CHICANO PARK AND THE CHICANO PARK MURALS
A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

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CHICANO PARK AND THE CHICANO PARK MURALS
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A Project

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Abstract of CHICANO PARK AND THE CHICANO PARK MURALS
A NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

by Josie S. Talamantez

Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals

Chicano Park is a 7.4-acre park located in San Diego City’s Barrio Logan beneath the east-west approach ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge where the bridge bisects Interstate 5. The park was created in 1970 after residents in Barrio Logan participated in a “takeover” of land that was being prepared for a substation of the California Highway Patrol.

Barrio Logan the second largest barrio on the West Coast until national and state transportation and urban renewal public policies, of the 1950’s and 1960’s, relocated thousands of residents from their self-contained neighborhood to create Interstate 5, to rezone the area from residential to light industrial, and to build the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. The decision to build a substation for the California Highway Patrol on the site the community had identified for a park became the defining moment as the residents took it upon themselves to create their own lasting landmark, Chicano Park, a barrio logo in their own style. Since April 22, 1970, the park has been utilized by the Chicano community of San Diego as a place for social and political events. Its facilities include children’s playgrounds, restrooms, a Kiosko or dance pavilion, picnic areas, multi-purpose courts, open play lawns, a raised plaza, community gardens, sculptures, fountain, and two small parking areas. The park is distinguished by murals painted on the pillars, abutments, and ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge.

The Chicano Park murals consist of an assemblage of multiple vibrantly colored paintings on of the concrete pillars and two abutments that support the San Diego end of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. Forty of these murals painted on twenty-four of pillars, abutments and ramps were constructed during the height of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. These murals and their iconography depict images of Mexican pre-Columbian gods, legendary icons and myths, botanical elements, animal imagery, the Mexican colonial experience, revolutionary struggles, cultural and spiritual reaffirmation through the arts, Chicano achievements, identity and bicultural duality as symbolized in the search for the “indigenous self,” Mexican and Chicano cultural heroes and heroines and scenes based on contemporary Chicano civil rights history. Today over 100 murals
Barrio Logan’s Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals appear to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance due to its critical association with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City of San Diego’s political and social history. In 1997 Cherilyn Widell, California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) 1996 State Historic Research Education Report for the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge that Chicano Park and the Chicano Park murals, although not yet 50 years old, meet the exceptional importance criterion for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. The San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge piers and supports that are grounded in Chicano Park are the “canvas” for the murals; the bridge must also be considered a contributing element of the Chicano Park murals.

Dr. Lee Simpson

Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this Project to all the residents of Logan Heights—past and present. The history of your contributions to the economic, social, political and cultural development of the City of San Diego has not been overlooked by your community.

To my parents Joe Nevarez and Sue Almanza Talamantez, I am grateful for the colorful historical narrative of your lives in Logan Heights that you shared with your youngest daughter. Your life experiences shaped my world view and provided me the tools necessary to survive.

To my late artist husband, Armando Ramirez Cid, your constant reminder of the value that the arts play in validating community will never be forgotten. Your ability to create something out of nothing in no effort was the standard you set.

To all activists who were part of the Chicano Park “Take-Over” April 22, 1970, your perseverance in the face of adversity left its mark for all to see. The decision to stand up and fight for our park defined us all.

And to all of the artists who have painted on the pillars of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge, or who have sang, played music, danced, read poetry, created theatrical skits, the beauty of your creations will be documented in the chronicles of history for future generations to understand the plight of the Chicano Movement. Thank you.

Que Viva Chicano Park!

C/S

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It with sincere gratitude that I acknowledge Dr. Jim Fisher, retired California Department of Transportation Cultural Historian, for his recognition of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals as a cultural resource. His encouragement to nominate the park and the murals to the National Register was the force that led me to California State University, Sacramento’s Public History program. Thank you.

The Thesis Project to nominate Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals to the National Register would not have been completed without the guidance and assistance that California State University, Sacramento Public History Director, Dr. Lee Simpson, so patiently provided. Thank you so much Lee, you’re the best.
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INTRODUCTION

This is the story of an undocumented historical district called Barrio Logan, a section of the Logan Heights neighborhood of San Diego, California, its cultural resources—Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals, a tipping point in Chicano History, and its significance in relationship to the National Register of Historic Places. The historical experience related in this Master’s Thesis Project run parallel to my own life’s journey of becoming a Public Historian.¹ The journey validates my family’s century old roots in Logan Heights and the fruit of my community’s self-determination, the establishment of the Park against all odds—of which I am a co-founder—the creation of over 100 beautiful cultural and historic murals, and the completion of a mandate to document and tell its history that was bestowed upon me in 1978 by community elders as they debated participation in the hour-long documentary entitled, Chicano Park produced by Redbird Films.²

The Master’s Thesis Project is a complete nomination of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park murals to the National Register. The establishment of Chicano Park, on April 22, 1970, is associated with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and the events that led to the “take-over” of the land to create the park contributed to the broad patterns of

¹ Based on my life’s experience I have known many facts about the historical content in this Master’s Thesis instinctively, but now I have had to define them as historical sources to validate facts cited.
² Redbird Films approached the community during this time period and completed the first 20 minutes of a film clip that eventually turned into an hour long documentary entitled, “Chicano Park” completed in 1988.
the social and political history of the City of San Diego. The Chicano Park Murals reflect
the cultural and historical content of the era and the place that muralism has gained in
mainstream art. The integrity of the property includes a historical narrative depicted in
images designed and executed by local and established Chicano artists: a collection of
over one hundred murals that have gained international recognition.

Chapter one of the project articulates a discussion of the National Register
program administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation, authorized under
the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Included in the discussion is a narrative
that provides the reader an understanding of the review criteria for nominating a site to
the National Trust. Chapter one also documents the historical significance and content of
Chicano Park and the integrity of the aesthetics of the Chicano Park Murals as delineated
by the National Park Services’ guidelines for nominating a site for inclusion on the
National Register. The chapter articulates the nomination process based on Chicano
Park’s significance, historical content including the integrity of workmanship of the
Chicano Park Murals, and the feelings associated with the site. A discussion on Chicano
art and its relevance as an organizing and educational tool during the Chicano Civil
Rights Movement is necessary for understanding the climate in which Chicano Park was
established. The reader is provided with an overview of Mexican mural art and its
relationship to Chicanos and Chicano artists during this era.
In chapter two the reader is introduced to Chicano history—a social history of the Mexican-Americans in the United States who identify themselves by the term Chicano.\(^3\) This chapter is only an appetizer for the serious historian who wants to delve deeper into Chicano history, although it does provide a preliminary description of the racism and segregation endured by Chicanos/Mexicanos/Latinos and Indigenous people in California. Chicano history begins with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and includes the “Take Over” of land that became Chicano Park and sets the stage for the on-going painting of the murals.

Conveyed in the historical narrative is a glimpse of what evolved during and shortly after the creation of the park. It was a time of intolerance to the status quo, when the community, both young and old, united to define for themselves what was in their best interest. Once Chicano Park became a reality, art became the expressive weapon of choice. Poems documented the community, music echoed oral history, dance perpetuated traditional cultural heritage, and murals brought joy and alarm while educating the masses. Within the first ten years after the “Take Over” 40 murals were painted on the

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\(^3\) Explanatory Note: (1) The term “Chicano” refers to people of Mexican ancestry who live in the United States and is the preferred nomenclature among many members of the contemporary generation of Mexican Americans. The term Chicano encompasses the political and social reality that its members for the most part are US citizens, not from Mexico, and have experienced a level of racial discrimination that has isolated them as “different” within American society. The use of the term Chicano officially came into use during the height of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and was coined as an alternative to the US Government categorization of all Latinos as Hispanic, a category that does not recognize or validate a Chicano’s indigenous roots, but categorizes by the European commonality—Spanish genetic roots and/or language.
ramps, pylons and pillars of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. Once the artists started painting, they did not stop. Today there are over 100 brightly painted murals in Chicano Park.

An historical overview of the trajectory of Chicanos living in California prior to statehood up through the 1970s, with a focus on San Diego’s Logan Heights, is provided in chapter two. It is inclusive of high and low points faced by the community. It is a history of a community’s intolerance to disregard and neglect and the demonstration of their self-determination to provide a lasting landmark branded with a barrio logo of their design and in their own style.

The Master’s Thesis Project nomination of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals to the National Register of Historic Places is the final component of this narrative. In this section the National Park Service (NPS) Form 10-900 of the United States Department of the Interior is completed in preparation for its submission to the California State Historic Preservation Office (Ca. SHPO) for review by the California State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC). The package includes the completed NPS Form 10-900 with historical narrative substantiating the recommendation based on the significance, historic content and integrity of the cultural resources, Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals, along with reference sources, maps and photographs.

\[4\]Community refers to the broader inclusion of Chicanos as a whole in the Southwestern USA and in California in particular.
Chapter 1

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHICANO PARK AND THE CHICANO PARK MURALS

Chicano Park is an urban park with recreational facilities, a kiosk in the shape of an Aztec temple and over 100 murals painted by Chicano artists from the local community and California. Within the first ten years of its establishment 40 murals were painted on 24 bridge supports depicting the thinking, the background, the neighborhood, the Chicano people and their struggles. The Park is a 7.4 acre site that was not created by the founding fathers of the City of San Diego or by the State of California as a park where the public would benefit from recreational activities. It was created out of resistance, a resistance that occurred when Barrio Logan residents no longer had faith that their interests were considered when public policy was being crafted for the community as a whole.

The residents of Logan Heights, the oldest neighborhood in San Diego, coupled with Chicano students and concerned citizens from throughout the Southwestern United States, came together to demonstrate intolerance to neglect and to create their own park. After many years of requesting a park to maintain a semblance of community that had been uprooted and destroyed by rezoning the area from residential to light industrial

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5 City of San Diego, Historical Site Board. Designation of Chicano Park as a City of San Diego Historical Site, #143, February 1, 1980.
along with the invasion of freeways and bridges, the community came together and
organized to occupy and “Take Over” a site that had been identified by the State and
agreed upon by the City to become a California Highway Patrol Substation (an office and
parking lot for over 140 employees. The “Take-Over” of the land for the development of
Chicano Park took place on April 22, 1970, coinciding with the national environmental
movement’s proclamation of the original Earth Day.

Barrio Logan’s Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals appear to be eligible
for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance due to its
critical association with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and events that have made a
significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City of San Diego’s political and
social history. Chicano Park and the Chicano Park murals, although not yet fifty years
old, meet the exceptional importance criterion for listing in the National Register of
Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.\(^6\) The San Diego-
Coronado Bay Bridge piers and supports that are grounded in Chicano Park are the
“canvas” for the murals; the bridge must also be considered a contributing element of the
Chicano Park murals.

\(^6\) [http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_7.htm#crit\%20con\%20g](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_7.htm#crit%20con%20g) Fifty years is an
estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. A property that
is less than fifty years is eligible if it is of exceptional importance. Each state also has a state register of
historical resources that applies the same criteria for evaluation. For example, the importance of an event
or an entire category of resources that is so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual. This category is
measured by the property’s importance within an appropriate historical context, whether the context is
local, state, or national. In the case of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals the historical context is
local, but also impacts on a statewide and regional level.
Chicanos have a long history in the southwestern region of the United States, arriving with the first Spanish expeditions from Chihuahua, Mexico in 1540 and 1563 and prior to the English arrival in 1621 to Massachusetts. Yet their history is not readily known nor has their existence been validated. Out of resistance and sheer determination the Chicanos in Barrio Logan were adamant about preserving their cultural roots and their historical contributions to the City of San Diego for their children and for future generations. Though the reasons for Chicanos to preserve their cultural heritage are different from early American preservationists, their motives are similar to those of all preservation movements in the United States.

The history of American preservation has evolved from the private sector to a balanced inclusion of the public sector. The initial focal point of American preservation stemmed from patriotism, which William J. Murtagh referred to as “secular pietism.” He cites one reason given in the saving of Andrew Jackson’s Tennessee home in 1856 as an example: “it is good policy in a republican government to inculcate sentiments of veneration for those departed who rendered services to their county in times of danger.”

And though the American preservation movement has broadened its criteria in the

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7 In 1997 the author, Josie S. Talamantez, attended the annual National Historic Preservation Conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico. While on a conference tour around the city she was privileged to be taken to the oldest Barrio in the United States where the Mexican Indians that traveled with Spanish explorers looking for the Seven Mystical Golden City of Cibola lived upon arriving in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This Barrio pre-dates the arrival of the pilgrims to Plymouth Rock.

8 William J. Murtagh, Keeping Time The History and Theory of Preservation in America (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006), xvii.
The twentieth century to include aesthetics it is the initial focal point that resonates in the preservation of Chicano Park. The creation of Chicano Park was the community’s self determined stance to be recognized and not ignored. After its establishment, it became sacred ground, where the community would gather to celebrate and validate the creation of the park and to memorialize those past heroes who were part of the founding of the park.9

The historical documentation of the creation of Chicano Park began on April 22, 1970, and continues this today, as artists sang the story, painted the history, recited individual narratives and danced the struggle. Poets created poetry and lyricists/musicians created *corridos*10 (historical narrative songs) citing the story of the Chicano Park “Take Over.” Dancers choreographed dances and performance artists celebrated Chicano Park. Artists came from far and near painting Chicano history and specifically the history of the Chicano Park “Take Over” and idolizing those that were willing to sacrifice their lives for the park.

The establishment of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966 expanded the preservation movement from focusing on the preservation of old buildings to include the recognition of architecture, design and aesthetics and historic and cultural values. It

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9 The Chicano Park Murals reflect in visual documentation many of the Chicano Park founders, e.g., the late Jose Eligio Gomez on pillar#46, the late Laura Rodriguez #60 and the Chicano Park “Take Over” depicting Mario Solis referred to as our “Chicano Paul Revere” as a Mayan Runner # 37.
10 Popular narrative song, or ballad, documenting public history
further expanded the preservation of buildings and landmarks to include areas and
districts that are of value to the community. The thinking leading up to the
implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act encouraged extensive focus on
economic conditions and tax policies in a solid effort to preserve the heritage of the
nation. The Act created the National Register of Historic Places, recognized as the
National Register. The National Register is the Nation’s official list of cultural resources
worthy of preservation. ¹¹

The process for listing a site on the National Register of Historic Places is quite
extensive. It includes an in-depth analysis to determine a structure’s historical and
architectural significance, but also assesses other factors such as integrity, evaluation of
significances, exceptional importance, and thematic/historic content considerations
enhancing the narrative context. The historical and architectural significance of a
structure falls between two different perspectives: historical or cultural importance and
architectural value. Either perspective constitutes a contributing factor in determining the
significance of a structure or a combination of both perspectives provides additional
worth to the overall significance. The National Register’s Criteria for Evaluations lists
four standards to determine the historic significance of a property. ¹² The criteria are:

The property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history.

The property is associated with the life of a significant person in the American past.

The property embodies distinctive features of a type, period, method of construction, or high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The property and its site yield, or are likely to yield, important information in history or prehistory.¹³

In the analysis of Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals for listing on the National Register it appears that they are eligible based on criteria one. Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals are associated with an event, the “Take Over” of the land that became the Park. The act of the community taking over the land has contributed significantly to the broad patterns of the local history of San Diego. The community’s seizing of the land also correlates to the broader patterns of Chicano social history in the United States during the 1960’s and 1970’s. This is recognized as the Chicano Civil Rights Era. From the community of Logan Heights it was an act of self determination.

¹³Ibid.

http://www.achp.gov/nrcriteria.html

Long time residents such as Laura Rodriguez, an elder turned community activist, Angie Avila, social worker, organizer, activist and strategist, Jose Gomez, a community activist, Josie Talamantez, a resident, community college student and activist, Diane Bolivar, long time resident, student, and community activist, and others declared that a park was in the best interest of the community. The “Take Over” constitutes significance at the local level as a defining moment in the local history of San Diego and was determined so by the San Diego Historic Board in 1980, only ten years after the establishment of the park. The California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred in January 1997.

Additional information that supports the historical significance of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals fall within criteria 3 and 4 mentioned above. The Chicano Park Murals maintain high artistic value and represent a distinctive time period in art history recognized as Chicano Art reflective of the Chicano Movement—mid 1960’s through the 1980’s (also referenced as the Chicano Civil Rights era.) Chicano Art is rooted in resistance and reflected in muralism and serigraph posters. Muralism gained international attention in the mid 1930’s with the post-revolutionary works of the Mexican Masters Diego Rivera, Jose Orosco, and David Siqueiros. They created their work for the public in public settings and not in galleries to be owned by a few. Chicano artists of the Chicano Movement era, following in the traditions of the Mexican masters,

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14 Marilyn Mulford, Mario Barrera, “Chicano Park” video documentary (Berkeley: Red Bird Film, 1988)
used the arts to tell the story of the Chicano struggle for basic civil rights, depicting the story of discrimination, segregation, and lack of access to education and services. They painted Chicano history. In the 1970’s Chicano artists painted on buildings, walls, neighborhood and community centers, businesses, and on bridge pillars. They created some of the first public works of art that led, in some cities, to a public arts policy.¹⁶

In preparing a nomination to the National Register, an essential element a property needs for determining historic significance is *integrity*. This element carries such importance that the National Register program has identified seven factors to be considered when determining the significance of a structure:

- *Location*
- *Design*
- *Setting*
- *Materials*
- *Workmanship*
- *Feeling*
- *Association*

¹⁶ RCAF artist Armando Cid’s 1976 public art tile mosaic murals in Sacramento, Ca. were the first commissioned art that set the precedence for a 2% ordinance that allocated public funds from community development public projects for art and lead to the establishment of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.
In the case of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals the location is significant, as Logan Heights was the first land development and the oldest neighborhood in San Diego, established in the 1880’s. After the turn of the century the railroad and the automotive industry paved the way for further real estate development that did not demand closeness to employment. Logan Heights, because of its proximity to the fishing and lumber industries and discriminatory housing covenants, became the home to San Diego’s Chicano and African American citizens.17

The section of Logan Heights affectionately referred to as Barrio Logan is where the majority of the Chicanos resided. Geographically it is located in the North West section of the community. In the late 1950’s through the end of the 1960’s urban renewal and transportation public policy left Barrio Logan bisected by Interstate 5 traveling from South to North and then quartered as the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge projected East to West off of Interstate 5. With the proposition of the establishment of a California Highway Patrol station in 1970 on the site that the community had identified for a future park the community created local history by standing up in defiance to the State of California and the City of San Diego to occupy the land and create their own park.

The design of the park is in the style that the community demanded that reflected the indigenous roots of the Americas. Within the design of the park there is an Aztec kiosk dance pavilion, sculpture and indigenous plant gardens, along with over 100 brightly painted murals on the bridge approach ramps and support pillars. Visually the park is stimulating, unique, and significant.

The setting and the workmanship of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals are critically important to recognize. The pillars on which the murals are created are the canvas on which many local and internationally recognized artists painted. The Royal Chicano Air Force, an internationally recognized artist’s collective (Jose Montoya, Esteban Villa, Ricardo Favela, Armando Cid, Juanishi Orosco, Rudy Cuellar, Louie “the foot” Gonzales, Celia Rodriguez, Irma Barbosa etc….) based in Sacramento painted on several of the pillars and approach ramps. Internationally and academically recognized
Rupert Garcia (Stanford University professor) directed the painting of the Mexican Masters and other influential Chicano public artists such as Gilbert “Magu” Lujan, (of the legendary East Los Angeles Chicano artist collective “Los four”), Victor Ochoa, Guillermo Aranda, Salvador Torres, Guillermo Rossette, and Mario Torero (original founders of the San Diego Toltecas en Aztlan), Yolanda Lopez (San Francisco Chicana feminist artist), Michael Schnorr (original member of the Border Arts Workshop), Susan Yamagata, and others are all represented. Following the precedent set by the Mexican Masters, the Chicano artists mentioned are all recognized for contributing their arts talent for the people and not for the few during the height of the Chicano Art Movement and up to the present day. The Chicano Park Murals continue to grow in numbers telling the history of the struggles of the Chicano people in the Americas.

The feeling of the site is evident during the annual celebration of the founding of Chicano Park. The community comes to celebrate and validate their efforts at self determination in defining their needs in the throes of adversity. The community is represented by the local residents and supporters from throughout the Southwest and beyond. There have been local, state and national filmmakers, as well as those from Europe, attending to get a glimpse of the beauty and the community ambient. There are people from all walks of life in attendance, blue collar, white collar, academics, as well as local politicians and civic leaders. The feeling of success continues to permeate within
the environment as old acquaintances rekindle friendships and new faces light up with pride.

The integrity of a property includes the element of association with an important historic event or person and a historic property. Chicano Park is associated with the Chicano Civil Rights era. It was established during the height of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement in 1970. Other events that coincide with founding of Chicano Park and the Chicano Civil Rights Movement include the “Occupation” of San Diego’s Old Neighbor—Neighborhood House Association—the first settlement house west of the Mississippi (now recognized as the Chicano Health Center one block away from Chicano Park) and the founding of El Centro Cultural de la Raza—the only Chicano/Indigenous art and cultural center in San Diego’s Balboa Park. Many of the same individuals involved in the establishment of Chicano Park were also involved in the above mentioned events.

Within each historical and architectural evaluation criteria used by the National Park Service to determine the historical significance there are four other attributes that can be applied to each of the above mentioned criteria—age, style, unaltered, and/or historical. Any of these four factors can increase or decrease the level of historical significance.18

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The age rule maintains that a historical structure must be fifty years old or older, unless it meets additional criteria rendering it exceptional through historical significance or architectural design. This rule is the focal point of discussion that historians today are having over the “recent past” movement. Historians, at opposite ends of the same dichotomy, are grappling with what to do with the large number of modern-era post World War II structures, less than 50 years of age that represent the mid twentieth century era, such as shopping malls, fast-food restaurants, and suburban developments that are found throughout the world and the United States. The discussion focuses on identifying and preserving the most outstanding of these modern-era structures that are rapidly disappearing to more energy efficient structures and sustainable designs.19

The “recent past” movement is important in the case of Chicano Park Murals. Many murals were painted during the height of the Chicano Civil Rights movement, less than 50 years ago, with many more being painted annually. The founders of Chicano Park foresaw the murals being painted on the pillars “All The Way to the Bay.”20 Today Chicano Park has more than 100 murals painted on the pillars and bridge ramps. As the current “Recent Past” movement focuses on the conservation of buildings, sites, and neighborhoods of the post-World War II era, Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals

19 Ibid. p 144.
20 From 1970 to 1987 the Logan Heights community fought for Chicano Park to be extended “All The Way To The Bay” a slogan that contributed towards the development of a small park on the San Diego Bay. After close to 50 years the Logan Heights community had access to the bay again.
represent the conservation of the history of a Chicano neighborhood and a celebration of that community’s right to define their own existence. The creation of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals represent an era in which Chicanos across the Southwestern United States were demanding their civil rights. The cultural resources, Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals, must be preserved and protected especially in light of encroaching gentrification and the potential development of a new football sports complex.21

Thematic/historic context is another critical element to be considered in determining historic significance. According to Norman Tyler, “Historic context refers to the cultural situation through which a property was created, including its subsequent evolution…historians…have traditionally used the themes and concepts process to determine the cultural significance of the subject of their research.” 22 Utilizing this consideration, the designation process becomes stronger when set within the context of larger trends. This framework was first adopted in 1936 by the National Park Service’s History Programs. The themes concept and the guidelines have been vital to the process over the years and have been revised numerous times. The most recent revision was

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21 Chicano Park is located within walking distance of the San Diego Convention Center and Padres Stadium, as San Diego debates the development of a new stadium for the infamous Chargers football team, Barrio Logan sits right in the geographic path of “future development” as referred to by Jose Gomez in the Chicano Park video documentary by Mulford and Barrera.

completed in 1994 to reflect everyday people in daily life within our national, state, and local history.  

Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals correspond well with the thematic framework of people, time, and place used by the Programs of the National Park and Landmark System. It was the sons and daughters of laborers and field workers defining their own history by resisting the status quo to create their own reality in 1970—that of a park for the community. The establishment of the park came after two decades of neglect and neighborhood annihilation by the San Diego political leaders and state and national transportation policies. During the 1950’s and 1960’s more than 5,200 homes were destroyed by the development of Interstate 5 and the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge, which bisected and dissected the self contained neighborhood of Barrio Logan.  

Adding further insult to injury, during this same timeframe the City of San Diego had also rezoned the area from residential to light industry, infusing the Barrio with auto junk yards, dismantlers and reassembling yards interspersed between houses, elementary schools, community centers, tortilla shops, restaurants, and small mom-and-pop grocery stores.

The remaining residents of Barrio Logan, trying to redefine the neighborhood and to maintain a sense of dignity, began meeting with City officials to request the development of a park. The requests fell on deaf ears, instead of a park on the community’s targeted parcel of land, a California Highway Patrol Station and parking lot was being built. That was the final blow that sent the community into a state of panic. It was a decisive moment when older long-time residents joined their children and neighbors’ children by forming a human chain around the construction workers, stopping the State of California and the City of San Diego from building the proposed Highway Patrol station. The community “Take Over” of the land lasted twelve days before an agreement was reached to support the development of Chicano Park. This was a turning point in local history for all involved.

Within the benchmarks used by the National Park and Landmark Service there are eight thematic categories that provide a systematic process for looking at the patterns of the country’s history. This structure provides an in-depth filter pertinent for historic preservation consideration when assessing where we, as a country, have been and where we are going. This analysis is referred to as a historic context statement and is required in most National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark nominations. There are eight thematic categories to be considered.
1. Peopling Places: examining human population movement and change; dealing with demographic shifts in American society, including family structure, lifestyle, gender issues, migration, and ethnicity.

The “Take Over” of Chicano Park and the creation of the Chicano Park Murals reflect a change in attitude by the Chicano community of Barrio Logan and their relationship to the broader community of the City of San Diego. This change reflected the ethnic and cultural demographics of the area. After years of invisibility, discrimination, and segregated housing, the residents of Logan Heights stood up for themselves and took over a small parcel of land to create a park on the first nationwide celebration of *Earth Day*.

2. Creating Social Institutions and Movements: Social institutions, associations, and organizations, play a role in shaping society.

The Chicano Park Steering Committee was formally established to address the concerns of the community and to specifically negotiate on behalf of Chicano Park. Other organizations playing a significant role in the creation of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park murals included M.E.CH.A (*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicoano en Aztlan*), a Chicano student organization, the Chicano Federation, a coalition service organizations, the Centro Familiar, a Catholic social service agency, the Brown Berets, a national activist group of Chicanos concerned with civil rights issues, and Toltecas en Aztlan, a group of artists and cultural preservationists.
3. Expressing Cultural Values: Cultural expressions and their associations.

The annual Chicano Park Celebration includes—music, dance, theater, art, literature/poetry, as well as community leaders speaking on Chicano Park, the Chicano Park Murals and other social justice issues. The painting of the Chicano Park Murals, which began in 1974 with the first mural marathon, has produced more than 100 murals to date. The murals express the historical and cultural, concepts, themes and values of Chicano and Indigenous people of the Americas. The Chicano artists that painted murals in Chicano Park have been identified as trailblazers of the California Chicano art movement.

4. Shaping the Political Landscape: Including federal, state, local and tribal institutions politically active and shaping public policy.

The establishment of Chicano Park became a defining moment in the history of San Diego, but especially for the Chicano people from Logan Heights. Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals represented the timeframe of the Chicano Civil Rights era. During this period of history public policy was being shaped on many levels. Most significant was the impact that Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and the United Farm Workers (UFW) had on agri-business (statewide and nationally), specifically the right for field workers to organize to create a union to negotiate on their behalf. The Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF), an internationally known artist collective based in Sacramento that also included
educators, local and statewide politicians, community organizers, used the arts—visual, literary & performing arts—to educate the masses on social injustice issues endured by Chicano and Indigenous peoples. Through their talents they were impacting local and statewide polices that still have lasting effect. In San Diego, the Toltecas En Aztlan and the Congresso de Artistas Chicanos en Aztlan, and other artists’ collectives were also using the arts as a strategic method of teaching and pointing out social and political issues. The Brown Berets, during this timeframe, contributed towards changing public policy that ignored and/or violated the rights of Chicano citizens of the United States. These and other Chicano activist organizations all contributed towards the founding of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals.

5. Developing the American Economy: Sites that represent points in our economic history.

Barrio Logan represented a thriving neighborhood that was rich in history, culture, and local commerce representing Chicano and non-Chicano business owners. On the exact same geographic site that Chicano Park is situated there were homes, apartments, a restaurant, and a night club where the local community lived, ate and celebrated cultural entertainment—music, dance and spirits. Although the site would not represent a point in

25 There were recognized as the arts warriors working closely with the UFW creating much of the visuals propaganda and working in tandem on many of the negotiating teams. There public art in the City of Sacramento was the precedent for a 2% law for city construction and development and for the establishment of the local arts agency to oversee arts policy.
the nation’s economic history, it was part of the economic sector valued by the residents of Logan Heights.

6. Expanding Science and Technology: focusing on science, physical science, the social sciences and medicine.

Logan Heights experienced urban renewal and national transportation policies in the worst possible way; that resulted in a dismantling process that rendered the neighborhood powerless during a time when public comment was not mandatory. The California Department of Transportation defined the route of Interstate 5 traveling South to North to bisect the Logan Heights community starting in the late 1950’s through the 1960’s with the connecting ramps between Interstate 5 and the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge.

Through urban renewal the neighborhood was rezoned to include light industry that wrecked havoc on its residents.

This theme specifically focuses on experimentation and invention, technological applications, scientific thought and theory, and effects on lifestyle and health. The freeways and bridges of the era fit the category; specifically the San Diego-Coronado Bay bridge, it was elegantly designed by principal architect Robert Mosher. It is 11,179 (2.1 miles) long and ascends at a 4.67 percent grade before curving 80 degrees east and has a span that reaches a maximum height of 200 feet. At the time that it was built it had the longest box girder in the world (holding this distinction until it was surpassed in 2008
by a bridge built in Chonquin, China.) The bridge is not a straight connection between San Diego and Coronado, but rather it has a curve. In addition, the bridge is the third largest orthogonal box in the country. In 1970, only one year after it was completed, it won the Most Beautiful Bridge award from the American Institute of Steel Construction.26

The Chicano Park Murals contributed to the well-being of the community. The 1978 President’s Commission on Mental Health documents the positive impact of the arts and culture has on the Chicano community.27 The murals are painted on the pillars, approach ramps and abutments of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge; they represent the canvases for the murals. The bridge is a contributing factor in the nomination of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals to the National Register.

7. Transforming the Environment: Our environment has become a human artifact as we have continued to affect it through our continued settlement. The community of Logan Heights established the Chicano Park as a cultural resource. After the near total destruction of the neighborhood a park was requested to maintain a sense of normality. When the request fell on deaf ears the residents took it upon

27 1978—4-volume Report to the President from the President's Commission on Mental Health
themselves to build their own park. The Chicano community locally and from throughout the Southwest revere and adore the park. One example is Lincoln Park in El Paso, Texas. This park was modeled in the image of Chicano Park—a park built under a freeway with murals painted on the pillars.²⁸ Chicano Park artist Felipe Adame was asked to paint the first mural on the pillars under the Spaghetti Bowl by Lincoln Center in 1983.

8. Changing Role of the United States in the World Community: Exploring diplomacy, trade, cultural exchange, security and defense, expansionism, imperialism, etc…looking at our relationship with indigenous and native populations and international community’s investigating diplomatic policies throughout history and the individuals involved with creating and administering them.

The Logan Heights community at one time had a self contained population of over 20,000 that dwindled to 5,000 after the area was rezoned changing it from residential to light industry and public policy targeted it as the route of freeways and bridges. The establishment of Chicano Park became a defining moment in the history of the City of San Diego. After years of discrimination and neglect the City now needed to look at its relationship with its Chicano residents/citizens. It was a defining moment for the City of San Diego and the Chicano residents of Logan Heights.

²⁸ http://www.convictedartist.com/lincoln_park_day_car_show.html
The timing for the nomination of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals to the National Trust is critical to ensure the preservation of these significant cultural resources. The Park and the Murals are located within walking distance to the San Diego Convention Center, Petco Park, and the Downtown Gas Lamp district. There has been on-going discussion of building a new football stadium for the San Diego Chargers and the constant focus on more tourist development. Barrio Logan, Chicano Park, the Chicano Park Murals and what is left of the residential housing are situated in the path of further commercial development.

Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals appear eligible under Criteria A at the local level of significance due to their association of the Chicano Civil Rights era and through events that have made a significant impact of the broader patterns of the City of San Diego’s political and social history. The nomination process is quite extensive and requires in-depth research utilizing the National Registers criteria for evaluation, the seven factors that define the historical significance of integrity, and historic themes and context to determine the cultural significance for the subject of the research. This chapter utilized the reference criteria to articulate the significance of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals.
The story of the Chicano Park “take over” and creation of the Chicano Park Murals does not reside in a vacuum. In a historical sense one could say its story is a product of the times. On April 22, 1970 members of the community of Logan Heights, a San Diego, California neighborhood, stood up for themselves and claimed their right to have their voices heard. No longer willing to endure the disrespect and injustices experienced on an on-going basis, they claimed and occupied a parcel of land for a park for their children. The “take over” of Chicano Park occurred during turbulent times, as the 1960’s and 1970’s were a time of social, political and civil unrest. The time frame is recognized as the civil rights era and, like African Americans before them, Chicanos were claiming their rights as equal citizens. Yet the history of Chicanos does not begin during these turbulent times. The history of Chicanos officially began when northern Mexico was ceded to the United States in 1848 by the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. It was at this point in time that the border crossed Mexico and Mexicans
became Chicanos, invisible citizens of the United States, subject to racism, discrimination and segregation.29

As Americans moved westward in search of new territories the vast wealth of Mexican land was enticing. Under the pretense of Manifest Destiny, Americans believed it their inalienable right to “drive out the wilderness and establish civilization.”30 The rapid expansion west began with the annexation of Texas and spread to California validating the “from sea to shining sea” propaganda that contributed toward the immediate exploitation of the Western half of the North American continent.31

The United States war with Mexico (1846-1848) ended with signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In one swoop the United States seized Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Upper California, and parts of Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado from Mexico. Though the Treaty theoretically guaranteed Chicanos living in the newly occupied United States protection of property and civil rights, the United States Senate ratified the treaty on March 10, 1848 deleting Article X that guaranteed the protection of Mexican land grants.32 Land owning Mexicans of Northern Mexico became landless,

29 Within the Chicano community there is a saying, “we didn’t cross the border the border crossed us” referring to Mexicans left in the United States after the signing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This statement is in reference to a community proverb.
31 Ibid.
32 http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/guadalupe-hidalgo/
oppressed, discriminated-against second class Chicano citizens in the newly occupied United States territory.

California during this time period was combating with its own lawlessness, as thirty three rebel Americans stormed Sonoma and annexed California from Mexico, declaring it an independent republic in 1846. This incident and the discovery of gold in 1848 made California more appealing to explore and exploit. The non-native population of California prior to 1848 was approximately 15,000, of which Mexicans made up approximately 6,000. By 1850 the non-native population rose to 100,000 most arriving by boat or coming over land from the eastern United States. In 1860 the census counted this population at 360,000.33

During the early years of California statehood, a rash of discriminatory laws were enacted that were targeted toward Chicanos. The Foreign Miners Tax law of 1850 applied a fee of $20 per month to immigrants of Asian, Mexican and Latin America decent, including California born Chicanos guaranteed citizenship through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The anti-vagrancy law that became known as the Greaser law and the 1855 act negating constitutional requirements that all laws be translated into Spanish demonstrate the attitude toward Mexicans in California.34

33 http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/resapport/states/california.pdf ;
34 Jose Pitti, Antonia Castañeda, Carlos Cortes, Five Views An Ethnic Sites Survey for California, (California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, Ca., December 1988) pg 210
The Anglo population grew at an alarming rate in California between 1850 through the end of the nineteenth century, while the Chicano population remained relatively consistent. The loss of land by changes in laws, bureaucratic loopholes, and implementation of squatter’s rights relegated Chicano landowners to the lower echelons of California citizenry. With the loss of their land holdings went their opportunity for self-sufficiency. The loss of jobs by design and/or through discrimination further eroded the socio-economic system and from the 1890’s through the 1930’s Chicanos existed by living close to poverty on menial unskilled labor employment.35

With inadequate resources and the loss of land and Anglo-imposed segregated restrictive covenants on real estate, Chicanos had limited access as to where they could reside. Barrios and/or colonias (Spanish speaking neighborhoods) existed out of necessity and desire as Chicanos were unwanted in Anglo segregated areas and because extended families and friends found comfort in the company of each other. The process of barrioization is not to be viewed as entirely a negative experience and proves to be one of the attributes that contributed to the preservation of Chicano cultural heritage. Ricardo Griswold del Castillo in his book, La Raza Hispano Americana concludes on a Barrio observation:

The Barrio gave identity and a feeling of being at home for the dispossessed and poor. It was a place, a traditional place, that offered some security from the city’s social and economic turmoil…In a sense the creation of the Barrio was a means

35 Ibid pg 210-211.
of cultural survival. Proximity of residence reinforced the language, religion, and social habits of Chicanos and thus insured the continuation of their distinctive culture.\textsuperscript{36}

The Chicano population grew tremendously in the first three decades of the twentieth century due to war and civil unrest in Mexico and the expansion of United States industries such as agriculture, canneries, mining, and railroads. The influx of Mexican immigrants was welcomed by the business industries primarily because they provided cheap labor for the profit and growth of the local and regional communities. Labor was needed and Mexicans came to work despite the fact that they were relegated to menial unskilled/semi-skilled jobs and had little hope for upward mobility. Chicanos constituted up to two-thirds of the workforce in most of these industries in the 1920’s.\textsuperscript{37} They generally settled throughout the southwest; however, by 1930 more than thirty percent of Mexican-born United States residents lived in California, working in every possible industry.\textsuperscript{38}

A growing concern in the United States between 1890’s and the 1930’s was the concept of the American identity. Though the concept had existed since the founding of United States independence, the mass influx of Southern and Western Europeans, in the


\textsuperscript{38}Ibid.
last part of the nineteenth century, was the impetus of the Anglo Saxon being considered the true American identity. This concept led the way for educational policy focusing on English and American cultural norms as the strategy of assimilation.

The Americanization movement took a firm root in the second decade of the twentieth century with the establishment of Settlement Houses providing English and lifestyle classes for immigrants. Frank Van Nuys, in his book, *Americanizing the West: Race, Immigrants, and Citizenship, 1890-1930*, discusses racism and social control agendas as the impetus of the Americanization efforts. He notes that Americanizers initially believed that immigrants would adopt American values, life styles and adopt the English language naturally. As immigrant communities held steadfast to their own language and cultural values, many of the Americanizers placed their faith in the socialization process transferred through the education system as the preferred method of transforming immigrants into productive citizens.

In 1914 the settlement house called Neighborhood House was established in San Diego, geographically situated in the heart of the *Barrio* and the tuna industry where the majority of the Chicano community lived and worked. Neighborhood House Americanization programs provided services and classes to the community. Many settlement houses’ goal was to “Americanize” immigrants through teaching English and American customs. Some of these programs were unsuccessful in Chicano communities,
primarily because they did not deal with the hard economic reality faced by Chicanos during this time period. Interestingly enough the San Diego Chicano community participated fully in the services being provided Neighborhood House (public showers, home economics classes, community cultural events, English and citizenship classes, a fresh milk station, day nursery—precursor to kindergarten classes, medical clinic services providing free immunization shots, cultural events, to name just a few) not because they wanted to assimilate but because they were experiencing hard economic times and the services were either free or offered at a low cost. The community embraced Neighborhood House because it was a central gathering place of services and acted in the capacity as the first community cultural center in Logan Heights.

Most of the settlement house resident workers believed in the Americanization concept for Chicanos, as their attitudes toward Chicanos were based on negative stereotypes of “Mexicans being lazy and liars.” The perspective of resident worker, Helen Marston Beardsley, of Mexican people was drastically altered by her experience of working at Neighborhood House from 1917 through 1920. She was a native San

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41 Ibid. Years later in an interview regarding the history of San Diego’s Neighborhood House, Helen Marston “spoke with disdain” of those volunteers and staff dedicated to the Americanization of Mexicans, and vehemently separated herself from their company. Instead, Marston proudly recounted the time
Diegan from an affluent family and admitted, that she “grew up thinking that all
Mexicans were lazy people with a care free philosophy that put off doing everything until
tomorrow.” In her article, “Mexican Traits,” that appeared in the August 1920 edition of
Survey magazine, the premier journal of social work in America, she tried to counter
Anglo preconceptions that found Mexicans to be lazy thieves and liars:

…the women of our neighborhood carry the double burden of home with its many
babies and of work in the fish canneries, whither they go, day or night, at the
sound of the whistles… In regard to Mexican men and boys she noted their work
in the district’s industries “when these plants are in operation, and some of them
work for desperately long stretches…The idling which we so resent is sometimes
merely the result of spurts of night work, followed by a few house of sleep in the
adjacent lumber yards.”

Ms. Marston Beardsley was the exception among the Neighborhood House resident
workers.

The ebb and flow of Mexicans from Mexico only added to the racial
discrimination faced by Chicanos. During the Great Depression the government’s
solution to the shrinking job market was the institution of Repatriation Programs.
Mexicans were exploited and considered an expendable workforce and no longer

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settlement workers cared for the Mexican twin babies brought to the settlement by their father after their
mother had abandoned them. That racial ethnic integration and acceptance was the kind of incident
Marston hoped her friends and critics would remember. Shelton, “The Neighborhood House of San Diego,”
55, 60. (Point of Clarification, elder/activist Laura Rodriguez, in conversation with Josie S. Talamantez in
1992, 19 was one of children that Marston was referring to, however the mother did not leave she had died
and Laura’s father was blind.)

43 Kyle E. Ciana, “Revelations of a Reformer: Helen D. Marston Beardsly and Progressive Social
Activism” www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/v50-3/beardsley.pdf
considered the backbone of California’s agricultural and other employment industry sectors in need of unskilled or semi-skilled labors. Over one million people of Mexican descent were either forced or pressured to leave the country, approximately 60% of those were United States born citizens, violating their basic civil liberties and constitutional rights.44

During the first half of the twentieth century racism, discrimination, and segregation remained a constant factor. Segregated schools for Chicano children perpetuated their marginal status throughout the Southwest. In response to this ostracism one Chicano community in San Diego County stood up to fight for the educational rights of their children. Locked out of their school, seventy-five Chicano children went home rather than to a separate building that was built to segregate them from the white children after the school board had approved an Americanization school for them. 45

Manuel H. Cid, Interview by Josie S. Talamantez, (1998; Sacramento, Ca.) discusses his family of six U.S. born citizens and his parents being forced to repatriate to Mexico. He was 16 years old and new nothing of Mexico. He considered himself American and not Mexican. He and his two brothers returned in 1943 to honorably serve in World War II, one of brothers died in the line of duty.

45 Robert R. Alvarez, Jr., “The Lemon Grove Incident The Nation’s First Successful Desegregation Court Case” The Journal of San Diego History (Spring: 1986) 32, Number 2. Meyer Weinberg states, “…in 1928, San Bernardino had sixteen such schools, Orange County fourteen, Los Angeles County ten, Imperial eight, Kern eight, Ventura four, Riverside two and Santa Barbara two” in Meyer Weinberg, A Chance to Learn (Boston: Cambridge University Press, 1977). pp. 155-165. Paul Taylor writing in 1927 states, that in the Imperial Valley, California, Mexican children made up one-third of the population and were separated into Americanization and opportunity classes. "Segregation" he stated "occurs in every town of the Imperial
case of Roberto Alvarez vs the Board of Trustees of Lemon Grove School District, referred to as the “Lemon Grove Incident” was the first successful desegregation court decision in the history of the United States. Though there was access to equal education in Lemon Grove for Chicano children, schools in San Diego City’s Logan Heights neighborhood remained subject to segregation.46

In the 1940’s Barrio Logan remained a segregated community, a self contained enclave unto itself. The local residents prospered economically during World War II as work was abundant in the shipping, steel, fishing and other industries that surrounded the community. In addition, there were community-owned business such as bakeries, grocery stores, restaurants, night clubs, as well as community services; however, the main business enterprises were owned and operated by non-Chicano residents, such as department and furniture stores, community theatres, fish canneries, steel and ship building companies, and military bases.

World War II marked a tipping point for Chicanos. When the call came to serve the country, over 500,000 Spanish surnamed individuals enlisted, earning thirteen Medals

46 Josie S. Talamantez remembers her father telling of his plight in the 1920’s at Sherman Elementary School in Logan Heights. While in the third grade he was placed in the “Mexican Ungraded” classes; he successfully argued his case to the Principal of the school to be placed back into the “regular” classes with the Anglo children where he felt he would have a better chance to succeed.
of Honor. At the same time that Chicanos were fighting for their country Chicano youth on the home front were being openly and publically attacked and discriminated against because of how they were dressed. Young Chicanos wearing Zoot suits, the latest fashion of the day, were being openly attacked by the soldiers and sailors for looking and dressing differently.

According to the Los Angeles History Almanac, “Mexican-American men were, disproportionately for their population, well represented in the military… many servicemen with no prior experience with Chicanos and Chicano culture resented seeing so many Chicanos socializing in clothing many considered unpatriotic and extravagant in wartime… United States War Production Board said that they (Mexican Zoot Suiters) wasted materials that should be devoted to the World War II war effort...” The Los Angeles newspapers and wartime propaganda described Mexicans as aliens who were invading California, never mind the fact that Chicanos had been in California since before statehood. These factors caused much racial tension between Chicanos and

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47 The authors father-in-law, a US born citizen who repatriated with his family in the 1930’s, walked with his two brothers (also US citizens) from Zacatecas, Mexico, across the Rio Grande to join the army. Manuel H. Cid interviewed by Josie S. Talamantez, December 1998 in Sacramento, California.
48 Author Josie S. Talamantez recounting conversations from her mother, Sue A. Talamantez regarding the treatment of her cousins and friends in Logan Heights during the Zoot Suit era.
49 http://www.laalmanac.com/history/hi07t.htm

whites.\textsuperscript{50} Carey McWilliams described the military attitude toward Chicanos in his book \textit{North From Mexico}:

Marching through the streets of downtown Los Angeles, a mob of several thousand soldiers, sailors, and civilians, proceeded to beat up every Zoot Suiter they could find. Pushing its way into the important motion picture theaters, the mob ordered the management to turn on the house lights and then ran up and down the aisles dragging Mexicans out of their seats. Streetcars were halted while Mexicans, and some Filipinos and Negroes, were jerked from their seats, pushed into the streets and beaten with a sadistic frenzy.\textsuperscript{51}

In San Diego during the 1940’s there were two military bases located along the waterfront, the Marine base was west of the downtown area and the 32\textsuperscript{nd} Street Navy base was, and still is, located in Logan Heights. San Diego is considered a military town and young Chicanos wearing Zoot Suits in Logan Heights at this time experienced the same type of racial profiling that was taking place in Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{52}

Racism and discrimination faced by Chicanos remained a constant during this timeframe and was overtly, blatantly, and negatively documented in the news media. One case in point was the Los Angeles Sleepy Lagoon case of 1942–43. It became the pinnacle of contention when seventeen Chicano youth were charged with the murder of another Chicano youth. The judge and the prosecution unashamedly publically

\textsuperscript{52} Author Josie S. Talamantez recounting conversations from her mother, Sue A. Talamantez regarding the treatment of her cousins and friends in Logan Heights during the Zoot Suit era.
humiliated and discriminated against the youth and denied them their basic human rights of bathing, changing their clothes, or getting haircuts. Even though the case was overturned in 1944, the newspapers sensationalized the trial, encouraging an anti-Mexican atmosphere that perpetuated racist stereotypes of Mexicans being other than law abiding citizens.\textsuperscript{53}

The labor needs in United States’ industries created the intersection by which Mexicans have been seen as a needed commodity—welcome them when needed and expel them when not needed. The Repatriation program of the 1930’s was the quintessential model displacing entire families including many Chicano United States citizens, when the Great Depression hit the country.\textsuperscript{54} In 1942 the United States again needed cheap labor, while her men were overseas fighting in World War II, and called upon Mexico to establish the \textit{Bracero} program. The plan for bringing Mexican workers to America through a guest worker program included such provisions as adequate housing and sanitary conditions, freedom from discrimination, and ten percent of wages being set aside in a savings fund payable to the worker upon his return to Mexico. In a few instances, the housing and sanitary conditions were adequate. Mexicans were not free from discrimination and regrettably, none of them saw any of the savings that were

\textsuperscript{53} Author Josie S. Talamantez recounting conversations from her mother, Sue A. Talamantez regarding the treatment of her cousins and friends in Logan Heights during the Zoot Suit era.

withheld from their wages.\textsuperscript{55} Between 1942 and 1964 4.6 million Braceros entered the United States.\textsuperscript{56}

There were attempts by the State department to end the \textit{Bracero} program in 1946, but employers negotiated its extension well past 1949. In 1951 the program was reconstituted as farmers argued for the need to maintain cheap labor to work in the agricultural industry. According to Brian F. Smith’s \textit{Historical Resources Survey Barrio Logan Community Plan} a large number of immigrants settled in Logan Heights during the era of the \textit{Bracero} program, representing 15\% percent of San Diego's Spanish-speaking population.\textsuperscript{57} There was also rapid growth in the African American community from 4,143 to 14,904 residents between 1940 and 1950. African American and Mexicans shared their living quarters in Logan Heights as the practice of residential covenants continued to force segregated housing.\textsuperscript{58} The African American community successfully

\textsuperscript{55} \url{http://mexicoandamerica.com/LaborPool.html} “The Bracero program ran from 1942 until 1964 when it was discontinued. Attempts were made by the State department to end the Bracero Program in 1946, but employers talked them into extending it until 1949. The program continued past 1949 until it officially ended in 1964. The year in which most Braceros were contracted was 1956 when 445,197 \textit{Braceros} were brought into the United States Government.”


\textsuperscript{57} Brian F. Smith, \textit{Historical Resources Survey Barrio Logan Community Plan Area San Diego} (City of San Diego, Planning & Community Investment Community Planning & Urban Form Divisions: September 2009)

\textsuperscript{58} \url{http://www.sandiegonaacp.org/history.htm} A Brief History of the San Diego NAACP 1917-2007 & Josie S. Talamantez recounting conversations from her mother regarding Dr. Kimbrough, the families dentist and well known African American artist.
challenged racial discrimination and segregation. The records also show that in the mid 1950’s, through litigation, all white neighborhoods were opened to people of color. The bonds of housing covenants were finally shattered, at least legally.

*Barrio* Logan remained California's second largest Mexican-American community throughout the 1940’s and 50’s—home to nearly 20,000 residents. This changed drastically as city zoning laws were changed, shifting Logan Heights from residential to a mixed commercial industry district (referred to as light industry.) The neighborhood immediately experienced an influx of Anglo-owned junkyards and dismantlers. These auto junkyards and auto wrecking centers were set up next to school yards and homes, wherever land was available, creating resentment in the community.

David R. Diaz in his book, *Barrio Urbanism: Chicanos, Planning, and American Cities*, argues that policy trends of planning professionals and developers failed to meet the needs of Chicano communities due to both poverty and racism. Using East Los Angeles, a Chicano section of Los Angeles similar to Logan Heights, he discusses the community’s inability to stop the major displacements and social disruptions of urban

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59 Ibid The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) records indicate that thirty-two legal cases challenging white owned restaurants that discriminated against Blacks and Chicanos were successfully upheld in court.

60 Ibid

renewal and freeway constructions, a trend that was happening throughout the southwest targeting Chicano neighborhoods between the 1950’s through the 1970’s.\textsuperscript{62}

Throughout the Southwest, urban Barrios proved to be the location of choice for the urban elites who decided where highway routes would be located. Without representation, Barrios were effectively attacked by state transportation departments, who had support from the federal highway administration. East Los Angeles suffered the worst from the bureaucratic logic. This Barrio had numerous vibrant cohesive neighborhoods that were either eradicated or radically reconstructed with the imposition of five distinct freeway routes.\textsuperscript{63}

Raul Homero Villa in his book Barrio Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture argues that the effects of landscape, laws, and media are the main points of intercourse and intersection that contribute to the destruction and demolition of the Barrios. He says,

many of the subordinating practices active in contemporary Barrio life were already present in nascent form in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century…three have been historically instrumental in producing the external boundaries of Chicano social space: (1) the physical regulation and constitution of space (via land-use decisions and the built environment); (2) the social control of space (via legal/juridical state apparatuses and police authority); and (3) the ideological control of space (via the interpellation of citizen-subjects through educational and informational apparatuses).\textsuperscript{64}

He points out that the concepts Barriozation and Barriology represent the opposite end of the same dichotomy. Barriozation is the formation of residentially and socially segregated Chicano Barrios or neighborhoods. Barriology, on the other hand, is a “State

\textsuperscript{62}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{63}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{64}Raul Homero Villa, Barrio Logos Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000) pg5-9
of Mind” where the cultural practices produced and exercised in the Barrios are tended toward positive articulations of community consciousness, which contribute to a psychologically and materially sustaining sense of “home” location. This is significant in the case of Barrio Logan as many long gone residents continue to feel the connection to the Barrio and joined in to support the “Take Over” of the land. Though the Barrio is a place that offered a geographical traditional identity, a feeling of being at home, a place that offered some security in the midst of social and economic transition, it was also a place of poverty, crime, illness and despair.

In the early 1960’s federal urban renewal programs and the desire to connect the nation by freeways impacted many low-income Chicano communities, and Barrio Logan was no exception. Barrio Logan was split in half by the intrusion of Interstate 5 beginning its South-North trek from the Mexican border to Oregon. The construction of Interstate 5 displaced families and businesses and resulted in the destruction of the Logan.

Many Barrios and low-income communities in California and across the nation faced the same fate as Barrio Logan. In the 1960’s Urban Renewal Projects and Transportation public policy were not subject to NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act), or the National Uniform Relocation Act, which today helps to protect communities from the potentially devastating and

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65 Ibid.
disruptive impacts caused by major improvement projects. Charles Mariano in his memoirs of Merced, California remembers, “One day it was decided there was going to be a freeway coming through…the Old 99 went straight through 16th street, where a bustling…… of stores and bars used to be…the New 99 was going to leap the tracks…three blocks into our neighborhood.” He says to his brother after witnessing blocks and blocks of demolished houses, “What about all the people inside the houses? Where did they go?”

With the exception of a few geographic sites, there seemed to be little consideration for the human factor while creating freeways across the nation. One story of intervention is worthy of mention here. In 1960 a Tucson, Arizona urban renewal project, the construction of the Butterfield Express, was proposed. In its path was a Mexican Barrio, two surrounding neighborhoods and the quaint downtown area of the city. Within the Barrio there was a small shrine that the community recognized as a religious and historic site called El Tiradito (the Wishing Shrine.) The community working with Dr. Jim Griffith, folklorist and professor of the University of Arizona, formed La Tiradito Foundation to preserve the integrity of the site. The mysterious

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67 Charles Mariano, “Highway 99”, The Whole Enchilada (Sacramento, Ca: Minuteman Press, 2009) pgs 36,37 Josie S. Talamantez interview with Charles Mariano 4/30/2010 in Sacramento, California he said his family was never informed that the New 99 route was going to go through the Mexican Barrio of Merced, Ca.
miraculous powers of El Tiradito are an important part of local lore and culture and residents still make pilgrimages to pray and make offerings. The community working with Dr. Griffith launched a successful nomination to National Register in 1971. The listing of the site on the National Register stopped the east west expressway from destroying the Barrio and preserved the traditional main streets of Tucson. Local lore has it that the miraculous powers of the site saved the Barrio from destruction.70

Barrio Logan did not have any miraculous powers to save their community. With the construction of the Interstate 5 in the early 1960’s and the subsequent San Diego Coronado Bay Bridge, 1967-1969, traveling east to west off of the Interstate 5, the neighborhood was bisected for a second time within the decade. More residents were displaced and more residential dwellings were leveled reducing the neighborhood population down to approximately 5,000 residents.71

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68 Josie Talamantez in conversation with Dr. Griffith while attending the Western State Folklorist regional gathering and cultural resource tour from Tucson, Arizona to Nogales, Mexico, 1997. The historic significance of La Tiradito is an event, the area of significance is religion, the cultural significance is Mexican American, the period of significance is 1850, 1874, 1875, 1899 and the historic sub-function is ceremonial. The site is highly acclaimed by the Mexican and non-Mexican community alike.


70 Josie Talamantez in conversation with Dr. Griffith while attending the Western State Folklorist regional gathering and cultural resource tour from Tucson, Arizona to Nogales, Mexico, 1997.

71 Martin D. Rosen; James Fisher, “Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals: Barrio Logan, City of San Diego, California” The Public Historian, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Autumn, 2001), pp 91-111. Michael Granerry, “20 Years Later, Span is Loved and Loathed,” Los Angeles Times, 2 August 1989. Also see Patrick McDonnell, “City Urged to Use Coronado Bridge Tolls for Barrio Logan Projects,” Los Angeles Times, 20 October 1990; Barnett, Community Murals, p107. It should also be noted that the Interstate 5 and State Route 75 construction projects of the 1960’s were...
The intrusion of Interstate 5 and the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge made it difficult for the residents in Barrio Logan to reach the churches and schools on the opposite side of the Interstate 5 and severed the business section from the larger Logan Heights district. The section southwest of the interstate became officially recognized as Barrio Logan by the city and county governmental officials and agencies. In an attempt to salvage what was left of the Barrio, members of the community began advocating for a park for the remainder of its residents. Discussions with political officials had been ongoing since 1967 and many residents in Barrio Logan believed that there would be land for a park provided by the City of San Diego.

On April 22, 1970, the formal struggle for a park in Barrio Logan began when students from San Diego City College, including Jose Gomez, Josie S. Talamantez, Martha Hurtado, Diane Bolivar, Mike Nava, Patricia Salazar, long-time residents of the neighborhood, along with Ron Trujillo, David Rico, Rosie and Domingo Nuñez and others students in Professor Gil Robledo’s Chicano Studies class learned from Mario Solis, Barrio Logan resident, that the City of San Diego and the State of California had negotiated a deal for use of the land by the California Highway Patrol. Many other students from surrounding colleges, universities, and high schools including San Diego

implemented at a time prior to the enactment of NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), CEQU (California Environmental Quality Act), or the National Uniform Relocation Act, which today helps to protect communities from the potential devastating and disruptive impacts caused by major public improvement projects.
State students Rico Bueno, Chunky Sanchez, and others joined families, elders, children and concerned citizens to occupy the land under the approach ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. They tolerated enough destruction of their Barrio and came together to define for themselves what they needed and it was not more police. Their efforts at self-determination would render a park for the betterment of the community. Between 250 and 500 people representing a wide cross-section of the community disrupted grading work that was in progress. They occupied the site for twelve days and demanded that a park be created immediately. To emphasize their point, the occupiers began the work of creating a park by using shovels, pickaxes, hoes and rakes to prepare the ground for the planting of grass, shrubs and flowers.

The action to create a park instead was the defining moment that empowered the community and changed how the residents proceeded in their relationship to the broader community. After the park the residents defined their community to meet their needs,

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72 Josie S. Talamantez conversation with Angie Avila (3/28/11) and Diane Bolivar (3/29/11), many long time residents and students too many names to be mentioned, but not forgotten, stood up that day to fight for the rights of the Barrio Logan community to have a park.
73 Marilyn Mulford, Producer; Mario Barrera & Marilyn Mulford Directors, Chicano Park (Berkeley: Red Bird Films, 1988).
they occupied the Old Neighborhood House and eventually converted it into a Chicano community health clinic, they occupied the Ford Building, in Balboa Park, that eventually led the way for the establishment of the Centro Cultural de la Raza, a Chicano and Indigenous arts, culture and heritage, they institutionalized the Barrio Station, a youth services organization and they became very involved with local and state politics as it pertained to Chicano issues.

The establishment of a CHP station under the bridge was viewed as an affront to Barrio Logan, a community that already had many grievances against local police actions. Furthermore, the proposed CHP station was to be an impressive size, proposing to employ some 195 uniformed personnel and 15 civilian employees and provide parking spaces for 115 cars. “Our neighborhood had already been invaded by the junkyards, the factories and a bridge had even been built through the Barrio,” Gomez declared. “The residents were viewed as obstacles that hadn’t gotten of the way of progress…Some of us decided that it was time to put a stop to the destruction and begin to make this place more livable.”

Forming the Chicano Park Steering Committee, the activists demanded that the property be donated to the Mexican-American community as a park in which Chicano culture could be expressed through art. “We are ready to die (to gain the park),” Salvador

75 Marilyn Mulford, Producer; Mario Barrera & Marilyn Mulford Directors, Chicano Park (Berkeley: Red Bird Films, 1988)
Roberto “Queso” Torres, a community artist, shouted to a gathering of city and state officials while supporters stamped their feet and shouted “viva la Raza-long live the race.” Twenty-eight year old Jose Gomez echoed this sentiment when he shouted: “The only way anybody is going to take the park away from us is through our blood.” Gomez later recalled: “The students, community members and the others said, ‘If you won’t build a park here, we’ll do it ourselves.’ That’s when the state officials knew we were serious. And the city entered into negotiations.”

Community activists withdrew only after city officials promised negotiations regarding the use of the land in question. San Diego City Councilman Leon Williams, an African-American whose district included Barrio Logan, assured the neighborhood residents that they would have a city park under the Coronado Bridge. The City of San Diego, through the efforts of community spokeswoman Angie Avila, Rico Bueno, Mike Nava, Jose Gomez and others, finally negotiated a settlement with the Chicano Federation, a consortium of various community groups, and the Chicano Park Steering Committee that required the city to exchange city-owned land for the disputed state land. The city then built a 4.5-acre park (later expanded to a total of 7.4 acres) on the acquired land bounded by Logan Avenue and National Avenue.

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77 San Diego Union, April 23, 1988; Angie Avila interviewed by Dr. Jim Fisher (Sacramento; 3/13/1996)
The creation of “the park” was a critical moment in the history of the Barrio Logan community. Victor Ochoa, mural coordinator in Chicano Park- from 1974 to 1979, recalled: “What I still remember is that there were bulldozers out there. And women and children made human chains around the bulldozers and they stopped the construction work. Then they actually took over to flatten it out, to plant nopales, magueys and flowers. And there was a telephone pole there, where the Chicano flag was raised.” One of the park’s original muralists, Mario Torero, linked the park to Chicano identity: “We can’t think of Chicanos in San Diego without thinking of Chicano Park. It is the main evidence, the open book of our culture, energy and determination as a people, one of the main proofs of our existence.” 

Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez, composer and singer of Chicano Park Samba, said, “There was an energy that’s hard to describe-when you see your people struggling for something positive, and it’s very inspiring. We have to show our youth the value of what we did. The park was brought about by sacrifice and it demonstrates what a community can do when they stick together and make it happen.” Another artist, Raul Jaquez stated: “The Park is our pearl, and the community is our oyster. A pearl is not born in a comfortable zone. An oyster creates a pearl through great irritation. That’s how our pearl was born.” For those involved in its establishment, Chicano Park had a decidedly

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78 Victor Ochoa interview by Dr. Jim Fisher (San Diego: 3/10/1996; Mario “Torero” Acevedo interview by Dr. Jim Fisher (San Diego: 3/10/1996.
revelatory effect and their commitment to its “place” in the community of Barrio Logan should not be underestimated.\textsuperscript{79}

The history of Chicano people in the United States began with the clash of cultures after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Even though Mexicans had been rooted in New Mexico since mid 1500’s, when the Spanish and their Mexican Indians servants arrived and settled into their separate enclaves, long before the

\textsuperscript{79} Los Angeles Times, June 4, 1989; San Diego Tribune, April 23, 1970, April 24, 1970; May 5, 1970, March 4, 1971 and March 28, 1984; May 1, 1970; November 12, 1971; San Diego Union-Tribune, July 24, 1969; November 9, 1969; May 5, 1970; July 1, 1970; July 3, 1970; March 3, 1971; Brookman, Philip and Guillermo Gomez-Peña, \textit{Made in Aztlan; Centro Cultural De La Raza Fifteenth Anniversary}. (San Diego: Tolteca Publications, 1986)p 20.; Brookman, Philip, “Looking for Alternatives: Notes on Chicano Art, 1960-90.; in Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa McKenna and Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, eds. Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985. (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery and UCLA, 1991) 185-186. Larry Weigel interview by Dr. Jim Fisher January 23 & 24, 1996. Explanatory Note: Jose Gomez died in January, 1985. On the occasion of the 15\textsuperscript{th} Chicano Park celebration, Laura Rodriguez said of Gomez: “We have to honor Jose Gomez today because he said he would never leave this Barrio. We must not think of his death, but of his life. He wanted a good quality life for all of us. And he is still alive today in all of our lives...He was a complex person-quiet, humble, yet very proud.” San Diego Union, April 21, 1985. Gomez himself explained his deep commitment to the Barrio this way: “My grandmother came here in 1900. My mother was born here, and so was I. Everyone knows me here. I can walk into any store, without any ID, and get a check cashed. There aren’t too many places in San Diego where you can do that. Despite all of the junk, it’s [Barrio Logan] my home and I’m comfortable in it. A lot of people feel like I do.” Doubtless, people like Laura Rodriguez. In September, 1994, Laura Rodriguez died. She too experienced the park profoundly. At 84 years of age, in the last year of her life, she insisted on going to Chicano Park every night in her wheelchair to commune with the bridge and its murals, absorbing their power and conviction. Ms. Rodriguez, who had placed her body in front of a bulldozer during the park takeover in April, 1970, served as inspiration for the building of what is now the Laura Rodriguez Family Health Center—the Old Neighborhood House (initially an Americanization Settlement House established in the 1920’s) located at 1801 National Avenue, taken over by the Chicano community activist fall 1970. In 1991, she was named a “Point of Light” for her community service by President George Bush. To her Barrio, she was known as “the woman who was always wearing a scarf, always preparing tamales for clinic fund-raisers, always fighting for her people.” Today a new elementary school is named in her honor and Ms. Rodriguez’s image is also honored by a mural on a bridge column near Caesar Chavez Parkway and Logan Avenue. “Laura is the fruit of our land .... [and] this is her shine,” stated Mario Torero, the designer and painter of Ms. Rodriguez’s mural—“Chicano Park” video: 1988; \textit{San Diego Union-Tribune}, April 20, 1995; Pitti 1988:245.
Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, it was the sale of northern Mexico that rendered Mexicans as Chicanos. The history of Chicanos in the Southwestern United States is marred by experiences of racism, discrimination and segregation.

The historical narrative of California’s culture clashes and the affects of adverse public policies on Chicanos set the stage that led the Chicano community of Barrio Logan to stand up for themselves, and defy the powers that be to build their own park, Chicano Park. The history provides legitimate support to designate the site as a national landmark.
APPENDIX

Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals A National Register Nomination
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

1. Name of Property
   historic name
   Chicano Park & Chicano Park Murals
   other names/site #number

2. Location
   street & number
   National Ave. at Dewy Street
   city or town
   San Diego
   state
   California
   code CA
   county San Diego
   code 067
   zip code
   92113

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the
documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets
the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that
this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__ entered in the National Register __ determined eligible for the National Register

__ determined not eligible for the National Register __ removed from the National Register

__ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
### 5. Classification

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- 7.4 acre park
- 40 Murals painted on 24 bridge columns holding up the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge
- Kiosk—Dance Pavilion
- Ceremonial sites
- Picnic areas multi-purpose courts
- Children's playgrounds, restrooms
- Fountain
- Sculptures
- Public Art
- Gardens
- Open play lawns
- a raised plaza

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900     OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires 5/31/2012)

Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals          San Diego, California
Name of Property                              County and State

6. Function or Use

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<td>Recreation and Culture</td>
<td>Open-Air Museum</td>
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Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California
Name of Property  County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification  Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)  (Enter categories from instructions.)

1970’s  foundation: ____________________________

Other: 7.4 Park with a Kiosk

dance plaza pavilion), Fountain,
Sculptures, Community Gardens &
Murals Painted on the bridge
columns and approach ramps
holding up the San Diego-
Coronado Bay Bridge

walls: ____________________________

_________________________  roof: ____________________________
Concrete bridge columns of
the San Diego-Coronado

other:  Bay Bridge
Chicano Park is a 7.4-acre park located in San Diego City’s Barrio Logan beneath the east-west approach ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge where the bridge bisects Interstate 5. Its main section is bounded by Interstate 5 to the east and National Avenue to the west, with a smaller pan-handle section extending from National Avenue to Newton Avenue and flanked to the south by Dewey Street. The park was created in 1970 after residents in Barrio Logan participated in a “takeover” of land that was being prepared for a substation of the California Highway Patrol. Since April 22, 1970, the park has been utilized by the Chicano community of San Diego as a place for social and political events. Its facilities include children’s playgrounds, restrooms, a Kiosko or dance pavilion, picnic areas, multi-purpose courts, open play lawns, a raised plaza, community gardens, sculptures, fountain, and two small parking areas accessed from Logan Avenue and National Avenue. The park is distinguished by murals painted on the pillars, abutments, and ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge.

Chicano Park Murals

The Chicano Park murals consist of an assemblage of multiple vibrantly colored paintings on of the concrete pillars and two abutments (flanking Logan Avenue near Interstate 5) that support the San Diego end of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. Forty of these murals painted on twenty-four of pillars, abutments and ramps were constructed during the height of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement. These murals and their iconography depict images of Mexican pre-Columbian gods, myths and legendary icons, botanical elements, animal imagery, the Mexican colonial experience, revolutionary struggles, cultural and
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  
San Diego, California

Name of Property      County and State

spiritual reaffirmation through the arts, Chicano achievements, identity and bicultural duality as symbolized in the search for the “indigenous self,” Mexican and Chicano cultural heroes and heroines such as La Adelita, Cesar Chavez, Father Miguel Hidalgo, Che Guevara, Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, and scenes based on contemporary Chicano civil rights history. Murals continue to decorate the pillars of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge; however, the bulk of the murals were painted in the 1970’s and 1980’s, by the major Chicano artists of California.

Narrative Description

Logan Heights/Barrio Logan/Chicano Park

Logan Heights is located in southwest San Diego approximately 17 miles from the United States-Mexico border, Logan Heights is bounded by Interstate 5, Highway 94, 25th Street and Imperial Avenue. Barrio Logan is a small southwest geographical area of Logan Heights that was severed by the intrusion of Interstate 5 and the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge.

Logan Heights, once a predominantly upper middle class community known as the East End, it was annexed to San Diego in the late 1880’s and its name was changed to Logan Heights in 1905. It was the first development site outside of Old Town and became the New Town settlement, primarily a residential area.  

It is one of San Diego’s oldest communities and the location of one of the longest established Mexican-American (“Chicano” hereafter) communities in San Diego.


81 Explanatory Note: (1) The term “Chicano” refers to people of Mexican ancestry who live in the United States and is the preferred nomenclature among many members of the contemporary generation of Mexican Americans. The term “la Raza” means “the people.”)
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  
San Diego, California

Major streets in Logan Heights and Barrio Logan in particular, bear the names of Civil War generals, with cross streets named after Spanish-American War admirals. Diversity of architectural designs is plentiful, with a mix of single- and multiple-family dwellings. In the 1890’s, increasingly large numbers of Mexican families settled in the western section of the area, first known as el ombligo (“the navel”) but soon to be known among local residents as el Barrio de la Logan, and later as Barrio Logan.

Around the turn the century, San Diego became a center of commerce, government and industry; many houses were built in the area. As commerce and industry developed along the bay, Barrio Logan’s growth continued to increase. With the introduction of the automobile the prominent Anglo residents began an out migration to other new settlements. It was now becoming an area that provided low cost housing for workers in the fish canneries, lumber, shipbuilding and railroad industries of the area. Barrio Logan quickly took on a separate community flair with a distinctive identity that came to represent a major center for Chicano culture and social activities. Barrio Logan experienced steady population increases from 1910 through the 1920’s as a result of revolution and turmoil in Mexico. Revolutionary conditions in Mexico caused over 500,000 people to leave the country for North America and San Diego’s Barrio Logan, essentially a border community, was a welcomed destination for many.

Businesses flourished in the self-contained waterfront community. A popular beach was once located at the site of the Coronado Bridge bay front. In the 1930’s, a community pier was built at the end of 28th Street as a WPA project. Prior to World War II, the beach and pier served as an important social center for local residents. The Great Depression made employment scarce and San Diego officials adopted policies that emphasized the deportation of Mexicans to Mexico and forced many families, including American citizens, to leave Barrio Logan.

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Nevertheless, by 1940, at least 15% of the population of San Diego’s Chicano community resided in Barrio Logan.83

Barrio Logan population grew steadily in the 1940’s due in part to military activities associated with World War II. The United States Navy built numerous facilities on the waterfront and other defense industries followed the Navy’s lead diminishing resident access to the bay. However, the economic benefit was an obvious tradeoff. World War II created a labor shortage. The Bracero Program84 was established in 1942 for the importation of temporary contract laborers from Mexico to the United States. Shipbuilding jobs as well as defense-industry employment in general attracted laborers, many of whom were from Mexico. In many cases, these workers had gained industrial skills working on the railroads and in industries in Northern Mexico and they were eagerly sought out by employment agencies in the San Diego area.

At this point, given its proximity to the naval and waterfront industries, Barrio Logan’s population boomed. Compared to Los Angeles, its Chicano population of 20,000 was the second highest on the west coast. Although experiencing a housing shortage, Barrio Logan was a self-contained enclave with its neighborhood markets, bakeries, bars, restaurants, churches and social/entertainment centers. Older barrio residents remember these days as “the good times.” 85

When the war ended, much of the area’s employment ended as well. Later, in the 1950’s, the city of San Diego changed its zoning laws. Property in Barrio Logan was changed from strictly residential to mixed use, allowing influx into the community of auto junk yards and wrecking operations and other light industrial plants. The cumulative effect of these land use policies resulted in the

83 Leroy E. Harris, The Other Side of the Freeway: A Study of Settlement Patterns of Negroes and Mexican-Americans in San Diego, California (Doctor of Arts dissertation, Carnegie-Mellon University, 1974)

84 The Bracero Program constituted a series of laws and diplomatic agreements between Mexico and the United States to provide laborers to the US. Although scheduled to end in 1947, the program continued to allow laborers to work in the agricultural industry and formally ended in 1964.

dislocation of families, business closures and the construction of transportation facilities that required more and more land in the area. Barrio Logan’s population decreased precipitously, and by 1979, it stood at about 5,000.86 The construction of Interstate 5 in the 1960’s severed Barrio Logan from the larger community of Logan Heights. Then the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge, constructed between 1967 and 1969 and sited in an east-west direction to link with Interstate 5, further bisected the barrio, essentially “completing the devastation,” according to long-time community activist Al Ducheny. Adding more testimony, Congressman Bob Filner, former City Councilman, whose district included Barrio Logan, said: “Both the construction of the bridge and the ongoing operations has had a really negative impact on the community of Barrio Logan, and there ought to be some recognition of that impact.87

Executive Director, Rachael Ortiz, of Barrio Station, a neighborhood social-service agency, stated that the worst aspect of the state highway and the bridge was that the neighborhood was converted to “mixed use and seedy light industry,” wreaking havoc on homes and families. Housing stock was destroyed to make room for the large columns of the bridge. By late April, 1970 at least 1,500 families had been displaced by the construction of the bridge and industrial zoning.

After the bridge was built there were shipbuilding shops, welders, sandblasters, auto dismantlers, mini canneries, etc…Hundreds of employees parked throughout the Barrio with disregard to the residents and their property. Children were crossing streets in front of giant trucks, and right overhead was this great big bridge, casting its shadow over what was left of the Barrio. It split the community, and the community was enraged.88

87 Los Angeles Times August 2, 1989; Patrick McDonnell, “City Urged to Use Coronado Bridget Tolls for Barrio Logan Projects”, Los Angeles Times (October 20, 1990)
After many years of community pressure, the San Diego Port District agreed to construct the Cesar Chavez Parkway Park on the waterfront in 1987. By April, 1991, the land portion of the park opened to the public. Today, a fishing pier juts out 700 feet into the San Diego Bay including berthing and observation facilities. This little park was located next to the last remaining fish cannery, where many of the residents worked. However, after the closing of the cannery the buildings remained vacant and in 2004 they were leveled into parking lots—with never a consideration of a cannery row cultural tourism venture similar to Monterey, California. Although not contiguous to Chicano Park proper, the Cesar Chavez Parkway Park was considered an extension of the park located “under the bridge.” It was the first time in decades that the residents of Barrio Logan had recreational access to the bay.

Chicano Park Murals
The creation of murals in Barrio Logan came about as a direct reaction to the social, economic, and political conditions confronted by the Chicano population. Chicano artists produced art in the streets as an alternative to art in traditional art galleries, which did not attract the larger community and which, until recent times, exhibited little Chicano art. Public murals became popularized precisely because they were accessible and belonged to everyone in the community. Mural art in the Chicano communities throughout California became a way to capture a people’s history and visually represented their struggles for better futures. Chicano murals sought to demonstrate pride, cultivate an awareness of cultural identify, and empower the community. Murals were, and still are, a form of education equivalent to an “informational superhighway” for people who may not have been directly benefiting from society’s technological advances. The mural remains a powerful tool. As young people walking down their neighborhood

and constructed before both the Uniform Relocation Act of 1970 and the National Environmental Protection Act of 1970 were signed into law. These laws collectively would have required greater public involvement through a series of public hearings and guarantees that persons displaced by a Federally-assisted project would have a decent, safe and sanitary place in which to live.
street they were able to “read” a mural and gain direct knowledge of their culture, history, and a sense of community struggle and personal responsibility.89

Murals inspired efforts to reclaim the community’s cultural heritage and was used as a means to develop individual and community self pride. Murals were an expression of collective vision and linked the artists to the people to shape content from social realism. Techniques were developed to allow non-artists to participate and paint their own murals. Community participation underscored community empowerment and its involvement in politics. Nowhere did the community-based mural movement take firmer root than in the Chicano communities of California. With the Mexican mural tradition as part of their heritage, murals were a particularly congenial form for Chicano artists to express their collective vision of their community.90 Not surprisingly, California has more murals than any other part of the United States. In Los Angeles, for instance, with the largest Chicano population anywhere in the world outside of Mexico City, it is estimated that between 1000 and 1500 separate murals were painted between 1969 and 1990. These murals were generally painted as individual works, not organized into large collections comparable to the Chicano Park murals. The revival of muralism in the barrio was a reaction to such contemporary concerns as high levels of gang and drug violence, the restrictive employment opportunities, English-only laws and a lack of political power in spite of an ever increasing population base.91

The height of Chicano political activism occurred between 1969 and 1980 and not only dictated the specific social and economic issues the movement dealt with, but also coincided with the most productive period of Chicano muralism.

90Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnett-Sanchez, ed Signs From the Heart: California Chicano Murals (Venice, California: Social and Political Art Resource Center, 1990)1, 9-10
91Nicolas Kanellos, The Hispanic Almanac: From Columbus to Corporate America. (Detroit, Mi: Gale Research, 1993) 358
Certainly this was the historical context where the Chicano Park murals are concerned. During this timeframe grass-root murals was generally funded by the artists themselves, local businesses or community social and arts centers and projected the themes of Chicano nationalism and cultural identity.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.</td>
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<td>Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.</td>
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<td>Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.</td>
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Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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<td>A</td>
<td>Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.</td>
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<td>removed from its original location.</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>a birthplace or grave.</td>
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<td>a cemetery.</td>
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<td>a reconstructed building, object, or structure.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>a commemorative property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.</td>
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Barrio Logan’s Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals appear to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance due to its critical association with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City of San Diego’s political and social history. In 1996 Cherilyn Widell, California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) 1996 State Historic Research Education Report for the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge that Chicano Park and the Chicano Park murals, although not yet 50 years old, meet the exceptional importance criterion for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. The San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge piers and supports that are grounded in Chicano Park are the “canvas” for the murals; the bridge must also be considered a contributing element of the Chicano Park murals.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Chicano Park

Although less than 50 years old, the park meets the criterion of exceptional significance. Its importance has been well established in the context of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and its development in San Diego. The City of San Diego recognized the park’s significance as early as 1980 only 10 years after its founding, when the San Diego Historic Site Board designated Chicano Park as a city historic site. The Board’s report noted: “Chicano Park is a significant representation of an era in the development of San Diego. It is also associated and identified with important events in the main currents of local

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Barrio Logan, Chicano Park and the “Takeover”

Racism and cultural isolation was not a new phenomenon to the residents of Logan Heights “prior to the “Takeover” of Chicano Park. Chicanos and Blacks, having lived in the area since the 1890’s, remained in the area, as many new parts of San Diego were being open for settlement. As San Diego began to grow, an increased use of restrictive covenants in housing contracts began to emerge relegateing ethnic minority populations to be isolated in the Logan Heights/Barrio Logan area of the city. By the 1920’s Logan Heights was considered “the residential section of the Negroes, Mexicans and Orientals.”

By the 1920’s Barrio Logan began to transform into a predominantly Mexican-American community as immigrants fled north from revolution and a poor Mexican economy. As commerce and industry began developing along the bay, Barrio Logan’s growth continued to increase. The area provided low cost housing for workers in the fish canneries, lumber, shipbuilding, and railroad industry of the area. A new phenomenon entered the community, the Neighborhood House; an Americanization settlement house with a desire to help the poor immigrant community establish themselves in Barrio Logan. While many settlements had as their goal the Americanization of the immigrant, through the teaching of English and “American” customs, this organization was also concentrating on public health, education and cultural and social activities. Except for some community-wide events most of the programs of the Neighborhood House were segregated by race and gender with separate workshops and classes given for African Americans, Mexicans, and Anglos as well as for girls and boys. While this agency served most of the Chicano residents of San Diego in the 1930’s, the city and county agencies almost

93 San Diego Union-Tribune, May 13, 1973; Ron Buckley, City of San Diego Historical Site Board, #143 (San Diego: February 1, 1980) pg 39.
95 Alvena Suhl, The Historical Geography of San Diego County. (M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1927) P70.
completely ignored the economic and public health problems of Mexican immigrants. In fact during this time period the government was trying to deport and repatriate Mexican immigrants and so was openly hostile towards their economic and social plight. The Neighborhood House was highly regarded by the residents and became recognized as a barrio institution despite the sometimes heavy handed efforts at Americanization and the administrator’s lack of interest in promoting and encouraging Mexican culture. This all changed during the 1960’s when the policies of the administration changed projecting a more bureaucratic 9-5 public access agency rather than the community center it was known to be that served the community with social and youth services when they were needed most—after work and school hours. The agency came under attack by Chicano activist when the agency was no longer providing relevant services to the community. The site eventually became Chicano Free Clinic and now serves the residents by providing low cost medical and dental services. Many residents in Barrio Logan had believed that they would gain access to land that would be used to build a park. On April 22, 1970, the formal struggle for a park in Barrio Logan began when Jose Gomez, a long-time resident of the neighborhood, and students, families, elders, and children occupied the land under the approach ramps of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge, after they learned that a California Highway Patrol (CHP) station would be built there. Between 250 and 500 people representing a wide cross-section of the community disrupted grading work that was already in progress. The site was occupied for twelve days and the demand that a park be created immediately was the rallying cry to the community. To emphasize the point, the community began the work of creating their own park by using shovels, pickaxes, hoes and rakes to prepare the ground for the planting of grass, shrubs and flowers. By the third day of the land occupation the Cacho family, prominent landowning Mexican-American farmers, from the Otay Mesa area of San Diego, and cultural preservationists, lent tractors, bulldozers and other essential farming tools to assist in the building of a park.

97 Richard Griswold del Castillo, Isidro Ortiz & Rosalinda Gonzalez; Mexican and Chicano History, La Lucha: The Beginnings of the Struggle, 1920-1930’s—What was the Neighborhood House? http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/mas/chicanohistory/chapter07/c07s03.html
99 Delia Cacho Talamantez, interviewed by Josie S. Talamantez, (January 2005, San Diego, California)
The establishment of a CHP station under the new bridge was viewed as an affront to Barrio Logan, a community that already had many grievances against local police actions. Further, the proposed CHP station was to be of impressive size, with the intent to employ some 195 uniformed personnel and 15 civilian employees and provide parking spaces for 115 cars. “Our neighborhood had already been invaded by the junkyards, the factories and a bridge...in essence, they viewed the people of Logan Heights as people who hadn’t gotten out of the way of industry as the junkyards, factories, etc… were coming to claim this Barrio,” Gomez declared. “Some of us decided that it was time to put a stop to the destruction and begin to make this place more livable.”

Forming the Chicano Park Steering Committee, the activists demanded that the property be donated to the Chicano community as a park in which Chicano culture could be expressed through art. “We are ready to die (to gain the park),” Salvador Roberto “Queso” Torres, a community artist, shouted to a gathering of city and state officials while supporters stamped their feet in rhythm and shouted “viva la Raza-long live the race.” Twenty-eight year old Jose Gomez echoed this sentiment when he shouted: “The only way anybody is going to take the park away from us is through our blood.” Gomez later recalled: “The students and the others said, ‘If you won't build a park here, we'll do it ourselves’ …that’s when the state officials knew we were serious. And the city entered into negotiations.

Community activists withdrew only after city officials promised negotiations regarding the use of the land in question. San Diego City Councilman Leon Williams, an African-American whose district included Barrio Logan, assured the neighborhood residents that they would have a city park under the Coronado Bridge. The City of San Diego, through the efforts of community spokeswoman Angie Avila and others finally negotiated a settlement with the Chicano Federation, a consortium of various community groups, and the Chicano Park Steering Committee that required the city to exchange city-owned land for the disputed state land. The city would then build a 4.5 acre park (eventually expanded to a total of 7.4 acres) on the acquired land bounded by Logan Avenue and National Avenue.

The creation of “the park” was a major defining moment in the history of the Barrio Logan community. Victor Ochoa, mural coordinator in Chicano Park from

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100 Marilyn Mulford, Producer; Mario Barrera & Marilyn Mulford Directors, Chicano Park (Berkeley: 1988)
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals       San Diego, California

Name of Property      County and State

1974 to 1979, recalled: “What I still remember is that there were bulldozers out there. And women and children made human chains around the bulldozers and they stopped the construction work. And they began to work the land and they started planting nopales (cactus) and magueys and flowers. And there was a telephone pole there, where the Chicano flag103 was raised.” One of the park’s original muralists, Mario Torero, linked the park to Chicano identity: “We can’t think of Chicanos in San Diego without thinking of Chicano Park. It is the main evidence, the open book of our culture, energy and determination as a people. One of the main proofs of our existence.”104

Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez, composer and singer of “Chicano Park Samba,” said, “There was an energy that’s hard to describe-when you see your people struggling for something positive, its very inspiring. We have to show our youth the value of what we did. The park was brought about by sacrifice and it demonstrates what a community can do when they stick together and make it happen.” Another artist, Raul Jaquez stated: “The Park is our pearl, and the community is our oyster. A pearl is not born in a comfortable zone. An oyster creates a pearl through great irritation. That’s how our pearl was born.” For those involved in its establishment, Chicano Park had a decidedly revelatory effect and their commitment to its “place” in the community of Barrio Logan should not be underestimated.105

103Explanatory Note: The Chicano Flag is Red, White, & Green with the Mestizo figure in the center. The Mestizo figure is a brown forward facing face with the profiles of an Indian and Spaniard on either side of the face.
104 Victor Ochoa interview by Dr. Jim Fisher (San Diego: 3/10/1996; Mario “Torero” Acevedo interview by Dr. Jim Fisher (San Diego: 3/10/1996.
105 Los Angeles Times, June 4, 1989; San Diego Tribune, April 23, 1970, April 24, 1970; May 5, 1970, March 4, 1971 and March 28, 1984; May 1, 1970; November 12, 1971; San Diego Union-Tribune, July 24, 1969; November 9, 1969; May 5, 1970; July 1, 1970; July 3, 1970; March 3, 1971; Brookman, Philip and Guillermo Gomez-Peña, Made in Aztlán; Centro Cultural De La Raza Fifteenth Anniversary. (San Diego: Tolteca Publications, 1986)p 20.; Brookman, Philip, “Looking for Alternatives: Notes on Chicano Art, 1960-90.; in Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa McKenna and Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, eds. Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985. (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery and UCLA, 1991) 185-186. Larry Weigel interview by Dr. Jim Fisher January 23 & 24, 1996. Explanatory Note: Jose Gomez died in January, 1985. On the occasion of the 15th Chicano Park celebration, Laura Rodriguez said of Gomez: “We have to honor Jose Gomez today because he said he would never leave this barrio. We must not think of his death, but of his life. He wanted a good quality life for all of us. And he is still alive today in all of our lives...He was a complex person-quiet, humble, yet very proud.” San Diego Union, April 21, 1985. Gomez himself explained his deep commitment to the barrio this way: “My grandmother came here in 1900. My mother was born here, and so was I. Everyone knows me here. I can walk into any store, without any ID, and get a check cashed. There aren’t too many places in San Diego where you can do that. Despite all of the junk, it’s [Barrio Logan] my home and I’m comfortable in it. A lot of people feel like I do.” Doubtless, people like Laura Rodriguez. In September, 1994, Laura Rodriguez died. She too experienced the park profoundly. At 84 years of age, in the last year of her life, she insisted on going to Chicano Park every night in her wheelchair to commune with the bridge and its murals, absorbing their power and conviction. Ms. Rodriguez, who had placed her body in front of a bulldozer during the park takeover in April, 1970, served as inspiration for the building of
Chicano Park Murals

Although not yet 50 years old, the Chicano Park murals appear to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A at the local level of significance for their association with political and cultural activities identified with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and their association with a growing recognition of the significance of mural art in mainstream art endeavors. The murals have deep transcendent values and constitute a historic resource for which the Barrio Logan community has a strong associative attachment and commitment to preserve.

Chicano political activism, which occurred in the 1960’s and 70’s, dictated the specific social and economic issues of the movement also coincided with the most productive period of Chicano muralism. California was the epicenter of Chicano mural activities and Chicano Park was one of the major fault lines. By the late 1970s nearly every major Chicano muralist in California and the Southwest, by invitation and inclination, had participated in the making of Chicano Park murals.

The importance of the Chicano Park murals has been underscored by local, international and national recognition of their artistic and social value. Additional local recognition came in February 1987, when the San Diego Public Arts Advisory Board (PAAB) voted to recognize the Chicano Park murals as meritorious public arts works. In June 1992, the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture described the murals as “the largest, most important collection of outdoor muralism in the county.” The murals have received widespread recognition by scholars and city officials and have become a tourist stopping point in San Diego.  

University of Paris professor Dr. Annick Trequer underscored the significance of the Chicano Park murals: “The Chicano Park paintings are very different in the sense that they have a special place in the history of the district where they were located.”

what is now the Laura Rodriguez Family Health Center—the Old Neighborhood House (initially an Americanization Settlement House established in the 1920’s) located at 1801 National Avenue, taken over by the Chicano community activist fall 1970. In 1991, she was named a “Point of Light” for her community service by President George Bush. To her barrio, she was known as “the woman who was always wearing a scarf, always preparing tamales for clinic fund-raisers, always fighting for her people.” Today a new elementary school is named in her honor and Ms. Rodriguez’s image is also honored by a mural on a bridge column near Crosby Street and Logan Avenue. “Laura is the fruit of our land .... [and] this is her shine,” stated Mario Torero, the designer and painter of Ms. Rodriguez’s mural—“Chicano Park” video: I988; San Diego Union-Tribune, April 20, 1995; Pitti I988:245.

produced. They represent some of the finest examples of popular mural art, directly inheriting the great Mexican tradition of the 1920s and the 1930s." Jim Prigoff photojournalist and co-author of *Spraycan Art* (1987), found that: "Chicano Park murals constitute one of five major mural sites in California." His studies concluded that the Chicano Park murals constitute a significant mural site, are "recognized as such all over the world," and compare favorably with other major mural sites such as Tujunga Wash, Estrada Courts (Boyle Heights), and Ramona Gardens in Los Angeles and San Francisco’s Balmy Alley murals. With the passage of time, other areas' mural sites may also be found eligible, but the large collection of murals in Chicano Park remains historically significant within the San Diego context.

The painting of the Chicano Park murals began in 1973 and moved through several phases of production in the decade of the 1970s. By 1980, over forty murals were completed. The period of significance therefore extends from 1973 to 1980. Similar to the Watts Towers of Simon Rodia, which were 27 years of age when they were placed on the National Register, the Chicano Park assemblage of murals must also be viewed as exceptionally important. The property boundaries for the murals parallel those of Chicano Park, in which they are sited, and also include the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. The San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge must be considered a contributing element, as the bridge supports at the San Diego end of the bridge are the “canvas” for the murals and are the aspects of the bridge’s contributive qualities.

Caltrans recognizing the significance of Chicano Park and the Chicano Park Murals utilized an impressive and alternative seismic retrofit process to strengthen the pillars of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge after then Governor Pete Wilson issued an edict after the 1994 Northridge earthquake to strengthen all California highway bridges.107

**Chicano Park Murals in Historical Perspective**

The revitalization of Barrio Logan’s cultural heritage did not develop in a vacuum, and of necessity must be viewed in its historical context. The context is informed by and includes a perspective relative to the Chicano Civil Rights Movement.

Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

which arose from the turbulent 1960’s.  

It drew on the century-long foundation of the experiences of la Raza (the Chicano people) in the United States since the end of the United States-Mexican War and the signing of the 1948 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—a circumstance that transferred the ownership of the present southwest (or Aztlan, the legendary origins of the Aztec civilization) from Mexico to the United States. The years after 1848 witnessed the transformation of a proud people (la gente) of Mexican ancestry into a discriminated against and impoverished class. In essence, the Chicano Civil Rights Movement was an attempt to address such conditions and grew to be a dynamic force for social change.

Chicano historian Joe Pitti expressed the following: “It (the Chicano Civil Rights Movement) is an amalgam of individuals and organizations who share a sense of pride in their cultural heritage, a dedication to the enhancement of Chicano culture, mutual identification, a desire to improve the Chicano socio-economic position and a commitment to making constructive changes in United States society.”

That constructive change of objective conditions was embodied in labor leader Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers’ Delano grape strike of 1962, the efforts of student-led M.E.CH.A. (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano en Aztlan) in 1969, Rudolpho “Corky” Gonzalez’s Crusade for Justice (Denver) in 1966, the Chicano Youth Liberation Conferences (Denver) I 1969 and 1970 and the Los Angeles National Moratorium in 1970, identified with Chicano Resistance to the Viet Nam War and the murder of Los Angeles Times reporter Ruben Salazar. To understand forces operating within the Chicano Civil Rights Movement at that time is not only to “read” the icons and themes of Chicano muralism but also to understand the broad social context underlying Barrio Logan’s Chicano Park murals.

The Chicano Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s inspired and was in turn inspired by a flourishing of art and culture throughout the southwest, the northeast and the urban United States. The activism of Chicano people in efforts to unionize farm laborers, to regain ownership of land grants, to acquire adequate bilingual and bicultural education, to improve housing and achieve political power commensurate with their numbers in the population revitalized,

enhanced and added a contemporary iconography to the long tradition of Mexican art. Such activism emphasized the graphics—poster-making, silk-screening and mural painting—to disseminate information and to communicate demands to the masses, literate and non-literate.

The Chicano artists linked their people’s struggle for civil rights and social justice with a reevaluation of their cultural identity during the 1960s, not unlike what was developing in the African-American civil rights movement.\(^{111}\) As part of this effort murals became the artistic vehicle of choice for educating a large illiterate populace about ideals of a new society and the virtues and evils of the past. Murals had the advantage of making direct appeals; they provided a near-perfect organizing tool that had specific cultural antecedents and precedence in the cultural and revolutionary tradition of Mexico.

In 1971 and 1972, Barrio Logan residents made extensive use of the park. Around April 22—the anniversary of the park “takeover”—and every year after 1970; the neighborhood celebrates the founding of Chicano Park with feasting, speeches, music and dancing (this tradition continues today—celebrating its 40th anniversary on April 24, 2010.) There was an ambiance about the park, however, that makes it unlike any other park in San Diego or California—it is sited directly under a busy bridge with its six approach ramps that in 1971 alone carried more than 8 million vehicles. Music and merrymaking in the park competed with the deafening rattle of trucks and cars moving across the superstructure’s floor high above park revelers. The support columns of the bridge occupied hefty portions of the parks space and gave the surreal illusion of a compacted concrete forest that contradicted the notion of an urban park being an area of open space. Shadows predominate, inspiring at once awe and wariness. As early as April, 1970, Salvador Torres, an artist whose childhood home was destroyed by the building of the bridge, and deeply influenced by David Siqueiros and the growing mural movement now identified with the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, had vowed that Chicano artists and sculptors of the community would turn the gloomy gray columns' of the bridge into things of beauty, “an outdoor museum,” reflecting the Mexican-American culture.\(^{112}\)

In keeping with a long tradition of Mexican art as resistance, murals became the art form of choice, silent sentiments and creative yearnings that were vivid and eye-catching, explosions of lights that vanquished the shadows while merging


\(^{112}\) San Diego Union-Tribune, April 24, 1970; San Diego Union, April 23, 1972
the past and the future with the present. They spoke to the ever-increasing social consciousness of the barrio and Chicano sensibilities reflecting issues and symbols that ranged from Aztecs icons to the United Farmworkers' black eagle, combining the Spanish and Indigenous heritage—a significant source of California's history. The bulk of the murals in Chicano Park were painted between 1973 and 1980, yet many new murals continue to accent the park annually.113

On March 23, 1973, mural making in Chicano Park began in earnest. Two teams of Chicano artists, Los Toltecas en Aztlan, from the Centro Cultural de la Raza, a cultural arts center located in Balboa Park and el Congreso de Artistas Chicanos en Aztlan, an artist collective from San Diego, began to apply paint to the concrete abutments bridge’s off-ramps flanking the east and west sides of Logan Avenue. On May 13, 1973, the ° San Diego Union-Tribune took notice of Chicano Park art project: “Their names are Mexican, so is their art. They paint on-concrete. Work began on the bridge columns a month ago and many may not be completed for years. The City has granted artists permission to paint the concrete walls and pillars under the Coronado Bridge from southwest San Diego to the Coronado Bay. The walls are washed, and then treated with an acid and primer. When dry, charcoal sketches are made and then filled with acrylic paints.... They said their work reflects, ‘our thinking, our background, the barrio, the struggle, la Raza (the Mexican people.)’114

It was the vision of individual artists such as Salvador “Queso” Torres, Victor’ Ochoa, Mario Torero Acevedo, Guillermo Aranda, Tomas “Coyote” Castaneda, Raul Jaquez, Yolanda Lopez, Guillermo Rosete, Salvador Barajas, Armando Nunez, Abran Quevedo, Jose Cervantes, Michael Schnorr; Felipe Barbosa, Mano Lina, Felipe Adame, Pablo de la Rosa, Louie Manzano, Tony de Vargas, Socorro Gamboa, Charles “Cat” Felix, Jr., Dolores Serrano-Velez, and others that initiated the painting of murals on the huge, sterile columns that dominated the park site. They envisioned “a seemingly endless canvas, stretching to the waters of the bay four blocks away” an opportunity to transform and “personalize” the dreary concrete landscape. The artists would crystallize David Siqueiros’ description of murals, that they must be “monumental and realistic.” And the Chicano Park murals would be bigger than life itself.

114 San Diego Union-Tribune, May 13, 1973; Ron Buckley, City of San Diego Historical Site Board Register, #143,(San Diego: February 1, 1980)p39
By the late 1970s nearly every major Chicano muralist in California and Southwest, by invitation and inclination, had participated in the making of Chicano Park murals. For example, internationally known painter from Stockton and San Francisco Rupert Garcia designed the tribute mural to Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros and Kahlo. The internationally recognized Royal Chicano Air Force from Sacramento, led by Jose Montoya, Esteban Villa, Ricardo Favela, Juanishi Orosco, Irma Lerma Barbosa, and Celia Rodriguez, placed its grand contributions on the park’s columns, as did the daring Charles “Cat” Felix, Jr., the driving force behind the acclaimed Estrada Courts murals in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles in 1973.

In 1977, the Kiosko, dance center (pavilion), was constructed. One of the most impressive structures in Chicano Park, it was designed by architect Alfredo Larin and brilliantly painted by the muralist Antonio de Vargas. True to the “team approach” of mural making, the Kiosko was completed only after ideas were solicited from the community. Such solicitation resulted in a design that is reminiscent of a pre-Columbian temple.115 (see Attachment for a complete listing of the artists who participated in the painting of the murals in Chicano Park.)

The interaction of the murals and community was clearly illustrated in 1977. Residents in Barrio Logan had long held intense grievances against the nearly 50 junkyards that had “invaded” the community as a result of rezoning policies of the city. The implications of so many junkyards and auto wrecking operations concentrated in a neighborhood seemed to translate into official neglect and lack of concern for the interests of Chicano residents. These feelings were captured on a Chicano Park bridge column that faces Logan Avenue. The column reads “Varrios Si! Yonkes No!” Varrio is a variant of barrio, or neighborhood, and Yonkes refers to junkyards; Barnett wrote that it -was only while the painters were at work that they realized that the caption on the column also sounded like “Yankees Go Home.” The majority all of the junkyards that filled the community with their constant clanging sound were owned by people who lived elsewhere. The mural depicted picketers standing in front of a cyclone fence that protects a secondhand auto-parts store, a utilities plant belching thick black smoke, dockyards and a Bank of America branch. In the background sky looms the

ever-present San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge itself. Signs carried by the picketers read (in Spanish): “More Houses, Less Junkyards” and “Unity Is Power.” The message was clear.

On still another level, the painters of the mural, Víctor Ochoa and Raul Jaquez, recruited a number of young men who hung around the park to assist in the mural painting project. Ochoa had been working with these young guys and was successful in organizing them into a collective called the Barrio Renovation Team, whose goal was to repair and repaint houses of the community’s elderly and impoverished residents. With city funding, the team increased its numbers and continued its work in Barrio Logan and other poor sections in San Diego.116

The murals in Chicano Park were painted collectively through the efforts of volunteers, artists as well as non-artists, and executed over an extended period of time and in three phases. The first phase of mural making, 1973-1974, involved two Chicano art collectives, Los Toltecas en Aztlan and El Congreso de Artistas Chicanos en Aztlan and the work emphasized pre- Columbian motifs and the “dominance of Chicano nationalism and spontaneity in the imagery portrayed.” For example, the first phase murals include “Quetzalcoatl” (1973), “Historical Mural” (1973), and “Children’s Mural” (1974). Cockcroft notes that essentially this first phase represented the “possessing (of) the park, marking it with the place or logo, of the community.” 117


The third mural phase, 1977-1980, celebrated resurgence in community pride by, for example, questioning the inordinate number of junkyards in the barrio and their visual and audio impacts on the quality of life. Marked by a 20-day Mural Marathon organized by Víctor Ochoa in 1978, this third phase utilized the skills of


Unlike the creation of the majority of the murals in the 1970s, those done between 1980s and the first decade of the twenty-first century were accomplished under a set criterion of need, ability, subject matter and the availability of funding. By early 1984, a group of artists led by Salvador Torres, Gloria Torres and Mario Torero and members of the Chicano Park Arts Committee began the work of touching up the murals. Due to the fact that mural life is about 10 years, maintenance is important. In 1991, the California Department of Transportation trained numerous artists in repair techniques. Torres expressed a desire to use natural clay unearthed in the park to make tiles that, along with sculpture, would enhance the beauty of the park.118

The development of Chicano Park and its murals is an ongoing process (“a work in progress,” in the words of Salvador Torres). Moreover, the murals serve as a reminder to people in the community that they can change their environment. Victor Ochoa emphasized that “The community needs the murals to speak up on certain issues.”119 Larry Baza, former Executive Director of Centro Cultural de La Raza in Balboa Park, suggested that “murals are illustrated sentiments” designed to overcome the limitations of physical conditions and non-literacy. Since 1973, the murals have become the icons they depict. Their maintenance involves the city, the people of the barrio and especially the artists who are continuing their work on the pillars of the bridge. The murals that adorn the columns of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge have received widespread recognition by scholars and city officials and have become a tourist stopping point in San Diego.

In 2002, the California Department of Transportation sought and obtained Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-240;
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California
Name of Property  County and State

ISTEA, pronounced Ice-Tea) funding to restore identified historic murals in Chicano Park. To date the project has not been completed.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Major Bibliographical References
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, Articles, and Manuscripts


Buckley, Ron. “City of San Diego Historical Site Board Register, #143,” February 1, 1980.

*California Highways and Public Works* (CHPW), September/October 1963.


Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals      San Diego, California
Name of Property      County and State

City of San Diego, Historical Site Board. *Designation of Chicano Park as a City of San Diego Historical Site*, #143, February 1, 1980.


Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals    San Diego, California
Name of Property    County and State


Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals     San Diego, California

Name of Property      County and State


“San Diego-Coronado Bridge,” California Highways and Public Works, September-October 1962, p.58’


Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals    San Diego, California
Name of Property      County and State


Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property
County and State


Maps
Assessor’s Parcel Maps, San Diego County Assessor’s Office, San Diego.
USGS, Point Lorna Quadrangle, 7.5 minute, 1967.

Public Records

Newspapers
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals     San Diego, California
Name of Property     County and State

La Prensa San Diego, January 12, 1996.
Sacramento Bee, December 28, 1995; January 8, 1990; 
San Diego Newsline, February 7, 1989;
San Diego Union, May 8, 1968; August 3, 1969, April 26, 1978, April 24, 1983,
July 14, 20, 7 1984; April 21, 1985, April 23, 1988, April 23, 1990;
San Diego Tribune, April 23, 25, 1970, April 24, 1970, March 28, 1984; May 24,
San Diego Union-Tribune, April 23, 1971, July 24, 1969; July 20, 1984;
September 8, 1989, February 8, 1990, March II, 1992; May 25, 1992, July 24,
1994; April 23, 1995; December 20, 1995, January 13, 1996; March 24, 1996,
San Jose Mercury News, August 23, 1990

Films

Dedicated to Jose Gomez, 1942-1985, founder and first chairperson of the
Chicano Park Steering Committee]
“Pilots of Aztlan: Flights of the Royal Chicano Air Force,” Directed by Steve La
Rosa, KVIE  Channel 6, Sacramento, CA 1994.
“Viva La Causa: 500 Years of Chicano History.” _Directed by Elizabeth Martinez
and Doug Norberg; produced by Collision Course, 1995.

Internet

Los Angeles Mural Home Page: http://latino.sscnet.ucla.edu 
General Search: “Chicano.”

Interviews Conducted by Jim Fisher, Architectural Historian & Historian at Cal
Trans. (Retired)

Mario Aguilar, Aztec dancer, San Diego, March 18, 1996;
Paul Askelson, Bridge Maintenance Engineer, Caltrans, April 1, 1996;
Angie Avila, Legislative Analyst and long-time resident of Barrio Logan, March
13, 19-96;
Larry Baza, Director, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, February 16, 1996;
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900     OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires 5/31/2012)

Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property      County and State

Tommie Camarillo, Chair, Chicano Park Steering Committee, February 28, 1996;
Patricio Chavez, Curator, Centro Cultural de la Raza, Sari Diego, March 1, 1996;
Rupert Garcia, Professor of Art, CSU, San Jose, March 12, 1996;
Gail Goldman, San Diego Arts Commission, March 12, 1996;
Phil Goldvarg, Poet and Social Worker, Sacramento, January 15, 1996;
Richard Griswold del Castillo, CSU, San Diego, March 18, 1996;
Howard F. Hollman, Centro Cultural de la Raza, March 1, 1996;
Raul Jaquez, Artist, San Diego, January 11 and March 1, 1996;
Art and Chris Luna, Luna’s Cafe, Sacramento, February 20, 1996;
Jose Montoya, Poet, Artist, Musician, Professor of Art, CSU, Sacramento, March 10, 1996;
Victor Ochoa, Artist-in-Resident, Centro Cultural de la Raza, March 26, 1996;
Juanishi Orosco, Artist, Sacramento, February 14,1-996;
Jose Pitti, Professor of U.S. and Chicano History, CSU, Sacramento, February 14, 1996;
Jim Prigoff, Photo-journalist and author, Sacramento, March 15, 1996;
Arline Prigoff Professor of Social Work, CSU, Sacramento, March 15, 1996;
Josie Talamantez, California Arts Council and long-time resident of Barrio Logan, February 22
Salvadore Roberto Torres, Artist, San Diego, *February 29, 1996;
Gloria Torres, Artist, San Diego, February 29, 1996;
Michael Tudary, San Diego Historical Site Board, March 22, 1996;
Larry Weigel, Environmental Planner, Caltrans, Sacramento, January 23 and 24, 1996.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

| Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested) |
| Designated a National Historic Landmark |
| Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #__________ |
| Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #__________ |
| Recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #__________ |

Primary location of additional data:

| State Historic Preservation Office |
| Other State agency |
| Federal agency |
| Local government |
| University |
| Other |

Name of repository: ____________________________

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<th>Name of Property</th>
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<td>Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
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Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals          San Diego, California

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7.4 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Data Source - USGS GNIS FID: 1869881

USGS 7.5” Quad Point Loma Date 1967 T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ ; BM

County/Route/Post Mile: 11-SD-75, PM 20 5/22 5

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1  11 48672E 3617766N 3
   Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2  4
   Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION (EXPLAIN WHY THE BOUNDARIES WERE SELECTED.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Josie S. Talamantez, Public Historian
organization  
street & number 3991 3rd Ave.
city or town Sacramento
state Ca.
e-mail jstalamantez@earthlink.net

date 916-731-4345
telephone  

zip code 95817
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals      San Diego, California
Name of Property      County and State

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  
  A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Continuation Sheets
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900     OMB No. 1024-0018
(Expires 5/31/2012)

Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals      San Diego, California
Name of Property      County and State

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Chicano Park, established in 1976, is a 4.5-acre national historic site located on Cesar Chavez Park in San Diego, California. The park, which is part of the Chicano Park District, was created to honor the contributions of Chicano and Chicana history and culture. The park features a series of murals painted by local Chicano artists that tell the story of the Chicano Struggle and the history of the Chicano movement.

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CHICANO PARK STEERING COMMITTEE
PO Box 12524 San Diego, CA 92112
619. 562-8661 / chicanoconnection.com
www.chicano-park.org
Photographs:
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego  State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Chicano Park Logo Rico Bueno Design under Raza Cosmica Mural by Mario Solis 1 of 1.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Kiosko (Aztec Dance Pavilion) with Murals

1 of 2.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: History of Chicano Park “takeover” 1 of 3.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Historic Mural on Side Ramp of San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge
1 of 4.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals   San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego   State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Quetzalcoatl Chicano Park Historic Mural on Interstate 5 ramp
1 of 5.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Chicano Pinto Union with murals in background
1 of 6.
Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego
State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00
Description of Photograph(s) and number: Adelita (Felipe Adame) with murals in background
1 of __7__.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego  State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00
Description of Photograph(s) and number: Tonantzin "Guadalupe" Mario Torrero 1 of 8.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego
State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00
Description of Photograph(s) and number: Celia Rodriguez, Irma Barbosa RCAF 1 of 9.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Aztec Warrior with Kiosko on left 1 of 10.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego

State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Leyes Jose Montoya RCAF 1 of 11.
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Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego     State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Farmworkers Michael Schnor 1 of 12.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Cosmic Lady Esteban Villa RCAF 1 of 13.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Coyoxauqui Michael Schnor 1 of 14.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals
San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego  State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Olin Juanishi Orosco RCAF 1 of 15.
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<td>11/22/00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description of Photograph(s) and number:</td>
<td>Michael Schnor mural with Kiosk 1 of 16</td>
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Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Aztec warrior with mural and entrance to Interstate 5

1 of 17.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals  San Diego, California
Name of Property  County and State

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Voz Libre on ramp from Interstate 5 to the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge
1 of 18.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Serpiente with murals in background 1 of 19.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals    San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego    State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Homage to Jose Gomez “La Tierra Mia”
1 of 20.
Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego  State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00
Description of Photograph(s) and number: Youth Mural under direction of Yolanda Lopez
1 of __21__.
Name of Property: Chicano Park
City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets
County: San Diego
State: California
Photographer: Caltrans
Date Photographed: 11/22/00
Description of Photograph(s) and number: History of Mexico mural with murals in background
1 of 22.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: *Hasta La Bahia* (All the way to the Bay) Felipe Adame

1 of 23.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals

San Diego, California

Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego

State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Quezalcoatl mural

1 of 24.
Name of Property: Chicano Park

City or Vicinity: National Ave and Dewy Streets

County: San Diego  State: California

Photographer: Caltrans

Date Photographed: 11/22/00

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 1 of 25.
Chicano Park and Chicano Park Murals          San Diego, California
Name of Property                      County and State

Property Owner:
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name   Caltrans

street & number 4050 Taylor Street
telephone

city or town San Diego
zip code State Ca. 92110

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.