

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAY 2 1977
DATE ENTERED DEC 22 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra

AND/OR COMMON
San Luis, Colorado

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Co 159

CITY, TOWN San Luis VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3

STATE COLORADO CODE 08 COUNTY Costilla CODE 023

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mixed Private Ownership

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN VICINITY OF STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTER OF DEEDS, ETC. Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER Costilla County Court House
CITY, TOWN San Luis STATE Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE ongoing FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historical Society of Colorado, 200 East 14th Avenue
CITY, TOWN Denver STATE Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra is both a monument to the past and to a unique and viable culture of today. With few exceptions, noted below, the great majority of structures in the town are small scale one and two story brown cream or white buildings, the oldest of which have been in continuous use since they were built in the early 1860s. The result is a harmonious whole, for, with only one major exception, the overall integrity of the town is intact.

Since the buildings in San Luis are primarily of adobe construction, although some have been modernized with store fronts, it is interesting to examine the physical description from the standpoint of the use and development of what might be termed adobe architecture. The oldest style produced simple plain square structures e.g. the Jacques Chapel Grocery (Photo #4), the Gallegos-Easterday House (Photo #10) and La Morada (Photo #36). These plain functional buildings retain a rather sturdy integrity and all are still in use. (The windows of La Morada are boarded up due to the religious sect which used the building). Equally old is the Smith Gallegos House (Photo #1) with its U shaped floor plan, and the Choury-Easterday House (photo #2) with its wings which were added to the basic structures as the family grew and needed more space.

During the 1880's the simple adobe structures were giving way to the more complex shape and forms found frequently in association with wooden superstructures. Examples include the Church of the Most Precious Blood (Photo #3), the Convent (Photo #5) and its elaborate wooden porch, and the County Courthouse (Photo #8). The overall effect is one of elaboration yet possessing clearly distinguishable ties with the simple structures of the past.

By approximately the turn of the century, the emphasis was shifting away from buildings with adobe facades to those with wooden facades or additions. An example would be the Emma Hacienda and Patio (Photo #13) with its wooden facade added in 1902, the building built by Plar Mondragon at about the same period (photo #8) of the Zegob General Store (Photo #11). In the latter example, the basic adobe structure was standing in 1865, with the wooden facade added ca. 1910. Apparently this shift in emphasis was an attempt to conform to what was believed to be American Victorian or what might more aptly be termed as American western architectural style.

Yet it is interesting to note that the use of adobe still survives. This may be due to the availability of the material, or to a reflection of the survival of the Spanish heritage, or perhaps simply to a recognition that adobe buildings are cooler and more suitable to the climate. Two examples of this modern construction can be found; the first, the old high school building (Photos # 17A & 17B) constructed in 1934 intrudes because of its very size and scale overpowering everything else in the area while the new Costilla County Community Center (Photo #2), even though it was constructed in 1974, continues the tradition of the use of adobe to erect low seemingly small scale buildings.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Cultural
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1851 to present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1848, Don Carlos Beaubien purchased Stephen Lee's share of the Sangre de Cristo land grant and gained full ownership of the million acre grant which took in much of what is now the Southern Luis Valley. One of the requirements under which the grant had been made was that settlement be made in the area. As early as 1846, settlers, many of them from the ranches of Don Carlos, had begun moving into the area. They were not successful in establishing permanent settlements due primarily to the resistance from the Ute Indians. Nevertheless, year after year, the settlers kept returning.

On April 15, 1851, the Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra was established. Not only is this town Colorado's earliest permanent settlement, it represents a culture important to Colorado's history; the Spanish. The significance is more than just historical, for while the basic way of life is and remains Spanish, over the years numerous immigrants have been assimilated, a process which, it should be noted, is still going on. The result is an intermingling of various cultures into what at first may seem a closed society, but whose members simply chose to perpetuate Spanish tradition, as a result of the way of life, the language and simple geographical placement.

An integral part of the Spanish tradition of San Luis, and something that the local residents are intensely proud of still today, is the Vega. Located east and south of town, this irregular shaped grassland was given to the town by Don Carlos Beaubien in 1863 for the pasturing of the town's livestock. It is still owned by the town today.

Some of the buildings of historical significance in San Luis are the Smith Gallegos House (listed in the National Register, April 14, 1975), Choury House, Convent, and the Church of the Most Precious Blood, the Jacques Chapel Grocery, La Morada or Penitentes' meeting house, Salazar's Store, the County Courthouse, the Gallegos-Easterday House and Post Office, and the Valencia Hotel. These structures, the construction dates of which span the period from the 1860's to the first decade of the twentieth century, are monuments to and illustrative of this valuable culture unique to Colorado's history.

The Smith Gallegos House (Photo #1) dates from ca. 1863 and is the only U shaped adobe house with the traditional plaza remaining on the main street of San Luis. Built by Nasario Gallegos, a member of one of the first twelve pioneering families, the house was purchased by Louis Cohn, a Jewish merchant who, besides being one of the original settlers, was related to two of the more prominent Arabic families. The house today is owned by a distant cousin of the Gallegos family, Joseph Vicini.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bean, Luther, Land of the Blue Sky People. Monte Vista, Monte Vista Journal pp. 42-43; 47-49
 Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites. Various inventory forms in and around San Luis. 1974-75

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1181 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	113	4637110	4117260	B	113	4625810	4113750
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	113	4611210	4113750	D	113	4621210	4117260

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northwest corner, the junction of Eighth Street and Main Street, the boundary runs south down the middle of Main Street until it meets the Rio Seco, and then swing southwest following the course of the river. Upon reaching the location where First Street would intersect, it turns east to Main Street and then jogs south until reaching the point where the People's Ditch crosses Main Street. (continued on continuation sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mrs. Sally Vigil

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

825 North Indian Hill

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Claremont

California 91711

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

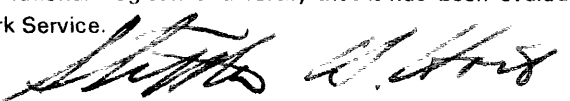
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE MARCH 31, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 ATTEST: *William Brown*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/22/78
 DATE 12/21/78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Boundaries San Luis Historic District

The original settlement of San Luis took place along the river and then spread eastward towards the Vega along what is now Fourth Street. It was bounded on the north and south by what is now First Street and Sixth Street. Prior to 1900, the Salazar family platted the Salazar addition located between Sixth and Eighth Streets and east of what is now Highway 159. This area, known locally as "Little Cuba" had been built prior to 1920.

The boundaries of the historic district take into consideration this historic growth pattern. Beginning at the junction of Eighth and Main Streets (Highway 159) the boundary goes south along Main Street to where the river crosses the road and then curves southwest along the river to its intersection with First Street. To the west of this line is all modern construction (Photo #22). At the intersection, the boundary proceeds east down First Street to the highway, jogs south to the San Luis People's Ditch and then follows it down to the boundary of the Vega (shown in red on the map), where it follows its boundary around to its intersection with Sixth Street. According to local sources knowledgeable in the history of San Luis, the irregular shaped boundaries of the Vega are due to the concern of Don Beaubien to select the best grass for the Vega. At its intersection with Sixth Street, the boundary turns right, and then left on Eighth Street back to the starting point. The structures outside the boundary on both the north and the east are of modern vintage. In fact, what appear to be small manufacturing plants obviously built within the last few years are found on the north side of Eighth Street.

Within this area, as is true for the entire residential section of town all of the structures tend to be of small scale and usually built of adobe which may or may not have been stuccoed over (Photos #19 or #24). There are a few modern structures noticeable primarily because of their bright colors as opposed to the soft beige and browns of the rest of the buildings, but they do not shatter the overall integrity of the area.

Most of the buildings have been added to and altered over the years, a tribute to the viability of the Spanish tradition, but the overall rhythm and harmony remain consistent throughout the area. The only major intrusion, the old high school (Photos #17a and 17b) intrudes because of its sheer scale and not its modern construction date.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The following are significant structures within the San Luis Historic District:

- 1) Smith Gallegos House (Photo #1)
- 2) Choury-Easterday House (Photo #2)
- 3) Church of the Most Precious Blood-Church Place (Photo #3)
- 4) The Convent-Church Place (Photo #5)
- 5) The County Courthouse-Northeast corner Casper
and Main (Photo #8)⁹
- 6) La Morada-Southwest corner Eighth and Costilla (Photo #6)
- 7) Zegob General Store-404 Church Place (Photo #11)
- 8) Mondragon Grocery-150 Main Street (Photo #8)
- 9) Salazar Store (Photo #7)
- 10) San Luis Valley State Bank-351 Main Street (Photo #12)
- 11) Valencia Hotel (Photo #15)
- 12) Gallegos-Easterday House (Photo #10)
- 13) Jacques Chapel Grocery-Chapel Place (Photo #4)
- 14) Choury House (Photo #2)
- 15) Valencia Hotel-200 Main Street (Photo #15)

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Choury House (Photo #2) is known to have been standing in 1865. It was built by A. Choury, a graduate of the University of Paris and an active civic leader who married into the Loboto family, another of the original settlers in the town. It is believed that the house may have served as a fort before the construction of Fort Massachusetts (1853) and Fort Garland (1858).

The Church of the Most Precious Blood (Photo #3) was built in 1886 (the original church was where the old high school now stands). Constructed by Father Francisco Garcia, a visita (circuit rider) priest of the Franciscan order, the religious center grew to include a chapel, a school and a convent. It was considered to be a mission church because it provided not only learning and religious training for the early settlers but a place of refuge for travelers as well. The Chapel (Photo #4) is now Jacques Chapel Grocery. The convent (Photo #5) not only housed the nuns, who came to San Luis to tend the school, but at one time also served as the first high school in San Luis.

La Morada (Photo #6) (Penitentes' Meeting House) was originally constructed in the 1860's, but until recently it was the meeting place of the Penitentes', an obscure and secret Spanish Catholic sect originating in the Middle Ages. This group, one of the very few still known to exist in Colorado, carried on the old practice of chanting in dramatic fashion a special rosary in Spanish and Latin on public occasions. Each Easter they choose a man to portray Christ to carry a cross to the top of a nearby hill and be flogged each step of the way.

The business now known as Romero's Store (Photo #7) was founded by Dario Gallegos in 1857. Arcadio Salazar, who had previously worked as a clerk, married Gallegos' daughter in 1874 and soon after was made a full partner. In 1894, he assumed full ownership of the business, and his decendents have continued to operate the store until the present day. In 1952, the store was recognized as being the oldest in the state still operated by the same family. The business is currently operated by George Romero, a cousin to the Salazar family.

The Costilla County Court House (Photo #8) was built in 1883 and is an adobe structure with a stone foundation. It is still the center of County government.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

The Gallegos-Easterday House (Photo #10) is known to have been standing in 1863 when it was used as part of a combination farm and grain mill. The owners of the mill, in addition to Nasario Gallegos were Ceran St. Vrain and H. Easterday. The house is still in use. It is currently owned by descendants of the Nasario Gallegos family.

The Zegob General Store (Photo #11) incorporated a plain adobe structure which dates from 1865 with a wooden addition dating from ca. 1900. Zazralia Zegob Sr. immigrated to San Luis shortly after the turn of the century and founded the general store which is still owned and operated by his descendants. (The store is first listed in the Colorado Business Directory in 1911.) The Zegob family is one of the three prominent Arabic families in town.

The San Luis Valley State Bank (Photo #12) now the Malouf Department Store was established in 1892 to handle the business generated by the grain mill belonging to St. Vrain, and Easterday. (see Photo #10). The original directors of the bank included E. Loboto, Arcadio Salazar, and A. Choury. The bank failed during the 1930s due to the depression and the building was taken over by the Malouf family, an Arabic immigrant family which now operates a department store in the structure.

The Valencia Hotel (Photo #15) was the original residence of Darios Gallegos. The building dates from the early 1860s. It later became the first hotel in San Luis and was the scene of many meetings between Carlos Beaubien and John Fremont.

In recent years there has been a tremendous revival of interest in the Spanish heritage with the rise of Chicano consciousness among many of the younger generation. Under the direction of the staff of the Centennial High School, publication has begun of a quarterly magazine entitled Adobe. Written and edited by the students themselves, it focuses on the history and culture of the town.

The appearance of this journal is only the latest manifestation of the strong viable Spanish-American culture in San Luis. Now well into its second century of existence, the town of San Luis, and more important the people and the culture of the town has not lost sight of its origins. Yet at the same time, the culture is growing and developing in the modern world of the twentieth century.

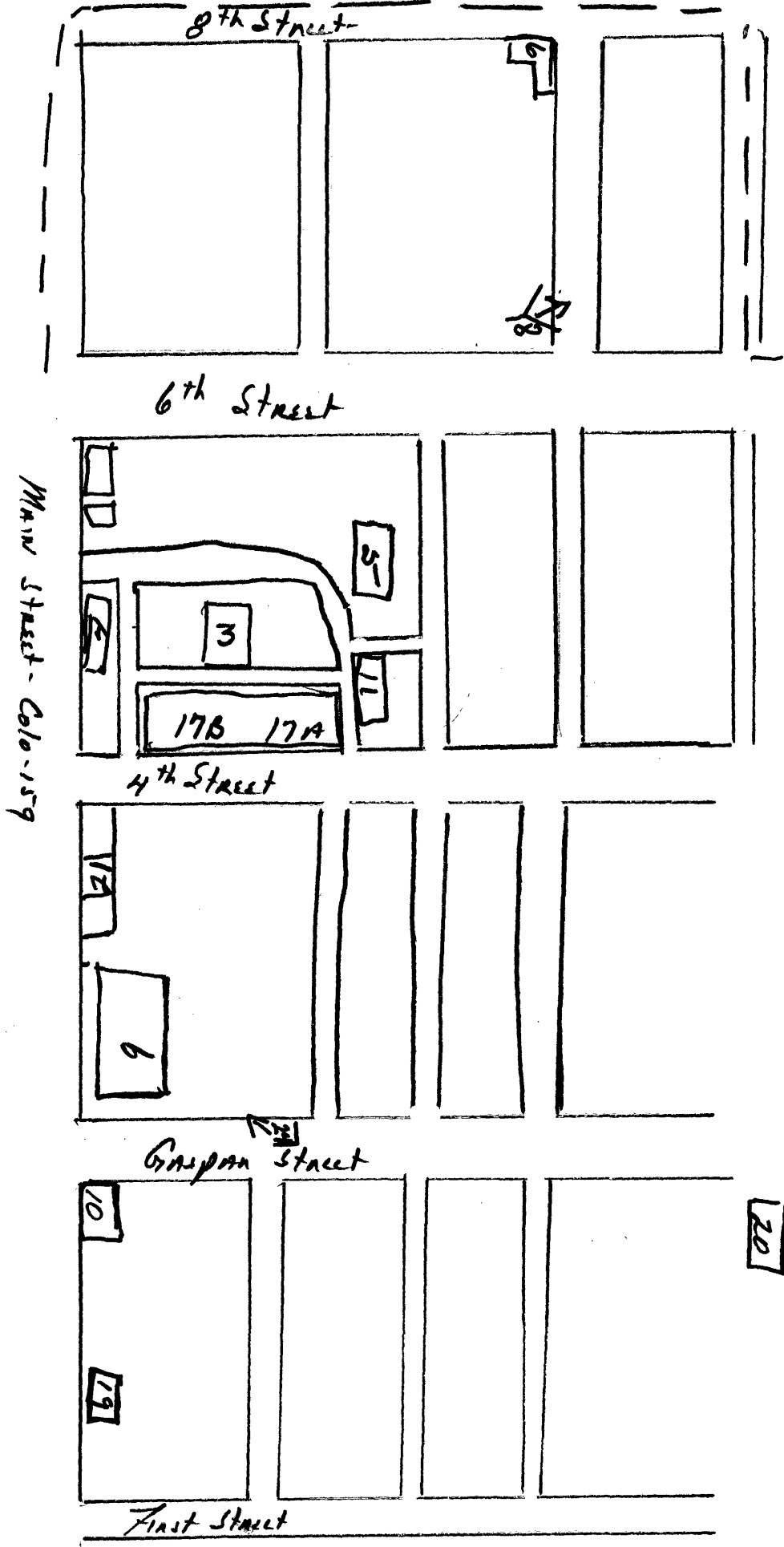
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Geographical
CONTINUATION SHEET Data ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

The boundary then follows the People's Ditch down to the intersection of the Vega's boundary and then is coterminous with the Vega's boundary (shown in red). At the intersection of Sixth Street and the Vega boundary, the boundary turns north along Costilla Street until reaching Eighth Street before turning west and running down the middle of the street until it reaches the starting point at the junction of Eighth Street and Main.



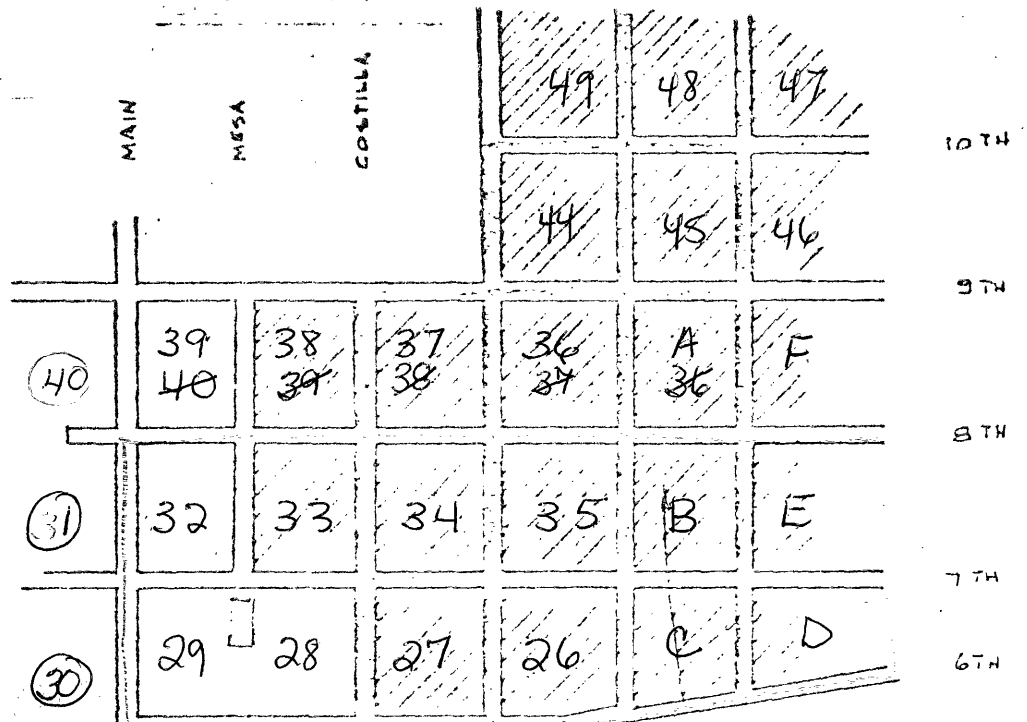
1/29/77
 24

Modern
 Subdivision

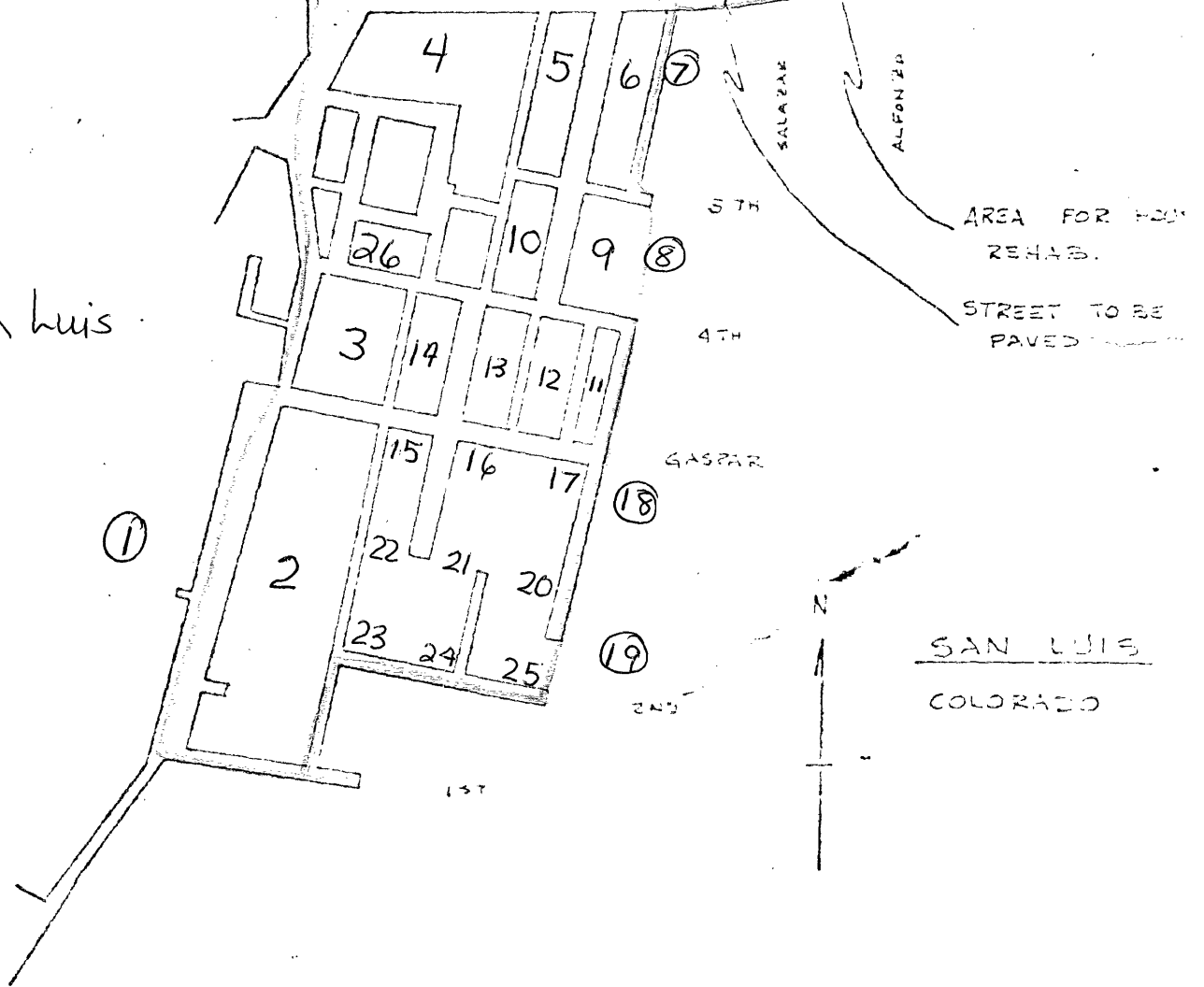
San Luis Historic District
 MAY 2 1977

This map, which is not to scale, is intended to show the relative location of the major buildings within the tract. No attempt has been made to show the buildings in the residential area east of the main street.

Salazar Addition



TOWN OF San Luis



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra
NAME:

MULTIPLE Culebra River Villages of Costilla County MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: COLORADO, Costilla

DATE RECEIVED: 2/20/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/06/02
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 78000837

NOMINATOR: STATE

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 _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

~~Additional Documentation Accepted~~

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

TELEPHONE

DISCIPLINE

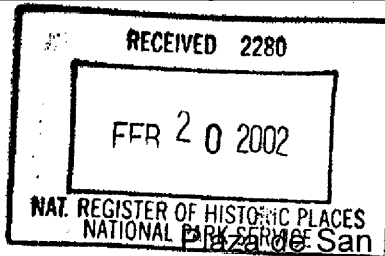
DATE

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

Accept
Edson Beall

Historian
3/22/02

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



Cover

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra
Historic District, Costilla County, Colorado
The Culebra River Villages
of Costilla County, Colorado – MPS

Section number Additional Information Page 1

The Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra Historic District (NRIS-78000837) meets the registration requirements for most of the property types outlined in The Culebra River Villages of Costilla County Multiple Property Documentation Form. As the principal village in the basin, the district contains a collection of good examples of the linear plan, center passage plan, hybrid plan, and hipped-roof box plan vernacular house subtypes; agricultural outbuilding and barn subtypes; hybridized commercial/residence and auto body shop commercial building subtypes; and an example each of the church and SPMDTU lodge hall subtypes.