

# SurveyLA

Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey

## Historic Resources Survey Report Arleta-Pacoima Community Plan Area



*Prepared for:*

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



*Prepared by:*



Architectural Resources Group, Inc.  
Pasadena, CA

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Revisions made to the Historic Resources Survey Report for the Arleta-Pacoima Community Plan Area are to the summary report not the survey findings for the area.

# Project Overview

This Historic Resources Survey Report (Survey Report) has been completed on behalf of the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources (OHR) for the SurveyLA historic resources survey of the Arleta-Pacoima Community Plan Area (CPA). This project was undertaken from May 2013 to March 2014 by Architectural Resources Group (ARG).

This Survey Report provides a summary of the work completed, including a description of the Survey Area; an overview of the field methodology; a summary of relevant contexts, themes and property types; and complete lists of all recorded resources. This Survey Report is intended to be used in conjunction with the **SurveyLA Field Results Master Report** (Master Report), which provides a detailed discussion of SurveyLA methodology and explains the terms used in this report and associated appendices. The Master Report and Survey Report can be accessed online at: <https://planning.lacity.org/preservation-design/historic-resources-survey>.

## SurveyLA Methodology Summary

Below is a brief summary of SurveyLA methodology. Refer to the Master Report discussed above for more information.

### ***Field Survey Methods***

- Properties surveyed for SurveyLA are evaluated for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources and for local designation as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM) or Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ), commonly known as historic districts.
- Field surveyors cover the entire area within the boundaries of a CPA. However, only resources that have been identified as significant within the contexts developed for SurveyLA are recorded.
- Consultants making resource evaluations meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* in Architectural History, History, or a related field.
- Surveys focus on identifying significant resources dating from about 1850 to 1980.
- All surveys are completed from the public right-of-way (from vehicles or on foot as needed).
- Digital photographs are taken of all evaluated resources.

- Field surveys do not include:
  - Individual resources and historic districts (including HPOZs) that are already designated (listed in the National, California, or local registers).
  - Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) surveys conducted within the last five years.
  - Potential HPOZ areas which have been surveyed within the last five years and are in the process of being designated.

### ***SurveyLA Resource Types***

SurveyLA identifies individual resources, non-parcel resources, historic districts and district contributors and non-contributors. Each of these is described below. Appendices A, B, and C of this Survey Report are organized by resource type.

- **Individual Resources** are generally resources located within a single assessor parcel, such as a residence or duplex. However, a parcel may include more than one individual resource, if each appears to be significant.
- **Non-Parcel Resources** are not associated with Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) and generally do not have addresses. Examples may include street trees, street lights, landscaped medians, bridges, and signs.
- **Historic Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme. Historic districts may include single or multiple parcels depending on the resource. Examples of resources that may be recorded as historic districts include residential neighborhoods, garden apartments, commercial areas, large estates, school and hospital campuses, and industrial complexes.
- **District Contributors and Non-Contributors** are buildings, structures, objects, sites and other features located within historic districts (such as residences, schools, and parks). Generally, non-contributing resources are those that are extensively altered, are built outside the period of significance, or do not relate to historic contexts and themes defined for the district.
- **Planning Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme, but do not meet eligibility standards for designation. This is generally because the majority of the contributing features have been altered, resulting in a cumulative impact on the overall integrity of the area and making it ineligible as a Historic District. The Planning District determination, therefore, is used as a tool to inform new Community Plans being developed by the Department of City Planning. These areas have consistent planning concepts, such as height, massing, setbacks, and street trees, which may be considered in the local planning process.

## Project Team

The Arleta-Pacoima CPA survey team included the following personnel from ARG: Charles E. Chase, Principal; Katie Horak, Senior Associate, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner; and Andrew Goodrich, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner. Additional assistance was provided by interns Evanne St. Charles and Sandra Shannon. Katie Horak served as project manager.

Concurrent with ARG's survey of the Arleta-Pacoima CPA, the additional Los Angeles CPAs of Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills, Westlake, and Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley were also surveyed by a team including ARG and the firms Historic Resources Group (HRG) and GPA Consulting (GPA). HRG conducted the survey of the Westlake CPA and GPA conducted the survey of the Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley CPA. Personnel from HRG also participated in some aspects of this project.

The project team also included Kevin Roderick, journalist, editor, and author of *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb*. Kevin provided valuable expertise and input regarding the San Fernando Valley and its significant resources throughout all phases of the project.

## Survey Area

### *Description of the Survey Area*

The boundaries of the identified Survey Area correspond with those of the Arleta-Pacoima CPA. The Survey Area is located in the northeast portion of the San Fernando Valley, approximately 20 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. The area is irregular in shape. The northwestern boundary is defined by portions of Arroyo Street, Fox Street, and Brand Boulevard. The southwestern boundary is formed by Interstate 5 Golden State Freeway (5 Freeway), the Pacoima Wash, and Woodman Avenue. The southeastern boundary is defined by Branford Street and the Hansen Dam. The northeastern boundary charts an irregular course that roughly follows Foothill Boulevard and, at times, Interstate 210 Foothill Freeway (the 210 Freeway). The Survey Area abuts the CPAs of Sylmar to the north; Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills to the west; Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon to the south; and Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon to the east. Much of the Survey Area is bordered by the City of San Fernando to the north.

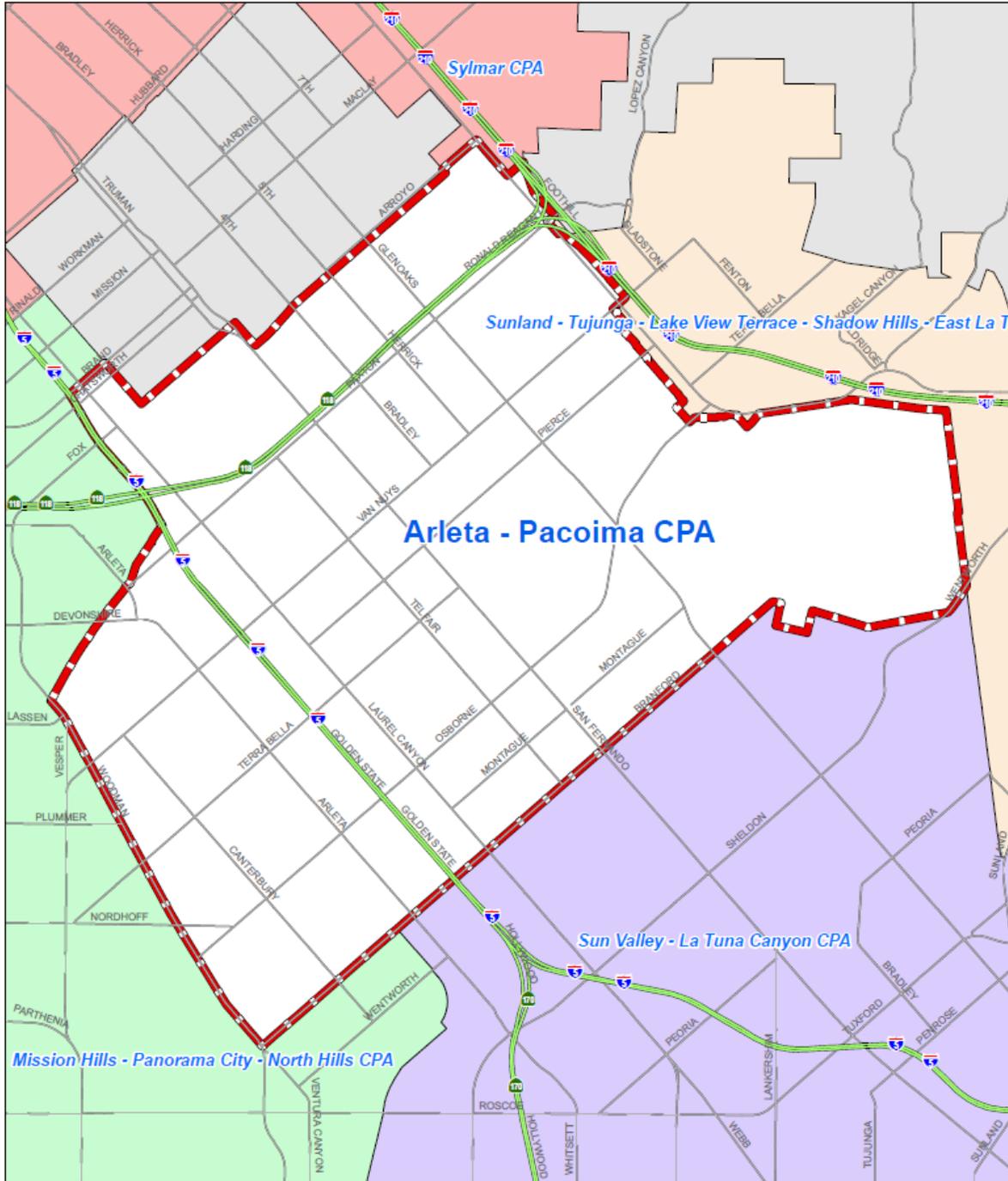
The Survey Area includes two distinct communities:

- **Arleta** is a small community located in the southwestern section of the Survey Area. The community is generally bounded by the Pacoima Wash to the north, Woodman Avenue to the west, Branford Street to the south, and the 5 Freeway to the east.<sup>1</sup>
- **Pacoima** is located in the northeastern section of the Survey Area. The community is generally bounded by Arroyo Street, Fox Street, and Brand Boulevard to the north, the 5 Freeway to the west, Branford Street and the Hansen Dam to the south, and Foothill Boulevard and the 210 Freeway to the east. Most of Pacoima's northern border abuts the San Fernando city limits.

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<sup>1</sup> The community of Arleta extends beyond the southeastern boundary of the Arleta-Pacoima CPA. The southeastern portion of Arleta along Woodman Ave with boundaries at Roscoe Blvd to the south, the Tujunga Wash to the southeast, and the 5 Freeway to the northeast forms part of the Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills CPA west of the Pacoima Wash and the Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon CPA east of the Pacoima Wash.

**Survey Area Map**



**Arleta - Pacoima**  
Survey Area



The Survey Area comprises 18,081 parcels, of which 17,267 were evaluated by the SurveyLA team. In accordance with SurveyLA methodology, properties not surveyed include buildings constructed after 1980 and resources designated under local, state and/or federal programs.<sup>2</sup>

The Arleta-Pacoima CPA is located in the northeast section of the San Fernando Valley. The area is generally flat, although there is some varied, hillside terrain in the central and eastern sections of the CPA near Whiteman Airport and Hansen Dam. The CPA is bisected and partially bounded by two channelized waterways: the Pacoima Wash and the Pacoima Diversion Channel. At the northwest corner of the CPA are the Pacoima Spreading Grounds, at which water is diverted from adjacent waterways and allowed to percolate into the ground. First used in 1932, the Spreading Grounds play an integral role in the replenishment of local groundwater supplies. A portion of the Spreading Grounds facility falls within the boundaries of the adjacent Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills CPA.

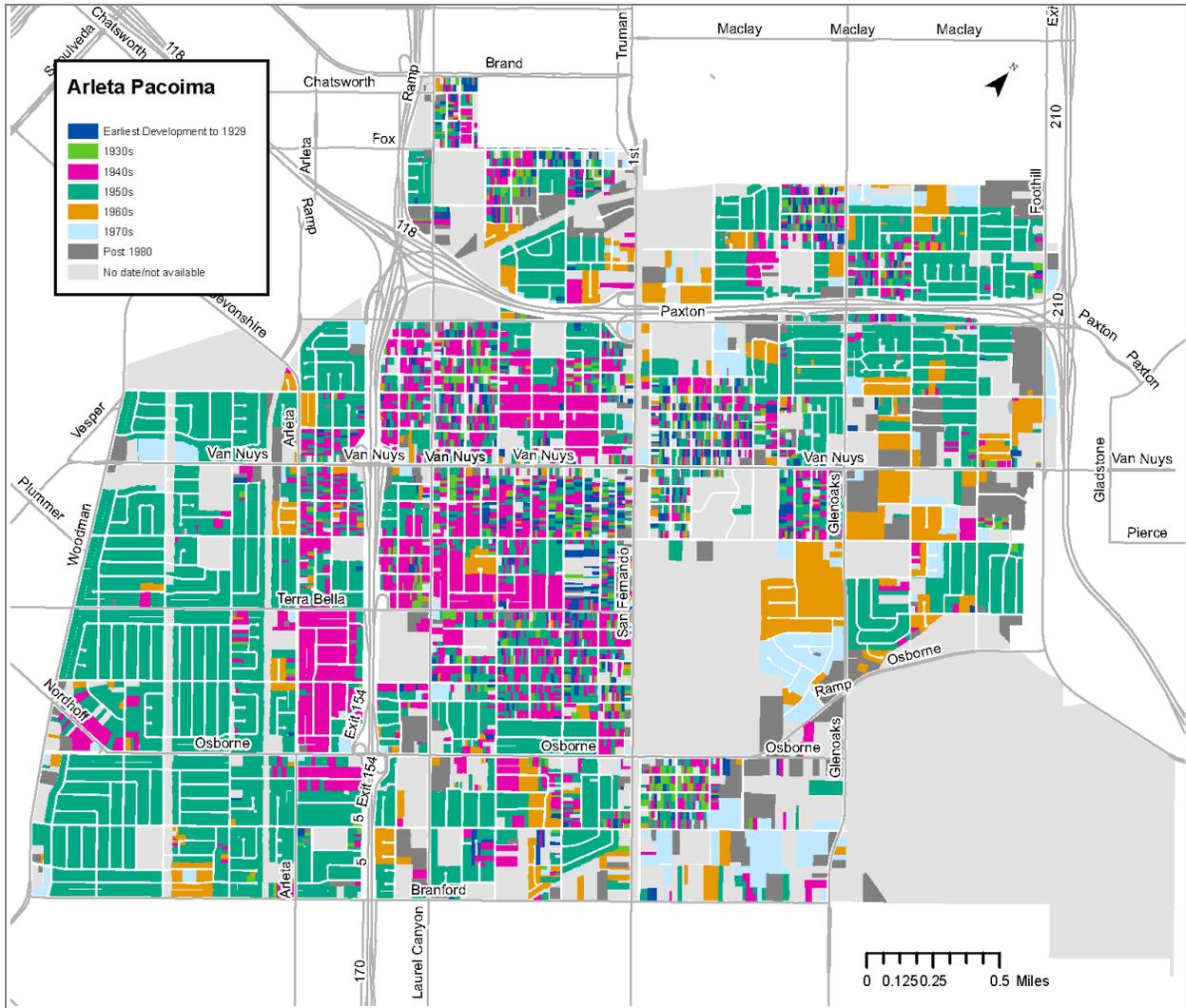
Human-made features largely shape and define the CPA. In addition to the channelized creeks and groundwater replenishment facility, the area is bisected by the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks that run adjacent to San Fernando Road, as well as by the 5 Freeway and State Route 118 Ronald Reagan Freeway (the 118 Freeway). Since both freeways are above grade, ramps, overpasses, and interchanges produce a physical and visual impact on adjacent neighborhoods. Hansen Dam, constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1939 in response to flooding in the San Fernando Valley, is a dominant physical feature in the eastern section of the CPA.

Most streets in the CPA adhere to a grid that is oriented in a 45 degree angle off the cardinal directions. The skewed orientation of the CPA's street grid is a continuation of the street grid of the adjacent city of San Fernando, which paralleled the course of the Southern Pacific Railroad line that was constructed in the 1870s and was the impetus for the city's founding. A small number of streets in the southeast section of the CPA break from the grid and instead conform to the area's varied topography.

The major east-west arteries within the Survey Area are (from north to south): Paxton Street, Van Nuys Boulevard, Terra Bella Street, Osborne Street, and Branford Street. The major north-south arteries within the Survey Area are (from east to west): Foothill Boulevard, Glenoaks Boulevard, San Fernando Road, Laurel Canyon Boulevard, Arleta Avenue, and Woodman Avenue.

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<sup>2</sup> There are currently no designated resources in the Arleta-Pacoima Community Plan Area.



Chronology map of the Arleta – Pacoima CPA (ARG 2013)

### Development History

European settlement in the north San Fernando Valley first occurred in 1797, when Franciscan missionaries founded Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana, the seventeenth in the chain of 21 missions that were established in California. The mission complex was located in present-day Mission Hills on a site located approximately three miles northwest of the CPA. Despite its proximity to the mission complex, the CPA remained undeveloped in the Spanish Colonial era.

In the 19th century, when California was transferred from Spanish to Mexican rule, the mission was secularized and large expanses of land, or *ranchos*, were issued by the Mexican government as a means of encouraging settlement. The CPA was part of the Rancho Ex-Mission San Fernando, an expansive rancho that encompassed most of the San Fernando Valley. As the century progressed, portions of the rancho were sold incrementally. In the 1870s, the northern

half of the Rancho Ex-Mission San Fernando was sold to a partnership that consisted of George Porter, Benjamin Porter, and state Senator Charles Maclay. The three partners subsequently divided their purchase into thirds: Maclay took the eastern third, located east of the present-day Southern Pacific Railroad tracks; George Porter acquired the center third; and Benjamin Porter assumed control of the western third. What would later become the CPA was divided between the holdings of Maclay and George Porter. Maclay then went on to establish the town of San Fernando, strategically sited along a north-south Southern Pacific Railroad line that was completed in the 1870s.

Development in the CPA first occurred in the Pacoima area and dates to the 1880s, in the midst of a frenetic real estate boom that had been touched off by a fare war between the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads. Pacoima was among the many new cities and towns throughout Southern California that were founded by speculative investors at the height of the boom. Its history dates to 1887 when Jouett Allen, a lawyer-turned-developer from Chattanooga, Tennessee, purchased 1,000 acres of undeveloped land that was located adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and just south of San Fernando. The property was subsequently divided in half: 500 acres were retained by Allen, and the other 500 acres were subdivided and platted to make way for the construction of a new town along the railroad line. Allen named the town Pacoima, supposedly a Native American term meaning “rushing waters.”<sup>3</sup>

Pacoima was developed as an exclusive community that would attract only “the highest classes of settlers.” Toward this end, Allen installed such features as curbs and cement sidewalks – the first-ever in the San Fernando Valley – and constructed a subterranean dam to supply the town with water. Allen also enacted a series of standards and restrictions aimed at attracting an affluent class of settler: new homes were required to cost a minimum of \$2,000, and owners were prohibiting from engaging in the sale of alcohol in the town.<sup>4</sup> Despite these efforts, development in Pacoima stalled when the real estate boom bottomed out in the 1890s. Only a handful of buildings were constructed in this early period of the community’s history, including a passenger rail depot, a schoolhouse, a hotel, and several single-family homes. Most of Pacoima’s original buildings were destroyed during severe flooding that occurred in 1891.<sup>5</sup>

Despite Pacoima’s long history, growth and development in the CPA remained slow for the first half of the twentieth century. Upon completion of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913, which provided the San Fernando Valley with a cheap and plentiful water supply, the CPA emerged as an agricultural community and yielded a variety of crops including oranges, lemons, peaches, apricots, olives, and alfalfa.<sup>6</sup> The area was also dotted with several poultry ranches. Pacoima, like most of the newly-irrigated San Fernando Valley, was annexed to the City of Los Angeles in 1915. Development in the CPA prior to World War II was limited to a handful of small, modest

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<sup>3</sup> Kevin Roderick, *The San Fernando Valley: America’s Suburb* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2002), 43.

<sup>4</sup> Pacoima Chamber of Commerce, “Pacoima’s History,” <http://www.pacoimachamber.com/pacoimas-history/>.

<sup>5</sup> Carl A. Maida, *Pathways Through Crisis: Urban Risk and Public Culture* (Lanham: Altamira Press, 2008), 189.

<sup>6</sup> Pacoima Chamber of Commerce, “Pacoima’s History,” <http://www.pacoimachamber.com/pacoimas-history/>.

single-family residences that were constructed alongside nearby orchards and ranches. The area retained its agricultural character through the World War II era.

Pacoima also emerged as the San Fernando Valley's unofficial minority district prior to World War II. The community was one of the few places in the San Fernando Valley that was not off-limits to racial and ethnic minorities; deed restrictions, racial covenants, steering, and other exclusionary real estate tactics prohibited non-whites from settling in other parts of the Valley at the time.<sup>7</sup> Japanese American agricultural laborers began to settle in the area in the 1920s, and by the 1930s the area was also home to a sizable Mexican American community. Author Mary Helen Ponce (born 1938) and rock-and-roll musician Richie Valens (born 1941), both prominent cultural figures of Mexican American heritage, were born and raised in Pacoima. In 1939, a report issued by the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) described Pacoima as predominantly Mexican American, with people employed primarily as laborers in blue-collar industries. The HOLC report further describes the area as sparsely and haphazardly developed.

Prior to World War II, the CPA was a location notorious for severe flooding during the winter season. Like many of the natural waterways in Southern California, the Pacoima Wash was dry for much of the year, but on occasion experienced severe flooding that caused widespread damage to Pacoima and other communities nearby. In the mid-1920s, the City of Los Angeles constructed the Pacoima Dam in the mountains north of the CPA in an effort to prevent such flooding; the dam was dedicated in 1929.<sup>8</sup> However, in 1938 severe floods across the Southern California region once again inundated the North San Fernando Valley and swept away many of the homes in Pacoima. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversaw the construction of several flood control infrastructure projects around the Southern California region, including a massive dam and reservoir that overlooked Pacoima. The concrete-and-earthen structure was named Hansen Dam in reference to Homer Hansen, whose home site and ranch were acquired to make way for the project.<sup>9</sup> Upon its completion in 1940, the two-mile-long, 97-foot-high dam stood as the "world's largest earth-filled structure," and continues to be the largest and most physically imposing landmark in the CPA.<sup>10</sup>

In the late 1940s, the City of Los Angeles leased 1,550 acres of the reservoir and its environs from the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a municipal recreation facility for residents of the North San Fernando Valley.<sup>11</sup> The Hansen Dam Recreation Area, which included a sandy beach, boating and swimming facilities, park facilities, and additional amenities including a petting zoo and pony rides, opened in 1949 and quickly emerged as a popular recreational facility. Due to

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<sup>7</sup> Kevin Roderick, *The San Fernando Valley: America's Suburb* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times Books, 2002), 140.

<sup>8</sup> "Pacoima Dam Dedicated," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 February 1929.

<sup>9</sup> "Hansen Dam Dedicated," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 August 1940.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Sharon Bernstein, "Funds Finalized for Restoration at Hansen Dam," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 April 1997.

escalating maintenance costs and its tendency to absorb silt and debris, both the beach and lake were closed in 1982, although the surrounding park facilities remained in operation.<sup>12</sup>

The CPA, like most of the San Fernando Valley, experienced significant physical and economic changes as a result of World War II. Blue-collar workers had moved to the area en masse during the war to work at nearby aircraft and assembly plants, including the Lockheed Aviation plant in Burbank. Lockheed continued to serve as a major area employer after the war. The influx of wartime workers, coupled with an acute housing shortage after World War II, generated an increased demand for working and middle-class housing in the North San Fernando Valley. An abundance of sprawling agricultural and ranch lands in the CPA attracted developers who were eager to capitalize on the increased demand for housing. Between the 1940s and 1960s, the CPA was transformed from a rural agricultural settlement into a sprawling residential suburb composed primarily of single-family homes. Orchards and ranches that had long comprised the area were subdivided and developed with tracts of single-family residences, most of which are small, unadorned interpretations of Minimal Traditional and Ranch style architecture. A public housing development, San Fernando Gardens, was also constructed in the CPA after World War II, largely as a response to a perception that the area had become synonymous with blight and deterioration.

Pacoima emerged as the center of African American life in the San Fernando Valley during the postwar era, again largely due to the restrictive covenants and exclusionary housing tactics that were strictly enforced in other parts of the Valley. Entire residential subdivisions such as the Joe Louis Homes, named for the well-known African American boxing champion, were explicitly marketed to African Americans. Baptist churches that were constructed in Pacoima in the 1940s and '50s functioned as the nuclei of the African American community and later functioned as "home bases" in the San Fernando Valley's fair housing movement. In 1960, an estimated 90 percent of all African Americans living in the Valley resided in Pacoima.<sup>13</sup>

Residential development in the CPA was accompanied by commercial and institutional development, much of which arose in the 1950s and '60s in direct response to the area's explosive residential growth. In 1946, local businessman Marvin Whiteman established Whiteman Airpark, a general aviation facility for the North San Fernando Valley, on a site in the center of the CPA, adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. Shops, food markets, banks, schools, churches, post offices, fire stations, and parks were constructed along major vehicular thoroughfares in the 1950s and '60s. The majority of commercial development occurred on Van Nuys Boulevard between Laurel Canyon Boulevard and San Fernando Road, although some commercial development arose along other arterial streets.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Geoffrey Mohan, "Black History Month/Valley Retrospective: Perspectives on the Past – and the Future," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 February 1994.

The completion of the 5 Freeway in the 1960s and the subsequent construction of the 118 and 210 Freeways further bolstered suburban growth by forging more direct connections between the CPA and major employment centers in central Los Angeles. Those parcels that remained vacant were developed with single-family and multi-family residences. Like much of the San Fernando Valley, the CPA was almost entirely built out with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial properties by the close of the 1960s.

As the CPA became more fully developed after World War II, a discernible socioeconomic division emerged between its western and eastern sections: in general, residents in the western section of the CPA were middle-class and Caucasian, whereas those in the eastern section were poorer and more racially diverse.<sup>14</sup> The construction of the 5 Freeway in the 1960s bisected the community and reinforced this division by creating a physical barrier between the adjacent communities. These factors compelled some area residents to take action. In the 1960s, residents in the more affluent, western half of the CPA successfully led a petition to break ties with Pacoima and become an independent neighborhood, which was named Arleta and was officially recognized as an independent community in 1968.<sup>15</sup> To this day, Arleta and Pacoima remain two distinctive communities with a shared history.

Cars and car culture have long been integral components of San Fernando Valley life, as the area developed in conjunction with the proliferation of the automobile. Cruising emerged in the postwar era as an immensely-popular activity among the Valley's youth, who would "cruise" up and down major boulevards to both socialize and show off their cars. Although the epicenter of cruising culture was located along Van Nuys Boulevard in the heart of Van Nuys, major boulevards in other Valley communities also emerged as popular cruising destinations, including a stretch of Laurel Canyon Boulevard in Pacoima that spanned from approximately Rinaldi Street to Chatsworth Drive.<sup>16</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, cruising on Laurel Canyon Boulevard played a significant role in Pacoima's cultural identity and was widely perceived as a "rite of passage" for local youth. However, over time the seemingly-benign activity of cruising became intertwined with violence and gang activity, which led the LAPD to implement a crackdown and put an end to cruising in Pacoima in the late 1990s. Due to cruising's largely-ephemeral nature, there remain virtually no tangible links to this aspect of local culture.

Like many communities across the city, the CPA's ethnic and racial composition underwent a significant transformation in the 1980s and 1990s, when large numbers of immigrants from Mexico and Central America arrived in the United States and settled in Los Angeles. Although Mexican Americans had resided in Pacoima since the early twentieth century, it was not until the late 1980s that Latinos comprised a majority of the CPA's population – a statistic that holds true to the present. Today, both Pacoima and Arleta are awash in businesses and cultural institutions that serve the area's sizable Latino population, interspersed among these those

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<sup>14</sup> George Garrigues, "Pacoima Striving to End Racial Feeling," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 February 1966.

<sup>15</sup> Geoffrey Mohan, "Arleta: Boycott of 'Pacoima' Addressers is Urged," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 December 1993.

<sup>16</sup> Art Marroquin, "LAPD Tries Barricades to Keep Lid on Cruising, Violence," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 June 1999.

that offer tangible links to the area's long history as the center of multiculturalism and racial diversity in the Valley.

## Designated Resources

There were no designated resources within the CPA at the time of the survey. This includes properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR) and/or the California Register of Historical Resources (CR), as well as locally designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCM) and Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ).

## Community Plan Area Survey Methodology

The survey of the Arleta-Pacoima CPA was conducted using the methodology established by the OHR for SurveyLA which includes the citywide Historic Context Statement and customized mobile Field Guide Survey System (FiGSS).<sup>17</sup> Concurrent with the survey of the Arleta-Pacoima CPA, three additional community plan areas were also being surveyed, including one in the north San Fernando Valley and two in central Los Angeles

The field work was conducted in two phases: *reconnaissance* and *documentation*. The reconnaissance phase was conducted by the project managers and key staff of all four CPA surveys, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications Standards*. The reconnaissance team for the Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills CPA included Katie Horak and Andrew Goodrich of Architectural Resources Group, and Kari Fowler and Christine Lazzaretto of Historic Resources Group. This phase involved a detailed and methodical review of each neighborhood, street, and individual property within the Survey Area. It was during this phase that decisions were made about which properties and districts should be documented, and how those properties should be evaluated. During this initial reconnaissance phase, surveyors reviewed pre-loaded data submitted by community members to MyHistoricLA, identified concentrations of resources that might later be recorded as eligible historic districts and planning districts, and developed lists of pre-field research tasks that would help inform the field survey. By making these decisions up front and as a team, this methodology ensures a more thoughtful approach to resource identification and evaluation, creates greater consensus among the field survey teams, and produces more consistent survey results across CPAs. This approach also substantially streamlines the next phase of field survey, enabling the field teams to document large numbers of properties quickly and efficiently.

During the reconnaissance phase, ARG created Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps of each neighborhood; these maps were printed for use in the field. A blank map showing only

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

street names, address numbers, and parcel lines was used by surveyors in the field for notes and comments about resources identified during the reconnaissance phase. Another map featured parcels shaded by decade of building construction, which helped to illustrate chronological development patterns and concentrations of resources.

Once the reconnaissance phase was completed, the documentation phase began. During this phase, field work was conducted by teams of two. Properties that were identified during the previous phase, along with those that had significant associative qualities identified in pre-loaded data in FiGSS, were recorded and evaluated for potential historic, cultural, or architectural significance. Documentation included a digital photograph, recordation of historic features and subsequent alterations, and the reason for a property's potential historic significance. It was also during this phase that contexts and themes were applied and evaluation status codes were assigned.

Surveyed properties included residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings and important landscape and infrastructure features such as bridges and designed landscapes. All field work was conducted from the public right-of-way. Following the completion of field work, all survey data was reviewed in detail by a qualified survey professional to ensure accuracy and consistency throughout the data set.

Survey teams conducted research on individual properties and neighborhoods throughout the field survey process. When specific information was needed in order to complete an evaluation, additional research was conducted. Sources included building permits, historical newspapers and periodicals, Sanborn maps, tract maps, and city directories. This research utilized the collections of the Los Angeles Public Library; Online Archive of California; University of Southern California (USC); University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); and the Library of Congress archives. This research helped with the identification of historic tract names and boundaries, names of tract subdividers, dates of subdivision, and original building uses and footprints.

# Summary of Findings

The following discussion of Property Types, Contexts, and Themes relates to the resources identified and recorded as eligible for designation.

## Summary of Property Types

The Arleta-Pacoima CPA is predominantly comprised of single-family neighborhoods. Although a variety of other property types exist, the patterns of development in this area – namely post-war suburbanization – were conducive to the widespread development of single-family residential neighborhoods.

### *Residential Properties*

The survey identified a relatively small number of eligible residential property types, including individual resources and concentrations of resources (historic and planning districts). In general, surveyors found that many of the residences in the survey area have been altered, indicative of a number of factors, possibly including the massive flood of 1938 and damage sustained during two major earthquakes (Sylmar in 1971 and Northridge in 1994). Therefore, concentrations of intact residences are rare and very few eligible historic districts were identified.

Within the Survey Area is a limited amount of early residential development that is reflective of the area's earliest periods of growth, some of it related to agricultural uses. Eight intact early single-family residences, all of which date to the 1910s and 1920s and exhibit character-defining features of the Craftsman style, were identified in the survey as individually-eligible resources. Generally, these early residences are located in residential neighborhoods that were subsequently built out with postwar housing, and were thus evaluated on the basis of their relative rarity. The Survey Area also includes one very rare example of an arroyo stone residence from the 1930s.

In addition, one residential historic district and one residential planning district were identified in the survey. The historic district comprises a 1950s-era garden apartment complex that is the only public housing development to be built and operated by the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) in the San Fernando Valley. The planning district includes a post-World War II subdivision that was marketed to African Americans and reflects the discriminatory housing practices that characterized the San Fernando Valley's housing market for much of the twentieth century. Since the majority of homes within the subdivision have been materially altered, the subdivision itself does not appear to meet the integrity thresholds for designation as a historic district but should be considered in the local planning process.

Finally, the survey identified a small handful of single-family residential properties that bear potential significance because of their association with notable persons. The survey also identified three 1960s-era mobile home parks that appeared to be good examples of the property type, but could not be evaluated due to limited access and visibility.

### ***Commercial Properties***

The Survey Area contains three intact examples of commercial properties that were built between the 1950s and 1960s, all of which are located along major vehicular thoroughfares in Arleta. Two intact walk-up food stands were identified as individually eligible for designation as excellent and rare examples of the property type. One Googie-style car wash was identified as individually eligible for designation on the basis of its architectural merit, and also due to its association with the proliferation of automobile-oriented services in the postwar era.

### ***Institutional Properties***

Institutional properties account for many of the resources in the Survey Area identified by the survey. Four of the institutional properties evaluated were identified as individually eligible resources, and most are located along major vehicular thoroughfares. One police station and one church were evaluated on the basis of their architectural merit. Two post-World War II fire stations were identified as excellent examples of that property type.

Eight eligible institutional districts were identified by the survey: two school campuses, three religious campuses that bear association with the Survey Area's ethnic and cultural history, a dam and recreation center that was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a municipal airport facility, and a rare example of a groundwater retention facility dating to the 1930s.

One postwar Department of Water and Power (DWP) facility was identified but was not evaluated for significance since a context for this property type has not yet been developed.

### ***Industrial Properties***

One industrial property, a grouping of Quonset huts, was identified by the survey. This property was flagged for future analysis when the context for their potential significance has been developed.

### ***Other Properties***

Finally, four non-parcel resources were identified in the Survey Area. These resources include two air raid sirens that are associated with World War II and Cold War-era civil defense, a mature oak tree that predates development in the area, and a 1920s-era bridge on San

Fernando Road that spans the Pacoima Wash and bears association with the road's history as a major north-south state highway prior to the construction of a freeway network in the San Fernando Valley.

## **Summary of Contexts and Themes**

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

For a complete list of all individual resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ, please refer to Appendix A.

Appendix B contains a complete list of all non-parcel resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ.

For a complete list of historic districts identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or HCM/HPOZ, please refer to Appendix C.

## **Context: Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Early Residential Development, 1880-1930**

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

Although the Survey Area is generally associated with post-World War II suburbanization, some residential development took place in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is reflective of the area's earliest settlement patterns. Properties identified under this Context/Theme consist of single-family residences, most of which date to the 1920s. All of these properties predate surrounding development and are distinguished for their relative age and rarity.



**Address:** 12201 W. Terra Bella St.

**Date:** 1920



**Address:** 13264 W. Judd St.

**Date:** 1929



**Address:** 10033 N. Haddon Ave.

**Date:** 1922



**Address:** 10358 N. Telfair Ave.

**Date:** 1928

## Context: Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980

### Theme: Ethnic Enclaves, 1880-1980

Restrictive covenants expressly prohibited racial and ethnic minority groups from purchasing or occupying property in most of the San Fernando Valley prior to World War II. While restrictive covenants were rendered unenforceable by the United States Supreme Court in 1948, informal practices including steering and undocumented gentleman's agreements perpetuated discrimination in the housing market well into the postwar era. This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Joe Louis Homes residential planning district, a single-family residential subdivision from 1950 that was specifically marketed to African Americans and exemplifies the barriers that racial and ethnic minority populations faced at the time.



**District:** Joe Louis Homes Residential Planning District

**Description:** Typical streetscape

**Date:** 1950



**District:** Joe Louis Homes Residential Planning District

**Description:** Typical residence

**Date:** 1950



**District:** Joe Louis Homes Residential Planning District

**Description:** Typical residence

**Date:** 1950

## **Context: Residential Development and Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Multi-Family Residential Development, 1910-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Garden Apartments, 1938-1960**

In the years during and after World War II, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), working with teams of notable architects, landscape architects, urban planners, and builders, pursued the construction of public housing developments in several of the city's most impoverished neighborhoods. HACLA's public housing developments aimed to alleviate a housing shortage and replace substandard dwelling units with safe and decent low-cost housing – issues that had become pressing in Los Angeles by the late 1930s. Most of HACLA's public housing developments exhibited characteristic elements of Garden City site planning principles such as the separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic; superblock site planning, with internal circulation networks that deviate from the city grid; expansive open spaces and courtyards; and a site plan that provides access to common outdoor spaces and facilitates interaction between residents.

Constructed in 1955, San Fernando Gardens, located in the Survey Area, was the last public housing development constructed by HACLA and is the only public housing development in the San Fernando Valley. The development stands out as an excellent and rare example of a garden apartment complex in the area.



**District:** San Fernando Gardens

**Location:** Van Nuys Blvd. and Lehigh Ave.

**Architect:** Victor Gruen and Arthur Gallion

**Date:** 1955



**District:** San Fernando Gardens

**Location:** Van Nuys Blvd. and Lehigh Ave.

**Architect:** Victor Gruen and Arthur Gallion

**Date:** 1955

## Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

### Theme: Restaurants, 1880-1980

Mid-20th century walk-up food stands were once commonplace in the City of Los Angeles but have become increasingly rare over time. This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two intact examples of 1960s walk-up food stands in the Survey Area, both of which are excellent and rare examples of the property type, which is a significant component of the area's commercial landscape.



**Address:** 8634 N. Woodman Ave.

**Name:** Tip-Top Hamburgers

**Date:** 1965



**Address:** 14035 W. Van Nuys Blvd.

**Name:** Shoestring

**Date:** 1961

**Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

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

**Theme: Municipal Fire Stations, 1900-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Post-World War II Fire Stations, 1947-1960**

In the period immediately following World War II, the City of Los Angeles constructed numerous municipal service facilities – including fire stations – in response to the city’s rapid growth and expansion. This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two significant and intact examples of postwar fire stations in the Survey Area. Fire Station No. 98 in Pacoima (left) embodies the forward-looking International style – a common architectural choice for institutional buildings constructed in the postwar era. In contrast, Fire Station No. 7 in Arleta (right) possesses aesthetic qualities more characteristic of Minimal Traditional architecture, blending with the residential neighborhoods that surround it.



**Address:** 13029 W. Van Nuys Blvd.

**Name:** Fire Station No. 98

**Date:** 1960



**Address:** 14123 W. Nordhoff St.

**Name:** Fire Station No. 7

**Date:** 1950

**Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Context: Religion and Spirituality, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Religion and Spirituality and Ethnic/Cultural Associations, 1850-1980**

Prior to World War II, Pacoima was one of the few locations in the San Fernando Valley that was not subject to restrictive covenants and other discriminatory housing practices that barred racial and ethnic minorities from purchasing or occupying property. Accordingly, Pacoima has a rich history as a multicultural “melting pot” that dates to the early twentieth century. Religious institutions often served as the center of cultural life among ethnic groups. This Context/Theme was used to evaluate four religious campuses that bear significant ethnic and cultural associations. Examples include two churches associated with the African American population whose founders were leaders in the fair housing movement (upper row), a Buddhist temple and community center associated with the local Japanese American population (bottom left), and a Catholic Church campus with long ties to the area’s Latin American community (bottom right).



**Address:** 11066 Norris Ave.  
**Name:** Greater Community Baptist Church  
**Date:** 1958



**Address:** 12928 Vaughn St.  
**Name:** Calvary Baptist Church of Pacoima  
**Date:** 1957



**Address:** 9450 Remick Ave.  
**Name:** SF Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple  
**Date:** 1962



**Address:** 10919 Norris Ave.  
**Name:** Guardian Angel Church  
**Date:** 1939/1955

**Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

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

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

Air raid sirens were installed throughout the City of Los Angeles during the World War II and Cold War periods for the purpose of civil defense. Two examples were identified in the Survey Area: one “rotating” type and one “flattened birdhouse” type. Both were installed on freestanding support poles.



**Location:** Laurel Canyon Blvd. and Van Nuys Blvd.

**Name:** Air Raid Siren No. 104

**Date:** circa 1940



**Location:** Sunburst St., west of San Fernando Rd.

**Name:** Air Raid Siren No. 215

**Date:** circa 1940

**Context: Architecture and Engineering, 1850-1980**

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

**Theme: Post-War Modernism, 1946-1976**

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

**Sub-Theme: Googie, 1935-1969**

Post-War Modernism is a defining aspect of the San Fernando Valley’s architectural landscape, and several excellent examples of Mid-Century Modern and Googie style architecture were identified in the Survey Area. Various commercial and institutional properties were identified under this Context/Theme. Notable examples include an expressionistic church (upper left) and a Googie car wash (upper right), both in Arleta, and a Mid-Century Modern Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) station (lower left) in Pacoima.



**Address:** 8848 N. Woodman Ave.

**Name:** Calvary Lutheran Church

**Architect:** A. Serchia

**Date:** 1965



**Address:** 8720 N. Woodman Ave.

**Name:** Woodman Car Wash

**Architect:** Unknown

**Date:** 1959



**Address:** 12738 W. Osborne St.

**Name:** Los Angeles Police Department Foothill Station

**Architect:** Kistner, Wright & Wright

**Date:** 1960

## **Context: Other Context, 1850-1980**

### **Theme: Event or Series of Events, 1850-1980**

This Context/Theme is used to capture unusual or unique property types significant for important associations, for which a specific theme has not been developed. In Arleta – Pacoima, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate two resources associated with Los Angeles' water-based infrastructure.

The Survey Area's location midway between the Pacoima and Tujunga washes made it historically conducive to agricultural uses, but also susceptible to severe flooding. Thus, water-related infrastructure played an integral role in the development of the area. This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two significant examples of water supply and flood control infrastructure: a groundwater retention facility that was developed in the 1930s in support of local agricultural uses (left), and a large dam that was constructed in 1940 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of a comprehensive flood management program for Southern California (right).



**Location:** Arleta Ave. and Devonshire St.

**Name:** Pacoima Spreading Grounds

**Date:** 1932-1933



**Location:** Foothill Blvd. and Osborne St.

**Name:** Hansen Dam

**Date:** 1940

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