



## Historic Resources Survey Report **Northridge Community Plan Area**



*Prepared for:*

City of Los Angeles  
Department of City Planning  
Office of Historic Resources



*Prepared by:*



Architectural Resources Group, Inc.  
Pasadena, CA

July 9, 2015

# Table of Contents

<b>Project Overview</b>	<b>1</b>
SurveyLA Methodology Summary	1
Project Team	3
Survey Area	3
Designated Resources	14
Community Plan Area Survey Methodology	16
<b>Summary of Findings</b>	<b>18</b>
Summary of Property Types	18
Summary of Contexts and Themes	20
<b>Selected Bibliography</b>	<b>33</b>

## Appendices

- Appendix A: Individual Resources
- Appendix B: Non-Parcel Resources
- Appendix C: Historic Districts and Planning Districts

# Project Overview

This Historic Resources Survey Report (Survey Report) has been completed on behalf of the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources (OHR) for the SurveyLA historic resources survey of the Northridge Community Plan Area (CPA). This project was undertaken from June 2014 to June 2015 by Architectural Resources Group (ARG).

This Survey Report provides a summary of the work completed, including a description of the Survey Area; an overview of the field methodology; a summary of relevant contexts, themes, and property types; and complete lists of all recorded resources. This Survey Report is intended to be used in conjunction with the **SurveyLA Field Results Master Report** (Master Report), which provides a detailed discussion of SurveyLA methodology and explains the terms used in this report and associated appendices. The Master Report, Survey Report, and Appendices are available online at [www.surveyla.org](http://www.surveyla.org).

## SurveyLA Methodology Summary

Below is a brief summary of SurveyLA methodology. Refer to the Master Report discussed above for more information.

### **Field Survey Methods**

- Properties surveyed for SurveyLA are evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources and for local designation as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM) or Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ), commonly known as historic districts.
- Field surveyors cover the entire area within the boundaries of a CPA. However, only resources that have been identified as significant within the contexts developed for SurveyLA are recorded.
- Consultants making resource evaluations meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* in Architectural History, History, or a related field.
- Surveys focus on identifying significant resources dating from about 1850 to 1980.
- All surveys are completed from the public right-of-way (from vehicles or on foot as needed).
- Digital photographs are taken of all evaluated resources.
- Field surveys do not include:

- Individual resources and historic districts (including HPOZs) that are already designated (listed in the National, California or local registers).
- Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) surveys conducted within the last five years.
- Potential HPOZ areas which have been surveyed within the last five years and are in the process of being designated.

### ***SurveyLA Resource Types***

SurveyLA identifies individual resources, non-parcel resources, historic districts, and district contributors and non-contributors. Each of these is described below. Appendices A, B, and C of this Survey Report are organized by resource type.

- **Individual Resources** are generally resources located within a single assessor parcel, such as a residence or duplex. However, a parcel may include more than one individual resource, if each appears to be significant.
- **Non-Parcel Resources** are not associated with Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) and generally do not have addresses. Examples may include street trees, street lights, landscaped medians, bridges, and signs.
- **Historic Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme. Historic districts may include single or multiple parcels depending on the resource. Examples of resources that may be recorded as historic districts include residential neighborhoods, garden apartments, commercial areas, large estates, school and hospital campuses, and industrial complexes.
- **District Contributors and Non-Contributors** are buildings, structures, objects, sites and other features located within historic districts (such as residences, schools, and parks). Generally, non-contributing resources are those that are extensively altered, are built outside the period of significance, or do not relate to historic contexts and themes defined for the district.
- **Planning Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme, but do not meet eligibility standards for designation. This is generally because the majority of the contributing features have been altered, resulting in a cumulative impact on the overall integrity of the area and making it ineligible as a Historic District. The Planning District determination, therefore, is used as a tool to inform new Community Plans being developed by the Department of City Planning. These areas have consistent planning concepts, such as height, massing, setbacks, and street trees, which may be considered in the local planning process.

## Project Team

The Northridge CPA survey team included the following personnel from ARG: Katie E. Horak, Principal, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner; and Andrew Goodrich, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner. Additional assistance was provided by intern Christina Park. Katie Horak served as project manager.

The project team also included Kevin Roderick, journalist, editor, and author of *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Kevin provided valuable expertise and input regarding the San Fernando Valley and its significant resources throughout all phases of the project.

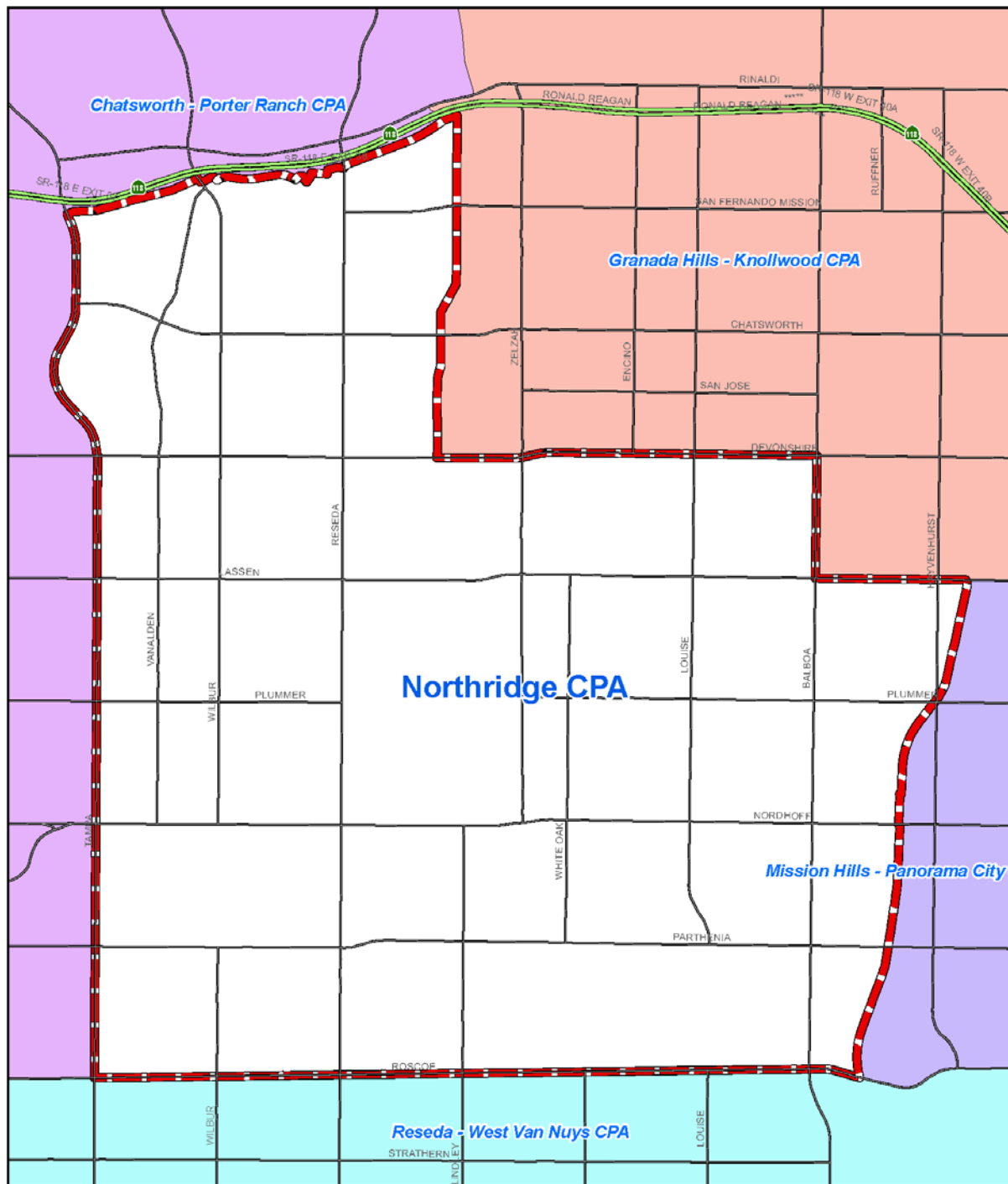
## Survey Area

### *Description of the Survey Area*

The boundaries of the Survey Area correspond with those of the Northridge CPA, which is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Downtown Los Angeles in the northwest section of the San Fernando Valley. The area is moderate in size compared to other CPAs and irregular in shape. Its boundaries are defined by sections of the Ronald Reagan Freeway/State Route 118 (118 Freeway) and Devonshire and Lassen Streets on the north; Roscoe Boulevard on the south; segments of Bull Creek, Balboa Boulevard, and the Aliso Canyon Wash on the east; and Tampa Avenue on the west. The Survey Area abuts the CPAs of Granada Hills-Knollwood on the north, Reseda-West Van Nuys on the south, Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills on the east, and Chatsworth-Porter Ranch on the west.

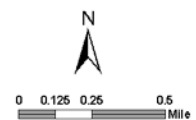
The area directly to the west of the Survey Area, between Tampa and Corbin Avenues (which includes the Northridge Fashion Center), is commonly referred to as Northridge and falls within the jurisdiction of the Northridge West Neighborhood Council. Residents and property owners in this area generally identify as being located within Northridge. However, in terms of CPA boundaries, which were used to define the parameters of this survey, the area located to the west of Tampa Avenue falls within the Chatsworth-Porter Ranch CPA.

### ***Survey Area Map***



# Northridge

## Survey Area



Within the Survey Area are 14,617 parcels, of which 13,665 were evaluated by the SurveyLA team. In accordance with SurveyLA methodology, properties constructed after 1980 and resources designated under local, state, and/or federal programs were not surveyed.

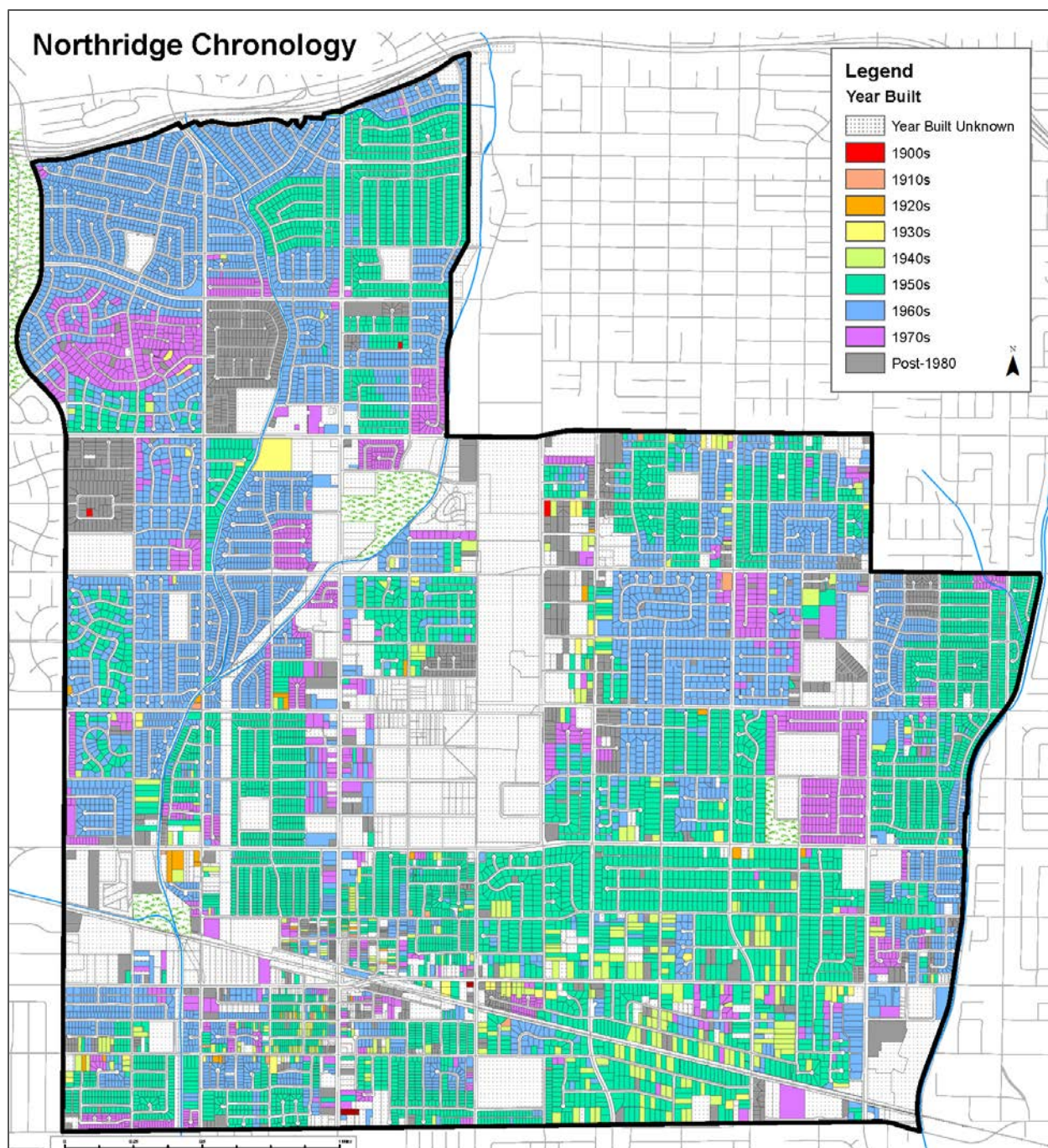
The Northridge CPA is a moderately-sized area that comprises 6,350 acres – or roughly ten square miles – in the northwest San Fernando Valley. While the area is generally flat, it is occasionally punctuated by gentle hills and mild to moderate elevation changes, particularly near the northwest corner of the CPA as it approaches the community of Porter Ranch and the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains. Since the area is almost entirely developed, there are no natural features of note. Three creeks that descend from the Santa Susana Mountains and bisect the CPA – Wilbur Wash, Aliso Canyon Wash, and Bull Creek – were originally free-flowing but were subsequently encased in concrete to prevent and control floods. At the southwest corner of the CPA is the convergence point of Aliso Canyon Wash and Limekiln Canyon Wash, another channelized creek that traverses the communities of Porter Ranch and Chatsworth.

Human-made features largely define the CPA. In addition to the aforementioned channelized creeks, the area is bisected by the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way, a primary route for freight and passenger trains traveling between Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Flanking the northern edge of the CPA is the 118 Freeway and its associated ramps and overpasses, which produce notable visual impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Various land uses and associated property types are located within the CPA. A majority of the area is zoned for residential use and is developed with a combination of single-family and multi-family residential properties. Most parcels adjacent to the railroad right-of-way are occupied by a variety of light industrial uses. Commercial properties are located throughout the area but are generally concentrated in shopping plazas and strip malls along the CPA's major east-west and north-south boulevards. Public and private institutional uses are interspersed throughout the CPA but do not follow a discernible pattern. Located near the center of the CPA is the campus of California State University, Northridge (CSUN), which occupies a large site that measures approximately 150 acres and is a focal point of the community. Within the CPA are three public parks: the 24-acre Northridge Recreation Center and two small neighborhood parks, Dearborn Park (nine acres) and Vanalden Park (ten acres).

Streets within the CPA are generally oriented around the orthogonal grid on which most of the San Fernando Valley was developed. With very few exceptions, boulevards and arterial streets adhere to the orthogonal grid and divide the area into a series of large, uniformly-sized blocks. Residential streets are more varied in character; while many are also oriented around the grid, others follow meandering courses and often terminate in cul-de-sacs. In the northwest corner of the CPA, most streets break from the grid entirely and instead follow a curvilinear pattern that conforms to the area's varied topography and the contours of the land.





*Chronology map of the Northridge CPA (ARG, 2015)*

The major east-west arteries within the Survey Area are (from north to south): San Fernando Mission Boulevard, Chatsworth Street, Devonshire Street, Lassen Street, Plummer Street, Nordhoff Street, Parthenia Street, and Roscoe Boulevard. The major north-south arteries within the Survey Area are (from east to west): Balboa Boulevard, Louise Avenue, White Oak Avenue, Zelzah Avenue, Lindley Avenue, Reseda Boulevard, Wilbur Avenue, and Tampa Avenue.



## ***Development History***

Like almost all of the San Fernando Valley, what would eventually become Northridge was undeveloped and consisted of vast expanses of barren flatlands prior to the arrival of Spanish explorers and missionaries in the eighteenth century. The area was inhabited by the Tongva people in the pre-contact period. Of note was a small watering hole located near the present-day intersection of Parthenia Street and Reseda Boulevard, where water that flowed through underground streams percolated to the surface. The watering hole functioned as an important gathering place among members of the area's indigenous population.<sup>1</sup>

The area remained undeveloped when California was under Spanish and Mexican rule. As was true of the entire San Fernando Valley, it was claimed by the Spanish crown in the eighteenth century, when Spain colonized Alta California and established the Mission San Fernando Rey de España. The Survey Area was relatively close to the mission grounds, but it was far enough away as to not be of use to the mission's operations. When California was ceded to Mexico, the area was incorporated into the Rancho Ex Mission San Fernando, a vast land grant that included almost all of the land in the San Fernando Valley and was sold to Eulogio de Celis in 1846.<sup>2</sup>

De Celis's heirs sold the northern half of the Rancho Ex Mission San Fernando to a triad of San Francisco-based investors that included State Senator Charles Maclay, shoe manufacturer George K. Porter, and Porter's cousin Benjamin, in 1874.<sup>3</sup> The men divided their purchase into three parts of roughly equal size: Maclay took the eastern third with his eye set on developing towns; George Porter took the middle third to plant crops and raise livestock; and Benjamin Porter, who was the least interested in developing the land, assumed control of the least-desirable western third.<sup>4</sup> Present-day Northridge was divided between the two Porters' claims, with most of the area falling within the portion owned by Benjamin Porter. The dividing line between George and Benjamin Porter's land was located along what is now Zelzah Avenue.<sup>5</sup>

In 1887, developers and investors Henry C. Hubbard and Francis Marion "Bud" Wright acquired 1,100 acres of land near the aforementioned watering hole from Benjamin Porter. Hubbard and Wright thereafter established what was known as Hawk Ranch, a dry farm where "thousands of tons of wheat and barley were harvested with machines that took eighteen mules to draw."<sup>6</sup> The cultivation of wheat and barley did not radically transform the physical landscape of the Survey Area; however, it did mark the first attempt at improving the land and sowed the seeds for more intensive agricultural development in this part of the Valley.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dana Bartholomew, "A Valley Oasis Comes of Age," *Los Angeles Daily News*, February 4, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Kevin Roderick, *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2002), 26.

<sup>3</sup> Catherine Mulholland, *William Mulholland and the Rise of Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 98.

<sup>4</sup> Roderick (2002), 42.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> "Name Zelzah to Go in Discard," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1929.

The construction of a Southern Pacific Railroad line through the Valley in the early twentieth century put the Survey Area on the map for the first time. The corridor was built as a part of Southern Pacific's Coast Line, which connected Los Angeles and San Francisco via a route that bisected the San Fernando Valley and crossed over the Santa Susana Pass.<sup>7</sup> The rail line passed directly through Hawk Ranch, and near Parthenia Street and Reseda Boulevard a rail depot was constructed "for the loading of grain and other products" that were cultivated in the area.<sup>8</sup> For years, this depot was the only Coast Line stop in the Valley between Burbank and Chatsworth.

Recognizing the economic potential that accompanied the arrival of the railroad, Hubbard and Wright sold Hawk Ranch in 1909 to the Valley Homes Company, a group of investors who had arrived from the Midwest and were primarily of Norwegian descent.<sup>9</sup> In 1910, the company filed a subdivision map for a new, 40-acre town that was to be located alongside the railroad tracks and anchored by the Southern Pacific depot.<sup>10</sup> At the request of Emily Vose Wright, the devoutly religious wife of Hawk Ranch co-owner Bud Wright, both the town and its depot were named Zelzah, a biblical term that referenced an "oasis" or "watering hole in the desert."<sup>11</sup>

Zelzah was founded as an agricultural community that boasted an optimal climate, fertile soil, convenient access to and from Los Angeles via railroad, and a natural groundwater supply. Lots within the town measured either five or ten acres, offering prospective settlers the chance "to buy a home, an orchard, an investment – one, or all combined, in a location that is ideal."<sup>12</sup> However, development activity in the town's formative years was very meager and was limited to a smattering of small houses and farmsteads near the railroad tracks. Residents of the town, almost all of whom were of Norwegian descent, also established a grammar school, store, and post office. An early resident of Zelzah aptly described the town as a small outpost where "most everyone kept a cow or two, a flock of chickens and a few hogs."<sup>13</sup>

Development was bolstered by the completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913 and the subsequent annexation of many San Fernando Valley communities, including Zelzah, by Los Angeles in 1915. Annexation provided Zelzah with access to the aqueduct's abundant water supply, securing a strong base for future growth. A *Los Angeles Times* article dated 1915 optimistically (and accurately) predicted that "when the Owens River water becomes available it will be possible for our farmers to produce enormous quantities of fruits and vegetables."<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> "Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park Cultural Resources Inventory Historic Overview," prepared by Alexander D. Bevil for the California State Parks Southern Service Center, March-April 2007.

<sup>8</sup> "Name Zelzah to Go in Discard," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 1929.

<sup>9</sup> Roderick (2002), 47.

<sup>10</sup> Tract map for Zelzah, MB 16, 94-95, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, accessed February 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Water and Power Associates, "Early Views of the San Fernando Valley," accessed January 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Newspaper advertisement for Zelzah Acres, *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1912.

<sup>13</sup> Roderick (2002), 60.

<sup>14</sup> "Planning a Cannery: Zelzah Land Owners Hope to Establish Market for their Crops and Produce," *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1915.

Once the aqueduct was complete and annexation was finalized, Zelzah experienced a sizable increase in development activity as new farms and ranches were established and the fledgling settlement matured into a bustling town, centered near what is now the intersection of Parthenia Street and Reseda Boulevard. New development consisted of modest single-family houses, several new businesses along the Reseda Boulevard commercial corridor, and institutions including a local chamber of commerce and the Norwegian Lutheran Church (HCM #152, 1917). Roads were widened and improved, ornamental light standards were installed along the Reseda Boulevard corridor, and a weekly newspaper was founded to highlight local issues.<sup>15</sup> By 1925, the population of Zelzah had grown from a small handful of families to 800 residents.<sup>16</sup>

Zelzah experienced considerable growth in the 1910s and 1920s, but the town never emerged as a major population center for the Valley like nearby Van Nuys or San Fernando. Rather, it retained a relatively rural character and was known as a hub of agricultural production. As Zelzah was the site of the only rail depot on the Coast Line between Burbank and Chatsworth, it also functioned as a shipping center and was home to several agricultural packing houses. The vast acreage surrounding the town was used to cultivate a variety of crops including sizable yields of walnuts, oranges, lemons, lima beans, lettuce, peaches, figs, and apricots.<sup>17</sup> A notable local industry was the H.J. Heinz Company, which opened a processing plant in Zelzah for its pickle division in 1924; this was the only Heinz facility located west of St. Louis, Missouri when it opened. Heinz planted the area with hundreds of acres of cucumbers that were used to produce the company's signature dill pickles and pickle relish.<sup>18</sup>

At the behest of local residents and civic leaders, the name of the town was changed from Zelzah to North Los Angeles in 1929. The new name was intended to draw a clearer connection between the town and the rapidly-growing City of Los Angeles, with the intention of capitalizing on the City's prosperity and attracting new investment.<sup>19</sup> However, since the town was located 25 miles from central Los Angeles, the new name proved to be misleading and often "led to confusion in mail deliveries."<sup>20</sup> For this reason, the name was changed again in 1938, this time to Northridge Village; later that year, local residents voted to shorten the name to Northridge.<sup>21</sup>

Northridge emerged as a favorite getaway for celebrities in the 1930s and 1940s when several entertainment stars, seeking respite from the bustle of the Hollywood entertainment industry, acquired land and established ranches on and around Devonshire Street. The area's bucolic setting and rural atmosphere offered celebrities a sense of privacy while remaining within a

---

<sup>15</sup> "Zelzah Assured of Getting New Light System," *Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 1925; "Weekly Newspaper to Start at Zelzah," *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1924.

<sup>16</sup> "San Fernando Valley In Midst of Rapid Growth," *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 1925.

<sup>17</sup> "Northward Over the Foothills," *Los Angeles Times*, January 2, 1930.

<sup>18</sup> "Pickle Plant Planned," *Los Angeles Times*, January 3, 1924.

<sup>19</sup> "Northridge," *Daily News*, May 25, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> "Northridge Portrait: Quake Leaves Its Mark on Epicenter Community," *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 1995.

<sup>21</sup> "Valley Town Votes on Name," *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1938.

reasonable commuting distance of major production studios.<sup>22</sup> Among the first celebrities to settle in the area was movie director Josef von Sternberg, who in 1935 hired architect Richard Neutra to design a glass-and-steel house, “surrounded by a 16-foot moat and drawbridge,” on Tampa Avenue.<sup>23</sup> Widely considered to be one of Neutra’s most inventive and admired commissions, the house was later occupied by novelist Ayn Rand, where she authored much of her best-selling novel *Atlas Shrugged*.<sup>24</sup>

Other celebrities also retreated to the Northridge area around this time, augmenting the area’s population of small-time growers and ranchers with a decidedly more affluent and esteemed class of “gentleman farmers.” In 1937, actress Barbara Stanwyck and her agent, fellow actor Zeppo Marx, purchased 130 acres on Devonshire Street and founded a thoroughbred horse breeding ground and training venture known as Marwyck Ranch.<sup>25</sup> Stanwyck commissioned Paul R. Williams, acclaimed “architect to the stars,” to design her residence (HCM #484), a Tudor Revival style edifice that offered panoramic views of the Valley. Stanwyck later sold her house, as well as ten adjacent acres of land, to actors Jack and Victoria Horne Oakie. Located nearby were ranches owned by motion picture stars Robert Taylor, Richard Arlen, Paul Kelly, and Carole Lombard, gossip columnist Louella Parsons, and composer Ted Fio-Rito.<sup>26</sup>

Agriculture continued to be the linchpin of Northridge’s economy well into the World War II era. However, with the arrival of celebrities and the proliferation of horse ranches, the community’s cultural identity became strongly associated with equestrianism in the 1940s. Devonshire Downs, which was located at Devonshire Street and Zelzah Avenue, opened in the mid-1940s as a racetrack and became the site of the San Fernando Valley Fair, “an annual tradition that gave local breeders and farmers a place to show off their prize stock.”<sup>27</sup> Starting in 1948, the local chamber of commerce hosted an annual equestrian parade and horse show known as the Northridge Stampede, where cowboy star and resident celebrity Montie Montana – who also served as the town’s honorary mayor – would regularly appear.<sup>28</sup> Promotional materials put out by the chamber proudly billed Northridge as “the horse capital of the west.”<sup>29</sup>

Like almost all of the San Fernando Valley, Northridge experienced an unprecedented wave of growth and development in the postwar era, transforming the area from a rural community of farms and ranches into a sprawling and populous suburb. The area’s wide expanses of farm and

---

<sup>22</sup> “Northridge,” *Daily News*, May 25, 2011.

<sup>23</sup> Roderick (2002), 93.

<sup>24</sup> “On the Trail of a Lost Architectural Legacy,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Marcie Heacox, “The Oakridge Estate: Preserving History,” in *California Thoroughbred*, May 2013, 1.

<sup>26</sup> “Map and Index of Northridge Ranch Owners,” n.d., Oviatt Library Digital Collections, accessed February 2015.

<sup>27</sup> Roderick (2002), 124.

<sup>28</sup> “Letter from the Northridge Chamber of Commerce Advertising the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Northridge Stampede,” June 1951, Oviatt Library Digital Collections, accessed February 2015; “Hometown Memories: Once a Nice Quiet Place, Northridge Is Thrust Out of Its Obscurity,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 24, 1994.

<sup>29</sup> “Brochure from the Northridge Chamber of Commerce Promoting Horse Use,” n.d., Oviatt Library Digital Collections, accessed February 2015.

ranch lands were well-suited to neighborhoods of mass-produced single-family houses, which were developed in earnest to accommodate an influx of households in search of a middle-class, suburban lifestyle. Piece by piece, the Survey Area's farms and ranches were sold to developers and subdivided into residential tracts beginning in the late 1940s. These new neighborhoods catered to a variety of income levels, ranging from developments of economical tract houses to communities of custom-designed residences sited on large, half-acre lots. Many were designed in various iterations of the Ranch style, which was immensely popular at the time and also paid homage to the community's rural roots and historically rustic culture.

Rapid residential development was accompanied by the rise of various commercial and institutional uses, which arose to serve the day-to-day needs of the area's steadily increasing population. Businesses coalesced into a thriving commercial center along the Reseda Boulevard corridor, which emerged as the community's primary shopping district. Low-scale strip malls that catered to the automobile were also developed along many of the community's major boulevards. New public school campuses were constructed in and around the new residential tracts that were being developed to keep pace with the area's influx of young families, as were a number of parks and churches. A 50-bed hospital opened in 1955, responding to a dearth of medical facilities nearby.<sup>30</sup> Millions of dollars were spent to widen and pave roads and to build infrastructure projects, notably the construction of underpasses at Parthenia Street and Reseda Boulevard to carry vehicular traffic under the railroad tracks.<sup>31</sup>

Several of the buildings and residential subdivisions that were developed in Northridge in the postwar era were designed by some of Los Angeles' most acclaimed Modern architects. Leading names such as A. Quincy Jones, Frederick Emmons, Welton Becket and Associates, Maxwell Starkman, and Austin, Field and Fry were responsible for designing several of the churches, schools, and government facilities that arose to accommodate the area's rapid population growth. The firms of Palmer and Krisel and Smith and Williams, both well-known for bringing Modernism to the masses through their innovative residential designs, incorporated architectural elements typically seen in high-style Modernism into middle-income tract houses. Today, these architects' contributions are evident in the Survey Area's built environment, conveying an era of optimism and growth as it rapidly developed in the postwar era.

Most of the postwar development in Northridge consisted of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. However, the community's strategic location alongside a major rail corridor also ushered in a limited amount of industrial development at this time. Nearly all industrial development was tightly confined to areas adjacent to the railroad tracks and consisted of light industrial uses including machine shops, lumber yards, warehouses, and auto repair shops. In 1960, Radio Corporation of America (RCA) opened a manufacturing plant for the company's

---

<sup>30</sup> "Northridge to Dedicate New Hospital," *Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1955.

<sup>31</sup> "Northridge Area to Get Street Improvements," *Los Angeles Times*, January 17, 1965.



missile and surface radar division near the intersection of Roscoe and Balboa Boulevards, in the southeast corner of the Survey Area.<sup>32</sup>

A notable event in the community's history took place in late 1956, when a new, four-year public university campus opened to undergraduate students.<sup>33</sup> The campus, which occupied a 165-acre site on Nordhoff Street that had previously been occupied by squash fields and orange groves, was founded to accommodate the Valley's influx of new residents, many of whom were eligible for higher education benefits under the federal G.I. Bill. Initially operating as a satellite campus for Los Angeles State College (now Cal State L.A.), the institution became autonomous in 1958 and was named San Fernando Valley State College (Valley State).<sup>34</sup> The fledgling campus began to take shape shortly thereafter, with the first permanent building dedicated in 1959, and continued to grow and evolve in the following decades. Its name was changed from Valley State to California State University, Northridge (CSUN) in 1971.<sup>35</sup>

The prosperity that characterized Northridge in the postwar era was not equally enjoyed by all. Like many communities in the West San Fernando Valley, which had developed a reputation as being "the most segregated and the most conservative part of Los Angeles," Northridge was inhabited almost exclusively by middle-class whites well into the postwar era, aside from a small population of Mexican Americans who worked on nearby ranches and farms.<sup>36</sup> While the Supreme Court had outlawed restrictive covenants in 1948, racism in the real estate market persisted through various off-the-record tactics including unofficial "gentleman's agreements," discriminatory lending practices, and brokers' tendency to "steer" minorities to the historically diverse communities of Pacoima and San Fernando.<sup>37</sup> These tactics made it nearly impossible for non-whites to purchase houses in the subdivisions that were being developed in and around Northridge. Discrimination was so rampant that "newspapers wrote it up when the [Wade] Rice family became the first African Americans to integrate a Northridge neighborhood in 1961."<sup>38</sup>

Race relations continued to strike a sour note even after neighborhoods and schools in the area began to integrate. The issue reached a boiling point in 1968, when several members of Valley State's Black Student Union, deeply frustrated by the campus' lack of diversity and what was perceived as a persistent culture of discrimination, occupied the main administration building and locked some 30 administrators in a conference room.<sup>39</sup> The captive administrators were released only after the university president agreed to a list of demands that was presented by the demonstrators. Ultimately, most of these demands were not met, but the incident did

---

<sup>32</sup> "10 Million Van Nuys RCA Plant Dedicated," *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1960.

<sup>33</sup> Roderick (2002), 125.

<sup>34</sup> California State University, Northridge, "CSUN History," accessed February 2015.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Roderick (2002), 147.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 146.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 147; *San Fernando Valley: Then and Now* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2003), 56.

<sup>39</sup> Roderick (2002), 147-148; "Campus Unrest and Related Campus Activities Collection, 1962-1988," Oviatt Library, accessed February 2015.

culminate in the creation of black studies and Chicano studies programs at the university, both of which were among the first of their type in the State University system.<sup>40</sup>

However, over time Northridge became considerably more diverse as fair housing laws were adopted and integration was increasingly accepted. Today, Northridge features a population that is roughly 50 percent white, accompanied by sizable proportions of Asian American and Latino residents. Based on recent data, the community is described as being “highly diverse for the City of Los Angeles and highly diverse for [Los Angeles] county.”<sup>41</sup>

Northridge continued to develop at a steady pace through the 1960s and into the 1970s, as the area’s remaining walnut and citrus groves were acquired by developers and subdivided into housing tracts. Suburban development was aided by the construction of two new freeways, Interstate 405 and State Route 118, which made the community easily accessible by car. The completion of State Route 118 in particular impacted the character of Northridge by opening up hard-to-reach areas in the northwest corner of the Survey Area to new development. The center of Northridge also shifted to the northwest as evidenced by the construction of the Northridge Fashion Center in 1971, which supplanted Reseda Boulevard as the area’s primary shopping destination.<sup>42</sup> The area’s remaining tracts of agricultural land were subdivided and developed in a piecemeal fashion until the 1980s, at which time the community was built out.

Vestiges of Northridge’s equestrian culture and rural identity disappeared as the community suburbanized in the postwar decades. The railroad depot that put the community on the map was demolished in the early 1960s, and a contemporary commercial building was built atop the watering hole that demarcated the community’s origins.<sup>43</sup> Horse racing ceased at Devonshire Downs in 1971, and a sizable portion of the once-popular equestrian venue was subsequently developed with an industrial park.<sup>44</sup> The area’s abundance of farms and ranches were transformed into ubiquitous residential tracts, as was Neutra’s von Sternberg House, which was unceremoniously demolished in the early 1970s to make way for a new housing development.<sup>45</sup>

The Survey Area sustained widespread damage as a result of the Northridge Earthquake, a 6.7 magnitude temblor that occurred in January 1994 and, at the time, was the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history.<sup>46</sup> Within the Northridge community, roads buckled, gas lines and water mains ruptured, and scores of buildings either collapsed or were damaged beyond repair. The CSUN campus and the Northridge Fashion Center both sustained severe damage and required

---

<sup>40</sup> “Explore CSUN’s Hidden History of Campus Activism,” *The Sundial*, December 9, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> “Mapping L.A.,” *Los Angeles Times*, accessed February 2015.

<sup>42</sup> “Northridge Fashion Center is Getting a Makeover,” *Daily News*, February 10, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Museum of the San Fernando Valley, “Photos of Historic Northridge Continue to Arrive,” accessed February 2015; Roderick (2002), 199-200.

<sup>44</sup> “The Downs: Though Harness Racing’s Bustling Sights and Shrill Sounds Have All Faded, Sparkling Memories of the Sport Linger On,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 27, 1985; Roderick (2002), 199-200.

<sup>45</sup> “On the Trail of a Lost Architectural Legacy,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 13, 1999.

<sup>46</sup> Roderick (2002), 13.

extensive construction. At Northridge Meadows, a dingbat apartment complex near the university campus, the building's upper stories collapsed onto its "soft" ground story and open garages, which killed a total of sixteen people and made the complex "the site of the largest number of the earthquake fatalities in the City's history."<sup>47</sup> A number of quake-damaged buildings in the Survey Area were either demolished or substantially rebuilt in the aftermath of the disaster.

While the Survey Area is largely built out, its built environment continues to evolve. At the time of the survey, the segment of Reseda Boulevard between Plummer and Parthenia Streets (on the north and south, respectively) was identified as one of fifteen "priority streets" slated for improvements as part of Mayor Eric Garcetti's Great Streets Initiative. In April 2015, the street was resurfaced and was outfitted with buffered bicycle lanes, new patterned sidewalks, and sidewalk furniture and public art pieces designed by the not-for-profit organization L.A. Más.<sup>48</sup> In addition to enhancing bicycle and pedestrian safety, these improvements also aim "to provide a sense of place and community to an aging business corridor in accordance with the community's recent Northridge Vision Plan."<sup>49</sup>

## Designated Resources

The following map depicts the location of designated resources within the Northridge CPA at the time of the survey. These include properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR) and/or the California Register of Historical Resources (CR), as well as locally designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM). Currently, there are no locally-designated Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ) located within the CPA. For the most up-to-date information on designated resources refer to [ZIMAS.lacity.org](http://ZIMAS.lacity.org) and [HistoricPlacesLA.org](http://HistoricPlacesLA.org), or contact the Los Angeles Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources.

---

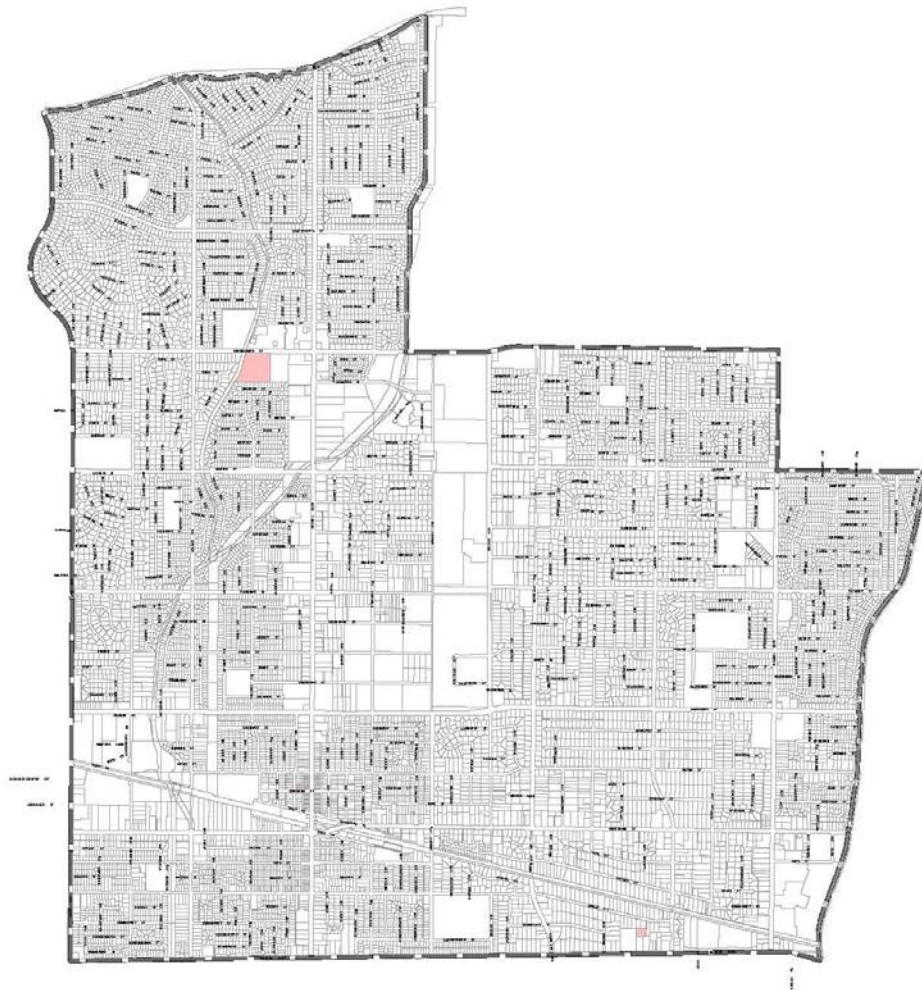
<sup>47</sup> "The Earthquake: Trapped; Airborne in Bed: A Building Collapses, Leaving 15 Dead," *New York Times*, January 18, 1994.

<sup>48</sup> Dana Bartholomew, "Northridge 'Great Streets' Program Bringing City's First Protected Bicycle Lanes," *Los Angeles Daily News*, March 27, 2015.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid; Los Angeles Department of Transportation, "L.A. Great Streets Blog," accessed June 2015.

# Northridge Community Plan Area

Designated Resources



## Legend

- City Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM)
- Listed in the National Register; Listed in the California Register (Status Code 1)
- Formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register; Listed in the California Register (Status Code 2)
- City Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)



## Community Plan Area Survey Methodology

The survey of the Northridge CPA was conducted using the methodology established by the OHR for SurveyLA which includes the Citywide Historic Context Statement and customized mobile Field Guide Survey System (FiGSS).<sup>50</sup> Concurrent with the survey of the Northridge CPA, seven additional CPAs were also being surveyed, all of which are located in the San Fernando Valley.

The fieldwork was conducted in two phases: *reconnaissance* and *documentation*. The reconnaissance phase was conducted by the project managers and key staff of all eight CPA surveys, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications Standards*. This phase involved a detailed and methodical review of each neighborhood, street, and individual property within the Survey Area. It was during this phase that decisions were made about which properties and districts should be documented, and how those properties should be evaluated. During this initial reconnaissance phase, surveyors reviewed pre-loaded data submitted by community members to MyHistoricLA, identified concentrations of resources that might later be recorded as eligible historic districts and planning districts, and developed lists of pre-field research tasks that would help inform the field survey. By making these decisions up front and as a team, this methodology ensures a more thoughtful approach to resource identification and evaluation, creates greater consensus among the field survey teams, and produces more consistent survey results across CPAs. This approach also substantially streamlines the next phase of field survey, enabling the field teams to document large numbers of properties quickly and efficiently.

During the reconnaissance phase, ARG created Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps of each neighborhood; these maps were printed for use in the field. A blank map showing only street names, address numbers, and parcel lines was used by surveyors in the field for notes and comments about resources identified during the reconnaissance phase. Another map featured parcels shaded by decade of building construction, which helped to illustrate chronological development patterns and concentrations of resources.

Once the reconnaissance phase was completed, the documentation phase began. During this phase, fieldwork was conducted by teams of two. Properties that were identified during the previous phase, along with those that had significant associative qualities identified in pre-loaded data in the FiGSS, were recorded and evaluated for potential historic, cultural, or architectural significance. Documentation included a digital photograph, recordation of historic features and subsequent alterations, and the reason for a property's potential historic significance. It was also during this phase that contexts and themes were applied and evaluation status codes were assigned.

---

<sup>50</sup> For more information about the SurveyLA methodology, refer to the ***SurveyLA Field Results Master Report***.



Surveyed properties included residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings and important landscape and infrastructure features such as bridges and designed landscapes. All fieldwork was conducted from the public right-of-way. Following the completion of fieldwork, all survey data was reviewed in detail by a qualified survey professional to ensure accuracy and consistency throughout the data set.

Survey teams conducted research on individual properties and neighborhoods throughout the field survey process. When specific information was needed in order to complete an evaluation, additional research was conducted. Sources included building permits, historical newspapers and periodicals, Sanborn maps, tract maps, and city directories. This research utilized the collections of the Los Angeles Public Library; Online Archive of California; University of Southern California (USC); University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); and the Library of Congress archives. This research helped with the identification of historic tract names and boundaries, names of tract subdividers, dates of subdivision, and original building uses and footprints.

# Summary of Findings

The following discussion of Property Types, Contexts, and Themes relates to the resources identified and recorded as eligible for designation.

## Summary of Property Types

Northridge is primarily a post-World War II residential community and is largely composed of mass-produced suburban houses. However, the community contains a variety of land uses, including several notable examples of commercial, institutional, and industrial development. Following is a summary of property types within the CPA that were documented and evaluated as significant.

### *Residential Properties*

Residential development consists largely of housing tracts that were developed between the 1950s and 1970s and are emblematic of the San Fernando Valley's transformation from an agricultural stronghold into a sprawling and populous suburb after World War II. Residential properties account for a majority of resources identified in the survey; eligible residential property types include both individual resources and concentrations of resources (historic and planning districts).

Thirteen residential properties were identified as individually eligible resources. Eight of these properties are single-family houses that date to the 1910s and 1920s. These houses reflect the earliest settlement patterns in the area and are rare examples of extant resources associated with the early agricultural community of Zelzah. Most of these early houses are stylistically modest, but one was also evaluated as an excellent example of Craftsman architecture. The survey also identified five single-family houses that are excellent examples of either Mid-Century Modern or Contemporary Ranch architecture.

Many residential properties that were evaluated in the survey are located within a historic district or planning district. In total, eight residential historic districts and one residential planning district were identified in the Survey Area. All eight of the historic districts were evaluated for their architectural merit and contain significant concentrations of Mid-Century Modern or Ranch style architecture; three of these districts were also evaluated as significant examples of postwar suburbanization. Similarly, the planning district contains a notable concentration of Mid-Century Modern architecture, is a significant example of a postwar suburb, and is significant for its association with a noted merchant builder; however, since most houses have been altered, it does not appear to retain sufficient integrity for historic district designation, although it may merit special consideration in the local planning process.

### ***Commercial Properties***

Most commercial development in the Survey Area is concentrated along the major east-west and north-south boulevards that traverse the community. Compared to residential properties, relatively few commercial resources were identified as individually eligible resources. The survey did identify four examples of prominent and distinctive signs that date to the 1960s and strongly evoke the commercial ethos of the era; one automobile dealership that exemplifies the property type and demonstrates the preeminence of the car in the postwar period; and three examples of long-term businesses that contribute to the community's commercial identity. One of these businesses was also evaluated as an excellent and rare example of a skating rink that is associated with post-World War II commercial recreation.

In addition, the survey identified one commercial planning district that served as Northridge's primary shopping district between the 1940s and 1960s. This district contains a notable concentration of low-scale neighborhood commercial buildings. However, since most of these buildings have been altered, the district does not appear to retain sufficient integrity for historic district designation but may merit special consideration in the local planning process.

### ***Industrial Properties***

Industrial development in the Survey Area is confined to areas adjacent to the Southern Pacific railroad tracks. One example of an industrial property was identified in the survey, a former blacksmith shop that dates to the 1920s and is associated with the early community of Zelzah.

### ***Institutional Properties***

The survey identified a number of institutional properties, which are not concentrated in discernible zones but are rather interspersed throughout the Survey Area. Public and private institutional properties represent the second most common resource type identified in the Survey Area, surpassed only by residences. Eligible institutional property types were recorded both as individual resources and as districts, depending on the number of significant resources present at a given site.

Institutional resources consist primarily of government services that were constructed to accommodate the area's rapid population growth in the postwar era. Specifically, the survey identified four Department of Water and Power facilities, including distributing and receiving stations and an administrative and maintenance center; one fire station; one post office; and three LAUSD schools that exemplify campus planning and design principles applied in the postwar period of school construction. Also identified was a public university campus (CSUN) that may also exemplify significant patterns of postwar campus planning and was the site of a notable protest in the Valley's African American civil rights movement.

Private institutions that were identified include the long-term location of a women's clubhouse and three churches. All of the churches were evaluated as excellent examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture, and one is also significant for its ethnic and cultural associations.

One institutional property was recorded as a non-parcel resource. This included an air raid siren that was associated with civil defense efforts during World War II and the Cold War.

### ***Other Properties***

Finally, the survey identified three significant examples of natural features. Two were groupings of mature trees that substantially pre-date surrounding development and are rare vestiges of the community's early roots. The third was a rare remaining example of an intact orange grove, which is located on the CSUN campus and is one of very few resources associated with the area's early agricultural history.

## **Summary of Contexts and Themes**

Many of the Contexts and Themes developed as part of the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement are represented in the Northridge CPA. Following is a representative sampling of some of the more common Context/Theme combinations that were used in the Survey Area, as well as several combinations that are either particularly representative or unique components of the area's developmental history. Each Context/Theme combination listed is illustrated with specific examples from the Survey Area.

Appendix A includes a complete list of all individual resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ.

Appendix B includes a complete list of all non-parcel resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ.

Appendix C includes a complete list of historic districts identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ. This appendix also includes Planning Districts, which do not meet eligibility standards and criteria for listing but may warrant special consideration for local planning purposes.

## **Context: Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: Early Residential Development, 1880-1930**

#### **Sub-Theme: Early Single-Family Residential Development, 1880-1930**

Developed almost entirely after World War II, Northridge is generally associated with postwar suburbanization. However, the community was first settled in the early twentieth century as an agricultural outpost called Zelzah. This Context/Theme combination was used to evaluate eight rare, intact examples of single-family houses that are associated with this early community. Built between the 1910s and 1920s, these houses are among the only vestiges of Zelzah and represent the earliest pattern of development in the area. Reflecting the modest means of early settlers, most are simple in form and architecturally modest; however, one of the houses (top left) was also evaluated under the Architecture context as an excellent example of the Craftsman style.



**Address:** 8803 N. Canby Ave.

**Date:** 1917



**Address:** 18704 W. Chase St.

**Date:** 1914



**Address:** 8813 N. Canby Ave.

**Date:** 1914



**Address:** 18261 W. Rayen St.

**Date:** 1911



## **Context: Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: Post-War Suburbanization, 1938-1975**

#### **Sub-Theme: Suburban Planning and Development, 1938-1975**

As the San Fernando Valley rapidly suburbanized after World War II, scores of residential tracts were developed in Northridge to accommodate the steady influx of households seeking new, quality housing in a suburban setting. Postwar housing tracts account for most of the residential development in the Survey Area. This Context/Theme combination was used to evaluate three historic districts and one planning district that stand out as excellent examples of postwar suburbanization, possessing design and planning features that strongly evoke this period of residential development. Each district was also evaluated under the Architecture context for containing notable concentrations of either Mid-Century Modern or Ranch style architecture.



**District:** Calahan-McLennan Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1954-1960



**District:** Chateau Highlands Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1956-1963



**District:** Living Conditioned Homes Historic District  
**Developer:** Sanford Adler, with Palmer and Krisel  
**Period of Significance:** 1957-1959



**District:** Northridge College Estates Planning District  
**Developer:** Julian Weinstock, with Palmer and Krisel  
**Period of Development:** 1957-1960

## Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

### Theme: Commercial Signs, 1906-1980

Businesses that date to the mid-twentieth century were often accompanied by one or more prominent, eye-catching signs. These signs were designed to attract the attention of passing motorists and provide the associated business with an identifiable brand. Four excellent, intact examples of commercial signs were evaluated under this Context/Theme combination. Eligible examples possess iconic design features and reflect the commercial ethos of the postwar era. Included are a variety of signage types, including freestanding pole signs (top) and wall-mounted signs (bottom). Most were erected by small, independently-owned businesses, but others, including a sign for Shakey's Pizza Parlor (bottom right), reflect corporate identity. The Shakey's sign is believed to be the last remaining example of this particular prototype, which was used by the chain in the 1960s and 1970s and prominently featured a large, plastic pizza chef.



**Name:** Continental Liquor Sign

**Address:** 9114 Balboa Blvd.

**Date:** 1963



**Name:** Northridge Lumber Company Sign

**Location:** 18537 Parthenia St.

**Date:** 1965



**Name:** Jolly Jug Liquor Sign

**Address:** 8464 N. Reseda Blvd.

**Date:** 1960



**Name:** Shakey's Pizza Parlor Sign

**Address:** 10340 N. Reseda Blvd.

**Date:** 1968



## **Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

### **Sub-Context: Education, 1876-1980**

#### **Theme: Public Schools and the LAUSD, 1876-1980**

#### **Sub-Theme: Post World War II Schools, 1946-1966**

Many new public school campuses were built in Northridge to keep pace with the area's rapid residential development after World War II. Financed by municipal bonds that were approved by Los Angeles voters, the new campuses embodied contemporary ideas in school design known as "building for learning," which emphasized fresh air, natural light, and the use of color, and also encouraged outdoor learning and mobility. This Context/Theme combination was used to evaluate three LAUSD campuses within the Survey Area, all of which feature highly intact site plans and buildings that clearly convey the design principles that were espoused by LAUSD in the postwar period. One (top left) was also evaluated under the Architecture context as an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern institutional architecture.



**Name:** Oliver Wendell Holmes Middle School

**Address:** 9351 N. Paso Robles Ave.

**Architect:** Welton Becket and Associates

**Date:** 1966

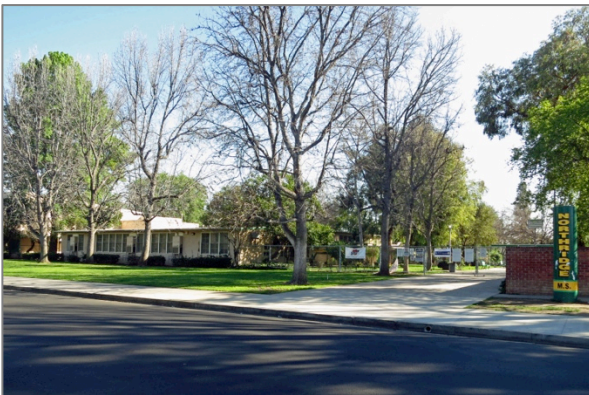


**Name:** Alfred Bernhard Nobel Middle School

**Address:** 9950 N. Tampa Ave.

**Architect:** Johnson and Silvestri

**Date:** 1962



**Name:** Northridge Middle School

**Address:** 17960 W. Chase St.

**Architect:** Walker, Kalziones and Klingerman

**Date:** 1954

## **Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

### **Sub-Context: Government Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980**

#### **Theme: Federal Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980**

#### **Theme: Municipal Fire Stations, 1900-1980**

Rapid residential development in Northridge after World War II also necessitated the expansion of other types of government services and facilities. These Context/Theme combinations were used to evaluate several institutional buildings and campuses that were built in the postwar era to accommodate the area's steadily-increasing population. Included are a post office that was constructed in 1964 (left), and a fire station that was completed in 1961 (right). Both were evaluated as excellent examples of their respective property type.



**Name:** United States Post Office, Northridge Branch

**Address:** 9534 N. Reseda Blvd.

**Architect:** Maxwell Starkman

**Date:** 1961



**Name:** Fire Station No. 103

**Address:** 18143 W. Parthenia St.

**Architect:** Austin, Field and Fry

**Date:** 1961



## **Context: Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Context: L.A. Modernism, 1919-1980**

**Theme: Post-War Modernism, 1946-1976**

**Sub-Theme: Mid-Century Modernism, 1945-1970**

As a community that developed primarily after World War II, Northridge features many notable examples of Mid-Century Modern architecture. The tenets of Modernism are diverse, but the movement generally rejected past traditions and historicist idioms, and instead embraced an aesthetic that incorporated modern materials and technologies and prioritized function over form. This Context/Theme combination was used to evaluate resources that stand out as excellent examples of the Mid-Century Modern style. A variety of property types were evaluated including several single-family houses and churches that are individually eligible (below), as well as historic and planning districts (following page). Many of the resources identified herein were designed by noted Modern architects of the period, such as Smith and Williams, Palmer and Krisel, and Jones and Emmons.



**Name:** First Lutheran Church of Northridge

**Address:** 18355 W. Roscoe Blvd.

**Architect:** Orr, Strange, Inslee and Senefeld

**Year:** 1964

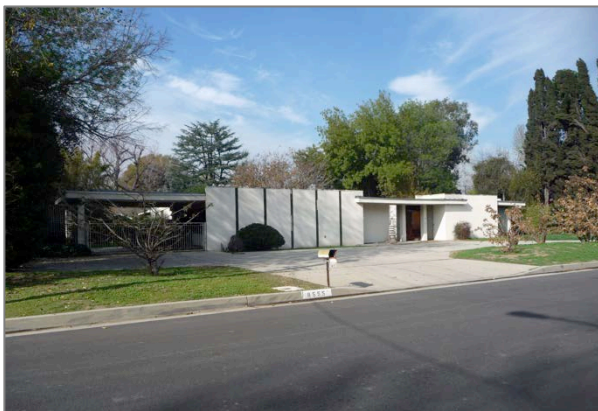


**Name:** Congregational Church of Northridge

**Address:** 9659 N. Balboa Blvd.

**Architect:** Jones and Emmons

**Year:** 1961



**Address:** 8555 N. Paso Robles Ave.

**Year:** 1965



**Address:** 9832 N. Canby Ave.

**Year:** 1959





**District:** Living Conditioned Homes Historic District  
**Architect:** Palmer and Krisel  
**Period of Significance:** 1957-1959



**District:** Living Conditioned Homes Historic District  
**Architect:** Palmer and Krisel  
**Period of Significance:** 1957-1959



**District:** Living Conditioned Homes Historic District  
**Architect:** Palmer and Krisel  
**Period of Significance:** 1957-1959



**District:** Blue Ribbon Tract Housing Historic District  
**Architect:** Smith and Williams  
**Period of Significance:** 1953

## **Context: Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: Housing the Masses, 1880-1975**

#### **Sub-Theme: Ranch House Neighborhoods, 1938-1975**

The predominant architectural style in the Survey Area's residential subdivisions is the Ranch house, an immensely popular choice for residential architecture in the postwar era. Six historic districts were evaluated under this Context/Theme combination, all of which possess excellent, intact concentrations of Ranch houses that are among the area's best examples of this style of architecture. Most of the districts are composed of custom residences that sit on large lots and are designed in various iterations of the Ranch style. Common features include rambling floor plans, complex roof forms, various cladding materials, diamond paned windows, and decorative shutters and dovecotes. Neighborhoods assume a cohesive appearance, with lush landscaping and wide, curvilinear streets with no sidewalks. Two districts were also evaluated under the Residential Development theme as excellent examples of postwar suburbanization.



**District:** Walnutwood Estates Historic District

**Period of Significance:** 1953-1958



**District:** Walnutwood Estates Historic District

**Period of Significance:** 1953-1958



**District:** Chateau Highlands Historic District

**Period of Significance:** 1956-1963



**District:** Chateau Highlands Historic District

**Period of Significance:** 1956-1963





**District:** Calahan-McLennan Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1954-1960



**District:** Calahan-McLennan Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1954-1960



**District:** Oak Park-Paso Robles Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1950-1965



**District:** Oak Park-Paso Robles Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1950-1965



**District:** Northridge Downs Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1956-1965



**District:** Northridge Downs Historic District  
**Period of Significance:** 1956-1965



## **Context: Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: The Ranch House, 1930-1975**

#### **Sub-Theme: Contemporary Custom Ranch House, 1930-1975**

Most of the Ranch style houses within the Survey Area are of a fairly typical design, but a small number exhibit contemporary design features that are highly distinctive, unusual, and/or expressive. Three single-family houses were evaluated under this Context/Theme combination as excellent examples of custom-designed Contemporary Ranch houses. These houses retain the basic form and massing of the Ranch house, but exhibit characteristics that are reflective of trends in Mid-Century Modern architecture. Two of the houses (top row) are notable for their dramatic rooflines. The third (bottom row) is notable for its redwood siding, floor-to-ceiling and clerestory windows, and folded-plate roofline and was designed by architect Perry Neuschatz, a onetime associate of renowned Modern architect Richard Neutra.



**Address:** 19224 W. Superior St.

**Date:** 1961



**Address:** 10440 N. Key West Ave.

**Date:** 1961



**Address:** 17550 W. Prairie St.

**Architect:** Perry Neuschatz

**Date:** 1960

## **Context: Cultural Landscapes, 1875-1980**

### **Theme: Vernacular Landscapes, 1850-1980**

The Survey Area largely dates to the post-World War II era, but interspersed throughout are some vestiges of its roots as a rural, sparsely-populated agricultural district. This Context/Theme combination was used to evaluate two groupings of mature trees that appear to substantially pre-date surrounding development and are associated with the area's early history. Featured is a grouping of mature California pepper trees (left), and a grouping of mature eucalyptus trees (right) that originally served as a windbreak for a nearby farm and was incorporated into an adjacent residential tract when it was developed in the 1970s.



**Name:** White Oak Avenue Pepper Trees

**Location:** White Oak Ave., south of Lassen St.

**Date:** c. 1930



**Address:** Vintage Street Eucalyptus Trees

**Location:** Vintage St., west of Etiwanda Ave.

**Date:** c. 1930



## **Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: Early Industrial Development, 1880-1925**

Identified in the Survey Area was one example of industrial development that dates to the 1920s and is a very rare example of industrial development in the vicinity. The building was historically occupied by a shop that specialized in “general blacksmithing, machine forging, oxy-acetylene welding and horse clipping” and was owned by Zelzah resident William K. English. This resource appears to be the only intact example of industrial development associated with the early community of Zelzah.



**Address:** 8719 N. Canby Ave.

**Date:** 1921

## Selected Bibliography

### ***Books and other published material:***

Avila, Eric. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

"Coast Line: A History." *The Ferroequinologist* (June 1984): 2-14.

Creason, Glen. *Los Angeles in Maps*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2010.

Heacox, Marcie. "The Oakridge Estate: Preserving History." Featured in *California Thoroughbred*, May 2013.

Hise, Greg. *Magnetic Los Angeles: Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Mulholland, Catherine. *William Mulholland and the Rise of Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Roderick, Kevin. *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2002.

*San Fernando Valley: Then and Now*. Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2003.

"Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park Cultural Resources Inventory Historic Overview."  
Prepared by Alexander D. Bevil for the California State Parks Southern Service Center.  
March-April 2007.

Wallach, Ruth, Dace Taube, Claude Zachary, Linda McCann, and Curtis C. Roseman. *Los Angeles in World War II*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Wanamaker, Marc. *San Fernando Valley*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

### ***Other repositories of maps, photographs, periodicals, and other materials:***

California State University, Northridge. "CSUN History," accessed February 2015.  
<http://www.csun.edu/aboutCSUN/history/>.

Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, accessed January 2015.  
<http://sanborn.umi.com.ezproxy.lapl.org/>.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. Tract Maps, accessed January 2015.  
<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/sur/surveyrecord/tractMain.cfm>.

*Los Angeles Daily News*, accessed August 2014 – February 2015. <http://www.dailynews.com/>.

Los Angeles Public Library, *California Index*, accessed January 2015.  
<http://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/visual-collections/california-index>.

Los Angeles Public Library Photographic Collection, *Historic Photographs*, accessed January 2015. [http://photos.lapl.org/carlweb/jsp/photosearch\\_pageADV.jsp](http://photos.lapl.org/carlweb/jsp/photosearch_pageADV.jsp).

Los Angeles Times. “Mapping L.A,” accessed January 2015.  
<http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/neighborhoods>.

Museum of the San Fernando Valley, accessed August 2014 – February 2015,  
<http://www.themuseumsfv.org/>.

*New York Times*, accessed February 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/>.

Oviatt Library Digital Collections, accessed August 2014 – February 2015. <http://digital-library.csun.edu/>.

ProQuest Newsstand, *Historical Los Angeles Times*, accessed August 2014 – February 2015.  
<http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.lapl.org/>.

*The Sundial* (student newspaper for California State University, Northridge), accessed August 2014 – February 2015. <http://sundial.csun.edu/>.

UCLA Digital Collections, *Los Angeles Times Photograph Collection*, accessed 2014.  
<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/>.

USC Digital Library, *California Historical Society*, accessed 2014.  
<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/index.htm>.

USC Digital Library, *Whittington Photographs*, accessed 2014,  
<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/index.htm>.

Water and Power Associates. “Early Views of the San Fernando Valley,” accessed August 2014 – February 2015.  
[http://waterandpower.org/museum/Early\\_Views\\_of\\_the\\_San\\_Fernando\\_Valley.html](http://waterandpower.org/museum/Early_Views_of_the_San_Fernando_Valley.html).