

Chapter 5
Shelving the Myth: Opportunities For Creating a Latino Venue in Highland Park

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Introduction	5-1
Methodology	5-2
Duality of History	5-2
Highland Park Preserved-Charles Lummis and His Influence	5-5
Present Day Highland Park	5-8
Specifics of Highland Park Study Area	5-8
Definition of Community	5-9
Contemporary Neighborhood in Transition	5-10
Further Census Change in 70's through 90's	5-12
Change in the North Figueroa Commercial Strip	5-13
Transition of Housing Stock	5-15
Cultural Infrastructure of the Latino Majority	5-16
Duality of Perception of Highland Park Community	5-20
Planning Issues	5-21
Mechanism for Control: Keeping the Single Family Home	5-21
The Craftsman Home and a Latino Household	5-21
Community Plan Revision	5-22
Interim Control Ordinance	5-23
Mass Transit and the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone	5-24
Architectural Description of Housing	5-26
Implications of Neighborhood Stabilization Efforts	5-26
Gentrification and Displacement	5-26
Gentrifier Consumption	5-30
Displacement	5-31
Synthesis of Issues	5-31
Recommendations	5-32
Endnotes	5-34
Bibliography	5-36

SHELVING THE MYTH: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATING A LATINO VENUE IN HIGHLAND PARK

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INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Master Plan's review of the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles' (CAD) grant awarding practices revealed that the department has primarily supported the larger and non ethnic arts organizations. As the lead city agency in shaping the cultural landscape, CAD has adopted a policy to promote cultural equity in Los Angeles. Through equitable arts and cultural programming, ethnic artists and arts organizations become focal points as they visually chronicle the state of the ethnic community, past, present, and future and present their interpretations to the greater audience of Los Angeles. These groups possess the great potential to open lines of positive inter-cultural communication.

The intention of this Chapter is to address the issue that culturally biased views of Los Angeles history can disenfranchise ethnic communities. Since the City's founding in 1781, the people of the City of Los Angeles have witnessed dramatic change in development at the expense of the less empowered. Historic preservation in itself is important, especially in Los Angeles, because of the unique historical factors that shaped this particular place. There is danger with single issue organizations, in that they tend to become one sided and exclusionary of issues contradictory to their agenda. In terms of historic preservation, for example, history is assembled to complement the preservationists' architecturally specific agenda. That history is usually incomplete and ultimately distorts historical fact.

The community of Highland Park in Northeast Los Angeles was chosen for study because it exemplifies the state of many "older" neighborhoods, regionally as well as nationally, in terms of the social, economic, and political issues that impact a transitioning area. Chapter 5, Shelving the Myth: Opportunities for Creating a Latino Venue in Highland Park demonstrates how history is manipulated to support efforts in preserving the built environment, irrespective of ethnic culture. Cultural equity will only come to be when there is respect and appreciation for other cultures.

A duality of Los Angeles history will be presented to illustrate how myths have been circulated to portray a positive image of a controversial situation and create obstacles for any attempt to establish a true cultural identity for unempowered populations. This

will provide the context for contemporary promotion of transitioning Highland Park. As Highland Park is becoming increasingly Latino, there remains a remnant described as the "old white guard" ¹ and an emerging artist community whose agenda is to re-establish and perpetuate the "arroyo culture" in a community which has assumed a different identity. The Latino identity has taken root in Highland Park although its significance is not established with an actual space such as a community or art center. Informally, a Latino identity has been emerging since early 1960's when U.S. born Mexicans began moving to the area. Now that Highland Park is becoming the home to more recent immigrants, the Latino-ness is substantiated in cultural and social landmarks. Although this social construct of identity has taken place, the establishment of a Latino venue is necessary to verify Latino commitment, investment, and strength in Highland Park. This is necessary because current planning issues that are in process may be harmful to the Latino community. These projects are the result of pressures placed on elected officials and through the local government power of eminent domain which has resulted in little Latino participation. And through this self determining/legitimizing process, comes empowerment. In this culturally sensitive neighborhood study, both historical and present situations and recent planning efforts in this transitioning neighborhood will be described to provide the dual perspectives necessary for equitable city response.

METHODOLOGY

Research methods employed in this chapter include interviews with community and neighborhood members to get insight on their perception of the community. Residents, teachers, students, business owners, members of neighborhood organizations and Latino and Anglo arts organizations, and representatives of local elected officials at Council District 1 and 14, were asked to describe issues, conditions or programs that impact their community of Highland Park and/or Los Angeles. Local and City community meetings, were attended to analyze their structures and identify the functions.

In terms of primary research, a literature review provided background information and placed arguments in this historical as well as economic contexts. The Los Angeles Department of City Planning and CAD staff reports, ordinances and plans were also examined to evaluate policy and procedures and trace the progression of planning proposals. Newspaper articles, organization newsletters and editorials provided candid interpretations of prevalent events and issues that impact Highland Park.

DUALITY OF HISTORY

The celebrated history of Los Angeles is culturally biased. Only with the city logo, "Los Angeles Founded 1781" is the Mexican

(controlled by Spain and colonized by Mexico) founding commemorated.



EXHIBIT 5-1. CITY LOGO AT 16TH AND LOS ANGELES

Popular history of Los Angeles often leaves out pre-California statehood. In an article which describes the early history of Los Angeles, the city is described as being "first settled in 1781, remaining a sleepy and relatively unimportant town for nearly its first one hundred years"² In those first one hundred years however, early Angelinos felt the impact of the Mexican Revolution (1810), the overthrow of Spanish rule (1821), and the formation of the Mexican Republic of California (1825). During that 23 year period, Californios witnessed the formation of the ranchos and the secularization of the missions and struggles for local power. The Mexican and American War resulted in the Peace Treaty of Cahuenga in 1847 and ultimately California statehood in 1850. Extreme changes in a very short period of time gives a sharp contradiction to the traditional view of early Los Angeles. These significant cultural events are often excluded in romanticized Los Angeles and California history.

"Life on the rancho, like the manor or the southern plantation, was self sufficient, pastoral, ostentatious, over indulgent and certainly picturesque and romantic in its social life.

However,

"it was also, like the manor and the plantation, a way of life that was locked in the past and continually fighting a holding action against the future of human and economic progress."³

Popular history further describes early Los Angeles settlers as "the best American stock; the bone and sinew of the nation; the flower of the American people" and "the outstanding quality of the newcomers was their prosperity."⁴ Clearly, the early image of Los Angeles was built on the foundation of the notion of American perseverance.

Conventional history asserts the midwesterners great move to Los Angeles; the people who had been raised on Victorian thought.

"The seeds of Victorian culture were located on the East coast, in the affluent segments of the urban population and at the upper strata emerged a group of well-to-do merchants and professionals. It was this class that began to define the cultural form of Victorianism."

"These were the men and women whose descendants would fill the ranks of the Protestant churches, engage in the various campaigns to reform society and stand at the forefront of economic development and westward movement. Individuals born into this tradition became the leaders of the institutions that set the norms for the nations. They spread across the continent, bringing their way of life to the constantly expanding frontier." ⁵

Aside from the "westward ho" movement of the "sunny seventies", there was also the era called "Hell Town" from the period of 1850 to 1870.

"How did Los Angeles become 'Hell Town' in the 1850's? And Why? The answers are rather simple. A lot of people (men) of the Yankee stock that characterized Fremont's freebooters - and worse - flooded into Los Angeles in the early 1850's. They were the human spill over from the gold mines. They were drifters, thieves, and con men, who in addition to everything else were for the most part racists and given to cruel outbursts of violence."⁶

Also Mexicans from Sonora flocked to the gold fields in which some were the equivalent of the Yankee thieves and plunderers. This period of transition is characterized with brutal racism towards the Mexicans, Californios and Native Americans. Los Angeles was in the process of becoming more "Americanized" but still the majority of the people up until the 1870's were Californio (Californian born Mexicans), Mexicans and Native Americans. However the upper strata "Yankeeized" Mexicans (Californios) and the "Mexicanized" Yankees lived harmoniously until the Land Act of 1851 broke down the rancho structure by compelling rancheros to show the legitimacy of land title.⁷

WOLVERINES

Former Residents of
and Visitors from

MICHIGAN

are Invited to the
OFFICIAL

PICNIC REUNION

AT

SYCAMORE GROVE PARK
LOS ANGELES

SATURDAY
SEPT. 16th

All Former Residents and Visitors in
Southern California Cordially Invited

Come and Greet Old Friends and Make New
Ones From the Old Home State

Bring Your Lunch Basket Well Filled and
Enjoy the Day!

Good Lunches Sold in Park Coffee Provided

County Registers and Headquarters Open All Day

POPULAR PROGRAM

About 2 O'Clock

Prof. C. F. Rand, popular soloist, will sing in costume

Listen in Every Wednesday Evening, 7:15, for the
State Societies Broadcast over KFAC

All the State Registers are at the
ALEXANDRIA HOTEL
In the office of the State Societies

Ride the BIG RED CARS
South Pasadena Cars Go Direct to Park

Practical Economical Reliable
PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY

Rarely are the unethical exploits of mission culture, and the unethical property acquisition that occurred during this transition period brought to light. Instead a refined portrait is painted to illustrate early Los Angeles development. Traditional historic representation is rarely presented with dual viewpoints. Single perspectives of history are often the case as historians promote their agenda while slighted ethnic groups are written as rootless and their history denied.

Highland Park History Preserved - Charles Lummis and His Influence

Contemporary Los Angeles also preserves the lighter side of mid-western frontiering. In Northeast Los Angeles' Highland Park, the famed Mid Westerner from Ohio is Charles F. Lummis who arrived in 1885 at San Gabriel Mission on foot. Mr. Lummis is said to be the father of historic preservation in Los Angeles. Consistent with monument designation guidelines of today, Lummis' endeavors were influential in shaping a cultural, political, economic and social history of Los Angeles through preservation and the craftsman influence.

Clearly a booster of Los Angeles, Lummis is said to be responsible for preserving the missions and Indian culture, with an artifact collection housed in the Southwest Museum in Mount Washington. However his intentions are not clear since his work supported the romantic myth of California. "The Missions", Lummis said, "are next to our climate, and its consequences, the best capital Southern California has."⁸ His preservation efforts may have been used to build the migrant, mid-westerners Protestant support, as the religious association of the Missions was de-emphasized. Only the architecture and not its historic significance was stressed. "Those mighty piles are monuments and because of Heroism and Faith and Zeal and Art. Let us save them - not for the church, but for humanity." In proclaiming this, Charles F. Lummis ignored almost 100 years of history and the context of the architecture.

The Missions in California are worthy of preservation, however the deeper historic, social, cultural, and political significance should be weighed equally with the architectural style that remains very Californian. Indeed the romanticized mission myth is phenomenal, but even more phenomenal is the lack of sensitivity to the plight of Native American experience in the missions.

Lummis was also a significant player in the development of "Arroyo Culture". Residing in and around the Arroyo Seco, Lummis, along with literary giants (at El Alisal - The Lummis House) of the period created "culture". This was a reaction against the only so-called form of literary culture which was the westward movement boosterism. The American Arts and Crafts movement was promoted out of the Arroyo Culture scene.⁹



The migrants that came in the 1850's and on were Midwesterners influenced by Victorian ethics. Fleeing the mainly industrial East coast, and ultimately arriving to Los Angeles' first suburb, Highland Park was seemingly the perfect environs to shed the rigidity of Victorian ways and the so called "leisure class" pressures. The area in and around the Arroyo Seco was perfect to try out the Craftsman idea. Stickley wrote extensively about the Craftsman aesthetic:

"To preserve these characteristics and to bring back to individual life and work the vigorous constructive spirit which during the last half-century has spent its activities in commercial and industrial expansion, is, in a nut-shell, the Craftsman idea. We need to straighten out our standards and to get rid of a lot of rubbish that we have accumulated along with our wealth and commercial supremacy. It is not that we are too energetic, but that in many ways we have wasted and misused our energy precisely as we have wasted and misused so many of our wonderful natural resources. All we really need is a change in our point of view toward life and a keener perception regarding the things that count and the things which merely burden us. This being the case, it would seem obvious that the place to begin a readjustment is in the home....." 10

Charles Lummis and Arroyo Culture took advantage of the prototype environs for the Craftsman home in the Arroyo Seco area, thus providing a cultural, social, and economic definition for the "culture-less" Northeast and Pasadena areas. Highland Park as well as other communities nearby the Arroyo, Montecito Heights, Lincoln Heights and the City of Pasadena, document the Craftsman movement in its existing housing stock.

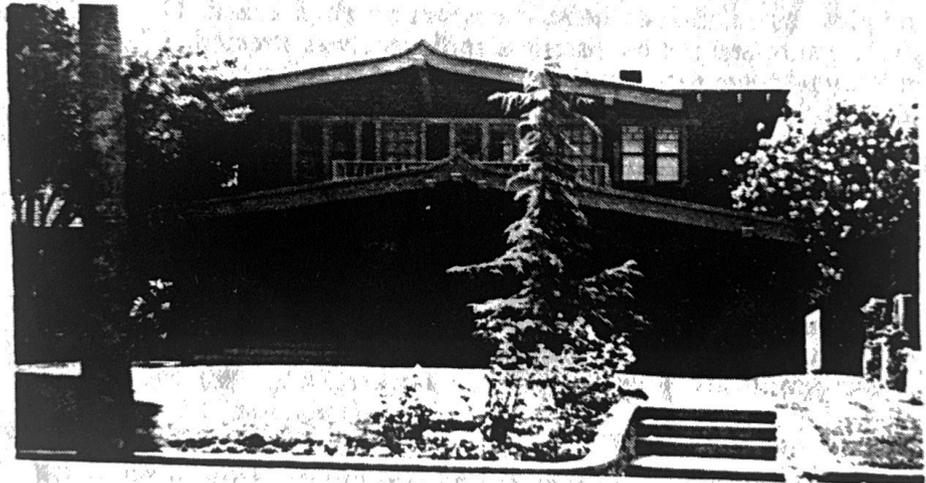


EXHIBIT 5-2. PROTOTYPICAL CRAFTSMAN HOME

The prototypical Craftsman home is worthy of monument designation for its contribution to early Los Angeles architecture. However, the Craftsman movement does not necessarily characterize Los Angeles' housing situation in the 1900's to 1920's.

While eclectic artists in Highland Park lived out the Craftsman ideal, housing segregation was a reality for Mexican and American born Mexicans.

As Los Angeles industrialized, Mexicans were displaced from the agricultural work force and were left to find other types of employment. Up until 1910, Mexicans lived in the area adjacent to the historic Placita Church and further out in semi rural areas. Still, the central business district, where Mexicans have historically lived, was an appropriate place as it was best to live close to the few job opportunities that became available. Because the population in the original barrio was growing, the Mexican community expanded to present day China Town and eastward. Although these Mexican communities provided a cultural infrastructure in terms of supportive institutions for community maintenance, some housing was characterized as deplorable. 11



EXHIBIT 5-3. DIVISION OF THE BARRIO BY JUDY BACA

In reaction to Jacob Riis' comparison of Los Angeles housing courts, to slum tenements in New York, the Los Angeles City Housing Commission was formed. A 1906 policy was created to make Los Angeles "...a city without a slum..." 12 This policy decision gave the housing commission the power to condemn housing courts, tear down buildings and sell cleared land to private developers. This occurred from 1906 to 1913 during the Craftsman House movement around the Arroyo Seco.

PRESENT DAY HIGHLAND PARK

In Highland Park, preservation of the Lummis tradition continues as historic preservationists push for historic district designation of almost the entire area. While Lummis' legacy remains interspersed throughout the area, historical significance can be justified according to city policy. But in terms of the process in which this historic designation will transpire, a micro portion of the "community" will undoubtedly be the sole voice and beneficiaries of this proposal. Actual "community" participation is minimal and skewed. Unfortunately, a significant majority of Highland Park constituents may not be involved in this process.



EXHIBIT 5-4 . GENERAL STUDY AREA

Specifics of Highland Park Study Area

Besides its historical backdrop, Highland Park's urban form fits the prototypical Urban Corridor Concept Plan for Los Angeles. The corridor concept is characterized by a commercial strip that is surrounded by residential uses that are high density. In Highland Park, the area is primarily zoned for residential use, with the exception of the commercial corridors of North Figueroa, York Boulevard and minor commercial strips including Monte Vista Street, Avenue 50, Avenue 60 and Monterey Road. The North Figueroa corridor marks the historic core of Highland Park and will be part of the general discussion area in this chapter because of its "civic center" qualities. It is a neighborhood central business district

that hosts public infrastructure: post office, fire department, library and recreation center.

Definition of Community

As discussed in Chapter 2, a community can be defined ethnically, experientially, or locationally and these concepts can be juxtaposed or transferrable, but can also stand alone. This notion is supported in Gentrification Displacement and Neighborhood Revitalization,¹³ which describes the community as a combination of social and physical elements. In sharp contrast, is the city's Urban Corridor Concept Plan which fits the physical definition of neighborhood:

"a collection of houses and other physical structures in an area defined by the land and housing market"¹⁴

Census data analysis provides evidence of both an ethnic and locational based definition of community. In 1990, Hispanics were the largest ethnic group in Highland Park at 67% of the total Highland Park population.

RACIAL COMPOSITION AND LATINOS

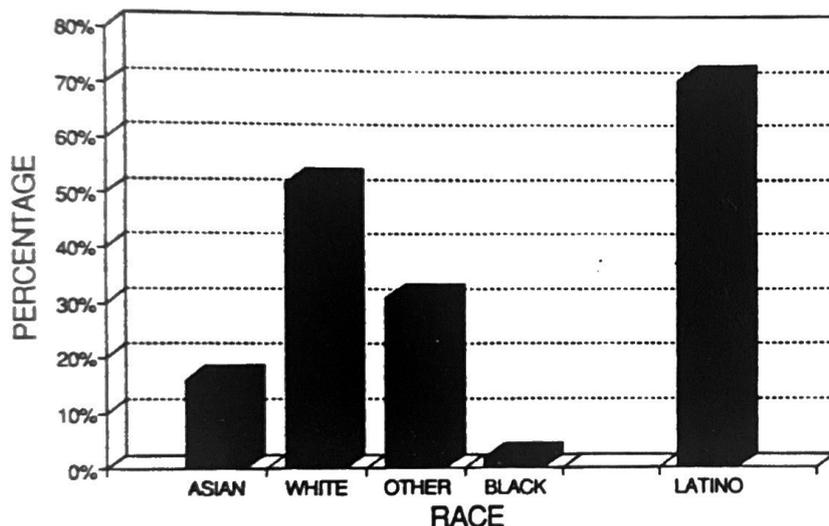


EXHIBIT 5-5. ETHNIC POPULATION

It must be noted that there has been a historic mis-count of Latinos by the U.S. Census Bureau. It was not until 1950 that persons with a Spanish surname were distinguished for the first time, but only in census tracts with 400 or more such persons. In 1950, in Highland

Park there were no census tracts that had 400 persons with Spanish surnames. But .5% were foreign born from Mexico. Every decade thereafter, Latino category headings have changed. In 1950 and 1960, the category was called "Spanish Surname", and in 1970 it was "Spanish Surname Language/Spanish Surname." In 1980, the category was called "Spanish Origin" and respondents were given the option to classify themselves further by indicating their ethnic background (Mexican, Puerto Rican). In 1990, the category was renamed "Hispanic Origin" again giving the option to enter ethnicity.

The changes each decade in categorization nomenclature, has the potential to discount actual figures. In *Applied Demography*, authors Murdock and Ellis argue that "nearly 90% of Hispanics have historically reported themselves to be White, but in the 1980 and 1990 Census, many reported themselves as being in the "Other" race category. Thus of the 9.8 million persons who indicated that their race was "Other" in 1990, 97% were Hispanic. Many Hispanics used the "Other" category as a residual category because they were uncertain how to respond to the race question."¹⁵

Consequently in Highland Park, where 52% of the 1990 census population indicated as Anglo are concurrently Hispanic, this reduces the non-ethnic White category significantly. Additionally, following Murdoch and Ellis' argument above, 31% of the population indicated "Other," must also represent a large percentage of Latino residents. It is therefore likely that Latinos make up a larger percentage than 67% of the total population in Highland Park.

Contemporary Neighborhood in Transition

Over the last 30 years, Highland Park has been through periods of transition, both in terms of ethnic composition and the economic health and character of its commercial district. Although census categories for Latinos have varied from decade to decade, increases in Latino population are evident.

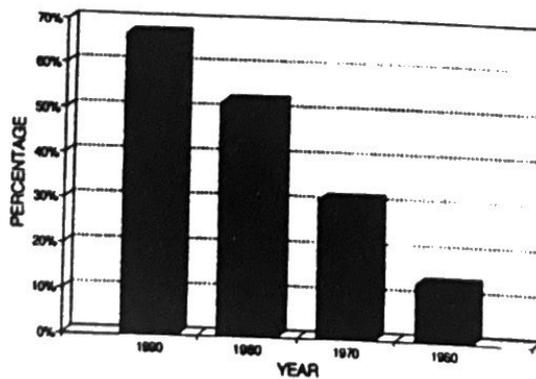


EXHIBIT 5-6 . LATINO POPULATION INCREASES

Another example of how community can be defined by ethnicity and experience, is the migration and immigration patterns. According to

the census, from the decade of 1960 to 1970 in Highland Park, the number of Latinos increased from 13% to 31%. The early 1960's seem to mark the beginning of Latino migration into the area. At this time, Highland Park was not the 'port of entry' for Latinos, but it is described by current residents as a "step up" for 1st and 2nd generation Mexican Americans, many of whom were raised in the communities of Boyle Heights and Lincoln Heights.

Mexican American resident of 35 years:

"My parents came to Los Angeles in the late 1920's. We lived in Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights and because my parents rented, they finally bought a house in Cypress Park. When I was in high school we'd go to Highland Park to go to the movies. There were 5 theaters on Figueroa, it was like Glendale now (Brand Blvd.). I always liked Highland Park."

"When I got married, we bought our first house on Avenue 61 near Aldama because it was cheap (\$15,000). We moved to Avenue 52 in 1962 because we needed more space. It cost \$18,000, even back then that wasn't a lot of money. We were the only Mexican family on the street.

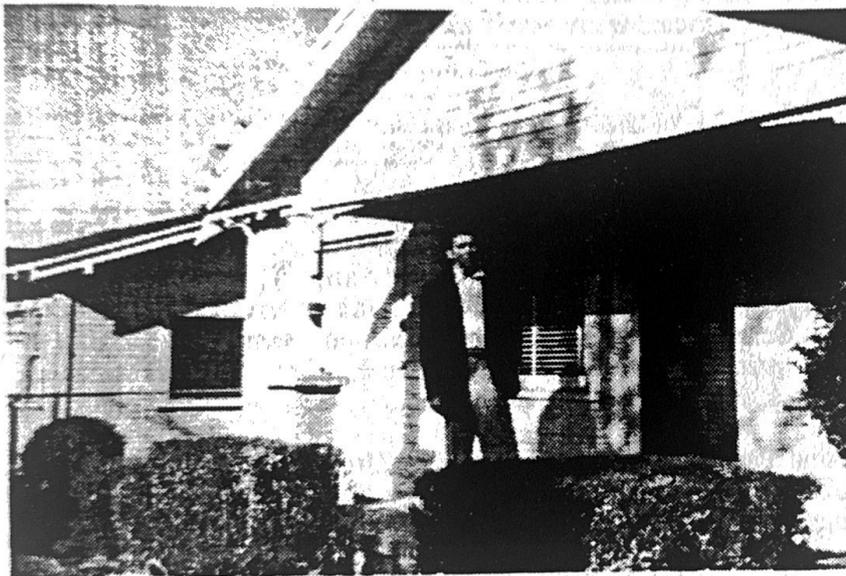


EXHIBIT 5-7. WITH MY NEW HOME ON AVE. 60, 1957

Anglo resident of 29 Years:

"I am not Latino but I was raised by Latinos and my husband is from Mexico, my heart is Latino and my children are first generation Latinos". I grew up in Los Angeles at 16th and

Central. I got married in 1958 and we lived in Silver Lake. In 1963 we started a family and bought our house on Irvington Place because it was adequate to what we could afford. Our street it was real quiet, there were just White little old ladies, no kids."

Mexican/Italian American resident of 29 Years:

"I grew up in Lincoln Heights and when we got married in 1963 we moved to Highland Park. We never bought a house because our rent was only \$150 for a 3 bedroom on Aldama Terrace. It was nicer back then. When I separated from my husband me and 3 of my children moved to San Pascual and York. After 7 years I moved to La Canada, the rent I paid in Highland Park was not worth all the vandalism to my family's cars."



The 1960's seems to be the decade for ethnicization of Highland Park. Prior to 1960 and through the 1970's, "White flight" took place leaving inter city residential areas that were once the Anglo neighborhoods. Due to social and economic trends over development of densely built inner cities and municipal negligence in terms of public improvements and maintenance, new home buyers of the 1950's to 70's grew more attracted to suburbia. The exodus of Anglos opened up the housing market to Latinos and other ethnic groups who had been residentially restricted from certain areas of the city.

Further Census Changes in the 1970-90's -
Los Angeles Unified School District Indicators

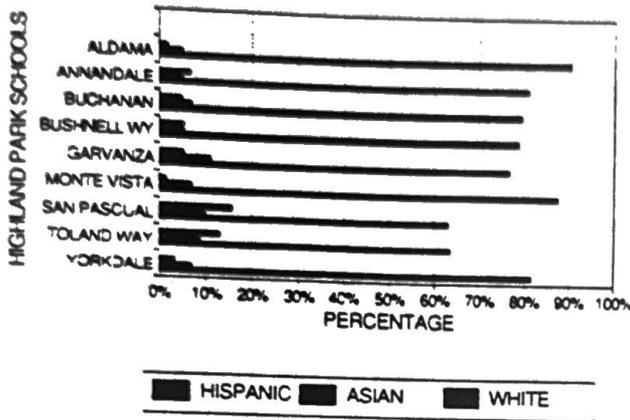
A more exact accounting of the neighborhood ethnic composition is the Los Angeles Unified School District and a review of the elementary school population in Highland Park. The jurisdictional boundary of approximately 1 - 2 mile radius used by the Los Angeles School District is more neighborhood sensitive. Census tracts sometime cross over into other areas like Mount Washington, Eagle Rock and South Pasadena which skews data.

Highland Park lies within Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Region 5 having 9 elementary schools in the area. Of the entire student population, 83% of the school children are Hispanic. The next largest student populations are Asian/Pacific Islander with 8%, Filipinos and Anglos at 3% each, African American at 2%. There are only 12 Native American students represented in the 9 elementary schools. at Burbank Junior High, 81% of the students are Hispanic and at Franklin High, 85% are Hispanic with students feeding in from other Northeast communities. Because of residentially restrictive boundaries for school enrollment at the elementary level, the LAUSD ethnic survey is likely to provide a more accurate count of Latinos in Highland Park.

Los Angeles Unified School District data further demonstrates neighborhood characteristics through a summary of its bilingual

education program at the elementary school level. Language is often associated with immigration and lends insight to generational levels. The possibility exists that Highland Park throughout the 1980's and 1990's, may be becoming more of a 'port of entry' neighborhood. LAUSD statistics for Monte Vista Street School, in core Highland Park, indicate an increase in the number of Hispanic children placed in the Limited English Speakers Proficiency Program. From 1990 to 1991 there was a 10% increase, and a 19% increase from 1991 to 1992. Also in 1992, of the 88% (785 students) Hispanic students at Monte Vista, 70% (546 students) are identified as limited English speakers. This is 61% of the entire student body (896 = total student population).¹⁶

ETHNIC SURVEY L.A. UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 1992



EXHIBT 5-8. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ETHNICITY

Change in the North Figueroa Commercial Strip

The North Figueroa commercial district reflects a transitioning economy in Highland Park as well as the region. From the 1930's through the late 1960's, Figueroa was a thriving shopping district with well known chain stores such as Kress, Gallenkamp's Shoes and See's Candies. Ivers Department store was an anchor store in the area and was in business for 71 years. There were 4 movie theaters; yet only one, The Highland, remains today.

The advent of the regional shopping mall was the catalyst for negligence in this local shopping district. As late as 1971, the Los



Angeles Times Marketing and Research Department identified Highland Park's North Figueroa as a central business district. However in 1973, the Eagle Rock Plaza introduced "a complete range of shopping facilities contained in a unified building complex arranged around a central, enclosed air conditioned mall." ¹⁷ In developing the mall, demographic studies were completed to identify the purchasing power within a 5 mile radius, and Highland Park fell within that radius.¹⁸ Attraction to the malls led to neglect of the North Figueroa shopping district. In 1976, Ivers Department Store closed its doors and the Glendale Galleria, a super regional enclosed mall opened that same year. The Ivers building was eventually razed and a mini-mall was built in replacement. Commercial activity was stunted along North Figueroa until the early 1980's.



EXHIBIT 5-9. PURCHASING POWER

There was a brief period from the late 1970's to early 1980's of commercial building and the Alpha Beta Shopping Center (now Viva) and 3 mini malls along North Figueroa were built. However, those projects did not result in the resurgence of commercial activity. Fashion 21, a discount and fashionable clothing store opened for business in 1984. The Highland Park store was the first of its kind and now there is a chain of 16 Fashion 21 stores located in other Latino communities, such as Montebello, El Monte, and Whittier. The store now assumes the role as anchor on Avenue 57 and North Figueroa and their success has encouraged related commercial endeavors between Avenue 56 through 58. Because the area has become more pedestrian oriented, one can associate the pedestrian activity with the street vendors who now congregate at this corner.

Transition of Housing Stock

In Highland Park, the city's residential density concept, as it relates to the Urban Corridors Concept Plan holds in terms of its zoning. Actual land use however does not reflect zoning, particularly in the old core area from the Avenues, north and south of Figueroa Street and south of Monte Vista Street. This discrepancy became relevant during the mid 1980's, when Highland Park became the target of intense development interests. In 1986, single family residences were sold and demolished by developers who replaced them with apartment buildings that are built to zoning capacity (and often adjacent to railroad tracks). Some classic examples are on Avenue 51 at Marmion Way, Avenue 53 south of Monte Vista Street, and on Marmion Way at Avenue 59. The total population increased by approximately 36% from 1980 to 1990 and although more housing is needed to meet the need of an increasing population, the apartments that were being built would be considered "dingbats" in any neighborhood they were built.

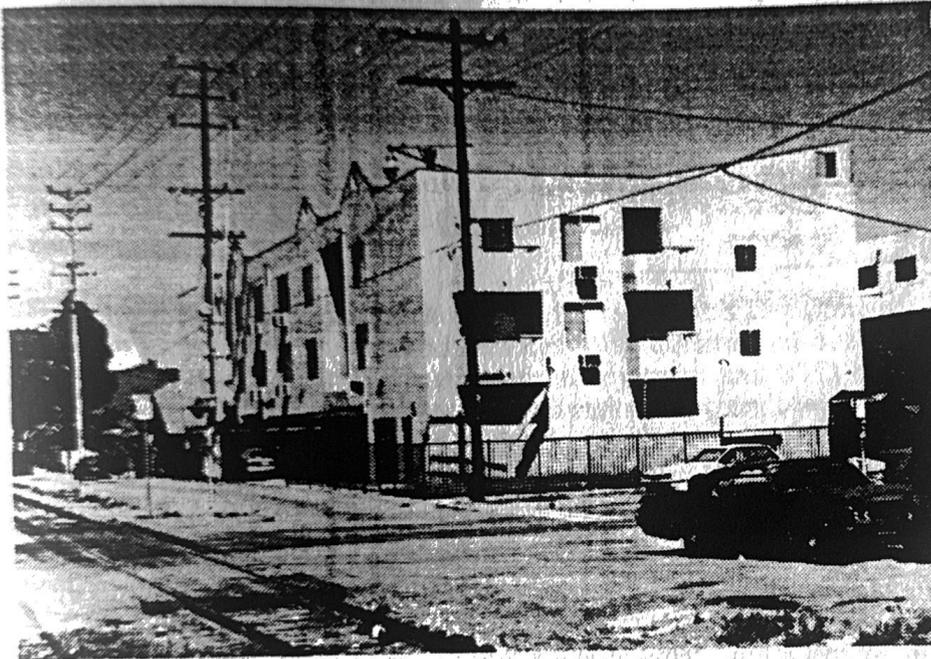


EXHIBIT 5-10. PROTOTYPICAL DINGBAT

Not only is the design out of scale with the existing fabric of the neighborhood, but the quality of habitability is inadequate. Because they are built to full zoning capacity (density of dwelling units per parcel of minimal or no setbacks) total livable space (square footage) is limited and there is less room for open/play space. They particularly contrast with the single family residential setting and became the catalyst for fervent action on the part of historic preservationists.

Cultural Infrastructure of the Latino Majority

The most prevalent indicator of Latino identity in Highland Park is its social landmarks. These provide cultural amenities that enrich the quality of life, as well as contribute to social exchange. These "social landmarks" ¹⁹ are constructed basically by "word of mouth" and flourish because of perpetual community support. Mostly they are typified by the small business that goes beyond the classic merchant/customer relationship.

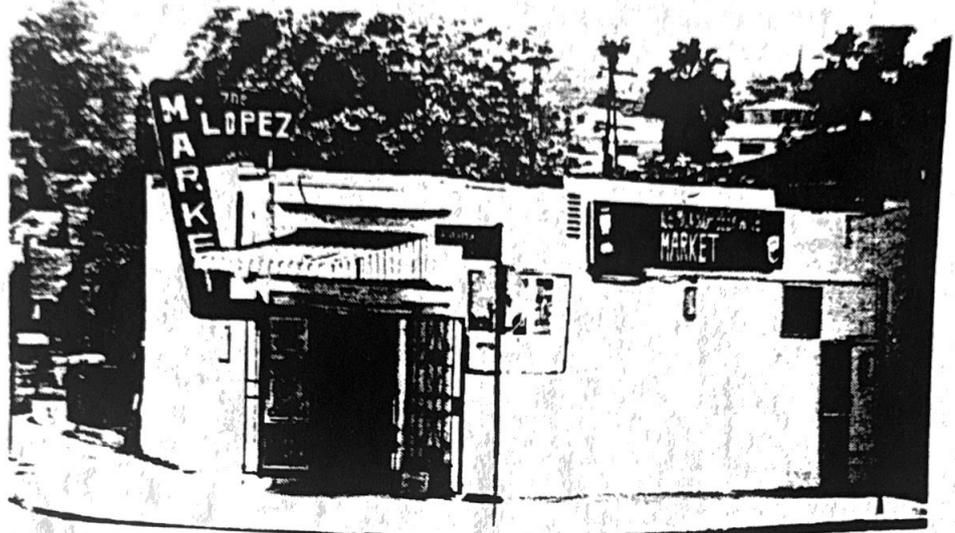


EXHIBIT 5-11. SOCIAL LANDMARK AT ASH & ALDAMA

By providing other services that may not be considered as good business practice, these social landmarks informally provide that venue for Latino rootedness in Highland Park. In the early 1960's, when Latinos began moving into Highland Park, Mexican staples were not available in local grocery stores. However, since the commercial transitions of the 1970's, the large and small grocery stores began to cater especially to the Latino market. Large grocers like Von's and Boy's Market have targeted the Latino community with their affiliated stores, Viva and Tianguis. The Viva chain now occupies 2 of the large grocery stores in Highland Park, yet are frequently criticized for exploiting the minority community with high prices and limited merchandise. With the small grocer, marketing is at a minimum, a simple mural advertises carne (meat) and legumbres (vegetables). These markets are an amenity in the neighborhood for their convenience and accessibility.

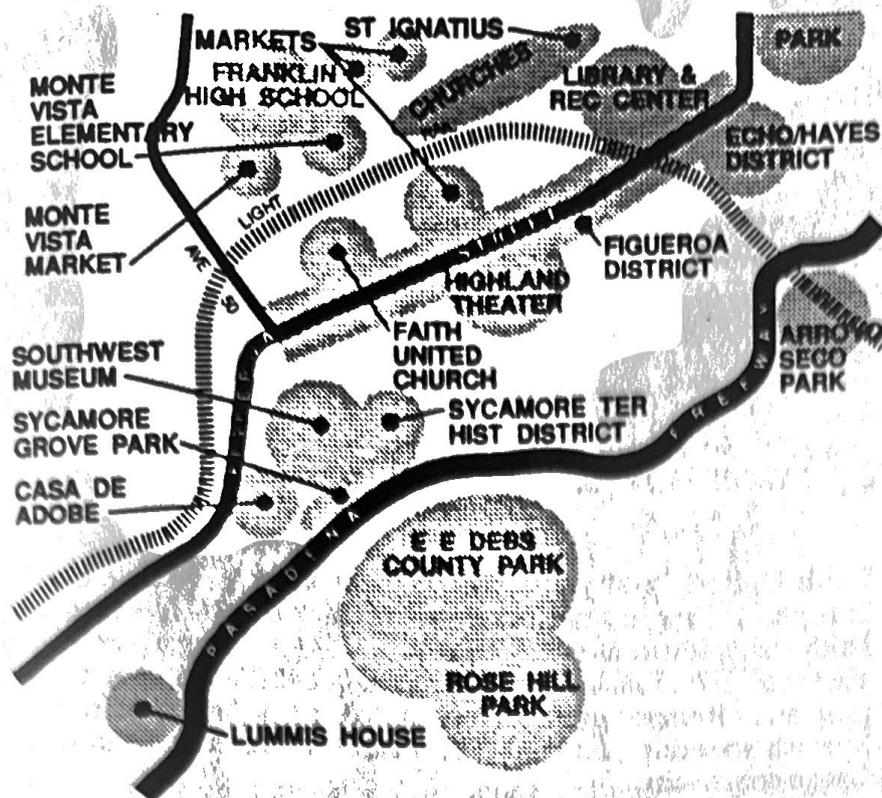


EXHIBIT 5-12 - MAPPED LANDMARKS

Another example of a social landmark is the People's Department Store which provides outdated services for a commercial outlet: layaway service, utility bill payment, money order and RTD bus pass sales. Other potential social landmarks may result with an increase of community support to the Arroyo Book Store/Libreria Arroyo. The store carries Spanish and English language books and LAUSD approved bilingual education materials, and also acts as a makeshift gallery space and meeting room.

Aside from the informal social landmarks there are notable groups in Highland Park that provide youth services to the community. They are:

Highland Park Junior Anti Crime Unit which is a graffiti paint out team of neighborhood youth led by and funded "out of pocket" by a Highland Park resident. The group paints every weekend and is looking into painting murals. The Unit discourages gang involvement and provides an alternative activity.

Soledad Enrichment Action is an alternative school which was founded by Brother Modesto of Our Lady of La Soledad Church in East Los Angeles. The director of the Highland Park School, paints murals and business signs with his students to provide an alternative activity to irrespective graffiti.



EXHIBIT 5-13. SEA'S FAITH UNITED MURAL/SIGN

Faith United Presbyterian Church is the most visible church in Highland Park in terms of community outreach and involvement. Faith United distributes groceries to needy residents every Friday afternoon and is looking into sponsoring clerical computer skills program. Because their congregation has not been traditionally Spanish speaking, the church is making outreach efforts to the Latino community.

Art In the Park offers visual arts, guitar, and performing arts to youth at Arroyo Seco Park. The program was originally created by local parents who felt there was a lack of artistic resources in Highland Park. Scholarships are offered to income eligible students. Art in the Park recently co-sponsored the "Blessing of the Cars" festival, which has enhanced the Highland Park Car Show.

The City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department
presents

The Blessing of the Cars

THE CAR AS ART

SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 1992
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A NON-RELIGIOUS EVENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY
ART IN THE PARK
ARROYO SECO PARK
5568 Via Marteol, Los Angeles
(213) 259-0861

PROGRAM

The 17th Annual Highland Park Car & Truck Show
Cars by Gilbert Magal, Lopez, and other Artists
Arts & Crafts by the Arroyo Seco Collaborative
Sculpture by Students of Art in the Park
Street Art Show
Sculpture from 2nd to 5th Grade
Free for Residents 13 or Older

ENTERTAINMENT ON THREE STAGES

Stage One
"The Blessing of the Cars," Puppet Show by Bill & Vaughan
The Broadway Trunk Theatre
American Indian and Queer-Cult Performances of Song & Dance
Auto-Performances by James Quinn

Stage Two
2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Stage Three ("La Concha" Amphitheatre)
Song, Music and the Menage Quadrone
Germans Franz & Sa de Melado Sound

EXHIBIT 5-14 THE CAR AS ART

Franklin High School Mural/Video Project is a special project sponsored by the Museum of African American Art. Franklin High school students led by Chicana muralist, Yreina Cervantes will complete a mural for the new cafeteria building in June 1992. Student muralists, including Sandra Moreno and Crash (Juan Ortiz), decided on the theme which encompasses a variety of issues that depict obstacles and solutions in everyday life.

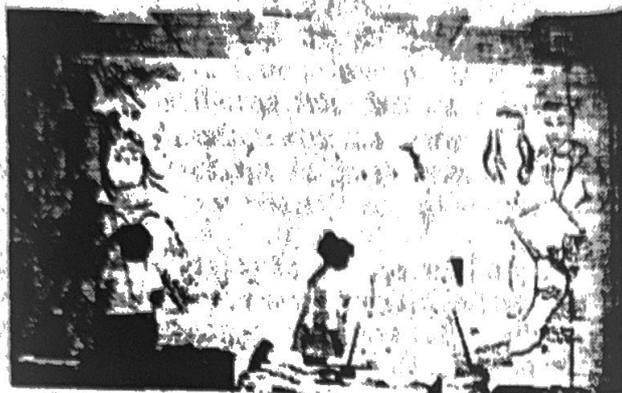


EXHIBIT 5-15. "NO PEACE NO UNITY"

Other types of cultural infrastructure are comprised of named institutions such as the Southwest Museum, Charles Lummis House and other celebrated cultural historic monuments. These resources, although they do possess some historic cultural value, are not utilized to the community's advantage. They are the type of landmarks that are unapproachable because of their sacred distinctions and lack of outreach to the diverse constituencies of the neighborhood.



EXHIBIT 5-16. FIND THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM!

Duality of Perception of the Highland Park Community

Although the characteristics of transitioning Highland Park are evident in the landscape, there exists a faction in the neighborhood that is in a state of denial. The non-ethnic historic preservation and art organizations advocate single issue agendas which do not acknowledge the actual social and economic dynamics of the Latino community. There is no one community organization that is addressing Latino issues, and more specifically Latino immigrant issues.²⁰ The loudest public indicator of the dual identity is the local newspaper which contrasts "single issues" and crime reports on its front page .

There is a duality of perceptions of neighborhood ranging from Latino realist to Anglo (historian and artist) idealist. To some in Highland Park, the issues are clear: drugs, crime and safety. A representative from City Council Office District 1 indicated that crime prevention is a number one priority.

Latino Franklin High Graduate:

"There are too many drug addicts around here"

Mexican-American Local Musician:

"I wouldn't advise anyone to go down there (Ave 50 & Fig) anytime of the day."

30 Year Latina Resident:

"I quit taking art classes at the park because it got too dangerous. They need security there. There is so much crime everywhere"

And, on a different note, there are the emerging arts collective members and the historic preservation organizations. These organizations have adopted namesakes like, "the arroyo regions of the north east highlands" and describe themselves as the "York Valley residents". Romantic namesakes are used to portray an image as semi pastoral with possible attempts to attract people with like views who want to disassociate themselves from negative connotations of Highland Park. This is similar to the use of popular press on the part of realtors.²¹ Of the few community organizations in Highland Park, none directly address the issues pertinent to the general concerns of the majority of residents who are primarily Latino.

PLANNING ISSUES

In the midst of major ethnic and socio-economic change, population growth, Latino population growth and narrow agendas of community factions and little Latino voice, further neighborhood transformation may result. Two central issues facing Highland Park have the potential to alter urban form and detrimentally impact the Latino community, both the low income and fixed income communities simultaneously. The following discussion deals with regulatory mechanisms and proposals which dictate a continuation of the single family residential neighborhood and the countering threats to residential properties adjacent to the Pasadena-Los Angeles light rail project.

Mechanisms for Control: Keeping The Single Family Home

In the mid 1980's, Highland Park had become the target of intense development, which the current zoning higher density R3 and R4 allowed. Adjacent properties were being purchased, leveled, and massive apartment buildings were built in replacement with rents that are not truly affordable. The single family residential fabric of the neighborhood was being threatened. This was the impetus for a campaign to keep Highland Park a single family (low density) residential area.

The local historic preservation group and an affiliated neighborhood association continue to lead the way in this fight for neighborhood "stability". This translates in their terms, to single family home ownership and occupancy. A neighborhood with many renters is considered unstable and renters have a reputation of being undesirable. While preservationists advocate to maintain stability, in reality 59% of Highland Park residents are renters and only 38% are owner occupants. The single family home remains to be the predominant housing unit type, so many Highland Park renters are not necessarily living in apartments.

Already involved in wide spread historic monument nominations of mostly residential structures, the preservation group, created a spin off organization to lobby and fund raise around the issue of preserving neighborhood form.²² The new neighborhood association engages in city planning strategies. Their efforts have long term effects on the entire built environment of Highland Park rather than on an isolated property. These two organizations have been influential to the Northeast Community Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) and are the proponents for the Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) and the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ).

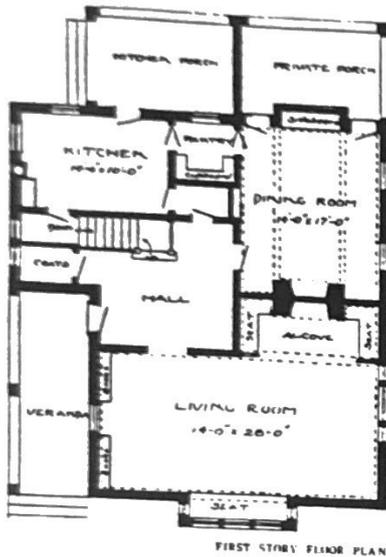
The Craftsman Home and a Latino Household

Craftsman homes were not necessarily designed for the Latino family, nonetheless, adaptations to the houses take place. Older

housing, no matter who it was designed for, gets passed down line until it is ultimately unsuitable for habitation or is gutted, restored or partitioned. While housing does get demolished now and again, the days of total clearance is of the past. Economic predicaments, household size and family structure are all determinants for housing adaptability. Whether or not Craftsman designers intended it or not, sleeping porches have been enclosed and converted to bedrooms; pantry walls have been knocked down to create roomier kitchens and high ceilings allow sufficient room for bunk beds. The following quotes offer two differing views of the functional aspects of community design.

Chicano Architecture Student:

"Craftsman homes were not designed for the Latino family. In the Latino household the kitchen is important; it is a gathering place for family members. Latinos eat in the kitchen and preparation of the meal is just as important as the meal itself. There is a lot of activity that takes place in the kitchen. It is probably the most utilized place in the house. In the Craftsman home the kitchen is shut off from the living and dining areas usually by a narrow doorway. The dining room is not necessarily used for dining, except for special occasions. Usually furnished with the ceremonial dining table it's just a way station from the living room to the kitchen. It's used for homework, the sewing machine, and other projects that might require a large work space."



Gustav Stickley:

"The dining room is the center of hospitality and good cheer, the place that should hold a special welcome for guests and home folks alike. Instead of being planned to fulfill manifold functions like the living room, it has definite uses and purpose and no disturbing element should be allowed to creep in...Hence it is without saying that the dining room should be placed in such a relation to the kitchen that the work of serving meals goes on with no friction and with as few steps as possible. A noiseless and well fitted swing door serves as a complete bar against sounds and odors from the kitchen, even if the connection be direct." 23

The serious implications of the HPOZ designation come to light when considering that the association that manages the zone will consist of only 5 members. Chapter 3 describes the composition of this board. The association will have the power to influence the Planning Commission, Cultural Heritage Commission and City Council through their recommendations on proposed new construction and alterations to buildings within the zone.

Community Plan Revision

While Highland Park fits the prototypical zoning model of Los Angeles, mentioned previously, existing land usage does not correspond; single family homes do line the Avenues. Around the

same time that these homes were being demolished and replaced with apartments, the Northeast District Plan was scheduled for revision. California Assembly Bill 283 provided that charter city zoning be compatible with its General Plan and Community Plans. And, a suit against the City of Los Angeles resulted in this mandatory plan revision. This timing provided the perfect platform for preservationists and new yuppie type homeowners to advocate maintenance of single family residential character by preventing construction of multiple unit housing.

The Community Plan or District Plan is a portion of the City of Los Angeles' General Plan. Though not an official zoning map, its purpose is to guide elected officials, the Mayor, and planning commissioners in future development activities within that district. The plan prescribes goals, policy and objectives for land use, housing, circulation, and public services which are aimed to benefit the welfare of district residents. Highland Park falls under the jurisdiction of the Northeast Los Angeles District Plan. The last updated plan, 1979, strictly emphasizes the preservation, maintenance and improvement of stable single family residential neighborhoods and to prevent these neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses.²⁴

This time, in revising the Community Plans, the city has expressed the desire for extensive citizen participation in the plan revision process to ensure that citizens have an active role in determining their quality of life. The Community Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) is to be the exemplary mechanism for providing citizen input. The CPAC members are appointed by the City Council and individual council members to represent "a broad range of community groups and interests" but with a land use perspective. The number of committee members is based on a proportional percentage of land use. If the district has more residential land than manufacturing land then the committee would have more individuals representing residential interests. The formula is said to be used to create a balanced well represented community.²⁵

A preliminary report from City Planning staff identified issues, opportunities, and constraints for the CPAC to guide them through the process. Housing issues brought forth during this current revision continue to stress single family residential housing, supporting the preservationists' motives; a founding member of the preservation organization is a CPAC committee member. And, the neighborhood association is well involved in this process as they have submitted a land use study and recommendations document to the CPAC, which, the committee says will be considered as any public comment.²⁶

Interim Control Ordinance

In the interim and in an effort to curb unwanted growth and destruction of the single family street scape, an Interim Control Ordinance (ICO) was adopted per the Council Offices of District 1

and 14 in 1989 as a result of preservationists' pressures.²⁷ The ordinance was adopted to safeguard single family detached housing from demolition, while the Northeast District Plan was undergoing revision. Also, as part of the District Plan revision process, an historic and cultural site inventory was undertaken and a significant amount of residential structures were deemed as having potential for designation. The ICO would also protect those potential historic structures from demolition.

In the original ordinance the duration was stipulated as effective for One year or until the Northeast District Plan was revised. The effectiveness of the ordinance has been extended three times since its initial adoption (pending completed plan revision). March of 1992 marked its third extension with its effectiveness stipulated as 1 year or until the Historic Preservation Overlay is adopted. The zone proposal was an end product of the drive "to preserve, maintain and improve existing stable single-family residential neighborhoods and to prevent these neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses."²⁸ It is possible that the decision for the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone adoption will be affirmative because the language in the Interim Control Ordinance references its adoption, and, that the HPOZ is being used as a land use tool as well as for historic purposes.

Mass Transit and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone



Regardless of the preservationists efforts, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) is "leading the way to greater mobility."²⁹ The Pasadena-Los Angeles Light Rail train is proposed to go through Highland Park. Station stops are planned for Avenue 50 and Avenue 57 and dense housing construction along Marmion Way is also part of the plan. Densification along this rail corridor will result in displacement of 6 households, that are likely to be Latino. There are also plans for a sound wall, of maximum height of 8 feet which will create physical barriers between neighborhoods. Displacement of households and closing off streets exacerbates disruption to the entire community of Highland Park. These plans are a complete contradiction to the historians and artists' ideals for the area.

To counter those actions and in defense of the single family residence, an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone has been proposed by preservation advocates for Highland Park. The implications are two fold: 1) preservationists are no longer relying on down zoning per Community Plan Revision and 2) an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone adoption is more likely. The HPOZ designation would be the optimal situation for preservationists, because it too, has an appointed committee that will be working in an advisory capacity to the City.

The Historic Preservation Overlay Zone is the city's mechanism for historic district designation. In keeping with the criteria for historic

Architectural Description of Housing

The architectural survey characterizes residential structures in Highland Park by a variety of styles, but the predominate style is likely to be the house that has elements of the Craftsman home. Some homes in the area are built in a purely Craftsman manner but most borrow elements from a variety of styles. A study done by the Historic Resources Studies Consultant (TELECU) for the Northeast Los Angeles Special Studies Area was completed to identify architectural historic sites to be used in revising the Northeast District Plan. In the summary of the report, Highland Park's architectural styles have been grouped into 6 major categories; Craftsman, Victorian, American Four Square, Spanish, Other Revival and miscellaneous.³¹ Highland Park's housing stock is mostly representative of Craftsman style and includes the California Bungalows and court yard apartments.

Implications of Neighborhood Stabilization Efforts

In Highland Park, the process for HPOZ nomination is entering its final stages. It has been relatively easy for the proponents of the HPOZ to make their way through the process because there has been little opposition.

Members of the preservation organization/neighborhood association are predominately Anglo residents of Highland Park. Some are recently arrived residents while others have been around long enough to see drastic changes in the neighborhood. There are approximately 100 paid members, but according to the president of the trust only about 5 members are active in monument and Zone nomination and the land use committee.³²

As an historic preservation organization, the trust/neighborhood association rally around the so called "neighborhood" issues, but only in the physical sense. However the "community" is a combination of social (Ch. 2 defines community spatially, experientially) and physical elements. In Highland Park the majority of the "community" is Latino who live in "potential" historic houses. Yet Latinos have not been involved with this neighborhood stabilization movement as a community interest group. There is, in fact, no community group in place that represents Latino, immigrant, and low income interests in issues such as fair housing, educational advancement or economic development.

Gentrification and Displacement: Results of Stabilization Efforts

The current economic situation in Highland Park coupled with historic preservation efforts, is laying the foundation for extensive gentrification and displacement. The Oxford American Dictionary defines gentrification as the "movement of middle class, families into urban areas causing property values to increase and having the

secondary effect of driving out poor families". The institution of an HPOZ creates a situation which promotes restoration of old homes and rising real estate prices. It may also displace Latinos and the low and fixed income residents from their homes. Increased polarization between the Latino community and the anglo "old guard" and new residents is a likely result of the process.

An HPOZ designation will not alone gentrify the neighborhood, but allow a movement and shift of capital. A class analysis of gentrification provides an explanation for how gentrification and displacement occur. Although this does not occur in every neighborhood, the "devalorization cycle" lists conditions of deterioration that subject a neighborhood to gentrification.

The cycle consists of 5 steps; 1) new construction of a neighborhood, 2) shift from ownership to landlord control, 3) block busting, 4) redlining and 5) abandonment.³³ Events in Highland Park do coincide with the steps of the devalorization cycle:

1. **New Construction of a Neighborhood:** Two major periods of construction date the development of the existing residential stock in Highland Park. 45% date from 1900 to 1910, and 38% date from 1910 through 1929. Highland Park had been a street car suburb up until the 1956, with the discontinuation of the "W" line by the Metropolitan Transit Authority.³⁴ Today, Highland Park is no longer a suburb but an urban neighborhood.

2. **Shift from ownership to landlord control:** 59% are renters and only 39% are owner occupants per 1990 census.

3. **Block Busting:** The area has experienced block busting with the multiple unit apartment development during the 1980's although the predominant housing type remains single family residential at 49%.³⁵

4. **Redlining:** Although the area has not been "redlined" by financial institutions, the city Interim Control Ordinance and proposed HPOZ curb investment of speculative developers.

5. **Abandonment:** Does not apply yet. In fact, this may not occur because of marketing efforts of realtors and gentrifiers.

While these conditions prevail in Highland Park, Smith argues that the devalorization cycle further results in "rent gap". The gap is the actual amount of rent, or capital, compared to the ground rent that could be gained under a better land use. This allows gentrification to take place both by rehabilitation (historic preservation) and redevelopment.

In terms of redevelopment, the densification plans to accompany the Pasadena-Los Angeles Light Rail may induce redevelopment activity

of sorts. This activity may also result in displacement with the residential densification at station stops and around the Marmion Way rail corridor. At present the mainly small bungalows lining Marmion Way on both sides (and a few of the "dingbat" apartment buildings) in which at least six will have to be removed to build the station stops.³⁶

A Lincoln Heights community activist who has been involved in the public hearing process asserts that the intent of these light rail projects is to transport residents of the wealthier neighborhoods. This rail is not intended necessarily for Highland Park residents but for Pasadena residents; Highland Park just serves as a thoroughfare.³⁷

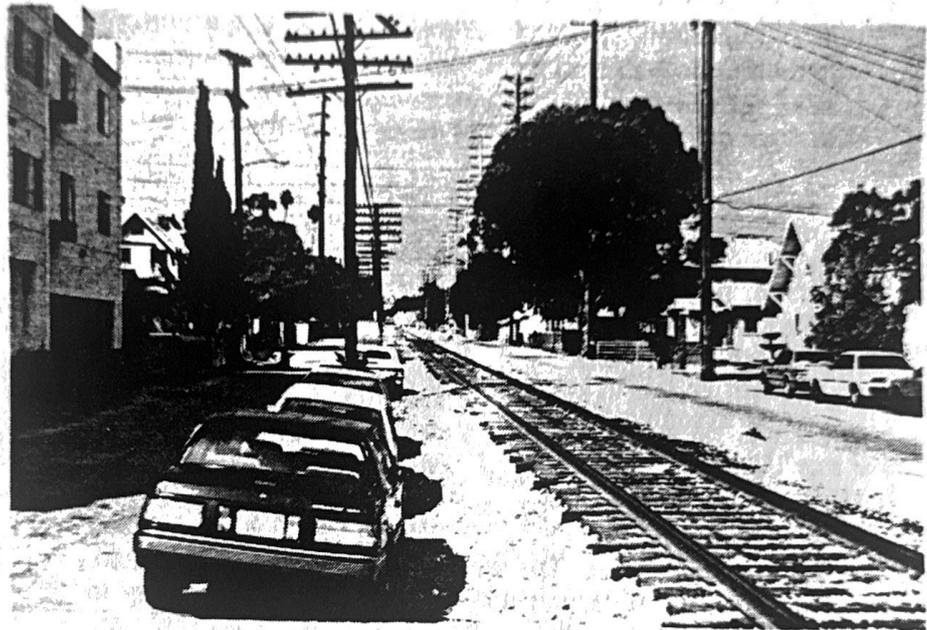


EXHIBIT 5-18 MARMION WAY

New construction marketing strategies based on Highland Park's proximity to downtown, are likely to be geared toward the Anglo corporate employee. A transformation of the resident occupation types supports the gentrification cycle of "shift of capital". Also, the escalation of real estate prices have been found in the Bay Area and San Diego with the introduction of their rapid transit systems.³⁸

The above is a capitalist city development approach which explains how gentrification occurs, but a socio spatial argument provides why it occurs. Gentrification of the City, edited by N. Smith and P. Williams adds to the devalorization cycle that investors are searching

for those under valued locations.³⁹ Investment in the area creates the shift of capital into the built environment. It becomes an "urban wilderness of profitability" when comparing it to the westward movements of 1850's. Realtors foster gentrification with their advertisements. Namesakes are used to convey an image of distinction: "Uptown Los Angeles" and the "Historic Northside" which serves to reduce the perceived risk in investment in an otherwise depreciating district. The local press also fosters gentrification with historic preservation updates, however on the same front page crime reports off set that image.

PROPERTIES

Serving the Historic Northside Communities of Mt. Washington, Eagle Rock, Highland Park, Glassell Park, and Montecito Heights.

You Don't Have To Go Far To Find Your Home Away From The Beaten Path!

Discover Uptown Los Angeles's Great People, Idyllic Hills And Reasonable Prices!

A passenger exiting from a bus in the vicinity of Avenue 57 and Via Marisol was robbed at gunpoint, losing \$104.

A driver in a gas station located at North Figueroa Street and Avenue 52 was beaten and his 1986 Suzuki truck stolen.

A burglary from an apartment in the 400 block of North Avenue 56 netted some \$900 in cash and jewelry.

The shooting, which occurred in the 5900 block of Hayes Avenue, was apparently in a dispute over a woman, according to police investigators.

A 15-year-old Highland Park youth died of a stab wound to his back in what police believed was a gang related attack Wednesday morning at Avenue 50 and Figueroa Street.

EXHIBIT 5-19 POPULAR PRESS

And, the boosterism does reflect the westward movement of the midwesterners to California. "Where the 19th century frontier represented the consummation of absolute geographic expansion as the primary spatial expression of capital accumulation, gentrification and urban redevelopment represent the most advanced example of redifferentiation of geographical space towards precisely the same end."⁴⁰

Boosterism is aimed at the "new middle class" who buy this notion of the "new urban frontier." The new middle class are mostly White professionals with no children or few. They work hard to get the newest and the best of clothes, entertainment, and food and their consumption patterns are similar to the old "leisure class". They opt for this urban lifestyle because it legitimizes their connection to the Victorian work ethic. Through housing preservation, they not only buy into a deteriorated neighborhood for future equity but they buy into the nostalgic past.



EXHIBIT 5-20 . NOW SHOWING "AMERICAN ME"

Gentrifier Consumption

In Highland Park preservationists and the proclaimed emerging "arroyo set" stake their claim to the "Highlands" not only in housing preservation but in their attempts for commercial modification. Their preference for consumer goods have not been met. An arroyo artist said, "Coffee houses, that is one of the first things we need" and "I would love to see this (N. Figueroa St.) become a restaurant row of international cuisine." A historic cultural monument, The Highland (theater) was criticized as not being sophisticated enough and shows "slasher" films.⁴¹

Long time and Latino residents were anxious for the re-opening of People's Department Store, the grand opening of which was scheduled for April 30, 1992; passersby would stop to look into the windows. There is Fashion 21 which carries economical and fashionable clothes for teens and young adults. The market dictates price and on North Figueroa discount prices are socially acceptable.

Displacement

Proponents argue that gentrification revitalizes a depressed area by upgrading property, and encouraging small business enterprises. The new middle classes benefit from this activity and the lower income working classes suffer from displacement. The activity in the housing market: "devalorization", rent gap, and finally new investment in under valued location, results in a shift from renter properties to owner occupancy. Highland Park is a high rental area with 62% Hispanic renters (US.Census) who are the prime target population for displacement. The new middle class and old white guard of Highland Park are more experienced in exploiting Highland Park for their single issue interest and the establishment of the HPOZ is evidence.

SYNTHESIS OF ISSUES

The following quote in the Cultural Affairs Master Plan best describes the purpose of Shelving The Myth: Identifying Opportunities for Latino Venue in Highland Park:

"It is necessary, to address past inequities in order to establish and appreciate a cultural life truly reflective of the city's heterogeneous population"⁴².

This study is an attempt to present how historic cultural biases are used to manipulate the less empowered. Such manipulation only results in ethnic and racial inequity, and fosters discontent among factions. In this type of situation there is no cultural equity.

The discussion of the transitioning neighborhood, Highland Park, is a contemporary illustration of possible community and neighborhood recomposition similar to the community transition in Little Tokyo. This situation could be applicable to any ethnic community that is in its organizing stages. There are many examples of less empowered communities that have been disrupted with public works projects. The freeway system and the Dodger Stadium are both the end products of wholesale community displacement. Also, the insensitivity of neighborhood associations, whose members chose to physically divide themselves from undesirables, by separating their turf with gates and restricted parking. If special districts are used inappropriately the same impact may result in a separation of communities.

This is what appears to be happening in Highland Park although in a deceptively subtle way. The more organized neighborhood groups have mobilized to the extent that a blanket special district will be superimposed over the neighborhood which is comprised of a majority Latino community who are renters and as well as homeowners. The potential for displacement is great and the consequences unfair.

Proponents of the historic designation are perfectly within their civic rights to initiate the HPOZ proposal. And the notion of maintaining the fabric of the residential neighborhood is valid. However, the methods employed to safeguard the community suggests exclusivity. Los Angeles cannot afford to be exclusive in housing practices. The number one housing issue prevails and that is affordability. The labor economy is such that home ownership, of a quality rental unit may not be a reality for many Angelinos. There is a definite need for affordable housing which includes new and rental housing. In Highland Park the high percentage of renters demonstrate that need. There are alternatives to substandard and non compatible housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A continual theme in this chapter is the threat of neighborhood control. The unempowered faction of the Latino community is threatened by the affects of wide spread city planning initiatives in terms of displacement. The empowered Anglo community may feel threatened by the true social and economic conditions of Highland Park which interfere with their objectives to restore "arroyo culture." The following recommendations identify opportunities to create a Latino venue in Highland Park.

Recommendation 5.1

Highland Park should have a cultural and community center with a Latino identity.

The Latino community in Highland Park is lacking a mechanism for community determination. Without a community voice that is distinctly Latino, the community will remain static when confronted with threats like displacement. Every community should have a cultural anchor. The Latino community of Highland Park, for lack of resources, has not met its potential in terms of politicization. The fact of strength in population numbers illustrates the potential for community empowerment. The process in which this center would develop would be as important as the functions itself. Chapter 8 describes community responsive planning.

Recommendation 5.2

Existing and future cultural social service and civic organizations should adopt as a mission statement the policy to outreach to the community by providing resources to meet future needs.

Of the community organizations that exist in Highland Park, none directly provide services that would improve the well being of its residents, educationally or economically. A literate and economically stable community is essential to community empowerment. Educational components should be adopted by existing and future organizations that will introduce youth and adults to opportunities for individual advancement in education, job training and careers. For example, the Southwest Museum might adopt local schools to provide research skill seminars and encourage higher education in ethnic studies, history, and the arts.

Recommendation 5.3

In maintaining the built environment and simultaneously meeting the housing demand the Department of City Planning and the Cultural Affairs Department should research alternatives to blanket zoning and historic overlay designation.

The neighborhood of Highland Park has a distinct built environment. The community of Highland Park has an increasingly growing population. To meet the housing need, while providing affordable and quality housing, a flexible alternative would accommodate shifts in the community. A Conservation District may be suitable for old core Highland Park considering its lot configurations.

Recommendation 5.4

The City's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, should include a policy that mandates relocation assistance to renters of single family homes.

In Highland Park, many renters live in single family homes and a resurgence of property sale may result in wide spread displacement and homelessness.

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