



Supplemental Historic Resources Survey Report

Industrial Zone Properties in the South Los Angeles Community Plan Area



Prepared for:

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



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Project Overview

This supplemental historic resources survey report (“Supplemental Survey Report”) summarizes additional field work conducted for SurveyLA in the industrially-zoned areas of the South Los Angeles Community Plan Area (CPA).¹ This survey report is to be used in conjunction with the main survey report and associated appendices for this CPA, published in March 2012.² All survey work was conducted according to SurveyLA methodology as discussed in the South Los Angeles main survey report.

Project Team

Additional survey work in the South Los Angeles CPA was conducted by Architectural Resources Group. Personnel included Katie Horak, Principal and project manager; Mary Ringhoff, Associate; and Evanne St. Charles. Additional assistance was provided by intern Christina Park.

Survey Area

Description of Industrial Zone Areas

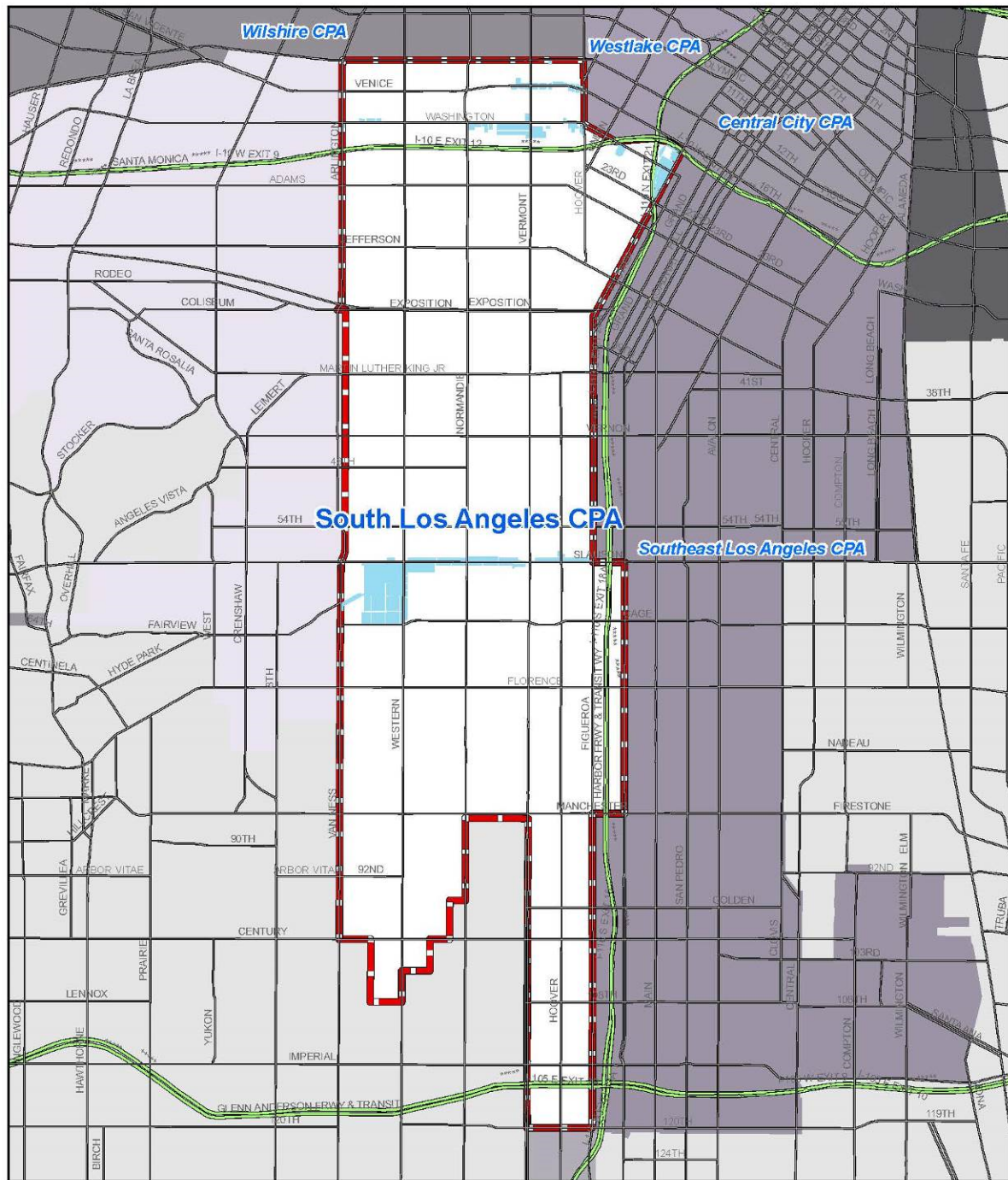
The survey area (“Survey Area”) includes approximately 1,152 industrially-zoned parcels in the north and central portions of the South Los Angeles CPA. Of these, approximately 994 parcels were surveyed by SurveyLA. SurveyLA generally does not include properties constructed after 1980 or resources that have been designated under Federal, state, or local programs. The map below illustrates the boundaries of the CPA and the location of industrially-zoned parcels.

Within the South Los Angeles CPA, industrially-zoned areas are located along portions of West Washington Boulevard and Venice Boulevard and in a small area bounded by Interstate 10, Interstate 110, and South Figueroa Street, all in the northern part of the CPA. In the central part of the CPA, industrially-zoned areas are found primarily along West Slauson Avenue and in a cohesive area bounded by Slauson, South Western Avenue, West Gage Avenue, and South Wilton Place. This area is crossed by the historic Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway line (now defunct).

¹ When this CPA was originally surveyed for SurveyLA, the Industrial Development context for the Citywide Historic Context Statement had not been developed. Therefore, industrially-zoned parcels could not be surveyed at that time. The context has since been completed and survey teams have returned to this CPA to survey industrial parcels.

² The main survey report and all appendices for the South Los Angeles CPA can be found at <http://preservation.lacity.org/surveyla-findings-and-reports>.

Survey Area Map with Industrially-Zoned Parcels



Industrial Zoning



Los Angeles
Department
of City Planning

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South Los Angeles CPA Survey Area



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Industrial Zone Areas Development History

In the years following Los Angeles' founding at mid-nineteenth century, industries in the city were few and largely agriculture based. Industrial uses were confined to areas in and around downtown, which was the center of the new city. The arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1876 helped to further spur industrial growth, and by the 1880s, industries relied heavily on these rail lines as the primary means of exporting manufactured goods to other parts of the country. With the discovery of oil in Los Angeles in the 1890s, the construction of the Port of Los Angeles (1906) and the Panama Canal (1914), and the opening of the Owens Valley Aqueduct in 1913, manufacturers from across the country came to Los Angeles, hoping to take advantage of its cheap power and water, and readily available transportation network.³

By the early 1900s, the need for separating industrial development from the city's booming residential sector was apparent. Early on, deed restrictions were used by residents to create a barrier between themselves and heavy industry; however, as manufacturing continued to increase, the City sought a more wide-reaching solution to the problem. In 1906, Los Angeles' first industrial district was formed, likely on land adjacent to the Salt Lake, Southern Pacific, and Santa Fe Railroads east of downtown.⁴ Additional districts followed, most of them established along rail lines or clustered near the port in San Pedro.

The creation of these industrially-zoned districts led to the concentration of a range of industrial property types in areas such as South Los Angeles. The industrial development of the South Los Angeles CPA followed roughly the same pattern as its residential and commercial development, starting in the northern portion in the early 20th century and extending southward over time with the establishment of transportation (rail and automobile) arteries. The industrially-zoned areas on and adjacent to the Washington Boulevard and Venice Boulevard streetcar routes were not appreciably different from the surrounding commercially-zoned areas, developing a mix of light industrial operations like printing shops, small-scale factories, and small warehouse/distribution facilities along with commercial retail and mixed-use properties.

Smaller industrially-zoned areas developed within the CPA during the 1920s and '30s, largely containing the same mix of light manufacturing and streetcar commercial businesses seen on Washington and Venice; areas along railroad lines, like the industrial parcels adjacent to Slauson Avenue, also contained operations like planing mills. One unusual pocket was a grouping of film distribution facilities associated with major motion picture studios, near the intersection of Washington and S. Vermont Avenue. These ranged in size and appearance, with some housed in purpose-built, two-story industrial buildings and others in smaller retail blocks.

By the mid-1920s, a large and discrete industrial area had developed within the central portion of the CPA, oriented toward the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway line. Bounded roughly by Slauson Avenue, South Western Avenue, West Gage Avenue, and South Wilton Place, this area housed a diverse range of manufacturing and warehousing operations, including bakery complexes, furniture factories, and facilities for producing glass and other building materials. Starting in the late 1930s-early 1940s, the area came to include other industries like specialized automobile parts

³ LSA Associates, "Draft Historic Context Statement: SurveyLA Industrial Development," August 26, 2011, 4-7.

⁴ LSA Associates, 7.

manufacturers and a plastics factory. Existing operations like the Hostess Bakery continued their original uses well into the post-World War II period, with Hostess completing a major 1950s upgrade to its 1924 plant that would continue its function until the company declared bankruptcy in 2012. While few of the area's properties contain their original occupants now, and many of the individual properties have experienced extensive alterations, its industrial character remains intact.

Summary of Findings

The following discussion of Contexts, Themes, and Property Types relates to resources on industrially-zoned parcels identified and recorded as eligible for designation.

Summary of Property Types

The South Los Angeles CPA contains a diverse range of extant industrial property types, primarily representing industrial development between the early 1920s and the early 1940s, with a few post-World War II examples. The CPA also contains commercial properties located in industrially-zoned areas, primarily along the former streetcar routes on W. Washington Boulevard and W. Venice Boulevard.

Industrial and commercial property types that were documented and evaluated as historically, culturally, or architecturally significant include factories, warehouses, bakeries, retail and mixed-use commercial buildings, film distribution facilities, a planing mill, a daylight factory, and a dog and cat hospital.

Summary of Contexts and Themes

Many of the themes developed for the Industrial Development context of the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement are represented in the Survey Area. The following is a sampling of resources recorded in the area under industrial themes as well as commercial and architectural themes.

For a list of all resources identified in the Survey Area see the *South Los Angeles Community Plan Area Industrial Zone Area Supplemental Appendices* at HistoricPlacesLA.org or SurveyLA.org.

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980
Sub-Context: Manufacturing for the Masses, 1883-1989
Theme: Food Processing, 1883-1965
Sub-Theme: Bakeries, 1887-1965

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate historic bakeries found in industrially-zoned areas of South Los Angeles; three intact examples of this property type were identified, all in the area of W. 62nd Street. The Los Angeles Biscuit Company and Langendorf bakeries are single buildings from the late 1920s-early 1930s and represent regionally-scaled industrial bakery operations. The Hostess Bakery Complex is a multi-building historic district originally built and occupied by Hostess, home of the famed Twinkie, Sno Ball, and Cupcake. The facility started here in 1924, was added onto over the years, and partially incorporated the older buildings into its new “State of the Art” facility in 1952. The complex remained in continuous operation in South Los Angeles until 2012, when Hostess declared bankruptcy and closed.



Name: Hostess Bakery Complex
Location: S. St. Andrews Pl. at W. 62nd St.
Period of Significance: 1924-2012



Name: Langendorf United Bakeries, Inc.
Address: 1870 W. 62nd St.
Date: 1930



Name: Los Angeles Biscuit Company Bakery
Address: 2010 W. 62nd St.
Date: 1926

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980
Sub-Context: Manufacturing for the Masses, 1883-1989
Theme: Factories, 1887-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate factories that produced goods for the public at large but did not fall under the other Themes in this Context, such as bakeries and flour mills. These included factories manufacturing a variety of products, from art glass to furniture to plastics. Dating from the late 1920s to the late 1940s, these factories represent small-scale manufacturing and are all located in the industrial area centered on W. 62nd Street and S. St. Andrews Place. They are distinguished by their utilitarian architecture, proximity to a historic rail line, and relative rarity within the South Los Angeles CPA; few intact examples of this property type remain.



Name: Los Angeles Art Glass Co.
Address: 6000 S. Gramercy Pl.
Date: 1926



Name: Bauman Bros. Furniture Manufacturing
Address: 6236 S. St. Andrews Pl.
Date: 1928



Name: J&J Cash, Inc.
Address: 6211 S. Gramercy Pl.
Date: 1927



Name: Allied Plastics
Address: 6231 S. Manhattan Pl.
Date: 1946

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980
Sub-Context: Manufacturing for the Masses, 1883-1989
Theme: Automobile Production, 1920-1965
Sub-Theme: Automobile Parts Manufacturing, 1920-1965

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two examples of industrial machine shops used for manufacturing automobile parts; both date to the early 1940s and are located in the industrial area centered on W. 62nd Street and S. St. Andrews Place. The Offenhauser Engineering Company shop was established in 1940; after being purchased by Meyer & Drake Engineering in 1946, its auto parts manufacturing use continued until at least 1967. Offenhauser's high-performance engines were prized by car racing enthusiasts and represent the sub-industry of custom auto part manufacturing. The nearby Sampson Motors facility opened in 1942. The properties illustrate the economic importance of automobile production in South Los Angeles during the mid-20th century.



Name: Offenhauser Engineering Co.
Address: 2001 W. Gage St.
Date: 1940



Name: Sampson Motors, Inc.
Address: 1936 W. 62nd St.
Date: 1942

Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Early Industrial Development, 1880-1945

The Early Industrial Development theme was used to evaluate two properties in South Los Angeles, both of which date to the 1920s and are rare intact examples of industrial development dating to the early 20th century. The F.D. Butzer Planing Mill, established in 1923, is now the Foster Planing Mill and has served the same function since its founding. The brick warehouse building at 1865 W. Cordova Street was built in 1927 as a warehouse and distribution facility for phonograph records. Both properties illustrate the development of the South Los Angeles area during its earliest period of industrial growth.



Name: F.D. Butzer Planing Mill/Foster Planing Mill
Address: 1258 W. 58th St.
Date: 1923



Address: 1865 W. Cordova St.
Date: 1927

Context: Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Theme: Industrial Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

Sub-Theme: Support Services Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two examples of an unusual historic property type: industrial film storage and distribution facilities associated with major motion picture studios. The MGM Film Exchange (1929) on Cordova Street and the Paramount Pictures Distributing Company building (1935) on W. 20th Street are two-story industrial buildings built in popular architectural styles of the time (Art Deco and Streamline Moderne, respectively). These two properties appear to be the only intact examples left in what used to be a grouping of film distribution facilities adjacent to S. Vermont Avenue; most of the properties were located in the area now occupied by the West Adams Preparatory School campus.



Name: Metro Goldwyn Mayer Film Exchange
Address: 1620 W. Cordova St.
Date: 1929



Name: Paramount Pictures Distributing Co., Inc.
Address: 1613 W. 20th St.
Date: 1935

Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

Theme: Streetcar Commercial Development, 1873-1934

The South Los Angeles CPA was well-served by streetcar lines in the 1920s and 1930s, including a Los Angeles Railway line on Washington Boulevard and a Pacific Electric Railway line on Venice Boulevard. One- and two-story commercial strips lined both routes, but with changing trends in commercial development, many commercial buildings from the era have been altered or demolished. The Streetcar Commercial Development theme was used to evaluate examples of early 20th century commercial development located in industrially-zoned areas along these former streetcar routes. One of the properties, 1907 S. Vermont Avenue, is also significant as an early branch of California Bank, founded in 1903; this branch (which included retail storefronts and two early film distribution companies) was constructed in 1922 to expand the bank's services westward.



Address: 1907 S. Vermont Ave.
Date: 1922



Address: 1856 W. Washington Blvd.
Date: 1922



Address: 1696 W. Washington Blvd.
Date: 1926



Address: 1453 W. Venice Blvd.
Date: 1930

Context: Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980

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

Theme: Related Responses to Modernism, 1926-1970

Sub-Theme: Art Deco, 1926-1939

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate one significant example of Art Deco architecture in an industrially-zoned area of the South Los Angeles CPA: Green Dog and Cat Hospital on W. Slauson Avenue. This property exhibits a high quality of design and possess architectural characteristics associated with the Art Deco style, including vertical orientation, smooth stucco cladding, and geometric-shaped ornamentation arranged vertically on the façade. The property is also significant under the Commercial Identity Context/Theme as the founding and long-term location of Green Dog and Cat Hospital, in continuous operation here since 1934.



Name: Green Dog and Cat Hospital

Address: 1544 W. Slauson Ave.

Date: 1934

For Further Reading

Books and other published material

Bottles, Scott L. *Los Angeles and the Automobile: The Making of a Modern City*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

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