

**SOUTH PASADENA MIDDLE SCHOOL
OLD GYM**

**HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION
[DRAFT]**

**1500 FAIR OAKS AVENUE
SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

**PREPARED FOR
SOUTH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**



INTRODUCTION

This Historic Evaluation has been prepared at the request of the South Pasadena Unified School District for the building commonly referred to as the “Old Gym” at the South Pasadena Middle School campus at 1500 Fair Oaks Avenue in South Pasadena. The building was constructed in 1928.

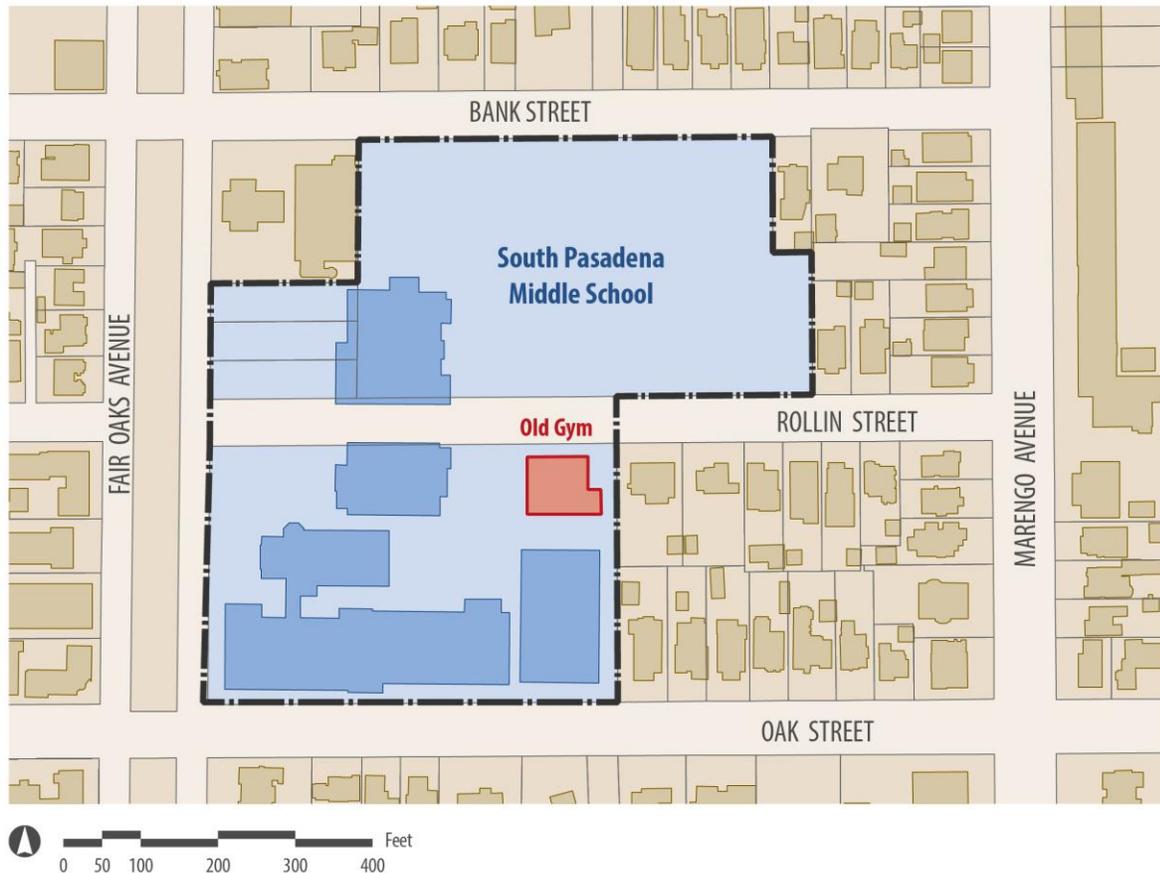


Figure 1: Block map with the Old Gym shown in with red outline
Source: Los Angeles County Assessor

SUMMARY OF DETERMINATION

The Old Gym at South Pasadena Middle School has been previously evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) and the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) as part of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) exploring the impacts of the 2005 South Pasadena Middle School campus expansion. That evaluation determined that the Old Gym was not eligible for the National Register or the California Register. However, that evaluation did find that the Old Gym is eligible to be listed as a City of South Pasadena Landmark because it reflects the heritage of the community, is an example of Romanesque Revival architecture, is associated with the locally prominent firm Marsh, Smith & Powell, and exhibits fine architectural details. This assessment concurs with the findings of the 2005 evaluation. The Old Gym is therefore considered a historic resource.

METHODOLOGY

This report follows a standard outline for Historic Resource Evaluation Reports, and provides a building description, historic context statement, and examination of the current historic status for the Old Gym. This report also includes an evaluation of the property's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, and City of South Pasadena historic resource.

MIG, Inc. prepared this report using research collected at various local repositories, including Los Angeles County Assessor's Office, South Pasadena Local History Collection of the South Pasadena Public Library, City of South Pasadena Planning Division, South Pasadena Unified School District, and several online sources.

CURRENT HISTORIC STATUS

This section examines the national, state, and local historical ratings currently assigned to the Old Gym.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the United States' most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts that represent historic, architectural, engineering, archaeological or cultural significance at the national, state, or local level.

The Old Gym is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) is an inventory of significant architectural, archeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed on the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register listed properties are automatically listed on the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or individuals. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register.

The Old Gym is not listed on the California Register of Historic Resources.

City of South Pasadena

The City of South Pasadena maintains a list of properties designated as Local Landmarks and Historic Districts under Article IVH of the South Pasadena Municipal Code. Similar to the National and California Registers, the Municipal Code provides a number of criteria which must be met for a property to gain Landmark status or be included in a Historic District.

The Old Gym is not designated as a City of South Pasadena Landmark or part of a City of South Pasadena Historic District.

California Historical Status Codes

Properties listed or under review by the State of California Office of Historic Preservation are assigned California Historical Resource Status Codes of 1-7 to establish their historical significance in relation to the National Register or California Register. Properties with a status code of “1” or “2” are either eligible for listing in the California Register or the National Register, or already listed in one or both registers. Properties assigned a Status Code of “3” or “4” appear to be eligible for listing in either register, but normally require more research to support this rating. Properties assigned a Status Code of “5” have been typically determined to be locally significant or to have contextual importance. Properties with a status code of “6” are not eligible for listing in either register. Finally, a Status Code of “7” means the resource has not been evaluated for the National Register or the California Register, or needs evaluation.

South Pasadena Middle School was evaluated as part of a historic resource survey for the City of South Pasadena. The Middle School was assigned a rating of 3S, “appears eligible as an individual property through survey evaluation.” However, the evaluation of the campus focuses exclusively on the auditorium building and does not mention the Old Gym.

The historic resource survey list is the same as the City of South Pasadena Cultural Heritage Inventory. Properties listed on the Cultural Heritage Inventory have been identified as cultural resources that can potentially be designated as a landmark or as part of a historic district. Properties that are included on the Cultural Heritage Inventory, though not landmarked or part of a historic district, are subject to review for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Cultural Heritage Commission when the property owner seeks to demolish or alter a property.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SITE

The Old Gym is located on the northeast corner of the South Pasadena Middle School campus. Constructed in 1928, the Old Gym is a one-story reinforced concrete gym designed in the Romanesque/Mediterranean Revival style. The building features a square plan. All facades feature reinforced concrete. The building rests on a reinforced concrete foundation and is capped by a truss roof with a slight parapet that hides the truss roof from view.

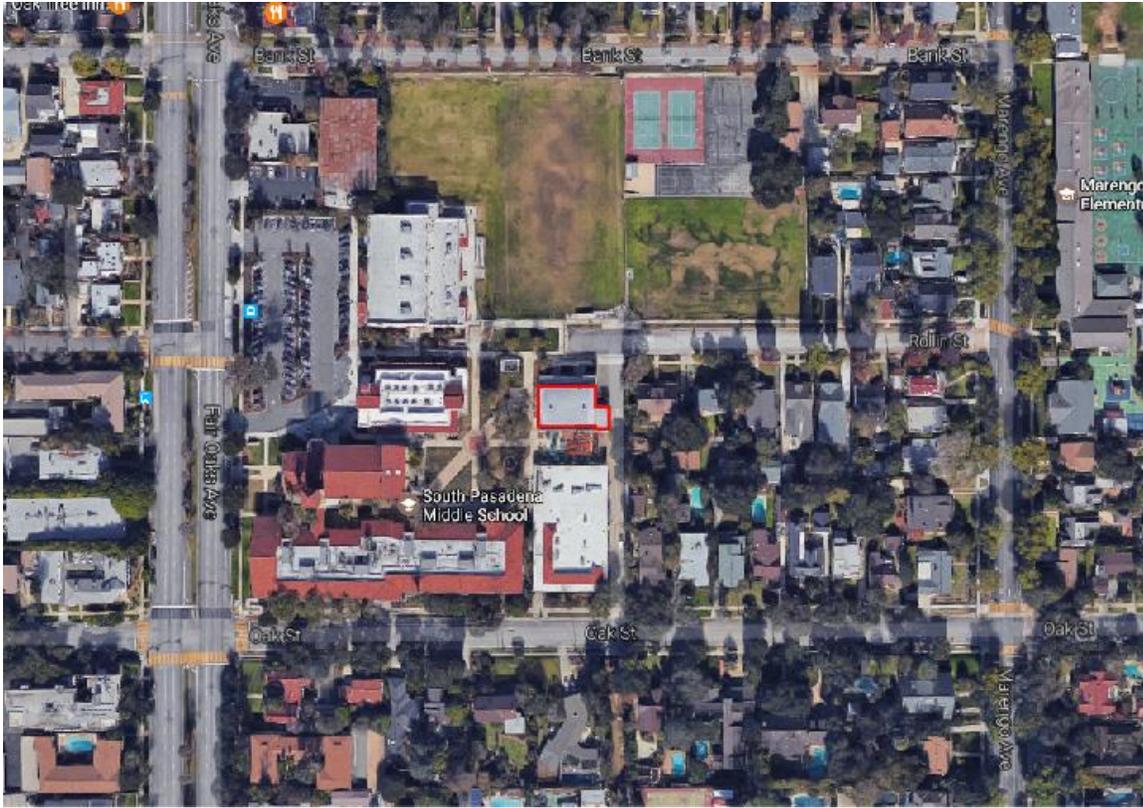


Figure 2: Aerial view looking north, with building outlined in red
Source: Imagery © 2017 Google, Map data.

EXTERIOR

The exterior of the Old Gym is in good condition. The materials and structure appear to be intact.

The main feature of the Old Gym primary façade is 4-bay arcade with a slanted roof one-quarter of the way from the roofline. The arches have a simple impost detail. The arcade is flanked on either side by flat-roofed projections. Each projection has a side-facing entrance to a stairwell that lead to the basement level. Each projection is characterized by an inlaid arched concrete detail with Byzantine decorative details and a central, 12-pane rectangular window set below a slightly depressed concrete lunette. Each main façade window is above a decorative, metal window box. There is ornamental brickwork below the window to grade level. There are two concrete staircases under the farthest arches that lead to two north-facing entrances.



Figure 3: North façade, looking south
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 4: North façade, looking east
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 5: Arcade, looking east
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 6: Northwest window detail on north façade
Source: MIG, March 2017.

The detail around the window on the projection is repeated on the west side of the projection. The west side of the Old Gym has four evenly spaced pilasters from grade level to three-quarters the height of the building. The space between each pilaster has a series of three casement windows with concrete lintels.



Figure 7: West façade, facing southeast
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 8: West façade, facing northeast
Source: MIG, March 2017

The southern façade has five evenly spaced pilasters. There are two casement windows with concrete lintels between each pilaster. A single replacement wooden staircase leads to two separate entrances. There is also basement level access to the locker rooms by a series of concrete stairs at grade level on the southeastern side of the building.



Figure 9: South façade, facing northeast
Source: MIG, March 2017

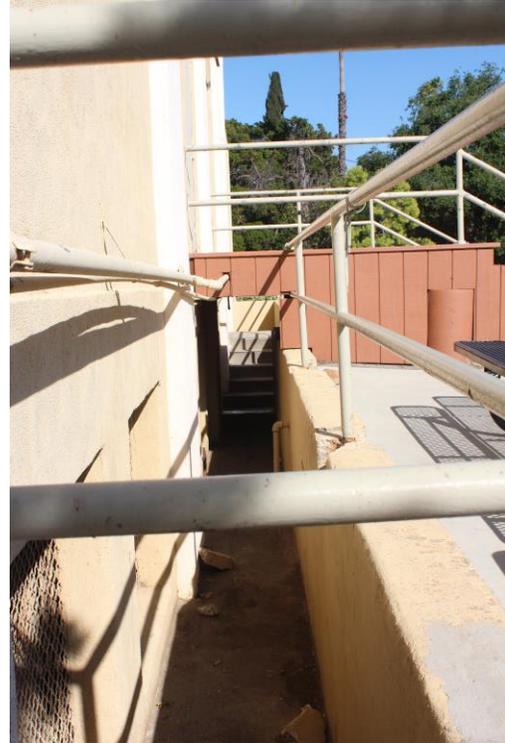


Figure 10: South façade view of basement level access, facing east
Source: MIG, March 2017

The east façade largely mirrors the west façade. The detail around the main façade window is again repeated on the east side. The east façade has four pilasters with a series of three casement windows with a concrete lintel between them. The grade of the site slopes eastwardly. As a result, where there are window wells at the basement level on the west and south side of the building, there is no window well on the east side and three basement windows are visible. The east façade has a small, flat roof addition on the southeast building corner. A chainlink fence encloses from eastern edge of the addition to below the second window.



Figure 11: East façade, facing southwest
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 12: Window detail on east façade, facing west
Source: MIG, March 2017

INTERIOR

Each of the north-facing entrances leads to a gym. The western side of the building served as the girls' gym. The space is set up for a basketball court. However, in recent years a rock-climbing wall has been added to the east wall of the gym.

The eastern side of the building served as the boys' gym and mirrors the girls' gym. Though the space was set up for a basketball court, it is currently being used as a classroom for the robotics class. The major difference from the girls' gym is the addition at the southwest corner that appears to have been used as a storage space. It has two square, three-over-three casement windows.



Figure 13: Interior view of girls' (west) gym, facing south

Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 14: Interior view of boys' (east) gym, facing north

Source: MIG, March 2017

The basement level of the building was also divided for girls' use and boys' use. Offices on either side of the corridor flank the end of the stairs. A double door leads to the main locker room area. The west side of the basement served as the girls' locker room. The western side of the building has three short perpendicular rows of lockers mounted on concrete platforms. Three linear rows of lockers line the length of the center of the space, also mounted on concrete. The south end of the room has three sunken, tiled shower areas. Doors at the southeast side of the locker room lead to an additional row of lockers. A bathroom at the northeast side of the locker room has central sinks and 4 stalls on each side. What appears to be an original, large washing sink occupies the southeast corner of the bathroom. Though it appears to have undergone updates, the space has been unused for many years and has been used for overflow storage.

The boys' locker room was updated more recently than the girls' lockers room. Like the girls' locker room, the main space of the boys' locker room is reached through an outside entrance at the front of the building. The stairs lead to a corridor with office space on the east side of the locker room. The office has a single stall shower. Under the stairs, on the northeast side of the boys' locker room, a small room that appears to have been used as equipment storage space. There are a series of four updated shower stations on the west side of the gym, with a bathroom containing four urinals, two stalls, and two stinks in the space between the showers and the entrance corridor. A heating room to the northwest of the showers contains an early water heater. The remaining space to the south of the locker room contains three rows of lockers on concrete platforms, similar to the locker configuration in the girls' locker room. The space has not been used in many years and appears to have been used for overflow storage.



Figure 15: Girls (west) locker room, facing south
Source: MIG, March 2017



Figure 16: Boys (east) locker room, facing south
Source: MIG, March 2017

LANDSCAPE

The Old Gym's main landscape feature is several new, concrete paths between artificial grass insets on the west side of the building. The Old Gym is located on Rollin Street. Rollin Street once intersected the campus. That street was closed to traffic when the campus was expanded to add the new gym and additional classroom space in the mid-2000s. A gate was added where Rollin Street ends, perpendicular to the Old Gym. The closure of the road changed the building's relationship to the rest of the campus.

SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighborhood immediately surrounding South Pasadena Middle School is characterized by residential use, with some commercial use. South Pasadena Middle School is located on a thoroughfare, Fair Oaks Avenue. Buildings in the area date from a variety of eras—from the turn of the twentieth century through recent years—and range in height from one to three stories.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

EARLY HISTORY OF SOUTH PASADENA

The first account of the area that would include South Pasadena was written by a member of the Gaspar de Portola expedition as it traveled through the San Gabriel Valley in 1769. Diaries by expedition members noted that the banks of Arroyo Seco and the area of present-day Raymond Hill were inhabited by Gabrielleno, a group of Shoshnean-speaking

Native Americans who had inhabited the Valley since the 12th century.¹ Two years after the Portola expedition, the Spanish established Mission San Gabriel to convert the Native Americans.

Over the next several decades, Native Americans settlements were abandoned because the inhabitants were moved to the mission. Additionally, Native American population dwindled due to diseases introduced by Europeans. As a result, their ancestral land was lost and granted to Spanish and Mexican colonizers.

One of the Mexican land grants, Rancho San Pasqual, included portions of South Pasadena. Covering about 14,000 acres, Rancho San Pasqual was granted to Juan Marine in 1835.² In the succeeding years, the rancho changed ownership but continued to remain pastoral. Rancho owner Manuel Garfias, between 1843 and 1846, built the oldest adobe in South Pasadena. Seven years later, the rancho was deeded to John S. Griffin to pay an \$8,000 debt. Shortly thereafter, Griffin and his business partner, Benjamin D. Wilson, subdivided a portion of the rancho into parcels for sale. Within 10 years, over half of the original acreage had been sold, including an 800-acre parcel in what would become South Pasadena, to Joseph Lancaster Brent in 1859.³

South Pasadena continued to grow. The first commercial business in South Pasadena opened in 1870 when David Raab purchased 60 acres from Wilson to start Raab's Oak Hill Dairy.⁴ Three years later, Griffin deed 4000 acres to Thomas F. Croft, vice president of the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association. Within a month, construction began on a waterworks and the subdivision of the lands. On January 7, 1874 members of the association met to choose the acreage that they wanted. A year later, a name was chosen for the community. Drawn from four suggestions, the stockholders chose a Chippewa word, Pasadena.⁵ During this time, a small downtown had started to form in the vicinity of Fair Oaks Avenue and Colorado Street. In 1878 a school opened in a private house on Columbia Hill, and 40 families now living in the area began to identify as being from South Pasadena. This sense of community was reinforced in 1844 when the post office, located in a building at Columbia Street and Sylvan Avenue, officially changed its name from Hermosa to South Pasadena.⁶ By 1886, the area had grown sufficiently to bring the construction of the Raymond Hotel, a 400-room resort hotel. Built to accommodate round-trip railroad passengers traveling between Boston and California, the hotel was considered the most imposing hotel in Southern California. It was destroyed by fire in 1885, rebuilt in 1901, remained open until 1932 and was demolished in 1934.⁷ South Pasadena was incorporated as a city on March 2, 1888.⁸

¹ Jane Apostol, *South Pasadena 1888-1988: A Centennial History* (1987), 5.

² *Ibid.*, 7.

³ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Manuel Peneda and E Caswell Perry, *Pasadena Area History* (Pasadena: James W Anderson Publisher, 1972) 19.

⁸ Apostol, 30.

The city continued to grow, and by the turn of the century South Pasadena had a bank (1904) and a high school (1907). In the 1920s, the city formed its own municipal water company and acquired a portion of Arroyo Seco for a park. With its proximity to the region's streetcar system and more established communities like Pasadena, the area quickly developed into a residential community for prosperous working class families.

SOUTH PASADENA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY

South Pasadena's school system formed in 1878 when the Pasadena School District was established by the Board of Supervisors.⁹ A permanent school was established in 1885 when a one-room school house was built on Center Street (School Administration Building today). The South Pasadena School District split from the Pasadena School District in 1886, when South Pasadena incorporated. By 1901, the District had two schools: one on Center Street (El Centro) and one at Lincoln Park.¹⁰ The District opened the first high school in 1904. First located in the basement of El Centro, the permanent high school was not constructed until 1907. As the population steadily grew, so did the need for more schools. In 1911, kindergarten classes were added and several new schools were built, including Oneonta Elementary School and Las Flores Elementary School. Existing schools, such as the high school, were expanded.

South Pasadena School Superintendent George Bush proposed an intermediate school for South Pasadena 7th and 8th graders in 1919, but voters turned it down, favoring the existing elementary and high school system.¹¹ The District expanded shortly after due to California State law passed in 1921 requiring any city without its own high school to annex to a neighboring school district. As a result, neighboring San Marino joined the South Pasadena School District.

Regardless of the school composition, the District knew that it would need to build a new facility in the coming years. In December 1924, the South Pasadena School District purchased a 7.5 acre site from Edward H Rust.¹² Edward H. Rust and his father, Horatio Nelson Rust, started a citrus nursery in 1884 and operated a nursery on the site until the sale of the land at Fair Oaks and Oak Avenue to the South Pasadena School District.

On June 3, 1927 South Pasadena residents passed a \$550,000 bond measure to build the South Pasadena Junior High School.¹³ The former nursery site was developed for \$440,000 to accommodate 1,000 students.¹⁴

The architectural firm Marsh, Smith & Powell designed South Pasadena High School, including the Old Gym, and contractor David J Reed built it. David J Reed was a contractor originally from Wales. His other notable contributions were the California State Capitol and

⁹ Yvonne Pine et al, *South Pasadena: A Century of Education; An Historical Anthology of the South Pasadena Unified School District*, (1986): 17.

¹⁰ Apostol, 34.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Apostol, 98.

¹³ Pine et al, 52.

¹⁴ "South Pasadena Junior High School Dedication Section," *Foothill Review*, Vol. 49, No. 42 (October 19, 1928): 9

County Hospital, Bakersfield. The architectural firm, consisting of Norman Foote Marsh, David D. Smith, and Herbert James, were notable for their work, particularly in school design. Notable works from their firm include Memorial Chapel at University of Redlands; Congregational Church, Sierra Madre; Parkhurst Building, Santa Monica; South Pasadena Public Library; Roosevelt Elementary School, Santa Monica; and Hollywood High School, Hollywood. Norman Foote Marsh was born in Upper Alton, Illinois and educated at the Urbana School of Architecture at the University of Illinois. He moved to Los Angeles in 1900 and formed a partnership with JN Preston that lasted one year. Soon after, he became associated with CH Russell, under the firm Marsh and Russell. They practiced together for six years, most notably completing the Venice canals in Venice, California. Marsh was a long-time South Pasadena resident. In 1927, Marsh, Smith & Powell was formed. David D. Smith was a graduate of Stanford University and served as the firm's senior engineer. Herbert Powell was named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1947.¹⁵

South Pasadena Junior High School was designed in the Romanesque style. A contemporary newspaper article noted that the scheme was “free interpretation of the best traditions of Italian and Spanish Romanesque.”¹⁶ The campus was designed around a series of arcaded courtyards. The school's architectural centerpiece as the auditorium and its Romanesque tower. The auditorium was flanked by one-and two-story wings that formed partially enclosed courtyards. Employing planar, cement pilastered walls, tile roofs, arched windows, and arcades, the school architecture drew from the Romanesque style. With allusions to medieval-period monasteries, which were often famed for their libraries and schools, the style was felt to be particularly appropriate for educational facilities.



Figure 17: 1927 view of South Pasadena Junior High School
Source: *Foothill Review*, December 1927

¹⁵ “Marsh, Smith & Powell,” Pacific Coast Architecture Database, <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/firm/126/> (accessed March 24, 2017).

¹⁶ *Foothill Review*, 9.

South Pasadena Junior High School's gymnasium was built when the rest of the campus was constructed in 1928. Its design reflected the campus' Romanesque style through the use of arches, pilasters, and arcades. The Old Gym has undergone few alterations since 1928. The heating, plumbing, and electric systems were updated in 1954. An addition to the southeast corner of the gymnasium was built sometime between 1964-1972. The campus underwent a significant update in 1966. During this time, the old south wing was demolished and new classrooms, library, and an administrative office were constructed.¹⁷

In October 1967, a fire damaged the roof and gymnasium level of the building. During this period the gymnasium was being used as classroom space during construction of the updated campus. It is likely that the addition to the gym occurred when fire repairs were made. The building has undergone relatively few alterations since its original construction: replacement of primary gymnasium entrance doors; remodeling of boys' locker room; updated heating, plumbing, and electrical systems; roof replacement; and a small addition. The Pasadena Middle High School underwent a second major update in 2005. At that time Rollin Street was closed and became a dead end in front of the Old Gym. A new gymnasium and additional classrooms were added to the northwest of the campus. Today, one-half of the gymnasium level is used as a classroom. The other spaces in the building are unused.



Figure 18: 1942 Aerial View of Campus, showing original site plan
Source: Historicaerials.com



Figure 19: 1972 Aerial View of Campus, showing site plan after 1966 update
Source: Historicaerials.com

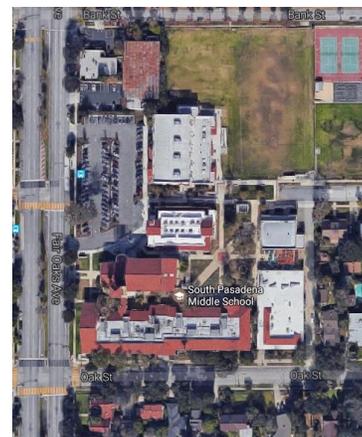


Figure 20: Present-day view of campus
Source: Google Maps

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS DESIGN

Schools constructed during the period that South Pasadena Junior High School was built began to reflect widespread reform of school design triggered by the Progressive Education Movement in the United States in the early 20th century.¹⁸ This resulted in a more differentiated, expansive school plant with specialized facilities and program-specific buildings and classrooms. It ended the era of monumental, big-block schools. This period also began as the 1920s ushered in a school building boom and period revival golden age in

¹⁷ "Low Bid Gives School Chance for Extra Unit," *The Los Angeles Times* (26 December 1966) 135.

¹⁸ Overview discussion of school design from Howell-Ardila, Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969, 9.

Southern California architecture.¹⁹ The importance placed on public education was reflected in beautifully designed schools. Campus design became more unified, with elaborate approaches and entrances.

While school design was evolving, so were the philosophies on how to educate children. The concept of junior high school was relatively new when South Pasadena Junior High School was designed and constructed. The junior high school concept was introduced in the United States in 1909.²⁰ Previously, most elementary schools had grades 1-8 and then students graduated into high school. The junior high school was introduced as a way to bridge the gap between elementary school and high school and included grades 7-9. When the South Pasadena Junior High School was built, the *Western Journal of Education* published the characteristics that the junior high would have, including:

1. A high school plant especially built and equipped to carry out a junior high school curriculum
2. A grouping together of boys and girls of the early adolescent period
3. A curriculum especially suited to the pupils of junior high school age
4. Provision for a better transition from the elementary schools to senior high school
5. Departmental instruction
6. Periods long enough to allow for directed study
7. Explanatory courses in short-term prevocational studies
8. Provision for individual differences in ability, aptitude, and interest by progressive differentiation in subjects
9. Supervised extra-curricular activities such as athletic sports, clubs, girls' and boys' leagues, debating, glee clubs, orchestras, band, etc.
10. Educational and vocational guidance
11. Where numbers permit, grouping together of pupils of appropriately similar ability
12. Home room and responsible home-room teacher for each group
13. Physical education and extra-curricular activities deliberately organized as a system for character training
14. Auditorium where student assemblies may be held
15. Well-equipped library
16. Shops: auto mechanics, printing, electronics, sheet metal, and wood
17. Home-making department: cooking, sewing, millinery, etc.
18. Gymnasium for boys and girls
19. A fair proportion of men teachers²¹

The shifting educational emphasis to programmed space for specific activities influenced the design of South Pasadena Junior High School. The idea of having a gymnasium was directly influenced by Progressive Era education ideas. In his book *Standards for Junior High School Buildings*, NL Engelhardt explains, "the gymnasium rooms should be located preferably at the end of a wing, or, in some manner, in a semidetached position to respect of the rest of the building...the gymnasium can be made accessible readily to playgrounds

¹⁹ City of South Pasadena Citywide Context Statement, (December 16, 2014): 164.

²⁰ "First Junior High School in the United States," Ohio History Central, http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/First_Junior_High_School_in_the_United_States (Accessed March 27, 2017).

²¹ "New Junior High In South Pasadena," *The Western Journal of Education*, (July 1927): 4.

and athletic fields, to the school, and to the community.”²² The South Pasadena Junior High school gymnasium did just this. Located across the lawn from the auditorium to the west and playing fields to the north, it was integrated into a holistic view of a junior high school campus. Engelhardt further expressed that separate spaces should be built for boys and girls to best provide for their needs. The gymnasium at South Pasadena Junior High School was designed with discrete space for boys and girls.

The junior high school model began to fall out of favor in the decades after the construction of South Pasadena High School. Because 9th graders were required to fulfill requirements for high school credit, it no longer made sense to have 7-9 graders grouped together. In 1951, South Pasadena voted on a bond issue to transfer to a four-year high school system. The bond won in San Marino and failed in South Pasadena. As a result, San Marino withdrew from the district and started its own high school. South Pasadena Junior High School remained in the 7-9 grade configuration until 1984, when it transitioned to the 6-8 grade configuration. It was renamed South Pasadena Middle School in 1994.²³

ROMANESQUE REVIVAL STYLE

The Romanesque Revival style of architecture originated in Europe in the early 19th century. Romanesque Revival buildings are based on medieval and early Christian Romanesque cathedrals of the 11th and 12th centuries. Common features of the style include molded semicircular arches for window and door openings, molded beltcourses that divide the exterior into horizontal bands; the Lombard band which is a series of miniature arches below the eaves; column capitals and compound arches enriched with geometric medieval or Byzantine inspired ornament; and gable roofs flanked by square or polygonal towers of differing heights and capped with pyramidal roofs.

Two phases of Romanesque Revival occurred in the United States. The first occurred in the 1840s-1850s and resembled earlier Gothic Revival buildings. A later phase, known as Richardson Romanesque, originated in the 1870s with the work of architect Henry Hobson Richardson. His interpretation often involved weighty, massive buildings clad in polychromed stone and punctuated by Syrian arches and sculpted Byzantine capitals. The style did not reach California until the 1880s and was only popular for a short period, likely due to the cost of construction. Because of the grandeur of the style, it was most often used in church, civic, and educational buildings. Elements of Romanesque revival were sometimes integrated into designs along with Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival styles, especially in Southern California.

EVALUATION

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is the United States’ most comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and includes buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts that represent historic, architectural, engineering, architectural, engineering, archaeological or cultural significance at the

²² NL Engelhardt, *Standards for Junior High School Buildings*, (New York: Columbia University, 1932) 130.

²³ Apostol, 149.

national, state, or local level. A resource over 50 years old is eligible for the National Register if it meets any one of the four criteria of significance and it sufficiently retains historic integrity. Resources under 50 years of age can be determined eligible if they are of “exceptional importance,” or if they contribute to a potential historic district. National Register Criteria are defined in detail in National Register Bulletin Number 15: How to Apply National Register Criteria for Evaluation. The four basic criteria under which a resource can be considered eligible for listing on the National Register are:

- **Criterion A – Event:** Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- **Criterion B – Person:** Properties associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
- **Criterion C- Design/Construction:** Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction
- **Criterion E – Information Potential:** Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is an inventory of significant architectural, archaeological, and historical resources in the State of California. Resources can be listed on the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register listed properties are automatically listed on the California Register. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations, or individuals. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register.

In order for a property to be eligible for listing on the California Register, it must be found significant under one or more of the following criteria:

- **Criterion 1 - Events:** Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States
- **Criterion 2 - Persons:** Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history
- **Criterion 3 - Architecture:** Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction or represent the work of a master, or possesses high artistic value
- **Criterion 4 - Information Potential:** Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation

Resources eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are automatically listed on the California Register of Historical Resources.²⁴

Criterion A/1 – Event

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym does not appear to be eligible for listing in the National or California registers for association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of local, state, or national history. The subject property was constructed during a time of great growth in South Pasadena. Though the campus is an early example of the approach to junior high school design, the Old Gym does not individually represent this context.

The Old Gym does not make a significant contribution to social, political, and economic trends that were occurring in junior high school design such that it would be individually eligible for listing in the National Register or the California Register. Because it represents the same context as campus building, such as the auditorium, it may have been considered a contributing resource to a small historic district that included other campus buildings. However, a significant portion of the campus has been demolished, or altered diminishing the historic integrity; and a district is no longer viable.

Criterion B/2 – Person

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym does not appear eligible for listing in the National or California registers for association with a person. Research has failed to suggest that any notable person figured prominently in the development of the South Pasadena Junior High School to qualify it under this criterion.

Criterion C/3 – Design/Construction

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym does not appear eligible for listing in the National or California registers for design. This building is an example of Romanesque Revival architecture. It incorporates some elements of the style, such as semicircular arched windows and Byzantine inspired details. The use of concrete pilasters and flat-roof projects to offer visual variety in massing recall elements of the style, but it is simplified and reductive in style. Though the style is legible in some of the design elements of the building, they are not distinctive enough to effectively convey the style.

Marsh, Smith & Powell are recognized for their contribution to Los Angeles area architecture, particularly school design. Though South Pasadena Junior High School is regarded as a good example of their work, the design of the Old Gym is very simplified compared to other buildings designed for the campus. Thus, it does not stand out in association with Marsh, Smith & Powell as one of their most distinguishable works. The site plan and design are an early example of junior high school campus design, but the campus has changed significantly since its construction in 1928. Furthermore, the Old Gym does not rise to a level of individual significance. The Old Gym is not eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register for design or construction.

²⁴ California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistant Series No. 7, How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources* (Sacramento, CA: California Office of State Publishing, 4 September 2001) 11.

Criterion D/4 – Information Potential

The analysis of the South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym for eligibility under Criterion D/4 for information potential is beyond the scope of this report. The “potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area” typically relates to archeological resources, rather than built resources. When Criterion D/4 does relate to built resources, it is for cases when the building itself is the principal source of important construction-related information. Based on historic research, this criterion is not applicable to the Old Gym.

City of South Pasadena

The City of South Pasadena maintains a local register of historic resources that is managed by the City of South Pasadena Cultural Heritage Commission.²⁵ The purpose of the commission is to aid in the “identification, protection, retention, and preservation of landmarks and historic districts in the city.” Potential resources may be designated as landmarks or historic districts under at least one of the following criteria:

- (a) Its character, interest, or value as part of the heritage of the community;
- (b) Its location as a site of a historic event;
- (c) Its identification with a person or groups who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state or United States;
- (d) Its exemplification of a particular architectural style of an era of history of the city;
- (e) Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood;
- (f) Its identification as the work of person or persons whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, the state or the United States;
- (g) Its embodiment of elements of outstanding attention to architectural design, engineering, detail design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
- (h) Its being a part of or related to a square, park, or other distinctive area which should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on historic, cultural, or architectural motif;
- (i) Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood;
- (j) Its potential of yielding information of archaeological interest;
- (k) Its integrity as a natural feature or environment that strongly contributes to the well-being of the city; or
- (l) Its significance as a distinguishable neighborhood or area whose components may lack individual distinction.

City of South Pasadena Landmark Evaluation

(a) Its character, interest or value as part of the heritage of the community.

The Old Gym building is one of two remaining buildings from the original 1928 campus design. It was designed by Marsh, Smith & Powell, a firm of local significance who are noted

²⁵ South Pasadena Municipal Code, Article IVH. Cultural Heritage Commission.

for their work in civic and school design. The Old Gym is a good example of the Romanesque Revival style of architecture and possesses sufficient architectural integrity under Criterion A as an individual building.

(b) Its location as a site of a historic event.

Historic research did not reveal any information linking the building to a significant event. The building is not eligible under Criterion (b).

(c) Its identification with a person or groups who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state or United States.

Historic research did not reveal any information linking the building to a significant person or group. The building is not eligible under Criterion (c).

(d) Its exemplification of a particular architectural style of an era of history of the city.

The Old Gym is one of the few remaining examples of Romanesque Revival architecture in South Pasadena. Therefore, the building is eligible under Criterion (d).

(e) Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood.

The Old Gym does not reflect the architectural style of the neighborhood. The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by Craftsman and Period Revival architecture. Therefore, the building is not eligible under Criterion (e).

(f) Its identification as the work of person or persons whose work has influenced the heritage of the city, the state or the United States.

Marsh, Smith & Powell were prominent architects in the Los Angeles area. They came to be particularly celebrated for their work in school design. They expressed great care and thought in the design of this campus. The Old Gym is a good example of the early work of the firm. As a result the Old Gym is eligible under Criterion (f).

(g) Its embodiment of elements of outstanding attention to architectural design, engineering, detail design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

The Old Gym, though a simple design, does reference the Romanesque Revival style of architecture. This is evidenced in the use of pilasters, the arcade, the arched details in the windows and entrances, and the detail around the windows of the main façade. The Old Gym is eligible under Criterion (g).

(h) Its being a part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on historic cultural or architectural motif.

Though built as part of the original 1928 South Pasadena Junior High School campus, the Old Gym is one of only two remaining original buildings on the campus. A 1966 and 2005 update eliminated the historic motif of the original plan. As a result, the Old Gym is not eligible under Criterion (h).

(i) Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood.

The Old Gym does not have visual prominence in the neighborhood. The 2005 closure of Rollin Street further diminished the prominence of the building in the neighborhood. The Old Gym is not eligible under Criterion (i).

(j) Its potential of yielding information of archaeological interest.

The application of this criterion is beyond the scope of this report.

(k) Its integrity as a natural feature or environment that strongly contributes to the well-being of the city.

The Old Gym is a built resource. As such, it is not eligible under Criteria (k).

(l) Its significance as a distinguishable neighborhood or area whose components may lack individual distinction.

The school complex of South Pasadena Junior High School has changed significantly since its construction in 1928, diminishing the integrity of a once distinguishable area. As a result, the Old Gym is not eligible under Criterion (l).

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym does not appear eligible for listing in the National or California Registers. It does appear to be significant at the local level in for its contribution to local character (Criterion a), architectural design (Criterion d), relationship to a person who influenced the heritage of the city (Criterion f), and exemplary use of detail (Criterion g).

INTEGRITY

To qualify for listing in the National or California Register, a property must possess significance under one of the aforementioned criteria and have historic integrity. The process of determining integrity is similar for both the California Register and the National Register. The same seven aspects of integrity—location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling and association—are used to evaluate a resource's eligibility for listing on the California Register and the National Register. According to the National Register Bulletin: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, these seven characteristics are defined as follows:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed.

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure, and style of the property.

Setting addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationship of the building.

Materials refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.

Feeling is the property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym retains integrity of location. It is situated on the original campus and is surrounded by the neighborhood that has remained characterized by residential uses. The building has undergone few exterior changes, with the exception of a small addition to the southwest corner of the building. Overall, it retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. However, the setting has been altered by the closure of Rollin Street, as well as the expansion of the campus to the northwest. As a result, the building's relation to the landscape and orientation to the campus has been diminished. It remains in partial use as a classroom, but a large portion of the building is unused and has been so for some time and has therefore lost some integrity of feeling and association. Overall, the building retains some degree of architectural integrity.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

For a property to be eligible for designation, the essential physical features that enable a property to convey its historic identity must be typically evident. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics, and the features must retain a sufficient degree of integrity. Character can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style or materials. The character-defining features of the Old Gym include

- Overall linear form
- Reinforced concrete construction
- Arcade at principal façade
- Two evenly spaced concrete stairways to the arcaded entrance
- Flat roof projections flanking the main façade
- Inlaid arched concrete detail with Byzantine decorative details
- Truss roof with flat parapet
- Multi-light steel sash windows
- Ornamental brickwork below main façade windows

CONCLUSION

The Old Gym building on the South Pasadena Middle School Campus 1500 Fair Oaks in is a Romanesque Revival building constructed in 1928. It does not appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. However, it does appear to be eligible as a South Pasadena Historic Landmark for its contribution to local character (Criterion a), architectural design (Criterion d), relationship to a person who influenced the heritage of the city (Criterion f), and exemplary use of detail (Criterion g). The building's period of significance is 1928, which is the date of the original construction.

The South Pasadena Junior High School Old Gym was previously evaluated in 2005 in relation to the campus extension. The evaluation at the time found that that the Old Gym building was not eligible for the National or California Register. It did find it was eligible to be listed as a South Pasadena City Landmark under Criteria a,d,f, and g. This analysis confirms the 2005 findings. The Old Gym is therefore considered a historic resource.

Any proposed project on the building site should be assessed to determine what, if any, effects the project will have on the historic resource, and appropriate mitigation measures should be prepared.

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RESOURCES

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