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LA MESA



DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

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1 LA MESA LEMON COMPANY BUILDING

8247 La Mesa Boulevard, 1895

The oldest commercial building in the city is the La Mesa Lemon Co. building, dating to 1895. Although the building no longer houses lemons, it is still in use as the home of several businesses.

2 LA MESA DEPOT

4695 Nebo Drive | Restoration by Larry Rose, 1894

The San Diego Railroad Museum, under direction of late La Mesa architect Larry Rose, returned the building to its location and undertook this award-winning historic restoration in the 1990s.

3 WALKWAY OF THE STARS

8338 La Mesa Boulevard, 2003

The "Walkway of the Stars" is a pedestrian walkway that has been transformed into an urban park. The walls feature murals painted by eight artists, on the theme of "People Helping People."

4 LA MESA DRUG STORE BUILDING

8301 La Mesa Boulevard | Designed by Marker and Russell, 1921

This iconic historic building served as a drug store from its February 1922 opening until 2020.

5 HISTORIC BANK BUILDING/POR FAVOR

8302 La Mesa Boulevard, 1927

The Bank of Southern California building opened on this prime corner of Lookout Avenue and La Mesa Boulevard in 1927. Since 1974, the building has been the home of Por Favor, a favorite local restaurant.

6 BOBEAU

8384 La Mesa Boulevard

BoBeau is Bohemian-chic meets industrial elegance, with an eclectic mix of exposed concrete walls, wood floors, eclectic tiles, and corrugated metal ceilings. The restaurant also features roll-up walls along the street, allowing a connection with the village activity, as well as an outdoor patio and garden.

7 LEGACY PARK LOOKOUT

8402 La Mesa Boulevard | Designed by Jesus and Mary Dominguez, 2016

Designed by locals Jesus and Mary Lynn Dominguez, the traditional gazebo structure is clad in a not-so-traditional multi-colored mosaic, with imagery and dates significant to La Mesa's history.

8 SHELDON'S CAFE

8401 La Mesa Boulevard, 1920/2012

This site was originally George Sheldon Gas Station, the first service station in La Mesa. An example of adaptive reuse, Sheldon's now has a second life as a popular local coffee shop that still refuels La Mesa's every day.

9 SHASTA HOMES

5502 Shasta Lane, La Mesa | Designed by Foundation for Form, 2021

Shasta Homes is a forward-looking approach at suburban-infill development. Utilitarian materials are incorporated in a modern way to attract a diverse mix of residents. The massing speaks to each's own vertical domain, with a weighted ground floor, private entries and intentional unit delineation.

10 EXTRAORDINARY BANANA PUDDING

8257 El Paso Street

Owner Toran Grays started with his great-grandmother's recipe for banana pudding, opening his restaurant in 2020. This one-of-a-kind shop features a cheery mural by artist Jesse Amaro, painted in a banana yellow, as well as a hand painted menu.

11 GROSSMONT CENTER

5500 Grossmont Center Drive

Designed by Welton Beckett and Associates, 1961

Now celebrating its 60th anniversary, this pioneering commercial center was designed by world renowned architect/planner Welton Beckett. Though much of the center has been remodeled or replaced, the Macy's department store building still shows the mid-century modern style of the original mall.

12 HERRICK COMMUNITY HEALTH LIBRARY

9001 Wakarusa Street, 2000

The Dr. William C. Herrick Community Health Care Library is a free public library specializing in health-related materials. The Library provides books, DVDs, pamphlets, magazines, newsletters, online resources, and its website with extensive links to reliable sources for all major health topics.

13 BRIERCREST PARK

9001 Wakarusa Street | Designed by James Hubbel, 2005

In this 4.2-acre park you can find green elements such as on-site water harvesting, a plant palette that is almost exclusively native, and state-of-the-art environmentally sustainable materials.

14 5220 WILSON (FUTURE PROJECT)

5220 Wilson Street | Designed by Studio E

This upcoming mixed-use project will feature 49 residential units and a small ground floor commercial space envisioned as a neighborhood-serving use such as a coffee shop. The top floor common amenity space will offer views northward and back to Mt. Helix to the east.

15 THE HAVEN AT LA MESA

8585 La Mesa Boulevard | Designed by Benson & Bohl Architects, 2021

This project features the adaptive reuse of a chapel and convent that were originally constructed in 1939. The chapel, altar, and choir loft were converted into a community room, business center, and library/loft. The west wing, most recently nursing home units, was brought up to current code and converted to 10 apartment units. The bells will continue to ring every hour on the hour.

16 MCKINNEY HOUSE/LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

8369 University Avenue, 1908

This iconic vernacular home was once part of a 2-acre lemon farm. Today it is the core of the La Mesa History Center including the society's research archives where visitors can come learn about their homes, buildings, families, and neighborhoods.

17 PORTER HALL/MACARTHUR PARK

4910 Memorial Drive, 1930

This revival style building with Asian elements served as the city library until 1957. It was moved to its current location in La Mesa's Post-War McArthur Park to make way for the current adult center. Porter Hall is now home to the Foothill Art Association's gallery.

18 JEFFERSON LA MESA (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)

4949 Baltimore Drive | Designed by ARK Architects, 2021

Currently under construction Jefferson La Mesa will be a four-story luxury multi-family development. The four-story garden-style community will feature studio, one, two and limited three-bedroom units.

19 RIVIERA SUPPER CLUB

7777 University Avenue

Originally built in the 1940s, this restaurant is a rare surviving example of a unique mid-century aesthetic. From the Googie style sign and rock wall exterior, to the leather banquette seating, it sets the perfect backdrop for a classic retro menu.

20 SECRET STAIRS

Windsor Drive & Canterbury Drive, 1908/1927

Public pedestrian walkways were a common element of exclusive high-end early 20th century suburban subdivisions, especially in hillside tracts. These popular public pathways continue to serve as assets (and exercise challenges) for both local residents and visitors.