

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Barrio El Membrillo Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by W. Granada St. on the north, W. Simpson St. on the south, the right-of-way of the former EP&SW Railroad on the east, and the Interstate 10 frontage road on the west. not for publication

city or town Tucson vicinity

state Arizona code AZ county Pima code 019 zip code 85701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

_____ Signature of certifying official	_____ Date
<u>State Historic Preservation Officer</u> Title	<u>Arizona State Parks</u> State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

_____ Signature of commenting official	_____ Date
_____ Title	_____ State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain:)	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal
<input type="checkbox"/>	private

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
11	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, multiple dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Sonoran Tradition

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: stone, concrete

walls: adobe, stucco

roof: asphalt

other: wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

Barrio El Membrillo Historic District is a small residential neighborhood southwest of Tucson's downtown. The district contains 13 dwellings, of which 11 are contributing resources that are good examples of the survival of the Sonoran Tradition (the regional Hispanic vernacular building tradition) into the early twentieth century. The two noncontributors have been altered inappropriately. The neighborhood retains a considerable degree of historic integrity in terms of setting and a high degree of integrity with regard to location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. As one of Tucson's historic barrios, it is still a closely knit, traditionally Hispanic neighborhood.

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheets, Section 7

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1920-1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N.A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance was chosen to reflect the barrio's development from its inception to the time it was almost entirely built up.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Barrio El Membrillo is a historic district significant under Criteria A and C in the areas of community planning and development and architecture. The district's period of significance is from 1920, when the plat for the Cottonwood Addition was filed, to 1950, when the neighborhood was almost entirely built up and the distinctive vernacular building tradition of the barrios came to an end. As such, in terms of community planning and development, El Membrillo represents the confluence of different concepts of public and private space—the Hispanic urban and rural models and the Anglo-American suburban model. In Tucson, barrios like El Membrillo developed as a response to the increasing social, economic, and political marginalization of Hispanics in what was, after all, their own land; in this respect, the barrio functioned as a support system. In terms of architecture, these late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century barrios are distinguished by the Hispanic vernacular building tradition, based on Hispanic precedents and modified by the selective adoption of materials and construction techniques imported by Anglo-Americans. The characteristic property type is the vernacular single or multiple dwelling built in the Sonoran tradition with bearing walls of adobe brick masonry and flat or pitched roofs.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

See Continuation Sheets, Section 8

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheets, Section 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 4 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>12</u> Zone	<u>502040</u> Easting	<u>3564385</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary is delineated on the accompanying district map.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary encloses all of the surviving remnant of the neighborhood known historically as Barrio El Membrillo, omitting peripheral vacant lots.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Morgan Rieder, Historical Architect
organization N/A date May 14, 2009
street & number 420 S. Samaniego Ave. telephone (520) 670-0053
city or town Tucson state AZ zip code 85701
e-mail mrieder@msn.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Barrio El Membrillo Historic District

City or Vicinity: Tucson

County: Pima

State: Arizona

Photographer: Morgan Rieder

Date Photographed: September 2008

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 4. S. Sentinel Ave. at W. Peak St.; view north-northwest.

2 of 4. 331 S. Sentinel Ave.; view east.

3 of 4. 410 S. Sentinel Ave.; view northwest.

4 of 4. 435 S. Sentinel Ave.; view east-southeast.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Barrio El Membrillo Historic District
Name of Property

Pima County, Arizona
County and State

Section number 7 Page 1

N/A
Name of multiple property listing

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Barrio El Membrillo is located within walking distance of downtown Tucson. The neighborhood is bounded on the north by W. Granada St. and the facilities of the Tucson Convention Center, on the east by the right-of-way of the former El Paso and Southwestern Railroad (EP&SW), on the south by W. Simpson St., and on the west by the Interstate 10 frontage road. Other barrios nearby are Barrio El Hoyo (listed in the National Register in 2008) and Barrio Libre (listed in 1978) to the east across the railroad tracks, and Barrio Kroeger Lane to the southwest, along the river. Until the late nineteenth century, this area was cultivated land on the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River. However, subsequent downcutting of the Santa Cruz made river-irrigated agriculture no longer possible, and the land was bought up for residential development. One of the resulting subdivisions was the Cottonwood Addition, platted in 1920, which contained five blocks with a total of 85 lots. These were distributed along a single north-south street, Sentinel Ave., and three east-west streets: Clark, Mesa, and Peak. Most of the lots are 50 feet wide and 113 to 130 feet deep. Historically, El Membrillo consisted of this subdivision as well as dwellings and orchards on unplatted land by the river (the prevalence of quince trees gave the barrio its name).

Approximately three-quarters of the barrio had been built by 1931, before the effects of the Great Depression; the remaining quarter was built during recovery from the Depression up to World War II and in the immediate postwar years. Little or no home building took place during the Depression years (for lack of funds) nor during wartime (for lack of materials). By 1950, the barrio had been almost entirely built up; very little infill was constructed thereafter. Construction of the Tucson Freeway (later Interstate 10) in the early 1950s reduced the Cottonwood Addition by more than half. At the same time, on the west side of the freeway, the groves of quince and other trees along the river were replaced by commercial development. Later, the portion of the addition north of W. Granada St. was demolished for Tucson Convention Center facilities. Today, El Membrillo is a small remnant of the original neighborhood but it is still a visually coherent entity and is still considered a distinct barrio by its residents. Photograph 1 shows S. Sentinel Ave., which contains 9 of the district's 11 contributing dwellings; the other two are on W. Mesa St.

The buildings constructed in El Membrillo during its period of significance are a continuation of the Hispanic vernacular building tradition known regionally as Sonoran. (Until the United States' invasion of Mexico and the subsequent treaties of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 and La Mesilla in 1854, what is now southern Arizona was northern Sonora.) The one-story dwellings are modest in size and scale, with simple massing. Flat roofs with parapets alternate with gabled roofs; windows are wood double-hung sash. Photograph 2 (331 N. Sentinel Ave.), Photograph 3 (410 N. Sentinel Ave.), and Photograph 4 (435 N. Sentinel Ave.) show typical examples. The dwellings were built by their owners, usually with help from members of the extended family. Adobe brick continued to be the primary material for bearing walls until after World War II. The early twentieth-century architectural movements and revivals—principally Craftsman/Bungalow and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival (or Spanish Eclectic, as used by McAlester

and McAlester [1997])—that characterized contemporaneous Anglo-American subdivisions in Tucson are not in overt evidence here. At most, a muted Craftsman influence can be seen in the low-pitched gables with slatted vents.

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N/A
Name of multiple property listing

The City of Tucson never bothered to install sidewalks in this neighborhood; people walk in the streets (for many years unpaved but now fairly well-maintained asphalt), where there is little vehicular traffic. Unlike Anglo-American suburbs, there are no garages; historically, very few people owned automobiles and most walked to work (Gourley 1992). Vegetation consists of local species—mesquite, desert willow, cactus—as well as a few imports, principally palm and mountain juniper. Building placement is variable, within the constraints of the subdivision's parallelogram-shaped lots, but most of the dwellings have a minimal front setback, with a low chain-link fence enclosing a small front yard that typically has chairs and benches, creating an outdoor living space. The yard is usually swept dirt; flowers are often present, but in pots rather than planted beds. This "housescape" (Arreola 1988) contrasts with the conventional Anglo-American suburb, where the setbacks are uniformly deeper, the front yard is an unfenced, largely symbolic lawn (or, increasingly in Tucson, xeric landscaping), and outdoor living occurs in the back yard. (In the back yards of El Membrillo, several families keep chickens and one family has a horse.)

Although today El Membrillo is surrounded by urban development, the barrio still has some of the rural atmosphere noted by Sheridan (1986:240) in his description of El Membrillo and El Hoyo in the 1920s and 1930s:

because of the proximity of the Río Santa Cruz, the ground was moister and more fertile than in most other parts of town. Vegetation flourished...The impression of still living in the country was particularly strong on winter mornings, when mesquite smoke drifting from the chimneys of wood stoves created a haze that mingled with the mist rising from the floodplain of the river. On those mornings, Anglo Tucson must have seemed very far away indeed.

Assessment of District Integrity

Location

Barrio El Membrillo today consists of a remnant of the Cottonwood Addition to the original Tucson townsite. Much of the neighborhood was destroyed by the construction of Interstate 10 and the development of the Tucson Convention Center, but a significant portion remains and it is still considered a distinct barrio. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of location.

Design

The surviving portion of the barrio still possesses its distinctive architecture, streetscape, and housescapes. The neighborhood has not been "discovered" by outsiders and thus has escaped gentrification. None of its dwellings postdates the barrio's period of significance and only two have lost their historic integrity, because of inappropriate additions. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of design.

Setting

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N/A
Name of multiple property listing

The neighborhood's surroundings have undergone major transformations since 1950, but within the neighborhood no new dwellings have been built and physical environment has seen little change except for several vacant lots, where dwellings were demolished. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of setting.

Materials

In the barrio's dwellings, the original building fabric is still extant: stone and concrete foundations, stuccoed adobe walls, wood double-hung sash, and composition or asphalt roofing. The chain-link fencing came into popular use in the 1940s, during the district's period of significance. Elements added later—security grilles over windows (on two dwellings) and rooftop evaporative coolers (visible on three dwellings)—are not a major problem. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The dwellings were built by the people of the barrio using traditional adobe construction combined with framing and finishing techniques adopted from Anglo-American practice. Because this still evident in the barrio's dwellings, El Membrillo retains integrity of workmanship.

Feeling

El Membrillo still feels like a self-contained entity. Walking down Sentinel Ave., the authenticity of the dwellings, together with their housescaples and streetscaples, give the sense of being in a semi-rural pocket, rather than in the middle of Tucson's contemporary urban fabric. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of feeling.

Association

The neighborhood has retained the essential physical features that convey its historic identity as one of Tucson's historic barrios, significant under Criteria A and C. In the area of community planning and development, the distinctive environment created by its inhabitants is still evident. In the area of architecture, its contributing dwellings are relatively unaltered characteristic examples of the survival of the Sonoran Tradition into the twentieth century. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of association.

Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

The following list provides the status of the resources within Barrio El Membrillo. Of the 13 dwellings in the district, 11 (84.6 percent) are contributing. For each entry, the initial date of construction is also given. Dates are based primarily on data from the Pima County Assessor's property record files, as well as from conversations with long-time residents.

<i>Street Address</i>	<i>Survey Site No.</i>	<i>Date Constructed</i>	<i>National Register Status</i>
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Name of Property

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County and State

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N/A

Name of multiple property listing

W. Mesa St.

608 001 1926 contributing

609 002 1924 contributing

S. Sentinel Ave.

331 003 1925 contributing

337 004 1936 contributing

406 005 1927 noncontributing (inappropriate additions
resulting in loss of historic integrity)

410 006 1925 contributing

418 007 1922 contributing

421 008 1937 contributing

425 009 1928 noncontributing (inappropriate additions
resulting in loss of historic integrity)

435 010 1929 contributing

440 011 1922 contributing

443 012 1936 contributing

473 013 1941 contributing