

1994

PARKSIDE BRANCH

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Parkside Branch is located at 1200 Taraval Street on the corner of 22nd Avenue. The area served by the Parkside Branch is bounded on the south by Sloat Boulevard. The western border proceeds north on 43rd Avenue, east on Santiago and north again on Sunset Boulevard. Parkside is bordered on the north by Quintara between Sunset and 15th Avenue and is bordered on the east by 15th Avenue.

The Sunset-Parkside district developed as a community during the last westward expansion of the city and until the late 1800's consisted mainly of rolling dunes, a cattle ranch and a few squatters living in scattered homes. In 1894 there were only 20 houses between Stanyan Street and the ocean.

In 1905 William Crocker's Parkside Realty Company opened a promising tract of homes near 21st Avenue and Taraval. That development, which was in high demand after the 1906 earthquake, gave the area its name. 725 acres were bought by the A.S. Baldwin Residential Development Company for \$1.5 million and became St. Francis Wood, Balboa Terrace and Monterey Heights. The downtown business district was inaccessible to these communities until that problem was solved by the Twin Peaks Tunnel which made rapid transit available beginning in 1918. The communities west of Twin Peaks became popular for their remoteness from what many middle-class citizens regarded as urban chaos.

19th Avenue, a major north-south artery was built in 1924. Sloat Boulevard provided an entrance to Sigmund Stern Grove. As the streets and car lines multiplied, the blocks filled with houses. The district expanded after World War II when developers Henry Doelger, Dale Stewart and the Gellert Brothers started building homes for returning GI's. The structures were attached single-family homes which sold for \$6,000. Miles of bare land were filled with homes, some of them completed at the rate of two per day. Henry Doelger Built so many homes in the area between 27th and 39th Avenues and Kirkham and Quintara Streets that the neighborhood became known as "Doelger City."

The growth of Taraval Street as the major business district in Parkside was determined by two factors - the development of Parkside Homes and the construction of the West Portal streetcar tunnel. The street is named after an Indian guide who came to San Francisco with the Anza expedition. McCoppin Square, which is located at 24th and Taraval dates back to 1868 and is named for politician Frank McCoppin. Boxing matches and cockfights as well

as the occasional duel occurred there. The Taraval Police station is across from McCoppin Square and will be undergoing renovation in 1994.

The oldest business on Taraval Street is the Parkside branch of the Bank of America which opened in 1927. The Tennessee Grill Restaurant, a neighborhood institution for 42 years, is a hub of activity for community meetings and local politicians. Other businesses include video stores, florist shops, restaurants and an impressive number of hair and nail salons, dry cleaners, realtors, insurance agencies and tax services. A Chinese herbalist, Asian restaurants and martial arts studios reflect the growing Asian population. Parkside once had a large Irish population and two Irish pubs on Taraval Street still reflect that past. The former Parkside movie theatre is now a day care center. Community interests are represented by the Parkside District Improvement Club and the Sunset Parkside Education and Action Committee (SPEAK). The Sunset Beacon reports on local affairs.

Parkside is basically a middle-class community. Neighborhood concerns include parking, Muni safety and service, more community policing, graffiti prevention and the potential problem of organized criminal youth gangs. People in the neighborhood are also concerned with the demolition of single-family homes which have been replaced by more profitable multi-unit apartment buildings during the past 20 years.

The total population of this area (according to the 1990 census) is 16,033. With 12% of the residents under the age of 12, 6% between 12 and 18 and 20% over age 65 most of the people served by the Parkside Branch are adults between 18 and 64 years of age (62%). 15% of the adults are in their 20's, 16% are in their 30's, 13% are in their 40's and 11% are in their 50's. 26% of the adults are over 60 years old and according to the 1970 census a quarter of the community was over 60 years old at that time indicating that the number of people in that age group has remained steady. Most residents speak English only (50%) although a large number (26%) speak Chinese, 3% speak Spanish, 2% speak Tagalog, Arabic and Korean, 1% speak German and someone in the Parkside area speaks every language that was counted by the 1990 Census, except Mon-Khmer. 57% of the residents are White, 1% Black and 29% Asian. In the 1990 census 5% of the local residents listed Hispanic origins and 13% of the population citywide listed Hispanic origins. 41% of the Parkside residents were born outside of the United States.

1989 median household incomes of the census tracts comprising the area range from a high of \$60,456 to a low of \$39,336. The average median income for the five tracts is \$49,128. The citywide median is \$33,414. A comparison of median household income figures by tract with the number of children and teens in those tracts shows that the three census tracts having lower median household incomes (\$39,336 - \$43,446) were also the tracts that had the highest number of residents under eighteen years old (485, 626 and 1228) while the two tracts having higher median incomes (\$60,456

and \$60,238) had considerably fewer residents under eighteen years old (209 and 252 respectively). Owner-occupiers outnumber renter-occupiers in the Parkside area by more than two to one.

14% of Parkside's residents 18 years of age or older do not have a high school diploma, which is 4% less than the citywide percentage of 18. 19% (16% citywide) were graduated from high school or have an equivalency degree. 25% (22% citywide) have some college education or associate degree. 17% (18% citywide) have bachelor's degrees and 8% (also 8% citywide) have graduate or professional degrees.

Many preschools and daycare centers serve the area's young children, including Happy Day Pre-School, Happy Times Nursery School, Parkside Nursery, Rainbow Montessori and community Children's Nursery. Preschoolers come to the library with their daycare groups as well as with their parents for storytimes, evening programs and individual book selecting. Children from Ulloa, St. Cecilia's and St. Gabriel's elementary schools as well as Herbert Hoover Middle School and Abraham Lincoln High School fill the Parkside library after school. Of those schools only Abraham Lincoln High School and Ulloa Elementary School are San Francisco Unified School District schools within the Parkside area. Ulloa is located at 2650 42nd Avenue with 414 students and yearly "Library and Textbooks" funding of \$3.17 per child. 31% of the students are considered educationally disadvantaged, with 29% having limited or no English and 7% considered gifted and talented. Lincoln is at 2162 24th Avenue and has 2119 students and yearly "Library and Textbooks" funding of \$7.20 per student. 55% of Lincoln's students are categorized as educationally disadvantaged, 28% have limited or no English and 7% are listed as gifted and talented.

Like most neighborhoods in San Francisco, Parkside has been undergoing many changes in the past two decades. According to the 1990 Census the major age group is between 20 and 60 years of age. the limited hours of the branch library deny access to this working-age group; Saturday hours are definitely needed. The collection needs to continue enlarging the Chinese language materials and to maintain its emphasis on popular reading of a wide variety, hot-topic, high-interest books, and books that will help broaden the opportunities of children whose homes and schools have limited resources.