

Minimal Traditional Style Homes in Talmadge Park Estates Historic District (TPEHD)

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Our neighborhood has many beautiful homes which - like the Spanish style homes - stand out on their own accord but Minimal Traditional homes are our subtle, understated beauties. Most of the Minimal Traditional homes in TPEHD were built between 1937-1942.

Roy Lichty, along with his brother Guy, were the real estate developers that promoted Talmadge. Between 1926-1928 - prior to any homes being built - they constructed the layout of lots, water & sewer connections, electrical services, sidewalks, curbs and paved streets that were bounded by decorative iron gates and acorn streetlights. In 1934, with the country still recovering from the 1929 stock market crash and Great Depression, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was established. Their objective was to create home financing along with improving the quality of moderate- and low-income housing. In fact, in 1935, San Diego's FIRST approved building loan under the FHA was obtained for a home at 4720 Norma Drive.

In 1936 the FHA published guidelines titled 'Principles of Planning Small Houses'. These guidelines offered detailed floor plans and details for small houses that encouraged efficient use of materials and space to provide the greatest value. Architects and master builders embraced the style and subsequent house plans and pattern books that matched the FHA criteria were widely published. It's these houses that became known as the Minimal Traditional style - a build style that worked well with the lot sizes offered in Talmadge subdivisions. As was typical for the time frame, prospective homeowners would purchase an individual lot and hire a builder for construction of the house. The builder worked by contract directly with the lot owner. Talmadge experienced a 'building boom' from 1935-1942 with over 86% of the houses being built, mostly in the Minimal Traditional style. During the period of these build outs there were over 100 builders, which resulted in the high level of architectural variety you will see in the neighborhood.

Key Architectural Highlights of Minimal Traditional Houses Within TPEHD:

- Typically one story, simple, compact and symmetrical although experimentation is common.
- Low pitched cross-gabled, hipped, side-gabled roofs with shallow eaves and exposed rafter tails.
Note: rafter tail design is said to vary based on signature style of the builder.
- Stucco or wood wall covering, often in combination.
- Brick or stone accent cladding of foundation skirt, half-wall or bay window bulwark.
- Cement entrance walkways with stamped, curved patterns.
- Small entrance porch or stoop.
- Wood front door, typically paneled, often with speak easy window.
- Bay window
- Fixed multi-lite picture window
- Double hung or casement secondary windows, usually wood
- Small accent windows - variety of shapes and sizes
- Ornamentation of gable siding, porch covers, and wood attic vents.

Subtypes:

- **Streamline Moderne** - curved corners; horizontal grooves/lines; glass block.

- **Colonial Revival** - entrance centered and prominent with columns, pilasters, or extended pediment to create a covered porch, dormers, dentils under eaves.
- **Ranch** - Broad, low to the ground one story; moderate to wide eaves; combo siding (stucco, board & batten, lap); attached garage.



Debbie offers monthly Walking Tours of Minimal Traditional House within Talmadge. To sign up for her next informative and entertaining tour, please email her at debsanders54@yahoo.com