CITYWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT:
EARTHQUAKE SHACKS THEME DOCUMENT

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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Source: San Francisco Public Library
# CITYWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT FRAMEWORK

## I. THEMATIC CONTEXTS, sub-contexts, & themes

### 1. Residential (1880-1989)
- **Single-Family**
  - Early Residential Development (1848-1880) (HE22)
  - Residence Parks
  - Sunset Residential Tracts (ad. 2014)
  - Developer Tracts:
    - Streetcar Suburbanization: 1880-1920
    - Auto Suburbanization: 1920-1950
    - Post-WWII Suburbanization: 1950-1989
  - Industrial Workers’ Housing
- **Multi-Family**
  - Flats & Small Apts. (HE22)
  - Single-Family Houses
  - Bungalow Courts, Courtyard Apts., Garden Apts.
  - Romeo Flats
  - Edwardian-era Flats (intern)

### 2. Commercial (1848-1989)
- **Downtown Core**
  - Merchants, Leaders & Commercial Identity
  - Hotels
  - Finance & Commerce
- **NCDs (HE22)**

### 3. Industrial (1848-1989)
- No sub-context
  - Regional Manufacturing, Shops & Mills
  - Piers & Ports
  - Warehouse Districts/ Design Districts
  - Labor History, Leaders & Union Halls
  - **Auto Row (ad. 2010)**

- *Indicates Themes not yet identified.
- **Bolded text** indicates under contract, in-progress, or completed documentation.
WHAT IS AN EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK?

• Statement of Significance
• Period of Significance
• Justification of Period of Significance
• Geographic Boundaries
• Related Themes of Significance
• Criteria for Eligibility
• Associated Property Types
• Property Type Descriptions
• Eligibility Standards
• Character-Defining Features
• Integrity Consideration

“Historic context statements are intended to provide an analytical framework for identifying and evaluating resources...explaining what aspects of geography, history, and culture significantly shaped the physical development of a community...what important property types were associated with those developments, why they are important, and what characteristics they need to have to be considered an important representation of their type and context.”

--California Office of Historic Preservation
Subject:

- Focuses on the earthquake shack typology
- Approximately 5,610 shacks were built between 1906-1908 by the San Francisco Relief Corporation
- After closure of camps, moved onto private lots and altered

Characteristics:

- Constructed in three pre-defined sizes:
  - Type A: 10’x14’
  - Type B: 14’x18’
  - Type C: 15’x25’
- Vertical board & batten siding
- “Park Bench Green” exterior color
- Pitched gable roof
- Galvanized metal chimney
- Redwood shingle roof
- 6-pane divided light windows
Where:
- Found citywide
- Most often in neighborhoods that are near one of the 31 former refugee camps.
ISSUES & CONSIDERATIONS

Issues:

- **Identification**
  - Due to level of alteration, sometimes difficult to identify

- **Integrity**
  - Bar for integrity is different due to alteration being part of property history

- **Significance/establishing rarity**
EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK
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- **Period of Significance**: 1906-1915

- **Criteria for Eligibility**:
  - **Criterion A/1 (Events)**: Most earthquake shacks will be found eligible under this criterion due to their direct association with the 1906 Earthquake & Fires
  
  - **Criterion C/3 (Architecture)**: Some earthquake shacks will also be found eligible under this criterion if they are especially architecturally intact examples of the earthquake shack typology

- **Related Themes of Significance**: 1906 Earthquake and Reconstruction (will cover Bonus Plan & Grant & Loan Programs)

Source: San Francisco Public Library
**Character-Defining Features:**
- Differ based on eligibility assessment
  - Box-frame construction, small-scale massing, and overall form
  - Architectural elements including but not limited to pitched gable roof, board and batten siding, and cedar shake shingle roof
- Dimensions similar to the identified Earthquake Shack Types:
  - Type A: 10’x14’
  - Type B: 14’x18’
  - Type C: 15’x25’

**Integrity Considerations:**
- Differ depending on eligibility.
- The bar for integrity is lower for earthquake shacks found to be eligible under Criterion A/1 (Events) vs those also found eligible under C/3 (Architecture).

(Source: *The San Francisco Call*, May 9, 1909)
EXAMPLES FOR EVALUATION

364 Richland Avenue

1227 24th Avenue (LM#171)

48 Peralta Avenue
• Located in Bernal Heights
• Likely example of **Type C** earthquake shack
• Determined eligible under **Criterion A/1 (Events)**
• **Integrity**: raising to insert garage disqualifies the property for eligibility under C/3.
Located in the Outer Sunset
Identified as three Type A and one Type B earthquake shacks combined
Determined eligible under Criterion A/1 (Events) and C/3 (Architecture)
Integrity: though the property has been altered, it retains its overall form and massing. The alterations made to the property are in keeping with its vernacular character.
San Francisco Landmark # 171
• Located in Bernal Heights
• Identified as potential **Type C** earthquake shack
• Determined **Ineligible**
• **Integrity:** The cumulative impact of alterations to the property (raising of cottage, replacement of original cladding, windows, etc.) resulted in loss of integrity.
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