

Ch.17 UNIVERSITY

A HISTORY OF APARTMENT AND MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

The following background on the historical development of apartment and other multifamily buildings in the University district draws directly from the reconnaissance level survey of the district in 1995.

General Description

The University Neighborhood Historic District is located on a bench of the Salt Lake valley approximately two miles east of the central business district of Salt Lake City and immediately west of the University of Utah campus. The area contains several original square 10-acre blocks as well as a number of half-size rectangular blocks. It is primarily a residential neighborhood with a commercial strip of two blocks in the east/central part of the district. Out of the 586 buildings in the district, 452 buildings are contributing, 71 are non-contributing due to alterations, and 63 are out-of-period structures. There are also two sites (grass medians and a park) and one structure (the reservoir) within the district.



Commander Apartments

While the period of significance for the district ranges from c.1883 to 1941, the majority of historic buildings (75%) date from the 1905-1925 period. The tree-lined streets, grass parking medians, sidewalks and uniform set-backs in the neighborhood are distinctive features that enhance its character. The district retains a high degree of its historic integrity with 82% of the buildings contributing to the historic association and feeling of the area.

Multiple Family Dwellings

Historic apartment buildings that contribute to the area include the University Apartments (c.1907) at 201 South 1300 East, the Cluff Apartments (1911) (National Register, 1989), at 1270-1280 East 200 South, the Commander Apartments (c.1928) at 147 South 1300 East, and the Edgehill Apartments (c.1928) at 227 South 1300 East. A complex of apartments buildings on 100 South between 1100 and 1200 East was built c.1955, and although then out of period (Survey 1995), maintains the historic quality of the street. The infill of newer structures has included only a few large apartment buildings, with residences of similar scale and materials comprising the majority of out-of-period structures.



University Garden Apartments

Several urban apartment buildings in this area were built close to the University primarily during the early twentieth century. Urban apartments are significant for their association with the rapid urbanization of Salt Lake City during the 1890-1930s. Apartments document the accommodation of builders and residents to the realities of crowded living conditions and high land values. The apartments in the University Neighborhood Historic District fall within the two periods of construction, 1902-1918 (University and Cluff Apartments) and 1922-31 (Edgehill and Commander Apartments), a break in building that was caused by WWI. Dwellers in apartments are more transient in nature than suburban homeowners and reflect this area's need for some short-term living accommodations in a predominately single-family dwelling neighborhood.

The need for large numbers of apartments and student housing did not occur until after World War II.

At that time, many of the residences were converted into rental units to accommodate the increasing student enrollment. Most of those houses have maintained rental status, although, since the mid-1990s, a number of homes west of 1300 East have been restored to single family dwellings.

Utah Division of State History *University Neighborhood Historic District* National Register of Historic Places Nomination 1995

See also: [A Preservation Handbook for Historic Residential Properties & Districts in Salt Lake City, Ch.17 University](#)



Cluff Apartments



Meldrum House (previously University Apartments)



Hugo Apartments