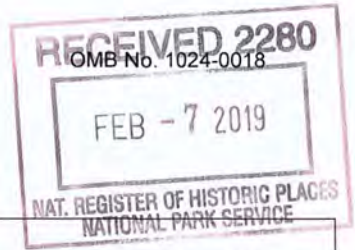


3534

NPS Form 10-900

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Ray Sherman Place
Other name/site number: Ray Sherman Place, Southern Section; TEX 3-6
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 4528 Blanco Avenue
City or town: El Paso State: Texas County: El Paso
Not for publication: Vicinity: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 levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 2/5/19
Signature of certifying official / Title Date
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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] Signature of the Keeper 3/25/19 Date of Action

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

	Private
x	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

Category of Property

	building(s)
x	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
29	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	12	structures
0	0	objects
29	12	total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling; OTHER: Community Building

Current Functions: DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling; OTHER: Community Building, Dumpster Enclosure;
 LANDSCAPE: Wall, Pavilion

7. Description

Architectural Classification: MODERN MOVEMENT: Apartment

Principal Exterior Materials: Brick, Concrete, Stucco, Wood, Stone, Metal: Aluminum and Corrugated Steel

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-14)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations: N/A

Areas of Significance: Community Planning & Development; Social History; Politics/Government

Period of Significance: 1953-1969

Significant Dates: 1953

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Louis Lloyd Mollinary, Architect / Ponsford Brothers Contractors, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 15-22)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 23-24)

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 (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 9.01 acres

Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 31.766055°N | Longitude: -106.437508°W |
| 2. Latitude: 31.766058°N | Longitude: -106.435330°W |
| 3. Latitude: 31.764425°N | Longitude: -106.435316°W |
| 4. Latitude: 31.764433°N | Longitude: -106.437511°W |

Verbal Boundary Description:

From the intersection of Hernandez Street and Blanco Avenue, proceed east along Blanco Avenue to the intersection of Blanco Avenue and Fox Place. Hence proceed south along Fox Place to the intersection of Fox Place and Sue Hall Drive. Hence proceed west along Sue Hall Drive to the intersection of Sue Hall Drive and Hernandez Street. Hence proceed north along Hernandez Street to the intersection of Hernandez Street and Blanco Avenue, at which point the boundary description began.

Legal Description:

Property #24594 - 2 FRENCH FARMS 1 TO 24 & N 23.95 FT OF 25 (87353 SQ FT).

Property #212454 - 5 FRENCH FARMS 1 TO 24 & N 23.95 FT OF 25 & 35 TO 38 & N 23.95 FT OF 59 & ALLEY BTW & ADJ STREETS (217206 SQ FT).

Property #214509 - 8 FRENCH FARMS 1 TO 24 & N 23.95 FT OF 25 (87353 SQFT).

Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the nominated property coincides with historic boundary of the Southern section of Ray Sherman Place as shown on the 1954 Sanborn map of El Paso, which is the earliest graphic representation available of the property (see Map 5).

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Greg Johnston, AIA, and Andreea Hamilton, AIA, with assistance from Alyssa Gerszewski, THC National Register Historian
Organization: McCoy Collaborative Preservation Architecture, PLLC
Street & number: 3200 Main Street, #3.6
City or Town: Dallas State: Texas Zip Code: 75226
Email: andreea@mccoycollaborative.com
Telephone: (214)977-9118
Date: 07/09/2018

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 25-31)
Additional items (see continuation sheets 32-44)
Photographs (see continuation sheets 5-6, 45-55)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Ray Sherman Place
City or Vicinity: El Paso
County, State: El Paso County, Texas
Photographer: Quimby McCoy Preservation Architecture and HACEP
Date Photographed: 09/02/2015, 03/01/2016, 06/28/2016

Photograph 1 – View of the rear laundry yards of Apartment Building Type A and Type E. Camera facing north. (March 1, 2016)

Photograph 2 – Entry Elevation of Apartment Building Type A. Camera facing northeast. (March 1, 2016)

Photograph 3 – Entry Elevation of Apartment Building Type A – porch detail. Camera facing northeast. (March 1, 2016)

Photograph 4 – View of recreation area and non-contributing metal pavilion, with superblock of Ray Sherman Place with Apartment Building Type B (right) and Type E (far left) and Type A (center). Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 5 – View of entry façade for Apartment Type B. Camera facing southeast. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 6 – View of entry façade for Apartment Type C. Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 7 – Rear façade for Apartment Type C (left) faces the end façade and rear yards of Apartment Type B (right). Camera facing west. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 8 – Enlarged porch entry facade for Apartment Type B. Camera facing east. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 9 – Enlarged rear façade entry for Apartment Type C. Camera facing south. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 10 – Entry façade for Apartment Type D facing Blanco Avenue and part of non-contributing stone dumpster enclosure. Camera facing southeast. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 11 – Rear façade for Apartment Type D. Camera facing west. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 12 – Entry façade for Apartment Type E facing Blanco Avenue. Camera facing southwest. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 13 – Rear façade for Apartment Type E. Camera facing east. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 14 – Maintenance Building north entry façade along Blanco Avenue. Camera facing south. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 15 – Maintenance Building view of east façade (left) and north entry façade (right). Original concrete site walls are on the east side of the building. Camera facing southwest. (March 1, 2016)

Photograph 16 – Maintenance Building view of south façade (left) and east façade (right). Camera facing northwest. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 17 – Maintenance Building view of west façade (left) and south façade (right). Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 18 – Enlarged view of reverse hip soffit at corner of Maintenance Building. Camera facing southwest. (June 28, 2016)

Photograph 19 – Interior view of typical first floor at the entry door area in Apartment Type E. (March 1, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Photograph 20 – Interior view of typical first floor kitchen area looking toward the main living area in Apartment Type E. (March 1, 2016)

Photograph 21 – Open recreation area and non-contributing metal pavilions and laundry slabs. Camera facing east. (Sept. 2, 2015)

Photograph 22 – Non-contributing native stone dumpster enclosure. Camera facing north. (March 1, 2016)

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.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Narrative Description

Ray Sherman Place, a public housing complex at 4528 Blanco Avenue in El Paso, El Paso County, Texas, was built by the Housing Authority for the City of El Paso (HACEP) in 1953. This complex was comprised of two distinct projects, TEX 3-5 (northern section) and TEX 3-6 (nominated southern section) divided by Blanco Avenue. Ray Sherman Place is located in the eastern side of El Paso, and occupies the block bounded by Blanco Avenue to the north, Fox Place to the east, Sue Hall Drive to the south, and Hernandez Street to the west (see Maps 4-8). It was designed as a planned neighborhood with each project treated as a distinct phase. The southern section is now the only extant part of the complex, as the northern section was demolished in 2016. The historic district reflects Modern architectural design and consists of twenty-eight (28) two-story apartment buildings, a one-story management office and maintenance building, and 12 non-contributing structures organized around a rectangular recreation area (see Map 8). The architect of Ray Sherman Place was Louis Lloyd Mollinary, and Ponsford Brothers Contractors served as builders (see Figure 4). Original architectural features such as the flat roofs, reinforced masonry brick walls with minimal detailing, and the cantilevered rear entry porch roofs can be seen throughout the district. A few alterations including window and door replacements, painting of exterior brick walls, and modifications to front entry porch roofs occurred over the years. Other site changes included the construction of two metal pavilions (non-contributing), a basketball court, and two concrete slabs for future laundry buildings in the recreation area in 1971. Around the same time, ten non-contributing dumpster enclosures were added adjacent to the public street around the perimeter. Despite these alterations, Ray Sherman Place retains a high level of historic integrity. The complex is still owned by the HACEP and continues to function as public housing.

Site and Overall Complex

Ray Sherman Place occupies a square block approximately three miles east of downtown El Paso and less than a mile north of the Rio Grande and Mexico. The surrounding neighborhood is primarily residential. The El Paso Coliseum, located less than a half mile west of the site, was completed in 1942 in a newly developing residential area of El Paso. A school is located between the Coliseum and Ray Sherman Place. The complex is a block south of East Paisano Drive, United States Highway 62, an east west thoroughfare paralleling the Franklin Canal. The school to the east has expanded and a park has been created south of the school.

The southern section of the site was the first phase of construction. It was completed in 1953 and included a management office and maintenance building and twenty-eight (28) two-story rectilinear apartment buildings organized around a large recreation area. This section provided 180 housing units (see Maps 6 & Figures 9-15). Ray Sherman Place was constructed on a vacant lot, a site chosen by the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso in efforts to acquire cheaper land on the outskirts of the inner city. No slum clearance appears to have taken place. The southern section was planned as a 'superblock' with no vehicular streets intruding into the site. The majority of the apartment buildings are orientated east-west and face onto open spaces, with the exception of the perimeter buildings which face the street. This is quite different from the northern section where most apartment buildings faced onto public or private streets (see Map 6). The apartment buildings are organized in pairs (or groups of pairs) with their front facades facing each other across a linear courtyard, and include a pedestrian path down the center. The rear open spaces serve as service yards and playgrounds. This sequence and rhythm provides linear, open lawn spaces that separate the apartment buildings. These 'front' and 'rear' spaces provide formal and informal open spaces that are used for gathering areas and play areas for children in the community. A large rectangular recreation area located in center of the site is used for soccer, baseball and other games. Two small square metal pavilions (non-contributing) and adjacent concrete slabs for future laundry building were added to the northeast and northwest

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

corners of the recreation area in 1971.¹ No indication of construction above the concrete slab line is evident. A paved basketball court was added around this time at the southwest corner. The parking for the southern section of Sherman Place was located around the perimeter of this section. Non-contributing native stone dumpster enclosures were added in 1971 when street parking was expanded along the perimeter (see Maps 7-8).

Design of Ray Sherman Place

Building design

The Ray Sherman Place apartment buildings are primarily two-story buildings with a flat roof - a design that responds to the local El Paso dry climate with deep overhangs to help shield windows and doors from the sun. The exterior is characterized by smooth, painted brick veneer at the exterior walls (see Photos 1 & 2). Doors and windows are located on the long sides of the rectilinear buildings, with the end walls largely devoid of detailing. The horizontal emphasis was enhanced with the original double-hung, metal windows, 2/2 configuration with smaller 1/1 configuration for the bathrooms. While the fenestrations were retained, these were replaced throughout the complex with aluminum casement windows, and with smaller single-hung 1/1 configuration in the bathrooms. The replacement front porch roofs and original cantilevered rear porch roofs created a sense of entry and provided shade where tenants could sit and enjoy their neighbors' company or watch the children play (see Photos 2, 8 & 11). This design reflects the innovations in the 1940s and 1950s that improved access to housing for low-income families, allied with high standards of material selection and detailing required by the Federal Public Housing Authority standards and guidelines.

While there are five different types of apartment buildings at Sherman Place, they share many materials and features. All are constructed with concrete slab-on-grade foundations, brick walls, flat roofs, and steel casement and single hung windows with rowlock brick sills. Each apartment has front and rear porches with concrete porch floors. The sizes of the apartments vary from one to five bedroom units to accommodate large families, elderly, and disabled individuals. Most of these apartment units are two-story in height (townhouses) with the living/dining, kitchen and one bedroom on the first floor and additional bedrooms on the second floor (see Map 7; Figures 9-15).

Apartment Building Type A

See photos 1, 2, and 3.

Type A are two-story rectilinear brick apartment buildings with flanking one-story apartments at each end. This unique type accommodates one-story apartments at each end, and five (5) two-story townhouses in the center. Apartments range in size from one to three bedrooms. The front facades have large wood framed, flat roofed entry porches with metal columns covered in CMU for the two story portion, and smaller sloped roofed entry porches on each side serving the one-story apartments. These front porches were modified, but the original cantilevered porches on the rear elevations are intact. (see Maps 7-8; Figures 10 & 15)

Apartment Building Type B

See photos 4, 5, 7, and 8.

Type B are two-story rectilinear brick apartment buildings, containing six (6) two-story townhouses. Apartment sizes include three (3) three-bedroom townhouses (in a 1 down / 2 up plan) and three (3) three-bedroom townhouses with three (3) bedrooms upstairs. The front facades have three large wood framed, flat roofed entry porches with metal columns covered in CMU, each serving two adjacent apartments. The front porches were modified, but the original cantilevered porches on the rear elevations are intact. (see Maps 7-8; Figures 11 & 15)

¹ Modernization / Renovation drawings dated August 11, 1969 and constructed in 1971.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Apartment Building Type C

See photos 6, 7, and 9.

Type C are two-story rectilinear brick apartment buildings, containing six (6) two-story townhouses. Apartment sizes vary from four-bedroom townhouses (in a 1 down /3 up) plan to a two-bedroom townhouse (with 2 bedrooms upstairs) plan. The front elevations have three large wood framed, flat roofed entry porches with metal columns covered in CMU, each serving two adjacent apartments each. These were modified, but the original cantilevered rear porches are intact. (see Maps 7-8; Figures 12, 14 & 15)

Apartment Building Type D

See photos 10 and 11.

Type D are two-story rectilinear brick apartment buildings, containing six (6) two-story townhouses. The apartments vary in size from one to five bedroom townhouses. There is one (1) one-bedroom townhouse, one (1) two-bedroom townhouse, two (2) three-bedroom townhouses, one (1) four-bedroom townhouse, and one (1) five-bedroom townhouse in this building type. The one and two bedroom townhouse units have the bedrooms on the second floor. The three bedroom townhouses consist of one unit in a 1 down/2 up plan and the other unit with all three bedrooms on the second floor. The four and five bedroom units are configured with one bedroom on the first floor with the remaining bedrooms on the second floor. The front elevations have two large wood framed roofed entry porches with metal columns covered in CMU that were modified, each serving two adjacent apartments. Two smaller entry porches are featured at each end. The original cantilevered rear porches are intact. (see Maps 7-8; Figures 13 & 15)

Apartment Building Type E

See photos 1, 4, 12 and 13.

Type E are two-story rectilinear brick apartment buildings, containing six (6) two-story townhouses. There are six (6) two-bedroom townhouses with two (2) bedrooms upstairs in this building type. The front elevations have three large wood framed flat roofed entry porches with metal columns covered in CMU, each serving two adjacent apartments. Original concrete cantilevered porches are intact on the rear elevations. (see Maps 7-8; Figures 14 & 15)

Management Office and Maintenance Building

See photos 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

Built in 1953, the management office and maintenance building is located at the northern edge of the southern section, and faces Blanco Avenue. The one-story rectilinear building is constructed of load-bearing concrete block walls with brick veneer; the foundation is slab-on-grade concrete and the roof is flat with a unique reverse hip soffit which slopes up from the wall at the face of the building to the edge of the wide eave. (see Maps 7-8; Figure 9)

Site Features

See photos 1, 4, 21 and 22

Public outdoor amenities for the planned neighborhood development originally included an open recreation space. This area now contains a basketball court, playing fields, two concrete slabs for future laundry buildings, and two non-contributing metal pavilions structures. Ten non-contributing stone dumpster enclosures were also added at the perimeter. The laundry lines for each of the apartments are located near the back door of each apartment with a T-shaped metal post with wires that extend to the rear façade of the unit (see Map 8).

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Modifications since Original Construction

Apartment Buildings

Since construction, several exterior and interior alterations have been made to the apartment buildings including:

- The original salmon colored brick exterior of the buildings has been painted. The buildings are now predominantly light green and pink. (see Photos 1, 2, 5 & 7)
- Exterior doors and screen door frames were removed and replaced. New paneled metal entry doors and black steel screen doors were installed in the original masonry openings. (see Photos 8 & 9)
- Steel double-hung window frames and sashes with 2/2 and 1/1 configurations were removed and replaced throughout with new aluminum single lite casement windows and single-hung aluminum bathroom windows with 1/1 configuration in the original masonry locations. (see Photos 5, 9 & 11)
- The roofing and entry porches at the front facades of each building have been modified in two phases: Two story units with one story units at ends – Type A (see Photos 2, 3, 8 & 10)
- The one story portions of building type A originally had no porch covering except for the wood frame roof overhang. The documents of the 1971 renovation call for the addition of 2x6 wood joists over the existing roof, forming 3:12 sloped roofs. The rafters were extended at the front to form a large porch roof (wood beams) supported by 4 ½ x 4 ½ metal columns. The framing was concealed with white pre-finished aluminum soffit. The new sloped roofs had composition shingles. The roofing material has since been replaced around 2005 with asphalt composition shingles.
- The two story portions of building type A had the same wood frame porch roofs (“hoods”) as types B, C, D and E. The documents of the 1971 renovation call for removal of the front porch roofs and replacement with a much larger wood framed porch roof (wood beams and joists) supported by 4 ½ x 4 ½ metal columns. The framing was concealed with white pre-finished aluminum soffit. The new front porch roofs had built-up gravel top roofing.
- In the 2003 renovation, the metal columns supporting the 1971 front porch roofs were wrapped in CMU and stucco. Low rough stone planters were also added.
- Two story units – Types B, C, D and E
- The original porch roofs (referred to as “hoods” on the original drawings, were wood frame, cantilevering out 3 feet over the front and back doors and extending approximately 1 foot on each side of these doors. The original roofing was built-up gravel top. The documents of the 1971 renovation call for removal of the front porch roofs and replacement with a much larger wood framed porch roof (wood beams and joists) supported by 4 ½ x 4 ½ metal columns. The framing was concealed with white pre-finished aluminum soffit. The new front porch roofs had built-up gravel top roofing.
- In the 2003 renovation, the metal columns supporting the 1971 front porch roofs were wrapped in CMU and stucco. Low rough stone planters were also added.
- The roofing material has since been replaced around 2005 with membrane roofing and no gravel top.
- The original back porch roofs on the two-story portion of the building remained intact. The existing porch roofs were faced with pre-finished aluminum fascia and all soffits were resurfaced with corrugated metal panel soffits.
- Modifications were made to the apartments to meet accessibility requirements. This included renovation of selected apartments and adding curb cuts and ramps throughout the site.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Management Office and Maintenance Building

Modifications since original construction include painting the original salmon colored brick a pale pink or green color, the exterior doors and frames have been replaced with hollow metal frames and wood doors, and metal burglar bars have been added to the window. One of the entrances on the west elevation was filled in with brick. While the original reverse hip wooden soffit retains its original form, the wood soffit materials have been clad with pre-finished corrugated metal panels. (see Photos 14-18)

Interior of the Buildings

Apartment Buildings

See interior photos 19 and 20

The typical apartment floor plans remain intact and were built with construction guidelines from the Federal Public Housing Administration. All apartments are similar in size and layout with concrete floors, plaster interior walls, private baths, kitchens, storage, and gas and electrical appliances. The majority of the apartments are two-story two-bedroom townhouses. The apartments range from one-bedroom apartments to five-bedroom apartments with the majority of the units (86%) being townhouses. All apartment buildings have a minimum of six (6) two-story apartments per building. Each apartment is typically laid out with entry doors sharing an exterior porch with the adjacent unit.

Each apartment has a combination living and dining area and a full kitchen with appliances on the first floor. Originally each apartment had unfinished concrete floors in the living/dining room area with linoleum tile in the kitchen area. Unlike other apartment units that the Housing Authority of El Paso constructed earlier (Alamitos and Tays), Sherman units featured wood trim and hardwood floors in the second floor. Non-chip metal frame doors, steel sash windows with copper screens were installed, and soundproofed firewalls separated the apartment units. The original interior paint colors were soft blues, creams and green tones. Apartments were furnished with modern appliances, double sinks, four-burner gas ranges with ovens, and twenty gallon gas water heaters were installed in each kitchen. Spacious shelves, ceiling light fixtures, and off-floor electrical outlets were common throughout the apartments. A narrow stairwell located directly across from the entry door lead to a second floor with wood flooring, a private bath and private bedrooms. Each private bath had a full tub/shower, toilet and sink with a mirror above. (see Figures 10-14)

Management Office and Maintenance Building

The management office and maintenance building interiors were divided into two distinct sections. The entry door off of Blanco Avenue on the north-east corner of the building has a small reception area with a management office beyond and a private bathroom. The maintenance building also has a central entry door and a metal garage door opens into a large storage area for equipment. The building has a concrete floor and plaster interior walls. (see Figure 9)

Modifications to Interiors since Original Construction

Apartment Buildings

Modifications to the typical units consisted largely of updating and modernizing the kitchens and bathrooms by replacing appliances, toilets, and sinks in 1971. Open plumbing fixtures and pipes installed in 1953 were replaced and concealed. Kitchen and bath shelving was removed and overhead cabinets were installed. In 1977, modernization upgrades of electrical and mechanical equipment were updated. In 2004, the apartments' interior doors and walls were modified to meet accessibility requirements. (see Photos 19-20)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Management Office and Maintenance Building

Modifications to this building largely consist of updating and modernization of the plumbing / bathroom area. New shelving and cabinets for the office have been installed. Electrical and mechanical equipment have been updated.

Modifications to the Site

Modifications to the site included the addition of two non-contributing square metal pavilions and concrete slabs for future laundry buildings in the recreation space in 1971, along with a paved basketball court. Around the same time, ten non-contributing native stone dumpster enclosures were added around the perimeter of the site. The original concrete walks were removed and replaced with new serpentine concrete walks (see Maps 7-8 and photos 21-22).

Integrity

Ray Sherman Place retains its integrity of **location** since it remains on its original site. Integrity of **setting** is evident in the intact surrounding residential neighborhood, and only slightly diminished by the demolition of the northern section of Ray Sherman Place in 2016. The site plan is intact including the building orientation and the relationship between built and open spaces. Alterations to the property including painting of the original salmon brick and the addition of metal pavilions and stone dumpster enclosures do not diminish integrity of the overall complex design. The integrity of building **materials** and **design** has been largely maintained with the exception of the changes to porches, as well as window and door replacement. However, these original porches could be restored to their original condition. The complex is still used for public housing and located in an urban location, and thus retains its integrity of **association and feeling**.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Resource List (Map 8)

Address	Building Number	Resource Type	Model Type	Number of Stories	Date Built	Contributing
4528 Blanco Ave.	Management Office and Maintenance	Building	N/A	One-Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-1	Building	A	Two-Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-2	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-3	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-4	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-5	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-6	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-7	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-8	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-9	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-10	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-11	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	A-12	Building	A	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	B-1	Building	B	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	B-2	Building	B	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	B-3	Building	B	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	B-4	Building	B	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	C-1	Building	C	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	C-2	Building	C	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	D-1	Building	D	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	D-2	Building	D	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-1	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-2	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-3	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-4	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-5	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-6	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-7	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	E-8	Building	E	Two -Story	1953	Y
4528 Blanco Ave.	Pavilion P-1	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528 Blanco Ave.	Pavilion P-2	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528 Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-1	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528 Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-2	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528 Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-3	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528 Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-4	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-5	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-6	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-7	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-8	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-9	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N
4528	Blanco Ave.	Dumpster T-10	Structure	N/A	N/A	1971	N

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Ray Sherman Place, located at 4528 Blanco Avenue, was built in 1953 and was the fourth public housing project to be constructed in the City of El Paso. Named for former mayor of El Paso (1931-1937) and proponent of slum clearance and public housing reform, Ray Sherman, the complex is now the second oldest extant public housing project in the city, after Tays Place (1941). Growth during and after World War II meant that the demand for subsidized low-income public housing remained an issue of great concern to city leaders. By the end of the war, military base cities like El Paso were inundated with returning veterans, causing a shortage of available and affordable housing. The United States Housing Act of 1949 was intended to address some of these issues and represented a shift in federal public housing policy. Unlike the 1930s, public housing was met with more opposition because of the economic prosperity after World War II, and there was an even greater emphasis placed on economy, simplicity, and standardization. Ray Sherman Place was proposed just as public housing policy was being more openly challenged, and as a result the design was smaller than previous projects and no slum clearance occurred in its construction. Representing the combined efforts of the Federal Public Housing Administration and the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Ray Sherman Place was built to help alleviate the low-income housing shortage. Ray Sherman Place briefly housed veterans, but largely served as low-income housing for Hispanic and white residents. Ray Sherman Place is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Social History, and Politics/Government for its association with the U.S. Housing Act of 1949 (amending the Housing Act of 1937). Designed by architect Louis Lloyd Mollinary and built by Ponsford Brothers Contractors, it is the only remaining example project in El Paso constructed as a result of the 1949 federal legislation. Between its construction in 1953 and 1969, Ray Sherman Place continually provided low-income housing to the residents of El Paso. The period of significance ends in 1969, which adheres to the National Park Service's 50 year guideline.

Post-War Housing Reform in El Paso

After the 1937 United States Housing Act was passed under the New Deal, El Paso acted quickly and became one of the first cities to pursue funds through this new federal agency. Mayor Marvin A. Harlan created the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso (HACEP) and appointed George G. Matkin, Vice-President of State National Bank as chair in November 1937. The board was comprised of experienced, distinguished, members of the community including: Modesto Gomez, an El Paso grocery merchant and representative of LULAC (the League of United Latin American Citizens); George Chedeyne who had served a few years earlier on New York City's first housing authority; Mrs. Otto Nordwald, an officer in the Council of Jewish Women, and George Webber of the Central Labor Union. El Paso architect Guy L. Frazer, member of the City Board of Planning and Walter Stockwell, an Assistant City Engineer, provided technical expertise. City Engineer Stacy served as a consultant.² HACEP was formally created by the city council on February 17, 1938. HACEP authorized two housing projects by year's end, designated by Numbers 1 (TEX 3-1, Alamito Place) and 2 (TEX 3-2, Tays Place).

The various city committees of the 1930s, and board members of HACEP after 1938, were comprised of many individuals who went on to have prominent careers worthy of national acclaim. R. E. Thomason, who first addressed the housing crisis, went on to the United States Congress and the federal judiciary. Cleofas Calleros became a social activist for the Hispanic community, and a chronicler of history at the Pass of the North. Ray Sherman, who created the first slum clearance committee continued working throughout the 1940s and became known as the "father" of slum clearance in the city and a major promoter of social reforms for the poor of El Paso. Ray Sherman Place is named in his honor (see Figures 1, 3 & 4).

² "Mayor Appoints Board to Push Housing Plea," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Nov. 5, 1937.

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The housing shortage after World War II was particularly severe in El Paso because of the dramatic increase in population that occurred during the 1940s. Although El Paso had been battling the growth of slums and tenements since the 1930s, and had completed Alamito Place and Tays Place, substandard housing continued to plague much of the city and was a chronic problem. El Paso County had a population of 131,007 in 1940 but by 1950 it had grown 48 percent to 194,965 and in the next decade reached 314,070.³ The Bracero Program, a guest-worker program between Mexico and the United States, brought Mexican nationals into the U.S. to work in agriculture and transportation, especially in the American Southwest, from 1942 to 1964. By the late 1940s the program was expanded and until 1964 averaged about 200,000 workers annually. El Paso was one of the Texas cities affected by the Bracero Program, with an increase in its Hispanic population. The influx of the population became focused in the city's slums, as government housing programs were only available for U.S. citizens; a fact that was neglected during campaigns for the new construction of adequate public housing. While the targeted inhabitants for Ray Sherman Place were primarily the Hispanic inhabitants of the nearby slums, many were not able to benefit from the low-income housing unless they became a U.S. citizen.⁴

In 1948, Carey McWilliams (1905-1980), wrote a disparaging account of his visit to El Paso for *The Nation*. McWilliams cited recent studies that found shockingly unsanitary tenements where up to ten families shared one toilet and only one out of twenty dwellings had a bath or shower. He noted high rates of diseases, few health facilities, and generally dismal living conditions. Documentary photographer Russell Lee toured El Paso in 1949 while working with the University of Texas at Austin project, the "Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas," overseen by sociologist Lyle Saunders. Lee conducted a photographic survey of the lives of Mexican Americans in Texas. El Paso's tenements were prominently featured among the hundreds of images he recorded in Corpus Christi, San Angelo, San Antonio and El Paso. This visual record was used to illustrate the lives of a segment of the population that many Americans, especially in the east, knew little about. Even George Sessions Perry's 1950 upbeat travelogue for the *Saturday Evening Post* described the challenge of slum clearance in El Paso and the influx of undocumented immigrants whom he described as, "destitute peons from Mexico's backward agricultural areas," who he saw packed into overcrowded tenements where they became a "serious menace to the community's health and sanitation."⁵

El Paso Herald-Post reporter Vernon Smylie toured area tenements in August 1948 and found many displaced tenants who had been removed from their homes for highway construction and slum clearance. He visited homeless families living in hidden areas of the city, in obscured shanties made of scrap metal, discarded lumber, cardboard, and roofing paper. A family of eight was crammed into a one-room shack without plumbing, electricity or windows. A common hydrant provided water and an entire city block of residents shared one outdoor toilet. In a second shanty, two elderly women shared a small lean-to and cared for several small children who slept outside. Another family lived outdoors, with a small, frail tent tethered to a fence.⁶

In the late 1940s the city limits were expanded to accommodate highway construction and promote new commercial and housing developments. Paisano Drive was extended east to meet Alameda Avenue, where U.S. Highway 80 entered the city. From 1940 to 1950, the City of El Paso doubled in size from 13.74 to 25.79 square miles and in the 1950s it more than quadrupled to 114.65 square miles. The Clardy Fox Addition and the

³ Timmons, 235 & 251; Department of Planning and Research, *Population and Housing Trends, 1970-1973*. (El Paso, TX: 1974), 8.

⁴ *Report of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1952-1953*. The PHA gave the local housing authorities the option to waive the citizenship requirement, but El Paso along with San Antonio and likely many other Texas cities chose to make the requirement mandatory since there were often more applications than units available. Donald L. Zelman, "Alazan-Apache Courts: A New Deal Response to Mexican American Housing Conditions in San Antonio," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* Vol. 87, No. 2 (Oct. 1983): 123-150.

⁵ George Sessions Perry, "The Cities of America: El Paso," *The Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 4, 1950.

⁶ "Displaced Tenement Dwellers Create Serious Shanty Problem," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Aug. 4, 1948; "Tenants Move to Shanties," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Aug. 4, 1948.

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annexation of the Town of Ascarate opened an area near the El Paso County Coliseum to development where two potential sites were identified for low-rent public housing projects.⁷

U.S. Housing Act of 1949

During 1948 Mayor Don Ponder unsuccessfully lobbied the U.S. Public Housing Administration for federal funding to construct more low-rent housing units in El Paso. He corresponded with New York Senator Robert Wagner, lead author of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (P.L. 75-412), explaining the housing situation along the border and the need for at least another 650 public housing units in the city. Ponder sought state funding from Austin and even solicited private developers and the National Association of Real Estate Boards but was unable to generate any interest in housing projects.⁸ The next year, as part of President Harry Truman's Fair Deal, the U.S. Housing Act of 1949 greatly expanded the role of the federal government in mortgage insurance and public housing construction. It amended the Housing Act of 1937 and allowed the U.S. Public Housing Administration to assist with the construction of 135,000 low-rent housing units each year. The president was authorized to further expand construction up to 200,000 units per year as needed. Truman signed the housing bill into law on July 19 and by August HACEP applied for a \$182,000 federal preliminary planning loan.⁹

The 1949 expansion of the U.S. Housing Act was short-lived, however, and in some ways, the completion of Ray Sherman Place marked the end of an era for El Paso public housing. The postwar enthusiasm for federal public housing assistance and projects was waning and a strong economy was re-building the American middle class. Although there had always been opposition, public opinion was shifting in the early 1950s. For twelve years local El Paso newspapers generally supported public housing projects and promoted them as temporary residences for the working class, a place where they could escape substandard housing, save money, and transition into home ownership.¹⁰

Public housing projects completed after 1949 saw a shift in design as well. The efficient, simple design principles of the pre-war era were continued after the war, but were adapted to a new public housing complex ideology. Earlier public housing projects consisted of several low-rise apartment buildings focused around a central courtyard with light, air and space being the main pillars of a better life for low income families. After World War II, the focus shifted from the lower density complexes to more condensed sites with more high-rise buildings with fewer social and recreational amenities. Although these new design aspects describe the general appearance of public housing projects after World War II and the 1949 U.S. Housing Act expansion, Ray Sherman Place more closely resembles the design of the earlier projects, such as Tays Place, with its central open community space, 28 one and two story apartment buildings housing 180 units on a roughly 10 acre site location on the outskirts of the inner city.¹¹

Housing authorities across the nation hoped to expand, and argued that public housing projects had a great positive impact on metropolitan areas. They helped clear slums and tenements and offered a safe, healthy, sanitary environment that would benefit all. They argued that housing projects were cost-effective, led to home ownership, did not reduce local tax revenues, and placed little burden on municipal governments (see Figure 5). But public

⁷ *Population and Housing Trends, 1970-1973*, 8; "Review of City-Wide Progress and Improvements," *El Paso Herald-Post*, July 3, 1954.

⁸ "Mayor to Continue to Push for New Public Housing Projects," *El Paso Herald-Post*, May 19, 1948; "Truman Outlines Vast U.S. Housing Program," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Feb. 23, 1948.

⁹ Goetz, 30.

¹⁰ "Tenants Well Housed in New Paisano Place," *El Paso Times*, June 6, 1952; "Comfort, Convenience, Low Rental Await Housing Project Occupants," *El Paso Times*, May 17, 1952.

¹¹ Judith Robinson, Laura Bobeczko, Paul Lusignan, and Jeffery Shrimpton, *Public Housing in The United States MPS*, (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2004), 66-67.

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opinion was shifting by the 1950s. There was growing criticism and when the El Paso Housing Authority discussed future housing projects critics cited problems with Ray Sherman Place. They charged that the project was expensive, about \$10,000 per housing unit, far above what private apartment developments cost. They accused the Housing Authority of exaggerating its impact, showing the worst slum conditions and claiming that new housing complexes eliminated tenements. Ray Sherman Place was constructed on a vacant lot, far east of the city, and no substandard housing was cleared to make way for the complex.¹²

This type of criticism was typical around the country. Texas and California saw movements for public referendums to limit or deny housing authority projects. Many questioned the “public” benefit of housing projects when so few could actually take advantage of the programs. Some even feared that public housing for low-income families could create interest in socialist programs where the federal government provided more and varied support for the working class. These nationwide public fears were spurred by the international tension of the Cold War and the US government’s antagonistic “Red Scare”. At one point in the mid-1950s tenants were required to take a loyalty oath before occupying public housing project apartments.¹³

The national political climate was changing as well. As Ray Sherman Place was being completed in late 1952, Republicans gained control of the U.S. Congress and Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected to the presidency. The New Deal was fading and most Republicans, rural congressmen, conservative and Southern Democrats had little interest in federal public housing initiatives. With steady economic growth, the real estate business and urban developers saw public housing as competition. There were calls for reducing the scope of the 1949 Housing Act and greatly reducing the federal government’s authority. By the end of 1953 President Eisenhower was under pressure to eliminate the Federal Public Housing Administration. In the end, Eisenhower compromised, preserving the federal agency but reducing its size and limiting its powers. The U.S. Housing Act of 1954 greatly reduced the scope of the U.S. Housing Act of 1949. After 1954, federal housing policy focused on slum prevention including rehabilitation¹⁴

In 1956, HACEP moved forward with plans for 330 more housing units, including designated sites for the elderly, but the project was defeated in a public referendum.¹⁵ No new public housing projects were constructed in El Paso until the Sun Plaza housing complex for seniors, with a nine-story tower and one-story bungalows was built in 1965. Sun Plaza, now a contributing structure in the Magoffin Historic District (NRHP 2016) undergoing rehabilitation, was constructed on a similar sized site with a similar unit count to Ray Sherman Place, with 20 percent more square footage. By that time, the approach to the design of public housing had changed to favor high rise construction and modern styles, as evident in Sun Plaza and Chelsea housing developments. Today, the southern section of Ray Sherman Place is the only remaining example of public housing in El Paso that was a direct result of the US Housing Act of 1949.

Significance of Ray Sherman Place

In 1950, HACEP proceeded with plans for two new housing projects, Paisano Place (TEX 3-4) and Ray Sherman Place (TEX 3-5 and TEX 3-6). Local architect Louis L. Mollinary (1909-1970) was secured to design all three housing complexes. Paisano Place opened in 1952, housing 306 units in 56 buildings in the east part of the city.

¹² “Housing Board Defends Selection of Project Site,” *El Paso Herald-Post*, Apr. 26, 1951; Robert B. Fairbanks, *The War on Slums in the Southwest: Public Housing and Slum Clearance in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, 1935-1965*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2014), 5.

¹³ Goetz, 27-29.

¹⁴ Goetz, 28 & 30.

¹⁵ “Inventory of 6,200 Public Housing Units,” *El Paso Herald-Post*, Aug. 6, 1970; Goetz, 30; “Be Sure to Vote,” *El Paso Herald-Post*, July 27, 1956; “Public Housing Vote Close,” *El Paso Herald-Post*, July 28, 1956.

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Ray Sherman Place South was completed nearby in 1953 with 180 units in 28 buildings and Ray Sherman Place North was completed shortly after housing 144 units in 23 buildings. Of these three, only Ray Sherman Place South remains. The plans were forwarded to the regional office of the U.S. Public Housing Administration in Fort Worth and the El Paso Housing Authority began quietly acquiring land for these new housing projects.¹⁶ The El Paso Housing Authority kept the locations of prospective public housing sites a secret from the public during the site selection process so as not to have landowners raise property values before a purchase could be made.

As the northern and southern sections of Sherman Place were different projects, construction was divided between two contractors, with the two sections of the project separated by Blanco Avenue. The southern section of Sherman Place south of Blanco Avenue was awarded to Ponsford Brothers, with a \$1,266,480 contract for the construction of twenty-nine buildings with 180 units grouped around a large open plaza. Work on the southern section began on January 27, 1952, approximately three weeks earlier than the northern section.

Since they were given separate project numbers by the U. S. Department of Housing (TEX 3-5 and TEX 3-6), the southern and northern sections of Ray Sherman Place were designed and constructed as distinct projects around distinct planning and organizational principles. As the same architect – Louis Mollinary – was selected for both projects, the buildings had similar features. Due to the unique site organization of these two distinct sections (projects) and separate construction contracts, they are not considered to be functionally related. In this respect, the southern section of Ray Sherman Place is independent from the northern section, and is considered its own functionally related district. Figures 4 and 6 show the site plan and the architect's rendering of Ray Sherman Place, with distinct planning differences between the two sections.

The two projects that would comprise Sherman Place were constructed on vacant lots, on the far eastern side of the city. While the building designs for each section were similar, the site plan of the two planned neighborhoods was distinct. The southern section (constructed between January 1952 and May 1953) consists of utilitarian two-story brick rectilinear housing buildings with apartment entrances that face the vehicular streets around the perimeter site. Large linear courtyards are formed between interior housing buildings and provide secondary neighborhood gathering areas and play areas for children in the community. A large rectilinear recreation area is located in center of the site. The north section (constructed between February 1952 and March 1953) consisted of two-story brick rectilinear housing buildings with apartment entrances that face the three vehicular streets that divide the site. A large recreation area and community building are located in the center of the site and are bisected by a vehicular street. These planned neighborhood site plans were distinct from earlier El Paso Housing developments, but the design of the apartment units were identical to those at the 1952 Paisano Place complex.¹⁷ Paisano Place provided housing for 306 eligible families in 56 brick two story buildings and was located less than a mile west of Ray Sherman Place.¹⁸

On Wednesday April 1, 1953 Ray Sherman Place was formally dedicated, culminating a twelve year effort to expand public housing in southeast El Paso (see Figures 1, 3 & 4). The completion of Sherman Place by HACEP doubled the number of low-rent units available in the city. At the dedication, Ray E. Sherman's widow applauded the new project as a "house of Homes" and noted that her husband "believed so firmly that it could be possible for all to live in healthful and decent surroundings regardless of economic circumstances." Mayor Hervey used the occasion to call for more slum clearance and new public housing projects. He noted that through "projects of this kind the youth of El Paso is getting a better chance, a brighter outlook in life, and an opportunity to further their

¹⁶ "Housing Board Moves to Purchase Land for Projects," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Mar. 2, 1951; Patton, 27.

¹⁷ *Public Housing in the United States MPS*, 72.

¹⁸ *Report of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1952-1953*.

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ambitions in life.” The *El Paso Times* noted the large group of civic leaders present at the dedication, honoring both the housing project and the memory of Ray Sherman. (see Figures 1, 3 & 4)

Following the dedication there was a tour of the new housing project. Basic two and three bedroom apartment units featured a combination living and dining area, a full kitchen with appliances, and full private bath. With so many occupants coming from aging, poorly-constructed, outdated tenements and shanties, the Housing Authority arranged for special evening classes and workshops to demonstrate how such state-of-the-art conveniences were to be used. Ray Sherman Place was quickly filled to capacity. The Federal Public Housing Administration had strict requirements for public housing project occupancy by low income families. Prospective tenants needed to meet specific requirements, with a family of four being able to have an annual income of up to \$2500 in 1953 in order to qualify. The rent for a two bedroom apartment averaged \$27.50 monthly, including water, gas, and electric. Residents also needed to be part of a designated neighborhood or ethnic group and each family needed to include an employed head of household who was a U.S. citizen. Strict income limitations further reduced the pool of applicants and earnings were regularly reviewed after occupancy. HACEP set an income limit of \$1,000 annually for a family of four, husband, wife, and two dependents.¹⁹

Ray Sherman Place serves as a tangible representation of public housing policy under the U.S. Housing Act of 1949 aimed at providing low-income housing for residents of El Paso. However, due to the housing shortage after World War II, it briefly housed veterans as well, and veterans were given preference on housing applications.²⁰ Overall, the complex largely served as subsidized low-income housing for whites and Hispanics.²¹

Under Texas law, Hispanics were classified as white although extensive *de facto* segregation was present throughout the state, including access to quality housing. In Austin, for example, three housing separate housing projects were constructed for whites, Hispanics, and African Americans. There was initial discussion to add a section to Ray Sherman Place for African American families due to growing community demands. When local African American community leaders demanded equal access to low income housing, the El Paso Housing Authority avoided having to add housing at Ray Sherman Place by instead following through on previous plans to add a southern section to the 1941 Tays Place housing project. This move by HACEP kept Sherman Place from having any segregated units in the complex.

In March 1957, the Housing Authority adopted a new city personnel policy for its employees and contractors. It was written as a “non-discrimination” act regarding “race, creed, color, national origin, sex, or labor by political affiliation.” It refers to employees and applicants for new positions but it does not mention tenants or tenant applications.²²

In 1966 a plan was drafted to update Ray Sherman Place and by 1968, with HUD approval, the renovations were included in Project Rehab, a \$21.6 million HACEP effort to upgrade 1320 public housing units throughout the city. During 1971, an exterior “face-lift” repaired concrete, paint, and grounds at several housing sites including Sherman Place. Porches were modified, stucco work was repaired, mosaic tile plastered, and clothes lines replaced. Inside the apartments, bathrooms and kitchens were updated and modernized. Open plumbing fixtures and pipes, installed in 1952, were replaced and concealed. Kitchen and bath shelving was removed and overhead cabinets were installed. Antiquated appliances, many from the original installation, were replaced with modern refrigerators, toilets and sinks. Site features were added, including two metal pavilions, a basketball court and concrete slabs for

¹⁹ Patton, 20.

²⁰ *Report of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1952-1953.*

²¹ *Public Housing in the United States*, 65.

²² Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, *Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas*, Mar. 19, 1957, Book 6, 1205.

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two future laundry buildings (not realized), in the recreation area. Native stone dumpster enclosures were also added around the perimeter of the site.

Ray E. Sherman as a Public Housing Advocate

The housing project was named in honor of Ray E. Sherman (1884-1947), Mayor of El Paso from 1931 to 1937. At the dedication ceremony, Mayor Fred Hervey recalled the tireless efforts of Sherman in bringing public housing to the city. Sherman dedicated much of his time in office to the elimination of substandard housing and tenements, and lobbied the federal government for assistance with public housing projects in El Paso years before the 1937 Housing Act was passed into law. In November 1933 he created a slum clearance committee, headed by construction contractor Robert E. McKee, to formally study El Paso's housing problems, identify suitable sites, estimate costs and prepare recommendations for some type of low cost residences. Sherman pursued federal funding under various New Deal programs and led delegations to Washington to lobby for housing project funding and slum clearance programs. The *El Paso Herald Post* considered Sherman one of the "best-informed men on slum clearance in America" and credited him with the development of El Paso's first two public housing projects, Alamito and Tays Place in the early 1940s.²³ (see Figures 1, 3 & 4)

Louis Lloyd Mollinary

Louis Lloyd Mollinary began working as the El Paso Housing Authority architect around 1950, when he was hired to design the southern section of Tays Place. He was retained to design this and subsequent El Paso public housing projects including Paisano Place and Ray Sherman Place. Mollinary was also contracted to work on plans for a proposed 1.6 million dollar elderly housing project, the John F. Kennedy Manor, in central El Paso. At that time he was working for the city or county government, not for the housing authority, as he traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with federal officials. This was likely the project that eventually became Sun Plaza. During this time he worked on at least one project for the city, related to San Jacinto Plaza.²⁴

Born on December 21, 1909 in El Paso, Louis Lloyd Mollinary was the son of Joseph C. Mollinary, a clerk working for the Texas and Pacific Railroad, and Mary Louise Serra, both originally from Gibraltar, Europe. Louis was the youngest of three children. He attended Texas College of Mines (University of Texas El Paso) and married Emma F. Mollinary, a photographer, in 1934. In the 1930s, he worked as an architect for ASARCO. By 1942 he was divorced from Emma and had no children, and on February 25, 1942 he joined the U. S. Army as a Private with an enlistment term for the duration of World War II plus 6 months. During his military service he achieved the rank of Captain. On March 17, 1942, less than a month after enlisting in the Army, Louis Lloyd Mollinary married Margaret Elizabeth Owen. They had two children together, and eventually divorced on November 21, 1968. After the war, he completed many home designs, including Casa Lindas Homes, Monterey-style residences before starting work at the Housing Authority. Mollinary was also a member of the El Paso Masonic Lodge no 130. Louis Lloyd Mollinary died on September 26, 1970 in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and was buried at Fort Bliss National Cemetery.²⁵

²³ "Sherman Place Dedication at 4 Today," *El Paso Times*, Apr. 2, 1953; "Dedicates Housing Project," *El Paso Times*, Apr. 2, 1953; "Project Name Will Honor Late Mayor," *El Paso Times*, Jan 4, 1952; "R.E. Sherman Taken by Death.," "Ray Sherman."

²⁴ "Proposed Elderly Housing Project," *El Paso Herald Post*, Mar. 2, 1963; Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, *Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas*, 1951-1958, Books 5-8.

²⁵ *El Paso Herald-Post*, Sept. 20, 1960.

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Ponsford Brothers

Harry T. Ponsford moved to El Paso from Ontario, Canada in 1897. As soon as he arrived in El Paso, he started a small contracting business, primarily working in masonry and carpentry. His early work later landed him the contracts for the W.W. Turney Residence (later the International Museum of Art) in 1910 and the Lydia Patterson Institute in 1913, which were both designed by the El Paso architecture firm Trost & Trost. By 1916 Harry's sons, Harry J. and Walter joined him at the firm. The 1920s and 1930s were a very prosperous time for the firm, regularly working with leading area architects on major projects including the Brazos, El Paso's first apartment homes, and the Firestone Building on Texas Avenue (1928). His firm was also the first construction firm in El Paso to offer private homes to be financed with monthly payments.²⁶

Arguably the best-known of Ponsford's work in this period is the Plaza Theatre, designed by W. Scott Dunne and opened in 1930. The theater has since been completely restored, remains in continued use, and in 1987 was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The 1930s brought change to the firm with three other Ponsford sons joining the firm; Emanuel, Albert and George. The firm changed its name to H. T. Ponsford and Sons and accrued a list of contracts including the additions and revisions at the Douglass, Beal, Alamo, Franklin and Aoy schools, the administrative buildings for the Phelps-Dodge Refinery, the Southwest Irrigated Cotton Growers and many other civic and government buildings in El Paso. In 1939, H. T. Ponsford and Sons worked with local architects Trost & Trost to remodel the Trinity Methodist Church. The Ponsford firm also constructed the first defense housing project in El Paso, Mesa Terrace at Fort Bliss, in 1941 and in 1942 they were noted as having rapidly constructed 130 buildings for the original Holloman Air Force Base and the Alamogordo Bombing Range in sixty days.²⁷

Harry T. Ponsford died that same year and his sons renamed the business Ponsford Brothers. They continued to work in El Paso, gaining major construction and defense contracts for Fort Bliss and Holloman Air Force Base as well as other work throughout the city. Some of their more notable construction projects include the 5/8 mile High Speed Rocket Sled Test Track, the Sun Bowl Stadium (1963). The firm remained in business into the 1990s.²⁸

Summary

Designed by architect Louis Lloyd Mollinary and built by Ponsford Brothers Contractors, Ray Sherman Place is the only remaining example of the 1950-1953 public housing design and construction campaign in El Paso, which was a direct result of the U.S. Housing Act of 1949. The construction of the complex was intended to alleviate the affordable low-income housing shortage that was occurring in El Paso after World War II. Used by veterans, as well as Hispanic and white families, Ray Sherman Place is now the second oldest remaining public housing project in El Paso, only surpassed in age by Tays Place. The construction of Ray Sherman Place on vacant land outside of what was considered downtown El Paso, also signified a shift in the national and local public opinion on slum clearance and federal housing. The prominent civic leadership of Ray E. Sherman (Mayor of El Paso between 1931-1937) began the public housing movement for the City of El Paso and significantly improved the lives of the local El Paso low income families. For all of his contributions to the City of El Paso, the Sherman Place project was named in his honor. Ray Sherman Place is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district under Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Social History and Politics/Government, at the local level of significance. The period of significance is 1953-1969.

²⁶ "Ponsford Among Church Leaders," *El Paso Times*, Apr. 30, 1972; "Death Takes City Builder," *El Paso Herald-Post*, May 7, 1942.

²⁷ "Ponsford Brothers Observe 58th Year as Leading E.P. Contracting Firm," *El Paso Herald-Post*, Apr. 28, 1956.

²⁸ "Death Takes City Builder".

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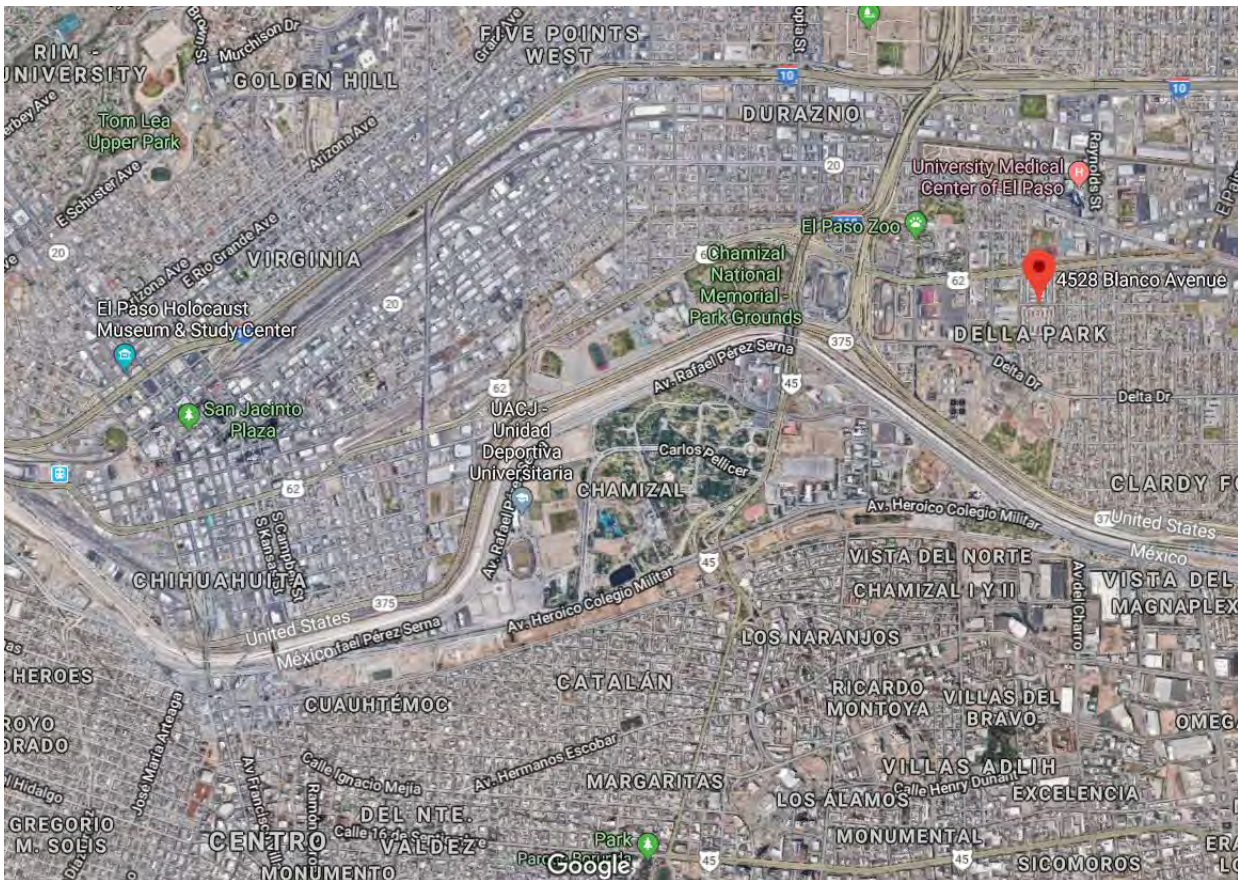
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Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Maps



Map 1 – El Paso, TX location in the United States (Wikipedia).



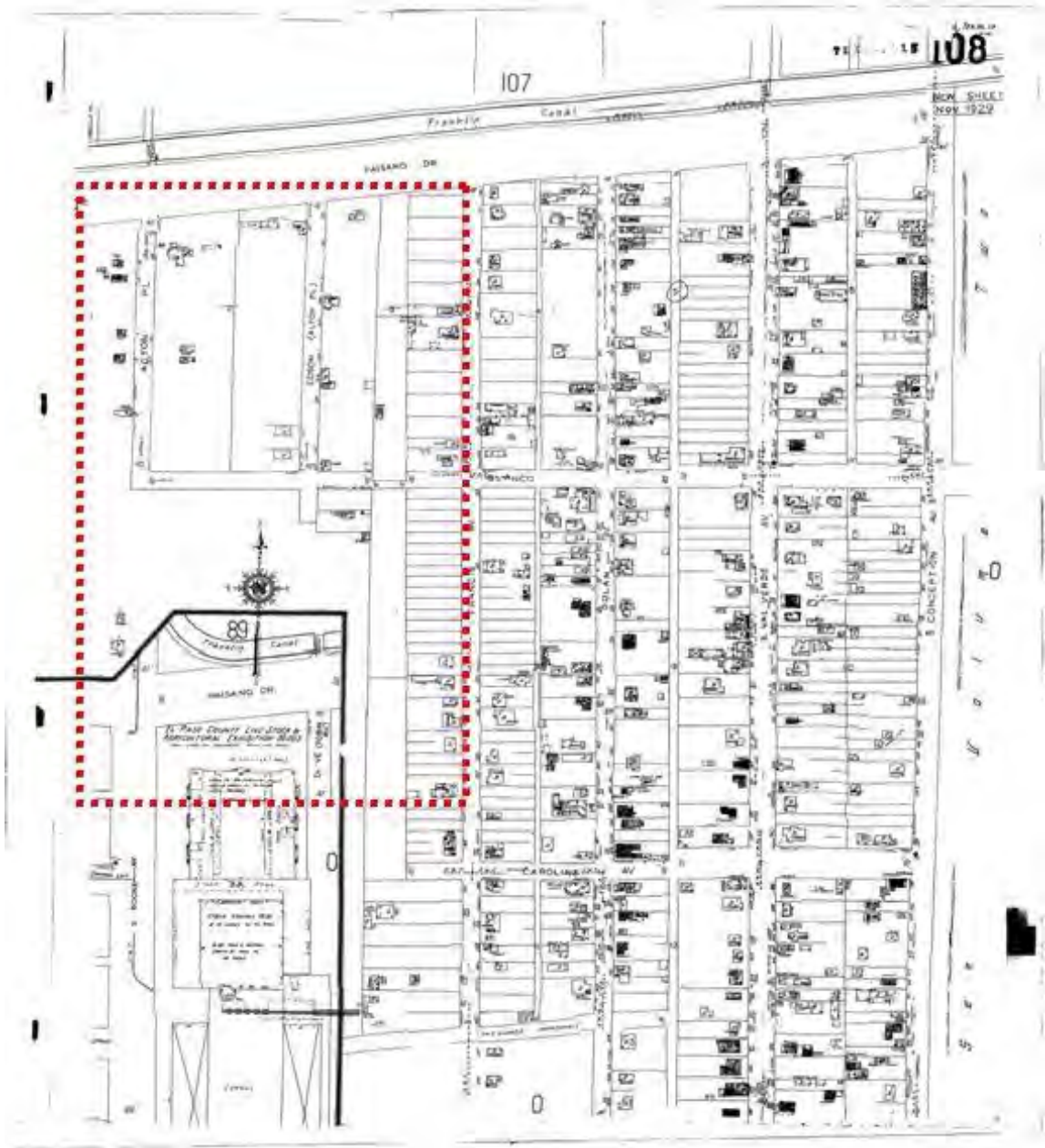
Map 2 – Google map shows Ray Sherman Place location. Map Accessed January 31, 2019

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



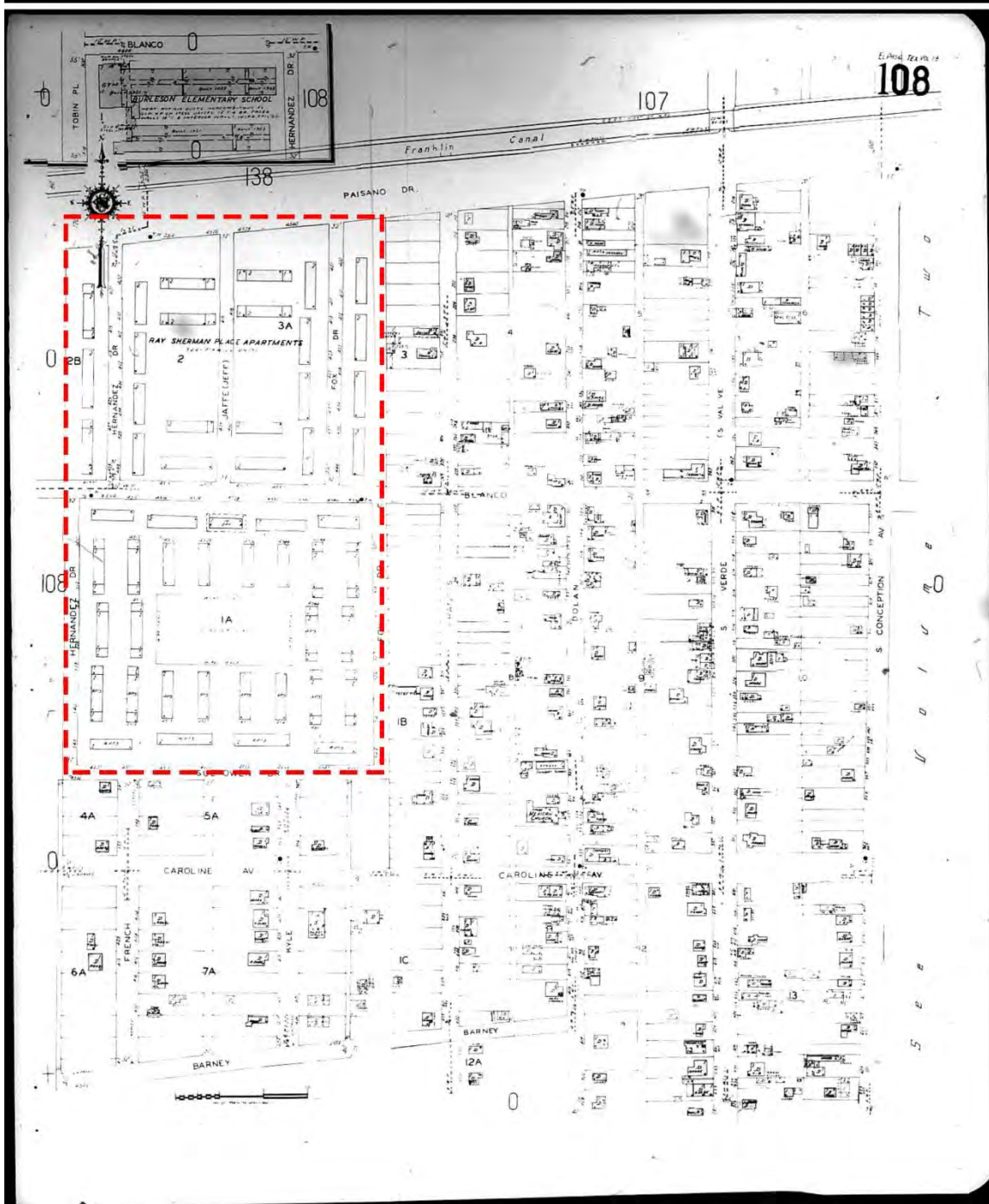
Map 3 – Google Earth, accessed June 21, 2018

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



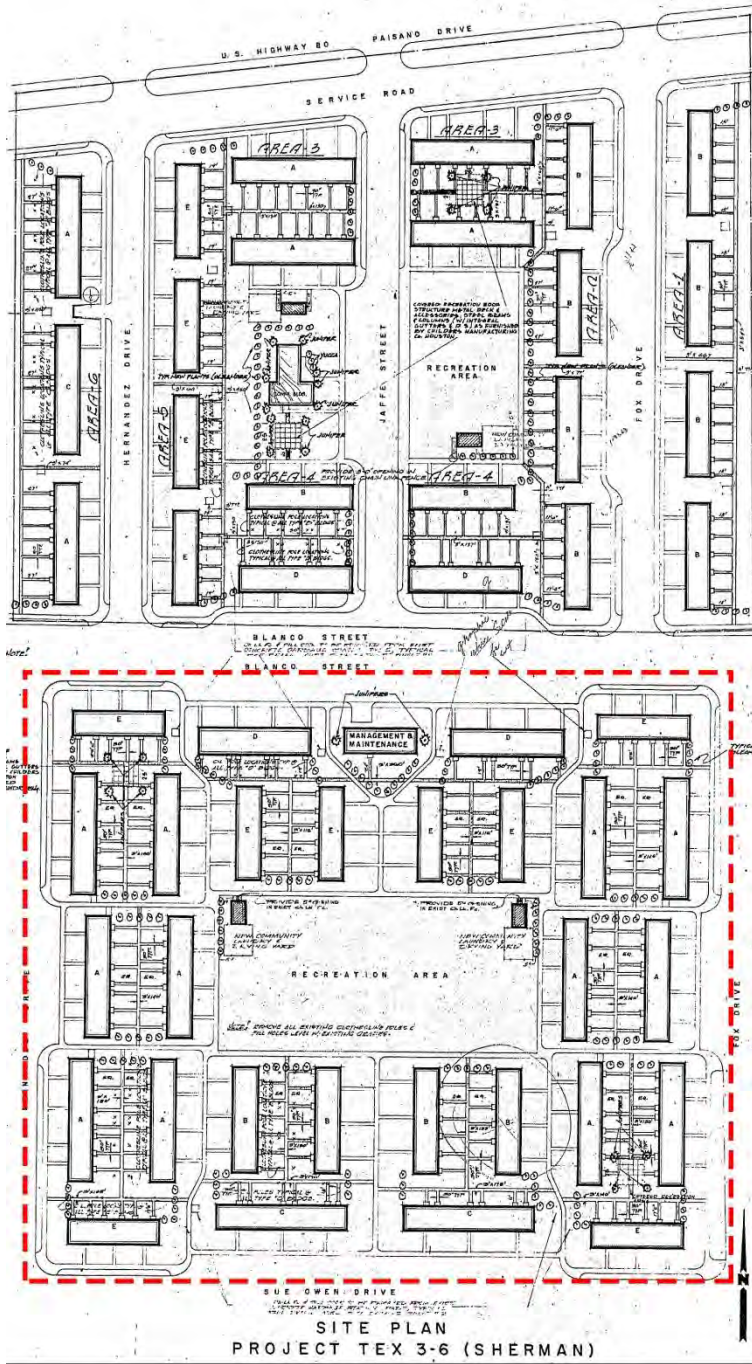
Map 4 – 1951 Sanborn map shows the future site of 4528 Blanco Ave. near a residential neighborhood. Courtesy of the City of Dallas Library Archives.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



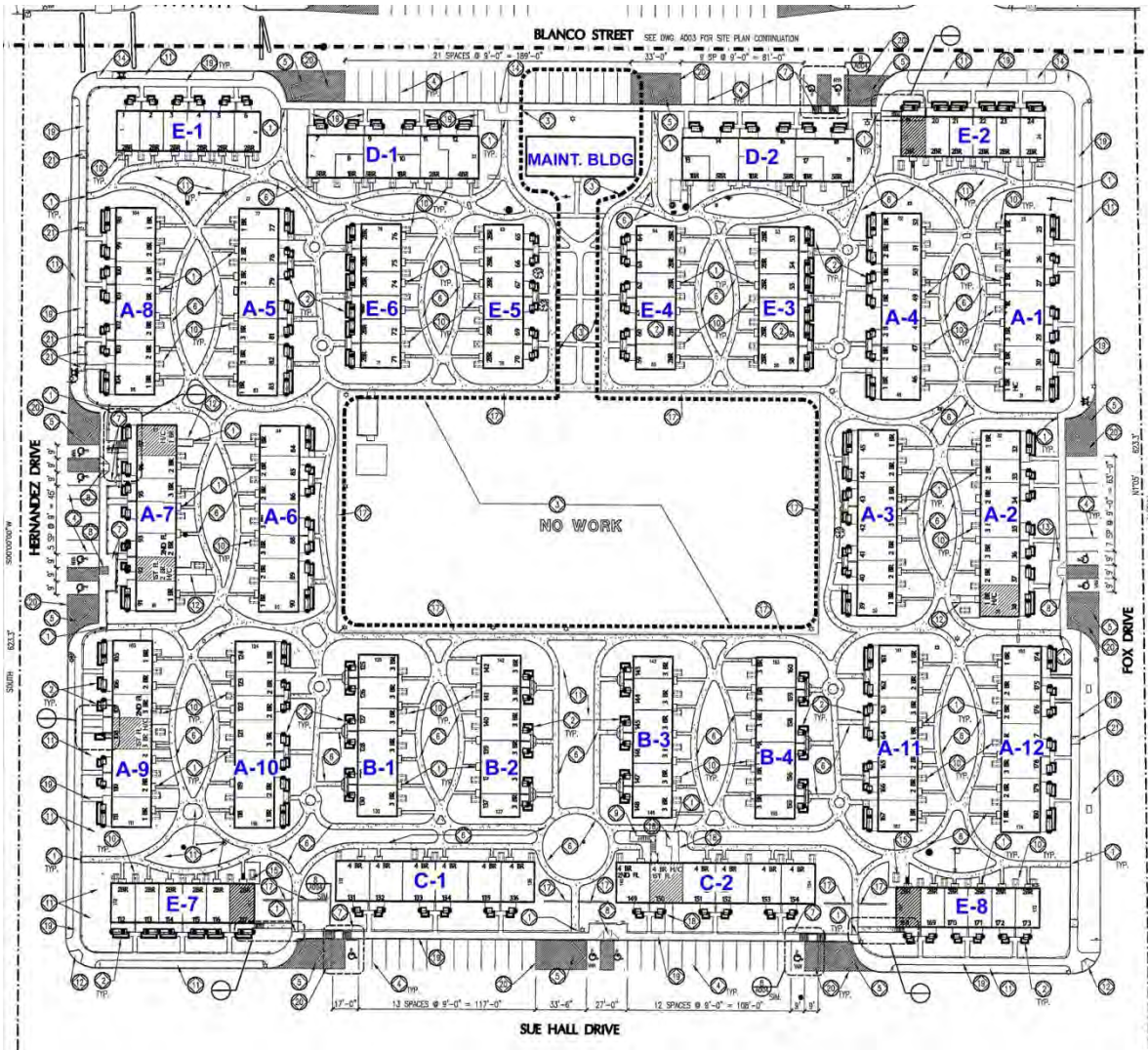
Map 5 – 1954 Sanborn map shows the site of both the northern and southern section of Ray Sherman Place (outlined in red dashed rectangle). Courtesy of the City of Dallas Library Archives.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Map 6- As-built site plan of Ray Sherman Place with the southern section outlined in red. As Built Drawings of 1969 - Courtesy of the Housing Authority of El Paso.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Map 7– Site plans showing the 2003 exterior and interior modernization. Courtesy of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Quimby McCoy Preservation Architecture, LLP
3200 Main Street #3.6
Dallas, Texas 75226

Map 8— Sketch map showing contributing and non-contributing resources within the district boundary.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Figures



Figure 1 – Feb 2, 1953 *El Paso Times* article on the formal dedication of Ray Sherman Place in honor of Ray E. Sherman, mayor of El Paso c. 1931-1937. Courtesy of the *El Paso Times*.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

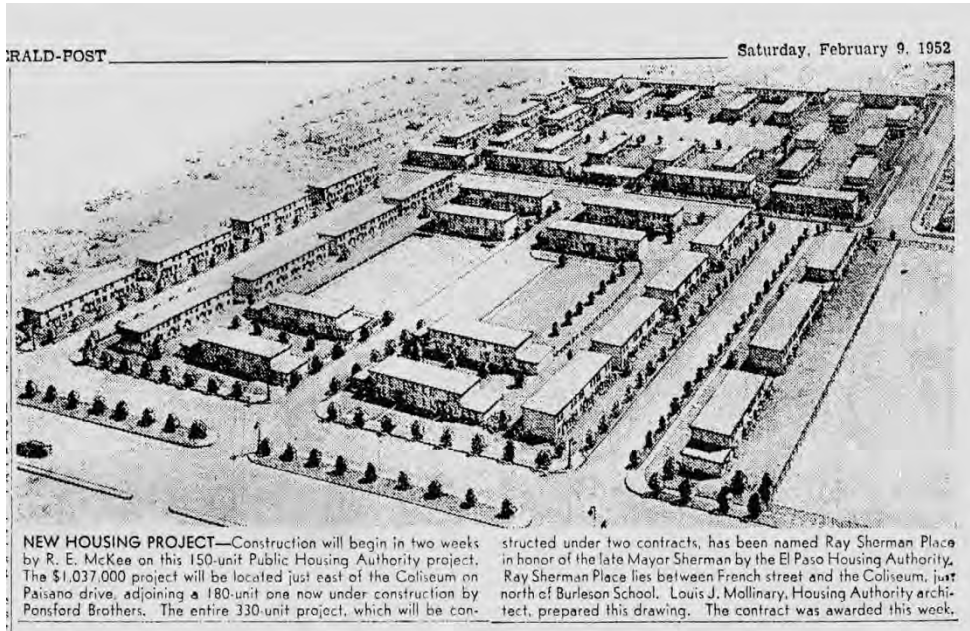


Figure 2 – February 9, 1952, announcement of the contract award for the Ray Sherman Place Housing Project. Courtesy of the *El Paso Herald-Post*.

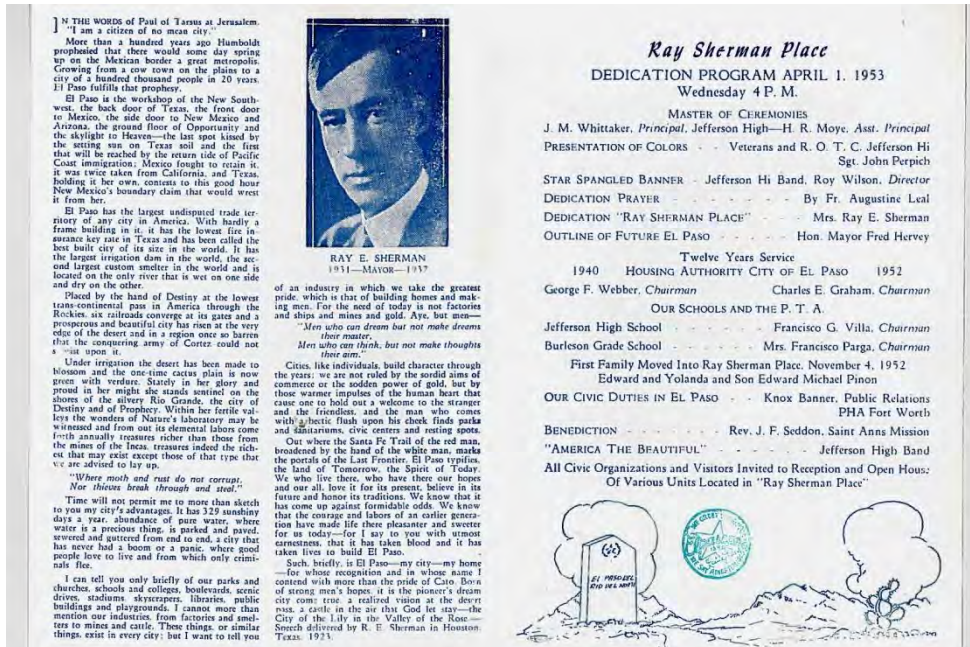


Figure 3 – April 1, 1953 Cover of Ray Sherman Place opening dedication brochure. Courtesy of the Housing Authority of El Paso.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

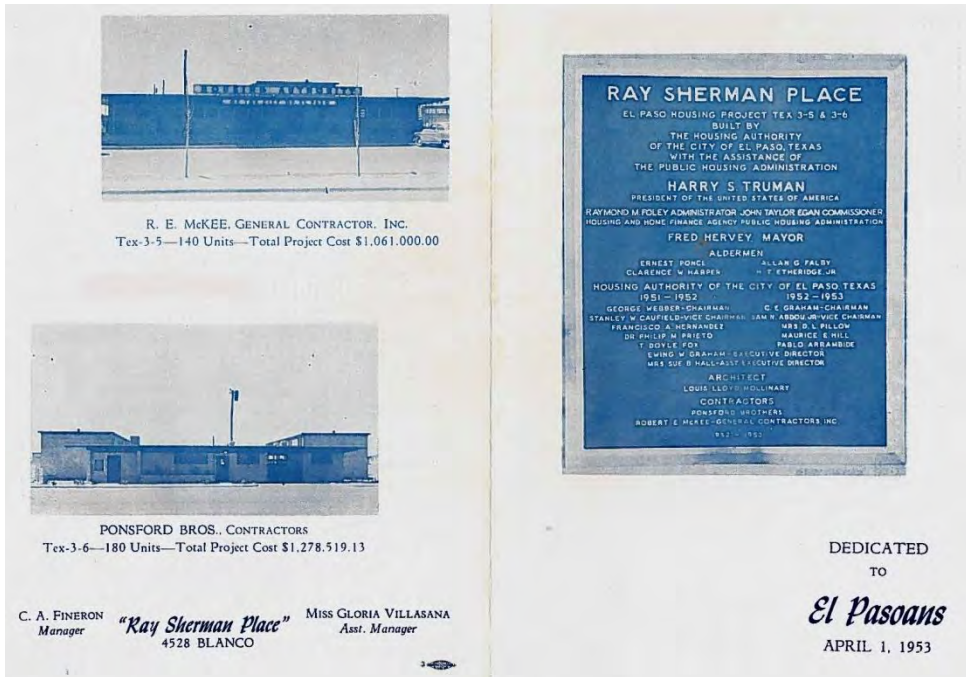


Figure 4 – April 1, 1953 Ray Sherman Place opening brochure with dedication plaque and information about the contractors and the costs of construction. Courtesy of the Housing Authority of El Paso.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, *Better Living for 3,399 Families: A Report on the Accomplishments of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1952-1953* (El Paso, TX: Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1953), 9.

Figure 5—From a public report, *Better Living for 3,399 Families: A Report on the Accomplishments of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, 1952-1953*. Courtesy of the Housing Authority of the City of El Paso.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Figure 6 –October 10, 1952 Housing Authority of El Paso photo archive during construction of Ray Sherman Place. View, looking from the corner of Blanco Ave south-west at the front elevation of Apartment Building Type E (left) and A (right). Courtesy of the Housing Authority of El Paso.



Figure 7 – 1953 Historical photo of the Maintenance Building north facing entry façade along Blanco Ave. Source: Ray Sherman Dedication Program (April 1, 1953)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Figure 8 – 1952 View of the rear laundry yards of Apartment Building Type A and Type E taken during construction. Courtesy of the Housing Authority of El Paso archives. See Photograph 3 for a current view of the same location.

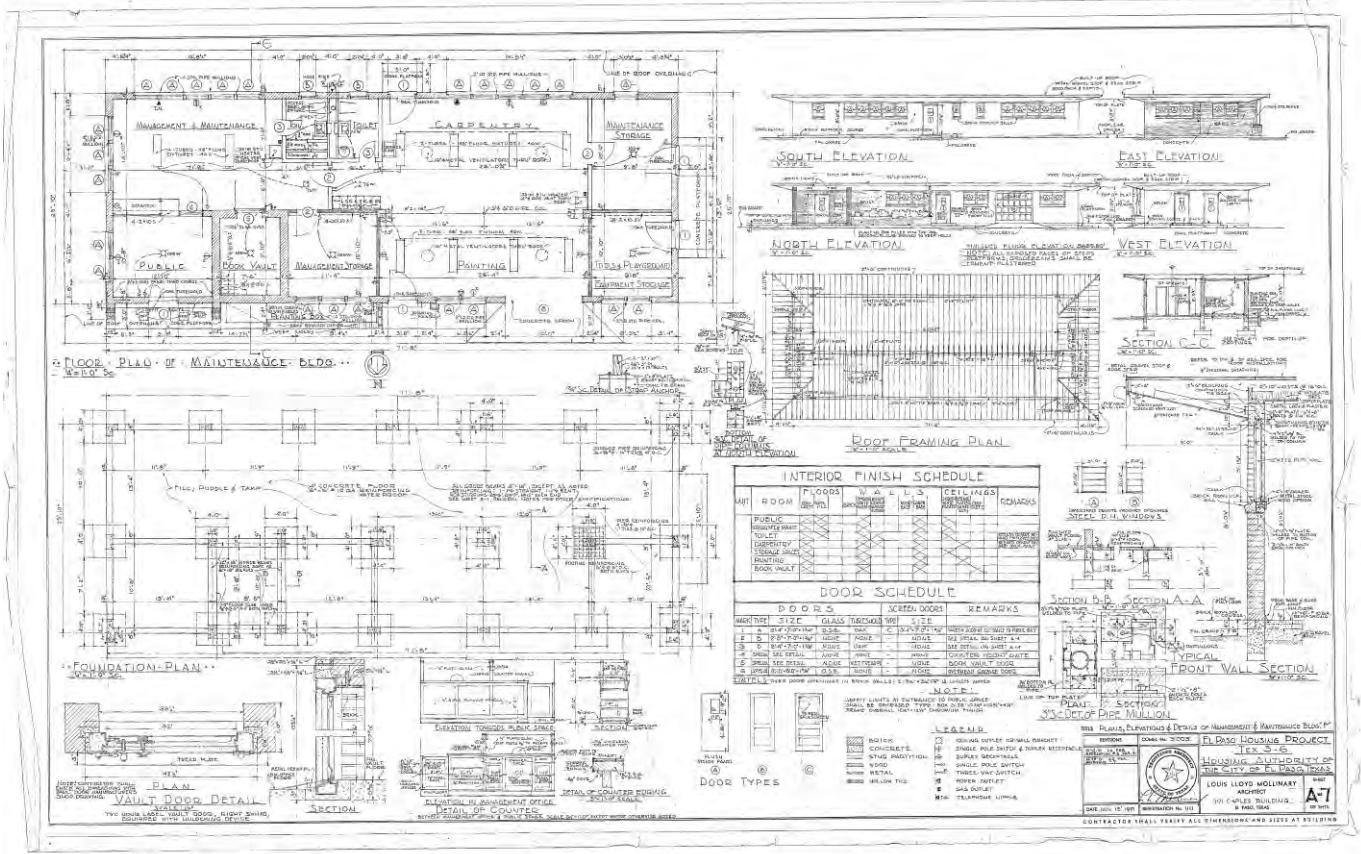


Figure 9 – Ray Sherman Place – Plans, Elevations & Details of Management & Maintenance Building by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

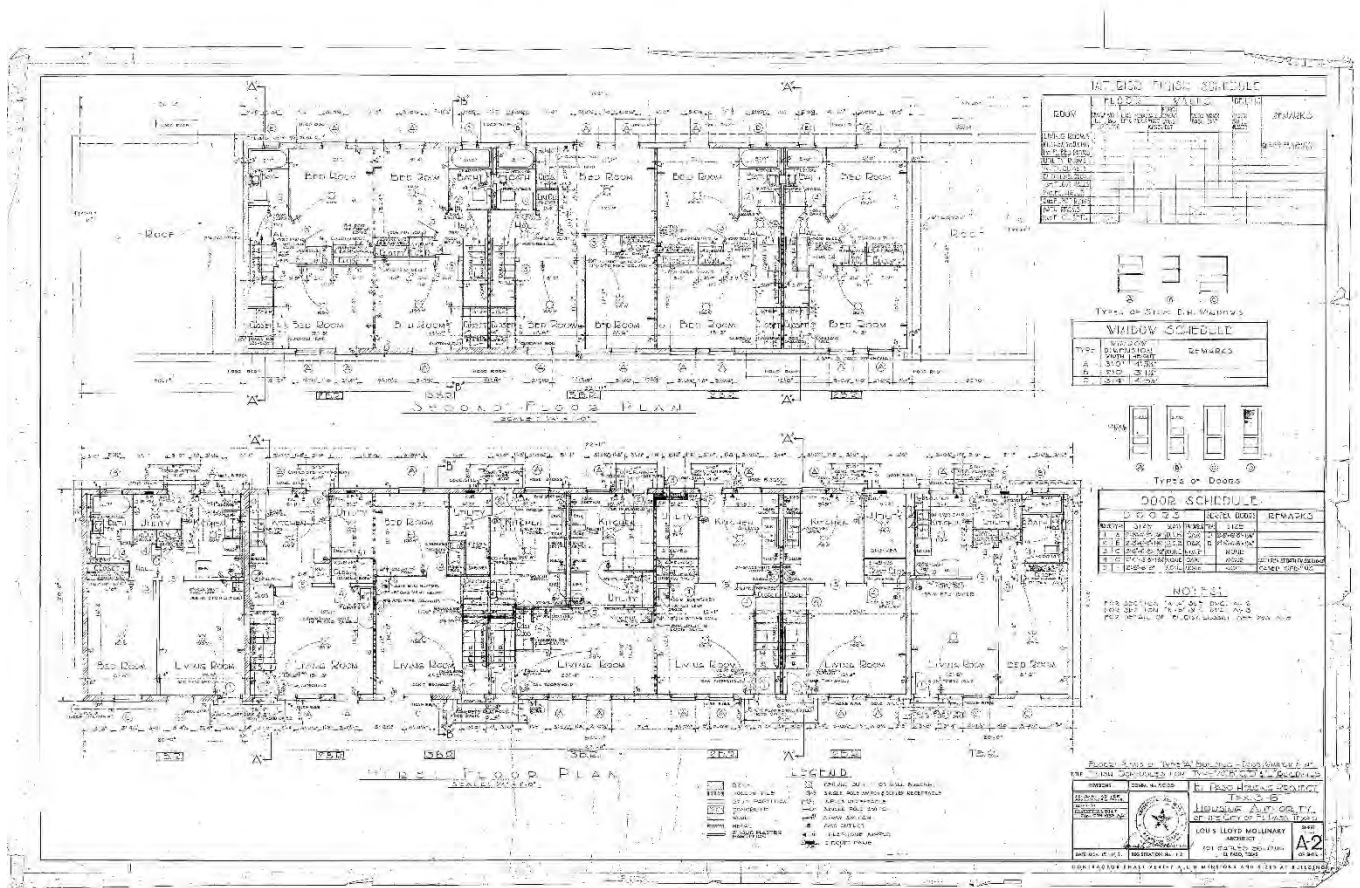


Figure 10: Ray Sherman Place – Original Floor Plan, Section & Details of Type “A” Bldg. by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

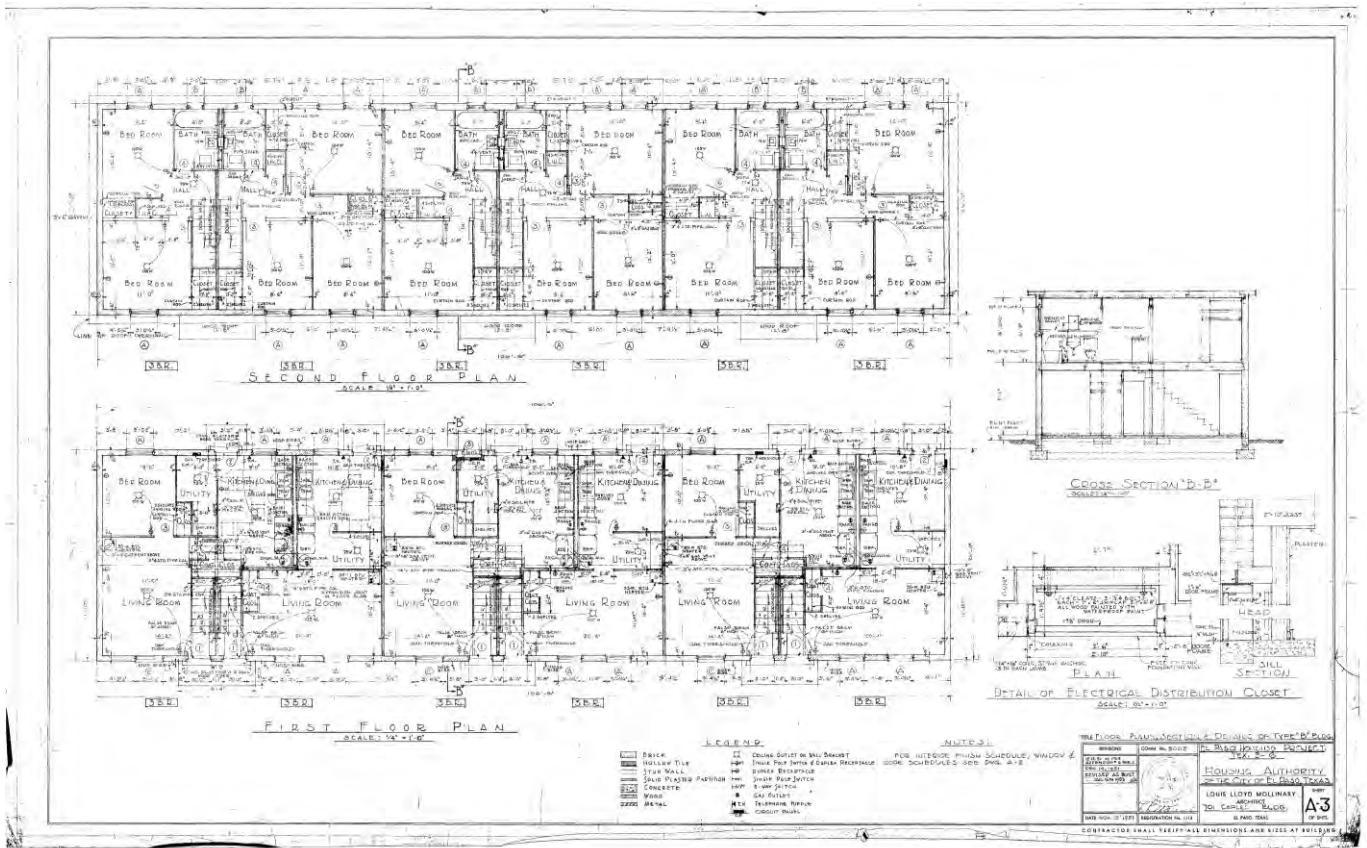


Figure 11 – Ray Sherman Place – Original Floor Plan, Section & Details of Type “B” Bldg. by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

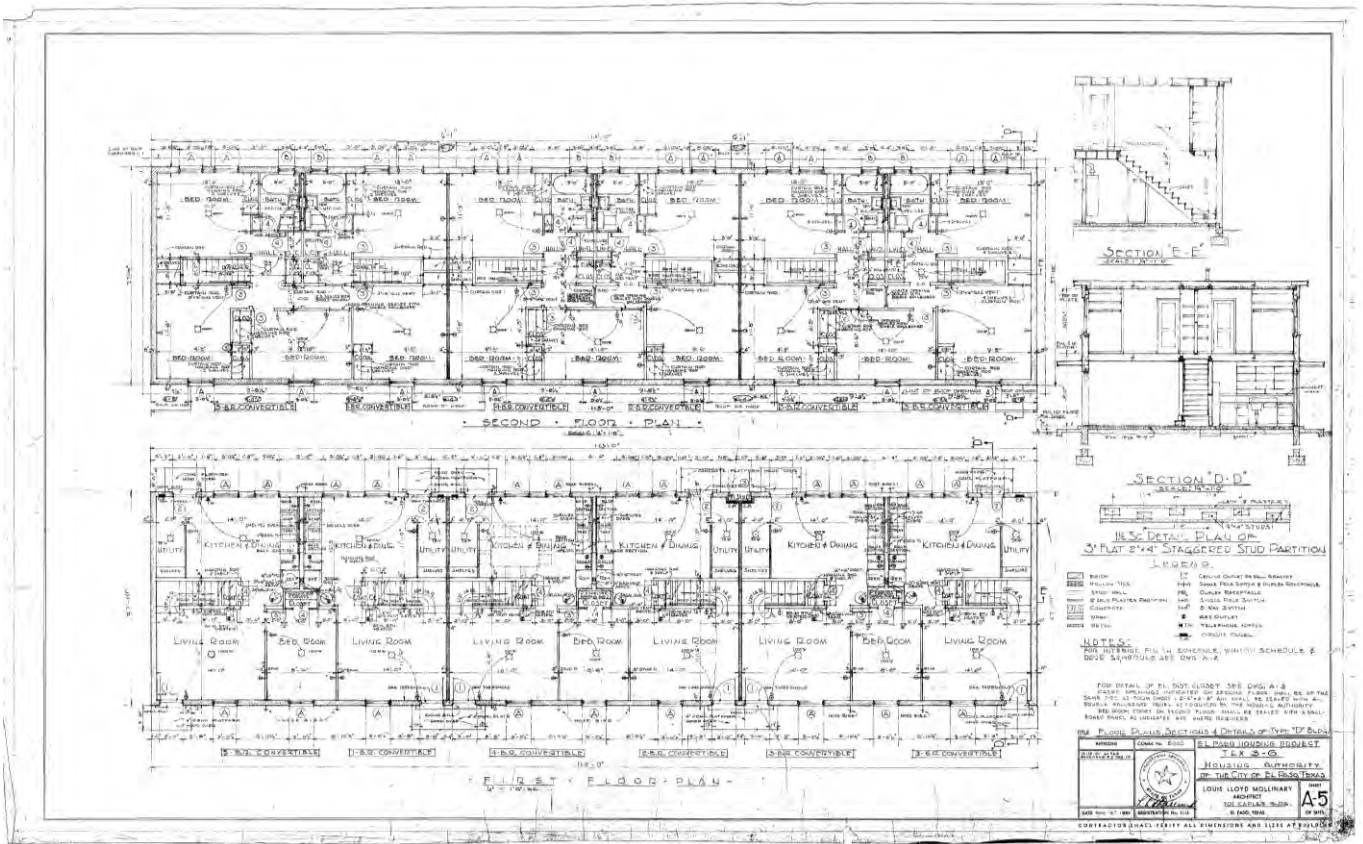


Figure 13— Ray Sherman Place – Original Floor Plans, Sections & Details of Type “D” Bldg. by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

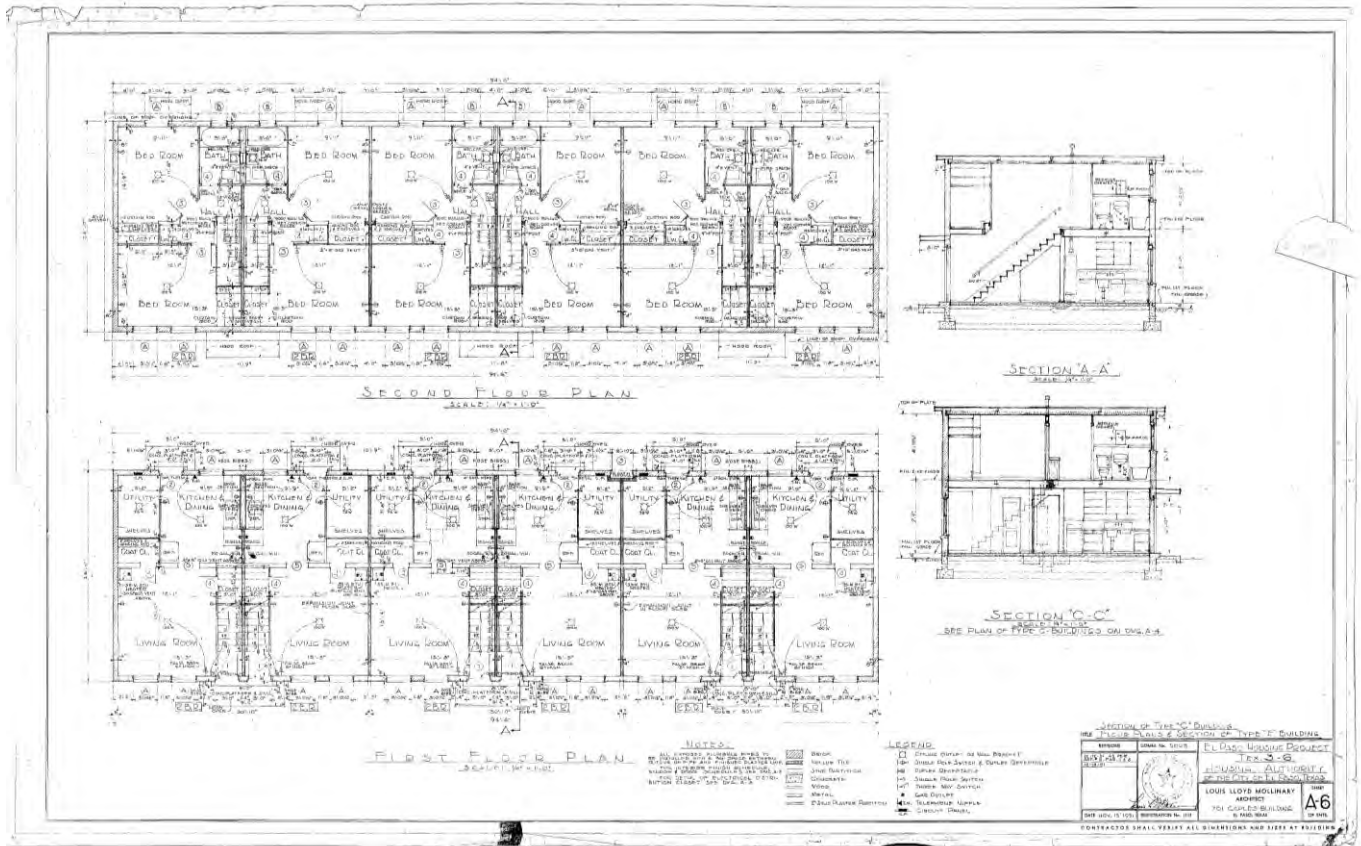


Figure 14 – Ray Sherman Place – Original Section of Type “C” Building, Floor Plans & Section of Type “E” Building by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

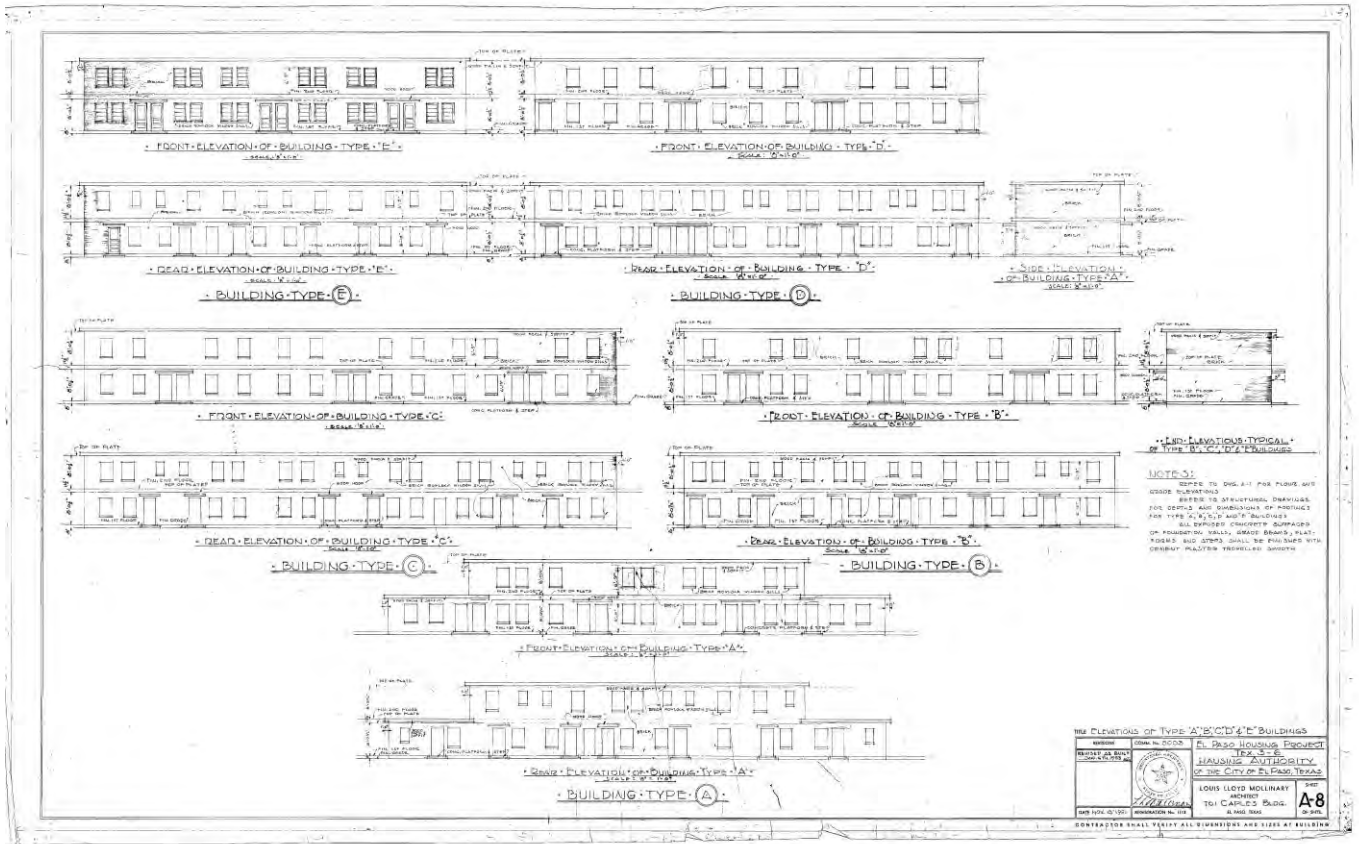


Figure 15 – Ray Sherman Place – Original Elevations of Type “A”, “B”, “C”, “D” & “E” Buildings by Louis Lloyd Mollinary Architect, dated November 1951.

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

Photographs



Photograph 1 – View of the rear laundry yards of Apartment Building Type A and Type E. Camera facing north. (March 1, 2016)



Photograph 2 – Entry Elevation of Apartment Building Type A. Camera facing northeast. (March 1, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 3 – Entry Elevation of Apartment Building Type A – porch detail. Camera facing northeast. (March 1, 2016)



Photograph 4 – View of recreation area and non-contributing metal pavilion, with superbloc of Ray Sherman Place with Apartment Building Type B (right) and Type E (far left) and Type A (center). Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 5 – View of entry façade for Apartment Type B. Camera facing southeast. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 6 – View of entry façade for Apartment Type C. Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 7 –Rear façade for Apartment Type C (left) faces the end façade and rear yards of Apartment Type B (right). Camera facing west. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 8 –Enlarged porch entry facade for Apartment Type B. Camera facing east. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 9 – Enlarged rear façade entry for Apartment Type C. Camera facing south. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 10 – Entry façade for Apartment Type D facing Blanco Avenue and part of non-contributing stone dumpster enclosure. Camera facing southeast. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 11 – Rear façade for Apartment Type D. Camera facing west. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 12 – Entry façade for Apartment Type E facing Blanco Avenue. Camera facing southwest. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 13 – Rear façade for Apartment Type E. Camera facing east. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 14 – Maintenance Building north entry façade along Blanco Avenue. Camera facing south. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 15 – Maintenance Building view of east façade (left) and north entry façade (right). Original concrete site walls are on the east side of the building. Camera facing southwest. (March 1, 2016)



Photograph 16 – Maintenance Building view of south façade (left) and east façade (right). Camera facing northwest. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 17 – Maintenance Building view of west façade (left) and south façade (right). Camera facing northeast. (June 28, 2016)



Photograph 18 – Enlarged view of reverse hip soffit at corner of Maintenance Building. Camera facing southwest. (June 28, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 19 – Interior view of typical first floor at the entry door area in Apartment Type E. (March 1, 2016)



Photograph 20 – Interior view of typical first floor kitchen area looking toward the main living area in Apartment Type E. (March 1, 2016)

Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas



Photograph 21 – Open recreation area and non-contributing metal pavilions and laundry slabs. Camera facing east. (Sept. 2, 2015)



Photograph 22 – Non-contributing native stone dumpster enclosure. Camera facing north. (March 1, 2016)















4522 11

4520 10











4510 6

4508 5





NOTICE
No parking in front of building
No parking in front of building

NOTICE
No parking in front of building
No parking in front of building

4528
BLANCO
SHEPARD

MAINTENANCE
ONLY

DOODGE
STRATUS
DX4-C259

397
MAINTENANCE
ONLY
397

















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Ray Sherman Place

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: TEXAS, El Paso

Date Received: 2/7/2019 Date of Pending List: 2/28/2019 Date of 16th Day: 3/15/2019 Date of 45th Day: 3/25/2019 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100003534

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 3/25/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Ray Sherman Place meets National Register Criterion A at the local level of significance in the areas of Politics/Government, Social History, and Community Planning & Development. Completed in 1953, Ray Sherman Place (the earlier, southern section of a larger two-unit public housing development) illustrates the cooperative activities of the El Paso community and the federal government to provide low-income, public housing to local residents during the post-WWII era. The apartment complex represents a significant local manifestation of the planning and design standards promulgated by the Federal government with respect to public housing programs governed by the 1949 Housing Act. The site's overall plan, layout and distribution of building units, and the size and minimal decoration of the individual apartment buildings clearly illustrate the forms and policies that governed federal public housing in the era. Designed by local architect Louis Lloyd Mollinary, the complex represents El Paso's second generation of public housing development intended to meet the chronic problem of substandard housing in this expanding border town. Although the modified entry porches on the front of the housing units significantly altered the visual character of those units, the overall form, placement and design of these buildings along with the relative integrity of the overall superblock complex is sufficient to convey the historic and architectural significance of the district.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criterion A

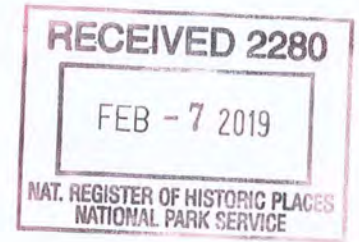
Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 3/25/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories



TO: Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

From: Mark Wolfe, SHPO
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas

DATE: February 8, 2019

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Ray Sherman Place, El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence.

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do) (do not) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

