

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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.

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### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments

Other names/site number: Catalina Foothills Condominiums

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

### 2. Location

Street & number: 2600 E Skyline Drive

City or town: Tucson State: AZ County: Pima

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<u>James W. Garrison</u>	<u>14 JULY 2015</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>AZ STATE PARKS / SHPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

  
Signature of the Keeper

9/8/15  
Date of Action

**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

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

OTHER: Mexican Colonial

### Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Walls (structure): Concrete masonry units (CMU)

Foundation: Concrete

Roof: Built-up; Clay Tile

Windows: Steel

Wall Sheathing: Stucco

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

### Summary Paragraph

Originally designed as vacation rentals, Mexican architect Juan Wørner Baz was commissioned by John and Helen Murphey in 1963 to design the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments (now condominiums). The well-preserved 5.42-acres site features Mexican Colonial-style architecture and includes 85 contributing resources—two residential compounds (24 units total), one caretaker's residence, one outbuilding (laundry), one free-standing communal carport, one koi pond, two waterfalls, one swimming pool, one ramada, one half wall (entrance), three mailbox stands, 37 decorative free-standing pillars, and 32 decorative statues—and two non-contributing resources—one contemporary soundwall and one contemporary metal courtyard fence. The property retains integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association [See Continuation Sheets 7.1 through 7.17].

### Narrative Description

**Location:** The property is located at 2600 E. Skyline Drive, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. Specifically, the property is situated within Township 13 South, Range 14 E, Section 8, as depicted on the 7.5' *Tucson North* USGS topographic quadrangle. The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments are located on the south side of East Skyline Drive, immediately west of the intersection of North Campbell Avenue and East Skyline Drive.

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u>69</u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>83</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Apartments are located on the south side of East Skyline Drive, immediately west of the intersection of North Campbell Avenue and East Skyline Drive.

**Setting:** The property was platted in 1962 as the Catalina Foothills Estates No. 6 subdivision—a division of the larger Catalina Foothills development project undertaken by John and Helen Murphey. In keeping with design guidelines established by the Murpheys for their foothills development, retention of native vegetation and buildings that adapted to the local topography, were adhered to during the design, construction, and occupational history of the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments (the apartments). Even during the time of its construction in the early 1960s, the apartments were surrounded by desert vegetation and large expanses of undeveloped land. An extensive landscape project, part of the original design of the complex, added an additional layer of lush vegetation to the setting. Over time, modern residential and commercial development has grown up around the property, but despite encroaching development, the site's native desert vegetation, designed landscape, and open land has been retained. In the mid-2000s, a Pima County transportation improvement project along Skyline Drive resulted in the construction of an 8-foot soundwall along the northern perimeter of the apartment complex and resulted in the reorientation of the complex entry to the west of the subdivision. In addition, a large privacy wall was constructed along the east side of the property.

**Design:** The 5.42-acres site includes 83 contributing resources—two residential compounds (24 units total), one caretaker's residence, one outbuilding (laundry), one free-standing communal carport, one koi pond, two waterfalls, one swimming pool, one ramada, one half wall (entrance), three mailbox stands, 37 decorative free-standing pillars, and 32 decorative statues—and two non-contributing resources—one contemporary soundwall and one contemporary metal courtyard fence.

*Residential Compounds:* The largest, and earliest (1963), of the residential compounds is situated at the center of the property. The 16-unit compound is centered on an extensive landscaped courtyard designed by Japanese master gardener, Taro Akutagawa, and units are evenly divided to flank the northern and southern margins of the courtyard. Each single-story, u-shaped unit shares at least one common wall with an adjacent unit, are constructed of concrete-masonry units (CMU) sheathed in a smooth plaster finish with a low-sloped roof, have a primary entrance facing away from the shared courtyard, contain a small integrated courtyard at their façade protected by a clay-tiled overhang, and integrated carports, many of which contain cantera stone statuary supporting the carport overhang. At the rear of each unit and facing the courtyard, are individual patio spaces covered by clay-tiled overhangs and enclosed by lush vegetation, stacked rock retaining walls, and small water features resembling natural creekbeds. End units also feature French doors that open to small balconies facing out and away from the compound. Interior units feature glass curtain walls that face towards the shared courtyard.

The second residential compound was constructed a year later in 1964 and features a rectangular block of 8, two-story units facing north towards East Skyline Drive. These units are also constructed of CMU with a smooth plaster finish, capped by a low-sloped roof. The units feature recessed, second story, integrated balconies constructed of CMU and wood, on both the north and south elevations, and a ground-level terrace facing south. At the primary façade, the roofline

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contains a shallow slope covered in clay tiles, and the roofline is punctuated with projecting chimneys featuring decorative tops. The east and west elevations contain floor-to-ceiling fixed picture windows, as well as small fixed, arched triptych-style windows.

*Caretaker's Residence (1963):* This boxy, v-shaped free standing building features a partially-enclosed entry-facing courtyard and a ground-level rear terrace. Walls are constructed of CMU sheathed in a smooth plaster finish, capped by a low-pitched roof and clay-tiled porch overhangs supported by decorative wood beams and eaves. The primary façade features v-shaped window walls, providing unobstructed views of a small courtyard and decorative cantera stone fountain. Also on the primary façade, the roof is populated with cantera stone sculptures forming a semicircle. The east and west elevations feature casement windows and geometric wall niches. The rear terrace is elevated above a manmade pond and waterfall (now dry), surrounded by large boulders and lush native vegetation.

*Laundry Building (1963):* The laundry building is located near the far south-central side of the property. The free standing building features a square one-room floorplan constructed of CMU with a smooth plaster finish. The walls narrow at the roofline where they meet a low-pitched roof with dramatically projecting wood eaves. The base of the walls is wider and buttressed by a bench-like protrusion around the perimeter of the foundation. The roofline is supported by both clearstory windows that wrap around three sides of the building, and a series of linear wood beams.

*Communal Carport (1963):* The multi-car carport is located near the far southwestern corner of the property. It features a solid east wall of CMU supporting a shed roof. Two scalloped half walls on the north and south elevations mirror the scalloped parapets located atop the adjacent apartments. The angled roof overhang is also supported by cantera stone statues.

*Water features (Koi pond, waterfalls and swimming pool [1963]):* The property features two large designed landscapes that include four water features. Within the central compound is a Japanese-inspired koi pond that wraps around a covered seating area and immediately west of the communal swimming pool. The surface of the pond is flush with the surrounding poured concrete patio and is filled with aquatic plants, fish, boulders, and is traversed by a flat concrete bridge edged in wood trim. At the far western edge of the pond is a rock-lined waterfall that feeds the pond. The pond is also softened by lush vegetation, and punctuated by geometric pillars, as well as statuary of animals and people.

Directly east and adjacent to the pond is a slightly L-shaped swimming pool backed by a tall 6-ft concrete wall featuring an abstract relief of a bull head and horns. The relief continues below the water line and is visible to those swimming in the pool. The top of the back wall has shallow niches fed by a narrow aqueduct that allow water to drip down and across the relief and into the pool. Additional water to the pool is fed through a decorative pillar with a spillway.

A second waterfall is located downslope and immediately south of the caretaker's residence. It is constructed of both stacked and upright granitic boulders and drains into a semi-circular two-foot deep pool. At present, the waterfall and associated pool is dry.

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*Ramada, Entry Wall, and Mailbox Stands (1963):* At the southwest corner of the swimming pool is a rectangular ramada. The structure is supported by metal pillars sunk into concrete footers sheathed in stucco capped by a flat roof covered in a lattice-work of wood beams in varying widths marked by decorative ends. Directly below and inside the footprint of the ramada is a brick patio inserted into the concrete pool decking.

At the former entrance of the property at East Skyline Drive is a curvilinear half wall constructed of CMU sheathed in plaster. The half wall once marked entry into the property and followed the curve of the former entrance. In addition, the property also retains the original mailbox foundations constructed of wood beams with decorative carved ends that match the same decorative ends of the pool ramada.

*Objects (statues and pillars [1963]):* One of the most striking features of this property and a key signature of Mexican Colonial architecture is the use of statuary and decorative objects in the landscape. The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments exhibits the highest number of decorative objects of all of the Mexican Colonial properties in Tucson. The property includes 32 cantera stone statues—of both animals and people—located throughout the property. These statues were designed by Wørner Baz and manufactured in Guadalajara, Mexico. In addition, there are 37 decorative plaster and lathe pillars throughout the property. These pillars are sheathed in stucco and feature a boxy plan capped by flatted tops that flare out around all four sides of the object. Like the statues they appear to be randomly placed throughout the property, but some are used to demarcate parking areas and driveways.

**Workmanship:** The property exhibits many unique character-defining features including cantilevered overhangs, hand-carved beams and doors, glass window walls, corner windows, pocket doors, cantera stone statuary, relief sculpture, Japanese-inspired gardens and water features, wall niches, rounded and elongated tryptic windows, and decorative chimney tops.

**Materials:** Concrete masonry units sheathed in plaster is the predominant material used throughout the site. Additional materials include terra cotta tiles above window overhangs, glass window walls, carved wood beams with decorative rafter ends, cantera stone statuary, and fired brick for patios and terraces, and poured concrete for walkways.

**Feeling:** The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments retain and reinforce the site's original design of being a private oasis in the desert. Because this property was originally designed to serve as vacation rentals for wealthy winter visitors, individual privacy was a key component of the design and this was achieved through V and U-shaped floorplans with individual courtyards, terracing, and lush vegetation. Furthermore, because this property continues to abide by strict design guidelines enforced by its homeowner's association, the property exhibits an incredibly high degree of physical integrity. As a result of these design guidelines, nearly all of the property's original Mexican Colonial design and all of its character-defining features have been preserved in place. Over the last 50 years the property's vegetation has continued to mature, and as such, the property stands out as a rare residential gem protected and secluded by lush landscaping.



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**Association:** The Catalina Foothills Estates No. 6 Apartments are associated with a Tucson-specific architectural style—Mexican Colonial—introduced by Mexican architect, Juan Wørner Baz. Wørner Baz created his own unique architectural style to fit Tucson’s desert landscape, while simultaneously fulfilling both his and the Murpheys design ambitions. This property represents the first and most expansive of the Mexican Colonial multi-family housing projects in Tucson designed by Baz while working for the Murpheys. Additionally, it features the highest percentage of statuary of any of the Mexican Colonial properties in Tucson (a key feature of Mexican Colonial architecture), and further it retains the highest level of physical integrity of any of Wørner Baz’ local projects.

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**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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Period of Significance**

1963-1964  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1963-1964  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Juan Wørner Baz (architect)  
John and Helen Murphey (developer and builder)  
Taro Akutagawa (landscape designer)  
J. Thomas Via (site preparation and planner)

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### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

#### **Criterion C: The Mexican Colonial Architecture of Tucson, Arizona**

The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments meet the qualifications for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, at the local level of significance, as the property retains a high degree of historical significance and integrity as the first multi-family residential property in Tucson exhibiting Mexican Colonial architecture. The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments (now Catalina Foothills Condominiums [owner-occupied]) was designed by Mexican architect Juan Wørner Baz (or Bas) during his tenure as the lead architect for John and Helen Murphey. In addition, all of the character-defining features that encapsulate Mexican Colonial architecture, and all aspects of its construction dating between 1963 and 1964, have been retained at the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, and are clearly articulated in later Mexican Colonial designs that can be seen throughout the Catalina Foothills and City of Tucson.

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

#### **Development of Mexican Colonial Architecture in Tucson**

On 14 October 1928, Juan Wørner Baz (1928-2014) was born to a Swedish father and Mexican mother. Like his sister, Marysol Wørner Baz, one of Mexico's critically acclaimed surrealist artists (including designing the mural at the Kitt Peak Observatory Visitor's Center [1964]), Wørner Baz was also inheritably artistic, graduating from the National Autonomous University of Mexico in the 1950s with a degree in architecture, landscape architecture, and interior design. During his early career, he studied with the "grandfather of Texas Modernism," architect David Williams and his earliest known projects included the Continental Hilton in Mexico City, and an addition to movie star Delores Del Rio's home. It was at the opening of the Hilton Hotel that Wørner Baz met John and Helen Murphey. According to Wørner Baz, "John began liking a lot of the things he saw, and it just happened that I was the one who did them" (4 November 1984, *Arizona Daily Star*). Despite the fact that his only solo project at the time was an addition for Delores Del Rio, Helen initiated the meeting with Wørner Baz, remarking that his work was "...just beautiful," and both she and John immediately hired him to design their new home in the Catalina Foothills.

Baz' Tucson architectural debut, Casa Juan Paisano (roughly translated as, "the house of my countryman John"), also known as the Murphey House, was completed in 1961. The new home was built on the land the Murpheys had reserved expressly for this purpose. The home took over a year to build, and when completed, the Murphey's new residence was a hybridization of modernist and revival architecture—two style combinations unique to Tucson and unique to the architects typically associated with the Murpheys (including Josias Joesler and Roy Place). With Casa Juan Paisano, the collaborative efforts of Wørner Baz and the Murphey's resulted in a modernist expression of a traditional Mexican hacienda.

This fortuitous meeting resulted in not only the commission of at least 14 projects in Tucson by the Murpheys and others, but also resulted in the creation of a new architectural style that considered both Tucson's desert environment and its Spanish heritage. Moreover the relationship

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with and patronage of the Murpheys provided Wørner Baz with the financial support to create an architectural style crafted specifically for Tucson. Wørner Baz described his own style as “Mexican Colonial”, explaining his personal style thusly,

Mexican Colonial architecture is made up of several parts...there is tremendous power in it. It is massive and holds to the ground. That part definitely comes to us from the Aztecs. Spanish architecture itself has two branches. From the religious we get the grandeur, from the Arabic, the delicacy. The Arabs are wonderful in handling the sun. They use screens beautifully. And water. They are masters with so much flair (4 November 1984, *Arizona Daily Star*).

While Wørner Baz described his own work as Mexican Colonial, his description does not tell the whole story. Certainly his Mexican Colonial work shares many similarities with Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, but it differs in that it is intrinsically modern in its engineering and functionality. At the height of its popularity in Tucson (1920s-1930s), Spanish Colonial Revival architecture featured elaborate entrances, grillwork over windows, tiled domes, clay tiles, and rounded walls and arches (Nequette and Jeffery 2002). In the 1960s, by the time Wørner Baz began working in Tucson, Spanish Colonial Revival had fallen out of local favor (Collins 2014). Rather than choose modernism over Spanish Colonial Revival, Wørner Baz adapted both to create a variant or subtype called Mexican Colonial. While a more apt definition of his style could be described as “Colonial Modern”, he nonetheless infused his Mexican Colonial design into all of his projects in Tucson. All of his known projects in Tucson share similar design features that are distinctly Mexican Colonial. These features include —and are included in nearly every Mexican Colonial project in Tucson—but are not limited to (as illustrated in Figures 7.1 through 7.17),

- Buildings oriented towards mountain views, without sacrificing interior comfort and livability
- Low, rectangular, and dense massing
- Both smooth and undulating wall surfaces
- Low-pitched roofs
- Cantilevered overhangs
- Glass curtain walls or glass pocket doors
- Mix of historic styles with International style
- Pod-style residential developments and floor plans (townhomes and apartments)
- Water features
- Designed landscapes in partnership with Japanese gardener Taro Akutagawa
- Cast-in-place concrete; innovative use of materials and technology
- Use of bold decoration, including massive concrete scrolls, vaults, screens, and undulating parapets
- Statuary (saints, philosophers, and animals)

Although Baz’ Mexican Colonial designs were specific to his work in Tucson, the arrangement of space and proportion also reflected Wørner Baz’ cultural heritage and modernist sensibilities.

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He believed that narrow openings and tall ceilings, for example, could influence how space was perceived. Wørner Baz also preferred buildings that mirrored their environments. Unlike the large-scale modernist buildings he designed in Mexico City, Juarez, and Mazatlan, his Tucson projects reflected his belief that the local topography required long and low horizontal buildings—buildings that better harmonized with their desert setting. Moreover, he wanted his Tucson buildings' exteriors to reflect a colonial appearance while keeping the interiors formal with few colonial details. His attention to his cultural heritage manifested itself in all of his Tucson projects, from long, horizontal massing, to decorative concrete and terra cotta details, attention to setting, and incorporation of outdoor space as living space through loggia, courtyards, atriums, glass curtain walls, and exterior pocket doors (4 November 1984, *Arizona Daily Star*).

In addition to Mexican Colonial architecture reflecting Wørner Baz' cultural heritage, this Tucson-specific style pays homage to Mexico's burgeoning modernist architectural movement of the late 1950s and 1960s; a movement emphatically embraced in Mexico City and inspired by early practitioners, Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier (Fraser 2000). Following World War I, European and American architects sought to create a new architectural style that would reflect modern society. The Twentieth century was a time of rapid technological change, including advancements in industrial design and structural engineering. Traditional revival style architecture was seen as outdated and the antithesis of a progressive modern society. The common belief was that function should form the basis for design, specifically design free from superfluous decoration. This principle became the basis of what would become known as modern or international-style architecture.

These concepts manifested themselves in the use of glass curtain walls, steel columns, low-pitched roofs, smooth wall surfaces, projecting flat planes, and absence of decoration. In the United States and Europe, steel was a common feature of modern architecture; however in Mexico, steel was not readily available, expensive, and required a skilled workforce. Instead, modern architects in Mexico (like Wørner Baz) chose concrete and masonry instead of steel because they were inexpensive, readily available, and did not require a highly skilled workforce (Fraser 2000). Mexican modern architecture was typically massive in scale but minimalist at the same time. Architect and engineer Felix Candela, for example, created massive reinforced concrete domes or "shells" in many of his Mexico City buildings. Luis Barragan, considered the father of Mexican modernism, used projecting horizontal and vertical concrete walls with bright colors to invoke feeling and sense of space. Both Candela and Barragan used water to reinforce their design aesthetic.

On the other hand, not all architects working during the 1950s and 1960s were so ready to shrug off historic or regional architectural styles in favor of "new" or international architecture. In fact, many Mexican architects created modern designs inspired by or combined with the architecture of previous decades. This is especially evident in the work of Barragan, who utilized traditional Spanish Colonial designs in his modernist work. Wørner Baz was also one of these architects.

Place and setting played a significant role in his designs, as did function. Residential buildings were often referential, while commercial designs were in keeping with the tenets of international-

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style architecture. Moreover, Tucson's Mexican Colonial-style buildings are highly decorative, showcasing bold decoration, such as massive concrete scrolls, vaults, and statuary.

A building survey of City of Tucson and incorporated Pima County has identified at least 14 projects attributed to Wørner Baz—3300 E. Casa Juan Paisano (1961), Broadway Village Annex (1961), 40 Camino Miramonte (1962), Catalina Foothills Estates No. 6 Apartments (1963-1964), First National Bank/Wells Fargo (1964), Catalina Foothills Estates No. 6 Townhomes (1964), Via Entrada Fountain (sculpture) (1964-1965), 5050 E. Calle Jabali (1964), 5825-35 Vista Valverde (ca. 1960s-1975), 4351 E. Sarnac (1969), 25 N. Calle Primarosa, Catalina Foothills Estates No. 7 Townhomes (ca. 1970s), Posada Real Townhomes (ca. 1970s), and St. Philips Plaza Retail Shopping Center (1985).

The unique architecture of Baz's first Mexican Colonial project did not go unnoticed, with Casa Juan Paisano featured in two national publications—*Architectural Digest* (1962) and *House Beautiful* (1964) (the home was individually-listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2013). In 1962, when *The Architectural Digest* featured Casa Juan Paisano, the subtitle of the article was, "Introducing Mexican Colonial [architecture] into the contemporary southwest" (1962:5). While Joesler and Wørner Baz shared many similarities in their use of revival-style design features, including infusing many of their designs with Middle Eastern details, Wørner Baz was designing buildings wholly different than his predecessor. Where Joesler was subtle, Wørner Baz was extravagant; but in both cases, the architects hired by the Murpheys helped introduce new architectural styles to Tucson. Indeed, the introduction of "new" architecture into Tucson's built environment was exactly what the Murpheys wanted from the architects they hired. With Wørner Baz, the Murpheys were able to continue and expand on the legacy they had begun with Josias Joesler.

In 1961, shortly after completing Casa Juan Paisano, the Murpheys commissioned Wørner Baz to design an annex to Joesler's Broadway Village Shopping Center (Tucson's first shopping center). While many Tucsonans were familiar with the Murphey's architectural imprint of Mexican-inspired designs, according to John Murphey, Wørner Baz was designing buildings' the likes of which Tucsonans had never seen (14 June 1961, *Tucson Daily Citizen*). In the local press, John Murphey explained that he was attempting an architectural "tour de force", and lauded the accomplishments of Wørner Baz, explaining that he would spare no expense to complete Wørner Baz' design and noting that every penny "would be worth it." True to his word, the Broadway Village Annex building was the most expensive commercial project ever undertaken by the Murpheys (14 June 1961, *Tucson Daily Citizen*).

The Broadway Village Annex became Wørner Baz' commercial Tucson debut and what John Murphey called his own architectural "swan song". Even the *Tucson Daily Citizen* concurred with John Murphey, describing the building as "traffic-stopping" (14 June 1961). While the Broadway Village Annex building was not the last building commissioned by John Murphey (he lived another eighteen years), by the end of 1961, both he and Helen solidified their patron-architect relationship with Wørner Baz. Based on the success of Casa Juan Paisano and the Broadway Village Annex building, the Murphey's effectively adopted Juan Wørner Baz as their chief architect.

Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
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Between 1961 and 1985, the Murpheys helped infuse Wørner Baz' Mexican Colonial architecture into Tucson's architectural landscape, hiring him to design a number of other residential and commercial buildings in Tucson, the most notable of which were the Broadway Village Annex building, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, Catalina Townhomes, St. Philips Plaza Retail Shopping Center, and a modern geometric concrete water fountain fronting the entry to the Catalina Foothills Estates No. 7 (8 November 1969, *Tucson Daily Citizen*). Through his connection with the Murpheys, Wørner Baz was able to expand his Tucson portfolio further, designing residential and commercial properties for wealthy friends of the Murpheys including houses in the Catalina Foothills, El Encanto Estates, and Aldea Linda Estates, as well as the former Southern Arizona Bank at Sarnoff Road and Broadway Boulevard. Even after he returned to Mexico, he would fly to Tucson to attend various social events and was often included in the local socialite pages (8 November 1969, *Tucson Daily Citizen*).

After nearly a decade hiatus from Tucson in which Wørner Baz returned to his Mexico City architecture firm, PITTAS, Helen Murphey asked him to come back to Tucson to help design the final Murphey project, St. Philips Plaza Retail Shopping Center (4 November 1984, *Arizona Daily Star*). Following the completion of St. Philips Plaza Retail Shopping Center, Helen passed away at the age of 96 and Baz returned to Mexico City.

### **The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments**

In 1963, the Murphey's commissioned Wørner Baz to design his first multi-family residential project. Originally designed as winter vacation rentals, the first building phase of the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments was completed in 1963 and included the central single-story complex, pool and koi pond, caretaker's residence, laundry building, and all of the designed landscaping with associated statues and pillars. The following year, a second complex of two-story units was completed. On 27 June 1964, the apartments were featured in the *Tucson Daily Citizen* lifestyle pages, and described the unique features of the complex thusly:

...the apartments...done on a series of levels...accoun[t] for the amazing amount of privacy and solitude pervading the grounds. Each unit is a completely separate entity from its neighbors. Walkways skirt through the grounds and provide semi-private access to the rectangular swimming pool on the south level...walkways and other areas are girdled by carefully placed rocks and plantings, including ponderosa pine, feathery mandina, Italian cyprus, juniper and pinion...because of the high point at which the apartments are situated, a delightful view of Tucson at night is caught by terraces and rooms looking towards the south.

The completed project resulted in an extensive network of buildings offering six different floorplans and designed landscape following a north-south trending slope of the Santa Catalina Mountains foothills. Buildings located at the north side of the property were oriented with views of both the Santa Catalina Mountains and views into the valley below. Residences situated on the south side of the property were afforded valley views and private terraces surrounded by cobble retaining walls, and lush vegetation punctuated by small creeks. Residential units were



Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
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constructed of concrete masonry units with varying heights, undulating blocks to create textured wall surfaces, and scalloped parapets to accommodate the topography of the site and provide unobstructed views. Single-story units feature u-shaped plans with a shallow apex enclosing small entry-facing courtyards. The 1964-age complex includes second-story integrated balconies on both primary and secondary facades, as well as a ground-level terrace. Additionally, carved wood eaves project far beyond exterior walls on both north and south-facing facades and provide shade and privacy. Window walls, corner windows, and picture windows appear throughout the property, and are all designed to capture different views. All units feature octagonal rooms that follow non-rectilinear floorplans, central fireplaces with integrated streamlined mantels, and decorative chimney tops.

Open space between buildings is densely populated with mature native and non-native plants, walkways, dry creek beds, cobble retaining walls and water features, including creeks along the south side of the site, a swimming pool and a Japanese-inspired koi pond. Throughout the landscape are cantera stone statues of philosophers, saints, and animals, as well as geometric-looking pillars. One of the more striking features of the landscape is the abstract bull-headed relief that projects out and below the pool surround. The relief continues into the pool below the waterline and water flows over the top of the edge of the surround via a shallow aqueduct. The statuary, pillars, and relief were also designed by and part of Wørner Baz' original design, while the landscape design was undertaken by Japanese master gardener, Taro Akutagawa—the same individual that designed the landscape at Casa Juan Paisano in 1961. Despite archival and genealogical research, little information could be found about Taro Akutagawa. He grew up in California and later moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico where he opened a gardening store. It is not known how he formed a relationship with Baz or the Murpheys. It appears that he was involved in at least three Murphey-Baz projects.

In the 1970s, the apartments were converted to condominiums and were sold as individual owner-occupied residences. The complex offered six floor plan options with prices ranging from \$42,950 to \$53,950 per unit (Catalina Foothills Condominiums ca. 1970).

The Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments embodies all of the features of Mexican Colonial architecture. Not only does it embody these features, but it became the template for all future multi-family projects undertaken by Wørner Baz during the period he worked in Tucson. While many of his Tucson buildings reference his first project, Casa Juan Paisano, incredibly they remain unique and stand on their own merits. Moreover, the apartments served as a template for at least two additional Wørner Baz multi-family housing projects south and east of the apartments along Campbell Avenue—Catalina Foothills Estates No. 6 Townhomes (1964) and Catalina Foothills Estates No. 7 Townhomes (ca. 1970s)—but they represent muted versions of the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, with only a handful of statues present, exposed burnt walls, and subdued landscapes created using native plants and terracing.

Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
Name of Property

Pima County, Arizona  
County and State

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

*Arizona Daily Star*. "Architect Would Return Tucson to the Horizontal". 4 November 1984.

Catalina Foothills Condominiums. "Catalina Foothills Condominiums." ca. 1970.

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Fraser, Valerie. *Building the New World: Studies in the Modern Architecture of Latin America, 1930-1960*. London: Verso, 2000.

*House Beautiful*. "Enclosed Swimming Pools." 1964.

Nequette, Anne M. and R. Brooks Jeffery. *A Guide to Tucson Architecture*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002.

*The Architectural Digest*. "Casa Juan Paisano." *Summer 1962*.

*Tucson Daily Citizen*. "Shopping Center Saints Embellish New Building". 14 June 1961.

"Foothills Apartment". 27 June 1964

"Tucson Seen". 8 November 1969.

---

#### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 5.42

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 12 | Easting: 506326 | Northing: 3576244 |
| 2. Zone: 12 | Easting: 506504 | Northing: 3576184 |
| 3. Zone: 12 | Easting: 506264 | Northing: 3576158 |
| 4. Zone: 12 | Easting: 506419 | Northing: 3576083 |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is located at 2600 E. Skyline Drive, on the south side of the road, immediately west of the intersection of North Campbell Avenue and East Skyline Drive in Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. The boundary of the 5.42-acre property is defined by tax parcel numbers: 108-11-2170; 216B; 57C (See attached maps).

Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected).

The boundary of the property is based on and defined by the original plat and parcel boundaries, as well as, the extent of the footprint of the built environment within these parcel boundaries.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Jennifer M Levstik,  
organization: Consulting Histórico  
street & number: 4041 E Camino de La Colina  
city or town: Tucson state: AZ zip code: 85711  
e-mail jenlevstik@yahoo.com  
telephone: 520-398-4933  
date: 6/10/15

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. SEE ATTACHED
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map. SEE ATTACHED
- **Additional items** Figures: SEE ATTACHED (Figures 1 [ 11 X 17 site map] through 10 [Continuation Sheets 7.1 to 7.7])

**Photographs**

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
City or Vicinity: Tucson  
County: Pima State: Arizona  
Photographer: Catalina Foothills Condominiums Home Owner's Association  
Date Photographed: 9/10/14  
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: See below and attached Continuation Sheets; starting on 7.8.

**Photo Files**

1 of 19 (File numbers below correspond with photo numbers on Continuation Sheets).

Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments

Pima County, Arizona  
County and State

Name of Property

- 001\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 002\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 003\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 004\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 005\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 006\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 007\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 008\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 009\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 010\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
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- 013\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 014\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 015\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 016\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 017\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 018\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments
- 019\_AZPimaCounty\_CatalinaFoothillsApartments

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

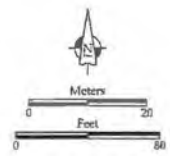
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



2600 East Skyline Drive  
 T13S R14E S8  
 (Tucson North Quad)  
 Catalina Foothills Estates  
 Apartments

- Key
- 1963 Complex
  - 1964 Complex
  - Designed Landscape
  - Statuary
  - Pillars
  - Mailboxes

- Photo Numbers  
 Coordinates  
 w/ photo numbers is  
 in continuation  
 sheets



NAD83 UTM Z12  
 2013 background imagery

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Name of Property  
Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments  
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Photo 1. Detail of 1963 façade, south side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northeast (2014).



Photo 2. Overview of a 1963 unit, north side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing south (2014).

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Photo 3. Detail of 1963 façade, west side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northeast (2014).



Photo 4. Overview of 1964 complex, north side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southwest (2014).



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Photo 5. Overview of 1964 complex, south side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northeast (2014).



Photo 6. Overview of pool ramada, south side, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing south (2014).

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Photo 7. Overview of central koi pond with ramada in foreground, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northwest (2014).



Photo 8. Overview of pool with bullhead relief, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing north (2014).

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Photo 9. Overview of pool and aqueduct, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing west (2014).



Photo 10. Detail of landscaping, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southeast (2014).

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Photo 11. South façade of Caretaker's Residence with rock-lined water feature in foreground, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northwest (2014).



Photo 12. North façade of Caretaker's Residence, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southeast (2014).

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Photo 13. Overview of laundry building, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southwest (2014).



Photo 14. Overview of communal carport, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southeast (2014).

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Photo 15. Overview of original communal mailboxes, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southwest (2014).



Photo 16. Detail of landscaping with statues in background, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northeast (2014).

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Photo 17. Detail of integrated statues, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing northeast (2014).



Photo 18. Detail of statue at communal carport, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing east (2014).

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Photo 19. Detail of entrance pillar, Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments, view facing southeast (2014).



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***Foothills  
Apartment***

**TOP LEFT:** Interior view of the living area in a unit in the Foothills Estates. The room features a large sofa, a coffee table, and a television set. The walls are decorated with patterned wallpaper.

**MIDDLE LEFT:** A bedroom interior showing a bed with a patterned coverlet, a nightstand, and a window with curtains. The room is decorated with patterned wallpaper.

**MIDDLE:** A large, ornate statue of a man in a long, flowing robe, likely a historical figure, standing in a garden setting.

**MIDDLE RIGHT:** An outdoor patio area featuring a large, dark wooden pergola structure over a pool or hot tub. The patio is bordered by a low wall and has a view of the surrounding landscape.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** A kitchen area with a stove, sink, and cabinets. The kitchen is modern and well-lit.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** A dining area with a table and chairs, adjacent to a living area. The room is decorated with patterned wallpaper and has a view of the surrounding landscape.

*Photos By Bill Soren*

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Figure 2. Excerpt from a 1964 *Tucson Daily Citizen* article showcasing the Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments.

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Figures 3 and 4. Excerpts from a Catalina Foothills Condominiums sales brochure (ca.1970s).

Catalina Foothills Condominiums is a unique condominium apartment development situated in the exclusive Catalina Foothills, a highly fashionable north-central area of the Catalina Mountains.

Spanish design sets the romantic mood for these two bedroom units located on rolling terrain which offers a magnificent view of the mountain ranges and valleys below. A divided boulevard, date palm trees and glowing Spanish lamps provide the background for a truly exclusive, carefree way of life.

Located just 15 minutes from downtown shopping, theatres, the University of Arizona cultural, dramatic and sports activities, Catalina Foothills Condominiums with the giant Saguaro cacti and desert growth is truly a secluded paradise.

Six different floor plans offer the buyer an excellent selection. Each single level unit includes a private entrance patio and a covered terrace. Covered carports are adjacent to patios and a large storage room is provided.

Japanese gardens surround the heated swimming pool which connects with all the units providing semi-private access to the pool grounds. Terraced and low stone walls create a restful atmosphere and the picturesque covered ramada is a focal point.

Each distinctively designed unit is a masterpiece of comfort and convenience, with every feature of modern living. And a few more ideas to stir your imagination. Come, experience the rich concept of Catalina Foothills Condominiums.



REALTY *EXCELLENCE* REALTY  
**WALT ALTMANN**  
**298-2305**

Res: 885-7470

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Name of Property  
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*Catalina Foothills* CONDOMINIUMS

*Standard Features*

- Private entry patio and foyer with circulating water fountains and post lamp lighting, all in Mexican, handcarved decor.
- Fireplaces, with fire screen.
- Walled, private service patios.
- All built-in electric appliances including range, double oven, dishwasher, disposer and refrigerator-freezer.
- Master antenna system for fine TV reception.
- All underground utilities.
- Roof mounted refrigeration and heating.
- Quality carpeting installed over sponge rubber pad and draperies included.
- Custom cabinetry in kitchen with formica counter tops.
- Telephone and TV jacks in major rooms.
- Individual hot water heaters.
- Washers and dryers provided in separate building.
- Exposed ceiling timbers from terrace into living room in some models.
- Escalators to serve all upstairs units.



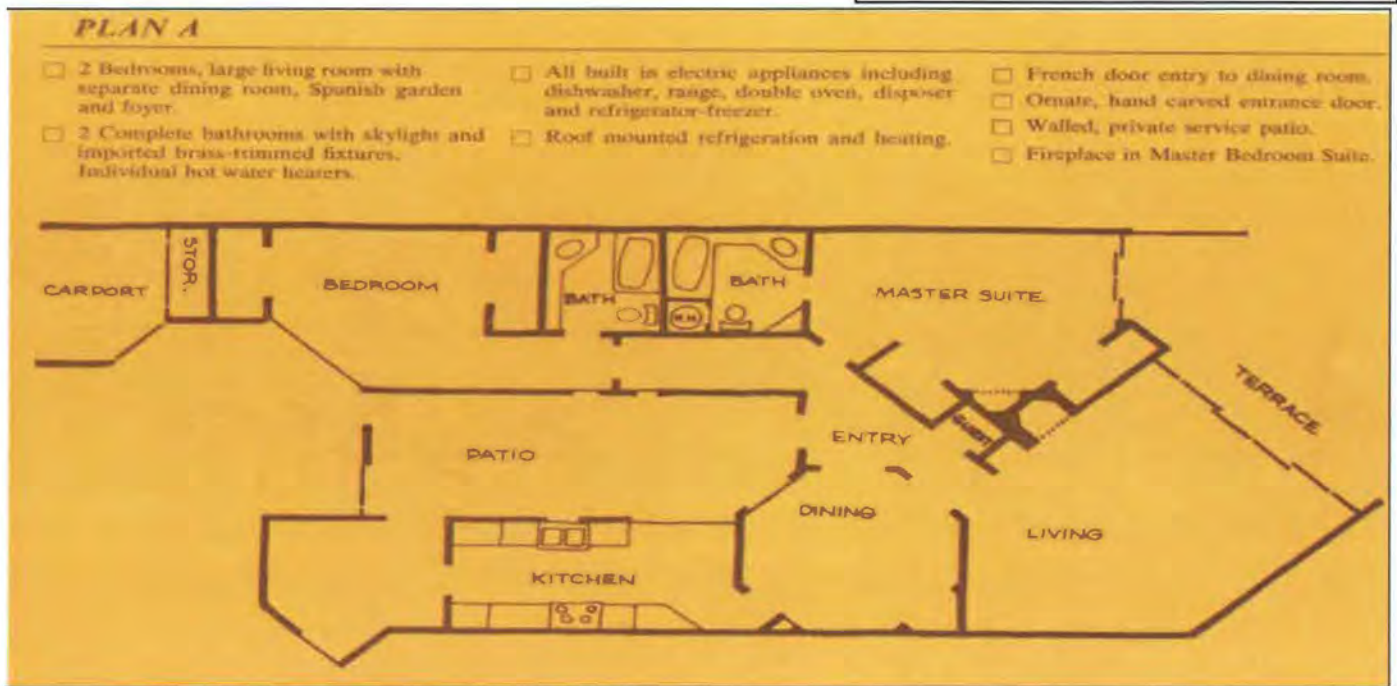
Figure 5. Excerpt from a Catalina Foothills Condominiums sales brochure (ca.1970s).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

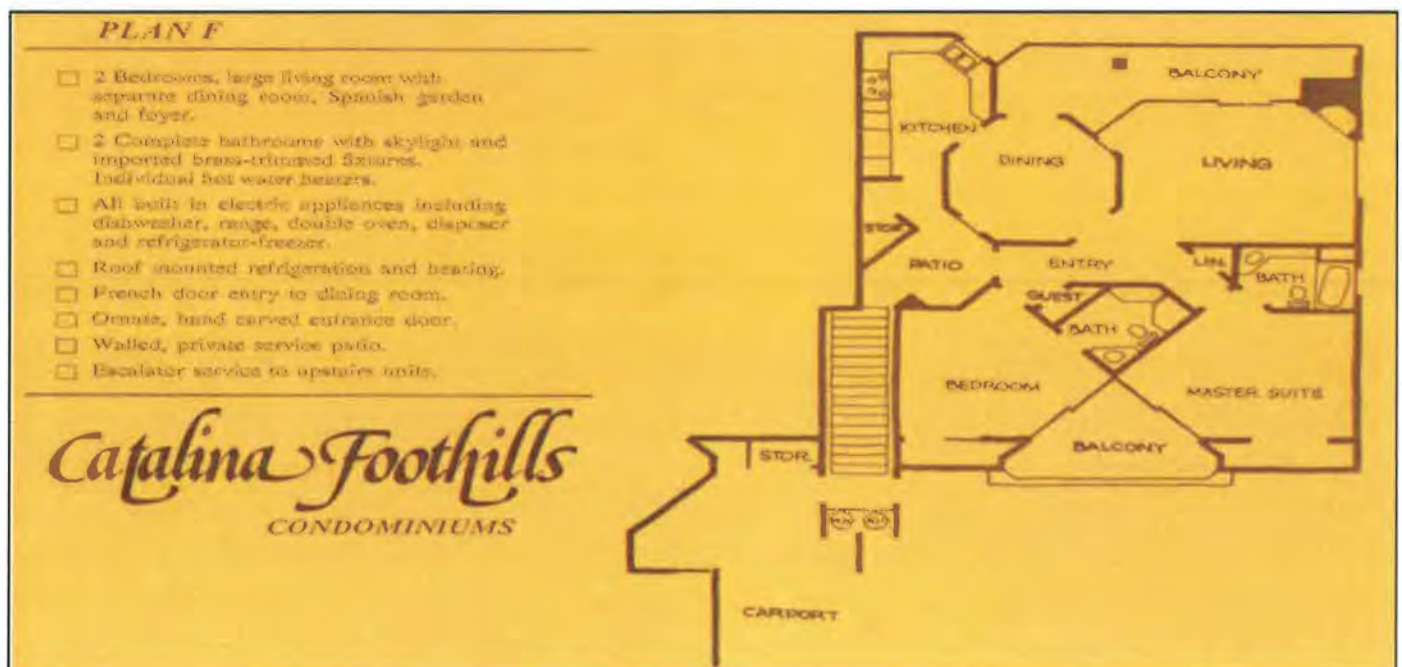
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property
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Figures 6 and 7. Excerpts from a Catalina Foothills Condominiums sales brochure showing examples of two of six floor plans (reference to escalator service in Figure 7 below refers to chair lifts) (ca.1970s).



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National Park Service

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Name of Property	Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments
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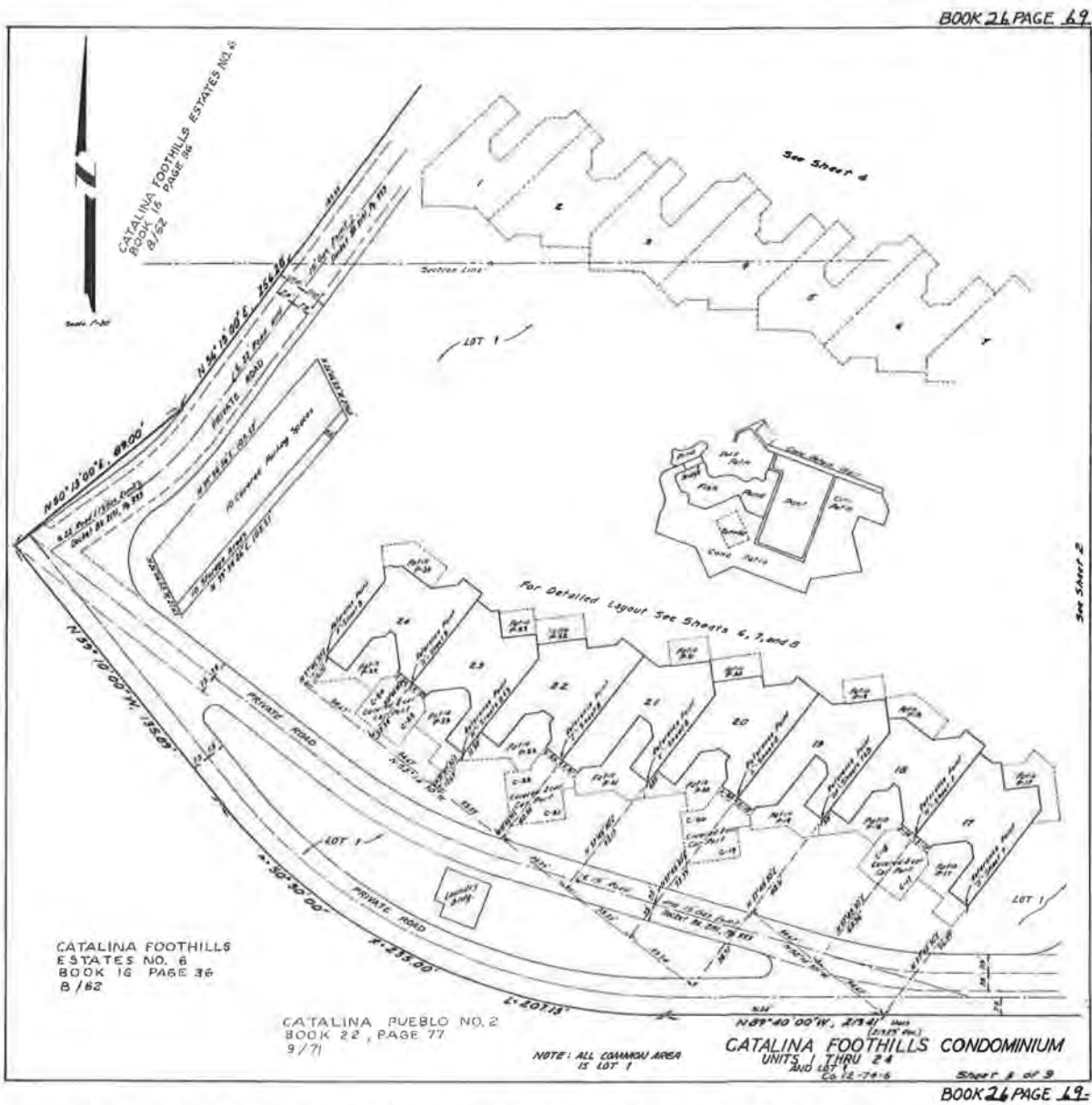


Figure 8. Catalina Foothills Condominiums plat map depicting single-story units and communal features (1974).

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Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property	Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments
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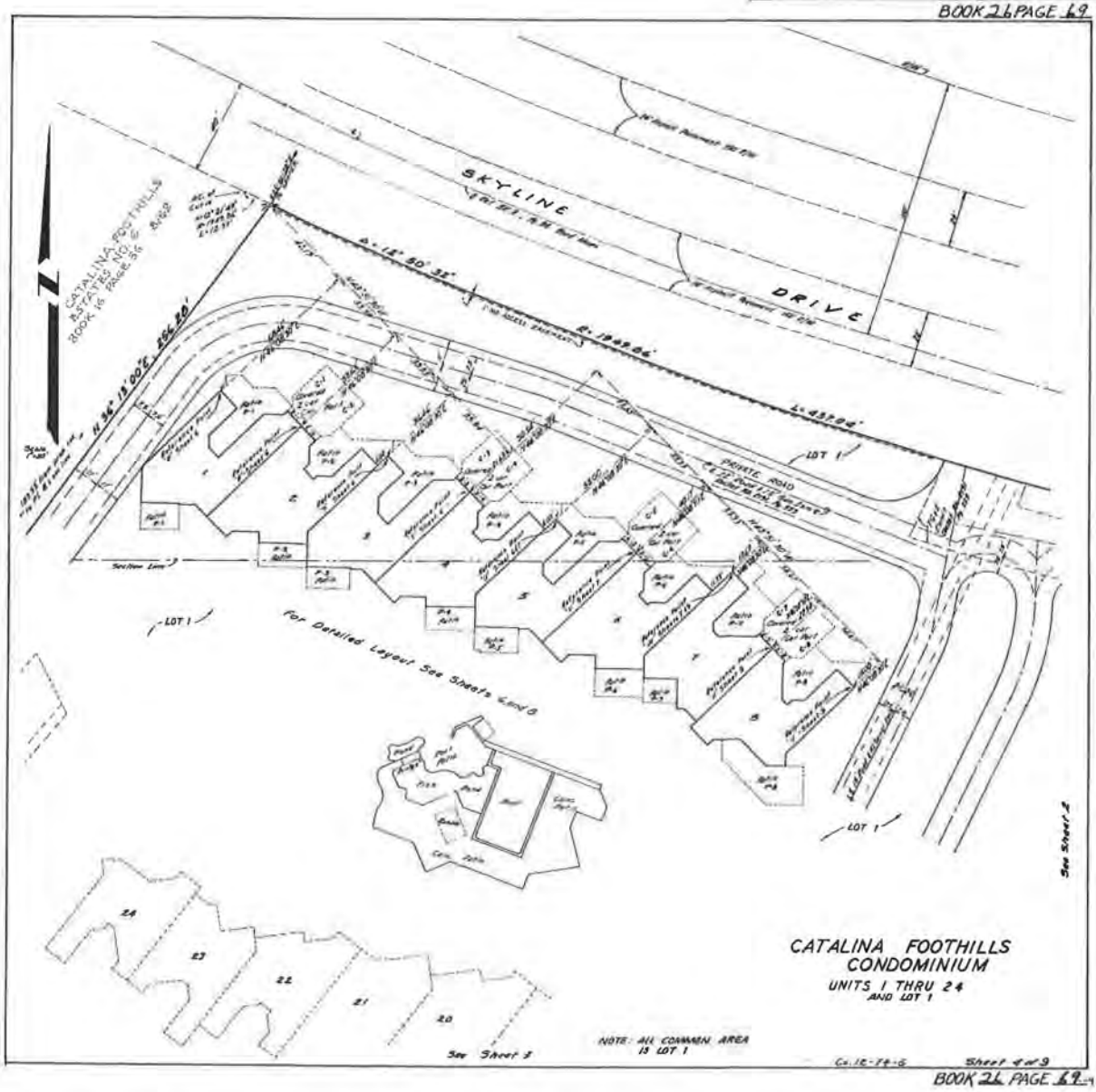


Figure 9. Catalina Foothills Condominiums plat map depicting single-story units and communal features (1974).

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National Register of Historic Places  
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Name of Property
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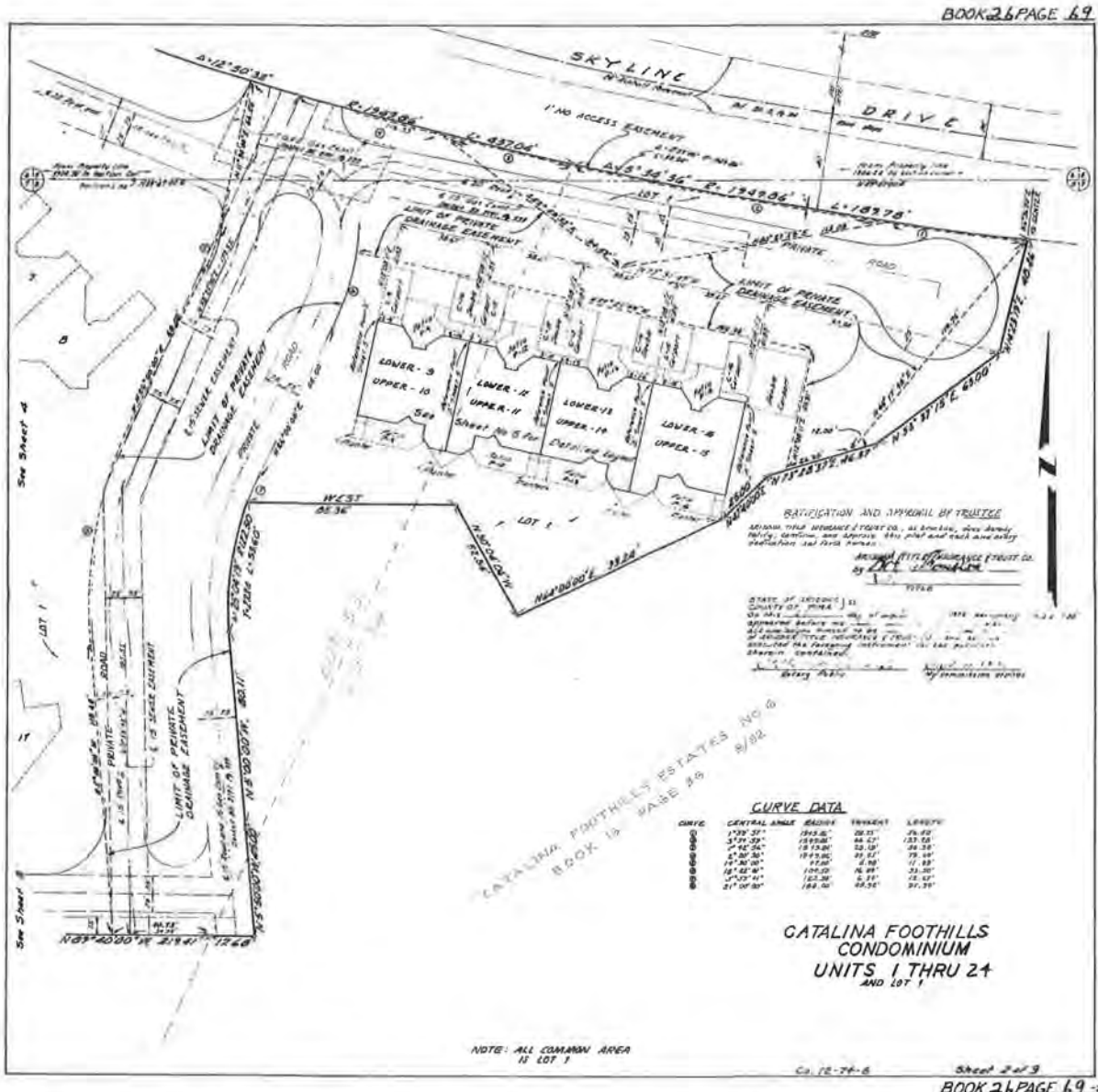
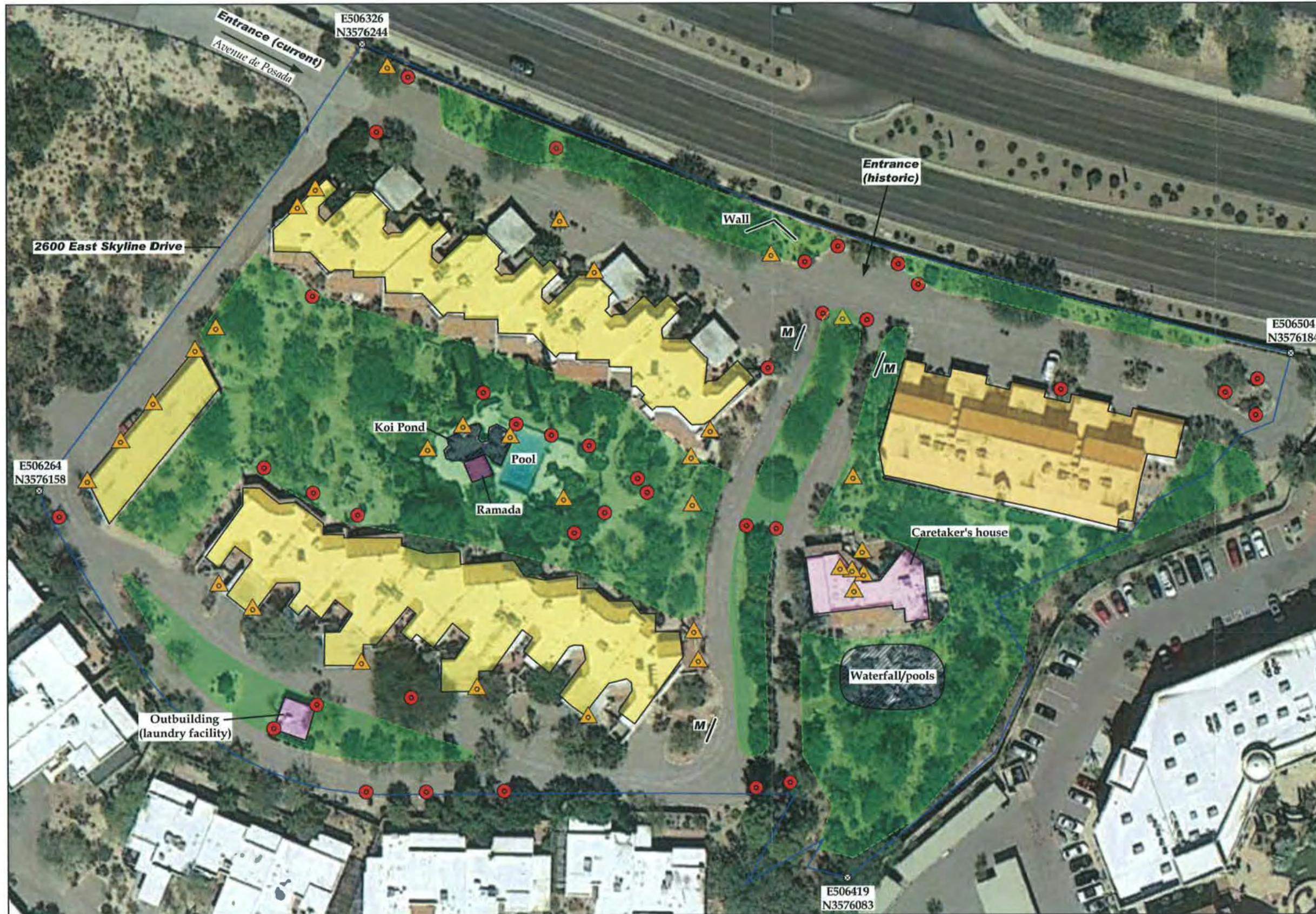


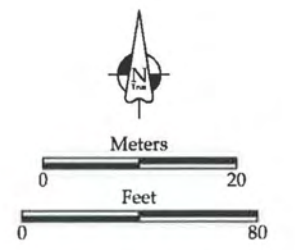
Figure 10. Catalina Foothills Condominiums plat map depicting two-story units (1974).



2600 East Skyline Drive  
 T13S R14E S8  
 (Tucson North Quad)  
 Catalina Foothills Estates  
 Apartments

Key

	1963 Complex
	1964 Complex
	Designed Landscape
	Statuary
	Pillars
	Mailboxes



NAD83 UTM Z12  
 2013 background imagery











































2600  
SKYLINE

PRIVATE  
DRIVE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARIZONA, Pima

DATE RECEIVED: 7/24/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/24/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/08/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/08/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000568

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 9/8/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*AOS architecture - local level*  
*POS 1963-1964*  
*Juan Warner Baz Architect*  
*Taro Akutagawa - landscape architect*

RECOM./CRITERIA C

REVIEWER Lisa Delone

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 9/8/15

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.



**Douglas A. Ducey**  
Governor

**Sue Black**  
Executive Director

**State Parks Board**  
R.J. Cardin, Chairman  
Kay Daggett, Vice-Chairman  
Mark Brnovich, Phoenix  
Alan Everett, Sedona  
Shawn Orme, Mayer  
Orme Lewis, Jr., Phoenix  
Lisa Atkins, State Land Commissioner

July 14, 2015

**RECEIVED 2280**

**JUL 24 2015**

**Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service**

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005-5905

**\*\*FEDERAL EXPRESS\*\***

**RE: CATALINA FOOTHILLS ESTATES APARTMENTS – Tucson, Pima, AZ  
TUCSON COMMUNITY CENTER HISTORIC DISTRICT – Tucson, Pima, AZ**

Dear Mr. Loether:

I am pleased to submit Registration Forms for consideration of listing in the National Register of Historic Places for the following properties:

- Catalina Foothills Estates Apartments
- Tucson Community Center Historic District

Accompanying documentation is enclosed, as required. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact me at [vstrang@azstateparks.gov](mailto:vstrang@azstateparks.gov) or at 602.542.4662.

Sincerely,

Vivia Strang, CPM  
National Register Coordinator  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Arizona State Parks

Enclosures

VS:vs

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