

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 9 1986

date entered NOV 19 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Paseo Víctor Rojas

and or common El Fuerte, Paseo de Damas

2. Location

street & number calle Gonzalo Marín at Avenida De Diego N/A not for publication

city, town Arecibo — vicinity of N/A

state Puerto Rico code 072 county Arecibo code 0090

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Municipal Government

street & number Municipality of Arecibo

city, town Arecibo — vicinity of N/A state Puerto Rico

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number Arecibo Government Center

city, town Arecibo state Puerto Rico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Hist. Arch. Survey of Arecibo has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date July, 1985  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records P.R.S.H.P.O.

city, town San Juan state Puerto Rico

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Paseo Víctor Rojas, is a roughly rectangular promenade with a curved east side, oriented on the east-west axis. Originally, the south side consisted of a wide flight of steps that led to the shore at the mouth of the Río Grande de Arecibo. By 1889, the stone balustrade containing the other sides of the promenade was extended to form a formal, defined space. This balustrade consisted of a series of large pedestals, connected by a rail and many small balusters imitating simplified pedestals. Within the periphery of the public space, circular planters with coconut palms are placed alternate with slab-benches. Access to the promenade is gained on the western, squared end, by means of a central set of four steps. Flanking the steps is a pair of pedestals supporting marble lions. Further emphasizing the entrance is a pair of wide, shallow, decorative urns, one on each of the pedestals which terminate the balustrade. Originally, smaller, neo-classical urns adorned the tops of the balustrade pedestals, but all were lost in the Hurricane of San Ciriaco in 1899.

After the Hurricane the Paseo was enlarged following the original design. It is at this time that the southern steps were closed by balusters. The Paseo Víctor Rojas has not been altered since, only maintenance work has been carried out.

At the center of the semi-circular east end, a large, square planter serves as a base for a monument dedicated to Víctor Rojas. The monument consists of a podium which supports a Doric-column pedestal and a bronze bust of the Arecibo hero to whom the Paseo is dedicated.

Modern lighting fixtures and a small concrete structure for utilities were added in recent years. These are non contributing elements but do not affect the Paseo's integrity.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates**      1881-1899                      **Builder/Architect**      unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Paseo de Damas (Ladies' Promenade) was built in 1881 over the ruins of the Old San Miguel Fort, a cannon platform built by the Spanish government as a result of a British attack on the town in 1702. Materials from the fort, demolished during the mid-19th century, were used in the construction of the promenade. Even today, the people of Arecibo refer to the Plaza as "El Fuerte" (The Fort). The circular section of the promenade, originally called "La Glorieta" (The Gazebo), was commissioned by Mayor Luis de Elao in 1873 as a monument to the old fort. In 1881, the remaining ruins of the Fort were demolished and the promenade was constructed to its full length, incorporating a wide flight of steps at the south side, which led to the banks of the Río Grande de Arecibo.

The promenade has suffered very few alterations since construction. The major change consists of the elimination of the steps to the bank of the river, shortly after Hurricane San Ciriaco devastated the town and the Paseo in 1899. The Paseo de Damas was then reconstructed and at its entrance were placed the two marble lions brought from Spain 1861 which stood at the feet of the monument to Queen Isabel II of Spain, at the town main plaza. The promenade has since acquired the name "Paseo Víctor Rojas", after the monument erected in honor of humble fisherman who dedicated himself to rescuing shipwrecked navigators off the dangerous coast, and who was honored by the Kings and Queens of Europe and by Presidents of America for his heroic tasks.

The Paseo has achieved significance because of its location on the site of the ancient fortifications of Arecibo, its construction with the materials of the old fort, and its status as the only public space constructed solely for the Isabellian (equivalent to the British Victorian) pastime of strolling through natural landscapes. In addition, it stands close to the site (now disappeared) used by the legendary Víctor Rojas as a departure point for his rescue operations. This monument is the only place in the island related to this man's heroic tasks.

Every year Arecibo's Government sponsors a swimming contest to commemorate Víctor Rojas. The contestants swim across the River departing from the Paseo.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Del Campo Blanco, Félix Julián; Un Paseo por el Arecibo de Ayer; ed. ALMACA, Arecibo, 1985  
Limón de Arce, José; Arecibo Histórico; ed. Rosado; Manatí, 1935

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Arecibo

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

A 

1	9	7	4	1	5	9	0	2	0	4	4	1	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification SEE ENCLOSED LOCATION PLAN

North - De Diego Avenue East - Arecibo River Mouth, Víctor Rojas Ave.  
South - Gonzalon Marín St. West - Unnamed Street

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Félix Julián del Campo Blanco/Héctor Santiago

organization State Historic Preservation Office

date August 26, 1986

street & number Box 82, La Fortaleza

telephone (809) 721-3737

city or town San Juan

state Puerto Rico

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Mariano G. Coronas Castro

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date August 26, 1986

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

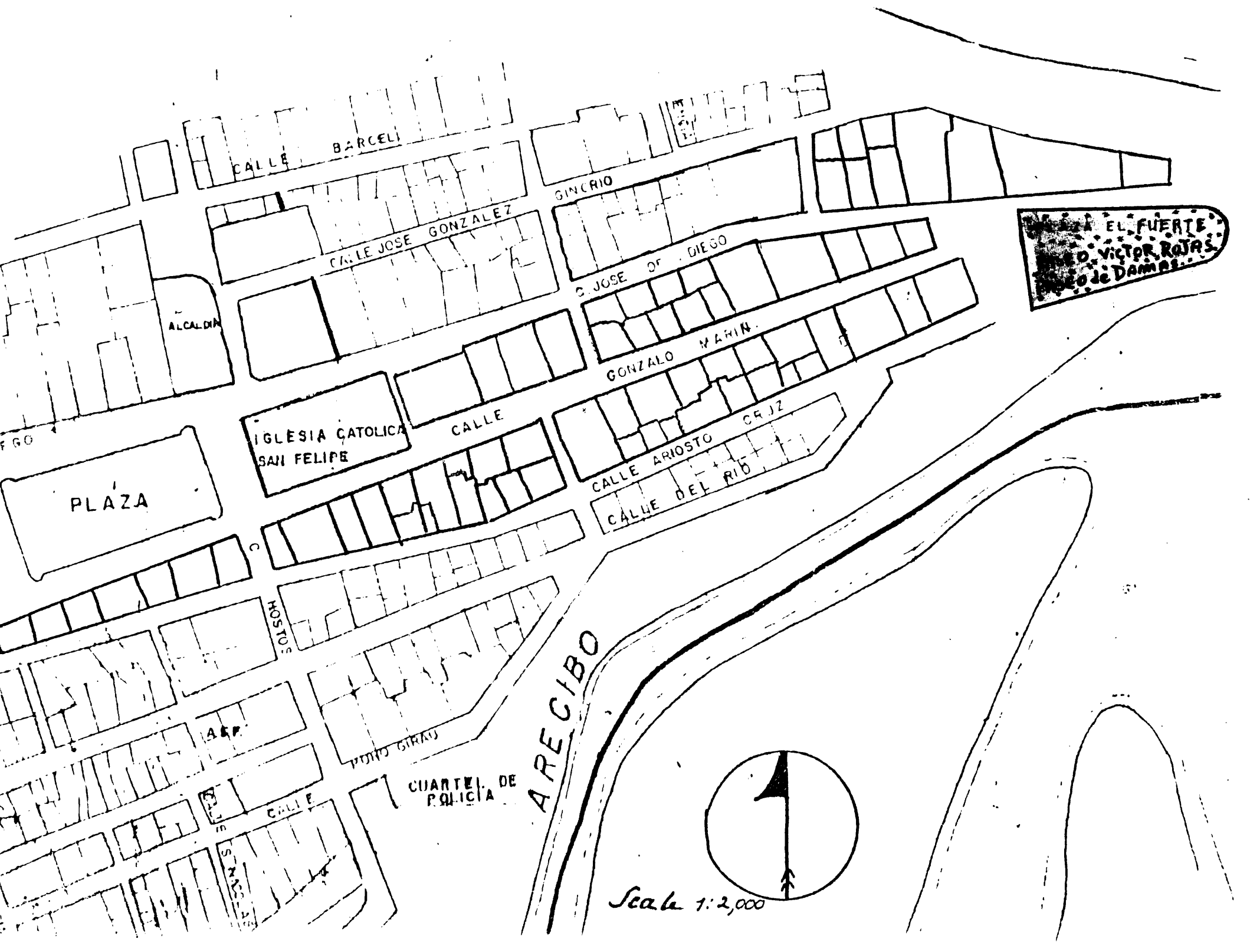
date 11/19/86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



CALLE BARCELO

CALLE JOSE GONZALEZ

GINCRIO

C. JOSE OF DIEGO

GONZALO MARIN

CALLE ARIOSTO CRUZ

CALLE DEL RIO

ALCALDIA

IGLESIA CATOLICA  
SAN FELIPE

CALLE

PLAZA

HOSIOS

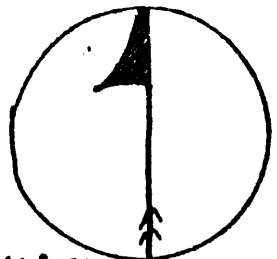
A.P.

PONTO GIRAS

CUARTEL DE  
POLICIA

ARECIBO

EL FUERTE  
DE VICTOR RAJAS  
DE LAS DAMAS



Scale 1:2,000