

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

TORRANCE HIGH SCHOOL

Summary

Torrance High School is located on a 9-acre, landscaped site at the end of El Prado Park near Downtown Torrance. The campus includes three well-preserved structures in Mediterranean styling built between 1917 and 1923, an auditorium in PWA Moderne that dates from 1938, and a variety of more recent structures built (or significantly remodeled) between 1952 and 1970. Because of the large number of newer buildings, the 4 significant structures are being nominated in a limited thematic format.

MAIN BUILDING (A)* UTM: 11/377820/3744000 Acreage: 0.5

The Main Building, built in 1917, was the first building on the high school campus. It is a two-story structure designed in the Mediterranean styling and influenced by both Classical and Spanish Colonial design elements. The form is rectangular with the central two-story mass flanked by one-story wings.

The main entrance is the dominant element of the building's facade. It consists of a set of layered elements; a large pediment with cornice, a coffered arch, a flat window with pediment above, a large arched fanlight, and a flat door opening. The doorway is flanked by paired columns supporting a broken cornice at the first story level.

Alterations to the facade are minor. They consist primarily of modifications to window and door openings. The original design intent is still clearly evident. Two lamps of a more recent vintage flank the central doorway.

A detached building (the Home Economics Building) is located to the north and behind the original structure. This building is visually connected by means of a semi-circular colonnade, included in the nomination.

An addition also adjoins the original structure to the rear, forming a slightly offset "T" shaped configuration. The southern side of the area formed by the intersection of the two structures has been designed as a patio area with tile fountain, benches brick patio, and an arched portico with balcony above. This addition is also designed in a style compatible with and similar to the original.

HOME ECONOMICS BUILDING (B) UTM: 11/377760/3744030 Acreage: 0.3

The Home Economics Building at Torrance High School is in Mediterranean styling with classical detailing. This building dates from 1923.

The two-story cast-in-place concrete structure exhibits bold rectilinear massing which gives it a strong monumental quality. The exterior walls are painted white while the hip roof is steeply pitched and uses red

*Note: Building letter designations are keyed to locations on site plan.

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Building	Label on Plot Plan	Date of Construction
*Main Building	(A)	1917
*Home Economics	(B)	1923
*Torrance High School Annex	(K)	1923
*Auditorium	(AUD)	1938
Classroom Bungalow	(C)	1952
Classroom Bungalow	(D)	1952
Classroom Bungalow	(E)	1952
Cafeteria	(CAFE)	1954
Administration Building	(G)	1963
Boys' Gymnasium	(I)	1936 (altered)
Girls' Gymnasium	(L)	1965
Science Building	(M)	1965
Industrial Arts Building	(N)	1965
Music Building	(J)	1966
Library	(X)	1970
Classroom Building	(Y)	1970

*Nominated buildings

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one of a handful of planned communities in the United States and was first envisioned as a model garden-industrial city by its founders. The original city plans were designed by the Olmsted Brothers of Boston, Massachusetts, sons of the celebrated landscape architect Frederic Law Olmsted.

The Olmsteds' plan called for the separation of residential, industrial, and commercial sectors. A long boulevard, the El Prado, divided the downtown business district extending through the residential area as a common. It was aligned to frame Mt. San Antonio and the San Gabriel Mountains fifty miles to the northeast. Two buildings were planned to face each other across this impressive stretch of parkway: the railroad depot and the city hall. The city hall was never built on this site; instead, Torrance School was situated on the most scenic parcel in the downtown area.

Because of the new construction described above, the few remaining early structures are dispersed throughout the campus and are being nominated individually in a limited thematic format.

MAIN BUILDING (A)

Architect: ROBERT ALLEN FARRELL

The Main Building was the first, and originally the only, building of Torrance High School. Named Torrance School and accommodating students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade, it opened on September 11, 1917, and was completed December 23, 1917. Constructed at a cost of \$34,230, it was designed to readily incorporate future additions. It provided seven classrooms, a principal's office, and a makeshift auditorium which could be improvised by sliding partitions between the kindergarten and primary rooms.

In 1921, a rear addition designed by E.H. Cline was built at a cost of \$38,849. Later referred to as the "Senior Patio," the addition included a brick patio with a tile fountain and benches. A long-standing tradition dictates that only Seniors (12th grade students) are permitted to congregate or cross the site. Two one-story wings were also added to the building.

Beginning in 1974, major rehabilitation and restoration work totalling over two million dollars was focused on the Main Building, preserving and enhancing the building's unique architecture.

HOME ECONOMICS BUILDING (B)

Architects: Farrell and Miller

The Home Economics Building was added to the school as part of a \$200,000 construction program begun in 1922. At that time, the school population was only 537 students - an increase of 114 in one year - but a campaign to build 3,000 new homes to house Torrance factory workers promised a much larger influx of students in the near future. The Los Angeles City School District purchased 17 adjoining acres of land and contracted with Farrell and Miller to design two additional buildings for the school.

The whole project included two separate structures, one to the east of the Main Building and one to the west, each connected to the Main Building with a

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTIONS

Boundaries are lines of convenience which encompass the historic resources and significant associated features.

Main Building (A)

Beginning at the east corner of the Main Building and proceeding northwest 275 feet to the north corner of the Main Building, then turning left and proceeding 25 feet southwest to the colonnade connecting the Main Building to the Home Economics Building, then proceeding 85 feet in a westward curve around the outside of the colonnade to the Home Economics Building, then turning left and proceeding 2 feet to the corner of the Home Economics Building, then turning right and proceeding southwest 100 feet along the side of the Home Economics Building to a point directly opposite the rear end of the Main Building, then turning left and proceeding 325 feet southeast across the landscaped area between the Home Economics Building and the Main Building, across the rear end of the Main Building and the landscaped area directly to the south of it, to a point directly opposite the southeast side of the Main Building, then turning left and proceeding 175 feet northeast across the landscaped area and the southeast side of the building, back to the starting point.

Home Economics Building (B)

Beginning at the east corner of the Home Economics Building and proceeding northwest 62 feet then turning left and proceeding 115 feet southwest along the side of the building, then turning left and proceeding southeast 62 feet across the rear of the building, then turning left and proceeding northeast 115 feet along the side of the building to the starting point.

Auditorium/Assembly Hall (AUD)

Starting at the east corner of the building and proceeding northwest 175 feet to the north corner of the building, turning left and proceeding southwest 90 feet across the front of the building, to the west corner of the building, turning left and proceeding 165 feet southeast to the south corner, then turning left and proceeding northeast 90 feet across the back of the building, thus returning to the starting point.

Torrance High School Annex (K)

Beginning at the southwest corner of the building and proceeding 90 feet east, then turning left and proceeding north 365 feet across the front of the building, then turning left and proceeding 175 feet west, then turning left again and proceeding 50 feet south across the end of this wing of the building, then turning left and proceeding 75 feet east, then turning right and proceeding 315 feet across the rear of the building back to the starting point.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Torrance High School Campus Thematic Resources

State California LA County

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Home Economics Building

Substantive Review

Keeper

Sinda McClelland 10.13.83

Attest

2. Auditorium

Substantive Review

Keeper

Sinda McClelland 10.13.83

Attest

3. Torrance School

Substantive Review

Keeper

Sinda McClelland 10.13.83

Attest

4. Main Building

Substantive Review

Keeper

Sinda McClelland 10.13.83

Attest

5.

Keeper

Attest

6.

Keeper

Attest

7.

Keeper

Attest

8.

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9.

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Attest

10.

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