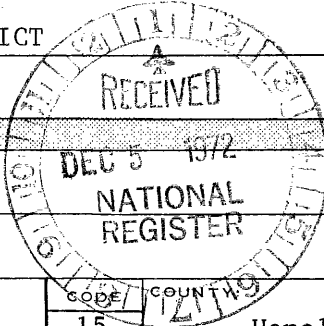


PHO 055221

STATE: Hawaii	
COUNTY: Honolulu	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JAN 17 1973	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)



1. NAME	
COMMON: CHINATOWN HISTORICAL DISTRICT	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN: Honolulu	
STATE: Hawaii	
CODE	COUNTY
15	Honolulu
CODE	
03	

3. CLASSIFICATION				
CATEGORY <i>(Check One)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	OWNERSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE <i>(Check One or More as Appropriate)</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY			
OWNER'S NAME: Multiple ownership			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	
	Hawaii		

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:			
Bureau of Conveyances			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
Tax Office Annex			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	
Honolulu	Hawaii	15	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS			
TITLE OF SURVEY: Old Honolulu The Historic Buildings Task Force			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1969 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Archives of Hawaii			
STREET AND NUMBER: Iolani Palace Grounds			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE	
Honolulu	Hawaii	15	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Hawaii	COUNTY: Honolulu	ENTRY NUMBER JAN 17 1973	DATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Chinatown Historical District consists of approximately 36 acres (15 square blocks) in the city of Honolulu. The boundaries of the district, as established by the Hawaii Historic Places Review Board, are as follows: a 50 ft. line on the ewa (north) side of Nuuanu Stream, the mauka (east) side of Beretania Street, a line 50 ft. from the building line on the Diamond Head (south) side of Nuuanu Avenue, and 50 ft. makai (west) of the longest pier stretching into Honolulu Harbor. The major reason for its early development and continuous history as a commercial area was due to the close proximity to Honolulu Harbor.

The majority of early inhabitants were Chinese immigrants who, after completing their work contracts with the sugar plantations moved to this area, purchased small parcels of land and opened small shops, businesses and restaurants, with residential accommodations in or near the same buildings. Later people of other ethnic backgrounds moved into the growing commercial district and created an atmosphere of great racial and social mixture.

Two major fires one in 1886 and the other in 1900 destroyed the majority of existing structures which necessitated the rebuilding of almost the entire area.

Chinatown is the most extensive area in Honolulu reflecting a contiguous architectural and historic character which recalls a sense of time and place. Most of the buildings are of a "masonry facade, main street America", vernacular, circa 1900-1920. Much of the value of the district can be attributed to the large number of buildings which resemble each other in age, scale, use, form, materials, and texture, creating a harmonious physical environment.

Chinatown is one of the few areas of Honolulu which has maintained a sense of identity as a community over the years. This has contributed to an atmosphere of social interaction which is evident at any given time day or night.

Today the majority of buildings in Chinatown date from 1901 with very few exceptions which escaped the January 20, 1900 Fire. The small size of individual lots has played an important role in the scale of growth and development over the years. The buildings are primarily two and three story structures with a few being one or four stories in height.

The most evident aspect of the harmonious character of Chinatown is the street facade. The buildings, in order to attain maximum building area on the lots, facilitated the use of common wall for adjacent property owners and a continuous street facade along the sidewalk property lines. One unifying element on many of the street scenes in Chinatown is the consistent use of individual sidewalk canopies projecting from the second floor level creating an almost continuous cover along the side walks. The use of materials varies widely from corrugated iron sheets suspended from walls with chains to intricately detailed wood designs on substantially supported steel frames.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) Early 1900's

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Ethnic groups</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	<u>Pacific Bridge</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Throughout the whole of its 180 years as a trading center in the Pacific, Honolulu has always been closely identified with its harbor--the principal channel of contact with the outside world. It is, however, that portion of Honolulu immediately adjacent to the harbor at the mouth of Nuuanu Stream which holds the longest continuous history of native and immigrant settlement and where the story of Hawaii's common folk has been most compactly unfolded. Here, within a limited tract of about thirty-six acres were concentrated as early as 1810 the dwellings of "the very first Chinese ever seen here, such notable white men as Francisco de Paula Marin and Isaac Davis, and innumerable native fishermen and other retainers of King Kamehameha, whose court had moved from Waikiki to Honolulu proper in 1809.

This very small section of the emerging community, so conveniently situated with reference to both the harbor and the neighboring land areas of leeward Oahu, quite naturally became the earliest center for trade and for persons engaging in commerce. It was not surprising, therefore, that the portion of Honolulu, bounded by the sea and Nuuanu Stream on two sides, should have attracted Hawaii's first large immigrant group with a special facility in trade and that the district should have come to known as "Chinatown". It had been noted, according to one observer in 1882, for the fact that the great majority of its business establishments--"watch-makers' and jewelers' shops, shoe-shops, tailor shops, saddle and harness shops, furniture-shops, tinshops, cabinet shops and bakeries, (were) all run by Chinamen with Chinese workmen."

Chinatown, however, derives its historical and cultural significance only in part from the central role it has played in the life of the Chinese community of Honolulu. Census data indicate that although in 1866, of the entire Chinese population of Honolulu, 201 or 54 percent may have lived in this or immediately adjacent areas of the city, it is quite clear that the residents of these 36 acres have never consisted exclusively of Chinese. Actually, the highest proportion of Chinese inhabitants in this area, as recorded by an official census, was 56.3 percent in 1900, just three months after the second devastating Chinatown fire, and this ratio dropped to 53.8 percent in 1920 and still further to 47.0 percent in 1930. By 1940, Japanese had exceeded the number of Chinese residents, and by 1970, persons of Chinese ancestry made up less than 20 percent of the inhabitants of the area, while Filipinos constituted 47 percent, with the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"The Plague and Fire of 1899-1900 in Honolulu" by Lana Iwamoto in Hawaii Historical Review, 1969, pp. 122-141.

"Honolulu's Fascinating Chinatown" by Helen Berkey in Paradise of the Pacific, Vol. 62, no. 2, pp 12-13.

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NO
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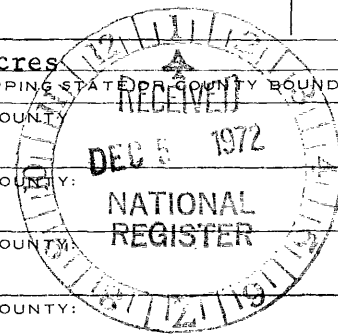
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 21° 19' 00"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 157° 52' 08"		Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	Degrees Minutes Seconds ° ' "	
NE	21° 19' 04"	157° 51' 53"				
SE	21° 18' 55"	157° 51' 46"				
SW	21° 18' 45"	157° 52' 06"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 36 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Dorothy Riconda, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Hawaii Register of Historic Places, Division of State Parks
DATE: May 2, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 621

CITY OR TOWN: Honolulu
STATE: Hawaii
CODE: 15

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National State Local

Name

Title State Liaison Officer

Date November 22, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert M. Utley
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Wm J. Nuttz
Keeper of The National Register

Date

1-15-73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

7.^a

Often the ground floor has sliding or folding doors allowing for total exposure of the store to passerby. Many times the store is extended onto the sidewalk by means of rolling or sliding display cases. In other cases, entrance is gained to the ground floor through a recessed entry with double wood frame glass doors flanked by splayed store front display windows. The front portion of the space is public domain with the rear being used for office and storage space. A rear door usually opens onto a rear alley or court yard. An exterior stairway leads to a second floor hallway with rooms opening on either side. The front rooms open onto the street with 3' x 5' double hung windows, usually two to a room. These upper rooms function as either living space or office space.

Brick and cut blue stone are the common materials of the older buildings with a few remaining wood structures. Newer buildings constructed during the 1920's and 30's are of concrete and hollow tile. In some cases, a combination of materials was used such as steel columns and wood beams. Recent buildings have been variably of an unsympathetic nature combining the worst qualities of poor design with sterile architecture. A more detailed description can be accomplished by dividing the buildings into material and architectural types and giving characteristics and examples of each.

Brick - The most common material found in the older buildings in Chinatown has been left exposed in most cases and its textured warmth is visible. It is covered in other cases by plaster to create a monolithic appearance. The unique characteristics of the brick buildings are:

- 1) arched lintels of brick often vertically layed to create a fan form.
- 2) decorative parapets with curved or angular forms.
- 3) designs around door and window openings.
- 4) corbelled projections as cornices or bases for pilaster forms.
- 5) a variety of designs, patterns and textures with brick.

Stone - Used on many of the older Chinatown buildings stone presents a strong solid appearance with an uneven texture. As with brick, the stone has been covered with plaster in some instances. The unique characteristics of stone are:

- 1) traditional regular interlocking stone work.
- 2) flush face texture with exposed mortar joints and irregular stone size and form.
- 3) irregular textured face stone with hidden or non-articulated mortar joints.
- 4) large lintels over door and window openings, occasionally single large stones or several stones in a low arch form.
- 5) capped and decorated parapets with a variety of curved and angular forms.
- 6) projected or revealed vertical elements simulating pilasters columns or other structural form.
- 7) horizontal bands revealed or projected.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Hawaii	
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FOR NPS USE ONLY		
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(Number all entries)

7.b

Chinatown - Cont'd

Wood - The remaining wood structures in Chinatown are in poor repair with extensive termite and dry rot damage. It would be very doubtful if any of these structures could be retained although they contribute to the overall scale, variety and character of the area.

Concrete and Hollow Tile - During the re-building of Chinatown, various buildings were constructed of concrete or hollow tile. Recently, there has been a rash of non-descript buildings of no contributing value to Chinatown. This has not always been the case with concrete buildings in the area. Notable exceptions include two types of buildings:

(A) Eclectic - The forms and details of these buildings reflect an attitude prevalent during the 1920's - a return to classic motifs on the facades of commercial buildings. The character created by these buildings is harmonious with and enhances the overall atmosphere and scale of Chinatown. Characteristics of eclectic buildings include:

- 1) decorated parapets with curving or angular forms.
- 2) cornices with classic mouldings, dentils and other details.
- 3) arched door and window openings with articulated frames.
- 4) columns and pilasters with bases, capitals and other details of classic orders.
- 5) patterns and details incised into the concrete.

(B) Pseudo-Oriental - While of basically simple form, the character and value of these buildings is found in their applied embellishments. The buildings cannot be defended as honest attempts to recreate oriental architecture. They do, however, contribute to the overall texture and character of Chinatown. Characteristics include:

- 1) tiled roofs of bright colors with eaves turned upwards.
- 2) decorative oriental patterns applied by painting or tile work.
- 3) door and window forms which recall oriental architecture.
- 4) window grills with oriental motifs and designs.
- 5) assorted designs, patterns, textures and details of oriental design.
- 6) bright colors of greens, reds, yellows and blues usually associated with oriental art and architecture.

Miscellaneous Buildings - The buildings in Chinatown have been categorized by their basic materials, realizing that one building may use several materials. An example would be a brick structure which has a concrete floor on the ground level and wood beams to support the upper levels. This building would still be classified as a brick building.

In contrast to this, there are several buildings in Chinatown which fall into no general category due to the variety and random use of materials. An excellent example of this is the Oahu market on the corner of King and

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Hawaii	
COUNTY		Honolulu	
FOR NPS USE ONLY			
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE	
		JAN 17 1973	

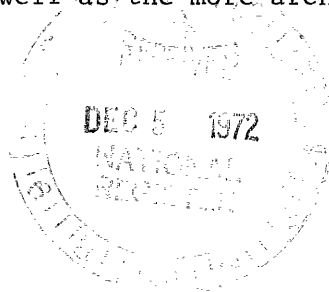
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7.c

Chinatown - Cont'd

Kekaulike Streets which is of no architectural style and has incorporated steel columns, wood rafters, iron corrugated roofing and moveable exterior walls to create a "non-architecture". The value and significance is not in the building but in the human activities which take place within the protected open space provided.

These buildings greatly contribute to the overall atmosphere of Chinatown and should be protected as well as the more architecturally sophisticated structures.



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

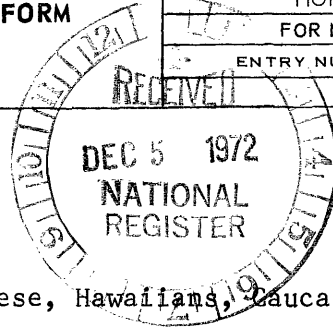
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STATE	
Hawaii	
COUNTY	
Honolulu	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JAN 17 1973

(Number all entries)

8.a

Chinatown (Significance) - Cont'd



remaining 33 percent divided among Japanese, Hawaiians, Caucasians, Negroes, Koreans, and Puerto Ricans.

Chinatown is, nevertheless, the one and only district in Honolulu which reflects vividly in its building, institutions, and people, the full impact of the city's role as a center of attraction for many diverse races and cultures. The buildings of Chinatown are chiefly of two or three stories, and architecturally they run the gamut from a few interesting examples of late 19th century American to buildings "combining the worst qualities of poor design with sterile architecture." Brick, wood and cut blue stone are the common materials of the older building, in whose construction "careful attention was paid to workmanship and detail," whereas concrete and steel figure more frequently in the later structures, a number of which are in a badly deteriorated physical condition. Low residential rentals, resulting from the old-fashioned and dilapidated housing facilities, have encouraged the use of Chinatown as an area of first settlement in Honolulu by members of virtually all of the newly-arrived immigrant groups.

Despite the relatively small proportion of Chinese actually residing in Chinatown, this restricted area still provides the principal center for the business and social life of the entire Chinese community of the Island--the headquarters for the United Chinese Society, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and the two Chinese newspapers. The heavy concentration of Chinese business establishments of all sorts, including their famous restaurants, draws many members of this and other ethnic groups into the district daily from other parts of the city. The larger group of Filipino residents and their associates from other areas tend to concentrate along upper Maunakea Street, with its pool halls, barber shops, eating establishments, bars, and risqué theaters, while opportunities for relaxation and diversion of specialized sorts, including Gypsy fortune-tellers, sex movies, tattooing parlors, and Soul-food restaurants, attract sailors and service personnel to Hotel Street and Blacks to Smith Street. The presence in Chinatown of such varied business firms of Japanese ownership as a language newspaper and bookstore, a bank and numerous barber shops, and of Hawaiian lei sellers, and Korean restaurants reflect the earlier and current uses of the district by these ethnic groups, both for business and residence. People from all the numerous ethnic groups in Honolulu, especially from the lower income brackets, find in the meat, fish, vegetable, and fruit stalls of Oahu Market and the dry-goods and clothing stores along King Street the commodities, not available elsewhere, to satisfy their special tastes.

In no other portion of either the city or the state is it possible for tourists and residents alike, including children on school excursions, to observe within such compact dimensions so much of Hawaii's varied peoples

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Hawaii
COUNTY		Honolulu
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ENTRY NUMBER	JAN 17 1973	DATE

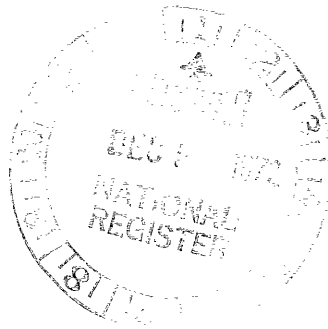
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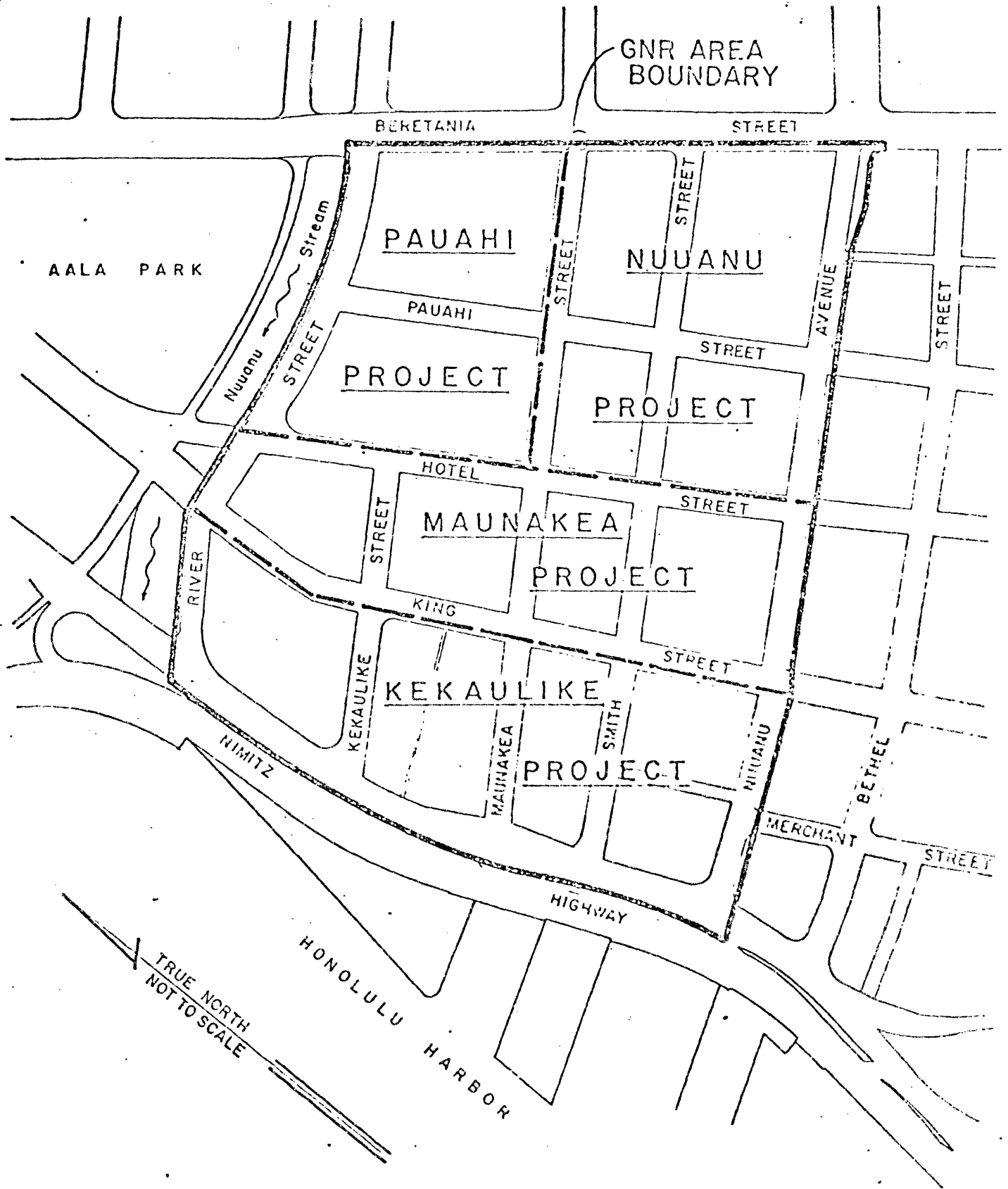
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Chinatown - Significance (Cont'd)

and cultures, both past and present. In order to preserve as much as possible of the essential character of this uniquely colorful and significant area in the history of Hawaii's common folk, it seems appropriate to place Chinatown on the State Register and nominate it to the National Register.

prepared by Andrew Lind, Ph.D.
Hawaii Historic Places Review
Board Member





**CHINATOWN GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD
RENEWAL AREA**