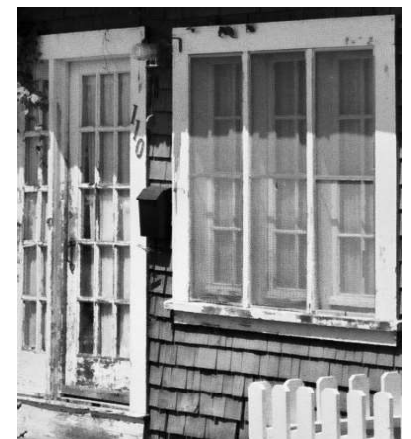




# Historic Context Statement For the City of Capitola





**DRAFT  
HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT  
FOR  
THE CITY OF CAPITOLA**

**PREPARED FOR:**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Capitola Historic Context Statement is based on the State Office of Historic Preservation's "Suggested Outline for Fully Developed Context Statement." The document provides a framework for investigation of the city's historic resources and will serve as a tool for preservation planning. The text examines how Capitola was established as a resort in 1874, chronicles subsequent development through city incorporation in 1949, and summarizes city expansion through the 1970s.

The manuscript includes the following themes and chronological periods: Prehistory and the Colonial Period (1769-1850); Economic Development (1833-1970); Government, Civic, and Social Institutions (1882-1970); Architectural Development (1882-1955); and Cultural Development (1874-1955).

The overview of Capitola's historic development is supplemented with examples of property types, such as districts, buildings, and features, which represent the patterns of growth. The examples are listed both in the text and in Appendix I, which includes photographs and a listing of architectural style, date of construction, and related themes. A thematic chronology follows as a reference guide and summary.

Throughout the context statement and the appendices, emphasis is given to the 1986 City of Capitola Architectural Survey, written by the firm of Rowe and Associates (Sara Boutelle, Roger Hatheway, and Charles Rowe). This work assessed structures more than fifty years old, that is, built prior to 1936, that had retained architectural integrity. Included were approximately 240 buildings that "best represented traditional architectural styles locally or the community's vernacular architecture." Information from the 1986 survey has been updated where more accurate detail has surfaced through research and the availability of new archival resources.

As a result of the survey, three National Register Historic Districts were established in Capitola in 1987: the Venetian Court District, Six Sisters/Lawn Way District, and the Old Riverview Historic District. Within each are structures designated as contributors to the historic character of the district.

The context statement is to be a foundation for additional review and continuing survey of the city's valued historic resources.

The context statement has been researched and written by Carolyn Swift, Capitola City Historian, with organizational assistance from former State Historic Preservation Officer Kathryn Gualtieri, who also authored Section 5.0, Architectural Development (1882-1955). Historical consultant Judith Steen edited the text.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Historic Context Statement**

A historic context statement is a technical document containing specific sections mandated by the Secretary of the Interior in National Register Bulletin 16. A historic context can be defined as “a body of information about historic properties that is organized by theme, time, and place.” Historic context is linked with tangible historic resources through the concept of property type. A property type is a “grouping of individual properties based on shared physical or associative characteristics.”

The purpose of a historic context statement is to provide a framework for identifying historic resources and determining their relative significance. Criteria can then be applied to determine whether a resource should be listed in a national, state, or local register. Specific examples referred to in this document are included solely to illustrate physical and associative characteristics of each theme and/or property type: exclusion from this report is not intended to diminish the significance of any individual historic resource or person.

### **1.2 Overview of Themes**

Each chapter of this report is centered on a specific theme derived from a broad set of associated events that helped shape Capitola history. Time periods for each theme will often overlap. Key historical events are used to determine the opening and ending dates of a particular thematic period. The time frame allows for a complete examination of the city’s extant buildings that are, in 2004, fifty years of age or older, as well as groups of structures historically linked to important people, events, or architecture.

The Historic Context Statement has been organized into five general themes: Prehistory and the Colonial Period (1769-1850); Economic Development (1833-1970); Government, Civic, and Social Institutions (1882-1970); Architectural Development (1882-1955); and Cultural Development (1874-1955).

Generally, the period covered by the report will end in 1949, the year Capitola was incorporated as a city. However, three exceptions to the 1949 cutoff date will be discussed:

- 1) Establishment of Cabrillo College in 1959 was followed, in 1962, by the completion of the community college campus on a site specifically chosen for its location midway between the cities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Set on property bordering Soquel, Aptos, and Capitola, the college hastened construction of new residential housing in all three communities. Capitola property values rose, and the city’s character shifted dramatically from a population of mainly retirees and summer vacationers to a year-round home for students and for families with young children.



2) Capitola lost its beach in 1964, a year after the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor was completed. Waves undercut the foundations of buildings, a storm sewer was exposed, and cliff erosion was accelerated. Capitola's economy was severely threatened. Numerous historic structures were demolished in an effort to modernize and improve the tourist appeal of the village, and a number of high-rise developments were proposed near the shoreline. The debate over the future development of Capitola inspired increased interest in city planning and the architectural review of proposed new construction.

3) Creation of an improvement district in 1968 to widen Forty-first Avenue set the stage for subsequent annexation and development of the Capitola Mall properties in the 1970s. The mall's establishment boosted city revenues and strengthened preservation of the village district.

### **1.3 Location and Boundaries of Capitola**

Capitola is a Santa Cruz County coastal community encompassing approximately two square miles. The city is to the north of the Monterey Bay shoreline, south of the unincorporated town of Soquel, east of unincorporated Live Oak and the City of Santa Cruz, and west of unincorporated Aptos. Capitola lies south of Highway 1.

The city's natural and cultural history has been shaped and characterized by its proximity to the ocean and its connection with Soquel Creek, which rises from Maymens Flat at 2,800 feet near the summit of the Santa Cruz Mountains and flows mainly south for about fifteen miles, emptying into Soquel Cove. The cove is the section of Monterey Bay north of a hypothetical line drawn from Soquel Point (near Pleasure Point) to the mouth of Aptos Creek. The Soquel Creek watershed is about forty-two square miles and is the third largest in Santa Cruz County, after the Pajaro River and San Lorenzo River watersheds.

Capitola has a temperate Mediterranean climate and distinct landforms influenced by the San Andreas Fault system. Because of surrounding, steep mountain ranges, the area was at first remote and difficult to reach. During the early stages of settlement by Anglo-European and American settlers, isolation slowed the pace of economic development, while natural scenic attributes drew increasing numbers of seasonal visitors, eager to escape the unbearable summer heat of California's interior valleys. Capitola was officially opened in 1874 as a vacation retreat and continues today as a haven for tourists. Since 1883 Capitola has been promoted as the oldest resort in California.

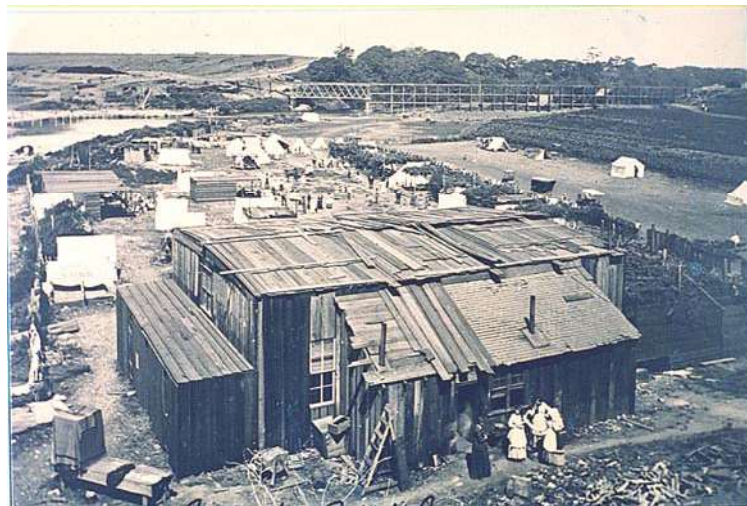
### **1.4 Community Character**

A waterfront setting, mild climate, and diverse topography drew visitors to the area years before Camp Capitola was founded on June 18, 1874. Since 1869 Samuel Alonzo Hall, the camp's originator, had leased the site for farming from owner Frederick Augustus Hihn (pronounced Heen). Evidently, from the beginning, Hall had heeded the

pleas of campers who wanted to pitch tents along the beach in the summertime. From 1874 through 1879, the Capitola campground was tucked between the wharf and the California Beet Sugar Company mill, located on what is now Riverview Terrace.

Hahn was the first in a series of beachfront lessees. As an astute businessman, landowner Hahn carefully observed the expansion at Camp Capitola, particularly after the 1876 inauguration of narrow-gauge, passenger rail service. In 1882 he drew up a subdivision map and began to administer the resort directly through managers hired by the F. A. Hahn Company. Lots were marketed mainly in the Santa Clara and central valley areas—places for which Capitola’s streets were named.

In the 1870s Capitola architecture was the rough, unadorned style typical of California campgrounds. Once the railroad was broad gauged in 1883 and the resort became increasingly popular, however, Hahn directed a series of upgrades. Remembering the vacation customs and recreational habits of his native Germany, he designed similar features for Capitola. A horticulturalist by avocation, Hahn dictated that the grounds be landscaped with trees and that space be set aside for ornamental gardens, small parks, and scenic paths. His agents advertised “Capitola By-the-Sea” as a resort rivaling coastal vacation spas in Europe.



Camp Capitola, 1875 (*Capitola Museum*)

Commercial structures, camp cabins, and the “free tent campground” erected by the Hahn Company, along with modest summer homes and a handful of Victorian cottages built on lots sold in the beach

“flats” and on the bluffs, characterized the village in the 1880s. Intermixed with resort lodgings were the simple houses and cabins of Hahn Company workers. Outside the official margins of the resort, surrounding acres remained identified with the town of Soquel and were occupied by farms, ranches, vineyards, orchards, and the modest homes of mill workers, loggers, and farm laborers.

Hahn Company improvements from 1882 to 1884 were followed in the 1890s by additional refinements to Capitola architecture. Regional architect Edward L. Van Cleeck was hired to design a large, 160-room hotel, a line of resort concessions along Ocean Front Avenue (the Esplanade), and two-story vacation rentals that included the duplexes known as the Six Sisters.

After Hahn died in 1913, his daughter, Katherine Cope Henderson, inherited the resort but kept it only six years, selling it in 1919 to wealthy San Francisco speculator H.

(Henry) Allen Rispin. He set out to modernize Capitola with a Spanish Colonial Revival theme, concrete construction, and curving streets. He targeted the San Francisco Bay Area as well as the central California valley for the sale of lots and bungalows. Rispin's plans for 1920s Capitola were flamboyant, including paved streets, a yacht club and fishing lodge, a waterside Venetian Court complex, and a boathouse and beach lagoon, as well as a golf course in neighboring Soquel.

Seaside cottage, Victorian, Craftsman Bungalow, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Mediterranean/Mission Revival architectural styles became intermixed with vernacular houses throughout the neighborhoods surrounding the resort and village. In the years following the Great Depression, a well-established summer vacation population and a growing unity among year-round residents created the groundwork for a community distinct from its rural surroundings. The central theme of tourism continued, and Capitola's survival as a resort has been safeguarded throughout its history.

## **1.5 Ethnicity and Gender**

### **1.5.1 Ethnicity**

Varied groups have helped shape the character of the local region. Earliest inhabitants were the Uypi Indians, an Ohlone tribal unit moved to the Mission Santa Cruz soon after it was founded in 1769. By the start of the twentieth century, no ethnically identifiable Ohlone group remained in the area that is now Capitola.

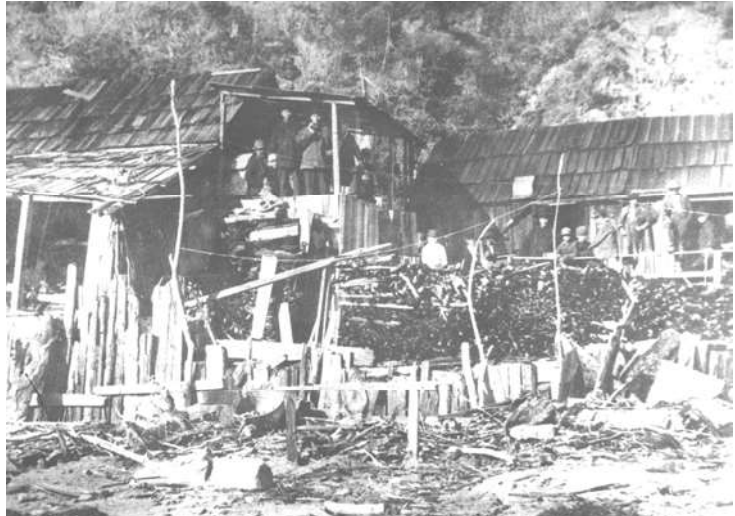
The Castro and Rodriguez families, members of the 1775-1776 Anza Expedition, represent the beginning of colonization and settlement. Both families received title to a number of Mexican land grants, including two partially within the present boundaries of Capitola.

From its start, Camp Capitola was a retreat populated by a mix of cultures and nationalities. When developer Frederick Hihn, a naturalized citizen from Germany, subdivided lots for sale in 1882, his agents focused at first on the Santa Clara Valley. Community leaders from Los Gatos and San Jose, many associated with the San Jose Germania Verein, a German social club, made early lot purchases. As Capitola grew, German, English, Irish, Scottish, French, Canadian, Australian, Italian, Portuguese, Croatian, and other nationalities added cultural texture to camp and community life.

The ability to reside or own land in the areas subdivided by Hihn was restricted. Deed limitations forbade the sale, lease, or occupation of the property "by any other than the Caucasian race," except employees. These restraints were common in resort communities and remained in effect in Capitola through the era of H. Allen Rispin and his Bay Head Land Company of the 1920s. In 1948 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that restrictive covenants were no longer enforceable.

African Americans, Japanese, and Chinese lived as part of the community outside the boundaries of the resort yet within present city limits.

Chinese immigrants and sojourners worked as farm laborers throughout the Monterey Bay region. In 1874 they were among two hundred laborers at the California Beet Sugar Company mill, situated on thirty acres of land along Soquel Creek, northwest of the campground. The mill continued to operate until 1879. Chinese were also involved in construction of the narrow-gauge Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad through Capitola in 1874. When Hihn took over the direction of Capitola in the 1880s, he hired Chinese workers on the grounds and at the hotel. Chinese immigrant Lee Song, for example, ran the Capitola Laundry for the Hihn Company from 1899 until 1913. The laundry sat on the site of the present Capitola City Hall.



**Chinese fishing village near the present New Brighton Beach State Park, ca. 1880 (*Capitola Museum*)**

When Capitola was founded, a Chinese fishing camp was nearby at China Beach, now a part of New Brighton Beach State Park.

The Chinese stayed at the site until at least 1890, when they were forced to move southeast along the coastline.

African American men were hired as waiters and porters at the Capitola Hotel in the 1890s. In July 1890 waiter Jerry D. Bowler was applauded for his bravery in the rescue of eleven-year-old George Shaw. Seeing the boy in distress, Bowler rushed from the hotel into the ocean, grabbed the child, and, although he “had all he could manage,” was able to hold Shaw afloat until other rescuers arrived.

William E. “Ernest” Cooper was a well-known African American resident. A Watsonville High School graduate, Cooper sought and obtained permission from Hihn to run a shoeshine concession at Capitola. Cooper and his wife, Annie, had two sons, Eugene and Ulysses, born at Capitola.

In 1927, African Americans were employed as waiters and lived upstairs on the third floor of a restaurant called “The Old Plantation,” in the McCormick tract near Park Avenue. To help protect the California coastline, African American soldiers of the 54<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment were stationed in 1942 at the former site of the military encampment, Camp McQuaide, between Monterey and Park Avenues.

Along Forty-first Avenue, Japanese Issei and Nisei strawberry growers and truck farmers owned or leased land before World War II, when they were removed to internment camps. The small Japanese community that lived near Capitola associated with a larger population in Live Oak and Santa Cruz.

A census taken shortly after city incorporation in 1949 recorded a population of 1880 persons residing in 700 occupied dwellings within city limits. All city residents were Caucasian.

### **1.5.2 Women**

Women have furthered Capitola's economic, social, and cultural progress, and, wherever possible, their contributions are detailed. In its early years, mainly women vacationers occupied Capitola. Once the summer season began and interior valley towns were heating up, parents worried about the increased possibility of disease. Mothers and youngsters packed up for the entire season when journeying to Capitola. Fathers often came only for brief visits. In 1888, for example, a writer for the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* estimated that at Capitola there were "about three men in camp and about five hundred women and children."

A substantial number of early Capitola deeds were obtained by women, who bought about one-third of the lots sold between 1882 and 1884.

Throughout Capitola history, women residents have been significant as business managers. This was a trend that Hihn fostered, and as the resort developed, he often extended to women the opportunity of leasing one of his commercial enterprises.

Perhaps the best known among the resort's women entrepreneurs is Martha J. "Patty" Reed (Mrs. Frank) Lewis, the Donner-Reed party survivor whose four-inch wooden doll is on exhibit at Sutter's Fort Historic State Park in Sacramento. Although famed as a resolute survivor of one of the most horrifying tragedies in the history of the West, Lewis was known to Capitola visitors in 1890 as the manager of both the Capitola Hotel and the Capitola Park Hotel, located in the McCormick tract between Monterey and Park Avenues. The Capitola Park Hotel eventually became known as the Lewis house and was Patty's home until shortly before her death in July 1923. Celebrated for her skills as a hostess, she was known as a "queen among landladies." She was revered as a member of the Society of California Pioneers, which often met at Capitola, and the Native Daughters of the Golden West. One of the Lewis family's enduring contributions was to assist establishment of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church on Depot Hill.

Two businesswomen linked to Frederick Hihn held title for a time to large tracts. When Hihn died in 1913, his eldest child, Katherine Cope Henderson, inherited nearly the entire village. Along with her husband, Henry, who had experience in resort management, Katherine remained in charge of Capitola and was president of the Capitola-Hihn Company when she decided to sell in 1919.

Hihn's grandson, Eulice Hihn, a surveyor, was bequeathed about two hundred acres surrounding the nearby train stop at Opal. Eulice was killed in a hunting accident and his widow, Kathryn Bothwell Hihn, inherited the land. She later married J. T.

McGeoghegan. During the real estate boom after World War I, she created “Opal Subdivision 1 of the Fairview Tract,” with lots for 250 homes. The subdivision is known today as Opal Cliffs.

## **2.0 PREHISTORY AND THE COLONIAL PERIOD (1769-1850)**

This Historic Context Statement was developed to interpret and explain the progressive growth of Capitola and to link its central themes to the existing resources within the city. Since only archaeological evidence from the prehistoric and colonial periods remains today, this background material is included as a preface.

### **2.1 Original Inhabitants**

Prior to the coming of Spanish and Portuguese explorers, more than ten thousand indigenous people were living in the coastal area between Point Sur and the San Francisco Bay.

The coastal region, from San Francisco Bay to Monterey Bay, was home to approximately forty culturally diverse native tribes now collectively known as Ohlone (a Miwok Indian word that translates to “western people”). Theirs was a mobile way of life in a region of plentiful waterfowl, shellfish, game, fish, and native plants that sustained villages for thousands of years. Inhabitants set controlled burns every year to clear large areas along the coast, assisting the growth of seed-bearing plants and providing grazing land for deer and other game. Village and campsites grew, diminished, or were abandoned at different seasons as families moved to harvest plants and hunt animals.

While most Monterey Bay native people spoke dialects of the Ohlone language, they saw themselves as locally independent political groups led by the elders of extended families. Earliest coastal inhabitants along Soquel Creek represented one of the small territorial bands that maintained semi-permanent villages and shifting campsites, recognizing territorial boundaries within the southeastern limits of the Uypi in the area near the present City of Santa Cruz. Estimated Uypi population in the pre-contact era was one hundred to three hundred people.

Soquel is probably a Spanish corruption of the name of Uypi leader Suquer, the second person baptized at the mission. Attempts made to turn into Spanish and English what was thought to be the original Uypi name include *Osocales*, *Osocali*, *Osoquales*, *Sakel*, *Sauquel*, and *Usuacalis*, among others. For the Uypi people living on the bluffs and along the banks of Soquel Creek, the founding of the Mission Santa Cruz, three-and-a-half miles away, in 1791, foreshadowed the end of their culture and most of their lives.

### **2.2 Spanish Exploration**

The colonial period began when Gaspar de Portola’s 1769 Spanish expedition traveled up the coast in search of Monterey Bay. The party was seeking a harbor “sheltered from

all winds” that was described by Sebastian Vizcaino in 1603. Throughout the 1769 journey, the explorers failed to recognize the harbor or the terrain that had been depicted earlier.

## **2.3 Colonial Period**

When the Portola party reached Soquel Creek on October 16, 1769, diarists made no mention of an Indian village. Father Juan Crespi recorded the stream’s name as *El Rosario del Beato Serafin de Asculi*. Near the mouth of this stream, the summer resort of Capitola would develop in another hundred years.

### **2.3.1 Mission Santa Cruz**

Twelfth in the chain along the El Camino Real, the Santa Cruz Mission was founded in 1791 by Father Fermin Francisco de Lasuen, successor to Father Junipero Serra as head of the Missions of Alta California. A flood destroyed the first building near the banks of the San Lorenzo River. The mission relocated to the top of the bluff in 1794. Santa Cruz Mission reached its peak in converts when the population rose to 523 in 1796. The number of converts declined thereafter. Converted “neophytes” died rapidly from disease and poor nutrition. By the time the missions were ordered secularized in 1833, few original inhabitants remained. None from the present boundaries of Capitola were known to be among them.

### **2.3.2 Villa Branciforte**

Villa Branciforte was a soldier-settler establishment founded with the dual purpose of colonization and defense. Built on the east side of the San Lorenzo River in 1797, within one league of the mission, it was named in honor of Miguel de la Grua Talamanca, the Marques de Branciforte and the Viceroy of New Spain. Among the first to arrive were individuals convicted of petty crimes. Others were soldiers serving the Spanish government who had finished their term of enlistment and arrived with their families. In two years, the population numbered seventy men, women, and children.

When civil war erupted between Mexico and Spain in 1810, Alta and Baja California were cut off from one another. Illegal trading took place with foreign ships that secretly anchored at Monterey. Sailors that came off these ships were the forerunners of Anglo-European and American settlers.

By 1820 Branciforte’s economy was advancing. Trade with foreign ships was legalized in the ports of San Francisco and Monterey. With the change of government control from Spain to Mexico in 1822, new land uses and ownership patterns emerged. When the Mexican government issued land grants about this time, the retired military at Branciforte and their offspring were the chief recipients.

Ownership of mission lands shifted when Governor Jose Figueroa secularized the Santa Cruz Mission in 1834. From the 1820s through the 1840s, foreigners or “extranjeros”

began to appear more regularly at the villa. Many of these were regarded as a respected class of European and Yankee traders who found it in their economic interest to learn the customs and language of their new country. A number converted to Catholicism, became naturalized citizens of Mexico, and married women from Branciforte. They accepted the lifestyle of the Californio and were integrated into the culture. Another group, viewed as a rougher class, started arriving late in the 1840s. American frontiersmen who traveled overland to reach Alta California epitomized the incoming strangers who preferred conquest to assimilation. These newcomers set themselves in conflict with the region's Spanish-speaking inhabitants. After the American take-over of 1846 and statehood in 1850, English-speaking pioneers built the town of Santa Cruz on the west bank of the San Lorenzo River, quickly assuming authority and dominance.

### 2.3.3 Ranchos

References to Soquel (Shoquel) are rare in Villa Branciforte documents. One early mention was made in 1803, when Branciforte Villa resident Marcelino Bravo (Brovo), forty-nine, petitioned the government in Mexico City for permission to graze cattle at Corralitos. He died in 1806, however, before a decision was reached. Santa Cruz Mission padres wrote at the time of his death that Bravo was settled at “el rio de Bravo o Shoquel.”

Capitola is partially within the margins of two Mexican ranchos, the Rancho Arroyo del Rodeo and Rancho Soquel.

**Rancho Rodeo** was a land grant edging Monterey Bay from Rodeo Creek to Soquel Creek. Using modern boundaries, the area takes in the City of Capitola on the west side of Soquel Creek, including Forty-first Avenue. In 1834 Francisco de Sales Rodriguez received title to this 1,473-acre rancho, which included a natural amphitheater used for semi-annual rodeos. In 1847 title to Rancho Rodeo was transferred to Soquel pioneers John Hames and John Daubenbiss. Both men constructed homes and helped found the town of Soquel, establishing industries along Soquel Creek.

**Rancho Soquel** encompassed 1,668 acres, bounded on the west by the Rancho Rodeo, on the east by the Rancho Aptos, on the north by public lands and the Soquel Augmentation grant, and to the south by Monterey Bay. The rancho lands included today's town of Soquel east of Soquel Creek, a major portion of the City of Capitola, parts of Cabrillo College, Monterey Bay Heights, and New Brighton Beach State Park.

The Rancho Soquel was granted to Martina Castro, a granddaughter of Joaquin Isidro (Ysidro) Castro, who had marched with the Anza party from Sonora, Mexico, to Alta California, in 1776. Martina, born at Branciforte in 1807, married Corporal Simon Cota in 1824. He died six years later, and Martina married Irish sailor Michael Lodge in 1831. A whaler, Lodge had jumped ship at Monterey in the mid-1820s.

Martina and Michael Lodge petitioned for title to the rancho—a strip one-and-a-half miles wide and two miles long—along the coast. Citizens granted rancho lands were



required within a period of time to occupy the property and build a house. Each rancho was to have a *hacienda* with a main rancho residence, surrounded by laborer housing, corrals, a gristmill, a tannery, and cultivated fields. Governor Figueroa awarded the rancho to the Lodges in November 1833. They selected a home site near the middle of the grant, beside a ravine with freshwater springs. The land along the shore, where their hides were shipped to market, was known as La Playa de Soquel (Soquel Beach, today's Capitola).

A decade later, in 1843, the couple wanted to enlarge the grant and requested an extension to a place called Palo de Yesca (Tinder Tree). An option of up to 32,702 additional acres was granted as the **Soquel Augmentation Rancho**. Much of the territory was forested with redwoods, and Lodge soon recognized the existing potential. He contracted with Hames and Daubenbiss to build a sawmill near the present town of Soquel.

### 2.3.4 American Settlement

California life shifted abruptly in 1848. The gold discovery at Sutter's Mill lured thousands of prospectors and other immigrants. Joining the miners, Michael Lodge abandoned a potato crop and moved his family to Mokelumne Hill in Calaveras County. Tragically, a typhoid outbreak took the lives of their three youngest children. Martina returned home safely, but Michael never came back and was presumed dead.

With the coming of California statehood and the formation of Santa Cruz County in the spring of 1850, more American settlers came to the Soquel valley. They sought to buy or otherwise acquire Mexican land grants and to establish industrial enterprises. Within a year, Martina's English-speaking sons-in-law closed ranks and forced her to partition the Rancho Soquel and the Soquel Augmentation. On August 28, 1850, Martina signed a document that divided the land grants between herself and eight surviving children.



The adobe home of Martina Castro and Michael Lodge was sold to Augustus Noble in 1856 and became a part of the Noble family farm on Hill Street. This photograph was taken in 1903. (Capitola Museum)

Required to comply with new regulations in an unfamiliar language, the Castro and Rodriguez families, along with the other Californio rancho grantees, went before the U.S. Land Commission, attempting to prove title to their ranchos. Both of Martina's grants were confirmed early.

In 1855 Martina's third husband, Louis Depeaux, coerced her into selling the adobe house to two Catholic priests. Within a year, the home site was sold again to Soquel pioneer farmer Augustus Noble. Forty years later, M. Elizabeth Peck, Martina's granddaughter, went to court, hoping to prove that Martina was demented and confused when asked to put her mark on the deed of her last parcel. Victory for Peck would have meant the deeds of Frederick Hihn and other pioneers who obtained Martina's lands were invalid. The court petition, however, was denied.

**Examples of Property Types:** *Properties associated with the context of Prehistory and the Colonial Period (1769-1850) include:*

**Averon house, 919 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 54) and the Averon carriage house, 911 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 53):** Although these structures were built after the Colonial Period, they are linked to Soquel Rancho grantee Martina Castro. In the last years of her life, Castro was cared for by her daughter, Maria Guadalupe Averon, and lived in a cottage nearby. Castro died in the Averon house in December 1890 (see property types under Section 3.2).

No other properties remain in Capitola directly associated with Native American, European, or Hispanic settlements in this time period. However, archaeological sites within the boundaries of Capitola yield important information. Indian burials, cooking debris, chert flakes and midden, and shell-processing sites, along with other prehistoric resources, have been found at various locations within Capitola, suggesting an extensive and long-term occupancy. Exact location of sites is protected information. Today, Capitola has to consider ways other than the preservation of historical properties to achieve an understanding of the Uypi and neighboring cultures. Site markers, interpretive panels, classroom instruction, and museum exhibits help to tell the story of indigenous people and early settlers.

### **3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (1833-1970)**

Soquel was a township by 1852 and was the third largest settlement in the county by 1860. The creek was essential to the life of the town. It provided waterpower for manufacturing and for mills upstream. The mouth of the creek, a flat known as Soquel Landing, became an important shipping point. As the first-growth redwoods were harvested, the lands of the Soquel valley were planted in crops. The Soquel community grew accustomed to thinking of the beach as its own territory. The transition of Capitola to a resort with a singular identity and appearance was a gradual development from a camp of hastily built, rough-hewn boards to a fashionable "watering place."

### **3.1 Industry (1850-1970)**

When Camp Capitola opened for its first official season in 1874, up to five hundred vacationers were already spending from four to thirty days every summer at the beach, yet it was considered a fleeting enterprise. Off-season, the campground shrank out of sight in a landscape patterned with farms and industries along the banks of Soquel Creek. For several years, such enterprises as a beet sugar mill, sawmills, flourmill, paper mill, woolen mill, and shoe factory dominated the land up the creek and channeled goods toward the coast for shipment.

Although Hihn, the leading industrialist of Santa Cruz County, developed Capitola, the only business he wanted close to the resort after 1882 was tourism. Industrial interests were discouraged from competition with recreational activity. Very few manufacturing or cottage industries survived for long near the beach. From 1900 through the 1950s, only one industry, the Campo Porcelain factory, was known to operate in the flats. The building, located near Stockton and Capitola Avenue, was demolished in the early 1960s.

#### **3.1.1 Shipping (1850-1970)**

Hihn acquired the beach and “Soquel Warehouse Lot,” a part of the Rancho Rodeo, in 1857, and engaged Sedgwick Lynch to build a 450-foot wharf. It was soon connected via Wharf Road to the new route to San Jose known as the Soquel Turnpike (Soquel-San Jose Road). Often damaged by storms, the wharf has been repaired and rebuilt many times. It was lengthened to twelve hundred feet in 1863 for larger ships and steamers but lost five hundred feet to a high tide two years later.

By 1868 Pacific Coast Steamship Company freighters docking at Soquel Landing were transporting massive quantities of lumber, leather, produce, and manufactured goods. A planing mill operated in Soquel, and at least five sawmills were running in the nearby timber region.

Capitola’s wharf was stacked with shipments of flour and thousands of feet of lumber and redwood products—fence posts, shakes, shingles, split pickets, telegraph poles, and wharf piles. The local specialty was paper. The coastal freighter *Gypsy* brought bales of scraps to Capitola for the Soquel Paper Mill, and new paper rolls would be loaded up in return.

After the Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad was completed in 1876, however, shipments by sea diminished and the wharf began to deteriorate. In 1902 Hihn ordered “danger” and “keep out” notices posted at both ends of the wharf and insisted users be asked to sign a liability waiver. The wharf had suffered storm damage and was in need of substantial repair. Hihn estimated it was then only six hundred to eight hundred feet long, with steamers docking only once a week.

The primary ambition of F. A. Hihn in the late 1860s and early 1870s was the construction of a railroad through Santa Cruz County. By 1876 a rail line subsidized by the county crossed, wherever possible, through Hihn properties. It followed the coastline from Santa Cruz to link with the Southern Pacific Railroad at Pajaro, south of Watsonville. Once Capitola was connected to both the SP line and, via Santa Cruz, the South Pacific Coast Railroad over the Summit to Los Gatos, the village's future as a vacation retreat and as a vital shipping point was secure. In 1881 the Santa Cruz-Watsonville line was acquired and broad gauged by Southern Pacific.

**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of shipping include the wharf, depot, and trestle.*

*See also 3.4 Transportation, Examples of Property Types.*

**Wharf, 1400 Wharf Road (Survey, 75):** The pier has been at the same location on the west side of Soquel Creek since 1858. The current wharf, repaired last in 2002, is used for boat rentals, bait shop and store, restaurant, and tourist attraction.

**Railroad Depot, 250 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 24):** The Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad ensured Capitola's expansion. Three depots have existed: the first was built in 1876, when the railroad started; the last and only remaining one was built in 1903 at 250 Monterey Avenue.

**Union Pacific Railroad Trestle (Survey, 64):** Finished in 1874, the trestle was under construction at the same time Capitola was founded. Although replaced by a new bridge in 1886 and repaired many times since, it continues to carry freight daily.



Imported goods were taken from freighters and hauled by cart along tracks leading to the warehouses. (1890 photograph, Ida Reanier Collection, Capitola Museum)

### 3.1.2 Fishing (ca. 1874-1920)

Captain John P. Davenport, a mariner from Rhode Island who migrated to California in 1849, is thought to be the initiator of on-shore whaling operations along Monterey Bay. He originally began in Monterey and then shifted his rendering pots to the beach at Soquel Landing in 1865. Two years later, he moved to El Jarro Point and became the founder of Davenport's Landing.

Chinese fishermen were also in the vicinity, residing at a camp east of Capitola village. Seine, gill nets, and trawl lines were used to catch a variety of fish that was shipped to market by train once the rail line was completed in 1876. Census figures for 1880 show a population at China Beach of twenty-nine men between the ages of sixteen and forty-three years old. The Chinese stayed along the shore at China Beach (New Brighton) for at least fifteen years and shipped thousands of pounds of fresh fish from the railroad stations at Capitola and Aptos.

Cottages leased by Italian fishing families appeared at the base of the Capitola pier in the 1880s. A majority came originally from Riva Trigoso, a remote community on the Ligurian Coast. In 1890 Domenico Canepa and his wife, Nicoletta, were among the first to settle at Capitola. The Italian colony worked a fleet of twenty to twenty-five boats, sending their daily catches to local markets or by train to San Francisco. The settlement lasted until the wharf was severely damaged by a storm and high tide in 1913. Most of the fishing families began moving closer to the new municipal wharf in Santa Cruz. Of



Photograph of the Italian fishing village and Camp Fairview, ca. 1890. (*Capitola Museum*)

those remaining at Capitola, a number moved to the Fairview tract at the top of the bluff or to homes along Capitola Avenue.

Captain George Mitchell ran the fishing excursion boats at Capitola from 1895 until his retirement in 1945. Like many early concessionaires who leased from the Hihn Company, Mitchell's winter home was in San Jose. He worked in partnership with his father, Joseph, who retired to a home in the center of Capitola Village. The Mitchells had a fleet of skiffs for rent and launches, the *Capitola* and the *Betsy*, for fishing and pleasure cruises. During the Hihn era, George Mitchell moved to Capitola, acquired ownership of the excursion fishing business on the wharf, and served as wharfinger.

An 1889 article in the *Santa Cruz Daily Surf* described the Capitola marine environment: "One feature of the bay at Capitola is a great field of kelp a little way from shore. On the edge of this, as well as in the open spaces found in it, is a famous fishing ground. Occasionally a sea lion shows his round glossy head above the water at the margin of the kelp. Schools of whales are often seen further out, 'breaching' into the air, making the spray fly in their unwieldy gambols. Immense schools of sardines not unfrequently moor into the bay, and over them will be countless thousands of sea birds attacking the little fish from above, while barracoutas [barracudas], bonitas, skip-jacks and other large fish chase them from below. Then a school of porpoises catch the big fish, and the fishermen capture the porpoises, and so the game goes on."

**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of fishing include, the wharf, a fish market, and residential homes of the fishing community.*

**Wharf: See 3.4 Transportation, Examples of Property Types.**

**Luigi Canepa market and residence, 102 Stockton Avenue:** Canepa built his two-story, vernacular residence and fish market at the corner of Stockton Avenue and the Esplanade in the early 1920s, about the time the fishing village near the wharf was demolished and the Venetian Court units were under construction. The Canepa family lived upstairs in the building and helped save it from a disastrous fire in 1933. The blaze destroyed the remainder of the block between Stockton and San Jose Avenues. Later, the Canepas purchased several parcels and built homes in the Fairview Tract.

**Frank and Josephine Bregante home, 4910 Capitola Road (Survey, 81):** The Bregantes owned the California Fish Market and Grocery on Capitola Avenue in the 1930s and 1940s. The family was among the fishing community residents who lived in the Camp Fairview subdivision.

**Vincent Canepa home, 529 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 52):** Canepa migrated to California in 1896, and his daughter, Edith Canepa Castagnola, was born in the house, a vernacular, two-story board-and-batten built in the mid-1870s. Historians believe the home may have originally been associated with the California Beet Sugar Mill located nearby.

**George Mitchell home, 221 San Jose Avenue (Survey, 19):** Mitchell inherited his parents' vernacular, two-story house in 1929 and lived there until his death in 1955. His workshop, added in later years, stands behind the home. At the time of his retirement at the age of seventy-five, Mitchell was a legend among generations of Capitola vacationers. Paul Johnston, one of the boys Mitchell had hired in the early 1900s to chalk, sand, and paint the launches, remembered that "it was nothing to catch a 30-40 pound salmon, sea bass, tuna or yellow tail. One day on the bay with six men fishing we came in with 120 salmon on board. The boat was only six inches above the water line."



Homes of the Italian fishing community were clustered at the base of the wharf from the 1870s until they were demolished in 1920. (*Capitola Museum*)



Luigi Canepa's Capitola Fish Market was the only building on the block between Stockton and San Jose Avenues to survive a disastrous fire in 1933. (*Capitola Museum*)

### 3.2 Agriculture (ca. 1833-1970)

Most of the countryside around the mouth of Soquel Creek was devoted in the early American period to farming and related industry. Coastal terraces were vacant of trees and needed no clearing for crops. In the 1850s the alluvial flat was planted in potatoes, a successful crop spurred by demands from the mining camps. The earliest building in Capitola village was an 1851 potato warehouse. When the bottom fell out of the market after about three years, Soquel Landing was heaped with surplus potatoes.

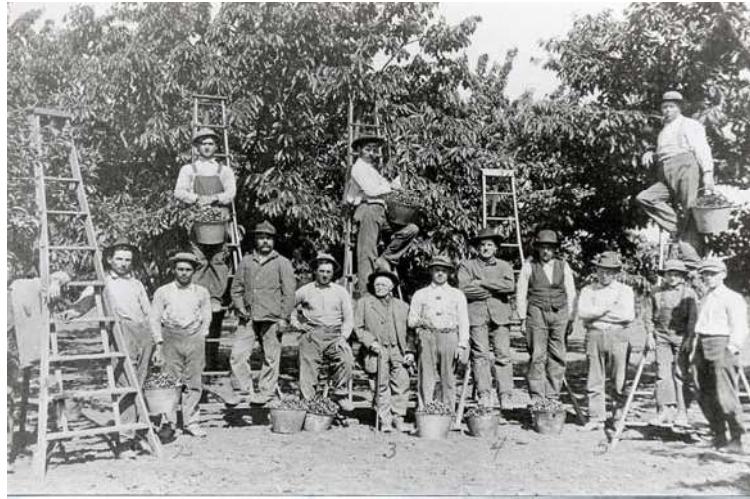
In the 1850s and 1860s, farmers experimented with a string of crops, including wheat, barley, and flax. A description printed in the fall of 1869 noted that along Soquel Creek there were “a number of splendid farms, where fine crops of grain, hay, corn, etc., are raised, while the rich bottom land, on the right hand side along the banks of the creek, fairly bristle with tall spires of standing corn.”

Beginning in 1858, Augustus Noble sold parcels for small farms in the area and was the principal developer of “Noble Hill.” In 1889 he subdivided lots for the Rosedale subdivision, named for the owner’s skill with roses and flowers.

The tract extended from Soquel Drive south along Noble Gulch to Hihn property near Capitola depot, in the vicinity of Bay and Monterey Avenues. One vacation homeowner at the end of the tract, near Cherry Avenue, Luke G. Sresovich, was a wholesale fruit merchant in San Francisco. In 1890 he combined business with pleasure by purchasing Rosedale’s entire cherry crop and shipping it to market by train. The cherry orchards of Rosedale may have, in fact, been the inspiration for the name of Cherry Avenue.

Members of the Olley Nutter family were prominent apple ranchers and cherry orchardists near Rosedale. They co-owned the Nutter and Russell Apple Dryer and Vinegar Works, a large local employer for many years. The plant was located at Hill Street and Capitola Avenue, which was unpaved and called the “Drier Road” in that location. The drier burned in November 1930.

Olley Nutter developed the “Nutter’s Crackless Bing” cherry and was aided in its propagation by protégés of botanist Luther Burbank. His son, Burton, grew and



Augustus Noble, standing center, posed with his cherry picking crew in 1913. Thirteen tons of cherries were picked in a single afternoon. (Paul Johnston Collection. Courtesy of the Museum of Art and History.)



marketed Satsuma and Elephant Heart plums in the family orchards and raised Hereford cattle.

The Beccaria, Rebuffo, and Braida family orchards existed for many years along Bay Avenue between Highway 1 and Capitola Avenue. Some of the old fruit trees still remain. Braida relatives also established the existing fruit stand at 700 Bay Avenue.

Eggs and poultry ranching became a prospering industry in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in Live Oak, Soquel, and the agricultural neighborhoods surrounding Capitola village. Chicken coops may still be found in backyards in such neighborhoods as Capitola Heights and Rosedale. In the late 1950s, Carl Neilson raised white turkeys kept in pens along Rosedale Avenue near its intersection with Bay Avenue. In the 1930s, the poultry industry at Capitola was large enough to become distressed by the noise of artillery gunfire at Camp McQuaide, the summer encampment of the 250<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery along Park Avenue. Complaints of poultry ranchers were one of the reasons the camp chose to relocate after 1936.



*Brown Bulb Ranch and Dairy along Forty-first Avenue, ca. 1934 (Courtesy of the Brown family)*

As the resort began to evolve in half circles away from the shoreline, Capitola was fortunate to have complementary land uses around it. Most compatible for Capitola were the flower and bulb industries that appeared about 1920 and eventually dominated the landscape to the west of the village. By the 1950s, Capitola was the “Begonia Capital of the World.” Begonias, calla lilies, freesias, gladiolas, and other floral varieties were tourist attractions along Forty-first

Avenue and on Capitola Road. Among the prominent Capitola growers were Brown’s Bulb Ranch and Dairy, Shaffer’s Tropical Gardens, and the Reinelt and Vetterle Hybridizing Gardens. Pawla’s Violet Farm, operated by Edith and Emily Pawla, was set along Wharf Road near Highway 1 and was a renowned producer of violet seed.

Capitola has only a handful of streets—Bulb and Orchid Avenues, Calla Lane, and Floral Drive—to suggest a past bordered with lath houses and green houses. Today, the Capitola Mall, Brown Ranch Marketplace, commercial office complexes, and residential housing units have replaced nearly all structures associated with bulbs and flowers.

### **Examples of Property Types:**

*Property types associated with the context of agriculture include single-family homes, tank houses, barns, sheds, and carriage houses.*

**Averon house, 919 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 54) and its carriage house, the Capitola Country Court Tea Room, 911 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 53):** A Second Empire style, mansard-roofed home, the Averon house was built in 1877 near the present Bay/Porter off-ramp on Highway 1. Now the oldest structure and residence in Capitola, the “mansion” was moved to

its current site at the top of the bluff in 1884. Today, the Averon home is surrounded by the Capitola Mansion Apartments and is only partially visible from the street. It was rescued from demolition in the mid-1970s through the efforts of local historical societies in Soquel, Capitola, and Santa Cruz. In 1993 the Museum of Art and History (MAH) presented owners with a plaque recognizing the structure’s historic significance. The neighboring carriage house is a vernacular building constructed ca.1890, now used for commercial business.



Today the Averon home is surrounded by the Capitola Mansion Apartments. The Victorian addition was demolished in 1948. (Capitola Museum)

Original owners of both structures were Josef Averon and his wife, Maria Guadalupe Castro, daughter of Martina Castro. Averon was a viticulturalist and native of France, who grew a vineyard and built a winery on the slopes below his Capitola Avenue home. He also planted orchards, had a fruit drier, and grew hops, which he later replaced with sugar beets processed at the California Beet Sugar Company mill at Capitola.

**Nutter residence, 307 Hill Street (Survey, 56):** This Craftsman Bungalow was built ca. 1915 by Charles Noble, a descendant of Augustus Noble, the purchaser of the adobe home of Martina Castro Lodge. It later became the home of orchardist Burton Nutter and his family.

**Braida house, 800 Bay Avenue (Survey, 55):** This vernacular home was built for the Pietro (Peter) Braida family in the 1920s.

**Rosedale subdivision, 405 and 407 Pine Street (Survey, 56):** Two similar, vernacular cottages are representative of homes in the tract known as “Rosedale” or “Rosedale Springs.”

**Farmhouse, 1810 Wharf Road (Survey, 76):** A spacious vernacular house with a cross gable roof was built on the west bluff overlooking Soquel Creek. The structure is characteristic of one- and two-story farmhouses built between 1900 and 1930 outside resort boundaries.

### 3.3 Land Development, Business, and Tourism

Vacationers seeking to spend time near the ocean encouraged the founding of Capitola. Once it existed along the shore, a series of investors and guardians stepped in to strengthen the resort against economic hardship and natural disaster. In the 1970s Capitola began a slow shifting away from a total dependence on tourism, as alternative economic resources developed.

#### 3.3.1 Resort Founding (1874-1879)

Samuel Alonzo Hall established Capitola in 1874 on the beachfront leased from Frederick Hihn. Hall had a ten-year lease from 1869 to 1879 and permitted camping at the beach in the summertime from the beginning of his occupancy. For this reason, the year 1869 is sometimes listed as the starting date for Capitola. Its actual founding, however, was June 18, 1874, with a grand opening on July 4. Although no buildings from this period are known to have survived, some “Camp Capitola” cabins were moved onto vacant lots or in backyards and may remain.

Capitola was described in 1877 in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* as “a popular resort, especially for those who prefer ‘roughing it’ in a tent or rude board shanty.”

Most of the visitors pitched their tents and camped without charge or paid \$1.50 for a cabin. Hall planned to make a profit by boarding horses at his livery stable near the trestle. The enterprise suffered, though, after a drought raised the price of hay in 1877. When Hihn increased the rent at the end of the lease in 1879, Hall was unable to meet the asking price and moved on.

Although Hall is credited as Capitola’s founder, it was his daughter Lulu who suggested the beach be opened to campers. She convinced her father to make the investment. As a



Lulu Hall Green Wolbach  
(Capitola Museum)

former Soquel School teacher, Lulu would have been acquainted with “Capitola,” the fabled heroine in the series of sentimental novels by E.D.E.N. Southworth, and most likely suggested the name for Hall’s camp. A writer years later for the *Santa Cruz Surf* remembered the connection, noting in May 1889 that, “ ‘Capitola,’ like the little heroine for whom it was named, has long made for itself a place in the hearts of many admirers.”

For the 1879 summer season, Hihn leased Capitola to two Santa Clara hotelkeepers. Hihn Company records describe the camp as bounded on the south by the Bay of Monterey; on the east by the brow of the tableland above the beach flat where the cabins were located; on the west by Santa Cruz Railroad and Soquel Creek; and to the north by the California Beet Sugar Company (Riverview Terrace). Structures then consisted of six cottages on the eastern terrace (El Camino Medio), four cottages fronting the bay, a saloon, two large stables, and various

other sheds. In the contract, Hihn agreed to purchase and leave on the premises a hotel building and the residence S. A. Hall had built behind it. Location of this early hotel was near the base of the eastern bluff. The new tenants were given lumber to build a bathhouse, fifty additional “camping booths,” water closets, horse sheds, and walkways “in conformity to the avenues and passages as laid off on the ground.”

Although Hihn had not yet taken direct oversight of the camp, he gave explicit direction to lessees about the size and shape of its buildings. The tenants were further required to “properly care for the shade and fruit trees growing on said premises.”

In 1879 visitors crossed Soquel Creek and entered Capitola on the east side of the village.  
(W.W. Elliott, *Santa Cruz County Illustrations*, 1879, f34)



### **Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of resort founding include the wharf and railroad trestle. See Shipping, 3.1.1 and Transportation, 3.4.*

### **3.3.2 Frederick A. Hihn: Camp Capitola Developed as Vacation Resort**

A native of Holzminden, duchy of Brunswick, Germany, Frederick Hihn, age twenty-one, arrived in California in 1849 and, like so many thousands of others, tried his luck first at the mines. After many adventures and misfortunes that included fires, flood, and theft, he arrived in Santa Cruz. Soon he was the most influential businessman in the county and would become its first millionaire.

Educated in science, engineering, and business, with apprenticeship as a merchant, Hihn approached nearly all interactions from a business stance. He started a Santa Cruz grocery store in 1853 and used his profits to acquire land. During his first decade in Santa Cruz County, he was listed in county record books as the grantee in about thirty-three deed transactions. Hihn’s third was in 1856, when he bought at a sheriff’s sale the property of Pruett (Prewitt) Sinclair, who held a portion of the Castro land grants. From

Sinclair, Hihn obtained a two-mile stretch between Borregas Gulch and Soquel Creek. In the next four years, he acquired title to the Soquel Rancho and Soquel Augmentation partitions of at least three other Castro and Lodge descendants.



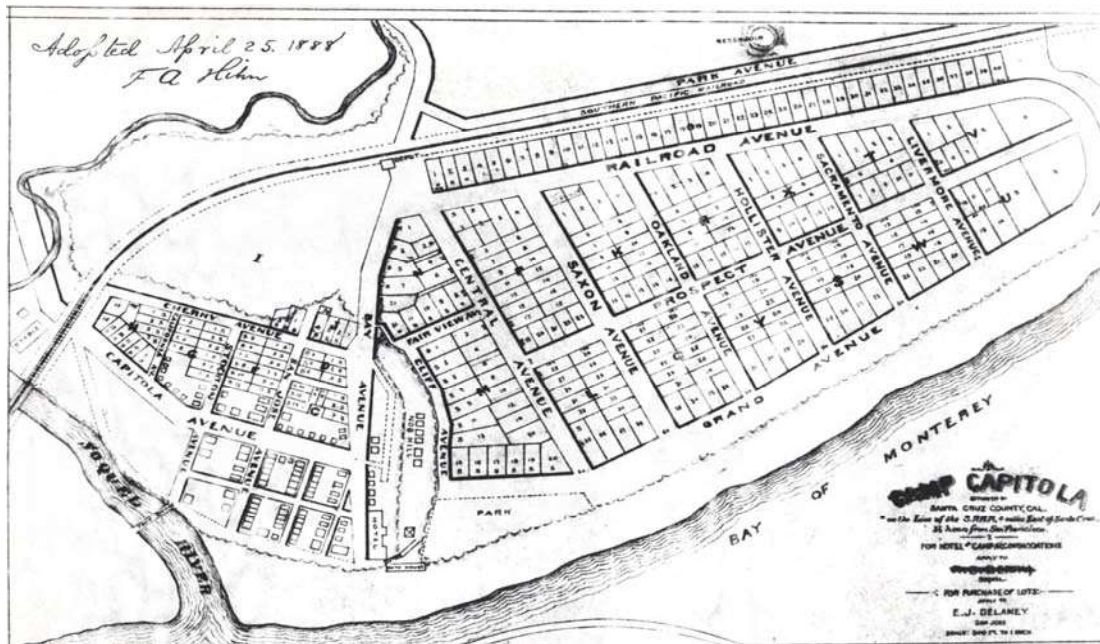
Frederick Augustus Hihn  
(Capitola Museum)

Throughout the county, Hihn was the major developer of water works, turnpikes, land subdivisions, railroads, and banks. He had sawmills at Aptos, Valencia, Glenwood, Gold Gulch, Laurel, Boulder Creek, and Kings Creek. He served as Santa Cruz County Supervisor and as State Assemblyman from Santa Cruz from 1870 to 1872. Hihn was an organizer of the California Pioneers of Santa Cruz County, president of the Santa Cruz Fair Building Association, and a Santa Cruz school trustee.

Hihn was not the founder of Camp Capitola, but, from its beginning, he observed the resort carefully, shrewd enough to realize that, with a refreshing climate and a beach safe enough for surf bathing, it would evolve into a profit-making enterprise.

### 3.3.2.1 Phase I: Residential (1882-1895)

Once the Southern Pacific Railroad had purchased the narrow-gauge line and had it broad gauged in 1881, the Capitola resort was recognized by Hihn as a viable investment. He leased the campground to several tenants who guided the camp through its first renovation in 1883. Southern Pacific moved the depot from the west to the east end of the trestle and a new road was graded down to the village.



Subdivision  
Map of 1888  
(Capitola  
Museum)

As Capitola expanded between 1884 and 1895, Hihn’s agents repositioned the buildings as needed. The “free tent campground” was shifted upstream along Soquel Creek, and the company cabins were also likely moved. Some of the smaller beach cottages along

Riverview Avenue, therefore, could potentially be older than the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps indicate.

F. A. Hihn Company initially offered lots in the flat for an average of \$100 and would build three- or four-room cottages if desired. The Hihn Company slogan of “Homes for a Thousand Families” appealed to women buyers. Deed agreements stipulated that if a lot were purchased and a home built with a payment schedule and the man of the family died, the widow would receive the deed free and clear.

### **Earliest Resort Subdivision (1882)**

The first permanent population of Capitola was made up of fishing families and workers for the Hihn Company, retired residents, and inhabitants who wanted to “improve their health.” They were drawn to the seashore, gardens, and park amenities. The pocket-sized community of the fall and winter months swelled to an average of three thousand visitors after the season began in May. In 1884 the camp opened to a crowd of thirteen hundred excursionists from San Jose, who arrived on three trains with a total of twenty-two passenger cars.

Residential parcels between Capitola and Cherry Avenues were sold first. Since most purchasers were Santa Clara Valley residents, the lots on San Jose Avenue were preferred. Buyers were granted an easement through Bay (Monterey) Avenue, San Jose Avenue, and Park Place to the beach, and they were allowed use of the “waters of Monterey Bay.” However, to build anything on the beach was forbidden, and Hihn had good reason. At least once, on a weekend in 1889, an interloper tried to pitch a tent on the beach



**Home of Henry Van Syckle, ca. 1890 (*Capitola Museum*)**

and claim title on the grounds that it was below the high-water mark. Resort workers promptly tore it down. Commercial trade or business other than that of the F. A. Hihn Company was also prohibited. No barns were allowed in the village flat.

Although lots were sold at each end of Cherry Avenue in the 1880s, Hihn reserved the middle of the block. It was rumored that he planned to situate a large hotel at that location, near the depot. He opted instead for a site closer to the beach. Hihn’s private tract above Cherry Avenue remained vacant until it was subdivided in the mid-1920s.

**Examples of Property Types:**

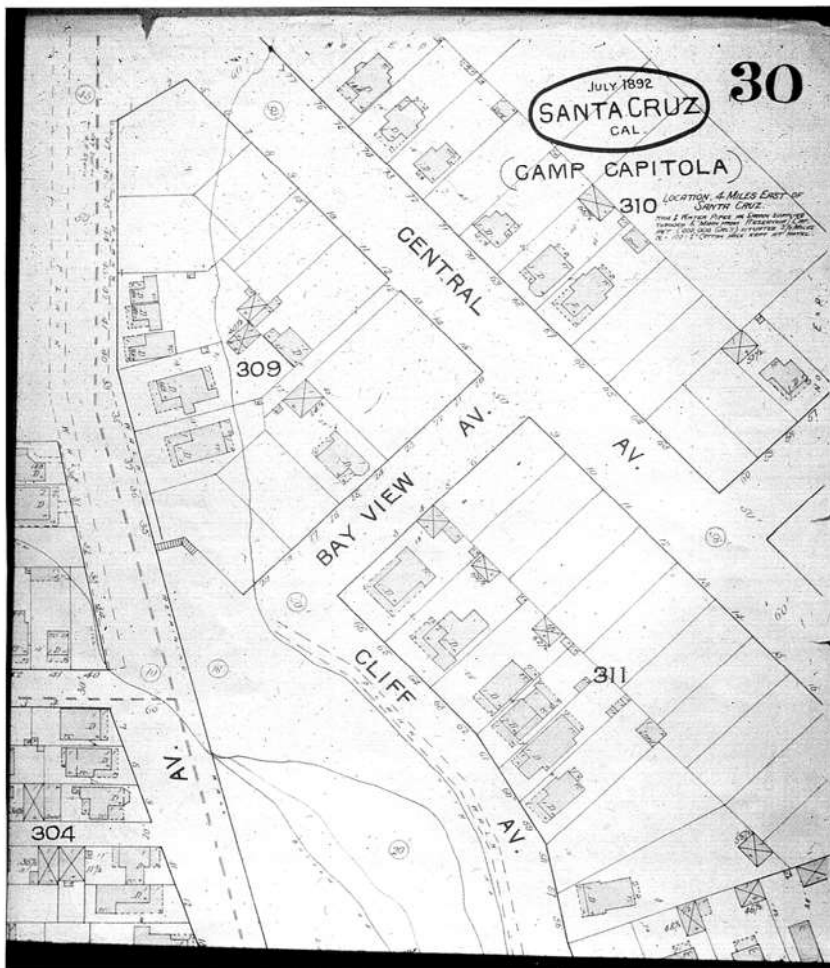
*Properties associated with the context of Phase I, Residential structures include beach cottages, vacation homes, and single-family houses.*

**202 Cherry Avenue (Survey, 8):** The oldest year-round residence in the village is the 1887 Eastlake Stick home built for \$4,000 by German immigrant Henry Van Syckle of San Jose. He was a prominent San Jose entrepreneur and German immigrant who retired to Capitola. The home initially had seventeen rooms and a tower, which has since been removed.

**317 and 325 Cherry Avenue (Survey, 10):** In photographs dated ca. 1890, the two-story vernacular homes are similar to their present appearance. The exterior staircases have apparently been removed. The cottages are characteristic of those constructed in the 1880s and 1890s by the F. A. Hihn Company for subdivision buyers.

**104 and 106 Cherry Avenue (Survey, 7):** These vacation bungalows with craftsman style features were constructed ca. 1892.

**Depot Hill Subdivision (1884-1913)**



1892  
Sanborn Fire Insurance  
Company map  
illustrating Capitola  
Park, now known as  
Depot Hill. Bayview  
Avenue is now Fairview  
Avenue.  
(Capitola Museum)

Depot Hill was sometimes called “Nob Hill” in the early years, although this name actually applied to El Camino Medio, where six cottages had been built in the 1870s.

When the 1884 hotel was constructed at the base of the cliff, Hihn had a staircase and “observatory” viewing tower built next to a park along the bluff, where vacationers could walk along Grand Avenue and “Lover’s Lane.” Another path went up the hill behind the hotel, and trees lined the ridge. By 1889 the F. A. Hihn Company was marketing the tract as “Capitola Park.”

Depot Hill became the popular name when Hihn and Southern Pacific collaborated on an enlarged depot and adjacent tree-lined park at the head of Railroad Avenue.

**Germania Verein:** Santa Clara Valley civic and business leaders purchased the choicest lots in the flats and on the bluff, once the circular subdivision was laid out on Depot Hill in 1884. Among the initial buyers were German immigrants, including Adolph Pfister, Andrew Steiger, John Pieper, Jacob Lenzen, Charles and A.T. Hermann, Herman Hannemann, and Wilhelm Steinbuhler, all successful businessmen from the Santa Clara Valley or San Francisco Bay Area and members of a German American club known as the Turn Verein, a social and athletic organization that helped maintain the old ways of life and provided opportunities for exercise. Pfister was among the founders of the San Jose chapter in 1856. It is likely these German American members were acquaintances or business associates of Hihn. The attachment of the German settlement to Capitola continued over time, with some cottages remaining under the ownership of the original families.



Cliff Avenue, Depot Hill ca.1925 (Courtesy of Lynn and French families)

**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of Phase I, Residential, Depot Hill Subdivision include beach cottages, vacation homes, single-family houses, and private estates.*

**Pfister home, 112 Cliff Avenue (Survey, 33):** A Santa Clara hardware dealer and grain merchant, Adolph Pfister purchased his Capitola lot between 1888 and 1890. Pfister was an immigrant who came to San Jose before the Gold Rush in 1848 and served as San Jose mayor from 1870 to 1873. He is an example of the community leaders of San Jose who built cottages on Depot Hill. His house has further significance because it has undergone few changes over the years and is still owned by descendants.



**Mocker home, 212 Hollister Avenue (Survey, 40):** This is a one-and-a-half-story, Craftsman style house that faces the corner of Hollister Avenue and Escalona Drive. Maude Mocker bought the property in 1912, and the house was built sometime between 1906 and 1913. Maude and her husband, Edwin, were natives of Germany and likely a part of the ethnic German social circles of San Jose.

**Steinbuhler home, 116 Central Avenue (Survey, 26):** Captain Wilhelm F. Steinbuhler and his wife, Olivia Kesiah Gabbs Steinbuhler, spent summers at their Queen Anne style Capitola home in the late 1890s. Steinbuhler was a member of the San Francisco Germania Verein, and was a friend of other members who had built cottages on Depot Hill. The Steinbuhler house was completed in 1893.

**Private Estate: English Colony/El Salto Resort, 620 El Salto Drive (Survey, 34, 98):**

Starting with the creation of the twin summer homes of Claus Mangels and Claus Spreckels in Aptos during the 1870s and continuing through World War II, private estates and family enclaves have played a visible role along coastal properties in Santa Cruz County. In Capitola, the English Colony designed by the Robertson and Rawlins families influenced the character and development of Depot Hill.

James Shaw Robinson and James E. Rawlins and their wives, Ethel and Margaret, migrated from England to Hanford, near Fresno, in 1878. The families prospered as founding pioneers of the Central Valley community. Purchasing Capitola lots from the F. A. Hihn Company in 1895, the two couples built “the English cottages,” with four Victorian era bungalows, a barn, sheds, caretaker’s quarters, and other outbuildings. The grounds were landscaped with a traditional English garden, croquet lawn, and clay tennis court. The Robinsons—changing their name back to its original Robertson—returned with the Rawlins family to England for an extended stay about 1906. A caretaker watched over the prized gardens at Capitola.



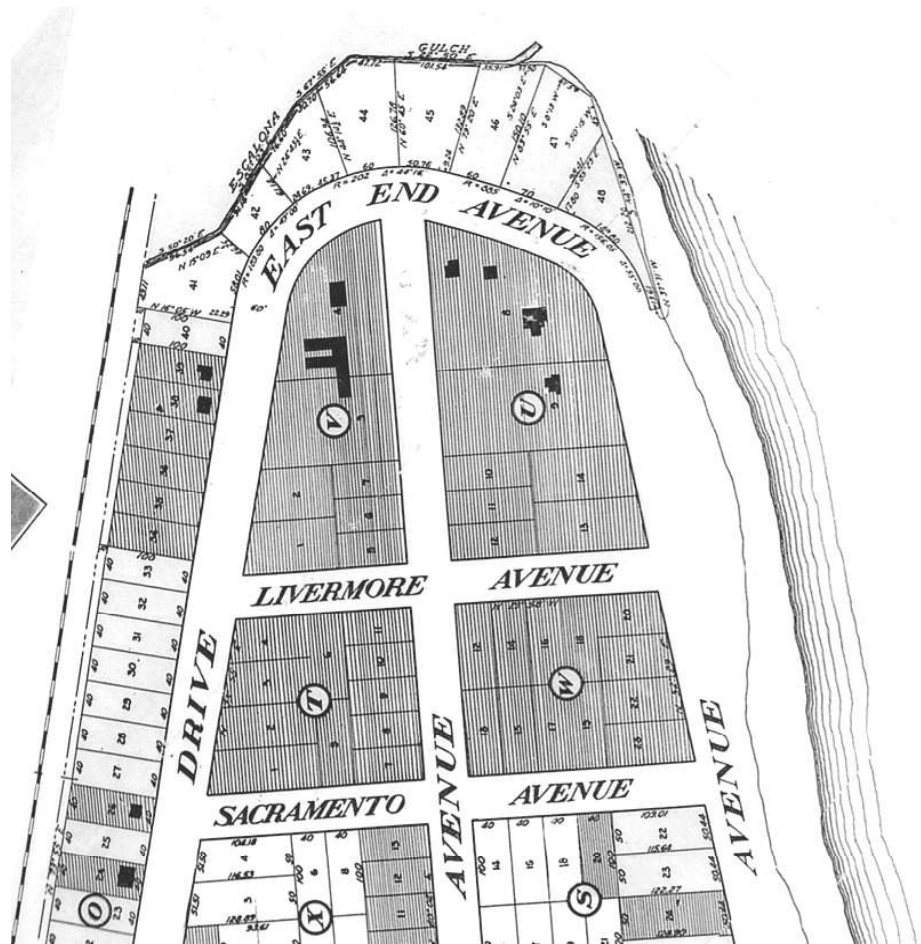
**One of the original English Cottages has been remodeled as the Monarch Cove Inn. (Courtesy of the Hanchett family)**

In 1909 San Francisco capitalist Lewis Edward Hanchett leased the cottages and, two years later, decided to buy. The wealthy new owner changed the name to El Salto and continued to develop it as a private estate. Hanchett was known as the San Jose “transit tycoon” who purchased the San Jose and Santa Clara Railroad street car system and later sold it to Southern Pacific Railroad. As a real estate developer, Hanchett built the fashionable Hanchett Park on the Alameda in San Jose.

At their Capitola retreat, the Hanchetts visited and entertained wealthy San Francisco residents who owned estates in Santa Cruz County, including C. C. Moore of Santa Cruz, the Porter and Sesnon families of Soquel, and the Van Eck, Tillman, and Mangels families, who frequented Aptos. In the 1920s, Hanchett made a number of expansions and increased his estate to eight acres, with several guest cottages, additional staff quarters, a four-car garage, and extensive gardens.

A 1926 Capitola map shows the cottages and ancillary structures of El Salto. The Lewis Hanchett property included Blocks T,U,V, and W. Prospect Avenue is known today as El Salto Drive.(Capitola Museum)

The Hanchetts sold El Salto for \$50,000 in 1946 to Joseph and Mary Tabacchini, who had previously operated an auto campground in Los Banos. They initially planned to run El Salto as an auto court but then modified the cottages as summer rental units with kitchenettes. In 1956 one of the original four English cottages was demolished to make room for construction of a four-plex.



Active in local politics, Tabacchini served on the Capitola City Council for eleven years and was mayor for six years. He was involved in civic affairs the entire time he lived in Capitola.

In 1960 the Tabacchinis sold El Salto Resort to an investment group. Two years later, Elizabeth Blodgett acquired title to the majority of the original estate, which had been divided into twenty-two rental units. In the late 1970s, she proposed a number of development projects for the site. Due to financial difficulties, however, she began selling the lots in 1982. A fire destroyed another of the cottages in the mid-1980s and

the property began to decline. In 1989 the City of Capitola condemned the cottages as unsafe, and for a time, the resort closed. When Blodgett began to dispose of additional property, her son, Robert Blodgett, acquired most of the remaining buildings. After a number of renovations were completed, the resort reopened in 1991.

Elizabeth Blodgett operated her portion of the resort until 1998, when she sold the last of her property, consisting of three lots to the west of her son's parcels. Seven of the original eleven historic structures remain. The grounds have diminished in size, and many characteristics associated with the early estate have been altered or lost due to development. It has been determined that House No. 1 may be eligible for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources and possibly the National Register of Historic Places.

The four separate parties who now own the eastern portion of the former Hanchett estate have made a number of proposals to develop the property.

### **Camp Fairview (1887-1913)**

Although it was not originally a part of the Capitola resort, Camp Fairview was configured as a subdivision that would take advantage of the recreational enterprises offered along the seashore.

Camp Fairview was west of the wharf and part of Rancho Rodeo. In 1858 sea captain John Curtis bought a tract of twenty acres at the top of the cliff. Frederick Hihn and Curtis were serving together on the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors in 1861, when Curtis suddenly resigned. He died a few weeks later.

Widow Phoebe S. Curtis married Dennis Carlton Feeley (sometimes Feely), a Santa Clara rancher, two years later. He farmed the property overlooking Capitola and kept possession after Phoebe died in 1870. After battling in court with Phoebe's children, Feeley obtained title to the ridge and had San Jose civil engineer H. A. Brainard survey and map it for the Camp Fairview subdivision, created in 1886.

By 1890 Fairview was advertised as "the most charming of Pacific Coast resorts." Feeley publicized broad streets, spacious lots, and "new plastered six-room cottages." He was unable, however, to promote or manage Camp Fairview as skillfully as Hihn had directed the progress of Capitola. The F. A. Hihn Company acquired title to the Fairview tract by 1900.

Beginning in the 1930s, the Fairview tract was referred to as Nob Hill, and sometimes "Knob Hill."



1922 map shows the boundaries of Camp Fairview. The numbered thoroughfares are now Emerald, Garnet, Jewel and Opal, streets of the Jewel Box. (Capitola Museum)

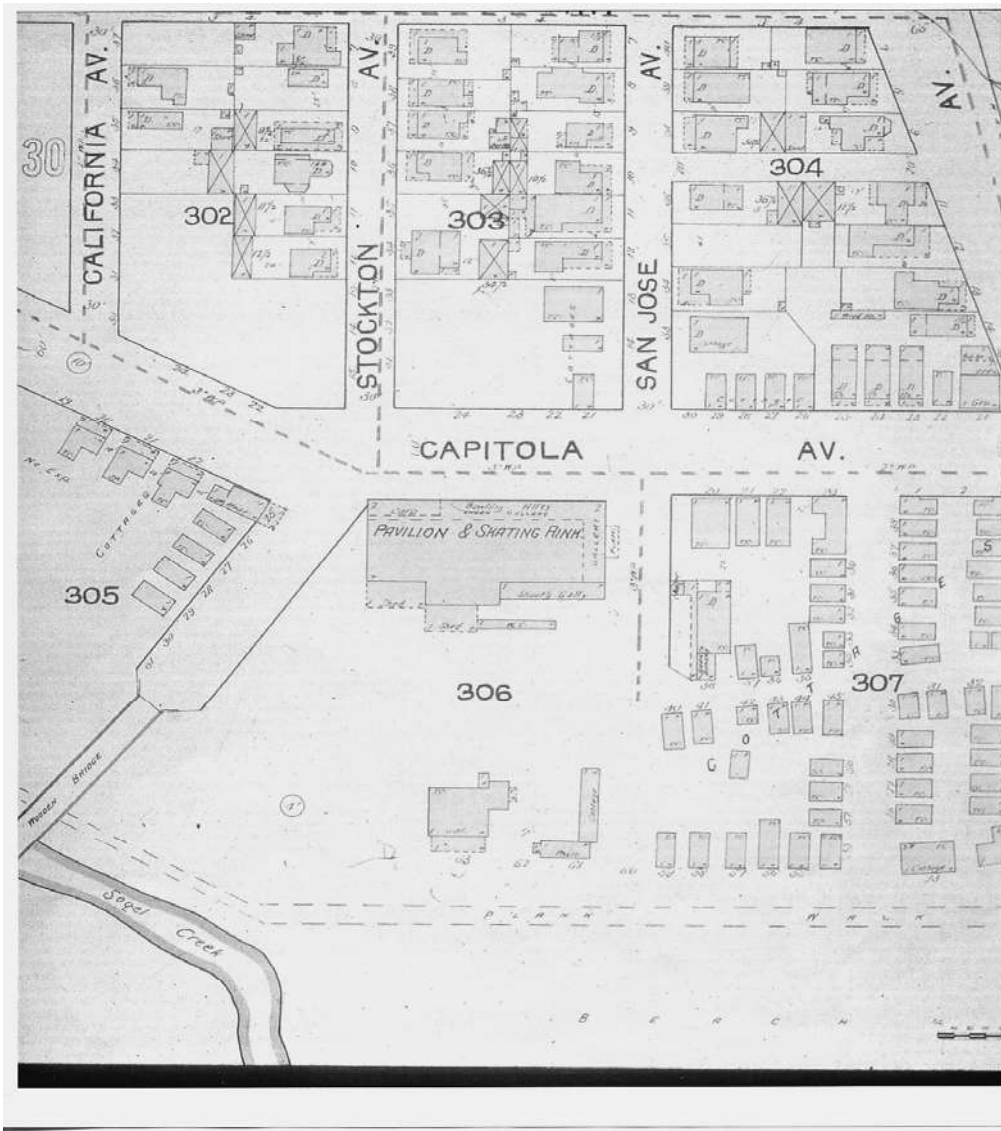
**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of Phase I, Residential, Camp Fairview include vacation cottages, farmhouses with additional structures, and single-family homes.*

**1530 Prospect Avenue (Survey, 88):** Built ca. 1895, the spacious Queen Anne has a decorative Victorian gable. Known as the Capitola Apartments in the 1930s, it is one of several larger vacation homes that were converted to apartments or served as boarding houses during the Depression.

**4555 Emerald Street (Survey, 83):** This summer cottage was built with Italianate influences, ca. 1900. It is “L” shaped with pairs of long windows facing the street.

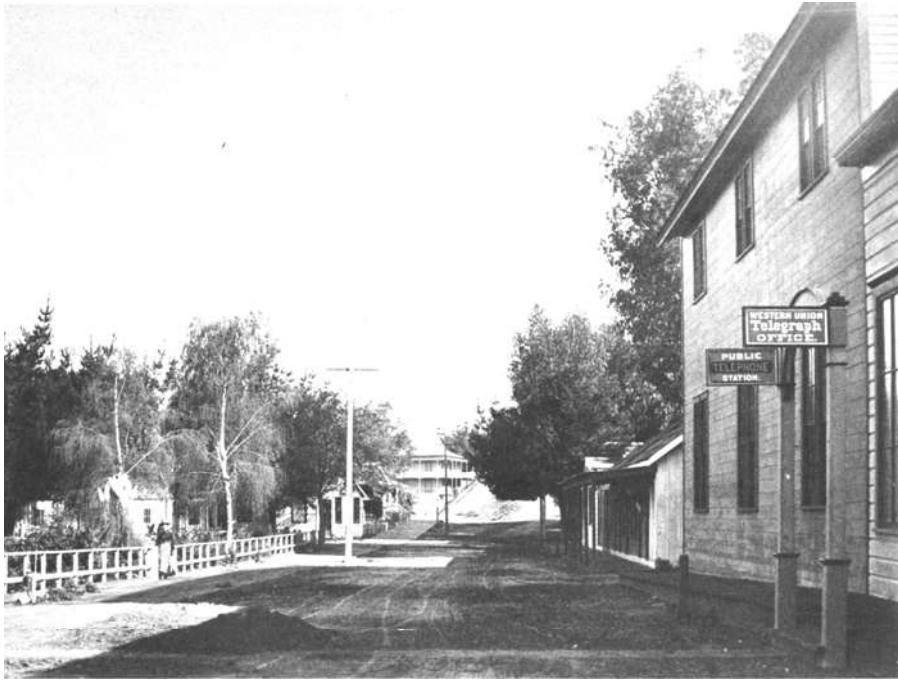
### 3.3.2.2 Phase I: Commercial (1884-1895)



1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows the earliest subdivision and a portion of the village commercial district. (Capitola Museum)

Once thousands of visitors were arriving each season by train, Hihn added recreational attractions to draw summer visitors with a higher income and a preference for accommodations more comfortable than canvas tents and rough board cabins. He opted to market Capitola as an affordable and yet fashionable summer retreat. In the period from 1882 to 1895, Hihn improved and promoted the camp.

New twelve-by-twenty-four-foot cabins were added. The side hill was blasted, and the dirt was used to make a flat on the east side of the camp, where the cabins were located.



**Capitola Hotel and  
Monterey Avenue,  
ca. 1890**  
(*Capitola Museum*)

Board sidewalks were built. The road in front of the hotel was created and named Bay Avenue, although it is now Monterey Avenue, intersecting with the esplanade. A tunnel was pushed through the east bluff to discharge sewage safely away from Capitola's beach. Work crews made sure the camp was well kept and freshly painted. Capitola was described in 1892 as "especially favored by San Joseans" and a resort where "cottages of all sorts, shapes, and sizes are to be had for any length of time."

A thirty-five-room hotel was built against the east bluff at the point where travelers could easily cross the mouth of Soquel Creek. In 1884 the river's course would also be changed to allow a broader expanse of the beachfront. A swinging cable bridge allowed vacationers easier access to the wharf.

Commercial structures from 1884 to 1897 included the Capitola Hotel, a skating rink and pavilion, grocery store, livery and feed stable, ice cream saloon, fish market, telegraph office, hot salt-water baths, a reservoir tank house with sleeping units, the Capitola Park Hotel, and several saloons. None of these buildings survive.

Hihn considered the beach to be F. A. Hihn Company property but kept it open to the general public in the summer. In the off-season, however, he at times limited access. One complainer noted in December 1886: "F. A. Hihn is fencing the entire Capitola tract. Travelers between Soquel and Capitola are now compelled to pass through a gateway."

### **3.3.2.3 Phase II: Residential (1895-1919)**

Hihn planned expansive improvements for Capitola between 1895 and 1905 to transition from Camp Capitola to Capitola By-the-Sea. In addition to an expanded number of rental units and apartments, Hihn planned several new subdivisions in areas previously occupied by cabins or tents.

## Architect Edward L. Van Cleeck

Edward L. Van Cleeck (1849-1925) was a prominent regional architect hired by Frederick Hihn to design not only the new Capitola Hotel but also a series of buildings along the esplanade and in the village.

Regarded as a pioneering architect, builder, and superintendent, Van Cleeck was in partnership with John Knapp in the 1880s. The partnership was dissolved in 1891, and Van Cleeck established his offices in the Hihn building at the corner of Walnut and Pacific Avenues in Santa Cruz.

Van Cleeck's existing architectural work in Santa Cruz includes his own Colonial Revival residence at 204 King Street; the ranch house of Delos D. Wilder (Wilder Ranch State Park); Villa Perla, the two-story Colonial Revival house built in 1893; the Deming house on Beach Hill; and the Leonard building at Front and Cooper Streets, Santa Cruz. In addition to other prominent commercial structures in downtown Santa Cruz, it is estimated that "Santa Cruz residences of his design would probably run into the hundreds." A favorite landmark, no longer standing, was the "Vue de l'Eau," a one-story, oblong building surmounted by a large octagonal observatory with a peaked, tower-like roof. Containing a waiting room and lunchroom, it was built in 1891 as the terminus house of the electric railway located on West Cliff Drive at Woodrow Avenue.



Van Cleeck architecture on Capitola Avenue, 1905 (*Capitola Museum*)

### Examples of Property Types:

*Properties associated with the context of Phase II, Residential include bungalow cottages, duplex vacation homes, apartments, and single-family dwellings.*

**326 Riverview Avenue (Survey, 63):** This tiny vacation cabin is significant as one of few existing cottages from "Huana Place," an expansion Hihn created between Stockton Avenue and the railroad trestle about 1900. The development was the beginning of the Riverview Avenue neighborhood.

**East Lawn Way and North Lawn Way (Survey, 13 and 14):** Between San Jose Avenue and the Esplanade, a tract of summer cottages was opened in 1911. It is now part of the Six Sisters/Lawn Way Historic District.

**Six Sisters, 110-122 The Esplanade, Contributor to the Six-Sisters/Lawn Way National Historic District (Survey, 12):** The 1903 vernacular units faced Ocean Front Avenue until the street was widened and moved to become the Esplanade in 1924-1925. The duplex owners sought to preserve their ocean view later and bought the newly created lots. The third unit in from Stockton Avenue was rebuilt in 1984.

**Linger Longer, 609 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 53):** Preparing to develop the tract, F. A. Hihn had the beet sugar company mill property surveyed in 1911. The parcel at 609 Capitola Avenue was owned by Horace T. Taylor and his wife, Anna (Keller) Taylor, a native of Germany. The one-story Craftsman Bungalow may have been built in 1911 and leased to the Taylors until they purchased it in 1915. The residence is historically associated with Harry Bowles, a member of the first Capitola City Council. Bowles lived at Linger Longer in his youth and again from 1945 until his death in 1997. He was among community residents of the 1940s who worked to provide Capitola with necessary services. He was a volunteer fireman and for twenty years a police commissioner.

**314 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):** Built about 1900 as a summer home, the two-story Colonial Revival structure served as a boarding house with rooms for rent during the Great Depression. Over the past two decades, it has been used for office space.

### 3.3.2.4 Phase II: Commercial (1895-1919)

Working through his superintendent, Frank Reanier, Hihn made his greatest investment in Capitola from 1895 until he died in 1913. Hihn revamped Capitola several times to keep it in competition with other large resorts in the region. The Colonial Revival and Queen Anne style Capitola Hotel was built at the foot of the eastern bluff in 1895.



Capitola Hotel and the Six Sisters, ca. 1903 (*Capitola Museum*)

Two years later, an announcement was made that the “face of the cliff beyond the hotel is being finally cleared of extra earth and rock so that it will be a sheer and clean wall from base to summit.” The cut dramatically altered the appearance of the eastern bluff. The work was accomplished to prepare for an addition to the hotel that would almost equal it in dimensions. It was four stories tall, of similar style, and “supplemented



by a club house of glass, which will be built directly over the water and into the face of the cliff and will be surmounted by a roof-garden of tropical plants.”

Further improvements coincided with the construction of the new depot and the Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railway line to Capitola in 1904.

### **Katherine (Hihn) Cope Henderson**

Katherine, born in Santa Cruz in 1857, was the eldest child of Frederick and Therese Hihn. She married William Thomas Cope of Santa Cruz in 1878. Katherine divorced her husband in 1898, and shortly after her father’s death in 1913, married Harry O. Henderson.

At forty-five, Henderson was twelve years younger than his wife. He had formerly been a hotel manager in Ventura County and wanted to oversee Katherine’s resort estate. The couple replaced Frank Reanier as superintendent and took over the Capitola Hotel from the preceding manager, Everard V. “Teddy” Woodhouse. By 1916, Katherine was listed in the Great Register of Santa Cruz County as president of the Capitola-Hihn Company, a title she kept until the property sold to H. Allen Rispin in 1919.

One influential decision made by the Hendersons toward the end of their Capitola ownership was to return the hotel to the previous manager. Woodhouse took over again in May 1919, a month before the sale to Rispin. A native of Australia, he eventually received an inheritance that allowed him to buy the hotel. By the late 1920s, he was a prominent Capitola business owner, recognized community organizer, and the energetic leader of Capitola improvement campaigns.

At the time they sold their resort holdings, Harry and Katherine Henderson retained the Hihn family home in the village and were residents when they died in 1920 and 1921, respectively.

### **Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of Phase II, Commercial include offices, recreational concessions, and boarding houses.*

**Hihn Superintendent Building, 201 Monterey Avenue, Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Survey, 15):** The building is on the site of one of the earliest camp concessions, the F. A. Angell and Brothers Store, established about 1887. The two-story Camp Capitola office was constructed ca. 1895. This village structure is closely related to both Hihn and H. Allen Rispin, the two capitalists who held Capitola in private ownership. The three adjacent buildings on Capitola Avenue were built by Van Cleeck about the same time but have since been given a stucco-fronted exterior.

**Craft Gallery Building, 126 San Jose Avenue (Survey, 17):** Although it is not known for certain if Van Cleeck was the architect, the building dates from the era of the architect's work in Capitola. By 1930 it had been remodeled with apartments upstairs and a drug store, the Capitola Post Office, and a circulating library downstairs. Damaged by heat and smoke during the downtown fire of 1933, it was repaired with a stucco exterior. In the late 1940s, the Kozy Apartments and Kozy Koffee Cup café moved in, and it was here that many discussions of the Capitola



Craft Gallery building before the 1933 fire  
(Capitola Museum)

Improvement Club took place in preparation for city incorporation.

**The Hillside Cottage/Reynolds boarding house, 221 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 16):** Built ca.1890, the boarding house was a commercial enterprise that existed outside the original Capitola boundaries and was perhaps not restricted by the Hihn Company, which threatened to go to court with anyone who operated a business without its authorization. James A. Reynolds and his wife rented rooms to summer vacationers from 1901 to 1914, a year after Hihn died.

Boarding houses grew in number after Hihn's death in 1913; the Van Syckle House, 202 Cherry Street; the Queen Anne at 1530 Prospect Street in Camp Fairview; and the two-story Colonial Revival at 314 Capitola Avenue were all boarding houses during the Depression.

### 3.3.3 H. Allen Rispin Era (1919-1936)

H. (Henry) Allen Rispin was a San Francisco capitalist who had worked with C. E. Canfield to develop the Capitola Heights subdivision along Wharf Road in the 1910s. Aware that real estate speculation on the coast was becoming lucrative after World War I, Rispin bought Capitola By-the-Sea in 1919.

Katherine (Hihn) Cope Henderson sold to Rispin the Capitola Hotel, beachfront and wharf, concessions, waterworks and electricity, plus 130 undeveloped lots on Depot Hill, thirty acres along Soquel Creek, and two hundred acres in Soquel. Katherine and her husband, Harry, lived in the Hihn home on Monterey Avenue, across from the Southern Pacific Depot. Other tracts within the current boundaries of the City of Capitola also remained in the Hihn family, including the Opal Cliffs property and the farmland along Park Avenue known as the Hihn Field.



Favoring Capitola Heights for his mansion, Rispin bought parcels from Henry Daubenbis (note: Henry, brother of John, dropped the second “s” from Daubenbiss) and Edith Pawla along the west bank of Soquel Creek, above the resort. Years later, he said he had initially been hesitant about “the expenditure of much money for a home on land which was bordered by the rubbish heaps of the little town.” His plan was to expand Capitola on both sides of the creek and sell subdivision tract sites quickly. Rispin’s chosen market was the upper-middle-income vacationer from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Apparently Rispin hoped Capitola would be a short-term venture. Even though he frequently publicized plans for expansion and improvement, his actions throughout the twenties demonstrate that he gave little thought to sustaining the village at the same level as Frederick Hihn had done.

### **3.3.3.1 Phase 1: Modernization (1919-1926)**

#### **Architect George McCrea**

Architect George McCrea designed Rispin’s twenty-two-room, Italian Renaissance style home. Promotions described it as a \$250,000 structure, although various local news reports estimated the actual cost between \$23,000 and \$50,000. The 9,000-square-foot building showcased Rispin’s tastes.

McCrea was an accomplished architect who specialized in religious and Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. From the early 1900s until his death in 1943, he worked mainly in the San Francisco Bay Area, although he designed a number of structures in Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Carmel. Early in his career, he had also been a partner of well-known architect Albert Farr. In Santa Cruz, McCrea built the ca.1918 Judge Marcel Cerf residence, now a part of the Casa Blanca Inn at the corner of Beach and Main Streets.

McCrea initially renovated a two-story frame house for Rispin in San Francisco. Impressed with the results, he engaged McCrea for the Capitola projects. The Capitola mansion, built in 1921, featured innovative plumbing, electrical wiring, and fixtures. An



automobile turn-around was installed in the garage, a concrete door concealed a basement wine cellar, and a hidden vault sat behind a sliding bookcase in the library. Caretakers living in a nearby cottage tended the house and gardens.

### Resort Expansion and Improvement

Capitola’s outline changed quickly after Rispin’s purchase. The millionaire’s initial goal was to restyle it with a modernized landscape of concrete, stucco, and tile.

While Hihn had promoted Capitola as an affordable vacation site, Rispin advertised homes for “the interest of families of the better class.” He said the distinction applied to character more than wealth, assuring potential buyers that his resort supported wholesome family values. The architectural theme he envisioned for Capitola was Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean. In some neighborhoods, such as “Subdivision Six” on the east side of Monterey Avenue, Rispin specified that new houses must cost at least \$5,000. Deed stipulations also forbade the distillation and sale of alcoholic beverages during Prohibition and continued to limit lot sales to Caucasians only.

Within weeks of buying Capitola, Rispin proclaimed \$1 million in forthcoming village improvements and the anticipated construction of a modern, four-story, reinforced concrete hotel to replace the one designed in 1892 by Van Cleek. Several concessions along the esplanade were soon demolished, including the Van Cleek designed bathhouse. Its replacement featured three central arches finished in stucco.



Through his Capitola Company and Bay Head Land Company, Rispin shifted the oceanfront thoroughfare and curved it onto the beach. The trolley station was moved to a new terminus at the end of Capitola Avenue, where a set of concrete stairs led to the top of Depot Hill. A news reporter noted that local house mover Stephen Hill “is jerking the buildings about in Capitola, until the place will soon lose semblance of the irregular, squatty camp of other—and past—days.”

Capitola Company map surveyed in 1922 (Capitola Museum)

On the west side, a sweeping roadway “by a detour around the old sugar mill” was named Riverview Avenue. Rispin also spent more than \$4,000 to build a thirty-foot concrete dam on Bates Creek to satisfy Capitola’s increasing demand for water.

Completion of the Glenwood Highway to San Jose introduced the automobile era in 1923. Visitors frequented Capitola for several hours or days in contrast to prior stays of a month or more. Motor courts and auto camps begin to appear in Capitola on former tent campgrounds and along nearby routes above the village.

In contrast to Frederick Hihn, who held strict ownership and control of all moneymaking ventures within the resort, Rispin readily sold commercial enterprises to proprietors who then spent substantial sums on improvements. Within months, Rispin announced he changed his mind about destroying the Capitola Hotel and sold it to the lessee Woodhouse, who invested \$15,000 on hotel renovations and another \$50,000 on Capitola Amusement Company concessions along the beachfront.

Woodhouse looked after community interests in the manner that Hihn’s superintendent, Frank Reanier, had done in the previous era. Personable and dedicated, the hotel owner was at times mistaken for Rispin, who was reclusive and did not socialize with local residents. As early as 1924 Woodhouse attempted to interest Capitola business owners in the establishment of a chamber of commerce.

From 1920 to 1926 Capitola expanded and prospered. Jazz music played nightly at “nickel dances.” Silent movies were shown at the first Capitola Theater, a three-hundred-seat auditorium on San Jose Avenue. The village had a French bakery, ice cream parlor, skating and boating concessions, photo studio, pavilion, poolroom, bowling alley, merry-go-round, and equestrian riding school.

Rispin and Woodhouse both pledged to lengthen the Capitola season to year-round, although natural forces made the effort difficult and at times impossible. In February 1926, for example, storm waves shattered buildings along the beachfront and flooded the village between the shoreline and Capitola Avenue. Repairs were completed in time for the start of the summer season in June. Another storm in 1932 undercut foundations along the beachfront and necessitated rebuilding the bathhouse retaining wall.

Even though his real estate ventures paid off in the first few years, Rispin sought a fast return for his financial outlay, desiring to speculate in oil. In a letter to Dakoming Oil Company owner W. W. Wright of South Dakota, dated August 23, 1923, Rispin offered to sell his Capitola subdivisions, parcels, amusements, stores, water and electricity, plus the three-hundred-acre Soquel property in exchange for a productive oil well. Although Wright indicated interest in Capitola, a sale was never completed.

In May 1924 the Heber-Harter Company put a tent on the Capitola beach and held a lot auction, promoting the opening of the Riverview subdivision. Rispin assured the lot buyers that water, modern sewer lines, gas, electricity, and graded streets would soon be installed. However, most of these promises were later ignored.

Throughout the twenties, a nightclub called the Hawaiian Garden set the pace for Capitola's economic success. Constructed in 1884, and dominating the block between Stockton and San Jose Avenues, the hall had been the camp skating rink and auditorium for forty years. Moved south toward the beach in 1924 and modernized with a stucco



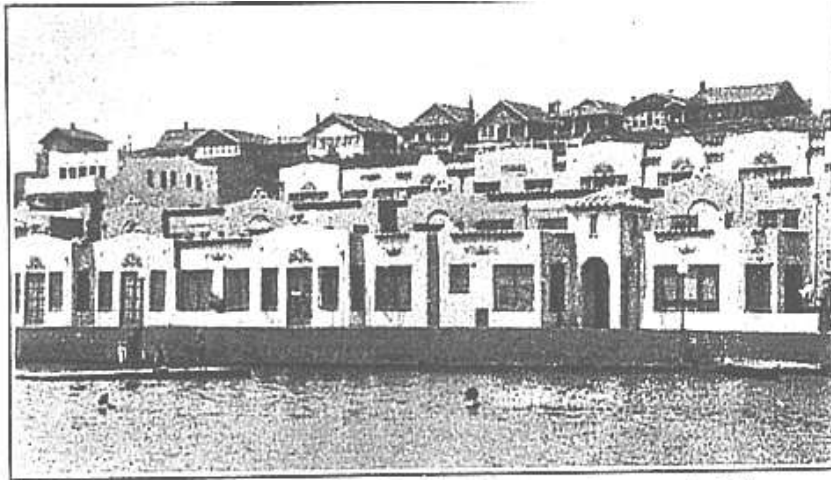
Capitola Theater and Hawaiian Garden Nightclub, San Jose Avenue, ca. 1927. Both structures burned in 1933. (Courtesy of Frank Urbancic)

front exterior, it was advertised as an “amusement pavilion,” with a Spanish Revival style décor that included a waterfall and pool, fireplace of rounded cobblestones, and fifty hammered copper lamps by craftsman John Otar, famed as “Otar the Lampmaker.”

It was immediately popular, featuring well-known orchestras and two dances nightly. Within a few years, however, both the nightclub and Capitola had reputations as settings that tolerated illegal consumption of alcohol. Even so, the Hawaiian Garden was the underpinning of the local economy, reportedly entertaining as many as nine thousand visitors in a single weekend.

One of the first sections of old Capitola that was cleared for development in the Rispin era was the Italian Fishing Village at the end of Wharf Road at the base of the pier. Most of its residents had moved when the new municipal wharf was completed in Santa Cruz in 1914. Fishing cabins were either torn down or relocated in 1920 to prepare for construction on the land subdivided by Rispin. The Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean complex was completed four years later at the edge of a dammed section of the creek, known as the Capitola Lagoon.

Henry Roth and Homer Langdon of Roth Realty Company in San Jose purchased the land and hired the firm of Wolfe and Higgins to design and construct forty-six bungalows in the complex, initially publicized as the “Venetian Villa” and known today as the Venetian Court. Carl J. Wolfe and William E. Higgins were prolific architects who designed a number of landmarks within the city of San Jose.



An advertisement printed on the 1926 Capitola Properties Company map promoted the Venetian Court (*Capitola Museum*)

More than a Million Dollars has been spent in new buildings and improvements in less than three years. The homes shown in the above picture are typical of new construction going on.

### 3.3.3.2 Phase II: Real Estate Development (1927-1940)

Capitola's business community realized by 1927 that Rispin was growing restless to sell. The real estate market was still vigorous. New subdivisions were planned for the McCormick tract and Fanmar Terrace, near the entrance to Depot Hill. Among the



active real estate agents were residents Harlan P. Kessler, Harry Hooper, Don Emery, Harry Harper, and Al Lent.

In April 1927 Rispin offered his mansion as a summer home to President Calvin Coolidge. The offer was made in behalf of Santa Cruz County and was likely another of Rispin's promotional strategies, one to enhance the status of Capitola in the minds of the public and perhaps—if Coolidge had agreed to come—hasten the sale of lots.

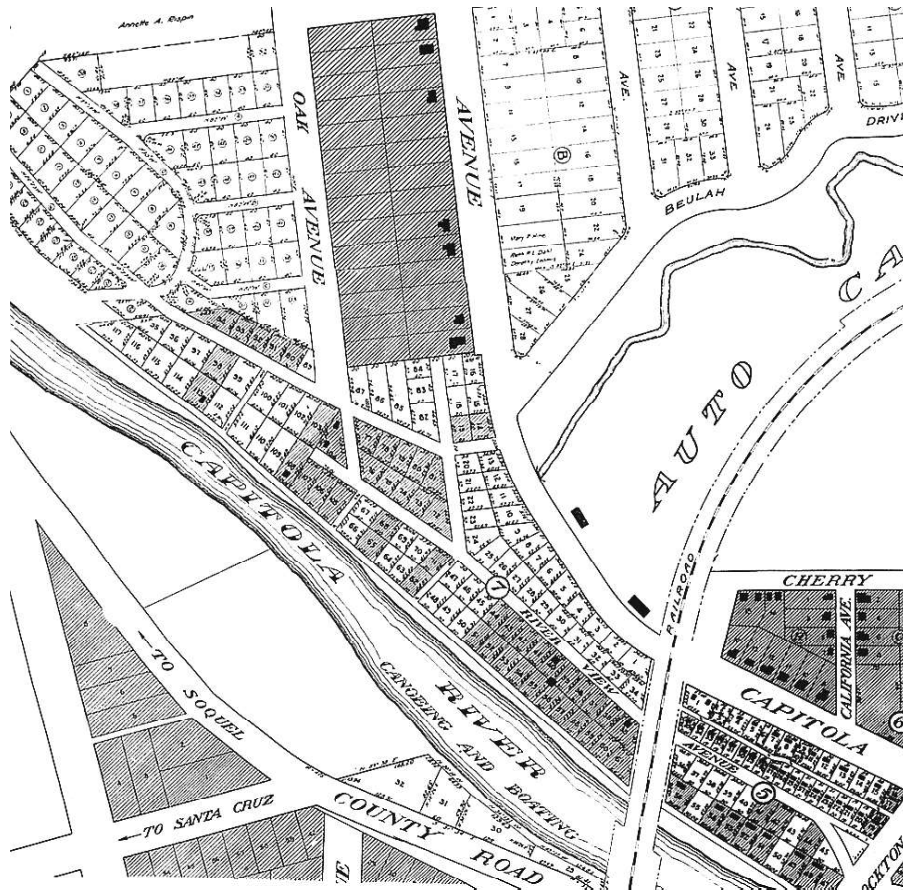
### Fanmar Terrace

In 1927 the Henderson home was tendered for sale by Hihn's granddaughter, Ruth Ready Younger. The land between the railroad tracks and Cherry Avenue had been held from development for many years. Hihn wanted to stop Southern Pacific Railroad from buying the tract for the construction of a competing hotel. Harlan P. Kessler, a real estate agent for Rispin, acquired the property and developed the Fanmar Terrace subdivision in 1928.

Fanmar Way is shown in this aerial photograph taken ca. 1930. The subdivision is on the upper left, between the railroad track and Monterey Avenue (*Capitola Museum*)



### Riverview Tract



Rispin's 1926 map shows his initial plan for the Riverview and Beulah tract subdivisions. (*Capitola Museum*)



After the California Beet Sugar Company mill was dismantled in the 1880s, the ground north of the village was used for a tent camp, the resort dump, and a compound of outhouses, but Hihn knew the wooded, creekside setting could be developed for summer homes. He had drawn plans for a housing tract along the creek before 1900 and had the “Sugar Mill Field” surveyed in 1911. Even so, the site was by and large vacant when Rispin bought Capitola. The new owner considered options—including a deer park or a golf course—for the upper portion of the tract, where he built a bridge leading to his mansion. Facing a rising debt, however, Rispin was forced to sell some of his property in 1928, and he put the Riverview Avenue and Riverview Drive subdivisions on the market.

Developer C. E. Blanchard bought Riverview Drive tract and moved ahead with plans for a subdivision first known as River View Park, and later Riverview Terrace. The first houses sold in 1929 were stucco bungalows with tile roofs, built with local labor. Most were single-family homes, priced from \$650 to \$1,250.



Riverview Terrace, ca.1931 (*Capitola Museum*)

In July 1939 Ray Miller and Edward L. Mum, real estate brokers, bought the tract between Riverview Drive and Bay Avenue and sold additional sites. In 1940—the year numbers were assigned to Capitola businesses and homes—Miller and Mum reported 107 lots had been bought for new houses costing between \$2,000 and \$3,000. An eight-foot bank on Bay Avenue was leveled into ten sites for business construction, with five adjacent acres prepared for the residential tract.

## Opal Cliffs

A train stop and storage yard at Opal was built ca.1884 for the Loma Prieta Lumber Company at the end of Prospect Street, west of Capitola village. Land was leased from Frederick Hihn for the offices and a store, lumberyard, planing mill, and a hay barn. Lumber was transported from the mills above Aptos.

Kathryn McGeoghegan, the widow of F. A. Hihn's grandson, Eulice Hihn, subdivided in 1923 the Opal Cliffs tract above the old rail station and lumberyard. Frank Blake, one of the owners of the Hawaiian Garden, foreclosed against McGeoghegan and obtained title to the Opal Cliffs tract in 1931. A year later, McGeoghegan's son, Jack, offered to supply Capitola with water from the Opal system, which came from an artesian well sunk years earlier by the F. A. Hihn Company.

The old rail spur at Opal was abandoned in 1931, although some of the Opal-stop buildings remained and eventually may have been incorporated into neighborhood houses.

Blake sold forty acres in Opal Cliffs to developer Harry McBain in 1936, and he is credited with the subdivision's development as a residential community. Although numbers had signified streets in the surrounding Fairview Tract for many years, they were eventually given the names Garnet, Diamond, Jade, Topaz, Crystal, and the other "gems" of the jewel box, in addition to Opal Street.



## Beulah Tract

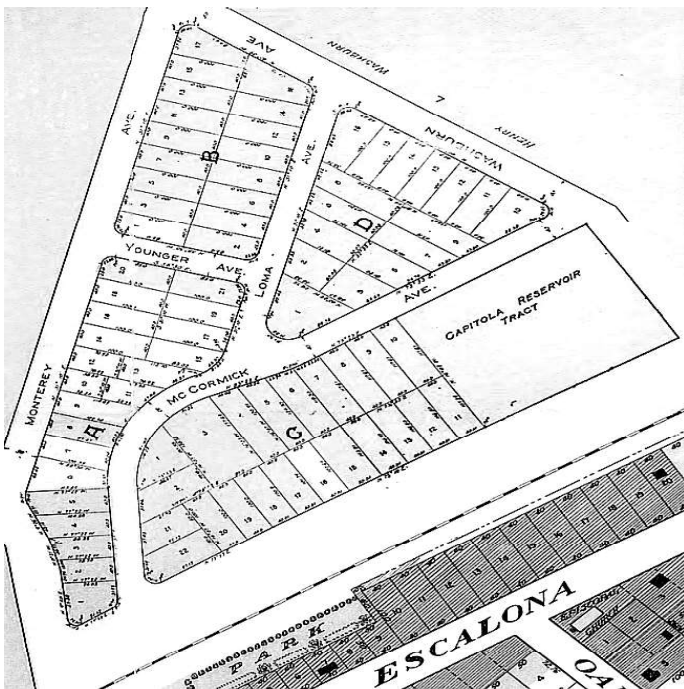
F. A. Hihn Company's picnic ground along Noble Gulch was known as Glen Beulah, an oak-studded park with picnic tables long enough to accommodate the annual gathering of the California Society of Pioneers.

In the late twenties, a portion of the picnic ground became a campground and auto camp. Al and Harriet Welch, friends and associates of H. Allen Rispin, acquired the deed in 1929 and renamed Glen Beulah the River Villa Campground, bounded on the east by the McCormick tract and the west by Capitola Avenue. Today the site is the City of Capitola parking lot and the Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park, a descendant of the earlier campsite.



Beulah Tract, 1954 (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)

The nearby Beulah housing tract was laid out between 1927 and 1933. The subdivision, between Capitola Village and Bay Avenue, was sparsely developed, until construction of Cabrillo College in 1962 increased the demand for family housing.



## McCormick Tract

Rispin opened McCormick tract in the mid-1920s as a housing development between Park Avenue and Monterey Avenue, bordering the lands of Henry Washburn and the Hihn eastern field. The subdivision grew slowly because of its nearness to Camp McQuaide, a noisy next-door neighbor from 1924 through 1936.

### 3.3.3.3 Phase III: Transition of Leadership (1927-1941)

In September 1927 a news article declared that Rispin had found a backer for a plan to convert his mansion into a private clubhouse. As a lodge, it was to complement a golf course on his three-hundred-acre tract southeast of Soquel. The announcement vaguely described a group of oil barons from Amarillo, Texas, but no further notices followed. The investors were never mentioned again.

Capitola's notoriety as a place to obtain illegal liquor persisted. Beach patrols by county sheriffs increased. Offenders were often tourists from the Santa Clara Valley and San Francisco Bay Areas. Residents complained that Capitola had no car available to transport troublemakers and no jail to detain them until authorities arrived.

Frank Reanier, former Capitola superintendent under the F. A. Hihn Company, was a Santa Cruz County supervisor in 1928 and became a vocal advocate for "a clean-up" in the village. Rispin himself eventually became the mark of rumors about the bootlegging of illegal alcoholic beverages. Gossip about his questionable activities during Prohibition was started about the same time his financial troubles became known.

Capitola citizens made their first independent move the following spring. In March 1928, the community hired attorney George W. Smith to prepare a petition asking the Board of Supervisors to declare Capitola's streets as property of the county. Taking the streets from Rispin's ownership would allow Coast Counties Gas and Electric Company to lay gas mains, which could not be done on private property. Avenues in the petition were those of Hihn's original subdivisions.

#### Sale of Rispin Properties

News came the summer of 1928 that forty-eight acres of Rispin's holdings—including his home—had been sold to Marian Realty and then transferred by that firm to the company of C. E. Blanchard of San Francisco. At approximately the same time, a gala celebration was underway for Rispin's latest project. The Capitola Light Tackle Club, a "Mecca for the Sportsman," was constructed on and alongside the Capitola Wharf, next to the Venetian Court. Although the \$20,000 wharf clubhouse was an imposing landmark, it was a failure. It was being used for boat storage in 1940, when it was set on fire by an arsonist and destroyed.



The Capitola Light Tackle Club existed on the wharf from 1927 to 1940. (Capitola Museum)

Through real estate agent Kessler, Rispin retrieved his mansion from the Blanchard Company in November 1928, announcing a new scheme to refurbish the Capitola home as a clubhouse, with fifty additional rooms to be built for members and their families. He also affirmed plans to dredge and widen Soquel Creek for the swimming and boating pleasure of club guests.

### **Capitola Improvement Club**

Citizens organized the Capitola Improvement Club in 1928 under the leadership of Harry Hooper. Initial energy focused on passage of an election to expand police protection, lower insurance rates, replace beach playground equipment, improve light and water service, and supply equipment and training for volunteer firefighters. For the first time, Capitola and Soquel leaders investigated a possible merger to create a municipality with the suggested name of “Sotola.” Water shortage was a critical issue for both communities. Capitola decided to negotiate for water rights from the Monroe, Lyon, and Miller Property Development Company of Aptos; the firm had acquired rights to the F. A. Hihn Company water system that supplied Capitola in the past.

A 1928 news headline, “Capitola Sewer Broken with No One to Mend It,” summed up a chronic problem. The main trunk of the sewer line put in forty years previously by the Hihn Company was leaking and “no organization is in existence to repair it.” An attempt was being made to form a Soquel-Capitola sanitation district, but county funds were unavailable, and homeowners were on their own to find solutions.

As the tourist season opened in 1929, Capitola police commissioners J. E. Robinson, Everett Vetterle, and W. H. Davis established a midnight closing hour for Capitola dances, hoping to eliminate the village’s “rough element.” Although he reluctantly complied, Hawaiian Garden owner Frank Blake threatened to remove his dance hall from Capitola immediately.

Capitola became an established residential community in the twenties. Grocery stores, an auto repair and gas station, barbershop, shoe repair, pharmacy, fish shop, bakeries, and restaurants shared space in the village with tourist concessions and the offices of real estate agents. Capitola’s year-round population in 1929 was roughly two hundred persons, consisting largely of skilled labor. Men worked as mechanics, plumbers, painters, farmers, carpenters, fishermen, mill men, teamsters, butchers, dairy workers, house movers, well drillers, and poultry ranchers. Jobs held by women included nurse, secretary, bookkeeper, the postmaster, and several apartment, restaurant, and shop owners or managers.

### **Bankruptcy and Foreclosure**

From his office on Capitola Avenue, Rispin continued to manage the Bay Head Land Company, the Capitola Company, and the Capitola Light Tackle Club. Most of his financial resources in 1929 were spent toward creation of the Soquel golf course called

the Monterey Bay Golf and Country Club. Finally open in mid-July, the course enveloped 130 acres of Rispin's 315-acre tract. Surrounding lots were offered for sale.

A week after the golf course opening, Bay Head Land Company suddenly announced it was liquidating its holdings. The Frank Meline firm from Los Angeles, specialists in subdivision marketing, prepared to sell fifteen hundred business and residential lots, the golf course, wharf, bandstand, the unsold portion of the Esplanade, and the Rispin mansion. All the properties together were thought to equal \$2 million. The auction firm purportedly distributed fifteen tons of literature in the promotion to "convert all property to cash in ten days."

Rispin employed an auction technique he had used in 1924. A huge tent was spread along the beach for the event August 22 and 23, 1929. Among the more active bidders was local resident Al Lent, a realtor and ardent sportsman, who, along with his friend Harry Hooper, was a celebrity in the village. Lent bid for the bandstand and a section of the beach and paid 25 percent of the price on the night of the auction. He later found out liens against the parcel would make clear title impossible. He sued the Meline Company to recover his investment. Meanwhile, the auctioneers filed suit against the Bay Head Land Company for costs.



1929 auction tent on the beach (*Capitola Museum*)

Rispin withdrew from Capitola. The new owner signed papers to take over Rispin's companies in 1930 and 1931. A newspaper reported, "The transfer which is expected to be completed within a short time will clear up the tangled situation involving the properties in and around Capitola, which has held up development there for several years."

The buyer was another oil industrialist acquainted with Rispin. Burlingame millionaire Robert Hays Smith reportedly paid Rispin less than \$20,000 for the mansion and assumed title to all of his remaining property not encumbered by litigation. Smith's son, Nicol, took care of family business and lived off-and-on in the Capitola house, managing the Capitola Properties Company and supervising the golf course in Soquel. Robert Hays Smith hired Rispin and employed him from 1930 to 1936 as part of his staff in the Bay Area.

Smith was worth \$3 million in 1920, but by 1933, he struggled to cover the Capitola investment. Bankrupt three years later, the Smiths forfeited the home and other properties through foreclosure. The mansion was briefly taken over in September 1937

by the American National Pictures Company, which had plans to turn the house and fifty acres across the road into a film production unit. The company moved elsewhere three months later, however, citing frustration with “prolonged litigation between present and former owners.”

**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of the H. Allen Rispin era (1919-1936) include single family dwellings, multiple unit housing, auto courts and beach cottages, stucco commercial offices, stores, markets, post office, restaurants, and amusement venues.*

**Rispin Mansion, 2200 Wharf Road, listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places (Survey, 77 and 106):** A twenty-two-room, 9,000-square-foot, Spanish Colonial Revival or Mediterranean (also described as Italian Renaissance style) home designed by San Francisco Bay Area architect George McCrea and built in 1921.

A high concrete wall screens the mansion and grounds from Wharf Road on the west, and the house overlooks Soquel Creek to the east. The mansion was constructed in an asymmetrical design of reinforced concrete, featuring a red-tile hipped roof, an arched portico, terraces, and balconies with balustrades. It has two wings and a large seven-sided bay extending from the basement to the fourth floor.

H. Allen Rispin and wife Annette lived in Capitola with their son, Alan, a 1921 Santa Cruz High School graduate. Much of their time, however, was spent in San Francisco, where the family kept a suite at the Fairmont Hotel in the early twenties. During this period, they were also listed in the San Francisco Blue Book.



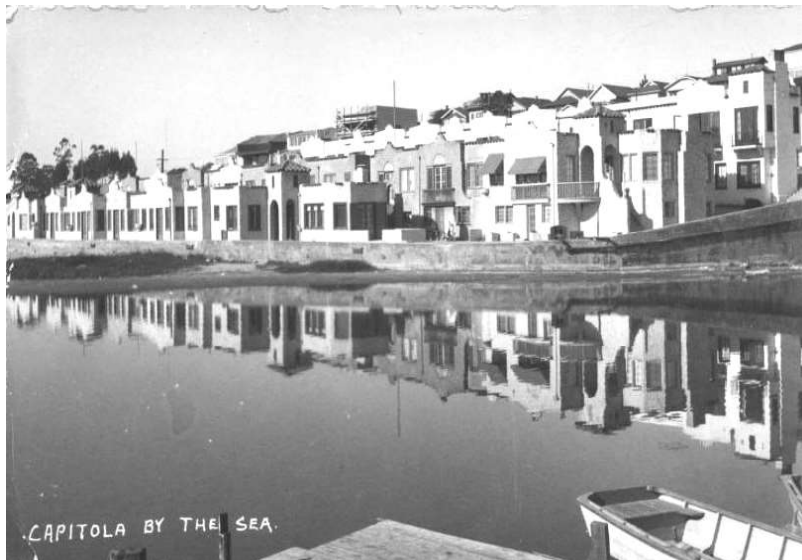
After they left Capitola, the Rispins separated. Annette died in San Jose in 1941. In his last years, son Alan, a Watsonville mechanic, supported his father. It is likely both were living at the Watsonville YMCA when the son died of epileptic seizures in 1946. Rispin, seventy-five, suffered a stroke the following spring and was taken to the county hospital. He spent his last days in indigent care at another hospital in San Francisco and is buried in an unmarked grave at Olivet Memorial Park (Colma).

For several years between 1937 and 1940, neighbor Al Lent and a group of investors were unsuccessful in an attempt to buy the Rispin property. In 1941 it sold for \$90,000 to the St. Joseph’s Monastery for use by the Poor Clares, a cloistered order of nuns. Bedrooms of the mansion were divided into cubicles and the basement used for storage.

A chapel and novitiate were added to the north end of the property and have since been removed.

The Poor Clares lived in the Rispin Mansion until 1959. Since then, the mansion has technically been vacant, although numerous transients stayed there in the mid-1960s. Numerous developments were proposed before the City of Capitola purchased the structure in 1985 and obtained additional property on Clares Street in 1989. The Rispin Mansion was listed on the National Register on March 14, 1991, as a historic district.

**Venetian Court, 1500 Wharf Road, listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places (Survey, 75 and 95):**



The court was built starting in 1923 as three tiers, divided horizontally and vertically by walkways in a curvilinear building plan. The top tier became a motel, while the first two are private units. The complex is wood-frame construction with a stucco surface. Major architectural features are offset entryways and a flat roof with either a parapet or small pyramidal caps.

Detailing includes textured stucco siding, red tile, and decorative relief work.

The Venetian Court is the leading example of the architectural style promoted by Rispin during the era of real estate speculation in the early 1920s.

During a period of renovation by Capitola Venetian Motel owner Lou Bartfield in 1977, an article was printed describing some of the original features of the Venetian Court. “During the renovation, he found lots of surprises like solid redwood floors, doors and beams that had been covered by layers and layers of paint and intricate castings on the exterior walls of medusa heads and dolphins,” wrote the interviewer. The Bartfields expanded the motel from nine to 22 units.

The motel owner also commissioned nine new doors carved by artist Alan Thorpe. Bartfield said he chose themes for the doors from art, literature, and music connected to the romance of the City of Venice. One was described as a “whimsical rendition” that showed Venetian gondolas moored at Capitola’s wharf. Another had a pelican staring out from the door, its eye being the door’s peephole. A third was carved with the theme of “Othello, the Moor of Venice,” while the Lion of St. Mark was included as a symbol of Venice.



**103 Stockton Avenue:** Wolfe and Higgins architect Carl J. Wolfe built this single-story duplex as a family vacation home. The structure has architectural features similar to the Venetian Court, and—along with the 1934 Stockton Avenue Bridge—contributes a sense of unity to commercial businesses on both sides of the Capitola lagoon.

**101 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 46):** A cottage on the corner of Capitola and Monterey Avenues was picked up and moved to the “River Villa” (Riverview) tract in September 1926 to allow construction of a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival stucco office and apartment building at 101 Capitola Avenue. Owner was Don D. Emery, the real estate agent later in charge of sales in Riverview Terrace for developer C. E. Blanchard. The slant corner doorway entrance mirrors the style of the Hihn superintendent’s building across the street. St. John’s Helpful Shop now occupies the former real estate office.

**Riverview subdivision homes:**

**317 and 317A Riverview Avenue (Survey, 61):** This cottage has twin gables over a railed porch. The craftsman style is characteristic of small vacation homes built in the Riverview Avenue district in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

**509A Riverview Drive (Survey, 73):** This Craftsman bungalow appears to have seen few alterations since it was built in the early 1930s.



Riverview Court Apartments (Courtesy of Frank Urbancie)

**Apartments became more numerous once Capitola was easily reached by auto. Examples in Capitola Village include:**

**Riverview Court Apartments, 315 Riverview Avenue (Survey, 61):** Joseph and Catherine Southern built the apartment complex with a Mediterranean arched entryway in 1921. It sits on the site of the former tent campground, which was shifted north toward Capitola Avenue in the Twenties.

**321 A and B Riverview Avenue (Survey, 62):** Built before 1927, the court apartments are a Spanish Colonial Revival style with an archway topped by tile. The interior court has clapboard siding, similar to the Riverview Court Apartments.

**307 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):** The structure is a Rispin era, Spanish Colonial Revival style apartment complex with a symmetrical façade and side elevations.

## Fanmar Terrace and McCormick tract homes:

**La Casa Blanca, 240 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 17):** The Spanish Colonial Revival style apartment complex was built at the end of the Rispin era, ca. 1930. The resort accommodations were built in an advantageous location across the street from the Capitola Depot and were an expansion of the village commercial district beyond its original boundaries.

Although it sits at the entrance to Depot Hill, La Casa Blanca demonstrates the spreading of resort boundaries that occurred during the Rispin era. On the east side of the resort, this growth took place at Fanmar Terrace and the McCormick tract. La Casa Blanca sits between these two additions.

*(Courtesy of Frank Urbancic)*



**206 Fanmar Way:** The original part of the house, built in 1930, is believed to be a design from the Sears Builder Catalog. The floor plan was 600-800 square feet. The doors have Astoria hardware trim, also offered through the catalog. The home interior has the Sears Company trademark of interlocking tongue-and-groove redwood paneling. A two-story addition was done in 1950, and attic dormers were added in 2001.

**404 McCormick Avenue:** Small vacation homes such as this vernacular cottage were among the first built in the McCormick tract in the early 1930s.

### 3.3.4 Tourism and Real Estate Management (1933-1949)

#### 3.3.4.1 Capitola Village of the Depression Era

A series of fires that plagued the resort from 1926 through 1940 prompted Capitola to shift from dependence on one single owner to a community guided by its business people. Most of the leaders of this transition worked in property sales or were in some way reliant on tourism.

Capitola residents were concerned about water pressure and fire protection even before an inferno swept through the business district in December 1926. The fire started on

San Jose Avenue near the beach and quickly spread through three Bay Head Land Company concessions. Arson was suspected.

A second calamity in December 1929 destroyed the historic Capitola Hotel. A handcart and three hundred feet of fire hose stored in a doomed annex were saved in time to fight the flames. The cause was never determined. Owner E. V. Woodhouse vowed to rebuild but never managed to do so. He eventually shifted his energies to management of an amusement casino on the beachfront and a tavern on Capitola Avenue.

As Prohibition was winding down in 1933, another mysterious blaze engulfed the Hawaiian Garden and neighboring Chinese Garden in the center of the village. Ignited on the west side of San Jose Avenue, the fire moved toward Stockton Avenue, consuming the entire block except for the Luigi Canepa Fish Market on the corner of the Esplanade.

Among the losses was Harry Hooper's real estate office. Hooper, a championship baseball star, had retired from professional play and was now a Capitola resident, raising his family in a Victorian on Cliff Avenue. A motivated Capitola businessman with a degree in civil engineering, Hooper persuaded merchants to rebuild quickly before for the next tourist season. Sewer and water problems were critical. Litigations over significant portions of the resort—including ownership of the streets, beach, and wharf—were not yet settled from the Rispin era. Timing was crucial.

"I consider the wrecked block the best for business locations in town," Hooper stated after the fire, "and we now have the opportunity of reconstruction along permanent lines at minimum cost."

Building cheaply, he said, would lower the cost of insurance rates, which had grown because of a water shortage, a lack of water pressure, and insufficient fire fighting equipment. Debate over village reconstruction began immediately. Woodhouse, chamber president, wanted uniformity in new construction. C. E. Blanchard of Riverview Terrace and sales manager Don Emery, chamber vice-president, lobbied for stucco and concrete.

Woodhouse and Hooper, along with realtor Rex Burdge, were mediators in negotiations between the property owner and the developer. The outcome was a hastily built, one-story stucco nightclub with twelve thousand feet of floor space on the southeast corner of Stockton and Capitola Avenues. Capitola contractor Earl McCombs and a crew of forty carpenters put up the



Orchestra leader Val Valente rolled his sleeves to help shovel dirt as construction began on the Big Top Ballroom. (Courtesy of the Macdonald family)

“Big Top Ballroom” in sixteen days, start-to-finish.

Despite a vigorous beginning, the Big Top was a big flop. An improved version opened the next season as the “New Hawaiian Garden” but it fared no better. In 1935 Capitola bulb growers Everett and Lowell Vetterle bought the pavilion and carefully cut it into three sections, to be moved and reassembled in the resort’s most historic setting—the site of the old Capitola Hotel. Prohibition had ended. Now attached to the Golden Poppy Beer Garden, the dance pavilion and skating rink had the right mix of attractions at last. Meanwhile, as a result of efforts to produce a recreational atmosphere, the word “casino” was tied to everything from bathhouse to barbershop. Slowly the burned-out block along Capitola Avenue began to fill in. The new structures were uniformly concrete or stucco.



Capitola Ballroom and skating rink, 1935  
(*Capitola Museum*)

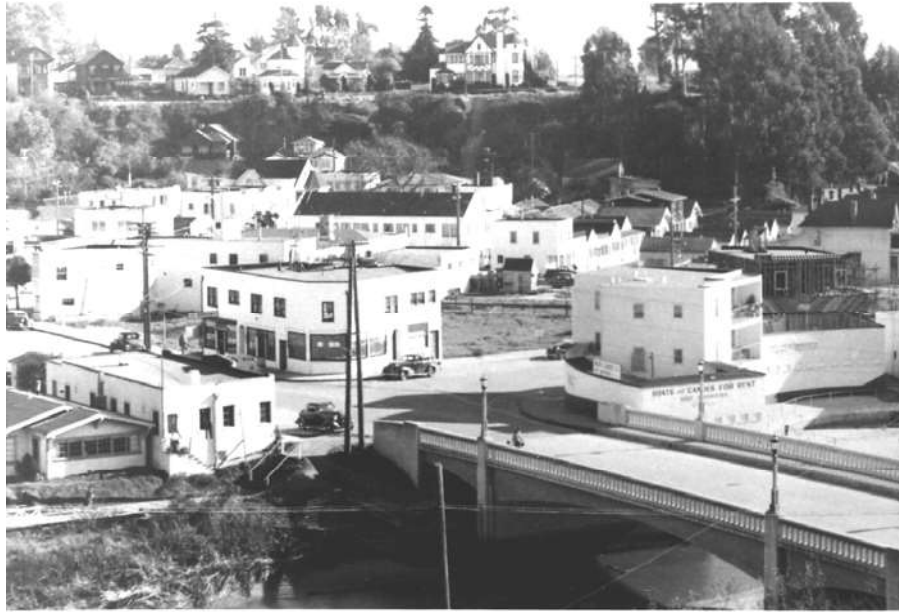
Several other events of 1933-1934 were encouraging. New Brighton Beach State Park opened. The Santa Cruz-Capitola Airport was completed nearby as a municipal airfield. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) built both a desperately needed sewer outfall below the eastern bluff and the concrete Stockton Street Bridge, which harmonized with the architecture of the commercial district.

As automobile travel increased, so did Soquel’s reliance on tourism. Its merchants complained they lost revenue after the Hawaiian Garden fire because fewer people stopped in Soquel to buy gas, eat, or spend the night. The two chambers of commerce re-opened talks of a possible merger but decided Capitola had a population too small to make incorporation feasible.

#### **3.3.4.2 Post World War II Era**

Capitola was quiet during the war. Blackouts along the coast curtailed the nightlife. Japanese families who lived near Forty-first Avenue were removed to internment camps. Italian residents were also required to move inland for a time. New commercial construction was postponed for lack of materials. The Capitola Ballroom was closed and used for storage. Rail passenger service over the hill ended after a storm damaged

the line in 1941. Even with wartime restrictions, however, Capitola's beach was packed whenever the weather was hot.



**Capitola village, ca.1942 (*Capitola Museum*)**

After the war, Santa Cruz County experienced a modest population boom. Former soldiers with young families needed housing. Capitola had become a retirement community surrounded by large tracts available for development. Yet water shortages, pollution, poor lighting, and bad streets discouraged major investors. Led by the chamber, Capitola turned to Soquel for the last time in 1946 with hopes of achieving city incorporation. The effort was abandoned after hostility broke out on both sides.

Capitola business owners, now experienced in handling the challenges involved with village tourism, were increasingly ready to assume control, particularly on issues related to the beach. When J. Beldon Bias, Jr., the owner of 2,500 feet of the beachfront, allowed realtor M. C. Hall to locate an office on a forty-by-fifty-foot strand of the shoreline, the reaction was instantaneous. The \$500 building was built in one day and gone the next, the victim of a suspicious fire. Afterward a committee led by Capitola realtor E. M. Gramm took legal action to halt construction along the center of the beachfront, which was the main point of public access. Threatened with a lawsuit, Bias eventually relinquished most of the beach property to the State Parks Department.

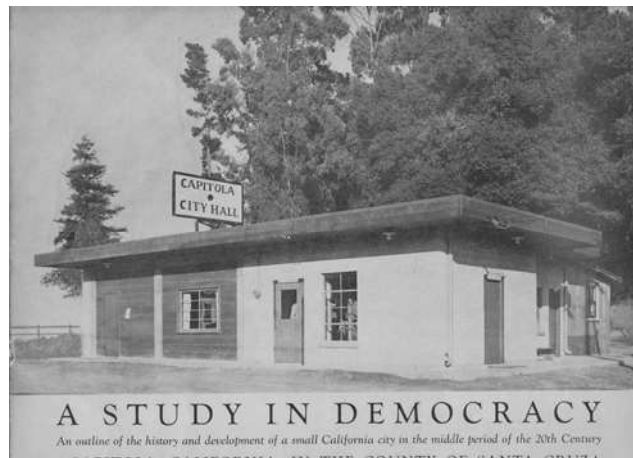
The Capitola Improvement Club was formed in May 1948 at a meeting held in the parish hall of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church. By August, Chamber President Gramm had told the community, "I will do no more begging for funds to repair the streets and maintain the beaches." The chamber bowed out of the incorporation campaign, although members were active participants.

For several years, Capitola's champion and chief supporter on county issues had been Harry McBain, a second district appointee to the board of supervisors. McBain, developer of the Opal subdivision and president of Monterey Bay Builders, Inc., had been an ally to Capitola in its fight to gain county services. When he died suddenly during the 1948 election campaign, his Capitola supporters joined the crusade for incorporation.

Improvement Club leaders Jack Rosensteel, Joe Tabacchini, John Battistini, and Brad Macdonald, the founder and co-owner of the Shadowbrook Restaurant, led the gathering of signatures for a special election. The names had to represent 25 percent of land values between the beach and Highway 1, and from Forty-first to Park Avenues. Petitions were circulated for months. Original proposed boundaries for the City of Capitola were "through the center of Forty-first Avenue over to the new Santa Cruz-Rob Roy Highway, excluding the Vetterle Butane Tank installation, to Monterey Avenue past the airport, down the center of Monterey Avenue to Escalona Gulch near the El Salto motor court, and from there to Monterey Bay." Frank Blake, owner of the artichoke fields at Opal Cliff, petitioned to have his neighborhood excluded because it was mostly farmland.

The club raised money for an analysis on incorporation done by the J. H. Jamison Service of San Jose in July. Jamison observed, "Incorporation is the only means by which the people of Capitola can control the direction and quality of the community's growth. A visitor can see at a glance that the development of some portions of Capitola has been unplanned and uncontrolled. It is unthinkable that the people of Capitola would wish to see the newer sections of the community develop into the same hodge-podge of architecture, use and construction as the older sections."

The vote to create the City of Capitola was won on January 4, 1949, by a margin of 297 to 243, and made official on January 11. The founding council consisted of Harlan P. Kessler, a realtor and insurance salesman; Harry Bowles, a painter; Brad Macdonald, a restaurateur; Jack Rosensteel, a plumbing supply store owner; and Martin Adamson, retired. Their first act was to select Kessler as mayor over Macdonald, who had the most votes. The decision created a lasting tension among former allies in the city incorporation effort and gave the new municipality a troublesome start.



Capitola City Hall has been located at 420 Capitola Avenue since 1950 (*Capitola Museum*)

Misunderstandings continued when the Capitola Chamber of Commerce—which had years before taken on many functions of city government—was notified the city intended to take over the community hall built in 1947. The chamber denied the council permission to move in, forcing city offices to locate initially in a small cottage at 127

Monterey Avenue. More than a year passed before an agreement was reached and the city was able to take possession of the present site at 420 Capitola Avenue.

### 3.3.5 Advancement from A Beach Reliant Economy (1964-1970)

Capitola's first General Plan, adopted in 1964, outlined tourist and convention uses in the flats, with commercial developments for Capitola residents to be located away from the village, mainly at the Forty-first Avenue and Capitola Road intersection and at Bay Avenue near the freeway.



**Disco Mart shopping center at 809 Bay Avenue, built in 1964, was an early commercial development on former agricultural property bordering the village. (*Capitola Museum*)**

Goals related to preserving the village as “the precious jewel of Capitola, the treasure of the town,” shifted, however, as the commercial district struggled with a problem it had not anticipated—disappearance of the beach. Completion of the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor at Woods Lagoon initiated the crisis by creating an obstruction that blocked the sand that formerly moved southward with the current and replenished the beach at Capitola. It would take almost a decade and a total of nearly \$1 million to restore the shoreline.

Along the Esplanade, large boulders were piled against the sea wall in a futile effort to protect sewer lines and minimize damage from storms and high tides. The barricade covered up what remained of the beach, forcing beach-goers into “rock bathing ” by the sea. Disappearance of the sand was viewed as the greatest financial threat in village history.

**Capitola's shoreline was restored when the city contracted with Granite Construction Company to build a 250-foot jetty at the eastern end of the beach. It took 5,500 tons of rock and 2,000 truckloads of sand to complete the project. (*Capitola Museum*)**



Capitola Council members, fearful of losing tourist dollars, endorsed proposals for multiple-story hotels and high-rise parking lots as incentives for vacationers. One plan offered a solution to two problems at once: to keep the sand from drifting away, a consulting engineer suggested construction of offshore parking at the base of the bluff below Grand Avenue. Up to one thousand cars would conceivably fit on a lot 370 feet wide, extending below the bluff from the old sewer treatment station (Esplanade Park) to Sacramento Avenue. The design called for not only parking but also “Boardwalk style concessions” and a large hotel. As a secondary benefit, the development would halt the bluff’s erosion of .6 to 1.5 feet per year.

Merchants lobbied as well for a master plan banning single-family residences in favor of a “resort exclusive” district downtown. Backed by the fire department, officials ordered the historic frame houses in the village to be demolished as fire hazards. In response, a significant number were razed.

**Built in Santa Cruz as Knights Opera House, this structure was moved to Capitola Avenue in 1927 and converted into the Capitola Garage. The building, set between California and Stockton Avenues, was demolished in 1962, among the first in the decade to be razed as a fire trap. (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)**



An influx of youthful newcomers, drawn to the village’s vacant shops and cheap rent in the mid-1960s, sought to cultivate its historical character and appearance. Within this population were artists with non-conforming lifestyles and the owners of storefront industries manufacturing candles, sandals, leather handbags, pottery, beaded necklaces, and psychedelic clothing.

Among those who liked the antiquated setting was a resident who had spent some of his youth in Capitola as a summer vacationer. In the mid-sixties, Tom King, an expert culinary chef and later a well-known restaurateur, organized the first protest group, called “Save Old Capitola.”



Another enthusiast was Bernie Waymire, a graphic artist and owner of a Capitola Avenue shop called the Plum Tree, who was appointed to the Capitola Planning Commission as its first “slow-growth” advocate. Waymire pushed for establishment of the city’s architectural and site review committee to provide an independent design oversight process. “It was things like that which tightened our values and made us look long and hard at what was being allowed, rather than opening our doors without any principles,” she said in a later interview. Waymire left the planning commission in 1970 but remained active in village affairs, serving as a founding member of the Capitola Village Association.

Olaf (Al) Palm, a self-described beatnik and artist, offered hands-on carpentry assistance, hammering some improvements that still exist along Capitola Avenue. Through his “imaginary improvement association,” Palm also scheduled meetings at a Capitola Avenue pub called the Local and invited well-known historical preservationists as speakers.



Capitola aerial view, 1965 (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)

In a 1967 Sunday feature, a writer for the *San Jose Mercury News* described Capitola as a resort transforming into a “Carmel or Sausalito type of community.” A dozen or more small shops had given the village “bright new paint jobs, unusual window displays, noticeable increases in the number of beards, sandals and long tresses—and even a few psychedelic touches.”

After five years of pleading for assistance, the Army Corps of Engineers assured Capitola that its beach would be restored. At first, sand was hauled in to form a new beach, but the currents washed it away. Finally, Granite Construction Company was hired to put a 250-foot jetty near the eastern bluff, using 5,500 tons of rock. An estimated two thousand truckloads of sand was needed to bring back the beach. Meanwhile, the “artist colony” continued to invest itself in government and civic affairs.



**Olaf (Al) Palm at the Palm Gallery, 219 Capitola Avenue, in 1967 (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photographv)**

### **3.3.6 Development of the Capitola Mall (1962-1988)**

Capitola in the 1960s began to move outside the village to set up a more consistently profitable commercial business district. The city annexed acres of the flower and bulb industries between the village and Forty-first Avenue in a series of land developments that would eventually add 220 acres of residential housing.

King’s Market, opened in 1963 by George Ow, Sr., became the first commercial enterprise at the southwest corner of the intersection of Forty-first Avenue and Capitola Road. Development of the King’s Plaza Shopping Center coincided with several others as Capitola discovered the ease and marketability of freeway access. By the early 1970s, Sears and Bank of America sat on the northwest corner of the intersection; Albertson’s Supermarket, Long’s Drug Store, and Wells Fargo Bank were northeast, and a Standard Chevron Station and Foster’s Freeze were on the southeast corner.

The Capitola City Council voted in 1968 to widen Forty-first Avenue to forty-eight feet, with four lanes extending from Highway 1 to the Southern Pacific Railroad track. The district was ready for development. City Administrative Officer Ray Abicht said he envisioned the city built solid with businesses and residences in the near future, “with the hub, undoubtedly, the Forty-first Avenue and Capitola Road area.”



George Ow, Sr. developed King's Plaza, the first shopping complex at the corner of Capitola Road and Forty-first Avenue, in 1963, taking advantage of the nearby cloverleaf intersection with Highway 1. The site of the present Capitola Mall is at center, left, on the former property of Brown Bulb Ranch and Dairy. *(Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)*

Although it hoped to take further advantage of development projects on Brown Bulb Ranch properties between Capitola Road and Clares Street, Capitola had to wait several years for the opportunity to make the bid for annexation. Max Kludt, Capitola city manager from 1973 through 1979, steered the city through a period of crucial steps leading to the thirty-eight-acre Brown Ranch annexation, allowing the Sutter Hill Development Company of Palo Alto to initiate construction on the Capitola Mall in 1974. After lengthy debates, the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) established a "sphere of influence" line that set a limit at Rodeo Gulch, outlining sections of Live Oak that could potentially be absorbed by the cities on either side. Opposition came from the City of Santa Cruz, which had moved too slowly to incorporate the shopping center within its own boundaries.

Annexation of Sutter Hill properties to Capitola won its final approval in 1975. Once stores at the mall opened, Forty-first Avenue became congested with shoppers and cynical references were made to Capitola as "San Jose by-the-Sea." Now impacted by urban traffic, Capitola still benefited from economic success that expanded with mall additions in 1988. A number of long-standing difficulties were dealt with in the village, where substantial repairs and improvements were overdue. The beach neighborhood, no

longer the commercial heart of Capitola, was able to continue developing its artistic character with a mercantile district focused on tourism.

**Examples of Property Types:** *Properties associated with the context of tourism and real estate management (1933-1949) include single-family homes, multiple-unit residences, vacation cottages and bungalows, stores, hotels, motels, theaters, amusement concessions, restaurants, garages, gas stations, and community buildings.*

**110 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 46):** A series of three Van Cleeck frame buildings were remodeled with apartments upstairs and commercial space downstairs. The buildings were connected and given a stucco exterior in the early 1930s.

**611 Riverview Drive and 719 Sunset Drive:** These single-family, stucco bungalows with tile trim are typical of the C. E. Blanchard development of the 1930s.

**216 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 16):** A log-cabin revival home built ca.1930, the house has retained its architectural integrity.

**105 and 107 Fanmar Way (Survey, 12):** Twin, cross-gable cottages with vertical siding above and horizontal siding below, these are representative of early homes built in the subdivision after it was opened for development in 1927.

**4980 Cliff Drive (Survey, 11):** This three-and-a-half-story International Moderne style home was built by John and Violet Battistini in 1947. The Battistinis were Capitola Improvement Club members who worked toward city incorporation in 1949.

**205-209 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):** This series of buildings was completed shortly after the fire of 1933. During the 1930s, the Moderne style structures housed the Capitola Post Office, a newsstand, and a bus stop.

**201 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 47):** Initially a Red-and-White Grocery, this rectangular, Moderne building with arched, fluted, square, streamlined columns was built in 1935. It was known as the Capitola Grocery in 1968, when Joanne McKown and Thomas Jefferson Davis acquired the building and established the counter-culture Aries Arts, which continued through the mid-1990s.



**Capitola Theater, 120 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 14):** Joseph Jacobs and Arthur Meyer built the five-hundred-seat Capitola Theater. Jacobs, a Burlingame resident, was a longtime summer vacationer at Capitola who invested in a unit at the Venetian Court in 1942. He heard people mention the village needed a theater, so he bought a parcel next to the site of the old Capitola Hotel and held onto it until materials were available at the end of World War II. Portions of a war surplus Quonset hut may have been used in the framework of the brick and redwood structure. Jacobs daughter, Audrey, was a graduate of Stanford University and a Modesto school teacher who came to help out on opening night in 1948. She stayed nearly fifty years, until the theater closed in September 1996.



**Capitola Theater was completed in 1948, shortly before the election to incorporate the City of Capitola. (Capitola Museum)**

**Rustic Inn, 220 San Jose Avenue:** Built in the early thirties at the corner of San Jose Avenue and Park Place, the two-story stucco building was originally a restaurant operated by William Strang.

**216 Capitola Avenue:** Now a retail shop, the ground floor was a liquor store in the mid-thirties and has throughout most of its history been a real estate office. It was the Hooper and Finson Real Estate building of Harry Hooper and Harry Finson, followed by A. V. Buck, and later Brad and John Macdonald. Buck was one of the village business owners who took up Olaf Palm's offer to improve the look of his wood frame and stucco building, and his additions remain.



**Hooper and  
Finson Real  
Estate office,  
left, along  
Capitola  
Avenue, ca  
1950 (*Capitola  
Museum*)**

### **3.4 Transportation (1769-1950)**

#### **3.4.1 Early Routes (1769-1858)**

Native American paths existed in the Monterey Bay region for thousands of years before they were joined by the trails of Spanish explorers in 1769. After European settlement, during the Spanish and Mexican periods, cattle and horse tracks crossed over Rancho Soquel. Travelers moved between missions, villas, and ranchos by cart and horseback or on foot. Routine passage over streams and arroyos was difficult without bridges and impossible in times of flooding.

Pioneers settling in Santa Cruz County after statehood in 1850 found themselves shut in by a barrier of forested hills and river canyons. Eventually, travelers from Soquel to San Francisco could ride by stage or wagon to San Juan Bautista, turn northward and continue on to Alviso, at the south end of San Francisco Bay, where they boarded a steamer for the final passage to the City. The trip took an average of two-and-a-half days. Exports, such as redwood shakes, posts, and pickets or rolled leather from the Porter Tannery in Soquel, typically made the trip to market by coastal steamer in a journey of several days. As the forests were logged and the timberline retreated, longer skid roads and canyon trails wound toward the coast to surf boats at Soquel Landing.

Traffic moved from Santa Cruz to Watsonville along the County Road, today's Soquel Drive and Freedom Boulevard. From intersections in the town of Soquel, heavily loaded wagons cut grooves in the summertime as they rolled toward the shore, where cargo was loaded onto steamers. When landowner Frederick Hihn had the wharf built in 1857-1858, Wharf Road approached it on the west side of Soquel Creek, through Rancho

Rodeo. The road from Soquel followed the ridge above the flood plain and then slanted sharply downhill to the beach.

### **3.4.2 Roads and Railroads (1858-1950)**

Two crucial transportation advancements allowed Capitola to succeed—a road over the mountains and a railroad. In 1858 Hihn and a number of backers subsidized and charted the course of the Soquel Turnpike (San Jose Road) over the summit. The mountain toll road from San Jose to Soquel was a critical link, one that gave Santa Clara Valley residents their first easy access to the coast—a path providing escape from the hot days of summer.

Eleven years later, when Samuel Hall leased the Soquel Landing flat from Hihn, vacationers were already arriving from over the hill, asking permission to camp and cool off near the ocean. By 1874 Hall had saved enough money to officially open his resort, where framework for a railroad trestle was under construction. Hall had the ingenuity to establish a resort at Capitola but may have underrated the significance of the coming of the rail line. He built a livery stable under the shadow of the new trestle, hoping to turn his largest profit from the care of horses.

For years, connecting local industry and passenger travel to a statewide rail network had been Hihn's goal. He had mastered the politics of railroad funding during a term in the state legislature. By 1871 he was promoting a narrow-gauge line through Santa Cruz County to hook up with the Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) at Pajaro in Monterey County. In 1873 he was joined in the project by other prominent investors, including sugar-refining capitalist Claus Spreckels. Hihn was able to convince county supervisors to put a railroad subsidy bill on the ballot, providing \$6,000 of public money per mile to build the twenty-one-mile line from the City of Santa Cruz to Pajaro. Watsonville voted against the measure—south county residents believed themselves served well enough already. Other county voters, however, gave the subsidy its victory. The Santa Cruz Rail Road Company, incorporated in 1873, listed Hihn and Spreckels as major shareholders. Hihn now had the power to direct the railroad toward his own enterprises, with sufficient financial backing from another wealthy industrialist. Hihn reciprocated Spreckel's investment, in part, by contributing \$22,000 toward the California Beet Sugar Company mill that Spreckels wanted developed near Capitola. In 1874 the mill was in operation within a few hundred yards of Soquel Creek. A spur track from the rail line was eventually extended to the processing plant. Soquel Creek's nine-hundred-foot trestle hovered above the agricultural fields and the beach. When the railroad was finished in 1876, the "Soquel" Depot was located at the west end of the trestle, near the base of the wharf at Capitola.

Capitola's first buildings were crude and temporary. The seasonal resort, in lowland along the creek, often flooded in the winter months. As an experienced carpenter, Hall reserved his skill for six cottages built in 1875 on El Camino Medio. Shown on early maps as "Nob Hill," El Camino Medio was on a bluff protected from high tides.

Because the lowlands were prone to flooding and high tides, most of the first durable Camp Capitola cabins were built at the base of Depot Hill on El Camino Medio, upper left. Photo ca. 1883 (*Capitola Museum*)

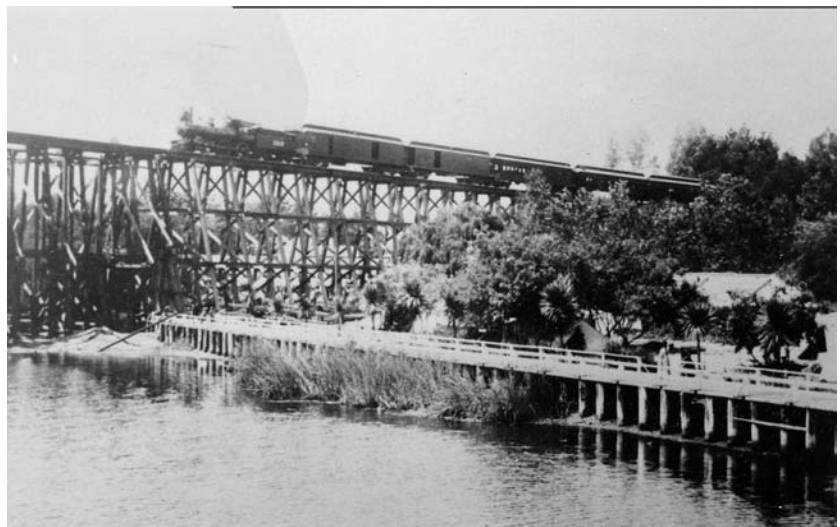


Once the railroad was in operation, Capitola greeted visitors by the hundreds. In 1880 the South Pacific Coast Railroad was completed between Alameda and the City of Santa Cruz, increasing the number of resort-bound passengers. By the time Hihn mapped the first Capitola subdivision in 1882, a thousand vacationers and more were arriving in season. Southern Pacific Railroad had purchased the Santa Cruz-Watsonville line in 1881 and had it broad gauged, allowing more direct rail service to and from all parts of the state. With the improvements to the rail line, Capitola quickly shed its reputation as a “rough camp” and matured, with bigger hotels, more concessions, privately owned cottages, and fully enclosed cabins with windows and doors.

While the depot was in its original location, travelers were required to come down the length of the beach to cross the creek where it entered the bay on the east side. Cabins and tents were arranged in rows that eventually defined the original business district.

Capitola depot was relocated in 1883 to the east end of the trestle, across the road from its current location. The new site led to an expansion of roads beyond the resort toward Soquel.

In 1903 Hihn negotiated with Southern Pacific for a new railroad depot, to be built across the road at the entrance to Park Avenue. He supplied ornamental trees and additional land for railroad sidings as an expression of his appreciation for construction of a “stylish depot building,” which stands today as the Inn at Depot Hill.







Passenger train arrives at Capitola, ca 1940 (*Capitola Museum*)

Regularly scheduled service “over the hill” from Los Gatos to Santa Cruz continued until mudslides forced the line to close following a heavy storm in 1941. The closing of the line ended passenger service over the mountains to Santa Cruz. After World War II, tourist trains from the San Francisco Bay Area were revived as the “Suntan Special,”

coming from San Jose to the Pajaro Junction, and then west toward Capitola and Santa Cruz. Passenger service ceased in 1950 and the depot was closed. It was officially abandoned in January 1956 and was sold to the stationmaster for \$1.

### 3.4.3 Village Transportation Patterns (1880-1904)

In the 1880s, Hihn shaped Capitola to take advantage of the natural beauty of the coastal landscape. Stairway observation decks, boardwalks, and parks were strategically positioned. Village paths were reserved for walking; bicycles, horses, and burros shared the roadways.

Hihn expanded the camp in 1888-1889 with an addition called “Capitola Park.” The site included today’s Depot Hill and part of the McCormick tract. Hihn built Park Avenue and, along the ocean bluff, a tree-lined path called “Lover’s Lane.” Monterey Avenue was cut and graded. After a landslide the next winter, a retaining wall was constructed with fossilized rock from the rocks below “Lover’s Lane.” Using the same stone, another wall had been erected on the north side of Cherry Avenue.



Dirt fill, taken from the cliff by tramcar, was spread over one-and-a-half acres of creek

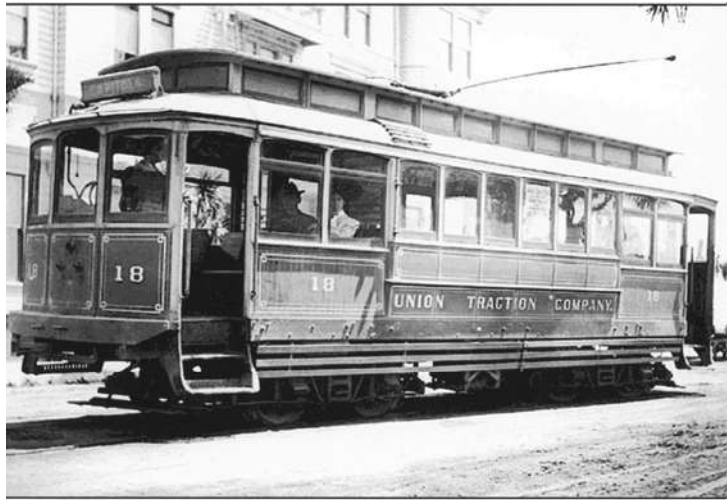
floodplain and smoothed for new construction. Pilings were driven for an esplanade boardwalk “to afford a charming stroll for day or evening.” Soquel Creek’s natural bed was shifted west to widen the beach and provide easier access. Both a pedestrian crossing and a 150-foot wagon bridge spanned the creek. A favorite amusement was to “walk across the cable bridge, pausing to set it ‘teetering’ up and down, much to the terror of the young ladies who would have to hold onto the young men to avoid tumbling into the Soquel.”

To please visitors, streets were named for the home cities of annual vacationers, and, whenever possible, Hihn commissioned paintings of Capitola to be hung in the depots of these communities. He marketed the seaside retreat as a rail destination, although it could be reached as well by carriage along scenic drives such as “Lower Soquel Road,” known today as Capitola Road.

As the twentieth century approached, Hihn built a larger hotel and remodeled the commercial village, while awaiting the construction of a planned electric trolley line, which arrived in 1904.

#### **3.4.4 Electric Railway (1904-1925)**

Trolley service between Santa Cruz and Capitola provided efficient transportation from 1904 until bus service was initiated twenty years later. The City of Santa Cruz had horse-drawn streetcars since the 1870s and electric trolleys since 1892, but it had taken another decade for service to reach through Live Oak to Capitola. Santa Cruz promoter Fred Swanton started the venture in 1901, and tracks reached Capitola in 1903. Operated by the Union Traction Company, the line came from Santa Cruz along the coast and crossed a bridge over Soquel Creek. It rounded the corner to a terminus at the end of the esplanade and then headed up Capitola Avenue to Stockton Avenue, where the streetcars turned left for the trip back to Santa Cruz.



The line connected Capitola visitors to a number of other resort stops—Twin Lakes, Seabright, the Santa Cruz Boardwalk, DeLaveaga Park, Vue de l’Eau, and Natural Bridges. But the company struggled financially as roadways were surfaced for the increasingly popular automobile. Trolley service to Capitola was abandoned in 1924. The tracks were ripped out and the roadbed down the hill to Capitola was paved and renamed Portola Drive, a route used by the Union Traction Company’s new fleet of Mack buses.

### 3.4.5 Impact of the Automobile (1908-1950)

At the end of World War I, the three-hour ride from San Francisco to Santa Cruz by train cost slightly less than \$3. The average time for an automobile driving the same distance was five hours, but cars were picking up speed. Because of bad roads and accidents, cars were used infrequently until the 1920s, when the California State Automobile Club began its campaign to improve and surface roads. The new Lincoln Highway, a cross-country route from New York to San Francisco, further inspired better thoroughfares statewide. Glenwood Highway, near the route of today's Highway 17, was opened in 1921. By then, the Santa Cruz-Watsonville Highway was surfaced in concrete with an overall width of eighteen feet.



Auto camping at Capitola in the 1920s (Courtesy of Frank Urbancic)

Because of its scenic location, Santa Cruz County was increasingly popular with vacationers who had more leisure time. Throughout the twenties, service stations were built at major intersections, and auto camps were featured at every resort. Capitola and Soquel were favored stops because of their locations midway between San Jose and Monterey. Even though the rural roads were unpaved for years, the attractiveness of auto touring surpassed the inconvenience. Soon “day-trippers” from over the hill created traffic jams along the esplanade on every sunny weekend. The increased popularity revived the idea of promoting Capitola as a year-round resort. “Capitola All the Time” was the trendy marketing slogan of the era.

As an oil salesman, H. Allen Rispin understood the potential of coastal developments that could easily be reached by car. Shortly after he bought Capitola in 1919, three gas stations and two garages were in the village, and the Bay Head Land Company's holdings were advertised as an easy drive from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Subdivisions built in the Rispin era, however—such as Riverview Terrace, Fanmar Way, and the McCormick tract—while intended for the automobile, generally had streets only wide enough for two-way traffic with the Model T.



Rispin owned the streets and vowed he would have them paved. By 1927, however, the community had grown tired of waiting for needed repairs and lobbied for the county to assume ownership. At the end of the Rispin era in 1930, Capitola had three miles of streets and only one was surfaced. The village community and its business leaders blamed the condition of the streets for slowing development in the thirties. Santa Cruz County added the streets to the county system in 1937, and household street numbers were assigned in 1940. Minimum progress was made to solve problems with parking, maintenance, and street lighting until the roadways were transferred to the City of Capitola with incorporation in 1949. Included with the transfer of streets were the Esplanade and the beach seawall.

### **3.4.6 Highway 17 (1931-1943)**

Work on a modern thoroughfare over the Summit in the Santa Cruz Mountains began in 1931. Santa Cruz lobbied successfully to have the highway end there, even though Soquel was the easier destination from a construction standpoint. The road was accomplished in phases, with the Santa Cruz portion, to Inspiration Point just north of Upper Glenwood Road, finished and dedicated in 1933. The route as far as Los Gatos was officially completed in 1940, although crews continued working until 1943. The first traffic counts showed that nine thousand vehicles per day were traveling on the highway. The numbers jumped higher in the summer season as tourists made their way toward the beaches in Santa Cruz and Capitola.

### **3.4.7 Highway 1 (1941-1958)**

In 1941 construction started on a modern highway to connect Santa Cruz and Watsonville. The work began in South County and reached a point near Aptos Village when Pearl Harbor and World War II shut the project down in December. Delayed until 1947, the job resumed with crews laboring to complete the 7.65-mile stretch to Morrissey Boulevard in two years. The final stretch, linking to Highway 17, was finished in 1958.

Capitola's first mayor, Harlan P. Kessler, was among the ribbon-cutters at dedication ceremonies in November 1949. The twin feats of Capitola incorporation and completion of Highway 1 created a barrier between Capitola and Soquel. From the time of Capitola's founding, the two villages had shared a territory and similar perspectives. "Capitola-Soquel" had been a familiar hyphenated title for numerous business, school, and social clubs. Highway 1 would hereafter define and separate the two communities.



Highway 1 under construction, 1948 (*Courtesy of the Daubenbiss family*)

### 3.4.8 Bus service (1925- )

Established in the mid-1920s, bus service to Capitola continued intermittently until after city incorporation, when a contract was signed for a regular inter-city bus schedule with the Santa Cruz Transit Lines. Greyhound Bus Lines also served Capitola through the 1950s.

### 3.4.9 Santa Cruz-Capitola Airport (1922-1954)



Capitola airfield, ca. 1930 (*Capitola Museum*)

An airfield coincided with the establishment of the Camp McQuaide military base on what had been known as Hihn's eastern field. Camp McQuaide was a summertime coast artillery training camp located on twenty-seven acres east of Depot Hill from 1922 to 1936. A glider club used the camp's landing strip unofficially for ten years, until the land was leased to the city of Santa Cruz. The airport was dedicated in November 1934. Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers graded the field and laid two runways, while the American Legion built the clubhouse.

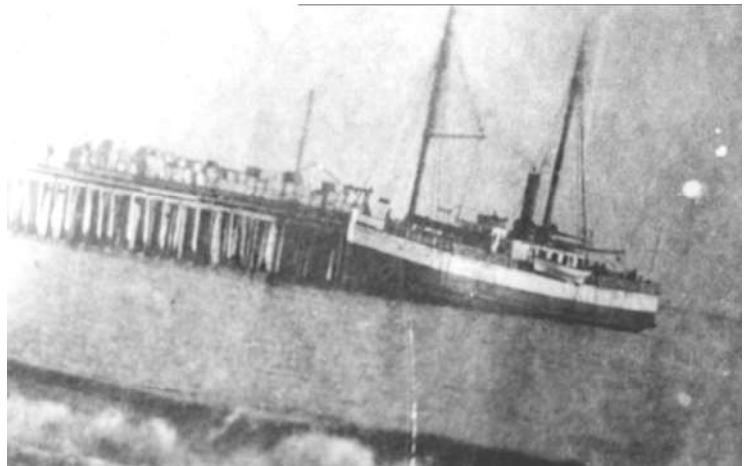
The airfield was called the Santa Cruz Airport, but known as the Santa Cruz-Capitola Airport. It closed during World War II, while its manager, Russell Rice, served in Texas with the Civil Air Patrol. Upon his return, Rice was given permission to make instructional flights back and forth to San Jose. Capitola's airport was among few along the coast cleared for take-offs before the war was over. After V-J day in 1945, airport business included a flight school, charter service, and hanger rentals.

Rice and his wife, Esther, managed the airport for nine years, but the lease with the Hihn family was a short-term agreement. The airport closed when a notice of termination was given in 1954. The Rices had already taken charge of Sky Park Airport in Scotts Valley and shifted operations there. Hihn's field was planted with strawberries until Cliffwood Heights was subdivided in the early 1960s. No airport structures remain.

### **Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of transportation include the trestle, bridge, auto courts, the wharf, service stations, and the bus depot.*

**Wharf (Survey, 75):** Built in 1857-1858, the pier was already worn when Camp Capitola was founded in 1874. The wharf manager listed its exports that year, however, to show how the wharf was doing "quite an extensive business." Among items shipped were 2,466,886 feet of lumber, 1,521 rolls of tanned leather, and 2,111 boxes of apples. Categories included groceries, country produce, and meats, both dressed and "on foot."



Wharf shipping diminished once the Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad was completed in 1876. A decade later, the agent for the Pacific Coast Steamship Company complained "general merchandise and freight of all kinds was down by three-fourths." The shipping era had ended shortly before the steamer *Gypsy*, which had docked regularly at Capitola, ran aground near Monterey in 1905.

Although often in need of repair, the wharf has always been popular for fishing and ocean excursions. An Italian fishing community that settled at the base of the wharf had a commercial fleet of about twenty boats until the wharf lost its mid-section during a storm in 1913. Longtime excursion fleet operator Captain George E. Mitchell was a familiar figure on the wharf from 1895 until his retirement in 1946.

H. Allen Rispin held title to the wharf from 1919 to 1931, but its legal status was unclear for several years afterward. Deed books in the Santa Cruz County Recorder's Office contain numerous references to the wharf and those who made claims to its concessions. As liquidation battles ensued, Captain Mitchell bought the lease from one of Rispin's promoter's, William Simonds. Mitchell obtained control of wharf concessions and the davits, floats, and wharf equipment, as well as the wharf's bait and tackle club.

In 1931 a sixty-five-year California state tidelands lease was awarded to the Central Coast Finance Company, a Watsonville based firm run by John F. Enns and Stanley Bromwell Huffman. Santa Cruz County obtained title by legislative act on July 16, 1935, amended July 16, 1959.

Mitchell evidently had control of the lease and conveyed it in 1945 to L. H. (Slim) Guest of Taft, who sold it a year later. The wharf lease then went through a succession of owners. George Dymesich and the Capitola Wharf and Boat Corporation obtained it in 1951. They transferred it to Thomas and Jean Shanahan in 1962. The



Shanahan's application to extend the original lease for an additional 25 years was granted January 1, 1971. Official title at that time was still held by the County of Santa Cruz. Shanahan conveyed the lease to Capitola Wharf, Inc. in 1976, and Rick Karleen bought it in 1979.

The arrow points to Capitola's first depot, ca. 1881. The trestle is to the far right.  
(Capitola Museum)

On January 24, 1980, Capitola City Council accepted the deed grant from the County of Santa Cruz for conveyance of the tidelands and submerged lands, which included the Capitola Wharf. Renovations were completed, and dedication festivities were held in October 1981. The city continues to improve, reconstruct, and maintain the wharf.

**Trestle (Survey, 64):** The narrow gauge railroad trestle built in 1874 over Soquel Creek was a 105-foot-long Howe truss bridge designed by Tom Carter. The track was broad gauged in 1881, and portions of the early bridge were replaced in 1886 with a new, 166-foot span that was twelve feet higher than the first one. “The grade from the depot easterly was so steep that a train of five or six coaches could not be started from the depot, but had to be backed down and across the bridge to get headway enough to carry them over the grade,” reported the *Santa Cruz Daily Sentinel*.

The top of the trestle was closed-in for a number of years after 1890 to “keep the timbers from the wind and rain.” Repairs have been ongoing; the road under the trestle was widened with concrete supports in the mid-1970s. Along with the wharf, the trestle is Capitola’s oldest landmark, one that dates to the year of the resort’s founding.

**Depot, 250 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 24):** The present depot was constructed on one of the Hihn Company’s park sites and is the source for the name Depot Hill given to the neighborhood behind it. The train station initially faced the railroad tracks, augmented by a sidetrack and storage building. By the 1950s, it had the faded yellow paint and neglected appearance often associated with western rail stops. The stationmaster, who purchased the depot after it was abandoned in 1956, sold it for \$1 to interior decorator Lucinda Savoy in 1960. She had it turned fifty degrees to its present angle and gave it a new foundation, plaster, paint, and gray shingle siding.



Two retired Los Gatos schoolteachers, Bea and Harry Schultz, bought the station in the early 1970s and continued its renovation. They sold it to another creative businesswoman, Cecil Carnes, who owned it through the 1980s. Carnes sold it to Dan Floyd and his partner, Suzanne Lankes, who opened the Inn at Depot Hill in 1990.

**Stockton Avenue Bridge (Survey, 21):** Replacing an old bridge built of iron and wood, the thirty-foot-wide concrete bridge was built by a crew of fifteen Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers in approximately 150 days at a cost of \$25,000. The bridge covers a span of 135 feet and consists of ninety yards of concrete and fifteen tons of steel. When it opened in May 1934, news reports noted its significance “because it is a new connecting link with the new road which is to follow the old Union Traction Company right-of-way.” Following the catastrophic fire that burned a major portion of the village in 1933, the bridge was heralded as an important improvement that pointed the way toward better times in the Depression era.



**Hillcrest Motel, 4670 Capitola Road:** These small units are typical of auto courts and motels established in Capitola from the mid-1920s through the 1940s.

**Bus Depot, 209 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):** In the mid-1940s, Jack Garland was agent and manager of the Capitola offices of both the Pacific Greyhound Lines and the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, located in the center of the village. Garland and his wife, Isabel, also ran the Capitola News Stand in the same building.



One of the City of Capitola's earliest solutions to village parking problems was a shuttle "elephant train" initiated in 1955. (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)

#### **4.0 GOVERNMENT, CIVIC, AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS (1882-1970)**

During its early decades, the Hihn Company nurtured the everyday life of Camp Capitola. Government was provided through the superintendent, Frank Reanier, who also had responsibility for all social functions in coordination with the managers of its hotels. When Hihn died in 1913, the administration was transferred first to his daughter and son-in-law, the Hendersons, and then to Rispin, who bought Capitola in 1919.

Rispin quickly divested himself of responsibilities to the community. He sold the resort utilities and commercial enterprises and applied himself to projects that would yield a quick profit. Without the guidance of a sole owner, Capitola merchants assumed the roles of leadership. E. V. Woodhouse, for example, who bought the prestigious but aging hotel, had the personality of a genial town mayor and community host. Harry Hooper, realtor and postmaster, was a baseball hero and common sense community spokesman who residents looked to for problem-solving advice and leadership.

Because Capitola depended on tourism, merchants and realtors had the greatest investment in its upkeep and general welfare. In the 1930s and 1940s, various chamber organizations, progress clubs, and improvement associations were formed, often working with business leaders from the town of Soquel, who shared mutual interests.

After World War II, the need for repairs and leadership grew to a level that a successful attempt was made to incorporate as a municipality.

#### 4.1 Incorporation and Civic Development (1947-1977)

One of the first battles after city incorporation was a dispute over ownership of the community hall built on Capitola Avenue in 1947. The building was on property that had been owned by Kessler, the first mayor, but its original purpose was social and civic rather than governmental. Traditionally, these had overlapped, and the community was not yet entirely ready for an abrupt separation. It took the decade of the 1950s before citizens had faith in the oversight of city council and staff.

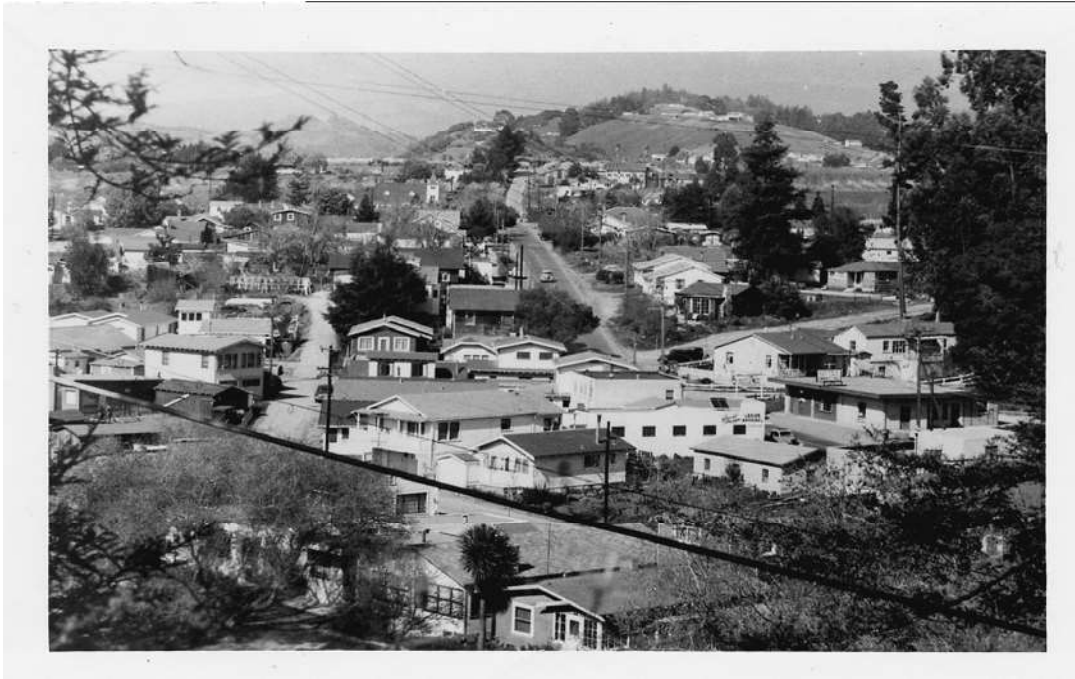
Planning commissioners appointed by Mayor Brad Macdonald in March 1950 were Homer Berry, Russell Rasmussen, Eleanor Fontes, Harry Finson, George Collins, Samuel Nelson, John Carter, Elmer S. Anderson, and Samuel Bright, who was the city judge.



Capitola City Council posed outside its first city hall at 127 Monterey Avenue in 1950. (*Capitola Museum*)

In 1952 the city survived one of its greatest challenges, a “disincorporation” election campaign. Fortunately, voters were by then impressed by city benefits, such as larger quarters for the Capitola Library, which was moved to the Kessler Building across the street from city hall. Other advantages emerging in the early fifties were storm drains, a working sewer system, a 750-gallon Mack fire truck, a trained auxiliary police force, a modern playground, an elementary school within city limits, regulated yard clean-ups, a garbage ordinance, beach cleaning, and a lifeguard paid to protect swimmers in the lagoon. All were coordinated through city government.

The city paid the chamber \$5,000 for the present city hall site and, in December 1950, moved in. The building was renovated and expanded in the 1960s. A portion of the police department section was retained when the new city hall, designed by architect Doug Messini, was completed in 1977.



Capitola Avenue is in the center of this 1948 photo that includes Riverview Avenue, left, and the Beulah tract, right. The community hall at 420 Monterey Avenue became the site of city hall in 1950. (*Capitola Museum*)

## **4.2 Public Services (1878-1963)**

### **4.2.1 Communications (1889-1963)**

#### **4.2.1.1 Post Office**

Patty Reed Lewis was manager of both the Capitola Park Hotel and Capitola Hotel in 1889. Her son, James Frazier Lewis, agreed that year to become Capitola's first postmaster. Lewis brought the mail from the depot and distributed it from a small office near the beach. At the time, Reed was also manager of the dance pavilion and skating rink, although he would later take over the candy concession and went on to a career as the renowned inventor of a nickel candy bar called the Victoria.

Capitola's post office moved from store to store as space required and has been in seven different sites. All the sites were apparently leased, except for the present post office at 826 Bay Avenue. Among those that still exist are the Moderne complex at 205-209 Capitola Avenue; the Craft Gallery building at 126 San Jose Avenue; the Capitola Pharmacy building at 118 Capitola Avenue; and the commercial building at 709 Capitola Avenue.

Best known of Capitola's postmasters is Harry Bartholomew Hooper, who served from 1933 until his retirement in 1957. The Committee on Baseball Veterans elected Hooper in 1971 to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. He was the only man to play on four Boston Red Sox championship teams, participating in the World Series games of 1912, 1915, 1916, and 1918. He also played five years with the Chicago White Sox and was



later a coach for the Princeton team. He is described in Hall of Fame literature as “one of baseball’s most dignified and intelligent players.” A commemorative plaque honoring Hooper was placed at the entrance to the Capitola Wharf in December 2002.

One of the department’s most memorable postal carriers was Capitola resident John Nicol, who in the 1950s was still bringing mail from Santa Cruz and Soquel into the village by wagon, drawn by his horse, Fanny.

**Harry Hooper (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)**

#### **4.2.1.2 Newspapers**

Santa Cruz newspapers on a regular basis featured news reports and social items from neighboring communities, including Capitola in season. The arrival and departure of guests were noted in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, the *Santa Cruz Surf*, and the *Santa Cruz Evening News*. Only two Capitola publications are known to have existed before 1960. *Capitola Sunset* was the daily evening newspaper published in the 1890s during the summer, featuring short stories of interest to camp vacationers as well as advertisements for the concessions. In the mid-1950s, after Capitola incorporation, Salvador Licart was editor of *The Chat* newspaper.

#### **4.2.1.3 Telegraph, Telephone, and Bulletin Boards**

Throughout the Hihn era, the Capitola Hotel served as the communications center of the village. Messages were posted on hotel bulletin boards, and the hotel office maintained telegraph and telephone conveniences. Telegraph services were also available at the Capitola Depot. Bulletin boards at various locations have continued as a useful means of announcing community events. Most have been set up and maintained by the Capitola Chamber of Commerce.

#### **4.2.2 Utilities (1878-1961)**

##### **4.2.2.1 Water**

Bates Creek historically provided Capitola with drinking water. Samuel Hall announced plans in 1878 to lay four-inch pipe from Grover’s Mill in Soquel to supply spring water for “culinary purposes and irrigation.” Landowner Frederick Hihn supplied water to the town of Soquel as well as Capitola. A decade later, the demand had

doubled, and the supply was inadequate for the growing number of resort vacationers. Hihn designed a new pumping works to take water from the well at the old beet sugar mill as well as from Bates Creek. The next year, a forty-foot water tower/tank house was installed at the corner of Park and Washburn Avenues. Water was pumped from a forty-thousand-gallon reservoir at Bates Creek. The Capitola tank house, fitted with sixteen sleeping rooms, was a landmark for thirty years. The engine and pumping works provided both water and electric lights.

Authors of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps complained in 1905, “The town and water supply are owned by the F. A. Hihn Company which refuses to give any information regarding the size and location of the water pipes.”

H. Allen Rispin acquired the rights to Capitola’s water supply when he bought the resort in 1919. The water system was taken over in 1926 by the Aptos firm of Monroe, Lyon and Miller, developers of Rio del Mar. The transfer plunged Capitola and Soquel into a water crisis within a year, and jointly the towns applied for help from the Public Utilities California Corporation. Attempts to form a consolidated water district were repeated several times in the thirties.

The old Capitola-Soquel water system and its Bates Creek reservoir were part of a 1943 consolidation into the Monterey Bay Water Company, improving water service to Capitola. The Soquel Creek Water District was formed in 1961. Capitola has no existing structures associated with its early water system, although small sections of original redwood water pipe are in the Capitola Museum collection.

#### 4.2.2.2 Electricity



Gerlach Wave Motor, 1895 (*Capitola Museum*)

Although it was only in the summer season, from June through September, Capitola had electric lights early. The forty-foot tank house and reservoir built at Capitola Park in 1889 had an engine and pumping works that were designed to furnish water and provide electricity. Within a few years, the system was running a steam-operated electric powerhouse and laundry behind the Capitola Hotel. The powerhouse provided current to a number of streetlights,

the hotel, the dance pavilion, and Reanier’s superintendent’s building but not to apartments, cabins, or tents.

Electric power was important to Hihn, and he wanted it cheaply. In 1895—at a time when the wharf was less important for shipping—Hihn leased the end of the pier for an experiment. E. Gerlach, who had a theory that ocean waves could be harnessed to provide electric power, formed a company and brought materials to Capitola for an enormous device. The Gerlach Wave Motor was a thirty-ton, wave-powered electric generator. Its balance wheel was the largest ever seen in the region, several stories tall, with paddles that moved forward and backward through the action of the waves. Tested and repaired often during 1896, it was expensive and utilized thousands of feet of lumber but was a total failure. No trace of the wave motor existed on the wharf the next year.

Rispin sold Capitola's water, gas, and electricity systems to the Public Utilities California Corporation in January 1928. The company occupied the old Hihn Company brick and iron steam pumping plant through the early 1940s. The building no longer exists. It is remarkable that most of Hihn's early provisions for the resort were still in place at the time Capitola became a city.

The city began negotiations with Coast Counties Gas and Electric Company for service shortly after incorporation.

#### **4.2.2.3 Sewage**

Disposal of sewage has always been Capitola's nastiest problem. Initially, Hihn had found a solution that was efficient for the short term but impractical for a growing community dependent on tourism. In 1888 he allowed the South Coast Paper Mill in Soquel permission to run a flume from the mill down the middle of Soquel Creek. The idea was to keep fluids from the paper mill from polluting the creek and the beach. The flume passed Soquel School and followed the ridge west along the bottomlands of the Averon property to what is now Riverview Avenue, where the outhouses of the tent campground were set upon it. As it came near Capitola, it went underground and angled toward Noble Gulch, and then headed east to a three-hundred-foot tunnel through Depot Hill, where sewage was discharged "safely into the bay," two hundred feet to the east of the resort.

The Hihn Company sewer system served the community until the late 1920s, when it was condemned by the Santa Cruz County Health Department. Rispin made no improvements after he bought Capitola, and the village struggled to keep creek and beachfront pollution to a minimum. In 1929, one of Capitola's biggest goals was to "carry the present sewer outfall much farther out into the bay." Work on a new sewer outfall, built as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, was completed in 1933 on the site of the old Capitola Hotel bathhouse under the Depot Hill bluff. The WPA plant was praised for its efficiency but gradually became an eyesore that was located too close to both the beach and a favorite local surfing spot—known for years as "Sewer's." Esplanade Park replaced it in the 1980s.



Capitola's sewer outfall was a 1933 WPA project . This photograph was taken shortly before the outfall was removed in the late 1980s. (*Capitola Museum*)

Septic tank and sewer pumping station problems were leading concerns in the months prior to the city incorporation election in January 1949. Merchants were shocked and alarmed when the health department insisted on the posting of quarantine signs at the beach. Following the start of tourist season in May, while work was being done to overhaul the treatment plant, residents complained that tourism had declined because warning signs were posted.

#### **4.2.3 Health Care**

During the Hihn era, one or more camp physicians spent the summer at the resort and tended the needs of vacationers. Community residents usually went to doctors in Soquel and Aptos for medical care and to Santa Cruz for hospital services. Capitola has no buildings associated with health care that existed prior to city incorporation.

#### **4.2.4 Fire Department**

Capitola was served throughout the Hihn era by a volunteer fire department of a half-dozen men who used equipment kept in a small firehouse or stored at the Capitola Hotel. As with other public services, the system worked well but began to fail in the late 1920s without continued support. Civic leader Harry Hooper commented in the early 1930s that when a structure caught fire, residents felt the best they could do was to pull the furniture out and watch the building burn. Often there was not enough water pressure, even if the equipment was brought to the site in time.

Community merchants, an improvement club, and church groups contributed to buy fire equipment during the Depression. A fire commission appointed in the late 1920s helped establish the Capitola Fire Department, organized in 1930 under Chief Ed Huber. The first piece of equipment was a hand-drawn fire cart used by Huber and nine volunteers. Woodhouse provided space for a firehouse in the old post office near El Camino Medio, and equipment was stored at the Hawaiian Garden. After the 1933 fire, Capitola's fire equipment was kept at the Capitola Garage at the end of Stockton Avenue.

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors established the Capitola Fire District in March 1940, with boundaries that extended as far as the Brown Bulb Ranch on Forty-first Avenue. Commissioners were Thomas Hayford, Homer Berry, Augustine Canepa, and Harlan Kessler, with Everett Vetterle elected president. Leo Gutterman was chief of the volunteer firefighters. Fred Jarvis, who owned the Capitola Garage, took command of the department and was chief from the late forties through the mid-1960s. His son, F. Harold Jarvis, later served as chief, and another son, Leland, was assistant chief.

The Capitola Fire Department was incorporated in February 1950 with twenty-seven members. A document filed with the county clerk noted the department existed both to



Capitola Fire Department, ca. 1953 (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)

protect lives and property and to act as a social group seeking to establish community fellowship. A new 750-gallon Mack fire truck purchased the same year is still in the possession of the Capitola Station of the Central Fire Protection District.

Capitola firefighters moved into their present quarters on Capitola Avenue in December 1955. In

1963, when the fire department ruled that older buildings in the village flat were to be demolished as fire hazards, one of the first to be razed was the old fire station. The structure known as the Capitola Garage had originally been Knights Opera House in Santa Cruz. The building had been cut in sections and hauled to Capitola, where it was reassembled between Stockton and Capitola Avenues in 1927.

The site of the old Capitola Hotel was the scene of a second fire in 1957, when the Saba Night Club and Sorensen's House of Wax burned in a spectacular blaze. (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)





#### 4.2.5 Police Protection

Early resident and carpenter D. L. Martin was named deputy sheriff of Capitola for a brief time in 1890. It was Martin's duty to see that patrons of Capitola's saloons did not become overly rowdy and that campgrounds kept an atmosphere encouraging to vacationing families. Hihn, who was attentive to every detail of camp life, made sure that entertainments were reasonable—drinking was permitted—but pleasure was to be balanced by decorum.

Once Reanier was hired as superintendent, he provided oversight that included law enforcement. If deputies were needed, Reanier and his staff promptly summoned help. Because of the Hihn Company's influence and authority in county affairs, Capitola was able to command a priority and attention that might not otherwise have existed. Once the Hihn family sold the resort, police protection diminished. Rispin, the new owner, felt little responsibility for law enforcement and left it up to county authorities. During Prohibition, the apathy of Rispin and the economy's reliance on tourism created a lenient, and some believed decadent, atmosphere.



**Police Chief Martin Bergthold stood outside Capitola City Hall, 420 Monterey Avenue, with a new patrol car in 1955. (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)**

Community leaders complained they lacked the resources to handle law enforcement on their own. The change in the degree of guardianship had a significant impact on Capitola's ability to sustain the image established by Hihn.

When citizens established a police commission in 1928, Rispin was invited to be a commissioner but was not active. The commission initially took aim at illegal drinking and the Hawaiian Garden's late-night, marathon

dances that were attracting village rowdies and spoiling Capitola's family atmosphere. The stance was a difficult one for merchants to support after 1929, when the dance hall became the sole attraction capable of sustaining the village economy during the Depression.

A police protection district was operating when Capitola incorporated in 1949. The first city police chiefs served for remarkably short periods. Robert "Pop" Mondelle was appointed the first chief and remained on the job two years; John Larson stayed three

months; Carlton Kinder resigned after one year; and Don Latta held the job three years, from 1952-1955.

Martin Bergthold, who joined the Capitola department in 1953, was appointed as Latta's replacement and continued as chief for twenty-four years. Police Department offices were initially a part of city hall and are now in its oldest section.

#### **4.3 Military (1924-1940)**

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment first set up an anti-aircraft battalion on Delaware Street in Santa Cruz in the fall of 1924. Two years later the Capitola property known as Hihn's eastern field was chosen as a more suitable site. The 63<sup>rd</sup> and then the 250<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery units used it for summer training sessions.

Camp McQuaide was named for National Guard Chaplain Joseph P. McQuaide, evidently the only military reservation in the United States to be so designated. The chaplain, a graduate of Santa Clara University, had served in both the Spanish American War and World War I. He died in 1924, about the time the encampment was founded.

During the six-week trainings, guns were fired at silk targets towed by speedboat or attached to airplanes. The firing, audible in Santa Cruz, continued until the allotment of ammunition was used. Range finding exercises, chemical warfare tests, traditional marching drills, and athletic competitions—including popular boxing matches—were part of the camp regimen.

Camp McQuaide met at Capitola every summer through 1936, when an announcement came that it planned to move due to longstanding arguments that firing the guns was detrimental to property owners, rabbitries, poultry ranches, sport fishing, and the tourism industry. Protests had started in the late twenties and continued, with residents



**The site of Camp McQuaide at Capitola became home to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp New Brighton in 1937 (*Capitola Museum*)**

sending petitions to the war department complaining of moving furniture, broken dishes, shattered windows, and that the “terrific jar of the guns even loosens the rim of the cliffs, and earth is sloughing off to a dangerous degree.” The summertime population had grown to sixty-six military officers and 647 soldiers by 1935, a number that exceeded Capitola’s year-round population.

Camp McQuaide moved in 1938 to a new site between Manresa and Sunset Beaches on San Andreas Road, where Monterey Bay Academy is now located. The Capitola barracks were a base for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp New Brighton in the late 1930s and were used briefly by African American soldiers of the 54<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery Regiment in 1942. The Hihn field location was eventually developed with single-family residential homes and as the campus of New Brighton Middle and Capitola Elementary Schools.

#### **4.4 Educational and Religious Institutions (1898-1965)**

##### **4.4.1 Schools**

Hihn donated land for the first Capitola School, located near Park Avenue and the reservoir tank house, along a short lane called School Way. Sessions began in February 1898 with teacher Kate Leonard, who was beginning a forty-year career teaching three generations of Soquel District pupils. The Capitola School, attended by the children of year-round residents, had an enrollment so small that the school operated only sixteen years before the teacher and students were transferred back to classrooms at Soquel School.

In the 1920s the school building became the private home of Henry Washburn, Santa Cruz County’s first farm advisor, and the street name was changed to Washburn Avenue. The original structure no longer remains.

Re-establishment of a K-8 grade campus to serve a growing population of baby boomers was a primary city council ambition following incorporation. The present campus, occupied now by Capitola Elementary and New Brighton Middle Schools, was built in 1952, close to the original schoolhouse on a neighboring parcel.

Capitola has never had a high school. Until construction of Soquel High School in the mid-1960s, students attended secondary school in Santa Cruz.

##### **4.4.2 Cabrillo College and University of California at Santa Cruz**

At the time the new Capitola Elementary School was constructed, less than 10 percent of Santa Cruz County high school graduates went on to college. County income and education levels fell below statewide averages. A vote to establish a junior college district was rejected in 1954 but passed in 1958. Cabrillo College opened in temporary quarters at Watsonville High School in 1959.

Charged with finding a site halfway between the communities of Santa Cruz and Watsonville, the junior college board of trustees debated the unoccupied Santa Cruz-Capitola Airport land along Park Avenue, which had been Capitola's first annexation in 1959. The Porter-Sesnon family property on Soquel Drive in Aptos was chosen instead, and Cabrillo College opened at the new campus in 1962, with an enrollment of two thousand students.

Situated near the border between Aptos and Soquel, and within walking distance of Capitola, the junior college campus had an enormous impact on growth in Capitola, dramatically hastening its transition from a largely conservative, older population to a youthful city with broader tastes in music, theater, and other cultural entertainments.

Opening of the University of California, Santa Cruz campus in 1965 further sped up urbanization, traffic, and commercial construction. Capitola greeted the influx of newcomers by expanding toward Forty-first Avenue, with plans for multiple-unit residential housing, shopping centers, and light industry. While leaders anticipated the loss of summer homes to permanent residency, they also mentioned looking forward to shedding Capitola's image as a "sleepy retirement village."

#### **4.4.3 Library**

Capitola's first revolving book library was set up in the post office, when it was located at 126 San Jose Avenue in the early 1930s. A library was operating in small quarters on Capitola Avenue in the early 1950s, when Mayor William F. Daley negotiated for a better site with the Santa Cruz County Public Library System. The new site, a former Capitola Avenue pet store at 411 Capitola Avenue, rented for \$30 a month. The library system provided only \$20, so the city agreed to pay the difference. Library services were expanded in 1963. The Capitola Avenue library closed in 1981.

#### **4.4.4 Churches**

Capitola and Pacific Grove, both founded in the mid-1870s, shared a number of characteristics in their early years. Both were tent campgrounds that gradually changed from canvas to wood, with accommodations that were affordable to the average income vacationer, and where large crowds enjoyed simple relaxation by the seashore in an atmosphere intended for families. The difference was religion. The Pacific Grove Retreat was a Methodist encampment with an emphasis on teetotalism and church devotion, while Capitola was at times described as "a Godless place."

Mrs. J. B. Rideout, author of an 1889 book, *Camping Out in California*, had gone searching for a church service in Capitola one Sunday but found only youthful couples "merrily flitting to and fro, like gaudy butterflies." That evening, she was offended by loud talking, bitter oaths, laughing, music, and the discharging of firearms in the camp that lasted until morning.

Hihn, vigilant about providing for the needs and wants of the average tourist, insisted his resort be balanced in its cultural, recreational, and spiritual offerings. Camp Capitola



therefore sanctioned both symphonic concerts and raucous parties, and it had a “free tent campground” as well as a luxury hotel. Visitors could attend Sunday church services to counter the weekday devotion to saloons, smoking rooms, card games, and billiard halls.

A consequence to Capitola’s future development was that, because of noise levels and the boisterous nature of beach amusements, churches were set apart, outside the

**St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, ca. 1920 (*Capitola Museum*)**

village. The first regular church services were established in the late 1880s with a mission of the Episcopal Church. The Rev. T. H. M. Bartlett, a Canadian chaplain, and his wife, Elizabeth, were residents for a number of summers, performing baptisms among the campers and conducting Sunday services in a hall in back of the Capitola Hotel.

When Donner Party survivor Patty Reed Lewis arrived in 1889 and for one season ran both the Capitola Hotel and Capitola Park Hotel, she also became an organizer of the St. John the Baptist Episcopal congregation. A year later, she assumed management of only the Capitola Park Hotel, later known as the Lewis House, and for nearly a decade the church held its services there. The church on Oakland Avenue was completed in 1898.

The Lewis family, with the Robinson (Robertson) and Rawlins families of the English Colony (El Salto Resort), assisted the Rev. Bartlett with his efforts to build the church. Hihn donated \$250 worth of lumber and two lots across the railroad tracks from the Capitola Park Hotel, in what is now the Depot Hill subdivision. For Capitola’s owner, the Oakland Avenue church was not only worth the lots and building materials, it was an asset he considered worthy of annual support. In a 1902 letter to the minister of the Soquel Congregational Church, Hihn announced that while in the past he had contributed \$12.50 a year to its operation, he was now only giving \$10, “as the Episcopal Church at Capitola also requires assistance, and also the Methodist Sunday school at Capitola.”

St. Joseph’s Catholic Church was established in 1904. Mrs. Richard N. Kaill tried twice in 1902 to negotiate for a lot in the village but was told by Hihn: “In my opinion a location in the camp would not be suitable, neither for the Church goes nor for those

who visit Capitola for pleasure.” Instead, he was willing to give sixty-by-one hundred feet of land for a church and school in a building at the corner of Bay and Capitola Avenues, “provided you can arrange to build a \$1,000 building on it.” Adjoining lots were purchased and sidewalks and curbs were added in 1929. The church building was razed in 1973 and a new church was built on Monterey Avenue.



**St. Joseph's Catholic Church, located at Bay and Capitola Avenues, was demolished in March 1973. (Capitola Museum)**

#### **4.5 Social and Recreational Institutions**

Capitola itself was established as a social and recreational institution, with every building and boardwalk crafted to suit the vacation lifestyle of relaxation and leisure. Each summer calendar of tourist events drew attendance as well from neighboring towns, as local residents were enticed to join the audience for an evening's concert or dance.

From the first time a summer lagoon was created as an annual event, it was the featured element of choreographed pageantry and contests of skill. None of the spectacles over the years were original or enduring until 1950, when Peggy Slatter Matthews was hired to teach youngsters to swim. She had performed at the Crystal Plunge in San Francisco and swam with such stars as Esther Williams, Johnny Weismuller (Tarzan), and Buster Crabbe in the Billy Rose Aquacade. She knew



**Capitola Begonia Festival began in 1954 with floats towed by swimmers in the Soquel Creek lagoon. (Capitola Museum)**

how to stage an aquatic production. As September approached, she went to the city recreation committee and got permission to hold a two-day water carnival with a float parade, swim races, and an evening water ballet in the lagoon. Matthews approached Capitola begonia bulb growers for their end-of-season blossoms to trim the barges.

Matthews called her early event the Capitola Water Fantasy, starring a troupe of Olympic swimmers who performed water ballets. The events continued until 1954, the year the “First Annual Capitola Begonia Festival” was started by Vivian Benias and Helen Antonelli. The Capitola Chamber of Commerce sponsored the annual nautical pageant and proclaimed Capitola “the begonia capital of the world.” By its fifth season, estimated crowds of ten thousand persons poured into the village to see the begonia parade, boat races, fishing derbies, and other weekend events. In the late 1960s, Governor Ronald Reagan signed proclamations designating National Begonia Festival Week.

The pageant ritual continues today, even though none of the Capitola floral industry remains within the city limits. The historic Brown Bulb Ranch and Dairy has been replaced by the Capitola Mall and Brown Ranch Marketplace shopping centers. Although the Brown family has relocated its offices and warehouses to a site south of Watsonville and its begonia fields to Marina Beach in Monterey County, it continues to provide blossoms for Capitola’s landmark event.

Capitola Begonia Festival is the final curtain of the summer season. The creekside houses where the floats are built are in the Old Riverview National Register Historic District. Along with the Stockton Avenue Bridge, the lagoon, and Esplanade businesses, they are associated with the Begonia Festival and contribute to the social and recreational history of Capitola.

**Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of government, civic, and social institutions include schools, churches, businesses, single-family homes, a bridge, and the lagoon concrete foundation.*

**St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, 216 Oakland Avenue (Survey, 41, 100):** The Gothic Revival style church, completed 1898, has a rectangular plan with a steep gable roof, a shallow projecting bay with a simple pitched roof, and a pointed and arched entry. Among the structural features are uniform wood shingling, Gothic arched windows with stained glass, and a cobbled foundation. Although the architect is unknown, there are two similar churches in Santa Cruz County: St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 101 Riverside Avenue, Ben Lomond, and the former Grace Episcopal Church, 12547 Highway 9, Boulder Creek, now the San Lorenzo Valley Historical Museum. Architect John Morrow designed both churches.

The bell for St. John the Baptist Church was acquired through efforts of early Capitola residents Albert and Martha Penny. Six generations of the family have been members of the congregation. The nine-hundred-pound English bell was shipped around Cape Horn

and purchased with a donation from Albert Penny's longtime friend, John Cash Penney (no relation), founder of the J. C. Penney department store chain. A church tower was built to hold the bell in 1930.

**Rispin Mansion, 2200 Wharf Road (Survey, 77):** The mansion was purchased in 1941 by St. Joseph's Monastery for use by the Poor Clares, a cloistered order of nuns. The order moved to more comfortable quarters in 1959.

**Capitola City Hall, 127 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 14):** The first city hall and police court from 1949 to 1950 was a vacation cottage near the beach. It has since been remodeled.

**Capitola Elementary School, 504 Monterey Avenue:** Dedicated on October 24, 1952, the school was designed by Corwin Booth of the architectural firm of Falk and Booth of San Francisco and built by contractor Tom Rosewall of Watsonville. Delmar Miller was the first principal.



**Capitola  
Elementary  
School, 1952  
(Capitola  
Museum)**

## **5.0 ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT (1882-1955)**

### **5.1 Environmental and Cultural Influences on Architecture**

Capitola's natural and cultural history relates directly to its geography. Located on Monterey Bay, the village is surrounded by coastal bluffs. Highway 1 runs along the current northern city limits. The area was first settled near the banks of Soquel Creek, a waterway that bisects the community. Within Capitola's two square miles are Native American sites that were occupied before the time of Spanish exploration and colonization.

Beginning in the 1850s, Capitola's rural character was dramatically changed by two men whose capitalist plans transformed this isolated section of Santa Cruz County into a thriving coastal resort with a 2004 population of more than ten thousand.



## 5.2 Geographic Development and Expansion

German immigrant Frederick A. Hihn was the first developer to shape the future of Capitola. The wealthy Santa Cruz businessman initially acquired property at Soquel Landing (Capitola) in 1856 and took title to another 2,500 acres adjacent to it three years later. A wharf was built in 1857-1858, and a high railroad trestle spanned the community by 1874.

Ship's carpenter Samuel A. Hall leased Hihn's waterfront lands in 1869 and on June 18, 1874, opened a rustic campground. In 1882 Hihn officially subdivided it. A hotel and bathhouse appeared the following year. Lots were sold and small cottages erected, interspersed among the summer rental cabins, the free tent campground space, and the modest houses occupied by the Hihn Company workforce. Trees were planted in the beach "flats" and, on Hihn's orders, open spaces for gardens, small parks, and scenic pathways were excluded from future development.

The first parcels sold by Hihn in 1882 became sites for wood-framed, vernacular-style houses located between Capitola and Cherry Avenues. Beginning in 1884, former grazing lands on the eastern bluff, now known as Depot Hill, were sold as lots for new summer cottages. Hihn created his third

subdivision map in 1888. By 1890, one hundred two- and three-room cottages were available as rentals in Camp Capitola. The transformation to Capitola By-the-Sea, Hihn's vision of a European-type vacation spa, had begun.

In 1890 a two-story building was constructed as an office for Hihn's real estate sales and rentals. Five years later, the developer hired Edward L. Van Cleeck, a Santa Cruz architect, to design a 160-room, Colonial Revival/Queen Anne hotel, new rental apartments, and amusement concessions along Ocean Front Avenue, now called the Esplanade. By 1897 a second wing was added to the hotel. The Six Sisters duplexes, whose function was to provide vacationers with oceanfront rental housing, were built in 1903. The last of Hihn's subdivisions, Lawn Way, located in the village center, was completed in 1911. Until his death in 1913, Hihn controlled every aspect of Capitola's growth.

Vacation homes were also constructed on the western bluff overlooking Camp Capitola. Dennis Feeley of San Jose acquired the tract and subdivided it in 1887, marketing Camp



San Jose architect Jacob Lenzen designed his summer home on Cliff Avenue with a view tower. The Queen Anne style house was later owned by baseball star Harry Hooper. *(Courtesy of the Lynn and French families)*

Fairview as a rival coastal resort to Camp Capitola.

The second developer to influence the look and character of Capitola was Canadian-born H. Allen Rispin, a San Francisco land speculator, who in 1919 purchased a majority of the Capitola resort holdings from Frederick Hihn's heir and oldest daughter, Katherine Cope Henderson.

Following the end of World War I, a new style, Spanish Colonial Revival, was sweeping the country. It featured stucco wall surfaces, arched windows and doors, iron and wood balconies, grille work, and tile. The architecture fit Rispin's vision for Capitola and became his trademark. Between 1920 and 1926, he favored the use of concrete, in place of wood, for all new buildings. Stucco apartment structures were constructed near the wharf and stucco amusement concessions appeared along the esplanade.

In 1921 Rispin hired San Francisco Bay Area architect George McCrea to design a residence for him in the Mediterranean/Spanish Colonial Revival style on the west bank of Soquel Creek. Three years later, San Jose architect Carl Wolfe was commissioned to design the Venetian Courts, a waterfront complex of forty-six stucco bungalows overlooking the lagoon.

Among Capitola land developments of the Rispin era were: "Subdivision Six," planned for the neighborhood of Monterey and San Jose Avenues, in 1922; Opal Cliffs, west of the village, in 1923; Riverview Avenue subdivision, in 1923 and 1927; the McCormick tract, in 1927; and Fanmar Terrace, in 1928. The creation of each new subdivision boosted the real estate market, moving lot sales in Capitola slightly ahead of neighboring coastal developments in Seacliff and Rio del Mar.

Plagued by rising debts, Rispin attempted to sell his Capitola properties several times. In 1928 the Blanchard Company of San Francisco acquired a portion of his holdings. C. E. Blanchard continued development of the forty-acre Riverview tract located on Soquel Creek, and a number of vernacular, wood-frame, and stucco bungalows were constructed there.



**The Rispin Capitola Company advertised two- and three-room cottages in September 1929. Bungalows like this, the promotion read, "may be rented by day, week, or month, or bought on easy terms." (*Capitola Museum*)**

### 5.3 Architectural Styles

A coastal location and mild, year-round climate contributed to Capitola's popularity as a tourist destination. The resort's "campground" structures, typical of vacation spots throughout California in the 1870s and 1880s, were contemporary with architect-designed buildings commissioned by Hihn and Rispin.

Historic and vernacular cottages and cabins as well as modest commercial structures remain. Capitola's oldest buildings are usually one-story, boxlike cottages with board-and-batten or clapboard siding. They may or may not have porches. Some have been moved one or more times. Most residences built after 1900 were similar to those constructed elsewhere in Santa Cruz County. Details such as roof design, window treatment, and decorative ornaments relate them to a particular time period or architectural style. Some buildings dating from the post-Hihn era, 1913 to 1925, for example, were designed in the Craftsman Bungalow style, with low-pitched gable roofs,



Hihn cottages, ca. 1884 (*Capitola Museum*)

exposed rafters in the eaves, windows arranged in horizontal bands, and natural materials, such as river rock or stone, for chimneys.

In the 1920s and 1930s, revivalism captured the attention of local builders. Structures from that period displayed a variety of architectural influences, from Mission Revival to Spanish Colonial Revival, and even Moderne. Village commercial

buildings are generally one or two stories in height. Some upper floors are used for office or residential space. Though many have been remodeled over time, most retain features associated with their original architectural designs.

A 1986 windshield survey of Capitola identified some 240 structures that best represent the city's architectural history. The survey found examples of Stick style, Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Craftsman Bungalow, and Mission Revival buildings, intermingled with simple, wood-framed or stucco vernacular houses and commercial stores. The survey concluded that Capitola's predominant architectural style is vernacular. Most of the structures were designed and built by local contractors and laborers. All of them add to Capitola's eclectic composition.

### 5.4 Architects and Builders

Santa Cruz resident Edward L. Van Cleeck (1849-1925) was the first architect known to have designed buildings in Capitola. The Colonial Revival style hotel with Queen Anne

influences was able to compete with the Sea Beach Hotel in Santa Cruz and the Del Monte in Monterey. Some of his other Capitola designs include the Six Sisters, several amusement concessions on the esplanade, and portions of the superintendent's building on the corner of Capitola and Monterey Avenues.

San Francisco Bay Area architect George McCrea (1871-1943) designed a variety of period Revival styles. He was commissioned by Rispin to plan the Rispin Mansion and the Capitola beach seawall in the 1920s. He also designed numerous churches throughout Northern California, as well as homes for other wealthy clients.

Wolfe and Higgins was an architectural partnership in operation from 1918 to 1926. The partners were Frank D. Wolfe and William E. Higgins of San Jose. A renowned architect, Frank D. Wolfe (1863-1926) worked mainly in the Spanish or Colonial Revival styles. His son, Carl J. Wolfe (1888-1931) continued working with Higgins after his father's death. In 1924, the firm designed Capitola's Venetian Court Apartments for developers Henry Roth and Homer Langdon of the Roth Realty Company of San Jose, who were investors with Rispin. George Espinola, who has extensively researched the work of the architectural firm, believes that it may have been Lewis Hanchett of El Salto Resort who introduced Wolfe and Higgins to Capitola. Frank Wolfe and Hanchett had worked together in the development of the Hanchett Park subdivision in San Jose.

A prolific contractor whose buildings still exist in Capitola, J. Earl McCombs listed himself in local directories as a plumber. His shop was at the corner of Stockton and Capitola Avenues, in a building he constructed. McCombs and his work crews were the rebuilders of the village's central commercial district after a series of fires from 1927 through 1933 destroyed a major portion of the landscape. McCombs also added stucco surfaces to frame structures throughout the village to give them a modern appearance. An example of his work is the remodeled, stucco exterior of the 1886 Steiger house at the corner of Cliff and Grand Avenues.



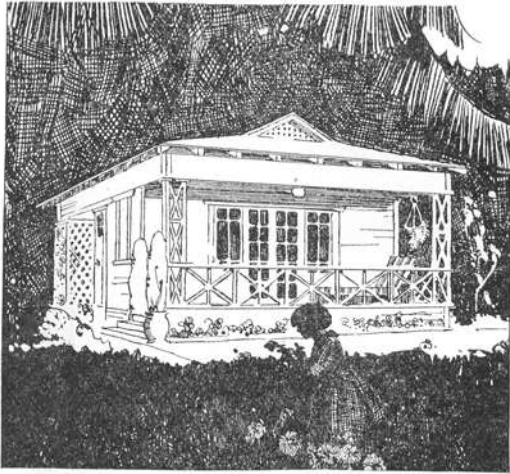
The Queen Anne style house at 102 Grand Avenue was built ca. 1890 for the Andrew Steiger family, members of the San Jose Germania Verein. The Steigers sold the summer home in 1919 to H. Allen Rispin. A business associate, Albert Welch, bought it in 1923. The home was remodeled and given a stucco exterior about 1930. Earl McCombs was the contractor. (*Capitola Museum*)

## 5.5 Associated Resource Types

### 5.5.1 Identification

Within the context of architectural development in Capitola, two resource types can be identified: (1) houses, including single-unit residences, vacation homes, and cabins and multi-unit residences, and (2) commercial and institutional structures. Additional features associated with Capitola's architectural development include trees and retaining walls.

### 5.5.2 Houses



This delightful and well designed bungalow is typical of those now being erected at Capitola-by-the-Sea. Every comfort and convenience is included to make these little homes distinctive and enjoyable.

**This sketch of a bungalow style cottage was included on a 1922 promotional map distributed by Rispin.**

Capitola has always been a residential community, whether its inhabitants were summer visitors or lived in Capitola full time. A substantial number of the city's residential properties were developed prior to World War II and constitute the bulk of the historically significant resources in the city. The earliest were simple vernacular style, like the small houses on Stockton, San Jose, and California Avenues in the earliest subdivision; Lawn Way in the central village; farmhouses on Hill and Pine Streets; cottages in the Riverview Avenue tract and on Central Avenue on Depot Hill; and Camp Fairview houses in the Jewel Box. Examples of East Lake-Stick style and Queen Anne residences survive. The Averon House, built in 1877, on Capitola Avenue, is the oldest house in the city, followed by the 1885 Henry Van Syckle residence on Cherry Avenue. The houses, both large and small, on Cliff and Fairview Avenues on Depot Hill, and the El Salto Cottages on Depot Hill are also significant. During the 1920s and 1930s, Craftsman bungalows and houses in the various Revival styles were constructed throughout Capitola. Examples of these are scattered throughout the neighborhoods. Some are seen along upper Capitola Avenue.

### 5.5.3 Commercial and Institutional Structures

Capitola began with commercial buildings. The vernacular Hihn Company cabins are now rare. Later business structures such as those on both sides of Capitola Avenue in the village, the Craft Gallery shop on San Jose Avenue, the original city hall on



Shadowbrook Restaurant, early 1950s (*Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography*)

Monterey Avenue, the Canepa building at the corner of the Esplanade and Stockton Avenue, and the former amusement casinos on the beachfront are trademarks of community identity. The wharf, trestle, and Stockton Avenue bridge are well-known industrial markers. The former Capitola Bowling Alley on San Jose Avenue, the Capitola Theater, and the fire station on Capitola Avenue are historic reminders of their time periods. Additionally, the former Capitola railroad depot, the Casa Blanca Apartments, Shadowbrook

Restaurant, the apartments at 403 Capitola Avenue, and the collection of small cabins at 206 Hollister Avenue, are noteworthy for their contributions to the architectural development of the city.

With the exception of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church on Depot Hill (1898), no nineteenth-century religious structures remain, and it is therefore considered a particularly significant historic resource.

### 5.5.4 Trees and Retaining Walls

The palm tree located in the center of Monterey Avenue in the village is an enduring natural amenity, as are two remaining pine trees that were once part of “Lover’s Lane” in the vicinity of El Salto Resort along Grand Avenue. The grass between the vernacular cottages has given identity to Lawn Way. The retaining walls on Cherry Avenue and Monterey Avenues, built 1889-1890, are distinctive to Capitola.

A cluster of old-growth redwoods stands along Noble Gulch in the Brookvale Terrace Mobile Home Park at 300 Plum Street.



### 5.5.5 Significance

Significant single-family residences are those directly related to Capitola's architectural chronology as described above. Designated for preservation are homes presently listed as part of the Riverview Area, Six Sisters/Lawn Way, and Venetian Court National Register Historic Districts. Those reflecting Capitola's eclectic style or character or that represent the work of an architect or master builder also merit historical status. Architectural and physical integrity must be considered when evaluating a structure's importance or its contribution to a potential historic district.

Nearly every commercial building in the central core of Capitola village contributes to the character of the historic business district. Other commercial properties may be eligible for listing as historic resources if they were constructed prior to 1955. Since it is the nature of commercial buildings to have storefronts that are frequently remodeled, such modifications do not necessarily compromise a building's integrity. Historic associations as well enrich the value of most buildings in the business district and may outweigh a lack of architectural integrity in the application of the criteria for listing.

Significant trees and retaining walls are historic resources that contribute to the overall ambiance of the building site, street, neighborhood, or district.

#### **Examples of Property Types:**

*Properties associated with the context of architectural development include single-family homes, apartments, vacation cottages and cabins, commercial stores, offices, buildings designed for recreation and entertainment, restaurants, a church, the railroad depot, the trestle, wharf, retaining walls, stairways, and walkways.*

**Hillside Cottage/the Reynolds House, 221 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 16):** This vernacular house with Italianate influences was built ca. 1890 and used as a boarding house until 1914.

**202 Cherry Avenue (Survey, 8):** The Eastlake Stick home of Henry Van Syckle was built in 1887.

**216 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 16):** Built in 1930, the Log Cabin Revival style home has retained its original architectural features.

**118 Cliff Avenue (Survey, 34):** Built between 1889 and 1892, the Bungalow style house was built by carpenter Daniel Martin on a lot originally used for tent camping. Although several alterations were made before 1933, the house has retained its character as a summer vacation cottage.

**314 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):** One of the village's larger summer residences, this Colonial Revival home was built between 1892 and 1905.

**The Windmill House (House that Jack Built) and the Silo House, 397 and 399 Riverview Avenue (Survey, 64):** Built in the 1920s by Jack Carroll, the Windmill House is both vernacular and eclectic in style, as is the tower-like, three-story cottage on the parcel next door.

**Burton Nutter home, 307 Hill Street (Survey, 56):** Built by Charles Noble ca. 1915, this Craftsman Bungalow is important to the agricultural history of Capitola.

**Averon Mansion, 919 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 54):** The Second Empire style home was built in 1877 below Hill Street and moved in 1884 to its present location. It is significant as the city's oldest residential structure, linked to both the Colonial Period and the era of American Settlement.

## **6.0 CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (1874-1955)**

Since its founding, Capitola has attracted writers and artists, as visitors and as residents. Those who were tourists often recorded their impressions of Capitola in books, popular magazines, and newspapers. Early paintings of Capitola, though rare, are in the collections of local museums and private owners. Images of the area abound as illustrations in published books and manuscripts. Photographs and postcards convey the compositions of early photographers, both professionals and skilled amateurs. The work of talented craftsmen has adorned the interiors and exteriors of private and commercial structures.

Entertainment in the village began with outdoor concerts, music and dancing at the hotel, and later at nightclubs. Motion pictures were shown at the resort as soon as silent films became available and continued with the opening of the theater in 1948. Capitola has also served as a backdrop for movies and was home for at least one Oscar-winning film star.

The culinary arts tradition opened with the Capitola Hotel's dining hall and the resort's concessionaires, especially with its bakeries and candy shops, and later with the establishment of cafes and restaurants.

### **6.1 Writers**

**Caroline Wells Healey Dall (1822-1912):** An author, reformer, and woman's rights advocate, Dall, a Boston resident, visited Capitola in 1880. In her 1881 book, *My First Holiday, or, Letters Home from Colorado, Utah, and California*, she describes the resort: "On the sparkling sand, under the glowing sun, it seemed to me more like some little watering place on the British Channel than any of our pretentious American resorts."

**Laura Redden Searing "Howard Glyndon" (1840-1923):** A nationally known deaf journalist and poet, Searing's poem, "Capitola," was written in the Capitola Hotel on



March 23, 1896, and published in a collection of her poems, *Echoes of Other Days* (1921). “Thy memory haunts us, like a star, Capitola!”

**Josephine Clifford McCrackin (1838-1920):** A noted author and journalist, McCrackin was born in Prussia. She came to California in 1867. In 1899, she moved to Santa Cruz after a forest fire destroyed her home in the Santa Cruz Mountains. She wrote books and many articles for magazines and the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, including several articles about Capitola. One news account written in November 1916 detailed a ten-cent trolley car ride to Capitola and stroll around the community. Describing Lover’s Lane, McCrackin wrote that it was a “leafy lane to walk in, picturesque villas and garden homes on one side, and the other still open except for tall trees and the glint and shimmer of the sea as you turn your head to catch the sound of the swish and boom of the waves breaking on the shore.”

**Kathleen Thompson Norris (1880-1966):** The author of more than eighty novels, including *Mother* (1911), *The Venables* (1941), and *Through a Glass Darkly* (1957), Norris was, reportedly, the highest paid American writer of her day. The wife of author Charles Norris and sister-in-law of author Frank Norris, she leased the McConnell cottage on “Knob Hill” in Capitola in the 1920s. The location could have been Depot Hill but was more likely the Fairview tract, often referred to in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* as either “Knob” or “Nob” Hill in the 1920s and 1930s.

**Laura F. Rawson (1878-1968):** A longtime Soquel resident and a reporter for the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* in the 1930s and 1940s, Rawson wrote regular columns about people and events in Soquel and Capitola.

**Isabel Hamel Raymond “I. H. Raymond” (18 -1930):** A native of Pescadero, Raymond moved to Santa Cruz about 1870 to become a reporter for the *Santa Cruz Surf*, published by A. A. Taylor. She also wrote promotional literature for local communities and hotels, including the Capitola Hotel. She died in Seattle, Washington.

**Francis Nicol Smith (1910-1995):** Smith was born in San Francisco, the son of millionaire Robert Hays Smith, who purchased Capitola properties from H. Allen Rispin in 1929-1930. Nicol Smith lived at the Rispin Mansion while he managed the family’s Capitola investments. He was a travel writer and lecturer and the author of five books: *Black Martinique, Red Guiana* (1942); *Burma Road* (1942); *Bush Master: Into the Jungles of Dutch Guiana* (1941); *Golden Doorway to Tibet* (1949); and *Into Siam, Underground Kingdom* (1946). He died in Calaveras County.

**Harry Harper:** Active in the Capitola Improvement Club in the 1930s, Harper was listed as a writer in city directories.

**Sol Licart:** The editor of *The Chat*, one of the few newspapers published in Capitola (he may have been Salvador Licart, born ca. 1898, who died in Monterey in 1962).

**Sanborn and Barney, publishers, the *Capitola Daily Sunset*:** The newspaper was issued in season every evening (except Sunday) and delivered by carriers and by mail. The subscription price was 25 cents a week. The publication office located at “the corner of Capitola and Fairview Avenue, across from the post office, Capitola,” was near the Capitola Hotel. The Capitola Museum copy is dated August 3, 1897, no. 47.

**Worth Brown:** A native of Healdsburg, Brown came to Capitola as a child in the early 1920s and settled with his family on a farm along Forty-first Avenue. As a youngster, he traveled with his father, James Brown, to the fields of Europe to study bulb production. By the time Capitola incorporated as a city in 1949, Worth and his brother Allan were the largest commercial growers of tuberous begonias in the world. Brown authored *Tuberous Begonias*, published by M. Barrows and Company of New York, in 1948.

## 6.2 Artists

**Louis A. Booksin (1858-1948):** Of German ancestry, Booksin lived in San Jose and was a summer visitor to Capitola. As a young man, he studied art in San Francisco. Later he was an orchardist in Santa Clara County, where he died. His pencil drawing, *The Flying Dutchman, Camp Capitola, Soquel, July 1879*, is one of the earliest renderings of camp life.

**Frank L. Heath (1857-1921):** Born in Oregon, Heath moved with his family to Santa Cruz in 1866, where he remained until his death. He studied art at the School of Design in San Francisco and had a studio in Santa Cruz on Beach Hill, training many local artists. Several of his paintings of Capitola are featured as engravings in early books and pamphlets.



**Cipriano Dodero (1861-1946):** A sign painter by trade, he was commissioned by Frederick Hihn to create *Capitola, 1889* (oil on canvas, 5'x 8'). Born in Mexico,

Dodero worked in Soquel. His painting of Capitola was exhibited for several years at the Capitola Hotel and then acquired by the heirs of Martina Castro and hung in the Averon home on Capitola Avenue. It was purchased in the mid-1970s by the Capitola Museum and is on permanent display. An advertisement in the *Surf*, printed August 21, 1889, lists “Cipriano Dodero, Landscape-Artist, Soquel. Paints landscapes of all kinds to order. Quick work and satisfaction guaranteed. Received instruction from best artists in Europe. Rates reasonable. Orders received at shop of L. Ortiz, Soquel.” Dodero died in Alameda County.

**Harold G. Peelor (1856-1940):** A native of New York, Peelor was by 1880 a resident of San Jose, employed as a sign painter. He was known for his regional paintings and also designed memorial stained-glass windows for churches, with Sylvain Le Deit. Peelor created *Capitola in 1892* (oil on canvas in a private collection). He was living in Milpitas at the time of his death in 1940.

**Warren Chase Merritt (1897-1968):** Born in Randsburg, California, Merritt studied at the California School of Fine Arts. As a commercial artist, he painted numerous murals in the Monterey Bay area, including one for the Patio restaurant in Capitola. When he moved to Capitola in the 1940s, he built a studio and continued to paint a variety of subjects, including watercolor portraits. He was an illustrator for magazines and for California history books. Merritt was also an accomplished musician and often played at social functions and dances in Santa Cruz and Capitola. Before they moved to Capitola, Merritt’s wife, Aline Kistler Merritt (1893-1967), was the editor of *Prints*, a print collector’s journal published in New York. She was also education director of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, in San Francisco. Warren Chase Merritt died in Santa Cruz.

**Olaf (Al) Palm (1935-2000):** Known for his ability to paint “just plain folks,” Palm was a native of Detroit who moved to Capitola in the mid-1960s, several years after



- earning his fine arts degree from San Jose State University. He opened a gallery at several locations on Capitola Avenue and painted a number of the village shop owners and residents, including Herman Kraft (1894-1970), known as “the world’s oldest lifeguard,” and his daughter, Peggy Slatter Matthews, a founder of the Capitola Begonia Festival and the first woman to serve on the Capitola City Council. The oil on canvas *Herman Kraft* is now in the collection of the Capitola Museum. In 1994, a show of Palm’s artwork was held at the Capitola Museum and the artist was honored by a mayoral declaration of “Olaf Palm Day” in acknowledgement of his contributions to historical preservation of village structures. Palm died in Fort Bragg, where he had lived for the last thirty years of his life.

**William John Kerr (1894-1982):** The artist created two murals of Capitola Village now exhibited in the City Hall Community Room. One showing a view of Soquel Creek was done in 1960. The other, a view from Depot Hill of the bay, Esplanade, and merry-go-round, was completed in 1959. Kerr, believing the 1959 painting was more esthetically pleasing without the wharf, initially left it out. He eventually yielded to repeated requests from the public and added the pier in 1966.

**Lewis August Sorensen (1910-1985):** Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, Sorensen designed clothing before starting a career as a doll designer. In 1950 he began creating and exhibiting wax dolls, and in 1956 he opened Sorensen's House of Wax at the end of the Esplanade in Capitola. The wax exhibit was located next to the Saba Nightclub and Ballroom on the site of the old Capitola Hotel and featured life-sized wax figures and dolls that Sorensen had either made or collected. The artist lost his work when both the House of Wax and the ballroom burned in 1957. Sorensen continued making wax figures for other museums, including the Hall of Memories in Santa Cruz, Sorensen's House of Wax in Scotts Valley, and Ripley's "Believe It or Not" Museum. For many years, Sorensen was the most noted male American doll designer. He was a 1963 charter member of the National Institute of American Doll Artists, which is dedicated to the art of doll making. *Lewis Sorensen's Doll Scrapbook* was published in 1976. He died in Fullerton, California.



Lewis Sorensen, right, posed with his creation of James Dean in 1955. (Courtesy of Covello and Covello Photography)

**Captain Wilhelm F. Steinbuhler (1816-1896):** A resident of San Francisco and member of the Germania Verein in that city, Steinbuhler built a summer house at 116 Central Avenue in Capitola in 1893. He had been coming to this region, however, for many years. A number of sketches he made while on vacation are now part of the Capitola Museum collection, including an 1879 drawing of the Aptos Hotel owned by Claus Spreckels and an 1874 pencil sketch of the Eberhardt Tannery in San Jose. Steinbuhler was living at his Capitola home at the time of his death.

Later artists to reside and work in Capitola include Nicholas Solovioff (1927-1994), Robert Buckland (ca. 1940-2003), and Bernice "Bernie" Waymire (1933-1997).

### 6.3 Photographers

**R. E. (Romanes Erastus) Wood (1840- ):** A photographer, machinist, and inventor, Woods owned a 160-acre farm in Bear Creek Canyon near Boulder Creek. In a structure adjoining his house, Wood set up a photographic gallery, printing office, and a watch factory, in addition to several other enterprises.

In 1876, he decided to shoot pictures of the people and places surrounding Santa Cruz and set up an exhibit at the American Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia. He wasn't able to make the trip, but his efforts produced the earliest known photographs of Camp Capitola.



**Susan Augusta "Susie" Lewis (1873-1929):** The daughter of Patty Reed Lewis was raised in Capitola at the Capitola Park Hotel (Lewis House) and was a founder of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church on Depot Hill. Her proficiency as a photographer was noted while she was a young girl, when she captured a number of clear images of scenes in and near Capitola.



**Ole Ravnos (d. 1945):** Though he was a Santa Cruz resident, Ravnos was a prolific Capitola photographer. His images were often made into photo postcards that are now prized collectibles.

**Henry Washburn (1889-1972):** Serving as Santa Cruz County's first farm advisor in the 1930s and 1940s, Washburn was a skilled photographer. As part of his work and as a hobby, he recorded scenes and events of local history. Particularly significant are his images of the local federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects in the 1930s; Farm Bureau programs; and several disasters, including fires and floods. His photographs are in the collection of the Museum of Art and History in Santa Cruz.

Farm Advisor Henry Washburn (pictured right) bought the old Capitola School and made it his home in the 1920s and 1930s. Washburn Avenue is named for him. *(Courtesy of the Museum of Art and History)*



**Mabel E. White Macdonald (1896-1973):** Raised in Santa Cruz, Macdonald was an avid amateur photographer whose images have become well known as postcards. A longtime Capitola resident, she captured scenes of the village from the 1930s through



Mabel Macdonald snapped a picture of a canoe headed up San Jose Avenue during the high tide of February 1926. *(Capitola Museum)*

the 1950s. Many of her photographs are in the collection of the Capitola Museum and a number can still be found as real photo cards. Macdonald was the mother of Brad and John Macdonald, who were both active in the Capitola community. Brad was among the organizers of the Capitola Improvement Club drive to incorporate the city and later served as mayor. He was also a founder of the Shadowbrook Restaurant.

**Photographic studios:** Among the concessionaires in Capitola were McKean and Ort, the Capitola Foto Gallery, the Frank L. Park photographic gallery, and the studio of photographer R. H. Strong.



## 6.4 Craftsmen

**John N. Otar, “Otar the Lampmaker” (1891- ):** Born in Georgia, Russia, Otar came to Santa Cruz ca. 1919. For his shop on Pacific Avenue, he had a unique doorway designed by architect Allen Collins. Otar created lamps and lamp brackets, door-knockers, grilles and hinges, andirons and fire-tongs that were sought-after for homes and commercial structures in Carmel, Santa Cruz, and Capitola, where his work was showcased at the Hawaiian Garden nightclub.

*An orchestra playing at the Hawaiian Garden posed for photographer Mabel Macdonald in the early 1930s. The work of Otar the Lampmaker was commissioned for both the interior and exterior of the dance hall that burned in 1933. (Courtesy of the Macdonald family)*

**Waldemar F. Dietrich (1892-1980):** Born in Oregon, Dietrich was a professor at Stanford University and a metallurgist before he became the manager of Campo Del Mar Pottery in Capitola, in the 1940s. Dietrich was author of *The Clay Resources and the Ceramic Industry of California (California State Mining Bureau Bulletin no. 99)* 1928. He co-authored *Fire Assaying* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1940). He resided in Capitola until the late 1950s and died in Arizona.

## 6.5 Musicians

**Lulu Hall Green Wolbach (18 -1930):** The woman who encouraged the founding of a camp named “Capitola” was also a music writer. Wolbach, who was active in the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, wrote the words and music to “Enforced Prohibition,” copyright 1923, and “Life Is To Us What We Make It,” copyright 1911.

**Background in Music:** Capitola began with music, and public concerts were among its earliest attractions. The San Jose Coronet Band played at the opening celebration for Camp Capitola on the weekend of July 4, 1874. In the late 1890s, performers like the Hext Concert Company, with Effie Elaine Hext, Herr Carl Walther, and Prof. Holub, performed selections from Beethoven, Chopin, Schubert, and others. Musicians made daily and nightly appearances in season. J. A. Swann, who, when he was in his early twenties, worked for the F. A. Hihn Company, remembered many years later how bands

from all surrounding cities would make appearances at Capitola. Performers played about two hours a day for an average of ten days, in exchange for free board and room at the Capitola Hotel.

In the Rispin era of the twenties, celebrated orchestras from the San Francisco Bay Area were invited to play, and the Hawaiian Garden became one of the region's fashionable dance clubs. When marthon dances were the rage, two or more orchestras were booked to play nightly. After the nightclub burned in 1933, Capitola business leaders worked feverishly to rebuild in time for the upcoming summer season. Val Valente and his orchestra, popular on radio and famed for performances at the Roof Garden café in San Francisco, were signed to headline the season when the Big Top Ballroom opened. Other performers known to appear in Capitola during the era included the Stanford Ambassadors, an eleven-piece orchestra playing in 1934 for the New Hawaiian Garden; the Gil Evan orchestra, performing at the same location in 1935; and the Stewart Mans orchestra, appearing in 1937 at the Capitola Ballroom on the former site of the Capitola Hotel on the Esplanade.

Brad Macdonald, founder of the Shadowbrook Restaurant, scheduled a number of famed orchestras from the 1940s to play at the Saba and Caribbean Nightclub when it opened in the old Capitola Ballroom in 1954. Since jukebox music was the latest trend, orchestra dances were less popular than Macdonald hoped.

## 6.6 Motion Pictures

Capitola made its movie debut with *Testing Block*, filmed in 1920 at the former Italian fishing village at the end of the wharf, and in Big Trees. The western featured silent-film hero William S. Hart (1864-1946) in the role of "Sierra Bill," regarded as one of his best portrayals.

**Walter Brennan (1894-1974):** A salesman for H. Allen Rispin's Capitola Properties Company in 1924, Brennan worked in the superintendent's building at Capitola and Monterey Avenues. He left Capitola for a career in Hollywood and became a three-time Academy Award winner for best supporting actor. A generation of television viewers also remember Brennan as Grandpa McCoy in the series, *The Real McCoys*.



"Two-Gun" Bill Hart posed with Harry Hooper, Jr., on the set of *Testing Block* in 1920. (Capitola Museum)



## 6.7 Culinary Arts

**James Frazier Lewis (1866-1943):** The son of Donner Party survivor Patty Reed Lewis ran several camp concessions as a young man, including the skating rink. He became the first postmaster and then took charge of the candy concession. Lewis became the developer of the world's first nickel candy bar, known as the Frazier Lewis Victoria Cream. He owned candy shops in Capitola and Santa Cruz for many years. Candy Bar Lane in downtown Santa Cruz is named for him.

**Shadowbrook Restaurant (1947- ):** In a log cabin built in the 1920s, Brad Macdonald and Ed Philippet opened a small restaurant along the bank of Soquel Creek in 1947. The young entrepreneurs overcame a number of obstacles to provide access and bring needed supplies down the hill to the restaurant. Construction of the cable car in the early 1950s added a touch of excitement that, along with a romantic atmosphere and reputation for fine dining, has given the establishment its continuing success.

**James Brown (1882-1932):** Born in Indiana, Brown came to California as a young man. He moved to Capitola in 1911 and started a strawberry ranch along Forty-first Avenue. He then became the first local grower of bulbs for the wholesale market. Seeking to fertilize his bulbs, Brown bought fourteen registered heifers and a bull from a neighbor. The Guernsey herd led the Brown family to establish another industry as a complement to bulb production. The Brown Ranch Golden Guernsey Dairy offered Grade A Raw and Grade A Pasteurized milk, buttermilk, butter, and a complete line of dairy products. In the 1930s, a string of Moo Cow stores, including one at the historic bandstand in Capitola, supplied ice cream in such flavors as "fruit salad sherbert," "peppermint candy," "honeymoon special," and "prune." Popular desserts even included a Moo Cow Pie.

*Moo Cow Moos* *Page 4*

*SPECIALS FLAVORS AVAILABLE FOR  
MAY IN SHERBETS AND ICE CREAM*

●

MAY 1ST TO 7TH INCLUSIVE  
*Pineapple De Luxe Ice Cream  
Lime & Lemon Sherbet*

MAY 8TH TO 14TH  
*Buttersotch Ice Cream  
Fruit Salad Sherbet*

MAY 15TH TO 21ST  
*Banana Custard Ice Cream  
Tutti Frutti Sherbet*

MAY 22ND TO 31ST  
*Nesselrode Pudding Ice Cream  
Apricot Sherbet*

●

All specials put up in 2 and 3 gallon cans unless ordered in advance for a different size.

Our standard flavors of Vanilla, Strawberry, Chocolate and Maplenut Ice Cream are always available in any size containers.

Our standard stock of sherbets are Orange and Pineapple and are available in 2 and 3 gallon lots at all times.


Increase your ice cream volume by using a special. Give your customers something new. Phone and place your order now.

# Moo Cow Moos

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TUBEROUS ROOTED BEGONIA  
*Grown by Brown Ranch*

## APPENDIX I EXAMPLES OF PROPERTY TYPES

### BAY AVENUE

**Pietro (Peter) Braida home  
800 Bay Avenue (Survey, 55):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
**Construction date:** 1920s  
**Theme:** Economic Development



### CAPITOLA AVENUE

**101 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 46):**

**Architectural style:** Spanish Colonial Revival  
**Construction date:** ca 1927  
**Theme:** Economic Development





**110 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 46):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular frame buildings with Spanish Colonial Revival facades. Remodeled in the Rispin era.

**Construction date:** ca. 1895

**Theme:** Economic Development

**Red and White Grocery  
201 Capitola Avenue  
(Survey, 47):**

**Architectural style:**  
Moderne

**Construction date:** 1935

**Theme:** Economic  
Development





**205-209 Capitola Avenue  
(Survey, 48):**

**Architectural style:** Moderne  
**Construction date:** ca.1933  
**Theme:** Economic Development

**216 Capitola Avenue:**

**Architectural style:**  
Vernacular with extensive  
renovations by Olaf Palm in the mid-  
1960s  
**Construction date:** ca. 1925  
**Theme:** Economic Development



**307 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):**

**Architectural style:** Spanish  
Colonial Revival  
**Construction date:** ca. 1925  
**Theme:** Economic Development





**314 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 48):**

**Architectural style:** Colonial Revival

**Construction date:** 1892-1905

**Theme:** Economic Development;  
Architectural Development

**Vincent Canepa home, 529  
Capitola Avenue (Survey, 52):**

**Architectural style:**  
Vernacular board-and-batten  
**Construction date:** ca.1874  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**Linger Longer, 609 Capitola  
Avenue (Survey, 53):**

**Architectural style:** Craftsman  
Bungalow  
**Construction date:** ca.1911  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**Averon Carriage House/Country  
Court Tea Room**  
**911 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 53):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
**Construction date:** ca. 1890  
**Theme:** Prehistory and the Colonial  
Period; Economic Development



**Averon Mansion**  
**919 Capitola Avenue (Survey, 54):**

**Architectural style:** Second Empire  
**Construction date:** 1877, moved in  
1884  
**Theme:** Prehistory and the Colonial  
Period; Economic Development;  
Architectural Development



## CAPITOLA ROAD

**Hillcrest Motel, 4670 Capitola Road:**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
**Construction date:** ca.1945  
**Theme:** Economic Development



**Frank and Josephine Bregante home, 4910 Capitola Road (Survey, 81):**

**Architectural style:** Queen Anne  
**Construction date:** ca.1895  
**Theme:** Economic Development



## CENTRAL AVENUE

**Steinbuhler home, 116 Central Avenue (Survey, 26):**

**Architectural style:** Queen Anne  
**Construction date:** 1893  
**Theme:** Economic Development



## CHERRY AVENUE



**104 and 106 Cherry Avenue  
(Survey, 7):**  
**Architectural style:** Craftsman  
**Construction date:** ca. 1892  
**Theme:** Economic Development

### **202 Cherry Avenue (Survey, 8):**

**Architectural style:** Eastlake Stick  
**Construction date:** 1887  
**Theme:** Economic Development;  
Architectural Development





**317 and 325 Cherry Avenue  
(Survey, 10):  
Architectural style: Vernacular  
Construction date: ca.1890  
Theme: Economic Development**



## **CLIFF AVENUE**



**Pfister home  
112 Cliff Avenue (Survey, 33):  
Architectural style: Vernacular  
Construction date: ca.1890  
Theme: Economic Development**



**118 Cliff Avenue (Survey 34):**  
**Architectural style:** Bungalow  
**Construction date:** ca.1890  
**Theme:** Architectural  
 Development

## CLIFF DRIVE

**Battistini home,**  
**4980 Cliff Drive (Survey, 11):**

**Architectural style:**  
 International Moderne  
**Construction date:** 1947  
**Theme:** Economic  
 Development

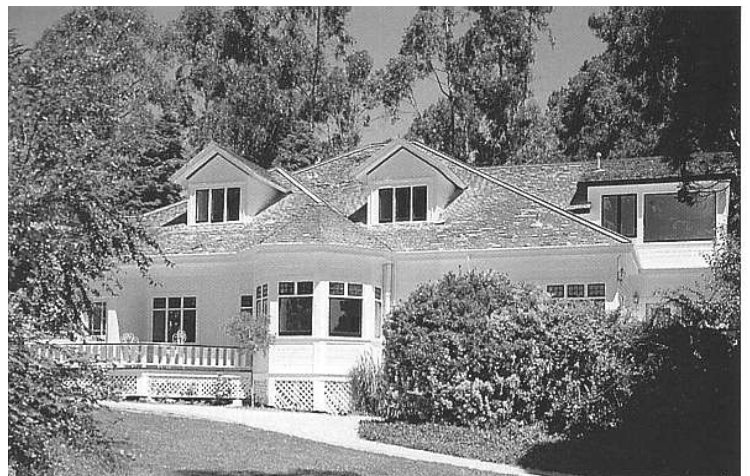


1947 photograph (Courtesy of Violet Battistini)

## EL SALTO DRIVE

**Private Estate: English Colony/  
 El Salto Resort, 620 El Salto Drive  
 (Survey, 34 and 98):**

**Architectural style:** Victorian with  
 craftsman elements  
**Construction date:** ca.1898  
**Theme:** Economic Development



## EMERALD STREET

**4555 Emerald Street (Survey, 83):**

**Architectural style:** Italianate influence

**Construction date:** ca. 1900

**Theme:** Economic Development



## ESPLANADE

**Six Sisters, 110-122 The Esplanade, Contributor to the Six-Sisters/Lawn Way National Historic District (Survey, 12):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular, Edward Van Cleeck, architect

**Construction date:** 1903

The third unit was rebuilt in 1984

**Theme:** Economic Development



1984 Photo (*Capitola Museum*)

## FANMAR WAY

**105 and 107 Fanmar Way (Survey, 12):**

**Architectural style:** Craftsman

**Construction date:** ca. 1930

**Theme:** Economic Development



**206 Fanmar Way:**

**Architectural style:** Sears Builder Catalog Design with extensive remodeling

**Construction date:** 1930

**Theme:** Economic Development



**HILL STREET**

**Nutter residence  
307 Hill Street (Survey, 56):**

**Architectural style:** Craftsman Bungalow

**Construction date:** ca. 1915

**Theme:** Economic Development; Architectural Development



**HOLLISTER AVENUE**

**Mocker home  
212 Hollister Avenue  
(Survey, 40):**

**Architectural style:** Craftsman

**Construction date:** ca. 1912

**Theme:** Economic Development



## LAWN WAY

**East Lawn Way and North Lawn Way, part of the Six Sisters/Lawn Way Historic District (Survey 13 and 14):**

**Architectural style:**  
Vernacular with Craftsman style influences

**Construction date:** 1911

**Theme:** Economic Development



This 1911 real photo postcard shows Lawn Way and the bungalow that became the first Capitola City Hall at 127 Monterey Avenue (*Capitola Museum*)

## MCCORMICK AVENUE



**404 McCormick Avenue:**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
**Construction date:** ca.1930  
**Theme:** Economic Development

## MONTEREY AVENUE

**Capitola Theater**  
**120 Monterey Avenue**  
**(Survey, 14):**

**Architectural style:** Quonset frame, Utilitarian

**Construction date:** 1948

**Theme:** Economic Development



**First Capitola City Hall  
127 Monterey Avenue  
(Survey, 14):**

**Architectural style:**

Craftsman with  
modifications

**Construction date:** 1911

**Theme:** Economic  
Development; Government,  
Civic, and Social Institutions



**Hihn Superintendent  
Building, 201 Monterey  
Avenue, Listed on the  
National Register of  
Historic Places (Survey,  
15):**

**Architectural style:**

Victorian

**Construction date:** 1887-  
1895

**Theme:** Economic  
Development (Land  
Development, Business and  
Tourism); Government,  
Civic, and Social Institutions



**216 Monterey Avenue (Survey, 16):**  
**Architectural style:** Log-Cabin  
Revival  
**Construction date:** ca. 1930  
**Theme:** Economic Development;  
Architectural Development



**Hillside Cottage/Reynolds  
boarding house**  
**221 Monterey Avenue**  
**(Survey, 16):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular with  
Italianate influences  
**Construction date:** ca. 1890  
**Theme:** Economic Development



**La Casa Blanca**  
**240 Monterey Avenue (Survey 17):**

**Architectural style:** Spanish Colonial  
Revival  
**Construction date:** ca. 1930  
**Theme:** Economic Development



**Railroad Depot**  
**250 Monterey Avenue**  
**(Survey, 24):**

**Architectural style:** Colonial  
Revival  
**Construction date:** 1903  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**Capitola Elementary  
School, 504 Monterey  
Avenue:**

**Architectural style:**  
International  
**Construction date:** 1952  
**Theme:** Government,  
Civic, and Social  
Institutions





**OAKLAND AVENUE:**  
**St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church**  
**216 Oakland Avenue**  
**(Survey, 41, 100):**

**Architectural style:** Gothic Revival  
**Construction date:** 1898  
**Theme:** Government, Civic, and Social Institutions

**PINE STREET**



**Rosedale subdivision**  
**405 and 407 Pine Street**  
**(Survey, 56):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
**Construction date:** ca.1910  
**Theme:** Economic Development

## PROSPECT AVENUE

**1530 Prospect Avenue  
(Survey, 88):**

**Architectural style:**

Queen Anne

**Construction date:**

ca.1895

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



## RIVERVIEW AVENUE

**Riverview Court  
Apartments  
315 Riverview Avenue  
(Survey, 61):**

**Architectural style:**

Spanish Colonial  
Revival

**Construction date:**

1921

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**317 and 317A Riverview Avenue  
(Survey, 61):**

**Architectural style:**  
Craftsman  
**Construction date:**  
ca. 1930  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**321 A and B Riverview Avenue (Survey, 62):**

**Architectural style:**  
Spanish Colonial  
Revival  
**Construction date:** ca  
1921  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**326 Riverview Avenue  
(Survey, 63):**

**Architectural style:**  
Vernacular  
**Construction date:** ca. 1905  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development

**The Windmill House  
(House that Jack Built)  
and the Silo House, 397  
and 399 Riverview Avenue  
(Survey, 64):**

**Architectural style:**

Vernacular, eclectic

**Construction date:** ca.

1925

**Theme:** Economic

Development; Architectural

Development



**RIVERVIEW DRIVE**



**509A Riverview Drive  
(Survey, 73):**

**Architectural style:**

Craftsman

**Construction date:** ca.

1925

**Theme:** Economic

Development

**611 Riverview Drive:**

**Architectural style:**

Spanish Colonial Revival  
bungalow

**Construction date:** ca 1930

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**SAN JOSE AVENUE**

**Craft Gallery Building**

**126 San Jose Avenue (Survey,  
17):**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular  
with Spanish Colonial Revival  
style renovation in 1933

**Construction date:** ca. 1895

**Theme:** Economic Development



**Rustic Inn, 220 San Jose  
Avenue:**

**Architectural style:**

International

**Construction date:** ca.  
1930

**Theme:** Economic  
Development





**George Mitchell home, 221 San Jose Avenue (Survey, 19):**

**Architectural style:**  
 Vernacular with Colonial Revival influences  
**Construction date:** ca 1895  
**Theme:** Economic Development

**STOCKTON AVENUE**

**Luigi Canepa market and residence  
 102 Stockton Avenue:**

**Architectural style:** Vernacular, remodeled  
**Construction date:** ca. 1924  
**Theme:** Economic development



**Wolfe vacation duplex  
 103 Stockton Avenue:**

**Architectural style:** Spanish Colonial Revival  
**Construction date:** ca. 1925  
**Theme:** Economic Development



**Stockton Avenue  
Bridge (Survey, 21):**

**Architectural style:**  
Utilitarian

**Construction date:**  
1934

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**SUNSET DRIVE**

**719 Sunset Drive:**

**Architectural style:**  
Spanish Colonial Revival

**Construction date:** ca.  
1929

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



## TRESTLE

### **Union Pacific Railroad Trestle (Survey, 64):**

**Architectural style:**  
Utilitarian

**Construction date:**  
1874, and replaced in  
1886

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



## WHARF ROAD

### **Capitola Wharf 1400 Wharf Road (Survey, 75):**

**Architectural style:**  
Utilitarian

**Construction date:**  
1857-1858

**Theme:** Economic  
Development



Aerial photograph courtesy of Karen Nevis



**Venetian Court**  
**1500 Wharf Road,**  
**listed as a district in**  
**the National Register**  
**of Historic Places**  
**(Survey, 75 and 95):**

**Architectural Style:**  
Spanish Colonial  
Revival  
**Construction date:**  
1924  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development



**Venetian Court architectural detail**

**Farmhouse and tank**  
**house**  
**1810 Wharf Road**  
**(Survey, 76):**

**Architectural style:**  
Vernacular  
**Construction date:**  
ca.1900  
**Theme:** Economic  
Development





**Rispin Mansion, listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places  
2200 Wharf Road  
(Survey, 77 and 106):**

**Architectural style:** Spanish Colonial Revival/Mediterranean  
**Construction date:** 1921  
**Theme:** Economic Development; Government, Civic, and Social Institutions

**Rispin Mansion ca. 1932  
(Capitola Museum)**



**Rispin Mansion 1999**

**APPENDIX II  
CAPITOLA THEMATIC CHRONOLOGY**

**1850-1880**

- 1850** Santa Cruz County formed.
- Martina Castro Lodge (Depeaux) divides Soquel and Soquel Augmentation Ranchos between herself and eight surviving children.
- The beach is known as “La Playa de Soquel,” where surfboats are used for shipments of tallow and hides.
- 1851** Potato warehouse built against the bluff. Soquel Landing flat used for shipping, fishing, and agriculture. Surrounding lands planted in agriculture or used for industry, primarily sawmills upstream.
- 1855** Martina Castro Lodge coerced into selling her adobe home on Hill Street in Capitola. She loses the last of her property in the sale.
- 1856** German immigrant Frederick A. Hihn begins to invest in Rancho Soquel properties of the Castro/Lodge family.
- Hihn, along with partner James Brennan, acquires Rancho Rodeo property of John Hames, along the road leading to the Soquel wharf warehouse lot.
- Augustus Noble acquires the adobe home and 121-acre ranch site that had belonged to rancho grantee Martina Castro Lodge.
- 1857** Hihn contracts with Sedgwick Lynch for construction of the Capitola Wharf. “La Playa de Soquel” becomes Soquel Landing.
- 1858** Hihn connects the wharf via Wharf Road to the Soquel-San Jose route over the summit.
- 1859** Hihn acquires clear title to 2,500 acres, more or less, of the Soquel and Soquel Augmentation Ranchos.
- 1863** Wharf is expanded to 1,200 feet.
- 1865** Captain John Davenport hunts whales from Soquel Landing. Chinese fishermen cast nets from the beach.
- Tourist visits are recorded in the summertime along the beach at Soquel Landing.
- 1869** Carpenter, resort manager, and farmer Samuel Alonzo Hall leases Soquel Landing.
- Five sawmills are operating in the Soquel region above Camp Capitola and more than 200,000 board feet are shipped monthly.
- 1874** California Beet Sugar factory is moved from Alvarado and reconstructed on a slope above the beach, roughly 200 yards from the new railroad trestle under construction. Sugar factory supervisors are German; laborers are Chinese immigrants. Hihn owns the land.
- In June, S. A. Hall opens Camp Capitola along the shoreline.

**1875**

Hall builds six cottages on El Camino Medio and a dance platform near the beach for the second season. Acres near the camp are planted in sugar beets and barley.

**1876**

Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad is completed; passenger trains stop at the “Soquel Depot” on the west side of the Capitola Trestle.

Vacationers arriving by train reach Capitola by following the shoreline and crossing the creek where it empties into the bay near the east bluff of today’s Depot Hill.

Circular layout of Capitola is defined.

Chinese fishing community exists at China Cove, now New Brighton Beach.

Italian fishing community settles at the base of Capitola Wharf and leases land from Hihn.

Capitola consists of cottages, cabins (not white-washed), white tents, dance hall, and livery. None of these early buildings survive.

**1877**

Drought increases price of hay and feed up to \$20 a ton. Hall, who obtains his major profit from management of the livery stable, finds his profit reduced at Capitola.

Joseph Averon and Maria Guadalupe Castro build mansard-roofed home “under the hill,” near the present Highway 1 interchange.

**1878**

Thomas Fallon establishes Camp San Jose to the east of China Cove (New Brighton). Fallon is unable to complete with Hihn’s Capitola.

Beet sugar mill is bankrupt; mill equipment remains on-site until 1884.

Hihn increases lease price and Hall is unable to continue. Capitola is leased to R. D. Berry of San Jose.

**1850-1880**

**Types of Existing Resources:**

Reconstructed wharf and trestle

Beet sugar mill residence

Averon house

**Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Industry; Shipping; Agriculture; Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Transportation

**1881-1895**

**1881**

Santa Cruz-Watsonville Railroad purchased by Southern Pacific.

**1882**

Hihn subdivides land between Capitola and Cherry Avenues; sells lots for summer homes with occupancy restricted to Caucasians, excepting servants. R. D. Berry and Frank Brandon hold the lease on the camp.

**1883**

Railroad line broad gauged; depot shifted to trestle’s east end.

Hihn puts an estimated \$5,000 into improvements, including a large skating rink/pavilion, bathhouse, and hotel.

**1884**

Beet sugar mill is dismantled. Some worker housing is moved to sites along upper Capitola Avenue. A three-story building that housed mill workers is moved to Park Avenue near Bay (Monterey) Avenue and renovated as the Capitola Park Hotel.

Hihn creates second subdivision map.

German-American families purchase the first lots sold on the eastern bluff. A number of buyers are members of the Turn Verein, a social and athletic club, and are prominent Santa Clara County residents involved in civic affairs. In the village, German Americans are also the lessees of several concessions.

Hihn leases a rail station known as Opal to the Loma Prieta Lumber Company. The firm builds a lumberyard and company store on the bluff west of the village. After 1925, when the timber has been harvested, the sidetracks are removed. Later, some of the buildings may have been recycled into homes.

A road from the first Capitola Hotel and a stairway leading to a cliff-top viewing tower ends at a walkway called "Lover's Lane" along Grand Avenue.

**1885**

Hihn raises the rent and Berry is unable to meet the increase. Hihn leases Capitola to Edwin B. Cahoon of Soquel.

Fifteen new cottages are built, 12-by-24 feet. The hotel accommodations are enlarged to accommodate 108 persons.

A flume carries waste and sewage from Soquel to Riverview Avenue, an area 500 feet below the old beet sugar mill. Tent camp outhouses are built over the conduit before it is angled to the east through Noble Gulch to Bay Avenue (Monterey Avenue). The sewage is then piped into a tunnel that ran through the cliffs at Depot Hill and is released into the bay toward Aptos. The conduit is one foot underground and covered with boards in the area of the present Capitola City Hall.

**1886**

Dennis Feeley subdivides Camp Fairview on 20 acres and sells lots on the western bluff above Capitola.

**1887**

Henry Van Syckle of Santa Clara retires to \$4,000 home on Cherry Avenue, now the oldest residence in the village.

**1888**

Hihn files new subdivision map.

Capitola property owners organize an association "for their mutual benefit and the preservation of good order." Five trustees are elected.

Leon Jones is the first Hihn camp superintendent. Martha Jane (Patty) Reed Lewis, a Donner Party survivor, is in charge of the Capitola Park Hotel. Hihn Company workers and concession staff form the beginnings of a year-round community.

Capitola Park is dedicated. In its vicinity a reservoir/tank house is completed. The 40-foot tall tank house has 16 sleeping rooms for summer rentals. Pumping works provide Capitola with water and electricity.

Camp Fairview streets graded; 40 lots are available at \$300 each.

Capitola has 86 2-3 cottages for rent. New construction is described as "brisk" with 18 new summer cottages completed.

Augustus Noble continues to develop the former home site of Martina Castro Lodge. It is subdivided by 1889 into Rosedale Springs. Noble is an early farmer and the tract becomes known for apples, cherries, and roses.

Frank Reanier is hired as camp superintendent and continues to supervise Hihn's interests at Capitola and Valencia until Hihn's death in 1913. Superintendent's building is camp office for real estate sales and rentals.

**1889**

Grade completed from the depot to the bottom of the hill (at Monterey Avenue), and dirt is used to help fill in the flat. Retaining walls are constructed using fossilized cliff stone. Another wall of fossilized rock is completed on the north side of Cherry Avenue.

D. L. Martin, a builder who constructed summer homes for lot buyers, was named deputy sheriff of Capitola.

**1894**

Thomas Lindsay of Capitola sets up the Soquel Seining Company at China Cove near New Brighton.

**1895**

Hihn improves the village with spacious rental apartments and new beach concessions. Edward L. Van Cleeck of Santa Cruz is the architect. Initial projects include the first section of the 160-room Colonial Revival and Queen Anne style Capitola Hotel.

Hihn leases Capitola wharf to the Gerlach Wave Motor Company, which widens and lengthens the pier for a wave-powered electric generator, an unsuccessful endeavor.

#### **1881-1895**

##### **Types of Existing Resources:**

Hihn Superintendent's building

F. A. Hihn Company rental cabins and resort cottages, 1 to 3 bedrooms

Mansion of retired Santa Clara Valley farmer Henry Van Syckle

Vacation homes on the flat and Depot Hill built by German immigrants, members of the Turn Verein

Fairview Tract cottages

Retaining walls of fossilized rock on Cherry and Monterey Avenues

Farmhouses in Rosedale District and Capitola Heights

Cabins and vernacular houses on the outskirts of the village occupied by Hihn Company workers

##### **Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Industry; Agriculture; Land Development, Business, and Tourism;

Transportation

Architectural Development

#### **1896-1905**

**1897**

The second section of the hotel includes additional rooms, dining hall, and a bathhouse on the bluff.

Services offered at Capitola include a physician and surgeon in residence during the summer.

Hihn pledges to the mission congregation of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church two lots at the corner of Oakland and Railroad Avenues and \$250 worth of lumber from one of his mills. The first service is held in the church in 1898. Founders include the family of Patty Reed Lewis, proprietors of the Lewis House, and the Robinson (Robertson) and Rawlins families of the English Cottages on Depot Hill.

**1898**

Hihn donates land for the first Capitola School, located on School Way. The school closes in 1914 due to a small attendance. The street name changes later to Washburn Avenue after Henry Washburn, the first Santa Cruz County Farm Advisor, buys the old schoolhouse as a residence in the 1920s. The building no longer exists.

Robinson (Robertson) and Rawlins families acquire portions of Block U in the Hihn subdivision map to create English Cottages, later renamed El Salto Resort.

Hihn directs further cuts to east bluff to make room for a new bowling alley.

**1900**

Hihn leases out the hotel and attached amenities for \$3,500 for the season, an increase due to improvements.

New cabins built at “Huana Place,” now the subdivision of Riverview Avenue.

**1902**

Hihn orders telephone equipment installation.

**1903**

New depot built at the head of Railroad (Escalona) Avenue.

Six Sisters duplexes designed by Edward Van Cleeck are completed.

**1904**

Santa Cruz-Watsonville Electric Railway is completed. Trolleys enter Capitola by crossing a third bridge over Soquel Creek.

Articles are filed to incorporate the Capitola Park Company.

The parish of St. Josephs Catholic Church in Capitola is built at the corner of Bay and Capitola Avenues and exists at that site until 1973.

Hihn begins to market the resort as “Capitola by-the-Sea.”

**1895-1905****Types of Existing Resources:**

Vacation homes, cottages, St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, and the El Salto private estate on Depot Hill

Resort buildings designed by architect Edward L. Van Cleeck

Residential and commercial structures in the flat, including cottages and apartments

Capitola Depot

Huana Place cabins near Riverview Avenue

Camp Fairview houses

Rosedale tract homes and farm cottages

**Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Agriculture; Transportation

Government, Civic, and Social Institutions: Religious and Educational Institutions

Architectural Development

**1906-1920****1907**

Subdivision map is created for Capitola Heights on the west bank of Soquel Creek. Wealthy San Francisco entrepreneur H. Allen Rispin is reportedly involved in the project.

The English Colony on Depot Hill is sold to Lewis E. Hanchett, including all of block U on the 1888 Capitola subdivision map. Hanchett enlarges the enclave and renames it El Salto.

**1911**

Hihn allows its owners to rent out the El Salto buildings only once a year. Owners agree not to build between the south side of block U and the edge of the bluff.

Lawn Way is completed and is Hihn's last Capitola subdivision.

James and Rura Brown, future founders of the Brown Bulb Ranch and Dairy, move to a tract along 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and begin farming.

**1913**

Frederick Hihn dies and his daughter, Katherine (Hihn) Cope Henderson inherits a majority of the Capitola properties. She and husband Harry O. Henderson move to Capitola and assume control of the resort, including management of the Capitola Hotel.

Capitola Wharf is shortened when the mid-section is destroyed in a storm. Residents of the fishing community shift toward Santa Cruz, where a new municipal wharf is completed in 1914.

**1914**

Brown plants strawberries and uses a Chinese work crew who live on site. Berries are replaced with 1920 with flower bulbs. The Browns become leaders in the Capitola bulb industry, known for its begonias. By the mid-1920s, the family expands its enterprise with Golden Guernsey Dairy.

**1915**

Al Lent constructs Craftsman bungalow home at the head of Prospect Street in the Fairview Tract. Later enlarged, the home becomes a landmark overlooking the village and resort. Lent is popular sportsman and real estate developer. His home is demolished in 2004.

**1919**

Rispin buys a majority of the Capitola resort holdings of Hihn's eldest daughter, Katherine Cope Henderson. He also acquires adjoining property owned by the Daubenbiss family of Soquel. Several acres for his mansion home are purchased from violet hybridizer Edith Pawla on Wharf Road.

**1920**

Rispin demolishes Italian Fishing Colony. A few of the fishing families remain in Capitola. Just before the colony is destroyed, the silent film *Testing Block* is filmed, starring William S. "Two-Gun Bill" Hart.

### **1906-1920**

#### **Types of Existing Resources:**

Capitola Heights subdivision houses along Wharf Road  
Vacation homes built in village, on Depot Hill, Fairview Tract, and Opal Cliff  
Rosedale Avenue subdivision homes  
Lawn Way cottages  
Village apartment buildings and single-family structures  
Houses built on former beet sugar mill factory site  
Village commercial structures  
El Salto cottages  
Farm structures between Wharf Road and Forty-first Avenue

#### **Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Industry; Agriculture; Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Real Estate Management



## 1921-1930

**1921**

Rispin builds his 22-room, \$250,000 home on 9 acres along Wharf Road and connects a bridge across Soquel Creek to the former beet sugar mill field.

**1923**

Hihn's 27-acre eastern field is used as an artillery site.

Rispin's architects redesign the Esplanade and curve the road onto the beach, leaving the Six Sisters with large lots where the street had previously been located. Owners eventually buy the lots to protect their views of the shoreline. Other structures completed at the same time include the bathhouse/boathouse at the end of the Esplanade at Stockton Street, the Luigi Canepa Fish Market, and concession buildings near the beach.

Trolley car lines are directed to a new terminus on Capitola Avenue. Service ends two years later.

Kathryn McGeoghegan, widow of Eulice Hihn, subdivides the Opal Cliffs tract.

Completion of the Glenwood Highway from San Jose initiates the automobile era. Vacationers come to Capitola for several hours or days instead of a month or more. Motor courts and auto camps appear in Capitola and Soquel. Rispin offers to trade all of his Capitola properties to W. W. Wright of Edgemont, South Dakota, in exchange for the Dakoming Oil Company.

Rispin has a subdivision map published that includes a deer park along Riverview Avenue above Oak Avenue. Soquel Creek is renamed (briefly) the Capitola River. The park site at the end of Grand Avenue is divided into nine lots as Subdivision 7. The former street in front of the Six Sisters is mapped into 8 lots. The former Beulah tract picnic ground is designated as the camping spot called River Villa Campground.

**1924**

Rispin plans development of the former fishing village site at the head of the wharf. Henry Roth and Homer Langdon of the Roth Realty Company, San Jose, contract with architects Wolfe and Higgins of San Jose to design and construct 46 individually owned apartment units. The project is named "Venetian Villa" and is fronted by a large lagoon.

The Hihn-era skating rink/pavilion is refurbished to become the Hawaiian Garden nightclub and ballroom. The entertainment spot features known orchestras and marathon dancing.

Riverview Terrace streets are under construction.

**1926**

An extreme high tide batters the Esplanade, cutting foundations of the Venetian Court, flooding the village as far as Capitola Avenue. Much of the Esplanade is destroyed.

Capitola is designated the site for the "Santa Cruz Municipal Airdrome." The airfield development coincides with establishment of the National Guard Artillery encampment to be known as Camp McQuaide.

**1927**

Property known as the "Henderson-Younger place" at the head of Bay (Monterey) Avenue is for sale. Newspaper reports state "this particular portion of Capitola was in the especial favor of the elder Hihn and reserved by him as a family holding when all the rest of the residential portion of Capitola was placed on the market." Hihn evidently

held onto the tract to prevent Southern Pacific from purchasing it for construction of a competing hotel. Harlan P. Kessler, a real estate agent for Rispin, develops the land in 1928 as the Fanmar Terrace subdivision.

Planes towing targets over Monterey Bay were fired upon from Camp McQuaide by the 250<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery of the National Guard—128 local residents file a petition complaining of damage to flocks of chickens that refuse to lay eggs. Other residents fear firing will accelerate cliff erosion.

Capitola Beach and Fishing Club opens on the wharf as a Rispin promoted enterprise, advertised as a “Mecca for sportsmen,” built in Santa Cruz “Lokbat” style of redwood from local forests. Earl McCombs is the contractor.

## 1928

Rispin begins to lose his property. In the summer of 1928, approximately 48 acres of his holdings are transferred to Marian Realty and then shifted by that firm to the C.E. Blanchard Company of San Francisco. The transfer initially includes the Rispin Mansion. Later, newspapers announce that Rispin is able to repurchase his house. Kessler is the real estate agent in charge of the sale.

Sale of the Capitola Hotel to lessee E.V. “Teddy” Woodhouse is finalized. Woodhouse also buys land along the Esplanade for the Capitola Amusement Company.

Blanchard announces development of the 40-acre “River View Park” subdivision.

A meeting is held on problems in Capitola: public drunkenness and a lack of police protection are blamed for ruining the resort’s reputation. Residents complain that no car is available to transport troublemakers to the county jail and no detention facility exists in Capitola.

Reanier, former Hihn superintendent and now a county supervisor, declares that Capitola needs to be “cleaned up.” Several places are selling alcohol during Prohibition. Hawaiian Garden is entertaining as many as 9,000 people in an 8-hour stretch of dancing. Judge Harry Bias owns the controlling interest in the business.

Fire and water pressure problems are a village concern. Rispin contributes a double-tank chemical fire engine and 800 feet of hose. Capitola Improvement Club members organize the first Capitola volunteer fire fighters.

Capitola and Soquel residents ban together seeking solutions to water shortage problems. Negotiations are made for water from the Monroe, Lyon, and Miller property Development Company of Aptos, owners of the old Hihn Company water system.

Capitola Improvement Club forms to raise money for fire and police protection. Hooper is the club president. The club calls on the California Public Utilities Corporation and secures promises for fire hydrants, an equipment shelter, and training for the volunteer firemen.

A police commission is established to deal with illegal alcohol sales and consumption during Prohibition.

Gas service reaches Capitola and is hailed as one of the greatest improvements in years. So far, 14,000 feet of pipe is laid. An estimated 150 residents have service. The railroad commission authorizes the Rispin Capitola Company to sell gas, electric, and water utilities to the Public Utilities California Corporation.

Rispin publicizes a plan to add 50 rooms to his mansion and to use it as a clubhouse for the Monterey Bay Golf and Country Club in Soquel. The golf course is designed by S. C. Hardin of San Francisco on 130 acres of a 315-acre tract in Soquel.

## 1929

Rispin announces a liquidation of the Bay Head Land Company holdings, to take place at an auction on Capitola Beach. The announcement is made a week after opening of the Monterey Bay Golf and Country Club in Soquel.

At the auction, lots are sold through the Frank Meline Auction Company of Los Angeles. Rispin's holdings are said to be in foreclosure, including 1,500 business and residential lots and the unsold portion of the Esplanade.

Rispin leaves Capitola, but the mansion is listed as his address until 1930. Foreclosure proceedings are delayed ten times. Finally, a substantial portion of Rispin's Capitola properties are transferred to Robert Hays Smith of Burlingame, who hires Rispin as part of his staff.

Capitola Hotel burns at the end of the year.

Riverview Terrace homes are described as "little stucco bungalow" houses, on lots priced from \$650 to \$1,250.

## 1921-1930

### Types of Existing Resources:

Rispin Mansion on Wharf Road designed by San Francisco architect George McCre

Subdivision homes along Monterey Avenue

McCormick tract homes

Fanmar Terrace subdivision

Venetian Court Apartments

Curved Esplanade with seawall, engineered by McCre

Esplanade bathhouse/boathouse

Village apartment and commercial structures

Opal Cliff subdivision and Jewel Box homes

Auto courts

Riverview and Riverview Terrace subdivisions

Stucco amusement and casino buildings on the Esplanade

Farmhouses in surrounding areas

Boathouse pool

Beach retaining wall

### Associated themes:

Economic Development: Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Real Estate Management;

Agriculture; Transportation

Architectural Development

Government, Civic, and Social Institutions: Utilities; Military

## 1931-1945

### 1931

News announcement is made that Rispin holdings are about to be transferred to a syndicate of San Francisco capitalists. Transfer is expected to "clear up the tangled situation involving the properties in and around Capitola, which has held up development for several years." Properties of Rispin's Bay Head Land Company and the Capitola Company include 200-300 separate parcels. Capitola Company owns the beach at Capitola, the wharf, the Venetian Court apartments, and village business properties. Members of the Robert Hays Smith family move into the Rispin Mansion.

Frank Blake, a partner in the Hawaiian Garden, forecloses against Kathryn McGeoghegan, Eulice Hihn's widow, and obtains ownership of the Opal Cliffs tract.

The old rail spur, 1,945 feet long, is abandoned at Opal, west of Capitola. The yard was a distributing point for the Loma Prieta Lumber Company and no longer needed after the company's mill at Olive Springs was destroyed in the earthquake of 1906. Some structures may have been recycled as homes in the Fairview Tract.

**1932**

James Brown expands his bulb ranch and dairy to include production of Moo Cow Ice Cream and opens several Moo Cow stores, including one at the bandstand in Capitola. Brown eventually provides milk for all Southern Pacific passenger trains.

Kathryn McGeoghegan's son, Jack, offers to supply Capitola Heights with water from the system at Opal. The water came from an artesian well sunk years earlier by the F.A. Hihn Company. The water issued to irrigate crops in the area between the Fairview Tract and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

**1933**

A fire at Frank's Place and the Hawaiian Garden on San Jose Avenue destroys the entire block except for the Canepa Fish Market on Stockton Avenue.

Local residents continue to keep the resort industry alive in Capitola after Rispin leaves and the fire wipes out much of downtown. Many commercial structures in the village area—even some of the Hihn-era Victorians—are given stucco fronts.

Capitola's economy stagnates throughout the Great Depression. Larger homes become boarding houses for workers. The permanent community grows as summer rentals are used as winter homes. "Hobo" encampments appear.

Local real estate agents come forward to rebuild Capitola after the fire. Efforts concentrate on a replacement dance pavilion called "The Big Top," at Capitola and Stockton Avenues. The enterprise is a big flop.

**1934**

Sewer outfall built against the eastern bluff as a WPA project.

Capitola Airport's clubhouse and hangers are completed along Park Avenue as a WPA project. Entrance to Camp McQuaide is initially along the railroad right-of-way toward Soquel.

Stockton Avenue concrete bridge is completed by WPA workers.

**1935**

A notice of default is filed against Nicol Smith, son of Robert Hays Smith, and the Rispin Mansion is put up for sale.

Big Top Ballroom, renamed the "New Hawaiian Garden," is cut into three sections and moved to the site of the old Capitola Hotel. Lowell and Everett Vetterle, of Vetterle and Reinelt Hybridizing Gardens on Capitola Road, assemble the structures into a ballroom and skating rink. It later becomes Brad Macdonald's Saba and Caribbean Night Club.

**1936**

Blake sells 40 acres of Opal Cliffs to Harry McBain, who came to Santa Cruz after serving as mayor of Glendale for 12 years. McBain is credited with developing Opal Cliffs as a community.

**1937**

Capitola streets are deeded to the county.

**1938**

Camp McQuaide closes at Capitola site and plans move to San Andreas Road, south of La Selva Beach.

**1940**

Capitola Beach and Fishing club on the wharf is set on fire and destroyed. At the time, it was known as the Capitola Clubhouse and was owned by Santa Cruz County.

**1941**

Capitola subject to nightly blackouts during World War II.

Japanese farmers removed to internment camps.

Italians are required to move away from the coastline.

The Rispin Mansion is sold by court order to the Oblates of St. Joseph for \$90,000. The mansion was purchased for use by the Order of Poor Clares, a cloistered order of nuns.

**1931-1945**

**Types of Existing Resources:**

Opal Cliffs, Fanmar Terrace, and Riverview tract homes

Stockton Avenue Bridge

Stucco apartments, hotels, and commercial stores

El Salto Resort expansion

Commercial development between Capitola and Bay Avenue

Markets and commercial buildings in Opal Cliffs and Fairview and along Forty-first Avenue

**Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Real Estate Management; Agriculture; Transportation

Government, Civic, and Social Institutions: Military; Educational and Religious Institutions

Cultural Development

Architectural Development

**1946-1974**

**1945**

Capitola’s economy revives after the war and new commercial structures are built.

**1946**

Santa Cruz Foundry is established at Hill Street and Capitola Avenue on site of the old Nutter apple drier and vinegar works. The foundry has a contract with Ford Motor Company to manufacture half a million connecting rod bearings. The building no longer exists.

Joe Tabacchini purchases El Salto Resort and refurbishes it as a vacation rental.

Capitola Chamber of Commerce initiates another city incorporation dialog with Soquel. The Soquel community isn’t interested.

**1947**

As an unincorporated county area, Capitola is suffering from a lack of maintenance. Residents and business owners try to solve wharf, sewage, road, lighting, and other problems. Citizens raise funds to construct a community hall at the site of the present city hall.

Rispin dies penniless at San Francisco Hospital and is buried in an unmarked grave at Olivet Memorial Park in Colma.

**1948**

Joseph Jacobs and Arthur Meyer open the Capitola Theater on Monterey Avenue.

Harry McBain, who served by appointment on the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, dies. Capitols feel they have lost an ally who had pledged to look after the community's well being. McBain's death prompts the reorganized Capitola Improvement Club to begin the campaign for city incorporation.

**1949**

Capitola incorporates as a sixth class city. The election is successful by a margin of 54 votes. The city is immediately christened "Scrapitola" because of council disagreements over who will be first mayor. Kessler is appointed instead of Macdonald.

Due to a disagreement with the Capitola Chamber of Commerce, the city council is initially unable to use the community hall on Capitola Avenue as a city building. The first city offices are on Monterey Avenue across from the Capitola Theater.

Completion of Highway 1 creates a barrier between Capitola and Soquel.

**1950**

Capitola Bowl opens at 115 San Jose Avenue.

Opal Cliffs subdivision expands. Growth begins between 33<sup>rd</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> Avenues after World War II. By 1950 there are 300 new homes with prices ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Surrounding the subdivision are artichoke and strawberry fields owned by Frank Blake and leased to sharecroppers. A business district is established at Portola Drive and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, including a market, bakery, beauty shop, realtor, hardware store, and cleaners.

Capitola Chamber of Commerce is paid \$5,000 for the community hall and city offices move to the 420 Capitola Avenue site.

**1951**

Soquel School District trustees plan to build a school on a site at Jade Street. The property is now the Jade Street Park Community Center.

**1952**

An unsuccessful attempt is launched to disincorporate Capitola.

Capitola Elementary School built on the former site of Camp McQuaide, close to the first Capitola School.

**1954**

Capitola Airport closes; Russell and Esther Rice shift as managers to Sky Park Airport in Scotts Valley. The Capitola land reverts to agricultural use for several years and is then developed as Cliffwood Heights.

Capitola Library moves from tiny quarters in the village to a former pet shop on Capitola Avenue.

Brad Macdonald and his father, Jack, open the Saba Restaurant and Caribbean Nightclub in the Capitola Ballroom and skating rink on Monterey Avenue.

The first official Capitola Begonia Festival is held.

Peggy Slatter Matthews, owner of the Pleasure Point Plunge and founder of the Capitola Water Fantasy, is elected the first woman city council member.

**1955**

Andy Antonetti sets up a merry-go-round next to Capitola Playhouse on the Esplanade. It becomes a Capitola landmark. Today the carousel is located at the Red Barn on Highway 101.

Capitola Fire Department moves from the Capitola Garage on Capitola Avenue up the street to its present location.

- The City of Capitola inaugurates an elephant train shuttle to take beach visitors from an upper parking lot in Capitola Heights to the beach.
- 1957** The Saba and the adjoining Sorensen's House of Wax burn during a fire of mysterious origin. Macdonald later helps the city acquire site for public restrooms. The site is now the Esplanade Park.
- 1959** Cabrillo College opens at the Watsonville High School campus.
- Capitola annexes 40 acres near 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It is first in a series of annexations to acquire 220 acres of land for development.
- Capitola receives a grant for master plan development.
- 1962** Cabrillo College moves to permanent site in Aptos. College enrollment prompts the construction of new homes, particularly in Opal Cliffs, the McCormick Tract, and at the former site of the Capitola Airport, now called Cliffwood Heights.
- 1963** George Ow, Sr. builds King's Market at the intersection of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Capitola Road. Within a year, he is able to buy adjacent land for a shopping center.
- Plans are announced for the construction of the MAC Disco Mart project on Bay Avenue at Hill Street.
- 1964** Capitola loses its beach due to construction of the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor at Woods Lagoon.
- Capitola officials give permission for development of a city park site on Grand Avenue. The Depot Hill property is sold for the Cliff Apartments.
- Cliff Apartments on Grand Avenue are under construction.
- 1965** Artist Al Palm is leader of an "Improve Capitola" campaign, while Tom King begins the "Save Old Capitola" committee. Both groups seek to stop the destruction of historic structures ordered torn down by the fire department as substandard buildings and fire hazards.
- Capitola Planning Commission votes to create an ordinance allowing 10-story high-rise buildings.
- Capitola shop owner Bernie Waymire is appointed to the Planning Commission. Wayne Fontes and Jim Reding join her in the effort to modernize Capitola without destroying its historic character.
- 1966** Artisans are credited with reviving Capitola's flagging economy as it struggles without its beach.
- 1968** An improvement district is set up to widen 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.
- A project is initiated to widen the railroad underpass at the trestle.

Longhaired citizens begin to take part in city politics and the chamber of commerce, prompting fears of a “hippie take-over.” These newcomers challenge city plans for residential and commercial development.

A rock jetty built near the eastern bluff helps restore the shoreline beach.

**1969**

Capitola City Council orders demolition of the Rispin Mansion. Owners were given 45 days to work out a plan to improve the property “to an acceptable condition.”

**1970**

Shell and Chevron service stations, Bank of America, Longs Drugs, and Albertsons are at the intersection at Capitola Road and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. The Brown family of the Brown Bulb Ranch sells a tract of its 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue properties for a Sears store. Planning soon begins toward development of the shopping center to become known as the Capitola Mall.

### **1946-1970**

#### **Types of Existing Resources:**

Village business district shops, liquor stores, beauty salon, cafes, and hot dog stands

City Hall

Resort and recreation facilities, theater, bowling alley

Fire station

Capitola Elementary School

Markets, stores, fruit stands

Housing developments at Opal Cliff, Beulah tract, and McCormick tract

Motels, hotels, and apartments

Malls, shopping centers

#### **Associated themes:**

Economic Development: Agriculture; Land Development, Business, and Tourism; Real Estate

Management; Transportation

Government, Civic, and Social Institutions

Architectural Development

Cultural Development



**APPENDIX III**

**City of Capitola  
Councils & Mayors, 1949-2003**

1949-1959    <u>1960-1969</u>    <u>1970-1979</u>    <u>1980-1989</u>    <u>1990-1999</u>    <u>2000-</u>		
<b>1949-1959</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Council Members</b>
<b>1/10/1949</b>	Harlan Kessler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin Adamson</li> <li>• Harry Bowles</li> <li>• Bradley Macdonald</li> <li>• J.C. Rosensteel</li> </ul>
<b>4/18/1950</b>	Bradley Macdonald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elmer Anderson</li> <li>• S. Clair Ellis</li> <li>• Joe Tabacchini</li> <li>• Russell B. Tripp</li> </ul>
<b>1/15/1952</b>	William Daley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charles Dixon</li> <li>• S. Clair Ellis</li> <li>• Joe Tabacchini</li> <li>• Otto VanBuren</li> </ul>
<b>4/20/1954</b>	William Daley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albert Meek</li> <li>• Peggy Slatter</li> <li>• Joe Tabacchini</li> <li>• W.D. White</li> </ul>
<b>4/17/1956</b>	Joe Tabacchini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homer Berry</li> <li>• Ruth F. Gabrielsen</li> <li>• Albert Meek</li> <li>• W.D. White</li> </ul>
<b>4/15/1958</b>	Joe Tabacchini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homer Berry</li> <li>• Ruth Gabrielsen</li> <li>• Jack Nicol</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alger Nusbaum</li> </ul>
<a href="#">1949-1959</a>    <a href="#">1960-1969</a>    <a href="#">1970-1979</a>    <a href="#">1980-1989</a>    <a href="#">1990-1999</a>    <a href="#">2000-</a>		
<b>1960-1969</b>		
Date	Mayor	Council Members
4/19/1960	Joe Tabacchini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homer Berry</li> <li>John Hesketh</li> <li>Jack Nicol</li> <li>Alger Nusbaum</li> </ul>
1/17/1961	Homer Berry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Andrew Antonetti</li> <li>John Hesketh</li> <li>Jack Nicol</li> <li>Alger Nusbaum</li> </ul>
4/17/1962	Andrew Antonetti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anthony Fontes</li> <li>John Hesketh</li> <li>Frank Layton</li> <li>Lee Miller</li> </ul>
4/21/1964	Andrew Antonetti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anthony Fontes</li> <li>Frank Layton</li> <li>Lee Miller</li> <li>Joseph L. Morrison</li> </ul>
4/12/1966	Phillip J. Walker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Andrew Antonetti</li> <li>Wayne Fontes</li> <li>John C. Lappin</li> <li>Joseph Morrison</li> </ul>
4/16/1968	John Lappin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frank J. Beccaria</li> <li>Wayne Fontes</li> <li>Ronald Graves</li> <li>Phillip Walker</li> </ul>

[1949-1959](#) || [1960-1969](#) || [1970-1979](#) || [1980-1989](#) || [1990-1999](#) || [2000-](#)

## 1970-1979

Date	Mayor	Council Members
4/21/1970	Phillip Walker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frank Beccaria</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• John Lappin</li> <li>• Hill Nelson</li> </ul>
4/18/1972	Ronald Graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Lappin</li> <li>• Hill Nelson</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> <li>• Phillip Walker (replaced by Gene Delucchi 7/3/73)</li> </ul>
3/12/1974	Hill Nelson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Dixon</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Tom Mason</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
3/9/1976	Tom Mason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Dixon</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Hill Nelson</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
3/14/1978	Michael Routh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jerry Clarke</li> <li>• Robert Garcia</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Carin Mudgett</li> </ul>

[1949-1959](#) || [1960-1969](#) || [1970-1979](#) || [1980-1989](#) || [1990-1999](#) || [2000-](#)

## 1980-1989

Date	Mayor	Council Members
4/10/1980	Jerry Clarke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Garcia</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Carin Mudgett</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
<b>4/15/1982</b>	Ronald Graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dennis Beltram</li> <li>• Robert Bucher</li> <li>• Jerry Clarke</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
<b>4/12/1984</b>	Michael Routh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dennis Beltram</li> <li>• Robert Bucher</li> <li>• Jerry Clarke</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan</li> </ul>
<b>4/10/1986</b>	Robert Bucher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jerry Clarke</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
<b>4/14/1988</b>	Jerry Clarke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Bucher</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
<a href="#">1949-1959</a>    <a href="#">1960-1969</a>    <a href="#">1970-1979</a>    <a href="#">1980-1989</a>    1990-1999    <a href="#">2000-</a>		
<h2>1990-1999</h2>		
<p>An * indicates that the person was elected that year.  If there is a date after the name, it indicates the date the council member became Mayor/Vice Mayor.</p>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Council Members</b>
<b>4/12/1990</b>	Stephanie Harlan *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Bucher *</li> <li>• Jerry Clarke *</li> <li>• Ronald Graves</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>

<b>4/14/1992</b>	Ronald Graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Bucher</li> <li>• Jerry Clarke</li> <li>• Margaret Fabrizio *</li> <li>• Michael Routh *</li> </ul>
<b>4/12/1994</b>	Margaret Fabrizio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Garcia *</li> <li>• Ronald Graves *</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan *</li> <li>• Michael Routh</li> </ul>
<b>11/5/1996</b>	Robert Garcia (12/3/96) Stephanie Harlan (11/13/97)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margaret Fabrizio *</li> <li>• Ronald Graves, Vice Mayor (11/13/97)</li> <li>• Tony Gualtieri *</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan</li> </ul>
<b>11/3/1998</b>	Tony Gualtieri (11/30/98) Bruce Arthur (12/9/99)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce Arthur *, Vice Mayor (11/30/98)</li> <li>• Margaret Fabrizio (Resigned 3/23/00)</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan *</li> <li>• Dennis Norton *, Vice Mayor (12/9/99)</li> <li>• Gayle Ortiz (Appointed to fill unexpired term 4/20/00)</li> </ul>

1949-1959 || 1960-1969 || 1970-1979 || 1980-1989 || 1990-1999 || 2000-

## 2000-

An \* indicates that the person was elected that year.  
If there is a date after the name, it indicates the date the council member became Mayor/Vice Mayor.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Council Members</b>
<b>11/7/00</b>	Dennis Norton (11/30/00) Gayle Ortiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce Arthur</li> <li>• Tony Gualtieri *, Vice Mayor (11/20/01)</li> </ul>

	(11/20/01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephanie Harlan</li> <li>• Gayle Ortiz *, Vice Mayor (11/30/00)</li> </ul>
<b>11/5/02</b>	Tony Gualtieri (11/26/02) Stephanie Harlan (11/25/03)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce Arthur *, Vice Mayor (11/25/03)</li> <li>• Stephanie Harlan *, Vice Mayor (11/26/02)</li> <li>• Dennis Norton *</li> <li>• Gayle Ortiz</li> </ul>

*Information provided by the City of Capitola and Santa Cruz Public Libraries, Ca.*

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