

2026 LOS ANGELES HISTORIC
NEIGHBORHOODS CONFERENCE

Meeting the Moment

Sharing L.A.'s Untold Stories: Current Initiatives in Cultural Placekeeping

Karen Mack

LA Commons

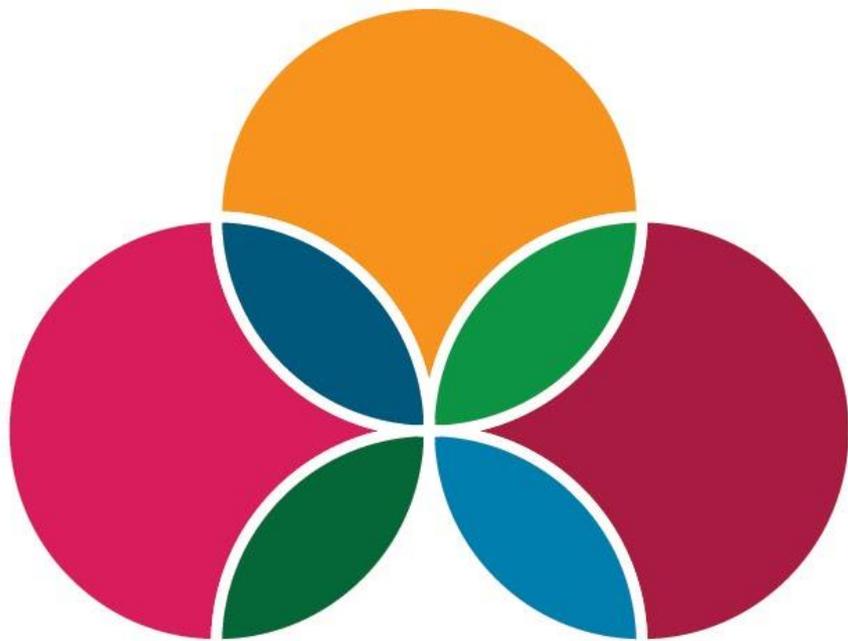
Melissa Jones

Los Angeles City Planning

Rita Cofield

Getty Conservation Institute





LAcommons

creating cultural connections



Our Mission

We engage communities in artistic and cultural expression that tells their unique stories and serves as a basis for dialogue, connection and a shared understanding of Los Angeles.





HARAMOK

HIGHLAND THEATRE

50





CULTURAL TREASURES
OF SOUTH LA

ABOUT ▾

CULTURAL TREASURES

MAP

DATA ▾



**WHAT IS A
CULTURAL
TREASURE?**





H I S T O R I C S O U T H L A

Black Cultural District

HISTORIC SOUTH LA

Black Cultural District



Malaya Taylor

California Cultural Districts



IT'S OFFICIAL



ABOUT THE CULTURAL DISTRICT



LA County represents the 3rd largest Black population in the nation



Largest concentration of Black cultural assets (museums, arts, entertainment, businesses, etc.) in the state



An opportunity to reverse exclusionary/racist policies of the past



Promotion of local business interests to directly benefit from coming regional economic advancement opportunities (2026 FIFA World Cup, 2028 Olympic & Paralympic Games, etc.)



Seeded through a \$3-million state allocation to develop a monument

Historic South LA Black Cultural District Map

Key Cultural Assets

- 1 27th Street Bakery
- 2 African American Cultural Center
- 3 Black Panther Party, SoCal - former
- 4 Brotherhood Crusade
- 5 California African American Museum
- 6 California Eagle Office - former
- 7 Community Coalition
- 8 Destination Crenshaw
- 9 First African Methodist Episc. Church
- 10 Harold & Belle's
- 11 Leimert Park Village Plaza
- 12 Lincoln Theater
- 13 Lula Washington Dance Theatre
- 14 Museum of African American Art
- 15 Nipsey Hussle Mural
- 16 Second Baptist Church
- 17 Simply Wholesome
- 18 Slauson Super Mall
- 19 South LA Cafe
- 20 Southern California Library
- 21 Barbara Morrison Perf. Arts Center
- 22 The Beehive
- 23 The Historic Dunbar Hotel
- 24 Vision Theater
- 25 Wilfandel Club House
- 26 William Grant Still Art Center



June 2024
LA Commons joins BCD as
Implementation Partner

2023 - Spring 2024
BCD Community
Committee Convened



June 2025



2023
Sen. Smallwood-Cuevas secures
\$3-million to initiate the process
of designing and erecting
markers and monuments



Nov 2025

- 1) CAC site-visit
- 2) Carolyn Hull + Deborah Murphy onboarded as consultants to the BCD

Dec 2024 - Jan 2025
Historic South Los Angeles Black
Cultural District Story Summits

Dec 2025
CAC announces new co-hort
state designated cultural
districts

BCD STORY SUMMITS

An opportunity to hear from South LA's Black residents and frequenters about their history within the community, and their visions for monumentalizing these stories and those to come.

- values, stories, and traditions
- shapes, symbols, colors, words, and images
- design elements (e.g., materials, shapes)
- location(s) for greatest impact and accessibility
- community engagement



Scan to view the Phase I Report



bit.ly/southlabeled

PRIORITIES

1. **Culture** | Recognizing the widely practiced beliefs, values, customs, languages, arts, shared knowledge, and behaviors of Black people passed down through generations.

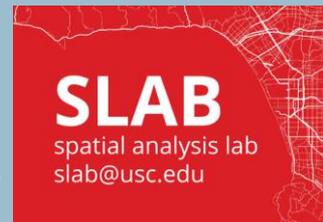
2. **Cultural Preservation** | Acknowledging pervasive historical inaccuracies in the documentation of the lives and contributions of Black people, and our important role as caretakers of authentic narratives and historical truths.

3. **Community Connectivity** | Achieving success through the Historic South Los Angeles Black Cultural District is contingent on the stakeholders within the local ecosystem — residents, business owners, the public sector, and service organizations — working together to further community resilience and strength.

4. **Economic Development** | Uplifting South Los Angeles in an equitable and responsible way requires that locally owned and operated enterprises are willing and prepared to participate in the influx of economic activity coming to the region.

5. **Education and Awareness** | Assuming that not everyone is educated on the themes and stories that are celebrated through this work, sharing knowledge at all levels is paramount to overcoming the longstanding, and sometimes intentional, miseducation related to Black life and culture in South Los Angeles.

KEEPING PLACE FOR CULTURE



Project Team



Research Question

What role do different forms of property ownership, such as public spaces, community organization properties, and private property, play in the arts and culture practices of communities of color in Los Angeles—and how can these communities deploy arts and property rights-informed strategies to hold onto their place in a changing city?



THANK YOU



HistoricPlacesLA Revealed Latino Los Angeles

L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference
February 21, 2026

LOS ANGELES
CITY PLANNING

Melissa Jones, City Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Background

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense residential area with multi-story apartment buildings and houses. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The image is overlaid with a gradient that transitions from a warm orange on the left to a cool blue on the right. The word "Background" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Office of Historic Resources

- Preservation within Los Angeles City Planning
- Opened doors in 2006
- Cultural Heritage Commission
 - Recommends designation of City Historic-Cultural Monuments (landmarks)
- Historic Preservation Overlay Zones
 - 35 locally-designated historic districts, encompassing over 21,000 properties



SurveyLA

- First citywide [historic resources survey](#)
- Joint grant project of the City and the Getty Foundation; technical and advisory support from the Getty Conservation Institute
- Standard-setting for municipal preservation programs nationwide
- 10-year project, from 2007-2017
- 30,000+ recorded resources
- [Historic context statement](#) for the City with over 70+ published context narratives

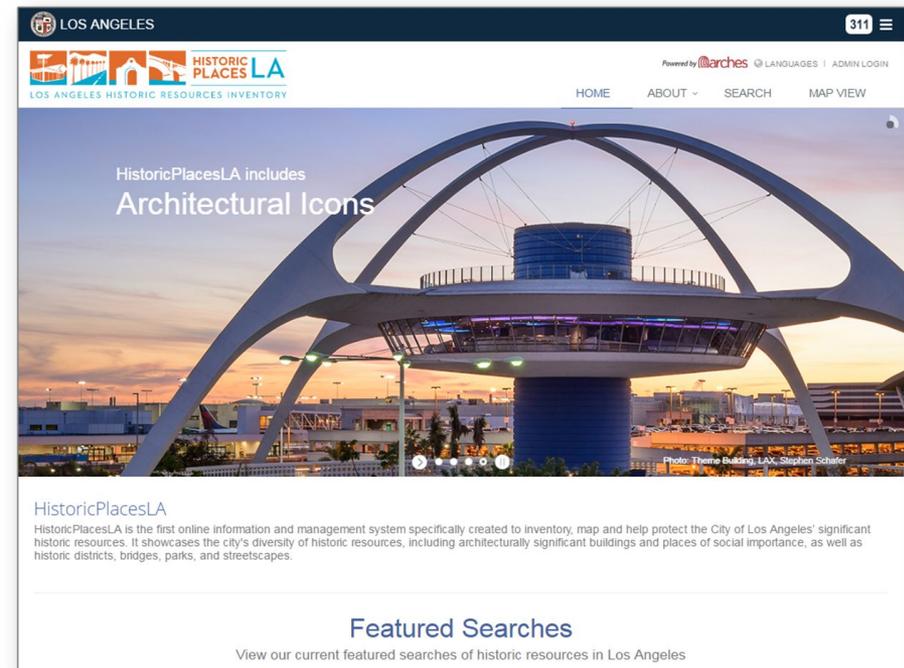


Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement



HistoricPlacesLA

- The City's online inventory of designated historic resources and surveyed resources
- One-stop location for information on historic resources
- Created as a customization of Arches, the Getty Conservation Institute's open source cultural resource management system
- Launched in 2015; latest version launched in 2024



HistoricPlacesLA Revealed

An aerial photograph of a dense urban neighborhood in Los Angeles, likely Hollywood or Beverly Hills, showing a mix of multi-story apartment buildings and houses. The image is overlaid with a color gradient that transitions from a warm orange on the left to a cool blue on the right. The text 'HistoricPlacesLA Revealed' is centered in white, bold, sans-serif font. A short white horizontal line is positioned above the text on the left side.

HistoricPlacesLA Revealed

- New OHR initiative – grant funded
- Make underrepresented histories more visible through physical markers
- Latino Los Angeles serving as the pilot project
- Install physical markers at sites important to Los Angeles' Latino communities

HISTORIC PLACES LA Revealed
LATINO LOS ANGELES



PARA DIVULGACIÓN INMEDIATA
17 de julio de 2024
planning.media@lacity.org
(213) 562-8294

La Oficina de Recursos Históricas del Departamento de Planeación de la Ciudad de Los Ángeles recibió una subvención de \$500,000 para destacar la herencia latina de la ciudad

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2024
planning.media@lacity.org
(213) 562-8294

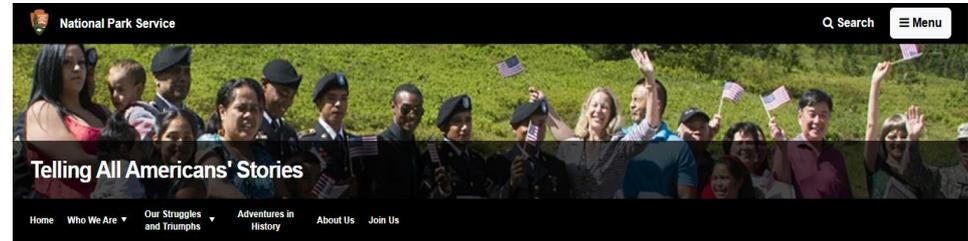
Los Angeles City Planning's Office of Historic Resources Awarded \$500,000 Grant to Highlight City's Latino Heritage

LOS ANGELES— Los Angeles City Planning's Office of Historic Resources (OHR) was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Humanities in Place program of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This grant will enhance OHR's ongoing efforts to broaden public awareness of the city's diverse cultural heritage, making the places and stories associated with underrepresented histories more visible and legible.

"This support from the Mellon Foundation will allow us to highlight the vibrant history and cultural contributions of the Latino community in Los Angeles, making these stories more accessible to everyone," said Ken Bernstein, Principal City Planner of the Office of Historic Resources.

Site Identification and Selection

- SurveyLA Latino [Los Angeles Historic Context Statement](#)
- Other historic contexts
 - National Park Service [American Latino Heritage Theme Study](#)
 - California Office of Historic Preservation [Latinos in 20th Century California](#)



NPS.gov / Home / Who We Are / American Latino Heritage / Theme Study

American Latino Heritage Theme Study

Latino history is American history.

American Latinos and the Making of the United States: A Theme Study is e

En Español [Los Latinos-Estadounidenses y la Creación de los Estados U](#)

SurveyLA
 Latino Los Angeles Historic Context Statement
 City of Los Angeles
 Department of City Planning
 Office of Historic Resources

September 15, 2015

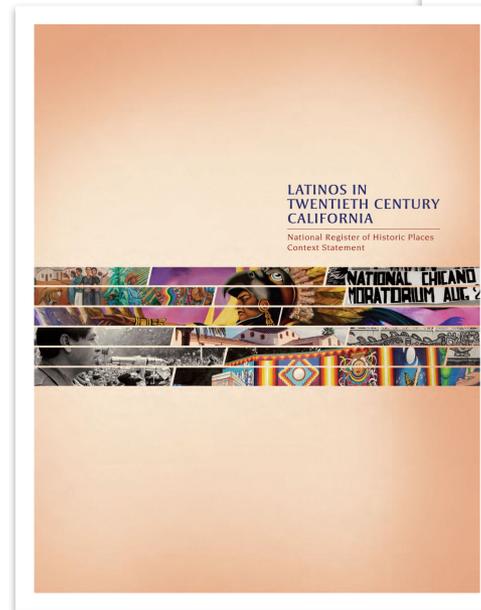
Prepared by:

CONSULTING



and

Becky Nicolaidis



Community Engagement

- 14-member Community Advisory Committee
- Subject Matter Experts
- Neighborhood Councils
- Online Survey Form
- Social media



LOS ANGELES
City Services City Directory



LOS ANGELES HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

1 Collect Feedback
2 Consent
3 Thank you

Site Name and/or Address

Please provide us with the site name (such as building name, business/organization name, etc.) and where it is located. An exact address is most helpful, but you can provide an intersection or a neighborhood. This can be an **already identified site** or a new site.

What makes this place important?

Why is this site important to you and/or the Latino community of Los Angeles? Do you have stories to share about this site? What do you want people to know about this place and its history? You can include names of important people, organizations, or businesses, or share personal stories or memories.

Record audio
Write your response

Would you like to upload any photos, images, or documents related to this site?

Choose Files No file chosen

Legal Agreement

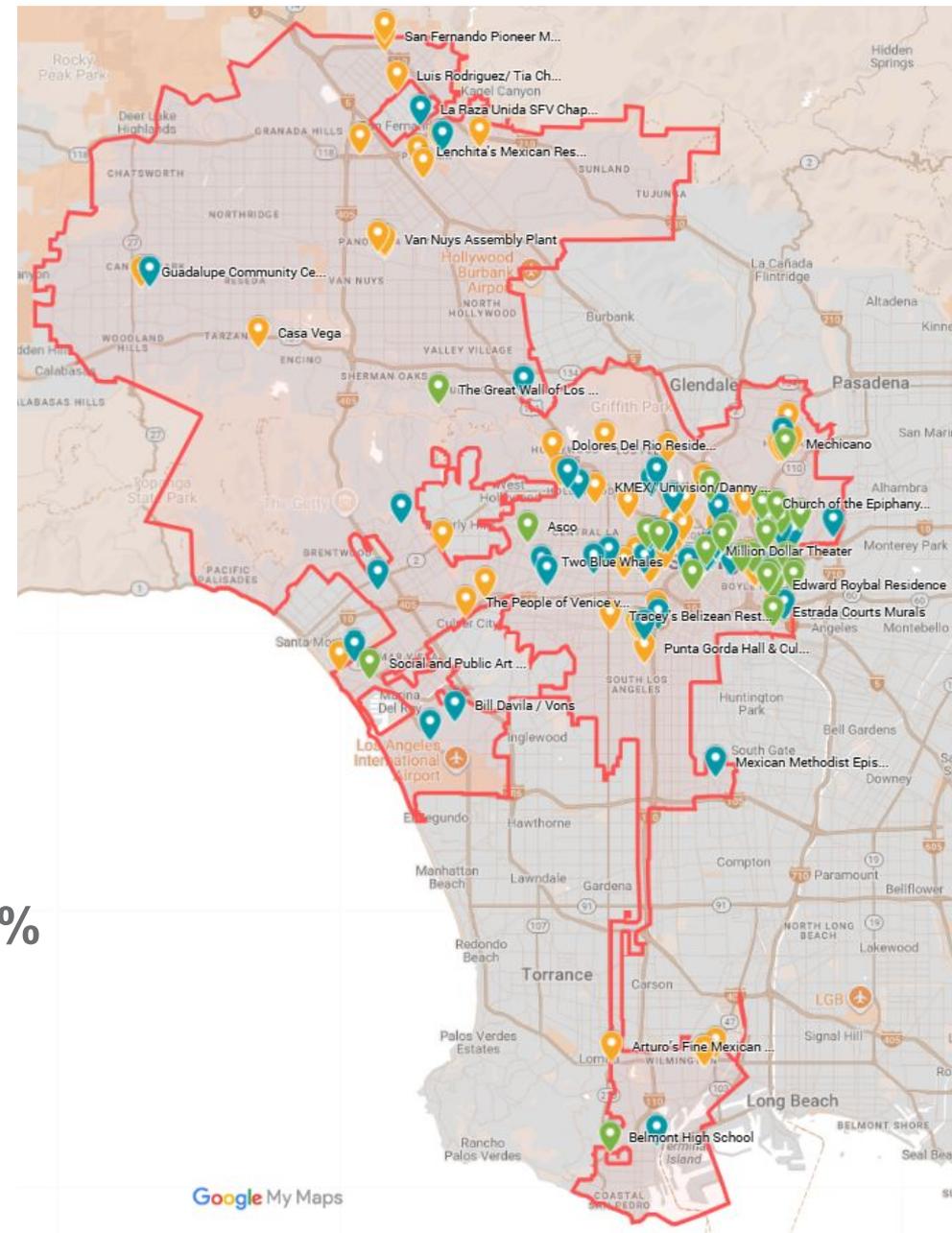
By making or agreeing to submit photograph(s), video(s), and/or audio recording(s) you represent and warrant that you own or otherwise control all rights in and to the photograph(s), video(s), and/or audio recording(s), and that the photograph(s), video(s), and/or audio

Are there any additional sites that you think should be recognized with a marker?

Previous
Next

Sample Marker Locations

- Over 100 sites to receive markers across the city
 - Northeast/ Valleys ~ 30%
 - Downtown/Boyle Heights/Westlake ~ 45%
 - Hollywood/Silverlake/Echo Park ~10%
 - Wilshire/Westside ~5%
 - South LA/ Harbor Areas ~10%



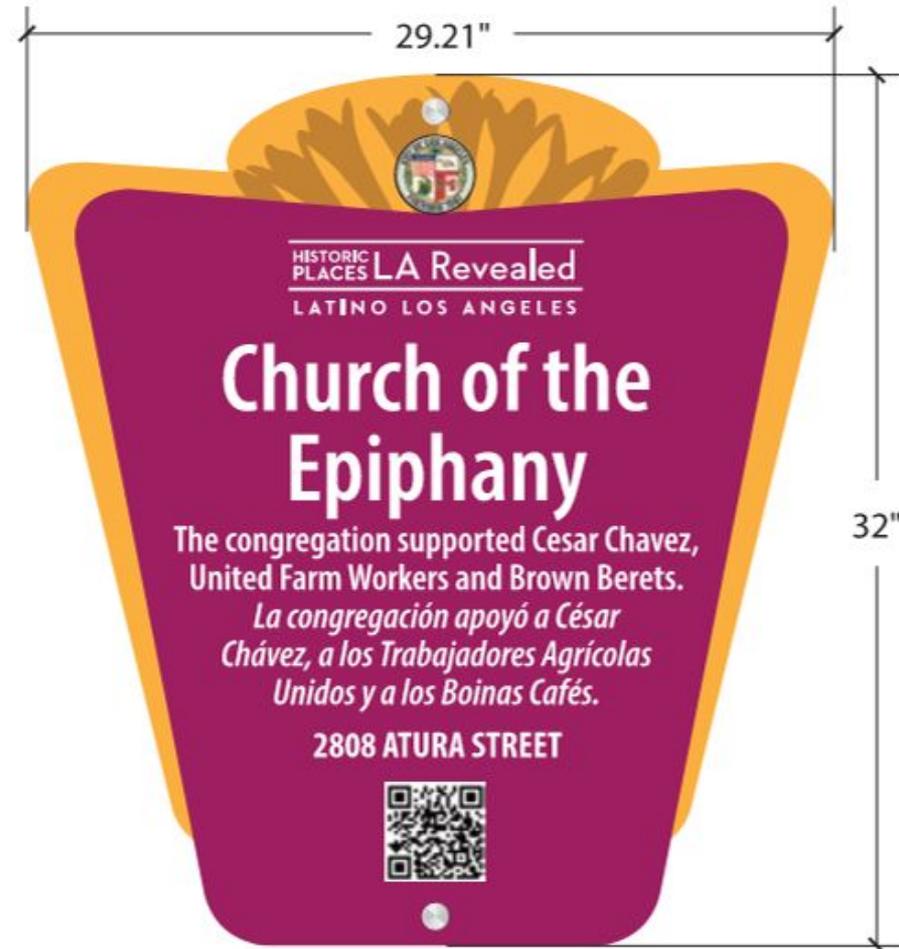
Design and Installation of Markers

- Sites that receive markers will not be designated
- Markers will be in public realm
- Pedestrian scale at sidewalks; attached to nearby street light poles

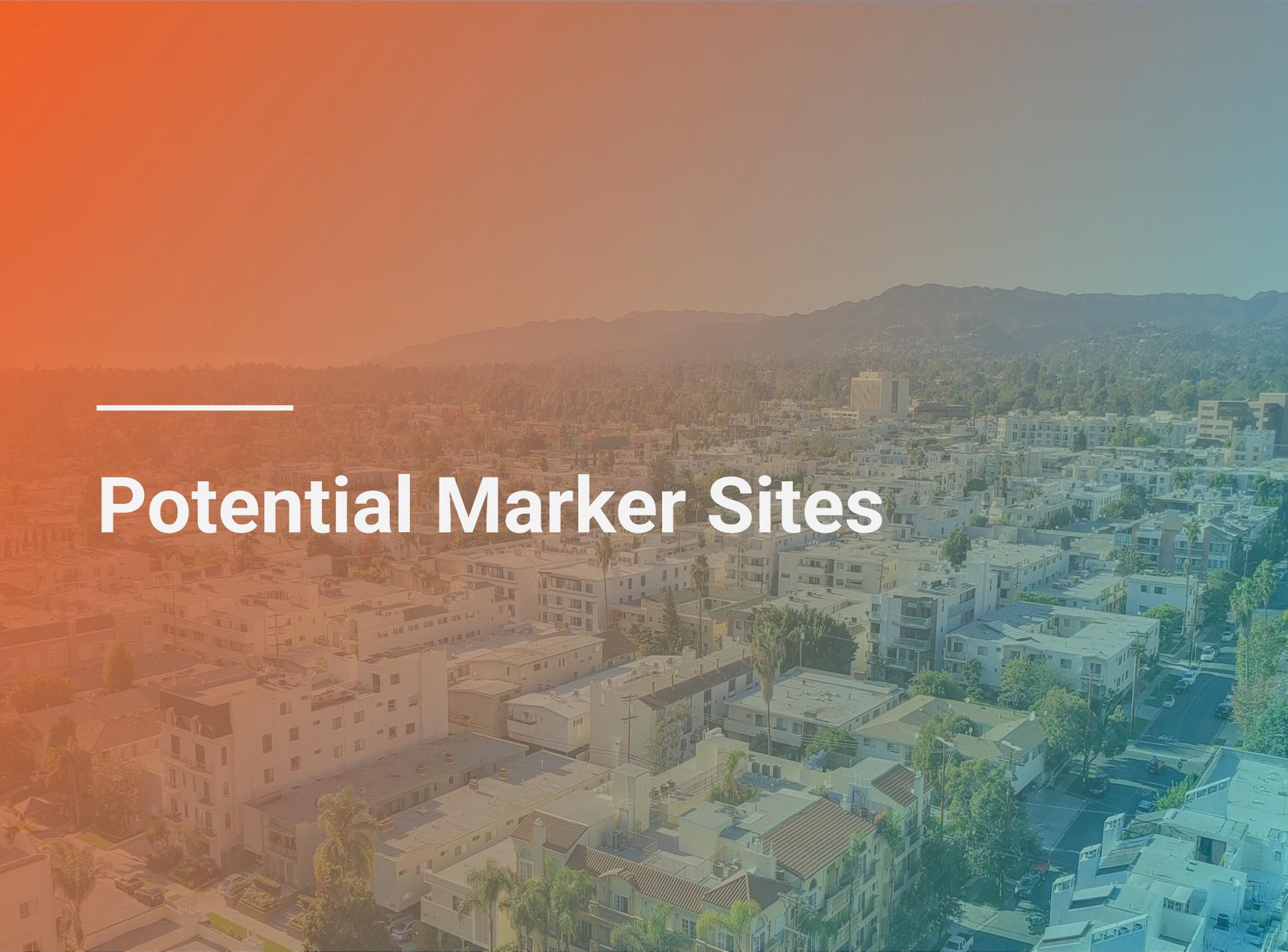


Design and Installation of Markers

- Markers will have:
 - Site name and address
 - Short, bilingual text
 - QR codes to access HistoricPlacesLA entries



Potential Marker Sites

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense residential area with multi-story apartment buildings and houses. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The image has a color gradient overlay, transitioning from a warm orange on the left to a cool blue on the right. A white horizontal line is positioned above the main text.

Justice for Janitors – West LA



Photo credit: Los Angeles Public Library, <https://tessa2.lapl.org/digital/collection/photos/id/28514/rec/4>

Candela's Guitars – Boyle Heights

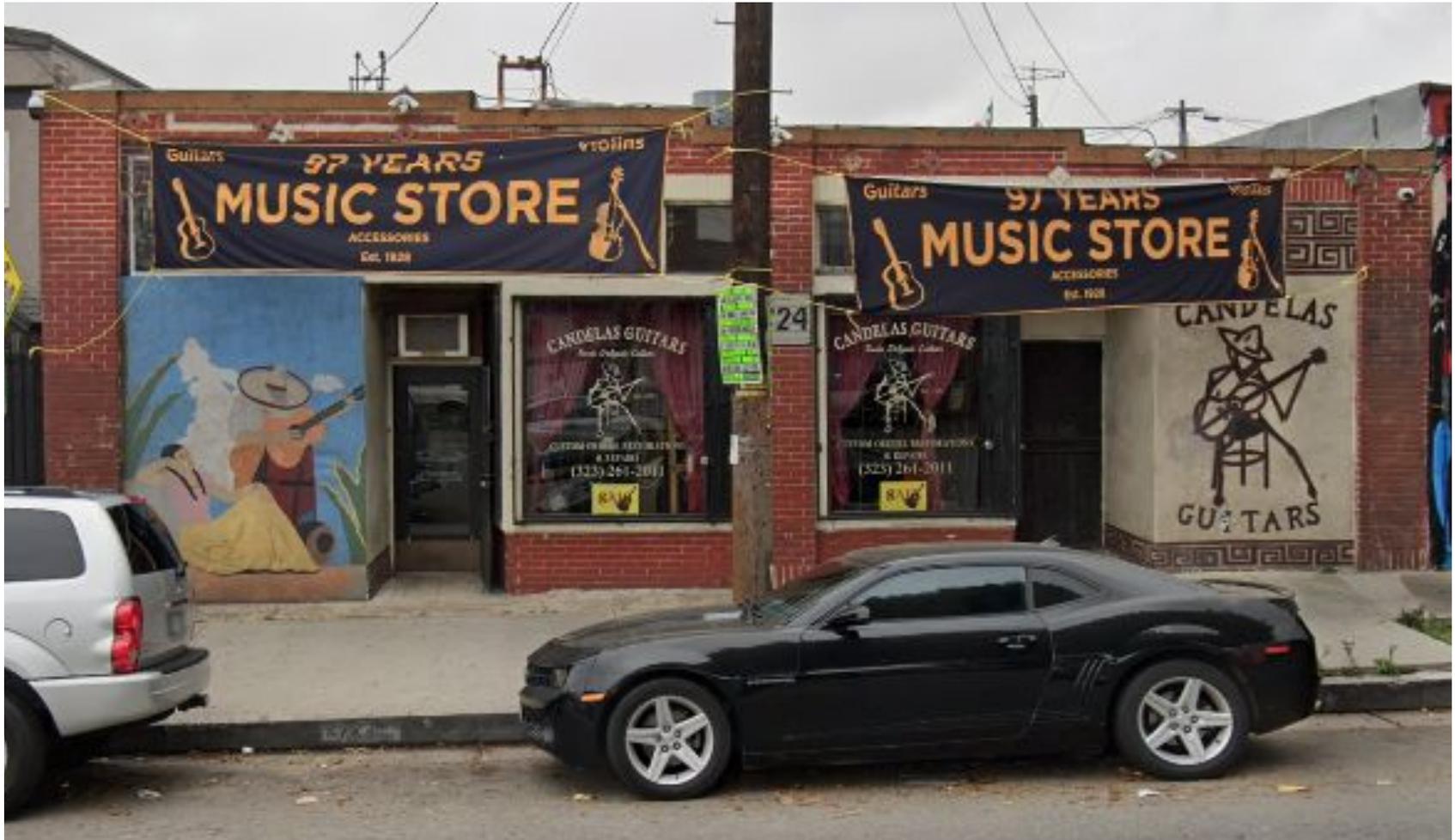


Photo credit: Google Street View

Harbor Canning Co. / Juanita's Foods – Harbor Area



Photo credit: Juanita's Foods <https://www.juanitas.com/about-us/history/>

Luis Rodriguez/ Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural & Bookstore – Valleys

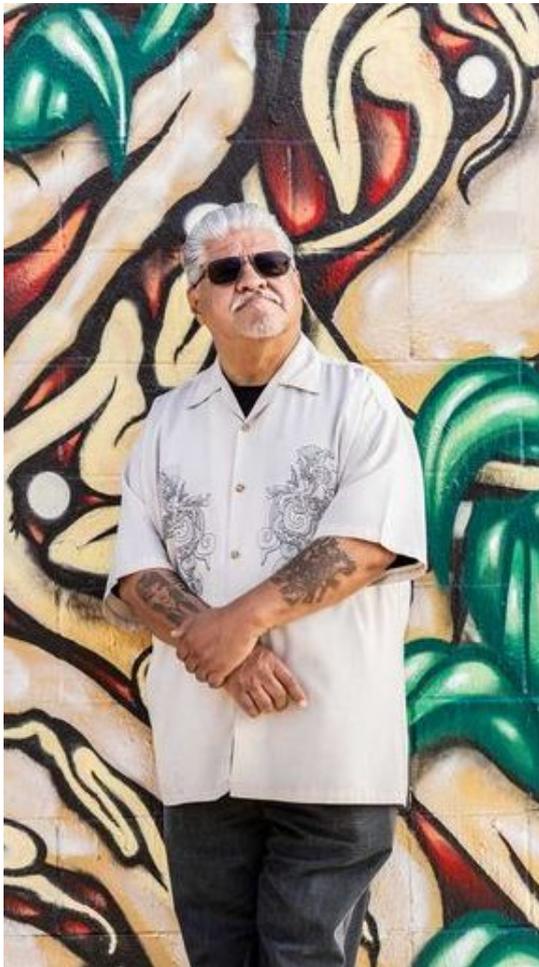


Photo credit: About Luis J. Rodriguez
<https://www.luisjrodriguez.com>



Photo credit: Google Street View <https://maps.google.com>

**HISTORIC
PLACES** LA Revealed

LATINO LOS ANGELES

Website:

<https://planning.lacity.gov/historicplacesla-revealed-latino-los-angeles>

Tell us more about important Latino sites in your neighborhood:

<https://pln.la/27nj1A>



African American Historic Places, Los Angeles Project

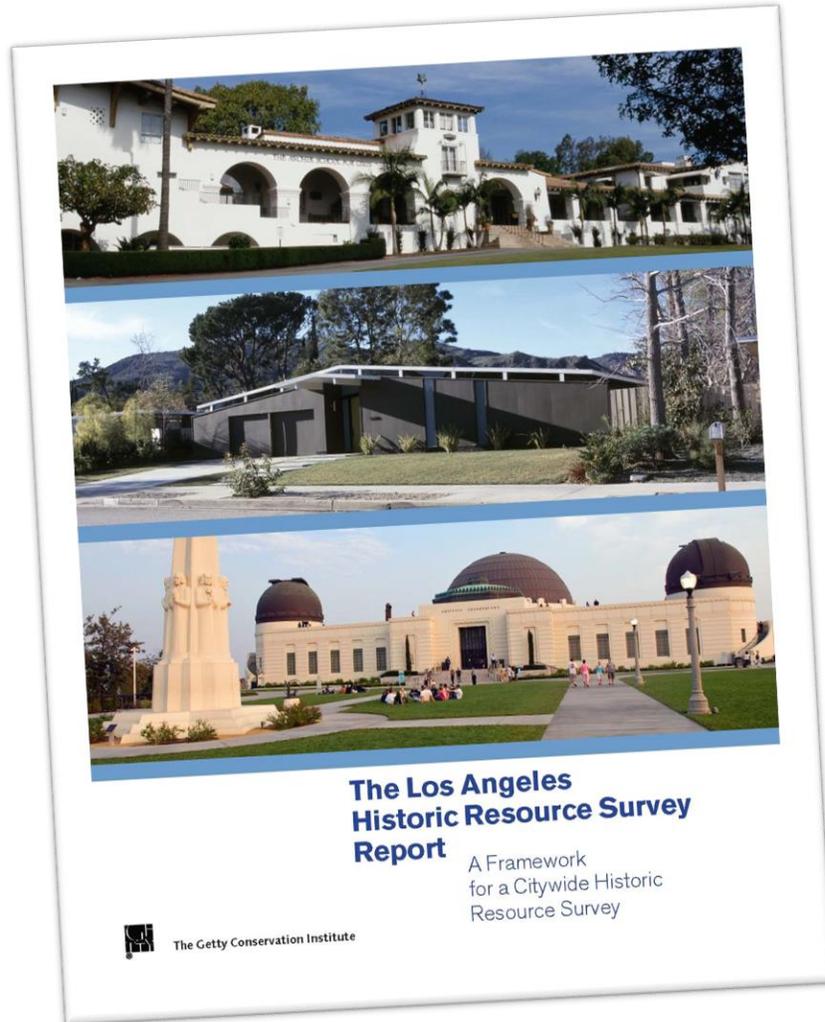
Rooted in Cultural Place-keeping



Getty



Why This Work & Why Now?



Systemic Gaps



Golden State Mutual Building #2, 1999 W. Adams Boulevard, designed by Paul R. Williams, 1949, LA HCM #1000. Photo credit: UCLA Library Special Collections

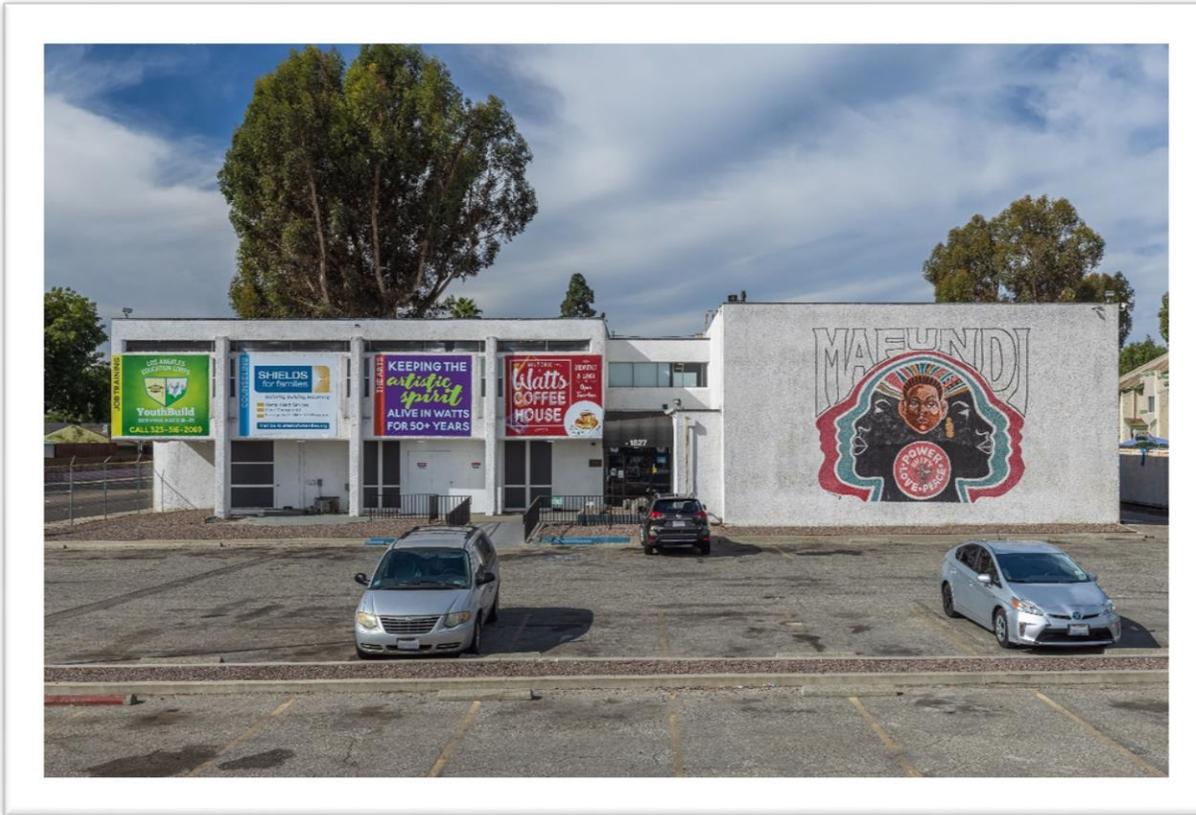
Broadly

- Cultural heritage conservation can contribute to the changes needed to address systemic racism in our society.

In Los Angeles

- Traditional designation programs and standards do not equitably encompass the diversity and richness of the African American experience in LA.
- Just over 4% of approx. 1,360 locally designated landmarks (HCMs) in LA are associated with African American history.
- SurveyLA made significant efforts to better recognize the cultural heritage of LA's diverse society, but it was limited in time and budget.

Project Goals

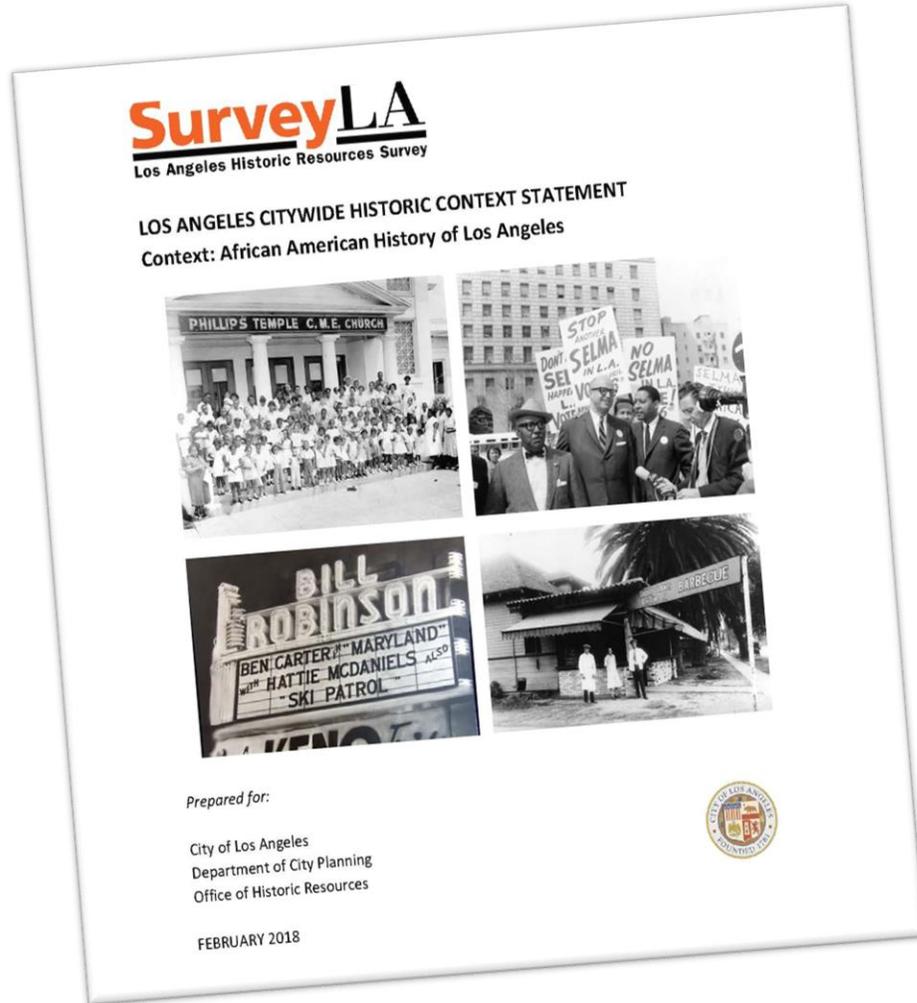


Mafundi Building, built 1969, Watts, architects Robert Kennard and Arthur Silvers.
Photo: Stephen Schafer www.HABS.photo.

- To advance outcomes of SurveyLA.
- To advance the recognition, understanding, protection, conservation, and celebration of the African American heritage of LA.
- To understand how the historic preservation processes and associated policies may be contributing to racism and identify where these can be rethought to ensure they support antiracist policies and practices within the planning and preservation work of the City.
- To contribute to the broader reform of the historic preservation planning framework at the local government level.
- To provide a potential model for future initiatives related to the heritage of Indigenous and other communities in LA.

Where Are We Now?

Updating the African American History of LA Historic Context Statement (HCS)

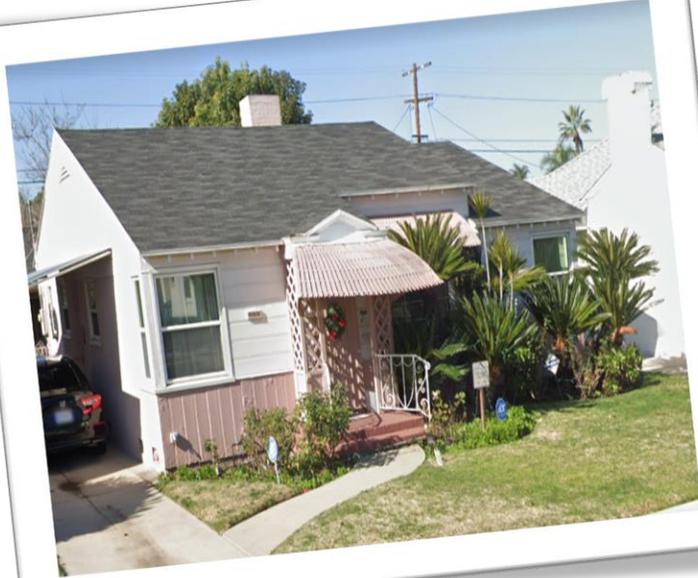


When reviewing the 2018 HCS the project's subcommittee considered three central questions:

- 1) Are there any factual corrections that need to be applied to the document?
- 2) What missing themes or topics should be included in the revision?
- 3) How do we infuse the "soul" of community into the 2018 context document?

Where Are We Now?

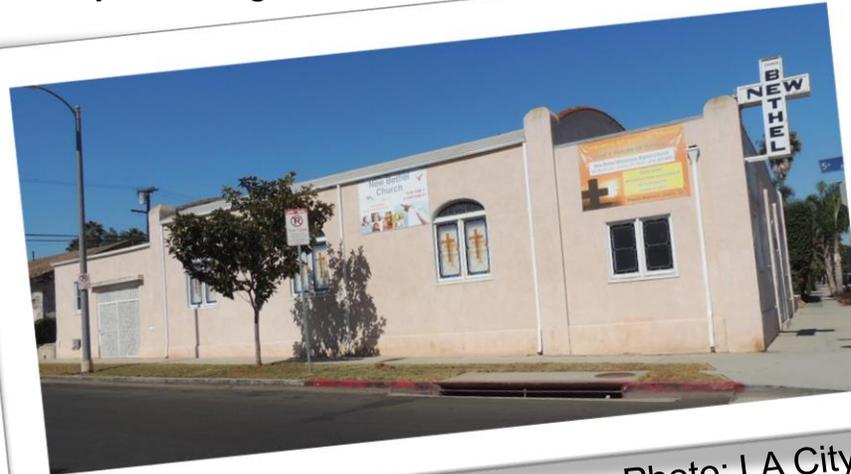
Designate sites from existing historic context statement and when its updated



Tom and Ethel Bradley Residence, built 1940, West Adams. Photo: LA City Planning.



Jewel's Catch One, built 1925, Mid-City. Photo: LA City Planning.



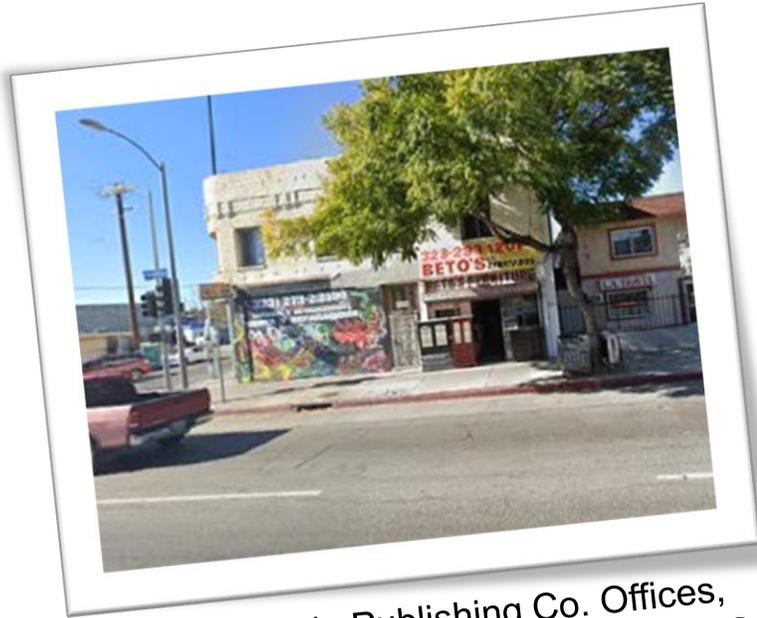
New Bethel Baptist Church, Venice. Photo: LA City Planning.



Stylesville Barbershop & Beauty Salon, est. 1957, Pacoima. Photo: © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Where Are We Now?

Designate sites from existing historic context statement and when its updated



California Eagle Publishing Co. Offices, built 1906, Historic Central Ave. Photo: © J. Paul Getty Trust.



St. Elmo Village, est. 1969, Mid-City. Photo: Elizabeth Daniels, © J. Paul Getty Trust.

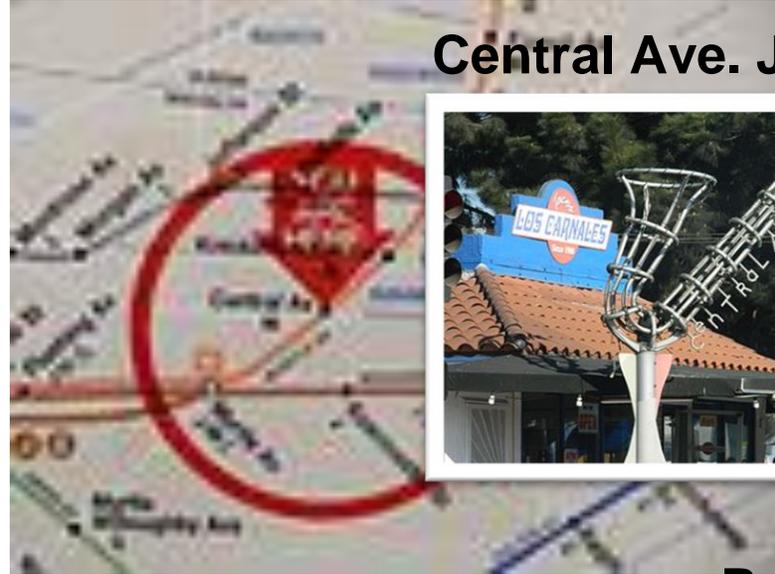


Greater Community Missionary Baptist Church, Pacoima. Photo: LA City Planning.

Where Are We Now?

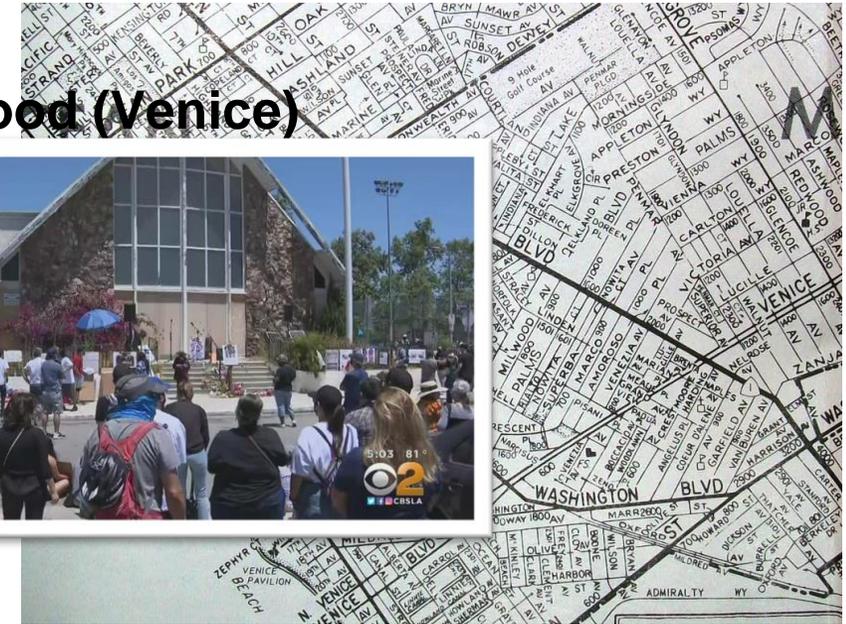
Better Cultural Preservation Strategies for three LA Neighborhoods:

Central Ave. Jazz Corridor



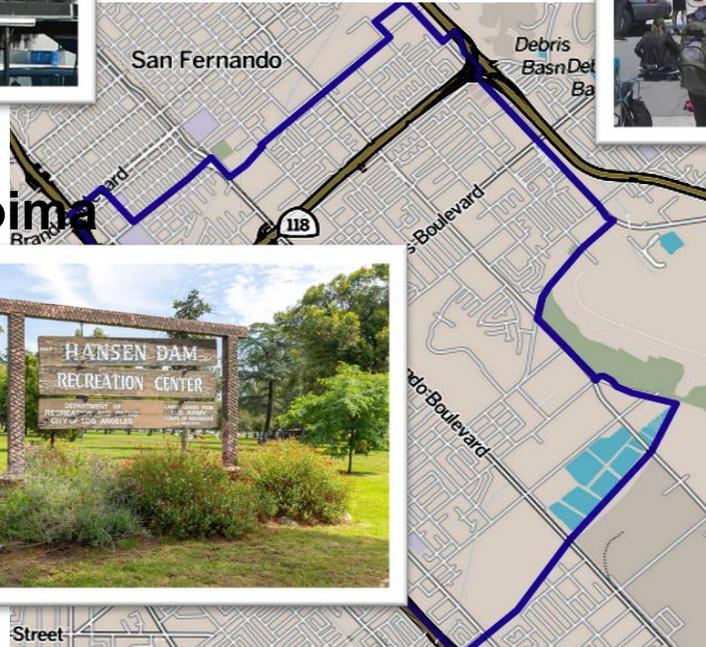
[This Photo](#) of Historic Central Avenue by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Oakwood (Venice)



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Pacoima



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What is Still to Come?

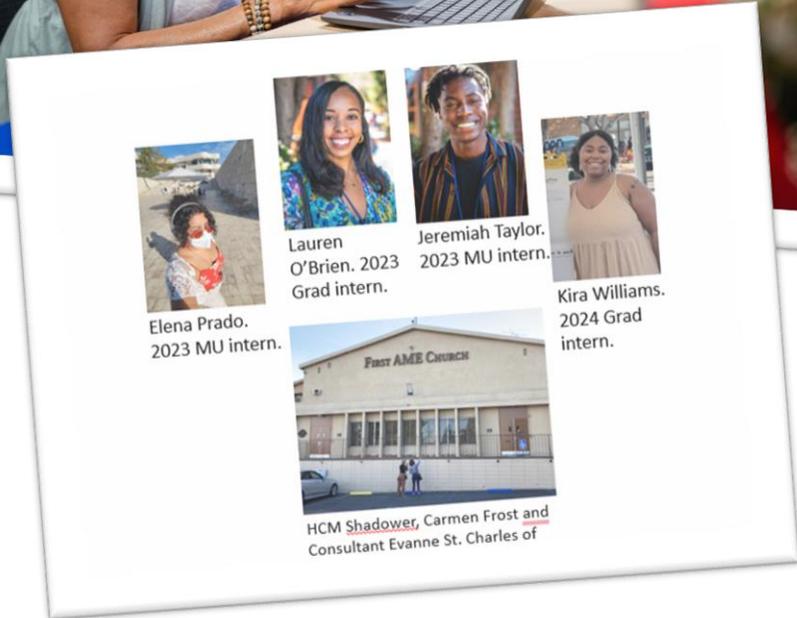
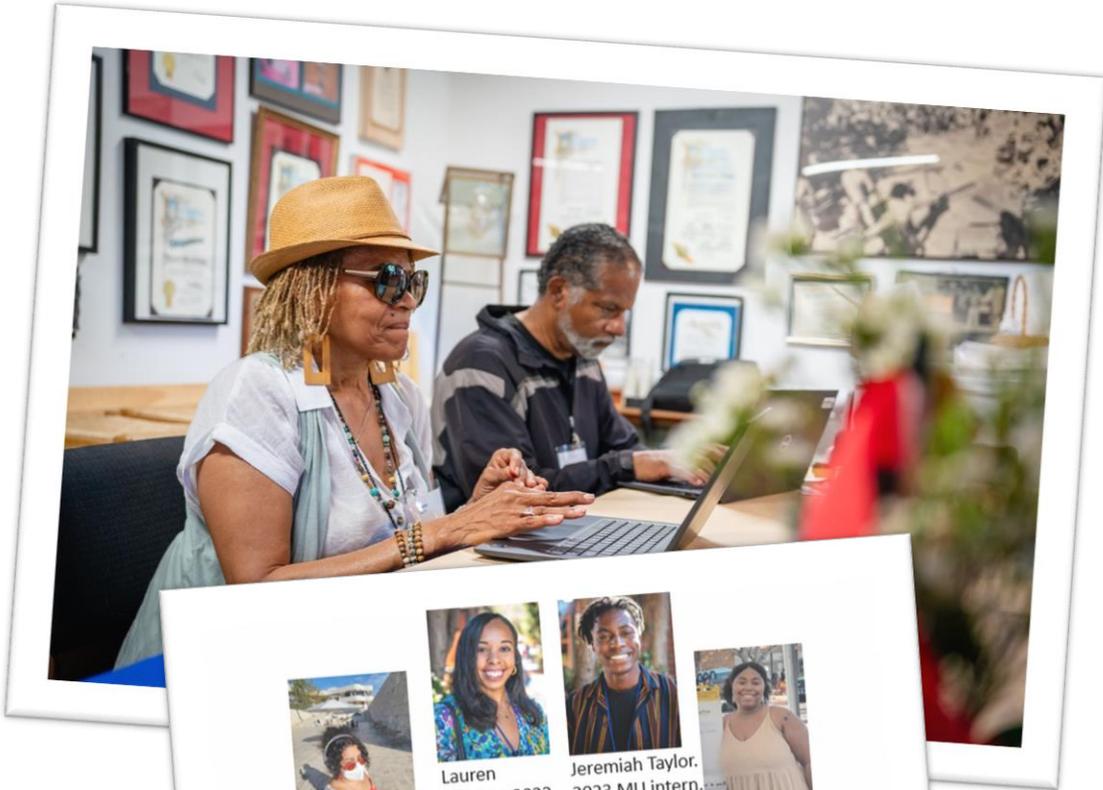


Holman United Methodist Church, 1958, Jefferson Park, architect Kenneth Nels Lind. Photo: Elizabeth Daniels, © J. Paul Getty Trust.

To be developed

- How can this work have an impact on Los Angeles and beyond? Become a model?
- What can we recommend to a broader audience based on our efforts?
- What kind of public programming best serves to communicate our findings?

Community at the Center



Advisory Members

- Project Advisors & Subcommittees
- Community Steering Committees

Internships

- Graduate and Undergraduate

Community Events & Outreach

- Project Kickoff
- Watts Drum & Jazz Festival
- Central Ave Jazz Festival
- Taste of Soul
- Office Hours

Community Collaborations

- Shadowing component
- Other initiatives – LA Women’s Landmarks initiative, Black Cultural Districts Initiative, African American Art History Initiative and Conserving Black Modernism at Getty

Thank You!



**LEARN MORE
ABOUT AAHPLA**



**TAKE THE AAHPLA
SURVEY AND HELP IDENTIFY
IMPORTANT PLACES**



**SIGN UP TO RECEIVE
PROJECT UPDATES**

Getty

