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move away, and as a result the historic fabric of the community was compromised. The vibrant culture that once sustained the area was displaced as older generations passed away and younger generations relocated to find new opportunities elsewhere.

In 2002, a commercial structure built in the 1920s and known as La Gloria, that housed a service station and roof-top dance hall, was demolished. The demolition of this cultural center of the community unleashed widespread opposition to the destruction of Westside history and galvanized a grassroots preservation movement on the Westside. Subsequent threats of demolition of other important structures served to highlight the urgency of protecting the historic and cultural resources of San Antonio's Westside.

The City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation became actively involved in the preservation movement on the Westside. In 2011, the Westside Cultural Resource Survey was undertaken to inventory the rich architectural and cultural history of San Antonio's Westside. With the help of many community partners, the Office of Historic Preservation has identified over 90 Westside properties and sites that are of historic and cultural significance. Each property has been photographed and researched to understand its unique history, the events and people associated with each place, and the role each property has played in the story of San Antonio's Westside development. The goal of this initiative is to help proactively identify and ultimately protect these important places that make the Westside a vital part of San Antonio. Through a series of public meetings, many community residents and others have shared their memories and experiences about these Westside properties.

A wide variety of property types have been identified through the Westside Cultural Resource Survey including historic commercial buildings, residences, churches, gas stations, and parks. Two small concentrations of surviving shotgun houses, on Smith Street and Fite Alley, are vestiges of typical Westside housing of the early 20th century. Portions of the Prospect Hill neighborhood, with

Queen Anne style homes from the turn-of-the-century, reflect some of the more elaborate Westside residential construction. The 1930s former Prospect Hill Library and the mid-century "modern" former Las Palmas Library, now home to City health facilities, were identified as significant public buildings. Many architecturally significant historic churches, including Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Alphonsus, and the Mexican Christian Church, are some of the important religious structures that have served generations of Westside residents. Small historic commercial structures lining Guadalupe Street and small corner tienditas reflect the former glory days of small business within the Westside community. Contreras Ice House on West Commerce Street is typical of the former neighborhood ice houses where residents would stop by for a cold drink and a bit of local gossip. The former Key Hole Club, a thriving nightclub venue throughout the 1940s and 50s, is another significant Westside institution. The Elizondo Flower Shop on Castroville Road has for generations provided flowers for visitors to nearby San Fernando Cemetery No. 2. Bakeries, including La Perla and La Chiquita, have played an important role in the Westside community offering pan dulce or "sweet bread" and other treats. Other identified Westside places include a historic fire station, several historic schools, and a number of significant historic homes.

The historic buildings and neighborhoods of San Antonio's Westside provide a sense of place and community. They remind us of the way San Antonio was and provide the chance for future generations to understand our diverse history and culture as well as our city's Hispanic heritage. By gathering the memories and knowledge of the Westside citizens through the Westside Cultural Resource Survey, the Office of Historic Preservation is committed to preserving our historic community and our Hispanic history. Visit the Office of Historic Preservation website for more information and to view photos of all of the Westside properties identified to date at: <http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/events.aspx>. Join us on this fascinating exploration of San Antonio's historic Westside.



San Antonio's Westside

History, Culture, Community

by the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

The Westside of San Antonio represents a significant part of San Antonio's identity as a center for Hispanic culture. The area prospered during the early 20th century as immigrants fleeing political unrest in Mexico made their homes on San Antonio's Westside. Small corner stores or tienditas served the neighborhoods, and families walked to church and to each other's homes. Guadalupe Street developed as a thriving entertainment and commercial "main street" with movie theaters, restaurants, and

local merchants. Much of the domestic architecture included small shotgun houses - now a rare find in San Antonio.

The construction of the interstate highways in the 1960s physically cut off the Westside from downtown and led to a decline. Urban renewal efforts in the late 20th century razed entire blocks of historic houses that had supported Westside families for multiple generations. Many residents began to