

## 18. South Temple

South Temple, formally known as Brigham Street, is frequently referred to as Utah's premier residential boulevard, a testament to the transformation of Salt Lake City from an agricultural village to an urban center that could support the elegant architecture along this street.

During the 1850s and 1860s, South Temple was rural, lined with adobe homes, orchards and barns. Then the railroad arrived, and fortunes were made. By 1880 frame and brick had replaced adobe. Orchards and barns were replaced with two-story shops and homes. By the 1890s South Temple was fulfilling Brigham Young's prediction that it would become the finest street in Zion. As the 20th century began, South Temple took on the elegant appearance we associate with it today. The most imposing mansions belonged to an influential group of men who had earned great wealth through mining and who had no cultural or religious association with the LDS Church. Their desire to separate themselves socially led to the establishment of the Alta and the University clubs while the construction of the Cathedral of the Madeleine and the First Presbyterian Church announced that non-Mormons had a permanent stake in this prestigious area of the City.

Professional people who were not as wealthy but prominent nonetheless were also building in the South Temple area. They built four-square boxes, Shingle style houses and Arts and Crafts bungalows. These styles were popular throughout the City, but South Temple residents built more elaborate versions representing some of the finest work of the State's best-known architects.



*This storefront was an early addition to the foursquare house at 434 E South Temple Street.*



*The storefront was a 1930s addition to the building at 754 E South Temple Street.*



*The building at 430 E South Temple Street was constructed to serve as a garage for the production of electric automobiles.*



445 E South Temple Street (1959)



633 E. South Temple Street (1960)

South Temple’s grandeur began to wane during the 1920s and 1930s. Wealthy families aged and dispersed. New construction along South Temple during this period consisted primarily of apartment buildings and clubhouses for fraternal and women’s organizations. While these buildings were among the most elegant clubs and multifamily structures in the City, they still represented change for South Temple. Zoning changes allowed commercial encroachment and higher residential densities. As land value increased, many architecturally significant single family residences were lost.

As residences were demolished they were replaced in the 1950s and 1960s with modern commercial and office buildings. These buildings brought a different character to the street and represent a wave of construction that is now appreciated for its mid-20th century modern and late modern designs. The City designated South Temple as an historic district in 1976, providing for the preservation of the unique buildings and street features that once made South Temple the City’s premier address.

**Additional Information**

Lester, Margaret D. Brigham Street. Published by Utah State Historical Society. 1979  
[books.google.com/books/about/Brigham\\_Street.html?id=EZhCPQAACAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Brigham_Street.html?id=EZhCPQAACAAJ)