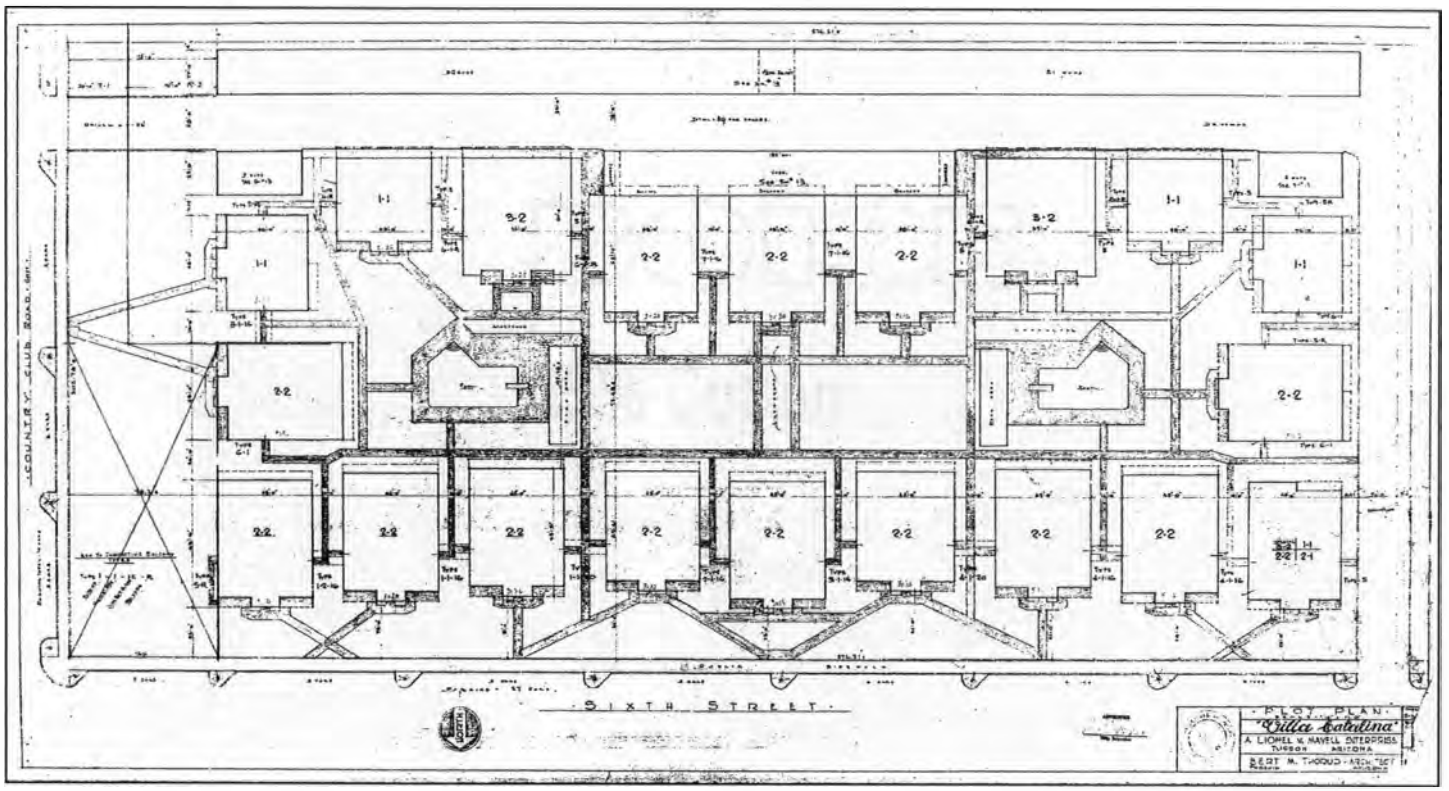
Rendering of the Villa Catalina apartment complex from an early sales brochure prepared by Lionel Mayell Tucson Enterprises, in either 1957 or 1958.



Original elevations for a representative two-story apartment building at Villa Catalina, from City of Tucson building records.



Original plot plan for Villa Catalina, from City of Tucson building records; the bottom of the plan is North. It does not reflect a subsequent enlargement of Building 521 (the uppermost apartment building on the left-hand side) or the addition of the parking lot (on the left-hand side between Country Club Road and the complex).



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Villa Catalina

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARIZONA, Pima

DATE RECEIVED: 11/13/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/01/09
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/16/09 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/27/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09001114

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

✓ ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT 12-22-09 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA_____

REVIEWER_____ DISCIPLINE_____

TELEPHONE_____ DATE_____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO, AZ
PHOTO 1 OF 17

0-015234 N-AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_0

GSCC12>

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 2 OF 17

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO. AZ
PHOTO 3 of 17

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
Photo 4 of 17

0-015234 N-AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina_8

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VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 5 OF 17

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GSCC12

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO, AZ
PHOTO 6 of 17

0-015234 N-AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina.01

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VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 7 OF 17

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VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 8 OF 17

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 9 OF 17

0-015234 N-AZ_PimaCounty_VillaCatalina 1

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TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
PHOTO 10 of 17

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VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
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VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
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TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
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VILLA CATALINA
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TUCSON, PIMA CO, AZ.
PHOTO 16 of 17

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO., AZ
Photo 17 of 17

VILLA CATALINA
TUCSON, PIMA CO, AZ
UTM - ZONE 12 E506788 N 356652

12-

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

TUCSON QUADRANGLE
ARIZONA-PIMA CO.
7.5-MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Topography compiled 1954. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1996 and other sources. Public Land Survey System and survey control current as of 1981. Boundaries current as of 2000

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 12
2 500-meter ticks: Arizona Coordinate System of 1983 (central zone)

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Houses of worship, schools, and other labeled buildings verified 1981

UTM GRID AND 2001 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

20% TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ARIZONA
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3
4		5
6	7	8

1 Jaynes
2 Tucson North
3 Sabino Canyon
4 Cat Mountain
5 Tucson East
6 San Xaiver Mission
7 Tucson SW
8 Tucson SE

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway hard surface
Secondary highway hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U.S. Route
State Route

INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 2002

TUCSON, AZ
1996
NIMA 3848 III NW-SERIES V898

ISBN 0-607-94811-6

Arizona® State Parks

"Managing and conserving Arizona's natural, cultural and recreational resources"

November 9, 2009

Janet Matthews
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th Floor (MS 2280)
Washington, D.C. 20005-5905

RE: Three National Register Nominations:

Villa del Coronado	Palm Lane Gardens	Villa Catalina
Maricopa County	Maricopa County	Pima County

Dear Ms. Matthews:

I am pleased to resubmit three National Register of Historic Places nominations form for the properties referenced above.

The Villa del Coronado nomination includes 16 contributing buildings 2 structures, 2 objects, and 4 noncontributing structures; Palm Lane Gardens has 11 buildings and 2 structures; and Villa Catalina has 24 contributing buildings, 6 structures, and 1 noncontributing structure.

These three nominations share a common historic context related to the development of the garden apartment. They are not, however, associated with an existing multiple property documentation form.

Accompanying documentation is enclosed, as required. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact me at wcollins@azstateparks.gov.

Sincerely,

William S. Collins

William S. Collins, Ph.D.
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State Historic Preservation Office

encl.

Arizona State Parks
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Phoenix, AZ 85007

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AZStateParks.com

800.285.3703 from (520 & 928) area codes

General Fax:
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Director's Office Fax:
602.542.4188