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# Santa Barbara African American / Black Historic Context Statement

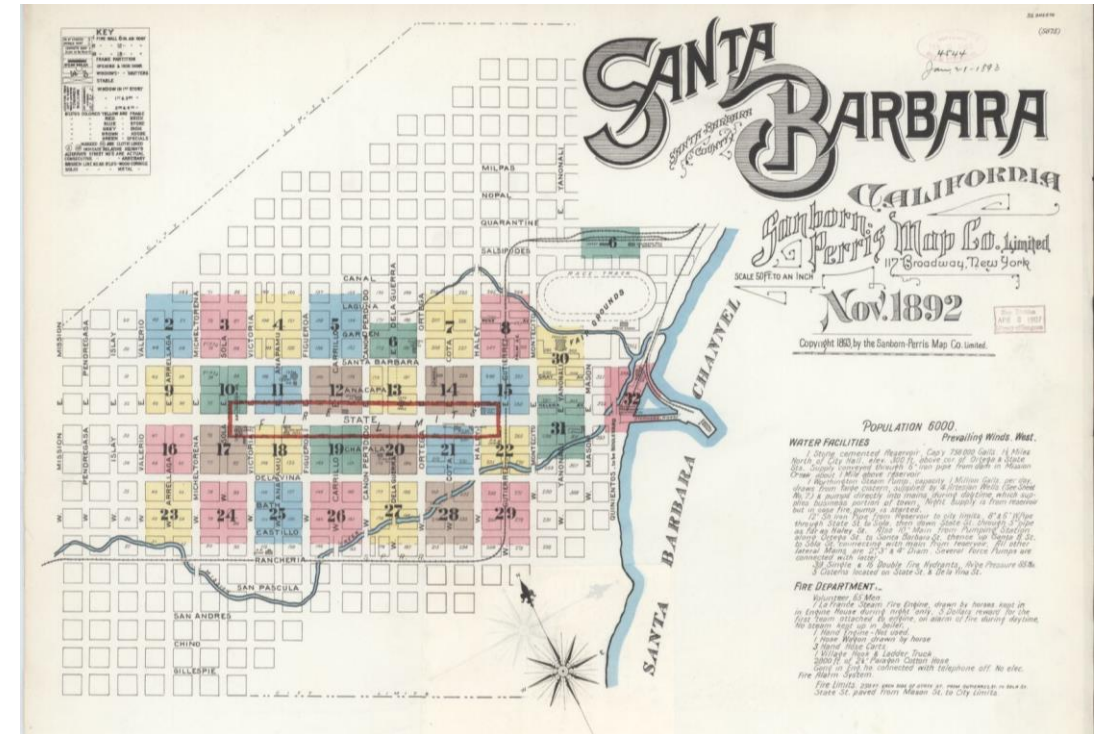
In partnership with  
Healing Justice Santa Barbara  
City of Santa Barbara Community Development, Planning Division  
January 2022

# What is a historic context statement?

"An organizational structure for interpreting history that groups information about historic properties that share a common theme, a common geographical area, and a common time period."

-National Park Service

That is, it is the history of the physical development of a place during a certain time and organized by themes and patterns.



1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for Santa Barbara. Source: Library of Congress

# What is a historic context statement?

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The Santa Barbara African American / Black Historic Context Statement will:

- Summarize or synthesis the community's history, specifically related to its physical development
- Identifies significant themes, patterns, trends, and property types
- Provides framework for identification, evaluation, and treatment of historic resources
- Not intended to be a comprehensive community history or chronology

# Why do we need context statements?

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- To better understand historic resources, even in the absence of comprehensive knowledge about specific buildings
- To establish historic and cultural preservation goals & strategies
- To support and update the City's inventory of historic properties
- To provide the basis for future preservation planning decisions & programs
- To inform other aspects of larger planning processes

# Who uses context statements?

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- Decision-making bodies
- City Planning staff
- Property owners
- Residents
- CEQA Consultants
- Historians

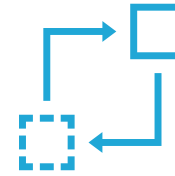
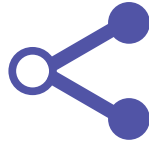


St. Paul A.M.E. Church (1915) at 502 Olive Street (corner of Olive and Haley streets), now a City of Santa Barbara Landmark . Source: Landmark nomination packet, 2020.



# Our Process

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**Synthesize • Field Testing • Listen • Educate • Listen • Quantify • Refine • Deliver**

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Research/Fieldwork

Community Engagement

HCS Development



# Context Statement Methodology

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## Research / Fieldwork Phase

- Review existing documentation
- Perform research at local, regional, and online repositories
- Identify potentially significant themes and sites



**MT. OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH**

Original Second Baptist Church building at 26 Gutierrez, before 1920s renovation. Source: *California Eagle*, November 15, 1915

# Context Statement Methodology

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## Community Involvement

- Gather public input throughout process
- Advisory Group check-ins
- Community Workshops / Outreach
- Historic Landmarks Commission Concept Review Meeting & Public Hearing





# Context Statement Methodology

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## Writing Phase

- Historical overview by time period / milestones
- Identify significant themes, patterns, trends, events, places, and people
- Identify property types and requirements for historic designation in relation to historic themes
- Recommendations and priorities



Members of the Unity Lodge No. 22 F.A.M Santa Barbara, not dated. Source: African American Museum & Library at Oakland via Oakland Public Library.

# Significant Historic Themes

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Historical Overview, 1769 to ca. 1980, with

- Theme: Housing Patterns & Residences
- Theme: Black-Owned Businesses & Business Districts
- Theme: Religion & Spirituality
- Theme: Civic Engagement
- Theme: Entertainment and Cultural Establishments

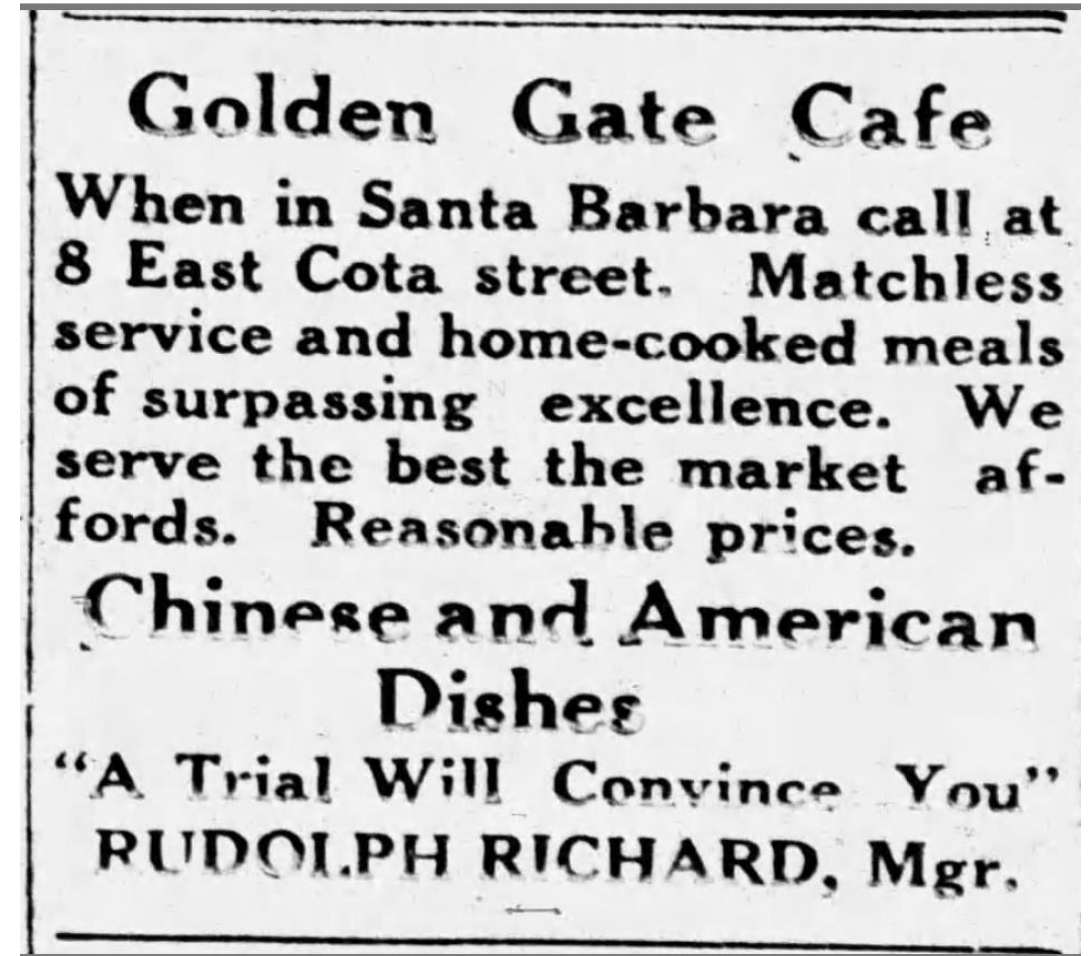


George Washington Carver Club, 1949. Source: Black Gold Cooperative Library System Digital Collection.

# Progress to Date

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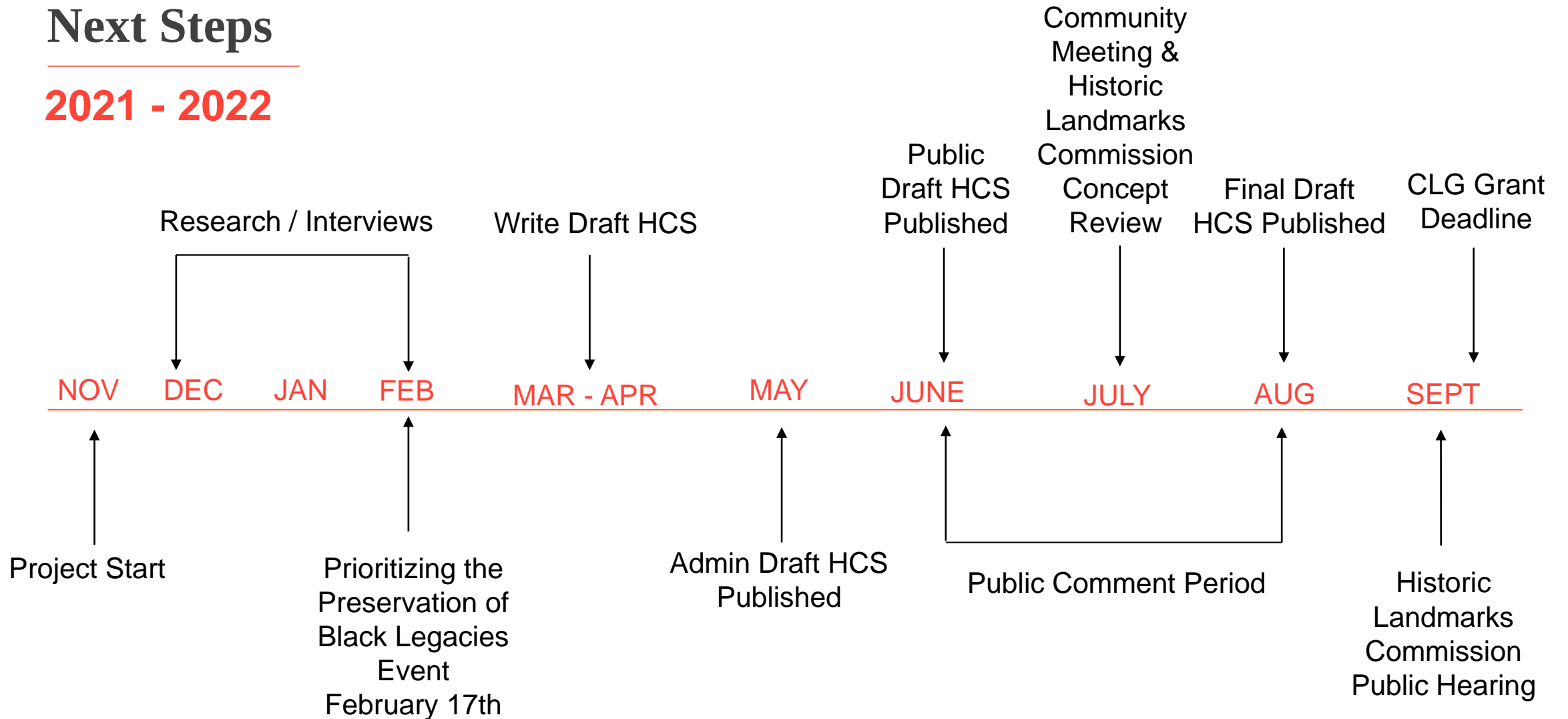
- Kick-off meeting with Planning Department staff and Advisory Group
- Review research collected by HJSB
- Archival research underway
  - Census data
  - Historic newspapers
  - Maps and photographs
- Preliminary list of potential historic sites
- Initial outreach for oral history interviews



Example of advertising in the *California Eagle* newspaper for Santa Barbara businesses catering to Black travelers. Source: *California Eagle*, September 30, 1922.

# Next Steps

2021 - 2022





To find out more, share stories and photographs, or to be involved, please contact:

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