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**Draft Supplemental Historic Resource Evaluation Report for Roosevelt Senior High School,  
Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California**

Dear Ms. Flores:

This letter is a Supplemental Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) of the historical significance of the Roosevelt Senior High School (SH) campus, a Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) school located at 456 South Mathews Street in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California. ASM Affiliates, Inc. (ASM) prepared this evaluation in advance of a comprehensive modernization project at the campus. Contained in this letter are the results of ASM's findings regarding the association of Roosevelt SH with significant themes and events in Latino history. The evaluation is limited to the school's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A and B and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) under Criteria 1 and 2, and as a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) historical resource. The evaluation was conducted in conformance with NRHP guidance on conducting historic building evaluations (specifically NRHP Bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* [1998]) and the California Office of Historic Preservation's (SHPO) *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources 1995, with Status Codes updated 2003*, Technical Assistance Series #7 *How to Nominate a Resource to the California Register of Historical Resources*, and CEQA.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The approximately 22.7-acre Roosevelt SH campus is bounded by East 4th Street on the northeast, Mott Street on the southeast, East 6th Street on the southwest, and South Mathews Street on the northwest. Hollenbeck Middle School occupies the parcel across East 6th Street. The remainder of the surrounding neighborhood is primarily a mix of single- and multiple-family residential properties, with a scattering of small commercial properties on East 6th Street. The parcel (APN 5185-004-929) is located within the Boyle Heights Community Plan Area (CPA) of the City of Los Angeles (Figure 1).

This report considers the school's eligibility for listing in the NRHP and the CRHR under Criteria A/1 and B/2, and as a CEQA historical resource. Evaluation was guided by the *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870–1969*, specifically the theme of *LAUSD and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1980* (LAUSD 2014), and the *SurveyLA Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* (GPA and Nicolaidis 2015), under the themes of *Education 1930–1980* and *The Civil Rights Movement, 1920–1980*. Particular attention was paid to the role of Roosevelt SH, along with four other East and Central Los Angeles (L.A.) LAUSD high

schools, in the 1968 student walkouts (known as “Blowouts”), which were an important early activity in the Chicano civil rights movement.<sup>1</sup>

A prior HRER, prepared by PCR in 2015, recommended Roosevelt SH not eligible as a historical resource under any criteria. LAUSD determined that the prior evaluation did not adequately consider the school’s historical association within the *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870–1969* and the *SurveyLA Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* (GPA and Nicolaidis 2015). This supplemental evaluation addresses those potential historical associations, relevant to eligibility under Criteria A/1 and B/2.

The 2014 SurveyLA field survey of the Boyle Heights CPA found the Roosevelt SH campus to be potentially eligible as a historic district under Criteria A/1, for its association with the Chicano civil rights movement in 1968, and under Criteria C/3, specifying that only two buildings that date to the 1930s were considered (Architectural Resources Group 2014a).

After careful consideration of the historical significance of the 1968 East L.A. high school Blowouts within the context of Latino civil rights and the activities that took place on the Roosevelt SH campus, ASM recommends Roosevelt SH eligible as a historic district under Criteria A/1. ASM also recommends Roosevelt SH eligible as a historic district under Criteria B/2 for its association with Salvatore (“Sal”) Castro, who played a central role in the 1968 protests at Roosevelt and four other East L.A. high schools. Castro became a symbol of the Blowouts, and was the only teacher to participate.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This assessment was prepared by ASM to determine the historical significance of the Roosevelt SH campus, specifically as it relates to the student protests of 1968 and 1970 (Criteria A/1) and to important persons associated with those events (Criteria B/2). In reaching the conclusions presented in this report, ASM also considered the relative historical significance of four other LAUSD high schools associated with the student walkouts, also known as “Blowouts”: Lincoln, Garfield, Belmont, and Wilson. The results of this analysis will assist LAUSD in determining whether the campus should be considered as historically significant for planning purposes in compliance with CEQA. This property is not listed in the NRHP or the CRHR. This report expands on SurveyLA’s identification of the school as a potential historic district under Criteria A/1 for its association with the 1968 Chicano civil rights movement (Architectural Resources Group 2014b:117).

The report contains the following sections: methodology, a summary of previous evaluations, historic overview specific to Chicano events and the Civil Rights Movement at Roosevelt SH and other LAUSD high schools, survey findings, eligibility criteria, significance evaluation of Roosevelt SH, and references. Also included are figures (Attachment A), suggestions for an interpretative plan (Attachment B), and a more comprehensive bibliography of readings and sources relating to civil rights in LAUSD schools (Attachment C).

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Following Escobar’s (1993) definition, in this report, the term Chicano is used to identify people involved in political action, in other words, people in the Chicano movement. The terms Mexican and Mexican-American generally signify people of Mexican descent who are not specifically part of the movement. Latino refers to a broader group comprising any person of Latin American descent who lives in the United States.

## METHODOLOGY

To begin this evaluation, ASM conducted background research into the Blowouts and the Roosevelt SH campus, concentrating on the Chicano civil rights activities in 1968 and 1970. Sources included databases of historic newspapers such as the *Los Angeles Times* and *La Raza*, Los Angeles County Assessor's maps, historic photographs, documentary and fictionalized video accounts of the Chicano civil rights movement at schools in East Los Angeles, and historic aerial photographs. Historic architectural drawings and construction documents provided by the LAUSD Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) were reviewed prior to visiting the campus. A number of academic and professional sources were consulted, including PhD dissertations and articles from scholarly periodicals, and a number of books on the subject of the Blowouts were consulted (titles are listed in Attachment C: Bibliography). Attempts were made to contact teachers and students who were associated with Roosevelt SH during the walkouts, including teachers who taught students about the Blowouts in subsequent years. Roosevelt SH yearbooks from 1968 through 1971 held at the Roosevelt SH Library were searched for information about the campus at the time of the protests. Los Angeles Board of Education minutes available at the UCLA Special Collections were examined for pertinent information. A site survey was conducted by ASM Architectural Historians Shannon Davis and Marilyn Novell on February 9, 2017, to document the campus through photographs and extensive notes. Particular attention was paid during the survey to identifying on-campus sites associated with the 1968 walkouts, based on background research.

ASM carefully considered the Roosevelt SH campus as potentially significant under NRHP and CRHR, for its association with important events in Chicano history (Criteria A/1) and important people (Criteria B/2) associated with the 1968 walkouts at Roosevelt and other LAUSD high schools, as well as protest activities that continued at Roosevelt through 1970.

ASM reviewed the SurveyLA findings for the Boyle Heights CPA and other prior reports, including a preliminary historic resource evaluation report. ASM referred to the *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870-1969* (LAUSD 2014) for guidance in the evaluation of the Roosevelt SH campus as a historic district within the context of LAUSD's nearly 800 campuses and the *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* prepared for City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning (GPA and Nicolaidis 2015).

## PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

ASM reviewed the SurveyLA findings for the Boyle Heights CPA (Architectural Resources Group 2014a) and other prior reports, including a preliminary HRER for Roosevelt SH (PCR 2015).

### *SurveyLA*

The SurveyLA report for the Boyle Heights CPA found Roosevelt SH to be an excellent example of an LAUSD high school under Criteria A/1 and C/3. SurveyLA recommended the school as significant under Criteria A/1 for its association with the East L.A. Blowouts. The period of significance for this context is 1968, the year that the Blowouts occurred. The campus was found to be a significant example of institutional development of high schools associated with the Chicano civil rights movement under the theme of *Education and Ethnic/Cultural Associations, 1876-1980*. According to the Boyle Heights CPA survey report, "the walkouts represent a pivotal moment in the Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s" (Architectural Resources Group 2014b:114-117).

The SurveyLA report also recommended the campus eligible under Criteria C/3. According to the report:

the school represents LAUSD campus planning and design concepts from the post-1933 Long Beach *Earthquake* period of school construction, with a period of significance of

1936, when the campus was reconstructed to its present configuration. Although multiple phases of development are represented on the campus, the evaluation pertains only to the former administration building and a classroom building that date to the 1930s [Building 1 and Building 7]. The classroom building is the work of noted Los Angeles architect Sumner Spaulding [Architectural Resources Group 2014b:114-117].

Although Roosevelt SH was not considered for eligibility under Criteria B/2, the SurveyLA report mentions several significant people who graduated from Roosevelt over the course of the years, including former Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

In the SurveyLA *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement*, prepared after the Boyle Heights survey was conducted, the student walkouts of 1968 are cited as an important early activity of the growing Chicano movement (also known as the Chicano Civil Rights Movement or El Movimiento) (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:59-60).

### ***Preliminary Historic Resource Evaluation Report***

The *Preliminary Historic Resource Evaluation Report for Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School* (PCR 2015) considered Roosevelt HS under several LAUSD themes: *Progressive Education Movement: Pre-1933 Long Beach Earthquake School Plants (1910-1933)*, *Post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake School Plants (1933-1945)*, and *Educating the Baby Boom—The Postwar Modern, Functionalist School Plant (1945-1969)*. The evaluation found the campus not eligible under any of these themes because of lack of integrity. However, the discussion is restricted to the school's significance as it relates to architecture (Criteria C/3), whereas these themes are clearly defined in the LAUSD Historic Context Statement (LAUSD 2014) as associated with significant events (Criteria A/1).

Under Criteria A/1, the PCR report finds Roosevelt SH not eligible as it relates to activities by the Chicano Liberation Front (CLF), which “do not appear to have been a significant event that shaped the history of the campus or the pursuits of the terrorist group” (PCR 2015:10). This report appears to disregard the 1968 Blowouts, in which the CLF could not have participated because the group was not formed until 1970 or 1971. A self-described revolutionary organization, the group claimed responsibility for numerous bombings in Southern California, including those at Roosevelt SH in 1970 (Notes from Aztlán 2014).

Under Criteria B/2, the PCR report finds Roosevelt SH not eligible because it “is not identified with the productive life of any individual District teachers, principals, administrators, students, or any other persons important in our past” (PCR 2015:10).

Regardless, the report is valuable for its detailed history of the expansion and construction of the campus and for its descriptions of the campus and the individual buildings.

## **BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THE EAST LOS ANGELES BLOWOUTS**

The SurveyLA *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* describes the roots of segregation and discrimination against Mexican students in Los Angeles public schools in the Progressive era, when “Americanization” was the goal in educating immigrants (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:43-44). Mexican-Americans at the time had a similar attitude, and in 1929, the oldest Latino civil rights group in the United States (U.S.), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), was founded with a mission of empowering Mexican-Americans through assimilation. A combination of good intentions and prejudice against Mexicans over decades led to the placement of Mexican students in vocational rather than academic programs and resulted in widespread segregation in the schools. These conditions had become institutionalized by the 1940s, setting the stage for the 1954 landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision

that officially ended school segregation, although factors such as ethnically separate neighborhoods, language, and economic status contributed to a continuation of de facto segregation (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:52-56).

Although it is difficult to trace the East L.A. Blowouts to one particular group or person, the Mexican American Youth Leadership Conferences for high school students held at Camp Hess Kramer were certainly a contributing factor. Hundreds of Mexican-American student leaders gathered at the annual conferences, which were intended to promote citizenship but also became forums for discussing problems at the schools (Tejeda 2011:38). In 1963, Sal Castro had just begun his teaching career at Belmont High and volunteered at the conference. There he found hundreds of students from all over L.A. County who all expressed similar grievances about poor conditions in the schools and lack of opportunity for Mexican-American students. At the time, dropout rates for Mexican-American students in 1968 in East L.A. were among the highest in the nation: 45 percent at Roosevelt, 57 percent at Garfield, 39 percent at Lincoln, and 35 percent at Belmont. Castro described the conferences and the 1968 Blowouts as “one big package” (Ochoa 2010). The low rumble of unrest became clearly audible when Castro came across the infamous article in *Time* magazine called “Minorities: Pocho’s Progress,” which described “the bleak barrios” of East L.A. as full of “rollicking cantinas with the reek of cheap red wine and greasy taco stands and the rat-tat-tat of low-riding cars down the avenue” (Time 1967). Castro was enraged that his community and people were viewed in that way and began organizing meetings with students from Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, and a few other schools. This loose organization eventually led to the 1968 Blowouts (Ochoa 2010).<sup>2</sup>

Under this cloud of unrest, in the fall before the Blowouts took place, Castro was teaching at Lincoln High. Students there told him they wanted to walk out in protest and asked for his help. “Don’t walk out,” Castro advised them, “organize.” A Blowout Committee was formed at four East L.A. schools (Roosevelt, Lincoln, Garfield, and Wilson), and another committee included students from all four schools. Belmont High was not among the original four schools that organized the Blowouts. Belmont had a lower percentage of Mexican-American students, but they formed their own Blowout Committee soon after and walked out on March 8, along with the other schools (Torgerson 1968). The result was what some called the “Mexican-American revolution of 1968.” In the largest chain of events of its kind, for a week and a half students, parents, activists, and teachers participated in walkouts and demonstrations, made speeches, and held sit-ins. Anxious officials responded by calling in law-enforcement and holding emergency sessions of the Board of Education (Torgerson 1968).

Heeding Castro’s advice, students had taken their grievances to the Board before organizing the walkouts. The Board invited them to speak at the upcoming meeting, but the students notified Board member Julian Nava of their intention to walk out of school and instead requested that Board members meet with them the following morning at a neutral location—either Hazard Park or adjacent to a nearby school district office (Board 1968a). Nava, the only Mexican-American on the Board, played an important role in this meeting. He introduced the students’ list of demands, a Brown Berets pamphlet,<sup>3</sup> and an anti-walkout flyer by a Mexican-American student organization with a headline reading “NO MORNING WALKOUT!!!” The documents illustrated a lack of unity among the Mexican-American students regarding the walkouts (Sosa 2013:120).

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<sup>2</sup> The book co-authored by Sal Castro, *Blowout! Sal Castro & the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice* (García and Castro 2011), provides a detailed, first-hand chronology and description of the Blowouts. The Edward James Olmos-directed film “Walkout” was based on this book.

<sup>3</sup> The Brown Berets were an organized group of young Chicano students, many of them college students, who were self-proclaimed radical activists who espoused “Brown Power.” They participated in the organization of the walkouts and in some of the protests. They were seen by some as agitators who were responsible for the Blowouts (Torgerson 1968).

The first round of Blowouts took place at five LAUSD schools in East L.A. and near downtown. Roosevelt, as well as the other high schools that participated in the first round of protests—Lincoln, Garfield, Belmont, and Wilson—had predominately Mexican-American student populations (80 to 82 percent at Roosevelt) (Reich 1968). Preceding the planned Blowouts, on March 1, 1968, approximately 500 student protesters walked out of Wilson High in a spontaneous reaction to the cancellation of a school play that was considered inappropriate.<sup>4</sup> In solidarity, the central Blowout Committee swiftly called for walkouts at the remaining schools. Then, on Tuesday, March 5, the first organized “official” walkouts took place simultaneously at Garfield, Roosevelt, and Lincoln high schools.

At first, school and police officials did not know how to respond to the walkouts. At Lincoln High, administrators allowed the students to leave the school grounds peacefully, and police escorted them to a nearby park where they held rallies. When the walkouts began to spread to other schools, officials from the school district and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) took a harder line. At Roosevelt High on March 5, administrators locked the gates that surrounded the school to prevent striking students from leaving, and LAPD squad cars massed around the campus to intimidate the strikers (Escobar 1993:1495).

On Wednesday, March 6, students at Roosevelt walked out again and gathered outside the school on 4th Street and on Mott Street (Figures 2 and 3). At about 2 p.m., police broke up the groups of students and took several into custody. Two days later, when Roosevelt principal Thomas C. Dyer heard students discussing whether or not to walk out, he invited them to attend an assembly in the school auditorium. At the assembly, he emphasized restraint in the protests and pledged that there would be no disciplinary action as long as there was no violence. After the assembly, Dyer decided to dismiss school early and enlisted 10 or 12 teachers to escort students to exits where they would not have to cross police lines. Meanwhile, students were coming up to Dyer to report on ongoing violence against Roosevelt students. Although Dyer believed that some of the reports were exaggerated, he later stated he thought both the police and the students had overreacted (Reich 1968).

Other reports of the events vary from the account provided by Dyer. According to reports to the Board, officials alleged that students at Roosevelt left classes at the urging of outsiders, including members of the Brown Berets. Another account adds that Victoria Castro, a college student who was formerly at Roosevelt, attached her car to the locked gate in the chain-link fence and pulled it open, allowing the students out in the street (1968 Student Walkout n.d.). The crowd walked to Evergreen Park and returned to the school to urge other students to leave classes, whereupon the crowd assembled on the sidewalks outside the school. The students purportedly began hurling objects at passing motorists. The police arrived and declared an unlawful assembly, attempting to clear the sidewalks and break up the crowd. Violence reportedly ensued, and a police officer was hospitalized. The police took numerous youths into custody and placed a 15-year-old under arrest in connection with the injured officer. The administration dismissed classes, and the student demonstrators soon left (Sosa 2013:119).

On March 7, Belmont students walked out. Later that day, a large crowd began to assemble at the Board meeting (Figures 4 and 5). The group included African American students, parents, community organizers, and Chicano students and activists from East L.A. Although African American students at Jefferson High in South-Central L.A. were simultaneously protesting, they took a different approach than the Chicanos. The African American students presented only four demands, whereas the East L.A. students presented many more. The East L.A. students also had to contend with dissent from other students within the school as well as the community. Although the Jefferson students appeared to be walking out in solidarity with the

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<sup>4</sup> Wilson High was sometimes omitted from lists of the first schools to participate in the protests, perhaps because the walkout was spontaneous in that case. (The Chicano newsletter *La Raza* [March 31, 1968] shows photos of student protests at Garfield, Roosevelt, Belmont, and Lincoln.) Belmont was sometimes omitted from the earliest descriptions of the events, arguably because the school came on board with its own Blowout Committee a little later than the others. Regardless, essentially there were five schools involved in the initial Blowouts (a *Los Angeles Times* map from March 12 shows all five).

Mexican-American students, these differences resulted in separate demonstrations and distinctly different calls for change (Sosa 2013:113) (Figures 6–11).

On Friday, March 8, more than 1,000 students boycotted classes for the fourth straight day at Roosevelt, Garfield, Lincoln, and Wilson high schools. The same day, teachers at predominately black Jefferson High dismissed classes as a concession to student militants (McCurdy 1968). Nineteen juveniles and one young adult were arrested at two other schools. Student leaders vowed to continue the boycott unless the Board agreed to meet with them at Lincoln High or on some other neutral ground. The students convened at Hazard Park, 2230 Norfolk Avenue, for a mass protest. Also at the meeting were Board members Julian Nava and Ralph Richardson, and state representative Edward Roybal. Nava pledged that no disciplinary action would be taken as long as no violence [by protesters] occurred.

At a special meeting on March 11, 1968, student body representatives from Garfield, Lincoln, Wilson, Belmont, Roosevelt, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Marshall high schools spoke before the Board and presented a list of 36 demands. Meanwhile, School Superintendent Jack Crowther was seeking ways to establish control over students. In a memo dated the same day addressed to selected school administrators, Crowther set forth mandates that would assign responsibility for future demonstrations “on or adjacent to school sites caused by an individual or a group whether students or otherwise.” The memo stated that law enforcement would “be in charge of all law enforcement aspects of the situation utilizing all appropriate means available” and that school officials or community organizations were not to interfere with the operations of law enforcement. Crowther (1968a) singled out “Garfield, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Wilson in East Los Angeles; Belmont in downtown Los Angeles; and Jefferson and Carver Junior High School in South Central Los Angeles.” By establishing a policy that applied to those specific schools and not the district as a whole, all students attending these schools became suspect, regardless of their degree or lack of participation in the demonstrations (Sosa 2013:130).

At a subsequent special Board meeting on March 26, held at the Lincoln High School auditorium at the request of the students, the Board presented their responses to each of the 36 demands. Sal Castro, advisor to the protesting students, presented a student representative of the Blowout Committee from each of four schools (Lincoln, Roosevelt, Wilson, and Garfield). Presentations were also made by students, parents, and teachers from the high schools, and a member of the Brown Berets (Board 1968b). Although the Board was in agreement with many of the demands, the responses essentially refuted or defended against each, citing inaccuracy of statements regarding conditions and financial constraints. The Board also presented figures to illustrate their claim that the pupil-to-teacher ratios at the four schools were comparable to or lower than those of schools in more privileged areas (Crowther 1968b) (Figure 12).

Thirteen activists (who came to be called the East L.A. 13), including Lincoln High teacher Sal Castro, were indicted by the County Grand Jury a few months after the protests. Charged with conspiracy for having planned the demonstrations, the organizers faced a total of 66 years in prison if convicted. Charges were struck down two years later by the California State Appellate Court (Berta-Ávila et al. 2011:xi).

### ***The Legacy of the Blowouts***

In the immediate aftermath of the Blowouts, a lengthy *Los Angeles Times* article was titled with the query “Start of a Revolution?” (Torgerson 1968). The story placed the recent demonstrations within the context of the past and speculated about the future of education in East L.A. Since World War II, leaders of the Mexican-American community had been calling for “unity, change, better education, civil rights, economic opportunity, and an end to what they called second-class citizenship” (Torgerson 1968). When the students walked out in March of 1968, the community supported them. People of a previously conservative older generation jammed the school Board meetings and shouted their approval of the demonstrations, and parents joined their sons and daughters in marches and sit-ins. Within a week after the Blowouts, claims

were already being made that they heralded a powerful new unity in “brown power” that was drawing national attention and enthusiasm. Some were less optimistic about the long-term effects, saying “they’ll wait a while before they’ll believe a few thousand school children can lead the typically divided, splintered Mexican-American millions into becoming a unified power” (Torgerson 1968). They did not have to wait long.

The 1968 walkouts “focused national attention, for the first time, on urban Chicanos as a vocal, assertive minority group” (Del Olmo 1978). “It was a definite break with the past,” stated Mexican-American historian Rudy Acuña. “Before the walkouts,” he continued, “all through the civil rights movement, people said Chicanos didn’t do things the way the blacks did. But when they saw the results of the blowouts, there was no turning back” (Del Olmo 1978). Dr. Julian Nava, a member of the Board of Education during the walkouts, said “[t]he schools will not be the same hereafter” (Del Olmo 1978).

The 1968 Blowouts differed from previous protests by Mexican-Americans in that the students who walked out of schools in Los Angeles were explicit in insisting that it was education as a social institution that was failing for Latinos and in demanding educational equality. As one Latino scholar put it, “[t]he walkouts of 1968 were fundamentally important because, far from simply turning away from schooling, Chicana/o students intended to take back their schooling” (Tejeda 2011:31). Concurrent with the national climate of unrest surrounding civil rights in the 1960s, Mexican-American students in Los Angeles began to request and demand smaller classes, more Latino teachers, bilingual classes, counseling for college entrance rather than automatically channeling Latino students into vocational programs, and a curriculum that addressed Latino history and interests.

As an indication of the significance and continuing influence of the walkouts to the Mexican-American community and the population at large, the Blowouts have been the subject of numerous books and articles, both popular and academic. The events were also memorialized in a 2006 HBO film directed by Edward James Olmos titled “Walkout.” The movie, filmed at Garfield High, presents a fairly accurate but fictionalized account of the events of 1968. A 1996 four-part PBS documentary titled “Chicano!” featured the Blowouts in an episode called “Taking Back the Schools” (PBS 1996).

Many of the student organizers went on to live lives of accomplishment. Paula Crisostomo, a Lincoln High student, became a school administrator where she continues to fight for reform in education. An actor played Crisostomo as the main protagonist in the film “Walkout” (Olmos 2006). Victoria Castro was elected to the LAUSD Board, where she served as president from 1998 to 2001 (Smith 1998). Moctesuma Esparza, one of the students charged with disrupting the schools, became a successful film producer and remains an activist by creating opportunities for Chicanos in entertainment and in other fields. Harry Gamboa, Jr., became an artist and writer. Carlos Muñoz, Jr., went on to a distinguished teaching and research career in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

On the tenth anniversary of the walkouts, the effects of the protests were still being felt. The *Los Angeles Times* published an article following up on some of the major players in the 1968 events titled “No Regrets, Chicano Students Who Walked Out Say: ‘68 Protest Brought Better Education, Most Believe Strike Helped, Ex Students Say” (Del Olmo 1978). However, accounts on the twentieth anniversary of the Blowouts depicted East L.A. schools as having changed little, citing dropout rates of 30 percent to 49 percent at five schools (Belmont, Garfield, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Wilson), although the number of Latino teachers and administrators had increased markedly, and at that time there were 6,000 bilingual classrooms (Woo 1988). In another look back 40 years later, a *Los Angeles Times* story titled “‘68 to ‘08—We’re Not Finished” claimed that although there had been improvements in the conditions of Latino students, such as the end to the previous ban on speaking Spanish in school, there was much more to be accomplished (Los Angeles Times 2008). Regardless of the failure to achieve all the goals of the protesters, the Blowouts had a broad effect on the equal treatment of all minorities in the educational system and on civil rights in general.

Teaching materials reflecting on the fortieth anniversary of the Blowouts emphasized the importance of teaching Chicana/Chicano high school students about their history in the schools to enable them to see that so-called student failure is not rooted in individual students, families, and teachers but in an ongoing legacy of educational injustice (Ochoa 2008). Thus, the Blowouts continue to be taught today, at Roosevelt as well as at other schools.

## **SURVEY FINDINGS**

An intensive pedestrian site survey of the Roosevelt campus conducted on February 9, 2017, by ASM architectural historians found the campus essentially unchanged from the conditions reported in the June 19, 2015, preliminary evaluation (PCR 2015). During the survey, each extant building constructed by 1968 and earlier was viewed and recorded through extensive photography and field notes. Interiors were recorded when accessible, including the halls, steps, and auditorium in Building 1, which were confirmed to be directly related to the 1968 Blowouts. Careful attention was paid to potential historic district boundaries and integrity of potential contributing resources and the district as a whole to the period of the Blowouts.

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

### *National Register of Historic Places*

Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's NRHP is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The NRHP is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity and:

- A. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or have yielded, or
- D. may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Note that only criteria A and B are applicable to this evaluation.

### *Integrity*

In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance. The NRHP publication *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin 15, establishes how to evaluate the integrity of a property: "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance" (National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places 1998). The evaluation of integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to the concept of integrity. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, aspects of integrity:

1. *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
2. *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
3. *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property, and refers to the character of the site and the relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often refers to the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. These features can be either natural or manmade, including vegetation, paths, fences, and relationships between other features or open space.
4. *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period or time, and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
5. *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory, and can be applied to the property as a whole, or to individual components.
6. *Feeling* is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, when taken together, convey the property's historic character.
7. *Association* is the direct link between the important historic event or person and a historic property.

### ***California Register of Historical Resources***

The CRHR program encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural significance; identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA. The criteria established for eligibility for the CRHR are directly comparable to the national criteria established for the NRHP.

In order to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, a building, object, or structure must satisfy at least one of the following four criteria. Note that only criteria 1 and 2 are applicable to this evaluation.

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Historical resources eligible for listing in the CRHR must also retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. For the purposes of eligibility for the CRHR, integrity is defined as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance” (California Office of Historic Preservation 2001). This general definition is generally strengthened by the more specific definition offered by the NRHP—the criteria and guidelines on which the CRHR criteria and guidelines are based upon.

### ***California Environmental Quality Act***

CEQA Section 15064.5 *Determining the Significance of Impacts to Archeological and Historical Resources* requires that all private and public activities not specifically exempted be evaluated against the potential for environmental damage, including effects to historical resources. Historical resources are recognized as part of the environment under CEQA. It defines historical resources as “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California.”

Lead agencies have a responsibility to evaluate historical resources against the CRHR criteria prior to making a finding as to a proposed Project’s impacts to historical resources. Mitigation of adverse impacts is required if the proposed Project will cause substantial adverse change to a historical resource. Substantial adverse change includes demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of an historical resource would be impaired. While demolition and destruction are fairly obvious significant impacts, it is more difficult to assess when change, alteration, or relocation crosses the threshold of substantial adverse change. The CEQA Guidelines provide that a Project that demolishes or alters those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance (i.e., its character-defining features) can be considered to materially impair the resource’s significance. The CRHR is used in the consideration of historical resources relative to significance for purposes of CEQA. The CRHR includes resources listed in, or formally determined eligible for listing in, the NRHP, as well as some California State Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest. Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks or landmark districts), or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory, may be eligible for listing in the CRHR and are presumed to be significant resources for purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise.

Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be a “historical resource” if it:

1. Is listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC Section 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).
2. Is included in a local register of historical resources, or is identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g).

### ***SurveyLA Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement***

To evaluate the significance of Roosevelt SH, ASM referred to the *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* prepared for City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning (GPA and Nicolaides 2015). The SurveyLA Latino context identifies Roosevelt SH as a known resource associated with Latino history (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:62). Applicable themes are *Education 1930–1980* and the *Civil Rights Movement, 1920-1980*. The historic context narrative related to the theme includes a section titled “1940-1980: The Struggle for Educational Equity,” which discusses the landmark court cases that addressed segregation in California schools and the student walkouts at Roosevelt SH and other schools in the 1960s (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:57-61). The Latino context cites the 1968 Blowouts as an important early Chicano activity and states that youth activism was a critical factor in the Chicano movement, noting the actions of groups like the Brown Berets, a group of activists who helped organize and participated in the 1968 Blowouts, and student protestors at high schools and colleges demanding educational equity and cultural recognition (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:71). Applicable contexts and themes are as follows:

### **Theme 3: EDUCATION, 1930-1980**

A resource evaluated under this theme may be significant in the areas of education, ethnic heritage, and/or social history for its association with the Latino community. Although Latinos played a central role in the creation of the public school system in Los Angeles, they were marginalized by the end of the nineteenth century and spent much of the twentieth century struggling for equal treatment.

*Period of Significance:* 1930-1980

*Period of Significance Justification:* The period of significance begins in 1930. Even though Latinos were primarily responsible for creating the public school system in Los Angeles, the earliest known resources related to this theme do not appear until the 1930s. 1980 is the end date for SurveyLA and may be extended as part of future survey work.

*Geographic Locations:* Citywide, but with the highest concentration in the areas between Downtown and Boyle Heights

*Area(s) of Significance:* Education, Ethnic Heritage, Social History

*Criterion:* A

*Associated Property Types:* Institutional–Elementary School, Middle School, High School, and Language School

*Property Type Description:* Property types under this theme include public elementary, middle, and high schools and private language schools or institutions that sought to teach Mexican immigrants English as well as American values and customs

*Property Type Significance:* Properties significant under this theme represent the limitations and opportunities of education for Latinos in Los Angeles

*Eligibility Standards:* Represents an important association with the Latino community in Los Angeles

*Character-Defining/Associative Features*

- For NRHP, properties associated with events that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- As a whole, retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance (for campuses)
- May be important for its association with historic figures (who attended a school) for the cumulative importance of those figures to the community
- May represent a significant event or movement in the social history of Los Angeles
- May represent issues relating to equal access to education or school desegregation

*Integrity Considerations*

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Integrity is based on the period during which the significant institution occupied the property
- Some original materials may have been removed or altered
- The mid-1930s may be considered a baseline for evaluating integrity of Design, Materials, and Workmanship as virtually every school in Los Angeles was rehabilitated after 1933

#### **Theme 4: CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, 1920-1980**

##### ***Theme: Important Events and Institutions in the Latino Civil Rights Movement***

A resource evaluated under this theme may be significant in the areas of ethnic heritage and social history for its association with the Latino civil rights movement. By 1900, Mexicans began forming organizations to foster community cohesion and mutual support. The Latino civil rights movement gained critical momentum in the 1930s as it intersected with the labor movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, the struggle for civil rights accelerated with the rise of the Chicano movement.

*Geographic Locations:* Citywide, but with the highest concentration in the areas between Downtown and Boyle Heights

*Area(s) of Significance:* Ethnic Heritage, Social History

*Criteria:* A/1

*Associated Property Types:*

- Institutional – Church Building and Courthouse
- Commercial – Retail Building and Office Building

*Property Type Description:* Property types under this theme include commercial and institutional buildings used by groups that played an important role in the Latino civil rights movement. In addition, property types include the locations of important events such as demonstrations.

*Eligibility Standards:* Is directly associated with events and institutions that were pivotal in the history of the Latino civil rights movement

*Character-Defining/Associative Features*

- For NRHP, properties associated with events that date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance
- Interior spaces that functioned as important gathering/meeting places must remain readable from the period of significance
- May be associated with Chicano women's groups and organizations

*Integrity Considerations:* Should retain integrity of Location, Feeling, Design, and Association from the period of significance

##### ***Theme: Important Persons in the Latino Civil Rights Movement, 1920-1980***

A resource evaluated under this theme may be significant in the area of ethnic heritage and social history for its association with persons who played an important role in the Latino civil rights movement. In many cases, significant individuals were involved with numerous groups, some of which only functioned briefly. Thus, the residence of an individual is often the property that best represents their productive life.

*Period of Significance:* 1920-1980

*Justification:* The period of significance begins in 1920 with the rise of mutual aid societies, or *mutualistas*. 1980 is the end date for SurveyLA and may be extended as part of future survey work.

*Geographic Locations:* Citywide, but with the highest concentration in the areas between Downtown and Boyle Heights

*Area(s) of Significance:* Ethnic Heritage, Social History

*Criteria: B/2*

*Associated Property Types:* Residential – Single-Family Residence and Multi-Family Residence

*Property Type Description:* Property types under this theme include single-family and multi-family residential buildings that were the homes of prominent Latino leaders in the civil rights movement

*Property Type Significance:* Properties significant under this theme are directly associated with important persons in the Latino civil rights movement

*Eligibility Standards*

- Individual must be proven to have played a significant and influential role in the Latino civil rights movement
- Is associated with a person who made important individual contributions to the Latino civil rights movement
- Is directly associated with the productive life of the person

*Character-Defining/Associative Features*

- For NRHP, properties associated with individuals whose significant accomplishments date from the last 50 years must possess exceptional importance
- For residential properties, the individual must have resided in the property during the period in which he or she achieved significance
- For multi-family properties, the apartment or room occupied by the person must be readable from the period of significance
- Retains most of the essential character-defining features from the period of significance

*Integrity Considerations*

- Should retain integrity of Location, Feeling, and Association from the period of significance
- Some materials may have been removed or altered

***Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement***

The *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870–1969* (HCS) (LAUSD 2014) establishes guidelines for evaluating the significance of LAUSD campuses. The HCS outlines historic contexts and themes, with eligibility standards, character-defining features, and integrity considerations for each. The Roosevelt SH campus was considered under the appropriate contexts and themes, and associated property types, period of significance, areas of significance, and geographic location. The applicable context framework, applicable eligibility standards, and integrity considerations for both individual significance and significance as a historic district are provided in the HCS (LAUSD 2014:141–143) and reiterated below. Note that

*Context:* Public and Private Institutional Development / Education

*Theme:* LAUSD and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1980

*Property Type:* Institutional/Educational

*Property Subtypes:* Elementary Schools, Junior High Schools, and High Schools

*Period of Significance:* 1954 to 1980

*Area of Significance:* Education/Ethnic Heritage

*Geographic Location:* Citywide

*Criteria: A/1 and/or B/2*

*Eligibility Standards*

- Was constructed during the period of significance
- Was the site of significant integration initiatives, challenges, or activities related to the Civil Rights Movement and school integration
- Directly reflects the movement for equal access to schools and/or to employment opportunities in LAUSD schools
- Has a well-established, long-term association with a figure who was significant in the Civil Rights Movement and school integration (eligibility under B/2)
- Is directly associated with events and institutions that were pivotal in the history of the Latino civil rights movement (Latino context)

*Character-Defining Features*

- Retains most of the associative and character-defining features from the period of significance

*Integrity Considerations*

- Retains integrity of Location, Design, Setting, Feeling, and Association
- Some materials may have been removed or altered
- If there are multiple buildings on campus constructed during the period of significance, these should be evaluated as a potential historic district

## **EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

### **Historic District Evaluation**

ASM carefully considered whether the Roosevelt SH campus is eligible as a historic district for the NRHP or CRHR under Criteria A/1 for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, and/or under Criteria B/2 for an association with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history. Particular attention was paid to applicable themes related to the Chicano Civil Rights movement as defined in SurveyLA *Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* and the LAUSD Historic Context Statement.

The Roosevelt SH campus meets all of the eligibility criteria listed in the LAUSD HCS under the theme of *LAUSD and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1980*. Specifically, the recommended historic district and its contributors were constructed or extant during the period of significance; the campus was the site of significant integration initiatives, challenges, or activities related to the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and school integration; the campus directly reflects the movement for equal access to schools in LAUSD schools; the campus has a well-established, long-term association with Sal Castro, who was significant in the Chicano Civil Rights Movement and school integration (eligibility under B/2); and it is directly associated with events and institutions that were pivotal in the history of the Latino civil rights movement (from the SurveyLA Latino context). The campus retains most of the associative and character-defining features from the period of significance. Following the LAUSD guidelines, the multiple buildings extant during the period of significance are evaluated in this report as comprising a potential historic district.

ASM recommends all buildings present on the campus in March 1968 at the time of the Blowouts be considered contributors to the proposed Roosevelt Senior High School Historic District (Figure 13). The contributors and the priority of significance of each are listed in Table 1 (below).

**Table 1.** Roosevelt Senior High School Historic District Contributors

<b>Bldg. No.</b>	<b>Building Name</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1	Auditorium and Classroom Building	1922	Primary
7	Classroom Building	1937	Primary
6	Industrial Arts Building	1968	Secondary
8	Instrumental Music Building	1959	Secondary
17	Classroom Building	1964	Secondary
18	Classroom Building	1964	Secondary
19	Physical Education Building	1968	Secondary
10	Flammable Storage Building	1953	Tertiary
11	Field Sanitary Building	1958	Tertiary
12	Equipment Field Storage	1941	Tertiary
16	Field Light Controls	1949	Tertiary
20	Utility Building	1968	Tertiary
	Track		Tertiary
	Landscaping		Tertiary

ASM considered whether any of the current buildings or landscaped areas were built in response to the protests, and whether Fickett Street, which at one time cut through the campus in front of/west of Building 1, was vacated in response to the protests. A master plan for the campus had already been submitted by 1966, when plans for \$1,730,725 in new facilities for Roosevelt SH were approved by the Board. Projects included a new physical education building, renovation of an industrial arts building, and a new industrial arts building (Los Angeles Times 1966). A 1966 street profile plan and as-built civil drawings from the same year show Fickett Street passing through the school in plan (LAUSD dwg. 8829.00.023 and 8829.00.024). Further indication that the master plan had been initiated previous to 1968 is the early filing of a redrawn tract map that shows Fickett Street vacated and incorporated into the campus (Figure 13). An historic aerial dated January 3, 1968 (University of California Regents 1968), shows that these projects were complete by the time of the 1968 protests, rather than in response to them (Figure 14). A cafeteria and domestic science building and a shop building, shown southeast of Building 1 in 1966 LAUSD drawings (LAUSD Vault dwg. 8829.00.027) and in a 1968 aerial view, have since been demolished (Figure 15). As such, ASM concluded that there were no buildings or modifications to the school that were the direct result of the Blowouts.

**Primary Contributors**

*Auditorium and Classroom Building (Building 1).* Building 1 appears to have been a primary location of activities related to the 1968 walkouts. Built in 1922 and redesigned after the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, the former administration building remains an iconic representation of the campus. The Deco features of the main entrance, in particular, are recognizable as the entrance to the school, with a focus on the Bauhaus-style raised metal lettering spelling out the name of the school. Leading to the entrance are two flights of a wide concrete stairway set between sets of simple beveled-edge stucco stoops. Four sets of single-light double doors are recessed into a two-story plain stucco wall with a fluted column at the center and two sets of high multi-light transoms above (Figure 16).

The interior of Building 1 was closely associated with the walkouts. Immediately inside the primary entrance is a lobby with a ticket booth and entrances to the auditorium to the right and a flight of concrete stairs beneath a concrete arch leading to the main hallway straight ahead. This area was associated with an assembly called by the school administration two days after the original walkouts, in which the principal urged the students to avoid violence in further protests (Reich 1968). Brian Gibbs, a teacher at Roosevelt for 15 years (1995-2010), included the Blowouts in his curriculum at the school. Gibbs based his lessons on research and personal conversations with other teachers and individuals with first-hand knowledge of the events, and continued the curriculum that had been taught for years before his tenure at Roosevelt. According to Gibbs, after the assembly, the students staged a sit-in on the lobby stairs. Police entered and began trying to disperse the students, using violent means. To escape, the students ran up the stairs, down the central hall, and out the other side of Building 1. At that point they ran to the right, through one of the classroom buildings, and onto Mott Street (Gibbs 2017). Later, Gibbs used the lobby and stairs leading to the main hallway to teach how the built environment can be seen as a “text” that tells a story (Gibbs 2010). After showing his students an episode of the PBS series *Chicano!* (Part 3: “Taking Back the Schools”), which includes scenes from Roosevelt, he gathered them on the stairs and told the story of the Blowouts (Figures 17–19). After the students had observed first-hand the place where the conflict took place, Gibbs (2010:6) reports “[t]heir school’s stairwell [became] a monument to be recognized and honored.”

*Classroom Building 7.* On the day of the sit-ins at Roosevelt, students were said to have run out of the back of Building 1 toward Mott Street and toward the right, where Building 7 is located. Oral histories say the students ran through Building C, which has been demolished but was located “where the current ball field is,” and into Mott Street. Photo evidence showing Building 7 at the time of the walkouts and the location of the building, with an entrance toward the interior of the campus and a second entrance immediately on Mott Street, suggest it is more likely the students ran through Building 7 into the street (Gibbs 2017).

### **Secondary Contributors**

Major buildings extant in early 1968 are considered secondary contributors. These include the Instrumental Music Building (Building 8), which was built in 1959. Buildings constructed in the 1960s—the Industrial Arts Building (Building 6), Classroom Building 17, Classroom Building 18, and the Physical Education Building (Building 19)—were all completed by the time of the walkouts.

### **Tertiary Contributors**

Tertiary contributors are utilitarian buildings that were extant at the time of the walkouts and that are some of the earliest on campus. These include the Equipment Field Storage (Building 12), which dates from 1941, and the Field Light Controls (Building 16), with a built year of 1949. Buildings from the 1950s that were extant are the Flammable Storage Building (Building 10; 1953) and the Field Sanitary Building (Building 11; 1958). The Utility Building (Building 20), built in 1968, is also a tertiary contributor to the historic district.

Because of the changing nature of landscaping, fields and landscaped areas around the primary contributing buildings are considered tertiary contributors. Although the bleachers have been replaced, the track configuration remains the same as it was in 1968; although the track at Roosevelt has not been confirmed as directly related to the protests, the track was a gathering place for protesters during the walkouts at some of the other participating schools, and it is likely that the track at Roosevelt served the same purpose. The playing field to the northeast of the physical education building remains an open space, as it was in 1968. The mature trees and other landscaping, especially the shady areas southeast of Building 1 toward Building 7 and Mott Street, are included in this category.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The story of the Japanese garden at the southeast corner of Building 1, as told by former Roosevelt teacher Brian Gibbs (Gibbs 2017), provides anecdotal evidence of the continuing role of Boyle Heights as home to new immigrants of various ethnicities. In the 1930s and 1940s, Japanese-American students at Roosevelt established a Japanese garden on campus. When Executive Order

### *Integrity*

All of the recommended contributors retain integrity to the period of significance of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### *Period of Significance*

ASM considered whether the recommended period of significance would be limited to 1968, when the Blowouts occurred, or continue through 1970 or later, when a series of additional protests took place. A major protest in 1970 at Roosevelt SH appears to be of a different nature than the well-organized and generally non-violent events of 1968. The 1970 Chicano Moratorium Against the Viet Nam War is arguably related to the Blowouts, but was organized and took place after the student walkouts in 1968. In 1970 and after, Roosevelt, as well as many other schools in East L.A. and nationwide, was affected by this less-organized, more violent movement. Unlike the 1968 protests, in 1970, the school was heavily vandalized and severely damaged by fires, breaking of windows, and bombs. The 1970 protest also appears to have been a more spontaneous event and to have involved more non-students. In the later events, the CLF, a militant Marxist-Leninist group that advocated violence as a means to an ends, became involved. Multiple smaller protests also took place into the 1970s, but none that had the broad implications and significance of the Blowouts. For these reasons, the recommended period of significance is limited to 1968.

### **Area of Significance: A/1**

ASM carefully considered whether the Roosevelt SH campus is eligible as a historic district under Criteria A/1 for its association with the 1968 Blowouts, in which Mexican-American students and their parents and sympathizers staged nearly simultaneous walkouts at five East L.A. high schools. Roosevelt SH students walked out of class repeatedly in the first weeks of March 1968. Roosevelt students conducted a second protest two days later, when they attended an assembly in the auditorium and staged a sit-in on the steps in the lobby of Building 1.

Building on the legacy of Mexican-Americans who had been protesting school segregation as early as the 1930s and 1940s, the Blowouts were widely considered the first major protest against racism and educational inequality staged by Mexican-Americans in the United States. The East Los Angeles students were said to have ignited the Mexican-American civil rights movement. Considered in context with the black Civil Rights movement, the historical significance of the Blowouts had similarities with the 1960 student sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina (Berta-Ávila et al. 2011:xi). As an indication that the Blowouts were a significant contributor to the broader Chicano civil rights movement, one of the Blowout participants, Carlos Munoz, describes a National Chicano Youth Conference held in Denver the following year, bringing together for the first time activists who were involved in both campus and community Chicano politics (Munoz 1989:75).

The Blowouts were an important event in the Chicano Civil Rights movement that focused national attention, for the first time, on Chicanos, and served as a catalyst for the movement in Los Angeles that spread throughout the U.S. Therefore, Roosevelt SH is recommended eligible as a historic district under Criterion A/1 for its association with an event important in our history.

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9066 ordering the internment of all people of Japanese ancestry was authorized by President Roosevelt in 1942, those students were abruptly removed from campus and the garden was eventually demolished. In 1992, on the fiftieth anniversary of the internment, the former students returned to campus and established the current Japanese garden adjacent to Building 1.

### **Area of Significance: B/2**

The Roosevelt SH campus was found to be associated with the lives of significant persons in the LAUSD Civil Rights movement. Sal Castro, who took the lead in organizing students at the East L.A. high schools who initiated the Blowouts, was a charismatic Mexican-American teacher at Lincoln High at the time of the protests, and at Lincoln High earlier in his career, where he began to observe the lack of opportunity for Mexican-American students compared to Anglos. At Belmont, he encouraged students to speak Spanish, not realizing that it was not allowed (Ochoa 2010). Castro encouraged students to make their grievances public after they failed to get the attention of school administrators and the Board. Castro was instrumental in the coordinated walkouts at Roosevelt, as well as Garfield, Lincoln, Wilson, and Belmont high schools. Castro was one of the “East L.A. 13” who were arrested and indicted for conspiring to plan the demonstrations. After firing Castro, the Board received numerous letters from students, parents, and other teachers both in support and objecting to his reinstatement when the charges were dropped two years later. Castro is highlighted in the SurveyLA Latino context for the active role he played in the struggle for educational equality associated with the Blowouts (GPA and Nicolaides 2015:23-24). Castro was so well-regarded by the District that on June 5, 2010, a school was dedicated in his honor (Sal Castro Middle School, adjacent to Belmont SH) (Sosa 2013:110).

Because of the importance of Sal Castro in encouraging Chicano students to assert their rights to an equal education and his role in helping organize the Blowouts, Roosevelt SH is recommended eligible as a historic district under Criterion B/2 for its association with a person important in our past.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Full evaluations of all of the East L.A. high schools that participated in the initial walkouts are out of the scope of this report. However, recommendations for further evaluation under Criteria A/1 and B/2 are as follows:

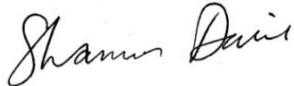
- Lincoln High (3501 N. Broadway): Although Lincoln High was not surveyed for this report, it appears to be fully intact with buildings from the 1930s and 1940s buildings. In fact, in 1999 the school was partially restored when intrusive visible portions of a \$2-million air-conditioning system were removed, in response to pressure from the community and architects (Los Angeles Times 1999). The campus also has the potential to be eligible under Criteria B/2 because it is the school where Castro taught.
- Garfield High (5101 E. Sixth Street): This campus retains a few buildings dating from 1967 and 1968, as well as several newer buildings. The school was among the original four schools to form a Blowout Committee and participated in the early activities of the movement. Further research is needed to determine eligibility.
- Belmont High (1575 W. Second Street): Belmont was not in the original plan of four schools and had a lower percentage of Mexican-American students, but the students joined the multi-school Blowout Committee soon after it was organized (Torgerson 1968). The school participated in the original Blowouts and has major pre-1968 buildings. Further research is needed to determine eligibility.
- Wilson High (4500 Multnomah Street): The current campus was under construction in 1968 and was not completed until the early 1970s (Board 1968b; LAUSD 2010); therefore, the campus retains no integrity to the period of significance and would likely be found not eligible.

## CONCLUSION

The evaluation in this Supplemental HRER is limited to Criteria A/1 and B/2 of the NRHP and the CRHR. ASM carefully considered the potential significance of Roosevelt SH under these criteria, as described above. ASM recommends the campus eligible as a historic district for the NRHP and the CRHR under Criteria A/1 and B/2. The campus is also historically significant under the guidelines set forth by the *SurveyLA Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* and the *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870-1969*. As such, ASM finds that Roosevelt High is a historic resource in accordance with CEQA.

Please contact me as needed, if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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Attachment A: Figures  
Attachment B: Interpretive Plan  
Attachment C: Bibliography

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University of California Regents

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Woo, Elaine

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# Attachment A: FIGURES

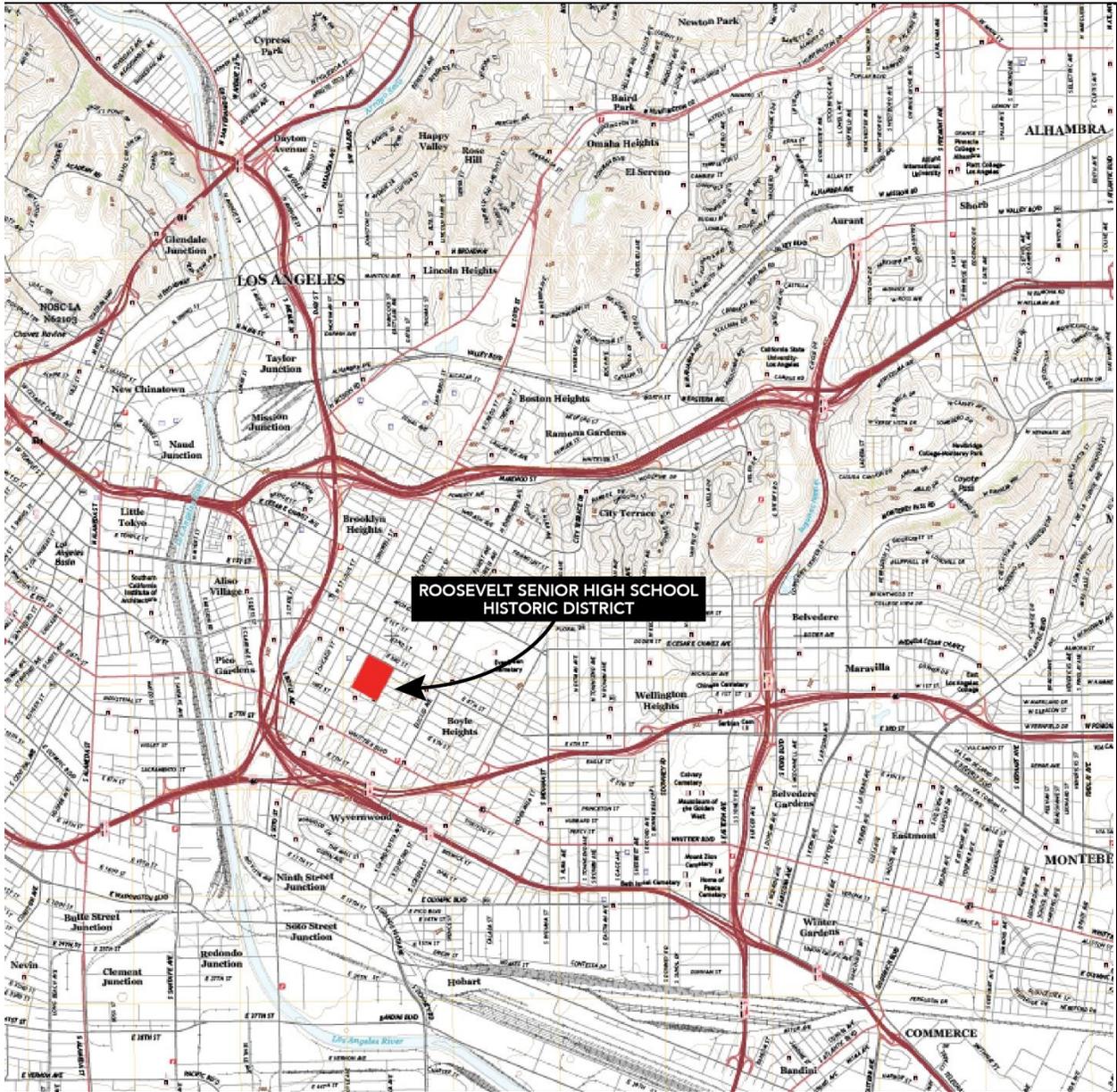


FIGURE 1. Project location



FIGURE 2. A Los Angeles Police Department photo of students and Brown Berets at Roosevelt SH.  
Source: Notes from Aztlán, March 5, 1968.



FIGURE 3. Students and police on Mott Street adjacent to Roosevelt SH.  
Source: Photographer George Rodriquez, 1968.



FIGURE 4. Activist Monte Perez speaking to striking students across the street from Roosevelt SH. Source: Raul Ruiz, n.d.

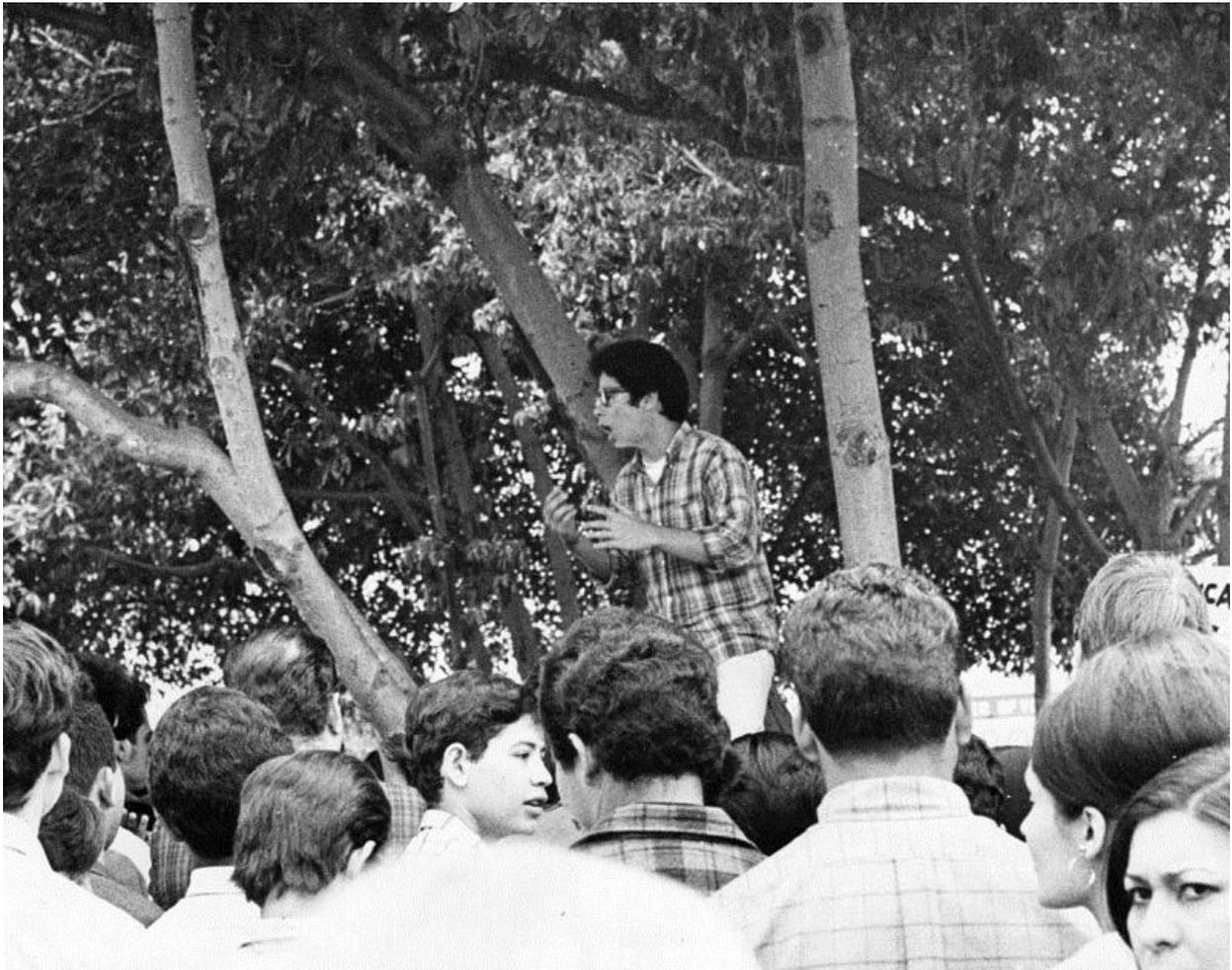


FIGURE 5. John Ortiz, Mexican-American student leader at James A. Garfield High School, addressing assembled students during a walkout. Source: Photographer H. Q. McCarthy. Los Angeles Public Library, Herald Examiner Collection, March 7, 1968.



FIGURE 6. Principal Reginald Murphy, Garfield High School, at a special assembly, appealing to students to return to classes. Assembly is outside, possibly on sports field, with students overflowing from bleachers. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, Herald Examiner Collection, March 7, 1968.



FIGURE 7. Police handcuff two women on sidewalk in front of Belmont High School during disturbance at school. Several police cars are on the street and a man watches the arrests in the background. One woman is a Brown Beret; the other carries a camera and is reported to be a photographer for the Free Press. Source: Los Angeles Public Library, Herald Examiner Collection, March 8, 1968.

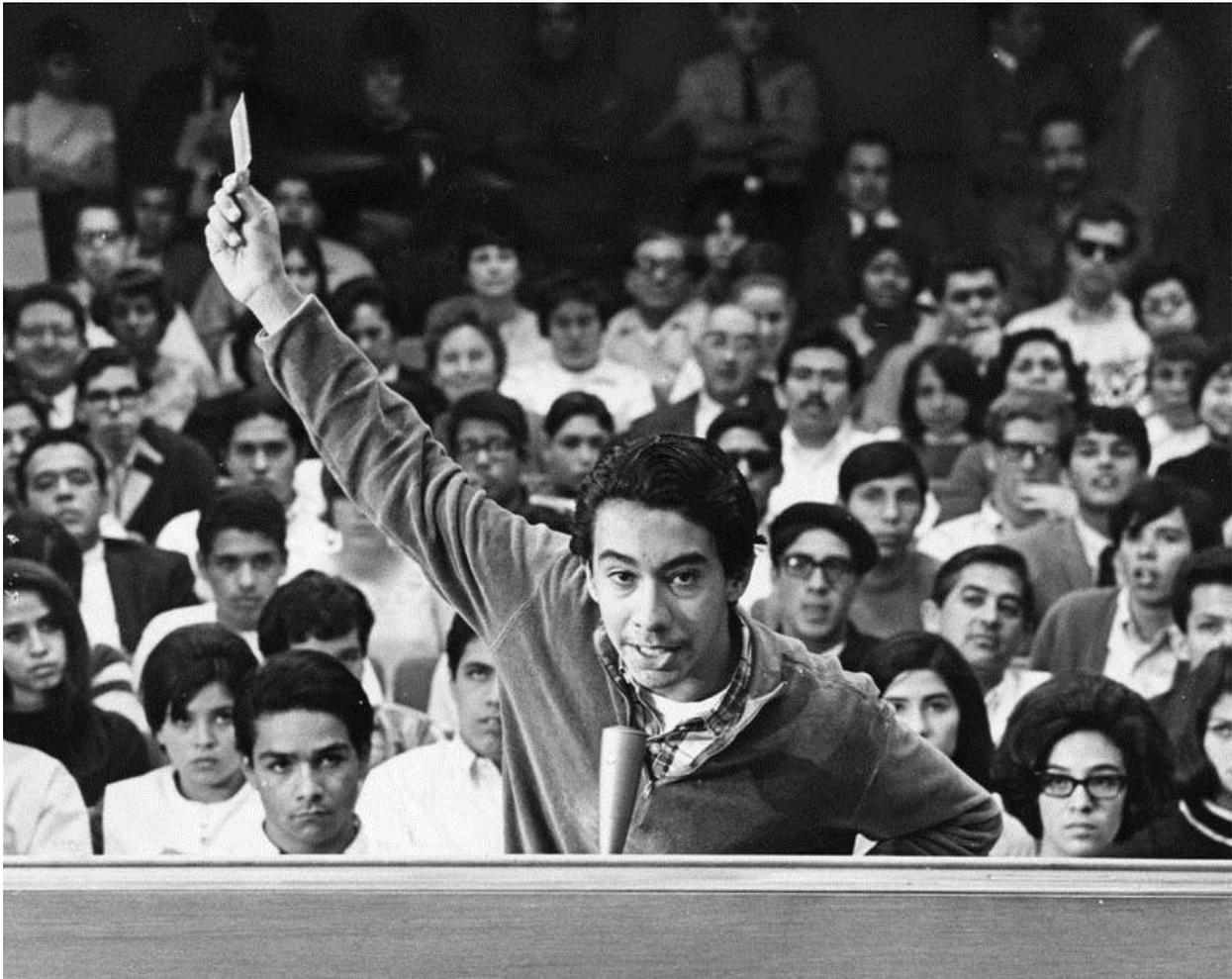


FIGURE 8. Protesters, mainly students, at doorway attempting to enter Board meeting.  
Source: Los Angeles Public Library, Herald Examiner Collection, March 12, 1968.



FIGURE 9. Students demonstrating outside the Board.  
Source: Raul Ruiz, March 1968.



FIGURE 10. Students protesting the arrest of students during the Blowout at Roosevelt SH. Source: UCLA Digital Collections, ca 1970.



FIGURE 11. Brown Berets at Lincoln High School. Source: Photographer Oscar R. Castillo, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, 1968.



FIGURE 12. Sal Castro, teacher and leader of boycott to protest inferior educational opportunities for Mexican-American students. Source: Photographer Jim Ober, Los Angeles Public Library, Herald Examiner Collection, March 12, 1968.



FIGURE 13. Recommended boundary and contributors to the proposed Roosevelt Senior High School Historic District. Source: ASM, March 23, 2017.

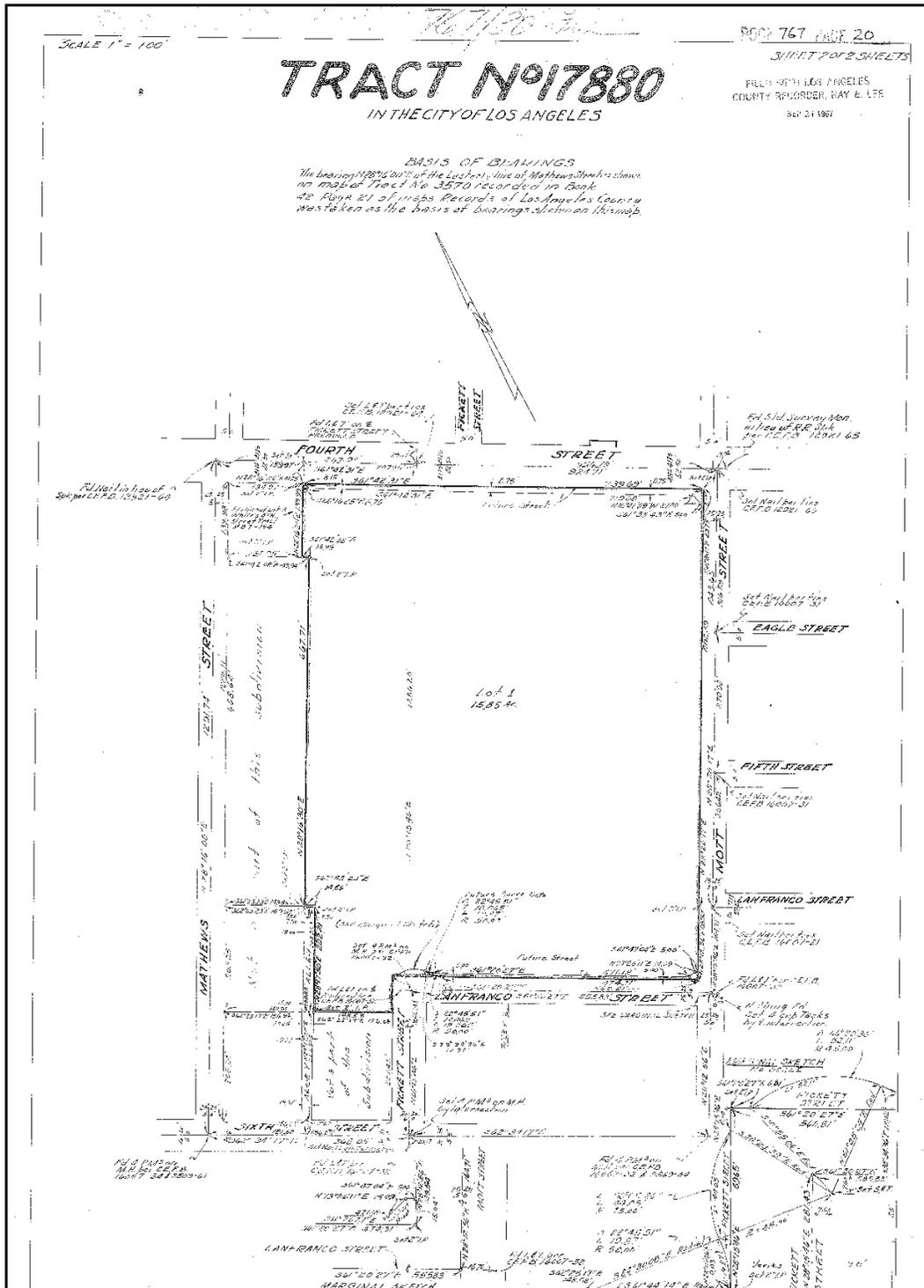


FIGURE 14. A preliminary tract map encompassing Roosevelt SH showing Fickett Street vacated (formerly forming the northwest boundary of campus).  
Source: City of Los Angeles Records, Tract No. 17880, 1967.



FIGURE 15. A 1968 aerial view of the Roosevelt SH campus showing extant buildings in March 1968.  
Source: University of California Regents, March 1, 1968.



FIGURE 16. The primary entrance to Building 1. Source: ASM, February 15, 2017.



FIGURE 16. The auditorium in Building 1. Source: ASM, February 15, 2017.



FIGURE 16. The lobby and staircase outside the auditorium in Building 1.  
Source: ASM, February 15, 2017.



FIGURE 17. Roosevelt students re-enacting the Blowouts on the historic staircase.  
Source: Photographer Eduardo “Eddie” Lopez, from former Roosevelt teacher Brian Gibbs, n.d.

**Attachment B: INTERPRETIVE PLAN**

This attachment contains an interpretive plan to commemorate the events, people, and places involved in the 1968 walkouts at Roosevelt SH. This plan consists of two sections:

- Identification of materials, programs, and events that could be developed by LAUSD in the future
- Sample narratives for use in interpretive panels at Roosevelt SH

### **Materials, Programs, and Events**

ASM recommends the following activities to further the knowledge and interpretation of the 1968 walkouts at Roosevelt SH and other schools within LAUSD:

#### **1) Intensive Survey of Similar Resources**

Conduct intensive surveys and evaluations of the other East L.A. schools associated with this significant event, specifically Garfield, Wilson, Lincoln, Belmont, and Jefferson, as well as Hazard Park. This evaluation would be focused on each school's associations with the Blowouts under Criterion A/1, and their association with any significant individuals, such as Sal Castro or other members of the East L.A. 13, under Criterion B/2. The evaluation reports should be done following the guidelines provided by the *LAUSD Historic Context Statement, 1870–1969* under the theme of *LAUSD and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1980*, and the *SurveyLA Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement* under the themes of *Education 1930–1980* and *The Civil Rights Movement, 1920–1980* and comply with CEQA.

#### **2) Development of Features for the Roosevelt SH Website**

Develop the content, including narrative and graphics, for a feature for the Roosevelt HS website: *roosevelthausd.org*. The web feature would provide a full narrative history of the events, as well as historic photographs, to fully interpret this significant event, as well as Sal Castro's involvement with the Blowout Committee at Roosevelt. Interpretive panels (see subsequent section) will include a Quick Response code (QR code) that will link to this web feature, or provide the same content. As part of this activity, efforts should be made to gather additional historic photographs, including those by photographer Oscar Castillo, housed at UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, and *LA Times* historic photos, held in the Los Angeles Times Photographic Archives in the Library Special Collections at UCLA.

#### **3) Oral Histories with Teachers**

Conduct and record a series of oral histories with teachers who can be identified that were present at Roosevelt in 1968, or have extensive knowledge of the events from teaching about them as part of their class curriculum. Interviews should be conducted following the *Principles and Best Practices* established by the Oral History Association,<sup>1</sup> including the recommended methods for digital recordation and translation. Oral histories should be conducted by historians who meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards* or individual who have participated in training to conduct oral histories. Release forms should be signed by each narrator through which her or she transfers his or her rights to the interview to the repository or designated body. Oral histories should be recorded using at least two separate audio recorders, utilizing at least one external microphone, as well as one video recorder. Oral histories should be archived at UCLA through the Oral History Program, and also in consultation with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/>

**4) Commemorative Events for the 50th Anniversary of the Blowouts**

Organize commemorative events to recognize the importance of the Blowout events and this period of Roosevelt SH's history. Activities in March 2018 could include screenings of the PBS documentary "Chicano!" and the film "Blowout!" to be held on the Roosevelt HS campus. Activities in the fall of 2018 (after the class reunion, see #5 below) could include first-hand recounting of the events by any teachers or students in front of an audience. Teachers who were not present at the Blowouts but who taught the events over the years would also be likely participants.

**5) Presence at Class of 1968 50th High School Reunion**

Coordinate with the organizers of the Roosevelt SH Class of 1968 reunion to arrange a medium to collect stories from the students attending the reunion. For example, a recording booth/area could be arranged during the reunion events in which students could be free to stop by and provide on-camera a less than five-minute account of their recollections and feelings about the events. The recording booth would be organized and monitored by professional historians who would then contact those students with the most direct involvement in the Blowouts after the reunion and ask them to be part of an oral history project (see #6 below).

**6) Oral Histories with Students**

Conduct and record a series of oral histories with students who can be identified as present at Roosevelt in 1968. Interviews should be conducted following the *Principles* and *Best Practices* established by the Oral History Association,<sup>2</sup> including recommended methods for digital recordation and translation. Oral histories should be conducted by historians who meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards* or individual who have participated in training to conduct oral histories. Release forms should be signed by each narrator through which her or she transfers his or her rights to the interview to the repository or designated body. Oral histories should be recorded using at least two separate audio recorders, utilizing at least one external microphone, as well as one video recorder. Oral histories should be archived at UCLA through the Center for Oral History Research and also in consultation with the Chicano Studies Research Center.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/>

## **Sample Panel Narratives**

Below are five sample narratives that can be utilized in the future for interpretive panels (approximately 200 words for each narrative).

### **PANEL #1: ROOSEVELT The 1968 Student “Blowouts”**

On March 5, 1968, hundreds of Mexican-American students walked out of Roosevelt High as part of an organized protest known as the “Blowouts.” The Blowouts were part of a larger effort by East L.A. students to improve their schools. Before walking out, student took a list of demands to the school board. Demands included smaller class size, more Latino teachers, bilingual classes, counseling for college entrance (rather than automatically channeling Latino students into vocational programs), and a curriculum that addressed Latino history and interests. When the school board failed to respond, students took action and planned a series of walkouts. Students at other predominately Mexican-American schools—Wilson, Lincoln, Garfield, and Belmont highs—joined the Roosevelt students in walking out of class to draw attention to educational inequality.

The Blowouts are widely considered the first major protest against racism and educational deficiencies staged by Mexican-Americans in the United States. Although Mexican-Americans had been complaining about school segregation as early as the 1930s, the actions at the heavily Mexican-American schools focused national attention, for the first time, on what was to become a vocal, assertive minority group. The initial walkouts at East L.A. high schools triggered a chain reaction of protests that rapidly spread, involving up to 10,000 students in Los Angeles and serving as a catalyst for the larger Chicano civil rights movement.

### **PANEL #2: ROOSEVELT The Legacy of the Blowouts at Roosevelt**

In the first week of March 1968, Roosevelt students joined thousands of Mexican-American students who walked out of East L.A. high schools as part of an organized protest known as the “Blowouts.” At Roosevelt, students walked out of class and gathered in the streets outside the school. Later in the day, police arrived to disperse them. The students resisted and violence erupted, leading to the arrest of fifteen protesters. Two days later, law enforcement was prepared when Roosevelt students attended an assembly in the school auditorium to discuss the ongoing volatile situation. After the assembly, teachers escorted some of the students to exits where they would not have to cross police lines. Other Roosevelt students staged a sit-in on the steps in the lobby outside the auditorium, where accounts say police entered the school and used forceful means to break up the peaceful demonstration. To escape, the students ran up the stairs, down the central hall, out the other side of the main building, through a classroom building, and onto Mott Street. Although protests continued for years after, in the first few days of the Blowouts, Roosevelt was the only school that experienced significant violence. Nearly fifty years later, teachers at Roosevelt continue to teach the Blowouts as an example of the effects of organized protests that focused national attention, for the first time, on Chicanos as a vocal, assertive minority group.

### **PANEL #3: ROOSEVELT OR LINCOLN Salvatore (“Sal”) Castro**

Sal Castro was an influential East L.A. high school teacher and activist who was instrumental in organizing Mexican-American students in several high schools to walk out of class in protest of educational inequality. In 1963, Castro was teaching at Belmont High and volunteered at the Mexican American Youth Leadership

Conferences intended to promote citizenship for high school students. There he found hundreds of students from all over L.A. County who expressed similar complaints about lack of opportunity for Mexican-American students. At the time, dropout rates for Mexican-American students in East L.A. were among the highest in the nation. Castro was enraged that his community and people were treated dismissively and began organizing meetings with students from Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, and other East L.A. schools.

A few years later, Castro was teaching at Lincoln High, where students wanted to walk out in protest and asked for his help. “Don’t walk out,” Castro advised them, “organize.” Castro began meeting with students from Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, and other schools and helped them form what they called “Blowout Committees.” Failing in their attempts to be heard by the school board, under Castro’s leadership, students in East L.A. walked out simultaneously in March of 1968 in demonstrations known as “Blowouts.” Castro was arrested, along with twelve others, for his association with the demonstrations and charged with conspiracy. Charges against the group, known as East L.A. 13, were dropped in 1972.

**PANEL #4: LINCOLN (and can be edited for the other schools)  
Lincoln High and the 1968 Student Blowouts**

In March 1968, hundreds of Mexican-American students walked out of Lincoln High as part of an organized protest at known as the “Blowouts.” Sal Castro, a teacher at Lincoln, was instrumental in bringing the students from East L.A. high schools together to voice their complaints and a list of demands to the school board. When the school board failed to respond, students took action and planned a series of walkouts. Students at predominately Mexican-American schools—Wilson, Roosevelt, Garfield, and Belmont highs—joined the Lincoln students in walking out of class to draw attention to poor schools and educational inequality.

The Blowouts were widely considered the first major protest against racism and educational deficiencies staged by Mexican-Americans in the United States. Although Mexican-Americans had been complaining about school segregation as early as the 1930s, the actions at the heavily Mexican-American schools focused national attention, for the first time, on what was to become a vocal, assertive minority group. The initial walkouts at East L.A. high schools triggered a chain reaction of protests that rapidly spread, involving up to 10,000 students in L.A. and serving as a catalyst for the larger Chicano civil rights movement.

**PANEL #5: Any of the five schools  
The East L.A. 13**

The “East L.A. 13” was a group of thirteen organizers of the 1968 Mexican-American student protests known as the “Blowouts.” The activists, including Lincoln High teacher Sal Castro, were indicted by the Los Angeles County Grand Jury a few months after the demonstrations and charged with fifteen counts of conspiracy for disrupting public schools and fifteen counts of conspiracy for disturbing the peace, amounting to a total of sixty-six years in prison if all were convicted. Legal defense was provided by the Chicano Legal Defense Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union, and charges were struck down two years later by the California State Appellate Court. The Blowouts initially took place at Wilson, Roosevelt, Lincoln, Garfield, and Belmont high schools, and rapidly caught fire, spreading to schools throughout Los Angeles and across the nation. The student protests were an important early activity in the Chicano civil rights movement.

**Attachment C**

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