The Department of City Planning will be honored with a 2008 Preservation Award from the Los Angeles Conservancy, recognizing the Department’s Historic Homeowner Education Program for the City’s Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs). The award will be presented at the Conservancy’s May 8th luncheon at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel.

The Historic Homeowner Education Program has worked to improve awareness and understanding of the City’s HPOZ program and of good historic rehabilitation practices, particularly within Los Angeles’ diverse low- and moderate-income historic neighborhoods.

The program includes a new brochure, entitled “HPOZ Living,” that explains the City’s HPOZ program, as well as a new 32-page Historic Rehabilitation Guide for owners of historic homes. Thousands of copies of these new publications will be available starting in May, in English, Spanish, and Korean, and may also be reproduced in additional languages in the coming months.

Los Angeles’ Diverse Historic Communities

Contrary to the common misperception that historic preservation only serves elite, upper-income communities, Los Angeles’ historic districts include many of the most ethnically and socioeconomically diverse neighborhoods in the city. Citywide, 14 of the 22 HPOZs have a median income level below the citywide median, and several HPOZs, including Pico-Union and Lincoln Heights, include large communities with language barriers.

After the Pico-Union HPOZ was adopted in 2004, the need for educational materials geared toward these populations became even more apparent. Through a grant from the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the Department of City Planning developed a Preservation Plan for this newly-adopted HPOZ in 2006.

To make this document more accessible to community residents, department staff created a series of ten pamphlets on common exterior projects such as re-roofing and window repair, incorporating practical tips on maintenance and simple repairs. As these pamphlets started to circulate, many residents in other HPOZs began to request them, especially after two of the pamphlets were translated into Spanish.

(Continued on page 2)

SurveyLA Updates: OHR Invites Your Involvement

As the SurveyLA project gears up for the start of pilot survey work this spring, the Office of Historic Resources has put in place new ways for you to learn more about the citywide survey, to help spread the word about the project, and to participate meaningfully in the survey activities.

Volunteer Speakers Bureau Available for Your Group

Last year, the OHR received a Certified Local Government grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation to assist in developing public outreach strategies for the survey. One of the centerpieces of this program is a new SurveyLA Volunteer Speakers Bureau – 20 trained volunteers who will serve as ambassadors of the SurveyLA project citywide. The consulting firm Historic Resources Group and OHR staff trained these dedicated volunteers, who will be fanning out throughout the pilot survey areas (see p. 3) to begin raising awareness about the survey and eliciting input about places that deserve consideration by the survey teams.

If you are part of an organization that wants to learn more about SurveyLA (Continued on page 2)
HPOZ Outreach Wins Award (continued)

As a result of the positive feedback on the Pico-Union pamphlets, the Department decided to expand its Pico-Union program into a citywide initiative for historic homeowner education. The Department applied for and received funding for two brochures from the Construction Services Committee, the City committee that allocates permit fee revenues to support the City’s public permit counters and services for project applicants. This enabled the Department to produce a citywide guide that collapsed all ten Pico-Union pamphlets into a single booklet, as well as a new general informational brochure to demystify the HPOZ process.

The New Publications

The new informational brochure will raise awareness of the HPOZ process among residents and property owners. Many residents remain completely unaware that they live within an HPOZ, or may have misconceptions about what they can or can’t do to their home. To effectively communicate this information, the brochure uses the popular FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) format to explain what an HPOZ is and what it means. The brochure also includes information regarding HPOZ benefits, financial incentives, preservation resources, City approval procedures, and context information.

The 32-page HPOZ rehabilitation guide includes 13 chapters: Using the Guide, Paint, Wood Siding, Stucco & Masonry, Windows, Doors, Porches & Balconies, Roofs & Chimneys, Landscaping & Hardscape, Fences & Gates, Architectural Styles, Additions, Historic Incentives, and Historic Resources. Each of the rehabilitation chapters begins with general background information about the topic followed by a list of standards and photos explaining the “do’s and don’ts” of historically appropriate rehabilitation drawn largely from the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The remaining sections are filled with illustrations, photos, and basic tips on maintenance and simple repairs. The overall approach of the guide is to demonstrate to residents that historic preservation is practical and does not have to be expensive.

Many thanks to Megan Hunter and Blake Kendrick of the Department’s Community Planning Bureau, Edgar Garcia of the Office of Historic Resources, and Louisa Ranick of the Department’s Graphics Section for their outstanding work in creating the award-winning publications, and to the City’s Construction Services Committee, chaired by Daniel Falcon, for its invaluable leadership and financial support.

An Opportunity for Neighborhood Outreach

We welcome your ideas and your involvement in distributing the new publications to property owners around the city. The Department will be partnering with local neighborhood councils, HPOZ Board Members, neighborhood preservation organizations, and local community groups to distribute these materials. But neighborhood councils and local preservation organizations may also want to create their own outreach programs using these brochures, coupling distribution of these citywide publications with their own, neighborhood-specific publications or messages. The brochures and guides will also be available at all of the City’s public permit counters – giving HPOZ applicants clear and pertinent information at their first point of contact with the City.

Historic preservation either takes hold or loses ground based on the incremental effects of hundreds of decisions made annually by owners of historic properties. The Historic Homeowner Education Program will motivate residents and property owners to take pride in their buildings and engage in rehabilitation activities that preserve and revitalize their own property, while also enhancing their entire neighborhood.

SurveyLA Updates (continued)

or participate – perhaps a neighborhood council, a homeowners group, a historical society, a service club, a church or synagogue, or a business organization – please contact Rita Moreno of the OHR at (213) 978-1192 to schedule a presentation or discussion with our speakers bureau.

SurveyLA Video to Air on Channel 35

The OHR has worked with the City’s Information Technology Agency to produce a new half-hour program on SurveyLA, to air regularly on LA CityView, Channel 35 on all cable television systems in the City of Los Angeles. The program highlights why a citywide historic resources survey is important to Los Angeles, and takes viewers to diverse historic places around the city, including Frank Lloyd Wright’s Ennis House, the Dunbar

(Continued on page 3)
SurveyLA Updates (continued)

Hotel on Central Avenue, the Far East Café in Little Tokyo, Weatherwolde Castle in Tujunga, Church of the Epiphany in Lincoln Heights, and the Modernist neighborhoods of Crestwood Hills in Brentwood and Balboa Highlands in Granada Hills. Later this spring, a shorter version of the program will begin airing as streaming video on www.surveyla.org, and DVD copies of the program will be available for community organizations around the city, including a Spanish-language version.

Pilot Surveys to Begin This Spring

Pilot surveys for SurveyLA will be launched in the late spring and will continue through the end of 2008. The pilot program is a critical part of the first phase of SurveyLA and will test the efficacy of survey tools and methods currently in development.

The pilot survey areas described below were chosen to generate important "lessons learned" for the citywide surveys while also providing valuable data covering many areas of Los Angeles. The Boyle Heights pilot survey contract has been awarded to Architectural Resources Group (ARG) of Pasadena. The OHR has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the other two pilot surveys, which are scheduled to begin this summer.

Boyle Heights Community, ca. 1870s-1970s - This survey will cover the residential area, which is extremely rich in ethnic, cultural, and architectural history.

Streetcar Commercial Development, ca. 1910-1940s - This pilot survey will review smaller-scale commercial architecture shaped by the city's extensive streetcar system. Two commercial corridors have been selected for this pilot survey: Vermont Avenue between Martin Luther King Boulevard and Manchester Boulevard, and Pico Boulevard from the 110 Freeway to Crenshaw Blvd.

Post-WWII Suburbanization in the San Fernando Valley, ca. 1945-1965 - Because a large proportion of Los Angeles' built environment dates from the post-World War II era, this pilot survey will examine suburbanization in the San Fernando Valley in two subareas - the East Valley communities between Victory Blvd. to the north, the 101 Freeway to the south, Whittier Ave. to the east, and Woodman Ave. to the west, and West Valley communities between Vanowen St. to the north, the 101 Freeway to the south, Balboa Blvd. to the east, and Winnetka Ave. to the west.

SurveyLA Volunteers Wanted!

The OHR is recruiting additional volunteers and neighborhood organizers to help gather information about the history and development of these areas and participate in the field surveys. Among the many ways you can be involved in the SurveyLA project include Field Survey Assistant, Researcher, Neighborhood Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, and Office Aide.

To learn more visit www.SurveyLA.org or contact Janet Hansen at (213) 978-1191 or via email: Janet.Hansen@lacity.org.

SurveyLA Background

SurveyLA: The Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey Project is the first-ever comprehensive inventory of our city’s historic resources. The project will bring together all that is known—and much that is presently unknown—about Los Angeles’ built heritage and make this information readily accessible on the web to shape decisions by policymakers, developers, planners, community organizations, and property owners.

The survey findings will have a multiplicity of benefits and uses: it will help direct future growth, shape the revision of Los Angeles’ 35 Community Plans, streamline environmental review processes, provide opportunities for public education, assist in disaster planning, and spur heritage tourism and the marketing of historic neighborhoods and properties.

The J. Paul Getty Trust and the City of Los Angeles have entered into a grant agreement for SurveyLA under which the Getty has committed to providing up to $2.5 million to the project, subject to certain matching requirements by the City. The survey is organized in two phases, to be completed over a five-year period. The first two years of the project comprise the “Initiation Phase” during which survey tools and methods will be developed and tested. Field surveys and evaluations will occur in the “Implementation Phase,” years three through five of the project (2009 to 2011). The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) is also providing technical and advisory support for SurveyLA separate and apart from the grant funding.
2008 Mills Act Application Now Available

The OHR has posted the new 2008 Mills Act Historical Property Contract applications on-line, at: www.preservation.lacity.org. The Mills Act is California’s leading financial incentive program for historic preservation, and the City of Los Angeles has one of the fastest growing programs in the State. The deadline for submitting an application is 5:00 p.m. on June 27, 2008.

The Mills Act program allows owners of qualifying historic properties to enter into a contract with the City of Los Angeles for a revolving ten-year term, under which owners agree to restore and maintain their property in accordance with historic preservation standards in exchange for a potentially significant reduction in property taxes. Qualifying properties include locally-designated Historic-Cultural Monuments and Contributing Properties in Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs).

In February, the City Council approved an amendment to the City’s Mills Act Ordinance, increasing the pre-contract property valuation limits to $1.5 million for single-family residences, and to $3 million for multi-family residential, commercial, or industrial buildings. The Cultural Heritage Commission may grant exemptions from these limitations in exceptional circumstances. The previous valuation limits of $500,000 for single-family homes and $1.5 million for other properties had not been increased since the City’s Mills Act program was created in 1996, and had become inconsistent with prevalent property values for historic buildings in Los Angeles.

HPOZ Updates

On April 24th, the City Planning Commission will consider a new proposed Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ), in the Stonehurst neighborhood of Sun Valley, located in the Northeast San Fernando Valley. The proposed Stonehurst HPOZ is comprised of 92 parcels, roughly bounded by Sheldon Street on the north, Stonehurst Avenue on the east, Wicks St. on the south and Dronfield Avenue on the west. The neighborhood features a remarkable collection of homes built in the 1920s that are notable for their extensive use of native river rock as the main building material for exterior walls, chimneys, and foundations. The Cultural Heritage Commission in March unanimously certified the Stonehurst HPOZ survey and recommended approval of the new district.

The City Planning Commission gave its approval in March to an expansion of Los Angeles’ first HPOZ, in Angelino Heights, adopted in 1983. The HPOZ did not previously include the entire Angelino Heights neighborhood; the new expansion area adds 184 parcels to the HPOZ, for a new total of 748 properties. The proposed HPOZ expansion also included an update to the original Angelino Heights HPOZ survey; the expanded HPOZ will go before the City Council in the coming months.

Historic-Cultural Monument (hcm) Application Revised

Are you thinking of submitting a nomination of a local historic place for City Historic-Cultural Monument status? If so, you may notice that the OHR has updated its instructions for completing the nomination. We’ve worked to make the nomination process clearer, and have added representative photos of existing Monuments to the instructions. See the new and improved instructions on-line at: www.preservation.lacity.org/monument-application.
Los Angeles’ Newest Historic-Cultural Monuments

Between January 1 and March 31, 2008, the Cultural Heritage Commission and the City Council completed the approval of 13 new properties as City Historic-Cultural Monuments. Los Angeles’ newest landmarks include a significant San Fernando Valley library, a bungalow once occupied by noted writer Charles Bukowski, and eleven bridges spanning the Los Angeles River—one of the largest concentrations of National Register-eligible bridges in the nation.

North Spring Street Bridge, HCM #900: Built in 1927, this reinforced concrete arch/T-beam bridge is an excellent example of Beaux-Arts bridge design. Merrill Butler incorporated new engineering and technical innovations into the bridge’s form but also drew upon Classical design elements, reflecting the values and objectives of the City Beautiful Movement of the early 20th century.

North Main Street Bridge, HCM #901: Built in 1910, the North Main Street Bridge is one of the earliest of the monumental L.A. River bridges. Designed by H.G. Parker and Hugo Eckardt, and constructed by Carl Leonardt, this reinforced concrete arch bridge reflects features of the Beaux-Arts style. At 280 feet, it stands as the shortest of the designated bridges. It was once the only reinforced concrete three-hinged bridge west of the Mississippi River.

Olympic Boulevard Bridge, HCM #902: Built in 1925, this reinforced concrete arch/T-beam bridge exhibits characteristic features of Beaux-Arts bridge design. It was designed by Merrill Butler, with City Engineers John A. Griffin and R.W. Stuart. Originally titled the “Ninth Street Bridge,” it was renamed the Olympic Street Bridge in honor of the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics.

Washington Boulevard Bridge, HCM #903: Built in 1931, this reinforced concrete T-beam bridge epitomizes Beaux-Arts design. It was constructed by the General Engineering Corporation based on the vision of Merrill Butler. This bridge is particularly noteworthy for its decorative friezes depicting bridge builders. These heroic portrayals of working people offer an early glimpse of an artistic theme that would blossom with the Works Progress Administration in the late 1930s.

Seventh Street Bridge, HCM #904: This reinforced concrete arch/T-beam bridge exhibits Merrill Butler’s preferred Beaux-Arts design. The firm of Lange & Bergstrom constructed the lower deck and trio of concrete arch forms in 1910 to allow streetcar passage. The navigable upper deck and T-beam supports date to a 1927 renovation. By incorporating the 1910 streetcar bridge into its updated design, the “double-decker” Seventh Street Bridge highlights two distinct periods of bridge construction in early twentieth-century Los Angeles.

Sixth Street Bridge, HCM #905: Built in 1932, this reinforced concrete T-beam/steel arched bridge is an excellent example of the Art Deco-Streamline Moderne style. Merrill Butler, Louis Huot and Louis Blume collaborated on the design. Upon its completion, the structure was the longest bridge spanning the River and the largest concrete bridge in Los Angeles.

Fourth Street Bridge, HCM #906: Built in 1931, this reinforced concrete arched bridge exhibits characteristic features of Gothic Revival monumental bridge design. Designed by Merrill Butler, along with Louis L. Hunt, this is one of only two historic bridges on the Los Angeles River to use a Period Revival design instead of a Beaux-Arts and Classical aesthetic.

North Broadway – Buena Vista Street Bridge, HCM #907: Built in 1911, this bridge was the first major monumental Beaux-Arts bridge constructed by the City of Los Angeles. Homer Hamlin, Engineer of Bridges and Structures for the Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering, served as principal designer, and Alfred P. Rosenheim of the Municipal Arts Commission contributed ornamental features. Upon its completion, it was California’s longest and widest concrete bridge, as well as the state’s first open-spandrel arched bridge.

Riverside – Figueroa Bridge, HCM #908: Originally built in 1927, this reinforced concrete/metal truss bridge is an excellent example of Beaux-Arts bridge design. The bridge was intended to be a reinforced single-arch concrete bridge.

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Los Angeles’ Newest Historic-Cultural Monuments (Continued)

(Continued from page 5)

with open spandrels, similar in form to the North Spring Street Bridge (HCM #900). However, flooding from the L.A. River and landslides along the adjacent hills damaged the bridge and necessitated renovations in 1939, including the removal of the arch span and the insertion of a metal truss into the lower portion of the bridge.

First Street Bridge, HCM #909: Built in 1929, this reinforced concrete arch/T-beam bridge exemplifies Beaux-Arts bridge design. Designed by Merrill Butler and H.P. Cortelyou, this bridge was constructed by the Mitty Brothers Construction Company. The bridge forms part of the monumental bridge building program dating from 1909-1932 that applied City Beautiful values to major civic structures in Los Angeles.

Riverside – Zoo Drive Bridge, HCM #910: Built in 1938, this reinforced concrete bridge exhibits character-defining features of Art Deco-Streamline Moderne bridge design. The bridge was designed under the direction of Merrill Butler, and is associated with the later period of the bridge building program, dating from 1935-1943, that oversaw the construction of several smaller to medium-sized Moderne style bridges across the L.A. River.

OHR Salutes Its Interns!

The Office of Historic Resources has benefited tremendously from the outstanding work of three volunteer interns in recent months:

Jackson Musker (right, in photo) is a summa cum laude graduate of Duke University, and an alum of St. Francis High School in his hometown of La Canada Flintridge. Jackson also has a strong interest in filmmaking and journalism, and is simultaneously working as an intern for KPCC-FM, where he is a contributor to the weekly program “Off Ramp.”

Eric Mendelson (center) is a Sophomore at Brown University, and a graduate of Harvard-Westlake School. He is working at the OHR four days a week, assisting significantly in the development of the cutting-edge SurveyLA database that will be used in this year’s pilot surveys (see p. 3)

Manny Valenzuela (left) has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from UC Irvine and has also been working as a Planning Intern for the City of Glendale’s historic preservation program. Previously, he was on the legislative staff of State Senator Jack Scott, and he is active in planning, housing, and historic preservation in his hometown of Temple City.

The OHR is accepting applications through May 2 for the Office’s Getty Foundation Multicultural Undergraduate Summer Internship. This 10-week summer internship includes a stipend of $3,500 and is open to college undergraduates of groups underrepresented in arts-related professions: individuals of African American, Asian, Latino/Hispanic, Native American and Pacific Islander descent. For more information, see www.preservation.lacity.org.