



Historic Resources Survey Report **Sun Valley- La Tuna Canyon Community Plan Area**



Prepared for:

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



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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 Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon Community Plan Area (CPA). This project was undertaken from July 2014 to June 2015 by Historic Resources Group (HRG).

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 at 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 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 Qualification 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 Area (CRA) surveys conducted within the last five years
- Potential Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) areas which have been surveyed in the last five years and are in the process of being designated.

SurveyLA Resources 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 are organized by resource type.

- **Individual Resources** are generally resources located within a single assessor parcel, such as a residence. 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 include street trees, street lights, landscaped medians, bridges, and signs.
- **Historic Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme. 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, sites, objects, and other features located within historic districts. Generally, non-contributing resources are those that are extensively altered, built outside the period of significance, or that 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 that makes 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 features – such as height, massing, setbacks, and street trees – which warrant consideration in the local planning process.

Project Team

The Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon CPA survey was conducted by Historic Resources Group. Personnel included Kari Michele Fowler, Senior Preservation Planner; Christine Lazzaretto, Principal; Laura Janssen, Senior Architectural Historian; Heather Goers, Architectural Historian; Robby Aranguren, Planning Associate, and Christy Johnson McAvoy, Founding Principal. Additional assistance was provided by intern Lauren Postlmayr. Kari Fowler served as the 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 identified survey area (“Survey Area”) corresponds with boundary for the Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon Community Plan Area (CPA).¹ Located in the eastern portion of the San Fernando Valley, the Survey Area has an irregular boundary and borders the CPAs of Sunland–Tujunga–Lake View Terrace–Shadow Hills–East La Tuna Canyon to the northeast; Arleta–Pacoima to the northwest; Mission Hills–Panorama City–North Hills to the west; and North Hollywood–Valley Village to the south. The City of Burbank abuts the CPA on the southeast. (*See Survey Area Map below.*)

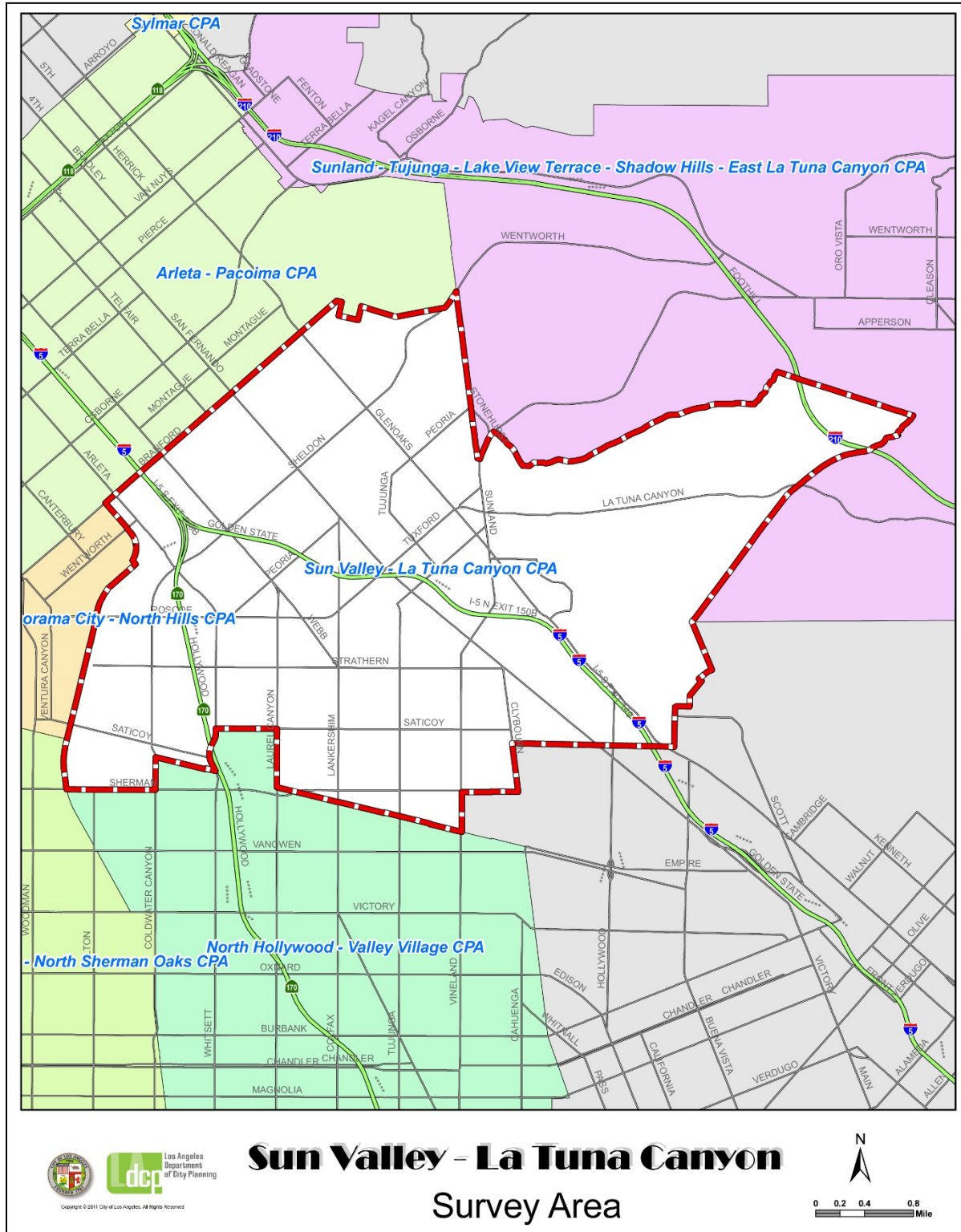
The CPA consists of a total of 20,434 parcels. Of these, approximately 19,462 parcels were surveyed by SurveyLA. SurveyLA generally does not include properties constructed after 1980, or resources that have been designated under Federal, state, or local programs.²

The topography of the Survey Area is generally flat, a characteristic which is reflected in the area’s largely orthogonal street patterns. The Survey Area is traversed by several major thoroughfares, including the north/south corridors of Laurel Canyon Boulevard, Lankershim Boulevard, San Fernando Road, and Glenoaks Boulevard; and the east/west corridors of Roscoe Boulevard, Strathern Street, and Saticoy Street. La Tuna Canyon Road extends eastward into the Verdugo Mountains in the easternmost portion of the CPA. The Survey Area is traversed by the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5) and the Hollywood Freeway (State Route 170).

¹ Note that some properties within the Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon CPA have been identified as being in the community of Shadow Hills. While much of Shadow Hills is located in the adjacent Sunland–Tujunga–Lake View Terrace–Shadow Hills–East La Tuna Canyon CPA, a portion of Shadow Hills is situated within this CPA.

² For designated resources within the CPA at the time of the survey, refer to the Designated Resources map below. For the most up-to-date information on designated resources, go to zimas.lacity.org or www.HistoricPlacesLA.org, or contact the Department of City Planning’s Office of Historic Resources.

Survey Area Map.



The Survey Area is comprised of low- to medium-density urban land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial properties. The majority of the Survey Area is composed primarily of low-density single-family residential neighborhoods, with some residential areas zoned for equestrian use. Multi-family residential development is generally located in concentrations along major north/south corridors such as Laurel Canyon Boulevard, Lankershim Boulevard, Glenoaks Boulevard, and Vineland Avenue, and also in the southeastern corner of the CPA, to the south of Villa Cabrini Park. Commercial development is primarily located along the major traffic corridors of Laurel Canyon Boulevard, Lankershim Boulevard, Glenoaks Boulevard, and Vineland Avenue. Industrial development comprises a substantial portion of the CPA, largely concentrated along San Fernando Road, Glenoaks Boulevard, and the Southern Pacific rail line.

Open space within the CPA includes several parks; Villa Cabrini Park, Verdugo Mountain Park, and La Tuna Canyon Park are all located in the eastern portion of the CPA. Other parks located throughout the Survey Area include Sheldon Arleta Park, Strathern Park North, Strathern Park West, and Sun Valley Park. Several recreation centers have also been developed, including the Fernangeles Recreation Center, the Sun Valley Recreation Center, and Stonehurst Recreation Center, which is a part of the designated Stonehurst Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. A substantial portion of the open space in the northern section of the CPA is dedicated to resources associated with the Hansen Dam Recreation Center, which abuts the northern boundary of the Survey Area.

Development History

The land comprising the Survey Area was first settled by the Native American Tongva tribe, who would later become known as the “Gabrielino” Indians when the Mission San Gabriel Arcangel was established on Tongva land. The first European settlers in the area were a group of explorers led by Spanish expeditioner Gaspar de Portola, who traveled north through the San Fernando Valley on August 7, 1769. Mission San Fernando Rey de España was founded by Father Fermin Lasuen, a Franciscan missionary, on September 8, 1797. By the early nineteenth century the Mission had evolved into a robust agricultural operation, selling fruits, vegetables, wine, livestock, and olives. The Mission was subsequently secularized, with the lands surrounding the mission subdivided as a land grant known as the Rancho Ex-Mission San Fernando. In 1874, Charles Maclay and his business partner, George K. Porter, purchased 56,000 acres of the northern portion of the rancho, which comprised the entire northern San Fernando Valley. Porter, who had a three-quarters interest in the land, had plans to develop the property as a ranch; Maclay, who owned a one-quarter interest, was interested in subdividing the land for real estate development.³ A portion of the land was dedicated to establishing the

³ Charles A. Bearchell and Larry D. Fried, *The San Fernando Valley: Then and Now* (Windsor Publications, 1988), 31.

nearby City of San Fernando; the remainder, however, was given over to ranching and the production of wheat, citrus, and other crops.⁴ Eventually, Maclay and Porter, who had deeded a portion of his share to his cousin, Benjamin F. Porter, found they could no longer agree, and the three men divided the land with the toss of a coin. Maclay received the eastern portion of the land, which comprises the present-day CPA.

During the late 1800s, the Southern Pacific Railroad laid tracks to the north through the area, and a water tank was situated at what is now the corner of Sunland Boulevard and San Fernando Road.⁵ A small settlement grew up around this area, which was eventually dubbed “Roberts” after the Roberts General Store, the only business in town at the time. However, by the turn of the century the community of Roberts had become known instead as “Roscoe.”⁶ At the time, the area was classified as one of the five healthiest places in the United States to live, and with the increased accessibility of the railroad, parcels of land in the area were being sold off to families coming to the area.⁷ By 1905, there were seven families residing in Roscoe.⁸ Extant resources from this period are rare, and only a few early residences remain today; examples include two Victorian vernacular cottages, located at 10149 Wealtha Street (1895), and at 8016 Fair Avenue (1905).

Despite the area’s relatively early settlement, development activity was limited throughout the 1910s. While the establishment of Roscoe School in 1917 signaled an expansion of the community, development efforts were focused on expanding industry in the area. During this period there were several factors that contributed to the development of Sun Valley, as the community would later be called. Perhaps the most critical was the opening of California State Route 99 around 1915, which was then the main highway between Los Angeles and Bakersfield. A Roscoe family boasted owning the first-ever gas pump along the highway.⁹ Increased access to the area also benefitted local industry; rock quarries in and around the nearby Tujunga Wash had recently been established in 1909. Over time, the presence of the quarries has had a marked effect on the landscape of Sun Valley and has led to the development of a number of industrial operations, many of which focus on waste management and landfill operations. One such example was the expansive Bradley Landfill, which had remained in operation for

⁴ Bearchell and Fried, 31.

⁵ Bearchell and Fried, 76.

⁶ Bearchell and Fried, 76. There are conflicting accounts regarding the origin of the name “Roscoe.” While it is unclear where the name originated, it stuck until 1948 when a contest held by the area Chamber of Commerce renamed the community “Sun Valley.”

⁷ “The History of Sun Valley and The Chamber of Commerce,” <http://www.svacc.com/history-of-sun-valley--the-chamber.html> (accessed April 2015).

⁸ “The History of Sun Valley and the Chamber of Commerce.”

⁹ “Sun Valley Portrait,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 14, 1996, http://articles.latimes.com/1996-07-14/local/me-26422_1_sun-valley (accessed April 2015).

over fifty years before closing in 2007.¹⁰ At the time of its closure, it was noted that Sun Valley was home to over thirty landfills and quarries.¹¹

As industry in the area expanded, so did the accompanying infrastructure. Los Angeles city planner George Gordon Whitnall spearheaded a campaign to construct four "highways" that would radiate from the San Fernando Valley into arteries leading to the city. These parkway/highways were more modest in design than the modern freeway, and often featured a landscaped center strip separating opposing lanes of traffic.¹² The most ambitious of these parkways was to be Whitnall Highway, which would stretch diagonally southeast by northwest from Newhall in the Santa Clarita Valley, through the San Fernando Valley, and meet up with the entrance of a two-mile tunnel originating off Riverside Drive that would run under Griffith Park into Hollywood.¹³ A key component of the project was the installation of power lines along the parkway, which were already installed by the time the first portion of the Whitnall Highway opened in June 1927. Although the project eventually stalled over issues of eminent domain and was abandoned entirely by the mid-1930s, the power lines – as well as the land already acquired by the City in preparation for the project – remained. Today, the area is known as the Whitnall Highway Power Corridor.

Residential development also flourished throughout the 1920s. Perhaps the most prominent example is the Stonehurst neighborhood, which is a designated Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. Stonehurst is composed of 92 homes built between 1923 and 1925 by Dan Montelongo, a local artisan and stonemason, using stone from the nearby washes and the foothills of the Tujunga Valley. The neighborhood boasts the highest concentration of homes utilizing native river rock as a primary building material anywhere in the city. Many of these homes were designed in a "Stonemason Vernacular" style that is a derivative of Craftsman architecture. Arroyo river rock was a popular construction material in the Sun Valley area, and there are several extant examples of Arroyo stone residences constructed during this period, as well as some wood-frame houses which exhibit Arroyo stone features.

As the 1930s progressed through the Great Depression, development on the whole languished. Commercial and industrial activity in the area was limited, with the exception of the Dundee Egg Farms, which was opened in Sun Valley in 1931. The Dundee Egg Farms had been in operation for over a decade before moving to this

¹⁰ "Bradley Landfill Closed at Last," *Los Angeles Daily News*, December 31, 1969, updated April 14, 2007, <http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20070415/bradley-landfill-closed-at-last> (accessed April 2015).

¹¹ "Sun Valley Celebrates as Bradley Landfill Closes," *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 2007, <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/apr/15/local/me-dump15> (accessed April 2015).

¹² Hadley Meares, "Phantom Fast Lanes: Whitnall Highway and the Footprint of Best Laid Plans," KCET Lost Landmarks, June 28, 2013, <http://www.kcet.org/socal/departures/columns/lost-landmarks/phantom-fast-lanes-whitnall-highway-and-the-footprint-of-best-laid-plans.html> (accessed April 2015).

¹³ Meares, "Phantom Fast Lanes: Whitnall Highway and the Footprint of Best Laid Plans."

location and establishing a storefront, complete with a cast stone egg over the door. A two-story warehouse building was added in 1964.

The 1930s also saw the establishment of one of the San Fernando Valley's most iconic resources. The Hansen Ranch became a Los Angeles County park and recreation area in 1931. The lodge, which was originally built as the ranch house for the Hansen family, was turned into a public clubhouse for parties and meetings. New recreational facilities included two tennis courts, a swimming pool, playground, picnic tables, and camping areas.¹⁴ Construction subsequently commenced on the Hansen Dam in 1938, and was completed in 1940. The dam served as an important barrier which protected the eastern Valley from flooding from the nearby Tujunga Wash.¹⁵ Today, the park is known as the Hansen Dam Recreation Area, a portion of which lies within the boundaries of the Survey Area. Also during this period, improvements were made to area infrastructure, including the construction of the concrete Tujunga Wash Bridge in 1935, which carried San Fernando Road over the wash.

As building activity ground to a halt during World War II, the character of Sun Valley remained largely rural in nature, and residents continued to embrace the rustic lifestyle. Many residential properties were not only zoned for equestrian use, but were specifically designed for horses to be maintained on the property, and bridle trails were a prominent feature of the local landscape. Beginning in the 1940s, however, Sun Valley's identity began to evolve away from that of a primarily agricultural community as defense workers – and later, returning servicemen – began to flock to the San Fernando Valley. The airport in nearby Burbank had opened as the Union Airport in 1930, but was known as the Lockheed Air Terminal following the company's purchase of the facility in 1940. Not only did the airport continue serving commercial air traffic throughout World War II, but it also supported the Lockheed Corporation's wartime manufacturing efforts. The company's Vega factory was sited directly adjacent to the airport and became a critical proving ground for the development and testing of new fighter jets and military transport plants. Unlike other manufacturers who had found success producing materials for the war effort, Lockheed was also able to transition successfully to a critical role in the postwar economy through their development of passenger jets for civilian air travel, as well as their work developing transport and stealth technology aircraft during the Cold War era. Their flexibility ensured the continued success of the company, and Lockheed dominated the local economy throughout the middle part of the century.

With the influx of new residents in the 1940s, building activity in Sun Valley was concentrated not only on housing, but also on developing institutions to meet the demands of the growing community. Examples include Fire Station No. 77, which was constructed in 1941. During the early years of the decade, some construction still reflected Sun Valley's agricultural past, such as the Our Lady of Zapopan Chapel, which

¹⁴ Wanamaker, 31.

¹⁵ Wanamaker, 32.

was built in 1942 to serve Latino farm workers in Sun Valley. A number of schools were also constructed in Sun Valley to accommodate the growing young families of who were relocating to the area. Perhaps the earliest examples of this trend are the Roscoe Elementary School building, constructed in 1939. Other intact examples include Sun Valley Middle School (1950), the Charles LeRoy Lowman Special Education Center (1950), Saticoy Elementary School (1955), and John H. Francis Polytechnic High School (1956). A Sun Valley branch of the U.S. Post Office was completed in 1960. And in 1964, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary parish dedicated a new Modern church designed by Thomas V. Merchant, exemplifying the area's increasing urbanization.

Neighborhood commercial centers also grew in importance as the “bedroom communities” of the San Fernando Valley expanded. Local establishments included the Pink Motel and Cadillac Jack's, developed between 1947 and 1959, the Lankershim Theater (1955), and the Googie-style Jimmy's Burgers (1965). Big Jim's Family Restaurant came along in the 1970s with themed décor that harkened back to the area's rural past. Its unique neon sign featuring a cowgirl atop a galloping horse still lights up nightly.

With the expansion of population, commerce, and industry in the postwar era, infrastructure became a major concern both during the 1940s and in the years following World War II. Communications services were improved and extended throughout the San Fernando Valley. Extant examples reflecting this growth include the Southern California Telephone Company Dial Office (1940), as well as a second building for the Southern California Telephone Company, which was constructed two years later, and the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company building (1950). Later improvements concentrated on the distribution of water and electrical power to the thousands of new residents in the area. Resources constructed during this period include the Valley Generating Station, constructed between 1951 and 1957; the Department of Water & Power East Valley District Headquarters (1956); and the Metropolitan Water District Treatment Plant (1963). As the automobile exploded in popularity during the mid-century years, many resources were also designed with motorists in mind. Local examples include PJ's Automotive service station (1948), The Dairy Store drive-through dairy (1951), and the El Michoacano food stand (1960).

The physical landscape of Sun Valley evolved during the postwar period as well. As large-scale residential developments were constructed, the vernacular landscape was replaced by designed landscape elements to accompany site-built homes and residential subdivisions. One extant example of such landscaping efforts is the Cartwright Avenue street trees, a unique collection of mature Aleppo pine trees along two blocks of Cartwright Avenue. The trees appear to have been planted about the time of the residential development on these blocks in the early- to mid-1940s. Today, they are a prominent visual landmark in the area, and create a distinctive feel in the neighborhood. In 1966, the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants was established on a 20-acres site donated by Eddie Merrill, a colleague and friend of Payne. Payne was an English horticulturalist, landscape designer, and botanist

who is best known for his dedication to the preservation of California's native flora. The Foundation was established to carry on Payne's life's work.

Building activity in Sun Valley continued throughout the 1970s; while construction from this period reflects more recent architectural trends and styles, several distinctive examples of institutional and commercial development are worth noting. The Wat Thai Temple and Theravada Buddhist Center, constructed in 1976, stands as a rare and unique example of East Asian Eclectic religious architecture in Sun Valley. It is the only Buddhist temple in the United States designed in a Thai architectural style. The original plans were drawn up by the Thai Department of Religious Affairs and revised by a local architect to meet building codes. The center serves approximately 40,000 Thai-Americans living in Los Angeles, and is the main gathering place for festivals, religious services, and cultural events within the city, drawing thousands of Thai people from throughout Southern California and beyond.

Development by Decade Map.



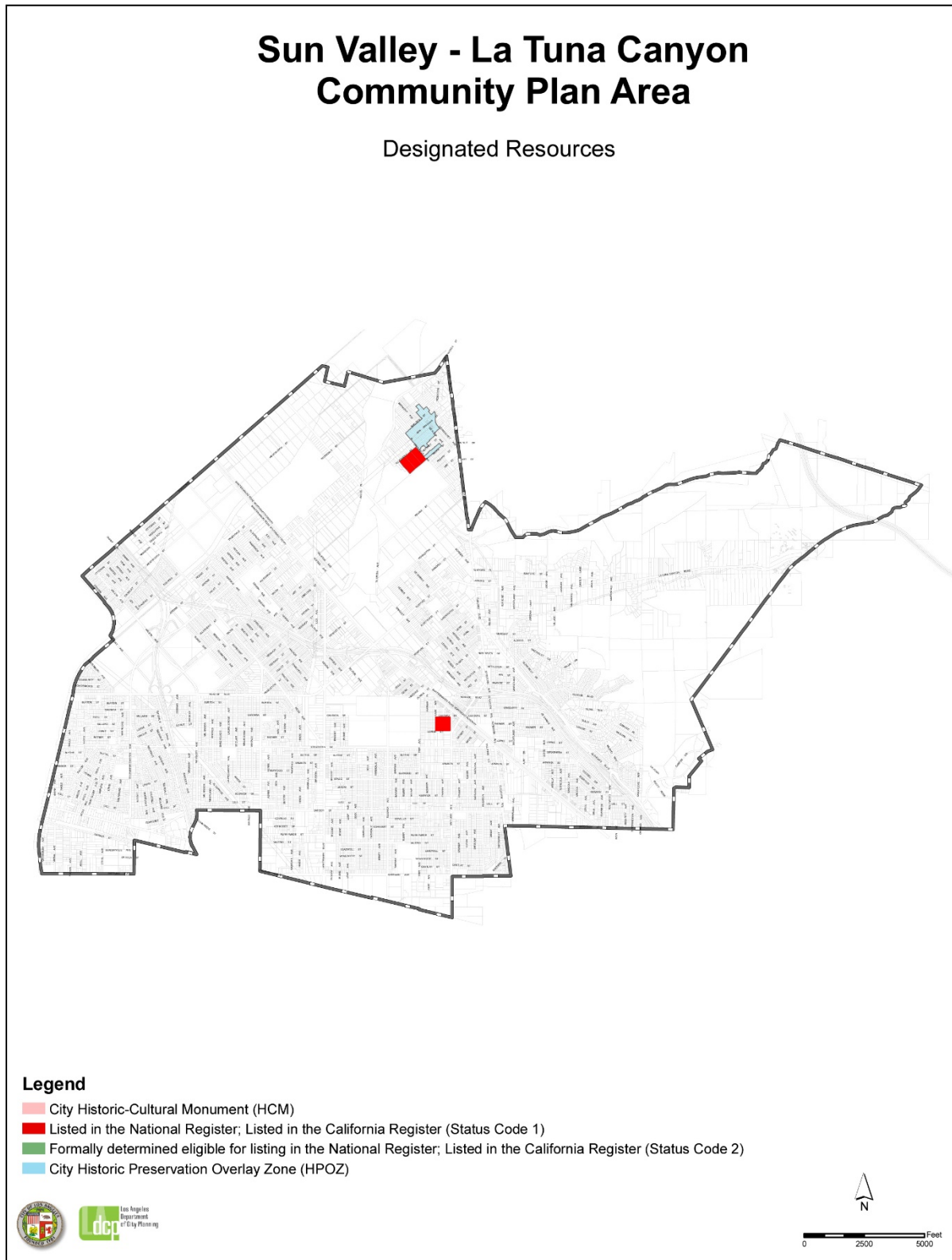
Designated Resources

The following map depicts designated resources within the Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon 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 (HCMs) and Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs).

Designated resources in the Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon CPA include the 1924 Stonehurst House, the 1925 Boulder House, and the Stonehurst Recreation Center Building built c. 1930. Also in the CPA is the Stonehurst HPOZ.¹⁶

¹⁶ For the most up-to-date information on designated resources, go to zimas.lacity.org or www.HistoricPlacesLA.org, or contact the Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources.

Designated Resources Map.



Community Plan Area Survey Methodology

The field survey was conducted using the methodology established by the Office of Historic Resources for SurveyLA, which includes the citywide Historic Context Statement and customized mobile Field Guide Survey System (FiGSS).¹⁷

The field work was conducted in two phases: *Reconnaissance* and *Documentation*. The Reconnaissance Phase was conducted by a team of two qualified survey professionals, both 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. 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. This approach also substantially streamlines the next phase of field survey, enabling the field teams to document large numbers of properties quickly and efficiently.

Once the Reconnaissance Phase was completed, the Documentation Phase began. During this phase, field work 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 FIGSS, were documented 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 is also during this phase that contexts and themes are applied and evaluation status codes are assigned. All field work was conducted from the public right-of-way. Following the completion of field work, all survey data was reviewed in detail by a qualified survey professional to ensure accuracy and consistency throughout.

In addition to identifying significant properties based on physical characteristics as observed from the public right-of-way, some properties in the Survey Area may be significant for historic associations, such as an association with an important person. To address this, extensive research was conducted prior to fieldwork to assist surveyors in identifying potentially significant properties. Sources included building permits, Sanborn maps, historic photos, historic and contemporary aerial images, city directories, genealogical records, voter registration records, census records, and historical newspapers and periodicals. Research for SurveyLA utilizes the collections of the Los Angeles Public Library; University of Southern California (USC); University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); Huntington Library; Historical Los Angeles Times; the Online Archive of California; and the Pacific Coast Architecture Database, among others.

¹⁷ For more information about the SurveyLA methodology, see the *SurveyLA Field Results Master Report*.

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

The Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon CPA contains a range of extant property types, representing a number of periods of development. The following is a brief summary of those property types that were documented and evaluated as historically, culturally, or architecturally significant.

Residential Properties

The survey identified a number of 1920s single-family residences as representative of some of the area's earliest development. Also from this period are two residences constructed of local arroyo stone. The oldest extant residence identified in the Survey Area is a Victorian vernacular cottage dating from 1895.

Commercial Properties

A small number of commercial properties were identified by the survey, including a drive-through dairy, a walk-up food stand, a neighborhood market, a neighborhood theater, a Googie-style restaurant, and an outstanding example of a roadside motel and coffee shop.

Institutional Properties

Three LAUSD school campuses dating from the postwar era were identified, as well as one rare 1930s school building. One school was evaluated for its architectural merit. Two churches were identified, one as an early example of the type and the other for architecture. A number of infrastructural properties were identified, including three telephone buildings, a fire station, and a post office. Several properties were identified for their association with municipal or regional water and power systems, including a water system headquarters, a water treatment plant, and a steam power plant. Other institutional examples include a religious school campus and a labor union hall.

Industrial Properties

Two brick industrial properties were identified, dating from the 1920s and 1930s, as early examples of the type.

Other Properties

The survey identified a number of unique property types. Examples include a neon pole sign, a 1930s concrete bridge, a transmission line corridor, a nursery, and an allee of Aleppo pine trees. A number of World War II-era air raid sirens were also identified.

Summary of Contexts and Themes

Many of the Contexts and Themes developed for the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement are represented in the Sun Valley–La Tuna Canyon CPA. The following is a representative sampling of some of the more common Context/Theme combinations used in the survey, as well as some examples that are specific to this part of the city. Each Context/Theme is illustrated with specific examples from the Survey Area.

For a complete list of individual resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix A.

For a complete list of non-parcel resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix B.

For a complete list of historic districts identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix C. 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 & Suburbanization, 1850-1980

Theme: Early Residential Development, 1880-1930

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

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate a number of intact single-family residences dating from the 1920s, which represent some of the earliest residential development in the Survey Area. However, there are two notable exceptions to this development pattern. An 1895 Victorian vernacular cottage, located at 10149 Wealtha Avenue, is the oldest extant residence identified in the Survey Area. A 1905 residence located at 8016 Fair Avenue is not fully visible from the public right-of-way.



Address: 10149 Wealtha Avenue
Date: 1895



Address: 10338 La Tuna Canyon Road
Date: 1926



Address: 9908 La Tuna Canyon Road
Date: 1927



Address: 10440 Penrose Street
Date: 1928



Address: 7910 Coldwater Canyon Avenue
Date: 1922



Address: 11845 Peoria Street
Date: 1921

Context: Residential Development & Suburbanization, 1850-1980

Theme: Post World War II Suburbanization, 1938-1975

Sub-Theme: Sub-theme: Suburban Planning and Development, 1938-1975

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an excellent and unique collection of mature street trees. The Aleppo pine trees that line two blocks of Cartwright Avenue appear to have been planted about the time of the residential development on these blocks in the early- to mid-1940s. Today, these trees are a prominent visual landmark in the area, and create a distinctive feel in the neighborhood.



Name: Cartwright Avenue Street Trees

Location: Cartwright Avenue, between Sherman Way and Valerio Street

Date: c. 1945



Name: Cartwright Avenue Street Trees

Location: Cartwright Avenue, between Sherman Way and Valerio Street

Date: c. 1945

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Markets, 1880-1980

Theme: Restaurants, 1880-1980

These Context/Themes were used to evaluate significant examples of commercial development in the Survey Area. Identified properties include a rare example of a 1930s neighborhood market, as well as an intact 1960s walk-up food stand.



Address: 7806 Lemp Avenue
Name: Rodriguez Market
Date: 1930



Address: 7201 Lankershim Boulevard
Name: El Michoacano
Date: 1960

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Commercial Development and the Automobile, 1910-1980

Sub-Theme: The Car and Car Services, 1910-1960s

Sub-Theme: Commercial Drive-Thru, 1920-1980

These Context/Themes were used to evaluate commercial development associated with the automobile. Examples include a 1940s service station, as well as a 1950s drive-through dairy, one of few remaining examples in the San Fernando Valley.



Address: 8959 Glenoaks Boulevard
Name: PJ's Automotive
Date: 1948



Address: 8959 Glenoaks Boulevard
Name: PJ's Automotive
Date: 1948



Address: 9417 Laurel Canyon Boulevard
Name: The Dairy Store
Date: 1951



Address: 9417 Laurel Canyon Boulevard
Name: The Dairy Store
Date: 1951

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Motels, 1925-1970

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an excellent and rare example of a 1940s roadside motel and coffee shop. The Pink Motel was constructed in 1947 by Joseph Thomulka; two years later Thomulka added the Pink Cafe, now called Cadillac Jack's. In 1959, he added the fish-shaped swimming pool. Both the motel and restaurant were still operational into the 1980s, but were primarily used as a location for movies and television. Currently, the property is closed to the public and used exclusively as a filming location. Today, this property is one of the best remaining examples of a roadside motel and coffee shop in the San Fernando Valley. This property was also evaluated for its design as an outstanding example of Mid-Century Modern roadside commercial architecture in Sun Valley.



Address: 9457-9475 San Fernando Road
Name: Pink Motel & Cadillac Jack's
Date: 1947-1959



Address: 9457-9475 San Fernando Road
Name: Pink Motel & Cadillac Jack's
Date: 1947-1959

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Commercial Signs, 1906-1980

Sub-Theme: Pylons, Poles, Stantions, and Billboards, 1920-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an excellent example of a neon pole sign in the Survey Area. The sign for Big Jim's Restaurant features a cowgirl atop a galloping horse.



Address: 8950 Laurel Canyon Boulevard

Name: Big Jim's Restaurant Sign

Date: 1979



Address: 8950 Laurel Canyon Boulevard

Name: Big Jim's Restaurant Sign

Date: 1979

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

Sub-Context: Education, 1876-1980

Theme: Public Schools and the LAUSD, 1876-1980

Sub-Theme: Post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake, 1933-1945

Sub-Theme: Post WWII Schools, 1946-1966

These Context/Themes were used to evaluate four examples of intact LAUSD public school campuses in the Survey Area, including two elementary schools, a junior high/middle school, and a high school. Dating from the mid-1950s, these schools reflect LAUSD planning and design concepts of the postwar period and the increase in facilities to accommodate postwar growth in the San Fernando Valley. The survey also identified a 1930s school building, a rare example from this period in the San Fernando Valley.



Address: 10765 Strathern Street
Name: Roscoe Elementary School
Date: 1939



Address: 10765 Strathern Street
Name: Roscoe Elementary School
Date: 1939



Address: 7850 Ethel Avenue
Name: Saticoy Elementary School
Date: 1955



Address: 7850 Ethel Avenue
Name: Saticoy Elementary School
Date: 1955



Address: 7330 Bakman Avenue
Name: Sun Valley Middle School
Date: 1955



Address: 7330 Bakman Avenue
Name: Sun Valley Middle School
Date: 1955



Address: 12431 Roscoe Boulevard
Name: John H. Francis Polytechnic High School
Date: 1956



Address: 12431 Roscoe Boulevard
Name: John H. Francis Polytechnic High School
Date: 1956

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

Sub-Context: Religion and Spirituality, 1850-1980

Theme: Religious Property Types, 1850-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate Woodbury University as a rare example of a 1920s religious campus. The site was originally developed as the Village of the Cabrini Academy. In 1906, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (known as Mother Cabrini) purchased 475 acres on the border of Sun Valley and Burbank from Jose Maria Verdugo in order to establish a nunnery and school. Mother Cabrini was the founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and in the 1920s she established an all-girls school to be run by the sisters. Woodbury University moved to this site in 1985, and has adaptively reused five of the Academy's original buildings, the oldest of which dates to 1927.¹⁸

Also evaluated under this Context/Theme is the Theravada Buddhist Center, Wat Thai of Los Angeles Buddhist Temple. This Buddhist center serves approximately 40,000 Thai-Americans living in Los Angeles, and is the main gathering place for festivals, religious services, and cultural events within the city. The center draws thousands of Thais from throughout Southern California and beyond. The temple building was also evaluated for its design as an excellent and rare example of East Asian Eclectic religious architecture. According to their website, it is the only Buddhist temple in the United States designed in a Thai architectural style. The original plans were drawn up by the Thai Department of Religious Affairs and revised by a local architect to meet building codes. It took approximately eight years to build; it was completed in the spring of 1982.



Address: 7500 Glenoaks Boulevard
Name: Woodbury University
Date: 1927-unknown



Address: 12909 Cantara Street
Name: Wat Thai Temple, Theravada Buddhist Center
Date: 1976-1982

¹⁸ While Woodbury University uses a Burbank address, the vast majority of the campus is situated in the City of Los Angeles.

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

Sub-Context: Communications, 1875-1980

Theme: Telephone History and Development, 1881-1950

Sub-Theme: Telephone Exchange Buildings and Pay Stations, 1881-1950

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate three examples of mid-20th century telephone buildings in the Survey Area, representing the expansion of communication services in the San Fernando Valley during this period. Among the identified properties are two rare examples of 1940s dial offices, both of which have been converted to office uses.



Address: 7832 Lankershim Boulevard
Name: Southern California Telephone Company
Date: 1942



Address: 8227 Sunland Boulevard
Name: Southern California Telephone Company
Date: 1940



Address: 7744 Lankershim Boulevard
Name: Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company
Date: 1950

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Municipal Fire Stations, 1900-1980

Sub-Theme: Post WWII Fire Stations, 1947-1960

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate a rare example of a 1940s fire station in the San Fernando Valley. This property was also evaluated for its design as an excellent and highly-intact example of Streamline Moderne institutional architecture. Fire Station No. 77 is now decommissioned.



Address: 8943 Glenoaks Boulevard

Name: Fire Station No. 77

Date: 1941

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Federal Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980

Sub-Theme: U.S. Postal Services and Post Office Construction, 1850-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an intact example of a 1960s post office in Sun Valley, representing the expansion of federal services in the San Fernando Valley during the postwar period.



Address: 10936 Ratner Street
Name: U.S. Post Office, Sun Valley Branch
Date: 1960



Address: 10936 Ratner Street
Name: U.S. Post Office, Sun Valley Branch
Date: 1960

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Municipal Water and Power, 1916-1980

Sub-Theme: Power Generation, 1916-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an excellent and rare example of a 1950s steam power plant in the San Fernando Valley. The Valley Generating Station occupies an approximately 150-acre site containing the original power plant, identified by the four tall stacks (now decommissioned), and the new power plant, with the two short stacks. Other features include cooling towers, oil tanks, and other support structures, as well as prominent landscape features such as interior streets, mature plantings, and signage. Constructed by the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power as the “Valley Steam Plant,” this facility was one of the largest steam plants in the nation when it was completed in 1957, and represented a shift away from hydro-generated electricity. The facility’s construction marked the period of unprecedented growth and development in the city of Los Angeles generally, and the San Fernando Valley in particular. Once all four generating units were placed in operation, the Valley Generating Station increased the city’s available power by over fifty percent, enough to serve a million people at a fraction of the cost, thereby establishing steam-generated power as a viable source of electricity for the city’s future growth. The Valley Generating Station’s four smokestacks have been a prominent visual landmark in the eastern San Fernando Valley for nearly six decades.



Address: 11801 Sheldon Street
Name: Valley Generating Station
Date: 1951-1957



Address: 11801 Sheldon Street
Name: Valley Generating Station
Date: 1951-1957

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Municipal Water and Power, 1916-1980

Sub-Theme: Office and Administration Buildings 1916-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power's Water System, East Valley District Headquarters. This large complex of 1950s administrative office buildings represents the expansion of municipal services in the San Fernando Valley during the postwar era.



Address: 12712 Saticoy Street South
Name: DWP Water System, East Valley
District Headquarters
Date: 1956



Address: 12712 Saticoy Street South
Name: DWP Water System, East Valley
District Headquarters
Date: 1956

Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

Sub-Context: Military Institutions and Activities, 1850-1980

Theme: Air Raid Sirens and Civil Defense, 1939-1960

Air raid sirens were evaluated under this Context/Theme for their association with World War II and Cold War military infrastructure in Los Angeles. Four examples were identified in the Survey Area.



Location: Peoria Street near Lankershim

Name: Air Raid Siren No. 216

Date: circa 1940



Location: Whitsett Avenue at Lull Street

Name: Air Raid Siren No. 119

Date: circa 1940

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Early Industrial Development, 1880-1945

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two examples of early industrial development in the Survey Area, both of which are located along the rail line that parallels San Fernando Road. Identified properties include a rare, intact brick industrial building dating from the early 1920s, as well as a 1930s building that originally housed an egg farming business. Dundee Egg Farms had been in operation for over a decade before moving to this location in 1931. Their building included a one-story storefront as well as a two-story warehouse. The building's former use remains evident on the facade: a cast stone egg sits above the storefront entrance, while the shadow of letters reading "Dundee Egg Farms" is still visible behind the address numbers above the warehouse entrance.



Address: 8267 Marmay Place
Date: 1922



Address: 8267 Marmay Place
Date: 1922



Address: 7645 San Fernando Road
Name: Dundee Egg Farms
Date: 1931



Address: 7645 San Fernando Road
Name: Dundee Egg Farms
Date: 1931 and 1964

Context: Architecture & Engineering, 1850-1980

Theme: Arts and Crafts Movement, 1895-1930

Sub-Theme: Arroyo Stone Buildings, 1898-1930

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two examples of arroyo stone residential construction in the Survey Area. Arroyo stone houses are a particular building type in this area of the San Fernando Valley; in the teens and 1920s many residences were built here using local stone.¹⁹



Address: 10603 Penrose Street

Date: 1920



Address: 13024 Wentworth Street

Date: 1928

¹⁹ Many arroyo stone houses in Sun Valley are already designated as part of the Stonehurst Historic Preservation Overlay Zone.

Context: Architecture & Engineering, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Post-War Modernism, 1946-1976

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

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two examples of Mid-Century Modern institutional architecture in the Survey Area, including a 1950s school campus, as well as a 1960 church building. Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church is notable not only for its architecture, which incorporates stylized Gothic arches and elliptical-perforated concrete screens, but also for its integrated concrete-and-glass art piece by Roger Darricarrere. Depicting the Crucifixion, the artwork is rendered using the "dalle de verre" technique pioneered by Darricarrere, which uses pieces of colored slab glass set in a concrete matrix.



Address: 12827 Saticoy Street
Name: Charles LeRoy Lowman Special Education Center
Architect: Kenneth N. Bergstrom
Date: 1950



Address: 7800 Vineland Avenue
Name: Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church
Architect: Thomas V. Merchant
Date: 1964

Context: Architecture & Engineering, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Post-War Modernism, 1946-1976

Sub-Theme: Googie, 1935-1969

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate an excellent and rare example of 1960s Googie commercial architecture, exhibiting a distinctive A-frame roofline. Now occupied by Jimmy's Burgers, this building strongly resembles the design of Der Wienerschnitzel restaurants of the same period. However, an association with the hot dog chain could not be confirmed.



Address: 7447 Lankershim Boulevard

Name: Jimmy's Burgers

Architect: George Riley

Date: 1965



Address: 7447 Lankershim Boulevard

Name: Jimmy's Burgers

Architect: George Riley

Date: 1965

Context: Other Context, 1850-1980

Theme: Events or Series of Events, 1850-1980

The Other Context is used to capture unusual or unique property types for which a specific theme has not been developed. In this Survey Area, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Sun Valley portion of the Whitnall Highway Power Corridor. Whitnall Highway was to be a portion of an early parkway system for the San Fernando Valley which was planned but not entirely built. While power lines were always an element of the 1927 design of the corridor, they were probably first installed between 1935 and 1939, when power from the Hoover Dam arrived in Los Angeles.

Also identified in the Survey Area is the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants, an organization dedicated the preservation of California's native flora. Payne was an English horticulturalist, landscape designer, and botanist best known for his work in Southern California. He opened his first nursery 1915. After relocating several times, in 1966 fellow nurseryman Eddie Merrill donated the current 20-acre site for the establishment of the Theodore Payne Foundation to carry on Payne's work.



Location: Whitnall Highway
Name: Whitnall Highway Power Corridor
Date: 1927



Location: Whitnall Highway
Name: Whitnall Highway Power Corridor
Date: 1927



Address: 10459 Tuxford Street
Name: Theodore Payne Foundation
Date: 1966



Address: 10459 Tuxford Street
Name: Theodore Payne Foundation
Date: 1966

Context: Other Context, 1850-1980
Theme: Design/Construction, 1850-1980

The Other Context is used to capture unusual or unique property types for which a specific theme has not been developed. In this Survey Area, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate a 1930s concrete bridge which carries San Fernando Road over the Tujunga Wash.



Location: San Fernando Road between Brandford and Truesdale
Name: San Fernando Road/Tujunga Wash Bridge
Date: 1935



Location: San Fernando Road between Brandford and Truesdale
Name: San Fernando Road/Tujunga Wash Bridge
Date: 1935

For Further Reading

The following is a list of general sources on the history and development of Sun Valley and La Tuna Canyon. This list is not comprehensive but is being provided for informational purposes.

Bearchell, Charles A. and Larry D. Fried. *The San Fernando Valley: Then and Now*. Windsor Publications, 1988.

Roderick, Kevin. *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2001.

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