

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Smith House
2539 French Street
Santa Ana, CA 92706

NAME	Smith House			REF. NO.
ADDRESS	2539 French Street			
CITY	Santa Ana	ZIP	92706	ORANGE COUNTY
YEAR BUILT	1952	LOCAL REGISTER CATEGORY: Contributive		
HISTORIC DISTRICT	N/A	NEIGHBORHOOD	Park Santiago	
CALIFORNIA REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	C/3	CALIFORNIA REGISTER STATUS CODE	5S3	

Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

Prehistoric Historic Both

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Minimal Traditional

During the Great Depression through the immediate postwar years, the Minimal Traditional home rose in popularity as the preferred style for middle-class housing in the United States. This basic house type fulfilled both aesthetic and social needs: in terms of aesthetics, the form represented a stripped-down version of the historic-eclectic styles popular in the 1920s, in particular the Tudor and English Revival styles. In social terms, the Minimal Traditional home satisfied requirements in square footage and plan by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which launched a campaign in this period to expand home ownership. The Minimal Traditional home served as the prototype used by the FHA in its efforts to codify and manufacture “a standard, low-cost, minimum house that the majority of American wage earners could afford” (Greg Hise, *Magnetic Los Angeles*, p. 57). Minimal Traditional homes are typically rectangular in plan and one-story in height, often with a front-gabled wing and prominent attached chimney. In contrast with the English and Tudor Revival styles the one-story version sometimes mimics, the Minimal Traditional home is capped with a low or intermediate pitch roof with a hipped or side gable. Sheathing materials include stucco, brick, or wood, often accompanied by stone veneer accents. Fenestration generally consists of multi-light casement, double-hung, and picture windows with wood frames. The eaves and rakes of the Minimal Traditional home are typically shallow (in a departure from the later Ranch House style, which they often resemble). Although they have little applied ornament, many Minimal Traditional homes often display decorative wood shutters and porch-roof supports.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

The Smith House qualifies for listing in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties under Criterion 1 as an intact example of a Minimal Traditional-style home in Santa Ana. The recommended categorization is “Contributive” because it is a good example of the Minimal Traditional style and history and character of the neighborhood. (Santa Ana Municipal Code, Section 30-2.3).

EXPLANATION OF CODES:

- California Register Criteria for Evaluation: (From California Office of Historic Preservation, Technical Assistance Series # 7, “How to Nominate Resources to the California Register of Historical Resources,” September 4, 2001.)
 - 3:** It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
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 - 5S3:** Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation.