

# SurveyLA

Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey

## Historic Resources Survey Report Venice Community Plan Area



*Prepared for:*

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



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# 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 Venice Community Plan Area (CPA). This project was undertaken from November 2013 to February 2014 by Historic Resources Group (HRG).

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, Survey Report, and Appendices are available on the Survey Findings page at SurveyLA.org.

## 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 City 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 Qualification 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 Area (CRA) surveys conducted within the last five years
- Potential Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) areas which have been surveyed in the last five years and are in the process of being designated.

### ***SurveyLA Resources 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 are organized by resource type.

- **Individual Resources** are generally resources located within a single assessor parcel, such as a residence. 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 include street trees, streetlights, landscaped medians, bridges, and signs.
- **Historic Districts** are areas that are related geographically and by theme. 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, sites, objects, and other features located within historic districts. Generally, non-contributing resources are those that are extensively altered, built outside the period of significance, or that 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 that makes 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 features – such as height, massing, setbacks, and street trees – which warrant consideration in the local planning process.

## Project Team

The Venice CPA survey was conducted by Historic Resources Group. Personnel included Kari Michele Fowler, Senior Preservation Planner; Christine Lazzaretto, Principal; Paul Travis, Principal; Heather Goers, Architectural Historian; Robby Aranguren, Planning Associate, and Christy Johnson McAvoy, Founding Principal. Additional assistance was provided by interns Emily Williams, Tim Rosenstein, and Lauren Postlmayr. Kari Fowler served as the project manager. Venice historian Jonathan Kaplan served as a consultant on the project.

## Survey Area

### *Description of the Survey Area*

The identified survey area (“Survey Area”) corresponds with the boundary for the Venice Community Plan Area (CPA), which is located in western Los Angeles. Irregular in plan, the Survey Area is bounded generally by Marine Court and Dewey Street to the north; Walgrove, Lyceum, Walnut, and Del Rey Avenues and Lincoln Boulevard to the east; and Zanja Street, Harbor Crossing Lane, and Washington Boulevard to the south. The CPA is naturally bounded to the west by the Pacific Ocean. The Survey Area borders the Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey CPA to the east, the city of Santa Monica to the north, and the unincorporated area of Marina Del Rey to the south (*see Survey Area Map below*).

The CPA consists of a total of 11,756 parcels. Of these, approximately 9,976 parcels were surveyed by SurveyLA. SurveyLA generally does not include properties constructed after 1980, or resources that have been designated under Federal, state, or local programs.<sup>1</sup>

The topography of the Survey Area is generally flat, a characteristic which is reflected in the area’s largely orthogonal street patterns. The Survey Area is traversed by several major thoroughfares, including Rose Avenue and Venice Boulevard running east/west; and Lincoln Boulevard (State Route 1), Abbot Kinney Boulevard, and Pacific Avenue running north/south.

The Survey Area is comprised of low- to medium-density urban land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial properties. Commercial development is concentrated along major corridors within the Survey Area such as Lincoln, Venice and Abbot Kinney boulevards. Windward Avenue in the vicinity of Main Street and Pacific Avenue has also retained its original use over time as the commercial nexus of Venice.

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<sup>1</sup> For information on designated resources within the CPA, please refer to the *Designated Resources* map below or go to [HistoricPlacesLA.org](http://HistoricPlacesLA.org)

**Survey Area Map.**



## ***Development History***

The land comprising the Survey Area was first developed at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1891, tobacco magnate and real estate developer Abbot Kinney and his business partner, Francis G. Ryan, purchased a 1.5 mile-long strip of beachfront land located south of Santa Monica. The 275-acre parcel had originally comprised a portion of Rancho La Ballona and was initially settled by the Machado and Talamantes families in the early 1800s. The northern third of the acreage was located in the city of Santa Monica. However, the remainder of the land, located south of present-day Marine Street, was situated in county territory and consisted of wetlands, with sand dunes and marshes that often flooded in the winter.<sup>2</sup> Kinney and Ryan turned their attention to the northern portion of the tract, where they developed a resort community which eventually came to be known as Ocean Park.

Abbot Kinney would likely have dedicated his career to developing Ocean Park; however, in 1898, Francis Ryan died suddenly at the age of 47. Kinney eventually acquired three new business partners in 1902: Alexander Fraser, Henry Gage, and George Merritt Jones. Competition from other developers motivated Kinney and his partners to make improvements to the community of Ocean Park and to expand their development further south into the land comprising present-day Venice. The beachfront acreage in the northeastern corner of the Survey Area represents the company's efforts to develop the area immediately south of Ocean Park between 1902 and 1904. The majority of the land was subdivided as part of the Golden Bay tract, which was recorded in May 1902. The land to the south, extending from Brooks Court down to Westminster Court, was also subdivided by Kinney, Fraser, Gage, and Jones as the Country Club tract, recorded in April 1903.<sup>3</sup> Three smaller tracts immediately to the east – including the Coral Crest Tract, which was also developed by the four men – were all recorded in 1903 and 1904.

The development of the Golden Bay tract reflects a unique layout which features separate streets dedicated for automobile and pedestrian use, creating a parallel plan of “drive streets,” “walk streets,” and alleys or “courts.” While several of Kinney's residential subdivisions in the Venice area exhibit this plan, the walk streets in the northern portion of Venice represent perhaps the earliest example of its implementation. The plan has been attributed to the developers' efforts to cut costs; in developing the area immediately south of Rose Avenue, sidewalks were substituted for streets along the two block-long, east/west lanes just off the boardwalk. Thus they achieved a courtyard effect for the small lots while providing safety for children.<sup>4</sup>

Further inland, to the east of Main Street, development occurred in a piecemeal fashion. Individual developers purchased blocks of land from larger tracts, such as the Santa Fe and

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<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey Stanton, *Venice California: 'Coney Island of the Pacific'* (Los Angeles: Donahue Publishing, 1993), 4.

<sup>3</sup> The Ocean Park Country Club was located across the street at the northeast corner of Westminster and Pacific Avenues; it was subsequently demolished and the property is now the Westminster Dog Park.

<sup>4</sup> Stanton, 9.



Ocean Tracts, and subdivided them into smaller parcels which were more suitable for residential development. In this way, developers were able to capitalize on the area's proximity to nearby Ocean Park amenities. Notable inland residential subdivisions included the Ocean Park Villa Tract and the Ocean Park Villa Tract No. 2, both of which were developed in 1903 near the Ocean Park Country Club. Retired banker and real estate developer E.J. Vawter also purchased a block of land which he developed as a botanical estate dedicated to the cultivation of carnations. The property's prior use was commemorated when Vawter later subdivided the land for residential development as the Carnation Tract.

By 1904, Kinney found himself at odds with his partners. Among other matters, the four men disagreed on how the unincorporated wetlands comprising the southern portion of their holdings should be developed. Abbot Kinney believed that to successfully develop the unincorporated area, it would be necessary to create an independent municipality south of Marine Street.<sup>5</sup> The four men decided to dissolve their partnership and go their separate ways; Kinney won a coin toss employed to divide up the company's assets and selected the southern portion of the tract. Several months later, those residents living south of Marine Street, in the unincorporated portion of the Ocean Park development, voted to establish the separate city of Ocean Park.<sup>6</sup> It was within this community that Abbot Kinney created his most successful development, Venice of America.

Following the dissolution of the Ocean Park Development Company, Abbot Kinney immediately commenced with plans to develop his own seaside resort community. As a man of means, Kinney had traveled widely throughout Europe and believed that the Italian city of Venice shared many of the same characteristics as the marshland he now owned. He envisioned a themed resort community which would foster a cultural renaissance and recall the exotic character of Venice through a recreation of the famous city's canals. He christened the project "Venice of America." Kinney hired Frank Dunham as building superintendent for the Venice of America project, and directed Dunham to travel to the East Coast and make a study of successful seaside resorts such as Sandy Hook, Coney Island, and Atlantic City. Dunham was also charged with hiring a landscape architect to design the plan for Venice of America. As a proponent of the "City Beautiful" movement, Kinney was keenly interested in the work of Frederick Law Olmsted, who had contributed to the plan for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago – a plan which was developed on reclaimed lowlands along the Lake Michigan shoreline and was oriented around a series of canals.<sup>7</sup> Dunham visited Olmsted's offices; although Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. had passed

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<sup>5</sup> Stanton, 10.

<sup>6</sup> For a time, there were two separate "Ocean Park" communities; the original community developed in South Santa Monica, and the later community which developed south of the incorporated boundaries of Santa Monica. The confusion between the two would not be fully resolved until 1911, when the name of the southern Ocean Park was changed to Venice.

<sup>7</sup> Stanton, 18.



away in 1903, it is likely that one of his apprentices – either Arthur Shurcliff, Warren H. Manning, or Beatrix Cadwalader Jones – was hired to design the plan for Venice.<sup>8</sup>

In 1905, a subdivision map was recorded for the Venice of America tract which reflected Abbot Kinney’s initial plans for his new development. The plan for the tract was comprehensive and included areas dedicated to recreational, commercial, and residential properties. At the beach, a 1,400-foot pier was constructed. Included among its various attractions were an auditorium, a dance hall, and a nautical-themed restaurant that resembled a ship. A hot saltwater plunge was situated on the beach just north of the pier; in 1908 the plunge was expanded to become the Venice Surf Bathhouse.<sup>9</sup> A boardwalk was planned along present-day Ocean Front Walk, which was noted on Kinney’s presentation map as the “Pacific Promenade.” Windward Avenue, which extended from the beach to the Bathing Lake and canals further east, was intended to serve as the primary commercial corridor. Visitors and tourists arriving in Venice via streetcar disembarked at Windward, which provided their first glimpse of Abbot Kinney’s “Venice-of-America.” As a result, Windward Avenue played an important role in establishing the character of Kinney’s development in Venice. In an effort to create a cohesive aesthetic in keeping with his vision for the resort town, Kinney stipulated that all building exteriors in the Venice business district be constructed “in harmony with the ‘Venetian Renaissance’ style.”<sup>10</sup> He commissioned architects Norman Marsh and Clarence Russell to design the principal buildings for Venice; the two men modeled their designs after Italy’s Piazza San Marco, whose buildings featured enclosed colonnaded walkways.

In keeping with Kinney’s vision for a town which resembled the Italian original, the residential area of Venice – known as the “canal district” – was distinguished by a network of man-made saltwater canals. The lateral canals in the residential area led to the Grand Canal, which emptied directly into the sea. As much of the land on which Venice was constructed was situated below sea level, the canal waters were controlled by the rising and falling of ocean tides, which flushed the waterways.<sup>11</sup> Distinctive arched footbridges, designed by Italian metal sculptor Felix Peano, spanned the canals and connected the four islands of residential lots.<sup>12</sup> In anticipation of the influx of visitors which would likely vastly exceed the available accommodations, land had also been set aside south of the Grand Canal for the erection of a tent city, where rustic “cottages with canvas sides”<sup>13</sup> – or as Kinney noted on his presentation map, “Venetian Villas” – could be rented for overnight stays.

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<sup>8</sup> Stanton, 18.

<sup>9</sup> Jan Loomis, *Westside Chronicles: Historic Stories of West Los Angeles* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012). Resources related to the pleasure pier are no longer extant.

<sup>10</sup> Stanton, 21.

<sup>11</sup> Carolyn Elayne Alexander, *Images of America: Venice California* (Charleston, SC: 1999), 47.

<sup>12</sup> Alexander, 31.

<sup>13</sup> Alexander, 26.

In preparation for the resort's official opening, the first sale of residential lots took place in 1904. Of the 504 lots available, 289 lots fronted the canals. Depending upon location, prices for the lots ranged from \$600 to \$1200.<sup>14</sup> To prevent speculation, Kinney limited sales to two lots per person. Streetlights were also installed; one extant example remains at the corner of Cabrillo Avenue and Altair Place. Construction activity commenced that same year, and today two extant examples remain of residential construction from this early period, which predates completion of the canal system. The Venice of America Home, constructed in 1905, is a designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument; the Venetian House was constructed in 1907. Both residences were designed in the Islamo-Byzantine style, reflecting the "East-meets-West" philosophy of Venice of America.

On the whole, however, construction of new housing in the residential canal area was "spotty at best." Historian Jeffrey Stanton writes that "it was a disappointment to Kinney, who had sold the lots to buyers with the understanding that they would build homes in a similar 'Venetian architectural style' shortly after opening day. Many to his dismay had broken contracts and sold to speculators. Then after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake caused the financial markets in the state to collapse, many wealthier lot owners postponed construction of a second home."<sup>15</sup> Residential building activity in the canal district did not gain momentum until the 1910s. One enterprising developer, Mark Collins, purchased the parcels comprising St. Mark's Island around 1912 and developed a 40-bungalow colony called "United States Island." Each bungalow was named for a different state, and the central courtyard held a scale model of the United States Capitol building.<sup>16</sup> Many of the bungalows are extant today on the properties bounded by Windward and Cabrillo avenues and Altair Place.

Although the canals were still under construction, Venice of America officially opened to the public on July 4, 1905. By this time, several key commercial buildings had been completed, including the Bank of Venice at the intersection of Windward and Pacific avenues. Early buildings were designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, reflecting Kinney's mandate, and featured elaborate arcades which extended along the north side of Windward Avenue from Ocean Front Walk to Pacific Avenue. The Mediterranean Revival style continued to be employed for new construction through the early 1920s; however, by the end of the decade, examples of commercial vernacular buildings were introduced to the district. Some streets were paved in brick; one rare extant example remains today on 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Pacific Avenue and Ocean Front Walk. The street also features perhaps the only extant example of the ornamental streetlights originally installed by Kinney; situated at the corner of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Speedway, the streetlight appears to have been relocated to its current location.

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<sup>14</sup> Stanton, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Stanton, 46-49.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander, 66.

Abbot Kinney's initial development of Venice was wildly popular, drawing over 40,000 visitors during opening weekend, many of whom traveled to the seaside resort by streetcar. Transportation played a critical role in the success of Kinney's Venice of America. The extension of rail and streetcar lines to Venice - a hard-won victory for Abbot Kinney - provided inexpensive, reliable, and direct access to the oceanfront community. The intersection of Windward and Pacific avenues functioned as an important transportation hub, serving as a stop for nearly every mode of travel available in Venice. The Los Angeles and Pacific Railroad's Venice Short Line, completed in 1904, connected Los Angeles to Venice, Ocean Park, and Santa Monica via Venice Boulevard and Pacific and Electric avenues. In 1911, the Los Angeles and Pacific Railroad would be taken over by Pacific Electric, and the "green cars" of the Venice Short Line replaced by P.E. "red cars."

Within Venice, gondoliers rowed tourists through the canals for a fee, serenading their passengers in Italian, while homeowners navigated the system of waterways by canoe or boat.<sup>17</sup> Land transportation consisted of the Venice Miniature Railroad, which also originated at Windward Avenue near the Short Line stop. Since any rail line traveling through the residential canal district would also have to cross over the distinctive arched bridges that spanned the canals, it was necessary to construct a miniature railroad at a special gauge. Kinney commissioned John J. Coit to design a narrow-gauge railroad that would take passengers from the Windward Avenue business district on a loop across canal bridges and through the residential district, stopping at Kinney's University of the Arts on Riviera Avenue, then return via a loop up West Washington Boulevard (now Abbot Kinney Boulevard), past its Lake Avenue maintenance yard and back to the Windward station.<sup>18</sup> Completed in 1905, the miniature railroad became a fixture of Venice community life, and remained in operation through 1924. The tracks were subsequently removed in 1925.

Although extant examples of early transportation-related resources are relatively rare in Venice, several buildings remain today. A 1911 Pacific Electric ticket building for the Venice Short Line still stands on Electric Avenue. Designed in a Japanese-Craftsman motif, it resembles the main streetcar station originally located adjacent to Venice City Hall; in the early days it was known as the "Tokyo" station (sometimes spelled "Tokio").<sup>19</sup> Additionally, a 1913 gondola building, where the public gondolas were stored and repaired, still stands at the corner of Mildred Avenue and Canal Street.

Following a successful opening season, in 1906 Abbot Kinney began to expand the city services in Venice. Construction commenced on a city hall (now designated a City Historic-Cultural Monument) and a fire station, which was designed by John Gabrovck and completed that same year. An Edison Electric Company facility was later constructed in

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<sup>17</sup> "The Lost Canals of Venice of America," [http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal\\_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html](http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html) (accessed November 2014).

<sup>18</sup> "Venice Miniature Railroad," <http://www.westland.net/venicehistory/articles/rail.htm> (accessed November 2014).

<sup>19</sup> Venice Short Line Tour website, <http://www.uncanny.net/~wetzels/vsline.htm> (accessed July 2014).

1910. The community's first newspaper, the *Venice Vanguard*, was established around 1911 and eventually relocated to its longtime headquarters on Mildred Avenue. Amusements were also added to the pleasure pier and amenities and commercial offerings along the boardwalk were expanded. Wooden shade structures were constructed at intervals along Ocean Front Walk, allowing pedestrians some relief from the sun.<sup>20</sup> Several hotels and apartment houses were constructed along Ocean Front Walk during the city's boom years of the 1910s and early 1920s to accommodate the influx of visitors. Several examples remain extant today, including the St. Mark's Hotel (1905);<sup>21</sup> the King George Hotel<sup>22</sup> and Potter Apartments (1912); the Hotel Cadillac and Hotel Waldorf (1914); and the Biltmore by the Sea (1921). A unique example of multi-family residential development also remains along Ocean Front Walk; the Sea Spray Court (1922, now the Gingerbread Court) exhibits a fanciful French Revival style; originally residential in use, it is now occupied by retail and office space.

By 1907, the Venice of America development had become the nexus of the City of Ocean Park. In fact, the area's success and its potentially negative impact on the surrounding business developments of Ocean Park was keenly felt by Ocean Park businessmen, sparking resentment and discord. It was these "conflicting business interests," as Jeffrey Stanton describes, that triggered a feud between the two entities. "The basic problem," Stanton observes, "was that two rival communities were growing up in one municipality."<sup>23</sup> After months of real estate and political battles, Abbot Kinney launched a campaign to "disincorporate" Venice of America from the surrounding community of Ocean Park. While community sentiment within Venice of America was clearly in Kinney's favor, his efforts failed to muster the two-thirds majority required to prevail in the public election. Venice of America remained a part of the Ocean Park community; in 1911, the entire community was renamed Venice.

While business development may have been controversial, residential developers in surrounding areas of Ocean Park began to devise ways to capitalize on the resort's success. Soon, a second set of six canals appeared just to the south of Venice of America. Developed by the Short Line Beach Company in 1905-1906, the subdivision was known as the Venice Canal Subdivision. The Short Line Beach Company continued to divide land further south down the peninsula, as did the Los Angeles Pacific Railroad Company and Kinney's former business partners. The Silver Strand tract, developed by Alexander Fraser, Henry Gage, and George Merritt Jones in 1905, featured lots oriented around a Grand Canal spanned by

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<sup>20</sup> Wooden shade structures are visible in historic photographs of the Venice promenade dating from the 1920s; however, their date of introduction is unknown. The extant shade structures appear to resemble the originals, but further research is required to confirm their origination.

<sup>21</sup> The original St. Mark's Hotel was located next door to this building but was subsequently demolished; its name has since been adopted by this property, which is now the oldest remaining hotel in Venice.

<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, the King George Hotel was where evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson was last seen prior to her mysterious disappearance in 1926; she was later discovered in New Mexico claiming she had been kidnapped but her story was quickly disproven.

<sup>23</sup> Stanton, 54.

bridges. Only one bridge remains extant today at Pacific Avenue and Lighthouse Street. Although the peninsula was originally subdivided by several different developers, the streets were later renamed in 1964 to reflect a nautical theme; east-west streets along the peninsula are arranged alphabetically from north to south.<sup>24</sup>

The Venice Park tract, the Venice Annex tract, and the Venice Vista tract were all recorded to the northwest of Venice of America in 1904 and 1905. The largest of the three tracts in the district, the Venice Annex tract, was distinguished from other subdivisions by its unique organization of walk streets, drive streets, and alleys, a development pattern similar to that used in the Golden Bay tract just a few years earlier. Development activity in the Venice Annex tract exemplified the demand for residential real estate in Venice at the time. It was reported that when the tract opened to the public in 1905, it took only two days for every lot to be sold; total lot sales for the weekend topped \$300,000. Construction activity commenced shortly thereafter, and continued throughout the 1910s and early 1920s. Most of the residences constructed in the district reflected the simplistic aesthetic of the beach community, and Craftsman and vernacular cottage styles prevailed. By the 1920s, new residences constructed in the district reflected the growing popularity of Period Revival styles, though most remained modest in scale and decoration.

Further inland, to the north and east of the canal settlements, the character of development differed due to a marked shift in population growth and settlement. The first subdivisions for residential development occurred in the area around 1903; many subsequent tracts were recorded after Venice was officially opened in 1905, and development activity continued through the mid-1920s. However, while this area exemplifies broader trends in residential development during the early 1900s, it is perhaps more notable as an important example of African-American life in Southern California during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now known as Oakwood, the area bounded by Dewey Street to the northwest, Lincoln Boulevard to the northeast, California Avenue to the southeast, Electric Avenue to the southwest, and Hampton Drive to the west evolved as an African-American enclave across multiple generations of ethnic migration to Southern California.

While it is unclear whether racially restrictive housing covenants – already in place in nearby communities like Santa Monica – were enacted in Ocean Park and Venice, de facto segregation in hiring practices and real estate sales restricted the mobility of black residents and led to the development of Oakwood as a predominantly African-American neighborhood. As one black resident later recalled, when asked why her family had chosen to settle in Oakwood, “This was the only place that they would sell to you. We knew.”<sup>25</sup> The population of African-Americans in Venice tripled between 1910 and 1920 as blacks arrived to work as manual laborers, service workers, and servants to wealthy white residents. Some

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<sup>24</sup> “Photo Standalone 37; Better Than Numbers,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 31, 1964.

<sup>25</sup> Andrew Deener, “The Decline of a Black Community by the Sea,” in *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramon, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 86.

of the earliest black residents of Venice settled in the area because they were hired as employees of Abbot Kinney; among these were cousins Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor.

Reese arrived with his family from Louisiana around 1905, intending to establish a janitorial service, and soon invited his cousin Irving Tabor and family to join them in Oakwood. Reese, an artist and sculptor, began making suggestions to Kinney and eventually was hired as the town decorator. He is best known for decorating parade floats simulating Mardi Gras, which became emblematic of Reese's sterling career. Tabor was eventually hired as Abbot Kinney's chauffeur, and the two men forged a special bond. When Abbot Kinney died, he willed his house to Tabor. However, due to racist sentiments elsewhere in Venice, Tabor was compelled to move the house to its present-day location in Oakwood. Both the Reese and Tabor residences remain extant in Oakwood today; the Irving Tabor Residence is designated as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

Early on, Oakwood was also home to a number of neighborhood churches: "By 1912, although there were only thirty-some black residents, there were already two African American churches in Oakwood. Fifty years later, the congregation of the First Baptist Church had grown to include over six hundred members."<sup>26</sup> Several of these early congregations are still present in Oakwood today, serving as important gathering places for the African-American community, including First Baptist Church, Bethel Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, Friendship Baptist Church, and The Nazarene Church (now New Bethel Baptist Church). A second phase of migration from the Southern states occurred during World War II, when the need for defense workers at nearby manufacturing facilities, such as Hughes Aircraft in Culver City and McDonnell Douglass in Santa Monica. The population of blacks in Oakwood tripled again between 1940 and 1950. It was not until 1970 that the black population in Oakwood began to decline. By that time, however, many descendants of the neighborhood's earliest African-American families had settled in Oakwood, creating a tradition of third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation residents.

In its early years, Venice's amusements and amenities attracted many early Hollywood celebrities. Stars such as W. C. Fields, Isadora Duncan and Fatty Arbuckle made their homes in Venice, as did the singing Lennon Sisters in later years. Venice's distinctive architectural character also made it a favorite of silent film directors such as Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton, who frequently used area streets and canals as a backdrop for their movies. This trend continues to the present day, although perhaps the best-known example of Venice as a location is its use in Orson Welles's *Touch of Evil*.

After fifteen years of successful operation, in the 1920s the course of development in Venice was significantly altered by several events which occurred in relatively swift succession. Prohibition, enacted in 1919, had drastically affected the resort's tax revenue. Then, in November 1920, Abbot Kinney died suddenly, leaving his son Thornton Kinney to

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<sup>26</sup> Andrew Deener, *Venice: A Contested Bohemia in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 52.



inherit his father's company. One month later Kinney's Venice pleasure pier was destroyed in a fire. While a new and improved pier was quickly constructed, Thornton Kinney lacked access to the company's trust-bound funds and the town's financial situation became precarious. Additionally, concerns continued to grow regarding the state of the Venice landscape and its public utilities. Abbot Kinney had deeded his canals to the city of Venice in 1912 due to mounting difficulties in maintaining the network of waterways, and by the 1920s they had become a public nuisance. The resort town's roads, water, and sewage systems had been hastily designed and could not accommodate the continuous influx of visitors. Additionally, with the growing popularity of the automobile, the narrow Venice streets offered little space for driving and parking cars. In the eyes of city leaders and business owners, "the canals looked like an opportunity to open up their community to the automobile."<sup>27</sup>

In 1924, the city of Venice announced plans to adapt its system of canals in order to meet the needs of a modern-day transportation infrastructure. The Pacific Electric trolleyways running along present-day Pacific and Electric avenues would be widened and paved, and the canals would be filled and converted to roadways. Residents fought the plan, but after several years of litigation – during which time the city of Venice was consolidated with Los Angeles – the battle was resolved in favor of the city.<sup>28</sup> The original Venice of America canals were filled in and paved in 1929. The canal network to the south, which had originally belonged to the Venice Canal subdivision, was spared as the area was insufficiently populated to levy the necessary property assessment.<sup>29</sup> Today, these canals are the only extant examples of such development in Venice and are designated a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

In 1925, the political infighting which had characterized the government of Venice for so many years came to a head. When a series of bond initiatives for public improvement failed to pass in an August election, the city trustees called for a special annexation election to be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>30</sup> As Jeffrey Stanton recounts, those who were against annexation "pointed out what happened to other cities that had consolidated with Los Angeles. Their opponents charged that Los Angeles's still "Blue Laws," which contained anti-gambling statutes and also banned Sunday and all night dancing, could close one third of the piers."<sup>31</sup> While both sides were vocal in their respective campaigns, annexation was approved in the October election at a vote of 3,130 to 2,215; Stanton theorizes that many residents had simply become tired of the city's "inept government."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "The Lost Canals of Venice of America," [http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal\\_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html](http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html) (accessed November 2014).

<sup>28</sup> Venice was consolidated with the City of Los Angeles in 1925.

<sup>29</sup> "The Lost Canals of Venice of America," [http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal\\_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html](http://www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/history/la-as-subject/the-lost-canals-of-venice-of-america.html) (accessed November 2014).

<sup>30</sup> Stanton, 143.

<sup>31</sup> Stanton, 143.

<sup>32</sup> Stanton, 143.



Consolidation with the city of Los Angeles in 1925 prompted a dramatic shift in the development of the area. During this period, residents saw the improvement of city services, as well as the construction of some of the community's most prominent public buildings, including the Venice High School (John C. Austin and Frederick C. Ashley, 1935), which was rebuilt after the 1933 Long Beach earthquake; the Venice Branch Library (David Witmer, 1930), which is designated as a Historic-Cultural Monument; and the Venice Post Office, designed by Louis A. Simon and constructed in 1939. Simon served as Supervising Architect in the Office of the Supervising Architect, for the U.S Department of the Treasury; he designed numerous public buildings throughout his career, most notably post offices. Completed in 1940, the building's lobby contains Venice's first mural, "Abbot Kinney and the Story of Venice," by American artist Edward Biberman. The mural was created in 1941 under the auspices of the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts, and depicts city founder Abbot Kinney's grand vision for Venice as a West coast cultural mecca.<sup>33</sup>

Consolidation also hastened the economic decline of Venice in the 1930s and 1940s. Los Angeles' "blue laws" eliminated dancing on Sunday and gambling games, and tourism quickly began to decline. Although the pleasure pier was briefly resurrected, the Kinney Company went into bankruptcy and defaulted on its bonds. The pier closed permanently in 1946 and was eventually demolished. Elsewhere, the landscape of Venice was impacted by the discovery of oil on the peninsula in 1929; soon the area was populated with scores of oil derricks. Although the oil boom provided area residents with much-needed income during the Depression, it left the landscape marred by oil derricks for decades to come. The final blow occurred in 1950, when the Pacific Electric Railway abandoned the Venice Short Line route.

Beginning in the 1940s, the low rents caused by the economic decline in Venice attracted many immigrants to the area, and a local Jewish enclave began to evolve. As business began to decline in Venice, some buildings along Ocean Front Walk were adapted to alternative uses. As a result, several institutional resources were established in an otherwise tourist-driven area. The most notable example is the present-day Pacific Jewish Center, originally established as the Bay Cities Synagogue in the 1940s when two storefronts were converted into a synagogue. The Hotel Cadillac, once known as a honeymoon hotel, became a popular rooming house for elderly Jewish immigrants. Temple Mishkon Tephilo, the oldest continuously operating synagogue on the Westside, relocated to their present location Venice in 1948; designed by Herman Charles Light, the synagogue is a designated Historic-Cultural Monument.

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<sup>33</sup> In 2012, the Venice Post Office was purchased by film producer Joel Silver; he is converting the building to offices and a screening room for his production company. Silver has committed to renovating the building façade as well as the mural, which has been restored and was on view at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art during the building's renovation. He plans to re-install the artwork in its former location in the lobby following the completion of the renovation work, which is planned for late 2015.

Affordable rents in Venice also attracted visual artists to the area. The brick warehouse at 1 West Washington Boulevard (now 901 Abbot Kinney Boulevard) was the long-time office of American designers Charles and Ray Eames. The Eameses were a husband and wife team who made significant contributions to various design fields throughout their careers, including architecture, furniture design, industrial design, graphic design, fine art, and film. This building served as the Eames Office from 1943 to 1988. Originally the Eames Office took up just the front three rooms of the former Bay Cities Garage. By 1948, the Eames Office had taken over almost half the building. When the Eames House and Studio (Case Study House #8) was built in Pacific Palisades, the Eames' film production was moved from the Office to the studio. By the late 1950s, demand for the Eames' furniture design was so high that all manufacturing moved elsewhere and the Eames Office expanded into the building's remaining empty space. From that time on, production in all media was done at the Office. At its height, from the early 1950s until a short time after Charles' death in 1978, nearly all of the Eames' design and production work was done by the Office, at the Office. Per Ray's instructions, the building was sold upon her death in 1988.

By the 1950s both the landscape and character of Venice had begun to experience a marked shift. Development within the community was increasingly driven by presence of the automobile, and in the years following World War II Lincoln Boulevard evolved as an important commercial corridor designed as a major vehicular thoroughfare. Lincoln Boulevard displays several examples of intact signage from the period; over time the Boulevard has become the site of several neighborhood commercial establishments which have retained a strong identity within the community, such as the Fox Theater, La Cabaña Mexican Restaurant, and Lincoln Hardware.

During the late 1950s and 1960s Venice became well-known for its vibrant, free-spirited atmosphere inspired by the growing population of counterculture artists. The “Beat Generation” was lured to the area by Venice’s low rent, mild climate, and tolerance of their lifestyle.<sup>34</sup> Prominent local beatniks included John Kenevan and Rocco Brescise, proprietors of the Venice West Café (City Historic-Cultural Monument); political activist John Haag; poets Stuart Perkoff, William Millet and Allen Ginsberg; and artist Earl Newman. The presence of these and other artists eventually provoked a backlash from local business and property owners, and in 1961 the Venice Planning Committee was formed in an effort to “clean up” the community. In an attempt to eradicate the “radical fringe element” that had begun to populate Venice, the Planning Committee recommended that the City of Los Angeles institute a rigorous program of building inspections. City officials identified over 1,000 Venice buildings that required significant repair.<sup>35</sup> Given the economic decline of the area, many property owners could not afford to repair their buildings and were instead

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<sup>34</sup> Stanton, 195.

<sup>35</sup> “Venice Eclectic: A Context for Venice,” Venice Eclectic tour booklet, presented by the Los Angeles Conservancy, April 20, 2013, as part of *Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A.*, [https://www.laconservancy.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/VeniceEclecticBook\\_Final4Web\\_LR.pdf](https://www.laconservancy.org/sites/default/files/files/documents/VeniceEclecticBook_Final4Web_LR.pdf) (accessed November 2014).

forced to demolish them. Between 1962 and 1965, nearly 550 buildings were demolished throughout the Survey Area, including many examples of early development in Venice.<sup>36</sup>

Venice Beach, on the other hand, was experiencing a pop-culture renaissance. This was due in part to the presence of Gold's Gym, which was first opened in 1963 by Joe Gold as a storefront weight room. It was subsequently purchased by gym member Ken Sprague, who built the business into an internationally known weight-lifting gym located a short walk from the beach. A small weight pen had been installed at the beach in 1952, and the area grew in popularity following the closure of Santa Monica's Muscle Beach in 1959. The Arnold Schwarzenegger weight-lifting documentary *Pumping Iron* was filmed at Gold's Gym in 1968. As the trend toward physical fitness escalated, Sprague closed the Venice location and opened a larger outpost in Santa Monica in October 1976. The original Venice location on Pacific Avenue was subsequently converted into a single-family residence in 1982; today, the original Gold's Gym sign remains extant. The City of Los Angeles also worked to improve the beach; in 1962 the City constructed a new recreation center along the beach which included sports facilities, beach parking, and a main pavilion.<sup>37</sup> A lifeguard building, designed by landscape architect S. W. Bridgers, was constructed in 1968.

By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, a mix of neighborhood commercial establishments had emerged amidst the modest dwellings constructed in earlier years along West Washington Boulevard. Primarily serving the African-American residents of nearby Oakwood, offerings included a beauty salon, markets, repair shops, artist studios, wholesale businesses, and secondhand thrift stores. The diversity of operations was due in part to the economic limitations of the surrounding community; "merchants had a difficult time surviving solely from retail sales. Many stores on the street were a mixture of wholesale and retail, and others provided a range of services to increase their profits and consumer base."<sup>38</sup>

As the economic environment began to shift during the highly politicized 1960s and 1970s, many African-Americans found it difficult to secure housing and employment; community organizers collaborated with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to construct fourteen low-income housing projects in Oakwood during the early 1970s. These buildings were scattered throughout the entire district and provided assistance to many African-American residents, allowing them to maintain a strong association with the neighborhood, which by that time included many descendants of the neighborhood's earliest African-American families. Families frequently constructed additional houses on the same parcel of land, which provided an opportunity for children and grandchildren to become homeowners in Venice.

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<sup>36</sup> "Venice Eclectic: A Context for Venice."

<sup>37</sup> Stanton, 200.

<sup>38</sup> Andrew Deener, "Neighborhood Symbiosis (2011)," in *The Urban Ethnography Reader*, Mitchell Duneier, Philip Kasinitz, and Alexandra Murphy, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 138.

Development continued to lag in Venice throughout the early 1970s due to the economic impact of the 1973-1974 oil embargo, as well as the continuing effects of community activists who promoted a conservative growth agenda. In 1972, the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) opened in neighboring Santa Monica. The school's mission encouraged innovation and advocated "re-imagining the edge." Soon students and faculty, drawn in by inexpensive housing and attracted to the growing counterculture and artistic community, began to settle in nearby Venice. With its abundant supply of vacant lots and run-down buildings, the Survey Area quickly became a laboratory for experimental, cutting-edge architectural design and adaptive reuse. Many distinguished architects designed some of their earliest work in Venice, much of it in the Post Modern style, including Frank Gehry, Steven Ehrlich, Frederick Fisher, and the architectural firm Morphosis, founded by Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi. Examples of their work in Venice include the Caplin Residence (Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts, 1979), the Spiller House (1979, Frank Gehry), and the 2-4-6-8 House (Morphosis, 1979).

In 1979 Thom Mayne, who was a SCI-Arc faculty member at the time, created a pop-up art gallery in the spare bedroom of his apartment on Main Street, calling the installation the "Architecture Gallery." For nine weeks, the gallery exhibited a rotating body of work created by some of the city's most innovative practitioners of modern architecture. Dedicated to the idea that "architecture IS art," the exhibition was the first of its kind in Los Angeles and proved to be a seminal moment in the evolution of modern architecture in Southern California. The work exhibited in the Architecture Gallery and the publicity it generated resonated throughout Los Angeles, but especially in Venice with its supply of vacant lots, inexpensive land, and creative residents.<sup>39</sup> Architects began to adaptively reuse existing buildings and design eclectic infill structures and experimental additions throughout the city.<sup>40</sup> This trend of innovation in architecture continues to this day.<sup>41</sup>

The counterculture movement in Venice also inspired another enduring artistic medium; in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many artists began to decorate Venice buildings with large-scale murals, a trend which continues to the present day. Many murals were intended to serve not only as artistic expressions, but political statements as well. Notable examples include the "Brooks Avenue Mural" (L.A. Fine Arts Squad, c. 1960s), which incorporates a nearby ghost sign from an early Venice laundry business; and "Brandelli's Brig" (Art Mortimer, 1973), which depicts a mural inside a mural inside a mural.<sup>42</sup> The campus of Venice High School also includes several murals. Perhaps the most well-known Venice muralist is Rip Cronk, who established himself as a world-class muralist in Hawaii before

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<sup>39</sup> "Venice Eclectic: A Context for Venice."

<sup>40</sup> "Venice Eclectic: A Context for Venice."

<sup>41</sup> While SurveyLA generally considered properties up to 1980, Venice is home to many important examples of Post Modern and Deconstructivist architecture constructed after this date. One of the best-known examples is the Chiat/Day Building, a.k.a. "The Binoculars Building," designed by Frank Gehry and completed in 1991. Such properties should be considered in any future survey projects.

<sup>42</sup> Painted on the outside of a bar, the mural depicts the owner and his wife outside of the bar, which displays the mural on the outside of the bar, and so on.

relocating to Los Angeles in 1979. He was named muralist-in-residence for the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), where he completed his first California mural, “Venice on the Half Shell,” which was installed at the Venice Pavilion. Cronk is credited with at least ten additional murals in Venice, including “Venice Reconstituted,” another parody of Botticelli’s “The Birth of Venus,” along with nine additional murals along the boardwalk.<sup>43</sup>

Cronk’s “Venice on the Half Shell” was one of several murals which memorialized roller-skating, an activity which helped popularize Venice Beach during the 1970s. According to Jeffrey Stanton, Venice’s wide Ocean Front Walk and smooth bicycle path made it the perfect outdoor roller rink, and soon Venice Beach became a popular spot to try the outdoor sport.<sup>44</sup> The fad peaked in the late 1970s, when Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley declared Venice “the roller skating capital of the world.”<sup>45</sup>

Over time, the counterculture atmosphere and artistic community in Venice, which had originally been fostered by artists who considered themselves outsiders, have come to represent the modern-day identity of the community. New residents, drawn by the free-spirited lifestyle and burgeoning architectural renaissance, began to relocate to Venice and property values began to rise, sparking renewed commercial and residential development efforts. Today, Venice maintains its character as a unique example of early-20<sup>th</sup> century development which remains a popular draw for both visitors and residents alike.

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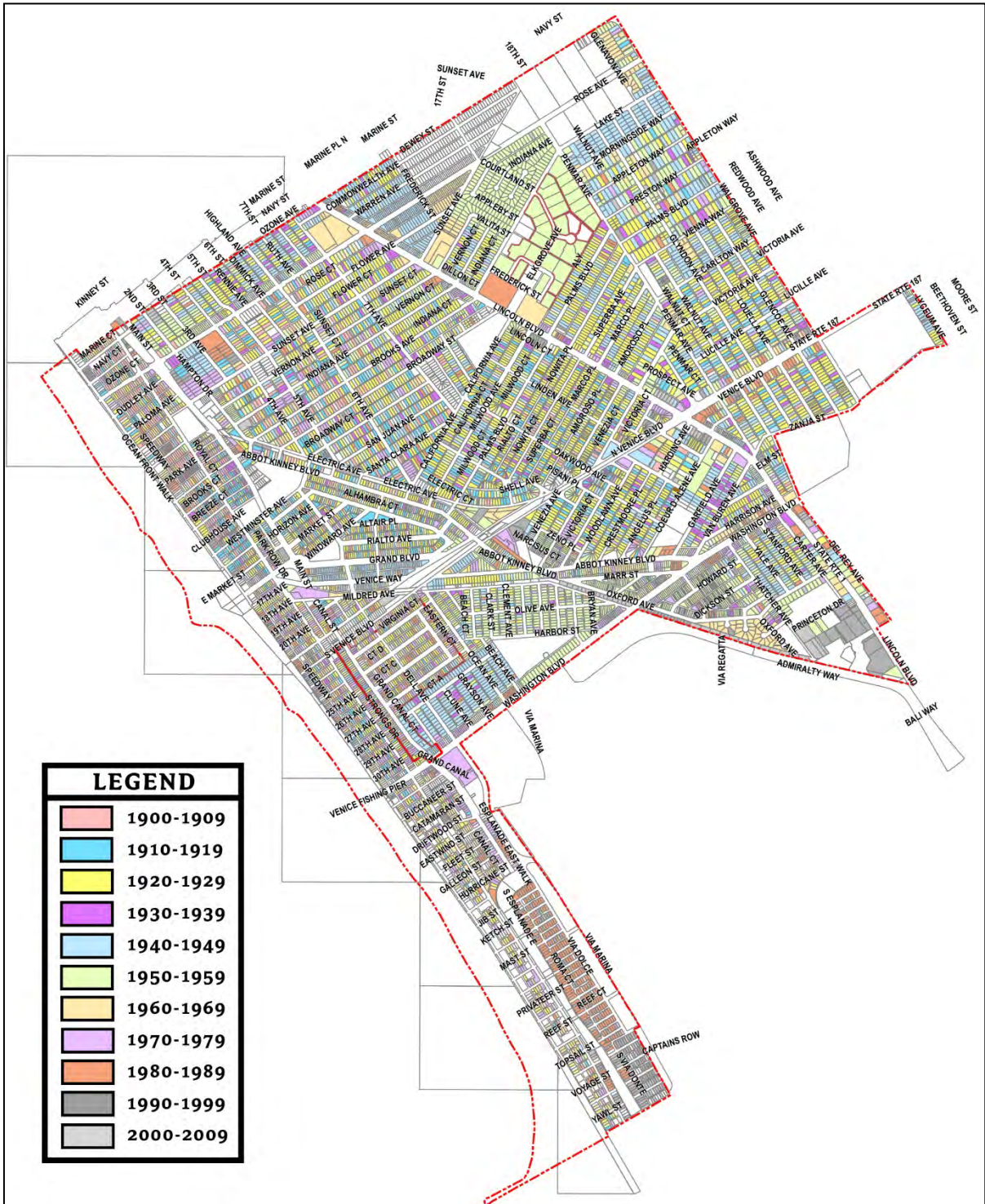
<sup>43</sup> “R. Cronk,” <http://www.westland.net/venice/art/cronk/> (accessed December 2014). While SurveyLA generally considers properties up to 1980, it is worth noting that Venice is home to a number of more recent murals, including works by artist Never, as well as later works by Rip Cronk.

<sup>44</sup> Stanton, 228.

<sup>45</sup> Stanton, 228.



**Development by Decade Map.**



## Designated Resources

The following map illustrates the location of designated resources within the Venice CPA at the time of the survey. These include 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).

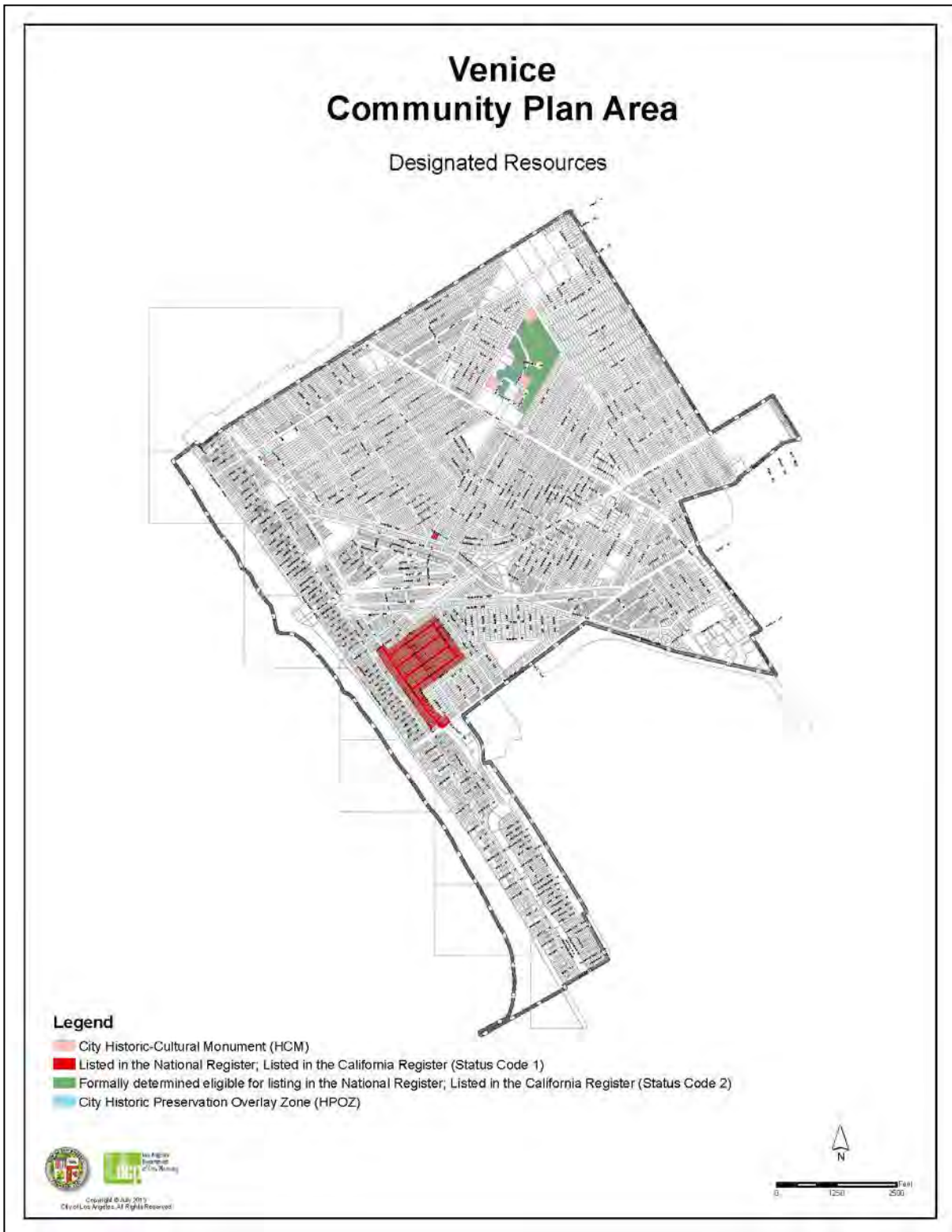
Among the designed resources are the Venice of America House (1906); the Venice Canal System and Bridges (1906); the Kinney-Tabor House (1906); Venice City Hall (1907); Venice Police Station (1930); Venice Branch Library (1930); Temple Mishkon Tephilo (1942); Lincoln Place Apartments (1949); and the Chiat/Day Building, a.k.a. “The Binoculars Building” (Frank Gehry, 1991).<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> For the most up-to-date information on designated resources go to [HistoricPlacesLA.org](http://HistoricPlacesLA.org) or [zimas.lacity.org](http://zimas.lacity.org).



**Designated Resources Map.**



## Community Plan Area Survey Methodology

The field survey was conducted using the methodology established by the Office of Historic Resources for SurveyLA, which includes the citywide Historic Context Statement and customized mobile Field Guide Survey System (FiGSS).<sup>47</sup>

The field work was conducted in two phases: *Reconnaissance* and *Documentation*. The Reconnaissance Phase was conducted by a team of two qualified survey professionals, both of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications Standards*. 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. 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. This approach also substantially streamlines the next phase of field survey, enabling the field teams to document large numbers of properties quickly and efficiently.

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 documented 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 is also during this phase that contexts and themes are applied and evaluation status codes are assigned. 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 Survey Area presented some challenges for the field survey teams. Many properties could not be completely evaluated due to limited visibility from the public right-of-way. A number of residences are obscured from view, in full or in part, by privacy walls and fences or dense shrubbery. To address this issue, an extensive amount of research was conducted prior to fieldwork to assist surveyors in identifying potentially significant properties. Sources including building permits, Sanborn maps, historic photos, and historic and contemporary aerial images.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> For more information about the SurveyLA methodology, see the *SurveyLA Field Results Master Report*.

<sup>48</sup> All documented properties were evaluated to the extent possible based upon visibility from the public right-of-way and follow-up research. However, architectural descriptions and integrity assessments could not always be completed. In such instances, all discernible information was recorded and notations were added indicating that the property was not fully visible from the public right-of-way. If

Additionally, a number of properties in the Survey Area may be significant for historic associations. Again, to address this issue, extensive research was conducted on individual properties to identify specific addresses and the period of residency of the significant person. Sources included City directories, genealogical records, voter registration records, census records, and historical newspapers and periodicals.

Research utilized the collections of the Los Angeles Public Library; University of Southern California (USC); University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); Huntington Library; Historical Los Angeles Times; the Online Archive of California; and the Pacific Coast Architecture Database, among others.



*Some residences are difficult to see from the public right-of-way.*

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possible, the evaluation was completed based upon the available information. However, in some instances the evaluation could not be completed, and a status code of 'QQQ' was assigned, indicating that additional research or access to the property would be needed to complete the evaluation, per SurveyLA methodology.

# 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 Venice CPA contains a diverse range of extant property types, representing a number of periods of development. The following is a brief summary of those property types that were documented and evaluated as historically, culturally, or architecturally significant.

### *Residential Properties*

The survey identified a number of intact residential properties dating from the earliest years of the Venice community prior to its consolidation with the City of Los Angeles. Most examples are single-family houses, including the original beach cottages along the extant canals, as well as those along the now-commercial street of Abbot Kinney Boulevard. A number multi-family residential properties were surveyed individually as early or excellent examples of their type, including bungalow courts, apartment houses, and one garden apartment. Among these are the early apartment houses fronting the beach along Ocean Front Walk. The survey identified three residential historic districts dating from the streetcar era; two of these were developed around a series of walk streets, and the other on a systems of canals. Another residential neighborhood was surveyed as a planning district for its long-time association with the African-American community in Venice. Several single-family residences were identified for their association with important persons, including early residents Irving Tabor and Arthur Reese, as well as Venice founder Abbot Kinney. Finally, a number of residential properties were identified for their architectural merit representing a variety of styles, including Craftsman, Shingle, Prairie, Streamline, Late Modern, and Post Modern, as well as one example of mimetic architecture.

### *Commercial Properties*

This survey identified a neighborhood commercial planning district along Abbot Kinney Boulevard. In addition to the planning district, a number of properties were identified individually as excellent examples of commercial development dating from the streetcar era. Early commercial buildings were also surveyed along Lincoln Boulevard and Ocean Front Walk, including several early hotels fronting the beach. A commercial historic district was identified around the intersection of Windward and Pacific avenues, Venice's original commercial core, and includes remaining examples of the Venice's distinctive arcade buildings. Other commercial properties types identified by the survey include three early

neighborhood markets, a neighborhood theater, a newspaper office, a restaurant, and a motel. Two properties were identified as long-time neighborhood businesses.

### ***Institutional Properties***

The survey identified two LAUSD school campuses, including a 1920s elementary school, as well as a high school dating from the post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake period of school construction. Two fire stations were survey, including a very rare example dating from 1909. Other government and infrastructure properties include a post office, a water and power distributing station, a water pumping plant, a gas company building, an electrical substation, and a streetcar ticket building. A number of religious properties were identified as early or excellent examples of their type, including a convent, a church, a synagogue, and a religious campus; some of these were also evaluated for their architectural style. Unique properties identified within the survey area include a fraternal organization meeting hall, a public golf course, and a cultural arts building developed by Abbot Kinney. A number of institutional properties were identified for their architectural merit representing a variety of styles, including Spanish Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Revival, and Prairie. Finally, the survey identified several significant examples of public murals.

### ***Industrial Properties***

A small number of industrial buildings were identified, including the long-time office of designers Charles and Ray Eames, as well as the building where the original Venice gondolas were stored and repaired.

### ***Other Properties***

The survey also identified a handful of unique or unusual property types, including a brick street, two remnant streetlights, several neon or painted signs, a series of wooden shade structures that line the beach, and three concrete canal bridges.

## Summary of Contexts and Themes

Many of the Contexts and Themes developed for the SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement are represented in the Venice 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 individual resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix A.

For a complete list of non-parcel resources identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix B.

For a complete list of historic districts identified as meeting eligibility standards and criteria for the National Register, California Register, and/or local listing, see Appendix C. This appendix also includes Planning Districts, which do not meet eligibility standards and criteria for listing but may warrant special consideration for local planning purposes.



## **Context: Pre-Consolidation Communities of Los Angeles, 1850-1932**

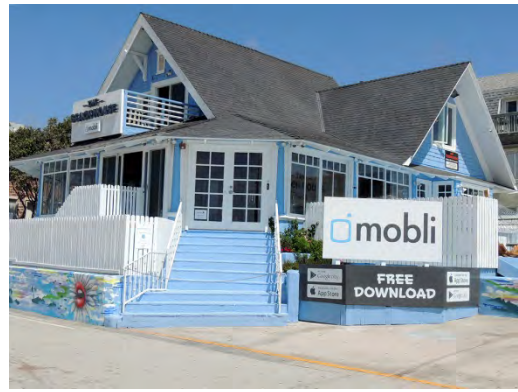
**Theme: Venice, 1850-1925**

**Sub-Theme: Important Events in Venice History, 1850-1925**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate approximately 60 residential properties dating from the period pre-dating Venice's consolidation with the City of Los Angeles. These properties are predominantly single family houses, though some apartment houses were identified as well. Eligible examples date from 1925 or earlier and are substantially intact on the primary façade. They display a variety of architectural styles, including Queen Anne, American Foursquare, Craftsman, American Colonial Revival, as well as modest vernacular cottages. Properties identified under this Context/Theme represent the earliest residential development in Venice.



**Address:** 902 E. Palms Boulevard  
**Date:** 1916



**Address:** 523 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Date:** 1901



**Address:** 51 E. 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
**Date:** 1910



**Address:** 838 E. Superba Avenue  
**Date:** 1909





**Address:** 2203 S. Marian Place  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 821 W. Victoria Avenue  
**Date:** 1906

Among the properties identified under this Context/Theme are a small number of intact single-family houses along Abbot Kinney Boulevard. Formerly W. Washington Boulevard, this street was originally developed during the teens and 1920s with a mix of residential and commercial buildings. Today, this area is exclusively commercial in its use, and early residences have been converted into retail shops and restaurants.



**Address:** 1507 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1911



**Address:** 1617 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 1607 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1920



**Address:** 1502 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1922

**Context: Residential Development & Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

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

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

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of early residential development in Venice, most notably along the existing canals. While today the Venice canals are predominately characterized by more recent construction, there remain some 35 original Venice cottages dating from the teens and 1920s. While nearly all of these cottages have undergone some degree of modification, their overall style and scale are a striking reminder of the original development patterns within the canals. Cottages are very modest, set close to the sidewalk, and are most often Craftsman, American Colonial, or vernacular in design.



**Address:** 438 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1926



**Address:** 450 E. Howland Canal  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 440 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 411 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1919





**Address:** 412 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 403 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 401 E. Howland Canal  
**Date:** 1925



**Address:** 461 E. Carroll Canal  
**Date:** 1922

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

**Theme: Streetcar Suburbanization, 1888-1933**

**Sub-Theme: Suburban Planning and Development, 1888-1933**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of residential suburban planning and development from the streetcar era in Venice. The survey identified three residential historic districts, as well as a unique cluster of residential beach cottages.

The Lost Venice Canals Historic District is a residential neighborhood that coincides with Venice's original canal district. The district contains 449 properties, and is predominantly single-family residential in its development, with some multi-family and commercial properties. Original residences date from the 1910s through the 1920s, when the original canals were extant. Lots are very modest in size, and developed with one- and two-story mostly Craftsman houses, although the district also includes examples of a wide variety of Period Revival styles. Streets within the district exhibit a unique configuration reflecting the neighborhood's original network of saltwater canals, as well as the traffic circle which occupies what had been a lagoon at the intersection of Main, Grand, and Windward.



**District:** Lost Venice Canals Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**District:** Lost Venice Canals Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**Address:** 428 E. Rialto Avenue  
**Date:** 1910



**Address:** 242 E. Market Street  
**Date:** 1912





**Address:** 320 E. Market Street  
**Date:** 1913



**Address:** 554 E. Rialto Avenue  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 435 S. Loring Avenue  
**Date:** 1907



**Address:** 520 E. Altair Place  
**Date:** 1912



**Address:** 210 E. Horizon Avenue  
**Date:** 1915



**Address:** 427 E. Rialto Avenue  
**Date:** 1912

The North Venice Walk Streets Historic District is a residential district located in the northwestern portion of Venice. The district contains 448 properties, and contains the blocks between Speedway and Main Street, from Navy Court on the north to Westminster Court to the south. The district is composed predominantly of one- and two-story single- and multi-family residences, with some larger apartment houses and commercial buildings as well. Buildings are generally oriented onto one of a series of wide concrete sidewalks which comprise the walk streets. Original residences primarily date from 1900 through the 1920s, and are typically designed in the Craftsman or Victorian vernacular style.



**District:** North Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**District:** North Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**Address:** 31 E. Rose Avenue  
**Date:** 1910



**Address:** 22 E. Thornton Avenue  
**Date:** 1905





**Address:** 24 E. Park Avenue  
**Date:** 1904



**Address:** 36 E. Park Avenue  
**Date:** 1907



**Address:** 38 E. Dudley Avenue  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 26 E. Thornton Avenue  
**Date:** 1902



**Address:** 21 E. Dudley Avenue  
**Date:** 1907



**Address:** 37 E. Dudley Avenue  
**Date:** 1908



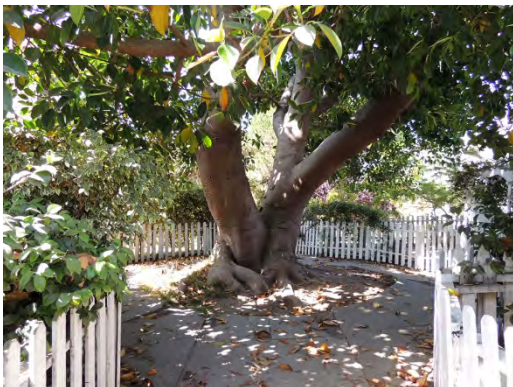
The Milwood Venice Walk Streets Historic District is a residential district located north of Venice Boulevard and east of Electric Avenue. Containing 471 properties, the district comprises the walk streets of Nowita Place, Marco Place, Amoroso Place, and Crescent Place in the Milwood neighborhood. Lots in the district are modest in size, developed primarily with one- and two-story single-family residences. Original residences were constructed from the teens through the 1930s and were largely designed in the Craftsman style, although the district also exhibits examples of Period Revival and modest vernacular styles. Most of the residences are oriented onto the narrow concrete sidewalk that comprises the walk streets. The walk streets are largely characterized by front yard walls and fences and mature vegetation, and are punctuated by circular planting beds. The drive streets feature concrete curbs and sidewalks with landscaped parkways. A landscaped traffic circle occupies the intersection of Crescent Place, Shell Avenue, and Superba Avenue.



**District:** Milwood Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**District:** Milwood Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**District:** Milwood Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**District:** Milwood Venice Walk Streets Historic District  
**Description:** Context view



**Address:** 712 E. Superba Avenue  
**Date:** 1922



**Address:** 902 E. Palms Boulevard  
**Date:** 1916



**Address:** 1615 S. Shell Avenue  
**Date:** 1925



**Address:** 820 W. Amoroso Place  
**Date:** 1922



**Address:** 729 E. Marco Place  
**Date:** 1912



**Address:** 815 W. Amoroso Place  
**Date:** 1912



United States Island (a.k.a. “U.S. Island”) is a unique cluster of modest rental cottages within the original Venice canal district. Occupying two triangular parcels between Windward Avenue, Cabrillo Avenue and Altair Place, the development was indeed an island, bounded on all sides by canals and linked with the rest of Venice via several pedestrian bridges. Built in 1913, each of these Craftsman cottages was named for a different state. The palm trees lining the island date to the original subdivision, as does a concrete streetlight located at the intersection of Cabrillo Avenue and Altair Place.



**Context: Residential Development & Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Context: Multi-Family Residential Development, 1910-1980**

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

**Sub-Theme: The Bungalow Court, 1910-1939**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of bungalow courts. Approximately 15 intact examples were identified in Venice. Primarily dating from the 1920s, they represent a variety of popular architectural styles of the period, including Craftsman, American Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, French Norman Revival, and Streamline Moderne. Perhaps most notably is the highly-intact Sea Spray Court, now known as “Gingerbread Court,” situated on the beach at Ocean Front Walk. Originally residential, today this properties is occupied by various retail shops with offices at the rear.



**Address:** 517-519 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Sea Spray Court  
**Date:** 1922



**Address:** 517-519 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Sea Spray Court  
**Date:** 1922



**Address:** 1514-1516 Electric Avenue  
**Name:** Lily Court  
**Date:** 1924



**Address:** 1514-1516 Electric Avenue  
**Name:** Lily Court  
**Date:** 1924





**Address:** 311-315 N. Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Dolph'n Court  
**Date:** 1924



**Address:** 311-315 N. Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Dolph'n Court  
**Date:** 1924



**Address:** 613-617 Crestmore Place  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 613-617 Crestmore Place  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 692-698 S. Venice Boulevard  
**Date:** 1947



**Address:** 692-698 S. Venice Boulevard  
**Date:** 1947



**Address:** 2301-2305 Oakwood Avenue  
**Date:** 1941



**Address:** 2301-2305 Oakwood Avenue  
**Date:** 1941



**Address:** 606-608 Venezia Avenue  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 606-608 Venezia Avenue  
**Date:** 1928



**Context: Residential Development & Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Context: Multi-Family Residential Development, 1910-1980**

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

**Sub-Theme: Apartment Houses, 1910-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of apartment houses in Venice. The survey identified approximately ten apartment houses, about half of which are situated on the beach overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Located along Ocean Front Walk between Venice Boulevard on the south and the City of Santa Monica border on the north, a number of the original hotels and apartment houses built to accommodate Venice’s earliest visitors remain extant today. Identified examples date from the teens to the 1930s. While most examples have some degree of alteration, these buildings are important to the understanding of Venice of America as an early-20<sup>th</sup> century tourist destination.



**Address:** 417 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Biltmore by the Sea  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 1305 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** The Potter  
**Date:** 1912



**Address:** 503 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Phoenix House  
**Date:** 1913



**Address:** 11 E. Anchorage Street  
**Name:** Francis X. Bushman Residence  
**Date:** 1932



**Address:** 15 E. Eastwind Street  
**Name:** Walker Arms  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 120 E. Westminster Avenue  
**Name:** Ames Apartments  
**Date:** 1913

**Context: Residential Development & Suburbanization, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Context: Multi-Family Residential Development, 1910-1980**

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

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

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate a rare example of a mid-century garden apartment complex in Venice. Located on South Venice Boulevard, this property is an excellent example of the property type and remains highly intact.



**Address:** 542-568 S. Venice Boulevard  
**Date:** 1949



**Address:** 542-568 S. Venice Boulevard  
**Date:** 1949

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

### **Theme: Ethnic Enclaves, 1880-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Oakwood Planning District as a rare example of an early-20<sup>th</sup> century African-American enclave in Venice. Oakwood first established itself as an African-American neighborhood in the early 1900s, as blacks migrating from the South settled in Venice to work as manual laborers, service workers, and servants to wealthy white residents. During World War II, the black population of Oakwood increased dramatically due to the need for defense workers at nearby manufacturing facilities, such as Hughes Aircraft in Culver City and McDonnell Douglas in Santa Monica. By the 1970s, many descendants of the neighborhood's earliest African-American families had settled in Oakwood, creating a tradition of third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation residents, and thereby providing a unique opportunity for homeownership in Venice. Predominantly single-family residential in its development, Oakwood is also home to several early religious congregations that continue to serve as important gathering places for the African-American community, including First Baptist Church, Bethel Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, Friendship Baptist Church, and The Nazarene Church (now New Bethel Baptist Church). While the area does not retain sufficient integrity or cohesion to qualify as a historic district, it may warrant special consideration for local planning purposes.



**Name:** Oakwood Planning District  
**Description:** Street view



**Name:** Oakwood Planning District  
**Description:** Street view



## Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

### Theme: Streetcar Commercial Development, 1873-1934

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of streetcar-related neighborhood commercial development in Venice. The survey identified a small number of individual examples, as well as one historic district and one planning district

The Windward-Pacific Commercial Historic District is a small commercial district oriented around the intersection of Windward and Pacific avenues in downtown Venice. This district is composed of 13 commercial properties, and represents the original commercial area for Abbot Kinney's Venice of America development. Original buildings were constructed primarily from 1905, when Venice of America was founded, through 1928. Original buildings were designed in an interpretation of the Mediterranean Revival style, with distinctive "Venice" arcades; seven of these arcade buildings remain today. This historic district was also evaluated for its association with Venice founder and community leader Abbot Kinney.



**Name:** Windward-Pacific Commercial Historic District  
**Description:** Street view



**Name:** Windward-Pacific Commercial Historic District  
**Description:** Street view



**Name:** Windward-Pacific Commercial Historic District  
**Description:** Venice arcades



**Name:** Windward-Pacific Commercial Historic District  
**Description:** Venice arcades



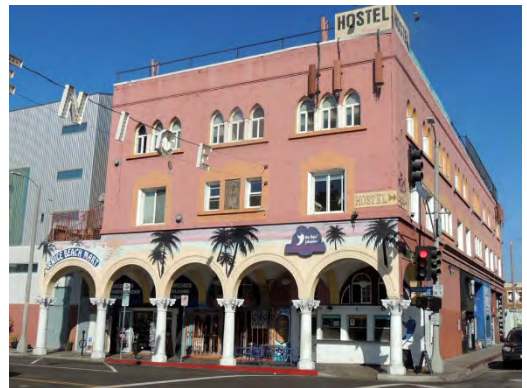
**Address:** 1605 S. Pacific Avenue  
**Name:** Venice First National Bank  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 19 E. Windward Avenue  
**Name:** St. Mark's Hotel  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 1512 S. Pacific Avenue  
**Name:** Ocean Park Bank  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 1513 S. Pacific Avenue  
**Name:** Hotel Gondolier  
**Date:** 1911

The Abbot Kinney Boulevard Commercial Planning District is an early-20<sup>th</sup> century neighborhood commercial corridor located in the northwestern portion of Venice. The district contains 147 parcels along both sides of Abbot Kinney Boulevard (formerly W. Washington Blvd.) between Westminster Avenue and Venice Boulevard. Development in the district is a mix of commercial and residential building types, with modest Craftsman cottages from the teens and 1920s alongside one- to three-story vernacular brick buildings from the 1920s. Today the district is almost exclusively commercial in its use. While the area does not retain sufficient integrity or cohesion to qualify as a historic district, a number of intact properties were surveyed individually.





**Name:** Abbot Kinney Boulevard Commercial Planning District  
**Description:** Street view



**Name:** Abbot Kinney Boulevard Commercial Planning District  
**Description:** Street view



**Address:** 1331 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Name:** Bundy Building  
**Date:** 1924



**Name:** 1221 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Name:** Wilmot Building  
**Date:** 1924



**Address:** 1401 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 1100 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Date:** 1922

**Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Neighborhood Commercial Development, 1875-1960**

**Sub-Theme: Early Neighborhood Commercial Development, 1880-1930**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of early neighborhood commercial development in Venice not located along a streetcar line. The survey identified a number of individual examples not situated within identified districts. Dating from the 1920s and 1930s, examples are primarily located along Lincoln Boulevard and Ocean Front Walk.



**Address:** 2419 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Date:** 1933



**Address:** 1905 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Date:** 1929



**Address:** 1801 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 321 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Date:** 1922



## Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980

### Theme: Hotels, 1880-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of hotel buildings in Venice, most notably those situated on the beach overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Located along Ocean Front Walk between Venice Boulevard on the south and the City of Santa Monica border on the north, a number of the original hotels and apartment houses built to accommodate Venice's earliest visitors remain extant today. Four examples were identified in the survey, dating from the teens to the 1930s. While most examples have some degree of alteration, these buildings are important to the understanding of Venice of America as an early-20<sup>th</sup> century tourist destination.



**Address:** 2 E. Breeze Avenue  
**Name:** Breeze Hotel  
**Date:** 1930



**Address:** 1217 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Hotel Waldorf  
**Date:** 1913



**Address:** 401 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Cadillac Hotel  
**Date:** 1914



**Address:** 217 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** King George Hotel  
**Date:** 1912

**Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Markets, 1880-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate three significant examples of early neighborhood markets in Venice. Among these is the building at 509 Rialto Avenue. Now a single-family residence, this market was the only commercial property located within the original Venice canals district.



**Address:** 600 E. Mildred Avenue  
**Name:** Kim's Food Corner  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 509 E. Rialto Avenue  
**Date:** 1924

**Context: Commercial Development, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Commercial Signs, 1906-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Projecting Blade Signs, 1906-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Wall Mounted and Façade Signs, 19850-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of commercial signage in Venice. Identified examples include mid-century neon blade signs, as well as painted wall signs. Both of the painted wall signs, for a wash/dry laundry and for Gold's Gym, represent now-defunct businesses. By contrast, the hardware store on Lincoln Boulevard has been in operation at this location since 1949; this property was also evaluated as a long-time neighborhood business.



**Address:** 1006 S. Pacific Avenue  
**Name:** Gold's Gym Wall Sign  
**Date:** 1965



**Address:** 26 E. Brooks Avenue  
**Name:** Wash/Dry Wall Sign  
**Date:** Unknown



**Address:** 812 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** China Inn Sign  
**Date:** 1959



**Address:** 1605 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** Lincoln Hardware Sign  
**Date:** 1949



## **Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980**

### **Sub-Context: Cultural Development and Institutions, 1850-1980**

#### **Theme: Visual Arts, 1888-1980**

#### **Sub-Theme: Visual Artists in L.A., 1888-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of properties associated with the visual arts in Venice. The brick warehouse at 1 West Washington Boulevard (now 901 Abbot Kinney Boulevard) was the long-time office of American designers Charles and Ray Eames, who made significant contributions to numerous fields throughout their careers, including architecture, furniture design, industrial design, graphic design, fine art, and film. This building served as the Eames Office from 1943 to 1988. In 1979, the one- and two-story brick building at the corner of Main Street and Westminster Avenue became “The Architecture Gallery.” Originally an auto garage, architect Thom Mayne had an apartment in the rear half of the building. For several weeks, the loft that doubled as Mayne's design studio became the first gallery space in Los Angeles dedicated to showcasing architecture as an art form. The work exhibited in the Architecture Gallery and the publicity it generated resonated throughout Los Angeles, and brought attention to a new cast of emerging practitioners known as the “L.A. School,” including Frederick Fisher, Thom Mayne, Michael Rotondi, Craig Hodgetts, Eric Owen Moss, and Frank Gehry. Noted Venice installation artist Robert Irwin maintained a studio on Market Street, just steps from the beach, until 1970 when he abandoned studio work altogether. In 1976, Irwin received the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. In 1984, Irwin was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship, making him the first artist to receive the honor. His work has been displayed at the New York MOMA, San Diego MOCA, and other museums. A black-and-white photograph of this building appears on the cover of a biography of Irwin, published in 1982.



**Address:** 901 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard

**Name:** Eames Office

**Period of Significance:** 1943-1988



**Address:** 200 E. Westminster Avenue

**Name:** The Architecture Gallery

**Period of Significance:** 1979





**Address:** 74-76 Market Street  
**Name:** Robert Irwin Studio  
**Period of Significance:** Unknown

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

**Sub-Context: Cultural Development and Institutions, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Public Art, 1900-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Murals, 1920-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate several significant examples of public murals in Venice. The “Brooks Avenue Mural” has been extant since the 1960s, and depicts the street frontage of Brooks Avenue, incorporating a nearby ghost sign from an early Venice laundry business. “Brandelli’s Brig” depicts a mural inside a mural; painted on the outside of a bar, the mural depicts the owner and his wife outside of the bar, which displays the mural on the outside of the bar, and so on. “The People of Venice vs. The Developers” Mural was designed by a women artists collective, and tells the story of local residents resisting new development by area outsiders.



**Address:** 901 S. Pacific Avenue  
**Name:** “Brooks Avenue” Mural  
**Artist:** L.A. Fine Arts Squad  
**Date:** circa 1960s



**Address:** 1515 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Name:** “Brandelli’s Brig” Mural  
**Artist:** Art Mortimer  
**Date:** 1973



**Address:** 316 S. Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** “The People of Venice vs. the Developers” Mural  
**Artists:** JAYA  
**Date:** 1975

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

**Sub-Context: Education, 1876-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Pre-1933 Long Beach Earthquake, 1912-1933**

**Sub-Theme: Post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake, 1933-1945**

These Context/Themes were used to evaluate two intact examples of LAUSD public schools in Venice. Broadway Elementary School dates from the 1920s and retains its main school building from that period; Venice High School represents the post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake period of school construction. Venice High School was also evaluated for its architectural merit as an excellent example of the PWA Moderne style by noted architects John C. Austin and Frederick C. Ashley.



**Address:** 1015 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** Broadway Elementary School  
**Date:** 1926



**Address:** 1015 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** Broadway Elementary School  
**Date:** 1926



**Address:** 13000 Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Venice High School  
**Date:** 1935-1937



**Address:** 13000 Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Venice High School  
**Date:** 1935-1937

**Context: Public & 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**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate a significant examples of Los Angeles fire stations. The survey identified one example in Venice, which was highly intact.



**Address:** 1930 S. Shell Avenue

**Name:** Fire Station No. 63

**Date:** 1950



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

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

**Theme: Municipal Water and Power, 1916-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Distributing and Receiving Stations, 1916-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of Department of Water and Power buildings in Venice. The survey identified an excellent and rare example of a distributing station from the 1920s.



**Address:** 911 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** L.A. Department of Water and Power  
Distributing Station No. 44  
**Date:** 1928



**Address:** 911 S. Lincoln Boulevard  
**Name:** L.A. Department of Water and Power  
Distributing Station No. 44  
**Date:** 1928

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

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

**Theme: Federal Infrastructure and Services, 1850-1980**

**Sub-Theme: U.S. Postal Services and Post Office Construction, 1850-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the Venice Post Office as an excellent and rare example of a post office building from the 1930s. Officially opened in 1940, this is one of Venice's most prominent public buildings, oriented onto the traffic circle at the intersection of Windward Avenue and Main Street in downtown Venice. The post office is currently undergoing an extensive restoration by film producer Joel Silver, which includes the lobby mural, "Abbot Kinney and the Story of Venice." The post office was also evaluated for its architectural merit as the work of U.S. Treasury Department architect Louis A. Simon.



**Address:** 1601 Main Street  
**Name:** Venice Post Office  
**Architect:** Louis A. Simon  
**Date:** 1939



**Address:** 1601 Main Street  
**Name:** Venice Post Office  
**Architect:** Louis A. Simon  
**Date:** 1939

## Context: Public & Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

### Sub-Context: Religion & Spirituality, 1850-1980

#### Theme: Religious Property Types, 1850-1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of religious properties in Venice. The First Christian Church of Ocean Park is a very rare remaining church dating from 1905. The Bay Cities Synagogue, commonly known as the "Shul on the Beach," was once part of a thriving Jewish community along the coast, but today is the only remaining synagogue on the beach and the oldest remaining in the area. Also identified was a 1920s convent building associated with St. Clement Catholic Church, as well as the religious campus of First Lutheran Church of Venice, which includes both a church and a school. The St. Clement convent and the First Lutheran Church of Venice were also evaluated as excellent examples of their architectural style.



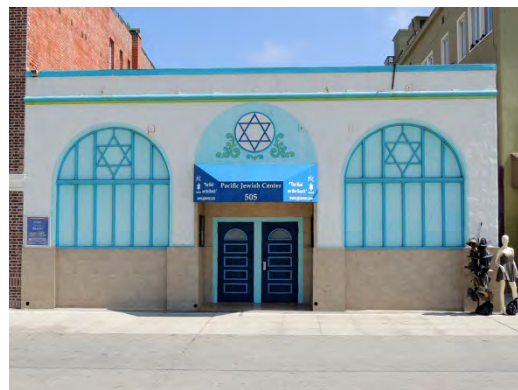
**Address:** 254 S. Hampton Drive  
**Name:** First Christian Church of Ocean Park  
**Date:** 1905



**Address:** 815 Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** First Lutheran Church of Venice  
**Date:** 1948



**Address:** 211 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
**Name:** St. Clement Convent  
**Date:** 1921



**Address:** 505 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Bay Cities Synagogue  
**Date:** 1944



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

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

**Theme: Public Works, 1900-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Street Lights and the Bureau of Street Lighting, 1900-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of streetlights in Venice. Located at the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Speedway is what appears to be the only remaining example of the ornamental streetlights that were installed throughout the Venice of America commercial. Similarly, at the intersection of Cabrillo Avenue (originally Cabrillo Canal) and Altair Place (originally Altair Canal) is what appears to be the only remaining example appears of the ornamental streetlights that were installed throughout the Venice canals district.



**Location:** 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Speedway  
**Name:** Venice of America Streetlight  
**Date:** Est. 1905



**Location:** 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Speedway  
**Name:** Venice of America Streetlight  
**Date:** Est. 1905



**Location:** Cabrillo Avenue at Altair Place  
**Name:** Venice Canals Streetlight  
**Date:** Est. 1906



**Location:** Cabrillo Avenue at Altair Place  
**Name:** Venice Canals Streetlight  
**Date:** Est. 1906



**Context: Industrial Development, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Early Industrial Development, 1880-1945**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of early industrial development in Venice. Most notably, the survey identified the Venice gondola building, where the original gondolas that operated on the Venice canals were repaired, maintained, and stored. The street to the rear of the building used to be a canal.



**Address:** 200 E. Mildred Avenue  
**Name:** Venice Gondola Building  
**Date:** 1913



**Address:** 320 E. Sunset Avenue  
**Date:** 1924

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

**Theme: Arts and Crafts Movement, 1895-1930**

**Sub-Theme: Craftsman, 1905-1930**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate significant examples of Craftsman architecture in Venice. The survey identified a number of examples, all of which are single-family residences. Most were also evaluated as excellent examples of early residential development pre-dating Venice's consolidation with the City of Los Angeles.



**Address:** 2439 S. Glencoe Avenue  
**Date:** 1912



**Address:** 2211 S. Prospect Avenue  
**Date:** 1912



**Address:** 2229 S. Prospect Avenue  
**Date:** 1914



**Address:** 708 W. Victoria Avenue  
**Date:** 1912

## **Context: Architecture & Engineering, 1850-1980**

**Theme: Arts and Crafts Movement, 1895-1930**

**Sub-Theme: Prairie Style, 1905-1924**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate two significant examples of Prairie style architecture in Venice, both designed by noted architects Marsh & Russell. The University of the Arts building was also evaluated as an early example of institutional development in Venice. Originally constructed by Abbot Kinney, the University of the Arts was intended to bring culture to Venice. The building was also a stop on the Venice Miniature Railway, an amusement railway line that operated from 1906 to 1925.



**Address:** 233-235 Westminster Avenue  
**Architect:** Marsh & Russell  
**Date:** 1911



**Address:** 1302 S. Riviera Avenue  
**Name:** University of the Arts  
**Architect:** Marsh & Russell  
**Date:** 1904



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

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

**Theme: Late Modernism, 1966-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Late Modernism, 1966-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate several significant examples of Late Modern architecture in Venice. Identified examples include several single-family residences and one condominium building.



**Address:** 3815 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Stone Condominiums  
**Architect:** Kahn, Kappe & Lotery  
**Date:** 1973



**Address:** 3815 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** Stone Condominiums  
**Architect:** Kahn, Kappe & Lotery  
**Date:** 1973



**Address:** 2600 Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Architect:** Leonard H. Steinbrueck  
**Date:** 1977



**Address:** 2600 Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Architect:** Leonard H. Steinbrueck  
**Date:** 1977





**Address:** 5407 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Date:** 1977



**Address:** 5407 S. Ocean Front Walk  
**Date:** 1977

## Context: Architecture & Engineering, 1850-1980

### Theme: Post-Modernism, 1965–1980

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate several significant examples of Post Modern architecture in Venice. The survey identified several examples of Post Modern single-family residences or residential additions. More than simply good examples of the style, these projects represent some of the earliest work by the innovators of Post Modern/Deconstructivist architecture that was just emerging out of what is known as the “L.A. School.” Identified examples include the work of Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi (Morphosis), Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts, and Frank Gehry.<sup>49</sup>



**Address:** 910 W. Superba Avenue  
**Name:** Sedlak House  
**Architect:** Morphosis  
**Date:** 1980



**Address:** 910 W. Superba Avenue  
**Name:** Sedlak House  
**Architect:** Morphosis  
**Date:** 1980



**Address:** 229 E. San Juan Avenue  
**Name:** Caplin House  
**Architects:** Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts  
**Date:** 1979



**Address:** 229 E. San Juan Avenue  
**Name:** Caplin House  
**Architects:** Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts  
**Date:** 1979

<sup>49</sup> While SurveyLA generally considered properties up to 1980, Venice is home to many important examples of Post Modern and Deconstructivist architecture built after this date. One of the best-known examples is the Chiat/Day Building, a.k.a. “The Binoculars Building,” designed by Frank Gehry (1991).





**Address:** 932 W. Amoroso Place  
**Name:** 2-4-6-8 House  
**Architects:** Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi  
**Date:** 1979



**Address:** 932 W. Amoroso Place  
**Name:** 2-4-6-8 House  
**Architects:** Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi  
**Date:** 1979



**Address:** 32 E. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
**Name:** Delmer Residence  
**Architects:** Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts  
**Date:** 1977



**Address:** 32 E. 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
**Name:** Delmer Residence  
**Architects:** Frederick Fisher and Thane Roberts  
**Date:** 1977



**Address:** 39 E. Horizon Avenue  
**Name:** Spiller Residence  
**Architects:** Frank O. Gehry & Associates  
**Date:** 1979



**Address:** 39 E. Horizon Avenue  
**Name:** Spiller Residence  
**Architects:** Frank O. Gehry & Associates  
**Date:** 1979



**Context: Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980**

**Theme: Residential Properties Associated with the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980**

**Sub-Theme: Residential Properties Associated with Significant Persons in the Entertainment Industry, 1908-1980**

This Context/Theme was used to evaluate the long-time family home of the popular singing group The Lennon Sisters. The Lennon family were long-time Venice residents who originally lived in a smaller two-bedroom home. With the girls' success on the Lawrence Welk show in the 1950s, the Lennons moved to this six-bedroom house. The house remained in the family for nearly 40 years; family matriarch Isabelle Lennon sold the home in 1996.



**Address:** 944 W. Harding Avenue  
**Name:** Lennon Sisters Residence  
**Period of Significance:** 1956-1996



**Address:** 944 W. Harding Avenue  
**Name:** Lennon Sisters Residence  
**Period of Significance:** 1956-1996

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

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

The Other Context is used to capture property types for which a specific theme has not been developed. In Venice, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate a number of public infrastructure buildings, including a fire house, a gas company building, an electrical substation, a water pumping plant, and a streetcar ticket building.



**Address:** 213 E. Rose Avenue  
**Name:** Venice Firehouse  
**Date:** 1906



**Address:** 213 E. Rose Avenue  
**Name:** Venice Firehouse  
**Date:** 1906



**Address:** 321 S. Hampton Drive  
**Name:** Edison Gas Company Building  
**Date:** 1910



**Address:** 321 S. Hampton Drive  
**Name:** Edison Gas Company Building  
**Date:** 1910



**Address:** 660 E. Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Southern California Edison Substation  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 660 E. Venice Boulevard  
**Name:** Southern California Edison Substation  
**Date:** 1923



**Address:** 314 E. Brooks Avenue  
**Name:** Electric Avenue Pump Plant  
**Date:** circa 1950



**Address:** 314 E. Brooks Avenue  
**Name:** Electric Avenue Pump Plant  
**Date:** circa 1950



**Address:** 1641 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Name:** Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Ticket Building  
**Date:** 1911



**Address:** 1641 S. Abbot Kinney Boulevard  
**Name:** Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Ticket Building  
**Date:** 1911



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

### **Theme: Important Persons/Individuals, 1850-1980**

The Other Context is used to capture property types for which a specific theme has not been developed. In Venice, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate a number of residential properties associated with important early Venice residents. The house at 16 E. Park Avenue was Abbot Kinney's first Venice residence. Kinney lived here during the construction of the canals; the house was later given to Kinney's son. The house at 541 Santa Clara Avenue was the long-time residence of Arthur Reese, the first African American to live and work in Venice. Reese came to Venice from New Orleans in 1905 to work as a janitor, and built this residence in the Oakwood neighborhood, which would become an early-20<sup>th</sup> century African-American enclave. Reese was also an artist and sculptor and ultimately became the unofficial town decorator, mostly known for decorating parade floats in the style of Mardi Gras. Reese soon invited his cousins, the Tabors, to join him in Venice, where Irving Tabor would become Abbot Kinney's personal chauffeur. The Kinney-Tabor House, a residence given to Tabor by Kinney, is located across the street from the Reese Residence; it is a designation Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.



**Address:** 16 E. Park Avenue  
**Name:** Abbot Kinney Residence  
**Date:** 1906-?



**Address:** 541 Santa Clara Avenue  
**Name:** Arthur Reese Residence  
**Date:** 1913-1938

## Context: Other Context, 1850-1980

### Theme: Design/Construction, 1850-1980

The Other Context is used to capture property types for which a specific theme has not been developed. In Venice, this Context/Theme was used to evaluate a number of non-building properties, including a remnant brick street, wooden shade structures on the beach, and several concrete canal bridges. The block of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue between the beach and Pacific Avenue may be the last brick street remaining in Venice. Historically Venice streets were paved with brick; however, it is unknown if the existing brick paving on 18<sup>th</sup> Street is original or a replacement. Along Ocean Front Walk, Venice Beach is punctuated by a series of wooden shade structures with concrete seating. Similar shade structures with are evident in a 1920s photograph of the Venice promenade; however, it is unclear if the current structures are original or later reproductions. The Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Bridge over the Grand Canal brought the P.E. “red cars” to Venice in 1904, linking the new town to the larger Los Angeles region. The Grand Canal linked Abbot Kinney’s original canals to a second canal system to the south. Today, the bridge and remnant portion of the Grand Canal is situated in the middle of a survey parking lot. Finally, the Lighthouse Bridge is the only remaining pedestrian bridge spanning the Grand Canal. There had been a series of bridges over the canal; the others were demolished in the 1970s. Only the Lighthouse Bridge was preserved and it has since been restored.



**Location:** 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Pacific and Ocean Front Walk  
**Name:** 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue Brick Street  
**Date:** circa 1905



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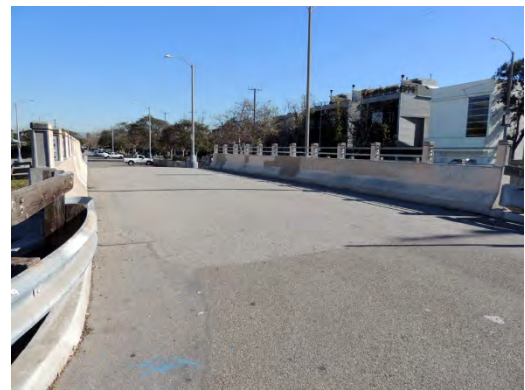
**Location:** Venice Beach  
**Name:** Venice Beach Shade Structures  
**Date:** circa 1920



**Location:** Venice Beach  
**Name:** Venice Beach Shade Structures  
**Date:** circa 1920



**Location:** Venice Boulevard over the Grand Canal  
**Name:** Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Bridge and Grand Canal  
**Date:** 1904



**Location:** Venice Boulevard over the Grand Canal  
**Name:** Pacific Electric Venice Short Line Bridge and Grand Canal  
**Date:** 1904



**Location:** Lighthouse Street over the Grand Canal  
**Name:** Lighthouse Bridge  
**Date:** circa 1925



**Location:** Lighthouse Street over the Grand Canal  
**Name:** Lighthouse Bridge  
**Date:** circa 1925



## For Further Reading

The following is a list of general sources on the history and development of Venice. This list is not comprehensive but is being provided for informational purposes.

Alexander, Carolyn Elayne. *Images of America: Venice California*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1999.

Deener, Andrew. "The Decline of a Black Community by the Sea: Demographic and Political Changes in Oakwood." In *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramon, eds. New York: New York University Press, 2010.

—. "Neighborhood Symbiosis (2011)." In *The Urban Ethnography Reader*. Mitchell Duneier, Philip Kasinitz, and Alexandra Murphy, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

—. *Venice: A Contested Bohemia in Los Angeles*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Loomis, Jan. *Westside Chronicles: Historic Stories of West Los Angeles*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2012.

"Ocean Park Time Line." OP History website. <https://oceanpark.wordpress.com/top/ocean-park-history/> (accessed November 2014).

Stanton, Jeffrey. *Venice California: 'Coney Island of the Pacific.'* Los Angeles: Donahue Publishing, 1993.

Venice History website. <http://www.westland.net/venicehistory/> (accessed July 2014).

Venice Short Line Tour website, <http://www.uncanny.net/~wetzels/vsline.htm> (accessed July 2014).