



Roosevelt Elementary School
Historic Resources Inventory Report
January 2022

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

PREPARED FOR

**Santa Monica–Malibu Unified School District
2828 4th Street
Santa Monica, CA 90405**

**Roosevelt Elementary School
Historic Resources Inventory Report**

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this historical resources inventory report is to determine if historic resources as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)¹ are present at Roosevelt Elementary School located at 801 Montana Avenue in Santa Monica, Los Angeles County, California. This report is intended to inform environmental review of future projects at the school.

In 2021, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) adopted several procedures for the identification of historical resources at school facilities and their recordation in historic resources inventory reports. This study was completed to comply with those measures and contains the following:

- A review of the existing buildings, structures, and features located at the school.
- A review of previous evaluations of the school through historic survey, environmental review, or other official actions.
- Identification and evaluation of any potential historic resources within the school, including their character-defining features.
- Review of the required consideration of historic resources within the school under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Based on visual observation of the property, research of primary and secondary sources, and an analysis of the eligibility criteria for listing at the federal, state, and local levels, HRG has identified a potential historic district at Roosevelt Elementary School that is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and for designation as a City of Santa Monica historic district. The potential historic district consists of six (6) contributing buildings, five (5) site features, and two (2) additional features with a period of significance from 1935 to 1940. Contributors to the potential historic district are as follows:

Buildings

- Building B, 1940
- Building C, 1940
- Building E, 1935
- Building G, 1935
- Building J, 1935
- Portion of Building K, 1935

¹ California PRC, Section 21084.1.

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Site Features

- Lincoln & Montana Quad, 1935
- South Courtyard, 1935
- North Courtyard, 1940
- Brick Flagpole Ring, 1935
- Brick Wall, 1935

Additional Features

- "Theodore Roosevelt" Panel, c. 1935
- WPA Bronze Plaque, 1940

All other buildings and features on site were determined ineligible for listing at the federal, state, and local levels.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose

In 2021, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) adopted two policies to establish procedures for the treatment of historical resources on district campuses (BP and AR 7113). SMMUSD committed to create an inventory of historical resources on its school campuses prior to approval of a master plan or school facilities project. This historic resources inventory report serves to identify potential historical resources as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)² on the Roosevelt Elementary School campus.

2.2 Project Team

Research, field inspection, and analysis were performed by Paul Travis, AICP, Principal and Senior Preservation Planner; Alexandra Madsen, Senior Architectural Historian; and Robby Aranguen, Planning Associate. Additional assistance was provided by Krista Nichols, Architectural Historian and Ani Mnatsakanyan, Intern. All preparers are qualified professionals who meet or exceed the *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards* in their respective fields.

2.3 Methodology

This report was prepared using primary and secondary sources related to the history and development of the City of Santa Monica, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD), and Roosevelt Elementary School.

Documents that were consulted include: historical photographs and aerial images; historical building plans; Sanborn Fire Insurance maps; previous surveys and environmental reviews; historic context statements; local histories; Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory; and the California State Historic Resources Inventory, Los Angeles County.

On June 8, 2021, a site visit was conducted by Paul Travis and Robby Aranguen. The site visit included all permanent buildings, structures, and objects that are 45+ years of age (constructed through the year 1976). Temporary buildings and structures, including portable buildings, were not included in the survey or evaluation. Existing conditions, character-defining features, and alterations were documented using digital photography.

2.4 Site Location and Description

Roosevelt Elementary School is located at 801 Montana Avenue in Santa Monica, Los Angeles County, California. The Roosevelt Elementary School campus occupies a rectangular, approximately 6-acre site on a single parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 4280-022-900). The location of the campus is shown below in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows permanent versus temporary/portable buildings on the campus.

² California PRC, Section 21084.1.

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Figure 1. Location Map



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Figure 2. Permanent and Portable Building Map



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3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Overview

Roosevelt Elementary School is located in the northwestern region of the City of Santa Monica. The current campus was first developed in the mid-1930s following the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake. Additional development occurred shortly thereafter in the early 1940s under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This section provides an overview of the current campus.

Originally located at 6th Street and Montana Avenue, the first Roosevelt Elementary School campus (1907) was severely damaged by the Long Beach Earthquake of 1933. That campus was demolished, and in 1935, the school was rebuilt at its current location. Designed by the master Los Angeles architectural firm Marsh, Smith & Powell, the new campus displays the smooth surfaces, curved corners, and horizontal banding emblematic of buildings constructed under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Public Works Administration (PWA), and commonly referred to as the PWA Moderne style of architecture. The school integrated indoor and outdoor spaces with many concrete patios located alongside classroom wings, emblems of the new “Santa Monica Plan” developed by the architects. Development of the school continued into the 1940s with buildings designed by Joe M. Estep under the auspices of the WPA. This early phase of construction centered the campus in the southcentral region of the parcel with PWA Moderne-style buildings on a finger-plan school plant. Building constructed in the 1930s and early 1940s were cohesively designed with new Modern buildings specifically meant to withstand seismic activity

In the post-World War II years, development at the campus was more sporadically completed. New development focused on the western edge of the campus. In 1951, several buildings were designed by architect Joe M. Estep that reoriented the school’s primary entrance to Lincoln Boulevard. In 1968, the original cafeteria was demolished, a new library was built, and a classroom was expanded. In the 1990s, a mix of permanent buildings, temporary buildings, and support structures were added in an ad hoc manner to accommodate additional needs.

3.1 Existing Buildings

At the time of this report the campus contains nine (9) permanent buildings, as well as athletic facilities, open spaces, and artworks. Existing buildings and features are listed below and are summarized in Table 1 (“Existing Conditions”).

The function of some campus buildings has changed and evolved over the years. To avoid confusion, whenever possible, the buildings discussed in this report have been keyed to the official building naming system of Roosevelt Elementary School as shown on the campus site plan and derived from the campus map and inventory documents provided by the school district (Figure 3). Following this figure is an architectural description of each building and feature. Current site photographs can be found in Appendix A.

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Table 1. Existing Conditions

Year Built	Current Name	Building Use	Architectural Style/Description	Map Key
Buildings				
1968/ c. 2000	Building A	Library/Classrooms	Mid-Century Modern/ Contemporary	A
1940	Building B	Classrooms	PWA Moderne	B
1940	Building C	Classrooms	PWA Moderne	C
1951	Building D	Cafeteria	Late Moderne	D
1935	Building E	Classrooms	PWA Moderne	E
1935	Building G	Classrooms	PWA Moderne	G
1951	Building H	Auditorium	Late Moderne	H
1935	Building J	Offices/Classroom	PWA Moderne	J
1935	Building K	Pre-School	PWA Moderne	K
Site Features				
1935	Lincoln & Montana Quad	--	--	--
1935	South Courtyard	--	--	--
1940	North Courtyard	--	--	--
1935	Brick Ring	--	--	--
1935	Brick Wall	--	--	--
1930s/ 2000s	Tennis/Basketball Courts			
c. 1970s	Handball Court	--	--	--
c. 2000s	Planter Garden	--	--	--
c. 2000s	Athletic Field	--	--	--
Additional Features				
c. 1935	"Theodore Roosevelt" Panel	--	(stone relief)	--
1940	WPA Bronze Plaque	--	(metal sign)	--
2006	Roosevelt Clock	--	(metal clock)	--
c. 2000s	"Roosevelt" Mural	--	(painted mural)	--
c. 2000s	"Roosevelt" Mosaic	--	(ceramic mosaic)	--
c. 2000s	"Class" Murals	--	(painted mural)	--

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3.2 Buildings

Building A (Library/Classroom)

Building A was constructed in 1968.³ A contemporary addition was added along the north elevation of the building in 2000.

Sited along Lincoln Boulevard in the western region of the campus, Building A is rectangular in plan. The two-story building is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. The building is roughly broken into a northern bay, constructed in 1968, and a southern bay, constructed in 2000. Fenestration is composed of bands of awning steel-frame and fixed windows. Entrances display metal slab doors occasionally flanked by fixed sidelight windows.

Along the west elevation, the southern bay features three slightly projecting bays with grouped steel-frame awning windows; the northern bay has large single-light windows with metal awnings. Along the east elevation, the building features a second story balcony with protective metal balustrade set above a covered corridor upheld by thin metal posts. A centrally located staircase provides access to the second story. Additional features include metal wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building B (Classrooms)

Building B was constructed in 1940 and designed by architect Joe M. Estep under the auspices of the WPA.

Building B is situated immediately east of Building A and west of Building C. It is the northern most east-west wing of the school plant. Building B has a generally rectangular plant, is one-story in height, and is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped awning steel-frame windows set above a metal bulkheads. Entrances feature steel slab doors flanked by awning windows and set beneath fabric awnings. Concrete patios are evenly placed along entrances on the south elevation and interspersed with plants. This elevation of the building looks south onto the North Courtyard. The building is connected to Buildings D and C via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld by steel pipe columns. Additional features include circular wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building C (Classrooms)

Building C was constructed in 1940 and designed by architect Joe M. Estep under the auspices of the WPA. It was expanded with additions in 1951 and 1968.

Situated along 9th Street and east of Building B, Building C is regular in plan and one-story in height. It is clad in smooth stucco and features a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped steel-frame awning windows. Entrances display single glazed and metal slab doors flanked by awning windows. Concrete patios are

³ HRG was unable to identify and architect or builder for this building.

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evenly placed along entrances on the east elevation. The west elevation of the building has a wide canopy, which faces onto the athletic field and rear paved area. The building is connected to Buildings B and E via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld by steel pipe columns. Additional features include circular wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building D (Cafeteria)

Building D was constructed in 1951 and designed by architect Joe M. Estep.

Situated north of Building H along Lincoln Avenue, Buildings D and H create the primary entrance to the school. Building D is a 1.5-story building with a rectangular plan. It is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped steel-frame awning windows. Entrances feature single metal glazed doors with transoms and sidelights, which are accessible via stairs and a concrete ramp from Lincoln Boulevard. A wall built on concrete masonry units (CMUs) wraps around the side of the building, separating the stair from the ramp. The entrance gate is composed of two horizontal beams that span Buildings D and H upheld by squared columns with horizontal scoring. Additional features include circular wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building E (Classrooms)

Building E was constructed in 1935 and designed by architects Marsh, Smith & Powell.

Building E is situated immediately south of Building B and north of Building G. It is the central east-west wing of the school plant. Building E has a generally rectangular plant, is one-story in height, and is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped awning steel-frame windows set above a metal bulkheads. Some windows are set beneath flat canopies with horizontal scoring. Entrances feature steel slab doors flanked by awning windows and set beneath fabric awnings. Brick patios are evenly placed along entrances on the south elevation and interspersed with plants. This elevation of the building looks south onto the South Courtyard. The north elevation has a projecting corridor with flat roof. The building is connected to Buildings D, B, and G via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld by steel pipe columns. Additional features include circular wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building G (Classrooms)

Building G was constructed in 1935 and designed by architects Marsh, Smith & Powell.

Building G is situated between buildings E and J in the central region of the campus. Building G is a one-story building with a rectangular plan. It is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped steel-frame awning windows. Entrances display single and double metal slab doors. Building G faces north onto the South Courtyard. The building is connected to Buildings H, J, and K via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld

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by steel pipe columns. Additional features include metal wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building H (Auditorium)

Building H was constructed 1951 and designed by architect Joe M. Estep.

Situated south of Building D along Lincoln Avenue, Buildings H and D create the primary entrance to the school. Like Building D, Building H is a 1.5-story building with a rectangular plan. It is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped steel-frame awning windows. Entrances feature single and double metal slab doors, which are accessible via stairs and a concrete ramp from Lincoln Boulevard. The entrance gate is composed of two horizontal beams that span Buildings D and H upheld by squared columns with horizontal scoring. The south elevation of Building H looks onto the Lincoln & Montana Quad. Additional features include circular wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building J (Offices/Classroom)

Building J was constructed in 1935 and designed by architects Marsh, Smith & Powell.

Situated south of Building G and west of Building H, Building J is rectangular in plan and one-story in height. It is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped awning steel-frame windows. The south elevation of the building faces onto the front paved area. Entrances display single metal slab doors flanked by steel-frame awning windows and typically set beneath fabric awnings. The building is connected to Buildings G, H, and K via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld by steel pipe columns. Additional features include metal wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

Building K (Pre-School)

Building K was constructed in 1935 and designed by architects Marsh, Smith & Powell. In 1951, an addition was added to the southeast elevation. The canopied corridor was added at that time.

Situated in the southeastern region of the campus immediately east of Building J, Building K is a one-story building with an 'L'-shaped plan. It is clad in smooth stucco and capped by a flat roof with metal coping. Fenestration is composed of grouped steel-frame awning windows. Entrances are mostly metal slab doors. The north elevation of the building has a wide canopy, which faces onto the planter garden. The building is connected to Buildings J and G via a series of canopied outdoor corridors with flat roof and wide eaves upheld by steel pipe columns. Additional features include metal wall vents and wall-mounted lights.

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3.3 Features

Lincoln & Montana Quad

This open space dates to the early development of the campus (circa 1935) and has not been heavily disturbed or altered over time. Situated in the southwestern region of the campus at the intersection of Montana Avenue and Lincoln Boulevard, the open space is characterized by large swaths of lawn with several mature trees.

South Courtyard

This open space dates to the early development of the campus (circa 1935) and has been modified over time. Situated between Buildings E, G, and J, the south courtyard has a large swath of grass and several mature trees and shrubs. It also features several planted areas between the brick patios of Building E and the original brick flagpole ring.

North Courtyard

This open space dates to the construction of Building B in 1940. Situated between Buildings B, C, and E, the north courtyard has a large swath of grass and several mature trees and shrubs. It also features several planted areas between the concrete patios of Building B.

Brick Flagpole Ring

The brick flagpole ring is situated in the South Courtyard and dates to the early development of the campus (circa 1935). The brick ring is approximately 2 feet in diameter and originally would have surrounded the flagpole located in the courtyard.

Brick Wall

The brick wall is situated in the northern region of the campus next to the tennis courts and dates to the early development of the campus (circa 1935). The feature is a low brick wall that is in fair condition and approximately 1 foot in height.

Tennis/Basketball Courts

This athletic facility was first created in the 1930s but has been significantly improved into the 2000s. The facility includes two outdoor hard courts surrounded by metal chain-link fencing.

Handball Courts

This athletic facility dates to the 1970s. Situated between the Tennis/Basketball Courts and Building A, the facility includes three concrete handball courts and walls.

Planter Garden

These planters were installed in the 2000s. Situated next to Building K, they are constructed of wood and are planted with various herbs and flowers.

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Athletic Field

This athletic facility dates to the 2000s. Situated at the northern region of the campus, the facility includes a large grassy field with dirt.

3.4 Additional Features

“Theodore Roosevelt” Panel

Completed by the Works Progress Administration or “WPA”, the “Theodore Roosevelt” panel is stone relief and was installed during the school’s expansion circa 1935. It shows Theodore Roosevelt on a horse next to a train and two lions, likely recounting his travels.⁴

WPA Bronze Plaque

Completed by the Works Progress Administration or “WPA”, the bronze plaque was installed during the school’s expansion in 1940.

Roosevelt Clock

The Roosevelt Clock is situated in the northern region of the campus and was installed by the Class of 2006. It shows a dog and metal clock.

“Roosevelt” Mural

Designed in the 2000s, the “Roosevelt” mural commemorates the school’s founding and important events in history. It wraps around several buildings, including Buildings H and J and a portable building.

“Class” Mural

Designed in the 2000s by several school classes, this painted mural depicts various themes along the side of Building A.

⁴ Additional research did not supply information on the title, artist, or date of completion for this panel.

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4.0 REGULATORY REVIEW

4.1 Historic Resources under CEQA

CEQA requires that environmental protection be given significant consideration in the decision-making process. Historic resources are included under environmental protection. Thus, any project or action which constitutes a substantial adverse change on a historic resource also has a significant effect on the environment and shall comply with the State CEQA Guidelines.

When the California Register of Historical Resources was established in 1992, the Legislature amended CEQA to clarify which cultural resources are significant, as well as which project impacts are considered to be significantly adverse. A “substantial adverse change” means “demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired.”

CEQA defines a historic resource as a resource listed in, or determined eligible for listing, in the California Register of Historical Resources. All properties on the California Register are to be considered under CEQA. However, because a property does not appear on the California Register does not mean it is not significant and therefore exempt from CEQA consideration. All resources determined eligible for the California Register are also to be considered under CEQA.

The courts have interpreted CEQA to create three categories of historic resources:

- *Mandatory historical resources* are resources “listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources.”
- *Presumptive historical resources* are resources “included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1, or deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1” of the Public Resources Code, unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant.
- *Discretionary historical resources* are those resources that are not listed but determined to be eligible under the criteria for the California Register of Historical Resources.⁵

To simplify the first three definitions provided in the CEQA statute, an historic resource is a resource that is:

- Listed in the California Register of Historical Resources;
- Determined eligible for the California Register by the State Historical Resources Commission; or

⁵ *League for the Protection of Oakland’s Architectural and Historic Resources vs. City of Oakland*, 52 Cal. App. 4th 896, 906-7 (1997).

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- Included in a local register of historic resources.

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3) supplements the statute by providing two additional definitions of historical resources, which may be simplified in the following manner. An historic resource is a resource that is:

- Identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code 5024.1 (g);
- Determined by a Lead Agency to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California. Generally, this category includes resources that meet the criteria for listing on the California Register (Pub. Res. Code SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852).

The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register, not included in a local register of historic resources, or not deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1, does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an “historic resource” for purposes of CEQA.

Properties formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places are automatically listed in the California Register. Properties designated by local municipalities can also be considered historic resources. A review of properties that are potentially affected by a project for historic eligibility is also required under CEQA.

4.2 Historic Designations

A property may be designated as historic by National, State, and local authorities. In order for a building to qualify for listing in the National Register, the California Register, or designation at the local level, it must meet one or more identified criteria of significance. The property must also retain sufficient architectural integrity to continue to evoke the sense of place and time with which it is historically associated.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is an authoritative guide to be used by Federal, State, and local governments, private groups and citizens to identify the Nation's cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment.⁶ The National Park Service administers the National Register program. Listing in the National Register assists in preservation of historic properties in several ways including: recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community; consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted

⁶ 36CFR60, Section 60.2.

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projects; eligibility for federal tax benefits; and qualification for Federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

To be eligible for listing and/or listed in the National Register, a resource must possess significance in American history and culture, architecture, or archaeology. Listing in the National Register is primarily honorary and does not in and of itself provide protection of an historic resource. The primary effect of listing in the National Register on private owners of historic buildings is the availability of financial and tax incentives. In addition, for projects that receive Federal funding, a clearance process must be completed in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Furthermore, state and local regulations may apply to properties listed in the National Register.

The criteria for listing in the National Register follow established guidelines for determining the significance of properties. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.⁷

In addition to meeting any or all of the criteria listed above, properties nominated must also possess integrity of *location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association*.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is an authoritative guide in California used by State and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the State's historic resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change.⁸

The criteria for eligibility for listing in the California Register are based upon National Register criteria. These criteria are:

⁷ 36CFR60, Section 60.3.

⁸ California PRC, Section 5023.1(a).

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1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

The California Register consists of resources that are listed automatically and those that must be nominated through an application and public hearing process. The California Register includes the following:

- California properties formally determined eligible for (Category 2 in the State Inventory of Historical Resources), or listed in (Category 1 in the State Inventory), the National Register of Historic Places.
- State Historical Landmarks No. 770 and all consecutively numbered state historical landmarks following No. 770. For state historical landmarks preceding No. 770, the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) shall review their eligibility for the California Register in accordance with procedures to be adopted by the State Historical Resources Commission (commission).
- Points of historical interest which have been reviewed by the OHP and recommended for listing by the commission for inclusion in the California Register in accordance with criteria adopted by the commission.⁹

Other resources which may be nominated for listing in the California Register include:

- Individual historic resources.
- Historic resources contributing to the significance of an historic district.
- Historic resources identified as significant in historic resources surveys, if the survey meets the criteria listed in subdivision (g).
- Historic resources and historic districts designated or listed as city or county landmarks or historic properties or districts pursuant to any city or county ordinance, if the criteria for designation or listing under the ordinance have been determined by the office to be consistent with California Register criteria.
- Local landmarks or historic properties designated under any municipal or county ordinance.¹⁰

⁹ California PRC, Section 5023.1(d).

¹⁰ California PRC, Section 5023.1(e).

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City of Santa Monica

In 1976, the City of Santa Monica (City) adopted the Landmarks and Historic District Ordinance.¹¹ The ordinance includes criteria and procedures for designating City of Santa Monica Landmarks, Structures of Merit, and Historic Districts. Landmarks may include structures, natural features, or any type of improvement to a property that is found to have particular architectural or historical significance to the City. Landmarks are considered to have the highest level of individual historical or architectural significance locally. Structures of Merit are historic resources with a more limited degree of individual significance. In 1992, the City became a Certified Local Government (CLG) and has continued its involvement in the state's program under the Office of Historic Preservation.

The Landmarks Commission may approve the landmark designation of a structure, improvement, natural feature or an object if it finds that it meets one or more of the following criteria, outlined in Section 9.56.100(A):

1. It exemplifies, symbolizes, or manifests elements of the cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history of the City.
2. It has aesthetic or artistic interest or value, or other noteworthy interest or value.
3. It is identified with historic personages or with important events in local, state or national history.
4. It embodies distinguishing architectural characteristics valuable to a study of a period, style, method of construction, or the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship, or is a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail or historical type valuable to such a study.
5. It is a significant or a representative example of the work or product of a notable builder, designer or architect.
6. It has a unique location, a singular physical characteristic, or is an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City.

The Landmarks Commission may approve the designation of a Structure of Merit if it has one of the following characteristics, outlined in Section 9.56.080:

1. The structure has been identified in the City's Historic Resources Inventory.
2. The structure is a minimum of 50 years of age and meets one of the following criteria:
 1. The structure is a unique or rare example of an architectural design, detail or historical type.
 2. The structure is representative of a style in the City that is no longer prevalent.

¹¹ City of Santa Monica, "Landmarks and Historic District Ordinance, Section 9.36.100," March 24, 1974.

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3. The structure contributes to a potential Historic District. (Added by Ord. No. 2486CCS §§ 1, 2, adopted June 23, 2015).

A historic district is defined by the City of Santa Monica as: “Any geographic area or noncontiguous grouping of thematically related properties which the City Council has designated as and determined to be appropriate for historical preservation pursuant to the provisions of this [ordinance].” In order to be designated a historic district, an area must meet one of the following criteria, outlined in Section 9.35.100(B):

1. Any of the criteria identified in Section 9.56.100(A)(1) through (6).
2. It is a noncontiguous grouping of thematically related properties or a definable area possessing a concentration of historic, scenic, or thematic sites, which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan, physical development, or architectural quality.
3. It reflects significant geographic patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning.
4. It has a unique location, a singular physical characteristic, or is an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City.

4.3 Historic Significance

The definition of *historic significance* used by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in its administration of the California Register is based upon the definition used by the National Park Service for the National Register:

Historic significance is defined as the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, state, or the nation.¹² It is achieved in several ways:

- *Association with important events, activities or patterns*
- *Association with important persons*
- *Distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form*
- *Potential to yield important information*

A property may be significant individually or as part of a grouping of properties.

4.4 Historic Integrity

Historic integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. It is defined as the “authenticity of a property’s historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical

¹² *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1997. (3)

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characteristics that existed during the property's historic period."¹³ The National Park Service defines seven aspects of integrity: *location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association*. These qualities are defined as follows:

- *Location* is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- *Design* is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- *Setting* is the physical environment of a historic property.
- *Materials* are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- *Workmanship* is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- *Feeling* is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- *Association* is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.¹⁴

4.5 Period of Significance

The National Park Service defines *period of significance* as "the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for... listing" in National, State or local registers. A period of significance can be "as brief as a single year... [or] span many years." It is based on "specific events directly related to the significance of the property," for example the date of construction, years of ownership, or length of operation as a particular entity.¹⁵

4.6 Historic Districts

Standard preservation practice evaluates collections of buildings from similar time periods, places, and historic contexts as *historic districts*. The National Park Service defines a historic district as "a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development."¹⁶ A historic district derives its significance as a single unified entity.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, 1995. (44-45)

¹⁵ *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1997. (42)

¹⁶ *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1997. (5)

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According to the National Park Service, “a district can comprise both features that lack individual distinction and individually distinctive features that serve as focal points. It may even be considered eligible if all of the components lack individual distinction, provided that the grouping achieves significance as a whole within its historic context. In either case, the majority of the components that add to the district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole.”¹⁷ Resources that have been found to contribute to the historic identity of a district are referred to as *district contributors*. Properties located within the district boundaries that do not contribute to its significance are identified as *non-contributors*.

As identified by the National Park Service, school campuses, which are often geographically concentrated and purpose-built, are often evaluated as historic districts. Schools in the United States, especially those built in the 20th century, often exhibit definable campuses and unified site plans which reflect individual building's interconnectedness and functionality as a larger grouping. Although historic districts can contain resources built during distinct periods of development, many school campus historic districts reflect a specific era of development and are contained within a common period of significance.

In Los Angeles, many historically significant school campuses have been identified as eligible for listing as historic districts. *The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Historic Context Statement* provides a framework for evaluating school plants in Los Angeles. The context statement's themes identify character-defining features for districts. The designation for group, rather than individual, eligibility can also reflect the building programs of specific eras. For example, the context statement's theme “Post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake School Plants,” notes that “eligible properties under [the] theme may be a single building ... or a grouping (campus) of buildings constructed during the period of significance.” The context statement also identifies the theme “Educating the Baby Boom: The Postwar Modern, Functionalist School Plant,” as “most often apply[ing] to a campus evaluated as a historic district.”¹⁸

SurveyLA, Los Angeles' citywide survey of historical resources, also identified several school resources as potential historic districts. The SurveyLA field surveys cumulatively covered broad periods of significance, from approximately 1850 to 1980 depending on the location, and included individual resources such as buildings, structures, objects, natural features and cultural landscapes as well as areas and historic districts. SurveyLA typically identified the significance, boundary, and period of significance for school campuses. District boundaries could encompass a portion of the school or its entire campus. Examples of eligible schools identified by SurveyLA geographically and thematically span from the Rafu Chuo Gakuen Japanese Language School in Boyle

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969*, Prepared for the Los Angeles Unified School District, 2014, 136 and 143.

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Heights, eligible for its association with the Japanese American community, to Venice High School, eligible for its post-1933 Long Beach Earthquake construction.¹⁹

4.7 Future Project Guidance

CEQA Thresholds

According to Appendix G, Environmental Checklist of the State CEQA Guidelines, cultural resource impacts resulting from the implementation of a proposed project would be considered significant if the project would:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

The State CEQA Guidelines indicate that a project would normally have a significant impact on historical resources if it would result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. A substantial adverse change in significance occurs if the project involves “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.”²⁰

The Guidelines go on to state that “[t]he significance of an historic resource is materially impaired when a project... [d]emolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources... local register of historic resources... or its identification in a historic resources survey.”²¹

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards

The *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (the “Standards”) provide guidance for reviewing proposed projects that may affect historic resources. The intent of the *Standards* is to assist the long-term preservation of a property’s significance through the preservation, rehabilitation, and maintenance of historic materials and features.

The *Standards* are a useful analytic tool for understanding and describing the potential impacts of substantial changes to historic resources. However, under California environmental law, compliance with the *Standards* does not necessarily determine whether a project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historic resource. Rather, projects that comply with the *Standards* benefit from a

¹⁹ City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, “SurveyLA Findings and Reports, Boyle Heights Community Plan Area.” Prepared by Architectural Resources Group. December 2014; City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, “SurveyLA Findings and Reports, Venice Community Plan Area.” Prepared by Historic Resources Group. March 2015.

²⁰ CEQA Guidelines, section 15064.5(b).

²¹ CEQA Guidelines, section 15064.5(b)(2).

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regulatory presumption that they would have a less than significant adverse impact on a historic resource.²²

Specifically, Section 15064.5(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, shall be considered as mitigated to a level of less than a significant impact on the historical resource.²³

The statutory language above references the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for four distinct historic "treatments," including: (1) preservation; (2) rehabilitation; (3) restoration; and (4) reconstruction. The specific standards and guidelines associated with each of these possible treatments are provided on the National Park Service's website regarding the treatment of historic resources.²⁴ For analytical purposes, a threshold decision must be made regarding which "treatment" standards should be used to analyze a project's potential effect on historic resources. According to the National Park Service, the "rehabilitation" standards (the Rehabilitation Standards) are most frequently applied for the majority of historic buildings. The Rehabilitation Standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.

In the case of schools located within the Santa Monica-Malibu School District that contain historic districts, the Rehabilitation Standards provide a framework for conservative impact analysis for future projects. A discussion of the Rehabilitation Standards as they may apply to future projects within the district is included below.

Secretary of the Interior's *Standards & Guidelines for Rehabilitation*

The Standards are intended as general guidance for work on any historic building. The National Park Service encourages maintaining the integrity of a district through the appropriate design of infill buildings at vacant sites or sites where new buildings replace non-contributing buildings. The Guidelines for Rehabilitation expand the discussion to sites and neighborhoods.

As written in the Guidelines for Rehabilitation, there is a distinction, but not a fundamental difference, between the concerns for additions to historic buildings and new construction, or "infill" adjacent to historic buildings on a property or within a district. As with most matters of design and planning, the differences are defined by the scale, site, setting, and project.

²² CEQA Guidelines, section 15064(b)(3).

²³ CEQA Guidelines, section 15064(b)(3).

²⁴ U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines," Technical Preservation Services, <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm> (accessed December 2021).

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Following are quotations from the National Park Service guidance.

“...a modern addition should be readily distinguishable from the older work; however, the new work should be harmonious with the old in scale, proportion, materials, and color.”

“Plan the new addition in a manner that provides some differentiation in material, color, and detailing so that the new work does not appear to be part of the historic building. The character of the historic resource should be identifiable after the addition is constructed.”²⁵

Rehabilitation Standards for Historic Districts

Future projects that involve new infill construction and/or demolition of contributing features to a historic district have the potential to impact the historic district. However, for potential impacts to be considered a “substantial adverse change” to a historic district under CEQA, it must be shown that the new construction and/or removal of the contributing buildings associated with a project would result in the physical alteration of the historic district such that its ability to convey its historical significance and eligibility for historic listing would be threatened.

Typically, if new buildings are designed to be compatible and differentiated from the historic district using the Rehabilitation Standards, future projects will not result in a “substantial adverse change.” Similarly, if a historic district retains a majority of its contributing features and integrity, and continues to convey its significance, future projects will not result in a “substantial adverse change.” Analysis should be conducted on a case-by-case basis to consider all potential impacts that a project may have on a historic district, including the percentage of resources retained and lost, historic spatial and circulation patterns, scale and massing, and visibility from the public right-of-way. As such, the Rehabilitation Standards provide a certain level of flexibility for future projects planned within or adjacent to historic districts.

²⁵ U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*, by Anne E. Grimmer and Kay D. Weeks (Washington, DC: August 2010), <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm> (accessed December 2021).

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5.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

5.1 History of Santa Monica²⁶

Early History

Human occupation of the Los Angeles Basin dates to approximately 12,000 to 13,000 years ago.²⁷ Native American groups including the Chumash and Tongva occupied the Santa Monica and Malibu region of the basin.²⁸ These Shoshonean-speaking groups occupied a vast territory and established numerous villages throughout the area along local rivers and near the coast, including in and around Santa Monica Canyon. The Tongva and Chumash were the “wealthiest, most populous, and most powerful ethnic nationality in aboriginal Southern California, their influence spreading as far north as the San Joaquin Valley Yokuts, as far east as the Colorado River, and south into Baja California.”²⁹

Colonial Period

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo led the first Spanish expedition into California in 1542. Cabrillo named various features along the coast of Southern California, including San Pedro Bay and the Channel Islands. On October 8th of that year, Cabrillo is believed to have dropped anchor in what is now Santa Monica Bay. He anchored in the bay of Malibu Lagoon later that month, naming it the “Pueblo de las Canoas” (Town of the Canoes), after the many Chumash canoes (*tomols*) in the area.

Despite this early exploration, the area was not further colonized until the arrival of the first land expedition in 1769, led by Gaspar de Portolá. Portolá traveled across Alta California from San Diego to Monterey, establishing a system of missions one day’s journey apart throughout the territory. He is said to have arrived in present-day Santa Monica on August 3rd. A few years later, on February 22, 1776, explorer Juan Bautista de Anza made camp “on a fine stream under the oak trees in the vicinity of today’s Malibu Creek State Park.”³⁰

At the time of California’s annexation as Mexican territory in 1822, the Santa Monica area was still unoccupied, an “unclaimed mesa covered with wild grass.”³¹ In 1827, Xavier Alvarado and Antonio Machado were given a provisional grant to “a place called Santa Monica,” referring to the land stretching from Santa Monica Canyon north to

²⁶ This section has been excerpted and adapted from the “City of Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory Update Historic Context Statement,” prepared for the City of Santa Monica by Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, March 2018, and the “Santa Monica High School Campus Plan Historic Resources Technical Report,” prepared for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District by Historic Resources Group, July 2018.

²⁷ John M. Erlandson, Torben C. Rick, Terry L. Jones, and Judith F. Porcasi, “One If by Land, Two If by Sea: Who Were the First Californians?” in *California Prehistory: Colonization, Culture, and Complexity* ed. Terry J. Jones and Kathryn A. Klar (Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press 2007), 81; Lynn H. Gamble, “Thirteen Thousand Years on the Coast,” in *First Coastal Californians* ed. Lynn H. Gamble (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2015), 1-2.

²⁸ The Tongva are also referred to as “Kizh” and “Gabrielino.”

²⁹ Bean and Smith, 538.

³⁰ *Malibu Complete*, edited by Chuck Chriss, 2005-2008: http://www.malibucomplete.com/mc_history.php.

³¹ Basten, Fred E. *Paradise by the Sea: Santa Monica Bay*. General Publishing Group, Inc., 1997. (8)

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Topanga Canyon. (The Alvarado-Machado lands later passed into the hands of Ysidro Reyes and Francisco Marquez.) In 1828, Don Francisco Sepulveda received possession of “a place called San Vicente,” which stretched from Santa Monica Canyon south to present-day Pico Boulevard, and from the coast inland to what is now Westwood and including all of the land that would become the original townsite of Santa Monica.³² The area was slowly populated and developed with an adobe by Ysidro Reyes in 1839. The rancho had herds of grazing cattle, horses, and sheep.

The 1840s brought several land disputes in Santa Monica between Sepulveda and the Reyes and Marquez families. The argument was not settled until 1851, the year after California achieved statehood. At that time, the Board of Land Commissioners deeded Sepulveda the 30,000 acres known as “Rancho San Vicente y Santa Monica.” The Reyes and Marquez families received approximately 6,600 acres known as the “Boca de Santa Monica.”³³

American Period

The original rancho lands remained intact and were used primarily for grazing purposes into the 1870s. Santa Monica’s local history really began in September of 1872, when some 38,409 acres of Sepulveda’s rancho was sold for \$54,000 to Colonel Robert S. Baker.³⁴ Baker, a cattleman from Rhode Island, acquired the flat expanse of the mesa to operate a sheep ranch. However, just two years later, Nevada Senator John P. Jones purchased a three-fourths interest in Baker's property for \$162,500. Together, the two men subdivided a portion of their joint holdings and platted the town of Santa Monica recorded in the office of the County Recorder at Los Angeles on July 10th, 1875. The townsite fronted the ocean and was bounded by Montana Avenue on the northwest, by Railroad Avenue (now Colorado Avenue) on the southeast, and by 26th Street on the northeast.³⁵ The streets were numbered, and the avenues were named for the Western states.

Baker and Jones envisioned Santa Monica as a prosperous industrial port, with a dedicated rail line linking the mines of Colorado and Nevada to a long wharf in Santa Monica Bay. Construction of the wharf and the rail line commence in early 1875. Jones and Baker organized the Los Angeles & Independence Railroad (LA&I), a steam-powered rail line that extended sixteen miles along a private right-of-way between the Santa Monica waterfront to 5th and San Pedro streets in downtown Los Angeles. The railroad was completed in a little over ten months, opening on October 17th.³⁶

³² Ibid. (8-10)

³³ Basten, Fred E. *Paradise by the Sea: Santa Monica Bay*. General Publishing Group, Inc., 1997. (10)

³⁴ Cleland, Donald M. *A History of the Santa Monica Schools 1876-1951*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, February 1952. (11)

³⁵ Patricia Marie McFadden, “A History of Santa Monica Schools,” Master Thesis, University of Southern California, August 1961:11-12.

³⁶ Water and Power Associates website, <http://waterandpower.org/>. Accessed August 2021.

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The official founding of Santa Monica dates to July 15th, 1875, when the first town lots were sold via auction.³⁷ The town's immediate growth was rapid; in less than nine months it had 160 homes and over one thousand inhabitants.³⁸ However, hopes to establish Santa Monica as the region's primary commercial shipping center were short-lived. In the early 1880s, Southern Pacific undermined the LA&I railroad by cutting their passenger and freight rates so drastically that both the local railroad and wharf were forced to operate at a loss from the moment they began operations. Eventually, both enterprises were acquired by Southern Pacific, who later abandoned the port project in favor of a site in San Pedro.³⁹ Thus, the wharf was demolished, and Santa Monica was forced to reinvent itself as a seaside resort town. As it turned out, this was an easy transition, as new residents and tourists alike were already flocking to the coastal community, lured by its scenic views and temperate climate.⁴⁰

On November 30th, 1886, residents of Santa Monica voted to incorporate as an independent city. By 1887, a rate war between the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads brought floods of people to Southern California, setting off a real estate boom in the still largely agricultural community. At that time, Santa Monica was home to a host of agricultural enterprises: carnations, lima beans, and produce were grown with great success.

The arrival of the first electric streetcar on April 1, 1896, and the later establishment of the "Balloon Route" from downtown Los Angeles, spurred further investment in Santa Monica real estate. A number of new subdivisions were opened during the first five years of the 20th century, and between 1900 and 1903 the resident population jumped from 3,057 to 7,208. By 1911, five electrical railway lines served Santa Monica with travel times of 30 to 50 minutes from downtown Los Angeles.⁴¹ The completion of major roadways to the area only increased its popularity as the automobile became a factor in Southern California growth.

Santa Monica experienced continued growth and development following World War I. In the 1920s, Santa Monica's population jumped from 15,000 to 37,000, the largest increase in the city's history.⁴² Commercial activity increased apace, and buildings were constructed to accommodate Santa Monica's new or expanding businesses and increased tourist activity. Commercial trends that began in the early 20th century continued in the 1920s, with the establishment of numerous prominent commercial

³⁷ *Souvenir Program, Laying of Cornerstone and Dedication of Grounds, Santa Monica High School*. April 11, 1912.

³⁸ Cleland, Donald M. *A History of the Santa Monica Schools 1876-1951*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, February 1952. (14)

³⁹ McFadden, Patricia Marie. "A History of Santa Monica Schools." Master Thesis, University of Southern California, August 1961. (14)

⁴⁰ Cleland, Donald M. *A History of the Santa Monica Schools 1876-1951*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, February 1952. (20)

⁴¹ "Santa Monica Bay New Scene of Great Activity," *Los Angeles Times*, July 16, 1911, IV11.

⁴² Dave Berman, "Founders' Dreams Dashed – City Finds its Own Identity," *Santa Monica Outlook, Centennial Edition, 1875-1975*, 5A.

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buildings downtown, including the city's first skyscrapers, along with the continued development of resort- and tourist-related resources. The downtown commercial core continued to expand along with the growing population. However, the Great Depression and World War II slowed commercial development in Santa Monica. Building activity declined, and new commercial construction was rare. Santa Monica's tourist attractions struggled throughout the Great Depression.

Despite economic struggles, the years between the Great Depression and World War II were busy years in Santa Monica. Several arms of Roosevelt's "New Deal" program, including the Public Works Administration (1933; PWA) and Works Progress Administration (1935; WPA), were heavily involved in Santa Monica during this period. After the Long Beach Earthquake of 1933 devastated the City, public aid helped the City rebuild.⁴³ The PWA/WPA helped to build several structures and buildings throughout in the city, including the Santa Monica Post Office (1938), Colorado Avenue Viaduct (1939), Olympic Boulevard Storm Drain (1940), and the Santa Monica Municipal Airport (1941). The WPA and Federal Art Project (FAP) were also responsible for various public art projects, including a mural in the Santa Monica Public Library (1935) and sculptures installed in Pacific Palisades Park (1934) and Santa Monica High School (1937). The Art Deco-style City Hall (1938), designed by Donald Parkinson with terrazzo mosaics by local artist Stanton Macdonald-Wright, was also constructed using WPA funds.

In the years leading up to the United States entry into the war in December 1941, a series of dramatic shifts began. Thousands of people migrated to Southern California from other parts of the country. The rapid influx of Douglas Aircraft and other defense workers exacerbated Southern California's already intense need for housing. In 1940, the population of Santa Monica was 53,500.⁴⁴ During the war, Douglas aircraft had 44,000 people (mostly women) on its payroll at the Santa Monica Cloverfield facility, nearly doubling Santa Monica's population.⁴⁵ Unlike other cities, Santa Monica had little open land on which to construct defense worker housing, even if the money and materials had been available. Instead, density increased in an already built-out city. The federal government converted newly-built public housing complexes to "defense housing," and constructed additional "war worker" housing complexes. These investments provided temporary relief, but housing was a problem that persisted for many years after the war's end.⁴⁶

Like so many Southern California communities, Santa Monica's population density increased during the postwar period as returning G.I.s sought to live in Southern

⁴³ David Kipen, "How the New Deal Continues to Shape L.A. 90 Years On," *KCET*, August 18, 2021, <https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/how-the-new-deal-continues-to-shape-la-90-years-on> (accessed October 29, 2021).

⁴⁴ California Department of Finance, "Historical Census Populations of Places, Towns and Cities in California, 1850-2000."

⁴⁵ Basten, *Santa Monica Bay*, 181.

⁴⁶ Les Storrs, *Santa Monica Portrait of a City: Yesterday and Today* (Santa Monica, CA: Santa Monica Bank, 1974), 38.

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California. Educational institutions, libraries and civic buildings all expanded to meet the growing demand. However, housing continued to be a problem. So dire was the postwar housing situation in Santa Monica, in 1945 the Santa Monica Housing Authority repaired army barracks across from City Hall between Main Street and Ocean Avenue for use as residential quarters. Only discharged service men and women and their families were considered for housing in the restored barracks.

Southern California's postwar population boom and rise in consumer culture spurred retail and commercial development throughout the region. Santa Monica was no exception. During the post-war years, Santa Monica continued to expand as a residential community, as a resort and hub of "space age technological development,"⁴⁷ and in the provision of healthcare and financial services for Los Angeles' westside. Large-scale commercial development in the postwar era was largely concentrated along Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards.

Southern California's aerospace industry gained momentum following World War II. Many existing aviation firms, such as Santa Monica's Douglas Aircraft Company, repositioned themselves for a new wave of defense manufacturing: missiles and spacecraft. This theme explores the industrial development associated with Santa Monica's innovation and leadership in the defense industry in Cold War America and beyond. Santa Monica was a hub of technology and innovation during the postwar period. It was home to some of the most important and cutting-edge aerospace, electronics, and computer systems companies in the country. In many ways, these companies are the natural ancestors of the technological firms that dominated the industrial area of Santa Monica at the beginning of the 21st century. Industries from the previous decades such as agriculture, motion pictures and transportation and shipping took a backseat to the aerospace industry.

Transportation also changed in the post-war years. Named the Olympic Freeway while still in the planning stages, the portion of Interstate 10 in Santa Monica between Bundy and the McClure Tunnel opened to traffic January 29, 1965. As a part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways (now known as the Eisenhower Interstate System), route planning was done at a Federal level, with less concern for existing neighborhoods and buildings. By 1958, Interstate 10's present configuration had been determined, generally following the old Los Angeles & Independence Railroad right-of-way from the eastern city limit to about 20th Street and running between Olympic and Michigan Avenues to the McClure Tunnel, cutting through established, less affluent residential neighborhoods. Construction began in downtown Los Angeles and progressed westward.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ "Two Research Firms Lease Office Space," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan 13, 1963, I6.

⁴⁸ The highway finally connected to the Pacific Coast Highway on January 5, 1965. Officially named the Santa Monica Freeway by the State Highway Commission on April 25, 1957, it has also been known as the Christopher Columbus Transcontinental Highway since 1976.

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Today, the City of Santa Monica has over 90,000 residents and its largest industries are professional, scientific and technical services.

5.2 History of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD)⁴⁹

Early Schools, 1875-1902

The first school to serve Santa Monica and Malibu was established within months of the recording of the subdivision of Santa Monica and the first sale of lots in 1875. The school district originally served the entire region from La Ballona Rancho on the southwest and the Malibu rancho to the northwest, but overtime was limited to the geographical boundaries of present-day Santa Monica and Malibu.

The district's first public school was held in the Presbyterian Church located at 3rd Street and Arizona Avenue. The school opened on March 6, 1876, with fifty-two students in attendance, and an administrative staff consisting of one teacher, one principal, and one janitor.⁵⁰ So swift was the settlement of Santa Monica in the early days that the student population jumped to 77 one month after the school opened, and there were over 100 students by the time the term ended.⁵¹

Early Development

The first dedicated school building was constructed on property donated by Senator Jones and Colonel Baker. Opened on September 11, 1876, the 6th Street School was a two-story wood-frame building located on 6th Street between Santa Monica Boulevard and Arizona Avenue. By 1884, the school hired a third teacher, and in 1887, a fourth. High school courses were added to the 6th Street School in 1891 in accordance with a law passed by the state legislature establishing high schools. Additions were made to the school in 1887.

The first school building was a relatively modest a two-story, wood-framed schoolhouse located at 6th Street near Arizona Avenue. The building was opened on September 11th, 1876.

⁴⁹ This section has been excerpted and adapted from the "City of Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory Update Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of Santa Monica by Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, March 2018, and the "Santa Monica High School Campus Plan Historic Resources Technical Report," Prepared for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District by Historic Resources Group, July 2018. It has been informed by additional research as referenced.

⁵⁰ Cleland, Donald Milton. "A Historical Study of the Santa Monica City Schools." *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn, 1953. (7)

⁵¹ "Century of History in Santa Monica, 1875-1975," *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, May 17, 1975, 22D.

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6th Street School, n.d. Source: Santa Monica Public Library.

In 1890, the South Side School, was built in the southern reached of Santa Monica at 4th and Ashland Streets. A continuous growth of population by the turn of the century led to the demolition of the school in 1902 and its replacement with a larger, 8-room building. A fire destroyed the school in 1908, although it was quickly rebuilt as a brick building and named the Washington School (1908, Robert Farquhar). The Santa Monica School District sold the fire damaged building, which was moved to 2001 Fourth Street and repurposed as the Phillips Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church, the first African American church in the Ocean Park district.⁵²

The origins of a high school in Santa Monica date to 1884, when 6th Street School principal W.W. Seaman began teaching high school subjects as a two-year extension of the grammar school. This extension of the elementary school was a common practice throughout California at the time, as trustees were authorized to organize high schools under an act of 1866, and under the State Constitution of 1879.⁵³ However, the founding of the high school was not official until the enactment of the Union High School Law of 1891, which formally provided for the establishment of high schools in the state. Therefore, although students receiving diplomas in 1887 might be regarded as the first graduates of Santa Monica High School, it was not until 1894 – when the school was accredited with a four-year course of study – that it had its first official graduating class.⁵⁴ In 1895, there were approximately 500 students in the school system.

That year, residents approved a \$15,000 bond to erect a dedicated high school at 10th Street and Oregon Avenue (now Santa Monica Boulevard). The construction of that school, known as Lincoln High School (1898, H.X. Goetz, contractor) signaled a school

⁵² Alison Rose Jefferson, "African American Leisure Space in Santa Monica: The Beach Sometimes Known As the 'Inkwell,' 14900s-1960s," *Southern California Quarterly* 91, no. 2 (Summer 2009): 161-162.

⁵³ Cleland, Donald M. A History of the Santa Monica Schools 1876-1951. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, February 1952. (17, 36, 54) Cleland, Donald Milton. "A Historical Study of the Santa Monica City Schools." *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn, 1953. (7)

⁵⁴ Cleland, Donald M. A History of the Santa Monica Schools 1876-1951. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, February 1952. (54)

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building boom that would erect eight schools in eighteen years. Lincoln High School contained five classrooms, an assembly hall, and physical laboratories.⁵⁵

Unification and Expansion, 1903-1933

The early years of the twentieth century ushered in dramatic changes to schools in the area. From approximately 1903 to 1933, schools in Santa Monica increased in number, grew in populations served, and changed in design and orientation.

In 1903, Santa Monica became a city of the fourth class, thereby entitling it to maintain its own schools. Thus, the school district became the Santa Monica City School District.⁵⁶ Increasingly, schools were expected to serve community needs in Santa Monica. In 1905, the newly established Woman's Club of Santa Monica championed the building of schools and a bond issue in 1906 provided funding for additional schools. By 1907, the population of Santa Monica had jumped to 7,200 residents.⁵⁷ The following year, the city expanded further by annexing the community of Ocean Park to the south.⁵⁸

In the early twentieth century, the Progressive Education Movement came to influence education in Santa Monica. Shunning traditional teaching philosophies, the Progressive Education Movement emphasized hands-on methods of teaching that allowed children to explore and learn to the best of their own individual abilities.⁵⁹ This influenced school programming, which increasingly emphasized individualized curriculum. As populations increased and space became scarce at schools, the Progressive Education Movement philosophies also provided a method for economizing space. As recorded by Historian Donald M. Cleland, during the early twentieth century, great strides were made in the Santa Monica school system:

The phenomenal growth of enrollment which the Santa Monica schools experienced during the early part of the twentieth century focused the attention of the board of education upon the problem of providing adequate physical facilities. It was during this time that...changes in curriculum were observed at all levels of instruction. At the elementary level, the platoon system of organization was adopted and put into effect in the four new elementary schools designed for this program. The platoon schools, as such, continued in operation until the early 1930s.⁶⁰

Platoon school systems divided larger student populations into two groups, one of which would study academic subjects in the classrooms in the morning while the second utilized the rest of the school facility for specialized subjects. Then, halfway

⁵⁵ "Santa Monica," *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1898, 15.

⁵⁶ Patricia Marie McFadden, "A History of Santa Monica Schools," 26.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* (15)

⁵⁸ Holliday, Bob. "Queen of the Setting Sun: A History of Santa Monica High School 1891-1991." Samohi Alumni Association, 1991. (35)

⁵⁹ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969*, Prepared for the Los Angeles Unified School District, 2014, 29-30.

⁶⁰ Milton, "A Historical Study of the Santa Monica City Schools," 7.

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through the day, the two groups would switch places and study subjects. The system was praised by leaders of the Progressive Education Movement including John Dewey and Evelyn Dewey and was thought to achieve a more humanistic and democratic education while also providing administrative efficiency.⁶¹

During this period of development, one of the biggest projects was the construction of Jefferson School (1907; demolished) at 1333 6th Street to replace the 6th Street School. A new, three-story high school of wood frame construction (1910) also replaced Lincoln High School at 10th Street and Arizona Avenue. Roosevelt School (1906) was constructed on 6th Street between Montana and Idaho avenues. John Adams School (1913-1914) was built on Ocean Park Boulevard between 5th and 6th streets.

By 1910, Lincoln High School was overcrowded, and plans were drafted for a new high school.⁶² Because Ocean Park residents were clamoring for a new institution closer to their community, thirteen acres on what was known as Prospect Hill were selected for the new high school site. Santa Monica High School (1912, Allison & Allison), almost immediately nicknamed Samohi, cost \$200,000 to build and was regarded as one of the finest school buildings around. The large brick building featured a polychromatic tower and an open colonnade of arches. It was heralded by the *Los Angeles Times* as an “Architectural Marvel.”⁶³ “Red tapestry bricks with wide cement joints” were a featured component of the design. Composed of three buildings, the Academic (or main) building, the Science Household and Fine Arts Building facing Fremont Avenue, and the Manual Arts building along Michigan Avenue, the intent was to have all rooms facing the south or east to have “disappearing windows” to maximize ventilation and light. The original design also called for “outdoor school rooms.”⁶⁴ Landscaping featured lush plantings and tropical palm trees that lent an exotic air to the campus. Subsequent additions to the campus included a gymnasium and a health unit (c. 1913) and a printing plant (1918). On May 20, 1921, an open-air theater (a.k.a., the Memorial Bowl) was dedicated to honor the dead of World War I.

1920s Expansion

During the 1920s, several new schools were constructed, and existing schools were expanded. The 1920s also brought a new design vocabulary to many schools, with several schools employing the wildly popular period-revival styles that came to characterize Southern California architecture. Attention to design and detail was conferred on buildings from the 1920s, and campuses as a whole served a more unified role with grand entrances and a greater degree of spatial differentiation.

⁶¹ Raymond A. Mohl, “Alice Barrows and the Platoon School, 1920-1940,” presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association (Washington, D.C.: April 1975).

⁶² Louise Gabriel, “History of Santa Monica, Part IV,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 8, 1985, K8.

⁶³ “Stately Buildings in Santa Monica’s Magnificent New Polytechnic High School,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1911, V1.

⁶⁴ “New Polytechnic High School,” *Los Angeles Times*.

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During this period, Santa Monica was first in spending on high school education among cities in Southern California.⁶⁵ A 1927 study found that half of the possible residential areas were already improved and that, in less than ten years, the population of the city would double. Recommendations included building a new junior high school in the southeast part of the city and renovating the existing high school and elementary schools. The study proposed an “Americanization School” with separate facilities from the general school population, perhaps a reflection of the multiethnic and multilingual nature of the population streaming into the area in the 1920s. The study also recommended that new school sites be spread evenly throughout the city, with little overlap.

The newly constructed schools featured two-story brick edifices. They included John Muir Elementary School (1923) at 725 Ocean Park Boulevard; the new McKinley School (1923, Allison & Allison)⁶⁶ at 24th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard; Madison Elementary School (1926, Francis David Rutherford) on the site of the old Lincoln High School at 10th Street and Arizona Avenue; Lincoln Junior High School (1923-1924) at 1425 California Avenue; the Garfield School at 1740 7th Street, and Franklin Elementary (reportedly built with beach sand) at 2400 Montana Avenue. Additions to the Grant School were made in 1924 by local architect Francis David Rutherford.⁶⁷ A six-room addition by Allison & Allison was made to John Adams Middle School in 1920.⁶⁸

Associated architects, firms, and design professionals from this period include Allison & Allison and Francis D. Rutherford, among others.

Innovation and Reform, 1933-1945

The 1930s and 1940s brought about major changes for schools serving Santa Monica and Malibu. The Long Beach Earthquake of 1933, Works Progress Administration program, and advent of World War II all left indelible marks on the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu and the schools therein.

Long Beach Earthquake of 1933

In 1933, the Long Beach Earthquake struck. Damage was widespread, and much of it focused on the schools in the greater Los Angeles area whose multi-story brick construction was adapted from east coast designs. Suddenly, they appeared ill-fit for Southern California’s children. According to the *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, “No single event has affected Santa Monica schools as much [as the earthquake].”⁶⁹ Although a cursory inspection had Santa Monica students returning to classrooms immediately,

⁶⁵ Osman R. Hull and Willard S. Ford, *School Housing Survey of the Santa Monica City Schools*, second Series, No. 4. 1927.

⁶⁶ The old McKinley School was sold to a Methodist church.

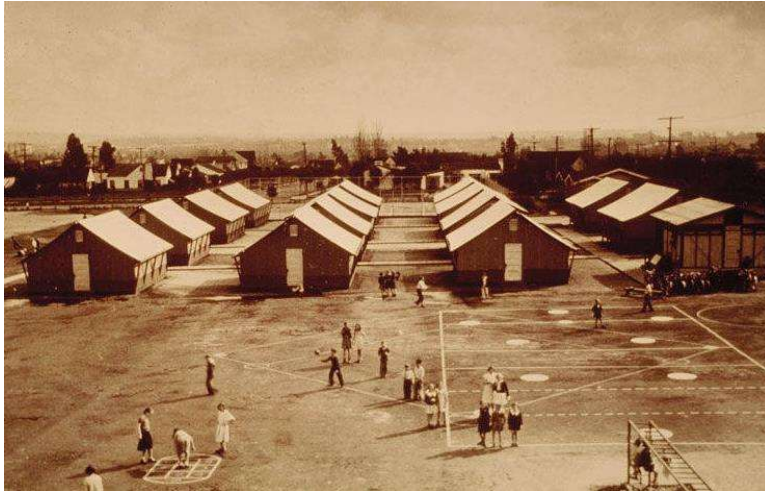
⁶⁷ “Santa Monica Will Add to Grant School,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 1924, 5.

⁶⁸ *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, January 2, 1920, 17.

⁶⁹ “A Century of History,” *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 23D.

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inspections by architects and engineers suggested otherwise. On March 13, 1934, the state commission inspected the city's schools and called for their immediate closure. A study of the damage to school buildings resulting from the Long Beach Earthquake showed that the main elements of weakness in school buildings were a failure to provide for lateral thrust; a heterogeneity of construction materials; weak roof construction; lack of proper anchorage between floors and walls; and masonry ornamentation.⁷⁰



Tents on the Santa Monica High School campus after the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake. Source: Santa Monica Public Library.

Within thirty days of the Long Beach Earthquake, the California State Legislature passed the Field Act, one of the first pieces of legislation that mandated earthquake-resistant construction in the United States.⁷¹ The Field Act required a statewide overhaul of building codes and practices, particularly for school buildings, and mandated state oversight to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of regulations.⁷² Thus, the Long Beach Earthquake ushered in a period of widespread school renovation and reconstruction that would transform many area schools, including those in Santa Monica.

In the fall of 1933, a bond issue of \$400,000 for the rehabilitation of schools in the district was defeated. In April of 1934, the entire school population of the district (approximately 6,000 students) were moved from their regular buildings into “tents” –

⁷⁰ Victor L. Martins, “A Study of Public Schools in Southern California Damaged by the Earthquake of March 10, 1933,” unpublished master’s thesis, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California, 1933 as cited in: George Edward Des Rochers, “The Construction of Earthquake Resistant School Buildings, Master’s thesis, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA: 1936.

⁷¹ Alquist, Alfred E. “The Field Act and Public School Construction: A 2007 Perspective.” California Seismic Safety Commission, February 2007. (7)

⁷² Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969. Sapphos Environmental, Inc., March 2014. (63)

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temporary structures with wood floors with canvas tops and sides that could be rolled up for light and ventilation.⁷³

Beginning in 1934, local, state, and federal funds were made available to reconstruct, modernize, and expand area schools, not only to meet new seismic requirements, but also to address the changing school needs.⁷⁴ As reported in the *Los Angeles Times* at the time, new and repaired buildings would be designed for “absolute safety with simplicity and beauty of architecture in harmony with the atmosphere and traditions of Southern California.”⁷⁵ Brick construction was largely replaced in lieu of reinforced concrete and wood buildings, which could better withstand lateral forces.⁷⁶

The Santa Monica schools that were able to be reconstructed were completed under the State Emergency Relief Act (SERA), which furnished the funds for all labor gratis to the district as a work relief provision during the depression. Schools that were able to be rehabilitated often had their second stories removed.⁷⁷

In 1934, the school district hired the architectural firm of Marsh, Smith, and Powell to prepare plans and specifications for new school buildings.⁷⁸ As reported in the *Los Angeles Times* at the time, new and repaired buildings would be designed for “absolute safety with simplicity and beauty of architecture in harmony with the atmosphere and traditions of Southern California.”⁷⁹ Brick construction was largely replaced in lieu of reinforced concrete and wood buildings, which could better withstand lateral forces.⁸⁰

Instead of the imposing, monumental buildings of the early twentieth century, new school design championed the use of one-story buildings with a more differentiated, expansive school plant design. Modern school design was concerned with the infiltration of natural light and increasing air circulation in the classroom. California’s moderate climate lent itself to passive heating and cooling designs that employed full-length sliding doors and operable windows at varying heights from different directions to draw in cool breezes and release warmer air.

New buildings would be “free of needless ornamentation,” since applied decoration often failed and fell to the ground during earthquakes. Thus, early-20th century schools that were substantially repaired or rebuilt after the earthquake commonly reflect the

⁷³ Holliday, Bob. “Queen of the Setting Sun: A History of Santa Monica High School 1891-1991.” Samohi Alumni Association, 1991, 20; Des Rochers, 110.4e3

⁷⁴ C. H. Kromer, “Earthquake Resistant Construction Applied to California Schools,” *Engineering News-Record* 115 no. 25, December 19, 1935, 856-860.

⁷⁵ “Safety, Simplicity, and Old-California Beauty Combined in Mission-Type Schools of Reconstruction Program,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 1934, page 17.

⁷⁶ Ralph C. Flewelling, “Schools, Earthquakes, and Progress,” *California Arts and Architecture*, September 1935, 20-21 and 29-31.

⁷⁷ Des Rochers, 47; 109.

⁷⁸ Des Rochers, 111.

⁷⁹ “Safety, Simplicity, and Old-California Beauty Combined in Mission-Type Schools of Reconstruction Program,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 1934, page 17.

⁸⁰ Ralph C. Flewelling, “Schools, Earthquakes, and Progress,” *California Arts and Architecture*, September 1935, 20-21 and 29-31.

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architectural trends of the 1930s, as decorative period revival designs were replaced with a more simplified, modernist aesthetic.⁸¹ The resulting remodels displayed smooth concrete or stucco exteriors, flat roofs, recessed windows, rounded corners, or other curved elements, as well as shallow relief panels and interior murals.

In August of 1935, funds for the SERA were suddenly discontinued and all construction work at Santa Monica schools ceased. New construction was completed under the auspices of the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Works Progress Administration (WPA)/Public Works Administration (PWA)

Much of the reconstruction activity that took place between 1935 and 1940 was accomplished with the assistance of the federal Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) and supplemented by local funds. In 1935, the Santa Monica City School District received \$1,500,000 in federal funds, along with \$290,000 in local school bonds, to repair or rebuild ten elementary, junior high and high school campuses.⁸² By far, the largest project was the complete rehabilitation and modernization of Santa Monica High School. By 1936, it was clear that existing funds would not be sufficient to complete the project at the high school, so an additional \$250,000 in bond money was approved by voters for this purpose. When the high school campus was finally complete, the WPA and Board of Education had spent more than \$1,225,000.

The net result was a \$3 million project wherein four schools, Adams, Roosevelt, Washington, and Grant, were all demolished and rebuilt. The second stories of Muir and Franklin Schools were removed. The brick facing at Santa Monica High School was removed, and the building was re-clad in stucco. The newly constructed schools eschewed period revival designs for more contemporary, pared-back, Streamline Moderne-style buildings with steel reinforcement. John Adams Junior High School (1935, Marsh, Smith & Powell) was located at 2355-2417 16th Street. Grant School at 2368 Pearl Street (1936, Parkinson and Estep) was constructed in the Streamline Moderne style and featured rows of steel sash hopper windows. Washington School was located at 2850 4th Street. Roosevelt School (1935, Marsh, Smith & Powell) at Lincoln and Montana was the most restrained in design, evoking the PWA Moderne style. The design for Franklin Elementary (c. 1934, H.L. Gogerty) was two stories in height and horizontal in orientation, with steel sash hopper windows.

In 1937, with funding from the WPA, an auditorium (Marsh, Smith & Powell; City of Santa Monica Landmark #47) was constructed for Samohi students and as a municipal hall for the community. The hall's elegant Streamline Moderne style design represents

⁸¹ Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969. Sapphos Environmental, Inc., March 2014. (63)

⁸² Des Rochers, 112.

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some of the best architecture of the WPA program. Its curved lines, horizontal massing, and decorative bands were emblematic of the style. Renamed Barnum Hall in 1944, the auditorium foyer houses tile murals of “The Vikings” by Stanton Macdonald-Wright, designed as part of a Federal Art Project for the WPA. Additionally, Wright designed the stage fire curtain mural, “Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla.” Santa Monica funded two separate bond issues to complete the theater, but budgetary problems plagued the project.

In 1937, the Santa Monica Technical School opened on the old Grant School site. In a move toward a more specialized, vocational education that would help ease the problems created by the Depression, the school initially offered courses in cosmetology, carpentry and industrial sheet metal. SaMo Tech, as the school became known, expanded during the war when the defense industry needed additional manpower; new classes were offered in aircraft manufacturing, shipbuilding, and other industrial fields. At the peak of the war effort, classes were offered in three shifts, 24-hours a day, seven days per week. Between 1940 and 1945, over 40,000 students passed through SaMo Tech.⁸³

World War II

Beginning in the early 1940s with the advent of World War II, Santa Monica experienced a massive surge in population as military personnel and workers at Douglas Aircraft worked around the clock manufacturing military aircraft.⁸⁴ This infusion of new residents led not only to a housing crisis and subsequent building boom, but also to steep increases in enrollment in the city’s schools. With a shortage of building supplies and resources, schools were forced to operate on double shifts to accommodate all of Santa Monica’s children. After the war, returning GIs married and started families, thus increasing the pressure on Santa Monica’s already overcrowded public school system. In addition to starting families, many returning GIs took advantage of the GI bill to help pay for their college educations.

Associated architects, firms, and design professionals from this period include Marsh, Smith & Powell, Parkinson & Parkinson, Henry L. Gogerty, and Joe M. Estep, among others.

Postwar Modernism, 1946-1970

Like elsewhere in Southern California, a growing population in Santa Monica put pressure on the limited resources in the city. New school buildings and the expansion of existing campuses was the result of these pressures.

⁸³ “A Century of History,” *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 23D.

⁸⁴ Santa Monica Conservancy website, <http://www.smconservancy.org/>. Accessed December 2016.

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Modernism and Functional School Plants

By the postwar years, the child-centered school plant first championed in the 1930s was adopted as standard design. Architecture reflected new humanist teaching theories, and schools were standardized to function for children's needs. As a result, schools became increasingly modern, eschewing the period revival and historical design vocabularies of earlier decades. Postwar schools in Southern California were designed to "feel decentralized, nonhierarchical, approachable, informal, and child-centered."⁸⁵ Specifically, many schools were designed to have one-story massing, ample lighting and ventilation, and an indoor-outdoor spatial feeling. These design elements, which were ubiquitous in the post-war era, were developed in the 1930s with the creation of the "Santa Monica Plan." Typical construction materials in post-war development included plywood, glass, and steel.

In addition to style and material, schools from this period also underwent a revolution in site plan, design, and layout. One new design principal in the postwar years was the finger-plan school. The finger-plan design featured a central corridor from which wings projected; this maximized the amount of fresh air and light for each wing. Over time, the simple finger-plan school adopted several variations including double-loaded hallways and zigzag building plans. In the 1950s, contrastingly, school plants increasingly adopted the cluster-plan style. The cluster-plan emphasized low massing and indoor-outdoor accessibility but grouped wings as modular units surrounding a common courtyard. This helped compact the campus and provided cost savings in construction.⁸⁶

In Santa Monica during the postwar period, large increases in enrollment presented major problems. As a result, the school district developed new plans for the operation, maintenance, and modernization of the schools, including the expansion of Santa Monica High School. Voters approved two large bond measures, in 1946 and 1950, to fund a large-scale building program that would address not only the immediate issue of overcrowding but the long-term needs of the rapidly growing city.⁸⁷

In order to improve efficiencies in the management of the schools, on July 1st, 1953, the City School District (elementary schools) and the High School District were consolidated into the Santa Monica Unified School District.⁸⁸ The area served by the new district included 8.3 square miles within the city limits, as well as 65 square miles in the then-unincorporated community of Malibu.

During this period, the segregation and racial makeup of schools was a subject of study at the Santa Monica school district. In 1969, the State Department of Education recognized that nine out of seventeen schools in the Santa Monica Unified School

⁸⁵ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969*, 78.

⁸⁶ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969*, 80-84.

⁸⁷ Cleland, Donald Milton. "A Historical Study of the Santa Monica City Schools." *History of Education Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn, 1953. (8)

⁸⁸ The district was later renamed the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD).

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District were racially imbalanced.⁸⁹ These schools were Cabrillo, Edison, Franklin, Muir, Point Dume, Roosevelt, Webster, Will Rogers, and Malibu Park Junior High School. Madison and John Adams schools were also added to the list shortly thereafter. Rather than redrawing boundary lines or busing students to achieve racial balance, the Board of Education first decided to concentrate on helping disadvantaged students. The schools with the highest number of economically and educationally disadvantaged students -- Edison, Washington, and Muir -- received additional help from the district.⁹⁰

Additionally, the School District's Racial and Advisory Committee organized a 126-member committee to find "community solutions" for the imbalance of five Santa Monica's Elementary Schools, including Edison, Franklin, Muir, Will Rogers, and Roosevelt. The *Report of the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Ethnic and Racial Balance*, published in 1972, identified five areas for improvement: transportation, increase the number of minority group faculty and staff, increase community involvement, in-service training for current teachers, and integration of students from various racial and ethnic backgrounds in schools.⁹¹ The school district eventually enacted some busing and hired more teachers of varied racial and ethnic backgrounds.⁹²

From to late 1940s to the 1960s, new schools were typically designed in the Mid-Century Modern or International style of architecture and landscape designs were Modern. The new schools in the school system included Will Rogers School (1948) at 2401 14th Street, a late example of the pared-back Streamline Moderne style, and Edison Elementary (1950) at 24th Street and Kansas Avenue. Many existing schools embarked on additions, including John Adams School (1969, James Mount).

Associated architects, firms, and design professionals from this period include Pierre Claeysens, Frederic Barienbrock & Andrew F. Murray; Garret Eckbo; Henry L. Gogerty; John C. Lindsay, and J. Harold Melstrom & Joe M. Estep, among others.

5.3 Roosevelt Elementary School

Development Narrative

Named for U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, the first Roosevelt Elementary School was designed by Francis D. Rutherford (1883-1933) in 1906 and was located on Sixth Street and Montana Avenue. In 1933, the Santa Monica school district permanently closed the Roosevelt school due to the physical damages it sustained during the Long Beach Earthquake in March of that year. The property was subsequently sold, and the district built a new Roosevelt Elementary School at a different north side location.

⁸⁹ The state guidelines state that if the percentage of students of one or more minority group in a school differs by over 15% from that of all the schools in a district, then the school is racially and ethnically imbalanced; "State Tells S.M. to Correct School Racial Imbalance," *The Los Angeles Times*, December 21, 1969.

⁹⁰ "S.M. Schools Will Concentrate on Aid for Disadvantaged," *The Los Angeles Times*, November 16, 1969.

⁹¹ Santa Monica Unified School District, *Report of the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Ethnic and Racial Balance*, (Santa Monica: 1972), 2.

⁹² Ken Fanucchi, "Voluntary Busing Plan Attracting Few Pupils," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 2, 1973.

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The origins of the new school were influenced by two intersecting factors of the 1930s, the California legislation known as the Field Act and the federal Depression relief programs of the “New Deal.” The Field Act of 1933 required districts to comply with new seismic building standards leading to a school construction boom in the 1930s throughout the affected region. In Santa Monica, Roosevelt Elementary School was one of four schools that were demolished and rebuilt.

For the new Roosevelt Elementary School campus, the district acquired a six-acre city block within Tract 2743.⁹³ Although a short walk east from the old school, the new location was slightly closer to the neighborhood known as North-of-Montana, which had experienced intensive residential development since the 1920s.⁹⁴ The new school was situated in a prime location for new residents with children.

By the time the second Roosevelt Elementary School opened, Santa Monica’s population of people of color was approximately 10 percent of the total population.⁹⁵ Schools in Santa Monica were not racially segregated.⁹⁶ However, there’s evidence that people of color were not welcome as residents in the North-of-Montana neighborhood, except as domestic workers and day laborers.⁹⁷ There’s also evidence they were excluded from home ownership north of Montana Avenue. In the 1930s, the residential district was given a blue grade by federal mortgage agencies which was a signal to lending institutions that it was not a racially mixed community and was primarily if not exclusively white.⁹⁸

“The Santa Monica Plan”

Roosevelt Elementary School campus debuted Marsh, Smith & Powell’s new “Santa Monica Plan,” a school plant design engineered to meet the requirements of the new state construction code and reflect modern design. The plan for the modern school was created by means of several seminars between the architects and educators of the Santa Monica district, in which buildings were planned and designed for safety, future expansion, and activity programs in rooms adaptable to such procedures.⁹⁹

In 1934, the firm established several underlying principles of the new plan:

⁹³ County of Los Angeles Assessor Map, accessed online. It is possible that tract 2743 was part of the Palisades Tract which was established in 1905 and by 1913 included the lots where the second Roosevelt School was constructed. For more about the Palisades Tract, see Historic Resources Group and Architectural Resources Group, *City of Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory Update Historic Context Statement*, March 2018, 64.

⁹⁴ Historic Resources Group et al, *Inventory Update*, 63.

⁹⁵ “Population, Volume III, Part I- Reports by States, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930,” United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/library/publications.html>. In 1930, Santa Monica’s population was 37,146. In the language of the Census at the time, the non-white population was made up of 740 Negroes, 2307 Mexicans, 20 Indians, 19 Chinese, and 432 Japanese.

⁹⁶ Alison Rose Jefferson, “Reconstruction and Reclamation: The Erased African American Experience in Santa Monica’s History,” 2020, accessed at www.alisonrosejefferson.com.

⁹⁷ Jeanette Marantos, “Tour Santa Monica’s once-vibrant Black neighborhoods, nearly erased by racism and ‘progress,’” *Los Angeles Times*, March 6, 2021.

⁹⁸ “Assessment of Fair Housing in the City,” Chapter II, *Housing Element, City of Santa Monica General Plan*, 27- 29.

⁹⁹ Herbert J. Powell, “Assessing Design Factors for Modern Elementary Schools in Southern California,” *Los Angeles School Journal* XIX, no. 5, October 14, 1935: 20-22.

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1. In an earthquake area, schools should be designed to protect their occupants as completely as possible.
2. In a California school, even more recognition of outdoor life should be given than heretofore.
3. In order that progress in educational methods may be made effective, the plan arrangement of the classroom should help, rather than hamper.
4. In recognition of new uses and of new materials available, the architectural appearance should be a direct expression, instead of a compliment to tradition.
5. Expansion is recognized from the outset as a requirement of a growing population.¹⁰⁰

In this way, the “Santa Monica Plan” from the very start recognized the need for Modern, functional school plants that were seismically sound. According to architects Marsh, Smith & Powell the “Santa Monica Plan” was designed for indoor-outdoor learning:

It is in the relation to outdoor living in California that this plan makes an important contribution. A paved brick terrace, using bricks salvaged from the existing Class C construction buildings, adjoins each classroom. Broad steps lead down to the lawn, and a sense of privacy is obtained by inserting a fifteen-foot-wide planted area between each terrace.

A maximum of light and air reaches each unit of the plan from all sides. Lawns between the wings of the school form a protected special play space for the younger children. It is this factor, perhaps, more than the others, which has caused this plan to be rather widely known as the “Santa Monica Plan.”

The Roosevelt School is located off the center axis of the plot, and space for future auditorium, cafeteria, and other special rooms is allowed. Its strength in expansibility lies in the fact that the school is composed of self-contained units tied together by shelters, and as the community grows additional units of classrooms are built.¹⁰¹

The “Santa Monica Plan” was quickly hailed by critics as a “new trend in educational procedure” that provided functional teaching spaces, child-centered buildings, and plentiful outdoor play areas.¹⁰² It was precedent-setting for school design not only in Los Angeles but also nationwide. Roosevelt Elementary School was publicized as a “model” school in national, regional, and local publications including *Architect and Engineer*, *California Arts and Architecture*, *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, and *The*

¹⁰⁰ “Santa Monica Plan as Developed in New School Building at Beach City,” *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, December 28, 1934: 17-18.

¹⁰¹ “Roosevelt School: Santa Monica, California, Marsh, Smith & Powell, Architects,” *The Architectural Record*, June 1936: 440.

¹⁰² Frederick W. Jones, “Schools,” *Architect and Engineer*, February 1935: 20.

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Architectural Record.¹⁰³ In fact, the school's design was so influential that it was highlighted as a model school in *The Progressive Elementary School: A Handbook for Principals, Teachers, and Parents*, an influential book published in 1938 by Robert Hill Lane, superintendent of schools in Los Angeles and vice president of the Progressive Education Association. The book featured numerous photographs and diagrams of the school, as well as an interview with a teacher at the school, who lauded the fresh air permitted by large glass doors and the sunny patios.¹⁰⁴

New schools in other states began to adopt the intimate, modern, and functional design elements employed by the "Santa Monica Plan." By the postwar building boom, the new building program had decisively shaped the character of schools across the United States.¹⁰⁵ The "Santa Monica Plan" and Marsh, Smith & Powell's oeuvre is discussed in greater detail in Section 5.5 below.

Construction History

Roosevelt Elementary School was designed by prominent school architects Marsh, Smith & Powell of Los Angeles between 1935 and 1936 at its new location on the corner of Lincoln Boulevard and Montana Avenue. According to Historian Donald M. Cleland, the new six-acre campus provided ample space for buildings and playgrounds. The site for the new school plant was nearly level and required very little preliminary grading. The foundation was deep enough to encounter solid ground, used reinforced concrete with "keys" meant to resist lateral thrust.

Original buildings constructed by Marsh, Smith & Powell at Roosevelt Elementary School include Buildings E, G, J, and K. The architects specified simple materials of painted stucco on wood frame construction. The flat roof and smooth wall planes, single story layout, horizontal orientation, and lack of ornamentation of the new school reflected the influence of architectural Modernism but the pared-down design was also a response to earthquake safety and the economic hardship of the 1930s.

In 1940, Buildings A, B, and C were constructed using WPA funds and designed by architect Joe M. Estep.¹⁰⁶ A building permit from that year states that ten rooms were planned for a single-story building of wood frame construction, finished with a flat roof, and designed by architect Joe M. Estep. This work was acknowledged by the WPA on the plaque dated 1940.¹⁰⁷ In 1951, an addition was made to Building C, extending it

¹⁰³ See: *Architect and Engineer*, February 1935: 20; *California Arts and Architecture*, September 1935: 21; *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, December 28, 1934: 17-18; and *The Architectural Record*, June 1936: 440.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Hill Lane, *The Progressive Elementary School: A Handbook for Principals, Teachers, and Parents*, Camden, MA: Houghton Miffling Company, 1938. <https://archive.org/details/progressiveeleme028136mbp/page/n7/mode/2up> (accessed October 22, 2021).

¹⁰⁵ Sapphos Environmental, Inc., *Los Angeles Unified School District Historic Context Statement, 1870 to 1969*, Prepared for the Los Angeles Unified School District, 2014, 59-61.

¹⁰⁶ Historical aerial photographs show these buildings under construction in March 1940 and completed by October of that year.

¹⁰⁷ Building permit, City of Santa Monica, dated February 14, 1940. The permit references the "ownership" of the WPA.

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toward the north. The architect is unknown, but was likely Joe M. Estep, who was active on the campus at that time.

In the 1950s, Joe M. Estep completed additions to the campus, including a cafeteria, assembly room, and two classrooms. Construction was described as frame and stucco construction, concrete slab, asphalt tile, and hardwood floors. The general contractor was Fred S. Macomber of Los Angeles.¹⁰⁸ These additions include the construction of Buildings D and H.¹⁰⁹ Building D was constructed on the western perimeter for the cafeteria and Building H was constructed as an auditorium on the southwest corner of the site. It was at this time that the school's main entrance, originally situated on the southwest corner of Building J with egress from Montana Avenue, was moved slightly north to the Lincoln Boulevard side of the campus. It is a terraced entrance set between the new cafeteria and auditorium and opens to the original courtyard.

In 1968, the original Building A (1940) was demolished, and a new building was completed in its location (Building A). An addition to the north of this building was added sometime between 2000 and 2002.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ "School Buildings, Santa Monica," *Architect and Engineer*, September 1951: 44.

¹⁰⁹ Patricia Marie McFadden, "A History of Santa Monica Schools," 45.

¹¹⁰ Date of alteration ascertained using aerial photographs.

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Selected Chronology

Pre-History

The area that would become Santa Monica is inhabited by the Tongva people.

Colonial Period

- 1542 Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo drops anchor in Santa Monica Bay on October 9th.
- 1769 Gaspar de Portolá arrives in Santa Monica on August 3rd.
- 1822 California becomes Mexican territory.
- 1827 Xavier Alvarado and Antonio Machado receive a grant to “a place called Santa Monica,” from Santa Monica Canyon north to Topanga Canyon.
- 1828 Don Francisco Sepulveda acquires “a place called San Vicente,” from Santa Monica Canyon south to Pico Boulevard, including the land that would become the original Santa Monica townsite.
- 1848 California is ceded to the United States by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
- 1850 California is admitted to the Union as its 31st state.
- 1851 Sepulveda is deeded the 30,000 acres known as “Rancho San Vicente y Santa Monica.”

Early Development & Establishment of the Schools

- 1872 Colonel Robert S. Baker purchases some 38,409 acres of Sepulveda’s rancho.
- 1874 Nevada Senator John P. Jones acquires a three-fourths interest in Baker's property.
- 1875 Baker and Jones plat the town of “Santa Monica,” extending from Montana Avenue to Railroad Avenue (now Colorado Avenue), and from the coast inland to 26th Street. The first lots go up for sale on July 15th.

The Santa Monica School District is established.
- 1876 Santa Monica’s first public school opens on March 6th in a Presbyterian church.

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- 1876 On September 11th, Santa Monica opens its first dedicated school building.
- 1884 A two-year extension to the 6th Street School marks the unofficial founding of a high school in Santa Monica.
- 1886 Santa Monica incorporates as an independent city on November 30th.
- 1891 The enactment of the Union High School Law formally provides for the establishment of high schools in California.
- 1898 Lincoln High School at 10th Street and Oregon Avenue (now Santa Monica Boulevard) is dedicated as Santa Monica's first official high school.
- 1903 The Santa Monica School District becomes the Santa Monica City School District.
- 1908 Ocean Park is annexed to the City of Santa Monica.

Development of Roosevelt Elementary School

- 1905-1913 Palisades Tract is subdivided by the Palisades Investment Company. The Tract is annexed by City of Santa Monica in 1906.
- 1907 First Roosevelt School opens at 6th and Montana Avenue. The school is designed by Santa Monica architect, Francis D. Rutherford.
- 1912 Second floor is added to first Roosevelt School.
- 1925 Sanborn maps show a densely built area of single-family residences north of Montana Avenue and multi-family residences south of Montana Avenue.
- 1930 Federal agencies designate the residential district north of Montana Avenue with a blue grade, a signal to mortgage companies that the area is dominated by white homeowners.
- 1933 The first Roosevelt School building sustains sufficient damage during the Long Beach Earthquake that it is demolished and the land is sold.

Post-Earthquake Reconstruction

- 1933 The Field Act is passed, legislation that mandates earthquake-resistant construction for schools in California.

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1934 The second Roosevelt School opens on Montana Avenue and 9th Street, three blocks east of the original school. Buildings E, G, J, K and the ball storage building are built at this time. The school is an example of the “Santa Monica Plan” and designed by architectural firm Marsh, Smith & Powell

The main entrance is at the corner of Montana Avenue and Lincoln Boulevard.

1940 Buildings A (demolished), B, and C on the campus are built. They are designed by Joe M. Estep with funding from the WPA.

Postwar Expansion

1951 An addition is made to Building C which extends the building toward the northeast.

Architect Joe M. Estep designs Buildings D and H. Building D is constructed on the western perimeter for the cafeteria and building H is constructed as an auditorium on the southwest corner of the site.

A new main entrance is established between Buildings D and H.

1967 Board of Education approves preliminary plans for construction of Building A. Plans include five classrooms and a library. Final plans expected in June 1968.

1968 Southern section of library (Building A) is constructed.

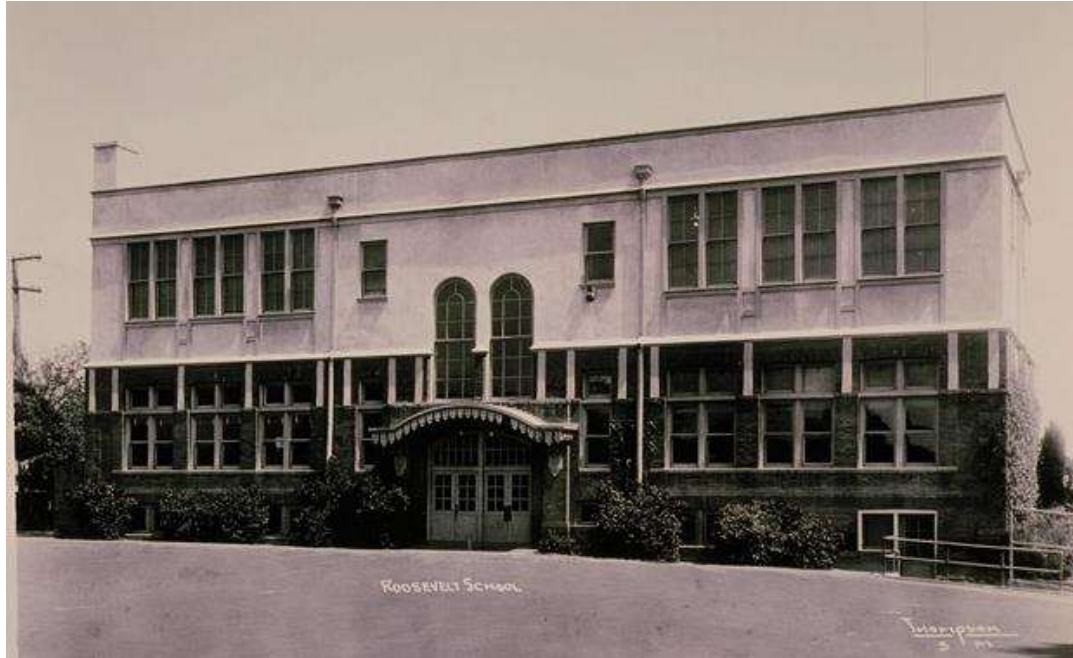
Later Development

2000 The northern addition to Building A is constructed.

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Historic Images

Original Roosevelt Elementary School campus (demolished), c. 1920s.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

Original Roosevelt Elementary School campus (demolished), c. 1920s.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

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Original Roosevelt Elementary School campus (demolished), 1925.



Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

Original Roosevelt Elementary School campus (demolished), c. 1920s.



Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

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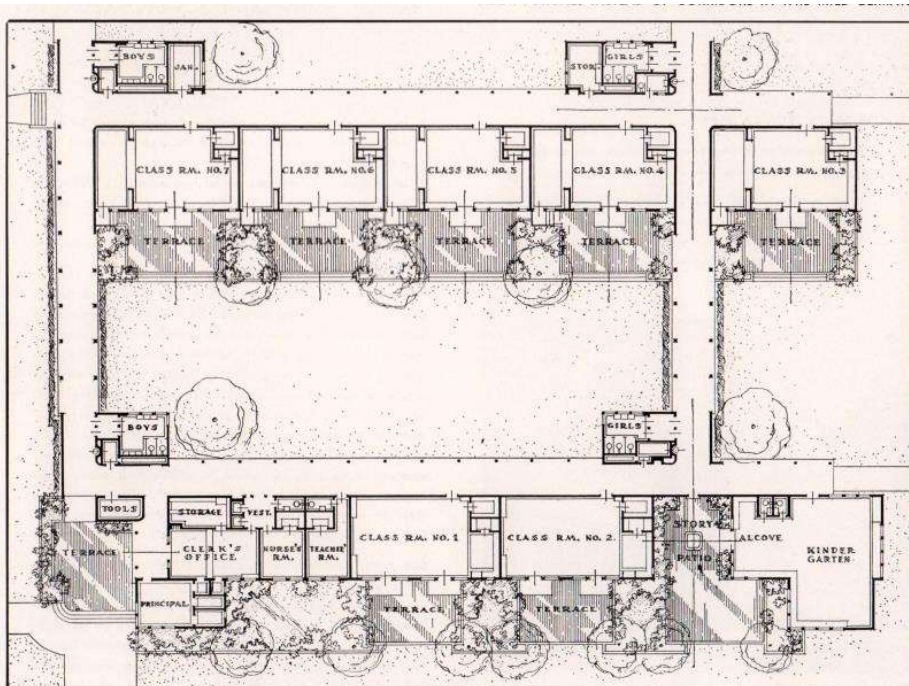
HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

Rendering and Plan for Roosevelt Elementary School by Marsh, Smith & Powell, 1935.



Source: Architect and Engineer.

Plot Plan for Roosevelt Elementary School by Marsh, Smith & Powell, 1935.

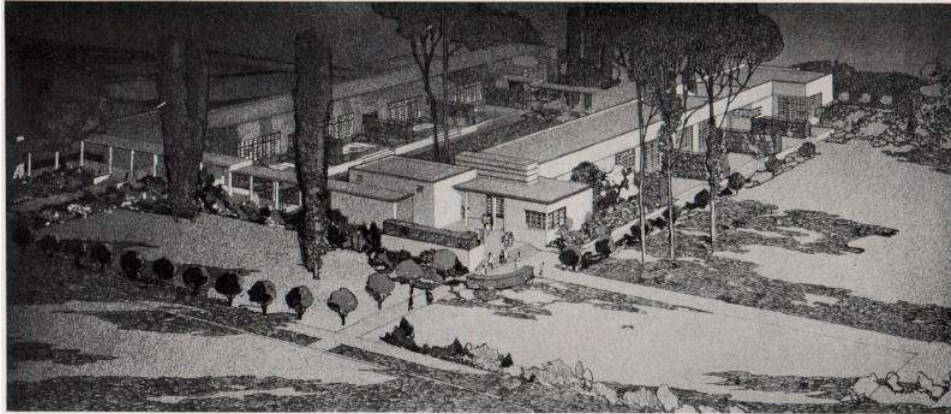


Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

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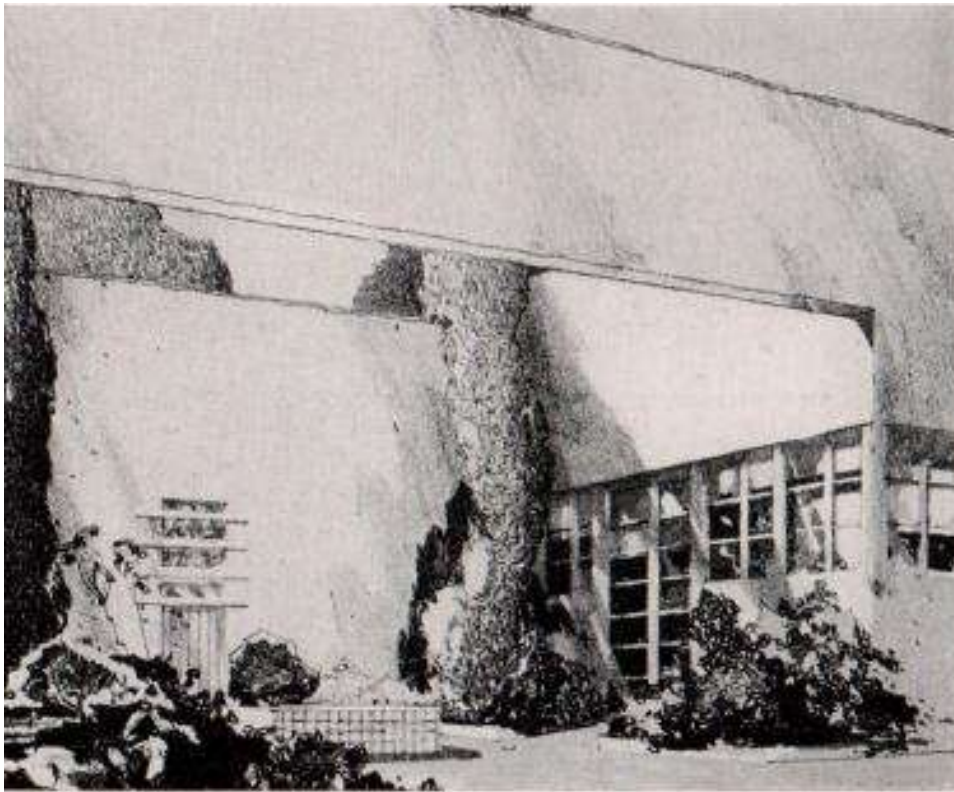
HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

Rendering Showing Outdoor Classrooms by Marsh, Smith & Powell, 1935.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

Rendering of Roosevelt Elementary School by Marsh, Smith & Powell, 1935.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

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Reinforcing Steel in Foundation, c. 1935.



Source: George Edward Des Rochers.

Exterior Walls with Sheathing, c. 1935



Source: George Edward Des Rochers.

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Framing Details and Roof Construction, c. 1935.



Source: George Edward Des Rochers.

Framing Details and Roof Construction, c. 1935.



Source: George Edward Des Rochers.

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Construction at the Roosevelt Elementary School campus, c. 1930s.



Source: Santa Monica Public Library.

Perspective Showing Outdoor Classrooms. Photograph by Victor Haveman, 1936.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

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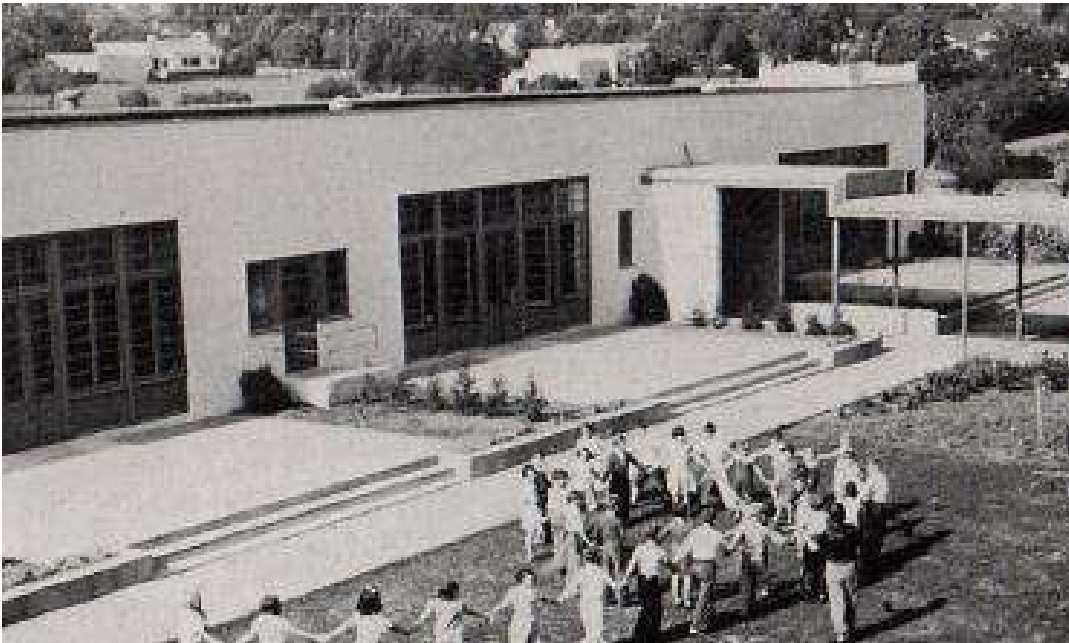
HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

Students at Roosevelt Elementary School. Photograph by Victor Haveman, 1936.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

Students at Roosevelt Elementary School. Photograph by Victor Haveman, 1936.

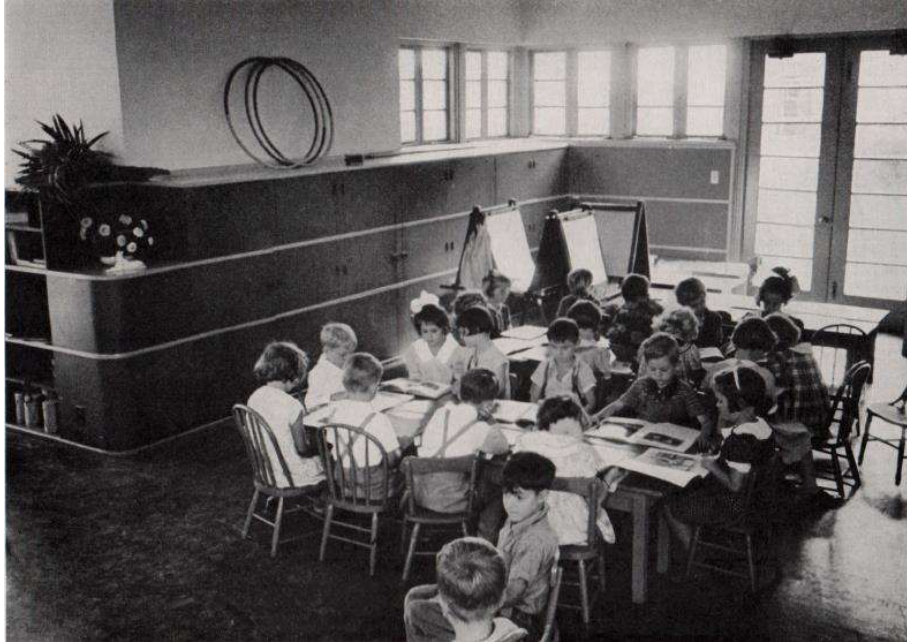


Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

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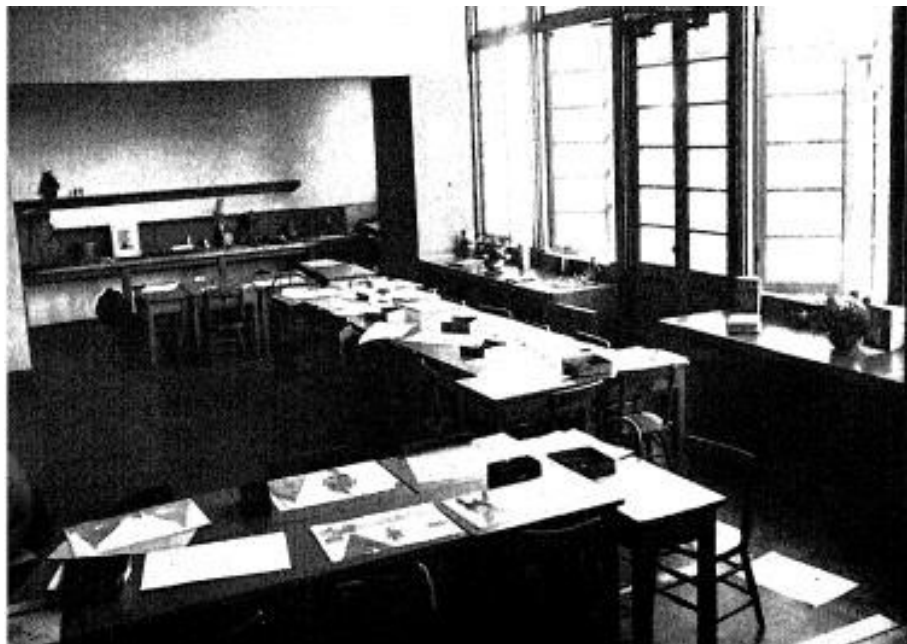
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Interior View of Typical Classroom, 1936.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

Classroom at Roosevelt Elementary School, 1938.



Source: *The Progressive Elementary School*.

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Students at Roosevelt Elementary School, 1938.



Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

Students at Roosevelt Elementary School, c. 1940s.



Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

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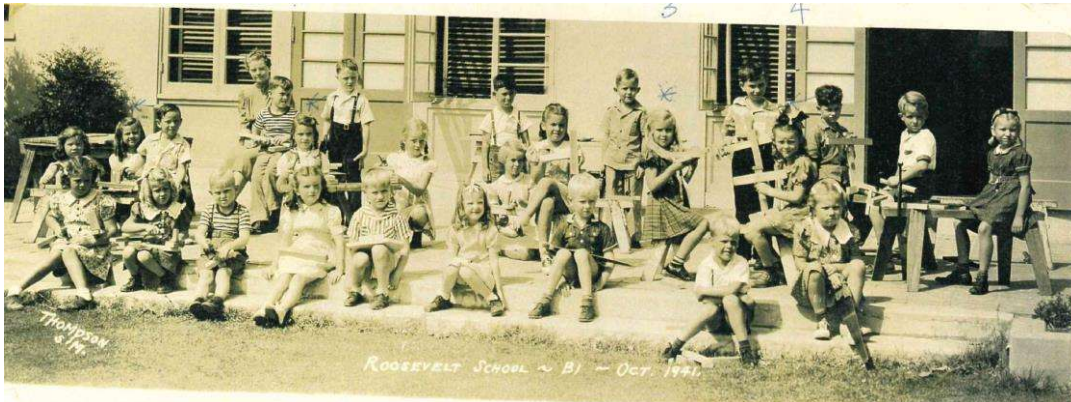
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Front Entrance of Roosevelt Elementary School c. 1940s.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

Students at Roosevelt Elementary School, 1941.



Source: Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

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Front Entrance of Roosevelt Elementary School c. 1950.



Source: Santa Monica Conservancy.

5.4 Architectural Styles¹¹¹

Streamline Moderne/PWA Moderne

The constraints of the Great Depression cut short the development of Art Deco architecture, but replaced it with a purer expression of modernity, the Streamline Moderne style. Characterized by smooth surfaces, curved corners, and sweeping horizontal lines, Streamline Moderne is considered to be the first thoroughly Modern architectural style to achieve wide acceptance among the American public. Inspired by the industrial designs of the period, the style was popular throughout the United States in the late 1930s. Unlike the equally modern but highly-ornamental Art Deco style of the late 1920s, Streamline Moderne was perceived as expressing an austerity more appropriate for Depression-era architecture.

The origins of the Streamline Moderne are rooted in transportation design, which took the curved form of the teardrop, because it was the most efficient shape in lowering the wind resistance of an object. Product designers and architects who wanted to express efficiency borrowed the streamlined shape of cars, planes, trains, and ocean liners. Streamline Moderne architecture looked efficient in its clean lines. It was in fact

¹¹¹ The architectural styles presented here are excerpted and adapted from the "City of Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory Update Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of Santa Monica by Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, March 2018.

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relatively inexpensive to build because there was little labor-intensive ornament like terra cotta; exteriors tended to be concrete or plaster. The Streamline Moderne's finest hour was the New York World's Fair of 1939-40. Here, the "World of Tomorrow" showcased the cars and cities of the future, a robot, a microwave oven, and a television, all in streamlined pavilions. While the style was popular throughout Southern California during the 1930s, there are relatively few examples.

Art Deco and Streamline Moderne were not necessarily opposites. A Streamline Moderne building incorporating some Art Deco elements was not uncommon, particularly in the Federally-funded projects of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Public Works Administration (PWA). The buildings executed under those programs are often referred to as PWA Moderne. They incorporate the clean lines of Streamline Moderne with simplified decorative elements of Art Deco to create an appropriately monumental but restrained architectural language for post offices, courthouses, schools, libraries, city halls, bridges, and other institutional and infrastructure projects across the country.

Character-defining features include:

- Horizontal emphasis
- Asymmetrical façade
- Flat roof with coping
- Smooth plaster wall surfaces
- Curved end walls and corners
- Glass block and porthole windows
- Flat canopy over entrances
- Fluted or reeded moldings or stringcourses
- Pipe railings along exterior staircases and balconies
- Steel sash windows

Late Moderne

The Late Moderne style incorporates elements of both the Streamline Moderne and International styles. While the earliest examples appeared in the late 1930s, the style reached its greatest popularity in large-scale commercial and civic buildings of the late 1950s and 1960s. The Late Moderne style is frequently identified by the use of the bezeled window, where horizontal groupings of windows are outlined in a protruding, bezel-like flange, often in a material and color that contrasts with the surrounding wall surface.

Character-defining features include:

- Horizontal emphasis
- Exposed concrete or cement plaster veneer
- Flat roofs
- Horizontal bands of bezeled windows, sometimes with aluminum louvers
- Operable steel sash windows (casement, awning, or hopper)

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Mid-Century Modern Style

Mid-century Modern is a term used to describe the post-World War II iteration of the International Style in both residential and commercial design. The International Style was characterized by geometric forms, smooth wall surfaces, and an absence of exterior decoration. Mid-century Modern represents the adaptation of these elements to the local climate and topography, as well as to the postwar need for efficiently-built, moderately-priced homes. In Southern California, this often meant the use of wood post-and-beam construction. Mid-century Modernism is often characterized by a clear expression of structure and materials, large expanses of glass, and open interior plans.

The roots of the style can be traced to early Modernists like Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler, whose local work inspired “second generation” Modern architects like Gregory Ain, Craig Ellwood, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Pierre Koenig, Raphael Soriano, and many more. These post-war architects developed an indigenous Modernism that was born from the International Style but matured into a fundamentally regional style, fostered in part by Art and Architecture magazine’s pivotal Case Study Program (1945-1966). The style gained popularity because its use of standardized, prefabricated materials permitted quick and economical construction. It became the predominant architectural style in the postwar years and is represented in almost every property type, from single-family residences to commercial buildings to gas stations.

Character-defining features include:

- One or two-story configuration
- Horizontal massing (for small-scale buildings)
- Simple geometric forms
- Expressed post-and-beam construction, in wood or steel
- Flat roof or low-pitched gable roof with wide overhanging eaves and cantilevered canopies
- Unadorned wall surfaces
- Wood, plaster, brick or stone used as exterior wall panels or accent materials
- Flush-mounted metal frame fixed windows and sliding doors, and clerestory windows
- Exterior staircases, decks, patios and balconies
- Little or no exterior decorative detailing
- Expressionistic/Organic subtype:
 - sculptural forms and geometric shapes, including:
 - butterfly roof
 - A-frame roof
 - folded plate roof
 - barrel vault roof

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5.5 Architects and Design Professionals

Marsh, Smith & Powell

The Los Angeles architecture firm of Marsh, Smith & Powell designed the campus and first buildings of the Roosevelt Elementary School in 1935. Consisting of master architect Norman F. Marsh (1871-1955), engineer David D. Smith (1886-1964), and designer Herbert J. Powell (1898-1996), the firm was founded in 1928.¹¹²

Norman F. Marsh was born in Upper Alton, Illinois in 1871. Marsh studied architecture at the University of Illinois before working as a lucical engineer for the Luxfer Prism Glass Company in Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia. In 1900, he relocated to Los Angeles where he entered into an architectural partnership with Jasper Newton Preston for a year, before joining with Clarence H. Russell from 1902 to 1907. Marsh & Russell planned the Venice Canals (1904-1905) in Venice, California.¹¹³ Marsh worked on his own for several years, before joining with Smith & Powell.¹¹⁴

David D. Smith was born in Versailles, Kentucky in 1886 before relocating with his family to Los Angeles in 1901 at the age of 15. Smith graduated from Stanford University's school of engineering. During World War I, he served as the office engineer in charge of military works at Brest, France.¹¹⁵

Herbert J. Powell was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1898. Powell briefly attended the University of California from 1916 to 1917, obtained a bachelor's degree from the University of Redlands in 1920, and earned a master's degree in architecture from Harvard University in 1924. Powell worked briefly as a draftsman for architects McKim, Mead & White in New York and Kilham, Hopkins & Greely of Boston before joining with Marsh and Smith in Los Angeles.¹¹⁶

During the firm's tenure from 1928 to 1955, Marsh, Smith & Powell was recognized throughout the Southwest and greater United States as one of the top firms for school design. Within its first years of forming, the firm designed the South Pasadena Junior High School (1928/1937), Lynwood Junior High School (1929); Newport Harbor Union High School (1930); George S. Stoneman School (1934); Hollywood High School (1935-1938); and completed several buildings at Redlands University (1928). The firm and was lauded for planning "many beautiful buildings in Southern California."¹¹⁷ Although the firm began designing schools from the first days of its formation, Marsh, Smith & Powell gained mastership of the type following the 1933

¹¹² Alan Michelson, "Norman Foote Marsh," Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD).

¹¹³ "Hollywood High School Historic District," National Register Nomination, Prepared by students of Hollywood High School and Historic Resources Group, 2011.

¹¹⁴ "Norman Foote Marsh," Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/332/> (accessed October 2021)).

¹¹⁵ "Rites Set Today for Architect," *Los Angeles Evening Citizen News*, August 6, 1964, page 9; "Architects of Junior High Widely Known," *Foothill Review*, October 19, 1928.

¹¹⁶ "Powell, Herbert (AIA)," *1962 American Architects Directory*, R.R. Bowker LLC, 1962 (562), AIA Historical Directory of American Architects, <https://aiahistoricaldirectory.atlassian.net> (accessed October 2021).

¹¹⁷ "Architects of Junior High Widely Known," *Foothill Review*, October 19, 1928, page 11.

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Long Beach Earthquake, when hundreds of schools across the Los Angeles Basin were damaged. It was noted in a 1934 edition of *Architect and Engineer*, that one of the firm's most recent commissions prior to the earthquake, the design of the George S. Stoneman School in San Marino, had survived the earthquake intact. When examined by the State Department of Architecture following the earthquake in 1933, they found the reinforced concrete buildings to comply almost completely with the legal requirements for strength and resistance to horizontal forces. The school has "been well built at the outset so it did not have to be built all over again or be expensively repaired."¹¹⁸ The firm was thus well poised for earthquake resistant school design.

Marsh, Smith & Powell rehabilitated and designed numerous schools following the earthquake. Some of the most notable of these schools are located in Santa Monica, where the firm devised their "Santa Monica Plan." The firm advised the Santa Monica board of education in its selection of schools to fund new construction or to rehabilitate in order to comply with seismic safety standards following the earthquake.¹¹⁹ Much of the November 1938 edition of *Architect and Engineer* was dedicated to the firm's new work in school design. In an article titled "Progress in School Design as Evidenced by the Work of Marsh, Smith & Powell, Architects," the author writes:

The architects of California can well take pride in that which has been accomplished during the last twenty-five years. Their school buildings are beautiful—they are practical, they are utilitarian, and they are economical in cost and in administration. Their achievements reflect the spiritual values of the people. It is indeed a pleasure to pay tribute to the firm [Marsh, Smith & Powell] whose work is featured within the covers of this issue, for it has contributed greatly to the excellent school buildings in California.

Following the earthquake, the firm designed the Henry E. Huntington School (1936); Ivy Avenue School (1937); Hollywood High School (1939); Corona Del Mar School (1945); El Camino College (1950); Life Science Building at UCLA (1952); and K. L. Carver Elementary School (1954). Other notable post-1933 works in Santa Monica by the firm include John Adams Middle School (1935); Madison Elementary School (c. 1936); Santa Monica High School (1938); and Santa Monica City College (1951).

The firm also served as architects for the University of Southern California and hired other well-known master architects, including Thornton M. Abell, William F. Cody, and Whitney R. Smith.¹²⁰ The firm received numerous awards for their work, including certificate of honors and a 1st honorary award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA).¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Homer M. Hadley, "School," *Architect and Engineer* 118 no. 1, July 1934.

¹¹⁹ Cleland, 109.

¹²⁰ "Marsh, Smith & Powell, Architects (Partnership), PCAD, <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/firm/126/> (accessed October 2021).

¹²¹ "Powell, Herbert (AIA)," 1962 *American Architects Directory*.

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Joe M. Estep

Santa Monica architect, Joe M. Estep (1888-1959) expanded Roosevelt Elementary School. Estep was born in 1888 in Ohio. After moving to Los Angeles circa 1910, Estep joined with architect Arthur R. Kelly to form Estep and Kelly in 1923. The firm mostly specialized in building single-family residences, including the Arthur Letts Jr. Residence (1927) and the W. B. Cline Residence (1930).¹²² The firm dissolved circa 1938.

In 1938, Estep briefly joined with Donald B. Parkinson to design the Santa Monica City Hall (1938). After this project it appears that Estep began practicing architecture on his own. In 1948, he designed the Elks Temple Lodge in Santa Monica.¹²³

In the mid-1950s, Estep was hired by the Culver City Board of Education to design several school buildings in the district. Estep designed the multi-use room and cafeteria at the Betsy Ross School (1953/1954); additions at Culver City High School (1956); and the campus of the Baldwin Hills Elementary School (1957).¹²⁴

Joe M. Estep's early career was mostly focused on residential commissions. In the 1940s and 1950s, he pivoted his career to focus on school construction. Most of his commissions during this time were for minor additions, alterations, and infill construction for existing campuses. It appears that he only designed one school campus, that of Baldwin Hills Elementary School in Culver City. As a result, Joe M. Estep was not known for his school commissions. For these reasons, buildings at Roosevelt Elementary School are not significant examples of his work.

Additional work by Estep in Santa Monica includes his additions to the campuses of John Adams Middle School and Grant Elementary School.

¹²² "H-Shape Idea Used in Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, May 15, 1938, page 76; "Joseph Morgan Estep (Architect), PCAD, <http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/2191/> (accessed October 2021).

¹²³ "Ground Broken for Elks Lodge," *Evening Vanguard*, November 4, 1948, page 1.

¹²⁴ "Local School Board Calls for Plans on El Rincon, El Marino Classrooms," *Evening Vanguard*, December 10, 1953, page 1; "Shape of Things to Come," *Evening Vanguard*, August 2, 1954, page 2; "Estep to Design School Buildings," *Evening Vanguard*, March 7, 1957, page 1.

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6.0 IDENTIFICATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

Individual buildings, site features, and other features of the Roosevelt Elementary School campus are examined below for the purposes of identifying potential historic resources. As a framework for this assessment, HRG examined the entire campus, inclusive of all buildings and features that are within the campus boundary.

6.1 Previous Historic Evaluations

In 1993, an evaluation by Leslie Heumann & Associates identified a potential Santa Monica Public Schools Thematic District. This potential thematic district identified six school campuses citywide as potential contributors; the Roosevelt Elementary School was identified as a contributing campus to this potential district. The evaluation noted that five of the schools, including Roosevelt Elementary School, reflect the influence of the PWA Moderne style popular in the 1930s. As a result, Roosevelt Elementary School was found eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The significance statement reads:

Roosevelt School is significant for its architectural associations and for its contribution to a thematic district of historic public schools in Santa Monica... Architects Marsh, Smith and Powell, the premier school architects in the region during the late 1930s through the 1940s, were chosen to design the new facility in 1934. According to author James Lunsford (Looking at Santa Monica page 75), the school reflected the 'Santa Monica Plan' which "became the standard for most schools in Southern California, where the climate favored such a design. In 1940, architect Joe Estep designed provided the plans for new buildings at both Roosevelt and Grant Schools. Estep was well known in Santa Monica at the time as one of the architects of the new City Hall.¹²⁵

Current historic preservation practice no longer recognizes thematic districts as a resource type. Neither the National Register of Historic Places nor the California Register of Historical Resources include thematic districts. Similarly, the City of Santa Monica's local preservation ordinance does not provide for the designation of thematic districts. Additionally, the potential Santa Monica Public Schools Thematic District is not on the City's list of locally designated districts, and it does not appear in the City's Historic Resources Inventory. Thus, the Roosevelt Elementary School is being considered as having been previously identified as an individual resource.

In 2007, an evaluation by Jones & Stokes noted that the school had not been significantly altered since it was evaluated in 1993. As such, the evaluation found that the property was eligible under Criteria A.1 "contributes to a district that exemplifies,

¹²⁵ State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory form, Roosevelt Elementary School. Leslie Heumann & Associates, 1992.

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symbolizes, or manifests elements of the cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history of the City.”¹²⁶

In 2008, PCR Services Corporation completed a draft historic resources evaluation for the school. PCR found Roosevelt Elementary School eligible for individual listing in the California Register and at the local level. The findings of the report were not adopted by the school district.¹²⁷

In 2018, the City of Santa Monica completed a Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update.¹²⁸ This update determined that Roosevelt Elementary School appeared ineligible for listing at the federal, state, or local level. According to the update:

*801 Montana Avenue (Roosevelt Elementary School) was previously identified as a contributor to the Santa Monica Public Schools District. However, this thematic grouping is no longer eligible as a historic district. While the property contributed to the character of the former historic district, it does not, on its own, appear to satisfy the registration requirements for local, state, or federal listing.*¹²⁹

The school was ascribed a current status code of 6L, “Determined ineligible for local listing or designation through local government review process; may warrant special consideration in local planning.”¹³⁰ The survey was completed from the public right-of-way and an in-depth inspection of the campus was not performed.

6.2 Historic District Assessment

The buildings and features of the Roosevelt Elementary School campus have been considered collectively for their potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and/or listing at the local level as a historic district.¹³¹

As noted in Section 4.6 of this report, the National Park Service defines a *historic district* as “a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.”¹³² Additionally, school campuses are noted as a potential example of a historic district.

¹²⁶ State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory form, 2425 16th Street; John Adams Middle School. Jones & Stokes, 2007.

¹²⁷ “Draft Historic Resources Evaluation Report for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Measure BB Program,” Prepared for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District by PCR Services Corporation, July 2008.

¹²⁸ “City of Santa Monica Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update Survey Report,” Prepared for the City of Santa Monica by Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, August 2018.

¹²⁹ Individual Resources, “City of Santa Monica Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update Survey Report,” Prepared for the City of Santa Monica by Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, August 2018.

¹³⁰ “California Historical Resource Status Codes,” Office of Historic Preservation, March 1, 2020.

¹³¹ For any given historic district, the retention of all contributors and character-defining features may not be necessary for that historic district to continue to convey its historical significance and remain eligible for historic listing. However, analysis should be conducted on a case-by-case basis to consider all potential impacts that a project may have on a historic district.

¹³² *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1997. (5)

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School campuses in the United States, especially those built in the 20th century often have definable spaces and unified site plans that were constructed as institutional complexes for educational purposes. The combination of space and purpose reflects individual school buildings' interconnectedness and functionality as a larger grouping. Because the Roosevelt Elementary School campus contains a grouping of related buildings and features, and was originally developed as an elementary school, consideration of this property as a potential historic district is an appropriate analytical framework for its evaluation.¹³³

Historic Significance

Criteria A/1/1

Roosevelt Elementary School is significant under National Register Criterion A, California Register Criterion 1, and City of Santa Monica Criterion 1 within the context of the WPA development of school campuses in the post-Long Beach Earthquake years of the 1930s. The Long Beach Earthquake of 1933 and WPA program left indelible marks on Santa Monica in the form of Roosevelt Elementary School. The school represents broad patterns of institutional history in Santa Monica when school campuses were substantially transformed throughout the City. Following the Long Beach Earthquake, scores of schools in Santa Monica and the greater Los Angeles region were demolished or rehabilitated after sustaining major damage to the then-mostly masonry buildings.

Unlike other schools that were rehabilitated or upgraded in the post-Long Beach Earthquake years, Roosevelt Elementary School was cohesively designed as a new campus using Marsh, Smith & Powell's new "Santa Monica Plan." This school thereby reflects the change in building design away from larger, masonry buildings to sleek, wood-frame school plants specifically meant to withstand seismic activity. The campus directly reflects a design shift resulting from this major natural disaster, when school plants were reimagined for longevity in a specifically Southern California environment. Additionally, the WPA, which was created by the Federal government to alleviate mass unemployment during the Great Depression, was heavily involved in the school's expansion. Roosevelt Elementary School thereby reflects the significant improvement in infrastructure during this period when skilled engineers, architects, and artists were employed to better institutions in Santa Monica and elsewhere. The reimagined earthquake-resistant design and WPA involvement at the Roosevelt Elementary School stand as testaments to the significant changes in the built environment of Santa Monica and greater Southern California during the mid-1930s to early 1940s.

Criteria C/3/4-5

Roosevelt Elementary School is also significant under National Register Criterion C, California Register Criterion 3 and City of Santa Monica Criteria 4 and 5 for its design.

¹³³ Ibid.

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Roosevelt Elementary School is a prominent, cohesive, and intact collection of PWA Moderne educational buildings that were built following the Long Beach Earthquake of 1933. Early buildings at the campus dating to 1935 were designed by the master architectural firm of Marsh, Smith & Powell, who incorporated the clean lines of the PWA Moderne style with a new intimate and functional school plant that emphasized indoor-outdoor spaces and plenty of natural light and fresh air. The school's classroom wings, outdoor patios, and landscaping all reflect the architectural elements of the new "Santa Monica Plan" established by the firm at Roosevelt Elementary School, and subsequently modeled at later schools. Roosevelt Elementary School subsequently came to influence school design across the country, which increasingly eschewed monumental and ornamented buildings for the modern and functional school plants championed by Marsh, Smith & Powell. In 1940, Joe M. Estep under the supervision of the WPA expanded these buildings, utilizing the same design guidelines established by the first phase of development. Completed under the auspices of the WPA, these buildings similarly reflect the PWA Moderne-style of architecture. Overall, the campus has a unified visual character.

The period of significance for Roosevelt Elementary School spans from 1935 to 1940. This timeframe includes the campus' early development following the Long Beach Earthquake of 1933 to its expansion under the WPA.

The period of significance begins in 1935 when Buildings E, F, G, J, and K, all designed by Marsh, Smith & Powell, were constructed using federal and local funds. The Lincoln & Montana Quad and south courtyard were open spaces created with the construction of these early buildings. The brick flagpole ring and brick wall were also completed in this early stage of construction. In 1940, Joe Estep expanded the campus with Buildings B and C. This construction created the north courtyard; funded by the WPA, a bronze plaque commemorates this construction. Contributing features are those buildings that were constructed during the period of significance (this includes the 1935 portion of Building K). Regarding the eligible quad and courtyards, it is the spatial organization, rather than the landscaping, that is significant and continues to convey the designs envisioned by Marsh, Smith & Powell and Joe M. Estep and partially funded by the WPA.

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Buildings & Features Dating from the Period of Significance

The following table identifies buildings and features dating from the period of significance (1935-1940) that are extant on the Roosevelt Elementary School campus today:

Table 2: Features Included in the Potential Historic District

Current Feature Name	Year Built	Integrity	Status
Buildings			
Building B	1940	Good	Contributor
Building C	1940	Good	Contributor
Building E	1935	Good	Contributor
Building G	1935	Good	Contributor
Building J	1935	Good	Contributor
Portion of Building K	1935	Good	Contributor
Site Features			
Lincoln & Montana Quad	1935	Good	Contributor
South Courtyard	1935	Good	Contributor
North Courtyard	1940	Good	Contributor
Brick Ring	1935	Fair	Contributor
Brick Wall	1935	Fair	Contributor
Additional Features			
"Theodore Roosevelt" Panel	c. 1935	Very Good	Contributor
WPA Bronze Plaque	1940	Very Good	Contributor

The location of contributing buildings, site features, and additional features to the potential historic district as well as the district boundary is shown below in Figure 4.

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Figure 4. Potential Historic District Map



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Assessment of Integrity

Roosevelt Elementary School contains a cohesive concentration of six contributing buildings, five contributing site features, and one contributing additional feature that dates from the period of significance and has been identified as the potential historic district. These contributing resources within the boundaries of the potential historic district remain in their original locations in the site, retaining spatial relationships and circulation patterns that have remained unchanged since the late 1930s. Although the campus was expanded under the auspices of the WPA in 1940, development did not interrupt the generally cohesive grouping of early buildings. Instead, these additions adopted the original design and furthered the original plans for the school developed by Marsh, Smith & Powell.

Integrity of the property's individual buildings is varied, and all buildings and features have been subject to varying levels of alteration. However, despite some degree of alteration, the property retains much of the circulation pattern and spatial relationships established during the period of significance that characterize the potential historic district as a whole. A detailed assessment of the integrity of the potential historic district is discussed below.

- **Location:** The buildings constructed during the period of significance remain in their original locations in the eastern region of the campus. Therefore, the potential historic district retains integrity of *location*.
- **Design:** The potential historic district retains most of the character-defining features of its original construction and subsequent development during the period of significance. Buildings constructed during the period of significance include PWA Moderne style buildings that are representative property types typical of design in the years following the Long Beach Earthquake of 1933 and WPA buildings of 1940. In addition, the three open spaces that contributing buildings face onto are also important features of the site, and reflect the importance given to natural light and ventilation in school design from that period. Despite some alterations, a majority of the essential physical features reflecting the original design and organization of the property as a school from the 1930s to 1940 remain intact within the potential historic district. Therefore, the potential historic district retains integrity of *design*.
- **Setting:** The potential historic district is located in northwestern region of Santa Monica. The surrounding area of Santa Monica has a whole has experienced consistent development since the school's establishment in the area in 1935. However, the school's greater surrounding property uses of residential, educational, and commercial development remain intact. The historic district is situated in the eastern region of the school property. Since the period of significance, the school has undergone somewhat continuous development, with some new buildings dating from the mid-20th century to present. Specifically, buildings constructed in 1951 on Lincoln Boulevard, along the western edge of the property, have altered the setting of the campus. These buildings

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reestablished the primary entrance from its original location on Montana Avenue to Lincoln Boulevard. The historic district is therefore no longer immediately accessible from the west as it was during its period of significance. Therefore, the potential historic district's integrity of *setting* has been compromised.

- **Materials:** The potential historic district retains most of its original materials. Contributors typically retain some physical elements from the period of significance, including original cladding, some original windows and doors, and detailing such as curved walls and outdoor corridors. However, all contributors have been altered to some degree. Common alterations include infill additions and replacement of some original doors and windows. Therefore, the potential historic district's integrity of *materials* has been compromised.
- **Workmanship:** The potential historic district retains the physical evidence of workmanship. This includes the contributors' general massing, construction methods, and aesthetic principals. Moreover, most exterior cladding and even detail work have been retained. The buildings were constructed using wood framing for seismic stability. Overall, the buildings continue to retain substantial physical evidence of period construction techniques, including original finishes and design elements that reflect the character and identity of the potential historic district as the work of master architectural firms and architects. Therefore, the potential historic district retains integrity of *workmanship*.
- **Feeling:** The potential historic district retains most of the character-defining features of its original construction, including representative building types as well as spatial relationships and circulation patterns that are typical of campuses from this time. These essential physical features continue to convey the original aesthetic and historic sense of a small public school completed in the late 1930s and expanded into 1940. Thus, the potential historic district retains integrity of *feeling*.
- **Association:** Because the potential historic district retains integrity of *location*, *design*, *workmanship*, and *feeling*, it retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as public school built following the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake utilizing new design principals and constructed by the WPA in Santa Monica. Therefore, the potential historic district retains integrity of *association*.

The potential historic district has retained integrity of *location*, *design*, *workmanship*, *feeling*, and *association*. The potential historic district has retained sufficient integrity to convey its significance at the state and local levels.

Integrity of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

The integrity of each contributing resource was evaluated and given an assessment of *Very Good*, *Good*, or *Fair*. Integrity assessments and associated thresholds are described in greater detail below. Table 2 includes an assessment of historic integrity for each building on the site.

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Very Good

Buildings which have been given an assessment of *Very Good* possess the following characteristics:

- Retain most or all of the seven aspects of integrity
- Exhibit the character-defining features of a distinct architectural style or type
- May exhibit minor alterations, including the replacement of some windows and/or entrance doors or the replacement of roofing material

Good

Buildings which have been given an assessment of *Good* possess the following characteristics:

- Retain most or all of the relevant aspects of integrity; likely retains integrity of design and/or workmanship¹³⁴
- May exhibit some character-defining features of a distinct architectural style or type
- May exhibit some degree of alteration, including the replacement of windows, entrance doors, railings, cladding, and/or roofing material, with generally compatible substitutes
- May include subsequent additions that do not disrupt the overall building form

Fair

Buildings which have been given an integrity assessment of *Fair* possess the following characteristics:

- Retain some of the relevant aspects of integrity, but may not retain integrity of design and/or workmanship
- Retain original building form, massing, and scale
- Exhibit multiple alterations, including the replacement of windows, entrance doors, cladding, and/or roofing material, possibly with incompatible substitutes
- May exhibit infill of some original windows and/or entrance doors and/or resizing of original window and door openings
- May include subsequent additions to primary and/or secondary facades, but the original building form is still discernible

¹³⁴ For properties significant under Criterion A for association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, the National Park Service has stated that properties “ideally might retain *some* features of all seven aspects of integrity...Integrity of design and workmanship, however, might not be as important to the significance.”

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Non-contributing buildings are those which were constructed outside the period of significance, or which date from the period of significance but lack sufficient integrity due to extensive alterations. These buildings may have retained the majority of their original massing and may remain in their original locations, and as such, they continue to convey the original plan and spatial relationships associated with the early school period, but ultimately lack the integrity to be considered contributors.

Non-contributing resources that were constructed during the period of significance but no longer convey their historic identity due to substantial alteration are given an assessment of *Poor*.

Evaluation of Eligibility

Evaluation of the Potential Historic District for the National Register

The potential historic district does not appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register due to integrity considerations. The integrity of *setting* and *materials* have been compromised by alterations, which include infill additions and the replacement of original doors and windows. For these reasons, the potential historic district does not appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Evaluation of the Potential Historic District for the California Register

The potential historic district appears to be significant under California Register Criteria 1 and 3 for its association with the development of PWA Moderne-style buildings and the “Santa Monica Plan” by master architects Marsh, Smith & Powell following the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake in Santa Monica. It is important as a group of resources that dates from the school’s early development as a functional, modern school plant expanded by the WPA.

The potential historic district has retained integrity of *location, design, feeling, workmanship, and association*. While integrity of *materials* and *setting* have been somewhat compromised by alterations, the California Register does not require the same level of integrity as required for the National Register. Therefore, the potential historic district retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance at the state level. For these reasons, the potential historic district appears to meet the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

Evaluation of the Potential Historic District in the City of Santa Monica

The potential historic district appears to be significant for local listing under Criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, and for its association with the development of PWA Moderne-style buildings and the “Santa Monica Plan” by master architects Marsh, Smith & Powell following the 1933 Long Beach Earthquake in Santa Monica. It is important as a group of resources that dates from the school’s early development as a functional, modern school plant expanded by the WPA.

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The potential historic district has retained integrity of *location, design, feeling, workmanship, and association*. While integrity of *materials* and *setting* have been somewhat compromised by alterations, local designation does not require the same level of integrity as required for the National Register. Therefore, the potential historic district retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance at the local level. For these reasons, the potential historic district appears to meet the criteria for listing as a historic district in the City of Santa Monica.

6.3 Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features are distinctive elements and physical features that convey the historical appearance of a property and are required for it to convey its historical significance. According to Preservation Brief 17, there is a stepped process to identifying character-defining features.¹³⁵ The first step involves assessing the distinguishing physical aspects of the building as a whole. This second step involves examining the building more closely. While on their own each of the elements above may not convey historical significance, in combination they define the property and convey the associations for which it is significant. Table 3 is included below to provide the character-defining features of each contributing resource to the potential historic district.

¹³⁵ Lee Nelson, *Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character*, Preservation Brief No. 17, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services.

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Table 3: Character-Defining Features

Contributing Feature	Shape/Form	Roof	Openings	Projections	Trim and Secondary Features	Materials	Setting
Building B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plan • 1-story height • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping • Metal flat roof of canopied corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; single and grouped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete patios • Canopied outdoor corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from North Courtyard • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Building C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plan • 1-story height • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping • Metal flat roof of canopied corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; single and grouped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete patios • Canopied outdoor corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from 9th Street • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Building E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plan • 1-story height • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping • Metal flat roof of canopied corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; single and grouped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brick patios • Canopied outdoor corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from North and South Courtyards • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Building G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plan • 1-story height 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canopied outdoor corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from South Courtyard

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Contributing Feature	Shape/Form	Roof	Openings	Projections	Trim and Secondary Features	Materials	Setting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal flat roof of canopied corridor 	single and grouped				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Building J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular plan • 1-story height • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping • Metal flat roof of canopied corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; single and grouped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete patios • Canopied outdoor corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from South Courtyard • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Building K (Portion of building from 1935)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'L'-shaped footprint • 1-story height • Curved interior walls and detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat roof with metal coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original door and window openings; single and grouped 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete patios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular wall vents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth stucco exterior • Metal detailing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from 9th Street • Location and proximity to other contributing buildings
Lincoln & Montana Quad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular shape 	--	--	--	--	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setback from Lincoln Blvd. and Montana Ave. • Proximity to Building H

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Contributing Feature	Shape/Form	Roof	Openings	Projections	Trim and Secondary Features	Materials	Setting
South Courtyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular shape 	--	--	--	--	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Buildings D, E, G, H, and J
North Courtyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rectangular shape 	--	--	--	--	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Buildings B, C, D, and E

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6.4 Assessment of Individual Resources

In addition to considering the campus as a historic district, the buildings and features of the Roosevelt Elementary School campus have also been considered separately for their potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and/or listing at the local level as a historic district

As noted in Section 4.3 of this report, the National Park Service defines *historic significance* as “the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, state, or the nation.”¹³⁶ Historic significance can be achieved through a property’s association with important events, activities or patterns; association with important persons; distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form; or potential to yield important information.

For a building or feature of the Roosevelt Elementary School campus to be historically significant as an individual resource, it must possess historic significance separate and apart from the other buildings and features on the campus. That is, the individual building or feature must itself have individual significance.

This is not the case at Roosevelt Elementary School, where significant buildings are collectively associated, and significance is connected to other buildings and features on the campus. For this reason, no buildings were found eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, or for local designation.

¹³⁶ *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1997. (3)

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7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on visual observation of the property, research of primary and secondary sources, and an analysis of the eligibility criteria for listing at the federal, state, and local levels, HRG has identified a potential historic district at Roosevelt Elementary School that is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and for designation as a City of Santa Monica historic district. The potential historic district consists of six (6) contributing buildings, five (5) site features, and two (2) additional features with a period of significance from 1935 to 1940. Contributors to the potential historic district are as follows:

Buildings

- Building B, 1940
- Building C, 1940
- Building E, 1935
- Building G, 1935
- Building J, 1935
- Portion of Building K, 1935

Site Features

- Lincoln & Montana Quad, 1935
- South Courtyard, 1935
- North Courtyard, 1940
- Brick Flagpole Ring, 1935
- Brick Wall, 1935

Additional Features

- "Theodore Roosevelt" Panel, c. 1935
- WPA Bronze Plaque, 1940

All other buildings and features on site were determined ineligible for listing at the federal, state, and local levels.

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APPENDIX A. SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Buildings



Building A.
South view.



Building A.
South view.



Building A.
Northwest view.



Building A.
Northwest view.



Building A.
South view.



Building A.
Northwest view.

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Building B.
West view.



Building B.
North view.



Building B.
South view.



Buildings B and A.
West view.



Building C.
Southwest view.



Building C.
West view.

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Building C.
West view.



Building C.
Southwest view.



Building C.
East view.



Building C.
Southeast view.



Building D.
South view.



Building D.
North view.

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Building D.
North view.



Building D and Covered Corridor.
North view.



Building E.
Northeast view.



Building E.
North view.



Building E.
North view.



Building E.
Southwest view.

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Building E.
Southwest view.



Building E.
Southeast view.



Building G.
Southeast view.



Building G.
West view.



Building H.
East view.



Building H.
South view.

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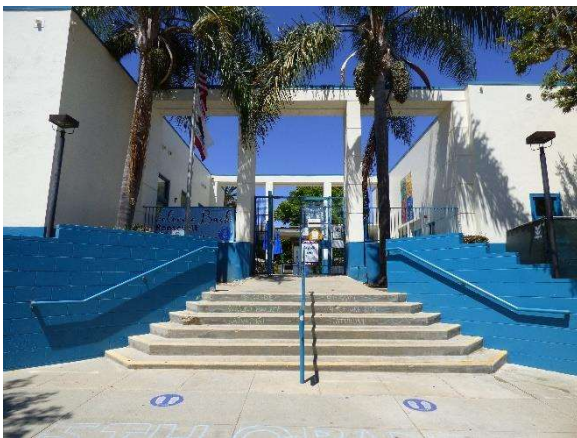
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Buildings J and H.
Northwest view.



Buildings H and J.
North view.



Entrance Courtyard, Building D and H.
East view.



Entrance Courtyard, Building D and H.
East view.



Buildings J and K.
Northwest view.



Buildings J and K.
East view.

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Building K.
East view.



Building K.
North view.

Features



Lincoln & Montana Quad.
North view.



Lincoln & Montana Quad.
Northeast view.



South Courtyard.
East view.



North Courtyard.
Southwest view.

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Brick Flagpole Ring.
East view.



Brick Wall
North view.



Tennis/Basketball Courts.
West view.



Handball Court.
West view.



Planter Garden
East view.



Athletic Field
Northeast view.

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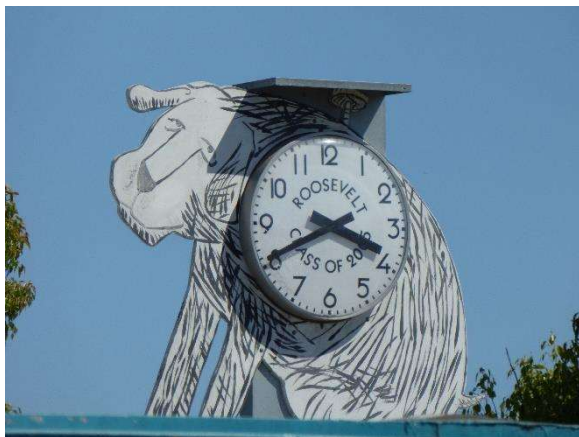
Additional Features



"Theodore Roosevelt" Panel, c. 1935.



WPA bronze plaque, 1940.



Roosevelt Clock, 2006.



"Roosevelt" Mural, c. 2000s.



"Roosevelt" Mosaic, c. 2000s.



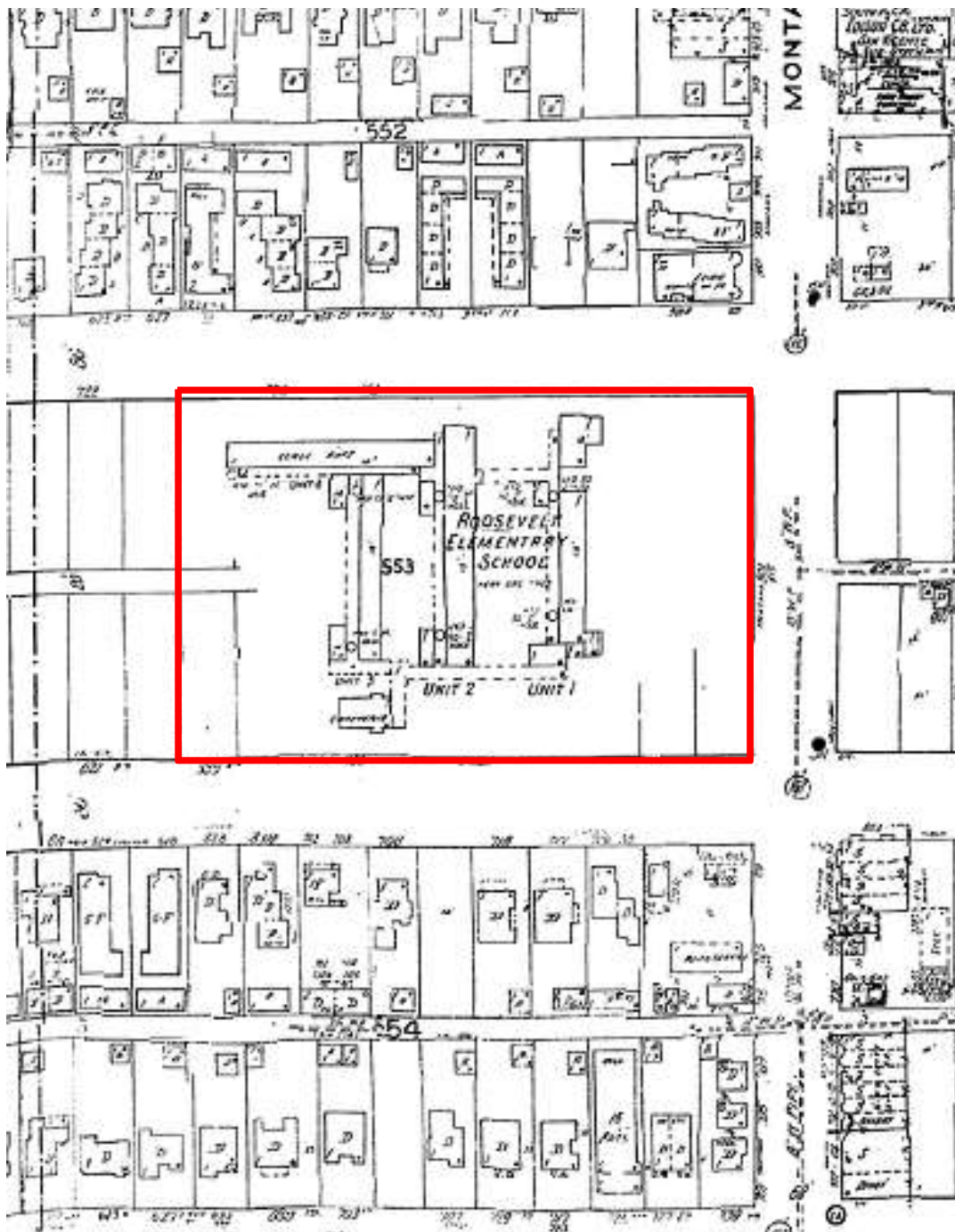
"Class" Murals, c. 2000s.

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APPENDIX B. SANBORN MAPS

Sanborn map, 1950.



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APPENDIX C. HISTORIC AERIALS

Historic aerial, 1928.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1938.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historical aerial, 1940 (March).



Source: UCSB Frame Finder, 2021

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Historical aerial, 1940 (October).



Source: UCSB Frame Finder, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1947.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1952.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1964.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1967.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1977.



Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 1981.

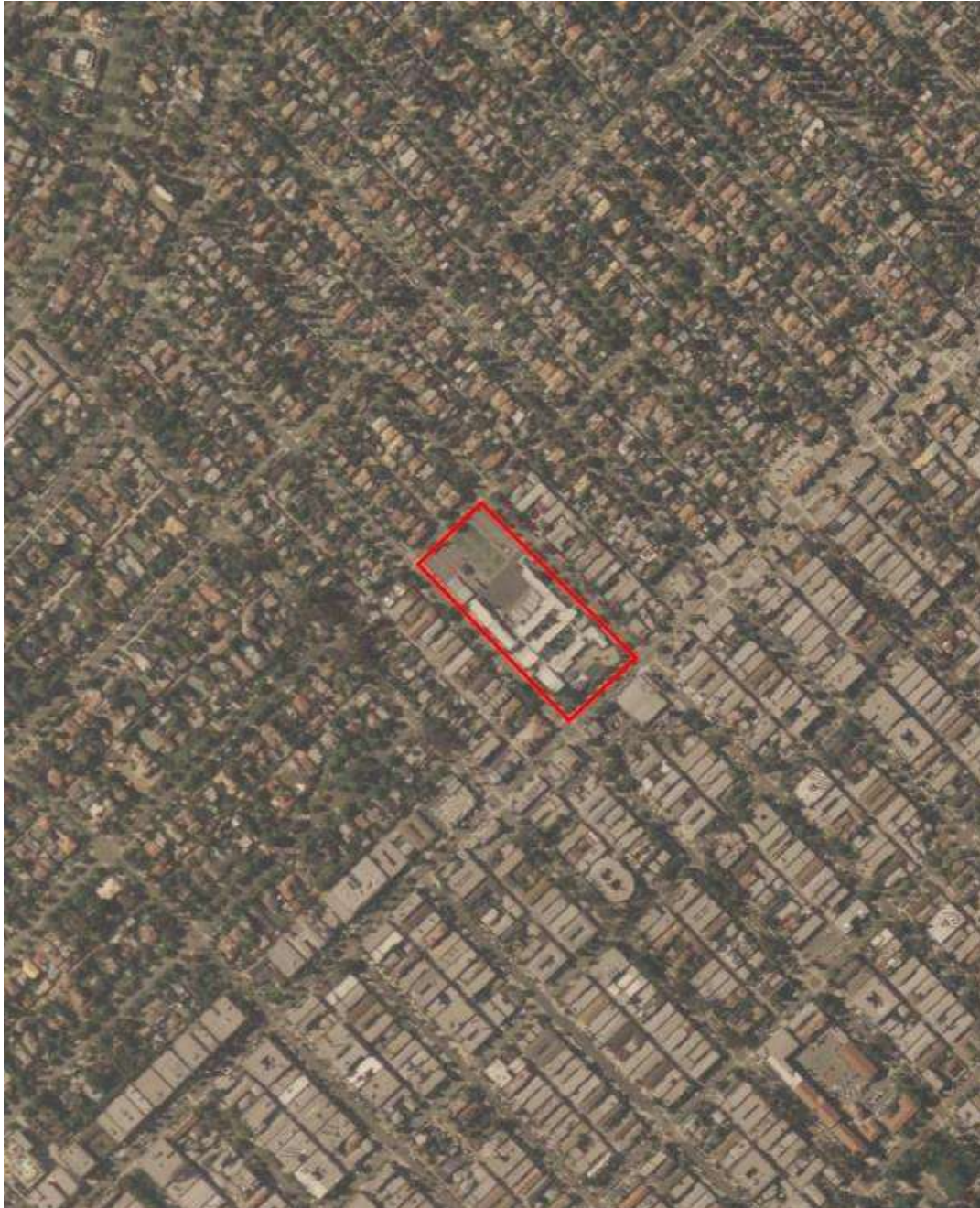


Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 2005.

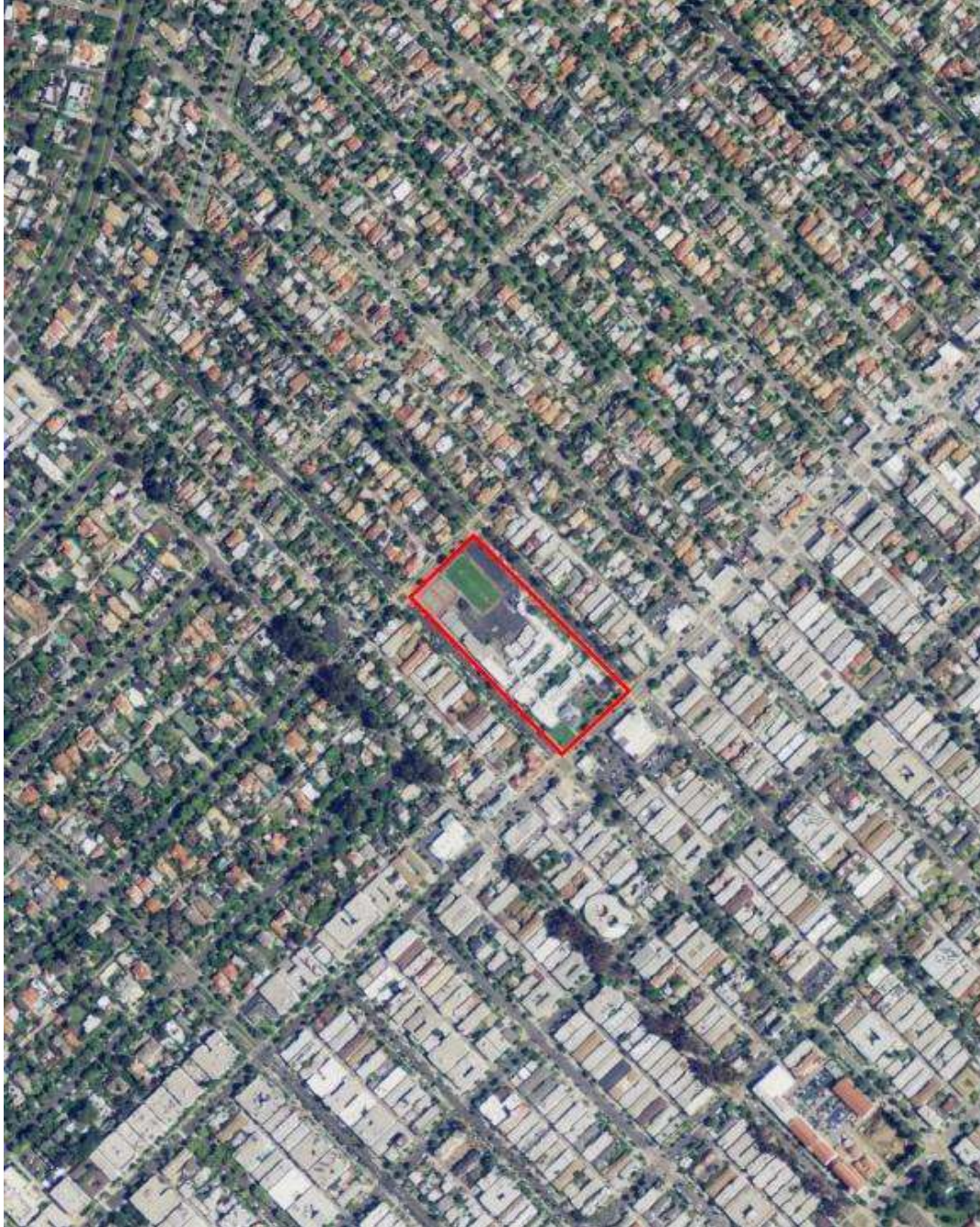


Source: EDR, 2021

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Historic aerial, 2012.



Source: EDR, 2021

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