



Agenda Item B.1
DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM
Meeting Date: August 18, 2025

TO: Historic Preservation Commission

SUBMITTED BY: JoAnne Plummer, Neighborhood Services Director
Lisa Prasse, Current Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Stow Grove Park Caretaker Cottage

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Concur with Rincon's conclusion that the Stow Grove Caretaker cottage does not meet any of the criteria to be considered a Historic Landmark or a Point of Historic Interest individually due to lack of architectural and/or historical significance and
- B. Provide feedback and input to the City Council regarding the demolition of the Caretaker Cottage in Phase One of the Stow Grove Park renovation project.

BACKGROUND:

Historical Background

The caretaker cottage is not an original structure at Stow Grove Park. In January of 1965 when the property was deeded to the County of Santa Barbara (County), one of the requirements was the construction of a caretaker cottage. The City of Goleta has construction plans for this structure that are dated in 1965. Subsequent plan sets for other park improvements, identify the caretaker cottage and the garage as existing facilities.

In 1965, the County of Santa Barbara was responsible for park locations from Cuyama to Carpinteria, spanning 129 miles. Due to the size of the county and remote locations of County owned park properties, it was a common practice to have a host at park locations throughout the County. This practice allowed for the opportunity to have a daily presence at popular park locations to address concerns, repairs, and issues. It also allowed the opportunity for the County to have team members strategically located throughout the large jurisdiction to conduct business in park locations within a reasonable proximity, reducing the travel time for maintenance crews.

In 2002, the City of Goleta was incorporated and the deed for Stow Grove Park was transferred to the city, which included the cottage. The City of Goleta put one of their maintenance team members into the cottage, until 2016. The departure of this employee raised a significant amount of discussion related to the options and the need for the caretaker cottage. The primary focus was the poor condition of the facility, the potential for the building to contain asbestos and lead paint as well as significant non-compliance with the 2010 Americans with Disability Act. The facility continues to remain vacant due

to these conditions, which have only been worsened over the last few years.

Stow Grove Master Plan and Commission reviews

In December of 2023, the Goleta City Council adopted the Stow Grove Park Master Plan and the associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents and prepared to renovate the nearly 100-year-old park. At that time, it was thought that the Caretaker cottage could be renovated for community use.

On August 20, 2024, the Neighborhood Services Department project team officially kicked off Phase One of the Stow Grove Park project. The team conducted a site walk to evaluate options for the affected areas in alignment with the Master Plan.

On September 11, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) reviewed considerations for a relocation of the restroom facility, which included possible scenarios associated with the relocation of other support facilities within the caretaker and maintenance areas of the property.

On February 19, 2025, at a special meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the future of the Caretaker Cottage Stow Grove Park. The Commission supported the demolition of the caretaker cottage given the condition of the cottage and there was not a need for the facility at this point. it

At March 17, 2025, the Historic Preservation Commission meeting, during the Commissioner comments portion of the meeting, there was a request to have a presentation regarding the Caretaker cottage.

DISCUSSION:

As mentioned above, the condition of the existing structure, coupled with the future needs/use of the park prompted the discussion regarding the viability of rehabilitating the cottage. The current proposal is to demolish the cottage and garage at this point. The discussion section focuses on the historic evaluation of the structure, input from the Stow family, and park maintenance needs. The latter two topics are provided for reference. On September 2, 2025, the City Council will be considering the decision to either demolish or retain the existing caretaker cottage, and the Historic Preservation Commission's input is requested.

Historical Evaluation

Neighborhood Services Department staff, after securing quotes from several firms, selected Rincon Consultants (Rincon) to review and conduct a historical evaluation of the caretaker cottage. That evaluation document which also outlines the Federal, State, and local criteria is provided as Attachment 1 to this report.

Rincon also evaluated Stow Grove Park as part of the 2023 Cultural Resources Technical Report for the Stow Grove Master Plan and Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration. In the 2023 Technical Report, the park and associated elements, including

the caretaker's cottage and garage, were recommended to be ineligible for listing in the National Registry of Historic Places (NRHP), California Registry of Historical Resources (CRHR), and as a City of Goleta Landmark under all applicable criteria found in Chapter 17.33 of the Goleta Municipal Code (GMC).

However, Rincon's report recommends that the park as a whole be considered eligible for listing as a City of Goleta Point of Historical Interest under Criterion A1 within the context of institutional development in the City of Goleta and identified the period of significance for the park as 1919 to 1940 (Losco et al. 2023).

During this period, Stow Grove Park, then referred to as Stow's Grove, was a privately held informal gathering place for the Stow family and the residents of Goleta which was largely undeveloped aside from mature trees and two unpaved roads. The park is an early example of such a park which played a significant role as a social gathering place for the community of Goleta. It is additionally associated with this historically significant individual Edgar Stow. While it does not retain sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a Goleta Landmark, Point of Historical Interest Criterion A1 indicates that eligible Points of Historical Interest may be altered or no longer extant.

The caretaker's cottage does not contribute to the Park's Point of Historical Interest because it was added after the park was given to the County and it is not affiliated with the Stow family directly. While the cottage is over fifty years old, its architectural style is not unique, and the cottage and garage represent simple facilities within a public park that did not serve a significant role within the municipal park system in Santa Barbara County. The cottage was not the first ranger/caretaker cottage within the County Park system, and the buildings did not influence any advancements in park design. The caretaker's cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are therefore considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A and the CRHR under Criterion 1 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria i.

People residing in the facility can often be associated with its historical relevance. In this cottage, the individuals that resided and served as caretakers were County or City employees, not identified as historically relevant. The caretaker's cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are therefore considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion B and the CRHR under Criterion 2 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria ii.

Further, Rincon's research did not identify the architect or builder of the caretaker's cottage or garage, and the buildings do not possess high artistic value. Based on the detailed information provided in Attachment 1, the caretaker's cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C and the CRHR under Criterion 3 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria iii.

The research conducted for this assessment did not indicate the caretaker's cottage and garage would yield important information about prehistory or history. They therefore recommended being ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D and CRHR under Criterion 4 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria iv. Additionally, based on the information provided above, the caretaker's cottage and garage are also considered

ineligible individually for listing as City of Goleta Points of Historical Interest under all Criteria A1 and A2.

Stow Family Input

Staff contacted the Stow family representative to discuss the city's request to eliminate the caretaker cottage at this location. The response received was that the Stow Company is comfortable with the City's request not to have a caretaker living onsite at Stow Grove Park and comfortable with the city determining the future of the caretaker cottage in consultation with the community.

A special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting as referenced above was held to discuss the future of the caretaker cottage as requested by the Stow Company and there were mixed views presented by the members in attendance. Overall, there was not a request to retain the structure, but a strong desire from the public to return a caretaker to the site. The Parks and Recreation Commission supported the removal of the caretaker cottage.

Park Maintenance Needs

As mentioned above, the park is now owned by the City of Goleta, who manage the daily maintenance through a variety of contracted teams as well as Parks and Open Space personnel. Combined efforts of this staffing model places employees and/or contractors at this site nearly seven days a week. This collaborative approach provides the City of Goleta to have representatives looking at and reporting on the conditions of the park, nearly seven days a week. This staffing effort is higher than any other park within the City of Goleta, with Jonny D Walls Neighborhood Park being the next highest.

CONCLUSION:

Rincon has evaluated the Caretaker cottage against local, state and federal criteria as noted above. Although the building is over 50 years old, Rincon's evaluation has not found the Caretaker cottage to meet any of the criteria to be considered a Historic Landmark or a Point of Historic Interest individually due to lack of architectural and/or historical significance. Therefore, implementation of the Stow Grove Park Master Plan including all options under consideration for the caretaker's cottage would result in no impact to historical resources pursuant to CEQA.

If it is the desire of the Historic Preservation Commission to consider Stow Grove Park as a local historical point of interest, staff can bring this item back at a later date in order to provide the required notice and to hold a public hearing as required by Chapter 17.33 of the Goleta Municipal Code.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Rincon Consultants' Historical Evaluation of Stow Grove Caretaker's Cottage
Dated August 13, 2025

ATTACHMENT 1

**RINCON CONSULTANTS' HISTORICAL EVALUATION OF
STOW GROVE CARETAKER'S COTTAGE
DATED AUGUST 13, 2025**

August 13, 2025
Project No: 25-17716

JoAnne Plummer
Director of Neighborhood Services City of Goleta
130 Cremona Drive, Suite B
Goleta, California 93117
Via email: jplummer@cityofgoleta.org

Subject: Stow Grove Master Plan Project - Caretaker's Cottage Review

Dear Ms. Plummer:

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) was retained by the City of Goleta (City) to support the Stow Grove Park Master Plan Project's (project/proposed project) environmental review. The proposed project involves development of the Stow Grove Master Plan, which would facilitate active and passive recreational amenities within Stow Grove Park. In 2023, Rincon assisted the City in the preparation of the Stow Grove Park Master Plan Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS-MND) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Final IS-MND was approved by Goleta City Council in December 2023. However, the City is now considering alternative plans for elements within the park that may require the preparation of an IS-MND addendum. The current memorandum was therefore prepared to support the project's further environmental review.

This memorandum was prepared by Architectural Historian Ashley Losco, MHP, with oversight from Senior Architectural Historian and Project Manager, Rachel Perzel, MA. Cultural Resources Principal, Shannon Carmack reviewed the report for quality control. Ms. Losco, Ms. Perzel, and Ms. Carmack meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards* (PQS) for architectural history and history (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 61) (National Park Service [NPS] 1983).

Project Background

The Stow Grove Park Master Plan envisions new, improved, expanded and renovated active and passive recreational amenities within Stow Grove Park. The Master Plan includes 25 total components/amenities, of which nine are general park improvements, six are play/active, five are social/educational, and five are passive/nature based.

As previously noted, Rincon assisted the city in the preparation of the Stow Grove Park Master Plan IS-MND, which was finalized by Goleta City Council in December 2023. In support of the IS-MND, Rincon prepared the *Stow Grove Park Master Plan Project Cultural Resources Technical Report* (2023 CR Tech Report). The 2023 CR Tech Report concluded that Stow Grove Park is ineligible for federal, state, and local designation as a Goleta Landmark. However, in recognition of its historical associations with the institutional development of Goleta and with Edgar Stow, the 2023 CR Tech Report recommended Stow Grove Park eligible for designation as a Goleta Point of Historical Interest under Criterion A1. According to the City of Goleta Municipal Code, Points of Historical Interest are not considered historical resources pursuant to CEQA.

The project description analyzed in the IS-MND included the renovation of the park's caretaker's cottage with potential opportunities for public use. However, the city is now considering alternatives to renovation of the cottage including demolition. The current memorandum was therefore prepared to analyze the potential impacts to potential historical resources associated with the proposed project not previously considered in the 2023 CR Tech Report. It builds on and integrates the findings of the 2023 CR Tech Report and addresses the caretaker's cottage in greater detail. To support analysis of

potential impacts, the following sections present a summary of existing conditions, historic context, developmental history and historic resources evaluation of the caretaker's cottage and its associated garage.

Regulatory Setting

This section includes a discussion of the applicable state and local laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards governing historical resources, which must be adhered to before and during implementation of the project.

California Environmental Quality Act

California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21084.1 requires lead agencies to determine if a project could have a significant impact on historical resources. As defined in PRC Section 21084.1, a historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), a resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified in a historical resources survey pursuant to PRC Section 5024.1(g), or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant. PRC Section 21084.1 also states resources meeting the above criteria are presumed to be historically or cultural significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates otherwise. Resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are automatically listed in the CRHR, as are California Historical Landmarks 770 and above; both are therefore historical resources under CEQA. Historical resources may include eligible built environment resources and archaeological resources of the precontact or historic periods.

According to CEQA, an impact that results in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is considered a significant impact on the environment. A substantial adverse change could result from physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 [b][1]). Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the CRHR or a local register (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5[b][2][A]).

The requirements for mitigation measures under CEQA are outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(a)(1). In addition to being fully enforceable, mitigation measures must be completed within a defined time period and be roughly proportional to the impacts of the project. Generally, a project which is found to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (the Standards) is considered to be mitigated below a level of significance (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 [b][1]).

National Register of Historic Places

Although the project does not have a federal nexus, properties which are listed in or have been formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR. The following is therefore presented to provide applicable regulatory context. The NRHP was authorized by Section 101 of the National Historic Preservation Act and is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The NRHP recognizes the quality of significance in American, state, and local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures,



and objects. Per 36 CFR Part 60.4, a property is eligible for listing in the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Criterion A:** Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- Criterion B:** Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
- Criterion C:** Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of installation, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- Criterion D:** Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

In addition to meeting at least one of the above designation criteria, resources must also retain integrity. The National Park Service recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, considered together, define historic integrity. To retain integrity, a property must possess several, if not all, of these seven qualities, defined as follows:

- Location:** The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred
- Design:** The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property
- Setting:** The physical environment of a historic property
- Materials:** The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property
- Workmanship:** The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory
- Feeling:** A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time
- Association:** The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property

Certain properties are generally considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP, including cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions, relocated structures, or commemorative properties. Additionally, a property must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. The National Park Service states that 50 years is the general estimate of the time needed to develop the necessary historical perspective to evaluate significance (National Park Service 1997). Properties which are less than 50 years must be determined to have "exceptional importance" to be considered eligible for NRHP listing.

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR was established in 1992 and codified by PRC Sections 5024.1 and Title 14 Section 4852. The CRHR is an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(a)). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are consistent with the NRHP criteria but have been modified for state use in order to include a range of historical resources that better reflect the history of California (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(b)). Unlike the NRHP however, the CRHR does not have a defined age threshold for eligibility; rather, a resource may be eligible for the CRHR if it can be demonstrated sufficient time has passed to understand its historical or



architectural significance (California Office of Historic Preservation 2011). Furthermore, resources may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR even if they do not retain sufficient integrity for NRHP eligibility (California Office of Historic Preservation [OHP] 2011). Generally, the California Office of Historic Preservation recommends resources over 45 years of age be recorded and evaluated for historical resources eligibility (California OHP 1995).

A property is eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Criterion 1:** Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage
- Criterion 2:** Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past
- Criterion 3:** Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values
- Criterion 4:** Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Local Regulations

City of Goleta Municipal Code

Title 17 of the City of Goleta's Municipal Code includes Chapter 17.33 Historic Resource Preservation, which was added as part of Ordinance No. 22-05 (Historic Preservation and Archaeological and Tribal Cultural Ordinance), an amendment to the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map. This Ordinance was officially adopted by the City Council in 2021. This chapter is summarized below.

Chapter 17.33 Historic Preservation

This chapter provides for the recognition and preservation of historic resources that reflect the social, cultural, historical, and architectural heritage of the City by establishing procedures and regulations that are necessary to assist the City in identifying and protecting its historic resources, encourage public education and appreciation of the City's heritage, ensure that new development maintains continuity with the City's historic character and scale, maintain historic resources as community assets, integrate the preservation of historic resources into the public and private development process, implement the goals and policies of the Visual and Historic Resources Element of the General Plan, and fulfill the City's responsibilities under applicable state and federal laws including CEQA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Criteria for designating Historic Landmarks, Districts, and Points of Historical Interest are detailed below.

17.33.040 Historic Landmarks: A building, structure, object, or site shall be designated a Historic Landmark, if the City Council finds that the following criteria are met: the proposed Historic Landmark is at least 50 years old or exhibits Exceptional Importance; and the proposed Historic Landmark meets one or more of the following:

The proposed Historic Landmark is associated with important events or broad patterns of development that have made a significant contribution to the historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, engineering, or architectural development of the City, State, or nation; or

The proposed Historic Landmark is associated with persons significant in the local, State, or national history; or

The proposed Historic Landmark embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is an example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship, or it is a significant example of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect; or

The proposed Historic Landmark has yielded or has the potential to yield, information important to the history or prehistory of the City, State, or nation; and

The proposed Historic Landmark retains those aspects of historic integrity that convey the reason for its significance.

17.33.070 Points of Historical Interest: A building, structure, object, or site may be identified as a Point of Historical Interest, which is not a historic resource, if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

It is the site of a building, structure, or object that no longer exists or has been altered, but was associated with historic events or important persons, or otherwise has significant cultural or historic significance; or

It is the site of a historic event which has no distinguishable physical characteristics.

Existing Conditions

The roughly 12-acre Stow Grove Park encompasses portions of Township 4 North, Range 28 West, and Sections 6 and 7 on the *Goleta, California* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle and is located at 580 North La Patera Lane in Goleta, Santa Barbara County, California (Figure 1). The roughly triangular-shaped park sits north of U.S. Highway 101 and south of Cathedral Oaks Road in the northern portion of Goleta in an area primarily developed with single-family residential subdivisions (Figure 2).

The caretaker’s cottage and its associated detached garage are located on the west side of Stow Grove Park, adjacent to the park entrance, and are enclosed by a chain link fence (Figure 3). Constructed in 1966, the cottage is elevated off the ground on a concrete foundation and is capped by a moderately pitched side-gabled roof sheathed in composition shingles. The roof has wide overhanging eaves clad with shiplap siding, decorative exposed beams, and louvered vents in the gables. Horizontal board siding sheaths the exterior throughout. The primary entrance, located centrally on the north elevation consists of a wood paneled door covered by a wood screen door. The entry is sheltered under the primary roof which extends to create a partial-width front porch supported by thin wood posts, sited on a concrete foundation, and enclosed with wood banisters. Windows throughout are non-original aluminum double sash or vertical sash units with decorative wood framing.

The east and south elevations are characterized by non-original aluminum-framed vertical sliding sash and 1/1 sash windows and vents along the foundation (Figure 4). On the west elevation a porch was likely enclosed with vertical board siding and aluminum-framed sash windows at an unidentified time. The enclosed porch is accessible via a glazed wood paneled door (Figure 5 and Figure 6). The one-story residence integrates minimal characteristics of the Ranch architectural style including low-to-the-ground horizontal plan, horizontal board siding, and partial-width front porch. Identified alterations to the caretaker’s cottage include enclosure of the west elevation porch and replacement of all windows at an unidentified time.

Adjacent to the caretaker’s cottage is a one-car garage with a square plan which sits on a concrete masonry unit foundation. Constructed circa 1975, the garage’s east elevation is connected to the west elevation of the cottage by a chain link fence and a paved path. The building is capped with a front gabled roof which is clad in composition shingles with a slight eave overhang, and exposed rafter ends. The wood structural system is sheathed in horizontal board siding. On the north elevation is a large

The cottage is landscaped with a front and backyard, bushes, and large oak trees. The backyard of the caretaker's cottage is fenced in with a wood frame fence. A concrete path runs along the south elevations of the cottage and garage and connects to a former clothesline. At the rear of the garage is a concrete foundation likely to a former patio.

Figure 1 Regional Location of Stow Grove Park

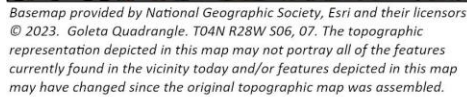


Figure 2 Location of the Caretaker’s Cottage within Stow Grove Park



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25-17716 CR
CRFig 2 Project Site

Figure 3 Caretaker's Cottage and Detached Garage, Facing South



Figure 4 South and East Elevations of Caretaker's Cottage and South Elevation of Detached Garage in Background, Facing Northwest



Figure 5 South and West Elevations of Caretaker's Cottage and Garage, Facing Northeast



Figure 6 West Elevation of Caretaker's Cottage showing the Patio Enclosure, Facing Northeast



Figure 7 South Elevation of Garage, Facing North



Historic Context

The following context is a summary of information presented in the *City of Goleta Citywide Historic Context Statement* prepared by Historic Resources Group (HRG) in March 2021.

Following Mexican independence from Spain, the Goleta area was divided into two large land grants: Rancho Dos Pueblos and Rancho La Goleta, named for the sailing ship or “goleta”, which wrecked several years earlier. After California officially became a U.S. state, the larger ranchos were subdivided into smaller, individual farms, and the Goleta Valley became an agricultural center known as a prominent lemon-growing region during the late 19th and 20th centuries. The earliest agricultural pioneers in the area included the Hollister Ranch, Cooper Ranch, and Stow Ranch, within which Stow Grove Park was historically located. During this period, the park was used as an unofficial gathering place for members of the Stow family and locals alike, who referred to the present redwood grove as Stow’s Grove. The grove was surrounded by lemon orchards owned by the Stow family. Members of the Stow family lived on the property, in what is referred to today as the Stow House (Santa Barbara County Landmark #6; designated Goleta Landmark, NRHP and CRHR-listed), located southwest of the current day park at 304 North Los Carneros Road.

In 1869 the communities of “La Patera” and “La Goleta” were established at the present-day Fairview Avenue and Hollister Avenue intersection and Patterson Avenue and Hollister Avenue intersection respectively. The first post office in La Goleta was established in 1875 and officially named the town “Goleta.” Transportation in the region was established in 1887 when the Southern Pacific Railroad

constructed a station in Goleta and in La Patera; the route through to San Francisco was completed in 1901. With connection to Santa Barbara and San Francisco through the railroad, Goleta and La Patera experienced a small commercial and residential expansion; however, due to the lack of available water, the area remained small and agricultural after World War II.

In 1932, the two towns merged into one town, Goleta, after the post office was moved to La Patera bringing with it the name “Goleta.” Some expansion occurred before World War II. In 1928, an airport was constructed near Hollister and Fairview avenues and hangars were added in 1932. The airport was vastly improved during World War II and was given to the City of Santa Barbara in 1946.

Immediately after World War II, many areas in Southern California experienced exponential growth, primarily resulting from an influx of soldiers returning from the battlefields and starting families. Goleta, in contrast, did not immediately experience those effects. Several factors contributed to the area’s slow development during this period including lack of a sufficient water supply and the construction of the Highway 101 bypass which drew traffic away from the city. Agriculture continued to be the driving economic force in the area until the late 1950s when the completion of Cachuma Dam brought a reliable source of water to Goleta, the aerospace industry established local offices, and the University of California, Santa Barbara was established in the area. Following these developments, new residents flooded into the area and single-family residential communities were constructed in former agricultural fields, including those surrounding Stow Grove Park. To further support increased residential development, additional amenities and institutional facilities such as parks, hospitals, and schools were constructed. Goleta Beach Park was established in 1949, and Stow’s Grove was donated to the County of Santa Barbara in 1963 and officially developed into Stow Grove Park in 1967. Goleta was incorporated as a city in 2002.

Municipal Park Development

Private and municipal parks have a dynamic history dating back to the mid-19th century. The earliest parks in California and the United States, known as pleasure grounds, were defined by lush landscapes where the visitor was immersed in a natural setting and could enjoy nature, picnics, and a water feature, if one was present (City of Los Angeles 2017). Typically, pleasure grounds were developed on city-owned property for which there were no buyers, on unsold land donated by a developer, or in an undesirable parcel surrounded by profitable properties that needed to be publicly or privately developed into a park to increase property values (City of Los Angeles 2017).

By the early 1900s these natural pleasure grounds gave way to formal municipal parks with early examples of the first playgrounds and recreational facilities developed around this time (City of Los Angeles 2017). Parks became a place of activity with educational or cultural programs often integrating elements such as zoos or conservatories, and adult playgrounds such as horseshoe pitches, golf courses, or auto camps. Some of these facilities were added to the former pleasure grounds while others were newly constructed. This type of park design was dominant in the United States through World War II.

Following World War II, trends in municipal park and recreational facility design focused on the development of parks and associated recreation areas for newly developed neighborhoods, in particular suburban neighborhoods which were generally expanding throughout the country. During this period, municipalities focused on the construction of municipal parks and associated recreational facilities to serve expanding suburban populations. Most parks during this era were defined by large recreational facilities such as pools, community centers, and sports fields (City of Los Angeles 2017). This era was also defined by the expansion in private and municipal golf courses. In the late 1960s, towards the end of this period, however, there was a trend in park design towards providing the visitor

with nature experience in addition to space for outdoor activities; these parks tended to lack large recreation facilities (City of Los Angeles 2017).

Developmental History of Stow Grove Park

Prior to World War II, Goleta was a small agricultural community consisting of a downtown core and a few single-family residences surrounded by large agricultural properties developed with farm fields and associated farmhouses. In the 1960s, new single-family residential communities were constructed in the former agricultural fields, including those surrounding Stow Grove Park. The new residents needed amenities and social facilities, therefore parks and institutions such as Stow Grove Park, hospitals and the University of California Santa Barbara were constructed.

The land on which Stow Grove Park sits was historically part of the larger Stow Grove Ranch, developed by the Stow family, a prominent family known for their commercial lemon orchards which flourished in the surrounding area from the late 1800s to the early 1950s (HRG 2021). Much of what comprises current-day Stow Grove Park, historically referred to by locals as Stow’s Grove during the early 1900s, was an undeveloped piece of land between the Stow’s lemon orchards, which the family used for picnics and family outings (the northern section of the park was part of a larger lemon orchard). During this period, the grove had a similar configuration to the current footprint: roughly triangular shaped with mature trees such as redwoods and live oaks, but with two unpaved roads which ran through it. As early as the 1930s, the Stow family allowed the public to utilize this undeveloped portion of their private property for social gatherings and picnics (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 1938).

The area surrounding Stow’s Grove was characterized by agricultural land until the 1960s when single-family residential communities were constructed east and west of the park while north of the park remained agricultural (NETR Online 2023). In 1963, the Stow family granted Stow’s Grove to the County of Santa Barbara to be used as a public park, from then on called Stow Grove Park (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 1963). Between 1966 and 1967, the County made improvements to the park consistent with current trends in municipal park design, including the addition of barbecue pits, volleyball courts, horseshoe courts, open lawns, bike paths, a rustic playground (no longer extant), and a restroom/comfort station (*Gazette-Citizen* 1966). The County also constructed the current caretaker’s cottage in 1966 as part of the park’s expansion (NETR Online 2023). Development of the garage did not occur until circa 1975 (NETR Online 2023).

The comfort station was designed by County staff and constructed by local contractor Samuel Roy Zimmerman, while the other features were designed and constructed by County Staff (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 1966). Not long after the park was opened, families and local groups actively used the park for social gatherings and events. An additional improvement to the park, Fort California, a wood frame playground was constructed by the San Marcos Lion’s Club adjacent to the rustic playground in 1971 (*Goleta Valley Sun* 1971). In 1972, the Epsilon Sigma Alpha sorority donated a new metal slide to the children’s playground (*Goleta Sun* 1972).

When Goleta became a city in 2002, ownership of the park was transferred from the County of Santa Barbara to the City of Goleta (ParcelQuest 2023). Fort California and the original rustic playground were demolished, and a new plastic playground was constructed at an unidentified time. New benches and water fountains were added throughout the park, also at unidentified times.

Developmental History of Caretaker's Cottage

After the dedication of Stow Grove Park in 1963, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors began planning future improvements for public use of the park. In 1964, the Board approved the assignment of a maintenance man position, or caretaker position, at Stow Grove Park including a “house with running utilities” (*Gazette-Citizen* 1964).

In 1966, the County constructed the current caretaker's cottage in the Ranch style, which was pictured in a 1967 aerial of the area (UCSB 1967; Figure 8). A summary of the history of the Ranch style, along with a list of its character-defining features are included below for reference. A newspaper article from 1973 stated Stow Grove received \$32,000 towards “rangers cottages” (*Carpinteria Herald* 1973). The article does not state what the money was utilized for, but it was likely used for construction of the garage and possibly enclosure of the rear porch; this is substantiated by the appearance of the garage in a 1975 aerial (UCSB 1975; Figure 9).

Additional alterations to the cottage and garage include the following: reroofing with composition shingles and replacement of original windows with aluminum-framed sash units. These alterations were undertaken at an unidentified time.

Figure 8 Aerial Image Depicting the Caretaker's Cottage, 1967 Aerial (UCSB 1967)

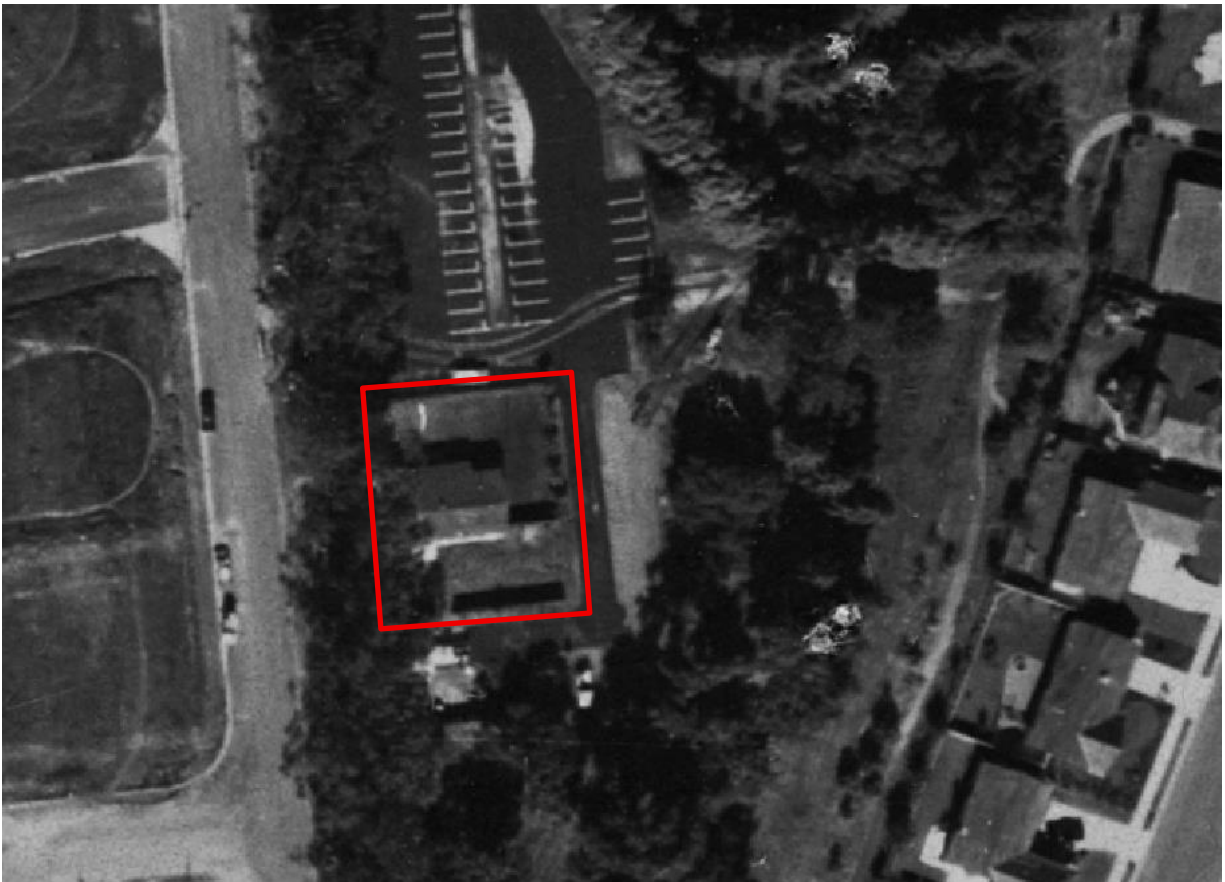


Figure 9 Aerial Image Depicting Construction of the Garage, 1975 (UCSB 1975)



Ranch Style

The Ranch architectural style was popular in the United States and California from circa 1935 to 1970. In California, the style recalled the early ranchos with sprawling one-story plans and a connection to the outdoors with porches and courtyards. After the financial controls of the Federal Housing Authority lifted after World War II, the Ranch style took off in popularity and was the most popular residential style in the United States from the 1950s to the 1960s (McAlester 2015).

Character-defining features of the Ranch style (McAlester 2015):

- Asymmetrical façade with front entry located off-center and sheltered under main roof
- Low-to the ground horizontal plan
- Low-pitched hipped roof without dormers
- Covered porches or patios
- Large windows and sliding glass doors
- Multiple wall cladding materials
- Integrated planters and/or broad, low chimneys
- Colonial variations: roof cupola, shutters, decorative wrought iron

Known Occupancy History

The research conducted for this study identified two park rangers that occupied the caretaker’s cottage between circa 1969 and 1985: Clifton Tinney and Harvey Hasting. Clifton Tinney served as the park’s ranger and occupied the cottage with his wife, Marie, between circa 1969 and 1978 (*Goleta Valley Today* 1972, *Santa Barbara News Press* 1978). Tinney was well loved by the surrounding community for his kindness, nature lessons and for starting a junior park ranger program at Stow Grove Park to encourage proper use of the park and to increase safety (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 1977a). After 15 years of county parks service including Santa Rosa Park before Stow Grove Park, Tinney officially retired in 1977.

Briefly in 1977, the County considered eliminating the position of resident ranger at Stow Grove Park and other parks in the county due to costs. However, the County continued the program and hired Harvey Hastings to replace Tinney in 1978 (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 1978, 1977b). Hastings was formerly a park ranger at Arroyo Beach, Jalama Beach, and Santa Rosa Parks in Santa Barbara County.

After thirty years, the County terminated the county contract for ranger and maintenance services in 2005, and the caretaker’s cottage was occupied by various city employees until 2016 (*Santa Barbara News-Press* 2004). It has been primarily vacant since that time.

Historical Evaluation

Summary of Past Identification Efforts

As previously noted, in 2023, Rincon recorded and evaluated Stow Grove Park as part of the 2023 CR Tech Report. The park and associated elements including the caretaker’s cottage and garage were recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, and as a City of Goleta Landmark under all applicable criteria. However, Rincon recommended the park eligible for listing as a City of Goleta Point of Historical Interest under Criterion A1 within the context of institutional development in the City of Goleta and identified the period of significance for the park as 1919 to 1940 (Losco et al. 2023). During this period, Stow Grove Park, then referred to as Stow’s Grove, was a privately held informal gathering place for the Stow family and the residents of Goleta which was largely undeveloped aside from mature trees and two unpaved roads. The park is an early example of such a park which played a significant role as a social gathering place for the community of Goleta. It is additionally associated with this historically significant individual Edgar Stow. While it does not retain sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as a Goleta Landmark, Point of Historical Interest Criterion A1 indicates that eligible Points of Historical Interest may be altered or no longer extant. The caretaker’s cottage does not contribute to the Park’s Point of Historical Interest eligibility because it was constructed outside the identified period of significance, 1919 to 1940.

To ensure that the potential historical resources eligibility of the caretaker’s cottage as an individual resource was adequately considered during the environmental review process, Rincon prepared the following individual evaluation of the caretaker’s cottage for national, state, and local designation as part of the current effort.

National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources and Local Designation

Constructed in 1966 and circa 1975, the caretaker’s cottage and garage were part of the development of Stow Grove Park from an informal gathering place into an official public county park. These efforts also included the construction of barbecue pits, volleyball courts, a playground, and several other

amenities. According to the *City of Goleta Citywide Historic Context Statement*, the city of Goleta experienced unprecedented growth in the 1960s after completion of Cachuma Dam brought a reliable source of water to Goleta, the aerospace industry established local offices, and the University of California, Santa Barbara was established in the area (HRG 2021). The County further developed Stow Grove Park in response to the demands of the growing population. Though the development of the caretaker’s cottage and garage were part of the Post World War II expansion of the area and of Stow Grove Park, they did not significantly contribute to the broad patterns of our history. The cottage and garage represent simple facilities within a public park that did not serve a significant role within the municipal park system in Santa Barbara County. The cottage was not the first ranger/caretaker cottage within the County park system, and the buildings did not influence any advancements in park design. The caretaker’s cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are therefore recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A and the CRHR under Criterion 1 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria i.

Research through Newspapers.com and Ancestry.com identified two park rangers who occupied the caretaker’s cottage during the historic period between circa 1969 to 1985, Cliff Tinney and Harvey Hastings. Though the park rangers each played an important role in Stow Grove Park and initiated programs for the betterment of the park and community, neither Tinney nor Hastings appear to be significant individually within the context of national, state, or local history. Their contributions did not extend past their regular duties as park rangers and caretakers of the park. They did not oversee the expansion of the park, construction of important facilities, or advancements within the context of recreational development in the city of Goleta or Santa Barbara County. The caretaker’s cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are therefore recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion B and the CRHR under Criterion 2 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria ii.

The caretaker’s cottage and garage reflect some elements of the Ranch style, which was popular at the time of their construction in 1966 and circa 1975 respectively: horizontal plan, asymmetrical front porch entrance, and horizontal board siding. According to *National Register Bulletin 15*, “To be eligible [under Criterion C], a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction” (NPS 1997). The Ranch style was one of the most popular architectural styles in the United States during the Post World War II period and thousands of examples were constructed throughout California. The present buildings do not possess sufficient distinctive characteristics or architectural elaborations of the Ranch style that would set them apart as significant examples of the style, for example multiple wall cladding materials, integrated planters and/or broad, low chimneys, and Colonial variations including roof cupola, shutters, and decorative wrought iron (McAlester 2015). Additionally, the caretaker’s cottage has undergone several alterations including replacement windows and enclosure of the rear patio. Research did not identify the architect or builder of the caretaker’s cottage or garage, and the buildings do not possess high artistic value. Based on the information provided above, the caretaker’s cottage and garage at Stow Grove Park are recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C and the CRHR under Criterion 3 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria iii.

The research conducted for this assessment did not indicate the caretaker’s cottage and garage may yield important information about prehistory or history. They therefore recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D and CRHR under Criterion 4 and as a City of Goleta Landmarks under Criteria iv. Additionally, based on the information provided above, the caretaker’s cottage and garage are also recommended ineligible for listing as City of Goleta Points of Historical Interest under all Criteria A1 and A2.



Impact Analysis and Conclusions

In summary, the City's is considering of a variety of development options for the caretaker's cottage, including demolition, which was not considered in the Stow Grove Park Master Plan IS-MND. In light of these new development options, Rincon prepared an individual historical evaluation to ensure that the potential historical resources eligibility of the caretaker's cottage was adequately considered as part of the environmental review process. In addition to the cottage's ineligibility as an element of Stow Grove Park as a Point of Historical Interest, the current study recommends the caretaker's cottage ineligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR, and as a City of Goleta Landmark and Point of Historical Interest as an individual resource due to lack of architectural and historical significance. Therefore, implementation of the Stow Grove Park Master Plan including all options under consideration for the caretaker's cottage would result in no impact to historical resources pursuant to CEQA.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact me at 805-947-4817, or rperzel@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Losco".

Ashley Losco, MHP
Architectural Historian

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Perzel".

Rachel Perzel, MA
Senior Architectural Historian

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