

Serramonte High School, Daly City Historic Resources Evaluation Report



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*Historic Resources Evaluation Report
Serramonte High School, Daly City*

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Introduction and Summary of Findings

The Jefferson Union High School District (JUHSD) proposes to demolish and redevelop the former Serramonte High School campus at 699 Serramonte Boulevard in Daly City (San Mateo County). The campus was designed by the architectural firm of Falk and Booth and completed in 1970. Since the buildings are over 50 years old, they must be evaluated under the California Register of Historic Resources criteria before a demolition permit may be issued.

To demonstrate that the proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change to the significance of a historical resource as defined in the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15064.5). We find that Serramonte High School is not eligible to the California Register of Historical Resources under Criteria 1, 2, 3, or 4. The demolition of the building will therefore not affect a historical resource as defined in the CEQA Guidelines.

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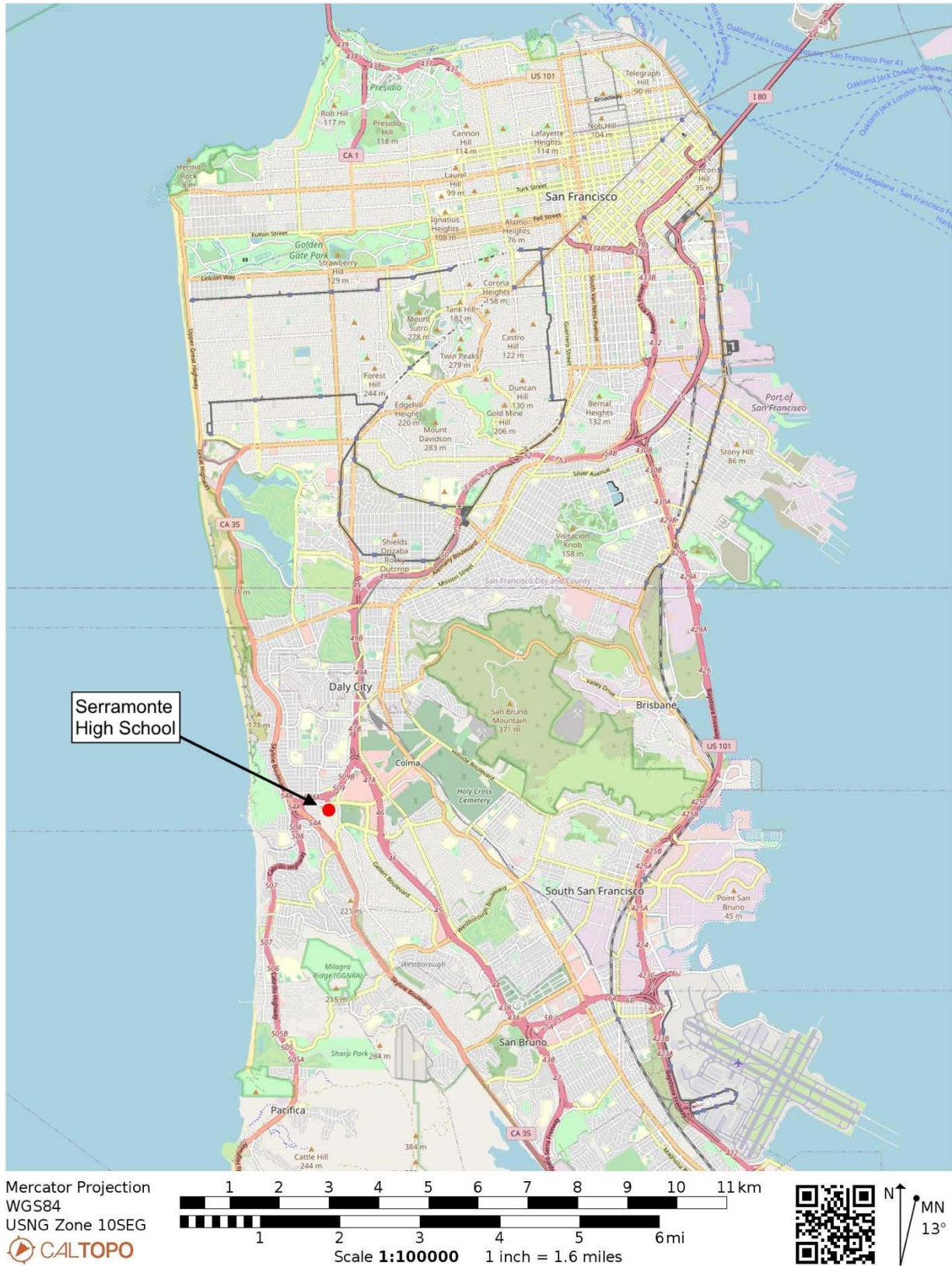


Figure 1 Location Map



Figure 2 Site Plan. Red arrows indicate entrances. Principal halls run north-south, while secondary halls run east-west.

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Figure 3 Floor Plan, Serramonte High School, showing uses in 2021. North is at right.

Description of Historic Resources



Figure 4 Northwest Entrance, View South

Serramonte High School consists of a single sprawling building sited on a large parcel of land bounded by Serramonte Boulevard to the north, Callan Boulevard to the east, St. Francis Boulevard to the west, and non-instructional buildings to the south. Parking lots can be found to the north and southeast of the building, within the boundaries of the property; and the Instructional Garden is to the west. Service roads run within the property near the east, south, and west boundaries. The school building itself is surrounded by these parking lots, Instructional Garden, and roads. Currently, a four-story workforce housing development is being built by JUHSD north of the building on land owned by JUHSD.



Figure 5 Gymnasium, South Side, View North

The building is one story in height and is made of reinforced concrete left in its natural, unfinished gray state. Stylistically, the building is closest to the Brutalist style. The footprint is irregular, with a large gymnasium wing to the west and a smaller cafeteria wing to the east. These projecting wings aside, the footprint of the building is roughly a square. Regarding height, the gymnasium wing rises to a substantially greater height than the rest of the building.



Figure 6 (left) Detail of the Frieze and Buttresses; (right) Gymnasium, Southwest View

The two most distinctive features of the exterior of the building are concrete buttresses and a projecting frieze or cornice that wraps around the top of the building. The buttresses are always arranged in pairs and are slightly chamfered at the corners. Each tapers gradually toward the top and then curves sharply inward where it meets the base of the frieze. This latter feature projects about three feet beyond the wall. It is faced with vertical flutes with sharp, squared edges everywhere except in the panels directly over the buttress pairs.

The only part of the exterior where the buttresses and frieze are not present is along the north side. On this side, these features are present only immediately east of the gymnasium wing; on the very long north side east of the gymnasium they are absent.

Other than some inconspicuous steel service doors, there are four entrances to the building. One is on the north side immediately west of the cafeteria wing, one is on the north side immediately west of the gymnasium wing, and the other two are at corresponding locations on the south side. Each entrance is composed of three adjacent pairs of doors, plus a large sidelight to one side, a narrow sidelight to the other side, and fixed transoms above. These doors, sidelights, and transoms are made of anodized aluminum. Each door is glazed at the top and at the bottom with an aluminum band between, and each has aluminum push plates. These entrances are set into wide recesses and are fronted by a concrete plaza and three short concrete steps.

Being mostly of glass, these entrances allow light into the hallways. The only other window in the building is on the east side, where a large window admits light into the cafeteria dining room. There are no other windows in the building. Instead, all classrooms, administrative offices, other rooms, and secondary hallways are lit by fluorescent lights. Due to the relative lack of windows, the walls of the building are

expanses of concrete broken only by the four entrances, the pairs of buttresses, the big window to the cafeteria dining room, and some small steel service doors.



Figure 7 Northeast Entrance



Figure 8 Cafeteria Wing, Looking Southwest

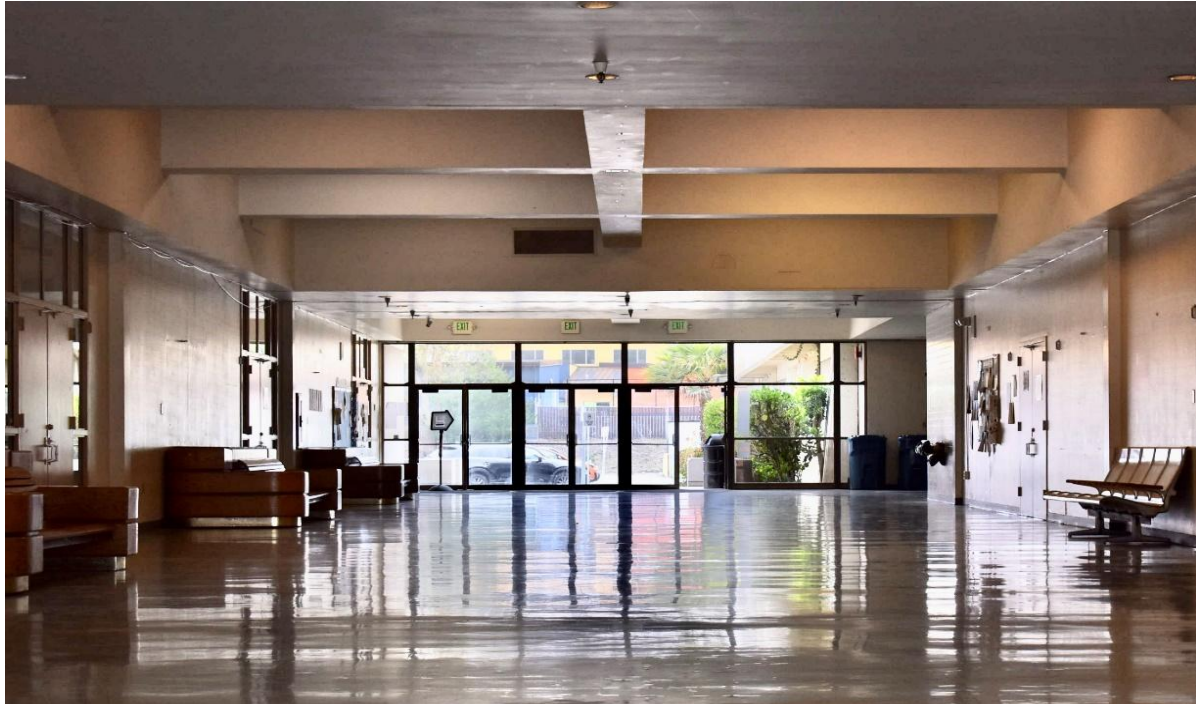


Figure 9 East Hallway, View South (above); South Hallway, View East (below)

On the interior, there are two principal halls and two secondary halls. The principal halls run north-south, from the entrances on the north side to the corresponding entrances on the south side. Each of these halls has a linoleum floor and walls finished in gypsum board. Concrete beams form coffer in each ceiling. As mentioned above, they receive light from the glassy entrances.

The other two (secondary) halls run east-west between the principal halls. The more southern of these is wide and has a coffered ceiling, while the other is narrow and has a plain ceiling. A set of aluminum doors, sidelights, and transoms fill the opening between the principal halls and one of the secondary halls (the wider southern one). Both east-west halls are carpeted and have gypsum board walls, with four 4' by 4' skylights in each. Originally, these two primary east-west corridors were equal in size, importance, and design. JUHSD added the classrooms along the exterior wall at the northern east-west corridor when the need for more classrooms was noted. At this time, the glass doors were removed at this reduced hallway.

Doors to classrooms and offices are of solid steel and are flanked on one side by narrow sidelights of wire glass. Doors to other rooms lack sidelights.



Figure 10 Bench in East Hallway

Four wooden benches can be found in the more eastern of the principal halls. These have rounded corners and backs and appear to be original to the building. No other original furnishing was evident in any of the halls.



Figure 11 Bronze Plaque in East Hallway

In the same hall a bronze plaque reads “Serramonte High School” and “Jefferson Union High School District,” identifies the architect as “Corwin Booth and Associated Architects,” identifies the building contractor as “Dickman Construction Company,” and gives the date as 1970. Since the building was designed in 1968, the construction date may be given as 1968-1970.

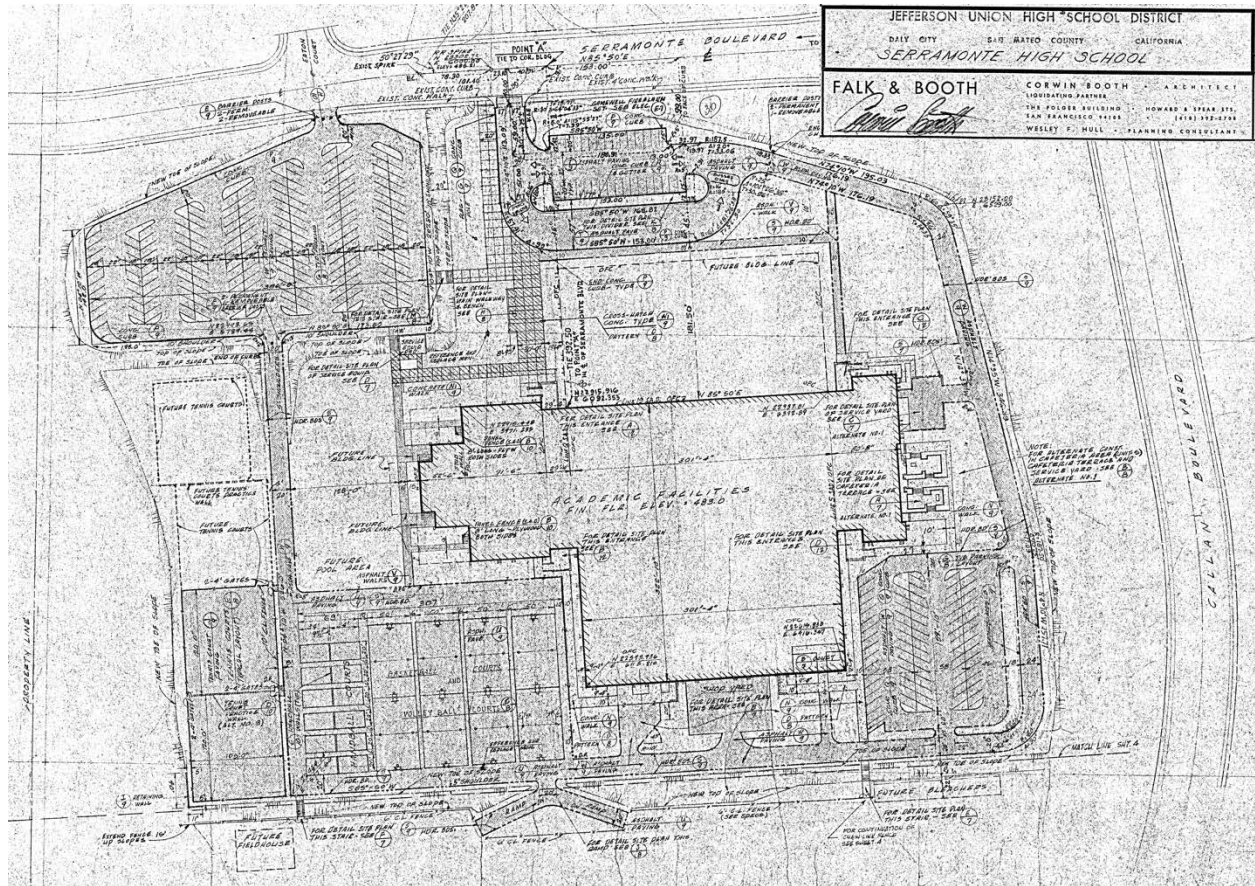


Figure 12 Construction Plans, 1970

Historic Context

History of Daly City

Since the beginning of the Spanish Period the Daly City area has been one of the preferred transportation corridors connecting San Francisco to the rest of the peninsula along El Camino Real and thus avoiding the swampy coast or the steep terrain inland (Hoover et al. 1966:392, Hynding 1982: 18). In 1856, San Mateo County was separated from the City and County of San Francisco, reflecting the development of the Peninsula after the Gold Rush, which brought hundreds of thousands of new settlers to San Francisco and the Bay Area. The previous use of local land for grazing cattle for meat and dairy production continued in the hills, and the new inhabitants of the region added small-scale market gardens of cold weather crops, like potatoes, cabbage, and artichokes, all of which supported the growing population of San Francisco (Hynding 1982:58, 96). The construction of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad in 1863 continued the area's important transportation role in the region and enabled the beginning of suburbanization (Hynding 1982: 64). The new transportation also created new business for the Colma-Daly City area with the creation of the Colma Cemetery complex between 1886-1901, which was the largest necropolis on the Pacific Coast at its completion (Shoup and Brack 1994; Svanevik and Burgett 1992, 1995).

Suburbanization of the Peninsula began in earnest from the 1920s as the advent of the automobile and highway construction spurred residential development. Downtown Daly City was largely developed in the 1920s. In the aftermath of the Second World War, major San Francisco developers including Henry Doelger and Carl and Fred Gellert constructed thousands of homes on huge tracts in Daly City, Broadmoor, and South San Francisco (Hynding 1982:248, 275). Most of the project area was therefore suburbanized by the 1950s. The traditional role of the area as a transportation corridor was revived in the mid-1960s, when I-280 was constructed through the project area, and again when the BART-SFO extension was completed in 2003 (Hayler 1964).

History of the Project Area

The Project Area is located in a neighborhood of Daly City called Serramonte, which was lightly developed until late in the 20th century. Used as grazing fields during the Mission and Mexican Periods, the United States deemed the area government and not Rancho land in 1853. Historic maps from the 1890s do not show structures or activities in the project area (USGS 1892, 1886, 1899). By 1915 a Chinese Cemetery was located to the east of the Project Area, but the area otherwise remained undeveloped (USGS 1915). Aerial photographs from the early 1940s show few structures near the project area, which was open space with little evidence of cultivation (Fairchild Aerial Surveys 1941). The vicinity had been the home of the 1,000-acre Christen Ranch Dairy (1885-1965) and was little developed beyond the ranch's needs. The well-known Westlake Mall and subdivision, to the west and north of Serramonte, was built in the post-World War II period by the developer Henry Doelger and became part of Daly City in 1948. By 1965 aerial photographs demonstrate the rapid pace of development in the region over the past few decades, with most of the previously empty fields covered by buildings (Cartwright Aerial Surveys 1965).



Figure 13 Christen Ranch Dairy, ca. 1940s. Photo from West Winston Manor Facebook Page.

The Serramonte area, however, remained undeveloped until the late 1960s when Fred and Carl Gellert initiated construction of a large 320-acre residential neighborhood and 680-acre shopping center. Located between Skyline Boulevard and Junipero Serra, the plan called for the creation of homes for 21,000 residents and the construction of a commercial hub for northern San Mateo County. The homes were to be mixed medium and low density, with apartments on the steeper slopes and one- and two-story and split-level single-family homes in the flatter areas. The Gellerts' Standard Building Company was a major San Francisco developer from the late 1920s through the 1950s, with a focus on single-family homes. Though racial covenants, which the Gellert Brothers had included in their contracts, were struck down in 1948, practices amounting to the same thing were still in use at Gellert properties into the early 1960s. In 1961 future San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown and others participated in several sit-ins at Gellert built homes at Forrest Knoll and picketed Standard Building's main offices to bring attention to these illegal practices. Soon others joined the picketers including Diane Feinstein, the future San Francisco Mayor and Senator from California. As San Francisco could no longer support large developments, the time was propitious for the Gellerts to look for projects down the peninsula and leave the conflict behind. They began to work in South San Francisco and then in the late 1960s the large Serramonte Development in Daly City, which included a shopping center and homes opened in 1968. The practices of refusing to show homes to non-white potential buyers continued at Serramonte demonstrating that the Gellerts may have left the protests of San Francisco behind, but they had not abandoned the practices that caused them. The Gellerts were not school architects and did not design Serramonte High School, instead they were induced to sell the land to Jefferson Union High School District (JUHSD), who hired Corwin Booth to design the new school.

History of Serramonte High School

Serramonte High School was built to accommodate expected population growth from the Serramonte development and to relieve the overcrowding at the existing JUHSD schools.¹ JUHSD was founded in 1922 and serves the cities of Daly City, Brisbane, Colma, and Pacifica. The first high school in JUHSD was Jefferson High School in 1922, which served the then-small population of Daly City. It wasn't until 1958 that a second high school, Westmoor High, was constructed in the Westlake Neighborhood. As the population of northern San Mateo County continued to grow throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Terra Nova High was built in 1961, and Oceana High in 1962 (JUHSD 2021). Both Westmoor and Oceana, in Pacifica, were designed by Mario Ciampi, who garnered national acclaim for Westmoor's "modern design elements" and received an honor award from the American Institute of Architects in 1959 for the work (*Time* 1960). It was especially noted for the extensive use of architectural glass and sometimes referred to as the Glass Palace. The need for another high school was clear not long after the opening of Oceana and in 1964 planning begun on a fifth high school for JUHSD.

In 1966 the district was still trying to garner financial and community support for a new school through a bond vote Jan 25th, 1966. Articles appeared in the local *San Mateo Times* questioning the need for an entirely new school and suggesting there might be less expensive options. There were also concerns about the location chosen, because it would require busing a substantial number of students. The land purchased for the school was part of the new Serramonte subdivision, which contained both residential and commercial elements. The district estimated about 800 of the students would be in walking distance and 1200 would need to be bused.

After much unresolved discussion, the school district decided to move forward with construction before they overcrowding got worse and costs rose. There was already overcrowding at the existing JUHSD schools requiring the purchase of portable classrooms to augment the current space at Westmoor High School, which was also running a staggered schedule to try to accommodate all the students. In the fall of 1968 Serramonte High School opened on the campus of Westmoor High School where it met while waiting for

¹ Discussion in this section is based on contemporary articles in the *San Mateo Times*; please see bibliography for references.

its new location to be finished. Serramonte was envisioned as a comprehensive school, but with a focus on Industrial Arts.

Work began October 16, 1966 on the new site with a ceremonial shovelful of earth and with grading and street work scheduled to be completed by mid-1967. Representatives of Corwin Booth and Associated Architects explained preliminary plans on November 15, 1966: 5 buildings in 1 concept, heavy, thick, noise-shielding rooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, a proposed plunge, classrooms, library, study areas, administrative zones, wall-to-wall carpeting, and interior walls throughout the building which could be moved in 5-foot increments for flexibility. The basic engineering was similar to Westmoor High, which had nearly parallel climatic, space, and aircraft noise patterns. Outdoor facilities were to include basketball and tennis courts, a running track with all-weather surface, and a football field with bleachers.

Opposition to the construction of Serramonte High grew once again in early 1968. The Westlake Citizens Steering Committee led by Dr. Sanford A. Marcus organized to try to halt the construction. According to Marcus, it was a waste of money the district did not have, especially after the defeat of a bond issue which limited state support of the new school. Instead, he proposed enlarging Westmoor High School or building a smaller, less expensive academic high school rather than a comprehensive high school on the Serramonte location. Once the new boundary lines were made public, revealing which neighborhoods would send their children to Serramonte rather than the current high schools, more parents joined the opposition. While no one denied the need for more classroom space, many parents were against the busing of their children to the new campus. Many meetings were held, Westlake parents tried to involve first the District Attorney and then the State of California on their side to stop the construction and/or fire the trustees, but to no avail.

A formal groundbreaking ceremony for the school buildings was held July 22, 1968. The buildings were slated to be completed at the end of 1969, but the cafeteria and gymnasium were not finished on time and an extension was given to December 26, which was again not met. The cafeteria was promised by January 19 with the gymnasium afterward. Students began attending school on campus during 1969-1970 school year without a completed school.

In early January 1970, the Jefferson Union High School District, including Serramonte High School, was told they needed to comply with the Board of Education order to correct racial and ethnic imbalances at their schools. In March Serramonte High School shuts down for a day and a half after two white students and two black students got into a fight in which one of the white students pulled a knife on the black students. The two white students are suspended. The principal at the school is quoted as acknowledging some racial tension at the school, but places most of the blame on the fact that the school construction has not yet been finished even though they are holding classes there. The following week the principal asked parents to come to the school to prevent more fighting as the day before a series of fist fights broke out at the school.

The *San Mateo Times* reported on weeks of fighting between Black and Latino students that took place in fall of 1974 including beatings and purse snatchings. In one case police were stationed at the school to try to prevent continued violence after a belt swinging fight involving an estimated 100 mostly male youths. There were some allegations of students from San Francisco High Schools coming to Serramonte to help their friends. This resulted in a number of suspensions and a list of demands presented to the school board on behalf of the Latino students including more bi-lingual and bi-cultural education for all students, and investigation of “double standards” in the district.

In May 1974 there was a public notice in the *San Mateo Times* requesting bids for the construction and completion of Serramonte High School Addition 1, which was to be done in accordance with the plans on file at Corwin Booth & Associates. This included the addition of classrooms, exercise rooms, shower and locker spaces, storage facilities, relocation of portable classroom units, and alteration to science resource center. In September 1975 the *San Mateo Times* noted that drawings had been approved for Serramonte High School physical education facility including a gymnasium for girls and expanded locker room facilities with construction to begin November 1975. Ultimately, the school was short-lived: Serramonte High closed

in 1981, reopened from 1993-1995 in a limited manner, and then closed again. It is currently used partly by JUHSD as office space and ESL classrooms, and partly by several religious and non-profit organizations.

The Architect

Serramonte High School was designed by architect Corwin Booth (1915-2008). Born in Columbus, Illinois, Booth attended the University of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana where he received a B.S. in Architecture. He was a civilian architect in Hawai'i during World War II and helped design Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. With structural engineer Mark Falk, who had previously worked with prolific Modernist school designer Ernest J. Kump, he formed the company of Falk & Booth in 1950 based in San Francisco. The company built schools throughout Northern California including Lodi, Newark, Irvington, Fremont, and Terra Nova high schools, and Capitola and Blacow elementary schools (AIA Architects Directory 1962).

After Falk's death in 1965, Booth opened Corwin Booth & Associated Architects, which expanded its focus to include the design of college buildings in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The company completed projects for the College of Marin, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, College of the Redwoods (Marin County), and Golden Gate College among others (AIA Architects Directory 1970). Booth continued designing primary and secondary schools as well, with Potrero Hill Junior High and Gomes Elementary School both finished in 1970-1971. During the rest of the 1970s Booth is known for three office highrise buildings in San Francisco at 211 Main Street, 221 Main Street, and 180 Montgomery Street.



Figure 14 Potrero Hill Junior High School. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library. Photo ID#ADD 4612.

In his designs of school and commercial buildings in the 1960s and 1970s, Booth's interest in the Brutalist and Late Modern styles of architecture can be observed. His two high schools for the Jefferson United School District demonstrate these styles: Terra Nova High School (1961) is Late Modern, while Serramonte High School (1970) was Brutalist. Other examples of his Brutalist designs are the office building at 221 Main Street in San Francisco, Irvington High in Fremont, Potrero Hill Junior High in San Francisco, multiple buildings at the College of Marin campus in Kentfield, and Sierra Madre Hall 113 and the Yosemite Towers at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, which were all designed and built in the first half of the 1970s. Please see a list of Booth's known works appended to the end of this Historic Context.



Figure 15 Yosemite and Sierra Madre Residence Halls (above) and Sierra Madre Community Center (below), California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo. Designed by Convin L. Booth. Retrieved from Cal Poly Housing.

Architectural Context

Through the 19th century and the early 20th century school buildings throughout northern California were compact and roughly squarish in shape. This worked well when schools were small, but as populations and schools grew, multi-story block-shaped buildings became cumbersome. To admit more light and air, larger schools sprouted wings to either side of the main block. In the 1920s, a different solution was found, namely that of making school buildings elongated in their form. With their horizontal emphasis and ubiquitous long bands of windows, the International Style became the default for such plans. California's climate encouraged architects to promote articulation between the indoors and outdoors.

New technology dovetailed with the development of progressive educational theory, which sought to develop schools that reflected children's perception of space. Moving away from rows of desks focused on the teacher, progressive modern classrooms sought to create flexible, child-focused spaces that permitted a variety of learning venues and were adaptable throughout the day and year. School architects also sought to make the school a public resource by creating auditoria and multi-purpose rooms that could host community events (Hille 2011:17).

In California, the immediate stimulus for these changes was the Field Act of 1933, which mandated earthquake-resistant school buildings. After this date, new school buildings that met the requirements tended to be one story in height and of lightweight construction, at least in suburban and rural places. Architect Ernest J. Kump, Jr., of the Fresno firm of Franklin and Kump began building such schools in the 1930s (Goad 2017; Bernard 2007:116). It was, however, Acalanes Union High School, in Lafayette, that gained Franklin and Kump national recognition. It was built in stages over a period of ten years, as had been the intention from the beginning (Cerney 2007; Goad 2017; Ogata 2008: 567).

While Mark Falk, Corwin Booth's partner at Falk and Booth, had previously worked with Kump, Booth's school designs after Falk's death turn away from many of the design elements present in mid-century schools. Instead, Booth concentrated on Brutalism, a style that evolved during the 1950s. Brutalism as a style is defined in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design Historic Context Statement:

The term Brutalism is derived from the French term "beton brut" or raw concrete. It was coined by English architects Alison and Peter Smithson in 1953. The architectural style evolves from Le Corbusier's 1940s-1950s experimentation with rough concrete in its crudest, most brutal form. Brutalist buildings often incorporate large expanses of glass however fenestration is often deeply recessed, resulting in shadowed windows that appear as dark voids. The plasticity of reinforced concrete allows for a myriad of shapes and forms, though repetitive angled geometries predominate. Concrete is poured on-site and left unpolished, often revealing the texture and grain of wood forms and small pebbles of the aggregate. The raw, expressive quality of Brutalist buildings are the antithesis of precision-machined glass and steel vertical boxes then dominating large-scale projects. Brutalist designs are considered a reaction against the slickness and anonymity of corporate Miesian glass curtain wall buildings (Brown 2010).

Visually, Brutalist architecture is characterized by concrete poured into strong geometric shapes, giving structures a 'blocky' appearance and a monolithic presence. Its purpose was to create simple, honest, and functional buildings with materials not hidden or obscured, but visible as themselves. Many people characterize its impact as "bold" or "heroic" and their purpose was to affect the perceptions of those who spent time in them. The buildings are typically massive in scale, constructed from the 1960s to 1980s, and serve commercial, municipal, and institutional functions (Brown 2010). Many examples of Brutalist architecture remain in the Bay Area such as the Hilton Hotel at 750 Kearney Street in San Francisco, multiple buildings on the campus of San Francisco State University, the Oakland Museum of California, Newman Hall Catholic Church in Berkeley, Wurster Hall at UC Berkeley, Saint Mary's Cathedral on Geary Street, Bank of California in San Jose. Architects began moving away from such styles in the 1970s as it became clear how hard it was to renovate such structures and concerns with how poured concrete responds in earthquakes (Brown 2010; Davis and Foglia 2017).

Booth's Serramonte High School should be considered in the context of other Brutalist architects, many of whom did not specialize in school architecture, but contributed to the style, nonetheless. Other, arguably higher style, examples of notable Brutalist design at campuses in the state include Woo Hon Fai Hall (previous home of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive) designed by Mario Ciampi, University of California, Berkeley; the Salk Institute for Biological Sciences in La Jolla, designed by Louis Kahn; California State University, Dominguez Hills, designed by Quincy Jones; and the Braille Institute of America in Los Angeles and the Geisel Library, University of California at San Diego, designed by William Pereira & Associates (Dudek 2016). In comparison to the examples mentioned above, Serramonte High is only a minor example of Brutalism lacking some of its defining features and soaring aspirations. It is not mentioned as an example of the type in architectural histories and guidebooks.



Figure 16 Exterior of Woo Hon Fai Hall (previous home of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive). Photo: UC Berkeley Vice Provost's Office



Figure 17 Interior of Woo Hon Fai Hall (previous home of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive). Photo: UC Berkeley Vice Provost's Office



Figure 18 Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, CA. Photo: By Codera23 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?cu rid=81787561>



Figure 19 Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, CA. Photo: By Allan Ferguson - Lonely chair at Salk Institute Uploaded by X-Weinzar, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=16146401>



Figure 20 Geisel Library, University of California at San Diego. Photo: University Communications, UC San Diego

Significance Evaluation

Framework for Evaluation

Under CEQA, local agencies must consider whether projects will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, which is considered to be a significant effect on the environment (Public Resources Code §21084.1). A “historical resource” is a resource determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, or local registers by a lead agency (14 Code of California Regulations §15064.5), while a “substantial adverse change” can include “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings” that impairs the significance of an historical resource in such a way as to impair its eligibility for Federal, State, or local registers.

Integrity Analysis

Integrity is a quality that applies to historic resources in seven ways: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Aerial photographs, as-built plans, and field visits suggest that Serramonte High School largely retains its original appearance. The school building maintains the same location, and footprint, though their use has changed from secondary education to special education, religious, and commercial. Overall, however, Serramonte High School has good integrity.

California Register Evaluation

California Register Criterion 1: Significant Events or Patterns of Events

This criterion evaluates resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

The school building dates to 1970, and is associated with suburbanization in northern San Mateo County in the 1960s and 1970s. The school building does not possess special qualities that make it significant in this pattern of history, being one among hundreds of modernist and brutalist school buildings constructed in California during the 1960s and 1970s. It is one of a number of high schools constructed by JUHSD in this period, and was short-lived, operating for only about 10 years before its closure. For this reason, the subject property does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under this criterion.

California Register Criterion 2: Significant Persons

This criterion evaluates resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

Works on the history of Daly City and research in local newspapers did not identify any significant individuals associated with this school. It seems unlikely that these school personnel would have historical importance under this criterion of the California Register. For this reason, the subject property does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under this criterion.

California Register Criterion 3: Significant Design/Construction/Architecture

This criterion evaluates resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.

The Serramonte High School building was one of many school buildings designed by Corwin Booth in the Brutalist Style during the 1960s and 1970s. The style is exemplified in the building by the use of raw concrete, monolithic presence, and repeating rectangular motifs in the external buttresses. Completed in 1970, the school is not an early or significant example of the style, nor one of Booth’s significant Brutalist works: buildings at the College of Marin and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, for instance, have garnered significantly more attention, while research identified no discussion of Serramonte High in architectural publications.

Serramonte High is an uninspired example of its style: it is monolithic to a fault, with no natural light except in the cafeteria and entranceways, and lacks the dynamism of form, varied surface textures, and visual interest exhibited by more notable examples of campus Brutalism. The school uses very common materials (reinforced concrete, steel, aluminum) in ways typical of its period.

For these reasons, Serramonte High School does not appear to be eligible for the California Register under this criterion.

California Register Criterion 4: Information Potential

This criterion is usually used to evaluate archaeological sites. In some cases, a built environment resource may contain useful information about construction techniques or use of materials by builders. However, Serramonte High was constructed with methods and materials that were common during the 1960s and 1970s. The school therefore does not have information potential that would make it eligible for the California Register under Criterion 4.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, Serramonte High School does not appear to be a historical resource under CEQA, because the school does not meet any of the criteria of the California Register. Therefore, the demolition of the building will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines §15064.5.

If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work should be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find.

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1966c "JUHS Mulls Serramonte School Plan." April 13.

1966d "Need More Classrooms at Westmoor." March 10.

1966e "New Industrial Arts Concept Offered." October 11

1966f "Serramonte High School Work Begins." October 17.

1966g "Serramonte School Features Disclosed." November 15

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1968b "Morgan Submits Boundary Proposals for Jeff High." January 23.

1968c "400 Protest Jefferson Busing Plan." February 14.

1968d "Parents See D.A. on Boundaries Switch." February 21.

1968e "Reject Jefferson Boundary Delay. 3,000 Fail on Petition; 450 at Meet." March 12.

1968f "State Rules Itself Out on Boundaries." June 25.

1968g "Serramonte High Groundbreaking." June 12.

- 1970a “‘Racial Balance’ Ruling Followed.” January 7.
- 1970b “Serramonte High Closes After Fight.” March 4.
- 1974 “Serramonte Hit by Race Fight.” October 10.
- 1975 “JUHSD Vandalism Doubles in Year.” September 17.

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- 1892 San Mateo, CA 15 minute quadrangle
- 1886 San Mateo, CA 15 minute quadrangle
- 1899 San Mateo, CA 15 minute quadrangle
- 1915 San Mateo, CA 15 minute quadrangle

Attachment: Projects by Corwin Booth

1947	Clark Airforce Base, Manila, Philippines
1952	Capitola Elementary School, 504 Monterey Avenue, Capitola, California
1955	Lodi High School, 3 South Pacific Ave., Lodi, California
1960	Irvington High School, 41800 Blacow Rd., Fremont, California
1961	Newark High School, 6201 Lafayette Ave., Newark, California
1961	Terra Nova High School, 1450 Terra Nova Blvd., Pacifica, California
1961, 1963	Blacow Elementary School, 40404 Sundale Dr., Fremont, California
1967	College of Marin Education Buildings, 835 College Ave., Kentfield, California
1968	College of the Redwoods, Eureka, California
1968	Golden Gate College, San Francisco
1968	California State Polytechnical University Residence Halls, San Luis Obispo
1969	Serramonte High School, 699 Serramonte Blvd., Daly City, California
1970	Potrero Hill Junior High School, 115 Wisconsin St., San Francisco, California
1970	Gomes Elementary School, 555 Lemos Ln., Fremont, California
1973	211 Main Street, San Francisco, California
1975	221 Main Street, San Francisco, California
1979	180 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, California