

Early Years

In 1901, the now thriving city of Huntington Beach was nothing more than a barren waste of sand dunes and farming fields. It was Col. S.H. Findlay who saw the possibilities of the location as a resort, and in 1901 he made a survey for a townsite, subdivided 40 acres of land and called it Pacific City. With fellow promoter W.T. Newland, they purchased some vacant houses at Newport and hauled them a distance of more than twelve miles. Thirty-six mules were used for two entire days to drag the buildings along the roads and over mesas to the new town. These were the first structures in Pacific City, the area now known as downtown Huntington Beach.

C.W. Warren, who later became city recorder and police judge, was the first resident of the new town. As a young man he spent his summers on the beach, living in a tent. He later decided to move into one of the houses carted from Newport, erecting the first sidewalk in town in front of his home.

The following year, 1902, Newland and Findlay along with Philip a. Stanton, formed the West Coast Land and Water Company purchasing what was then known as the Northam Rancho comprising approximately 3,500 acres. The Northam Ranch house was on Yorktown across from the current Civic Center. This was the first building on the mesa, brought to the site by R.J. Northam between 1895-97. It is considered by many to be the birthplace of Huntington Beach.