

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Los Banos del Mar

other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number 401 Shoreline Drive not for publication

city or town Santa Barbara vicinity

state California code CA county Santa Barbara code 083 zip code 93101

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stevie R. Crayge 11/19/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

entered in the
National Register

Date of Action

Shelby Byer 12/24/92

Los Banos del Mar
Name of Property

Santa Barbara, California
County and State

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	
1	1	buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2	1	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/sports facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Modern and Spanish Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof red tile

other reinforced concrete pool

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- X 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.
X 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 achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Recreation

Social History

Period of Significance

1939-1942

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Associated Architects of Santa Barbara

[Howell, Henry and Edwards, William A.];

Charles M. Urton; Jack Bramlage; L.A. Cline, Inc.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more 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
X Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Santa Barbara Historical Museum

Los Banos del Mar
Name of Property

Santa Barbara, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	1	0
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2	5	2	5	0	0
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3	8	1	0	4	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca Conard, Ph.D.; research by Cheri Savage and M.L. Days

organization Pool Preservation Group date 2/10/92; revised 9/26/92

street & number 2 Sunrise Hill Lane telephone 805/969-9389

city or town Santa Barbara state CA zip code 93108

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Santa Barbara

street & number 735 Anacapa Street telephone 805/564-5305

city or town Santa Barbara state CA zip code 93101

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Los Banos del Mar, Santa Barbara, CA

DPN-259-1118

Section 7: Description

Los Banos del Mar is a public recreational facility located at 401 Shoreline Drive in Santa Barbara, on the southwest corner of the Cabrillo Boulevard-Castillo Street intersection (Cabrillo Boulevard becomes Shoreline Drive west of Castillo Street). The property includes a bathhouse and a swimming pool surrounded by landscaped walkways and mature palm trees. The bathhouse is a one-story wood frame building with smooth-stuccoed exterior walls designed in a style that merges Art Moderne and Hispanic elements. Functionally, it comprises a shower/locker building on the north side of the pool, a separate equipment room on the east side of the pool, and a smaller storage room on the northeast corner, all of which are joined by continuous exterior walls that give the appearance of one large building from the outside. The exterior walls continue beyond the building to screen the pool completely on the east and west. On the south side of the pool, a low wall topped by a chain link fence connects to the west and east walls. The pool itself is L-shaped, consisting of an Olympic-sized main pool with a small, shallow beginner's pool area off the southwest corner. When Los Banos del Mar was constructed in 1939, palm trees were planted along the perimeter of the pool and bathhouse. In addition, the facility included a wading pool on the east, formal gardens on the north, shuffleboard courts on the northwest, and an open play area on the west. Subsequently, the gardens and the shuffleboard courts were removed to make way for major street improvements in 1943, and the wading pool was replaced in 1979. The palm trees planted on the perimeter of the property remain, however, and the National Register boundaries include these landscaping features. A small, freestanding chlorine storage shed (1969) located within the boundaries is counted as a non-contributing structure. [Note: Los Banos del Mar, like most of Santa Barbara, is not laid out on cardinal points of the compass. The front facade actually faces northwest. However, for ease of discussion and comprehension, the front of the building is described as facing north, and all other directions follow accordingly.]

Los Banos del Mar bathhouse is a modestly designed public building which combines elements of Art Moderne style with the more traditional Hispanic architectural style for which Santa Barbara is well known. Overall, the building is characterized by a low-scaled horizontality consisting of long, rectangular blocks. Along the north front facade (facing Cabrillo Boulevard), horizontal Art Moderne stylistic elements are evident in the flat roof, symmetrically spaced decorative wall grilles, and a stringcourse which runs the full length of the building just above the grilles. A small, classically composed entrance barely breaks the

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Los Banos del Mar, Santa Barbara, CA

GFN-259-1116

horizontal line of this facade. The same basic design elements continue along the west facade. Even-textured walls emphasize the streamlined character of the predominant Art Moderne style and harmonize its transition to the Hispanic style along the east facade. Here, asymmetrically composed blocks covered with multi-plane red tile roofs combine to create a more informal appearance. A high, smooth-stuccoed wall encloses the open-air pool located adjacent to the bathhouse on the south side.

The L-shaped swimming pool is built of reinforced concrete with a capacity of approximately 400,000 gallons. The main pool measures 72'x164'; it is 3.5' deep at the shallow end, sloping to 11' at the deep end where three diving boards are located. The beginner's pool area measures 15'x50'. A concrete bathing deck surrounds the entire pool. Spectator bleachers are located on the south side. A handicap ramp has been installed on the south side, providing access to the pool area at the southwest corner.

The permit file in the City Building Department indicates that no repairs or alterations were made to the bathhouse and pool between 1939 and 1966. In 1966, the concrete pool deck was resurfaced and raised slightly, and underwater lights were installed. A storage area for chlorine was constructed in 1969. In 1970, the interior of the bathhouse was altered, at which time new heating units as well as new shower and lavatory facilities were installed. A fiberglass pool liner was installed in 1977. In 1981, a handicap ramp was built along the south wall. The bathhouse was reroofed in 1982, and repairs were made during 1983-84. Since then, the bathhouse and pool have received only routine maintenance.

The exterior design of the bathhouse has not been altered since it was completed in 1939. Nor has the design of the pool been altered, although relining and resurfacing have changed its external appearance to a slight degree. These changes do not impair its design and materials integrity.

When the bathhouse and pool were constructed in 1939, the bathhouse opened onto a landscaped public garden and walkway. On the northerly side of the building a circular fountain surrounded by a walking path provided the focal point of the gardens. Landscaping consisted of palm trees, large flower beds, and lawn areas. In addition to the trees in the garden area, palm trees also defined the perimeter of the bathhouse and pool. Shuffleboard courts and an open play area were located, respectively, northwest and west of the bathhouse. The garden and the shuffleboard courts were forfeited in 1943 when Cabrillo Boulevard was

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extended westward from Castillo Street; later, the extension was named Shoreline Drive. Only a portion of the open play area remains on the west side of the building. Because it no longer retains much of its original character, the remaining open area has been excluded from National Register boundaries.

A separate, fenced wading pool was constructed east of the bathhouse and pool at the same time the main structures were erected. This pool has since been replaced. The original "mushroom" wading pool was basically rectangular in shape, but rounded at the east end. A lawn area surrounded the pool. In 1979, the rectangular wading pool was replaced with an entirely new pool, which is a stylized figure 8 in shape. Consequently, the wading pool also has been excluded from the National Register boundaries.

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Los Banos del Mar, Santa Barbara, CA

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Section 8: Statement of Significance

Introduction

Los Banos del Mar is significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of recreation and social history. It is an institution which is closely associated with the rise of municipally sponsored recreation programs and facilities in Santa Barbara. It also is one of only two historic swimming pool complexes associated with the era of coastal bathhouses in California, c. 1875-World War II, to have survived in relatively unaltered condition. Under Criterion C it is significant as a facility which is associated with the evolution of a Hispanic-inspired architectural tradition for which Santa Barbara is well known. Both the bathhouse and the pool retain excellent integrity of design and location. The property's period of significance extends from 1939 when construction was completed, until 1942. In functional terms, the bathhouse has been an important venue for Santa Barbara's recreational programs continuously from 1939 to the present, but for National Register purposes the period of significance is arbitrarily defined as the period beyond its 50 years of age.

Santa Barbara acquired several municipal recreational properties during the 1920s and 1930s. In most cases, land acquisition came about through private citizen efforts, and facilities were financed either by philanthropic donations or with the aid of federal funds. Many of these properties and facilities were specifically located near the ocean in order to preserve public open space and access to the ocean. In addition to Los Banos del Mar, these included the Cabrillo Pavilion (1926; Roland F. Sauter and E. Keith Lockard), a bathhouse now used as a community cultural arts center; the municipal tennis courts (1938), Laguna Ball Park (1938; now gone), Cabrillo Ball Park (acquired 1925-27), Pershing Park (acquired 1926-27), and Dwight Murphy Field (acquired 1925). After World War II, Santa Barbara increasingly catered to a tourist clientele, with motel and related service business development located near the coast. As a result, the recreational facilities established during the earlier decades have become even more important as amenities that are available to the public.

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Criterion A

Oceanfront development for recreation in Santa Barbara began in the late nineteenth century. After Charles Nordhoff visited Santa Barbara in the winter of 1872 and then praised its "equable climate" in *California--A Book for Travelers and Settlers*, visitors nationwide came seeking the proclaimed healthful benefits of Santa Barbara's beaches and mineral springs. The Arlington Jockey Club, a group of wealthy, Eastern-bred men, raced horses on the beach as well as at two tracks laid out in the East Beach area. One of these tracks was located at the Agricultural Park, which hosted the county fair as well as circuses, balloon ascensions, and other outdoor events. A mule-drawn streetcar, established in 1876, carried residents and visitors to and from the bathhouses that began to appear in the area now known as West Beach. Among these bathhouses was a popular establishment operated by Fred Forbush, located in the vicinity of the present-day Los Banos del Mar.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Santa Barbarans fully realized the inherent commercial as well as aesthetic values of the oceanfront. As early as 1891, the City acknowledged the necessity of providing public access to the beach. Ordinance No. 233, adopted in 1891 for the purpose of constructing an oceanfront boulevard (now known as Cabrillo Boulevard), also directed that an area at the western end, near Castillo Street, "be covered with asphaltum or bituminous rock, with band stand, fountains, seats, etc. as the Council may direct." This "public garden" area became known as Plaza del Mar, landscaped with lawn areas, palm trees, and wide walkways. In 1899 and 1900 Plaza del Mar was enlarged when the Chamber of Commerce aided the City in acquiring additional land. The Chamber stipulated that a portion of the land be reserved for a bathhouse and that the City spend \$2000 in improvements. The City, however, did not improve the parcel; rather, in September of 1900 the City Council voted to reconvey title to the bathhouse site to the Chamber of Commerce and further stipulated that a modern facility costing not less than \$10,000 be built.

The Chamber, in turn, conveyed the site to United Electric and Gas and Power Co. (later Southern California Edison), which complied with all requirements and erected the first Los Banos del Mar in 1901. It contained an indoor pool with heated ocean water, a bowling alley, a billiard parlor, a roof garden, and an outdoor bandstand. The bathhouse and park, later improved with shuffleboard and tennis courts, were popular spots, made easily accessible because Edison Electric Co. placed the terminus of its streetcar line at Plaza del Mar. So popular was this recreation place that when the first bathhouse burned in 1913, Southern

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California Edison immediately announced it would build a new bathhouse, stating that "a first class bathhouse is essential to the development and growth of Santa Barbara." A new bathhouse of Moorish design was completed in 1915 at an estimated cost of \$58,000. Ten years later, the second bathhouse was badly damaged by the earthquake of June 29, 1925, and the facility remained closed for several years.

In 1934, the City purchased the "Bath House Site" from the electric company for the sum of \$55,000. Purchase of the site was, in large part, a result of growing public interest in organized municipal recreation programs and facilities. In May of 1929, local organizations had presented a petition to the City Council pointing out the need for a municipal recreation program in order to use playground facilities at public parks to their fullest. This petition arrived just prior to a report from an *ad hoc* Recreational Playgrounds Report Committee, which recommended the appointment of a permanent recreation commission. Responding to these initiatives, the City Council established the Board of Recreation Commissioners in June of 1929, followed by the hiring of a recreation director and support staff to coordinate programs which would utilize facilities at public schools as well as the city's parks and beaches. The Recreation Department quickly assumed responsibility for maintaining the tennis courts located at Plaza del Mar and Oak Park, illuminating the ball field at Pershing Park (adjacent to Plaza del Mar), and supervising ball leagues.

In late 1933 the Recreation and Park Boards agreed that the Recreation Department would supervise all city recreation activities. Shortly after that, in 1934, the City Council appointed a Recreation Planning Council to study the city's recreation needs. Three major Depression Era public works projects resulted from this assessment: construction of Laguna Ball Park in 1938; construction of the Municipal Tennis Courts, dedicated in 1938; and construction of the third and present Los Banos del Mar, constructed on the approximate site of its predecessors. Laguna Ball Park has since been removed, but the Municipal Tennis Courts and Los Banos del Mar remain. Several other municipal parks and recreation areas also were improved with federal assistance during the 1930s.

In July 1937, the City Council approved demolition of the second bathhouse and construction of an automobile parking area, a project which was to be carried out with federal assistance through the Works Progress Administration. This project, however, proved to be controversial because it was associated with a planned extension of Cabrillo Boulevard, which would cut through Plaza del Mar and the bathhouse site. As a result, the project was redesigned to allow

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for demolition only. It is not clear from official records, however, to what degree the demolition was carried out since later documents indicate that the new facilities incorporated portions of the old.

In October of 1937 the City engaged Associated Architects of Santa Barbara to design a new swimming pool and bathhouse facilities as well as a ball field, grandstand, and other facilities at Laguna Ball Park. Both projects were funded with the aid of a Public Works Administration grant. Upon the recommendation of an *ad hoc* Swimming Pool Committee, the new pool and bathhouse were to be sited on the location of the old facility. Other recommendations submitted by the committee called for an open-air pool and a children's wading pool. In addition, Council minutes show that the committee also recommended rehabilitating the south portion of the old bathhouse for dressing rooms and for housing pool equipment, as shown, reportedly, on preliminary plans which had been prepared by Associated Architects of Santa Barbara, a corporation comprising ten local architects.

Unfortunately, the architectural plans do not appear to have survived, making it difficult to determine just which portions of the old building might have been rehabilitated as part of the new facility. A newspaper article of October 11, 1937, reported that approximately \$8400 of the available funds would be "used for remodeling the south portion of the present bath house at Plaza del Mar into a dressing and locker room." The north portion of the bathhouse, which had been declared unsafe, was to be demolished, indicating that no demolition at all had occurred as of mid-October 1937.

Architects Henry Howell and William A. Edwards of Associated Architects prepared the final architectural plans. The City selected Charles M. Urton of Santa Barbara to serve as general contractor; Jack Bramlage, also of Santa Barbara, received the contract for concrete and tile work; and the firm of L.A. Cline, located in Hollywood, received the contract for plumbing and equipment. Council minutes of July 28, 1938, show that the revised estimate of final construction costs stood at \$71,381.00; engineering and architects' fees, administrative costs, and interest during construction raised the total project cost to about \$78,180.00. Of this amount, the City of Santa Barbara furnished \$43,000, and the remaining \$35,180 came from the Public Works Administration. The building permit was issued on March 18, 1938.

Construction was completed in October 1938, but the pool did not open until late April 1939. Year-round swimming is now an accepted, if not expected, part of southern California life, but

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in the late 1930s cities still bowed to convention and closed their outdoor pools for the "winter" season. Santa Barbarans enthusiastically welcomed the return of the municipal plunge. When the *Santa Barbara News-Press* reviewed notable civic accomplishments at the end of 1939, the opening of the third Los Banos del Mar ranked as one of the year's biggest events.

Santa Barbara's Los Banos del Mar was one of at least twenty oceanside bathhouses and pools which dotted the California coast during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only four of them have survived to the present, and only two are still retain their original character and function as recreational swimming pools: Los Banos del Mar and the Palos Verdes Bathhouse. Palos Verdes Bathhouse and Bathing Pool, constructed in 1930 and now known as Roessler Pool, is currently undergoing partial restoration. This project will retain the exterior design of the four-story bathhouse and the pools, while the building interior will be completely renovated.

John D. Spreckels, who built the Hotel del Coronado, also built a \$4,000,000 amusement center at Mission Beach which included a bathhouse and dancing casino. The Mission Beach Plunge opened in 1925. However, as a result of a multi-million-dollar renovation project completed in 1988, very little of the original structures remain. The pool has been altered to accommodate a modern filter system, and the bathhouse was completely rebuilt and expanded to include a fitness center. Fleishhacker Pool in San Francisco, a gigantic 1,000-foot-long seawater pool and its Mediterranean style bathhouse, were constructed in 1925. The pool was closed in 1977, and the property is now part of the neighboring San Francisco Zoo. While both the pool and the bathhouse have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the facility is no longer in use for swimming.

The coastal bathhouse era began in the late 1870s and lasted until World War II. Santa Monica Bath House, constructed in 1877, was the first of several salt-water plunges built along Santa Monica Bay. Others included the Arcadia Bath House, part of the Arcadia Hotel which was built in 1887; North Beach Bath House, built in 1893 and replaced in 1927 by the Deauville Beach Club; Pascual Marquez Bath House, another turn-of-the century establishment; Venice Bath House, built 1904; Ocean Park Bath House, built 1905; and Crystal Beach Bath House, date of construction undetermined. Perhaps the most famous of the early-day bathhouses was Sutro Baths, constructed by Adolph Sutro at San Francisco's Ocean Beach in 1894. Sutro's pretentious Victorian monstrosity contained seven pools -- some heated, some unheated, some fresh water, and some salt water -- with assorted gymnastic paraphernalia, a variety of

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concessions and a spectator's gallery. Between 1912 and 1966, when it closed for good, Sutro Baths underwent a number of changes. The entire complex burned in 1966, and in 1980 the site became part of Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

The San Diego area also had its share of coastal bathhouses, including the Mission Beach Plunge. Oceanside had a bathhouse by 1885; it was replaced in 1904 by the Oceanside Electric Company's salt-water plunge. The Coronado Boathouse and Plunge was constructed in 1887, and the developers of Del Mar enticed would-be residents by providing a beachside bathhouse, known as Los Banos Del Mar Warm Water Plunge. A railroad company built La Jolla's first bathhouse in 1894. After this building burned in 1905, a new bathhouse opened, this one including a bowling alley, cafe, and covered verandah.

None of these buildings or the pools they housed are still standing. Likewise, Long Beach Bath House, constructed in 1902, is now the site of office buildings. Redondo Beach Bath House, built c. 1909, is now the site of Redondo Seaport Village. The Huntington Beach municipal plunge, an open-air pool constructed in 1912, disappeared long before its more famous companion, the Huntington Beach Pier. The Balboa Bathhouse and Boathouse and the Santa Cruz "plunge baths," both built c. 1906, also are gone.

The bathhouse era, which began with relatively simple wooden structures to provide beachgoers with dressing rooms, soon came to incorporate salt-water pools. Generally, these were indoor pools, and the water was usually filtered, sometimes heated as well. The idea seems to have been to provide a safer and more comfortable swimming area without sacrificing proximity to the ocean, which provided a cheap source of water as well as the reputed healthful benefits of seaside air. Early-day bathhouses usually were privately operated. In keeping with the spirit of the times, which meant promoting beach communities as resorts for wealthy tourists, they often were architectural showpieces. This was certainly true in Santa Barbara. The demise of coastal bathhouses seems to be linked with changing ideas about recreation and the move to provide municipal facilities as well as organized programs. In particular, outdoor pools began to replace indoor "plunges" or "baths," as they were called. Bowling alleys, billiard parlors, and dancing casinos no longer seemed to be activities wholly compatible with swimming. Available information indicates that patronage declined during World War II, when coastal hotels, harbors, and piers were taken over for military purposes, and users did not return in appreciable numbers after the war. As a result, many of the old bathhouses and pools were razed in the 1950s.

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Within the history of coastal bathhouses in California, Los Banos del Mar occupies an unusual niche. Construction of the third and present facility in 1939 coincided with the end of one era and the beginning of another. Its location reflected a long tradition of placing recreational swimming pools by the ocean. Its open air, Olympic-sized pool anticipated the future of competitive and fitness swimming. Its modest architectural design spoke to the necessity of placing function before form in pinched economic circumstances.

Since its opening in 1939, Los Banos del Mar has become one of the most popular recreational facilities in Santa Barbara. Recreational, fitness, and competitive swimmers alike use the pool. Its fifty-meter pool has made Los Banos del Mar an attractive training facility for Olympic swimming, diving, and water polo competitors. Since 1939, the pool also has been a venue for *Semana Nautica*, a week-long series of competitive aquatic and nautical events staged annually in Santa Barbara. Santa Barbara City College students use the pool under a joint powers agreement with the City.

Although a 1972 City Council resolution dedicated the property for public park and recreational use, long-range plans for harbor development indicated that Los Banos del Mar eventually might be razed in order to enlarge the harbor entrance and parking area. This circumstance led a group of local citizens to mount an effort to have the plunge designated as a City Landmark. Ironically, the present-day threat echoes the controversy which developed in the 1930s, when demolition of the second Los Banos del Mar appeared as though it would lead to construction of a parking lot. As an indication of the pool's local popularity, approximately 6000 individuals signed a petition calling for landmark status, representing overwhelming public support for recognizing Los Banos del Mar as an important part of Santa Barbara's heritage. On October 23, 1991, the City Landmarks Committee unanimously endorsed landmark status before a crowd of about eighty local supporters who turned out for the meeting. This followed an earlier advisory action taken by the City Planning Commission, which voted 6-1 in favor of supporting landmark status. Sixteen local organizations representing a wide cross-section of the community also endorsed landmark status for Los Banos del Mar. On January 14, 1992, the City Council voted 6-1 to accept the Landmarks Committee's recommendation and designate Los Banos del Mar a City of Santa Barbara Landmark.

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Criterion C

Los Banos del Mar, which combines elements of Art Moderne and Hispanic architecture, presents a fine example of the evolution of Hispanic-inspired architecture in Santa Barbara. Its design elements, which are understated, reflect not only the budget constraints imposed by economic depression but the way in which local architects adapted the Hispanic mode to then-current design trends. Two prominent local architects who made significant contributions to the development of Santa Barbara's Hispanic image, Henry Howell and William A. Edwards, designed the bathhouse and pool complex. Edwards, a Santa Barbara native, received his degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania and, in 1919, returned to his home town to practice. In 1925, he formed a partnership with Joseph Plunkett, and Henry Howell joined the firm in 1926. The firm established a reputation for commercial architectural design, specializing in the Hispanic revival style. Following the disastrous earthquake of June 29, 1925, which leveled much of the downtown core, the firm designed several commercial buildings which have been recognized as contributors to Santa Barbara's Hispanic image. Howell left the firm in 1929 but continued to practice in Santa Barbara. Both he and Edwards were members of the Associated Architects of Santa Barbara, a corporation of local architects which aided the City in its planning and development functions during the 1920s and 1930s.

The first bathhouse, constructed in 1901, was an elaborate Mission Revival building with a multi-plane roof, a grand two-story arched entrance flanked by a arched loggia, and squat towers with balconied windows. The second bathhouse, constructed in 1915, was a touch simpler but slightly more elegant. Its Beaux Arts design featured a central two-story tower ornamented with a floral swag and large arched windows symmetrically spaced along the front facade. Both buildings were attractively landscaped with lawn areas, palm trees, walkways, and park benches. Had financial circumstances permitted, the third Los Banos del Mar might have been equally eye-catching. The times dictated otherwise, though. Howell and Edwards chose to execute the new bathhouse in the popular Art Moderne style, modifying its smooth, streamlined facades on the north and west by including red-tiled extensions on the east side. The new building thus shared characteristics of public buildings constructed with federal aid during the 1930s. Importantly, though, it also acknowledged the Hispanic architectural image that Santa Barbara had adopted in the 1920s.

A movement to recapture Santa Barbara's architectural heritage began in the late nineteenth century when a number of individuals lamented the gradual disappearance of adobes and the

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dilapidated condition of the former presidio. These symbols of Santa Barbara's pueblo days steadily gave way to streets laid out on a geometric grid, multistory brick commercial blocks interspersed with wooden false-front stores in the downtown business core, and orderly rows of brick and frame houses. Nostalgia for the romantic aspects of Santa Barbara's Californio days coincided with the birth of city planning in the United States, circumstances that led to the rescue of certain historic structures and, equally important, fostered community interest in creating a regional architectural style based on Santa Barbara's Spanish and Mexican history. In 1909, nationally known planner Charles Mulford Robinson recommended to the Santa Barbara Civic League that the city establish design guidelines to enhance its existing natural attractiveness. A decade later, the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association, a private organization, engaged planner Charles Cheney, of the Olmsted and Olmsted firm, to draw up another plan for Santa Barbara. It was Cheney who recommended that the city not only adopt architectural controls and zoning ordinances, but that it do so in order to create a city with its own unique character.

The architectural choice for Santa Barbara was obvious. Implementing a Hispanic character was quite another step. During the early 1920s several local architects worked with the Community Arts Association to demonstrate, through public exhibitions of drawings, how the downtown core and the waterfront area could be transformed to Hispanic design without replacing entire buildings. At the same time, property owners increasingly chose the Spanish Colonial Revival style for new construction of both commercial and residential buildings. As it turned out, the Community Arts Association's public education effort was well-timed. On June 29, 1925, an earthquake decimated the downtown core, necessitating considerable rebuilding. In response, most of the downtown business district was rebuilt in the Hispanic mode. This rebuilding effort provided the necessary architectural concentration to create the precise image that many community leaders had hoped to inspire through gentle persuasion.

While the 1925 earthquake provided the city with an architectural windfall, sustaining Santa Barbara's Hispanic character proved to be a continual challenge, in part because not all citizens supported the idea of a cultivated and uniform Hispanic image and in part because some property owners were drawn to new architectural styles. Moderne styles presented the first serious challenge to Santa Barbara's Hispanic architecture. The resulting tension produced a number of interesting architectural hybrids. One of the earliest of these was Los Banos del Mar. Howell and Edwards, two architects who understood the long-range goal of the Community Arts Association and who specialized in Hispanic designs, merged Hispanic and

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Moderne elements to produce a modest yet attractive design for a public recreational facility. Other extant examples of combined Hispanic and Moderne styling in Santa Barbara include the Letsch Duplex at 216-218 W. Yanonali Street (1937; architect undetermined), where arched openings are combined with glass brick windows; Alpha Floral at 1329-1331 State Street (1940; Alex D'Alfonso), where a red-tile gable roof and exposed rafters are combined with rounded display windows surrounded by marble glass; the V.E. Wood Auto Building at 315 State Street (1922; remodeled 1946; Harold John Vaile), which combines a low-pitched red tile roof with a curving Art Deco corner and deeply recessed display windows; and the Christian Science Reading Room at 1301-1303 State Street (1950-51), designed by internationally known designer Kem Weber and architect Roy Cheesmen, which combines a sweeping rounded corner marquee and roof parapet with a recessed clerestory sheltered by a red tile gabled roof.

These buildings attest to the popularity of Moderne styles during the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s as well as the tenacity of Santa Barbara's Hispanic architectural roots. All of them mark the evolution of Hispanic architectural imagery in the decades following the mid-1920s transformation. As a public building and as one of the first buildings to embody a merging of two popular styles, Los Banos del Mar is a significant property documenting the evolution of Santa Barbara's Hispanic architectural tradition.

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Maps and Aerial Photographs

- 1903 Sanborn Map
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August 5, 1937
October 14, 1937
October 15, 1937
April 28, 1938
July 28, 1938

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"The Bath House Opens Today," July 28, 1901.
"Bath House Burned to Ground at Early Hour This Morning," March 27, 1913.
"Bath House Will Be Rebuilt, Plans Indefinite But Certain," March 29, 1913.
"Bath House Ready for Formal Opening," April 22, 1915.

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"Los Banos del Mar is Dedicated; Thousands Attend Opening of Baths," April 23, 1915.

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GEN-100-1110

Section 10: Geographical Data

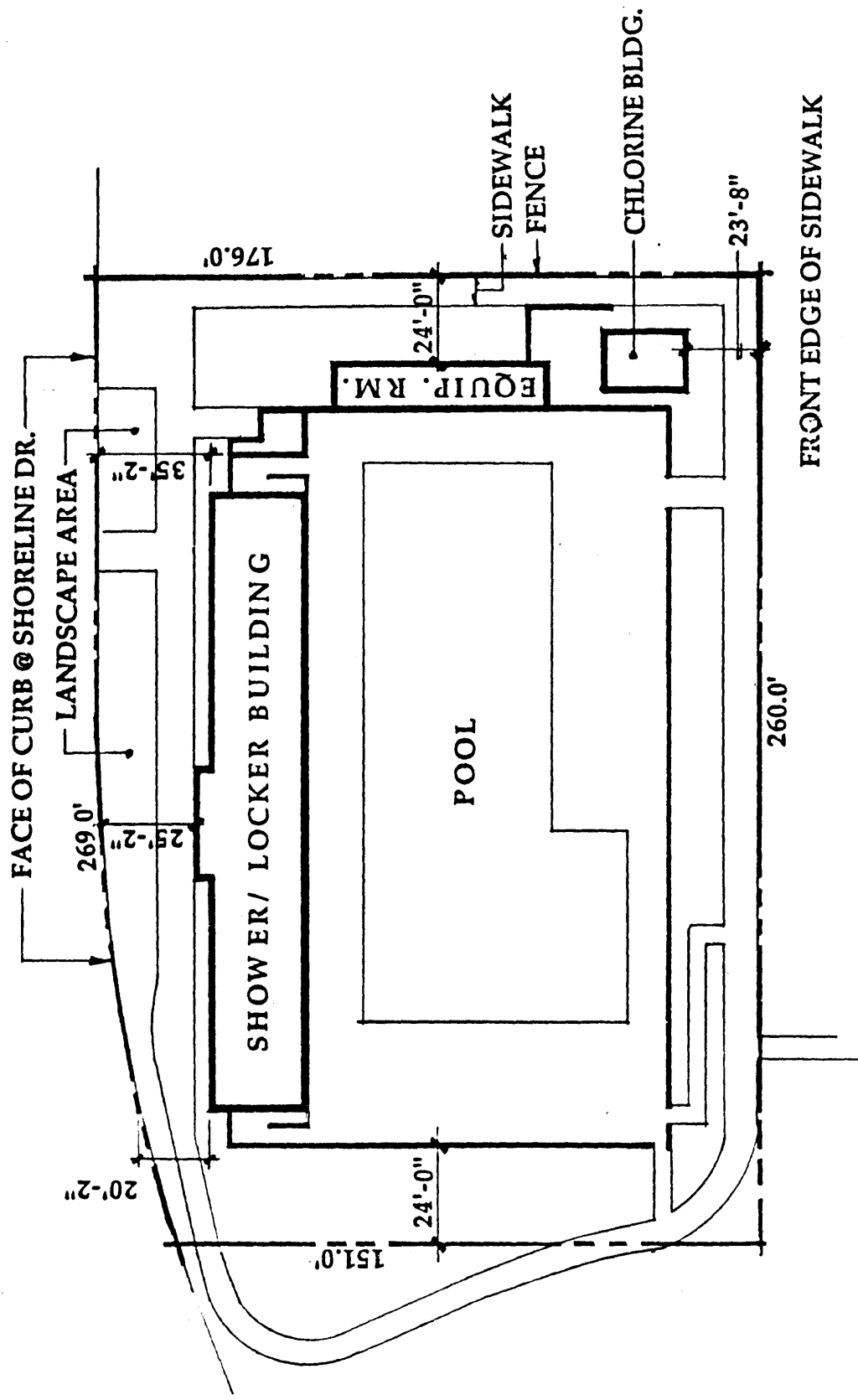
Verbal Boundary Description

On the north, the boundaries of Los Banos del Mar extend to the curb of Cabrillo Boulevard/Shoreline Drive on the north; on the east, the existing sidewalk which separates the pool and bathhouse from the wading pool. On the south and west, the boundaries extend approximately 24 feet from the footprint of the pool and bathhouse. These boundaries incorporate the mature palm trees planted around the pool and bathhouse when it was constructed, but exclude the wading pool and most of the lawn area to the west. The excluded areas no longer retain their historic character.

Boundary Justification

Although a children's wading pool was part of the 1938-39 design and construction, the original structure was replaced in 1979 with a completely new pool designed in a different configuration. The wading pool therefore does not meet integrity standards, and it has been excluded from the boundaries. The lawn area on the west side of the property represents a portion of the open play area that was located south of the shuffleboard courts. After Cabrillo Boulevard was extended in 1943, the open play area was expanded in size and eventually planted with a lawn. A 1953 aerial photograph shows that the lawn had not yet been planted, so the landscaping as it appears today on the west side is a relatively recent phenomenon. Through these changes, however, the palm trees have remained. The boundaries have therefore been set to include only the palm trees.

The boundaries are depicted graphically on the following pages.



NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY FOR:
LOS BANOS DEL MAR

401 SHORELINE DRIVE, SANTA BARBARA, CA



1" = 40'-0"

Handwritten signature or notes in the bottom right corner.

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Boundary Delineation

